



DUET *for* SOLO PIANO

EVE EGOYAN

A FILM BY
SU RYNARD

Duet for Solo Piano
Synopsis

An intimate portrait of a remarkable artist Eve Egoyan.

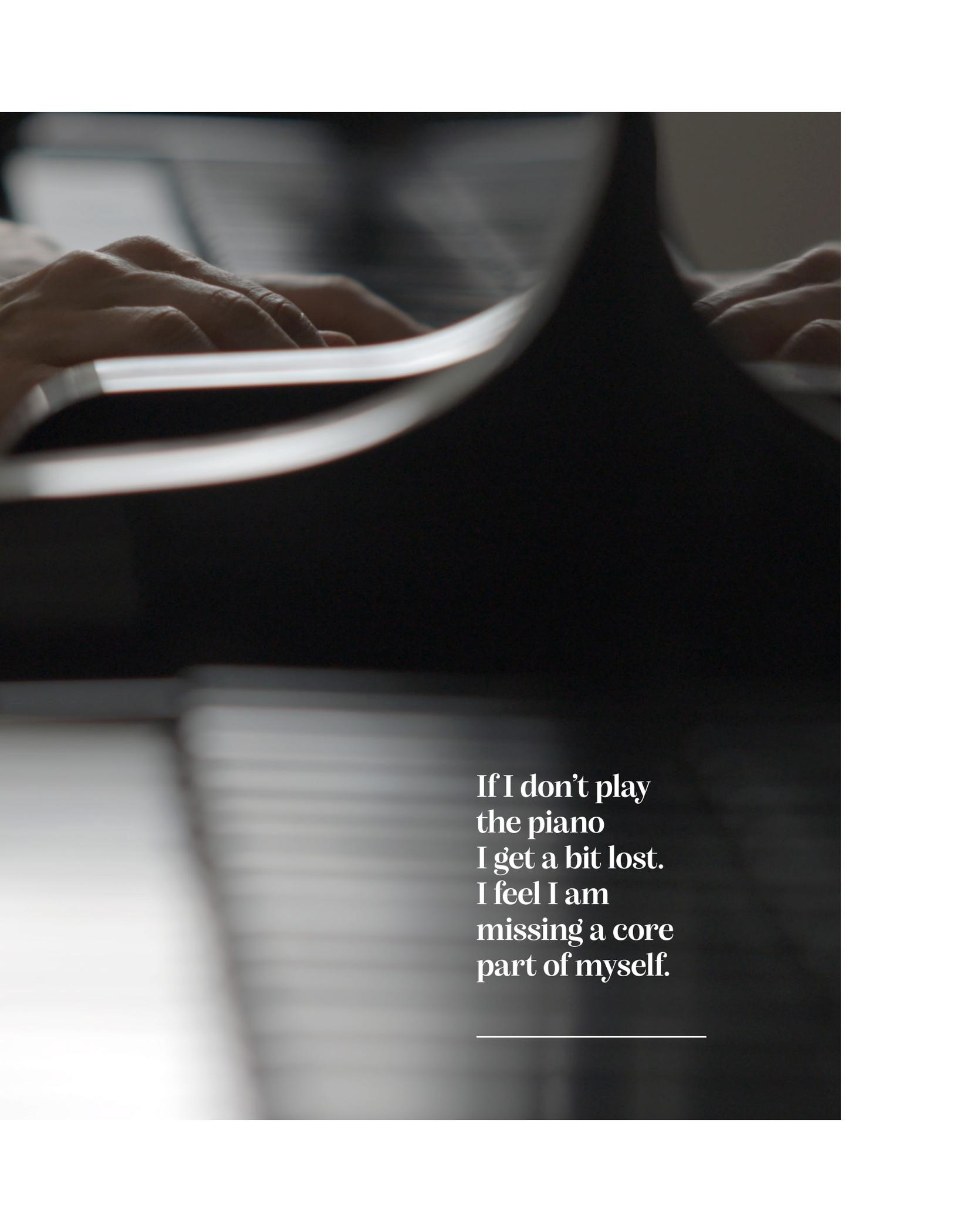
DOCUMENTARY
72 minutes
2019 CANADA

Eve Egoyan is one of the world's most sought-after interpreters of contemporary new music and is recognized as being one of the 25 greatest Canadian classical pianists of all time.

