

CROSSROADS OF THE EARTH

FOR MIXED QUARTET

A THESIS IN
Music Composition

Presented to the Faculty of University
of Missouri-Kansas City in partial fulfillment of
the requirements for the degree

MASTER OF MUSIC

by
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B.M., New England Conservatory of Music, 2022

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CROSSROADS OF THE EARTH

FOR MIXED QUARTET

Jiaqi Wang, Candidate for the Master of Music Degree

University of Missouri-Kansas City, 2024

ABSTRACT

Crossroads of The Earth is a single-movement mixed quartet in five sections, set for flute/piccolo, alto saxophone, violoncello, and piano. My inspiration for this composition stemmed from the environmental awareness film *11th Hour* which vividly portrays the adverse effects of humanity's historical disregard for the environment through compelling and urgent imagery. The film prompted me to reflect deeply on contemporary environmental issues over the course of this nine-minute piece. The first section (mm.1-19) employs bright colors and the hocket technique, creating a sparkling effect to represent the beautiful, safe, fresh, and harmonious planet we currently inhabit. The second section (mm.20-60) utilizes whole tone and octatonic tone clusters, along with abrupt shifts in dynamics and registers, conveying a sense of tension and crisis. This section suggests that human behaviors are gradually leading to a series of detrimental consequences in our lives. In the third section (mm.61-91), faster rhythmic patterns and a tighter texture drive towards the climax, generating a strong sense of chaos and disorderliness. This reflects the idea that the environmental pollution of the Earth has spiraled out of control. The fourth section (mm.92-123) depicts how humans are subjected to nature's vengeance, showcasing individual instruments with bombastic, heavy chords. The final section (mm.124-140) draws on the pitch and rhythmic designs from the first section, returning to a calm yet simultaneously unresolved conclusion. Punctuated pitches enter the listener's mind, provoking a deeper contemplation of the environment.

APPROVAL PAGE

The faculty listed below, appointed by the Dean of the UMKC Conservatory have examined a thesis titled “Crossroads of The Earth,” presented by Jiaqi Wang, candidate for the Master of Music degree, and certify that in their opinion it is worthy of acceptance.

Supervisory Committee

Chen Yi, DMA, Committee Chair
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PROGRAM NOTES

Crossroads of The Earth is a single-movement mixed quartet in five sections, set for flute/piccolo, alto saxophone, violoncello, and piano. My inspiration for this composition stemmed from the environmental awareness film *11th Hour* which vividly portrays the adverse effects of humanity's historical disregard for the environment through compelling and urgent imagery. The film prompted me to reflect deeply on contemporary environmental issues over the course of this nine-minute piece. The first section employs bright colors and the hocket technique, creating a sparkling effect to represent the beautiful, safe, fresh, and harmonious planet we currently inhabit. The second section utilizes whole tone and octatonic tone clusters, along with abrupt shifts in dynamics and registers, conveying a sense of tension and crisis. This section suggests that human behaviors are gradually leading to a series of detrimental consequences in our lives. In the third section, faster rhythmic patterns and a tighter texture drive towards the climax, generating a strong sense of chaos and disorderliness. This reflects the idea that the environmental pollution of the Earth has spiraled out of control. The fourth section depicts how humans are subjected to nature's vengeance, showcasing individual instruments with bombastic, heavy chords. The final section draws on the pitch and rhythmic designs from the first section, returning to a calm yet simultaneously unresolved conclusion. Punctuated pitches enter the listener's mind, provoking a deeper contemplation of the environment.

The protection of the Earth is our shared responsibility, and we must recognize that the Earth is the only home in which we can live and prosper. Only by valuing and safeguarding the Earth can we ensure that future generations will continue to enjoy this beautiful and precious planet.

Jiaqi Wang (2024)

INSTRUMENTATION

Flute/Piccolo

E flat Alto Saxophone


Violoncello


Piano

PERFORMANCE NOTES


A. Flute/Piccolo:


(1): : exhaling.

(2): : slap tongue.

(3): : key click


B. Alto Saxophone in E-flat:


(1): : key click.


(2): : slap tongue.


(3): Multiphonics: The fingering of the multiphonics is provided in the score, and the fingering charts are derived from Daniel Kientzy's *Les Sons Multiples*. Players are encouraged to use their own fingering in order to play the multiphonics.

C. Violoncello:


(1): : approaching the highest pitch.

