Hallelujah Analysis

Using pitch as your guiding perspective, you are going to compare two renditions of the song *Hallelujah*.

The song was originally written and sung by Leonard Cohen, but the most famous recording of it is by Jeff Buckley, a singer / song-writer famous particularly for his large vocal range. There are many features that differentiate the two versions, but you will focus on pitch in your analysis.

SETUP

To make your life easier as you listen intensively to these songs, I recommend that you download Audacity, a free app that will allow you to start and stop playback of audio files with much greater control than you can in a typical audio player.

You will also need the Max patch that we used in Tuesday's class, so please contact me if you can't get it to work. I have placed a revised copy of it in the new FoMaS Tools folder, at:
`https://www.dropbox.com/sh/6c91czbsvtyujfv/AABT4nLgOHZ2iGnZWXHSlLnca?dl=0`

Finally, the link to the assignment folder, where you can access all of the materials you will need for this assignment, is:
`https://www.dropbox.com/sh/mq2isd1q6csuj55/AABYezaQGMeqlNKDZttltpZla?dl=0`

INSTRUCTIONS

STEP 1

Listen to Cohen and Buckley's complete renditions in the `Full_Recordings` folder. Write a paragraph sharing your initial thoughts about how Cohen and Buckley use pitch differently in their performances.

STEP 2

Now listen to the excerpts found in the `Excerpt_A` folder. These excerpts focus on the first verse in each version. With a few small exceptions, the lyrics are the same:

> Well I've heard there was a secret chord
> That David played and it pleased the Lord
> But you don't really care for music, do you?
>
> Well it goes like this:
> The fourth, the fifth, the minor fall and the major lift
> The baffled king composing Hallelujah
>
> Hallelujah
> Hallelujah
> Hallelujah
> Hallelujah

Using the Tone Generator Max patch, or any other tool you'd like, make two tables showing the frequencies sung for every syllable in excerpt A's text in Cohen and Buckley's versions. Then produce a single visualization comparing the data in both tables. Your visualization may take any form you please, as long as it (a) shows the frequency sung for every syllable in the text in both versions and (b) makes it easy to see which syllable is associated with a given frequency. Put briefly, your visualization should help us to see the two shapes of the melody.

Now listen to the recordings found in the `Excerpt_B` folder. These recordings are pulled from the endings of both renditions. Make separate visualizations for both versions of excerpt B, again showing frequency and syllable. In your visualization of Cohen version, you do not need worry about counting the precise number of repetitions in the fade-out, but you must clearly mark where the fade-out begins. In your visualization for the Buckley version, please clearly mark the first long *halle**lu**jah.*

Making detailed references to your three visualizations, write 2-3 paragraphs comparing the approaches to pitch taken by Cohen and Buckley in Excerpt A. Some questions you might address are:

> What are the key differences in pitch between the two versions?
>
> What are the key similarities?
>
> Does Buckley's higher voice make an inherent difference to the song's impact on you?
>
> Leaving vocal ranges aside, are there important differences in the extent to which their renditions are pitched, or other significant differences in how pitch works?

STEP 5

Making detailed references to your three visualizations, write 2-3 paragraphs comparing the approaches to pitch taken by Cohen and Buckley in Excerpt B. Some questions you might address are:

> What results from Buckley's choice to hold several individual pitches for a long time? How does the effect differ from the Cohen?
>
> Just like any of us, each singer has their own vocal range. What part(s) of each singer's range do you think the melody occupies at the song's end (bottom, middle, high, all over the place, etc.) and how does the placement of the melody within each singer's range influence your impression of or feelings about the ending?

STEP 6

On your computer, create a folder and **title it with your name**. Inside of that folder, create a PDF document with your written answers to the above question. Please also include separate PDFs for each of your visualizations. Make sure to label them clearly so I can understand your references. Compress your named folder and email it to me at `chambm7@rpi.edu` with the string "`FoMaS_HW_091319`" in the subject line by 11:00am on Friday, 13 September 2019.