

**Cycles: Exploring the intertextual relationships between Bheki
Mseleku, Bokani Dyer and Thandi Ntuli**

by

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DKCCLA001

A minor dissertation submitted in *partial fulfilment* of the requirements for the award of the
degree of Master of Music.

**Faculty of Humanities
University of Cape Town
2022**

Date of submission: April 2022

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Acknowledgements

Thank you Bokani Dyer and Thandi Ntuli for your interviews and for allowing me to analyse your beautiful work. Thank you to the people before me who have done such important work on Bheki Mseleku, such as Nduduzo Makhathini, Andrew Lilley and Eugene Skeef – I am grateful for all of your help and information.

I am indebted to my supervisor Amanda Tiffin for the countless hours she has put into this project. Thank you for being a role model to me and for your thoughtful and detailed critique on my work. But most importantly, thank you for your mentorship.

I am grateful to my family and friends for their support and understanding. And last but certainly not least: thank you to my husband for being my absolute rock on this journey. I could not have done this without you.

ABSTRACT

Bheki Mseleku was a South African-born jazz pianist, composer and improviser. During his life-time, Mseleku had a prominent career in London and since his death his compositions have been widely performed in South Africa. In the late 1970s he went into exile and moved to London, where he received greater recognition as a composer and performer than in his homeland. From 1991 to 2003 Mseleku recorded six original albums, displaying a lyrical and technical jazz pianism. As a composer, Mseleku was prolific, incorporating a cyclical style with extensive use of harmonic sequences, as is evident in his work *Aja* (1997). He also employs both Zulu and European musical aesthetics, such as in *Celebration* (1991), as well as an introspective spiritualism such as in *Looking Within* (1993) and *Meditations* (1992).

In recent years, there has been renewed interest in Mseleku's music, both from jazz musicians as well as jazz scholars. This research discusses and considers the relationships between Mseleku's compositions and those of younger South African jazz pianists Bokani Dyer (b. 1986) and Thandi Ntuli (b. 1987). Through the use of intertextual theoretical frameworks and jazz analysis, this thesis explores the notion of influence and the dialogical relationships of these artists' compositions. These intertextual structures are paired with a close reading of selected works of Mseleku, Dyer and Ntuli, to critically discuss the posthumous influence that Mseleku has had on two members from a younger generation of South African jazz musicians.

This research aims to consider Mseleku's role and influence within South African jazz music. This dissertation deconstructs the intertextual relationship between the music of Bheki Mseleku and Bokani Dyer and Thandi Ntuli. In doing so, this research questions how Mseleku's musical praxis informs that of Dyer's and Ntuli's, as well as how intertextual relationships can be explored through jazz musical analytical methodologies.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Declaration.....	III
Acknowledgements.....	IV
Abstract.....	V
List Of Figures	VIII
Introduction: Beauty of Sunrise – Introduction and Rationale	1
I. Introduction.....	1
II. Rationale.....	3
III. Research Questions.....	3
IV. Selection Criteria.....	3
Chapter 1: Literature Review, Through the Years: Mseleku, Dyer and Ntuli – A Life in Music.....	5
1.1. Biographical Overview.....	5
1.2. Family.....	6
1.3. Education.....	7
1.4. Health.....	8
1.5. Time.....	9
1.6. Spirituality.....	13
1.7. Influence.....	14
1.8. South African Jazz Pianism.....	17
Chapter 2: Theoretical Framework - Closer To The Source.....	20
2.1. Intertextuality.....	20
2.1.1. What is a ‘text’?.....	21
2.1.2. Intertextuality attached to cultural practice	22
2.1.3. Involvement of the audience and listener.....	22
2.1.4. Taxonomies.....	23
2.1.5. Influence vs. Intertextuality.....	23
2.1.6. Intertextuality in Music	24

2.1.7. Intertextuality and Intermusicality in Jazz.....	25
2.2. Jazz Harmony and Analysis.....	28
Chapter 3: Methodology – Star Seeding.....	32
3.1. Interviews.....	32
3.2. Analysis.....	33
3.3. Dedication.....	34
3.4. Cycles.....	35
3.5. Modality.....	35
3.6. Instrumentation and Texture.....	36
Chapter 4: Analysis – Journey From Within.....	38
4.1. Dedication.....	38
4.1.1. Dedication in Mseleku’s music.....	38
4.1.2. Dedication in Dyer’s music.....	45
4.1.3. Intertextuality through Dedication: Mseleku’s influence in Dyer’s music	48
4.1.4. Dedication in Ntuli’s music.....	49
4.2. Cycles.....	49
4.2.1. Melodic Cycles and Cyclic Patterns in Mseleku’s music.....	49
4.2.2. Melodic Cycles and Cyclic Patterns in Dyer’s music.....	59
4.2.3. Intertextuality through Melodic Cycles: Mseleku’s influence in Dyer’s music.....	61
4.2.4. Melodic Cycles and Cyclic Patterns in Ntuli’s music.....	61
4.2.5. Intertextuality through Melodic Cycles: Mseleku’s influence in Ntuli’s music.....	63
4.2.6. Harmonic Cycles in Mseleku’s Music.....	64
4.2.7. Harmonic Cycles in Dyer’s Music.....	71
4.2.8. Intertextuality through Harmonic Cycles: Mseleku’s influence in Dyer’s Music.....	78
4.2.9. Harmonic Cycles in Ntuli’s Music.....	78
4.2.10. Intertextuality through Harmonic Cycles: Mseleku’s influence in Ntuli’s Music.....	83
4.3. Modality	83
4.3.1. Modality in Mseleku’s Music.....	84
4.3.2. Modality in Dyer’s Music.....	93
4.3.3. Intertextuality through Modality: Mseleku’s influence in Dyer’s Music.....	97
4.3.4. Modality in Ntuli’s Music.....	98
4.3.5. Intertextuality through Modality: Mseleku’s influence in Ntuli’s Music.....	106
4.4. Texture and Instrumentation.....	106
4.4.1. Texture and Instrumentation in Mseleku’s Music.....	106

4.4.2. Texture and Instrumentation in Dyer’s Music.....	109
4.4.3. Intertextuality through Texture and Instrumentation: Mseleku’s influence in Dyer’s Music.....	111
4.4.4. Texture and Instrumentation in Ntuli’s Music.....	111
4.4.5. Intertextuality through Texture and Instrumentation: Mseleku’s influence in Ntuli’s Music.....	113
Chapter 5: Conclusion - Home At Last	114
Bibliography.....	117
Appendices.....	125
Appendix 1: Discography.....	125
Appendix 2: Interview Questions.....	127

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1: Example of analysis with use of Roman numerals, chord symbols and the bracket:arrow system.....	29
Figure 2: Constant structure harmony and root movement in ‘Well You Needn’t’	40
Figure 3: A section of ‘Monk’s Move’ indicating the sharp eleven characteristic note and the root motion down whole tones.....	41
Figure 4: Mseleku’s solo on ‘Monk’s Move’ at 3:02 utilising a whole tone scale in his right:hand.....	41
Figure 5: First four bars of Mseleku’s left:hand on ‘Monk the Priest’	41
Figure 6: A transcription of Monk’s use of stride piano techniques in his left hand on the first four bars of the jazz standard ‘Everything Happens to Me’	42
Figure 7: A section of the head of ‘The Messenger’ with analysis of ii:V’s (bracketed), extended dominant chords (labelled) and off:beat rhythmic hits (circled in blue).....	42
Figure 8: B, C and D sections of the head of ‘Hallucinations’ with analysis of ii:V’s (bracketed), extended dominant chords (labelled) and off:beat rhythmic hits (circled in blue).....	43
Figure 9: The bridge of ‘Moontrane’ showing functional and ambiguous harmony through analysis.....	44
Figure 10: Bar 1 to 13 of ‘Woody’s Tune’.....	44
Figure 11: D Aeolian, or D natural minor.....	45
Figure 12: The chord progression in the introduction of ‘The Age of Inner Knowing’ with chord analysis.....	47
Figure 13: The chord progression in the introduction of ‘Meditation Suite’ with chord analysis.....	47
Figure 14: Mseleku’s fill at 9:09 on ‘The Age of Inner Knowing’	47
Figure 15: Dyer’s fill at 1:02 on ‘Meditation Suite’.....	48
Figure 16: Lead sheet of ‘Cycle’ indicating the three different melodic cycles.....	50
Figure 17: First melodic cycle of ‘Cycle’ showing how the motif is repeated.....	51
Figure 18: Second melodic cycle of ‘Cycle’ showing how the motif is repeated and varied.....	51
Figure 19: Second melodic cycle of ‘Cycle’ showing a different analysis of how the	

motif is repeated.....	52
Figure 20: Third melodic cycle of ‘Cycle’ and how the motif is repeated.....	52
Figure 21: The first melodic cycle of ‘Aja’ with two variations on the main motif.....	53
Figure 22: The second melodic cycle of ‘Aja’ with two variations on the main motif.....	53
Figure 23: The third melodic cycle of ‘Aja’ with one variation on the main motif.....	54
Figure 24: Lead sheet of Angola with the four melodic themes indicated.....	56
Figure 25: Second melodic theme of ‘Angola’ with two melodic variations.....	56
Figure 26: Third melodic theme variations in ‘Angola’.....	57
Figure 27: More third melodic theme variations in ‘Angola’.....	58
Figure 28: Fourth melodic theme in ‘Angola’.....	58
Figure 29: Ostinato pattern in ‘Ekhaya’.....	59
Figure 30: The piano and bass ostinato pattern in ‘Neo Native’.....	59
Figure 31: Ostinato bassline in ‘Dollar Adagio’.....	60
Figure 32: Melodic cycle in ‘Exiled’.....	61
Figure 33: Motif and variations in ‘Exiled’.....	62
Figure 34: Rhythmic and melodic variation on main motif (variation 1).....	62
Figure 35: Melodic cycle in ‘Uz’ubuye’.....	63
Figure 36: Variation on main motif in ‘Uz’ubuye’.....	63
Figure 37: 12-bar harmonic cycle in ‘Aja’ comprising of three separate 4-bar harmonic cycles using the same chord progression but in three different key centres.....	64
Figure 38: Analysis of harmonic cycle in ‘Aja’.....	65
Figure 39: Analysis of harmonic cycle using the cycle of fifths found in ‘Angola’ (linking sequence 1).....	66
Figure 40: Analysis of harmonic cycle using a diminished axis found in ‘Angola’ (linking sequence 2).....	67
Figure 41: Lead sheet of ‘Angola’ with both linking sequences indicated.....	68
Figure 42: Bar 28 to 37 of ‘Angola’ analysing linking sequence 1.....	69
Figure 43: Start of the coda of ‘Angola’ analysing linking sequence 2.....	69
Figure 44: End of the coda of ‘Angola’ analysing the second ‘linking sequence 1’.....	70
Figure 45: Polyrhythmic ostinato played throughout the A section on the piano in ‘Closer to the Source’.....	70
Figure 46: A section of ‘Closer to the Source’ with analysis showing the harmonic cycle and variation.....	71

Figure 47: Lead sheet of ‘The Artist’ indicating the two harmonic cycles	73
Figure 48: Lead sheet of ‘Waiting, Falling’ indicating the harmonic cycles and variations.....	75
Figure 49: Lead sheet of ‘Keynote’ indicating chromatic root movement and constant structure chords.....	77
Figure 50: Analysis of the harmonic cycle (and with variation) showing the basic piano comping pattern and bass line of ‘Uz’ubuye’ with chords.....	79
Figure 51: Lead sheet of ‘The Offering’ indicating root movement analysis and the two harmonic cycles.....	81
Figure 52: Analysis of the first harmonic cycle in ‘The Offering’	83
Figure 53: Diatonic seventh chords of G Aeolian.....	83
Figure 54: Lead sheet of ‘Supreme Love’ with analysis of the A section.....	84
Figure 55: Notes of D Dorian with characteristic notes of the mode: natural fourth, sixth and ninth.....	85
Figure 56: Notes of F Lydian dominant with characteristic notes of the mode: natural third, sharp fourth and flat seventh.....	85
Figure 57: Seventh chords built on the notes of D Dorian.....	85
Figure 58: Seventh chords built on the notes of F Lydian dominant.....	85
Figure 59: Lead sheet of ‘Vukani’	87
Figure 60: C Phrygian.....	88
Figure 61: C Phrygian chord voicings in ‘Vukani’	88
Figure 62: G pedal bassline at letter B in ‘Vukani’	88
Figure 63: Seventh chords built on notes (and using notes) of C Phrygian.....	89
Figure 64: Head of ‘The Age of Inner Knowing’ indicating the melody notes used from the hybrid scale.....	90
Figure 65: C Aeolian.....	91
Figure 66: C Major.....	91
Figure 67: Hybrid scale Mseleku uses in the melody of ‘The Age of Inner Knowing’.....	91
Figure 68: Bars 1 to 8 of ‘The Age of Inner Knowing’ indicating the chords from C Aeolian, and modal interchange from the Phrygian and major modes.....	91
Figure 69: Diatonic seventh chords from C Aeolian.....	92
Figure 70: Diatonic seventh chords from C Phrygian.....	92
Figure 71: Diatonic seventh chords from C major.....	92
Figure 72: Analysis of functional harmony in the solo section of ‘The Age of	

'Inner Knowing'	92
Figure 73: 'Meditation Suite' lead sheet.....	93
Figure 74: G Phrygian.....	94
Figure 75: Diatonic seventh chords of G Phrygian.....	94
Figure 76: Bars 5 to 8 of 'Meditation Suite' indicating the modal interchange used.....	94
Figure 77: Solo section chord progression of 'Meditation Suite'	95
Figure 78: Lead sheet of 'The Artist' indicating modal interchange.....	97
Figure 79: Lead sheet of 'Umthandazo' indicating chord analysis and modal Interchange.....	99
Figure 80: C Dorian.....	99
Figure 81: Diatonic seventh chords of C Dorian.....	99
Figure 82: C Lydian dominant.....	100
Figure 83: Hybrid scale Ntuli uses at letter C in 'Umthandazo'	100
Figure 84: Diatonic seventh chords of F Major.....	101
Figure 85: Lead sheet of 'Sangare' indicating chord analysis and modal interchange.....	103
Figure 86: E-flat Dorian.....	103
Figure 87: Diatonic seventh chords of E-flat Dorian.....	103
Figure 88: Diatonic seventh chords of E-flat Lydian.....	104
Figure 89: Diatonic seventh chords from E-flat Major.....	104
Figure 90: Diatonic seventh chords from E-flat Phrygian.....	105
Figure 91: Diatonic seventh chords from E-flat Locrian.....	105

Introduction

Beauty of Sunrise - Introduction and Rationale

I. Introduction

My first encounter with Bhekumuzi (Bheki) MehlokaZulu Hyacinth Mseleku was on the day that he passed away. I was in high school at the time and had little knowledge of South African jazz musicians beyond the more well-known greats, such as Hugh Masekela, Miriam Makeba and Abdullah Ibrahim. With hindsight, I wish that I had been more aware of Mseleku and his music during his lifetime, so that I could have engaged with his music as being attached to a living person. I have come to realise that I was not alone in my ignorance, as Mseleku had a more prominent career abroad than in his homeland South Africa (Ngidi, 1995: 33).

In 2011, I enrolled in the jazz programme at the South African College of Music. It was only in the final year of my undergraduate degree that I encountered Mseleku's music, when I played an arrangement of his tune 'Thula Mtwana' for a friend's performance class. It is a beautiful composition and, for me, his use of vocalise and Zulu musical influences, such as the tonal quality of the scating, the call and response, and the rhythmic complexity (Washington, 2012: 108) set his sound-world apart from the predominantly bebop-centric syllabus that I had encountered throughout my studies. Subsequently I encountered Mseleku as a topic of discussion at a journalism course I attended in 2015, as part of the Cape Town International Jazz Festival. The South African jazz journalist Gwen Ansell led the course, and she often mentioned Mseleku as someone who was not properly celebrated locally or written about in South African scholarship. This fuelled my interest, as I wanted to learn more about this musician and his music. This dissertation is, in many ways, a culmination of that desire – a mechanism through which to learn and explore.

While Mseleku was not known widely in South Africa outside the circles of jazz aficionados (Ngidi, 1995: 33), I came to discover that there exists a handful of loyal followers, individuals who are dedicated to the preservation of his music and legacy. I spoke to Professor Andrew Lilley, who has studied Mseleku's music extensively and also transcribed many of Mseleku's compositions and improvised solos. I connected with many people on Facebook who knew Mseleku and played with him. These included pianist Nduduzo

Makhathini, Eugene Skeef (one of Mseleku's best friends, with whom he went into exile in London) (Sinker, 1987: 30), Gareth Lockrane (a flute player who played with Mseleku in the last few years of his life) and Eddie Parker (who recorded flute on Mseleku's album *Celebration* in 1992). I also found a group on Facebook consisting of Mseleku fans called 'Bheki Mseleku is Still Alive'¹. Through this small but active global community, I was able to connect with other musicians who knew Mseleku and to acquire numerous transcriptions or chart arrangements of his music. Such interactions buoyed this exploratory research, allowing for community engagement beyond the minimal academic encounters that my undergraduate years had provided me.

As much as this research is a response to my own curiosity about Mseleku's music, it is also aligned with a recent surge of musical and critical work being done on Mseleku's life, music and spirituality (see Lilley, 2020²; Makhathini 2019³; Makhathini 2018⁴). The more I have got to know about Mseleku's music, the more I have understood his profound influence on many younger local jazz pianists who were making a name for themselves in South Africa and abroad. This then led me to consider and study the music of Bokani Dyer (b. 1986) and Thandi Ntuli (b. 1987). Both of these young jazz pianists have stated in interviews that Mseleku influenced them musically and spiritually, and I wanted to explore that influence further. Many other South African jazz pianists have been influenced by Bheki Mseleku and have duly acknowledged this influence, namely Afrika Mkhize ("Africa Mkhize on paying tribute to late Bheki Mseleku", 2015), Nduduzo Makhathini, Andre Petersen and Mark Fransman (Makhathini, 2018: 4). I participated in this newly burgeoning resurgence of interest in Mseleku's music. I was curious about this influence and the quasi-spiritual connection that so many musicians seem to have now with this previously little-known musical figure, which Makhathini (2018) describes as "inextricably part of Mseleku's construction of his musical practice and the narratives surrounding his life and music" (2018: 52).

¹ <https://www.facebook.com/groups/bhekimseleku>

² *The Artistry of Bheki Mseleku*

³ "Bheki Mseleku: Towards a Biography"

⁴ "Encountering Bheki Mseleku: A Biographical-Analytical Consideration of his Life and Music"

II. Rationale

This research aims to consider Mseleku's role and influence within South African jazz music. Considering the recent surge in scholarly and performance interest, located within South Africa, in Mseleku's life, music and spirituality, Mseleku has gone from being largely unrecognised in South Africa at the time of his death in 2008 (Lilley, 2020: xii) to being a musician with a loyal following and with name recognition across multiple age groups of living musicians. Such a research project interrogates the presence of Mseleku in the music of two South African jazz pianists.

III. Research Questions

This dissertation deconstructs the intertextual relationship between the music of Bheki Mseleku and two younger South African jazz pianists, namely Bokani Dyer and Thandi Ntuli. In doing so, this research questions how Mseleku's musical praxis informs that of Dyer's and Ntuli's, as well as how intertextual relationships can be explored through jazz musical analytical methodologies.

IV. Selection Criteria

Through intertextual readings and musical analysis⁵, this thesis seeks to explore the notion of Mseleku's influence on South African jazz pianism specifically, and on jazz music more broadly. Dyer and Ntuli were selected due to their respective, extensive corpus of creative outputs, particularly in the form of albums where they each held the position of bandleader and primary creative voice. Additionally, while both Dyer and Ntuli have expressed the influence of Mseleku on their music, through popular media press and musical descriptors such as song titles, the intertextual relationship between these artists has not yet been the subject of academic inquiry. While it can be argued that there are other South African musicians who meet this criteria, the scope of this study requires delimitation to only two artists. Because of Mseleku's increased popularity among jazz musicians, further explorations into these intertextual relationships is a site for productive and interesting scholarly investigation.

⁵ This will be further expanded on in Chapter 2

As tertiary music studies engage with decolonial considerations, it is inevitable that more musicians like Mseleku will be placed at the centre of South African jazz discourses and syllabi. As a musician who is passionate about Mseleku's music, I can't help but be excited that there is a renewed interest in his music, and this thesis hopes to contribute to that development.

Chapter 1: Literature Review

Through the Years: Mseleku, Dyer and Ntuli – A Life in Music

1.1. Biographical Overview

A musician's life experiences and background can have a profound influence on the kind of music that they create. In this introductory section, I aim to compare and contrast the backgrounds of Mseleku, Dyer and Ntuli in an attempt to provide some context and a rudimentary understanding of their creative journeys. The biographical and cultural realities of the three artists play profound roles in the construction and creation of their respective compositions, and inform their compositional philosophies and musical practices. The themes selected for discussion throughout this chapter inform not only these constructions, but crucially the relations between these contexts with respect to the artists and their works.

Bheki Mseleku was born on 3 March 1955 in Durban, South Africa and died on 9 September 2008 in London, United Kingdom. He was a composer and multi-instrumentalist performer, but predominantly played piano, saxophone, voice and guitar. During his lifetime he released six albums, with a further posthumous album released in 2021. Mseleku played and collaborated with various South African and international artists, including Joe Henderson, Winston Mankunku, Hugh Masekela, Courtney Pine and Abbey Lincoln. His compositions are notable for their use of advanced harmony and chordal voicings, aspects that defined his piano playing.

Bokani Dyer is a South African pianist, composer and producer, born in 1986 in Botswana. He has, to date, released five albums spanning various jazz genres and outfits. Dyer has played with many renowned South African musicians, such as Dorothy Masuka, Jonas Gwangwa, Jimmy Dlodlu, and Marcus Wyatt, amongst various other international jazz musicians.

Thandi Ntuli is a pianist, vocalist and composer from Pretoria, South Africa, born in 1987. Ntuli has released two studio albums and one live album, and she has performed and collaborated with many local jazz musicians including Thandiswa Mazwai, Steve Dyer and Marcus Wyatt.

1.2. Family

Bheki Mseleku was one of seven children, and two of his siblings were also musicians: his sister Pinkie was a singer, and his brother Langa a composer and keyboard player (Makhathini, 2018: 174). His father, William Mseleku, was the leader and composer of the Amanzimtoti Players, a prominent component of the vaudeville productions in the 1930s (Ballantine, 2012: 204). William also recorded for the band His Master's Voice, which featured his wife Alvira on vocals, his siblings Alfred and Mavis, and other prominent local singers such as Victor Khumalo (Erlmann, 1991: 92-93). Mseleku senior graduated from the University of Cambridge with a bachelor's degree in music, thereafter becoming a teacher and an active member of the anti-apartheid political party, the African National Congress (ANC) (Ngidi, 1995: 34).

Mseleku was largely a self-taught musician: his initial introductions to the piano were through his brother, without permission from his parents. Once his family realised Bheki's inclination towards music, Alvira and William gave him unlimited access to the piano (Willgress, 1994: 29).

Like Mseleku, Dyer also came from a musical family. His father, Steve Dyer, is a South African saxophonist. In comparison to Mseleku, Dyer's love for music was nurtured by his parents, and especially his father, exposing his son to concerts and taking him along to rehearsals: "I was listening to a lot of stuff and my dad was sharing a lot of music with me... I remember going to Cape Town for the Cape Town International Jazz Festival with my dad, I think in 2003, just after *Home At Last* had been released and I was lucky enough to watch that performance of [Bheki Mseleku's]." (Dyer, 2019).

Ntuli was not from a musical family per se, but her family encouraged her to play piano and have supported her career as a musician. It was, however, her brother who introduced her to Bheki Mseleku's music.

1.3. Education

Mseleku, Dyer and Ntuli all had notably different music education backgrounds, which in turn has an effect not only the music they play and compose, but also the mechanics of how they relate these works to other musicians as bandleaders and collaborators.

As stated earlier, Mseleku's music education was autodidactic. Throughout his career, he foregrounded the narrative of the self-taught musician, stating: "In my growing up I didn't have any formal training in music, it was by accident that I played music in a way," (The South Bank Show, 1992). This aspect of Mseleku's formative musical years is confirmed by Kathryn Willgress, who wrote: "[Bheki Mseleku is] a self-taught musician who didn't sit down at a piano until the age of 17 or pick up a saxophone until even later" (Willgress, 1994: 29).

Because Mseleku was had no formal music training, he tended to teach his compositions aurally to his band, rather than scoring them. Bandmate and saxophonist Courtney Pine recalls that Mseleku is:

...reacting to the music: he plays certain chords and you can see the positive effect it has on him and he radiates this to the other musicians. So the next thing you know, you're playing the melodies without him saying: Can you play this? It's a C sharp, it's a D sharp. It's not about that: it's about the sound and the feeling... Bheki is implying certain things to you – he is not telling you to play them. And once you get that, he goes somewhere else and next thing you know you've got a fully formed piece (The South Bank Show, 1992).

Dyer started learning to play the piano from a young age, but only started listening to jazz when he was 16 years old: "I've always had a love for music, but developed a liking for jazz from the age of 16 after I had been playing for a few years. I was introduced to jazz by my father, Steve Dyer, who used to play jazz music in the car and at home often" (Brand South Africa, 2011). In contrast to Mseleku, Dyer's music education extended to tertiary and postgraduate study. He studied at the South African College of Music, University of Cape Town and graduated with a Bachelor of Music in Jazz Performance in 2008, receiving the degree with distinction. Dyer is currently pursuing a Master's degree at the University of Pretoria (Mohlomi, n.d.).

Dyer's compositions often feature long heads⁶ with melodic or thematic development before shifting into the improvisation sections of each piece⁷. Thus, while Dyer's music features extended improvisatory sections, the core musical material is composed, arranged and scored. This is especially the case in his works for larger ensembles.

Ntuli also had formal music education training. She has a background in western classical music, but later became interested in jazz, studying a Bachelor of Music in Jazz Performance at the University of Cape Town from 2007 to 2010.

The different educational backgrounds of these three artists would affect their music, especially in the ways that it is taught and communicated to the band members. Mseleku did not read or write music notation, so none of his compositions were notated by himself. Many of his compositions were only notated later in his life, by one of his band members, Gareth Lockrane. Many have since transcribed and notated his music into lead sheets⁸, but during his lifetime Mseleku communicated his compositions by singing the melodies and demonstrating the chords he wanted.

