

OLIVEIRA, CAROLINE C., D.M.A. Gwyneth Walker's Use of Melodic Motive and Tonal Centricity to Depict E. E. Cummings' Poetry in the Cycle "though love be a day." (2015)

Directed by Dr. Robert Wells. 88 pp.

- I. Opera Role: Thursday, April 11, 2013, 7:30 p.m., Taylor Theatre. Noémie in *Cendrillon* (Jules Massenet)
- II. Solo Recital: Sunday, April 21, 2013, 5:30 p.m., Recital Hall. "The Blessed Virgin's Expostulation" (Henry Purcell, realized by Benjamin Britten); "Suleika I" D. 720, "Suleika II" D. 717 (Franz Schubert); "Nur wer die Sehnsucht kennt," "Heiß mich nicht reddten, heiß mich schweigen," "So laßt mich scheinen, bis ich werde" from *Lieder und Gesänge aus Wilhelm Meister*, op. 98a (Robert Schumann); "Solveigs Sang," "Solveigs Vuggesang" from *Peer Gynt*, op. 23 (Edvard Grieg); *Try Me, Good King Last Words of the Wives of Henry VIII* (Libby Larsen)
- III. Solo Recital: Sunday, April 13, 2014, 5:30 p.m., Recital Hall. "Wir eilen mit schwachen, doch emsigen Schritten" from *Jesu, der du meine Seele*, BWV 78 (Johann Sebastian Bach); "Wenn des Kreuzes Bitterkeiten" from *Was Gott tut, das ist wohlgetan*, BWV 99 (Johann Sebastian Bach); "Слезы," "В огороде, возле броду," "Рассвет" from *Шесть Дуэтов* (Six Duets), op. 46 (Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky); "La pesca" from *Soirées musicales* (Gioacchino Rossini), "Le gittane" from *Péchés de vieillesse* (Gioacchino Rossini); *Pavane*, op. 50 (Gabriel Fauré), *El desdichado* (Camille Saint-Saëns); *Chanson Espagnole* (Claude Debussy); "Rede, Mädchen, allzu liebes," "Die grüne Hopfenranke," "Ein kleiner, hübscher Vogel," "Wenn so lind dein Aug emir," "Am Donaustrande, da steht ein Haus," "Nein, es ist nicht auszukommen," "Schlosser auf! Und mache Schlösser," "Ein dunkeler Schacht ist Liebe," "Es bebet das Gesträuche" from *Liebeslieder Walzer*, op. 52 (Johannes Brahms)
- IV. Solo Recital: Sunday, October 26, 2014, 5:30 p.m., Recital Hall. *The Telephone* (Gian-Carlo Menotti)
- V. D.M.A. Research Project. GWYNETH WALKER'S USE OF MELODIC MOTIVE AND TONAL CENTRICITY TO DEPICT E. E. CUMMINGS' POETRY IN THE CYCLE "THOUGH LOVE BE A DAY." This document provides an overview of E. E. Cummings' and Gwyneth Walker's biographical information and artistic output before analyzing the harmonic and melodic motives Walker uses in the four settings of E. E. Cummings poetry found in this song cycle.

GWYNETH WALKER'S USE OF MELODIC MOTIVE AND TONAL CENTRICITY  
TO DEPICT E. E. CUMMINGS' POETRY IN THE CYCLE

"THOUGH LOVE BE A DAY"

by

Caroline C. Oliveira

A Dissertation Submitted to  
the Faculty of The Graduate School at  
The University of North Carolina at Greensboro  
in Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree  
Doctor of Musical Arts

Greensboro  
2015

Approved by

Robert Wells  
Committee Chair

APPROVAL PAGE

This dissertation written by CAROLINE C. OLIVEIRA has been approved by the following committee of the Faculty of The Graduate School at The University of North Carolina at Greensboro.

Committee Chair \_\_\_\_\_

Committee Members \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

March 5, 2015  
Date of Acceptance by Committee

March 5, 2015  
Date of Final Oral Examination

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to extend my sincerest gratitude and appreciation to my advisor and committee chair, Dr. Robert Wells, for his wisdom, patience and encouragement over the past five years.

I am incredibly grateful to my committee members, Drs. James Douglass, Nancy Walker and Guy Capuzzo, for their support and guidance.

Finally, I wish to express my deepest thanks to Robert Oliveira, Pamela Oliveira and Daniel Crupi for your steadfast encouragement and ongoing support.



## TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
LIST OF FIGURES.....	v
CHAPTER	
I. INTRODUCTION .....	1
II. E. E. CUMMINGS .....	4
III. GWYNETH WALKER .....	13
IV. ANALYSIS OF "I: THY FINGERS MAKE EARLY FLOWERS" .....	22
V. ANALYSIS OF "II: LILY HAS A ROSE" .....	33
VI. ANALYSIS OF "III: AFTER ALL WHITE HORSES ARE IN BED" .....	39
VII. ANALYSIS OF "IV: MAGGIE AND MILLY AND MOLLY AND MAY" .....	50
VIII. CONCLUSION .....	58
REFERENCES .....	62
APPENDIX A. MUSICAL SCORE .....	65
APPENDIX B. COPYRIGHT PERMISSION .....	86

## LIST OF FIGURES

	Page
Figure 1. "Thy fingers make early flowers," mm. 1. ....	25
Figure 2. "Thy fingers make early flowers," mm. 3. ....	26
Figure 3. "Thy fingers make early flowers," mm. 13. ....	26
Figure 4. "Thy fingers make early flowers," mm. 10. ....	27
Figure 5. "Thy fingers make early flowers," mm. 24. ....	28
Figure 6. "lily has a rose," mm. 2-4. ....	35
Figure 7. "lily has a rose," mm. 5. ....	36
Figure 8. "lily has a rose," mm. 41-45. ....	38
Figure 9. "after all white horses are in bed," mm. 7-8. ....	42
Figure 10. "after all white horses are in bed," mm. 35-36. ....	42
Figure 11. "after all white horses are in bed," mm. 9-10. ....	43
Figure 12. "after all white horses are in bed," mm. 2-4. ....	44
Figure 13. "after all white horses are in bed," mm. 17-19. ....	44
Figure 14. "maggie and milly and molly and may," mm. 5-6. ....	51
Figure 15. "maggie and milly and molly and may," mm. 9-10. ....	52
Figure 16. "maggie and milly and molly and may," mm. 15-16. ....	54
Figure 17. "maggie and milly and molly and may," mm. 20.....	55
Figure 18. "maggie and milly and molly and may," mm. 21-22. ....	56

CHAPTER I  
INTRODUCTION

Gwyneth Walker is a prolific contemporary American composer, whose catalogue of compositions contains repertoire for choir, orchestra, band, chamber ensembles, solo instrument, and solo voice. Although her catalogue is diverse, her largest contribution to contemporary American music has been her compositions for choir. In an interview with Walker from 2004, Susan Weber and Marcia Lee Goldberg from MMB Music make strong supportive comments about Walker's music, including "Your music is constantly performed - musicians enjoy performing it. Audiences seem to like listening to it..." and "your music captures people right away."<sup>1</sup>

Although her musical output is dominated by choral repertoire, she has also composed a large quantity of pieces and cycles for solo voice including *No Ordinary Woman!*, *The Sun is Love*, and *Three Songs for Lucille. though love be a day*, a song cycle for high voice and piano, was published in 1979 and is comprised of settings of E. E. Cummings poems. This is Walker's first published cycle.

---

<sup>1</sup> Susan Weber and Marcia Lee Goldberg, "An Interview with Gwyneth Walker," Gwyneth Walker – Composer, <http://www.gwynethwalker.com/webintv.html> (accessed May 20, 2014)

E. E. Cummings' poetry is known for its radical and avant-garde form, syntax, punctuation, and general abandonment of traditional grammatical rules. In *though love be a day*, Walker manages to gracefully and successfully share E. E. Cummings' poems through a primarily aural medium. She uses recurring melodic themes and musical interludes to further illustrate the form or text of the poems. In some instances melodic devices, motives, tonal areas, and occasionally specific pitches are assigned to characters or ideas, which are used to further communicate the content of the poem.

Gwyneth Walker also set four poems of E. E. Cummings for choir: "White Horses" published in 1979, "spring!" published in 1993, "I carry your heart" published in 1993 and "I thank you God" published in 1998. Walker also arranged "spring!" and "I carry your heart" for solo voice and piano in 2006. Considering that this document is intended to focus on Walker's portrayal of E. E. Cummings' poetry originally composed for solo voice and piano, these pieces will not be included in the analysis. Walker also includes one song in this cycle that is set to a poem of her own. This song, entitled "Still," will also not be discussed as it does not contain poetry by E. E. Cummings.

Although I will provide relevant musical excerpts, the reader may also reference Appendix A, which contains a copy of Gwyneth Walker's composition *though love be a day*. This document will provide biographical overviews of E. E. Cummings and Gwyneth Walker as well as descriptions of their respective artistic styles, before focusing on individual analyses of "Thy fingers make early flowers,"

“lily has a rose,” “after all white horses are in bed,” and “maggie and milly and molly and may,” from Gwyneth Walker’s song cycle *though love be a day*.

## CHAPTER II

### E. E. CUMMINGS

Edward Estlin Cummings was born October 14<sup>th</sup>, 1894 to Edward Cummings and Rebecca Haswell Cummings. Between the ages of 8 and 22, he wrote a poem a day resulting in hundreds of unpublished poems from the years 1902 – 1916.<sup>2</sup> While pursuing his Master's Degree at Harvard in 1916, modern poetry caught his interest and he began writing "avant-garde poems in which conventional punctuation and syntax were ignored in favor of a dynamic use of language."<sup>3</sup>

Cummings volunteered to join the Norton-Harjes Ambulance Corps in 1917 and was imprisoned in France on suspicion of treason. After being released in 1918, he returned to the United States and was drafted into the army, where he spent 6 months in training camp in Massachusetts before the war ended. In 1920, his poems and drawings were published in the influential literary magazine, *The Dial*. His contributions to the magazine received tremendous attention and his career began to take off. His first book, *The Enormous Room*, was published in 1922 and is an autobiographical yet fictionalized account of his 4-month imprisonment during the war. The book was well-received by critics and soon after led to publication of

---

<sup>2</sup> Bethany K. Dumas, *E. E. Cummings: A remembrance of Miracles*, (New York: Harper & Row Publishers, 1974), 51.

<sup>3</sup> Poetry Foundation, "E. E. Cummings: Biography," Poetry Foundation, <http://www.poetryfoundation.org/bio/e-e-Cummings> (accessed May 14, 2014).

multiple poetry collections, including *Tulips and Chimneys* in 1923, *XLI Poems* in 1925 and *is 5* in 1926. Once these collections were published, critics and readers realized that “his unusual typography, capitalization, and punctuation were used with good reason.”<sup>4</sup>

Cummings was traveling back and forth between New York and Paris throughout the 1920s. In 1931, enticed by the hope for an improved society due to the communist revolution, Cummings moved to the Soviet Union. *Eimi*, his diary chronicling his visit to the Soviet Union and expressing his displeasure and anger towards the Soviet Regime, was published in 1933.<sup>5</sup> After the distribution of *Eimi*, Cummings experienced difficulty finding a publisher for his following works, so he self-published multiple volumes of poetry including *No Thanks* (1935), *Collected Poems* (1938) and *50 Poems* (1940).

In the 1950s, Cummings was recognized for his contribution to modern poetry. In 1950 he was awarded the Academy of American Poets fellowship and in 1951 he received the Guggenheim Fellowship. In 1952 he became the Charles Eliot Norton Professor at Harvard through the spring of 1953. His final collection of poems, *95 Poems*, was published in 1958. Cummings passed away on September 2<sup>nd</sup>, 1962.

---

<sup>4</sup> Dumas, 55.

<sup>5</sup> Poetry Foundation, “E. E. Cummings: Biography,” Poetry Foundation, <http://www.poetryfoundation.org/bio/e-e-Cummings> (accessed May 14, 2014).

According to Richard S. Kennedy, because of Cummings' "explorations and trials" with language his work developed three principle styles: lyric and mythic, satiric, and modernist.<sup>6</sup> The first style, lyric and mythic, is categorized by "the cycles of the natural world or the essential rhythms in human life" combined with "the expressed emotion or employment of mythic procedures in songs or singable stories."<sup>7</sup> The content of the poetry would discuss subjects such as childhood pleasures, the serenity of death, the flow of rivers, the changes of the moon, sexual fulfillment. Cummings would employ visually directive spacing or alter the conventional grammar and punctuation in order to contribute significance and visual guidance for readers.<sup>8</sup> Various examples of poems falling into this category are "in Just=/spring," "Tumbling-hair," and "the hours rise up putting of stars and it is." His second style, the satiric style of expression, had an extreme range, swinging from a dark rejection of life and society found in "pity this busy monster, manunkind" and "Humanity i love you," to a light and gentle mockery of human folly such as "89."<sup>9</sup> The third style, the "modernist" style, is more of a reference to his craftsmanship rather than the modernist movement in history. Cummings broke, twisted, reshaped and manipulated words for his poems, "similar to what the

---

<sup>6</sup> Richard S. Kennedy, *Dreams in the Mirror: A Biography of E. E. Cummings*, (New York: Livewright Publishing Corporation, 1980), 124.

