

B177467,
Portfolio of Compositions:
Submission 2, Notes on Pieces

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flight

'flight' is the opening piece of *the sky*, literally continuing where the previous EP, 2, left off by using the very same orchestral tuning sample that hinted at this upcoming phase at the final moments of the final song on 2, ' '. It sets the tone of this EP by introducing the acoustic soundscape, making use of my original instruments, the piano and the guitar as well as samples of everyday objects, like keys and bottles. It also sets the scene, where I imagine myself flying through *the sky* facing the choice between fighting or fleeing.

Lyrics:

third time's charm
and the first line's gone
works like a charm
far as first times go
won't hurt no harm
some verses to recall
good luck good luck
you heard from afar
the words in my diary's
the world in my palm
the worry is it drops but i'm nervously calm
like a night never heard of a dawn
out like a light that's been burned to the core
the thirst from before's just an urge we endure
the jerks and the dorks we deserve to ignore
it's the slurs that they sow and the blurs that we saw
it's worse than before, even dirt is a throne
but as birds fight the storm and fly back home
till the night is done, i'm all yours
but of course, i heard that *the sky* might fall

will it be a fight or flight tonight?
do u wanna ride or die tonight?
are u gonna rise and shine tonight?
fingers crossed 2 *the sky* find out tonight
will it be a fight or flight tonight?
do u wanna ride or die tonight?
are u gonna rise and shine tonight?
fingers crossed 2 *the sky* find out tonight

elevate
from underground
to off the ground
levitate
don't know how?
come and bounce
renegade
i'm unannounced
like a summer day's thundercloud
i'll tell you what i'm on about

how are they frowning?
i'm like a fountain of ideas
piling up to the heights of the mountains
ain't nobody counting
go to the pub like i'm gonna do some shouting
how about doubtful
but let this album be your alarm sound
warned out, worn out
arms up, arms down
what you know about storms?
'cause that's why it's calm now
so calm down
find signs of life in the lights of *the sky*
somehow
i'm sorry i've been quiet all night
i promise we'll be quite alright
are you feeling like line or a kite?
tell me:

will it be a fight or flight tonight?
do u wanna ride or die tonight?
are u gonna rise and shine tonight?
fingers crossed 2 *the sky* find out tonight
will it be a fight or flight tonight?
do u wanna ride or die tonight?
are u gonna rise and shine tonight?
fingers crossed 2 *the sky* find out tonight

oxygen

'oxygen' is a piece with probably the heaviest content on *the sky*, weighing us onto a diving downfall. It deals with dark topics of feeling stuck in the trappings of loneliness and anxiety amidst an existential crisis. The scuffing of the guitar sample of the start is nothing short of a metaphor of how I was feeling at the time of writing it, and the sidechained disruptive kick pattern creates a suitable sensation of hyperventilation.

Please note that this piece has already been marked in the first submission, though is included here due to new developments and its role as part of this EP as a whole.

Lyrics:

leave me, this house is just a space that locked me in
breath in, breath out, i'm just wasting oxygen

take a step
break a leg
people that are true were never made to last
take a breath
fake my death
i wanna see the views when i'm laid to rest
make a wish
make a mess

ask me how i'm doing, what would you make of this?
a train to miss
a rain to check
i'll ask you how you doing if it's okay at best

waste time waste space waste feelings
wasted of my face while i'm chasing the ceiling
my place like a cage somewhere in a strange city
changed my mind but the change ain't pretty
i'm not living i'm just coping
sleeping in until it's over
what's the thing that keeps me going
when everything around is broken?

