

Culumex: The Ins and Outs

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Culumex: The Ins and Outs

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Summary

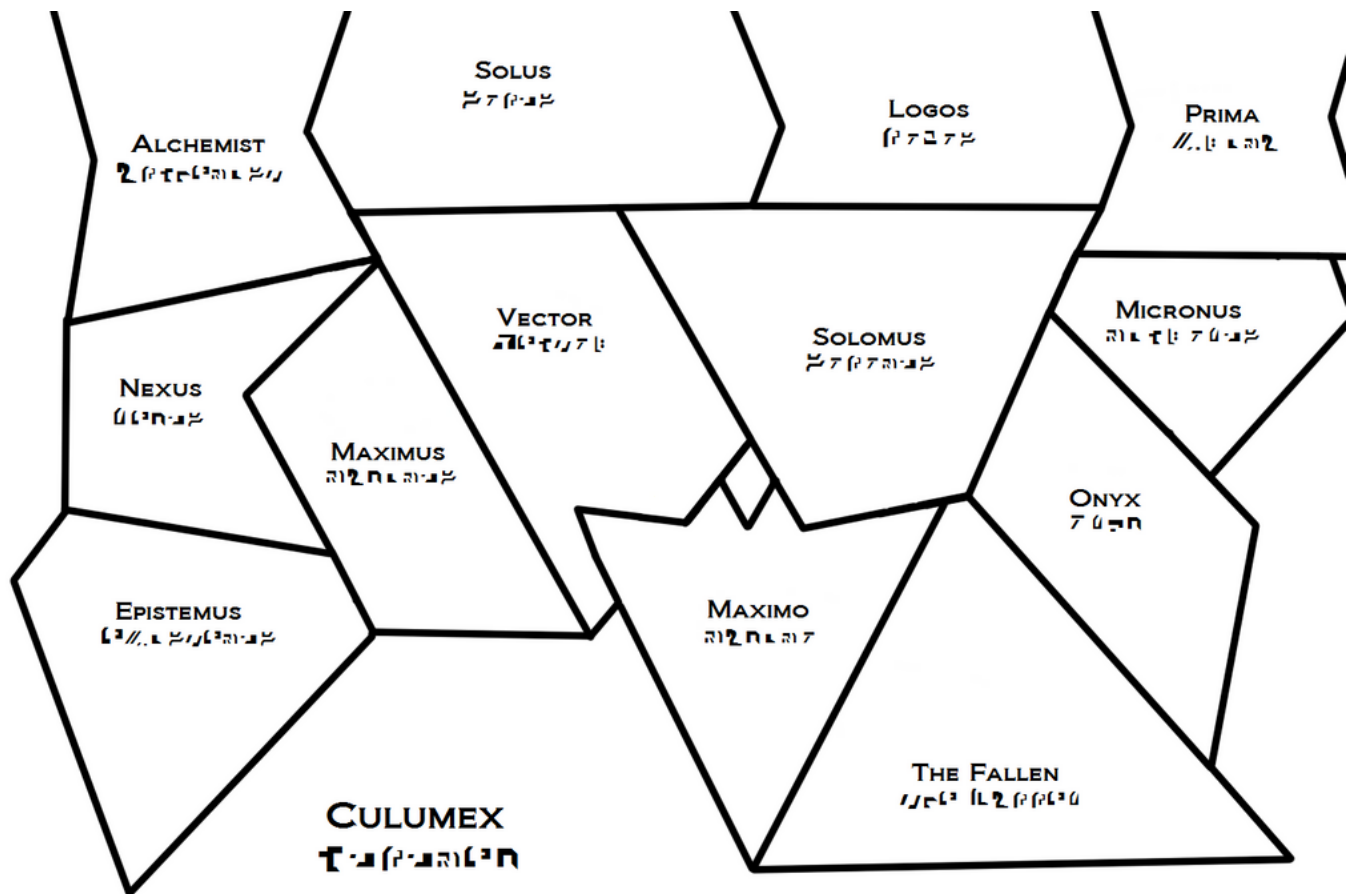
For those familiar with my Pacemakers series, I present a map and an overview of Culumex, the Minibot city.

