

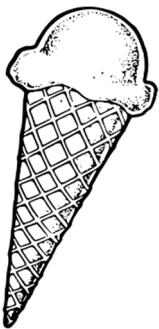


GWYNETH WALKER

Shoe Jazz

four songs on poems by Nikki Giovanni

for Mezzo-Soprano and Brass Quintet (or Piano)



1. First Chair
2. No Heaven
3. Shoe Jazz Blue Jazz
4. I Know the Song the Moon Sings

FULL SCORE

Shoe Jazz

duration 12:10

The texts for *Shoe Jazz* are found in a 2009 collection entitled Bicycles by African-American poet Nikki Giovanni (b. 1943). These poems speak to all ages – young and old. There is humor, tenderness, rhythmic energy and strength, with an over-riding message of *I am who I am!*

The opening song, “First Chair,” speaks of a desire to play first chair (the premiere seat in an orchestra section), but knowing *I’m too jazzy...I am Gospel...and Rhythm and Blues. I make my own music*. This song uses a swing rhythm almost throughout. The astute listener may hear the high octave motive (elevated) for the words *First Chair*. References to the music of Vivaldi and Beethoven provide contrast between “preferred” music, and the poet’s natural music.

“No Heaven” is a *pure* song, in the key of C Major. *How can there be no heaven, when rain falls gently on the grass*. A charming image comes with: *And little finches eat upside down*. Here the singer performs upward grace-note figures to suggest upside-down chords. The song ends very simply with *How can there be no heaven...when you smile at me*.

“Shoe Jazz Blue Jazz” makes reference to Miles Davis (iconic American jazz trumpeter). *Miles Davis – All Blues*. This is an especially, swing rhythmic, relaxed tempo song. The shoes come in many colors. Perhaps these are dancing shoes. But they also tap out any little ants scurrying across the floor! Vocal sounds enhance the rhythms: *ta-ta-ta-ta...*

“I Know the Song the Moon Sings” is an extended song, due to the expanded message of the poem. The mood ranges from ephemeral moonlight (gentle high *tremoli* in the accompaniment, singer with upward thoughts of the moon) to a more down-to-earth soulful singing (*I, too, am a motherless child*). The music briefly quotes from the spiritual, “Sometimes I Feel Like a Motherless Child.” However, this *motherless child* is full of energy, *running wild!* Thus, a refrain from “Shoe Jazz Blue Jazz” returns to close the set.

Poems

FIRST CHAIR

They say I'm too jazzy
For First Chair

I bring something different
And maybe something nice

But the orchestra is Baroque
And I am Gospel

It is Beethoven
And I'm Rhythm and Blues

It's piano
And I'm honking sax

My problem is:
I make my own muffins
Ice cream
And music

Not always the best
But all ways my best

I look good
And I dress well

I definitely have
Stage presence

I want to play
I want to play
I want to play

NO HEAVEN

How can there be
No Heaven

When rain falls
gently on the grass
When sunshine scampers
across my toes

When corn bakes
into bread
When wheat melts
into cake

When shadows
cool
And owls
call
And little finches
eat upside
down

How can there be
No Heaven

When tears comfort
When dreams caress
When you smile
at me

SHOE JAZZ BLUE JAZZ

Green shoes
Blue shoes
Red shoes
Good news

Bad news
Suede shoes
No ties
Loose pants

Pink shoes
 Shining
White shoes
 Whining
All shoes
 Dining
On the little ants

Your shoes
Her shoes
My shoes
Good news

His shoes
Those shoes
Miles Davis
All Blues

I KNOW THE SONG

I know the song
The moon sings
Though she only sings
To moonbeams
And to all the stars
That twinkle
In the night

I know the song
Her heart hears
Since she belongs
To no one
And there is none to hear
Her sing her song

I know to sing
The moon song
That mostly the moon
Sings alone
Bravely
Through the night

I know the song
The moon sings
I understand the harmony rings
That tinkle chiming for the sun

I, too, am
A motherless child
My heart and soul
Are running wild

I, too, am a motherless child

Shoe Jazz

for Mezzo-Soprano and Brass Quintet

Nikki Giovanni
from Bicycles 2009*

Gwyneth Walker

1. First Chair

$\text{♩} = 120$ swing eighths
with subtle energy, in a jazz style

Mezzo-Soprano

Trumpet 1 in C**

Trumpet 2 in C**

Horn in F

Trombone

Tuba

M-S

Tpt. 1

Tpt. 2

Hn.

