

SEASONS OF BASHO

for high voice, cello, and piano

JESSICA MEYER

SEASONS OF BASHO

for high voice (C4 - G5), cello (or viola), and piano

14'

When I first wrote this piece, I took the enchanting haiku of master Matsuo Basho and sequenced the translated text in a way that narrates an age-old story of discovery, infatuation, loss, and loneliness using the unique combination of countertenor, cello, and piano. Since the premiere, it has mostly been performed with viola instead of cello, and the high voice can easily be a soprano or mezzo...but I do love how the cello can cut through the texture so well in this version.

Basho's poetry is deeply rooted in nature, and I used the cyclical changing of the seasons as a metaphor for the highs and lows of obsessive love.

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**cellist will need a rubber practice mute, and the pianist will need a small rubber mallet for striking the inside of the piano (or, they can knock on it really loudly).*

SPRING

Won't you come
and see loneliness?
Just one leaf from the Kiri tree
With plum blossom scent
this sudden sun emerges
along a mountain trail
Lead my pony
across this wide moor to where
the cuckoo sings

SUMMER

Mogami River,
yanking the burning sky
into the sea
A lightning gleam:
into darkness travels
a night heron's scream
Summer moon –
clapping hands,
I herald dawn

AUTUMN

Sick on my journey,
only my dreams will wander
this desolate moor
Grabbing at straws
the strength to bear
our parting
Taken in my hand
it will vanish in hot tears
autumn frost

WINTER

Winter solitude
in a world of one color
the sound of wind
On the polished surface
Of the divine glass,
Chaste with flowers of snow
Years end,
all corners of this
floating world, swept

SEASONS OF BASHO

I. SPRING

Searching ♩ = 50

JESSICA MEYER

High Voice

Cello

Piano

glissandi are always for duration of note value

n < *mf* > *n* *mp* < > < > < > < > *mf*

6

p *p* *p*

pulsations in the bow, faster than slower

won't you? won't you come? won't you come and

f > *p*

mp

11

accel. *rit.*

see lone - li-ness? Just one leaf from the

p *p*

inside piano gliss.

15 *accel.* *rit.* ♩ = 55 *mp*

ki - ri tr - ee wi - th plum blos - som scent this

random harmonics

mp *p*

p

Lead.

19

sud - den sun e - mer - ges

mf

mp

22

a - long a moun - tain trail lead

p *mp* *p*

poco a poco accel......

26

mp *mf* *mp*

lead my lead my po - - ny a - cross this wide moor

mp

Tempo primo

30

ff

to where the cuck-oo sings

ff *mp* *p*

molto vib. *poco vib.*

IV

let ring

ff

*

II. SUMMER

Sultry J = 40

Annotations: sul pont. → airy sul tasto, ord., drag bow up stopped string, create croaking sound by lifting left finger slight and applying RH pressure... then release, "groan bow drag": mute strings while dragging bow from ord. to sul tasto, bariolage by alternating strings while tremolo, airy sul tasto, ord., sfz, p, ord., p, ord.

Annotations: glissandi are always for duration of note value, bow side of cello, "groan" bow drag, fluctuate G on IV for beating, bow side of cello, "groan" bow drag, slide to random harmonics

6 sul pont. 3 V ord. → sul pont

Annotations: mf, choke stop suddenly, p, trill by lifting finger from stopped to harmonic... get faster then slower

J = 60

12 ord. V trill mf f mp p <> <>

15 sul tasto niente ord. mf mp <> <>

poco a poco cresc.....

19 f ff 8vb | 1

High Voice (seductively spoken) "Mogami River..."

loco 8vb | loco 8vb | loco sfz

Piano alternating notes tremolo slow to fast f ff

25 ♩ = 95

raucous

fff

3 6 6 3

26 (*seductively spoken*)

yank - ing the burn - ing sky in - to the sea

f

tr

slide while trilling

27 //

ff

3 6 6 3

tr

slide while trilling

//

28

a light - - ning gleam

slide to what feels appropriate

sharp

mp

8va

29

in - to dark - - ness tra - vels

mf

mf

30

a night he - ron - - s(ah)

f

mf

32 *f* *ff*

scream!

ff *bariolage* *V* *3* *V* *tremolo* *gliss.*

f *glissando, random pitches*

34

fff *V* *3* *V* *tremolo*

ff *8vb* *loco* *8vb* *loco*

35 *ff*

sum - mer moon

6

loco loco loco

8^{vb} 6 8^{vb} 6 8^{vb}

36

spoken *mf* *rit*.....

