

MAYA ZODIAC

in the author's Mayascale, Luubscale, and 2012 Scale—

Here is the giant Mayan “timeclock” I longed to compose out for years, and which I finally began when the Mayan age closed in December 2012. Number trials I made spoke repeatedly “72,” and that suggested rotation: the rotation of our constellations one degree every 72 years. Their glacial movement around the night sky is the “precession of the equinoxes,” and it's the key that unlocked this music.

Three hypnotic layers turn in the piece at different speeds, like concentric wheels—all scaled to one another. The starry-sounding music that's mostly background: this quickest layer is in Mayascale.

Each note, at one-fiftieth of a second (approx.), equals 20 days, or one-thirteenth the Maya almanac.

The lead element in the piece sounds like a guitar riding a lushly peaceful, hydrolized wave. This material is in Luubscale.

Each 3 sec. motif this guitar speaks equals 8 yrs., or one-thirteenth the Maya “luub,” or “great resting place” (104 years).

The Maya zodiac contains 13 signs, instead of 12, all animals. A Zodiac cue by the flutes, and then the vocal, occurs exactly on each minute. Each minute represents 160 yrs., or one-thirteenth the life of one Maya zodiac sign. (Pitches here sourced from 2012 scale)

The flute and vocal announcements of the signs enter

13 times in the course of 13 minutes. The total length of the complete clock, finishing at 13:00, stands for 2,080 years. That's one Mayan “zodiac age,” like our own “Age of Aquarius.”

Let the “nested 13's” be only subliminally felt as your concentration drifts slowly in the aural space. Imagine you are lying on the ground looking up at the night sky—rotating over centuries.

Most satisfying for the author is the inspired work by soprano Allison Bernal who easily masters these odd pitches from outer space (and time). Yet the “new” pitch math she sings is born of an ancient calendar!

Allison Bernal comes from a musical family—her grandfather Gil toured with Lionel Hampton on tenor sax, right alongside Quincy Jones. No surprise, then, that her faultless ear feels comfortable in new and unfamiliar tuning landscapes. While an undergraduate, Allison assumed the challenging lead (Laurie Moss) in Copland's *The Tender Land*, gave the English language premiere of Darius Milhaud's *Agricultural Machines*, and also interpreted Henri Dutilleux's *San Francisco Night*. She figures prominently on Jeremy's earlier innova release: *Mayan Time Mayan Tales*. Altogether versatile, she has worked in film and television and even starred in a TV musical UCSB students conceived especially for her, *Dr. Daphne*. Recently, she has been an executive in Mixhalo, Michael Einziger's real-time audio platform tech company.

Jeremy Haladyna is but one composer-beneficiary of Jill Felber's love of bringing contemporary music to audiences worldwide. A student of Keith Bryan, Judith Bentley, and James Galway, Felber is a laureate of the University of Michigan and Bowling Green State. Her early career found her teaching at Ohio University and several other prominent schools. Over six seasons with the Detroit Contemporary Ensemble, she worked with famous names such as Foss, Schuller, Rochberg, and Bolcom. Touring with duo partner Claudia Anderson (as ZAWA!) has lately taken her to Carnegie Hall, Wigmore Hall, and many academic venues as clinician. In the 1990s, Felber joined the faculty of UC Santa Barbara as Professor of Flute and has also served as Department Chair.

Virginia Kron is a beloved figure in California new music circles. Lauded by the press as “a remarkable musician [with a] distinctive cello style,” her formation includes a B. Mus. degree from the University of Wisconsin and a Master's from USC. From her extensive career, of special note is her premiere of John Biggs' cello concerto with the New West Symphony and subsequent recording with the Czech National Symphony. Her own, well reviewed original album is *The Crystal Harp*. Long a pillar on cello at California's Cabrillo Festival, Virginia's mastery of the music of our time is matched by recordings and concerts with noted Celtic harpist Kim Robertson. She has long assisted UCSB's Ensemble for Contemporary Music with featured festival performances and in the recording studio.