leave me, this house is just a space that locked me in
breath in, breath out, i'm just wasting oxygen

get a grip
give a shit
everybody cares until they're sick of it
live a little
die a bit
get some fresh air smoke a cigarette

lost words, lost count, lost meaning
lost and not found look around have you seen me?
my head like a deathbed in a strange city
changed my life but the change ain't pretty
i'm not living i'm surviving
deafening, the sound of silence
what's the thing that keeps me trying
when everything about me is dying?
dying

leave me, this house is just a space that locked me in
breath in, breath out, i'm just wasting oxygen

idk / in-between

'idk' is a piece about feeling lost and confused, especially after something dramatic happening. If we consider acousticism as a feature of seeing things for how they naturally are, it only seems fitting that this piece uses many electronic elements in this unclear state, and the alternative groove goes along with it. Seamlessly, we get to 'in-between' before we even realise, which takes the notion of uncertainty to a deeper level of indecision. Musically, this is interpreted with repetition of similar sonic ideas, like the static sample and the hovering piano that seems to be going nowhere. It's like being so zoomed in that we cannot see the bigger picture anymore.

Please note that this piece has already been marked in the first submission, though is included here due to new developments and its role as part of this EP as a whole.

Lyrics:

sick of home but i'm homesick
need to be alone but i'm lonely
i feel like a ghost but you know me
won't pick up the phone but call me
every single time that you ask me why
every single time that you told me so
feel like my life's just passing by
what the fuck is the point of us holding on?

i don't know
i don't know
what the fuck is going
right or wrong?
high or low?
i'm just trying to keep holding on
i don't know
i don't know
what the fuck is going
right or wrong?
high or low?
i'm just trying to keep holding on

can i fear why? i know what it was
spent a year high, i was glowing up
shed a tear, why are we growing up?
been a weird night, so show me a thunder from a clear *sky*
you owe me that much
lonely at the top, throw me off
lonely at the bottom, awfully so
'yo what's up?' i'd like to know but
it's ups and downs, ongoing movement
it's pros and cons and no conclusion
issues from the internet noise from the news on
blissful ignorance, joyous confusion
signs of hope with a microscope
lines to cope to a microphone
'how's life going?' it'll write a poem
but i don't like your tone so mind your own
'cause

i don't know
i don't know
what the fuck is going
right or wrong?
high or low?
i'm just trying to keep holding on
i don't know
i don't know
what the fuck is going

right or wrong?
high or low?
i'm just trying to keep holding on

good luck

so in-between things
that there's no in-between
so in-between things
that there's no in-between
so in-between things
that there's no in-between

if i would follow you anywhere
would you be there waiting for
me tomorrow? i'll be ready then
am i being crazy or
do you understand me?
even i can't always stand me
i would follow you anywhere
i'm sorry i'm just

so in-between things
that there's no in-between
so in-between things
that there's no in-between

two-way street, it's a crossroads
of big dreams & lost hopes
high hopes and low esteem
time flies so slowly seems
that i owe the old me a piece
of music or advice
touch *the skies*
but don't get lost inside
it's just a life
so trust that i'm just
zoning in

i'm so in-between things
that there's no in-between
so in-between things
that there's no in-between

leave the stories for the dreamers
insecurities for inbetweeners
pick a team, say mean things
there's nothing but me between us
leave the stories for the dreamers
insecurities for inbetweeners

pick a team, say mean things
there's nothing but me between us

ghost

'ghost' is a piece about feeling like a literal ghost just floating through air, places and people without anyone seemingly even noticing, let alone caring. This leaves one unsure whether they even exist. The instrumental lines feel afloat while the groove trots on.

Lyrics:

so how have u been?
less and less
i'm guessing yes since they wished me the very best
restless soul well rested so
is existing where the exit is?
my friends text me less
well, i'm terrible with messages
against the angst, don't stand a chance
hence the fact, that friends and ends go hand in hand
no less soulless than a ghost is
hopeless i'll hold you the closest
i'm moments unposted, those opened and ghosted
i'll post a mortem, host my funeral for them
show goes on till we all die of boredom
lost in the lot to process
chosen one ain't the praise you thought
go get some in case you want
a game where no one won
a proless con
don't hold on 'cause i'm almost gone

resist to exist
insist to persist

i'll be there but i'm never around
i'll be there but you're better without
legs off the ground, head in the clouds
remember what you've gone forgetting about
what are u forgetting about?
what are u forgetting about?
what are u forgetting about?
what are u forgetting?

