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# **PROGRESSIVE TRAITS IN THE MUSIC OF DREAM THEATER**

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## Chapter 1 – Foreword

The band Dream Theater has been one of the most successful ‘progressive metal’ acts of the last twenty years. They released their critically acclaimed album ‘*Metropolis Pt. 2: Scenes from a Memory*’ (hereafter referred to as *Scenes from a Memory*) in 1999, when they were almost “aggressively out of fashion”, playing a “dense blend of progressive rock and post-Halen metal”, molded into an ambitious concept album<sup>1</sup>. Dream Theater (formed in 1985) wears its roots on its sleeves, and the fact that they are largely indebted to the progressive rock of the seventies is no secret.

Yet what is progressive rock? What is meant by the ambiguous term ‘progressive’?

If Dream Theater is lumped into the category “progressive metal”, does this imply aspects of progressive rock are apparent in their music?

This thesis attempts to present a brief answer to these questions.

The main research question is: What is ‘progressive’ about the music of Dream Theater as a self-declared<sup>2</sup> progressive metal band?

This is divided into the following sub-questions:

- How could ‘progressiveness’ be defined?
- What is ‘progressive’ about the album *Scenes from a Memory* in general, and about the song ‘The Dance of Eternity’ in particular?

The answers to these questions have been found by a literature study, researching progressive rock in general and searching for defining traits, by reviewing leading authors in this field. The methodology used for this thesis is further explained in chapter 2.1. A list of traits can be found in chapter 2.4. Based on this work and my own conclusions as a progressive rock listener and as a musician, I have compared the album *Scenes from a Memory* in general to the traits of progressive rock found in the literature. Furthermore, I have made an in-depth analysis of the song ‘The Dance of Eternity’, which is in my opinion the most progressive song on the album.

Dream Theater has proved to be an influential band, both as a collective of musically accomplished people and as a band writing complex music. As a guitarist, I have been influenced by guitarist John Petrucci’s technique, innovative solos and his penchant for writing riffs that are both interesting when viewed in isolation and when seen in context of the music they are part of.

It is for this reason, and the fact that Dream Theater (and indeed, the whole genre of progressive metal) is underrepresented in scholarly literature<sup>3</sup>, that I have chosen this subject: to elucidate their influences, innovations and their music in general.

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<sup>1</sup> Stephen Thomas Erline, album review on [www.allmusic.com](http://www.allmusic.com), accessed April 2, 2013.

<sup>2</sup> Dream Theater 2013, official website, accessed March 23, 2013.

<sup>3</sup> While a number of authors have written publications on progressive rock, progressive metal has enjoyed very little scholarly attention. Apart from a PhD dissertation on rhythm in the music of Dream Theater by Gregory Mccandless, only Jonathan Pieslak has written a musical analysis of progressive metal (*Rhythm and Meter in the Music of Meshuggah*, 2007)

## Chapter 2: A definition of progressiveness

### 2.1 – Problematization

In order to be able to answer the question of ‘what is progressive in/about the music of Dream Theater’ (hereafter abbreviated as DT), a definition of ‘progressive’ must first be found. This term has its origins in the progressive rock of the late 1960s and the 1970s, so this music must serve as the background from which the implications of the term ‘progressive’ are to be extracted. Various scholars have stated traits which are characteristic of progressive rock: these are musical traits which are associated with ‘progressiveness’ in this music<sup>4</sup>. Musicians in the progressive rock movement had a general desire to expand upon the existing idiom of rock, a wish to innovate and experiment with other styles of music, new technologies and other unconventional musical means<sup>5</sup>.

For this reason, the factor that typically characterized progressive rock seems to be this philosophy, rather than an arbitrary set of musical traits which is the result of this search for innovation. Concluding this is, however, not sufficient for the aim of this thesis: although DT has a similar philosophy, the fact that the members of DT also listened extensively to progressive rock means that they have also been influenced musically by it. Although their aims may be similar (both progressive rock artists and DT striving for innovation and an expansion of musical means), the influences of progressive rock on the music of DT are not confined to philosophy. For this reason this thesis attempts to point out the main traits that characterize ‘progressiveness’ in progressive rock in order to localize these in the music of DT. This in turn is necessary to be able to conclude which aspects of the music of DT can be called ‘progressive’.

Although music combining these traits is not by definition progressive rock, and no progressive rock band necessarily includes all of them, the search for defining musical characteristics has been the main methodology in literature on progressive rock<sup>6</sup>. Progressive rock itself is (like most genres) a shaky moniker that fits best the bands it sees as its primary exponents: it is inherently a construct that attempts to draw distinct lines where there are multiple angles of interpretation. Therefore, any definition includes and excludes vast amounts of artists which were not even considered in the formation of the definition: they are labeled anonymously, and often retrospectively. For this reason, the list of traits compiled in chapter 2.3 should be seen as being characteristic -rather than defining- of (most) progressive rock.

