PORTFOLIO OF ORIGINAL COMPOSITIONS

A thesis submitted to the University of Manchester for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy
in the Faculty of Humanities

2014

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SCHOOL OF ARTS, LANGUAGES AND CULTURES
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Portfolio of Musical Works

CD

*El corre corre* (2010) for piano and percussion ......................................................... 8’22
Written for Psappha
Recording of première by Tim Williams and Richard Casey, Manchester, UK (11 November 2010)

*...y punto* (2011) for violoncello and percussion ..................................................... 5’59
Recording of première by Marco Pereira and Jeff Eng, Atlantic Music Festival, Maine, USA (27 July 2011)

*Galipote* (2011 rev. 2012) for two violoncellos ...................................................... 15’15
Commissioned by Domo Duo
Recording by Theo Vinden and Chris Therepin, World Event Young Artists 2012, Nottingham, UK (13 September 2012)

*Acumayá* (2012) for string quartet .............................................................................. 15’07
Recording of workshop by Quatuor Danel, North West New Music Festival, Manchester, UK (8 March 2012)

DVD

*Rithuases* (2011) for chamber orchestra ................................................................. 11’07
Written for the University of Manchester Chamber Orchestra
Recording of première by the University of Manchester Chamber Orchestra, Manchester, UK (4 February 2012)

*Cinquillamente* (2012) for piccolo/flute, bass trombone and percussion .... 22’41
Commissioned by The Fourth Wall Ensemble
Recording of première by The Fourth Wall Ensemble, International Flute Symposium, West Virginia, USA (20 July 2013)

*Cocologia* (2013) for mezzo soprano and large ensemble .................................... 20’06
Recording of première by Nina Whiteman and Vaganza, North West New Music Festival, Manchester, UK (28 October 2013)

Scores

*El corre corre* (2010) for piano and percussion
*...y punto* (2011) for violoncello and percussion
*Galipote* (2011) for two violoncellos
*Rithuases* (2011) for chamber orchestra
*Acumayá* (2012) for string quartet
*Cinquillamente* (2012) for piccolo/flute, bass trombone and percussion
*Cocologia* (2013) for mezzo soprano and large ensemble

Final Word Count: 14,981
Abstract

The portfolio consists of seven instrumental compositions, composed during a period of three years. The portfolio is accompanied by a CD and DVD, containing the recordings of the compositions, and a written commentary. The latter gives an overview of the portfolio and focuses on the most important compositional issues. The Introduction presents the early influences and describes the evolution of the author’s musical language. Chapter 1 studies the author’s personal identity and Dominican identity and their influence on the music. Chapter 2 examines the different musical structures in the portfolio, comparing them to the traditional narrative arc. Chapter 3 discusses the origins of the rhythmic language and its elements, focusing on the creation of different textures. Chapter 4 deals with pitch and the construction of harmonic soundworlds. Chapter 5 studies the ritualistic elements and their evolution in the portfolio. The conclusion gives details of the compositions the author has written since finishing the portfolio and his future plans.
Declaration

The author hereby declares that no portion of the work referred to in this portfolio has been submitted in support of an application for another degree or qualification of this or any other university or institute of learning.

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Acknowledgements

I would like to thank the following for their support and advice throughout this project (in alphabetical order):

Dr Nancy Alam
Dr Bienvenida Guillermina Alfonso
Mrs Clara Leyla Alfonso
Mr Darwin Aquino
Mr Josh Brown
Prof Philip Grange
Miss Naomi Johnson
Miss Katherine Lunney
Dr Kevin Malone
Mr Placido Piña
Dr Jose Joaquin Puello
Miss Sarah Leyla Puello
Dr Camden Reeves
Dr Richard Whalley

I would also like to thank the following for performing my compositions (according to composition order):

Psappha (El corre corre)
Jeff Eng and Marco Pereira (...y punto)
Iris Su-Yu Eh and Andrew Stride (...y punto)
Ryan Madhok and Diana Wuli (Galipote)
Chris Therepin and Theo Vinden (Galipote)
University of Manchester Chamber Orchestra (Ritluases)
Quatuor Danel (Acumayá)
ANIMA-Collective (Acumayá)
Greg Jukes and The Fourth Wall Ensemble (Cinquillamente)
Vaganza and Nina Whiteman (Cocologia)
Pura Tayson and Darwin Aquino (Cocología)
Introduction

My first encounter with twentieth-century concert music was when I played Debussy’s *Syrinx* around the age of fifteen. Until then, the repertoire I was playing was from the Baroque, Classical or Romantic eras. *Syrinx* motivated me to seek out further modern works to play like Varèse’s *Density 21.5* for solo flute, Piazzolla’s *Histoire du tango* for flute and guitar, and Poulenc’s Flute Sonata. The repertoire at the National Youth Orchestra of the Dominican Republic, where I was first flute, also had a profound impact on my development and interest in twentieth-century music. The orchestra provided the opportunity to play works by other important twentieth-century European composers (i.e. Stravinsky, Shostakovich, Ravel) as well as orchestral arrangements of merengues\(^1\) by Dominican composers.

Another important influence was the Dominican composer Darwin Aquino, artistic director and conductor of the Dominican National Youth Orchestra. The first time I heard the music of a living composer was when the National Symphony Orchestra played Aquino’s *Suite para orquesta del ballet Insomnio*. Aquino also encouraged me to compose and introduced me to the music of Ligeti, Berio, Messiaen and Bartók. His exploration of Dominican folk music and the conversations we had stimulated my interest in Dominican music. I started to study the latter during my undergraduate degree and subsequently, it became an important part of my Master’s and doctoral research.

As an undergraduate, I engaged with the music of Stravinsky, Messiaen, Ligeti and Debussy,\(^2\) which subsequently influenced my own compositions. I also started studying Dominican merengue in order to incorporate it into my music. This initial exploration culminated in my final composition, which had influences from merengue rhythms, Stravinsky's additive rhythms and Messiaen’s modes of limited transposition. Since then, I have sought to create a musical language that combines Dominican music and culture with the European concert tradition.

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1. Merengue is a popular dance from the Dominican Republic that is typically played in a fast 2/4 meter. Merengue ensembles vary in sizes but the two-sided drum *tambora* and the metal *güira* are used in the majority of ensembles.

2. My dissertation was on French orchestral music, more specifically Debussy’s *La Mer* and D’Indy’s *Un jour d’été à la montagne.*
My doctoral research has focused on integrating Dominican cultural elements into my music (Chapter 1), building strong musical structures (Chapter 2) and developing my rhythmic language (Chapter 3). To this effect, I have researched the music of other Latin American composers, such as Astor Piazzolla, Amadeo Roldán, Tania León, Julio Alberto Hernandez, Alberto Ginastera and Leo Brouwer, to evaluate how they incorporated Latin American elements into their music. During the Ph.D., the music of Stravinsky, Birtwistle, Debussy, Carter, Bartók, Berio and Ligeti was often researched because of their strong rhythmic language, their integration of folk music with concert music and/or their articulation of teleological structures.

The intention to create distinct harmonic soundworlds in the portfolio compositions was to a certain extent a secondary research area. Nevertheless, the harmonic processes and language of Messiaen, Lutoslawski and Debussy influenced my harmonic language as will be discussed in Chapter 4. Finally, the ritualistic character that my music gained towards the end of the Ph.D. was an unforeseen development that arose from the research into Dominican music as seen in Chapter 5.

**El corre corre**

*El corre corre* was written for Psappha to be premiered in a concert where Birtwistle’s *The Axe Manual* was also being performed. The percussion instruments were drawn from the ones used in Birtwistle’s piece. I wanted to have a chromatic ascent from the lowest tom-tom to the highest temple block and have a counterpart to the piano with the marimba. At the beginning of the piece, two themes are introduced: the first (bb. 1-3) is based on the sound of the tom-tom which the piano imitates; the second (bb. 4-6) was inspired by the percussive and melodic characteristics of the upper register of the piano. A third theme is introduced at letter G to interrupt the development of the first two themes. This theme is played in the middle register to allow the sound of the piano and marimba to blend into each other and contrast the other two themes. The third theme pushes the music towards the climax at letter K where we finally hear themes one and

---

3During the Master’s, I wrote an extended essay on Lutoslawski’s later compositional techniques.
4Here the cluster chords on the piano imitate the sound of the tom-tom and subsequently get develop as the piece progresses.
two played simultaneously. The coda, based on the third theme, brings the piece to a close.

...y punto
The main issue I wanted to address in ...y punto was my melodic writing. As will be seen in Chapter 4, the motivic cell F-B-G heard in bars 1-4 is the basis for the entire melodic development. I chose the violoncello because of its range and the expressive character and colour of its different registers. I decided to have non-pitched percussion in order to focus on the melodic writing. I used the suspended cymbals to provide a backdrop to the violoncello and use the short attacks of the woodblocks and bongos as a contrast to the sustained line of the violoncello and cymbals.

Galipote
After writing purely melodically for the violoncello in ...y punto, I wanted to explore its percussive possibilities as well as its more violent character. The percussive sounds used in Galipote are a selection of the effects Ryan Madhok and I workedshopped. The beginning of the piece depicts a journey from percussive to pitched music. The idea of having the second violoncello as an echo was developed later and it inspired me to portray the journey from echo to unison in Galipote. The echo is achieved by first placing a piece of cloth on the second violoncello in order to muffle the sound of the percussive attacks. It is furthered by the difference in tone quality of the different ‘air sounds’ and of the muted violoncello (e.g. bar 26). The scordatura was necessary because I wanted to have the low Bb as a point of arrival at bar 152. Moreover, the scordatura gives a hollow sound to violoncello II that further enhances the idea of echo.

Ritluases
Ritluases depicts three rituals of possession where the clarinet is ‘mounted’ by off-stage woodwind instruments, representing the “spirits”, and breaks away from them during the last ritual to become an independent body. Even though the clarinet is doubling the other woodwinds for most of the piece, it is still a soloist because it is portraying the role of the ‘chosen one.’ I chose the clarinet because of its range and different characters

5After working with Trio Iolar, Ryan Madhok commissioned me to write a violoncello duet.
6An idea inspired by Ives’s The Unanswered Question.
across its registers. As will be seen in Chapter 2, the three rituals have the same inner structure, but their thematic material differs in order to depict the different “spirits” that mount the clarinet. A coda follows the third ritual where the clarinet reasserts itself as an individual, pushing the rest of the ensemble to the climax and the end of the piece.

**Acumayá**

*Acumayá* presented an opportunity to develop my use of timbre, texture and control of register. Consequently, I decided that each movement would focus on a particular parameter to drive the music. In movements one and five the string quartet is used to colour a single melodic line; in movement two the quartet acts as one instrument to expand and reduce its use of register whilst exploring different plucking technique; in movement three I used the ensemble as a resonance board for the low, sustained notes (initially on the violoncello); finally, movement four focuses on controlling the register and the textures to articulate the structure. As will be seen in Chapter 2, I also created a teleological structure that takes the listener from the first movement to the last.

