

GWYNETH WALKER

I've Known Rivers

for Tenor Solo and Piano

1. My Soul has Grown Deep
2. Troubled Water
3. Jump Right In!
4. In Time of Silver Rain

I've Known Rivers

duration: 12 minutes

adapted from the Choral version commissioned and premiered by the Holland (MI) Chorale in 2008

I've Known Rivers is a set of four songs based on the poetry of Langston Hughes (1902-67), an African-American poet who lived much of his life in the Harlem neighborhood of New York City. However, Hughes was born in Joplin, Missouri, birthplace also of Samuel Clemens (Mark Twain). And, like Twain, he held a fascination for the Mississippi River and rivers in general. The theme of water is present in many of his writings.

My Soul has Grown Deep reflects upon rivers of historic and geographical importance – the Euphrates, the Nile and the Mississippi. As the rivers have endured over time, so has the human soul. The waters – the blood – runs deep.

In contrast to the universal message of the first song, *Troubled Water* is contemporary and personal. Water becomes an image of the unsettled and uncertain nature of love. The journey of love is a journey of troubled water. There is no resolution.

Undaunted by the elusive nature of love, the poet (Tenor) turns flippant, displaying a persevering and humorous outlook in *Jump Right In!* (to the river). Romantic misadventures will not conquer the spirit. “I could’ve died for love, but for livin’ I was born.”

In Time of Silver Rain is a song of healing. “In time of silver rain, the earth puts forth new life again.” And with the regeneration of Spring, the poet marvels at the wonder of life.

Widely performed throughout the country, the music of American composer **Gwyneth Walker** is beloved by performers and audiences alike for its energy, beauty, reverence, drama, and humor. 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. For nearly 30 years, she lived on a dairy farm in Braintree, Vermont. She now divides her time between her childhood hometown of New Canaan, Connecticut and the musical communities of Sarasota, Florida and Randolph, Vermont.

Gwyneth Walker has been a proud resident of Vermont for many years. 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. In 2012, she was elected as a Fellow of the Vermont Academy of Arts and Sciences.

Walker’s catalog includes over 300 commissioned works for orchestra, chamber ensembles, chorus, and solo voice. A special interest has been dramatic works that combine music with readings, acting, and movement. The music of Gwyneth Walker is published by E. C. Schirmer (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

I've Known Rivers

for Tenor Solo and Piano

Langston Hughes (1902-1967)

Gwyneth Walker

1. My Soul has Grown Deep

Gently flowing ♩ = 108

Piano

mf *p* *mf*

Ped. Ped.

4

p *mf* *p*

(Ped.) Ped.

7

mf *p*

Ped. Ped.

10

A *p* evoking the magic and mystery of rivers

I've known riv - ers:

A

p

p

Ped. simile

13

I've known

16

riv - - ers:

19 **B** *(p)* *poco rit.*

I've known riv - ers an - cient as the world and old - er than the flow of hu - man

B *poco rit.*

22 **Slower**

blood in hu - man veins. _____ My soul has grown deep like the

Slower

50 *rit.*

I've known riv - ers: _____ An - cient, dusk - y riv - ers. _____

rit.

53 **F** *Slower* *a tempo* (♩ = 108) *p*

_____ My soul has grown deep _____ like the riv - ers. _____

F *Slower* *a tempo* (♩ = 108) *p*

57

60 *p* *rit.* *cresc.*

I've known riv - ers, _____ I've known riv - ers. _____

p *rit.* *cresc.*

63 *f espr.* **G Slower**

My soul has grown deep, my soul has grown

cresc. **G Slower** *f*

(Ped.)

67 **H a tempo (♩ = 108)** *mf*

deep, my soul has grown deep like the riv - ers,

H a tempo (♩ = 108) *mf*

(Ped.)

71 *p*

like the

p mf p

(Ped.) (Ped.)

74 *rit.*

riv - ers.

rit. *(p)*

(Ped.) (Ped.)

2. Troubled Water

Flowing ♩ = 120

p gently

(p)

Ped.

6 A

mf cantabile

Be - tween us, al - ways,

A

mf

cantabile

Ped. *simile*

11

loved one, there lies this trou - bled wa - ter.

Ped.

16 B

mf cantabile

You are my sky, my

B

mf

cantabile

21

shi - ning sun O - ver trou - bled wa - - - - - ter.

p

Red.

26

You are my sky, my shin - ing sun o - ver

mf

C

Red.

32

trou - bled wa - - - - - ter. I

p

rit.

mf

Red.

