

Appendix 1 – referring to previous compositions

Sonata for violin and piano (2017)

In early 2017, before starting the writing process of my *Sonata for violin and piano*, Toru Takemitsu was an important inspiration for this piece. In *Distance de Fée* (1951), he composes this movement almost like a song, where, for most of the work, the violin takes on the role of ‘singer’ and the piano the role of the ‘accompaniment’. It is possible to find a connection between both Takemitsu’s music and my own, despite their obvious timbral differences. Takemitsu’s *Distance De Fée* was very much an inspiration for the first movement of my *Sonata*, but I wanted to retain the integrity of my material without transforming it into Takemitsu’s way of composing. For example, at the beginning of *Distance De Fée*, the piano starts with one simple melody, accompanied with chords. The melody and the accompaniment are arranged in a vertical way (Example 1).

The image shows a musical score for the piano introduction of 'Distance de Fée' by Toru Takemitsu. The score is for Violin and Piano. The Violin part is a single staff with a whole rest. The Piano part consists of two staves. The right hand plays a melody of half notes, and the left hand plays chords. Dynamics include *pp dolce*, *p*, *mf*, *poco f*, and *mf*. The key signature has one flat (B-flat) and the time signature is 2/2.

Example 1 - *Distance de Fée* (1951) by Toru Takemitsu - Piano introduction - Schott Editions

By contrast, at the beginning of my *Sonata for violin and piano*, the melody, at the top, appears without accompaniment (Example 2)

Lento (c.a. $\text{♩} = 32$)

Violin

calm and introspective

Piano

pp

p

8th M.

R. (R.)

Example 2 - Sonata for violin and piano (2017) by Daniel Davis, 1st mov. - Piano introduction

In my music, in contrast to Takemitsu, I decided to be stable from the beginning, using the same chord in different inversions (Example 3).

6

Violin

expressive and

Piano

sempre p

(M.)

(R.)

Example 3 - Sonata for violin and piano (2017), 1st mov. - A-flat chord, first time that a tonality is stablished

In the first movement, all sections are made by only one chord per section. I wanted to use each chord inversion to create not only a melodic line, but also a voice leading progression as accompaniment (Example 4). The purpose was to have a harmonic context and explore the maximum I could, before changing to the next chord.

A **Tempo primo (c.a. $\text{♩} = 32$)**
sweetly and expressive

N.V. —————> Vib.
S.T. —————> S.P. —————> P.O.

Violin

Piano

pp *p* *pp sub.*

— (M.) —

The violin plays selected notes from the chords, although with some differences, imitating the first line that the piano played at the very beginning.

In bar 4, there is a triplet (Example 5) and the only one in the initial section of the first movement. I think of this triplet like a stone, dropped into a lake. This action will trigger waves on the lake, and consequently change the original condition of the lake itself.

Example 5 - Sonata for violin and piano (2017) - 1st mov., bar 4, using a triplet to generate new material in a near future

This triplet at the very beginning creates new material at rehearsal mark D, making both melody and accompaniment more unstable with the use of triplets. Also, the violin imitates the melody played by the piano at the very beginning (Example 6).

The image shows a musical score for a violin and piano. The top system is for the Violin, and the bottom system is for the Piano. The Violin part begins with a triplet of eighth notes, followed by a half note and a quarter note. The Piano part begins with a triplet of eighth notes, followed by a half note and a quarter note. The score includes dynamic markings such as 'pp', 'p', 'mf', and 'senza dim.'. The Violin part has a 'Vib.' marking and a 'N.V.' marking. The Piano part has a 'R.' marking and a '(free using)' marking.

Example 6 - Sonata for violin and piano (2017), 1st mov. - activity unleashed by the triple on bar 4

There are many analogous examples of this kind of compositional thinking within the central tradition of Western classical music. Although as far as we know Haydn did not think of the ‘stone dropped into the lake’ metaphor, almost everything in his music is thematic in some way. For example, in the second movement of his *String Quartet Op. 64, No. 2*, the quavers material (Example 7) played by the second violin, viola and violoncello appears to function as accompaniment in this section. However, in bar 43 the same quaver material becomes a melody, played by the first violin (Example 8) and then by the violoncello on bar 52 (Example 9).



Example 7 - Haydn String Quartet Op. 64, No. 2, II movement - 2nd violin plays quavers as accompaniment



Example 8 - Haydn String Quartet Op. 64, No. 2, II movement - violin takes the same material, this time as melody

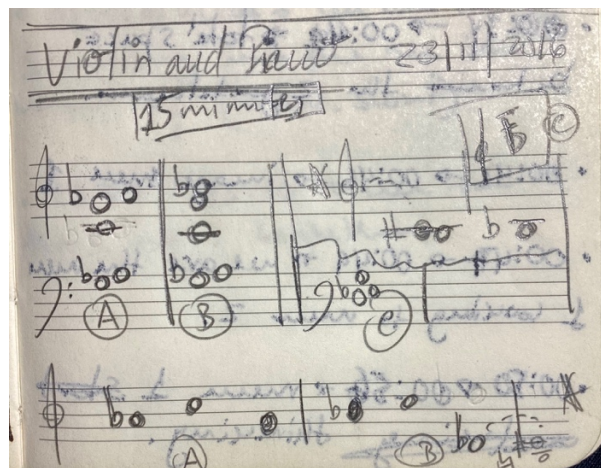


Example 9 - Haydn String Quartet Op. 64, No. 2, II movement - violoncello takes the same material, this time as melody

Everything is thematic and any individual musical object is made up of, for that one piece, the interreaction of different organic elements that are all reacting, changing and melding; they are specific to that piece. These organic elements, their reactions and changes, their instabilities go back to intuition again. Individual intuition, quite mysteriously, finds the energy of all these elements and that is

where the consistency of a movement comes from. With Haydn it is the same, because everything relates to everything else: everything is organic.

