

Five Herrick Settings For Elizabeth

- 1. To Daisies, not to shut so soon
- 2. Julia's Hair
- 3. The Bracelet
- 4. The Maiden Blush
- 5. Night Piece

Five Herrick Settings for Elizabeth.

I have always enjoyed singing. When I came to St Petersburg, my friend David Hicks (tenor) and I put a notice up in the State Conservatory of Music in English asking whether anyone else would be interested in singing the music of the Elizabethan and Jacobean Periods. I got one phone call from another student, Yelena Tarasova (soprano), and then a friend in the American Consulate put us in touch with a mezzo soprano, Tatiana Kuchkovskaya, who was willing to sing alto. We called ourselves Angliski Akcent and at the end of our first year and four concerts later we expanded from four to six voices when Juli Brudney (baritone) and Natalia Rayeba (alto) joined us.

Finding somewhere to rehearse was easy to begin with. I was a student at the Conservatory. We just walked in and took over a room. When I had completed my post graduate diploma in composition in Tishchenko's class, it became more problematical: they put "security" on the doors and you needed a current student identity card to get it. Lena taught at the Glinka Music School so we just move there; but when she was made Regnant in St Nicholas's Cathedral, she resigned. We became homeless; a singing group with nowhere to sing except the Public Parks; that was pleasant enough in summer but in winter time the temperature dropped to well below zero. You can sing outside for about twenty minutes before your voice disappears. David and I tried it, singing Sea Shanties on the deck of the "Shtandart" (a replica of Peter the Great's Flagship) in minus 15. Vodka helped for a while. The television cameras were an added incentive to keep going; but when your voice has gone, that's it. Finish and back into the warm.

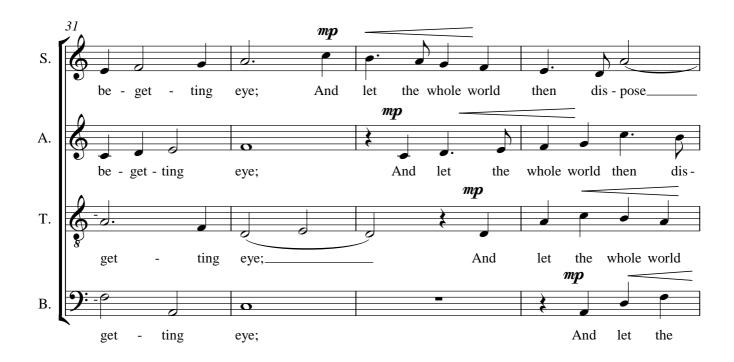
My thoughts turned to the British Council whose offices were in the Myaskovsky Library Building. Might they help us? The building was used by several bodies who seemed to keep open until late. I asked my friend Elizabeth White, who was Director of the British Council and she arranged for us to rehearse in the Seminar Room every week. What I did not know for a very long time was that it meant that someone had to stay in the British Council Office whilst we rehearsed. Most of the time it was Elizabeth. How do you say "thank-you"? It needed to be more than just a mere expression of gratitude (and admiration for the work that she did). Yes I loved the concerts and receptions, but it was more than that; the draw to spend time in her company was stronger because of who she was and not what she was and so they had to be special songs. The lines between love, affection, admiration and friendship are very narrow and I have never had any difficulty in confusing them and so Herrick was an obvious choice and besides I know several Julia's. So these songs were written for Angliski Akcent to sing to Elizabeth on a suitable occasion (and we'll invite as many Julia's as we can find just to spread confusion and avoid embarrassment). Peter Dyson 3.8.99

