

THE BLOOD SONG WINTER COUNT

**A cycle of musical compositions interpreted through the perspective of
Blackfoot ritual and Indigenous storywork**

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(Mía'níst'ípoyí—Different Talker/Speaks Many Languages)

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The Blood Song Winter Count

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Dedications

To the matriarchs of my *Blood*...

To my mothers, Cindy Day Rider and Veronica Brewer.

And to my ancestresses that came before me, and to the ones still with me, and to the ones who will come after me.

And most of all, to the sewing needle that crafted the cradleboard that swaddles these creations...

My Grand/*MOTHER* Pookaa'khoyinnim'aakii (Little Pipe-Woman).

Abstract

The Blood Song Winter Count, is a collection of five (5) musical works that collectively function as sonic symbols which document my personal experience of grief and loss. These works function as ritualized emotional “time capsules” of my lived experience and are interpreted through my Indigenous knowledge inheritance of Blackfoot storywork and ritual. Although this supporting paper is meant to contextualize their creation, this document also serves a relational seed to root myself in an audiences’ soil. To fully decipher the sonic symbols that make up *The Blood Song Winter Count*, you must fully understand their ancestral lineage, which ultimately originates with the land and with an emotional-spiritual ecosystem within me.

Ömahkinna-Aatsímoyíkhaan

Ayo Äpistotookí, íihtsipáitapíyo'pa, napi'naatósí, kipita'aakíi-ksaahkomm'ítapíwa, naató

íitapíihtsí, kíitsí íníhskatsímat poohwáá Níístó Sípísttoóipoyí.

Amó nissohko, Mía'níst'ípoyí, isspommo's annohk ksiístsíkó,

Anníik ohta'psskíp áwaatoyínnayísíní níipáitapíyessin-níníhkssín.

Ähyáapí niipáitapíwahsin áhni ghí'taapistotááksín, ahní'ohkoitapiiyi ssksinimá'tstokhiisiin

oht'iksíst-Naatoí'sáókásíí, aaáhs-Pok'aahkóinnímaa'kíí, aaáhs-Sípísttoóipoyí.

Waatoyisannëss Mía'níst'ípoyí, itákkaa'tss, ohtkoí 'kso'koyís aahk-otsistapi'taki'aah

íihtsipáitapíyo'pa ohkoitapiiyisiin mah'k ohkooni'saa

Kamotáána

—“Dad” Leonard Day Rider-Sípísttoóipoyi (Owl Talks)

Making Camp

My dear ones, the work is about to begin.

–Jo-ann Archibald¹

Oki, tsa' niitaaniiko, Mía'níst'ípoyí. My traditional name is Different-talker, or Speaks-Many-Languages, and I am from the Kainaiwa-Blood Tribe. We are one of four nations that make up the Blackfoot confederacy. With these words, I am creating a space within my manuscript, which in standardized writing practices would normally function as a preface. Here I make a place where we can meet as a community and strike *our* camp so that we may orient ourselves within our own emotional terrain. This written manuscript contains some challenging topics that revolve around my personal experiences dealing with death, grief, and personal tragedy which some may find triggering. I urge you to take care of yourselves and listen to your own emotional body as you navigate this thesis. As you experience this document and the musical creations it accompanies, you will notice this is *not* a “traditional” analytical treatise, but a *traditional* expression of my Indigenous knowledge inheritance through music. This honest telling of my *hearing-worlds-through-spirit* encapsulates my entire Blackfoot knowledge system because “[Blackfoot perception of] music symbolizes the contents of life, validates acts, and possesses supernatural powers...the Blackfoot taxonomy of culture is reflected in the taxonomy of music.”²

The dissemination of musical content in this manuscript prioritizes Indigenous ways-of-knowing that recontextualize the meaning and methodology of academic research. My work is deeply engaged with storyworking, meaning-making, relationality, and the ritualization of

¹ Traditional statement spoken before Coast Salish traditional gatherings. Jo-ann Archibald, “Indigenous Storywork: Educating Heart, Mind, Body & Spirit,” accessed April 4, 2024, <https://indigenoustorywork.com/>.

² Bruno Nettl, *Blackfoot Musical Thought: Comparative Perspectives* (Kent, Ohio: Kent State University Press, 1989), 118–119.

emotional and social spaces. Though these ways of exploring the world have been part of Indigenous cultures from the beginning, these are relatively new methods of scholarly research. As we speak, they are being pioneered in the academy by *Indigenous* scholars like Jo-Ann Archibald, Shawn Wilson, Gregory Cajete and Dylan Robinson—I take inspiration from these elders, whose work has been so influential on this manuscript. This is critical work for future Indigenous scholars and for all the other brave knowledge seekers who set out to challenge hegemonic colonial structures that currently exist in academic institutions. It is also important to recognize Kerry Scott’s master’s dissertation *A Contemporary Winter Count*³ because his work inspired the idea of including traditional winter count⁴ “technology” in the presentation of this project.

As I state above, Indigenous ways-of-knowing and interacting with the world have existed in the collective knowledge base of Indigenous peoples since time immemorial. The revival and renewed manifestation of these mechanisms for exploring the world are the sacred foundations of current Indigenous knowledge and thought systems. The arrival of European colonizers to North America openly brought about the genocide of many Indigenous peoples across our land. The settler colonial conquest also sought to kill the “*Indian*” inside of us by perpetrating a nefarious agenda of cultural assimilation. This is still present today, and covertly pilots the settler-colonial biases in academic structures. These biases normalize the violent cycle of the *killing* of knowledge-systems that operate outside the normative scope of Westernized academia, which Dylan Robinson confirms in his book, *Hungry Listening*:

It is an understatement, in the intergenerational legacy of the Indian residential schools and Indian boarding schools, to say that Indigenous people remained triggered by “education,” given that such systems of supposed education have

³ Kerry M. Scott, “A Contemporary Winter Count” (MA thesis, University of Lethbridge, 2006).

⁴ A winter count is a traditional time keeping and historical recording “technology,” typical of plains Indigenous peoples, that is represented on buffalo hide through painted pictographic-symbolic imagery.

been used as forms of violence intended to eradicate Indigenous epistemologies, languages, and forms of perception. Put most simply, writing *about* rather than *by* Indigenous people both actively dispossesses knowledge from Indigenous knowledge holders in our community, and naturalizes Indigenous knowledge resource extraction as simply “knowledge mobilization” and dissemination.⁵

My master’s thesis is a bi-part creation-project, the first part being my own personal story that gave life to the musics I have created. The second part is the actual music—which forms the emotional and spiritual center of my winter count. If I were to summarize the structure of this work briefly, and rather *coldly*, and in a way that would appease the “standard” academic senses: 1. My lived experienced serve as the research methodology. 2. The created music serve as the results. 3. The knowledge transferred through my experiential learning is the data collected and summarized in the text of this manuscript.

By positioning myself and this creation-project in my inherited Blackfoot sacred way-of-being, I can create a ceremony which frames my thesis in a ritualized space which connects us to knowledge transmission routes that are overlooked in Western Academia. In the words of Gregory Cajete, “ritual and ceremony can be personal or communal ‘technologies’ for accessing knowledge, and symbols are used to remember key understandings of the natural world.”⁶ Also, imbuing spirit to these musical creations through my story gives them a life and purpose beyond their received text/sound-based mediums, because as Gregory Cajete states “properly fashioned artifacts contain the energy of the thoughts, materials, and contexts in which they are fashioned and therefore become symbols of those thoughts, entities, or process.”⁷

⁵ Dylan Robinson, *Hungry Listening: Resonant Theory for Indigenous Sound Studies* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2020), 104.

⁶ Gregory Cajete. *Native Science: Natural Laws of Interdependence* (Santa Fe, N.M: Clear Light Publishers, 2000), 65.

⁷ Cajete, *Native Science*, 65

As Dylan Robinson proclaims in his introduction to *Hungry Listening*, "...[exploring ways] to move beyond settler colonial structures of classical music, classical music composition, presentation, and listening are long overdue."⁸ And as an Indigenous scholar and composer, I wholeheartedly agree with Robinson.

⁸ Robinson, *Hungry Listening*, 10.

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And lastly to whomever has experienced any of the music contained in the *Blood Song* *Winter Count* and to whomever is experiencing this document in the perfect place at the perfect time. May we pray and feast together.

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THE BLOOD SONG

WINTER COUNT

My body remembers



Sonny-Ray Day Rider

It sings this land

Ritual I

*An ancient dialect
Sings the God codes in me*

*Pagan psalms and hidden hymns
These Blood songs surpass the oldest of The Old Tongues*

*You see primitivism
I feel the elementals carved in my terrestrial heart*

*You see erosion
I feel Gods erupting*

My arteries are threaded through out this Earth

Prelude

Native people have been good observers. They understood things were always in process, that things were always being created and then destroyed and then created in new forms.

