



MUSIC A LEVEL COMPOSITION 2023

PRACTICE LOVE



BRIEF

- Write a Pop Ballad to be performed by a female vocalist at a talent show or live charity performance event (e.g. Live Aid) to help raise awareness for domestic violence.
- The song takes the perspective of a woman who still misses the man that hurt her. She is jealous of his new partner, even though she knows and believes that her own safety and well-being is more important than her relationship with her ex-partner.

LYRICS –

Verse 1:

How could I be so dumb
Guess it's the price of being numb
I've fallen in your arms
Now were dancing and I am seeing hearts
Smoking cigarettes on the bridge
Before we committed our first kiss

Chorus:

You took the plans we made and gave them to her, to her
Was I a practice love for you to learn to hurt, to hurt

Verse 2:

Does she know
The things I know
Cant she see the late nights shell be spending alone
Afraid which man will come home today
The gentleman
Or the lonely drunk

Bridge:

Remember when (took the plans we made and gave them to her)

Remember when

You called me up on the phone last night

You said you're tired of this whole life

Then you drink till you're on the floor

And you scream down the whole. Damn door

And I'm so tired of this

I miss the gentleman whose love was bliss

I miss

Ohh

Chorus:

You took the plans we made and gave them to her, to her
Was I a practice love for you to learn to hurt, to hurt

PRACTICE LOVE

- This composition is a pop ballad piece with lead female vocal and backing singers. The piece has a verse chorus structure with an intro, bridge and outro.
- This piece is written for piano accompaniment and instruments including, synth strings (violins and cellos), harp, drums, bass, horns section including saxophone and brass. The song begins with 8-part chorus.
- I have used a mixture of classical instruments and western pop instruments, typical of musical theatre, to give my composition variety and depth. Given that domestic violence is a huge problem all over the world today I wanted too make the song big and loud, because the problem needs to be heard and addressed.

FULL SCORE

Full Score Timeline and Instrument List

Timeline Markers: 1, 17, 33, 49, 65, 81, 97, 113, 129, 145, 161

Section Markers: choir vox intro, verse 1, drums start, chorus, refrain, verse 2, bridge, chorus

Instrument List (Left Panel):

- 1. M S R I bv1
- 2. M S R I bv2
- 3. M S R I bv3
- 4. M S R I bv4
- 5. M S R I bv5
- 6. M S R I bv6
- 7. M S R I bv7
- 8. M S R I bv8
- 9. M S R I main vocals
- 10. M S R I main vocals
- 11. M S R I bv harmony
- 12. M S R I main harmony
- 13. M S R I main...ony 2
- 14. M S R Stien...piano
- 15. M S R bass
- 16. M S R drums
- 17. M S Neo Soul DK
- 18. M S R flute dbl (vox)
- 19. M S R sax motif
- 20. M S R sax (imitation)
- 21. M S R trump...l (vox)
- 22. M S R chrus horns
- 23. M S R brass chorus
- 24. M S R trombones
- 25. M S R violin 1
- 26. M S R violin imitation
- 27. M S R string fills
- 28. M S R solo cello
- 29. M S R high cello
- 30. M S R Cellos
- 31. M S R harp

Score Elements (Right Panel):

- Vocals:** bv1: Comp A, bv2: Comp A, bv3#01, bv4, bv5, bv6, bv7, bv8, main vocals (vocals#01.3, voc, vocals#01.11, vocals#01.10), bv harmony (vrs hrm:), main harmony (harmony#01.2, harmon, harm), main...ony 2 (Audio 9: Comp A, Audio 9:).
- Piano:** Steinway Grand Piano, Steinway Piano 2, Steinway Piano 2.
- Bass:** bass, bass, bass, bass.
- Drums:** drums, Bluebird, Bluebird, Bluebird, Bluebird, Bluebird, BL, B, Bluebird, Bluebird, Bluebird, Bluebird, Bluebi, Blueb.
- Flute:** flute, Flute Solo, Flute Solo, flute dbl (vox), flute dbl (vox), Flute Solo, flute d.
- Sax:** sax motif, sax (imitation), Sax.
- Trumpets:** Trumpets, Trumpets, tru, tru, French Horns.
- Brass:** brass chorus, Fr, Full, desc, desc, Trombones.
- Violins:** violin 1, Violins 1, Violins 1.
- String Fills:** string fills, Ci, Ci.
- Cello/Double Bass:** solo cello, high cello, Cellos, stacc, stac, stac, Cellos.
- Harp:** Harp.