Jeremy Haladyna
“All in all...a very thoroughly conceived sonic universe....The results are simply fascinating.”
Frank J. Oteri, senior editor, newmusicbox.org

Eleven trips to the Mayan region and an immersion of some 35 years into Precolumbian thought have indelibly marked the work of this U.S.-born composer. His Mayan Cycle now stretches to 35 pieces in diverse genres, over half of which have seen digital release.

Jeremy, from 2003-2019 Director of UC Santa Barbara's Ensemble for Contemporary Music, holds academic qualifications and prizes from three countries. A laureate of France's Lili Boulanger Prize, he taught UCSB's undergraduates composition for 29 years. His own past teachers include William Kraft, Karl Korte, Eugene Kurtz, Jacques Charpentier, Peter Racine Fricker, John McCabe and Joseph Schwantner. At UCSB, Jeremy is now Emeritus faculty.

Haladyna—as performer—has appeared on several record labels and in the multiple roles of pianist, conductor, organist—even turntable-ist. His own music has been heard at Carnegie (Weill) Hall; South Bank Centre, London; the Monday Evening Concerts, Los Angeles; St. Paul's Cathedral, London; and the National Museum of Art, Mexico City. Guest residencies include the Chopin Academy, Warsaw; a colloquium at Kings College, London; and in 2009, Mayan Cycle elements were brought to concerts in Istanbul, Turkey. His music has been featured over-the-air in Australia, Canada, New York (WQXR's Q2), Philadelphia, and Chicago *inter alia*.

The composer's website is mayancycle.com.

Pok-ta-Pok

music of Jeremy Haladyna



CRC 3832

from the MAYAN CYCLE	
1 Pok-ta-Pok (2000)	10:10
version for piano/clavichord ballplaying teams, live percussion	
2 8000 Gods Half Diminished (2018)	8:15
3 Monster Owls (2003)—excerpt	3:44
narration by the composer	
4 En la Estera del Chilam Balam (1992)	8:28
Jill Felber, amplified flute	
5 Organ Sonata (Maximón) (2017)	2:18
II Maximón Is Put Together in Darkness	
6 Organ Sonata (Maximón) (2017)	3:11
V The Hanging of Maximón	
Jeremy Haladyna, Flentrop organ and scratch turntable	
7 Stingray Spine Cadenza from “Copal” (1999)	2:34
Jeremy Haladyna, 2-manual harpsichord by Herz	
8 The Vision Serpent (1999)	6:53
Jeremy Haladyna, piano	
9 Quoth the Jade Mask (1986)	8:54
Virginia Kron, cello; J.H. piano	
10 Maya Zodiac (2016)	14:34
Allison Bernal, soprano, singing in Scale 2012.	

Total Time: 69:07

Recorded 1994 – 2018 at U.C. Santa Barbara, Goleta, California. Produced by Jeremy Haladyna, except track 4, produced by Jill Felber. Tracks 1, 2, 3, 10 engineered by Jeremy Haladyna, Studio Varèse, CREATE, UCSB. Track 7 engineered by Jeremy Haladyna, Lotte Lehmann Concert Hall, UCSB. Tracks 4 & 8 engineered by Kevin Kelly, UCSB Sound Recording. Track 9 engineered by Avery Wheeler, UCSB Sound Recording. Tracks 5&6 engineered by Anthony Paul Garcia, Lotte Lehmann Concert Hall, UCSB. Pipe organ by Flentrop; organ assistance by Evan Losoya. Keyboard preparation: David Cesca. All works published by Alux Music (ASCAP). Cover Photo: Wolfgang Sauber, 2008, used by permission.

