

The Canberra Times

Piano and two voices in trio

In the world of popular music, it's not unusual for an artist to accompany himself at the piano, but he wouldn't normally call himself a duo. The oddly named Trio A Due is made up of two singers, Almut Seebeck and mezzo-soprano Felicitas Weyer, Weyer's piano making up the third part. They were in Canberra last year at the Harmonie German Club, where critic W.L.Hoffman praised their "fine musicianship" in a program he said was "pleasantly light and lively". Now they're back for the Multicultural Festival, performing at Teatro Vivaldi on February 17 and 18. Trio A Due have performed all over Germany, singing works by von Bingen, Purcell, Handel, Mendelssohn, Schumann, Brahms, Dvorak, Glass, Ives and even Burt Bacharach. Australian composer Robert Lloyd and Richard Vella have dedicated compositions to them, too. Bookings for dinner and show: 6257 2718

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Styles? Pfft! „There is only good and bad music“

TRIO OF TWO: Cabaret artists Felicitas Weyer and Almut Seebeck mix the Renaissance with jazz, and add a dash of traditional Yiddish tunes.

By Ron Cerabona

German singers Almut Seebeck and Felicitas Weyer perform under the name Trio A Due (Trio of Two). Explaining the apparently numerical anomaly, Seebeck said, „If you listen, you think there are at least three persons“.

And it's true there are three things going on at once. Weyer sings in her natural mezzo while playing the piano, accompanying both herself and lyric soprano Almut Seebeck.

At Teatro Vivaldi, as part of the National Multicultural Festival, they will be performing Happy Days are Here Again, a concert of songs ranging from the Renaissance to 20th century jazz by way of traditional Yiddish tunes, all in their own arrangements.

„We'll be starting with Arie Antiche, hits of the 18th century, beautiful and rhythmic love songs“, Seebeck said. She said she thought this material, featuring works by composers such as Handel and Bononcini, was a good fit with jazz because in both cases there was freedom to improvise in performance.

„It's never exactly the same.“

The Yiddish songs, with titles like Laugh and Be Merry and The Main Point Is To Be Healthy, deal with overcoming life's problems, while the jazz half of the program ranges from Ellington and Gershwin to German songs by the Comedy Harmonists.

Seebeck and Weyer met while studying music at university in Wurzburg in the 1980s and joined forces when Weyer was seeking another singer to join her in duets of classical songs.

They were taught by Karl-Heinz Jarius, a pupil of renowned Italian tenor Benjamino Gigli and they enjoy encompassing a wide variety of music in their performance. „Music is so rich, you can't separate different styles,“ Weyer said. „There is only good and bad music.“

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