Because of Dyer's and Ntuli's formal education background, they both have most of their compositions notated, mostly as lead sheets, rather than large-scale scores or arrangements for each instrument. This type of lead sheet acts more as a reference point for band members, mainly for chords, rhythms and melodies, as Dyer and Ntuli would still explain the music to their band members and guide them through their interpretations of their music.

1.4. Health

As a child Mseleku was in an unfortunate go-karting accident where he lost the tips of two of his right-hand fingers. The extent of his injuries meant that he had to approach the piano in a different way (Bheki Mseleku, 1994). The damage caused by the accident resulted in the fingers on Mseleku's right-hand being less dexterous and flexible, forcing his hand to favour smaller intervals. This had a notable effect on his chord voicings, as well as his sense of

⁶ A 'head', in jazz parlance, refers to the first (and last) chorus of a tune, in which the song or melody is stated without improvisation or with minimal improvisation.

⁷ Some examples of this compositional style of Dyer's can be heard in "Keynote", "Reflection" and "Waiting Falling" on his album *World Music* (2015)

⁸ A lead sheet is notated music which states only the essential elements of a tune: melody and harmony.

attack for melodic sections. Mseleku noted that: “I just have to play with limitations. For instance, I can only go up to an octave. I can’t go to the tenth. I want to go to the tenth, even to the sharp eleventh... If I would be able to do that, my sound would completely change in the way that I play things, so I’m really limited in that way” (ibid).

In 2001 his health started to deteriorate, and he was diagnosed with bipolar disorder and diabetes. His illness caused him to stop performing, which had financial implications for Mseleku (Okapi, 2016). In May 2008, he became ill and was admitted to hospital in London due to diabetes complications. By the end of June he was well, and ready to perform at a concert scheduled for 11 July, and started to work on a new album with Eugene Skeef. Unfortunately, on 9 September he died of diabetes (Mojapelo, 2008: 289).

Neither Dyer nor Ntuli have publicly disclosed any major health issues that inhibit their music making, careers as musicians and music performance styles. While Mseleku’s physicality effected his style of piano playing, Dyer and Ntuli are not inhibited in this way. Both are able to play larger intervals in their right hands and are not limited to one specific attack on the piano. Thus, for them, the process of composing and constructing harmonic content for their works is one that is unencumbered by physical limitations which, as has been shown, was a contributing factor to Mseleku’s unique pianism and compositional voice.

1.5. Time

Mseleku’s life occurred in a different historical and political context to that of Dyer and Ntuli. As a black man during apartheid South Africa, Mseleku’s opportunities as a musician, performer and person were hindered by the oppressive laws of the apartheid state. These limitations were part of the reason Mseleku went into exile, as a mechanism for expanding his musical horizons and opportunities. In 1976 he left South Africa after the Soweto uprising, and in 1977 he toured New York with both the bands *Spirits Rejoice* and *Malombo*, performing at the famous Newport Jazz Festival (The Times, 2008). Whilst in New York, he met one of his musical idols, American pianist McCoy Tyner, but most notably also met John Coltrane’s wife Alice Coltrane. Mseleku made such an impression on Alice that she gave him John’s mouthpiece on which he had recorded the seminal album *A Love Supreme* (1965). Mseleku was enamoured with New York, but due to financial limitations he was forced to

return to South Africa (Sinker, 1987: 30). In 1980, together with Skeef, Mseleku went into political exile in Germany.

During his lifetime Mseleku travelled extensively between New York, Germany, London, and Zimbabwe, before returning to his home country in 1994. This experience of nomadism can be heard in “Melancholy in Cologne” on *Star Seeding* (1995), which starts with an introspective⁹ solo piano introduction, before the rhythm section joins in in a supporting role. The change in feel creates a sense of being untethered, reflective of the artist being away from home.

One could argue that Mseleku returned home with the hopes of finally settling down in his home country and making a living there rather than abroad, which is alluded to in the title of his 2003 album *Home At Last*. He wrote the music for this album at the time of returning to South Africa. Salim Washington writes: “... Bheki Mseleku on *Home At Last* (2003), signalling the end of Mseleku’s exile and bringing a glimpse of what a closure to the inxile/exile dyad could look like” (Washington, 2012: 108). This hopeful observation did not materialise into a career at home.

Because of the historical context in which Mseleku lived, he was also able to perform with South African jazz luminaries, such as Abdullah Ibrahim, Hugh Masekela, Johnny Dyani, Louis Moholo, Jonas Gwangwa, Feya Faku, Winston Mankunku and Chris McGregor, placing himself within an inter-racial circle of musicians for whom the very act of playing together was considered a mechanism for resistance against the apartheid government (Ballantine, 2012: 9).

In 2003, Mseleku released what would be his final album: *Home At Last* with Feya Faku and Winston Mankunku. This recording can be described as an album embracing the South African aesthetic, and featured music Mseleku composed upon his return to South Africa following the end of apartheid (Washington, 2012: 108). The compositions are harmonically simpler than Mseleku’s other albums, leaning more towards the harmonic palette of traditional South African jazz styles such as marabi and mbaqanga, rather than European or American jazz. In 2005, the compilation album *The Best of Bheki Mseleku* was released, and

⁹ Introspective because of the descending melodic lines, embellishments and slow, yet rubato, tempo of the introduction

the following year he returned to London. He was not getting much work in South Africa and there was also a lack of recognition there once he returned, unlike his exiled peers (Mojapelo, 2008: 289).

Dyer started to become active as a professional musician from around 2005 and moved to South Africa from Botswana when he was about four years old. His father is a white South African, and Dyer and his family lived in Botswana due to his father living there in exile. They returned to South Africa in 1990 when apartheid was being dismantled in anticipation of the first democratic elections that took place in 1994 (Black Major, 2020).

During his studies, Dyer was chosen by pianist Andre Petersen to perform with a youth band at a summer school in Norway. He was also chosen for the Standard Bank National Youth Jazz Band in Grahamstown (now Makhanda), which toured Sweden and performed at the Cape Town International Jazz Festival (Brand South Africa, 2011).

During his studies and in the years leading up to his debut album in 2010, Dyer performed and collaborated with various musicians across different genres of music. He performed in the Arts Alive concert alongside Dorothy Masuka, Thandiswa Mazwai and Siya Makuzeni. He had also previously performed with Shannon Mowday, Jimmy Dlodlu, Jonas Gwangwa and Judith Sepuma, in their respective backing bands. Dyer joined the Moreira Project, which toured Southern Africa in 2008 (Brand South Africa, 2011). In 2009, Dyer was the runner-up in the South African Music Rights Organisation (SAMRO) Overseas Scholarship competition and used his winnings to study with renowned American pianist Jason Moran in New York for three weeks (Black Major, 2020).

After the success of his album *World Music* (2015), Dyer toured Switzerland and Germany with his quintet and trio, and also toured the UK with harmonica player Adam Glasser. Back home, Dyer also curated the Jazzafrika Legacy Session at the popular Johannesburg jazz club The Orbit, which prioritised performing works from South African jazz legends (Black Major, 2020).

Ntuli become active as a professional musician from around 2008 and has always lived in South Africa. She has, however, explored the notion of ‘exile’ as a born-free South African in her second album *Exiled* (2018). This album speaks to her vast influences as an artist,

especially of sounds from around the African continent. It also unpacks the idea of exile, especially in a South African context where the term is multifaceted. Ntuli notes:

There were ideas I was playing around with, exploring, which were intermingled. Questioning how black love exists, for example, within our families. Looking at spousal relationships, how black love exists within ourselves... My perception was that there's some sense of exile still. Even though we've passed political emancipation. There are a lot of things which still feel displaced, even though we can't put our finger on it.
(Gxolo, 2018)

In early 2019, Ntuli was invited to perform in Switzerland as part of the Jazzwerkstatt Festival (Sosibo, 2020). She wanted to revisit some of her compositions from her album *Exiled* and decided to reimagine, recontextualise and arrange the album for a 14-piece live ensemble (The Thandi Ntuli Art Ensemble), which includes Shane Cooper on double bass from South Africa. The rest of the ensemble were mostly musicians from Europe, aside from a percussionist from Kenya. Ntuli had never written for strings before, but grew up with the sound of the Soweto String Quartet and was also inspired by Mazwai's use of strings on her album *Zabalaza* (2006) (Ansell, 2020). This festival performance resulted in a live album, released in 2020.

For Dyer and Ntuli, their musical activity has occurred in post-apartheid South Africa, where jazz no longer functions as a tool for opposition to an oppressive state. They have lived in a period of history where the South African president quotes Hugh Masekela (SABC News, 2018), rather than banning him and forcing him into exile. This is not to say that the music of post-apartheid South Africa does not, or cannot, have a political message or be critical of authority. But I would argue that the historical context of Mseleku's life was different from that of Dyer and Ntuli, and that this has contributed to differing approaches to their music.

The concept of 'home' is different for each of these three musicians and it has changed the ways in which they have composed their music around this concept: for Ntuli, 'home' is a post-apartheid South Africa where black jazz musicians are celebrated for creating sounds of freedom; for Dyer, 'home' is similar to Ntuli, but it could also be seen as Botswana, where he spent the first few years of his life; and for Mseleku, 'home' was a place where he was not celebrated.

1.6. Spirituality

Mseleku was a spiritual man, and this spirituality is also present in his music. His Zulu background as well as his Buddhist beliefs formed the core of his self and music. Just as he started to garner some traction for his solo career in London, he decided to take a vow of silence from 1988 to 1990 and practised Hinduism at a temple in London and a Buddhist monastery (Willgress, 1994: 29). When asked why he did this, Mseleku explains: “I feel if I evolve spiritually, the music will have more depth. Maybe even from one note, like Pharaoh [Sanders] does” (Fordham, 2008). It can be said that Mseleku used his music as a vehicle through which to express his beliefs.

Makhathini takes a particular interest in Mseleku’s spirituality and notes that “[r]eferences to spirituality and mysticism in Mseleku’s musical aesthetic... is evident in album titles like *Meditations* (1992) and *Timelessness* (1994), as well as track titles like “The age of the divine mother”. “The age of inner knowing” and “Looking within”, to name a few...” and that spirituality is “...inextricably part of Mseleku’s construction of his musical practice and the narratives surrounding his life and music.”. Mseleku notes himself that “I also see myself a [sic] medium but using sounds, using music and I try to be more conscious of this working towards purifying the tube which this energy runs through” (The South Bank Show, 1994). It is through this process that Mseleku has received many of his own compositions from his own dreams. Mseleku also notes that his musical development transpired through “knowledge... from my past life” (Sinker, 1987).

Ansell (1999) notes that “Mseleku’s preference for cyclic forms [could be linked to] his belief [in] reincarnation, which is itself a cyclic progression” (Makhathini, 2018: 62).

Mseleku believed in a universal consciousness, which can be seen in his liner notes for his album *Star Seeding*:

Special thanks to The Supreme Spirit, The great Beloved Father, Mother, God and all the Masters of spiritual enlightenment; Mataji Shyama, Muktananda Baba, Paramahansa Yogananda and the great avatars; Sri Lord Krishna, Beloved Jesus Christ, Beloved Gautama Buddha, Beloved Prophet Mohamed, Meera-Ma, Sai Baba, Nitya Nanda, and to archangel Michael The Divine Protector
(*Star Seeding*, 1995).

As Franya J. Berkman (2007: 42) notes: "...jazz musicians have been exposed to the sounds and musical processes they have discovered in the cultures from which these traditions have emerged. One can hear this influence in musical borrowings, such as the use of traditional instrumentation...". This is definitely the case for Mseleku and Ntuli, particularly in both artist's use of flute in many of their compositions.

Ntuli's music can be described as spiritual, not just from the titles of her compositions, such as "Umthandazo", which translates as 'prayer', but also from her meditative, repetitive themes. This will be discussed at a later point in the thesis.

While I argue that a sense of spirituality could be read in the music of Dyer and Ntuli, this was not a central theme that emerged either during my interviews or in any of the secondary literature. Thus, we can understand that, while for Mseleku spirituality formed a cornerstone of his public persona, this is not the case for Dyer and Ntuli.

1.7. Influence

All three artists, even though they came from different backgrounds, were influenced by similar genres of music. The combination of particularly bebop, modal music and the South African aesthetic is a feature of Mseleku's music, and can also be seen in the compositions and improvisations of Dyer and Ntuli.

Mseleku was a prolific composer and, during his life, released five full original studio albums, all in the space of twelve years. A sixth album of a solo piano performance of his that was recorded live was also released. He wrote in various styles of jazz, including (but not limited to) jazz subgenres that could be described as cool jazz, post-bop, hard bop, and bebop. Mseleku's musical influences came from his local upbringing, but also from listening to the western jazz scene: "[Bheki Mseleku's] influences come from great South African musicians like Kippie Moeketsi, Chris McGregor and Dudu Pukwana; from Sun Ra and Thelonious Monk; from Pharaoh Sanders and John Coltrane, but mostly from his own spiritual commitment" (Willgress, 1994: 29).

One can hear many influences in Mseleku's music, but most notably western classical, South African music, and European and American jazz aesthetics. His final album, *Home At Last*, is arguably his most commercially orientated album. In this album, Mseleku eschewed complex

harmonic figures and explored the South African jazz aesthetic, which typically employs less dense harmonic structures. This album reflects a post-apartheid optimism and the ‘Rainbow Nation’ of South Africa in the mid-1990s, with the album’s title expressing Mseleku’s relief at being able to return home after years in exile (Washington, 2012: 108).

As a whole, the album was more groove-based and employed simpler chord progressions with less harmonic movement, such as I-IV-V, from the South African styles of mbaqanga, kwela and marabi. In an interview in 1987, his influences are described as such: “Bheki will happily acknowledge the presence in his music of his father’s mbaqanga, of Bach and Debussy... and of the inspiration of fellow South Africans... Kippie Moketsi... and Winston Mankunku Ngozi” (Sinker, 1987: 30).

Mseleku practiced western classical music, such as the piano music of Frédéric Chopin (Dyer, 2019), and this can be heard coming through in the long forms of his compositions, as well as in his use of through-composed works. The use of Romantic era musical techniques, such as themes and motifs, also point towards a musical sensibility that was influenced by Western Classical music.

Dyer’s third album, *World Music*, was released in 2015. It is thematically centred around appreciating the many different influences that he has been exposed to, creating a beautifully individual and cohesive album. One could say that it explores African and European jazz aesthetics, with more traditional jazz compositions like “Transit” and Southern African and Afro-Cuban rhythms in compositions like “Vuvuzela”. “World Music was a statement to say that I accept all the different music I’ve come across that has influenced me, and that I want to find a way to freely express myself on the album” (Hawkins, 2018).

Ntuli released her debut album *The Offering* (2014) in 2014. It was a strong first release with a clear vision of what she wanted to contribute to South African jazz, and even to the African continent, getting recognition from alternative music African American news agents, AfroPunk. There were strong influences from Africa and America: ““Umthandazo” (“The Prayer” in Zulu)... demonstrates Thandi Ntuli’s sense of cultural and musical weaving. She cites two main influences for the song: the subdued yet dancing tone and genre-blurring song structures of American guitarist Pat Metheny and the meditative aspects of African ritual music” (Sinnenberg, 2016).

“However, she draws influence from all over Africa, which is why she likes [Moses] Molelekwa’s music so much – he incorporates other African musical ideas in his work.” Thandi Ntuli also states: “I think there is a lot of influence on my album (*The Offering*) from outside of South Africa” (Gedye, 2016).

Gwen Ansell describes the debut album as follows:

As for the music, it announces a very distinctive vision. If there is a point of reference, it has to be the late Bheki Mseleku in the way it employs spare, almost meditative themes that spiral outwards, gaining ever more lush and ornate harmonic underpinning as they progress. There’s a lyrical joy in the development of the arrangements (as on *Love Remembers*) that Mseleku would have also recognized and appreciated. Ntuli’s music, like his – and with the root reference point for both being African traditional music – swirls around richly textured repeating motifs.
(Ansell, 2014)

Ntuli’s music also features use of cyclical techniques, evident in the form used on the song “H.T”. Her compositions’ forms and heads are often long and use a lot of thematic development. Much like Dyer, such an approach requires forethought at the level of composition and arrangement, rather than through extended improvisatory development. Ntuli attributes this to her practising and listening to western classical music, such as Claude Debussy, whose music influenced her composition “*Love Remembers*” (Ntuli, 2019). While her compositions are not conceptualised through improvisations, they do feature improvisation from the performers.

Both Dyer and Ntuli recognise these influences that are mentioned above in Mseleku’s music too. Dyer mentions: “... there is so much in his playing, from South African influences to studying the American jazz tradition. On *Celebration* (1992) he dedicates songs to American pianist Bud Powell and American saxophonist John Coltrane. He was checking out a lot of stuff and you can hear that... [also his connection with] classical music – I know he was playing quite a bit of Chopin” (Dyer, 2019).

Ntuli also recognises: “I think [Mseleku] drew a lot from [the modal] lineage and what I loved about it is because I think a lot of pianists before him pulled a lot from the Marabi and Mbaqanga tradition, and expanded it quite a bit, but I think it made his sound more universal because the modal sound is very universally African... there’s definitely some [Thelonious] Monk that I hear, and I also pick up a lot of Bud Powell” (Ntuli, 2019).

Two recent works on Mseleku that have been invaluable to my research project, have been Andrew Lilley's book *The Artistry of Bheki Mseleku* (2020) and Nduduzo Makhathini's minor dissertation "Encountering Bheki Mseleku: A Biographical-Analytical Consideration of his Life and Music" (2018). Makhathini's work contains a detailed biography of Mseleku, an analysis of Mseleku's style with some transcription, and a chapter on Mseleku's spirituality. Whereas Lilley's book is an in-depth analysis of Mseleku's improvisational and compositional style including transcriptions of Mseleku's compositions and improvised solos. These works have been useful for my study, especially Lilley's transcriptions and analysis, and Makhathini's biographical and spirituality discussions on Mseleku.

1.8. South African Jazz Pianism

In addition to the scholarship written on Bheki Mseleku, there also exists a discourse around South African jazz pianism that informs my own research. Phuti Sepuru, in her doctoral thesis "Exploring elements of musical style in South African jazz pianists" from 2019, discusses the style of ten prominent South African jazz pianists through her own analysis and interviews with each pianist. Her study, which includes research on the pianism of both Dyer and Mseleku, begins to consider the unique phenomenon of South African jazz pianism as a distinct style. Particularly important for my study is Sepuru's discussion of the Zulu pianists in her research, where this heritage filtered through into their playing and compositions, similar to that of Mseleku. Sepuru discusses how these pianists were influenced by American jazz traditions and how their South African-ness will inherently come through in their playing. For example, South African pianist Kyle Shepherd noted in his interview with Sepuru that "...Bheki [Mseleku] had one foot in a deep sense of his Zulu roots and in his South African roots ... , one foot say, in the American jazz idiom". In considering the intertextual conceptualization of Mseleku's style as being one that is comprised of a variety of influences, this study provides insights into mechanisms to address his musical, and particularly pianistic, contribution to South African jazz.

Jeffrey Brukman's "Shifts and Turns in Paul Hanmer's *Nachtroep*: A Close Musical Analysis", published in 2016, discusses South African pianist and composer Paul Hanmer's triple concerto and how he embraces African pianism in a western classical setting. Mseleku, Dyer and Ntuli are known to have studied western classical piano, with the latter two musicians having a background in western classical piano technique; so it is of particular

interest to me to see how Hanmer, as a pianist, combined jazz and western classical elements for my research: "...contemporary South African composers are embracing African pianism, African art music, or creating works that fuse jazz elements with conventions drawn from the art music traditions of seventeenth- to twentieth-century Europe" (Brukman, 2016: 42).

Salim Washington in his 2012 article "Exiles/Inxiles: Differing Axes of South African Jazz During Late Apartheid" discusses key differences between South African jazz musicians who went into exile during Apartheid, and those who stayed (which Washington terms 'inxiles'). Washington places particular focus on contrasting exiled pianist Chris McGregor and 'inxiled' saxophonist Winston "Mankunku" Ngozi. This article is of interest for my study, particularly because of his focus on McGregor, and Washington's discussions on how apartheid affected McGregor's musical influences, particularly as an exile:

...McGregor was a prodigy with considerable skills in European music and learned South African music from the perspectives of rural Africans, and also urbanised Africans through his apprenticeship (though as a band leader) in township jazz. McGregor himself was keenly aware of the import of the conflicting and complementary music practices he was absorbing (Washington, 2012: 93).

This could be seen as similar to Mseleku's experience. Both artists experienced a form of exile during the apartheid years, and both were familiar with Western Classical musical and pianistic traditions. However, the difference in each of these artist's experience would have been greatly impacted by their race, and how they were each classified under apartheid.

Christine Lucia, in her "Abdullah Ibrahim and 'African Pianism' in South Africa" article, published in 2004, makes reference to pianist and composer Ibrahim's album *African Piano* (1969) and in doing so discusses how Ibrahim's piano style could be described as African. This article is of interest for my research in the way that Lucia describes a pianist's style, and compares it to others from South Africa, how the historical context (as an exile) can affect musicians' styles, and how Ibrahim used "...American jazz styles of the 1940s and 50s into the formation of [Ibrahim's] pianism." (Lucia, 2004: 55).

The discourse engaging with South African jazz pianism can therefore be seen to consider two key concepts of this style's construction: namely the role of exile within the formation of the musical identities of South African jazz musicians, and the integration of local musical styles with broader Euro-American ones, such as bebop and Western Classical piano

traditions. This speaks to Christopher Ballantine's statement that South African jazz is "...a fusion – vital, creative, ever-changing – of so-called 'traditional' styles with imported ones, wrought by people of colour out of the long, bitter experience of colonisation and exploitation" (Ballantine, 2012: 4). Such considerations have informed my own approaches and considerations to the intertextual relationships between the music of Bheki Mseleku and that of Bokani Dyer and Thandi Ntuli.

Chapter 2: Theoretical Framework

Closer to the Source

2.1. Intertextuality

“There’s an axiom that says there is no such thing as “original” music ... Musicians borrow different parts and make them their own, but there’s nothing really new, nothing that hasn’t been done before”
(Rollins, 2020)

In order to understand and explore how Mseleku’s musical influence is present in the works of Dyer and Ntuli, this research has adopted three intersecting source materials through which to consider and analyse this music, namely, interviews, music analysis and secondary literature. By utilising the theoretical frameworks of intertextuality and jazz analysis, this thesis will explore the presence of Mseleku’s influence and stylistic traits within the music of Dyer and Ntuli.

The concept of intertextuality was originally theorised by Julia Kristeva in her 1966 essay “Word, Dialogue and Novel” (Orr, 2011: 641). Kristeva argued that “no text is genuinely original; they have to be connected and interacted with other texts, which is the absorption and transformation of other texts. As a result, they are all intertextual” (Cao, 2013: 165).

Orr argues that no ‘text’ exists in a vacuum and “a text’s ‘intertextual’ potential and status are derived from its relations with other texts past, present, and future” (Orr, 2011: 641). Kristeva similarly argues that intertextuality is “a mosaic of quotations; any text is the absorption and transformation of another” (Moi, 1986: 37). Intertextuality therefore rejects the notion of influence being unidirectional, as ‘texts’ are constantly in flux. Maria Jesús Martínez Alfaro (1996: 268) argues that “the concept of intertextuality requires, therefore, that we understand texts not as self-contained systems but as differential and historical, as traces and tracings of otherness, since they are shaped by the repetition and transformation of other textual structures”. Alfaro also writes that intertextuality is “the progressive dissolution of the text as a coherent and self-contained unit of meaning, which has led, in turn, to a shift of emphasis from the individual text to the way in which texts relate to one another” (ibid).

2.1.1. What is a 'text'?

The term 'text' does not necessarily refer only to printed or written sources. According to Mary Orr (2011: 642), "intertextuality [was] always presumed to encompass non-print 'texts'". Graham Allen agrees with Orr: "As we move through the various critical positions which intertextuality has inspired we will frequently observe that it is a term by no means exclusively related to literary works, or even simply to written communication" (Allen, 2000: 5). Andrew J. Kluth goes further to say that a 'text' can be anything that communicates meaning: "The idea of text in this critical landscape is not confined to those texts that are printed and read in the conventional sense ... 'Texts' can be thought of as anything that signifies: colours, signs, textures, sounds (even those other than speech utterances)" (Kluth, 2019: 53).

Allen also argues that the term 'text' in this context can refer to music: "Intertextuality, as a term, has not been restricted to discussions of the literary arts. It is found in discussions of cinema, painting, music, architecture, photography and in virtually all cultural and artistic productions" (Allen, 2000: 174). However, this can prove difficult, and according to Ingrid Monson "poststructuralist cultural theory in the humanities has had difficulty addressing non-linguistic discourses and practices (such as music, dance, and visual images) that in some respects operate analogously to language and text but in others do not". Therefore, when considering intertextuality in music, one cannot use the term without discussion: one needs to interact with the texts through musical examples and analysis (Alfaro, 1996: 268).

Many meanings can be read from one 'text': "each word (text) is an intersection of other words (texts) where at least one other word (text) can be read" (Kristeva, 1980: 66). Various 'texts' can also take into account culture and politics: "The idea of music as a text to be situated and interrogated for its meaning and complicity in structures of power has precedent in much of the work of the New Musicology of the 1980s and 1990s" (Kluth, 2019: 54).

More specifically to jazz music (which will be expanded on later): learning and playing the jazz and bebop language could be considered intertextuality in itself. Frederick Garber (1998:73) argues that "the [jazz] solo is a text because it is full of traces and indexes – what it means when we say that the history of jazz is present in every improvised solo, that it appears in large part through the choices one makes at any one time. These are jazz's déjà-lu

[‘already read’], and they are among the reasons why we can speak of jazz’s inter texts and therefore of the solo as text”.

2.1.2. Intertextuality attached to cultural practice

Because the practise of intertextuality is focused on the relationship between different texts, one has to take into account cultural considerations, as Orr explains: “‘Intertextuality’ names a text’s relations to other texts in the larger “mosaic” of cultural practices and their expression” (Orr, 2011: 641). Intertextuality acknowledges that texts collide and are not static, i.e. texts automatically interact with other texts.