<sup>7</sup> Kennedy, 125.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.



'modern' artist was doing to his materials."<sup>10</sup> Easily identifiable, many poems fall into this category, including "the sky was," "Buffalo Bill's," and "l(a." In his book *E. E. Cummings: A Biography*, Christopher Sawyer-Lauçanno succinctly summarizes E. E. Cummings' style:

What is identifiably Cummings style is all here: the uncapitalized 'i'; the use of parentheses and the ampersand; the spacing for visual and aural purposes; the punctuation for effect; the running of words together to create a wholeness out of separateness; the unique imagery ('hair-thin tints,' 'women coloured twilight'); the syntactical interruptions; and the creation of an adverb -- 'sayingly' out of another part of speech. And yet these are not just tricks for the sake of a unique semantic; the saying is integral to the meaning.<sup>11</sup>

Because of these aforementioned style elements, he quickly "established a reputation as an avant-garde poet conducting daring experiments with language."<sup>12</sup>

"Cummings was a central figure in that remarkable generation of American writers, including Ezra Pound, Gertrude Stein, T. S. Eliot, John Dos Passos, and William Faulkner, who carried out a revolution in literary expression in the twentieth century."<sup>13</sup> The unique and distinct choices Cummings made had a

---

<sup>10</sup> Kennedy, 126.

<sup>11</sup> Christopher Sawyer-Lauçanno, *E. E. Cummings: A Biography*, (Naperville: Sourcebooks, 2004), 167.

<sup>12</sup> Poetry Foundation, "E. E. Cummings: Biography," Poetry Foundation, <http://www.poetryfoundation.org/bio/e-e-Cummings> (accessed May 14, 2014).

<sup>13</sup> Richard S. Kennedy, "E. E. Cummings," *Modern American Poetry* [http://www.english.illinois.edu/maps/poets/a\\_f/Cummings/Cummings\\_life.htm](http://www.english.illinois.edu/maps/poets/a_f/Cummings/Cummings_life.htm) (accessed Dec 29, 2014).

permanent impact on writing and poetry. The list of contemporary American poets and writers influenced by E. E. Cummings is long, and includes Edward Field, Charles Bukowski and many more. Richard Kostelanetz mentions in an essay on Cummings, "If you focus upon Cummings' more extraordinary poems – those that distinguish him from everyone else, before or since – you are more likely to recognize him, as I do, as the major American poet of the middle-twentieth century."<sup>14</sup> Many have tried to emulate his style, but critics generally feel this is futile. Gerald Locklin states "It seems to most poets, however, as fruitless to imitate Cummings closely as Hemingway. Both styles are dead giveaways."<sup>15</sup>

Cummings' popularity and influence transferred into the musical world. Many prominent contemporary composers have set Cummings' poetry. This includes solo works by Dominic Argento (the cycle *Songs About Spring*), John Duke ("i carry your heart"), John Cage (song cycle, *Five Songs for Contralto*), Ned Rorem ("in the rain," "Doll's Boy"), and many others. As anticipated, each composer works to set Cummings' poetry in their own musical style, some of which are more successful than others. Walker's settings of Cummings' poems are sensitive to the text, with piano accompaniment and vocal lines that support and enhance the mood, meaning, syntax, and form of the poetry.

---

<sup>14</sup> Richard Kostelanetz, *The Old Poetries and the New*, (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1981): 230.

<sup>15</sup> Gerald Locklin, "The Influence of Cummings on Selected Contemporary Poets," *Spring: The Journal of the E. E. Cummings Society*, no 2, (1993) 45.

The poetry Gwyneth Walker selected for her song cycles consists of two poems from E. E. Cummings' earlier collections and two poems from his final collections. "Thy fingers make early flowers" comes from *Tulips and Chimneys*, "after all white horses are in bed" is found in *is 5* while "maggie and milly and molly and may" and "lily has a rose" are published in *95 Poems*.

The original manuscript for *Tulips and Chimneys* contained 150 poems, however the publisher reduced it to 66 poems, removing 84. Although the ultimate reason is unknown, it is speculated that removal of these poems was due to length rather than content.<sup>16</sup> These poems were later printed, 43 published in *&*, and 41 published in *XLI Poems*. In his book entitled *E. E. Cummings*, Norman Friedman refers to the contrast of "Tulips" and "Chimneys" as a stylistic distinction, "for most of the 'Tulips' are free verse, representing 'natural' or 'organic' structures, while all of the 'Chimneys' are sonnets (sometimes tinkered with, but sonnets nevertheless), representing 'fixed' or 'artificial' structures."<sup>17</sup> "Thy fingers make early flowers of" is considered part of the "Chimneys" portion of the collection. Friedman goes to explain that in this collection, "most of his [Cummings'] characteristic subjects are here, even at the beginning: spring, love, twilight, the city, the country, sex, the demimonde, dream, time, death children, war, society, and so on."<sup>18</sup> Robert E.

---

<sup>16</sup> Norman Friedman, *E. E. Cummings: The Growth of a Writer*, (Carbondale and Edwardsville: Southern Illinois University Press, 1964), 36.

<sup>17</sup> Friedman, 38

<sup>18</sup> Friedman, 43.

Maurer states in a 1955 publication of *The Bucknell Review*, "the book is so obviously the work of a talented young man who is striking off in new directions, groping for original and yet precise expression."<sup>19</sup>

*is 5* was published in 1926 and, as the title would suggest, is broken in to five sections. "after all white horses are in bed" is a part of this collection, found in section I. At the request of the publishers, this collection contains a foreword, written by Cummings himself. This foreword provides tremendous insight into the mind and process of Cummings' production. He writes:

If a poet is anybody, he is somebody to whom things made matter very little-- somebody who is obsessed by Making. Like all obsessions, the Making obsession has disadvantages; for instance, my only interest in making money would be to make it. Fortunately, however, I should prefer to make almost anything else, including locomotives and roses. It is with roses and locomotives (not to mention acrobats Spring electricity Coney Island the 4th of July the eyes of mice and Niagara Falls) that my "poems" are competing.<sup>20</sup>

Friedman states that "Fresh, original, exuberant, experimental yet traditional, *is 5* is Cummings' first consistently characteristic book of poems."<sup>21</sup> His poetry from the 1920s, including *is 5* and *Tulips and Chimneys*, solidified Cummings' place in American poetry.

---

<sup>19</sup> Robert E. Maurer, "Latter Day Notes on E. E. Cummings' Language," *Bucknell Review* 5, no. 3 (May 1955) 43.

<sup>20</sup> E. E. Cummings, *is 5*, (Boni & Liveright, 1926), i.

<sup>21</sup> Friedman, 50.

*95 Poems* was published in 1958 and is the last collection of poems published prior to Cummings' death. *95 Poems* contains "maggie and milly and molly and may" as well as "lily has a rose." From the 1920s to 1950s, Cummings' work changed very little. In fact, multiple critics called "his failure to develop as a writer a major weakness."<sup>22</sup> However, with this collection, Friedman feels that "the windows of perception have been cleansed, and the satirical vision has been practically replaced by crystal-clear impressions of nature and a consistently maturing transcendentalism."<sup>23</sup>

Rushworth M. Kidder spends time in the introduction of his book "*E. E. Cummings: An Introduction to the Poetry*" explaining general rules for understanding and interpreting Cummings' form, syntax, and meaning. His seven rules are as follows:

- 1) Treat each stanza as a separate syntactical unit
- 2) Supply punctuation and capitalization as necessary
- 3) Sometimes add words to complete the sense
- 4) Rearrange words within lines as needed
- 5) Connect fragments from line to line
- 6) Treat parentheses carefully

---

<sup>22</sup> Poetry Foundation, "E. E. Cummings: Biography," Poetry Foundation, <http://www.poetryfoundation.org/bio/e-e-Cummings> (accessed May 14, 2014).

<sup>23</sup> Friedman, 162.

7) Pay attention to context.<sup>24</sup>

Although these rules are intended to be directions for interpreting Cummings' poetry in a written format, it can be argued that Walker's musical settings also assist in reflecting these rules. Her music is sensitive to the punctuation, capitalization, and context and at times she will rearrange words or lines of poetry, likely in an effort to assist the listener in interpreting the poetry.

---

<sup>24</sup> Rushworth M. Kidder, *E. E. Cummings: An Introduction to the Poetry*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1979): 11-14.

### CHAPTER III

#### GWYNETH WALKER

Critics and scholars often use the word “accessible” to describe Gwyneth Walker’s music. In a review in *The New York Times* of *though love be a day*, John Rockwell describes her music as “accessible and singable (meaning not excessively chromatic), yet responsive to the texts and convincing on its own terms.”<sup>25</sup> Grove dictionary states that she desired to stay accessible, by bringing “familiar aspects of life to the concert platform,” such as a choir imitating the sound of farm machinery and cows in *Three Songs in Celebration of the Family Farm* or staging performances in non-traditional sites.<sup>26</sup> Carson Cooman explains that Walker’s work is “always accessible, although never simplistic. The sense of craft and structure is never in doubt – each note was placed with care and thoughtfulness.”<sup>27</sup> When asked in an interview why her music is always referenced by audiences and critics as “accessible,” Gwyneth Walker explains

---

<sup>25</sup> John Rockwell, “Rondi Charleston Wins Art Song Vocal Competition,” *The New York Times*, May 6, 1990

<sup>26</sup> *Grove Music Dictionary Online*, s.v. “Walker, Gwyneth Van Anden,” <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com:80/subscriber/article/grove/music/2022301> (accessed May 16, 2014)

<sup>27</sup> Carson P. Cooman, “Gwyneth Walker: An American Original: An Introduction to her Work,” Gwyneth Walker – Composer, <http://www.gwynethwalker.com/walkerinfo.html> (accessed May 16, 2014)

My music is me. I've been doing this all of my life. Writing music that communicates to other people is my approach. This is the gift I have of expressing myself as a human being. I am a joyous and sensitive person with plenty to say. These qualities come through in the music.<sup>28</sup>

The aforementioned “accessibility” of Walker’s music has likely contributed to its demand today. With an impressive catalogue boasting over 300 commissioned compositions, she is an active composer whose music is “beloved by performers and audiences alike for its energy, beauty, reverence, drama and humor.”<sup>29</sup>

Gwyneth Walker was born in 1947 in New York City to John Baldwin Walker and Adele Van Anden Walker. That same year, her parents and two older sisters moved to New Canaan, Connecticut where she spent the formative years of her childhood.

Early on, music played an important role in her life. Fascinated by the piano, two year-old Walker recounts crawling downstairs and “plunking” out notes.<sup>30</sup> Her parents placed her in piano lessons a few years later, however she was more interested in sharing her musical compositions with the instructor rather than learning technique. After a few lessons, her teacher suggested Walker withdraw

---

<sup>28</sup> Susan Weber and Marcia Lee Goldberg, “An Interview with Gwyneth Walker,” Gwyneth Walker – Composer, <http://www.gwynethwalker.com/webintv.html> (accessed May 20, 2014)

<sup>29</sup> “Biography,” Gwyneth Walker – Composer, <http://www.gwynethwalker.com/presskit.html#BIO> (accessed May 18, 2014).

<sup>30</sup> Gene Brooks, “An Interview with Gwyneth Walker,” *The Choral Journal* 37, no. 2, (Feb 1999) 23.



from formal lessons, explaining that she was afraid she would end up crushing Walker's love of music.<sup>31</sup>

Walker continued to explore the piano and write her own songs. Throughout elementary school, she wrote music for her friends using toy instruments from her house to create a small orchestra. Once she reached junior high, Walker's friends began requesting arrangements of the Everly Brothers' songs, or other popular music of the time. Walker notes that this is the first instance where she composed for someone other than herself.<sup>32</sup> While in high school at the Abbot Academy, she sang in all choirs and ensembles that were available to her – the Glee club, the Chapel Choir, an Octet and a Mixed Madrigals group including boys from Andover Academy.

Walker attended Brown University for her undergraduate degree. She initially planned on pursuing physics but after a short discussion with the chairman of the music department, Ron Nelson, she changed her major to music and tested out of all undergraduate music theory.<sup>33</sup> Her coursework was mostly comprised of independent studies with composition teacher, Paul Nelson. She was accepted into a highly competitive folk group at Pembroke due to her guitar skills and sight-singing capabilities. By her sophomore year, she was creating arrangements for the group and composing six to eight pieces for them to perform each year. Additionally,

---

<sup>31</sup> Gene Brooks, 23.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid.

she began composing for orchestra and received the opportunity to have one of her pieces read by the Rhode Island Philharmonic.

