

MSC0017A
Score



GRATITUDE

for SATB chorus a cappella

[2024]

*Premiered by the
Western University Singers
Official Selection of the 2024 MSC Call for Scores*

text by

L.M. MONTGOMERY

music by

H. ZACK FERNS



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ABOUT THE PIECE

My setting of Montgomery's "Gratitude" aims to reflect the poem's powerful portrayal of the emotions felt in a close friendship. When writing the piece, I mainly focused on two of the most basic musical building blocks, melody and harmony, to musically support Montgomery's imagery, while keeping the texture simple and rhythms natural to ensure the text is clearly delivered. This is one of my favourite poems, and it is my sincere hope that my setting only adds to the effect given by Montgomery's beautiful text.

ORIGINAL TEXT

L.M. Montgomery (1874-1942)

Gratitude

*I thank thee, friend, for the beautiful thought
That in words well chosen thou gavest to me,
Deep in the life of my soul it has wrought
With its own rare essence to ever imbue me,
To gleam like a star over devious ways,
To bloom like a flower on the drearest days
Better such gift from thee to me
Than gold of the hills or pearls of the sea.*

*For the luster of jewels and gold may depart,
And they have in them no life of the giver,
But this gracious gift from thy heart to my heart
Shall witness to me of thy love forever;
Yea, it shall always abide with me
As a part of my immortality;
For a beautiful thought is a thing divine,
So I thank thee, oh, friend, for this gift of thine.*

MSC Presents

MSC Presents, launched in 2023 by Toronto's Modern Sound Collective (artistic director: Kai Leung), is a progressive new publication label serving as a professional distribution platform for the music of MSC-affiliated composers. Offering an extremely competitive royalty rate to its artists, this initiative aims to create accessible opportunities for growth and collaboration for the many talented young choral composers in the GTA and beyond.

PRINTING

Choral scores distributed by MSC Presents are formatted for saddle-stitch 8.5x11 printing.

ABOUT THE COMPOSER

H. Zack Ferns (b. 2002) is a composer, music theory student, pianist, and choral singer currently pursuing a Master of Music in Music Theory at Indiana University's Jacobs School of Music. He is an alumnus of Western University's Don Wright Faculty of Music from where he holds a Bachelor of Music in Composition. He also holds the ARCT in Piano Performance from the Royal Conservatory of Music, Toronto. As a composer, Zack mainly composes for choir, and he enjoys setting texts by Canadian poets.



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Zack grew up in Hamilton, Ontario, and music has always been a large part of his life. He has played the piano since he was four years old, and was always involved in other musical endeavours growing up. Recently, he has enjoyed being a member of the Western University Singers, and now sings with NOTUS, the Indiana University Contemporary Vocal Ensemble.

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Tenderly, poco rubato $\text{♩} = 75$

Musical score for the first system of 'GRATITUDE'. It features five staves: Soprano, Alto, Tenor, Bass, and Piano (for rehearsal only). The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 2/4. The tempo is 'Tenderly, poco rubato' with a metronome marking of 75. The dynamics are marked *p* (piano), *mp* (mezzo-piano), and *p* (piano). The lyrics for all parts are: 'I thank thee friend for the beautiful thought That in words well'.

Musical score for the second system of 'GRATITUDE'. It features five staves: Soprano (S.), Alto (A.), Tenor (T.), Bass (B.), and Piano (Pno.). The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 4/4. The dynamics are marked *mp* (mezzo-piano) and *pp* (pianissimo). A rehearsal mark '9' is placed above the Soprano staff. The lyrics for all parts are: 'chos-en thou gav - est to me, Deep in the life of my soul it has'.

12 *mf* *p* *poco rit.*

S. wrought with its own rare es - sence to ev - er im - bue

A. wrought with its own rare es - sence to ev - er im - bue

T. wrought with its own rare es - sence to ev - er im - bue

B. wrought with its own rare es - sence to ev - er im - bue

Pno.

17 *mp* *mf* *mp* *mf*

S. moving ahead, with joy ♩ = 85
 in To gleam like a star o - ver de - vious ways, To

A. me, To gleam like a star o - ver de - vious ways, To

T. me, To gleam like a star o - ver de - vious ways, To

B. me, To gleam like a star o - ver de - vious ways,

18 *mp* *mf*

moving ahead, with joy ♩ = 85

Pno.

22 *f* *poco rit.* *mp* **26** *p* Tempo primo

S. bloom like a flow'r on the drear-est days Bet-ter such gift from thee to

A. bloom like a flow'r on the drear-est days Bet-ter such gift from thee to

T. bloom like a flow'r on the drear-est days Bet-ter such gift from thee to

B. To bloom like a flow'r Bet-ter such gift from thee to

Pno. *f* *poco rit.* *mp* *p* **26** Tempo primo

28 *mp* *p* *poco accel.*

S. me Than gold of the hills or pearls of the sea. For the

A. me Than gold of the hills or pearls of the sea. For the

T. me Than gold of the hills or pearls of the sea. For the

B. me Than gold of the hills or pearls of the sea. For the

Pno. *mp* *p* *rit.* *poco accel.*

33 a little quicker, with passion ♩ = 85

poco rit.

A tempo

S. *mf* lus - ter of jew - els and gold may de - part, And they have in

A. *mf* lus - ter of jew - els and gold may de - part, And they have in

T. *mf* lus - ter of jew - els and gold may de - part, And they have in

B. *mf* lus - ter of jew - els and gold may de - part, And they have in

Pno. *mf* 33 a little quicker, with passion ♩ = 85 poco rit. A tempo

38

poco rit.

