

Huw Watkins

Four Sonnets

for tenor and piano

(2014)

ED 13726
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PREVIEW
Low Resolution

Commissioned by Barbara and Roy Hall

First Performance: 11 July 2014

Mark Padmore, tenor
Huw Watkins, piano
Cheltenham Music Festival 2014
Pittville Pump Room
Cheltenham, UK

Duration: c. 16 minutes

Also for male voice by Huw Watkins:

In my craft or sullen art (2007) for tenor and string quartet
Three Auden Songs (2008) for tenor and piano
Look Down, Fair Moon (2010-11) for baritone and

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I The Melancholy Year Is Dead with Rain

The melancholy year is dead with rain,
Drop after drop on every branch pursues,
From far away beyond the drizzled flues
A twilight saddens to the window pane,
And dimly thro' the chambers of the brain,
From place to place and gently touching, moves
My one and irrecoverable love's
Dear and lost shape one other time again,
So in the last of autumn for a day
Summer or summer's memory returns,
So in a mountain desolation burns
Some rich belated flower, and with the gray
Sick weather, in the world of rotting ferns
From out the dreadful stones it dies away.

Trumbull Stickney (1874-1904)

II Striving to sing glad songs, I but attain

Striving to sing glad songs, I but attain
Wild discords sadder than Grief's saddest tune,
As if an owl with his harsh screech should strain
To over-gratulate a thrush of June,
The nightingale upon its thorny spine,
Finds inspiration in the sullen croak,
The kindling dawn, the woe beside joyous din
Are inspiration to the songster's lark,
The seas are silent in the sunny calm,
Their anthem surges in the stormy gale,
The skies outroll no solemn oration,
Till they have heard the thunder's proclamation,
My mirth is born of tears, my gladness born
My grief is born of gladness, my pain

James Russell Lowell

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III Sonnet

I am in need of music that would flow
Over my fretful, feeling finger-tips,
Over my bitter-tainted, trembling lips,
With melody, deep, clear, and liquid-slow,
Oh, for the healing swaying, old and low,
Of some song sung to rest the tired dead,
A song to fall like water on my head,
And over quivering limbs, dream flushed to glow!

There is a magic made by melody:
A spell of rest, and quiet breath, and cool
Heart, that sinks through fading colors deep
To the subaqueous stillness of the sea,
And floats forever in a moon-green pool,
Held in the arms of rhythm and of sleep.

Elizabeth Bishop (1911-1979)

"Sonnet" [1928] from THE COMPLETE POEMS 1927-1979 by Elizabeth Bishop, ed. Mark Strand, © 1979
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IV How Can I Forget

That farewell voice of love is never
Yet I remember it and think of it with you
I see the place she spoke of, passing by
The flowers were blooming as her form drew
That voice is gone; what memory pleases
Loved but one moment, and the words
"Farewell" the winds repeat as they
Walking in silence through the
The wild flowers in the meadow
Bowed down as though they were
In this spot the flowers are the same
In scenes that are the same
Thus here the flowers are the same
I never forget

John Keats (1795-1821)

Huw Watkins

Four Sonnets

The Melancholy Year

Trumbull Stickney

Huw Watkins

Moderato $\text{♩} = 84$

Tenor

Piano

The musical score is presented in three systems. The first system shows the beginning of the piece with a Tenor staff and a grand staff for the Piano. The piano part starts with a forte (*f*) dynamic, followed by piano (*p*) dynamics. The Tenor staff has a whole rest. The second system begins with the lyrics 'The melancholy year' and features a mezzo-piano (*mp*) dynamic for the piano accompaniment. The third system continues the lyrics 'is dead with rain. Drop after drop' and includes dynamic markings of mezzo-forte (*mf*) and piano (*p*).

drop on eve - ry branch pur - sues.

mp *p*

This system contains measures 12 through 15. It features a vocal line in treble clef with lyrics and a piano accompaniment in grand staff. The piano part includes dynamic markings of *mp* and *p*.

16 *pp* From far a way be - yond the drizz -

mp

This system contains measures 16 through 19. It features a vocal line in treble clef with lyrics and a piano accompaniment in grand staff. The piano part includes dynamic markings of *pp* and *mp*.

20 *mf* *mp*

to A twi - light sad - dens to

mp *mf* *p* *mp*

This system contains measures 20 through 23. It features a vocal line in treble clef with lyrics and a piano accompaniment in grand staff. The piano part includes dynamic markings of *mp*, *mf*, *p*, and *mp*.

24 *p*
the win - dow pane. And dim

p *p* *mp*

28 thro' the cham - bers *mp*

mp *mp* *p*

in place and gen - tly touch - ing

mp *p* *mp*

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36

Moves _____ My one and ir - re - cove - ra - ble love's Dear _____

p

This system contains measures 36, 37, and 38. It features a vocal line with lyrics and a piano accompaniment. The piano part includes a dynamic marking of *p* (piano) at the beginning of measure 36. The music is in a key with one sharp (F#) and a 4/4 time signature.

39

_____ and lost _____ o - ther

This system contains measures 39 and 40. It continues the vocal line and piano accompaniment from the previous system. The piano part features a complex texture with arpeggiated figures and sustained chords.

p

_____ So in the

f *p*

And

This system contains measures 41 and 42. It features a vocal line and piano accompaniment. The piano part includes dynamic markings of *f* (forte) and *p* (piano). The system concludes with a double bar line and the word "And" written below the piano staff.