

Please note that not all pages are included. This is purposely done in order to protect our property and the work of our esteemed composers.

If you would like to see this work in its entirety, please order online or call us at 800-647-2117.

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PROGRAM NOTES

The poetry of Emily Dickinson (1830–1886) is especially appealing due to the wide range of topics, diversity of mood and peculiar imagination of the poet. The writings are reflective, passionate, witty, sensuous, observant and ridiculously humorous. Her heart soars. Her mind pokes fun!

Emily was truly a New Englander. Her poems are understated and compact. Her love of Nature focuses on small things—birds, bees, meadows and a pond.

In creating the musical settings, the composer (herself a New Englander) endeavored to capture the spirit of the poetry, and of the poet, with songs diverse in style, and concise in form. Everything from romance to frogs is explored, briefly.

Great delight is taken in creating musical translations of the colorful imagery: the letters floating off on the breeze (“My Letter to the World”); the shimmering moonlight (“The Moon and the Sea”); a frog croaking in a bog (“The Frog in the Bog”); *hopeful* birds hopping about (“Hope” with Feathers); the *boat of passion* riding the waves and then settling into its mooring (“Passion”); the ship’s cannon firing in celebration (“Joy”); and the tiniest, lightest gifts of Nature (“All I Have to Bring”).

These are the poet’s *Letters to the World*. She lived as a recluse, yet her words took flight—traveling the universe as messengers of the soul.

Duration: 14 minutes

THE COMPOSER

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

THE POEMS

1. My Letter to the World

This is my letter to the World
That never wrote to Me –
The simple News that Nature told –
With tender Majesty
Her Message is committed
To Hands I cannot see –
For love of Her – Sweet – countrymen –
Judge tenderly – of Me

2. The Moon and the Sea

The Moon is distant from the Sea –
And yet, with Amber Hands –
She leads Him – docile as a Boy –
Along appointed Sands –
He never misses a Degree –
Obedient to Her eye –
He comes just so far – toward the Town –
Just so far – goes away –
Oh, Signor, Thine, the Amber Hand –
And mine – the distant Sea –
Obedient to the least command
Thine eye impose on me –

3. The Frog in the Bog

I'm Nobody! Who are you?
Are you – Nobody – Too?
Then there's a pair of us!
Don't tell! they'd advertise – you know!

How dreary – to be – Somebody!
How public – like a Frog –
To tell one's name – the livelong June –
To an admiring Bog!

4. Hope (with Feathers)

"Hope" is the thing with feathers –
That perches in the soul –
And sings the tune without the words –
And never stops – at all –

And sweetest – in the Gale – is heard –
And sore must be the storm –
That could abash the little Bird
That kept so many warm –

I've heard it in the chilliest land –
And on the strangest Sea –
Yet – never – in Extremity,
It asked a crumb – of me.

5. Passion

Wild Nights – Wild Nights!
Were I with thee
Wild Nights should be
Our luxury!

Futile – the Winds –
To a Heart in port –
Done with the Compass –
Done with the Chart!

Rowing in Eden –
Ah, but the Sea!
Might I but moor –Tonight –
In Thee!

6. Joy

'Tis so much joy! 'Tis so much joy!
If I should fail, what poverty!
And yet, as poor as I,
Have ventured all upon a throw!
Have gained! Yes! Hesitated so –
This side the Victory!

Life is but Life! And Death, but Death!
Bliss is, but Bliss, and Breath but Breath!
And if indeed I fail,
At least, to know the worst, is sweet!
Defeat means nothing but Defeat,
No drearier, can befall!

And if I gain! Oh Gun at Sea!
Oh Bells, that in the Steeples be!
At first, repeat it slow!
For Heaven is a different thing,
Conjectured, and waked sudden in –
And might extinguish me!

7. All I Have to Bring

It's all I have to bring today –
This, and my heart beside –
This, and my heart, and all the fields –
And all the meadows wide –
Be sure you count – should I forget
Someone the sum could tell –
This, and my heart, and all the Bees
Which in the Clover dwell.

for Mezzo - Soprano and Piano

Gwyneth Walker

1. My Letter to the World

Gently flowing ♩ = 92

as a single leaf of paper floating off with a breeze

Piano

p delicately

with pedal

3

6

rit.

mf

p

mf cantabile

a tempo

a tempo

mf

This is my let - ter to the

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12

World that nev - er wrote to Me. _____ The

Ped. _____ *simile*

15

sim - ple news that Na - ture told - with ten - der Maj - es - ty. _____

18

Her Mes - sage is com - mit - ted to Hands I can - not see. _____ For

rit. *Slower (mf)* *p*

2. The Moon and the Sea

Start slowly *pp* gently, as moonlight *with pedal* *accel. poco a poco* shimmering tremoli

a tempo (♩ = 112) *p*

The Moon is dis - tant from the Sea and

a tempo (♩ = 112)

yet, with Am - ber Hands, She leads Him, do - cile as a

rit. mf *rit.* **Slightly slower** **Slightly slower**

p *a tempo* (♩ = 112)

Boy, a - long ap - point - ed Sands.

