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MA COMMERCIAL PRODUCER

CREATION ELEMENT C1: WRITTEN PROPOSAL

WORD COUNT: 2327

WHAT YOU ARE INTENDED TO CREATE?

For my final creation assignment I will be creating a 6 track extended project to demonstrate my songwriting, vocal ability, production skills and mixing abilities. I intend on collaborating with external music producers to create this body of work that will reflect my journey as a musician so far and the different musical personalities that I possess. My extended project will be entitled 'ALIEN[E]P', taken from my second name Aliene. The theme around this will be based around love, heartbreak, female empowerment, solitude and victory. This will be a very personal project for me because it will include a collection of some of my very first songwriting material. All songs have been taken from a period of time between 2015 and 2016, reflecting a version of myself from when I first started creating music professionally. Some songs will be demos I recorded when I first started out, with no intention of releasing them to the world. Others will be tracks that I have previously recorded or released, with new and original instrumentation. It has been said that an artist's very first pieces of work are usually their best work, because it was raw and authentic (Robinson. Y, 2020), and I believe that is the case for some of my earlier work.

Before starting my masters degree, I was particularly excited about this creation assignment. When I discovered that I would be granted the opportunity to produce an entire project myself, I knew exactly what I wanted to create. I had envisioned this EP for over 2 years and now would be my time to manifest it into real life. I am confident that my EP will interest those who have been following my music journey from the beginning till now. Previous feedback from industry professionals and my growing fanbase have expressed a desire for a project. Granting me reassurance to move forward with my EP. This will be a great chance for my listeners to see me take on more responsibility as a producer as well as a vocalist, and to see a different side of me artistically.

My main goal for this project is to release a body of work that connects me with an audience of my own, ultimately growing my fanbase. Over the years I have released a selection of singles, however failed to connect to people for a long period of time. I want to create this project to help change my temporary audience into a permanent one (McGuire. P, 2020). By creating a 6 track project I am aiming to gain wider promotional coverage and reach more people around the globe. Another goal is longevity. I want to create a project that creates a long-lasting impression on my listeners. This project may spark the interest of those who listen to a similar music style to me or similar artists.

WHY ARE YOU TAKING ON THIS PROJECT?

I am taking on this specific project for a multitude of reasons. Firstly, I have always been a music lover before I ever started making music. I had the privilege of growing up on full albums and investing into a musician's story, rather than a sample of their life, which we call singles. It is important for me to create a full body of work in a time where music is deemed as rather disposable (Grime. T, 2020). Thanks to platforms such as Spotify and Apple Music, music is now mostly listened to predominantly through playlisting, making it difficult to build a real connection with an artist. It is more important than ever for artists to still create albums and EPs, as they are a great way to reflect their artistry and creativity in a more well rounded way (McGuire. P, 2020). Respected musicians such as Beyoncé, Kendrick Lamar and The Internet are artists well known for their bodies of work. Despite living in a time where everyone seems to be aiming for the number one spot on the single charts, these artists stay true to their art and continue to create albums that show their longevity in this industry.

In a self made documentary titled *'Life Is A Dream'*, musical artist Beyoncé spoke on the state of the music industry today. She expressed her concern for the direction in which music is going and how quickly artists "burn out" (Knowles.B, 2013) when they depend on singles to sustain their career. The realisation that no one makes bodies of work any is quite devastating as a music lover and maker. Due to where music is going, most artists are only looking for a quick one hit wonder or overnight success (McGuire. P, 2020) that will get them through the door. It appears that artists are no longer seeking longevity in their careers, therefore it is important that I demonstrate this as a serious musician.

My second reason for taking on this project is because I believe it is quite crucial at this stage of my career. This project will not only help me to attract more listeners, but it will help me to gain a loyal and active fan base. Over the years I have released a number of singles and demos that have captivated people for a short period of time. My music has failed to capture a sustainable audience due to the lack of consistency with my releases. This means my listeners are not fully investing in me as an artist, because they are not receiving a cohesive story or full image of me. Instead they are receiving glimpses of me and what I have to offer, but not enough to convert them into loyal and active listeners. I am finally at a place where I am confident in my sound and my ability to tell my story to the world, without fear of judgement. Again this project is very personal and one that is long overdue.

Another important factor for why I am undertaking this project, is to demonstrate a collection of my most promising and impressive work. Not only will this project give me the opportunity to show off the skills I have learnt during my Masters course, but it allows me to share work from my personal collection and show how far I have come. This project will be a momentous moment in my musical journey as it will be an opportunity to prove myself not only as an artist, but also as a new found producer. It will also give me the confidence to continue making music in a time where social media has turned everyone into a musical critic.

