

# Phrasing and Polyrhythm in Contemporary Jazz Guitar: A Portfolio of Recorded Performances and Exegesis

Volume One

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## Abstract

This dissertation examines, through transcription, analysis, and performance, the use of rhythmic devices by two pivotal contemporary jazz guitarists, John Abercrombie and Gilad Hekselman. An in depth examination of phrasing (Chapter One) and polyrhythm (Chapter Two) are underpinned by transcriptions by the author of Abercrombie's *Straight Flight* (1979), Hekselman's entire discography as a leader, *Splitlife* (2006), *Words Unspoken* (2008), *Hearts Wide Open* (2011), and *This Just In* (2013), along with selections of Ari Hoenig's *Bert's Playground* (2008) (Volume Three: Appendix Seven: pp. 3-231). Interviews with Abercrombie, Hekselman, and Hoenig are also integral to the research (Appendix Five: pp. 135-153).

The transcription and analysis culminated in a comprehensive list of various devices relating to phrasing and polyrhythm (Appendix Four: pp. 132-134). This list was used as a practical application guide, including expansions of concepts and personal explorations that are discussed throughout this exegesis.

The focal point of this performance based dissertation is four CD recordings (Volume Two), a total of four hours of music, in which the findings of the research are applied: CD1: *Retrieval Structure*, CD2: *Abercrombie and Hekselman Duets*, CD3: *Perception*, and CD4: Disc One: *Abercrombie and Hekselman Repertoire*/Disc Two: *Ari Hoenig Session*. These recordings include performances with Gilad Hekselman, John Abercrombie, and Ari Hoenig, all of whom provided the initial focus of the research in the transcription and analysis phase.

# Declaration

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ PROGRAM: \_\_\_\_\_

This work contains no material which has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma in any university or other tertiary institution and, to the best of my knowledge and belief, contains no material previously published or written by another person, except where due reference has been made in the text.

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## Publications

*Original Compositions: Lionel Loueke* (Mel Bay Publications, Inc)

*Polyphony for Jazz Guitar: Gilad Hekselman* (Jazz Heaven)

*Gilad Hekselman Transcriptions: Splitlife* (Aurora Sounds)

*Gilad Hekselman Transcriptions: Words Unspoken* (Aurora Sounds)

*Gilad Hekselman Transcriptions: Hearts Wide Open* (Aurora Sounds)

*Gilad Hekselman Transcriptions: This Just In* (Aurora Sounds)

*Retrieval Structure* (Aurora Sounds)

*Perception* (Aurora Sounds)

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I also give permission for the digital version of my thesis to be made available on the web, via the University's digital research repository, the Library catalogue, the Australasian Digital Theses Program (ADTP) and also through web search engines, unless permission has been granted by the university to restrict access for a period of time.

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When embarking on this endeavour I was simply a fan of both Gilad Hekselman and John Abercrombie's guitar playing and compositions. I am extremely happy to say that over the years I have developed a strong rapport with both of them and now consider them close friends, colleagues and collaborators. Their impact on both the intellectual research and resulting CD recordings has been invaluable. I am genuinely humbled by this, and look forward to the future of these professional working relationships.

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