

Ripple

from Three Graphic Score Studies

for a cappella choir (any voicing)

Duration ca. 3'

WORDS & MUSIC BY

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Ripple

Ripple is a song about the power of our actions to spark change. It's the final movement in a choral set called *Three Graphic Scores Studies*, which explores the musical and creative possibilities of using graphic elements in choral music.

Text

I am a ripple of joy.
I am a ripple on quiet water.

One drop could change the current.
One drop, then another: an unstoppable rising torrent.

Watch it grow. See what flows
from a single ripple.

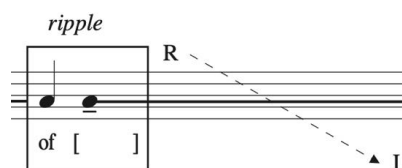
Performance notes

- 1. Groups:** For this movement, the choir should be divided into 3 equal groups. Please note, for mixed voice choirs, each group should include both high and low voices, and any low voices should sing an octave below written.
- 2. Choir formation:** To amplify the effects in this movement and make coordination easier, each group should form a single row (so the choir is in 3 rows in total).
- 3. Timing:** This movement is written primarily without measure; rather spatial placement indicates the approximate timing, coordination, and order of events. Segments with stemmed notes which are performed together in time (i.e., Group 1's part and the opening of Cue 6) may be conducted partially in meter in order to coordinate.
- 4. Duration:** any stemmed notes should be performed at approximately half note equals 50. Stemless notes are treated like a fermata. Their approximate length is shown as a line extension, although their exact duration is left up to the conductor's discretion to allow time for shaping and the 'ripple' effect (which will vary in length depending on the size of a choir).
- 5. Dynamics and shaping:** Initial dynamics are shown in Western notation (piano, forte, etc.) and subsequent shaping (crescendo/decrescendos) as line thickness.
- 6. Other effects:**

Forest river soundscape: the soundscape could be comprised of various sounds including wind, water, rustling leaves, birds, etc. Singers should very loosely follow the shape of the drawn graphic for their overall dynamic and density. For example, at the opening of the work they should be louder and denser but thin out and become quieter as Groups 1 and 2 sing.



Ripple: this effect moves a musical idea from one side of the choir to the other. When this is marked in the score, each chorister in the given group should perform the boxed material with their entries overlapping the chorister next to them.

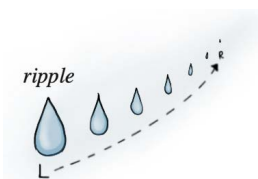


Each time this effect occurs there is a dotted arrow showing which side of the choir the ripple should begin (L, R, or center) and where it should end. To coordinate this, leaders should be assigned to sing the material first as written, so others may follow to create the ripple effect. Four leaders will need to be assigned:

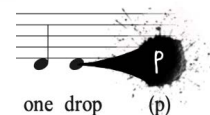
- Group 2 Right (the furthest chorister on the right in this group)
- Group 2 Center (one chorister in the center of this group's row)
- Group 2 Left (the furthest chorister on the left in this group)
- Group 3 Right (the furthest chorister on the right in this group)

Please note: when the extended line from the previous ripple reaches directly into the next (as shown in the example above) singers should hold the final word of the previous idea until they come in with their next ripple.

Water droplets: Make any water droplet-like sound the choir chooses such as tongue clicks, snaps, thigh hits, etc. or a combination thereof. In Group 2's part (as in the example to the right), explore getting quieter and/or changing in pitch or timbre as the droplets ripple through the choir.



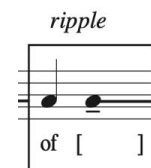
Bursts: These are coordinated and punctuated ending consonants



Empty square brackets in lyrics:

- When this occurs in the score (at Cue 2, group 2; and at Cue 8, group 3) singers may choose one word to fill in the following sentence:

I am a ripple of...[ex. joy, hope, courage, etc.]



Note about score color & printing

I've left this score in colour for an enhanced visual experience, however printing in black and white is sufficient for musical interpretation.

