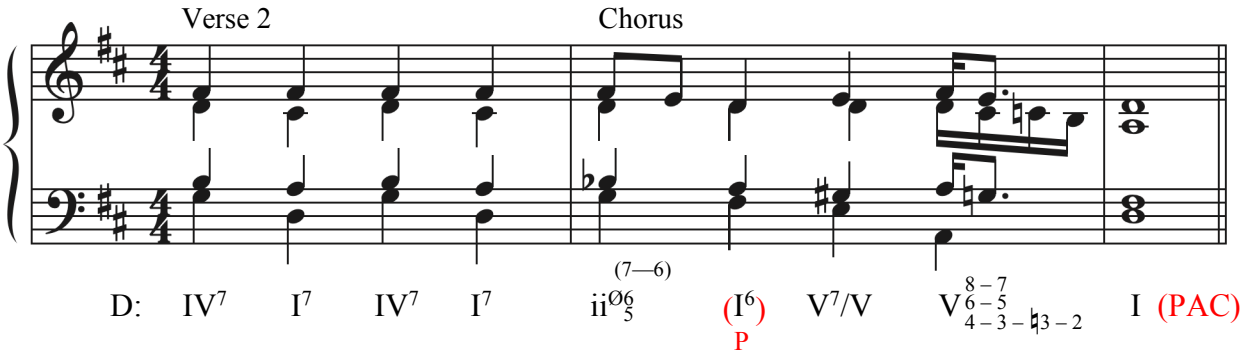
Mode Mixture in John Mayer's *Continuum* **Name**: KEY .

G. Fankhauser

1. John Mayer, "Stop This Train" (*Continuum*, 2006), 1:15–2:00 https://youtu.be/2UiX4dUUjWc?t=75
   a. Write parts for SATB... See below. The soprano (E–D) and alto (B–A) at the end create P4–P4, which is good. Inverting them, placing the D–C♯–C♮–B–A line or "train" in the soprano, would create P5–P5.
   b. On the word "stop," the first chord of the chorus shows a 7–6 suspension. Identify the rare "seventh-chord" quality on the downbeat (G-B♭-D-F♯): mM (minor triad with major seventh)
   c. What is the topic of his song? ... While the lyrics relate personally to Mayer and his parents, they reflect a more universal longing to slow down the *fast pace of life*, particularly with regard to aging parents: If only we could stop the aging process and, more profoundly, dying! The sevenths in the verse tug away from the stability of basic major triads. The remarkably dissonant $ii^{Ø6}_{5}$ (7–6) begins the chorus with the word, "stop." Note also how the nostalgic "home" is accompanied by I^6, a consonant, tonic harmony that often provides stability but here functions as a passing chord between the two modified supertonics, $ii^{Ø6}_{5}$ and V^7/V. Listen also for how with "moving," V^7/V "pushes" forward more strongly with its G♯ and for the quickly descending line (a "train") of the unusual dominant embellishments, D–C♯–C♮–B–A.



Lyrics: Don't know how else to say it.
I don't want to see my parents go.
One generation's length away
From fighting life out on my own.

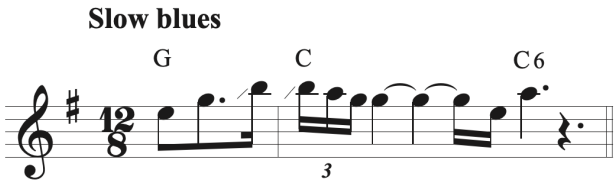
Stop this train. I want to get off and go
Home again. I can't take the speed it's
Moving in. I know I can't, but,
Honestly, won't someone stop this … train?

2. John Mayer, "Gravity" (*Continuum,* 2006)
   … In some more recent live versions, however, he plays an E♭ to A (see "b"). What scale degree is altered, and how is it altered? $\hat{6}$ to $\flat\hat{6}$ Why might have Mayer chosen to make that alteration? (See the lyrics, below.) To make the harmony "heavy" or "sad," supporting lyrics like, "Gravity wants to bring me down."

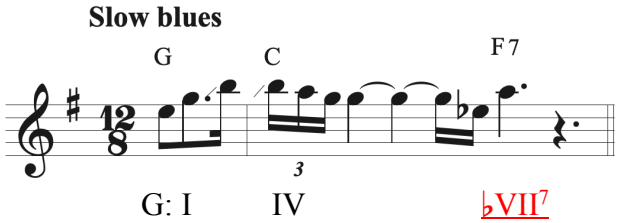
   To fit with his E♭, the band has to change…
   In G, $A^{Ø}7/C$ or Cm^6 = $ii^{Ø6}_{5}$
   In G, F7 = $\flat VII^7$
   (While Mm, its function is not $V^7/\flat III$.)

   Lyrics: Gravity is working against me,
   and gravity wants to bring me down.

   a. Studio version (0:29–0:34)
   https://youtu.be/7VBex8zbDRs?t=22
   Also, live in Rio (2013), c. 0:32 https://youtu.be/j50gxGY-ds0?t=31



   b. Some more recent live versions



   Live in LA with Alessia Cara (2017), c. 1:02
   https://youtu.be/UY7FpJbODvE?t=57
   Live in Singapore (2019), c. 0:25
   https://youtu.be/50B4uaXe7Es?t=21
   Live in NYC (2019), c. 2:09
   https://youtu.be/chcQpa_tkks?t=129