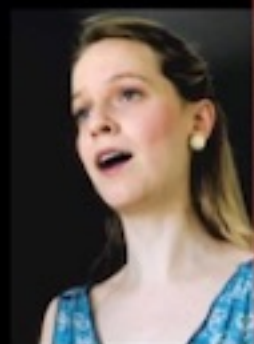


*what listeners have been saying
about*



CURT CACIOPPO



Songs With & Without Words



Mary Bonhag, soprano
Paul Orgel, pianist

Listener response to SONGS WITH & WITHOUT WORDS by Curt Cacioppo
Mary Bonhag, soprano / Paul Orgel, pianist

The cycle is truly stunning. The soprano is excellent. She sang with such feeling, as if she might be the bereaved mother herself. Beautifully and elegantly written and wonderfully presented by Paul Orgel and Mary Bonhag.

In this dire time when so many children are being lost to parents and the rest of us human beings, your gift of this song cycle is especially meaningful. Thank you so much for sharing it.

This is absolutely AMAZING! Exquisite, serene, well-balanced, haunting reduction to core sounds and sentiments, dramatic without being boisterous, classical beauty in a not-so-classical language, great lyrics, great piano, wonderful voice, deeply moving interview! Congratulations! I posted a brief comment on Youtube.

I've been listening, intently, to "Songs With & Without Words." They arise at the crossroads of intellect and affect, being simultaneously fascinating (in their lucid complexity) and deeply moving (in their uncompromising search for something that is always not quite there but always felt as very much there).

We were both very moved by this recording. We loved all eight compositions and the superb performances by Paul and Mary. We listen to a lot of vocal music, and I must say that among sopranos who perform contemporary works, Mary was outstanding: "that girl can sing!" Wonderful voice texture and control, technical execution, and "deep dive" interpretation. And, of course, Paul is amazing.

Your 'Lieder mit und ohne Wörter' -- it's a beautiful work, beautifully performed. Mary Bonhag is really impressive (particularly that stretch in her last song -- tough to sound lovely and with clear diction in that high tessitura, but she manages it like a champ).

Just donned my headphones and listened to the 3 instrumental works. They are gorgeous! The performance by Paul Orgel was totally moving. It just flows. Lastly the recording done by engineer Dan Rome is pristine. Bravi to all. Tomorrow on to the songs with vocals.

I haven't heard such a poignant dirge in a long time. Curt Cacioppo's music, which I had previously known mainly from his string quartets, is neither shrill nor pathetic, but just as dignified and loving as the words Paul Orgel finds in the [YouTube] interview about his late son. Mary Bonhag has a very beautiful and sure-footed voice.

Masterwork.
Elegy on a grand scale.

...performed with intensity and deep commitment which brought me almost to tears several times. The score is amazing.

The piano-vocal cycle is very beautiful, marvelous! Bravo!!!!

...listening to this many times over, it is so rich in its expression. In a sleepless night it brought me into a poetic world.

Beautiful voice, piano, words, compositions and recording.

This is such a powerful homage. I hope that this recording gets the wide audience it deserves.

A heart-rending elegy.
I couldn't help but wonder how Paul Orgel could play this without lapsing into tears.

This is wonderful, Curt.
Who is your publisher?

I finally had the opportunity of quiet today to listen to these pieces; the whole cycle is really marvelous - very moving. I hope that it has many performances.

Listener response to SONGS WITH & WITHOUT WORDS continued

Despite the pain that Paul must have been reliving in performing the cycle, I sensed from his inspired playing that the music was also helping him to heal. Among the many things in the cycle that impressed me, "Useless Things" really knocked my socks off. Seems that you've done for blues in "classical" music what Monk and Coltrane did for it in jazz.

Fantastic!

Excellent!

The music is a profoundly moving elegy. As I listened to Paul's beautiful performance, I kept wondering how he could play on without breaking down in tears. It was heartbreaking. I know that I couldn't do it if I ever found myself in his shoes.

Incredibly moving.

Tremendous. Really tremendous. She's a fantastic singer. His playing is wonderful. Follow-up 1: Listened again. "God will pity us" and "Father sounds the chord." Devastating. Overwhelming outpourings. The conclusion also conveys disintegration in a gripping stranglehold. Wow.

This is amazing!

Follow-up 2: Listening to it again after quite some time. It's better than before. Truly, a masterpiece of intense content. More satisfying than before. Just needs multiple listenings. Deep, deep work. Wonderful performance.

...an incredible piece!

Follow-up 3: your recent song cycle really holds up. This is a wonderful, powerful work, rendered so amazingly well. Tremendous music.

Yes, definitely a major masterpiece. No doubts at all. Even more satisfying and compelling than I remember. Requires multiple listenings, and each one gets better.

Listening - spellbinding!

Follow-up 4 (having requested the score):

I read through it! Amazing. Also it suggests haunting moments of searing tonal stresses and possible resolutions and then back into extremely sensuous and less functional tonality. But not Scriabin, rather English or maybe almost extreme jazz harmonies without actually calling any of these up. And more. The E-flat minor piece is pure lament. The eruptions after the G major chords - I could not stop playing them over and over again. Diminished broken triads a half step lower each time, but an octave higher. Wow.

Powerful and beautiful set.

It is a great set of pieces.

Follow-up 5: Deeply gripping. Large-scale lament. Fantastic performances.

Wow. Powerful
...and painful.

"Congratulations" is not the right word for music like this, but it is great that this performance was recorded and released. I hope that the cycle gets many performances. It is a gorgeous and profoundly moving set of songs!

Beautiful music and recording. Enjoyed the personal text which is reflected perfectly in the settings. I greatly admire the vocal writing.

This is your 'Kindertotenlied', Curt, in the same way that "(I, madly struggling, cry)" was your "General Booth"!