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## Foreword

The love of all things retro is a collective cultural obsession through which we celebrate a fondness for bygone days. There are few things that can inspire such nostalgia as well as music that is rooted in the era when it first became famous. This collection represents three of the best-known and classic retro hits that, over time, have captured hearts and imaginations everywhere.

Although written by Americans – Neil Sedaka and Howard Greenfield – (*Is this the way to) Amarillo?* became massively famous in the UK and remains generally unknown in the USA. The song was first recorded by Tony Christie and released in the UK in 1971. In 2005, the comedian Peter Kay joined Christie to re-release the single in aid of Comic Relief. A huge array of famous British faces helped Kay to create the video including Michael Parkinson, Keith Harris and Orville, Sir Jimmy Saville, various stars from *Coronation Street* and Christie himself. A number 18 hit when originally released, this re-release spent seven weeks at number one. The song refers to Amarillo in Texas, USA and is about a man travelling to find his fiancée. Apparently Amarillo was chosen to feature in the song because it rhymes with 'willow' and 'pillow' and I suppose you can't argue with logic like that! After the second verse and chorus there's a chance to go *a cappella*: the piano can leave out the small notes and give the singers a chance to show off what they can do!

The jazz standard *Dream a little dream of me* was made famous in 1968 by 'Mama' Cass Elliot of the Mamas and the Papas. It was initially recorded in 1931 by the Wayne King Orchestra and has been covered countless times since, however, Elliot's rendition remains the definitive version. Try singing the first verse in unison to start with, then adding the 'wrap-around' soprano backing-vocals for verse two. In the middle section, where the tune dovetails between soprano and alto parts, watch out for the different rhythms on '... but I linger on here' and '... to linger till dawn, dear'. I've also included some of Elliot's vocal inflections and even two bars of whistling - enjoy these! Do listen to Elliot's recording, if you can.

Originally recorded in 1967 by top 'easy listening' crooner Andy Williams, *Can't take my eyes off you* has been covered over the years by a multitude of different artists including Frankie Valli, Shirley Bassey and Lauren Hill. The original Williams version was included on the soundtrack of the film *Bridget Jones – The Edge of Reason* and is a favourite for couples to have played at their wedding celebrations. Part of the song's attraction is the way it builds up from a gentle verse, through the infectious 'ba dap' instrumental section and via a dramatic *sforzando-piano-crescendo* effect at bar 44 into the ultimate sing-along chorus, 'I love you baby ...'. Enjoy all the contrasts, sing out, and you'll have the audience up on their feet joining in by the end!

Alexander L'Estrange, November 2006

## Editorial notes

Choral Basics has been devised to provide arrangements and original pieces specifically for beginner choirs.

**Vocal ranges:** the arrangements don't explore the extremes of the voice, but aim to stretch the vocal range from time to time in the context of a well-placed musical phrase. Small notes indicate optional doubling within a part.

**Breathing:** singers should aim to follow the punctuation of the text and breathe accordingly. However, commas above the staff suggest places to breathe where not provided for in the text.

**Piano accompaniments:** the simple yet imaginative piano parts have been written to support the vocal lines. Small notes in the piano part are intended to help support singers while learning the piece; however, once more confident you may choose to omit the notes, or just to play them very gently.

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# Dream a little dream of me

Words and music by Willy Schwandt, Fabian Andre and Gus Kahn  
arr. Alexander L'Estrange

Gently lilting (♩. = 88)

PIANO

*mp*

Ped. Ped. Ped. Ped.

3

Ped. Ped. Ped. Ped.

A. SEMICHORUS (opt.)

5

*mp*

Stars shin - ing bright a - bove\_\_\_ you, Night bree - zes seem to

Ped. Ped. Ped. Ped.

8

whis - per\_\_\_ 'I love you', Birds sing - ing in the sy - ca - more tree,\_\_\_

Ped. Ped. Ped. Ped.

# Can't take my eyes off you

Words and music by Bob Crewe and Bob Gaudio  
arr. Alexander L'Estrange

Not too fast (♩ = 110)

SOPRANO

ALTO

PIANO

*mp*

*mp*

You're just too

5

*mp*

Can't take my eyes off you, -

good to be true. You'd be like

9

I wan-na hold you so much.

hea-ven to touch, At long last

Detailed description of the musical score: The score is for three parts: Soprano, Alto, and Piano. It is in 4/4 time and marked 'Not too fast' with a tempo of 110 bpm. The key signature has one flat (B-flat). The Soprano part has four measures of rests. The Alto part has four measures of rests, followed by a triplet of eighth notes (G4, A4, B4) marked *mp*. The Piano part has four measures of accompaniment, starting with a triplet of eighth notes (F4, G4, A4) marked *mp*. The lyrics are: 'You're just too', 'Can't take my eyes off you, -', 'good to be true. You'd be like', 'I wan-na hold you so much.', 'hea-ven to touch, At long last'. The score includes measure numbers 5 and 9. There are triplets in the Alto and Piano parts corresponding to the lyrics. Dynamics include *mp* (mezzo-piano).