

PIED BEAUTY, Pick

SAB
accompanied

Pied Beauty



text by

Gerard Manley Hopkins

music by

James Elias Pick

Note from the Composer

Pied Beauty is a song of joy and gratitude, praising God who created a beautifully varied world. The first stanza revels in nature's visual contrasts, such as two-color skies or the patterns on birds' wings. It goes on to describe man's interaction with creation, as farmers work the land, dividing, plowing, and planting—unwitting patchwork artists.

The second stanza shifts to more abstract opposites: swift and slow, sweet and sour, adazzle and dim. The fast-paced world is full of these essential dichotomies, easy to overlook—but if one pauses and savors, glorious beauty is found in such diversity. In the end, Hopkins contrasts the variety in nature with God's changelessness. God is the author of creation, but He is not subject to its limitations and variability; He stands above: "Praise Him."

Several key words in the poem may be unfamiliar (abbreviated definitions from *Oxford Languages*):

- *Pied* [paɪd]: "covered with patches or spots of two or more colors"
- *Dappled* [ˈdæp əld]: "marked with spots or rounded patches"
- *Brinded* [ˈbrɪn dɪd]: "brownish or tawny with streaks of other color"

Musically, as a song of praise, the mood is undeniably joyful. The piano bubbles with excitement, almost as if breathing in and out. The vivid poetry lends itself to text painting: a pointillistic accompaniment hints at the spotted trout (m. 19-28); the birds' flight is heard in the ascending "ah's" (m. 36-39); major seventh chords juxtapose consonance and dissonance, mirroring the poet's thoughtful consideration of various opposing words, littered with alliteration (m. 77-89).

In performance, the vibrant poetry must come through, making good diction essential. The choir should also take full advantage of the wide range of dynamics and explore different vocal colors to best convey the text.

Soli Deo Gloria.

~ James Elias Pick

Visit www.jamespick.com to contact the composer or share recordings.

Text:

Glory be to God for dappled things –
For skies of couple-colour as a brinded cow;
For rose-moles all in stipple upon trout that swim;
Fresh-firecoal chestnut-falls; finches' wings;
Landscape plotted and pieced – fold, fallow, and plough;
And all trades, their gear and tackle and trim.

All things counter, original, spare, strange;
Whatever is fickle, freckled (who knows how?)
With swift, slow; sweet, sour; adazzle, dim;
He fathers-forth whose beauty is past change:
Praise him.

~ Gerard Manley Hopkins

Pied Beauty

(SAB, accompanied)

Also available for SATB, SSA, and TTB

Gerard Manley Hopkins

James Elias Pick

Joyfully (♩ = c. 150)

PIANO

f *espress.*

con pedale

The piano introduction is in D major, 4/4 time. It begins with a treble clef and a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#). The melody starts with a quarter rest, followed by a quarter note G4, an eighth note A4, and a quarter note B4. The bass line starts with a quarter rest, followed by a quarter note D3, an eighth note E3, and a quarter note F#3. The tempo is marked 'Joyfully' with a quarter note equal to approximately 150 beats per minute. The dynamics are marked 'f' (forte) and 'espress.' (espressivo). The piece concludes with a 'con pedale' instruction, indicated by a pedal symbol.

5

The piano accompaniment continues for measures 5-8. The treble clef part features a series of eighth and sixteenth notes, while the bass clef part provides a steady accompaniment with quarter and eighth notes. The key signature remains D major.

9

f

S
A

Glo - ry be to God for dap - pled things

f

B

Glo - ry be to God for dap - pled things

9

f *mp*

The vocal and piano accompaniment for measures 9-12. The vocal parts (Soprano and Alto) enter in measure 9 with a melody in D major. The lyrics are 'Glo - ry be to God for dap - pled things'. The piano accompaniment continues with a melody in the treble clef and a bass line in the bass clef. The dynamics are marked 'f' (forte) and 'mp' (mezzo-piano). The key signature remains D major.