In 1970, she began her graduate studies at the Hartt School of Music, the conservatory of the University of Hartford. She found this to be an exciting point in her musical journey, as this was the first time she was immersed in music and surrounded by other musicians. She enjoyed challenging music theory and composition classes and studied privately with Arnold Franchetti. Walker believes that although she received encouragement and crucial advice from Dr. Franchetti, her unique musical voice was self-taught.<sup>34</sup> Upon successful completion of her Master of Music degree, she was invited to be the first Doctor of Musical Arts student in composition at the Hartt School of Music, and was offered a position as a teaching fellow. While pursuing her doctorate, she taught ear training classes, keyboard harmony and undergraduate music theory.

Upon completion of her DMA, she was offered a faculty position at Oberlin in 1976. Due to the recent acquisition of her Doctorate, she was well versed in newer types of music theory, including Schenkerian Analysis and Set Theory. She began teaching upper level music theory courses and working individually with composition students. However, she quickly realized she did not have enough time to write and compose her own music. Although she tried to rearrange her schedule to allow her time to compose outside of summer break, the classes she was teaching

---

<sup>34</sup> Brooks, 24.

required too much preparation and focus. In 1982, she left her teaching job in order to compose full-time. Walker stated, “although it was scary to leave the teaching job, it was scarier yet to never fulfill the dream of composing for a living.”<sup>35</sup>

Walker’s catalogue is diverse, ranging from concert band repertoire to staged dramatic works. However, she possesses a proclivity toward vocal music and mentions in an interview that if forced to select only one type of music, it would be choral.<sup>36</sup> She has recently qualified that statement to read “choral and vocal.”<sup>37</sup> She supports this sentiment by explaining that when writing for the human voice, “you are writing for something that is universal and everlasting.”<sup>38</sup>

When asked in an interview who her musical influences are in, Walker states “‘Influenced by’ is not relevant, because I started composing when I was two. Surely, I borrow sounds of what is around me...”<sup>39</sup> She also mentions that “her background as a folk musician is an influence” and that she loves musicians like James Taylor, Joni Mitchell, Judy Collins, and the Beatles.<sup>40</sup> Walker’s music is classified as “American music” with defining characteristics such as “rhythmic sense, open

---

<sup>35</sup> “Gwyneth Walker.” *Vermont PBS*. (accessed May 20, 2014)

<sup>36</sup> Brooks, 21.

<sup>37</sup> Gwyneth Walker, e-mail message to composer, December 20, 2014.

<sup>38</sup> Brooks, 21.

<sup>39</sup> Brooks, 26.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*

sonorities, and influences of rock, jazz, blues, and American folk music.”<sup>41</sup> Although her music contains quartal harmonies and non-referential triads, the overall harmony is typically diatonic.<sup>42</sup>

In a review of “The Sun of Love,” a recording of Walker’s song cycles released in 2005, Blair Sanderson comments on Walker’s style and work.

What matters most is Walker’s craft, which is impeccable; and more important than her mild harmonies and pretty diatonic melodies are her unerring sense of phrasing and effective setting of words. At times, Walker’s music seems informed by Debussy and Poulenc, shaded by Ives, and perhaps even inspired by Menotti and Sondheim – a blend that puts the song cycles *though love be a day*, *Mornings Innocent*, and *The Sun is Love* closer to the polystylism of the contemporary generation than the vocal contortions of the avant-garde, which Walker rejects entirely.<sup>43</sup>

In addition to plentiful tertian and quartal harmonies, modes play a prominent part in Walker’s music. In a correspondence from 2007, Walker explains that the incorporation of occasional non-tonal elements is in an effort to keep the music varied and directed. Her compositions often “wander” far from the tonal center. Walker compares E. E. Cummings’ use of language to her harmonic style. She

---

<sup>41</sup> Carson P. Cooman, “Gwyneth Walker: An American Original: An Introduction to her Work,” Gwyneth Walker – Composer, <http://www.gwynethwalker.com/walkerinfo.html> (accessed May 16, 2014)

<sup>42</sup> *Grove Music Dictionary Online*, s.v. “Walker, Gwyneth Van Anden,” <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com:80/subscriber/article/grove/music/2022301> (accessed May 16, 2014)

<sup>43</sup> Blair Sanderson, “Review: *The Sun is Love*,” AllMusic, <http://www.allmusic.com/album/the-sun-is-love-song-cycles-and-piano-music-by-gwyneth-walker-mw0001841821> (accessed Dec 29, 2014).

uses familiar musical materials, but tries to shape them into her own message, hoping that the audience will recognize the familiar harmony or rhythm and understand her use of it.<sup>44</sup>

Walker favors the works of contemporary American poets and her catalog reflects this.<sup>45</sup> When selecting text, Walker is drawn to works that are not convoluted but create images. She is careful to select text that, if read aloud, the words and imagery were easily understood.<sup>46</sup> To Walker, “. . . poetry is not words. It is the images that the words create.”<sup>47</sup> When setting text to music she explains that she tries to let her heart and soul respond to the poem, allow her feelings to speak, and then find the overall musical language that suits the piece as a whole.<sup>48</sup>

In Walker’s settings of E. E. Cummings’ poetry in her song cycle *though love be a day*, she notes that she tries to “take special care in presenting them [E. E. Cummings’ words and imagery] in a way that people who are not poetry lovers . . . can understand.”<sup>49</sup> This is her only cycle for solo voice that includes poetry of E. E.

---

<sup>44</sup> Susan Weber and Marcia Lee Goldberg, “An Interview with Gwyneth Walker,” Gwyneth Walker – Composer, <http://www.gwynethwalker.com/webintv.html> (accessed May 20, 2014).

<sup>45</sup> Gwyneth Walker, personal e-mail message to composer, December 20, 2014.

<sup>46</sup> Vicki Lynne Burrichter, “The Choral Music of Gwyneth Walker: An Overview.” (DMA diss., University of Northern Colorado, 2003), 91.

<sup>47</sup> Gwyneth Walker, “Words and Music,” Gwyneth Walker – Composer, <http://www.gwynethwalker.com/e-words.html> (accessed May 20, 2014).

<sup>48</sup> Burrichter, 92.

<sup>49</sup> Burrichter, 100.

Cummings. Walker explains in an email correspondence, “I have set to music the poems of E. E. Cummings which appeal to me and which I feel would work well as lyrics. There are no other poems [by Cummings] which fall into this category.”<sup>50</sup>

The cycle *though love be a day* is among the earliest of Walker’s mature works. These songs include moments of great metrical freedom, with portions of the music written in free meters and without barlines.<sup>51</sup> Each solo work begins with a piano introduction intended to set the mood of the upcoming piece. Additionally the piano accompaniment is intended to “depict the intrinsic imagery of the poetry, highlighting poignant words and making musical commentary on the text.”<sup>52</sup>

This “musical commentary” is apparent throughout the cycle, with the exception of “Still,” the final song in the cycle. This is the only piece in the cycle with poetry not by E. E. Cummings and, instead, by Walker herself. She provides a thorough analysis of this piece on her website. Walker highlights important motives she uses in “Still,” most notably a “splitting apart” motive she incorporates and transforms throughout the piece. However, the poetry is by Walker and set in the first person narrative. The previous poems by E. E. Cummings are not set in the first person, and sometimes involve multiple characters or speakers. Therefore, the musical and melodic motives that are used to support characters and form of the

---

<sup>50</sup> Gwyneth Walker, personal e-mail message to composer, December 20, 2014.

<sup>51</sup> Carson Cooman, “Letters and Replies,” Gwyneth Walker – Composer, <http://www.gwynethwalker.com/letrep.html#WITT> (accessed May 21, 2014).

<sup>52</sup> Tana Rene Field-Bartholomew, “A Performer’s Guide to the Songs of Gwyneth Walker” (DMA diss., University of Cincinnati, 2007), 122-123.

poetry are not noticeably present in this final song. Although she does include musical motives, they do not appear to further enhance the form of the poetry or the narrative she provided. Instead, they are used to enhance the overall message of separation, yet closeness.<sup>53</sup>

Walker continues to add to her ever-expanding catalogue of music, which, as mentioned earlier, now boasts over 300 compositions. In 2000, she received the “Lifetime Achievement Award” from the Vermont Arts Council; in 2008, she received the “Athenaeum Award for Achievement in the Arts and Humanities” from the St. Johnsbury Athenaeum; and in 2012, she was elected as a fellow of the Vermont Academy of Arts and Sciences. Walker currently divides her time between New Canaan, Connecticut; Sarasota, Florida; and Randolph, Vermont.

---

<sup>53</sup> Gwyneth Walker, “*Still*: A Musical Analysis by Gwyneth Walker,” Gwyneth Walker – Composer, <http://www.gwynethwalker.com/ana/gw-still.pdf> (accessed May 12, 2014).

## CHAPTER IV

### ANALYSIS OF "I: THY FINGERS MAKE EARLY FLOWERS"

The first song in the cycle *though love be a day* is titled "Thy fingers make early flowers." The original poem is found within a six-poem sequence entitled "songs" within the collection *Tulips and Chimneys*. While some of these poems in this sequence directly reference music, Rushworth Kidder explains that the inclusion of this poem in the "Songs" sequence is due to its "graceful lyricism built from the literary counterparts of musical devices. ...Refrain ("though love be a day") and a careful attention to rhyme mark the piece as more song than statement."<sup>54</sup>

#### Thy fingers make early flowers

Thy fingers make early flowers of  
all things.

thy hair mostly the hours love:  
a smoothness which  
sings,saying  
(though love be a day)  
do not fear,we will go amaying.

thy whitest feet crisply are straying.  
Always  
thy moist eyes are at kisses playing,  
whose strangeness much  
says;singing  
(though love be a day)  
for which girl art thou flowers bringing?

---

<sup>54</sup> Kidder, 22.



To be thy lips is a sweet thing  
and small.  
Death, Thee i call rich beyond wishing  
if this thou catch,  
else missing.  
(though love be a day  
and life be nothing,it shall not stop kissing).

E. E. Cummings' original poem is organized into three clear stanzas.

Rushworth Kidder's first rule to interpreting Cummings' poetry is to "treat each stanza as a separate syntactical unit."<sup>55</sup> The four songs in the cycle reflect this rule and Gwyneth Walker specifically states that for this piece, she focused on composing the music so that it reflects the poetic shape.<sup>56</sup> She organized the piece into three separate verses but included notational freedom, so that there is a frequent lack of bar lines and key signatures.<sup>57</sup> Walker provides a thorough analysis of this piece on her website. In it, she explains that each of the three sections start with a "relatively free, metrical situation" and eventually grows into a more defined meter. She draws a parallel to her harmonic language, noting that the recitative sections are based on quartal harmonies and that simple triads are prevalent at the end of each verse. She highlights instances of text painting in her music: For example, "fingers" and "flowers" are considered delicate so the recitative quality of musical setting in the

---

<sup>55</sup> Kidder, 11.

<sup>56</sup> Gwyneth Walker. "'Thy fingers make early flowers' from *though love be a day*: A Musical Analysis by Gwyneth Walker," Gwyneth Walker – Composer, <http://www.gwynethwalker.com/ana/gw-thyf.pdf> (accessed May 12, 2014).

<sup>57</sup> Ibid.

beginning is appropriate. Finally, she mentions that the number five plays a prominent role in this song cycle since the title of the set has five words, there are five songs in the cycle, and the five-digit image of fingers is important in this song.<sup>58</sup>

Walker uses four different melodic and harmonic motives throughout this piece. The first motivic idea is introduced at the very beginning of the song. This is both a harmonic and melodic motive and for the purposes of this paper, we will call this Motive 1. In the figure below, the piano is comprised of stacked fourths starting on F-sharp 4 and ending on A 5. The vocal line outlines a B-Dorian scale, starting on F-sharp 4 before leaping up to B 4, with motion up to D 5 before descending by step back to A 4.

---

<sup>58</sup> Gwyneth Walker. "Thy fingers make early flowers' from *though love be a day*: A Musical Analysis by Gwyneth Walker," Gwyneth Walker – Composer, <http://www.gwynethwalker.com/ana/gw-thyf.pdf> (accessed May 12, 2014).

### Motive 1:

The image shows a musical score for Motive 1. The top staff is a vocal line in treble clef, marked "slowly, quasi recitative" and "p". It begins with a half rest, followed by a quarter note G4, an eighth note A4, a quarter note B4, an eighth note C5, and a quarter note D5. The eighth notes A4 and B4 are beamed together and marked with a "3" above them. The quarter notes C5, D5, and E5 are beamed together and marked with a "5" above them. The lyrics "Thy fin-gers make ear- - ly flowers" are written below the notes. The piano accompaniment consists of two staves (treble and bass clefs) with a grand staff bracket on the left. The piano part is marked "pp" and features a chord of G4, B4, and D5 in the treble clef, with a fermata over the G4. The bass clef is empty.

**Figure 1. “Thy fingers make early flowers,” mm. 1.**

The sixteenth note quintuplet from Motive 1 (set here to the words “early flowers”) is extracted and used in the piano throughout the piece, with the first instance occurring at the beginning of the second system. This fragment continues to reappear in both the vocal line and in the piano line so to remind the listener of the initial mood of the piece – one of delicacy and intimacy.