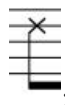
(2): : increasing the bow pressure and gradually distorting the sound.

(3): : ricochet; thrown, several leaps on one stroke (5-6 times is preferred).

(4): : behind the bridge.

D. Piano:

(1):  : All square notation in the piano part represents the pitch cluster. Pianist can try various ways to produce the cluster.

(2):  : pluck the string inside of the piano with long pedal.

Crossroads of the Earth

for piccolo/flute, alto saxophone, violoncello and piano

Score in C

Duration: 8 minutes

Jiaqi Wang (2024)

$\text{♩} = 60$; Dreaming, with sense of mysterious

The score is written for four instruments: Flute/Piccolo, Alto Saxophone, Violoncello, and Piano. It is in 4/4 time with a tempo of 60 beats per minute. The key signature is C major. The score is divided into three systems, each starting with a double bar line and a repeat sign.

System 1 (Measures 1-3):

- Flute/Piccolo:** Starts with a **Flute** dynamic marking. The melody features triplets and slurs. Dynamics range from *mp* to *mf*.
- Alto Saxophone:** Features a **key click** effect and **ord.** (order) markings. Dynamics range from *p* to *mp*.
- Violoncello:** Includes a **poco vib.** (poco vibrato) marking. Dynamics range from *p* to *mp*.
- Piano:** Features a **pluck the string inside of the piano with sustained pedal** instruction. The right hand has a triplet melody, and the left hand has a sustained bass line with **8va** markings. Dynamics range from *mp* to *mf*.

System 2 (Measures 4-6):

- Fl. (Flute):** Includes **flz.** (flautissimo) and **ord.** markings. Dynamics range from *sf* to *mf*.
- Alto Sax.:** Remains mostly silent in this system.
- Vc. (Violoncello):** Features **espress.** (espressivo) markings and a quintuplet. Dynamics range from *mp* to *mf*.
- Pno. (Piano):** Features a **pp** (pianissimo) dynamic in the right hand and triplets in the left hand. Dynamics range from *pp* to *mp*.

System 3 (Measures 7-9):

- Fl.:** Starts with a **f** (forte) dynamic. Dynamics range from *f* to *mp*.
- Alto Sax.:** Features a **f** dynamic and triplets. Dynamics range from *f* to *mp*.
- Vc.:** Includes a **gliss.** (glissando) marking and a **f** dynamic.
- Pno.:** Features a **f** dynamic in the right hand and a **mp** dynamic in the left hand.

10

Fl. *f* singing

Alto Sax. *f*

Vc. *f* ord vib.

Pno. *f*

13

Fl. *f*

Alto Sax. *mp*

Vc. *mp* *f*

Pno. *mf*

16

Fl. *mf*

Alto Sax. *mf*

Vc. *mf*

Pno. *mf*

rit. **A** ♩=60; Struggling, intense

19

Fl. *ff* 3 *p subito* *mp* *p* exhaling *mp < f*

Alto Sax. *f* 3 *p* *ff* *mp* *f*

Vc. *f* *gliss.* *ff* *pizz.* *sfz*

Pno. *f* 3 *sfz* *sfz* 3 *sfz*

23

Fl. *mp < f* *flz.* *ord.* *mp* *mf* *f* 3

Alto Sax. *sfz* *pizz.* 3 *arco* *mp* *f* *sul pont.* *ord.* *ff* *p subito*

Vc. *sfz* *pizz.* 3 *arco* *mp* *f* *sul pont.* *ord.* 5 *gliss.* *ff* *p subito*

