Gwyneth Walker

I’ve Known Rivers

musical settings of the poetry of
Langston Hughes

for Mixed Chorus, Strings and Percussion
(or Piano)

My Soul Has Grown Deep
Troubled Waters
Jump Right In!
In Time of Silver Rain
**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.

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.

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.”

*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.

*          *          *          *          *

Widely performed throughout the country, the music of American composer **Gwyneth Walker** is beloved by performers and audiences alike for its energy, beauty, reverence, drama, and humor. Dr. Gwyneth Walker (b. 1947) is a graduate of Brown University and the Hartt School of Music. She holds B.A., M.M. and D.M.A. degrees in Music Composition. A former faculty member of the Oberlin College Conservatory, she resigned from academic employment in 1982 in order to pursue a career as a full-time composer. For nearly 30 years, she lived on a dairy farm in Braintree, Vermont. She now divides her time between her childhood hometown of New Canaan, Connecticut and the musical community of Randolph, Vermont.

Gwyneth Walker has been a proud resident of Vermont for many years, and she is the recipient of the 2000 “Lifetime Achievement Award” from the Vermont Arts Council as well as the 2008 “Athenaeum Award for Achievement in the Arts and Humanities” from the St. Johnsbury Athenaeum. In 2012, she was elected as a Fellow of the Vermont Academy of Arts and Sciences. She also received the 2018 “Alfred Nash Patterson Lifetime Achievement Award” from Choral Arts New England.
I’ve Known Rivers
for SATB Chorus (divisi), Percussion and String Orchestra

Langston Hughes (1902-1967) Gwyneth Walker

1. My Soul has Grown Deep

Gently flowing $q = 108$

Percussion
(Toms-Toms [2], Maracas, Bongo, Suspended Cymbal, Rainstick, Tambourine, Slapstick, Triangle, Tam-Tam)

Violin 1

Violin 2

Viola

Violoncello

Contrabass

Maracas (held high and lowered)

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Walker | I've Known Rivers | 1. My Soul has Grown Deep

I've known rivers:

( )

pizz.

mf

arco (Mar.)
I've known rivers
and older than the flow of human blood in human veins.

ancient as the world flow of human blood in human veins.

poco rit.
My soul has grown deep like the rivers.

Slower
\( a \text{ tempo } (\dfrac{\text{j}}{\text{=}} = 108) \)
bathed in the Eu·phra·tes when dawns were young.

built my hut near the Con·go and it lulled me to sleep.

Ah,

a flowing background, as rivers
(played w/ hands)

Bongo

Walker | I've Known Rivers | 1. My Soul has Grown Deep
Ah,

looked up on the Nile and raised the pyramids above it.

heard the singing of the Mississippi when Abe Lincoln went down to
New Orleans, New Orleans, and I’ve seen its muddy bosom turn all
arco

New Orleans, and I’ve seen its muddy bosom turn all

I’ve seen its muddy bosom turn all

I’ve seen its muddy bosom turn all

mf
cantabile

I’ve known rivers:
golden in the sunset.

I’ve known rivers:
golden in the sunset.

I’ve known rivers:
golden in the sunset.

44

E
rp

48

Sop. \textit{mf}

I’ve known rivers:
golden in the sunset.

E
rp

I’ve known rivers:
golden in the sunset.

I’ve known rivers:
golden in the sunset.

arco

7
I've known rivers:
My soul has grown ancient, dusky rivers.

An ancient, dusky river.
My soul has grown

a tempo (\( \dot{\text{}} = 108 \))
depth like the rivers.
I've known rivers,
I've known rivers,
I've known rivers,
I've known rivers,
Ah,
Ah,
Ah,
I've known rivers. My soul has grown deep.

Ah, I've known rivers. My soul has grown.

Rivers, rivers. My soul has grown.
deep, my soul has grown deep, my soul has grown deep, my soul has grown deep, my soul has grown deep, my soul has grown deep.

H a tempo (q = 108)

Walker | I’ve Known Rivers | 1. My Soul has Grown Deep
2. Troubled Water

Flowing $\frac{\text{d}}{\text{mm}} = 120$

Rainstick

Perc.

Vln. 1

Vln. 2

Vla.

Vlc.

Cb.

Solo, con sord.