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<sup>4</sup> The main publications on progressive rock which stated defining characteristics are *Rocking the classics: English Progressive Rock and the Counterculture* by Edward Macan, *Listening to the future: the time of progressive rock, 1968-1978* by Bill Martin, *The Progressive Rock Files* by Jerry Lucky and *Progressive Rock Reconsidered* by Kevin Holm-Hudson

<sup>5</sup> Covach 1997, p. 4.

<sup>6</sup> Ironside 2012, p. 3.

## 2.2 - A brief history of progressive rock

In the wake of the political and psychedelic revolution of the 1960s, rock music became more ambitious. Fueled by the ideals of the hippie counterculture, drugs and an ever expanding array of electrical instruments, bands like the Moody Blues, Procol Harum, the Nice and Pink Floyd started churning out increasingly long songs, with little regard for the conventional pop-format and the verse-chorus structure.

The exact start of this movement is hard to pinpoint: Bill Martin pragmatically picks 1968 because it was the year of the formation of King Crimson, Yes and Caravan, as well as the year the first Soft Machine and Jethro Tull albums were released<sup>7</sup>. Edward Macan notices a “first wave” of progressive rock, a “proto-progressive style”<sup>8</sup>, whose proponents emerged from the psychedelic rock without displaying the full range of characteristics associated with mature progressive rock, starting around 1965<sup>9</sup>. John Covach considers the main difference between bands of this “proto-progressive style” and the mature progressive rock movement to be one of “seriousness”: the desire to create works that would not disappear in a year but rather be listened to and analyzed for decades to come<sup>10</sup>.

This wave includes many of the same bands which constituted the second, “mature” wave of progressive rock bands which were (retrospectively) recognized as the start of the classic progressive rock era (placed by Macan around 1968/1969). According to Macan, the combination of the counterculture of the late sixties, the Vietnam War (which inspired protests, both in the form of demonstrations and in music) and the widespread availability of hallucinogens were crucial to the development of this new, ambitious music which would become progressive rock.

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<sup>7</sup> Martin 1998, p. 60.

<sup>8</sup> Influential examples of this music are *Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band* (1967) by the Beatles (although they had been experimenting with foreign instruments and tonalities at least since *Rubber Soul*, released in 1965) and the Beach Boys' *Pet Sounds*, released in 1966.

<sup>9</sup> Macan 1997, p. 23.

<sup>10</sup> Covach 1997, p. 4.

### 2.3 – *Progressive rock in the classic age: 1968-1978*

During the first half of the seventies, progressive rock made the transition from an underground community to a chart-topping musical phenomenon. Britain was arguably the leading country in the mature progressive rock wave, with the biggest acts originating there. The most influential of these are often called the ‘Big Six’, usually consisting of Genesis, Jethro Tull, Yes, ELP, King Crimson and Pink Floyd<sup>11</sup>.

Pink Floyd’s *Dark Side of the Moon* (1973) became one of the best-selling albums of all time, and other British bands fared nearly as well. The genre diversified strongly: some bands incorporated hard rock (e.g. Rush), others were influenced by the grandeur of opera and began writing rock operas (e.g. Queen, Pink Floyd), and others went mostly acoustic and incorporated influences of folk music (e.g. Genesis). Still others became more eclectic and embraced atonality and free-form improvisation (e.g. Frank Zappa and King Crimson)<sup>12</sup>. See Appendix A for a list of influential progressive rock albums released in this period.

Progressive rock fell into decline in the last years of the seventies. It was succeeded as popular music by punk and disco: a return to the roots, to danceable music, and a reaction to the pretensions and the grandeur of progressive rock. The major acts suffered dwindling sales, and either reinvented themselves as popular music acts, continued making albums with limited commercial success or exposure, or disbanded altogether. The music returned to the underground scene from whence it came, and resurfaced again in the eighties in the form of so called ‘neo-prog’, of which Marillion was the main exponent.

In the late eighties a fusion between metal and progressive rock surfaced, inspired equally by big thrash-metal artists like Metallica, Slayer and Megadeth and by the bands of the seventies’ progressive rock wave. It is within this movement of ‘progressive metal’ (which has a significantly ‘harder’ sound) that DT developed in the late eighties alongside acts like Opeth and Tool<sup>13</sup>.

The genre reached its commercial peak during the nineties, and has continued to develop since, mostly without significant public exposure.

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<sup>11</sup> Lucky 1998, p. 18

<sup>12</sup> Covach & Boone 1997, p. 4.

<sup>13</sup> Keister & Smith 2008, p. 434.

## 2.4 - A selective list of progressive traits

A multitude of characteristics which are typical of progressive rock have been recognized by scholars<sup>14</sup>. An attempt will be made here to name those which are most typically named in progressive rock literature. Note that almost no single band exhibits all of the following characteristics: this list rather describes progressive rock than defining it. This implies these characteristics are commonly found in progressive rock although their presence is not a criterion to be met in absolute terms for something to be able to be called progressive rock. The meaning of the word “composition” differs from its connotations in art music: progressive rock artists usually composed their music as opposed to improvising. This means the music was rehearsed extensively with little room for improvisation, however, it was not written down, but rather learned by heart.