Notes

Please note that the concept of Minibot "paces" first came from the user [ink_andpaper](#), though their headcanons for it differ from mine. I saw the outline of a concept and decided to write a series for my own interpretation of it, but feel free to check out theirs too ^^

See the end of the work for more [notes](#)

The Sectors of Culumex



Alright, an overview on the city: it's exclusively for Minibots; they don't take kindly to larger-frames, who they call **verriesen** ("outsiders"), invading their privacy! The thirteen sectors are named after the Thirteen Primes, who the Minibots revere, even The Fallen, which leads into a small description of each sector:

The Prima sector is their "capitol", where officials live. However, when there's a convening of all the sectors, they meet at the Council Tower, which is that diamond approximately in the middle.

The Micronus sector is the smallest, but it's where all of their technology is tested before it's distributed. If it doesn't pass the Micronus mechs, don't trust it. Sometimes they'll ship more to Onyx to improve their lives, but Onyx in turn shuttles it down to The Fallen sector to better *theirs*. (Micronus is where Gears was sparked.)

The Onyx sector is a little bigger, but the bots who live there live simply. They build but they aren't technology-savvy, so they don't have all the recent upgrades; their cleanliness could be improved. (This was the sector where Brawn was sparked.)

The Fallen sector is their form of the slums and unfortunately far too many bots live there.

The Maximo sector is essentially where the Underground affiliates from all thirteen sectors come out *above* ground and play. It's their greatest stronghold that's not underneath their city.

The Solomus sector is where the artists gather. Painters, sculptors, musicians, they can come here to make a name for themselves or, if they're a beginner, learn from the best. However, because Culumexian arts are far different from the arts of even the other sectors, the residents are also very secretive with their crafts when they get visitors.

The Vector sector is for the philosophers. Poets, preachers, counselors, even the Zealots, any of them are free to debate or discuss whatever they care to when they're in Vector. If any bot feels lost, they should go there for guidance.

The Logos sector is even more secretive than Solomus. This is where augmentations are invented and put into practice. Augmentations are important among all Culumexians and the Logos mechs are teachers to anyone who doesn't know how to use theirs. As the most practiced with their augmentations, they also serve as a military stronghold.

The Solus sector would be the one on the "brochure". It's where the richest of the rich live and they live very big. It's the biggest sector and the fullest, not because it's the most populated but because of the architecture. There are all ranges of entertainment and all levels of places to find something to one's fancy. (Windcharger was sparked here.)

For those who can't afford Solus, Epistemus is the next choice. The mechs there don't have much of a work ethic but they do have lots of creativity, so they are the commissioners of the "construction class" sectors. This is the Micronus sector's biggest buyer, as Epistemus mechs are always raring to find a new way to use the "newest thing". (This is where Cliffjumper was sparked.)

Maximus is one of the construction class sectors, made up almost entirely of construction workers. Because of that, the residents are a bit rough around the edges and slow to trust. They're methodical in their building, always trying to see their work from a different angle, but that makes them a slow-moving sector when compared to the others. (This is where Huffer was sparked.)

Nexus is the top-notch construction sector. Everything is abuzz there because the workers are always tearing down the old to put up the new. They crave the pride of building something worthwhile, which is why this sector is also where two bots are most likely to bond and build a family. (Usually they'll meet on a worksite!)

The dangers of Maximo can't compete with Alchemist. This is the science sector, one which began covertly and eventually became an open secret that couldn't be uprooted. Alchemist is where scientists lure or outright *hunt* unsuspecting bots at a young age and take them into their trial programs. Once a bot is in, they usually don't get out.

There you have it! *bows* Oh, by the way, did you find the Decepticon symbol yet? >:)

Music, Instruments, and Dancing

Chapter Summary

Well, I got inspired by the beautiful Vosnian headcanons of a friend of mine on Tumblr and decided to write in more detail on my headcanons for Culumexian music. Enjoy!

