

the snowman walking in the air

The Snowman Walking in the Air: A Magical Journey Through Music and Animation

the snowman walking in the air is an enchanting phrase that immediately brings to mind a sense of wonder, nostalgia, and a touch of winter magic. For many, it conjures memories of a beloved animated film and an iconic piece of music that has captured hearts across generations. But what exactly is the story behind the snowman walking in the air, and why has it become such a timeless symbol of holiday spirit and artistic creativity? Let's dive into the fascinating world of this whimsical winter tale, exploring its origins, cultural impact, and the unique blend of animation and music that makes it so unforgettable.

The Origins of the Snowman Walking in the Air

The phrase "the snowman walking in the air" is most famously associated with the 1982 British animated television film **The Snowman**, based on Raymond Briggs' 1978 picture book of the same name. The story follows a young boy who builds a snowman that magically comes to life. Together, they embark on a beautiful flight through the night sky, an iconic scene visually represented as the snowman walking in the air.

Raymond Briggs' Beloved Picture Book

Raymond Briggs' **The Snowman** was a wordless picture book that captured the imagination with its simple yet evocative illustrations. The narrative relies purely on images, allowing readers to immerse themselves in the magical experience without the distraction of text. This artistic choice made the story universally accessible and emotionally impactful.

The Animated Film and Its Impact

The animated adaptation, directed by Dianne Jackson and produced by John Coates, brought the snowman's flight to life with delicate watercolor-style animation. The film's most memorable moment is undoubtedly the snowman walking in the air, soaring across moonlit skies and snowy landscapes. This sequence perfectly captures the wonder and innocence of childhood imagination.

But what truly elevated the film was the hauntingly beautiful song, "Walking in the Air," composed by Howard Blake. Sung by Peter Auty, the piece became synonymous with the snowman's magical journey.

The Song "Walking in the Air": A Timeless Classic

Music plays a crucial role in the emotional resonance of *The Snowman*. "Walking in the Air" is a gentle, soaring melody that complements the visual poetry of the animation. It evokes a sense of freedom, adventure, and the ethereal quality of winter nights.

Howard Blake's Composition

Howard Blake's score is a masterclass in creating atmosphere through music. The song uses a simple yet effective arrangement, featuring a choir and orchestral elements that build gradually, mirroring the snowman's ascent into the air. The lyrics, though minimal, convey the magic and mystery of the flight.

Cover Versions and Cultural Influence

Over the years, "Walking in the Air" has been covered by numerous artists, including the popular version by Aled Jones in the 1980s. These renditions have helped introduce the song to new

audiences, keeping the snowman walking in the air alive in popular culture.

The song's connection to the Christmas season has made it a staple on holiday playlists worldwide, further solidifying its place as a winter classic.

Animation Techniques Behind the Snowman Walking in the Air

The snowman walking in the air is not just a narrative highlight but also an example of pioneering animation techniques that contributed to the film's charm.

Watercolor Animation Style

One of the unique features of *The Snowman* is its watercolor animation, which gives the film a soft, dreamlike quality. This technique involved painting each frame by hand, creating a fluid and organic aesthetic that perfectly suits the gentle story.

Innovative Flight Sequence

Animating the snowman's flight was a challenging task. The animators used a combination of traditional hand-drawn methods and careful timing to create the illusion of smooth, graceful movement. The snowman walking in the air sequence stands out for its seamless blend of fantasy and realism.

Why the Snowman Walking in the Air Resonates With

Audiences

What makes the image of the snowman walking in the air so enduring? It's a combination of themes that speak deeply to human emotions and experiences.

The Magic of Childhood Imagination

At its core, the story celebrates the boundless creativity and wonder of childhood. The snowman coming to life and taking flight symbolizes the power of imagination to transform the ordinary into the extraordinary.

Seasonal and Emotional Connections

Set against a backdrop of snowy landscapes and the Christmas season, the snowman walking in the air taps into feelings of warmth, hope, and nostalgia. It reminds viewers of the joy found in simple moments and the magic that the holiday season can bring.

