

The Stories of
mouvement du sentiment



Gelivan

“La musique c’est la représentation sonore, simultanée, du sentiment de mouvement et du mouvement du sentiment.”

M. Aguéev, Roman avec cocaïne

“Music is the simultaneous sound representation of the feeling of movement, and the movement of feeling.”

~ The Flow of Music ~

selected text from the book 'Flow – The Psychology of Optimal Experience' by Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi

In every known culture, the ordering of sound in ways that please the ear has been used extensively to improve the quality of life. One of the most ancient and perhaps the most popular functions of music is to focus the listeners' attention on patterns appropriate to a desired mood. So there is music for dancing, for weddings, for funerals, for religious and for patriotic occasions; music that facilitates romance, and music that helps soldiers march in orderly ranks.

When bad times befell the pygmies of the Ituri forest in Central Africa, they assumed that their misfortune was due to the fact that the benevolent forest, which usually provided for all their needs, had accidentally fallen asleep. At that point the leaders of the tribe would dig up the sacred horns buried underground, and blow on them for days and nights on end, in an attempt to wake up the forest, thus restoring the good times.

The way music is used in the Ituri forest is paradigmatic of its function everywhere. The horns may not have awakened the trees, but their familiar sound must have reassured the pygmies that help was on the way, and so they were able to confront the future with confidence. Most of the music that pours out of Walkmans and

stereos nowadays answers a similar need. Teenagers, who swing from one threat to their fragile evolving personhood to another in quick succession throughout the day, especially depend on the soothing patterns of sound to restore order in their consciousness. But so do many adults. One policeman told us: "If after a day of making arrests and worrying about getting shot I could not turn on the radio in the car on my way home, I would probably go out of my mind."

Music, which is organized auditory information, helps organize the mind that attends to it, and therefore reduces psychic entropy, or the disorder we experience when random information interferes with goals. Listening to music wards off boredom and anxiety, and when seriously attended to, it can induce flow experiences.

Some people argue that technological advances have greatly improved the quality of life by making music so easily available. Transistor radios, laser disks, tape decks blare the latest music twenty-four hours a day in crystal-clear recordings. This continuous access to good music is supposed to make our lives much richer. But this kind of argument suffers from the usual confusion between behavior and experience. Listening to recorded music for days on end may or may not be more enjoyable than hearing an hour-long live concert that one had been looking forward to for weeks. It is not the hearing that improves life, it is the listening. We hear Muzak, but we rarely listen to it, and few could have ever been in flow as a result of it.

As with anything else, to enjoy music one must pay attention to it. To the extent that recording technology makes music too accessible, and therefore taken for granted, it can reduce our ability to derive enjoyment from it. Before the advent of sound recording, a live musical performance retained some of the awe that music engendered when it was still entirely immersed in religious rituals. Even a village dance band, let alone a symphonic orchestra, was a visible reminder of the mysterious skill involved in producing harmonious sounds. One approached the event with heightened expectations, with the awareness that one had to pay close attention because the performance was unique and not to be repeated again.

The audiences at today's live performances, such as rock concerts, continue to partake in some degree in these ritual elements; there are few other occasions at which large numbers of people witness the same event together, think and feel the same things, and process the same information. Such joint participation produces in an audience the condition Emile Durkheim called "collective effervescence," or the sense that one belongs to a group with a concrete, real existence. This feeling, Durkheim believed, was at the roots of religious experience. The very conditions of live performance help focus attention on the music, and therefore make it more likely that flow will result at a concert than when one is listening to reproduced sound.

But to argue that live music is innately more enjoyable than recorded music would be just as invalid as arguing the opposite. Any sound can be a source of enjoyment if attended to properly. In fact, as the Yaqui sorcerer taught the anthropologist Carlos Castaneda, even the intervals of silence between sounds, if listened to closely, can be exhilarating.

Many people have impressive record libraries, full of the most exquisite music ever produced, yet they fail to enjoy it. They listen a few times to their recording equipment, marveling at the clarity of the sound it produces, and then forget to listen again until it is time to purchase a more advanced system. Those who make the most of the potential for enjoyment inherent in music, on the other hand, have strategies for turning the experience into flow. They begin by setting aside specific hours for listening. When the time comes, they deepen concentration by dousing the lights, by sitting in a favorite chair, or by following some other ritual that will focus attention. They plan carefully the selection to be played, and formulate specific goals for the session to come.

[...]

So far we have considered only how flow arises from listening, but even greater rewards are open to those who learn to make music. The civilizing power of Apollo depended on his ability to play the lyre, Pan drove his audiences to frenzy with his pipes, and Orpheus with his music was able to restrain even death. These legends point to the connection between the ability to create harmony in sound and the more general and abstract harmony that underlies the

kind of social order we call a civilization. Mindful of that connection, Plato believed that children should be taught music before anything else; in learning to pay attention to graceful rhythms and harmonies their whole consciousness would become ordered.

Our culture seems to have been placing a decreasing emphasis on exposing young children to musical skills. Whenever cuts are to be made in a school's budget, courses in music (as well as art and physical education) are the first to be eliminated. It is discouraging how these three basic skills, so important for improving the quality of life, are generally considered to be superfluous in the current educational climate. Deprived of serious exposure to music, children grow into teenagers who make up for their early deprivation by investing inordinate amounts of psychic energy into their own music. They form rock groups, buy tapes and records, and generally become captives of a subculture that does not offer many opportunities for making consciousness more complex.

Even when children are taught music, the usual problem often arises: too much emphasis is placed on how they perform, and too little on what they experience. Parents who push their children to excel at the violin are generally not interested in whether the children are actually enjoying the playing; they want the child to perform well enough to attract attention, to win prizes, and to end up on the stage of Carnegie Hall. By doing so, they succeed in perverting music into the opposite of what it was designed to be:

they turn it into a source of psychic disorder. Parental expectations for musical behavior often create great stress, and sometimes a complete breakdown.

