Summary of Dissertation Recitals: Connecting with the Roots (+),
Dominican Merengue: The Role of the Güira, Acoustic & Electro-Acoustic Works

by

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A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Musical Arts
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ABSTRACT

These three percussion dissertation recitals were given in lieu of a written dissertation. They were presented in partial fulfillment of the requirements for Doctor of Musical Arts (Music Performance: Percussion) at the University of Michigan. The work below represents the programing and research from the dissertation recitals.

The first recital, *Connecting with the Roots (+),* was presented on February 19, 2023 in Hankinson Rehearsal Hall at the University of Michigan. The program consisted of music written for solo Western classical percussion instruments by Dominican composers. Solos were written by Omar Ernesto Ramirez, Darwin Aquino, Dante Cucurrullo, Socrate Garcia, Aida De Moya, and Josean Jacobo. The recital also included three transcriptions and an original composition for percussion ensemble.

The second recital, a lecture entitled *Dominican Merengue: The Role of the Güira,* was presented on March 11, 2023, in Britton Recital Hall at the University of Michigan. The lecture was representative of the research I conducted in the summer of 2019, with the support of the Center *for World Performance Studies* on Dominican Music. It also featured historical information and rhythmical analysis detailing the evolution of the merengue from the 1930s to 2000s. Two solos were performed to end the lecture with influences from the style of playing the güira in the main two styles of merengue: perico ripiao and merengue de orquesta.

The third recital, *Acoustic & Electro-Acoustic Works,* was presented on March 26, 2023, in the McIntosh Theatre at the University of Michigan. The recital presented acoustic and electro-acoustic music from the 20th and 21st century. The acoustic pieces are: *Boomslang* by Roshanne Etezady, *Asanga* by Kevin Volans, and *Truc à Trac* by Nicolas Martynciow. The electro-acoustic works are: *Deus ex metronome* by Russell Wharton, *Interzones* by Bruce Hamilton, and *Ecotones* by Matthew Burtner. This program explores a wide range of the sonic aspects the percussive world has to offer, making this a varied and engaging program.

FIRST DISSERTATION RECITAL PROGRAM

JEAN CARLO UREÑA GONZÁLEZ, Percussion

Sunday, February 19th, 2023
Hankinson Rehearsal Hall
8:30PM

CONNECTING WITH THE ROOTS (+)

Guerrero Campeche (2020/21) Josean Jacobo (Vibraphone + Valsie/Triangle)

Preludio #2 (1977) Rafael (Bullumba) Landestoy

Sencillo (Vals Criollo) (1977) Rafael (Bullumba) Landestoy

Sedna's Waltz (2020/21) Aida De Moya (Marimba)

Aee mamá si ee (2020/21) Darwin Aquino (Multiple Percussion Set-Up)

El Vals de Santo Domingo (1977) Rafael (Bullumba) Landestoy, arr. Jean C. Ureña
Nancy Zeltsman

It Will be fine (in the aftermath) (2020/21) Socrates Garcia (Multiple Percussion Set-Up +Track)

Pequeña obra de percusión (2020/21) Dante Cucurrullo (Duo, Multiple Percussion Set-Up)
Peter Nichols

Paseando por las calles de mi pueblo (2020/21) Omar Ernesto Ramirez (Vibraphone)

Atezado (2013) by Jean Carlo Ureña González (Percussion ensemble)
Nolan Ehlers, Anna Mueller, Xin Yi Chong, James Koo, Peter Nichol, Gavin Ryan, Olivia Cirisan, Schuyler Donahoe, and Ancel 'Fitz' Neeley

Audio: Gavin Ryan

FIRST DISSERTATION RECITAL PROGRAM NOTES

CONNECTING WITH THE ROOTS (+)

The Dominican Republic is an island rich in music, rhythm, and culture. Growing up in such a diverse environment gave me the opportunity to be exposed to a wide variety of music, developing in me a curiosity in the percussive musical arts. *Connecting with the Roots* is my first commissioning project that brings six diverse Dominican composers, from rising stars to well-established professionals, to write works for solo (acoustic + electronic) and duo percussion music. The music presented in this recital illustrates some of the sounds and grooves heard throughout the Dominican Republic. This collaborative work aimed to develop six works that represent some of the composers' knowledge of Western music, combined with their non-Western backgrounds, and experiences.

Connecting with the Roots is the first step into developing more collaboration with Dominican composers and utilizing the percussive arts as a medium to share their voices.

Josean Jacobo, *Guerrero campeche*

Josean Jacobo is a Dominican pianist, composer, and arranger born on August 17th, 1987, in Santo Domingo. During his time at the Berklee College of Music, Jacobo developed his voice both as a composer and pianist. His music represents the rhythmic pulses of Afro-Caribbean and Créole music. Jacobo is considered one of the most important living jazz musicians in the Dominican Republic. With his group *Josean Jacobo & Tumbao,* he focuses on avant-garde jazz music, combining harmonies from traditional jazz with Afro-Dominican fusions[1].

In *Guerrero Campeche*, Jacobo incorporates a Dominican instrument called a "valsie," a single headed membranophone played by the performer sitting on top of it and pitch bending it with the foot while playing with both hands. Jacobo initially saw the piece as a duo, in which one of the players played valsie and triangle, and the other played the vibraphone. But, due to performance logistics when taking the piece on the road and not having a valise player

[1] Da Gama, "Josean Jacobo: Herencia Criolla."

accessible, the valsie and triangle are recorded. The tradition that Jacobo outlines in his composition is called *prí prí*, which is a tradition that is celebrated in Villa Mella[2], a place in the northern part of the capital, Santo Domingo. Traditionally prí prí instrumentation includes güira, accordion, and valsie. Jacob utilized the vibraphone as a substitute of the accordion, the reason why the chords through the piece are clustered together. Because of the Jacobo writing in prí prí style, several logistical and technical challenges emerge. Due to the physical construction of the vibraphone, closed voicing that are in complex moving chordal rhythms, are not as idiomatic to play and presents a challenge throughout the piece.

Guerrero Campeche follows a Rondo form with an introduction ABACBA, the "C" section being an open solo for valsie. There is an implied opportunity for the vibraphone to solo as well. The construction invites the possibility of expanding the work into an ensemble piece.



Figure 1: *Guerrero Campeche,* Vibraphone closed voiced chords excerpt

Rafael "Bullumba" Landestoy, *Guitar Compositions*

- *Preludio #2*
- *Sencillo (Vals Criollo)*

Dominican composer Rafael "Bullumba" Landestoy (Romana, 1925-2018), was one of the most prominent Latin American composers. He studied piano with Mary Siragusa at the National Conservatory of Music of Santo Domingo. He also studied at the Music Conservatory of Mexico and took some courses at Juilliard School of Music in New York City where he resided for a part of his life in the 1950s and later in 1977. He is known for his focus on piano compositions, which include *Vals de las Ninfas, Vals de Santo Domingo, Criollo en Do, and*

[2] Nicolás, "Afro Dominican Drumming."

Minivans, among others[3]. Landestoy is considered one of the most prominent Latin American composers and the most prolific Dominican composer of the *Bolero*. His works included 30 piano pieces, 12 guitar solos, and 10 art songs for soprano and piano. Most of his piano and guitar pieces were written at the San Antonio Abad Monastery in Humacao, Puerto Rico, where he began a spiritual journey in 1962. During his time in the monastery, Bullumba taught piano, classical guitar, and composition. Much of maestro Landestoy's music is frequently played throughout the Dominican Republic and it is utilized for pedagogical purposes in the National Conservatory of Music of Santo Domingo (CNM). His music can also be heard on the recording entitled *Compositores Dominicano* recorded by the notable Dominican pianist, Maria de Fatima Geraldes, who is a professor at CNM and a champion of his music.