Universality and Wordless Storytelling

Because the original book and film rely heavily on visuals and music rather than dialogue, the story transcends language and cultural barriers. This universality helps the snowman walking in the air resonate with audiences worldwide.

How to Experience the Snowman Walking in the Air Today

If you're new to *The Snowman* or want to revisit this magical tale, there are several ways to immerse yourself in the experience.

Watching the Animated Film

The animated film is often broadcast during the holiday season on television, but it's also available on various streaming platforms and DVD collections. Watching the full film allows you to appreciate the artistry and emotional depth of the story.

Listening to the Soundtrack

Seeking out Howard Blake's original score or the numerous cover versions of "Walking in the Air" can bring the magic into your own home. The music alone is enough to evoke the feeling of flying through a winter night sky.

Exploring Raymond Briggs' Artwork

For those interested in the artistic side, reading the original picture book or viewing Briggs' illustrations provides insight into the origins of the snowman walking in the air. His detailed and expressive watercolors are a testament to his skill as an illustrator.

Creating Your Own Snowman Walking in the Air Moment

Inspired by the magic of the snowman walking in the air, you might want to create your own winter memories. Here are some ideas to bring a touch of that wonder into your life:

- **Build a Snowman:** Embrace the traditional joy of crafting a snowman with friends or family, adding personal touches to make it special.
- **Host a Movie Night:** Gather loved ones to watch **The Snowman** together, pairing the viewing with hot cocoa and festive treats.
- **Create Winter Art:** Try your hand at watercolor painting or drawing scenes inspired by the snowman's flight, capturing the spirit of the story.
- **Enjoy the Music:** Play "Walking in the Air" during winter evenings to set a magical atmosphere in your home.

These simple activities help keep the enchanting feeling of the snowman walking in the air alive, blending art, music, and shared experiences.

The snowman walking in the air remains a cherished symbol of the magic found in winter, creativity, and the power of storytelling. Through its timeless blend of animation and music, it continues to inspire wonder and joy year after year. Whether you're revisiting this classic or discovering it for the first time, the snowman's magical flight invites you to believe in a little bit of magic every winter season.

Frequently Asked Questions

What is 'Walking in the Air' from The Snowman?

'Walking in the Air' is the iconic song featured in the 1982 animated film The Snowman. It accompanies the magical flight scene where the boy and the snowman soar through the sky.

Who originally performed 'Walking in the Air' in The Snowman?

The original performance of 'Walking in the Air' in The Snowman was by Peter Auty, a choirboy at the time, although many people mistakenly attribute it to Aled Jones.

Why is 'Walking in the Air' so popular during Christmas?

'Walking in the Air' has become a Christmas classic due to its association with The Snowman film, which is traditionally broadcast during the holiday season, evoking a sense of wonder and nostalgia.

Who composed 'Walking in the Air' for The Snowman?

The song 'Walking in the Air' was composed by Howard Blake specifically for The Snowman film.

Are there any notable covers of 'Walking in the Air'?

Yes, 'Walking in the Air' has been covered by numerous artists, including Aled Jones, Nightwish, and Celtic Woman, each bringing their own style to the haunting melody.

What is the significance of the flying scene in The Snowman?

The flying scene, accompanied by 'Walking in the Air,' symbolizes the magical friendship and adventure between the boy and the snowman, capturing the film's themes of imagination and wonder.

Where can I watch The Snowman and hear 'Walking in the Air'?

The Snowman is often broadcast on television during the Christmas season and is available on various streaming platforms and DVD collections featuring classic holiday films.

Additional Resources

The Snowman Walking in the Air: An Iconic Journey Through Animation and Music

the snowman walking in the air is a phrase that resonates deeply with fans of both classic animation and evocative musical compositions. Originating from the beloved 1982 British animated television film "The Snowman," this phrase encapsulates a magical scene where the titular character embarks on a breathtaking flight through the night sky. More than a mere narrative moment, it has evolved into a cultural touchstone symbolizing wonder, innocence, and the timeless allure of winter storytelling.

