



# Cycle of the Sun

A Sound Journey of Light

Written for Quartet

2 Concert Pianos

the first also controlling Spitfire's Orchestral Contemporary Textures via MIDI

Percussion

large 28" F# Gong with two large-headed, wool-covered mallets, Tibetan Prayer Bell D# & Prayer Bowl in G#

Midi Technician

controlling fader volume for orchestral textures & field recordings

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*'The Sun's Cycle waxes and wanes over the course of a year.*

*It reaches a peak at each Solstice, stops and begins a change in direction, which affects all life on Earth.*

*The Solstices are a time to stop, to look back on where the half yearly cycle has brought you, and to look forward to how you will use the developing energy.*

*At the Equinoxes, day and night are equal in length. The outer and inner worlds, light and dark, are equal and balanced. They provide an opportunity for us to work with this integration within ourselves.*

The Earth's Cycle of Celebration, Glennie Kindred

Composed by Maddy Chassar Hesketh

Performed by members of the Aurora Orchestra- August 2020

Duration- c. 5'

# Cycle of the Sun

## Composers Statement

I wanted to write a piece that celebrated the ebb & flow of sun during the seasons – leaving the listener contemplating the cyclical nature of life.

By appreciating the earth's cyclical nature and realising how much it is at odds with the modern world's linear way of thinking, I hope it will allow us all to make better, more environmentally friendly decisions in the future.

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The shimmering timbre of the piano's high register represents the energy of the sun as it brings nature to life. The electronic drones ebb & flow to represent the surges of growth and decay as each season peaks and fades. The Moon Bowl and Prayer Bell represent those sudden moments of seasonal change – which seem to appear suddenly after much anticipation. The shimmering gong and lower registered notes on the piano are designed to root us firmly to the earth – appreciating that this organic, life force, this miracle of creation, is ultimately our home.

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## Musical Influences

All the music is my own. But I love Debussy's music and wanted to add something of his magic to the piece.

The chords at bars 57 to 60 are an adaptation of the climax of Debussy's piece, Little Shepherd (bars 16 to 19). I remember reading that Debussy wanted to capture the image of a shepherd sat on a hill looking out over a beautiful country scene in contemplation.

Whilst making the field recordings in Glastonbury, that you can hear on the piece, we walked to the top of the Tor and it immediately reminded me of the Debussy piece as I looked out over the Somerset levels. I decided to add these two chords to the piece!

I also discovered that the Tor has a 7 level labyrinth that runs up it. This gave me the idea of the 7/8 theme that appears three times during the piece. I wanted to give the piece a sense of climbing the Tor.

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*A note about the Tempo of the Score & the fade on the recording*

*The score is timed to be played live at 80bpm. This gives it a duration of 4:59  
When I recorded the piece live for 'Inspire' I played it without a metronome as I wanted to keep the playing as free as possible, it was slightly slower than 80 bpm so I've faded the recording at bar 86 to ensure the piece remains within 5 minutes. The whole piece can be played within 5 minutes if played precisely at 80bpm!*

# Cycle of the Sun

## **Winter Solstice (0.00)**

The Light of the Sun flickers into life again after the long winter Life returns and the first flowers of Spring appear out of the frozen earth

## **Spring Equinox (1:50)**

Day and Night are in perfect balance as the first day of spring arrives Fertility and the potency of the life force reaches its peak

## **Summer Solstice (3.10)**

Mother Earth is expansive and organic growth is rife  
The Summer's peak brings the harvest, the sun king dances in the warm evening shadows

## **Autumn Equinox (4.22)**

Day and night are in perfect balance, nature's harvest is complete Nature prepares to rest and take shelter

## Instrument Specification

Two grand pianos ideally miked up with added Reverb (Lexicon Dark Hole reverb was used in the recording which adds a shimmering to the higher register notes)

Piano 1 has the MIDI interface (such as the Yamaha MIDI grand) connected to Spitfire Audio's London Contemporary Orchestra Textures (setting to Quantum Space Forest with a MIDI fader controlling the dynamic setting – the recording used Logic 10 to control Spitfire)

### Note on playing Spitfire on the Piano

The MIDI piano triggers the Orchestral Texture – the piano triggers the notes Spitfire plays, and the piano pedal allows the Spitfire Orchestral Atmosphere to develop when held down or drop away when released

There are two pianos (I wrote the piece for my brother and I to play originally) because the second part can be played without interfering with the orchestral texture part

Paiste 28" Planetary Gong (Jupiter) played with two large gong mallets – the gong rolls to be played nearer the outer rim of the gong with two medium sized mallets and the singular hits to be played nearer the middle with a large mallet with a wool cover for a warmer sound

Tibetan Prayer Bells to be attached by a thread and struck together lightly in mid-air via a swinging motion (the bell I used is a Siesta Nepalese Tingsa Bell)

Prayer Bowl to be struck with a wooden mallet (the bowl used on the recording was a D# Moon Bowl from Enlightenment, Glastonbury)

Field Recordings (recordings of the Sacred Springs and Singing Birds alongside Glastonbury Tor recorded during the Summer Solstice 2018 – they fade in and out of the recording)

# Cycle of the Sun

## Winter solstice

Rubato con moto ♩ = 80

Maddy Chassar Hesketh

Piano 1  
doubled by  
MIDI

*p* *dolce* *mp espress.*

Ped. Ped.

