English Part-songs

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Repertoire Suitable for: SATB and SSAA Highschool (Intermediate to Advanced) and SATB College

Our Favorites: You Stole My Love, Quick! We Have But a Second, Lay a Garland, You Spotted Snakes

Historical Context:
- The English glee was the vehicle by which secular part-singing was carried in the period between the deaths of Handel and Mendelssohn (1750-1850)
- Singing of glees and catches was a social event
- Texts were originally bawdy, but toward the end of the 18th century they began to use better poets like Shakespeare
- By the early 1800s, the whole English nation was singing. Choral Festivals became popular, and lower classes (“victims” of the Industrial Revolution) were taught to read music in evening classes. Choirs became associated with factories. ¹

Part-Songs:
- The Novello Part Song Book is a TREASURE TROVE. It includes songs of any subject, including the seasons, love, boar’s head songs (for madrigal dinners), hunting, sea, patriotism, etc. Search the Table of Contents for a piece you might want: http://javanese.imslp.info/files/imglnks/usimg/2/2a/IMSLP228650-PMLP373933-NovelloPartSongBookTOC.pdf
- Many versions of the same text exist, so you can find the version that best fits your choir.
- Lots of Shakespeare texts are in the Novello Part-Song book if you want to make a Shakespeare set.
- All part-songs on IMSLP include piano reduction: http://imslp.org/wiki/Novello's_Part-Song_Book_(Various)

**Critical Thinking:**
See each piece for specific teaching opportunities.

Much of the text is in older, more formal English. Rewrite the poetry in your own words.

If the piece is in strophic form: How does the composer treat each verse? Are the notes exactly the same? Where does it change, if at all? How can we create contrast between each verse in spite of the notes being nearly identical?

Are there any literary devices in the poetry (metaphor, simile, alliteration, allegory, etc.)? Identify and define.

**Performance Practice:**
Many choirs perform these part-songs a capella, but feel free to use a pianist if needed, especially when the accompaniment seems to be more independent. Some part-songs begin with a piano introduction and then have the piano double the voices.

**April Showers- J. L. Hatton**
SATB/Accompaniment
Novello: Volume 6, p. 5
Text: From “Green’s Nursery Annual”
Key: E Flat major
Form: Strophic, three verses
Voicing:
S: F4- F5
A: B flat 3- B flat 4
T: D3- F4
B: G2- A flat 3

**History**: Hatton was an English composer, conductor, pianist, accompanist, and singer. His love of English madrigals and German music shaped his composition of English glees.

**Comments**: Text painting: “pitter patter” recurs throughout the piece. The original version was composed for men’s voices.

**Teaching Opportunities**: Text painting, sharp dynamic contrasts (see opening text).

**Jack Frost- J. L. Hatton**
SATB/Accompaniment
Novello: Volume 6, p. 50
Text: from “Green’s Nursery Annual”
Key: A minor
Form: ABA’
Voicing:
S: E3-F5
A: B3- C5
T: E3-E4
B: A2- F4

**Comments**: Much dynamic and articulative expression. Men create sound effects with the rising and
falling steps on the text “creeping.” Diction opportunities: “Who doth strike with icy dart.”

**Teaching Opportunities:** Form, dynamics, articulation, story of Jack Frost, alliteration: “through each crack and crevice creeping.”

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**Lay a Garland- Pearsall**

**SSAATTBB/Accompaniment**

**Novello:** Volume 11, p. 47

**Librettist:** Beaumont/Fletcher

**Key:** E Flat Major

**Voicing:**
- S1: E flat 4- G5
- S2: C4- F5
- A1: B flat 3- B flat 4
- A2: A flat 3- G4
- T1: E flat 3- G4
- T2: C3- E Flat 4
- B1: B flat 2- E flat 4
- B2: G2- B flat 3

**History:** Text is from Beaumont and Fletcher’s play *The Maid’s Tragedy*, written 1609. The original text is in first person (Lay a Garland on my hearse…) but is changed to third person (…her hearse…) in Pearsall’s work.

**Comments:** Beautiful, continuous texture similar to a Franco Flemish Renaissance motet. Another edition with the text *Tu es Petrus* is available.

**Teaching Opportunities:** Expression of suspensions (leaning into dissonance), count-singing (keeps all voices in the same place)

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**Adieu, Love, Adieu- G. A Macfarren**

**SATB/Accompaniment**

**Novello:** Volume 2, p. 32

**Librettist:** Anonymous

**Key:** G major

**Form:** Varied Strophic. “Adieu Love” refrain occurs four times, repeating middle sections. More variety within each verse.

**Voicing:**
- Soprano: D4-G5
- Alto: A3-C5
- Tenor: G3-G4
- Bass: G2-D4

**History:** Anonymous poet, text from “The Unfaithful Shepherdess.”

**Comments:** Humorous text about lover only staying around for three days, finding other loves, but not staying with them either. Humorous pauses at the end of each refrain (“new love”). Texture of piece switches from homorhythmic to imitative.

