

Occidental College Music

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Senior Recital in Music Production
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Nanm Pèdi (Lost Souls)

A heavy piano melody backed by a string ensemble sets a dramatic tone. The melody is soon accompanied by a variation of the Yanvalou Rhythm. *Yanvalou* comes from Dahomey, West Africa (Benin) and is a Fon term meaning “to pray.” It is used as invocation and supplication music during Rada Vodou ceremonies. Rada is one of the two major branches of Vodou, and the spirits or *Lwa* associated with it are said to be benevolent and have the deepest African ancestry. While instrumentation can vary, the rhythm is typically played by a traditional drum ensemble or *batterie* and is played in 6/8. The *batterie* consists of *The Ogan* (bell), *Boula* (middle pitched drum), *Seconde* or *Segon* (middle pitched drum), and *Maman* (lead and lowest pitched drum). In this track the Ogan will be played by the hi-hats, while the percussion and shakers that decorate the track loosely follow the original patterns for the Boula and Seconde.

Nou Cho (We're Hot)

A sample of an Ibo rhythm variation is played by the Ogan, Boula, Seconde, and Maman drums in 4/4. The Ibo Rhythm comes from the Ibo people of present day Nigeria and is used to honor the ancestors and spirits of Ibo origin. The synthy chords that join the drums create a festive atmosphere. The beat drops into a *Kanaval* energy with a catchy guitar melody and *Compas* style percussion.

Agwé

An Afrobeat style guitar melody and hi-hats playing an Ibo rhythm Ogan pattern set the tone. The track continues as a bassline, shakers and second guitar melody complement the rhythm and melody. The beat drops and the kick solidifies the Afrobeat energy.

Respire

A Yanvalou rhythm sample played by the Ogan, Boula, Seconde, and Maman drums starts the track. A chopped R&B sample meets the rhythm and a somber tone is set. The sample slows down by half speed and a bouncy hi-hat and kick pattern follows the rhythm's lead. The Reese bass melts the track together.

Ibo Juno

The track starts off with a dreamy synth arp before it is accompanied by hi-hats playing the typical Ibo Ogan. The shaker and supporting hi-hats add to the bounce while the kick and 808 glue the track together. Faint synth pads and leads maintain the soulful and video-gamey feel of the track as it progresses.

Tansyon

A guitar sample opens the track up and is soon joined by an Ogan pattern variation from the Nago rhythm played in the hi-hats and a steady kick pattern. The Nago rhythm originates from the Yoruba people of present day Nigeria. Its spirits represent power and wisdom. Rim shots soon add to the conversation while the sample weaves through the rhythms. A full Nago sample appears towards the middle and also ends the track.

Soul Nago

A Nago rhythm sample played by the Ogan, Boula, Seconde, and Manman drums starts the track. The sample is joined by synthy neo-soul chords that set the tone for the rest of the track. The hi-hats, clap, and kick follows the rhythm's lead before the bass comes in and dances in the lower register.

By any means

A dark piano opens the track before being joined by a Petwo Ogan inspired pattern played by the hi-hats and a dramatic mostly descending string ensemble. Petwo is the second major branch of Haitian Vodou and its Lwa associate with fire, making them more aggressive. The rhythm itself is also "hot" and its rhythms are used to bring rebellion and change. The ceremony that led to the Haitian Revolution (Bwa Kayiman) was a Petwo Ceremony. The stripped down Petwo rhythm sets the tone for the aggressive and muddy 808 that comes in shortly after.

Dirty Work

The sample features a repeated Senegalese djembe pattern. After the pattern creeps in and sets the hot tone of the track, the sample is joined by a rolling hi-hat pattern and 808. The Ogan pattern variation from the Petwo rhythm is played by the shakers and weaves in and out of the track.

Sauvage Anthem

A reversed sample of a Haitian song is played while strings carry the melody. The drums are a combination of Afro Brazilian elements and trap drums which create a rhythmically dense world.