

Russell Steinberg

# Brím a Brew

op. 61

Five Songs on Poetry by Ray Underwood

For Mezzo Soprano and Piano

1. Clear Glass Bottles
2. White Shoes
3. Lullaby
4. Winter Comes A-Riding
5. Do Not Abandon Me My Angels

Duration: Approximately 23 Minutes

**Blown To Bits Publications**

Preview Score

*Brim a Brew*  
for Mezzo Soprano and Piano  
by Russell Steinberg

Blown To Bits Publications

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Preview Score

## NOTES

These songs speak of simple things: the magic of wind whistling through empty glass bottles, an aged maid representing the harvest of a simple bountiful life, a lullaby to ward off the great darkness, and winter galloping on a stallion followed by snowy hosts. Juliana Gondek sent me home one day with an extensive folder filled to the brim with poetry of her belated friend Ray Underwood. Ray's poems got under my skin with their simple, elegant, Americana quality—and beneath all that, a mighty darkness. This collection sets five of his poems in musical language that tries to tap into that sense of simple and elegant American identity, with resonances of Copland and Barber.

## FOR THE SINGER

Strive for a purity of tone and clear declamation, reserving vibrato only for special expression of longer notes. Passages such as the end of Do Not Abandon Me My Angels mm. 55-74 may be sung even in a thin and pure Renaissance manner.

## FOR THE PIANIST

The use of pedal is critical to blur harmonies and create a hazy resonance in this music. Long areas where the pedal is to be held down are clearly marked (for example, the opening of Clear Glass Bottles). Other areas are left to the performer's taste. For instance, the pedal should be held continually in Clear Glass Bottles mm. 53-60, but mm. 61-67, while also using a static harmony, may need several pedal changes, especially through mm. 64-67, to avoid sounding too muddy. Many areas in the Lullaby also require experimentation to achieve the proper "haziness" without becoming overly thick and muddy. However, the collision from cross-relations of tones should not be avoided, as it is an essential sonic component of the song.

## **POEMS BY RAY UNDERWOOD**

### **CLEAR GLASS BOTTLES**

Clear glass bottles  
Stand along  
The window ledge  
And so the song of wind will  
Often whistle through  
Or leave them empty.  
Filled with just a pale blue  
Or green of some faint shade  
Or late at night  
Molasses made  
From dark and stars  
Will fill these few  
Forgotten jars.  
And so I place my heart of glass  
Upon this sill  
And right in line  
With clear glass bottles standing still  
In shades of noon and evening time.  
Sometimes a wind with whistling spin  
Will play this vessel  
From within.  
Sometimes the moon will pour up to  
Its brim a brew  
Of silver-blue.

### **WHITE SHOES**

White shoes  
Long grass  
White house  
Beveled glass  
White blouse  
Green trees  
White parts  
Wobbly knees  
White hair  
Strong chin  
Wooden chair  
Beveled grin  
Sweet air  
Light wind

Aged maid  
Fruit pies  
Gray braid  
Blue eyes  
Lemon oil  
Habit grunts  
Table toil  
Help hunts  
Pruned trees  
Neighbor boy  
Green knees  
White wash  
Money toy  
Wrinkled josh  
Giggled joy.

Joy farm  
Farmed love  
No harm  
From above  
Many peaches  
Few tears  
Hundred harvests  
Hundred years.

### **LULLABY**

Strings are running through you  
You're a button on a thread  
And you traverse the nighttime  
Through the stories of your head  
Rhemes and rhemes of colored dreams  
Vibrate from the strings  
Scents and songs and pictures  
Unborn lakes and secret streams.

Goodnight, goodnight, my baby  
Pay attention while you fly,  
For somewhere while you glide the night  
Are the reasons that you cry.  
Falling through the darkness,  
Like a red coal in a rage  
Burning, as you fall,  
Through paper page and paper page.

For every voice that's in the world  
There is one inside your head  
And God must hush them all with peace.  
Before you rise from bed.

### **WINTER COMES A-RIDING**

Winter comes a-riding  
Comes a-riding  
Like a ghost  
Mounted on a stallion  
Followed by a snowy host  
Bring your flurry in a hurry  
Over all the town  
Over all my dreamings  
When I'm lost and laying down  
Bring your silver sentences  
To whisper in my ear  
All whites and night's repentances  
All brighter flights from fear.  
Bring, your lords and ladies,  
swordsman's rapiers of glass,  
Bring your silence  
Then early morning off to Mass.  
Cover all my rooftops  
With your lily-diamond breast  
And 'til the springtime sun  
Awakes me,  
Winter let me rest.

