GWYNETH WALKER

The Tree of Peace

for SSAA Chorus and Orchestra
The Tree of Peace
Duration: 5’30”

Instrumentation:

- 2 Flutes
- Oboe
- B♭ Clarinet
- Bassoon
- 2 Horns in F
- 2 Trumpets in C
- Trombone
- Percussion (one player):
  - Timpani, Suspended Cymbal,
  - Glockenspiel, High Bongo
- Strings

The text for The Tree of Peace has been adapted from the Quaker poem, O Brother Man, by John Greenleaf Whittier (1807–1892). This contemporary adaptation of the poem broadens the scope of the original with more inclusive language, opening with, “O, my sister and my brother, 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 the 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 strings, clarinet, bassoon, and timpani. 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 strings and winds. These are marked “flowing.” 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.

—Notes by the composer

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 Brantree, Vermont. She now divides her time between her childhood hometown of New Canaan, Connecticut and the musical communities of Sarasota, Florida and Randolph, Vermont.

Gwyneth Walker has been a proud resident of Vermont for many years. She is the recipient of the Year 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 (VT) Athenaeum. In 2012, she was elected as a Fellow of the Vermont Academy of Arts and Sciences.

Walker’s catalog includes over 300 commissioned works for orchestra, chamber ensembles, chorus, and solo voice. A special interest has been dramatic works that combine music with readings, acting, and movement. The music of Gwyneth Walker is published by E. C. Schirmer (choral and vocal music) and Lauren Keiser Music (orchestral and instrumental music).

Further information concerning Gwyneth Walker and her works is available at www.gwynethwalker.com
The Tree of Peace
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Lyrics by Gwyneth Walker
Adapted from the poem O Brother Man
by John Greenleaf Whittier (1807-1892)

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Walker / The Tree of Peace
O, my sister and my brother, all who walk upon this

Walker / The Tree of Peace
earth, fold to your hearts each other.
earth, fold to your hearts each other.
earth, fold to your hearts each other.
Where mercy dwells, the peace of the Lord is there.
Walker / The Tree of Peace
Walker / The Tree of Peace
Walker / The Tree of Peace

Bongo

Listen, listen to one another

ritard.
Walk with reverence in the steps of those who have gone before, where forgiveness and wisdom have stood.

Slower \( \mathfrak{j} = 72 \)

Walker / The Tree of Peace
So shall the wide earth become a temple, each loving life a psalm of gratitude.
walk with reverence where forgiveness and wisdom have stood.

listen, listen to one another,
Lis ten, lis ten to one an oth er,
Lis ten, lis ten to one an oth er,
Ah, listen, listen to one another.

Walker / The Tree of Peace
Listen, listen to one another. Listen, listen to one another.
With strength $J = 88$

Then shall all shackles fall.

With strength $q = 88$

Then shall all shackles fall.

With strength $q = 88$

Then shall all shackles fall.

With strength $q = 88$

Then shall all shackles fall.

With strength $q = 88$

Then shall all shackles fall.
The violence of war over the earth shall cease.

Love shall tread out the fire of anger, and in its

The violence of war over the earth shall cease.

Love shall tread out the fire of anger, and in its

The violence of war over the earth shall cease.

Love shall tread out the fire of anger, and in its

Walker / The Tree of Peace
Then shall all shack-les fall

Ash-es plant a tree of peace.

Then shall all shack-les fall

O, my

Ash-es plant a tree of peace.

Ash-es plant a tree of peace.

Ashes plant a tree of peace.

Then shall all shack-les fall

O, my

Ash-es plant a tree of peace.

Ash-es plant a tree of peace.

Ash-es plant a tree of peace.

O, my

Ash-es plant a tree of peace.
The violence of war over the earth shall cease,

sister and my brother,

The violence of war over the earth shall cease,

fold to your hearts each other.
Love shall tread out the fire of anger, and in its ashes plant a tree of mercy.
Where mercy dwells, the Lord is there.

Walker / The Tree of Peace
plant a tree of peace, plant a tree of peace, plant a tree of peace...
love shall tread out the fire of
anger, and in its ashes plant a tree of peace.

anger, and in its ashes plant a tree of peace.

anger, and in its ashes plant a tree of peace.
*A few voices hold pitch on “Ah,” most voices sing the pattern.

Walker / The Tree of Peace
*A few more voices join the held “Ah.” A few less sing the pattern.

Walker / The Tree of Peace
ritard. to end

white note glissando, entire length of keyboard

ritard. to end

Duration: 5'30"
March 19, 2014
Baton Rouge, Louisiana