—Gregory Cajete⁹

Grief, like nature, is wild and untamed. It is an unbridled phenomena that can be furious and embracing like the two *seemingly* oppositional elementals fire and water—one fiercely destructive and the other mercifully life giving. Yet fire can still create new life from the maw of its ashes and water can devastatingly drown and extinguish all light in its flood-path. Grief is as capricious as nature. It is a monster sometimes, and a gentle beast at other times. Yet to travelers unfamiliar with its territory, grief is *always* bewilderingly disorienting and painful.

Pain associated with loss is at the epicenter of my thesis creation project and it was also the catalyst for an important emotional/spiritual self-investigation. The five musical compositions explored in this document are sonic symbols created from the aftermath of tragedy. My initial experience of grief was like an earthquake that resulted in the shaping of a new emotional topography in my life, a new land that I could not safely settle in; the aftershocks of which shattered my relationship with my higher power.

Although the thematic material of these artifacts was centered around pain, they also documented a cathartic renewal of myself and a new understanding of what the sacred/creator meant to me. The story that is stitched together in this document is of a very monumental and transformative period in my life, and the musics manifested from this journey are the *aural* history of my personal winter count. Philosophical ideas and objective questions were illuminated by the

⁹ Cajete, *Native Science*, 36.

incandescence of my grief and helped me to better understand myself. The magnitude of the pain I felt was only balanced by the vast amount of healing I contained within myself. Although, this all seemed illusory as Creator had broken me open and I perceived my pain as infinite and never-ending. This experience fractured my relationship with spirituality, but this experience *also* reshaped my connection with my traditional spirituality and my perspective on what it meant to be human.

I struggled to find reprieve and emotional peace in myself and in my traditional spiritual practices as a queer, two-spirited Blackfoot person. I struggled to find a sense of home and safety in all that I held close to my heart. It wasn't until I heard the land beckoning me to spend time with its soil and trees that I found a space where I could sit with my grief, sorrow, and joy. It was also with the land I conceptualized these creations, and it was when I was in nature that I realized that my journey with grief *was* my thesis.

The land shared its medicine with me, and in return I offered my *Blood*.

Ritual II

Your womb built a womb that sewed my heart

*Loving ancestresses spooling my lineage
A genetic thread that perfected my being*

My love was your love

*And when we laid you to rest
I cut the patches from my chest
I stitched you back into our quilt
I gave your memory back to this Earth*

*My wound is a womb
And in it I cradled God*

Chapter 1

Blood offering to the Sonic Symbol:

Telluric Ache (Blood Prayer)

A full year before I started my master's program, in the Winter of 2019, I had my graduation recital. This was the capstone of my undergraduate degree. The concert featured musical works that I had created during my studies in composition studio over the past four years. The evening was quite successful, and I celebrated with my family and extended kin. But the elation I felt from completing such a personal and academic milestone was short lived.

The day after my recital my eldest brother was severely wounded with a gunshot to his head. This was a violent and deliberate act which traumatized my family and community. Without going into details of what we had to endure during the initial attack and the months after, I can assure you that it was *agonizing*.

My brother was well respected by people in our community. He was a celebrated mixed martial arts fighter, a youth sports coach, a fitness trainer and most of all he was our family protector. Although my brother had survived, he would never be the same; he was severely impaired by the event and our family would never be the same. The only constant during that time was the amount of fear and pain I felt for my loved ones and the memory of a brother I once had.

However, life carried on after this calamity, and my family and I were working to rebuild a sense of normalcy together. But also, it is important to note that we were amid a global pandemic during this time, when humanity *collectively* struggled to maintain a sense of normality. It was also during this time that my grand/parents moved in with me. This brought a familiar stability to my life, which was very welcome after such a traumatic experience. Whatever wildfire was

burning inside my psyche and spirit was reduced to embers by their calming presence. The blazing pain I initially felt was a somber ache now. After months of feeling overwhelming dread and experiencing my family's collective heartache, there were now moments when life felt bearable again. But this smoldering, slow burning ember had ignited an anger with Creator. My connection to my spiritual source was fractured and I would constantly start my prayers with the question "*why my brother?*"

*The juxtaposition of the tectonic plates cracking my chest
The polarization of my feelings of now and then*

*A holy memory held in time
And what was once was a feeling of joy
Unfolds into pain*

—(III)

Praying with my grand/mother in ceremony, or over sage and sweetgrass was a loving ritual I carry in my spirit. To hear her asking our ancestors and spiritual beings for guidance in our Blackfoot language has always brought me comfort. One of her commitments while my brother was in hospital was to *keep* praying. Her daily routine would consist of waking up in the later morning hours and prepare her usual cup of coffee. She would then call me up from my downstairs studio (my morning ritual began with coffee at the piano), and she would tell me to sit with her while she would set the smudge bowl ablaze. After she was done praying and smudging herself, she would instruct me to do the same. Following our morning ritual of prayer together, she would cook us a late breakfast (another ritual of ours), and my grand/father would return from spending the morning with my brother at the hospital to join us. After we had our breakfast together my grand/mother would relieve my grand/father from his loving duties and spend the remainder of the

day at the hospital with my brother. While I had the joy of spending the day with my grand/*father*, my main responsibility was to prepare supper in the evening and deliver it to my grand/*mother* at the hospital. It was not unusual to walk into my brother's hospital room and see my grand/*mother* praying with her rosaries (Ma was also Catholic) at my brother's bedside. I would then spend the evening there with her, and eventually my siblings and kin would trickle in while the hospital visiting hours (and Covid-19 protocols) permitted us to do so. My grand/*mother* would stay after hours, and I would wait up for her after midnight at home. When she finally returned from the hospital, we would end our evening in prayer and ready ourselves for the next day.

We lived day-by-day during this time and our daily rituals often began the same. My grand/*father* would wake at 5 a.m. and return to the hospital to be with my brother. I would be the second to wake and enjoy my first cup of coffee at the piano again. I would eventually hear my grand/*mother* calling me from upstairs to go and pray with her. After our prayers and ritual smudge, she would begin preparing our late breakfast. My grand/*father* would come back from the hospital and join us at the table for breakfast. My grand/*mother* would leave to be with my brother at the hospital. I would prepare supper and bring it to my grand/*mother*. I was gathered with family, keeping our brother and grand/*mother* company. I would wait for my grand/*mother's* return home from the hospital, and we would light our evening smudge.

This was our ritual.

Then one day she hugged me one last time, and nothing was ever the same again...*again*.

*In an Elder-realm embraced by my viscera
Resides a subterranean phenomenon
Where Litho and Astheno speak geomancies beneath my chest
And their holy tongues detonate the subduction between my emotional-body and flesh*

*With Tectonia's fingers nuzzled between my ribs
My heart explodes
And I am ripped open*

*My mouth is full of ashes
I choke on God*

—(IV)

My grand/mother was born into this world on September 20, 1954, and on September 20, 2020, her 66th birthday, she suffered a major heart attack and left this world. The week that proceeded her death was spent preparing her funeral, which I had little to do with, and was taken care of by other family members not immediate to us. The relief from funeral arranging duties gave my family and I the time to mourn and mentally prepare ourselves to give our mother back to Creator.

Time passed quite quickly during that week before her funeral, and all I could remember feeling was intense emotional pain and discomfort. I was hurting, and this hurt I felt was an excruciating pain I had *never* experienced in my lifetime. I remember laying on my grand/mother's chosen side of my grand/parent's bed and crying for a majority of that week, as I did not have the mental capacity to greet guests and our extended family for long periods of time. When I did briefly have the emotional bandwidth, I would venture out of my grand/parents' bedroom to greet guests and provide some input on funeral arrangements, then I would return to the bedroom, lay back

down on my grand/mother's side of the bed, look at pictures of her and continue to feel my heart break.

When the day of her funeral arrived, I felt a brief respite of closure after we ceremoniously laid her to rest. However, that fleeting moment of peace was replaced with an overwhelming sadness and a fear of living life without her. I returned to my grand/mother's last physical resting place and asked myself "*why her?*"

*I never believed in Jesus much
And the only church to truly save me
Was my mother loving so unconditionally
And the only religion and devotion I knew
Was the peace I had as a son praying with you*

*Now crosses and ceremony don't protect me much
My brother's shielding once did that
My faith was a fierce warrior standing tall
And my heart feared no snake or man
But a bullet took all that*

*I find it hard to pray
Because God hasn't been listening lately
But I feel Creator bleeding out from these wounds
This is light dressed in pain*

—(V)

The passing of my grand/mother and the devastating attack on my brother—which collaterally wounded my family as well—were two searing burns that compounded our pain. The family I once knew, the familiarity, the safety, and the dynamics that shaped my being were gone. My "world" burnt to ash, and for the first time it felt like my spirituality was gone as well. I was angry with the prayers and rituals that once sustained my spirit, and it felt like my faith in everything I considered sacred were obliterated. I *hated* Creator, at least I felt like I did, because

the anger burning in my chest sure felt like hate. My heart was screaming out in pain, but it had no mouth to sing its hurt.