13

S
A

For skies of cou-ple - co-lour as a brin - ded cow; —

B

For skies, cou-ple - co-lour, as a

f *mp*

17

S
A

19 *mp*

For

B

cow; —

19 *p* *cresc. poco a poco*

(Ped.)

21

S
A

rose - moles all in stip - ple

p

B

Oh

25 *mf* up - on trout that swim; *f*

28 *dim.*

31 *mp* Fresh - fire - coal chest - nut - falls; *mf*

Oh *p* *mf* *p* *mf*

Oh *mp* *p* *cresc. poco a poco*

L.V.

The musical score is for a piece titled "PIED BEAUTY—SAB". It features three vocal parts: Soprano (S), Alto (A), and Bass (B), along with a piano accompaniment. The score is divided into three systems. The first system starts at measure 25, where the vocalists sing "up - on trout that swim;". The piano accompaniment provides a harmonic foundation with sustained chords and moving lines. The second system begins at measure 28, marked with a "dim." (diminuendo) instruction, leading to a softer passage. The third system starts at measure 31, where the vocalists sing "Fresh - fire - coal chest - nut - falls;". This section includes dynamic markings such as *mp* (mezzo-piano), *mf* (mezzo-forte), and *p* (piano). The piano accompaniment continues with a steady rhythm, marked with *mp* and *p*, and includes a "cresc. poco a poco" (crescendo poco a poco) instruction towards the end of the system. The score concludes with a "L.V." (Fine) marking.

36

S
A

p *mp* *mp* *mf* *mf*

Ah Ah Ah Ah Finch - es'

B

p *mp* *mp* *mf* *mf*

Ah Ah Ah Ah Finch - es'

41

S
A

f

wings;

B

f

wings;

41

45

S
A

B

49 *f*

S A
Glo - ry be to God for dap - pled things

B
Glo - ry be to God for dap - pled things

49 *f mp*

53

S A
Land - scape plot - ted and pieced fold, fal-low, and

B
Land - scape plot - ted and pieced fold, fal-low, and

f mp

57 *p mp*

S A
plough; And all

B
plough;

p

61

S A

trades, _____ their gear and ta - ckle _____ and

B

And all _____ trades, their gear, ta - ckle _____ and

mp *mf*

cresc.

65

S A

trim. _____

B

trim. _____

f

65

69

S A

B

73 **rit. poco a poco**

S
A

B

rit. poco a poco

f *mp*

77 **Dream-like** (♩ = c. 120) *mp*

S
A

B

All things coun - ter, o - ri - gi - nal,

All things coun - ter, o - ri - gi - nal,

77 **Dream-like** (♩ = c. 120) *p espress.*

81

S
A

B

spare, strange; What - e - ver is

spare, strange; What - e - ver is

84

S
A

fi - ckle freck - led (who knows how?) With

B

fi - ckle freck - led (who knows how?) With

poco rit.

87

S
A

swift, slow; sweet, sour; a - daz - zle, dim;

B

swift, slow; sweet, sour; a - daz - zle, dim;

poco rit.

90

Slowly returning to Tempo I

mp

S
A

mf

He

B

mf

He

90

Slowly returning to Tempo I

mp *cresc.*

94

S fa - thers - forth _____ whose beau - ty _____ is past *div.*

A fa - thers - forth _____ whose beau - ty _____ is past

B fa - thers - forth _____ whose beau - ty _____ is past

Tempo I

98 *f* *rit.*

S change: _____

A *f* change: _____

B *f* change: _____

Tempo I

98 *f* *rit.*

102 **a tempo**

S **Praise Him.** **rit.**

A **Praise Him.**

B **Praise Him.**

a tempo **rit.**

106 **a tempo** **unis.** **allarg.**

S **Praise Him.**

A **Praise Him.**

B **Praise Him.**

a tempo **allarg.** **ff**