-**Virtuosity**, both instrumental and compositional, is a common hallmark of progressive rock. Especially compared to the main stream rock musicians of the sixties, progressive rock musicians would emphasize technical prowess in long, complex solo-passages. In the words of Chris Atton: “Virtuosity—in an uncomplicated sense that drew on conservatoire notions of ability, agility and imperturbability, rather than blues-based individualism or relativism—was prized.”<sup>15</sup> Apart from instrumental proficiency, virtuosity may also be apparent in, for instance, the use of counterpoint (e.g. in the music of Gentle Giant) or the use of extended, coherent musical forms (e.g. in the music of Yes)<sup>16</sup>

- **‘Composition’** is one of the most obvious trademarks of progressive rock. The fact that most progressive rock is often complex, through-composed<sup>17</sup> music as opposed to music improvised based on a riff or a chord progression forms, in my opinion, one of the largest contrasts with most other rock genres. The idea of ‘composing’, as described in the previous sentence, forms a stark contrast with rock music: forfeiting spontaneity and the pentatonic scales that formed the backbone of traditional blues and rock music<sup>18</sup>. Another trademark that sought to bring out further complexity is the notion of the **pre-composed solo**. This means a solo that is specifically composed to fit the rhythmical and harmonic requirements of the song, or section of a song<sup>19</sup>.

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<sup>14</sup> See footnote 4

<sup>15</sup> Atton 2001, p. 30.

<sup>16</sup> Covach 1997, p. 4.

<sup>17</sup> ‘Through-composed’ is used here in the sense that the music is rigidly thought out and learned by heart by the musicians, leaving little room for improvisation.

<sup>18</sup> Spicer 2000a, p. 150.

<sup>19</sup> McCandless 2010, p. 50.

-An **electric-acoustic dichotomy**, consisting of a contrast between electrically amplified, 'rock' sections with electric guitars and keyboards and acoustic folk-influenced sections characterized by acoustic guitars and wind instruments. The combination of heavy sections, often bordering on hard rock and a more 'pastoral' quality reminiscent of folk or country music is often the method by which long pieces are built up and kept surprising.<sup>20</sup> This was often coupled with the experimentation with instruments drawn from the art music tradition, like the recorder, the flute and the violin<sup>21</sup>. One of the earliest and most influential albums to feature this contrast is *In the Court of the Crimson King* (1969) by King Crimson. Likewise, a **vocal-instrumental** dichotomy is also common in progressive rock<sup>22</sup>, although this term describes the rather obvious implications of having instrumental sections within songs.

-The use of **multi-movement pieces** is another characteristic that made it possible for musicians to escape the confines of the three-minute song, offering possibilities for the development of themes and elaborate storytelling. This is not exactly the same as 'longer song durations', a trait offered by Kevin Holm-Hudson<sup>23</sup>, but while some artists may merely extend the verse-chorus structure by adding verses and an extended bridge (Led Zeppelin's 'Stairway to Heaven' comes to mind) to achieve a greater song length, this is an exception to the rule.<sup>24</sup> Examples of multi-movement pieces are 'Close to the Edge' by Yes, 'Meddle' by Pink Floyd, 'Supper's Ready' by Genesis and 'The Devil's Triangle' by King Crimson.

-The continuous expansion of songs led to the **album as basic unit** rather than the single.<sup>25</sup> This trait is seen as an important, if not the most important, aspect of progressive rock by scholars and musicians alike, most notably John Petrucci, the guitarist of DT.<sup>26</sup> Related to this is the **concept album**, an album as an integrated whole, with overlapping thematics, musical themes and storyline. It could be argued that *Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band* is the first (popular) concept album. It was certainly influential, and concept albums became increasingly integrated and are a common phenomenon in classic era progressive rock<sup>27</sup>.

-Progressive rock almost invariably features experimentation with **compound time signatures**, most often quintuple or septuple meters. Initially, individual songs would have a single compound time signature in the style of Dave Brubeck's 'Take Five' which is in 5/4 time (for example Pink Floyd's 'Money' (1973), which is in 7/8, or the 'Apocalypse in 9/8' section of the 1972 Genesis song 'Supper's Ready'). As progressive rock developed further ('progressed', one might say) in the seventies, multiple time signatures in a single song became commonplace, up to the point of songs switching time signatures every few bars.<sup>28</sup> See for instance the solo section of Genesis's 'Firth of Fifth' (from *Selling England by the Pound*, 1973) or the opening section of 'Siberian Khatru' from Yes's *Close to the Edge*.

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<sup>20</sup> Macan 1997, p. 31.

<sup>21</sup> Macan 1997, p. 37.

<sup>22</sup> Macan 1997, p. 42.