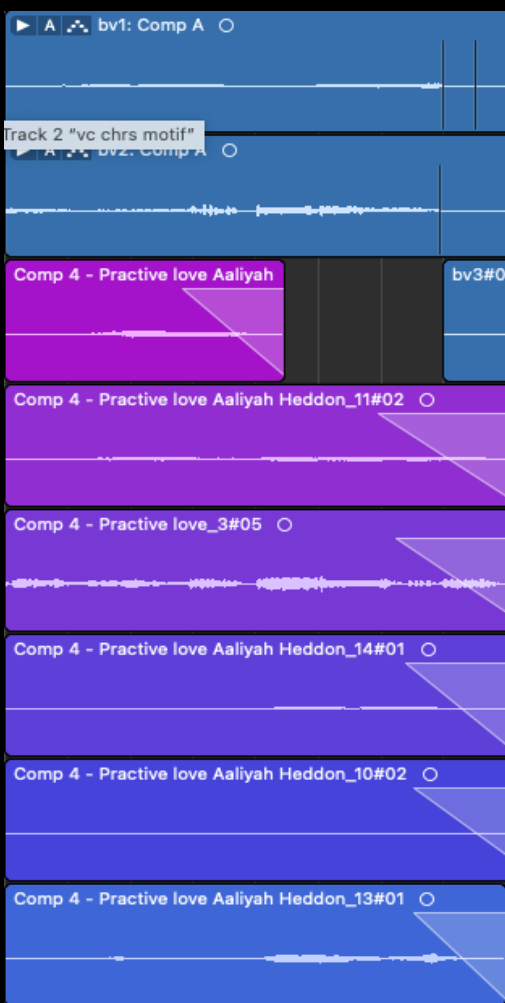


STRUCTURE

- This is a verse-chorus structures piece with an intro, bridge, and outro.

Introduction – Verse 1 – Chorus – Verse 2 – Bridge – Chorus 2 –
Outro

INTRODUCTION

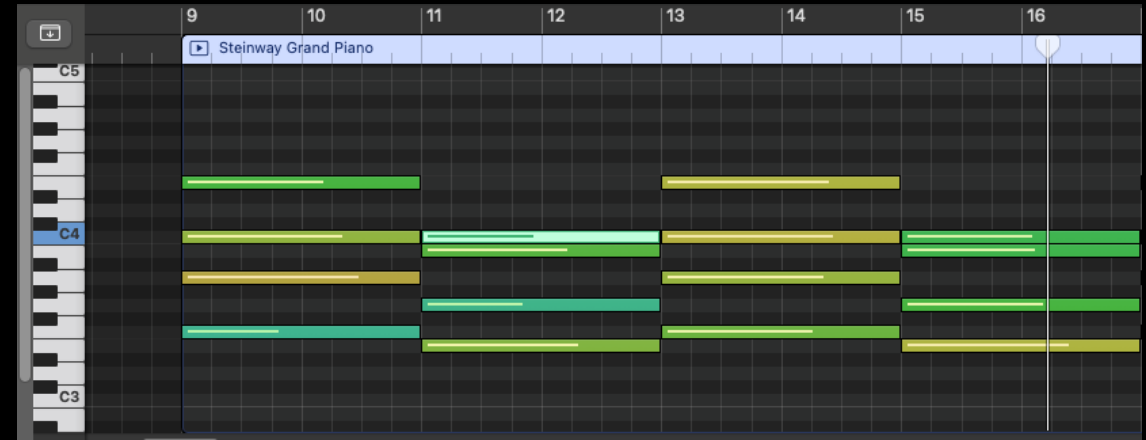


The introduction consists of choral vocals harmonising a descending chromatic line. Each part has conjunct movement and some chromaticism. I chose to do this because choir vocals like these give an angelic gospel style sound to the beginning of the piece to reflect the beginning of a relationship. There is contrary motion and polyphonic textures within these 8 bars. I have panned the parts left and right so the harmonies sound like they're coming from different sides of the room. As this is supposed to be performed live, I used panning to create a surround sound setting for speakers (two in front, two behind, two two the left and two to the right).



I have also added faders to the end of each track in order to let the piece flow better into the next phase of the piece without sounding choppy.

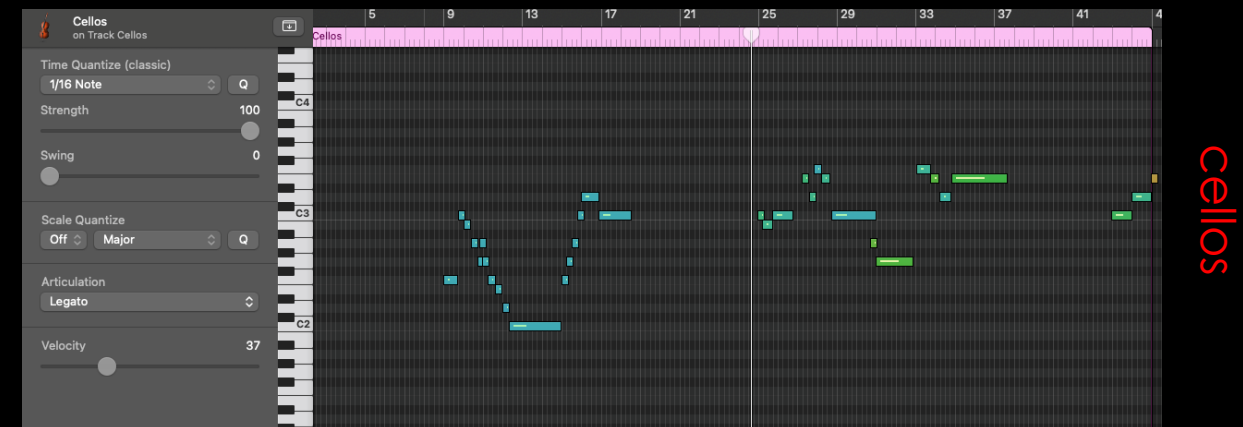
INTRODUCTION (BAR 9-16)