Music, Instruments, and Dancing

Like any culture, Culumexians have music for many different occasions. All of their instruments have different names than ours, but when I mention them, I'll give the closest comparisons possible. Though there are many sub-genres of music in Culumex, these are the three main genres, most often used:

Ceremonial occasions, such as weddings and funerals, are often accompanied by a **braam** (plural form braamae). A braam is a wind instrument with the deep strong notes of a tuba, but when the player reaches higher octaves, it adopts the twang of a trumpet. Dance at weddings varies according to gender. Mech wedding dance must be conservative, to show respect for the bond of the new couple. A mech using contemporary dance at a wedding offends the bride and challenges the groom, which is obviously very dangerous. Femme dance is allowed to be more contemporary, in the hopes that they might attract a single suitor there, unless the groom requests otherwise so he can see only his femme. Funeral dance is conservative, to be used as a tribute; the family and pace of the deceased often refrain, due to grief.

Celebrations of almost every nature are accompanied by a "string" instrument, such as a **vlin**. I say "strings" because instruments with physical strings don't exist in their city. "Stringed" instruments are wired to be operated by magnetics; only Culumexians who are attuned (meaning they have a magnetic augmentation) can play a vlin unless someone who's not attuned cheats with handheld magnets. It's rare that this trick works however; like all of their wired instruments, a vlin requires a specific amount of magnetic pressure to sound right. When played correctly, a vlin sounds like a mixture of a violin and a clarinet, depending on which areas are being manipulated. [For example, this would be what a vlin duet sounds like.](#) When a celebration is held more casually, however, a cousin to the vlin, the **valn**, is used. It's their form of a bass or electric guitar, also operated by magnetics and most often heard in taverns. [This is my headcanon for Brawn's favorite tavern song, the one he gets up on the table for, though the lyrics would be different.](#) Celebratory dance is by far their most acrobatic form; the dancers usually spend more time in the air than on the ground and when they are on the ground, they're either strutting around each other or they're in a somersault.

Mercstre zanlos, or home melodies, consist of family/pace bonding songs. Most of these are composed by the pace-mate or family member most musically inclined, to whatever extent that may be, but each member of the household is required to compose at least one for evaluation. These can be accompanied by any instrument available, though percussion is most favored. Dance is an expectation for home melodies; emphasis is made on the movements of the feet and each movement composes a specific part of the story. Human comparisons would be Irish step dancing, but with heavier, more lingering beats because their center of gravity is lower and this type of dance is more tribal. Their feet are their drums. Meanwhile their upper body movements are

sweeping and dramatic, like ballet, for the sake of whatever story they're telling. The waist and hips are studied closely for which of the two types of movement they portray; at any time the emphasis of the story could change.

Culumexians *love* to sing and most are extremely good at it. Paces sing and dance together as bonding rituals as well as making it a part of everyday routine. For example, if they're taking care of each other—washing together, tending an illness/wound, buffing each other's plating—they'll sing home melodies. The camaraderie relaxes and comforts them. During a performance, however, that same camaraderie can be used to charge each other up and give the performance more distinctiveness. Most performances are done by the entire pace; solos are rare and even looked down on in some areas of Culumex, so soloists are given a "backup", a pace-mate who's prepared to turn the solo into a duet if they see that the audience disapproves. The part each pace-mate plays in the performance can seem completely random to an outside viewer but incredibly personal to the pace itself, so singling out someone to criticize their skills is a taboo. Each role is chosen with care, so if criticism is deserved, address the entire pace and name no names! The leader will know who needs more practice.

A note should also be made about lullabies. Most are accompanied by wind instruments like the vlin or the **eloras**, their combination of a flute and a duduk. Singing is an expectation for lullabies; some can be sung in the Common Tongue, but those that a creator writes specifically for their creation must be sung in Culumexian, to create a sense of intimacy with the little one. As their creation gets older, however, the creators' lullabies take on meaning which can be darker than one would expect. This is an attempt at bracing them for the expectations of the society around them as well as the outsiders' world, should they choose to venture out of Culumex.

The Arts

Chapter Notes

As requested by Redfire_Dragon, here's a little something about the various art styles in Culumex! It was so much fun! :D

The Arts

Most Culumexians who use artistry for a living live in Solomus, which is easily one of the most competitive sectors of the city when it comes to promotion. Every artist there is pushing to be unique among the many—and there are *many*. Chances are high that if a Culumexian doesn't go into construction, technology, or politics, they'll go into the realm of the arts.

