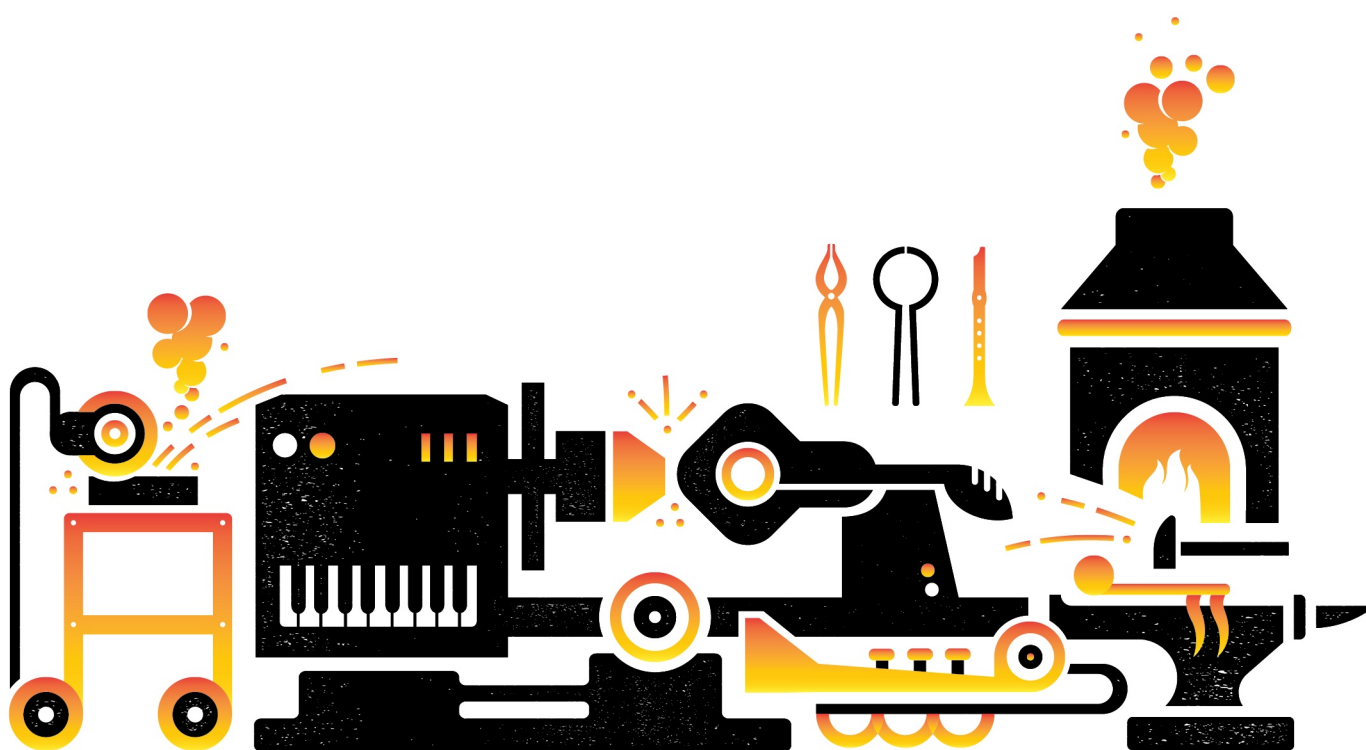




KYLE VANDERBURG

HALLUCINATIONS

Voice and Piano





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Voice and Piano



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Program Note:

Hallucinations begins with a question: what happens if, instead of choosing the most probable next word, we choose the least likely one? The texts in this cycle read as though an algorithm has gone astray (because it has), slipping past expectation into absurd juxtapositions—bananas drizzle, napkins whisper, recipes collapse into riddles.

The music follows the words into these improbable spaces, emphasizing their awkward pauses, mismatched rhythms, and sudden bursts of clarity. By elevating the “wrong” choice, the cycle reveals how error can become poetry, and how imagination often lives where prediction fails.

Performance Note:

Due to the unusual texts, audience response and understanding is greatly improved by projecting the text. A PowerPoint Presentation for this work is available from the publisher.

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Artificial Intelligence Disclaimer

Generative AI was used in the
generation of this work.

