

FRED HAGENEDER

THE SPIRIT OF TREES





1	<b>Birch</b>	5.11
2	<b>Rowan</b>	3.22
3	<b>Ash</b>	4.39
4	<b>Willow</b>	6.10
5	<b>Larch</b>	7.31
6	<b>Lime</b>	4.54
7	<b>Elm</b>	5.18
8	<b>Beech</b>	4.41
9	<b>Oak</b>	7.07
10	<b>Yew</b>	16.55
	total	65.56



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**BIRCH** is a pioneer tree colonizing wastelands and preparing the soil for the coming of the Forest. To us humans it appears always young and graceful. Birch has an anti-depressive effect and cleanses our minds as well as our bodies (tea from young leaves is diuretic and antiseptic). Birch has always been considered as a *tree of new beginnings*; it prepares the Earth as well as the Soul. Many ancient Birch traditions relate to motherhood and the protection of children.

Hence, when playing it live, I always dedicate this song to the children. And also to the inner child in grown-ups. And to all birch trees, of course. The scale is Eb.

fred hageneder pedal harp, guitar  
carlos alvarez flute



**ROWAN** is a wild fruit tree to be found in the colder parts of the temperate zone. Medicinally, it strengthens the immune system and cleanses the blood. In Celtic Ireland it is associated with Brigid, the muse of the arts, and of spinning and weaving. Its English name stems from the Viking term *runa*, 'a secret, to whisper'. And what is whispering is the voice of the heart. Rowan mediates the inner voice, which knows our own destiny and potential. The gift of Rowan is inspiration.

The tune came to me during a rowan meditation. It is in D minor (F). It works well as a harp solo but I love Henry's violin here!

fred hageneder pedal harp  
henry sears violin  
dorothea greve bodhran  
martin shaw bells



The majestic **ASH** is fully grown after about one hundred years, and generally reaches three times that age. Ash loves light and lets it pass through its bright green feathered leaves, creating reflections and shades like no other tree. This is what the song is about, flickering reflections in Eb, Ab and Bb, all major chords. As Ash reaches into the light so it reaches down into the darkness of Mother Earth – a loving place I try to express with the C minor sections.

This tune previously appeared on the 1995 Phoenix album *The Celtic Tree Circle*, but in a much different arrangement. This one here is more easy-going, particularly with Martin's beautiful and warm congas.

fred hageneder pedal harp  
aristazabal hawks double bass  
martin shaw congas



**WILLOW** It is no accident that Willow and Ash appear close together in this set. To me they represent a kind of yin-yang pairing: Ash being a tree of the Sun, Willow of the Moon. From Celtic traditions to ancient Sumer, Willow has been associated with the Moon, with moon goddesses who are also deities of love and of the Underworld. My archetypal vision for Willow is a moonlit lake, sheltered by old willow trees, with ancestral spirits gliding silently through the dancing mist. The harp sings them a song in C minor and F minor.

fred hageneder pedal harp, percussion  
carlos alvarez flute  
helen sherrah-davies violin  
antonia pagulatos violin  
karen o'brien viola  
samantha rowe violincello



**LARCH** trees living in remote parts of their native Alps show what Larch truly is: the spirit of gigantic trees who have seen countless centuries, and whose trunks radiate solar warmth. Beneath these trees, tradition has it, the 'blessed maidens' of the Elven realm dance on special nights. *Feel* these trees and you know why.

