

PRINTING INSTRUCTIONS

Print both pages of this file back to front.

Trim inside thick grey border on this page.

Fold along center so that the panel below is the front cover.

ELEMENTALS

Written and produced by Dave Seidel, 2008

More information: mysterybear.net

1. **Herald of Air** [16.05]
2. **Nur** [07.50]
3. **A Door Into Spring** [09.17]
4. **Herald of Water** [16.03]

Design and layout ©John Kannenberg 2009.

Cover and interior images:

Digital photography manipulations by John Kannenberg, June 2009.

Original photographs of air, earth, fire and water by John Kannenberg, 2006-2009.

[www.stasisfield.com/releases/year07/sf-7004.html]



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“I didn’t make these pieces with a coherent plan. It was only after they were all done that I conceived of an organizing principle (otherwise known as an “excuse”) for putting them together in this sequence, loosely confederated under the idea of the classical elements of Earth, Water, Air and Fire.

“Herald of Water” and “Herald of Air” are really the same piece, with individual tones articulated differently in each; subtler differences arise from the use of random number sequences that control the spectral filtering of the sounds. In “Herald of Water,” the gently-undulating nature of the sounds evoke the movement of water; in “Herald of Air,” the abrupt transitions from note to note are reminiscent of the sharp and mercurial nature of atmospheric processes such as lightning. Both pieces are based upon an eleven-note chord in just intonation combining La Monte Youn’s Opening Chord and Magic Chord and building from low to high. Each note in the chord is expressed as a pulse that starts slowly, accelerates to a rate proportional to its pitch, then decelerates. “Herald of Water” and “Herald of Air” are dedicated to La Monte Young and Lois V Vierk.

“Nur” is the Arabic word for light, and represents the element Fire. The piece consists of a sequence of just-tuned chords which start sparsely then become denser; these chords are played using a waveform whose harmonics are taken from the first eight unique integers in the Fibonacci sequence. Each oscillator is processed using a technique invented by electronic music pioneer Jean-Claude Risset whereby slight differences in pitch above and below the primary note create an harmonic arpeggio effect. Each chord begins with large pitch offsets that become progressively smaller, creating acoustical beating patterns that provide an ever-shifting micro-rhythm, blurring into a wash by the end of the piece.

“A Door Into Spring” is the only piece in this set that does not employ synthesis as such. The sound here was taken from a recording of the squeaky dishwasher door in my kitchen, manipulated through granular techniques, time-stretched and layered on top of itself at different pitch levels at whole-number ratios. Since the sound is entirely derived from a metal spring, I have chosen this piece to represent the element Earth.

“Herald of Water,” “Herald of Air” and “A Door Into Spring” were composed using Csound; “Nur” was composed with SuperCollider. For more technical information about these pieces, including source code, see <http://mysterybear.net>.

David Seidel
July 2009