

# Duo Sonidos

[www.duosonidos.com](http://www.duosonidos.com)

**William Knuth, violin | Adam Levin, guitar**



**NAXOS** recording artists **Duo Sonidos**, brings together the talents of violinist William Knuth and classical guitarist Adam Levin. Based in New York and Boston, Duo Sonidos is at the vanguard of the guitar chamber music world. Their most recent album released in February 2019, *Wild Dance* on NAXOS label, debuted at #3 on the Billboard Traditional Classical charts. The duo was formed in 2006 at New England Conservatory. In November 2010, Duo Sonidos released their self-titled debut album, including works by Manuel de Falla, Astor Piazzolla, Salvador Brotons, and the premiere of a commissioned work by Eduardo Morales-Caso. They subsequently won 1st Prize at the 2010 Luys Milan International Chamber Music Competition in Valencia, Spain. The duo has enjoyed widespread critical acclaim for their first recording. Kenneth Keaton of *American Record Guide* hailed the CD as “exquisite music-making... an exciting discovery, recommended to all lovers of great chamber music playing.” The disc was awarded a May, 2012, US Choice award by *BBC Music Magazine*, in which music critic Julian Haylock wrote, “Duo Sonidos plays with a loose-limbed, easy virtuoso ‘cool’ and beguiling tonal warmth that combines laid back intuitiveness with classical sophistication... stunning performances.” The duo released their newest album on NAXOS label in February 2019 which is the first of three volumes which will document the entire catalogue of violin/guitar transcriptions by guitarist/arranger Gregg Nestor. Volume 1 includes world premiere recordings/arrangements of works by Szymanowski, Foss, Gershwin, Rodrigo, Ravel, Williams, and Ponce.

Duo Sonidos has toured extensively in Europe and made US debuts in New York, Chicago, Boston, Washington D.C., Madrid, Valencia, Detroit, Dallas, Miami, Philadelphia, Atlanta, and San Francisco. The duo has performed throughout the US and internationally, including Boston GuitarFest, the Chicago Latino Music Festival, Austin Classical Guitar, Queens New Music Festival in New York, Detroit Chamber Music Society, The Strathmore Center, Carnegie Mellon University, the University of Texas at Dallas, Pilgrim Chamber Players of Chicago, Temple University, Indiana University, Viterbo University, and the University of Wisconsin at Parkside, sharing an eclectic program of music that included transcriptions of masterpieces by composers such as Astor Piazzolla, Manuel de Falla, Arcangelo Corelli, G.F. Handel, Karol Szymanowski, Lukas Foss, Xavier Montsalvatge, Eduardo Morales-Caso, Joaquin Rodrigo, and Robert Beaser, as well as a smattering of newly commissioned works. The duo is working with cutting-edge technology, performing a live concert at WGBH Boston’s Fraser Studio while simultaneously broadcasting live on WFMT Chicago. During the pandemic, the duo triangulated a live

streamed performance with multiple presenters, including Austin Chamber Music, The View, and Austin Classical Guitar.

Duo Sonidos is dedicated to building a standard and expansive repertoire for violin and guitar through fresh arrangements and newly composed works. The duo has commissioned works from Clarice Assad, Sergio Assad, João Luiz, an upcoming work by Marco Pereira, Allen Krantz (USA), Gregg Nestor (USA), Jan Freidlin (Israel), Jorge Variago (Argentina), Jorge Muñoz (Spain-USA), David del Puerto (Spain), Jorge Sastre (Spain), and Eduardo Morales-Caso (Cuba-Spain). Their upcoming recording project will showcase newly commissioned works by several of today's most respected Brazilian composers, including Clarice Assad, João Luiz, Sergio Assad, Marco Pereira, among others. Levin and Knuth have also been honored as US Fulbright Scholars in the field of music performance in Madrid, Spain and Vienna, Austria respectively. William Knuth serves as Assistant Professor of Violin and String Area Coordinator at the Syracuse University Setnor School of Music and Adam Levin is on faculty at the University of Rhode Island and UMass Boston.