Kristeva’s work on intertextuality in the late 1960s coincided with the transition from structuralism (modernism) to poststructuralism (postmodernism). Allen (2000: 3) describes this move as “one in which assertions of objectivity, scientific rigour, methodological stability and other highly rationalistic-sounding terms are replaced by an emphasis on uncertainty, indeterminacy, in communicability, subjectivity, desire, pleasure and play”. Therefore, one cannot discern meaning from something entirely based outside of its cultural reality – full perspective of a piece of music has to be gained by considering its non-musical aspects. I agree with Allen that the application of intertextuality for this study is productive, as “[i]ntertextuality seems such a useful term because it foregrounds notions of relationality, interconnectedness and interdependence in modern cultural life” (Allen, 2000: 5).

2.1.3. Involvement of the audience and listener

Music is not made solely for its creator: it is also made for consumption by listeners, through recordings and live performances. Therefore, the audience is part of the intertextual relationship. One has to consider that recorded music only came about in the twentieth century and that what we know about music depends on how cultures change and interact with one another. Orr (2011: 644) explains:

‘Intertextuality’, like ‘intermediality’ after it, is only the latest name for ‘adaptation’ and ‘translation’ of ideas and expression, to make sense of contemporary culture. Like the multiform species of nature, culture in all its forms, including the virtual, has constantly adapted to changing climates and conditions for its ongoing existence. As in the past, the protean possibilities for cultural production will continue to depend upon the acts of human engagement and recording. Whether in transient oral and bodily performances (speech,

poetry, folk tales, drama, dance), or in material forms that outlive the instance of expression (writing, painting, sculpture, tapestry, architecture, the internet), particular movements will form, develop, and change shape thanks to temporal and spatial possibilities, including contact with neighbouring or rival cultural practices and their new media.

Because intertextuality is not absolute and requires a degree of critical thought, intertextual messages require commonalities between author and audience. Within the context of music, Eero Tarasti (2002: 18) argues that for a composer to effectively communicate a message to a listener “the two subjects must share common codes, i.e., possess a similar musical competence”. These commonalities can be held at multiple levels: be they language, cultural experience, historic perspective etc.

2.1.4. Taxonomies

In his 1982 book *Palimpsests: Literature in the Second Degree*, his ‘last word’ upon intertextuality, Gérard Genette argues for broad use of the transtextuality, and provides five subcategories for understanding these terms, namely intertextuality, paratextuality, metatextuality, archtextuality and hypertextuality. While these terms provide robust distinctions of literary use, within the concept of this study my focus remains on intertextuality, which Genette defines as: “the relation of co-presence between two or more texts, that is, the effective presence of one text in another which takes place by means of plagiarism, quotation or allusion” (Alfaro, 1996: 280). Serge Lacasse also presents more intertextual terms present in recorded popular music, outlining concepts such as quotation, allusion, parody and remix, amongst others. For the purpose of this study, quotation and allusion are productive intellectual frameworks to consider the intertextual relationship(s) between texts created by jazz musicians.

2.1.5. Influence vs. Intertextuality

Influence and intertextuality are not precise analytical tools: one cannot prove them conclusively, but rather they are open to interpretation. As John B. Clayton & Eric Rothstein (1991: 3) state: “[t]he shape of intertextuality... depends on the shape of influence. One may see intertextuality either as the enlargement of a familiar idea or as an entirely new concept to replace the outmoded notion of influence”. Clayton & Rothstein also argues that, in contrast

to influence, intertextuality can address unconscious influence from other authors and also postulate the conception of authors' texts.

Within the context of jazz music, the relationship between artists and their influences is less fraught, and often made obvious by the artist through song titles, direct quotations etc. John P. Murphy argues that a jazz musician's influences form a core aspect of the music's cultural dialogue, and asks: "what relationships exist between an individual jazz musician and his or her precursors in the jazz tradition?" (Murphy, 1990: 7). Murphy uses Harold Bloom's *The Anxiety of Influence* (1973) as an intellectual springboard for understanding the centrality of influence in jazz discourse. Murphy writes that while poets – as discussed by Bloom – "must struggle to overcome the influence of their precursors in order to be able to create on their own" (ibid.), many jazz musicians should and do take joy in learning from other musicians. For jazz musicians, influences are not denied, but rather celebrated; there exists a necessity of acknowledging one's influences. This argument aligns with Scott DeVeaux's critical discussion of jazz historiography. He writes that "... individual musicians are defined by a network of influences – the contemporaries and predecessors [sic] from whom they are presumed to derive a style" (DeVeaux, 1991: 541). In this way jazz becomes an interesting and productive site for scholarly investigation of influence and intertextuality, as it does not possess the same anxieties of its own influences as other art forms.

2.1.6. Intertextuality in Music

There are a variety of intertextualities within music, and it could be described as scholarly fertile ground. Exploring the intertextual relationship between musical texts provides new meanings and understanding of all the texts. J. Peter Burkholder (2018: v) states that "as long as people have been making music, people have been remaking music: taking a musical idea someone already made and reworking it in some way to make something new". However, this 'remaking' might not be a conscious decision, nor may it be obvious even to the trained ear. Keith Negas (2012: 370) further argues that "[e]ven if the inspiration is implicit or unacknowledged, songs are heard alongside and in relation to other songs (by songwriter and listener alike). This is integral to how they narrate the world to us".

2.1.7. Intertextuality and Intermusicality in Jazz

An important point of discussion when considering intertextuality is whether the author uses it consciously or subconsciously and how the author positions themselves to create their own voice; i.e. what the author's role is and how they are in control of this intertextuality, if at all. Kluth backs this up by saying: “an intertextual consideration of music focuses on how an artist situates themselves in this body of texts, works within it to stretch its bounds by artfully intertextualizing or juxtaposing heretofore familiar elements that might position the artist and their output in the constellation of cultural artifacts that make up social reality” (Kluth, 2019: 54). Jazz saxophonist Sonny Rollins also agrees with this notion: “In jazz, we don't consciously borrow in the same way that other artists might. The beauty of improvisation is that it lets you do anything. I don't know what I'm going to play – that's where intuition, and art, comes in” (Rollins, 2020).

In order to discuss intertextuality, the term ‘sonic signifier’ will be useful. The term ‘signifier’ was first discussed by linguist Saussure (1974) and essentially refers to anything that carries meaning. This concept can be expanded to music, as “... a musical sign or group of signs – from the smallest musical event to entire traditions – may provide ‘meaning’, or signify something ...” (Fairhall, 2008: 4). Kluth writes that in Joe Farrell's composition ‘Moon Germs’, the use of the soprano saxophone in this context creates a sonic signifier to John Coltrane and his famous use of soprano saxophone on ‘My Favourite Things’. “The question of Farrell's use of the soprano saxophone on ‘Moon Germs’ is interesting with regard to its historical significance and perceived novelty. Did he play soprano solely because of John Coltrane?” (Kluth, 2019: 59). Farrell's use of soprano saxophone (as he was predominantly a tenor saxophone player, like Coltrane) could be seen as a sonic signifier: to the trained ear, something that immediately makes us think of Coltrane and ‘My Favourite Things’. Whether Farrell *intended* to make this connection is irrelevant – this signifier exists beyond the author's intention.

Monson offers the alternative term ‘intermusicality’, and argues that, in jazz, the metaphor of conversation is used frequently. Jazz soloists are asked if they have anything to say through their improvised solos, while rhythm section players are expected to be in dialogue with one another and the soloist to create interesting textures over which to improvise. Monson considers the use of intertextuality within music as differing to that of written discourses, and

offers “the idea of intermusicality, which is something like intertextuality in sound, as a way to begin thinking about the particular ways in which music and, more generally, sound itself can refer to the past and offer social commentary” (Monson, 1996: 97) and “I prefer to call them intermusical relationships to draw attention to a communication process that occurs primarily through musical sound itself, rather than words” (Monson, 1996: 127). Allsen also uses the term in his scholarship: “J. Michael Allsen, for example, compares favourably the term’s potentiality for musicology and prefers it to more established musicological references to ‘imitation’ and ‘borrowing’” (Allen, 2000: 175).

When a performer utilises characteristic techniques of the past, they are displaying an understanding of music history and, in turn, invoking a sound that is stylistic of a previous era, accessing a form of archive of sound. Monson uses the example of a trumpet player using a plunger mute, who could “invoke the legacy of Cootie Williams” (1996: 97). This example of intertextuality suggests that what one recognises or hears in a performance is dependent on one’s own context and knowledge; i.e., a jazz expert will hear more in a jazz performance than a novice, or even in comparison to a typical audience member with no jazz training or knowledge. Monson argues that “[t]here is much room for overlap and difference between any two individuals within and between categories” and “Jazz performances are not musical texts in and of themselves (in that they are negotiated between multiple improvising participants), but when such performances are recorded and disseminated through LPs, CDs, and cassettes, they become texts” (1996: 126).

This aligns with the notion, made earlier, of the role of the audience as intertextual interlocutors. Having knowledge of a particular music genre can create a sense of community: “a chain of associations is set off that engages the listener and unites her or him with a community of individuals who share a similar musical point of view... Theoretically, almost any musical detail or composite thereof could convey a reference, as long as a community of interpreters can recognize the continuity. The key here is the community of interpreters (which includes both performers and audience), for a sonic detail becomes socially meaningful and actionable only in a context that is at least partially shared” (Monson, 1996: 127).

William Echard agrees with Monson and the notion of both intertextuality and intermusicality:

The personality of any given style or genre comes in part from its prior associations with people, histories, places, institutions, and ideas. This is true not just of styles and genres but of any recognizable feature in a piece of music. Even novel features have strong connotations. As a result, each element in a piece of music carries its own cluster of voices – a kind of autonomous persona – and the piece of music as a whole becomes a dialogue between these voices. Thus, any musical utterance is in fact intermusical. (Echard, 2018: 177).

Monson (1996:97) also adds that intermusicality can look into how music conveys cultural meaning and that the notion is not absolute:

The idea of intermusicality [can be used] as a way to begin thinking about the particular ways in which music and, more generally, sound itself can refer to the past and offer social commentary. In so doing, I am interested in how music functions in a relational or discursive rather than an absolute manner... The topic of interest here is the musical quotation or allusion, which embodies the conflict between innovation and tradition in jazz performance as well as the larger question of how instrumental music conveys cultural meaning.

It can therefore be argued that the jazz tradition and learning the jazz language is an entirely intertextual practise. Emulation is key to learning the jazz language through memorising ‘licks’, learning jazz standards and transcribing great players’ improvised solos. Sonic signifiers can form part of this intertextual practise too, though, according to Monson : “When jazz musicians learn traditional repertory, quote a particular musician’s solo, play a tune with a particular groove, or imitate a particular player’s sound, they reveal themselves to be very aware of musical history. It is important to note that the sonic features that allude to prior musical performances include dimensions beyond harmony, rhythm, and melody” (ibid).

Even though Monson makes a very compelling argument for the use of the term intermusicality instead of intertextuality when it comes to discussions about music, I will be using the term intertextuality rather, as it can be used as a blanket term in all scholarly practises, rather than limiting it to just music. I will be using the notion of intertextuality as one of my theoretical frameworks, as a means to compare the nature of influence between these three artists. While harmonic analysis is very important when contrasting music performers, it can only take one so far in the discussion.

While it is tempting to become caught up in terminological debates, at its core intertextuality provides a productive discursive tool for the discussion of jazz. It allows one to consider how the ubiquitous use of influence in jazz forms and shapes its praxis. It further provides a more

critical, interpretive and subjective approach to discussing the relationships between two or more musical texts. In the current historical moment, Bheki Mseleku's music is finding interest from both jazz musicians and scholars alike, and thus intertextuality seems to be the ideal lens through which to view Mseleku's legacy and its impact on twenty-first century South African jazz.

2.2. Jazz Harmony and Analysis

In order to further analyse and compare the output of the three artists in my study, I use a common practice jazz harmony system of analysis. This common practice, formed over many years of jazz practice (predominantly an aural tradition), can be found detailed in two method books: Mark Levine's *The Jazz Theory Book*, and Joe Mulholland and Tom Hojnacki's *The Berklee Book of Jazz Harmony*.

Levine's *The Jazz Theory Book* is described as the industry standard for its ubiquitous use in jazz scholarship. Andrew Lilley states that "[t]exts such as Mark Levine's *The Jazz Theory Book* (1995) are generally accepted as indicative of practices for theoretical thinking in jazz" (2020: xxii).

Mulholland and Hojnacki's *The Berklee Book of Jazz Harmony* is similar to the unpublished, yet popular and widely used, jazz theory and harmony workbooks used by the Berklee College of Music, written by Barrie Nettles and Alex Ulanowsky. According to Keith Salley (2015: 5), "Mulholland and Hojnacki may be credited with clarifying, extending, and making more widely available the same approach". Chris Stover (2014) notes that:

The Berklee Book of Jazz Harmony... represents the most deeply-rooted... from the perspective of pedagogical practice. Mulholland and Hojnacki develop a conceptual frame that has animated the music theory curriculum at the Berklee College of Music for several decades, including a hierarchically grounded analytical orientation, a robust notational system calculated to reinforce that analytical reading, and a fundamental assumption of chord-scale isography that underlies its entire theoretical orientation.

Both method books focus on melodic and harmonic musical characteristics such as chords, scales, progressions, modes, form, compositional devices, reharmonisation and analysis. Both deal with the two main harmonic categories in jazz: functional harmony and modal harmony. Both books consider jazz harmony within an intertextual manner, looking at compositions in

terms of the historical context of jazz, and how these compositions are interactive in their development.

One way in which the two method books differ is that the Bracket-Arrow analysis system is not used by Levine (Elliott, 2021). In the Berklee approach to harmonic analysis, solid brackets are used to indicate a II – V progression, whereas a dotted bracket is used to indicate a II – subV or a subII – V progression. A solid arrow indicates root motion down the interval of a perfect fifth, and a dotted arrow indicates root motion down a semitone (such as subV – I). These are useful tools to visually indicate harmonic analysis on a lead sheet and how each chord functions in context, shown in the figure below.

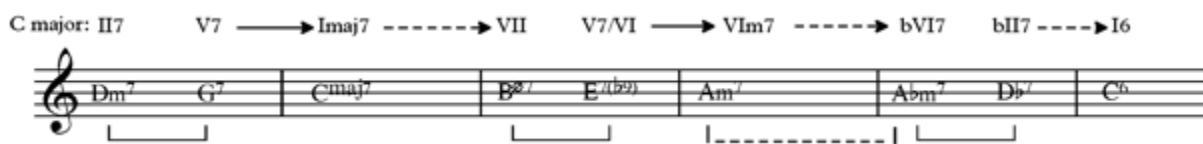


Fig. 1 – Example of analysis with use of Roman numerals, chord symbols and the bracket-arrow system.

As shown above, and as is common practice in both method books, roman numerals are used to indicate the root of the chord. Various different accepted symbols are used to show the chord quality and alterations to the chord, or upper tensions of the chords.

I have chosen to use the bracket-arrow system in my analysis.

Transcription is another common practice in jazz, and is necessary to understand and give context to works studied, including the heads (with melody, rhythm and chords) and solo improvisation. I have gathered lead sheets of Bheki Mseleku’s compositions, and where they could not be found (or were not sufficient), I transcribed them myself. Both Dyer and Ntuli were kind enough to provide me with lead sheets of their compositions, and again where this was not sufficient or lead sheets were not made available (or were not written down by the composer), I transcribed them myself.

One consideration when utilising the two method books and common practice in jazz harmony and analysis is that they do not look at aspects such as rhythmical and textural considerations of music. This is understandable, considering both of these texts focus primarily on jazz harmony, and thus rhythmic and textural analysis is beyond their scope and

remit. Therefore, my own analysis will extend upon what Mulholland, Hojnacki and Levine have outlined. Other aspects I consider are style, tempo, instrumentation and arrangement.

When analysing the works for textural and instrumentation considerations, I use Mike Tomaro and John Wilson's book *Instrumental Jazz Arranging – A Comprehensive and Practical Guide* in conjunction with the common practice jazz harmonic analysis outlined above. This book extends on Levine, Mulholland and Hojnacki's approaches, by using harmonic analysis as well as questions of instrumentation and texture. Aspects of texture and instrumentation are dealt with in Tomaro and Wilson's book, through explaining melodic and harmonic devices used in jazz arrangement, and writing for varying ensemble sizes with various instruments.

Rhythm is a big factor in music and especially in jazz. Swing quavers are very common in jazz, but notating this rhythm and feel accurately can be difficult. The swing quaver feel is indicated by including the musical term 'swing' in the chart for the performer. This avoids writing out endless tied triplets, improving ease of reading. However, this rhythmic notation (and this is not just for swing quavers) can limit the true rhythmic groove that the notation is trying to convey: the performer could be playing behind the beat, in front of the beat, or with a stronger sense of swing, for example. Lilley agrees with this and states: "Traditional notation is not ideal for capturing the essence of the rhythmic complexity of jazz" (Lilley, 2020: xviii).

Jazz, being an aural practice, needs to be accompanied by listening when reading a chart or lead sheet, as there is only so much that music notation can convey. Factors such as phrasing and articulation also come into play, which can have an effect on rhythm and feel, especially in swing. These are both particularly linked to certain styles of jazz and to the personal preference of the musician. David Liebman (Liebman, n.d.) speaks about these aspects in an all-encompassing article on the nuances and concept of jazz rhythm, especially in its notation.

In my analysis, I predominantly look at harmony and harmonic devices used, as opposed to melody; however, it is important to note that melody and harmony and their relationships with jazz improvisation are inextricably linked. When analysing harmony, especially in cyclical music, one cannot do this fully without looking at the melody, since the chords inform the notes in the melody. Lilley agrees with this when speaking about Mseleku:

“Understanding functional harmony, however, is central to grasping Mseleku’s conceptual approach as this aligns directly with the construction of his compositional and improvisational sensibility” (Lilley, 2020: xxii).

As previously stated, the use of jazz analysis in this dissertation forms one of three intellectual frameworks, which inform this research. Utilising close readings of this music with my fieldwork and the theories of intertextuality, allows analytic discussions that move beyond solely harmonic and towards in-depth and critical understandings of Mseleku’s musical legacy and its impact on Dyer and Ntuli.

Chapter 3: Methodology

Star Seeding

This dissertation aims at exploring the nature of influence between jazz musicians, and in this particular study, between Bheki Mseleku, Bokani Dyer and Thandi Ntuli. I do so by using three types of data for comparison: scholarly and popular literature concerning the topic, musical analysis of the relevant music and interviews with two of the composers. As explained in the previous chapter, the literature on which I focus, which forms the cornerstone of my theoretical framework, concerns intertextuality. By using close readings of the music, to identify sonic signifiers, this research provides an intertextual discussion of selected works of Mseleku, Dyer and Ntuli.

3.1. Interviews

In 2019 I conducted semi-structured interviews with Dyer and Ntuli. The interviews were one-on-one via Zoom, as both artists live in different locales than I do. Conducting the interviews on Zoom also aided the recording process. I used a semi-structured interview setup, or SSIs, to facilitate a more conversational style of interview, which allowed my interlocutors to speak freely while I provided basic structural guidance. This more interactive approach acknowledges and benefits from a tacit intimacy between myself and my interlocutors, as we share common experiences as performing musicians. It also meant that I could be flexible in terms of the order of questions, allowing for a more conversational interview style (Adams, 2015: 493).

I chose to interview Dyer and Ntuli because they are both prominent young jazz pianists in South Africa. The influence of Mseleku's music is audible in their compositions and improvisations. However, as stated earlier, Dyer and Ntuli differ from other jazz musicians who are openly influenced by Mseleku, such as Afrika Mkhize and Nduduzo Makhathini. Mkhize and Makhathini were both students of Mseleku and thus had a different, arguably more personal and direct relationship with him. Dyer and Ntuli carry Mseleku's influence through listening to his recordings and playing his compositions; a much less personal or direct interaction.

My role as interviewer was to facilitate discussion and prompt certain responses from the interviewee. The interviews began by asking the artists how they would describe themselves, then how they came to know of Mseleku's music. Further discussion would consider how he influenced them musically and spiritually and touch on specific sonic signifiers in their music that point towards Mseleku's music.

Through these interviews, I was able to consider the influence or intertextuality of other artists on these two musicians, and the degree to which this was conscious or subconscious. By asking questions aimed at evoking description of Mseleku's style of composition and improvisation, and information on who they think influenced him, I was able to ascertain the artists' opinions of Mseleku. To gain a deeper understanding of their positionality within their music, I asked Dyer and Ntuli about influential artists, and also asked questions about spirituality in their music. The latter is an important part of Mseleku's approach to composition (South Bank Show, 1992). Lastly, I asked them if any sonic signifiers of Mseleku's music are present in their own music. I used this information to investigate sonic signifiers in Dyer and Ntuli's music, but I also analysed recordings and used my own transcriptions to understand this phenomenon.

Both participants were particular in expressing that Mseleku's influence in their music was not one that eclipsed their own artistic voice. Both Dyer and Ntuli stated that their music was influenced by Mseleku generally, but when it came to specific musical examples, they were less certain of this. It is at this point where intertextual understandings become important: that an intertextual relationship can exist between two texts without the author's knowledge or intent (Clayton, 1991: 3). Neither Dyer nor Ntuli were unwilling to express the presence of Mseleku's influence on their music, and both allowed for critical interpretation of the intertextual relationship between Mseleku's music and their own. Conducting interviews to add to my analysis has provided a richer, qualitative perspective to this study.

3.2. Analysis

I have used the common jazz practice for harmonic, melodic and rhythmic analysis, as mentioned in the previous chapter. It is the simplest and most commonly used system in jazz and provides more than sufficient scope for my study.

To streamline my music analysis, I have identified four themes to investigate and discuss within each of the three artists' musical compositions or improvisations. The themes I have chosen to investigate are the following: dedication, cycles, modality, and texture and instrumentation. This analysis will consider whether these themes are present or not, and if they are how they are dealt with by each artist. These themes are stylistic characteristics and devices present in the artists' compositions or improvisations.

I would like to note that, while rhythmic devices (particularly how each of the three artists juxtapose African and American rhythmic aesthetics) are an integral aspect to each of the three artists' music, I omitted this theme from my analysis, as there is no scope for this discussion in a minor dissertation. Another theme I have omitted is melodic devices – particularly how each artist makes use of pentatonic scales, and angular and chromatic bebop language in their improvisations, and how this is mixed with modal and South African aesthetics. These themes could be aspects for further research.

In the section that follows, each of the four selected themes will be discussed, showing how such analysis functions within the standard jazz repertoire.

3.3. Dedication

Many composers use their works as acts of homage to another musician whom they respect or by whom they are influenced. This can sometimes be seen in the title or subtitle of a piece of music, or is perhaps mentioned in the liner notes of a printed CD, or subsequently in interviews conducted with the artist. By looking at these dedications, one can necessarily tell much about influence in jazz music overall. Utilising such an approach can yield productive results, especially in musical oeuvres that have not yet received broad scholarly attention. In discussing the string quartets of South African composer Christopher James, Marc Röntsch writes: “A precursory glance at the titles and dedications of James’s four string quartets reveal in each an aspect of James’s personality” (Röntsch, 2017: 238). Röntsch’s discussion of James’ music considers titles and dedications as “vehicles for expressing gratitude” (Röntsch, 2017: 66), and thus as scholarly significant mechanisms for understanding an author’s musical choices.

3.4. Cycles

Cycles are present in all genres of music, and jazz is no exception. Most jazz styles are quite structured, with a lot of predictability in aspects such as form, and harmonic resolution. As Andrew Lilley states:

Expectation and predictability are hardwired into the harmonic system in jazz and this gives a particular structural sensibility to the music. Chords behave a certain way in respect of their function and we are comfortable with typical progressions appearing over and over again. Like short musical equations, they invite predictable outcomes but also generate infinite possibilities for composition.
(Lilley, 2020: 3)

Certain progressions have become synonymous with the genre and can be heard in countless jazz standards. For example, the basic form of the turnaround progression I VI II V can be seen in jazz standards such as 'I Thought About You', 'Time After Time' and 'When I Fall in Love'.

Some chord progressions in jazz can continue almost endlessly with no set resolution. For example, dominant sevenths moving down in a cycle of fifths; e.g. D7 to G7 to C7 etc., where it will end up back at D7. This can be described as a cyclical progression. A more complex example could be the use of the diminished and augmented symmetrical axes. John Coltrane is famous for using these two almost mathematical axes.

In my analysis, I have separated the cycles theme into two subthemes: melodic cycles and harmonic cycles. I have included melodic ostinato patterns in the melodic cycles subtheme discussion. I then identified each artist's use of cycles, analysed each cycle and determined where and how the cycle has been repeated and/or varied, if at all. For ease of understanding, I also visually represented each melodic and harmonic cycle by colour coding each on the transcriptions that I have provided.

3.5. Modality

A distinct style, sound and approach in the jazz genre are found in the modal jazz sub-genre. Modal music is based on less familiar tonic modes (i.e., not Ionian), such as Dorian and Phrygian. It can often be characterised by horizontal or scalar playing (rather than vertical or

chordal playing) using modes in the melody (modality not tonality), sparse chord changes (often one chord can last for eight bars, if not more), pedal points, ostinato bass lines, and quartal harmony (often using the eleventh in the upper tensions or a suspended fourth in the chord, and building chord voicings in fourths). A pure modal composition would not include any functional harmony, and chords built within the mode of the piece will often move stepwise, as opposed to in intervals of a fifth, for example. Often modal interchange is used, which is borrowing diatonic chords from parallel modes and using them in the primary key.

Modal jazz is credited to American trumpeter Miles Davis, with his composition ‘Milestones’ in 1958 (Barrett, 2006: 186). As a composer and improviser, Davis was “more concerned with melody than chord changes” (Boothroyd, 2012) and thus a shift away from the harmonic freneticism of bebop to the harmonically more static modal jazz, was in many ways an inevitable step for Davis (ibid.).

Modal music is often more difficult to analyse. One must examine the melody for indications of a particular mode, relating melody notes to the underlying chords. One must also look for use of melody notes that are characteristic of a particular mode. These characteristic notes help define and distinguish each mode. For example, the Phrygian mode has a flattened second and the Aeolian mode has a flattened sixth. To identify modal harmony, as opposed to functional harmony, we are looking for chords that do not have a particular function or expected resolution. One must also analyse each chord to see whether modal interchange was used or not – if the chords are derived from various modes, or just from one mode etc.

