

Gwyneth Walker

Lovesongs

for Narrator and Piano

1. Youthful Love
2. Special Love
3. The Food of Love

Lovesongs

duration: 7'40"

A multitude of amorous expressions are explored in *LOVESONGS*. These range from love while traveling, to love at home and love at the dinner table!

Youthful Love is based on the poem, "Recuerdo," by Edna St. Vincent Millay. The young lovers are riding on the Staten Island Ferry. "We were very tired – we were very merry. We had gone back and forth all night on the ferry." The boat rocks. The couple gaze in each other's eyes. They stay up all night. Very tired...very merry...and very young!

A *Special Love* has formed between the narrator and a beloved pet (portrayed by the pianist). The dear creature does not "obtrude" and does not need to be entertained. So well behaved! [The text is by H. D. Thoreau.]

Epicurean delights are the topic for *The Food of Love*. The text is the well-known poem by Colonel Henry Heveningham, "If Music be the Food of Love." Cream puffs, Valentine's hearts and music fill the stage. It would seem that the narrator cannot decide which pleasure is the greatest. [These are indeed overwhelming choices!] Therefore, tossing caution (and props) to the winds, the solution is to celebrate everything!

Dr. Gwyneth Walker (b. 1947) is a graduate of Brown University and the Hartt School of Music. She holds B.A., M.M. and D.M.A. Degrees in Music Composition. A former faculty member of the Oberlin College Conservatory, she resigned from academic employment in 1982 in order to pursue a career as a full-time composer. She now lives on a dairy farm in Braintree, Vermont.

Gwyneth Walker is a proud resident of Vermont. She is the recipient of the Year 2000 "Lifetime Achievement Award" from the Vermont Arts Council as well as the 2008 "Athenaeum Award for Achievement in the Arts and Humanities" from the St. Johnsbury (VT) Athenaeum.

Walker's catalog includes over 200 commissioned works for orchestra, chamber ensembles, chorus and solo voice. The music of Gwyneth Walker is published by E. C. Schirmer of Boston (choral and vocal music) and Lauren Keiser Music (orchestral and instrumental music).

Further information concerning Gwyneth Walker and her works is available at www.gwynethwalker.com

Lovesongs

for Narrator and Piano

1. Youthful Love

Based on the poem *Recuerdo*
by Edna St. Vincent Millay (1892-1950)

Gwyneth Walker

During the introduction, NARRATOR comes on stage portraying a traveler on a boat, gently rocking to and fro.

Jazzy tempo (♩. = 72)
as a ferryboat crossing the water

Piano

mf

with pedal

The piano introduction consists of four systems of music. The first system is a grand staff with a treble clef and a bass clef. The right hand plays a series of chords in the upper register, while the left hand plays a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes. The second system continues this pattern with some melodic movement in the right hand. The third system features a more complex rhythmic pattern with sixteenth notes in the right hand. The fourth system concludes the introduction with a final chord and a fermata.

Narrator:

We were very tired, we were very merry— We had gone **back** and forth

A

pp
(fade and continue under reading)

stop

(*Rec. stays*)

The narrator's vocal line is written on a single staff with a treble clef. It begins with a box labeled 'A' above the first measure. The piano accompaniment is written on a grand staff. The right hand plays a simple harmonic accompaniment, while the left hand plays a rhythmic pattern. The piano part includes a section marked 'pp' (pianissimo) with the instruction '(fade and continue under reading)'. A 'stop' instruction is placed above the piano part, and a fermata is shown below the piano part with the instruction '(Rec. stays)'.

all night
on the ferry.

It was bare and bright,
and smelled like a stable –
But we looked into a fire,
we leaned across a table,

We lay on a hill-top
underneath the moon;

p *mf* *smoothly*

(approximately synchronize reading with music)

And the whistles kept blowing, and the

B *a tempo* (♩. = 72)

p in the background *simile* *with pedal*

dawn came soon.

rit.

cresc.

(as an aside to the audience)

very tired...

very merry...

Slower

C *a tempo, jaunty* (♩. = 72)

f *p* *mf* *Red.*

We were very tired, we were very merry— We had gone back and forth
all night on the ferry;

poco rit.

music stops reading continues

And you ate an apple, and I ate a pear,
From a dozen of each we had bought somewhere;

And the sky went wan, and the wind came cold,
And the sun rose dripping, a bucketful of gold.

D **E** Slightly slower

p
with pedal

accel.

a tempo (♩. = 72)

Musical score for the first system, featuring piano accompaniment in G minor with a forte (f) dynamic marking.

rit.

read more slowly (tired)

We were very tired, we were very merry,
We had gone back and forth all night on the ferry.

F

Musical score for the second system, including lyrics and piano accompaniment with a piano (p) dynamic marking.

We hailed, "Good morrow, mother!" to a shawl-covered head,
And bought a morning paper which none of us read;
And she wept, "God bless you!" for the apple and pears,
And we gave her all our money but our subway fares.

Slower

Musical score for the third system, including lyrics and piano accompaniment with a piano (p) dynamic marking.

G *a tempo* (♩. = 72)

accel.

Musical score for the fourth system, featuring piano accompaniment with piano (p) and forte (f) dynamic markings.

knowingly
very tired...

smiling
very merry.

Quickly

8va -----

FREEZE –
Narrator and
Pianist hold
pose.

Musical score for the fifth system, including lyrics and piano accompaniment with piano (p) and forte (f) dynamic markings.