- Before the first verse begins, there is another 8-bar (bars 9 -16) section to the introduction, here the texture of the choral vocals is broken down to 3 parts rather than 8. this section introduces the key of the piece (F major).
- This is also where more of the instruments are being introduced, such as the harp, the cellos, the piano and the bass. The piano and the bass play the chord sequence (F-Cmaj7) while the harp plays a simple melody harmonising itself in thirds.



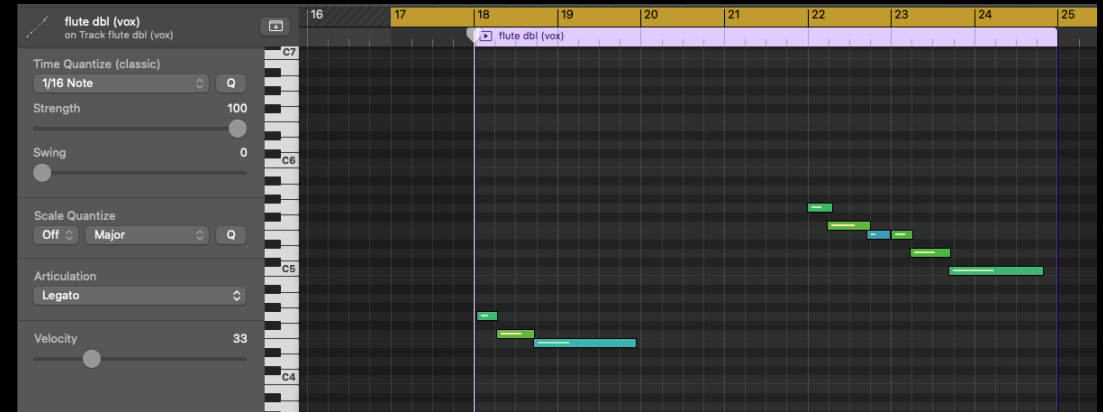
- The cello part has the main melody at this point in the song, it uses an ascending and descending melodic line with mainly conjunct movement and a few small leaps. This cello line continues into the first verse, however, it starts to act as a counter-melody in the song.



VERSE 1 (BARS 17-44)



- The most important part about this verse is the vocals. The main vocal hold the main melody which is a rising and descending melodic line in conjunct movement and this becomes the repeated them of the verse. This introduces the 1st theme before leading up to the first chorus. This theme is not seen again later on in the song, making it special as none of the sections are the same apart from the chorus. I have done this because I think it reflects the notion that no stage in a relationship will be the same as the last

