

Donald Cobb

Cold Mountain Songs

Songs on Poetry of Han Shan
translated by Gary Snyder

for voice, violin and piano

Donald Cobb was born in 1936 in Oakland, California. His music-making began in the family home, and at age 15 in a hotel summer band. He studied with composers Richard Donovan, Leon Kirchner and Darius Milhaud. He has taught and led musical ensembles in many schools and colleges, including Mills College, the Athenian School, Wildshaw School in San Francisco and Friendsville Academy in Tennessee. Community and traditional song has been an abiding study. In the 1970's, he was musical director of the Oakland Museum Spring Concerts, highlighting music of American and California composers.

The composer's path of finding musical expression through poetic language and the contours of our spoken language led first to the Irish poet, W. B. Yeats, and his *Crazy Jane Poems*, and followed over years to the possibilities for song in the work of admired American poets, including Walt Whitman, Vachel Lindsay, Robinson Jeffers, whose poems are the basis for *Boats in a Fog*, for voice and piano, and Gary Snyder, whose translation of Han Shan is the basis for the current volume, *Cold Mountain Songs*. Scored for high voice, violin and piano, it was first performed in 1973 by John Duykers, tenor, Nathan Rubin, violin and Donald Cobb, piano.

BY DONALD COBB:

CRAZY JANE SONGS *

*Six songs on poems of W. B. Yeats
for voice and piano*

CONFUCIAN ODES

*Translations by Ezra Pound
Three SATB choruses, unaccompanied*

COLD MOUNTAIN SONGS *

*Poems by Han Shan, translation by Gary Snyder
for voice, violin and piano*

THE TOWN OF AMERICAN VISIONS
THE SPRINGFIELD OF THE FAR FUTURE

*Poetry of Vachel Lindsay
for SATB chorus, with piano*

COME, SAID THE MUSE *

*Three songs on poetry of Walt Whitman
for voice and piano*

FIVE ORCHESTRAL SONGS

for orchestra

CHILDREN'S SONGS *

*On poetry of Vachel Lindsay, James Stephens, Christina Rossetti,
James Hogg, Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, James Whitcomb Riley
for voice and piano*

PATHS

A four movement work for orchestra

REMNANTS

9 pieces, for violin, clarinet, double bass and piano

BOATS IN A FOG *

*Songs on the poetry of Robinson Jeffers
for voice and piano*

SEVEN SONGS *

*Billy Boy, The Curtains of Night, The Old Ship of Zion,
Colorado Trail, A Life on the Ocean Wave, Brave Wolfe, Polly Wolly Doodle
Arranged for voice and piano*

IN COUNTRYSIDE

A set of seven pieces – for clarinet, trumpet, trombone and piano

FIDDLER JONES, PASTORAL AND OTHER SONGS

*On poetry of Thoreau, Melville, Masters, Cummings,
Frost, Sandburg and Williams
for voice and piano*

* Engraved song publications available from the composer.

CHILDREN'S SONGS with illustrations by Josy Cobb,
CRAZY JANE SONGS with illustrations by Diane Cobb
COME, SAID THE MUSE with illustrations by Diane Cobb
SEVEN SONGS with illustrations by Thomas Eakins
BOATS IN A FOG
COLD MOUNTAIN SONGS

Donald Cobb

Cold Mountain Songs

Songs on Poetry of Han Shan
translated by Gary Snyder

for voice, violin and piano

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“In a tangle of cliffs, I chose a place –”
“If I hide out at Cold Mountain”
“I can't stand these bird songs”
“Clambering up the Cold Mountain path,”
“I've lived at Cold Mountain - how many autumns.”
are poems 2, 17, 13, 8 and 21 from
The Cold Mountain Poems
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From Gary Snyder's introduction to *Cold Mountain Poems*:

