

Module: Creation

Written Proposal Assignment

Element 1

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Introduction

For my final project, I am proposing a concept E.P entitled “A Little Guide to Inhumanity “. The concept is about modern sociology and technology, and how these two have been morphed over the last decades. The E.P will be mainly focused on the impact of social media and mental health, but it will also feature other topics such as consumerism and online relationships.

The journey so far

I’ve been studying music since 2010 and writing music since I’m fourteen years old but only a couple of years ago I discover a passion for music production. This was a role in the music industry that I thought I would never be associated with, but fortunately, I decided to delve into it and last Summer (2019) I came up with this concept and is one of the main reasons why I wanted to come to Tileyard.

I don’t know exactly what made me think about this concept but it was probably based on my life experiences and other people. Around the same time that I came up with this, I was studying Myers-Briggs Personality Types and did a personality test to hopefully try to understand who I was in a social perspective. I did the test and was very surprised at how accurate the results were. According to 16 personalities I am an INFJ.

“An Advocate (INFJ) is someone with the Introverted, Intuitive, Feeling, and Judging personality traits. They tend to approach life with deep thoughtfulness and imagination. Their inner vision, personal values, and a quiet, principled version of humanism guide them in all things” (16 personalities, 2020)

After I understood what my personality type was, it felt natural having this concept in my mind, as I’ve always had been a person who tends to see things for what they really

are, and also helped and guided other people using my honesty and my friendship values which is one of the main characteristics of being an INFJ. In a way, this E.P is a certain reflection of who I am as a person, making the project having more meaning to me.

Since I started this MA, my production skills have increased and are getting more polished. This is based on what I've learned from the tutors at Tileyard, but also from the relationships and the projects I've made with other producers and songwriters. This has given me enough confidence to make my own "artistic" project under my artist name "Gabriel Leo". This is going to be a collaborative work between me and some of the producers and songwriters at Tileyard.

"A Little Guide to Inhumanity" - Overview, Vision, Strategy and Goals

The portfolio will feature around five to six songs and three interludes sections.

In these songs I will be the main singer, musician, producer or co-producer depending on the track and who fits the best role in this project in comparison to my strengths and weaknesses which I've learned from Belbin's Team Roles.

"Individuals have a greater self-understanding of their strengths, which leads to more effective communication between colleagues and managers. Great teams can be put together, existing teams can be understood and improved, and everyone can feel that they are making a difference in the workplace" (Belbin, 2020).

While each song will be three to four minutes long and their purpose will be to serve the message of this concept, the interludes will be 60-90 second length songs that will feature celebrities (actors, musicians, psychiatrists) where they show their point of view of

how they see this post-modern society. The idea at the moment is to sample their interviews and insert it in an instrumental, which will have a similar atmosphere as the “normal” tracks.

Sonically, the E.P. will be a blend of different genres, particularly Rnb/Soul with Hip Hop and Electronica. Even though this might seem like a lot of genres and perhaps seems to be too alternative, the goal will be to condense them into pop songs in order to maximise its appeal.

The main influences are artists like Tom Misch, Michael Jackson, Anderson Paak and Kaytranada. These artists have allowed me to hone in the sound that I have been working over the past year.

The objective is to make a project that has a linear and consistent sound/ atmosphere without limiting myself to just one genre of music.

I intend to release this project in the Fall of 2020 or beginning of 2021, depending on how successful will the process be and also how impactful COVID-19 will be by then.

Even though I’m doing this for artistic reasons and values, I also want to include this as part of my professional portfolio to pitch it to labels and sync companies so I can market my abilities and demonstrate how competent I can be in this industry.

For me to consider this project a success I established certain parameters as standards:

- The lyrical content has to be honest and be relatable to your normal day-to-day person. For that to happen, I will need to write about topics and trends that are relevant in this “digital” age, as mentioned earlier. There’s no intention to harm or shame any person or their personality traits that I might mention in the project.

It's meant to make people be aware of their actions on a daily basis, but without criticising them. It's very based in Stoic's philosophy.

- *“Stoicism, a school of thought that flourished in Greek and Roman antiquity. It was one of the loftiest and most sublime philosophies in the record of Western civilisation. In urging participation in human affairs, Stoics have always believed that the goal of all inquiry is to provide a mode of conduct characterised by tranquillity of mind and certainty of moral worth” (Saunders, n.d.).*
- The music has to be exciting and groovy with a touch of commercial elements. Each song will have physical instruments and digital instruments for it to sound balanced and varied. No song can sound the same or feel the same.
- There won't be any features of any singers or rappers in this project to preserve its authenticity and character.