37

jour - ney far to touch your hand. The trip is trou - bled wa - ter. We

D Slower
quasi recitativo, *p* (as a commentary), *mf*

D Slower
quasi recitativo

mf

p

76 *f* *accel.* **H** *a tempo* (♩ = 120)

this - This sea of trou - bled wa - - - ter,

f *accel.* **H** *a tempo* (♩ = 120)

8va

f

Ped.

82 *p* *rit.* **Ending 1* *Ending 2*

— This sea of trou - bled wa - ter. ter. —

p *rit.* **Ending 1* *Ending 2*

p *pp*

(*Ped.*) *Ped.*

88 *pp* *Slowly, freely* *accel.*

pp *Slowly, freely* *accel.*

p

* Use ENDING 1 if this song is to be performed individually. Use ENDING 2 if continuing on to *Jump Right In*.

3. Jump Right In!

With energy ♩ = 120

The musical score is written in 4/4 time with a key signature of one flat (B-flat). It consists of a piano accompaniment and a vocal line. The piano part features a rhythmic bass line with eighth notes and chords, and a treble part with chords and melodic lines. The vocal line is in the soprano register. Performance instructions include dynamics like *f* (forte) and *f* *boisterously*, and techniques like *gliss.* (glissando) and *[loud hand clap]*. The score is divided into systems, with measure numbers 4, 7, and 10 indicated at the start of each system. A box labeled 'A' is placed above the vocal line at measures 4 and 7. The piece concludes with a *Ped.* (pedal) instruction.

f

f *boisterously*

A

4 I went down to the ri-ver, I set down on the bank. I

A

7 tried to think but could-n't, so I jumped up and sank. I came up once and hol-lered! I

[loud hand clap]

10 came up twice and cried! If that wa-ter had-n't a-been so * cold I

Ped.

*Ossia if needed

13 (Opt.) B

might-'ve sunk and died. _____ But it was cold in that wa - ter!

gliss.

16 (Opt.) humorous falsetto

It was cold! _____

19 [Finger snaps] *sing f* C

ch ch ch ch ch I took the el - e - va - tor six - teen

[opt. vocal sounds]

22

_____ I

_____ I

25 [Clap]

stood there and I hol-lered! I stood there and I cried! If it had - n't a-been so

28 (Opt.)

high I might-'ve jumped and died. But it was

Ped.

31 **D**

high up there! It was high!

D

34 [Finger snaps]

ch ch ch ch ch ch

[opt. vocal sounds]

*Ossia if needed

62

Fine as wine! _____ Life is

65

fine, life is fine, life is fine,

Red.

68

life is fine. _____

p cresc. rit. ff

p sub. cresc. rit. ff

8va

Red.

4. In Time of Silver Rain

At a peaceful tempo ♩ = 92
 blurred and shimmering, as silver rain

p *Red.* *simile*

The piano introduction consists of two measures in 4/4 time. The right hand plays a series of chords in a descending sequence, while the left hand plays a steady eighth-note accompaniment. The first measure is marked *p* and *Red.*, and the second measure is marked *simile*.

3 *p peacefully*
 In

Measures 3 and 4. The vocal line (treble clef) has a whole rest in measure 3 and a half note in measure 4. The piano accompaniment continues with the same pattern as the introduction. The tempo marking *p peacefully* is present.

5 **A**
 time of sil - ver rain,

6 **A**

Measures 5 and 6. The vocal line (treble clef) has a whole note in measure 5 and a half note in measure 6. The piano accompaniment continues. The first measure of this system is marked with a boxed **A**.

7
 in time of sil - ver rain,

8

Measures 7 and 8. The vocal line (treble clef) has a whole note in measure 7 and a half note in measure 8. The piano accompaniment continues. The first measure of this system is marked with a boxed **8**.

9

the earth puts forth new

11

life a - gain,

13

green grass - ses grow and

15

flow - ers lift their heads, and o - ver all the plain the

rit. **Slower**

rit. **Slower** 8^{va}

18 *cresc.* *accel.*

won-der spreads, the won-der spreads of life, of life, of life, of

loco *accel.*

mf cresc.

Ped.

C *a tempo* (♩ = 92)

22 *f*

life!

C *a tempo* (♩ = 92)

f (*f*)

Ped.

25 *mf*

In time of sil - ver rain

p

(*Ped.*)

27 *mf*

the but - ter - flies lift silk - en wings

(*Ped.*)

50 *p* (Opt.)

flow - ers lift their heads _____ and ov - er all the plain, and

53 *cresc.*

o - ver all the plain the won - der spreads of _ life, of life, of

56 *(cresc.)* **G** *f* *rit. to end*

life, of life, _____ the

60 *(rit.)* *(rit.)* *f*

won - der, won - der of life!

Ped.