

GWYNETH WALKER:
AN ANNOTATED BIO-BIBLIOGRAPHY
OF SELECTED WORKS FOR MIXED CHORUS

D.M.A DOCUMENT

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By

Richard L. Schnipke, B.M.E., M.M.

The Ohio State University
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Document Committee:

Dr. Hilary Apfelstadt, Advisor

Dr. Russel Mikkelson

Professor Richard Blatti

Dr. Timothy Gerber

Approved by:

Advisor
Music Graduate Program

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ABSTRACT

Gwyneth Walker (b. 1947) is one of the most prolific American choral composers living and writing today, having composed over 150 works for chorus as well as numerous works for solo voice, orchestra, band, chamber ensembles, and other solo instruments. Walker's music is truly reflective of the American spirit and has been compared to that of Aaron Copland. Her works are performed frequently by ensembles across the country and have become staples of contemporary choral repertoire.

This document serves as a practical guide for choral directors interested in programming Walker's music. It surveys all of Walker's works for mixed chorus that are categorized as unaccompanied, with piano, and with organ. These ninety-five pieces represent works that choruses could utilize with readily available forces, as most choruses have regular access to an accompanist. The description of the works is presented in the form of an annotated bibliography and includes information pertaining to vocal ranges, vocal and technical demands, basic musical elements, and difficulty level. The document also includes general and biographical information about Walker, as well as overall musical observations, supplemented by responses gleaned from a conversation between the author and the composer.

Dedicated to my parents

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VITA
RICHARD L. SCHNIPKE

April 18, 1970 Born – Bethesda, Maryland

1993.....Bachelor of Music Education
Bowling Green State University

1993-1995Assistant Choral Director
Oak Harbor Junior High and High Schools, Oak Harbor, Ohio

1995-1999 Choral Director
Archbold High School, Archbold, Ohio

1999-2001 Graduate Teaching Assistant
School of Music
The Ohio State University

2001..... Master of Music in Choral Conducting
The Ohio State University

2001-2002 Graduate Teaching Assistant
College-Conservatory of Music
University of Cincinnati

2002-2004Lecturer in Choral Music
School of Music
The Ohio State University

2004-present.....Choral Director and Performing Arts Department Chair
Olentangy High School, Lewis Center, Ohio

FIELDS OF STUDY

Major Field: Music
Conducting
Music Education

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Gwyneth Walker (b. 1947) is one of the most prolific American composers of choral music living today. In her early sixties, she has well over one hundred compositions for mixed chorus in her catalogue. These compositions range in duration from one to thirty minutes, vary in difficulty level (based on the abilities of the group for which the work was commissioned), and include a cappella works as well as accompanied pieces utilizing piano, organ, solo instruments, instrumental chamber ensembles and full orchestra.¹

My primary value is equality. As a Quaker artist, I believe that all musical endeavors are of equal (or, potentially equal) worth. The choir rehearsing on a weekday evening, perhaps in the less-than-glamorous basement of the church, strives to make music. As does the symphony orchestra, on Saturday night, on the concert stage. The school ensemble, the community chorus, the amateur chamber group and the professional touring artists are all musicians, all living a musical experience.²

As stated above, composer Gwyneth Walker strives for equality (in her work as well as in her life), therefore she writes music for many different genres, including not only choral music, but also music for solo voice, orchestra, band, instrumental chamber ensembles, and solo instruments. In keeping with this value of equality, she also works to create music that is accessible to performers of various abilities including junior high,

high school and university students, community and church volunteers, and professional musicians.

Although Walker holds high the value of equality, she maintains somewhat of a preference for the choral genre. In a 1999 interview with Gene Brooks, then Executive Director of the American Choral Directors Association, she stated:

...Some churches have excellent performances, and the people, from all walks of life that attend, listen attentively. I heard many fine choral music performances. I decided at that time if I could only write one kind of music, it would be choral, because people have always sung and always will sing. That is universal. It's not like Haydn writing for an instrument that no longer exists.³

In an article condensed from a talk given at the "Composing a Career" Conference sponsored by the Women's Philharmonic at The New School, New York, NY, Walker gave aspiring composers the following advice:

...we might remember that the majority of performing musicians in this country are singers. Church choirs and school/community choruses are always looking for new repertoire. One way to begin working with a local chorus is to attend a concert, to meet the conductor and singers afterwards...mention that one is a composer. Say no more, and wait for a response. In most cases the conductor and/or singers will express interest and ask if there is music for them. By all means, go home and write some, if you don't already have it on hand! There is no reason that if one writes a good choral work for community chorus it could not then be presented to a publisher. Performances by choruses around the country might result.⁴

Walker is clearly a strong advocate for adding to the repertory of choral music, whether for its ability to stand the test of time or for its use by countless ensembles across the country.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to provide choral conductors with a practical guide for selecting and programming Walker's unaccompanied and keyboard-accompanied works for mixed chorus. The largest portion of the document, in the form of an annotated bibliography, describes the vocal ranges, vocal and technical demands, basic musical elements, and difficulty level of ninety-five of Walker's compositions. This document also provides detailed information pertaining to the composer's life and overall compositional styles and traits, and serves as a tool not only for conductors in their search for repertoire, but also for others seeking insight into the work and life of this great contemporary American composer.

Need for the Study

Despite the popularity of Walker's choral works, there is relatively little scholarly research on her music to date. Only two doctoral documents on Walker and her compositions exist. The first, *The Choral Music of Gwyneth Walker: An Overview*,⁵ by Vicki Lynne Burrichter (D.A. University Northern Colorado 2003), focuses on eight of Walker's works, four of which are for women's voices. Burrichter's dissertation also contains substantial biographical information, including a transcription of a lengthy personal interview with the composer. The second document, *A Performer's Guide to the Songs of Gwyneth Walker*,⁶ by Tara Rene Field-Bartholomew (D.M.A. University of Cincinnati 2007), focuses on four of Walker's song cycles for solo voice. Field-Bartholomew's document also includes biographical information and both documents contain general musical observations about the specific works studied.

The Burrichter and Field-Bartholomew documents are available on Gwyneth Walker's comprehensive website, www.gwynethwalker.com.⁷ In addition to these two scholarly documents, this website also contains letters to and from the composer; articles and analyses by the composer and others; interviews with the composer; audio and video segments; and the composer's complete catalogue including sample recordings and program notes.

Many of the sources available at the website are reproductions of previously published periodical articles. The only other published source containing information about Gwyneth Walker is a book entitled *Composers on Composing for Choir*,⁸ edited by Tom Wine (2007). Walker is one of ten contemporary composers who give insight into their compositional process and procedures. The book also provides brief biographical and background information on each of the composers.

While the above sources provide insight into specific aspects of Walker and her compositions, to date there has been no large-scale study of Walker's works for mixed chorus. Burrichter states in her Recommendations for Further Study: "There are many mixed choral pieces not covered here, and those could be studied in whatever manifestation might seem important to the future author."⁹ Additionally, while Walker's website contains an impressive compilation of informative content, there is no current scholarly guide that aids conductors in selecting and programming Walker's works for mixed chorus. This document is designed to fill that gap.

Scope of the Study

The works surveyed for this document include three categories of Walker's choral catalogue: Mixed Chorus Unaccompanied, Mixed Chorus with Piano Accompaniment, and Mixed Chorus with Organ.¹⁰ Encompassing approximately ninety-five titles, these three categories make up the majority of Walker's output for mixed chorus. These compositions represent works that choruses could utilize with readily available force, as most choral ensembles have regular access to an accompanist. Some of these pieces are also voiced for women's or men's choruses, but only the mixed chorus versions will be considered in this document. Likewise, some of the selected keyboard-accompanied pieces have optional orchestral or wind accompaniments that will not be considered. The annotations will, however, alert conductors to the availability of these additional voicings and optional instrumentations.

Procedures

The first step in this process was to identify music appropriate to the study by searching composer's online catalogue which is available at www.gwynethwalker.com.¹¹ The second step was to secure copies of the music. The author obtained the musical scores from three sources. Walker's two publishers, E. C. Schirmer¹² and MMB Music,¹³ provided published works. The majority of the unpublished works, available in pdf format at www.gwynethwalker.com, were downloaded and printed. The few unpublished scores not available on the website were obtained via email correspondence with the composer's assistant, Jonathan Guilford.¹⁴ Guilford sent the author pdf versions of the scores via email for downloading and printing.

The third step was to examine each piece individually for musical characteristics, vocal ranges, vocal and technical demands, and level of difficulty. Following that, the author developed annotations combining his own findings along with additional information from Walker's website. Annotation structure was based on two similar previous bibliographic documents: *The Foundation of Artistry: An Annotated Bibliography of Distinctive Choral Literature for High School Mixed Choirs*¹⁵ by Linda Allen Anderson (2002) and *Canadian Music for Women's Voices*¹⁶ by Hilary Apfelstadt (1989). Chapter Four of this document contains a detailed explanation of the annotation procedure and organization of works.

It is important to note that the author considered using the choral rating system detailed in *Teaching Music through Performance in Choir: Volume 2*,¹⁷ compiled and edited by Heather J. Buchanan and Mathew W. Mehaffey (2007). As this system was created for works by a wide variety of composers spanning several centuries and stylistic periods, it was not deemed appropriate for describing numerous works by a single composer. Several descriptive characteristics in the rating scale do not apply Walker's music, while other characteristics, although relevant to Walker's works, are not included in the rating system. Because of that, the author developed an original difficulty rating system specifically for this document. For details describing that system, please see the beginning of Chapter Four, page 48.

While studying and annotating the selected compositions, the author noted many of Walker's characteristic musical traits and compared these with the observations made by Burrichter¹⁸ and Field-Bartholomew.¹⁹ At the same time, the author reviewed commentary and musical analysis (found on the website), by Walker herself and fellow

composer and personal webmaster Carson Cooman.²⁰ These findings were supplemented by a personal conversation between the author and the composer at the Michigan Choral Directors Association Annual Conference on October 31, 2008.²¹

In light of the lengthy personal interview transcribed in Burrichter's dissertation, it is the most comprehensive source for biographical information.²² (Field-Bartholomew²² also cites Burrichter for a portion of the biography.) Additional biographical data was gathered from *In Her Own Words, With Views of Her Beloved Vermont, a Video Interview* (2007-2008),²⁴ Walker's introduction to her website, as well as several other non-scholarly sources found on the website including letters to and from the composer, transcriptions of interviews, and newsletter articles.²⁵ Two especially informative web sources include *An Interview With Gwyneth Walker*,²⁶ by former ACDA Executive Director, Gene Brooks (1999) and *Walker Celebrates Lifetime of Composition*²⁷ by Chris Costanzo (2007). *Composers on Composing for Choir*,²⁸ the published volume mentioned earlier in this chapter, also provided biographical insight.

Personal correspondence with Walker,²⁹ her assistant, Jonathan Guilford,³⁰ and her webmaster, Carson Cooman,³¹ was accomplished via email. These communications garnered answers to general questions concerning Walker's catalogue, current and future projects, and meeting arrangements.

Organization of the Study

Chapter Two comprises a biography of Gwyneth Walker including information about her childhood, family life, musical influences and development, education, teaching career, locations of residency, and current life. Chapter Three describes

Walker's overall compositional styles, traits, and procedures. As it is imperative to a survey of her choral writing, a discussion of the selection and influence of text in her compositional process is also included in Chapter Three. Chapter Four contains an explanation of the annotation procedure and the annotated bibliography of the ninety-five unaccompanied and keyboard-accompanied works for mixed chorus. Finally, Chapter Five serves as a summary of the document, points readers toward other resources that might be helpful in learning more about Walker and her works, describes the composer's current and future compositional ventures, and gives recommendations for further study.

CHAPTER 2

BIOGRAPHY OF GWYNETH WALKER

In 1947, Gwyneth Walker, the youngest of three daughters, was born in New York City to John Walker, Jr., a physicist and inventor, and Adele Van Anden Frank Walker, a housewife who loved opera, genealogy, and traveling with her husband.¹ Before Gwyneth was a year old, the family relocated to a home in New Canaan, Connecticut where she spent the remainder of her childhood. At the age of two, after hearing her older sister practicing the piano, young Gwyneth pulled herself up to the piano and not only started to mimic the sounds her sister had played, but also began to create musical sounds of her own. From this point forward, she has never stopped composing music. As a child, Walker received basically no formal musical training. After only a few piano lessons, where she was more interested in showing the teacher her new “compositions,” rather than practicing the assigned scales and exercises, the piano teacher suggested to her parents that she might be best left to explore music on her own terms. By the age of six she had, however, taught herself how to read and notate music, and during elementary school, she created her own compositions, wrote them down, and recruited her friends to get together for performances on toy instruments.² This continued

through junior high school, where she also began arranging rock and folk songs for her friends to sing in harmony.³

Having attended public school through junior high, Walker was enrolled in a private high school that was known for having strong music and athletic programs that were both of interest to the adolescent Gwyneth. It was in high school that Walker first formally studied music theory and where she also arranged music and wrote some original compositions for her girls' singing group.⁴ She was also quite skilled in the game of tennis and played on the school tennis team.

High school was also an important time for Walker as this is when she connected with her Quaker faith that plays such a major role in her life and in her music. While attending a tennis camp in high school, Walker stumbled upon a Quaker meeting. What she heard in the meeting affected her immediately and deeply.⁵ Having been raised and active in the United Church of Christ, the young Walker was not familiar with the Quaker faith, but after telling her mother of her experience, she learned of her mother's Quaker family lineage.

I told my mother at the end of the summer how much I'd liked the Quaker meeting. She said, "Oh! That's interesting, dear. Did you know you come from seven generations of Quakers on Long Island?" And I said, "No." It's the most important thing in my life, and I'm sure that they just claimed me! My ancestors were lying around saying, "Whom can we get to speak our values out there – to go out into the world and say Quaker things? Oh! This one – this one here ought to do!" And so they got me.⁶

After high school, she attended Brown University and originally studied physics, but the musical offerings in the course catalogue immediately caught her interest. She was quickly admitted to the music program and exempted from a majority of undergraduate theory and aural training courses. At Brown, Walker wrote for the Brown

Orchestra, sang in the select singing ensemble and wrote all of their arrangements. Her main composition teacher at Brown was Paul Nelson,⁷ and while attending the Aspen Music School during a summer, she studied with French composer, Darius Milhaud.⁸ Walker also spent some time on the Brown tennis team but eventually had to resign from the team due to conflicts with musical rehearsals. Prior to her graduation, Walker was privileged to have the Rhode Island Philharmonic give a reading of her first symphony.⁹

As a graduate student at the Hartt School of Music, where she received her masters and doctoral degrees in composition, she studied with Arnold Franchetti (a student of Richard Strauss and son of the Italian opera composer, Alberto Franchetti) and taught classes in ear training, keyboard harmony, and music theory. Having never taken these classes, Walker had to use the course textbooks and teach herself before presenting information to her classes. A doctoral teaching fellow, Walker was also the first doctoral student in composition at the Hartt School. While there, she also continued to write and arrange for many different types of groups.¹⁰

Dr. Walker taught at Oberlin Conservatory of Music from 1977-80, and at the Hartford Conservatory for one year (1981-2). She taught mostly advanced students, since she was trained in Schenkerian analysis and other more modern theoretical foundations and other professors were not. Besides Music Theory and Analysis, she taught Ear Training and Composition, the latter most often to students who were interested in folk music or other non-traditional forms.¹¹

While at Oberlin, Walker also spent some time coaching the tennis team.¹²

Though she enjoyed her teaching and coaching, she felt an intense calling to compose. Walker realized the time consuming demands and responsibilities of her academic faculty position were impeding her capability to compose and, in 1982, at the age of 35, Walker

decided to give up teaching in order to pursue writing music on a full-time basis and has been doing so ever since.¹³

Since retiring from academic teaching twenty-six years ago, she has resided in a home that she rents on a dairy farm in Braintree, Vermont where she has devoted her life to composing music and to taking care of the business matters which allow her to earn a living doing what she loves most. Walker considers herself a true “New-Englander,” is a proud resident of Vermont, and in the year 2000, was the recipient of the “Lifetime Achievement Award” from the Vermont Arts Council. She enjoys living in the rural, lower middle-class town and takes much of her inspiration from not only the scenic country-side in which she lives, but also from the down-to-earth people who live there and in the surrounding communities.¹⁴

Pulling a good deal of inspiration from the texts she sets, Walker favors American writers and specifically New England poets including Emily Dickinson and e.e. cummings. She also feels very connected to New England composers of the past like William Billings and Charles Ives, considering herself to be linked to these and other notable composers who hail from the north east.

Many of Walker’s ideals and influences both musically and personally come from her Quaker faith which is central in her life.

"I owe so much to my Quaker faith," she said emphatically. "It helped me realize that composing is what God wants me to do." Later she responded to a fan letter, "... music is a gift from God...if one pursues this craft, develops one's skills ... this is a form of worship."¹⁵

Her egalitarian values also stem from the Quakers and compel Walker to work for balance in her catalogue, including works for a great variety of instrumentations and

voicings as well as for musicians of varying training and ability. She additionally believes in an honest day's work, craftsmanship in her product, learning and working to improve her skill set, and integrity in her life and in her compositional process. It is these values that have allowed Walker to build a life where she can follow her true passion and calling and have the ability and business sense to earn a living doing so.¹⁶

Often compared to Aaron Copland because her music embodies an American spirit, Walker does not feel her overall compositional style has been directly influenced by any of her predecessors or contemporaries. Rather, she feels that since she began composing at such an early age, with very little constraint or criticism during her formative years, she has been able to develop a style that is all her own. Many of her influences came from the folk, rock, and other popular styles that she was exposed to and working with during childhood and adolescence and which are truly indicative of the American experience.¹⁷

Walker's current compositional efforts include creating men's chorus versions of many of the existing selections for mixed and women's chorus, and adding orchestration or brass and percussion parts to existing choral selections. Walker is also presently interested in incorporating dramatic elements into her work and has plans for new extended choral, staged and orchestral works that include this concept. An extended work for solo organ is additionally anticipated as Walker has accepted a commission from the American Guild of Organists for their 2010 national convention.¹⁸

Walker attributes much of her musical talent to her mother, who, though not a trained musician, always had a love for Italian opera¹⁹ and, as Walker learned in her mother's later years, had a great musical ear and the ability to easily harmonize melodies

while singing with her daughter.²⁰ Walker has never been married or had children.

Instead she has dedicated her life to her compositional career and her Quaker faith. In a response to elementary school children on this topic, she stated:

I am not married, and I do not have any children. Composing music is a full, complete life. And, my musical compositions are my "children." I created them, and I love them, just as I would create and love children.²¹

Walker currently works seven days a week, composing three to four hours daily and spending another five to six hours each day on administrative business relating to her compositions.²² True to her background as an athlete, Walker continues to believe in the importance of an active lifestyle and strives to walk, swim, and play tennis regularly to compensate for her sedentary career as a composer.

"I will never retire," she said flatly. One thing is certain. She is leading exactly the sort of life she has always wanted, doing exactly what she has always liked to do, and creating much joy for others through her efforts.²³

CHAPTER 3

MUSICAL OBSERVATIONS

The harmonic and rhythmic vocabulary of Gwyneth Walker has been described as open, sparse and very American. The formal construction has been observed to be tightly-knit.¹

Carson Cooman² and other musicians³ have described Walker's compositional style as American in spirit, comparing her to Aaron Copland. Her music is accessible yet interesting, familiar yet not predictable, and truly enjoyable to both performers and audiences alike. This musical language has resonated with people across the nation, and made Walker a favorite composer of American high school, community, university, and church choirs and conductors.

In surveying nearly one hundred of Walker's works for mixed chorus, the author has discovered numerous musical characteristics that reappear frequently. As expected, not all of these traits are present in every piece. Comments on these characteristics have been organized into the following categories: Harmonic/Melodic, Textural, Rhythmic, Structural/Architectural, Accompanimental, Expressive, and General Observations. Following the author's original survey of the scores, he had the opportunity to meet with Walker and discuss his observations.¹ Her responses, as well as observations by other

scholars, aid in explaining some of Walker's general style traits and compositional processes.

Harmonic/Melodic Characteristics

“The harmonic language is both simple and complex, typical of the composer's style.”⁵

Walker's harmonic language is clearly tonal and while fairly straightforward, it is not simplistic. Depending upon the text and overall inspiration for each piece, Walker incorporates techniques such as adding dissonance, altering scale degrees (often times giving a modal feel), and writing open harmonies (fourths and fifths) to help her create the desired effect. Throughout Walker's work, many sonorities reappear. Walker favors major chords with added major seconds and/or sharp fourths. She also frequently uses major seventh chords and open chords (no third present) with added flat two and/or sharp four chord tones. Many of her more dissonant sonorities are built by stacking seconds or thirds beyond the range of an octave. The use of these various dissonant chords leads one to infer an influence of jazz and popular music on Walker's writing. She also sometimes utilizes stacked fourths, or quartal harmonies.⁶ This “stacking” of various intervals, as well as the addition of traditional non-chord tones, are Walker's methods of using dissonance to add interest or to create tension in her works.

Frequent common tone modulations and chromaticism also help create interest by incorporating harmonically unexpected moments within Walker's fairly traditional style. Harmonies in her choral part-writing generally tend to expand and contract rather than move in parallel motion, a hallmark of good voice-leading and a characteristic that helps

make Walker's compositions so singable. One final notable harmonic characteristic is the establishment of chords or patterns in the vocal parts that are then altered by a change in the accompaniment. The following three examples illustrate this technique, each in a slightly different manner. One of the simplest illustrations comes from *I Have Called You*. Here, in measures 24 through 28, the chorus is singing octave "F's" while the accompaniment moves through a series of sonority changes.

The image displays a musical score for the song "I Have Called You". It is divided into two sections. The first section, starting at measure 22, features four vocal staves (Soprano, Alto, Tenor, Bass) and a piano accompaniment. The lyrics are: "You be - long to me." for Soprano and Alto, and "I am your Re - deem - er. You be - long to me." for Tenor and Bass. The piano accompaniment consists of a steady eighth-note bass line and a chordal accompaniment in the right hand. The second section, starting at measure 28, shows the vocal parts and piano accompaniment. The lyrics are: "When you" for Soprano and Alto, and "When you" for Tenor and Bass. The piano accompaniment includes a dynamic marking of *mf* (mezzo-forte) and a section marked with a 'B' in a box, indicating a change in the accompaniment's sonority.

Figure 1.

Ring Out Wild Bells illustrates a similar technique in measures 73 through 75 with the chorus sustaining a sonority including the notes F, G, C, and D, while the accompaniment provides the modulation.

The image displays a musical score for the hymn "Ring Out Wild Bells". It is divided into two systems. The first system covers measures 71 to 73, and the second system covers measures 74 to 75. The vocal parts are for Soprano (S.), Alto (A.), Tenor (T.), and Bass (B.). The piano accompaniment is shown in grand staff notation.

Measure 71: The vocal parts enter with the lyrics "Come, O come, ring in the com - mon love of good." The dynamics are *p* (piano) for the first half and *mf* (mezzo-forte) for the second half. The piano accompaniment features a steady eighth-note pattern in the right hand and a similar pattern in the left hand.

Measure 74: The vocal parts sustain a sonority of notes F, G, C, and D. The dynamics are *f* (forte). The piano accompaniment continues with the eighth-note pattern, featuring triplets in the left hand.

Measure 75: The vocal parts conclude with the lyrics "Come, O come. Ring". The dynamics are *mf* (mezzo-forte). The piano accompaniment continues with the eighth-note pattern.

Figure 3.

Walker’s melodic writing tends to favor the fourth scale degree and often pieces or sections have a Lydian quality. As mentioned above, the raised fourth scale degree is also prominent in her work, and pentachords utilizing this pitch are often present (especially in the accompaniments). Upon closer examination, one realizes that a focus on the fourth scale degree and recurrence of the raised fourth scale degree both point toward the Lydian mode. In our conversation, the composer stated that the Lydian mode has an “upward” or “lifting” quality due to the half step relationship between the fourth and fifth degrees. As will be discussed later in this chapter, Walker prefers texts that are uplifting, positive, or celebratory in nature. One might then infer that her affinity for the Lydian mode relates directly to her ability to express the text musically. A melodic fragment (in solfege, Do-Sol-Fi) found in the opening measure of several pieces can be used to illustrate this point. The piece *Feathers and Frogs* begins with this pattern, possibly depicting the “upward” flight of birds, especially with its high range:

Quickly, with energy ♩ = 132

Percussion (Tambourine)

Piano

p lightly, as a bird call

Figure 4.

In *Dazzling As the Sun*, the same opening fragment is perhaps used to represent the sun “rising.”



Figure 5.

Gifts from the Sea also utilizes this same theme, although this time Walker moves through the second scale degree instead of moving directly from one to five.



Figure 6.

The lowered second scale degree is also found frequently throughout Walker’s works and implies the Mixolydian mode. Walker states that she uses this mode to depict “downward” or “descending” motion or emotion.⁷ While other scholars have inferred this use of modal writing to be an influence of Walker’s background in folk music, Walker herself considers it utilizing her skills and training in a manner to best express the text or to set the atmosphere for each piece.⁸

Textural Characteristics

While Walker utilizes many different textures in her writing, homophony is definitely the most prevalent, especially in her a cappella works. As one might expect from a composer who gives utter importance to expressing the text, Walker confirms that the homophonic texture is the easiest way to convey the text to the audience.⁹ While homophonic texture is the most prevalent, a good deal of alternation between the men's and women's sections is also present, and enough contrapuntal writing exists to keep her music varied and engaging.

Walker also frequently utilizes soloists, singing on neutral syllables (i.e. "la la"), and repetition of words or short phrases in a motivic manner. These techniques allow the composer to vary the texture and timbre without the addition of instruments, and are especially noticeable in her unaccompanied works. *How Can I Keep From Singing?*, one of Walker's most popular choral pieces, provides an excellent example of her employment of neutral syllables. Throughout the work she uses "la's" to expand the piece, utilizing the singers to provide "instrumental" interludes. Measures 70 through 76 in the following example illustrate this technique.

14 [B] ♩ = 108
 mf
 I thank You God, I thank You God, I thank You God, I thank You
 mf
 I thank You God, I thank You God, I thank You God, I thank You
 mf
 I thank You God, I thank You God, I thank You God, I thank You
 mf
 I thank You God, I thank You God, I thank You God, I thank You

[B] ♩ = 108
 mf *tre corde*

16
 God for most this a-maz-ing day.
 God for most this a-maz-ing day.
 God for most this a-maz-ing day.
 God for most this a-maz-ing day.

sim.

Figure 8.

Sonorities built by utilizing both ascending and descending “bell-tone” type entrances across the voice parts also appear frequently throughout the surveyed works.

When asked about this particular characteristic, Walker’s response was pragmatic:

I’ve done that in a number of pieces...it sounds nice, it works well, and people can do it. It takes a little practice but it’s not difficult. Once they try it a few times, then they usually really get it...If it works well, you keep it in your arsenal or understanding of what is possible.¹¹

This “bell-tone” type technique is used in various pieces to create different effects. In the opening measure of *Chords of Love* it is used very quietly on a neutral syllable as a subtle introduction.

The image displays a musical score for the piece "Chords of Love". It consists of six staves. The first staff is a treble clef with a key signature of three flats and a 4/4 time signature, marked "Freely, slowly". The second, third, and fourth staves are also treble clefs, each with a piano (*p*) dynamic marking and a mezzo-moderato (Mm.) tempo marking. The fifth staff is a bass clef, also with a piano (*p*) dynamic marking and a mezzo-moderato (Mm.) tempo marking. The sixth staff is a treble clef, marked "Freely, slowly". The score illustrates the "bell-tone" technique, which is a subtle introduction on a neutral syllable, characterized by a specific melodic contour and dynamic marking.

Figure 9.

The final measures of *Hope is the Thing with Feathers* illustrate it once again on a neutral syllable, only descending, in a higher tessitura, accented, at a much louder and dynamic, and used in a more celebratory or playful manner.

Figure 10 is a musical score for a vocal ensemble and piano. It consists of six staves. The top five staves are vocal parts (Soprano, Alto, Tenor 1, Tenor 2, and Bass) in treble clef, with a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#). Each vocal line features a melodic phrase starting with a fermata, followed by the syllable "Ah," which is then repeated in a descending sequence. The piano accompaniment is on the bottom staff, in bass clef, and begins with a dynamic marking of *f* (forte) and an *(accel.)* (accelerando) instruction. The piano part features a series of ascending and descending eighth-note patterns, each marked with a fermata and a dynamic marking of *f*.

Figure 10.

We see the same technique used once again in *Now Let Us Sing*. Here it is both ascending and descending; the choir is singing the word “now” (also utilizing the repeated text motif characteristic mentioned above); depicting “pyramids of joy.”

Figure 11 is a musical score for a choir, labeled with a boxed 'D' and the instruction *(pyramids of joy)*. It consists of six staves. The top staff is a single vocal line in treble clef, with a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#). The word "now," is written below the staff, with a dynamic marking of *p* (piano) and a fermata above the note. The subsequent five staves show the word "Now," repeated in a descending sequence, with each note marked with a dynamic marking of *p* and a fermata above it. The bottom staff shows the word "Now," repeated in a descending sequence, with each note marked with a dynamic marking of *p* and a fermata above it.

Figure 11.

Another interesting characteristic is the simplification of texture leading to or at the climax of the piece. In these moments, the focus of the composition becomes very clear. Active accompaniments simplify or disappear entirely, choral parts generally move from sections of SA and TB alternation or contrapuntal scoring to Walker's favored four-part homophonic style, and rhythmic patterns simplify, even becoming staid, often employing primarily quarter-note and eighth-note rhythms. All of this is done once again to aid in clearly expressing the text at the most crucial point in the piece. Walker considers this characteristic simply good compositional practice.

...you need everybody singing that (the text) together. I suppose it would be possible to have a climax with everybody in a polyphonic setting and perhaps *Carmina Burana* may have examples of that...it's just not probably my style. I tend to be more direct in my message.¹²

Examples of this characteristic are found in numerous pieces including *The Dreamer of Dreams* and *A Song of Praise*. The former demonstrates this technique as it directly precedes the climax. Notice the rhythmic simplification, primarily homophonic texture, and absence of accompaniment from measures 65 through 71.

12

60 *(f) emphatically*
 world!
(f) emphatically
 it must
 world!
(f) emphatically
 it must
 world!
(f) emphatically
 it must
 world!
 world!

65 *(cresc.)*
 we are a-far with the dawn - ing and the suns that are not yet high.
cresc.
 we are a-far with the dawn - ing and the suns that are not yet high.
cresc.
 we are a-far with the dawn - ing and the suns that are not yet high.
cresc.
 we are a-far with the dawn - ing and the suns that are not yet high.

More slowly,
 freely
 And out of the in - fi-nite
 And out of the in - fi-nite

13

70 *(cresc.) rit.*
 mom - ing, in - trep-id you hear us cry:
(cresc.)
 mom - ing, in - trep-id you hear us cry:
(cresc.)
 mom - ing, in - trep-id you hear us cry:
(cresc.)
 mom - ing, in - trep-id you hear us cry:

[H] With energy
J = 112 unis, ff triumphantly
 We are the mu-sic
unis, ff triumphantly
 We are the mu-sic
ff triumphantly
 We are the mu-sic
unis, ff triumphantly
 We are the mu-sic
ff triumphantly
 We are the mu-sic

With energy
J = 112
 mom - ing, in - trep-id you hear us cry:
mf
 mom - ing, in - trep-id you hear us cry:
mf
 mom - ing, in - trep-id you hear us cry:
mf
 mom - ing, in - trep-id you hear us cry:

rit.
 mom - ing, in - trep-id you hear us cry:
mf
 mom - ing, in - trep-id you hear us cry:
mf
 mom - ing, in - trep-id you hear us cry:
mf
 mom - ing, in - trep-id you hear us cry:

rit.
 mom - ing, in - trep-id you hear us cry:
mf
 mom - ing, in - trep-id you hear us cry:
mf
 mom - ing, in - trep-id you hear us cry:
mf
 mom - ing, in - trep-id you hear us cry:

60 *(f) emphatically*
 world!
(f) emphatically
 it must
 world!
(f) emphatically
 it must
 world!
(f) emphatically
 it must
 world!
 world!

