

Album Name: **Platinum**

Tracklist:

1. Lost Wings
2. Frozen Time
3. Summer Breeze
4. Morning of Yesterday
5. A Study in Happiness
6. The Hollow Fractal
7. Chromatic Dreams
8. Synthetic Forest
9. Sky Blue Aria
10. The Shifting Sands of Arsalan
11. Daymare
12. Re:Sin
13. Transcendence

I decided to name the album “Platinum” because this was my first ever composing project, and wanted to try songs in a variety of styles while also developing my style. Platinum is often used in many different chemical reactions as a catalyst. It is as if I am the “platinum” and my songs are the different “reactions”. The tracklist is listed in order of when each song was composed, with two exceptions: *Lost Wings* is an intro song and should obviously come first, and *Transcendence* was the very first song I composed, and given that and its style I thought it would fit as the ending song.

Lost Wings

This song was actually composed spontaneously one Sunday afternoon. I had just downloaded a new app on my phone and was eager to try it out. Though I ended up not using the app very much after this, I still got one (short) song out of it! It wasn't originally going to be the intro track, but because of the similarities in style and close key centers between this and *Frozen Time*, I thought it would fit. All I needed to do was transpose the song down a half step then change the ending a little bit so it would flow smoothly into the next song. In this song, I wanted to emulate the style of one of my favorite composers, Yuki Kajiura, and a type of song she would create for a soundtrack.

Frozen Time

My first full composition using instruments other than a piano! This was also originally going to be a collaboration between me and a friend who would create a video for it, along with one of his friends who would sing for it. However, we ultimately never heard back from the singer, so piano it is for the melody. In this song, I wanted to emulate the style of one of absolute favorite groups, Kalafina. In their songs, they often use many strings, which is reflected in the arrangement of the song. Not only is there a string intro, but there is also many strings throughout the song, including a string countermelody in the chorus.

Summer Breeze

In this song, I decided to create something that was a bit less orthodox in structure, by not having a clear verse/chorus/bridge, but rather a song that played between two different musical ideas and juxtaposed them together. Though I was originally inspired after going to a Green Day concert in March 2017, it morphed more into wanting to emulate the lighter style of ONE OK ROCK, like in some of their songs such as *Wherever you are* and *C.h.a.o.s.m.y.t.h.*

Morning of Yesterday

For this song, I was originally inspired after transcribing the melody for a song called *Shissou FLAME* (by MY FIRST STORY), but it changed more into another song inspired by Kalafina. However, instead of strings, this explored another side of their discography, which is pretty piano heavy but still having some rock elements. This song I played a lot with key changes, as there are 6 throughout the song. I also originally wrote the first chorus in a different key from the second chorus, but I decided to transpose that part up to match the second chorus because it gave more uniformity to the song while still flowing with the parts before and after.

A Study in Happiness

This song I composed while I was recovering from scoliosis surgery in the summer of 2017. It was the second song I composed on a different phone app than the one I mentioned before. It was inspired by the older, upbeat, pop-punk songs of Paramore, such as *Playing God*. One funny thing that happened is that I composed the entire song forgetting to add a bass- the piano bass part sufficed enough originally, however eventually I felt the song was too treble-heavy, which adding a bass helped balance that out. However, I only got around to adding it 6 months after the song was originally finished! This song also was where I first experimented with rich chords in the melody in the chorus in earnest (like in the style of Kalafina, as they have 3 vocalists that sing together in harmony), which many people in my family were impressed by when they heard it.

The Hollow Fractal

The origin of this song is a bit funny, as I composed the entire intro in March/April 2017, but then completely forgot about it until August when going through my many Muscores files. This song was inspired by a group called Sound Horizon, which in addition to having multiple singers, like to experiment with sudden yet fitting changes in time signature, tempo, key, or plainly, the style. This is reflected in the sudden doubling of tempo in the middle of the song, but also the gradual, slight decrease in tempo in the intro.