The second movement of my *Sonata* was made in a different way with everything growing from initial improvisation at the piano. Suddenly, I played on the low register a changing chord ostinato, oscillating between A, D and F and half tone chord above B-flat, E-flat and G-flat (Example 10).



Example 10 - Sonata for violin and piano (2017), 2nd mov. - Initial idea for ostinato

After the ostinato in the left hand (Example 11), I realised that I could use, in parallel, semiquavers using the same notes of the chords improvised, creating a sort of melodic line, which could work as both melody and accompaniment for the violin.

Moderato (c.a. $\text{♩} = 64$)

Example 11 - Sonata for violin and piano (2017), 2nd mov. - initial ostinato. Draft 1

Although the starting point for my *Sonata* was improvising on the piano, the *Concerto for Violin and Orchestra* (2014) by Michel van der Aa was a source of inspiration. For example, in the second movement the van der Aa starts with a slow movement and gradually introduces rhythmic and fast materials (Examples 12, 13, and 14) these initiate a sequence of rhythmic patterns around the orchestra. Although, the material van der Aa used has nothing to do with mine, the relationship with introducing new material and developing, from there, a new idea made me realise that that was my connection point between my improvisation in example 4 and the link between the other ideas (Examples 15, 16 and 17).

Example 12 is a musical score snippet from Michel van der Aa's *Concerto for Violin and Orchestra*, II movement, introduction. It shows measures 271 to 285. The Solo Violin part is marked with a 3/4 and 4/4 time signature. The dynamics range from *mp* to *mf*. The other instruments (Violin I, Violin II, Viola, Violoncello, and Double Bass) have various markings including *solo*, *arco*, *pizz.*, and *mf*.

Example 12 - Michel van der Aa *Concerto for Violin and Orchestra*, II mov. introduction - slow material plus some rhythmic motifs in the violin

Example 13 is a musical score snippet from Michel van der Aa's *Concerto for Violin and Orchestra*, II movement. It shows measures 327 to 341. The Solo Violin part is marked with a 2/4, 5/4, 3/4, 4/4, and 2/4 time signature. The dynamics range from *f* to *mp*. The other instruments (Violin I, Violin II, Viola, Violoncello, and Double Bass) have various markings including *solo*, *arco*, *pizz.*, and *mp*.

Example 13 - Michel van der Aa *Concerto for Violin and Orchestra*, II mov. Response to the rhythmic motifs and transformation from calm rhythmic material to an agitate rhythmic material.



Example 17 - Sonata for violin and piano by Daniel Davis, II mov. (bar 144 - 145) Response to the new material and transformation of it (continuation).

Colours (in circles) for marimba and String Quintet (2017)

In *Colours (in circles)* (2017), I tried to apply, not only all the information I had absorbed in my research so far, but also the necessity of sketching, taking more time to think about my materials and engaging more deeply with my ideas. I relished the opportunity of directly collaborating on the piece with an experienced Guildhall percussionist, testing my desire to make my music 'practical' in the way its concepts are realised.

This work started as many of my other pieces with improvisation at the piano, playing some chords, changing punctual notes and playing with different dynamics – trying to take advantage from the improvisation. Although, it was a free improvisation, I wanted all these chords and improvised notes to belong to the odd partials of the harmonic series in D (image 90).

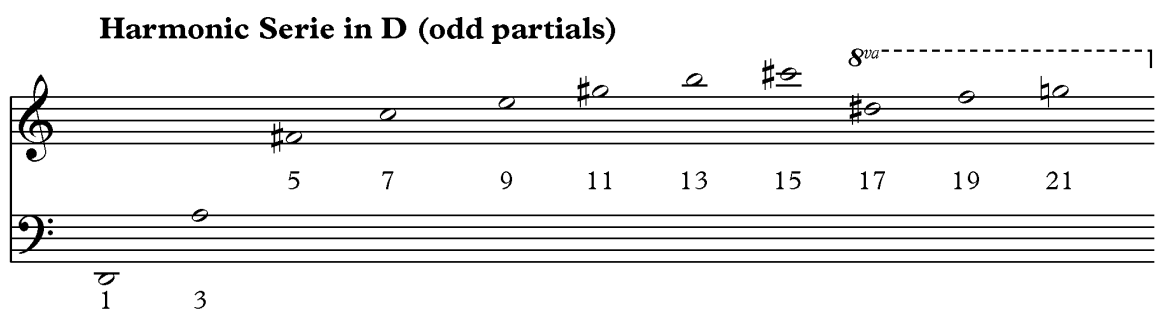


image 1 - *Colours (in circles)* (2017) by Daniel Davis - sketches - harmonic series in D, odd partials

After my improvisation, I ended with four different chords (image 91).

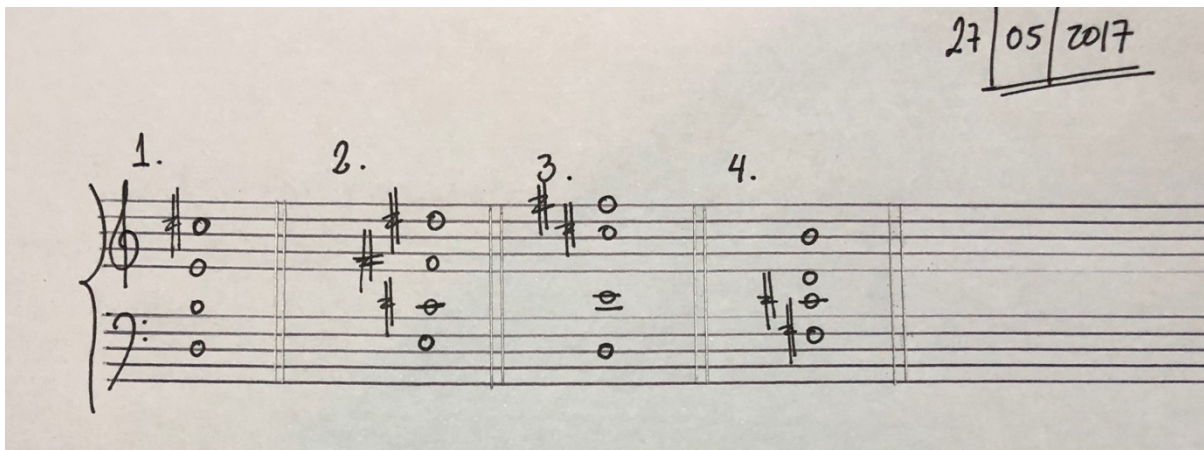


image 2 - Colours (in circles) (2017) - sketches, page 3, 27th of May 2017, main chords.

