

Orange-Mounts of More Soft Ascent
GP-S001.6
SATB choir, a cappella

Joshua Shank

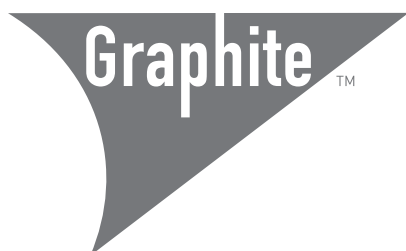
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Joshua Shank

Orange-Mounts of More Soft Ascent

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

Orange-Mounts of More Soft Ascent

It seems that Keats was not a fan of the color orange. I can't say that I am either but, after undertaking the task of reading Keats' collected works to find poems that mentioned colors, I wish he would have enjoyed it a little more because it seems that in his short life he only used the word "orange" once in his poetry. Granted that it's one of those words that's sort of famous for not rhyming with anything, but it still seemed ironic that in 458 pages the color only came up once.

That being said, I was lucky he decided to use it in a great poem. In the eight lines I excerpted Keats sprays invective on the prideful like a literary skunk (and even mentions another color in the process). He builds toward a final, desperate accusation to the heavens spitting out consonants like a great snake along the way.

Text

Excerpt from *Isabella; or, The Pot of Basil*

Why were they proud? Because their marble fountains

Gushed with more pride than do a wretch's tears?

Why were they proud? Because fair orange-mounts

Were of more soft ascent than Lazar stairs?

Why were they proud? Because red-lined accounts

Were richer than the songs of Grecian years?

Why were they proud? again we ask aloud,

Why in the name of Glory were they proud?

– John Keats (*England, 1795-1821*)

A special note: I am especially indebted to Matthew Culloton 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).

Orange-Mounts of More Soft Ascent

from *Color Matrigals*
for Tea Richwice

SATB Chorus, a cappella

John Keats

Joshua Shank

Without sensation or emotion (♩ = ca. 60)

notable elevated.

mp

S Why? _____

A **mp** Why? _____ Why? _____ Why? _____

T **mp** Why? _____ Why? _____ Why? _____ Why? _____

B **mp** Why? _____ Why? _____ Why? _____ Why? _____

5

S Why _____ were they proud? _____ **mf**

A _____ Why _____ were they proud? _____ **mf**

T Why? _____ Why _____ were they proud? _____ **mf**

B Why? _____ Why _____ were they proud? _____ **mf**

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With spitting consonants (♩ = ca. 140)

9

poco rit. *mp*

S

A

T

B

Why? _____

Why? _____

Why? _____

15

mf

T

B

Why? _____

Why? _____

Why? _____

Why? _____

20

mf *no vib.*

S

mf *no vib.*

A

simile TM

T

simile

B

Why were they proud? Be -

Why were they proud? Be -

Why? _____

Why? _____

Why? _____

Why? _____

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23 *no vib.*

S
cause their mar - ble founts Gushed with more pride than do a

A
cause their mar - ble founts Gushed with more pride than do a

T
Why? Why? Why? Why?

B
Why? Why? Why? Why?

27 *f*

S
wretch's tears? Why? Why?

A
wretch's tears? Why? Why?

T
Why? Why? Why? Why?

B
Why? Why? Why?

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31 *mf*

S Why? — Why? — Why? — Why?

A *mf* Why? Why? Why? Why?

T *mf* Why were they proud? — Be-cause fair — orange - mounts Were of

B *mf* Why were — they proud? — Be-cause fair — orange - mounts Were of

no vib. — *TM* — *no vib.* — *no vib.* —

35

S Why? — Why? — Why? —

A Why? Why? Why?

T more soft — as - cent than la - zar stairs? —

B more soft — as - cent than la - zar stairs? —

f *f* *f*

no vib. — *TM* — *no vib.* —

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39 *sub. f* *mf*

S Why? Why? Why were they proud? Be-cause

A *sub. f* *mf* Why? Why? were they proud? Be-cause

T *sub. f* *mf* Why? Why? Why were they proud? Be-cause

B *sub. f* *mf* Why? Why? Why were they proud? Be-cause

43 *mf*

S red-lined ac-counts Were rich-er than the songs of Gre-cian years?

A *mf* red-lined ac-counts Were rich-er than the songs of Gre-

T *mf* red-lined ac-counts Were rich-er than the songs of Gre-cian

B *mf* red-lined ac-counts Were rich-er than the songs of

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47

S *f* Why? Why?

A *f* cian years? Why? Why?

T *f* years? Why? Why?