Chromatic Dreams

This song was one of the first composed in my Music Composition class at school, which in the first semester we used Garageband. Though this song is quite simple compared to the other songs on this album, I think that's where its strengths lie. Sometimes the best way to improve a song isn't to always add things, but to remove what shouldn't be there. However, there are still some sort of complex things in there, such as going back and forth between major & minor, and a couple key changes.

Synthetic Forest

This song I began writing after seeing one of my all time favorite bands, Evanescence, live in October 2017. As one could originally assume, I was very inspired after that, and came up with half the melody in the space of about an hour. The long piano part at the beginning was directly inspired by one of the songs on the album they were promoting at the concert, *The In-Between*. And the style of the song in general, such as the combination of strings and techno, the harp, and the key changes in the chorus were also inspired by elements of that album. Luckily, in the limited edition of the album that I bought, the full orchestra scores were included on the extra DVD, which helped me tremendously in arranging. If I had to choose which song on the album was the most complex in its structure, I would likely say this one, because of the key changes, time signature changes, and the anti-meter intro (which was incredibly difficult to input in a sheet music program).

Sky Blue Aria

I was inspired by the relaxing, pop-rock songs of the band Galileo Galilei in this song, while also using the rich chord harmonies in the melody I mentioned earlier. It was mainly composed over Thanksgiving break, which I was still coming off of the creative high that I had from the Evanescence concert a month earlier. Looking back at it now, in a way it is similar to Chromatic Dreams but still definitely has its own identity.

The Shifting Sands of Arsalan

My first song of 2018. Though technically it was started December 30th of 2017, I still consider it to be a song from this year because the bulk of it was composed this year. In this song, I wanted to play with using unorthodox instruments in a hard rock song where they wouldn't necessarily be expected, such as an alto saxophone, clarinet, sitar, and trumpet. It also has "tritone" key changes, which are one of the most difficult key changes to make, as a tritone is the farthest away 2 notes can be from each other without being able to invert them and have them be closer to each other. This song has 2 of those, which are going in and out of the bridge. The name of the song comes from the epic of Amir Arsalan, which details the journey of a (fictional) Persian prince named Arsalan whose royal ancestry was kept from him, which he eventually earns of and has to fight to fulfill his claim to the throne.

Daymare

This was another song I composed in my Music Composition class, however using a different program from Chromatic Dreams, this time using Reason. It was largely inspired by a song that has resonated with me a lot, being *Hakuchumu* by Aimer. However, this song builds off of the mood created by *Hakuchumu* by constantly building throughout to having the second chorus come in very intensely, and in a hard rock style. The title of this song is a portmanteau of "day" and "nightmare".

Re:Sin

This song is in the style of another one of my favorite bands, MY FIRST STORY. This is reflected in the arrangement, as their songs often have very rich piano parts in the background in addition to the electric guitars. I was originally going to have another song in this style,

however I decided against it because that song I composed in early summer 2017 and was my first attempt at a hard rock song. I was still learning the genre (as I still am today), and there were a lot of problems in its arrangement and mixing that I flat out did not know how to fix. The title is a play on words between the word “reason” (which is unrelated to the music program used in *Daymare*) and the fact of life that people “sin” and “re-sin” over and over again and think they're forgiven, when they are truly not.

Transcendence

This was my very first composition ever, composed in early January 2017. At that time, I hardly knew anything about chord progressions, intervals, what chord sounded like what (in the key), etc. This was purely me going with whatever sounded good to my ears. I knew I wanted it to reflect the style of those who have been big inspirations to me, such as Kalafina and Evanescence, but that was it. I think this song is both a reflection of where I started, and how much I've learned since then.

Programs Used:

Passacaglia Music Notation (1)

Musescore 2 (2, 3, 4, 6, 8, 13)

Audio Evolution Mobile (5, 9, 10, 12)

Garageband (7)

Reason (11)