

**CULMINATING EXPERIENCE PROJECT**

**COMPOSITIONAL JOURNEY IN BERKLEE VALENCIA**

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## **BACKGROUND**

I was born in Santiago de Chile in Latin America. Being a son of a well respected musician, and the stepson of an entrepreneur dedicated to the development of museums and tourism, led me to live in a broad cultural world, in where I had access to different intellectual ways of thinking and share amongst people who had radically different points of view, which gave me the liberty to question the information that I received before adopting it.

Although music was always in my life, I couldn't study it formally until I was nineteen. That was mainly because of the opposition of certain people in my family to do this as a career. Although I had to deal with some disadvantages, mainly because of the "idea" of starting late, at the end this was an advantage, because I could see the things that I was learning with a more critical point of view helping me to make some conclusions that I wouldn't be able to do if I were starting early. That helped me to realize that in western music because of the excess of theorization is seen in a very logical way, resulting in sometimes apply concepts that are sometimes for the sake of showing off rather than make music itself. That results in that we over inform the listeners and with that we avoid to make a real connection with them, taking off the real purpose of this art, which is make an emotional bond between the person listening and the person playing, therefore making noise instead of music. As a way of avoids that, and using the tools that I learned in my formal studies, I wanted to create "Complex" music, with difficult resources, but making it easy to listen to the inexperienced ear.

## **INTRODUCTION OF THE WORK**

This work hopes to reveal the results that myself as a musician and a composer had in this 3 semesters as a student in this masters program. The results that are going to be shown here were more a product of a group of different circumstances, rather than a established plan. This happened mainly because with so much information in certain fields, my interests were more focused over the existent possibilities of learning, rather that the ideas that I wanted to develop in a first time.

To try to be as much open in musical terms, what I did was to play 5 tunes (4 original and one arrangement of standards), each of one is going to be covering one of the aspects showed below, this is because in my opinion those are the main aspects that are involved in my compositions. Those aspects are:

- Band Format
- Time Signatures
- Modes used
- Process of creation
- And Style

The planning of the work would consist first of all in write and choose the tunes that are going to be placed in the folder, then the tunes are going to be recorded, and

shown in a concert or if it is not possible would be an exposition, in where the songs are going to be shown and explain, the criteria for choosing the tunes is totally personal, because in my opinion they clearly show the process that I had here, and try to solve my concerns about certain aspects showed above

## **THE ASPECTS**

The aspects that I used to classify this work were divided in Band Format, Time Signatures, Modes, and Process of creation and Styles. Here in this part, I'm going to try to explain more profoundly about the reasons that led me to do this

1-Time Signatures: One of the main characteristics of the Mediterranean music is the use of odd time signatures, here I had the opportunity to be exposed to these kind of time signatures and using it in my music. The Idea of those tunes was trying to create easy listening melodies to the western ears using those resources. The idea was to adopt those patterns and try to adapt it to western styles, without thinking in a mathematical way or a pattern-based structure, but also as a way of enhance the melody. When you hear this music, you are going to notice time signature changes, as well as different patterns that help to the development of the melody.

2- Process of Creation: I think that is important to point that aspect, because all the tunes or arrangement were created for a certain reason more than because of the deadline of the thesis itself, I think that this is important to point that out, because I think that show the process of making a work is as important as the work itself

3- Styles: Among with the different things that I had the opportunity to experiment here in my stay in Valencia, the different styles of music that I had the opportunity to play and listen were decisive in the process of creativity and growth as a musician and person, that's why my compositions were based in different styles, but trying to get an identity of its own

4-Band Format: I decided to use this aspect, because during the year I had the opportunity to interact with different band formats, and composing and playing with them was an amazing opportunity to meet the and also to discover new sounds (for example with more acoustic instruments, Mediterranean percussions, and also with solo instruments). The compositions that I showed here were the ones that in my opinion reflected the best use of those formats. The fact that were more tunes with quartet in this process, it's because that's the format that I'm most used to work with.

5-Modes: Although I had compositions in tonal music, passing through different tones during the music pieces, I had to use single microtonal modes, in order to explore the world of the fretless guitar...The arrangements of the standards were doing in order so that the melody and the solos were made using those modes.

## USE OF TIME SIGNATURES (Tema Número 2)

(Intro) Bbm7

### The Idea

It always had got my attention the way that we compose music, and the way that is taught in the western side of the planet. That is because it's based in a concept of circularity leaded by multiples of four. That means, that to make a proper theme in music, you need o have a call and a response that last at least 4 measures. A good example of it is the song Footprints of Wayne Shorter.

