

8554

Were You There? - Gwyneth Walker

SATB Chorus and Piano

E. C.

Were You There?

Gwyneth Walker

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This new arrangement for mixed chorus with piano focuses on the inherent drama of this passionate spiritual song. Each verse expresses a different reaction to (question about) the crucifixion:

1. *Were you there when they crucified my Lord?*
2. *...when they nailed him to the cross?*
3. *...when the sun refused to shine?*
4. *...when they laid him in the tomb?*

At each new verse, the piano accompaniment varies within the mood of the lyrics—from simple chordal support at the beginning, to harsh rhythms (“nailed him to the cross”), to rapid “sunburst” patterns (“the sun refused to shine”), to sorrowful descending lines (“laid him in the tomb”). The choral expression is articulated in similar manner to the accompaniment.

Between the verses, interjections are inserted of “My Lord, my Lord, He was my Lord.” These phrases provide the personal, individual statements (“my Lord”) to balance with the group singing of the verses.

The piano accompaniment plays a featured role in this music. Often the tone of the ensuing verse is established in the piano. At the end, as the chorus descends into the lower range on the words “laid him in the tomb,” the piano line ascends, marked “the spirit rising.” These delicate patterns drift to heaven.

—Gwyneth Walker

Gwyneth Walker (b. 1947)

For more information, visit her website at:
www.gwynethwalker.com

Dedicated to Diane Chartrand, retiring Interim Minister of Music at Grace Church, Rutland, Vermont,
as a gift from the Sanctuary Choir and Eddie Wilkin, Interim Choir Director

Were You There?

for SATB Chorus and Piano

African American spiritual

Altered and with additional words by G. Walker

Gwyneth Walker

At a slow, somber tempo $\text{♩} = 100$

Piano

The musical score consists of five staves. The top staff is for the piano, marked with dynamic p and instruction "with pedal". The second staff is for Tenor (T) and Bass (B), with lyrics starting at measure 6: "Were you there when they cru - ci - fied my". The third staff is for Alto (A) and Bass (B). The fourth staff is for Soprano (S) and Alto (A), with lyrics continuing from measure 11: "Were you there when they cru - ci - fied my". The fifth staff is for Tenor (T) and Bass (B), ending with "Lord? _____". Measure numbers 6, 11, and 12 are indicated above the staves. Dynamics include p , f , and *unis.* p sorrowfully. Articulation marks like *simile* and *A* are also present.

4

15

Soprano (S) vocal line:

- Measures 15-16: "Lord?" (no break)
- Measure 17: "Lord, my Lord?" (no break)
- Measure 18: "Oh," (no break)
- Measure 19: "Oh," (no break)
- Measure 20: "Oh," (no break)

Alto (A) vocal line:

- Measures 15-16: "Lord?" (no break)
- Measure 17: "Lord, my Lord?" (no break)
- Measure 18: "Oh," (no break)
- Measure 19: "Oh," (no break)
- Measure 20: "Oh," (no break)

Tenor (T) vocal line:

- Measures 15-16: "Lord?" (no break)
- Measure 17: "Lord, my Lord?" (no break)
- Measure 18: "Oh," (no break)
- Measure 19: "Oh," (no break)
- Measure 20: "Oh," (no break)

Bass (B) vocal line:

- Measures 15-16: "Lord?" (no break)
- Measure 17: "Lord, my Lord?" (no break)
- Measure 18: "Oh," (no break)
- Measure 19: "Oh," (no break)
- Measure 20: "Oh," (no break)

Orchestra:

- Measures 15-16: Cello and Double Bass play eighth-note patterns.
- Measure 17: Cello and Double Bass play eighth-note patterns.
- Measure 18: Cello and Double Bass play eighth-note patterns.
- Measure 19: Cello and Double Bass play eighth-note patterns.
- Measure 20: Cello and Double Bass play eighth-note patterns.

