

decketh joy, water destroy

for soprano & piano

music by

Ryan Suleiman

text by

Ralph Waldo Emerson

2018

decketh joy, water destroy (2018)

for soprano & piano

ca. 10'

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for questions or concerns, feel free to contact the composer directly

Performance Notes

Lighting: It is preferred that the performance include a small number of lighting effects, but a performance without them is acceptable. Lighting effects are indicated in boxed text above the music.

Walking Offstage: At rehearsal J, the singer is directed to leave the stage while the pianist continues playing. This theatrical effect is preferred, but a performance without it is acceptable.

Chamber Version: A version of this song for soprano and flute, Bb clarinet, harp, percussion (1), cello, and double bass is also available, with no change to rehearsal or measure numbers. Inquire with the composer for more information.

Program Notes

Water has always fascinated artists. It mesmerizes through the intrinsic beauty of its physicality and its complex relationship with us humans. In our own time, we can be awestruck by its beauty and cognizant of the destruction it increasingly brings in this century, each year more than the last. The text is Ralph Waldo Emerson's poem, "Water":

The water understands
Civilization well;
It wets my foot, but prettily,
It chills my life, but wittily,
It is not disconcerted,
It is not broken-hearted:
Well used, it decketh joy,
Adorneth, doubleth joy:
Ill used, it will destroy,
In perfect time and measure
With a face of golden pleasure
Elegantly destroy.

decketh joy, water destroy

Ralph Waldo Emerson
text

Ryan Suleiman
music

Begin with a neutral stage lighting.
Audience may be partially lit.

delicate, spacious, misterioso ♩ = c. 56

soprano

always listen to the resonance

piano

mp

lightly

8va^{both hands}

5

Ped. * Ped.

8

A

mp

The

mf *p* *mf*

3

5

p

* Ped. *

12

wa - ter_ ah_

mp

very delicate, like ripples

3

9

Ped. * Ped.

16 *mp* *mf* *mp*

The wa - ter un - der - stands civ - il - iz - a - tion well.

* Ped. * Ped. * Ped. * Ped. * Ped.

21 **B**

pp *pp* *poco* *p*

8^{va} 7 3 5 6

very delicate, a little restrained

* Ped. *

25 **C** *mf*

simile *mp* *p* *mp* *p*

5 3 3

* Ped. * Ped. * Ped. * Ped.