a tempo (♩ = 112)

p

16 *(p)*

He nev - er miss - es a De - gree, o - be - dient to Her

20 *mf*

eye. He comes just so far - to - ward the

24 *poco rit.* *Slightly slower* *rit. p (as a waning moon)*

Town - just so far, goes a - way.

poco rit. *Slightly slower* *rit.*

28 *(rit.)*, *a tempo* (♩ = 112)

(rit.), *a tempo* (♩ = 112)

(p) *with pedal*

3. The Frog in the Bog

With energy ♩ = 112

playfully
no pedal
Slower*mf* Looking at pianist

a tempo (♩ = 112)

finger to lips – “hushed”

13 *rit.*

know!

rit.

p

16 *a tempo* (♩ = 112), *as a tango* *p* *drearily*

a tempo (♩ = 112), *as a tango*
as a dreary bog How

f *gruffly*

20

drear - y, — drear - y, drear - y, drear - y, drear - y, —

p

23

— to be some - bod - y! How pub - lic like a

4. Hope (with Feathers)

Joyful tempo ♩ = 126

p lightly, birdlike

Hope is the thing with

p light and feathery

Rev.

feath - ers - that perch - es in the soul - and

(Rev.)

sings the tune with - out the words - and nev - er stops at

Rev.

mf with exuberance

all. Ho - ho - ho - ho - hope,

mf

Rel.

13

rit. (mf)

ho - ho - ho - ho - ho - hope. And

rit.

16 Relaxed tempo

sweet - est in the Gale is heard, and sore — must be the storm, that

Relaxed tempo

20

rit. Slowly *p* a tempo (♩ = 126)

could a - bash the lit - tle Bird that kept so man - y warm.

rit. Slowly a tempo (♩ = 126)

p

5. Passion

With motion ♩ = 112

f with passion

with passion f

5

9

nights! Wild nights! Wild

13

rit. **Slower**

nights! Were I with thee,

rit. **Slower**

8va

20

17

20

17

rit. *p*

wild nights should be our lux - ur - y, our lux - ur - y.

rit. *mf* *p* *(p)*

(Led.)

20

a tempo (♩ = 112)

mf espr.

20 *a tempo* (♩ = 112)

mf *espr.*

Fu - tile, the Winds, to a

a tempo (♩ = 112)

(p) *as tumultuous waves of romance*

mf

simile

23

23



Heart in port. Done with the Com - pass,

26

26

done with the Chart!

6. Joy

With a joyful bounce ♩ = 108

p

cresc.

slight pedal

4

(cresc.)

f

more pedal

7

LH

rit.

(pedal stays through break)

11

Start slowly and accel.

f *ecstatic*

with excitement ♩ = 120

'Tis so much joy! _____

Start slowly and accel.

accelerate into an unmeasured blur of sound

with excitement ♩ = 120

p

mf

(Ped.) _____ *Ped.*

rit.

'Tis so much joy! If

*Rec.*17 **Slower, as a recitative***mf**p*

I should fail, what pov-er-ty! And yet, as poor as I, have ven-tured all up-on a throw! Have

Slower, as a recitative20 *loco*

gained! Yes! Hes-i-ta-ted so. This side the vic-tor-

23

*accel.**a tempo* (♩ = 120)

y!

simile

7. All I Have to Bring

Singer pretends to write another letter, as in Song #1.

Lightly ♩ = 108, with moderate energy
as a single leaf of paper floating off with a breeze

The musical score is for the song "All I Have to Bring" and is written for voice and piano. It is in 4/4 time and the key signature has two flats (B-flat and E-flat). The tempo is marked "Lightly" with a quarter note equal to 108 beats per minute, and the mood is described as "with moderate energy as a single leaf of paper floating off with a breeze".

The score is divided into three systems, each with a measure number in the top left corner of the vocal staff.

- System 1 (Measures 1-2):** The piano accompaniment begins with a delicate, flowing melody in the right hand, marked *p* *delicately*, while the left hand provides a simple harmonic support. The instruction *with pedal* is written below the piano staff. The vocal line is silent, indicated by a whole rest.
- System 2 (Measures 3-4):** The vocal line enters in measure 3 with the lyrics "It's all I have to". The piano accompaniment continues with a wavy, sustained texture in the right hand, marked *pp* *barely audible background*. The vocal melody is marked *p* *gently, meekly*.
- System 3 (Measures 5-8):** The vocal line continues with the lyrics "bring to - day - this, and my heart be -". The piano accompaniment features a more active, rhythmic pattern in the right hand, while the left hand remains simple. The vocal melody is marked *with more strength cresc.*
- System 4 (Measures 9-12):** The vocal line concludes with the lyrics "side. This, and my heart, and". The piano accompaniment continues with a rhythmic pattern, marked *cresc.* in the right hand.

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30

12

(cresc.) *mf*

all the fields, and all the mead - ows wide.

(cresc.) *mf*

15

Strict tempo (as if counting time) *(mf)*

Be sure you count, should I for-get, some

Strict tempo (as if counting time) *(mf)*

(with pedal)

18

cresc.

one the sun could tell. This, and my heart, and

Red.

22

(cresc.) *f* *ecstatic* *rit.*

all the Bees which in the clo - ver dwell.

(“all of nature” scale) *cresc.* *f* *ecstatic arpeggios* *rit.*

with pedal *Red.*