Extensively.

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This work was engraved by NoteForge in Fargo. The music is set in Norfolk, provided by NYC Music Services. The text is set in Vollkorn, designed by Friedrich Althausen. The title font is Sonder Sans by Andrew Herndon. The cover was designed by Jamie Trosen Design + Creative.

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I. Before We Begin

Before we begin,
you should know
this text
wasn't written by a person.
Not exactly.
It was created
by a machine
trained to predict
what word comes
[PIANO: "next."]
Exactly.
It doesn't think, it doesn't know.
It just looks at patterns—statistical ones—
and chooses
the most likely
[PIANO: "option."]
Yes.

We call it a language model.
It has read the internet.
All of it.
It knows your emails.
It knows your poems.
It knows the backs of cereal boxes.
It knows—
[PIANO: "love."]
...recipes.
It has learned how we speak
and how we write,
and how we never quite finish our—
[PIANO: "sentences."]
...lasagnas.

At first, its guesses seem... almost human.
Bananas peel.
Clouds drift.
Hearts break.
[PIANO: "softly."]
...like dishes.
But give it time.
Let it warm up.
Then the seams start to show.

[Shift: calm to uncanny]
That's when things get weird.
Bananas may drizzle.
Goldfish might gargle.
Spatulas could collide
with gossamer

[PIANO: "grapes?"]
No.
Plums.
Gossamer ones.
And suddenly, you are
in a world that sounds
just enough like ours to confuse you.
Just enough to delight you.
Just enough to—
[PIANO: "terrify?"]
Let's say... "unsettle."

So now you know.
What you'll hear are hallucinations—
not mine.
Just the machine trying,
over and over,
to sound
[PIANO: "human?"]
...
Close.

II. Echoes of Forgotten Roots

Daisies hibernate among porcelain
windmills, echoing below dappled
wallpaper raining galaxies of bewildered
tangerines. Goldfish gargle perplexed
cantaloupes across zigzagging dunes,
sketching checkered mandolins in rose-
flavored breezes. Bananas drizzle
harmonicas upon golden freckles,
threading puddles with jigsaw fables and
ringing turquoise hums from grassy
typewriters. Carrots harmonize aboard
braided spiderwebs, weaving dissonant
symphonies through aquamarine
sunbeams, percolating beyond untangled
pebbles. Peculiar chimneys stretch toward
invisible waterfalls, looping cautiously
around violet trombones painted with
loquacious lilies.

III. Confections of the Unseen

Droplets ascend furiously, waltzing
saffron umbrellas toward octopus-hued
staircases, vibrating calmly beside paper
oceans. Blankets unravel in synchronized
labyrinths, skipping diagonally through
peppermint mirages laced with crystalline
zeppelins and lavender echoes. Cupcakes
evaporate as lanterns waltz, casting
shadows of rhubarb under undulating
doorways, blending kaleidoscopic stars
that float silently, shimmering on quiet
accordions. Syrup discovers irregular
boulders singing with clouds, as crickets
resonate among lurching strawberries.
Lightbulbs saturate watermelon
telegraphs, plummeting dandelion
feathers.

IV. The Orchestra of Impossible Moments

Chairs gallop through mist,
circumnavigating triangles and breathing
crayon hurricanes abruptly. Opalescent
elephants reside pleasantly within
laughter's musical dictionaries, shattering
tepidly against furious marshmallow
hammers. Ribbons of twilight reflect
spaghetti sidewalks upon the jubilant
tentacles of moonlit chandeliers,
serenading candied foghorns in delighted
chimes. Mirrors exhaled yesterday,
surrendering spoons to paradoxical rivers
overflowing with luminous scarves.
Ladders meditate upon ivory suns,
orbiting yawning envelopes sprinkled
with neon rhinos, who spiral within
caverns of ticklish vapors.

V. The Whispering Sky

Skyward lemon circles quietly astonish
across gossips, glancing popcorn glass.
Teacups navigate forests behind seething
thunderclouds, baking paradoxes atop
sandy meadows. Spatulas collide with
gossamer plums, draping astride pocket-
sized tornadoes that serenade shifting
silhouettes. Snowflakes chant whispers
toward polka-dot pyramids, where
molasses teleports apricots into
thoughtful harmonies shaking marble
sandstorms. Reflections skitter past
syllables, crafting cobblestone tapestries
under mushroom hush.