65 *(cresc.)*
 we are a-far with the dawn - ing and the suns that are not yet high.
cresc.
 we are a-far with the dawn - ing and the suns that are not yet high.
cresc.
 we are a-far with the dawn - ing and the suns that are not yet high.
cresc.
 we are a-far with the dawn - ing and the suns that are not yet high.

More slowly,
 freely
 And out of the in - fi-nite
 And out of the in - fi-nite

13

70 *(cresc.) rit.*
 mom - ing, in - trep-id you hear us cry:
(cresc.)
 mom - ing, in - trep-id you hear us cry:
(cresc.)
 mom - ing, in - trep-id you hear us cry:
(cresc.)
 mom - ing, in - trep-id you hear us cry:

[H] With energy
J = 112 unis, ff triumphantly
 We are the mu-sic
unis, ff triumphantly
 We are the mu-sic
ff triumphantly
 We are the mu-sic
unis, ff triumphantly
 We are the mu-sic
ff triumphantly
 We are the mu-sic

With energy
J = 112
 mom - ing, in - trep-id you hear us cry:
mf
 mom - ing, in - trep-id you hear us cry:
mf
 mom - ing, in - trep-id you hear us cry:
mf
 mom - ing, in - trep-id you hear us cry:

rit.
 mom - ing, in - trep-id you hear us cry:
mf
 mom - ing, in - trep-id you hear us cry:
mf
 mom - ing, in - trep-id you hear us cry:
mf
 mom - ing, in - trep-id you hear us cry:

rit.
 mom - ing, in - trep-id you hear us cry:
mf
 mom - ing, in - trep-id you hear us cry:
mf
 mom - ing, in - trep-id you hear us cry:
mf
 mom - ing, in - trep-id you hear us cry:

Figure 12.

A *Song of Praise* illustrates the characteristic as it happens directly in conjunction with the climax. Though the piece in general is fairly simple texturally, at the climax in measure 70, there is a noticeable rhythmic simplification and lack of accompaniment.

10

60 **J**

moun - tains rise, the plants and_ flow'rs,
mf lightly
 ...the flow-ing seas a-broad, the plants and_ flow'rs,
mf lightly
 ...the loft - y__skies, the
mf lightly
 ...the sun to fuel the day, the
p lightly

65

the moon shines full at Thy com-mand, and all the lit-tle stars, lit-tle stars o - bey. While
p cresc. *f*
 the moon shines full at Thy com-mand, and all the lit-tle stars, lit-tle stars o - bey. While
p cresc. *f*
 clouds and_ winds, the moon shines full at Thy com-mand, and all the lit-tle stars, lit-tle stars o - bey. While
p cresc. *f*
 clouds and_ winds, the moon shines full at Thy com-mand, and all the lit-tle stars, lit-tle stars o - bey. While
rit. *mf*
 Slower, grandly

Figure 13.

continued

Figure 13. (continued)

70 [K] 11
Slowly, freely
mf
all that take their life from Thee are ev - er in Thy care, Where - ev - er hu - man -
all that take their life from Thee are ev - er in Thy care, Where - ev - er hu - man -
all that take their life from Thee are ev - er in Thy care, Where - ev - er hu - man -
all that take their life from Thee are ev - er in Thy care, Where - ev - er hu - man -
f
Slowly, freely
cue size notes are for rehearsal only through measure 79

75
mp *p tenderly* *div. f unis.*
kind may be, where - ev - er hu - man - kind may be, where - ev - er hu - man - kind may be, the
mp *p tenderly* *div. f*
kind may be, where - ev - er hu - man - kind may be, where - ev - er hu - man - kind may be, the
mp *p tenderly* *f*
kind may be, where - ev - er hu - man - kind may be, where - ev - er hu - man - kind may be, the
mp *p tenderly* *div. f unis.*
kind may be, where - ev - er hu - man - kind may be, where - ev - er hu - man - kind may be, the

Rhythmic Characteristics

Many of Walker's rhythmic characteristics stem from the inherent rhythms and emotions of the texts she chooses. Brief meter changes are used to accommodate the flow of the text, and metered recitative is used to help express the text. Walker also

employs rhythmic subdivision (many times in eighth-note triplets) to propel the motion toward the climax. An example of this characteristic may be clearly seen in the following excerpt from *God Speaks to Each of Us*, where the accompaniment uses triplets in contrast to the paired eighth-notes in the choral parts.

The image displays two systems of a musical score. The first system, starting at measure 40, features four vocal staves (Soprano, Alto, Tenor, Bass) and a piano accompaniment. The vocal parts have the lyrics: "Just keep go - ing. No feel - ing is fi - nal." The piano accompaniment includes a treble clef staff with eighth-note triplets and a bass clef staff. Performance markings include "gradual cresc. to [E]" and dynamic markings "mf" and "p". The second system, starting at measure 43, features the same four vocal staves and piano accompaniment. The vocal parts have the lyrics: "Don't let your-self lose me." The piano accompaniment continues with eighth-note triplets. Performance markings include "rit." and dynamic markings "mf".

Figure 14. continued

Figure 14. (continued)

The musical score is divided into two systems. The first system starts at measure 46, marked with a box containing the letter 'E'. It features four vocal staves and a piano accompaniment. The vocal parts have lyrics: "Near-by is a coun-try they call life." and "Near-by is a coun-try they call life. You will know it by its ser-i-ous". The piano accompaniment includes a right-hand part with a tempo marking of $\text{♩} = 88$ and a *rit.* marking, and a left-hand part. The second system starts at measure 49 and features three vocal staves and a piano accompaniment. The vocal parts have lyrics: "Give me your hand." and "ness Give me your hand, give me your hand." and "ness Give me your hand.". The piano accompaniment includes a right-hand part with a *rit.* marking and a *mf* marking, and a left-hand part. Performance markings such as *f*, *p*, and *mf* are used throughout the score.

Hemiola and other patterns of rhythmic opposition (e.g. patterns of five against three) are also used regularly and are present in the accompaniment (right hand versus the left hand)

and in the accompaniment versus the voices. As in Walker's harmonic writing, the presence of jazz and pop influences is also apparent rhythmically.

The rhythmic language of Gwyneth Walker has been described as "American" – influenced by jazz and rock styles. Perhaps some examples of these influences might be helpful. One aspect of the American vernacular style of rock music is driven rhythms, epitomized by repeated regular note values, with accents...A specifically jazz-derived rhythm is syncopation.¹³

Another item of note is the frequent use of the tempo marking where the quarter note equals 120. This tempo appears repeatedly and is often marked "flowing." This is interesting, as quarter note equals 60 is common with many composers and has been compared to the beating of the human heart. Musicians and reviewers alike have described Walker's music as "energetic" or "athletic,"¹⁴ correlating with a quicker than average tempo.

Structural/Architectural Characteristics

Overall form and structure are paramount to Walker. She has said that her compositional process always begins with "fleshing out" the form or structure for the work.¹⁵ She has also mentioned the importance of conciseness in her compositions. Walker feels it imperative that pieces "do not ramble" or "over-stay their welcome."¹⁶ This is evident in the surveyed works. As very few are longer than five minutes and all of the short works that comprise larger sets can be performed individually, Walker's works tend to be compact and highly structured.

Various structural and architectural elements are common to the works examined for this study. Walker's introductions, especially in the accompanied works, tend to state thematic material that many times reappears at the end of the work. In several cases

introductions are also lengthy and endings are extended or delayed. Introductions also tend to feature themes in a high tessitura that appear in the right hand of the accompaniment.

Walker also employs the use of ostinato patterns extensively throughout her works. In accompanied pieces they often appear as triplet and quintuplet patterns in the accompaniment, and in the unaccompanied works the patterns sometimes pass among the voices. When asked about these patterns, the composer gave another practical response.

...if you happen to have an accompaniment...that is like the river flowing...when you've got a pattern, there's really no need to change this pattern every measure. You're just trying to say 'here is the river,' and you say it a few times and then the chorus sings. I don't really think the pianist would appreciate it if every other measure had a change just to be different...so I think that in the accompaniments, sometimes creating a pattern that repeats for a certain amount of time would make sense. It would be the simplest thing to do.¹⁷

Having been a folk singer and guitarist when in high school and college as well as a person of deep spiritual faith, Walker also finds inspiration in American folk music and hymn melodies. Approximately fifteen percent of the surveyed works comprise settings of preexisting material. Commenting on her talent for merging these types of music with her own style in a review of "River Songs (1996) for SATB Chorus and Chamber Orchestra," for *New Musica*, Carson P. Cooman writes:

There are a few composers with the ability to bring together a total synthesis of traditional material and their own musical ideas. The 1996 work by American Gwyneth Walker displays that she very well may be the greatest living exponent of this art. Perhaps not since Aaron Copland has there been a composer who is able to combine traditional American songs and spirituals so integrally with his/her own material so as to make them be totally fresh and original – without losing any of the power and flavor of the originals. Walker provides subtle modifications, amplifications, and repetitions of the words – combined with her own distinctive and lush harmonizations, new melodies and countermelodies, and skillful orchestral accompaniment.¹⁸

In an analysis of the same work, Cooman made the following additional observations.

River Songs is one of the finest examples in Walker's catalogue of what she calls "contemporary adaptations." A contemporary adaptation is an original composition which uses a piece of existing musical material, such as a folk song or a hymn tune. Although a contemporary adaptation is a kind of arrangement, it is far more extensive than a typical arrangement in terms of its departures from the source material. It may involve large additional amounts of original music (in addition to the source material) and/or new or additional text. Contemporary adaptations are very important to Walker's output.¹⁹

Walker's "contemporary adaptations" always stay true to the spirit of the original, while incorporating the new and unexpected. An interesting structural characteristic is the addition of an extra measure of music that acts as a bridge between verses or sections. This is especially true in settings of pieces like hymn-tunes and folk-songs that are traditionally strophic in nature. More often than not, these extra measures occur in the piano or organ accompaniment only and not in vocal parts. Walker's ideas on this and other techniques employed in these adaptations once again support her practical outlook.

Of course you think of what you'd like to do that's different. You don't want to just take that melody and put a new harmony with it. You change the meter like I did in *How Can I Keep from Singing?*, which was in triple meter. Or you might add a couple of measures which changes the whole rhythmic tempo of the piece...it's just a way of perhaps looking at the piece in a new way. And also sometimes folk-songs or familiar hymns just sort of go...and there's more to it than that. In other words the original isn't always maximizing the material. The original may have been kind of rough-hewn, just what somebody sang as it was and that person didn't have time to then go home and write it down and say "oh, I think another measure here would be nice." So, since I am writing it down, I have the luxury of fooling around with it and trying to see how it would be.²⁰

Accompaniment Characteristics

I think I have a knack for writing a good accompaniment so I'm encouraged to do that...and as you know I'm not a trained pianist, but I do the best that I can and it seems to be a contribution that I've been able to make.²¹

The vast majority of Walker's works possess some type of accompaniment. With well over one hundred works for mixed chorus in her catalogue, only eighteen are categorized as "unaccompanied." Within the pieces surveyed for this document, nineteen are with organ and nearly sixty are with piano. The composer suggests that the large number of accompanied pieces in her library is likely a result of several different factors. First, though she is not formally trained, Walker plays the piano "in her own way," and incorporating it, especially in her earlier works, was helpful to her compositional process. Second, though she does admire a cappella music, Walker feels that a cappella works tend to be performed less than those that are accompanied because many choirs, especially those that are less experienced, are concerned with the loss of pitch in a cappella pieces. This observation is once again in keeping with Walker's practical nature and desire to create "music for use." Finally, she comments on using the accompaniment to convey more thoroughly her musical thoughts: "Sometimes you wonder how you could ever express all you wanted to say if you didn't have an accompaniment...How would it all hold together?"²²

Consequently, it is important to point out some distinctive aspects of Walker's writing for piano and organ. In general, her accompaniments are accessible, especially those for organ. As Walker constantly strives to write music that is usable, she develops accompaniments that can be played by most church organists. The piano accompaniments, while characteristically more complex than the organ pieces, are always accessible to accompanists with good musical skills. Not a trained pianist, Walker writes piano parts that require strong musicianship skills more than technical facility. In the video introduction to her website, she mentions that during her few piano lessons as a

child, she didn't understand why the teacher insisted that she "put her thumb under." Consequently, later in the same video she states the following of her piano accompaniments: "They're quite playable because you don't have to put your thumb under. You can just play them!"²³ In a conversation with the author, Walker further expanded on this same idea.

I'm not sure it's the technique...I think it's the musicality, because the notes themselves lie well under the hand. But if somebody doesn't know how to read a quintuplet...or sometimes a change in meter or a change in key...the person needs to know how to read music, but they don't need to be a concert pianist. It's just that if somebody was used to only playing the very simple, they might take a look at all the notes on the page, before they realize that the notes lie well, and think, "this is going to be too much for me." But if they've had some training and played some then they say "I'm not afraid to look at this" and then say "oh, well that works really well," because I can play them myself.²⁴

Walker's accompaniments support her vocal writing and in many instances create the mood, essence, or texture of the piece while the choir sings the melodic ideas.²⁵ The accompaniments also often provide much of the rhythmic drive and forward momentum while the vocal lines are more sustained or flowing. One specific aspect of the accompaniments that is especially characteristic of Gwyneth Walker's writing is her use of the sixteenth-note quintuplet figures in the right hand. Once again in tune with the composer's practical sensibilities, she comments: "I use that a lot. We have five fingers, might as well use them!"²⁶ These figures appear extensively throughout her works and can be seen in the following examples from *More Love* (measures 49 through 54) and *Be My Defender* (measures 76 to 77).

49
dia - monds spark - ling_ bright, that can_ com - pare in *unis.*

52
Such *unis. p*
brill - ian - cy with those who are in_ the light.

Figure 15.

76
S
A
T
B
unis. f
Ah, _____

Figure 16.

Expressive Techniques

I didn't really know much about that element (the expressive qualities) of my music, but I had a review of an orchestral piece way back in the 1980's or earlier, and the critic said "Walker's ability to capture musical moods is magnificent."

You know, because in graduate school, it's not a topic of discussion and so I didn't really know. And then I read that, and as the years past similar things came up, I said, "I must have an ability to capture musical moods," because people always say that. And now I really just try to capture musical moods. I mean I'm not self-conscious about it, but I think this is obviously some special thing that is apparent in my music and I want to be sure I use that.²⁷

Walker's ability to express texts, feelings, and moods is a trait that sets her apart from her contemporaries. The incorporation of blurred pitch collections, vocal percussion, and rhythmic speaking are just a few of the techniques she uses to create images, evoke emotions, and paint text. Instructions like "barely audible" are used throughout her works in both the vocal parts and in the accompaniments to help evoke atmospheres. Walker also works to incorporate dramatic aspects including choreography, spoken text or narration, and conducting suggestions to make her compositions more entertaining for audience members. For example, in *Feathers and Frogs*, directions are included in the score for dramatic readings of the poetry prior to each movement.²⁸ Likewise, in *Slow Scythe*, the instruction "conducted in one sweeping scythe-like gesture per measure" is provided for the conductor.²⁹

Walker's affinity for American poetry is apparent throughout her catalogue. In keeping with the ideal of creating music that is accessible, she states that American poetry is "something the average person can come in the hall and understand."³⁰ A few of the poets whose texts she has set include e.e. cummings, Emily Dickinson, Christina Rossetti, and Langston Hughes. Walker uses music to evoke the images the poetry conjures in her mind and her compositions bring the poetry to life for audiences. In a 1998 issue of the *Choral Journal*, Richard Coffey says the following about her work:

Gwyneth Walker is a master composer with a fertile imagination and a knack for finding texts of such unusual imagery and beauty that one feels she will never run

out of words to set (and we hope not!). Walker always lets the poet speak first, and the music takes its shape thereafter. With never a wasted gesture, yet often with crucial and overwhelming repetitions, she grasps the mind of the poet, overlays it with inspired music, and sends it out to the rest of us...If you're a conductor, you should have a study copy of everything that Gwyneth Walker has written.³¹

Looking more closely at the texts Walker has set, the author found four themes that resonate: nature (or the farm), praise and thanks to God, love, and equality. In a conversation between the author and the composer, Walker quickly expressed that humor was missing from the list. "Almost everything I do, if it's a set of something, has something humorous in it. And that's because I love (humor). It's part of my nature. And also because it's great for an audience...we all like to see something funny and entertaining...What I wouldn't have of course are angry, or belligerent, or elitist texts."³² Two poets that Walker made special mention of are Thomas Merton and Langston Hughes. Merton's "very advanced spiritual poems" strongly appeal to Walker. Additionally, Walker has set such a large number of Hughes' poems that she has been granted a blanket license to use any work in his output.³³

Similar to the updating and reworking of musical material in her "contemporary" adaptations (described earlier in this chapter), Walker also tends to re-work texts, especially those in the public domain. In searching for an Easter text, Walker relates the following experience.

...I wanted to write an Easter anthem and I couldn't find anything and then I thought, oh, you know the Handel aria, *I Know that My Redeemer Liveth*, and then when I looked it up in *Messiah*, the lyrics aren't very good. It's all about death and worms...and I can't do that. And I found that there was this poem from the nineteenth century that was a little bit overly sentimental, but used those words...and I thought, now that's exactly what I want. But it didn't really have much of a punch at the end. So, I used the verses, I think I probably added some words, and then I took the first verse and reversed the order so that it ended very

powerfully. Instead of “I know that my redeemer lives, and on this earth again will stand. I know eternal life He gives with grace and healing in His hand.” That’s nice, but (for) the ending, that’s not enough. Oh it wasn’t “grace,” it was “power.” I took that out because with being a Quaker, we’re not into power. So, I thought for the last I would say “I know eternal life He gives. I know grace and healing is in His hand. I know, I know my redeemer lives for here on earth He has come again!” Now that’s really dramatic. So, you know, I took great liberties and the poem was in the public domain. And it’s an example of something that in it’s original was probably a nice hymn, but not riveting and it could be if you realized what really is the message, that Christ has returned, not that “grace and power are in His hand” ...³⁴

General Observations

In addition to the characteristics already described, Walker’s music reveals a sensitivity to vocal color. She writes masterfully for the voice, utilizing the natural color of the different voice parts to suit the text and mood of each piece. Her expertise in voice leading also makes her choral parts very singable. One exception is the fact that Walker’s tenor parts tend to have a fairly high tessitura with the majority of pieces containing at least a “high G.” While this is not problematic for more experienced singers, it can prove to be challenging for younger or untrained vocalists.

As Burrichter,³⁵ Field-Bartholomew,³⁶ and Cooman³⁷ have written about various aspects of Walker’s music, the author thought it important to inquire if there were any additional concepts the composer would like included in this document. Her immediate response described audience reaction to performances of her compositions.

In my video that my cousins had seen, that was their spontaneous reaction. They said, “This video covers everything, except it doesn’t really tell people about the experiences our audiences have.” ...and it just stuck in my mind, how do you communicate to people: now...if your chorus performs this score, the audience will be on the edge of their seat, and if you perform that other piece, the audience might not be? It’s very hard to describe that...obviously I’m the last one who could do it, because I can’t say, “This is going to be riveting, you’re going to love it!” But people in my hometown in Vermont always come to my choral concerts.

There was a line down Main Street just to get into this festival, because they know that whatever the chorus is going to sing is meant for them and that there are even audience participation parts of it too. So, you can't really lean back in your chair and zone-out because you may be asked to sing or yell or clap or something soon enough.³⁸

In summing up Walker's musical style, the composer herself provides the most concise explanation.

It has often been observed that the musical language of Gwyneth Walker is direct, accessible and yet holds the interest of the listener...As we have seen, the form is logical, yet also dramatic in nature. The rhythmic language is varied, and yet not overly-complex. And, the harmonic structures are basic (chords built in fourths, triads), yet shifting center and moving in unexpected directions often enough to avoid predictability. This is a simple and familiar vocabulary, used in new ways, with artistic purpose.³⁹

Throughout the process of examining the selected pieces, making musical observations, studying the writings of Walker and other scholars, and reviewing personal conversations, the author found one overarching trait that comes to the forefront.

Practicality permeates almost every aspect of this document. Whether it be in Walker's compositional techniques or musical ideals, or in the way she goes about her daily life, balancing her creative talent with her business sense, and her need for athletic release, Gwyneth Walker is foremost a practical person.

CHAPTER 4

ANNOTATIONS OF SELECTED WORKS FOR MIXED CHORUS

Despite the amount of helpful information about Walker’s music on the composer’s website (www.gwynethwalker.com), there is little provided pertaining to vocal and technical demands, vocal ranges, basic musical elements, and difficulty level. In order to provide a valuable tool to choral directors in their search for repertoire, this chapter supplements these details with the information Walker herself has made available. The compositions selected for this chapter come from three different categories in Walker’s catalogue: Mixed Chorus Unaccompanied, Mixed Chorus with Piano Accompaniment, and Mixed Chorus with Organ. They are included below imitating the organization of Walker’s catalogue. The annotations will be structured as follows:

Annotation Number	Assigned by the author of this study for organizational purposes. Unaccompanied entries begin with “U,” entries with piano accompaniment begin with “P,” and entries with organ accompaniment begin with “O.”
<u>Title</u>	<u>Including date of composition</u>
Set/Series	Listed as applicable
Publisher and Number	Most of Walker’s choral works are published by E. C. Schirmer, unpublished works are available from the composer
Commission/Dedication	
Voicing	Choral forces including divisi where applicable
Other Available Voicings	

Optional Instrumentations	Accompaniments intended to substitute for the original are listed without explanation. Optional instruments that can be used in addition to the original accompaniment are listed as “optional.”
Soloist(s)	
Vocal Ranges	Listed by voice part in accordance with the chart on the following page (<i>Figure 16</i>)
Text Source	May include author, dates, books of the Bible, etc.
Duration	
Text Designation	Sacred or Secular
Performance Comments	Specific observations concerning vocal and technical demands, musical elements, level of difficulty, and suggested performance ensemble type (high school, university, church, community, etc.)
Difficulty Level Rating	This rating allows choral musicians to ascertain the difficulty of a selection quickly, without reading the entire annotation. The Difficulty Level Ratings used in this document are as follows: Easy: Accessible to junior high, beginning high school, and less accomplished church choirs Moderate: Accessible to most high school, church and community choirs Moderately Difficult: Accessible to advanced high school, community, and church choirs, as well as collegiate ensembles Difficult: Accessible mainly to very advanced groups including university ensembles and professional choirs
Composer’s/Performance Notes	Walker has written notes for a large portion of her choral library. These comments generally deal with how the text has been set as well as some mention of compositional technique. Walker’s webmaster, Carson Cooman, is responsible for her catalogue. In some pieces, where Walker does not have notes, Cooman has written program notes. These comments are included when appropriate, and Cooman’s contribution is notated.

Vocal Range Chart

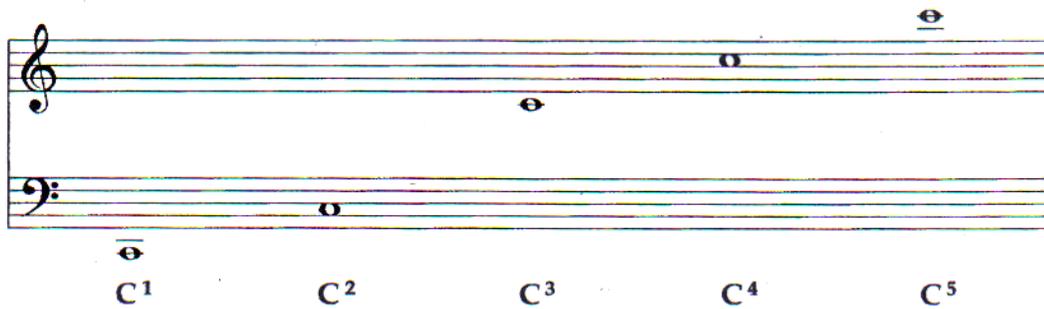


Figure 17.

Unaccompanied

U1.

Title	Benediction at God's Acre (2008)
Publisher and number	Unpublished, available at www.gwynethwalker.com
Commission/Dedication	Composed for the 275th Anniversary of the Congregational Church of New Canaan, Connecticut: 1733-2008; premiered by the Chancel Choir on June 8, 2008
Voicing	SATB (1 measure of optional 3-part women and optional 5-part men)
Vocal Ranges	S: D3-F [#] 4 A: B2-D4 T: D2-G3 B: G1-C [#] 3
Text Source	The Sarum Primer
Duration	1'20"
Text designation	Sacred
Performance Comments	

Benediction at God's Acre is a fairly simple, four-part, chorale-style piece.

Entirely in the key of D major, this one page work is set primarily in four-four time with one measure of two-four and two measures of six-four inserted in various spots to accommodate the text. The rhythms are sight-readable, though there are a few sixteenth-note patterns as well as both eighth-note and quarter-

note triplets. Though more contemporary than traditional and containing some dissonances, the harmonic writing is accessible and could be sung well by most church choirs. Groups that regularly perform choral benedictions would find *Benediction at God's Acre*, an accessible, useful, and lovely addition to their libraries.

Difficulty Level Rating Moderate
 Composer's Notes None available

U2.

Title	<u>Chords of Love (2002)</u>
Publisher and number	ECS #6238
Commission/Dedication	Commissioned for the combined choir of King Philip Middle School and Hall High School – West Hartford, CT, Lorri Cetto, Music Director
Voicing	Treble Voice(s) & SATB divisi
Vocal Ranges	Treble: C3-F4 S: C3-G4 A: B ^b 2-C4 T: F2-A3 B: F1-D3
Text Source	Adapted from the lyrics of “The Pilgrim’s Farewell,” an early American song found in <u>The Sacred Harp</u> (1844). The stanzas have been rearranged to end with the beautiful phrase: “To you I’m bound with chords of love.”
Duration	3’45”
Text designation	Sacred
Performance Comments	

Chords of Love sits solidly in the key of f minor for the duration of the work with few accidentals throughout. The SATB parts are written in straightforward homophonic texture with some sections of SA and TB alternation and a few short accompanimental figures that stray from this standard. The treble part provides the melodic line at the opening of the piece while the chorus hums to provide subdued chordal accompaniment. The majority of the remaining treble part is simply a repeat of this opening melody with slight alterations to the end of

the final phrase. In the few short sections where the treble voice(s) has new music, Walker has taken care to provide support from the soprano part of the chorus.

The most challenging portion of *Chords of Love* is the final page of music. Here, although no alteration to the key has been made, the harmonizations are more dissonant and lead to the final dramatic chord which contains the pitches F, G, A^b, B^b, C, and E^b. Overall, this work is accessible and would be well suited for church or community performances combining adult and children's choirs as well as for school groups of various levels like those of the commissioning groups.

The treble part could also effectively be performed by a soloist.

Difficulty Level Rating Moderate
Composer's Notes

The music is new, and yet reflective of the straightforward style of The Sacred Harp singing. This is New England simplicity. Chordal structures are sparse. The meter remains constant.

The song opens with a solo voice (or treble voices) expressing the Pilgrim's farewell to friends. This message is then taken up by the chorus in the first verse. A joyous refrain follows: "I'll march to the Promised Land. I'll land on Canaan's shore."

This alternation between Pilgrim solo, verse and refrain is repeated several times leading to the final verse: "For we believe His Precious Word: To you I'm bound with chords of love." The final cadence is achieved through the chorus building up a rich, nine-part "chord of love."¹

U3.

<u>Title</u>	<u>The Christ-Child's Lullaby (1988)</u>
Publisher and number	ECS #4380
Voicing	SATB (minimal S, A, and B divisi)
Soloist(s)	Alto II (extended), Alto I and Soprano (brief)
Vocal Ranges	S: C3-F4 A: G2-C4 T: C2-G3 B: B ^b 1-D3

	Alto II Soloist: G2-B ^b 3
	Alto I Soloist: E3-A3
	Soprano Soloist: A3-F4
Text Source	Traditional Hebridean
Duration	8'45"
Text designation	Sacred
Performance Comments	

While many of the chords and melodies used in *The Christ Child's Lullaby* are repeated throughout, the duration, transparency of texture, sustained quality, and dissonant harmonies make this piece challenging. The individual sections of the piece seem simple at first glance, but the links or transitions between these sections prove to be more difficult. The lengthy opening alto solo is accompanied in a canon-like fashion by the rest of the alto section in two-part divisi. In the copy, the composer suggests that this alto divisi might also be performed by a soloist or small group. While the alto I solo toward the end of the piece is simple, the soprano solo is a bit more challenging because of the tessitura and rhythmic nature of the writing. This piece is best suited for a university or advanced high school or church choir.

Difficulty Level Rating Moderately Difficult

Composer's Notes

The Christ-Child's Lullaby is a setting for SATB Choir of the traditional Scottish "Hebrides Lullaby." This is an extended and dramatic treatment which might be enhanced by spatial separation of the various soloists (portraying Mary) from one another and the chorus.

The work opens with an Alto solo singing a lullaby: "My love, my dear, my darling thou..." Her song is framed by other women's voices, in echo and answer. As the rhythmic activity increases, the full chorus enters, growing in speed and dynamics into a celebratory statement of "Alleluia."

The middle section features a gentle tapping rhythm (from some of the members of the chorus) accompanying the Alto solo, with the chorus offering occasional response. The taps are intended to keep the energy and excitement of the "Alleluias" behind the solo singing.

The full chorus returns in celebration. Solo women's voices proclaim "Hosanna to the Son of David!" As the chorus fades out, the opening Alto soloist returns with her lullaby and expression of unworthiness to tend to the Christ-Child. She sings alone at the end.²

U4.

Title	<u>Directions for Singing: An Educational Adventure for Chorus and Venerable Instructor (2003)</u>
Publisher and number	Unpublished, available at www.gwynethwalker.com
Commission/Dedication	Commissioned by the Thetford Chamber Singers, Valerie Miller, Music Director, in celebration of their 25th season (1978 - 2003).
Voicing	SATB (some S and B divisi)
Soloist(s)	There are speaking lines for the conductor and for a guest artist or actor to portray Professor John Wesley
Vocal Ranges	S: A2-G4 A: G2-C [#] 4 T: A1-A3 B: F1-C3
Text Source	Based on John Wesley's preface to the hymnal <i>Sacred Melody</i> (1761)
Duration	7'30"
Text designation	Sacred
Performance Comments	

The opening music for *Directions for Singing* is the traditional hymn setting of *A Mighty Fortress Is Our God*. The remainder of the piece is a series of musical responses (original music by Walker) to Wesley's directions. Much of the writing is in a traditional four-part, hymn-like style with some alternation between SA and TB voices. Compared to many of Walker's other works, the harmonies are more simple and less dissonant. Due to the fair amount of divisi in the soprano and bass voices, one would prefer an experienced smaller group or larger inexperienced group to handle this easily. Overall, this piece is accessible and could be sung well by high school, community, and church groups. Because of

the hymn-like style of the piece, organ could easily be used to double the voice parts throughout, making the piece even more accessible.

Difficulty Level Rating Moderate

Composer's Notes

Directions for Singing is a light-hearted educational adventure for Chorus and Venerable Instructor. Professor Wesley pays a visit to our local chorus. His ever-relevant instructions are taken to heart by the singers, who endeavor to follow his advice. Singing correctly, modestly and in time take some effort. However, the instruction to "sing lustily" seems to catch on quickly with the chorus.

Professor Wesley imparts his wisdom with a stern demeanor. However, once the lessons are completed and the singing abounds, he enjoys the fruits of his labor. In his own words: "Sing all, and with good courage!"

Performing resources:

Able-bodied chorus

Able-bodied conductor

Guest Artist to portray Professor John Wesley (does not need to know how to read music!)³

U5.