Pno. *f* 5 *mp* 5

27

Fl. *sub mp* *f* *ff* *flz.*

Alto Sax. *sf* 5 *key click*

Vc. *f* *pizz.* *sfz* *arco* *col lengo batt.* 3 *ord.* *sfz* *f* *gliss.* 3

Pno. *p* 5 *sfz* 5 *sfz* *sfz*

30

Fl. *ord.* *5* *flz.* *ord.* *sfz* *mp* *5*

Alto Sax. *f* *3* *6* *3* *mp* *f* *5*

Vc. *mp* *sfz* *col lengo batt.* *mp* *p* *f* *ord.*

Pno. *sfz* *5* *sfz* *p*

8^{va} 8^{va} 8^{va} 8^{va}

33

Fl. *p* *flz.* *ord.* *mp* *3*

Alto Sax. *mp* *3* *mf* *3* *5*

Vc. *gliss.* *gliss.* *ff* *mf* *mp subito*

Pno. *sf* *5* *mp*

8^{va} 8^{va} 8^{va}

B ♩ = 66; Afflicted, faster

36

Fl. *mf* *3* *f* *3* *ord.*

Alto Sax. *sf* *sfz* *mf*

Vc. *mf* *8^{va}*

Pno. *f* *sfz* *sfz*

8^{va}

39

Fl. *sf* 5 *fz.* *f* *mp*

Alto Sax. *f* *sfz*

Vc. *pizz.* *arco* *f* *mp*

Pno. *sfz* *sfz* *sfz* *f* *sfz*

42

Fl. *ord.* *flz.* *ord.* *slap tongue*

Alto Sax. *ff subito* *pp subito* *mp* *sfz* *sfz*

Vc. *p* *mp* *sul pont.*

Pno. *f* *pp subito*

45

Fl. *ord.* *sfz* *sfz* *sfz* *mp subito* *flz.*

Alto Sax. *f* *ff*

Vc. *f* *ord.* *sfz* *sfz* *sfz* *sfz* *ff*

Pno. *f* *sfz* *sfz* *ff*

48

Fl. *mf* *p subito* ord. 3

Alto Sax. *mp subito* *mf*

Vc. *mp* *f* *mf* molto sul pont. ord. pizz 3

Pno. *mp* *p* 3

(8) - 1

51

Fl. *mf* *sf* *f* *mp* 3 *tr* *slap tongue* ord.

Alto Sax.

Vc. *mp* *mf* *f* 3 3 arco *b* *tr*

Pno. *p* 3 *f*

54

Fl. *mf* *f* *ff* 3 6 flz.

Alto Sax.

Vc.

Pno. *sf* *mf* *ff* 3 6 *A bit free!*

57 *ord* *mf* *mp* *mf* *p* *accel.*

Fl.

Alto Sax. *slap tongue* *f*

Vc. *sul pont.* *arco* *sul pont.* *mf* *mp* *f* *sfz* *sfz*

Pno. *mp* *pp* *3* *8^{vb}* *3* *8^{vb}* *3* *8^{vb}* *3* *8^{vb}*

C ♩=72-76; A bit faster than "B", with more anxiety and restlessness

61 *mp* *p* *ord.* *gliss.* *sfz*

Fl.

Alto Sax. *mp* *p*

Vc. *ord.* *gliss.* *sfz*

Pno. *f* *3* *3* *3*

63 *f* *flz.* *ord.* *To Picc.*

Fl.

Alto Sax. *f*

Vc. *pizz.* *arco* *sfz* *p* *f*

Pno. *p* *3* *3* *3*

65

Fl.

Alto Sax.

Vc.

Pno.

f *ff* *f*

gliss. *gliss.*

sfz *mp*

5 3 3

67

Fl.

Alto Sax.

Vc.

Pno.

mp subito *p*

f

pp

5 3 3 5

69

Fl.

Alto Sax.

Vc.

Pno.

Piccolo

more intense!

f *f* *sf*

p *f*

gliss. *pizz.* *sfz*

ff *sfz*

7 7 7 7 3 7 7 7

8^{vb}

71

Picc. *sfz* *sfz* 3 *f*

Alto Sax. *f* 7 *sfz* *ff*

Vc. arco *mf* *gliss.* *ff* pizz. *sf* *ff*

Pno. *sfz* 3 *sfz* 3 *sfz* 3

8^{va} 8^{vb}

73

Picc. *ff*

Alto Sax. *f*

Vc. arco *ff* *gliss.* *sfz* *gliss.* *sfz* *gliss.*

Pno. *f* 7

8^{vb}

75

Picc. *sfz*

Alto Sax. *mf* 3 6 *sfz* *sfz* *sfz* *sfz*

Vc. *f* *gliss.* *ff* pizz. *sf* arco 3 *sf* pizz. *sf*

Pno. *sfz* *sfz* *sfz* *sfz*

8^{vb}

77

Picc. *sf* *f* *tr* *b*

Alto Sax.