Duet For Solo Piano unfolds over a one-year period as Eve defies the traditional conceptions of piano and pianist on a journey to find her own voice. Born in Victoria B.C. Canada, Eve is the daughter of Armenian artists who emigrated from Cairo, and sister of filmmaker Atom. The film weaves the past and present, the personal with musical moments, exploring the events that have shaped Eve and left their mark on who she is today.

Beautifully photographed and crisply edited, the film offers rare insight into the creative process and the complexity of developing new work that pushes the boundaries of art, instrument and self.

Duet For Solo Piano features collaborators and composers Nicole Lizée, John Oswald, David Rokeby, Linda Catlin Smith and Michael Snow.



If I don't play
the piano
I get a bit lost.
I feel I am
missing a core
part of myself.

I've known Eve for more than twenty years.

Our collaboration began when I received a very brief email from Eve, subject heading: short film? She was about to embark on year long process of developing a program of work by five composers, as well as create a new piece of her own.

The first time we sat down there was no camera, simply an audio tape recorder. What emerged was a person whose self and art were so deeply intertwined it was hard to decipher where one stopped and the other began.

Eve expressed the need to erase the act of musical interpretation and the imprint of composers she carried in her body. She shared her need to find an original voice, so much so she was literally re-inventing the piano (via the use of a Disklavier — an acoustic piano with an electronic interface) and the actual musical notation used to record her compositions.

Eve has practiced almost every day of her life since she was a child. She has a dedicated and loving family yet a complex and conflicted relationship to her past. Her talents won her scholarships. She studied at the most prestigious institutes abroad, yet she was robbed of a diploma when she confronted the power and predatory behaviour that can exist in the private piano room.

We filmed for a period of a year. We talked. We documented rehearsals. We worked at Eve's studio and in her home. My initial goal was to combine vérité style reality-based filming and cinematic vignettes. The aim was to capture moments that would reveal a side of the artist and the artistry normally hidden from view. This did indeed happen, yet so much more began to emerge.

The "show" Eve developed would disrupt any expectation that a pianist walks on stage sits down and plays. The compositions involved glitched film projection (Nicole Lizée) extended musical moments (John Oswald), whispered vocalizations (Linda Catlin-Smith), and performing in the theatrical sense of the word.

The first time we sat down there was no camera, simply an audio tape recorder.

This is where it gets interesting. Egoyan is an intensely private person, she does not naturally take to the stage, she is a reluctant performer, she does not like technology. Her new work involved an extraordinary push outside her comfort zone. Throughout rehearsals she teetered on the knife edge of vulnerability and virtuosity with a ferocious desire to create. She openly developed an intense trust with her collaborators who created the show with her, namely dramaturge Joanne McIntyre, technical producer Phil Strong, set and costume designer Cheryl Lalonde, lighting designer Simon Rossiter as well as the documentary film crew and myself.

The title of the film *Duet for Solo Piano* is taken from the title of Eve's composition that she developed during the course of filming. By using a Disklavier, Eve created a "ghost" piano – a kind of dialogue between the real piano and its virtual self. It is also here, in the space between what a piano can do and what she wished it could do, Eve truly finds her voice.

What I learned in my journey to represent another, was that to know Eve, to understand her, was to meet her in the place where she is her most intimate self. The piano is her landscape, her safe place, her true home. Paradoxically when she is inside her music, she is truly revealed.

I am grateful to my key collaborators, cinematographer John Price, editor Caroline Christie and sound designer Phil Strong. These people are incredible artists in their own right to whom I am deeply indebted.

