

SEASONS OF BASHO

for high voice, viola, and piano

JESSICA MEYER

SEASONS OF BASHO

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

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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**violinist 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

Viola

Piano

glissandi are always for duration of note value

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

f

6

ped.

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.*

p

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

19

sud - den sun e - mer - ges

mf

mp

22 *mp*

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

molto vib. *poco vib.*

IV

mp *p*

let ring

ff

ff

*

II. SUMMER

Sultry $\text{♩} = 40$

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
 glissandi are always for duration of note value
 bow side of viola
 "groan" bow drag
 fluctuate G on IV for beating
 bow side of viola
 "groan" bow drag
 slide to random harmonics
 6 sul pont. 3
 mf
 choke stop suddenly
 p
 trill by lifting finger from stopped to harmonic... get faster then slower

$\text{♩} = 60$

11 → sul pont ord.
 mp
 f
 mp
 p
 15
 poco a poco cresc.....
 mf
 mp
 sul tasto niente ord.
 19
 f
 ff

21
 High Voice
 Piano
 (seductively spoken)
 "Mogami River..."
 sfz
 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

trill

slide while trilling

27

ff

3 6 6 3

27 //

32 *f* *ff*

scream!

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

f *glissando, random pitches*

34

fff *ff* *V*₃ *V* *tremolo*

8^{vb} *loco* *8^{vb}* *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 viola *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 viola 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

Viola

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*

f *ff* *mf*

53 *mp*

hot tears _____

senza sord.

n

p

60 *pp*

Au-tumn frost _____

rit. poco a poco.....

IV. WINTER

Desolate ♩ = 60

n.v. lunga

pulsations in the bow,
faster than slower

accel.

rit.

n < *mp* > *n* *p* *pp* *p* *mf* *p* *mf* *p*

lunga

L.H. dampen strings inside the piano. Below is sounding pitch.

pitch bend

glissandi are always for duration of note value

8 *a tempo*

High Voice

fingering pitches

gliss.

mf

mf

molto accel...exploding into downbeat

13

mf

Win - ter So - li - tude in a

(*ff*) *mp*

16

world of one — co - lor the sound of wind_

ord.

lunga

lunga

bow pulsations

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.

mf

accel. rit.

24

mp *mf*

chaste chaste with flow-ers of

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

$\text{♩} = 58$

27

snow

p *mp* 5

in the clouds

mp 3

Ped. 6 6 6 6

28

mf *soaring*

pedal sim. 6 6 6 6

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*. A long horizontal line with an arrow pointing right spans across the treble staff. The piano accompaniment consists of sixteenth-note chords in the right hand and bass notes in the left hand, with a '6' below each measure. Measure 34 features a treble clef with a half note G4, marked *mp*. A long horizontal line with an arrow pointing left spans across the treble staff. The piano accompaniment continues with similar patterns, marked with '6' below each measure.

34 bow pulsations getting slower

ord.

Musical score for measures 35-36. Measure 35 features a treble clef with a half note G4, marked *slow gliss.*. A long horizontal line with an arrow pointing left spans across the treble staff. The piano accompaniment continues with similar patterns, marked with '6' below each measure. Measure 36 features a treble clef with a half note G4, marked *gliss.*. A long horizontal line with an arrow pointing left spans across the treble staff. The piano accompaniment continues with similar patterns, marked with '6' below each measure.

36

p
years

gliss.

Musical score for measures 37-40. Measure 37 features a treble clef with a half note G4, marked *pp*. A long horizontal line with an arrow pointing left spans across the treble staff. The piano accompaniment continues with similar patterns, marked with '6' below each measure. Measure 38 features a treble clef with a half note G4, marked *pp*. A long horizontal line with an arrow pointing left spans across the treble staff. The piano accompaniment continues with similar patterns, marked with '6' below each measure. Measure 39 features a treble clef with a half note G4, marked *pp*. A long horizontal line with an arrow pointing left spans across the treble staff. The piano accompaniment continues with similar patterns, marked with '6' below each measure. Measure 40 features a treble clef with a half note G4, marked *pp*. A long horizontal line with an arrow pointing left spans across the treble staff. The piano accompaniment continues with similar patterns, marked with '6' below each measure.

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

6 6 6 6

41

- ing... float - - -

poco a poco cresc. sempre

mp

6 6 6 6

42

- - - ing

poco a poco cresc. sempre

mf

6 6 6 6

43 *f*

world

p

swept

ff

IV

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