

## **Choral Pieces**

“Beauty Come Dancing”

“Ballet Russe”

“There Was a Naughty Boy”

“For a Dead Lady”

“Those Who Love”

All these texts were set at the Salzburg Festival two years ago on my trusty 88-key Casio. I had written the text to “Beauty Come Dancing” at the Festival del Sole just before. The dance theme makes it a natural companion to Masefield’s “Ballet Russe.” There a ballerina dances to Chopin piano accompaniment. I aimed for tunes he might have written but didn’t. Although Masefield’s verse and mine scan in iambic pentameter, I set both to waltzes. That can be tricky.

John Keats heads my poetic pantheon, with Masefield a close second. I would choose the same two, in the same order, for comic poetry. Keats’ “There Was a Naughty Boy” is a delicious example.

E. A. Robinson, like Masefield, paid no court to modernism. “For a Dead Lady” and “Eros Tyrannos” build like Bach fugues. No poet surpasses him for cadence and the longer breath. Sara Teasdale’s “Those Who Love” shows the equal power of a lighter touch.

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