At this first stage, I did not realise the similarity between my four chords. In a way, they needed to be similar – they came all from the odd partials of the harmonic series in D. However, at the moment of playing them on the piano they seemed different. By circumstance, the way they are orchestrated changed their colour and timbre.

Curiously, at the time I was thinking about the materials for this work, Jacob Collier's video, George Russel's Lydian mode theory, Ernst Levy theory of harmony and Steve Coleman's symmetric theory, were resonating in my mind. So, engaging with my materials and thinking about what I had absorbed recently, I reached the conclusion that I could use the circle of fifths to transpose the chords I had explored. In parallel, I was not only discovering ideas of creating and manipulation of harmony, but also discovering ways of getting into research, and for that reason, to take advantage of autoethnography and its ways of creating data, I documented all the process of sketching:

Today I was thinking about how I should go through the nearest tonalities of D in the circle of fifths (...)¹

¹ (Davis, 2017a)

In this last reference, I was referring to the chords I created through my improvisation process. For example, if consider my 'chord 1' (D, B, E, C-sharp) as D, then I will be able to situate it in the circle of fifths (image 92)

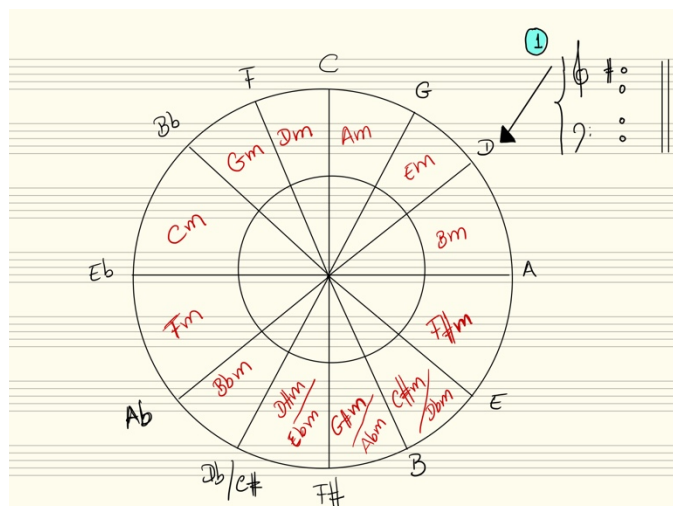


image 3 - 'chord 1' situated in the circle of fifths.

After having this chord situated, I can now transpose it using the nearest tonalities in the circle of fifths, as for example, A, G, C, or E. Of course, although my source chords were not conceived as belonging explicitly to a diatonic key, nonetheless viewing them through a more explicitly tonal filter, allowed me to explore whether 'minor' transformations might yield interesting results. Although I reduced all my transpositions possibilities, I still had a great diversity of transpositions that I could use.

So, I took the first chord in D and started to transpose it to the closest tonalities, as for example B, A and G. The result in their pure state were satisfying, but I thought that I needed voice leading between the chords. After connecting chords D to A and D to G with voice leading the results were even more fascinating.²

This was my starting point of a transformation journey. As a first stage I tried to create a course starting in 'chord 1' as D and finishing in C (image 93), this time,

² (Davis, 2017a)

without thinking in the nearest tonalities. To do it, I started from D ‘chord 1’ and transposed it by intervals, as for example D to B.



image 4 - *Colours (in circles) (2017)* - sketches, harmonic journey between D and C

From the moment that I realised “*these are my chords*” I spent several days engaging with them. This time encouraged me, not only to develop inversions and transpositions (image 94), but also to fragment them in partials (image 95). The idea was:

...to have more than one way to invert or orchestrate that chord as a melody or as a counterpoint³

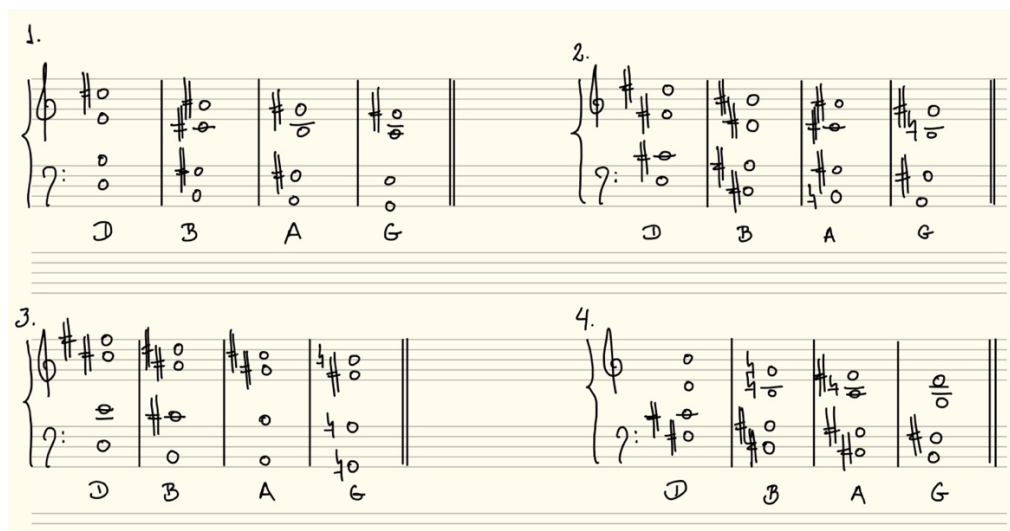


image 5 - *Colours (in circles) (2017)* - sketches, harmony

³ (Davis, 2017b)