**Teaching Opportunities:** Form, dynamics, rewriting in modern dialect. Difference between homophony and polyphony.
Now Fie on Love- G.A. Macfarren
SATB/Piano
Novello: Volume 15, p. 7
Librettist: Thomas Goffe
Key: A major
Form: Strophic, two verses
Voicing:
S: D4- F#5
A: C#4- D5
T: E3- F#4
B: A2-D4
History: Wikipedia has an interesting story about Thomas Goffe’s bad luck with love. The story of his unloving wife may inform the piece, if you choose to share it. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thomas_Goffe
Comments: Humorous text: “love was not made for people in their wits,” “to love is but to go to school and weep.” “Bedlam” means chaos, uproar, confusion.
Teaching Opportunities: Dynamic contrasts of the same text (See opening lines), articulation (accents, sfz), text painting (melismatic “feathered brains”)

The Wounded Cupid- C.A. Macirone
SATB/Accompaniment
Novello: Volume 2, p. 47
Librettist: Herrick
Key: E major
Voicing:
Soprano: B3-G#5
Alto- G#3-B4
Tenor: E3-E4
Bass: F#2-B3
History: The original poem was either by Anacreon, a popular ancient Greek poet, or an imitator of Anacreon. The 1700s saw a revival and translation of Anacreontic poetry. The Anacreontic Society of London composed the tune that the United States uses for its National Anthem.
Comments: Humorous, dramatic text about Cupid being stung by a bee. Valentine’s day or as part of a love set. Accents reinforce key words like “stung,” “snake,” “torment,” “smart.”
Teaching Opportunities: Rewriting the story in modern text. Researching the mythological Cupid and Venus.

You Spotted Snakes- G.A. Macfarren
SSAA/Accompaniment
Novello: Volume 2, p. 38
Librettist: Shakespeare
Key: C Major
Voicing:
Soprano 1: G4-A5
Soprano 2: C4-C#5
Alto 1: G3-D5
Alto 2: G3-A4
History: Text is from “Midsummer Night’s Dream,” Act ii, Scene 2.
Comments: Many excellent opportunities for text expression: “thorny hedgehogs,” “weaving spiders,”
“beetles black.” Philomel, mentioned in the poetry, is a fairy queen. 

**Teaching Opportunities:** Reading a summary of “Midsummer Night’s Dream,” discussing the context of the song within the story. Many diction opportunities: use this piece to teach some IPA symbols.

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**Sir Knight, Sir Knight, Oh Wither Away- C.A. Macirone**

**SATB/Accompaniment**

**Novello:** Volume 2, p. 40  
**Librettist:** Friedrich de la Motte Fouqué  
**Key:** D Major  
**Form:** Varied Strophic (5 verses total)  
**Voicing:**  
Soprano: D4-F#5  
Alto: D4-B4  
Tenor: F#3-G4  
Bass: A2-A3  

**History:** Text is from *Sintram and His Companions* by Fouqué, an English version of *Aslauga’s Knight* by Thomas Carlyle. This piece is also entitled “Sintram’s Song.”

**Comments:** More independent accompaniment, including an allegro brillante con fuoco e non legato introduction. Piano still supports the rhythms and pitches of the voices.  

**Teaching Opportunities:** Researching and/or comparing *Sintram and Aslauga’s Knight*. Articulation and Dynamic expression. Tempo changes (piece includes Tempo I mo. in several places but never specifies where to slow down: students could help create varied ritardandos).

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**You Stole My Love- Walter Macfarren**

**SATB/Piano**

**Novello:** Volume 5, p. 53  
**Librettist:** Anthony Munay  
**Key:** D major  
**Voicing:**  
Soprano: D4-A5  
Alto: A3-D5  
Tenor: D3-F#4  
Bass: A2-D4  

**History:** Macfarren composed music for voice and piano. He was a piano professor at the Royal Academy of Music in London. He edited several keyboard works of Mozart and Beethoven.

**Comments:** This piece is a lot of fun with relatable text for students. Less than one minute long: you can choose to repeat the entire work with varied dynamics. A cleaner version is available on CPDL but has one or two errors (sopranos m. 11, for example): be sure to double check notes with Novello on IMSLP.

**Teaching Opportunities:**

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**Quick! We Have But a Second- Charles Villiers Stanford**

**SATB a capella**

**Source:** [http://www1.cpdl.org/wiki/index.php/Quick!_We_have_but_a_second_(Charles_Villiers_Stanford)](http://www1.cpdl.org/wiki/index.php/Quick!_We_have_but_a_second_(Charles_Villiers_Stanford))  
**Librettist:** Thomas Moore  
**Key:** B Flat Major  
**Voicing:**  
S: F4-G5
A: D4 - B flat 4  
T: D3-G4  
B: C3-C4  

Comments: Lively, fun, succinct piece. Text may be inappropriate, referring to drinking: “fill round the cup while you may.” Some brief alto divisi.  