### **DO NOT ABANDON ME MY ANGELS**

Do not abandon me My angels—  
Please to make your home  
Inside my heart  
However small  
It strains in deep  
And sorrowful contractions  
Changing palace  
Into tiny hunt.  
Please to stay  
And bathe the sills  
In blues and lovely lights  
And following my steps  
With echoes like a joke,  
Sketching out across my eyes  
The only beauty in one line  
And guiding me into another song,  
Please stay  
And like the ages past  
When down my heart would twist  
In agonizing groan  
You would shape it into music  
Subtle deep forlorn  
And ride to heaven on  
That tide of tears.

Preview Score

# I. Clear Glass Bottles

Poetry by Ray Underwood

Music by Russell Steinberg

**Dark and fantastical**  $\text{♩} = 100$  *pp* delicate

Clear glass bot- tles

**Dark and fantastical**  $\text{♩} = 100$   
*Pluck Inside Piano*

*mp* *pp* *p* *ppp*

*8va* *gliss.* *gliss.* *Ord.* *8va*

*3* *3* *3* *3*

*Led.*

7

Clear *misterioso*

*8va* *3 etc.* *8va* *8va* *8va* *3*

*pp* *mf* *pp* *8va*

*3*

\* *Led.*

10

glass bot tles

*8va* *8va* *8va* *8va* *3* *3* *3* *3* *3* *cantabile* *mp*

*pp* *3 etc.*

*6/4* *6/4* *6/4* *6/4*

13 (hum) *pp* *cantabile* *mp* *sfz*

mm Clear glass bot-tles

16 Stand u - pon The win-dow ledge

(8)

*pp* *mp* *p* *mp*

\* Ped.

19 And so the song - of wind

*mp* 3 etc.

\* Ped.

22 will Of - - ten

*f* *mp*

\* Ped. \*



24  
whi stle through Or leave them emp - ty,

27  
Filled with just a pale  
*Pluck Inside Piano*

33  
blue Or  
*Ord.*

36  
green of some faint shade

38 *p*

*pp* *mp*

\* Ped.

41 *pp* *mf*

Or late at night Mo - las - ses

*mf* *pp* *mf* *pp*

\* Ped. \*

45 *f*

made From dark and stars Will fill these few for - got - ten jars.

*mf* *f*

Ped. \* Ped.

49

50 *8va* *Ord.*

*Pluck Inside Piano*  
*p*  
+ + + +  
\* *Ped.*

54 *p* *pp* *mp* *p*

And so I place my heart of glass U-pon this sill And right in line

*pp* *p* *pp* *p*

59 *mp* *p*

With clear glass bot-tles stand-ing still

*pp* *p* *mp*

\* *Ped.* \*

64 *p* *mp*

In shades of noon and eve - ning time.

*mf* *mp*

68 *p*

69

70 *ff*

71 *ff*

72 *f*

73 *sfz*

74 *agitato mp*

Some - times a wind with whist - ling spin

*agitato*

*p* *f* *p* *f*

6/4

6/4

6/4

6/4

76 *f*

Will play this ves-sel From with - in.

*p*

*cresc.*

This system contains measures 76 and 77. Measure 76 features a vocal line with a fermata and a piano accompaniment of sixteenth notes. Measure 77 includes the lyrics "Will play this ves-sel From with - in." and a piano accompaniment with a crescendo marking.

77

*f*

*dim.*

This system contains measures 77 and 78. Measure 77 continues the piano accompaniment with a forte dynamic. Measure 78 features a vocal line with a fermata and a piano accompaniment with a decrescendo marking.

79

*f*

*dim.*

This system contains measures 79 and 80. Measure 79 continues the piano accompaniment with a forte dynamic. Measure 80 features a vocal line with a fermata and a piano accompaniment with a decrescendo marking.

81

8va

*pp*

*p*

*mf*

*p*

*pp*

This system contains measures 81 and 82. Measure 81 features a vocal line with a fermata and a piano accompaniment with a pianissimo dynamic. Measure 82 includes a triplet in the piano accompaniment and dynamics of mezzo-forte and piano, ending with a pianissimo dynamic.

84 **Calm** *mp*

Some - times the moon will pour up to

**Calm**

*mp*

3 5 5

8va

3

87

Its brim-a- brew Its brim-a- brew

(8)

3 3

89

Of sil - ver - - - blue.

*mf*

*mf*

3 3

91 *p* *mp*

Of sil - ver - blue.\_\_\_\_\_

94

Of sil - ver - blue.\_\_\_\_\_

96 *pp*

blue.\_\_\_\_\_

(8) Pluck Inside Piano Ord.