This song has a motive of four measures which is has variations twice surrounding it to a twelve bars theme. In other tunes the themes take form 4 to 48 bars to make the song, that get me to make to myself the question of what happen if I do songs with a motive who is not a multiple of four and give the sensation of circularity that we are use to hear in western music, for that I have to use motives that can be easy to sing and teach by rote and use styles that appeal to do that. For that I decided to do a funk song, inspired in the afro beat music starting with a pedal in Bb minor pentatonic, in 5/4 which result in this



# CHAPTER 2 PROCESS OF CREATION

## Vince Guaraldi Lead Sheet

**A**

♩ = 180

Musical notation for section A, measures 1-12. The key signature has two flats (Bb and Eb), and the time signature is 3/4. The notation is as follows:

- Measure 1: Bbmaj7
- Measure 2: Bbmaj7
- Measure 3: Bbmaj7
- Measure 4: Bbmaj7
- Measure 5: Gm7
- Measure 6: Gm7
- Measure 7: Bbm7
- Measure 8: Bbm7
- Measure 9: Eb7
- Measure 10: Eb7
- Measure 11: Eb7
- Measure 12: Eb7

Measures 13-14 are marked with a first ending (1.) and a second ending (2.).

- Measure 13: Amaj7
- Measure 14: Amaj7

Measures 15-16 are marked with a first ending (1.) and a second ending (2.).

- Measure 15: Amaj7
- Measure 16: Cmaj7

**B**

Musical notation for section B, measures 17-30. The key signature has two flats (Bb and Eb), and the time signature is 3/4. The notation is as follows:

- Measure 17: Abmaj7
- Measure 18: Abmaj7
- Measure 19: Bbmaj7
- Measure 20: Bbmaj7
- Measure 21: Emaj7
- Measure 22: Fmaj7
- Measure 23: Ab7(#11)
- Measure 24: Ab7(#11)
- Measure 25: Fm7
- Measure 26: Fm7
- Measure 27: Dm7
- Measure 28: Dm7
- Measure 29: Em7
- Measure 30: Em7

Measures 29-30 are marked with a first ending (1.) and a second ending (2.).

- Measure 29: Abmaj7
- Measure 30: Db7



2

33 Gmaj7

37 Dmaj7

41 Ab7(#11)

45 Cmaj7 B7(#11)

## The Idea

This tune was inspired because I wanted to make a jazz waltz inspired in the cartoon “Peanuts” but with chords that escape from the II-V dynamic that are usually presented in jazz. For that I had to establish a melody that could be easy to remember, and also very easy to have a lot of options of different chords. I used one melodic cell, and I varied it in different ways

### The motive

Bbmaj7 Ab7(#11)

The A part has 28 measures instead of 32, basically to try to play with the sense of circularity showed above. But the melody helps to not to miss those absent measures.

The harmony of the tune was developed in order that the tension wouldn't be subjected just to the II-V structure, using sub dominant chords as root notes, and dominants, basically, because there is a major range of notes that I can use without them sound as a not permitted note, also using those intermodal changes would change the color, also creating a challenge of making a melody that allow the tensions, but at the same time can be enjoyable and easy to remember

Also there is a lot of parallel upper chords on minor and major chords like the example below, that makes a nice effect of movement, that I personally like

The format used in this song was a jazz quartet, because it is a very standard and adequate format for the sonority that I wanted to have. In the beginning had two extra voices, but they didn't sound the way I wanted to.

## CHAPTER 3 STYLES

### We'll figure it out

♩ = 180  
INTRO

3 **A** A $\flat$ maj7( $\sharp$ 5) G $\flat$ maj7( $\sharp$ 5) Fm7 Gmaj7

7 1. A $\flat$ maj7( $\sharp$ 5) D $\flat$ maj7 Emaj7 Gmaj7 Cm7

11 1.2. B $\flat$ maj7 Dmaj7 F9

14 Ebm7 Dm7 D $\flat$ m7 Cm7

18 Ebm7 Dm7 D $\flat$ m7 Cm7

22 C $\sharp$ m7 Bmaj7 Cm7 Cm7

Solos en A (6/8) y B , al terminar intro

## The Aspect

This is the third tune, and the first one composed in the format that I'm using right now which is a quartet, that I composed this year here, the idea behind it, was to try to do a melody that could be easily sang in an odd time signature. That's why I used the 11/8 time signature grouping it two groups, one of 5/8 and other of 6/8 making a very smooth intro with the guitar using parallel chords, which are part of two different melodic minor scales. Those are F melodic minor and Eb melodic minor (the rhythmic pattern is not written, but you can see the division for reading purposes

♩ = 180  
INTRO  
Abmaj7(#5) Gbmaj7(#5)

Then following that time signature (5+6) in a tonada-sort of mood with the drums. I proceed to play the melody, which is two measures motif, which is varied during the A part

3 A Abmaj7(#5) Gbmaj7(#5) Fm7 Gmaj7

7 Abmaj7(#5) 1. Dbmaj7 Emaj7 Gmaj7 Cm7

11 1.2. Bbmaj7 Dmaj7 F9



# BAND FORMAT LEMURIA

## Lemuria

$\text{♩} = 125$

5

9

13

17

21

25

29

33

The image displays a page of musical notation consisting of ten staves. The staves are numbered 2, 37, 41, 45, 49, 53, 57, 61, 65, 69, 74, and 79. The notation includes various musical symbols such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings like 'p.'. The music is written in a single system on a grand staff (treble and bass clefs). The notation includes various musical symbols such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings like 'p.'. The music is written in a single system on a grand staff (treble and bass clefs).

