

Gwyneth Walker

Birds of Peace

Songs of Freedom and Peace
for High Voice, Flute and Piano

“The Caged Bird”

“The Raven and the Dove”

“Everyone Sang”

program notes:

The bird is often a poetic symbol of the exalted qualities of freedom and peace. **Birds of Peace** songs center around this imagery – the bird of freedom, the bird of peace.

The “Caged Bird,” (poem by 19th-century African-American poet Paul Laurence Dunbar) sings for his freedom. *He beats his wing on the cruel bars.* He sends a plea to Heaven. For *he would be free.*

“The Raven and the Dove” is based on an American anti-war protest song from the 1960s, with a text by Ewan McColl. *The dove she is a pretty bird, she sings as she flies.* This is a mournful song, set in the minor mode, and often placed in the low voice register. For the dove is gentle. She may be frightened away. If she leaves, the raven will come. The song implores: *if you live peaceful, she never will go.*

“Everyone Sang” is based on a poem by British poet Siegfried Sassoon, published in 1919, just at the end of World War I. The bird is a bird of freedom, of ecstasy and of the rejoicing soul. *Everyone was a bird, and the song was wordless. The singing will never be done!*

This thrill of the bird in flight brought to mind another poem, “The Windhover” by Gerard Manley Hopkins (written at a similar time to the Sassoon text). Thus, the familiar line of *My heart in hiding stirred for a bird* is interjected into the song. The bird soars above humanity, above the war. *Everyone’s voice was suddenly lifted, and beauty came like the setting sun.*

The flute plays a central role in these songs, representing the bird: striving for a higher realm outside of the cage, crying for freedom (end of “Caged Bird” song); suggesting the delicacy of a bird’s wings (grace notes in “Raven and Dove”), and soaring into the highest, ecstatic ranges (“Everyone Sang”). The subtitle for this last song is “as a prisoned bird set free.” This seems like a suitable description for the character of the flute in the entire set, **Birds of Peace**.

Birds of Peace

for High Voice, Flute and Piano

Gwyneth Walker

1. Caged Bird

based on the poem "Sympathy"
Paul Laurence Dunbar (1872–1906)
G. Walker, alt.

Slowly, mournfully ♩ = 76

Flute

Fl.

V.

VERSE 1

I know what the caged bird feels, a - las! _____ When the

sun is bright on the up-land slope; _____ when the wind stirs _____ soft through the

p *p* *mf* *p* *p* *p*

*poco accel.**cresc.*

14

V spring - ing grass, and the riv - er flows like a

rapidly, as the wind

poco accel.

cresc.

3 3 3

ped.

16

V stream of glass; when the first bird sings, and the

(accel.) *mf* **Slower**

(accel.) **Slower**

mf

6/4 6/4

ped.

18

V first bud o - pens, - and the faint per - fume from the chal - ice

gentle arpeggios

p

3

4/4 4/4

p

20

V steals I know, I know what the caged bird

poco accel.

poco accel.

ped.

a tempo (♩ = 76)

23

Fl. *p* *cresc.* *mf*

V feels.

a tempo (♩ = 76)

VERSE 2

26

Fl. *p*

V *mf* with more strength and sorrow *p* *mf*

I know why the caged bird beats his wing till its

p *mf* *p*

29

V blood is red on the cruel bars; For he must fly back to his

p

mf *p*

8va

32 *mf* *accel.* *Slower*

V perch and cling, when he would ride on the bough a - swing; And a

mf *accel.* *Slower*

35 *f with intensity* *mf*

V pain still throbs in the old, old scars, and they pulse a - gain with a keen - er sting,

39 *p* (*p*)

V he beats his wing, he beats his wing, he beats his wing... I know, -

p (*p*)

42 *with pedal* *poco accel.* *a tempo* (♩ = 76)

Fl. *mf*

V *mf* I know why he beats his wing.

poco accel. *a tempo* (♩ = 76)

45
Fl.

48
Fl.

V

mf

I _____

51 VERSE 3

Fl.