Lorin Hollander, who was a child prodigy at the piano and whose perfectionist father played first violin in Toscanini's orchestra, tells how he used to get lost in ecstasy when playing the piano alone, but how he used to quake in sheer terror when his demanding adult mentors were present. When he was a teenager the fingers of his hands froze during a concert recital, and he could not open his clawed hands for many years thereafter. Some subconscious mechanism below the threshold of his awareness had decided to spare him the constant pain of parental criticism. Now Hollander, recovered from the psychologically induced paralysis, spends much of his time helping other gifted young instrumentalists to enjoy music the way it is meant to be enjoyed.

Although playing an instrument is best learned when young, it is really never too late to start. Some music teachers specialize in adult and older students, and many a successful businessman decides to learn the piano after age fifty. Singing in a choir and playing in an amateur string ensemble are two of the most exhilarating ways to experience the blending of one's skills with those of others. Personal computers now come with sophisticated software that makes composition easy, and allows one to listen immediately to the orchestration. Learning to produce harmonious

sounds is not only enjoyable, but like the mastery of any complex skill, it also helps strengthen the self.

~ Introduction ~

I worked on this album sporadically from 2013 to January 2017, without thinking about making an album, neither compiling these tracks in any kind of project.

It was published on January 22, 2017, after spending eight months vagabonding through Southern Europe (Italy, Portugal, Spain), while coming back to Geneva every 1-2 months for 1 to 4 weeks.

It's only at the end of 2016 that I knew I would make an album.

In 2015 I was thinking of making a first official EP. For sure the first images to be used for the video of *askiya* have been shot with that in mind in February 2016.

It's probable that it was just after deciding to make the EP that I also decided to leave my apartment and life in Switzerland for traveling, and find a place to settle somewhere in Southern Europe.

I first was planning to join a friend who was studying cinema in Lisbon, a city that had a good impression on me in the past, and where the climat seemed to be ideal for me. In the end I stayed

just two months in Portugal. Lisbon was too big for me, and it simply wasn't the right time for such project.

From November 2016 to April 2016, I lived alone in that apartment and comfort that I abandoned. It's by living on my own for the first time, in a calm and quiet area, that I started to make music with more focus, but still without that discipline and consistency that I apply now since October 2018.

During those times, I compensated that solitude with hosting fellow travellers via CouchSurfing and AirBnb. I met new friends who became important persons in my life.

This album contains the expressions of my emotions and my biggest influences in the span of those three years – till that time the richer of my life.

~ caro smoke jarrett ~

The introduction of the albu is an audio collage – I didn't create any music material myself.

I just layered two movie scenes from the followings :

Caro Diario (1993, Nanni Moretti)

In this intimate film (the title translates to *Dear Journal*) from which I discovered the movie director Nanni Moretti, I sampled the scene where the soundtrack is no other than a part of Keith Jarrett's famous gig in Koln back in 1975. The recording was released on vinyl and is now available on Spotify [<http://bit.ly/Koln1975>].

No dialog here, we see the protagonist (Nanni Moretti himself) on his Vespa, driving out of the city of Roma, to the beach, on the site where Pier Paolo Pasolini was killed...in 1975.

I just realised now why that music has been chosen for that scene. The author put in frame his memories associations. I suppose that when Pasolini died, Moretti (23 years old back then) was listening to Keith Jarrett. That's beautiful.

Smoke (1995, Wayne Wang & Paul Auster)

The second scene – from which the dialog and a discreet piano playing lower notes than those from Keith Jarrett – is a little wonder. You can watch it here : bit.ly/smoke-gelivan.

One of the main character shares his life's project with the other :

A photography album of more than four thousands pictures, taken everyday at 8am, from exactly the same spot – the corner of the street where he's running his shop.

If we do the math, we understand that we're talking about a daily discipline that he is maintaining for more than ten years.

The other character – a writer who lost his wife recently – says he's feeling overwhelmed by what he sees, and that he doesn't understand why his friend does that.

I let you discover the rest of the story by watching this wonderful film.

I guess I watched those films around the same period and I don't remember how the idea came really. I think didn't realise there was some piano already on the scene from *Smoke* as well. So we can hear two pieces of piano playing on top of each other, making love.

~ bristol chords ~

The core of the second track was created on an iPad with iMaschine, in Bristol when I was visiting my musical friend Barnaby Carter. This great guy found me online back in 2012, listening to *Eclectic Soul*.

It was October 21st, 2014. We were four in the living room (I went with two Swiss friends) and we all got on our respective device or computer to make a track simultaneously.

12th May 2015, I recorded some trumpet with Théophile Blanchon – a musician I met via my friend Emmanuel. Emmanuel was with me in that Bristolian living room. Théophile played over the draft I had at that time.

I worked on this song sporadically until the end of 2016.

I remember some summer sessions on my laptop, during my travels. Like in the rented car when I was solo road tripping in Apulia, and also in Calabria (again with Emmanuel).

Théophile sent me two new recordings in November 2016. I ended up using some bits from each recording.



Emmanuel during his anti-Calabrese-mafia training.



My left arm and myself, in Calabria, just after coming close to death by weapon. We took some almonds from the trees on a private land. Don't mess with Calabria.



L'athlète and his Ferrari.

In November 2016, Théophile sent me two new recordings, done playing over the almost-finished project. I ended up using bits from each recording I had at hand.

We can hear two great guys speaking the truth : Filmmaker Richard Linklater in the intro – interviewed in the 90s soon after the release of *Slacker*, which was his second feature film.

“By the time you’re 14, you have this raging individuality that wants to express itself, and if the culture around you, everything around you is not letting you do that, you gonna break windows, you gonna cause troubles, guys gonna get in fights. [...] You have

to get away from your parents before you can move on, and really start thinking for yourself. – But it's not just the parents, it's the whole environment – Yeah, that whole small town environment, or whatever, just that high school environment. The indoctrination of our public education, that's the biggest thing to rebel against.”

