

Jeremiah Bolarinwa

1910015

Creation Element 2b - ADAD7004

Reflective Commentary

For the portfolio element of this assignment I have made the decision to create a 6 track E.P. The title of this project is Jerryology. The reason I have named it this is because of the narrative behind the E.P. I want this project to be almost like a study of me and my musical journey. I have been into music ever since I could remember and just wanted to outline the journey so far within a body of work. My journey in music began as a drummer. As a toddler I would set up pots and pans at home in the form of a drum kit and just play for hours which indicated signs of love for the drums to my mother. Fast forward a couple of years, I began playing at the church main services by the age of 7 years old. From then on, my passion for drumming grew and grew, which motivated me to want to improve. At the age of 16, I began to take interest in learning the keyboard. This also was under the influence of the church music scene. I started off by purchasing a beginner keyboard and would watch a series of YouTube tutorials. I would also record other musicians, that inspired me, playing on my phone and would go home and rehearse licks and chords etc. The final part to my musical journey so far that I wish to outline is the production aspect. I began producing seriously in June 2018 and the passion for this grew from my undergraduate studies. We had some modules whereby we had to use the big studios. Seeing all the high-end equipment there such as the desk and the different types of studio monitors, always had me in amazement and I became increasingly intrigued on how to go about operating this equipment. It was not until then that period I began to understand how songs are made in DAW's and the whole recording process. Prior, I had just overlooked the whole process and just imagined that everything was played on live instruments.

I wish to therefore incorporate this narrative onto a body of musical work. My plan is to construct a timeline that demonstrates my musicality and my production skills throughout the E.P. For this reason, I have made certain musical decisions for example my first few tracks will be highly percussive. I have used a wide range of percussion instruments, including some live percussion instruments from across the world such as the Omele (Small Talking Drum) and Shekere (Shaker) from Nigeria. A variety of cross rhythms will be played resulting in an overall complex rhythm just in order to emphasize the idea of me starting out as a drummer. For these tracks, the melodies and chords should be simple with the main focus being the rhythm section of the music. Going deeper into the E.P. the next few songs will remain virtuosic in terms of rhythm, but the melodies and chords played become more complex. Virtuosic melodic motifs will be used as well as complex chords such as extended chords (7ths & 9ths) and this is in order to highlight the keyboard aspect to my musical journey. The album should conclude with tracks that show both the rhythmic and melodic side to me. However, it will be topped with a variety of production techniques many of which I have acquired during my time at Tileyard education. This means that techniques such as Filter sweeps, stutter effects, parallel compression etc will be incorporated when tackling these final songs.

Personal Development Plan

What are my Goals?	What Needs to happen first in order to achieve this?	When do I want this done by?	How am I doing?	
Firstly, to create melodic motifs in order to build on for a track	Need to just spend some time on logic at a keyboard and brainstorm melodic ideas	I aim to have this done this week.	This proved to be the simplest task as there was an overflow of ideas	
Further Develop the best ideas into a full song	Arrange the track each track on logic	This should be done by the 1 st august giving me enough time recording	This went well because I simply had to apply a sensible chord progression to my melodic motif alongside a good drum rhythm	
Get in contact with appropriate artists for writing and recording sessions	Great networking and communication skills needed to approach artists	Aim to have all my artists agreed and recorded by the 10 th of August	This task proved a bit difficult due to different schedules however I believe if better organised I may have had just a bit more a wider range of artists	
Mix and Master The tracks At Tileyard Studios	Need to be organised in booking studio time and make sure it is done in plenty of time	From the 11 th of August all recording must be completely done and all that should remain is mixing and mastering.	The mix and master went well, cross referenced against industry work there isn't too much of a different.	

The first track on this EP is titled “How Many Times” and the vocals were recorded by an artist that goes by the name of Adejosh. This is the introductory track and has been produced in a specific way in order for it to be line with the narrative behind the E.P. which is to mirror my musical journey. Hence the title, Jerryology. A study of my musical character. In terms of melody for this track, I made the decision to keep it very minimal. This is only because I want the emphasis to be on the rhythm section of the music. For this reason, there are only three melodic instruments involved. These are the electric guitar, bass guitar and synth pad. The electric guitar is played continuously throughout the whole track, with the synth pad and bass guitar being layered in and out in order to keep the listener engaged.