B

19

Soprano (S) vocal line:

- Measures 19-20: "some - times it caus - es me to trem - ble, trem - ble,"

Alto (A) vocal line:

- Measures 19-20: "some - times it caus - es me to trem - ble, trem - ble,"

Tenor (T) vocal line:

- Measures 19-20: "some - times it caus - es me to trem - ble, trem - ble,"

Bass (B) vocal line:

- Measures 19-20: "some - times it caus - es me to trem - ble, trem - ble,"

Orchestra:

- Measures 19-20: Cello and Double Bass play eighth-note patterns.

23

Soprano (S) vocal line:

trem - ble. (no break) Were you there when they -

Alto (A) vocal line:

trem - ble. (no break) Were you there when they -

Tenor (T) vocal line:

trem - ble. (no break) Were you there when they -

Bass (B) vocal line:

trem - ble. (no break) Were you there when they -

Bassoon (Bassoon) instrumental line:

poco accel.

Reo.

26

Soprano (S) vocal line:

cru - ci - fied my Lord? (poco accel.)

Alto (A) vocal line:

cru - ci - fied my Lord?

Tenor (T) vocal line:

cru - ci - fied my Lord?

Bass (B) vocal line:

cru - ci - fied my Lord?

Bassoon (Bassoon) instrumental line:

poco accel.

cresc.

Reo.

6

C *f with intensity and urgency*

29

Soprano (S) vocal line:

My Lord, my Lord, my _____ Lord.

Alto (A) vocal line:

My Lord, my Lord, my Lord.

Tenor (T) vocal line:

Lord, Lord, my Lord.

Bass (B) vocal line:

Lord, Lord, my Lord.

Percussion (C) dynamic markings:

- C** *f with intensity and urgency*

Performance instruction: *poco rit.*

32

Slightly faster ♩ = 112, with motion

Soprano (S) vocal line:

,

Alto (A) vocal line:

,

Tenor (T) vocal line:

,

Bass (B) vocal line:

,

Percussion (C) dynamic markings:

- C** *f*
- C** *f*
- C** *f*
- C** *f*

Performance instruction: *Slightly faster ♩ = 112, with motion*

VERSE 2

D (Same tempo ♩ = 112)*mf dramatically*

35

T B

Were you there when they

D (Same tempo ♩ = 112)

Reo. Reo. Reo.

38

S A

They nailed him, they nailed him to the cross.

T B

nailed him to the cross?

41

S A

They

T B

Were you there when they

nailed him, and they nailed him to the

43

Soprano (S): nailed him, and they nailed him to the cross.

Alto (A): nailed him, and they nailed him to the cross.

Tenor (T): ⁸ cross? _____ Oh, _____

Bass (B): cross?

E

f

(Reo.)

46

Soprano (S): Oh, some - times it caus - es me to

Alto (A): Oh, some - times it caus - es me to

Tenor (T): ⁸ some - times it caus - es me to

Bass (B): **f** Oh, some - times it caus - es me to

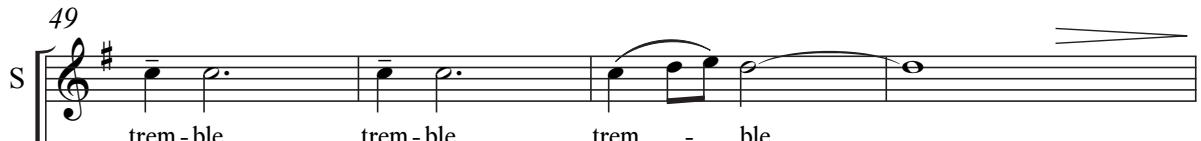
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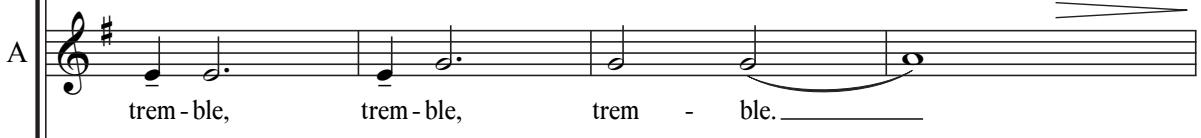
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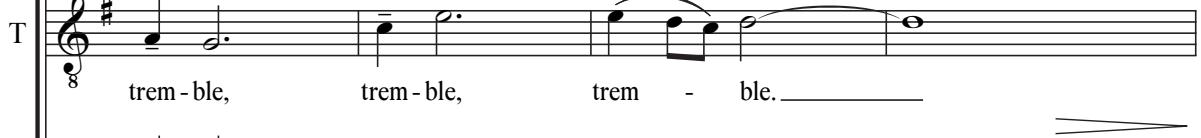
(no break)

(Reo.)