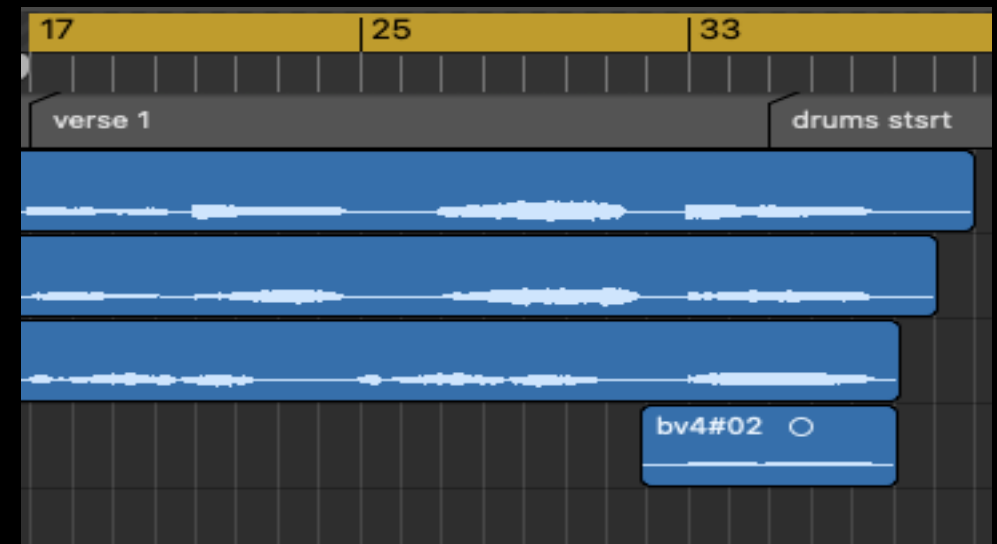
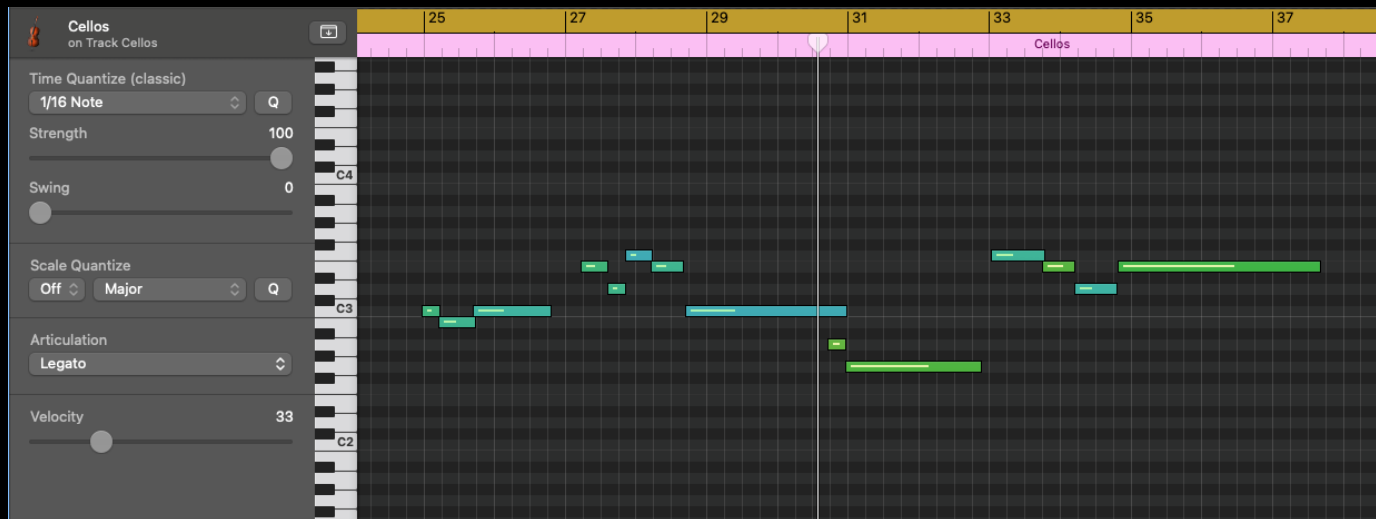


- The flute makes its first appearance here imitating the vocal, once on the same octave as the vocal, and on the second time an octave higher – I believe this gave the notes more range and it wouldn't feel as repetitive. I also wanted imitation to be a common occurrence during the song between parts

VERSE 1

- Also, in verse 1, is a counter melody made by the cellos who held the melody in the introduction. This counter-melody is subtle and allows the piece to have more textural variation.

- Finally, the chorus vocals also appear in the first half of the 1st verse. I did this because I wanted that feeling of the 'angelic' choral singing to gently fall away before the first chorus without a sudden halt.



CHORUS 1 (45-63)

The chorus melody is the most prominent theme in the song: the fall and rise of a third to then be followed by the leap of a 6th and three descending stepwise notes. The rest of the orchestration, I have written to simply accompany this melody rather than countering it too much.

you took the plans we made and gave them to her to

8

her was i a prac tice love for you to learn to hurt you to

16

hurt

The image displays a musical score for the chorus of a song. It consists of three staves of music in 4/4 time. The first staff (measures 45-52) contains the lyrics 'you took the plans we made and gave them to her to'. The second staff (measures 53-60) contains the lyrics 'her was i a prac tice love for you to learn to hurt you to'. The third staff (measures 61-63) contains the lyrics 'hurt'. The melody is written in treble clef and features a prominent theme of a fall and rise of a third, followed by a leap of a sixth and three descending stepwise notes.