B Gre - cian years? Why Why

51

S *f* Why were they proud? a - gain we ask a - loud,

A *f* Why were they proud? a - gain we ask a - loud,

T *f* Why were they proud? a - gain we ask a - loud,

B *f* Why were they proud? a - gain we ask a - loud,

no rit. to the end
ff
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55

S
Why in the name of Glo - ry were they proud? _____

A
Why in the name of Glo - ry were they proud? _____

T
Why in the name of Glo - ry were they proud? _____

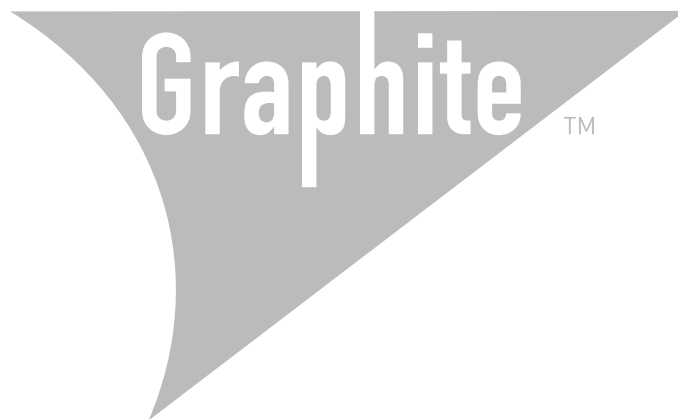
B
Why in the name of Glo - ry were they proud? _____

ff
ff
ff
ff

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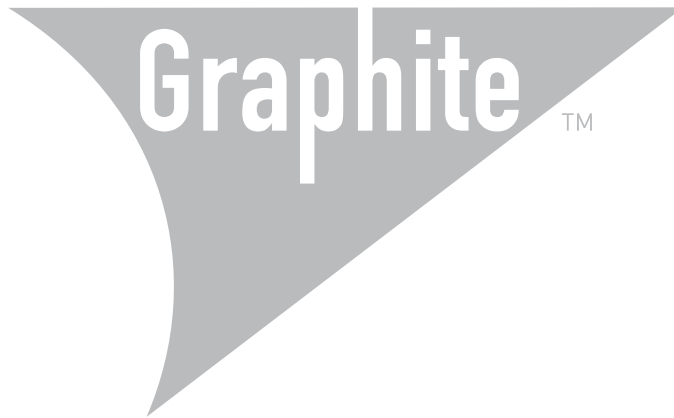
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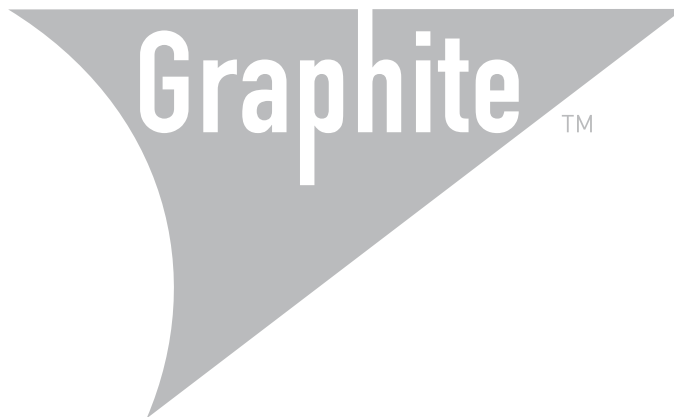
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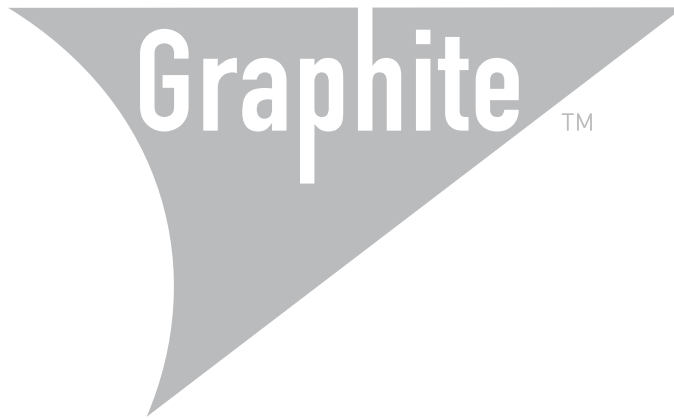
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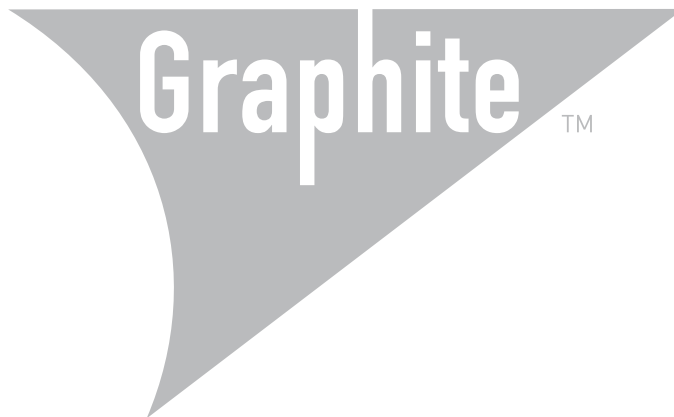
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Joshua Shank



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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