Prelude #2, Sencillo (Vals Criollo), Waltz in E, *Pueblerino, Prelude #1,* and *Criolla en La Mayor,* are Landestoy's most well-known guitar pieces. *Prelude #2* is traditionally paired with a more up-beat Landestoy composition, *Plueberino or Sencillo*.

Sencillo, on the other hand, is a transcription by Juan Sorroche written in an ABA form with a coda. In most of Bullumba's compositions, the closed clustered chord voicing was utilized to give a sense of intensity as well as release. This is much appreciated in his iconic piece *El Vals de Santo Domingo* in which Bullumba makes chords and key transitions by utilizing this method.

Aida De Moya, *Sedna's Waltz*

Aida De Moya is a composer, arranger, orchestrator, and guitarist from the Dominican Republic born on February 20th, 1992. Her compositions blend jazz elements with her folkloric roots from the Dominican Republic, as well as influences from Brazilian Music. Her studies at Berklee College of Music and New England Conservatory in Jazz composition, nurtured her compositional voice. De Moya is the winner of the Jazz Education Network's Young Composer Showcase of 2017. Her arrangements have been performed by renowned artists such as Paquito D'Rivera, Berta Rojas, Arturo Sandoval, and Toninho Horta[4].

[3] Torres-Santos, "Chapter Two: Dominican Republic." 24.
[4] De Moya, "About, Bio."

Sedna's Waltz is a challenging piece that paints a portrait of a goddess of the sea of the same name. Sedna is a goddess who is known for bouncing with the waves and caring for all the creatures. Even as a goddess, she finds herself trapped in routine, wondering if there's more to life than these tasks she's been given. In this work, Sedna is portrayed to go on an adventure in which she faces challenges and unexpected turns, learning to appreciate the little moments in life. Towards the end, we can hear her coming back on the same waves she rode before understanding her unique place in this world.



Figure 2: *Sedna's Waltz,* A' Section excerpt

The form in De Moya's composition follows a unique structural form. The form of the piece goes as follows: Introduction-A-A'-B-B'-Bridge-A'-Coda. In which some of the sections, for example the B and B' are in essence similar, but the flow in which the melodic line can be perceived is different, since the in the B' section could be interpreted as a new triple feel. Which is different from the B section, that there is a clear sense of where the strong down beat is at. Each new section contains a coda, either by the addition of tempo changes like ritardando or by having a cadential point on a fermata.



Figure 3: *Sedna's Waltz,* B section excerpt



Figure 4: *Sedna's Waltz,* B' section excerpt

Darwin Aquino, *Aee mamá si ee*

Darwin Aquino is a composer and conductor born on December 22nd, 1979. He is the conductor of the St. Louis Philharmonic Orchestra and Opera Theater of St. Louis. Aquino is the former artistic director of the El Sistema of Dominican Republic. Aquino's most celebrated orchestra composition is *Espacio Ritual,* premiered by the Orchestre Philharmonique de Radio France[5].

Aee Mamá Si Ee is inspired by a folk song from a music tradition played throughout the Dominican Republic, Palo or Atabales. Palo can be played for a religious ceremony (to a saint or funeral) or on special occasions (secular parties)[6]. The main theme of the song has been an inspiration for the composer for the past fifteen years. In his composition, Aquino aims to convey the traditional usage of these manifestations as a ritualistic and nonsecular soundscape.

The piece begins with the note "Like a Ritual Space," giving the opportunity for the performer to develop a free initial statement with the palo song *(Aee Mamá Si Ee*) that the piece is titled after. Even though in some versions of the palo tradition, the tambourine is utilized as a sort of "clave" rhythm, Aquino's incorporation of the tambourine for its initial interaction is abrupt and arrhythmic, serving as a sudden transition between sections, Como un Espacio Ritual and Un poco Pa'lante (Like a ritual space and a little forward).

Traditionally the palo song, *Aee Mamá Si Ee,* is performed unharmonized with a call and response form. However, Aquino presents the lyrics, with harmonic interactions that are played on the marimba. All this accompanied by the suspended cymbal being struck with brushes.



Figure 5: *Aee Mamá Si Eee palo song excerpt*

Right after the secular portion of the piece featuring the lyrics from *Aee Mamá Si Ee*, traditionally the palo ensemble reacts with the more rhythmical portion of palo, Aquino kept the

[5] Aquino, "Biography."
[6] Santana and Sánchez. *La Música Folclórica Dominicana,* 371.

same form in his composition. The piece ends with a more improvisational section in which the performer is asked to revisit their favorite moments, ending on the note "G."

"Our first son Riccardo was born during the pandemic when I was composing this piece. In a very special passage, his lullaby is heard. Hopefully some of you can remember "Hasta Mañana, Si Dios Quiere" from the famous Topo Gigio."[7] - Darwin Aquino

Rafael (Bullumba) Landestoy, *El Vals de Santo Domingo*

El Vals de Santo Domingo (The Santo Domingo Waltz) was originally written for piano solo and could be found in Bullumba's collection *Romantic Contemporary Music from the Dominican Republic*. Along with the composer, pianist Martin Söderberg worked on an album titled *Piano Music of Rafael Landestoy* that became a comprehensive recording for references to future performances of the pieces. Bullumba's compositions have been transcribed for different instrumentation in small and large ensembles. This waltz has versions for solo piano, Violin, and Piano; Violin,Viola, Cello, and Harp; full orchestra, and now for two marimbas[8]. In the Dominican Republic, the most popularized versions are the piano and orchestra version, which are also how Bullumba's voice is kept alive throughout the country. The full orchestra version can be listened to in the *Clasicos Dominicanos* album project.

Socrates Garcia, *It Will be Fine (in the aftermath)*

Socrates Garcia is a composer, arranger, producer, record engineer, bandleader, guitarist, and educator from the Dominican Republic. Currently he is the Associate Professor of Music and Director of Music Technology at the University of Northern Colorado, where he teaches music technology and advanced jazz arranging. Garcia's composition represents a symbiotic combination of Afro-Dominican and Afro-Caribbean genres within the aesthetic of contemporary jazz. An example of this is his latest album *Back Home*, where Garcia incorporates Dominican traditions such as Palo, Bachata, Merengue, and Gaga. In his *Dominican Suite for*

[7] Aquino, "*Aee mamá si ee"*

[8] Yumpu. "Celebration of Dominican Classical Composers and Musician."

Jazz Orchestra, Garcia gives the Güira (a Dominican metal scraped instrument) a more prominent role, which is unusual in a big band setting[9].

It Will be Fine (in the aftermath), is a reflection and statement on the events that humanity experienced in the world in the past decade including, COVID-19, natural disasters, the government revelations of UFO, immigration concentration camps, wars, and creation of weapons of mass destruction. Garcia uses the phrase "Time is running out…," as a statement on the need for action to be taken to fight these problems.

The initial speech in the fixed media presents a challenge for the performer since the timing has to line up with the statements being made. This is because the composer wants each statement to have an impact on the audience and this can only be done by the performer's careful timing of the words, and melodic lines. However, the computer becomes more duo-like with its next appearance, when it is accompanied by the glockenspiel.