There is a subtle countermelody introduced in the chorus by the saxophone and the violins which builds up the texture to a two-part counterpoint:

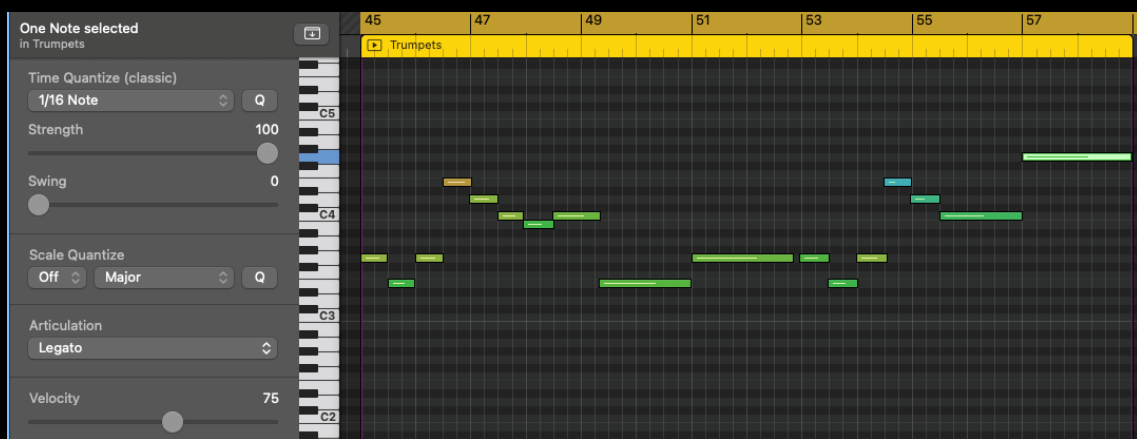
A screenshot of a Digital Audio Workstation (DAW) interface showing the Saxophone track. The track is labeled 'Saxophone' and is set to 'One Note selected in Saxophone'. The settings for the track are: Time Quantize (classic), 1/16 Note, Strength 100, Swing 0, Scale Quantize Off, Major, and Velocity 70. The piano roll shows a sequence of notes in the key of C major, starting on C4 and moving up stepwise to G4, then down stepwise to C4.

After the chords in the brass and strings, this melody returns in the saxophone but off-beat instead:

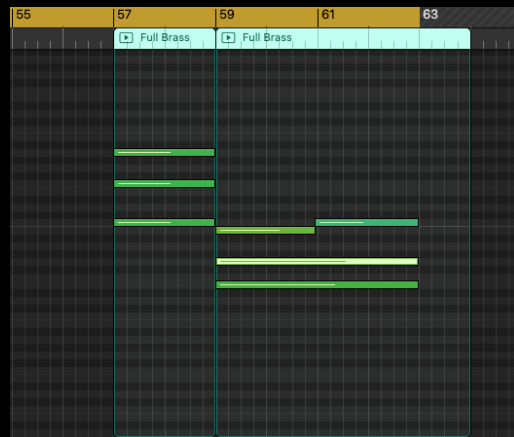
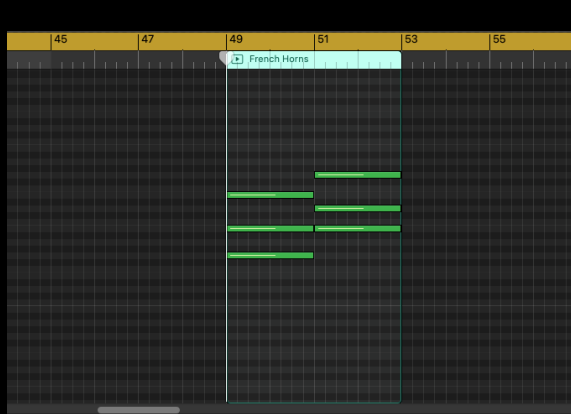
A screenshot of a Digital Audio Workstation (DAW) interface showing the Saxophone track. The track is labeled 'Saxophone' and is set to 'Saxophone on Track sax motif'. The settings for the track are: Time Quantize (classic), 1/16 Note, Strength 100, Swing 0, Scale Quantize Off, Major, and Velocity 70. The piano roll shows a sequence of notes in the key of C major, starting on C4 and moving up stepwise to G4, then down stepwise to C4. The notes are positioned off-beat, indicating a syncopated melody.



flute



trumpet



Brass chords

CHORUS 1

The flutes and the trumpets in the chorus double and harmonise the main melody in the vocals. The flutes double the notes and the trumpets harmonise the melody in thirds – and is in turn doubling the vocal harmony (also harmonising in the thirds).

The brass section also comes in at bar 49 with 'brass stab' chords, which I think ended up working really well with the melody to keep building up to the peak of the chorus. The brass chords also helped when leaving the chorus into the small break before the second verse by gradually dying down a long with the other instruments in the chorus.

THE BREAK...

- In the song there is a small 6-bar break between the first chorus and second verse. This contains a return for the solo saxophone playing its own melody. The melody uses stepwise movement and a syncopated ascending sequence to lead us in to the second verse. This is accompanied by the piano, bass and drums, a long with the dying away of the brass chords.



