“*Songs for a New World*” by Robert Brown

On the 6th of November, 2016 I went on a little road trip from the city of Irvine to the city of La Cañada Flintridge; it was to attend a concert called Songs for a New World. The trip was an hour long but the views of San Gabriel Mountains along the road made it more worth it. As soon I arrived I fell in love with the city of La Cañada, the old buildings and the tight streets. The city church was even more beautiful; the mixture of glass and wood was perfect. The people at the entrance were welcoming and the vibes inside the church were breathtaking. Although I am not Christian and I have never been in a church, the feelings and vibes I got inside the church were out of this world.

Everyone in the audience was laughing and having a great time, I could also hear some positive opinions from people sitting behind me. Everybody was blown away by the performance. I could see the audience reacting and relating to the subjects the play talks about. Most of the audience were from an older generation so it was easier for them to relate to the play; looking back at their choices and seeing whether they made their choices out of fear, love or money? Thinking about what drove them through their lives and how they made their choices; did they go by the book or did they choose their own way in life, and wondering how their lives would look like if they made different choices.

The performers were amazing, their voices touched the audience. It was clear that they were not ordinary singers; they knew how and when do deliver and they did. The acting was on point, and the artistic mixture between both the acting and the voices was extraordinary. You did not need to look at their faces to see emotions, it was delivered perfectly with their voices. They were artists; Amazing artists.

The stories that were told by the songs in the act were full of emotions, there were some funny parts and there were some emotional parts. The stories in the songs had great messages in them, they gave personal life advice and advice in life in general. “Do we have a homeless problem?” that was a question/title of one of the songs in the act. The song sends a message to the people, asking them to open their hands wide and help the homeless. God gave everything up for us, we all deserve a helping hand and we all have each other. The river won’t flow for the homeless but it must and it will if we help them. We must listen to God; he gave everything up for us and he is asking us to help the poor.

My favorite song in the act was “The River Won’t Flow,” and that is because of the message it delivers as well as the way it delivers it. It was an English Jazz trio song with a Recitative text; the lines were not repeated many times. The performers did a great job delivering the song and their voices touched the audience's hearts. The main performer was Dr. Matt Thomas and he had an amazing voice. The audience could hear his passion for music from his voice. Kevin F. Story also did a great job in that song and in the act in general. At the end of the song the whole cast sang together and performed a great ending to that beautiful song.

The director of the act was Justin S. Fisher, he did an amazing job relating the songs to verses from The Holy Bible. A great message was delivered by the director in the act, and that message was to follow God’s plan by following his words. The act is similar to Operas from the Baroque Period because it talks about history and is divided into acts with costumes. But I think it is also a smaller scale Oratorio because the show adapted stories from the Bible.

Jason Robert Brown, “*Songs for a New World*” (1995)

Instruments: Piano, Guitar, Drums. / Text: English, Recitative, Syllabic

Genre: Jazz trio. / Tempo: Adagio, Accelerando.

Meter: Compound, it changes. / Dynamic: mezzo piano, Crescendo.

Melody: Conjunct, Not many leaps and is arches gently. / Harmony: Consonant, Major key.

Texture: Thick polyphonic. / Form: Ternary.