

# SUSAN BOTTI

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As composer and performer, Susan Botti's eclectic background and experiences are reflected in her music. Theatre and the visual arts play a formative role in the aesthetic of her work. Her musical explorations have encompassed traditional, improvisational and non-classical composition and singing styles.

Botti is the recipient of numerous grants and awards, including the Goddard Lieberman Fellowship from the American Academy of Arts and Letters, a Guggenheim Fellowship, and the Rome Prize; and grants from the National Endowment for the Arts, the Aaron Copland Fund, NY Foundation for the Arts, The Greenwall Foundation, The Jerome Foundation, ASCAP, and the Foundation for Contemporary Performance Arts. She was the third Daniel R. Lewis Young Composer Fellow with the Cleveland Orchestra, premiering her works *Impetuosity* (conducted by Roberto Abbado), and *Translucence* (conducted by Music Director, Franz Welser-Möst).

Her *EchoTempo* (for Soprano, Percussion & Orchestra) was commissioned and premiered by Maestro Kurt Masur and the New York Philharmonic (with Botti and Christopher Lamb as soloists). The European premiere of *EchoTempo* (with the same soloists under Maestro Gunther Herbig) occurred soon after in the "Music im 21. Jahrhundert" Festival in Saarbrücken, Germany. Other performances of this work include Ms. Botti as soloist with Maestro H.K. Gruber and the NPS Radio Orchestra in Utrecht, Holland, with percussionist Peter Prommel. A commission from the Orpheus Chamber Orchestra for solo violin and chamber orchestra, *Within Darkness*, was premiered at Carnegie Hall and The Kennedy Center, with Martha Caplin as violin soloist.

In the 2016-2017 season, Botti was Composer-in-Residence with the Alabama Symphony Orchestra (Carlos Izcaray, Music Director). They commissioned and premiered a new work for orchestra (*Glaze*), and Botti performed her *EchoTempo* and *Telaio: Desdemona* with them as well.

Botti's works for wind ensemble have met with acclaim - including *Cosmosis* (for wind ensemble, soprano soloist, and women's voices), which was commissioned by a consortium of universities, and premiered at Carnegie Hall, with conductor Michael Haithcock leading the University of Michigan wind ensemble and chorus, with the composer as soloist. Other wind ensemble pieces include *Terra Cruda*, (recorded for Naxos) and *sull'ala* (concerto for Saxophone and Wind Ensemble), with Carrie Koffman (saxophone soloist) and Glen Adsit conducting the Hartt Wind Ensemble.

A chamber music project, *Gates of Silence*, was a 3-part commission from the Blakemore Trio (Vanderbilt University) – works for violin & piano; piano trio; and piano trio plus soprano (Botti). Inspired by Virgil's *Aeneid*, it incorporates poetry by National Book Award finalist, Linda Gregerson. This poetry, *Dido Refuses to Speak*, was awarded a 2011 Pushcart Prize. *Gates of Silence* was premiered in Nashville, and at Merkin Hall in NYC. A recording of *Gates of Silence* with Botti and the Blakemore Trio was released on Albany Records, with support from the Copland Fund.

Recently premiered was *Bird Songs*, for solo soprano "in a nest of percussion" – commissioned and premiered by Lucy Shelton; and *Mangetsu* for soprano and violin – commissioned by violinist Airi Yoshioka (premiered by Botti and Yoshioka).

A recording of Botti's vocal chamber music, *listen, it's snowing*, (New World/CRI) features her operatic soliloquy, *Telaio: Desdemona* (for soprano, string quartet, harp, piano & percussion). Called "striking emotional music..." (Opera Magazine), this work was commissioned by The American Artists Series of Detroit, and has been performed in numerous venues including New York City, Taipei, Santa Fe, Atlanta, and Washington D.C.

In addition to performing her own vocal works, Botti specializes in the performance of contemporary music by composers of diverse styles, including: Gubaidulina, Crumb, Kurtág, Cage, Chihara, Pintscher, Matheson, and Partch, among others. She was featured as a composer and singer on the Los Angeles Philharmonic's Green Umbrella series in a concert honoring Steven Stucky's 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary as the LA Phil's Composer in Residence. Composer/conductor Tan Dun created several major works highlighting her vocal and theatrical talents, including his *Orchestral Theatre III: Red Forecast* for soprano and orchestra, which she premiered with the BBC Scottish Symphony and performed at Carnegie Hall with the American Composers Orchestra. Tan Dun also wrote the role of "Water" for her in his internationally renowned opera, *Marco Polo* (Sony Classical), which she premiered at the Münchener Biennale, and subsequently performed in Europe and Asia, and at the New York City Opera. She can also be heard as vocal soloist in Tan Dun's soundtrack for *The Banquet*.

A native of Cleveland, Ohio, Botti's early training included studies in music, art, and theater. She received her Bachelor of Music from the Berklee School of Music; and her Masters in Music Composition from the Manhattan School of Music. Her vocal teachers included Hilda Harris, Drew Minter, Myron McPherson, and Nancy Armstrong. Botti was an Associate Professor of Composition at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor (from 2000-2006). She is currently a member of the Composition faculty at the Manhattan School of Music in NYC (from 2006), and is an Adjunct Associate Professor at Vassar College.

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