Then there's Alan Watts and his wisdom, telling us :

“What would you like to do if money were no object? how would you really enjoy spending your life? [...] When we finally got down to something, which the individual says he really wants to do, I will say to him, you do that and forget the money, because, if you say that getting the money is the most important thing, you will spend your life completely wasting your time. You'll be doing things you don't like doing in order to go on living, that is to go on doing things you don't like doing, which is stupid. Better to have a short life that is full of what you like doing than a long life spent in a miserable way. And after all, if you do really like what you're doing, it doesn't matter what it is, you can eventually turn it – you could eventually become a master of it. It's the only way to become a master of something, to be really with it.”

Full transcript of this speech from Alan Watts available here : genius.com/3764541.

At the very end of the track, you can hear that first draft made on the iPad, except that I added the trumpet of the mighty Théophile.

Later in Spring of 2017 I remixed this track to make a groovy hip hop beat, to which my Belgian friend and rapper Pierre Citron made love to. This is the track *Doin' Fine*, one of the four of the project *Rodalquilar Sessions* – an EP released in October 2017.

It was a way to finish the work with this music material, because I wasn't totally satisfied with the groove of *bristol chords*, that I thought was not-enough, cold and too mechanical. I found the rhythm too static somehow. Probably because of the other elements, and the slow tempo.

My friend Sam – we met via CouchSurfing – did the great video for *bristol chords* with images from his stay in Tokyo [bit.ly/bristolchords].



an image from the music video for askiya.

~ askiya ~

This is the first song I completed for the album – way before knowing I'd make an album – and with the least efforts.

I used the track *Down The Lines* from Romare as a reference for the arrangement, which made the whole process easier.

I used many instrument loops from the *Apple Loops for Garage Band* library.

The upright bass for exemple, was used just as it is by Tiggs Da Author on the beautiful song *Gone*. In fact, I discovered this loop first via this track. I sampled *Gone*, and the loop has been chopped and replayed to create the core of *askiya*.

For the second part of the song, I used another upright bass loop from the same source, this time without modifying it.

The intro talk comes from an interview of Adriano Celentano, an Italian singer (81 years old in 2019) whom my dad loves and that I always found intriguing and fascinating. I think that without knowing it, I wanted to be like him, somehow.

I look for Celentano on the web and find out that he imagined and directed an animated TV show based on his values and opinions of the world, with his alter-ego from the future as hero.

To me it's a great example that at more than 80 this man is still creative. He's also patient, because I read that this idea was first presented in 2005, and he wasn't able to produce it at that time.

We even hear in *askiya* :

“patience is the key to success”

I sampled these words from Tiggs Da Author in *Gone*.

Askiya is the word symbolising the art of wit (–humour) in Uzbekistan. According to UNESCO : "Askiya is a genre of Uzbek verbal folk art that takes the form of a dialogue between two or more participants, who eloquently debate and exchange witticisms around a particular theme."

I read that in a magazine, loved the word and the story.

According to Wikipedia, there was also the Askiya Dynasty from the years 1493-1591, ruled by Askia Mohammad I – a bad guy from the Niger area.

From winter to summer 2016 we sporadically worked on the music video. The team was composed by these local artists : Loïc Herzig [[@luciano_acca](#) on Instagram], Daniela Marchetta [[@dani_padani](#)] and Davide Marchetta. We all grew up in the same neighbourhood of Onex, in canton of Genève.

We first shot some images in the area where I live, then I filmed a lot with my iPhone during my trips around Europe from May to August 2016. I invested in that device precisely to use it as a camera and document my adventures, long before I started to used it as a phone as well.

My friend Davide also added some of his images.

We didn't really know what it would be in the end. A collage, simply?



Editing of the teasers to announce the music video for askiya. Cattolica Eraclea, Sicile.

At the editing stage, we thought of telling a story – mine, at that moment. We took inspiration from the short-movie by KNLO from the French Canadian collective Alaclair Ensemble. He did that film as promo material to announce his new album [bit.ly/KNLOLAN16].

The track *askiya* lasts 4 minutes and 26 secondes. The video is almost ten minutes long. We composed an introduction, in which we hear some layered recordings I did during Summer 2016 in Belmont-sur-Lausanne (Switzerland) and Matino (my hometown in Apulia). This part is the beginning of the following track on the album.

I think that the video of *askiya* perfectly captured my life at that moment. Watching it back from times to times reminds me of what matters the most in my life and helps me to center.



June 1st 2016, I was walking the "Sentiero dell'olivo" (Olive tree's trail), from Lugano to the first Italian town after the border.

~ matino-belmont ~

The fourth track is essentially a spontaneous recording I did, of my friend Emmanuel improvising on piano in Belmont-sur-Lausanne, at his girlfriend's. After some minutes I join him and play on the higher notes.

I layered some field recordings I did during my trips, using a *Yamaha Pocketrak PR7* microphone.

In the intro we hear my uncle and aunties from Matino, the little South Italian town where I spent the first three years of my life.

My uncle Rocco lived and worked for decades in Geneva, and went back to his family when he retired. He mixes up Italian and French without realising it, like my mum.

That day of June 2016, I was ending my solo road trip in Salento, this wonderful region of Southern Italy that we labelled “The Maldives of Europe”. I rented a car for ten days (just 90 euros, with the new Goldcar company). I started from Brindisi to reach Gallipoli and finally Matino, driving all the way by the coast, and stopping wherever I felt like.



*mon friend Fenel, at the beach.
Otranto. June 2016.*

I remember the soundtrack of that trip being the EP from Dimlite titled *A/DD* and some tracks from the compilation *The Roots of Chicha: Psychedelic Cumbias From Peru*.

When I arrived in my hometown It was a total surprise for my uncle and aunts, as they didn't know I was traveling around. I was touched by their openness and warmth, specially because we aren't so close (intimate), we don't see/hear each other so often.

