

*July Mountain*

for field recordings and percussion

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*for Greg Stuart and Jez riley French*

## **July Mountain**

*We live in a constellation  
Of patches and of pitches,  
Not in a single world,  
In things said well in music,  
On the piano and in speech,  
As in the page of poetry—  
Thinkers without final thoughts  
In an always incipient cosmos.  
The way, when we climb a mountain,  
Vermont throws itself together.*

—Wallace Stevens

*July Mountain* is a 20-minute crossfade from a collection of 20 mono field recordings (arranged in rotating groups of 10 simultaneous recordings) to 10 sets of recorded percussion parts, with a 1-minute fade out at the end. (Total duration is 21 minutes.)

**Field Recordings:** The 20 recordings may be made by the performer(s) or obtained from the composer. They should all be made in mountain areas or valleys if possible. See the attached chart for the arrangement of the recordings in time, panning, and information about the fades. The mix of the 10 simultaneous recordings will be more rich in event or denser than a stereo recording, but the overlapping of the recordings should nonetheless feel natural. This can be achieved by a careful balancing of the individual tracks.

**Percussion:** There are 10 layers of (recorded) percussion sounds following the descriptions given below and using the attached chart to align them in time. (Various possibilities exist for the live performance of some of the parts, combined with parts that have been recorded.) The fade in here is created by the accumulation of sounds.

- 1.) **Drum Wind:** 18 different but related sounds, beginning at 2:00 and with a period of 60 seconds. Each of the sounds is a sustained (light) friction noise made on a drum of some kind. The drums may vary in size and resonance. The kind of excitation may also vary from using a brush or a towel, to leaves, pillows, wooden dowels, etc. Make sure at least one third of the sounds have a deep resonance (i.e., where the cavity of the chamber can be heard) and one third have a shallow resonance (more of just a surface). Each sound begins with a small fade (i.e., not at full volume). The last minute (from 20:00 to 21:00) is a long fade in the last three drums.
- 2.) **Projected Sine Tones:** 8 sine tones of the given frequencies and durations projected into (onto) resonant surfaces (and recorded); beginning at 3:30 and with a period of 2 minutes. In each case, after a short fade in, the tone stays at the selected volume for the first quarter of its duration and then begins a long fade out (3/4 of its duration). The surface should have a certain lightly “grainy” characteristic (i.e., so that these will not be heard as pure tones). This may be a feature of the instrument itself (i.e., a sine tone projected onto a snare drum) or may be helped along (by placing some grains of rice or beans on the surface of the drum or cymbal). The character (i.e., timbre, loudness, distance, etc.) of the tone should change subtly over its duration (perhaps by moving the speaker playing the tone along the surface of the instrument).

- 3.) **Bowed Wood Blocks:** 10 different bowed wood block sounds (relatively mid- to low-register sounds), beginning at 5:00 with a period of 90 seconds. Each sound begins at the start of the unit, lasts 45 seconds (and is followed by a pause of 45 seconds). Once a sound has started, it continues playing every 90 seconds: thus the number of simultaneous blocks increases from 1 to 10.
- 4.) **Bowed Snare Drum:** 17 different sustained sounds obtained by bowing a snare drum, beginning at 6:30 and with a period of 45 seconds (each new sound is added at these times). Sounds start at the given times and are then repeated until the end (all sounds fade from 20:00 to 21:00), so the band of sound “widens.” Sounds may be created by bowing on any part of the instrument and by bowing on a drumstick or doweling with its tip pressed against the drum. A range of sounds, starting from bands of noise and then, as each sound gets added, tending more to focus on a specific pitch or frequencies (or group of frequencies) as it approaches the last sound.
- 5.) **On the Piano:** a series of 32 piano chords, beginning at 8:00 and occurring every 22.5 seconds (see attached part). Each of the four given parts should be recorded separately, and then each channel panned: 1 far right, 2, far left, 3, center, 4, moving from left to right (and possibly a bit louder than the others). All sounds are allowed to ring out (i.e., *l.v.*).
- 6.) **Bass Drum Rice:** 24 pulses of a bass drum, with rice or seeds on the surface, beginning at 9:30 and occurring every 25 seconds. Essentially what is desired is a regular pulse, lasting about 10 seconds on a deep, resonant surface, with something of a focus on a bass G (ca. 49 hertz). Tuning and tapping a bass drum (or a timpani); or exciting the drum with a pulse of a sine tone; or another method might be found. Once the method is selected, this procedure should be recorded 24 times (perhaps slightly differently each time).
- 7.) **Tin Foil Vibraphone:** 8 long tones (of the durations given), beginning at 11:00 and starting every 50 seconds. Bowed vibraphone sounds with tin foil wrapped around the bars of the pitches indicated (creating a light “buzz” added to the pitch). This sound will fade out gradually from 20:00 to 21:00.
- 8.) **Slow Timpani Glissando:** 6 sounds of various durations starting at 12:30. Each sound is a glissando on a timpani tuned either to a bass G (at 49 hertz) or one at 98 hertz. (There are a variety of ways of producing this sound : please feel free to experiment.) Once the sound is on its way the player can decide if he wants to keep going in this direction or to move back in other direction (possibly changing direction slowly and subtly two or three times over the duration of the pitch). The starting position given indicates a pitch either below (up to 50 cents), above (up to 50 cents) or on the G chosen as the point of reference. These sounds should be as long as possible, without striking the drum too hard (up to 80 seconds).
- 9.) **Seed Rain:** 7 very high sounds, starting at 14:00, with each new sound added every 40 seconds. Each sound (and they are different in noise character and/or pitch height) is basically a steady stream of seeds (or rice or beans) falling on a high-pitched bar (glockenspiel) or disc (crotales). The stream for each of the sounds may be assembled from multiple takes (in order to get the sense of a dense, sustained feeling).
- 10.) **Bells and Beating Tones:** 13 very high bell sounds, starting at 15:30 and occurring every 20 seconds. Four high bells are found (they should all be in the same approximate range) and identified by number (1 – 4). The chart shows which bells should be played at which time (each should be recorded separately). Each bell is allowed to ring (i.e., the resonance of the bells will likely overlap). Once the approximate frequency ranges of the bells have been analyzed, pairs of (beating) sine tones will be mixed into the resonance of the bell combinations).