COLD MOUNTAIN

Kanzan, or Han Shan

"Cold Mountain" takes his name from where he lived. He is a mountain madman in an old Chinese line of ragged hermits. When he talks about Cold Mountain he means himself, his home, his state of mind. He lived in the T'ang dynasty - traditionally A.D. 627-650, although Hu Shih dates him 700-780. This makes him roughly contemporary with Tu Fu, Li Po, Wang Wei, and Po Chü-i. His poems, of which 300 survive, are written in T'ang colloquial: rough and fresh. The ideas are Taoist, Buddhist, Zen. He and his sidekick Shih-te (Jittoku in Japanese) became great favorites with Zen painters of later days - the scroll, the broom, the wild hair and laughter. They became Immortals and you sometimes run on to them today in the skidrows, orchards, hobo jungles, and logging camps of America.

In a tangle of cliffs, I chose a place –
 Bird paths, but no trails for men.
 What's beyond the yard?
 White clouds clinging to vague rocks.
 Now I've lived here – how many years –
 Again and again, spring and winter pass.
 Go tell families with silverware and cars
 "What's the use of all that noise and money?"

If I hide out at Cold Mountain
 Living off mountain plants and berries –
 All my lifetime, why worry?
 One follows his karma through.
 Days and months slip by like water,
 Time is like sparks knocked off flint.
 Go ahead and let the world change –
 I'm happy to sit among these cliffs.

I can't stand these bird songs
 Now I'll go rest in my straw shack.
 The cherry flowers out scarlet
 The willow shoots up feathery.
 Morning sun drives over blue peaks
 Bright clouds wash green ponds.
 Who knows that I'm out of the dusty world
 Climbing the southern slope of Cold Mountain?

Clambering up the Cold Mountain path,
 The Cold Mountain trail goes on and on:
 The long gorge choked with scree and boulders,
 The wide creek, the mist-blurred grass.
 The moss is slippery, though there's been no rain
 The pine sings, but there's no wind.
 Who can leap the world's ties
 And sit with me among the white clouds?

I've lived at Cold Mountain – how many autumns.
 Alone, I hum a song – utterly without regret.
 Hungry, I eat one grain of Immortal-medicine
 Mind solid and sharp; leaning on a stone.

In a Tangle of Cliffs

Han Shan

translation by Gary Snyder

Donald Cobb

$\text{♩} = \text{ca. } 98$

Voice

In a tan - gle of cliffs I chose a place—

Violin

p

Piano

mp *mf*

5

Bird - paths, but no trails for men.

mf *f*

10

What's beyond the

pizz. *p*

16

yard? ___

arco

mp

poco

20

What's beyond the yard?

mp

mp

25

White clouds clinging to vague

mp

30 *rall.* *a tempo*

rocks.

solo
mf

30 *rall.* *a tempo*

rocks.

solo
mf

36 *rall.* *a tempo*
marcato *marcato*

Now I've lived here how ma - ny years— A - gain and a -

with voice

f

36 *rall.* *a tempo*
marcato *marcato*

Now I've lived here how ma - ny years— A - gain and a -

with voice

f

42

gain, spring and win-ter pass.

mp *mf*

42

gain, spring and win-ter pass.

mp *mf*

47 *f* *mf* *f* *no vib.*

52 *mf* *f* *stay f* *mp with voice*

Go tell fam - i - lies with sil - ver-ware and

57 *f* *mf*

cars "What's the use of all that noise and mon- ey?"

62 *no vib.*
f

67 *marcato*
mf *connected*

72

77 *no vib.* *rall. Slower* *poco accel.* *poco rall.*
mf *pizz.* *mp* *f*

If I Hide out at Cold Mountain

$\text{♩} = \text{ca. } 80$

Voice

If I hide out at Cold Moun-tain_ Liv-ing off moun - tain

Violin

arco
mp
little vibrato

Piano

mp

6

plants___ and ber-ries— All my life-time, why wor-ry?

mf *mp*

mf *mf* *mp*

10

One fol-lows his kar - ma through.---

mf solo *legato* *mp*

The musical score is presented in three systems. The first system (measures 1-5) features a voice line with lyrics, a violin line with 'arco' and 'mp' dynamics and 'little vibrato' marking, and a piano accompaniment with 'mp' dynamics. The second system (measures 6-9) continues the vocal line with lyrics and piano accompaniment with 'mf' and 'mp' dynamics. The third system (measures 10-13) shows the vocal line with lyrics and piano accompaniment with 'mf' and 'mp' dynamics, including a 'solo' marking for the violin and 'legato' for the piano.

