

The Relationship Between the Systems of Earth Science and Music

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While numerous people believe that art and the Earth are not related, they are interconnected through classical and modern music. By composing pieces for the listener to interpret what part of the Earth the music refers to, the connection between the systems of Earth Science is clear.

‘The Four Seasons’, by Antonio Vivaldi, encompasses the atmosphere, through melodies depicting contrasting weather in the Summer and Winter. Characteristics of the biosphere are prevalent, through the sound of hunters’ horns in Autumn and birds in the Spring. The relationship between the hydrosphere and music is evident through the piece ‘La Mer’, or ‘The Sea’, by Claude Debussy, for it demonstrates the drama of rising tides and crashing waves of Earth’s waters. ‘The Planets’, written by Gustav Holst, was first written in eight parts, each one representing a planet. Later, when a ninth body, Pluto, was discovered, the composition was considered incomplete. Another composer, Colin Matthews, then made a ninth movement; however, Pluto was later deemed a dwarf planet making it irrelevant. These events show that even music can be affected by scientific processes in the systems of Earth Science and how the art form could be used to study research of Earth and other surrounding bodies.

In modern day, composers have used natural features of the biosphere to create music. An example is Stephen Lias, whose inspiration for his creations come from national parks. He has written over a dozen pieces from Mesa Verde, Yosemite, and Rocky Mountain national park, one of which was performed by the Boulder Philharmonic and later at the Kennedy Center in Washington DC. Numerous people see little connection between art and the Earth; however, composers who create pieces for the listener to interpret what system of Earth Science the music refers to make the relationship comprehensible.

References

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