

A Grass-Green Pillow
GP-S001.5
SATB choir, a cappella

Joshua Shank

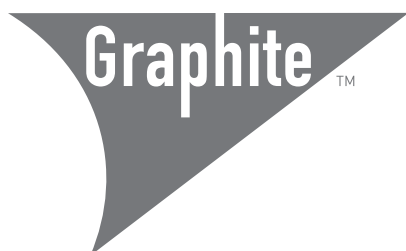
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Joshua Shank

A Grass-Green Pillow

for a cappella SATB choir

from *Color Madrigals*



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Performance Notes

Because of the tight harmonies, little to no vibrato is desirable.

Take a breath only when indicated by a rest.

If a crescendo appears without a starting/ending dynamic it is based on the treatment of the text.

Program Notes

A Grass-Green Pillow

If there were a “standard” subject for poetry centered on the season of spring it would probably be the subject of love and, more specifically, new love. Luckily, the genius of Keats takes on this traditional theme with the amazing, poetic language and seamless rhyme he is known for. I gravitated towards this particular text because of the symmetry between the first and second halves of the poem. In the first two stanzas it sounds like the stereotypical, overzealous young man trying to woo a maiden who might be above him in social standing and may or may not return his sentiments. However, once you reach the midway point (and especially in the last stanza), it suddenly becomes much more tender and romantic – as if he suddenly figures out the difference between lust and love.

I'd like to think he chooses the latter.

Text

‘Where be ye going, you Devon maid’?

Where be ye going, you Devon maid?

And what have ye there i' the basket?

Ye tight little fairy, just fresh from the dairy,

Will ye give me some cream if I ask it?

I love your meads, and I love your flowers,

And I love your junkets mainly,

But 'hind the door I love kissing more,

O look not so disdainly.

I love your hills, and I love your dales,

And I love your flocks a-bleating

But O, on the heather to lie together,

With both our hearts a-beating!

I'll put your basket all safe in a nook,

And your shawl I hang up on this willow,

And we will sigh in the daisy's eye

And kiss on a grass-green pillow.

– John Keats (England, 1795-1821)

FYI

If you're not a rigorous student of the classics it can be difficult to read through the poetry and understand everything Keats is talking about. Listed here are some of the more obscure things he mentions in the course of his writing which, once you know what they are, can really make each text come to life.

'hind: short for behind and should rhyme with mind, find, bind, etc.

junket: a sweet, custard-like food curdled with rennet (a preparation or extract of the rennet membrane of a calf's stomach used to curdle milk and make cheese, junket, etc.)

mead: short for meadow and should rhyme with lead, deed, need, etc.

A special note: I am especially indebted to Matthew Cullotton and Vicki Peters for supporting the creation of such a large work. They and their respective choirs gave all six pieces amazing premieres in three different “volumes” (red/green, purple/yellow and blue/orange).

A Grass-Green Pillow

from *Color Madrigals*
for Jocelyn Hagen and Tim Takach
SATB Chorus, a cappella

John Keats

Joshua Shank

Playfully (♩ = ca. 138)
fp *sub. mf* TM

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Musical score for SATB Chorus, a cappella. The score consists of six staves: Soprano (S), Alto (A), Tenor (T), Bass (B), and two additional staves. The Soprano staff has lyrics 'Where, Where, Where'. The Alto staff has lyrics 'Where, Where, Where, Where'. The Tenor staff has lyrics 'Where, Where, Where'. The Bass staff has lyrics 'Where, Where, Where'. The score includes dynamics like *fp* and *sub. mf*, and a tempo marking of ca. 138. There is a large 'Graphite' watermark across the score.