VERSE 2

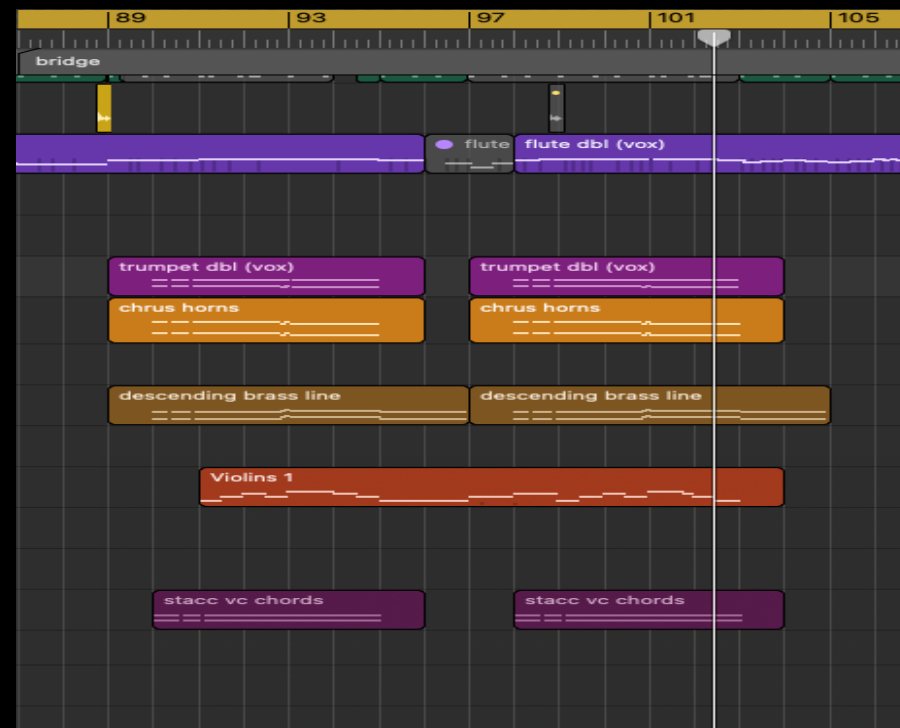
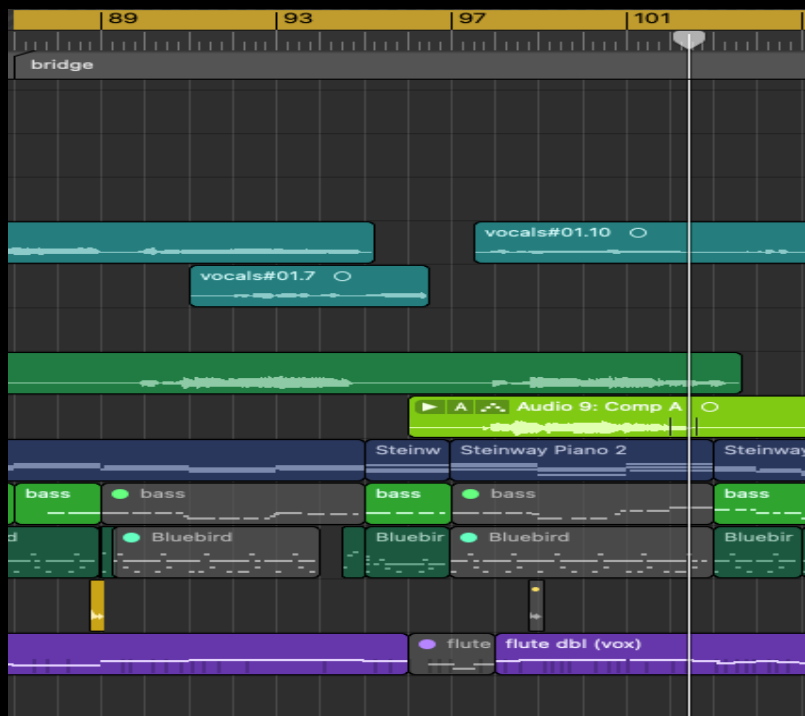
- The second verse come back with a different melody to the 1st verse, making it different from many other pop songs. This verse introduces a new countermelody not heard before in the piece. This is played by the flute and imitated by the cellos (in a high register) in canon (C-D-E-D).

The screenshot shows a DAW interface with two main tracks visible. The top track is labeled 'flute dbl (vox)' and shows a melody line with notes in orange and red. The bottom track is labeled 'stacc vc chords' and shows a bass line with notes in green and blue. The interface includes various controls like Time Quantize, Strength, Swing, Scale Quantize, Articulation, and Velocity. The bottom panel also shows a piano roll for the bass line, with notes in green and blue. The top panel shows a piano roll for the flute melody, with notes in orange and red. The bottom panel shows a piano roll for the bass line, with notes in green and blue. The interface includes various controls like Time Quantize, Strength, Swing, Scale Quantize, Articulation, and Velocity.

In the vocal melody, on the word 'afraid' there is an octave leap, and it is shortly followed by a descending sequence on the words 'the gentleman or the lonely drunk'. This will then lead us to a change of key to A minor – on the word 'drunk' the vocal ascends in semitones (G-G#-A), this is also doubled in the bass line.