My aunt, one of the two living sisters of my father, hosted me in his place for the few days I had left. I was then able to easily enjoy the lands, and wonderful sea.

At the end of the track we hear my father as well. Though this was September of the same year, when I joined him by night train and bus after some weeks in Sicily (Davide's parents house).



Davide, walking alive. Riserva dello Zingaro, Sicily.



Gelivan chilling by his swimming pool.

For the first time since my childhood, I was in my hometown with my father, who lived there until he was 21.



Zio Antonio, zia Sarina (RIP), zia Fernanda, zio Antonio (RIP), my father just wanting to join his friends at the beach, zia Luigina with her daughter. ~1967?

He was sharing memories related to the places where we passed by, and his face lit up. Like the first day they brought him to the sea, in a horse cart.

One of those days of September 2016, I went from Parabita (where my aunt lives, which is the town just next to Matino) to the beach of Lido Conchiglie, walking something like 3 hours and 14 km.

A guy passing by in a car yelled at me :

“ANDO CAZZO VAIIII? ANDOOO CAZZOOO VAIIII?”

Which means *“WHERE THE FUCK ARE YOU GOING?”*.

I could have asked the same.

Most people there don't understand why someone would walk, instead of taking a car. So if you walk, you are a crazy person. Which in my case is true.

It's funny, from all the notebooks I wrote during those years, the only one that was in my bedroom as I am writing these lines is from September 2016.

I then went to get some other notebooks from that box I keep in the basement. I wasn't sure that I did write during each of these trips, and to my happy surprise : that was a constant.

Here's what I wrote (originally in French) on the 14th of September 2016, my first morning in Parabita :

“The dawn. Earlier than I thought. Here there aren't the mountains or hills of Sicily to delay the light. It's approximately 7 am. Seven. My number. I keep seeing it. It was the number of the mini pool ball key ring in Scopello. The kilometers of the coast trail at Riserva dello Zingaro. Yesterday on the TV : “I Sette Magnifici”. And I probably forget some others. Oh yes, the night train the other day: carrozza 7. – The dawn. She [things have a genre/sex in French and Italian] follows me. I'd like to live it. It's time to do it.

Once again told and promoted in the radio show ‘Dans tes rêves’ [In your dreams], once again by a man, a creative. He was saying how he loved to write at dawn, when it's still dark outside, during Winter. In this calm, this special waking-up mood. I know, I did experiment it, and each time it was wonderful. Then Pirandello, in the last two pages of his book [One, No One and One Hundred Thousand] – finished to read outdoor in Agrigento before embarking in the train. I had wet eyes. [...] He says that he get up and go out at dawn. The way he talks about it. This magic of the morning. Already described by Henry David Thoreau. I have a vague memory talking about Thoreau in my dreams. My dreams. I'd like to take the time to write them down.”

Then on September 15th :

“Fourteen. fourteen kilometers. The distance I walked yesterday from here to the sea of Lido Conchiglie. Then almost seven to reach the train station in Sannicola. Around 20 kilometers I walked yesterday. It was memorable. The notion of time losing all reference. The fatigue, curiously not feeling it. The legs, a bit. But during the last 100-200 meters yesterday, after I saw a pink-tainted sun setting behind me, I was feeling great. Almost Euphoric. I don’t know why I wrote a capital E. There was a portion of the road in the country. Just after the cimetry of Alezio. Just before, I went through the town with its beautifully coloured buildings. I stopped in a sport area, where I was alone. I did some pull-ups, forgot my towel, lost my hat previously. Got everything back few moments later. I’m distracted.”

Surprisingly enough, *matino-belmont* is the most popular track on Spotify.

~ sentiment de mouvement ~

A feeling born on a summer night. It was right after attending a concert from Nut Nut [juliesemoroz.ch/nut-nut], a band of beautiful and creative girls. Music and visuals, though on that occasion there was one more girl for the music.



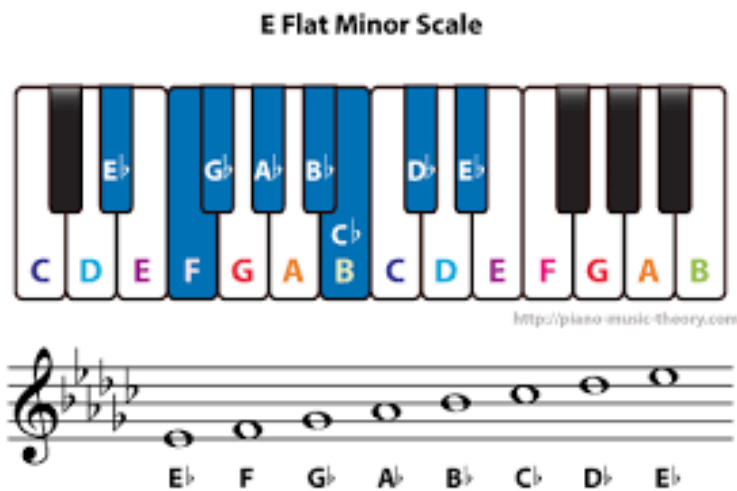
Another gig, same venue.

The date was July 24, 2014, and it was happening in an ephemeral venue that was there just for a season, 5-minute walk from my place.

Here's a video taken during that concert : bit.ly/NutNutLive.

I got inspired by the humming from one of their song that night, and I think that the very same night I recorded something similar on my laptop. Two layers: a low-pitch humming, and a higher one that I'm not sure I could reproduce today. Maybe I received and channeled the feminine energy of the concert?

That was the starting point, The very first element. The rest came out effortlessly. I think that after the humming, in the same session, I recorded the bass line. Also the kick maybe. The other parts where added subsequently.



I could have used also two white notes: *F* and *B* (on the picture *B* is considered as a *C flat*). Seems like I didn't even check which scale I was using back then.