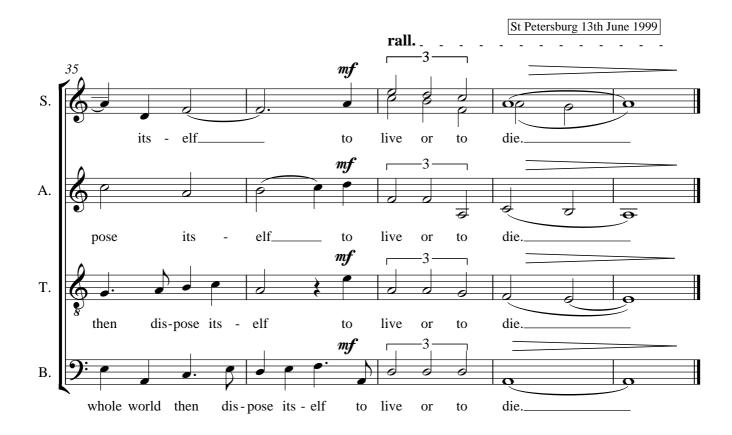
1. To Daisies, not to shut so soon

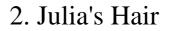


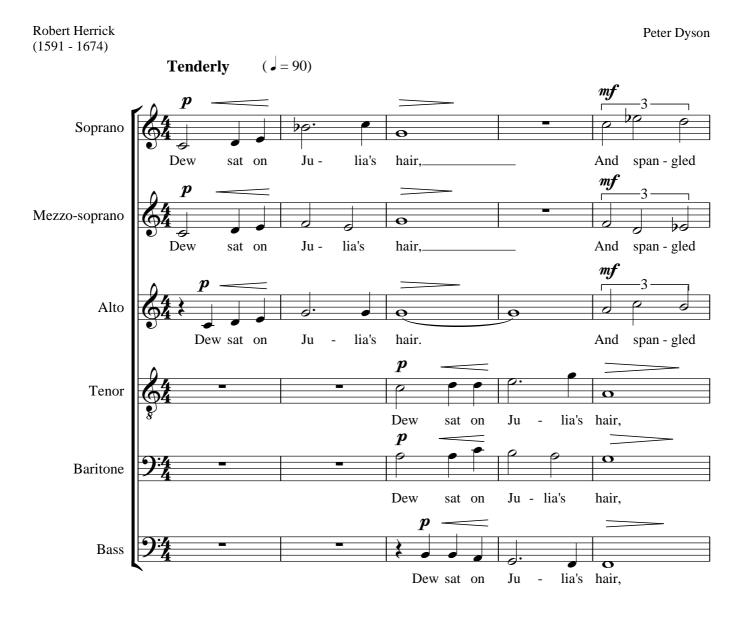
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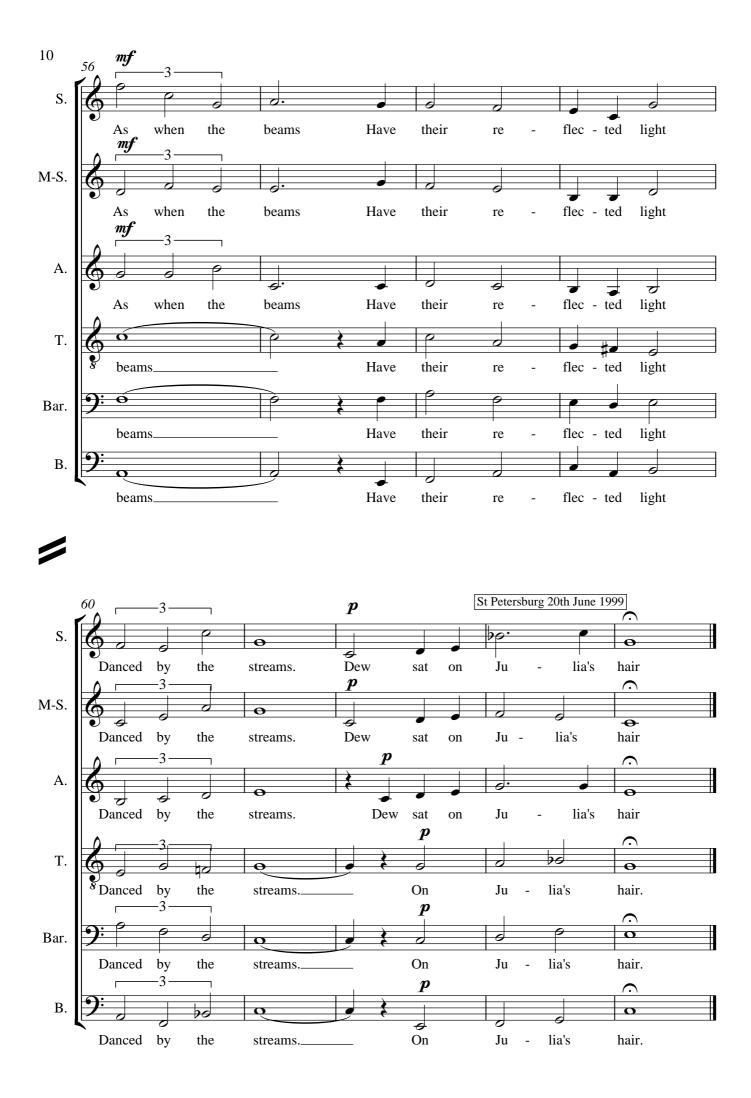