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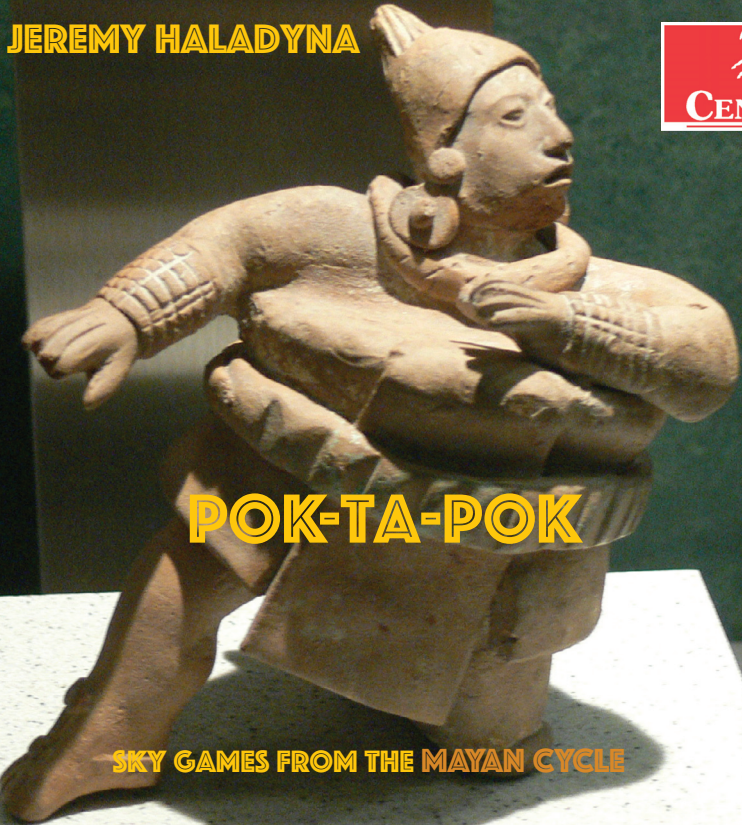
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JEREMY HALADYNA



POK-TA-POK

SKY GAMES FROM THE MAYAN CYCLE



POK-TA-POK
(one name for the Maya game; also a minor archaeological site in SE Mexico)

For the pre-Conquest Maya, sport was religion. The ballgame concerned the role of man in the Cosmos, as well as the greater scheme of Creation and the gods. It was the only place where puny humans stood a fighting chance.

Let's go now to Chichen Itzá and stand right under the giant rings of its ballcourt. By clapping my hands there loudly I found I could produce at least 11 audible echoes between the walls. Here the work of the late scholar Linda Schele suggested a connection to myth: could this be the Cosmic Turtle's shell splitting open? From the cracking of that shell, the young Maize god had emerged reborn. What's more, that lengthwise crack in the heavens had an earthly mirror: the I-shaped playing field of the ballgame. So that's where we'd be headed!

Next would be music for the tossing-up of three stars from Orion's belt, and their bright twinkling afterward. Later, in the wee hours of the morning, the black portion of the Milky Way would have to loom large. For the Maya, this black void in the night sky was like a cosmic highway. With the music careening wildly into vertigo, we'd zoom down this starry road—straight down to earth and ballcourt center-field.

At letter "I" in the score (2:45)—we land on the field with a "thump," in the middle of a game-in-progress. "Regulation play" is depicted by an agile, syncopated theme tied to a repeating bass. Players face one another across a center line as they seek to drive the ball into the opposite "end zone" using only their hips

and buttocks. Many telling period images survive of players in thick leather gear to guard against injury from the hard rubber ball.

Researcher Ted Leyenaar found modern people playing a descendant of the ancient game in Sinaloa, Mexico—and keeping score. I translate into music a portion of the scoring he transcribed. But at "game point" for the A side, an opposing B-team player manages to send the ball through the ring, scoring a "wild-card" win. The gallery madly scatters, because tradition says that any player lucky enough to do this has title to everyone's wardrobe!

Now there remain only the losing players, sacrificial priests, tropical birds and iguanas. With these witnessing, the unlucky losing captain is sacrificed. The priests carry him up a flight of six sharply vertical stairs, bind him into a ball and release him to bump down in disgrace, his neck broken. Their object?—to offer blood before the Maize god, in his ballcourt "portal"—ensuring the next harvest.