Of course, my emotional states were not always extreme and constant, I had days that were overwhelming, and I had days that were a little more manageable. But when my grief would become unbearable, my emotions switched between blazing-hot anger and drowning-cold sadness. I felt both engulfed by flames and submerged under water. I felt *trapped* in these oppressive emotional states, and I felt like there was no way out because I knew there was no prayer, or amount of sweetgrass to burn that would ease this pain. Panic would then ensue because I felt crushed under the weight of agonizing emotions. Then, after experiencing these violent waves of emotional turbulence, I felt numb. Which was infinitely more worrisome to experience because it was scary to feel disconnected from my body. If I didn't feel safe in my rituals, or my spirituality, or my own being, where did I feel safe then?

*My terrestrial heirloom
Is an ancient organ beating*

My heart humming this Blood topography

*My body remembers
It sings this land*

—(VI)

During one “bad” day, I had some physiological signals that warned me that these difficult and claustrophobic emotions would confine me again. But before the paralyzing grief and fear would cement in my body, I had the urge to spend some time in nature. As it had been a while since I connected with the land, and because of my intense graduate studies and my personal

mourning, being in nature was not prioritized during this time. Despite being on the verge of an emotional upset, paired with a hesitancy to break away from academic duties, I found it necessary that day to make my way to the river bottom.

Once I had arrived at the bank of the river I meditated on the sight and sound of the haphazard rhythm of the water caressing the muddy shore. And alongside the choppy ebb and flow of the river, I was flooded with a peace I usually feel while being in nature and I was greeted with a sudden realization that this was the same spiritual connection I once felt while in ceremony. Alongside that fleeting understanding of a connection to something beyond me, I felt whole again. And alongside that tacit knowledge of my inextricable connection to the land, I felt like I was home and eating breakfast with my family again. And alongside feeling embraced by the land, I felt my *grand/mother* praying in Blackfoot again. And alongside the river shore, I surrendered to my grief and drowned in pain again.

Ritual VII

*The stratigraphist in me
Looks for Gods under my skin*

*So, I sever the ethereal limbs from my pain-body
And count the epochs contained in my spirit-flesh*

*These magmatic layers of emotional origins
Lithify my heart*

*Beloved, Tectonia
Crack open my chest and break me apart*

—Rock Breaker (Tectonia)

Chapter 2

Blood Offering to the Sonic Symbol/s:

Blood Night Song No.2 (Matriakii)
&
The Blood Alchemist Wateraga (Matriakii of Magic)

Some odd months passed glacially since my grand/mother transitioned from this earthly realm into the spiritual one, and just as she made that journey, the seasons of this land transitioned as well. Fall eventually turned to winter, and the land readied itself for a frozen slumber. After a long dream, the eventual land-thaw was teased awake by the sun's warm kisses. Cold and long dark nights slowly turned into long hot sunny days, which, of course, is the natural order of our meteorological cycling.

During the cusp of spring and summer, I began a romantic relationship with an individual (we'll call him "Three"), and after months of experiencing intense emotional highs and lows, this love affair was quite welcome. So, just like the various flora of this land bashfully blossomed to the brazen flirt of the summer sun, I too was excited for this new season of my life.

*You breach my perimeters
Mouth humming on my neck
My petals blush open
My heart's in bloom because of this*

*But with your fangs sinking in
Just enough to break the skin*

*I ignore the warnings
I play dumb*

I'm as foolish as I can be

—(VIII)

Three and I had deep feelings for each other, and like any relationship we had our ups and downs, but our low points were getting to be quite extreme and were becoming far more tumultuous than any healthy relationship could endure. The relationship with Three did not last, which I had trouble accepting at the time, and like any painful breakup, I grieved.

However, the pain I experienced from the ending of this relationship triggered an unresolved hurt in me. When I started my relationship with Three, I was able to distract myself from healing over the losses of my old way of life, which included losses of my family and my past spiritual anchors. I was growing dependent on that distraction because I still felt disconnected in my spiritual practices. I still struggled with my own emotions when it came to the loss of my grand/mother and the tragedy surrounding my brother. So, I projected my feelings of safety and a sense of “home” onto Three and our relationship, which ironically, wasn’t safe at all.

I'm starting to think I was never meant for normality

First was my brother, who confronted a bullet

Second was my mother, whose heartbreak killed her

*Then third was a lover with a tempestuous character
He had a gentle caress that concealed his angry fists
I soon became addicted to his pretty words that promised a fix
Yet he still possessed a razor tongue that cut beyond my flesh*

*I used to sing for love
Now I sing to find Gods*

—(IX)

After experiencing grueling heartache from the ending of my romantic relationship, I felt a greater urgency to sit in ceremony to pray. I needed to engage with my spiritual self once again, but I still felt a disconnection from my spiritual practices after suffering so much emotional pain.

I was *afraid* to visit those higher parts of myself. Before I engaged in my spiritual practices, I knew I had to reconcile my turbulent relationship with Creator, which I still was not prepared to do. Blaming Creator for my tragedies gave me a false sense of control and pacified the suffocating feeling of my painful emotions during that time. My family and my connection to the spirit-world provided the warmth I needed to survive any cruel elements in my previous life. And after experiencing such a harmful relationship with Three, I felt I had no stable territory to make camp and rest my tired spirit. My feeling of “home” was not familiar, my sense of belonging in both the spiritual and physical world was absent. Whatever fire kept me warm at my previous *home-camp* left me burnt, and the romantic love that I hoped would nourish me, only left me thirsty.

*Grief bears fruit
There is God/s in these wounds*

*With a broken and emotionally eroded heart
I am open to be cleansed and nourished*

*I am ready for my veins to be filled with imagination
My Blood rhythms pulse with magic again*

These are the gifts from our Matriakii, Wateraga

—(X)

As fearful as I was to re-engage with spirituality again, my spirit *needed* to be nourished and sustained. So, I attempted dipping my toes into our community ceremony waters once again. Unfortunately, I was bitterly bitten by a realization that these spaces do not always foster the safe environment my spirit needed to heal as a two-spirited individual. I still *needed* a sacred source to fill the empty cup my spirit had become. Although I felt I could not safely be included in those

healing spaces of communal ceremony just yet, I still had a space where I could access the most intimate realms of myself.

On one particularly hot summer day, I made my usual journey to the river bottom, and as I made my humble trek to dip my toes in kinder waters, I felt the warm kisses of the sun on my skin, and the seasonal elements embracing my senses. The trees and the land communed their secrets with me. Despite my feelings of dejection from a recently abandoned romance, I felt like I was in-love again.

While I honored that moment of my spirit feeling whole, I glimpsed past my reflection on the water's surface, and I was startled to *feel* creator singing *again*.

Ritual XI

Be not afraid

*For I am your Blood made into Earth
Your memory of madness made into love
Your pain made into song
I am your rebirth stoked from fire*

*Benevolent spirits sung from your anguish
Your tears restored our waters
Our love is your love*

Be not afraid

*Our love is your love
Your tears restored our waters
Benevolent spirits sung from your anguish*

*I am your rebirth stoked from fire
Your pain made into song
Your memory of madness made into love
For I am your Blood made into Earth*

Be not afraid

*For I am your Blood made into Earth
Your memory of madness made into love
Your pain made into song
I am your rebirth stoked from fire*

*Benevolent spirits sung from your anguish
Your tears restored our waters
Our love is your love*

Be not afraid

Our love is your love...

Chapter 3

Blood Offering to the Sonic Symbol:

Blood Sonata

I remember, many (*many*) years ago, a Blackfoot Elder shared a story of how she met Creator *face-to-face*. The story concluded with how she had suffered a great deal of emotional pain and how she begged and pleaded with Creator to make the “hurt in her heart go away”... Creator didn’t hear her pleas, and the emotional pain she continued to experience kept violently twisting at her heart...

I never really understood the Elder’s *medicine* in that story at *that* time.

*It brings me comfort to think
That if the spirits drank from the lakes of my grief
My pain would bring them to their knees*

—(XII)

I remember, two seasons prior to my brother experiencing his tragedy, my *grand/mother* had asked me to accompany her on her annual Catholic pilgrimage to Lac Ste. Anne, which is located west of Edmonton Alberta, in Treaty 6 territory. For as long as I can recall, this spiritual Mass is one my *grand/mother* attended every year with her sisters. This was an annual tradition for the *Eagle Bear Sisters* (Ma’s maiden name was Eagle Bear). A tradition they had started many years ago after my great-grandfather, who like his daughter (Ma), coincidentally suffered a major heart attack, and left this world as well.

As children, my siblings and I attended this yearly spiritual pilgrimage with my *grand/mother* and continued to do so into our adolescent years. Then one year we decided we were

too “cool” to make this special road trip with my grand/mother. Eventually, as I matured, I grew sensitive to my grand/mother’s belief in Catholicism.