**Cinquillamente**

*Cinquillamente* was commissioned by The Fourth Wall Ensemble – a hybrid arts ensemble where the musicians are also dancers and actors. The commission presented an opportunity to experiment with movement on stage. From the outset, I wanted the movement on stage to correlate with the music. I therefore decided to use the musical and physical foreground/background to depict this connection. The result of these physical movements is the illusion that a secret ritual or ceremony is taking place, which is enhanced by the bass drum introduction depicting a ritualistic drum call. The trombone melody and the “cloud” material\(^7\) do not undergo any extensive development in order to suspend time, draw attention to their present situation and thus clarify the evolving relationship between the two themes.

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\(^7\)The “cloud” material is often presented with box notation in order to make it easier for the performers to play the music. The “cloud” material is a written rallentando from a tremolo. The rate of deceleration is different between parts and thus a traditional notation would have resulted in unnecessary complex rhythms.
**Cocologia**

*Cocologia*, composed for mezzo-soprano and ten instruments, sets Norberto James Rawling’s poem *Los inmigrantes* and portrays a ceremony that pays homage to the Cocolos and their culture.\(^8\) The singer, accompanied by two percussionists and four horns, delivers a eulogy (i.e. the text) in memory of the Cocolos. The clarinet, viola and two violoncellos – three string instruments and one wind – parallel the typical ensemble of the Cocolos (i.e. bass drum, snare drum, triangle and flute – three percussion instruments and one wind). The music of this quartet is highly energetic and as such represents and celebrates the music of the Cocolos. The poem is divided into five sections (an epilogue and four sections) which I separated with ever-longer instrumental interludes.\(^9\) As the piece progresses, the quartet music becomes as important as the text so as to commemorate and celebrate the Cocolos culture.\(^10\)

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\(^8\)The Cocolos were brought from the lower Antilles to the Dominican Republic to work as slaves in the sugarcane industry. Marginalised because of their language and culture, the Cocolos continued to practise their own traditions within their communities.

\(^9\)I edited the poem due to its length. I shortened the first, second and fourth sections and cut out the third. I was careful not to lose any meaning; the arc of the poem remained the same. However, the poem does lose some of its imagery of Cocolo culture, which I portrayed with the music.

\(^10\)The music traditionally played by the percussion and flute is an essential part of the Cocolo’s ‘teatro danzante’ (dancing theatre), which is a unique artform in the Dominican Republic. *Cocologia* not only pays homage to Cocolo culture through the text but it also celebrates it by using its rhythms and increasing the focus on the quartet music as the piece progresses. Towards the end of the piece, the quartet music is seen as equally important as the other achievements of the Cocolos.
1. Personal Identity, Dominican Identity

‘Poised between Old World civilizations, Dominicans brewed a
unique culture steeped in both African and Spanish traditions. Its
myriad musics include a wealth of African-derived styles […];
European-influenced forms[..]; and many styles, such as
merengue and mangulina, that fuse African and European
elements.’

I consider myself to be a product of European education and Dominican culture because
I went to a French school in the Dominican Republic. As a composer, therefore, I felt
compelled to integrate Dominican rhythms with a contemporary musical language in
order to depict my personal duality through my music. As I researched merengue – a
popular dance I considered to be the most representative of the Dominican Republic’s
musical tradition – I realised that my own duality was a defining feature of Dominican
identity as a whole. Consequently, my focus shifted towards a broader exploration of
Dominican identity beyond my own. This chapter will briefly examine how merengue
reflects Dominican identity and how this research led me to Dominican folk music.
Finally, it will discuss how this research influenced my approach to composition.

1.1 Merengue and the Dominican Identity

The music of the Dominican Republic has been influenced by Iberian, Taino and
African music due to its history of colonisation and slavery. Nevertheless, it is
merengue that is regarded as a national symbol above all other music. The constant
conflict between our European and African past, and our reluctance to accept it, defines
Dominican identity and shaped merengue’s development. Consequently, to discuss
merengue is to discuss Dominican identity.

The complex debate of whether merengue originated in Europe or Africa has racial,
political and class issues at its core to which I cannot do justice in this commentary.

Paul Austerlitz, in his book Merengue: Dominican Music and Dominican Identity,


12Tainos were the indigenous people that populated the island before it was colonised.

13Paul Austerlitz argues that in the early part of the twentieth century, merengue was mainly practised in
rural areas. Leonidas Trujillo, dictator from 1930 to 1961, used merengue in all his public appearances
and when he eventually got to power, he formed the *Orquesta Presidente Trujillo* and required it to
specialise in merengue. For thirty-one years merengue was the music of the state, making it a national
symbol until this day (Austerlitz, *Merengue: Dominican Music, Dominican Identity*)
studies the arguments on both sides of the debate in more detail. Simply put, the argument centres around whether Dominicans are descendants of European or African people. By associating merengue with a European dance and denying any African influences, one could argue that Dominicans are solely descendant from Europeans; by associating merengue with African rhythms and denying any European influences, one could argue that Dominicans are descendant from Africans. However, I believe that merengue exemplifies Dominican identity not because it is a European or an African derived dance, but rather because of its inner conflict and its amalgamation of two cultures that have been present in the Dominican Republic.

The political and racial issues that shaped Dominican history were responsible for merengue’s rise in popularity and its development at the expense of folk music. Throughout our history, there has been discrimination shown towards the folk music tradition because of its origins in slavery and African culture. As my research progressed, I became more interested in exploring Dominican folk music and its tradition in order to get a fuller picture of what specifically constitutes Dominican identity.

1.2 Folk Music
The Dominican Republic has a diverse range of folk music and traditions that are specific to certain regions in the country. Whilst researching folk rhythms and structures, I realised that folk music and merengue share some elements. As seen in Example 1.1, the instrumentation of these styles is similar as they all use drums and idiophones. The rhythms that each of these instruments play, notated in Example 1.1, have a comparable character that is based on syncopation, rhythmic layering and repetition. A skilled performer will then embellish them to create more complex and

14The term ‘folk music’ refers to the music that is practised by marginalised social groups which have their own traditions in the Dominican Republic. There are many styles that have been developed in different parts of the island that originated in the music of the African slaves. Merengue’s uncertain origins and rise to popularity separates it from these styles. It is also not considered to be folk music because it is in the Dominican mainstream popular culture.

15For instance, the music of the ‘Congos de Villa Mella’ can be found in the north of the capital city, Santo Domingo; the ‘gagá’ was the result of the coexistence of Dominican and Haitian workers in the sugarcane plantations situated in the east; and, the music of the Cocolos can be found in San Pedro de Macorix and Samaná, regions where slaves from the Lower Antilles settled in the Dominican Republic.
varied rhythms. I believe that the comparable instrumentation and character of the music reflects the syncretism of Dominican music, both popular and folk.

Example 1.1: Basic patterns for different styles

In order to better understand the subtle differences between the styles and the context in which they are played, I researched the different traditions and ceremonies associated with the music. As will be discussed in Chapter 5, the exploration of ritual and theatricality in my music was a result of this research.

1.3 Dominican Identity in my Music

The research into Dominican folk music, its traditions and its rituals, had a direct influence on the concept of the compositions Galipote, Ritluases and Cocologia. The first, written for violoncello duet, is based on the legend of the ‘galipote’, a man who can transform himself into a violent and cruel creature in order to attack travellers or impede their progress. Galipote’s organic development (see Chapter 2) signifies the transformation from man to creature; the interjected ‘Ritmico’ sections portray the violent nature of the legend.
Ritluases, for chamber orchestra, is a musical interpretation of a religious ritual of possession, typical of Las 21 divisiones (The 21 divisions) – an influential subculture and religion in the Dominican Republic that has often been misunderstood and taken for a pagan and satanic practice. Nevertheless, Las 21 divisiones has one God (Papa Bon Dye) and ‘saints’ (Loá, plural Luases) similar to Catholicism, the Dominican Republic’s main religion. These saints are the ones that ‘mount’ (or possess) a practitioner’s body during ritual ceremonies. In Ritluases, the strings, percussion and brass act as the congregation whilst the off-stage woodwinds depict the saints that ‘mount’ the clarinet by playing in unison with it and remaining unseen. Towards the end of the work, the clarinet rebels against the woodwinds by breaking away from the unison (see Example 1.2), thus attaining its own individuality.

Example 1.2: First clarinet break-away from woodwinds

Example 1.2: First clarinet break-away from woodwinds (continued)

The research into Dominican folk music and its traditions led me to explore the possibilities of ritual in my music, which pushed me towards thinking about the theatricality of performance. The imitative character of Galipote led me to place the two performers two-and-a-half metres apart, facing each other. The idea of theatricality was
further developed in *Rituales, Cinquillamente* and *Cocologia*, and will be discussed in Chapter 5.

My research into European music influenced my use of pitch as will be seen in Chapter 4. Nevertheless, I believe that I am still exploring Dominican identity because I am integrating ‘European pitch’ and ‘Dominican rhythm’, highlighting further the duality that exists in Dominican culture.

At the start of the Ph.D. I thought that rhythm would be the main focus of my research. The discovery of Dominican folk music led me to seek a deeper understanding of our history and identity. As a result, I sought to create an idiosyncratic musical language developed from different aspects of Dominican culture and from European concert music, that I hope in turn reflects a broader Dominican identity.
2. One Arc, Seven Structures

‘The composer is of course peculiarly concerned with time; as the poet, dramatist, film-maker, and choreographer, he is in the business of making structures which require real time to be fulfilled.’

Music is bound by time and as such can be defined as the articulation of time through sound, experienced in only one direction. Furthermore, music can have a direct relationship with time, in the case of teleological music, or it can challenge time, as in ‘momentary’ music. I am interested in teleological structures as I seek to guide the listener through a musical journey. Consequently, the passage and articulation of time is a crucial part of my compositional process. The direct relationship between my music and time is a defining feature that influences all other parameters.

The most basic teleological structure in Western art is commonly known as the ‘narrative arc’ and it is used in Greek tragedies, short stories and novels. As seen in Figure 1, the narrative arc has three defining features: the introduction and development section, the climax and the concluding section. The first section builds towards the climax, after which the concluding section rounds off the arc, providing some form of closure. The narrative arc’s dramatic and finite structure, its active relationship with time and its climax were the main characteristics that I was keen to explore in my music.

