

*The Ballad of Longwood Glen* for tenor and harp by Richard Wilson

The Ballad of Longwood Glen is a setting of Vladimir Nabokov's narrative of the same title. Consisting of thirty-two rhymed couplets, the poem was written in America, directly in English, and bears the date 1957. The musical version, composed at Yaddo in the summer of 1975, begins and ends with the tenor and harp closely coordinated in the manner characteristic of art songs. The music of these two areas is similar, a reprise being the musical reflection of the return to (apparent) normalcy found at the close of the poems. In the intervening portion of the piece, as the events of the poem become increasingly strange, the performers stray from exact coordination. This independence allows the singer a good deal of freedom in delivering the text.

The first performance was given by Paul Sperry and Nancy Allen (the dedicatees) at Vassar College on February 1, 1978.

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