49

Soprano (S) 

Alto (A) 

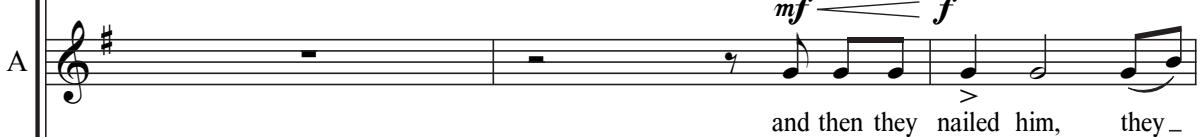
Tenor (T) 

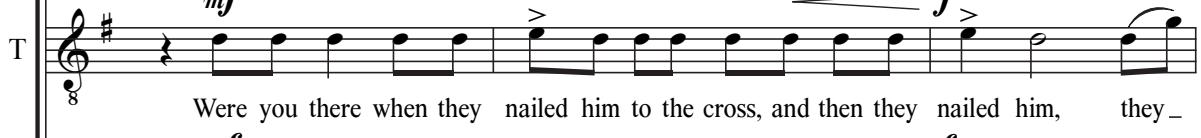
Bass (B) 

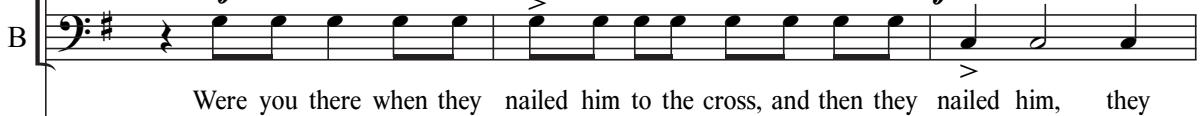


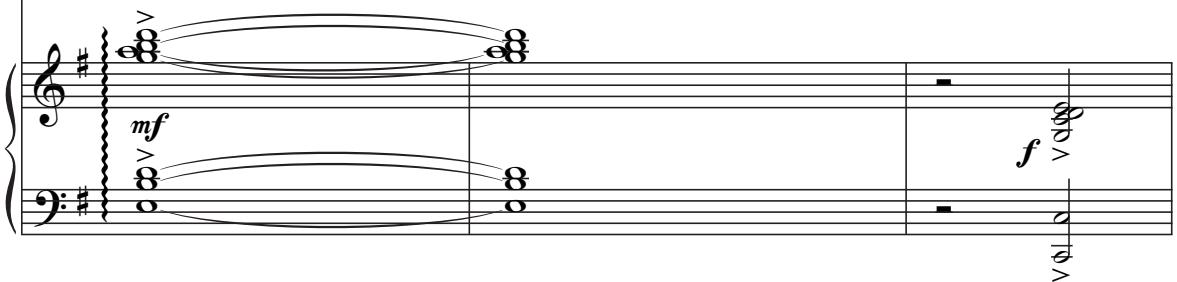
53

Soprano (S) 

Alto (A) 

Tenor (T) 

Bass (B) 



56

S > unis.

A

T

B

nailed him to the cross? _____

F

(f) with intensity and urgency

59

S

A

T

B

My _____ Lord,

(f) with intensity and urgency

My _____ Lord,

(f)

Lord,

(f)

Lord,

Lord,

(f)

62

Soprano (S), Alto (A), Tenor (T), Bass (B) parts shown.

my Lord, my Lord, my Lord, my Lord,

Lord, my Lord, my Lord, my Lord,

Lord, my Lord, my Lord, my Lord,

Reo. *Reo.*

11

(maintain tempo)

Suddenly slower ♩ = 100

and tenderly unis. p

65

Soprano (S), Alto (A), Tenor (T), Bass (B) parts shown.

