River of Freedom

Music by Adam Walters
Script by Caitlyn Kamminga

Full Score

[As recorded]
River of Freedom

Instrumentation

Solo Baritone Voice (doubling Handbell)
Flute (doubling Piccolo)
Clarinet in B-flat
   Horn in F
Trombone
Tenor Steelpan (doubling Djembe)
Percussion (Djembe, Snare Drum, Tambourine)
   Violin
   Double Bass
   and Narrator

Approximate duration: 50 minutes

A Note on Sources and Authorship

The Merikins practised the Spiritual Baptist faith upon their arrival in Trinidad in 1816 and the faith is practised by many today. Preparation for writing the score to River of Freedom included extensive research trips by the composer to listen to music of the Spiritual Baptist tradition in situ in churches across Trinidad. A hymn and a chorus heard during these trips have been incorporated into the score with the aim of giving voice to the rich musical expression of Trinidad's Spiritual Baptist community.

The hymn I Heard the Voice of Jesus Say in Part 3 was written by Horatius Bonar in 1846. Some of the harmonic and melodic material in the arrangement of this hymn in River of Freedom is taken directly from a rendition heard by the composer in a church service at St Michael's Spiritual Baptist Tabernacle, Third Company Village, Trinidad on Sunday 10th November 2013.

The chorus sung to "Hello" is a traditional melodic refrain often heard in Spiritual Baptist churches in Trinidad.

The spiritual in Part 1a is an original composition and the lyrics are by Krisson Joseph.

Performance Note

The Narrator may be a female or male performer. In the score, sung parts for the narrator are notated in the bass clef, so a female narrator would sing an octave higher than notated.

The pitch of the bell (F5) in Part 3 is important. If a genuine Spiritual Baptist bell cannot be sourced, a handbell of the same pitch may be used in its place.

The steelpan player doubles on Djembe 2.

The improvisatory sections for the Baritone soloist on the word "Hello" in Parts 1a and Part 3 should be stylistically appropriate to Trinidad's Spiritual Baptist tradition.

River of Freedom was commissioned by the US Embassy in Port of Spain, Trinidad to commemorate the 200th anniversary in 2016 of the arrival of the Merikins in Trinidad.
River of Freedom

Introduction

Maestoso \( \frac{1}{=50} \)

Flute

Clarinet in Bb

Horn in F

Trombone

Tenor Steelpan

Djembe 1

pp

Baritone Solo

Violin

Contrabass

pp

This score is dedicated to Amina, Lola and Sonia

Music by Adam Walters
Script by Caitlyn Kamminga

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Part 1a

NARRATOR:
Oh say does that star-spangled banner yet wave,
o’er the land of the free and the home of the brave?

Dr Jones was a learned man, a man of the Enlightenment.
He believed that all men are created equal,
That they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights,
That amongst these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness!

Andante =100

Allegro =110

Dr. Jones was a learned man, a man of the Enlightenment.
Dr Jones was a learned man,
A man of medicine, a medicine man,
But above all Dr Jones was a benevolent man.
And so like other gentlemen of Virginia,
he supported Emancipation... in principle.
But like other gentlemen of Virginia,
he never managed to devise a plan for Emancipation,
that wasn’t "injurious to society."
Dr Jones was a kind and learned man,

Who owned slaves like his good friend Thomas Jefferson.
So really if a man were to say it straight,

The benevolent Dr Jones believed in Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness for some...
but not all.

Allegro $\approx 110$

\begin{align*}
&\text{Fl.} \\
&\text{Cl.} \\
&\text{Hn.} \\
&\text{Tbn.} \\
&\text{Pan} \\
&\text{Vln.} \\
&\text{Cb.}
\end{align*}
Said his good friend, Thomas Jefferson,  
"Nothing is more certainly written in the book of fate,  
than that these people are to be free."

Said his good friend, Thomas Jefferson,  
"Nor is it less certain that the two races, equally free,  
cannot live in the same government."
And so Emancipation remained a theory discussed at length by gentlemen
Over cigars and wine after dinners served to them by their slaves.

