

MP3 — CLASSICAL MUSIC

LOVE SONGS — Words & Music by John Thrower
Kassandra Dimopoulou/Soprano, Momoko Kamiya & Bogdan Bacanu/Marimbas

LOVE SONGS was composed and dedicated to Bogdan Bacanu and Momoko Kamiya and was written in a very short time period before the recording of the album RHYTHMS OF LIFE (www.ClassicConcert.com). It was an obvious attempt to mix the ambient of popular music into the area of classical music.

This is all in accordance with the ideas of 'classic fusion' which I have explained so often, that I am almost getting tired of doing so. But the strange thing is that there are so many classical and modern thinking musicians who have no idea or even sympathy for such ideas, and yet they do their Bach, Mozart and the rest, not being aware that indeed, such composers were themselves 'classic-fusionists'.

Here in LOVE SONGS the texts, melodic lines, harmonies and inevitably, the form of the pieces is completely simply and straightforward, Here we have the influence of folk music, pop music, 50's jazz balads, even dance-floor (techno) with a rap section. You may notice that at times it is not made for a popular singer, or indeed two marimba players who may know little about their instruments. This is the 'classic-fusion' aspect, for this music is written for serious musicians and not amateurs.

What on earth did the composer have in mind? You see, we have come so far away from the ideals of the classical composers of the 18th and 19th centuries that I feel obliged to actually explain what I did.

Let's start with Franz Schubert. Did you know that he wrote about 600 songs? Many of Schubert's most famous songs are actually vocal/piano arrangements of german folk songs. Songs that they were singing in the fields and in the streets in those days — songs that were well known. Schubert felt no shame or even the need to explain his love of folk music, for it was, if not common practice, generally accepted.

But just a minute. Didn't Johann Sebastian Bach basically do the same thing in his sunday Cantatas. All the themes and texts were clerical music, already known by the congregation, Nothing new and original here... accept that they went through the hands of one of the greatest and perhaps THE greatest master of all time.

What I am trying to point out, is that we, in modern <contemporary> have gotten out of the habit of doing this thing. Probably the last reference to folk music from any serious composer was Bartok. Of course, we should not forget to mention Ravel, Copland, Bernstein, Chavez, Poulenc, Villa Lobos and many othes.

It is certainly true that George Gershwin wrote hundreds of 'folk-songs'. Thank heavens he wrote the Rhapsody in Blue and American in Paris, otherwise, maybe the modern classical world wouldn't even take him seriously today. Just a broadway song writer.

But he did write those <broadway> 'folk songs' that we all know and love. For me, Gershwin is a 'classic fusionist', or a composer who didn't hesitate to use the common material of his time and incorporate it into a classical setting. I hope you are slowly getting the message.

This is the idea of LOVE SONGS. Blatant, obvious popular song influence in text, form and intent. Just like Schubert, Bach or Gershwin was doing *back then*. Of course, today — this kind of behaviour is not allowed in the modern music scene. There is little place for... god forbid — love. How can we even allow ourselves to express love in contemporary music? Can you tell me how to express love in new atonality? If it can be done I would be interested to find out.

I would like to thank Bogdan Bacanu and Momoko Kamiya, two of the greatest Marimba artists living today for not having any reservations to play this music. In fact — I think they did like it, And I think it does take some courage to do this. I thank also Kassandra — for trying to find the mixture between popular and classical, operatic and jazz — it's not easy... in fact, if you think it is, just try it.

LOVE SONGS should be in the end, categorized as lighter music. I also have written more challenging music for Soprano and two Marimbas (JUST ONE WORLD), but I do hope that the idea that lighter music should find it's place in modern composition, is not lost.