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**Adam Levin, classical guitarist,** Praised for his “visceral and imaginative performances” by the Washington Post, prize winning and Billboard top-charting classical guitarist and recording artist Adam Levin has performed on four continents across the globe. Levin has performed extensively across the United States at renowned venues such as Chicago’s Pick Staiger, Nichols, and Mayne Stage concert halls as well as at the prestigious Art Institute of Chicago; Boston’s Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum, the Museum of Fine Arts, and Jordan Hall; Spivey Hall in Atlanta; repeat appearances at Le Poisson Rouge in New York City; and the Kennedy Center in Washington, DC. In Europe, Levin has performed in some of the finest venues across Spain, Portugal, Italy, Germany, Switzerland, Israel, China, Brazil, and Columbia. Adam Levin’s live performances have been featured nationally numerous times on NPR’s Performance Today, the nationally syndicated Classical Guitar Alive, and studio performances on top radio stations including WFMT Chicago, WCRB Boston, and RIPR Rhode Island.

Levin has toured across the US including appearances at Guitar Foundation of America, Austin Classical Guitar, Philadelphia Classical Guitar Society, Old First Church in

San Francisco, Boston Classical Guitar Society, Berklee College of Music, The National Gallery in Washington D.C, and Miami New Music Festival, and Austin Chamber Music. During the 2022-23 concert season, Levin will tour in New York, California, and Brazil with violinist, William Knuth (as Duo Sonidos), to premiere works by Clarice Assad, Sergio Assad, and João Luiz, perform as soloist with the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra and Raanana Symphonette, and make solo appearances Spain, Portugal, and Taiwan. His guitar trio, The Great Necks, will perform an all-Spanish program in Providence, RI, Austin, TX, and Mexico City.

The recipient of numerous top prizes, Adam Levin has been recognized by the Society of American Musicians, the Lake Forest Concerto Competition, Minnesota’s Schubert Competition, Boston GuitarFest, Concurso Internacional de les Corts para Joves Intèrpretes in Barcelona, Concurso Internazionale Di Gargnano, and Certamen Internacional Luys Milan de Guitarra in Valencia. For his promotion, interpretation and performance of Spanish music, he was nominated for the 2011 Trujamán Prize, in which only three guitarists worldwide are selected annually. In 2020, the Community of Valencia, Spain nominated Levin as the Ambassador of Music, to represent the culture and music of that region.

From 2008-2011, Levin was honored as a Fulbright Scholar as well as grant awards from the Program for Cultural Cooperation Fellowship (promoting cultural understanding between Spain and the United States) and the Kate Neal Kinley Fellowship, to research contemporary Spanish guitar repertoire in Madrid, Spain. His three-year residency resulted in a major collaboration with 30 Spanish composers spanning four generations, who each wrote works commissioned by and dedicated to Levin. In 2012, production began on a four volume encyclopedic recording project with Naxos. The first two recordings in the series, 21st Century Spanish Guitar, Volume 1 and Volume 2 have been released by Naxos to rave reviews from Classical Guitar Magazine, Soundboard, American Record Guide, and featured Recording of the Month and Recording of the Year awards from Music-Web International. In November 2017, Naxos released Volume 3 of the series, with six world premieres of solo works dedicated to Levin, including pieces by three of Spain's most renowned composers, Antón García Abril, Leonardo Balada, and Cristobal Halffter, plus three works by rising composers Eduardo Morales-Caso, Laura Vega, and José Luis Greco. Volume four was released on the Frameworks Record Label in August 2021 with works by Morales-Caso, Brotons, Balada, Muñiz, and J.L Turina. It reached no.1 on the Billboard Traditional Classical Albums Chart. Adam Levin as a member of the guitar trio, The Great Necks, released an album on the Frameworks label with original arrangements by Sibelius, Bach, Marqués, Villa-Lobos, and Scriabin. Adam released an album in 2019 with his duo partner and violinist, William Knuth, called Wild Dance (Naxos Label). This is the first of three volumes of arrangements by guitarist/arranger, Gregg Nestor. Vol. 1 showcases works by Foss, Szymanowski, Gershwin, Ravel, Ponce, and Korngold. Both the trio and duo albums reached the top ten on the Traditional Classical Billboard Chart.