Figure 6: *It will be fine excerpt,* Glockenspiel and fixed media excerpt

Garcia is the first composer to utilize the Dominican percussion instrument Tambora in a solo multi-percussion piece setting. The tambora makes its first appearance with a *Pambiche* rhythm, which is looped by the performer and utilized to accompany the next theme presented by the vibraphone. The piece ends with a shortened version of the initial computer and glockenspiel theme. The voice of the composer can be heard at the end of the piece stating the title of the piece "In the aftermath…, everything will be fine…", and is accompanied with freely bowed crotales that are timed with the words. Because of the specific usage of multiple tracks, the performer needs a midi keyboard to trigger each track before performing each new section.

[9] Garcia, "About."

Dante Cucurrullo, *Pequeña obra de Multipercusión*

Pianist and conductor Dante Cucurrullo was born on January 13th,1957 in San Juan, Dominican Republic. In 1981 he graduated from the National Conservatory of Music, with a certificate in Piano Performance. Cuccurullo was the Vice Principal of the National Conservatory of Music, Director of Orchestral Activities, Conductor of the Juan Pablo Duarte Symphony Orchestra, and Director of the Contemporary Philharmonic Orchestra. In 1996, Cucurullo received a *Casandra Dominican Music Award* for Classical Composer of the Year. Currently, Cucurrullo is the Conductor of the in-house orchestra of the National Theater in the Dominican Republic. Cucurrullo's well-known compositions include *Sueño, Ciclo de Interrogantes 7, Ciclo de Afirmaciones,* and his latest symphonic poem composition *Garrick*[10].

Pequeña obra de multipercusión is a short piece that depicts the composer's affinity for clowns. His latest work, *Garrick,* tells a story of a clown that was sad because he could not make people laugh. The abrupt interaction of the woodblock is a reaction of the "clown" character, Pequeña *obra de multipercusión* does not tell a story, but the funky "clown-like" walk represented in the triple bass line is performed on the marimba, vibraphone, and timpani. The "clown-like" feel of the bass line is due to the placement of the voices. Although the composer accentuates the big beats, the second portion of the triplet bassline lays on the lower note, which gives the wrong sense of where the beat is to the piece. In addition to this, the majority of the melodic line interactions from the vibraphone and marimba, start in the third portion of the triple.



Figure 7: *Pequeña Obra de Percusion* excerpt*,* Bassline excerpt

The piece was originally conceived with the intention to create a solo percussion work, however because of the logistical concert *Pequeña Obra de Multipercusíon* has been adapted into a duo.

[10] *Universidad EAFIT,* "Dante Cucurullo."

Omar Ernesto Ramirez, *Paseando por las calles de mi pueblo*

Omar Ernesto Ramirez was born in Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic on March 27th, 1993. Ramirez is a pianist, composer, poet, and singer-songwriter that combines his Dominican roots with the classical Western background he developed during his time at the National Conservatory of Music of Santo Domingo and later at the Cleveland Institute of Music. In 2018, Ramirez released his debut album titled, *Morívivi,* which focused on exploring allusively the nostalgia, depression and fear of failure that a Dominican artist feels when immigrating to the United States[11]. Omar describes the story he conveys through the piece as follow:

> Paseando por las Calles de Mi Pueblo (Walking through the Streets of My Town) aims to recreate the sonic experience of what it felt like to go back home after living abroad. As I walked around my old neighborhood a medley of songs surrounded me. All the different sounds, rhythms, and genres coexisting in the same space unveiling the idiosyncrasies that make up our Dominican Folklore.[12]

Paseando por las Calles de Mi Pueblo, develops from a simple theme that Ramirez presents at the very beginning of the piece. The whispered theme presented at the beginning becomes an eight-bar phrase, accompanied by an intricate bassline reflective of the composer's influence from Dominican merengue bass patterns' developing into this eleven-minute work.

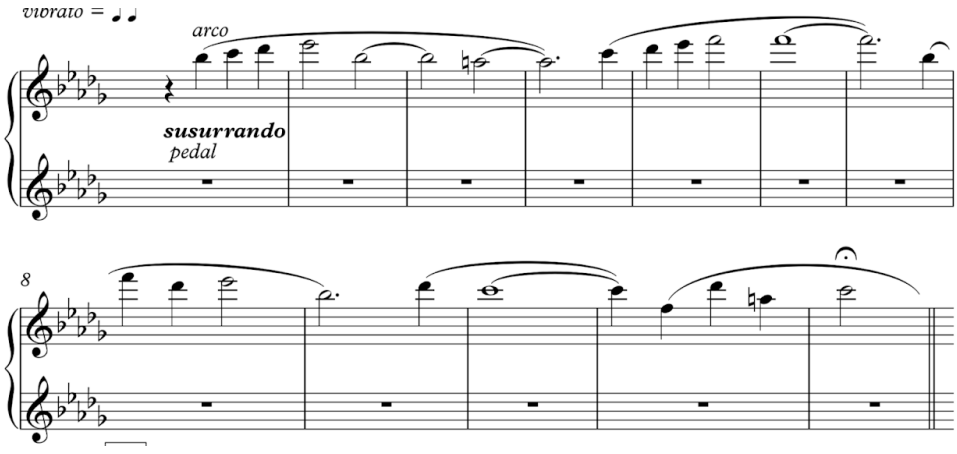


Figure 8: *Paseando por las calles de mi pueblo* excerpt, initial theme

[11] Ramírez, "Morivivi the album."
[12] Ramírez, "Paseando Por Las Calles de mi Pueblo"

Throughout the piece, Ramirez develops this initial theme, channeling his focus on different materials, but always keeping the theme's essence present. The theme is broken into three subsections that can be heard in the middle and end of the piece led by broken arpeggiated chords to reflect the differences between the present versus memories the composer wanted to convey.

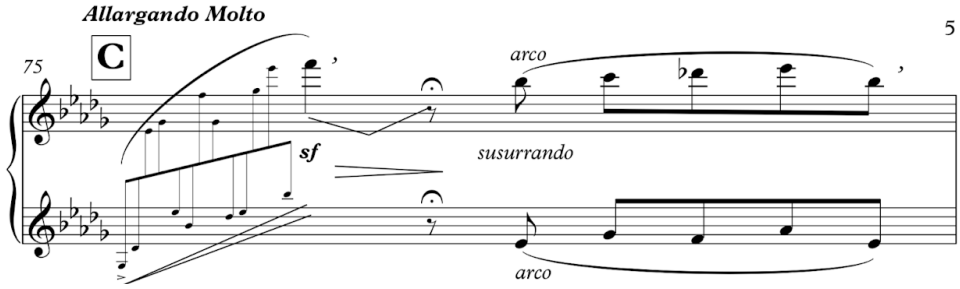


Figure 9: *Paseando por las calles de mi pueblo* excerpt, broken arpeggiated and subsection of the theme

The secondary theme gets developed in three ways: chromatic harmonic changes, rhythmic intricacy, and expansion of the tessitura to cover the full range of the vibraphone. Ramirez's usages of the bass line for the majority of the piece represents an accompaniment until the second the last development of the theme, in which the bassline becomes the focus point for the section.



Figure 10: *Paseando por las Calles de mi Pueblo* excerpt, Moving bassline excerpt

Jean Carlo Ureña González, *ATEZA'O*

The name *ATEZA'O*, is a reflection on the name of a percussion group I co-founded in 2013. The group's former members were students of mine and my brother's, as well as studio mates from the National Conservatory of Music of Santo Domingo. The group came about when the conductor of the *Orquesta Dominicana De Vientos (ODV)* asked me to write a piece for a new shipment of instruments that we were about to receive in the spring of 2013. My first percussion ensemble piece, *Inspiracion*, was a result of this.

