

Creation Module - Element 1 - Written Proposal

Presentation and discussion of the ideas and plans-of-action to the final project in the MA Commercial Music Producer course with Tileyard Education. Presenting the underpinning theory behind this proposal which is based upon new knowledge acquired throughout the previous two terms of the course, current projects, insight and feedback from people in the industry, peers, fellow students and an extensive past experience and research of the current music industry landscape, relevant genres and other models of frame-work to strategies which have inspired several of the ideas. I will be explaining the intention behind this project and setting the bench-marks for success.

In this section, I shall present a proposal, discussing the conception, research, ideas and layout of my final project, which concludes my MA course, which has been a highly enjoyable challenge. Throughout the course I have made countless contacts in the music industry, made friends and have extended my personal knowledge whilst augmenting my expertise and technical abilities. I have witnessed a multitude of young and upcoming artists with whom I share somewhat similar status in career on various levels, taking inspiration from their ways of action and musical ideas.

A project which is a culmination of my MA studies at Tileyard and this current stage in my career as a singer-songwriter-producer, but also of a period of five years of living and making music in London, since I moved here from the warm and sunny Tel-Aviv. Those years have been a period of personal and professional development, which I intend to continue and bring into this 'Grand-Finale' and make something that will conclude this period in a flourish, remarkable and spectacular manner.

Armed with new knowledge learnt throughout the MA Commercial Music Producer course with Tileyard education and the access to feedback and insight from A&Rs from major record-labels, professionals and teachers with vast experience in the music industry, plus exclusive guidance and advice from my legendary mentor–Jon Kelly.

Throughout this period in my life I have been inspired by life-changing events in my own personal life, whilst being very conscious about global current events and social and political upheaval in these very interesting times in which we live, under the shadow of a pandemic, which is something I manifest in my work –both in songwriting (mostly within my lyrics) and sound-design.

With all that in mind came the realisation that this project and the intention behind it would be about both personal growth– dealing with topics and stories based upon my own life experience, psychology and philosophy, and professional development–breaking out as a solo artist and creating a mechanism that would, in the foreseeable future, bring me closer to achieving my career goals which include: Turning my songwriting and production into a profitable international career, making a name for myself in the global music business, getting signed to a record label– fulfilling and maximising my potential as an artist and an entertainer. All of which will be discussed further and in more detail later on in this proposal.

Given the fact that my debut album ‘Mercury Retrograde’ has been self-released earlier this year and is already out there being actively promoted independently, Completing new music and working on an effective ways of promoting it, bringing new audiences looking into my back-catalogue, thus providing more streams and growth of social media statistics and numbers, crucial to grabbing the attention of record labels, professionals and companies in the music industry, aiming to collaborate with them to grow my brand and develop my career.

My proposal consists of three main elements:

Element 1 – First E.P. : ‘Band EP’ (working title)

A 4 track E.P. recorded at the shining new Rosewood Studios in Redhill, Surrey. An epic piece of powerful rock-and-roll recorded with my brilliant live band– The Delilahs (Leo Mollon on drums and Marley Owen-Le Bozec on bass). Bringing a unique style of songwriting, encrusted with raw energy of a rock band playing the basic tracks live to a click, in what is probably the best sounding live-room I have ever played in. Captured with pristine and polished production in a state-of-the-art palace of recording studio with an infinite selection of microphones, amplifiers and every drum you can possibly imagine, including 8 timpani drums amongst classic kits, vibraphones and a multitude of different “toys”– providing the ultimate playground for a group of musicians and producers to spend a couple of weekends in, resulting with bombastic sound and a project packed with emotions (and guitars!).

The wonderful staff at Rosewood and the friendly vibe on our sessions, bringing countless unforgettable moments, have made it possible to produce such an honest and soulful record, which is made with and out of love and genuine friendship between everyone involved with this project.

Probably the most personal, revealing and invasive musical project I have ever worked on, certainly the most powerful and emotional to this day.