The rhythm section of this track is full of different cross rhythms. This is an important feature, especially in relation to the concept of this E.P., because cross rhythms is a technique that I was been introduced to at the very early stages of my musical journey, It formed the basis for a lot of the music we played in church, which is where my musicianship began to take shape. The use of cross rhythm in this song results in a thick texture in the percussion section. This adds immensely to the groove of the music and makes the song danceable.

The process of making this track overall went well and the plan was followed quite closely to how it was predicted in the proposal. I started off creating by, first, finding the melody which is now the continuous guitar progression. This was recorded on the click at 100BPM. I had chosen this tempo with the knowledge that the track needs to be danceable as I want the emphasis of the music to be the rhythm sector. Once the melody had been recorded, I began to work on the drum pattern. The particular pattern used is a variation on a swung afrobeat rhythm that is being used in new school afrobeat more and more. This is now being popularly addressed as the “Gbese” rhythm. I then filled in the beat using percussion instruments, such as the shekere, claves, shakers etc, to create cross rhythms. To do this properly I had to mute the previously recorded guitar melody in order to perfect the grooves.

This new school style of afrobeat is becoming increasingly popular with pioneers of the genre, such as Burna Boy, Davido, and Wizkid, raking in millions of views in a number of weeks. Evidently, the genre is doing well and a large number of people are warming up to the sound despite the language barrier meaning a larger possibility of success for this EP as it is heavily influenced by afrobeat. **Figure 1** in the appendix shows evidence of public interest in afrobeats. The multi-million views on multiple tracks, in such a short space of time shows clearly there is a demand for this sound. I aspire to be a part of the ground-breaking history that I believe afrobeats will continue to make which is what strongly formed my decision to include so many afrobeat tracks within this EP. Within this genre of music many producers are beginning to release their own songs with an artist featuring to sing the vocal line. So, the producer does not necessarily sing on the track but it is there track. This idea has been adopted throughout this EP. Each song has an artist doing the vocals on them which is why every track is featuring someone else. Many successful afrobeat tracks have been birthed this way which gave me the confidence to go ahead with the concept. Evidence of this is shown in **Figure 2**.

There have been a number of skills that were highlighted throughout this recording process. Firstly in regards to the session and working with the artist, there are some interaction skills needed from the producer in order to ensure that the best performance is given from the artist recording at the time. The artist had never been to Tileyard before so essentially, they were on new territory meaning they may not necessarily have been the most comfortable as they didn't know what to expect. It became my responsibility to ensure, once we got into the studio, before the recording starts, that the artist was comfortable. It was evident that he was comfortable. Grammy Award-winning, music producer, Eliot Kennedy, breaks down the reasons as to why it is so important to have the artist in a state of complete comfortability.

"When artists behave badly, it is often just a defence mechanism, it's just someone feeling insecure. It's your job to get them to relax. As a music producer, you don't just want someone to stand there and sing, you want them to transfer emotion, which means they have to be extremely honest with themselves and you. Some people are initially uncomfortable with that, you have to break down all their barriers and so, as a result, bad behaviour comes out - we've all got our own little defence mechanisms when we're feeling uncomfortable. It's amplified in a recording studio environment, because people aren't always willing to give you that level of honesty and go there straight away, so there's a lot of psychology involved." (Feenie-Hart, 2014)

In short, this just means that, being honest with yourself in itself is a difficult task, let alone have to be honest with someone. However, once a rapport is built a level of trust is built alongside. This makes it that bit easier for the artist to translate their true emotions onto what they are recording.

Upon evaluation I believe this goal was achieved as the artist gave a great performance and based upon his behaviour in the studio it was evident that he had warmed up to the place and was comfortable. I believe this shows strongly on the vocal performance in the song.