Finally and probably the most important reason why I am undertaking this task, is due to the lack of female producers within the music industry. In the 5 years I have been actively pursuing my music career, I have crossed paths with only one female producer. It is no surprise to anyone that the music industry is heavily male dominated and that can be quite intimidating for women. It was important for me to take control of my first EP, crediting myself as co-producer and songwriter and performer. Unfortunately I have experienced many situations where I have felt undermined as a female in a studio full of men or even ignored. This project is my chance to take the lead and create a body of work where I am fully involved at every step of the process. I am also creating this to help empower women and assure them that they can do everything. They can write, sing, produce and perform their own music.

WHAT ARE THE BENCHMARKS FOR SUCCESS?

My success rate will not be determined by the number of streams and plays that my project receives. However it will be measured by my ability to tell a cohesive story and it's relatability to my audience. Yes, ultimately this can be judged based on the quality of streams I receive on platforms such as Spotify and Apple Music, but it is not the main determinant.

When looking at the benchmarks of success I began to look at other musical artists and the impact their project had in their career. New York rapper Azealia Banks released her 4 track EP '1991' in 2012, which helped her music career drastically. Azealia's lead single '212' became a global sensation when it was first released earlier in the year. The reaction from the public was so great that she quickly went on to release her project '1991' that continued to provide the same high energy that listeners experienced with 212. This move made her audience and music professionals want to hear more from the artist. Her project was a combination of house, dance and east coast hip hop, which effortlessly flowed together. For 16 minutes you were a part of

Azealia's world and it was evident that this was her speaking her truth and letting the world in on her musical journey.

As mentioned earlier, my project will include a number of unreleased demos that I recorded at the beginning of my career. This was inspired by recording artist Drake who released a series of Demos on his project '*Dark Lane Demo Tapes*' in 2020. This project involved some of Drake's very first tracks which helped gain his massive fan base that we all know today. Not only was Drake able to finally monetise the music that has been circulating Soundcloud free of charge for years, but the rapper was able to make his work relevant in the present day. Proving that no matter how old a song may seem, it can still be released like a brand new song. Both Drake and Azealia have successfully used their projects as a tool to grow their audience and that is what I am thriving for with this EP.

HOW DO YOU INTEND ON APPROACHING THE PROJECT?

When approaching my project I wanted it to reflect me in all aspects including but not limited to the songwriting, production and arrangement. All the music included in the project will be original pieces written and composed by me. However, as mentioned earlier, I will be seeking external help from music producers I have worked with in the past and those also undertaking this master's degree. A personal friend of mine, WTSN is also a music producer who I have worked with on various projects, including my debut single 'U.F.O.'. Due to our successful music relationship I wanted to involve WTSN into the production process, to help develop my tracks the way I intend for them to be heard. Though the final decisions regarding the tempo, the key and the musical arrangement will all be made by me, I will be getting help with tying my ideas together. This will ensure my tracks and project as a whole are mixed correctly.

I have chosen to seek help for several reasons; Since participating in this course I have come to realise my strengths and weaknesses. I am a great songwriter and I am able to create beautiful melodies and lyrics to a song. I am also good at arrangement and creating a song that is commercially appealing. However due to my lack of experience in production, my productions tend to sound quite basic, despite what I initially intend on creating. Therefore I have decided to collaborate with a producer to ensure things are mixed appropriately. The producer will take the ideas that I have given them and ensure all instruments fit with each other.

There were several approaches I considered when approaching my project. Initially I considered hand picking a selection of commercially friendly songs I have written and making a project that I knew would be profitable. Though this may be successful, it wouldn't be true to me as an artist. I want to choose songs that showed every aspect of me and that were true to my art, therefore I decided to not go down that route.

TIMELINE OF PROJECT

The creation of my project will take place over a period of two months, between the end of August and October. During this time I will be carefully selecting a variety of tracks from my catalogue of music that I believe fit together perfectly. As all songs have been written previously, therefore my main focus during this time will be on the music production. After finally deciding on the top 6 songs, I will look at starting the production. During the first couple of weeks, I will be carefully curating the foundation of my songs, focusing on chord progressions, drum patterns and melodies that compliment each individual track. I will then be booking several studio sessions in both Tileyard and external studios, where I will be working with one or two external producers to help me bring the songs together. Once all the tracks have been curated I will then use the last few weeks to work on the mixing, really honing in on the skills I have learnt throughout my degree.

To conclude, my extended project 'ALIEN[E]P' is very close to my heart and one that I thoroughly look forward to completing. This milestone will help define me as an artist and producer and hopefully inspire more female producers to carry on creating and existing in an industry heavily dominated by men.

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