Inspired by personal experience and true events in my life, one could suggest that this would be my version of Bob Dylan’s seminal album ‘Blood on the Tracks’ (Columbia, 1975), which has brought the energy and stories surrounding the demise of his marriage to his first wife Sara according to countless mentions in biographies and stories in the media

A noticeable energy on each of the songs, even if some of the recorded pieces included were not involving the subject directly. Dylan himself stated the the songs were actually inspired by stories from Anton Chekhov (PopMatters, 2013), although you can easily find evidence to contradict that, for example, when he introduced the

song 'Simple Twist of Fate' on his live 'At Budokan' album with the words: "Here's a simple love story. Happened to me", which resonates with me throughout the production of this record.

The songs in the 'Band E.P.' involve the story of my previous relationship, a story of strong infatuation, a fiery and unstable relationship, all the way to a long and painful demise with songs such as 'I Know It's You', 'Hear Me Out' and '5:46 (Sad Song)', so in many ways can be considered as a therapeutic project as well, crucial to self-development.

The E.P. is pushing towards to the Rockier side of my musical identity, with the album consisting sounds and hooks, one can easily relate to artists and bands such as Oasis, Joy Division, Pink Floyd, The Kinks and Supergrass, which should be to thread, connecting between this one and the next project on this proposal.

Element 2 – Second E.P. : 'Quarantine' (working title)

4-6 track E.P. inspired by current events and the world during the Covid-19 pandemic, and my personal experience of those.

Appropriate to our time, this E.P (or potential album) is being made remotely between studios in London, New York and Tel-Aviv.

During the first lockdown last year, a random conversation about Supergrass' 1999 self-titled album, also known as "the X-ray album" (Parlophone, 1999) between myself and long-time friend and colleague, drummer and producer Ariel Shafir, who is a resident at the legendary Dreamland studios in Woodstock, NY, has taken place.

As Ariel and I were discussing current events and catching-up on our lives and current projects, we realised that it has been years since we last collaborated. When the Supergrass album came up, it dawned on us both that we should produce an album that is an ode to that brilliant record, which has an enormous influence on my work. Utilising the all-analog, warm sounding vintage studio, with excellent tape-machines and an epic Neve desk in the control-room to create a project which

stays true to the fuzzy, warm analog tones that identifies the sounds of the Supergrass record, which is characterised by a vintage sixties sounds, using vintage instruments and analog recording equipment.

Using vintage instruments I own (mostly guitars and effect pedals) and the incredibly wide selection of vintage drum-sets, organs, synthesisers, microphones and tape-machines at Dreamland to attain that sound. Since I can't go to New York and be present in the studio this time, being in London under lockdown, my tracks are being recorded digitally, mostly in my home-studio in North-West London, then later passed through and recorded to tape, using many studio effects such as re-amping my guitars and passing vocals through a genuine leslie speaker for a rotating effect, to name a couple. Having a solid rock-and-roll drummer who is also a Berklee graduate to play on the record and recorded at such amazing facilities is a massive privilege, let alone the fact that we communicate so naturally as musicians and long-time friends only adds to that "band-like" feeling, which is also crucial to the sound and type of performance we are aiming for.

The songs and range of sounds we have been generating so far with songs such as 'Apocalypse', '2020 Year Zero' and 'Quarantine' are definitely hitting the mark on achieving those sounds and style, ranging between sounding like Radiohead, Led Zeppelin, The Velvet Underground, The Dandy Warhols and Supergrass respectively. With the way the project is moving forward it is very interesting to see how it will turn out after the analog mix and mastering at Sterling Sound Studios in New York.

With songs dealing with such troubled times on a global scale, times of isolation, loneliness and uncertainty, I have already started working on the visual side and artwork to this project. I commissioned a very talented photographer in Poland to take photos of this beautiful field of sunflowers outside of the city of Poznan. Those images of a field full with yellow flowers, has brought the association of freedom and the sunny open-air, reminiscent of a festival crowd, photographed from a helicopter hovering above the happening, bringing many feelings of nostalgia and optimism for a brighter future.

