

M. E. Valverde

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I F l o w . . . I A m
for SATB chorus a cappella (div.)

About the Poet

Beloved poet Rainer Maria Rilke was born in Prague, then Austria-Hungary in December 1875 and died of leukæmia in December 1926 in Montreux, Switzerland. Initially enrolled in military school, he left to attend German preparatory school and fulfilled his education at Charles University to specialize in literature. Within his first two years in University, he had published three German language poetry collections.

While Rilke spent years traveling extensively—to Germany, Italy, Russia, Spain, and Egypt—absorbing a variety of artistic influence, his most prolific period took place at the turn of the 20th century in Paris, France. There he was impacted by the work of sculptor Auguste Rodin and painter Paul Cézanne. The First World War evacuated him to Germany and eventually to Switzerland where, with impending illness, he composed his final works, among which include *Die Sonette an Orpheus* or the *Sonnets to Orpheus* of 1923.

About the Translators

Internationally published poet and translator Anita Barrows, PhD, is a clinical psychologist and tenured professor at the Wright Institute in Berkeley, California. Her practice predominantly treats children, adolescents, and adults with autism and other developmental disabilities as well LGBT adults suffering from trauma, abuse, or chronic illness. Author of four poetry collections, she holds Masters degrees in English literature and Italian literature from Boston University and University of California, Berkeley, respectively. Her accolades include grants from the National Endowment for the Arts, the Centrum Foundation, and the Ragsdale Foundation as well as the Quarterly Review of Literature's Contemporary Poetry Award.

Author of over a dozen books, Joanna Macy, PhD, has devoted her life to activism, advocating for justice, peace, and ecological awareness. Her approach balances Buddhist scholarship and science, the psychological with the spiritual. With the purpose of addressing desperation and disconnection to create meaningful, collaborative action, her teachings honor the earth as a living thing with which all humanity can connect. Covering five continents, her travels conducting lectures, workshops, and training sessions have influenced thousands of people. She is now retired and resides in Berkeley, California, close to her children and grandchildren.

*Quiet friend who has come so far,
feel how your breathing makes more space around you.
Let this darkness be a bell tower
and you the bell. As you ring,
what batters you becomes your strength.
Move back and forth into the change.
What is it like, such intensity of pain?
If the drink is bitter, turn yourself to wine.
In this uncontainable night,
be the mystery at the crossroads of your senses,
the meaning discovered there.
And if the world has ceased to hear you,
say to the silent earth: I flow.
To the rushing water, speak: I am.*

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Composer's Notes

"I Flow... I Am" is a setting of Anita Barrows and Joanna Macy's a translation of Rilke's 29th and ultimate sonnet to Orpheus. It is a spiritual commentary on the courage it takes to be present in darkness, breathing, speaking, living, and loving through pain and uncertainty. As Macy suggests, we may only survive on this planet by flowing with the turbulence of the earth, taking refuge in its beautiful chaos.

This work was commissioned in 2016 by South Salem High School Symphonic Choir under the direction of Will McLean and premièred in March 2017 in Salem, Oregon.

dur. = ca. 4'

Commissioned by the South Salem High School Symphonic Choir, Salem, Oregon,
Will McLean, Director

I Flow... I Am

for SATB chorus a cappella (div.)

Rainer Maria Rilke

1875-1926

translated by

Anita Barrows

b. 1947

and

Joanna Macy

b. 1929

Mari Esabel Valverde

b. 1987

Freely, comfortingly ♩ = ca. 63
p

Soprano
Qui et friend who has come so

Alto
Qui et friend who has come so

Tenor
Qui et friend who has come so

Bass
Qui et friend who has come so

Piano
(for rehearsal only)

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4 *poco a poco cresc.*

S far, feel how your breath - ing makes more

A far, feel how your breath - ing makes more *poco a poco cresc.*

T far, feel how your breath - ing makes more *poco a poco cresc.*

B far, feel how your breath - ing makes more *poco a poco cresc.*

8 *mf poco rall.*

S space a - round you. Let this dark - ness be a bell tower

A space a - round you. Let this dark - ness be a bell tower *mf*

T space a - round you. Let this dark - ness be a bell tower *mf*

B space a - round you. Let this dark - ness be a bell tower *mf*

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mp with wonder **A tempo** *f*

S and you the bell. As you ring, As you ring,

A *mp with wonder* and you the bell. what

T *mp with wonder* and you the bell. what

B *mp with wonder* and you the bell. what

mf

S As you ring, As you ring,

A *f* bat - ters you be - comes your strength. *mp* Move

T *f* bat - ters you be - comes your strength. *mp* Move

B *f* bat - ters you be - comes your strength. *mp* Move

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19

S in - to the change. — What is it

A *mf* back and forth and back in - to the change. — What is it

T *mf* back and forth in - to the change. — What is it

B *mf* back and forth in to the change. — What is it

22

S *f* like, such in - ten - si-ty of pain? *mp* If the drink is bit - ter,

A *f* like, such in - ten - si-ty of pain? *sub. p* If the drink is bit - ter,

T *f* like, such in - ten - si-ty of pain? *mp* If the drink is bit - ter,

B *f* like, such in - ten - si-ty of pain? —

26 (9) *cresc.* **rub.**

S turn your - self to wine.

A *mp* (9) turn your - self to wine. In this un - con - tain - a - ble

T (9) turn your - self to wine. In this un - con - tain - a - ble

B *mp* (9) turn your - self to wine. In this un - con - tain - a - ble

30 *mf*

S In this un - con - tain - a - ble night,

A night, *mf*

T night, *mf* *mp poco a poco cresc.* be the

B night, *mf* *mp poco a poco cresc.* be the

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33 *più f vibrantly*

S be the mys - tery at the cross - roads of your

A *più f vibrantly*
be the mys - tery at the cross - roads of your

T 8 mys - tery, in this night,

B mys - tery, in this night,

36 *mp poco a poco cresc.*

S sens - es, be the mys tery,

A *mp poco a poco cresc.*
sens - es, be the mys - tery,

T *più f vibrantly*
8 be the mys - tery at the cross - roads of your

B *più f vibrantly*
be the mys - tery at the cross - roads of your

poco rit. () *f*

39

S in this night, the mean - ing dis - cov - ered there.

A in this night, be, the mean - ing dis - cov - ered there.

T sens - es, the mean - ing dis - cov - ered there.

B sens - es, be, the mean - ing dis - cov - ered there.

A tempo

43

S And if the world has ceased to hear

A And if the world has ceased to hear

T And if the world has ceased to hear

B if the world has ceased to hear

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47

S you, say to the si - lent earth: I

A you, say to the si - lent earth: I

T you, say to the si - lent earth: I

B you, say to the si - lent earth: I

51

S flow. To the rush - ing wat - er, speak: I

A flow, To the rush - ing, wat - er, speak: I

T flow. To the rush ing wat - er, speak:

B flow. To the rush - ing wat - er, speak:

p *mf* *p* *mf* *p* *mf*

55

S am. I flow. I am. I flow. I am. I

A am. I flow. I am. I flow. I am. I

T I am. I flow. I am. I flow. I am. I

B I am. I flow. I am. I flow. I am.

60

S flow. I am. I flow. I am. *f* *rall. al fine mp un poco sotto voce*

A flow. I am. I flow. I am. *f* *mp un poco sotto voce*

T flow. I am. I flow. I am. *f* *mp un poco sotto voce*

B I flow. I am. I flow. I am. *f* *mp un poco sotto voce*