Su Rynard

I wanted to explore
the space between
what a piano can do
and what I wish
a piano could do.



Duet for Solo Piano
Credits

Key Credits

Music

Format

UHD / DCP
16: 9 / 1.78:1
5.1 sound
72 minutes, 2019 CANADA

Website

DuetforSoloTheFilm.com

Trailer

<https://vimeo.com/331064109>

Private link preview screener

<https://vimeo.com/331917014>
Password: Duet

Interactive

SoloForDuet.ca

Produced in Toronto, Canada

Produced and Directed

Su Rynard

Cinematographer

John Price

Editor

Caroline Christie, CCE

Sound Design and Mix

Phil Strong

Location Sound

Mike Filippov
Jason Milligan
Ryan Cox

Title Design

Megan Oldfield,
Field Design Office

Thought and Desire

Linda Catlin Smith

Homonymy

John Oswald
Published by PITCH

EVE

Michael Snow

David Lynch Études

Nicole Lizée

Surface Tension

Eve Egoyan and David Rokeby

Duet for Solo Piano

by Eve Egoyan

Dream

Performed by Armenag
Shah-Mouradian (tenor) and
Komitas Vartabed (piano) 1912

My grandmother
would not talk
about the genocide,
but she would sing
Armenian songs
to my father,
who would tell us
her story and cry.



Director Bio

Su Rynard

SuRynard.com
TheMessengerDoc.com
DuetforSoloTheFilm.com
SoloForDuet.ca

Filmmaker Su Rynard's diverse body of work spans nearly three decades and embraces dramatic, documentary, experimental, and media installation. Challenging and enigmatic, her fifth feature film *Duet for Solo Piano* is intimate portrait of contemporary Canadian pianist Eve Egoyan.

Her documentary *The Messenger* (2015) received ten awards, notably a Top Ten Audience Choice Award at Toronto's Hot Docs and the Buffon Prize from the Pariscience International Film Festival. Her dramatic feature *Kardia* (2006) was awarded the prestigious Alfred P. Sloan Feature Film Prize at the Hamptons Film Festival. Rynard recently directed the television documentary *Mosquito* (2017), produced for Discovery US by YAP films, narrated by Oscar nominated Jeremy Renner. Her first feature *Dream Machine* (2000) was a production with The National Film Board of Canada. Rynard's films have screened in festivals around the world including the Toronto International Film Festival, Reykjavik Film Festival, and the Rotterdam International Film Festival.

Su Rynard is a graduate of the Ontario College of Art and was a director resident at the Canadian Film Centre. Her work is often inspired by science, ecology, and the human relationship to the natural world. Her media art works have been exhibited at the MOMA in New York and the National Gallery of Canada. She is currently directing a cinematic science and environmental documentary on the loss of coral reefs.

Subject Bio

Eve Egoyan

EveEgoyan.com

Winner of numerous awards and accolades, Eve Egoyan is an artist whose medium is the piano. Her intense focus, command of the instrument, insightful interpretations, and unique programmes welcome audiences into unknown territory. Her recordings have received accolades including "Best Classical", The Globe and Mail (1999), for her first solo CD, and one of "Ten Top" classical discs, The New Yorker magazine (2009), and "Top Classical Disc of the Year", The Globe and Mail (2011). Eve's recent releases include *Thought and Desire*, works by Linda Catlin Smith, and *De Puro Amor / En Amor Duro*, Maria de Alvear's epic diptych. Recent touring includes solo recitals at the following festivals: Transart, Italy; Klangspuren, Austria; the Huddersfield Festival, U.K.; and the Modulus Festival, Vancouver, Canada. Eve's most recent project, *Solo for Duet*, is a deeply integrated virtuosic mix of sound, image, and unspoken narrative challenging traditional conceptions of piano and pianist which is currently touring internationally. Eve was selected as one of the 25 greatest Canadian classical pianists of all time by the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation.