*ppp* *pppp*

## II. White Shoes

Carefree with a sense of fresh air, but also nostalgia

♩. = 84

Musical notation for measures 1-9. The score is in 3/4 time with a key signature of three flats. The right hand features a melodic line with slurs and accents, while the left hand provides a steady accompaniment. Dynamics include *pp* and *mp*. Pedal markings are present: *Ped.* at the start, *\* Ped.* at measures 5 and 7, and *\* etc.* at the end.

Musical notation for measures 10-20. The right hand continues the melodic development with slurs and ties. The left hand accompaniment remains consistent. Dynamics are *p* and *f*.

Musical notation for measures 21-31. The right hand has a more active melodic line with slurs and accents, including a *8va* marking. Dynamics range from *f* to *p*. Pedal markings include *Ped.* at the end of the system.

Musical notation for measures 32-41. The right hand contains the lyrics: "White shoes — Long grass — White house". The notation includes slurs, accents, and a *8va* marking. Dynamics include *mp*, *f*, *sfz*, and *pp*.



41 *mf*

Be-velled glass \_\_\_\_\_ White blouse green trees

51

White parts Wob - bly knees White hair Strong chin \_\_\_\_\_

60 *mf* *f* *espress.* *mp* *p*

Wood-en chair Be-velled grin Sweet air \_\_\_\_\_ Light wind \_\_\_\_\_

*mf* *cresc.* *f* *espress.* *mp*

71 *mp*

Aged maid \_\_\_\_\_

*p* *pp* *f* *sfz* *p* *8va*

81 *mp*

Fruit pies— Gray

92

braid Blue eyes Le-mon oil Ha-bit grunts Ta - ble

101

toil

*mf* *8va* *f* *sfz* *mf*

111

*f*

Help hunts Pruned trees Neigh-bor

120 *mf*

boy Green Knees White wash mon-ey toy

126 *f* **Glowing** *f*

Wrin-kled josh Gig-gled joy Joy\_\_\_ farm

*f* **Glowing** *sfz mp*

*Red.*

134

— Farmed love\_\_\_ No harm\_\_\_ From a- bove\_\_\_

140

— Ma-ny pea- ches Few tears

\* *Red.*

146 *poco rit.*

*mf* *cresc.*

\* Ped. \*

*poco meno mosso* *A tempo*

153 *f* *p*

Hun-dred har-vests Hun-dred years

*poco meno mosso* *A tempo*

165

*p* *f* *8va*

172

*mp* *p* *pp* (8)~

# Lullaby

1 Gently rocking ♩=112

*Red. una corda*

10 poco accel. *pp* *p* poco rit.

Strings are run-ning through you

*p*

16 poco accel. *pp* *p* poco rit.

You're a but-ton on a thread

*pp* *p* *mp*

19 *mp* *p*

And you tra-verse the night-time Through the stor-ies of your head

*mp* *p* *pp*

*Red.*

24

Rhemes - and rhemes of co - lored dreams Vi - brate

\*

29

from the strings Scents - and

33

*meno mosso*  
*espress.*

songs and pic - tures *pp* Un-born lakes and se - cret streams.

*meno mosso*  
*espress.*  
*pp*

38

**A tempo**

**A tempo** *p* Good

**A tempo**

Ped.

46

night, good night, my ba - by Pay at -

53

\* rit. A tempo

ten-tion while you fly, For some-where while you glide the night Are the rea-sons thayou cry. -

rit. A tempo

59

*mf*

Fal - ling through the dark-ness,

*mf*

65

Like a red coal in a rage in a rage in a rage

*tre corda*

69 *f*

Burn - ing, as you fall, Through pa - per page and pa - per page.

73

*ff*

78 **Meno mosso**

*p*

For ev - ery voice that's in your world -

**Meno mosso**

*p*

*una corda*

83

There is one in - side your head -

*delicate*

*mf*

*pp*



87

*mp*

92

*pp espress.*

And God must hush them all with peace. - - -

*espress.*

*pp*

96

Be - fore you rise from bed. -

98

*ppp*

8va

Red.

# Winter Comes A-Riding

Allegro appassionata ♩ = 88

1

The piano introduction consists of four measures. The right hand features a melodic line with slurs and accents, starting with a forte (*sfz*) dynamic and moving to piano (*pp*). The left hand provides a rhythmic accompaniment of eighth notes in a 6/8 time signature, starting with a forte (*f*) dynamic. A large 'DRIVEN SCORE' watermark is overlaid on the page.

5

Win - ter comes - a - rid - ing comes a - rid - ing comes a

Measures 5-8 of the score. The vocal line begins with the lyrics 'Win - ter comes - a - rid - ing comes a'. The piano accompaniment continues with a melodic line in the right hand and a rhythmic accompaniment in the left hand. Dynamics include forte (*f*) and mezzo-forte (*mf*). A large 'DRIVEN SCORE' watermark is overlaid on the page.

