

International Trumpet Guild Journal Review

Twentieth Century Art Songs – Translations for Cornet and Piano

Luke Spence, cornet; Andrew Welch, piano

TSN-010; Tonsehen, 822 Guilford Avenue #135, Baltimore, MD 21215; <http://tonsehen.com>

Mahler: Ich atmet' einen linden Duft; Mahler: Liebst du um Schönheit; Mahler: Ich bin der Welt abhanden gekommen; A. Mahler: Lobgesang; Berg: Liebesode; Berg: Schliesse mir die Augen beide; Schönberg: Am Strande; Boulanger: Attente; Messiaen: Le sourire; Ravel: Chanson á boire; Poulenc: Fleurs; Ives: Soliloquy; Ives: The Housatonic at Stockbridge; Price: Night; Adams: Prayer; Larsen: Boy's Lips; Larsen: Big Sister Says, 1967.

Dr. Luke Spence is the Visiting Assistant Professor of Trumpet at the SUNY Potsdam Crane School of Music and is also a member of both the Washington Chamber Orchestra and Anima Brass. He is accompanied on this recording by Andrew Welch, the Director of Music Ministry at Allin Congregational Church in Dedham, Massachusetts and Associate Director of the Georgetown Chorale. Spence has chosen German, French, and English art songs for this recording and has included a QR code in the liner notes which provides subtitle translations for those that want to experience the lyrics along with the music. Spence's cornet playing throughout is nuanced and exquisite with a warm lovely sound. Since these are all songs with meaningful lyrics, it is a major challenge to convey the meaning behind each song and also to maintain variety. Spence remedies this by doubling down on the musicality and provides passionate interpretations. This is clearly evident in the opening three Mahler songs, all expressively played with measured vibrato and long eloquent reflective phrases. Some of the more modern sounding pieces by Price, Ives, and Adams offer a nice change of pace with progressive voicings, rhythms, and folk-like melodies. The recording closes with two fun pieces by Larsen, in which Spence employs glissandi, note bends, and growls to best express the almost cartoonish jazz-age feel to the songs. Whether it is a soft entrance in the high register, quick and delicate wide slurs, or a mournful melody, Spence consistently delivers a strong musical interpretation. (Kurt Zemaitaitis, trumpeter, Navy Band Northeast, Newport, RI.)