My attempt to score a piece for a Classical string quartet goes to another place. In Siberia, where trees are rare, a group of seven larch trees makes a sacred grove in shamanic tradition. As winter fades (represented by the string instruments) the first tender buds of the greening larch (harp, F# minor) fight for life and begin to open.

wind howling  
helen sherrah-davies violin  
antonia pagulatos violin  
karen o'brien viola  
samantha rowe violincello  
fred hageneder pedal harp



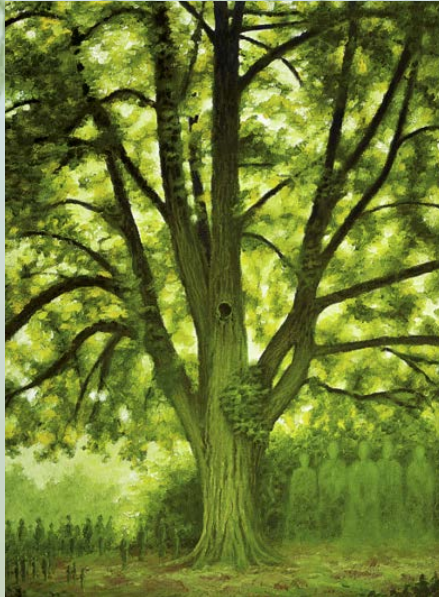
**LINDEN** is sometimes called Bee Tree in America, and rightfully so! I had the rare chance of putting a stereo microphone left and right of the entrance to a wild bee's nest. The Celtic steel-strung harp plays (in dorian E minor, changing to D) for the bees and the golden nectar of Linden, and the birds answer.

In European tradition, Linden is the tree of healing par excellence. In Greek myth, the ancestral god of medicine, Asklepios, learns the secrets of healing by the centaur Chiron, who is the son of Philyria, the spirit of Linden. Say no more.

In Germanic traditions, Linden also guards the den of the Dragon, the Earth spirit. Tribal meetings and courts were held in the benevolent and soothing atmosphere of this tree.

fred hageneder celtic harp, pedal harp  
bees humming  
birds singing





**ELM** guards the realm, by this I mean the Otherworld. Be it fairy encounters in Western European traditions or the ancient Greek hero Orpheus returning from the Underworld, when there is a gate between the worlds, there is an old elm tree nearby. The tragic worldwide elm decline during the second half of the 20th century coincides with the human race being more self-centred than ever before. The old elms have been cut, as the bridges to other kingdoms of nature have been burned.

The steel-harp intro pays homage to Orpheus's lyre mourning his beloved. The actual Elm tune (in D minor) is a song of the heart, for it is our heart that is the true gate. David's mellow saxophone is a gift I am still grateful for.

fred hageneder pedal harp, guitar, saz, percussion  
dave mckeown tenor sax, clarinet



**BEECH** Since the Stone Age, Beech has been a close companion of Man. Yet its cool, observing character is little understood, its spirit being hidden beneath the tight bark. In many languages, the tree's name is related, if not identical, with the word for a book. Indeed it is a kind of book-keeper, storing the memories of the forest like no other tree. Its character is serious, old and wise – and yet playful, as everybody knows who sees the vibrant, green leaves in spring. Beech has a lot of fun too.

The band tries to express this mix of seriousness and playfulness by means of a blues improvisation (E major). Being fully aware of the pun in pronunciation, I call it the Beech Blues.

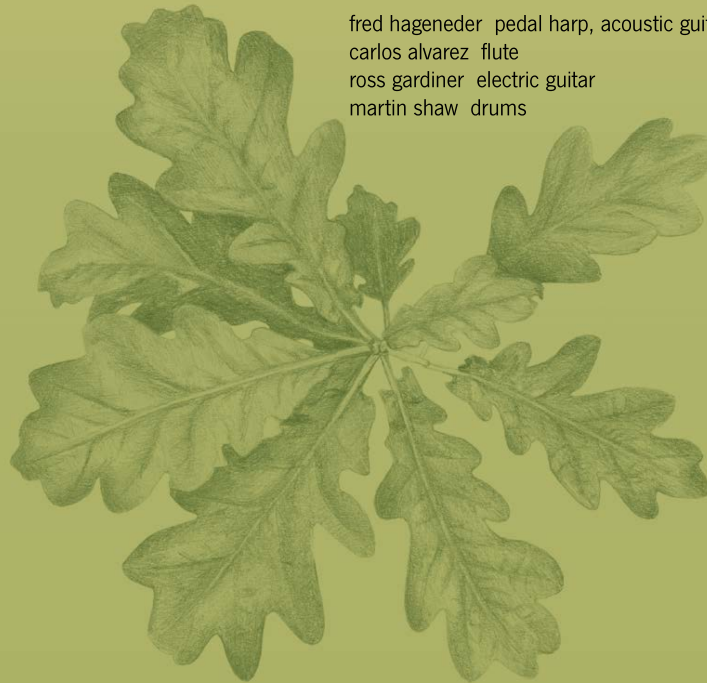
fred hageneder pedal harp  
andrew mckenzie electric guitar  
aristazabal hawks double bass  
martin shaw drums