3.6. Instrumentation and Texture

Instrumentation and texture are important considerations in music and can directly affect the curation of a feeling or idea, and how a piece of music is understood. These two parameters can often contribute to the expression of emotional shifts and meaning-making within the composition (Cooper, 1996). I have analysed recorded material of each artist through a textural lens. I have especially looked at recorded materials that make use of unique textures that are not often present in traditional American jazz, such as using vocals without lyrics as an instrument, the use of keyboards, Rhodes or synthesiser as opposed to piano, and the format for which the composition is recorded and written.

For this theme, I have grouped these two concepts (instrumentation and texture) together, to discuss how instrumentation effects texture and compare how each artist utilises texture similarly and differently.

Chapter 4: Analysis

Journey from Within

As mentioned previously, I have identified four musical themes present within the compositions or improvisations of each of the three artists that demonstrate an intertextual musical relationship. This analysis will consider whether these themes are present, and how they are dealt with by each artist. While further themes could be explored, this is too large a scope for this minor dissertation. These further themes could form the focus of further research in the field. In the subsections that follow, each of these four themes will be discussed and analysed within the context of the three artists that form part of this study.

4.1. Dedication

The musical heritage of jazz, often referred to as its ‘tradition’, acknowledges those who have come before as an integral part of the journey of musical apprenticeship. Schools of playing can be traced through a chronology of players like an ancestral chain – not as copies of the past, but rather as an ever-developing line carried forward and informed by multiple layers of innovators and stylists whose contributions have brought the language to where it is.
(Lilley, 2020: 23)

In this subsection the use of musical and titular dedications will be discussed in two ways. First, how Mseleku utilises sonic signifiers to create audible links to the artists to whom he dedicated his works and, second, how Dyer and Ntuli utilise similar techniques to signify Mseleku’s influence on their work.

4.1.1. Dedication in Mseleku’s music

Mseleku was influenced by many different American and European jazz artists, dedicating many of his compositions to these players, such as Bud Powell, Thelonious Monk, and John Coltrane. John Fordham succinctly expresses this in one of his concert reviews of Mseleku: “...a more equal balance of Chick Corea’s vivacity, [Thelonious] Monk’s bluntness and the spiritually intense American jazz of John Coltrane and McCoy Tyner” (Fordham, 2006).

Comparisons between Mseleku’s sound and that of the Coltrane Quartet are plainly audible, such as his modal compositional style and the spirituality present in a number of titles within Mseleku’s oeuvre. Much of his music could be described as spiritual, not only from the titles

of the tracks themselves, but also in the meditative way Mseleku approached writing: the inclusion of ostinato bass lines and cycles, and the pensive-sounding melody lines¹⁰ used in his jazz ballad writing. Mseleku also wrote many contrafacts of jazz standards, where he based his chord progressions on already existing jazz standards, with his own melody and often a new feel. The use of these contrafacts of course imply a form of intertextual connection, but I argue that this goes beyond intertextuality and can be seen as a form of dedication – a mechanism through which Mseleku was musically able to pay homage to his influences.

Certain of Mseleku's acknowledgements of influences appear within his choice of titles for his compositions. An example of this can be seen in his composition 'Supreme Love', the title of which implies a dedication to John Coltrane and particularly his seminal album *A Love Supreme*. Mseleku makes use of the sonic signifier of the soprano saxophone, a signifier similar to that of Farrell (1972) described by Kluth. This intertextual auditory connection creates associations for the listener, forms of aural links to Coltrane's notorious use of the soprano saxophone on 'My Favorite Things' from *A Love Supreme*.¹¹ The time signature of this Mseleku composition is 3/4 but has a 6/8 feel from the drums, which also alludes to Coltrane's famous recordings of 'Afro Blue' and 'My Favorite Things'. 'Supreme Love' is written in a modal style that is associated with Coltrane's later work, a genre of jazz that Coltrane helped pioneer. The analysis of 'Supreme Love' will be dealt with later in the modal theme.

Mseleku was heavily influenced by The Coltrane Quartet of McCoy Tyner, Elvin Jones and Jimmy Garrison, who were the band on the album *A Love Supreme*. Mseleku was also influenced by Tyner, the pianist on the recording. One can hear Tyner's influence in Mseleku's use of quartal harmony and pentatonics, both of which were aspects of Tyner's signature piano style. Tyner's piano playing style was at times sparse, allowing the soloist to have space to improvise freely. This was a technique Mseleku also adopted, providing musical links between his music and that of Coltrane and Tyner.

¹⁰ Such as the solo piano introduction in 'Melancholy in Cologne', described on page 10

¹¹ Coltrane's 1960 recording of 'My Favorite Things' is regarded as "the most famous soprano saxophone recording in jazz history" (Morrison, 2010) and took the instrument into new territory in jazz. So much so that one cannot hear the soprano saxophone in modern jazz without thinking of Coltrane and 'My Favorite Things'

Mseleku acknowledges American pianist’s Thelonious Monk’s influence on his playing and dedicates several compositions to Monk. For example, the composition ‘Monk’s Move’ is dedicated to Monk through the title of the piece. Mseleku’s composition makes use of “dominant sevenths centred on two whole-tone axes: the A section on G and the B section on Ab” (Lilley, 2020, 46). This type of harmonic device is also found as a characteristic in some of Monk’s compositions, demonstrating further the influence of Monk in Mseleku’s music. The reasons for Mseleku’s dedication of this composition to Monk are clear: Monk often utilised half-diminished chords and whole tone scales in his work. The latter is known as a characteristic in Monk’s improvisation and compositions.

An example of constant structure harmony in Monk’s compositions is ‘Well You Needn’t’. Here he uses constant structure dominant seventh chords moving in semitones. These are devices that typify many of Monk’s compositions.

Fig. 2 – constant structure harmony and root movement in ‘Well You Needn’t’

‘Monk’s Move’ makes use of melodic and harmonic characteristics associated with Monk: The sharpened eleventh (or flattened fifth) is used as a characteristic note in both the melody

and harmony of the A section. The chords in the A section are constant structure chords moving down a whole tone.

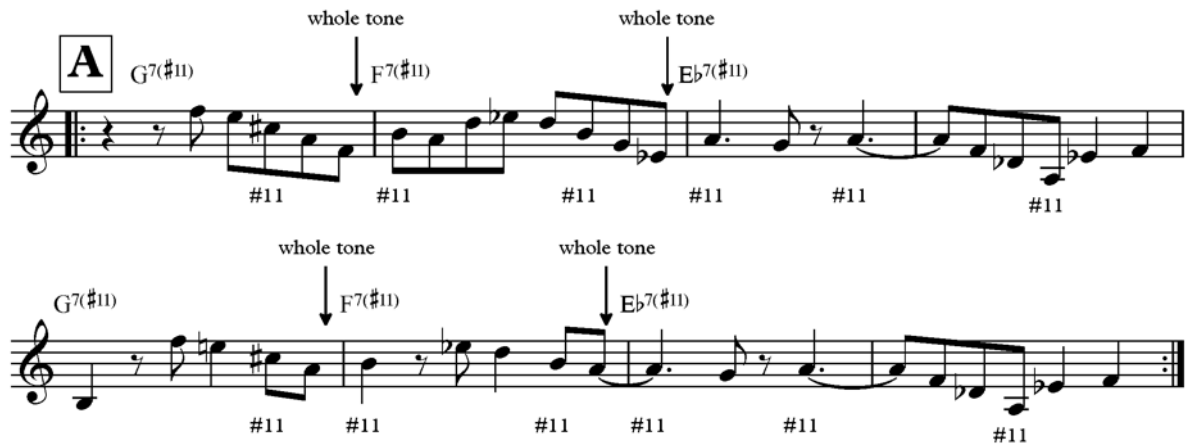


Fig. 3 – A section of ‘Monk’s Move’ indicating the sharp eleven characteristic note and the root motion down whole tones

Mseleku also extensively made use of whole tone scales when improvising on ‘Monk’s Move’.



Fig. 4 – Mseleku’s solo on ‘Monk’s Move’ at 3:02 utilising a whole tone scale in his right hand

Another dedication to Monk from Mseleku is his composition ‘Monk the Priest’. Monk’s influence can be seen here in Mseleku’s use of the stride piano tradition and his use of extended dominants on this composition. In figure 5, an extended dominant sequence starts on bar two and ends in bar four with dominant seventh chords descending in the cycle of fifths.



Fig. 5 – First four bars of Mseleku’s left hand on ‘Monk the Priest’

Monk was known for his use of stride piano techniques in his playing. This can be seen, as an example, in Monk’s recording of the jazz standard ‘Everything Happens to Me’.

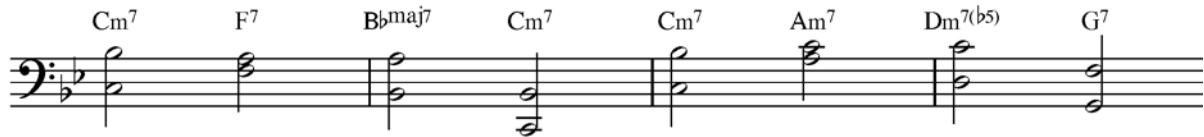


Fig. 6 – a transcription of Monk’s use of stride piano techniques in his left hand on the first four bars of the jazz standard ‘Everything Happens to Me’

One can also see Mseleku’s use of the stride technique in his left hand in figure 5. Mseleku often further developed the stride piano tradition that Monk used. This can be seen in Mseleku’s use of the fifth in the chords in bar one of figure 5. In contrast, Monk mainly uses the root, seventh and/or third of the chord, which stays truer to the traditional style of stride piano.

Bud Powell is another influence Mseleku acknowledged in his composition ‘The Messenger’, which Mseleku dedicated to Powell. Bud Powell often utilised ii-Vs to shift key centres, extended dominant chords and off-beat rhythmic hits in his compositions. All of these devices can be seen in Powell’s ‘Hallucinations’. Powell’s influence on Mseleku is indicated by Mseleku’s use of these devices in ‘The Messenger’.

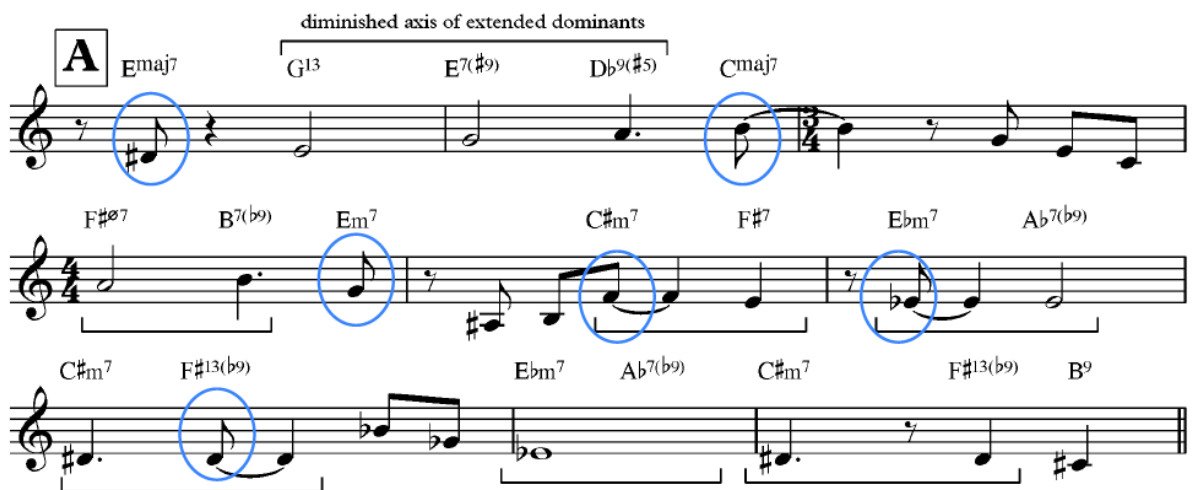


Fig. 7 – A section of the head of ‘The Messenger’ with analysis of ii-V’s (bracketed), extended dominant chords (labelled) and off-beat rhythmic hits (circled in blue)

The image displays five staves of musical notation for the head of 'Hallucinations'. The first staff (B section) shows chords: Dm⁷, G⁷, Cm⁷, F⁷, B^bm⁷, E^b⁷, Am⁷, and D⁷. The second staff (C section) shows: Gm, D⁷/A, B^b⁶, C⁷, F⁶, D⁷, Gm⁷, and C⁷ (circled in blue). The third staff (D section) shows: F⁶, B^b⁷, A⁷ (circled in blue), D⁷, G⁷, C¹³(b⁹), F⁶, and F⁷. The fourth staff shows: B^b⁷, B^o⁷, F⁷/C (circled in blue), D⁷(b⁵) (circled in blue), G⁷(sus⁴) (circled in blue), G⁷ (circled in blue), C⁷(b⁹), and F⁶. The fifth staff shows: Bm⁷(b⁵), E⁷, Am⁷(b⁵) (circled in blue), D⁷, Gm⁷(b⁵), C⁷, and F⁶ (circled in blue). Brackets under the first three staves indicate ii-V progressions. Labels 'extended dominants' are placed above the B^b⁷ and F⁷/C chords. Blue circles highlight off-beat rhythmic hits on the notes G[#] in the second staff, A⁷ in the third staff, and F⁷/C, D⁷(b⁵), G⁷(sus⁴), and G⁷ in the fourth staff.

Fig. 8 – B, C and D sections of the head of ‘Hallucinations’ with analysis of ii-V’s (bracketed), extended dominant chords (labelled) and off-beat rhythmic hits (circled in blue)

Powell uses extended dominants (mostly) moving in the cycle of fifths, as can be seen in figure 8, whereas Mseleku made use of extended dominants using the diminished axis in ‘The Messenger’.

‘Woody’s Tune’ is dedicated to trumpeter Woody Shaw, as can be seen in the title. Shaw played in the typical post-bop style and wrote tunes with a combination of functional, modal and ambiguous harmony (Blue Note, n.d.). Shaw’s composition ‘Moontrane’ is an example of how he combines functional and ambiguous harmony. In figure 9, bars 5 to 8 of the bridge, Shaw harmonises the melody with constant structure minor chords, which is an example of ambiguous harmony. From bars 5 to 7, the first chord of each bar moves down a whole tone to the next minor chord. Each bar, however, resolves down a fifth, which alludes to functional harmony. There is also a minor ii-V-I progression from bar 4 to 5, which again is making use of functional harmony.

The image shows two staves of musical notation. The top staff is in treble clef and contains a melodic line. Above the staff, the chord $E\flat maj7$ is written at the beginning, and $A\flat7$ and $D7(b9)$ are written at the end with arrows indicating their functional relationship. The bottom staff is also in treble clef and contains a bass line. Above this staff, the number '5' is written at the start. The chords Gm , Fm , $B\flat m$, $A\flat m$, $D\flat m$, Bm , and Bm are written above the notes. Arrows labeled 'whole tone' indicate the intervallic relationship between the roots of Gm to Fm , Fm to $B\flat m$, $B\flat m$ to $A\flat m$, and $A\flat m$ to $D\flat m$.

Fig. 9 – the bridge of ‘Moontrane’ showing functional and ambiguous harmony through analysis

The combination of these harmonic concepts can also be seen in Mseleku’s composition, which affirms his dedication to Shaw. Mseleku, like Shaw, also used constant structure minor chords and typical root movements to suggest functional harmony.

The image shows four staves of musical notation for 'Woody's Tune'. The first staff (bars 1-4) has chords $B\flat m^9$, Dm^9 , $B\flat m^9$, and Dm^9 written above. The second staff (bars 5-7) has chords $B\flat m^9$, Cm^9 , Dm^9 , Em^9 , and $F\sharp m^9$ written above. The third staff (bars 8-10) has chords $F^7 alt.$, $B\flat m^9$, and Dm^9 written above. The fourth staff (bars 11-13) has chords $B\flat m^9$, Dm^9 , $B\flat m^9$, and Dm^9 written above. Bar numbers 5, 8, and 11 are indicated at the start of their respective staves. A triplet of eighth notes is marked with a '3' in the second and fourth staves.

Fig. 10 – bar 1 to 13 of ‘Woody’s Tune’

In bars five to seven Mseleku uses ambiguous harmony with the chords in constant structure of minor 9ths ascending by whole tones. This is then followed by a moment of functional harmony in bar eight with the F dominant seventh, which functions as V and is expected to resolve to B-flat minor, and duly does. The melody of the next five bars, bars 9 to 13, uses notes from D Aeolian mode, or D natural minor, indicating the use of modal harmony in this section of the piece. However, harmonically, this section could be seen as using modal interchange, since the Bb minor chord is not present in the harmonic series of D Aeolian. Therefore, the Bb minor chord can be seen as borrowed from another mode.



Fig. 11 – D Aeolian, or D natural minor

Mseleku's titles can be regarded as sites for exploration of his dedications to his musical influences, as a nod to those that came before him. These acknowledgements function beyond only the titular and can be observed in various compositional techniques utilised by Mseleku, as mechanisms for aural expression of dedication. Here, Mseleku follows a tradition within jazz of openly acknowledging one's musical influences (DeVeaux, 1991), looking backwards as a means of developing one's own distinct compositional voice.

4.1.2. Dedication in Dyer's music

In this section, I will discuss how Bokani Dyer utilises dedication to allude to the intertextual link between his works and those of Mseleku. Bokani Dyer's "Song no. 2" represents a nuanced connection to Mseleku, as Dyer acknowledges that, at the time of composing, he was listening to Mseleku's music. He makes the following statement in this regard: "I think that the nature of the influence is not always apparent when I listen to my music. I don't necessarily hear a direct influence of Bheki's, but he has been a huge inspiration, musically and otherwise." (Hawkins, 2018). Here, Dyer speaks to the subjective nature of influence, how influence is interpretive rather than positivist, and how these musical connections seep into the work in different ways.

Dyer dedicates his composition 'Whisper' to Mseleku (Dyer, 2019), almost as a conceptual homage. However, this dedication does not extend to the music, as there is little musically that can be understood as Mseleku-esque. Dyer explains this as follows:

The title came from a masterclass that Charlie Haden conducted at Cape Town Jazz Festival. Someone asked him a question about recording with Mseleku, and what he said was that all great players have this whisper, like a silent abstract thing that one can hear beyond the notes. For me that was the kind of spiritual symbolism, for him it's a whisper but with great players there's just something that feels like something beyond the notes, like an illuminated presence of the music. Something that charges the notes that just make them really perfect even with the imperfections and all those nuances. So that's what it meant to me when he said that; my understanding of [Mseleku's] concept.
(Dyer, 2019)

In 2018, Dyer released his fourth studio album, *Neo Native* (2018). It includes tracks such as ‘Dollar Adagio’ which is a tribute to Abdullah Ibrahim, and ‘The African Piano Suite’, which comprises of four movements, Nguni, Xikwembu, Chikapa, and Mutapa (Bilawsky, 2018). Dyer explains his approach to this suite as follows: “I wanted to explore the piano in a different way, inspired by African idioms and musical instruments, seeing how it is possible to give those a voice through the piano... I’m interested in whether, for people listening to it, it can communicate on a level that’s inherent in ‘Africanness’ before ‘jazzness’” (Ansell, 2019).

Dyer has recently released his fifth and latest album, *Kelenosi* (2020), which he recorded and produced in 2020, during the COVID-19 global pandemic. The sixth track on the album is entitled “Hyacinth”, which is Bheki Mseleku’s middle name (Mohlomi, 2021).

Dyer’s composition, ‘Meditation Suite’, alludes to Mseleku’s composition of the same name, from his solo piano album, *Meditations*. Upon closer study, the melody of Dyer’s tune is similar to Mseleku’s ‘The Age of Inner Knowing’. Hawkins writes that “‘Meditation Suite’ was a more Bheki-influenced piece. It was inspired by one of his pieces: ‘The Age of Inner Knowing’ from his *Celebration* album” (Hawkins, 2018). When I ask Dyer about this in my interview with him, he explains: “The harmonies, the tempo, the mood of the piece [inspired me]... ‘Meditation Suite’ I can definitely say is something that is evidently inspired by Mseleku” (Dyer, 2019).

When further analysing both ‘The Age of Inner Knowing’ and ‘Meditation Suite’, more similarities were apparent. As Dyer states, there are similarities between the mood and tempo of both pieces (although Dyer’s tempo is a little faster). On first listening, one could almost say that they are the same tune, just different versions or recordings thereof. In his interview, Dyer also stated that he “checked out the solos on ‘Age of Inner Knowing’, ‘Melancholy in Cologne’ and ‘Timelessness’” (Dyer, 2019). It is at the harmonic level that the similarities become most apparent: both compositions are written in a modal style, using both functional harmony and modal interchange, and each melody is predominantly written within one mode. The modal nature of ‘Meditation Suite’ will be discussed and analysed later on in this chapter when I discuss modality.

Dyer took clear inspiration from the chords of Mseleku’s ‘The Age of Inner Knowing’ in the introduction of his composition.

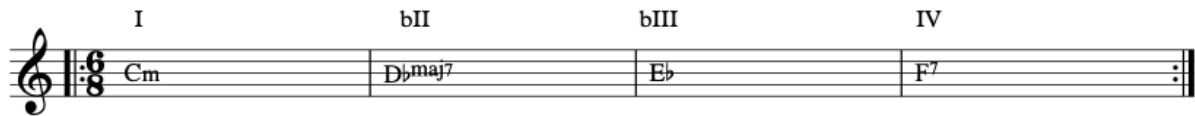


Fig. 12 – the chord progression in the introduction of ‘The Age of Inner Knowing’ with chord analysis

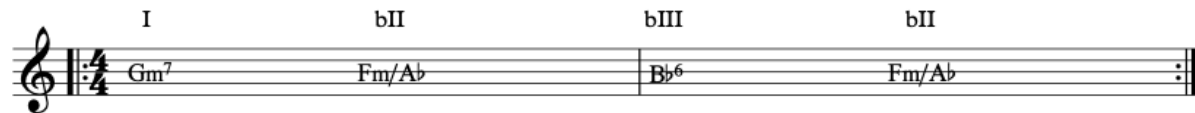


Fig. 13 – the chord progression in the introduction of ‘Meditation Suite’ with chord analysis

The introduction of ‘Meditation Suite’ is in a different key and time signature from ‘The Age of Inner Knowing’, but it has a near identical harmonic progression: the first three chords of both use the same root movement (I - bII - bIII), with only the second chord differing slightly in quality. Both Mseleku and Dyer use a bII major chord, but the polychord Fm/Ab in ‘Meditation Suite’ can be analysed as A-flat major 6, whereas Mseleku used a major seventh in his progression.

As a further nod to Mseleku, Dyer quotes a fill that can be found in many of Mseleku’s recordings and performances. It is a line that uses fast repeated notes, often using the blues or pentatonic scale. As an example, and to further show the influence that ‘The Age of Inner Knowing’ had on Dyer’s ‘Meditation Suite’, Mseleku’s famous fill occurs and can be heard at 9:09 on Mseleku’s ‘The Age of Inner Knowing’.



Fig. 14 – Mseleku’s fill at 9:09 on ‘The Age of Inner Knowing’

In figure 14, Mseleku uses repeated groupings of four notes from the C blues scale as a fill between melody lines freely, where each G-flat (the blues note) is not strictly on the beat of each quaver in relation to the rhythm section. Dyer also uses a version of this fill in ‘Meditation Suite’ at 1:02.



Fig. 15 – Dyer’s fill at 1:02 on ‘Meditation Suite’

In figure 15, Dyer uses repeated groupings of three notes from the G minor pentatonic scale as a piano melody line in a four-bar vamp between two melody sections.

There is a similarity in compositional approach between Dyer’s ‘Meditation Suite’ and Mseleku’s ‘The Age of Inner Knowing’. Both have a similar laid-back swing feel and mood, with an odd bar numbered form, but they are in different time signatures. Dyer’s tune uses a 2/4 bar in the head, while Mseleku’s piece remains in 6/8. However, Dyer’s composition has an underlying 4/4 implied in the rhythmic feel and uses triplets in the melody, which creates a further similarity to Mseleku’s 6/8 piece.

While Dyer’s melody stays in one mode, Mseleku borrows from the parallel major to give a different sound to the melody. Both of the compositions use modal interchange in their chord progressions for different colours and follow with functional harmony in their solo sections. The solo sections are different from the heads and create a more structured and even numbered form over which the players can improvise.

4.1.3. Intertextuality through Dedication: Mseleku’s influence in Dyer’s Music

What can be seen here is that Dyer makes two links to Mseleku in ‘Meditation Suite’: one at the level of language, and the other at the musical level. As previously discussed, the title of the work makes an obvious link to Mseleku’s album *Meditations*. Dyer then pairs this with sonic signifiers that create allusions to Mseleku’s use of harmony, rhythm, and texture. Here the intertextual relationship functions at multiple levels, and Dyer’s use of musico-titular signifiers speak to a dedication to Mseleku’s influences, a technique that Mseleku himself utilised in his acknowledgements of his own influences.

4.1.4. Dedication in Ntuli's music

While Thandi Ntuli did not dedicate anything directly to Mseleku, she has made use of dedications of her compositions to acknowledge influence and gratitude. 'Sangare' is dedicated to Malian singer Oumou Sangare (Gedye, 2016) and '201AA' is dedicated to her parents. These dedications can be found on her handwritten lead sheets.

4.2. Cycles

In this subsection, the use of cycles will be identified and discussed in various ways. I will first identify melodic cycles and cyclic patterns in each artists' music, and then look for intertextual connections within Dyer and Ntuli's use of melodic cycles and cyclic patterns. I will then shift analytical focus towards the use of harmonic cycles within each artists' music, and consider the intertextual relationships present in Dyer and Ntuli's use of harmonic cycles in their music.

4.2.1. Melodic Cycles and Cyclic Patterns in Mseleku's music

Mseleku's compositional and improvisational approaches are characterised through their uses of cyclical techniques (Lilley, 2020: 3). Cycles formed a central part of his compositional style and can be argued to be the stylistic approach for which he is best known. Mseleku's use of unfolding cyclical patterns in his harmonic and chordal language create a perpetual and never-ending feeling in his music. However, Mseleku also used melodic cycles and cyclic patterns in his compositions, which would often be informed by the cyclical nature of his harmonic progressions.