15

mf

20

poco rall.

mf easy

mp

25 *a tempo*

Days and months slip by like wa - ter, — Time is like

p sweep

p

mp

mp

30

sparks _____ knocked off _____ flint. Go a - head and let the world change. _

no vibrato
p *mp* *with voice*

mf

This system contains measures 30 through 34. The vocal line starts with a melodic phrase in 3/4 time, then changes to 2/4 and 4/4. The piano accompaniment features a bass line with a sharp sign and a treble line with chords and moving lines. Dynamics include piano (*p*), mezzo-piano (*mp*), and mezzo-forte (*mf*). The instruction "no vibrato" is written above the first vocal note, and "with voice" is written below the piano accompaniment in the second measure.

poco rall. *a tempo*

35

I'm hap - py _____ to

f

f

This system contains measures 35 through 40. The vocal line has a long rest followed by the lyrics "I'm hap - py _____ to". The piano accompaniment continues with complex textures. Dynamics include forte (*f*).

41

sit a-mong these cliffs. I'm hap - py _____ to

pizz.
f-sfz
mf
sfz

This system contains measures 41 through 45. The vocal line has a long rest followed by the lyrics "sit a-mong these cliffs. I'm hap - py _____ to". The piano accompaniment features a complex texture with many chords and moving lines. Dynamics include fortissimo (*f-sfz*), mezzo-forte (*mf*), and fortissimo (*sfz*). The instruction "pizz." is written above the piano accompaniment in the second measure.

45

sit a - mong these cliffs.

sfz *sfz* *arco*

f

49

no vib. pizz.

sfz

53

arco *mf* *ritard.*

I Can't Stand These Bird-Songs

In 1 ♩. = ca. 48

Voice

I can't stand these bird - songs Now I'll go rest in my

Violin

mp legato

9

straw shack. The cher - ry

mf *mp* legato

18

flow - ers out scar - let The wil - low shoots up feath - e -

poco rall.
almost: $\overset{3}{\text{trill}}$

26 (*rall.*) *a tempo*

ry. Morn - ing sun drives o - ver blue peaks Bright clouds

legato
mf

34

wash green ponds. Who knows that I'm out of the dus - ty

mf *mf* with voice

41 *rall.*

world _____ Climb-ing the south - ern_ slope of Cold Moun -

47 *a tempo*

-tain? _____

mf *legato* almost: ³

54

The cher - ry flow - ers out scar - let _____ Who

mp *mf with voice*

61

knows that I'm out of the dus - ty world _____ Climb-ing the

poco

67 *rall.*

south - ern_ slope of Cold Moun - - - - - tain?

mf

Clambering up the Cold Mountain Path

$\text{♩} = \text{ca. } 120$

Voice

Clam-ber-ing up the Cold Moun-tain path. The

Violin

mf

Piano

mf

4

Cold Moun-tain trail _____ goes on _____ and on:

solo

mf

7

The long gorge choked with scree _____ and boul - ders, The

The musical score is written for Voice, Violin, and Piano. It is in 12/8 time and begins with a tempo marking of approximately 120 beats per minute. The first system (measures 1-3) features the voice line with the lyrics 'Clam-ber-ing up the Cold Moun-tain path. The'. The violin and piano parts provide accompaniment, with the piano part marked *mf*. The second system (measures 4-6) continues the voice line with 'Cold Moun-tain trail _____ goes on _____ and on:'. The violin part has a 'solo' marking above it. The piano part continues with *mf* dynamics. The third system (measures 7-9) features the voice line with 'The long gorge choked with scree _____ and boul - ders, The'. The piano part continues with *mf* dynamics.