Evening bingo was the after-Mass activity for *Eagle Bear Sisters*, and sometimes if they travelled early enough the day before Mass, it was their pre-Mass activity as well. I told them that they should rename their annual trip “The Eagle Bear Bingo Pilgrimage.” I remember the *Eagle Bear Sisters* first unapologetic laughter at that joke. Although their sudden shrill cackle was a bit alarming to my physical senses, my spirit was elated to bask in such comforting light. As an adult, I would often join my grand/mother’s pilgrimage to Lac Ste. Anne. And now, because I was an adult, I was permitted to join the *Eagle Bear Sisters*’ bingo rituals. I felt blessed.

I was not particularly religious, but it brought my grand/mother joy for me to be by her side and recite our Catholic prayers together during Lac Ste. Anne church services. I did not know at that time that this last pilgrimage with my grand/mother was a memory I would have to hold close to my heart for the difficult journey I was yet to travel.

*As a child
I remember exploring other worlds
I spoke to dinosaurs, dragon-lords, and innocence*

*As a child
I remember being dragged to Hell
I spoke to shame, guilt, and powerlessness*

*Violently uprooted from Heaven
Seedling replanted and smothered in fear*

*There’s no way out
My body can’t scream*

—(XIII)

I remember, lying in bed with Three, and each moment of our shared intimacy seemed so fleeting, but the memories and sensations feel burned into my spirit. The sweet conversations and intimate moments usually ended with laughter. I would enjoy the sensation of my body tensing with extreme joy, it felt like I was being constricted in *light* and I would proceed to feel my body relax and melt back into the bed. I would revere the intense gulp of air after I had expelled my lungs from laughter. The electric radiating buzz that emitted from my chest, gently spilled down my arms and out of my hands—like mountain rivers bleeding down into vast lakes. Three’s waters worshipped my shores, and he summoned feelings of what I thought was love... memories like *this* felt like Heaven.

I remember, I had broken up with Three *again* (surprise), and a group of close friends and I decided to go out for the night, which was a better option than sulking at home over this too familiar scenario. My friends and I opted to go to watch a local rock band at a nearby music venue. The evening felt good, and the evening felt right. I was comforted by the company of my friends, which distracted me from feelings of disappointment (and relief) at my relationship ending with Three (*again*). The joyous night with friends continued. Somewhere in the late evening hours, Three showed up to the live music venue to apologize and express his willingness to resolve any problems in our relationship. We both concluded that we would continue our discussion later in the evening.

The night continued...and so did Three’s consumption of alcohol...the night continued...and Three convinced me to continue our post-breakup discussion privately in his vehicle. Our conversation ended with me rejecting his apologies and his wishes to continue our relationship. In an angered reaction, Three made false claims to the police and the night ended with me being held in a jail cell for *twelve* hours at the police station.

I remember laying in that cold jail cell with intense feelings of betrayal. After the shock of the *incident* had worn off, I realized I was in a place with no way out...

I could not make sense of the time passing...two hours could have been four hours...six hours could have been two hours...and one hour might as well been an *eternity*...there was no way out. The terror I felt, being confined in a box, was an experience my body could not comprehend (but paradoxically *understood* all too well). The fear I felt was a monster eating my body and the panic consuming my mind was relentless. Twelve hours in a tiny rectangular concrete room made my body experience *unimaginable* horrors...memories like *this* felt like Hell.

*I used to sing to the spirits
For the pain in my heart to go away
I dreamed with an energy up above
To experience Heaven reflected in a man
...(God hasn't been listening lately)*

*But the Narcissist from Nazareth hears me
Holding his whisky like a bible
Reading liquored pages, singing broken psalms*

*Promising to heal me with his cruel hands
His forked-tongue twists into mine
His cross picks out my eyes*

*Blinded with vulnerability
I worship this man in bed again
I drink his body and he leaves my heart empty*

*With my spirit unourished
I seek refuge in the arms of this false God*

*On a temporary altar of messed up sheets
I rest my hopes of having peace
I rest my faith of future dreams*

*The hurt in my heart begs for reprieve
The pain in my emotional-body pleads for release
...(God's still not listening)*

*Lost in vulnerability
My spirit sings tears in the dark
And the Narcissist from Nazareth hears me again*

I am trapped between Heaven and Hell...

—(XIV)

In the late winter of 2022, three years after my brother suffered a gunshot wound to his head, and two years after my grand/mother had passed on, I was enduring a turbulent season in my personal life. The demands of my graduate studies had intensified, the pressures of numerous deadlines and commitments only added to the emotional turmoil of escaping a toxic relationship

and to my feelings of deep grief. My body/spirit felt like it was trapped and confined with no way out—very much what I felt like in that jail cell, but only this time it lasted a lot *longer* than twelve hours.

I was burnt out, and I wanted to give up.

I was tired and I wanted to rest.

My spirit was restless, and I wanted to be still.

My emotional-body was exhausted from screaming, and my mind wanted silence.

I felt lost, and I made no efforts to connect with spirit or land.

The pain I felt in my heart was fire that consumed me.

These painful emotions and grief engulfed me.

One day, when I thought I was close to giving up, I decided to pray to my *grand/mother* instead. While conversing with her through prayer and ritual, I remembered the moments and feelings I experienced praying *with* her. The memories of our connection through prayer together brought up the warmth of her presence, and I realized that she wasn't really "gone" from this world when she crossed over to the spirit realm. All the unconditional love I felt from my *grand/mother* and the memories of our time together was a sacred reflection of me—her love was my love—and after that bittersweet moment of understanding, I cried, not only because I missed her deeply, but because she never really left me.

During that brief and intense cathartic cry, I remembered laughing with my *grand/mother* and her sisters. I remembered the intimate moments that made my heart spill over with Three. I remembered being gathered with my family around the dinner table. I remembered how the land embraced me.

The feelings that these memories induced in my body were important to honor, because if my grand/*mother's* love and presence was just a mirror of me, then so were these moments when I felt whole. When I remembered the feeling of the sacred singing to me by the river, I also understood that the sacred was just a reflection of me.

Grief bears fruit.

There *is* God/s in these wounds.

The holy waters I needed to nourish myself were replenished.

Creator never really left me.

Ritual XV

*On the altar of my own healing
Rests my mother, siblings, and painful lovers
I've bled out the memories of my old life*

*I have burned my Blood into ash
And I have cried into this dirt
I have prayed with sullen clay*

*But Firaga spooled my veins into thread
Used my pain for sinew
Then took my old eyes and beaded this chapter into the Earth*

I am blessed with Blood moccasins to traverse this new holy terrain

Chapter 4

Blood Offerings to the Sonic Symbol:

The Grief Eater Firaga

In loving memory of Dorothy Mae Day Rider

(Pookaa'khoyinnim'aakii)

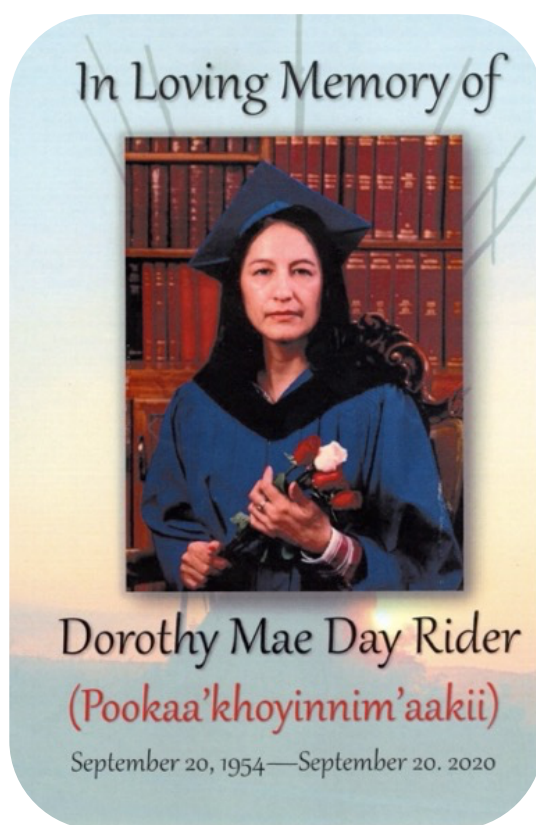


Figure 1. color scan copy of front cover of the *memorial card* for Dorothy Day Rider (Ma).
Personal collection.

Dorothy Mae (Pookaa'khoyinnim'aakii) Day Rider, Elder, Wife, Mother, Grandmother, Auntie, Sister, and a true friend to all, made her final journey home on her birthday, September 20, 2020, at the age of 66 years

She leaves behind her loving and devoted husband of 51 years, Leonard, her children, Cindy (Tim), Jesse, Olivia (Darrell), Sonny-Ray, Amanda, Bunny (Shannon) and adopted children Leo, Craig (Shannon), her grandchildren, Jagger, Wyatt, Kaeden, Bubba, Bauer, Tim Jr, Maddie, Lennon, and great-granddaughter, Christie Jessa Marie. She is also survived by sisters, Phyllis, Audrey, Virginia (Mervin) and her many nieces, nephews, friends, relatives, Maoto'kiiksi sisters, and Sundance family.