One of the most popular art forms is sculpting. While clay doesn't exist in Culumex, artists will often take the most random assortment of materials and combine them to achieve the effect they want. Glass is a beautiful but risky choice, given that there hasn't ever been a Culumexian who could be called “gentle” in how they touch and move things. Many an artist has despaired to find that when they take a step back from their finished masterpiece, they find a conspicuous crack in the center—or worse, they fail to notice the flaw until a curious onlooker touches it, sets it off and it all comes crashing down.

For this reason, glass is something of a taboo unless one is willing to risk it and actually succeeds with it. Cybre-glass, the substance used to make energon cubes, is a bit more durable and safer to work with. Beyond glass, the range of materials to work with is boundless. Metals of all varieties—gears, wiring, circuit boards, and even the tools themselves may make up the scene.

Painting is popular both inside Solomus and outside. Those in other sectors often teach it to their sparklings as a pastime, but Solomus bots who take it seriously use enhanced tools such as light piping and metal settings to go with their paint. Pre-made enamels and lacquers are standard, but some like to make their own paints from scratch. Melted metals such as mercury, iron, copper and chromium are often used as backdrops and then overlaid with diluted liquid chemicals: white and red phosphorous, magnesium, and fluorescent energon derivatives.

Most paintings are set on hand-engraved canvases made of silver and then sealed with a composite which gently reacts with whatever volatile chemicals were used. Over time, the glow in the paintings brightens or dims depending on their upkeep; if they want, the artist can touch up the sealant to the point where it looks as if they painted it the previous night, though most find they become fond of the weathering that happens over time.

Those who call themselves professional artists may rise to take on one of the art forms most difficult to master: what they call **suspentures**. A suspenture is a sculpted mural comprised of circuitry, light piping, holomatter and magnetics, each one a link in a vast web. It requires a great deal of patience and concentration as the artist connects each minute detail. A successful suspenture should, as its name implies, be a scene suspended in midair, perfectly three-dimensional and able to be touched or even held, depending on its size.

Very few artists have actually achieved this, given how much accuracy it requires. If even one circuit is misplaced, the magnetism needed for suspension will burn out the entire array. If the holomatter doesn't get the charge it should from the circuitry, the matter may just disappear, leaving ugly gaps. If the light piping warps the magnetism effect, bits and pieces of the structure will simply collapse. Furthermore, in order for the mural to be properly promoted, it needs to be easily transported from the artist's home to their show and able to be assembled quickly. This art form is so difficult that simplified versions of it have been sold as strategy games for those brave enough to try it. The gameplay usually lasts no less than two months, if the gamer perseveres.

Some subcategories of art have emerged over time, each taking their aspects from the three main art forms, but others are failing arts, practically unheard of. Historical illustrations, collages, calligraphy and engraving are often taught in schools, but holo-photography and printmaking are usually seen as nothing but pastimes. Graphics are bland, abstracts are blinding and portraits are seen as nothing but an invasion of privacy.

Despite all of this, without a doubt the most beloved art form is body art. All sectors are educated in it and use it for all ceremonial procedures. They use all manner of decoration—paint, holomatter, leafing, filigree, chainmail, etcetera—to adorn the body, each mark symbolizing something important to the particular ceremony. The decorations on their hands are especially important, taking precedence over others to be done correctly. Bonding ceremonies and Sealing Rites, when a pace closes ranks and won't accept any more members, are particularly extravagant because the participants are celebrating a sense of peace and completion.

Most of the ceremonial body art is traditional, but each pace-mate is personalized to a degree based on which sector they originally come from. Even if a pace-mate has moved from their home sector, when they take part in a ceremony they return to their roots, painting the runes of their original clan on their lower back or their chest as tribute to who they were before. The crest of their pace is placed opposite it.

Body art is a sacred and intimate procedure to be done between pace-mates alone; the only time an outsider is allowed to decorate a pace-mate's body is when the pace celebrates their **fratersarius**, the anniversary of their Sealing Rites. Whoever is chosen to perform this duty is counted as a deeply trusted friend, someone they can count on to celebrate with them and appreciate the honor unconditionally.

End Notes

I hope you're enjoying! Feel free to comment, ask about a specific area of their culture, or give me ideas on what should be addressed next!

Please [drop by the Archive and comment](#) to let the creator know if you enjoyed their work!