Out of Four Elements (1980)

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OUT OF FOUR ELEMENTS (1980)

by

Michael H. Keur

A Thesis
Submitted to the
Faculty of the Graduate College
in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the
Degree of Master of Music
School of Music

Western Michigan University
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Michael H. Keur
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WESTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY, M.M., 1980

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Out of
Four
Elements
-1980

for:

woodwind, brass, and string quintets; percussion; voices; and electronic tape.

Michael Keur
Performance Arrangement

- Speaker #1
- Woodwind
- Quintet
- Percussion ensemble
- Guitars
- Bass
- Strings
- Voices facing seating areas

Percussion Instruments:
1. Tom toms - four small snare drum
   woodblock
2. Tom toms - four large timpani - two bass drum
   temple blocks
3. Suspended cymbals - three ("small," "medium,
   "large")
   crash cymbals
   triangle
4. Vibraphone
   Xylophone
I.

Prelude

Hero and Leander—Donne

Both robb'd of air, we both lie in one ground,
Both whom one fire had burnt, one water drowned.

II.

A Burnt Ship—Donne

Out of a fired ship, which, by no way
But drowning, could be rescued from the flame,
Some men leaped forth, and ever as they came
Near the foes ship, did by their shot decay;
So all were lost, which in the ship were found.
They in the sea being burnt, they in the burnt ship drowned.

III.

The Earth, With Thunder Torn, With Fire Blasted...

from, Cowley—Greville

The earth, with thunder torn, with fire blasted,
With waters drowned, and windy palsy shaken,
Cannot for this with heaven be distasted,
Since thunder rain and winds from earth are taken.
Man torn with love, with inward furies blasted,
Drowned with despair, with fleshy lustings shaken,
Cannot for this with heaven be distasted;
Love fury lustings out of man are taken.
Then, man, endure thyself, those clouds will vanish;
Life is a top which whipping sorrow driveth;
Wisdom must hear what our flesh cannot banish;
The humble lead, the stubborn bootless striveth.
Or, man, forsake thyself; to heaven turn thee;
Her flames enlighten nature, never burn thee.

IV.

Interlude

The Air Still Moves...

from, Cowley—Greville

The air still moves, and by its moving cleareth
The fire up ascends and planets feedeth
The water passeth on and all lets woareth
The earth stands still, yet change of changes breedeth.

V.

Sonnet—Drummond of Hawthornden

I know that all beneath the moon decays,
And what by mortals in this world is brought
In time's great periods shall return to nought;
That fairest states have fatal nights and days.
I know how all the muses' heavenly lays,
With toll of sprite which are so dearly bought,
As idle sounds of few or none are sought.
And that nought lighter Is than airy praise.
I know frail beauty, like the purple flower
To which one morn oft birth and death affords;
That love a jarring Is of minds' accords,
Where sense and will invadeth reason's power;
Know what I list, this all can not me move.
But that, oh me, I both must write and love.

VI.

Postlude

Nature, That Framed Us...

from, Tamburlaine

Nature, that framed us of four elements
Warring within our breasts for regiment,
Both teach us all to have aspiring minds.
Special Notation

symbol | explanation

proportional accelerando

- if the box contains single notes without stems (i.e., \( \text{\textcopyright} \)), repeat the notes in a random order with random rhythms for the duration of the arrows.
- if the box contains figures (e.g., \( \text{\textcopyright} \)), perform contents of the entire box in order (as written) and repeat for the duration of the arrow—however, tempos and rhythms, in this case, remain somewhat flexible to provide for a perception of "randomness."

note: a "slash" through either of the above symbols (i.e., \( \text{\textcopyright} \) or \( \text{\textcopyright} \)) indicates that the prescribed function is to be performed as fast as possible.

- "bend" tone as indicated by the placement and configuration of the symbol in relationship to the staff.

- \( \# \) - 1/4 step sharp

- \( \flat \) - 1/4 step flat

- straight mute

- cup mute

- harmon mute ("stem in" always, unless otherwise indicated).

- rim shot - on tom-toms and snare drum.

- on the rim - on tom-toms and snare drum.

(please note, however, that this same symbol is employed for the woodblock notation in movement III.)

Also: movements I, IV, and VI are notated proportionally with one complete system representative of 10 seconds of "real" times; durations are indicated by beam lengths.
I. Prelude

Hero and Leander—Donne

marked and dramatic style

Both robbed of age,

We both lie in one grave,

Both whom one time had bound.
The Earth, With Thunder Torn, ...
from Caelica-Greville
pp continue frantic styline, but very soft as background
Interlude

The Air Still Moves, ...

from Caelica—Greville

marked and dramatic style