9

rid - ing comes a rid - ing Like a ghost Mount - ed

Measures 9-12 of the score. The vocal line continues with the lyrics 'rid - ing comes a rid - ing Like a ghost Mount - ed'. The piano accompaniment continues with a melodic line in the right hand and a rhythmic accompaniment in the left hand. Dynamics include mezzo-forte (*mp*) and forte (*f*). A large 'DRIVEN SCORE' watermark is overlaid on the page.

13

Mount - ed on a stal - lion

16

Fol-lowed by a snow - y host

18

Mount - ed on a stal - lion Fol-lowed by a snow - y

21

host Bring your flur - ry In a hur - ry

24

O - ver all the town - - O - ver all my dream - ings -

27 *mf*

When - I'm lost and lay - ing down -

30 *poco a poco dim.* *rit.*

35 **Static, calm**  $\text{♩} = 60$  *p* *Coaxing*

Bring your sil - ver sen - ten - ces - -

*Ped.*

39 *poco accel.* *poco rit.*

- to whis - per in my ear -

43 *poco accel.*

All whites and night's re - pen - ten - ces

*Red.*

47 *poco rit.* *mf*

All bright - er - flights from fear.

*mf*

*Red.*

51 *poco accel.* *poco rit.* *poco a poco accel.*

Bring, your lords - - and

*poco a poco accel.*

*f* *mf*

55

lad - ies, swords - men's ra - piers of glass,

58

Bring your si - lence Then ear - ly morn - ing off - to Mass.

**A tempo**

62

65

Co - ver all my roof - tops With your li - ly - dia - mond breast

69 *mf*

And'till the spring-time sun A-wakes me, Win-ter let me

74 *mp* *Gradually wind down*

rest.

79

82

*ppp*

*pp*

# Do Not Abandon Me My Angels

Impassioned ♩ = 80

Musical notation for measures 1-4. Treble clef, 4/4 time signature. Measure 1 starts with a fermata. Dynamics: *f*, *mp*, *f*, *ff*, *p*. Includes an 8va marking with a dashed line.

Ped.

Calm, flowing

Musical notation for measures 5-9. Treble clef, 4/4 time signature. Measure 5 starts with a fermata. Dynamics: *pp*, *mp*. Includes triplets and an 8va marking.

\* Ped.  
una corda

\*

10 accel. . . . . rit. . . . . A tempo

Musical notation for measures 10-11. Treble clef, 7/8 time signature. Dynamics: *pp*, *pp*. Includes a *tre corda* marking.

12 accel. .

Musical notation for measures 12-13. Treble clef, 7/8 time signature. Dynamics: *poco a poco cresc.*. Includes triplets.

14 A tempo

Musical notation for measures 14-17. Treble clef, 4/4 time signature. Dynamics: *ff*, *sfz*, *p*. Includes an 8va marking.



17

rit. .

*pp*

*p*

19 *A tempo*

*Pleading*

Do not a - ban - don me my

*A tempo*

23 *espress.*

an - gels— Please to make your home In-side my heart How-ever small

*pp*

26 *p*

It strains in deep And sor - row ful con - trac - tions

*mf*

*8va*

*mf*

29 *ps* *pp* *p*

Chang - ing pa- lace in-to ti-ny hunt. Please to stay And bathe the

32 *mp*

sills In blues and love - ly lights - -

*cresc.*

34 *mf* *f*

And fol - low - ing my steps

*f*

36 *mp* *mp*

With ech-oes like a joke, Sket - ching out a - cross - my eyes -

38 *mf* *mp*

The on - ly beau - ty in one line And guid - ing me

41 *pp* *una corda*

in - to a - noth - er song, - -

*disembodied*

44 *tre corda*

46 *cresc.*

48

*accelerando e cresc.*

*mf*

50

*f*

**A tempo**  
*Impassioned*

52

*ff*

56 **Calm** ♩ = 72

*pp*

**Calm** ♩ = 72

Please stay And like the a - ges past

*pp* *legato*

*una corda*

60

*p* When down my heart would twist— *mp* In a-gon-i - zing groan

64

You would shape. it in-to mu-sic

*mf* *mp*

*tre corda*

68

Sub-tle— deep— for-lorn *p* Floating dolce And ride to hea-ven— *rallentando* on That tide of

*8va*

*p*

*una corda Ped.*

A tempo

71

tears. And

A tempo

(8)

73

ride to hea - ven on That tide of tears.

(8)

76

> pp

8va

pp

ppp

Ped.

\*

Ped.

\*