<sup>23</sup> Holm-Hudson 2002, p. 4.

<sup>24</sup> Lucky 1998, p. 120-121.

<sup>25</sup> Ahlkvist 2011, p. 644.

<sup>26</sup> Dream Theater, *Score* DVD Documentary.

<sup>27</sup> Lucky 1998, p. 120-121.

<sup>28</sup> Macan 1997, p. 48.



-The **influence of Western art music** is deemed evident in progressive rock by multiple scholars. John Covach sees progressiveness as “the evocation of art music within the context of rock and pop”<sup>29</sup>. In their search for greater complexity and progression, musicians turned to diverse aspects of art music, especially nineteenth-century art music, to infuse into their music. Responsible for this phenomenon to a significant extent were the keyboard players, who not only enjoyed an unprecedented major role in progressive rock bands, but who also had a classical background in formal piano training. Most notably Keith Emerson of the Nice and Emerson, Lake and Palmer, but also Rick Wakeman of Yes and Tony Banks of Genesis enjoyed classical piano training<sup>30</sup>. Art music influences range from the use of scalar runs and virtuoso arpeggios in solos to the use of classical forms and models.<sup>31</sup> Emerson, Lake and Palmer’s *Pictures at an Exhibition*, for instance, is a reworking of Mussorgsky’s piece of the same name, Yes’s ‘Close to the Edge’ (on the eponymous album) is written in a loose sonata form<sup>32</sup> and ‘Atom Heart Mother’ by Pink Floyd is a six-part suite complete with brass section and choir.

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<sup>29</sup> Covach & Boone 1997, p. 7.

<sup>30</sup> Martin 1998, p. 24.

<sup>31</sup> Martin 1996, p. 70.

<sup>32</sup> Macan 1997, p. 99.

## Chapter 3: Progressive Rock and Dream Theater

### *3.1 – A short biography of the band Dream Theater*

In order to discuss the music of Dream Theater, a succinct biography might be suitable. Dream Theater formed in 1985 at the Berklee College of Music in Boston, Massachusetts, where drummer Mike Portnoy, guitarist John Petrucci and bassist John Myung studied together. Kevin Moore, a friend of Petrucci's, joined on keyboards. In 1986 the band decided to drop out of college to pursue a full-time career in music. In late 1990 vocalist Kevin James LaBrie joined to complete the band. Their second album, *Images and Words* (1991), became a commercial success and a “genre classic” of progressive metal<sup>33</sup>.

Moore left the band after the release of the third album *Awake*, prompting the band to audition Derek Sherinian on keyboards. Sherinian's tenure in the band (1994-1999) would mostly not be a successful time for the band: their 1995 EP featured the eponymous twenty minute song *A Change of Seasons* but little else, and their new label Elektra forced them to record a more mainstream record which became the unsuccessful *Falling into Infinity* (1997). In early 1999 the band fired Sherinian to hire Jordan Rudess, with whom DT started recording *Scenes from a Memory* unbound by concessions to the Elektra label, which became a critical if not a great commercial success<sup>34</sup>.

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<sup>33</sup> Wilson 2007, p. 107.

<sup>34</sup> Wilson 2007, *Lifting Shadows: The Authorized Biography of Dream Theater* has been consulted for all biographical information.

### 3.2 - *Progressive traits in Scenes from a Memory*

The album *Scenes from a Memory* (1999) proved to be a high point in DT's career. The technical virtuosity of the band members was well known for a decade, but the production of a coherent album, both musically and lyrically, proved to be a watershed moment.

*Scenes from a Memory* is DT's first concept album. It tells the story of a man who discovers aspects of his former life through hypnosis, which is thematically comparable to the mystical and supernatural topics frequently covered by 70's progressive rock bands<sup>35</sup>.

The album is divided into multiple acts, reminiscent of a rock opera, which together comprise twelve songs (see Appendix B for more information). It is loosely based on the song 'Metropolis Pt. 1: the Miracle and the Sleeper', from their 1992 album *Images and Words*. Fans had requested a sequel to 'Metropolis Pt. 1' for years, due to the ironic name of the song: a 'part 2' was never intended to be made by the band<sup>36</sup>. Various musical themes from 'Metropolis Pt. 1' are expanded upon or simply quoted in *Scenes*, and several lyrics are referred to as well. Most notably, the song 'The Dance of Eternity' takes its title from the closing lyrics of Metropolis Pt. 1<sup>37</sup>. These links have been traced by Fabien Labonde, who provides a comprehensive table on his website<sup>38</sup>.

The narrative is provided by the lyrics, but these form a relatively small part of the album. Although almost all songs (the exceptions being 'Overture 1928' and 'The Dance of Eternity') feature vocals, a lot of space is dedicated to instrumental sections, development of themes and actual "proggyness", as it is often referred to by fans<sup>39</sup>. It is also one of the most popular albums by the band to date, if not the highest selling<sup>40</sup>.

