



SCORE LIBRARY

Matthew Whittall

THE RETURN OF LIGHT

for voices and orchestra

(2015)

STUDY SCORE



Instrumentation

2 Flutes (both doubling Piccolo)
2 Oboes
2 Bb Clarinets
2 Bassoons (2nd with A extension tube)
2 F Horns
2 C Trumpets

Percussion (1 player – see detail)
Piano (played inside – see detail)

SATB Choir

Strings (min. 8-7-5-4-3)
(a small number of Cello and Contrabass players require Superball friction mallets)

Percussion instruments and equipment:

Wind gong (played with triangle beater and wire brushes)
Suspended cymbal (played with bow)
Bass drum (played with Superball mallet)
1 Low timpano (played with Superball mallet)
Crotale (lowest F, played with bow)
Japanese bowl gongs (4-6, preferably of non-specific pitch)
Vibraphone
Thai gongs



Percussion and Piano directions:

The percussion and piano parts from the beginning through figure F, inclusively, are notated as a kind of improvisation. The notation is left purposely open in order to encourage sound exploration. The cues need not be followed strictly past a certain point. Rather, the opening through figure B are meant to give an idea of the type of gestures desired, and the rough timing between those gestures. The two players are required to listen closely to each other, and to the ensemble, and create a texture of well spaced out noises, with sparseness and calm being the overriding mood, as if observing a quiet landscape.

Piano:

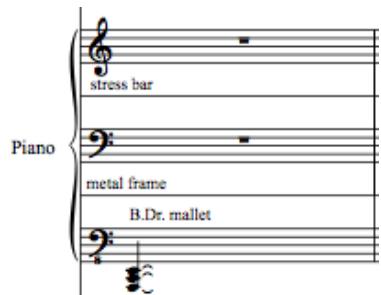
Preparation: Remove lid, depress damper pedal with weight for the duration of the piece.

Special equipment:

- 1 Bass drum mallet
- 1 medium marimba mallet
- 1 Superball mallet
- 10-12cm length of bicycle inner tube
- 1 plastic stick (such a chopstick or mallet handle)

-The piano part is played entirely within the body of the instrument. The keyboard is not used at all in this piece. As such, the piano part may easily be performed by a non-specialist (i.e. a second percussion player).

-There are five main areas of activity in the piano part, as shown below:



Staves:

Top staff: Single steel strings in the middle register

Middle staff: Double wound brass strings in the middle-low register

Bottom staff: Single wound brass strings in the lowest register

Lines:

Upper line: Stress bar(s) above the string bed

Lower line: Metal frame over the soundboard

-All performance directions (tools, technique, pressure, etc.) are indicated verbally in the score and part.

-The interior of the piano must be clean and completely dust-free in order to facilitate friction with Superball mallet and bicycle inner tube. The Superball mallet itself should also be clean and dry.

-The area used at figure O is the densest area of tunings pegs in the mid register. The plastic stick is dragged gently (almost without force or pressure) through the tuning pegs to give a sound like ice cracking or water droplets falling. As this sound is rather quiet, this gesture may be unobtrusively amplified.

Choir:

Special equipment for figure O:

- Several sheets of aluminum foil, in three rough sizes: 10 cm, 20 cm and 30 cm.
- Fu-rin (Japanese metal wind bells, set of 3, or other small metal bells close in pitch)

Fu-rin:



-The aluminum foil sheets should held at diagonal corners and twisted very gently. Use as many of these sheets as necessary to create an audible texture without obscuring other noise elements.

Special techniques:

-The opening of the piece is a noise continuum shared by all singers. It is divided into four parts, but in a strictly SATB division. Singers may move freely among the noise effects at will, and as general balances require. (The same applies to the transition from singing to noise at figure O.)

There are four main techniques in the beginning:

- Half-whistle: A near-pitchless, wavering whistle, like a gentle wind
- Tongue clicks: Single or double, very sparse
- Lip pops: A rather forceful expulsion of air from just behind the lips, the pitch of which is determined by the open space in the mouth (less space= higher pitch)
- Tongue-attack whistling: A whistled glissando gesture with a strong tongue attack between the lips. This is meant to echo the same pizzicato effect in the upper strings, and should sound as similar as possible (see note below).