Levin's critically acclaimed discography also includes his debut album, *In the Beginning* [ALR, 2009], *Music from Out of Time* [La Comunidad de Madrid, 2010], and *Fuego de la Luna* [Verso, 2011], the latter showcasing the complete guitar works of Spanish-Cuban composer Eduardo Morales-Caso, a composer whose music Levin has championed since the launch of his career.

An avid chamber musician, Levin has performed with orchestra, string quartet, and various instrumental and vocal duo combinations. His chamber ensemble, Duo Sonidos ([www.duosonidos.com](http://www.duosonidos.com)), has been celebrated for bringing a fresh interpretation of chamber music to wide-ranging audiences across the globe while expanding the repertoire for violin and guitar through new commissions. They will feature newly commissioned works by Brazilian composers Egberto Gismonti, Clarice Assad, Sergio Assad, and João Luiz in 2023. Adam is also a member of The Great Necks Guitar Trio ([www.thegreatnecks.com](http://www.thegreatnecks.com)) with guitarists, Matthew Rohde and Scott Borg. Together they are exploring previously unthinkable orchestral works on three guitars. And, finally, Adam's newest musical partnership is with virtuoso Israeli mandolinist, Jacob Reuven ([www.duomantar.com](http://www.duomantar.com)). Together, they explore original and arranged Israeli music. Their album, *Music from the Promised Land* (Naxos, 2021) reached No.1 on the Billboard Traditional Classical Album Chart. In 2022 and 2023, they will premiere newly commissioned double concertos by Israeli composers Avner Dorman, Ziv Cojocar, and Ittai Rosenbaum. They will also be performing world-premiere arrangements of Piazzolla's *Seasons* as well as commissioning several composers to compose new *Seasons*. Duo Mantar and The Great Necks Guitar Trio will team up to perform Beethoven's monumental Violin Concerto for mandolin and guitar trio, followed by a revolutionary and fresh arrangement of Beethoven's *Grosse Fuga* for three guitars.

As an ambassador of the guitar, Mr Levin is dedicated to sharing the guitar in underserved and unconventional spaces. He has raised money for hurricane victims and was awarded the Albert Schweitzer Fellowship to conduct hundreds of hours of innovative community work in Boston public schools, prisons, and rehabilitation centers. Demonstrating his long-term commitment to music advocacy, Levin founded Kithara Project ([www.kitharaproject.org](http://www.kitharaproject.org)), a non-profit organization whose mission it is to improve the lives of children and youth through the classical guitar. They currently run four year-round community-based guitar education programs in Boston, Albuquerque, and Mexico City, enrolling approximately 130 students.

A native of Chicago's North Shore, Adam holds bachelor's degrees from Northwestern University in Music Performance, Psychology, and Pre-Med. Levin completed his master's degree in guitar performance at New England Conservatory in Boston. His esteemed teachers have included Eliot Fisk, Oscar Ghiglia, Gabriel Estarellas, Anne Waller, Mark Maxwell, and Paul Henry. Adam faculty-in-residence at Boston Guitarfest, professor of guitar at the University of Rhode Island and UMass Boston. Levin also serves as artistic director of the annual University of Rhode Island Guitar Festival

([www.uriguitarfestival.org](http://www.uriguitarfestival.org)) and the Rhode Island Guitar Guild ([www.riguitarguild.org](http://www.riguitarguild.org)). Adam Levin is an Augustine Artist and performs on a guitar by luthier Stephan Connor and Dominique Field.