The following track is performed by an artist called Moet and the song is titled – Motherland. This is the second track on the album but the first track where I begin to express my keyboard capabilities a lot more. The percussion in this track remains complex but danceable with the variety of cross rhythms going on. This is also the track I decided to go further and add live African percussion instruments to further embellish the percussion section. The instruments I have added are the Shekere (Shaker type instrument), Omele Asiwaju and Omele Cord. These are three traditional Nigerian percussion instruments which I felt sat well underneath the track but also just brought life to the track that bit little more. The drum rhythm is similar to that of the first track in that it is another variation on the 'gbese' drum beat. Although it is quite simple, it sits well on top of the remaining percussion instruments. There is a lot going on in this track in terms of melody. This was an intentional production decision made in order to fit the narrative of the EP and therefore showcase and exaggerate my keyboard skills. For this track, I began creating by recording the main melodic motif which is the marimba sound that runs for the entirety of the track. This track consists of an electric piano however it is used in an unusual way. I make use of the pitch bend in this song rather than playing the chords straight. It gives a completely new feel to the song. This also shows my musical capabilities in regards to the keyboard as it portrays additional

skill. The bassline of the track is simple but groovy as it follows the kick pattern. The glide effect is used also within the bassline just to give that bass pumping dance feel. There is some counterpoint melody that exists between the marimba and the siren keyboard instrument. This is just to keep the listener engaged in the song. The conversation that goes on between the two instruments allows the song to remain interesting and to some extent fresh to the ears as opposed to if the same instruments continuously played throughout the whole song.

The recording process of this song was straightforward however it didn't go as originally planned. The track was recorded at my home studio where I had originally planned to only do the backing vocals and rough lead guide track. However due to lack of time and lack of availability at the Tileyard Studios, we were forced to just simply do the recording from home. Upon evaluation it is clear to see that this is one of the aims that weren't quite met. Although the track was a success, had it not been down to a slight lack in organisation we may have been able to meet the aim of recording at Tileyard Studios.

The reference track used for this song was Rema's – Dumebi. It uses a variation of the same 'gbese' drum pattern. The vocals rhythmic so more focused on the flow and riding the beat other expressing vocal talent with virtuosic riffs and so on. Has one melodic motif running all throughout. Other melodic elements entering every now and again. This is a track that has been very successful globally which shows there

is a strong possibility for this song to be successful. See **Figure 3** for further evidence of the success of this song.

The third track on the EP is featuring an artist that goes by the name of Kueen and is titled 'Gimme Love'. This is the second track to demonstrate my keyboard ability. Firstly, the electric piano is panned central throughout the whole song. This is just because I want this to be the main point of focus. I almost want to over exaggerate the role of the keyboard to fit the narrative behind the E.P. The guitar in this song is played by me on the keyboard and it is a virtuosic motif that makes use of trills and embellishments. Again, this is just to demonstrate keyboard skill. This song also makes use of Mallets and these mallets are panned to the right. They only feature for the hook in order to thicken the texture that extra bit and to keep the listener engaged. The guitar part drops in and out also to keep things interesting. The bassline is a simple one but effective as it follows the kick pattern to an extent which makes the music sound tighter and well thought out. For the outro I have made use of an R&B synth lead where I solo for the final 8 bars. This, again, is to highlight the fact that this is the keyboard portion of the E.P. so for that reason I needed to express myself as much as possible on the keys. The solo is a clear representation of my capabilities as a keyboardist. For this reason, I believe that this track especially fits the narrative of the E.P. perfectly.

There is a point in the song, In the first verse where the song breaks and the lead vocalist sing a chromatic riff which is followed note for note by the other melodic instruments. This again shows my keyboard capabilities clearly.

The drum beat of this song is quite straightforward and repetitive. This has been intentionally done because the rhythm section isn't the point of focus here. The main purpose for the drums here is just to provide the groove. The percussion in this track is minimal. It is predominantly made up of shakers with the exception of the high claves.

The process for making this track began with the chords on the electric piano. Once the chord progression had been solidified, I built more melodies around that. At this point, it's just the melodies recorded against a click. To fit the narrative of the E.P. I began to play on the guitar sound to create a motif to layer on top of the chords. I then added the Mallets for a motif to counterpoint the guitar.

