

Full Notes on Arrangement: Symphonic Suite “Mondstadt”

Genshin Impact is a game that holds a dear association in my heart, having been playing it since 2020 after my O Level examinations. This game is a multi-roleplayer game where players explore a total of seven different regions to complete quests. I particularly love the music from the game for its eclectic fusion of styles. Notably, for this region "Mondstadt", the composer infuses influences from Eastern European music, with the use of the mandolin (in the original soundtrack) and dances in irregular time signatures.

Symphonic Suite from Genshin Impact "Mondstadt" is the first installation of my "Genshin Impact" arrangement series, where I explore the unique music of each region. In first deciding what music to arrange, a particular consideration would be the significance of these pieces. Spanning three albums, it is a rather herculean task to arrange and compile all the music from these albums and a task I am not willing to take. I had to be very decisive in my choice of pieces and eventually arranged the music into three separate movements.

I envision the first movement to be like when a player first opens and logs in the game. Hence, the first movement is a collection of the most recognisable background music. Beginning with the main theme, the music then leads to two selections "Bustling Afternoon in Mondstadt" and "A Day in Mondstadt" which I find the most distinct among the background music. These short pieces are played as the player enters Mondstadt city. I had to be creative in my emulation of certain folk instruments, most notably in the use of the harp and unpitched percussion. Immense detail was required in transcribing these two movements not just in melodic contour but the harmonic sonorities as well.

The next two movements are coupled together in the sense that they drive the plot of the game. I intend for the listeners of the arrangement to recollect about the main storyline. The second movement first begins with "Storm Befalls", which is first played as Dvalin the primary antagonist enters Mondstadt city and terrorises its inhabitants. The music then jumps towards the next two pieces "Forlorn Child of Ancient Times" and "Forsaken Child of Ancient Times", which are played as the player approaches Dvalin's dwelling. These two pieces are in stark contrast with the tempestuous presentation of the earlier piece, adopting a more melancholic approach. A significant difficulty would be in emulating the vocal and organ sounds, and I had to be resourceful in exploring new blends between different instruments.

The third movement begins with "The Wind Catcher from a Foreign Land" which appears in the main trailer of the game. Though not explicitly tied to the region, I found great significance using it to signify the beginning of the first major battle of the adventurer. This grandiose sound appealed to me greatly and I found it a very appropriate linkage between the second movement and "Caelestium Finale Termini". Speaking of the next piece, it is perhaps one of the most recognisable music from the region, having been played during the player's fight with Dvalin. One of the most significant challenges arranging this piece was managing the string ostinato without fatiguing the wind players. Dovetailing, amongst other techniques, was a popular technique, and great care should be taken to ensure the fluidity of the melodic line. Following a loud crash ending this piece, "Tender

Strength" is then presented, which is a calm and introspective piece that is a fitting conclusion to this arrangement.

Holistically, great care was taken to ensure an accurate representation of the original music. The tonalities, voicings were strictly adhered to. All the pieces arranged are presented in full, albeit with some additional passages and truncations to better aid the transitions. The instrumentation numbers for the winds are just a guideline - conductors of this arrangement are free to adjust the balance as they please.