**William Knuth, violinist**, has earned recognition for his artistry as a solo and chamber musician and has been praised by American Record Guide for his “perfect intonation, wide range of timbre... expressive phrasing, and great sensitivity”. Mr. Knuth spent two years as a Fulbright scholar in Vienna, Austria studying at the Vienna Universitat fur Musik und darstellende Kunst. He was a featured performer multiple times for members of the United Nations Council as well as foreign ambassadors from Russia, Spain, Germany, and Austria. He is currently on faculty at the Syracuse University Setnor School of Music

As a member of Duo Sonidos with guitarist Adam Levin, Knuth has performed extensively throughout the United States, Europe, Canary Islands and South America. In 2010, Knuth and Levin released their debut album Duo Sonidos and subsequently were awarded First Prize at the 2010 Luys Milan International Chamber Music Competition in Valencia, Spain. Julian Haylock of BBC Music Magazine chose Duo Sonidos as the “BBC Top Choice US Release Album” when he wrote: “Duo Sonidos plays with a loose-limbed, easy virtuoso ‘cool’ and

beguiling tonal warmth that combines laid back intuitiveness with classical sophistication...stunning performances.”

Recent concerts in the US have included a debut at Lincoln Center Alice Tully Hall, performances in New York’s Carnegie Hall, Brooklyn Academy of Music, Fundacao Oscar Americano Sao Paulo, Columbia University’s Miller Theater, Boston’s Jordan Hall, Boston Symphony Hall, Harvard Sanders Theater, Boston WGBH Radio, Chicago WFMT Radio, WCNY Radio, NPR Radio, Mayne Stage Chicago, guest solo appearances with the Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra, Syracuse Symphony Orchestra, the Boston International Guitarfest, and ensemble work with Discovery Ensemble, Ensemble Signal, Boston Philharmonic Orchestra, Harvard Group for New Music, IMPULS Festival Austria, AIMS Festival Orchestra Graz, June in Buffalo festival, and the Ojai Festival. Special projects have included collaborations with Steve Reich, Kaija Saariaho, Salvador Brotons, Eduardo Morales-Caso, Jorge Muniz, Phillip Glass, Julia Wolfe, David Lang, Lukas Foss, Norah Jones, Radiohead’s Jonny Greenwood, Goldfrapp, David Byrne, and Jon Brion.

William holds a MM degree from the New England Conservatory of Music where he studied violin with Nicholas Kitchen of the Borromeo Quartet and Chamber Music with Eliot Fisk and Paul Biss, a Fulbright certificate for work with Ernst Kovacic at the Vienna University of Music and Performing Arts, and a BM from the Eastman School of Music where he was a student of Lynn Blakeslee. Knuth is currently an Assistant Professor of Violin and Chamber Music and String Area Coordinator at the Syracuse University Setnor School of Music.

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## CRITICAL ACCLAIM

“Duo Sonidos plays with a loose-limbed, easy virtuoso ‘cool’ and beguiling tonal warmth that combines laid back intuitiveness with classical sophistication... stunning performances from Duo Sonidos.”

– *Julian Haylock, BBC Music Magazine, “US Choice”*

“Knuth plays violin with perfect intonation, a wide range of timbre, sprightly rhythm, expressive phrasing, and great sensitivity. He never overwhelms his partner...and his affinity for this music is ideal. Levin is every bit as fine. This is exquisite music-making... an exciting discovery, recommended to all lovers of great chamber music playing.”

- *Kenneth Keaton, American Record Guide*

“At times relaxed and lyrical, at others fiery and exuberant, their playing reminds me so very much of a classically oriented Grappelli-Reinhardt collaboration. Both musicians involved are evidently highly trained virtuosos, but luckily for us, they don’t let that training get in the way of their sheer enjoyment of this material... Duo Sonidos plays with exactly the right balance of elegance and élan, never once falling into cheap showmanship for its own sake. These are really dedicated musicians who want people to enjoy what they’re doing, yet refuse to lower their standards in order to broaden that audience... an absolute gem.”

-- *Lynn René Bayley, Fanfare Magazine*

"Alternating between fiery, passionate, and beautifully melodic... Knuth provides the fire with a virtuoso performance on violin, Levin's guitar practically lights up the theatre with passion when he plays... Together, they have a wonderful sound."

- *Stephanie Sirovatka-Marshall, University of Wisconsin - Parkside*