A tempo \( \text{\texttt{\textasciitilde}=110} \)

**Piccolo**

- Off on "government"
- \( \text{\texttt{\textasciitilde}=110} \)

**Clarinet**

- \( \text{\texttt{\textasciitilde}=110} \)

**Horn**

- \( \text{\texttt{\textasciitilde}=110} \)

**Tuba**

- \( \text{\texttt{\textasciitilde}=110} \)

**Piano**

- \( \text{\texttt{\textasciitilde}=110} \)

**Violin**

- \( \text{\texttt{\textasciitilde}=110} \)

**Cello**

- \( \text{\texttt{\textasciitilde}=110} \)
They say that the War of 1812 was America's Second War of Independence. But those brave fellas woulda had to wait another 50 years for their freedom, had they not fought on the side of the British in the War of 1812.
Helluva choice for a man... to fight as a blood soldier in a war that was not his
or to stay in chains working another man's land,
 living in fear that he would be separated from his family.
The greatest of all terrors, a sale to the deep South.
And I can tell you, a sale was worse than a flogging a million times over.
Why a man could be flogged again and again
and his back would heal.
But when his family was ripped apart?
His heart would never heal,
It would bleed forever more.
The balm, I am see king, ain't in Gi - le - ad. Soul, hea ling. don't come from no
man. My heart is year ning, my soul finds peace. Oh Lord, is this, my re lease?
Is this my release to war in peace?

Meno mosso \( \times=66 \) accel.

espress. quasi cadenza
A tempo \( \approx 72 \)

Fl.

Cl.

Tbn.

Pan

Vln.

Cb.
Nathanael had two views from his cabin in the morning...

Out the front door he looked up at Dr Jones' magnificent manor house, where his master slept on the finest linens, next to his not so benevolent ivory skinned wife.
Out the back door was the river... the River of Freedom.
Helliwa choice for a man...  So he prayed and he sang.
Some slaves nurtured the African tradition of conjuring, whilst others felt Jesus grip their souls.

But it didn't matter how you caught the spirit.
Said Nathaniel,
"All I know is when a person sings,
sings loud from his heart,
a person gets strong inside!

Said Nathaniel, "All I know is when a person sings,
sings loud from his heart,
a person gets strong inside!"
And when you get strong inside the spirit arrests you!
And when the spirit arrests you, you have to dance
When we sing and dance, Lord, it makes us strong!
And the spirit arrests us!
Baritone soloist and Narrator to join in with clapping (same rhythm as steelpan player), ending at bar 390.
We were strong, Lord, and we were brave...

But we were not free. No sir.

It was the home of the brave, but it was not the land of the free.

And so he sang and he prayed,
And he looked out the back door at the River of Freedom.
Said Dr. Jones about his boy Nat,

"Why nobody knows me better than that.

Allegretto \( \frac{\text{=}}{104} \) \( \text{rit.} \) \( \frac{\text{=}}{104} \) 

Allegretto \( \frac{\text{=}}{104} \) \( \text{rit.} \) \( \frac{\text{=}}{104} \)  

To Snare Drum
A strong and able lad, he is a fine body servant. We have a shared respect, he is my advisor and confidante. Nobody knows me better than Nat."
And then two years into that second war of independence,

Allegro \( \approx 100 \)
“WHEREAS, many persons now resident in the United States,
have expressed a desire to withdraw THEREFROM
with a view of entering into His Majesty's Service
This is THEREFORE to give notice
That ALL who may be disposed to emigrate from the United States
will be received on board His Majesty's Ships!
GOD SAVE THE KING!”

said be,
Sir Alexander Cochrane.
Said the benevolent Dr. Jones to his good friend Thomas Jefferson, "Those poor negroes think the British are going to set them free.  
How quickly they have forgotten the fine promises of the last war, 
After which they were shipped off to Jamaica."
“So you see,”
Said the benevolent Dr. Jones to his boy Nat,
“How much better off you are here, working for me.”
So imagine his shock and bewilderment
When just like that, his boy Nat
Bolted.
Down the River of Freedom
Down the Patuxent and out into the Chesapeake Bay.
And imagine his shock and dismay
When his boy Nat returned with British soldiers
And burnt that plantation down to the ground!
Lord, Teach me to forgive.

My day's been grief,
Fl. 604
Cl. mp
Hn. mp
Tbn. mp
Pan. mp
Vln. mp
Cb. mp

611
Fl. pp
Cl. pp
Hn. p
Tbn. pp
Pan. pp
Vln. pp
Cb. pp

Subito più mosso
=96

espressivo

p con dolore
p
Subito più mosso
=96

p
Subito più mosso
=96

p
p
p
p
p
p
p
p
p
p
p
Nathaniel had returned for his wife Sally and his little baby John.
Sally and little John John
And another ten to boost!
Said Nathaniel,  
"We were brave Lord, but we were not free.  
So we sang and we prayed  
And we bolted down the River of Freedom!"
Part 2

Allegro \( \approx 100 \)

Fl.