Title	<u>Every Night (When the Sun Goes Down) (1996)</u>
Publisher and number	ECS #5135
Commission/Dedication	Commissioned by the Thetford Chamber Singers, Thetford, VT, in memory of Diana Grimo, a friend and accompanist of the Chamber Singers.
Voicing	SATB (S divisi)
Soloist(s)	Baritone
Vocal Ranges	S: B2-A ^b 4 A: G2-C4 T: E ^b 2-G3 B: F1-E ^b 3 Baritone Soloist: A1-E ^b 3
Text Source	Traditional Appalachian
Duration	5'
Text designation	Sacred
Performance Comments	

Every Night opens with an eight-bar baritone solo that sets up the melodic and tonal structure for the piece. The soloist should have a lyrical voice and the ability to sing difficult intervals expressively. Most of the choral writing in this

piece is traditional with four-part homophonic sections, some canonic entrances, alternation between SA and TB, etc. The harmonizations are not difficult though Walker's signature dissonances are present. The biggest challenges in this piece come in the transitions and the key change. Sustaining good intonation in these areas might prove challenging for even advanced groups. Looking at Walker's overall choral output, one might classify the difficulty of this piece as intermediate. Because of the exposed choral and solo writing, it would provide a good challenge for high school and community groups and also be appropriate for collegiate ensembles.

Difficulty Level Rating Moderately Difficult

Composer's Notes

This arrangement of the traditional Appalachian song, *Every Night, When the Sun Goes Down*, focuses on the transcendence of faith over sorrow and of peace (through death) over suffering and pain:

True love, don't weep or mourn for me.

The Lord has come to set me free.

A new verse is added at the end:

And when I rise up in the sky,

If you look up quickly,

You will see me passing by.

On wings of silver, I will fly.

During this verse, the listener might hear a fluttering of wings ("la-la"s) from within the choral texture. This is to symbolize the spirit of a bird hovering close by.⁴

U6.

<u>Title</u>	<u>For Ever and Ever (1986)</u>
Publisher and number	ECS #4316
Voicing	SATB (S divisi, B divisi on one chord)
Soloist(s)	Soprano (extended)
Vocal Ranges	S: D3-A4
	A: A2-C4
	T: A2-G4
	B: G1-E3
	Soprano Soloist: D3-E4

Text Source The Lord's Prayer
Duration 4'
Text designation Sacred

Performance Comments

Like several of Walker's other unaccompanied pieces, *For Ever and Ever* also starts with a solo voice. Once again this singer needs to have a lyrical quality and an excellent sense of pitch. The aleatoric section at the chorus's first entrance that instructs singers within each section to "stagger entrances one beat apart to create a blurred, murmuring sound," would prove to be a challenge, especially for more inexperienced singers. As the piece contains many of Walker's signature dissonances, there are a couple of exposed difficult entrances (especially the tenors in m. 47). Overall, Walker's setting of The Lord's Prayer is haunting, dramatic, and accessible to many different choirs of varying experience and abilities. High school, church, community and university level ensembles would all be able to give effective performances of this work, provided they have experience singing a cappella music and are willing to work to master a few contemporary compositional techniques.

Difficulty Level Rating Moderately Difficult

Composer's Notes

This is a musical setting of "The Lord's Prayer" for unaccompanied SATB Choir, with Soprano soloist. The interpretation is dramatic and personal, featuring a solo voice offering the prayer.

At the beginning and end, the choir frames the soloist with gentle patterns repeated freely beneath the melody. The expression of the individual is apart from the group (choir). In the middle portion of this anthem, however, the full choir gathers into a crescendo on the word "glory."

As the music fades at the end, the melody rises on the words "Our Father...Amen." The solo voice is suspended above the choir.⁵

U7.

Title	<u>God's Grandeur (2001)</u>
Publisher and number	ECS #6046
Commission/Dedication	Commissioned by Opus 7 Vocal Ensemble, Seattle, WA, Loren Pontén, Music Director
Voicing	SATB divisi
Soloist(s)	SATB Quartet
Vocal Ranges	S: C3-B ^b 4 A: A2-D4 T: D-G B: E1-D3 Soprano Soloist: A3-G4 Alto Soloist: D3-D4 Tenor Soloist: C2-A4 Bass Soloist: C2-D3
Text Source	"God's Grandeur," "The Windhover" (excerpted) and "Pied Beauty," poems by English poet, Gerard Manley Hopkins (1844-1899)
Duration	7'
Text designation	Sacred
Performance Comments	

God's Grandeur consists of three individual sections of music that flow continually without break. The first section is mostly eight-part singing with many dissonant, contemporary harmonies. In the second section, the chorus mainly sings a repeated ostinato-like "la la" pattern while the four soloists share the text and the melodic material. In difficulty, the third section chorus parts are similar to the first with much divisi and contemporary harmonizations. Overall, this work contains some of Walker's most difficult writing due to the chord structures, duration, and divisi. *God's Grandeur* is likely best suited for university, select community, and professional choirs.

Difficulty Level Rating Difficult

Composer's Notes

The texts for *God's Grandeur* are three poems by English poet, Gerard Manley Hopkins (1844-1899). These poems, which are presented without break, are: "God's Grandeur," "The Windhover" (excerpted) and "Pied Beauty." The strong

common focus is the glory of God as especially manifested in the beauty of nature.

"He fathers forth whose beauty is past change: Praise Him."

The musical settings endeavor to allow the inherent rhythms of the words to speak. Therefore, especially in the first song, meters change often. The rhythms are fluid. The tempi accommodate comfortable articulation of the words.

Central images in the opening song are "The world is charged with the grandeur of God" [Triumphant octave leaps in the chorus to portray "charged"] and "...the Holy Ghost over the bent world broods...with ah! bright wings" [followed by fluttering of wings as "la-la"s]. The image of wings connects the first and second song (based on "The Windhover"). Against a fluttering background, soli voices sing this ecstatic poem: "I caught this morning morning's minion, kingdom of daylight's dauphin..."

The thrill of watching the bird in flight leads directly into the closing song: "Glory be to God for dappled things..." As in the opening song, this is triumphant music. Yet also tender ("finches' wings"). The combination of delicacy and grandeur is the essence of these poems, and of the musical settings.⁶

U8.

<u>Title</u>	<u>Give Over Thine Own Willing (1997)</u>
Publisher and number	ECS #5252
Commission/Dedication	Composed in celebration of the sesquicentennial of Earlham College, Richmond, Indiana, 1847-1997 and commissioned by the Earlham Concert Choir, Daniel Graves, Music Director
Voicing	SATB (S & B divisi, small amount of A divisi)
Soloist(s)	SATB Quartet
Vocal Ranges	S: C3-G4 A: G2-C4 T: E ^b 2-G3 B: F1-D3 Soprano Soloist: E ^b 3- E ^b 4 Alto Soloist: C3-C4 Tenor Soloist: A ^b 2-G3 Bass Soloist: C2-C3
Text Source	Adapted from the writings of Isaac Pennington by Paul Lacey
Duration	3'45"
Text designation	Sacred

Performance Comments

Give Over Thine Own Willing is an interesting and accessible work that could be used successfully with a church, community, or high school group that has a good basis in a cappella singing and contemporary harmonies. The piece sits solidly in the key of E flat throughout, the tessitura of the choral parts remains in reasonably comfortable ranges, and the choral writing, while containing some of Walker's characteristic dissonances, is straightforward. No once voice part is overly exposed and some of the more difficult transitions and modulations, found in many of Walker's other unaccompanied works, are not present here. Likewise, the writing for the solo quartet is not overly difficult, though the tenor part does tend to sit between middle C and the G above middle C. Soloists with mature vocal quality would be very important in helping the piece have its desired dramatic effect.

Difficulty Level Rating Moderate

Composer's Notes

The lyrics for *Give Over Thine Own Willing* are taken from the writings of Isaac Pennington, as adapted by contemporary author Paul Lacey. The message is one of setting aside personal ambitions and desires in order to allow God's will to grow within us and guide our lives. "And then you shall find...that the Lord knows and loves you, and will lead you to the inheritance of life."

Interspersed within these lines are lyrics from a Protestant hymn, "Take My Life, and Let it Be" (words by Frances Ridley Havergal, 1874), whose sentiments augment the Pennington thoughts. "Take my life, and let it be consecrated, Lord, to Thee." The hymn lyrics are presented most often in a quartet of solo voices which express the intimate and personal act of the individual giving over one's life to God.⁷

U9.

Title	<u>If Ever Two Were One (2003)</u>
Publisher and number	ECS #6227
Commission/Dedication	Commissioned by Stace Stegman as a gift to his wife, Sandra Frey Stegman, on the occasion of their 30th wedding anniversary, July 28, 2003 and premiered by the Bowling Green State University Collegiate Chorale
Voicing	SATB divisi
Vocal Ranges	S: D3-A4 A: A2-D4 T: F2-A3 B: G1-D3
Text Source	"To My Dear and Loving Husband" and "A Letter to Her Husband, Absent Upon Public Employment," poems by Anne Bradstreet (1612-1672)
Duration	3'15"
Text designation	Secular
Performance Comments	

With a good deal of divisi in all four voice parts and large, dramatic dynamic contrasts, *If Ever Two Were One* could be a challenge for small or younger choirs. Though the harmonies are consistent with the bulk of Walker's output, the piece sits solidly in the key of d minor for its entirety with very few accidentals, making it more accessible than some of her other works. There are some rhythmic challenges in the center section, where the sopranos have to sing a duple feel against the men's accompanying triplet patterns. This piece could be performed well by a good high school, community, or university chorus.

Difficulty Level Rating Moderately Difficult

Composer's Notes

The lyrics for this song are taken from two poems of Anne Bradstreet (1612-1672): "To My Dear and Loving Husband" and "A Letter to Her Husband, Absent Upon Public Employment." The first poem is a simple testament of loving devotion, while the second (a fragment of which is interspersed into the song text) portrays the pain of separation/distance, and the joy of reunion.

The musical setting unfolds in three sections. The first poem is presented in phrases which open as the lines diverge. A listener might imagine a flower opening. Or, the reading of the poem with a sigh of ecstasy after each line. The

intensity and range of the phrases increases until the words: "Then while we live, in love let us so persevere, that when we live no more, we may live ever."

The middle section laments the absence of the husband. As the Sopranos and Altos sing the new words, the Tenors and Basses quietly repeat a pattern of: "we may live ever" as a background. Finally, the voices join together to sing the passionate lines: "Flesh of thy flesh, bone of thy bone, I here, thou there, yet both are one." And then the opening section returns, more powerfully than before, concluding with a triumphant: "When we live no more, we may live ever!"⁸

U10.

Title	<u>Motherless Child (1996)</u>
Publisher and number	ECS #5131
Commission/Dedication	Commissioned by the GALA Choruses Festival V – 1996, Tampa, Florida
Voicing	SATB (some divisi)
Vocal Ranges	S: A2-A4 A: G2-D4 T: A1-A3 B: G1-D3
Text Source	Traditional African American Spiritual
Duration	5'30"
Text designation	Secular
Performance Comments	

While *Motherless Child* is primarily four-part writing and the amount of divisi is noticeably less than many of Walker's other a cappella works, this piece is fairly difficult and would require an accomplished ensemble to perform it well. The dissonant harmonies, exposed melodic material and the sustained nature of the piece make it so. In many of Walker's other works, the part-writing is such that dissonances are approached in a more accessible manner and they are often repeated either for several consecutive measures or throughout the piece. Here there is some repetition, but overall the harmonies (and tone clusters at times) are presented in a more disjunct manner. In addition, while the work never modulates out of the key of d minor, there are many accidentals and harmonic modifications throughout. The sustained nature of the work, a duration of more than five

minutes, and the several tempo and stylistic transitions in the piece combine to make this work one of Walker's more challenging compositions. *Motherless Child* is likely best suited for a university or professional ensemble, though a very accomplished high school or community group might also perform it well given adequate rehearsal time.

Difficulty Level Rating Difficult

Composer's Notes

Motherless Child is derived, in part, from the African-American spiritual "Sometimes I Feel Like a Motherless Child." The original song dates back to the era of slavery when it was common practice to sell children of slaves away from their parents.

In this new adaptation, the theme of separation or alienation (away from home, apart from one's community) is viewed as universal and eternal. Everyone at some time feels like a "motherless child."

But as one expresses these feelings, one realizes a common bond with humanity. And one is no longer alone.

Thus a more hopeful refrain is woven into the lyrics of the spiritual:

*Hold on.
Hold on.
We are together.
And we are one.*⁹

U11.

Title	One Faith (2007)
Publisher and number	Unpublished, available at www.gwynethwalker.com
Commission/Dedication	Commissioned by Union Avenue Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), St. Louis, Missouri, and premiered by the Union Avenue Chancel Choir in commemorating the 100th anniversary and renovation of the church sanctuary: 1907-2007
Voicing	SATB divisi
Vocal Ranges	S: D3-A4 A: A2-D4 T: F#2-G3 B: G1-D3

Text Source Adapted from the hymns: *In Christ There is No East and West*, lyrics by John Oxenham (1852-1941) and *All Things Bright and Beautiful*, lyrics by Cecil Frances Alexander (1818-1895)

Duration 4'

Text designation Sacred

Performance Comments

Though consisting of primarily homophonic texture, *One Faith* begins and ends with the same seven-part tone cluster that is built by adding one voice at a time.

The hymn-like style makes up the majority of the work, but more contrapuntal and rhythmically independent sections are interspersed to add variety and to help mark new thoughts or ideas in the text. In keeping with this straightforward feel, the piece is set almost entirely in four-four time with only a few measures of two-four and six-four, and the rhythms are simple and accessible. Conversely, the keys and harmonic structure are more complex, alternating between the keys of D major and G major with a good deal of dissonance in the vocal writing. Though several repeated sections do exist, Walker chooses sophisticated, contemporary harmonies, and with the lack of accompaniment to support the singers, most average choirs would find this piece quite an undertaking. Overall, *One Faith* would be best suited for collegiate level ensembles or accomplished church choirs.

Difficulty Level Rating Moderately Difficult

Composer's Notes None available

U12.

Title Peace Like a River (1989)

Publisher and number ECS # 4485

Commission/Dedication For the Palm Beach Monthly Meeting, The Religious Society of Friends, Lake Worth, Florida

Voicing SATB (some SATB divisi)

Vocal Ranges	S: C3-A4 A: B ^b 2-C4 T: C2-F3 B: B ^b 1-D3
Text Source	African-American Spiritual
Duration	2'30"
Text designation	Sacred
Performance Comments	

Peace Like a River is one of Walker's most accessible unaccompanied works.

Much of the work is written in a straightforward hymn-like, homophonic style with either all four voices singing together or with either the men carrying the melody and the women accompanying or the opposite. There is one polyphonic section (that the composer mentions in her note below), where the melodic material is passed among the sections and accompanied by descant-like "la la" material in the other voices. While there is some divisi in each of the four voice parts, the dissonances used here are fewer and are more accessible than those used in some of Walker's more difficult material. The work remains entirely in the key of F major throughout with no accidentals or harmonic shifts occurring during the piece. This piece could be performed well by many groups, but it might be most appropriate for good high school, community, or church choirs.

Difficulty Level Rating	Moderate
Composer's Notes	

Peace Like a River is an African-American Spiritual. The composer first heard this song as it was sung by the members of the Palm Beach, Florida Friends Meeting (Quaker) at the end of worship service. The singing was a beautifully calming experience.

As a gift for the Meeting, the composer arranged this song for SATB chorus. Each verse receives its individual setting.

The opening verse is marked "serenely," within the mood of the first time the composer heard the song. The second verse, "I've got pain like an arrow," brings the Tenors and Bases to accentuate the word, "pain."

"I've got strength like a mountain" is sung by the Tenors and Basses, with "ah's" in the Sopranos and Altos, as if lifting a heavy load. Then the fountain flows, with the melody framed by flowing counterpoint.

Determination is a very Quaker trait. This fifth verse is performed by all voices, forcefully. The ending is a celebration of the strength of the soul.¹⁰

U13.

<u>Title</u>	<u>The Right to Vote (1998)</u>
Publisher and number	Unpublished, available at www.gwynethwalker.com
Commission/Dedication	Composed in celebration of the Sesquicentennial of the Women's Rights Movement: 1848-1998
Voicing	SATB (some SATB divisi – more B & S)
Vocal Ranges	S: C3-G4 A: G2-B3 T: E ^b 2-G3 B: E1-E3
Text Source	Original text by the composer
Duration	5'
Text designation	Secular
Performance Comments	

The Right to Vote is interesting because its text, subject matter, and vocal dialogue style of composition (as mentioned by the composer below) make its performance use limited. It would fit well into a patriotic or historically-themed program, but would be difficult to fit into the context of a more common, varied choral concert. While the text is simplistic and the music seems straightforward at first glance, there are some challenges present. A good deal of divisi in the soprano and bass parts, the high tessitura of the tenor part, syncopated rhythmic patterns, and some interesting and not obvious modulations make this piece difficult for the beginning choir. Overall, this work is best suited for an accomplished community or school choir that is presenting some type of thematic program in which the piece would fit accordingly. Although the text designation for the work is listed above as “secular,” there are several references to God throughout the work. The

secular designation was given as the political themes of the work outweigh the sacred references. *The Right to Vote* is much more appropriate for use in a secular setting than in the context of a worship service.

Difficulty Level Rating Moderately Difficult

Composer's Notes

The Right to Vote was composed in celebration of the sesquicentennial of the Women's Rights Movement: 1848 - 1998. This work is essentially a dialogue between the voices of society at large (19th century), denying women the right to vote, and the voices of individual women working toward suffrage. At first, the dialogue is uneven. Many sing, "No! You can't vote!" Only a few voices answer, "But I believe that we are equal. I believe that we are free."

As the verses unfold ("No, you can't speak!" "No, you can't own a business!" "No, you can't express yourself!"), the women speaking for themselves expand their message. They grow in strength into a final flurry of "Yes! Yes! Yes!"

The Women's Rights Movement was initiated mostly by Quaker women. Therefore, in this song, the references to faith as the source of equality spring from the Quaker philosophy. And God is referred to as the One Teacher.

"And in God's eyes we are equal. And in God's eyes we are one!"

It is suggested for performance that the men and women stand on opposite sides of the stage, facing each other. This will visually enhance the dialogue. This is a dramatic presentation rather than a musical selection. The singing should emphasize rhythm and diction more than vocal tone.¹¹

U14.

Title	<u>The Road Goes Ever On (2006)</u>
Publisher and number	Unpublished, available at www.gwynethwalker.com
Commission/Dedication	Commissioned by the University of California Alumni Chorus for the University of California Choral Ensembles in memory of Ronni Kordell Gravitz
Voicing	SATB (little divisi)
Vocal Ranges	S: D3-F4 A: G2-D4 T: D2-A3 B: A1-D3
Text Source	From "The Lord of the Rings" (1954), by British author and Scholar, J. R. R. Tolkien (1892-1973)
Duration	2'30"
Text designation	Secular

Performance Comments

Being one of Walker's shortest unaccompanied works, *The Road Goes Ever On* provides a good opportunity for younger or less accomplished groups to tackle some of Walker's more sophisticated and signature harmonic writing.

Rhythmically, the work is dominated by repeated eighth note patterns that seem to be never ending and embody the text. Walker never officially modulates from the key of d minor, but there are several harmonic shifts throughout, especially the alternation of B flat and B natural in all four voices. Divisi is minimal, but occurs in the male voice parts to help with extremes of range. The final chord of the work calls for divisi in all four voices. *The Road Goes Ever On* could be performed effectively by a strong high school or community chorus. University and professional groups would also give strong performances with less rehearsal time needed.

Difficulty Level Rating Moderately Difficult

Notes by Carson Cooman

In the books, this song was written as a "walking song" by the hobbit doyen Bilbo Baggins and quoted and adapted by young Frodo Baggins. It celebrates the joy of a life filled with journey and adventure and everything that comes with it.¹²

U15.

<u>Title</u>	<u>Sounding Joy (1986)</u>
Publisher and number	ECS #4318
Commission/Dedication	Created especially for the "Sounding Joy! Singers," a small chorus from Randolph, Vermont – neighbors and friends of the composer
Voicing	SATB (AT divisi on final chord)
Vocal Ranges	S: D3-G4 A: D3-D4 T: D2-E3 B: D2-D3
Text Source	The Bible (Psalm 95)
Duration	2'
Text designation	Sacred

Performance Comments

Sounding Joy opens in a traditional hymn-like style and, as the composer states in her notes below, “evolves into more contemporary and joyous language.” This language alternates between polyphonic and homophonic phrases to the utilization of syncopated, almost pop-style rhythms, to the incorporation of short, layered ostinato patterns. This variance in style over very short sections of music provides one of the primary challenges in performing this work. While much of the piece is in the key of C major (with very few accidentals), another challenge arises as the tonality starts to shift with the incorporation of these different styles. These more contemporary harmonizations and shifting tonalities add interest to the work but do not, by any means, render it inaccessible. *Sounding Joy* is of moderate complexity and is well suited for use with smaller ensembles. Because of the traditional hymn-like opening and Biblical text, it would fit quite well within the context of a worship service.

Difficulty Level Rating Moderate

Composer’s Notes

Sounding Joy is based on a fugal tune by 18th-century composer and horse breeder, Justin Morgan, a resident of Randolph, Vermont. This new version starts with the original song, to be sung in rousing (perhaps four-square) early New England style. The music then evolves into more contemporary and joyous language, with syncopated rhythms and a bouncing bass. The energy builds into a final chord of mixed tonalities, perhaps an homage to New England composer Charles Ives.¹³

U16.

Title	<u>Two Prayers from “The Golden Harp” (1999)</u>
Set/Series	The Golden Harp
Publisher and number	Available from MMB Music, visit http://www.mmbmusic.com/ for purchase/rental information
Commission/Dedication	Commissioned by the Arkansas Chamber Singers
Voicing	SATB (little A and B divisi)

Optional Instrumentations	<i>Two Prayers</i> for chorus are unaccompanied, but if performing the entire “Golden Harp” set, string quartet or string orchestra parts are available from the publisher.
Vocal Ranges	S: D3-G4 A: B ^b 2-E ^b 4 T: E ^b 2-A ^b 3 B: F1-D3
Text Source	Bengali Poet, Rabindranath Tagore (1861-1941)
Duration	4’15” total
Text designation	Sacred
Performance Comments	

Two Prayers from “The Golden Harp” are the two a cappella movements from this seven movement work for chorus and string quartet. These movements are individually titled *This is My Prayer* (1’50”) and *Thou Art the Sky* (2’25”) and could be performed effectively as a pair or individually. (Because of the parameters of this study, the other five movements will not be considered in this document.) *This is My Prayer* (movement #3) is the simpler and shorter of the two movements. In the key of E flat throughout, and like some of Walker’s other more accessible pieces, it has no accidentals or modifications to the diatonic scale. There are, however, many of Walker’s characteristic dissonances present, which could provide a challenge for less confident singers. The texture is four-part homophonic writing with some alternation between SA and TB, and *divisi* is present only in the bass part for three measures. *Thou Art the Sky* (movement #5) is a bit more lengthy, complex, and challenging than its counterpart. The texture is much like the third movement with four-part homophonic writing and alternation between SA and TB and there are about four measures of *divisi* for both the bass and alto parts. Harmonically, there are many more variances with accidentals and temporary shifts in tonality throughout. The dissonances are also

greater in number and more difficult to sing. As a set, these pieces would probably be most easily performed by a college, university or professional chorus.

This is My Prayer alone, however, is much more accessible for church, school, and community groups.

Difficulty Level Rating Moderately Difficult

Composer's Notes

The Golden Harp is the result of a commission from the Arkansas Chamber Singers for a work for chorus and string quartet. The Chamber Singers wished to collaborate with the Quapaw Quartet (string quartet from the Arkansas Symphony) in presenting music written especially for the two ensembles.

The poetry of Rabindranath Tagore was suggested to the composer by a member of the Arkansas Chamber Singers. And indeed this poetry is well-suited to settings for chorus and strings. The poems are gentle and lyrical. The language is readily comprehensible and very singable. There are frequent images of floating and soaring -- images congenial to the string idiom, as the bows float across the strings, or musical lines soar into the high ranges of the instruments.

The opening song, "I Am Here to Sing Thee Songs," contains the phrase "When in the morning air the golden harp is tuned." This beautiful image of a stringed instrument captured the composer's imagination, and led to the title of the work.

All of the poetry selected for *The Golden Harp* is found in Tagore's collection, *Gitanjali*, published in 1913. The poems span the course of the poet's life. And the form of *The Golden Harp* mirrors this pattern. The work is divided into seven sections: triumphant at the beginning and close (#1 "Invocation" and #7 "Salutation"); more introspective in the interior sections (#2 "Beloved," #3 "Prayer," #5 "Thou Art" and #6 "My Tears of Sorrow"); and rising to a celebratory middle section (#4 "Light, My Light").

The message of *The Golden Harp* is spiritual, and yet very close to the center of human emotions. Tagore's poetry extols the beauty of the divine and the beauty of the soul within -- the beloved as creator, the beloved as lover. "Thou art the sky and thou art the nest as well."

Born in 1861 to an influential Bengali family, Rabindranath Tagore achieved fame as a novelist, playwright, poet, painter, lecturer, politician and composer. In 1913 he was awarded the Nobel Prize in literature, the first non-European to achieve such an honor. He died in 1941.¹⁴

U17.

Title	<u>This Train (1997)</u>
Publisher and number	ECS #5189
Commission/Dedication	Commissioned by the Oklahoma Choral Directors Association for the 1998 All-OMEA Chorus
Voicing	SATB divisi
Vocal Ranges	S: D3-A4 A: F2-C4 T: D2-A3 B: G1-D3
Text Source	Traditional American
Duration	3'45"
Text designation	Sacred
Performance Comments	

This rhythmic adaptation of the traditional tune keeps with the spirit of the original yet adds a contemporary flair indicative to Walker's compositional style. On the difficult yet not inaccessible side, the work includes a great deal of divisi and exposed singing for all four voice parts, some challenging rhythmic figures, several tempo changes, interesting yet tricky transitions, and wide dynamic variety, as well as a number of dissonant harmonies. Despite the challenges, choristers will find this piece exciting and enjoyable to sing. *This Train* is well suited for advanced high school and collegiate ensembles.

Difficulty Level Rating Moderately Difficult

Composer's Notes

This Train is a traditional American song which used the train as a metaphor for the way to heaven. "This train is bound for glory." Sounds of a train whistle and steam engine are interspersed with the music.

Additional lyrics have been added for contemporary relevance ("This train will stop at the ghetto...and at the factory door"). And new musical sections ("If you reach up, reach up to the sky...") have been inserted to broaden the formal structure.

This song was selected as the basis of this new composition due to the compelling rhythmical nature of the theme and the universal message of the lyrics. "This is the train of freedom and glory and justice, and it's pulling out tonight."¹⁵

likely be better suited than a light, lyrical voice, however, as Walker's "mezzo-soprano" indication seems to be more likely about tone color than range or tessitura. As for the choral writing, although there is a good deal of divisi, there are many sections of solid four-part writing. Most of the piece is written in a homophonic texture, with some SA and TB alternation, and a couple of sections have a more polyphonic feel. Harmonically, some movements are more difficult than others, but Walker's signature dissonances are present in all of the choral writing. The piano accompaniment provides rhythmic and harmonic energy throughout the work. While the accompaniment is quite simple in some places, it is also technically demanding in others. Both accompanist and soloist must have excellent musicianship and sensitivity to give this piece its due in performance. Because of the sheer length of the work and the depth of the text, *A Heart in Hiding* would be best suited to collegiate, advanced community, or professional groups. Less experienced groups, however, might find some success in excerpting one or two movements from the larger work.

Difficulty Level Rating Difficult
 Composer's Notes

Among the many, varied poems of Emily Dickinson are love poems – passionate love poems. These poems were written of a love which never developed into an established, recognized relationship. Indeed, these were composed by a poet who rarely left her home, who was rarely seen in public. Hers was a guarded soul, a heart in hiding.

The six songs in this set span the elements of love, from the gentle "Forever at His Side to Walk" to the ecstatic "A Kingdom's Worth of Bliss," from the reflective and sensual "The Moon is Distant from the Sea" to the overtly passionate "Wild Nights!" Each mood, each poem presents its individual interpretation of love. However, this set is framed by one poem which is viewed as a summary of love, and of life's spirit, "'Tis So Much Joy." [This poem appears in song #1, and returns in song #6, "A Jewel, a 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!

Here the poet speaks of the uncertainty of love (a chance, a "throw"). And yet she is willing to risk her heart, to allow a passionate love to grow there – to "venture all." And in this way, she lived her life to the fullest.

And if I gain! Oh Gun at Sea! O Bells that in the Steeples be!

The musical setting employs a mixed chorus and piano, with a mezzo soprano soloist. The solo voice portrays the poet as she speaks in the first person: "What would I give to see his face?" The chorus sings the descriptive poetry: "Forever at His Side to Walk." Although starting separately, the two "voices" begin to interact, exchanging material, reinforcing the expression. Near the end, the chorus adopts the passages which had previously been presented by the soloist. "And if I gain! Oh Gun at Sea!" The piano accompaniment reverberates with a salutatory "gun" motive. All join forces as the work closes with the phrase "have ventured all!"¹⁷

P2.

Title	Key Ring (1998)
Set/Series	An Hour to Dance (No. 1 in the set)
Publisher and number	ECS #5282
Commission/Dedication	Jointly commissioned by the Whitman College Chorale, Robert Bode, Director and the Minneapolis Vocal Consort, Karin Barrett, Director
Voicing	SATB
Vocal Ranges	S: D3-G4 A: C3-D4 T: G2-G3 B: D2-D3
Text Source	Poetry of Virginia Hamilton Adair (b. 1913, New York City), from the collection "Ants on the Melon," published in 1996
Duration	2'30"
Text designation	Secular
Performance Comments	

Key Ring is a fairly short and accessible work. The writing alternates between sustained and dissonant sections where the composer uses many intervals of a major second with a sparse, hollow-sounding accompaniment, and sections with consonant harmonies of thirds, fourths, and fifths that have more rhythmic

momentum and a much more active accompaniment. In the sustained, dissonant sections, the texture is homophonic; in the more active, consonant sections there is a good deal of alternation between SA and TB. The range of the voice parts is fairly limited, though the tessitura of the tenor part is high. While the many dissonant harmonies used throughout the work would make it difficult for an inexperienced choir, the repetition of these intervals throughout the piece lessens this obstacle. *Key Ring* could be performed well by many different ensembles ranging from an intermediate high school or community group to an upper level university ensemble.

Difficulty Level Rating Moderately Difficult

Composer's Notes

These seven musical settings present an overview of the life and work of poet Virginia Hamilton Adair. From the opening "Key Ring," filled with the anticipation of life's mysteries yet-to-be-explored, to the closing "Take My Hand," expressing resignation of a life gone by, the poems grow in vitality, color and romance, and then fade into stillness, loss of color and a vanishing of sight. [Virginia Adair is now blind.]

It is intended that a performance of the entire set of *An Hour to Dance* will draw the listener into the world of Virginia Hamilton Adair -- a world of unique poetic imagery, of beauty and dance and of personal loss. The musical language aims to reflect the poetry in focusing upon central rhythms and melodic flows inherent in the words. The aesthetic is to allow the poetry to speak through the music. Sonorities therefore range from full and colorful (in the first four poems) to increasingly sparse (in the closing poems).¹⁸

P3.

