

Music @ St. Alban's

Sunday Concerts in Davidson

Performer Profile – May 22, 2022
A.W. Duo



Cellist **James Waldo** (D.M.A.) is an avid chamber musician, recitalist, and educator. James recently completed his Doctor of Musical Arts (DMA) degree program at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, where he was awarded the University Graduate Fellowship, two Foreign Language and Area Studies Fellowships (FLAS; Russian language), Teaching Assistantships for Music Theory, Western Music History, and History of the Delta Blues. Spring 2022 performance engagements include an appearance as concert soloist with the Edgewood College Orchestra and performance engagements with the LunART Festival, Misdsommers Music in Door County, WI, and the Madison Festival Choir. James is 2021-2022 artist-in-residence for the Juilliard (Evening Division) composition studio of Ray Lustig, where he works with students to develop new works for the cello. James has served as principal cellist for the Cecilia Chorus of New York's semiannual concerts in Carnegie Hall since 2013, and he has performed on period instruments with the Madison Bach Musicians, the North Carolina Baroque Orchestra, LeStrange Viols, and the Salon/Sanctuary Concert Series in NYC. Beyond his engagements in classical music, James received a doctoral minor in jazz studies, and has performed and recorded for numerous popular music artists, including *The Brilliance*, *Spirits of the Red City*, and jazz pianist Robert Rodriguez. James' playing can be heard on composer Luigi Porto's soundtrack to *Uljhan*, an award-winning independent film by Indian filmmaker Ashish Pant. James is currently cellist-in-

residence for the Juilliard Evening Division Composition Lab, run by composer Ray Lustig.

A native of Voronezh, Russia, pianist **Alyona Aksyonova Waldo** maintains an accomplished career as a concert pianist, chamber musician, collaborative pianist, and educator. As a soloist, Alyona was winner of the Second Gavrilin Governor's International Competition and finalist of The Third International Gnessin Piano Competition in Moscow. She appeared twice as soloist with the Voronezh Academic Symphony Orchestra. After relocating to New York City at age 19, Alyona was awarded a full scholarship for Bachelor of Music and Master of Music degree programs from Mannes College, The New School for Music, under the tutelage of Vladimir Feltsman and Pavlina Dokovska. Notable chamber music performances include Midsummer's Music in Door County, WI; Piccolo Spoleto Festival in Charleston, SC; performances with cellist Sara Sant'Ambrogio at the Highlands-Cashiers Chamber Music Festival, NC; concerts at Weill Recital Hall of Carnegie Hall, and performances at the Polish, Russian and French Consulates of New York. and Merkin Hall at Lincoln Center. As a collaborative pianist, Alyona worked for the La Lingua Della Lirica Festival in Novafeltria, Italy, and served as staff pianist for the Mannes Prep Division in New York.

James and Alyona began performing together as the **A.W.Duo** in 2011 after connecting musically as graduate students at Mannes College in New York City. A.W.Duo has toured the United States annually, performing at chamber music series, festivals, colleges, and other community venues. The duo gave their debut concert tour of northeast China in 2017, and holds plans to return for a second tour when pandemic conditions allow it. While living in New York City, the duo co-founded the Listen Closely Chamber Music Collective, organizing free chamber music performances at community-friendly locations around uptown Manhattan. The duo independently released a recording of Rachmaninoff's Sonata for Cello and Piano in 2013, and gave performances of Beethoven's complete cycle of works for cello and piano in New York City and Columbia, SC in 2015.