

IB Music Experimenting

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1 Experimenting as a Creator

1.1 Reinventing 2000s EDM as Orchestral (AOI 4)

To experiment with my ability to *add* musical texture in an arrangement, I chose to reinvent in the local context a 2000s electronic song I’ve known and loved for a long time. First published on the site Newgrounds by user Dimrain47, “The Falling Mysts” is a trance-style EDM song, which I’ve always appreciated for its melodic focus overtop a simple but skillfully fitting harmony. I’ve been eager for a while to arrange this song for a small chamber orchestra, and I decided upon an instrumentation of a string quartet joined by Flute, B♭ Clarinet, and Bass Clarinet. Despite having similar registers, I chose a Bass Clarinet over a Bassoon due to its more mellow attack, which I thought would better compliment the other wind instruments in octaves while blending nicely into the strings for harmony. In past arrangements, I’ve taken notable creative liberties in ‘reharmonizing’ the harmony and changing the melody, so I intended to maintain the core of the song, opting instead to familiarize myself with more subtleties like strings techniques, playability(!), voicing, and voice leading. As such, I employed pizzicato, violin harmonics, *sul ponticello*, double stops and more in my string writing to convey more texture and variety in the sound. Also, in comparison to more classical settings, I enjoy EDM’s emphasis on the natural minor scale over the leading tones in a harmonic or melodic minor scale. This can be seen in the heavy use of the $\flat VII$ and v chords, which culminate in the main chord progression of $i-\flat VII-\flat VI-v-i$. The walk-down and the $v-i$ cadence gave me many notable musical moments to employ parallel movements and tactful voice leadings, and, towards the end, I used very open, regal string voicings with these chords to imply very clear harmonic function and create a solemn tone. Overall, I am incredibly proud of the result.

The sheet music can be found in the appendix.

1.2 Etude in Jazz Style 5/8 for Drums and Piano (AOI 4)

1.3 Creating Music Software for Pure Sine Waves (AOI 4)

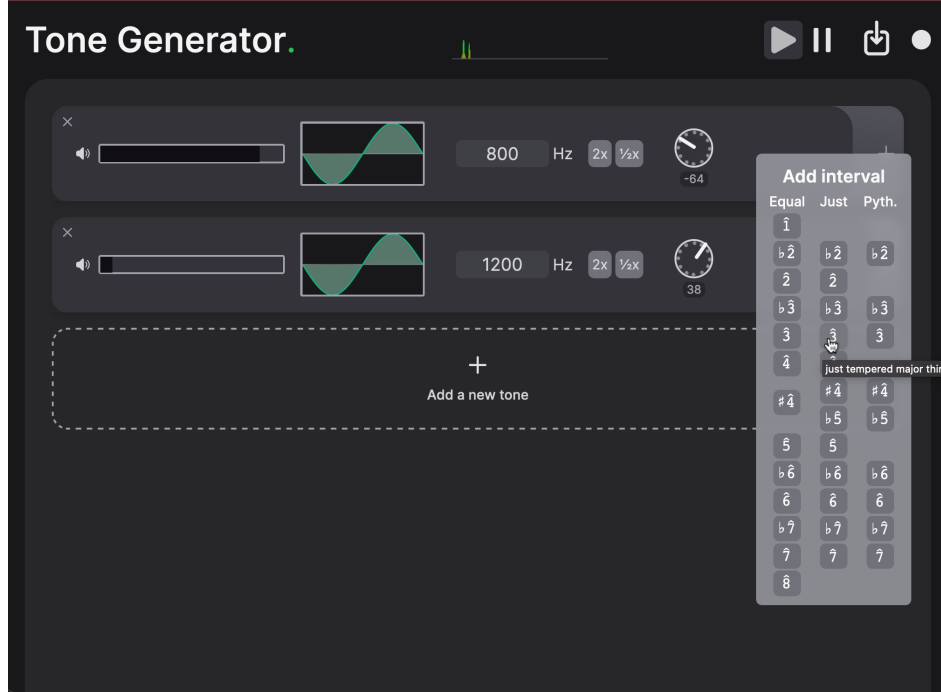


Figure 1: The Web Interface of my Tone Generator Showing the Just- and Pythagorean-Tuned Interval Capabilities

