

RAINDROP SONG

for
SSA chorus
with piano

by
Steven
Paxton

poetry by
Chris Willerton



CREATIVE SPIRIT

CHRIS WILLERTON is emeritus professor of Literature and Honors Studies at Abilene Christian University. In a 40-year career he taught creative writing, English and World Literature, and humanities, directed a reading circuit, and founded the ACU Honors College. His poems have appeared in numerous journals and anthologies. He studied at TCU and the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

RAINDROP SONG

On a nighttime walk not long ago,
I felt a raindrop dampen me,
Then heard it whisper in spattery glee:
"A hit! Most palpable! Oho!
It's onto your baseborn scalp I've hurled
After nebulous days of my vapor youth;
Now swept by the wind in a thunder-stream
From roiling mountain clouds of night
That soak the stars in celestial steam,
I've plummeted miles to your darkened world
Toward lacework-city, the shimmering lights,
To you, deep darkened storm unfurled
Above your head where I alight."

I felt the sky increase its drip
So I brought him down on a fingertip
And held him near and heard him vow:
"Men and water drops, say I,
Have each their day, and then they die.
So ask not why
I sing my song, but tell me now:
Wasn't it splendid?"
And serenely into the grass descended.

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RAINDROP SONG

poem by
CHRIS WILLERTON

STEVEN PAXTON

Contemplative ♩=72

PIANO *p*

ONE SINGER STEPS FORWARD, (spoken) On a nighttime I felt a raindrop
WELL IN FRONT OF CHOIR: walk not long ago, dampen me, *più mosso*

5

mp

Red. _____

Then heard it whisper in spattery glee: **Surprised ♩=96**

SOPRANO I *f* *mp*

(SPEAKER RETURNS TO CHOIR) SOPRANO II *f* *mp*

ALTO *f* *mp*

9

mf

Surprised ♩=96

"A hit! Most pal-pa-ble! O -

13 *f* *mf*

- ho! It's on - to your base-born scalp I've hurled Af - ter

- ho! It's on - to your base-born scalp I've hurled Af - ter

- ho! It's on - to your base-born scalp I've hurled Af - ter

13 *mp* *f* *p*

16 *cresc.* *f*

neb-u-lous days of my va - por youth; Now swept by the wind in a thun-der-stream From the

neb-u-lous days of my va - por youth; Now swept by the wind in a thun-der-stream From the

neb-u-lous days of my va - por youth; Now swept by the wind in a thun-der-stream From the

16 *r.h.* *l.h.* *cresc.*

Red.

18 *mp*

roil-ing moun-tain clouds of night That soak the stars in ce - les - tial steam, I've

roil - ing clouds of steam, (m) I've

roil - ing clouds of steam, (m) I've

18 *f* *mp*

21 **meno mosso**

plum - met - ed miles to your dark - ened world T'ward lace - work ci - ty, the shim - mer - ing lights

plum - met - ed miles to your dark - ened world T'ward lace - work ci - ty, the shim - mer - ing lights

plum - met - ed miles to your dark - ened world T'ward lace - work ci - ty, the shim - mer - ing lights

21 **meno mosso**

p

24 **rit. poco a poco** 3

To you, deep dark-ened storm un-furled A-bove your head where I a -

To you, deep dark-ened storm un-furled A-bove your head where I a -

To you, deep dark-ened storm un-furled A-bove your head where I a -

24 **rit. poco a poco**

(SINGERS MAY PANTOMIME
BRINGING DOWN RAINDROP
ON FINTERTIP)

27 **Carefully** $\text{♩} = 82$ *p*

light, I felt the sky in-crease its drip So I brought him down on a

light, I felt the sky in-crease its drip So I brought him down on a

light, I felt the sky in-crease its drip So I brought him down on a

much faster than choir's
quarter-note pulse

27 *p*

repeat pattern
with pedal down

And.

30

fin - ger - tip And held him near and heard him vow:

fin - ger - tip And held him near and heard him vow:

fin - ger - tip And held him near and heard him vow:

30

slowing gradually to the ♩=82 pulse

ff

33 **più mosso** **accel. poco a poco**

mf

"Men and wa - ter drops, say I,

mf

"Men and wa - ter drops, say I,

mf

"Men and wa - ter drops, say I,

33 **più mosso** **accel. poco a poco**

p

mp

38 ----- Quick Waltz ♩=132

f

Have — each their day, and — then they — die. —

f

Have — each their day, and — then they — die. —

f

Have — each their day, and — then they — die. —

38 ----- Quick Waltz ♩=132

mf



43 *mf*

So ask not why I sing my — song,


mf

So ask not why I sing my song,

mf

So ask not why I sing my song,

43 *mp*



48 **Largo** *f* **accel.** *ff*

but tell me, now: Was - n't it splen - did?"

but tell me, now: Was - n't it splen - did?"

but tell me, now: Was - n't it splen - did?"

48 **Largo** *mf* **accel.** *f*

52 **Presto** ♩ = 180

p *cresc. molto poco a poco*

SAME SINGER STEPS FORWARD AGAIN: (spoken)
And serenely into the grass descended.

56 **rit.** *ff*

* Play F-sharp in right hand only if left hand reach is not possible.

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ONLINE AND PRINT PUBLICATIONS

CHORUS

MIXED CHOIR

Amy Beach (1543–1623)

Agnus Dei *from Grand Mass in E-flat Major* SATB, solos, pno or orch

Beethoven (1666–1727)

Kyrie *from Mass in C Major* SATB, opt. solos, pno or orch

Mass in C Major SATB, solos, pno or orch

Francisco López Capillas (1608–1674)

Missa Benedicta SATB unac

Sanctus and Benedictus *from Missa Benedicta* SATB unac

Karl Michael Komma (1913–2012)

Die Weihnachtsgeschichte nach Lukas SATB (double), solos, fl, ob, tpt, org, perc

Frances Meier

Pasque Flower in April SATB unac

Steven Paxton

Aeterna Christi munera SATB unac

Ave Maria SATB unac

Eye SATB, pno

Frè Timoniè SAB / TBB, pno, opt perc,

How Can I Keep From Singing SATB, pno

Lucis Creator Optime SATB unac

The Open Door SATB unac

Prophecy SATB divisi unac

The singer only sang SATB divisi unac

Three Hymns to the Son SATB unac

Three Marian Hymns SATB unac

Visions SATB, eng hn (or alto sax), cello, perc, or pno

Jan Pieterszoon Sweelinck (1562–1621)

Psalm 1 SATB unac

Psalm 20 SATB unac

Psalm 90 SATB unac

Psalm 96 SATB unac

John Taverner (1490–1545)

In pace, in idipsum SATB unac

Weber, Joseph (1936–1999)

Cantata on the Oracle of Edom SSATTB, tenor duo, variable winds/stgs, or org

TREBLE CHOIR

William Byrd (1540–1623)

Sanctus and Benedictus *from Mass for 3 Voices* SSA unac

Johanna Kinkel (1810–1858)

Drei Duetten SA, pno

Steven Paxton

If I Had a Ribbon Bow SSA, pno

From the Garden of Kama SSA unac

Raindrop Song SSA, pno

Three Spring Songs SSA, pno

MUSIC OF UGANDA

Ga-ze SSA / 3-Part Mixed / TTB, pno, opt perc, opt inst

Konikoneco SATB / 3-Part Mixed / TTB, pno, opt perc, opt ins

MUSIC FOR CHOIR WITH OVERTONE SINGING

Stuart Hinds

Beauty SATB divisi, unac

Meeresstille SATB, solos, unac

Pacem SATB unac