Cinematographer

John Price

John Price's cinematographic work has screened at TIFF, IFFR, IDFA, SXSW, the Berlinale, CPH:DOX, NYFF, Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, The Venice Biennale, Punto de Vista and many others. Active as a cinematographer on a range of projects, Price maintains a vital practice of analog filmmaking often shooting with vintage motion picture cameras. Primarily interested in humanist documentary films with a social conscience, he has extensive experience shooting in extreme climates from the Canadian Arctic to the Atacama Desert. A Canadian Screen Award winner for Best Cinematography in a Feature Documentary, recent credits include: Liz Marshall's *Meat the Future* and Alan Zweig's *There is a House Here*.

Editor

Caroline Christie

Toronto-based editor Caroline Christie has worked in a variety of cinematic forms including feature documentaries, scripted and experimental short films, feature films, TV drama and 3D IMAX. Her stylish, award winning work has been screened widely around the globe. Recent dramatic film credits include Terrance Odette's *Fall*, Peter Lynch's *Birdland* and Mike Slee's *Amazon Adventure* and in documentary, Liz Marshalls *Meat the Future* and Alison Reid's *The Woman who Loves Giraffes*.

Sound Designer

Philip Strong

Phil Strong is an award-winning composer and sound designer based in Toronto, Canada. He works in film, dance, theatre, musical performance, art installation and educational outreach. In Canada he has earned a Gemini for Best Original Musical Score, a nomination for Best Sound and a Golden Sheaf Award. He has composed many feature film sound tracks, including Director Su Rynard's film *The Messenger*. Since studying at the Banff Centre For The Arts, Phil has received numerous commissions and has been the principal composer for Christopher House and Toronto Dance creating soundtracks for ten major dance productions and earning the first ever Dora Mavor Moore Award for Outstanding Music in Dance *Timecode Break*. Most recently he has been nominated again with outstanding music and design for *Eunoia*; Denise Fujiwara's masterpiece based on Christian Bök's seminal book of poetry.

Solo for Duet
Interactive Project

**I asked for this.
Change.
Just need to erase...
Everything.**



Solo for Duet
Interactive Project

A single emerging portrait tenuously captures the notion of erasure.

SoloForDuet.ca

SoloForDuet.ca interactive is a companion piece to the feature documentary *Duet for Solo Piano*, wherein Filmmaker Su Rynard followed Eve over the course of a year to chronicle the creative process of this extraordinary artist.

This interactive work explores Eve's desire to create a clean slate, to "erase herself" artistically, in order to discover a new voice. By using a Disklavier, an acoustic piano with a computer interface, Eve is able to create a "ghost" piano — a dialogue between the real piano and its virtual self. In the process she searches for her own voice.

Eve is a reluctant performer and fiercely private. To echo this sentiment, sections of the text are obscured by diacritic characters, only revealing themselves through the act of scrolling. The animations used throughout the piece only ever hint at the objects they represent, never fully revealing themselves. A single emerging portrait that tenuously resolves or vanishes captures the notion of erasure.

A deeply integrated virtuosic mix of sound, image, and unspoken narrative challenging traditional conceptions of piano and pianist. SoloforDuet.ca was created by media artist and filmmaker Su Rynard and Alex Wittholz, Helios Design Labs—a multi-disciplinary design studio specialized in the creation of unique interactive experiences.

We acknowledge the support of the Canada Council for the Arts.
Nous remercions le Conseil des arts du Canada de son soutien.