All the individual parts in *Inspiracíon* were composed thinking of the player that would be assigned to it, so it could challenge them but also be within their technical abilities and strengths. *ATEZA'O* was created using the same process. The creation of this piece happened one night in the summer of 2013 when excitement of participating in the Youth Orchestra of the Americas (YOA) festival, for their residency in Dominican Republic, kept me up at night so I decided to utilize my time composing.

ATEZA'O incorporates multiple traditions and instruments rooted in the Dominican Republic with the western classical instruments. Throughout the piece elements of the Caribbean can be heard thanks to the sound of rhythms such as: Palo, Gaga, and Guloya. Three hollow long single headed drums–palo mayor, chivita o respondon, and alcahuete–represent the palo trio tradition. The triangle pattern that starts the groove of the piece and the snare drum pattern that comes at the end finishes the mixing of traditions representing the Guloya. Lastly, the drumset transcribes the rhythm a Gaga ensemble would be representing. This mixing of traditions from the Dominican Republic is one of my compositional signatures. Given the similarities in the feel, and groove from the traditions utilized in the piece are: gaga, palo, and guloya gives the impression of a dense and diverse rhythm section, which represents the mixture of culture and traditions the Dominican Republic is known for.

This recital titled *Connecting with the Roots* + is a project with the purpose of bringing these composers' works to light, not just from the works they created for this specific project, but also their previous works. It also aims to open the door for many other commissions that could develop directly from this. In addition, this project serves as a tool that could be utilized as an ambassador material for Dominican Republic culture, through the sharing of its music, rhythms, and tradition.

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SECOND DISSERTATION LECTURE RECITAL PROGRAM

JEAN CARLO UREÑA GONZÁLEZ, Percussion

Saturday, March 11, 2023
Moore Building, Britton Recital Hall
3:00 PM

DOMINICAN MERENGUE: THE ROLE OF THE GÜIRA

Merengue Patterns (Tambora & Güiro)
- Primera
- Segunda
- Pambiche
- Caballito
- A Lo Maco
- Mambo
- Joyao

Compadre Pedro Juan (1951) Luis Alberti (1906-1976)

Vale la Pena (1998) Juan Luis Guerra (b. 1957)

Güira Inspired Snare Drum Solos (2023) Jean Carlo Ureña González (b. 1993)
- **# 1 (to Yapo)**
- **# 2**

A La Dolorita (2019) Yasser Tejeda y Palotré

Candela Pa Lo Pie (2019) La Gran Mawon

Audio: Gavin Ryan

SECOND DISSERTATION LECTURE RECITAL SCRIPT

DOMINICAN MERENGUE: THE ROLE OF THE GÜIRA

Introduction

Thank you all for attending my second dissertation lecture recital - *Dominican Merengue: The Role of the Güira.* As a native of the Dominican Republic, most of my interests in music are influenced by the traditions I was exposed to throughout my time growing up in the Dominican Republic. Dominican Merengue, along with Bachata, are traditions very accessible everywhere in the country: in little convenience stores called "colmado," radio, TV commercials jingles, at home during "cleaning time," school dances, and family gatherings. Merengue is also connected to the ownership of our "Dominicanidad," our Dominican identity.

Today's lecture will focus on the güira, an instrument common across many Dominican musical traditions. My passion to become a percussionist comes from the güira. But, before we dive into all things güira related, I want to share some general background information regarding the Dominican Republic, so we can place ourselves geographically in the land of the "platano power," Quisqueya.

Dominican Republic

Christopher Columbus "discovered" the island in 1492 and named it Hispaniola. The country is located on the archipelago of the Greater Antilles and constitutes the second largest island in the Caribbean area, after Cuba[13]. The island's dimensions are 76,421 square kilometers, which are shared with Haiti. The Dominican Republic occupies a little over two-thirds of the island. When Christopher Columbus arrived the island was inhabited by the Tainos (Arawak), an indigenous group that populated Northern South America and Caribbean[14].

The Dominican Republic gained its independence on February 27, 1844. This year was considered the First Republic[15]. The capital is Santo Domingo. The population is over eleven

[13] Volf, "D.R. vs Cuba."
[14] Strochlic, "Meet the survivors."
[15] "Historia breve de la República Dominicana."

million and their race is considered mulatto (mixed races). The flag of the D.R. is called “la bandera tricolor” (the tricolor flag), because of the three main colors incorporated on it: blue represents the sky and God, red represents the blood spilled by the comrades during the battle of indepences, white represents the peace and union between all Dominicans[16]. The food is plantain-based: “mangu con los tres golpes” (mangu with the three hitters), which is mashed plantain, fried cheese, eggs and salami.

What is Merengue?

Today we are focusing on the role of the güira in the merengue. But in order to understand how the güira fits in the grand scheme of the merengue we need to understand what merengue is. The earliest documentation of merengue dates back to the First Republic of 1844, when the Dominican Republic gained its independence from Haiti. The first president of the Dominican Republic from 1844 to 1848, Pedro Santana, decreed that every military base had a band. This helped the diffusion of merengue as a national rhythm, aided by the fact that it was the only musical tradition accepted by elite society. The first written version of merengue was composed in the 1840s by Colonel Juan Bautista Alfonseca[17].

Merengue has a connection with the three main races that are predominant in the Dominican Republic: Taino, European, and African[18]. The Arawak people's influence is reflected in the usage of the güiro made of gourd or calabash, which later became the güira, directly influenced from the cassava grating mechanism utilized by the indigenous people, made of tin. The guitar and accordion come from Europe. The African influence comes from the double headed instrument utilized in the tradition, called “tambora.”

Instrumentation:

Since the origin of the merengue the phrase “sin güira y tambora no hay merengue” (if there is no güira and tambora it isn’t merengue) has been true. Güira and tambora have always been the beating heart of the merengue tradition. In the beginning the strings utilized to

[16] Vasquez, “Día de la Bandera.”
[17] “Biografía, carrera, discos y canciones de Juan Bautista Alfonseca.”
[18] Rosado, *El Merengue Contemporaneo,* 23.

accompany the rhythms were, guitar, cuatro, tres, bandurria, and tiple. All of these were later replaced by the German accordion.

Type of Merengue Bands

Bandas Tipica o de Perico Ripiao is the merengue style that is most connected to the beginning of the merengue, the instrumentation is güira, tambora, accordion, and marimbula (wooden box with pluck metal blade). Later on the conga, saxophone, and electric bass were introduced. In the *Merengue de Orquesta o Salon,* the instrumentation stays the same for the rhythm section (tambora, güira, congas, and electric bass), but the piano replaces the accordion, the horn section expands now with saxophone, trumpet and trombone.

- [play merengue tipico and merengue de orquesta video excerpt] -

To understand the role of the güira, we need to understand its counterpart in the merengue, the tambora.

Tambora:

The tambora is a double headed membranophone instrument that comes in direct influence from the tribe Bantu in Africa[19]. It is a small wooden barrel, normally made out of a hollow avocado tree. In previous years, the skin utilized was goat, female on the side that is played with the hand and male goat for the side that is played with the stick. Nowadays, it is more common to see cow and calf skin. The tambora is played sitting down and placed on your lap, with the higher pitch sounding side on the left hand, to achieve the "seco" sound (slap). The left hand plays open, closed, and slap or seco with bare hands. The right-hand plays with a stick on the rim, head, and a combination of both rim and edge of the head. Carlos Perez and Eligio Mendez are two of the makers responsible for the development of the "sound" of the tambora. And one of the important people, among others, responsible for the playing aspect in the development of the tambora is Angel Andujar (Catarey). Up until this day he is considered the

[19] Rosado, *El Merengue Contemporaneo,* 29

best tambora player that has ever lived, because of his vast knowledge of the tambora patterns, style, and adaptation when playing.