<u>Title</u>	<u>Summary by the Pawns (1998)</u>
Set/Series	An Hour to Dance (No. 2 in the set)
Publisher and number	ECS #5283
Commission/Dedication	Jointly commissioned by the Whitman College Chorale, Robert Bode, Director and the Minneapolis Vocal Consort, Karin Barrett, Director
Voicing	SATB
Vocal Ranges	S: C3-A4 A: C3-D4

	T: C2-A3
	B: G1-D3
Text Source	Poetry of Virginia Hamilton Adair (b. 1913, New York City), from the collection "Ants on the Melon," published in 1996
Duration	2'40"
Text designation	Secular
Performance Comments	

Summary by the Pawns is one of Walker's more accessible and light-hearted pieces. A buoyant and detached four-measure piano introduction sets the tone for the piece. The texture of the choral parts is homophonic with a brief, five-measure imitative section near the end. There is some unison choral writing and several sections comprise two-part writing with the tenor doubling the soprano and the bass doubling the alto down the octave. While a few of Walker's favorite dissonances are used, the majority of the harmonies are more traditional and consonant, incorporating more common dissonances like dominant seventh chords. In keeping with the text, the feel of the piece is playful and dance-like. There is even an eight-measure piano interlude where the composer suggests choreography. Overall, this piece would be appropriate and enjoyable for any group from an average high school group upward.

Difficulty Level Rating	Moderate
Composer's Notes	

See annotation #P2 for Walker's comments on the entire set.

P4.

<u>Title</u>	<u>The April Lovers (1998)</u>
Set/Series	An Hour to Dance (No. 3 in the set)
Publisher and number	ECS #5284
Commission/Dedication	Jointly commissioned by the Whitman College Chorale, Robert Bode, Director and the Minneapolis Vocal Consort, Karin Barrett, Director
Voicing	SATB (some soprano divisi throughout, SATB divisi last 2 pages)

Vocal Ranges	S: C3-G4 A: C3-D4 T: C2-F3 B: C2-D3
Text Source	Poetry of Virginia Hamilton Adair (b. 1913, New York City), from the collection "Ants on the Melon," published in 1996
Duration	3'
Text designation	Secular
Performance Comments	

More like the majority of Walker's output in difficulty and harmonization than the first two pieces in this set, *The April Lovers* paints a dusky, ethereal picture of springtime and young love. The repetition of the flowing opening accompaniment along with the unison choral entrance set the tone of this lovely work. Some of the composer's standard techniques such as using the neutral syllable "la" in sections to allow the chorus to help color transitions, and employing thick, dissonant harmonies with a tone-cluster-like feel are present throughout. While the majority of the choral texture is homophonic, there is a bit of alternation between male and female voices and a lovely center section where the chorus echoes the musical statements made in the accompaniment. Although the piece begins with simple unison, it extends to nine-part divisi by the end. There is also a large amount of soprano divisi during the second half of the piece. An unmeasured section, led by the conductor cuing individual section entrances, is meant to evoke the feeling of flower buds opening and leads to the nine-part dissonant chord that ends the work. Because of the difficulty of the dissonant harmonies, the piece would be best suited for an advanced high school or community group, or a good college or university ensemble.

Difficulty Level Rating	Moderately Difficult
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Composer's Notes

See annotation #P2 for Walker's comments on the entire set.

P5.

Title	<u>An Hour to Dance (1998)</u>
Set/Series	An Hour to Dance (No. 4 in the set)
Publisher and number	ECS #5285
Commission/Dedication	Jointly commissioned by the Whitman College Chorale, Robert Bode, Director and the Minneapolis Vocal Consort, Karin Barrett, Director
Voicing	SATB (3 measures soprano divisi, 1 measure bass divisi, plus STB divisi on final chord)
Vocal Ranges	S: D3-A4 A: A2-D4 T: G2-A3 B: C2-D3
Text Source	Poetry of Virginia Hamilton Adair (b. 1913, New York City), from the collection "Ants on the Melon," published in 1996
Duration	3'30"
Text designation	Secular
Performance Comments	

The centerpiece and namesake of the collection, *An Hour to Dance* is set in solid four-part writing with no division except for the last page. The bulk of the work is in three-eight time with the feeling of one beat per measure. Near the end, a slower, freer section in duple meter gives the ear a short respite from the previous quick, almost flight-like feel, and then once again builds to a finish in the quicker tempo in triple meter. *An Hour to Dance* exemplifies the composer's gift for wedding music and text. While Walker uses dissonance throughout the work, many chords are doubled in the lush accompaniment that not only supports the singers but also provides much of the rhythmic and expressive qualities of the piece. Like many of the composer's works, the choral texture is primarily homophonic with some short imitative sections and much interplay between the voices and the accompaniment. While this is not Walker's most difficult work, it

certainly contains some harmonic and rhythmic challenges and is best suited for groups at least at the level of an advanced high school ensemble.

Difficulty Level Rating Moderately Difficult

Composer's Notes

See annotation #P2 for Walker's comments on the entire set.

P6.

<u>Title</u>	<u>Slow Scythe (1998)</u>
Set/Series	An Hour to Dance (No. 5 in the set)
Publisher and number	ECS #5286
Commission/Dedication	Jointly commissioned by the Whitman College Chorale, Robert Bode, Director and the Minneapolis Vocal Consort, Karin Barrett, Director
Voicing	SATB (1 measure soprano divisi)
Vocal Ranges	S: B ^b 2-A ^b 4 A: B ^b 2-D ^b 4 T: B ^b 2-A ^b 3 B: C ^b 2-D ^b 3
Text Source	Poetry of Virginia Hamilton Adair (b. 1913, New York City), from the collection "Ants on the Melon," published in 1996
Duration	3'
Text designation	Secular
Performance Comments	

Slow Scythe begins with a simple, very hollow-sounding accompaniment that leads into the opening melodic statement sung softly by the altos. This melodic material is used at various times in both the tenor and alto voices throughout the piece to tie sections together and is sung again at the end by the altos in rhythmic augmentation. As in many of the composer's other works, the choral texture is basically homophonic with brief imitative sections. One of the biggest challenges a choir would face in preparing *Slow Scythe* is the large number of difficult dissonances. Throughout the work the choir sings sustained, highly dissonant chords while the accompaniment provides rhythmic and some melodic interest. Another item of note is that the tessitura of the tenor part is fairly high. Because

of both this range and the nature of the work, the composer actually suggests that “a soft head tone may be appropriate.” Overall, the number and strength of dissonances present in this piece make it one of the most difficult in the set. It would take a very advanced high school, university or community ensemble to perform *Slow Scythe* with the sensitivity that the composer has envisioned.

Difficulty Level Rating Moderately Difficult

Composer’s Notes

See annotation #P2 for Walker’s comments on the entire set.

P7.

Title	<u>White Darkness (1998)</u>
Set/Series	An Hour to Dance (No. 6 in the set)
Publisher and number	ECS #5287
Commission/Dedication	Jointly commissioned by the Whitman College Chorale, Robert Bode, director and the Minneapolis Vocal Consort, Karin Barrett, director.
Voicing	SATB (2 measures soprano divisi)
Vocal Ranges	S: D [#] 3-E4 A: A2-G [#] 3 T: F [#] 2-E3 B: A1-C [#] 3
Text Source	poetry of Virginia Hamilton Adair (b. 1913, New York City), from the collection "Ants on the Melon," published in 1996
Duration	2'
Text designation	Secular
Performance Comments	

By far the shortest piece in this set, *White Darkness* is very similar in choral texture to the others, employing primarily homophonic vocal writing with a few moments of alternation between male and female voices and just a couple of measures of imitation. In contrast to many of the other pieces in *An Hour to Dance*, the piano part does function more as an accompaniment to the choir rather than an equal voice. It basically provides the introduction, supports some sections of the choral singing, and offers brief interludes bridging the choral statements.

Walker also employs a cappella writing more throughout *White Darkness* than in the other selections in this set. One item of interest here is that she has written an optional accompaniment for measures 13-20 with the instruction to “play only to support the chorus.” While the vocal ranges are very comfortable and somewhat limited, the dissonances and harmonies used throughout will once again provide the biggest challenge for choirs performing this piece. The sparseness of the accompaniment suits the text and mood of the piece, but also makes the singing of these dissonances more difficult. This work is best suited for the college or university chorus, but could receive effective performances by advanced community and high school groups.

Difficulty Level Rating Moderately Difficult

Composer’s Notes

See annotation #P2 for Walker’s comments on the entire set.

P8.

<u>Title</u>	<u>Take My Hand (1998)</u>
Set/Series	An Hour to Dance (No. 7 in the set)
Publisher and number	ECS #5288
Commission/Dedication	Jointly commissioned by the Whitman College Chorale, Robert Bode, Director and the Minneapolis Vocal Consort, Karin Barrett, Director
Voicing	SATB
Soloist(s)	Mezzo-Soprano
Vocal Ranges	S: C3-F4 A: C3-C4 T: F2-A3 B: A1-D3 Mezzo Soprano Solo: G2-F4
Text Source	Poetry of Virginia Hamilton Adair (b. 1913, New York City), from the collection "Ants on the Melon," published in 1996
Duration	4'15"
Text designation	Secular

Performance Comments

Arguably the most unique piece in the set, *Take My Hand*, begins with the chorus creating vocal percussion that imitates the sound of a train. As all three stanzas of the poem end with the same text, “Coming to a crossing the train cries in the night,” the chorus acts as the train throughout using vocal percussion and repetitive rhythmic statements to conjure the image of a quick train moving through the darkness. The mezzo-soprano soloist carries the remainder of the text from the first two stanzas as well as the melodic material for most of the piece. During the third and final stanza of the poem, the chorus first states the text with new musical material then the soloist repeats the same text to help give emphasis and strength to the poet’s dramatic final statement. While the choral score is moderately simple and could be performed quite adequately by a good high school choir, the mezzo-soprano solo is more difficult and would likely be best performed by a more mature singer who has had a fair amount of training. The range, musicianship, and musical sensitivity needed to properly perform the piece would prove difficult if not impossible for the untrained or amateur vocalist. It is interesting to note that the composer includes directions pertaining to where the soloist should stand as well as instructions for the conductor on how his or her gesture should reflect the “passing train.”

Difficulty Level Rating Moderate

Composer’s Notes

See annotation #P2 for Walker’s comments on the entire set.

P9.

Title	As a Branch in May (1983)
Publisher and number	ECS #4888
Commission/Dedication	A wedding gift for Evan Williams and Greig Shearer.
Voicing	SATB
Other Available Voicings	Medium voice and guitar Solo voice and piano Two treble voices and piano
Vocal Ranges	S: B2-G4 A: B2-D4 T: A1-E3 B: G1-D3
Text Source	Gwyneth Walker
Duration	3'30"
Text designation	Secular
Performance Comments	

As a Branch in May is one of Walker's most accessible choral works. Having been conceived as a solo piece, the SATB version is melody-driven, opening with the women stating the melodic material in unison, followed by a similar section voiced by the men in unison. After these two opening statements, the remainder of the piece is mainly in two parts written in a duet-like style between SA and TB. There is no divisi and only limited four-part writing scattered throughout the second half of the work. In comparison to the majority of Walker's writing, the rhythms and harmonic structure are also quite simple. Likewise, the piano part is very accessible and functions much more like a traditional accompaniment than many of Walker's other piano scores. These items, along with limited vocal ranges, make *As a Branch in May* appropriate for almost any level of SATB choral ensemble. It would also serve as a good teaching tool for building vocal tone and unison singing in the men's and women's sections.

Difficulty Level Rating Easy

Composer's Notes

As a Branch in May was composed in 1983 as a wedding gift for Evan Williams and Greig Shearer. The lyrics express the abiding strength of love over the changing seasons of the year, over the passage of a lifetime.

The original version of this song was scored for Soprano and Organ. Subsequent versions include SATB Chorus and Piano, Medium Voice and Guitar, Solo Voice (or Children's Choir) and Piano and a duet for two Treble Voices and Piano.¹⁹

P10.

<u>Title</u>	Carol of the Brown King (2008)
Publisher and number	Unpublished, available at www.gwynethwalker.com
Commission/Dedication	Composed as a gift for the choir and congregation of Middle Collegiate Church, New York, NY
Voicing	SATB (approximately 12 measures of 3-part men and 7 measures of 3-part women)
Other Available Voicings	TTBB
Optional Instrumentations	Organ accompaniment
Vocal Ranges	S: F3-A ^b 4 A: B ^b 2-C4 T: C2-A ^b 3 B: F1-C3
Text Source	Langston Hughes (1902-1967)
Duration	4'
Text designation	Sacred
Performance Comments	

Because of the specific nature of the text, *Carol of the Brown King* is best suited for an African-American choir or for a choir presenting a program of music set to the writings of African-American authors. The music and the text are both quite accessible for choir members as well as members of the congregation. Slightly reminiscent of the traditional carol, *We Three Kings* (though not in triple meter), the choral rhythms and harmonies are fairly familiar and easy to sight-read. The piece is centered around the men's section with the female voices acting in a more responsive manner. The largest challenge of this work is a good deal of three-part division that exists in the male voices. (Some three-part divisi is also present in the women's section.) While it sometimes adds Walker's contemporary

composer's works. Though the alto and bass parts both extend down to low F#, the soprano and tenor ranges are limited and comfortable. The choral texture is not overly homophonic or imitative, though there is a lot of pairing between the tenor and bass parts as well as the soprano and alto parts. The accompaniment is light and detached and provides an ostinato-like underpinning for much of the composition. Harmonically, there are sections of very simple intervals of thirds and fifths, as well as more challenging chords containing minor seconds and ninths. Overall, considering both difficulty and programming *Cheek to Cheek* would likely be best suited for a college, university, or professional choir.

Difficulty Level Rating Difficult

Composer's Notes

Cheek to Cheek is described as a "nocturnal tango."

*"We are lying back to back,
ass-symmetrical, so to speak.*

*To the ticking of the dark
we are dancing cheek to cheek."*

This is a sensuous and subtle tango, with frequent changes of meter. A bit of choreography is appropriate.²¹

P12.

Title	Chester (2006)
Publisher and number	ECS #7033
Voicing	SATB (soprano and tenor divisi on final two measures)
Vocal Ranges	S: D3-G4 A: A2-C4 T: D2-G3 B: G1-C3
Text Source	William Billings (1746-1800)
Duration	2'40"
Text designation	Sacred
Performance Comments	

Walker's arrangement of *Chester* remains very close to the original, revoicing the choral score and adding piano and optional percussion. The piece is harmonically traditional with little reference to Walker's own contemporary vocabulary and

also, like Billings's score, relies primarily on four-part, hymn-style choral texture. The second and third verses are exact repeats of the first verse, with a suggestion from the composer for the second verse to be free of percussion and only melody sung by the men in unison, with harmony added only for the last four measures. Following the third verse, there is an extended piano interlude including another suggestion from the composer: "Choreography might be nice here, rather than standing still marching, or military formation in Colonial American style." Not overly technically demanding, the piano part consists of both block, supportive chords and some quick moving eighth-note and sixteenth-note patterns. Overall, this arrangement of *Chester* is straightforward and accessible for most choral groups. It would be especially appropriate for a program of American music.

Difficulty Level Rating Easy

Composer's Notes

Words and music of William Billings (1746-1800 -- Boston, Massachusetts) provide the chronological beginning of New England repertoire. "Chester," a popular song from the Colonial era, is a brashly patriotic hymn. This new adaptation includes the optional addition of a military drum. The theme of this song is a bravura "New England's Soul forever reigns!"²²

P13.

Title	<u>The Dreamer of Dreams</u>
Publisher and number	ECS #6291
Commission/Dedication	Commissioned by the choirs of Ball State University, Muncie, Indiana, Jeffrey Carter, Music Director
Voicing	SATB (some soprano divisi, 5 measures bass divisi)
Vocal Ranges	S: D [#] 3-G4 A: C [#] 3-C [#] 4 T: F [#] 2-G3 B: A [#] 1-B2
Text Source	from "Ode" by Arthur O'Shaughnessy (1844-1881)
Duration	4'
Text designation	Secular

Performance Comments

The Dreamers of Dreams is a beautiful and powerful piece that requires extremes in dynamic ranges and musical sensitivity. It also encompasses a large range of harmonic difficulty, with simple unison and triadic passages as well as many sustained major seconds and thick dissonant, cluster-like chords. The choral texture is homophonic with some alternation and imitation between SA and TB and the rhythms are straightforward with no change of meter throughout. The accompaniment is more rhythmically and technically demanding than the choral parts and provides much of the underlying rhythmic movement for the piece, while also helping to set the dramatic tone for each section. Walker has selected *The Dreamers of Dreams* as suitable for community, college, or professional choir likely because of difficult dissonances, large dynamic ranges, and requisite vocal and musical maturity. An advanced high school choir with mature singers and strong musicianship skills, however, would find this piece challenging yet satisfying and enjoyable.

Difficulty Level Rating Difficult

Composer's Notes

The text for *The Dreamers of Dreams* is an abbreviated and adapted version of the "Ode" by Arthur O'Shaughnessy (1844-1881). The principal message of this song is that we "music makers" are "dreamers of dreams." We live a life apart from the rest of the world. "We live a life of song. "This may be a lonely life. "We...sit by desolate streams." But, it is also a life of beauty, imagination and strength.

The musical setting opens with three triumphant chords in the piano, followed by a soft, 'murmuring' background. The singers enter gently. Perhaps they express the dreamlike world of song. The music increases in dynamics and tempo into the middle section: "Each age is a dream that is dying. But ours is coming to birth!"

The change to a flowing accompaniment signals the arrival of the third stanza: "For we, with our dreaming and singing, ceaseless, triumphant we!" There is a slowing down and perhaps a time for reflection on the words: "O world! we dwell

apart from thee." The music then grows into a triumphant statement of "We are the music makers!" And yet the ending is quiet, within the character of the magical world of music. "We are the movers and shakers, on whom the pale moon gleams." Three gentle patterns in the piano balance the opening chords.²³

P14.

Title	<u>Every Life Shall Be a Song (2005)</u>
Publisher and number	Unpublished, available at www.gwynethwalker.com
Commission/Dedication	For the Chandler Cultural Foundation in celebration of the Centennial of Chandler Music Hall, Randolph, Vermont: 1907-2007
Voicing	SATB divisi
Optional Instrumentations	Organ Brass quintet, percussion & piano Brass quintet, percussion & organ
Vocal Ranges	S: B ^b 2-G4 A: B ^b 2-D4 T: E ^b 2-G3 B: D2-C3
Text Source	19th century British author John Addington Symonds (1840-1893)
Duration	3'
Text designation	Secular
Performance Comments	

Joyful and triumphant in nature, *Every Life Shall Be a Song* is accessible for most choruses of an intermediate skill level. The meter remains in common time throughout, and rhythms consist of nothing more complicated than eighth-note patterns. The majority of the harmonies are traditional and in most instances, dissonances are built in a scale-like manner by adding once voice at a time to the existing chords. The accompaniment is more simple than many of Walker's others, and could be performed adequately by a good high school accompanist. The choral texture is almost entirely homophonic with a few sections of alternation between SA and TB. One of the challenges a younger group might face when rehearsing this piece is the division in voice parts. There is division at

some point in all four voice parts and there is one brief (3 measure) section of exposed four-part men.

Difficulty Level Rating Moderate

Notes by Carson Cooman

Every Life Shall Be a Song is a celebration of life, unity, and music. This work was written in celebration of an important anniversary in the composer's home community of Randolph, Vermont. The Victorian-style Chandler Music Hall was originally built in 1907, in the midst of the heyday of such cultural building projects. By the end of the 1920's, however, the hall had fallen into disrepair and was no longer in use. In 1978, The Albert B. Chandler Cultural Foundation was formed to renovate the hall and turn it into a thriving arts and performance center for Vermont. It has remained as such to the present day, serving each year as the home for a variety of cultural events -- with a particular focus on classical music. Many of Gwyneth Walker's compositions have been performed in Chandler Music Hall over the years.

The text of the work summarizes the artistic message and goals of the Chandler Cultural Foundation stating that "New arts shall bloom of loftier mold, and mightier music fill the skies, and every life shall be a song... When every life shall be a song, then all the earth is paradise."²⁴

P15.

Title	<u>Feathers and Frogs (2006)</u>
Publisher and number	ECS #7035
Voicing	SATB divisi
Vocal Ranges	S: C3-G#4 A: A2-C#4 T: E2-G#3 B: A1-B2
Text Source	Emily Dickinson (1830-1886)
Duration	4'
Text designation	Secular

Performance Comments

Fun to sing and enjoyable to listen to, Walker's settings of these two Emily

Dickinson poems are also thought provoking and musically challenging. Unlike

many of the composer's other works, the choral texture is made up largely of

alternation between the male and female voices as well as more contrapuntal

writing, with only a small amount of SATB homophonic quality. While many of

the choral harmonies are consonant, a good deal of dissonance is also present, adding to the unexpected and light-hearted drama of the piece. The meter is set in four-four time throughout both selections, and the rhythms are straightforward, though some dotted rhythms and a good deal of syncopation is present. Although certainly not inaccessible, the piano accompaniment is somewhat challenging and is an integral part of the composition, providing much of the spirit and musical character in both selections. Likely the most difficult aspects of the work are the dissonant, sometimes cluster-like sonorities (often accomplished through divisi) and the independence required of all four voice parts. While *Feather and Frogs* is certainly not Walker's most difficult selection, it is likely best suited for an advanced high school or college level ensemble with a strong accompanist.

Difficulty Level Rating Moderately Difficult

Composer's Notes

The poetry of Emily Dickinson (1830-1886 -- Amherst, Massachusetts) represents the idiosyncratic and satiric New England personality. These two short songs, "Hope is the Thing with Feathers" and "I'm Nobody!," are treated in a light-hearted manner. Perhaps the listener might hear a bird in the first song, and a frog (doing a tango by the bog) in the second! Although humorous in nature, these lyrics and songs have thoughtful messages.²⁵

P16.

<u>Title</u>	<u>Spirituals (2000)</u>
Set/Series	Harlem Songs
Publisher and number	ECS #5769
Commission/Dedication	Commissioned by the Chesapeake Chorale, Paul Rardin, Artistic Director
Voicing	SATB
Other Available Voicings	SSAA TTBB
Soloist(s)	Baritone (1 measure in length)
Vocal Ranges	S: G2-G4 A: G2-D4 T: C2-G3

	B: B ^b 1-D3
	Soloist: F2-D3
Text Source	“Spirituals,” poem by Langston Hughes (1902-67)
Duration	3’45”
Text designation	Sacred
Performance Comments	

The technically demanding accompaniment sets the tone and provides much of the dramatic color in this work. The choral writing is very singable and straightforward, though it does contain the dissonances that Walker favors. After an ethereal piano opening, the voices enter in a simple and majestic manner that gives life to the text. The following section, in a swing style, features a duet between the SA and TB parts and vocal percussion that imitates the sound of a jazz cymbal player. We then return to the flowing accompaniment and stately choral style introduced earlier in the work. With an accomplished accompanist, this work could be performed and enjoyed by almost any ensemble ranging from high school choir to community chorus to select university ensemble. With this in mind and due to the dramatic quality of the text as well as the stately manner of the choral writing, the ultimate performance would likely be achieved by a group of mature voices.

Difficulty Level Rating	Moderate
Composer’s Notes	

Harlem Songs are musical settings of the poetry of Langston Hughes, an African-American poet who lived most of his life in Harlem, NY. His poetry was inspired by the culture of Harlem: spirituals and blues, urban streets and rooftops, faith and endurance. The language is direct, uncluttered and colorful. It is highly American!

Spirituals [the first in this set] is a song of strength. It opens with ascending patterns: “the rising shafts of mountains...something strong to put my hands on.” The focus then shifts to the strength of song in times of trouble: “I heard my mother singing when life hurt her: Gonna ride in my chariot someday!” The music rises to the affirmation “Sing, O black mother! Song is a strong thing.”²⁶

P17.

Title	<u>Harlem Night Song (2000)</u>
Set/Series	Harlem Songs
Publisher and number	ECS #5770
Commission/Dedication	Commissioned by the Chesapeake Chorale, Paul Rardin, Artistic Director
Voicing	SATB divisi
Other Available Voicings	SSAA TTBB
Vocal Ranges	S: B2-E ^b 4 A: F2-D [#] 4 T: C2-F3 B: G [#] 1-F3
Text Source	“Harlem,” poem by Langston Hughes (1902-67)
Duration	3’15”
Text designation	Secular
Performance Comments	

Incorporating many of the compositional techniques utilized in *Spirituals*, including swing style, vocal percussion, unmetered repeated patterns in the accompaniment, duets between SA and TB parts, and dissonant harmonies, *Harlem Nights* evokes an entirely different mood. The accompaniment, though not simplistic, is more accessible than the first work in the set, while the difficulty of the vocal parts remains comparable. The accompaniment offers harmonic support to voice parts and doubles them in places. This work could be performed by ensembles ranging from high school choirs, to community choruses to select university groups.

Difficulty Level Rating Moderate

Composer’s Notes

See annotation #P16 for Walker’s comments on the entire set.

Harlem Night Song [the second in this set] is infused with the language of blues: major/minor tonalities mixed, a gentle tempo, humming. This is nocturnal, atmospheric music. The chorus sings “I love you” back and forth, as though calling across the Harlem rooftops. A change of pace in the middle of the song:

“Down the street, a band is playing...” Scat singing, percussive vocal effects and random patterns of “I love you” bring the song to a close.²⁷

P18.

Title	<u>Tambourines (2000)</u>
Set/Series	Harlem Songs
Publisher and number	ECS #5771
Commission/Dedication	Commissioned by the Chesapeake Chorale, Paul Rardin, Artistic Director
Voicing	SATB divisi
Other Available Voicings	SSAA TTBB
Soloist(s)	Soprano (approximately 4 measures in length)
Vocal Ranges	S: C3-A4 A: A2-D4 T: C2-A3 B: C2-D3 Soloist: G3-A4
Text Source	“Tambourines,” poem by Langston Hughes (1902-67)
Duration	3’45”
Text designation	Sacred
Performance Comments	

This rhythmic and energetic work provides an exciting closing to the three-piece set. In keeping with the musical aspects that help to make the individual works of “Harlem Songs” cohesive, the composer once again utilizes many of the same compositional techniques that were mentioned in the comments for the previous two works. Vocal percussion and hand tapping patterns play an integral role in the composition and comprise the introduction. As with other of Walker’s accompanied works, the piano part, which again requires a fairly accomplished player, provides the rhythmic drive that underscores the vocal writing. The difficulty of the choral parts is comparable to that of the first two songs in the set, making it accessible to many performing ensembles. The soprano solo, though not lengthy, requires a singer with the technical ability to move easily in and out of the high register.

Difficulty Level Rating Moderate

Composer's Notes

See annotation #P16 for Walker's comments on the entire set.

Tambourines [the third and final piece in this set] employs a variety of hand-tapping patterns and vocal sounds to suggest the playing of a tambourine. The intent is to capture the spirit and joy of playing a tambourine (or, an imaginary tambourine!). The "pseudo-tambourines" then accompany several gospel tunes inserted into the middle of this song. A joyous closing section celebrates: "tambourines to the glory of God!"²⁸

P19.

Title How Can I Keep from Singing? (1995)

Publisher and number ECS #5100

Commission/Dedication The original version of this work was commissioned by the Thetford Chamber Singers, Thetford, Vermont
This SA(T)B version was commissioned by Segwick Middle School, West Hartford, Connecticut

Voicing SA(T)B

Other Available Voicings SSA
TTBB

Vocal Ranges Soprano: D3-G4
Alto: D3-D4
Tenor: D2-E3
Bass: D2-D3

Text Source Quaker Hymn

Duration 3'30"

Text designation Sacred

Performance Comments

The energetic accompaniment, full of ostinato-like patterns and running sixteenth notes, provides the rhythmic underpinning for *How Can I Keep From Singing?*.

While the accompaniment is technically demanding and requires a fairly accomplished player, the vocal parts are simple and straight forward, consisting mainly of homophonic writing and simple rhythms. As the SA(T)B voicing suggests, tenors and basses are often singing in unison. A vocal challenge associated with this male unison singing comes from the fact the men are often singing repeated measures of the pitch D3. This tessitura can be difficult for the

with beautiful consonant harmonies as well as many of the dissonances that one would expect to find in a Gwyneth Walker composition. The meter changes are frequent and varied throughout the work, and while the rhythms of the choral parts are not overly complex, those found in the accompaniment are substantially more challenging. The accompaniment features unmetered, free-flowing broken chords, sustained tonalities supporting more rhythmic choral passages, moving triplet, sixteenth note, and quintuplet patterns, as well as melodic interludes that work in tandem with the choir to establish the drama and mood changes of the piece. Though not impossible by any means, the accompaniment is fairly difficult and would be best handled by a skilled player. With the voicing listed as a SSATB, *I Thank You God* stays true to this classification throughout, with division in the soprano part for the majority of the work and no division in any other voice part except for the tenor part on the final chord. This is a challenging, but not overly difficult piece that could be performed well by an upper level high school or church choir with a strong accompanist. It would also be equally appropriate for college, community, and professional choirs.

Difficulty Level Rating Moderately Difficult

Composer's Notes

This is a song of praise. A piano introduction marked "slowly unfolding, with wonderment," spans the broad range of the keyboard, as if expressing the breadth of space and life. The chorus enters, offering thanks to God for "the leaping, greenly spirit of trees," "a blue true dream of sky" and "everything which is infinite."

A central phrase of "I who have died am alive again today" returns frequently. This is an expression of the rebirth of the soul with each "amazing day."³⁰

P21.

Title	<u>I Will Be Earth (1992)</u>
Set/Series	The original SSA version of the piece is from the set: "Songs for Women's Voices"
Publisher and number	ECS #4887
Commission/Dedication	The original SSA version was commissioned by St. Joseph College, West Hartford, Connecticut, in celebration of the 60th anniversary year: 1932-1992.
Voicing	SSATB (1 measure of tenor divisi)
Other Available Voicings	SSAA
Optional Instrumentations	Orchestration (chamber orchestra) also available for SSAA version
Soloist(s)	Female "solo or a few voices" followed by male "solo or a few voices" at the opening of the piece
Vocal Ranges	S: E3-G [#] 4 A: E3-D4 T: G2-G [#] 3 B: A1-E ^b 3 Female Solo: E3-E4 Male Solo: E2-E3
Text Source	American poet, May Swenson (1913-1989)
Duration	2'30"
Text designation	Secular
Performance Comments	

I Will Be Earth begins with a simple and beautiful female unison or solo melody accompanied by lovely and simple broken chords in the piano. This melodic material is then passed to the male voice(s) and treated in the same manner. The opening section is followed by more passing of the melodic material between voice parts with short and simple harmonic interjections from other sections. The center section is the most difficult and dissonant as Walker has utilized more unstable and less tonally pleasing harmonies to reflect the strength, passion and urgency of the text. The final section is again more consonant harmonically, taking the opening melodic material and developing and expanding upon it more thoroughly. The choral texture varies throughout, with sections of unison melody, four-part homophonic singing, some pairing and exchange between male and

female voices, and some imitative sections. Like the choral score, the accompaniment also contains some simplistic sections and other more complex, difficult passages. While the publisher has classified *I Will Be Earth* as SSATB, the majority of the work is solid four-part singing with the division in the soprano part happening only during the final two and a half pages of music. This piece would be very accessible for a good high school choir. Because of the simplistic, beautiful nature of the opening, it would also serve as a good tool for introducing high quality, contemporary literature to a choir not accustomed to singing difficult, less traditional harmonies.

Difficulty Level Rating Moderate

Composer's Notes about the original SSA set

Songs for Women's Voices are musical settings of six poems by American poet May Swenson. The poems address a variety of topics -- from feminism to romance to death -- yet they speak with one voice, one style, and one life-affirming philosophy. The musical settings are intended to present these poems in a simple and straightforward manner which seeks to portray the beauty, humor, and passion of the words.

It is suggested that each poem be read aloud (by a member of the chorus or reader) before the performance of each song. The poems may also be printed in the concert program. But it is recommended that the audience read the poems in advance (pre-concert or during intermission), perhaps also following along in the printed version during the reading aloud, and then focus on the chorus during the actual singing.