Motive 2 can be considered a melodic and rhythmic motive and appears in two forms. For the purposes of this paper, the different forms will be titled Motive 2a and Motive 2b. The first instance is found in the first measure on page 4 of the music (page 66 in this document). Motive 2a occurs in the treble line of the piano and starts with descending stepwise motion, later transforming into larger leaps of 3rds and 5ths. The sixteenth notes are organized so they begin in groups of three for the stepwise motion and shift to groups of four for the leaps of thirds and fifths.



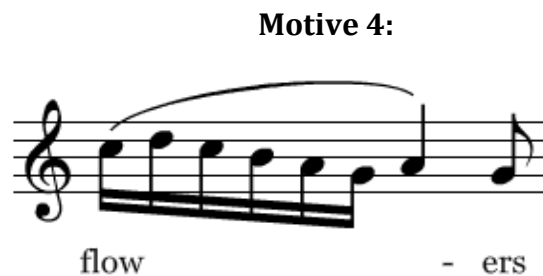
Motive 3 is introduced at the transition to 3/4 on the second system of page 4 (page 66 of this document). This is a melodic, harmonic and text motive. In this first occurrence, it consists of a C-minor chord transitioning to a B-flat major chord in the piano while the vocal line has a chant-like setting of “though love be a day” on E-flat 5 ascending to F 5. Although this is the first instance of Motive 3, it is more often found at a slightly lower pitch level in the vocal line with adjustments to the accompaniment as well. The vocal line retains the same rhythmic idea, but the line descends a minor second from D-flat 5 to C 5, rather than ascending a major second in the previous occurrence. The piano outlines an A-flat chord with quartal harmonies before moving to a B-flat major chord with an added second.

**Motive 3:**

The musical score for Motive 3 consists of three staves. The top staff is a vocal line in treble clef with a key signature of one flat (B-flat major/C minor). It begins with a quarter rest, followed by a quarter note E-flat (labeled '5' in the original image), and then a triplet of quarter notes: F (labeled '5'), G-flat, and A-flat. The lyrics 'though love be a day' are written below the vocal line. The middle and bottom staves are piano accompaniment. The middle staff is in treble clef and shows a C-minor chord (C4, E-flat4, G4) followed by a B-flat major chord (B-flat4, D5, F5). The bottom staff is in bass clef and shows an A-flat major chord (A-flat3, C4, E-flat4) followed by a B-flat major chord with an added second (B-flat3, C4, D4, F5).

**Figure 4. “Thy fingers make early flowers,” mm. 10.**

The first instance of the final motive is found in the last measure of page 5 (page 67 of this document). Motive 4 is a melodic, rhythmic and text based motive. In the majority of the occurrences, this motive is set so that it starts on the fourth scale degree of a chord, steps up to the fifth scale degree, then descends down by step to the first scale degree. This either takes place in the vocal line or in the right hand of the piano. The left hand of the piano often matches the sixteenth note rhythm but instead, arpeggiates the chord built on scale degree 2 of the outlined descent. In this first instance, the vocal line is outlining G major while the bass is outlining A minor.



**Figure 5. “Thy fingers make early flowers,” mm. 24.**

Each of these motives plays an important role, providing further structure to Walker’s setting of this text. Motive 1 is used to introduce and close each of the verses. After the first occurrence in the initial measures, the composer ends the first verse by setting the text “We will go amaying” to the same motive. As this verse ends, the piano has a short 4-measure interlude that begins at the top of page 5 (page 67 of this document). This interlude consists of a full iteration of Motive 1,

followed by an extraction of just the descending quintuplet. Then, as the voice enters at the pickup to the second system with the text “thy whitest feet,” the piano plays Motive 1, in the same B Dorian mode that it was initially presented with the rolled chord displaced down by one octave. The second verse concludes in the bottom staff on page 6 (page 68 of this document). In the 3/4 bar found in the second measure of that staff, Motive 1 returns in B Dorian in the piano. Since this occurs at the end of the verse in the B Dorian mode, this is used as both the closing to verse 2 and the initiation of verse 3. On page 8 (page 70 of this document), a return of Motive 1 occurs in the third system at the close of the third verse beneath the word “kissing however this time in A Dorian. The piano repeats the extracted quintuplet from Motive 1 at various pitch levels in the following four measures. This closes out the final verse as well as the piece, fulfilling Motive 1’s responsibility.

According to Walker, “each of the three verses follows a similar development where the opening is free and the motion is towards metrical definition.”<sup>59</sup> She later goes on to state “the musical setting of this song grows from the amorphous to the defined in terms of meter.”<sup>60</sup> Therefore, this piece shifts time signatures constantly and Motives 2a and 2b are used to transition from a simple to a compound meter or vice versa. Motive 2a first occurs in the first measure at the top of page 4 (page 66 of this document). The time signature of 4/4 was introduced in the previous measure

---

<sup>59</sup> Gwyneth Walker. “Thy fingers make early flowers’ from *though love be a day*: A Musical Analysis by Gwyneth Walker,” Gwyneth Walker – Composer, <http://www.gwynethwalker.com/ana/gw-thyf.pdf> (accessed May 12, 2014).

<sup>60</sup> Ibid.

on the previous page. Since Motive 2a begins with a stepwise descending motion containing sixteenth notes in groups of 3, it gives the listener the illusion of being in a triple meter such as 6/8 or 9/8. However, once the leaps of 3rds and 5ths begin, the grouping shifts from 3 sixteenth-notes to 4-sixteenth notes, providing the listener with a clear concept of 4/4. At the bottom of page 4 (page 66 of this document), Motive 2b appears and functions as a transition from a 3/8 bar to 4/4. On the next page in the final system, motive 2a is used as a transition from 5/4 to 6/8. This time, the motive's initial compound "feel" is used to transition us to a compound duple, rather than from a compound duple to a simple meter. Then, on page 6 (page 68 of this document), in the third system second measure, Motive 2b is used to bring the music out of 6/8 into 4/4.

It is necessary to discuss Motive 4 before focusing on Motive 3. Motive 4 is a beautiful example of text painting. As mentioned earlier, the motive occurs in the vocal line or piano part in conjunction with the word "flowers." The sixteenth notes ascend and descend in a lilting manner. This motive first appears on page 5 (page 67 of this document), where the flirtatious nature of the female character in the poem is revealed by the text "for which girl art thou flowers bringing?" Barry Marks explains, "The maiden is a coquette, but her intentions are far more openly dishonorable than those of her seventeenth-century sisters. Far from putting her suitor off, she is...encouraging him to put his whole heart into his kissing."<sup>61</sup> Walker

---

<sup>61</sup> Barry Marks, *E. E. Cummings* (New York: Twayne Publishers, 1964), 68-69.



chooses to highlight the girl's flirtation by highlighting the word "flowers" with this musical motive. Although on pages 5 and 6 (pages 67 and 68 of this document) the stepwise sixteenth note descent takes place in the vocal line over the word "flowers," in the latter portion of page 6, the piano takes over the motive while the voice sings "flowers" on sustained pitches.

Motive 3 is the most apparent example of the use of a musical device to support E. E. Cummings' form. In the poem, the text "though love be a day" is brought back in each stanza in parenthesis and always occurs on the penultimate bar of the stanza. Walker uses the half note chords in the accompaniment to symbolize the two parentheses, and employs a simple speech-like rhythm to highlight the text. Because of the static nature of both the piano and vocal line for this phrase, the line of text always stands out in the music. In fact, each time this phrase is sung, the measures before and after are usually very rhythmically active, drawing even more attention to this musical moment. Since Walker chose to rearrange a few of the lines of the poetry in her music, Motive 3 does not always occur in the penultimate line of each verse. However, it does always appear towards the end of each verse.

In "though love be a day," Walker uses these four motives to reflect the organization the poetry. Motive 1 functions as a transition between the three verses, whether that be to close out a verse, introduce a new verse or be an interlude. Motive 2 serves to transition between simple meters and compound meters, allowing those transitions to be seamless. Motive 3 is used to support the

punctuation and location of the repeated line of poetry “though love be a day.”

Motive 4 is used to text paint the petals of flowers and the coquettish nature of the female character in this song.

## CHAPTER V

### ANALYSIS OF "II: LILY HAS A ROSE"

The poetry for "*lily has a rose*" is organized into five stanzas of four lines each. E. E. Cummings uses parentheses and quotations throughout this poem to portray this conversation between the two characters, lily and violet. The first two lines of the poem are spoken by violet and directed to the reader. The following two lines within quotations are lily's response to violet's statement. The second through fourth stanzas are the conversation between the two girls, with violet speaking in stanzas two and four and lily responding in stanza three. The final stanza is text spoken by violet to the reader.

#### lily has a rose

lily has a rose  
(i have none)  
"don't cry dear violet  
you may take mine"

"o how how how  
could i ever wear it now  
when the boy who gave it to  
you is the tallest of the boys"

"he'll give me another  
if i let him kiss me twice  
but my lover has a brother  
who is good and kind to all"

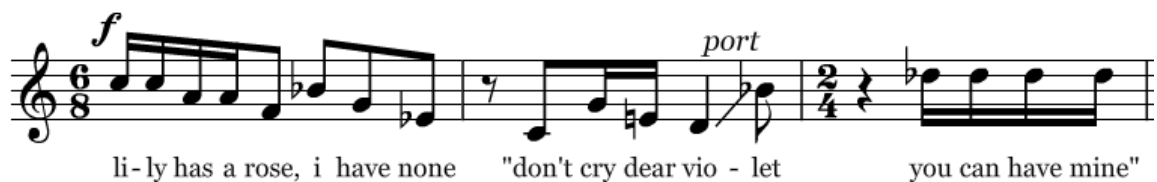
“o no no no  
let the roses come and go  
for kindness and goodness do  
not make a fellow tall”

lily has a rose  
no rose i’ve  
and losing’s less than winning (but  
love is more than love)

One is able to differentiate between which girl is speaking and to whom while looking at the printed poem, however this is more challenging when listening to a reading of it. Walker provides musical clues in her setting to distinguish between the two girls and guide the audience through the form of this poem. Generally speaking, violet’s text in the vocal line is set to smaller intervals, primarily seconds and thirds, while lily’s dialogue spans larger musical intervals, often fourths and fifths. According to the text, violet appears to be a feebler character compared to lily. When the poetry starts, violet is crying because she has no rose, and later refuses to wear the new rose she received. Lily, on the other hand, seems to be a stronger character, willing to allow a boy to kiss her twice in order to fetch violet a new rose. Perhaps the intervals provided for each girl are in an effort to reflect this disparity in their personalities. In addition to interval differentiation, each character is assigned general tonal areas and specific pitches in order to assist the listener through the conversation.

The brief introduction of staccato eighth and sixteenth notes arpeggiates various chords including F major, E-flat major, D major and B minor. Similar to the

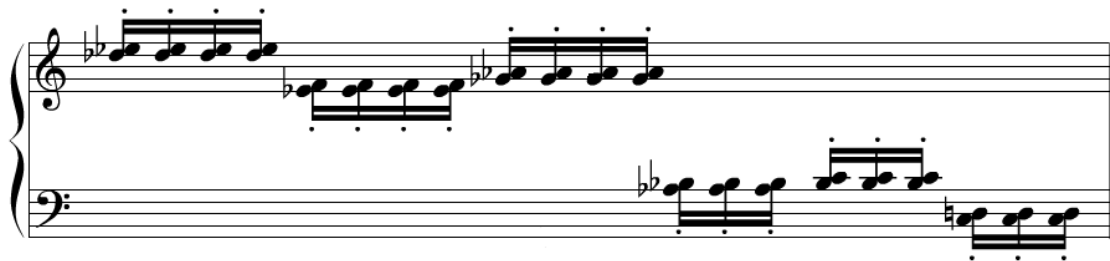
previous song in the cycle, “lily has a rose” starts without a time signature or key signature. The vocal line enters in measure 2 while the time signature of 6/8 is established. While speaking as violet, the singer outlines a descending F-major triad followed by a descending E-flat major triad to the text “lily has a rose, I have none.” In the next measure, the singer responds as lily with the text “don’t cry dear violet,” which outlines a C-major triad and then slides up a minor sixth from D 4 to B-flat 4. In measure 4, the singer, still embodying lily, offers “you can have mine” on D-flat 5. In just this first stanza of poetry, Walker lays the melodic groundwork for the rest of the piece. Note the smaller intervals of major and minor thirds that are associated with violet’s text juxtapose with the larger interval of a minor sixth connected to lily’s text in the following measure. Finally, this association of D-flat 5 with lily’s text at the end of the system will become important as the song progresses - this pitch will continue to be associated with lily’s comments.