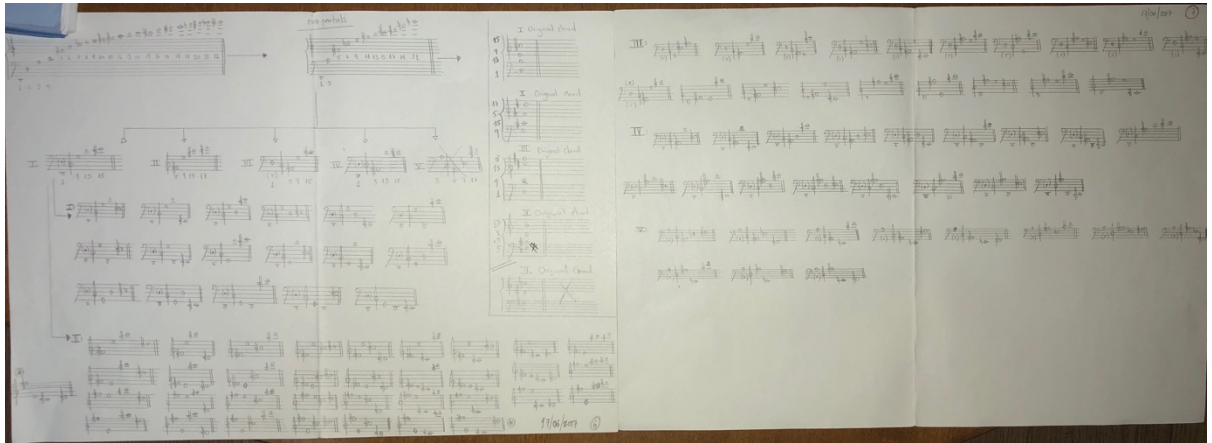


image 6 - Colours (in circles) (2017) - sketches, harmony

Today, I was listening *Gurrelieder* by Schoenberg and suddenly I heard a small melody that resonated in my mind [image 96]. This made me think about a rhythmic contour that I could use as a principal element in my piece.⁴

Langsam (♩ = ca. 84)

957 958 959 960 961 962 963

1.2.3.4.klFl
1.2.Fl
3.4.Fl
1.Ob
2.3.Ob
1.2.EH
1.Kl [A]
2.3.Kl [A]
1.2.BsKl [A]

Handwritten notes below the score:

Langsam 3
b. b. | b. 2 etc. . .)

23/06/17

image 7 - *Gurrelieder* by A. Schoenberg. Bar 957-963 - inspiration for contour and rhythm

⁴ (Davis, 2017c)

I took this small contour and rhythm and transposed it onto the chords I had have been engaging with. For example, in G [image 97]⁵

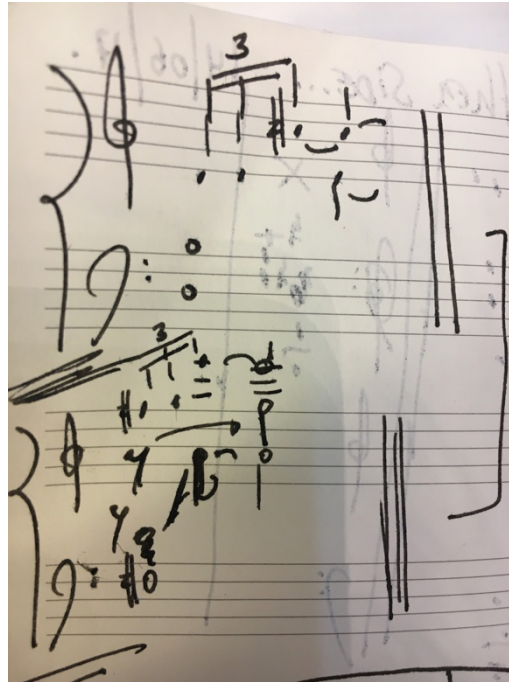


image 8 - Colours (in circles), sketch - contour and rhythm from Gurrelieder plus Colours (in circles) harmony and melodic line.

Of course, reflecting on Schoenberg's legacy opens up associations with late romanticism, free atonality or the twelve-tone method itself. Because, *'You absorb from finding something that is new or surprising and not everything you find become[s] materials for a work, but there is a moment when an idea and a material come[s] together'*⁶, absorbing Schoenberg's piece made me think about the connection between my material and one idea:

I decided that I should have the same motif in all the transpositions I made on one of my previous sketches.

So, I have written all the transpositions with the same motif [image 98]⁷

⁵ (Davis, 2017c)

⁶ (*Art Is About How You Look At Things*, 2016)

⁷ (Davis, 2017c)

I decided to write just the marimba line first. Considering that the marimba has a soloist play in this piece, it must be, not only the soloist, but also the bridge for the accompaniment in the quintet.

