

PROGRAMME NOTE

The title comes from W. B. Yeats' *Byzantium* – lines which exactly sum up my feelings about the universe:

'A starlit or a moonlit dome disdains
All that man is,
All mere complexities,
The fury and the mire of human veins.'

As a keen amateur astronomer, it often occurred to me that if I were to try my hand at writing a nocturne it would probably be very different in character from those of, say, Chopin or Field. And so it proved: this thirteen-minute piano piece is an *astronomical* nocturne.

When one looks through a telescope at, say, the Great Nebula in Orion the image is at first faint and unclear (hardly surprising, as it lies some 1600 light years away). It seems little more than a patch of grey mist in the night sky, silent and apparently quite still. But the longer one looks, the more detail emerges: a greenish tint to the mist and a recognisable structure which, after a few observations, can easily be drawn from memory. At the centre of the nebula lies a trapezium of bright new stars. It is by their light that the nebula appears to glow. In fact the whole thing is a whirling mass of gas and dust, gradually coalescing into new stars and perhaps new planetary systems.

This piece tries to reflect something of how I feel about such phenomena – it begins slowly and mysteriously and only very gradually does the pace quicken and the activity increase until at the end the music is bursting with energy.

A Starlit Dome was composed for the pianist Iwan Llewelyn-Jones, to whom it is dedicated.

© 1996 by John Pickard

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BRITISH MUSIC INFORMATION CENTRE.
10, Stratford Place, London, W.1

for Iwan Llewelyn-Jones

A Starlit Dome

Duration: c. 13 minutes

John Pickard
(1995 revised 1997)

Misterioso ♩ = c. 58

Piano

ppp

8va

5

poco sf *ancora ppp*

(8)

10

poco più f *poco f > pp* *pp*

(8)

15

7

Ped.

19

♪ = ♪

23

più f cresc.

28

più f

32

f *molto* *ff* *dim.*

36

mf *poco rit.*

40

A tempo

p

45

Musical score for measures 45-48. The piece is in 3/4 time. The right hand features a complex melodic line with many beamed sixteenth notes and slurs. The left hand provides a harmonic accompaniment with chords and moving lines. A 4+5/8 time signature change is indicated at the end of measure 48.

49

Musical score for measures 49-52. The right hand continues with intricate melodic patterns. A dynamic marking of *p* (piano) is present in measure 50. The left hand accompaniment includes some chords and moving lines.

53

Musical score for measures 53-55. The right hand has a melodic line with some slurs. The left hand accompaniment includes chords and moving lines. A *poco allarg.* (poco allargando) marking is present at the end of measure 55.

56

Musical score for measures 56-60. The right hand has a melodic line with some slurs. The left hand accompaniment includes chords and moving lines.

61

Musical score for measures 61-64. The right hand has a melodic line with some slurs. The left hand accompaniment includes chords and moving lines. Dynamic markings include *sub. p* (subito piano), *dim.* (diminuendo), and *pp* (pianissimo).

65

Musical score for measures 65-68. The right hand has a melodic line with some slurs. The left hand accompaniment includes chords and moving lines. A dynamic marking of *pp senza espressione* (pianissimo senza espressione) is present in measure 66. A *poco rit.* (poco ritardando) marking is present at the beginning of measure 65.

69

74

78

sempre pianissimo

81

non cresc.

pp

legato

84

86

88

pp sempre

91

pp
con fantasia

93

R.H.

95

97

cres.
sub. pp

99

$\text{♩} = \text{c. } 116$

ppp
sempre legato
p
8va...

102

Musical notation for measures 102-105. Treble clef has a melodic line with slurs. Bass clef has a rhythmic accompaniment of eighth notes.

106

Musical notation for measures 106-109. Treble clef has a melodic line with slurs. Bass clef has a rhythmic accompaniment of eighth notes.

110

Musical notation for measures 110-113. Treble clef has chords with slurs. Bass clef has a rhythmic accompaniment of eighth notes. A *p* dynamic marking is present.

114

Musical notation for measures 114-116. Treble clef has chords with slurs. Bass clef has a rhythmic accompaniment of eighth notes. *L.H.* is written below the bass line.

117

Musical notation for measures 117-119. Treble clef has chords with slurs. Bass clef has a rhythmic accompaniment of eighth notes. *poco* and *pp sub.* dynamic markings are present.

120

Musical notation for measures 120-123. Treble clef has chords with slurs and triplets. Bass clef has a rhythmic accompaniment of eighth notes.

123

Musical score for measures 123-125. The right hand features a melodic line with a long slur over measures 124 and 125. The left hand plays a rhythmic accompaniment. A dynamic marking of *pp* is present in the left hand at the end of measure 125.

126

Musical score for measures 126-129. The right hand continues the melodic line with a slur. The left hand accompaniment is consistent. A dynamic marking of *pp* is present in the left hand at the end of measure 129. The word *legato* is written above the right hand staff.

