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FULL-LENGTH VERSION (842 words)

Dutt Campbell Duo

With an energizing and adventurous repertoire focusing on both new works by living composers and contemporary classics, the Dutt Campbell Duo unites the talents and vision of two prominent figures in today's new music: violist Hank Dutt, who performed with the three-time Grammy-winning Kronos Quartet for nearly 50 years; and pianist Kate Campbell, a current member of the groundbreaking San Francisco Contemporary Music Players, the West Coast's largest and longest-running new music ensemble.

Given their focus on contemporary works, it's fitting that Campbell and Dutt were introduced to each other (in 2024) by a noted composer—Mary Kouyoumdjian, whose alternately elegiac and turbulent *Children of Conflict: A Boy with a Makeshift Toy* for viola and piano has become a flagship work for the duo. Campbell and Dutt also workshoped their musical partnership early on with a movement from a Kronos-commissioned work from Dutt's past, *Sunjata's Time* by Malian balafon virtuoso and Trio Da Kali member Fodé Lassana Diabaté. Dutt rearranged the piece from the original solo balafon and string quartet version to the duo's instrumentation, noting, "I think it works very well, because the piano, being a percussion instrument, brings a sparkle and effervescent quality to the work. And it's a lot of fun to play."

The duo is also committed to commissioning new works, including a forthcoming piece from Kouyoumdjian and compositions by Missy Mazzoli and former Kronos cellist Joan Jeanrenaud. Dutt and Campbell are also ardent supporters of New York's nonprofit Luna Composition Lab and look forward to premiering a new composition by a Luna Lab alum and to performing additional works by Luna Lab mentors and alumni. Looking to the immediate precursors and influences of many of today's leading composers, Dutt and Campbell also offer their own singular interpretations of now-classic works by the likes of Meredith Monk, Philip Glass, Toru Takemitsu, and Benjamin Britten.

On the origins of the duo, Dutt commented, "I was investigating new avenues of playing after leaving Kronos. Kate and I had each played a work by Mary Kouyoumdjian. Mary suggested I contact Kate, because she'd had a wonderful experience with her. She also thought Kate and I would work well together, both musically and as people. And she was right—our first session together was delightful, and we could immediately sense so much promise. And as we've continued working together, it's become more and more exciting and rewarding."

"Everything happened pretty fast," Campbell concurred. "We read once a week over the summer of 2025, and by November, we were on the road performing."

After having spent years performing in larger ensembles, both Campbell and Dutt appreciate the special qualities and opportunities of this new duo. In Campbell's words: "I'm a longtime admirer of Hank's playing. Just to hear that sound and be participating in it is very, very special for me. Also, in this duo, we have a generous amount of rehearsal time and can do very deep, detailed work on a small amount of music. Sometimes we'll have someone Zooming in with us, and we might focus on just 20 measures of music. We get very granular and into the flow of it, and that's wonderful."

Elaborating on the role of collaborations beyond the duo, Dutt noted, "I also enjoy having composers and other performers sit in. When we were readying ourselves for our first concerts, we had the pleasure of Joan Jeanrenaud stepping in on Zoom to give us feedback, as well as [former Kronos members] John Sherba, Sunny Yang, and Jennifer Culp. So we had all this input, which means more to think about, and other ways to look at the music before we ultimately choose how we're going to do it."

"But also," Dutt concluded, "the two of us just work very well together."

About Hank Dutt

The violist of the world-renowned Kronos Quartet for most of his five-decade career, Hank Dutt has been hailed for "exquisitely songlike phrasing" (*New York Times*) and "one of the most humanly haunting viola sounds around" (*Santa Barbara News Press*). He has appeared on more than 70 recordings (including three Grammy Award-winners), premiered more than 1,100 new compositions and arrangements, and taken the stages of the world's most revered concert venues and festivals thousands of times. He has also shared in numerous other national and international honors, including the Polar Music Prize, Avery Fisher Award, and "Musicians of the Year" from *Musical America*.

About Kate Campbell

Hailed as a "brilliant pianist" (*Financial Times*) and "an artist of remarkable commitment and insight" (*San Francisco Classical Voice*), Kate Campbell has been the pianist of the San Francisco Contemporary Music Players for 12 years and regularly collaborates with other new music ensembles like After Everything and Eco Ensemble. Her recent honors include a Drescher Ensemble Artist Residency, a distinguished fellowship at Hambidge Center for the Creative Arts, and a residency at Avaloch Farm Music Institute. Her recorded work can be heard on New Amsterdam Records, Pinna Records, and New Focus Recordings. She currently serves on the collegiate faculty of the San Francisco Conservatory of Music.

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