Cl.

Hn.

Tbn.

Pan

S. D.

Vln.

Cb.

Snare Drum

Open

pizz

arco
The Liberator King had arrived!

Black men in red coats;
Whilst the benevolent Dr. Jones was unsure of where he would spend the winter, his grand home burned to the ground, his ex-slaves donned His Majesty's uniform. Dressed in new clothing, it was the first time the soldiers had been addressed by their Sir names in public.
Said Nathaniel,

"We were black men in red coats;"
Our heads filled with the notion of liberty and happiness, 
knowing that in the Crown Colonies we were to have land 
and where we were to be free!
Free to go when and where we pleased, Lord.
Black men in red coats; and white men shaking in their boots!

Why taking a white man's surname was as defiant as taking his pig.
Said Nathaniel, "Lord, we bolted down the River of Freedom literally to make a name for ourselves!"
The Liberator King!
Who wasn't bothered a'call about liberty, 
but rather with cheap labor.

His troops were weary from the Napoleonic Wars.
Using the black refugees killed two birds with one stone;
Whilst drawing from the Yankee economy,
it added to his under-manned army.
Some of the refugees nurtured the African tradition of conjuring, whilst others felt Jesus grip their souls. But it didn't matter how you caught the spirit.
Said Nathaniel, “All I know is when a person sings, sings loud from his heart, a person gets strong inside! And when you get strong inside, the spirit arrests you! Lord, the spirit made us strong!”
And so they sang and they prayed,
And they bolted down the River of Freedom,
to join the Liberator King.

Fl.
Cl.
Hn.
Tbn.
Djem. 1
Bar. Solo
Vln.

Fl.
Djem. 1
Bar. Solo
Vln.

Fl.
Djem. 1
Bar. Solo
Vln.

Fl.
Djem. 1
Bar. Solo
Vln.

Fl.
Djem. 1
Bar. Solo
Vln.

Fl.
Djem. 1
Bar. Solo
Vln.

Fl.
Djem. 1
Bar. Solo
Vln.

Fl.
Djem. 1
Bar. Solo
Vln.

Fl.
Djem. 1
Bar. Solo
Vln.

Fl.
Djem. 1
Bar. Solo
Vln.

Fl.
Djem. 1
Bar. Solo
Vln.

Fl.
Djem. 1
Bar. Solo
Vln.

Fl.
Djem. 1
Bar. Solo
Vln.

Fl.
Djem. 1
Bar. Solo
Vln.

Fl.
Djem. 1
Bar. Solo
Vln.

Fl.
Djem. 1
Bar. Solo
Vln.

Fl.
Djem. 1
Bar. Solo
Vln.
Within six weeks of training the new recruits were ready. The Corps of Colonial Marines were a fierce band of freedom fighters. Disciplined and determined, these men were part of an attacking force that burned down the President's Palace in Washington. Later the black scars from the scorching fire were covered in snowy white paint. Black scars from men in red coats covered in snowy white paint. After the war, the President's Palace would be known for ever more...
as the White House.

Said Nathaniel,

“I shall go when and where I please, Lord.
Yes Lord, I shall go when and where I please.”
By the end of the war the British Navy had recruited six black companies.

And when they sailed for home in April 1815, the companies were brought to Bermuda, where they were stationed on Ireland Island.
"Lord, we were hard working artisans and labourers; We donned His Majesty’s uniform to join the British in the building of the new Royal Naval Dockyard. The superintendent was ill at ease with our independent spirit, Lord stating we were 'averse to... control', and subject to no restraint but their own caprice!"

Said Nathaniel,
And yet,
Sir Alexander Cochrane found great value in the Colonial Marines, describing the black companies as, "infinitely more dreaded than the English troops!" and recommended to London that they man the garrison as a reserve force to fend off further conflict with the Americans.
Said Nathaniel, "Black men in red coats and white men shaking in their boots.

Lord, we literally made a name for ourselves fighting as blood soldiers in a war that was not our own."
"Black men in red coats and white men shaking in their boots..

Lord, we literally made a name for ourselves

I shall go when and where I please, Lord.
The Liberator King had arrived.
The Liberator King!
Who believed like other English gentlemen,
"that the black race was as susceptible of refined civilisation
and capable of profit from education, as any other shade."
And was therefore at liberty to entertain the notion of blacks
as potentially being equal!