so have u seen me?
your face says you haven't
how do you fathom a phantom?
it's like having an anthem
i'm just a dancer
terminal answer to casual banter
well, i'm keen to hear it

it smells like a teen spirit
just walked through the door
careful on the chalk on the floor
i'm an earful, talking no more
nightmare in a room full of dreams
jumpscare in beautiful scene
i stared but you couldn't see
i'm scared, but who wouldn't be?
sick with worries, you'll catch it
vision gets blurry and that's it
buried the hatchet, now hurry the casket
burning a match in a hurricane, that's how we lasted
sorry i've been mia
just let me go and i'll stay

resist to exist
insist to persist

i'll be there but i'm never around
i'll be there but you're better without
legs off the ground, head in the clouds
remember what you've gone forgetting about
what are u forgetting about?
what are u forgetting about?
what are u forgetting about?
what are u forgetting about?

Credits:

Venla Turunen – Background Vocals

variations for wind

'variations for wind' is the most experimental thing on the project. It is a phone recording of strong winds, and as such, represents the most radical, realest and rawest take of our theme of nature clashing with technology on the EP. It is clearly a conceptual piece, raising the ever-interesting question of those of us interested in sound – what all can be considered music? Moreover, if it feels like this doesn't make any sense, it feels exactly how I have so often felt through my studies in music, upon some traditional composition theory or analysis, for example.

While some background noise of the city life is captured, the wind outsounds it all and takes over, which often feels like the case when you're trying to, say, have a phone call or listen to music out and about in Edinburgh. Windy days are so common here, and I have often felt annoyed about it. In this way, I wanted to pay homage to the birthplace of this project that I will soon be moving out of and remember the wind as nothing but music to my ears.

This piece marks halfway through *the sky*, dividing the EP into two parts: Leading up to here has been quite depressing and dark, whereas from here on we will find ways to come in terms with the ways that we are.

stereo

'stereo' is a song about someone who will always be there for you, even though it might not always be good for you. This could be a person, or just the mischievous voice inside your own head, as suggested by the additional persona in the piece singing the pitch-shifted vocals of the hook. Just put your headphones on, and it's the two of you against the world. Along the lines of this EP's experiments with various takes on how acoustic elements can fit in electronic contexts, this piece came to be through the notion that, thanks to its ease and accessibility, MIDI feels almost more handmade than recording an actual acoustic instrument in modern-day studio sessions, which inspired the guitar riff that runs through the piece. A friend of mine described this song to me beautifully: It's a sad song that isn't sad.

Lyrics:

i'm that sad song on your stereo
might be a bad choice just to carry on
though wherever you go, i'm there you know
in your headphones and radio
the sad song on your stereo

woke up to a creepy noise
and i woke up with freaky pose
but it's just me, if u need a dose
'cause you look like you've seen a ghost
good days and how we dream of those
watch a movie and make it a cheesy choice
and i'll be there when u need the most
yeah you don't ever have to be alone
the bad news i'll read along
the sad tunes on the piano
keep on keeping on
yeah keep it going, yeah keep me on
right on your shoulder when you're over-the-shoulder
a shoulder to cry on
a moment to hide from the moments there's
nowhere to hide
i'll be over your ear like a four-leaf clover to try on

i'm that sad song on your stereo
might be a bad choice just to carry on
though wherever you go, i'm there you know
in your headphones and radio
the sad song on your stereo

bad day and a worse night
and in fact it ain't even the first time
hurt heart 'cause you burst mine
work hard not to learn why
the worst part of life's like a birthmark
unlucky but fuck it, it's worth a try
you did me wrong, and i did you wrong