In the case that I had to evaluate this track against existing industry work, I would compare it to the work of afrobeat artist Tiwa Savage. Dangerous Love in particular. In terms of rhythm, the beat is a simple repetitive loop. However, it is still groovy and effective. Which I have also tried to adopt in my production. Tiwa Savage is a well-established artist within the genre today with many of her songs effortlessly reaching multi-million streams and views.

Track 4 of the EP is called 'From the Hood' and it is the only track on the EP featuring 3 artists which are Adejosh, Juelz & NB4. This is the first song on the EP to represent me as the musician I am today. The track consists of elements of me as a drummer, a keyboardist and music producer. Firstly, in terms of drums for the track, although it is a very simple rap break beat, it is very effective and does the role of keeping the groove very well. In terms of production, the drums in the track have been panned central. This is in order for there to be a sense of hard knocking drums. The drums are more present as opposed to just being in the background providing the rhythm. The song begins with a stutter effect, which I learnt how to do from a YouTube tutorial (Benett, 2020) This again is a representation of my abilities as a producer which I aimed to showcase in line with the narrative behind this EP. The melody in this song is based predominantly around the piano and bass repeated throughout. The piano's melodic motif is how I began creating the song. It is made up of an ascending run followed by 2 extended (7th) chords. The bass line follows the rhythm of the piano almost completely but plays different notes in order to fit the chord progression. The synth pad runs softly underneath the track just to create a sense of ambience. The synth lead on the other hand doesn't play throughout the song. It acts as the anticipation of the track and is rarely used in the verses. This melodic line is a virtuosic one made up of trills and embellishments again in order to put emphasis on the fact that I am also a keyboardist.

The process of recording this track was fairly straightforward. I had recorded the melodic motif alone and left it. This wasn't returned to until the session that we recorded this track. I had played the piano motif alone in a session and everyone immediately was in agreement that this is an idea that should be further developed. I began by making the drum beat, which is the typical rap beat that exists on the track currently. This immediately set the groove and made it easy to fill out the other parts.

The fifth track is performed by an artist called Bekah Brown and the name of the track is 'Playin' Wit Me'. This track is the second track to express me as a musician currently. In other words, a drummer, keyboardist and producer. For this reason, I have tried to

incorporate my skills as each of these when making the following songs. In regards to this particular song "Playin' Wit Me" I had a friend of mine come in and record electric guitar over the idea I had laid down with the keys. I told him to record firstly some chords then afterwards to add some improvised guitar licks. Upon reflection, I made the decision to only use a 4 bar loop out of all the chords he laid down and scrapped the improvised notes. The reason for this decision was that I felt that there was more beauty in the simplistic repetition than the over complicated recording we had prior. Sometimes less is more and I felt that this was the case. Decisions such as these, I believe, really showcase my skills as a music producer as it takes a certain amount of skill to identify that sometimes although things may sound amazing isolated or when soloed, it doesn't mean that it works well with the rest of the music. Knowing when and where to cut things as a producer is a very critical skill.

Again, with this track the recording process went smoothly. I had the artist as comfortable as possible, engaging in conversations which were not necessarily to do with the music in order for the artist to feel even more at ease, offering drinks of water etc. This reflected through the session as I believe the artist warmed more to the idea of studio recording. Evidence of this was seen when she began offering suggestions such as word changes and harmony choices etc.

As this is an R&B track, I have used chords that are very common within the genre of music. Extended chords tend to be used a lot however, in R&B the voicings on those chords tend to be more squashed rather than evenly spread out. q

The 6th track on this EP is performed by an artist that goes by the name Melba. The song is titled Spiritual. This is another track created with the purpose of displaying each side to my musicality. The drum beat is more complex than your typical afrobeat rhythm and this is mostly due to the placement of the kick. This is especially evident at the beginning where the timing of the kick sounds a bit unusual due to the fact that the rim shot hasn't been introduced yet. Once the rim shot comes in, the groove becomes clearer and more understandable to the listener. A lot is going on in terms of percussion. Cross rhythms are flowing in order to give a sense of a thicker texture. This is a typical feature of African music which forms the foundation of my musicality.