![Figure 1: Narrative arc](image)

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17This definition of music was a result of my experiences at the University of Manchester: I first came across it during my supervisions with Dr Camden Reeves and lectures by Prof Philip Grange that I audited.
This shape can be found in operas, symphonies, tone poems and in compositions from the twentieth century. To give three basic, well-known examples: Beethoven Fifth Symphony articulates the move from C minor to C major; Debussy’s Prélude à l’après-midi d’un faune presents the development of the initial flute melody through different orchestrations and colours; Varèse's Ionisation describes the narrative arc through its textural and dynamic build up, from the initial bass drum rumble to the moment where the piano, celesta and chimes play the first pitches of the work. Thus, the narrative arc’s familiarity was an issue I needed to address in order to use the same shape in different works. For this reason, each composition in the portfolio has a unique structure, with different sections that articulate the general shape of the narrative arc.

The different sections within these structures are governed by ratios. During the Ph.D., I realised that the cinquillo rhythm – LLRLR – and the clave rhythm (see Figure 3, below), found in Dominican music, can be expressed as a 2:1:2:1:2 and a 3:3:2 ratio, respectively. A work could have three sections presenting a 3:3:2 ratio: the first and second sections would last three minutes and the last one, two minutes. Consequently, this work would have a ‘structural rhythm’¹⁸ that articulates the clave rhythm through its sections. ...y punto and Ritluases explore a clave-based structural rhythm whereas Galipote and Cinquillamente use a cinquillo-based one. El corre corre, Acumayá and Cocología rely on different ratios to determine their internal proportions.

Jonathan Cross argues that ‘the “rightness” of [The Triumph of Time’s] structure is a result partly of the (informal) moment-to-moment logic of the piece, partly of the presence of certain regularly recurring musical ideas which provide coherence without suggesting an inappropriately synthetic unity.’¹⁹ This concept of recurrent musical ideas, present in the music of Birtwistle, Stravinsky and Messiaen had an influence on me. For example, the cor anglais melody, heard three times in different contexts, and the three notes of the soprano saxophone provide a cohesive line throughout Birtwistle’s The Triumph of Time whilst the landscape material continues to develop in the background.

¹⁸In general, I use the term ‘structural rhythm’ to signify the macro-rhythm created by the work’s sections.
In Stravinsky’s *Symphonies of Wind Instruments* the initial theme recurs throughout the work, often separating the development of other material. In my works, I often use recurrent musical ideas as signposts and parameters to delimit the different sections and draw the listener’s attention to specific moments in time.

This chapter will discuss how the narrative arc is articulated in different works in the portfolio and how my approach evolved through the course of the doctorate. In order to better evaluate and understand the progression of my structural technique, it will be a chronological discussion.

### 2.1 El corre corre

*El corre corre*, the first piece in the portfolio, has a four-section structure governed by the 1:3:3:1 ratio (see Figure 2). The ratios between the main sections are clear, but there is a lack of clarity in the development that leads to an unconvincing climax at letter K. Moreover, the sense of arrival needed for a successful climax is diminished by the fact that the music immediately falls away. Even if the thematic development and the climax were somewhat unsuccessful, *El corre corre* allowed me to explore the interplay between different thematic materials that I continued to use throughout the portfolio. It was also the first composition where I assigned a specific role to a musical gesture: before letter B, letter I and letter N, the musical flourish followed by silence signifies the end of the section, articulating a musical full-stop.

![Figure 2: El corre corre’s structure](image)

### 2.2 ...y punto

*...y punto*’s structure is drawn from the 3:3:2 clave-based ratio. Only the first part of the clave rhythm is used as the rhythmic cell for the structural rhythm (see Figure 3) and as a result, *...y punto* has three sections (see Figure 4). The first two sections form the introduction and development segment of the narrative arc where the energy builds
towards the climax. ...y punto’s third section represents the conclusion of the arc where the music falls away after reaching the climax. Each section starts with the pizzicato violoncello and bowed suspended cymbal gesture (i.e. bar 1, bar 35 and bar 77), which allowed me to articulate the structural rhythm. Birtwistle also uses a gesture, or musical signpost, to signal the beginning of all the movements in Harrison’s Clocks. Here the gesture opens each movement, but it also separates the verses of the first one.

![Figure 3: Dominican clave rhythm and the rhythm used in the portfolio works](image)

The narrative arc is more clearly articulated by the violoncello’s melodic line, which subtly drives the music forwards. It progressively climbs in register until it reaches the climax with a high G, before falling to the lowest register. This overall shape, closely related to the narrative arc, is also distinguishable in the initial melodic cell – ascending tritone followed by a descending major third, F-B-G – and its subsequent development. In the first section (see Example 2.1a), each melodic phrase follows the ascending and descending shape of the melodic cell but their peaks get higher at each new phrase (e.g. D♭, E♭ and F at phrase 1, 2 and 3 respectively). In ...y punto’s second section, this process begins again but the climb in register is faster and higher, achieving a mini climax at bar 48, after which the violoncello line is restricted in register (see Example 2.1b). From bar 53 to 75 the melodic line is still articulating an ascending and descending shape, but, unlike the first section, there is a ceiling that is broken through with the repeated figure at bars 75 and 76, heightening the sense of arrival at the high G. In the final and concluding section, the melodic line falls to the bottom of the violoncello register, previously unheard in the composition (see Example 2.1c). The
narrative arc is thus articulated in the overall structure as well as in the series of arc shapes within the melodic line.

Example 2.1: ...y punto’s melodic shape; section 1 (a), section 2 (b), section 3(c)

The narrative arc is also evident in the *accelerando* driven by the percussive interludes. Every time they recur, the percussive interludes get faster and rhythmically denser, propelling the tempo of the following violoncello section forwards. At bar 84, the bongo and woodblock material achieves its own climax through a gradual *accelerando* and increase in rhythmic density.

In both the violoncello and percussion material, dynamics help to articulate the narrative arc. The ascending lines are usually accompanied by a *crescendo* and the descending ones by a *decrescendo*. Furthermore, as the register climbs so does the overall dynamic level until the climax, where the high G is played *fortissimo* and the subsequent *decrescendo* reaches a *pianissimo*. 

21
2.3 Galipote

The idea of a structural rhythm on multiple levels was first explored in *Galipote*. Here the music evolves from percussive sounds, to pitch, to harmonics in the introduction, which is followed by three distinct sections. *Galipote*’s introduction, like *y punto*, is through-composed in that the thematic development continues through each section. Nevertheless, the structural rhythm drawn from the cinquillo, determines the pace of development in the introduction as well as the length of the three main sections (see Figure 5).

![Figure 5: Galipote’s structure](image)

In *Galipote*’s second section the developmental process is interrupted by the thing it ultimately develops into. At its most basic, *Galipote* is the journey from percussive sounds to a violent rhythmic unison and then down to calmer sounds. Until bar 82, the material develops in a linear, organic fashion. The process is then interrupted by fragments of what the material ultimately becomes (bb. 99-182). As a result, the music gains a sense of unpredictability and forward motion which culminates in the climax at bar 172. After the energy of the climax dissipates (i.e. bb. 182-200), there is a quick recapitulation of the piece’s journey in the last section.

2.4 Ritluases

*Ritluases*’s structural rhythm, drawn from the clave rhythm. Initially, the work was going to have a three-section overall structure based on , like *y punto*. In order to firmly establish the recurring structure of the ritual of possession I decided to repeat one section before allowing the clarinet to break away. The inner structure of the first two rituals is as follows: first, the drums signify the start of the ritual (i.e. musical signpost) and engage the strings in a dialogue; then, the off-stage woodwinds introduce
the theme; finally, the clarinet doubles the off-stage woodwind theme with a string accompaniment. The third ritual follows this inner structure closely until bar 198 where the clarinet no longer doubles the other woodwinds. In the coda, which starts at letter O, the three “spirit” themes are heard in the off-stage woodwinds as the clarinet becomes increasingly more independent from them. When the climax is reached at letter R, the clarinet, no longer controlled by the off-stage woodwinds, plays its own melody above the ensemble (see Figure 6).

The returning drums and tempo indication \( \text{d} \text{r} \text{a} \text{m} = 80 \) further enhance the cyclic idea of the returning rituals. The different tempi in each section (i.e. section 1 goes from \( \text{d} \text{r} \text{a} \text{m} = 80 \) to \( \text{d} \text{r} \text{a} \text{m} = 107 \); section 2 from \( \text{d} \text{r} \text{a} \text{m} = 80 \) to \( \text{d} \text{r} \text{a} \text{m} = 60 \); section 3 from \( \text{d} \text{r} \text{a} \text{m} = 80 \) to \( \text{d} \text{r} \text{a} \text{m} = 100 \); and finally, section 4 from \( \text{d} \text{r} \text{a} \text{m} = 80 \) to \( \text{d} \text{r} \text{a} \text{m} = 160 \)) highlight the fact that every ritual begins in a similar way but that their thematic material is different from each other. Each ritual in Ritluases articulates a small narrative arc that always returns to the beginning and, on reflection, the lengths of their internal sections should have been determined by the \( \text{d} \text{r} \text{a} \text{m} \text{r} \text{h} \text{y} \text{m} \text{i} \text{c} \text{a} \text{l} \text{r} \text{h} \text{y} \text{m} \text{a} \text{n} \text{t} \text{i} \text{o} \text{n} \) structural rhythm. Even though each ritual articulates a small narrative arc, Ritluases’s overall structure only portrays an ascending shape. The clarinet’s rebellion against the “spirits” creates an exaltation that pushes the music to its climax and sustains the energy until the end of the piece.

Figure 6: Ritluases’s structure

The returning drums and tempo indication \( \text{d} \text{r} \text{a} \text{m} = 80 \) further enhance the cyclic idea of the returning rituals. The different tempi in each section (i.e. section 1 goes from \( \text{d} \text{r} \text{a} \text{m} = 80 \) to \( \text{d} \text{r} \text{a} \text{m} = 107 \); section 2 from \( \text{d} \text{r} \text{a} \text{m} = 80 \) to \( \text{d} \text{r} \text{a} \text{m} = 60 \); section 3 from \( \text{d} \text{r} \text{a} \text{m} = 80 \) to \( \text{d} \text{r} \text{a} \text{m} = 100 \); and finally, section 4 from \( \text{d} \text{r} \text{a} \text{m} = 80 \) to \( \text{d} \text{r} \text{a} \text{m} = 160 \)) highlight the fact that every ritual begins in a similar way but that their thematic material is different from each other. Each ritual in Ritluases articulates a small narrative arc that always returns to the beginning and, on reflection, the lengths of their internal sections should have been determined by the \( \text{d} \text{r} \text{a} \text{m} \text{r} \text{h} \text{y} \text{m} \text{i} \text{c} \text{a} \text{l} \text{r} \text{h} \text{y} \text{m} \text{i} \text{o} \text{n} \) structural rhythm. Even though each ritual articulates a small narrative arc, Ritluases’s overall structure only portrays an ascending shape. The clarinet’s rebellion against the “spirits” creates an exaltation that pushes the music to its climax and sustains the energy until the end of the piece.
2.5 Acumayá

The five-movement structure of Acumayá is governed by the ratio 3:1:6:14:3\(^{20}\) and it is influenced by cyclic forms.\(^{21}\) In Bartók’s Fourth String Quartet, movements I and V share similar motifs and form, movements II and IV are both Scherzos and share musical ideas that are variations on themes presented earlier, and movement III, an Aria, stands alone. Similarly, the first and last movements of Acumayá book-end the entire work and share the same melodic material and duration. The second movement, the shortest, and the fourth movement, the longest, are also paired: the second movement’s thematic material is developed in the fourth and eventually drives the latter movement to its climax. The third movement’s texture and material contrast with the other movements and therefore stands alone.