Multi-movement pieces are the main means through which storytelling and instrumental sections are combined: of the twelve songs on this album, five are multi-movement pieces, taking up 50 minutes out of the total length of 77 minutes. It is also clear that the album is the basic unit rather than the single, for there is an overlapping narrative throughout the album and there is no silence between the tracks. The track list on the back of the CD (see appendix B) confirms this inner coherence by dividing the album into 'acts', 'scenes' and parts of scenes.

The contrast between acoustic and electric sections is mostly absent here. This is true for all of DT's music, and there is a clear cause for this absence: progressive metal is a fusion of heavy metal and progressive rock<sup>41</sup>, and it seems the heavy metal influences have purged the music of acoustic ambitions. The band may occasionally shift to a clean sound, which usually accompanies a ballad, but no attempt is made to evoke a pastoral atmosphere and no acoustic instruments are heard.

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<sup>35</sup> Anderton 2010, p, 425.

<sup>36</sup> McCandless 2010, p. 22.

<sup>37</sup> See Appendix B.

<sup>38</sup> Labonde 1999, <http://flabonde.free.fr/DTSFAM1.htm>, accessed June 5, 2013.

<sup>39</sup> Atton 2001, p. 34. Note that progressiveness as noted by most fans is almost synonymous with complexity, as noted by Atton. 'Proggyness' usually implies virtuoso solos, odd time signatures, complex metric or tonal riffs and uncommon timbres: anything that could be considered unusual or progressive.

<sup>40</sup> Rolling Stone 2012: Readers' Poll: Your Favorite Prog Rock Albums of All Time.

<sup>41</sup> Holm-Hudson 2002, p. 2.

Virtuosity is, like in all of the music of DT, amply present. Of the twelve tracks on the album, two are slow ballads with a simple chords progression and focus on the vocals (tracks 1 and 7) and track number four is a one-minute interlude with vocals accompanied by piano. The rest of the tracks feature complex instrumental parts laced with compound time signatures, about half of the time containing vocals which seem hardly central to the music.

Influences of Western art music are not as clear in the music of DT as they were in the classic era of progressive rock. Of course, the band has a classically trained keyboard player, and they certainly composed multi-movement pieces, but one gets the impression that the main influence for these choices was not art music but the classic era of progressive rock itself.

Composition as a trait cannot be overlooked here. DT's music is even more rigid than classic era progressive rock was: in live performances there is no improvisation except during the keyboard solos. The guitar solos are without exception pre-composed and are performed note for note during live performances.

### 3.3 - Progressive traits in 'The Dance of Eternity'

If there is one spot on the album where the band really took their time to create complex music out of a multitude of influences, it is on this instrumental track. I have chosen this track for close reading because it is in my opinion the track with the most rhythmic, metric and melodic complexity and experimentation on the album, making it an interesting showcase of DT's use of 'progressive' influences. DT chose this song for auditioning drummers to play because of its challenging technical requirements<sup>42</sup>. Appendix A shows a detailed analysis of the track.

The amount of material on this song belies its length of six minutes and thirteen seconds, and as a result overall coherence is often lacking. Coherence is not always a factor that DT seems to cherish: on some of their most lauded tracks they seem content to present a wealth of material, most of which is not referred to again as the song progresses.

Virtuosity as a trait is most easily spotted here. Whether it's the high tempo at which the material is performed (a high of sixteenth triplets at 132 BPM is achieved in bars 84-86, which comes down to 13.2 notes per second<sup>43</sup>) or the large amount of time signature changes, a lot of skill was required for playing and composing this song.

The time signatures perhaps require some explanation, for which I am indebted to Gregory McCandless<sup>44</sup>, who wrote a 200 page dissertation on rhythm in the music of DT. DT does not shift time signatures in the traditional sense, the way for instance a song's chorus may be in 3/4 time and the verse in 4/4. Instead, they use the variation of phrase length as an important musical parameter. Rather than varying the implication of a phrase by placing it differently in a bar (so it is distributed differently across the bar's stressed beats), they adapt the length of the bar itself to fit the desired length of the phrase. For example, see figure 1, where an alternately rising and descending motive is subtly altered in length every bar. The bar is 'molded' in length to fit the motive, instead of the motive being fitted somewhere in the bar. In other words, the bar length is the subordinate of the phrase length.



FIGURE 1: BARS 27-30, GUITAR PART.

Another rhythmic aspect that is explored here is polyrhythm. In bar 53, guitar and bass play B1 and B0 respectively in eight groups of five and one group of four (compare figures 2 and 3). In bar 54, the drums divide the beat in groups of four, implicating a polyrhythm in which the drums 'syncopate' the guitar part. In bar 56, the drums accentuate every fifth note, leading to a new aural interpretation in which the beat is counted in groups of five. This kind of metrical dissonance is common to progressive metal bands and is considered to be a progressive trait which was not present to this extent in the progressive rock bands of the classic era<sup>45</sup>. Compound time signatures are scattered throughout the song, as seen in appendix C: only the first half of the song features sections in common time.

