Gwyneth Walker

Across the Water

Songs of the Water
for Piano and Orchestra

Peace Like a River
Way, Haul Away
The Water is Wide
Across the Water is a piano concerto based on familiar songs, all with water themes. The intent was to create music with a simple, folk language, yet with the drama and variety inherent to the concerto genre.

One might imagine a pianist sitting alone at the keyboard to enjoy playing a well-loved song. As the playing develops, orchestral instruments surround the soloist. The pianist therefore is able to switch roles, and sometimes accompany the melody as it is played by the orchestra.

The first movement is “Peace Like a River.” This starts peacefully and quietly, in keeping with the message of the first verse, “I’ve got peace like a river.” However, the growth in the original song, from verse to verse, is translated into the new arrangement. “I’ve got pain like an arrow” is accented, with increased dynamics and tempi. The third verse, “I’ve got strength like a mountain” is expressed through block chords (mountains). An interlude leads to “I’ve got joy like a fountain,” which is filled with scalar runs and arpeggios. The final verse is the most boisterous – “I’ve got determination!”

“I’ve got peace like a river, strength like a mountain, joy like a fountain...in my soul.”

“Way, Haul Away” is a sea chanty from the British Isles. This is a rowdy song. In this new presentation, the music opens with a minor third in the high range of the solo piano. This is marked “As a Captain’s Whistle in the distance.” Little tremoli patterns (suggestive of a school of fish) join. Strains of the original song are played in the orchestra (interrupted by the fish). And then the actual song begins, energetically, in the solo piano. There is much back-and-forth exchange of phrases, in a style similar to how sailors might sing this song, alternating lines with each other.

A middle section (switching from minor to major tonality) is inserted. This might be heard as a hornpipe dance section, to be played by the fife (piccolo). The song theme returns, and the music ends with a quick ascent, up from the bottom of the sea.

“The Water is Wide” is a well-known English song. In this new presentation, the orchestra provides a flowing introduction as waves rocking the boat to and fro. The melody is played by the soloist. The abundance of unaccompanied passages express the freedom and solitude of this song.

The music modulates to “deeper” keys (many flats) as a secondary melody is presented. Eventually, this “brightens” back to the original Eb tonality. Before the theme returns, the piano creates the accompaniment, as large waves surrounding the simple tune. And indeed, the piano never does play the theme. Instead, the opening “rocking of the boat” motives return to bring the music to a close.
Across The Water
for Piano Solo and Orchestra

1. Peace Like a River

Peacefully $ \dot{\cdot} = 108$

Flutes (Piccolos)

Oboe

Bb Clarinet

Bassoon

Horn in F

Trumpet in C

Trombone

Percussion
(High and Low Bongos, Suspended Cymbal, Medium and Low Tom-Toms, Glockenspiel, Tambourine, Temple Blocks [5], Optional Spoons)

Piano Solo

Violins

Viola

Violoncello

Contrabass

*Lyrics from the original song are displayed to show the character of the music.

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Slightly faster \( j = 120 \)

"I've got pain like an arrow..."

Across the Water / 1. Peace Like a River
Across the Water / 1. Peace Like a River
Across the Water / 1. Peace Like a River
Across the Water / 1. Peace Like a River
Across the Water / 1. Peace Like a River

(I've got strength like a mountain...)
Across the Water / 1. Peace Like a River
Across the Water / 1. Peace Like a River
Across the Water / 1. Peace Like a River
Across the Water / 1. Peace Like a River
Across the Water / 1. Peace Like a River
Across the Water / 1. Peace Like a River
Across the Water / 1. Peace Like a River

"I've got joy like a fountain..."
Across the Water / 1. Peace Like a River
Across the Water / 1. Peace Like a River
Across the Water / 1. Peace Like a River
Across the Water / 1. Peace Like a River
135  accel. poco a poco (to J)

Pno.

140  (accel.)

