

Poems used in the choral cycle *Harlem Songs* (2000)

Poetry by Langston Hughes
Music by Gwyneth Walker

Spirituals

Rocks and the firm roots of trees.
The rising shafts of mountains.
Something strong to put my hands on.
 Sing, O Lord Jesus!
 Song is a strong thing-
 I heard my mother singing
 When life hurt her:
Gonna ride in my chariot some day!
 The branches rise
 From the firm roots of trees.
 The mountains rise
 From the solid lap of earth.
 The waves rise
 From the dead weight of sea.
Sing, O black mother!
Song is a strong thing.

Harlem Night Song

Come, Let us roam the night together
Singing.
I love you.
Across
The Harlem roof-tops
Moon is shining.
Night sky is blue.
Stars are great drops
Of golden dew.
Down the street
A band is playing
I love you.
Come,
Let us roam the night together
Singing.

Tambourines

Tambourines!
Tambourines!
Tambourines
To the glory of God!

A gospel shout
and a gospel song:
Life is short
But God is Long

Tambourines!
Tambourines!
Tambourines
To glory!