BRIDGE

- The first section of the bridge is from bars 87-103. in this part the song shift to A minor using chromatic ascending movement to modulate to the new key. The bridge consists of two drop outs, the drums and the bass drop out of the music creating a sudden silence as the instruments have been playing throughout the entire piece, the vocals harmonised in thirds) sing 'remember when' x2 with trumpets, horns, trombones and strings doubling their parts in octaves. I really like this because I think it has a very powerful and chilling effect in the music, when the texture becomes homophonic for the first time in the song.



- The second half of the bridge the chord pattern is augmented (moves twice as fast). I is now 1 chord per bar, rather than 1 chord every two bars.

bass

Piano

BRIDGE 2

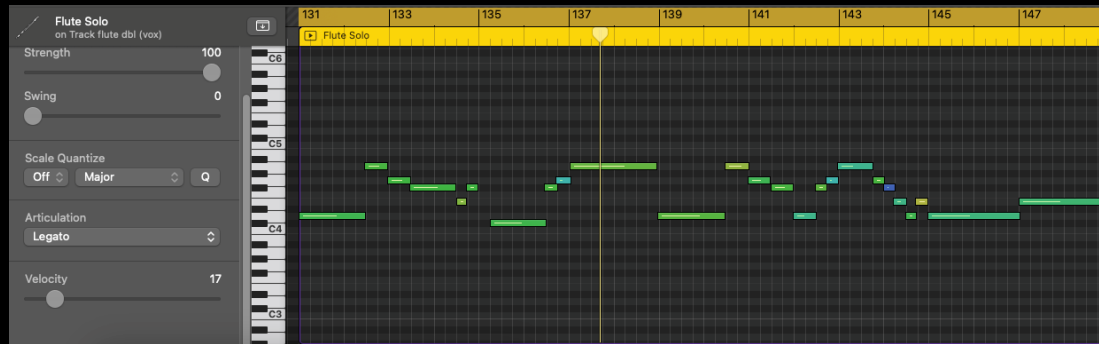
In the second half of the bridge the 2nd flute countermelody heard in verse two (C-D-E-D) but in a different variation which is extended, leading us through the different sections, until the flute begins to alternate between doubling the vocal and playing its own thing.

flute

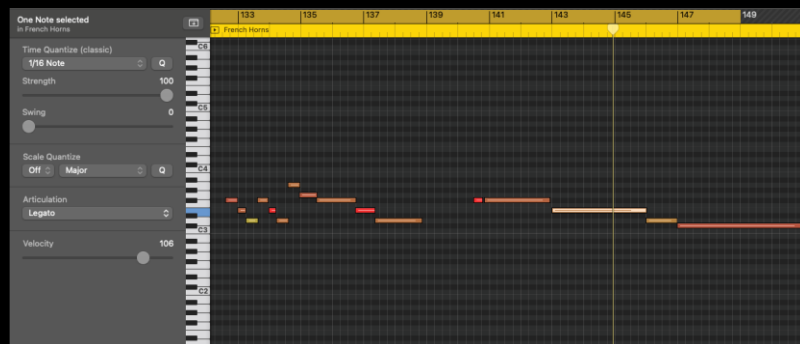
flute

FINAL CHORUS

- The bass leads us with an ascending to the new key of D major for the final chorus. The lyrics and the melody repeat from the first chorus here, except here I have written a 10-part counterpoint with different melodies in the vocal, flute, saxophone, trumpets, French horns, trombones, solo violin, solo cello, and the remainder of the strings.



the **flute** takes the role of a variation of the main vocal melody.



The **French horns** are playing the main countermelody, which is the most prominent of all the melodic lines, the volume and repeated notes at bar 140 add dramaticism and gives the piece a grand ending – the brass gives a fanfare sound to this chorus as well, which I really like