Dorothy was born on September 20, 1954, in Cardston, Alberta and was raised in Standoff by her loving parents Stanley and Madeline Eagle Bear. She attended school in lower Standoff, Fort Macleod, Claresholm, and Yakima (Washington). She met the Love of her life & her True Life-Long Companion Leonard (Sipisttoo'poyi) in July 1969. She successfully completed her social work degree at the Mount Universal College in Calgary, Alberta and upon her graduation she was employed by Blood Tribe Social Development for 25 years until her passing.

Dorothy was a dedicated mother and grandmother to her children and celebrated every aspect of their lives. She was also devoted to her cultural, traditional, and spiritual ways and loved her life-long & annual commitment to the Moat'kiiksi (Buffalo Woman Society)...

Dorothy made an imprint on many peoples' hearts and will be lovingly missed.

Dorothy was predeceased by her Father (Stanley), Mother (Madeline), Brother (Ray Eagle Bear), Niece (Carmen Eagle Bear), Nephew (Raymond Eagle Bear), Granddaughter (Christie Marie), Brother-in-law Andy Black Water, Uncles Lois Knife Sr. (Louise), Mike Eagle Bear Sr. (Angeline), William Eagle Bear (Margaret), Edward Eagle Bear (Hazel), Ray Cross Child (Beatrice), Pat Cross Child (Theresa), Domonic Cross Child. Grandparents Jack (Agnes) Eagle Bear, Lizzie Standing Alone, Low Horn, Cross Child, Red Crane. ¹⁰

¹⁰ Cornerstone Funeral Home. "Day Rider Dorothy" *Cornerstone Funeral Home*, cornerstonefuneralhome.com/obituaries/day-rider-dorothy.

Blood Warrior Jesse Day Rider



Figure 2. color scan copy of Jesse Day Rider
Photographer unknown.
Personal collection.

Photo also published in a number of websites/articles.

FIGHTER DETAILS:

Name: Jesse Dayrider Pro MMA
Record: 0-1-0 (Win-Loss-Draw)
Nickname: Blood Warrior
Current Streak: 1 Loss
Age: 45 | Date of Birth: 1978.01.24
Last Fight: April 25, 2014 in HKF
Weight Class: Light Heavyweight
Last Weigh-In: 201.5 lbs
Affiliation: Progressive Fighting Academy
Height: 6'4" (193cm)...¹¹

¹¹ Tapology. "Jesse Dayrider ('Blood Warrior') | MMA Fighter Page | Tapology." Tapology, www.tapology.com/fightcenter/fighters/27972-jesse-dayrider?category=news.

To My Lover's Past, Present, and Future:

*May we find home at the end of the world
If not, remember all that is good is a reflection of you*

*If at the end of this holy pilgrimage I do not melt back into you
And once we realize we were just shadow and light mirrored
May we greet each other with bewildering laughter on the other-side*

*All this love is just me in you
The entire world is codified magic
Light and data reconfigured*

God is threaded throughout my entire being

—(XVI)

Closing Ritual (XVII)

*My ancestral nostalgic urgency
secretly sings rituals to me*

*Pulsars, Novas,
and Holy Celestial Beings drum beneath my love*

*This temporal ceremony dances my consciousness
to ancient prayers of the past*

*Our Matriakii, Hadean Aeon
wraps me in their medicine bundle to sleep*

I dream I am sacred once again

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Appendix 1

List of works in *The Blood Song Winter Count* and performances

1. *Telluric Ache (Blood Prayer)*

Composed for string quartet. World Premier in Lethbridge, Alberta, Canada, on September 24, 2022. Performed by The Penderecki String Quartet.

2. *Blood Night Song No. 2 (Matriakii)*

Composed for piano and viola duo. World premiere in Pikangikum First Nation, Ontario, Canada, on December 3, 2023. Performed by Melody McKiver and Beverly McKiver.

3. *The Blood Alchemist Wateraga (Matriakii of Magic)*

Composed for orchestra. Digital world premiere on February 27, 2022. Live world premiere May 14, 2022, in Calgary, Alberta, Canada. Both premiers performed by the Calgary Philharmonic Orchestra.

4. *Blood Sonata*

Composed for piano and flute duo. World Premiere on June 29, 2022, in Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada. Performed by Jessica Mcmann (Sparvier-Wells) and Beverly McKiver.

5. *The Grief Eater Firaga*

Composed for string orchestra. World premiere on June 10, 2023, in Calgary, Alberta, Canada. Performed by the Kensington Sinfonia

Appendix 2

Compilation of *The Blood Song Winter Count* musical scores

Telluric Ache

(Blood Prayer)

For string quartet

Sonny-Ray Day Rider

Commissioned by:
The New Music LAB (NMLAB)
Andrew Stewart, Board Director

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Sonny-Ray Day Rider

My body remembers

It sings this land

We acknowledge the support of the Canada Council of the Arts and Alberta Fine Arts Foundation of the Arts



Alberta
Foundation
for the **Arts**



Canada Council
for the Arts

Conseil des arts
du Canada

Instrumentation

Violin

Violin

Viola

Cello

Telluric Ache

Blood Prayer

Sonny-Ray Day Rider

♩ = 60

The musical score is divided into three systems, each containing four staves for Violin I, Violin II, Viola, and Cello. The key signature is B-flat major (two flats) and the time signature is 4/4. The score includes various dynamics such as *pp*, *f*, *mf*, *p*, *espress.*, and *mp*, along with hairpins and slurs. Measure numbers 8 and 14 are indicated at the start of their respective systems.

21

Vln. I *f* *mf* *f*

Vln. II *p* *cresc. f* *mp*

Vla. *p* *cresc. f* *p* *mf*

Vc. *f* *mf* *p* *mf* *pp*

28

Vln. I *mf* *pp* *pp*

Vln. II *pp*

Vla. *f* *p*

Vc. *f* *mp* *ff* *pp* *mp* *f*

36

Vln. I *p* *mf* *p*

Vln. II *p* *mf* *cresc.*

Vla. *cresc. f* *p* *mf* *mp* *mf*

Vc. *p* *f* *mf* *f* *p* *f*

43

Vln. I *mf* *f* *mp*

Vln. II *f* *mf* *mp*

Vla. *f*

Vc. *mf*

50

Vln. I *mf* *f* *p*

Vln. II *mf* *f* *mf*

Vla. *mf* *f* *p* *f*

Vc. *p* *f* *p* *p*

57

Vln. I *p* *f* *mf*

Vln. II *p* *p* *f* *p* *mf*

Vla. *p* *mf* *f* *p* *f* *p* *p* *mf*

Vc. *mf* *f* *f* *p* *p* *mf*

64

Vln. I *p* *mf* *mp* *p* *p* *mf*

Vln. II *f* *mf* *p* *mf*

Vla. *f* *p* *mf* *p* *p*

Vc. *f* *f* *p* *p* *mf*

70

Vln. I *p* *p*

Vln. II *p*

Vla. *mf* *p* *mf* *mf*

Vc. *f* *f* *p* *p* *f*

77

Vln. I *mf* *f* *p* *mf*

Vln. II *f* *p* *p* *mf* *p* *p*

Vla. *f* *f* *mf*

Vc. *f* *mf* *f*

84

Vln. I *mp* *p* *mf* *mp* *p*

Vln. II *mf* *p* *p* *mf* *p*

Vla. *p* *mf*

Vc. *f* *mf*

91

Vln. I *mf* *f* *p*

Vln. II *mf* *p* *cresc.* *f*

Vla. *mf* *f* *mf* *mf*

Vc. *mf*

98

Vln. I *pp cresc.* *f* *pp cresc.* *f*

Vln. II *pp cresc.* *f* *pp cresc.*

Vla. *p* *f* *pp cresc.* *f*

Vc. *p* *f* *p*

105

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

pp cresc. f pp p pp p

f p pp mp pp p

f pp mf pp p

f pp mf pp p

Detailed description: This system of musical notation covers measures 105 through 114. It features four staves: Violin I (Vln. I), Violin II (Vln. II), Viola (Vla.), and Violoncello (Vc.). The key signature is one flat (B-flat major or D minor). The Vln. I staff begins with a *pp* dynamic, followed by a *cresc.* leading to a *f* dynamic, then a *pp* dynamic, and continues with *p*, *pp*, and *p*. The Vln. II staff starts with *f*, then *p*, *pp*, *p*, and *pp*. The Vla. staff begins with *pp* and *cresc.* leading to *f*, then *pp*, *mp*, *pp*, and *p*. The Vc. staff starts with *f*, then *pp*, *mf*, *pp*, and *p*. The notation includes various note values, rests, and dynamic markings with hairpins.

