

Piano

Pyrolysis

I. Black Sugar

II. Smoke Water

III. Beehive Coke

for Vibraphone, Piano and String Quartet

Kitra Razin

2019

INSTRUMENTATION

Vibraphone
Piano
2 Violins
Viola
Cello

Duration: ca. 8.5 minutes

PROGRAM NOTE

The process of pyrolysis irreversibly alters the composition of organic materials via thermal decomposition. A by-product of pyrolysis is black sugar, a shiny, powder pollutant. Additionally, pyrolysis produces a fuel from coal called coke. Coke is manufactured in brick beehive ovens.

Smoke water, though unrelated to pyrolysis, functions similarly to pyrolysis when it permanently alters seed structures during the germination of plant species.

The piece *Pyrolysis*, inspired by other chamber works, much like the chemical process itself, utilizes transformational techniques similar to pyrolytic reactions.

Each movement shares characteristics with both the chemical it is titled after and the colloquial secondary meaning.

“Black Sugar” is small (short) and sweet, and it is intended to complement as well as enhance the other movements.

“Smoke Water” is fluid with shifting tonal centers, like ripples in a lake, but its predominantly minor tonality and unorthodox modulations infuse the movement with a dark, impure, smoky quality.

“Beehive Coke” is the brightest movement and the first with an unambiguously major key, resembling an effervescent carbonated soda.

I. Black Sugar

Piano

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♩ = 120

5 2

A

2 f

17

p pp

B **C**

5 2 3

I. Black Sugar
Piano

34 *8va* D

p *mf* *pp*

40 *mf*

43 E

2 *2* *2* *2*

F *8va*

sfz *dim.* *p*

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II. Smoke Water

Piano

♩ = 60
(3 + 2)

p cresc. *f*

A

pp cresc.

(3 + 2)

11

mp cresc.

13

f

II. Smoke Water
Piano

15

subito p

f > *p mf* > *p mp* > *pp* B

16

l.h. (3 + 2) 4

Ped.

22

(3 + 2) (2 + 3) C

pp cresc.

Ped.

28

mf dim. D (3 + 2) *p*

Ped.

32

(2 + 3) (3 + 2) (2 + 3) (3 + 2)

6 2 2

6 2 2

Ped.

*

II. Smoke Water

Piano

E *8va*

mf *p*

3 *3* *3* *3* *3*

3 *3* *3*

3 *3* *3*

8va

47

f *p* *mp* *p*

3 *3* *3* *3* *3*

3 *3* *3*

8va

49

mp *mf* *mp* *mf* *f*

3 *3* *3* *3* *3* *3* *3*

51

52

F

ff *p*

3 *3* *3* *3* *3* *3* *3*

5 *5*

II. Smoke Water
Piano

59 *p* *l.h.* *r.h.* *l.h.* *r.h.* *mf* *8va*

61 *accel.* *p* *pp* *8va* *legato*

62 *p* *mp* *8va*

63 *f* *8va*

64 *8va* *attacca*

III. Beehive Coke

Piano

$\text{♩} = 90 - 112$

13 A 6 B 4

13 6 4

Detailed description: This block contains the first system of musical notation, measures 1 through 12. It is written for piano in 4/4 time with a key signature of three flats (B-flat, E-flat, A-flat). The tempo is marked as quarter note = 90-112. The system is divided into three sections: Section A (measures 1-6, 13 measures total), Section B (measures 7-12, 6 measures total), and Section C (measures 13-16, 4 measures total). Each section is represented by a thick black bar on both the treble and bass staves.

24

p

Ped.

Detailed description: This block contains the second system of musical notation, measures 17 through 26. It begins with a piano (*p*) dynamic marking. The music features a melody in the treble clef with slurs and ties, and a bass line in the bass clef. A 'Ped.' (pedal) marking is present at the start of the system. The key signature remains three flats.

27

C 8 10 D 8

10 8

Detailed description: This block contains the third system of musical notation, measures 27 through 36. It is divided into Section C (measures 27-30, 8 measures total) and Section D (measures 31-36, 8 measures total). Section C contains a thick black bar in the treble staff and a slur in the bass staff. Section D contains thick black bars in both staves. The key signature remains three flats.

E

p *cresc.* *f*

Detailed description: This block contains the fourth system of musical notation, measures 37 through 42. It is marked with a piano (*p*) dynamic and a crescendo (*cresc.*) marking. The music features a melody in the treble clef with slurs and ties, and a bass line in the bass clef. The system concludes with a forte (*f*) dynamic marking. The key signature remains three flats.