The Origins of "The Snowman Walking in the Air"

The phrase "the snowman walking in the air" is intrinsically linked to the animated adaptation of Raymond Briggs' 1978 picture book "The Snowman." The short film, directed by Dianne Jackson and produced by Channel 4, is renowned for its wordless storytelling and the hauntingly beautiful score composed by Howard Blake. Central to the film's emotional impact is the song "Walking in the Air," which accompanies the snowman's ethereal flight.

The song itself was originally performed by St Paul's Cathedral choirboy Peter Auty, whose angelic voice became synonymous with the scene. The soaring melody and lyrics describe the snowman and the boy's journey through the skies, capturing the wonder of childhood imagination. Over time, "Walking in the Air" has been covered by numerous artists and has cemented itself as a seasonal classic, often revisited during the Christmas period.

Analyzing the Symbolism Behind the Flight

The snowman's flight in the air is rich with symbolic meaning. At its core, it represents the transcendence from the mundane to the magical, a common theme in children's literature and animation. This flight scene is not just a physical journey but an emotional and imaginative escape, illustrating the limitless possibilities of youthful wonder.

From a psychological perspective, the imagery of walking or flying through the air often connotes freedom and exploration. In "The Snowman," this manifests as a metaphor for the boy's brief escape from reality, symbolizing purity and joy untainted by the adult world. The snowman itself, a figure made from snow, is transient and fragile, which adds a poignant layer to the experience of flying together — a fleeting moment of happiness before the inevitable thaw.

The Technical Craftsmanship of the Animation

The animation style of "The Snowman" is notable for its delicate hand-drawn technique, which faithfully captures the softness and ephemeral nature of snow. The flight sequence, in particular, showcases meticulous attention to detail, with smooth transitions and fluid motion that evoke a dreamlike quality.

The choice to keep the film largely wordless enhances the universality of the narrative, allowing the visuals and music to communicate the story's emotional depth. The snowman walking in the air becomes a visual metaphor that transcends language barriers, inviting viewers of all ages to immerse themselves in the scene's wonder.

The Musical Legacy of "Walking in the Air"

No discussion of the snowman walking in the air would be complete without a detailed look at Howard Blake's musical composition. "Walking in the Air" is a hauntingly beautiful piece that combines a

soaring melody with simplistic yet evocative lyrics. Its orchestral arrangement and choral elements contribute to an atmosphere of ethereal beauty.

The song's enduring popularity is evidenced by its frequent inclusion in Christmas playlists and its adaptation by various musical artists over the decades. For instance, Aled Jones's 1985 version brought renewed attention to the piece, becoming a chart-topping hit and introducing the song to a wider audience. The melody's ability to evoke nostalgia and innocence has made it a staple in holiday music repertoires worldwide.

Impact on Popular Culture and Seasonal Traditions

The snowman walking in the air has inspired numerous adaptations, merchandise, and live performances, especially during the Christmas season. Its imagery often appears on greeting cards, decorations, and even stage productions, underscoring its place in contemporary festive culture.

This scene's influence extends beyond the UK, with international audiences embracing the film and its music. The universal themes of friendship, imagination, and the transient nature of life resonate globally, making the snowman walking in the air a symbol of seasonal magic.

Comparisons with Other Winter-Themed Narratives

When placed in the broader context of winter-themed stories, "The Snowman" stands out for its minimalist storytelling and emotional poignancy. Unlike other holiday classics that rely heavily on dialogue or complex plots, the snowman walking in the air sequence relies on visual storytelling and music to convey its message.

Stories such as "Frosty the Snowman" or "Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer" feature more traditional narrative arcs and character development, whereas "The Snowman" opts for a poetic and contemplative approach. This distinction contributes to the film's unique charm and enduring appeal,

particularly among audiences seeking a more reflective holiday experience.