-Overtone singing at figure O may be performed by any singers capable, not only Tenors.

Strings:

Special equipment:

Violins/Violas: 7-8 3-cm metal/glass guitar bottleneck slider tubes

These are used at the opening through figure E by two or three solo players in the Vln 1, Vln 2 and Viola sections. The slide pizz. gesture shown in the score is obtained by touching the slide tube to the A string on the indicated pitches without depressing it. All other strings should be muted with the fingers to avoid sympathetic resonance. This is best done by holding the instrument in the lap like a small cello. The general sound is meant to mimic ice “singing”, i.e. the pitched cracking of ice sheets in sunlight. (Audio examples of this phenomenon can be easily found online).

Cellos/Contrabasses: 3-5 Superball mallets, for gently rubbing the back of the instrument body.

Special notation for String body and Choir:

The following arrow notation is used for all strings and voices. Players/singers are to move one by one from the back/outer edges of each section from one note/harmony to the next, thus blending the two together and creating a canonic “melting” effect. The conductor may give one or two cues in these measures, as fits the context. This transition, while important, should not be overly emphasized, lasting roughly 1.5-2 times the length of a measure at the indicated tempo.

A musical score for orchestra and choir. The score is divided into six staves, each representing a different section: Vln I div., Vln II div., Vla div., Vel. div., and Cbs div. The score consists of ten measures. Measures 1-4 show individual notes with horizontal arrows pointing right, indicating a sequential movement from the outer edges of each section towards the center. Measures 5-10 show pairs of notes connected by horizontal lines, with arrows pointing right, indicating a more integrated blending of the sections. Measure 10 concludes with a dynamic marking of *p sempre legato*. The first four measures have dynamics of *pp*, while the last six measures have dynamics of *p*.

Program note:

“To the polar navigator the return of the sun is an event of indescribable joy and magnificence. In those dreadful wastes he feels the force of the superstitions of past ages, and becomes almost a worshipper of the eternal luminary. As of old the worshippers of Belus watched its approach on the luxuriant shores of the Euphrates, we, too, standing on mountains of ice or perched on the masts of the ship, waited to hail the advent of the source of light. At last it came! A wave of light rolled through the vast expanse of heaven, and then uprose the sun-god, surrounded with purple clouds, and poured his beams over the world of ice. No one spoke for a time. Who indeed could have found words to embody the feelings of relief which beamed on the faces of all, and which found a kind of expression in the scarcely audible exclamation of one of the simplest and least cultured of the crew, “Benedetto giorno!” The sun had risen with but half his disk, as if reluctant to shine on a world unworthy of his beams. A rosy hue suffused the whole scene, and the cold Memnon pillars of ice gave forth mysterious whispers in the flood of heat and light. Now indeed with the sun had a new year begun – what was it to bring forth for us and our prospects? But alas his stay was short – he remained above the horizon for a few minutes only; again his light was quenched, and a hazy violet colour lay over distant objects, and the twinkling stars shone in the heavens.”

-Julius von Payer, *New Lands Within the Arctic Circle*, Chapter IX, “The Return of Light” (publ. 1876)

Pronunciation guide for IPA symbols (approx.):

[ɑ] is in the “a” in “far” (UK English)

[ɛ] as in the “u” in “sun”

[ə] as in the “u” in “hurt” (UK English)

[ɔ] as in the “aw” in “paw” (UK English)

[ʊ] as in the “oo” in “boot” (US English)

[y] as in the German “ü” or Finnish “y” vowel, eg. “süß” or “yli”



THE RETURN OF LIGHT

Cold and still; meditative

MATTHEW WHITTALL (2015)

1 7-10" **2** 12-15" **3** 5-7" **4** 10" **5** 10" **6** 10"

jet whistle position, air only
one breath segue to
whistle tone

2 Flutes

[fssss] *n* (not together)
remove reed, blow air through instrument
one breath segue to
slowly change fingerings, do not use octave key

2 Oboes

[sfz] *n* (not together)
blow air through instrument
one breath segue to
7-10" (sporadic, pitchless, gentle air swells, like wind)

