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Contents page

1. Introduction.
2. Overview of my projects intentions.
3. Influences behind what i am doing, and why.
4. My interpretation of the benchmark for success.
5. How i intend to approach the project.
6. The overall timeline of my project.
7. Conclusion.
8. Bibliography.
9. Appendices.

Introduction

In this specific essay I will be conveying an overview of what the project is, and i will be outlining my role within its creation. I will also be referencing the influences behind my project, and what role this project will have in the longevity of my professional career beyond education. I will also be outlining my subjective goals and what i consider to be the benchmarks for success. I will also be conducting research within similar styles of music in regards to the production, songwriting and creative techniques that are going to inspire my project decisions. I will be analysing the methods that are used in the creation of similar styles of music and what are the alternative methods that i could've used but have decided not to. I will also be providing a timeline of completion for this project and how i expect to reach my desired outcome within the given timeframe.

What my project is:

My desired outcome for this specific project is to produce an album worth of commercial uk dance music that is both relevant and competitive in the current market. I plan on creating an album consisting of 30-35 minutes worth of audio over the duration of the coming 10 week semester. I will be doing this by referencing and analysing current popular commercial dance tracks that are relevant in today's market, using professional commercial production techniques that are used within this genre and adapting them to my own stylistic elements of creation. I will be doing this by analysing production techniques that i will discuss further in depth throughout this essay in reference to; the history of dance music production methods, the structure of current commercial tracks, the instrumentation that is apparent within this genre and the creative process and production methods used within current practices. I will also be studying what tracks are currently popular in the uk dance charts and using active listening to provide theoretical in depth analyses of what production methods will be influencing my creation. Throughout the semester i will be organising consistent sessions with singers and songwriters that are suitable and competent within this genre. The role that i will be partaking in this project is to produce and create each track using both my own equipment, and also equipment that is available within the Tileyard premises. I will be using my own instrumentation and production, whilst also using my own DAW (Logic pro x) and third party plugins. My role also includes finding songwriters and singers that are competent within the uk dance scene and organising sessions with them. I will also be influencing the creative songwriting in reference to lyricism and melodies. I will also be taking full responsibility of all songwriting in regards to the production and instrumentation elements. An issue that might occur during this process is my time management. As we have a scheduled time of completion for the project it is within my best interests to set a specific weekly schedule in order to help me combat this issue, this is something i have done and will later discuss in this essay.

Influences behind what i am doing and why:

When approaching this specific project, it is my desire to have an outcome that can be used for furthering my professional career after education. That means defining my career ambitions as a professional producer. This is something that i defined before beginning the production course, and i have further defined and discussed with my personal mentor Charlie Arme (See appendix 1). It is my long term goal to gain traction as an artist producer and sign a deal with a large label. Whilst also releasing music that charts, playing shows and festivals, working and collaborating with top experienced industry professionals and gaining momentum similar to that of Sigala and Joel Corry. Thus far in my professional career i have been able to produce and release music onto all streaming platforms with a healthy trajectory of gaining around 300k streams. However, it has been

discussed with Arme (2022) during meetings that my immediate short term goals in order to have a growing trajectory towards my longterm goals should be; to partake in an artist development project that focuses on defining my sound, and having a collection of music that is ready to pitch to labels. Fountain (2021) suggests that an artists development programme is the process where a mentor can work with you in order to achieve your goals. A process often used by labels to help upcoming musicians reach their full potential and operate commercially (Fountain 2021). Arme (2022) suggested that myself alongside the Tileyard team consisting of himself, Mathew Newque and Steve Manovski arrange for me to re produce a series of 3-4 songs that have already been worked on and recorded during session time with Steve and get them pitch ready for playback. However as this ties in with the final project, i would like to take this a step further by arranging an album worth of recordings that are ready for playback, and that are pitch ready for labels. Arme (2022) suggests that independent labels usually arrange a contract agreement of 3 songs with artists that they can release and market with the hopes of profitability. As i am engaging in an artist development scheme, it's my intention to collaborate with a host of musicians in order to help me reach my potential with my skillset and have a collection of tracks that are of an industry standard ready for release. Musically my personal releases take inspiration from the likes of Sigala, Joel corry, Meduza and Goodboys. These are all artist producers that i wish to have a similar trajectory to, whilst also diversifying my portfolio in order to cross genres in the future for longevity within the music industry. However during this process it is a common issue that i find with collaborating with new artists that some of them can be un reliable when scheduling appointments, already this semester i have had two cancelled sessions. I look to combat this issue by using already pre recorded top lines and making an instrumental behind them. This will alleviate the pressure of cancellations and help me reach my desired goals more effectively.