115

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

pp

p mf pp

p mf pp

mp pp

Detailed description: This system of musical notation covers measures 115 through 119. It features the same four staves as the previous system. The Vln. I staff has a *pp* dynamic. The Vln. II staff has *p*, *mf*, and *pp*. The Vla. staff has *p*, *mf*, and *pp*. The Vc. staff has *mp* and *pp*. The notation includes various note values, rests, and dynamic markings with hairpins.

Blood Night Song No.2

(Matriakii)

For piano and viola duo

Sonny-Ray Day Rider

Commissioned by:
Melody McKiver and Beverly McKiver

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Sonny-Ray Day Rider

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Instrumentation

Piano

Viola

Blood Night Song No.2

Matriakii

Sonny-Ray Day Rider

♩ = 60

Viola

cantabile

espress.

p

Piano

p

p

mp

p

8

Vla.

mp

mp

Pno.

mp

p

14

Vla.

p

Pno.

mf

Leg.

♩ = 220

16

Vla.

mf

pp

Pno.

p

20

Vla.

Pno.

p

24

Vla.

Pno.

28

Vla.

Pno.

32

Vla.

Pno.

f

36

Vla. *mf*

Pno.

40

Vla. *f* *sf*

Pno. *f*

44

Vla. *mf* *f* *molto rit.*

Pno.

48

Vla. *accel.* *a tempo* *p*

Pno. *mf*

ped. *

52

Vla. *mf*

Pno. *Leg.* *

56

Vla. *f*

Pno. *mp* *Leg.* *

60

Vla. *p*

Pno. *mf* *Leg.* *

64

Vla.

Pno. *Leg.* *

68

Vla.

Pno.

72

Vla.

Pno.

76

Vla.

Pno.

80

Vla.

Pno.

84

Vla.

Pno.

mf

Reo. *

Reo. *

Reo. *

Reo. *

88

Vla.

Pno.

mp

92

Vla.

Pno.

rit.

Reo. *

Reo. *

Reo. *

Reo. *

Reo. *

Reo. *

Reo. *

96

Vla.

Pno.

a tempo

f

Reo. *

Reo. *

100

Vla. *mf*

Pno. *p*

104

Vla.

Pno. *mp*

108

Vla. *f* *mf*

Pno.

112

Vla. *f* *rit.* *a tempo*

Pno. *p*

116

Vla.

Pno.

Ped.

120

Vla.

Pno.

Ped.

124

Vla.

Pno.

mf *mp* *p*

molto rit.

Ped.

128

Vla.

Pno.

Ped.

132 $\text{♩} = 60$

Vla. *mp* *p*

Pno.

Leg. * *Leg.* * *Leg.* * *Leg.*

136

Vla.

Pno.

Leg. * *Leg.*

THE BLOOD ALCHEMIST WATERAGA

(Matriakii of Magic)

For reduced orchestra

Sonny-Ray Day Rider

Commissioned by:
The Calgary Philharmonic Orchestra
Rune Bergmann, Music Director

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Sonny-Ray Day Rider

My body remembers

It sings this land

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Instrumentation

Flute (2)

Oboe

Bb Clarinet

Bassoon

Horns (2)

Bb Trumpet

Trombone

Bass Trombone

Tuba

Timpani

Full Strings:

Violin I

Violin II

Viola

Cello

Contrabass

The Blood Alchemist Wateraga

Transposed Score

Matriakii of Magic

Sonny-Ray Day Rider

A ♩ = 60

Timpani *p mp mf p mp mf p mp mf p*

B♭ Tpt. *mp mf p*

B

Ob. *pp*

B♭ Tpt. *p mp mf p mp mf mp*

Timpani *mf p mf p mf p*

Fl. 2 *p mf p*

Ob. *mf p mf mp*

B♭ Cl. *mf*

Bsn. *p f p*

B♭ Tpt. *p mf p mf f*

Tbn. *p mf p*

B. Tbn. *p p*

Tuba *p mp*

Timpani *mf p mf p*

29

Fl. 1

Fl. 2

Ob.

B♭ Cl.

Bsn.

Hn. 1

Hn. 2

B♭ Tpt.

Tbn.

B. Tbn.

Tuba

Timp.

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

Cb.

mp

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

mp

p *mf* *p* *mf* *p* *p*

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

p *mf* *p*

mp *p*

p

mp *p*

mp *p*

mp

mp

Musical score for orchestral instruments, measures 36 to 41. The score is written for the following instruments: Fl. 1, Fl. 2, Ob., B♭ Cl., Bsn., Hn. 1, Hn. 2, B♭ Tpt., Tbn., B. Tbn., Tuba, Timp., Vln. I, Vln. II, Vla., Vc., and Cb. The key signature is B-flat major (two flats) and the time signature is 4/4. The score includes dynamic markings such as *f*, *mp*, *mf*, *p*, and *pp*, along with crescendo and decrescendo hairpins. The woodwinds and brass sections have active parts, while the strings are mostly silent.

This musical score page covers measures 43 through 48 of a symphony. The instrumentation includes woodwinds (Flutes 1 & 2, Oboe, Bass Clarinet, Bassoon), brass (Horns 1 & 2, Trumpets, Trombones, Tuba), percussion (Timpani), and strings (Violins I & II, Viola, Violoncello, Contrabass). The score is written in a key signature of two flats (B-flat major or D-flat minor) and a common time signature. The woodwind and brass sections feature complex rhythmic patterns and dynamic markings such as *mf*, *f*, *mp*, and *p*. The strings play a sustained, low-register accompaniment, with the contrabass line marked *p*. The timpani part includes a roll starting in measure 47. The overall texture is dense and dramatic.

C

50

Fl. 1
 Fl. 2
 Ob.
 B \flat Cl.
 Bsn.
 Hn. 1
 Hn. 2
 B \flat Tpt.
 Tbn.
 B. Tbn.
 Tuba
 Timp.
 Vln. I
 Vln. II
 Vla.
 Vc.
 Cb.

Dynamic markings: *mf*, *p*, *mp*, *mf*, *mp*, *mf*, *p*, *mp*, *mf*, *mp*, *mf*, *p*, *mf*, *pp*, *mf*

Detailed description: This page contains the musical score for measures 50 through 54. The score is written for a symphony orchestra. The woodwind section includes two flutes (Fl. 1 and 2), oboe (Ob.), B-flat clarinet (B \flat Cl.), and bassoon (Bsn.). The brass section includes two horns (Hn. 1 and 2), B-flat trumpet (B \flat Tpt.), trombone (Tbn.), B-flat tuba (B. Tbn.), and tuba. The percussion section includes timpani (Timp.). The string section includes Violin I (Vln. I), Violin II (Vln. II), Viola (Vla.), Violoncello (Vc.), and Contrabass (Cb.). The key signature has one flat (B-flat), and the time signature is 4/4. The score features various dynamic markings such as *mf* (mezzo-forte), *p* (piano), *mp* (mezzo-piano), and *pp* (pianissimo). The woodwinds and brasses play melodic lines with dynamic changes, while the strings provide harmonic support and the timpani plays rhythmic patterns.

D

Musical score for orchestra, measures 57-64, section D. The score is in 3/4 time and B-flat major. The instruments and their parts are:

- Fl. 1:** Measures 57-64. Dynamics: *mf*, *f*, *f*.
- Fl. 2:** Measures 57-64. Dynamics: *p*, *mf*, *f*, *mf*, *f*.
- Ob.:** Measures 57-64. Dynamics: *p*, *mf*, *f*, *mf*, *f*.
- B♭ Cl.:** Measures 57-64. Dynamics: *mf*, *p*, *mf*, *f*.
- Bsn.:** Measures 57-64. Dynamics: *mf*, *f*.
- Hn. 1:** Measures 57-64. Dynamics: *mf*, *mf*, *p*, *p*, *mf*.
- Hn. 2:** Measures 57-64. Dynamics: *mf*, *mf*, *p*, *p*, *mf*.
- B♭ Tpt.:** Measures 57-64. Dynamics: *mf*, *mf*, *p*, *mp*, *mf*.
- Tbn.:** Measures 57-64. Dynamics: *mp*.
- B. Tbn.:** Measures 57-64. Dynamics: *p*, *mp*, *mp*.
- Tuba:** Measures 57-64. Dynamics: *mp*, *mf*, *mp*.
- Timp.:** Measures 57-64. Dynamics: *f*.
- Vln. I:** Measures 57-64. Dynamics: *p*, *mf*, *p*.
- Vln. II:** Measures 57-64. Dynamics: *p*.
- Vla.:** Measures 57-64. Dynamics: *mp*, *mf*.
- Vc.:** Measures 57-64. Dynamics: *p*, *mf*, *mf*.
- Cb.:** Measures 57-64. Dynamics: *mf*, *mf*.