2 Clarinets (B \flat)

[sfz] *n* (not together)
remove reed, blow air through instrument
one breath segue to
7-10" (sporadic, pitchless, gentle air swells, like wind)

2 Bassoons

[sfz] *n* (not together)
reverse mouthpiece, blow
air through instrument segue to
7-10" (sporadic, pitchless, gentle air swells, like wind)

2 Horns

[sfz] *n* (not together)
reverse mouthpiece, blow
air through instrument segue to
7-10" (sporadic, pitchless, gentle air swells, like wind)

2 Trumpets (C)

[sfz] *n* (not together)

Percussion

Cymb. *mf* (bowed, one stroke only)

[sfz] scrape w/tri. beater

Wind gong

Timpani & Bass Drum

w/superball mallet, subharmonics, long slow gestures ad lib.

Piano

stress bar

vib. mallet (med.)

metal frame

B.Dr. mallet

rubber tube, med. press.

(held down throughout)

whisper (one breath length) segue to
low half-whistle, like wind

Ice! [sss]

whisper (one breath length) segue to
tongue clicks

Ice! [sss]

whisper (one breath length) segue to
lip pops

Ice! [sss]

whisper (one breath length) segue to
whistled, with tongue attack
very sporadic*

A 2x B 1x

Violin I

(alt. bowing on bridge or C-bout)

pizz. *pp-mp* (bottleneck slide)

A 2x B 1x

Violin II

(alt. bowing on bridge or C-bout)

pizz. *pp-mp* (bottleneck slide)

A 2x B 1x

Viola

(alt. bowing on bridge or C-bout)

pizz. *pp-mp* (bottleneck slide)

A 2x B 1x

Violoncello

pizz. mute strings with hand, no resonance

1. solo 7-10"

poco f *n*

3-6" 7-10" superball mallet on back of instrument, rub gently

Contrabass

p-mp

3-6" 7-10" superball mallet on back of instrument, rub gently

*Upper strings and voices create a sparse series of events with this sound. Every 8-15 seconds, concertmaster initiates a short period of denser, louder activity using either figure A or figure B. All players and voices respond as quickly as possible in canon, creating an echo effect. All players/voices then return to continuum.

** Move into cue 2 figures independently, each player in their own time.

A

Fl. 10" Ob. 12-15" Cl. 5-7" Bsn. 10" Hn. 10" Tr. 20"

Perc.

Pno rubber tube, med. press. repeat/mix figures ad lib.

Vln I

Vln II

Vla

Vcl.

Cbs

Detailed description: This is a page from a musical score. At the top, there are six diamond-shaped boxes numbered 1 through 6, each with a duration value below it: 10", 12-15", 5-7", 10", 10", and 20". Below these are staves for Flute, Oboe, Clarinet, Bassoon, Percussion, and Piano. The piano part has specific instructions: 'rubber tube, med. press.' and 'repeat/mix figures ad lib.'. The bottom half of the page shows staves for Violin I, Violin II, Viola, Cello, and Double Bass. Large, semi-transparent gray geometric shapes (circles, squares, rectangles) are overlaid on the staves of the lower section, suggesting performance techniques or visual effects.

B

1 10" 2 10" 3 12-15" 4 5-7" 5 10" 6 12-15"

Fl. Ob. Cl. Bsn. Hn. Tr. Perc.

Pno

Choir (Noise)

Vln I Vln II Vla Vcl. Cbs

(whistle tone, starting from C4 fingering, slowly down chromatically)

rubber tube, extreme press.

rubber tube, med. press.

4.6 highest whistlers, very slow, smooth gliss.

p ————— f

C $\text{♩} = 60$

19 (sporadic, pitchless, gentle air swells, like wind)

Fl.

Ob.

Cl.

Bsn.

Hn.

Tr.

Perc.

Pno cont. ad lib.

low half-whistle, like wind

Choir (Noise)

Vln I

Vln II

Vla

Vcl. arco no vibr. 1—1 2 1 2 1 2 1 2 2 2 1 3 2
f gl. raw tone, slight extra pressure

Cbs

*Microintervals (i.e. pitches other than those with conventional ♯, ♪ or ♯ signs) are not meant to be learned as written, but are relative indications of pitch wavering. Cellists keep fingers as close together as possible; the change from one indicated fingering to the next will produce the desired approximate pitch difference.

