

Stay Home by Ka Shing Oscar LI

For this composition "Stay Home", I used a mixture of both Pierre Schaeffer's composition method #1 and #2, as well as both aleatoric (Composition via randomness) and field recording elements. At first, I have this idea to writing a piece that reflect the frustration of stay home under the pandemic. I have a really clear idea that the composition will be break into 5 main scenes: Introduction (Turning a Roar sound into a whistling sound and transit in phrase two with A noise of beating on), Honey-moon (mainly Whispers), frustration (mixture of Roar, Screeching and Whistling sound), cleaning-up (Mixture of Whispers and reduced level of Screeching sound), and carrying-on (a voice of people and the beating sound that started the phrase two). There are also two main parts, one that follows a specific time line of 0.6sec equals a day, starting from the 17" till 3'14". The second is the main body of sounds which I hear and captured through field recording during my quarantine.

For the introduction, I wanted to start the piece from a heart-beat monitor with 2020hz sine wave (generated from supercollider and processed in DAW with fade-in and out), representing the death of the virus, and eventually have it becomes the representation of the virus. A white noise that is always there, despite we recognize it or not. I specifically set the frequency to 2020, as this is the year where the pandemic starts in Canada. I have the volume level automated according to the new case number in the country (the use of the Aleatoric approach) from Match 1st (17") till Nov 30th (3'14"). Since it turned into a white noise, I have the base set to -40db (see appendix for the adjusted list which list the time and volume). Also, I did a panning from right to left to right and back to centre as it fades down to -40db, like how we hear about the virus from different people at the very beginning but

not knowing who to trust. The section will end with a door closing sound, which is also the start of the staying home. The sound would ring throughout the whole piece as that represent the rate of leaving the apartment, two to three days (1.2 or 1.8 sec in the piece) at the start and slowed down to once per month (18.6 sec, see highlighted in adjusted list in appendix). The door closing sound also got modulated with reverb and frequency cut in phrase three, turning it into a really low deep reverb like a heart beat in the thriller movie. I did this for two reason, first is to have that sound becoming a back ground sound supporting the piece, secondly to reflect that lack of outside interaction becomes a haunted feeling, which was eventually over come in the 4th phrase (Cleaning-up).

For the phrase two, honey moon, I recorded a series of sounds that we do to enjoy the quiet times of our own, like drinking a can of coke, taking a warm bath, reading a book and listening to music. I choose a piece of Canton pop, Solitude (一人之境), that talks about how one could enjoy the time being alone as the music being played here, which perfectly matches this section of the piece, as it is about enjoy the new quietness. (I asked and gained a written approval from the composer and publisher Terence Lam for the use of the music in this project, Thank Terence!). There is not much I did on the recorded sound other than noise reduction and trimming it down, as we didn't really notice all the sounds going on around us.

The song then leads the piece into phrase three with a sigh, which we start to notice different sound around our space. The rain outside, the sound of the washing machine, the dripping of the coffee, construction noises etc. I put this section together using the method

#2 (developing composition via the given set of sound, unlike method #1 of looking for/ create sound for the composition), as I only have a general idea of what I want, but the sound depends on what I could capture during the field recording. In order to create the feeling of really picking these sounds as it is in person, I did a lot of panning and balance mixing to get the optimal experience. The section slowly enter phrase four cleaning-up, with the actual sound of cleaning the dishes and the fridge buzzing sound. This section is way less busy the phrase two and three, as we clean off the frustration to adopt to the new normal. The reduce of sound source also let us re-heard the “white noise” (the 2020hz and the door closing sound), like we have to pull ourselves together and know that this is the new normal, as the numbers of new cases are picking up (hence the volume of the 2020hz). Lastly is a deep breath and really clear door closing sound to tell the audience that life goes on.

