

Bright star, would I were stedfast as thou art

for voice and piano
Op. 10

dedicated to Daniel Kuk

Lance Mok

Text by John Keats
London: January 2021

ca. 2½ mins

for High Voice (E major)	I
for Medium Voice (C major)	6
for Low Voice (A major)	11

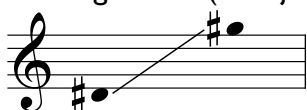
Bright star, would I were stedfast as thou art is a setting of John Keats's sonnet. The poem inspired the most tonal work in the composer's oeuvre to date. The song is set to a modified AABA form with a coda ending in a deceptive cadence as the sonnet deviates from the ideals of eternal love to contemplating death, and thus love's mortality. The stable pulse and tonality echo the tranquillity of the night and the steadfastness the poet vowed to his love. The song is available in E major, C major, and A major, and was also transcribed by the composer for piano solo as his Op. 10a.

The song was first recorded by tenor Neil Latchman with the composer at the piano on 21 May 2021 at St Mary's Ealing, London, United Kingdom. The duo premiered it live at the same venue on 29 April 2023.

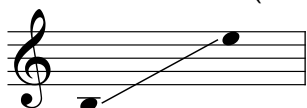
Instrumentation: voice and piano

The voice part is sung in English. The respective range for each key is as follows:

for High Voice (E major)



for Medium Voice (C major)



for Low Voice (A major)



Text

Bright star, would I were stedfast as thou art—
Not in lone splendour hung aloft the night
And watching, with eternal lids apart,
Like nature's patient, sleepless Eremite,
The moving waters at their priestlike task
Of pure ablution round earth's human shores,
Or gazing on the new soft-fallen mask
Of snow upon the mountains and the moors—
No—yet still stedfast, still unchangeable,
Pillow'd upon my fair love's ripening breast,
To feel for ever its soft fall and swell,
Awake for ever in a sweet unrest,
Still, still to hear her tender-taken breath,
And so live ever—or else swoon to death.

John Keats

dedicated to Daniel Kuk
致 谷璋昭

Bright star, would I were stedfast as thou art

Op. 10

Lance Mok
Text by John Keats

for High Voice (E major)

Adagietto ♩ = 66

mp

Bright star, would I were sted-fast as thou art— Not in lone splen-dour hung a-

Adagietto ♩ = 66

p

8. Ped.

3

- loft the night And watch-ing with e - ter - nal lids a - part,