29

D

Fl.

Ob.

Cl.

Bsn.

Hn.

Tr.

Perc.

Pno

Vln I

Vln II

Vla

Vcl.

Cbs

unis. 3 2 1 2 3 2 3 2 — 2 1 gliss. gliss. gliss. gliss. gliss. gliss. gliss. arco no vibr. mf f

E

1

10"

2

12-15"

39

Fl.

Ob.

Cl.

Bsn.

Hn.

Tr.

Perc.

Pno

Choir (Noise)

Vln I

Vln II

Vla

Vcl.

Cbs

E

1

10"

2

12-15"

"color trill"
free, variable durations
from 1-4" approx.

continue indep.

Wind gong (wire brushes, slow circles)

[Crot. (bowed)]

poco

Like soft breathing.
Choir as unit,
led by one singer.

segue to S

segue to A

segue to T

segue to B

All strings: *non vibrato*
All strings transition to held F 1 by 1,
very slowly, back of section to front
(independently)
arc. → ♩ → ord.

mute on

n arco

pp

mute on

n arco (independently)
ord. → ♩ → ord.

pp poco

mute on

n arco (independently)
ord. → ♩ → ord.

pp poco

mute on

n arco

pp poco

mute on

n arco

pp poco

div.

raw tone (extra pressure)

gliss. ff

gliss. gliss. gliss. gliss. gliss. gliss. mf

F

19 Gentle; a soft light filling the sky $\downarrow = 44 - 48$

49

Fl.

pp-mp

Ob.

replace reed

Cl.

Bsn.

replace reed

n

p

pp

p

1.2. n

1.2. pp

p

n

p

1.2. pp

p

p

Musical score for Horn (Hn.) and Trombone (Tr.). The score consists of two staves. The top staff is for the Horn, and the bottom staff is for the Trombone. Both staves are in treble clef and common time. The score shows a sequence of notes followed by a dynamic instruction. A large black arrow points to the right, indicating a dynamic change. To the left of the arrow, there are six eighth-note heads. To the right of the arrow, the dynamic is labeled ***n*** (normal). Below this, the instruction "replace mouthpiece" is written. Further to the right, another black arrow points to the right, indicating another dynamic change. To the left of this second arrow, there are four eighth-note heads. To the right of the second arrow, the dynamic is labeled ***p*** (piano). Below this, the instruction "replace mouthpiece" is written again.

Musical score for piano in 3/4 time, treble clef, key of B major. The piano part consists of three staves. The top staff shows a continuous eighth-note pattern. The middle staff starts with eighth notes, followed by a long black bar, then eighth notes again. A large black arrow points right from the end of the bar. The bottom staff has a single eighth note at the beginning, followed by a long black bar, and then continues with eighth notes. The measure number 'n' is placed below the middle staff's bar line.

Musical score for soprano, alto, tenor, and bass voices. The score consists of four staves. The soprano staff (top) starts with a dynamic of *mp*. The alto staff (second from top) starts with a dynamic of *n*. The tenor staff (third from top) starts with a dynamic of *n*. The bass staff (bottom) starts with a dynamic of *n*. The vocal parts are connected by a dashed line. The soprano part includes markings such as "2 sole" and "tutte uniti". The alto part includes markings like "(altre) *mp*". The tenor part includes markings like "*n*" and "*mp*". The bass part includes markings like "*n*" and "*mp*". The vocal parts are connected by a dashed line.

Musical score for orchestra showing measures 11-12. The score includes parts for Vln I, Vln II, Vla, Vcl, and Cbs. The instrumentation is as follows: Vln I (2 players), Vln II (2 players), Vla (2 players), Vcl (2 players), and Cbs (2 players). The music consists of two staves per part. Measure 11 starts with a dynamic of *mp*. Measure 12 begins with a dynamic of *mf sempre legato*. Measures 11-12 are divided into measures 11-12. Measures 13-14 are indicated by a bracket below the staff.

G

Fl. Ob. Cl. Bsn. Hn. Tr. Perc. Pno.