Yes Lord, I shall go when and where I please!"
in a society properly ruled by an aristocracy of superior birth names, education and wealth.

The Liberator king had arrived.
The Liberator King!
Who wasn't bothered a'tall about liberty for the black men in red coats,

but was very bothered with developing his sugar plantations in the West Indies.
Which required cheap labour...
Otherwise known as slave labour.

Meno mosso
Solo
Begin after "cheap labour"

He had needed help from the escaping slaves
to keep the annoying Yankee colonists at bay.
And so he found a way...

to keep the sugar in his tea.
Black men in red coats and white men shaking in their boots!
Lento tranquilo $q=66$

Fl.

Cl.

Pan

Vln.

Lento tranquilo $q=66$

Solo

Fl.

Cl.

Hn.

Pan

Bar. Solo

Vln.

Handbell (sounding F2)
Bell to be played by singer from back of auditorium.
Rhythm is notated approximately, but begin each bracketed group where indicated.

accel.

Part 3
**Molto lento* = 50**

From the back of the auditorium, walking slowly back to the stage during Verse 1. Breathe after beat two, even where this cuts a word.

---

**Female instrumentalists**

Hum - male players to decide which part to hum, though both parts must be represented (small notes indicate Baptist-style melodic embellishments: these should be hummed lightly).

---

**Male instrumentalists**

from the back of the auditorium, walking slowly back to the stage during Verse 1. Breathe after beat two, even where this cuts a word.

---

**Female instrumentalists**

Hum - male players to decide which part to hum, though both parts must be represented (small notes indicate Baptist-style melodic embellishments: these should be hummed lightly).

---

**Male instrumentalists**

from the back of the auditorium, walking slowly back to the stage during Verse 1. Breathe after beat two, even where this cuts a word.

---

**Female instrumentalists**

Hum - male players to decide which part to hum, though both parts must be represented (small notes indicate Baptist-style melodic embellishments: these should be hummed lightly).

---

**Male instrumentalists**

from the back of the auditorium, walking slowly back to the stage during Verse 1. Breathe after beat two, even where this cuts a word.

---

**Voice**

*Very calm (introvert even), with no sense of hurry whatsoever.

In *a cappella* sections, bars may be lengthened ad lib, especially the 7th and 14th bar of each verse.
gave
The
living
water
thirsty
to,

Toop
Fl.

Fl.

Cl.

Cl.

Hn.

Hn.

Tbn.

Tbn.

Pan

Pan

Tamb.

Tamb.

Female instrumentalists

Female instrumentalists

Male instrumentalists

Male instrumentalists

Bar. Solo

Bar. Solo

Narrator

Narrator

Vln.

Vln.

Cb.

Cb.

Violin

Double bass

Instrumentalists stop humming ad lib in time to play.
voice of Jesus say, "I am this dark world's
Light. Look unto Me; thy morn shall
Join in with humming

Cl.

Hn.

Tbn.

Pan

Tamb.

Bar. Solo

Narrator

Male instrumentalists

Female instrumentalists

Vln.

Cb.
On August 17th, 1816, the six companies disembarked in Trinidad, at San Fernando de Naparima, where they were organised, according to their military companies into villages near the Mission of Savanna Grande. Ex-sergeants were sworn in as the new constables of the Company Villages, and each family was rewarded for their service with 16 acres of land.
Hidden away by the Liberator King deep in the tropical forests of Trinidad, the villages were placed far away from the slaves who worked his plantations to avoid the possibility of putting notions of liberty and happiness into other men's heads.

But they were free!
And within a few years the hardworking soldiers had cleared the thick forests
where they began to grow provisions and red rice.
They had fought as blood soldiers for freedom and land
to make a name for themselves.

So they prayed and they sang
And they called themselves the "Merikins"
Ad lib. on the word "Hello" in the Spiritual Baptist style
(notes for guidance only)
Hello, hello, hello!

Handbell (sounding 8ve higher)

Vln.

Cb.

Narrator: Hello, hello, hello!

Handbell (sounding 8ve higher)
Said Nathaniel,  
"I shall go when and where I please, Lord!  
We bolted down the River of Freedom  
and settled on the living waters  
of the River of Hope.  
I shall go when and where I please, Lord.  
Yes, Lord, I shall go when and where I please!"
Till walk
Till travelling days are done