May Swenson (poet) was born in Logan, Utah in 1913. She died in Ocean View, Delaware in 1989. In her lifetime, she worked mainly as a poet, publishing over 450 poems. Much of her life was spent in Greenwich Village, New York City, where she was a chancellor of the Academy of American Poets.³¹

P22.

Title	<u>My Soul Has Grown Deep (2007)</u>
Set/Series	I've Known Rivers
Publisher and number	ECS #7281
Commission/Dedication	Commissioned by the Holland Chorale, Gary W. Bogle, Music Director, Holland, Michigan

Voicing	SATB (3 measures of 3-part women)
Other Available Voicings	TTBB
Vocal Ranges	S: G2-F4 A: G2-C4 T: C2-G3 B: C2-C3
Text Source	Langston Hughes (1902-1967)
Duration	3'
Text designation	Secular
Performance Comments	

Lush and full of lovely consonant harmonies as well as many dramatic, dissonant sonorities, *My Soul Has Grown Deep* remains accessible while providing inherent challenges. With a consistent meter of four-four time and simple, sight-readable choral rhythms, the largest obstacle lies in the dissonant chords and harmonies. While there is very little divisi and chords never extend to larger than five parts, many sonorities do contain internal minor seconds and minor ninths that can prove challenging for a less experienced choir. The choral texture largely alternates between SA and TB statements with some four-part homophonic sections as well as a few rhythmically independent entrances. The piano accompaniment is also fairly accessible, consisting primarily of rolling eighth-note and eighth-note triplet patterns that seem to mimic the rolling of water. Several measures of right-hand sixteenth-note quintuplet patterns and approximately two measures of right-hand sixteenth-note quintuplets against left hand eighth-note triplets mark the most technically difficult sections of the piano score. In terms of overall difficulty, *My Soul Has Grown Deep* falls in the middle of Walker's output and is best suited for an advanced high school, experienced community, or university level ensemble.

Difficulty Level Rating	Moderately Difficult
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Composer's Notes

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.³²

P23.

<u>Title</u>	<u>Troubled Water (2007)</u>
Set/Series	I've Known Rivers
Publisher and number	ECS #7282
Commission/Dedication	Commissioned by the Holland Chorale, Gary W. Bogle, Music Director, Holland, Michigan
Voicing	SATB (soprano divisi for the majority of the piece along with a good deal of bass and some alto divisi)
Other Available Voicings	TTBB
Vocal Ranges	S: G2-G4 A: G2-B ^b 3 T: G2-G3 B: G1-D3
Text Source	Langston Hughes (1902-1967)
Duration	2'45"
Text designation	Secular
Performance Comments	

With the addition of more divisi, making the chords thicker and more extended,

Troubled Water is very similar to the first piece in the set by way of harmonic difficulty. Once again Walker alternates pleasing, consonant sounds with more difficult, dramatic dissonant ones. In several places throughout the work, the men sing three-part, consonant harmony while the women are also singing three-part consonant harmony. The difficulty occurs when put together; the voices are actually in dissonance with one another. The meter is set primarily in three-four time with some measures or short sections of four-four interspersed throughout.

The choral rhythms are simple and sight-readable with the exception of one four-measure passage where the men sing eighth-note patterns against the women's eighth-note triplet figures. Unlike much of Walker's writing, the piano plays a secondary, more accompanimental role with a simple quarter-note introduction and even, flowing eighth-note patterns that in many places reinforce the voice parts. Several a cappella sections and, as in the first piece in the set, one four-measure section of right-hand sixteenth-note quintuplets are also in existence.

The piano score is much less challenging than the choral score. Overall, *Troubled Water* is slightly more difficult than *My Soul Has Grown Deep* and would be best suited for a very advanced high school or university level ensemble.

Difficulty Level Rating Moderately Difficult

Composer's Notes

See annotation #P22 for Walker's comments on the entire set.

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.³³

P24.

<u>Title</u>	<u>Jump Right In! (2007)</u>
Set/Series	I've Known Rivers
Publisher and number	ECS #7283
Commission/Dedication	Commissioned by the Holland Chorale, Gary W. Bogle, Music Director, Holland, Michigan
Voicing	SATB (approximately 4 measures each of 3-part women and 3-part men, plus 8-part divisi for the final 4 measures)
Other Available Voicings	TTBB
Vocal Ranges	S: A3-A4 A: F3-D4 T: D2-A3 B: D2-D3
Text Source	Langston Hughes (1902-1967)
Duration	2'30"
Text designation	Secular

Performance Comments

More lively and energetic than the first two pieces in the set, *Jump Right In!* is also the most accessible. The piano accompaniment, while technically more demanding than the previous two pieces, plays a more integral role and provides a good portion of the character and rhythmic impetus for the piece. The choral texture is dominated by alternation between the male and female voices with many rhythmically independent entrances and only a few short homophonic phrases. With the meter set in a lively four-four throughout, some of the rhythms are slightly more complex, many containing syncopated patterns and entrances. The choral harmonies, while largely consonant, contain some dissonances, but these are simpler and approached in a more accessible manner than the earlier pieces in the set. One challenge to consider is that the tessitura of both the soprano and tenor parts is fairly high throughout the work with both parts being required to sing several “high A’s.” Another item of note is that Walker has incorporated some vocal percussion during the course of the piece to add rhythmic interest and excitement. Overall, *Jump Right In!* is an enjoyable piece that could be performed well by a strong high school choir with a good accompanist.

Difficulty Level Rating Moderate

Composer’s Notes

See annotation #P22 for Walker’s comments on the entire set.

Undaunted by the elusive nature of love, the poet (chorus) 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.”³⁴

P25.

Title	<u>In Time of Silver Rain (2007)</u>
Set/Series	I've Known Rivers
Publisher and number	ECS #7284
Commission/Dedication	Commissioned by the Holland Chorale, Gary W. Bogle, Music Director, Holland, Michigan
Voicing	SATB divisi
Other Available Voicings	TTBB
Vocal Ranges	S: C3-A4 A: B2-D4 T: C2-A3 B: C2-E3
Text Source	Langston Hughes (1902-1967)
Duration	3'30"
Text designation	Secular
Performance Comments	

With a flowing, peaceful tempo and many lush, thick, dissonant harmonies, *In*

Time of Silver Rain more resembles the first two pieces in the set than its

immediate predecessor. The opening section features the women carrying the

melodic material with men accompanying in an ostinato-like “la la” figure. At the

end of this initial section all four voices are singing together, though SA and TB

are somewhat rhythmically independent of one another. The next section begins

oppositely with the men carrying the melodic material and women acting in a

more accompanimental manner. The piece then begins to build as more and more

division in the voice parts and thicker, more complex and dissonant harmonies are

incorporated. Unlike many of Walker’s other works, the presence of four-part

homophonic choral texture is minimal. Here, the composer utilizes a good deal of

alternation between SA and TB and when all four parts are singing together, the

male and female sections tend to be rhythmically independent of one another.

The meter is set in four-four time with the exception of two measures of three-

four that are inserted to better express a section of repeated text, and while the

choral rhythms contain some sixteenth-note and dotted patterns, they are not on the whole, difficult. Though not the most demanding of Walker's output, the accompaniment does contain some challenging sections and requires a solid musician with good technical facility. Overall, *In Time of Silver Rain* would be best suited for a college, university, or upper-level community choir.

Difficulty Level Rating Moderately Difficult

Composer's Notes

See annotation #P22 for Walker's comments on the entire set.

"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.³⁵

P26.

<u>Title</u>	<u>Let Evening Come (2001)</u>
Publisher and number	ECS #7014
Commission/Dedication	Original SAA version commissioned by the State University of New York at Fredonia Women's Chorus, Gwen Detwiler, Director.
Voicing	SATB divisi
Other Available Voicings	SSA
Optional Instrumentations	optional percussion
Soloist(s)	3 Soloists: Soloists 1 & 2 soprano or mezzo-soprano, Soloist 3 preferably tenor or baritone, but could also be soprano or mezzo-soprano
Vocal Ranges	S: C3-F4 A: B2-B ^{b3} T: C2-A3 B: G1-D3 (optional D1) Solo 1: G3-E4 Solo 2: G3-E4 Solo 3: A3-E4 (written in treble clef, if sung by a tenor or baritone, would sound down the octave)
Text Source	<i>Let Evening Come</i> by Jane Kenyon (1947-1995 – Wilmot, New Hampshire) from <i>Otherwise: New & Selected Poems</i> , Copyright 1996 by the Estate of Jane Kenyon
Duration	3'30"
Text designation	Sacred

Performance Comments

Though *Let Evening Come* begins with a modest unison choral statement, as one moves past the opening solos, both the number of parts and difficulty of the choral harmonies quickly start to increase. From approximately the mid-point of the piece through the end, division in the voice parts and dissonant harmonies (some cluster-like) are frequent. The meter remains in four-four time, with only a few measures of five-four and six-four included. The choral rhythms are easy to sight-read. During the solos, the choir acts in an accompanimental manner, and while there are sections of homophonic texture, many contain at least one rhythmically independent part. Although the three solos are not vocally difficult, they require singers with a good sense of pitch (due to the number of repeated pitches and the lack of support in the accompaniment). The piano part is fairly challenging, containing many sixteenth-note and sixteenth-note quintuplet, right-hand patterns and some sections with three against five opposition in the left and right hands respectively. Overall, because of the amount of division and the difficulty of the harmonies, *Let Evening Come* would be best suited for a college, university, or advanced community choir.

Difficulty Level Rating

Moderately Difficult

Composer's Notes

The rural New England landscape can inspire introspective poetry. Such is the case in the beautiful poem, "Let Evening Come," by Jane Kenyon. Here we find many references to the countryside – the farm, bales of hay, the shed, the fox in her den. And for all of these, evening comes at the close of day, the end of life or the end of struggle. "Let it come as it will, and don't be afraid. God does not leave us comfortless." This is the message from the land, and from the soul connected to the land.

This musical setting focuses on several images associated with evening. The opening, four-note motive in the piano accompaniment might be heard as church

bells tolling the coming of nightfall. These bells return (with singing) at the end of the song.

The chorus enters with the phrase, "Let evening come." This is sung initially all on one pitch (D), and later moves only to surrounding pitches. This static and peaceful pattern anchors the music, and offers a reassurance of the inevitable return of evening, and of comfort.

Various soloists, in a gentle recitative, present the opening stanzas of the poem -- images of afternoon leading into evening. The soloists continue, and the group refrain of "Let evening come" is repeated more and more quickly, uniting as the full chorus sings: "Let it come as it will, and don't be afraid." The music culminates in a celebratory singing of "Let evening come," with rapid accompaniment (church bells) in the piano³⁶

P27.

<u>Title</u>	<u>Let Music Fill the Air (2003)</u>
Publisher and number	ECS #6363
Commission/Dedication	Commissioned for the 50th anniversary season of the Polymnia Choral Society of Melrose, Massachusetts -- Michelle Graveline, Music Director
Voicing	SATB divisi
Vocal Ranges	S: D3-A4 A: D3-C4 T: F2-A3 B: D2-D3
Text Source	Adapted by the composer from a text by Plato, and from a passage from the Handel opera "Rosalinde." W.G. Rothery (1858-1930), tr.
Duration	4'
Text designation	Secular
Performance Comments	

In *Let Music Fill the Air*, the composer has taken several texts and combined them into a work that celebrates music. With each new section of text comes a change in music, varying from the wistful unison humming at the opening that expands to the hollow, open fourths first in the women's section, then in the men's, to the vibrant, exciting, lush, eight-part harmony that brings the piece to its thrilling completion. While each section of music is different from the previous, Walker writes seamless transitions that allow each section to build upon previous

material. One common element throughout the work is the choral texture which is primarily homophonic with some alternation between female and male voices and utilizes very little imitation. Like in many of her other compositions, the rhythms in the choral parts are considerably less complex than those found in the accompaniment. Categorized by the publisher as SATB, there is a great deal of divisi in the work. The largest amount of division is found in the soprano part, followed by the bass, then closely by the tenor, while division is only required of the altos a few times in the work. Though the harmonic writing in *Let Music Fill the Air* is challenging in parts, it is the amount of divisi and the dynamic ranges, as well as the amount of vocal finesse and maturity needed to conquer everything demanded, that make this piece most suitable for a large college, university, or community choir.

Difficulty Level Rating Moderately Difficult

Composer's Notes

Let Music Fill the Air weaves together several texts with the common theme of celebration of the power of song. The opening section uses the lines from the Handel Opera, "Rosalinde": "Are you troubled? Music will calm you." This is the healing power of music. The mood then turns to triumph: "Raise your voice. Let music fill the air." During this phrase, the music shifts from the c minor to C Major tonality.

Reflective qualities fill the middle section, with the quote from Plato's writings: "Music gives soul to the universe. Music gives wings to the mind." This leads to urgency and celebration: "Let my voice speak! Let my heart rise on wings of song." For music enables self-expression, and an elevation of the spirit.

The concluding section ("rise on wings of song") modulates to the key of A Major, effecting an overall tonal shift from three flats (c minor) to three sharps (A Major). This may be heard as a brightening of tonality, an exuberance as music fills the air!³⁷

P28.

Title	Long Ago Lady (1984)
Publisher and number	Unpublished, available at www.gwynethwalker.com
Commission/Dedication	Commissioned by Woodstock Union High School, Woodstock, Vermont.
Voicing	SATB divisi
Vocal Ranges	S: E3-G4 A: A2-E4 T: E2-E3 B: A1-E3
Text Source	A song by Vermont folksinger and composer Jon Gailmor
Duration	4'30"
Text designation	Secular
Performance Comments	

As is noted below, *Long Ago Lady* is an arrangement of a song written by a folksinger from the state of Vermont. Because the text is so specific, groups programming this piece would likely either be from that state, or presenting a very specific type of thematic concert where this text would be appropriate. Musically, *Long Ago Lady* is much more simplistic, especially harmonically, than the bulk of Walker's work. In keeping with the style of the original piece, the piano accompaniment sounds much like a guitar and the choral harmonies are much more simple and consonant than those the composer usually prefers. The only real challenge presented is the division of voice parts which happens throughout the second half of the piece. Concerning divisi, one item to consider is an exposed a cappella section featuring four measures of four-part men followed by four measures of four-part women. The choral texture is basically homophonic with some alternation between men and women. The rhythms are also simple and easy to sing. Provided the group is large enough to cover the divisi, *Long Ago Lady* is likely one of Walker's most accessible and sight-readable pieces.

Difficulty Level Rating Moderate

Notes by Carson Cooman

This work is an arrangement of a song by the Vermont folksinger and composer Jon Gailmor. The title, *Long Ago Lady*, refers to the state of Vermont.³⁸

P29.

Title	<u>Blow the Candles Out (1997)</u>
Set/Series	Love – By the Water
Publisher and number	ECS #5249
Commission/Dedication	Commissioned by the New Classic Singers, College of DuPage, Glen Ellyn, IL, Lee R. Kesselman, Music Director
Voicing	SATB (one measure each of soprano, tenor, and bass divisi)
Vocal Ranges	S: C3-B ^b 4 A: C3-D4 T: C2-A3 B: G1-E ^b 3
Text Source	Traditional American Folksong
Duration	3'30"
Text designation	Secular
Performance Comments	

Blow the Candles Out opens quietly with subtle chords from the piano followed by an almost entirely a cappella unison and two-part men's introduction. Out of this simple and beautiful beginning, the accompaniment kicks into a lively and energetic figure that invites the women to enter and sets the tone for the remainder of the work. The vocal lines are singable and the choral harmonies consist of pleasing consonances and accessible dissonances. The meter remains constant throughout and the choral rhythms are straightforward. Likewise, the choral texture is primarily homophonic with some imitation and "call-and-response" interaction between the male and female voices. Division of voice parts is also minimal. While this piece is accessible and would be enjoyable for a good high school choir, it does provide challenges as well. These include range (especially first soprano and first tenor), dissonant harmonies (as mentioned above, those included are not as difficult as in some of the composer's other works, but many

are still present and would need attention), and pitch accuracy on the staccato vocal jumps on final page of music. The accompaniment is also quite challenging and would require an accomplished player.

Difficulty Level Rating Moderate

Composer's Notes

These are three ballads about love, and about water. They greet love ("Blow the Candles Out"), depart from love ("Fare Thee Well") and survive love! ("Banks of the Ohio"). The songs delve into the rich heritage of ballad repertoire -- exploring, expanding and updating the originals.

"Blow the Candles Out" exists with many sets of lyrics. The most American version, with reference to Portland, Maine, has been selected here. The piano accompaniment is created from patterns suggestive of ocean waves and candlelight.³⁹

P30.

Title	<u>Fare Thee Well (1997)</u>
Set/Series	Love – By the Water
Publisher and number	ECS #5250
Commission/Dedication	Commissioned by the New Classic Singers, College of DuPage, Glen Ellyn, IL, Lee R. Kesselman, Music Director.
Voicing	SATB (alto and bass divisi plus 20 measures of double choir with male and female soli)
Vocal Ranges	S: C3-A4 A: A2-E4 T: E2-A3 B: A1-E3
Text Source	British text (derived from Mark <i>XIII</i>)
Duration	4'30"
Text designation	Secular
Performance Comments	

More difficult and lengthy than the first piece in the set, *Fare Thee Well* is likely best suited for college, university, professional, or accomplished community ensembles. Though not rhythmically difficult for the choir, the dissonant harmonies, high tenor and soprano tessitura, as well as the sheer number of parts would prove to be very challenging for younger or less musically mature

ensembles. Much of the work is in six parts (with the division in the alto and bass) and the work ends with a double choir section accompanied by two solo parts (one female and one male), for a total of ten voice parts. As in many other works by Gwyneth Walker, the choral texture is primarily homophonic and there are some meter changes. While not as demanding or exposed as some of her other writings, the piano accompaniment is substantial and would require a strong accompanist.

Difficulty Level Rating Difficult

Composer's Notes

See annotation #P29 for Walker's comments on the entire set.

"Fare Thee Well" can be found with many melodies, including the new one used here. The text is British in origin, and is derived from the New Testament "Till all these things be done." (Mark XIII) This song has been vastly expanded, with an inserted and impassioned middle section. At the opening, the piano represents the clock striking 3AM -- the hour of the lovers' parting. Later, the piano is the ocean.⁴⁰

P31.

<u>Title</u>	<u>Banks of the Ohio (1997)</u>
Set/Series	Love – By the Water
Publisher and number	ECS #5251
Commission/Dedication	Commissioned by the New Classic Singers, College of DuPage, Glen Ellyn, IL, Lee R. Kesselman, Music Director.
Voicing	SATB (soprano and bass divisi, 3 measures tenor divisi)
Vocal Ranges	S: D3-G4 A: D3-D4 T: D3-A3 B: F1-F [#] 3
Text Source	Traditional American Song with additional text by Gwyneth Walker
Duration	5'30"
Text designation	Secular
Performance Comments	

Basing her harmonies on those of the original song and containing very few

untraditional dissonances, *Banks of the Ohio* is harmonically the simplest in this

Other Available Voicings	Two-part treble
Vocal Ranges	S: C3-A4 A: A2-D4 T: C2-A3 B: F1-D3
Text Source	A Shaker Song from Canterbury, N.H., ca. 1870
Duration	6'
Text designation	Sacred
Performance Comments	

More Love, a medley of three Shaker songs, is an accessible piece that would be suitable for many choirs. For the most part, Walker has kept the harmonies traditional, staying fairly true to the chords and progressions of the original songs. The second song in the medley, “Brilliant Gem,” is harmonically more contemporary, showing the largest influence of Walker’s own original compositional style. The first and last songs are set in a lively, dance-like six-eight time and the middle song is set in a slower, more subdued four-four. The choral rhythms, though not simplistic, are accessible and could be learned fairly quickly. Within the three songs, a variety of choral textures exist, including four-part homophonic style, contrapuntal sections, and alternation of the male and female voices. The piano accompaniment adds a great deal to the lively, joyous settings and contains some fairly difficult technical passages that require a strong player. As one might expect from a spirited, joyous piece, there is a considerable amount of full-voice singing and the tessitura is high for both the tenors and sopranos. With a duration of approximately six minutes and a substantial amount of divisi, this piece would give young or inexperienced choirs the greatest amount of difficulty. *More Love* is, however, an accessible work that would be well suited for a choir with developed, mature voices, or a large high school, church, or

community chorus. It would also be an ideal piece for a mass choir or combined choir setting, like a church choir festival.

Difficulty Level Rating Moderate

Composer's Notes

More Love is a call from the Shakers, a religious sect prominent in the Eastern United States in the 18th and 19th centuries. This song originated in the Canterbury, New Hampshire community around 1870. Shaker music is often lively, suitable for singing and dancing. This new interpretation enjoys the spirit of the original, presenting the song in unison, harmonized and in imitation (canon). Two other Shaker songs, "Brilliant Gem" and "Love by the Handful," are combined with "More Love" to make a medley. The joy and colorful lyrics of the Shaker songs can be summarized in the lines "Here's love by the handful, here's love by the ball, here's love for the elders and love for you all." And finally, triumphantly, "O Zion, more love!"⁴²

P33

Title	<u>My Love Walks in Velvet (1978)</u>
Publisher and number	ECS #4312
Commission/Dedication	Composed as a wedding gift for Patricia Mays and James Adlam. The song was originally created for Soprano and Piano. The SSA setting was commissioned by Vox Femina, Los Angeles.
Voicing	SATB (tenor and bass divisi on final chord)
Other Available Voicings	SSA Solo voice Solo voice and guitar
Vocal Ranges	S: D2-F4 A: F2-D4 T: B ^b 1-G3 B: G1-D3
Text Source	Gwyneth Walker
Duration	4'30"
Text designation	Secular
Performance Comments	

The flowing, broken chords of the accompaniment set the tranquil, minor feel that permeates *My Love Walks in Velvet*. The meter stays solidly in common time and the rhythms are fairly simple and accessible. Harmonically, the key focuses around c minor, though the composer utilizes the key signature for C major and employs accidentals to create the desired effect. Although dissonances are

present in the choral parts, they are more simple and accessible than many of those found in Walker's later, more complex works. The choral texture contains a good deal of alternation between male and female voices, as one might expect to find in a love song. Entrances are also more independent and contrapuntal in nature than many of the composer's other works. Though fairly limited overall, the vocal ranges stretch the tenors to a high G and altos to a low F. As the men lead the opening statement and much of the melodic material throughout the piece, *My Love Walks in Velvet* would be quite accessible for a high school choir with a solid men's section.

Difficulty Level Rating	Moderate
Composer's Notes	Applicable notes by the composer not available
P34.	
<u>Title</u>	<u>Now Let Us Sing! (2003)</u>
Publisher and number	ECS #6600
Commission/Dedication	Commissioned by the Colchester Community Chorus, Carol Reichard, Music Director in memory of Perrie Coope
Voicing	SATB divisi (soprano and bass divide most, followed by tenor, then alto)
Other Available Voicings	SSAA
Vocal Ranges	S: D3-G4 A: B2-D4 T: G2-G3 B: G1-D3
Text Source	Traditional Spiritual with additional text by St. Francis of Assisi
Duration	3'30"
Text designation	Sacred
Performance Comments	

Like many of Walker's other arrangements or adaptations of folk songs and spirituals, the composer keeps the harmonic structure fairly true to the original. *Now Let Us Sing!* contains very few untraditional harmonies and when employing dissonance stays primarily with the more familiar seventh chords. The meter is

in four-four time throughout and the rhythms, while not difficult, utilize syncopation, as one would expect in a spiritual. The choral texture, though largely homophonic, includes sections of alternation between male and female voices, some independent bass lines (once again in keeping with the tradition of the spiritual), and two brief sections where voice parts enter one at a time in an ascending or descending manner. The composer refers to these sections as “pyramids of joy.” While the rhythms, harmonies, and voice leading are fairly accessible, there is considerable divisi, especially in the soprano and bass parts. Taking this and the sacred nature of the text into consideration, *Now Let Us Sing!* would likely be best performed by a large choir such as a community chorus or a festival chorus combining several church choirs. While the piano accompaniment is exciting and not very difficult, the addition of the optional brass and percussion parts seems to better suit the celebratory feel of the piece.

Difficulty Level Rating Moderate

Composer’s Notes

Now Let Us Sing! is a celebration of song -- the singing of a community chorus, the singing of all creatures on the earth. A voice for everyone!

The basis for this work is the traditional spiritual with the lyrics: "Now Let Us Sing 'til the power of the Lord comes down." This is an exhortation for all to lift up their voices, unafraid. After beckoning the chorus to sing, the lyrics spread out to include all of the animals on Noah's Ark as well!

Lines from the Prayer of St. Francis are interspersed: "the rising morn in praise rejoice, the lights of evening find a voice..." All the earth shall sing. Now!⁴³

P35.	
Title	<u>Freedom Will Not Come Today <i>and</i> Hold Fast to Dreams (2008)</u>
Set/Series	Our Dream of Freedom
Publisher and number	Not yet available from the publisher or the composer's website; one may email the composer for more information music@gwynethwalker.com
Commission/Dedication	Commissioned by the Illinois Music Educators Association District 7 Chorus Division, Dr. Brad Holmes, conductor
Voicing	SATB (approximately 5 measures of SATB divisi, plus several additional measures of soprano divisi)
Vocal Ranges	S: D3-A4 A: C3-D4 T: D2-A3 B: A1-D3
Text Source	Langston Hughes (1902-1967), copyright 1994 by the Estate of Langston Hughes
Duration	4'30"
Text designation	Secular
Performance Comments	

These first two pieces in this set are annotated together as they are meant to be performed as a pair. The composer has written them to meld seamlessly and has also listed them together in her catalogue. Though there is not a great deal of divisi in either piece and many of the harmonies are consonant, an increasing amount dissonant sonorities are present. The meter is set primarily in four-four time with additional measures of two-four, three-four and six-four interspersed throughout. The choral rhythms are simple and readable with quarter-note triplets as the most difficult figure. While the choral texture is largely homophonic, there are frequent contrapuntal sections and alternation between SA and TB. The piano accompaniment, though certainly not Walker's most demanding, contains some technically challenging passages and requires a strong player. Overall, these two pieces provide a great contrast to one another with the bold opening statement of *Freedom Will Not Come Today* and the more reflective quality of *Hold Fast to*

Dreams, and would be well suited for groups at least at the level of a strong high school choir.

Difficulty Level Rating Moderately Difficult

Composer's Notes

Our Dream of Freedom is a set of four songs presenting four different statements about the dream of freedom.

#1. "Freedom Will Not Come Today" is a forceful song. The piano introduction grows in dynamic intensity leading to the entrance of the chorus, marked 'boldly'. "Freedom will not come today, this year, or ever, through compromise and fear." This is a message of asserting one's right to freedom.

#2. "Hold Fast to Dreams," in contrast, has a gentle theme. Dreams can be precious and fragile. Thus, florid passages in the piano accompaniment reflect the dreams as they float above us. "Hold fast...for if dreams die, life is a broken-winged bird that cannot fly." At the end of this song a portion of the first song returns to link the dreams to the aspirations of freedom.⁴⁴

P36.

Title	<u>The Dream Keeper (2008)</u>
Set/Series	Our Dream of Freedom
Publisher and number	Not yet available from the publisher or the composer's website; one may email the composer for more information music@gwynethwalker.com
Commission/Dedication	Commissioned by the Hamburg (NY) High School Chorale for premiere at the NY State School Music Association Conference, December 1, 2008, Rochester, NY, Norman Zogaib, Conductor
Voicing	SATB divisi
Vocal Ranges	S: D3-G4 A: A2-C4 T: D2-G3 B: A1-C3
Text Source	Langston Hughes (1902-1967), copyright 1994 by the Estate of Langston Hughes
Duration	3'15"
Text designation	Secular
Performance Comments	

With a short, six-measure introduction to be used specifically when performing the piece within the context of the entire set, *The Dream Keeper* is a beautiful, prayerful setting full of rich, contemporary harmonies. The choral texture is

primarily homophonic with several brief, more rhythmically independent sections added throughout. Rarely less than four parts, the harmonic texture is thick and lush throughout with a good deal of divisi in all four voice parts during the final third of the piece. Within the four-part sonorities there are some accessible, contemporary dissonances, and as the texture expands the dissonances increase in number and complexity. With just a few added measures of three-four and six-four, the meter is mostly four-four time with commonplace rhythmic patterns in the choral parts. While the piano's role is more secondary than usual for Walker, it contains some technically demanding passages that require a strong player. Overall, *The Dream Keeper* is a beautiful and effective piece that could be sung by an advanced high school, college, or university level choir.

Difficulty Level Rating Moderately Difficult

Composer's Notes

Our Dream of Freedom is a set of four songs presenting four different statements about the dream of freedom.

#3. "The Dream Keeper" is a prayer for the protection of dreams. "Bring me all of your dreams, you dreamers." The choral writing is often in hymn style, while the arpeggiated piano accompaniment flows around the chorus, perhaps "wrapping" the dreamers in a "blue-cloud cloth" of safety from the harsh world.⁴⁵

P37.

<u>Title</u>	<u>Dream of Freedom (2008)</u>
Set/Series	Our Dream of Freedom
Publisher and number	Not yet available from the publisher or the composer's website; one may email the composer for more information music@gwynethwalker.com
Commission/Dedication	Commissioned by the Hamburg (NY) High School Chorale for premiere at the NY State School Music Association Conference, December 1, 2008, Rochester, NY, Norman Zogaib, Conductor

Voicing	SATB (approximately 3 measures each of 3-part men and women, plus approximately 12 additional measures of soprano divisi, and full 8-part division for the final four measures with 10 parts on the final chord)
Vocal Ranges	S: G3-G4 A: C3-D4 T: F2-G3 B: B1-E ^{b3}
Text Source	Langston Hughes (1902-1967), copyright 1994 by the Estate of Langston Hughes
Duration	2'45"
Text designation	Secular
Performance Comments	

The most exciting and energetic of the set, *Dream of Freedom* is also harmonically the most accessible. With a thinner choral texture than in *The Dream Keeper*, the harmonies, though dissonant in places, are generally less complex. The last page of the music contains the most divisi, concluding with a ten-part, cluster-like final chord. The choral texture is varied throughout, including homophonic, alternating and accompanying SA and TB, and more contrapuntal sections. The meter is set in a driving four-four through the entirety of the piece and the choral rhythms, although containing some syncopation, are generally not difficult. The piano score provides much of the underlying rhythmic intensity, and while accessible, contains some technically challenging passages. *Dream of Freedom* is a rousing piece that provides an exciting closing to this set and would be enjoyed and performed well by an advanced high school, college, or community choir.

Difficulty Level Rating Moderately Difficult

Composer's Notes

Our Dream of Freedom is a set of four songs presenting four different statements about the dream of freedom.

#4. The final song, “Dream of Freedom,” is energetic, with rhythmic sounds coming from the chorus. This song represents the fight for freedom “with its back against the wall.” The dream is described as ‘embattled’. And the singing is marked ‘emphatically.’ Accents fill the musical score. Interspersed are quiet reminders of “Dreamers, dreamers, dream on.” At the conclusion of the song comes the line “to save the dream for one it must be saved for all.” Thus, the final chord expands to ten pitches, as “notes for all.”⁴⁶

P38.