1. 2. *p* *p* *p* *p* *p*

pp *mp* *mf* *pp* *mp* *n* *mp* *mp* *p* *mp* *metal straight mute on*

Thai G.

S A T B *mp* *mf* *mp* *p* *u* *m* *mp* *p* *(m)* **\| p* *p* *(m)* *mp* *p* *u* *m* **\| p* *p* *(m)*

Vln I Vln II Vla Vcl. Cbs. *unis.* *p* *mp* *p* *p* *p* *p* *n* *p*

* \| - obligatory section breath, all singers

78

H

Fl. *pp* to Picc.

Ob. *pp*

Cl. *p* 1. *p* *p*

Bsn. *p*

Hn. *mp*

Tr.

Vib.

Perc.

Pno.

S. *p* → o → u → m *mp* → m

A. *mp* → u → m v → m

T. *mp* o → m

B. *mp* o → m

Vln I

Vln II

Vla

Vcl.

Cbs

87

Fl. to Fl. *pp*
Fl. *pp*

Ob. *mp*

Cl.

Bsn. *p* *pp* 2. remove A extension

Hn. *mp*
Tr. metal st. mute *mp* *p*

Perc. Thai G. Vib. Thai G. *mp*

Pno

S *p* *mp* *mf* *mf*
S *p* *mp* *mf* *mf*
A *p* *mp* *mf* *mf*
T *p* *mf* *mf* *m*
B *p* *mf* *mf* *m*

Vln I
Vln II *p*
Vla *p*
Vcl. *p*
Cbs *p*

98

I

Fl. *mf* — *n* to Picc.

Ob. *mf* — *n* to Picc.

Cl. *p* — *mp* — *n*

Bsn. *pp* — *mp* — *p* — *n* — *p*

Hn. *ppp* — *mp* — *n* — *p* — *mp* — *p*

Tr. *ppp* — *mp* — *metal st. mute* — *p* — *mp* — *p*

Perc. *Thai G.* — *mp*

Pno

S *pp* — *p* — *mp* — *n* — *pp* — *mp* — *n* — *pp* — *mp* — *n*

A *pp* — *p* — *mp* — *n* — *pp* — *mp* — *n* — *pp* — *mp* — *n*

T *pp* — *p* — *mp* — *n* — *pp* — *mp* — *n* — *pp* — *mp* — *n*

B *pp* — *p* — *mp* — *n* — *pp* — *mp* — *n* — *pp* — *mp* — *n*

T & B : Divide chords equally

Vln I *pp* — *p* — *pp* — *p*

Vln II *pp* — *p*

Vla *pp* — *p*

Vcl. *pp* — *p*

Cbs *pp* — *p*

J

Fl. *pp* Picc. *pp* to Fl. *pp* to Fl.

Ob. *pp*

Cl. *pp*

Bsn. *pp*

Hn. *mp* *p*

Tr. *p*

Perc. Vib. *pp* Thai G. *mp*

Pno

S *pp* *mp* *n* *f* 2 sole 1 *n* *f* (altre) *n* *mp* *n* *f*

A *pp* *mp* *p* *mp* *n* *f*

T *pp* *mp* *p* *mp* *n* *f*

B *pp* *mp* *p* *mp* *n* *f*

Vln I *n* *p* mute out

Vln II *n* *mp* *p*

Vla *n* *p*

Vcl. *n* *p*

Cbs *n* *p*

T & B : Divide chords equally

119

Fl. *mf*

Fl. *mf*

Ob. *mf*

Cl. *mf*

Bsn. *mf*

Hn. *mp* *f*

Tr. *mf* *n* *mute out*

Perc. *Vib.* *f* *Thai G.* *Vib.* *p*

Pno

S (altra) *f* *2 sole* *mp* *p* *tutte* *p*

A *mf* *f* *mp* *p* *u*

T *mf* *f* *mp* *p* *u*

B *mf* *f* *mp* *p* *u*

Vln I *poco f* *warm, with vibr.* *mp* *p* *mute on 1 by 1, poco vibr.* *non div.*

Vln II *mute out* *poco f* *warm, with vibr.* *mp* *p* *mute on 1 by 1, poco vibr.* *non div.*

Vla *mute out* *poco f* *warm, with vibr.* *mp* *p* *mute on 1 by 1, poco vibr.* *non div.*

Vcl. *mute out* *poco f* *warm, with vibr.* *mp* *p* *mute on 1 by 1, poco vibr.* *div.*

Cbs *mute out* *poco f* *warm, with vibr.* *mp* *p*

K 12-15" 20-30+" **L**

gentle swells, random, varying lengths, overlapping freely

Fl. Ob. Cl. gentle swells, random, varying lengths, overlapping freely Bsn. gentle swells, random, varying lengths, overlapping freely Hn. Tr. Perc. Pno.

