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Foreword

The most successful pop act ever to emerge from Sweden, ABBA was originally so-named partly in jest (there was a well-known Swedish fish-canning company of the same name). Their worldwide fame, however, was no joke, particularly after they won Eurovision in 1974 (with *Waterloo*). They occupied the UK number one spot nine times between 1974 and 1980, and over the course of the decade they found huge success; first in Europe, Australia and Japan, then finally in the US (*Dancing Queen* reached number one there in 1977).

Cracking Eurovision was hard work: Benny and Björn had written a song for the 1972 competition, which came third in the Swedish heats, and their attempt in '73 finished third again. With *Waterloo* (original working title 'Honey Pie') they jumped on the fashionable glam-rock bandwagon, inspired by UK acts such as Wizzard. They donned colourful costumes and their producer Michael B. Tretow built up a 'wall-of-sound' effect, utilising heavy reverb and distorted guitar. The result was an instantly memorable, classic pop hit. Sing it with a really solid, driving pulse, and if you're blessed with lots of men in your choir, try singing both the high and the optional low octaves in the verse to create your own 'wall-of-sound'.

Fernando was released in 1976. It was an immediate hit and in 2005 the single still held the record in Australia for the most weeks spent at number one. 'Fernando' was an imaginary character – Benny claimed he had had a vision of a conversation between two Mexican revolutionaries. In this arrangement the South American feel can be enhanced with an optional flute part – think of panpipes and distant drums. The final choruses on pages 15 and 16 can be sung *a cappella* (that is, without the piano accompaniment) for a striking contrast.

Thank you for the music contains one of ABBA's all-time great sing-along choruses, after a rather touching *colla voce*-style verse. There's a chance for soprano and alto soloists to have a go here before all parts come together for the rousing 'So I say ...' Sing out, strong and proud, and enjoy this collection of songs celebrating one of the best-loved pop outfits (and what outfits they wore!) of all time.

Alexander L'Estrange, January 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 optional.

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Fernando

Words and music by

Benny Andersson, Stig Anderson & Björn Ulvaeus

Moderato (♩ = c.100)

FLUTE

p cresc

PIANO

Moderato (♩ = c.100)

p cresc

4

ff

ff marcato

8

mf

mf

11

1st verse only S. A. unison

p

1. Can you hear the drums, Fer - nan-do? _____ I re - mem - ber long a - go _

2nd verse only (S. A. div.)

(2.) - nan do, _____ Ev - 'ry ho - ur, ev - 'ry

p

(2. *mp*)

Thank you for the music

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Moderato (♩ = 96)

A. SOLO (opt.)* *mf*

SOPRANO/
ALTO

MEN

PIANO

mf *p*

mf *p*

Red. Red. Red. Red.

5

S. SOLO

fact I'm a bit of a bore, When I tell a joke,

mp

Red. Red.

9

A. SOLO *mp cresc* S. A. SOLO

you've prob-ly heard it be - fore, But I have a ta-lent, a

mp cresc

Red.

13

ALL *mf* *mp*

won-der - ful thing, 'cos ev - 'ry - one lis - tens when I start to sing, I'm so

mf *mp*

* All solos are optional.

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