<sup>42</sup> *The Spirit Carries On*, Documentary on the search for a new Drummer, 2011.

<sup>43</sup> The actual record on this album, in the last instrumental section of *Beyond this Life* is sixteenth notes played at 210 BPM, which comes down to 14 notes per second. This does not include the legato trills on the same track, which are played in sixteenth triplets at 210 BPM equaling 21 notes per second.

<sup>44</sup> Gregory Richard McCandless. *Rhythm and Meter in the music of Dream Theater*, 2010.

<sup>45</sup> Pieslak 2007, p. 221.



FIGURE 2: BARS 54-56, GUITAR PART.

Musical notation for drum part, bars 54-56. The notation is in 4/4 time. The top staff shows a complex rhythmic pattern of eighth and sixteenth notes, with some notes beamed together. The middle staff shows a series of eighth notes, and the bottom staff shows a series of eighth notes.

FIGURE 3: BARS 54-56, DRUM PART.

The influence of art music is, like on the album as a whole, hard to pinpoint. Apart from virtuoso arpeggios, the main influence seems to be tonally expanded twentieth-century art music. The piece starts with a lot of modal exploration in the Phrygian mode, but soon incorporates whole-tone, octatonic and chromatic scales, up to the point where the tonal center is quite lost. Tritone stacks and augmented triad arpeggios spanning multiple octaves are also encountered. Most of these have no connection to the harmonies implied: instead, they seem to be used for their own sake. As noted in Appendix C, similarities with atonal music occasionally come to mind.

## Chapter 4: Discussion & conclusion

The music of DT combines most of the aspects that characterized progressive rock in the classic era: except for the electric-acoustic dichotomy, most progressive traits have been identified in chapter 3. DT is called a progressive metal band, and the influence of metal is dominant in the sound and the songwriting. It seems where there have been clashes between progressive rock and metal traits, metal has won: acoustic passages, pastoral atmospheres and the use of old instruments are absent in the music of DT.

To me it seems like there is a different interpretation of how to make progressive music. Progressive rock seems to aim for an expansion of means, no matter in which direction, whereas the music of DT progresses mostly in rhythmic and melodic complexity: at least, that is where innovations are most notable.

The term progressive, although interpreted differently by each band, seems to have become a certain sound or a genre similar to blues or reggae rather than a working method: in my opinion this is true for DT, though I doubt the band would agree. On the other hand, progressive rock revivals seem to occur about every ten years, and the nineties revival which infused progressive rock with metal (or is it the other way around?) has certainly produced innovative music. The last couple of years have seen a proliferation of new bands dubbed 'progressive': examples would be Animals as Leaders and Textures: these seem to expand on the musical language of the progressive metal bands of the nineteen nineties.

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## Appendices

Appendix A is, unfortunately, highly subjective. These albums all come up rather frequently in the literature consulted for this thesis (see Bibliography), but assigning a ranking as to what would be the most important album is a matter beyond any objective means. This list should properly be seen, then, as a selection made by the author of this thesis.

<b>6.1 – Appendix A: A list of important progressive rock albums</b>			
<b>Year of Release</b>	<b>Album Title</b>	<b>Artist</b>	<b>Country of origin</b>
1969	<i>In the Court of the Crimson King</i>	King Crimson	England
1969	<i>The Nice</i>	The Nice	England
1970	<i>Weasels Ripped My Flesh</i>	Frank Zappa	United States
1971	<i>Tarkus</i>	Emerson, Lake & Palmer	England
1972	<i>Close to the Edge</i>	Yes	England
1972	<i>Octopus</i>	Gentle Giant	England
1972	<i>Thick as a Brick</i>	Jethro Tull	England
1973	<i>Dark Side of the Moon</i>	Pink Floyd	England
1973	<i>Eldorado</i>	Electric Light Orchestra	England
1973	<i>Mekanik Destruktiv Kommandoh</i>	Magma	France
1974	<i>The Lamb Lies Down on Broadway</i>	Genesis	England
1975	<i>A Night at the Opera</i>	Queen	England
1976	<i>2112</i>	Rush	Canada
1976	<i>Leftoverture</i>	Kansas	United States

<b>6.2 - Appendix B: Track list of DT's album Scenes from a Memory</b>			
<b>No.</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Lyrics</b>	<b>Length</b>
1.	'Scene One: Regression'	Yes	2:06
2.	'Scene Two: I. Overture 1928'	No	3:37
3.	'Scene Two: II. Strange Déjà Vu'	Yes	5:12
4.	'Scene Three: I. Through My Words'	Yes	1:02
5.	'Scene Three: II. Fatal Tragedy'	Yes	6:49
6.	'Scene Four: Beyond This Life'	Yes	11:22
7.	'Scene Five: Through Her Eyes'	Yes	5:29
8.	'Scene Six: Home'	Yes	12:53
9.	'Scene Seven: I. The Dance of Eternity'	No	6:13
10.	'Scene Seven: II. One Last Time'	Yes	3:46
11.	'Scene Eight: The Spirit Carries On'	Yes	6:38
12.	'Scene Nine: Finally Free'	Yes	12:00