64

Fl. 1

Fl. 2

Ob.

B♭ Cl.

Bsn.

64

Hn. 1

Hn. 2

B♭ Tpt.

Tbn.

B. Tbn.

Tuba

64

Timp.

64

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

Cb.

E

$\text{♩} = 140$

Fl. 1

Fl. 2

Ob.

B \flat Cl.

Bsn.

Hn. 1

Hn. 2

B \flat Tpt.

Tbn.

B. Tbn.

Tuba

Timp.

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

Cb.

p

mf

f

mp

78

Fl. 1

Fl. 2

Ob.

B♭ Cl.

Bsn.

Hn. 1

Hn. 2

B♭ Tpt.

Tbn.

B. Tbn.

Tuba

Timp.

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

Cb.

mp *mf* *f*

mf

mf

mp *mp*

mf *mf*

mf *mf*

mf *mf* *mf* *mf*

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

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

mf *p* *mf* *p*

The image shows a page of a musical score for orchestra, starting at measure 78. The score is divided into three systems. The first system includes Flute 1 and 2 (both silent), Oboe, B♭ Clarinet, and Bassoon, all starting at measure 78 with *mf*. The second system includes Horns 1 and 2 (*mf*), Trumpets in B♭ (*mp*), Trombones (Tenor *mf*, Bass *mf*), and Tuba (silent). The third system includes Timpani (silent), Violins I and II (starting at *mf*, with dynamics *mp*, *f*, *mp*, *mf*, *mp*, *f*), Viola (starting at *mf*), Violoncello (starting at *mf*), and Contrabass (starting at *mf*). The score is in a key signature of two flats and a 6/8 time signature.

85

Fl. 1 *mp*

Fl. 2

Ob. *mp*

B♭ Cl.

Bsn. *mf* *mf* *p*

Hn. 1 *mf* *mf* *p*

Hn. 2 *mf* *mf* *p*

B♭ Tpt. *mp* *f* *mp*

Tbn. *mf* *mf* *mf* *mf* *mf* *mf* *mf*

B. Tbn. *mf* *mf* *mf* *mf* *mf* *mf* *mf*

Tuba *mf* *mf* *mf* *mf* *mf* *mf* *mp*

Timp. 85

Vln. I *mf* *p* *mf*

Vln. II *mf* *p* *mf*

Vla.

Vc. *mf* *p* *mf* *p*

Cb. *mf* *p* *mf* *p*

92

Fl. 1 *mp* *f* *p* *f*

Fl. 2 *f* *mp* *f* *p*

Ob. *f*

B♭ Cl.

Bsn.

Hn. 1 *mf* *mp* *p*

Hn. 2 *mf* *mp* *p*

B♭ Tpt.

Tbn. *mp* *p* *mf*

B. Tbn. *mp* *p* *mf*

Tuba *f*

Timp.

Vln. I *p*

Vln. II *p*

Vla.

Vc. *mf*

Cb.

99

Fl. 1

Fl. 2

Ob.

B♭ Cl.

Bsn.

Hn. 1

Hn. 2

B♭ Tpt.

Tbn.

B. Tbn.

Tuba

Timp.

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

Cb.

p

f

p

f

f

f

mf

mp

mp

F

106 $\text{♩} = 60$

Ob. *p*

Bsn. *p*

Timp. *f*

Vla. *p*

Vc. *p*

Cb.

113

Timp. *mf*

Vla.

Vc.

Cb.

120

Timp. *p* *mf*

Vln. I *mp* *f* *p*

Vln. II *p*

Vla. *mf* *f* *p*

Vc. *p* *mf* *p*

Cb.

127

Timp. *p* *mf* *mp*

Vln. I *mf* *p* *mp* *mf* *p* *mf*

Vln. II *mf* *p*

Vla. *p*

Vc. *p*

Cb. *p*

132

Timp. *p*

Vln. I *p*

Vln. II *p*

Vla. *p*

Vc. *p*

Cb. *p*

Blood Sonata

For piano and flute duo

Sonny-Ray Day Rider

Commissioned by:
Jessica Mcmann (Sparvier-Wells)

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Sonny-Ray Day Rider

My body remembers

It sings this land

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Instrumentation

Piano

Flute

Blood Sonata

I. Ophanim

Sonny-Ray Day Rider

$\text{♩} = 60$

Flute

Piano

pp

Ped. Ad lib.

Fl.

Pno.

cantabile

Fl.

Pno.

mf

espress.

p

Fl.

Pno.

semplce

The score is written for Flute and Piano in 4/4 time with a tempo of quarter note = 60. The key signature has three flats (B-flat, E-flat, A-flat). The piano part features a complex rhythmic pattern of eighth and sixteenth notes, often with slurs and ties. Dynamics range from *pp* to *mf*. Performance instructions include *Ped. Ad lib.*, *cantabile*, and *espress.*. The flute part is mostly rests, with some melodic lines in the later measures.

13

Fl. *mf* *tr*

Pno.

16

Fl. *espress.* *mf*

Pno. *cantabile* *mf* *p*

19

Fl.

Pno. *mf*

22

Fl.

Pno.

25
Fl. *p*

Pno. *f* *p*

28
Fl.

Pno. *mf* *f*

31
Fl. *espress.* *mp*

Pno. *pp*

34
Fl.

Pno. *semplice*

37

Fl.

Pno.

40

Fl.

Pno.

cantabile *mf* *mp*

43

Fl.

Pno.

f *mf*

46

Fl.

Pno.

f *p* *mp*

49

Fl.

Pno.

agitato *mf* *f*

52

Fl.

Pno.

p cresc. *f* *pp cresc.*

55

Fl.

Pno.

p *ritenuto* *a tempo* *mf*

f *mp cantabile*

58

Fl.

Pno.

mf

61

Fl. *f* *p*

Pno.

64

Fl. *mp* *p* *poco rit.* *accel.* *a tempo*

Pno.

67

Fl.

Pno.

69

Fl. *p* *mf*

Pno.

71

Fl. *mf*

Pno. *mp* *p*

Ped. * Ped. * Ped. * Ped. * Ped. *

73

Fl.

Pno. *Ped Simile*

75

Fl.

Pno. *pp*

77

Fl. *f*

Pno. *mf*

Ped. * Ped. * Ped. * Ped. * Ped. *

79

Fl. *p* *mf*

Pno. *p*

Ped Simile

81

Fl. *f*

Pno.

83

Fl. *f*

Pno. *Reo.* *

85

Fl. *mf*

Pno. *mf* *p* *Ped Simile*

87

Fl. *p*

Pno. *p*

89

Fl. *mf*

Pno. *ped.*

91

Fl. *mf*

Pno. *mf* *p* *Ped Simile*

93

Fl.

Pno.

95 *poco rit.*

Fl. *f*

Pno. *mf*

97 *accel.* *a tempo*

Fl. *p* *mf* *cresc.*

Pno. *pp* *mf* *cresc.*

99 *ritenuto* *a tempo*

Fl. *f*

Pno. *f* *p*

101 *poco rit.* *a tempo*

Fl.

Pno. *f* *p cantabile* *mp*

Ped. Ad lib.

Detailed description of the musical score: The score is for Flute (Fl.) and Piano (Pno.). It consists of four systems of staves. The first system (measures 95-96) shows the Flute playing a melodic line starting with a forte (*f*) dynamic, and the Piano providing accompaniment with a mezzo-forte (*mf*) dynamic. The second system (measures 97-98) features the Flute with a piano (*p*) dynamic followed by a mezzo-forte (*mf*) dynamic and a crescendo (*cresc.*). The Piano accompaniment starts with a pianissimo (*pp*) dynamic, moves to mezzo-forte (*mf*), and also includes a crescendo. The third system (measures 99-100) has the Flute playing a melodic line with a forte (*f*) dynamic, then a *ritenuto* section, and finally returning to *a tempo* with a piano (*p*) dynamic. The Piano accompaniment starts with a forte (*f*) dynamic and ends with a piano (*p*) dynamic. The fourth system (measures 101-102) shows the Flute with a *poco rit.* section followed by *a tempo*. The Piano accompaniment starts with a forte (*f*) dynamic, then a piano (*p cantabile*) section, and ends with a mezzo-piano (*mp*) dynamic. Pedal markings (*Ped. Ad lib.*) are present throughout the piano part.

104 *espress.*
p *mp*

Pno. *pp* *semplice*

107 *mf*

Pno.

110 *f* *p*

Pno. *mf* *cantabile* *p*

113 *mf* *f*

Pno. *mp*

116

Fl.

Pno.

mf *f*

119

Fl.

Pno.

p *cresc.* *f*

122

Fl.

Pno.

p *ritenuito*

125

Fl.

Pno.

a tempo *mf* *p cantabile* *mf*

128

Fl.

Pno.

v o

131

Fl.

Pno.

p

pp

Lea. *

Lea. *

134

Fl.

Pno.

