

Marc Alexandru Tint - Creation (ADAD7004_LON)

I intend to write, produce and engineer a Hip-Hop, Grime and Electronic influenced album that consists of 11 tracks. Over the past few years, I have experienced working with Cojo on various projects, and have developed an effective working system and a mutual appreciation for each other's creative mindset. Cojo and I decided to create a project with a mix of our influences, with my interest including, but not limited to, creating Hip-Hop and Rap tracks, as well as Heavy Metal music, to achieve a unique and entertaining album that stretches and challenges our capabilities. The album will be based on a concept of various emotions, starting with extremely aggressive tunes that display anger, continuing with a range of other feelings and meander this journey at the end with a more relaxed feel. The lyrical content has thus far been described as meaningful, with a range of engrossing themes such as self development, love songs, political issues, personal stories and a parody 'dis' song being involved in the project. The inspiration behind this concept is a discussion among us concerning Queen with their greatest hits compilation. We were intrigued and fascinated by the transitions between their songs that carry their listener from emotional ballads to international pop hits, and ending with heavy, guitar infused sounds. Similarly, we wanted to explore this theme but as a whole album rather than a compilation and to create something that offers a range of flavours. Although Cojo suggested that this might become an idea that could potentially reach out to music lovers from a variety of backgrounds and envisioned the tracks as all singles, I do not perceive that to be an outcome for this particular body of work.

There are several reasons motivating me to take this project on. To begin with, it is reasonable for me to work with Cojo because of our prior experience creating songs which highlighted how perfectly we gel in the studio. As previously mentioned, I really enjoy creating Rap music, and I also admire the rapper, Cojo, himself. In my opinion, his voice is very unique which offers us the potential to make an exceedingly exceptional album. Since Cojo has a big fan base in Romania, another incentive to do this project is exposure and an opportunity to integrate into the music scene in Romania, as it is my country and I frequently visit and spend time in it. Spreading my name in more than one country would contribute to not only enhancing my contacts, but also in furthering my revenue across different artists around the globe. An inducing factor is also the focus on Hip-Hop music within the album, as I am particularly drawn towards having a career in Hip-Hop music while also being an opportunity to work with one of the top, young rapper in

Romania. His voice is also inspiring as it is very harsh and the music that he normally releases is quite dark which blends well with my heavy metal background. Additionally, due to my recent experiences of working with commercial artists, songwriters and producers, I can now take a certain, different approach to his sound by offering a slight commercial flavour to his songs. Utilising my prior experiences in that manner will enhance the audience who listens to the project and expand his fan base.

In terms of success, at the very outset, I aim to broaden a niche genre into the mainstream music. Although the artist does not suit to everyone's taste, I recognise that it is possible to create something that will provide him with more traction and enhance his brand to formulate his own movement of sound. Moreover, I have an objective of constantly improving my skills as a writer and producer in every project that I entail. With this particular album, there will be a great deal of knowledge and skills to absorb from the writing process, the mixing process and dealing with clients' opinions and expectations or any part of creating the album, especially since this will be my first ever album as a producer and engineer. It would also contribute to another benchmark I have set which is gaining contacts and popularity as a producer within the Romanian music industry. While increasing the range of people I work with is always beneficial, it is particularly the case for me as I am not certain whether I intend to stay in the UK or move back to Romania so far. If I complete this album with Cojo before the deadline, it is likely that my name would be out there in the summer or, at the very latest, autumn of the coming year so, I will have potential clients who are aware of me and will have heard my recently released music should I decide to go to Romania and I can focus on new projects straight away. At this stage, my objective is to have this project completely finished, mix and mastered by the date of the deadline so that it will be ready for release whenever the artist sees best fit, and hopefully, in the end, there will be 11 tracks that we are completely content with.

I am planning to approach this project in three distinct stages; organisation, preparation and communication. Although, it does seem like organisation and preparation would fall under the same category, the organisation aspect is more focused on my planning and time management over the course of the next few months while preparation is more aligned with detailing out the ideas for the songs and themes for the sessions with Cojo as much as possible. Ideally, I would like to spend the first month creating the tracks and then, in the remaining two months, dedicating the time to mixing and mastering. During the last weeks of mixing and mastering, I also intend to seek advice and opinions from my peers and mentors regarding the music. If they direct me to any flaws or come up with any suggestions, I will scrutinise

the songs again before a final listening session which I will schedule with Cojo, the team and myself a week prior to the hand in date. A key hurdle would be that only a handful of our sessions will be face to face and over a short period of time due to him living in Romania, and so to overcome that, thorough preparation must be done on both of our behalf so we can gain the most out of the time that we have together next month. I intend to utilise Zoom to discuss before and after any processes or ensure that no obstacles, such as communication, will hinder our progress. This also serves as a precautionary measure just in case we do not have sufficient time to achieve the desired outcome once I am in Romania.

I recognise that obstacles, such as limited opportunity to interact in person, may affect both, my prepared project timeline as well as the timeline in regards to the release. If there are any technical difficulties such as poor connection, I aim to resolve those by simply exchanging messages. Although, this will extent the process much longer, it will assist in reaching our goal. Another potential drawback is that although I understand his voice and what works well with it and have my own style of capturing audio, I will not be able to utilities that as I will not present when it comes to the final recording. To address this, I might speak with the recording engineer on call to discuss his process and try to come to an agreement. One technical problem with other people recording Cojo is that I know that the engineers he works with use Ableton, which means I will have to bounce out the entire tracks. While there is not a significant difference in the time zone, it will still be difficult to arrange frequent sessions as Cojo works part time and is also a student. However, after my trip to Romania, we aim to organise at least one session per week in order to hit the deadline. Our primary focus would be writing the songs and I will mix and master them later, back in the UK.