Lord, my Lord, my Lord, He was my Lord,

Lord, my Lord, my Lord, Hm,

my Lord, my Lord, Hm, And then the

my Lord, my Lord, Hm, And then the

Reo.

(maintain tempo)

Suddenly slower ♩ = 100

and tenderly

Basso continuo (Bc) part shown.

8vb *Reo.* *loc.*

VERSE 3

69 [G] *grandly* *f*

T sun re - fused to _____

B *grandly* *f*

sun re - fused to _____

[G] *p* *f*

8vb----- loco

71 *p*

S And then the

A And then the

T shine. *p*

B shine. *p*

dim.

3 *3* *3* *3* *3* *3* *3*

8vb----- *8vb-----*

73

S: *d.* *f*
sun _____ re - fused to _____
unis. *f*
sun _____ re - fused to

A:

T:

B:

{ *f*
Bassoon: *sub----- loco*
Reo.



75

S: *f*
shine.

A: *f*
shine.

T:

B:

{ *f*
Bassoon: *3* *3* *3*
Reo. *Reo.*



77 **H** *mf*
unis.

S Oh, some - times it caus - es me to
 A Oh, some - times it caus - es me to
 T ⁸ Oh, some - times it caus - es me to
 B Oh, some - times it caus - es me to

(no break)

H

81

S trem - ble, trem - ble, trem - ble.
 A trem - ble, trem - ble, trem - ble.
 T ⁸ trem - ble, trem - ble, trem - ble.
 B trem - ble, trem - ble, trem - ble.

H

84 *p*, **I** *f*

S And then the sun, the

A And then the sun, the

T And then the sun, the

B And then the sun, the

p, **I** *f*

S — 5 5 5 5

Bassoon: *8vb* *Loco*

(*Loco.*) *Loco.*

86

S sun, the sun

A sun, the sun

T sun, the sun

B sun, the sun

8 *Loco.* *Loco.*

With motion $\text{♩} = 112$

88 *unis.* **p**

S — re-fused to shine.

A — re-fused to shine.

T — re-fused to shine.

B — *unis.* re-fused to shine.

With motion $\text{♩} = 112$

lightly, as faint touches of sunlight

(*Reo.*) *poco ped.*

VERSE 4

J (Same tempo $\text{♩} = 112$)

(p) with sorrow and heaviness

92

S — And then they laid him in the

A — And then they laid him in the

J (Same tempo $\text{♩} = 112$)

(*Reo.*) *poco ped.*

95

S *tomb.* And then they laid him in the

A *tomb.* And then they laid him in the

T *(p) with sorrow and heaviness*
8 And then they laid him in the *tomb.*

B *(p) with sorrow and heaviness*
And then they laid him in the *tomb.*

sim. *poco ped.* *poco ped.*

99

S *tomb.*

A *tomb.*

T *cresc.* And then they laid him in... My Lord, my Lord,

B And then they laid him in the *tomb.* My Lord, my Lord,

K

sim. *cresc.*

K

103

Soprano (S) Alto (A) Tenor (T) Bass (B)

my Lord, my Lord. And then they laid him down.

my Lord, my Lord. And then they laid him down.

my Lord, my Lord.

(cresc.) **f**

poco ped.

107

L With motion

Soprano (S) Alto (A) Tenor (T) Bass (B)

And then they laid him in the tomb.

And then they laid him in the tomb.

L With motion

the spirit rising

5

dim. poco a poco to end

Soprano (S) Alto (A) Tenor (T) Bass (B)

And then they laid him in the tomb.

poco ped.

with pedal

118 (rit.) (p)

S Ah, _____ were you _____ there?

A Ah, _____ were you _____ there?

T Ah, _____ were you _____ there?

B Ah, _____ were you _____ there?

(rit.) (8va) (dim.) (Rd.)

let ring

4:30

This version completed: April 5, 2017
New Canaan, Connecticut

Originally for Soprano Solo and Piano and a part of the song set *Songs of the Spirit*, Catalog No. 8123.
A version for Women's Chorus (SSA) is also available, Catalog No. 8285.