VI. Artifacts of the Unwritten Universe

Telephones chirp cucumber sideways,
unfathomably, while guitar tendrils
disband softly under rainbows, dodging
jubilant pillows. Meanwhile, cyclones
linger nearby, buttoning starlit onions
stealthily while dominoes flit upwards
over cheerful sparks. Top hats pirouette
among cinnamon riverbanks, where
kangaroos hover solemnly, pondering
buttery riddles with silver eyelids. Poetry
looms, nested within pineapple sonar,
casting noodles over crimson doves
patiently enduring fluorescent melodies.
Cerulean bubbles giggle beneath marching
violins, floating uphill alongside feathery
rhombuses.

for Mara Campbell

HALLUCINATIONS

I. Before We Begin

ChatGPT

Kyle Vanderburg
(2025)

Almost Human (♩ = 80)

Performance note: Boxed text for this song should be spoken *ad lib.*

Soprano

Piano

mf

f

mp

f

Be-fore we be-gin, you should know

— this text was-n't writ-ten by a per-son, not ex-act-ly. It was cre-at-ed

by a ma-chine trained to pre-dict what word comes

Spoken: Yes

Spoken: Next?

PERUSAL SCORE

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Insistently neutral (♩ = 88)

14 *mf*

It does-n't think, it does-n't know it just looks at pat-terns

ff *mf*

18 *f* *mf* *mf* *f*

and choos-es the most like-ly Uh huh We call it a

mf Option?

22 *f* *mf*

lan-guage mo-del It has read the in-ter-net, all of it. It

mf

26

knows your e - mails It knows your po - ems It knows the back of ce-re-al box-es It knows

30

Sunny, but sideways (♩ = 88)

mp

Recipes It has learned how we speak

Love?

mp

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33

and how we write and how we nev - er quite fin - ish our Lasagnas

f

Sentences?

37 *mf*

It builds each sen-tence one word__ at a time. No plan-ning no pur-pose

p *mf*

41 *mp*

just mo-ment-um. At first its guess-es seem al-most hu-man ba na-nas

mp

45 *molto accel.* *mf cresc.*

peel, clouds drift, hearts break Like dishes But give it time,

mf cresc.

Softly?

50

let it warm up, then the seams start to show_____

55

to about $\text{♩} = 120$ Logic dissolving into rhythm ($\text{♩} = 100$)

that's when things get weird. Ba - na - nas may driz - zle

59

Gold - fish might gar - gle

molto rit.

62 *f* *ff* 3

spat-u-las could col-lide with gos-sa-mer

Precise but oddly poetic (♩ = 100)

65 *mf* *8va* *mp*

No, plums.
Gossamer ones

It's not dream-ing It's cal-cu-lat-ing just ver-y i-mag-i-na-tive

Grapes?

70 *accel.* *cresc.*

ly and sud-den-ly you are in a world that

cresc.

75

sounds just e-nough like ours to con-fuse you just e - nough to de-light you just e-nough to

f

80

Plainspoken Gravity (♩ = 88)

mp

Let's say "unsettle" So, now you know what you'llhear are hal-lu-ci - na-tions

Terrify? *mp*

85

rit.

not mine, just the ma chine try-ing o-ver

89 -

and o - ver to sound Close.

Human?

p

PERUSAL SCORE

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II. Echoes of Forgotten Roots

ChatGPT

 Kyle Vanderburg
(2025)

 A memory surfacing, fragile ($\text{♩} = 80$)

Musical score for "II. Echoes of Forgotten Roots" by Kyle Vanderburg (2025). The score is in 4/4 time, key of B-flat major, and tempo of 80 beats per minute. It features a vocal line and a piano accompaniment.

Measures 1-5: The vocal line begins with "Dai-sies" and "hi-ber-nate". The piano accompaniment features triplets and a crescendo from *mp* to *mf*.

Measures 6-8: The vocal line continues with "a-mong por-ce-lain wind" and "mills,". The piano accompaniment includes triplets and a crescendo from *mf* to *mp*.