<b>6.3 - Appendix C: An analysis of DT's song The Dance of Eternity</b>		
<b>Measures</b>	<b>Time signatures</b>	<b>Analysis</b>
<b>1-2</b>	4/4	The sound effects heard are a reversed sample from Metropolis: pt. 1, at 7:16. A low D sounds in the synthesizer.
<b>3-4</b>		The bass plays the rhythmic theme from Metropolis: pt. 1.
<b>5-6</b>		The drums join the bass.
<b>7-10</b>		The guitar joins in.
<b>11-18</b>	4/4   7/8   3/4   3/4 :	Theme 1 (a jagged line, principally in sixteenth notes, in G Phrygian) is introduced in the synth. It is accompanied by theme 2, played by guitar, drums and bass, consisting of a series of syncopated powerchords. The theme is altered to fit the various time signatures by means of metrical compression.
<b>19-26</b>	4/4   7/8   3/4   7/8 :	Guitar and bass play 2 bars in G Phrygian, followed by a E5b9 arpeggio in the third measure and chromatic leading tones leading back to G Phrygian in the fourth measure. The synth plays a metrically compressed version of theme 2.
<b>27-30</b>	13/16   15/16   17/16   14/16	All instruments play a unison riff in G Phrygian, which is adapted in length to suit the various time signatures.
<b>31-38</b>	4/4   7/8   3/4   3/4   4/4   7/8   4/4   5/4	The synth plays theme 1, but this time a fifth higher in D Phrygian. Guitar and Bass play theme 2, lowered by a perfect fourth to D. Measures 37 and 38 break with theme 1 and lead back to G Phrygian.
<b>39-41</b>	17/16   15/16   13/16	A unison repeat of the riff from measures 27-30, varied slightly metrically.
<b>42</b>	4/4	Guitar, bass and drums once more recall the syncopated power chords of theme 2 while the synth performs a scalar run downwards using the whole-tone scale based on E. This is played respectively in sixteenth quintuplets, straight sixteenth notes and sixteenth sextuplets down to the low G.
<b>43-44</b>	6/8   6/8	Respectively the bass and the synth recall a riff from Metropolis pt. 1 in the original key while the rest of the band remains silent.
<b>45-52</b>	5/4   2/4   5/4   2/4   5/4   2/4   5/4   5/8	The 5/4 measures consist of multiple octaves of the note G-flat, played by drums, bass and guitar. The keys play a melody based on the whole-tone scale: this is lowered by a semitone during the last quarter note of the bar. The drums divide this bar in alternating groups of two and three. The 2/4 measures are filled with stacks of tritones and major thirds, played in unison in sixteenth notes. In the closing measure all instruments play a chromatic lick downwards, from A to the low B.
<b>53-55</b>	11/4	Synth, bass and guitar play the note B in multiple octaves. The notes are divided into 5 groups of 5 sixteenth notes and one group of 4 sixteenth notes. The drums are silent until measure 54, after which they divide the beat into groups of 4 sixteenth notes, thus creating a differently perceived rhythm.

<b>56-57</b>	9/4   2/4	The drums switch to groups of five. In measure 57 guitar and synth play the E minor scale upwards: the confirmation of E minor as the key retrospectively confirms the B of the previous measures as the fifth.
<b>58-59</b>	11/4	The rhythmic configuration from measures 53-55 is repeated, though guitar and synth now play virtuosic arpeggios in unison, namely i - i - II - iv - i - i - II - II - iv.
<b>60-67</b>	4/4	This section climaxes as all instruments play a complex line in the scale of E minor harmonic, embellished with chromatic lines and leading tones. This line takes us three octaves downwards during measures 60-66, ending in a VI-V cadence for E minor.
<b>68-76</b>		The synth plays a piano solo in ragtime style over the progression   i   VI V   i   ii V   i   VI V   i I   IV   V . The other instruments accompany in a kind of pseudo-swing, playing extremely low powerchords.
<b>77-86</b>		The next solo is in E Phrygian and is played in unison by synth and guitar in an A-B-A-C form. In the C section (measures 84-86) the solo speeds up to sixteenth triplets, playing a rising sequence of suspended chords, ending on an E-sus4 chord.
<b>87-94</b>		A bass solo in A minor ensues, occasionally punctuated by short stabs by the rest of the band. In the previous section, we modulated from E to A by use of the ambiguous Esus4/Asus2 chord. The ambiguity between A-Phrygian will be a central theme in the next sections.
<b>95-102</b>		The band plays a syncopated riff in unison in A minor.
<b>103-110</b>		The drums switch to a conventional heavy metal rhythm, and a complicated riff in E Phrygian in incessant 16th notes is played by the rest of the band. Variations are to be found in measures six and eight of this section.
<b>111-118</b>		The intervallic structure of the previous riff is moved upwards by a perfect fourth while the tonal material stays the same: this means that the key is now A minor.
<b>119-131</b>	4/4, 7/16, 6/16	The intervallic structure built on the low A is continuously moved upwards, while the low A itself does not shift. On the guitar and bass this means the open A string sounds in between the rising pattern of fretted notes. The rhythmic formula is shortened from 16 notes a bar to 7 in bar 123 and 6 in bar 127. This rising process continues until the A two octaves above the low A is reached, gradually increasing the tension.
<b>132-135</b>	7/16   7/16   7/16   4/4	All instruments play a rising pattern in unison based on the minor second intervals in the scale of A minor, ending with a trill on the high E.