2 Soli, div., con sord.

pp as a background

mf cantabile

Hmm

Be-tween-us, al-ways,

6

Tutti (con sord.)

lightly separated

Tutti (con sord.)

lightly separated

con sord.

pizz.

con sord.

pizz.

con sord.

pizz.

con sord.

pizz.

con sord.

pizz.

con sord.

pizz.

con sord.

pizz.

con sord.

pizz.

con sord.

pizz.

con sord.

pizz.

con sord.

pizz.

con sord.

pizz.

con sord.

pizz.
11

S

A

loved

one,

there

lies

this

trou-

bled

wa-

ter.

pp

T

B

la

la

la

la

la

la

la

la

la

la

la

la

lies

la

la

la

la

la

la


16

S

A

You

are

my

sky,

my

mf

cantabile

T

la

la

la

la

la

You

are

my

sky,

my

B

la

la

la

la

la

You

are

my

sky,

my

rolled pizz.

Vln. 1

Vln. 2

Vla.

Vlc.

Cb.

Walker | I've Known Rivers | 2. Troubled Waters
Walker | I've Known Rivers | 2. Troubled Waters

Perc.:

S:

A:

T:

B:

Vln. 1:

Vln. 2:

Vla.:

Vlc.:

Cb.:

Glockenspiel (sft. mts.)
You are my sky, my shining sun
The trip is troubled water.

We see yet cannot

journey far to touch your hand.

We see yet cannot

journey far to touch your hand.

We see yet cannot

journey far to touch your hand.

We see yet cannot

Slower, quasi recitative
This fateful troubled water. We see yet cannot understand this.
accel.

**E a tempo** ($\nu = 120$)
Rainstick

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Perc.</th>
<th>S</th>
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<th>T</th>
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<td>p</td>
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Vln. 1
accel.

E a tempo ($\nu = 120$)
arco, lightly

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vln. 1</th>
<th>Vln. 2</th>
<th>Vla.</th>
<th>Vlc.</th>
<th>Cb.</th>
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<tr>
<td>pp</td>
<td>pp</td>
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<td>arco, lightly</td>
<td>(pizz.)</td>
<td>(pizz.)</td>
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20
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Deep hearts, dear, dream of happiness
Deep hearts, dear, dream of happiness
Deep hearts, dear, dream of happiness
Deep hearts, dear, dream of happiness
2 Soli, div.
2 Soli, arco, div.
balked by troubled water. Be between us always –

balked by troubled water. Be between us always –

balked by troubled water. Be between us always –

rolled pizz.
I've Known Rivers

2. Troubled Waters

love, and this –

love, and this –

love, and this –

love, and this –

Be

Be

Be

Be

This sea of troubled water.

This sea of troubled water.

This sea of troubled water.

This sea of troubled water.
I've Known Rivers

2. Troubled Waters

This, between us always – love, and this –

This, between us always, always, always – love, and this –

rolled pizz.

rolled pizz.

rolled pizz.

mf

f

mf
sea of troubled water,

Sea of troubled water

Perc.

S

A

T

B

Vln. 1

Vln. 2

Vla.

Vlc.

Cb.
This sea of troubled water.
Slowly, freely

(proceed directly to the next song without pause)
3. Jump Right In!

With energy $\downarrow = 120$

Tambourine

unis. $f$ hoisterously

Perc. $f$

T B

Vln. 1

Vln. 2

Vla.

Vlc.

Cb.

Tambourine shaken [held high and lowered]

Tutti

gliss. ad lib. (trem.)

Sul II

x$\times_\text{8/8}$

Sul II

x$\times_\text{8/8}$

Sul II

x$\times_\text{8/8}$

Sul IV

rolled pizz.

arco

I've Known Rivers

Walker | J've Known Rivers | 3. Jump Right In!

went down to the river, I set down on the bank. I tried to think but couldn't, so I
I came up once and hollered! I came up twice and cried! If that jumped up and sank.

Hey! cried!

Water hadn’t been so cold. But it was I might’ve sunk and died.

Walker | I’ve Known Rivers | 3. Jump Right In!
It was cold!

I took the elevator sixteen

Walker | I've Known Rivers | 3. Jump Right In!
floors above the ground.