Fls. 2

Ob.

Cl.

Bsn.

Perc.

Pno.

(accel.)

J  Slightly faster, with energy $\frac{j}{=} = 100$

J  Slightly faster, with energy $\frac{j}{=} = 88$

pizz., unis.

Across the Water / 1. Peace Like a River
Across the Water / 1. Peace Like a River
Across the Water / 1. Peace Like a River
“I’ve got peace like a river,”

Across the Water / 1. Peace Like a River
I’ve got strength like a mountain,

Joy like a fountain...
Across the Water / 1. Peace Like a River
Across the Water / 1. Peace Like a River
More slowly, grandly

\[ \frac{179}{2} \]

Free measure

More slowly, grandly

\[ \frac{poco ped.}{\text{start slowly and accelerate}} \]

Across the Water / 1. Peace Like a River
Across the Water / 1. Peace Like a River
2. Way, Haul Away

*Lyrics from the original song are displayed to show the character of the music.

Across the Water / 2. Way, Haul Away
"Way, haul a-way, we'll haul a-way, Joe."

rhythmically, as a school of fish

"Way, haul a-way, we'll haul and haul to-geth-er."

\begin{align*}
\text{With energy, playfully } & \text{ } \frac{j=112}{j} \\
\end{align*}

Across the Water / 2. Way, Haul Away
Across the Water / 2. Way, Haul Away
Across the Water / 2. Way, Haul Away
Across the Water / 2. Way, Haul Away
Across the Water / 2. Way, Haul Away
Across the Water / 2. Way, Haul Away
Across the Water / 2. Way, Haul Away
Across the Water / 2. Way, Haul Away
Across the Water / 2. Way, Haul Away
Across the Water / 2. Way, Haul Away
Across the Water / 2. Way, Haul Away
Across the Water / 2. Way, Haul Away
Across the Water / 2. Way, Haul Away
Across the Water / 2. Way, Haul Away
Across the Water / 2. Way, Haul Away
Across the Water / 2. Way, Haul Away
Across the Water / 2. Way, Haul Away
Across the Water / 2. Way, Haul Away
Across the Water / 2. Way, Haul Away
In this section (letter I to letter J), the players may tap their feet in time to the music, once every quarter note.

105
Temple Block #2
*playful duet with Piano*
(or Spoons with similar rhythms)

Perc.  
\[\text{mf}\]

Pno.  
\[\text{p}\]

106
T. B. #1 (or Spoons)

Perc.  
\[\text{p}\]

Pno.  
\[\text{pp}\]

109
Susp. Cym. (or Spoons still)
tap on crown with stick

Perc.  
\[\text{pp}\]

Pno.  
\[\text{barely audible}\]

Across the Water / 2. *Way, Haul Away*
Across the Water / 2. Way, Haul Away
Across the Water / 2. Way, Haul Away
Across the Water / 2. Way, Haul Away
3. The Water is Wide

Gently flowing \( \text{=} 88 \)

Vlns.

Vla.

Pno.

Vle.

Cb.
Across the Water / 3. The Water is Wide

\[ \text{poco accel.} \quad \text{With more motion} \]

\[ \text{mf cantabile} \quad \text{with pedal} \]

\[ \text{pizz.} \quad \text{p} \]

\[ \text{p} \quad \text{pizz.} \]

\[ \text{p} \]

\[ \text{p} \]

\[ \text{p} \]
Across the Water / 3. The Water is Wide
Across the Water / 3. The Water is Wide
Across the Water / 3. The Water is Wide
Across the Water / 3. The Water is Wide
Across the Water / 3. The Water is Wide
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Across the Water / 3. The Water is Wide
Across the Water / 3. The Water is Wide
Across the Water / 3. The Water is Wide
Across the Water / 3. The Water is Wide
Across the Water / 3. The Water is Wide
Across the Water / 3. The Water is Wide
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Across the Water / 3. The Water is Wide