

Caitlin Harrison

Pagan Scenes and Dances

for orchestra

Each movement of *Pagan Scenes and Dances* is named after the points of The Pagan Wheel of the Year. The wheel traces the change of seasons with ceremonial occasions to celebrate or reflect on the current environmental state. The most prominent themes are from darkness to light, along with tracing the fertility of spring to the summer and autumn harvests before the death of winter. The wheel is cyclical, with every year end, *Samhain*, going into *Yule* to start the pattern again. With this in mind, the piece could technically be performed starting at any movement, although most effective would be beginning with *Yule*, *Beltane* or *Lughnasadh*. Many of the pagan festivals correlate to modern ones such as *Yule* and Christmas, *Imbolc* and Candlemas, *Ostara* and Easter, and *Samhain* and Halloween.

I. Yule — Scene

Yule starts the pagan wheel at the very darkest moment of the year, the winter solstice. Despite the stark and bleak landscape *Yule* is reminiscent of lighter times, a likely tactic to help Pagans of centuries gone by get through the harshest time of year. The movement begins by setting the barren scene with delicate higher textures in the upper strings and wind, before the darker depths of the lower instruments enter. A light snowflake-like dance takes over for the second half of the movement as the darkness begins to dissipate.

II. Imbolc — Dance

One of the more ceremonial movements, *Imbolc* symbolises the light emerging from the darkness. Like a candle in the darkness, the glockenspiel guides the deep tones of the lower instruments upwards until the emergence of the Cor Anglais solo. Whilst the slow 3/4 metre and sombre mood resembles a sarabande, the 'dance' element remains abstract until the solo.

III. Ostara — Dance

Ostara marks the spring equinox, symbolising rebirth and the boom of life one sees in nature. This is represented through the blooming fanfares in the brass and large tutti chords, with the offbeat rhythms bringing contrast to the primal dance.

IV. Beltane — Scene

After the bloom of spring comes the beginning of summer, *Beltane* (or May Day). *Beltane* celebrates the fertility of the lighter months, with bonfires traditionally lit as a purification ritual. Harking back to the more ceremonial mood of *Imbolc*, this movement contains unruly solos in the clarinet and piccolo, untameable like a flame or nature itself.

V. Litha — Dance

Litha celebrates the summer equinox, also called Midsummer, the lightest part of the year. The sun is worshipped with dancing around and jumping over bonfires. The 12/8 metre forms a clear and joyful dance, with bouncing dotted rhythms littering the canonic string theme. Some Pagan cultures also view this as the win of light over dark; the second half of the movement represents more of a battleground, with loud and turbulent gestures littering the soundscape before the opening light theme ultimately wins.

VI. Lughnasadh (*LOO-na-sa*) — Scene

Lughnasadh is a reflective occasion that thanks the Gaelic God, Lugh, for the year's harvest. The movement itself is a prayer, contrasting the rest of the work not only in theme but also texture as the instrumentation is heavily stripped back from the previous movement. The origins of *Lughnasadh* has funeral themes, marking the beginning of the death of the earth for this cycle. The prayer is also cautious, as the people ask for a forgiving winter to come.

VII. Mabon — Dance

The autumn equinox marks not only the final harvest but mostly importantly the beginning of the earth's decay. It is a dark death, with unpredictable rhythms and timbres littering *Mabon* as wild themes in the oboe and other solos represent the oncoming chaos and decent.

VIII. Samhain (*SAH-win*) — Scene

The cycle comes to and end with *Samhain*, what we commonly refer to as Halloween. The veil is at its thinnest between the living and the dead. Grand gestures open the movement before haunting themes take over in the brass and solo bassoon. The piece ends with a final dramatic run into a wild and terrifying darkness.

Viola

for London Euphonia Orchestra

Pagan Scenes and Dances

for orchestra

I. Yule

Caitlin Harrison

♩ = 120 *desolate*

5 *sul pont.*

p *mp*

12

3

mp *p*

22 **A** *ord.*

fp *fp*

32

fp

42 **B**

fp

50

9

pp

65 **C**

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

71

4 *sul pont.*

mp *mf*

Viola

II. Imbolc

♩ = 80-90 *sarabande-like*

musical staff with notes, rests, and dynamic marking *pp*. Includes the instruction *sul tasto* above the staff.

musical staff with notes and rests.

musical staff with notes and rests, marked with a boxed letter **A**.

musical staff with notes and rests.

musical staff with notes and rests, marked with a boxed letter **B**. Includes the instruction *ord.* above the staff and dynamic marking *f.mp* below the staff.

musical staff with notes and rests.

musical staff with notes and rests, marked with a boxed letter **C**. Includes the instruction *sul tasto* above the staff and dynamic markings *f* and *p* below the staff.

musical staff with notes and rests, marked with a boxed letter **D**.

musical staff with notes and rests, ending with a double bar line and dynamic marking *pp*.

Viola

III. Ostara

$\text{♩} = 60$ *bursting*

Musical notation for measures 1-7. The piece is in 3/4 time. Measures 1-3 contain three accented eighth notes with *sfz* dynamics. Measure 4 has a half note with *fp* dynamic. Measures 5-7 contain three accented eighth notes with *sfz* dynamics, followed by a half note with *fp* dynamic.