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4

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S Where, Where,

S Where, Where, Where, Where, Where,

A Where, Where, Where, Where, Where, Where,

A Where, Where, Where,

T *f* Where be ye go - ing, you — Dev-on — maid? —

B *f* Where be ye go - ing, you — Dev-on — maid? —

8

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S Where, Where, Where,

S Where, Where, Where, Where, Where, Where,

A Where, Where, Where, Where, Where,

A Where, Where,

T And what — have — ye there in the

B And what — have — ye there in the

12

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S Where, Where,

S Where, Where, Where, Where,

A Where, Where, Where, Where, Where,

A Where, Where, — Where,

T bas - ket? Ye tight — lit - tle

B bas - ket? Ye tight — lit - tle

Bring out T1 for next 4 measures

16

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S Where, Where, Where,

S Where, Where, Where, Where, Where, Where,

A Where, Where, Where, Where, Where,

A Where, Where,

T fair - y, — just fresh — from the dair-y, — Will ye give — me — some

B fair - y, — just fresh — from the dair-y, — Will ye give — me — some

Bring out B1 for next 2 measures

20

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S Where, Where, O, *f*

S Where, Where, Where, O, *f*

A Where, Where, Where, *f* Where, O, *f*

A Where, Where, *sub. f* Where, O, *f*

T cream if I ask it? I love your

B cream if I ask it? I love your

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24

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S O, O,

S O, O,

A O, O, O, O,

A O, O, O, O,

T meads, and I love your flow - ers, And I love your

B meads, and I love your flow - ers, And I love your

Graphite notable, elevated.

28

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mf like the beginning

S O, Where, Where,

mf like the beginning

S O, O, Where, Where,

f *mf* like the beginning

A O, O, O, Where, Where,

f

A O, O,

T jun - kets main - ly, But 'hind the door I love

f

B jun - kets main - ly, But 'hind the door I love

32

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S Where, Where, Where, Where, Where, Where, Where,

S Where, Where, Where, Where, Where,

A Where, Where, Where, Where, Where, Where, Where, Where,

mf like the beginning

A Where, Where, Where, Where,

T kis - sing more, O look not so disdain - ly.

sub. mf into the background

B kis - sing more, O look not so disdain - ly. O

36 *sub. f* *warmly* *mf*

S Where, I

A Where,

T *sub. mf into the background* — O look not so dis-dain - ly, — O look not so dis-dain-

B look not so dis-dain - ly, — O look not so dis-dain - ly, — O

40 *mf warmly*

S love your hills, and I love your dales, And I

A I love your hills, and I love your dales,

T - ly, — O look not so dis-dain - ly, — O look not so dis-dain-

B look not so dis-dain - ly, — O look not so dis-dain - ly, — O

44

S love your flocks a - bleat - ing

A And I love your flocks a - bleat - ing

T - ly, — O look not so dis-dain - ly, — O look not so dis-dain -

B look not so dis-dain - ly, — O look not so dis-dain - ly, — O

48

S — But O, on the heath - er to lie to -

A — But O, on the heath - er to lie to -

T - ly, — O look not so dis-dain - ly, — O look not so dis-dain -

B look not so dis-dain - ly, — O look not so dis-dain - ly, — O

f

f

f more legato than before

f more legato than before

52 *ff*

S
geth - er, With both our hearts a - beat - ing! _____

A
geth - er, With both our hearts a - beat - ing! _____

T
- ly, — With both our hearts a - beat - ing! With both our hearts a - beat -

B
look not so dis - dain - ly, — With both our hearts a - beat - ing! _____

ff

56 *A little slower* $\text{♩} = \text{ca. } 100$ *mf* gently, with appropriate word stresses to the end

S
— I'll put your bas - ket all

A
— I'll put your bas - ket all

T
- ing! — I'll put your bas - ket all

B
— I'll put your bas - ket all

mf gently, with appropriate word stresses to the end

60

S safe in a nook, And your shawl I hang up on this wil - low, _____

A safe in a nook, And your shawl I hang up on this wil - low, _____

T safe in a nook, And your shawl I hang up on this wil - low, _____

B safe in a nook, And your shawl I hang up on this wil - low, _____

65

S *mf* And we will _____ sigh in the dai - sy's eye _____

A *mf* — And we will _____ sigh in the dai - sy's eye _____

T *mf* — And we will _____ sigh in the dai - sy's eye _____

B *mf* — And we will _____ sigh in the dai - sy's eye _____

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70 *Slower* (♩ = ca. 84)

S *mp* And kiss on a grass - green *mf* pil - low.

