**PIANO DUO DESISLAVA SHTEREVA & EVGENIA SIMEONOVA**

For over twenty-five years, Desislava Shtereva and Evgenia Simeonova have performed together as one of Bulgaria’s leading piano duos, admired for their artistry, versatility, and refined ensemble sound. Their rich and ever-expanding repertoire spans centuries—from Baroque and Classical masterpieces to contemporary Bulgarian works—and has been heard in prestigious concert halls and festivals across Bulgaria and abroad.

The duo has been awarded Second Prize at the 5th International Piano Duo Competition in Tokyo (Japan) and received a Diploma at the 9th International Piano Duo Competition TIM (Italy). They have appeared as soloists with all major symphonic and chamber orchestras in Bulgaria.

For their outstanding recital programs featuring the great masters of Russian music, Shtereva and Simeonova received the “Golden Muse” Award (2007) for their contribution to promoting Russian culture and art in Bulgaria.

A special focus of the duo’s concert activity is the exploration of works written for multiple piano ensembles—pieces for four, six, and even eight hands—by composers such as Bach and Mozart, as well as contemporary Bulgarian masters. Of particular significance is their collaboration with composer Alexander Yosifov, whose piano ensemble works they have championed in concert and recorded for Bulgarian National Radio and Bulgarian National Television. Their CD Alexander Yosifov: Selected Works (2015) highlights this fruitful partnership.

Two of the duo’s major projects are devoted to the “Hungarian Dances” by Johannes Brahms and the “Slavonic Dances” by Antonín Dvořák, both performed in their original versions for piano four hands. These rare complete live performances have been recorded for Bulgarian National Radio and released by Gega New (Brahms – Hungarian Dances, 2016; Dvořák – Slavonic Dances, 2023). The Slavonic Dances have also been presented in a unique stage version featuring choreography by Alexandra Tikhomirova (Russia) with principal dancers from the Sofia Opera and Ballet.

In 2022, during the “Sofia Music Weeks” International Festival, Shtereva and Simeonova gave the first complete concert performance in Bulgaria of all 13 works for two pianos by Pancho Vladigerov, in honor of the 100th anniversary of the National Academy of Music bearing the composer’s name, where both pianists are long-standing professors. This landmark event earned them the prestigious “Crystal Lyre” Award from the Union of Bulgarian Musicians and Dancers for outstanding artistic achievement.

In March 2025, in collaboration with the National Academy of Music, the Pancho Vladigerov House-Museum, and the Gega New label, the duo released a double CD featuring the complete works for two pianos by Pancho Vladigerov—a significant contribution to Bulgaria’s musical heritage.

Both they hold master classes in piano and piano duo under the Erasmus program in Italy, Croatia and Austria.

*“The Piano duo Shtereva – Simeonova is a new, great phenomenon in Bulgaria’s musical life - precision, sophistication, temperament, beauty of the tone, original interpretation, musical individuality. Their presentation of works ranging from pre-classics to the latest in modern music, often composed specially to be played by them, is masterful, qualifying them as mature, up to the world standards performers”.*

*prof. N. Kaufmann doctor of art criticism, corresponding member of the Bulgarian academy of sciences*

**DESISLAVA SHTEREVA**

Desislava Shtereva graduated from the Secondary School of Music in Burgas in the piano class of Rada Chomakova. In 1992 she completed her higher education at the P. I. Tchaikovsky State Conservatory in Moscow, where she studied with Professor Zinaida Ignatieva. She is a laureate of national and international piano competitions in Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Italy, and Japan, and has appeared at prestigious music festivals both in Bulgaria and abroad. An active soloist and chamber musician, her concert career is marked by stylistic diversity and artistic refinement. Shtereva has recorded for the Bulgarian National Radio and Radio Moscow. In 2001, Gega New released her CD featuring works for piano by Pancho Vladigerov, performed together with Rada Chomakova. In 2008, this recording was included in the international series *“Masterpieces of Classics.”*

In 2013, she defended her PhD dissertation on interpretative challenges in the piano duo works of Alexander Yosifov.
She is currently Professor of Piano at the Faculty of Theory, Composition and Conducting at the National Academy of Music “Pancho Vladigerov” and also teaches at New Bulgarian University in Sofia.

**EVGENIA SIMEONOVA**

Evgenia Simeonova graduated with honors and a gold medal from the Secondary School of Music in Pleven, where she studied piano with Mariana Nacheva. She went on to earn her degree from the National Academy of Music “Pancho Vladigerov” in Sofia, as a student of Professor Lily Atanasova and Professor Dr. Atanas Kourtev, followed by a two-year master class in piano and piano accompaniment. She continued her studies at the Prague Academy of Music with Professors František Rauch and Valentina Kameníková, in Professor Yvonne Lefébure’s master class in Paris, and with Professor Viktor Merzhanov at the P. I. Tchaikovsky Moscow Conservatory. Simeonova is a laureate of the 4th International “Carlo Soliva” Competition in Italy and has performed in the Czech Republic, Slovakia, France, Austria, Greece, and South Korea.

In 2015, she defended her PhD dissertation on interpretative issues in the piano duo works of Francis Poulenc.
She is currently Professor of Piano. In the period 2020-2024 was Deputy Dean of the Faculty of Theory, Composition and Conducting at the National Academy of Music “Pancho Vladigerov” in Sofia.