2 Experimenting as a Performer

2.1 “Futile Devices” And My Foray into Harp (AOI 1)

In AOI 1, I chose to experiment with the song “Futile Devices” by Sufjan Stevens in the global context. This song is notable for its appearance in *Call Me By Your Name*, a 2017 movie exploring LGBTQ issues, serving as a form of political expression. With this, I chose to experiment with the Harp, an instrument with which I had absolutely no prior experience. I arranged, transposed and improvised on the main ostinato of the song, learning about the intricacies of the Harp to make this process more simple. I first familiarized myself with basic technique and the arrangement of the Harp’s pedals. From its tuning in *C* with all pedals in the middle position, I tuned it to *C* dorian by flattening the 3rd and 7th scale degrees. This was to make my life easier, transposing the harmony from *F#* dorian/*C#m* to *C* dorian/*Gm* so I could use the red and black strings to better orient myself (1 and 4 respectively). I began by playing the main arpeggio, outlining a *Cm7/G*, then transitioning to the *F7sus4* and *F7*, using both hands to get it to tempo. In variation form, I progressively added more layers to the melody, eventually incorporating it in octaves in both hands. The last portion was the most challenging, where I played the second ostinato, outlining more chord

extensions, in the RH, while maintaining both the first ostinato and the harmony in the LH. Overall, I was proud of my progress in about a week in-class and without any instruction.

2.2 Reharmonizing a National Anthem (AOI 1)

In AOI 1, I chose to experiment with the Russian Anthem, in the global context. I planned to experiment with the harmony of the piece—specifically by reharmonizing elements of it and varying the key. I planned to do this because it employs a simple harmony with virtually no chord extensions or modulations. By experimenting with it, I will convert it towards a more jazz-influenced style, with a more complicated harmony, including a number of distant modulations scattered throughout. In this way, I plan to transform the melody into a different context, enriching its simplicity with new harmony.