Tbn.

Tuba

*Used with permission of the poet

**Parts for B♭ Trumpets are also available

80 *(cresc.)* *f*

M-S I want to play I want to want to want to play I want to play I want to want to want to play

Tpt. 1 *(cresc.)*

Tpt. 2 *(cresc.)*

Hn. *(cresc.)*

Tbn. *(cresc.)*

Tuba *(cresc.)*

84 **H**

M-S [Raise hand in the air and wave to get attention] *speak or shout enthusiastically*
I WANT TO PLAY!

Tpt. 1 *f*

Tpt. 2 *f*

Hn. *f*

Tbn. *f*

Tuba *f*

2. No Heaven

♩ = 100 or slower

M-S

Tpt. 1
Open
p gently, reverently

Tpt. 2
Open
p gently, reverently

Hn.
Open
p gently, reverently

Tbn.
Open
p gently, reverently

Tuba
Open *lightly tongued*
p gently, reverently
delicately

8

M-S
A
p gently
How can there be No Hea - ven When rain falls gent - ly on the grass When

Tpt. 1

Tpt. 2

Hn.

Tbn.

Tuba

46 *p* Ah Ah Ah *p*

M-S

Tpt. 1

Tpt. 2

Hn.

Tbn.

Tuba

52 **E** *f emphatically*

M-S

How can there be No Hea - ven When tears com - fort When dreams ca -

Tpt. 1

Tpt. 2

Hn.

Tbn.

Tuba

57 *p* *rit. to end* *(p)*

M-S

ress When you smile at me

Tpt. 1

Tpt. 2

Hn.

Tbn.

Tuba

3. Shoe Jazz Blue Jazz

[connector from the previous song]

♩ = 120, or slower

M-S

Tpt. 1

Tpt. 2

Hn.

Tbn.

Tuba

p gently, peacefully

p gently, peacefully

p gently, peacefully

Detailed description: This system contains the first five measures of the piece. It features six staves: M-S (Music Stand), Tpt. 1, Tpt. 2, Hn. (Trumpet), Tbn. (Trombone), and Tuba. The music is in 4/4 time. The Tpt. 2, Hn., and Tbn. parts have melodic lines with long slurs. The Tuba part has a simple bass line. The M-S part is mostly rests.

6

Free measure

rit.

M-S

Tpt. 1

Tpt. 2

Hn.

Tbn.

Tuba

mf

[may include a bit of a "Miles Davis style" solo, since he is mentioned in the lyrics]

p gently, peacefully

Detailed description: This system contains measures 6 through 9. Measure 6 is a 'Free measure' with a 'rit.' (ritardando) marking. The M-S part has a whole note rest. The Tpt. 1 part has a melodic line starting in measure 7 with a 'mf' (mezzo-forte) dynamic and triplets. The Tpt. 2, Hn., and Tbn. parts have melodic lines with slurs. The Tuba part has a simple bass line. The system ends with a key signature change to B-flat major.

9 **Relaxed tempo** (♩ = 120)
swing eighths

M-S *mf* Green shoes

Tpt. 1 ready Plunger mute *mf*

Tpt. 2 ready Plunger mute *mf*

Hn. *mf*

Tbn. ready Plunger mute *mf*

Tuba *mf*

14

M-S Blue shoes Red shoes

Tpt. 1 (closed)* (Open)

Tpt. 2 (closed)* (Open)

Hn. Mute with hand (closed)* (Open)

Tbn. (closed)* (Open)

Tuba

19 **[optional: non-pitched vocal sounds]** *mf*

M-S Good news Bad news ta ta ta ta ta ta Suede shoes

Tpt. 1

Tpt. 2

Hn.

Tbn.

Tuba

*The measure-by-measure alternating open and closed muting in the brass is intended as a parallel to the “off and on” vocal patterns.
 Walker | *Shoe Jazz* | 3. Shoe Jazz Blue Jazz

54

M-S ta ta ta ta_ tap ta ta ta ta_ ta ta ta ta_ tap ta ta ta ta_ ta ta ta ta_

Tpt. 1 tap Play tap Play

Tpt. 2 tap Play tap Play

Hn. tap Play tap Play

Tbn. tap Play tap Play

Tuba

59 **F** *p* whispered gleefully, not on pitch

M-S Green Blue Red

Tpt. 1 Plunger mute + *p*

Tpt. 2 Plunger mute + *p*

Hn. Mute with hand + *p*

Tbn. Plunger mute + *p*

Tuba tap *p*

65 *f* exclaimed *f* Clap hands

M-S Good news!