At the moment I don't have a specific and organised release plan, but I intend to release two to three singles and learn from each release and then focus on the campaign of the project as a whole. This will be used as market research. Once I understand what target audience I'm associated with, which region, which artists sound similar to me, I will then be able to market the release of the E.P. more accurately.

“Before you speak to a group of people, you should learn as much about them and their interests as possible.” (Kurtus, 2005).

I'm pondering in including some visuals but this will depend if I want to make it myself or ask someone to do it for me or even pay a professional.

I would like to give a projection of how well each release is going to be, but at this point, it is hard to do that, as I'm someone who doesn't have a big social media presence, which is something that I'll have to work on.

So, for now, these are going to be the goals that I want to set for this project:

- *Reach 10k plays at least in one of the tracks on Spotify;*
- *Make at least one music video;*
- *Make a lyric video for each single;*
- *Reach at least 3 big Spotify Playlists*

Research Methodology

In order for this vision to become a reality and for me to reach my goals I know I need to research more about music production techniques, sociology, philosophy and digital marketing based on my SWOT Analysis (see Appendix 1).

At the moment I have gathered a few books that I believe will be crucial on my journey :

- **"12 Rules for Life"** by Jordan Peterson;
- **"The Power of Now"** by Eckhart Tolle;
- **"Get More Fans"** by Jesse Cannon and Todd Thomas;
- **"Music Marketing Promotions Guide"** by Chris Greenwood
- **"The Mixing Engineer's Handbook"** Bobby Owsinski;

Not only books but articles, youtube videos and interviews will also be a form of research which will guide me through this journey.

One of the best examples is a YouTuber called Matt D'Avella who is a filmmaker and a minimalist, which is what most of his content is based on. He was also another inspiration that made me come up with this concept.

Case study- Pink Floyd on Concept Albums

While the music from the artists I mentioned previously inspired me to seek a particular sound, the album that has influenced me the most to make this project have a specific concept is Pink Floyd's "The Dark Side of The Moon" in terms of storytelling, innovation and sociology. The way they have made this album become timeless it's the approach that I want to apply in this project. It's a very bold thing to say but that is the objective, it doesn't mean it will happen.

Most people would ask why is this album so iconic? I think it was an album that came at the right time. *"Redefining British psychedelia, space rock, and the concept album concept itself"*(Pitchfork, 2020)

Concept albums were very popular in the 60s and 70s and even though Pink Floyd wasn't the first band to do it, they were definitely one of the most successful cases.

"The Wall", which is another Pink Floyd concept album, is probably a better example than "Dark Side of The Moon" due to its intricacies, its length and subjects, but I'd rather mention "Dark Side of the Moon" in this proposal because without this one, "The Wall" would probably have never happened, as it focuses on the struggles of successful musicians and their introspective thoughts. *"The Wall" is the complete story of a musician who suffers a sort of nervous breakdown and shuts himself out from the world to be alone*

with his thoughts and memories of his mother, his father, his childhood and his life of excess (Cumberland, 2020).

“Dark Side of The Moon” main themes were time, conflict, anxiety, greed, death and alienation. These ideas were divided into two parts and in the first one, Roger Waters (bass player and writer) writes about living an unfulfilled life leading it to an awful death, which can be heard at the end of the first half of the album with “A Great Gig in the Sky” that features a soulful female vocal screaming, almost as if she’s in agony and pain while the instrumental is very dynamic and moody.

The second half focuses more on the reasons why a society might live this unfulfilled life, based on decisions that can be harmful to them, which are the themes that were previously mentioned.

“That’s why so much of the album is negative and pessimistic. It deals with political, social, and psychological maladies, and with the various stresses that contribute to alienation and stand as obstacles to overcoming it” (Reisch, 2011).

The way they’ve arranged each section of this album almost resembles a similar approach to how movies are made with acts and chapters. In this case, the main protagonist is the listener so it is Pink Floyd’s job to make sure the listener understands each stage or at least has an emotional reaction to each song.

To finish this section, the last thing I wanted to mention about this album was how well they’ve managed to intertwine each section regardless of the technological limitations that existed at the time. In fact, they used a variety of sampled sounds and synthesis, which had just been commercially introduced to the world in the previous decade.

"In the early 1960s, after befriending the musician Herbert Deutsch, Robert Moog set about inventing the first commercially available synthesiser. Released in 1964, Moog's 900 Series Modular Systems resembled towering mainframe computers with a spiderweb of cables that "patched" the various modules together to create a complete sound (Harder, n.d.).

Project Planning and Guidance

My action plan is going to be divided into six parts/stages including :

- Research;
- Jamming and Experimentation;
- Recording;
- Mixing and Mastering;
- Visual Concepts;
- Marketing Strategy

According to my CPA Chart (see Appendix B), I've laid down the tasks that I think are relevant at this point. These are subjective as they can be changed during the course of action.