*july mountain:* percussion chart (instruments and timings)

part	start	period	event number	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18		
1 drum wind (18 sounds)	2:00	1'	<i>start</i>	2:00	3:00	4:00	5:00	6:00	7:00	8:00	9:00	10:00	11:00	12:00	13:00	14:00	15:00	16:00	17:00	18:00	19:00		
			<i>duration</i>	5'00	1'00	2'00	6'00	7'00	8'00	3'00	1'00	6'00	4'00	6'00	7'00	4'00	4'00	4'00	4'00	4'00	3'00	2'00	
			<i>end</i>	7:00	4:00	6:00	11:00	13:00	15:00	11:00	10:00	16:00	15:00	18:00	20:00	18:00	19:00	20:00	21:00	21:00	21:00		
2 projected sine tones (8 tones)	3:30	2'	<i>start</i>	3:30	5:30	7:30	9:30	11:30	13:30	15:30	17:30												
			<i>frequency</i>	98	49	220.5	588	3136	784	392	1470												
			<i>duration</i>	4'30	7'30	3'30	5'30	3'30	5'30	4'30	3'30												
			<i>begin fade out</i>	4:37.5	7:22.5	8:22.5	10:52.5	12:22.5	14:52.5	16:37.5	18:22.5												
			<i>end</i>	8:00	13:00	11:00	15:00	15:00	19:00	21:00	21:00												
3 bowed wood blocks (10 sounds)	5:00	90"		5:00	6:30	8:00	9:30	11:00	12:30	14:00	15:30	17:00	18:30										
			<i>no. of blocks</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10										
4 snare drum bowed (17 sounds)	6:30	45"		6:30	7:15	8:00	8:45	9:30	10:15	11:00	11:45	12:30	13:15	14:00	14:45	15:30	16:15	17:00	17:45	18:15			
5 on the piano (32 chords)	8:00	22.5"		see piano part for timings and chords																			
6 bass drum rice (24 sounds)	9:30	25"		9:30	9:55	10:20	10:45	11:10	11:35	12:00	12:25	12:50	13:15	13:40	14:05	14:30	14:55	15:20	15:45	16:10	16:35		
			<i>(event)</i>	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b>														
7 vibraphone with foil (9 long tones)	11:00	50"	<i>start</i>	11:00	11:50	12:40	13:30	14:20	15:10	16:00	16:50	17:40											
			<i>pitch</i>	g4	g3	g#4	g5	a5	g3	d5	g5	d6											
			<i>duration</i>	1'30	2'20	2'20	3'10	2'20	5'50	2'20	3'10	3'20											
			<i>end</i>	12:30	14:10	15:00	16:40	16:40	21:00	18:20	20:00	21:00											
8 slow tipani glissando (6 sounds)	12:30	80"		12:30	13:50	15:10	16:30	17:50	19:10														
			<i>starting position</i>	above	below	on	above	on	below														
			<i>starting direction</i>	up	up	down	down	up	down														
9 seed rain (6 sounds)	14:00	40"		14:00	14:40	15:20	16:00	16:40	17:20	18:00													
10 bells + beating sine tones (13 sounds)	15:30	20"		15:30	15:50	16:10	16:30	16:50	17:10	17:30	17:50	18:10	18:30	18:50	19:10	19:30							
			<i>bell numbers</i>	1	1	3	1	1	2	1	3	1	4	1	1	1							
				2	2		2	4		2		2		3		3							
					4		3		3		3		4										

# July Mountain

(piano parts)

Musical score for piano parts 1-4, measures 1-11. The score is written for four staves (1-4) and includes time signatures and notes. Vertical dashed lines indicate measure boundaries. Time stamps are provided below the staves.