Tpt. 1 Open *f*

Tpt. 2 Open *f*

Hn. Open *f*

Tbn. Open *f*

Tuba Play *f*

4. I Know the Song the Moon Sings

Moderate tempo ♩ = 108
(straight eighths)

St. mute, shimmering, as moonlight

Tpt. 1 *p* 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3

Tpt. 2 *p* 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3

St. mute, shimmering, as moonlight

5

Tpt. 1 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3

Tpt. 2 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3

Hn. (Open) *mf cantabile*

10

Tpt. 1 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3

Tpt. 2 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3

Hn. 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3

15

Tpt. 1 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3

Tpt. 2 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3

Hn. Mute with hand *p*

19 **A** *p* gently, as moonbeams

M-S I know the song The moon sings— Though she on - ly sings To moon - beams And to

Tpt. 1 (*p*)

Tpt. 2 (*p*)

Hn. (Muted) (*p*)

Tbn. *p* lightly tongued

Tuba Muted *p*

23

M-S all the stars That twin-kle In the night_____

Tpt. 1

Tpt. 2

Hn.

Tbn.

Tuba

27

M-S *(p) smoothly* moon - - - beams, *pp* * moon - - - beams_

Tpt. 1

Tpt. 2

Hn.

Tbn.

Tuba

32

M-S I know the song Her heart hears_

Tpt. 1

Tpt. 2

Hn.

Tbn.

Tuba

B

*Cue-sized notes are an *ossia* for lower voices.

64 D *(mf)*

M-S brave - ly Through the night I know the song The

Tpt. 1

Tpt. 2

Hn.

Tbn.

Tuba

68 *p delicately*

M-S moon sings I un - der - stand the har - mo - ny rings That tin - kle, tin - kle chim - ing for the

Tpt. 1 *very lightly, silvery*

Tpt. 2

Hn.

Tbn.

Tuba

72 *poco rit.* **Slightly slower** *f forcefully (straight eighths)*

M-S sun I, too, am A moth - er - less child,

Tpt. 1

Tpt. 2

Hn.

Tbn.

Tuba

77 *rit.* **Slowly**

M-S *p*
I, too, am A moth-er-less child, I, too, am A moth-er-less child. My heart and soul Are

Tpt. 1 *p*

Tpt. 2 *p*

Hn. *p*

Tbn. *p*

Tuba *p*

82 *f emphatically*

M-S *f*
run - - - ning wild I, too, am a moth-er-less

Tpt. 1 *f*

Tpt. 2 *f*

Hn. *f*

Tbn. *f*

Tuba *f*

E ♩ = 120 *swing eighths*
[same tempo as "Shoe Jazz Blue Jazz"]

87 *jazz style* [non-pitched vocal sounds with brass] *start quietly and cresc. (to m. 95)*

M-S *p gently*
child ta ta ta ta_ ta ta ta ta_ Green shoes

Tpt. 1 *p start quietly and cresc. (to m. 95)*

Tpt. 2 *p start quietly and cresc. (to m. 95)*

Hn. *p start quietly and cresc. (to m. 95)*

Tbn. *p start quietly and cresc. (to m. 95)*

Tuba *p start quietly and cresc. (to m. 95)*

92 *(cresc.)* *f*

M-S Blue shoes Red shoes Good news Your shoes Her shoes

Tpt. 1 *(cresc.)* *f*

Tpt. 2 *(cresc.)* *f*

Hn. *(cresc.)* *f*

Tbn. *(cresc.)* *f*

Tuba *(cresc.)* *f*

97

M-S My shoes My shoes My shoes

Tpt. 1

Tpt. 2

Hn.

Tbn.

Tuba

All brass make non-pitched vocal sounds with singer or tap instrument

102

M-S Jazz shoes! ta ta ta

Tpt. 1 half-valve gliss. ("smear") (ta ta ta)

Tpt. 2 half-valve gliss. ("smear") (ta ta ta)

Hn. half-valve gliss. ("smear") (ta ta ta)

Tbn. half-valve gliss. ("smear") (ta ta ta)

Tuba half-valve gliss. ("smear") (ta ta ta)