Piano 2

*mp leggiero*

Ped.

Moon Bowl(G#)  $\frac{4}{4}$

Prayer Bell(D#)  $\frac{4}{4}$  (l.v.)

Large Gong 28" (F#)  $\frac{4}{4}$  *pp*

Pre-recorded Track  
Volume Control  
MIDI Fader\*

Start = 100% 0%

Start = 0% 100% 0%



6

Pno. 1

*p* *mp*

Ped. *8va*

Pno. 2

*p*

Ped.

M.B.

P.B.

L.G.

*ppp* *p*

P.R.  
MIDI

33%

10

**Pno. 1**

*p espress.* *ppp*

*poco rit.* *8va*

*pp*

*ppp* *mf* *mf* (l.v.)

66% 100% 0%

0% 100%

14

**Tempo primo** **Majestically**

*p* *pp* *mp*

*mp* *p*

*ppp* *p*

0% 100% 0%

19

Pno. 1

Pno. 2

M.B.

P.B.

L.G.

P.R.

MIDI

*pp* *mf* *ppp* *f*

*Red. p Play like shimmering sunlight dancing*

8<sup>va</sup>

100% 0%



24

**Tempo rubato**  
*Softly emphasise accents*

Pno. 1

Pno. 2

M.B.

P.B.

L.G.

P.R.

MIDI

*pp* *pp*

0% 33% 66% 100%

28

Pno. 1

Pno. 2

M.B.

P.B.

L.G.

P.R.

MIDI

100%

66%

33%

*ppp*

*ppp*

*ppp*



**Spring Equinox** *Played with a sense of anticipation*

**Tempo primo**

31

Pno. 1

Pno. 2

M.B.

P.B.

L.G.

P.R.

MIDI

0%

100%

0%

0%

*ppp*

*mf*

*p*

*pp*

*p*

*ppp*

*pp*

*ppp*

*pp*

*15<sup>ma</sup>*

*Ped.*

*Ped.*

36 *8va*

Pno. 1 *pp* *mp* *ppp*

Ped. 3

Pno. 2 *pp* 3

Ped. 3

M.B. P.B. L.G. P.R. MIDI

*ppp* *mp* *pp*

100% 0% 20%



41 **Tempo rubato**

Pno. 1 *pp*

Ped.

Pno. 2 *pp*

*8vb*

M.B. P.B. L.G. P.R. MIDI

*ppp* *mp*

40%



45

Pno. 1

Pno. 2

M.B.

P.B.

L.G.

P.R.

MIDI

rit. . . . .

8<sup>vb</sup>

8<sup>vb</sup>

ppp

mp

ppp

mp

mp

mp

80%

100%

0%

100%

0%



**Rubato con moto rall.**

50

Pno. 1

Pno. 2

M.B.

P.B.

L.G.

P.R.

MIDI

*Misterioso*

*mp*

*mf*

*Red.*

0%

100%

0%

80%

0%

# Summer Solstice

7

57

Pno. 1 *p Allargando*

Ped.

Pno. 2

M.B.

P.B.

L.G. *pp* *mp* *ppp* *mf*

P.R.

MIDI 100% 80% 0%



63

Pno. 1

Ped.

Pno. 2

M.B.

P.B.

L.G. *mf*

P.R.

MIDI 80% 0% 100%

# Autumn Equinox

Tempo rubato

70

Pno. 1

Pno. 2

M.B.

P.B.

L.G.

P.R.

MIDI

80%

0%

33%

*pp*

*mp*

*ppp*

*mp*

Ped.

Ped.

77

Pno. 1

Pno. 2

M.B.

P.B.

L.G.

P.R.

MIDI

8va

*p*

*ppp*

*mp*

*ppp*

*mp*

8va

continue at 20%

66%

Ped.

Ped.

81

rit. . . . . Tempo primo

Pno. 1

*mp*

Pno. 2

8<sup>va</sup>

Ped.

M.B.

P.B.

L.G.

PR.

MIDI

100% 0%  
0% 0%



86

Pno. 1

*pp*

*ppp* Morendo

Ped.

3

3

Pno. 2

8<sup>va</sup>

Majestically

*pp*

Ped.

15<sup>ma</sup>

M.B.

P.B.

L.G.

PR.

MIDI

100% 0%  
80% 0% 100%