**Figure 6. “lily has a rose,” mm. 2-4.**

Walker provides a short piano interlude which functions as a segue into the second stanza of poetry. This interlude is comprised of major seconds that are set as repeated, staccato sixteenth notes. These sixteenths begin as groups of four, leaping

around the staff before switching to groups of three. This interlude is intended to represent both lily and violet – perhaps a conversation between the two girls. The major second is lily’s interval and the wide leaps signify violet. A similar motive occurs in measure 24. Below is an example of the first interlude.



**Figure 7. “lily has a rose,” mm. 5.**

After this transition, the music in measure 6 is in A Aeolian with a time signature of 2/4. The *piano* accompaniment contrasts the *mezzo forte* vocal line in measures 7 through 13. The vocal line alternates between E 4 and G 4, with the exception of measure 13. Since violet is represented by smaller intervals, this minor third reminds the listener which girl is speaking.

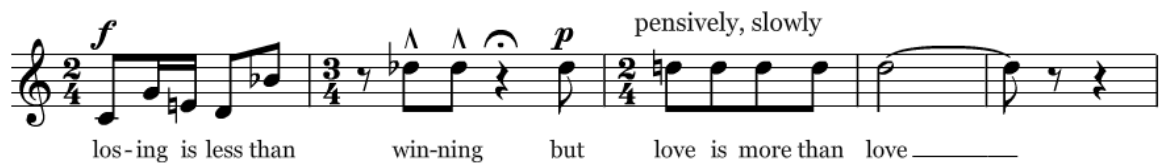
There is a brief three-measure interlude, where the right hand of the piano plays the same music from the vocal line in measures 2 through 4 (Figure 6). The third stanza of poetry begins in measure 17 when lily exclaims “he’ll give me another if I let him kiss me twice.” This text is set to repeated sixteenth-notes on D-flat 5 in measure 17. Then, at the bottom of page 10 (page 73 in this document), larger intervals appear, as the singer descends fifths for “but my lover has a brother”

before returning to the D flat 5 for “good and kind to all.” This repeated use of D-flat 5 with the larger intervals of descending fifths are intended to signify that lily is speaking at this time.

In measure 24 the interlude of repetitive major seconds, originally found in measure 5, functions as a transition from the third to the fourth stanza of poetry. (see Figure 7) Again, these major seconds set in various registers are meant to represent the two characters. The minor third comprised of E 4 and G 4 returns for violet’s text in measures 25 through 33. This is musically identical to measures 7 through 13, with the notable exception of the octave leap set to the word “tall” in measure 25. The composer calls for a *portamento* from B 4 to B 5 as text painting for this word. Although this large leap is uncharacteristic for violet’s text, the alternating thirds have already established that violet is speaking. Therefore, when this octave leap arrives, it is clearly an instance of text painting and does not confuse the listener.

For the final stanza of poetry, the composer uses the same melodic motive that was used in the first stanza so that the vocal line outlines F-major triads and E-flat major triads. For the final two lines of text, it’s unclear if this text belongs to lily or violet in the original poem. The text “losing is less than winning” is melodically identical to the setting of lily’s text “don’t cry dear violet” from the first page of the song, with the notable exception that the phrase ends on D-flat 5 for the word “winning.” Due to the identical melody and the prominent D-flat 5, the music infers that this is lily’s line of poetry. The last line of the poem is in parenthesis, likely used

to signify that a different character is speaking. To support this idea, Walker includes a fermata over a rest before having the voice line ascend to a D 5 (natural). The half-step ascent cancels out the D-flat in the previous measure and the fermata over the rest highlights the parentheses E. E. Cummings included in his poem. These elements combined emphasize the likelihood that Violet is speaking this last line of text as an aside to the audience. Walker is being conscious of context, Kidder's seventh rule of interpreting Cummings' poetry.<sup>62</sup>



**Figure 8. "lily has a rose," mm. 41-45.**

The composer's setting of this poem assists the audience in comprehending the general form and clarifies which character is speaking to whom. Walker assigns smaller intervals to violet, larger intervals to lily, specific pitches to each girl, and reuses musical ideas for interludes. Additionally, the composer is sensitive to punctuation and utilizes text painting to further guide the audience through this poem.

---

<sup>62</sup> Kidder, 14.



## CHAPTER VI

### ANALYSIS OF "III: AFTER ALL WHITE HORSES ARE IN BED"

Of the E. E. Cummings poems that Gwyneth Walker uses for this song cycle, "after all white horses are in bed" is the only poem she does not use in its entirety. Below is the original poem by E. E. Cummings, published in 1926 as part of his collection of poetry entitled *is 5*.

#### after all white horses are in bed

after all white horses are in bed

will you walking beside me, my very lady,  
if scarcely the somewhat city  
wiggles in considerable twilight

touch(now)with a suddenly unsaid

gesture lightly my eyes?  
And send life out of me and the night  
absolutely into me....a wise  
and puerile moving of your arm will  
do suddenly that

will do  
more than heroes beautifully in shrill  
armour colliding on huge blue horses,  
and the poets looking at them, and made verses,  
through the sharp light cryingly as the knights flew.

With the permission of the publisher, Walker extracted and set part of the poem, focusing on six lines found in the earlier portion of the poem. She rearranges these selected lines of poetry to create a slightly different aesthetic than the original E. E. Cummings poem. In fact, one of Rushworth Kidder's rules for interpreting E. E. Cummings poetry instructs the reader to rearrange words within lines as needed. Although Walker removed lines for her musical setting, she also reorganized certain words and maintained the integrity of the original poem.<sup>63</sup> Below are the excerpted lines that Walker uses.

after all white horses are in bed

after all white horses are in bed  
will you walking beside me, my very lady,  
touch lightly my eyes  
and send life out of me  
and the night absolutely into me

In a review of this piece from 1997, Judith Carman mentions this song contains "much word repetition (for reasons of musical structure and form)."<sup>64</sup> "after all white horses are in bed" was later arranged for both solo voice and guitar as well as SATB choir and piano. Both arrangements maintain the integrity of the original version for high voice and piano, therefore this analysis will focus on the initial composition for solo voice. However, in Vicki Lynn Burrichter's dissertation

---

<sup>63</sup> Kidder, 12.

<sup>64</sup> Judith Carman, "Music Reviews: 'Though Love Be a Day. Five Songs for High Voice on Poems by E. E. Cummings and Gwyneth Walker,' by Gwyneth Walker," *Journal of Singing: The Official Journal of the National Association of Teachers of Singing* 54, no2 (Nov 1997): 73.

entitled “The Choral Music of Gwyneth Walker: An Overview,” she includes a detailed chart, that provides a breakdown of the tonality, motivic ideas and various comments for the SATB version of this piece.<sup>65</sup> These repeated text and melodic motives serve a larger purpose and support the story of the poetry. In this edition for solo voice, Walker transforms these repetitions into various tonal areas, to portray one character’s journey (the knight) as he searches for the other character in the poem (the lady). Keeping the same text attached to consistent melodic ideas allows the audience to shift their attention from the words, and instead focus on the musical journey represented by the shifting tonalities.

Before discussing this musical journey, it is necessary to identify and describe the three main motives and their accompanying text. For the purpose of this paper, the first two systems of the piece will be labeled as measure 1, and traditional measure numbers will start at the beginning of the last system of the first page, (page 76 in this document) starting with measure 2.

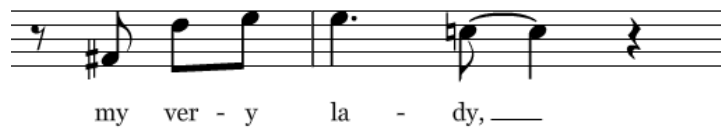
Motive 1 occurs with the text “My Very Lady.” The first time this text is sung, the vocal line leaps up a minor sixth followed by a whole step, and eventually falls a major third. At other times, this minor sixth ascent is replaced by an octave. Rhythmically, the text of “my very” is comprised of either eighth notes or quarter notes while the word “lady” is usually placed on a dotted quarter followed by a tied eighth to another quarter. Although there are slight melodic and rhythmic

---

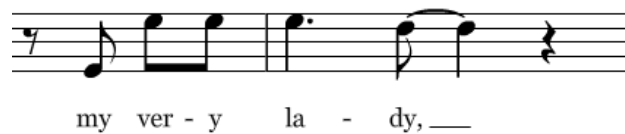
<sup>65</sup> Burrichter, 18.

differences between the various iterations of this text, the phrase shape stays consistent. An increase in rhythmic activity during “my very” accompanies a large ascent in pitch, while “lady” coincides with a deceleration of rhythmic activity and a descent of a smaller interval. Additionally, excepting one instance, the word “lady” always includes the pitch E 5 in the vocal line. Below are initial instances of this rhythmic and melodic motive.

**Motive 1:**



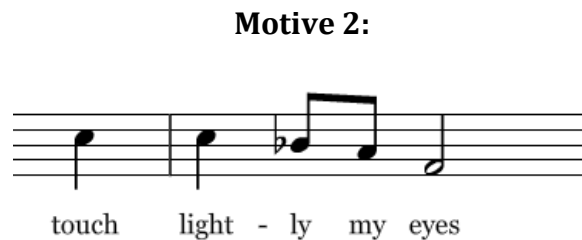
**Figure 9. “after all white horses are in bed,” mm. 7-8.**



**Figure 10. “after all white horses are in bed,” mm. 35-36.**

Motive 2 corresponds to the phrase “touch lightly my eyes.” The melody in the vocal line is the same each time, but is transposed according to the tonal area of that verse. The word “touch” and first syllable of the word “lightly” always occur on the same pitch before descending stepwise two steps and falling a major third. Rhythmically, the motive always consists of two quarter notes followed by two eighth notes that lead to a half note. Metrically, this motive always begins on the

fourth beat of one measure and leads into the downbeat of the next. The first example of Motive 2 is shown below in Figure 11:



**Figure 11. “after all white horses are in bed,” mm. 9-10.**

The final text and musical relationship, labeled Motive 3, occur during the phrase “white horses are in bed.” There are two versions of this musical gesture with the difference occurring in the final two pitches of the vocal line. In both instances, the first portion of the musical gesture outlines a descending minor chord for the text “white horses are.” In the first iteration of this motive, found in measures 2 through 4, the descending minor chord for “white horses are” outlines an F-Sharp minor triad while the pitches set to the text “in bed” leap up to D 5 before descending back to B 4. Therefore the music in this phrase is in E Mixolydian, with the scale degrees 5, 6, 4, 2, 7 and 5 aligning to the text “white horses are in bed.” Since this music is written in the Mixolydian mode which includes a lowered scale degree 7, there will not be truly Authentic Cadences. Therefore this motion from D 5 to B 4 or scale degrees 7 to 5 mimics an Imperfect Authentic Cadence. In the second version of this musical gesture, the phrase is transposed down a half step (from E Mixolydian to E-flat Mixolydian) and the final two pitches are displaced by an octave

(changed from D 5 to D-flat 4) and a fifth (changed from B 4 to E-flat 4). Therefore, the scale degrees that are outlined in the second version of this motive are 5, 6, 4, 2, 7, and 1, with that 7 to 1 motion in the vocal line imitating a Perfect Authentic Cadence.

**Motive 3:**



**Figure 12. “after all white horses are in bed,” mm. 2-4.**



**Figure 13. “after all white horses are in bed,” mm. 17-19.**

Walker explains in an analysis that she “has selected as lyrics several lines of the poem which suggest imagery of a knight on a white horse, the lady (on her pedestal) who is worshipped from afar, and nighttime...”<sup>66</sup> Since these lines of text are focused on description of characters and setting, the composer uses these three musical and textual motives to depict her music in telling the story of the knight searching for the lady.

---

<sup>66</sup> Gwyneth Walker, “White Horses,” Gwyneth Walker – Composer, <http://www.gwynethwalker.com/whitehor.html> (accessed May 12, 2014).

The opening of “after all white horses are in bed” lacks both a key signature and time signature, similar to the beginning of the first piece in this song cycle. Even so, the sparse stacked piano chords suggest a tonal centricity of E. For example, the first arpeggiated chord suggests scale degrees 1, 2, 5, and 3 in the key of E major, followed by scale degrees 1, 2, 6 and 4. As the piano introduction continues from the end of the first line into the second line, Walker explains that the melodic activity found in this higher register “might function to transport the listener away from present day reality and into night and the past.”<sup>67</sup> On the second line of the page at the end of the introduction in measure 1, a time signature of 4/4 is established and this new meter leads the song into the first verse.

This piece is loosely organized into three verses, each beginning with Motive 3. In between each verse, there is a short piano interlude. The three verses signify different portions of the knight’s search for his lady. The first is used to set the scene, the second verse and interlude represent the knight’s ongoing quest while the third verse provides the reunion between the knight and his lady. The various tonal areas and key signatures the music passes through are representative of the knight’s journey as he searches for his lady.

The first verse begins in measure 2 at the bottom of page 13 (page 76 in this document). The entry of the vocal line is firmly rooted in E Mixolydian. (See Figure 12). The piano matches that of the introduction only it is displaced down by one

---

<sup>67</sup> Gwyneth Walker, “White Horses,” Gwyneth Walker – Composer, <http://www.gwynethwalker.com/whitehor.html> (accessed May 12, 2014).

octave. This line of text, “after all white horses are in bed,” supplies the listener with the time of day.