The contrast between hope and reality will be accented by switching the clear blue sky in the original photos with one of a fiery red skies I captured in London with my camera, an idea which reminded me of the artwork to Red Hot Chilli Peppers classic 1999 album 'Californication' (Warner, 1999), which is also creating a dissonance between luxury or beauty with freedom and a sense of alienation and danger.

A few other singles are being written and produced in other settings which might also be included in this project are in the works as well.

Element 3 – 'Swim Music Group'

During the past month or so, following the release of my debut album 'Mercury Retrograde', which is receiving great feedback from my fan-base, peers, fellow students, teachers, industry professionals I've met throughout the course and on A&R sessions and my mentor, saying they could easily hear my songs being played on the radio and in festivals in and outside the UK, giving the example of the legendary Sister Bliss (Faithless) saying that "this should be played in stadiums", reacting to songs off the album. All of the above confirms that the potential to break-out is there and in order to push forward towards the readiness to move on to that next level in my career and get signed– the formation of a team of young professionals to work together and work on different fronts simultaneously.

A group of students from different disciplines at Tileyard has gathered together, feeling motivated and excited to join together and see how we could work together, eventually agreeing upon the formation of a new in-house student-based, independent group at Tileyard, working on branding, promotion, artist development and creating events around the recent release of the album and future projects. We decided to call ourselves 'Swim Music Group'.

The modeling or fitting model to this group is the American Indie Elephant 6 cooperative which is loosely defined as a musical collective which is, much like myself, inspired by artists and movements from the 1960's and produced bands such as Of Montreal and Apples in Stereo— both massive influence on my musical career and work.

Originally started in the United States in the 1990's by singer, songwriter, producer and mathematician Robert Peter Schneider (Ph.D) who is the man behind (and front) of Apples In Stereo with a group of high school friends, who collaborated on several bands and musical projects such as Chocolate U.S.A, The Gerbils, The Sunshine Fix, Ulysses and The Minders, just to name of few.

The inspiration from Elephant 6 is reflected on the design of the groups' new logo, which also resembles psychedelic, sixties-like posters and logos from the 1960's.

The Idea of having an entity of people of similar vision to help one another with their own music as well and developing as a group is very appealing to us all and we are all very keen and excited to be on board for this joint-venture.

The group is currently forming a communal data-base of people who curate relevant Spotify playlists, write on blogs and magazines, contacts we manage to find in radio stations, managers, A&Rs and touring agencies. Organising this data-base in spread-sheets and contacting people from a new email under the groups name.

Our first event was an online listening party to the album which proved very successful, was well attended and very enjoyable, once more showing our potential to efficiently work as a group.

We are also working towards creating promotional content and ideas that could stand out on social media, with each member focusing on their own expertise in the various fields which this highly elaborate operation is composed of.

We have developed mood boards and inspiration boards, using methods learned in the music marketing discipline to focus the visual style and aesthetics around the brand.

Thinking about setting the benchmarks for this final project to measure its success, I decided to focus on the following aims and goals:

- Completing the tracks and bringing them to a pitch-ready standard and quality in songwriting, sound, performance, production and post-production that would satisfy my own standards of tracks I would be proud to include in my portfolio.
- Growing an organic audience.
- Increasing numbers of streams, views and engagement on social media.
- Production of promotional content, such as music videos and photos.
- Production of merchandise and setting up an online-shop.
- Receiving radio plays, interviews and coverage on blogs and magazines.
- Getting signed by a label or start negotiating with one.
- Getting syncing opportunities for my tracks.
- Getting in touch with touring agencies and creating a plan for future touring.

Those should bring me closer to achieving my ultimate goal, which is to turn my songwriting and production into a profitable, international career. Continuing producing music and content which would see my own vision and personal standards, to be proud to have on my catalogue for years to come. Coming up with works that move people emotionally and intellectually (also physically in the future when live concerts and festivals would be allowed to take safe and hopefully safe to attend), and ultimately achieve a world-wide exposure and acclaim, or as Roger Waters said it: “We all had a common goal which was to become rich and famous” (Longfellow, 2003).

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