Since the first days as a musician, the people involved in this profession have the opportunity to face different band formats that is a very good form of expand their sonorities and also presents a new challenge because every format have its difficulties

and advantages. Here this year I wanted to experiment with the solo format, which is a very difficult in my opinion, because you have to deal with the fact that you don't have any other instrument to support you, and also you have to be aware of taking care of the harmony at the same time that the melody. With Lemuria I wanted to make that happen in a way that can be easy to listen having the liberty of play complex things making a melody that would be easy to play doing the chords and the same time, but if I wasn't able to do that, still give the sensation that I was playing in a desirable chord. This song is played in a style called "Tonada" which is one of the styles that evolved in Latin America from the 6/8, 3/4 patterns that came from the north of Africa via Spain. That's why I wrote the melody in 6/8, but I wrote it as it where in 3/4. The idea of the chords was to try to make chords that share notes in common but don't have any harmonic relationship



For example in this passage the chords are Bmaj7 and Cmin7, those chords although don't have an harmonic relationship they share two notes, B# (Eb) and A# (Bb) that gives a very interesting way of playing with different scales and making a relation amongst them, also the song has a lot of modal interchanges, as you can see in the "A" part. (From measure 9 to 28)

The B part is more tonal, until the measure 44, which has a chromatic movement with maj7 chords and minor chords

The structure is AABA



CHAPTER 5 (MODES)

4.  
-M. SANTANARIA

**AFRO BLUE**

(MED. FAST)

F-7 G-7 Abmaj7 G-7 F-7

F-7 G-7 Abmaj7 G-7 F-7

E<sub>b</sub> = Db E<sub>b</sub> F-7

E<sub>b</sub> = Db E<sub>b</sub> F-7

Solo F-7 7

F-7 G-7 Abmaj7 G-7 F-7

F-7 G-7 Abmaj7 G-7 F-7

E<sub>b</sub> = Db E<sub>b</sub> F-7

E<sub>b</sub> = Db E<sub>b</sub> F-7

OPEN SOLOS ON F-  
- OR -  
SOLO ON 3/4 MINOR BLUES

## **The Idea**

In my years as a student of Berklee Boston, I started to get interested in microtonal scales. I took 4 semesters with Dave Fiuczinski, in which he taught me the basic stuff of the quartertones and microtonalism. When I arrived here, being in contact with musicians that are used to that way of playing music, such as the people from arab countries, made me realize that is not only a matter of playing the notes, but also to situating them in a context, which set a double task, because learning the scales was only the first step to play this kind of music. In well-tempered music the system of playing is led by the harmony, which makes that the melody has to be subdued by it, that makes a circular approach to the music, because the idea is to play different chords and finish the part with a chord that permits to go back to the first chord again. But in the microtonal music, the way of approach the music is a linear one, in where the capacity of doing melodic development using scales with microtones is more important than playing chord changes. Afro Blue was a perfect tune to develop those concepts (circular and linear), because while the head have chord changes, the solo was played in a pedal in F minor

To play this song I used a fretless guitar tuned like an Oud (F, C, G, D, A, F), this instrument was tuned in that way specifically because it permits to play the instrument in the first position, which helps to play with open strings, the scales that I used to play the solo were Arabic Maqams in F, which are scales that the particularity with them, is that you to play the scales you have to play going up in one way, and going down in other way, this is interesting, because the microtones are played as a way of add color rather to work as a note itself (you don't end with those notes, but you only PASS through them

The pictures that you are going to see now are going to help you to clarify the point showed above

## Maqam Rast

Rast on Do
Rast on Sol

Nahawand on Sol
Rast on Do

## Maqam Husayni

Bayati on Re
Bayati on La

Kurd on La
Bayati on Re

(Pictures of the scales taken from the website [alsiadi.com](http://alsiadi.com) (the aleppian school of music))

## **Conclusions**

Following this study, my conclusion is that in order to be creative, an artist has to do two things, which are to live in an ambient that enhances the creative work, and to try to learn about other areas of knowledge, that is because the art is an answer from the author to the time and place in where he or she is living in. The activity of learning new areas of knowledge is only going to help to broad horizons and understand better about other aspects and points of view about the same questions or statements that the author is trying to portray in its works. That only helps to improve the bond that the person tries to make between he or she and the people who is going to be exposed to the work, only because he or she is going to be more aware about what is happening around them.

My objective now is to try to search for knowledge in different areas both logical and spiritual, so I can reach a better level of awareness and understanding of the world and period of time that I'm living in. Helping to fortify the bond between myself, and all the elements surrounding me.