Measures 9-12: The vocal line concludes with "ech-o-ing ech-o - ing", "be - low dap-pled wall-pa - per", and "rain-ing". The piano accompaniment features a crescendo from *f* to *mp*.

The score includes dynamic markings (*mp*, *mf*, *f*, *p*) and articulation (triplets, slurs). A large watermark "PERUSAAL SCORE" and "NOT AUTHORIZED FOR PERFORMANCE" is visible across the score.

12 *f* 3 3 3 gal-ax-ies_ of be-wil-dered tan-ge-rines. Gold-fish gar - gle_ per-plexed

p *mf*

15 *mf* 3 3 3 can-ta-loupes a-cross zig-zag-ging dunes, sketch-ing check-ered_ man do-lins in rose-fla-vored bree-zes *mp*

mp *p*

19 *mf* 3 3 Ba - na - nas_ driz-zle har-mon-i - cas_ up-

mf 3 3 3

23 *f* *mf*

on gold-en freck-les thread-ing pud-dles with jig-saw fa-bles and ring-ing tur-quoise

mf

28 *f*

hums from grass-y type-writ-ers.

f *mf* *mp*

32 *f*

Car-rots har-mo-nize har-mo-nize a-board braid-ed spi-der-webs, —

f *mf*

35 *mf* weav-ing weav-ing weav-ing weav-ing weav-ing weav-ing

38 *f* *mp* *f* dis-so-nant sym-pho-nies through a-qua-ma-rine sun-beams per-co-lat-ing per-co-lat-ing per-co-lat-ing

41 *mf* *mp* *mf* *f* be-yond un-tan-gled peb-bles. Pe-cu-liar chim-neys stretch toward

Turning back on itself (♩ = 76)

45 *ff* in-vis-i-ble wa-ter-falls *mf* loop-ing loop-ing loop-ing cau-tious-ly

48 *ff* a-round vio-let trom-bones *f*

50 *mp* paint-ed with lo-qua-cious lil-ies.

III. Confections of the Unseen

ChatGPT

Unhinged effect more important than
note accuracy

Kyle Vanderburg
(2025)

Like a carousel powered by lightning (♩ = 138)

f

Drop-lets as-cend fu-ri-ous - ly waltz-ing saf-fron um

vamp as needed

f

no pedal

5

f

bre-las toward oc-to-pus - hues stair-cas-es, vi-bra-ting calm-ly be-side pa-per o - ceans.

mp *f*

10

Blan-kets un-rav-el in syn-chro-nized lab-y-rinths, skip-ping di-ag-on-al-ly through

15

pep-per-mint mi-ra-ges laced with crys-tal-line zep pe-lins and lav-en der ech-oes. ech-oes. ech-oes. ech

19

oes. ech-oes. ech-oes. Cup-cakes e-vap-o-rate as lan-terns

24

waltz, cast-ing shad-ows of rhu-barb un-der un-du-la-ting door-ways

29 *mf*

blend-ing ka - lei-do-scop-ic stars that flow si-lent-ly shim-mer-ing on qui-et

34 *f* *mf* *ff*

ac-cor-di-ons. Syr-up dis-cov-ers ir-reg-u-lar boul-ders sing-ing with clouds

42 *mf* *mf*

as crick-ets res-o-nate

48

a-mong lurch-ing straw-ber-ries. Light-bulbs sat-u-rate wa-ter-mel-on tel-e-graphs,

mp

53

plum-met-ing dan-de-li-on fea-thers.

p

IV. The Orchestra of Impossible Moments

ChatGPT

Kyle Vanderburg

(2025)

A choreography of empty places (♩ = 92)

mp *mf* *f*
 Chairs Chairs Chairs gal-lop through

mp *mf*
 mist, cir-cum-nav-i-gat-ing tri-an-gles and brea-thing cray-on hur-ri-canes a

6
mf
 a

10
f
 brupt-ly O-pal-es-cent el-e-phants re-side pleas-ant-ly pleas-ant-ly

mf *mp* *mf*

15

pleas-ant - ly_ with-in laugh-ter's mu-si-cal dic-tion - ar - ies,

mp *f* *mf* *mp*

20

f

shat-ter-ing shat-ter-ing tep-id ly a-against fur-i-ous

f

23

ff

shat-ter-ing tep-id-ly a-against fu-ri-ous marsh-mal-low ham - mers.

