

Birds of Mars Digest

Number Sixteen

September—October 2022



Noho Pop Paintings [53-69]
Drawings [200—255]
Video Show [#13—15]

Introduction

In September I was really focused in on making the 5x7 inch Noho Pop Paintings. I was asking my friends what their favorite cartoon character was and then I would make a quick painting for them. But then I got a few gigs for the Birds of Mars Trio lined up [Sept 24—Wild Chestnut Cafe; Oct 14—Iconica Social Club] and preparing for those gigs ended up taking a lot of time away from making art. Then I was making some Kurt Vonnegut paintings a friend was interested in, and I ended up spending more than an hour on each of those. Since it was for someone else I always second-guess myself and keep working on the same painting for too long. I got bogged down and disinterested—to the point where I stopped making the small NohoPop paintings altogether until October, when I made six of birds to have seem new “merch” for the Iconica show.

Also in September I started to take a closer look at George Russell’s Lydian Chromatic Concept. That research ended up taking a lot of September as I grappled with understanding his system. By the end of the month I had fairly good understanding of it. I began to use some of his concepts in my own playing, and that is what I was working on for the Birds of Mars Trio gigs.

In October, with my wider understanding of music in general, partly due to studying George Russel’s Lydian Chromatic Concept, I returned to an in depth study of Thorough Bass—the system which Bach, Mozart and Beethoven used in composing their music. Slowly one insight led to another and new constructs of understanding formed. By the end of the month I had a very clear big picture of “music” and realized that it is more complex than one could imagine. There are more things to play through once than there is time in one hundred years.

Now it is already half-past November and I am caught up making this digest.

Chris Gentes—Northampton, Massachusetts —November 15, 2022

Contents

Drawings [200-255]	3
Noho Pop Paintings.....	5
Birds of Mars Video Show.....	7

Drawings [200-255]

September—October 2022

September 2022

200 Music: Lydian Chromatic Concept (LCC) 1

201 Music: LCC 2

202 Music: LCC 3

203: Music: Monhegen Book

204 Study: Lisa Simpson

205 Study: Randy Marsh

206 Study: “Pikachu”

207 Study: Vonnegut 1

208 Study: Vonnegut 2

209 Study: Vonnegut 3

210 Study: Vonnegut 4

211 Music: LCC 4

212 Music: LCC 5

213 Music: Birds of Mars Tenor 1

214 Music: Birds of Mars Tenor 2

215 Music: LCC 6

216 Music: Birds of Mars Tenor 3

217 Whole Tone Chords

218 Music: Key to Everything 1

219 Music: Birds of Mars Tenor 4

220 Music: Key to Everything 2

October 2022

- 228 Music Lessons (ML) Folder Cover
- 229 ML Chromatic Work Sheet
- 230 ML Piano Notes
- 231 ML Overview 1
- 232 ML Overview 2
- 233 ML Overview 3
- 234 Dim Intervals
- 235 Major 6 Triads
- 236 Major Flat 6 All Chords
- 237 ii dim plus three notes
- 238 Diminished Scales
- 239 Additive—All
- 240 Many Scales
- 241 4 Voicing inversions
- 242 Thorough Bass Inversions
- 243 Thorough Bass
- 244 7 6 flat4 2 forms diatonic
- 245 Forms and Modes
- 246 Voicings
- 247 Summary
- 248 893 progressions
- 249 Impossibility to Practice All There Is
- 250 Basic Scale Forms
- 251 4 Thorough Bass Chords (plus 5 # b) diatonic
- 252 Everything—simplified
- 253 Ultimate Practice Sheet
- 254 All Forms Map
- 255 All Forms

Noho Pop Paintings

See Digest #15 for the complete NohoPop Story through September 1. This section contains all of the new Noho Pop Paintings since then. Quite frankly, there hasn't been much created since I spent most of October working on some complex musical concepts.

Noho Pop 11x14" *Acrylic on Gessobord*

These ones were on some old gessobord I had from earlier art that I repurposed. I made three more (in bold) over this time.