<b>136-143</b>	5/16   5/16   7/16   5/16   7/16   5/16   5/16   7/16	The synth plays the scale of A Phrygian upwards from A3 to A4: one note per bar. This gives an interesting effect since the bar lengths vary considerably. The rest of the band plays the note A in octaves. The 5/16 measures are rhythmically divided into 2+3 and the 7/16 measures are divided into 2+2+3.
<b>144-145</b>	10/16	Guitar and synth play a pattern in A-minor downwards from A5 to B3. The drums and the bass divide the measures into 4+3+3.
<b>146-151</b>	4/4   7/8   3/4   3/4   4/4   7/8	The guitar plays theme 1, altered to fit the time signatures. Bass and synth play theme 2, this time in pure octaves instead of powerchords.
<b>152-163</b>	9/8   9/8   6/8   9/8   6/8   15/8 :	The bassline develops the material of theme 2 in E Phrygian. The guitar plays a repeating line which begins in E Phrygian but which consistently meanders off into the whole tone scale, at which moment the synth doubles this line, either at the unison or at the second. These primary lines consist of eighth notes, as opposed to the sixteenth notes of the previous passages, as the drums play a triple meter. The hectic feeling of the previous passages is replaced by a slow maelstrom of ever-changing time signatures and syncopated dissonant patterns, reminiscent of Stravinsky's Rite of Spring.
<b>164-171</b>	9/8   9/8   9/8   8/8 :	The bassline repeats the tonal material from the previous section, adapted to the new time signatures. Guitar and keys switch to an almost wholly chromatic line which has little in common with E Phrygian anymore. In the last three measures the keyboards come up with an interesting contrapuntal part which combines the chromatic material from this section into separate chromatic lines. The drums switch between duple and triple meters.
<b>172-183</b>	3/4   4/4   3/4   4/4   12/16   10/16   12/16   14/16   5/16   5/16   5/16   6/16	The melodic line of the guitar and the synth from the last section is further explored, now in sixteenth notes without rests. The melody is mainly chromatic, but the wholetone scale and the octatonic scale make an occasional appearance. Bass and guitar now play this in unison while the synth has a rare break during this section. Tension is clearly building up again in anticipation of the final climax. The time signatures are open for interpretation: the drums ambiguously accentuate these measures.

<b>184-195</b>	3/4   4/4   3/4   4/4   12/16   10/16   12/16   14/16   5/16   5/16   5/16   6/16	Tension rises further as the material of the previous section is repeated literally and in unison by all instruments: the bass plays in the lowest octave (upwards from E1), the guitar in the octave above and the synth plays two octaves above the bassline. The drums merely accentuate certain notes in the melody. Like the previous section, the last four measures contain a transitory E arpeggio apparently derived from E Lydian (which has its augmented fourth degree in common with the whole tone scale on E, while allowing a full E triad) followed by a rising octatonic scale.
<b>196-207</b>	5/16   5/16   5/16   5/16   5/16   7/16   5/16   6/16   5/16   5/16   5/16   7/16	The Lydian arpeggio from the closing measures of the last section (B G# A# G# E) is developed further. Moving ever upwards, first in A (measures 196-198), then in C (measures 200-202) and lastly in the form of a F minor arpeggio with an added flat sixth (measures 204-206). These modulations are accomplished through the modulatory functions of the octatonic scale, similar to the use of the symmetric diminished 7 chord in art music, with the difference being that the octatonic skill can also modulate a perfect fourth upwards (measures 195, 199 and 203).
<b>208-215</b>	6/8 (7/8 in measure 211)	Tension is finally relieved as the band falls downwards a diminished fifth towards the key of B Lydian. Up next is C# Myxolydian (measures 210-211), seemingly implying F# major as new key. This is not to be, as the band reaches A Lydian in measures 212-213, finally falling down to F# Lydian in measures 214-215.
<b>216-217</b>	5/16   3/8	F# Lydian falls to E5, which forms a III-VII-i progression via B5 to the tonal closure of the song, the C# minor chord in the first measure of the next song, One last Time.