

Contemporary Romanian Creative Poses-2025 Commercial Segment

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Abstract: *The characteristics of the commercial creative segment in the central Balkan area are anchored in the definition of the local modern artistic identity. Normal and logical existence and deepening of specific elements, thus the zonal delimitation outlining the relevance and consistency, the bordering space related to the peoples of Romanian, Bulgarian, Serbian, Croatian, Macedonian origins, constituting the favorable environment for the display and propagation of the artistic product.*

Particularly interesting and at the same time worthy of analysis is the context of the approach to the construction of traditional local structures, namely the additional implementation of the elements characteristic of modern styles propagated daily in the mass media, the resulting constellation being a compiling, effective one, with a positive impact on the preferential tastes of the public general. Thus, the current musical productions analyzed (2022-2025), in the techno-dance, neo-soul, hip-hop styles or even jazz-etno mergers, mainly the primordial implementation of typical (Balkan) structures outline the weight, the remarkable relevance obtained in the compilatory form. For the success of a concise analysis, highlighting the specific elements, the object of the creative moment in the central eastern European commercial area, we intentionally chose 3 pieces of different invoices.

Keywords: *Balkan style, neo soul, hip hop, commercial music, composition patterns, top 40 charts;*

1. Introduction

Artistic creation is part of a larger cultural phenomenon, known by the term „folklorism”. As a social phenomenon, folklorism it represents an objective process of application, use and fruition of expressive valences of native folklore in various fields of activity: education, professional creation to, mass media, audio, video and cinematographic production, tourism industry and entertainment, organised cultural management, etc.

The essence of this phenomenon it consists in changing (or not) the primary functions, uprooting folklore from the context its original (of the village choir, the seats, the weddings, the clacks, for example) and the adaptation to a wider context, related to the show, stage, concert.

Among the basic features of folklorism are:

- the promotion of secondary, derived forms in the report with the authentic forms of the oral tradition,
- the modification of the morphological structure and semantics of creations,
- revision of the genre structure system, exacerbation of some genres to the detriment of others,

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- levelling regional styles, etc.

2. I'm not going to the club - Theo Rose

Track released in 2024, typical of the techno-dance style, intended for the wide consumption of radio, television (or club) platforms (stations), a creative compilation structured by 3 distinct elements as follows :

Hispano/Latino invoice elements³

- Rhythm : standard procedure of the *reggaeton* style, origin of Latin music from the Caribbean area, previously derived from the Jamaican *reggae* rhythm in the form of *Panama's Espanol*, totally different from its predecessor and yet main influential.



Fig.1. Rhythmical drums structure

- Harmony: based on Andalusian harmonic cadence : I-VII-VI-V, central point of the *flamenco* style⁴, based on the frigid mode, with roots in the classical (Renaissance period), here in introductory ordering random I -VI -VII, the chord of the 5th step, for the completion of the statement making its appearance later in the segment Intermezzo 2.

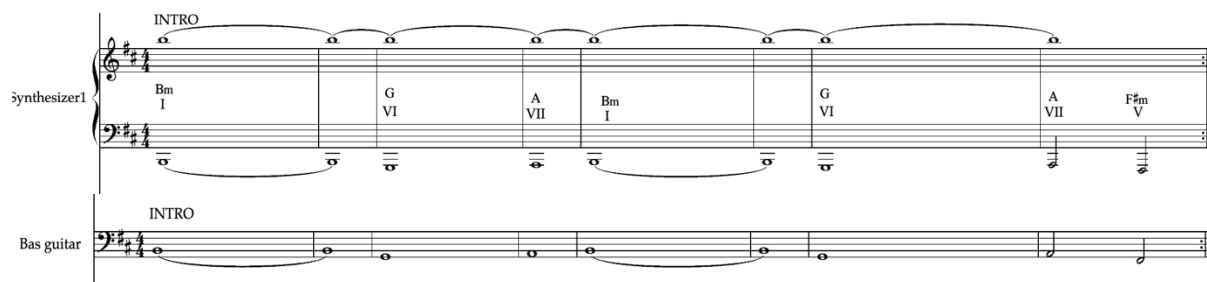


Fig.2. Base line and synthesizer structure

In Intermezzo 2, an extended cadence is thus observed through the appearance of two new steps, (necessary for the distancing and stylistic contouring of the sections, a primordial elementary aspect in the process of avoiding monotony), thus the structure of the resulting harmonic constellation is rendered through the sequence of steps III, V, IV#, I.

