

Performance Notes – The Pasture – Z. Randall Stroope

Tempo: The score purposefully asks for the singers to be “unhurried”. Note several “poco ritard” markings toward end of verses and refrain (measures: 17,25,53) Watch the conductor for the “poco meno mosso” and “ritard” markings on the final page. Be aware of the places in piano interludes where the music slows prior to a vocal entrance – (measures: 20,48,58)

Meter: Meter changes frequently, but with clear purpose to align with natural word accents

Diction: “r” is silent before a consonant; “r” is flipped before a vowel (except words like “pasture” where the vowel that follows is silent; ladies drop the “r” in “pasture.”
“t”, “d”, “p” and “k” need to be clearly articulated with extra support
The poem was written by Robert Frost, a New England American poet. Based on the accents of that part of the country - “shan’t” should be pronounced “shahnt.” Be sure to articulate both the “t” and the “b” each time you sing “I shan’t be long.” Also emphasize the “c” in “you come to” – each time.

Men’s verse: drop the “r” and emphasize the “t”s in the word “totters”. Also attend to the consonants in “fetch”, “little”, “it”, “licks.”

Dynamics: *Crescendo/decrescendo* marks are carefully indicated throughout the score. Note the building to a forte in the final verse – (pages 6-7 – measures 49-57). Note also, the *decrescendos* at the very end. There is only one *Forte* in the entire piece. Be sure to observe all *pianos* and *mezzo pianos* as marked.

Breathing: Breathe phrase endings. Phrases are relatively short and indicated clearly by rests that follow.

Phrasing: There is a natural rise and fall in the phrases that will result from careful attention to dynamics.

Articulation: Legato throughout

Vocal technique: Gentlemen, the challenge in your verse is to keep your voice light. You are describing a little calf. The tone needs to be light throughout – I would choose falsetto in the highest part of of your vocal range.

Ladies your range is narrow and usually middle range, never push the volume, think “gentle.”