Because of this spontaneous play, I thought that it was kind of childish. Also because it's not perfectly played and I was okay with that.

This brings us to the quote I share in the track:

"To become truly immortal, a work of art must escape all human limits: logic and common sense will only interfere. But once these barriers are broken, it will enter the realms of childhood visions and dreams." – Giorgio de Chirico

Maybe we can pause for a moment after this.

*

Funny story about one of the rhythmic sound, the one that sounds like Burial, starting at 2min20. I was with Emmanuel and we were about to meet up with our boy Boris. We called him on the phone, and we could hear that crunchy sound, which is simply the friction of the microphone of his phone dancing in his pocket. Unless he was using his mouth in such a creative way and never told us about this skill). We put it on speaker, I recorded it with my Yamaha Pocketrak PR7 microphone and said *"I'll put this in my music someday"*.

I didn't know on which track, I don't even know if I had already put out the idea for *sentiment de mouvement*. Or it was around the same period of time that all of this happened.

I might have been influenced by some Floating Points tracks in which he plays long parts of Rhodes on a deep house structure with human-played groovy drums. *Myrtle Avenue* being one of my all time favorite. One day I'll make a track as genuine.

~ walk around (think and write) ~

Let's start with the title. It's taken from a dialog between the protagonists of the movie *Before Sunset* (Richard Linklater, 2004).

If you didn't know yet, Richard is my favourite filmmaker. He learned all by doing, and just took some acting class if I'm correct.

I feel connected to this guy. As you know now, this isn't the only reference to his work in the album.

The character is talking about her stay in Eastern Europe :

“It took me a while to figure out why it felt, you know, so different. And then, one day, as I was walking through the Jewish cemetery, I don't know why, but it occurred to me there, I realised that I had spent the last 2 weeks away from most of my habits. TV was in a language I didn't understand. There was nothing to buy, no advertisements anywhere. So, all I've been doing was...walk around, think, and write. My brain felt like it was at rest, free from the consuming frenzy. And I have to say, it was almost like a natural high. I felt so peaceful inside, no... strange urge to be somewhere else, to shop... Maybe it could have seemed like

boredom at first, but it quickly became very, very soulful. It's interesting, you know?"

In January 2014 I finished a first version of this track, much more simple and downtempo [bit.ly/gelivan-walkaround].

One day I wanted to rework that track and do something richer, more uptempo. I went from 94 to 120 bpm.

The core of the song is a melodic loop I played with a *Hugh Tracey Kalimba Alto* (see right here). Other melodic parts were created from that loop, sliced and replayed in Ableton Live.



That theme came up while I was playing on top of the song *A Way* by Mr.Woodnote & Lil Rhys feat. Eva Lazarus [bit.ly/woodnote-a-way].

How did I discover Mr. Woodnote? He was playing in the streets of Bristol when I was walking around with my friend Barnaby Carter. That might be the same time when Barnaby told me about a movie from Richard Linklater, that he sampled in one of his first tracks. That's how I knew about the filmmaker.

We can also appreciate the birds from my neighbourhood in the background, as well as some recording slices of my niece talking and laughing.

That was the first time I messed around with jungle breaks (those drum loops sampled from old funk tracks and used in jungle/drum&bass music). We hear them in the final part of the track, which is the more energetic part.

~ the holy moment ~

This is probably my favourite from the album.

Many people mentioned it as a special track for them, helping them in centring themselves on what really matters in their life, or while in grief.

Most of the work on this one has been accomplished right after a 10-day vipassana meditation retreat I did in Algarve. It was in the middle of a two-month stay in Portugal (mid-October to mid-December 2016).

I traveled there from Geneva without flying. I went by car-sharing, buses and trains.

