

# Proposed educational workshop activity - Duo BoMi

## Four Hands, One Piano, A World of Sound

**Target Audience:** Adaptable for elementary school students (ages 8+), middle/high school music classes, and general university audiences. No prior musical training is required.

**Duration:** 45-60 minutes (flexible to suit different schedules)

### **Workshop Objectives**

- To discover the fascinating, collaborative art form of piano four-hand playing, exploring its unique techniques and sonic possibilities.
- To demonstrate how musical traditions from diverse cultures come alive and connect through the piano.
- To explore extended piano technique (when an acoustic piano is available).
- To engage participants in active listening and cultural comparison, making abstract musical concepts concrete and relatable.
- To inspire curiosity and foster a deeper appreciation for the rich tapestry of global music and the power of musical collaboration.
- To demystify classical performance and encourage a shared, accessible understanding of music.

### **Workshop Description & Activities:**

Duo BoMi invites students on an interactive "Orient Express" journey, delving into the extraordinary world of four-hand piano playing as a vehicle for cultural exploration. Through captivating live performances, engaging demonstrations, and personal storytelling, this workshop is divided into three sections:

#### **1. The Magic of Four Hands (10-15 min):**

- Introduction: We introduce ourselves, highlighting our diverse origins and our shared mission to explore music together.
- What is Four-Hand Piano? An immediate, fun demonstration. We introduce the piano as an instrument, its different components and possibilities. We play a simple, familiar melody first with just two hands (one person), then add the other two hands to show the dramatic increase in richness, complexity, and power, explaining how we share the keyboard.
- The Challenge & The Joy: We will briefly discuss the unique challenges and rewards of playing four-hands: how we coordinate and communicate without words to create a unified sound.
- Interactive Element: Visually demonstrate how we navigate the keyboard, showing specific hand positions (e.g., crossing hands, playing in close proximity, who plays the pedal, who turns the pages) that are unique to four-hand playing.

## **2. Musical Performance: From Paris to the Levant (25-30 min):**

- We will perform 3-4 carefully selected, short excerpts from our "Orient Express" program, chosen specifically to highlight both four-hand techniques and cultural contrasts/connections. Each piece is accompanied by a brief, engaging story or cultural context, personally connecting the music to its origins (e.g., the inspiration behind the piece, traditional events it might accompany).
  - Piece 1 (Le jardin féerique by Maurice Ravel): Discussing the fairy tale behind it, the French musical tradition. Explain how the four-hand arrangement allows for rich, impressionistic textures.
  - Piece 2 (Bay of Rainbows by Christine Donkin): Discussing how contemporary Canadian voices contribute to the musical landscape. How does the four-hand format lend itself to these new sounds?
  - Piece 3 (Winter Morning in Istanbul by Fazil Say): After playing, we will isolate and demonstrate specific musical elements from this Middle Eastern piece. Such as the extended technique mimicking Oud sound, and the Hijaz maqam/mode.
  - Piece 4 (Dance from the Levant Lands by Maurice Ghanem): After playing, we will isolate and demonstrate specific rhythms from this piece, and teach the participants a simple traditional group dance (Dabké) that goes with that rhythm.

## **3. Your Turn: Q&A (10-15 min):**

- An open & interactive Q&A session. Students are invited to ask anything about the music, the cultures, the challenges of playing four-hands, or the pianists' personal experiences.
- We aim to leave students with a sense of connection to these diverse musical worlds and an understanding of collaboration.

### **Why Duo BoMi for this Workshop:**

Our unique blend of cultural backgrounds and our specialized focus on piano four-hand performance position us perfectly to deliver an unparalleled educational experience. We offer a direct, engaging, and personal journey into the heart of musical collaboration and global cultural dialogue, demonstrating how two musicians and one instrument can bridge continents and inspire new perspectives.

### **Technical Requirements for Workshop:**

- Piano: One well-tuned acoustic piano (grand piano strongly preferred for optimal four-hand sound and visual impact, but a quality upright piano is acceptable for smaller classroom settings).
- Space: A classroom, library, or small performance space with seating for the students, allowing good visibility of the piano and pianists.
- Microphones (Optional but Recommended): Two vocal microphones with stands for clear communication, especially in larger settings.