Teaching Opportunities: look up story of Orpheus (mentioned in text),

The Sea King- Henry Smart
SATB/Accompaniment
Novello: Volume 1, p. 65  
Librettist: Barry Cornwall  
Key: C major  
Voicing:  
S: E4-G5  
A: C4-C5  
T: G#3-G4  
B: G2-C4  

History: Odin, mentioned in the poetry, is a Germanic/Norse mythological god. The Sea King could be a Viking term for a pirate.  

Comments: Brief Tenor and Bass divisi in a few places, can easily be omitted without comprising harmony. The dynamics and articulation are what make this piece interesting (several accents and staccati).  

Teaching Opportunities: Strophic form, creating variation with each strophe. Poetry/Sea Poems by Larry Cornwall and other poets. Research the Sea King of Germanic/Norse mythology. Create an original story of the Sea King.

Here are some titles/authors from each book that might pique your interest:

Novello Volume 1

A Drinking Song- Jules Benedict  
Invocation to Sleep- Jules Benedict  
Hunting song- Henry Smart  
The Sea King- Henry Smart  
Orpheus with his lute- G.A. Macfarren

Novello Volume 2

Robin Goodfellow- G.A. Macfarren  
The Splendor Falls on Castle Walls- G.A. Macfarren  
Song of the Railroads- G.A. Macfarren  
Land Ho! - Henry Leslie  
Charm me asleep- Henry Leslie

Novello Volume 3

A Finland Song- Henry Hiles  
Summer Longings- Henry Hiles…. waiting for may, could be a pre-graduation song  
The Three Fishers - G.A. Macfarren

Novello Volume 4
It was a lover and his lass - G.A. Macfarren
O Mistress Mine - G.A. Macfarren
Down in a Pretty Valley - Henry Leslie
The Curfew - Henry Smart
Fairy Song - Agnes Zimmerman

Novello Volume 5
Many works by Arthur Sullivan
Winter - Arthur Sullivan (Humorous Text)
Wake to the Hunting - Henry Smart
The Crusaders - Ciro Pinsuti
The Caravan - Ciro Pinsuti

Novello Volume 6
Consists of works all by J.L. Hatton
The Hemlock Tree
The Sailor's Song
The Village Blacksmith
Over Hill, Over Dale
The Village Dance

Novello Volume 7
Consists of works all by J.L. Hatton, including different versions of the same titles
Busy, Curious, Thirsty Fly
The Way to Build a Boat, or Jack's Opinion

Novello Volume 8
Consists of Works All by Henry Smart
Ave Maria
Dream, Baby, Dream
Oh Say Not That My Heart is Cold

Novello Volume 9
Consists of works all by Walter Macfarren
Autumn
Cradle Song
Summer Song
The Curfew Bell
The Fairies
The Warrior

Novello Volume 10
Consists of works all by R. L. de PEarsall
I saw Lovely Phyllis
In Dulci Jubilo
Shoot, False, Love, I care Not
Sing We and Chant It (for 8 voices and 4 voices)
The Winter Song
When Allen-a-Dale
Novello Volume 11
Consists of works all by R. L. de Pearsall
A King There was in Thule
Caput Apri defero (The Boar’s Head)
Lay a Garland- Pearsall
The Watchman’s Song (For male and missed voices)

Novello Volume 12
Many Compositions by Fanny Hensel (Mendelssohn’s sister)
Already Snow has Fallen-Robert Franz
At the Coming of the Spring- J. L. Hatton
Autumn- A.C. Mackenzie
When Woods are Glowing- Fanny Hensel

Novello Volume 13
The Wreck of the Hesperus- Henry Hiles
The Boat- R Schumann  contains part for horn and flute-
The Calm of the Sea and the Prosperous Voices- Henry Hiles
The Dream- R. Schumann

Novello Volume 14-
Features works of Renaissance composers MArenzio, Morley, and Palestrina
Gently Falls the Evening Shade- Luca MArenzio (Italian Madrigalist)
Shoot, False Love, I care not Thomas Morley
Oh Say What nymph- Palestrina

Novello Volume 15-
It Was a Lover and His LAss- Josiah Booth
Love’s Question and REply- John B. Grant
Shall I Tell You Whom I Love?- S. S. Wesley
The Bells of St. Michael’s Tower- Sir R. P. Stewart

Novello Volume 16
Hymn to the Moon- Josiah Booth
The Song to Pan- Ciro Pinsuti
Would You Ask my Heart- Ciro Pinsuti
The Water Lily- Niels W. Gade

Novello Volume 17
Hymn to Cynthia- Berthold Tours
Oh, I Wish I Were a Swollow- Oscar Wagner
Tell Me Where is Fancy Bred- Ciro Pinsuti

Novello Volume 18
A Red, Red Rose- R. Schumann
Fair Land, We Greet Thee- Ciro Pinsuti
The Moorland Witch- Edward Hecht
There is Music By the River- Ciro Pinsuti