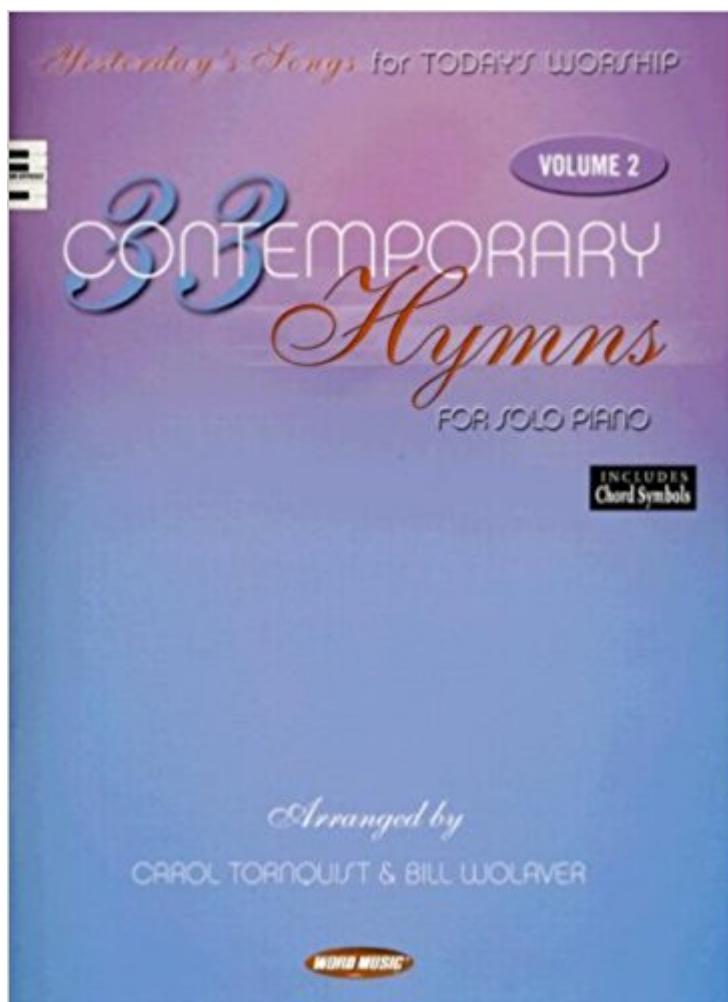


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33 Contemporary Hymns For Solo Piano, Volume 2: Yesterday's Songs For Today's Worship



Synopsis

The sub-title for this collection (Yesterday's Songs For Today's Worship) says it all: classic hymns from our Christian heritage in fresh, new harmonic and rhythmic settings making them a perfect fit for services incorporating "blended" worship. The partnership of experienced arrangers Carol Tornquist and Bill Wolaver offers instrumentalists a diversity of musical styles and the addition of chord symbols provides the option of including other players (guitar and bass, for example).

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

After reading some of the reviews here, I found myself pulling this well-liked, well-used book off my shelf again, just to investigate. Never having played "Jesus Loves Me" from this volume, I decided to check out the mess. Conclusion: I love all of Bill and Carol's renditions of these hymns, but I fervently love jazz and gospel and the glorious, sometimes dissident chords that go with these styles. If you are not a fan, the book may have limited appeal. Otherwise, enjoy! You'll be glad you did!

I have a degree in piano, and served over 50 years as a church musician. I have used Carol Tornquist's arrangements over and over. They are almost always beautiful and useful. I've had countless compliments on her lovely hymns and medleys. However, Bill Wolaver's arrangements are almost all useless. They are dissonant, I can't think why he (or any publisher) would think they work in a church service. I promise you there will be several people in the congregation cringing at

some of those chords. I managed to clean up the "Jesus Loves Me" piece by normalizing many of those terrible chords, but it took some work -- still don't know if I'll ever use it. I might try to fix some of his other offerings, but it's a chore? If you want to spend money on half this book, it's probably worth it, but you will not be pleased with "33 Contemporary Hymns" -- probably only 17 or so. I've worked in every kind of church, young/old/formal/casual, can't think of any group who would appreciate some of these arrangements.

Easy to whip into shape in a hurry and sound good.

I loved a few of the arrangements, so I guess the book was worth the money, but was sad that a fair number of the arrangements were just too weird for my simple tastes. My people would think I was totally messed up and playing all the wrong notes if I played these songs in my church. For example, Jesus Loves Me - of all songs! - got turned into an ugly mess. To me, it seemed like that arranger was far too worried about showing off how eclectic his arrangements could get and still vaguely remind people of the original composition. Broke my children's music-loving heart. Totally ruined this precious song for me. Several arrangements were like that. Of course, this is only my opinion. But when I play something in a worship service, I want it to bless my people, not leave them scratching their heads. My church is full of down-to-earth, blue-collar, regular-Joe folks. This music is beyond their comprehension.

These arrangements sound beautiful and are rated correctly for difficulty. There are more useful ones for me than not useful, which does not occur often. I especially liked the arrangement for "Jesus Loves Me."

Carol Tornquist's arrangements are the core of my worship piano playing. In this volume, I love the chords, voicings, and timings borrowed from jazz; unlike so many other arrangers, the songs still sing and don't end up as "jazz arrangements." Many of Bill Wolaver's arrangements in volume 1 stretched me too far, but here (volume 2) his arrangements are consistently delightful. I will be using all but one or two of the 33 arrangements here. I play in a fellowship in a retirement community. They LOVE these songs and the arrangements. PS: I sometimes discard the more elaborate intros and interludes when they get, shall I say, too creative. I want the core song melody to be the heart of my playing. And sometimes I simplify or eliminate the runs when they don't seem to add to the "message" which to me is the song itself.

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