Lea. *

Lea. *

Lea. *

Lea. *

Score

Blood Sonata

II: Vessel

Sonny-Ray Day Rider

The score is written for Flute and Piano in 3/4 time, key of B-flat major. The tempo is marked as quarter note = 75. The music begins with a piano (*p*) dynamic. The piano part features several instances of *L.V.* (Left Hand Voicing) and a *Ped.* (Pedal) marking. The flute part has a *p* dynamic and a *L.V.* marking. The score is divided into three systems. The first system covers measures 1-8. The second system covers measures 9-16. The third system covers measures 17-20. In the third system, the piano part includes a *p dolce* marking and a *Ped. Simile* instruction. The piano part also includes several *L.V.* markings and a *Ped.* marking. The flute part has a *p* dynamic and a *L.V.* marking.

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22

Fl. *p* *f*

Pno. *cresc.* *f* 3

(Ped Sim).

25

Fl. *mf* *f*

Pno. *sub. p* *cresc.* 3

(Ped Sim).

28

Fl. *tr* *mf* *p*

Pno. *f* *dim.* *mf* *dim.* *p*

(Ped Sim).

32

Fl. *p*

Pno. *cresc.*

(Ped Sim).

36

Fl. *f* *mf*

Pno. *f* *sub. p* *mp*

(Ped Sim).

39

Fl. *p* *più mosso*

Pno. *cresc.* *ff*

(Ped Sim).

42

Fl. *poco rit.*

Pno. *(Ped Ad Lib).*

44

Fl. *a tempo* *p*

Pno. *f* *p*

(Ped Ad Lib).

Ped.

48

Fl.

Pno.

p

(Ped.)

54

Fl.

Pno.

p dolce

p

ped. * *ped.* * *Ped. Simile.*

58

Fl.

Pno.

f *mf*

cresc. *f* *mf*

3 *3* *3*

(Ped. Sim.)

61

Fl.

Pno.

p

cresc. *mf* *f*

8va

3 *3* *3* *3* *3* *3*

(Ped. Sim.)

64

Fl.

Pno.

tr

espress.

mf

3

p

(Ped Sim).

67

Fl.

Pno.

f

3

3

3

3

p

mp

f

tr

(Ped Sim).

70

Fl.

Pno.

f

3

3

3

3

p

f

3

3

3

3

tr

mf

ped.

*

74

Fl.

Pno.

p

mf

p

pp

ped.

*

Ped.

The Grief Eater Firaga

For string orchestra

Sonny-Ray Day Rider

Commissioned by:
The Kensington Sinfonia
Andrea Case, Genevieve Micheletti, Ensemble Directors

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Sonny-Ray Day Rider

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Alberta
Foundation
for the **Arts**



Canada Council
for the Arts

Conseil des arts
du Canada

Instrumentation

String section:

Violin I

Violin II

Viola

Cello

Contrabass

Score

The Grief Eater Firaga

I. Blood Offering

Sonny-Ray Day Rider

$\text{♩} = 110$

Violin I

Violin II

Viola

Cello

Double Bass

6

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

D.B.

11

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

D.B.

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16

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

D.B.

mp

pp

mf

pp

mf

pizz.

21

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

D.B.

pp

pp

p

p

p

p

26

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

D.B.

mp

mp

mf

mf

mp

pizz.

mf

31

Vln. I *mf* *p*

Vln. II

Vla. *mf* *p*

Vc. *mf* *p*

D.B.

35

Vln. I *mp*

Vln. II *mp*

Vla. *mp* *mf*

Vc. *mf*

D.B.

39

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla. *mp*

Vc. *mp*

D.B. *mp*

44

Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
D.B.

Detailed description: This system contains measures 44 through 48. The first violin part (Vln. I) features a melodic line with eighth and sixteenth notes, including slurs and ties. The second violin (Vln. II), viola (Vla.), and cello (Vc.) parts consist of dotted quarter notes with stems pointing down. The double bass (D.B.) part consists of quarter notes with stems pointing down. The key signature has three flats (B-flat, E-flat, A-flat).

49

Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
D.B.

cresc. *mf*
cresc. *mf*
cresc. *mf*
cresc. *mf*
arco
mf

Detailed description: This system contains measures 49 through 52. Measures 49-51 feature a *cresc.* (crescendo) marking. In measure 50, there are accents (>) over the eighth notes in the first violin and the eighth notes in the second violin, viola, and cello. In measure 51, there are accents (>) over the eighth notes in the first violin and the eighth notes in the second violin, viola, and cello. In measure 52, the dynamic is *mf* (mezzo-forte). The double bass part is marked *arco* (arco) and *mf*. The key signature has three flats.

53

Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
D.B.

Detailed description: This system contains measures 53 through 56. The first violin part (Vln. I) features a melodic line with eighth and sixteenth notes, including slurs and ties. The second violin (Vln. II) part features a melodic line with eighth and sixteenth notes, including slurs and ties. The viola (Vla.) part consists of half notes with stems pointing down. The cello (Vc.) and double bass (D.B.) parts consist of dotted quarter notes with stems pointing down. The key signature has three flats.

57

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

D.B.

cresc.

f

cresc.

f

cresc.

f

cresc.

f

cresc.

f

61

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

D.B.

mf

dim.

mf

dim.

mf

mf

dim.

mf

65

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

D.B.

p

p

p

p

69

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

D.B.

Detailed description: This musical score page contains five staves for measures 69 through 72. The key signature is three flats (B-flat, E-flat, A-flat). The Violin I part is mostly silent, with rests in measures 69-71 and a whole note in measure 72. The Violin II part plays a melodic line of eighth notes with slurs, ending with a half note in measure 72. The Viola part has a dotted quarter note in measure 69, rests in 70-71, and a half note in 72. The Violoncello part has a dotted quarter note in measure 69, rests in 70-71, and a half note in 72. The Double Bass part has a dotted quarter note in measure 69, rests in 70-71, and a half note in 72. The score concludes with a double bar line at the end of measure 72.

The Grief Eater Firaga

II. Blood Elegy

Sonny-Ray Day Rider

♩ = 65

Violin I

Violin II

Viola

Cello

Double Bass

espress.

p

p

6

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

D.B.

pizz.

p

p

12

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

D.B.

pp

p

16

Vln. I *pp* *p*

Vln. II *p* arco

Vla. 16 *p*

Vc. *pp*

D.B.

20

Vln. I *cresc.* *mf*

Vln. II *cresc.* *mf*

Vla. 20 *cresc.* *mf*

Vc. *cresc.* *mf*

D.B. *cresc.* *mf*

25

Vln. I *dim.* *p* *mf* 3

Vln. II *dim.* *p*

Vla. 25 *dim.* *p*

Vc. *dim.* *p*

D.B. *dim.* 3 *p*

30

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

D.B.

ppp *p*

mf *p*

arco

36

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

D.B.

mf *mp* *mf*

mf *mp* *mf*

mf *mp*

mf *mp*

41

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

D.B.

cresc. *f* *mf*

p *cresc.* *f* *mp* *p*

cresc. *f* *mp* *mf*

cresc. *f* *mp*

cresc. *f* *mp*

46

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

D.B.

mp

mf

f

mp

mp

51

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

D.B.

f

mp

f

3

3

3

56

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

D.B.

3

3

3

3

3

3

61

Vln. I *f* *mf*

Vln. II *mf* *dim.* *p*

Vla. *mf* *dim.* *p*

Vc. *mf* *dim.* *p*

D.B. *mf* *dim.* *p*

66

Vln. I *mp* *mf*

Vln. II *mf*

Vla. *mf*

Vc. *mf*

D.B. *mf*

71

Vln. I *f* *mf*

Vln. II *f* *mf*

Vla. *p* *mf* *mp*

Vc. *p* *mf* *mp* *f* *mp*

D.B. *p* *f* *mp*

77

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

D.B.

81

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

D.B.

f

mf

mf

mf

85

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

D.B.

p

87

Vln. I *mf* *p*

Vln. II *mp* *p*

Vla. *mp* *p*

Vc. *pizz.* *mp* *p*

D.B. *f* *mf* *p*

91

Vln. I *pp* *mp* *pp*

Vln. II *pp* *mp* *pp*

Vla. *pp* *mp* *pp*

Vc. *p* *mp* *pp*

D.B. *p* *pizz.* *pp*

Detailed description of the musical score: The score is for measures 87-91. It features five staves: Violin I, Violin II, Viola, Violoncello, and Double Bass. The key signature is three sharps (F#, C#, G#) and the time signature is 6/4. Measure 87 starts with a 6/4 time signature. Measures 88-89 have a 5/4 time signature. Measure 90 has a 7/4 time signature. Measure 91 has a 4/4 time signature. Dynamics include *mf*, *p*, *mp*, *f*, *pp*, and *p*. Articulation includes *pizz.* (pizzicato). Phrasing includes slurs and triplets (marked with '3').