The only movement that articulates the narrative arc is the fourth. The first and fifth movements are an exploration of how to change the colour of a single line, whilst the second explores the different plucking techniques available on string instruments and the third tries to recreate the complexity of upper partials. Nevertheless, Acumayá as a whole articulates the narrative arc thanks to the general momentum from the first movement, through the climax of the fourth, to the concluding fifth movement.

Unique to Acumayá is the fact that the climax is reached through a ritardando. The overall development of the thematic material in the fourth movement is organic and perhaps predictable. On reflection, the pacing of the music would have been improved by replicating the 3:1:6:14:3 ratio within the internal structure of the fourth movement, creating a link between the micro- and the macro-structures. This was an important development in my structural technique that I addressed in the next piece, Cinquillamente.

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\(^{20}\)The 3:1:6:14:3 ratio did not originate from a particular rhythm. I knew that the fourth movement would be longer than the sum of all the other movements. Since the last movement is paired with the first, it shares the same length.

\(^{21}\)For example, I was influenced by the multi-movement construction in which a theme occurs in more than one movement and where the end of the piece mirrors the beginning.
2.6 Cinquillamente

"Cinquillamente" develops the idea of using structural rhythm on multiple levels, which was first explored in "Galipote." "Cinquillamente" consists of five sections, an introduction and a conclusion. As seen in Figure 7, the cinquillo-based 2:1:2:1:2 ratio governs the five sections and the internal structure of the first one (i.e. bb. 17-94). In "Cinquillamente"’s first section, the relationship between the trombone’s melodic material and the “cloud” material of the piccolo and the percussion is dictated by the ratio.\(^\text{22}\) The trombone’s melodic material is twice as long as the piccolo’s and percussion’s “cloud” material, giving importance to the first over the latter. As the piece progresses, their relationship evolves from the first section, where the trombone is dominant over the “cloud” texture, through the third section where they are equals, to the fifth section where the “cloud” material is dominant over the trombone’s melodic material.

![Figure 7: Cinquillamente’s structure](image)

Whereas the internal structure of the first section is dictated by the cinquillo-based 2:1:2:1:2 ratio, the third section follows a 1:1:1:1:1 ratio to allow equal time for both the trombone and the “cloud” material. In the fifth section, the contrast between the two themes is no longer supported by the instrumentation. Instead, the dominance of the “cloud” material is evident when the trombone plays it at bar 339. This progression is also portrayed by the players’ placement on stage: the trombone starts centre-stage and the piccolo and percussion are towards the back and as the piece progresses, they swap places until the piccolo and percussion are front-of-stage and the trombone is towards the back.

\(^{22}\) The “cloud” material refers to the music played by the flutter-tonguing/trilling piccolo and tremolo percussion. Here the music has no audible pulse creating a sound mass.
The second and fourth sections serve as *Cinquillamente’s* driving force. In the second section (bb. 95-138), the flute and trombone material develops rapidly, driving the music to a climactic moment at bar 137, which quickly returns to the initial trombone theme. When the flute and trombone material comes back in the fourth section, the percussion generates the climax at bars 282-287. This then becomes the climax of the entire piece due to its position in relation to the total duration of *Cinquillamente*.

The climaxes in sections 2 and 4 were achieved through an acceleration and crescendo. The acceleration, from $\mathbf{q}=60$ to $\mathbf{q}=90$, arriving at $\mathbf{q}=112$, helps the music gain momentum and reach a convincing arrival point or climax. Similarly, the general crescendo from pianissimo to fortississimo in these sections enhances the thematic development, accelerando and climax. The subito piano that follows the climaxes (i.e. b. 138 and bb. 288-305) provides an extreme contrast which further accentuates them.

*Cinquillamente’s* introduction and conclusion book-end the five main sections, providing a return to the beginning and thus completing the cycle. Here the bass drum plays an elongated cinquillo rhythm, which gives the work a ritualistic character and a more localised and direct use for the structural rhythm. *Cinquillamente’s* book-ended structure was developed from *Acumayá’s*.

2.7 *Cocología*

*Cocología’s* structure was inspired by Norberto James Rawlings’s poem ‘Los inmigrantes’. The original poem has a short three-line prologue followed by four parts, each longer than the previous one. This structure lent itself to an end-accented form that could articulate the narrative arc, which is reflected in *Cocología’s* increasingly longer vocal sections. In the first three parts of the poem, the author recounts the discrimination and the neglect the Cocolos suffered throughout their history. At the beginning of the fourth part, he lists the names of some Cocolos to honour their sacrifice and celebrate their contributions to Dominican culture in the hope that they would eventually be recognised as Dominicans. The poem created a narrative arc that I used as the basis for *Cocología’s* structure. I situated the climax during the moment
where Rawlings lists the names as I thought that is where the poem’s energy was leading towards.

*Cocologia* has three main sections – beginning to letter D, D to J and J to T – and a coda, letter T to the end. The vocal sections are through-composed and their lengths are determined by the words. I decided that the 3:2 ratio would define the relationship between the vocal and the instrumental music in sections 1 and 2, whereas in section 3 the ratio would be roughly 1:1 (see Figure 8). These sections have different instrumentation in order to portray the music’s development and emphasise the climax with the *tutti* from letter T. *Cocologia’s* use of instruments to separate the sections was inspired by Boulez’s *Le Marteau sans maître* where each movement has its own instrumentation\(^\text{23}\) and the full ensemble is reserved for the final one.

![Figure 8: Cocologia’s structure](image)

Similar to *Cinquillamente’s* trombone melody, the vocal melody does not carry a lot of developmental drive. As will be seen in the following chapter, it is the variety in energy level and rhythmic density that pushes the music to its climax. It is worth noting that the return of the bongo tremolo *crescendo* propels the music to the climax (letter S to T).

\(^{23}\)Even though *Cocologia* is in one movement, the idea of having purely instrumental sections, of relating different sections according to their instrumentation and reserving the full ensemble for the last section was inspired by *Le marteau sans maître* (itself another vocal piece). The latter has nine movements with the following instrumentation: I. Avant "l'artisanat furieux" (Alto flute, Vibraphone, Guitar, Viola); II. Commentaire I de "bourreaux de solitude" (Alto flute, Xylorimba, Tambourine, 2 Bongos, Frame drum, Viola); III. "L'artisanat furieux" (Voice, Alto flute); IV. Commentaire II de "bourreaux de solitude" (Xylorimba, Vibraphone, Finger cymbals, Agogô, Triangle, Guitar, Viola); V. "Bel édifice et les pressentiments" (Voice, Alto flute, Guitar, Viola); VI. “Bourreaux de solitude” (Voice, Alto flute, Xylorimba, Vibraphone, maracas, Guitar, Viola); VII. Après "l'artisanat furieux" (Alto flute, Vibraphone, Guitar); VIII. Commentaire III de "bourreaux de solitude" (Alto flute, Xylorimba, Vibraphone, Claves, Agogô, 2 bongos, Maracas); XI. "Bel édifice et les pressentiments" (Voice, Alto flute, Xylorimba, Vibraphone, Maracas, Small tam-tam, Low gong, Very deep tam-tam, Large suspended cymbal, Guitar, Viola).
The familiarity of the narrative arc allowed me to have the same frame for every work in the portfolio within which I could develop different and unique structures. As the research progressed and my composition technique evolved, I explored more complex structures in order to create a relationship between different thematic materials within a work. I believe that *Cinquillamente* is the most complex form as I articulated two structures – the narrative arc and the role change between the trombone material and the “cloud” texture – and used the structural rhythm on multiple levels. Nevertheless, I believe *Cocología* is also important as it presents the refinement of all the major techniques I developed during my research.
3. Rhythm and Texture

Dominican rhythms\(^{24}\) form the basis of my rhythmic language and through their manipulation I build textures. These rhythmic textures are the result of the amalgamation of the individual parts, which are characterised by the manipulation of rhythmic ostinatos and rhythmic cells. At the start of my research, I focused on developing different rhythmic processes that would allow me to go beyond the limitations of Dominican rhythms whilst creating textures alluding to Dominican music.

In the pursuit of new techniques to build textures, I have composed works that explore pulsed and pulseless music. *Cojuelo Spirit*, written during my Master’s, is the first example of this relationship in my oeuvre. In this piece, the floating melodic line of the first violin is juxtaposed against the pulsed, rhythmic music of the ensemble (see Example 3.1). The pulsed and pulseless elements were developed during the Ph.D., and in turn different types of pulsed and pulseless music were used in later pieces.

\(^{24}\)The term “Dominican rhythms” refers to rhythms found in merengue and in Dominican folk music.
This chapter will examine the main elements of my rhythmic language that are responsible for creating different rhythmic textures. It will then analyse my relationship with texture and how it developed during the doctorate. It will continue to consider the interaction between pulsed and pulseless rhythms and, finally, it will present the different types of pulsed and pulseless music present in the portfolio works.

3.1 Elements of my Rhythmic Language

Latin American composers have often incorporated their country’s musical tradition into their own works. For example, Aquino’s *Congofonía* uses a rhythmic ostinato throughout the piece based on the *congo mayor* rhythm from the *congos de Villa Mella* (see Example 3.2). The original rhythm accentuates every fourth quaver but in Aquino’s piece he accentuates every fifth quaver, emphasised by the woodblock and violins.\(^{25}\)

\(^{25}\)The rhythmic ostinato combined with the emphasis on the first beat of the bar creates a conflict that is developed later in the work.
Example 3.2: Congofonia bars 42-45

In the portfolio works, the clave and cinquillo rhythms are often used and developed in the individual parts without ever playing the central/principal role that they do in Dominican music. As seen in the previous chapter, the cinquillo rhythm, used in Cinquillamente (see Example 3.3), is elongated and repeated in the first sixteen bars; it pre-empts the overall structure.

Example 3.3: Cinquillamente bars 1-16

Cocología is the only work in the portfolio that uses rhythms taken directly from Cocolo music in order to celebrate and pay homage to it (see Example 3.4). In Cocolo music these patterns are played together, but in Cocología they are used in combination or separately.

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27 As seen in Chapter 2, Cinquillamente’s overall structure is based on the cinquillo.