<u>Title</u>	Ring Out, Wild Bells (2006)
Publisher and number	Unpublished, available at www.gwynethwalker.com
Commission/Dedication	Commissioned by The Wausau Lyric Choir – Wausau, Wisconsin
Voicing	SATB divisi
Optional Instrumentations	Organ Brass quintet, percussion & organ
Vocal Ranges	S: C3-A4 A: A2-D4 T: G2-A4 B: C2-D3
Text Source	Text by Alfred, Lord Tennyson, adapted by the composer
Duration	4’
Text designation	Sacred
Performance Comments	

The choral texture of *Ring Out, Wild Bells* is primarily homophonic with some alternation between male and female voice parts as well many short, single-measure segments where a voice part connects the end of one musical phrase to the beginning of the next. The meter remains in four-four throughout, and the choral rhythms are simple and repetitive. While the accompaniment contains a few of Walker’s signature quintuplet and sextuplet flourishes, it also comprises both legato and accented arpeggio-style passages as well as block chords that double the choral writing. In terms of difficulty level, this accompaniment falls somewhere in the middle of Walker’s output. Chorally, the biggest challenge in *Ring Out, Wild Bells* is the dissonant harmonies found especially in the second half of the piece. As in many of her other original compositions of this time

period, the composer favors the intervals of seconds and ninths in the choral harmonies. For the most part, the divisi tends to lead to sections of three-part men and three-part women (with the division written in the soprano and bass lines) with only a few measures of actual eight-part singing. *Ring Out, Wild Bells* is best suited for a college or university level ensemble, or an accomplished community or church choir.

Difficulty Level Rating Moderately Difficult

Composer's Notes

Ring Out, Wild Bells is a Christmas anthem for mixed chorus and piano on the poem by Alfred, Lord Tennyson. The text celebrates the image of bells (represented by cascading "ringing" fourths in the piano accompaniment) to herald both the "going out" of the old year, the "coming in" of the new year, and the birth of Jesus.

Between the verses of the poem, the composer has inserted a refrain, "Come, Lord Jesus." This may be interpreted as the prayer of the awaiting world. The refrain repeats, intermingles with the verses, and ultimately expands into the triumphant, closing "Come, Lord Jesus, Come Emmanuel!"⁴⁷

P39.

<u>Title</u>	<u>The Road to Freedom (2003)</u>
Publisher and number	ECS #6306
Commission/Dedication	Commissioned in celebration of the 30th anniversary season of the Salisbury Singers of Worcester, Massachusetts, Michelle Graveline, Music Director
Voicing	SATB (approximately 16 measures soprano divisi, 8 measures bass divisi, and 4 measures each tenor and alto divisi)
Vocal Ranges	S: B2-B4 A: G2-E4 T: E2-G ^{#3} B: A1-C ^{#3}
Text Source	From the traditional song, "Follow the Drinking Gourd," adapted by the composer
Duration	(2003)
Text designation	Secular

Performance Comments

Walker's adaptation of the traditional African-American song is set in a steady swing style with a jazz feel. As in most of her arrangements, the harmonic integrity of the original song is kept intact. In this case, however, Walker added newer harmonic ideas from the jazz idiom (which grew out of the African-American tradition) rather than from her own contemporary musical vocabulary. As the composer mentions in her notes, the accompaniment provides the solid rhythmic ("walking") underpinning for much of the work and while it is technically not the most demanding in Walker's catalogue, it calls for an accompanist with a great sense of rhythm and a working knowledge of the swing style. The choral texture is primarily homophonic with some alternation between male and female voices and a more rhythmically independent ending. As one might expect from a piece in this style, the meter remains in four-four throughout and the choral rhythms are not difficult despite instances of syncopation. Overall, *The Road to Freedom* is very accessible for a good high school or a beginning college or university ensemble, provided the group has the numbers to handle the few short divisi sections. It is interesting to note that the composer has also included in the score instructions for footsteps, hand claps, and even some "choreographed" arm movements for the choir.

Difficulty Level Rating Moderate

Composer's Notes

The Road to Freedom is based on the traditional song, "Follow the Drinking Gourd." Dating back to the time of the Underground Railroad, this African-American song provided a map to the runaway slaves. By heading toward the Big Dipper (the "Drinking Gourd"), the fugitives would head north, toward Canada and freedom.

The intent of the new choral setting is to highlight some of the characteristics of the original song. The theme of walking is reflected in the tempo marking of "at a steady tempo, as if walking on a long journey." The piano accompaniment is often very regular, within the spirit of even-paced walking. Occasional staccato chords may be heard as light footsteps.

The chorus portrays the Northern journey most prominently during the refrains. Footsteps, hand-claps (for joy) and "shooting stars" appear. The travelers are heading north, keeping their eyes on the sky. Near the end of the song, new verses are added to express their excitement:

I can see the light in the Northern sky.
 My steps are weary, but my spirits are high!
 The road to freedom is dark and long.
 But every step I take brings me closer to the place where I belong,
 in the land of freedom!⁴⁸

P40.

<u>Title</u>	<u>Sing On! (A Musical Toast) (2003)</u>
Publisher and number	ECS #6524
Commission/Dedication	Commissioned by the Ellington High School Vocal Ensemble, Sal Ciccirella, Music Director
Voicing	SATB (approximately 8 measures of divisi for each voice part)
Vocal Ranges	S: D3-F4 A: A2-D4 T: D2-A4 B: G1-D3
Text Source	Colonel Henry Heveningham (c. 1690)
Duration	3'
Text designation	Secular
Performance Comments	

Walker's setting of *Sing On!*, a text which has been popular among contemporary composers, is more light-hearted than some more familiar settings, showing the composer's creativity and sense of humor. The meter shifts from playful, six-eight sections in D major to more contemplative, four-four sections in d minor. Though not overly challenging, the choral rhythms are slightly more complex than those in many of Walker's other works. While largely homophonic, the choral texture contains a substantial amount of alternation between male and

female voices as well some imitative and rhythmically independent sections. Harmonically, *Sing On!* is a good example of Walker's ability to utilize more traditional, consonant harmonies while adding her signature dissonances. The accompaniment, while providing much of the rhythmic drive, is not technically demanding and could be played well by an accompanist who is a good musician, but does not necessarily have "great fingers." While Walker categorizes the piece as suitable for college/university choirs, it was originally written for a high school choir and with some effort it could be performed well and enjoyed by upper-level high school singers.

Difficulty Level Rating Moderately Difficult

Composer's Notes

The pleasures of music, food and love are "toasted" in *Sing On!* Based on the familiar text by Col. Henry Heveningham ("If music be the food of love..."), this musical setting adds a few new touches: the clanking of knife-on-glass to set the tempo; a gesture of a toast-celebration as the final cut-off; and playful clusters (perhaps cream puffs!) in the piano accompaniment.

A middle section delights in reordering the words:

If food be the music of love...

if music lovers love food...

if the love of food be music! (which may speak to the gourmets in the audience)

Delicacies, one and all!

This song was composed to honor Sal Ciccirella, Choral Director, and his students, who share in his love of music, food and life. Sal retired in June, 2003, after 36 years of teaching at the Ellington (CT) High School.

*Sing On!*⁴⁹

P41.

Title	<u>Evening Prayer (2006)</u>
Set/Series	Songs to the Lord of Peace
Publisher and number	ECS #6971

Commission/Dedication	Commissioned by the Center for Catholic Studies at Fairfield University in celebration of the 60th Anniversary Season of the Fairfield University Glee Club: 1947-2007
Voicing	SATB divisi
Soloist(s)	Soprano & Tenor
Vocal Ranges	S: G2-F4 A: G2-A3 T: D2-A3 B: G1-D3 Soprano Solo: G3-C4 Tenor Solo: A2-G3
Text Source	Thomas Merton (1915-1968)
Duration	4'
Text designation	Sacred
Performance Comments	

The opening accompaniment of *Evening Prayer* begins with slow patterns of soft chords that move upward in octaves getting faster until the pianist sets up the vocal entrance with blurred, rapidly-moving, dream-like patterns. The men first sing a melodic figure in longer, sustained tones under the accompanist's continued flurry. The women then take the melodic material and within four measures all four voice parts are singing together as the introduction leads into the body of the piece. The overall feel alternates between sections of this distant, dream-like atmosphere and sections with more urgency, immediacy and passion. For the bulk of the work, the meter is four-four time, though there are brief interjections of five-four, six-four, and seven-four. Chorally, the rhythms are quite simple with only a limited amount of subdivision of the beat and no syncopation. The choral texture is mostly homophonic throughout, with some alternation between male and female voices and a few imitative entrances. The soprano and tenor solos are only four measures each in length and while neither is overly vocally demanding, the tenor needs to have a comfortable high G. The

harmonic language is somewhat sophisticated with considerable dissonance throughout. Much of the piano accompaniment is technically simple, although the last few pages contain a series of sixteenth note patterns that might prove challenging for the novice pianist. Primarily because of the sophistication of the harmonies and the text, *Evening Prayer* would be best suited for a college/university or an accomplished community chorus.

Difficulty Level Rating Moderately Difficult
 Composer's Notes

The texts for these four songs are taken from a series of "Freedom Songs" which Thomas Merton wrote in 1966. These poems were created in response to a special request in connection with the Christian non-violent movement for Civil Rights. Thus, faith, equality and peace are the unifying themes in the songs.

The ordering of the texts and the creation of the musical settings have been formed with the intent of presenting a growth in the intensity of the message. From the quiet "Evening Prayer" to the powerful "There is a Way," the songs span a variety of imagery and musical language. The prayer, the voice of faith and the affirmation of equality grow ever more insistent.

Images central to the various songs are:

"Evening Prayer" – the prayer rising "sweet as incense smoke"
 "I Have Called You" – forceful, the voice of the Lord speaking "I have called you by your name. You belong to me."
 "Be my Defender" – growth in intensity from the quiet supplication "Lord, be my Defender" to the dramatic "Kneel and tremble in the night"
 "There is a Way" – a triumphant march to glory!

Lines from the poem "There is a Way" encompass the inspiration behind the entire set of *Songs to the Lord of Peace*.

There is a way to glory.
 Love is this way to glory.
 Riding on to Sion where the Lord of Peace rules in glory.⁵⁰

P42.

<u>Title</u>	<u>I Have Called You (2006)</u>
Set/Series	Songs to the Lord of Peace
Publisher and number	ECS #6972

Commission/Dedication	Commissioned by the Center for Catholic Studies at Fairfield University in celebration of the 60th Anniversary Season of the Fairfield University Glee Club: 1947-2007
Voicing	SATB divisi
Soloist(s)	4 voice male soli quartet
Vocal Ranges	S: E3-A ^b 4 A: C3-C ^b 4 T: E2-F4 B: C2-E ^b 3 Tenor 1 soli part: F3-F3 Tenor 2 soli part: E ^b 3- E ^b 3 Baritone soli part: C ^b 3- C ^b 3 Bass soli part: G ^b 3- G ^b 3
Text Source	Thomas Merton (1915-1968)
Duration	2'30"
Text designation	Sacred
Performance Comments	

I Have Called You has a much different feel than the first piece in the set. The forceful, rhythmic, almost majestic chords of the piano introduction set this new quicker tempo and invite the strong unison opening choral statement that sets the tone for the remainder of the piece. Much like *Evening Prayer*, the majority of the work is in four-four time with brief interjections of two-four and six four. The choral rhythms are very simple with no subdivision of beat, and in keeping with the strong straightforward style, contain absolutely no syncopation. Once again, the choral texture is primarily homophonic with some alternation between the male and female sections and only a small number of imitative entrances. The harmonies, although dissonant in places, are not as complex or difficult as those in the previous piece. While at first glance, the male soli quartet might seem challenging, in actuality the passage is only eight measures in length. The quartet sings the same chord for the entire passage, during which time, the remainder of the men are either singing a unison melody or are resting. The piano

accompaniment is also different than that of many of Walker's other works, based almost solely on quarter note block-style chords that move steadily throughout the work and provide the rhythmic underpinning. Overall, *I Have Called You* is more accessible than the other works in this set and could be performed well by a good high school or church choir.

Difficulty Level Rating Moderate

Composer's Notes

See annotation #P41 for Walker's comments on the entire set.

P43.

Title	<u>Be My Defender (2006)</u>
Set/Series	Songs to the Lord of Peace
Publisher and number	ECS #6973
Commission/Dedication	Commissioned by the Center for Catholic Studies at Fairfield University in celebration of the 60th Anniversary Season of the Fairfield University Glee Club: 1947-2007
Voicing	SATB divisi
Soloist(s)	Soprano & Tenor
Vocal Ranges	S: B2-F#4 A: G2-D4 T: G2-A3 B: A1-C3 Soprano Solo: F#3-C#4 Tenor Solo: F#2-C#3
Text Source	Thomas Merton (1915-1968)
Duration	3'30"
Text designation	Sacred
Performance Comments	

Be My Defender opens with the accompanist playing two free, sustained, descending, scale-like passages followed by two measures of quarter-note block chords "at a leisurely tempo," that invite the first vocal entrances. At the beginning, the simple unison choral statements act basically in support of, or in response to the accessible four-measure soprano and tenor solos. Immediately following the tenor solo, the choral parts begin to build quickly in both number

and dynamic, leading to the first forte, four-part chorus statement only four measures after the solos have finished. The majority of the remainder of the work builds and expands upon this full choral texture until the ending, where the choral parts begin to thin and the soprano soloist is once again heard making a simple, almost distant statement. As in the first piece in this set, the harmonies are more complex, dissonant and typical of Walker's style in her recent compositions. As in both of the first two pieces in this set, the meter is four-four with short segments in six-four, five-four, and three-four. Vocally, the rhythms are quite accessible with only basic subdivisions of the beat and no syncopation. More challenging patterns including quintuplets in the right hand against triplets in the left hand are found in the piano accompaniment. Like the first piece in the set, *Be My Defender* is best suited for a college/university or an accomplished community choir because of the difficult dissonances and musical sensitivity required.

Difficulty Level Rating Difficult

Composer's Notes

See annotation #P41 for Walker's comments on the entire set.

P44.

<u>Title</u>	<u>There is a Way to Glory (2006)</u>
Set/Series	Songs to the Lord of Peace
Publisher and number	ECS #6974
Commission/Dedication	Commissioned by the Center for Catholic Studies at Fairfield University in celebration of the 60th Anniversary Season of the Fairfield University Glee Club: 1947-2007
Voicing	SATB divisi (approximately 30 measures of soprano divisi and approximately 8 measures each of alto, tenor and bass divisi)
Optional Instrumentations	Chamber Orchestra
Vocal Ranges	S: D3-C5 A: A ^b 3-D4

	T: E2-C4
	B: F1-G3
Text Source	Thomas Merton (1915-1968)
Duration	4'15"
Text designation	Sacred
Performance Comments	

Like the first and third pieces in this set, *There Is a Way to Glory* begins with a slow, free piano introduction that then moves into a more metered feel just before the voices enter. The bulk of the piece is in two-two time at a “walking” tempo that seems to emulate a “walk or march to glory.” There are also measures of four-four, five-four, six-four, and seven-four. These metric changes generally accompany a slowing of tempo along with moments of a more reflective or subdued mood. Though the majority of the choral texture is homophonic, there is a good deal of alternation between the male and female sections as well as some eighth-note imitative entrances. Even with these changes in meter and imitative texture, the choral rhythms are not difficult. While there is some division in the lower three voices, the soprano section divides the most frequently. Two soprano parts are present through much of the second half of the piece with the first soprano singing a descant-like part for the last sixteen measures and the sopranos actually dividing into three parts for the final two measures. Concerning these final two measures, an item of interest is that the composer has written a “high C” in the both the first soprano and the first tenor and labeled it as “descant.” Like others in this set, many of the harmonies contain a good deal of dissonance, although they are not as difficult to sing as some of those found in other pieces by the composer. Likewise, the piano accompaniment, while not simple, is also not as rhythmically or technically challenging as are many of Walker’s other

accompaniments. Walker has listed “Songs to the Lord of Peace” as suitable for community, college, or professional ensembles. *There Is a Way to Glory* would also be appropriate for an advanced high school choir.

Difficulty Level Rating Moderately Difficult

Composer’s Notes

See annotation #P41 for Walker’s comments on the entire set.

P45.

Title	Shepherd’s Song at Christmas (2008)
Publisher and number	Unpublished, available at www.gwynethwalker.com
Commission/Dedication	Original SSA version commissioned by Tapestry Women’s Choir in celebration of their 10th season: 1998-2008
Voicing	SATB (4 measures each of soprano and tenor divisi)
Other Available Voicings	SSA
Optional Instrumentations	Organ
Soloist(s)	Tenor or Soprano
Vocal Ranges	S: A3-G4 A: E3-D4 T: E2-G3 B: B1-C#3 Soprano or Tenor Solo: A3(2)-F#4(3)
Text Source	Langston Hughes
Duration	2’45”
Text designation	Sacred
Performance Comments	

Shepherd’s Song at Christmas is a fairly simple, yet beautiful setting of this

Langston Hughes text. The tenor or soprano soloist should be light in vocal

quality as the solo is meant to depict the voice of the shepherd child. While not

present for the entirety of the piece, the soloist states the opening melodic material

and then returns periodically throughout. At first, the choral entrances merely

provide a harmonic backdrop for the soloist, but then grow to alternate between

carrying the melodic material and interacting with and exchanging motives with

the soloist. The choral writing is accessible, employing simple rhythms and more

familiar contemporary harmonies. Only four measures of division exist

throughout the work, and during these measures, the men are simply doubling the women down the octave. The meter remains in four-four throughout with the accompaniment providing a gentle, flowing eighth-note triplet ostinato pattern for a large portion of the work. Overall, with an appropriate soloist, most high school and church choirs could accomplish very effective performances of *Shepherd's Song at Christmas*.

Difficulty Level Rating Moderate
 Composer's Notes

The poem *Shepherd's Song at Christmas* is found in a collection of children's Nativity poems by Langston Hughes. The "voice" in this poem is a shepherd child who wonders what he (or she) can bring to the Child in the Manger. He is just a poor shepherd child. What can he offer?

The answers are: a song (which he can sing); a lamb (which he can bring) and his heart (which he can give). These are his gifts to the King in Bethlehem.⁵

P46.

<u>Title</u>	<u>Tell the Earth to Shake (2004)</u>
Publisher and number	ECS #6423
Commission/Dedication	Commissioned by the Clearview Regional High School Vocale Ensemble, Mullica Hill, New Jersey, Jack Hill, Music Director. Premiered on February 2, 2005 at the National Convention of the American Choral Directors Association – Los Angeles, CA
Voicing	SATB divisi
Soloist(s)	5 short spoken solos at the opening of the piece (any voice part)
Vocal Ranges	S: C3-A4 A: C3-D4 T: G2-A3 B: D2-D3
Text Source	Poem <i>Earthquake</i> , by Thomas Merton (1915-1968)
Duration	4'15"
Text designation	Sacred (Walker has categorized this work as "secular" in her catalogue. While the text does not speak directly of God, Jesus, or contain any overtly sacred terminology, Merton did intend for the text to be heard as "the voice of God." In the author's opinion, this intention would be fairly clear to both the performers and the audience.)

Performance Comments

The opening piano tremolo and forceful spoken solos set the tone for this aggressive, energetic and exciting setting of Merton's poem. Following the introduction, *Tell the Earth to Shake* is set in four-four time throughout. Beginning with a march-like tempo (quarter note = 88), it gradually gains in excitement and speed over the course of the work with a fast, almost frenetic section (quarter note = 126), and then leads suddenly to a slower, dramatic conclusion. The vocal parts, though rhythmically not complex, contain a fair amount of rhythmic independence as well as division in each voice part. The harmonies are also fairly difficult with a lot of dissonance and include many minor seconds. Likewise, the dynamic ranges and tessitura are somewhat demanding and would be best handled by mature singers. Although the accompaniment contains some ostinato-like patterns, it is fairly thick and complex and requires a player with solid technique. Overall, *Tell the Earth to Shake* is best suited for a choir of mature singers, although as demonstrated by the commissioning group, a top-notch high school choir could also give an exemplary performance.

Difficulty Level Rating Moderately Difficult

Composer's Notes

The poem, by Thomas Merton (1915-1968), a Trappist Monk, presents the powerful voice of God: "Tell the earth to shake...for a new world is born, and all my people shall be one." This is an insistent poem, with repetitions of stanzas, and only slight variations. Through forceful restatement, the poem grows into the closing lines:

There shall be no more hate
And no more oppression
The old wrongs are done
My people shall be one.

The musical setting adopts the form of the poem. As the lyrics are structured into verse 'pairings' ("tell the earth to shake..." "the old wrongs are over..."), so the men's voices are paired with, and answered by, the women's voices. The alternation continues several times, with the tonal center shifting up a step with each section.

The modulations, intended to increase the strength and intensity of the song, are effected through sections of "pacem" (peace). This word has been inserted by the composer to form bridges between the verses. For, as the earth will shake "with marching feet of messengers of peace..." so peace becomes the means of bringing the people together as one.⁵²

P47.

<u>Title</u>	<u>This Is the Day the Lord Hath Made (1985)</u>
Publisher and number	ECS #4314
Commission/Dedication	Initially composed for solo soprano and solo baritone voices, as a wedding gift for Sandra and Thomas Cooch
Voicing	SATB (soprano divisi almost entire second half, bass divisi approximately 12 measures)
Soloist(s)	Soprano and Baritone
Vocal Ranges	S: C [#] 3-G4 A: C [#] 3-F4 T: B ^b 1-G3 B: B ^b 1-E3 Soprano Solo: F3-A4 Baritone Solo: C2-D3
Text Source	Isaac Watts and Gerard Manley Hopkins
Duration	4'30"
Text designation	Sacred
Performance Comments	

Following a brief, simple piano opening consisting of intervals of a fifth, the choral introduction is an a cappella, hymn-like melody with the men and women singing in octaves. The piano then returns with an unmetered, sixteenth-note, repeated pattern that continues as the solos make their initial statement. With the same fluid feel of the choral introduction, the baritone soloist enters first with new musical material that is answered by the soprano soloist. Although this new music has a similar flowing motion, the rhythms and intervals are much more difficult and contemporary than those of the choir's earlier statement. The

soprano soloist reappears at several points throughout the work while the baritone does not return after this preliminary section. The choral texture alternates between homophony and polyphony, and between choral and instrumental timbres. Over the course of the piece the choral parts are more accessible than the solo parts. Dissonances are approached in such a manner that singers will hear them with little difficulty, and they are generally resolved quickly. Although a few measures of the choral writing provide technical, vocal, harmonic, and rhythmic challenges, the majority of the parts are quite accessible. This is not Walker's most difficult accompaniment, but the piano part includes some technically difficult passages and calls for a player with good musical sensitivity. While Walker has categorized *This is the Day the Lord Hath Made* as suitable for community, college, or professional ensembles, a strong high school or church choir with vocally mature (or guest) soloists and strong accompanist would also find success with the work.

Difficulty Level Rating Moderately Difficult

Composer's Notes

This is a combination of two texts: "This is the Day the Lord Hath Made" (Isaac Watts) and "Pied Beauty" (Gerard Manley Hopkins). The message is one of giving praise for the beauty of the day, for faith and for "skies of couple colour as a brindled cow..."⁵³

P48.

<u>Title</u>	<u>The Bottom of the Sea (2004)</u>
Set/Series	Three Days by the Sea
Publisher and number	ECS #6570
Commission/Dedication	Commissioned by the Key Chorale, Daniel Moe, Music Director, in celebration of their 20th season, 2005.
Voicing	SATB (soprano and bass divisi)
Soloist(s)	2 Soprano and 2 Alto soloists (2 measures each)
Vocal Ranges	S: G3-F4 A: D3-A3

	T: C2-F3
	B: E ^b 1-D3
	Soprano 1 Solo: A3-F4
	Soprano 2 Solo: A3-D3
	Alto 1 Solo: A3-D3
	Alto 2 Solo: G3-A3
Text Source	“Song (from Crossportion’s Pastoral)” by Thomas Merton (1915-1968)
Duration	3’
Text designation	Secular
Performance Comments	

The Bottom of the Sea begins and ends with the same blurred pitch pattern in the right hand of the piano and the descending lines in the pianist’s left hand that the composer mentions below. The choral parts and the accompaniment work together to create a dream-like, ethereal atmosphere that perfectly suits the whimsical text. The choral texture alternates between the male and female sections with just a bit of imitation and a couple of brief homophonic statements. Many of the choral harmonies are consonant and utilized dissonances consist almost entirely of major seconds. The meter is four-four time with brief shifts to two-four, and rhythms are mostly familiar with more complex patterns used repetitively (making the piece more easily teachable). Divisi written in the soprano and bass parts is used primarily to create a three-part texture when either the men or women are singing alone and ideal balance would likely be achieved by equally dividing the men’s and women’s sections into three parts. Brief but effectively placed, the four solos are not vocally challenging, but require singers who are rhythmically independent. Consisting of many arpeggio-like, broken chord patterns, the piano accompaniment requires a musician with a good deal of technical facility. Like some of the other compositions annotated previously,

Walker has categorized this set, “Three Days by the Sea,” as suitable for community, college, or professional ensembles. Out of the context of the entire set, an upper-level high school choir could also find success and enjoyment with

The Bottom of the Sea.

Difficulty Level Rating Moderately Difficult

Composer’s Notes

The sea is a universal force which speaks to each of us in unique ways. Thus, these texts by three different authors were selected for this set of choral works. It is intended that a diversity of aspects of the sea be explored.

“The Bottom of the Sea” is a product of imagination – the ocean floor, the home of mermaids, “where waters most lock music in,” a dimly-lit room where “lost orchestras play.” [The orchestras play a waltz.] This song is characterized by descending lines into the depths of the piano and choral ranges.

[The concept for these songs was formed during the composer’s residency at the Hermitage Artists Retreat on Manasota Key, FL during the Winter of 2004, while walking on the beach!]⁵⁴

P49.

Title	<u>Gifts from the Sea (2004)</u>
Set/Series	Three Days by the Sea
Publisher and number	ECS #6571
Commission/Dedication	Commissioned by the Key Chorale, Daniel Moe, Music Director, in celebration of their 20th season, 2005.
Voicing	SATB (approximately 9 measures of tenor and bass divisi and approximately 5 measures of soprano and alto divisi)
Soloist(s)	Soprano (2 four measure entrances)
Vocal Ranges	S: D3-E4 A: A2-C [#] 4 T: E2-F [#] 3 B: G1-C3 Soprano Solo: F [#] 3-F [#] 4
Text Source	Anne Morrow Lindbergh (1906-2001)
Duration	3’30”
Text designation	Secular
Performance Comments	

In the flowing piano accompaniment and rolling vocal lines that encompass *Gifts from the Sea*, one can almost envision the gentle waves of the ocean as they move

in and out from the shoreline. Helping to add to the rolling feel of the piece, the meter is in six-eight time for much of the work. The composer does, however, incorporate shorter sections with combinations of two-four, three-four, four-four, and five-four to add variety and to give more poignant portions of the text stronger emphasis. Rhythmically, the choral parts are not difficult, although they require singers to move between duple and triple subdivision of the beat. While many of the harmonies are simple and consonant, Walker's signature dissonant major and minor seconds are present, providing choral challenges and adding interest to the score. Although not technically demanding, the soprano solo requires a singer with a light, pleasant tone quality to best depict the character of the work. Likewise, although the accompaniment is not extremely technically demanding, it requires great musical sensitivity and expression. Like *The Bottom of the Sea*, *Gifts from the Sea* is fairly accessible for most college and university choirs, but it would also provide a reasonable challenge for an advanced high school choir.

Difficulty Level Rating Moderately Difficult

Composer's Notes

See annotation #P48 for Walker's comments on the entire set.

"Gifts from the Sea" are found on the beach. One might find shells, perhaps the shell of a hermit crab. One might also find simplicity. Patience and faith come from the sea. "One should lie empty, open, choiceless as a beach."⁵⁵

P50.

Title	<u>Down to the Sea (2004)</u>
Set/Series	Three Days by the Sea
Publisher and number	ECS #6572
Commission/Dedication	Commissioned by the Key Chorale, Daniel Moe, Music Director, in celebration of their 20th season, 2005.

Voicing	SATB (a good deal of soprano and tenor divisi and approximately 4 measures of bass divisi)
Other Available Voicings	TTBB
Vocal Ranges	S: G2-G4 A: G2-C4 T: C2-G3 B: G1-C3
Text Source	<i>Sea Song</i> by Norah Mary Holland (1876-1925)
Duration	5'
Text designation	Secular
Performance Comments	

The most vocally demanding and harmonically difficult of this set, *Down to the Sea* is also the most dramatic with a good deal of the three-part writing for both the men's and women's sections. Thick, rich, lush harmonies that are reminiscent of Romantic composers while identifiable with Walker's contemporary language add to the dramatic nature of the work. The choral texture consists mainly of alternation between the male and female sections, saving the full choral forces for the most emphatic statements of the text. Following the gentle, simplistic opening chords of the piano, the bulk of the piece is set in a quick, rolling three-four meter with the accompaniment providing an almost constant motion throughout. The choral rhythms are simple with the exception of one short a cappella section that switches to a duple feel without actually changing meter. While the division of voices never requires more than three parts per SA and TB, the drama of the dynamic ranges and the tessitura of the first soprano and first tenor parts would likely be best suited for a group of mature, experienced choral singers. Likewise, the active accompaniment requires a player with both technical facility and inherent musicianship.

Difficulty Level Rating	Difficult
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Composer's Notes

See annotation #P48 for Walker's comments on the entire set.

Norah Mary Holland, a Canadian poet, cousin of W. B. Yeats, provides the lyrics for the closing song, "Down to the Sea." Here is the dark, strong, passionate sea, the "waters, wild and wide." This is sustained and powerful music, with the rolling waves often portrayed in the piano accompaniment. A love and a fear of the sea are combined. "O strong and terrible Mother Sea, let me lie once more on your cool white breast." There is no home on the land. In the final voyage, "I will go down to the sea again."⁵⁶

P51.

Title	Three Songs in Celebration of the Family Farm (1988)
Publisher and number	Unpublished, available at www.gwynethwalker.com
Commission/Dedication	Commissioned by the Vermont Agriculture and Arts Association.
Voicing	SATB divisi
Soloist(s)	Soprano, Baritone
Vocal Ranges	S: C3-A4 A: A2-E4 T: E2-A4 B: F#1-D3 Soprano Solo: E3-A4 Baritone Solo: D2-E3
Text Source	Martha Holden, farm worker; East Montpelier, Vermont
Duration	13'
Text designation	Secular
Performance Comments	

Set to a very whimsical text, these three songs employ numerous contemporary compositional techniques. The individual songs and a few characteristics of each are as follows:

1. *In the Morning* – The sounds evoked are a blend of modern techniques including percussive noises utilizing the voice as well as the strings and lid of the piano and contemporary, dissonant ostinato-like patterns in the accompaniment, with more consonant, folk-like material. The soprano and baritone solos that exist only in this first song require singers with good agility and excellent musicianship skills. The choral parts are not as difficult

harmonically as are the solos, but there is a substantial amount of division in all four voices. The piano accompaniment provides much of the color for each section of the song, and while not extremely technically difficult, it employs several contemporary techniques mentioned above.

2. *The Mega Munchers* – This second song is humorous and light-hearted depicting the sounds of the barn compressor with vocal percussion and describing the cows at feeding time. The overall feeling is described well by the composer’s expressive marking at the first sung entrance, “with amusement and horror.” The choral parts, though dissonant in places, tend to be rhythmic and accented and fairly accessible. Like the first piece in this set, the accompaniment is not technically demanding and employs some contemporary techniques.
3. *A Calf Named Clematis* – Alternating between sweet, legato, harmonically pleasing sections describing this “shy” calf and disjunct, rhythmic, dissonant sections describing the other calves, *A Calf Named Clematis* possesses some of the most beautiful moments of the set. The choral parts, though certainly not simple, are accessible, much like the previous two songs. Providing sparse, simple, supportive chords in the gentle sections and an accented, aggressive, ascending ostinato bass line in the faster sections, the piano accompaniment is also similar to the remainder of the set in level of difficulty.

Three Songs in Celebration of the Family Farm presents a bit of a paradox when comparing the simple, child-like nature of the text to the more sophisticated, contemporary language of the music. Though the choral parts are accessible,

these three pieces are musically far from simplistic and would require a fair amount of preparation, even from an experienced choir. For these reasons and the specific subject matter of the text, programming this set of pieces would prove to be challenging. This is likely why they have not yet been published in the twenty years since their composition.

