

The Keys of Life

FMP SK Signature Series 2019

- doing the cross fade type of event:
 - Winds and battery percussion can face back or side field
 - The winds and percussion do not necessarily need to keep moving through these counts. They can halt randomly if the look of the form is more textured/random
 - The battery can go further back field and park facing away as they don't play until measure 35
 - To help the visual focus, plan to keep some guard out on the field doing body or light choreography on this transition, even if the guard will be changing equipment for this production
 - To accomplish this, the guard staying out on the field can hand their equipment to other guard members to take off the field
 - The guard that stays out could move toward the piano set. Or, some of the guard that exits the field to drop off charge equipment can re enter the form with the new equipment or as dancers
 - The drill evolution AND the small group of guard should be one that takes the audience's eyes naturally to the piano area halting on beat three (3) of measure 11
 - This can happen in a sequential or ripple sort of way
 - Everyone should freeze on beat three (3) of measure 11 and the form or look of that set should be soft, textured and the intervals should be such the winds can pose and perhaps do some subtle choreography during the next phrase at measures 12-19
 - The clarinets and flutes should end up closest to the audience so they are in place to project clearly when they turn around to play at measure 22

Measures 12-19

- This section is a heated, romantic and gentle moment to portray intimacy and emotion. The piano station/tarp area should be the main focus with some guard in front or around this area to draw the audience's focus.
 - It is important for a good portion of the guard to remain off stage entering in later on
- The wind staging should be such that it helps take the focus to that piano stage area and be open enough to have them do some subtle choreography to enhance the piano/dancer area
 - This can be backfield or toward the stage/tarp area but probably not front field

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- At measures 18-19, the low brass should face back or perhaps the back corner of side 2. They could turn toward the audience on the crescendo of their sustained note to enhance the communication of this swell
- If you decide to use a piano tarp/large keyboard place on the field, a guard member(s) or other soloist could act as if they are generating the melody notes placed in "synth 1" on the score at measures 14-15 and 17-18 with their feet in a dance/choreography type of way (see explanation earlier in this document)

Measures 20-21

- The clarinets and flutes could move in double time (to the 8th note) here to change the look quickly and take the focus for their backgrounds to the piano melody at measure 22
- The remainder of the winds and battery should stay halted here
- Some additional guard close to where the clarinets/flutes were staged can move out here as well
 - Those added should join those already out in choreography and body showing little or no flag at this point

Measures 22 -30

- This section is all about focusing on the piano melody (stage/tarp) and the guard/dancers around it
 - Solo dancer(s) could still be dancing on the piano prop to outline the melody that is in the piano or "string ensemble" part on the score
 - Piano part may be too busy but feel free to adapt the choreography by simply outlining the melody with the feet
- The clarinets should be in a reasonable proximity to the piano stage and be halted or moving slowly for measure 22-25, facing front
 - Flutes and the other woodwinds could move to the 8th note (double time), until they play at measure 24
- The upper woodwinds should be staged closest to the front of the form for this phrase but can be faced backfield or toward a back corner of the field from 26-30
- The brass section should be faced backfield or toward the back corner for this entire phrase.
 - All the winds can move to the quarter note or 8th note at 26-30 provide the step size is not too large
- These guard out on the field can set up to be a halted, dance focus featured at measures 26 to 35 coming up

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- Depending on the size of your guard, do not feel obligated to have more than 1/3 of the group out there at that point

Measure 31-35

- This majestic section should be played to the back corner or straight backfield with full resonance and not be played front to ensure the climax phrase at measure 46 is big and bold
- The entire band can be halted for these measures. Or, can move slowly in the same direction in this form
- Those guard out there could be a unison body/choreography moment in front of the winds or surrounded by the winds to focus them
 - If double flags will be used for the apex at measure 46, it may be fine to show some of that flag color provided the choreography is lower planed (closer to the ground)

Measures 36 - 45

- All of these measures could be treated as double-time for the entire group to match the musical intensity and to create some velocity going into the big climax phrase at measure 46
 - The winds do not necessarily need to be faced front field here since the percussion is the main focus
 - They could face backfield, a back corner of the field or even the end zone
 - Moving to the 8th note will provide the drill writer more opportunity for counts (it is 40 counts but 80 steps of double time)
 - The most energy should come in the second half of this phrase or the last 20 counts/40 steps
- It would also be appropriate to treat measures 36-43 in double-time but then move to single time at measures 44-45 to create some drama going into the climax phrase at measure 46
 - If you choose this approach and the wind players were facing backfield prior, then they should turn front during measures 44-45
- The batter should not move if they hadn't moved since the end of the intro
- Musically, this phrase sounds like undulating waves which could be portrayed by spinning, rotating, opening and closing, undulating or some follow the leader type of drill motion
- Those guard not yet out on the field should be brought on randomly to create a new texture and to ensure they are in an optimum place to contribute to the halted unison flag

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moment at 46.

- If single flag, do not show much fabric and keep the work low to the ground
- If double flags will be used at measure 46, the flags should look as if they are only

Measures 46-58

- It is certainly acceptable to halt and play gloriously for this entire phrase
- This should be a nice, readable form with curves or soft angles, most likely parallel to the front sideline and mostly no further back than mid field for projection purposes
 - The battery should be centered to whatever form is chosen and a long or behind the winds
- This is where the fabric of the flag should be used in big, sweeping motions to depict the grandiose phrasing
 - The guard could be peppered around or over the top of the musician form. They should be at least 6-8 steps from each other to help fill the field with color and ensure there is sufficient room to do large, sweeping choreography (especially if double swing flags are used)
 - If double flags are being used, then obviously they would appear at this climax phrase
- Measure 50 would be a good musical place to change the look of how the musicians are standing or posed
 - Could move to feet apart (open second position) or another soft or sculpted pose

Measures 59-63

- The focus should remain on or near the piano stage/tarp. A guard soloist or small group should remain there for focus purposes
 - If a large piano tarp/mat is used, the dancer/soloist choreography should mimic or outline the melody as it did earlier in the piece
- Depending on when some of the guard is staged for the climax section prior, these counts could be used to exit some of them. However, don't feel you must exit everyone as there is time to do so at the start of Part 3
- Musicians could face back, side or toward a corner to help focus the piano stage and any guard there
- There is the possibility of re-staging the halted set at measure 58 and doing some sort of sequential (apple) type drill move combining choreography and drill movement to help

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take the focus to the very last note of the piece at measure 63

- Consider the placement of the sax soloist for Part 3 when re-staging this counts
 - Closer to the stage/station for Part 3 or the front sideline depending on microphone placement and instrument desired
- Although it states to go straight to Mvt 3 at measure 63 on the score, it is recommended to make this as a freeze, "Kodak" moment (freeze for a photo and applause) on the downbeat of this measure matching the metallic resolution of the pit
 - Stay frozen for more than four counts (@ eight to 12 counts), but make sure the guard and musical choreography also helps complete the visual thought here
 - Some sort of head, arm or body pose that is calm and relaxed would be most appropriate to help provide Part 2 with closure and audience response

Sample Copy

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