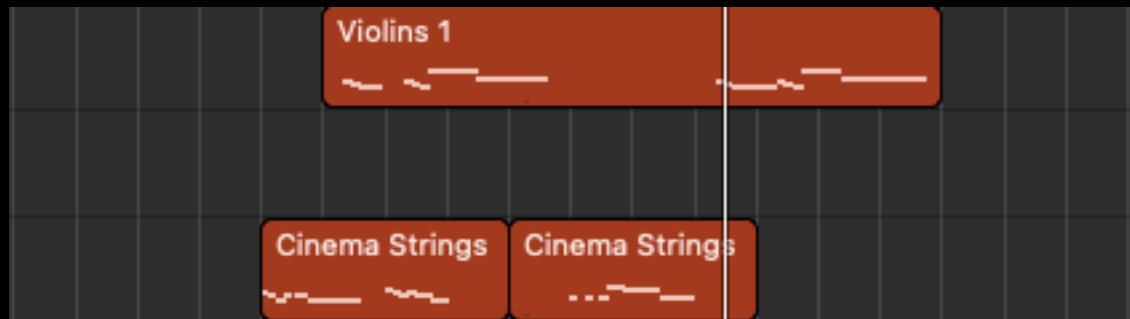


The **saxophone** imitates the French horns

FINAL CHORUS



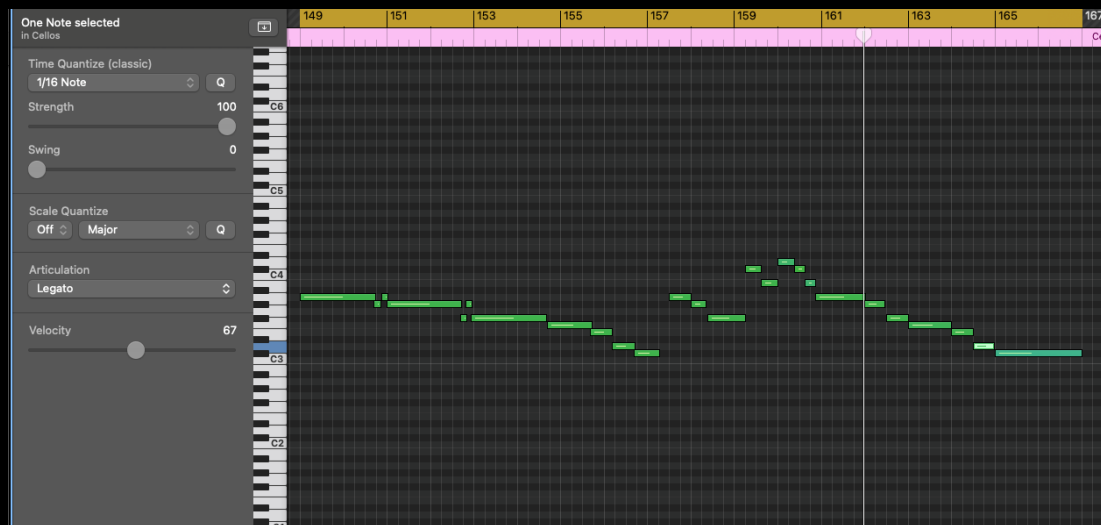
The **trombones** play a descending line ending on the 3rd of the F# chord.



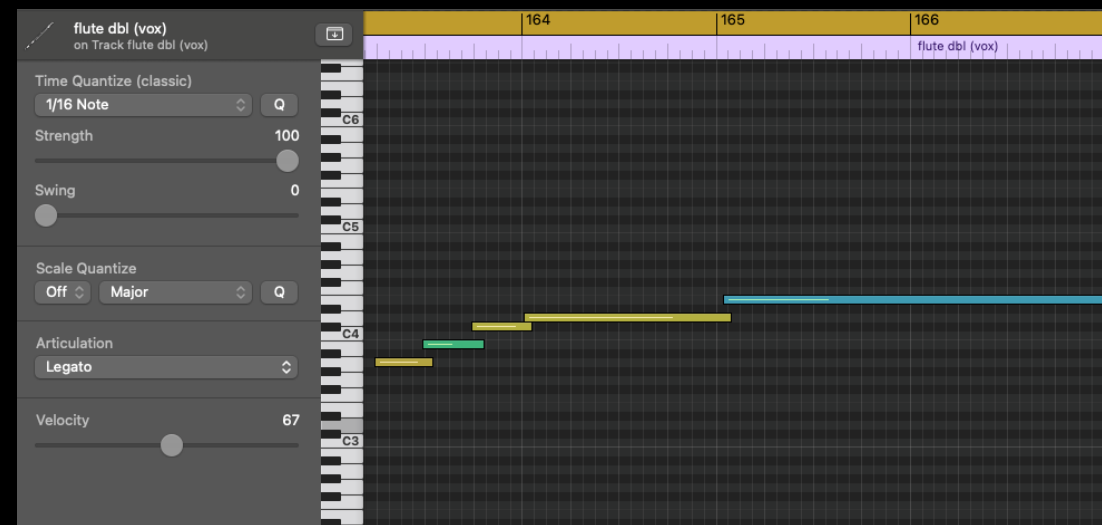
Finally, the **solo violins** and **the cellos** (cinema strings) are acting as fills.

OUTRO

- Finally, the outro of the song modulates again to A major, the melody is improvised in the vocals and the accompaniment gradually drops out until there is only left the vocal, the bass a solo cello and a solo flute, reflecting the first verse. I did this drop out because I wanted the piece to resolve after the functional chaos and tension created in the final chorus and give a peaceful ending. In my mind this reflected a sense of acceptance in the woman's thoughts, accepting that it is good she is no longer with her partner and she has found peace.



The cello starts of by doubling the vocal until it moves on to its own melody.



The flute, imitated the end of the melody in the vocal, to reflect the imitation that happened in the beginning of verse 1.