Time stamps: 8:00, 8:22.5, 8:45, 9:07.5, 9:30, 9:52.5, 10:15, 10:37.5, 11:00, 11:22.5, 11:45

Musical score for piano parts 1-4, measures 12-21. The score is written for four staves (1-4) and includes time signatures and notes. Vertical dashed lines indicate measure boundaries. Time stamps are provided below the staves.

Time stamps: 12:07.5, 12:30, 12:52.5, 13:15, 13:37, 14:00, 14:22.5, 14:45, 15:07.5, 15:30, 15:52.5

23 8

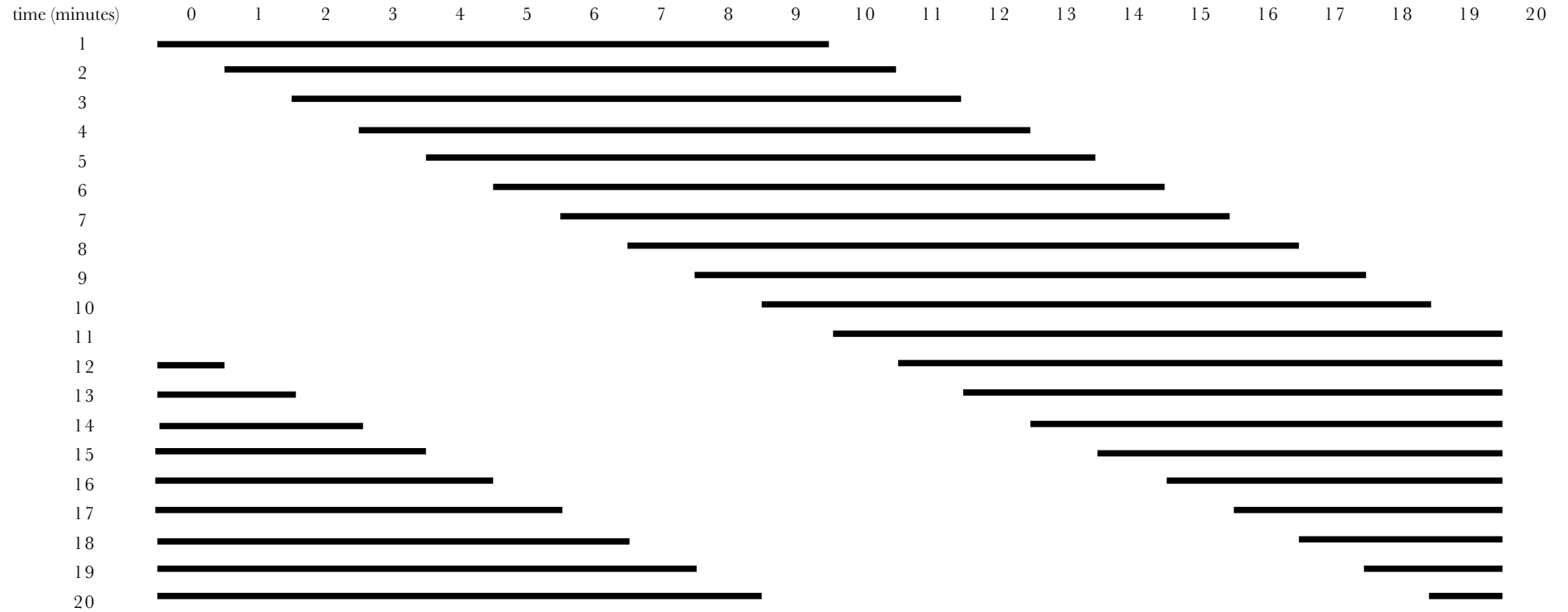
1  
2  
3  
4

16:15 16:37.5 17:00 17:22.5 17:45 18:07.5 18:30 18:52.5 19:15 19:37.5

Detailed description: This is a musical score for four staves, numbered 1 to 4. Staff 1 is in treble clef and contains a single melodic line with notes at 18:07.5, 18:30, 18:52.5, 19:15, and 19:37.5. Staff 2 is in treble clef and contains a series of chords and notes. Staff 3 is in bass clef and contains a series of chords and notes. Staff 4 is in treble clef and contains a series of chords and notes. Vertical dashed lines indicate time markers at 16:15, 16:37.5, 17:00, 17:22.5, 17:45, 18:07.5, 18:30, 18:52.5, 19:15, and 19:37.5. The number '23 8' is written at the top left of the first staff.

*July Mountain (field recording chart)*

(number of recording)



Each field recording is 10 minutes long. Numbers 12 to 20 are broken into two segments.

Field recordings nos. 1 to 11: short fade in and long fade out (so that the individual recording is nearly inaudible in its last 2 minutes).

Field recordings nos. 12 to 20 : short fade in both times; fade out the first half is about 1 minute, and in the 2nd, about 4 minutes. The last two minutes are nearly inaudible.

Panning: each recording is place in a distinct place in the left–right spectrum.