Solo for Duet
Interactive Project

Credits
Interactive Team

Film Crew

Performed by
Eve Egoyan

SoloForDuet.ca

Interactive Directors
Su Rynard
Alex Wittholz

Interactive Producer
Heather Grieve

Lead Developer
Dan Sundry

Developer
Jen Saxena

Illustrators
Felix M. Wittholz
Jamie Bennett

Interactive Studio
Helios Design Labs
HeliosDesignLabs.com

Filmmaker
Su Rynard

Cinematographer
John Price

Editor
Caroline Christie, CCE

Sound Design and Mix
Phil Strong

Location Sound
Mike Filippov
Jason Milligan
Ryan Cox

Composers
Eve Egoyan
Nicole Lizée
John Oswald
Linda Catlin Smith
David Rokeby
Michael Snow

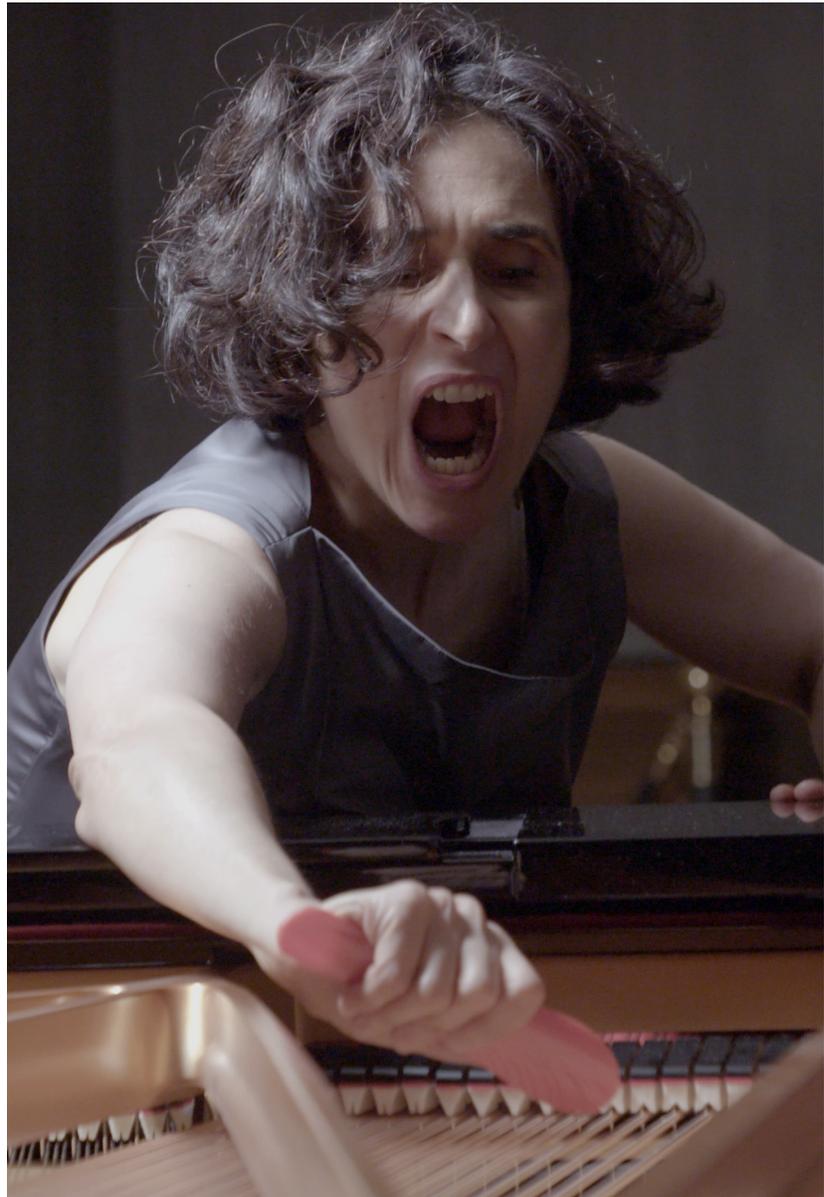
Contact

Su Rynard
+1 416 705 4732
surnard@gmail.com

V tape
+1 416 351 1317
distribution@vtape.org

V tape
www.vtape.org

SuRynard.com
TheMessengerDoc.com
DuetforSoloTheFilm.com
SoloForDuet.ca



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an Ontario government agency
un organisme de gouvernement de l'Ontario