130

Musical score for measures 130-133. The right hand continues the melodic line. The left hand accompaniment features a dynamic marking of *mf* at the start of measure 130 and *pp* at the end of measure 133. The instruction *agitato ma pp* is written below the left hand staff.

134

Musical score for measures 134-138. The right hand features a melodic line with a slur. The left hand accompaniment is consistent. A dynamic marking of *p* is present in the left hand at the end of measure 134.

139

Musical score for measures 139-142. The right hand features a melodic line with a slur. The left hand accompaniment is consistent.

143

Musical score for measures 143-146. The right hand features a melodic line with a slur. The left hand accompaniment features dynamic markings of *mf*, *p*, *f*, *p*, and *ff* across the measures.

148

p *fff*

152

p *mp* *pp ma energico*

155

158

161

R.H. *sf* *sf(sim.)* *gva*

164

gva

168

p

poco

5

5

5

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172

cresc.

5

5

5

176

sempre cresc.

5

180

x

183

ff

p

gva

5

187

sf

sf

2

(8)

192

mf

p

gva

(8)

Detailed description: This system covers measures 192 to 195. The right hand features a melodic line with slurs and accents, while the left hand plays a steady eighth-note accompaniment. Dynamic markings include *mf* and *p*. The instruction *gva* (glissando) is placed below the left hand in measure 195. A dashed line with the number (8) is at the bottom.

196

sf

sf

(8)

Detailed description: This system covers measures 196 to 199. The right hand has a melodic line with slurs and accents, and the left hand continues with eighth-note accompaniment. Dynamic markings include *sf* (sforzando). A dashed line with the number (8) is at the bottom.

200

f

(8)

Detailed description: This system covers measures 200 to 203. The right hand has a melodic line with slurs and accents, and the left hand continues with eighth-note accompaniment. Dynamic markings include *f* (forte). A dashed line with the number (8) is at the bottom.

204

p

gva

(8)

Detailed description: This system covers measures 204 to 207. The right hand has a melodic line with slurs and accents, and the left hand continues with eighth-note accompaniment. Dynamic markings include *p* (piano) and *gva*. A dashed line with the number (8) is at the bottom.

208

cresc.

(8)

Detailed description: This system covers measures 208 to 211. The right hand has a melodic line with slurs and accents, and the left hand continues with eighth-note accompaniment. Dynamic markings include *cresc.* (crescendo). A dashed line with the number (8) is at the bottom.

212

f

p

loco

gva

(8)

Detailed description: This system covers measures 212 to 215. The right hand has a melodic line with slurs and accents, and the left hand continues with eighth-note accompaniment. Dynamic markings include *f*, *p*, and *loco*. The instruction *gva* is placed below the left hand in measure 215. A dashed line with the number (8) is at the bottom.

216

cresc. molto *ff* *p*

(8) *gva*

This system contains measures 216 through 219. It features a grand staff with treble and bass clefs. The music is in 3/8 time. Measure 216 starts with a *cresc. molto* marking. Measure 217 has a *ff* dynamic. Measure 218 has a *p* dynamic. Measure 219 has a *gva* (glissando) marking. There are various ornaments and fingerings indicated throughout.

220

cresc. molto *ff* *ff* *7 martellato*

(8)

This system contains measures 220 through 223. It features a grand staff with treble and bass clefs. The music is in 3/8 time. Measure 220 starts with a *cresc. molto* marking. Measure 221 has a *ff* dynamic. Measure 222 has a *ff* dynamic. Measure 223 has a *7 martellato* marking. There are various ornaments and fingerings indicated throughout.

224

tr *tr* *tr*

This system contains measures 224 through 227. It features a grand staff with treble and bass clefs. The music is in 3/8 time. Measures 224, 225, and 226 have *tr* (trills) markings. There are various ornaments and fingerings indicated throughout.

228

brillante *p*

This system contains measures 228 through 231. It features a grand staff with treble and bass clefs. The music is in 3/8 time. Measure 228 has a *brillante* marking. Measure 231 has a *p* dynamic. There are various ornaments and fingerings indicated throughout.

232

molto *ff* *f*

$\leftarrow \text{♩} = \text{♩} \rightarrow (\text{♩} = \text{c. } 58)$

This system contains measures 232 through 235. It features a grand staff with treble and bass clefs. The music is in 3/8 time. Measure 232 has a *molto* marking. Measure 233 has a *ff* dynamic. Measure 234 has a *f* dynamic. Measure 235 has triplets. A tempo marking $\leftarrow \text{♩} = \text{♩} \rightarrow (\text{♩} = \text{c. } 58)$ is present above the staff. There are various ornaments and fingerings indicated throughout.

235

238

242

245

Allarg.-----A tempo

249

252

gva

(8)

molto allargando al fine—

256

p cresc. molto

ff

(loco)

gva

259

ff

p

ff

ff

261

fff

fff

fff *tutta forza*

gva