V

___ know why the caged bird sings ah me! When his

f *p*

Tri. _____

53

V

wing is bruised and his heart is sore, when he

f *p*

Tri. _____

55 *mf*

V
beats his bars and he would be free; It is not a car - ol of

p *mf*

with pedal

58 *f* *p*

V
joy or glee, but a prayer he sends from his heart's deep core, a

Slower *f* *p*

Slower

61 *mp* *mf*

V
plea, a plea, a

mp *mf*

65 *f*

V
plea that up - ward to Heaven he flings, I know, I know why the caged bird

f

69

Fl. *p* *cresc.*

V *p* *cresc.*

sings. He would be free, he would be free... a

p *cresc.*

Red.

73

Fl. *(cresc.)* *f* *ff* *f* *p*

V *(cresc.)* *f* *ff* *f* *p*

prayer, a plea, he sings, and would be free.

Slowly *a tempo* (♩ = 76)

Slowly *a tempo* (♩ = 76)

(cresc.) *ff* *p*

Red.

76

Fl. *mf*

V

mf

79

Fl. *rit.* *f*

(emphatic cry for freedom)

2. The Raven and the Dove

anti-war song of the 1960s
 Lyrics by Ewan McColl
 G. Walker, alt.

“The Cuckoo”
 Traditional English Folk Song
 Gwyneth Walker, arr.

With gentle motion ♩ = 120

VERSE 1

Fl. *p*

V *p*

The dove she is a

6 *lightly, as a bird's wing*

Fl. *(p)*

V pret - ty bird, she_ sings as she flies. _____ She_

11 *(p)*

V brings us glad_ ti - dings and tells us no lies. _____

16

Fl.

V She_ flies in the moun - tains and the val - ley so low. _____

21 *(p)*

V _____

And_ if you live_ peace - ful, she

25

Fl.

(*p*)

V

*
nev - er will go.

p

29

Fl.

(*p*)

V

p

35

VERSE 2

Fl.

poco cresc.

mf

V

Come all you young fel - lows, from near and a -

crisp rhythms, as a military drum

poco cresc.

mf

(no pedal)

*The singer may choose whichever pitches are most comfortable to sing.

crisp rhythms, as a military drum

40

Fl.

mf

V

far, _____ don't join in the _____ bat - tle, don't

45

Fl.

V

go for the war. _____ For the dove she will

50

Fl.

V

leave you, and the ra - ven will come. _____ And_

55

Fl.

V

death will come_ march - ing to the sound of a drum.

60

Fl.

V

with pedal

65

Fl.

V

VERSE 3

mf gently

Come all you pret - ty

mf gently, gracefully

*The singer may choose whichever pitches are most comfortable to sing.

70

Fl. *gracefully*

p

V
mai - dens, come walk in the sun, _____ and _____

(mf)

p

Rec.

75

Fl. *p*

V
don't let your _____ young man ev - er car - ry a gun. _____

mf

p

Rec.

80

Fl.

V
For the bul - lets will scare her, and she'll fly a - way. _____

(mf)

mf

p

(Rec.)

Rec.

85

Fl. *p*

V *(mf)*

And then there'll be weep - ing by night and by

p *mf*

(Ped.)

90

Fl. *p*

V day.

delicately

p (*p*)

Ped. with pedal

95

Fl. *(p)* *delicately*

V

*The singer may choose whichever pitches are most comfortable to sing.

100

Fl.

V.

mf

VERSE 4

105

Fl.

V.

f

rit.

Slower

f *emphatically*

The dove she is a

rit.

Slower *emphatically*

f

(f)

110

Fl.

V.

pret - ty bird, she _ sings as she flies. She _ brings us good _ ti - dings, and

3

115

Fl.

V. *mf* more gently

tells us no lies. She_ flies in the moun - tains and the val - ley so

mf

120

Fl.

V. *p*, *peacefully*

low. _____ And_ if you live_ peace - ful, she nev - er will

p

Reo. _____

125

Fl. *p*

V. *(p)* very peacefully

go. _____ And if you live_

p

(Reo.) _____

*The singer may choose whichever pitches are most comfortable to sing.

131

Fl. *rit. to end*
as wings
p

V
peace - ful, she nev - er will go.

rit. to end

135

Fl. *(rit.)*

V

(rit.)

as a bird in flight
8va
pp

Red.