My interpretation of the benchmark for success:

What i consider to be my interpretation of the benchmark for a successful project outcome is: to create an album worth of commercially competitive music, to use the time to undergo an artist development programme where i collaborate and learn from industry professionals, to have a solid amount of tracks that are ready for pitching to labels and playback from A&R. I plan on using the other students and fellow peers in order to have playback sessions with, where they can give their opinion and advice for bettering my tracks. The main issues for primary concern are as previously discussed; planning my time effectively and session cancelation. Both of which i look to problem solve by having a suitable planner in place, and using already pre recorded top lines to write tracks to. Further to that, i would like to release these tracks onto all streaming platforms alongside independent labels in order to further my reach and continue to build traction towards my larger goals. I look to do this by utilising the Tileyard campus for connections, for instance; the Ostereo networking events have proven very helpful in linking me with artists and label owners within the dance genre. Skinner (2019) argues that networking is one of the most important things you can do to further your career in the music industry, explaining how networking can open doors for you with like minded people and labels that can help you grow and develop as an artist.

How i intend to approach the project:

When approaching this project its my desire to have tracks that compete in the current market. Hyperbits (2022) discusses the benefits of using reference tracks as a template in your own production, arguing that its the secret to sounding professional. Its discussed that reference tracks can be helpful for; matching your master loudness to sound competitive, sounds and instrument ideas, structure ideas, sound design and mixing and

mastering. The issue that could occur when using reference tracks is that your own interpretation might not sound original, and issues could occur in sounding too similar. I look to combat this issue by using reference tracks as a structure guide, and a guide for current sound design whilst also using elements of my own skillset and production to combat sounding too similar. For this i have researched what commercial tracks are currently streaming well in the uk within the dance community. Current dance tracks that sit in the uk top 40 are 'The Motto' Tiesto & Ava Max (2021) (see appendix 2) and 'What would you do' Joel Corry, David Guetta, Bryson Tiller (2022) (see appendix 3). For a creative understanding of what is currently competitive i have used active listening to break down elements of the tracks and what techniques are being used for reference in my own production. Masterclass (2020) explains active listing as focusing on an element of music without distraction. Makepopmusic (2021) gives an example of how to do this by downloading a track, dragging it into your daw, and making notes based on each element of the track. By using this technique when listening to the two reference tracks, i have been able to break down and gain an understanding of what creative techniques are being used in their tracks, as a reference for tips in my own production over the course of the album. For instance;

structure- 'The motto' (2021) uses a 2 bar intro, followed by an 8 bar verse, 8 bar pre chorus, 16 bar chorus, 4 bar break, 8 bar second verse, 8 bar second pre chorus, 16 bar second chorus, 4 bar outro. 'What would you do' (2022) follows a; 4 bar intro, 8 bar verse, 8 bar chorus, 8 bar second verse, 8 bar second pre chorus, 16 bar second chorus, middle 8, 16 bar third chorus and a 4 bar outro. In commercial house music a common trait of all songs is that the structure moves quickly, it's a common trait of most pop music. in an interview with Abbey road institute, Max Martin (2017) argues that pop music follows the same trends as society in that everything is moving quickly at a fast pace, he argues that this, alongside adding subtle elements and energy throughout the production is imperative in keeping the attention of that audience. This is something that i will bring into my own product, in order to keep the audiences attention and reach my goals of being commercially competitive. Kody (2021) argues house music is set between 115- 130 bpm, both of these tracks are set between this bpm parameter, and i will be looking to keep my production between 120-130 bpm.

instrumentation- Here's where things differ slightly more than arrangement techniques in that 'The motto' (2021) takes more of a deeper house approach in using sub basses, atmospheric pads and synths, donk style bass in the chorus, deeper and darker textures than that of 'What would you do' (2022) which utilises; an upbeat piano rhythm, brighter fx and textures/ear candy, slap bass and a catchy upbeat hook line. However where they can both be defined as house music is in the drum pattern. The four to the floor kick, offbeat hats, swung top loops, claps snaps and snare on the 2 and 4. I look to take inspiration from the instrumentation as well as utilising the classic house drum patterns. However copying trends might make the music that i produce become dated very quickly, so what instrumentation has been used throughout house music since its birth that i can stay true too, and create for more of a timeless stream of tracks? Masterclass (2022) argues that the birth of house music came from instruments such as; Roland 909, Roland tr 808, Roland tb 303, Korg and various others. I will be looking to utilise these instruments in order to eradicate the issues in becoming dated quickly, and i will look to stay true to its roots. I will also be looking at creating hooky top lines with songwriters and singers that help to compliment the tracks and make them stand out in a commercial sense, i believe that this is the mark of a truly good song, and i will be looking at peer feedback to ensure the best quality results.