it's just a song, but it hurts right?
send them me on an mp3
an npc or an mvp
boulevard of many broken dreams
could be on any empty street
everyday just another day
they said they with us, where the fuck are they?
or maybe you're the one that got away
i'm always here, when you gotta play that

i'm that sad song on your stereo
might be a bad choice just to carry on
though wherever you go, i'm there you know
in your headphones and radio
the sad song on your stereo

mind like mine

'mind like mine' is a head-bobbing anthem about standing up and owning up to who you are, also, and especially, when we may be feeling down. With the rolling drum break, recurring keyboard samples, and an ongoing vocal flow that ties it together, this piece is heavily inspired by 90s and early 2000s hiphop. In particular, this piece pays homage to one of my all-time favourite artists, Mac Miller whose debut album didn't drop actually until 2010, though definitely captured the old-school spirit. The piece is also an invitation for anyone that could relate to its message to join the party.

Lyrics:

wake up in the night
sleep in the morning
may have lost my mind
but at least it isn't boring
you take up all my time
but can't keep me in order
don't wait up 'cause i'm
so deep in my thoughts
it might take forever, sorry
some days are never for me
i'm made of melancholy
it might make a better story
something wrong with me – it's who i am, how am i?
outsider outside raining down on cloud9s
you might ask how does he do this and why?
'cause the sky's always cloudless to the clueless
it's like great minds think alike
i'd like to but i do not,
now do you not too?
i think a drink tonight might just do
mind you, i've gotta mind like you

sun dont shine in my cloud9

and sometimes downtime is just downsides
it's just a lifestyle for a mind like mine
but that's alright 'cause life sounds like
that the day we're gonna die it's gonna about time
it's just a lifestyle for a mind like mine

i'm curiously serious
but seriously, i'm curious
am i the only one that sees this
life as a drama series?
piling up a hundred seasons
vibe until we're numb and weary
write in mascara on mirrors
lies to every honest query
i'm not a bad guy, but probably the weirdest
just a bit sad like *the sky* when it's not the clearest
cheers to my nearest and dearest but hear this
nothing as sincere as unlocking a new fear is
so here's a little thinker
it's a wrinkle in the pattern:
people chatter but other than that we don't matter
the world just turns and burns if we don't gather
together we can represent the xeno matter
an emo rapper
a hero after
and i mean that for real
so i ask for zero laughter
see you at the afters, you should come because
we're all no one but we're all one of us

sun dont shine in my cloud9
and sometimes downtime is just downsides
it's just a lifestyle for a mind like mine
but that's alright 'cause life sounds like
that the day we're gonna die it's gonna about time
it's just a lifestyle for a mind like mine

'if there's a million ways to life give me a million ways to life'

grey

'grey' is a piece about acknowledging how temporary everything is; in good times which you hope would last forever; and in bad times which you hope would never have begun. I have certainly enjoyed and endured both in the greyness of Edinburgh weather and architecture. Starting off with just the acoustic guitar and then the voice, least processed as it appears on the whole EP, I wanted to express and expose myself honest and vulnerable. This song is reminiscent of the early 2000s, particularly with the guitar riff and the slow groove. For this one, I avoided digital instruments and automated tools like quantisation. Instead, acoustic and analogous instrumental performances were recorded for a lively and natural feel.

Lyrics:

the ink from which poem flows
the sink from which my soul drains
sing and let the songs know
i think of you the whole day
to think about the photos
is to think about the growth pains
break oaths on smoke breaks
go insane, so in vein
the clot in my cold veins
i'm nothing but snowflakes
at the end of the day, going away
nothing to see, i'm just more of the same
unfortunately stay
i'll be just so very okay
'cause hey,
cautionary tales are just old tales

in the morning i thought that the sun was up
and holding my throat were your loving arms
hope means the most when you've given up
promise i'll be just okay
when *the sky* is not so grey
and we'll learn to live again