³ Patricio, X. Maya. 2023. *Reggaeton Cruise*. Los Angeles: Grandy Miller Books, pp.17-33.

⁴ Lola, Hernandez. 2005. *Flamenco Music Theory, Rhythm, Harmony, Melody, Form*. Madrid: Acordes Concert SI, pp. 56-89.

Fig.3. General score containing drums, base, keyboards and vocal lines.

- The bass line in the introduction is configured by the structure of continuous interpretation (note held), an essential element for increasing the rhythmic-harmonic cumulation in the middle part.

Fig.4. Base line structure

In the middle part, a bifunctional elevated rhythmic joint of both the rhythmic and harmonic sections appear, represented by the sonority of the frequencies emitted by the synthesizers.

- Timbral coloratura, the synthesized sounds rendered through keyboard instruments in the introductory part structure down to the harmonic support of steps I-VI-VII, through common sound in the soprano register note b and functionally, the representation of the fundamental, the 3th and the 2th for the stated cadence.

The harmonic-rhythmic consolidation takes place as I mentioned previously in the middle section through the appearance of techno, hip-hop⁵, dance⁶ formulas in direct correlation with the bass line and the stylistic support of the rhythm.

Balkan elements, etno invoice

⁵ Mary, Fogarty. Imanikan, Johnson. 2025. *The Oxford handbook of Hip Hop Dance Studies*. Oxford: University Press, Oxford Dance, Performing Arts, Sociology, Antropology, pp. 133-155.

⁶ Rick, Snowman. 2024. *Dance Music Manual 5th Edition*. New York: Routledge Taylor & Francis Group, Oxfordshire, Art, Energy, Electronics, Algorithmics, Computer Science, pp. 66-71.

- The vocal line is structured on a *bichordia* continued by a *tetrachordi*⁷, an arrangement of the *aeolic* mode on the extent of a none (in the small octave, and in the 1st octave), based on the question-answer principle (*proposta-riposta*) with a phrase ending consisting of subtonic, 3th, supratonic with return to fundamental, consolidating relationship regarding the chaining of phrases, *antecedent-consecvent* procedure.



Fig.5. Vocal line analysis

- The instrumental melodic line represented by Intermezzo 1 and Intermezzo 2 emphasizes the Balkan character, gradual pentatonic upward ordering starting from the 5th step. (e, f#, g, a, b).

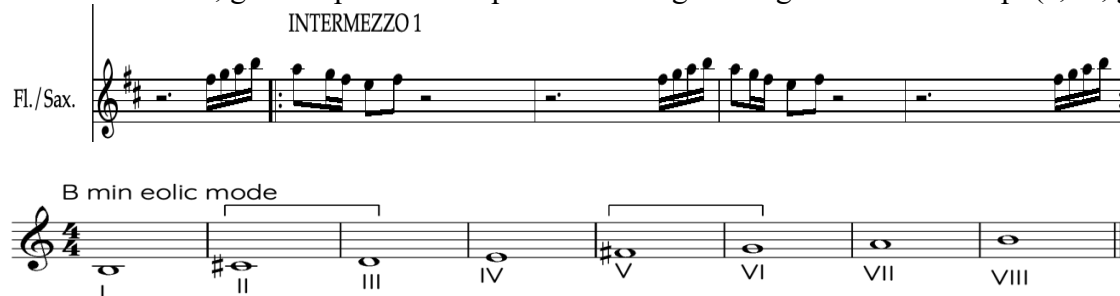


Fig.7. Intermezzo parts, construction, analysis.

3. Olteni went to scythe - Eugenia Nicolae

Song released in 2024, stylistic fusion of traditional traditional folklore from the southern part of Romania, active compilation with contemporary American structural identity, stylistic conceptual expression through support for *neo-soul*, *R&B*, *soul*⁸, or *hip-hop*.

