Pinhole photograph, Smith Island Sunrise
Mary Agnes Williams, 2014 www.maryagneswilliams.com

Smith Island Sunrise
Thomas Parker Williams

Detail view showing active area outlined in red.

Smith Island, MD sits twelve miles from shore in the middle of the Chesapeake Bay. Two converted fishing boats ferry visitors and residents between the mainland and three tiny island towns. For generations, the close-knit families on the island have made their living from the Bay. Smith Island is still an active waterman community.

Smith Island Sunrise - is a musical composition that was created by using a visual source, a pinhole photograph by Mary Agnes Williams. I used the numerical RGB values of a small, 10 x 100 pixel, section of the photo to assign pitches for the score. The numerical values of 500 of these pixels are used in this composition.

I selected 5 rows of pixels, and read off the RGB values. Red (first row), green (3rd row), red (5th row), blue (7th row) and green (10th row). Using these values I assigned notes over the range of five octaves.

The numerical value is shown below each note. The notes of the five octave range are assigned from the value 57 (C2) to 227 (C7). These numerical values were the lowest and highest observed in the photograph within the standard range of 00 (black) to 255 full color value.
In some cases the notes of a value were transposed to a different octave for musical purposes.

The written score, 50 measures long, 2 pixels per measure was played and recorded and may be heard by scanning the QR code or visiting www.thomasparkerwilliams.com/smith-island-sunrise.htm.

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