Difficulty Level Rating Moderately Difficult

Composer's Notes

Three Songs in Celebration of the Family Farm are musical representations of farm life in the 1980s. The beauty, ordinariness, rigors and amusements of the work day are all portrayed. Even the sounds of the compressor and the cows shuffling through the barn are evoked!

The composer, who lives on a family-owned dairy farm, researched these songs by spending hours in the milking barn. Her companions were 218 Holstein cows.⁵⁷

P52.

Title	<u>The Tree of Peace (2006)</u>
Publisher and number	ECS #6939
Commission/Dedication	Original SSA version commissioned for the Iowa State University Women's Choirs, Kathleen Rodde, Conductor, and the Iowa State Women's Choir Festival with support from Sigma Alpha Iota Philanthropies, Inc.
Voicing	SATB divisi
Other Available Voicings	SSAA TTBB
Vocal Ranges	S: D3-A4 A: A2-D4 T: D2-G3 B: G1-D3
Text Source	Quaker poem, "O Brother Man," by John Greenleaf Whittier (1807-1892)
Duration	5'30"
Text designation	Sacred
Performance Comments	

One of Walker's most lengthy individual works, *The Tree of Peace* is likewise grand in scale incorporating several different musical sections that relate to and build upon one another. A variety of choral textures, accompaniment styles,

harmonies, tempos, key areas, rhythmic motives, and dynamic levels are among the compositional techniques used to help express the dramatic nature of the text. The choral texture varies from the simple unison (octave), homophonic opening statement to a full, eight-part chorus employing several different rhythmic motives among the voice parts. This vocal division is utilized in all four voices for a substantial portion of the second half of the piece. The key centers around d minor for much of the work with a final joyful section in D major celebrating and finding relief in “planting the tree of peace.” Throughout the work, Walker utilizes harmonies ranging from simple duet-like, consonant thirds and fourths to thick, lush chords full of both consonant and dissonant intervals. Likewise, more complex choral rhythms including quarter-note and eighth-note triplets, sixteenth-note patterns and syncopations are also employed. The accompaniment, while not quite as technically difficult as some, demands a strong player, both musically and technically. Overall, because of the scale of the work, the amount of divisi, the nature of the harmonies, and dramatic range of dynamics, *The Tree of Peace* would likely best suited for a larger choir of mature singers, like a university or community symphony chorus.

Difficulty Level Rating Difficult
Composer’s Notes

The text for *The Tree of Peace* has been adapted from the Quaker poem, "O Brother Man," by John Greenleaf Whittier. This contemporary adaptation of the poem broadens the scope of the original with more inclusive language, opening with: "O, my brother and my sister, all who walk upon this earth, fold to your hearts each other."

A new text fragment, "Listen, listen to one another," is introduced into the poem, and serves as an interlude between stanzas. The final sentence of the original

poem becomes the focal point of this work, returning many times: "Love shall tread out the fire of anger, and in its ashes plant a tree of peace."

The musical setting reflects the dual nature of the title, **Tree** (strength) and **Peace** (tenderness). The work opens with accented chords in the piano accompaniment. These chords are marked "with strength." This is the conviction of *The Tree of Peace*.

The tender aspects are introduced in the arpeggio patterns in the piano. These are marked "flowing." And the related choral phrases refer to humanity ("O, my brother and my sister"), to mercy and to the peace of the Lord. Passages of tenderness alternate and intertwine with passages of strength to form a confluence of the message: a prayer for peace.⁵⁸

P53.

<u>Title</u>	<u>spring! (1993)</u>
Set/Series	Two Songs
Publisher and number	ECS #5045
Commission/Dedication	Commissioned by the Kellogg Chamber Singers of the California Polytechnic University, Dr. Iris Levine, Conductor
Voicing	SATB (4 measures soprano divisi, 5 measures each of tenor and bass divisi)
Optional Instrumentations	optional percussion
Vocal Ranges	S: A2-A4 A: A2-E ^b 4 T: D2-A3 B: G1-E ^b 3
Text Source	"spring!" from <i>Complete Poems</i> , by e.e. cummings
Duration	2'30"
Text designation	Secular
Performance Comments	

Light-hearted and playful, this rhythmic piece would serve as an excellent tool for introducing contemporary harmonies and compositional techniques to a solid, growing high school or young college choir. Beginning with familiar open fifths and octaves in the choral parts, the composer then approaches dissonant harmonies and intervals accessibly by utilizing both simple voice leading and supportive pitches in the accompaniment. Largely homophonic, the choral texture does contain some exchange between the male and female sections; however, a

few rhythmically independent entrances from each voice part occur. The meter remains in four-four with the exception of one measure of two-four utilized to extend a phrase ending. Although not simplistic, the choral rhythms are accessible and would teach easily. Employing percussive knocks on the lid of the piano and “black-note tone clusters,” the piano score, with only a few technically challenging measures, provides the crisp rhythmic backdrop for the piece and requires an accompanist with excellent rhythmic accuracy.

Difficulty Level Rating Moderate

Composer’s Notes

Two Songs, "spring!" and "i carry your heart", are musical settings of poetry of E. E. Cummings. These songs were created to form a set with an earlier work, *White Horses* (also a setting of an e.e. cummings poem). Therefore, if the three songs are performed in order, *White Horses* joins with "spring!" as the sustain pedal in the piano accompaniment holds through from one song to the next.

Both *White Horses* and "i carry your heart" reflect the lyrical/romantic aspects of e.e. cummings's writing. The musical emphasis is on the vocal lines. In contrast, "spring!" is an enthusiastic celebration of Spring. This is an up-tempo work. Both the accompaniment and the choral parts are filled with interval leaps, perhaps reflective of lyrics such as:

*"i'll dance and i'll sing
in the may, in the spring..."*⁵⁹

P54.

<u>Title</u>	<u>i carry your heart (1993)</u>
Set/Series	Two Songs
Publisher and number	ECS #5067
Commission/Dedication	Commissioned by the Kellogg Chamber Singers of the California Polytechnic University, Dr. Iris Levine, Conductor.
Voicing	SATB (approximately 4 measures of divisi in each part)
Vocal Ranges	S: A2-G4 A: A2-E ^b 4 T: C2-A3 B: F1-E ^b 3
Text Source	“i carry your heart with me (i carry it in)” from <i>Complete Poems</i> , 1904-1962 by e.e. cummings

Duration 2'20"
Text designation Secular
Performance Comments

By far the most difficult of Walker's three settings of e.e. cummings' texts, *i carry your heart* presents both simplistic beauty and dramatic intensity in just slightly under two and half minutes. Following the understated unison (octave) opening, the harmonies thicken and become more complex and dissonant as the texts gains urgency. The choral texture is largely homophonic with some alternation between male and female voices as well as one short section with the sopranos carrying the melodic material while they are accompanied by the lower three voices. The meter is primarily in three-four time with some shorter sections in two-four and four-four, and the choral rhythms are accessible with variations of eighth-note triplets being the most complex figures. Overall, the accompaniment is fairly sparse, utilizing sustained chords that support and add to the dramatic nature of the choral parts, and containing only two technically difficult measures. Walker has categorized "Two Songs" as suitable for middle and high school ensembles. While *spring!* and *White Horses*, the other unofficial member of this set, are quite accessible to high school groups, *i carry your heart* employs more divisi and much thicker, more dissonant harmonies therefore rendering it more appropriate for very advanced high school or college/university choirs.

Difficulty Level Rating Moderately Difficult
Composer's Notes

See annotation #P53 for Walker's comments on the entire set.

P55.

Title	<u>When Jesus Wept (2006)</u>
Publisher and number	ECS#7034
Voicing	SATB (approximately 12 measures of divisi overall) with optional percussion
Vocal Ranges	S: B2-G4 A: E2-B3 T: E2-G3 B: E1-E3
Text Source	Original tune and lyrics by William Billings (1746-1800), Boston, Massachusetts
Duration	4'
Text designation	Sacred
Performance Comments	

Walker's setting of *When Jesus Wept* recalls the haunting hollowness of Billings' original canon while incorporating the composer's own dramatic contemporary harmonic language and atmospheric writing for the piano. It is another example of the composer's ability to marry existing material with her own style in a way that respects the original while improving upon it and giving it an updated, interesting perspective. Following the piano introduction, Billing's melody, with a slightly offset rhythm, is stated in simple unison phrases alternating between the men and the women. As this initial statement closes, Walker begins to incorporate her own text and new musical material as the piece slowly begins to build. Overall, the harmonies are constructed from the original song and much of the work reads and sings easily. As the piece grows dramatically and becomes more impassioned, however, dissonances are added and some cluster-like chords are employed at the most intense moments. Even considering the difficulty of some of the harmonies and the vocal divisi, because of the more familiar, traditional color of much of the vocal writing, *When Jesus Wept* would be suitable for an advanced high school or a strong church choir. The piano accompaniment,

dissonant harmonies. These intervals and harmonies are, however, repeated throughout the piece, which assists in the learning process. Overall, *White Horses* is quite accessible and appropriate for use with high school, community, and beginning university ensembles.

Difficulty Level Rating Moderate

Composer's Notes

The text for *White Horses* is adapted from the e.e. cummings poem, "after all white horses are in bed..." The composer has selected as lyrics several lines of the poem which suggest imagery of a knight on a white horse, the lady (on her pedestal) who is worshipped from afar, and nighttime ("after all white horses are in bed"). This choral work may be interpreted as a love song hearkening back to the day of the Troubadours. Thus, the piano introduction (in high range) might function to transport the listener away from present day reality and into night and the past.⁶¹

P57.

<u>Title</u>	<u>The Whole World (in His Hands) (2008)</u>
Publisher and number	ECS #7269
Commission/Dedication	Original setting for treble voices, SATB version commissioned by the Seraphim Choir of the First Evangelical Lutheran Church, Ellicott City, MD
Voicing	SATB (8 measures of 3 part-men and 4 measures of soprano divisi)
Other Available Voicings	Treble voices
Vocal Ranges	S: B ^b 2-G4 A: B ^b 2-E ^b 3 T: B ^b 1-E ^b 3 B: B ^b 1-C3
Text Source	Traditional African-American Spiritual
Duration	4'30"
Text designation	Sacred
Performance Comments	

Originally conceived and written for children's voices, *The Whole World* is one of Walker's most easily accessible pieces for mixed choir. Unlike many of her other adaptations of preexisting melodies, this is a true "arrangement" of the spiritual, staying close to the original harmonies and rhythms. There is a swung eighth-note feel throughout both the accompaniment and the voice parts which the

composer notates using eighth-note triplets. The choral texture varies among sections of unison and homophonic singing, alternation between the men and the women, and either the men or the women carrying the melody with the other section providing a vocal accompaniment. One section of the music contains three-part divisi for the men. While this might seem difficult for younger choirs, the short section contains a great deal of repetition and simply provides the background harmonies for the melody in the women's voices. *The Whole World* would provide an excellent opportunity for teaching about melody, harmony, and accompaniment within the choral texture as well as building unified tone quality in both the men's and women's sections. Provided the choir has a solid number of changed baritone voices, a good freshmen or even eighth-grade choir could find success in rehearsal and performance.

Difficulty Level Rating Easy

Composer's Notes

The Whole World (in His Hands) is an animated and expanded version of the familiar song. This music, intended for children's chorus, has hand gestures written into the score: "high-five" hand slaps on the words "you and me *brother*, you and me *sister*," and other motions aligned with the lyrics of each verse.

The intent -- fun!

Additional words have been added to accentuate the celebratory nature of this song.

The Whole World was initially composed as part of the Millennium Suite, commissioned by the community of Bradenton, FL. The song now stands on its own.⁶²

P58.

Title	<u>The Writings on the Wall: A Celebration of the 10th Anniversary of the Opening of the Berlin Wall: 1989-1999 (1998)</u>
Publisher and number	Unpublished, available at www.gwynethwalker.com
Commission/Dedication	Commissioned by "One Voice" Mixed Chorus, Minneapolis, MN, Jane Ramseyer Miller, Music Director
Voicing	SATB (a few measures each of soprano, tenor and bass divisi)
Soloist(s)	Various spoken solos
Vocal Ranges	S: B ^b 2-G4 A: G2-E ^b 4 T: B ^b 1-G3 B: G1-E ^b 3
Text Source	Inspired by the book: <i>The Writings on the Wall: Peace at the Berlin Wall</i> by Terry Tillman.
Duration	7'30"
Text designation	Secular
Performance Comments	

Following the spoken solos and piano ostinato patterns of the introduction, *The Writings on the Wall* is separated into two distinct musical sections. The first is marked "triumphantly," and is joyous and stately with the choral texture varying between sections of homophonic writing and alternating male and female voices. Harmonically, it is accessible and sometimes reminiscent of the American folk style of Aaron Copland. The majority of the second section is faster and more energetic, employing a greater sense of rhythmic urgency. As the text becomes more humanistic and symbolic, Walker incorporates a slow, reflective section that builds to a return of the previous driving feel. Overall, this second section is also harmonically accessible, though it contains a few dissonant, cluster-like chords near the dramatic climax of the work. Technically, *The Writings on the Wall* is accessible for solid high school groups and would serve as an excellent vehicle for a cross-curricular project with the history department.

Difficulty Level Rating Moderately Difficult

Composer's Notes

The Writings on the Wall is inspired by the book "The Writings on the Wall: Peace at the Berlin Wall" by Terry Tillman. The book centers around a collection of photographs taken at the time of the fall of the Wall in 1989.

The photographs focus on the graffiti inscribed on the Wall. Many of the inscriptions are short -- a few words or a phrase. As is typical of graffiti, the expressions range from noble affirmations of peace and freedom to personal and humorous markings. A more lengthy inscription, "The Fire of Freedom," closes the book.

The musical presentation opens with a reading of introductory comments by the author, Terry Tillman. Then, various of the short graffiti are recited by members of the chorus over ostinato patterns in the piano accompaniment. The chorus then joins together to sing "The Fire of Freedom."

Brothers and sisters of the wall
You have lit the flame.⁶³

With Organ Accompaniment

O1.

Title	<u>All the Beauty of the Lord (2007)</u>
Publisher and number	ECS #7143
Commission/Dedication	Commissioned by the College Street Congregational Church, Burlington, Vermont, in honor of the 20th anniversary of their Music Director, Yona Yellin.
Voicing	SATB (3 measures of divisi in all voice parts)
Vocal Ranges	S: D3-F4 A: B ^b 2-B ^b 3 T: F2-G3 B: B ^b 1-C3
Text Source	Lyrics adapted from the hymn <i>There's a Wideness in God's Mercy</i> ; words by Frederick W. Faber (1814-1863)
Duration	2'15"
Text designation	Sacred
Performance Comments	

All the Beauty of the Lord is a beautiful, straightforward, hymn-like anthem that is accessible to many church choirs. The choral texture is almost entirely four-part

homophony and the organ part, while not technically difficult, provides support for the choral harmonies. In keeping with the hymn style, the meter remains in four-four time throughout and the rhythms are quite simple. Although there is a good deal of dissonance utilized in the choral score, most difficult dissonances are approached by step-wise motion in the voice leading and reinforced in the accompaniment. Overall, *All the Beauty of the Lord* would serve as an excellent tool for introducing lush, contemporary harmonies in a lovely, singable anthem.

Difficulty Level Rating Moderate

Composer's Notes

The text for *All the Beauty of the Lord* is based on the lyrics for the anthem, "There's a Wideness in God's Mercy." The musical setting is new.

The focus of this anthem is on the vastness of God's love -- the wideness of mercy, the wideness of the sea, the broad vision of the mind. And while God's love is huge and wonderful, only through the simplicity of our loving -- ever living by the Word -- can the light of God enter our lives.

Thus, the musical language of the anthem is simple, in hymn style. The initial spacing of the chords is open (vast). Near the end of the anthem, the replenishment of beauty is expressed as the melodic line ascends, and the chords fill out into a multitude of pitches -- "All the Beauty of the Lord!"⁶⁴

O2.

Title	Carol of the Brown King (2008)
Publisher and number	Unpublished, available at www.gwynethwalker.com
Commission/Dedication	Composed as a gift for the choir and congregation of Middle Collegiate Church, New York, NY
Voicing	SATB (approximately 12 measures of 3-part men and 7 measures of 3-part women)
Other Available Voicings	TTBB
Optional Instrumentations	Piano
Vocal Ranges	S: F3-A ^b 4 A: B ^b 2-C4 T: C2-A ^b 3 B: F1-C3
Text Source	Langston Hughes (1902-1967)
Duration	4'
Text designation	Sacred

Performance Comments

Because of the specific nature of the text, *Carol of the Brown King* would likely be best suited for an African-American choir or for a choir presenting a program of music set to the writings of African-American authors. The music and the text are both quite accessible for choir members as well as members of the congregation. Slightly reminiscent of the traditional carol, *We Three Kings* (though not in triple meter), the choral rhythms and harmonies are familiar and easy to sight-read. The piece is centered around the men's section with the female voices acting in a more responsive manner. Likely the largest challenge of the work, a good deal of three-part division exists in the male voices as well as some in women's section. While it sometimes adds Walker's contemporary dissonances to the more traditional voice parts, the organ accompaniment is also accessible and often doubles the voice parts in a supportive manner. Overall, *Carol of the Brown King* is an enjoyable piece that could be performed by many choirs, provided they have a good men's section that can carry the bulk of the work and easily sing in three parts.

Difficulty Level Rating Easy

Composer's Notes

The poem *Carol of the Brown King* is found in a collection of children's Nativity poems by Langston Hughes. This poem describes the three Wise Men traveling to Bethlehem. "One was a brown king, so they sing."

The musical interpretation of the poem focuses on several primary elements in the poem. The first element is one of travel. Thus, the general rhythm of the music, introduced at the beginning, sways to and fro, as camels walking to Bethlehem. Also, inserted into the song are traveling refrains of "Journey on, journey on to Bethlehem."

The second element is the three Wise Men. In this case, the men's voices often divide into three-part chords, especially when singing significant lines of the

poem such as, “Three Wise Men, One dark like me.” At the close of the song, the voices of the Magi descend into the low range as the Wise Men bow at the Manger.⁶⁵

O3.

Title	<u>Dazzling as the Sun (2004)</u>
Publisher and number	ECS#6513
Commission/Dedication	Commissioned by the Downtown Minneapolis Churches for their Choral Festival, February 27, 2005
Voicing	S: C3-G4 A: A2-D4 T: E2-G3 B: A1-C3
Text Source	Poem by Delores Dufner, Order of Saint Benedict; 2003 copyright by the Sisters of Saint Benedict, St. Joseph, MN
Duration	3’30”
Text designation	Sacred
Performance Comments	

Dazzling as the Sun is filled with beautiful, lush, and sometimes dissonant harmonies that allow the piece to build throughout and thoroughly express the text. The harmonies start simply, employing consonant, easily singable thirds and fourths. As the piece progresses and the harmonies become fuller and more dissonant, Walker utilizes primarily step-wise motion in the voice-leading, making these somewhat difficult chords more accessible. In order to accomplish these thick harmonies, Walker employs division in the voice parts. Except for the final chord, however, the male and female sections are never divided into more than three parts each. The overall choral texture, which is largely homophonic with some alternation between SA and TB, is never greater than six parts. The meter remains in four-four time throughout and the choral rhythms are familiar and accessible. Because of the dramatic nature of this text setting, the composer also utilizes extremes in dynamic ranges. The organ accompaniment, while containing some triplet and quintuplet rhythmic patterns in the right hand, is

accessible on the whole and could be played well by a good church organist.

Overall, *Dazzling as the Sun* is a dramatic, singable anthem that would be suitable for many church choirs with appropriate numbers to handle the divisions and some experience in singing contemporary harmonies.

Difficulty Level Rating Moderate

Composer's Notes

Upon first reading of the poem, "Dazzling as the Sun" (by Delores Dufner, OSB), I formed several strong and central images. There is the image of "on high," as "the face of Jesus on the mountains." Perhaps, beyond this, is the view of God's love descending from heaven to earth, in the embodiment of Jesus.

There are also the images of radiance, whiteness and glory.

All of these images contribute to the uplifting nature of this poem. In the musical setting, therefore, I chose to use the Lydian mode (raised fourth step of the scale) throughout. The introduction delineates D Lydian, with a G# present. At m. 33, the movement to A Lydian has been achieved. And the climax of the music comes at m. 89 ("This is my beloved Son"), based on C Lydian.

While the accompaniment presents the uplifting elements (Lydian mode, opening interval up a 5th), the voices enter in descending scalar lines. Perhaps these phrases represent Jesus coming down from Sinai. Or, the voice of God reaching down from heaven.

The vocal lines are mostly stepwise. The first stanza of the poem is presented as the love of God descending from heaven. The second stanza ("Transfigured for disciples' eyes") is presented in a recitative-like manner, as in relating a prophesy.

A dramatic contrast arrives with the third stanza ("Then the cloud of presence"). Here is the voice of witness. Here is the love of God. "This is my beloved Son on whom my favor rests." The chorus has the predominant role in expressing these words. The accompaniment is merely supportive.

These phrases represent the first climax of the anthem. The second, most powerful statement arrives at m. 89, when the concluding words of the poem ("destiny of glory") are combined with "This is my beloved Son." The tonal center of C (C Lydian) has been chosen for these passages due to the associations of purity and strength with this tonality. Yet the anthem concludes in A Lydian, a key with many sharps (or crosses). The final tone cluster may be interpreted as the "cloud of presence," or God's love surrounding humanity.

In performing this anthem, the singers would want to pay special attention to the dynamics and articulations. The first half of the piece must be kept subdued, except where growth for expressing the text is notated. Then, the climax in m. 52 will have dramatic effect. Similarly, the intermediary sections (rehearsal letters F, G and H) must be kept quiet, or growing with accordance to the dynamics in the score, in order for the large climax at Letter I to have maximum power. This is a dramatic anthem. Contrast and expression are essential.⁶⁶

Additional Notes by Carson Cooman

Dazzling as the Sun is a setting of a celebratory text by Delores Dufner, OSB. The text focuses on images related to the Biblical Transfiguration, when Jesus was visited on the mountain by Moses and Elijah and was "transfigured" in blinding light. The text traces the Biblical preparation for the New Testament Transfiguration from the Old Testament and finally relates it to us today.

The anthem begins quietly with a single melody which gradually becomes flowing figurations, over which the choir enters. As the text traces the Biblical images forward, the music builds in energy until the final section when God's statement of "This is my beloved Son" returns while the music builds underneath it to a vibrant climax -- "dazzling as the sun."⁶

O4.

Title	<u>Ever With Me (2004)</u>
Publisher and number	ECS #6346
Commission/Dedication	Commissioned by the United Church of Christ Musicians' Association for premiere at the Annual Conference -- July 29, 2004 Allentown, PA, Marguerite Brooks, Conductor
Voicing	SATB (approximately 8 measures each of soprano and bass divisi)
Optional Instrumentation	Piano (pianist plays from the organ score, specific suggestions for adaptation for piano notated)
Vocal Ranges	S: E ^b 3-G4 A: B ^b 2-C4 T: E ^b 2-G3 B: F1-E ^b 3
Text Source	<i>Sarum Primer</i> , Psalm 5:8; Psalm 4:8
Duration	3'
Text designation	Sacred
Performance Comments	

Set almost entirely in four-four time, with one measure each of three-four and five-four, *Ever With Me* is a straightforward anthem with alternation between SA and TB as well as a good deal of homophonic choral texture. Even with the slight changes in meter, the choral rhythms remain familiar and accessible with the most

difficult pattern utilizing eighth-note triplets. Choral harmonies are dissonant, yet accessible from the opening statement, and dissonant tones are generally added to consonant harmonies by one or more of the voices moving in a step-wise manner while the other pitches remain constant. The only divisi present is in the soprano and bass parts and could easily be accomplished by dividing the men's and women's sections each into three equal parts. The keyboard accompaniment, which can be used for either organ or piano, is technically simple (notes are given in the score for adaptations when using piano instead of organ) and, for the most part, simply provides harmonic support for the voices. Although it contains some challenging, unfamiliar harmonies, *Ever With Me* is very singable and is appropriate for many church and community groups.

Difficulty Level Rating Moderate

Composer's Notes

Ever With Me weaves together texts from several familiar hymns: "God be in my Head" (Sarum Primer) and "Lead Me, Lord" (Psalms 5:8 and 4:8). New words have been added as well. The intent is to create a musical setting which can bring renewed life to these beautiful lyrics.

The anthem opens with an invocation to prayer: "O Lord, hear my prayer." Then follows a gentle supplication: "Be in my head. Be in my eyes. Be in my mouth." The prayer becomes more forceful: "Lead me, Lord. Lead me in the paths of peace." And, finally, the prayer forms its most powerful expression: "God be in my head. God be in my eyes. God be in my mouth." Indeed, "God be in my joy and in my laughing." And, beyond life, "God be with me ever."⁶⁸

O5.

Title	Every Life Shall Be a Song (2007)
Publisher and number	Unpublished, available at www.gwynethwalker.com
Commission/Dedication	Composed in celebration of the Centennial of Chandler Music Hall, Randolph, Vermont: 1907-2007
Voicing	SATB divisi
Vocal Ranges	S: B ^b 2-G4 A: B ^b 2-D4

	T: E ^b 2-G3
	B: A1-C3
Text Source	John Addington Symonds (1840-1893)
Duration	3'30"
Text designation	Secular
Performance Comments	

Joyful and triumphant in nature, *Every Life Shall Be a Song* is accessible for most choruses of an intermediate skill level. The meter remains in common time throughout and rhythms consist of nothing more complicated than eighth-note patterns. The majority of the harmonies are traditional and in most instances dissonances are built in a scale-like manner by adding one voice at a time to the existing chords. The accompaniment is more simple than many of Walker's others and could be performed adequately by most church organists. The choral texture is almost entirely homophonic with just a few sections of duets between either soprano and alto or tenor and bass. One of the challenges small or inexperienced groups will face when rehearsing this piece is the division in voice parts. There is division at some point in all four voice parts and there is one brief, three measure section of exposed four-part men.

Difficulty Level Rating Moderate
Notes by Carson Cooman

Every Life Shall Be a Song is a celebration of life, unity, and music -- a setting of a text by the 19th century British author John Addington Symonds (1840-1893).

This work was written in celebration of an important anniversary in the composer's home community of Randolph, Vermont. The Victorian-style Chandler Music Hall was originally built in 1907, in the midst of the heyday of such cultural building projects. By the end of the 1920's, however, the hall had fallen into disrepair and was no longer in use. In 1978, The Albert B. Chandler Cultural Foundation was formed to renovate the hall and turn it into a thriving arts and performance center for Vermont. It has remained as such to the present day, serving each year as the home for a variety of cultural events -- with a particular focus on classical music. Many of Gwyneth Walker's compositions have been performed in Chandler Music Hall over the years.

The text of the work summarizes the artistic message and goals of the Chandler Cultural Foundation stating that "New arts shall bloom of loftier mold, and mightier music fill the skies, and every life shall be a song. ... When every life shall be a song, then all the earth is paradise."⁶⁹

O6.

<u>Title</u>	<u>Faith Grows (2005)</u>
Publisher and number	Unpublished, available at www.gwynethwalker.com
Commission/Dedication	Commissioned by First Congregational Church, Shrewsbury, Massachusetts as a gift for Malcolm Halliday in celebration of his 15th season as Minister of Music
Voicing	SATB (11 measures soprano divisi and 6 measures alto divisi) and unison children's choir
Vocal Ranges	S: D3-F [#] 4 A: B2-B3 T: F [#] 2-E3 B: D2-D3 Children's Choir: D3-E4
Text Source	Lyrics by Gwyneth Walker, adapted from the poem <i>All Beautiful the March of Days</i> by Frances W. Wile (1910)
Duration	4'
Text designation	Sacred
Performance Comments	

One of Walker's simplest and most accessible pieces, *Faith Grows* is built upon the interplay between a hymn-like, homophonic, SATB chorus and a unison children's choir. Though the harmonic language contains some contemporary chords and intervals, it is remarkably straightforward and readable, with the few dissonances being approached by step-wise motion from consonant harmonies and unisons, and the accompaniment providing a good deal of support for the chorus. The children's choir part is also accessible, containing familiar intervals and rhythmic patterns. Repetition in both the part writing and melodies also help to tie the piece together and aid in ease of preparation. The meter is primarily in four-four time with just a few measures of six-four and the rhythms in the

children’s choir, SATB chorus, and organ parts are simple and familiar. Overall, *Faith Grows* would be accessible to most church music programs.

Difficulty Level Rating Easy
 Composer’s Notes

Faith Grows is based upon the poem “How Beautiful the March of Days” by Frances Wile. The music is newly-composed. The intent of this anthem is to present expressions of faith from the different generations. The adults sing of the endurance of faith over the passage of time. “All beautiful the march of days.” And the youth describe the first awakenings of faith. “I feel there is Someone beside me. This is how my faith grows.”

Both groups are made aware of God’s presence in the beauty of the natural world. As the adults see “a vision passing by,” the children delight in the woods and streams, singing “Someone made these for me.” Faith takes root in the young singers, leading the adults to offer a benediction. “The wonder of thy name.”⁷⁰

O7.

Title	<u>God Speaks to Each of Us (1999)</u>
Publisher and number	ECS #5664
Commission/Dedication	Commissioned by Betty Clark, Organist and Choir Director, Trinity Episcopal Church, Rutland, Vermont
Voicing	SATB (4 measures of soprano divisi and 3 measures of bass divisi)
Vocal Ranges	S: A2-G4 A: A2-D4 T: E2-G3 B: B1-D3
Text Source	Rainer Maria Rilke from <u>Rilke’s Book of Hours: Love Poems to God</u> , translated by Joanna Macy and Anita Barrows, copyright 1996
Duration	3’20”
Text designation	Sacred
Performance Comments	

God Speaks to Each of Us is a beautiful but challenging anthem that musically reflects the sensitive nature of the text. The choral writing, while largely homophonic with a few imitative entrances and a bit of alternation between voice parts, is quite exposed and contains many tight, dissonant harmonies. This style of choral writing is found throughout Walker’s compositions, but is especially

present in her unaccompanied works and requires a choir with an excellent sense of pitch as well as good control of vocal tone quality, especially in the upper soprano register. The meter is mostly in four-four time with one measure of five-four and a few measures of six-four; the rhythms are simple with eighth-note and quarter-note triplets comprising the most difficult figures. Less technically challenging than the choral score, the organ part is more accessible and consists mainly of sustained, supportive chords and eighth-note triplet patterns outlining sonorities. While the accompaniment provides support for the singers in some instances, there are also several a cappella sections that require musical independence. While some church choirs might find success with *God Speaks to Each of Us*, it is a challenging anthem and is best suited for university and advanced community ensembles.

Difficulty Level Rating Difficult
Composer's Notes

The poem by Rainer Maria Rilke provides an especially thoughtful and sensitive text. The central image is that of a God who "walks with us silently out of the night." God's spirit is within us, moves in our shadows and holds our hand.

The musical setting takes the form of two waves of growth, each time returning to the central lines: "God speaks to each of us as he makes us, and walks with us silently out of the night." For, as we set out in life, we are constantly reminded that God is with us.

The first wave moves from "These are the words we dimly hear" to "make big shadows I can move in." And the second carries from "Let everything happen to you" to "give me your hand." The closing section merges the words "give me your hand" and "walks with us silently out of the night." For, these are the essential images of the poetry. The final patterns of high sixteenth notes in the organ might be heard as stars.

This anthem is a musical setting of sensitive and thoughtful poetry. Much care has been taken to achieve growth and shape through dynamics and tempi. Therefore, it is essential to adhere to the markings as closely as possible. At letter B, the

tempo is marked 108, and should stay at this tempo right through m. 24. At m. 25, the tempo is once again 108, and should stay there until one m. before E. The tempo markings until the ending are important to the musical presentation.

In the organ accompaniment, the patterns of high 16th notes at mm. 3, 8 and the ending are meant to depict stars. Therefore, a suitable high stop (gentle, not piercing) should be selected in the registration).⁷¹

O8.

