

Title:

Eclipse (E.P.)

Description:

Last year, for my 3rd year arts award, I recorded an E.P. “Comet” of 4 original songs. My proposal included an outline of the 4 songs, the vision for the project, the location, and musicians that I planned to hire in order to record the album. The project was a huge success, and I’d like to propose a similar project for this year, but with new music and a new vision.

After recording in the studio for the first time, I learned a lot about what went well and what could be improved. For example, although I enjoyed the improvisational aspect to the songs, I think it was more interesting to have concrete ideas with improvisational sections rather than having it be aligned with a more standard approach to jazz with a head and solo section. For example, my favorite song on the E.P. is the song “Satellite” because the structure is simple and the parts are mostly written out, yet there are sections that open up to feature lots of improvisation among all the instruments. My original idea was to create pieces that weren’t just 32 bar AABA jazz tunes with a melody and solo section, and yet 2 of the songs on the record ended up being that exact form. Of course, they are unique in their own ways (“Somewhere Far” is a quintuplet-based melody), but for Eclipse, I’d like to aim for more of a thru-composed, non-standard form approach while still keeping the integrity of my “space” idea.

During my writing process last year, I had many songs that didn’t make it past the drawing board that still had lots of potential. There are two songs in particular that I would like to use parts of on this project because they turned out really well, but unfortunately I didn’t focus my energy into developing and editing them enough to make them usable. For this project, I plan on doing that, but also writing new music with the intention of using the guitar to create lines specifically for the guitar.

I think there is something about the layout of the guitar that lends itself to particular lines and sounds that guitarists generally avoid because we are taught in a way to embrace traditional music theory and to not embrace the unique intervallic qualities of the guitar. I first began experimenting with this when writing the song “Voyager” from my previous album, and I think it is easy to hear the unique qualities of the lines and the sounds that really highlight the structure of the guitar itself. Thinking about the layout of the guitar and the symmetry that exists within it is really inspiring for songwriting, and I have been a huge proponent for using the guitar in ways that aid a piece of music in a way that only a guitar can. For example, I have been getting into modern acoustic guitar pieces and have been really inspired by them to create unique pieces of music that show off the capabilities of the guitar’s framework within songwriting. I did a show on WXTJ a month or two ago showcasing some of these pieces, and it is attached in the portfolio.

For the actual recording part of Eclipse, I’d like to use the same musicians as last time, but I may change studios depending on their availability around the end of February. Last time, I booked two days in the studio, and I plan to do the same in order to use the second day as a

backup day or, if there is nothing left to record, a day where I can watch and learn from the engineer. Since I already bought the composition software for my last project, that is no longer an expense, and I'm simply covering the cost of the recording session.

Finally, I can't go without talking about my faculty mentor Mike Rosensky who helped me out immensely last year through the whole process by putting me in contact with the studio musicians and spending hours meeting with me weekly to help edit and finalize the tunes. I am excited to have him as my faculty mentor again, and I know he will be a great help to this project.

Timeline:

Spring 2023 primarily involves brainstorming and making voice memos of musical moments or recounting ideas that pop into my head so I don't forget them. This is normally how I go about brainstorming because eventually I will have enough voice memos to create a foundation for a song. I will also begin writing ideas in hopes to go into the summer with a lot of the structure already in place. I also plan to look back at my pieces in progress and make edits to them during this time.

Summer 2023 will be reserved for writing the music using the online software Flat. Usually, I go through many drafts of songs before I am set on songs that I want to do, and even those are sometimes changed and edited much later on in the writing process. I would like to devote a big part of the summer to writing a piece for the acoustic guitar to add variety to the album, while still keeping the same vision.

Fall 2023 will entail the start of the editing phase and contacting the musicians. By this point, I plan to finalize the music and send out the rough drafts roughly two weeks before the studio date. The studio dates will be scheduled for late February or early March (depending on when people are available). I will reach out to my faculty advisor for criticism on the music as well as the musicians working on it to see if they have any suggestions within their parts or the overall score. Some of the studio time will be spent rehearsing, of course, and again, it will be good for me to keep an open mind for changes.

Spring 2024 will include the recording date, and I will be spending the majority of my time beforehand practicing the parts and solos. I plan to again spend a little bit of money to put it on streaming services like Spotify, Apple Music, Pandora, etc. through TuneCore. The project will be essentially completed at this point in terms of music, and I expect to have the tracks released again before the end of March.

Budget:

Minimum Wage Recording Studio (or equivalent) - \$650 (\$300 per day, 2 days, \$50 tip)

Musicians - \$2400 (8 hours, 3 musicians, \$100 per hour)

TuneCore- \$15 (1 year subscription)

Total: \$3075 (remainder covered out of pocket)

Participation in the Arts at UVA:

I have been a member of the Jazz Ensemble for 6 semesters and was involved with the studio recording during COVID lockdown for John Dearth's album *Infernal Resilience* which can be heard on www.https://virginiajazz.org/. I also participated in the jazz small groups for 6 semesters firstly with Jeff Decker, and more recently with Peter Spaar. Furthermore, I have been taking lessons for 5 semesters with Michael Rosensky, 4 of which were advanced lessons that included a jury. The price for advanced lessons was also covered by the lessons scholarship. On top of music performance, I have taken many MUSI classes at the university including History of Jazz Music, Music and Discourse, and Intro to Music and Computers. I plan to take more in the upcoming semesters. On my own, I have been playing solo acoustic gigs around Charlottesville at many wineries and restaurants around the area including (but not limited to) King Family Vineyards, Pippin Hill Vineyards, Common House, The Garage, and Glass House Winery.

Portfolio Examples:

“Satellite” - from E.P. “Comet”

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O1N6TCEiQvQ>

“Voyager” - from E.P. “Comet”

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IKh8yhuf_0

(Supplemental video to provide evidence of acoustic inspiration)

“Drifting” (Andy McKee) - Performance at “WXTJ Jamz” Show

<https://youtu.be/8lMctk7yYG0?t=228>