Elements, american stylistics

- Rhythmic structure⁹ (although the other compartments have a structuring in the form of the triplets subdivisions on quarters), has a static conformation, the appearance of *hemiola* is therefore imminent.

⁷ Constantin, Răpă. 1985. *Lucrări de muzicologie, Vol 17-18, Sisteme tonale traco-dace*. Cluj Napoca: Conservatorul de Muzică G. Dima, pp. 8-12.

⁸ Mark, Lettieri. 2018. *The Neo Soul Guitar Book*. London, pp.45-67.

⁹ Peter, Magadini. 1993. *Polyrhythms The Musicians Guide*. London: Hal Leonard Publishing Corporation, pp.18-45.

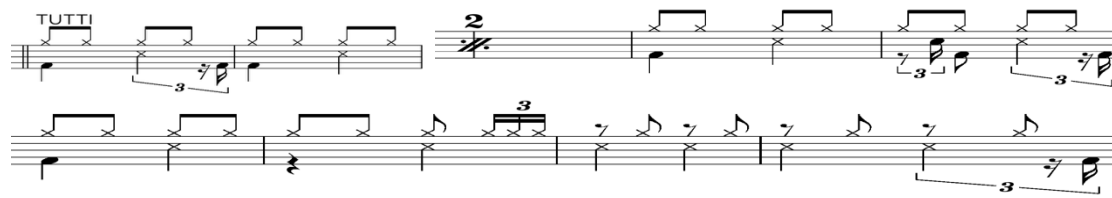


Fig.8. Drum pattern, neo-soul formula

The bass line gives an airy, syncopated rhythmic structuring, a broad implementation of the elements of the *funk-fusion* style, as well as the *dead-notes* procedure, the *slap* technique, the *glissando*. All these procedures necessary for the expansion of cumulation and harmonic-rhythmic tension, constitute a previous display of instrumentalists such as Marcus Miller¹⁰, Victor Wooten¹¹ or Stanley Clarke.

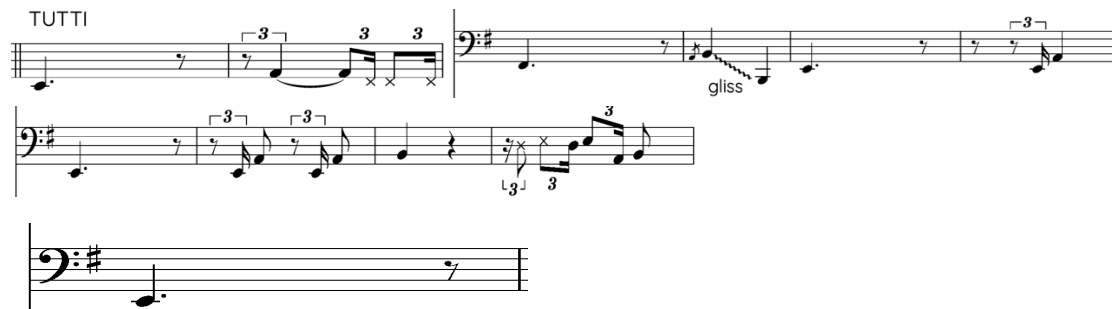


Fig.9. Base line using modern technics

- The harmonic configuration¹² of the electric piano score is based on chords with *bipolar* structures, constructions with added sounds (7/5#, 7/9b, shrunk, 6/9), or extensions of 7th and 9th¹³ (m7, m9), similar to the bass line, rhythmic a structured, airy outline, consistent support in double motion, both rhythmic and harmonic.

¹⁰ Marcus, Miller. 2008. *The best of Marcus Miller*. Milwaukee: Hal Leonard Publishing Corporation, pp. 17-33.

¹¹ Victor, Wooten. 2018. *Bass Workshop, The Language of music and how to speak it*. Hudson: Print Music, Dance & Performing Arts, pp. 19-38.

¹² Mark, Levine. 1995. *Jazz Theory Book*. Pentaluma California: Sher Music Co., pp. 89-113.