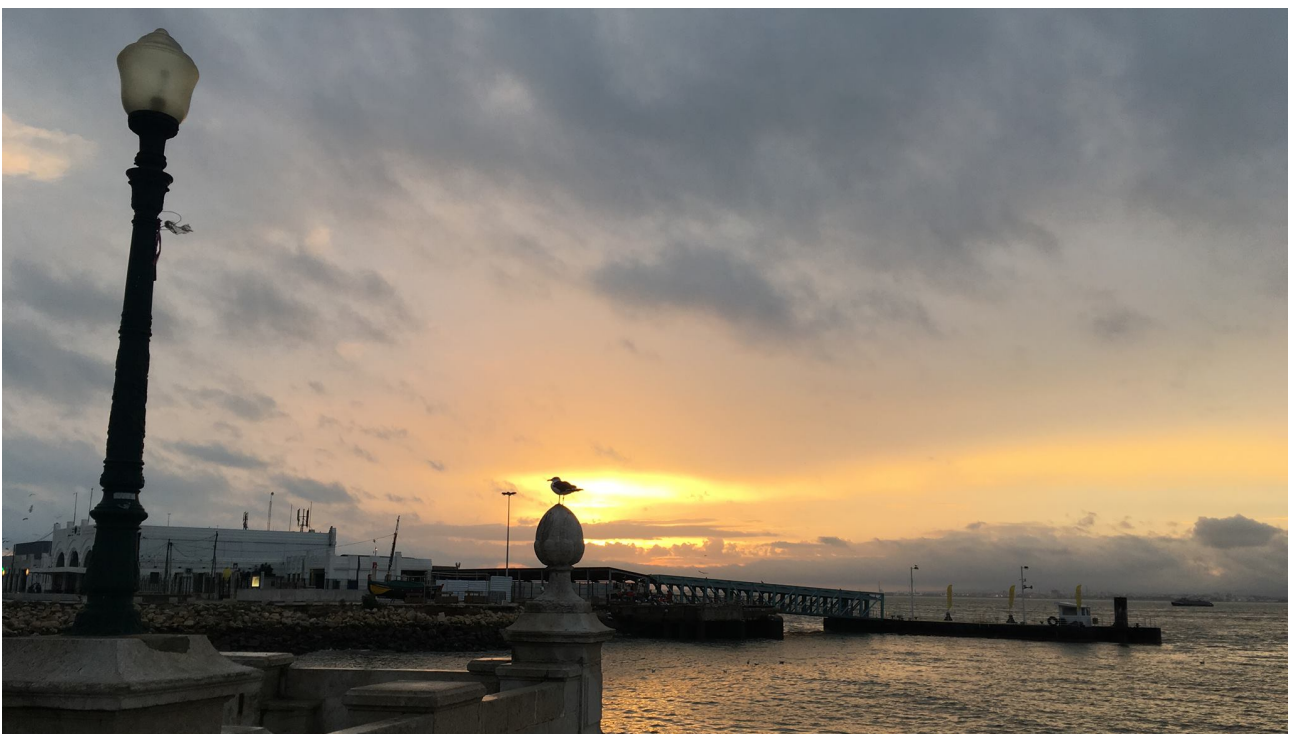


My CouchSurfing host's house in The Pyrénées Ariégeoises, on my way to Portugal. Built with his own hands and a friend's pair.

I stopped in Montpellier, The Pyrénées Ariégeoises, Pau (unplanned) and Bilbao. I was CouchSurfing or staying in youth hostels.

On the way back from Portugal, I took the boat to cross the river/border between Portugal and Spain. In that occasion, I forgot about the time zone difference, which caused me to be one hour late for the car-sharing departure that was supposed to bring me to Sevilla. Like in other instances during my adventures, I had to improvise.

I remember with joy the feeling when I arrived at 7am in Lisbon on October 25th 2016 with a night train I took the prior evening not far from Bilbao (North East of Spain).



Some minutes after my arrival in Lisbon.

I love taking night trains – falling asleep somewhere, and coming back to the world somewhere else, more than one thousand kilometers away. New climate, new language, new feelings. It's a quite oneiric experience. The previous summer I did that several times to cross Italy from North to South, and South to North.

The 10-day vipassana retreat is practiced in silence, without any communication with the outside world, no distraction by any objects we own. We must leave all the unessential stuff we have with us before we start. We can't communicate with fellows meditators, not even eye-contact. We can only speak to the manager for practical stuff, and we can ask questions about the practice to the teacher, twice a day.

That was a hard-to-describe-if-not-impossible experience. You're just with yourself... and your mind.

My mind was going crazy sometimes, like telling me (pretty much everyday) to go away cause that was insane to "*do nothing*" for so long, that I wanted to create (like working on my music).

Concretely those where *running away* thoughts, caused by the discomfort I was feeling, which was mainly mental. Sometimes physical when I was feeling pain to my knees as I was sitting in the same position for a long time. Nothing serious or unusual. Above that, I had the best food in my life during the retreat. The cooking was done by volunteers who did the 10-day course already.

I imagined myself being out of it, and regretting that I left. So I stayed.

It's quite subtle, but I guess we can feel in *the holy moment* the state of calm I was in after vipassana.

I remember how fluid the process of making this track was. It happened effortlessly. Even though it might be the most complex and rich track I produced, everything was just flowing.

The dialog in the introduction is taken once again from a Richard Linklater's film, *Waking Life* (2001). And what a movie!



Picture from the scene I sampled from Waking Life.

Here's what's said :

“The best scripts don't make the best films, because they have that kind of literary narrative thing that you're sort of a slave to. The best films are the ones that aren't tied to that slavishly. So I don't know. The whole narrative thing seems to me like, um ...

Obviously, there's narrativity to cinema 'cause it's in time, just the way there's narrativity to music. But, you know, you don't first think of the story of the song, and then make the song. It has to come out of that moment. And that's what film has. It's just that moment, which is holy. You know, like this moment, it's holy. But we walk around like it's not holy. We walk around like there's some

holy moments and there are all the other moments that are not holy, right, but this moment is holy, right? And if film can let us see that, like frame it so that we see, like, "Ah, this moment. Holy." And it's like "Holy, holy, holy" moment by moment. But, like, who can live that way? Who can go, like, "Wow, holy"? Because if I were to look at you and just really let you be holy, I don't know, I would, like, stop talking."

If you didn't, go watch that movie now.

If you like to read, you can checkout the full transcript of *Waking Life* here : <https://wakinglifemovie.net/>.

Those words perfectly describe the creative process I experienced, and this is something that happens pretty much everyday for me now.

You can't imagine how transforming this discipline is for me. The simple act of letting music flowing in and out of me. Well, you can't know, unless you practice yourself, be it music making or some other act of creation.

The track is so rich in sound, in life, in experiences and feelings.

The core sound from which everything else was built on, is the first musical part we hear clearly starting at 00:55. That element is me opening a tube I got when I ordered the poster you can see down here.

NOBODY TELLS THIS TO PEOPLE WHO
ARE BEGINNERS,

I wish someone told me. All of us who do creative work,
WE GET INTO IT BECAUSE WE HAVE GOOD TASTE.

BUT THERE IS THIS GAP.

For the first couple years you make stuff, it's just not that good.

IT'S TRYING TO BE GOOD, **BUT IT'S NOT.** BUT YOUR
IT HAS POTENTIAL TASTE =

the thing that got you into the game, **IS STILL KILLER.**
And your taste is why your work disappoints you.

**A LOT OF PEOPLE NEVER GET
PAST THIS PHASE, *they quit.***

Most people I know who do **INTERESTING, CREATIVE WORK** went through years of
this. We know our work doesn't have this **SPECIAL THING** that we want it to have.

We all go through this. =====

AND IF YOU ARE JUST STARTING OUT
OR YOU ARE STILL IN THIS PHASE, **YOU GOTTA KNOW ITS NORMAL**

and the most important thing you can do is do **A LOT OF WORK.** Put yourself on a
deadline so that every week you will finish one story. **IT IS ONLY BY GOING**

THROUGH A VOLUME OF WORK THAT YOU WILL *close* THAT GAP,

AND YOUR WORK WILL BE

= as good AS YOUR AMBITIONS.