28 Cocología takes the rhythms from the Cocolos.
Example 3.4: Cocología’s Cocolo rhythms

The complex cross-rhythms and textures that define Dominican music rely on layering individual rhythmic lines. Consequently, rhythmic layering became an important technique in my rhythmic language to subtly allude to the character of Dominican music without directly using its rhythms. As seen in Example 3.5, the two independent lines of Galipote’s violoncellos are superimposed to create a compact, jagged and rhythmic texture. Here, as in merengue or in Cocolo music, the parts are independent but their rhythms interlock.29

Example 3.5: Galipote’s bars 124-136

In Dominican music, the rhythmic patterns are repeated throughout most of the piece, which is a limitation I sought to overcome. Messiaen’s separation of rhythm from pitch inspired me to build textures that repeat only in terms of rhythm (i.e. not in terms of pitch). Example 3.6 shows the basic 21\(\frac{1}{2}\)-long and the 25\(\frac{1}{2}\)-long rhythmic ostinatos in

29A similar technique is used on El corre corre’s first theme.
Galipote’s violoncello I and II, respectively. Here the length of the ostinato is shortened in violoncello I, and lengthened in violoncello II in order to further destabilise the music. The intervals, predominantly minor seconds and tritones, do not have a cycle, but the G is an anchor from which other pitches are introduced.

Example 3.6: Galipote’s rhythmic ostinato

In Acumayá, the development is based on a short rhythmic motif. In the second movement and at the beginning of the fourth, the \( \text{iq e} \) cell recurs in all four parts. It acts as a reference point and creates a framework in which the music can develop. Similarly, the \( \text{jjjqx} \) cell in Cocología’s instrumental sections is a recurring feature that provides cohesion between the individual parts. It instils the music with a unique character that is developed, eventually leading to the climax (see Example 3.7).
3.2 Creating Textures

The textures in earlier portfolio works are the result of superimposing various rhythmic parts. As seen in Example 3.8, the sparse texture of *El corre corre*’s theme 1 is created by the interlocking rhythms of the piano and percussion. On reflection, the through-composed nature of these rhythms inhibits the relationship between the instruments. Thus, I decided to explore different rhythmic ostinatos to retain some sense of repetition in later works and be able to present and develop cohesive relationships between instruments and materials.
Rhythmic ostinatos were used to build rhythmic textures where all the parts were equal and interlocking. In most of my works, these ostinatos are layered to construct textures that serve as a starting point from which the music then develops, abandoning the ostinatos as the music progresses. As seen in Example 3.9, Galipote’s rhythmic ostinatos (seen in Example 3.6) are abandoned to allow the texture to increase and push the music to the climax.

Example 3.9: Galipote’s texture based on earlier rhythmic ostinatos

3.3 Contrasting Textures

At the start of the Ph.D., rhythmic unisons were used to provide a sharp textural contrast and thus shape the music. As Example 3.10 shows, Galipote’s climax is heightened by the unison of the two violoncellos and it contrasts the increase in rhythmic density of bars 107-171. The rhythmic unison of El corre corre’s theme 3 (i.e. letter G) also provides a clear opposition to the rhythmic layering of the first two themes. On reflection, theme 3’s eventual polyphonic texture dilutes the clarity of its character and diminishes its distinction from the rest of the piece.
In *Cocologia*’s instrumental sections rhythmic unisons break up the polyphonic texture, punctuate specific moments in time and shape the music. In Example 3.11, the polyphonic texture created by the strings is interrupted by a unison passage that launches the music into another section with a different texture. These rhythmic unisons separate sections and, as a result, create larger phrases that shape the music and give it a sense of breath.
The long and weightless nature of my melodic writing, developed in ...y punto’s violoncello part, is a recurring feature in the portfolio and has become a contrasting element to the polyphonic rhythmic textures. Unlike the rhythmic unison, the long, weightless lines often exist in conjunction with the rhythmic, polyphonic parts, and thus create a two-tier texture. The contrast is evident when both these elements are juxtaposed (e.g. ...y punto’s violoncello and percussion sections) or when layered (e.g. Ritiluases letter D to F).

3.4 Textures Articulating the Narrative Arc

Edward T. Cone’s description of the ‘basic Stravinskyan technique comprising three phases [...] stratification, interlock and synthesis’ could also describe my approach to structure. The initial separation, or stratification, of thematic material present in Symphonies of Wind Instruments’s block structure can also be heard in El corre corre and ...y punto. As in Stravinsky’s work, the thematic materials in my compositions are then superimposed, or interlocked, and synthesised.

As the Ph.D. progressed, texture and orchestration were used to articulate the structure of the works. As in the first movement of Lutoslawski’s Second Symphony where sections are defined by their instrumentation as well as their rhythmic content, in my later pieces instrumentation became as important as rhythm and more consideration was given to it. Consequently, instruments gained specific roles within a section, which helped define its texture and character.

In every composition of the portfolio, textures thicken in order to reach the climax. The rhythmic density at the beginning of El corre corre and ...y punto is sparse but it increases as the music advances. In later pieces, this build-up is less evident but it is still responsible for driving the music forwards. In Cinquillamente, each segment of

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30 The melodies in the portfolio tend to consist of long notes without a sense of pulse. I describe them as weightless because they float above the accompaniment.


32 In Lutoslawski’s Second Symphony the episodes have different combination of instruments and each refrain has a different instrumentation based on double-reed instruments, which gives them a distinctive sound. For example, Episode 3 has three clarinets, vibraphone and piano; Refrain 3 has an English horn and two bassoons, Episode 4 has two cymbals, a tam-tam, celesta, harp and piano, Refrain 4 has an oboe, a cor anglais and a bassoon.
thematic material has its own organic textural increase throughout the piece, which is slightly obscured by the alternation of the materials. The increase in textural density is clarified when all three instruments play simultaneously for the first time at bar 217.

*Galipote* was the first work in which the textural increase occurs in different stages (or waves). In the introduction, the music is sparse and slowly builds up in rhythmic density, reaching its height in bars 13-14 before returning to a monophonic texture (e.g. bar 36). This process is repeated again from bars 36 to 82, before being interrupted by the ‘Ritmico’ section in bar 83. The development of the ‘Ritmico’ section, which eventually leads to the climax, also follows this wave-like structure. Every ‘Ritmico’ section’s rhythmic density increases before the violoncello II’s glissando interrupts the development. When the ‘Ritmico’ section begins anew, the texture is less rhythmically dense than before the *glissando*, but more active than the start of the previous ‘Ritmico’ section (see Example 3.12).

Example 3.12: *Galipote* wave-like increase in density, showing Wave A (bb. 99-123)
Example 3.12: *Galipote* wave-like increase in density (bb. 99-123) (continued)

Example 3.12: *Galipote* wave-like increase, beginning of Wave B (bb. 124-136)
Ritluases’s structure lent itself to this wave-like increase in density because it depicted the same ritual three times. To heighten this fact, all three rituals have the same structure articulated by similar textures. Ritluases’s biggest climax and densest texture emphasises the moment when the clarinet breaks free from the “spirits”.

In Cocología, the wave-like increase is only evident during the passage leading up to the climax (i.e. bb. 346-564). Here each wave is punctuated by a short rhythmic unison and/or by silence. The stop and start character of this passage creates a sense of breathability absent from the other portfolio works and obscures the general increase in rhythmic density; only from bars 513 to 564 does this increase become apparent.

3.5 Texture at Climax

El corre corre’s climax was supposed to be the densest moment in the piece. On reflection, the lack of sustained intensity contradicts the high rhythmic density and consequently weakens the impact and effectiveness of the climax. In the rest of the portfolio, I sought to create a sense of arrival at the climax in order to emphasise that moment and better articulate the structure.

The high unison in Galipote’s climax is successful because it is the only moment in the composition where both violoncellos play together, whereas the climax in Acumayá is successful because all four instruments build a five-octave chord, creating the densest moment in the piece. The climaxes in Ritluases and Cinquillamente are effectively attained but their impact is lessened because of their relatively short duration.

...y punto is unique because it is the only composition in the portfolio that has two climaxes: the violoncello’s and the percussion’s. Cocología’s climax is the most successful one in the portfolio due, in part, to the expectation created by the build-up and by the chord before letter T, which gives a real sense of arrival at letter T. The intensity of that chord is carried until bar 575, where it is held. Bar 576 serves as a sharp contrast to bar 575 and highlights the importance of the previous eleven bars.
3.6 Pulsed versus Pulseless Music

The basic relationship between pulsed and pulseless music in the portfolio pieces was influenced by Dominican popular and folk music where the melody is more sustained and sung above the rhythmic accompaniment.\textsuperscript{33} A similar relationship can also be seen, amongst other pieces, in the violoncello part in the fifth movement of Messiaen’s \textit{Quatuor pour la fin du temps}, where the piano has a pulsating accompaniment over which the violoncello plays a \textit{cantabile} line; or at number 59 of Lutoslawski’s Fourth Symphony where the trumpet, playing \textit{ad libitum}, has a pulseless line over the rhythmic accompaniment of the orchestra.\textsuperscript{34}

The contrast between pulsed and pulseless music is first heard in \textit{...y punto}, where the pulseless (i.e. violoncello) and the pulsed music (i.e. bongos and woodblock) have little interaction throughout the piece. Here the contrast between the two types of music serves to differentiate the thematic materials, enabling their independent developments and subsequent climaxes.

This same contrast helps the organic development at the beginning of \textit{Galipote}. The music begins with a vague sense of pulse that slowly grows towards bar 13. Aeolian-like sounds, i.e. pulseless, prepare the entry of pitch whilst the percussive sounds disappear (see Example 3.13). The pulseless melody is finally revealed at bars 36-37 and developed in the following bars.

\textsuperscript{33}The melody is metered but it does not carry the same rhythmic impetus and energy of the accompaniment.

\textsuperscript{34}Other pieces that have a similar relationship include Ginastera’s violin I part of the first movement of his String Quartet No. 1 and the violin melody in the second movement of Ligeti’s Horn Trio.
Example 3.13: *Galipote* bars 16-32

In the development section of *Galipote*, the pulsed ‘Ritmico’ sections carry the music forwards. As seen in Chapter 2, these sections are punctuated by the violoncello II’s pulseless *glissandi* (see Figure 5, page 20). As the climax is approached, the pulsed rhythms and pulseless melody are played simultaneously to increase the density of the music. On reflection, the speed of the rhythmic material and the short length of the pulseless melody prevent their contrast from being clear, and as a result the increase in texture feels limited. This issue was addressed in *Ritluases*, where the contrast between the clarinet’s melody and the strings’ and percussion’s rhythmic material is clearer (see Example 3.14).
The opposition between pulsed and pulseless music was essential for *Acumayá’s* structure. Its five-movement form can be understood as the alternation between pulseless and pulsed music: movements one, three and five have pulseless material whilst two and four are predominantly pulsed. The opposition between the two types of music also exists within the fourth movement. Here the beginning is based on the \( \text{\textbf{\textcircled{J}}} \) rhythmic cell from the second movement, but it progressively acquires a pulseless character. For the first time in the portfolio, there is an evident struggle between the two types of music, which drives the movement towards its climax and beyond (i.e. from bar 45 to the end).