- [perform merengue in 1st and 2nd on Tambora] -

Güira:

The güira is an idiophone instrument originally made out of tin or metal. Currently, it is made out of nickel steel, thanks to the influences in the production of Guillermo Lopez. To produce a sound on the güira, we utilized something called "gancho;" however, other names are acceptable depending on the region or country such as lena, pullero, trinche or peine. The güira in the 20th century replaced the güiro made of bangaña that was utilized in the 19th century and early 20th century to play merengue[20].

One of the most important figures in the history of the güira is Cuco Valoy, who made the first güira made out of tin (oil can), the one that looks more similar to the modern güira, during his active times as a merengue singer 1970s - 1990s[21]. Guillermo Güira, who is the father of the modern güira, was the first person to develop one made out of nickel steel, which made them more long lasting. Guillermo is also responsible for designing the handle for the güira. Some influential güira players who developed the style and placed the güira as a more soloistic instrument include Pablito Barriga (clean sound), Manuel Güira, Paco Quero, Johnny Venturya (who later became one of the most influential merengue singers of the country, titled "El Caballo Mayor," the main horse), and Rafael Martinez (Yapo) developer of the florid merengue pattern[22].

Through time, updates in the fabrications of the güira have made significant changes that affect the sound production. A güira from the 50s will not sound the same as a güira from the 2000s: a modern güira sound is darker but sharp, whereas it used to be thin. The first güira inspiration comes from the taino influence of the "Guayo," which is the grater utilized to make the dish called "casabe" through the grating of cassava. Later on came Cuco Valoy's development (tin güira). Guillermo Lopez, also known as Guillermo Güira, developed the

[20] Rosado, *El Merengue Contemporaneo,* 36.
[21] Esta Noche Mariasela, "¿Cómo se hace la güira?"
[22] Vargas, "Top 5 de los mejores güireros"

modern güira (nickel steel made). The previous tin-made güira wears out quicker and the handle falls apart easily through usage since it was welded. For the past thirty years, Guillermo has been responsible for the güira sound every merengue player has. His collaborator is "La Piraña" (the piranha), who makes the grains on the instrument by hand with a bold nail. The making of a güira takes around three and a half hours, their size can be of 18', 19', 20' or 24' x 13', 15'. The "Gancho" used to play the güira generally has 10 to 12 spokes[23].

- [perform güira examples, merengue in 1st, 2nd and pambiche] -

Other traditions in which you can hear the güira are bachata, salve, carabine, palo o atabales, pripri, sarandunga, mangulina, and gaga.

Writing for the Güira and Tambora:

Like many folk traditions from other cultures, the merengue rhythm section patterns have always been passed by rote. However, in the 1960s Luis Alberti, considered one of the fathers of the merengue as we know it today, created a method book called *Método de güira y tambora,* in which he transcribed the pattern into a western notation[24]. For the tambora, he assigned a specific line or space on a musical staff to reflect which sound needed to be done and with which hand. For the güira he utilized the same system as string bowings to show when to pull the gancho up or down. On February 08, 2023, Janina Rosado pianist and arranger for the past three decades for one of the most influential musicians, *Juan Luis Guerra y 440*, released a book that will change the way people write merengue, titled *El Merengue Contemporaneo, manual para la base rítmica*[25] (The contemporary merengue, rhythmic base manual). This book presents images of how to create the sounds on instruments like the tambora and güira, but also shows the notation of the rhythms in a similar manner to how percussion or drums are written today. This book will prevent misinterpretation of the patterns since composers will have a clear resource to write the patterns correctly.The book also explains the utilization of the piano and electric bass in the merengue.

[23] Contreras, "Figuración Musical para la Güira Dominicana," 26.
[24] Ureña, De la Rosa, and Valenzuela, "Ritmos Dominicano," 6-8.
[25] Rosado, *El Merengue Contemporaneo*

- [play excerpt from *Concert for Saxophone and Orchestra* by Bienvenido Bustamante. First excerpt with the percussion playing the rhythm wrong, second with the percussion playing what the rhythm is supposed to be, rather than what is written] -

1930s-50s Merengue

These three decades are considered the most important for the development and boom of the merengue as a key part of Dominican nationality. The only dictator the country ever had for a long period, Rafael Leonidas Trujillo (1934-1961)[26], was a key component of this, since he utilized the merengue for his campaigning and for his elite society gatherings. Luis Alberti used to work for the dictator. He is responsible for the structure of the merengue nowadays, thanks to his composition *Compadre Pedro Juan (*paseo, merengue body and jaleo). During this time the orchestras had a big band format and the dance was more connected to ballroom dance than the steps currently utilized. In these decades, the accordion and guitar got replaced by clarinet, trumpet, and piano. The güira was more of a metronomic component; few flourish interactions happened, and the rhythm was played straight forward.

- [perform *Compadre Pedro Juan* by Luis Alberti] -

1960s-70s Merengue

The Afrocuban conga made its appearance into the band and the saxophone obtained a bigger involvement in the "jaleo" section. In replacement of the double bass, Johnny Ventura was one of the first to incorporate electric bass in his band[27]. In these decades the sounds created by the bands were influenced by North American Music, in particular electronic music and rap. One of the influential merengue band leaders, Wilfrido Vargas, heavily utilized this influence in his song *El Jardinero.* The güira was still considered a metronomic component, playing the patterns straight forward.

[26] Pletcher, "Rafael Trujillo."
[27] Rosado, *El Merengue Contemporaneo,* 58.

- [play *El Jardinero* by Wilfrido Vargas video excerpt] -

1980s-90s Merengue

The 80s were considered the golden age of the merengue. Due to the proliferation of the orchestra, there was a higher demand for it. TV hosted merengue bands more often. Because the merengue was being played at a faster speed in this decade, two merengue variations came out of this process: Caballito and A lo Maco.

- [perform Caballito and A lo Maco on tambora and güira] -

Los Hermanos Rosario and Las Chicas del Can (an all-female group) were representative bands of the 80s merengue.

- [play excerpt of *Ta Pillao* by Las Chicas del Can video excerpt] -

In the 90s, merenhouse started to develop out of the connection and influence merengue obtained from Northamerican music. Groups such as Proyecto Uno and Ilegales were boy bands that utilized güira and tambora in their music. Also in the 90s Juan Luis Guerra, after coming back to the Dominican Republic from his studies at Berklee College of Music, started to incorporate jazz harmony into his music, adding more complex harmonies to the merengue. In both the 80s and 90s the güira started to be utilized more as a color change than a metronomic element.

- [perform excerpt of *Vale la Pena* by Juan Luis Guerra] -

2000s Merengue

Faster merengue tempos made the creation of the “mambo” a reality. Patterns in the rhythm section became simpler, but they were charged with “cortes” (complex cues) and more embellished percussion playing. The horns started to reach a higher tessitura in their interjections. The lyrics and the singing became more connected to Hip-Hop rapping style.

Singers like Julian “Oro Duro,” Omega “El Fuerte,” and Juliana “La Reina del Mambo” were key contributors in the development of this style of merengue.

- [perform examples of mambo, as well as play video excerpt of *Ya Yo Mangue To "En Vivo” by* Omega] -

How do we incorporate this into our “classical studies”?