Vc. *sf arco* *f* *ff* *gliss.* *sf* *sf* *f* *ff* *sfz* *sfz*

Pno. *f* *ff* *sfz* *sfz*

8^{va}

8^{vb}

79

Picc. *ff* *f* *ff* *mp subito* *sfz*

Alto Sax. *mf* *f* *tr* *b*

Vc. *f* *gliss.* *gliss.*

Pno. *mf*

8^{va}

8^{vb}

81

Picc. *mp* *sfz* *tr* *b* *sfz* *sfz* *mp*

Alto Sax. *3* *3* *3* *3*

Vc. *gliss.* *ff* *gliss.* *sfz* *gliss.* *sfz*

Pno. *ff* *sfz* *sfz* *sfz* *sfz* *sfz*

8^{va}

8^{vb}

83

Picc. *f* *ff* *ord* *flz.* *flz.*

Alto Sax. *f* *ff* *5* *3*

Vc. *f*

Pno. *sfz* *sfz* *sfz* *sfz* *sfz* *sfz* *sfz*

8^{va} 8^{va}

8^{vb}

85

Picc. *ord.*

Alto Sax. *sfz* *sfz*

Vc. *ord.* *gliss.* *gliss.* *gliss.* *fff* *pizz.* *sfz*

Pno. *sfz* *sfz* *sfz* *sfz*

8^{va} 8^{va}

8^{vb}

87

Picc. *sfz* *sfz* *sfz* *3* *3* *3*

Alto Sax. *sfz* *sfz*

Vc. *sfz* *sfz* *sfz*

Pno. *ff*

8^{va} 8^{va}

8^{vb}

For Box Notation on mm.89-91:

Please repeat the indicated notes in each instruments for 10-12 seconds, making the crescendo with each repetition, building the intensity gradually, with freedom.

Musical score for measures 89-91, measures 89-90. The score includes parts for Piccolo (Picc.), Alto Saxophone (Alto Sax.), Violoncello (Vc.), and Piano (Pno.).

- Picc.:** Measure 89: *f*, notes G4, A4, Bb4, C5, D5, E5. Measure 90: *ff*, notes G4, A4, Bb4, C5, D5, E5. Box notation: ca 10-12".
- Alto Sax.:** Measure 89: *f*, notes G4, A4, Bb4, C5, D5, E5. Measure 90: *ff*, notes G4, A4, Bb4, C5, D5, E5. Box notation: ca 10-12".
- Vc.:** Measure 89: *f*, notes G2, A2, Bb2, C3, D3, E3. Measure 90: *ff*, notes G2, A2, Bb2, C3, D3, E3. Box notation: ca 10-12".
- Pno.:** Measure 89: *f*, notes G4, A4, Bb4, C5, D5, E5. Measure 90: *ff*, notes G4, A4, Bb4, C5, D5, E5. Box notation: ca 10-12".



Musical score for measures 90-91, measures 90-91. The score includes parts for Piccolo (Picc.), Alto Saxophone (Alto Sax.), Violoncello (Vc.), and Piano (Pno.).

- Picc.:** Measure 90: *ff*, notes G4, A4, Bb4, C5, D5, E5. Measure 91: *fff*, notes G4, A4, Bb4, C5, D5, E5. Box notation: ca 10-12".
- Alto Sax.:** Measure 90: *ff*, notes G4, A4, Bb4, C5, D5, E5. Measure 91: *fff*, notes G4, A4, Bb4, C5, D5, E5. Box notation: ca 10-12".
- Vc.:** Measure 90: *ff*, notes G2, A2, Bb2, C3, D3, E3. Measure 91: *fff*, notes G2, A2, Bb2, C3, D3, E3. Box notation: ca 10-12".
- Pno.:** Measure 90: *ff*, notes G4, A4, Bb4, C5, D5, E5. Measure 91: *fff*, notes G4, A4, Bb4, C5, D5, E5. Box notation: ca 10-12".

D $\text{♩} = 66$; Vengeful

ord.

92

Picc.

tr \flat \flat

3

flz.

ff fff

Alto Sax.

1 2 3
4 5 6

ff

Vc.

ord.

gliss.

ff fff

Pno.

fff

8^{va}

94

Alto Sax.

1 2 3
4 5 6

ff

ff fff

Vc.

gliss.

gliss.

f

Pno.