Pros and Cons of the Film's Approach

- **Pros:**

- Timeless animation style that appeals to all ages
- Powerful use of music to evoke emotion
- Universal themes accessible without dialogue
- Short runtime making it suitable for family viewing

- **Cons:**

- Lack of dialogue may challenge younger viewers' understanding
- Some may find the narrative too brief or abstract
- The film's vintage animation may appear dated compared to modern CGI

The Enduring Appeal of "The Snowman Walking in the Air"

Decades after its release, the snowman walking in the air remains an evocative image, symbolizing the magic of childhood and the fleeting nature of joy. It continues to inspire new generations through broadcasts, special screenings, and musical performances. The combination of visual artistry and emotional music creates a sensory experience that few animated films achieve.

Moreover, the phrase itself has transcended its original context, often used metaphorically to describe moments of unexpected wonder and beauty. In literature, music, and popular discourse, the snowman walking in the air stands as a beacon of imaginative freedom and seasonal nostalgia.

The story's simplicity and emotional resonance offer a reminder that sometimes, the most powerful narratives are those that invite us to dream — to walk, or even fly, in the air alongside a snowman on a winter's night.

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the snowman walking in the air: *Happy Now* Charles Higson, 2015-09-17 From the author of the latest official James Bond novel 'Charlie Higson's thrillers are major events' Mark Billingham 'An off-beat, atmospheric novel' Mirror 'Written with chilling perception' Time Out 'I do not believe that a man can be truly happy unless he fully understands what he is and can act accordingly... how can it be wrong to be happy?' These lines are taken from Will's diary, a seemingly innocuous exercise book which details his house-breaking activities. Will carefully selects houses - forty-seven so far - ensuring their owners will be in. As they cook their supper or watch television, Will (wearing surgical gloves and leaving no trace behind) enters not only their houses, but their secret lives. A secret museum, housed in his loft, is 'held together by sex'. All his trophies are carefully catalogued and he keeps a very precise diary of his activities and his thoughts. All his life Tom Kendall had lived as quietly and normally as possible ... but he gave people the creeps ... 'kids didn't like him, or the cat'. When Tom discovers Will's diary he decides to adopt the same quest for happiness. Tom has problems of his own - a difficult temper, problems with his girlfriend, Maddie, and an overwhelming sense of powerlessness. Perhaps Will's diary holds the key?

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the snowman walking in the air: *Howard Blake* Howard Blake, 2010-09

the snowman walking in the air: *Abbas Kiarostami's Cinema of Life* Julian Rice, 2020-09-11 Standing apart from celebrated Iranian ideals of war and martyrdom, revolutionary filmmaker Abbas Kiarostami was known as a man who praised life and celebrated it in all his works. Creating films for more than 40 years during times of unending war and political turmoil, Kiarostami promoted the Sufi tradition of seeing God as part of nature and the pre-Islamic Zoroastrian ideal of environmental protection. Kiarostami's self-image as a citizen of the world, his renunciation of war, and his concern for the future of nature cement his importance within the art form of poetic cinema. Addressing Kiarostami's illumination of humanity's self-destructive tendencies, author Julian Rice presents a detailed analysis of twelve individual films, from *Homework* (1989) to *Like Someone in Love* (2012). Departing from concerns of spectatorship or film in general, Rice's book portrays the human and spiritual core of Kiarostami. Connected to all other humans and to the earth we all inhabit, Kiarostami's vision remains a powerful message for film scholars and peaceful people everywhere.

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Did you know? Richard Burton claimed that he would rather have played rugby for Wales at Cardiff Arms Park than Hamlet at the Old Vic. Local rivalries between choirs in the 'land of song' used to be so fierce that fights would break out following singing competitions. Roald Dahl was an RAF fighter pilot during the Second World War, and a near-death crash landing inspired his first published work. The Little Book of Welsh Culture is a fast-paced, fact-filled journey through the cultural heritage of Wales, crammed full of myths, traditions and personalities. Experience the country's immense artistic legacy as never before, from the medieval legends surrounding King Arthur and The Mabinogion to its modern-day transformation into a thriving filming location for big-screen blockbusters. Discover the truth behind the ancient druidic rituals of the National Eisteddfod, separate the facts from the fiction that surround Dylan Thomas' infamous lifestyle, and learn how Wales successfully regenerated the Doctor Who franchise - and unearth some fascinating secrets and hidden gems along the way.

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