An apt composition to start off with is Mseleku's 'Cycle'. As the title suggests, the composition is cyclical: it uses a 24-bar form with a repeated 8-bar chord progression. The repetitive 8-bar harmonic cycle lends itself to three different melodic cycles within each 8-bar harmonic cycle, as can be seen in figure 16:

Fig. 16 – lead sheet of ‘Cycle’ indicating the three different melodic cycles

The first melodic cycle starts on an upbeat. The beginning of bar 9 starts in the same way as bar 1, almost as if to repeat the melodic cycle as soon as the harmonic cycle starts again. But as soon as that happens the next melodic cycle starts.

The first melodic cycle is made up of a four-note motif that repeats nine times. On each repeat the original motif is varied by ascending stepwise through the harmonic progression until bar 6. Then in bar 7 and 8 the motif moves down a fourth twice to get back to the original motif as an upbeat to bar 9.

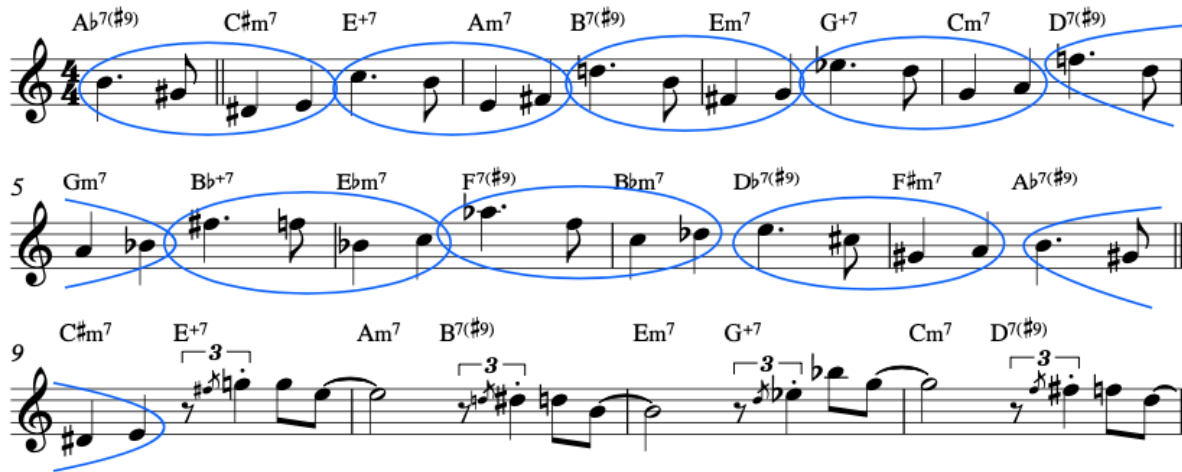


Fig. 17 – first melodic cycle of ‘Cycle’ showing how the motif is repeated

The second melodic cycle is comprised of a different four-note motif which, like the first melodic cycle’s motif, is repeated according to the harmonic progression.



Fig. 18 – second melodic cycle of ‘Cycle’ showing how the motif is repeated and varied

The repeated motif starting in bar 11 is varied slightly by going up a fifth from the second note, rather than moving down a step. This variation is used in bar 13 and bar 15 within the harmonic progression. The second melodic cycle does not move upwards stepwise like the first melodic cycle, but each motif rather alternates in direction between descending and ascending.

The first full motif in the second melodic cycle could also be analysed as starting on bar 10 and ending on bar 12, as follows:

Fig. 19 - second melodic cycle of 'Cycle' showing a different analysis of how the motif is repeated

The third melodic cycle is made up of four two-bar motifs, moving up a minor third each time with the chords (as each two-bar chord progression is essentially the same progression, but moving up a minor third, therefore using the diminished axis).

Fig. 20 – third melodic cycle of 'Cycle' and how the motif is repeated

The ending of the last motif is varied slightly with the note moving up a step to the G-flat (rather than down a step to an E-flat, which it would have done if it were following the pattern of the original motif). The last two notes of bar 24 are also different from the pattern created in the first motif. They are an upbeat into a short two-bar melody before the flute solo starts on the original recording.

Some of Mseleku's pieces are cyclical in their entirety, such as 'Aja' which uses cycles based on the symmetrical augmented axis. This is a similar device to those utilised by John Coltrane in his compositions. The symmetry of this harmonic cycle informs the melody.

The image shows three staves of music for the first melodic cycle of 'Aja'. The first staff, labeled 'A', contains the main motif with chords C^{ø7}, F⁷, B^{ø7}, E⁷, A^{maj7}, E^{b7}, and D^{maj7}. The second staff, labeled '5', shows 'melodic cycle 1 - variation 1' with chords A^{bø7}, D^{b7}, G^{ø7}, C⁷, F, B⁷, and B^b. The third staff, labeled '9', shows 'melodic cycle 1 - variation 2' with chords E^{ø7}, A⁷, E^{bø7}, A^{b7}, D^{bmaj7}, G⁷, and G^{bmaj7}. Each staff is circled in blue.

Fig. 21 – the first melodic cycle of ‘Aja’ with two variations on the main motif

As Andrew Lilley explains: “the head of ‘Aja’ explores different melodic motifs as the primary drivers of the composition. Three distinctive thematic ideas reflect on the trilogy of the augmented axis creating a thirty-six-bar head” (Lilley, 2020: 15). For each melodic cycle or theme, the motif is stated in the first four bars of the cycle. The cycle is then varied by moving down to the next key centre until the next new melodic motif is stated.

In the second melodic cycle, the second variation on the main motif is only three bars long due to an upbeat bar in bar 24, which is different to bar 16 in the main motif and bar 20 in the first variation.

The image shows three staves of music for the second melodic cycle of 'Aja'. The first staff, labeled 'B', contains the main motif with chords C^{ø7}, F⁷, B^{ø7}, E⁷, A^{maj7}, E^{b7}, and D^{maj7}. The second staff, labeled '17', shows 'melodic cycle 1 - variation 1' with chords A^{bø7}, D^{b7}, G^{ø7}, C⁷, F, B⁷, and B^b. The third staff, labeled '21', shows 'melodic cycle 1 - variation 2' with chords E^{ø7}, A⁷, E^{bø7}, A^{b7}, D^{bmaj7}, G⁷, and G^{bmaj7}. Each staff is circled in red.

Fig. 22 - the second melodic cycle of ‘Aja’ with two variations on the main motif

In the third melodic cycle, the main motif is only varied once. The head ends with new melodic material introduced in last four bars.

The musical score for the third melodic cycle of 'Aja' is presented in three staves. The first staff, starting at measure 25, is labeled 'melodic cycle 1 - main motif' and contains the notes C^{ø7}, F⁷, B^{ø7}, E⁷, A^{maj7}, E^{b7}, and D^{maj7}. The second staff, starting at measure 29, is labeled 'melodic cycle 1 - variation 1' and contains the notes A^{bø7}, D^{b7}, G^{ø7}, C⁷, F, B⁷, and B^b. The third staff, starting at measure 33, contains the notes E^{ø7}, A⁷, E^{bø7}, A^{b7}, D^{bmaj7}, G⁷, and G^{bmaj7}.

Fig. 23 - the third melodic cycle of 'Aja' with one variation on the main motif

'Angola', unlike 'Aja', is not purely cyclical in nature, but uses sequences as the harmonic underpinning of the composition. The tune has a long-extended form, due to extensive thematic development. Mseleku uses one main cyclical harmonic sequence to extend the form and vary the four main melodic themes.

The musical score for 'Angola' is divided into several sections. At the top, a harmonic sequence is shown with notes Cm⁷, A^bmaj⁷, and G(sus4b9). Below this, the 'first melodic theme' is shown in a blue box, starting at measure 5 with Cm⁷, A^bmaj⁷, and G⁷(b9). The 'second melodic theme' is shown in a red box, starting at measure 14 with Cm⁷ and Fm⁷. The score includes first and second endings for the first melodic theme.

21 G⁷ Cm⁷ C⁷ Fm⁷

25 G⁷ Cm⁷ C⁷ Fm⁷ G⁷

30 **C** G⁷ Cm⁷ D⁷ Gm⁷ A⁷ Dm⁷ to coda \oplus

34 E⁷ Am⁷ Fm⁶ G⁷ DC al coda

third melodic theme

\oplus coda B⁷ Em⁷ Ab⁷ Dbm⁷ F⁷ Bbm⁷

Gbm⁶ Ab⁷ A^{o7} Bbm⁷

Gbm⁶ Ab⁷ A^{o7}

Ebm⁷ Ab⁷ Dbmaj⁷ C^{o7} F⁷ Bbm⁷

fourth melodic theme

Ebm⁷ Ab⁷ Dbmaj⁷ C^{o7} F⁷ Bbm⁷

Lead sheet of the song 'Angola' showing four melodic themes. The first theme is in 4/4 time with chords Gbm6, Ab7, A°7, Bbm7, and Gbm6. The second theme is in 2/4 time with chords Ab7, A°7, Bbm7, C7, Fm7, G7, and Cm7. The third theme is in 4/4 time with chords A7, Dm7, and E7. The fourth theme is in 2/4 time with chords Am7, Fm6, and G7.

Fig. 24 – lead sheet of Angola with the four melodic themes indicated

The first melodic theme is stated once at the beginning of the head and again once the head returns after solos, with no variations. The second melodic theme has two variations. The first variation starts with the second melodic theme being rhythmically displaced (starting a quaver earlier) and then repeated.

Detailed view of the second melodic theme and its variations. The second melodic theme is in 4/4 time with chords Cm7 and Fm7. Variation 1 is in 4/4 time with chords Cm7 and Fm7. Variation 2 is in 4/4 time with chords Cm7, C7, and Fm7. Variation 2 (without last two notes) is in 4/4 time with chords Cm7, C7, and Fm7.

Fig. 25 – second melodic theme of 'Angola' with two melodic variations

The second variation changes two notes from the first variation with the addition of the C7 chord in bar 23. The melody in bar 22 now includes an anticipation of the C7 chord. The second variation is then repeated, but with the last bar replaced by the pick-up to the next section of the piece.

The third melodic theme has two variations. This theme and its variations are used as a linking motif to extend the head and the thematic development by using it in different key centres. The first variation begins in the coda and is a modulation up a semitone of the original melodic theme according to the new key centre. The second variation starts immediately after the first variation and is just a change in the first note creating a lower neighbour tone.

Fig. 26 – third melodic theme variations in ‘Angola’

The second variation is stated again twice in the coda. The third melodic theme is then repeated once the harmonic progression has returned down a semitone to the original key centre.

Fig. 27 – more third melodic theme variations in ‘Angola’

The fourth melodic theme is first stated in the coda and is repeated once, as is, with no variation. After the repeat of the fourth melodic theme, the third melodic theme is stated again.

Fig. 28 – fourth melodic theme in ‘Angola’

Mseleku’s solo piano composition ‘Ekhaya’ makes use of a melodic cycle in the form of an ostinato pattern in the right hand. It is a two-bar phrase which is repeated throughout the piece. The pattern is reminiscent of a mbira melody, with Mseleku playing it with an almost percussive attack. The quavers are swung and the melodic phrase works throughout the harmonic cycle of I-IV-V.



Fig. 29 – ostinato pattern in ‘Ekhaya’

This melodic motif is used as a vehicle for rhythmic and melodic variation, but also as a vehicle over which to improvise. The left-hand starts off with short bassline punctuations. Throughout the piece the texture thickens and dynamics grow until it reaches the climax during an improvised solo. The piece then subsides in both texture and dynamics.

Because the two-bar phrase is repeated constantly, Mseleku varies the phrasing and articulation throughout the piece, however the rhythm and melody never vary. Looping the motif endlessly could be described as meditative.

4.2.2. Melodic Cycles and Cyclic Patterns in Dyer’s music

Dyer’s composition ‘Neo Native’ is written for piano trio: piano, bass and drums, and makes use of an ostinato pattern reminiscent of a mbira in both the piano and bass. The ostinato cycle in the piano left hand starts off the piece, creating almost a meditative atmosphere, as the drums and bass freely improvise until the double bass joins in with its own ostinato pattern. This complements the ostinato pattern in the piano, creating almost a new melodic cycle once both instruments play together. This combined melodic cycle is played until 2:40.



Fig. 30 – the piano and bass ostinato pattern in ‘Neo Native’

The ostinato pattern is a three-bar phrase. However, in the first statement of the pattern, the piano repeats the first bar, creating one four-bar phrase. Thereafter, the three-bar pattern is repeated throughout. The phrasing and articulation of the ostinato is kept the same throughout the recording. The piano right hand starts to play sparse chords and eventually melodies over

the ostinato pattern, while the bass and drums improvise freely. Just before the bass comes in with its full ostinato, it plays it in part almost to allude at what is to come.

The ostinato is used as a vehicle over which to improvise and to slowly add layers to build-up into a new section. Similarly, like a mirror image, the ostinato is used again at the end of the composition to wind down the piece: both the bass and piano start together with their ostinato patterns. Following this, the bass stops the pattern and moves to improvisation in the upper register, interacting with the pianist's improvisation, also in the upper register. The pianist maintains the ostinato pattern in the left hand. Finally, the trio fades to almost nothing at the end.

'Dollar Adagio', also written for trio, is another composition of Dyer's that makes use of an ostinato pattern, but this time only in the bass. The one bar repeated bassline is very syncopated; to such an extent that one can only hear where the beat is when the drums come in.



Fig. 31 – ostinato bassline in 'Dollar Adagio'

The ostinato cycle is used similarly to 'Neo Native', in that it is a vehicle for building up the music with layers: The piece starts with only the bassline, and then the piano creeps in with sparse chords and melodic fills. The drummer improvises before beginning the main groove. Following this, the main melody is played by the piano with the bass ostinato pattern still present underneath. During the melody, the piano and drums join in the bass groove with a few rhythmic hits, but otherwise the melody is mostly operating independently from the ostinato. Again, the ostinato is a feature of one of the two main sections of the composition and is used to signify the change between the two sections.

Romy Brauteseth, the bassist on the album recording of 'Dollar Adagio', varies the ostinato slightly in the introduction and head, often adding an approach note where she sees fit or adding a staccato on some of the Bs. After the contrasting second section, there is a piano solo where the ostinato is play more freely. The ostinato only makes use of three notes: E, B

and D, which could be analysed as degrees 1, 5 and 7. With the absence of a third the tonality is ambiguous: it could be outlining either a minor seventh or a dominant seventh chord. Dyer does this deliberately to be able to play around with the tonality of what he is playing on the piano.

4.2.3. Intertextuality through Melodic Cycles: Mseleku’s influence in Dyer’s Music

Dyer employs similar techniques to Mseleku in his use of melodic ostinato cycles, but his melodic-thematic development isn’t as extensive as Mseleku’s. Similar to Mseleku, Dyer’s ostinatos are meditative, and he also uses them as a vehicle over which to build a composition and to improvise. Unlike Mseleku, however, Dyer uses the ensemble format of a trio rather than solo piano to achieve this, giving the composition more possibilities of instrument combinations and contrasting sections.

4.2.4. Melodic Cycles and Cyclic Patterns in Ntuli’s music

Ntuli’s composition ‘Exiled’ is written for sextet: trumpet, tenor saxophone, guitar, voice, piano, bass and drums (where Ntuli sings and plays piano). It makes use of a four-bar melodic cycle which comprises the A section of the form.



Fig. 32 – melodic cycle in ‘Exiled’

The A section is repeated once (as written above in figure 32). The cycle is played in unison and octaves by the guitar, voice, tenor saxophone and trumpet for the first time and by the guitar and voice for the second time. The second time, the horns play a countermelody, which results in a variation of the melody and the texture. The form then moves to a B section, and the A section returns after that.

During this third A section, the piano and drums collectively improvise over the cycle which creates a thicker texture. The cycle is therefore used as a vehicle over which to improvise. The harmony also changes briefly at bar 8 of the cycle, with the tenor saxophone playing a harmony just for that bar, rather than playing in octaves.

Within the four-bar melodic cycle, the main motif could be analysed as a one bar motif with variations in the rhythm and the melody.



Fig. 33 – motif and variations in ‘Exiled’

The first variation is a rhythmic and melodic variation: the G# and C# are omitted from the main motif and the G# that is left is rhythmically displaced, creating a new rhythm for the first half of the bar. The second half of the bar is the same, as shown below in figure 34:



Fig. 34 – rhythmic and melodic variation on main motif (variation 1)

The second variation is similar to the first variation, but the A is sustained and tied over until the next bar.

Ntuli’s composition ‘Uz’ubuye’ (which is Zulu for ‘Until You Come Back’) is written for sextet: alto saxophone, tenor saxophone, guitar, piano, bass and drums. The melodic cycle is used as a means for improvisation. The melody is played by the saxophones and guitar. The saxophones initially play the cycle together in octaves, but by the fifth cycle it is played in unison, with the tenor saxophone taking it up an octave as the piece builds.



Fig. 35 – melodic cycle in ‘Uz’ubuye’

After the saxophones play the cycle in unison, the saxophones and guitar break away from the melody and collectively improvise around the cycle. At 2:30 the melodic cycle is brought back for the drums to improvise over. As the composition dies down, the whole band gets softer and the cycle is played down an octave. In the recording, the track fades out to end.

The main motif within the eight-bar melodic cycle is varied slightly by changing the final two notes of the motif in the variation.

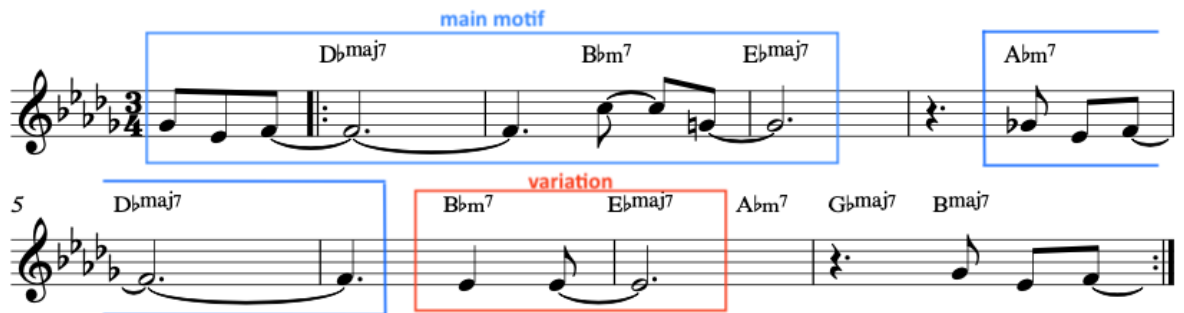


Fig. 36 – variation on main motif in ‘Uz’ubuye’

4.2.5. Intertextuality through Melodic Cycles: Mseleku’s influence in Ntuli’s Music

Similar to Mseleku and Dyer, Ntuli makes use of melodic cycles as a vehicle over which to build a composition and to improvise. Unlike Dyer, Ntuli makes more use of thematic and motivic development in her melodic cycles, which invites changes in texture and harmony. Mseleku is a master at thematic and motivic development and while Ntuli does not use this as expansively as Mseleku, one could argue that Ntuli was influenced by Mseleku in this regard.

4.2.6. Harmonic Cycles in Mseleku's Music

As mentioned in the previous section, Mseleku uses many cyclical techniques in his compositions and improvisation. Cycles formed a central part of his compositional style. For example, Mseleku would often use extended dominant sevenths in a repeating cycle. The movement of chords in thirds, as seen in jazz standards 'Giant Steps' and 'Autumn Leaves', is present in Mseleku's 'The Messenger' (Lilley, 2020: 33). This type of cycle is described as harmonic and would often inform Mseleku's use of naturally emerging melodic patterns and cycles.

In Mseleku's composition 'Aja', a four-bar chord progression is used over a twelve-bar form, modulating endlessly between three key centres, using a symmetrical axis of an augmented fifth – an augmented axis. As discussed in the previous section, the melody presents a new thematic idea in each cycle where the harmony informs the melody.

The figure shows a 12-bar harmonic cycle in 'Aja', divided into three 4-bar cycles. Each cycle is in a different key, with the first cycle in C major, the second in F major, and the third in D-flat major. The chords are written in treble clef with a double bar line at the end of each cycle.

main harmonic cycle

harmonic cycle 1

1: C^{ø7} F⁷ | B^{ø7} E⁷ | A^{maj7} E^{b7} | D^{maj7}

harmonic cycle 2

5

A^{bø7} D^{b7} | G^{ø7} C⁷ | F B⁷ | B^b

harmonic cycle 3

9

E^{ø7} A⁷ | E^{bø7} A^{b7} | D^{bmaj7} G⁷ | G^{bmaj7} :||

Fig. 37 – 12-bar harmonic cycle in 'Aja' comprising of three separate 4-bar harmonic cycles using the same chord progression but in three different key centres

Each four-bar chord progression is in a different key an augmented fifth apart: starting with A, then F, then D-flat major. The first V chord (F7) of the progression is sub V/V, while the first II chord (C half-diminished) is its related II. This II-V (in bar 2, 6 and 10 in figure 37) then resolves to I in the current key. The progression then moves to chord IV via a tritone

substitution, sub V/IV, before the four-bar progression modulates up an augmented fifth to the next key centre.

Fig. 38 – analysis of harmonic cycle in ‘Aja’

The 12-bar cycle that is created through the augmented axis is repeated throughout the head and the solo section. The cycle is repeated three times to create a 36-bar form. The cycle is repeated with no variation.

‘Angola’, as mentioned in the previous section, makes use of extensive thematic development and variation with the use of melodic and harmonic cycles. Mseleku does this by using segments of two cyclical harmonic sequences to extend the form and to vary the four main melodic themes. For the sake and ease of labelling the linking devices on the lead sheet, I call the cyclical harmonic sequence using the cycle of fifths ‘linking sequence 1’ and the cyclical harmonic sequence using the diminished axis ‘linking sequence 2’.

As Lilley (2020: 19) explains these linking sequences:

In ‘Angola’, the movement of a minor 7 up a whole step to a dominant is used throughout the composition to activate harmonic movement between the central themes located in the two primary key centres of C minor and Db major... [T]his sequence moves through a cycle of fifths, each minor chord effectively having dual function as I-7 in the resolution key and IV-7 in the subsequent key of resolution. Played in its entirety, the sequence will take twelve bars to complete a cycle.

In figure 39, I illustrate the basic form of the harmonic cycle (that Lilley mentions above) in full, to show how it would eventually ‘complete’ after one repeat of the cycle. I then indicate on the lead sheet (figure 41) where Mseleku has used segments of this cycle as a linking device in his composition.

Fig. 39 – analysis of harmonic cycle using the cycle of fifths found in ‘Angola’ (linking sequence 1)

Mseleku uses segments of the above sequence as a linking device to connect sections of ‘Angola’ together. Figure 39 illustrates the harmonic cycle in full. In ‘Angola’, Mseleku adds another chord I that precedes chord V, which makes the progression: IV-I-V-I.

Rather than just using the cycle of fifths however, Mseleku uses the diminished axis (a cycle of minor thirds), so that the sequence takes four bars to complete a cycle rather than twelve. The sequence using the diminished axis is the second cyclical harmonic sequence that Mseleku uses in ‘Angola’.

I will illustrate, in figure 40 (as I have done above in figure 39), the basic form of the abovementioned harmonic cycle using the diminished axis in full, to show how it would eventually ‘complete’ after one repeat of the cycle. I will then indicate on the lead sheet

(figure 41) where Mseleku has used segments of this cycle as a linking device in his composition. Here is an example of the cycle, which I've started in E minor:

minor 3rd minor 3rd minor 3rd minor 3rd

E minor Db minor Bb minor G minor

I V I I V I I V I I V I

Em B7 Em Dbm Ab7 Dbm Bbm F7 Bbm Gm D7 Gm

Fig. 40 – analysis of harmonic cycle using a diminished axis found in ‘Angola’ (linking sequence 2)

Cm7 A♭maj7 G(sus4b9)

5 **A** Cm7 A♭maj7 G7(b9)

9 Cm7 A♭maj7 1. G7(b9) 2. G7(b9)

14 **B** Cm7 Fm7

17 G7(b9) Cm7 Fm7

21 G7 Cm7 C7 Fm7

25 G7 Cm7 C7 Fm7 G7

linking sequence 1

30 **C** Cm7 G7 Cm7 Gm7 D7 Gm7 Dm7 A7 Dm7

34 Am7 E7 Am7 Fm6 G7 DC al coda

to coda

♩ coda

linking sequence 2

38 Em⁷ B⁷ Em⁷ D^bm⁷ A^b7 D^bm⁷ B^bm⁷ F⁷ B^bm⁷

42 G^bm⁶ D^b/A^b A^{o7} B^bm⁷

45 G^bm⁶ D^b/A^b A^{o7} B^bm⁷

48 E^bm⁷ A^b7 D^bmaj⁷ C^{o7} F⁷ B^bm⁷ ³

52 E^bm⁷ A^b7 D^bmaj⁷ C^{o7} F⁷ B^bm⁷

56 G^bm⁶ D^b/A^b A^{o7} B^bm⁷ G^bm⁶

linking sequence 1

60 D^b/A^b A^{o7} B^bm⁷ F^m7 C⁷ F^m7 C^m7 G⁷ C^m7

64 D^m7 A⁷ D^m7 A^m7 E⁷

66 A^m7 F^m6 G⁷

Fig. 41 – lead sheet of ‘Angola’ with both linking sequences indicated

The first linking sequence starts at bar 28, in the key of C minor, with chord IV^m7 going up a whole tone to V⁷, then moving through the cycle of fifths (as in figure 39). Mseleku does not

move through every key in the sequence, but after four cycles, moves directly back to C minor in bar 36. The function of this linking sequence is to extend the form in C minor.

28 Fm7 G7 Cm7 G7 Cm7 Gm7 D7 Gm7

33 Dm7 A7 Dm7 Am7 E7

35 Am7 Fm6 G7

C minor

A minor

C minor

Fig. 42 – bar 28 to 37 of ‘Angola’ analysing linking sequence 1

Linking sequence 2 starts at the beginning of the coda. Here the cycle I – V – I is moved through the diminished axis: the G minor 7 from bar 32 (before going to the coda) moves down a minor third to E minor 7 and the diminished axis continues (as in figure 40). This linking sequence’s function is to extend the form and modulate into D-flat major.

minor third minor third minor third

I V I I V I I V I

Em7 B7 Em7 Dbm7 Ab7 Dbm7 Bbm7 F7 Bbm7

Fig. 43 – start of the coda of ‘Angola’ analysing linking sequence 2

The second ‘linking sequence 1’ starts at the end of the coda in D-flat major and moves through the cycle of fifths. This linking sequence’s function is to take the composition back to the top of the form and to modulate back to C minor.