A *mp* bring out And kiss on a grass green *mf* (m)

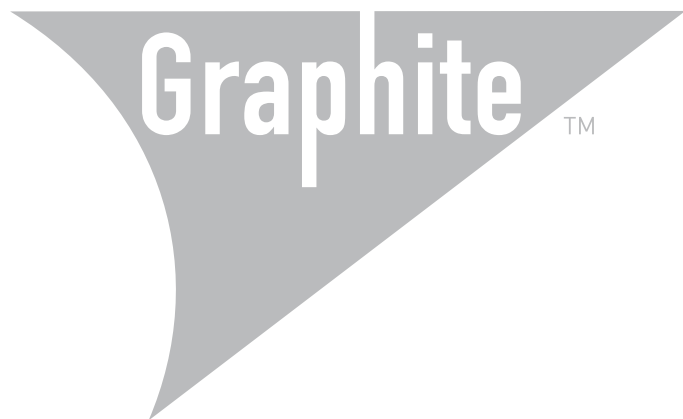
T *mp* And kiss on a grass - green *mf* (m)

B *mp* And kiss on a grass - green *mf* (m)

The image shows a musical score for four voices: Soprano (S), Alto (A), Tenor (T), and Bass (B). The score is in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. The tempo is marked 'Slower' with a metronome marking of approximately 84 beats per minute. The lyrics are 'And kiss on a grass - green pil - low.' for Soprano, and 'And kiss on a grass green (m)' for Alto, Tenor, and Bass. The score includes dynamic markings of mezzo-piano (mp) and mezzo-forte (mf), and features a 'Graphite' watermark.

