

Ambian

by Daniel R. Mitchell

The title of this collection is derived from “ambiance” or “ambient” and represents the idea that music seeks to create an ambiance for the listener.

The music was created on a software synthesizer that I designed and wrote, *BasicSynth*.

The drum sounds on *Whirledwind* and *Plead For Persuasion* are from “TamTam Drum Kits”

(http://wiki.laptop.org/go/Free_sound_samples).

Whirledwind (2007)

Whirledwind was inspired by a satellite image of hurricane Katrina as it made landfall on the coast of Louisiana, USA. The storm was massive, and was one of the most destructive storms of recent years.

The musical style is “minimalist” or “pattern music” due to the repetitious and slowly changing musical phrases. The drum sounds are recorded individual sounds, while everything else is synthesized.

Bounce (2009)

Bounce was conceived as I worked on the echo effect for the *BasicSynth* synthesizer. When the echo time is set long enough, and the panning is synchronized with the echo, the sound of each note seems to bounce.

In terms of musical form, *Bounce* is a compressed “rondo” with short phrases alternating and repeating throughout the piece. Several layers of sound are built up, often like a *canon* with delayed echo of the phrases. The exposition of all the themes is followed by an elongation and a thinning of the texture. A recapitulation of the opening closes the piece.

Charism (2011)

Charism is “an extraordinary power (as of healing) given a Christian by the Holy Spirit for the good of the church.” (*Merriam-Webster Dictionary*). In general, charism means grace. More specifically, the term is applied to the spiritual orientation of a religious order of the Catholic Church, for example, a teaching order.

The piece was composed using a melody that repeats in different contexts. A synthetic flute is used for the melody, accompanied by marimba-like, organ-like, and bell-like synthesized sounds.

Music For A Wedding (2015)

On October 20th, 2015, I got married to Jeri. Jeri and I had known each other in college (1977-1979) but went separate ways after graduation. I went to the University of North Texas to continue my music studies, and later became a computer software developer. Jeri got married and raised a family. We only saw each other once during the ensuing years, at a college reunion in 1988. Eventually we reconnected on the Internet, began to correspond, and realized we still had a lot in common. With my computer software career finished, and needing something new, Jeri helped me move back to Oklahoma and start a new life together.

I had not been composing since 2011, but decided to compose a new piece for her to celebrate our wedding. The piece is a “conversation” between two complementary, but different, ideas that eventually are heard together.

See Sawing (2016)

See Sawing is from the idea of something going back-and-forth, like a see saw. The effect is created by panning the different sounds at different rates. It can also be considered a pun about “seeing” and what we “saw.”

Musically the piece has a meditative, calming style, repetitious in structure, slowly evolving texturally.

Sticks N Stuck (2016)

Sticks N Stuck is a “happy tune” that got stuck in my mind. It is bouncy, lively, repetitious, and joyful. The sounds always remind me of someone playing at tapping rhythms with sticks.

The piece has an A-B-A structure, with the sticks taken over by a “serious” middle section, but returning at the end.

Plead For Persuasion (2016)

When we need understanding from others, we plead for persuasion. We need them to persuade us as to why they think that way.

This piece is plaintive, with a main theme layered, and varied, into a bigger texture. The pounding, emphatic, accompanying figures contrast the plaintive melody.

Sub(dis)traction (2016)

Subconscious distractions of events that otherwise we think are important.

The title also refers to the synthesis technique used for the piece. I created a new subtractive synthesis instrument for the *BasicSynth* synthesizer and then wrote this piece with sounds produced by various patches for that instrument.

Father's Tune (2016)

Father's Tune is a piece I wrote for my father for Father's Day 2016.

Eine Kleine Geburtstags Musik

Happy Birthday, Jeri -- May 2016.

Happy, Happy,
Happy Birthday to you.
(Feel free to sing
And dance in
Your Birthday suit
As you eat cake and ice cream.)
May your wishes
And dreams come true,
Happy, Happy,
Happy Birthday to you.