

Songs of Youth

A song cycle for baritone or bass and marimba

Music by Mark Feezell / DrFeezell.com

4. California Lullaby for Marimba

♩ = 72

(baritone tacet; if using 4-octave, play 8va throughout)

Marimba

pp p pp p pp p mp

10

mf mp mf mp f fmp mf mp

20

f mf f ff sub. mp mf f

30

mf *f* *mf* *f* *ff* *fff sub. mp*

40

mf *mp* *f sub. mp* *pp* *p* *pp* *n*

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Text and music by Mark Feezell / DrFeezell.com

Songs of Youth is a cycle of seven songs for baritone or bass and marimba. A five-octave, concert grand marimba is preferred, but the songs may also be performed on a quality four-octave marimba. Performers may elect to perform individual songs independently or the entire cycle in sequence (approximately 19-23 minutes).

The following timings are approximate:

1. Wandering (4:17)
2. The Bumblebee (1:40)
3. Wondering (3:23)
4. California Lullaby (4:00)
5. Summer-soon Storm (2:25)
6. Apart (3:40)
7. The Resonance of Memory (1:43)

The form of the cycle is generally palindromic, with the fourth song functioning as the center for the piece. This means that songs 1/7, 2/6, and 3/5 correspond in subject matter (contrasting but related topics) and principal tonal center (generally identical). The primary exception to this pattern is intentional: the last song doesn't return to the opening tonal center of the cycle, just as we never fully return to our youth. For further explanation of the use of palindromic/symmetrical formal units and bipolar tonal axes, see writing by and about the twentieth-century composer Béla Bartók.

Most of the marimba writing is admittedly not appropriate for a beginner. Even the fourth song, though not technically challenging, is musically demanding. All songs except for the second and seventh require four mallets. The sections in which the vocalist and the marimbist perform together demand rhythmic and tempo precision from both performers. Sections where one performer performs alone may be treated more flexibly. At all times, the drama of the texts should be the focal point of the performance.

Mark Feezell
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