	Second in Track	New Cases	db		Second in Track	New Cases	db		Second in Track	New Cases	db		Second in Track	New Cases	db		Second in Track	New Cases	db						
March	1	17	4	40	April	1	35.6	1140	32	May	1	53.6	1825	28	June	1	12.2	758	35	July	1	30.2	216	39	
	2	17.6	3	40		2	36.2	1553	30		2	54.2	1653	29		2	12.8	705	35		2	30.8	351	38	
	3	18.2	6	40		3	36.8	1249	32		3	54.8	2760	22		3	13.4	675	35		3	31.4	319	38	
	4	18.8	1	40		4	37.4	1484	30		4	55.4	1299	31		4	14	641	36		4	32	266	38	
	5	19.4	11	40		5	38	1495	30		5	56	1274	32		5	14.6	609	36		5	32.6	290	38	
	6	20	7	40		6	38.6	1154	32		6	56.6	1450	30		6	15.2	723	35		6	33.2	288	38	
	7	20.6	6	40		7	39.2	1230	32		7	57.2	1426	30		7	15.8	642	36		7	33.8	232	38	
	8	21.2	6	40		8	39.8	1394	31		8	57.8	1512	30		8	16.4	545	36		8	34.4	267	38	
	9	21.8	11	40		9	40.4	1474	30		9	58.4	1268	32		9	17	409	37		9	35	371	38	
	10	22.4	15	40		10	41	1383	31		10	59	1146	32		10	17.6	471	37		10	35.6	321	38	
	11	23	10	40		11	41.6	1170	32		11	59.6	1133	32		11	18.2	405	37		11	36.2	298	38	
	12	23.6	29	40		12	42.2	1065	33	1	12	0.2	1176	32		12	18.8	413	37		12	36.8	383	37	
	13	24.2	61	40		13	42.8	1297	31		13	0.8	1121	33		13	19.4	481	37		13	37.4	349	38	
	14	24.8	59	40		14	43.4	1383	31		14	1.4	1210	32		14	20	393	37		14	38	331	38	
	15	25.4	84	39		15	44	1316	31		15	2	1125	32		15	20.6	330	38		15	38.6	341	38	
	16	26	100	39		16	44.6	1727	28		16	2.6	1251	32		16	21.2	320	38		16	39.2	437	37	
	17	26.6	158	39		17	45.2	1821	28		17	3.2	1146	32		17	21.8	386	37		17	39.8	405	37	
	18	27.2	128	39		18	45.8	1456	30		18	3.8	1062	33		18	22.4	367	38		18	40.4	546	36	
	19	27.8	146	39		19	46.4	1673	29		19	4.4	1040	33		19	23	409	37		19	41	464	37	
	20	28.4	214	39		20	47	1775	28		20	5	1030	33		20	23.6	390	37		20	41.6	443	37	
	21	29	244	38		21	47.6	1591	29		21	5.6	1192	32		21	24.2	318	38		21	42.2	575	36	
	22	29.6	141	39		22	48.2	1768	28		22	6.2	1146	32		22	24.8	300	38		22	42.8	543	36	
	23	30.2	619	36		23	48.8	1920	27		23	6.8	1141	32		23	25.4	326	38		23	43.4	432	37	
	24	30.8	701	35		24	49.4	1778	28		24	7.4	1078	33		24	26	279	38		24	44	534	36	
	25	31.4	617	36		25	50	1466	30		25	8	1011	33		25	26.6	380	37		25	44.6	496	37	
	26	32	634	36		26	50.6	1649	29		26	8.6	937	34		26	27.2	249	38		26	45.2	479	37	
	27	32.6	714	35		27	51.2	1597	29		27	9.2	871	34		27	27.8	323	38		27	45.8	416	37	
	28	33.2	898	34		28	51.8	1526	30		28	9.8	994	33		28	28.4	295	38		28	46.4	397	37	
	29	33.8	665	36		29	52.4	1571	30		29	10.4	906	34		29	29	429	37		29	47	412	37	
	30	34.4	1128	32		30	53	1638	29		30	11	772	35		30	29.6	286	38		30	47.6	409	37	
	31	35	1143	32							31	11.6	757	35								31	48.2	497	37

	Second in Track	New Cases	db		Second in Track	New Cases	db		Second in Track	New Cases	db		Second in Track	New Cases	db									
Aug	1	48.8	431	37	Sept	1	7.4	477	37	Oct	1	25.4	1777	28	Nov	1	44	3244	18					
	2	49.4	377	37		2	8	499	37		2	26	2122	26		2	44.6	3273	18					
	3	50	353	38		3	8.6	570	36		3	26.6	2037	26		3	45.2	2972	20					
	4	50.6	318	38		4	9.2	631	36		4	27.2	2060	26		4	45.8	3283	18					
	5	51.2	397	37		5	9.8	648	36		5	27.8	2206	25		5	46.4	3922	14					
	6	51.8	373	38		6	10.4	687	35		6	28.4	2363	24		6	47	3669	16					
	7	52.4	424	37		7	11	681	35		7	29	1800	28		7	47.6	4248	12					
	8	53	233	38		8	11.6	608	36		8	29.6	2436	24		8	48.2	4593	9					
	9	53.6	233	38		9	12.2	544	36		9	30.2	2558	23		9	48.8	4086	13					
	10	54.2	681	35		10	12.8	632	36		10	30.8	2468	24		10	49.4	4301	11					
	11	54.8	289	38		11	13.4	704	35		11	31.4	2141	26		11	50	4561	10					
	12	55.4	423	37		12	14	782	35		12	32	2360	24		12	50.6	4973	7					
	13	56	390	37		13	14.6	841	34		13	32.6	2154	26		13	51.2	4746	8					
	14	56.6	418	37		14	15.2	913	34		14	33.2	2145	26		14	51.8	5274	5					
	15	57.2	233	38		15	15.8	883	34		15	33.8	2343	24		15	52.4	4801	8					
	16	57.8	197	39		16	16.4	943	34		16	34.4	2378	24		16	53	4527	10					
	17	58.4	789	35		17	17	877	34		17	35	2698	22		17	53.6	4115	13					
	18	59	282	38		18	17.6	1044	33		18	35.6	2211	25		18	54.2	4507	10					
	19	59.6	336	38		19	18.2	1102	33		19	36.2	2422	24		19	54.8	4869	8					
	20	0.2	382	37		20	18.8	1095	33		20	36.8	2252	25		20	55.4	5084	6					
	21	0.8	500	37		21	19.4	1307	31		21	37.4	2673	22		21	56	5835	1					
	22	1.4	366	38		22	20	1248	32		22	38	2758	22		22	56.6	5583	3					
	23	2	372	38		23	20.6	1090	33		23	38.6	2553	23		23	57.2	5886	1					
	24	2.6	537	36		24	21.2	1340	31		24	39.2	2972	20		24	57.8	4648	9					
	25	3.2	322	38		25	21.8	1361	31		25	39.8	3008	20		25	58.4	5020	7					
	26	3.8	448	37		26	22.4	1345	31		26	40.4	2533	23		26	59	5636	2					
	27	4.4	402	37		27	23	1763	28		27	41	2679	22		27	59.6	5964	0					
	28	5	492	37		28	23.6	1739	28		28	41.6	2744	22	3	28	0.2	6493	-3					
	29	5.6	582	36		29	24.2	1660	29		29	42.2	3149	19		29	0.8	6477	-3					
	30	6.2	557	36		30	24.8	1797	28		30	42.8	3214	19		30	1.4	6102	-1					
	31	6.8	498	37							31	43.4	3445	17										

Source: <https://www.ctvnews.ca/health/coronavirus/tracking-every-case-of-covid-19-in-canada-1.4852102>