S. Be-ne-det-to gior-no! (start 1 by 1) S. Be-ne-det-to gior-no! A. (start 1 by 1) A. Be-ne-det-to gior-no! T. quite fast, avoid synchronizing Solo Be-ne-det-to gior-no! (others continue) Sola Be-ne-det-to gior-no! fading away... A. Be-ne-det - to gior - no! fading away... T. Be-ne-det - to gior - no! fading away... T. (u) → i → u fading away... B. Solo Be-ne-det-to gior - no! fading away... B. Be-ne-det-to gior - no! fading away...

Vln I Vln II Vla Vcl. Cbs

147 M

Fl.

Ob.

Cl.

Bsn.

Hn. a 2 f ppp mp

Tr. Thai G. mp

Perc.

Pno

S f n p mf pp mp p

A f n p mf pp mp p

T f n p mf pp mp p

B f n p mf pp mp p

Vln I mf increase vibr. f vibr. ord. div. a 3 p poco vibr. div. a 2 mute on 1 by 1

Vln II mf increase vibr. f vibr. ord. poco vibr. mute on 1 by 1

Vla mf increase vibr. f vibr. ord. poco vibr. mute on 1 by 1

Vcl. mf increase vibr. f vibr. ord. poco vibr. mute on 1 by 1

Cbs mf increase vibr. f vibr. ord. p

155

N

Fl. Ob. Cl. Bsn. Hn. Tr. Perc. Pno.

p *mp* *mp* *mp* *to Picc.*

p *mp* *mp* *p* *to Picc.*

Thai G. *Vib.* *mf* *mp*

S A T B

p *mp* *p* *mp* *p* *mp* *p* *mp*

e *m* *e* *m* *e* *m* *a*

e *m* *e* *m* *e* *m*

e *m* *e* *m* *e* *m*

e *m* *e* *m* *e* *m*

Vln I Vln II Vla Vcl. Cbs

pp *p* *pp* *p* *n* *n*

p

A musical score page featuring five staves for string instruments. The top staff is labeled "Vln I" and the second from top is "Vln II". The third staff is "Vla", the fourth is "Vcl", and the bottom staff is "Cbs". Each staff has two measures of music. Measure 1 consists of eighth-note patterns with various dynamics like "pp" and "f". Measure 2 continues these patterns. The score is set against a background of large, semi-transparent circular and square shapes in shades of gray.

O Transfigured; returning to night
20-30"

30-60"

∞

Fl. 1.2. whistle tone
Fl. (independently) slowly change fingerings, do not use octave key
Ob.
Cl.
Bsn.
Hn. reverse mouthpiece, blow air through instrument (independently) becoming more gentle, sporadic, fading away
Hn. reverse mouthpiece, blow air through instrument (independently) becoming more gentle, sporadic, fading away
Tr. reverse mouthpiece, blow air through instrument (independently) becoming more gentle, sporadic, fading away
Perc. Jap. bowl gongs, Thai G. (pp-mp) *
Pno. gently drag plastic stick through densest section of tuning pins (becoming sporadic)
S. high half-whistle
S. Fu-rin & Foil sheets (segue to) (bells becoming sporadic)
A. tongue clicks (segue to) (becoming sporadic)
T. overtone singing, indep.
B. lip pops (segue to) (becoming sporadic)
Vln I. ord. → s.p. → ord. (independently) *
Vln II. pp-p (circular bowing) slow → fast → slow (independently) *
Vla. ord. → s.p. → ord. (independently) *
Vcl. tr poco sul pont. (bassoon)
Cbs. s.p. *