**OAK** As Oak is sacred to sky and thunder gods, no other tree has enjoyed such a high status among Indo-European peoples and for over three thousand years. And Oak has remained emblematic in the psyche and politics of humans up to this day: from ancient shrines to Coats of Arms to modern coins and logos, Oak symbolizes spirit. Oak is strength, Oak is virtue, Oak is creative male energy. But Oak is also very tender and caring, no other temperate tree hosts and feeds such a high number of animal and insect species as oak trees do. The flute in part A plays a hymn to this, while part B is dominated by an electric guitar representing the brewing thunderstorms in which the strength of Oak finds its match.

E flat major.

fred hageneder pedal harp, acoustic guitar  
carlos alvarez flute  
ross gardiner electric guitar  
martin shaw drums



**YEW** is the only tree which surpasses the power of Oak and the life expectancy of Linden. It is the oldest living tree species of Europe, and one of the oldest in the world. Its characteristics and strengths are truly ancient, stunning botanists in every aspect of its unique biology. Yew trees can renew themselves, a single tree can regenerate from an old hollow shell and gain a new lease of life. The life span of many ancient yew trees must reach millennia but they keep their true age a secret from our intellectual minds.

Yew is the tree of the Great Mother, its iconography reaching back to the Palaeolithic period. Call it the original Tree of Life, call it the World Tree, and you are not wrong! From the initiation rites of Yggdrasil in Scandinavia to the 'tree of God' in the Caucasus Mountains to the 'tree of God' in indigenous Japan, all peoples once knew about the prime importance of Yew.

This track was recorded in one take in Nigel's studio in Devon. When I drove there to unite my custom-made yew-wood harp with his yew-wood flute in pentatonic C minor, I almost died in a car accident. Playing this, I felt extremely humble, grateful, and clear. This is the power of Yew: If you want, if you are ready, you can sacrifice everything on the altar of love...

...and be reborn.

fred hageneder yew-wood harp  
nigel shaw yew-wood flute, high whistle





# THE SPIRIT OF TREES

fred hageneder 40string tyrolean pedal harp,  
31string clarsach (gut),  
30string clarsach (iron),  
guitar 1, 9; bouzouki, saz 7  
carlos alvarez flute 1, 4, 9  
dorothea greve bodhran 2  
henry sears violin 2  
aristazabal hawks double bass 3, 8  
martin shaw bells, congas, drums 2, 3, 8, 9  
helen sherrah-davies violin 4, 5  
antonia pagulatos violin 4, 5  
karen o'brien viola 4, 5  
samantha rowe violincello 4, 5  
bees humming 6  
dave mckeown tenor sax, clarinet 7  
andrew mckenzie electric guitar 8  
ross gardiner electric guitar 9  
nigel shaw yew-wood flute, high whistle 10

all songs written, arranged and produced  
by fred hageneder

mixed and compiled in 2001  
by fred hageneder at edge farm, gloucestershire, uk

remastered 2012  
by gerrit haasler at blackstone studios, berlin

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all paintings by fred hageneder and per-olaf mademann

pencil drawings by elaine vijaya nash

'tree of hearts' drawing by shanti twilley aged 9

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jens jacobsen and yvan rioux

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