¹³ Edine, Bahha. Robert, Rawlins. 2017. *The Encyclopedia of Jazz Theory for All Musicians*. Milwaukee: Hal Leonard Publishing Corporation, pp. 67-78.



Fig.10. Electric piano harmonic- rhythmic compilation

Balkan elements

- The rhythmic-melodic configuration of the guitar is a typical Balkan one, which imitates the emulation of the instrument typical of the area of our country (as well as the Hungarian perimeter) the so-called *Tymbalon*, *Cimbalom* or *Hackbrett*, which appeared in the 19th century with Asian origins. Master instrumentalists and builders such as Josef Schunda or later his son Josef Vencel Schunda bring the instrument to today's final form, so a 35-pair string percussion instrument with soundboard, sustain and mute pedal mechanism, support system, case.



Fig.11. Guitar line, emulating the *Tymbalon* style

- The vocal¹⁴ melodic line of segment A, consists of a static minor pentatonic ordering (e, f#, g, a, b) starting from the note b, and outlining (vaguely) the intention of extension to *heptatonia*, with harmonically correlated melismatic conformations, as well as a continuous brief intervallic movement on steps, respectively adjacent sounds.



Fig.12. Melodic vocal line, structure

¹⁴ Dan, Buciu. 2014. *Mic tratat de armonie modală*. București: Grafoart, pp. 45-67.

Segment B of the piece represents a structural development, a sum of the natural chromatic elements typical of local folklore, correspondent of the classic *tetradiatonic*¹⁵ acoustic mode 1. (e, f#, g, a#, b, c#, d, e).



Fig.13. Melodic vocal line second part, structure

4. The Balkan jazz project – Sorin Zlat & Friends

Exceptional musical prototype of 2022¹⁶, special, ingenious elaboration, put into practice by valuable local instrumentalists, elite of the perimeter north of the Danube. The expression, the perfect technique of the instrumentalists, the vision of stylistic fusion shows the immeasurable artistic capacity. We have (again) 2 constituent sections which stand out particularly:

Balkan elements

- The beginning of the theme boils down to the standard figuration of the accompanying formula of the previously mentioned instrument *Tymbalon*, of the autochthonous formula of the *hora* style, supported by the alternation of the bass line, rhythmic-harmonic consolidation of the right hand.



Fig.14. Standard romanian *Tymbalon* formula

- The additional immediate appearance of the accordion and double bass (pinched-*pizzicato* technique), complete the framework of the exhibition preceding theme 1, the thematic exhibition followed by the surprise of sudden development in jazz style, cursive, intuitive transition to theme 2, clear instrumental characteristics that denote the ability to quickly elaborate a special concept, to produce artistic values in real time.

¹⁵ Constantin, Răpă. 1985. *Lucrări de muzicologie, Vol 17-18, Organizări ale materialului sonor în baza proporționalității intervalice*. Cluj Napoca: Conservatorul de Muzică G. Dima, pp. 8-12.

¹⁶ Retrieved April 01, 2025, from https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xsOAFgzCo0Q&list=RDxsOAFgzCo0Q&start_radio=1.



Fig.15. Accordion, base line, main theme of the piece

Jazz elements

- The complementary appearance in the segment of the 2nd theme of instruments such as the piano, saxophone, rhythmic section (drums), further through the collective support of the double bass, accordion or *Tymbalon*, outlines the painting with a jazz¹⁷ sound, interpretive manner of accuracy in unison, having a maximum weight, with special dynamism.



Fig.16. Jazz lines, bebop classical structures

Harmonic outlines the *Quint-Fall*¹⁸ effect, or *Water-Fall*, (gradual downward movement in the quint interval, d-g, c-f, b-e, a) from the equation missing only the final d-g relationship, V-I relationship, which would end the cycle, bringing us back to the fundamental. In an ascending ordering of the steps used, this would represent the logical, officially substantiated sequence of the *doric* mode.

¹⁷ Patrick, Befumo. 2002. *Exotic Scales, New Horizons for Jazz Improvisations*. Sydney, New Zealand: SuperiorBooks.com, Inc., pp.133.

