

Gordon Thornett

# THREE FLOWER SONGS

SETTINGS OF POEMS BY ROBERT HERRICK

*for Women's Choir (SSA)  
A Cappella*

2015



**SWIRLY MUSIC**

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# THREE FLOWER SONGS

*for Women's Choir (SSA)*  
*A Cappella*

1. To Blossoms      2. To Daffodils      3. Gather ye Rosebuds

All three of these poems are by the seventeenth century English lyric poet, Robert Herrick (1591-1674). While flowers are referred to in each of them, their main common theme is time - in particular the briefness of our lives here on this earth, and the need to use this time well.

'Gather ye rosebuds' was in fact the first to be written, and this was in response to a request by the University of Michigan Women's Glee Club for a song with the theme of time. It was premiered in Ann Arbor, Michigan in November 2013, and a recording can be heard on the Swirly Music website (see below).

'To Blossoms' and 'To Daffodils' were written more recently, and are awaiting a good recording. Whilst 'Gather ye Rosebuds', which can be obtained separately from Swirly Music, may be performed on its own, it is suggested that the other two pieces would work best in a sequence, as here presented.

*Gordon Thornett has written a number of choral settings for Christmas and other seasons of the year. His Festive Overture, 'The Joy of Christmas' is published by Faber Music, and some of his choral pieces are published by Oxford University Press, Norsk Musikforlag and Shawnee Press. There are also about twenty pieces, mainly choral, listed under his name on SwirlyMusic.org, which can be ordered in printed form or as digital downloads (and recordings of many of these can be heard on the website).*

[www.newcarols.com](http://www.newcarols.com)

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# 1. To Blossoms

Robert Herrick

Gordon Thornett

**Moderato** ♩ = 96

**SOPRANO 1** *p* So fast, \_\_\_\_\_ so fast! *mf* Fair pled-ges of a

**SOPRANO 2** *p* So fast, \_\_\_\_\_ so fast! *mf* Fair pled-ges of a

**ALTO** *p* So fast, \_\_\_\_\_ so fast! *mf* Fair pled-ges of a

6

fruit-ful tree, Why do ye fall so fast? Your date is not so past, Your date is not so

fruit-ful tree, Why do ye fall so fast? Your date is not so past, Your date is not so

fruit-ful tree, Why so fast? Your date is not so past, Your date is not so

12

*mp* past. But you must stay but here a-while, To blush and gen- tly\_ smile; And go at

*mp* past. But you must stay but here a-while, To blush and gen- tly\_ smile; And go at

*mp* past. But you must stay but here a-while, To blush and gen- tly\_ smile; And go at

18

*p*

last. Why do ye fall so fast?

*p*

last. Why do ye fall so fast?

*p*

last. Why do ye fall so fast?

23

*mf* *f* *mp*

What, were ye born to be An hour or half's de - light; And so to bid good-

*mf* *f*

What, were ye born to be An hour or half's de - light;

*mf* *f*

What, were ye born to be An hour or half's de - light;

28

*mf* *mp*

night? 'Twas pi-ty Na-turebroughtye forth, Mere-ly to show yourworth, And

*mp* *mf*

Good- night. 'Twas pi-ty Na-turebrought ye forth, Mere-ly to show yourworth,

*mp* *mf*

Good night. 'Twas pi-ty Na-turebrought ye forth, Mere-ly to show yourworth,

34

*p* lose you quite. Why do ye fall so fast? \_\_\_\_\_

*mp* And lose you quite. *p* Why do ye fall so fast? \_\_\_\_\_

*mp* And lose \_\_\_\_\_ you quite. *p* Why do ye fall so fast? But *f* *legato*

40 *f* *legato*

But you are love - ly leaves where we may read howsoon things have their

*f* *legato*

But you are love - ly leaves, where we may\_ read howsoon things have their

you are love-ly leaves, \_\_\_\_\_ where we may\_ read howsoon things have their

44 *mf*

end, though ne'er so brave: And af - ter they haveshown their pride Like you a -

*mf*

end, ne'er so brave: And af - ter they haveshown their pride Like you a -

*mf*

end, though ne'er so brave: And af - ter they haveshown their pride Like you a -

50

*mp* while, they glide in-to the grave, *pp* the grave, the grave. *p* So

*mp* while, they glide in-to the grave, *pp* the grave, the grave. *p* So fast,—

*mp* while, they glide in-to the grave, they glide in - to the grave, *pp* the grave. *p* So fast,——

57

fast,—— so fast! Why do ye fall so fast? Why do ye

so fast!—— Why do ye fall so fast?

so fast!—— Why do ye fall so

62

*poco rit..*  
*ppp* dying away fall so fast? fall so fast?

*ppp* dying away Why do ye fall so fast? fall so fast?

*ppp* dying away fast? Why do ye fall so fast? fall so fast?