In *Cocologia’s* instrumental sections, the Dominican rhythmic patterns and the tremolos signal the difference between energetic and highly energetic music. From letters A to D, the music goes from highly energetic (i.e. tremolo, pulseless) to energetic (i.e. rhythmic patterns, pulsed), and vice versa from letters F to J. From letter L to T, there is not a clear trajectory, instead the pulseless and pulsed music are juxtaposed to allow a slow increase in rhythmic density and thus reach the climax.
The contrast between the vocal and instrumental sections in *Cocología* is not defined by the use of pulsed or pulseless music but rather by their energetic and serene characters. The mezzo-soprano has a speech-like part that could be considered pulseless because of its apparent flexibility. This lack of pulse is supported by the percussion accompaniment that creates a pulseless backdrop for the singer. However, as seen in Example 3.15, the horns create a slow, irregular pulse that anchors the vocal part, giving the music a ceremonial character. The irregular pulse and the pulseless character of the vocal part are in contrast with the energy of the instrumental sections.

Example 3.15: *Cocología* letter K

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The pulsating horns represent the sound of bells, which is made clear towards the end of *Cocología*.  

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35The pulsating horns represent the sound of bells, which is made clear towards the end of *Cocología*.  

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3.7 Different Types of Pulsed Music

My initial research into Dominican music, and more specifically its rhythms, provided me with the two types of pulsed rhythm present in the portfolio. The first is derived from Dominican drum patterns (see Example 3.16), while the second originates in the güíro pattern of merengue music and the triangle pattern of Cocolo music (see Example 3.4). The latter patterns are relentless and have a very strong sense of beat.

Example 3.16: Dominican patterns

In *El corre corre* the first two themes are based on Dominican drum patterns, but the first one is simple and the second compound. The third theme, inspired by the relentlessness of the güíro pattern, is a break from what came before and thus creates a clear contrast. *Acumayá* developed the idea from *El corre corre* and explored both types of pulsed music in the fourth movement, often simultaneously (see Example 3.17a). As *Acumayá*’s fourth movement progresses, the clear beat disappears as tuplets are layered, creating a pulseless texture that eventually leads to the climax (see Example 3.17b).

Example 3.17a: *Acumayá*’s fourth movement bb.54-56
Example 3.17a: *Acumayá*’s fourth movement bb.54-56 (continued)

Example 3.17b: *Acumayá*’s fourth movement bb.106-109
Both types of pulsed music are present in *Cinquillamente’s* ‘Assertive’ sections (i.e. bb. 95-138 and bb. 237-287) and *Cocología*’s instrumental sections. In the first, the contrast between both types heightens the metric modulation and the rhythmic unison. In *Cocología*, both types of pulsed music are often used simultaneously. Here the beat is shifted in one or more parts, creating a conflict between them in order to give a sense of development (see Example 3.18a). Towards the climax, the rhythm based on the snare drum is ‘ternarised’\(^{36}\) to develop the material and the relationship between the instruments (see Example 3.18b).

\(\text{Example 3.18a: Cocología letter C}\)

\(^{36}\text{A simple rhythm translated into a compound rhythm.}\)
3.8 Different Types of Pulseless Music

There are also two types of pulseless music in the portfolio. The first and most common is the lyrical, quasi-recitative one that appears in ...y punto. The second originates in the use of tremolos and the idea that extreme speed can equate to pulselessness.

In order to create the sensation of pulselessness, the melodic writing in the portfolio presents a combination of tuplets, a few offbeats, and long and irregular rhythms. During the compositional process, I very rarely used bars as I was composing which allowed me to distance myself from the metre; I would divide the music into bars once the work was finished. The bars are merely a tool to help the performers keep time and stay together because the strong and weak beats were rarely a concern.\(^{37}\)

\(^{37}\textit{Cocologia} is an exception to this because I purposely used }6/8\text{ and }2/4\text{ metres to portray the ‘in two’ feel of the }2/2\text{ metre in Cocolo music (see Example 3.18b).}
After Ritluases – a synthesis of my earlier compositional procedures – I wanted to develop different aspects of my musical language, including pulseless music. Acumayá’s third movement first experimented with the idea that extremely fast notes could create a pulseless texture. Here the tremolos and different-length tuplets create a shimmering texture and a free, flowing character that give the music a sense of pulselessness. Cinquillamente explores the relationship between pulsed and pulseless music through the tremolos of the piccolo and percussion sections. The gradual and written ritardando, from tremolo to single attacks, also suggests that pulseless music could be seen as consisting of extremely fast notes.

The work done in Acumayá and Cinquillamente was essential to the development of Cocología’s instrumental sections, where the music passes from extremely energetic to energetic music and vice versa. This subtle difference in the music signals the moment when the excitement builds and falls during the Cocolos’ ceremonies – an important aspect of the proceedings.

The concept of pulsed and pulseless music, even if unconscious at first, has been a constant thread throughout the portfolio compositions. At first, I was concerned with developing my rhythmic language drawing on Stravinsky’s additive rhythms, Messiaen’s rhythmic ostinatos and Lutoslawski’s use of texture, which allowed me to explore the different types of pulsed and pulseless music. The portfolio thus presents the evolution of my rhythmic language, revealing that rather than being drawn exclusively from Dominican rhythms, it is instead focused primarily on the interaction and opposition of pulsed and pulseless music.
4. Pitch: Creating and Maintaining Soundworlds

The main role of pitch in this portfolio is to create harmonic soundworlds that define the overall work or its different sections.\(^{38}\) There are two approaches in the portfolio: ...y punto and Galipote maintain a unique soundworld throughout and El corre corre, Rituases, Acumayá, Cinquillamente and Cocologia have different soundworlds, which help differentiate and define their sections. The soundworlds in the portfolio pieces are defined by the scales and intervals used. As seen below, the use of pre-existing and original scales was inspired by Messiaen’s music and his modes of limited transposition.

This chapter will examine how scales were used to create and maintain different soundworlds. It will also study the development of block chords as an essential tool for building and releasing tension. Finally, this chapter will discuss the two types of melody that I employed and developed during the Ph.D.

4.1 Using Scales

The portfolio compositions present original and pre-existing scales (e.g. pentatonic scale) that are used to create different soundworlds.\(^{39}\) I built the first as an alternative to the latter. I gave the original scales a defined feature, either a minor third between two consecutive pitches at some point in the scale (see Example 4.1a) or a tritone from the ‘tonic’ (see Example 4.1b). There are other scales that have these features (e.g. octatonic scale has a tritone from the tonic); nevertheless, I wanted the freedom to choose the pitches and intervals according to what I was planning for the composition.

\[\text{Example 4.1a: El corre corre theme 1 and Galipote scales, showing use of minor thirds}\]

\(^{38}\)For the rest of the chapter I will use ‘soundworld’ to signify ‘harmonic soundworld’.

\(^{39}\)Original scales refer to scales of my own invention.
Debussy used modal, octatonic, whole-tone, major and minor scales in his compositions to expand his harmonic language. Messiaen built a rich harmonic language comprised of his modes and chords of resonance, chords on the dominant and chords in fourths that can be recognised in all of his works. In the portfolio, scales such as the pentatonic scale (e.g. *El corre corre’s* theme 3), the octatonic scale (e.g. *Acumayá’s* fourth movement) and Messiaen’s third mode of limited transposition (e.g. *Cocología’s* vocal sections) were chosen for their unique characteristics and their ability to build clear and consistent soundworlds, which in turn shaped the piece. For example, *Acumayá’s* overall structure is articulated by the scales used in each of the movements and the soundworlds they produce. The first and last movements use the same original scales, whilst the second and fourth utilise octatonic scales. The third movement, is unique in the portfolio. Here the quartet imitates the complexity of the upper partials of the lower pitch played by the violoncello or the viola; no specific scale is used.

The soundworlds can be defined by multiple scales when these scales share the same ‘tonic’ and the same feature. If required, the music could develop its pitch content without needing to be transposed (i.e. change of tonal centre). As seen in Example 4.1 (above) and Example 4.2, the different scales used in *...y punto* and *Galipote* share the tritone and minor third, respectively. Throughout these works, the music maintains its initial soundworld by using the same intervals, whilst developing its pitch content using similar scales.
The intervallic content of the horizontal line can also define and maintain a recognisable character without requiring a set of scales. For instance, *Cinquillamente* does not have a particular set of scales but its sections have a distinct personality that is supported by the intervallic content. The trombone’s thematic material is characterised by the perfect fifth whilst the piccolo and percussion are defined by the minor second (see Example 4.3). Towards the end of the work, the themes are no longer specific to the instrument and thus the trombone plays the piccolo and percussion theme, and vice-versa (See Example 4.4).

Example 4.3: *Cinquillamente*’s themes

Example 4.4: Trombone at *Cinquillamente*’s bar 339

A soundworld can also be sustained throughout the music by transposing the primary scales into other tonal centres. In the case of *...y punto* and *Galipote*, the scales themselves do not vary but the tonal centres do, which creates one soundworld throughout the work. In *El corre corre, Ritluases, Acumayá* and *Cinquillamente* the
tonal centres and scales change to create different soundworlds and better distinguish the sections.

4.2 Tonal Centres

Tonal centres serve as a structuring device in most of the portfolio compositions. For example, in *El corre corre*, B♭ is the tonal centre of theme 1, E of theme 2 and F of theme 3; in *...y punto*, each of the three sections has a different tonal centre, F-B-G respectively; in *Ritluases*, the tonal centre rises with each new ritual, E-F-F♯-G and all five of the movements of *Acumayá* have their own tonal centres, A-A♭-D-A♭-A respectively. In the case of *...y punto*, the tonal centres are taken from the melodic cell, which can be heard in a macroscopic level at the start of every section (i.e. bars 1, 35 and 77). The rising tonal centres in *Ritluases* create a harmonic drive that leads to the climax whereas the tonal centres in *Acumayá* further establish the pairing of the movements.

4.3 Harmonic Development in *Cocología*

Messiaen argued that his modes are ‘at once in the atmosphere of several tonalities, without polytonality, the composer being free to give predominance to one of the tonalities or to leave the tonal impression unsettled.’

The main scale in *Cocología*’s vocal sections is Messiaen’s third mode of limited transposition around two tonal centres. As seen in Example 4.5, the vocal part switches from the third mode in C to the third mode in F♯ with ease. The flexibility of tonal centres gives the melodic line freedom to maintain the intervallic content, thus maintaining its character, and to heighten the text.

Example 4.5: *Cocología*’s vocal part

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Example 4.5: Cocología’s vocal part (continued)

*Cocología* was the first piece where non-octave scales were used in my compositions. These scales, used in the instrumental sections and in later vocal sections, proved to be an important addition to my harmonic language. As seen in Example 4.6a, the scales do not repeat at the octave rather, intervals repeat at the ninth. It is then possible to build distinctive chords from these scales, which have a consistent intervallic content without necessarily repeating pitches (see Example 4.6b).