Clap - ping hands I he - rald__ dawn

repeat while getting faster and faster until you reach the fastest possible

bow side of cello *tremolo*

f *fff* *fp* *fp*

hit iron frame inside of piano with mallet, or you can knock on it

release pedal with a "thunk" when cello cuts off

let ring, keep foot on the pedal

III. AUTUMN

Pained ♩ = 74

High Voice

sad & lonely girl, obsessively playing the piano...

Piano

p

use pedal throughout

8

mp

Sick on my sick on my

rise in dynamics only a little bit with the singer...stay detached

Resigned...

16

f

jour ney on ly my dreams will wan der this de so late

23

pp

moor

30

More agitated

36

mf

grab-bing at straws the strength to bear our part-ing part-ing part - ing

with rubber practice mute

Cello

mf

43

f angrily

Tak - en

IV
tr

more agitated, now take part in the drama

mp

49 *ff*

tak-en in my hand _____ it will van-ish in hot tears _____

non vib.

f *ff* *mf*

53 *mp*

hot tears _____

senza sord.

n *p*

60 *pp*

Au-tumn frost _____

rit. poco a poco.....

IV. WINTER

Desolate $\text{♩} = 60$

n.v. lunga

pulsations in the bow,
faster than slower
→ ←

accel.

rit.

glissandi are
always for
duration of
note value
→ ←

pitch
bend

First system of musical notation for 'Desolate'. It features a violin part with dynamics *n*, *mp*, *n*, *p*, and *pp*, and a piano accompaniment with dynamics *mf*. The piano part includes a box: "L.H. dampen strings inside the piano. Below is sounding pitch." and a *lunga* marking. Performance instructions include "pulsations in the bow, faster than slower" and "glissandi are always for duration of note value".

Second system of musical notation, starting at measure 8. It includes a High Voice part and a piano accompaniment. Dynamics include *mf*. Performance instructions include "sounding pitches" and "molto accel...exploding into downbeat".

Third system of musical notation, starting at measure 13. It includes a vocal line with lyrics "Win - ter So - li - tude in a" and a piano accompaniment. Dynamics include *mf* and *ff*. Performance instructions include "pitch bend" and "glissandi are always for duration of note value".

16

world of one — co - lor the sound of wind_

→ bow pulsations ←

lunga

lunga ord.

20

sul pont.

ord. play normally

f

mp

f

gliss.

22

on — the po - lished sur - face of the di - vine glass

ord. p

n.v. → vib.

p

mf

accel. rit.

24

mp *mf*

chaste chaste with flow-ers of

mf *esp.* *p* *mp* *mf*

$\text{♩} = 58$

27

snow

p *mp*

in the clouds

mp

Ped. 6 6 6 6

28

mf

soaring

pedal sim.

29

6 6 6 6

30

6 6 6 6

31

6 6 6 6

32

6 6 6 6

33 bow pulsations getting faster

Musical score for measures 33-34. Measure 33 features a treble clef with a half note G4 (marked *p*) and a piano accompaniment of sixteenth-note chords. Measure 34 features a treble clef with a half note G4 (marked *mp*) and a piano accompaniment of sixteenth-note chords. A large watermark 'PERUSAL' is overlaid on the page.

34 bow pulsations getting slower

Musical score for measures 35-36. Measure 35 features a treble clef with a half note G4 (marked *slow gliss.*) and a piano accompaniment of sixteenth-note chords. Measure 36 features a treble clef with a half note G4 (marked *p*) and a piano accompaniment of sixteenth-note chords. A large watermark 'PERUSAL' is overlaid on the page.

35

Musical score for measures 37-38. Measure 37 features a treble clef with a half note G4 (marked *gliss.*) and a piano accompaniment of sixteenth-note chords. Measure 38 features a treble clef with a half note G4 (marked *gliss.*) and a piano accompaniment of sixteenth-note chords. A large watermark 'PERUSAL' is overlaid on the page.

36

Musical score for measures 39-40. Measure 39 features a treble clef with a half note G4 (marked *p*) and a piano accompaniment of sixteenth-note chords. Measure 40 features a treble clef with a half note G4 (marked *pp*) and a piano accompaniment of sixteenth-note chords. A large watermark 'PERUSAL' is overlaid on the page.

37 *pp*

end

mp

38

mp

years

gliss.

39

p

end

mf

all

mf poco a poco cresc. sempre

40

corn - ers of this float - - - - -

poco a poco cresc. sempre

p

41

- ing... float - - - - -

poco a poco cresc. sempre

mp

42

- - - ing

poco a poco cresc. sempre

mf

43 *f*

world swept *p*

ff

6 6 6 6

f

45 *rit*.....

n.v. → vib. sul pont. ord. sul tasto n.v.

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

f

let ring to the end