3'

3. Everyone Sang (as a prisoned bird set free)

Siegfried Sassoon (1886–1967)
published 1919

With gentle motion ♩ = 120
delicately, as a bird in flight

Piano introduction in G major, 4/4 time. The right hand plays a melodic line of eighth notes, while the left hand provides a simple accompaniment. The piece begins with a piano (*p*) dynamic.

Ad. _____ *simile*

Measures 5-8. The flute part begins with a melodic line of eighth notes, marked piano (*p*). The piano accompaniment continues with a simple harmonic support.

Measure 9. The flute part has a rest. The vocal part enters with the lyrics "Ev' - ry - one sud - den - ly burst out". The dynamic is *mf* with excitement. The tempo remains the same.

A With excitement (Same tempo)

mf with excitement

Ev' - ry - one sud - den - ly burst out

A With excitement (Same tempo)

Measures 10-11. The piano accompaniment features a rhythmic pattern of chords, marked *mf*.

Ad. _____

12

Fl. *mf*

V sing - ing, _____ and I was filled with such de -

with pedal

14

Fl. *tr*

V light as pris - oned birds must find in

p

ped.

16

Fl.

V free - dom _____ wing - ing wild - ly a - cross the white

8va

ped.

18 *poco rit.* **Slightly slower**

Fl. *(mf)*

V orch - ards _____ and the dark green fields, _____

poco rit. **Slightly slower**

Leg.

21 *p* *accel.* *mf*

Fl. *p* *mf*

V on, on, out of sight. _____

accel.

Leg.

25 **B** *a tempo* (♩ = 120) *mf*

Fl. *mf*

V *mf* *quietly ecstatic* *p*

Ev' - ry - one's voice was sud - den - ly lift - ed, _____ and

B *a tempo* (♩ = 120) *mf*

mf

27 *rit.* *a tempo*

Fl.

V

(p)

p *rit.* *a tempo*

(p)

30 *lightly tongued*

Fl.

p

V

(p) *with rhythmic energy*

33 *(p)* *mp* *mp*

Fl.

V

(p) *mp* *mp*

36

Fl. *mf*

V *mf with growing excitement*

O but ev' - ry - one was a bird, and the

mf

with slight pedal

38

Fl.

V

song was word - less, the sing - ing will nev - er be

3

40

Fl. *f*

V *f*

done.

f

Ad.

44

Fl. *rit.* **D** Slower ♩ = 108

V *rit.* **D** Slower ♩ = 108

mf

Leg.

47

Fl.

V * *mf cantabile*

My heart in hi - ding stirred for this

Leg. *simile*

50

Fl. *mf*

V bird - the a - chieve of, the mas - ter - y of the

53 *soaring* 23

56 *accel.*

59 *(accel.)* **E** *a tempo* (♩ = 120)

f *ecstatic*

f *ecstatic*

with pedal

*The lyrics from mm. 47 to 59 are excerpted from "The Windhover" by Gerard Manley Hopkins, published in *Poems*, 1918. G. Walker, alt.
Walker | *Birds of Peace* | 3. Everyone Sang

62

Fl. *Relaxed tempo*

V *(f)*

Ev' - ry - one's voice was sud - den - ly lift - ed, and

(f)

Relaxed tempo

64

Fl. *rit.* *Slower*

V *p*

beau - ty came like the set - ting sun. O but

p

rit. *Slower*

p

Leg.

67 **F**

Fl. *accel. poco a poco*

V *(p)* *cresc. poco a poco*

ev' - ry - one was a bird, ev' - ry - one was a

F *accel. poco a poco*

(p) delicately *cresc. poco a poco*

(no pedal) *add pedal*

70 *(accel.)*

Fl. *(cresc.)*

V *(cresc.)*

bird, and the song was word - less, the sing - ing will nev - er be

(accel.)

(cresc.)

73 *Quickly, joyously*

Fl. *f*

V *f*

done!

rit.

Quickly, joyously

f

rit.

ped.

2'45"
 Total: 9'05"
 June 29, 2015
 New Canaan, Connecticut