Fig. 44 – end of the coda of ‘Angola’ analysing the second ‘linking sequence 1’

‘Closer to the Source’ is another Mseleku composition that makes use of extensive thematic development through harmonic cycles. There are two known recordings of the piece: a trio version written for piano, percussion and soprano saxophone on the album *Celebration*, and a solo piano and vocals version that is part of the *Meditations* album. On both recordings, a four-bar ostinato cycle is repeated on the piano throughout the A section of the form. It could be analysed as a polyrhythmic figure creating a two-over-three feel.

Fig. 45 – polyrhythmic ostinato played throughout the A section on the piano in ‘Closer to the Source’

The harmonic cycle that underpins the ostinato is a simple I-VI-V progression in C major, a derivation of the standard I-VI-II-V progression. The polychord F over G (F/G) functions as V7. The four-bar harmonic cycle is repeated four times before a variation: the A minor chord moves down a fifth to D7 which is functioning as V/V in C major. The D7 then resolves to F/G and that then resolves to C. This variation, however, does not change the melody.

harmonic cycle

The image shows a musical score for 'Closer to the Source' with harmonic analysis. The score is divided into six systems, each with a treble clef and a key signature of one flat. The first five systems are enclosed in a blue box and represent a 'harmonic cycle' of I-C, VI-Am, and V-F/G. The sixth system is enclosed in a red box and is labeled 'variation', showing a progression from V/V-D7 to V-F/G and I-C, followed by a first and second ending. Bar numbers 1, 5, 9, 13, 17, and 21 are indicated at the start of their respective systems. Triplet markings (3) are present in bars 1, 3, 5, 7, 9, 11, 13, 15, 17, 19, and 21.

Fig. 46 – A section of ‘Closer to the Source’ with analysis showing the harmonic cycle and variation

4.2.7. Harmonic Cycles in Dyer’s Music

Dyer’s composition ‘The Artist’ is a ballad written for trumpet melody and rhythm section. The head has an extended form of 35 bars and could be considered through-composed (ABCD form), as almost no melodic themes are repeated or varied in the head. The form is odd-numbered and makes use of a few changes in time signatures: the A and B sections are predominantly in 4/4 but with one bar of 2/4 in each section. The C section is predominantly in 3/4, with two bars of 5/4, and the D section establishes the 3/4 time signature before going into the solo section with the same time signature.

The C section makes use of almost entirely constant structure chords (besides the D minor half-diminished), which can be heard in the piano voicings. The solo section also makes use of an odd-numbered form, but with a different harmonic progression to the rest of the

composition. Besides these two sections, the other sections make use of two harmonic cycles that are based mostly on modal interchange. The modality is discussed in a later section.

harmonic cycle 1

A ♩ = 52
 A \flat maj7 F \sharp maj7 E \flat maj7 D7(b9)

5 B \flat m(b6) Bmaj7(#5)

harmonic cycle 1 (with variation)

B A \flat maj7 F \sharp maj7 E \flat maj7 C $^{\circ}$ 7

13 B \flat m(b6) Bmaj7(#5)

C ♩ = 90
 D \flat maj7(#5) Bmaj7(#5) Dm7(b5) F \sharp maj7(#5) Bmaj7(#5) Dm7(b5)

21 D \flat maj7(#5) Bmaj7(#5) Dm7(b5) F \sharp maj7(#5) Bmaj7(#5)

harmonic cycle 2

D Dm7(b5) G7alt.

28 Am¹³ G¹³ Fm(maj7)

32 E \flat /B C/A \flat Fm G \flat maj7(#11) D \flat 6 G7(sus4)

Fig. 47 – lead sheet of ‘The Artist’ indicating the two harmonic cycles

The first harmonic cycle in the A section is eight bars long. This same harmonic cycle is repeated in the B section with a different melody. With the different melody, Dyer has changed the D dominant seventh flat-9 chord from the fourth bar of the harmonic cycle to a C diminished seventh in the fourth bar of the harmonic cycle when the cycle is repeated. This is done to accommodate the different melody.

The second harmonic cycle in this composition is first stated in the D section and is 12-bars long, and resolves to C major in the first bar of the solo section at letter E. This cycle is repeated after the solo section at letter E, and also resolves to C major to end.

In Dyer’s ‘Waiting, Falling’, he bases the composition on a four-bar chord progression, but uses different permutations each time that the progression is repeated. He uses this device to extend the form, add harmonic interest and also for the main melodic theme to change during the course of the composition. This is a similar technique to that used in Mseleku’s ‘Angola’. However, Dyer uses predominantly ambiguous harmony (as opposed to functional or modal harmony) in this composition. This is typical of post-bop compositions, and therefore one cannot analyse it through the common jazz practice lens of functional harmony of Roman numerals and the bracket-arrow system. The roots of the chords are predominantly based on

the G-flat Lydian dominant scale, but the qualities of the chords don't match this mode. The piece doesn't use modal interchange either.

harmonic cycle 1

7 D \flat maj7(#11) E \flat 6 F#maj7 A \flat 6 B \flat (add2) Gm7 F#maj7

A

harmonic cycle 1 (with variation and extension)

7 D \flat maj7(#11) E \flat 6 F#maj7 E/D E \flat /B B \flat /A \flat C/B \flat F#maj7

11 E \flat 6 F#maj7(#11) A \flat (add2) B \flat B \flat (sus4) B \flat B \flat (sus4) B \flat

B

harmonic cycle 1 (with variation and extension)

16 D \flat maj7(#11) E \flat 6 F#maj7 E/D E \flat /B B \flat /A \flat C/B \flat F#maj7

20 E \flat 6 F#maj7(#11) A \flat (add2) B \flat

C

harmonic cycle 1

23 D \flat maj7(#11) E \flat 6 F#maj7 A \flat 6 B \flat (add2) Gm7 F#maj7

harmonic cycle 1 (with extension)

27 D \flat maj7(#11) E \flat 6 F#maj7 A \flat 6 B \flat (add2) Gm7 F#maj7

harmonic cycle 2

32 Em(\flat 6) A \flat maj7 D \flat maj7 E \flat 6 Em(\flat 6) A \flat maj7 F#maj7

The image displays a musical score with seven systems, each containing a chord progression and a corresponding melodic line on a treble clef staff. The time signature is 3/4. The first system, labeled 'harmonic cycle 1', shows a progression of D \flat maj7(#11), E \flat 6, F#maj7, A \flat 6, B \flat (add2), Gm7, and F#maj7. The second system, labeled 'A', shows a variation of cycle 1 with extensions and substitutions: D \flat maj7(#11), E \flat 6, F#maj7, E/D, E \flat /B, B \flat /A \flat , C/B \flat , and F#maj7. The third system, labeled 'B', continues this variation with E \flat 6, F#maj7(#11), A \flat (add2), B \flat , B \flat (sus4), B \flat , B \flat (sus4), and B \flat . The fourth system, labeled 'C', repeats the variation from system B. The fifth system, labeled 'harmonic cycle 1', repeats the original cycle 1 progression. The sixth system, labeled 'harmonic cycle 1 (with extension)', repeats the original cycle 1 progression. The seventh system, labeled 'harmonic cycle 2', shows a different progression: Em(\flat 6), A \flat maj7, D \flat maj7, E \flat 6, Em(\flat 6), A \flat maj7, and F#maj7.

D solos

harmonic cycle 1

36 D \flat maj7(#11) E \flat 6 F \sharp maj7 A \flat 6 B \flat (add2) Gm7 F \sharp maj7

harmonic cycle 1

40 D \flat maj7(#11) E \flat 6 F \sharp maj7 A \flat 6 B \flat (add2) Gm7 F \sharp maj7

harmonic cycle 2 (with extension)

44 Em^(b6) A \flat maj7 D \flat maj7 E \flat 6 Em^(b6) A \flat maj7 F \sharp maj7

E

harmonic cycle 1

49 D \flat maj7(#11) E \flat 6 F \sharp maj7 A \flat 6 B \flat (add2) Gm7 F \sharp maj7

harmonic cycle 2

53 Em^(b6) A \flat maj7 D \flat maj7 E \flat 6 Em^(b6) A \flat maj7 F \sharp maj7

harmonic cycle 1

57 D \flat maj7(#11) E \flat 6 F \sharp maj7 A \flat 6 B \flat (add2) Gm7 F \sharp maj7

harmonic cycle 2

61 Em^(b6) A \flat maj7 D \flat maj7 E \flat 6 Em^(b6) A \flat maj7 F \sharp maj7

fade out...

Fig. 48 – lead sheet of ‘Waiting, Falling’ indicating the harmonic cycles and variations

The first harmonic cycle is four bars long and is stated in the introduction. When the melody begins, the same cycle is varied and extended to become eight bars long. Chords are added between the second and third bar of the original four-bar cycle. This variation comes back to the original cycle at bar 12 and sustains on the B-flat chord with the addition of suspended chords. The same variation is used at letter B, except the B-flat chord is not sustained. The original four-bar cycle is then repeated twice at letter C, but the second repeat from bar 27 sustains the F-sharp chord to extend the cycle.

A second harmonic cycle is introduced at bar 32 before the solo section. The solo section at letter D makes use of both the harmonic cycles: the original harmonic cycle is repeated twice and then the second harmonic cycle is used with the F-sharp chord sustained, to create an odd-numbered form in the solo section. Letter E alternates between both of the two original four-bar harmonic cycles before the composition fades out on the last chord of the second harmonic cycle, an F-sharp major seventh.

Dyer uses a similar cyclical technique in one of his other compositions 'Keynote', to extend the form and to increase the harmonic rhythm of the piece. Here, however, Dyer increases the harmonic rhythm by using descending semitone movements in the bass line, and constant structure chords.

The image displays a musical score for a piece titled 'Keynote'. It consists of three staves of music in treble clef. The first staff begins with a boxed letter 'A' and contains a melodic line with several chords: G, Ebm, Dmaj7, Am9, and Abm9. A blue box highlights the Am9 and Abm9 chords, with a 'semitone' label and arrow indicating the interval between them. The second staff starts at measure 5 with F#m9 and contains a melodic line with chords Fm9 and Em9. A blue box highlights these two chords, with 'semitone' labels and arrows indicating the interval between them. The third staff starts at measure 9 with Dmaj7(#5), Eb/B, and Am9. A blue box highlights the Fm9 and Em9 chords in the second staff, with 'semitone' labels and arrows indicating the interval between them. The text 'minor 9 constant structure chords' is written in blue below the second staff. The score includes various musical notations such as accidentals, stems, beams, and triplets.

Fig. 49 – lead sheet of ‘Keynote’ indicating chromatic root movement and constant structure chords

Dyer begins his use of constant structure chords in bar four of the piece. These are all minor ninth chords, the first two of which move down chromatically. The third of the minor ninth chords is a tone down from the previous one. Thereafter, the chords move down in semitones, to land on an Em9 chord. Then, at bar 15 there is a brief moment of sus4b9 constant structure chords. Immediately after that, from bar 16 there is a string of major 7 sharp 11 chords. In a manner similar to the previous segment of the composition, the root movement between the first and second chords of this cycle descends chromatically, followed by downward movement of a tone, and finally the last two chords move down chromatically. The major 7 sharp 11 chords continue from letter B and Dyer extends this section with descending root movement in semitones from bar 27. The first few chords of this section then repeat to form the basis of the solo section at letter C.

4.2.8. Intertextuality through Harmonic Cycles: Mseleku's influence in Dyer's Music

I argue that Dyer is influenced by Mseleku's cyclical style: he varies cyclical harmonic sequences in a few of his compositions to extend the form of his composition and vary his thematic development. Unlike Mseleku, though, Dyer predominantly uses ambiguous harmony. Dyer speaks about Mseleku's cyclical style of composition as follows:

...and then going into [Mseleku's] compositional style, it is really great as a music listening experience as well as an exercise for musicians because a lot of his material is cyclical... I've practiced and transcribed quite a few of his compositions and it gets you into this meditative state because of the circular and cyclical nature of his music... Sometimes if I write a composition and it has that cyclical nature it makes me think: 'Oh yes, this is maybe something that Bheki Mseleku would've done'. That type of thinking is maybe taken from him. So in those instances where I'm composing and then I get into a kind of cycle thing where you do the modulations then immediately that makes me think about him as a direct kind of influence of that kind of thinking.
(Dyer, 2019)

4.2.9. Harmonic Cycles in Ntuli's Music

The melodic cycle of Ntuli's 'Uz'ubuye' has already been discussed in the previous section. I now discuss the harmonic cycle that underpins the melody of the composition. As mentioned previously, the repetitive and cyclic nature of this composition is used as a vehicle over which to improvise. The harmonic cycle underpins the introduction, head and collective improvisation section, with no variation in harmony. The bassline combined with the basic accompanying (comping) rhythm in the piano right hand creates a polyrhythm of two over three.

Fig. 50 – analysis of the harmonic cycle (and with variation) showing the basic piano comping pattern and bass line of ‘Uz’ubuye’ with chords

The main harmonic cycle is four bars long and is the only cycle that is repeated throughout the composition. The cycle makes use of a variation on a I-VI-II-V progression. The four-bar harmonic cycle is repeated with a variation in the last two bars of the cycle: chord V is stated earlier and a II-V is added in the last bar to further increase the harmonic rhythm before returning to chord I at the beginning of the cycle.

The qualities of the chords in this cycle are not what one would expect in a major key. The cycle’s chord progression makes use of modal interchange, but not all from the same mode. For example, the II chord (E-flat major 7) could be analysed as from the Phrygian or Locrian modes. And the V chord (A-flat minor 7) could be analysed as from the Aeolian, Dorian or Mixolydian modes.

This cycle could be compared to Mseleku’s ‘Closer to the Source’ in terms of the polyrhythm and basic comping pattern, and also in terms of the same harmonic cycle being repeated throughout. As with Mseleku’s composition, the repetitive harmonic cycle in ‘Uz’ubuye’ invites a variation in themes and texture through improvisation.

‘The Offering’ utilises cyclical harmonic sequences. As opposed to Dyer, but similarly to Mseleku, Ntuli uses more of a combination of functional harmony and modal interchange.

This Ntuli composition is a fitting example of that. This piece uses a re-ordering of chords to create new sections and extend on existing sections for thematic development.

harmonic cycle 1

A Cm7 A♭maj7(#11) ----> Gm7 Em9 ----> E♭maj7 ----> A♭maj7 ----> Gm7 Em9

harmonic cycle 1 with variation

5 Cm7 A♭maj7(#11) Em9 ----> E♭maj7 D♭maj7 ----> G♭maj7

harmonic cycle 1

9 **B** solos Cm7 A♭maj7(#11) ----> Gm7 Em9 ----> E♭maj7 ----> A♭maj7 ----> Gm7 Em9

harmonic cycle 1

13 **C** Cm7 A♭maj7(#11) ----> Gm7 Em9 ----> E♭maj7 ----> A♭maj7 ----> Gm7 Em9

harmonic cycle 1 with variation

17 Cm7 A♭maj7(#11) Em9 ----> E♭maj7 D♭maj7 ----> G♭maj7 Gm7

21 E♭maj7 D♭maj7 G♭maj7 Gm7 Em7 --> E♭maj7 D♭maj7 ----> G♭maj7

harmonic cycle 2

25 **D** solos
 Gm7 Em9 ----> Ebmaj7 -> Ab7(#11) --> Gm7 Em9 ----> Ebmaj7 -> Ab7(#11) -->

harmonic cycle 2

29 **E** solo backgrounds
 Gm7 Em9 -----> Ebmaj7 -> Ab7(#11) ----->

31 Gm7 Em9-----> 1. Ebmaj7 -> Ab7(#11) | 2. Ebmaj7 -> Abmaj7(#11)

harmonic cycle 2 with variation

34 Gm7 Em9----> Ebmaj7 Dbmaj7(#11) Ebmaj7 Dbmaj7(#11) Gbmaj7

Fig. 51 – lead sheet of ‘The Offering’ indicating root movement analysis and the two harmonic cycles

The first harmonic cycle starts at the top of the form and is the main four-bar cycle upon which the composition is based. It makes use of modal interchange and three moments of descending chromatic root movement in the chords. The harmonic cycle is repeated three times before moving on to the first variation of the cycle. The first variation of this cycle is at bar five and has the same first bar as the original cycle, but due to an anticipation in the melody, the E minor chord is also anticipated and sustained, leaving out the G minor chord. The E minor moves to the E-flat major chord, as before, but now moves on to a D-flat major chord then a G-flat major chord due to a change in the melody. This re-harmonisation of the cycle has a strong cadence down a fifth.

On the album recording, what follows is an improvised bass solo at letter B, which is based on the chords of the original harmonic cycle. The melody instruments then come back in at letter C with a repeat of the original harmonic cycle and melody.

Another variation happens from bar 17: it starts out the same as the first variation (from bar five) but with the addition of a G minor chord on beat three of bar 20. From bar 21, the cycle uses and repeats the same harmony as the third and fourth bar of the variation (bar 19 and 20). As has happened in the original harmonic cycle, the G minor chord moves to an E minor chord, and then the final two bars of the original variation are repeated. This harmonic movement could be described as a re-ordering of chords that have previously occurred in the form. This has been done to increase the harmonic rhythm, and in so doing extend the cycle and melodic theme from four to eight bars.

Another solo section starts at letter D, with a piano solo on the recording. Even though the chords of the solo section are all chords that have occurred in the form previously, this new order of chords creates a new progression and new harmonic cycle ('harmonic cycle 2' in figure 51) with the change in quality of the A-flat chord from major seventh to a dominant seventh chord. The second harmonic cycle that is first stated in the improvised piano solo is derived from bar two and three of the first harmonic cycle.

This second harmonic cycle is repeated through the horn backgrounds, which are played underneath the piano solo. It is then repeated again in part as an ending. It is almost a combination of both harmonic cycles: instead of moving from the E-flat major chord to the A-flat dominant seventh chord (as in the second harmonic cycle), the E-flat major chord moves to a D-flat major chord then a G-flat major chord (as in the variation of the first harmonic cycle).

The harmonic cycles are in the key of G minor (or G Aeolian) using a combination of functional harmony and modal interchange. If we take the first harmonic cycle as an example, for the most part this cycle is functioning in G minor with some modal interchange from the Phrygian and Mixolydian modes. The A-flat major 7 chord could be analysed as from the Phrygian mode and the E minor 7 chord could be analysed as from the Mixolydian mode. These two chords that make use of modal interchange are used to add chromaticism in the root movement. In figure 52, the first harmonic cycle is analysed for functional harmony in G minor:

Fig. 52 – analysis of the first harmonic cycle in ‘The Offering’

Fig. 53 – diatonic seventh chords of G Aeolian

4.2.10. Intertextuality through Harmonic Cycles: Mseleku’s influence in Ntuli’s Music

Ntuli, like Dyer, is attracted to Mseleku’s cyclical way of playing. Although she may not use this technique, it is definitely present in her music. Ntuli describes Mseleku’s harmonic compositional style:

I also loved [Mseleku’s] composition style; I think one of the things that I loved the most is his cyclical way of writing. It’s almost very meditative but not necessarily monotonous. It’s not like that sort of repetition where your mind can wonder – it’s cyclical in a way that keeps you engaged. I relate to that kind of writing, almost a mathematical way of writing, that moves in a pattern... What I have loved about his cyclical changing of keys is how seamless it makes key changes or harmonic changes happen. So I haven’t necessarily done it exactly but I’ve enjoyed it when my songs can move between modalities without it necessarily being obvious (Ntuli, 2019).

Cyclical harmony gives players and composers a freedom to express themselves. It creates an almost meditative quality that is significant for all three artists in terms of their spiritual beliefs. It also gives the improviser a framework upon which to build endless inventions of melody, rhythm and texture.

4.3. Modality

All three artists make use of aspects of modal harmony in their compositions. In this subsection I identify each artist’s use of modal harmony, modal interchange and modal

melodies, how they have each used these aspects in some of their compositions, and whether these aspects could signify an influence from Mseleku in Dyer and Ntuli’s work.

4.3.1. Modality in Mseleku’s Music

Mseleku’s composition ‘Supreme Love’ is written in a modal style. Mseleku uses two different modes in the head. The A section of the head has the same four bar melody that is repeated, but by bar 5 of the head, a different mode is used with different harmonic underpinnings to indicate this. Bar 1 to 4 are in D Dorian (the second major mode), then bar 5 to 8 are in F Lydian dominant (the fourth melodic minor mode), and then back to D Dorian for bars 9 to 12.

The musical score for 'Supreme Love' is presented in two systems. The first system (bars 1-12) is divided into three 4-bar phrases. The first phrase (bars 1-4) is in D Dorian mode, with chords Dm7, Em7, Dm7, and Em7. The second phrase (bars 5-8) is in F Lydian Dominant mode, with chords Eb/F, F/G, Eb/F, and F/G. The third phrase (bars 9-12) is in D Dorian mode, with chords Dm7, Em7, Dm7, and Em7. The second system (bars 13-16) is in D Dorian mode, with chords F7(sus4), G7(sus4), A7(sus4), and D7(sus4). The third system (bars 17-20) is in D Dorian mode, with chords F7(sus4), G7(sus4), and A7(sus4). Fingerings and phrasing slurs are indicated throughout the score.

Fig. 54 – lead sheet of ‘Supreme Love’ with analysis of the A section

The first four bars of the melody can be characterised as D Dorian because the fourth of each chord has been emphasised in the melody. Further, the natural sixth degree of the Dorian

mode has been included in bar four of the melody. This note is a defining note of the Dorian mode (as well as the natural ninth and natural fourth).



Fig. 55 – notes of D Dorian with characteristic notes of the mode: natural fourth, sixth and ninth

The next four bars of the head can be characterised as F Lydian dominant, because the notes of the melody all come from C melodic minor, the scale upon which the mode is based. The characteristic notes which define Lydian dominant, flattened seventh and the sharpened fourth are both present in the melody, and the first chord has F as its root.



Fig. 56 – notes of F Lydian dominant with characteristic notes of the mode: natural third, sharp fourth and flat seventh

The harmonic series of D Dorian is expressed by only two chords (which is very common in modal jazz): D minor 7 to E minor 7. Similarly, the harmonic series for F Lydian Dominant is expressed by the two chords: E-flat over F, to F over G. The two chords representing each mode are chord I or II from each respective mode. The movement from chord I to II and back to I in modal jazz is also very common.

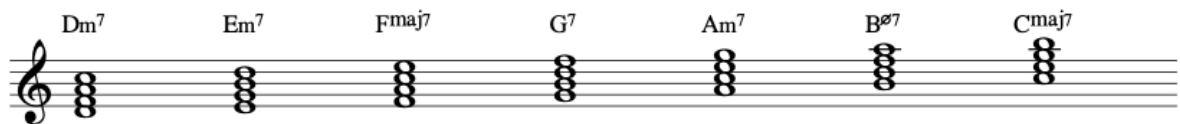


Fig. 57 – seventh chords built on the notes of D Dorian

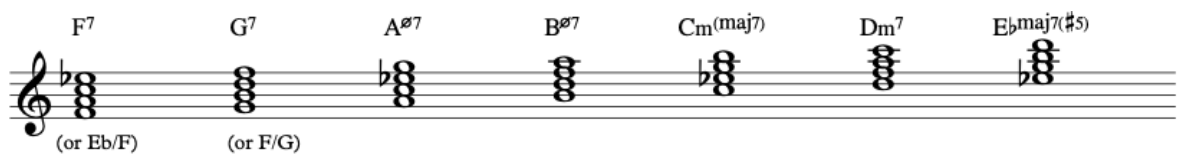


Fig. 58 – seventh chords built on the notes of F Lydian dominant

It should be noted that the chord Eb/F does not strictly characterise Lydian dominant harmony, as this voicing emphasises the natural fourth (B-flat in this key), as opposed to the characteristic sharpened fourth of the mode. However, it is common in the modal style for a player or composer to superimpose a melody strongly rooted in a particular mode over ambiguous harmony. As Lilley notes in his discussion of ‘Supreme Love’: “Exploration outside of the mode is also part of the overall design associated with the style” (Lilley, 2020:35).

The B section makes use of ambiguous harmony with constant structure dominant seventh suspended fourth chords, making the composition as a whole not purely modal.

Mseleku did, however, use purely modal harmony without any ambiguous or functional harmony in some of his compositions. ‘Vukani’ (which translates to ‘Wake Up’ in English) is an example of this. This track is purely in the mode of C Phrygian – the notes of the melody use this mode only and all the chords used belong to C Phrygian.

C(sus4b9)

5 bassline to continue through A

9 **A**

13

The image displays a musical score for the piece 'Vukani'. It consists of five distinct melodic themes, each with a piano accompaniment. Theme B (measures 17-26) is a melodic line in the treble clef. Theme C (measures 31-34) is a melodic line in the treble clef, described as a 'bassline to continue through C'. Theme D (measures 39-40) is a melodic line in the treble clef, with a chord chart above it: I Cm7, VII Bbm6, VI Abmaj7, and V G7alt. The piano accompaniment is shown in grand staff notation (treble and bass clefs) for measures 27-30 and 41-44. The key signature is three flats (B-flat major/C minor).

Fig. 59 – lead sheet of ‘Vukani’

The melody through all five themes of the piece utilises the notes of C Phrygian, which is the third mode of A-flat major. The melodic themes are repeated with slight variations throughout the composition, which creates a meditative or trance-like state that is often associated with modal jazz.



Fig. 60 – C Phrygian

The melodic theme at letter B makes use of quartal harmony, which is often used to add to the ambiguity of modal harmony and to highlight the upper tensions of the chord. Apart from the tag at bars 39 and 40, the piece makes use of static harmony drawn from C Phrygian mode. In his piano voicings, Mseleku shifts the voicings to express the C Phrygian mode in various ways.

To indicate this mode in my transcription of this piece, I have used Csus4b9 for the first section, and C minor 7 in the second section, which is indicative of the way Mseleku voices C Phrygian in each of these sections. Although, when being reproduced, this is of course open to interpretation. Including upper tensions and the use of suspended chords is also common practise to indicate modal chords and this type of harmony.



Fig. 61 – C Phrygian chord voicings in ‘Vukani’

At the start of letter B, the melody here is written over a G pedal (which is the dominant of the mode) and ascends in quartal harmony. The G pedal bass line could be transcribed as follows:



Fig. 62 – G pedal bassline at letter B in ‘Vukani’

There are only two bars of harmonic rhythm in this piece at bars 39 and 40. The four chords used are all part of C Phrygian, so no modal interchange or functional harmony is used in this piece.