- I R A G L A S S

I recorded the source sound one or two years before. Then I found the same kind of tube in a mall in Lisbon and used it to show it in the video teaser for the album release [bit.ly/gelivan-lp-teaser].



Everything is music.

The kalimba in this track is not the same as in *walk around*. This is a Hokema B9. Much smaller, and with just 9 notes, compared to the bigger 15-note *Hugh Tracey Alto*.



I recorded three kalimba layers that we hear in different parts.

Back to Lisbon just after vipassana, I was so immersed in the creation of this track. I recorded the kalimba straight into my music software (Ableton Live) from the built-in mic of my MacBook Pro.

Surprisingly, it came out quite good. If I did stop the flow to record it with my Yamaha handy mic for better audio-quality, I wouldn't get this result. Sometimes we better go with what we have at hand instead of waiting for the best tools and perfect setup.

In the track we can hear Giuseppe (my friend's cousin from Sicily) talking about the most frightening slide from the aquatic park, some other friends laughing, my niece reading what I was writing on the laptop someday (the word was *rencontrer* = to meet), birds from the first hours of a summer day in Sicily, samples from two tracks I played in Eclectic Soul, female vocal and flute samples taken from a CD I got at the library (a compilation of Bulgarian women songs), the mechanical sounds of a K7 player, some beer flowing in a glass, the handling of some

Indian instrument with just one cord (that I broke in the end), the same Burial-like sample I used in *bristol chords*.

Now that I talked about Portugal, I can tell you that the artwork for the album was taken spontaneously during on of my walk in Lisbon, still after vipassana (I do make the precision, as the first two weeks in Lisbon prior-vipassana where a totally different experience), when I was staying at a meditator's place while he was away for the season in the Swiss mountains.

I took that picture near the *Oceanário de Lisboa*. I was trying to understand where that tele cabin was going, and couldn't figure it out (didn't search for long, never found out).

On that day, I casually discovered and really enjoyed the *Jardim Garcia de Orta*, with some nice and original music instruments available to play anytime right there in the park.



One of the instruments in Jardim Garcia de Orta.

~ yaya ~

I created the core of *yaya* in one week in September 2015, as the first track of a coaching program by Mike Monday.

Mike Monday is *the* creativity coach, a new career he started after seventeen years as a successful DJ/producer. I learned so much from his content since 2013, and I could name him for almost all my accomplishments (not only music-wise).

The course was actually out of my budget, and I was going through a difficult time emotionally, which led me to drop the program after two weeks.

The starting point was a picture shared by Mike. I don't have it anymore – I remember it was calm water on a rocky seashore, with reflects of the sky.

It's curious, I think many troubles over the last years came from the suffering of knowing my two nieces were living with a mother that was so stressed out, out of touch with reality and *la joie de vivre*, and a father that seemed unable to truly communicate with them, to listen to them. I was like a sponge,

absorbing all their suffering, ending up depressed at times. I lost focus so often because of my lack of skills in handling emotions.

I say it's curious because I ended up adding pieces of audio from a video I shot of my niece when she was two years young.

I just love that video. We see her talking with her grand mother. Such beauty and authenticity in the way she express herself, going from one emotion to the other in the blink of an eye.

Always ready to offer a smile.



My first niece Chiara, 2 years old in 2011

Seeing this makes me want to procreate, and see a human being grow up since day one.

Yaya is my niece's name, the way she was pronouncing it when she was 2. Today it's *Chiara*.

One more time we have Théophile's trumpet, recorded while he was playing over another track (which isn't mine). At the time, the song *yaya* wasn't even born.

It's the same recording session than *bristol chords*. Still with the same pocket microphone.

The guy talking in the intro and outro is the Ukranian pianist Lubomyr Melnyk. The source is once again a video, from YouTube.

I'm glad to realise that what Lubomyr says about playing piano is what I experience more and more when making music, on a daily basis.

Here follows the transcript :

“When I went to do this music, nothing else existed. I had no job, I had no money whatsoever, and I really mean nothing. Just piano and me. And it was there, that the pianist when he eliminates the world and put aside everything else and simply has this keyboard, this instrument, and his fingers and his hands, and his hearth and his soul, and that’s all that exists in the Universe, the whole Universe.

Then, something beautiful starts to happen. [...] I think this piano music re-awakens people from this sleep. People are out of... they’re not in touch with our time, they’re not in touch with the sounds around us, with the people around us. The concept of a metaphysical world was very standard with people, until the modern era. They understood that things are not what they seem.”

I could be more broke than I am right now, without a home, I’d just be okay making music, simply enjoying the process, resting in it, and also knowing that my creativity will sustain me as long as I am dedicated.

I could live in the studio I’m renting for 400 bucks per month, which is my work place and where I spend much time almost everyday since mid-November 2018. I would sleep there and go take showers at a friend’s, and sometimes use the showers from the swimming pool. Bath in the lake/river when it’s not too cold.

Today I make money with Internet and by helping others to make music with individual coaching and workshops, as well as with occasional DJ gigs. I know that money will flow to me soon, in abundance, allowing me to live properly and relaxed, keeping adding value to the world.

~ final words ~

For the optimal experience of this album, I like to invite you to listen to it with proper headphones.

When people ask me to play it, I feel a bit annoyed because to me it doesn't make sense to listen to it while we do something else, talk over, make noise or whatever. Plus I don't like this moment where people might feel obliged to make a comment after listening.

I came to this conclusion :

this is an *introspective* album.

It's intimate. You can't play it in the background as an ambience, even less when you're with a bunch of people. To me this music should be listened to in solitude, just with yourself. Calmly, maybe even without moving your body. Laying down on your back, eyes closed, in darkness or with candle light.

