

# Duo Joris van den Berg & Martijn Willers

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## Cello & Piano



Joris van den Berg and Marijn Willers met in 2006 in Amsterdam, during the preparations for the first Dutch National Cello Competition of the Amsterdam Cello Biennale. After Joris van den Berg won the 1<sup>st</sup> prize in the competition the two young musicians decided to keep working together, as they found they shared a great enthusiasm for playing chamber music at the highest level.

Mr. Van den Berg perfected his playing while studying in Manchester and Cologne with teachers like Ralph Kirshbaum, Frans Helmerson and Gary Hoffman. He is characterized as a true artist with a personal sound, an intelligent and warm musicality, a strong conviction and an impressive command of the instrument. Joris van den Berg played chamber music with among others Daniel Hope, Gary Hoffman and Philippe Graffin in concert halls like the Concertgebouw, Amsterdam and the Wigmore Hall, London and was a soloist with the The Hague Residentie Orchestra (The Hague Philharmonic), Amsterdam Sinfoniëtta, the Manchester Camerata and the Symphony Orchestra of Flanders. He

plays on a 1703 Giovanni Grancino cello and a Tourte “L’ainé” bow, placed at his disposal by the Dutch National Musical Instrument Foundation.

Mr. Willers studied in Amsterdam with Mila Baslawskaja and David Kuyken. As a soloist, Martijn Willers won the SNS Reaal Foundation Masterclass Prize in the final of the "Vriendenkrans Competition" in the Concertgebouw in Amsterdam in 2006. From early on, he performed lots of wonderful chamber music in all sorts of combinations, and has specialised in refining the art of playing together with many different musicians. Martijn Willers plays a Steinway grand piano build in 1909, placed at his disposal by the Dutch National Musical Instrument Foundation.

As a duo, Joris van den Berg and Martijn Willers performed in many concert halls in The Netherlands, including the Concertgebouw, Amsterdam and Vredenburg, Utrecht and they performed very successful concerts in the United Kingdom and the United States. The duo was prizewinner of the International Johannes Brahms Chamber Music Competition 2008 in Pörtlach, Austria.

In 2012 Van den Berg and Willers have been selected as laureates for the Dutch Classical Talent Tour and Award, organised by the Concertgebouw and the Concertgebouw Orchestra Amsterdam. It included a recital tour in the 2013-2014 season with performances in the most important concert halls in The Netherlands, including the Concertgebouw, Amsterdam, after which Joris van den Berg won the Dutch Classical Talent Award 2014. The first CD of the duo, which includes sonatas by Prokofiev and Britten, is titled “Dialogo” and has been released in October 2013 and has received great critical acclaim.

The duo is widely acclaimed for its sincere and intense performances of the cello and piano repertoire. In searching for utmost depth and musical truth, Joris van den Berg and Martijn Willers have found ideal colleagues in each other. The intense musical and personal dialogue between the two musicians and between the musicians and their audience is one of the central themes of their performances, which conquered the hearts of many audiences.