

The Skipping Stone

SA & Piano

Z. Randall Stroope

About the text ...

The lives and words of three individuals who made a lasting impact on the world were chosen as the text for this work. Though born centuries apart and from very different points of the globe, each one struggled to change their existence ("what is") to their essence ("what ought to be"). Their words - not stated formally in poetry, but in everyday quotes - "calls" us to think and live at a higher level. In the words of Khalil Gebran, "Your living is determined not so much by what life brings to you as by the attitude you bring to life; not so much by what happens to you as by the way your mind looks at what happens." As is often the case, some "quotes" of well-known historical figures (like story-telling) become paraphrased or modified in translation. Though this sometimes poses a challenge to authenticate a particular quote and in rare cases even the source, the intent or essence of these three individuals is clear. May there be an increasing amount of people on the planet who strive to make the human existence more beautiful for all.

Kahlil Gebran was born in 1883 into a very poor family in a mountainous area in northern Lebanon. He and his mother, as well as his siblings, immigrated to the United States and settled in Boston. Kahlil's talent as a visual artist and writer developed quickly and he had his first art exposition at age 21, followed by study in Paris. He came back to the United States, moving to New York City, where he devoted the rest of his life to painting and writing.

Rumi was born in 1207 in what is present day Afghanistan, then later moving to Turkey where he spent most of his life. Rumi believed in pursuing music, dance and poetry as a way to worship. Among other things, his life was dedicated to the peaceful co-existence of people of all diverse backgrounds and religions. His books of quotes and poetry are some of the most popular in the United States, even though written 800 years ago.

Hildegard von Bingen (also known as Saint Hildegard) was born into nobility in 1198, and at a young age entered the service of the church. She became famous throughout Europe for her visions and treatises on theology. She was a composer and poet, and her work is well-known today. She is an important example of someone who overcame gender, physical and social barriers to achieve her goals - 800 years ago.

Performance notes ...

This work was composed with harmonic vocabulary that creates a rather mystical soundscape, lending itself to the transcendental character of the four writers above. "Academic" compositional trappings are unnecessary. Rather, I chose to let the simplicity of the music mirror the direct, clear nature of the quotes. Additionally, each quote is a distillation of larger concepts of service, beliefs/reflections on life. Though some of the writers selected in this work had strong religious connections, the writings used in this musical work are no more religious than secular. The messages center on encouraging one to do daily random acts of kindness, to reflect mature and sincere compassion for others, and - no matter the walk of life - to view every situation as an opportunity to create a more peaceful co-existence.

Z. Randall Stroepe

About the composer ...

Z. Randall Stroepe is an American composer and conductor. He is the artistic director of two international music festivals, is an honorary board member of the National Association of Italian Choral Directors, and has conducted in 25 countries. His composition teachers were Cecil Effinger and Normand Lockwood, both students of the famous French teacher Nadia Boulanger (who was a student of Gabriel Fauré). Randall has 190 published works, and has directed at Carnegie Hall over 40 times, and conducted music for mass at the Vatican on 14 occasions. His music can be heard on Spotify, YouTube and other platforms, including his own website (www.zrstroepe.com)

Performance time: 3:01

The Skipping Stone

Quotes from Kahlil Gebran,
Rumi, and Hildegard von Bingen

SA and Piano

Z. Randall Stroope

mp *anonymous*

$\text{♩} = 84$

Soprano
Alto
Piano

I a - lone — can - not change the world,

I a - lone — can - not change the world,

6

S
A
Pno.

mf *mp*

but I can cast a stone — a - cross the wa - ters to cre - ate man - y rip - ples,

but I can cast a stone — a - cross the wa - ters to cre - ate man - y rip - ples,

14 *Kahlil Gebran*

S
A
Pno.

p *mp*

rip - ples, rip - ples. In one — drop of wa - ter

rip - ples, rip - ples. In one — drop of wa - ter

Rumi

S
A
Pno.

16

are all se - crets of the world, As the wa - ter re - flects the

are all se - crets of the world, As the wa - ter re - flects the

mf

S
A
Pno.

21

stars and moon, we re - flect the mind and soul.

stars and moon, we re - flect the mind and soul.

f mf mp

Hildegard von Bingen

mf

S
A
Pno.

26

I shine in wa - ters, and I burn in the sun,

I am the flame a - bove the beau - ty in the fields; the

mf

S
and all of the stars, the sun, the moon, the stars,

A
moon, and all of the stars, the sun, the moon, the stars,

Pno.

S
stars, stars, stars, stars, stars, stars,

A
stars, stars, stars, stars, stars, stars,

Pno.

S
stars, stars, stars, stars!

A
stars, stars, stars, stars!

Pno.

rit. al fine ***ff***

rit. al fine ***ff***

rit. al fine ***ff*** *a tempo* ***mf***

46 *mp*

S I a - lone — can - not change the world, but I can

A I a - lone — can - not change the world, but I can

Pno. *mp*

51 *mf* *mp*

S cast a stone — a - cross the wa - ters to cre - ate man - y rip - ples, rip - ples,

A cast a stone — a - cross the wa - ters to cre - ate man - y rip - ples, rip - ples,

Pno. *mf* *mp*

56 *p* **57**

S rip - ples rip - ples, rip - ples.

A rip - ples rip - ples, rip - ples.

Pno. *p*