I have sketched some lines that I would like to use as melodies for the soloist. The first one, is an ascending scale using the odd partials of the harmonic series on D. However, every time I repeat this scale I move the last note closer to the fundamental [image 99]. This will ensure that at the end of all my repetitions I have a sort of cluster making the sonic result noisier. In a way, I will end up with a transformation of a harmonic sonic result to a noise, which is a technique Gerard Grisey applied in *Partiels* (1975).¹⁰

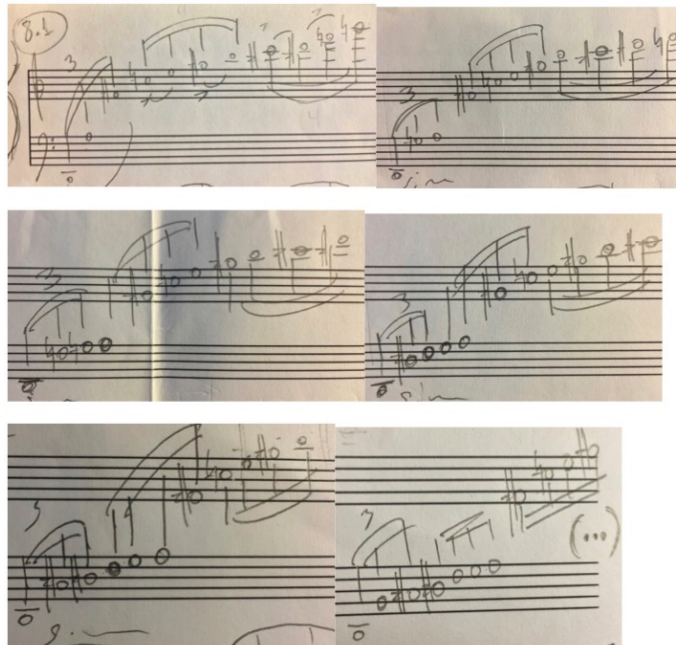


image 10 - Colours (in circles) - sketch, marimba melodic contour

Still in my blog:

Another line I made, is a rhythmic pattern using the original chords. I tried to have big jumps between the notes and kept the fundamental always present in the low register [image 100]¹¹

¹⁰ (Davis, 2017d)

¹¹ (Davis, 2017d)

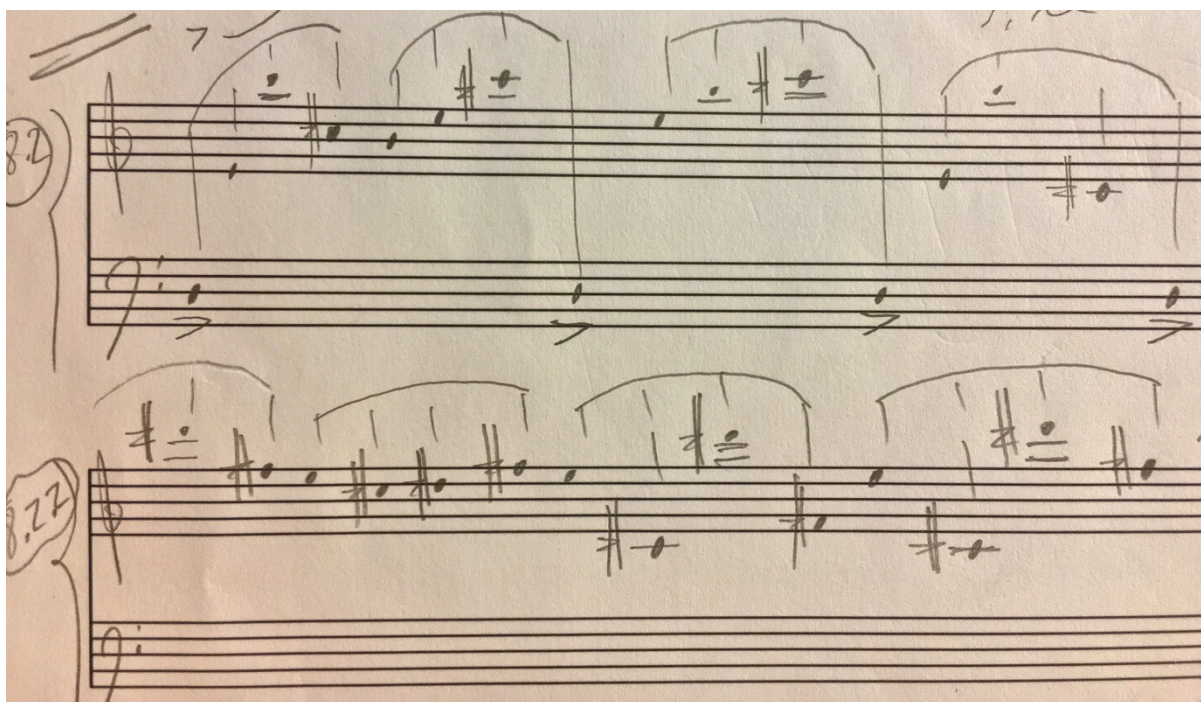


image 11 - Colours (in circles) - sketch, marimba melodic contour

For the third marimba line, I took the motif explored, used the different transpositions of the same motif and made an ascending line with it [image 101]¹²

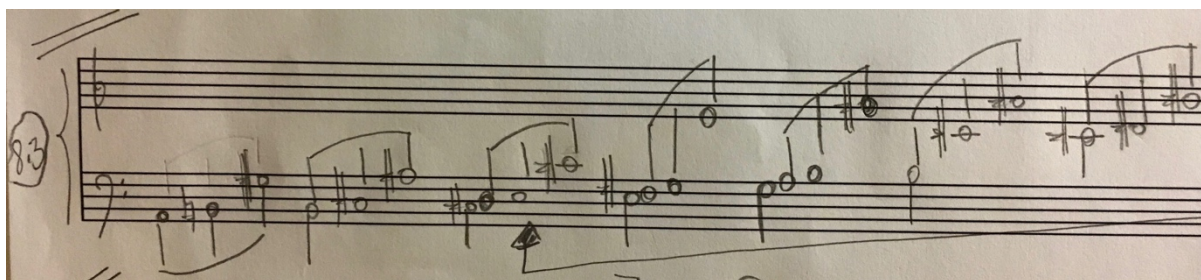


image 12 - Colours (in circles), sketch, marimba melodic contour

At the end, I started to use fragments of each of these examples and constructed a single line. At the beginning, I started with the odd harmonic series on D ascending scale without any transformation, then I used the first two small groups of three notes of the third marimba line, then I used again the odd

¹² (Davis, 2017d)

harmonic series on D with the 21st partial closer to the fundamental and I did not use the 13rd, 15th, 17th and 19th partials. Therefore, I used some fragments of the second line, then the harmonic series with the 21st partial closer to the fundamental and with the 13rd, 15th, 17th and 19th partials, then a bit more of some fragments of the third marimba line and at the end a small fragment of the second line.

