

Please note that not all pages are included. This is purposely done in order to protect our property and the work of our esteemed composers.

If you would like to see this work in its entirety, please order online or call us at 800-647-2117.

*Adapted from the choral version commissioned
and premiered by the Holland (MI) Chorale in 2008*

PROGRAM NOTES

I've Known Rivers is a multi-movement work, comprised of songs based on four different poems by Langston Hughes (1902–1967). Though he lived much of his life in the Harlem neighborhood of New York City, Hughes was born in Missouri and raised in Kansas, Illinois, and Ohio. At age seventeen, he traveled down to Mexico to live with his estranged father.

As he crossed the Mississippi River, he was inspired to write *The Negro Speaks of Rivers*, which begins “I’ve known rivers. . . .” and is the text for the first movement, “My Soul Has Grown Deep.” It reflects upon rivers of historic and geographical importance—the Euphrates, Congo, Nile, and Mississippi. As the rivers have endured over time, so has the human soul. The waters—the blood—runs deep.

In contrast to the universal message of the first song, “Troubled Water,” which uses the poetry of the same title, is contemporary and personal. Water becomes an image of the unsettled and uncertain nature of love. The journey of love is a journey of troubled water. There is no resolution.

Undaunted by the elusive nature of love, the poet, heard via the chorus, turns flippant, displaying a persevering and humorous outlook in “Jump Right In!” (to the river) from Hughes’ poem *Life is Fine*. Romantic misadventures will not conquer the spirit. “I could’ve died for love, but for livin’ I was born.”

“In time of silver rain,” once more using the poem of the same title, is a song of healing. With the regeneration of spring, the poet marvels at the wonder of life.

Though intended to be performed as the complete multi-movement work *I've Known Rivers*, each song may be performed separately. Duration: 12:00.

—Gwyneth Walker

AVAILABLE EDITIONS

SATB Chorus and Piano OR			
<i>opt. Percussion and String Orchestra</i>	<i>Piano/Choral Score</i>	<i>Full Score</i>	<i>Instrumental Parts</i>
1. My Soul Has Grown Deep	7281	7281A	7281B
2. Troubled Water	7282	7282A	7282B
3. Jump Right In!	7283	7283A	7283B
4. In time of silver rain	7284	7284A	7284B
TTBB Chorus and Piano		<i>Piano/Choral Score</i>	
1. My Soul Has Grown Deep	7297		
2. Troubled Water	7298		
3. Jump Right In!	7299		
4. In time of silver rain	7300		
Tenor Solo and Piano		<i>Piano/Vocal Score</i>	
I've Known Rivers	8825		
Baritone Solo and Piano		<i>Piano/Vocal Score</i>	
I've Known Rivers	8826		

I've Known Rivers

for Baritone Solo and Piano

My Soul Has Grown Deep

Langston Hughes (1902–1967)

Gwyneth Walker (ASCAP)

Gently flowing ♩ = 108

Piano

4

7

10

A *p* evoking the magic and mystery of rivers

I've known riv - ers: _____

A

Words: Copyright © 1994 by The Estate of Langston Hughes. Used by permission of Harold Ober Associates.

13

I've known

mf *p*

Ped. Ped.

16

riv - - ers:

mf

Ped. Ped.

19 **B**

(p)

poco rit.

I've known riv - ers an - cient as the world and old - er than the flow of hu - man

B *poco rit.*

p

Ped. Ped. Ped.

22

Slower

blood in hu - man veins. My soul has grown deep like the

Slower

p

Ped.

26 *a tempo* (♩ = 108)

riv - ers. _____ Ah, _____

a tempo (♩ = 108)

29

mf [C] _____ I bathed in the Eu - phra - tes when dawns were young. _____

cresc. *mf* [C] _____ *simile*

32

_____ I built my hut near the Con - go and it _____

35

lulled me to sleep. _____ I looked up - on the Nile _____

LH [D] _____ *D*

Troubled Water

Langston Hughes (1902–1967)

Gwyneth Walker (ASCAP)

Flowing ♩ = 120

p gently

(p)

A *mf cantabile*

Be - tween us, al - ways,

simile

loved one, there lies this trou - bled wa - ter.

B *mf cantabile*

You are my sky, my

mf

(Ped.) with pedal

Words: Copyright © 1994 by The Estate of Langston Hughes. Used by permission of Harold Ober Associates.

© Copyright 2010, 2019 by E. C. Schirmer Music Company, Inc., a division of ECS Publishing Group.
www.ecspublishing.com All rights reserved.

21

shin - ing sun O - ver trou - bled wa - - - - - ter. _____

p

p

Ped. _____ Ped. _____

26

You are my sky, my shin - ing sun o - ver

mf

mf

Ped. _____

32

trou - bled wa - - - - - ter. _____ I

p

rit. *mf*

rit.

Ped. _____

37

jour - ney far to touch your hand. The trip is trou - bled wa - - - - - ter. We

quasi recitativo *p* (as a commentary) *mf*

quasi recitativo

mf *p*

Jump Right In!

Langston Hughes (1902–1967)

Gwyneth Walker (ASCAP)

With energy ♩ = 120

f *gliss.*

4 *f* *boisterously* **A**

I went down to the riv-er, I set down on the bank, I

7 [loud hand clap] *x*

tried to think but could-n't, so I jumped up and sank. I came up once and hol-lered! I

10

came up twice and cried! If that wa-ter had-n't a-been so * cold I

*Ossia if needed

Ped. _____

Words: Copyright © 1994 by The Estate of Langston Hughes. Used by permission of Harold Ober Associates.

© Copyright 2010, 2019 by E. C. Schirmer Music Company, Inc., a division of ECS Publishing Group.

www.ecspublishing.com All rights reserved.

13 (Opt.) B

might-'ve sunk and died. But it was cold in that wa - ter!

gliss.

B

16 (Opt.) humorous falsetto

It was cold!

19 [Finger snaps] sing f C

ch ch ch ch ch I took the el - e - va - tor six - teen

[opt. vocal sounds]

C

22

floors a-bove the ground. I thought a-bout my ba-by and I thought I would jump down. — I

In time of silver rain

Langston Hughes (1902–1967)

Gwyneth Walker (ASCAP)

At a peaceful tempo ♩ = 92

blurred and shimmering, as silver rain

p

Ped. *simile*

3 *p peacefully*
In

5 **A**
time of sil - ver rain,

A

7
in time of sil - ver rain,

Words: Copyright © 1994 by The Estate of Langston Hughes. Used by permission of Harold Ober Associates.

9

the earth puts forth new

11

life a - gain,

13

green grass - es grow and

B

15

flow - ers lift their heads, and o-ver all the plain the

rit. **Slower**

rit. **Slower**