

The Trans-Tasman Piano Duo was in town Sunday, playing to a large audience in the fourth **Tauranga Musica** concert at Graham Young Theater.

As all who ever attempted a Piano Duet are aware, putting 4 Hands to One Piano is full of pitfalls.

Yet most composers wrote for this configuration. Creating a symphony in your living room just takes two players of superb skill and coordination.

We heard two such players on Sunday. **Katherine Austin** is head of Piano Studies at Waikato Conservatorium; and **Glenn Riddle** is similarly Lecturer in Keyboard at Melbourne.

We've read much of how the young Mozart wrote Duo Sonatas for himself and sister Nannerl to wow the heads of Europe. Our visiting Duo gave a fine example of what that must have been like.

Later Franz Schubert composed his beautiful *Fminor Fantasie* as a teaching tool for the young Countess Caroline Esterhazy, to whom he communicated in a special way.

Emulating a large orchestra on one piano was demonstrated in two movements of Stravinsky's sad ballet *Petrouchka*, about which Miss Austin helped our audience by recounting her own childhood listening experience.

Six youthful duos from the brilliant pianist Sergei Rachmaninoff included a dazzling *Scherzo*, always a crowd pleaser.

But what had the entire audience swaying in sympathy was a setting of Tchaikovsky's *Waltz of the Flowers*. This was Moscow theater now made living room piano now become another wonderful ending from Tauranga Musica.

The next concert of the series is 24 September at Tauranga Park Auditorium, Pyes Pa.

-- Prof Barry Vercoe Mus D.