Due to my fond memories playing the güira with my family in birthday celebrations, as well as the multiple times I shared the stage performing side-to-side with my brother (I played güira and he tambora), I have always known that I want to create a book in which I explore all the traditions the güira is utilized in the form of snare drum solos. The solos incorporate güira techniques or phrasing.

Through my time as a student, I have worked on solo or etude books that approach the snare drum in different ways, such as rudimental or orchestral snare drum playing. Some of these books have specific and unique ways of writing, such as Jacques Delecluse’s *Twelve Studies for Snare Drum*[28] *(orchestral),* Joe Tompkins’ Nine French-American Rudimental Solos[29] (mix of rudimental/orchestral), John S. Pratt’s *14 Modern Contest Solos: for Snare Drum*[30] *(rudimental),* and Sam Solomon’s *Hitchhicker Etudes*[31] (paired with recording excerpts of different music styles). This gave me the idea of the possibility of sharing my culture through the snare drum, so even though people are not able to play the instruments, they could still learn and benefit from feeling music in a different way. *Güira-Inspired Solos for the Snare Drum* aims to share and expose the player and the audience to different traditions from the Dominican Republic through the snare drum.

One of the challenges creating a book with this concept in mind is that the way of producing sound on both instruments is different. Finding snare drum techniques that convey the unique sound of the güira was a challenge. The first solo I created is inspired by the solo my favorite güira player, Yapo, did while on tour with Juan Luis Guerra.

[28] Delecluse, *Twelve Studies for Snare Drum*
[29] Tompkin, *Nine French-American Rudimental Solos*
[30] Pratt, *14 Modern Contest Solos: for Snare Drum*
[31] Solomon, *Hitchhicker Etudes for Snare Drum*

- [play video excerpt from Yapo's solo] -

- [perform excerpt from *Solo #1 to Yapo* by JCUG on the güira; perform *Solo #1*] -

The second solo is inspired by the güira playing style utilized in *Perico Ripiao*, in which the player adds a kick drum to complement and support the electric bass.

- [perform mini solo with the style and incorporating the kick drum] -

- [perform *Solo #2* by JCUG] -

From here I will continue to study in greater depth other traditions from the Dominican Republic, such as *Salve, Palo,* and *Gaga,* to figure out ways in which I can convey these styles on the snare drum.

- [perform excerpt from *A La Dolorita* by Yasser Tejeda (salve) and *Candela Pa Lo Pie* by La Gran Mawon (gaga)] -

Thank you all for coming! I really appreciate everyone taking their time to share this afternoon with me learning about all things güira.

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THIRD DISSERTATION RECITAL PROGRAM

JEAN CARLO UREÑA GONZÁLEZ, Percussion

Sunday, March 26th, 2023
McIntosh Theater, University of Michigan
2:30PM

ACOUSTIC & ELECTRO-ACOUSTIC WORKS

Asanga (1997) Kevin Volans (Multiple Percussion Set-Up)

Boomslang (2007) Roshanne Etezady (Marimba)

Truc à Trac (2015) Nicolas Martynciow (Snare Drum)

Deus ex metronome (2019) Russell Wharton (Snare Drum + Fixed Media)

Interzones (1996) Bruce Hamilton (Vibraphone + Fixed Media)

Ecotones (2013) Matthew Burtner (Percussion + Fixed media)

Audio: Gavin Ryan

THIRD DISSERTATION RECITAL PROGRAM NOTES

ACOUSTIC & ELECTRO-ACOUSTIC WORKS

The third dissertation recital, titled *Acoustic & Electro-Acoustic Works,* is an exploration of 20th and 21st century acoustic and electro-acoustic works. Through the utilization of mallet instruments, snare drum, and multiple percussion, this recital explores pieces that reveal a wide range of the sonic aspect the percussive world has to offer, making this a varied and engaging program. These pieces are also intended to expose the performer and the audience to contrasting music.

Kevin Volans, *Asanga*

Composer and pianist Kevin Volans was born on July 26, 1949, in Pietermaritzburg, South Africa. During the 1970s Volans studied with Karlheinz Stockhausen and Mauricio Kagel in Cologne. In the 1980s, his compositions in addition to being influenced by Stockhousen, were also influenced by his research conducted in South Africa, anti-conceptual and non-formal composition[32]. In 1997 he was listed by the BBC Music Magazine as one of 50 of the most important living composers.

Asanga, in the ancient Indo-European language of Indian *Sanskrit* translates to "freedom from attachment." Dedicated to and premiered by percussionist Roby Schulkowsky on September 30th, 1998, in Stockholm. Volans wrote the piece as a gift to Schulkowsky on the event of her father's death[33].

For the instrumentation, Volans suggests four low drums, including a bass drum, two higher tom-toms, and two metal plates or extremely high skins[34].

Volans throughout *Asanga* mostly utilize forte, fortissimo or fortissisimo. However, only in two sections of the piece he goes under this dynamic to piano, in measures 73 - 77. This section works as a transition into, larges sixteenth note base section that precedes it. The second

[32] Volans, Kevin. "Biography."
[33] Walsh, Jordan Taylor. "Finding Meaning in Detachment."
[34] Volans, Kevin. "Asanga (1997).

time a dynamic marking in the softer side (mezzo-piano) appears is in the coda, with each quintuplet interaction the bass drum has.



Figure 11: *Asanga* excerpt, only piano section



Figure 12: *Asanga* excerpt, mezzo-piano BD interaction

Roshanne Etezady, *Boomslang*

Roshane Etezady is an American composer and educator born in 1973. Etezady studied piano and flute. During her formative years she was exposed to a vast array of styles of music that developed her musical curiosity. Philip Glass' performance on *Saturday Night Live* in 1986, awakened Etezady's interest in contemporary classical, as well as the idea of becoming a composer[35]. Etezady's work has been commissioned and performed by Albany Symphony, PRISM Saxophone Quartet, Eighth Blackbird, and the Amadinda Percussion Ensemble, to name a few. Etezady's advocacy for creating open dialogue between composers, performers, and audiences, can be seen through her outreach programs and performances with the Minimum Security Composer Collective[36].

[35] The Wind Repertory Project. "Roshanne Etezady."
[36] The Wind Repertory Project. "Roshanne Etezady."

Boomslang was commissioned in 2007 by percussionist Gwendolyn Dease and later recorded as a part of Dease's 2012 album of the same name. Etezady's marimba composition is inspired by the snake "boomslang."[37] The snake is represented with the phrasing of the syncopated bass line.



Figure 13: *Boomslang,* excerpt, opening syncopated bass line



Figure 14: *Boomslang* excerpt, return of syncopated bass line initial phrase

The Six note grouping in measure 139 can be perceived as an interaction inspired by Jacob Druckman's *Reflection on the Nature of Water,* where the first movement *crystalline,* plays with the similar grouping that is as Etezady presents it in *Boomslang* and is also followed by either syncopated rhythms or rolls.



Figure 15: *Boomslang e*xcerpt, six note grouping gesture

[37] Seiphetlho, Ntefeleng. "Boomslang."

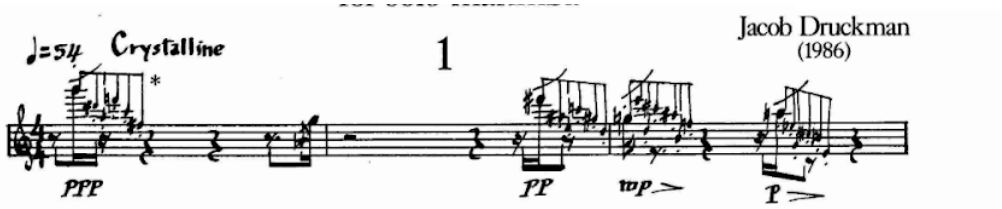


Figure 16: *Reflection on the Nature of Water* excerpt, six note grouping interaction

The contrasting middle section of the piece "Slithery," breaks with the playful phrasing Etezady utilized in the earlier section and this time sticks more with a phrasing that outlines the metric in which disconnects the feel of this new section from the initial mood.