Maybe it could be used as my friend: to center yourself and remind you what matters for thyself.

~ album photo d'un vagabond ~



Lugano. May or June 2016. The beginning of my vagabond adventures.



My desk at Ari's, my host in Valdipino, little town in Liguria. I spent two weeks there in May 2016, one in August, and ten days in May 2017 with Emmanuel. Ari lived as a street artist in Italy in the 90s, for ten years. He wrote a book about that period of his life, that I almost finished to translate to French. Though this project is in stand-by for now.



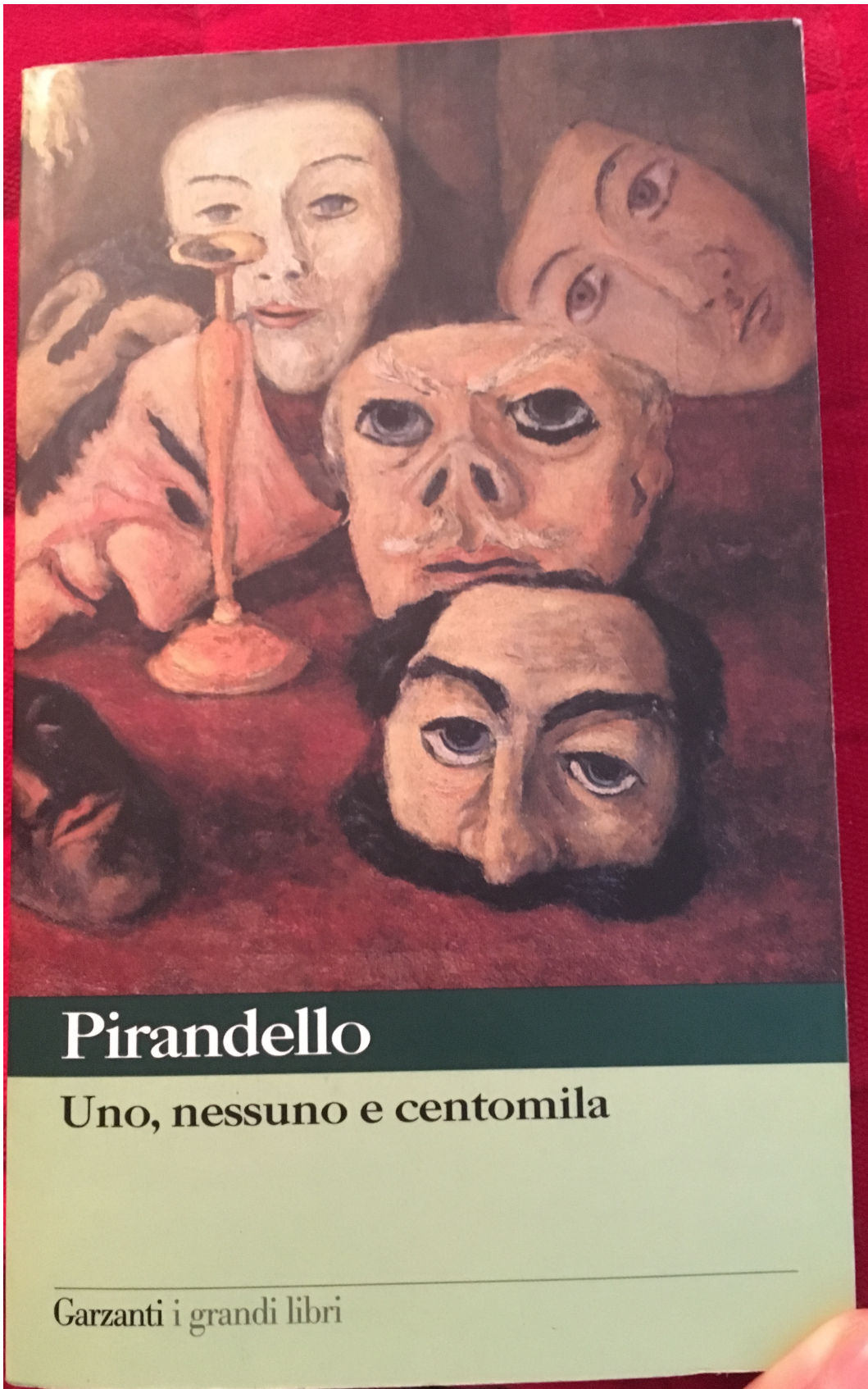
On a trail near Val dipino.



My bathtub in Valdipino. I immersed myself naked. Just next to it there's the spring from which I was getting my fuel during my stay.



Lil kalimba jam before falling a sleep in the calmness of Valdipino.



If I should suggest just one book to read to anyone, it would be this one. Has been translated (One, No One and a Hundred Thousand). My host Giovanna in Putignano (Apulia) introduced it to me. June 2016. Her sister hosted me in Malta two years earlier. That's when/where I met Giovanna the first time.



Giovanna's boyfriend (RIP) bringing me to Bari one morning.



Nice bar in Bari.



The car breaks down not far from Coimbra. Beautiful rainy day.



On my way to the swimming pool. Lisbon.



Here's all I took with me when I was thinking to live abroad for six months. Just add some clothes I was wearing when I took the picture, and a good winter coat.



Street art in Granada, Spain.



*Max, Lorrain's dog. Rodalquilar, Andalusia.
Lorrain was a volunteer at vipassana. When I told him that I make music, he
told me "me too" and invited me in his home.*



Rodalquilar, December 2016.

After my first stop on my way from Portugal to Geneva, I went back one month in Spring 2017 to keep the house, take care of Max and the garden, enjoy the music setup and the beauty of the valley. In that occasion, I gave birth to the core of the following project Rodalquilar Sessions that came out in October 2017 on Diffract Records. April 2019, we do a road trip Andalusia and stay 6 days in Rodalquilar to chill and recharge ourselves and shoot images for a new video for the same project.



Street art in Valencia, Spain.