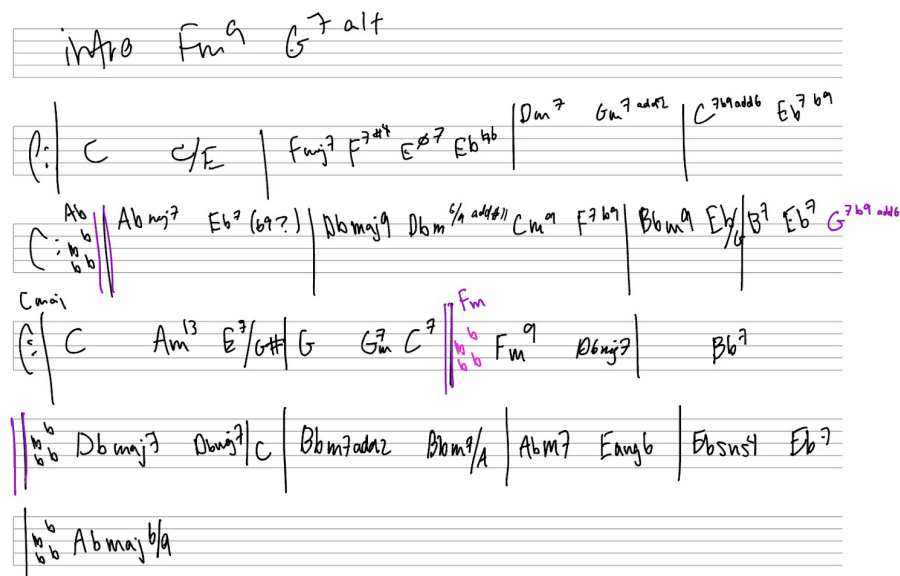


Figure 2: My Handwritten Lead Sheet for the Russian Anthem Reharmon

2.3 Improvising on Coltrane’s “Alabama” Vamp (AOI 1)

In AOI 1, I am choosing to experiment with John Coltrane’s “Alabama,” in the local context. This song is AOI 1, because Coltrane intended it to reflect the state of the civil rights movement in the US. It’s said that he attempted to mimic the cadences of Martin Luther King Junior’s speeches with his improvisational melody. I plan to experiment with the idea of sitting on a single harmony with improvisation in the melody. In Coltrane’s work, he sits on this C minor harmony, with a melodic emphasis on a $b7-1$ resolution, or a $v-i$ resolution. I will experiment with a $Fm-F$ dorian harmony in an improvisational way, focusing on the sound of a $iv-i$ resolution, to create a similar tone to Coltrane in a novel way.

3 Track List

Track	Start	End
“The Falling Mysts” EDM for Chamber Orchestra	0:00	2:15
5/8 Time Signature Etude for Piano and Drums	2:19	3:47
Pure Sine Waves and Just Intonation	3:51	4:40

Table 1: Experimenting as a Creator

Track	Start	End
Arranging for and Learning the Harp	4:44	6:14
Coltrane’s “Alabama” and Modal Improvisation	6:18	8:16
Reharmonizing a National Anthem	8:20	9:38

Table 2: Experimenting as a Performer

4 References

5 Appendix

Arrangement of "The Falling Mysts"

Dimrain47

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♩ = 125

This block contains the first system of the musical score, covering measures 1 through 6. The instruments are Flute, Clarinet in Bb, Bass Clarinet, Violin, Viola, Violoncello, and Contrabass. The key signature has four flats (Bb, Eb, Ab, Db) and the time signature is 4/4. The tempo is marked as quarter note = 125. The Flute part is mostly rests. The Clarinet in Bb and Bass Clarinet play sustained notes with dynamics *mf* and *p* respectively. The Violin and Viola play sustained notes with dynamics *mp* and *p*. The Violoncello plays sustained notes with dynamics *mp*. The Contrabass is mostly rests. A glissando is marked on the Viola in measure 6.

Flute

Clarinet in Bb

Bass Clarinet

Violin

Viola

Violoncello

Contrabass

7

This block contains the second system of the musical score, covering measures 7 through 12. The instruments are Flute (Fl.), Clarinet in Bb (Cl. in Bb), Bass Clarinet (B. Cl.), Violin (Vln.), Viola (Vla.), Violoncello (Vc.), and Contrabass (Cb.). The key signature has four flats and the time signature is 4/4. In measure 7, the Flute and Clarinet in Bb play a short melodic phrase with dynamics *pp* and *mf* respectively. The Bass Clarinet plays a sustained note with dynamic *mf*. The Violin and Viola play sustained notes with dynamics *mp* and *mp*. The Violoncello plays sustained notes with dynamic *mp*. The Contrabass plays a pizzicato figure with dynamic *f*. In measure 12, the Flute and Clarinet in Bb play a short melodic phrase with dynamics *mf* and *f* respectively. The Bass Clarinet plays a sustained note with dynamic *f*. The Violin and Viola play sustained notes with dynamics *mf* and *mf*. The Violoncello plays sustained notes with dynamic *mp*. The Contrabass plays an arco figure with dynamic *mf* and a triplet of eighth notes.

Fl.

Cl. in Bb

B. Cl.

Vln.

Vla.

Vc.

Cb.

26

Fl. *mp*

Cl. in B♭

B. Cl.

Vln. *mf*

Vla. *f*

Vc. *mp* arco

Cb. *mf* *gliss.* *ppp* *f*

30

Fl. *ff*

Cl. in B♭

B. Cl.

Vln. arco *mf* *f*

Vla. *f*

Vc.

Cb. *f* détaché

34

Fl. *ff*

Cl. in Bb *ff*

B. Cl. *mf*

Vln. *mp* harmonics

Vla. *p*

Vc. *p* arco

Cb. *p*

Measure 34: Flute and Clarinet in Bb play a rapid sixteenth-note scale. Bass Clarinet plays a low, sustained note with harmonics. Violin, Viola, and Violoncello play a long, sustained note. Contrabass plays a low, sustained note with an accent mark.

