

The background of the entire page is a complex fractal pattern known as a sunburst. It consists of numerous bright, glowing points of light that radiate outwards, creating a dense, intricate web of light and shadow. The colors are primarily warm, ranging from deep oranges and reds to bright yellows and whites, giving it a fiery, sun-like appearance. The pattern is most concentrated in the lower half of the page, where it becomes a dense field of tiny, shimmering points, and becomes more sparse and larger in the upper half.

Sunburst

for piano quartet

Charles Peck

Program Notes

This two-movement work explores the energy in sunlight. The first movement, titled *Reflect*, focuses on the frenetic, scattered motion of light waves. The music contains only a few short gestures, but it jumps to and between them at speed, as if it were following a ray of light over contrasting surfaces. Each gesture is imbued with that same, active motion, exemplified by the use of extreme ranges in the piano and tightly interlocked rhythms in the ensemble. Contrarily, the patient second movement, titled *Absorb*, acts as a solar-powered circuit. The music begins in the low register and breathes slowly while the circuit receives and stores energy. As the power accumulates, the electricity begins to hum, an effect that is personified by drones in the violin and viola. Finally, after flickering on and off, the movement climaxes with a powerful release of energy, followed by a steady, sequential descent in register as the circuit runs out of power.

Duration

10 minutes

Composition Year

2016

Sunburst was commissioned and premiered by the New York Youth Symphony as part of the First Music Program

First performance by the New York Youth Symphony on May 2nd, 2017

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I. Reflect

♩ = 108

Violin: *pizz.*, *ff*, *arco*, *ff*, *f*

Viola: *sul pont. (s.p.)*, *mf*, *f*, *ord.*, *ff*, *f*

Cello: *f*

Piano: *ff*, *mf*, *ff*, *mf*

Vln.: *ff*, *mp*, *p*, *mf*

Vla.: *ff*, *ff*, *mf*, *ff*

Vc.: *f*, *mf*

Pno.: *mf*, *ff*, *mf*, *ff*

Vln.: *f*, *ff*, *arco*, *ff*

Vla.: *arco sul tasto (s.t.)*, *p hollow*, *s.p.*, *ord.*, *ff*

Vc.: *sul tasto (s.t.)*, *ord.*, *ff*

Pno.: *mf*, *ff*, *mf*, *ff*, *mf*

13

Vln. *p* < *f* *ff* *mf*

Vla. s.t. *p* as before ord. *p* < *f* *ff* *mf*

Vc. s.t. *p* as before ord. *p* < *f* *ff* *mf*

Pno. *p* *mf* *ff*

B deaden strings
strum with the
back of fingernail

18

Vln. arco *p* < *f* *mf*

Vla. arco *p* < *f* *mf*

Vc. arco *p* < *f* *mf*

Pno.

23

Vln.

Vla.

Vc.

Pno.

27

Vln. *arco* *p sub.*

Vla. *arco* *p sub.* *ff*

Vc.

Pno. *mp sub.* *ff*

29

Vln. *fff aggressive* *ff* *pizz.*

Vla. *f* *ff* *pizz.*

Vc. *f* *ff* *arco* *over pressure*

Pno. *ff*

C

33

Vln.

Vla.

Vc. *ff* *pizz.*

Pno. *ff*

D

38

Vln. *ff* *p* arco

Vla.

Vc.

Pno.

E continuously glissando
exaggerate accents

44

Vln. *ff*

Vla. s.t. arco *p* ord. *f* s.p. *ff*

Vc. s.t. arco *p* ord. *f*

Pno. exaggerate accents *ff* 5

47

Vln.

Vla.

Vc.

Pno. *p* *ff* *p* *ff*

F

Musical score for section F, measures 48-53. The score is in 4/4 time. It features four staves: Violin (Vln.), Viola (Vla.), Violoncello (Vc.), and Piano (Pno.). The Violin part is marked *p sub.* and features a melodic line with slurs and accents. The Viola part is marked *ff* and features a pizzicato (*pizz.*) accompaniment. The Violoncello part is marked *ff* and features a rhythmic accompaniment. The Piano part is marked *mf sub.* and features a complex accompaniment with slurs and accents.

54

Musical score for section F, measures 54-59. The score is in 4/4 time. It features four staves: Violin (Vln.), Viola (Vla.), Violoncello (Vc.), and Piano (Pno.). The Violin part is marked *ff* and features a melodic line with slurs and accents. The Viola part is marked *ff* and features a rhythmic accompaniment. The Violoncello part is marked *ff* and features a rhythmic accompaniment. The Piano part is marked *ff* and features a complex accompaniment with slurs and accents.

G

Musical score for section G, measures 60-65. The score is in 4/4 time. It features four staves: Violin (Vln.), Viola (Vla.), Violoncello (Vc.), and Piano (Pno.). The Violin part is marked *p sub.* and features a melodic line with slurs and accents. The Viola part is marked *ff* and features a rhythmic accompaniment. The Violoncello part is marked *ff* and features a rhythmic accompaniment. The Piano part is marked *mf sub.* and features a complex accompaniment with slurs and accents.

Sunburst

61

Vln.

Vla.

Vc.

Pno.

H

Vln.

Vla.

Vc.