8 *sul pont.*

Musical notation for measures 8-14. The piece is in 3/4 time. Measures 8-13 contain sixteenth-note chords with *p* dynamic. Measure 14 contains a half note with *mf* dynamic.

15

Musical notation for measures 15-24. The piece is in 3/4 time. Measures 15-24 contain sixteenth-note chords with *p* dynamic.

25

Musical notation for measures 25-34. The piece is in 3/4 time. Measures 25-34 contain sixteenth-note chords with *p* dynamic.

35 *sul pont.*

Musical notation for measures 35-42. The piece is in 3/4 time. Measures 35-37 contain accented eighth notes with *sfz* dynamics. Measure 38 has a half note with *fp* dynamic. Measures 39-42 contain sixteenth-note chords with *p* dynamic.

43

Musical notation for measures 43-47. The piece is in 3/4 time. Measure 43 has a half note with *ff* dynamic. Measures 44-47 contain eighth notes with *f* dynamic, including triplets and a *div.* marking.

48 *pizz.*

Musical notation for measures 48-54. The piece is in 3/4 time. Measures 48-51 contain triplets with *f* dynamic. Measures 52-54 contain eighth notes with *ff* dynamic.

VIOLA

IV. Beltane

TACET *attacca*

Viola

V. Litha

Vivace ♩ = 90-105

6 A

9

12

14

17 B

20

23

25 C

p *mf* *mp* *mf* *fp* *p* *mf* *mf.p* *mf* *mp* *mf* *fp* *p* *f* *ff*

31 **D**

Musical staff 31-32: Treble clef, 3/8 time signature, key signature of one sharp (F#). The music consists of a continuous eighth-note pattern. The first measure starts with a dynamic marking of *ff*.

33

Musical staff 33: Continuation of the eighth-note pattern from the previous staff.

36

Musical staff 36-38: Continuation of the eighth-note pattern. The key signature changes to one flat (Bb) at the start of this staff.

39 **E**

Musical staff 39-41: Treble clef, 3/8 time signature, key signature of one flat (Bb). The music changes to a more melodic line with slurs and accents. Dynamic markings include *mp*, *mf*, and *fp*.

42

Musical staff 42-44: Continuation of the melodic line. Dynamic markings include *p*, *mf*, and *mf.p*.

45

Musical staff 45-47: Continuation of the melodic line. Dynamic markings include *mp*, *mf*, and *fp*.

48 **F**

Musical staff 48-50: Continuation of the melodic line. Dynamic markings include *p*, *mf*, and *mf.p*.

51

Musical staff 51-52: Continuation of the melodic line. The tempo marking *poco rit.* is present above the staff. Dynamic markings include *mp* and *p*.

53

Musical staff 53: Continuation of the melodic line, ending with a double bar line. Dynamic marking is *pp*.

Viola

VI. Lughnasadh

♩ = 80 *still, glistening*

pp > < p < mp p pp

9 A

pp <

15

mp > p > mp pp

21 B

< mp > pp

29 C

< mp < mf > p f

37 D

> p < mf > p

Viola

VII. Mabon

♩. = 80-90 *macabre*

pizz.

Staff 1: Measures 1-5. The music consists of eighth notes with accents. A dynamic marking of *f* is present at the beginning.

Staff 2: Measures 6-11. Continuation of the eighth-note pattern with accents.

Staff 3: Measures 12-16. A rest followed by fingerings: 2, 2, 2, 3, 2, 2.

A

Staff 4: Measures 17-26. A rest followed by a series of eighth notes with accents. A dynamic marking of *f* is present.

Staff 5: Measures 27-36. Continuation of the eighth-note pattern with accents.

Staff 6: Measures 37-40. Continuation of the eighth-note pattern with accents.

Staff 7: Measures 41-44. Continuation of the eighth-note pattern with accents.

Staff 8: Measures 45-47. Continuation of the eighth-note pattern with accents.

Staff 9: Measures 48-56. A rest followed by a triplet of eighth notes, then eighth notes with accents, and another triplet. A dynamic marking of *f* is present.

Staff 10: Measures 57-60. A rest followed by fingerings: 2, 2, 3.

Viola

65 C

arco

Musical staff 1: Measures 65-74. Starts with a whole rest, then a melodic phrase with dynamics *mp* < *f* > *f*. A fermata with a '4' above it covers measures 70-73. Ends with a melodic phrase and dynamics *mp* < *f* >.

75

Musical staff 2: Measures 75-82. Starts with a whole rest, then a melodic phrase with dynamics *mp* < *f* > *f*. A fermata with a '2' above it covers measures 76-77. Ends with a melodic phrase and dynamics *ff*.

83 D

Musical staff 3: Measures 83-86. Rapid sixteenth-note passage starting with dynamics *f*.

87

Musical staff 4: Measures 87-90. Rapid sixteenth-note passage.

91

Musical staff 5: Measures 91-93. Rapid sixteenth-note passage.

94

Musical staff 6: Measures 94-96. Rapid sixteenth-note passage.

attacca

Viola

VIII. Samhain

♩ = 110-120 *haunting*

6

f *fp*

13 **A**

2

fp *fp* *fp* *fp*

20 **B**

3 22

p

46 **C**

9

p

55

p *mf*

58

f

61

ff

63

ff