

# Mp3 Bill Carrothers & Wendy Lewis - The Language Of Crows

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Vocal/piano duets of tunes we both like. It's been alternately described by others as "the most intimate CD I've ever heard" to "It sounds like two children locked in a closet." 11 MP3 Songs in this album (48:33)

! Related styles: JAZZ: Jazz Vocals, JAZZ: Weird Jazz Details: Wendy Lewis - voice Bill Carrothers - piano, voice Recorded in 1999 at Creation Audio, Minneapolis, MN Jazz Magazine (France) Top 10 discs of 1999 Cadence - August 2000 Vol. 26 No. 8 - page 106 Jerome Wilson Charles Ives is quoted on the liner card of this CD and he might have enjoyed this singular collection of altered hymns, children's rhymes, traditional songs and other unlikely selections. Lewis has a low, lush voice instead of the solemn soprano you might expect and that just emphasizes the quirky humanity of this session. It sounds very eerie when Lewis sings the old hymn "The Vacant Chair" over Carrothers' off-kilter piano or does childlike songs like "Doll House" and "Savior Self" in a lush, sensuous voice. They put a lot of ill-fitting parts together in odd ways. There's even a German children's song done with whispered conversation and jangly piano. The only thing close to this is Ran Blake's occasional jaunts into Americana but this is even more sinister than his work, beautiful but subtly disturbing. Allaboutjazz.com Jim Santella Wendy Lewis and Bill Carrothers are outcasts. By combining impressionism with cynical humor, they've come up with a cerebral session that's both pleasant in its linear form and adventurous through its added dimensions. A jazz pianist from Minneapolis, Carrothers likes to vary from expected mainstream harmony and dress up his accompaniment with dense atypical chords. His solo romps swing with a light-hearted sense that can only come through a love for the music. Lewis lyrics are articulated well enough and they're printed in the liner booklet; however, the deeper meaning takes hold only after studying the duo's performance. "She must know what's good for me cause she's the one who's on t.v." for example, is a poke at daytime talk shows. We can easily identify with Lewis' work because she deals with everyday topics. To supplement the vocal presentation, Carrothers inserts light jazz interludes that belie his true talents. A straight-laced "Take Me Out to the Ballgame" comes with cool jazz piano fills. The sordid tale of Lizzie Borden is offset with a swinging jazz piano center section. Even the spirituals contain quirky piano harmonic tricks; it's as if

Alfred Hitchcock had turned "Jesus Loves Me" into a feature-length film. An accurate singer with a pleasant voice offers head-turning, thought-provoking lyrics while the jazz pianist supplies adventuresome counterpoint. What a concept! Minneapolis Star Tribune, Sunday Sept. 12 1999 Local Pop/Rock Jim Meyer This impromptu recording of duets and solos on Carrothers' label seems most unlikely, yet it's strangely in tune. Vocalist Lewis has led outstanding rock and jazz groups such as Rhea Valentine and Mary Nail. Pianist Carrothers, an 80's bebop prodigy, has grown into a methodical scholar of classical and American folk traditions. Now they've put their formidable instrumental skills into a stormy marriage of Lewis' stark originals and choice vintage pieces, such as the devastating wartime memorial "The Vacant Chair". But this CD really excels when Lewis' plain-spoken, highly poetic social criticisms blend with Carrothers' unusual harmonic twists in a mutual search for new ways out of the old conventions. Who knows what to make of "The Ballad of Lizzie Borden" and "Take Me Out to the Ballgame", but Lewis and Carrothers' shared creative trust and expressive force makes for some outstanding pieces of understated avant-garde.

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