

SUSAN BOTTI

- REVIEW EXTRACTS -

"...a haunting distillation of drama without words..." (*Lament: The Fallen City from Gates of Silence*)
Steve Smith, *The New York Times*

...Botti's *Translucence* ...sheerly beautiful score. Where others seemed intent on overwhelming, Botti persuaded with soft elegies, ethereal interludes, and a vigorous, lumbering dance, all steeped in poetry by May Swenson... vivid music..."

Zachary Lewis, *The Cleveland Plain Dealer*

"striking emotional music (*Telaio: Desdemona*) ...Botti...sang with a honeyed soprano, equally golden in declamation or in soaring tessitura...The writing for instruments is as honest and compelling as the vocal line - restrained, but exploiting the potentials with jazz elements, dissonance and much melody. This is a major piece of work in Botti's developing chamber opera canon."

Michael H. Margolin, *Opera*

"...Ms. Botti is sensitive to the texts she is setting, and her approach to *EchoTempo* covers considerable ground, from an almost whispered lyricism to virtuosic angularity..."

Allan Kozinn, *The New York Times*

"...*EchoTempo*...full of lovingly crafted sonic details that gleamed and disappeared...The singer/composer wrote the piece for her own slender voice and remarkable technique...She ably piqued the ear by blending the vocal and the percussive..."

Justin Davidson, *Newsday*

"There is something sweet about Susan Botti's *EchoTempo*...Botti is a ravishing singer – pure, playful and inventive, with a glowing voice that's absolutely even from the top to the bottom of her range...she sings achinglly in tune – not just precisely on pitch but in a special joyful zone somewhere in the heart of each note..."

Greg Sandow, *Andante*

"...it is a rare pleasure these days to encounter a young composer grappling with real emotional and psychological issues in fresh and modern terms..." (*Within Darkness*)

James Oestreich, *The New York Times*

"Botti's *Within Darkness* for solo violin and chamber orchestra, takes the paintings of Vermeer and the idea of light and its absence (shadows and dark) as inspiration. A strong sense of pulse underlies the piece, giving momentum to the music's gestures...Low flute tones and frequent slides from the strings tied the piece to the tradition of anti-nocturnes: music that finds darkness more like needles of sound than a soothing enclosure."

Philip Kennicott, *The Washington Post*

"Botti's *Translucence*... an effective study of contrasting colors and atmospheres. Botti has a real gift for textures ranging from the ethereal to the cataclysmic..."

Donald Rosenberg, *The Cleveland Plain Dealer*

"Botti is a singer-composer...*Telaio: Desdemona* is extraordinary...the results on disc are quite special and hugely entertaining."

John Story, *Fanfare*

"...Susan Botti...as both performer and composer is one of the fresher, more imaginative voices on the New York new-music scene..."

James Oestreich, *The New York Times*

"Botti's *Impetuosity* remains airborne for most of its invigorating 10 minutes. The composer...maintains a bold and fresh sense of motion in this score. Sounds fly by in a swirl, waltz gleefully about and head off on jazzy tangents. The only moment of repose is a solo for the concertmaster, who has a dandy workout before the orchestra resumes its mysterious and jaunty ride."

Donald Rosenberg, *The Cleveland Plain Dealer*

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"...When Botti is hot, she is incandescent. Her soprano sears the score, consumes it, and breathes it back as musical fire. And that's when she's singing other composers' material. When she's singing her own music, Botti is transformed from re-creator to creator of an intense, immensely emotional music...Her voice can be as sorrowful as a sob, as soft as a farewell, and as fine as a line drawn with a sharp knife on the soft skin above the heart...emotional display of the rawest and most elemental form. Her art is Dionysian, not Apollonian, and Botti is a bacchante, tearing the emotional flesh from the rigid bones of the score..."

James Leonard, *The Ann Arbor Observer*

"...Botti is a performance artist - if the term is understood to cover a complete control of gesture...Berio's *Sequenza III* and the *Attila József Fragments* of Kurtág, virtuoso masterworks...for unaccompanied solo voice, which demands the utmost concentration and variety of sound - challenges met by Botti with deceptive ease...fierce intensity and total command of her pure, cleanly produced voice"

Fred Hauptman, *Seattle Weekly*

"Botti's *Arias from Telaio: Desdemona* in which Botti used her ravishing, pure soprano – and her subtle acting skills – to create snapshots of the doomed heroine of Shakespeare's *Othello*...Both music and performance delved deep, to simple, wrenching and beautiful effect."

Susan Isaacs Nisbett, *The Ann Arbor News*

"Mr. Tan could not have asked for a more involved performance from the players (*Red Forecast*), and especially from the soprano Susan Botti, who vanquished the wide-ranging solo part"

Anthony Tommasini, *The New York Times*

"Simply as an act of concentration, the singing (in Tan Dun's *Marco Polo*) was enormously impressive, especially from...Susan Botti as Water, handling Zerbinetta-ish coloratura with ease and at one point imitating a flexatone with uncanny accuracy."

Rodney Milnes, *The London Times*

"Susan Botti...delivered the atmospheric, textless vocal part (*She Is Asleep* by John Cage) exquisitely. Ms. Botti's composition *Jabberwocky* ...effectively turned Lewis Carroll's satirical poem into a shockingly expressionistic musical narrative..."

Anthony Tommasini, *The New York Times*

"The best thing about this generally fine performance (Gubaidulina's *Homage à T.S. Eliot*) was soprano Susan Botti. The New York singer has a vocal presence that speaks to the essence of the music, illuminating every note. Her diction is impeccable, with even the quietest syllables and awkward vocal tangles made perfectly clear, and she infuses the music with the nuance Gubaidulina intended."

Douglas McLennan, *Seattle Weekly*

"...Susan Botti's breathtakingly lovely voice...(Tan Dun's *Red Forecast*)"

Mary Miller, *The Scotsman*, Edinburgh

"...The singers, Susan Botti and Dora Ohrenstein, made the musical phrases burst like sonic skyrockets... (Lois V. Vierk's *Swash*)"

Jack Anderson, *The New York Times*

"...it was hard to know what to admire most about her efforts here: her music, her singing, or the theatrical flair and imagination she brought to both. Her score (*Wonderglass*) traverses a kaleidoscopic mix of styles, from jazz through Weill to Neo-Classical Stravinsky and beyond, with remarkable assurance."

James Oestreich, *The New York Times*