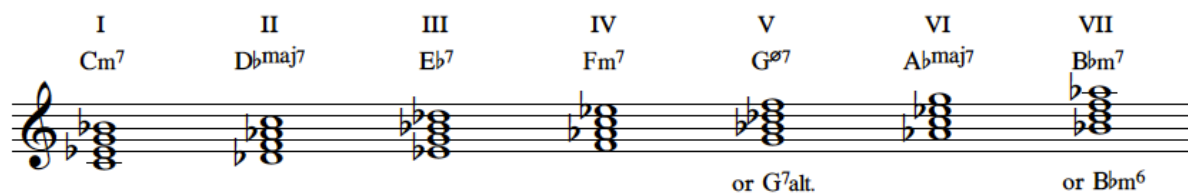


Fig. 63 - seventh chords built on notes (and using notes) of C Phrygian

The solo section (which takes place after the tag at the end of the head) is also in C Phrygian, giving the soloist and rhythm section the freedom to explore different voicings and perhaps use altered harmony in conjunction with the Phrygian sound.

There are two ostinato bass figures that are used: one during the introduction and letter A, and another at letter C. Ostinato basslines are one of the aspects that often typify modal jazz.

‘The Age of Inner Knowing’ is written in a modal style but uses a combination of both functional harmony and modal interchange, with the melody predominantly written within one mode.

A Cm7 D \flat maj7 Eb F

4 5 b3 1 7 1

5 Gm A \flat maj7 B \flat (add2) C

2 b3 4 b7 b6 5

9 D \flat maj7 Eb F E7(#9)

3 b3 1

13 A7alt. D7(#9) G7 1. A \flat maj7

b3 4 b3 1 2 1 b7 5 4 b3 1

17 D \flat maj7 2. A \flat maj7 D \flat maj7 C/E A7alt.

4 5 b3 1

B Dm⁹ Fm¹¹ Em¹¹ A7alt.

3 1 b7 5 6 b7 b3 3

26 1. Dm¹¹ Fm⁹ Em^{7(b5)} A7alt. 2. Dm¹¹

5 5

Fig. 64 – head of ‘The Age of Inner Knowing’ indicating the melody notes used from the hybrid scale

Mseleku makes use of the C Aeolian mode, or C natural minor, in its melody almost exclusively, with some moments of moving to the parallel major. With the combination of C Aeolian together and the inclusion of the natural third, natural sixth and natural seventh, Mseleku creates his own hybrid scale.

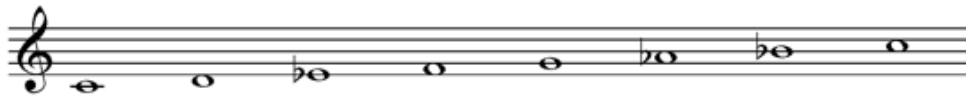


Fig. 65 – C Aeolian



Fig. 66 – C Major

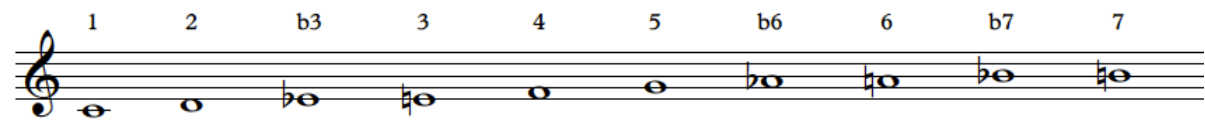


Fig. 67 – hybrid scale Mseleku uses in the melody of ‘The Age of Inner Knowing’

With Mseleku’s use of his hybrid scale for the melody of the piece, the sound created is of both modal texture (from the Aeolian mode) and diatonic harmony (from the parallel major). The blending of these two textures occurs as a result of the juxtaposition of the minor and major qualities present in the hybrid scale.

With the melodic contour utilising two different modes, it follows that that there will be modal interchange in the chord progression. For example, the chords in the first 8 bars are drawn predominantly from C Aeolian, but this passage also utilises chords drawn from the parallel Major and Phrygian modes.

Fig. 68 – bars 1 to 8 of ‘The Age of Inner Knowing’ indicating the chords from C Aeolian, and modal interchange from the Phrygian and major modes

I	II	bIII	IV	V	bVI	bVII
Cm ⁷	D ^{ø7}	E ^b maj ⁷	Fm ⁷	Gm ⁷	A ^b maj ⁷	B ^b 7

Fig. 69 – diatonic seventh chords from C Aeolian

I	bII	bIII	IV	V	bVI	bVII
Cm ⁷	D ^b maj ⁷	E ^b 7	Fm ⁷	G ^{ø7}	A ^b maj ⁷	B ^b m ⁷

Fig. 70 – diatonic seventh chords from C Phrygian

I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII
Cmaj ⁷	Dm ⁷	Em ⁷	Fmaj ⁷	G ⁷	Am ⁷	B ^{ø7}

Fig. 71 – diatonic seventh chords from C major

The solo section is not based on the head or form of the melody, but is based purely on a I-VI-II-V progression, which provides the soloist a section of functional harmony as a basis for improvisation.

Cm	A ^{ø7}	D ⁷ alt.	G ⁷ alt.
I	VI	II (V/V)	V

E ⁷ (#9)	A ⁷ alt.	D ⁷ alt.	G ⁷ alt.
III	VI	II (V/V)	V

Fig. 72 - analysis of functional harmony in the solo section of ‘The Age of Inner Knowing’

The last four bars of the solo changes are essentially the same because chord III is related to chord I. However, in this segment of the solo section there is a constant upper structure of dominant seventh chords functioning as an extended secondary dominant sequence

descending in fifths. The E dominant seventh chord (which is acting as a secondary dominant here) is replacing the minor seventh chord usually found in a diatonic major tonality.

4.3.2. Modality in Dyer's Music

Dyer's composition 'Meditation Suite' was inspired by Mseleku's 'The Age of Inner Knowing'. This was discussed in the dedication theme. I will now discuss the modal themes present in Dyer's 'Meditation Suite' and compare it to Mseleku's 'The Age of Inner Knowing'. Where the similarities between the two compositions becomes apparent is in the harmonic language of each. Both compositions are written in a modal style, but combine functional harmony and modal interchange. In both pieces the melody is predominantly written within one mode.

The musical score for 'Meditation Suite' lead sheet consists of seven staves of music in 4/4 time. The chords and melodic lines are as follows:

- Staff 1 (Measures 1-4):** Chords: Gm7, Fm/Ab, Bb6, Fm/Ab. Melody: Slurs over measures 1-4, ending with a triplet in measure 4.
- Staff 2 (Measures 5-8):** Chords: Gm7, Fm/Ab, Bb6, Fm/Ab, A7(#9), D7. Melody: Slurs over measures 5-8, ending with a triplet in measure 8.
- Staff 3 (Measures 9-12):** Chords: Abm/Bb, Eb, F, Gm7, Fm/Ab, Bb6, Fm/Ab. Melody: Slurs over measures 9-12, ending with a triplet in measure 12.
- Staff 4 (Measures 13-16):** Chords: Gm7, Fm/Ab, Bb6, Fm/Ab, Gm7, Fm/Ab, Bb6, Fm/Ab. Melody: Slurs over measures 13-16, ending with a triplet in measure 16.
- Staff 5 (Measures 17-20):** Chords: Gm7, Fm/Ab, Bb6, Fm/Ab, A7(#9), D7. Melody: Slurs over measures 17-20, ending with a triplet in measure 20.
- Staff 6 (Measures 21-24):** Chords: Abm/Bb, Bb13(b9), Bb(sus4b9), Ebmaj7(#5). Melody: Slurs over measures 21-24.
- Staff 7 (Measures 25-28):** Chords: Em9, Fm11, C(sus4b9), A7, D7. Melody: Slurs over measures 25-28, ending with a triplet in measure 28.

Fig. 73 – 'Meditation Suite' lead sheet

The melody of ‘Meditation Suite’ is written exclusively in the mode of G Phrygian. It is similar to the natural minor, or Aeolian mode, but has a flattened second degree as the characteristic note. Dyer’s only use of notation outside of G Phrygian is an E natural, but in all the instances where this note occurs it is acting as a chromatic passing note.

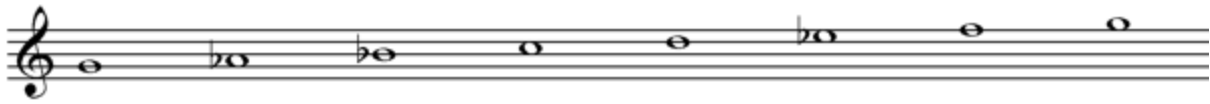


Fig. 74 – G Phrygian

The main chord progression is stated in the introduction in the first two bars and is repeated multiple times in the head. The first two chords (G minor 7 and Fm/Ab) come from G Phrygian.



Fig. 75 – diatonic seventh chords of G Phrygian

The chords Gm7 and Fm/Ab are characteristic of G Phrygian but the Bb6 is not, as it does not have a dominant quality. Here Dyer borrows this chord from either the Dorian or Aeolian mode. This is not the only instance of modal interchange: the rest of the head includes several chords borrowed from parallel modes, such as the Lydian, Major, and Dorian modes.



Fig. 76 – bars 5 to 8 of ‘Meditation Suite’ indicating the modal interchange used

In bar seven, the A7#9 is functioning as chord II in the Lydian mode, but also acts as V/V for a delayed resolution, as part of a dominant sequence moving down a fifth to the D7 chord in bar eight. The D7 chord in bar eight is functioning as the V in the parallel major mode. This modal interchange results in multiple chord qualities occurring on the same positions.

Similar to Mseleku's piece, the solo section chord progression in Dyer's tune is different from the form of the head. It uses the first three chords of the introduction, ending with a C7 chord in the fourth bar, instead of going back to the Fm/Ab polychord. This is followed by a standard I-VI-II-V progression providing some functional harmony for the improviser. The C7 chord acts as IV in G Dorian. Mseleku used a similar approach in his solo section, also using secondary dominants to replace the minor seventh chords usually found in the Phrygian mode.

The musical notation shows a treble clef with a key signature of one flat (Bb). The progression consists of eight chords: Gm7, Fm/Ab, Bb6, C7, Gm7, E7(#9), A7, and D7. Below the staff, Roman numerals are provided: I, II, III (Dorian), IV (Dorian), I, #VI, #II, and V.

Fig. 77 – solo section chord progression of 'Meditation Suite'

Dyer's composition 'The Artist' is another example of his writing that uses a modal style. The piece makes extensive use of modal interchange throughout the long form. The melody cannot really be analysed as one particular mode (or even a few different modes) due to the extensive use of modal interchange. The melody notes are derived from the mode of the moment. If one were to write the melody notes as a hybrid scale, it would be the chromatic scale. For the sake of ease, I analyse the modal interchange in the key of C.

♩ = 52

A A \flat maj7 F \sharp maj7 E \flat maj7 D7(b9)

bVI (Phrygian) #IV (Locrian) bIII (Dorian) II (Lydian)

5 B \flat m(b6) Bmaj7(#5)

bVII (Phrygian) VII

B A \flat maj7 F \sharp maj7 E \flat maj7 C $^{\circ}$ 7

bVI (Phrygian) #IV (Locrian) bIII (Dorian) I

13 B \flat m(b6) Bmaj7(#5)

bVII (Phrygian) VII

♩ = 90

C D \flat maj7(#5) Bmaj7(#5) Dm7(b5) F \sharp maj7(#5) Bmaj7(#5) Dm7(b5)

bII VII II (Aeolian) #IV VII II (Aeolian)

21 D \flat maj7(#5) Bmaj7(#5) Dm7(b5) F \sharp maj7(#5) Bmaj7(#5)

bII VII II (Aeolian) #IV VII

D Dm7(b5) G7alt.

II (Aeolian) V (Major)

28 Am¹³ G¹³ Fm(maj7)

VI (Lydian) V (Major) IV

32 E_b/B C/A_b F_m $G_b\text{maj}7(\#11)$ D_b^6 $G7(\text{sus}4)$
V (Major) I (Major) IV (Phrygian) bV (Locrian) bII (Phrygian) V (Major)

36 **E** solos C E_b^6 F^7 $D_b\text{maj}7$
1st x only $bIII$ (Dorian) IV (Dorian) bII (Phrygian)
I (Major)

41 **F** $D_m7(b5)$ $G^7\text{alt.}$ 4
II (Aeolian) V (Major)

45 A_m^{13} 3 G^{13} $F_m(\text{maj}7)$
VI (Lydian) V (Major) IV

49 E_b/B C/A_b F_m $G_b\text{maj}7(\#11)$ D_b^6 $G7(\text{sus}4)$ C
V (Major) I (Major) IV (Phrygian) bV (Locrian) bII (Phrygian) V (Major) I (Major)

Fig. 78 – lead sheet of ‘The Artist’ indicating modal interchange

There are moments of functional harmony in the piece, for example, from bar 35 to 36, with the movement from V to I in the major mode. The same resolution occurs in the last two chords.

The composition makes use of chords from six different major modes: Phrygian, Locrian, Dorian, Lydian, Aeolian and the major (Ionian) mode. The harmony is very much guided by the melody, as almost each bar, if not every beat, uses a chord from a different mode.

4.3.3. Intertextuality through Modality: Mseleku’s influence in Dyer’s Music

Dyer uses modality in a similar manner to Mseleku, which can largely be seen when comparing ‘The Age of Inner Knowing’ and ‘Meditation Suite’. Dyer does mention this inspiration and it can be heard through the similar harmony that is present in both

compositions. Both artists make use of a combination of functional harmony and modal interchange in their compositions. This similarity could be attributed to the fact that Dyer has transcribed Mseleku's 'The Age of Inner Knowing' and in so doing, has absorbed and taken inspiration from Mseleku's harmonic language. Dyer makes more extensive use of modal interchange, however, and did not make use of pure modal harmony, as Mseleku did in 'Vukani'.

4.3.4. Modality in Ntuli's Music

Ntuli's composition 'Umthandazo' (which translates to 'The Prayer' in English) makes use of a modal melody and modal interchange.

The musical score for 'Umthandazo' is presented in four staves, all in 5/4 time and C Dorian mode (one flat, two naturals). The key signature is B-flat major (C minor).

- Staff 1 (Measures 0-8):** Labeled 'C Dorian:'. It begins with a boxed 'A' and a 'V' chord symbol $G^{(sus4)}$. The melody features a triplet of eighth notes (G, A, B) and a descending eighth-note line (A, G, F, E). Chord symbols include $G^{(sus4)}$, Cm/D , $G^{(sus4)}$, and Cm/D .
- Staff 2 (Measures 5-8):** Continues the melody from the first staff. Chord symbols include $G^{(sus4)}$, Cm/D , $G^{(sus4)}$, and Cm/D .
- Staff 3 (Measures 9-10):** Labeled with a boxed 'B'. It shows a modal interchange to IV (Ionian) with an F chord, followed by III with an $E_b^{maj7}(\#11)$ chord.
- Staff 4 (Measures 11-15):** Continues the modal interchange. It starts with IV (Ionian) and an F chord, then moves to III with $E_b^{maj7}(\#11)$ chords in two first endings. The piece concludes with a 5/4 time signature.

Fig. 79 – lead sheet of ‘Umthandazo’ indicating chord analysis and modal interchange

The melody in letters A and B is based on C Dorian, with harmony based on chords drawn from that mode. The only deviation from the Dorian harmonic series is chord IV in letter B, which in Ntuli’s piece is an F major chord, which is borrowed from the Ionian harmonic series, which is the parallel major harmonic series. If chord IV was drawn from the Dorian harmonic series, it would be a dominant seventh chord, as seen below.

Fig. 80 – C Dorian

Fig. 81 – diatonic seventh chords of C Dorian

In section A, Ntuli utilises static harmony to imply the C Dorian tonality with chords Gsus4 and Cmin/D. The polychord creates some harmonic ambiguity, as it uses a strong C minor triadic sound, which indicates chord I in the harmonic series. However, the minor triad is superimposed on a D bass note, which is the second degree of the scale. The melody outlines

the notes of a D minor 7 chord (F, A and C in bars 2 and 6). Therefore, the chord should be analysed as chord II, not chord I. In the modality of C Dorian, the two chords in section A can simply be analysed as chord V to II to indicate the tonality. This is using static harmony, and harmonic ambiguity, which are both typical of the modal style.

This static harmony continues into letter B where the chords move up and down stepwise (in this case a tone). The two chords in letter B can be analysed as chord III and IV. Chord III is found in C Dorian, whereas chord IV is found in C Ionian (the parallel major).

Letter C uses a different tonality to alter the melody, which can be seen with the use of the F-sharp and E-natural. The section starts off with the same chords as the B section, but in the second bar the E-flat chord moves up a semitone to E minor to accompany the F-sharp in the melody. The chords then move up and down chromatically. The E minor chord indicates modal interchange and is borrowed from the Lydian mode. At the second time bar there is another use of modal interchange: the A-flat major chord is drawn from the Phrygian mode. In this section, there is no dominant mode used, due to extensive modal interchange. Ntuli makes use of harmony from four different modes at letter C: Ionian, Lydian, Phrygian and Dorian.

The melody at letter C uses a combination of C Dorian and C Lydian dominant. Here the inclusion of the E-natural is a natural third and the F-sharp is a sharp four. The B-flat (flat seven) remains, indicating a Lydian dominant sound, in which the sharp four and flat seven are characteristic notes. Letter C's melody could therefore be analysed as a hybrid scale: a combination of C Dorian and C Lydian dominant.

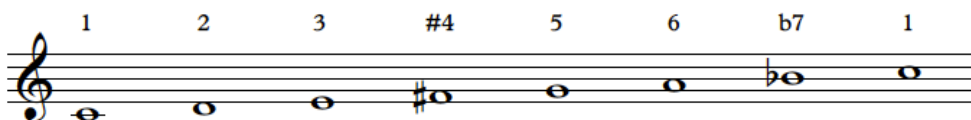


Fig. 82 – C Lydian dominant



Fig. 83 – Hybrid scale Ntuli uses at letter C in ‘Umthandazo’

The A minor chord at the end of letter C (bar 19) could be analysed as chord VI in the Ionian mode. Because of what follows, it can also be considered to have a dual function of chord III, leading into the solo section, which is in F major.

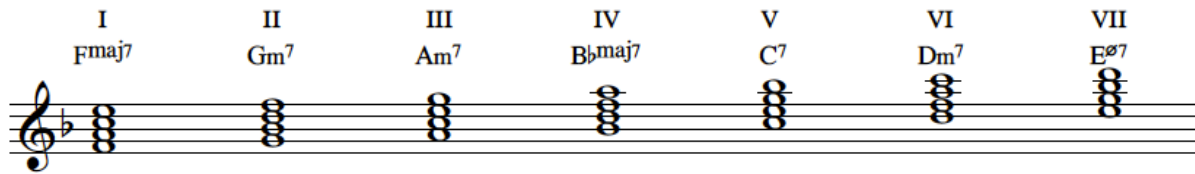


Fig. 84 - diatonic seventh chords of F Major

The A minor 7 chord could be analysed as chord III and the B-flat major as chord IV, which are both chords present in F major. The B-flat major chord is present in C Dorian as chord VII, but the A minor chord is not present in C Dorian: the VI chord in C Dorian is a half-diminished chord. This creates a different key centre for the solo section. This tonality is not found in the form of the composition itself. The use of an entirely different tonality or key centre using functional harmony is similar to what Mseleku and Dyer make use of in their modal compositions ‘The Age of Inner Knowing’ and ‘Meditation Suite’, respectively.

Another one of Ntuli’s compositions that is written in a modal style is ‘Sangare’. It makes use of a modal melody and modal interchange.

I III IV (Major) II (Lydian)
 Eb Dorian: Eb(sus4) Gbmaj7 Ab6 F(sus4)

III IV (Major) II (Lydian) III IV (Major)
 4 Gbmaj7 Ab6 F(sus4) Gbmaj7 Ab6

bII (Phrygian) bII (Phrygian) V (Major) bII (Phrygian) V (Major)
 7 Emaj7(#11) 1. Emaj7(#11) Bb(sus4) 2. Emaj7(#11) Bb(sus4)

A I III IV (Major) I I
 Eb(sus4) Gbmaj7 Ab6 Eb(sus4) Eb(add2)

III IV I III IV (Major)
 13 Gbmaj7 Ab7 Eb(sus4) Gbmaj7 Ab6

I III IV (Major) III IV (Major)
 16 Eb(sus4) 1. Gbmaj7 Ab6 2. Gbmaj7 Ab6

B I III IV (Major) II (Lydian) III IV (Major)
 19 Eb(sus4) Gbmaj7 Ab6 F(sus4) Gbmaj7 Ab6

II (Lydian) III bII (Phrygian) bV (Locrian) V (Major)
 23 F(sus4) Gbmaj7 Emaj7(#11) Amaj7(#11) Bb(sus4)

27 I Eb(sus4) V (Major) Bb(sus4) III Gbmaj7 V (Major) Bb(sus4)

29 C I Eb(sus4) V (Major) Bb(sus4) III Gbmaj7 V (Major) Bb(sus4) I Eb(add2) V (Major) Bb(sus4)

32 III Gbmaj7 V (Major) Bb(sus4) I Eb(sus4) V (Major) Bb(sus4) III Gbmaj7 V (Major) Bb(sus4)

35 I Eb(sus4) V (Major) Bb(sus4) III Gbmaj7 IV (Major) Ab6

Fig. 85– lead sheet of ‘Sangare’ indicating chord analysis and modal interchange

The melody makes use of E-flat Dorian throughout the head. The D-sharp in bar 25 is merely an enharmonic equivalent for E-flat.

Fig. 86 – E-flat Dorian

The harmony borrows predominantly from E-flat Dorian, but makes extensive use of modal interchange. The chords used from E-flat Dorian are chords I, III and IV.

I Ebm7 II Fm7 III Gbmaj7 IV Ab7 V Bbm7 VI Cø7 VII Dbmaj7

(or Ebsus4, or Ebadd2)

Fig. 87 - diatonic seventh chords of E-flat Dorian

The composition makes use of extensive ambiguous harmony, which is common in modal jazz. The Ebsus4 chord is ambiguous because of the omission of the third of the chord.

However, for example, the flat-third in the melody over the Ebsus4 chord in bar 16 indicates that the chord has a minor quality and therefore should be analysed as chord I in E-flat Dorian.

The Ebadd2 chord is also ambiguous, due to the omission of the third of the chord. The melody in bar 10, for example, includes a D-flat which is a flat-seventh, and the accompaniment is playing a flat-third which therefore gives the chord a minor quality. Therefore, the chord should be analysed as chord I in E-flat Dorian.

Extensive modal interchange is used in ‘Sangare’, borrowing chords from the Lydian, major, Phrygian, and Locrian modes. The chord used from E-flat Lydian includes chord II, as shown below:

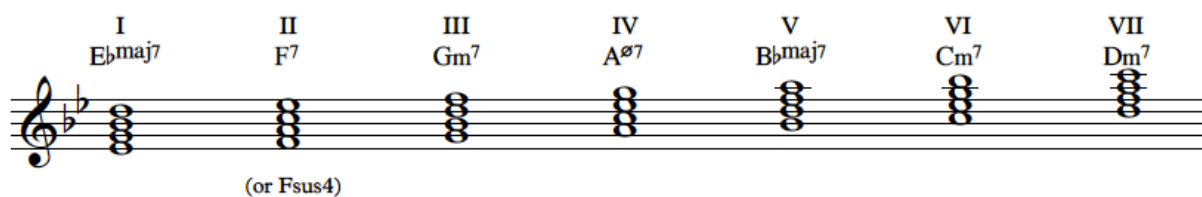


Fig. 88 – diatonic seventh chords of E-flat Lydian

The chords used from E-flat Major include chords IV and V, as shown below.

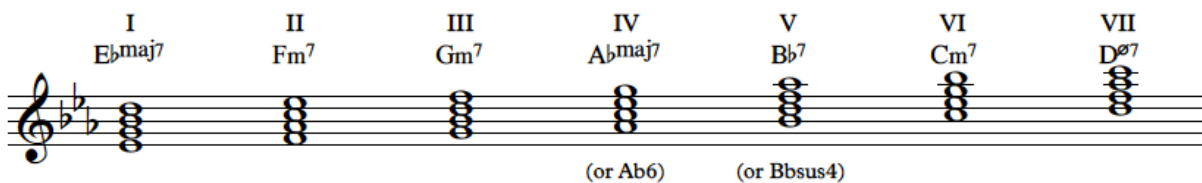


Fig. 89 – diatonic seventh chords from E-flat Major

The Bbsus4 chord can be analysed as chord V in the Major (Ionian) mode. For example, in bar 30 the melody includes an A-flat (which is a flat-seventh) making the chord have a dominant seventh quality, not a major or minor quality. The A♭6 chord is also ambiguous and can be analysed as chord IV in either the parallel major mode or the Mixolydian mode, as both modes indicate chord IV as having a major quality.

The chord used from E-flat Phrygian includes chord bII, as shown below. I have notated the bII chord as its enharmonic equivalent (E major 7) for ease of reading, rather than using F-flat major 7. E major 7#11 is the chord used in ‘Sangare’. I have done the same with B major 7, rather than C-flat major 7.

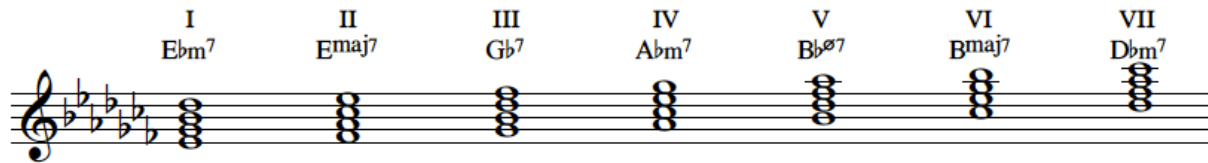


Fig. 90 - diatonic seventh chords from E-flat Phrygian

The chord used from E-flat Locrian includes chord bV, as shown below. E-flat Locrian is the seventh mode of F-flat major, but I have notated the bV chord as its enharmonic equivalent (A major 7) for ease of reading, rather than notating the chord as B-double-flat major 7. A major 7#11 is the chord used in ‘Sangare’. Without looking at this composition through a modal lens, one could also analyse the A major 7#11 chord as a moment of constant structure because the chord is preceded by an E major 7#11.