Finally, I played this on the piano and I felt that some of these fragments were not as good as I expected but some of them were convincing, so I underlined them as material I could work with later [image 102]¹³

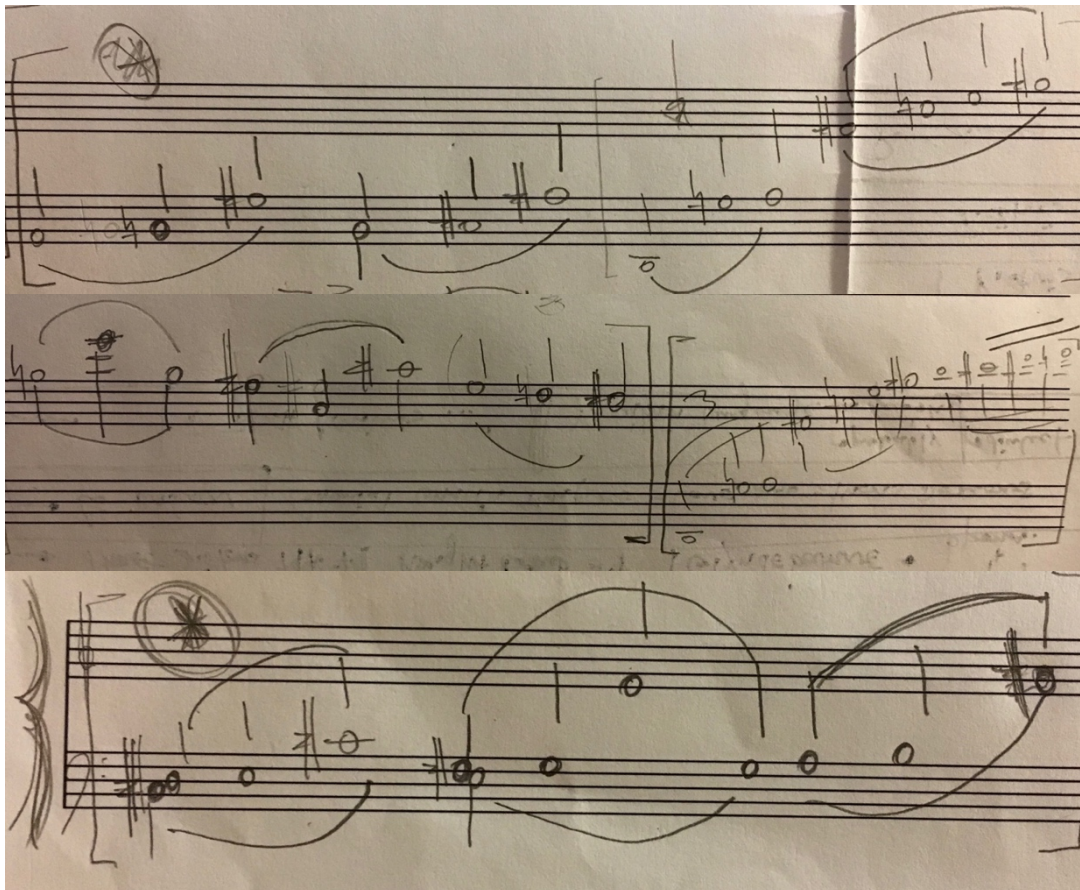


image 13 - Colours (in circles) - sketch, marimba melodic contour, using the previous melodic lines

Since I realised the importance of writing a single line as a way of shaping my work, I invested some days in the sketching of these melodic lines. Some of the ideas I

¹³ (Davis, 2017d)

was applying were gleaned from my engagement with other composers' work. As for example, *Partiels* (1975), Grisey transformed his harmonic sonic result into a noise, transposing – with each attack, resonance and decay – the high partials of the harmonic series he was using, closest to the fundamental, creating a noisier sonic result.

Grisey used this approach of the highest partials to the fundamental, not only as a transformation of a harmonic sonic result to a noisier sonic result, but also as a slow transformation of one chord into other. So, and because the partials are not immobile, in *Colours (in circles)*, I tried to apply the same technique making a single line with the original source (which are the odd partials of the harmonic series) and my chords (image 103)

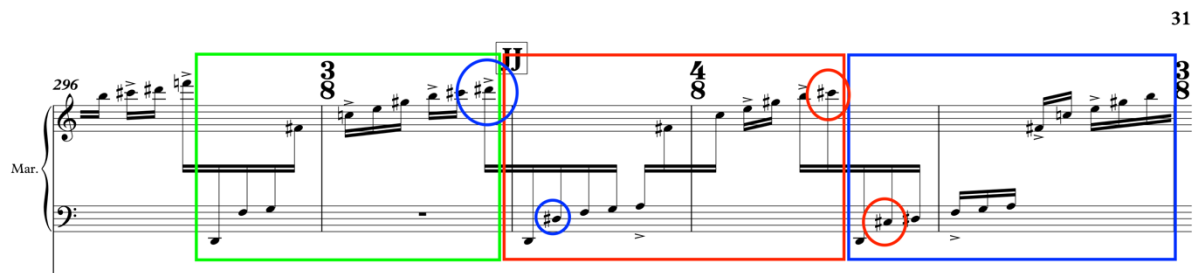


image 14 - *Colours (in circles)* - sketch, transformations processes

The difference here is, that in my own work, I was not looking to change my chord. I wanted to stay in the same ambience, keeping the same polarity. So, when I was looking to close the space between the fundamental and the highest partial, I was creating a sort of illusion – almost as if I wanted to change my material. In contradicting this intention to change, I was able, not only to coming back to the main idea, but also to refresh the ear of who is playing and listening.