¹⁸ Chris, Stover. 2015. *Jazz Harmony, A Progress Report*. New Jersey: The Journal of Jazz Studies, Institute of Jazz Studies, The University of New Jersey, Vol.10, No.2, pp. 157-197.



Fig.17. Harmonical movement, doric mode scale

The concept of negative harmony¹⁹ B fundamental, F# m in upward motion, E major in downward motion, minor in context B minor chord of the 4th step a, can also be treated here as *modal interchange*.

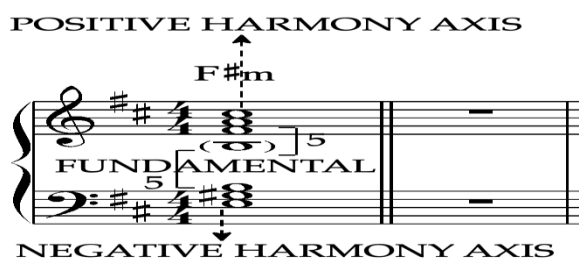


Fig.18. Negative harmony, positive vs. negative axis



Fig.20. Extended turnaround with applied tritonous substitution, reharmonising procedure

The final cadence for theme 2 is an extensive *turnaround* procedure, often found and used in jazz harmonic structuring (I-VIIm-IIIm-V), with a stable descending chromatic line of motion (B-Bb-A-D).

The second stringing chord (VI-Em) will be replaced by the *tritone substitution* procedure (IIIb-Bb), so the new extended *turnaround* formula looks like this: I6-bIII 13/5# - IIIm7-V7/5b.

Previously in the classic segment, the cadential relationships (of course in the early phase) implemented in the cycle of fifths can also be ascertained, constellations without added (altered) sounds, the related tensions and solutions being brief.

¹⁹ Ernst, Levy. 1985. *A Theory of Harmony*. Albany: State University of New York Press, pp. 25-37.



Fig.21. Descendent movement in classical music

5. Conclusion

- Comparing the beginnings of musical creation where established performers and creators could generally stand out for each style, today we reach the stage where there are a multitude of variations and not indisputable representatives of a style, current, or a new direction of creativity. Composers, instrumentalists, vocal soloists, all confer a particularly high level relating to the technical, harmonic, inventive-interpretive, expressive, etc. aspect, but...**None** of them can be listed as a promoter of a specific new style, of a new era in the history of musical creativity. It would certainly be a mistake to list a certain performer/creator as superior to the others, deciding for the tie-breaker being in this case the degree of popularity due to record sales, live or multimedia appearances. This aspect has **in my opinion absolutely nothing in common with the value, the musical, artistic substance, of the act issued (on stage)!**

- Current finding of the artistic sector, of Balkan creations that are still largely based on the notions, generally on the legacy previously left by our forefathers, elements such as the 5+1 of tonal systems (oligochordic, pentatonic, modal, tonal-functional, serial-dodecaphonic and the *metatonal*, this representing the one that brings to fruition the entire tonal heritage, which includes the previous ones), in a new compilatory form, a fusion of already existing, well-known elements and styles. The result is a particularly interesting one, a natural evolution, a creative stimulus necessary for the contemporary world map, diametrically opposed to the disharmony effect where experiments in serial-dodecaphonic or atonal mode represent the exact opposite of the tonal-functional foundation, respectively of harmony.

- The creative flow of the 20th century is basically „saved“ from the emergence and existence of compiling moments, where we can talk freely about harmony, where we involuntarily think of consonantal chords, major or minor, their asymmetric constructions (consisting of large and small 3th parties), at the opposite pole the symmetrical constructions of chords (augmented or diminished) already belonging to the dissonant structure.

- The 20th century therefore reproduces the situation in which the attention of composers, of artistic creation in general, turns mainly to the experimental area, a continuous search for creative modalities, sometimes reaching in the end (however) the concept of disharmony, or contrast (as found in the analyses presented) keeping the conformation of tonal-functional classical elements, harmonic laws, of the constructions of the melodic lines, a systematic merging, interactive correlation of them.

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