Figure 17: *Boomslang* excerpt, slithery section

With extension and elaboration on previous materials, Etezady finishes the piece with an extended coda that lasts 37 measures. This syncopated bass line material comes back as a quicker version each time new returning material appears and is accompanied by tempo mark changes that indicate "slightly faster" or "yet faster."



Figure 18: *Boomslang* excerpt, slightly faster section

Nicolas Martynciow, *Truc à Trac*

Nicolas Martynciow is a French percussionist, drummer, and composer. He studied percussion with Claude Giot, Philippe Boisson, and Francis Brana. In 1990 he graduated from the Conservatoire National Supérieur de Musique et Danse de Paris. In addition to *Truc à Trac,* Martynciow is responsible for two of the most popular snare drum pieces, *Impression* and *Tchik,* with *two* of the most performed solos among national and international snare drum competitions[38].

Truc à Trac was written in 2015. Through the piece, Martynciow requests the percussionist to utilize sticks and brushes. At the beginning of the piece, Martynciow gives a "performance notation" in which he specifies what each symbol he selected for his composition means (normal stroke, on the rim, stick on stick, normal, rimshot bossa nova, rimshot jazz, and one hand buzz). He also explains the French sticking system that utilizes a filled dot for left hand and a hollow circle for right hand. Adapting to this notation system is one of the biggest challenges the performer faces when playing this piece.

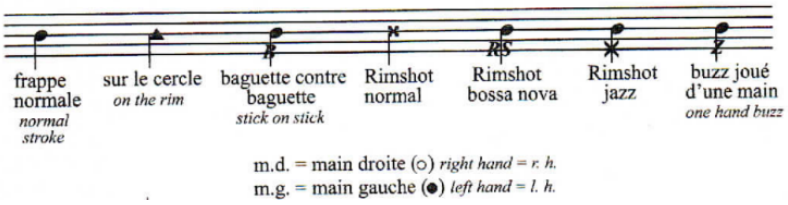


Figure 19: *Truc à Trac,* performance *notation.*

Throughout the piece, Martynciow draws on extended techniques on the snare drums to present different timber colors such as the use of the glissando, one-handed buzzed roll, playing on the rim, rimshot, and stick with stick. In addition, Martynciow utilizes a jazz standard snare drum playing practice, with the incorporation of the brushes. This section is the only one in which the composer requests the performer to be creative by incorporating a solo through a repeater 12/16 bar motive.

[38] Martynciow, Nicolas. "Biography."



Figure 20: *Truc à Trac* excerpt, improvisation section

Martynciow's *Truc à Trac,* analysis shows that it is a rounded binary ABCA form with a coda. Each new section Martynciow initiates with the same theme that starts the piece.

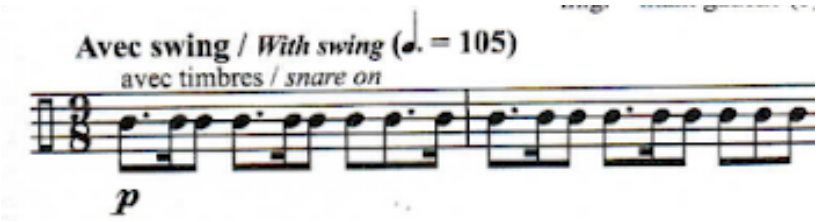


Figure 21: *Truc à Trac* excerpt, initial theme



Figure 22: *Truc à Trac* excerpt, initial theme as the beginning of new section

In each interaction of the snare drum Martynciow utilizes a quasi-small bridge to connect each section. Through a process of metric modulation, the transition between every new section is seamless.



Figure 23: *Truc à Trac* excerpt, metric modulation section.

The piece ends with the initial rhythmic theme. Only this time, the long notes and dotted eighth notes sometimes have rolls, making this last A section feel more like an A'.



Figure 24: *Truc à Trac* excerpt, embellished initial theme as coda.

Russell Wharton, *Deus ex metronome*

Russell Wharton is an American percussionist, educator, performer, arranger, and composer. As a composer, Wharton's primary engagement is as a music arranger for high school marching bands. Wharton's music is published through Tapspace Publications and includes an array of solos and chamber percussion pieces. In most of his compositions, Wharton incorporates fixed media as the counterpart to his creations, *Deus Ex Metronome* is an example of this.

Deus Ex Metronome, composed in 2019*,* is inspired by Roland's Dr. Beat Metronome BOSS DB-90. The metronome's unique sound, which is the initial sound setting, is what starts the piece in 4/4 at 90BPM. Throughout the piece Wharton goes through the different preset sound options the metronome has, including the coach setting (voice).



Figure 25: Dr. Beat Metronome BOSS DB-90

Wharton's inspiration for his material comes from the influences of pianist and composer, Tigran Hamasyan, Jazz drummer Mark Guiliana, and Kendric Lamar's rapping style on his album *DAMN*[39].

Wharton uses the initial rhythmical theme presented by the snare drum all through the piece in different notes length values.



Figure 26: *Deus Ex Metronome* excerpt, initial rhythmical theme



Figure 27: *Deus Ex Metronome* excerpt, regrouped initial theme variation

"Though the Doctor has helped me build my skills as a musician, we have not yet gotten the chance to perform together, so I decided that it would be fun if Dr. Beat and I got to play a little tune together."[40]

Kendrick Lamar's song *FEEL,* inspired Wharton in *Deus Ex Metronome,* in the way the rapper structures his verses and the odd grouping utilized through the rapping[41]. From the chorus, the song has two large verses that are each different length. The song does not keep an even form between verses.

I feel like a chip on my shoulders
I feel like I'm losin' my focus
I feel like I'm losin' my patience
I feel like my thoughts in the basement
Feel like, I feel like you're miseducated

[39] Wharton, Russell. *"Deus Ex Metronome."*
[40] Wharton, Russell. *"Deus Ex Metronome."*
[41] Wharton, Russell. *"Deus Ex Metronome."*

Feel like I don't wanna be bothered
I feel like you may be the problem
I feel like it ain't no tomorrow, fuck the world
The world is endin', I'm done pretendin'
And fuck you if you get offended
I feel like friends been overrated
I feel like the family been fakin'
I feel like the feelings are changin'
Feel like my daughter compromised, and jaded
Feel like you wanna scrutinize how I made it
Feel like I ain't feelin' you all
Feel like removin' myself, no feelings involved
I feel for you, I've been in the field for you
It's real for you, right? Shit, I feel like

"The piece is not intended to display chops or physical prowess, but to create musical interest through rhythm and articulation." [42]



Figure 28: *Deus Ex Metronome* excerpt, phrasing/sticking suggested by Wharton

[42] Wharton, Russell. *"Deus Ex Metronome."*

Bruce Hamilton, *Interzones*

Bruce Hamilton is a composer, percussionist, improviser, and electronic musician from Philadelphia. He was born in 1966, has received honors, awards, and commissions from Carbondale Community Arts, Indiana University, Pittsburgh New Music Ensemble, Electronic Music Midwest, Third Practice Music Festival, and the Percussive Arts Society International Competition.