Pok-ta-Pok was completed in 1999, the 2-keyboard version revised in 2000, and a full orchestration finished in 2002.

8000 GODS HALF DIMINISHED
(Tikal Stela 31)

How to capture, in sound, this phrase carved in stone by a king?

This piece needs to show time—like sand—flowing through an hourglass, but "halted" halfway. King Stormy Sky of Tikal is chronicling the passing of half a score of years (in Lincolnesque terms) or, as

we'd say now—a decade. The Mayans marked time in 20-year parcels as opposed to 10. Further, each of the (roughly) 4000 days here was, to them, a god. So this monument, carved 445 A.D., is done at a halfway point, with "8000 gods half diminished."

In line with the Maya love of puns, I sanction the spectre of a "half-diminished" chord from the future. But the 4000 notes that serve as connective tissue here only appear half-diminished on paper. The sound, filtered through the math of the Mayan calendar, comes out altered by Mayascale (author's tuning).

In A.D. 445, just as now, it was all about political legitimacy, and King Stormy Sky (Siyaj Chan K'awiil) wants it desperately even though his bloodline isn't legit. The intense solos in this piece represent five big news events he wants remembered. The arrival of an invader, Fireborn (Siyaj K'ak') from the great city of Teotihuacan, happens first in A.D. 378. Coming last, after more decades and double decades, there's word of the King's grandfather having just died in 439. (Was he, Spearthrower Owl, also an "invader," a power behind this throne?)

Fate decreed that his monument would be buried with Stormy Sky deep inside Tikal's Temple 33, and preserved for us to read, making him not only legitimate, but: immortal. Immortality charted in a course of time only half diminished!

MONSTER OWLS (excerpt)

Here is the wonderful moment in the Maya sacred book, The Popol Vuh, when monstrous owls are dispatched from the Underworld to summon the boy

Hero Twins. This is the beginning of their trials, tribulations, and—ultimately—vengeance. Unlucky First Father, who sired the twin boys, fell victim to the wiles of the Lords of the Underworld. But the clever boys will come out on top.

All told, four deformed owls are sent from the Underworld to bring back the boys and their ballgame equipment. It's on the playing field that the young twins will be tested and—eventually—prove triumphant. Two owls are featured here:

Caquix-Tucur = "Parrot owl," in Quiché Maya, with the parrot plumage accounting for this owl's "red shoulder"

Holom-Tucur = "Head owl," literally just a bodiless, flying head with wings.

This portion of the piece relies heavily on commercial owl calls made for hunters, which I sampled in the studio, tuned, and then extensively processed. Large tracts of this piece are executed in my own Mayascale. In this, the full pitch gamut "encloses" just one solar year.

EN LA ESTERA DEL CHILAM BALAM
(On the Mat of the Jaguar Priest)

for amplified C flute or alto flute

Among the Classic Maya the Chilam Balam, or Jaguar Priest, was the main religious figure and an interpreter of the gods. Further, given the Mayan obsession with time, he needed to unite the fields of past, present and future. Miraculously, some of the most earthshaking of the visions received by Jaguar

Priests have been preserved for us in the Books of Chilam Balam.

Alone on his mat, in a trancelike state, the Jaguar Priest was akin to a time traveler. His was the challenge of unlocking the secrets of the recurring cycles of Mayan time—with sufficient precision about future events as to impress, but enough vagueness to avoid pointed questions. The flute (Mayan *chul*), a fixture of Mayan musical life, here represents him.

This piece would recreate those moments, gained only after persistent incantation, of exceptional lucidity breaking through mystical clouds. Certain sounds characteristic of the Mayan languages have been joined to the music, in order to bring the often gestural music closer to speech. I was aiming for a rhetoric of prophecy in this music—sometimes direct, sometimes circuitous.

This piece was written for California flutist Jill Felber in 1992.

ORGAN SONATA – "MAXIMÓN"
(with optional scratch turntable)
(Mvmnts., II & V)

Maximón commands an enthusiastic following as a folk saint of highland Guatemala, where he is a modern interpretation of Rilaj Mam, or Ancient Grandfather. His chief enclave today is in the highlands of Guatemala, where the Tz'utujil Maya pay him homage.