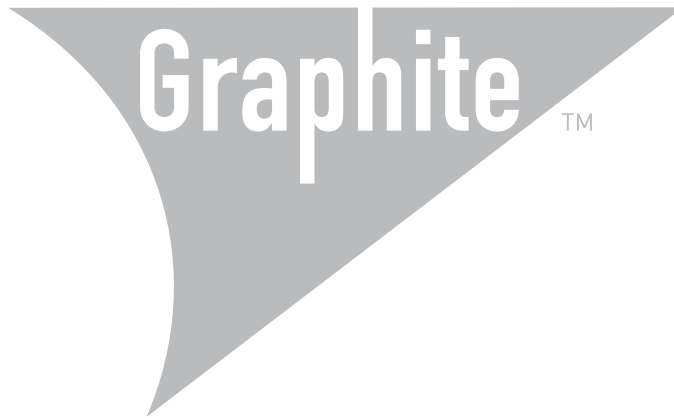
Burnsville, March 2007

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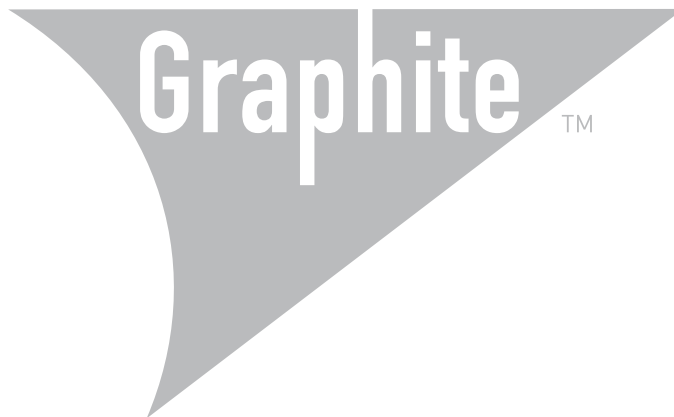
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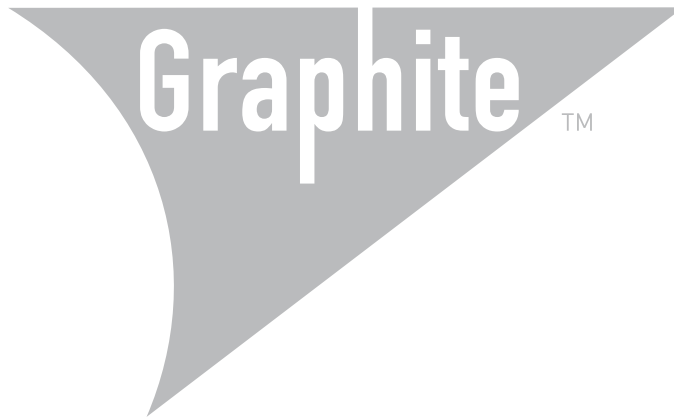
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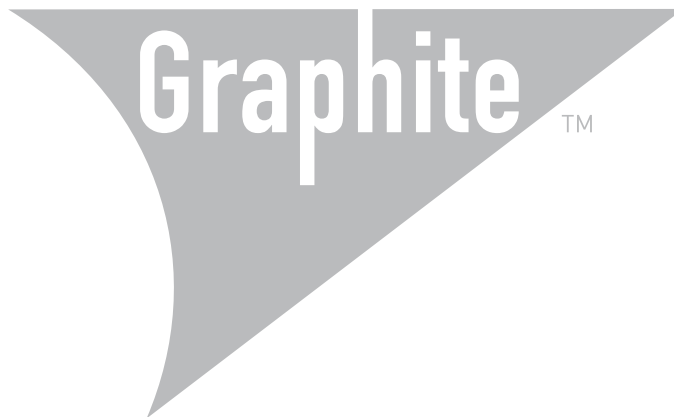
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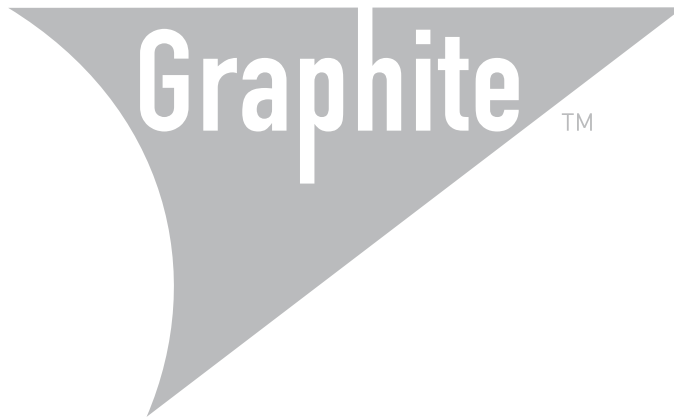
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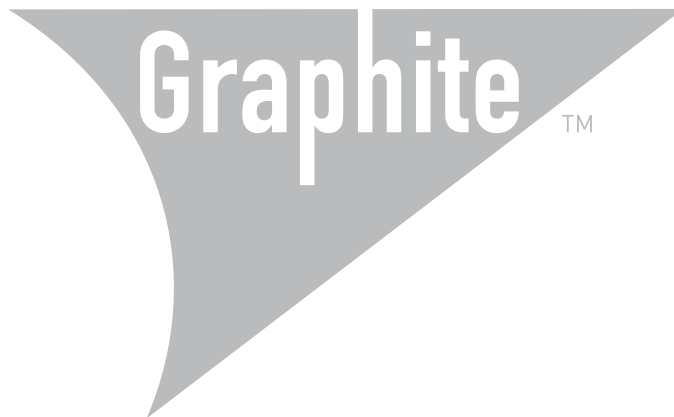
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Joshua Shank



Joshua Shank (b. 1980) has been commissioned by organizations such as the Lorelei Ensemble, the Choral Project, the American Choral Directors Association, and the Association for Music in International Schools. From 2004-2014, he served as Composers-In-Residence for the Minneapolis-based professional choir, The Singers, where he collaborated annually to expand and invigorate the repertoire for professional-caliber ensembles through innovative programming as well as new works written specifically for the ensemble. In 2002, he became the youngest recipient ever of the Raymond W. Brock Composition Award from the American Choral Directors Association. A native of Minnesota, his music was recently featured in a documentary about the extensive choral tradition in the upper Midwest, *Never Stop Singing*, and his published works have sold over 150,000 copies worldwide.

Joshua received his undergraduate degree in Music Education from Luther College where he studied conducting with Weston Noble. He has also earned master's and doctoral degrees in Musicology and Composition from the University of Texas at Austin where he studied with Donald Grantham and the late opera composer Daniel Catán. A fierce advocate for students' access to music education, he served as a public-school teacher in Minneapolis/St. Paul for many years before going on to teach at

Gonzaga University, Valley City State University, and Eastern Washington University. When he's not writing music, you can probably find him biking, studying vegetarian cooking, or watching hilariously bad movies.

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Timothy C. Takach	GP-T010	Neither Angels, Nor Demons, Nor Powers	SSATBB, a cappella
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Joe Twist	GP-T021	Weep, O Mine Eyes	SSAATTBB a cappella
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