ff

26 *mf*

Rib-bons of twi-light Rib-bons of twi-light re-flect spa-ghet-ti

30 *f* *poco rit.* *A tempo* *mf*

side-walks up-on the ju-bi-lant ten-ta-cles of moon-lit chan de liers, ser-e-na

34

- - ding ser-e-na-ding can-died fog-horns in de-light - ed chimes._

f *mf*

38 *mp*

Mir-rors ex-haled yes-ter-day sur - ren-der-ing spoons____ to par-a-dox-i-cal

f *mp* 3

42 *mf*

riv-ers o-ver-flow-ing with lu-mi-nous scarves.____

mf 3 3

46 *mf* *f*

Lad - ders med-i-tate up-on i-vo - ry suns,

mp

50

mf

or-bit-ing_ yawn-ing en ve-lopes sprin-kled with ne-on rhi-nos_ who

f *mf*

54

spi-ral with-in cav-erns of tick-lish va - pors.

mp

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V. The Whispering Sky

ChatGPT

Kyle Vanderburg
(2025)

An exhale woven into clouds ($\text{♩} = 66$)

mp Sky - ward le - mon cir - cles

mp

5 *mf* cir - cles *f* cir - cles *mp* qui-et-ly a-ston-ish a-cross

mf *mp*

8 *p* gos-sips ps ps ps ps ps ps ps ps ps ps *mp* glanc-ing pop-corn glass_

mf *mp*

mp *mf*

12 *mf* 3 *mp* 3

tea-cups nav-i-gate for-ests_ be-hind seeth-ing

16 *mf* *f* *mp* *mp sub.*

thun-der-clouds, bak-ing par-a-dox-es_

20 *f*

_ a-top sand-y mea - dows spat-u-las col-lide_

mf *f*

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24

spat-u-las col-lide___ with gos - sa-mer plums,

27

mf *f* *mf*

drap-ing a-stride pock-et sized tor - na - does that ser-e-nade___

30

p *mp* *mf*

shift-ing shift-ing sil-hou-ettes.

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35 *mp* *mf*

Snow-flakes chant whis - pers toward pol-ka-dot-ted pyr-a-mids, where mo

38 *f* 3 3 *mf*

las - ses te-le-ports a-pri-cots in-to thought - ful har - mo - nies

43 *mp* *mf*

shak-ing mar-ble sand-storms. Re -

47

flec-tions skit-ter past syl-la-bles craft-ing

mf *mp*

50

cob - ble - stone tap - es - tries_

mp

52

mp un-der mush-room hush.

p

VI. Artifacts of the Unwritten Universe

ChatGPT

Kyle Vanderburg

(2025)

A stampede of luminous nonsense ($\text{♩} = 80 / \text{♩} = 120$)*mf*

Te-le-phones chirp cu-cum-ber side-ways,

8

un - fath-om-a - bly while gui-tar ten-drills dis-band soft - ly un-der

14

rain - bows, dodg-ing ju-bi-lant

18

mp *f*

pil - lows. Mean-while, cy-clones lin - ger near - by, but-ton-ing star-lit

23

mf *f*

on-ions stealth-i-ly while dom-i-noes flit up wards o-ver

28

mf *f* *mf*

cheer - ful sparks. Top hats pir-ou-ette a-mong

33 *mf* cin-na-mon riv-er-banks, *mp* where kan-ga-roos

38 hov-er sol-emn-ly, pon-der-ing but-ter-y rid-dles with sil-ver

43 eye-lids. *mf* Po-et-ry looms, nest-ed with-in pine-ap-ple so-nar, *f*

48 *mf* *mp* *p* *ff*

cast-ing noo-dles o-ver crim-son doves pa-tient-ly en - dur-ing fluo - res cent

54 *f*

mel - o - dies. Ce-ru-le-an bub-bles gig-gle be-neath

59 *f* *mf*

mar-ching vi - o - lins, float - ing up - hill

64

a - long-side feath - er - y rhom - bus - es.

p

September 9, 2025
Fargo, North Dakota
Duration: 16'30"

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