A tempo

S. *mf* them no life of the giv - er, But this grac - ious gift from thy heart to

A. *mf* them no life of the giv - er, But this grac - ious gift from thy heart to

T. *mf* them no life of the giv - er, But this grac - ious gift from thy heart to

B. *mf* them no life of the giv - er, This gift from thy heart to

Pno. *mf* poco rit. A tempo

43 *poco rit.* *mp* *p* *Tempo primo*

S. my heart shall wit-ness to me of thy love_ for - ev - er; Yea, it shall al - ways a -

A. my heart shall wit-ness thy love for - ev - er; Yea, it shall al - ways a -

T. my heart shall wit-ness thy love for - ev - er; Yea, it shall al - ways a -

B. my heart shall wit-ness thy love for - ev - er; Yea, it shall al - ways a -

Pno. *poco rit.* *poco meno mosso* *rit.* *Tempo primo*

49 *mp* *p* *mp*

S. - bide with me. As a part of my im - mor - ta - - li -

A. - bide with me. As a part of my im - mor - ta - - li -

T. - bide with me. As a part of my im - mor - ta - - li -

B. - bide with me. As a part of my im - mor - ta - - li -

Pno.

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54 *mf* moving ahead, resolutely ♩ = 80 *molto rit.* *f div.*

S. - ty; For a beau - ti - ful thought is a thing di - vine,

A. - ty; For a beau - ti - ful thought is a thing di - vine,

T. - ty; For a beau - ti - ful thought is a thing di - vine,

B. - ty; For a beau - ti - ful thought is a thing di - vine,

Pno. moving ahead, resolutely ♩ = 80 *molto rit.*

59 **60** *p* *ur.* poco meno mosso, with intention ♩ = 70 *poco rit.*

S. I thank thee, oh friend, for this gift of thine.

A. So I thank thee, oh friend, for this gift of thine.

T. So I thank thee, oh friend, for this gift of thine.

B. So I thank thee, oh friend, for this gift of thine.

Pno. **61** poco meno mosso, with intention ♩ = 70 *poco rit.*

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 VOICINGS INDICATE MAXIMUM DIVISI SPLITS WITHIN EACH WORK

Danial Sheibani	<u><i>The Affable Enigma</i></u>	SSSAAATTTBB a cappella	Rūmī	3 min	2021	MSC0009
Sami Anguaya	<u><i>Dawn, Where Are You Now?</i></u>	SSAATTBB, piano, 2 woodblocks	Sami Anguaya	4 min	2024	MSC0013
Kai Leung	<u><i>Generation 2.5</i></u>	SSAATTBB a cappella	Kai Leung	7 min	2024	MSC0014
H. Zack Ferns	<u><i>Gratitude</i></u>	SATB a cappella	L.M. Montgomery	4 min	2024	MSC0017
Rémi St-Jacques	<u><i>Hope is the Thing with Feathers</i></u>	SATB a cappella	Emily Dickinson	3.5 min	2020	MSC0019
Michael Nunes	<u><i>I.</i></u>	SSAATTBB a cappella	Erica Kath	3 min	2019	MSC0018
Sami Anguaya	<u><i>Lying Awake, Waiting</i></u>	SSAATTBB a cappella	Tom Robinson & Sami Anguaya	4 min	2022	MSC0001
Nicholas Wanstall	<u><i>May This Place</i></u>	SSAATB a cappella	Nicholas Wanstall	3 min	2018	MSC0006
Hirad Moradi	<u><i>Ah, Moon of My Delight!</i></u>	SSAATTBB a cappella	Omar Khayyam	8 min	2022	MSC0015
Nicholas Wanstall	<u><i>Le Pont Mirabeau</i></u>	SATB, soloist, & piano	Guillaume Apollinaire	4 min	2024	MSC0016
Madox Terrell	<u><i>Remember</i></u>	SSAATTBB a cappella	Christina Rossetti	2.5 min	2020	MSC0010
Carol Kayee Mak	<u><i>The Sirens' Song</i></u>	SSATBB & piano	William Browne	5 min	2019	MSC0008
Emily Green	<u><i>Somewhere in Space</i></u>	SSAA & percussion trio	Edith Södergran	3.5 min	2023	MSC0002
Elizabeth Legierski	<u><i>Spring and Fall</i></u>	SSAATTBB a cappella	Gerard Manley Hopkins	3 min	2018	MSC0007
Francesca Hauser	<u><i>That Shadow, My Likeness</i></u>	SSAATTBB & piano	Walt Whitman & Christina Rossetti	4 min	2024	MSC0013
Tyrese Walters	<u><i>This is Not Love</i></u>	SSAATTBB a cappella	Elsa Gidlow	3 min	2024	MSC0020
E.K.R. Hammell	<u><i>Too Still for Dreams</i></u>	SSAATTBB & piano	A.E. Wetherald	4.5 min	2022	MSC0003
Francesca Hauser	<u><i>Twilight</i></u>	SSAATTBB & piano	Sara Teasdale	3.5 min	2022	MSC0004
Emily Green	<u><i>What the Silence Offers</i></u>	SSAATTBB, soloist, & amplified speaker	Erica Kath	9 min	2022	MSC0012
Kai Leung	<u><i>When David Heard</i></u>	SSAATTBB a cappella	2 Samuel 18:33	3 min	2022	MSC0005