## 2. To Daffodils

Robert Herrick

Gordon Thornett

**Allegretto** ♩ = 80

SOPRANO 1 *mf*  
Fair Daf - fo - dils, we weep to see you haste a-way so soon;— And

SOPRANO 2 *mf*  
Fair Daf - fo - dils, we weep to see you haste a-way so soon;—

ALTO *mf*  
Fair Daf - fo - dils, we weep to see you haste a-way so soon;—

5  
yet the ear - ly ri - sing sun has not at-tain'd his noon.——

And yet the ri - sing sun has not at-tain'd his noon.——

The ri - sing sun has not at-tain'd his noon.——

9 *f* Stay, stay, stay, stay, *mf* Un - til the hast - ing

*f* Stay, stay, *mf* Un - til the hast - ing day has run, the

*f* Stay,—— *mf* stay, Un - til the hast - ing day has run, the day has

14

day has run But to the e - ven- song; And, hav - ing pray'd to - geth - er, we will

day has run But to the e - ven- song; And, hav - ing pray'd to - geth - er, we will

run But to the e - ven- song; And, hav - ing pray'd to - geth - er, we will

19

go with you a - long. *pp* Daf - fo - dils, fair daf - fo -

go with you a - long. *pp* Daf - fo - dils, fair daf - fo -

go with you a - long. *pp* Daf - fo - dils, fair daf - fo -

24

dils. *p* We have short time to stay, as you, We have as short a spring; As

dils. *p* We have short time to stay, as you, We have as short a spring;

dils. *p* We have short time to stay, as you, We have as short a spring;



29

*mf* *mp*

quick a growth to meet de-cay, as you, or a - ny - thing. We die as your hours

*mf* *mp*

As quick to meet de-cay, as you, or a - ny - thing. We die as

*mf* *mp*

To meet de-cay, as you, or a - ny - thing. We

34

do, and dry a - way, like to the sum - mer rain;

your hours do, and dry a - way, like to the sum - mer rain;

die as your hours do, and dry a - way, like to the sum - mer

38

**poco rall.** **Meno mosso** ♩ = 160

*p* *morendo*

Or as the pearls of morn-ing's dew, Ne'er to be found a - gain.

*p* *morendo*

Or as the pearls of morn - ing dew Ne'er to be found a - gain.

*p* *morendo*

rain; Or as the pearls of morn - ing dew Ne'er to be found a - gain.

### 3. Gather ye rosebuds

Robert Herrick (1591-1674)

Gordon Thornett

**Vivo** ♩ = 100

**SOPRANO 1** *p* While ye may, while ye may.

**SOPRANO 2** *p* While ye may, while ye may.

**ALTO** *p* While ye may, while ye may.

7 *mf* Gath-er ye rose-buds while ye may, Old time is still a - fly ing: And

*p* While ye may,

*p* While ye may,

13 *p* this same flow'r that smiles to- day To-mor-row will be dy ing.

*p* while ye may, To-

*p* while ye may, dy - ing,

19

*f* The glo-rious lamp of heav'n, the sun, The high-er he's a-  
 mor-row will be dy ing. *f* The glo-rious lamp of heav'n, the sun, The high-er he's a-  
 dy - ing, dy - ing, dy - ing. *f* The glo-rious lamp of heav'n, the sun, The high-er he's a-

25

get- ting, The soon - er will his race be run, And near-er he's to set ting.  
 get- ting, The soon - er will his race be run, And near-er he's to set ting.  
 get- ting, The soon - er will his race be run, his race be run, And near-er he's to set ting.

31

**Meno mosso** ♩ = 82

*mf* The age is best which is the first, When youth and blood are  
*mp* While ye may, while ye may, while ye may, while ye may, When youth and blood are  
*mp* While ye may, while ye may, while ye may, while ye may, When youth and blood are

rit. . . . .

37

warm-er;—

warm-er;— *mf espr.* But be - ing spent, they still suc-ceed the form er.——

*mf espr.* warm - er; But be - ing spent, the worse and worst—Times still suc-ceed the form er.——

Tempo primo  
Vivo ♩ = 100

42

Poco meno mosso ♩ = 72

*pp* while ye may, while ye may, while ye may, *f* Then be not coy, but use your time, And

*pp* while ye may, while ye may, while ye may, *f* Then be not coy, but use your time, And

*pp* *f* Then be not coy, but use your time, And

49

while ye may\_ go mar- ry:— For hav - ing lost but once\_ your prime—

while ye may\_ go mar- ry, mar ry:— For hav - ing lost, hav - ing lost your

while ye may\_ go mar- ry,—— mar- ry: For hav - ing lost, hav - ing lost but

54 *p*

You may for ev - er tar - ry, for ev - er tar - ry,

prime You may for ev - er tar - ry, for ev - er

once your prime You may for ev - er tar ry,

60 *pp*

mar - ry. Gath - er ye rose - buds while ye may,

tar - ry, tar - ry. Gath - er ye rose - buds while ye

for ev - er tar - ry, mar - ry. Gath - er ye rose - buds

65 *calando* *molto rit..*

while ye may, while ye may, while ye may, while ye may.

may, while ye may, while ye may, while ye may.

while ye may, while ye may, while ye may.