In terms of melody for this song, the chords played on the electric piano are virtuosic extended chords. (7ths). This has been done purposely in order to emphasize my skill as a keyboardist. There is also a lot of counterpoint melody going on with different melodic motifs being played at the same time. Finally, the bass line in the song isn't your usual root note bass line. The bass has a groove of its own, which is a virtuosic line to play which has, again, been done intentionally in order to show to the listener my skills as a keyboardist.

In terms of production, the vocals have been parallel compressed. This is a technique I have been trying to master since we were taught which is why I have tried to implement it as much as possible in these tracks. I have made use of filter sweeps in this track in order to create a sense of dynamic range. For the outro I make use of a high cut filter to give a sense

of ending. This, accompanied by the kick dropping out makes it extremely clear to the listener that the song is coming to end which is what caused this decision to be made.

The process for making this track was simple. For this song I began by creating the drum beat. I felt as though that would help easily build a foundation and have the style of music set in stone.

The final song on the EP is titled 'In the Ride'. This song is featuring Adejosh and Juelz. This is the final track of the E.P. and ultimately like the previous two tracks are supposed to demonstrate the three aspects to my musicality which are drummer, keyboardist and producer. The way I've gone about portraying this through this song is firstly the extensive use of percussion instruments. Again, there are many African percussion instruments used in this track, layered on top of one another. This is just in order to support the drum groove. In terms of portraying myself as a keyboardist, I've made use of the pitch bend on the electric piano rather than just playing the chords straight. This is a skill I picked up watching others play at church events, gigs etc. It almost reminds you of music you would hear in a summer destination like Hawaii. It gives a completely different feel to the music. On the synth pads I make use of a variety of extended chords (mainly 7ths & 9ths) this was done in order to showcase more keyboard skill as I aim to emphasize my playing ability in this segment of the E.P. However, I also feel as though this opens up the melody just that little bit more. In terms of production on this track, there are techniques that I have used in order to demonstrate my production abilities also. I've made use of things like filter sweeps, to give sections a more defined sound. Another one of the main techniques I have used is Parallel Compression. Alongside all the information received on parallel compression I have done further research onto how to apply this compression to my work. "So what Parallel compression is going to do is, it's not going to affect the high levels because that would be normal compression this is parallel compression and what we want it to do is bring up the low levels because it adds sparkle, interest and excitement to just about anything you put it on" (Masterclass 2020) This shows why the vocals in this EP sound particularly warm.

To conclude, this shows the E.P covers my musicality from a drummer, to keyboard and finally music producer. The project was overall a success as the primary aims of the portfolio was met.

Although the E.P. covers the grounds of the narrative behind it very well, there were a range of aims that were not quite met. I was faced with some obstacles such as being unable recording lead vocals at Tileyard Education through the range of hardware made available. Due to the current pandemic it has made things such as setting up sessions and getting musicians in for recordings etc much harder. Despite this, I believe this E.P. successfully met the main aim which was to give listeners a bit of an insight to my musical life as a drummer, keyboardist and music producer.

Regarding the commercial aspect of music, I believe that this EP would be very successful commercially. This is because the majority of the album is afrobeats and the demand for this genre is growing day by day. This is evident in the UK merely by the introduction of the first ever official UK afrobeats charts which was introduced in July 2020.

“Understood to be one of the world’s first official charts for the genre, the Official UK Afrobeats Chart is to be compiled using UK sales and streaming data from over 9,000 outlets, incorporating audio and video streams, downloads and physical sales. The chart is described as a landmark moment for a genre whose growing influence on popular music culture is exploding across the globe - driven by a growing community of independent and major label artists.” (Company, O.C.C) Here we see that many people are now streaming and buying afrobeat music, enough for an official chart to be created. This EP hosts a range of fresh extremely talented artists who sit comfortably in this genre. For this reason, I am confident about the commercial capabilities of this EP.

REFERENCES

Benett, J.B. (2020) Logic Pro X Stutter Effect, Available at:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5mdC1bU-qxg> (Accessed: 20th August 2020).

Company, O.C.C (2020) First ever Official Afrobeats Chart to launch this week to celebrate rise of Afrobeats in the UK, Available at: https://www.officialcharts.com/chart-news/first-ever-official-afrobeats-chart-to-launch-this-week-to-celebrate-rise-of-afrobeats-in-the-uk__30265/ (Accessed: 19th August 2020).