In measures 7 to 8 on page 14 (page 77 in this document), the text “my very lady” (Motive 1) coincides with a harmonic transition away from E Mixolydian. This introduction to Motive 1 marks the beginning of the knight’s search for the lady. In the prior measures during the text “will you walking beside me,” the piece is firmly rooted in E Mixolydian. As mentioned earlier in this chapter, a portion of the phrase “my very lady” will always be set to the pitch E 4 and as anticipated, the vocal line climbs to E 5 for the syllables “-y” and “la-.” The following descent from E 5 to C 5 symbolizes the beginning of the knight’s search since this C-natural in the vocal line in combination with the piano accompaniment also rooted in C major provides a stark contrast from the extraordinarily distantly related mode of E Mixolydian the measure before.

In measures 9 and 10, both iterations of the text “touch lightly my eyes” (Motive 2) outline F major in the vocal line. In measures 11 and 12, the piano shifts to lush, large rolled chords that lack any tonal area. The chant-like setting of the text “and send life out of me and the night absolutely into me” continues to reference F major above these ambiguous rolled chords. This is the only instance this text appears in this piece and the rather extreme shift in piano texture combined with a lack of tonal area supports the idea that the knight is unsure of where he should search in order to find his lady. The second version Motive 3 (“after all white horses are in bed”) arrives a few measures later in measures 17 through 19, with the vocal



line in E-flat Mixolydian (see Figure 13) supported by D-flat major and E-flat major chords in the accompaniment as the first verse comes to a close.

A brief piano interlude transports the piece back to E Mixolydian for the beginning of the second verse in the middle of page 15 (page 78 in this document). During that interlude, the song briefly visits the tonal areas of D-flat major, A-flat major and D major before returning to E Mixolydian. The knight is desperately searching for his lady and these chords and tonal areas listed (E-flat, D-flat, A-flat and D) are “places” he has searched but not found her. At the beginning of the second verse in measure 23, the vocal line brings the listener back to E Mixolydian, representing the knight returning to the place where he started. This time, however, the knight begins to search in a different direction.

In measure 29 during Motive 1 (“my very lady”), the pitches fall a fourth from E 5 to B 4, rather than from E 5 to C 5 in measure 8. In the next phrase, the text “touch lightly my eyes” (Motive 2) outlines E major in the vocal line (as opposed to F major in the previous verse) while the piano references C-sharp minor. While the vocal line repeats the word “touch” at *piano* and *pianissimo* dynamics, the accompaniment also becomes sparse. These elements combine to create a tender musical moment, intended to represent the knight’s vulnerability. Motive 1 returns in the third and fourth systems of page 16 (page 79 in this document). As anticipated, the pitch E 5 representing the lady and her location always occurs in the vocal line, but the phrase is transformed slightly each time.

Page 17 (page 80 in this document) leads to a longer piano interlude, this time visiting F major, E-flat major, D minor, A minor, G minor and B-flat minor chords. As the third verse begins in measure 3, the vocal line arrives in E-flat Mixolydian for the text “after all white horses are in bed.” This contrasts with the E Mixolydian entrances of the prior two verses and ends up being the farthest tonal center the knight visits during his quest. The text “my very lady” is repeated twice at the top of page 18 (page 81 in this document) and the music passes through B major, G-sharp minor and C-sharp minor chords. The knight is getting frantic and the statement of “my very lady” in measures 59 and 60 reflects this: the pitch E 5, this time replaced with an E-flat 5. This is quickly rectified by the second instance of “my very lady” which ends on E 5.

In measures 63 and 64, the piano transitions from running eighth notes to rolled chords. The vocal line outlines A major for the text Motive 2 while the piano references F-sharp minor. This phrase is repeated three times and in the measures of rest in the vocal line, the accompaniment has running eighth notes that wedge-in, outlining B Dorian. In the third and final instance of the text “touch lightly my eyes,” the singer leaps from an A 4 to an A 5 on the word “eyes.” The piano supports the grand gesture with sweeping eighth notes, eventually ending in A major in order to match the vocal line. This single instance of A major represents the location of the lady. After searching through numerous tonal centers, the knight is reunited with his lady in the final line of this piece in A major.

Burrichter mentions in her document that an underlying story line may have been Walker's goal. She states that the potential key to Walker's understanding of the poem is that "after 'knights' on their 'white horses' .... Have faded into fantasy, the speaker will remain with his 'lady.'"<sup>68</sup> Burrichter also identifies the three motives discussed in this chapter, but does not draw conclusions as to how their various transformations could be considered a portion of the knight's journey searching for his lady. The pitch E 5 is intended to represent the lady. By using the three textual and melodic motives but transposing them into various tonal areas, Walker guides the listener through the knight's journey, which ranges widely from E Mixolydian to F major to E-flat Mixolydian, before finally reuniting with his lady in the final tonal area, A major.

---

<sup>68</sup>Burrichter, 18.

## CHAPTER VII

### ANALYSIS OF "IV: MAGGIE AND MILLY AND MOLLY AND MAY"

"maggie and milly and molly and may" is the penultimate song in Gwyneth Walker's cycle *though love be a day* and the final song using poetry by E. E.

Cummings. Below is the original poem:

maggie and milly and molly and may

maggie and milly and molly and may  
went down to the beach(to play one day)

and maggie discovered a shell that sang  
so sweetly she couldn't remember her troubles,and

milly befriended a stranded star  
whose rays five languid fingers were;

and molly was chased by a horrible thing  
which raced sideways while blowing bubbles:and

may came home with a smooth round stone  
as small as a world and as large as alone.

For whatever we lose(like a you or a me)  
it's always ourselves we find in the sea

This poem is clearly divided into six stanzas each containing 2 lines. This is the least lyrical of the set and is very rhythmic, percussive and, at times, speech-like. In order to further support this interesting poetic organization, Walker often includes short piano interludes of varying length between the stanzas. This assists

the listener in “hearing” the form of 6 stanzas of 2 lines. It also is in keeping with Richard Kidder’s first rule of interpreting Cummings’ poetry, which is to “treat each stanza as a separate syntactical unit.”<sup>69</sup>

This song is set in 12/8 and contains a four bar piano introduction. In the first measure, only a bass note is provided on each strong beat. In the second measure, a tenor note is added and so on until the fourth measure, where there are four pitches. The vocal line enters in measure 4, setting the scene and with the first two lines of poetry. In the second line of poetry, “to play one day” is in parenthesis. Gwyneth Walker sets these words to a very disjunct vocal line and eliminates the staccato eighth note chords in the piano. The preferential treatment to this preposition within the parentheses aligns with Kidder’s sixth rule for interpreting E. Cummings poetry: “Treat parenthesis carefully.”<sup>70</sup>

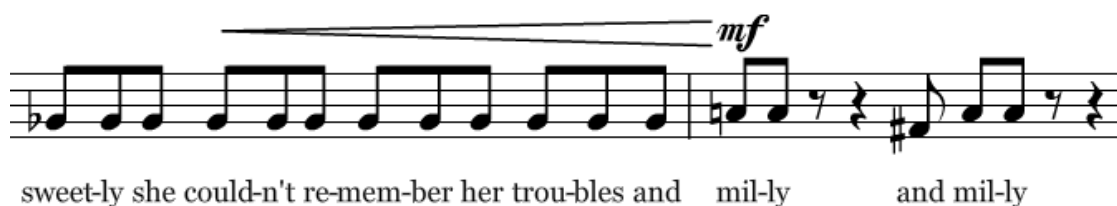
The musical score for measures 5 and 6 of "maggie and milly and molly and may" is shown. It is in 12/8 time and marked *p* (piano). The vocal line (treble clef) has the lyrics: "maggie and milly and molly and may went down to the beach to play one day". The piano accompaniment (grand staff) features eighth notes in the right hand and chords in the left hand. The lyrics "to play one day" are enclosed in parentheses in the original image.

**Figure 14. “maggie and milly and molly and may,” mm. 5-6.**

<sup>69</sup> Kidder, 11.

<sup>70</sup> Kidder, 13.

After a brief piano interlude, the second stanza of poetry begins with a pickup to measure 8 at the bottom of page 19 (page 82). The vocal line suggests A-flat Mixolydian since the text “and maggie discovered a shell that sang” climbs up scale degrees 1, 2, 3 and 4 before settling on G-flat 4 for “sweetly she couldn’t remember her troubles; and.” In the E. E. Cummings poem, this line ends with the word “and,” which is used to connect the second stanza to the third stanza. Walker uses an enharmonic equivalent to portray in the music that “and” is actually located at the end of the second stanza but can be interpreted as part of the third stanza. At the end of measure 9, the word “and” is included in the repeated eighth notes on G-flat 4. In measure 10, Walker sets “milly” on A 4 on the downbeat. As a pickup into beat three of that same measure, Walker repeats the text “and milly,” however this time, “and” is set to F-Sharp 4 before ascending to A 4. The transition from the function of the G-flat 4 to the F-sharp 4 is noticeable to the listener at this moment, as this pitch transitions from the seventh scale degree in the A-flat Mixolydian in the vocal line, to the tonic in measures 10 and 11.



**Figure 15. “maggie and milly and molly and may,” mm. 9-10.**

As the poetry discusses milly and the starfish, the piano accompaniment shifts from the repeated staccato eighth note pulses to arpeggios and block chords. The piano and vocal line are still in F-Sharp minor in measure 11, as the vocal line slowly ascends up, starting on scale degree 6 before passing through scale degrees 1, 2 and 3. At the end of this third stanza, E. E. Cummings wrote a semicolon after the word “were” while the word “and” is attached to the fourth stanza. In order to honor the semicolon and highlight the differing location of the word “and” in this stanza, Walker adjusts the piano. The brief interlude introduces running eighth notes that climb and descend the first four scale degrees of the D-flat Lydian mode. Not only is this a tonal area the piece has not visited yet, but the running eighth notes are also a new addition to the texture.

At the arrival of the fourth stanza, Walker arranged for this text to be spoken in rhythm, rather than sung. Bethany Dumas raises an important point about these lines of poetry in her book entitled *E. E. Cummings: A Remembrance of Miracles*. Dumas states “The fourth couplet... that about molly, is the only one which has neither true rhyme nor imperfect rhyme; it thus emphasizes the disharmony of molly’s soul.”<sup>71</sup> The combination of the running eighth notes in the piano set against the spoken text highlight the lack of rhyme and frenetic nature of the text.

E. E. Cummings arranged this last line of this stanza similar to the second stanza. The word “and” is arranged so that it is connected to “bubbles” by a colon

---

<sup>71</sup> Dumas, 104.

without a space between. Walker reflects this poetic decision in measures 15 and 16. The running octave eighth notes in the piano begin to ascend in measure 15 and end their climb in the third beat of measure 16. The vocal line cuts out on the fourth beat of measure 15. As the last two pitches of the eighth note motive are played in the accompaniment, the vocal line matches the rhythm by speaking “and may” simultaneously. This pause in the vocal line is representative of the colon, while speaking “and may” signifies to the listener that the focus is about to shift from molly to may, as the poetry moves from the fourth to the fifth stanza.

**Figure 16. “maggie and milly and molly and may,” mm. 15-16.**

Measure 17 starts with a piano interlude comprised of musical material similar to that of the introduction. The vocal line introducing the fifth stanza of poetry begins at measure 19 with melodic material that matches the first stanza found in measures 5 and 6. At the end of the first stanza, Walker needed to set parenthesis and chose to remove piano accompaniment to highlight the wide ranged vocal line (See Figure 14). However, in this verse, there are no parentheses, so the



piano supports the vocal line by playing a dotted half note D-flat major chord in first inversion. Additionally, Tana Field-Bartholomew points out an instance of text painting, explaining, “the word ‘large’ is painted by a leap to a high G-flat, the highest note within the phrase.”<sup>72</sup> The combination of ascending leap, the shift to quarter-note rhythms, and the block chord in the accompaniment all contribute to the immediate sense of expansiveness. Below is measure 20 so it may be compared to measure 6.

The image shows a musical score for measure 20. It consists of two systems. The first system is a single staff with a vocal line. It begins with a 'rit.' marking and a dashed line above the staff. The notes are: G4, A4, B4, C5, D5, E5, F5, G5. A horizontal line above the staff indicates a leap from G4 to G5. The second system is a two-staff piano accompaniment. The upper staff has a 'rit.' marking and a dashed line above it. The notes are: G4, A4, B4, C5, D5, E5, F5, G5. The lower staff has a dotted half note chord: D4, F4, A4. A horizontal line above the upper staff indicates a leap from G4 to G5.