I thought about my baby and I thought I would jump down.

stood there and I hol-lered!

I stood there and I cried! If it hadn't been so high.

Hey! cried!

Walker | I've Known Rivers | 3. Jump Right In!
But it was high up there! It might’ve jumped and died.

Walker | I’ve Known Rivers | 3. Jump Right In!
I've Known Rivers | 3. Jump Right In!

So since I'm still here liv-in', I guess I will live on. I

Though you may me see hol-ler, and

Hey!
you may see me cry –
I’ll be dogged, sweet baby,_____

Life is fine!
Fine as wine!

sing > slide
unis.

Life is fine!
Fine as

35
Life is fine, life is fine! So wine!

since I'm still here liv-in', I guess I will live on. I could've died for love, for

since I'm still here liv-in', I guess I will live on. I could've died for love, for
Walker | I've Known Rivers | 3. Jump Right In!
I've Known Rivers

JUMP RIGHT IN!

fine, life is fine,

Life is fine, life is fine, life is fine,
I've Known Rivers

3. Jump Right In!

life is fine!

life is fine, fine!

Bongo (hands)
4. In Time of Silver Rain

At a peaceful tempo $\downarrow = 92$

Perc.

Vln. 1

Vln. 2

Vla.

Vlc.

Cb.

Glock.

con sord., unis.
light, silvery tremolo

con sord., unis.
light, silvery tremolo

con sord., unis.
light, silvery tremolo

con sord., pizz.

A

In time of silver rain,

pp barely audible

la la la la la la la la la la la la

Walker | I've Known Rivers | 4. In Time of Silver Rain

In time of silver rain, the earth puts forth new life again.
green grasses grow and flowers lift their heads,

and over all the plain the wonder spreads,

and over all the plain the wonder spreads,

and over all the plain the wonder spreads,

and over all the plain the wonder spreads,
wonder spreads of life, of life, of life, of... In time of silver rain,

wonder spreads of life, of life, of life, of...

wonder spreads of life, of life, of life, of...

wonder spreads of life, of life, of life, of...

wonder spreads of life, of life, of life, of...

wonder spreads of life, of life, of life, of...
In time of silver rain.

In mf

in time of silver rain.

In mf
I've Known Rivers

4. In Time of Silver Rain

Perc.

Vln.

Vla.

Vlc.

Cb.

Solo

time of silver rain the butterflies lift silk en wings

rit. Slower

pp in the background

la la la la la la la la la la la la la

unis.

Solo

p

pp

rit.

to catch a rainbow cry.

and

pp

pp

pp
as down the road way passing boys and in joy beneath the sky, passing boys and trees put forth new leaves to sing in joy beneath the sky, trees put forth new leaves to sing in joy beneath the sky.
girls go singing, too. In time of silver rain, in time of silver rain, in

too. In time of rain, rain, rain,

Vln. 1

Vln. 2

Vla.

Vlc.

Cb.
In time of silver rain, when spring and life are new.

accel.

a tempo \( \frac{q}{\text{=} 92} \)
in time of silver rain,
in time of silver rain,
In Time of Silver Rain

The earth puts forth new life again.

Green grasses grow and

A

B

F

47

44 (Tom-Tom & Bongo)
flow-ers lift their heads and o-ver all the plain, and
the wonder spreads of life, of life, of
cresc. poco a poco

over all the plain the wonder spreads of life, of life,
cresc. poco a poco

cresc. poco a poco

cresc. poco a poco

cresc. poco a poco

cresc. poco a poco

cresc. poco a poco

--- | --- | --- | --- | --- | ---

Walker | I've Known Rivers | 4. In Time of Silver Rain
In time of silver rain,

life, of life, of life, of...

In time of silver rain,

life, of...

In time of silver rain,

life, of...

In time of silver rain,
in time of silver rain, the wonder, wonder of life!

life, the wonder, wonder of life!

life, the wonder, wonder of life!

in time of silver rain, the wonder, wonder of life!

in time of silver rain, the wonder, wonder of life!

life, the wonder, wonder of life!

life, the wonder, wonder of life!

in time of silver rain, the wonder, wonder of life!

in time of silver rain, the wonder, wonder of life!

3:30/Total Duration: 12:00
This version completed
October 19, 2018
New Canaan, Connecticut