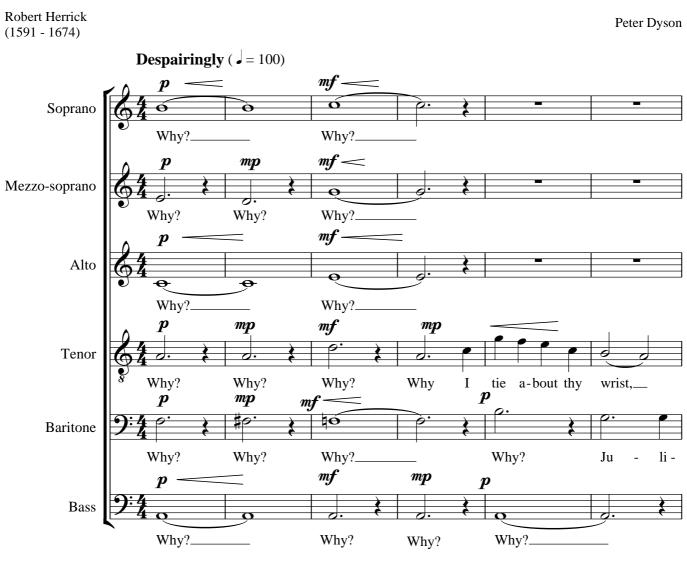


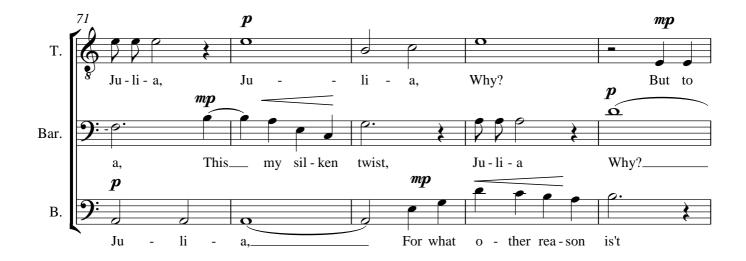






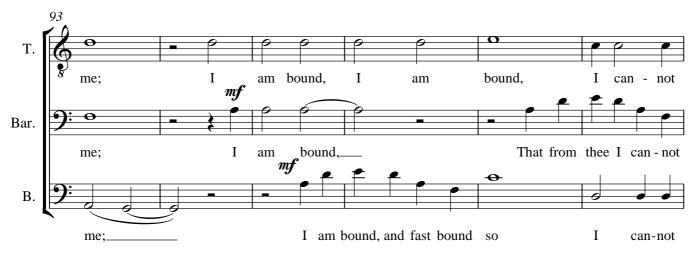
3. The Bracelet

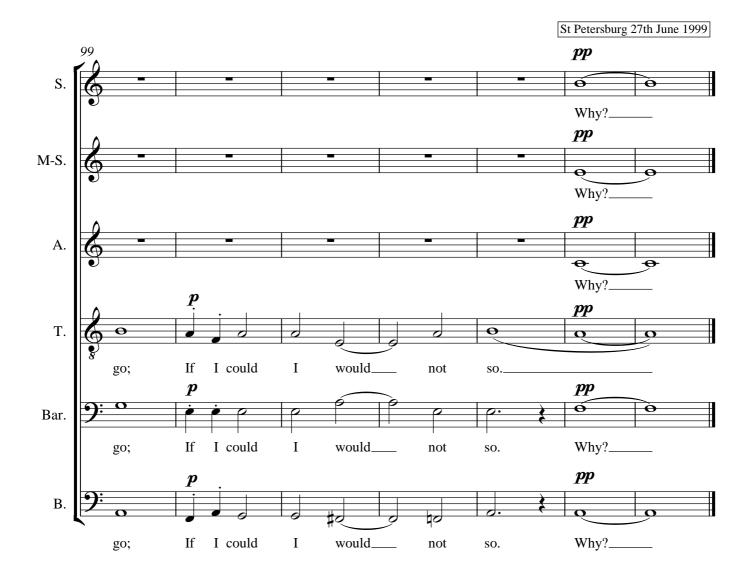






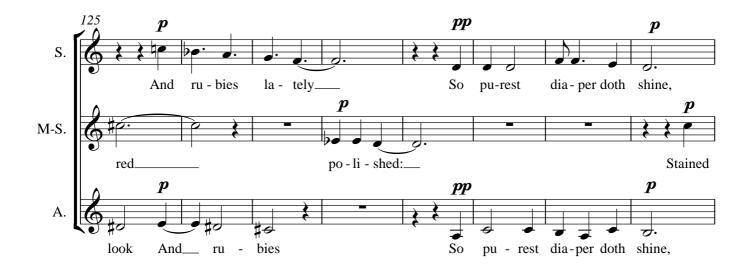


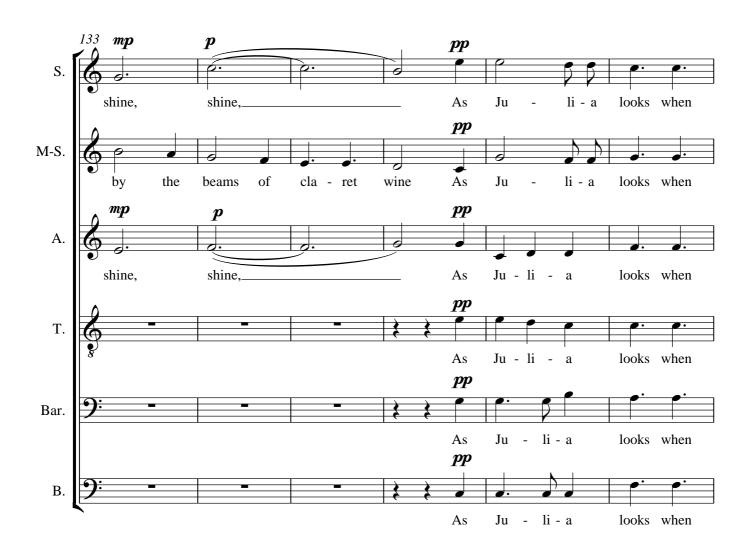




4. The Maiden Blush

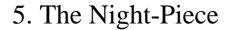


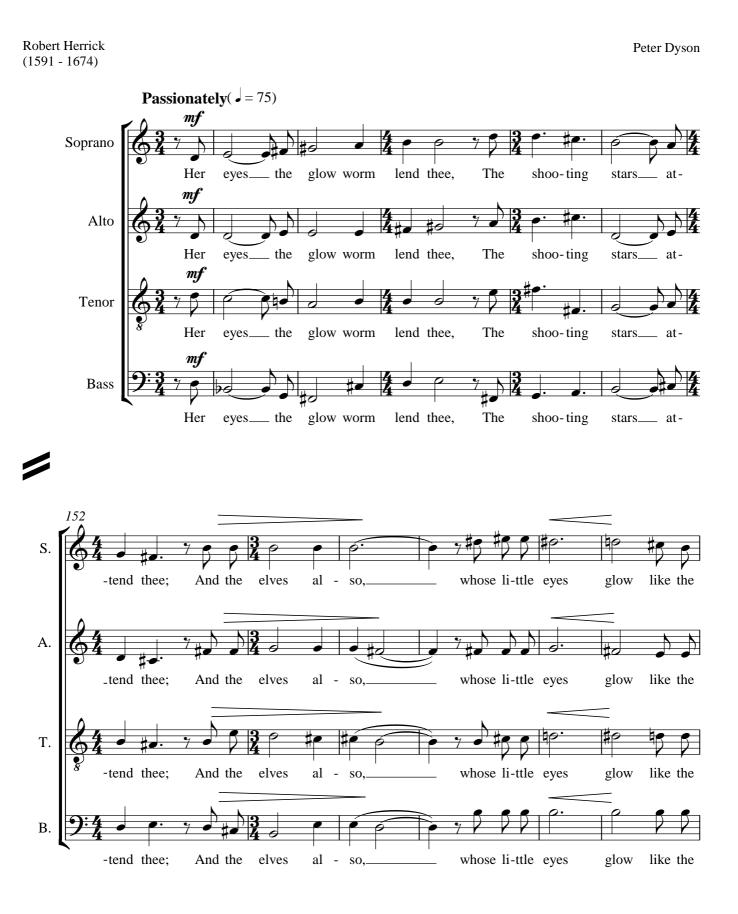






St Petersburg 4th July 1999

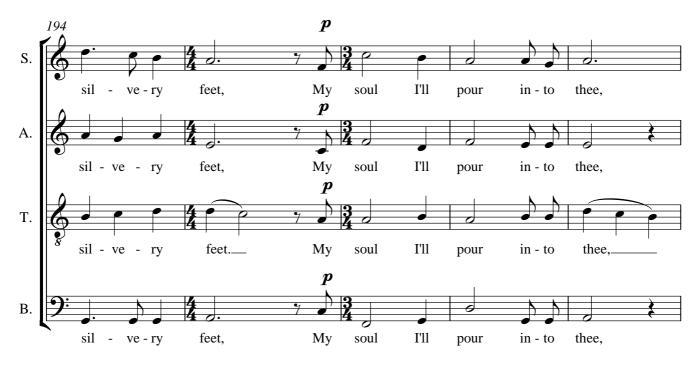


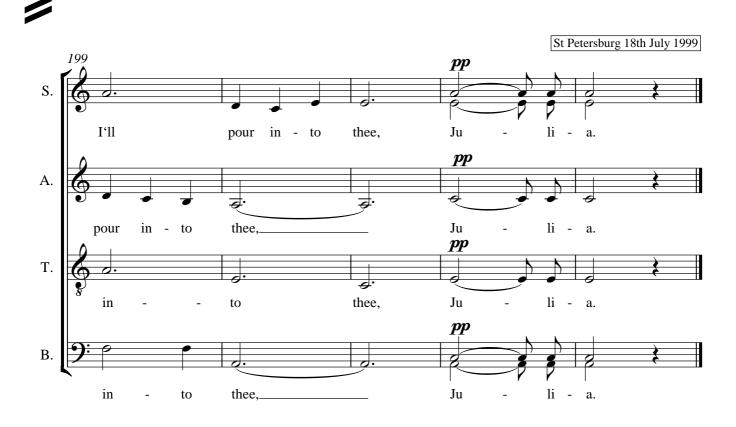












1.To Daisies not to shut so soon

Shut not so soon; the dull-eyed night Has not as yet begun To make a seizure on the light, Or to seal up the sun. No marigolds yet closèd are, No shadows great appear; Nor doth the early shepherd's star Shine like a spangle here. Stay but till my Julia close Her life-begetting eye, And let the whole world then dispose Itself to live or die.

