

Proposal C1: Creation

ADAD7004_LON - sem2_CW001CSL

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Introduction

For this assessment we are set the task to expand in detail on the process and decisions making behind the completion of 30-45 minutes of music which is recorded, mixed and mastered by ourselves. In this research project I will elaborate on the process and creative decision making that took place in the songwriting, the arrangement and composition of the tracks as well as the pre- and post-production to the recorded music. I will academically support the research I did prior to starting the project and the hurdles I came across throughout it as reflection on how to potentially better the final result for this assessment. I have decided to complete a 10 track studio recorded album and an additional 3 sync briefs as final submission for my C2 Portfolio Element. During our time studying at Tileyard we have been advised to challenge ourselves on all our different skills and define where our strengths lie especially. I have therefore crafted a SWOT analysis, see table 1 (Leckstein, 2023) which shows where my strengths and weaknesses lie within my set of skills. According to my skills I've made an analysis elaborating which of my specific skills I've focused on and how I've navigated this year to accompany my strengths. I will elaborate on this later in this research project. We have also been taught to be as deployable as possible, but to simultaneously recognise and define our own creative niche and work alongside those to create our own trademark. This is so whenever someone is in need of a certain sound or element in music and you are in that bracket, they will think directly of you for the job. I will expand on what crafts my sound and niche in this research paper.

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1. Personal and Professional Development

a. SWOT analysis (REF)

To make the decision on the sound of this project and to truly understand where my strengths lie I started with arranging a SWOT analysis. (Leckstein 2022) this allowed me to understand my skill set better and start my project with the right approach. Throughout the project I was also able to always fall back on this whenever I was in doubt or felt stuck in the process.

Table 1

Strengths - Advanced piano player and singer - Very strong vocal that is trained to remain healthy for a long time - Great live band and recording musicians around me - Access to top tier mentoring and guidance at Tileyard - Defined a strong sound and niche for my music - Guides recording process professionally	Weaknesses - Busy with live shows to promote recent release of EP 'flourish' and social life - Family abroad and therefore quickly out of the loop - Gets anxious when not in control of the project and time
Opportunities - Delve in to practicing guitar playing - Learn a new way of recording through getting the whole band in the studio together.	Threats - Time Management - Full calendar with live shows - Losing touch of momentum on social media - Falling out of the loop due to stress and anxiety - Getting distracted by social media because of keeping up-to-date with my releases

b. Analysis of SWOT

Analysing this SWOT assists and reminds me to choose focus points in my weeks and to maintain and stick to a well planned schedule. An overly full calendar results in me sometimes losing track of time and getting stressed and anxious, which is something I should always remember to keep in line.

2. What is my project?

a. Breakdown, why album and sync?

For my final project I'll be submitting 30-45 minutes of recorded music. Consisting of a 6-8 track commercial album for my artist project 'Liza Lo' and 3 sync briefs, mixed and mastered to a high standard. I decided to work on the sync briefs to challenge myself in doing something different. The Sync world is rather new to me and I wanted to challenge myself and diversify my work and potentially expand my sources of income by opening up the world of sync for me.

During lectures like 'Making Music Work' at Tileyard (Bliss, 2023), the first thing we were taught was to diversify our skill set according to our musical palette. During the tasks set in this lecture by Sister Bliss I learnt that I have an ear for classical arrangement because of playing and listening to it whilst growing up. I listened to a lot of classical music at home with my parents and studied classical piano from a young age. When approaching a film score for the first time, I initially went to my piano. To elaborate on my piano arrangements I grabbed the highly renowned plugin from the Symphony Orchestra and found a real joy and excitement in arranging a musical project with close to real classical instrumentation. I've always had a passion for including atmosphere in my compositions and as Sister Bliss taught us, Atmosphere is like the underscoring in film, it sets the mood of the movie. I found this is something I can invest my passion in and also addressed producing foley sounds. You will find a correlation in the commercial album and sync briefs in this. After studying music production through Patreon, on Jordan Rakei's page, who is a real hero for me, I learnt that adding various layers of atmosphere to your recordings, created depth in your sound. Since learning this I've included atmosphere in all my recordings. My mentor during this course was Veronika Hanl, an experienced music producer for various Netflix films and BBC shows. She has supplied me with the three briefs I wrote to and guided me along the way. Her main key advice for me was to stick to my strengths in sound and creating a motif sound to my productions as to fruit towards becoming a pioneer in my specific sound. This way, in the future, when a

music supervisor would be looking for a specific sound and I fit the brief, my defined sound would benefit my chances.