well this is it, that's alright
jinx it with the lack of signs
you'll miss the mist at your eyes
wish i could have asked the sky
why it's never black and white
life feels better than i'd like
time and time after time
that's a while i haven't cried
and i've tried
so please don't try to answer why
outlast the last of light
to sit tight is to stand and fight
have a life and then die
let's just make it past july
2024 and -5

in the morning i thought that the sun was up
and holding my throat were your loving arms
hope means the most when you've given up
promise i'll be just okay
when *the sky* is not so grey
and we'll learn to love again

promise this is over soon
as long as i can get to you

promise this is over soon
as long as i can get to you

in the morning i thought that the sun was up
and holding my throat were your loving arms
hope means the most when you've given up
promise i'll be just okay
when *the sky* is not so grey
and we'll learn
we'll learn

promise this is over soon
as long as i can get to you...

better

'better' is a piece about realising and admitting to your own flaws, faults and weaknesses. It's a delicate ballad for piano and robot. The unaltered, unpolished and natural one-take piano and the heavily processed, almost sounding like an AI-generated voice, create a visceral contrast. The irony of this type of text to be delivered by a supposedly error-free, now disgraced and broken machine is a reminder for us to embrace our imperfections.

Lyrics:

life moving on has me wondering
just how much more might be coming up
say where do you think you'd gone if
you were the things that you're running from?

thought i was meant to be something
but now i know that i'm something else
thought i was broken by nothing
but now i know that i'm nothing else

said whatever comes
struggle and then some
i'm not better
i just hide it better
that's just how my story goes
there's no glory 'cause
i'm so sorry for nobody but for me and myself

i never felt like belonging
just too much more i'd be longing for
i think a new day is dawning
but don't trust me i've been wrong before

thought i was meant to be something
but now i know that i'm something else
thought i was broken by nothing
but now i know that i'm nothing else

said whatever comes
struggle and then some
i'm not better
i just hide it better
that's just how my story goes
there's no glory 'cause
i'm so sorry for nobody but for me and myself

plummet

'plummet' is the final piece of the EP, finally bringing us down from the long, wavering and bouncy flit across and through *the sky*. The repetitive motif of the cello as accompanied by the flute follow a downward motion and the bassline descends, as could be expected from a piece about falling. Many suggestions of toward what one may be falling are also made repeatedly in the text. As with the final pieces of the last two EPs, the text of this one is essentially an essay compiled from, or a rhapsody consisting of all the ideas that found no other slot on the project. In the final four lines, references are made to the previous EPs as well as the next one. Where the vocals come in, the instrumental elements become more strictly aligned along with layers being progressively added on. This technological control of the 'natural' is a hint at the next instalment of the EP-series which will likely set a contrast against this EP's focus on the acoustic and the natural with electronics and artificiality at the conceptual forefront.

Like falling in a dream just to wake up, imagine this piece finishing just as you hit the ground.

Lyrics:

the album's final
downside spiral
so walk outside the chalk outlines
it's going down like the pilot with the ship
only i know it's a trick because
only i know how it ends
only i go down the trench
hence again
it's graveyard shift
where the radars miss
the ravers bliss
what u take part in?
make art for the bravehearted
late to the party but the gate's not guarded
they talk shit
and they talk shit
gave my face for lift
rather than gave a shit
make it in your mind
and take it to the apartment
sailing through the sky and you can't be stopped
what goes up
all comes down
what comes to love
all of the above

falling down
from a cloud
and all i found
is common ground
with something new
i wanted doubt
but somehow proud
like letters read and numbers count
this one thing's through
it better be it wore me out
it better be it bore me down
but it will never be, you were born with it
now live with it, or in it
when all is gone
and all in's all we got
before you know, you know you'll fall in love
and all of a sudden the sun is dark
i'll call you up
and we can start to fall apart
fingers crossed
heartless high and a starless sky
can't fall in line
so fall with me 4 the last time
follow me till we fall asleep

Credits:

Paul Tollin – Cello
Corran Crawford – Flute