Maximón always appears clad as a prosperous Ladino, in Stetson hat and numerous rich scarves.

Surrounded by candles, he gives audience to supplicants who ply him with offerings of lit cigars and moonshine. Care of his wooden likeness is in the charge of religious brotherhoods.

The welding of their ancient past with Holy Week, accomplished by the modern Tz'utujil through Maximón, is astounding. Always deferent first to the Christ, Ancient Grandfather still has important roles to play throughout Semana Santa. Opinions differ on whether Maximón stands then for Judas Iscariot; many insist not. But if asked to play the part—only if he agrees will he suffer a ritual hanging as Judas. Such respect is due because before the Conquest Rilaj Mam was their Protector.

The six parts of this sonata treat different aspects of Maximón's cult. In the second movement, as he is put together piece by piece, Maximón's ritual identity is reawakened. Movement five constitutes his hanging (playing the role of Judas).

The optional scratch CD turntable is meant to be a sonic mirror. It mirrors the syncretism that has Mam—Ancient Grandfather—in the person of a modern cowboy, full of *joie de vivre*!

STINGRAY SPINE CADENZA
from "COPAL"

This cadenza forms the central part of a mixed octet, but stands well alone as a high-intensity miniature. And well it might, given that the stingray spine was the instrument by which Maya nobility drew their own blood in tribute to the gods, as well as to induce trancelike visions. As proof, we

have the vivid image on a lintel stone (#25) from the jungle site of Yaxchilán. Here Lady Xoc (Shark) hallucinates in the presence of a Vision Serpent that occupies much of the frame. The serpent is disgorging her vision.

Near her is a bowl containing paper stained with her blood. That bloody paper would have been burned, along with fragrant copal incense, as a royal offering to the gods.

Here harpsichord epitomizes both the sharpness of the spines and the sharp anguish of such moments, moments nonetheless undertaken (as the ancient Maya believed) for the greater good of all.

THE VISION SERPENT

The Vision Serpent, Mayan Cycle #14, treats a central figure in Mayan ritual art. This mystical reptile appears often on ceramics and on the interior decoration of buildings and was vital to how the elite practiced classic Maya divination.

If the vision as event darted like a serpent, content of a vision emerged as a passenger from its open jaws. On Lintel 25 from Yaxchilán, Mexico, Lady Xoc (Shark) receives a message from a symbolic warrior figure. Through clouds of copal incense fumigating the temple space, and thanks equally to chemical endorphins induced by her blood loss, Lady Xoc stands at the precise moment of revelation.

After a short panel setting a prescient mood, the solo piano suddenly darts into action, taking up the content of Lady Xoc's mystical encounter. Bright and

intense for a time, her visions emerge from—then retreat back into—the ether of the indistinct, fragrant with the resonance of Classic Maya centuries. The Serpent alternately darts and holds still, its jaw-clenched "passenger" speaking most tellingly in the moments of quiescence.

This piece was premiered by the composer in December 1999 at the Chopin Academy, Warsaw.

QUOTH THE JADE MASK

My musical journey in search of the Maya began here, with an archaeological find at Altun Ha, in Belize. This Belizean subject fit, coming as it did so soon after my 1985 visit to another of its treasures—ancient Xunantunich.

There have been recent, exciting finds at Altun Ha—including an entire sun priest's tomb. The most impressive single object therein was a piece of worked jade, the largest solid jade ever found in Mesoamerica (almost 15 cm. in height). This head (which I convert to mask, pleading poetic license) was the image of Vucub Caquix, the sun deity of the last great Mayan age. Imagine the effect of the sun's rays striking this jade bird after centuries of dark slumber!

The voice of the jade is heard just after the point in the piece when the cello begins stabbing at notes unpredictably, imitated closely by the piano's jabs and trills. The dialogue then subsides into an eerie *sotto voce* until the close, while the music seems to follow a homing signal sounding from resonances of the past.