<u>Title</u>	<u>A Hymn of Resurrection (2007)</u>
Publisher and number	ECS #7199
Commission/Dedication	Composed for the Chancel Choir of the Congregational Church of New Canaan, Dr. Jo Deen Blaine Davis, Director of Music
Voicing	SATB (4 measures of 3-part women and 2 measures of 3-part men)
Optional Instrumentations	Organ, brass quintet and timpani
Vocal Ranges	S: F3-F4 (optional B ^b 4) A: E ^b 3-C4 T: F2-G3 (optional B ^b 3) B: B ^b 1-D ^b 2
Text Source	Jessie B. Pounds (1861-1921)
Duration	3'15"
Text designation	Sacred
Performance Comments	

Majestic, celebratory, and accessible, *A Hymn of Resurrection* is an ideal anthem for Easter Sunday. With a full, exciting organ accompaniment and optional brass quartet and timpani, the choral score is very hymn-like, consisting of primarily homophonic writing with some alternation between SA and TB. The harmonies, supported throughout by the accompaniment, utilize contemporary chords and intervals, but are much more accessible and less dissonant than those used in many of Walker's other works. The meter is set in four-four time throughout, although at times there is a feeling of two, and the rhythms are simple and familiar in both the choral parts and the accompaniment. Although the work is accessible to many church choirs, because of the fullness of the accompaniment,

especially if utilizing brass, large choirs or mass groups would have the most success with *A Hymn of Resurrection*.

Difficulty Level Rating Moderate
 Composer's Notes none available

O9.

<u>Title</u>	<u>Light of Light (2007)</u>
Publisher and number	Unpublished, available at www.gwynethwalker.com
Commission/Dedication	Composed for the Congregational Church of New Canaan, Connecticut, Dr. Jo Deen Blaine Davis, Director of Music
Voicing	SATB (a good deal of divisi in the soprano and bass parts) and unison treble choir (with an optional 2 nd part in one section – listed as “optional descant”)
Vocal Ranges	S: C3-B4 A: C3-E4 T: C2-G [#] 3 B: A1-E3 Treble Choir: D3-G [#] 4
Text Source	Liturgy of St. James, 4 th century, translated Gerald Moultrie, 1864
Duration	5'30"
Text designation	Sacred
Performance Comments	

Walker's setting of this well-known hymn is accessible, although not simplistic.

The treble choir part, which also might be performed effectively utilizing a soloist, encompasses a large vocal range and requires singers with some level of musical sophistication, such as a well trained children's choir, or a junior high or beginning high school girls' group. The sonorities found in the SATB choral parts contain some dissonance, but for the most part are written in an accessible manner. With a substantial amount of divisi written in both the soprano and bass parts and little or none in the alto and tenor, directors might consider assigning equal three-part division in both the male and female sections. There is a good deal of homophonic texture throughout the work along with some alternation

between different voice parts and choirs, as well as some more contrapuntal exchanges. The organ accompaniment is not difficult, although it contains some sixteenth-note patterns in the right hand. The meter remains in four-four throughout and the rhythms are simple and accessible, although there are some syncopated entrances. The most difficult aspect of the work is the thickness of texture and fullness of chords. With up to six parts in the SATB choral writing, plus the one or two in the treble choir, many average church choirs would find difficulty in just covering all of the parts. This considered, *Light of Light* is an accessible anthem that could be prepared quickly by a strong church music program.

Difficulty Level Rating Moderate
Composer's Notes

The hymn "Let All Mortal Flesh keep Silence" has long been a favorite of the composer. The melody, referred to as "Picardy," originated as a traditional French Carol. The simplicity of the stepwise melodic line, first ascending, then descending, has an appealing directness.

This new arrangement, "Light of Light," endeavors to adapt and expand the familiar hymn into an anthem, with a dramatic presentation of the verses. After a brief organ introduction, the melody enters with the treble voices, then with the men's voices (with counterpoint in the treble voices), then with the women's voices (counterpoint now in the men's voices) and finally with the organ (with counterpoint from the entire choir). Thus, the volume and the strength of the message grows.

The verses are punctuated with the refrain of "Alleluia! Glory to the Son of Light, born for us this holy night." The emphasis upon light, both in the title of the anthem and in the florid organ accompaniment (perhaps as rays of light), was inspired by the beautiful image in the lyrics referring to Christ as "the Light of light descending."⁷²

O10.

Title	Love Unfolding (2001)
Publisher and number	ECS #5947
Commission/Dedication	Commissioned by the Episcopal Diocese of Vermont in honor of the Consecration of Thomas Clark Ely, Tenth Bishop of Vermont
Voicing	SATB (soprano, alto, and tenor divisi on final chord only)
Optional Instrumentations	Brass Quintet
Vocal Ranges	S: D3-A4 A: C3-D4 T: E2-A3 B: D2-D3
Text Source	Chapter 86, <i>All Shall Be Well: Daily Readings from Julian of Norwich</i> (14 th century)
Duration	4'
Text designation	Sacred
Performance Comments	

Following the open, hollow-sounding organ introduction, the unison (octave) opening choral statement is reminiscent of the chant that might have been heard during the time when this text was penned. As the voices begin to expand and separate, the homophonic choral texture is maintained and Walker's contemporary harmonic language is revealed. This homophonic texture is consistent throughout the work with only a small amount of alternation between the male and female voices. The beginning of the piece is set in a quick four-four and as the piece builds, the tempo accelerates leading to a change in meter to two-two. A few measures of two-four and three-four are also interjected into the two-two section, providing a "mixed-meter" feel. The rhythms in both the choral and organ parts are very straightforward and easy to sight-read. While the unison opening choral statement and initial choral harmonies are easily attainable, more difficult dissonant harmonies are added as the piece builds. Additionally, control and transparency in the choral tone will provide a challenge to less accomplished

choirs performing *Love Unfolding*. Overall, with an accessible organ score and some work on appropriate tone color, many good church choirs could find success with this work.

Difficulty Level Rating Moderate

Composer's Notes

Love Unfolding is based on a text from the *Revelations of Divine Love* of the 14th-century mystic Julian of Norwich. Julian's meditations led her to feel God's presence in the form of inspired "showings." Thus, in *Love Unfolding*, Julian's message is that "Love is our Lord's meaning." She saw "full surely that before ever God made us, he loved us. And this love was never quenched nor ever shall be."

The musical interpretation of these words focuses on the unfolding awareness of God's presence in our lives. Thus, the introduction "unfolds" as the music rises in pitch and dynamics: a growth of the spirit. After the peaceful entrance of the voices, the pace quickens gradually, highlighting Julian's observation that "In this love, he has done all his works." The tonality shifts from minor to major, and the music rises to a celebratory closing section of "Love everlasting, without beginning, without end."⁷³

O11.

Title	<u>My Beloved Son (2006)</u>
Publisher and number	Unpublished, available at www.gwynethwalker.com
Commission/Dedication	Commissioned by the Cathedral Choral Society, Washington National Cathedral, Washington, D.C., USA, J. Reilly Lewis, Music Director; made possible by the Richard Wayne Dirksen Memorial Endowment Fund.
Voicing	SATB divisi
Optional Instrumentations	Brass quintet, percussion & organ
Soloist	Mezzo-Soprano (extended solo)
Vocal Ranges	S: D3-G4 A: B2-D4 T: D2-G3 B: E1-C3 Mezzo-Soprano Solo: B2-G4
Text Source	Charles Wesley (1707-1788) and Hildegard von Bingen (1098-1179) translated by Christopher Brunelle
Duration	8'15"
Text designation	Sacred

Performance Comments

Over eight minutes in length, this larger-scale work would not be suitable for most Sunday morning church services, but would be better utilized in a special occasion service, a concert or festival setting. By far the longest of any of Walker's single pieces for choir and organ, *My Beloved Son* features a dramatic, thick choral texture with division in all four voice parts as well as an extended, vocally demanding and harmonically difficult mezzo-soprano solo. As mentioned by the composer in the notes below, a variety of choral textures are utilized to help express the different natures of the two somewhat disparate texts. The bulk of the work is set in four-four time with some short unmeasured sections as well as bars of six-four and three-four interspersed to help the text speak more naturally. Although quarter-note and eighth-note triplets as well as some dotted patterns are present, the rhythms are fairly simple and sight-readable. Like many of Walker's other larger-scale, more complex works, a good deal of dissonance is present in both the choral and organ harmonies. Optional parts for brass quintet and percussion are also available and would add more to the scope and drama of the piece. Due to the complexity of the choral harmonies, the amount of division in the voice parts, and the sheer length of the work, *My Beloved Son* would be best suited for an advanced ensemble with experience singing contemporary harmonies and large enough numbers to handle the division. The soloist also needs to be a well-trained musician with a lyrical voice that is large enough to carry over the other performing forces.

Difficulty Level Rating Difficult

Composer's Notes

My Beloved Son combines two contrasting texts, each portraying the birth of Jesus. The hymn text, "Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus," by Charles Wesley (1707-1788) is written from an objective viewpoint. The author speaks to Christ, and about Christ:

Come, thou long-expected Jesus, born to set thy people free;
From our fears and sins release us; let us find our rest in thee.

In contrast, the poetry of Hildegard of Bingen (1098-1179), in new translations by Christopher Brunelle, expresses the voice of Mary. This is subjective writing:

Such knowledge is too wonderful for me:
The form of a woman was lowly,
But it welcomed a King.

The Wesley text and poetry of Hildegard are interwoven to create a juxtaposition of the objective and subjective expressions, an alternation between personal and descriptive language. The hymn verses are sung by the full choir, whereas the Hildegard lyrics are presented by a Mezzo soloist. The hymn sections are in strict 4/4 meter. The solo passages are often in free recitative. Hymn material is homophonic in rhythm. The poetic material is contrapuntal. Christ is viewed as the Savior, coming from afar. Or, Jesus is the Beloved Son, "my son, whom I made in my womb."

The climax of the anthem arrives with the fourth verse of the hymn lyrics, "By thine own eternal Spirit..." In this section, the two contrasting "messages" of this anthem, the objective and subjective, are now superimposed. For, all of the men's voices sing the hymn material, while the women sing the very subjective "My Son, my Son..."

The anthem ends softly, bringing a return to the opening hymn verse, "Come, thou long-expected Jesus," sung by the entire choir, with the solo voice of Mary floating above: "Such knowledge is too wonderful for me."⁷⁴

O12.

<u>Title</u>	O Gracious Light (1988)
Set/Series	from <i>Bethesda Evensong</i>
Publisher and number	ECS #4476
Commission/Dedication	Commissioned by the Church of Bethesda-by-the-Sea (Palm Beach, Florida) in celebration of the 100th anniversary of the founding of the church: 1889-1989
Voicing	Published for 3-part treble chorus, but intended for any combination of voices, providing all three parts are covered

Vocal Ranges	Ranges given in the treble clef, men singing these parts would sound one octave lower Part 1: C3-F4 Parts 2 & 3: C3-D4
Text Source	Traditional
Duration	2'15"
Text designation	Sacred
Performance Comments	

O Gracious Light is a simple and beautiful piece that is attainable by almost any choir. Published for three-part treble voices, the piece is intended to be suitable for any combination of voices. The choir is singing in unison (or octaves if utilizing adult men and women together) for almost the entirety of work. Approximately four measures of harmony exist in all of the choral writing. In these measures two-part and three-part harmonies are built upon the existing melody basically utilizing inverted triads. The organ part provides the harmonic backdrop for the work and includes interesting rhythmic patterns that act more in duet with the voices than in an accompanimental fashion. While the harmonies are indicative of Walker's contemporary style, they are more accessible than those present in her more complex works, and the vocal melody is always supported by the organ. As the composer mentions below, frequent meter changes are present (four-four, five-four, and six-four) and help to add interest to this vocally simple piece. While not as simple as the voice parts, the organ part is also not overly demanding and could be played well by most church organists.

Difficulty Level Rating	Easy
Composer's Notes	

Bethesda Evensong is a musical setting of the Evening Prayer Service for Choir, Organ and (optional) Strings and Percussion.

Of particular interest in this work are the tropical and dramatic elements. In the courtyard of Bethesda-by-the-Sea, palm trees sway in the breeze and tap against

the stone church. These tapping sounds are brought into the music as maracas shaking softly, or hands tapping. Rhythmic patterns often "sway" -- created by shifting or irregular meters. The result is an often-traditional musical language infused with tropical sound effects.

O Gracious Light is intended for full choir and organ. The choral writing is mostly in unison (octaves). However, a 3-part homophonic texture evolves near the end.

This is an especially joyous setting of the text.⁷⁵

O13.

<u>Title</u>	<u>Psalm 23 (1998)</u>
Publisher and number	ECS #5374
Commission/Dedication	Commissioned by the Worcester, Massachusetts Chapter of the American Guild of Organists for the 1999 Region I Convention in Worcester -- June 28, 1999.
Voicing	SATB (one measure of bass divisi)
Other Available Voicings	Solo voice and piano
Vocal Ranges	S: D3-A4 A: D3-D4 T: D2-A3 B: C2-D3
Text Source	Biblical text paraphrased by the composer
Duration	3'15"
Text designation	Sacred
Performance Comments	

Following the organ introduction, *Psalm 23* begins with a unison (octave) choral statement of Walker's melody for the familiar text. Beneath the simple but beautiful melodic material, the organ accompanies with broken chordal figures. These ideas continue throughout the first half of the piece with the few added harmonies keeping with the simple consonant mood that has been established. In the second half of the work, as the text intensifies and becomes more insistent, so does the music. Choral and organ harmonies begin to expand and become more dissonant and challenging while rhythmic figures and tempo markings begin to quicken. Overall, a large portion of the work is in three-four time with several

measures of four-four and one measure of six-four. The choral texture is primarily homophonic with little alternation between SA and TB and a few rhythmically independent entrances. The choral rhythms are also straightforward and sight-readable with the exception of two measures of eighth-note triplet patterns that might initially be problematic for some choirs. The organ part, while crucial to the overall impact of the piece, is not technically demanding, excepting a few measures of sixteenth-note patterns in the right hand. Although not apparent at first glance, with the lack of divisi and ease of the first half, *Psalm 23* would prove to be quite challenging for an average church choir due to the harmonic difficulties found later in the piece.

Difficulty Level Rating	Moderately Difficult
Composer's Notes	none available

O14.

<u>Title</u>	<u>Quiet Wonder (2001)</u>
Publisher and number	ECS #5851
Commission/Dedication	Commissioned by Old First Church, Springfield, Massachusetts, in honor of Charles Page, Organist and Choir director.
Voicing	SATB (4 measures of 3-part women)
Vocal Ranges	S: D3-G4 A: B2-D4 T: D2-G3 B: A1-D3
Text Source	Gwyneth Walker
Duration	4'
Text designation	Sacred
Performance Comments	

Different from many of Walker's other manageable, hymn-like settings; *Quiet Wonder* is a beautiful, effective and contemporary anthem that is accessible for many church choirs. Once again utilizing primarily homophonic choral texture with some alternation between SA and TB, as well as a few more contrapuntal

entrances, the composer's own contemporary language is more present here. The choral parts are used not only in a traditional four-part harmonic style, but also incorporate sustained unison melodies and sustained dissonant chords that help to paint the atmospheric nature of the text. Although dissonances are present throughout the work, they are less complex than others used by the composer, and are approached through the voice leading in a teachable manner. The meter is set in four-four for the entirety of the work and the choral rhythms are easily sight-readable. The organ accompaniment, while integral to the overall feel of the piece, is accessible. Little division in the female and none in the male voice parts also help to make the piece suitable for small choirs. Because of the specific subject of the text, *Quiet Wonder* is most appropriate for service with a nature or "Earth Day" theme.

Difficulty Level Rating Moderate
Composer's Notes

A request came for an anthem to celebrate the 40th anniversary of Charles Page as Music Director at Old First Church, Springfield, MA. Charles himself suggested an anthem in praise of the beauty of the earth. Thus, the creation of *Quiet Wonder*.

This is delicate music. The work opens with a solo organ line marked "as a bird call." This motive returns within, and at the end of, the anthem.

The choir enters, singing of walking the earth in quiet wonder. A small brook in the forest calls forth the refrain:

"O God, my Creator, the Spirit riding on the wind,
Teach me to be a Shepherd of the Earth."

The reverence for God's creatures "large and small" is enjoyed through depicting the "hopping, swimming, gliding and galloping" forms of life. Soaring to heaven!

"I walk this earth in quiet wonder."

Quiet Wonder was inspired by the environs of the composer's home in Braintree, Vermont, especially the beloved swimming pond⁷⁶

O15.

Title	<u>Ring Out, Wild Bells (2006)</u>
Publisher and number	Unpublished, available at www.gwynethwalker.com
Commission/Dedication	Commissioned by the Wausau Lyric Choir – Wausau, Wisconsin
Voicing	SATB divisi
Optional Instrumentations	Piano Brass quintet, percussion & organ
Vocal Ranges	S: C3-A4 A: A2-D4 T: G2-A4 B: C2-D3
Text Source	Text by Alfred, Lord Tennyson, adapted by the composer
Duration	4'
Text designation	Sacred
Performance Comments	

The choral texture of *Ring Out, Wild Bells* is primarily homophonic with some alternation between male and female voice parts as well many short, single-measure segments where a voice part connects the end of one musical phrase to the beginning of the next. The meter remains in four-four throughout, and the choral rhythms are simple and repetitive. The organ accompaniment consists largely of both legato and accented eighth-note and triplet arpeggio-style passages as well as some block chords that double the choral writing. In terms of difficulty level, this accompaniment falls somewhere in the middle of Walker's output. Chorally, the biggest challenge in *Ring Out, Wild Bells* is the dissonant harmonies used especially in the second half of the piece. As in many of her other original compositions of this time period, the composer favors the intervals of seconds and ninths in the choral harmonies. For the most part, the divisi tends to lead to sections of three-part men and three-part women (with the division written in the

soprano and bass lines) with only a few measures of actual eight-part singing.

Ring Out, Wild Bells would best suited for a college or university level ensemble, or an accomplished community or church choir.

Difficulty Level Rating Moderately Difficult

Composer's Notes

Ring Out, Wild Bells is a Christmas anthem for mixed chorus and piano on the poem by Alfred, Lord Tennyson. The text celebrates the image of bells (represented by cascading "ringing" fourths in the piano accompaniment) to herald both the "going out" of the old year, the "coming in" of the new year, and the birth of Jesus.

Between the verses of the poem, the composer has inserted a refrain, "Come, Lord Jesus." This may be interpreted as the prayer of the awaiting world. The refrain repeats, intermingles with the verses, and ultimately expands into the triumphant, closing "Come, Lord Jesus, Come Emmanuel!"⁷

O16.

Title	Shepherd's Song at Christmas (2008)
Publisher and number	Unpublished, available at www.gwynethwalker.com
Commission/Dedication	Original SSA version commissioned by Tapestry Women's Choir in celebration of their 10th season: 1998-2008
Voicing	SATB (4 measures each of soprano and tenor divisi)
Other Available Voicings	SSA
Optional Instrumentations	Piano
Soloist(s)	Tenor or Soprano
Vocal Ranges	S: A3-G4 A: E3-D4 T: E2-G3 B: B1-C#3 Soprano or Tenor Solo: A3(2)-F#4(3)
Text Source	Langston Hughes
Duration	2'45"
Text designation	Sacred
Performance Comments	

Shepherd's Song at Christmas is a simple, yet beautiful setting of this Langston Hughes text. The tenor or soprano soloist should be light in vocal quality as the solo is meant to depict the voice of the shepherd child. While not present for the entirety of the piece, the soloist states the opening melodic material and then

returns periodically throughout. At first, the choral entrances merely provide a harmonic backdrop for the soloist, but then grow to alternate between carrying the melodic material entirely and interacting with and exchanging motives with the soloist. The choral writing is accessible, employing simple rhythms and more familiar contemporary harmonies. Only four measures of division exist throughout the work, and during these measures, the men are simply doubling the women down the octave. The meter remains in four-four throughout with the accompaniment providing a gentle, flowing eighth-note triplet ostinato pattern for a large portion of the work. Overall, with an appropriate soloist, most high school and church choirs could accomplish very effective performances of *Shepherd's Song at Christmas*.

Difficulty Level Rating Moderate
 Composer's Notes

The poem *Shepherd's Song at Christmas* is found in a collection of children's Nativity poems by Langston Hughes. The "voice" in this poem is a shepherd child who wonders what he (or she) can bring to the Child in the Manger. He is just a poor shepherd child. What can he offer?

The answers are: a song (which he can sing); a lamb (which he can bring) and his heart (which he can give). These are his gifts to the King in Bethlehem.⁷⁸

O17.

<u>Title</u>	<u>A Song of Praise (2003)</u>
Publisher and number	ECS #6286
Commission/Dedication	Commissioned by the Chancel Choir of Centenary United Methodist Church, Winston-Salem, NC as a gift to David Pegg in celebration of his 10th season as Music Director
Voicing	SATB (approximately 8 measures of soprano divisi, and 3 measures each of alto, tenor and bass divisi)
Vocal Ranges	S: E3-G4 A: G2-C4 T: F2-G3 B: C2-C3
Text Source	Isaac Watts (1674-1748)

Duration 3'45"
Text designation Sacred
Performance Comments

One of Walker's most accessible pieces, *A Song of Praise* is joyous and playful.

The organ score consists of quick moving eighth-note patterns that provide the rhythmic underpinning for much the work and the choral parts are set primarily in an upbeat, four-part, homophonic choral texture. Some alternation between the male and female voice parts exists, as well as a few contrapuntal entrances.

While one short section with dissonant harmonies helps to add weight to the text, most of the sonorities in the choral writing are traditional with an occasional contemporary chord. The organ part, while quick moving, is not overly difficult and could be handled by someone with fairly modest technical capacity. Overall, the work would be well suited for and enjoyed by most high school and church ensembles.

Difficulty Level Rating Moderate
Composer's Notes

The lyrics for this hymn are adapted from the Isaac Watts words for "I Sing the Mighty Power of God." However, instead of "might" and "power," this song emphasizes beauty and gentleness. The closing lines, "Wherever humankind may be, the Lord is present there," seem particularly healing in these times of destruction and loss. Wherever humanity is present, so also, is the voice of God.

This is an energetic hymn, with many Amens: staccato, loud, joyous. For the flowing seas, the sun and stars, plants and flowers, and all that live praise the beauty of the Lord. Amen!⁷⁹

O18.

Title	<u>St. John's Trilogy (1990)</u>
Publisher and number	ECS #4699 A separate congregation part is also available from the publisher, ECS #4699A
Commission/Dedication	Commissioned by St. John's Episcopal Church, Randolph, Vermont.
Voicing	Congregation and optional mixed chorus

Vocal Ranges	<p>Written primarily in the treble clef, the majority of the choral parts are unison with some two, three and a few four-part harmonies. Assigning of vocal parts is left to the director's discretion. The simplest way to examine the range is to assume the choir would be divided into two equal parts and adjustments would be made for the three and four-part chords. With this in mind, the treble clef vocal ranges are as follows:</p> <p>Part 1: C3-G4*</p> <p>Part 2: A2-D4*</p> <p>*If these parts were sung by adult men, they would sound down an octave.</p> <p>One twelve-measure sections of actual SATB writing does also exist. The vocal ranges for this section are as follows:</p> <p>S: D3-D4 A: B2-D4 T: D2-F[#]3 B: B1-D3</p>
Text Source	Episcopal Eucharist Service, Rite II
Duration	<p>Gloria: 2'45"</p> <p>Sanctus: 1'</p> <p>Agnus Dei: 50"</p>
Text designation	Sacred
Performance Comments	<p>Intended for congregational singing during a worship service, <i>St. John's Trilogy</i> is accessible to almost any choir. In order to help lead large groups of people, the organ doubles all of the vocal lines in these three short selections. The optional choral parts merely harmonize the unison congregational singing and are written for a choir leading worship. Some of Walker's contemporary, dissonant harmonies are present, but are incorporated so they can be achieved with little or no rehearsal from the congregation or choir. While it would be difficult to envision this set of pieces being utilized in a concert setting, denominations other than that of the commissioning organization (such as Catholic or Lutheran) might</p>

find *St. John's Trilogy* to be an interesting addition to the musical selections used in regular worship.

Difficulty Level Rating Easy
Notes by Carson Cooman

This work is a setting for congregation, optional choir, and organ of the traditional American Episcopal Rite II liturgy, as it appears in the Book of Common Prayer. It is a work designed for practical liturgical use by congregations. The set contains settings of the *Gloria in excelsis*, *Sanctus*, and *Agnus dei*.⁸⁰

O19.

<u>Title</u>	<u>With Thee That I May Live</u>
Publisher and number	ECS #5277
Commission/Dedication	A separate children's choir part is also available from the publisher, ECS #5279 Commissioned by the Holy Trinity Episcopal Church -- Oxford, Ohio for Easter 1997.
Voicing	SATB (4 measures of 3-part women and 3 measures of 3-part men) with Children's Choir (2 parts)
Optional Instrumentations	Optional brass quartet and timpani
Vocal Ranges	S: C3-A4 A: C3-E ^b 4 T: C2-A3 B: G1-D3 Children's Choir Part 1: C3-A4 Children's Choir Part 2: C3-F [#] 4
Text Source	Anna Barbauld (1743-1825)
Duration	5'45"
Text designation	Sacred
Performance Comments	

Slow and deliberate and set almost entirely in minor tonalities with only a brief final section in major, *With Thee That I May Live* is not a typical Easter anthem. As expected, however, the piece is large in scale with a mixed choir, children's choir, organ, and optional brass and timpani. The choral texture is largely homophonic with some imitative entrances scattered throughout the work. While not as harmonically challenging as some of Walker's other works, the choral parts contain some dissonance as well as a number of melismatic passages in all of the

voice parts. In addition to these quick moving passages, the high tessitura and technical demands in the children's choir writing requires a well-trained group of young singers. Set primarily in four-four time with a few measures of two-four and six-four interspersed to bring appropriate emphasis to the text, two several measure sections of three-four time are also included. Several key and tempo changes are likewise incorporated, adding to the dramatic style that builds throughout the work. Although not overly challenging, the organ part contains some sixteenth-note sections, and especially if performed without brass, would require a strong player. *With Thee That I May Live* would add a unique color to an Easter Sunday service, and could be performed well by most above average church choirs, provided the children's choir is well-trained.

Difficulty Level Rating Moderately Difficult

Composer's Notes

The text to *With Thee That I May Live* is by Anna Barbauld (1743-1825) and was selected by members of the Parish.

This anthem weaves together the Barbauld poem with the familiar Isaac Watts text, "This is the day the Lord hath made." The latter returns as a refrain for children's voices.

The Barbauld text moves from darkness to light -- from the "world wrapt in gloom" to the triumph of the Resurrection. Thus, the music opens in the depths of sound (Organ Pedal, low C). A few higher chords in the organ punctuate the unison singing of the choir. The start of light.

The brass enters, and the music grows in tempi and dynamics. The voices rise into higher ranges for a closing section:

"To Thee, my Savior and my King,
glad homage let me give.
I'll sacrifice all that I am,
with Thee that I may live.
Hosanna!"⁸¹

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS

Summary

Gwyneth Walker is one of today's most prolific and widely performed American composers of choral music. In keeping with both her egalitarian values and her practical nature, Walker writes compositions that are accessible to varying levels of musicians as well as music that is interesting and entertaining for audience members. The choral pieces annotated in this document demonstrate Walker's ability to write for ensembles ranging in ability from junior high school groups to advanced university and professional choirs. With seventy-four of the ninety-five surveyed pieces categorized as moderate or moderately difficult, it is apparent that the bulk of Walker's writing, however, falls in the mid-range of difficulty level, making her music very accessible to high school, collegiate, community, and church choirs. As these groups comprise the largest percentage of choral ensembles across the country, this concept supports the composer's desire to create music that will be performed and enjoyed by a large number of people.

In the author's personal experience as a singer, conductor, and listener, he has found Walker's music very engaging and appealing. As stated earlier in this document, Walker's ability to "create musical moods,"¹ to paint text, to pen interesting but

accessible accompaniments, and to write beautiful, singable voice parts is extraordinary. It is these elements that allow Walker's compositions to stand out from those of her contemporaries and draw both musicians and audience members alike to her music.

As Walker's compositions gain popularity, more and more information is becoming available pertaining to the composer and her music. Walker's website, www.gwynethwalker.com,² is the most comprehensive source available to those seeking information. Walker herself has described the site as "putting all her eggs in one basket."³ Its contents include a complete catalogue of works, with links to pages specific to each composition, including notes by the composer or her webmaster, and in many cases amateur recordings of the works. Most of the choral scores that have not yet been published by ECS Publishing are available here in pdf format and are downloadable at no cost. The website also contains reproductions of articles, interviews, letters and email correspondence, research documents, musical analyses, essays, reviews, photographs, radio interviews, and archival manuscript material. Audio and video introductions by the composer, a complete list of all professional recordings, and a calendar of upcoming events and performances appear on the website as well.

Composer's Current and Future Projects

Walker's current choral projects include adding TTBB versions of existing SSAA and SATB titles and orchestrating or adding brass and percussion to pieces originally with piano accompaniment.⁴ An email correspondence from Walker's assistant, Jonathan Guilford relates some of Walker's other current projects.

Dr. Walker is especially interested in dramatic presentations. Therefore, her composing schedule for the current season includes several staged works with music, several orchestral works (some with narrator), and choral works which are multi-movement works often involving solo instruments as well. There will be a few "stand-alone" anthems in the schedule. But in general, the focus is on diversifying and enlarging the scope of the catalog.⁵

With Walker's growing popularity among musicians, she observes that finding a balance between accepting and completing commissions and following her own artistic visions presents a challenge. The author's inquiries about future texts to be set and commissions prompted the following response:

...I have enough of a backlog of things (texts) for which I have permissions that will last for me for many years to come. So, I'm actually really not looking for any more texts, and I'm not looking for any more commissions of any sort, choral or other, because I've already filled the time. So, the only way that a project would work is if it combines with something on my list. Because I really have things I want to do, some of which are not commissions because nobody would ever think of doing some of the things I want to do. They're sort of unique...⁶

Fortunately for choral musicians, choral titles currently comprise the largest percentage of Walker's catalogue. As one might expect from such a creative individual, she is at the point in her career where she is in need of new, diverse and challenging projects. With such a huge output of existing choral music, Walker's future endeavors will likely focus less on choral repertoire.

I love choral writing, but it's...too much. I already have done so much... Therefore, I will write the few choral pieces that I mentioned, because I don't want to not write choral music, but I don't have room for other things....I have other things to do, and who knows, after five years of doing these other things, I may have some other choral ideas to do...I think I have enough in most genres and I really gave it my all to these recent Langston Hughes things that I did for high school, *Our Dream of Freedom*. I gave every ounce of whatever I could do for high school voices in that one. And, for the community (chorus, in these new) Walt Whitman (pieces), I gave every ounce of what I could do for that (community chorus). So, it's not as though I'm feeling that there's a lot that I haven't done, that I can improve upon next year. I feel right now that's all I can

do. I cannot do any better in this genre than I have done. So, let me just branch out and do other things and then see where I'm led.⁷

Though Walker's output of choral music in the years ahead will likely be less than in the past, choral conductors and singers alike eagerly await the new compositions of this first-rate composer.

Recommendations for Further Study

With the Burcher dissertation⁸ providing an overview of Walker's choral output, Field-Bartholomew's document⁹ focusing on Walker's writings for solo voice, and now this document surveying nearly one hundred works for mixed chorus, there is an increasing amount of scholarly research pertaining to Walker's choral and vocal writing. Scholars interested in further study of Walker's output might consider studying her music for women's chorus, since she is so well respected for her work in that genre. Another area for potential research is Walker's instrumental writing. Studies of her band, orchestral, chamber, and solo instrumental music might also prove interesting to future authors and researchers.

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