Example 4.6a: Non-octave scales

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41A non-octave scale is a scale that does not repeat at the octave.
4.4 Creating and Releasing Tension

As seen in Example 4.7, the vertical result in *Galipote* (i.e. dyads) is the outcome of the two rhythmic ostinatos in the violoncello lines. The soundworld is defined by the tritone and the seconds but similarly to Lutoslawski’s issue with his controlled aleatory technique,\(^{42}\) the music in *Galipote* struggles to build and release tension: the rhythm is motoric but the harmony is near-static.

Example 4.7: *Galipote* bars 83-91, showing the vertical result of the horizontal lines

*Ritluases* takes advantage of the static nature of my harmonic language. At the start of the compositional process, I built block-chords that would recur during specific sections in order to define their character. For example, the pitch field from bar 59 (see Example 4.8a) recurs and cements the overall sonority of *Ritluases*’s bars 59 to 67 (see Example

\(^{42}\)Lutoslawski’s unwillingness to relinquish his control over harmony in the *ad libitum* sections forced him to have one chord per section, which the players would elaborate within the pitch field. Throughout his career he tried to overcome this shortcoming with variants of the same twelve-note technique (e.g. Lutoslawski’s ‘chain’ technique layers two independent strands whose sections begin and end at different times).
4.8b) in a manner reminiscent of Lutoslawski. The block-chord indicated by the arrows in Example 4.8b, further establishes the soundworld. Throughout this passage, the music is rhythmically active but the soundworld is unchanged.

Example 4.8a: Ritluases’s chord at bars 59

Example 4.8b: Ritluases bars 59-67

43I assigned a set of pitches to different instruments, which changes at bar 65 in the example.
Example 4.8b: Ritluases bars 59-67 (continued)

The pensive character of Ritluases’s second ritual (i.e. Letter H) provided the opportunity to create a clear block-chord progression for the first time in the portfolio, and have a section where the harmony had a distinguishable development. However, as seen in Example 4.9, the chords are different but share their intervalllic content. There is little sense of development because there is no real build-up and release of tension as the intervalllic content is not very diverse and there is little voice-leading. I later addressed these issues in Cocolo gia.
Example 4.9: Rituales second ritual chords
In Cocología’s vocal sections, the block chords are responsible for building and releasing tension. I decided to build tension towards moments in the text that I wanted to emphasise by adding intervals to the block chords that I considered more dissonant; I released tension by subtracting dissonant intervals and/or adding more consonant ones.\(^{44}\) In the context of my musical language, a unison has very little tension and a dissonant chord has more tension than a consonant one.\(^{45}\) Example 4.10a shows that at bar 275 there is very little tension (only one pitch) which increases in the following bar when all four horns come in, creating a five-note chord. The tension is partially released with the following major chord. By building up tension, the music is able to reach a small climax at bar 307 (see Example 4.10b). Here the voice sings ‘remotos’ creating a six-note dissonant chord that is followed by a four-note chord and then a three-note one at bar 309 that release the tension of the mini-climax. By creating and releasing tension the motion of the music becomes clearer and more direct.

\[\text{Example 4.10a: Cocología bars 275-277}\]

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\(^{44}\)I based the distinction between consonant and dissonant on the interval ratios. The more complex the ratio is, the more dissonant it is. For example, a unison (1:1) is more consonant than an octave (2:1), which in turn is more consonant than a perfect fifth (3:2) and the perfect fourth (3:4).

\(^{45}\)I call a consonant chord one that is made up of largely consonant intervals. Consequently, a dissonant chord is composed of mainly dissonant intervals.
4.5 Melody

During my Master’s, melody played a minor part in my compositional language. *El corre corre*, the first piece of the Ph.D., also lacks distinctive melodic materials.\(^{46}\) I sought to address this issue with the next composition, *...y punto*, which proved to be a crucial work in the development of my melodic language.

The contour and intervallic content of my melodies defines their character. Every piece in the portfolio, except for *El corre corre*, has distinctive melodies that maintain their character throughout the work. In *Galipote*, *Ritluases* and *Acumayá*, the melodic phrases are repeated almost identically making them instantly recognisable. In *...y punto*, *Cinquillamente* and *Cologología* it is the contour and intervallic content that is repeated and extended. As a result, there is a sense of development in the melody that allows it to expand and contract without losing its character.

The rising tritone and descending major third of *...y punto*’s F-B-G melodic cell dictates its development. The contour of each phrase follows this general ascending and descending shape of the melodic cell (see Example 2.1, page 19). The ascending tritone

\(^{46}\) My concern with horizontal music focused initially on rhythms and rhythmic procedures more than on melodic writing.
remains a constant feature of the melody throughout the piece, but the descending major third is more flexible, often replaced by a stepwise descent or by other small intervals.

The trombone theme in *Cinquillamente* is developed in a similar manner as *...y punto*’s violoncello theme. However, the intervallic content of the melodic cell (see Example 4.11) is not as important. The ascending and descending contour of the melody is conserved throughout the piece, regardless of the intervallic content. For example, the initial ascending perfect fifth is not maintained – it is replaced by a tritone, a sixth or a seventh – but each new phrase has an ascending shape marked by a large interval. This initial rise is eventually followed by a descending motion. The character of the line is maintained through its contour as well as its short-long rhythm, present in the original cell (see Example 4.11).

Example 4.11: *Cinquillamente*’s bass trombone melodic cell

*Cocología* does not have a melodic cell but there is a general contour shared between the different phrases. As seen in Examples 4.12a and 4.12b, each phrase has an initial ascent followed by a descent. The length of both depends on the words and where the emphasis of the text lies. The general contour of the vocal line helps to create and maintain its character, allowing the music some flexibility to draw out the meaning of the words.

Example 4.12a: *Cocología*’s first vocal section
Example 4.12b: Cocologia’s third vocal section

There are no melodic cells in Galipote, Acumayá or Ritluases. Instead, these works employ short melodic phrases that are repeated with little variation throughout. Here the melodies do not push the music forwards, but rather, serve as a recurrent reference for the listener, similar to the trumpet part in Ives’s The Unanswered Question. Unlike Ives’s work, the recurrent melodies are associated with different sections rather than with a particular instrument, which helps characterise each section and emphasise the structure. For example, the first and last movements of Acumayá share the same melody (see Examples 4.13a and 4.13b), which clearly connects them; all three themes in Ritluases’s rituals are distinct because they do not share their intervallic content and instead, have self-contained melodies. This not only separates the three rituals but it also articulates the brief recapitulation of all three melodies from letter O to P.
Example 4.13a: Acumayá’s first movement melodic material

Example 4.13b: Acumayá’s last movement melodic material
Example 4.13b: Acumayá’s last movement melodic material (continued)

The portfolio compositions exhibit a practical approach to pitch that creates clear soundworlds and serves to articulate the structure. At first, the choice of scales, tonal centres and chords provided just the background for the rhythmic and structural elements of the works. As the Ph.D. progressed, pitch played a bigger role in shaping the music. The melodic line and the rise and fall of tension strengthened the music’s direction and, consequently, the music became more transparent and the soundworlds more distinct.
5. Ritualistic Elements: Visual Characterisation, Staging and Theatre

There is an innate theatricality to music whenever it is performed live. Visual and physical elements during a live concert can enhance the experience and add another dimension to the interpretation of the music. Specific stage layouts (e.g. Ives’s *The Unanswered Question*), dramatic movements (e.g. Birtwistle’s *For O, for O the Hobby-Horse is Forgot*) and Music-Theatre (e.g. Aperghis’s *Le Corps à corps* and *Corporel*) have been exploited by composers to create a visual parameter that enhances the music. As a result of this research, I sought to develop the visual characterisation of my music to provide audiences with a more immersive experience.

*Galipote* was the first piece to explore a visual element. The research into Dominican folk legends, which served as inspiration for *Galipote*, led to an increased interest in the folk traditions of the Dominican Republic. This eventually led me to Dominican rituals, where music plays an important role in both religious and secular ceremonies. I then explored the concept of ritual, both musically and physically, within my compositions.

*The Oxford English Dictionary* (2014) defines a ritual as a ‘religious or solemn ceremony consisting of a series of actions performed according to a prescribed order.’ Rituals usually take place in a sequestered place and have a cyclical or repetitive nature by which they are defined. The series of actions that distinguish different rituals can often be seen by outsiders as nonsensical or illogical. The ritualistic element in music does not have to necessarily portray a specific ritual; it can be abstract and give the allusion that the audience is witnessing a ritual, even if they do not know its meaning.

This chapter will examine the influence the research into rituals had on my compositional output. It will then outline the ritualistic elements in *Galipote*, *Rituases*, *Cinquillamente* and *Cocología*.

5.1 Influence on Compositional Output

Messiaen’s *Et exspecto resurrectionem mortuorum*, Birtwistle’s *Ritual Fragment* and Boulez’s *Rituel in memoriam Bruno Maderna* were amongst the first works I researched to get a sense of how other composers incorporated the idea of ritual in their music. All
three works take into account the performance space: *Et exspecto resurrectionem mortuorum* was composed to be performed in large spaces, *Ritual Fragment* places the musicians in a semi-circle and *Rituel* separates eight groups of musicians on stage. Furthermore, in *Ritual Fragment* ten of the players move to the front of the stage to become soloist whilst the other four remain immobile, accompanying and linking solos and signalling moments of structural importance. Boulez emphasises the separation of the different groups by assigning them different tempi, which gives the impression of a procession. I thus became interested in exploring the direct relationship between music and its theatre.

I researched pieces that had a sense of theatricality and drama but that were not operas or ballets. Birtwistle’s *Secret Theatre*, *For O, for O, the Hobby-Horse is Forgot* and *Verses for Ensemble* are musical dramas where the movement on stage complements the music. For example in *Secret Theatre*, the player movements and the musical material they play in specific positions reinforce the sense that the audience is witnessing a ritual, even if they do not understand it.\(^{47}\) The result of this research can be seen in the visual characterisation and physical stage presence of *Galipote*, *Ritluases*, *Cinquillamente* and *Cocología*.

Theatricality in my music goes beyond the visual and physical elements, it also affects the musical material. Different roles and characters are assigned to different instruments which helped define the music.\(^{48}\) My aim was to build an aural and visual experience for the audience where the visual elements enhance the music. The main focus was on the music itself, which was supported by theatrical and ritualistic elements.

**5.2 Galipote**

In order to create the illusion that the violoncello II is an echo of violoncello I, they are facing each other and are at least two and a half metres apart. The distance between the violoncellos allows the audience to perceive that sound is traveling from one instrument

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\(^{47}\)There are varying degrees of theatricality in music. Henze’s *El cimarrón* and Stravinsky’s *L’histoire du soldat* tell a dramatic story through music but it is not necessarily presented on stage. Maxwell Davies’s *Eight Songs for a Mad King* fully explores the drama both musically and visually.

