

# *Drowned*

for

soprano and piano

Text by  
Carl Sandburg

Music by  
Joe L. Alexander

Dr. Joe L. Alexander  
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# *Drowned*

*for*

**Soprano & Piano**

## **PROGRAM NOTES**

Joe L. Alexander composed *Drowned* in March of 2002 as his response to the Alabama Composer/Writer Partnership's call for new works. The partnership was funded by the Alabama State Council on the Arts and was conceived by the Birmingham Art Music Alliance. It's goal was to have living Alabama composers set to music the works of living Alabama writers. I selected my friend and fellow Tuscaloosian, Alan May, for my collaboration. *Drowned* was premiered on April 16, 2002 at Wright Recital Hall on the campus of Samford University in Birmingham, Alabama. Dewin Tibbs was the singer, and Chris Griffin played piano. Before the premiere, the poet spoke about the creative process while writing the poem. The text "Drowned" first appeared in a literary journal called *Yemassee* and was published in a chapbook called *Light Coming through the Shape of the Moon* by the *Wing and the Wheel Press*.

## **PERFORMANCE NOTES**

Accidentals apply only to the octave in which they are written and remain in effect for the measure unless cancelled out by another accidental..

## **DURATION**

**c. 5:00**

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Music  
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Text  
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*Drowned*

Text by Alan May  
Music by Joe L. Alexander

*Drowned*

I watch the old men drag the lake  
the one man loses the dark tip  
of his oar again and again

I think of my sister's hair  
drying in the sun  
my neighbor hanging

her was at night  
the lantern swings low  
across the water

the one man loses the dark tip of his oar  
again and again  
as a boy I'd dive from the pier

I was told that undertakers  
cut and sell the hair of the dead  
my neighbor hums to herself

in the dark  
the water rises  
the old men have the boy

by the ankle  
the drowned are coming  
they are taking us home

Soprano & Piano

# Drowned

Text by Alan May

by Joe L. Alexander

♩ = 76 funeral dirge

Soprano

*mp*  
I watch the old men

*legato*  
*p*  
*pp*

*And.* *simile* *And.* *simile*

6

drag the lake the one man lo-ses the dark tip of his

*mf*

11

oar a-gain and a-gain

*Sost. Ped*  
*p*

16

I think of my sis-ters hair dry - ing in the

*mf* no Ped

*pp*

*leg.* *simile*

21

gliss

sun

21

*mf*

27

*mf*

my neigh-bor hang 3 - ing her wash at night the lan - tern swings

27

*p*

32

low - a - cross the wa - ter the one man - lo - ses the dark tip of his oar

32

*f*

3

37 *mf*  
 a - gain and a - gain as a boy I'd dive from the

no Ped *f* *p* *Sost. Ped* *Sost. Ped* *Ped.*

42 *mp*  
 pier I was told that

*mf* *f* *p* *Sost. Ped* *Ped.*

48 *mp*  
 un - - - der - ta - kers cut and sell the hair of the dead

*mf* *f* *p* *Sost. Ped*

52 *mf*  
 my neigh - bor hums to her - self in the dark the wa - ter ri 3 -

no Ped *f* *p* *Sost. Ped* *p* *simile*

56

ses the old men row towards shore the one man lo-ses the dark tip

*p* *f* 3 *p* *f* 3 *p* *f* *p*

*leg.* *simile*

61

of his oar the old men have the boy by the an -

*f* *cresc.* 3

*Sost. Ped* *leg.* *simile*

66

kle the drowned are com - ing

*ff* *mf* 3

71

they are ta - king us home

*a tempo* 3 *rit. al fine*

*f* *p* *rit. al fine*

*Sost. Ped* *leg.*

The composer welcomes any questions concerning *Drowned* and would greatly appreciate hearing about performances. Inquires and programs should be sent to:

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