I've already started some of the activities included in these stages, especially in the research area, where I've taken some tutorials with Amanda Gentle which was one of the tutors responsible for Mental Health.

Unfortunately, Amanda had to leave Tileyard Education and Suzanna Storey is now replacing her. Hopefully, she'll also be able to help me.

Another person who is going to be essential in the development of the E.P. is Sean Hargreaves, who is a Producer and Songwriter and also my mentor.

Sean will provide me with his knowledge on arrangement, production and mixing techniques as I develop each song. I've already started having some mentorship meetings with him in order to advance on the project more concisely.

I've given a timeline of three to six months for the process of Jamming, Writing and Producing and given 1-2 months for Mixing and Mastering based on what Sean told me in one of the meetings. He mentioned the importance of getting a good song first regardless of how long it takes and then worry about the mixing stage.

For the Marketing Strategy, I found Manuela at a Tileyard event and she is studying Music Business. She heard me singing and decided to offer help towards my social media account, as I am very bad at this.

For the Visual Concepts I've met Bou who is studying graphic designing and he also offered help but I'm still a bit unsure how much he wants to be apart of this. This is something that I need to be careful because I don't want somebody to delay this process.

Conclusion

At the moment, I feel that this project is attainable. It's not going to be particularly easy but I'm sure I'll find a way to make it work.

I feel confident about it, especially because I've surrounded myself with people who share similar interests as me and are good at what they do.

Hopefully, this E.P. will be an amazing start for my career as an Artist and a Producer and also get the attention from labels and artists who will want to work with me in their future projects.

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Appendices

Appendix A- SWOT Analysis

SWOT - Personal Analysis

Strengths	Development Areas
• I like to think that I'm a competent Singer, Songwriter and Musician. I've been working in these areas since I'm 11 playing at pubs, festivals, etc. I've also had the experience of releasing music, which increased my knowledge of presenting a product to a listener. • I'm very good with working with other people as I'm a very calm and correct person. Whenever I work with someone my main objective is not to be nice to people and agree with everything they say, but to be honest and productive in a respectful way in order to serve the main propose. By having this mentality I feel that I bring the best out of everybody and they do the same with me. • Even though I'm bad with my time management, I like to finish things, especially if I have a deadline, because I see this as a challenge that has to be delivered on the issue day no matter how good or bad it is.	• I feel like for the past few years I've been studying a lot of music production in order to become a competent producer, but there are still a few areas in which I know I have to work on such as Sound Design, Mixing and Mastering, and Synthesis. • Even though I like the idea of having routines in my life, I find it really hard to stick to them. I need to find a method to stick to my routines. • Another area that I want to improve is my resources with people. I feel that I need to know everybody, especially at Tileyard, not only to build a relationship with these people, but also for my name to be spread around the campus. • The last key area that I have to improve 100% is my exposure within the Social Media platforms. This is something that I don't like to do very often because I genuinely dislike it, but I know it's crucial nowadays to have good appeal in these platforms. My goal would be to find a person who can help me run my Socials whilst I'm learning about it. • Procrastination is definitely an issue that I've had for a while, but I'm keen in learning how to stay focused for long periods of time and to be more efficient with task/time management. • I also need to study certain topics to give me content for my album. (eg. Philosophy)
Opportunities	Threats
• Being in London and at Tileyard will allow me to get more contacts and support. • I want to work with people that have more knowledge than me so I can learn from them. • Collaborate with people that are associated with the music I like to make	• Competition amongst the students which might deprive me from getting where I want to be (which is also a good thing because it's another challenge) • Not being able to find the right people, which I doubt it would happen

Appendix B - CPA Chart to commence in January 2020

Task	Activity	Start	Length	Type
A	Research on Sociology and Philosophy	Week 1	6-8 weeks	Informative
B	Research on Production Techniques	Week 1	Continuous	Informative
C	Jamming, Writing and Producing	Week 4	3-6 months	Creative
D	Mixing And Mastering	After task C is finished	1 month	Creative
E	Mentorship with Sean	Week 10	Continuous	Informative
F	Tutorials with Amanda and Suzanna	Week 2	Continuous	Informative
G	Finding a Designer	Week 25	1 month	Administrative
H	Phtoshoots	Week 27	1-2 Weeks	Creative
I	Making the Artwork	After Task G is finished	1 month	Creative
J	Making an EPK	After all the tasks are finished	1-2 Weeks	Administrative
K	Social Media	Week 6	Continuous	Administrative
L	Release 1st Single	September?	1 week	Administrative
M	Release 2nd Single	October ?	1 week	Administrative
N	E.P. Release	November?	1 week	Administrative
O	Pitching to Blogs, Magazines, etc...	Before and After each release	2-3 weeks	Administrative