10

wide creek, the mist-blurred grass.

mf

solo
mf

13

16

poco rit. *a tempo*

19 *poco rit.* *a tempo*

mp *mf*

22 (slip - p'ry)

The moss is slip - pery, though there's

mp with voice *mp*

25

been___ no rain___ The pine sings, but there's no___ wind. ___

mf

28

cresc. *f*

cresc. *f*

31 *poco rit.* *a tempo*

Who can leap _____ the world's _____ ties _____ And

p

less f *p*

34

sit _____ with me _____ a - mong _____ the white clouds? _

poco

37

Musical score for measures 37-39. The system includes a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The vocal line features a melodic line with slurs and a fermata at the end. The piano accompaniment consists of chords and moving lines in both hands.

40

Musical score for measures 40-43. The system includes a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The vocal line has a fermata and dynamic markings *mf*. The piano accompaniment has a *solo* marking and *mp* dynamic.

44

Musical score for measures 44-46. The system includes a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The vocal line has a fermata and dynamic marking *mf*. The piano accompaniment has a crescendo and dynamic marking *mf*.

47

50

Slower

54

A tempo

almost no vibrato

Slower

I've Lived at Cold Mountain

$\text{♩} = \text{ca. } 80$

Voice

I've lived at Cold Mountain— how many autumns. A -

Violin

mp legato

Piano

mp legato

5

lone, I hum a song— ut - ter - ly with out — re - gret.

no vib.

mf

10

Hun - gry, — I

mp

mp

The musical score is written for Voice, Violin, and Piano. It is in the key of D major (indicated by two sharps) and 4/4 time. The tempo is marked as quarter note = ca. 80. The score is divided into three systems. The first system (measures 1-4) features the voice line with lyrics 'I've lived at Cold Mountain— how many autumns. A -', the violin playing a melodic line marked *mp legato*, and the piano accompaniment also marked *mp legato*. The second system (measures 5-8) continues the voice line with 'lone, I hum a song— ut - ter - ly with out — re - gret.', the violin with *no vib.*, and the piano with *mf*. The third system (measures 9-12) shows the voice line with 'Hun - gry, — I', the violin with *mp*, and the piano with *mp*. A triplet of eighth notes is marked with a '3' above it in both the violin and piano parts in the final measure.

15

eat one grain of Im - mor - tal-med-i-cine Mind sol-id and sharp; lean-ing on a

This system contains measures 15 through 18. It features a vocal line with lyrics and a piano accompaniment. The key signature has three sharps (F#, C#, G#). The piano part includes a prominent melodic line in the right hand and a supporting bass line in the left hand.

19

stone.

a little vibrato
with piano

mf

This system contains measures 19 through 22. The vocal line begins with the word "stone." and includes performance instructions: "a little vibrato" and "with piano". The piano accompaniment features a melodic line in the right hand and a bass line in the left hand, with a dynamic marking of *mf* in the right hand.

23

mp *poco*

rhythmic *mf*

A little slower

This system contains measures 23 through 27. It includes the instruction "A little slower" at the top right. The piano part has dynamic markings of *mp* and *poco* in the right hand, and *rhythmic* and *mf* in the left hand.

28

no vibrato

mf *mf* *mp*

f *mf* *mp*

This system contains measures 28 through 31. The vocal line starts with the instruction "no vibrato". The piano accompaniment features a melodic line in the right hand and a bass line in the left hand, with dynamic markings of *mf*, *mf*, and *mp* in the right hand, and *f*, *mf*, and *mp* in the left hand.

*In a tangle of cliffs, I chose a place –
Bird paths, but no trails for men.
What's beyond the yard?
White clouds clinging to vague rocks.
Now I've lived here – how many years –
Again and again, spring and winter pass.
Go tell families with silverware and cars
"What's the use of all that noise and money?"*