

Desiderata
GP-L008
SATB a cappella

Isaac Lovdahl

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Isaac Lovdahl

Desiderata

for SATB choir a cappella



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Text:

Be gentle with yourself. You are a child of the universe no less than the trees and the stars. You have a right to be here.

- Excerpted from Max Ehrmann's Desiderata (1927)

You are here — life exists and identity. The powerful play goes on, and you may contribute a verse.

- Excerpted from Walt Whitman's "O Me! O Life!" (1892) and adapted for use by the composer

From the Composer:

"Desiderata" explores universal themes of identity, self worth, and human potential in the face of existential uncertainty. We each have something unique and meaningful to offer the world, despite all our fears and doubts. What meaning will you create for yourself today? What will your contribution to humanity be? This piece was born out of a desire to create something greater than myself and to encourage others to do the same.

- Isaac Lovdahl, 2025

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Dedicated to my nephew, Zayden Isaac Scheett

Desiderata

for SATB choir a cappella

Max Ehrmann & Walt Whitman

Isaac Loydahl

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With a subtle, sinuous grace ♩ = 57™

Soprano *p* Be— gen - tle, be— gen - - tle, be— gen - tle with your- *mp*

Alto *p* Be, be gen - tle with your- *mp*

Tenor *p* Be— gen - - tle, be gen - tle with your- *mp*

Bass *mp* Be— gen - tle with your-

Piano *for rehearsal only*

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7

mf *p* *mf*

S self, be gen - tle with your - self. You are a child of the u - ni - verse,

A self, be gen - tle with your - self. You are a child of the u - ni - verse,

T self, be gen - tle with your - self. You are a child of the u - ni - verse,

B self, be gen - tle with your - self. You are a child of the u - ni - verse,

12

f *f* *f* *mp* *mp*

S you are a child of the u - ni - verse, you are a child of the u - ni - verse.

A you are a child of the u - ni - verse, you are a child of the u - ni - verse.

T you are a child of the u - ni - verse, you are a child of the u - ni - verse, the

B you are a child of the u - ni - verse, you are a child of the u - ni - verse, the

17

mp *mf*

S no less than the trees, no less than the trees and the

A no less than the trees, no less than the trees and the

T u - - ni - verse no less than the trees and the

B u - - ni - verse no less than the trees and the

molto rit. *a tempo*

ff *mp* *pp*

20

S stars; you have a right, you have a right

A stars; you have a right, you have a right

T stars; you have a right, you have a right

B stars; you have a right, you have a right

25 *mf* *rubato* *p* *mf* *p*

S to be, to be

A to, to be, to be

T you have a right...

B you have a right...

Distantly, but with solemnity ♩ = c. 98

30 *dim. al niente* *mf* *mf*

S here. Mmm

A here. Mmm

T The pow - er - ful play goes on, the pow - er - ful play goes on, the

B The pow - er - ful play goes on, the pow - er - ful play goes on, the

35

mf
S You are here— life exists and i - den - ti - ty.

mf
A You are here— life exists and i - den - ti - ty.

T pow - er - ful play goes on, the pow - er - ful play goes on, the pow - er - ful play goes

B pow - er - ful play goes on, the pow - er - ful play goes on, the pow - er - ful play goes

40

f
S goes on...

f
A goes on...

f on, goes on, *sub. p* the pow - er - ful play goes on, the

f on, goes on, *sub. p* the pow - er - ful play goes on, the

46

mp
S You are

mp
A You are a child

mf
T pow - er - ful play goes on, no

mp *cresc. poco a poco*
B pow - er - ful play goes on, the pow - er - ful play goes on, the

50

mf
S here life exists and i -

mf
A of the u - - - ni - verse,

mf
T less than the trees and the stars;

mf
B pow - er - ful play goes on, the pow - er - ful play goes on, the

54

S den - ti - ty. You are a child of the u - ni - verse and

A you are a child of the u - ni - verse and

T the pow - er - ful play goes on, and

B pow - er - ful play goes on, the pow - er - ful play goes on, and

molto rit.

58

S you may con - tri - bute a verse.

A you may con - tri - bute a verse.

T you... The

B you... The

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63 *Much slower, expressively*
p

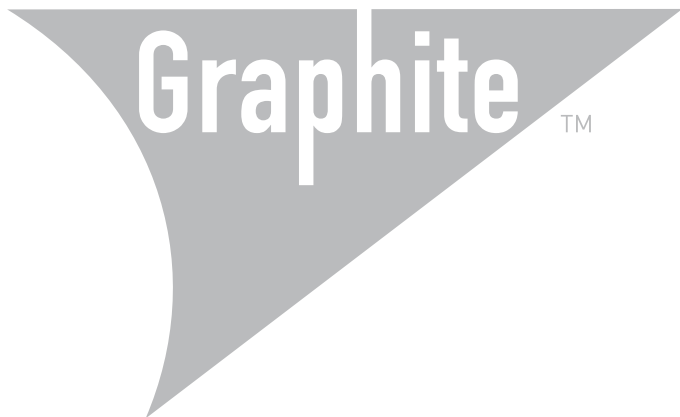
S
 Mmm _____ The pow - er - ful play goes on.

A
 Mmm _____ The pow - er - ful play goes _____ on.

T
 8 pow - er - ful play goes on, the pow - er - ful play goes on.

B
 pow - er - ful play goes on, the pow - er - ful play goes on.

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Isaac Lovdahl

Though the great Waters sleep

GP-L006

7 *molto f* *mp*

S
Though the great waters sleep,

A
Though the great waters sleep,

T
Though the great waters sleep,

B
Though the great waters sleep,

7 *f* *mf espress.*

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11 *p*

S
Ooo

A
Ooo

T
Ooo

B
Ooo

11 *mp*

2

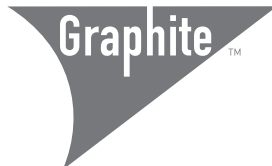
Isaac Lovdahl



Isaac Lovdahl is an award-winning composer, conductor, educator, and bass-baritone vocalist who serves as the Director of Choral Activities at Bemidji State University and Artistic Director of the Bemidji Chorale. Prior to his appointment at BSU, Isaac served as a music educator and director of choirs at the University of North Dakota, Cretin-Derham Hall High School, and Sartell High School. His music has been described as “a revelation” and “remarkable” (The American Prize), and is increasingly gaining traction throughout the choral music world. Over the past 5 years, Isaac has received award recognition, commissions, and premieres from: Cantus, the Yale Glee Club, The Singers - Minnesota Choral Artists, the Young New Yorkers’ Chorus, the Cambridge Chamber Singers, the Bellevue Chamber Chorus, The American Prize, the Youth Chorale of Central Minnesota, the Festival of New American Music, the North Dakota State University choirs, the Ithaca College Choral Composition Festival, Minneapolis SongSLAM, and the North Dakota Music Teachers Association in conjunction with the Music Teachers National Association. To learn more, please visit isaaclovdahl.com.

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