Interzones was commissioned by percussionist Timothy Adams in 1996[43]. It is a vibraphone solo with fixed media developed in the Indiana University Center for Electronic and Computer Music. Hamilton is very detailed throughout the piece, he describes how each interaction and phrase must be presented. He achieves this through detailed performance notes.



Figure 29: *Interzones* excerpt, examples of phrasing details.

The fixed media that accompanies the vibraphone solo uses samples from multiple acoustic instruments such as guitar, saxophone, snare drum, and vibraphone. All of these are manipulated with a sound file processing program called Sound Hack and a sample editing software called Sound Designer.

The composers believe each section could be described as variations, but his intent was to create different scenes or musical zones[44]. When creating the piece Hamilton envisioned abstract images that came to life through the different zones he was thinking on. Throughout the piece, you can hear Hamilton playing with the vibraphone timbre. At times it can feel more machine (MIDI sound) and sometimes it can very apparently present the vibraphone as an instrument that developed in a jazz setting. The triplet felt interaction between the fixed media and the vibraphone achieved this. While this section is very apparent the utilization in the fixed media of ride or hi-hat inferring a quasi-swing feel, as well as the double bass sound outlining the grid.

[43] Hamilton, Bruce. "Program Notes."
[44] Hamilton, Bruce. "Program Notes."



Figure 30: *Interzones* excerpt, triplet feel interaction between fixed media and vibraphone.

Matthew Burtner, *Ecotones*

Matthew Burtner is a composer, sound artist, and eco-acoustician born in Alaska in 1970. Through his work, Burtner explores embodiment, ecology, polytemporality, and noise. In 1999, Burtner developed the *Metasaxophone,* an acoustic tenor sax that with the utilization of a microprocessor, multiple sensors, sends, and converts data into an independent continuous computer message during the performance.

The term ecotone refers to the steep areas of transition between ecological communities, ecosystems, or ecological regions along an environmental gradient, from natural to human generated[45]**.** Burtner represents this with the seven different recordings he transitioned between throughout the piece. Soundscape, all audible sounds within a specific area[46]. Each of this audio is in interaction with a small portion of the large set up.



Figure 31: *Ecotones* excerpt, maracas, woodblock, and cicada interaction.

Percussionist Garret Mendellow commissioned Burtner to write *Ecotones* in 2013. With *Ecotones,* Burtner draws on information from the exploration of his passion for studying the

[45] Kark, Salit. "Effect of Ecotones on Biodiversity."
[46] Blake, Jared. "What is a Soundscape?"

relationship between human beings and their environment, ecoacoustics. The form is completely decentralized from the sense of theoretical musical form or human notions of time, but it is more reactive to the ecological sounds presented in the fixed media. The fixed media utilizes information from the wind or ocean waves and measurable parameters such as temperature or geological changes. An ecotone represents the transition area between distinct ecosystems, Burtner explores this through the recording of soundscapes and eco acoustic percussion music. *Ecotones* aim to represent the interaction between glaciers, volcanoes, forest, coasts, fire, and coral reefs[47]. All of the soundscapes utilized in *Ecotones* were recorded by Burtner; he recorded them in the EcoSono Institute in Guatemala, the West Indies, Alaska, and the US East Coast.

The piece is divided in seven sections, each one transitioning through the utilization of ecotones. In each section Burtner pairs a soundscape with a specific section of the percussion set up. The seven sections are divided by the soundscape's interaction. The first section is based on the sounds of the night-time cicada. This transitions into section two, which represents the underwater soundscape, with the utilization of the wooden bowls on an amplified water bowl. From there, Burtner transitions the fixed media into a fire sound section, while the percussionist creates a counterpoint interaction with crash cymbals. Each of the following sections represent a specific soundscape such as molten lava flow, wind flow, and bird calls (on drums). *Ecotones* ends with section seven, a delicate soundscape of the popping sound of a melting glacier that expunges pockets into the atmosphere. Then the percussionist brings back the rhythm from the opening part previously played on the maracas. But this time it is played on a single bell to connect the soundscape of this section with the cicada soundscape that opened the piece.

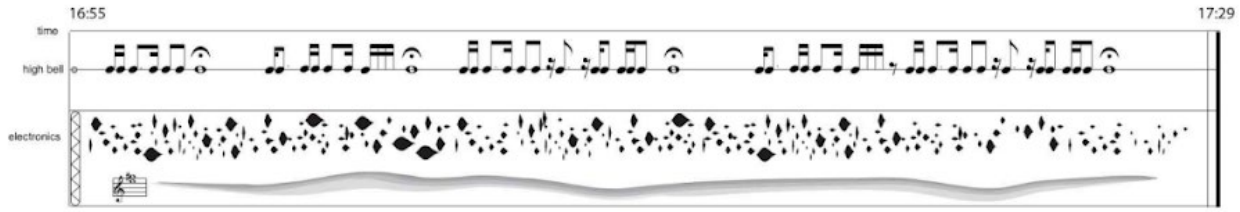


Figure 32: *Ecotones* excerpt, high bell interaction.

[47] Burtner, Matthew. "Ecotones."

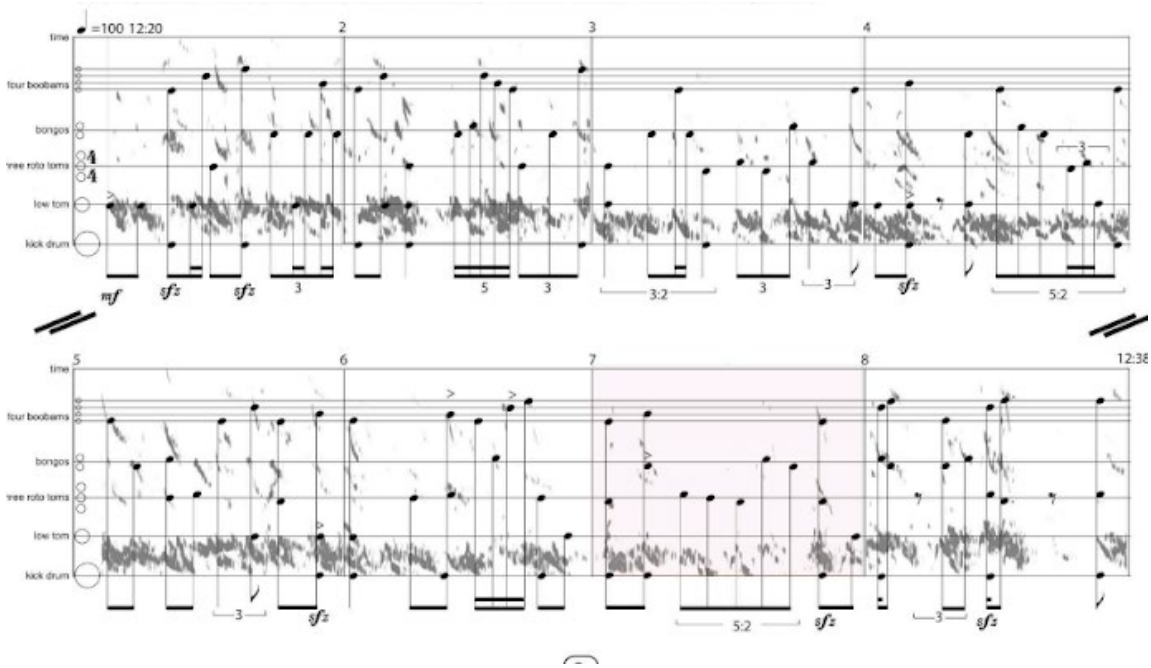


Figure 33: *Ecotones* excerpt, birds call section

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