**Figure 17. “maggie and milly and molly and may,” mm. 20.**

In the final stanza of the story, the narrator stops telling the story of the girls’ trip to the beach and instead, speaks to the audience. Walker changes the musical mood entirely by drastically decreasing the rhythmic and melodic activity. This sixth stanza contains the only use of capitalization in this poem and it occurs at the very

<sup>72</sup> Field-Bartholomew, 27.

beginning of the line on the word “For.” At the end of measure 21, Walker removes the accompaniment entirely, includes a large breath mark in both the piano and vocal line, and has the vocal line enter with “for what-“ requesting the delivery be “slowly, pensively.” In measure 22, the piano is playing slow, bass-heavy chords *colla voce* and the singer is allowed to portray this vocal line in an open tempo due to the composer’s marking of “slowly” in the prior measure. These drastic musical changes highlight the shift in narrative purpose and unique punctuation in this final stanza.

slowly, pensively

for what - ev - er we lose like a you or a me it's

slowly

*colla voce*

**Figure 18. “maggie and milly and molly and may,” mm. 21-22.**

In order to not leave the song in this pensive place, Walker returns to the previous tempo at the end of this stanza with “Tempo I.” She borrows the first line of poetry and repeats it a few times, alternating it with a lighthearted staccato treble eighth note descent. The piece ends with the vocal line singing the text “and molly

and may” by leaping down a fourth from E 4 to B 3 while the piano descends stepwise from E3 and 2 to B 2 and 1.

Walker portrays this poem’s form by providing differing melodic and harmonic ideas for each stanza, including short piano interludes when necessary, and reflecting Cummings’ use of punctuation in the vocal and piano lines.

## CHAPTER VIII

### CONCLUSION

Gwyneth Walker's settings of E. E. Cummings' poetry in her song cycle *though love be a day* support the poetry's form and text. In the first song in the cycle, "Thy fingers make early flowers," Walker uses four motives to highlight repeated lines of text, bring out the flirtatious nature of the character, and guide the listener through the form of the poem. In "lily has a rose," the two characters are assigned specific pitches or intervals in order to help navigate the listener through the dialogue. During "after all white horses are in bed," Walker abandons her portrayal of poetic form and instead uses repeated melodic motives to shift the listener's focus from melodic to harmonic content – in this instance, the real conduit through which she tells the story of the poetry. In the final piece of the cycle, "maggie and milly and molly and may," the piano interludes support the breaks between the stanzas and specific musical devices highlight punctuation marks, including colons, semicolons and parenthesis.

In addition to navigating the listener through each song using the aforementioned harmonic and melodic devices, Walker also strives to establish this collection of songs as a cycle. As a unit, *though love be a day* provides an effective mechanism for exploring the many facets of human love. The E. E. Cummings poetry

references lust (“Thy fingers make early flowers”), romantic love (“after all white horses are in bed”), friendship, and even includes commentaries on types of loneliness (“maggie and milly and molly and may”). Some of these songs include specific, named characters (“lily has a rose” and “maggie and milly and molly and may”) while others focus on their specific aspects of love, removing characters all together (“after all white horses are in bed” and “Thy fingers make early flowers”).

In addition to the linking theme of various types of human love, Walker also references the prominence of the number five during her analysis of “Thy fingers make early flowers.” During an interview for her dissertation, Tara Field-Bartholomew received further clarifying information from Walker. Walker explains that although the title [to “Thy fingers make early flowers”] contains five words, there are five songs in the cycle, quintuplet motives appear in the first and last song in the cycle, this all happened subconsciously and no “extra meaning should be sought in these occurrences of the number 5.”<sup>73</sup>

In terms of organization and construction, “after all white horses are in bed” was the first poem selected for this cycle. Walker provides us with further details: “These words immediately suggested a musical setting as a love song. And this song became the centerpiece... of the cycle.”<sup>74</sup> Walker set “maggie and milly and molly and may” and “lily has a rose” as musical contrasts to the aforementioned piece. She

---

<sup>73</sup> Field-Bartholomew, 14.

<sup>74</sup> Field-Bartholomew, 8-9.

selected “Thy fingers make early flowers” as the opening for the cycle because it “beckons the listener to enter the romantic and playful world of E. E. Cummings” and included her own poem, “Still,” as the final piece in order “to provide an intense and powerful closing to the cycle.”<sup>75</sup>

Therefore, this set is considered a cycle due to the theme and content of the poetry and construction of the pieces. There are common musical elements found in these songs in this cycle, such as “wandering” from tonality, heavy use of diatonic modes, metrical freedom, and musical motives found in both the vocal line and piano. However, these are common elements to Gwyneth Walker’s musical style and therefore no linking musical materials can be found to connect the pieces of the cycle. The important musical elements discussed earlier that are unique to each song are intended to maintain the integrity of the poem.

Further questions arise after completion of this analysis. Does Walker also use specific melodic and harmonic ideas and tonal centers to further support and illustrate form and text in her choral works of E. E. Cummings? Walker’s compositions often include melodic gesture and texture as prime sources of organization;<sup>76</sup> therefore, are these devices mentioned in this paper similarly prevalent or necessary when setting poetry with more standard or grammatically correct text? These musical gestures are common elements in her compositional

---

<sup>75</sup> Field-Bartholomew, 9.

<sup>76</sup> *Grove Music Dictionary Online*, s.v. “Walker, Gwyneth Van Anden,” <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com:80/subscriber/article/grove/music/2022301> (accessed May 16, 2014)

style, so do these further enhance her settings of other poets? These questions are outside the scope of this discussion and further research can be done in order to ascertain the answers.

This is the first song cycle by Gwyneth Walker published for solo voice. Since its publication in 1979, Walker's catalogue of pieces for solo voice has grown substantially. Although this is one of her earliest compositions, it is one of great musical insight and thought and remains an accurate representation of the composer's musical style.

## REFERENCES

- Brooks, Gene. "An Interview with Gwyneth Walker." *Choral Journal* 39:7 (February 1999): 21-27. *Gwyneth Walker – Composer*.  
<http://www.gwynethwalker.com/walkinf5.html> (accessed April 24, 2014).
- Burrichter, Vicki Lynne. "The Choral Music of Gwyneth Walker: An Overview." DMA diss., University of Northern Colorado, 2003. In ProQuest Dissertations and Theses,  
<http://search.proquest.com/pqdtft/docview/305315431/1B46867E6D4B4905PQ/1?accountid=14604> (Accessed April 26, 2014).
- Carman, Judith. "Music Reviews: 'Though Love Be a Day. Five Songs for High Voice on Poems by e. e. cummings and Gwyneth Walker,' by Gwyneth Walker." *Journal of Singing – The Official Journal of the National Association of Teachers of Singing* 45.2 (November 1997): 73-74.
- Cooman, Carson P. "Gwyneth Walker: An American Original: An Introduction to Her Work." *Gwyneth Walker – Composer*.  
<http://www.gwynethwalker.com/walkinfa.html> (accessed May 16, 2014).
- Cummings, E. E. *is 5*. Boni & Liveright, 1926.
- Cummings, E. E. *Complete Poems, 1904 – 1962*. Edited by George J. Firmage. New York, NY: Liveright Publishing Corporation, 1994.
- Dumas, Bethany K. *E. E. Cummings: A Remembrance of Miracles*. New York: Harper & Row Publishers, 1974.
- Edwards, J. Michele. "Walker, Gwyneth Van Anden." In *Grove Music Online*. *Oxford Music Online*.  
<http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/202230> (accessed May 16, 2014).
- "E. E. Cummings." *Poetry Foundation* <http://poetryfoundation.org/bio/e-e-cummings> (accessed May 14, 2014).



- Field-Bartholomew, Tana Rene. "A performer's guide to the songs of Gwyneth Walker." DMA diss., University of Cincinnati, 2007.  
<http://search.proquest.com/docview/304887646?accountid=14604>  
 (accessed April 27, 2014)
- Friedman, Norman. *E. E. Cummings: The Art of His Poetry*. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1960.
- Friedman, Norman. *E. E. Cummings: The Growth of a Writer*. Carbondale and Edwardsville: Southern Illinois University Press, 1964.
- Griffiths, Paul. "Cummings, E. E." *Grove Music Online: Oxford Music Online*.  
<http://oxfordmusiconline.subscriber/article/grove/music/A2083886>  
 (accessed May 19, 2014).
- "Gwyneth Walker." *Vermont PBS*. Online Video Clip. May 10, 2010.  
<http://www.vpt.org/learn/vpt-productions/profile/913-gwyneth-walker>  
 (accessed May 20, 2014)
- Jarrell, Randall. *The Third Book of Criticism*. New York: Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 1969.
- Kennedy, Richard S. "E. E. Cummings," *Modern American Poetry*.  
[http://www.english.illinois.edu/maps/poets/a\\_f/Cummings/Cummings\\_life.htm](http://www.english.illinois.edu/maps/poets/a_f/Cummings/Cummings_life.htm)  
 (accessed Dec 29, 2014).
- Kennedy, Richard S. *Dreams in the Mirror: A Biography of E. E. Cummings*. New York: Livewright Publishing Corporation, 1980.
- Kidder, Rushworth M. *E. E. Cummings: An Introduction to the Poetry*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1979.
- Kostelanetz, Richard. *The Old Poetries and the New*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1981.
- Locklin, Gerald. "The Influence of Cummings on Selected Contemporary Poets."  
*Spring: The Journal of the E. E. Cummings Society*. no 2 (1993): 40-47.
- MacNeill, Roger. "Review of 'I Thank You God' (1998) for SSA Chorus and Piano."  
*Gwyneth Walker – Composer*. <http://www.gwynethwalker.com/walkinfc.html>  
 (accessed May 12, 2014).
- Maurer, Robert E. "Latter Day Notes on E. E. Cummings' Language." *Bucknell Review*  
 vol. 5, no. 3 (May 1955):

- Marks, Barry. *E. E. Cummings*. New York: Twayne Publishers, 1964.
- Pollack, Norma. "Poems of Cummings Set to Music." *The Journal of the E. E. Cummings Society*. Spring 4 (1995): 121-129.
- Poetry Foundation. "E. E. Cummings: Biography." Poetry Foundation. <http://www.poetryfoundation.org/bio/e-e-Cummings> (accessed May 14, 2014).
- Rockwell, John. "Rondi Charleston Wins Art Song Vocal Competition." *The New York Times*, May 6, 1990.
- Sawyer-Lauçanno, Christopher. *E. E. Cummings: A Biography*. Naperville: Sourcebooks, 2004.
- Walker, Gwyneth. "I Thank You God." Gwyneth Walker – Composer. <http://www.gwynethwalker.com/ithankyo.html> (accessed May 16, 2014).
- Walker, Gwyneth. "Still: A Musical Analysis by Gwyneth Walker," Gwyneth Walker – Composer. <http://www.gwynethwalker.com/ana/gw-still.pdf> (accessed May 12, 2014).
- Walker, Gwyneth. "Thoughts on American Music." Gwyneth Walker – Composer. <http://www.gwynethwalker.com/acda2012.html> (accessed May 20, 2014).
- Walker, Gwyneth. "'Thy fingers make early flowers' from *Though Love Be a Day*: A Musical Analysis by Gwyneth Walker." Gwyneth Walker – Composer. <http://www.gwynethwalker.com/ana/gw-thyf.pdf> (accessed May 12, 2014).
- Walker, Gwyneth. "Words and Music." Gwyneth Walker – Composer. <http://www.gwynethwalker.com/e-words.html> (accessed May 20, 2014).
- Walker, Gwyneth. "White Horses." Gwyneth Walker – Composer. <http://www.gwynethwalker.com/whitehor.html> (accessed May 12, 2014).
- Weber, Susan and Marcia Lee Goldberg. "An Interview with Gwyneth Walker." Gwyneth Walker – Composer. <http://www.gwynethwalker.com/webintv.html> (accessed May 20, 2014).

APPENDIX A  
MUSICAL SCORE

# though love be a day

Five Songs for High Voice and Piano on poems of E. E. Cummings and Gwyneth Walker

E. E. Cummings

Gwyneth Walker

## I Thy fingers make early flowers

slowly, quasi recitative *p*

The musical score consists of three systems, each with a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The first system begins with the tempo and dynamic markings 'slowly, quasi recitative' and '*p*'. The vocal line features a triplet of eighth notes and a five-note melodic phrase. The piano accompaniment starts with a *pp* dynamic and includes a triplet of eighth notes. The second system continues the vocal line with the lyrics 'thy hair most - ly the hours love' and includes a five-note melodic phrase. The piano accompaniment features a five-note melodic phrase. The third system includes the tempo marking '♩ = 72 (♩ = ♩) throughout' and the lyrics 'a smooth - ness which sings say - ing do not fear'. The piano accompaniment includes a five-note melodic phrase and a section marked '8va'.