Pno.

I

68

Vln.

Vla.

Vc.

Pno.

pizz.

ff

s.p. arco

mf

ord.

p

f

72

Vln. *ff* *mf* *ff* *ff*

Vla. *ff* *mf* *ff* *ff*

Vc. *ff* *mf* *ff* *ff*

Pno.

strum with fingernail

arco

pizz.

arco

78

Vln. *p* *f* *ff* *ff*

Vla. *p* *f* *ff* *mf* *ff*

Vc. *p* *f* *ff* *ff* *mf* *ff*

Pno. *p* *ff*

pizz.

J

84

Vln.

Vla.

Vc.

Pno. *mf* *ff* *mf* *ff*

K

88

Vln. *mf* *ff*

Vla. *mf* *ff*

Vc. *mf* *ff*

Pno. *mf* *ff*

92

Vln.

Vla.

Vc.

Pno. *mf* *ff*

L

Vln. *p sub.*

Vla. *p sub.* *ff*

Vc.

Pno. *mp sub.* *ff*

97

Vln. *fff* *aggressive*

Vla. *f* *fff*

Vc. *f* *fff* *arco* *pizz.*

Pno. *fff*

99

Vln. *mf* *arco*

Vla. *f*

Vc. *f* *mp*

Pno. *f* *mf*

101

Vln. *ff* *f*

Vla. *mf* *ff*

Vc. *p* *ff*

Pno. *fff* *dry*

M stop open strings immediately after attack

104

Vln. *p*

Vla.

Vc. *ff*

Pno. *mf*

108

Vln. *f*

Vla.

Vc.

Pno. *fff* *mf*

112

Vln. *fff* *mf* *f*

Vla. *fff* *mf*

Vc.

Pno. *fff* *mf* *fff*

N arco

(D) (E)

115

Vln. *mf sub.* *ff*

Vla. *ff* over pressure *ord.* *mf sub.* *ff*

Vc. *ff* over pressure *ord.* *mf sub.* *ff*

Pno. *mf* *fff* *mf sub.* *ff*

O

Vln. *f*

Vla. *p* *ff* over pressure *ord.*

Vc. *ff* over pressure *ord.*

Pno. *fff* *mf* *fff*

123

Vln. *p sub.*

Vla. *ord.* *p* *ff* *p sub.*

Vc. *p* *ff*

Pno. *p* *ff* *mp sub.*

126

Vln. *ff* *aggressive*

Vla. *ff* *f*

Vc.

Pno. *ff*

P pizz.

Vln. *ff*

Vla. pizz. *ff*

Vc. over pressure *ff*

Pno. *ff*

131

Vln.

Vla.

Vc.

Pno.

II. Absorb

♩ = 84

Vln.

Vla. *sul tasto (s.t.)*
pp *mp* *pp* *mp*

Vc. *sul tasto (s.t.)*
pp *mp* *pp* *mp*

Pno. *pp* *mp* *pp* *mp*

9

Vln.

Vla. *pp* *mp* *pp* *mp*

Vc. *pp* *mp* *pp* *mp*

Pno. *pp* *mp* *pp* *mp*

17 **Q** *poco s.p.*

Vln. *ppp* *mf*

Vla. *p* *mf* *poco s.p.*

Vc. *p* *f* *ord.*

Pno. *p* *mf*

8^{ma}

R

24

Vln. light bow pressure, stutter bowing slightly with gentle shakes of the right hand to create a slightly unstable, flickering sound

Vla. light bow pressure, stutter bowing slightly with gentle shakes of the right hand to create a slightly unstable, flickering sound

Vc. *pp*

Pno.

(8va)

S

30

Vln. *p*

Vla. s.t. ord. *p* *mp*

Vc. s.t. ord. *p* *mp*

Pno. *p* *mp*

38

Vln.

Vla. ord. *mf*

Vc. ord. *mf*

Pno. *mf*

T

44

Vln. *s.p.*
pp *f*

Vla. *s.p.*
f

Vc. *ff*

Pno. *f*

8va

U

50

Vln. *ff*

Vla. *ff*

Vc. *fff*

Pno.

8va

55

Vln.

Vla.

Vc.

Pno.

8va

V light bow pressure, stutter bowing slightly with gentle shakes of the right hand to create a slightly unstable, flickering sound

60

Vln. *fff* flicker *pp*

Vla. *fff* flicker *pp*

Vc. *fff* flicker *pp* ord. flicker

Pno. *fff*

(8^{va})

67

Vln. s.p. ord.

Vla. s.p. ord.

Vc. ord. flicker s.p. ord.

Pno.

W

Vln. *ff* sostenuto, espressivo ord. ord. -> poco s.p.

Vla. *ff* sostenuto, espressivo ord. ord. -> poco s.p.

Vc. *ff* sostenuto, espressivo ord. ord. -> poco s.p.

Pno. *ff* sostenuto



80

poco s.p. → s.p.

Vln.

Vla.

Vc.

Pno.

85

s.p. → molto s.p.

Vln.

Vla.

Vc.

Pno.

89 **Rit.**

s.t. no vib.

pp sub.

s.t. no vib.

pp sub.

s.t. no vib.

pp sub.

Pno.

8va

