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Sky Dance

Statement of Compositional Intent

Minimalism is a musical innovation that became popular in the 1960s, in which pieces are written using very minimal musical material. This style of music usually represents a mood, feeling or thing. My piece, *Sky Dance*, is a minimalist piano composition, inspired by the ever-moving clouds in the sky and conveys the flowing and changing shapes that we see in our skies every day. I have achieved this representation through the use of various minimalist techniques and compositional devices.

Table 1: Form

A (1 – 48)				B (49 – 72)	C (73 – 121)							Outro (117 – 121)
a (1 – 12)	a ¹ (13 – 24)	a ² (25 – 36)	a ³ (37 – 48)		c (73 – 80)	c ¹ (81 – 88)	c ² (89 – 96)	c ³ (97 – 100)	c ⁴ (101 – 108)	c ⁵ (109 – 112)	c ⁶ (113 – 117)	

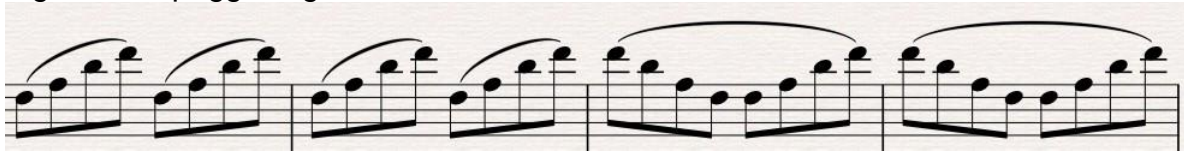
The piece begins with ascending and descending arpeggiating chords in the upper register of the right-hand representing the majesty of the clouds floating gracefully in the sky. These arpeggiated chords become the main theme of the piece and are repeated throughout. I also only used the root and dominant notes in the block chord accompaniment at 13 to keep the tonality ambiguous, another convention of the minimalism pieces. In keeping with the minimalism style, whilst the first motif is repeating throughout the A section the texture gradually increases by shortening the note values and adding additional notes in the accompanying left-hand in the process of addition. In the beginning, the accompaniment begins with tied semibreves on the tonic notes of chords in section a, then changes to crotchets playing block chord in a¹ and later, quavers in section a³. The thickening of the texture conveys the clouds are moving and changing quicker than they previously were.

When the piece changes to section C, I used deletion to slowly reduce the number of notes in the motif, creating variance and thinning the texture. c¹ begins with the

full ascending and descending motif () and by c³ there is only a fragment

of the melody remaining (.

Figure 1: Arpeggiating motif



The piece ends with a gradual augmentation of the motif, beginning with the original quavers and slowing to descending crotchets. At the same time, there is a decrescendo from forte to pianissimo which fades out the melody. Together, this creates the impression that the music is fading into nothingness, suggesting that the clouds go on forever and are never ending, as they are in real life.

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