For mixing, I aim to follow my usual method of watching many videos and tutorials from people that I admire. I am familiar with Cojo's style, and when he raps, his style is to go in and out of a beat. Creating polyrhythms just from the voice is a key component of all Hip-Hop, which means that, to a degree, I need to keep things minimalistic when beatmaking. Hence, I directed my attention to producers who do that well. Take Boi-1da, for example, I have studied his work many times because his songs are always extremely catchy but not too complex. I also need to ensure that the beats themselves, particularly for the singles in the songs are linear. This is vital so that the artist "can shine" (Genius, 2018). I will also be taking inspiration from this famous producer who, when making the track "Mob Ties" (Splice, 2019), often found himself re-pitching and detuning his samples and drum kits to create more up tempo rhythms or subtle changes to different parts of the song. After watching numerous of these 'Deconstructed' videos and putting them into

practice in my own music, I have come to agree with “A little goes a long way”.

Spending the last few years in the UK has also benefitted me as it has helped me understand the genre of grime more, not just from the music itself, but also the culture and meaning behind the whole movement. Cojo also likes the underground scene in England and we have both taken the time to appreciate and savour the characteristics that we want to fuse into the project. In order to facilitate that, I recently purchased the ‘London Grit’ extension pack from Native Instruments (Native Instruments, 2021). The extended pack was recommended after I watched a video on Mix7/Maxsta demonstrating his approach to creating the Grime song “Born On Your Own” (Computer Music Magazine, 2019). Seeking inspiration from producers such as Maxsta, as well as others like Danny Weed and Jammer (FACTmagazine, 2016), is something that I have already done to ensure I am sufficiently prepared to make this album to the exact sound that Cojo desires.

Along with the dirty sounds of grime, I am also taking inspiration from Muse’s frontman Matt Bellamy. His signature guitar and effects offer a wide range of synth-like sounds that allow his melodies to be unique and interesting. Similar to Cojo’s previous works (PORC TV, 2019), you can hear very sci-fi like synths which enhance the aggression to his tone. I want to be able to infuse the style of Heavy Metal somewhere within this project because I know that it will compliment the sound that Cojo is attempting to achieve. After watching a video of Chris Lord-Alge going through his process of mixing and processing Bellamy’s guitar (Mix with the Masters, 2017), it inspired me to further my knowledge of processing in order for me to be able to create some bizarre sounds that match Cojo’s voice. Once again, I am going to prepare at least twenty sound banks for when I have face to face sessions with him, so that I can plug my guitar straight into DI and we can create something instantly. On the topic of sound banks, I also intend to generate multiple synth sounds too by utilising plugins such as Serum, Massive X and Omnisphere, so that in the album there is a wide range of guitar-synths and normal synths.

An alternative option would have been a production showreel where I submitted tracks from a spectrum of different genres. While this will be something that I will definitely do for the future because it is a great way to show off my skills as a producer, I did not choose this path because the opportunity to do this album for a well renowned artist in Romania is something I could not refuse. Cojo approached me this year and specifically said that he needed me, but also spoke of possible tracks with featured artists whom I would definitely get to meet. Some artists named were

rappers as well as quite successful singers too. As spoken of before, building a name for myself in my home country is something that I wish to do, so again, I could not refuse this opportunity.

This is my second ever professional album that will be released, however it is the first produced and engineered album that I will release; meaning that Cojo's new project will be the start of my production career. Kickstarting my music life with this album will benefit me hugely, as Cojo has a huge fan base already and I know that if the release is as successful as we both plan for it to be, I just might make a colleague and client for life.

To an extent I would say that the aims for this project are rather high. As this is my first year of mixing and mastering, I have had to challenge myself to create a single and since a whole album is much more complex and time consuming, it will serve as a serious challenge. Not to mention that the artists and writers that I have been working with during this past year have been far less established than Cojo, so there is more pressure just from that. Taking this into consideration and judging the project as a whole, the aims are high but I do believe they are right for me.

Bibliography

Computer Music Magazine - YouTube, 2019. Grime Production with Maxsta | Producer Masterclass | Part 1 of 2 [online] Available at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TxW4_YDvzJ8 [Accessed 28/04/21]

FACTmagazine - YouTube, 2016. Jammer - Against The Clock [online] Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kYKrch5oAgE> [Accessed 30/04/21]

Genius - YouTube, 2018. The Making Of Drake's "Diplomatic Immunity" With Boi-1da | Deconstructed [online] Available at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z9Fv3_1kgRY [Accessed 28/04/21]

Mix with the Masters - YouTube, 2017. Mixing Muse Guitars - Chris Lord-Alge [online] Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Uc3SxgT4uCw> [Accessed 02/05/21]

Native Instruments, 2021. Bass Heavy Grime [online] Available at: <https://www.native-instruments.com/en/products/komplete/expansions/london-grit/> [Accessed 28/04/21]

PORC TV - YouTube, 2019. COJO | URBANIST SESSIONS [online] Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BpnV1QSMJkg> [Accessed 02/05/21]

Splice - YouTube, 2019. Producing Drake's "Mob Ties" with GRAMMY winner Boi-1da | In The Charts [online] Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fPhsxV6vXT8> [Accessed 30/04/21]