In a way, that is why the piece is called “in circles”, because I wanted to create a journey where I could explore my chords, while at the same time I found myself with a type of material that allowed me both to change the ambience and return to the original idea. As a composer, I need to make decisions, and returning to the original idea was my decision – a rule I created before starting. I wanted to explore one single piece of material from the very beginning until the end, exploring its

inversions, transformations, its simplicity and complexity. What Grisey offered was helpful trigger for me to create this instability.

Until this stage, I had a large quantity of material to use in this piece. However, I was struggling with the work's rhythmic language. When I started to sketch some rhythms, I documented the process in my blog:

Today I was experimenting rhythm patterns and exploring metric divisions [image 104]

So, my time signature is 6/8 and I can write, as for example, a group of 4, 2 and 3 demisemiquavers, with an accent on the first note of each group (4, 2 and 4) [image 105]¹⁴

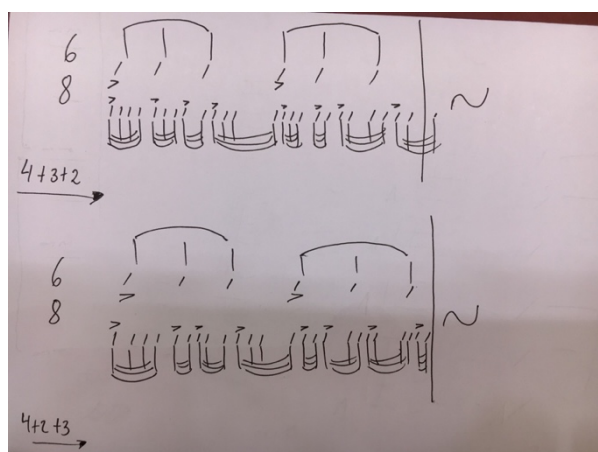


image 15 - Colours (in circles) - sketches, rhythm patterns in 6/8



image 16 - Colours (in circles) - sketch, 1st group of demisemiquavers (4, 2 and 3)

¹⁴ (Davis, 2017e)

Or a group of 4, 3 and 2 demisemiquavers, with an accent on the first note of each group (4, 3 and 2) [image 106]

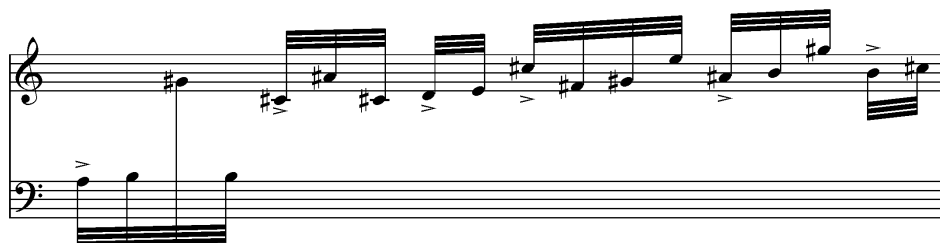


image 17 - Colours (in circles) - sketch, 2nd group of demisemiquavers (4, 3 and 2)

Or have a triplet converting the 6/8 into a 3/4 [image 107]



image 18 - Colours (in circles) - sketch, group of triplets plus 6/8 fundamental rhythm pattern

Or a group of 4, 3 and 2 semiquavers, with an accent on the first note of each group (4, 3 and 2) [image 108]



image 19 - Colours (in circles) - sketch, 1st group of semiquavers organised in 4, 3 and 2

Or a group of 4, 2 and 3 semiquavers, with an accent on the first note of each group (4, 2 and 3) [image 109]¹⁵

¹⁵ (Davis, 2017e)



image 20 - Colours (in circles) - sketch, 2nd group of semiquavers in 4, 2 and 3

I sketched another rhythm patten, playing with 7/8 instead of 6/8 (image 110) and followed the same procedure as in the previous examples.

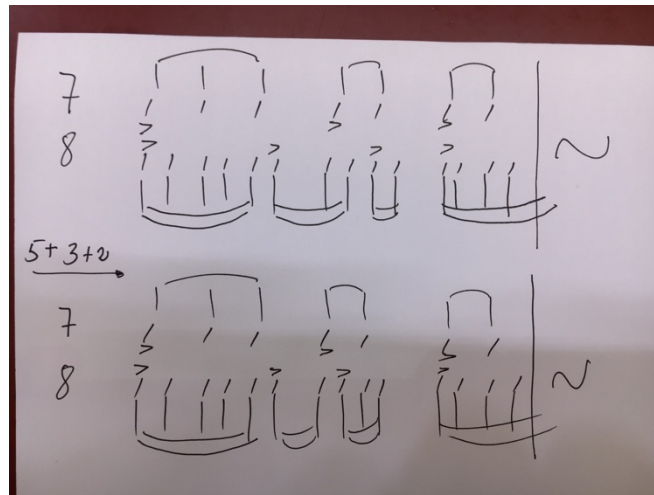


image 21 - Colours (in circles) - sketch, rhythm pattern in 7/8

After this process of sketching, not only my rhythms but also the harmony and melodic lines, I realised that suddenly, I found myself in the act of composing. So, I started connecting all the pieces of my puzzle together. At the beginning, I thought of having a process of transformation of two sonic results: harmonic sonic result to an enharmonic sonic result. I based my transformation process in Radulescu's 'cardinal points of the sound compass' (image 111)¹⁶

