

Pyrolysis

I. Black Sugar

II. Smoke Water

III. Beehive Coke

for Vibraphone, Piano and String Quartet

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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.

II. Smoke Water

Violin II

♩ = 60

(3 + 2)

mp cresc. *f p cresc.*

poco a poco

A (3 + 2)

f p cresc.

B (3 + 2)

f subito p f p mf p mp pp

(3 + 2) (2 + 3)

p cresc. *mf*

C

pp cresc. *mf dim.*

D (3 + 2)

p sul pont.

II. Smoke Water
Violin II

34 (2 + 3) (3 + 2)

40 (2 + 3) (3 + 2) E mp

46 p f p mp mf mp mf f

51 ord. F ff p

54

58 3 3 mp p mf

61 accel. p pp p mp f V.S. attacca

III. Beehive Coke

Violin II

$\text{♩} = 90 - 112$

Musical staff 1 (measures 1-5): Treble clef, key signature of three flats, 4/4 time. Dynamics: *mf*. Includes hairpins and slurs.

Musical staff 2 (measures 6-10): Treble clef, key signature of three flats, 4/4 time. Dynamics: *mf*. Includes hairpins and slurs.

Musical staff 3 (measures 11-17): Treble clef, key signature of three flats, 4/4 time. Measure 11 is marked with a box 'A' and 'sul pont.'. Dynamics: *pp*. Includes hairpins and slurs.

Musical staff 4 (measures 18-23): Treble clef, key signature of three flats, 4/4 time. Measure 18 is marked with a box 'B' and 'pizz.'. Dynamics: *mf* and *p*. Includes hairpins and slurs.

Musical staff 5 (measures 24-38): Treble clef, key signature of three flats, 4/4 time. Measures 24-27 are marked with a box 'C' and contain triplets (3) and octaves (8). Measure 28 is marked 'arco'. Dynamics: *mf*. Includes hairpins and slurs.

Musical staff 6 (measures 39-43): Treble clef, key signature of three flats, 4/4 time. Measure 39 is marked with a box 'D'. Dynamics: *mf*. Includes hairpins and slurs.

Musical staff 7 (measures 44-48): Treble clef, key signature of three flats, 4/4 time. Dynamics: *p cresc.*. Includes hairpins and slurs.

Musical staff 8 (measures 49-54): Treble clef, key signature of three flats, 4/4 time. Measure 49 is marked with a box 'E'. Dynamics: *f*. Includes hairpins and slurs.