Measure 35: Flute and Clarinet in Bb play a rapid sixteenth-note scale. Bass Clarinet plays a low, sustained note with harmonics. Violin, Viola, and Violoncello play a long, sustained note. Contrabass plays a low, sustained note with an accent mark.

36

Fl. *ff*

Cl. in Bb *ff*

B. Cl. *mf*

Vln. *mp* harmonics

Vla. *p*

Vc. *p* arco

Cb. *p*

Measure 36: Flute and Clarinet in Bb play a rapid sixteenth-note scale. Bass Clarinet plays a low, sustained note with harmonics. Violin, Viola, and Violoncello play a long, sustained note. Contrabass plays a low, sustained note with an accent mark.

Measure 37: Flute and Clarinet in Bb play a rapid sixteenth-note scale. Bass Clarinet plays a low, sustained note with harmonics. Violin, Viola, and Violoncello play a long, sustained note. Contrabass plays a low, sustained note with an accent mark.

38

Fl.

Cl. in Bb

B. Cl.

Vln.

Vla.

Vc.

Cb.

40

Fl.

Cl. in Bb

B. Cl.

Vln.

Vla.

Vc.

Cb.

42

Fl.

Cl. in Bb

B. Cl.

Vln.

Vla.

Vc.

Cb.

mf

ff

legato

mf

legato

p

legato

p

legato

mp

45

Fl.

Cl. in Bb

B. Cl.

Vln.

Vla.

Vc.

Cb.

f

mf

mp

mp

f

48

Fl.

Cl. in Bb

B. Cl.

Vln.

Vla.

Vc.

Cb.

50

Fl.

Cl. in Bb

B. Cl.

Vln.

Vla.

Vc.

Cb.

ff

ff

ff arco

arco

f

f

ff

52

Fl. *f*

Cl. in B♭ *f*

B. Cl. *f*
legato

Vln. *Drama queen*

Vla. *f*

Vc. *f*

Cb. *mf*

55

Fl. *ff*

Cl. in B♭ *ff*

B. Cl. *ff*

Vln. *ff*

Vla. *ff*

Vc. *ff*

Cb. *ff*

57

Fl.

Cl. in Bb

B. Cl.

Vln.

Vla.

Vc.

Cb.

f

59

Fl.

Cl. in Bb

B. Cl.

Vln.

Vla.

Vc.

Cb.

mf *mp* *f*

62

Fl.

Cl. in B♭

B. Cl.

Vln.

Vla.

Vc.

Cb.

ff

ff

65

Fl.

Cl. in B♭

B. Cl.

Vln.

Vla.

Vc.

Cb.

mf

mf

ppp

ppp

p

ppp

p

ppp

pp

ppp

pp

ppp

Etude

jc514

♩ = 280 [a]

Drumset

Piano

5

D. Set

Pno.

9

D. Set

Pno.

13

D. Set

Pno.

17 b

D. Set

Pno.

p

20

D. Set

Pno.

24

D. Set

Pno.

pp cresc.

27

D. Set

Pno.

(cresc.)

31 **c**

D. Set

Pno.

33

D. Set

Pno.

36

D. Set

Pno.

a

39

D. Set

Pno.

Measures 39-42: D. Set plays a continuous eighth-note pattern with accents. Pno. provides harmonic support with chords and rests.

43

D. Set

Pno.

Measures 43-46: D. Set continues the eighth-note pattern. Pno. features a melodic line in the right hand and harmonic support in the left hand.

47

D. Set

Pno.

Measures 47-50: D. Set continues the eighth-note pattern. Pno. features a melodic line in the right hand and harmonic support in the left hand, including a triplet in measure 50.

51

D. Set

Pno.

this or similar fill

Measures 51-54: D. Set continues the eighth-note pattern. Pno. features a melodic line in the right hand and harmonic support in the left hand, including a triplet in measure 53. A "this or similar fill" is indicated above the D. Set part in measures 53-54.

this or similar

54

D. Set

Pno.

5

3

this or similar

58

D. Set

Pno.

3

3

60

D. Set

Pno.