Feenie-Hart, A.F.H (2014) Top 10 tips for being a music producer, Available at:

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/entertainment-arts-30009922> (Accessed: 28th August 2020).

Masterclass, A.M. (2020) Demonstration of parallel compression on vocal, Available at:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dZYtDdgb_to (Accessed: 27th August 2020).

APPENDIX

FIGURE 1

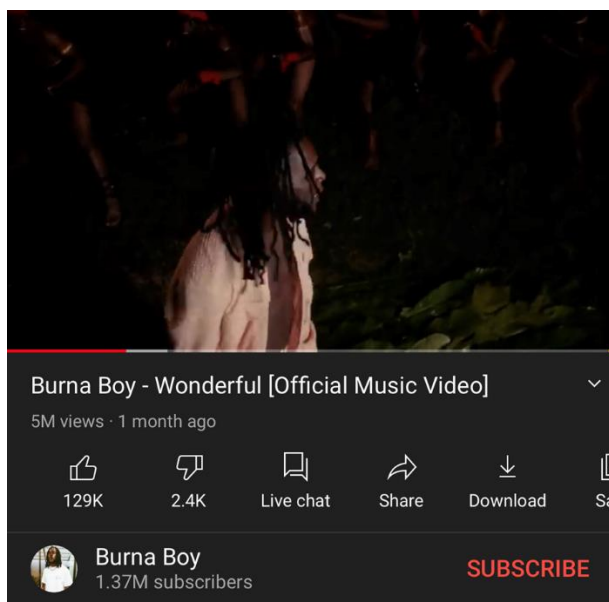
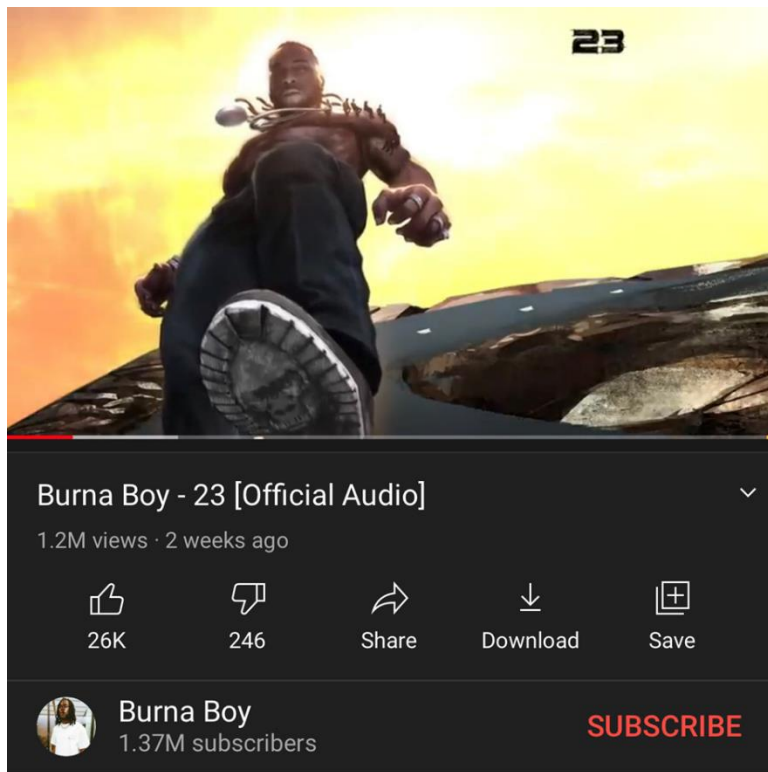


FIGURE 2



Juls - Blessed featuring Miraa May and Donaeo
(OFFICIAL MUSIC VIDEO)

554K views · 2 weeks ago

3.8K 28 Live chat Share Download Sa

 **Juls baby**
50.8K subscribers **SUBSCRIBE**



DJ Tunez - Causing Trouble ft. Oxlade (Official Video)

320K views · 11 months ago

4.1K 67 Live chat Share Download Sa

 **DJ TUNEZ** **SUBSCRIBE**

FIGURE 3