8^{va}

96

Picc.

ord. \flat tr

f ff

Alto Sax.

tr \flat \flat

3

flz.

f ff

Vc.

ord. \flat tr

tr \flat \flat

ff fff f

Pno.

sfz

8^{va}

98

Picc. *flz.* *ord.* *ff* *3* *ord.*

Alto Sax. *ord.* *flz.* *f* *ff* *tr* *b* *tr* *b* *tr* *b* *3*

Vc. *b* *(tr)* *gliss.* *ff* *fff* *5*

Pno. *8^{va}* *8^{vb}* *3* *3*

101

Picc. *flz.* *fff* *ff* *fff*

Alto Sax. *f* *ff* *f* *ff*

Vc. *extremely close to the bridge* *f* *ff* *fff*

Pno. *8^{va}* *fff cresc.* *6* *6* *6* *3* *3*

105

Picc. *ord.* *tr* *b* *tr* *b* *tr* *b* *flz.* *ord.* *ff* *mf* *sf* *sf* *slap tongue* *To fl.*

Alto Sax. *ord.* *ff* *mf* *sf* *sf*

Vc. *ord.* *sf* *ff* *pizz.*

Pno. *8^{va}* *fff* *3* *3* *3* *f* *ff*

109

Picc.

Alto Sax.

Vc.

Pno.

8^{va}

E ♩=56; Dissociated, very free

113

Alto Sax.

slap tongue
ord.
trill
flz.

mf *mp* *f* *sf* *p* *sf* *ff*

118

Fl.

Alto Sax.

ord.
flz.
trill
trill
trill
trill
trill
trill
trill

sf *sf* *f* *ff* *ff* *fff*

rit. **F** ♩=60; Helpless but longing

121

Fl.

Alto Sax.

Vc.

Pno.

solo
trill
trill
ord. non vib.
ricochet
5
3

ff *fff* *mp subito* *mf* *mp*

mf

125

Fl.

Alto Sax.

Vc. *mf* *p* *pp* *mp* *p* *p*

Pno. *p* *mf* *f* *p*

8^{vb}

ricochet 5 pizz. 3 arco 3

129

Fl. *p* *mp*

Vc. *mf* *p* *mp* *p* *f*

Pno. *sf*

8^{vb}

ord. air sound

ricochet 5 pizz.

pluck the string inside of the piano

133

Fl. *f* *mp* *f*

Alto Sax.

Vc. *f* *mf* *mp*

Pno. *mp*

key click 3 3

arco 3 ricochet 5 3 sul tasto

136

Fl. *air sound*
p ————— *mp*

Alto Sax. *key click*
mf

Vc. *f*
mf
pizz.

Pno. *f*
8va
8vb

pluck the string inside of the piano with sustained pedal

rit.

139

Fl. *air sound first, then back to regular sound.*
p < *f* *p* ————— *mf*

Alto Sax. *mf*

Vc. *mf*

Pno. *8va*
8vb

Kansas City, MO, January 2024

VITA

Born in Beijing, China on September 3, 1999. Now, he is a second-year MM composition student at the University of Missouri - Kansas City, where he studies composition with Dr. Zhou Long, Dr. Chen Yi, and Dr. Paul Rudy. He began to study composition when he was 12 years old. He entered the Central Conservatory of Music Middle School in China in 2012, studied composition with professor Du Yong and professor Chen Changfeng. Then at the age of 18, he entered New England Conservatory to study composition with Canadian & American composer Kati Agocs. He graduated from the New England Conservatory of Music in May 2022.

Throughout his composing career, he has composed music of different instrumentation and genres, from solo to symphonic orchestra. He has won international awards, including the first prize in the 10th International Antonín Dvořák Composition, the 27th Young Musician International Competition 'Città di Barletta', and the 3rd prize in The New Symphony Vienna International Composers Competition. He has also won the Missouri Composer Project, the Donald Martino Award for Excellence in Composition at NEC, and the Balourdet String Quartet Composition Competition at NEC. In addition, many of his compositions have been selected for public performance by professional ensembles and orchestras, such as the Lithuania Mettis Quartet, Columbia Civic Orchestra, Exponential Ensemble, Barcelona Modern Ensemble, Corvus Saxophone Quartet, Volker Brass Quintet, New York S.E.M Ensemble, Atlantic Music Festival Chamber Ensemble, UMKC Percussion Quartet, Balourdet String Quartet, etc.

When he composes music, he pays attention to expressing his inner feelings and his heartfelt resonance with the hearts of the audience. His ideal for music is to bring happiness, joy, and love to the hearts of others.