3'00"

short pause

2. Special Love

Henry David Thoreau (1817-1862)

After a short pause, NARRATOR walks to side of stage and appears to be greeting and petting a beloved animal friend.*

Moderate tempo ♩ = 72
tenderly

mf

p

mf *slightly frisky*

(“petting” motive)

(“cow shaking bell around neck” motive)

p

poco rit.
[tap piano ledge, upper end]

pp

A

spoken lovingly
How well-behaved are cows!

a tempo

p

8va-

*A good-natured pianist might accept the role of “beloved cow” in this scene.

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Or to share the shade,
Or to lick the dog held up,
like a calf,—

Though just now
they ran at him to toss him,—

Musical score for the first system. The piano accompaniment consists of two staves. The right hand has a dynamic marking of *f* and an 8vb octave sign. The left hand has a dynamic marking of *p*. The vocal line is on a single staff with lyrics.

They do not obtrude.

Their company is acceptable.

B Original tempo *rit.* **C**

Musical score for the second system. The piano accompaniment consists of two staves. The right hand has a dynamic marking of *mf* with the instruction "with dignity" and a dynamic marking of *p*. The left hand has a dynamic marking of *mf*. There is a *rit.* instruction and a *Red.* (Reduction) line below the staves.

For they can endure
the longest pause;
They have not got
to be entertained.

Very quickly

molto rit.

Musical score for the third system. The piano accompaniment consists of two staves. The right hand has a dynamic marking of *f* with the instruction "playfully" and a dynamic marking of *p*. The left hand has a dynamic marking of *f*. There are tempo markings of *Very quickly* and *molto rit.* and a *Red.* (Reduction) line below the staves.

D Original tempo

("petting" motive)

rit.

Musical score for the fourth system. The piano accompaniment consists of two staves. The right hand has a dynamic marking of *mf* with the instruction "tenderly" and a dynamic marking of *p*. The left hand has a dynamic marking of *mf*. There is a *rit.* instruction and a *Red.* (Reduction) line below the staves.

How well-behaved... How well-behaved... How **well**-behaved are cows.

(*2nd.*)

NARRATOR: a final pat on cow's head.

Quickly
*
mf

rit.
p

pp
8va

1'45''
short pause

*Pianist may shake head slightly while playing each “cowbell” motive, to simulate a calf shaking her bell.

NARRATOR gathers props for the next scene. These items have been left on the piano, hidden under a cloth napkin. They are a large cream puff (can be fake), a large Valentine's heart (or, better yet, a heart-shaped box of chocolates), and a musical score (unless the singer is singing from score). NARRATOR enthusiastically puts napkin at neck, and then begins to admire the props.

The music starts to play.

3. The Food of Love

Colonel Henry Heveningham (1651-1700)

The music starts once the NARRATOR has picked up the props and is admiring them.

Joyfully (♩ = 80)

Musical score for the first system, featuring a piano introduction in D major with a forte (f) dynamic.

NARRATOR lifts or throws cream puffs in the air whenever the “cream puff” motive is played

“cream puff” motive
[random white-note clusters]
to suggest cream puffs
floating in the air

(and perhaps also blows kisses)

Musical score for the second system, showing the “cream puff” motive in the right hand (RH) and both hands.

Narr: If

Musical score for the third system, continuing the piano accompaniment.

(approximately synchronize reading with music)

music be the food of love, sing on!

“cream puff” motive
(as before)

Musical score for the fourth system, including a vocal line and piano accompaniment.

Sing on 'til I am filled with joy; (a tempo) For then my listening soul you move (a tempo)

f joyfully *p*

Ped. _____

to pleasures that can never cloy. (a tempo) Slower, celebratory If music be the food of love! rit. **B**

p *mf*

Ped. _____

admiring props a tempo poco rit.

f *non dim.*

with pedal

addressed to a fictitious lover

Your eyes, your mien, that you are Pleasures invade so fierce
 your tongue **declare** music everywhere. both eye and **ear,** the transports
 are, they wound.

f *mf* *f*

Ped. _____

[release pedal after text in bold is spoken]

And all my senses feasted are,
though yet the treat is only... sound.

listen, hand cupped over ear

8^{va}-----

p

start slowly and accelerate

ped.----- *with pedal*

Music! Food! Love!

D *a tempo*

f

no rit.

* spoken rhythmically, while juggling props

If

(with pedal)

mu - sic be the food of love, if love be the food of mu - sic, if

E *Playfully*

p

tap

tap

8^{vb}-----

food be the love of mu - sic, if mu - sic lov - ers

*as if trying to find the right (most satisfying) combination of words to express one's delight with music, food and love!
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love food! If food be the mu-sic of la la la love, if the love of food be

taps

very delicately, colla voce

rit. *start slowly and accelerate*

mu - sic, and love be mu-sic, and love be food, and food and mu - sic and

rit. *8va* **F** *start slowly and accelerate*

(p)

(accel.) *abrupt stop*

la la la la la la

G *abrupt stop*

(accel.) **f** **mf** **Slowly**

Sure I must perish by your **charms**, unless you save me in your arms. With

Leg.

(approximately synchronize reading with music)

pleasures that can never cloy, sing on 'til I am filled with joy. For

H *a tempo*

p *cresc. poco a poco*

And. *simile*

then my listening soul you move, if music be the food,

mf *p*

And.

spoken slowly, grandly

if music be the food, if music be the food of love!

f *p*

a tempo, joyfully

"cream puffs"

8^{va}

f 8^{va}

To celebrate, NARRATOR throws cream puff and Valentine's heart props over shoulder, keeping hands held high.

PIANIST keeps hands elevated over keys, in celebration.

2'40" / Total: 7'40"
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