\(^{48}\)For example, in *Ritluases* the clarinet represents the person being mounted and the off-stage woodwinds are the “spirits”.
to the other musically and physically – visually portraying the idea of an echo. This layout also balances the practicalities of performance, as both performers need to maintain eye contact, with the concept of the piece.

There is a clear visual difference between the two violoncellos at the start of the piece that is marked by the fabric placed over the violoncello II’s body. The use of a piece of cloth and the specific places the performers are asked to hit the violoncello at the beginning of the piece add another visual aspect to Galipote. It is immediately evident that violoncello II is an echo because of its muffled and delayed sound. This relationship between the sound quality of violoncello I and violoncello II is sustained throughout most of the piece. As seen in Example 5.1, the aeolian and pizzicato sounds of violoncello I are imitated by violoncello II’s aeolian sounds, played with different techniques and its col legno battuto.

![Example 5.1: Galipote violoncello II echo](image)

**5.3 Ritluases**

Ritluases’s layout was inspired by Birtwistle’s use of space. The semicircle formed by the players in Ritual Fragment portrays the idea of ritual, which is also seen in Ritluases’s semicircle. However, contrary to Ritual Fragment, there is no movement on stage in Ritluases, instead the clarinet is placed in the centre of the semicircle to signify its importance in the ritual. Here the clarinet is the ‘person’ who is being possessed, the strings, percussion and brass depict the congregation surrounding the clarinet whereas the offstage woodwinds portray the otherworldly “spirits”. ,

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Ritluares’s ceremonial character is evident but it could have been stronger. The presence of the conductor reduces the sense of immersion that the layout provides but is necessary to keep the orchestra together. On reflection, the addition of synchronised movements between the percussion and perhaps even the strings, could have created a stronger ceremonial character. Similarly, when the clarinet finally breaks away from the “spirits” at letter R, the performer should stand up to signify the clarinet’s independence from the “spirits” but in the first performance the clarinettist refused to do so.

5.4 Cinquillamente

Unlike Ritluares, Cinquillamente does not portray a particular ritual. The positions that the performers take on stage are a visual representation of the relationship between the thematic materials. As discussed in Chapter 2, the trombone commences with the main theme whilst the piccolo and percussion have a secondary one, which is portrayed by the performers’ positions on stage. As the piece progresses, the roles are reversed and towards the end of the piece the trombone has the secondary theme and the piccolo and percussion have the main one. Here the piccolo and percussion are at the front of the stage whilst the trombone is towards the back. Cinquillamente finishes with all three performers at the back of the stage and with their backs towards the audience.

I consider Cinquillamente to still be a work in progress from a theatrical point of view. The music is finished but I would like to experiment further with the performers’ movements and evaluate the manner in which they move. Due to the ensemble being based in the United States, I have not yet had the opportunity to attend a live performance of this piece, nor workshoped it with the ensemble in order to experiment with different ideas and movement possibilities.

5.5 Cocología

I studied George Crumb’s Ancient Voices for Children and Madrigals because they set Spanish texts, written by Lorca, and use a mixed ensemble. I specifically looked at how the percussion was used to accompany and colour the voice part. Boulez’s
compartmentalisation of the ensemble in *Le Marteau sans maître* gave me the idea of having different instrumentation for each of *Cocología*’s sections.

*Cocología* depicts a ceremony where the mezzo-soprano delivers a eulogy whilst the strings and clarinet pay homage to the Cocolos’ music. To differentiate the two main groups, the strings and clarinet are placed in front of the horns and percussion. The singer, originally conceived to be at the back, is placed in front of the clarinet to achieve a better balance within the ensemble. As in *Ritluases*, the conductor is necessary but in *Cocología*, they are placed on the left-hand side to preserve the ceremonial nature of the piece as much as possible.

During the compositional process, I experimented with several alternatives, from different stage layouts to movement on stage, in order to bring out the ceremonial character in *Cocología*. I decided to set the ensemble’s layout and use lighting simulate movement on stage and draw-in the audience’s attention. The lights allow the music to start in complete darkness, enhancing the sense of immersion. A spotlight slowly shines on the bongo player until a second spotlight illuminates the tubular bells at the beginning of the piece. As the music progresses, the instruments’ entries are supported by the lights. At the end of the piece, a blackout brings the ceremony to a close.

My interest in Dominican folklore provided an opportunity to investigate the relationship between physical and aural elements in music because of the inseparable link between the music and the ceremonies. The research started with an exploration of how the sound was produced (i.e. *Galipote*), but my affinity with rituals then propelled me to incorporate staging, theatre, and visual and musical characterisations. *Cocología* has opened the door to further possibilities of balancing ritualistic elements, lighting and staging with music.

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49 Segment 1: voice and two percussionists; segment 2: string trio; segment 3: voice, two percussionists and two horns; segment 4: clarinet, viola and cello; segment 5: voice and four horns; segment 6: string trio and clarinet; segment 7: tutti.

50 The initial idea was to have the singer start at the back of the stage. As the piece progressed, she would slowly advance until reaching the front of the stage for the climax and declamation of the Cocolos’ names.
Conclusion

This portfolio of compositions cements many of the ideas I have been developing since my Master’s and marks the beginning of my interest in rituals and the performance element of music. Future compositions will build on the teleological structure, rhythmic and harmonic processes present in the portfolio works in order to keep developing my compositional technique. I will also continue to research the rich aspects of Dominican music and culture that connect the portfolio compositions as they have not yet been fully explored. I foresee this research expanding to include other Latin American countries such as Cuba, Colombia, Argentina and Puerto Rico because of their shared history. If the Ph.D. portfolio explored Dominican identity, the next step in the research might explore Latin American identity and their cultural differences.

Visual characterisation and staging are areas of my music that I would like to develop much further. In the portfolio, I used staging to enhance the audience’s perception of the music but the theatrical elements are minimal. Larger ensembles and orchestra pose an interesting challenge due to their spatial limitations, which I addressed in the portfolio to a certain extent but which could be investigated further. Visual characterisation enhances the theatre inherently present in musical performance, but I would like to explore the boundaries of where music ends and theatre begins.

Since completing the portfolio I have composed two more works: *Alabanzas* for symphony orchestra and *Eolicamente* for flute and percussion. Both these compositions have unique goal-orientated structures and use some of the rhythmic and harmonic processes studied in this commentary. I was able to create more convincing structures with better pacing because I consciously built and released tension through a combination of musical parameters to articulate the shape of the composition. Due to time constraints I was unable to incorporate theatrical elements into these two works, but in their performance I used soft lighting to create a more intimate atmosphere and draw the audience into the music.

I am continuing to research Dominican identity. I am currently reading ‘The Dominican Republic Reader: History, Culture, Politics’ to familiarise myself with other areas of
Dominican culture.\textsuperscript{51} I hope this research will inform my next two pieces – for piano trio and percussion ensemble.

## Selected Bibliography

**Literature**

(a selection of works read during the course of this research period that had an influence on the portfolio compositions)


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PEARSALL, EDWARD, ‘Symmetry and Goal-Directed Motion in Music by Béla Bartók and George Crumb’, *Tempo*, vol. 58, no. 228 (April, 2004), pp. 32-39


SANTANA, JOSUE and EDIS SANCHEZ, *La música folclórica dominicana* (Santo Domingo: Editora Búho, 2010)


(a short selection of influential works during the research period)

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Garcia Caturla, Alejandro, *Tres danzas cubanas* (1927)
Ginastera, Alberto, *Estancia* (1941)
Ives, Charles, *The Unanswered Question* (1906)
Ligeti, György, Horn Trio (1982)
Ligeti, György, Second String Quartet (1968)
Ligeti, György, *Ten Pieces for Wind Quartet* (1968)
Lutosławski, Witold, String Quartet (1964)
Maxwell Davies, Peter, *Eight Songs for a Mad King* (1969)
Messiaen, Olivier, *Et Exspecto Resurrectionem Mortuorum* (1964)
Messiaen, Olivier, *Quatuor pour la fin du temps* (1941)

Nancarrow, Conlon, Player Piano Studies (1948-1992)


Roldán, Amadeo, *Rítmicas #5* (1930)

Roldán, Amadeo, *Suite de ‘La Rebambaramba’*

Stravinsky, Igor, *The Rite of Spring* (1913)

Stravinsky, Igor, *Three Pieces for String Quartet* (1922)

Stravinsky, Igor, *Symphonies of Wind Instruments* (1920)

Varèse, Edgard, *Amériques* (1918-1921/1927)

Varèse, Edgard, *Ionisation* (1929-1931)

Webern, Anton, *Five Movements* for String Quartet op. 5 (1909)

Webern, Anton, *Six Bagatelles* for String Quartet op. 9 (1913)
Appendix A: Information and Performances of Portfolio Compositions

*El corre corre* (2010) for piano and percussion  
Duration: ca. 8 minutes  
Commissioned by Psappha  
Première: Psappha, Manchester, UK (11 November 2010)

*...y punto* (2011) for violoncello and percussion  
Duration: ca. 6 minutes  
Première: Marco Pereira and Jeff Eng, Atlantic Music Festival, Maine, USA (27 July 2011)  
Performed by Iris Su-Yu Eh and Andrew Stride, Manchester, UK (23 November 2012)

*Galipote* (2011) for two violoncellos  
Duration: ca. 15 minutes  
Commissioned by Domo Duo  
Première: Domo Duo, Manchester, UK (16 November 2011)  
Performed by Theo Vinden and Chris Therepin during the World Event Young Artists 2012, Nottingham, UK (13 September 2012)

*Ritluases* (2011) for chamber orchestra  
Duration: ca. 11 minutes  
Commissioned by the University of Manchester Chamber Orchestra  
Première: University of Manchester Chamber Orchestra, Manchester, UK (4 February 2012)

*Acumayá* (2012) for string quartet  
Duration: ca. 15 minutes  
Workshopped by Quatuor Danel, North West New Music Festival, UK (8 March 2012)  
First and second movement performed by ANIMA-Collective, London, UK (19 September 2013)

*Cinquillamente* (2012) for piccolo/flute, bass trombone and percussion  
Duration: ca. 20 minutes  
Commissioned by The Fourth Wall Ensemble  
Première: The Fourth Wall Ensemble, West Virginia, USA (20 July 2013)  
Performed during the Indianapolis Theatre Fringe Festival, Indianapolis, USA (1 June 2014)

*Cocología* (2013) for mezzo soprano and large ensemble  
Duration: ca. 20 minutes  
Première: Nina Whiteman and Vaganza, Manchester, UK (28 October 2013)  
Performed during ‘Lineas, blancas y ondas’, Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic (6 August 2014)