

Top reviews



## Top review from the United States



areadingarchitect

★★★★★ **We may have lost Sondheim in 2021, but we found Schorr in 2022!**

Reviewed in the United States on September 26, 2022

**Verified Purchase**

Eric Schorr's new album offers richly distinct musical settings that unify a group of poems by various contemporary writers. Reflected in the title, Schorr's music is the love child of Poulenc's effervescence and Sondheim's urbanity. These songs lead one into a blissful yet wistful past that will be especially familiar to anyone who came of age in the '80s -- and no less enjoyable to anyone else. I've been listening to this music for the past several Sunday mornings -- it's wonderful to hear on this most melancholy day of the week. I'm already developing favorites among Schorr's songs: "French Novel" with its piano interlude and the musical "description" of the second of two versus the second of many; "Morning (After) Commute" that will bring a knowing smile to anyone who ever savored a tryst; the one about the man of Cambridge with his exposed chest set to the sexy samba rhythm; and the title song with its discontented mother on a visit to New York. These songs transport me to my younger years; they are certainly the songs of remembrance and desire proclaimed by the album's subtitle. And like the memory of desire, they bring contemplative joy to the listener.

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Judith S. Goldstein

★★★★★ **Beautiful and more beautiful**

Reviewed in the United States on September 13, 2022

**Verified Purchase**

"New York Pretending to be Paris" is a beautiful journey in poetry and music—a journey of reflection, adventure, love and loss. The poems, the works of several authors, are compelling. Deepened by music of beautiful rhythms and melodies, the words gain powerful, unexpected dimensions. Together, they are accessible, (a la Broadway by way of Sondheim and Weill), while stretching the ear and mind into worlds of new meaning. One wants to return and immerse oneself in the beauty of the music as it grants new freedom to thoughts and feelings embedded in the magic of poetry. Bravo to Eric Schorr.

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Claudette M Mayer

★★★★★ **The perfect gift for lovers of both poetry and music**

Reviewed in the United States on August 23, 2022

**Verified Purchase**

Eric Schorr is a wonderful composer and pianist whose love of poetry inspired him to set to music poems that resonated with him. Written by noted contemporary poets (Cynthia Zarin, Thomas March, Richie Hofmann, Morri Creech, Aaron Smith and Susan Kinsolving), the poems in New York Pretending to be Paris—Songs of Remembrance and Desire are heightened emotionally as Eric takes "the music that is already inherent in the text" and makes it come even more alive in lyrical art songs sung by superb vocalists backed by excellent instrumentalists. Just as the poems range in style and subject matter, so the music veers from Romantic to jazz to chanson to bossa nova. The CD includes Eric's liner notes and the texts of the beautiful poems that inspired him. I enthusiastically recommend this CD to all lovers of both poetry and music.

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Rick Hamlin

★★★★★ **Great music, each song a treasure.**

Reviewed in the United States on September 2, 2022

**Verified Purchase**

The poems selected are profound and delightful, sometimes playful, always going deep. And Eric's music adds new life to them. Fine singers and great arrangements. Worth listening to over and over again.

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Philip R.

★★★★★ **A PROFOUND WORK OF ART**

Reviewed in the United States on September 10, 2022

New York Pretending to be Paris is a magical discovery.

Composer Eric Schorr unexpectedly combines contemporary poetry sung by opera singers with his own compositions ranging from classical to bossa nova and jazz. Between the classicism of the operatic voice, the off-beat rhythm of contemporary poetry and Schorr's arresting and melodic compositions, a kind of nuclear fusion occurs unleashing a unique beauty that engages both the mind and the ear. This is music that must be LISTENED to with full attention. What Schorr creates captivates the listener with a new kind of musical story telling. Each song unfolds like a novella, rich in imagery and meaning. If you think of each song as a chapter, the story is one about the varieties and complexities of the human experience.

The album is nothing short of a profound work of art.





Ken Meltzer

★★★★★ **Eric Schorr's lovely and affecting songs of remembrance and desire**

Reviewed in the United States on October 6, 2022

New York *Pretending to be Paris: Songs of Remembrance and Desire* spotlights the music of Eric Schorr. The music of Eric Schorr, a graduate of Yale and Harvard Universities, encompasses the genres of art song, theater, television, and film. New York *Pretending to be Paris* (also the title of the final song in Schorr's cycle, *Mother*) features settings of various poets Schorr discovered during his quest to find verse suitable for musical adaptation. In the CD booklet, Schorr describes that extensive search, and the kinds of poets/poetry he finds most suitable for song settings. Schorr describes his songs "always lyrical," and the writing most certainly reflects the composer's experience in the musical theater. The songs are brimming with melody that is both accessible and captivating. And Schorr demonstrates a willingness to explore a wide range of styles in order to do justice to the poetry; as he puts it: "the music veers from Romantic to jazz to chanson to bossa nova." The repertoire on New York *Pretending to be Paris*, originally scored for voice and piano, is presented in arrangements for a chamber ensemble comprising all four instrument families. Those orchestrations are unfailingly lovely and transparent, always complementing (and never interfering with) the singer and his/her narrative.

In New York *Pretending to be Paris*, the affinity between the various poets and composer is clear. Schorr has chosen poems that tell the stories of people in a wide range of experiences. Sometimes, the characters react in unexpected, striking ways. Two such instances occur in the song cycle, *Mother*. Both are settings of poems by Susan Kinsolving. In *Under House Arrest*, a mother abandons (for a time) her newborn in a deserted field. In *Remodeling*, a wife who has learned of her husband's adultery takes a sledgehammer, crowbar, and a pickaxe to the family's idyllic 1950s suburban home and car. In both cases, poet Kinsolving and composer Schorr present their subjects in a non-judgmental fashion. These women act, and the reader/listener is given the freedom to apply his own response and judgment. The same holds true for *Elegy for a Small Town Psychic* (poem by Morri Creech). Both the departed "Clairvoyant Mabel" and the (probably duped) clients she left behind are depicted not as caricatures, but as human beings, worthy of empathy (and perhaps affection), rather than disdain. There is another aspect of Schorr's musical settings I greatly admire. Many of the poems describe situations that, for the reader, may seem at first blush quotidian and unremarkable. But for the poem's narrator, the situations occupy a place of great significance. Schorr embraces the opportunity to depict musically the narrator's profound emotional responses to instances of daily life. Schorr's music never strikes me as disproportionate. Quite the contrary, it is affecting and brimming with humanity. Puccini was a master of this approach, and Schorr's songs are a worthy successor to that tradition.

Mezzo Eve Gigliotti, tenor Jesse Darden, and baritone Michael Kelly bring attractive lyric voices, style, dramatic commitment, and admirable diction to their interpretations. The chamber 19 Mercer Ensemble plays exquisitely. The recorded sound is excellent. The booklet includes the composer's eloquent and illuminating program notes, and complete texts. A captivating disc.

Ken Meltzer