2. Julia's Hair

Dew sat on Julia's hair, And spangled too, Like leaves that laden are With trembling dew. Or glittered to my sight, As when the beams Have their reflected light Danced by the streams.

3. The Bracelet

Why I tie about thy wrist, Julia, this silken twist; For what other reason is 't But to show thee how, in part, Thou my pretty captive art? But thy bond-slave is my heart: 'Tis but silk that bindeth thee, Knap the thread and thou art free; But 'tis otherwise with me: I am bound and fast bound, so That from thee I cannot go; If I could, I would not so.

4. The Maiden Blush

So look the mornings when the sun Paints them with fresh vermillion So cherries blush and Kathryn Pears And apricocks in youthful years So corals look more lovely red And rubies lately polished So purest diaper doth shine Stained by the beads of claret wine and Julia looks when she doth dress her either cheek with bashfulness

5. The Night-piece

Her eyes the glow-worm lend thee, The shooting stars attend thee; And the elves also, Whose little eyes glow Like the sparks of fire, befriend thee.

No Will-o'-the-wisp mislight thee, Nor snake or slow-worm bite thee; But on, on thy way Not making a stay, Since ghost there 's none to affright thee.

Let not the dark thee cumber: What though the moon does slumber? The stars of the night Will lend thee their light Like tapers clear without number.

Then, Julia, let me woo thee, Thus, thus to come unto me; And when I shall meet Thy silv'ry feet, My soul I'll pour into thee.