

THE GLASTONBURY THORN
Stroope

SATB, unaccompanied

WW1975

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Music by
Z. Randall Stroope


WALTON

About the Work

Glastonbury (pronounced “glah-stuhn-bree”) is a town in southwest England, known for its natural beauty, ancient sites, myths, and King Arthur legends. It overlooks the marshes of the Somerset Levels. Glastonbury and surrounding is a pilgrimage for New Age enthusiasts, those with strong religious faith, persons fascinated by legends and “grails,” and those who simply love Somerset and the peaceful sanctuary of fauna and flora.

Many believe that Joseph of Arimathea (the figure who offered the tomb for Jesus’ body) was actually Jesus’ uncle. Joseph had passed through Somerset years earlier, and vowed to come back. Following the crucifixion, he returned to Britain with a group of followers, and brought the cup (Holy Grail) that had been used at the Last Supper. When they arrived in Glastonbury, Joseph stuck his staff into the ground where it immediately rooted and burst into bloom. This was a sign to Joseph to establish the first Christian church in England on that hill. The staff is said to be a sprig from the crown of thorns—thus the “Glastonbury Thorn” tradition began. Flowers from that thorn tree have been presented to queens and kings during advent for centuries.

Z. Randall Stroope

The Glastonbury Thorn (anonymous)

O’er the brooks and marshy levels of Glastonbury,
Standing in tall wind-swept moorgrass and bluish meadow rue,
An Eastern Thorn with flowers white and brilliant as the dawn,
With roseberries on newfallen snow.

The deep hay meadow’d roots of the Glastonbury Thorn
Remind one of abiding Faith in the harshest of storms.
The thorn leaves of the Ley Line give Refuge and shade,
And Hope on Joseph’s branches for all who believe.

Twice-blooming offspring of the stainless Rose,
Celebrate the Holy Grail of birth, love and life.
Weio, weio, allewe-gloria!
Weio, weio, alleweio!

Vocabulary:

- *Somerset Levels* - coastal plain and wetland area of Somerset, England
- *meadow rue* - dense clustered bluish-purple foliage, growing waist tall
- *ley line* - straight alignments thought to be drawn between historical structures/landmarks; some traditions promote that ancient societies deliberately built along these lines to “engage the earth’s energy,” communicate with other worlds, or even align trade routes. There are many movements today that explore these views.
- *weio, weio, alleweio* - [weo weo alɛweo] ”way-o, way-o, ah-leh-way-o” - this archaic phrase (likely used in some “urban dictionary of the medieval world”) appears to communicate praise or adoration of the creator and/or the beauty of the natural world.

About the Composer

Z. Randall Stroope is an American composer and conductor. His composition teachers were Normand Lockwood and Cecil Effinger, both students of Nadia Boulanger, the famous French teacher and student of Gabriel Fauré. Among others, Randall studied conducting with Margaret Hillis, chorus master of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra. He is the artistic director of two international summer music festivals, and guest conducts about twenty-five concerts a year. Randall has a home/studio on Merritt Island, Florida, and in Santa Fe, New Mexico.

Duration: Approx. 4:40

written as a gift to Gary and Nancy Schwartzhoff for their careers dedicated
to changing thousands of lives through the art of music

The Glastonbury Thorn

SATB

Anonymous

Music by

Z. RANDALL STROOPE (b. 1953)

Innocent, but deeply passionate (♩ = 76)

mp espr.

Soprano
We - io,* we - io, al - le - we - io,

Alto
We - io,* we - io, al - le - we - io, We -

Tenor
We - io,* we - io, al - le - we - io, We -

Bass
We - io,* we - io, al - le - we - io, We -

Piano
(for rehearsal only)

5

we - io, al - le - we - io. *, mf*

We - io, we - o, al - le - we - o. O'er the

- io, we - io, al - le - we - io.

- io, we - io, al - le - we - io.

- io, we - io, al - le - we - io.

- io, we - io, al - le - we - io.

* IPA [weo weo alæweo]

"Weio, weio, alleweio" - pronounced "way-o, way-o, ah-leh-way-o" [weo weo alæweo]. This archaic phrase is likely a form of praise or adoration of the countryside and the beauty of its creator. (See preface notes.) The poet seems to have had personal knowledge of the Somerset area, and certainly of the significance of the *Glastonbury Thorn*.