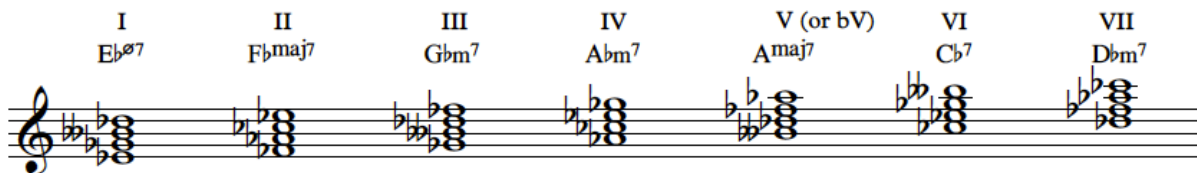


Fig. 91 - diatonic seventh chords from E-flat Locrian

Due to the extensive use of modal interchange, the harmony is not static, unlike ‘Umthandazo’. There is a lot of stepwise motion in the roots, which is common in modal jazz. This can be seen, for example, from bars 5 to 6. Letter C makes use of the movement I-V-I. Chord III is a related chord of chord I so could be analysed as such. The harmony in letter B is based on the chord progression in the introduction (bars 1 to 9), and the harmony in letter C is based on the chord progression in letter A, with the addition of a Bbsus4 chord.

4.3.5. Intertextuality through Modality: Mseleku's influence in Ntuli's Music

Mseleku writes 'Vukani' in a typical and pure modal jazz style with the use of one modality, use of a pedal section, ostinato bass lines, quartal harmony and no functional harmony. Ntuli also writes in this modal style without any use of functional harmony; however, she often makes use of extensive modal interchange and ambiguous harmony. In 'Umthandazo', Ntuli used some modal interchange and some more harmonic rhythm within the piece's main modality, unlike in 'Vukani' where no modal interchange is used. Ntuli also seems to favour hybrid modal scales, like Mseleku, where more than one mode is used throughout the melody. 'Vukani' and 'Sangare' are exceptions to this, where a single mode is used throughout the melody.

4.4. Texture and Instrumentation

All three artists make use of unique textural and instrumentation considerations. One could argue that Dyer and Ntuli's unique textures could be influenced in part by Mseleku, especially when it comes to combining American and South African jazz aesthetics. There are many different textural concerns one could discuss when comparing these three artists. I cover as many points as I can within the remit of this study, but in this theme, I pay special attention to textural considerations such as their use of guitar, flute and vocals within their ensembles.

4.4.1. Texture and Instrumentation in Mseleku's Music

Mseleku's music utilises varying subgenres of jazz, and as a result his approach to form, tempo, texture and dynamics was diverse. Mseleku favoured the use of traditional small jazz ensemble combinations in the majority of his recordings: These included the jazz piano trio, jazz quartet with tenor saxophone as lead instrument, or the classic jazz quintet with trumpet and tenor saxophone as the frontline instruments, backed by a trio of piano, double bass and drums.

The horns would either play in unison, octaves or in close harmony with each other, and Mseleku would often double the horn melody on piano. These techniques are very common

in traditional hard bop quintets. However, Mseleku was unique in his addition of unusual instruments such as flute, soprano saxophone or vocals to these traditional jazz ensembles.

Mseleku opens his album *Timelessness* with the titular track: a fast-paced tune that allows the listener no time to acclimatise to the fact that the album is starting. Mseleku starts with a thick textured introduction with long rhythmic notes, and a constant upper structure in the piano chords (which descend chromatically). The tenor saxophone, together with the drums, catches the rhythmic hits, and the drummer creates intensity with multiple, complex fills in between these rhythmic accents. This introduction is the main motif to which the band continually returns. Juxtaposing the main motif sections, are sections which feature fast changing, descending harmonies, over which the tenor saxophone and piano play a bebop-like, constant eighth-note melody in the piece. The main theme is repeated at the end of the tune, as a vamp over which the drummer solos. However, with every repeat of the theme Mseleku alters the upper structures of the chords, creating the effect of a static melody over a shifting harmonic and rhythmic palette.

In contrast to this, “Vukani” starts off with a slow, but long meditative introduction with a four-bar syncopated repeated bass line and march-like feel from the snare drum. This bass line and the snare drum are carried into the melody with a vocal refrain from the band singing the repetitive lyrics in harmony. The song starts to build to a climax with thick harmonies and then a faster tempo is reached with a new rhythmic feel (from a two-feel to a four-feel) and new repeated bassline. Throughout these shifting rhythmic and textural moods, the harmony is all based within the mode of C Phrygian. The only time that this breaks, is for two bars of functional harmony, providing a brief harmonic shift before the tune returns to the driving rhythmic feel, repeated syncopated bass line and C Phrygian harmony.

While Mseleku often uses advanced harmonic and rhythmic motifs against a thick textural landscape, a tune like “Looking Within” demonstrates Mseleku’s more subtle compositional voice. A ballad with a sparsely beautiful yet dissonant melody floating over Mseleku’s chord voicings, the head of “Looking Within” is short here by comparison to Mseleku’s other compositions. This provides the performers with an opportunity for long improvisations in his typical ballad style.

Mseleku's melodic writing tends towards sweeping singable melodies, with his beautiful touch on the piano keys in contrast to his often-angular improvising with the use of patterns. He would also comp with lush harmonies and richly voiced chords.

Distinctly, Mseleku often scored his melodies for the flute: his debut album *Celebration* included flute on 'Angola', 'The Age of Inner Knowing', 'Cycle', 'Joy' and 'Supreme Love'; his album *Timelessness* included flute on 'C-Ton' and 'Ntuli Street'; and his album *Beauty of Sunrise* (1997) included flute on 'Violet Flame'. The flute is not often heard as a melody instrument in jazz but Mseleku often included it in his works. He favoured using the flute to double the melody with piano ('C-Ton', 'Angola', 'Ntuli Street' and 'Joy'), with trumpet ('Violet Flame') or with tenor saxophone ('Cycle'). Mseleku created a warm yet sweet texture by combing the flute in unison or octaves with another instrument on the melody.

The use of multi-layered vocals is a unique feature that is not often found in traditional American hard bop ensembles. When Mseleku wrote for vocals, he mainly made use of the voice in the role of a horn player to double the melody with a unique tone quality and African-style scat syllables. Mseleku often used multiple voices in unison or harmony as backgrounds to the melody played on horns or piano, as opposed to solo vocal.

On the track 'Vukani', the band members sing together, although here Mseleku uses group vocals as a feature, rather than as a solo vocal feature. Similarly, on the tune 'Thula Mtwana', the vocals are very repetitive and often the vocal melodies are lyric-less ('scatting' the melody). In amongst the multi-layered vocals, Mseleku's nasal vocal tone can be heard, providing a distinct textural quality. Another example of his use of vocals, is in 'Suluman Saud'. Here, Mseleku uses vocal interjections in the introduction and in other sections the vocals double the horn melody for a different texture.

One exception is the song 'Through the Years', recorded on Mseleku's third album *Timelessness*, featuring vocalist Abbey Lincoln. Mseleku wrote the melody for Lincoln and she wrote the lyrics. This was the only song Mseleku recorded that was a pure vocal feature, with lyrics and a guest vocalist.

It was only on his final album, *Home At Last*, that Mseleku explored writing melodies for the guitar. This album could be described as his most commercial, utilising simpler chord

progressions and more of a typical South African aesthetic. On this album, the guitar is used on four tracks. The titular track is similar to an RnB song in the groove, which the guitar highlights with typical comping in that style. ‘Dance With Me Tonight’ and ‘Nants’ Inkululeko’ also has the guitar mainly comping, while ‘Imbali’ has the guitar doubling the horn melody in the A section and doubling the piano melody in the B section.

On his album *Beauty of Sunrise*, Mseleku explores the textures made possible by the typical hard bop jazz quintet, comprising trumpet, tenor saxophone and piano trio. This album is arguably Mseleku’s most traditional in terms of jazz instrumentation and compositional approach. The exception on this recording is ‘Suluman Saud’, on which Mseleku has added his trademark vocal interjections.

Mseleku also recorded and performed his compositions for solo piano, such as on his album *Meditations*. As described by Nduduzo Makhathini, his solo piano work displays characteristics of “short melodic themes (often moving in cyclical patterns) and spontaneous improvisations” (Makhathini, 2018: 4). This was in contrast to his ensemble playing, which features more structure in the composition and arrangement considerations. Mseleku did not make use of any keyboard, electric piano, synthesiser or Fender Rhodes piano, probably due to the fact that he did not write his music in a jazz funk style.

4.4.2. Texture and Instrumentation in Dyer’s Music

As a performer and improviser, Dyer’s playing mutates from singing melodies to angular improvisation with ease. As a composer and bandleader, it is evident that Dyer gives his band members freedom to interpret their parts, and much of the end product is left up to communication between players during the recording of his music. However, Dyer does seem to favour writing for the piano left hand and bass to double, giving a strong bass line and underpinning to many of his compositions. Often these bass lines take the form of an ostinato bass line and contribute to larger macro-structural repetitive sections, which act to build the music to climactic peaks. Such a musical technique results in meditative or trance-like aspects to these compositions, which is popular in contemporary jazz. Dyer often employs slow introductions, with either solo piano or drum solos, allowing for a greater dynamic and textural growth within the composition.

Dyer's harmonic language utilises functional jazz harmony, as well as more experimental modal harmonic techniques. Dyer has also experimented with Southern African rhythmic influences and textures with the addition of percussion on 'Vuvuzela' and 'Chimurenga'.

While *Neo Native* sees Dyer composing exclusively for a traditional jazz piano trio (piano, double bass and drums) (de Villiers, 2021: 54), he also utilises large horn ensembles, as is evident on *World Music, Emancipate the Story* (2011) and *Mirrors* (2010). Dyer favours writing for quintet with the trumpet and tenor saxophone taking the melody and he would often write for them in octaves, which is typical of a hard bop quintet. The horns in Dyer's compositions are often written in close harmony for the trumpet and tenor saxophone.

Similar to Mseleku, Dyer sometimes writes for wordless vocals that double horn lines, to add to the texture of his compositions. An example of this is on his jazz ballad 'Blessing'. This piece makes use of vocal textural soundscapes using effects, creating a sound akin to throat singing. Similar to Mseleku's 'Suluman Saud', on Dyer's piece one can hear improvised vocal interjections in the introduction.

Dyer's experimentation with guitar textures can be heard on isolated examples within his compositions. The guitar writing on several pieces explores special effects on the instrument, such as the use of palm-muted strings, such as heard on 'Transit'. The guitarist often utilises guitar effects, such as echo and delay, as on 'Hoods'. Dyer also writes for the guitar to double horn melodies, like on 'Keynote', or to play the melody as soloist, as on 'Waiting, Falling'.

Dyer tends to play on piano predominantly, but when playing in a funk style, he often plays on keyboard, Fender Rhodes or synthesiser. This can be heard on the tracks 'Recess' and 'Kgalagadi'. Additionally, Dyer experiments with the usage of what he calls prepared 'African piano'. This technique is featured on the solo piano track 'Water'. Here Dyer makes the piano sound like various Southern African melodic percussion instruments, such as the mbira.

My thinking in the African Piano concept is to approach the piano a bit of a different way. I'm trying to draw inspiration from traditional African instruments and African music influences, basically not looking on piano as a Jazz and Classical instrument appropriated for the purposes of African music, but instead looking into the past and looking at very traditional music and seeing how to bring that message across on the piano. This is basically my thinking when I get to the "African Piano" music.
(Hawkins, 2018)

4.4.3. Intertextuality through Texture and Instrumentation: Mseleku's influence in Dyer's Music

Dyer is inspired by Mseleku's textural considerations, but develops it to a perhaps more modern context. This is predominantly done through Dyer's particular use of guitar and vocals. Mseleku is not known for using guitar in his ensemble, but when he did use the instrument on the album *Home At Last*, it was mainly just accompanying the groove. Dyer utilises the guitar slightly differently, and often uses it to double the melody, and with effects like delay and palm muting. Just as Mseleku combines traditional American hard bop instrumentation with South African vocal aesthetics, Dyer does the same. This combination could be described as a sonic signifier, linking the two artist's work. It could be argued that Mseleku paved the way for this to be explored by future South African jazz musicians.

4.4.4. Texture and Instrumentation in Ntuli's Music

Ntuli plays the piano with a powerful touch, accompanying herself with lush harmonies, lyrical melodies and ornate improvisation. Her compositions are filled with joy and hope together with crescendos to pivotal points in her pieces and changes of pace. There is both modal and functional jazz harmony present in her music, and she will often experiment with time signatures and polyrhythms in her compositions.

Ntuli's composition 'Umthandazo' makes use of a wider scope of instrumentation than Mseleku tended toward: utilising keyboards instead of piano on this recording, and electric guitar with effects. The composition has a time signature of 5/4 with a long form of extended melodic ideas. Each section is repeated a few times, which creates an almost meditative or trance-like mood as the piece builds up towards the solo section. The texture changes on each repeat, with different instruments being added: the A section just has the vocals on the melody, then at section B the saxophone is added to the vocal melody, with the thickest

texture occurring in section C, where the melody is played by the saxophone, guitar and vocals. Another vocal line is also added in harmony, to further thicken the texture of this section.

Mseleku and Ntuli seem to have similar textural considerations in their use of the combination of voice (used as another horn), and saxophone for the melody, whether the vocals use lyrics or not. The use of guitar and keyboards (instead of piano) however gives 'Umthandazo' a different sound to Mseleku's 'Vukani' and does not make the two recordings audibly comparable at a first listening.

Ntuli uses flute in some of her compositions, such as 'The Void'. Here the flute doubles the piano melody, which is comparable to Mseleku's 'Angola' in terms of this textural approach. The two compositions are, however, very different: 'Angola' is up-tempo, whereas 'The Void' is a ballad which makes use of spoken word poetry, improvised flute lines and flute effects like flutter tonguing. As Gxolo described: "Ntuli's work speaks to myriad influences such as incorporating the flute, as is done in what is commonly referred to as spiritual jazz" (2018).

As well as being a pianist, Ntuli is also a singer, and will often sing her own compositions while playing piano, or sing backing vocals, as can be heard on her debut album. Ntuli's approach to vocal writing is to use the singer as one would a horn player, to create a melodic texture. In 'Sangare', the vocals double the horn melody, while in 'Lonely Heart' vocals both double the horn line and sing lyrics for the head.

Ntuli's music is replete with experimental textures of different instruments. One example is the use of electric guitar, which can either be heard doubling the melody or playing with effects like echo, as in 'Sangare'. Similar to Dyer, Ntuli also makes use of palm-muted guitar, such as in 'Uz'ubuye'. And similar to both Mseleku and Dyer, Ntuli also writes for the guitar to double the horn melody, as in 'H.T'.

Many of Ntuli's compositions are written with a full ensemble in mind: she adds guitar, trumpet and saxophone to the always-present piano trio (piano, bass and drums). Similar to Mseleku and Dyer, Ntuli often makes use of the hard bop ensemble texture of trumpet and tenor saxophone doubled at the octave, such as in '201AA'.

A few of Ntuli's compositions are written for solo piano: the ballad introduction to 'Uz'ubuye' opens with solo piano to create a gentler mood. Ntuli tends to compose for predominantly for piano, but utilises a keyboard for a few of her works, such as 'Umthandazo'.

4.4.5. Intertextuality through Texture and Instrumentation: Mseleku's influence in Ntuli's Music

Ntuli is also inspired by Mseleku's textural considerations, and similarly to Dyer, takes these further to a more modern context. Ntuli's use of flute makes a strong link between her and Mseleku. Her use of vocals in the role of a horn player, with African-style scat syllables creates a unique tone quality that is easily identifiable with Mseleku's writing. The two artists are also comparable when it comes to their singable melodies and angular improvisations.

Chapter 5: Conclusion

Home At Last

Through interviews and analysis, this thesis has explored the notion of intertextuality between Mseleku, Dyer and Ntuli. This was done through conceptual consideration of four unique themes present in their music: dedication, cycles, modality and texture. In doing so, this research has considered how each artist has their own particular compositional voice, while simultaneously forming musical intertextual relations in the jazz tradition. Between Dyer and Mseleku, and Ntuli and Mseleku, there is a clear existing relationship, one audible in the music of the two younger pianists, utilising Mseleku's musical legacy while forging their own distinct musical paths. Certain elements of the jazz language come out in one's playing, often subconsciously, due to the aural nature of the jazz tradition, making the act of critical listening an essential starting point for such musicological thought.

As has been discussed earlier, intertextuality allows for a multidirectional relationship to exist between texts, allowing for more interpretation of the text from the listener. This allows for considerations of text to move beyond their historical context, and into the interpretive: it successfully avoids the linear characteristics of influence. By making these connections through analysis and fieldwork, this research has endeavoured to place the music of Mseleku into dialogue with that of two pianists from a younger generation. Intertextual considerations provide mechanisms to take Mseleku's music out of, and beyond, its historical position and allow it to be considered reinterpreted in the present.

Two clear links that were found in this study were between Mseleku's 'The Age of Inner Knowing' and Dyer's 'Meditation Suite', and between Mseleku's 'Closer to the Source' and Ntuli's 'Uz'ubuye'. In 'Meditation Suite', one can hear sonic signifiers in the composition's mood, the harmony and a direct nod to Mseleku through some of Dyer's piano fills. In 'Uz'ubuye', one can hear sonic signifiers in the repetitive melodic and harmonic cycle to lend itself to extensive thematic development through improvisation.

Other links between Mseleku and Ntuli can be seen in their common use of extended melodic development, modal melodies and modal interchange. Ntuli states: "... what I have loved about [Mseleku's] cyclical changing of keys is how seamless it makes key changes or harmonic changes happen. So I haven't necessarily done it exactly but I've enjoyed it when

my songs can move between modalities without it necessarily being obvious” (Ntuli, 2019). Mseleku and Ntuli also use the flute in a jazz context, and vocals using South African scat syllables and unique tone qualities.

While Dyer does not use fully cyclical techniques like Mseleku (who often used to cycle through all twelve keys in a single composition), he makes use of cyclical harmonic sequences to extend the composition’s main theme. Dyer also more often than not combines modal interchange, and functional and ambiguous harmony rather than using purely functional or modal harmony. This differs from Mseleku, who would often either use purely functional harmony or purely modal harmony.

Both Dyer and Ntuli combine traditional American hard bop and modal jazz with South African aesthetics, which is a characteristic of Mseleku’s music. In their use of instrumentation, both Dyer and Ntuli use vocals in the role of a horn, electric guitar effects and keyboard to perhaps bring Mseleku’s style to a more modern context. It could be argued that Mseleku paved the way for young South African jazz musicians to do this. All of these aspects show the presence of links between these artists, but do not necessarily prove the existence of influence.

As mentioned before, further research could be done on Mseleku, especially on his influence when it comes to his spiritual relationship to music, and Zulu aesthetics in jazz. As Dyer states:

Also his spiritual approach to music is commendable because he places a lot of importance on trying to be a vessel of communication; it’s like separating yourself from the mechanics of the music and accessing it from a different side of thinking. So even though if you analyse his solos you will find that technically in the music mechanics it all makes perfect sense and his understanding of functional harmony is really great. Technically proficient but there is also a lot of importance in the spiritual aspect to the way you approach music making. I think the spirituality is a very significant part of his expression.
(Dyer, 2019)

In recent years there has been a surge of interest in Mseleku, which can be seen in the release in 2021 of his previously unreleased album *Beyond the Stars* (2021) (which was recorded in 2003), the imminent release of Eugene Skeef’s documentary on Mseleku, and various other scholarly outputs that focus on Mseleku’s music.

I have argued that using intertextuality as a means of discussion on influence between jazz musicians is a helpful and meaningful theoretical tool. Jazz is inherently intertextual in nature, and therefore lends itself to different ways of analysing and to contrasting opinions.

The project has been eye-opening, and its in-depth nature has taught me much about techniques used in modern and South African jazz, which I can take into my own work as a performer, composer and arranger. Also, learning about and analysing Bheki Mseleku's music, and talking to various musicians who knew him, has been important to my understanding of South African jazz and its musicians in a historical and more holistic manner.

“Music is already there. We're not creators but channelers – we only have to be receptive” (Willgress, 1994: 29). This is a quote from Mseleku, and it speaks to a core belief of his; one that both Dyer and Ntuli share. This is one of the ways Mseleku has indirectly influenced musicians: not only through his music, but how he considered himself as a universally conscious human. As Mseleku's musical legacy continues to shift into greater focus, with more musicians and scholars acknowledging his presence within South African jazz, the music of this deeply introspective, thoughtful artist, is gaining the focus and recognition that it deserves.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Discography

Mseleku, Bheki

1992. *Celebration*, World Circuit.

1992. *Meditations*, Verve Records.

1994. *Timelessness*, Verve Records.

1995. *Star Seeding*, Verve Records and PolyGram.

1997. *Beauty of Sunrise*, Verve Records and PolyGram.

2003. *Home at Last*, Sheer Sound.

2021. *Beyond the Stars*, Tapestry Works. [posthumous release]

Dyer, Bokani

2010. *Mirrors*, Universal.

2011. *Emancipate the Story*, Dyertribe Music.

2015. *World Music*, Dyertribe Music.

2018. *Neo Native*, Dyertribe Music.

2020. *Kelenosi*, Dyertribe Music.

Ntuli, Thandi

2014. *The Offering*, Ndlela Music Company.

2018. *Exiled*, Ndlela Music Company.

2020. *Live at Jazzwerkstatt*, Ndlela Music Company.

Appendix 2: Interview Questions

Interview Questions for Bokani Dyer:

- 1) Please can you introduce yourself as an artist.
- 2) How did you first become aware of Bheki Mseleku and his music?
- 3) Do you remember when first you heard his music? What were your immediate thoughts or your first impression of him?
- 4) Did you ever get to meet or perform with Bheki Mseleku? What is your opinion of his music and him as a person?
- 5) How would you describe Mseleku's playing and composition style? Where and from which musicians would you say his influences come from?
- 6) Who influenced Bheki Mseleku in your opinion? How has he influenced you?
- 7) Do you think Bheki Mseleku has influenced other young South African musicians? How would you say this is evident?
- 8) I have noticed a sudden surge of interest in Bheki Mseleku over the past few years, would you agree? Please expand.
- 9) In an interview with Carol Martin in 2015 you mention Mseleku's ballad style influenced your composition "Transit" – how would you say this is so? I hear it mainly in the introduction and melody of the tune? Carol says she can hear similar chord structures in your playing to Mseleku's – would you agree? Please expand.
- 10) Your composition "Transit" and your album "World Music" makes use of traditional jazz influences and African sounds – what does influence mean to you in this sense and because of where you were born, your heritage and where you grew up?
- 11) You performed your own arrangement of Mseleku's composition "Cycles" (at Straight No Chaser in 2015) and "Age of Inner Knowing" in 2016 at The Orbit. How did you approach learning and performing these tunes?
- 12) You've also noted in an interview with Seton Hawkins in 2018 that your composition "Meditation Suite" was influenced by Mseleku's piece "Age of Inner Knowing" – what did you take from this piece? Was it when you originally learnt "Age of Inner Knowing" that your "Meditation Suite" came about?
- 13) You mention in the same interview with Hawkins that your composition "Whisper" is a dedication to Mseleku, attributing it to a spiritual frequency that is added to his music. It is definitely apparent in Bheki's music – would you say anything in

particular of Bheki's spiritual nature in his influenced this tune, or is it simply a dedication? For me, I can hear Bheki's influence and sound at the end of "Whisper".

- 14) Bheki Mseleku often said that a lot of people are scared to reveal their true self in their music and that by dealing with your own existence in a spiritual way, one can get through life more easily. Does this resonate with you personally and would you agree?
- 15) Bheki Mseleku likes to use chord progressions that cycle effortlessly through all 12 keys – have you checked this out and used this in your own playing and compositions? Have you checked out anything else in particular to his style and approach to piano playing?
- 16) Mseleku says that he's attracted to simplicity and that is how he heals himself and gets to a place of peace and security through music. Does this resonate with you at all?
- 17) Would you agree that you are one among many young South African musicians where you can hear Mseleku's influence in their playing?
- 18) What would you or do you teach your students about Mseleku's style and approach of playing?

Interview Questions for Thandi Ntuli:

- 1) Please can you introduce yourself as an artist.
- 2) How did you first become aware of Bheki Mseleku and his music?
- 3) Do you remember when first you heard his music? What were your immediate thoughts or your first impression of him?
- 4) Did you ever get to meet or perform with Bheki Mseleku? What is your opinion of his music and him as a person?
- 5) How would you describe Mseleku's playing and composition style? Where and from which musicians would you say his influences come from?
- 6) Who influenced Bheki Mseleku in your opinion? How has he influenced you?
- 7) Do you think Bheki Mseleku has influenced other young South African musicians? How would you say this is evident?
- 8) I have noticed a sudden surge of interest in Bheki Mseleku over the past few years, would you agree? Please expand.

- 9) Gwen Ansell mentions in an article for Business Day that she hears Mseleku as a point of reference in your music – would you agree?
- 10) Gwen is reminded of Mseleku in your meditative themes which become more ornate harmonically as they progress – would you agree? Would you attribute it to anything else?
- 11) Gwen also mentions that she hears Mseleku’s influence on your composition “Love Remembers” – do you agree with this statement? If so, which aspects would you say informed you?
- 12) You described Mseleku’s music as ‘sacred documents’ in a news24 interview in 2016 – could you please expand on this?
- 13) Bheki Mseleku often said that a lot of people are scared to reveal their true self in their music and that by dealing with your own existence in a spiritual way, one can get through life more easily. Does this resonate with you personally and would you agree?
- 14) Bheki Mseleku likes to use chord progressions that cycle effortlessly through all 12 keys – have you checked this out and used this in your own playing and compositions? Have you checked out anything else in particular to his style and approach to piano playing?
- 15) Mseleku says that he’s attracted to simplicity and that is how he heals himself and gets to a place of peace and security through music. Does this resonate with you at all?
- 16) Would you agree that you are one among many young South African musicians where you can hear Mseleku’s influence in their playing?
- 17) What would you or do you teach your students about Mseleku’s style and approach of playing?