The overall timeline of my project:

A major issue that could occur when trying to achieve my specific goals with this project, is not planning my time effectively and not meeting the required deadline. Corporate (2022) suggest using the SMART (Specific, measurable, attainable, relevant and timely) method to set goals and plan effectively. Also arguing that you should; set goals correctly, prioritise wisely, set a time limit, take breaks between tasks, organise yourself, remove non essential tasks and plan ahead. This is something I've considered in my approach by setting a schedule of completion and making sure that my goals are achievable and realistic within the timeframe. As previously discussed i have 4 tracks that have been assigned to me by the tile yard team, and therefore that leaves me with 6 tracks the i require to make, produce and record. The schedule for completion is in 10 weeks time. For the remainder of the term i have set, planned and organised a series of two sessions per week with vocalists and song writers. This will allow me 6 weeks to record vocals within the tiltyard premises, and a further 4 weeks to mix and master, organise the arrangement, use peer feedback for improvement and make changes to ensure the best quality result. If problems occur with un-reliability and cancellations, then i still have 4 weeks to re arrange the sessions. If that problem was to occur, then that would pose as an issue however there would still be time to re plan and overcome this problem. I have devised a calendar schedule to keep my sessions in order (See appendix 4) this is for my organisation and pre planning.

conclusion:

In conclusion i am excited for this project as i believe that it will help me develop my career past education. I am looking forward to collaborating with new artists and developing my own sound. I am also looking forward to creating music that is pitch ready to labels. I believe that this project will serve as a great addition to my previously released singles.

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Appendices:

Appendix 1

SG

Sam Green

Thu 20/01/2022 18:37

To: Charlie Arme

↶ ↷ ➡ ...

This is basically along the lines of what my statement said-

About me:
I have been producing music for over 6 years, within the last 2 years i have been producing and releasing an ongoing stream of commercial house/dance tracks (however i am adaptable to other commercial genres). I have been releasing music independently with interest and support from independent labels, and have been able to accumulate over 250k views on my tracks internationally, with my most successful track reaching over 100k. I have had support and play from BBC Introducing and dj's on local radio stations. Currently i am playing local gigs, local festivals and bars on weekends.

My immediate goals include- continuous collaborations and releases of my own material. To get signed to a label, however in the meantime have a continuous release of tracks signed to independent labels that can playlist pitch, sync library pitch and maximise my musics potential whilst also running promotion myself. To continuously play shows and to keep developing and learning from professionals. Continuously grow my image and social media platforms.

My longterm goals include- my career aspirations of signing to a major label, continuous releases that chart, a large social media platform, collaborating and learning from large producers and artists, continue a constant work flow, play festivals and large shows. Have a consistent income from selling music, playing shows, library music, royalties, recording artists and session producing that allows me to live solely from music. I want to gain traction as an artist producer, similar to that of Calvin Harris, Joel Corry, Sigala etc

In a mentor i am looking for first hand industry experience with someone who can increase my knowledge on the role that a&r plays in maximising an artists tracks potential, knowledge on industry marketing and feedback on my own personal tracks. I am looking for someone that will be able to supply knowledge that can help further guide me to attain my goals and aspirations as an artist. Someone who is familiar with how labels operate and work, and what they look for in artists. Someone that is familiar with the role that a&r play in an artists career. Someone that can help build and develop me as an artist and business.

That basically explains everything im looking to achieve from the course and music in general, sorry its not short mate haha, but it's important to me.

Cheers,
Sam

Appendix 2

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Appendix 3

27

25 ↓

WHAT WOULD YOU DO

JOEL CORRY/DAVID GUETTA/TILLER

ATLANTIC

21

7

buy

listen

Appendix 4

(dotted dates mean what days i have booked sessions)

< May 2022

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30	31					

Session with Chikaya

14:00
19:00