

FIVE MUSICAL ANALYSES

An Introduction by Gwyneth Walker

The five analyses presented in this collection are intended to function as a unit. Each study contributes insights into different aspects of compositional technique and musical language. Although there will be some overlapping areas of discussion (harmonic language, structural analysis), the variety of analytical approaches is designed to cover a range of topics. And thus, a reader is advised to read all five analyses in order to get a comprehensive view of this composer's language.

*Analysis #1 – two songs from the cycle **Though Love Be a Day***

This pair of analyses focus on the composer's early style period, which exhibits a language slightly different from the later works. All aspects of this style are discussed.

*Analysis #2 – "A Splash of Cold Water" from **Short Set for String Quartet***

This is an in-depth analysis of the harmonic, thematic, rhythmic and structural elements of the composer's more developed style period. Because of the brevity of this movement, a detailed analysis has been possible.

*Analysis #3 – **I Thank You God***

This choral work is discussed from the viewpoint of the overall direction of the song. The intent of the work is examined, with special focus on the tonal structure devised to support the musical growth. Although some specific harmonic analysis is included, the emphasis in this discussion is on understanding the tonal areas, movements between them, and structures within them, which shape the song.

*Analysis #4 – "Simple Gifts" from **Shaker Tunes for Brass Quintet***

Within the Walker catalog are a number of works which are based on pre-existing sources. These new presentations might be called arrangements. However, the amount of alteration and "creative play" has lead the composer to describe the works as "contemporary adaptations." This analysis focuses primarily on the techniques involved in taking these pre-existing sources in new directions.

*Analysis #5 – **About Leaves***

This work for chamber orchestra, inspired by the poetry of Robert Frost, is examined from the perspective of orchestration. The study particularly centers on how the use of instrumental colors relates to tone painting, or capturing the images of the poetry in music.

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