

Title:

Comet (E.P.)

Description:

This project will consist of a 4-song, all original E.P. The genre will be primarily modern jazz with hints of fusion and world music. Compositionally, I hope to focus on tonality and meter we don't hear in popular music today. My stylistic experience in metrically modulating rhythms and shifting modal harmonies will center the album, but each song will be focused on a different aspect of these ideas.

The first song is a lydian/lydian dominant song I partially wrote a few years ago called "Star Dance" for saxophone, pan flute, and rhythm section. The original song was written in 13/8, but for playability and improvisational purposes, it will be condensed to 12/8. This song is primarily lydian/lydian-dominant focused in terms of melody, and it will include a modal lydian solo section. The parts on this track are relatively simple, and the sax/pan flute parts can be played on other instruments as well (i.e. clarinet instead of pan flute). Overall, the idea is open and will require the most part writing.

The second song is a tune based off a lead sheet I wrote last semester for my small combo temporarily called "Krit's Conundrum". This song is a straight-ahead burner, and features a complex bridge with a series of metric breaks and quartal lines. In the solo section, this becomes a modal E phrygian section with an Em(sus4)(b9) in the background to provide lots of opportunity for creative improvisation. The melody in the A sections is very simple, but the chord changes are dense, contrasting the modal phrygian section.

The third song is going to be completely prewritten, and be very similar to a Mestis song. I am thinking this will be written for a 7 string guitar and be primarily chord-melody based. In the middle, I want to include a melody played on guitar with a countermelody on piano which will eventually become unison. Finally, it will end on a vamp which will then continue into a large drum solo and the song will end with a collective hit.

The fourth song is a fast waltz similar to that in style of "Zhivago" by Kurt Rosenwinkel, but at a bit slower tempo. I want the melody idea to be very simple as chords go by quickly similarly to Rosenwinkel. This will need a few horns for the final build at the end, and will feature a large improvised guitar solo over the changes. This will likely not have a horn solo over the form. This song will not have as much of a rhythmic element, and it will incorporate some free playing but still be light and bouncy up until the end when the main melody returns.

Overall, the E.P. will be about 20-25 minutes long, and I plan to have guitar, piano, bass and drums on all of the tunes. I also want to include a saxophone (and perhaps a few other horns for harmony parts) on one or two of the tunes as well. I plan to record it at Minimum Wage Recording Studio, and the engineer told me that he charges by the day and that the project appears to be a 1-2 day project in terms of recording and mixing/mastering.

My background in composition has been mostly centered around metal and progressive metal, and I plan to borrow a lot of aspects from prog to incorporate into the modern jazz album.

There is a lot of overlap between the genres from metric modulation to unique chord progressions. I have included three original progressive metal songs that have been in development over the past couple of years. I had planned on making an album, and I have created roughly 10 complete songs, some more in development than others. Two of the three that are included, Napalm and Washout, feature real drums and co-production from one of my friends at VCU. However, I wrote them a couple of years ago, so I wanted to include a more recent composition.

The song “DMM” doesn’t have an official name yet- I wrote it last winter, and this is essentially what my demos sound like before I pass them on to a drummer. The DMM demo is 100% written, recorded, and produced by me in the span of a couple weeks, and although it is certainly not complete, it’s the most recent song I have written and I believe it represents a view of my current methodology and style.

The process for getting live drums for the other songs took about a year in total due to busy schedules and the inability to meet in person due to COVID. Everything in the Washout and Napalm tracks was done without being able to meet or play together in person, and all the production decisions are still very much in development. Neither I or my friend have had any formal production training, so we were mostly going off of what sounds good and trying to match other mixes that we like. I also don’t have a full version of a DAW, so my production decisions are often limited anyways.

In terms of jazz, I have written 3 songs for my Jazz Chamber Ensemble at UVA, one of which was played at the winter concert. I had significant help from my advisor Mike Rosensky and also my chamber professor Pete Spaar who analyzed the works and helped me refine the ideas. I have attached the lead sheet to all 3 songs. One of which, Star Dance, I am working on modifying to be played on the E.P. My plan with the project is to bring my progressive metal background and my jazz experience from UVA together to create and experiment with a new style of music.

Timeline:

Spring 2022 primarily involves brainstorming and making voice memos of musical moments or recounting ideas that pop into my head so I don’t forget them. I will also begin writing ideas in hopes to come into the summer with a lot of the structure already in place.

Summer 2022 will be reserved for writing and practicing the music as well as contacting the musicians and the engineer to arrange studio time when people are available. This will involve contact between the studio and the musicians themselves to try and arrange a date and time to record the music come Fall. Writing will be done using the online software Flat.

Fall 2022 will entail the start of editing the songs. By this point, I will have sent out the rough drafts of the music, and the studio dates will be scheduled for mid-to-late-Fall (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 this is where I'm assuming most changes will take place once I can actually hear the music live.

Spring 2023 will involve potential communication with the engineer about the mix and finding someone to do the album artwork. I probably won't directly advertise it, but I will spend a little bit of money to put it on streaming services like Spotify, Apple Music, Pandora, etc. through DistroKid. The project will be essentially completed at this point in terms of music, and I expect to have the tracks in my hands with ample amounts of time before the presentation.

Budget:

Composition Software- \$150 (Lifetime subscription to Flat.io)

Minimum Wage Recording Studio (2 days)- \$550 (\$275 per day)

Musicians (8 hours)- \$2300

Album Artwork- \$50

Total: \$3050 (some will be covered out of pocket)

If I go further over budget (most likely on musicians), I will use my own money to pay for them (or anything else). I have accounted for 2 days of pay time.

Participation in the Arts at UVA:

I have done jazz ensemble for 4 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/](https://virginiajazz.org/). I also participated in the jazz small groups for 4 semesters firstly with Jeff Decker, and more recently with Peter Spaar. In my first two semesters, I would often play with my jazz combo at the amphitheater outside of class time so we could get experience playing in person. More recently, I have been involved with the UVA band "Work in Progress" led by Michael McNulty and Ellis Nolan (both Miller Arts Scholars), and we have been playing venues around Charlottesville consistently. I have also been taking lessons for 3 semesters with Michael Rosensky, 2 of which were advanced lessons that included a jury. The price for advanced lessons was also covered by the lessons scholarship. I was accepted into the Miller Arts program roughly two weeks ago, so I haven't had too much experience within the program yet, but I have met and performed with lots of people in the program, most frequently being Michael McNulty, Ellis Nolan, and Elie Bashkow.