B01 Calvin & Hobbes Hugging

B02 Smurfette with Flower

B03 Daffy Duck

B04 Snoopy Dancing

B05 Joker Card

B06 Artist Smurf

B07 Hemmingway

Noho Pop 5x7” Acrylic on Canvas Board

I began the first Noho Pop painting on July 18, 2022, and I completed it on July 20, 2022. By the first of August I had finished about twenty-five paintings. At the end of August there were fifty-four completed 5x7” paintings in the Noho Pop style. Here is the list. One day I will find a good way to present the images and comments about the paintings, but for now I am just going to list them.

- 53 Totoro
- 54 Hemingway
- 55 Lisa Simpson
- 56 Bart Simpson
- 57 Randy Marsh
- 58 Vonnegut 1
- 59 Vonnegut 2
- 60 Vonnegut 3
- 61 Calvin and Hobbes Hugging
- 62 Smurfette with Butterfly
- 63 Kermit
- 64 Bird 1
- 65 Bird 2
- 66 Bird 3
- 67 Bird 4
- 68 Bird 5
- 69 Bird 6

I made the small bird ones for a Birds fo Mars gig at Iconica so that I would have something new for the merch table. Other than that I was so focused on music I didn’t create much new work at all.

Birds of Mars Video Show

Birds of Mars Video Show #13

Scenes & Music for Films

“George of Florence at the Chalk Fest”

MPEG-4, 960x540

25 minutes 17 seconds

I went downtown and saw that the chalk fest was going on.

George of Florence, videographer and photographer, was documenting the chalk art. I videotaped him as he videotaped the chalk fest. George documented a lot of Birds of Mars shows back in 2018—2019 and for that I am very grateful, so I was glad when he said I could videotape him videotaping.

This video is kind of funny if you watch it through. George has a lot of occasional funny lines and witty sayings. The first six minutes or so there is a baby screaming, but if you watch it ten times you get used to it. I left that in the video because that is what was happening.

“If in doubt, just call it art, and you get a pass” — George of Florence

I followed along and videotaped. I tried to make the shot interesting all the time. I would try to center his head on yellow buildings as he walked. At the end I stopped and there was a yellow building in the shot as he walked away. That was deliberate once I had got the idea of the yellow buildings in the background idea. But the idea first came to me in the moment as I was videotaping and realized that I could frame his head in the yellow building and adjust the camera as he was walking to keep that composition static.

The music is a rehearsal tape of piano music that I made. Birds of Mars have a few gigs coming up and I wanted to put together six songs with specific progressions. Then I wrote out the chords and made this

recording of the song progressions for the musicians in the band so they could get familiar with them. Now I've been working on them myself on sax. Getting real familiar with them and working out some melodies.

So, after I took the video of George I was thinking that I would record a new soundtrack, but since I had just recorded the Birds of Mars song sketches thing for the gig I decided to just use that. It worked out good. The song changes happened coincidentally at good parts in the video. At least it seemed that way. The moods of the songs matched the video. Maybe the brain just makes it seem that way. The music stops, but you don't realize it until afterwards.

“Ok, where's the damn chalk art?” — George of Florence.

George comments on his bike, as well as the red cement stuff that they are replacing bricks with downtown. Then he rides through the middle of the intersection during the walk signal. Anyway, there is a lot more.

“Halloween's early this year.” — George of Florence.

The music is six songs and the forms are such that they can be played in different ways or with different configurations of musicians. The music is about 15 minutes and the video is 25 minutes or so. Once the music ends I just leave the sounds of the video without a soundtrack. It kind of has a nice effect.

535 words 1 minute

.....

Birds of Mars Video Show #14

Scenes & Music for Films

“Vox Pop Family Tribe”

MPEG-4, 960x540

27 minutes 42 seconds

On September 17 I sat in with “Vox Pop Family Tribe” at the Liberal Arts Pop Up Shop on Pleasant Street in Northampton and took some video with my camera to document the show.

Birds of Mars Video Show #15
Scenes & Music for Films
“Birds of Mars at Wild Chestnut Cafe”

MPEG-4, 960x540

1 Hour 27 minutes 34 seconds

This is audio recording from the performance at the Wild Chestnut Cafe on September 24, 2022. Sir Cecil—Drums, Michael Suter—Bass, Chris Gentes—Tenor Sax.