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9

Tell the story! Nature is gentle, but has a powerful undercurrent.

pronounced
"bree"

brooks and marsh - y lev - els of Glas - ton - bury,

staggered breathing
hum

staggered breathing
hum

staggered breathing
hum

13

Stand - ing in tall wind - swept moor - grass and blu - ish mea - dow

mf
Stand - ing in tall wind - swept moor - grass and blu - ish mea - dow

* as in an acciaccatura, place the "grace note" before the beat and emphasize the main note

17

16 *mp*

rue, — We - io, — we - io, al - le - we -

mf dolce

rue, — An East-ern Thorn — with flow-ers white and bril-liant as the

mf dolce

— An East-ern Thorn — with flow-ers white and bril-liant as the

20 *mf*

io. With rose - ber - ries on — new - fal - len snow.

mf

dawn, With rose - ber - ries on new - fal - len snow. We -

mf

dawn, With rose - ber - ries on new - fal - len snow. We -

mf

With rose - ber - ries on new - fal - len snow.

pronounced "nyoo"

mp espr.

mp espr.

25 *mp espr.* we - io,

We - io, we - io, al - le - we - io, We - io, we - io, al -
 - io, we - io, al - le - we - io, We - io, we - io,
 - io, we - io, al - le - we - io, We - io, we - io,
mp espr.
 We - io, we - io, al - le - we - io, We - io, we - io, al -

31 al - le - we - io. 33 *mf*

- le - we - io. We - io, we - io, al - le - we -
 al - le - we - io. We - io, we - io, al - le - we -
 al - le - we - io. We - io, we - io, al - le - we -
mf
 - le - we - io. We - io, we - io, al - le - we -

39

37 (Sop. or Mezzo) *mf*

Solo

The deep — hay — meadow'd roots — of the Glas — ton-bury

S *mp* staggered breathing
io. hum

A *mp* staggered breathing
io. hum

T *mp* staggered breathing
io. hum

B *mp* staggered breathing
io. hum

42

Thorn Re-mind one of a - bid-ing Faith in the harsh-est of storms.

mf dolce

The

mf dolce

The

47

mp *mf*

S We - io, we - io, al - le - we - io. And

A thorn leaves of the Ley line — give Re - fuge and strength, And

T thorn — leaves of the Ley — line — give Re - fuge and strength, And

B And

And

51

We - *mp*

S Hope on Jo - seph's branch - es for — all — who be - lieve,

A Hope on Jo - seph's branch - es for all who be - lieve,

T Hope on Jo - seph's branch - es for all who — be - lieve, We - *mp espr.*

B Hope on Jo - seph's branch - es for all who be - lieve, We - *mp espr.*

55

io, - - - al - le - we - io.

We - io, we - io, al - le - we - io.

mf (melody) *mp*

We - io, we - io, al - le - we - io. We - io,

- io, we - io, al - le - we - io, We - io,

- io, we - io, al - le - we - io, We - io, we -

60

63

mf

We - io,

mf

we - io, al - le - we - io. We - io,

mf

we - io, al - le - we - io. We - io,

mf

we - io, al - le - we - io. We - io,

64

we - io, al - le - we - io, We -

we - io, al le - we - io, We -

we - io, al - le - we - io, We -

we - io, al - le - we - io, We -

68

confident and unstoppable
- io, we - io, al - le - we - io. Twice —

confident and unstoppable
- io, we - io, al - le - we - io. Twice —

- io, we - io, al - le - we - io.

- io, we - io, al - le - we - io.

72

bloom - ing off-spring of the stain - less Rose,
 bloom - ing off-spring of the stain - less Rose,
confident and unstoppable
 bloom - ing off - spring of the stain - less Rose,
confident and unstoppable
 Twice bloom - ing off - spring of the stain - less Rose,

76

Cel - e - brate the Ho - ly Grail of birth, love and life.
 Cel - e - brate the Ho - ly Grail of birth, love and life.
 O O birth, love and life. We - *f* *ecstatic*
 O O birth, love and life. We - *f* *ecstatic*

80 *mf* float, little if any vibrato

(Sop. obbligato)

84

Solo

f ecstatic

We - io, we - io, al - le - we - glo - ri - a! — We - io, we - io,

f ecstatic

We - io, we - io, al - le - we - glo - ri - a! — We - io, we - io,

- io, we - io, al - le - we - glo - ri - a! — We - io, we - io,

- io, we - io, al - le - we - glo - ri - a! — We - io, we - io,

86 (end solo)

90 *poco rit.*

mf *mp non vib.*

al - le - we - io, We - io, we - io, — al - le - we - io.

mf *mp non vib.*

al - le - we - io, We - io, we - io, — al - le - we - io.

mf *mp non vib.*

al - le - we - io, We - io, we - io, — al - le - we - io.

mf *mp non vib.*

al - le - we - io, We - io, we - io, — al - le - we - io.