¹⁶ (Radulescu, 1975)

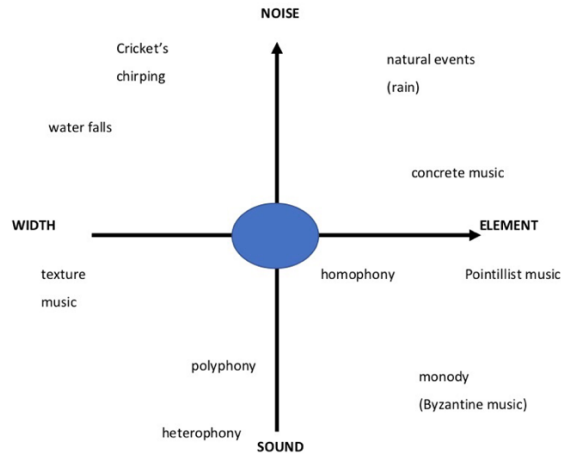


image 22 - Radulescu's cardinal points of the sound compass

Radulescu's Sound Plasma demonstrates a large set of techniques about how transformation, relationship of sonic results work. However, it sets an interesting way to understand some of the ideas about processes of how to change the perception of the audience.¹⁷

Although I was focused on Radulescu's 'cardinal points of sound compass' technique, O realised that *Colours (in circles)* should have a constant harmonic plus enharmonic relationship, instead of effecting a complete transformation. So, I tried to identify where my work is located on these cardinal points. The idea was to represent, graphically, where my work belongs (image 112).

¹⁷ (Radulescu, 1975)

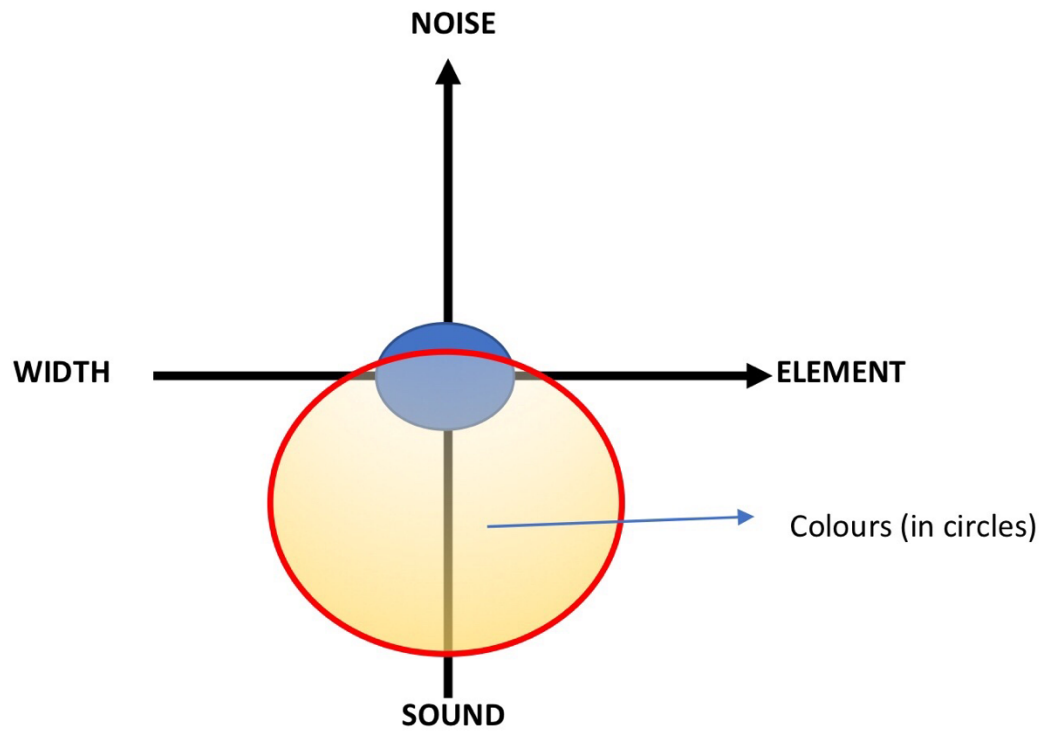


image 23 - representation: where Colours (in circles) is situated in Radulescu's cardinal points of the sound compass

2

Mar.

Vln. 1

Vln. 2

In Adès' *In Seven Days*, he introduces a rhythmic and at the same time a static material in the strings, a single line that starts to phase as long it continues, becoming a sort of canon that creates an instability (Example 19).

Example 19 - In Seven Days (208) by Thomas Adès - Introduction

There is no conscious connection between *In Seven Days* and *Colours (in circles)*. The first time I heard this work was when I was working in my piece *Other...* (2017) for accordion solo, in September 2016.

When I was sketching my material, I was not thinking about Adès' work. However, when I was trying to solve my beginning issue and my material problem, I just remembered this piece and thought that I could do something similar. So, I opted to construct the core of the piece gradually giving the strings small rhythmic fragments in canon (Example 20).

Colours (in circles)
for Marimba solo and String Quintet



Daniel Davis (b. 1990)

The musical score for 'Colours (in circles)' is presented in three systems. The first system includes the Marimba solo and Violin 1, 2, Viola, and Violoncello 1 and 2. The second system includes Violin 1, 2, and Viola. The third system includes Violin 1, 2, and Viola. The score is in 4/8 time, with a tempo marking of Moderato (c.a. ♩=148 to 154). The first system features a 5/8 time signature change. The second system features a 4/8 time signature change. The third system features a 4/8 time signature change. The score includes dynamic markings such as mp, p, and norm. (accented).

© Daniel Davis Editions 2017

Example 20 - *Colours (in circles)* first page - constructing the core

With this canon, I wanted to create instability and gradually transform this instability into the stability of the core of my material.