Thy fin - gers make ear - ly flowers of all things

thy hair most - ly the hours love

a smooth - ness which sings say - ing do not fear

*pp*

♩ = 72 (♩ = ♩) throughout

8va

\* "Thy fingers make early flowers of". Copyright 1923, 1951, © 1991 by the Trustees for the E. E. Cummings Trust. Copyright © 1976 by George James Firmage, from COMPLETE POEMS: 1904-1962 by E. E. Cummings, edited by George J. Firmage. Used by permission of Liveright Publishing Corporation.  
 Music: © Copyright 1993 by E. C. Schirmer Music Company, for all countries. All Rights Reserved including recording and public performance for profit.  
 ECS Publishing | Boston, Massachusetts

*mf* do not fear *f* do not fear

*p* *mf* *f*

Detailed description: This system contains the first two measures of the piece. The vocal line begins with a whole rest, followed by a half note G4 (marked *mf*) and a half note A4 (marked *f*), with the lyrics "do not fear" and "do not fear" respectively. The piano accompaniment features a steady eighth-note pattern in the right hand and a more active bass line in the left hand. Dynamics range from *p* to *f*.

though love be a day we will go a -

*mf* *f*

Detailed description: This system contains measures 3 and 4. The vocal line continues with a quarter note B4 (marked *mf*) and a half note C5 (marked *f*), with the lyrics "though love be a day" and "we will go a -". The piano accompaniment continues with similar rhythmic patterns. A fermata is placed over the final note of the vocal line. Dynamics range from *mf* to *f*.

may - ing though love be a day we will go

*mf* *f*

Detailed description: This system contains measures 5 and 6. The vocal line continues with a quarter note D5 (marked *mf*) and a half note E5 (marked *f*), with the lyrics "may - ing" and "though love be a day we will go". The piano accompaniment continues with similar rhythmic patterns. Dynamics range from *mf* to *f*.

a - may - ing

Detailed description: This system contains measures 7 and 8. The vocal line continues with a quarter note F5 (marked *mf*) and a half note G5 (marked *f*), with the lyrics "a - may - ing". The piano accompaniment continues with similar rhythmic patterns. Dynamics range from *mf* to *f*.

mf  
thy

whit - est feet crisp - ly are stray - ing

play - ing whose strange - ness much says; sing - ing

for which girl art thou flow ers bring - ing

flow - - ers, flow - - ers

*mf*

bring - ing - - flow - - ers,

*f*

flow - - - ers bring - ing - - though love be a day

*p*

flow - - - ers bring - ing - -

*p*

quasi recitative

to be thy lips is a sweet thing

Ped. \*

and small \_\_\_\_\_ Death, Thee i call rich be-yond wish-ing if this thou catch,

else miss-ing and life be noth-ing, and life be noth-ing

*mf*

though love be a day \_\_\_\_\_ though love be a

*f*



day though love be a day

it shall not stop

kiss . . . ing

Red.

3' 20" \*

E. E. Cummings II

Gwyneth Walker

### lily has a rose

*♩ = 160*

*mf playfully* *p*

*f* *mf* *poco ped.*

*mf* *p*

li - ly has a rose, i have none "don't cry dear vio - let you can have mine"

o how how how could I ev - er wear it now

"lily has a rose". Copyright © 1958, 1986, 1991 by the Trustees for the E. E. Cummings Trust, from COMPLETE POEMS: 1904-1962 by E. E. Cummings, edited by George J. Firmage. Used by permission of Liveright Publishing Corporation.  
 Music: © Copyright 1993 by E. C. Schirmer Music Company, for all countries. All Rights Reserved including recording and public performance for profit.  
 ECS Publishing | Boston, Massachusetts

for the boy who gave it to you is the tall - est of boys

*8va*

This system contains a vocal line and piano accompaniment. The vocal line has a treble clef and a key signature of one flat. The piano accompaniment has a grand staff with treble and bass clefs. The lyrics are "for the boy who gave it to you is the tall - est of boys". The piano part features a melodic line in the right hand and a harmonic accompaniment in the left hand. A dynamic marking of *8va* is present above the piano part.

*loco*

*f*

This system features a piano solo. The vocal line is silent. The piano accompaniment has a grand staff. The tempo marking is *loco*. The dynamics include *f* (forte). The key signature remains one flat. The system concludes with a double bar line and a repeat sign.

*f*

"he'll give me an - oth - er if I let him kiss me twice,

*p*

This system contains a vocal line and piano accompaniment. The vocal line has a treble clef and a key signature of one flat. The piano accompaniment has a grand staff. The lyrics are "he'll give me an - oth - er if I let him kiss me twice,". The dynamics include *f* (forte) and *p* (piano). The system concludes with a double bar line and a repeat sign.

*p* *mf* *slowly*

twice, but my lov - er has a broth - er who is good and kind to

*mf*

This system contains a vocal line and piano accompaniment. The vocal line has a treble clef and a key signature of one flat. The piano accompaniment has a grand staff. The lyrics are "twice, but my lov - er has a broth - er who is good and kind to". The dynamics include *p* (piano), *mf* (mezzo-forte), and *slowly*. The system concludes with a double bar line and a repeat sign.

a tempo

all<sup>o</sup>

a tempo (♩=160)

8va ↓ Ped.

\*

(mf)

o no no no let the

ro - ses come and go for kind - ness and good - ness do not

port.

8va - - - - - 8va loco

(p)

*f*  
li - ly has a rose no rose i've,

*p*  
li - - ly has a rose no - - - - - rose have i

*f* *p* Pensively, slowly  
los - ing is less than win - ning but love is more than

a tempo  
love

Sra + Ped. \* 1' 40''

III

E. E. Cummings

Gwyneth Walker

after all white horses are in bed

slowly

*pp dolce, una corda*

*Ped. ad lib.*

*4:3*

*4:3*

*tre corde*

$\text{♩} = 88$  *p dolce*

af - ter all white hor - ses are in bed

*(pp)*

"after all white horses are in bed". Copyright 1926, 1954, © 1991 by the Trustees for the E. E. Cummings Trust. Copyright © 1985 by George James Firmage, from COMPLETE POEMS: 1904-1962 by E. E. Cummings, edited by George J. Firmage. Used by permission of Liveright Publishing Corporation. Music: © 1986, by Boosey & Hawkes, Inc. for all countries. Copyright assigned 1989, to E. C. Schirmer Music Company, a division of ECS Publishing, Boston, Massachusetts. All rights reserved. Made in U.S.A.

will you walk - ing be - side me, my ver - y

la - - dy, — touch light - ly my eyes

touch light - ly my eyes and send life out of me and the

night ab - so - lute - ly in - to me — af - ter all, af - ter all, af - ter

$\text{♩} = 108$

all white hor - ses are in bed

Ped. generously

*mf*

af - ter all white hor - ses are in bed

*mf*

8va

will you walk - ing be - side me, my ver - y

8va

8va





*loco*  
*p*  
*mf*  
Ped. generously

(l.h. over)

*mf*  
af - ter  
(l.h. over) Ped. \*

all, af - ter all, af - ter all white hor - ses are in bed

my ver - y la - dy, my ver - y

la - - - dy, touch light - ly my eyes, touch

light - ly my eyes, touch light - ly my eyes

*f*

*mf*

*dolce*

*p* slower

*pp*

3' 30'' \*

IV

E. E. Cummings

Gwyneth Walker

### maggie and millie and molly and may

*♩* = 120

*p* playfully

*p*

mag - gie and mil - ly and mol - ly and may went down to the beach to play one day

and mag - gie dis - cov - ered a shell that sang so

The musical score is written in 12/8 time with a tempo of quarter note = 120. It consists of four systems of music. The first system shows the piano introduction with a 'p' dynamic and the instruction 'playfully'. The second system continues the piano accompaniment. The third system introduces the vocal melody with a 'p' dynamic and lyrics: 'mag - gie and mil - ly and mol - ly and may went down to the beach to play one day'. The fourth system continues the vocal melody with lyrics: 'and mag - gie dis - cov - ered a shell that sang so'. The piano accompaniment continues throughout.

"maggie and millie and molly and may". Copyright © 1956, 1984, 1991 by the Trustees for the E. E. Cummings Trust, from COMPLETE POEMS: 1904–1962 by E. E. Cummings, edited by George J. Firmage. Used by permission of Liveright Publishing Corporation.  
 Music: © Copyright 1993 by E. C. Schirmer Music Company, for all countries. All Rights Reserved including recording and public performance for profit.  
 ECS Publishing | Boston, Massachusetts

*mf*

sweet - ly she could - n't re - mem - ber her trou - bles and mil - ly and mil - ly and

mil - ly be - friend - ed a strand - ed star whose rays five lan - guid fing - ers

*spoken*

were and mol - ly was chased by a hor - ri - ble thing which

raced side - ways while blow - ing bub - bles: and may

*p*  
and

*p*

rit. - - - - -

May come home with a smooth round stone as small as a world and as large as a -

rit. - - - - -

*f* *bb*

a tempo slowly, pensively

lone. for what - ev - er we lose like a you or a me it's

a tempo slowly

*f* *colla voce*

Tempo I

al - ways our - selves we find in the sea

Tempo I

Ped. \*

The first system of the musical score consists of a vocal line on a single staff and a piano accompaniment on two staves. The vocal line begins with a whole rest, followed by a quarter note G4, and then a quarter rest. The piano accompaniment features a complex harmonic texture with many accidentals, primarily flats and naturals, creating a dense, chromatic sound. The bass line starts with a whole note G2.

\* (no Ped.)

The second system continues the musical score. The vocal line has the lyrics "mag - gie and mil - ly and mol - ly and may" written below it. The piano accompaniment continues with its complex, chromatic texture. The bass line has a whole note G2.

*Red.*

\* (no Ped.)

The third system is identical to the second system, featuring the same vocal line with lyrics and piano accompaniment.

*Red.*

\*

The fourth system shows the vocal line with lyrics "mag - gie and mil - ly and mol - ly and may". The piano accompaniment is mostly silent, with a few notes appearing in the bass line towards the end of the system. A dynamic marking of *p* (piano) is present above the vocal line and below the piano accompaniment. The system concludes with a double bar line and a rehearsal mark "1' 15''".

APPENDIX B  
COPYRIGHT PERMISSION



# ECS PUBLISHING

E. C. Schirmer Music Company • Ione Press • Galaxy Music Corporation • Highgate Press

1727 Larkin Williams Road, Fenton, Missouri 63026

phone: 1-800-647-2117 fax 636-305-0100

e-mail: [office@ecspublishing.com](mailto:office@ecspublishing.com)

web: [www.ecspublishing.com](http://www.ecspublishing.com)

## Dissertation Permission

Permission is herewith granted to:

Caroline Oliveira  
3116 Pisgah Place Apt B  
Greensboro, NC 27455

for the reproduction of (the "Work"):

Publication Title:        Though Love Be a Day  
Composer/Author:        Gwyneth Walker  
Catalogue Number:       4319

I: "Thy fingers make early flowers of". Copyright 1923, 1951, © 1991 by the Trustees for the E. E. Cummings Trust. Copyright © 1976 by George James Firmage, from COMPLETE POEMS: 1904–1962 by E. E. Cummings, edited by George J. Firmage. Used by permission of Liveright Publishing Corporation.

II: "lily has a rose". Copyright © 1958, 1986, 1991 by the Trustees for the E. E. Cummings Trust, from COMPLETE POEMS: 1904–1962 by E. E. Cummings, edited by George J. Firmage. Used by permission of Liveright Publishing Corporation.

III: "after all white horses are in bed". Copyright 1926, 1954, © 1991 by the Trustees for the E. E. Cummings Trust. Copyright © 1985 by George James Firmage, from COMPLETE POEMS: 1904–1962 by E. E. Cummings, edited by George J. Firmage. Used by permission of Liveright Publishing Corporation. Music: © 1986, by Boosey & Hawkes, Inc. for for all countries. Copyright assigned 1989, to E. C. Schirmer Music Company.

IV: "maggie and millie and molly and may". Copyright © 1956, 1984, 1991 by the Trustees for the E. E. Cummings Trust, from COMPLETE POEMS: 1904–1962 by E. E. Cummings, edited by George J. Firmage. Used by permission of Liveright Publishing Corporation.

V: Copyright © 1993 by E. C. Schirmer Music Company, A division of ECS Publishing, Boston, MA. All rights reserved. Reprinted with permission.

All Music: © Copyright 1993 by E. C. Schirmer Music Company, A division of ECS Publishing, Boston, MA. All rights reserved. Reprinted with permission.

Print copyright line exactly as printed in the published score, including the line for the corresponding texts, using the above credit line on the dissertation copy.

Permission is hereby granted to Licensee to include the Work in the dissertation entitled *Gwyneth Walker's Use of Melodic Motive and Tonal Centricity to Depict E. E. Cummings' Poetry in the Cycle "Though Love Be A Day"* for the University of North Carolina at Greensboro (the "Institution"), under the agreed upon condition that the dissertation is never to be published, sold or distributed in any manner outside of the licensed Institution. Any intention to do so will require further authorization and licensing from ECS Publishing.

The following excerpts are permitted:

The fee for the above-identified use is **\$25.00**.

Projected date of completion: May 8, 2015

Date certificate issued: February 3, 2015

Authorized by:

Abi Enockson  
Copyrights Administrator

License #116296