Alongside the sync briefs I decided to live record half of a studio album for my artist project 'Liza Lo'. I have released two EP's and some singles so far for the project, which I produced myself. Some of the tracks streamed very well, like the track Empty Room which streamed over 1 million times and Breathe In which streamed over 100K times (Spotify, 2023). For that reason I wanted to record part of an album for my final project. I wanted to take a different approach to my arranging and recording process this time. I've decided to record my full band live in the studio, all together in a room. After discussing the project with my other mentor Jon Kelly, we came to the conclusion that recording with live drums, bass and guitars, the songs would really have the space to come to life. By making one space for the songs, the record has it's own 'space' and really come out as a whole (REF). The other half of the album, which won't be part of my final project, will be intimate lullabies, which I'll record in my home studio.

b. Liza Lo & Sound

After researching the artists that inspire me a lot, like Billie Marten, Ben Howard and MARO, I found that the common denominator was they all incorporated recorded live instruments and not a lot of midi or digital instrumentation is present in their recordings. The songs on the albums vary between tracks with a full band and more stripped back songs with guitars and vocals only. For this reason I wanted to really stick with only recording real instruments and not going for synthesisers directly, which is something I'm more used to and have done in previous recordings. I always used a lot of midi instruments and samples. This is easily accessible and comfortable for me as these sounds all come out of my plugin and sample collection. However, this time I wanted to really push myself and try to get everything from real instruments. I will still allow myself to go to other solutions if necessary, of course, but I don't want my main approach to be to grab everything from my synthesiseres or samples.

c. Defining my niche and approach to the project further

The songwriting, my vocal tone and intimacy in my music are what characterize my music. Therefore I will be focussing especially on these three aspects during the arrangement and preparations for my recordings. I have been writing with different songwriters and will be taking some of the remaining songs to different songwriters to help me better them. I found that through writing with other songwriters, a different world unlocks. From experience, I found that if I don't have to focus on playing an instrument, my songwriting is generally a lot stronger. "Collaboration is a great way to power up your songwriting efforts" writes Willie Weeks in an interview with I sing Mag (Weeks, 2019). It can really spark up a song you get stuck with.

3. Timeline

Most of the songs have already been written, but as mentioned in the previous paragraph, I will still be diving into some songwriting groups to better the tracks. The Sync briefs have been sent to me by Veronika Hanl and I will be focussing on these in between the acoustic songs and band recordings in June. I will elaborate on my planning in this section.

-May

- | 15 - 20 - writing camp Helsinki.
- | 22nd - Session Nype to continue working on the album and specifically on our track 'angel eyed'. Will also be looking at songwriting and arrangement for 'it's simple, love'
- | 23 - 27 - developing 'Whisper Goodbye', 'Without You', 'Losing Touch'
- | 29 - 2 - developing 'wind in my hair', 'delayed morning' and 'live in the moment'

-June

- | 6 - 11 - developing 'hermana', 'dimelo' 'a messenger' - Spanish guitarists
- | 12 - - developing 'I waited'
- | 13 - 18 - deciding which tracks go on the final cut and developing them further
- | 14 - prep harmonising for acoustic songs with Bryony and James
- | 19 - 23 - recording stripped back tracks in studio
- | 26 - 27 - prepping live recordings with full band in studio
- | 28 - 1 - additional production acoustic songs

-July

- | 3 - 7 - decide best mixing opportunities
- | 8 - 12 - Mixing Acoustic Songs
- | 13 - acoustic songs out for mastering
- | 13 - 14 - writing essay
- | 15 & 16 - final prep recordings
- | 17 & 18 - recording full band in studio
- | 19 - 23 - mixing and finalising full band recordings

6. Reading list

Bartlett, B. (2007). *Recording Music on Location: Capturing the Live Performance*. United States: Taylor & Francis Ltd.

Bliss, S. (2023) Making Music Work [Lecture on Location] *CPL0922 - Development*, The Gallery, Tileyard Education 1 Feb

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Spotify (2023) *Liza Lo - Top Tracks*, Spotify. Available at: <https://open.spotify.com/artist/1o2NiIe5jFTvLsv7gCMhMH?si=GNqaZBHdQrS8y-XC1wqMag> (Accessed: 10 May 2023).

Weeks, W. (2019). The power of collaboration. *I Sing Mag*. 6 Dec 2019, p.1.