

Written Proposal for a musical project entitled “The Journey” by Richsamuel Manso

Concept:

“The Journey” is the result of a collection of songs that represent each one a stage of me as an artist or even as a person. So “The Journey” is a journey that takes the listener from one of my lowest points where depression was surrounding my thoughts and sadness was my best friend to a point where knowing Jesus gives me inner peace and allows me to experience joy in Christ. Another option to this would have been doing an EP called “shades”. The idea was a similar one, but the difference consists in the fact that “Shades” would have just shown case various sides on a horizontal level, whereby, with “The Journey”, it is a more a perpendicular path ascending from the bottom to the top. Since this project is not entirely composed of gospel songs, but has some explicit content, it can find its place in a pop chart, like RCA Victor who in the post-war years labelled pop as “a genre that covered a multitude of things” (McGuinness, 2021). This being my first big project, I think that is best for me to keep it on a digital format and spread it through streaming services because, “nothing has made music more accessible than the streaming services” (Ranj, 2021).

Inspiration & Reference:

The inspiration and the reasons that convinced me to navigate myself into this artistic direction came from the music that I have been listening to because it has always been real, and the authors have been sharing personal issues on it making themselves vulnerable and relatable. The artists that have inspired me are a lot and hopefully, this will be reflected in this collection of songs that I will put together. I can tell that every song will represent a character or a mood that I have been acting on. Travis Scott, Bryson Tiller, Drake, Kirk Franklin, Maverick City Music and Kanye West are just a few of the artists to that I can say I owe my sound. In regards to producers that, I would say, are very influential in all this process of me revealing who I was and who I am as an artist and producer, there are the likes of R3hab, Vinai, DVBBS, Foreign Teck, Gravez, Eestbound, Wondagurl, Boi 1-da, Krs., Kingbjnmn and Dylan Graham. My sound right now is very much more of an RnB one, but the influence of all these great producers and artists can be heard in every song that I produce. What I like most about these is that every one has his sound. Take Krs. as an example. If you listen to “No odda” by Kranium (Donalson, 2018), the sample is very airy, so I can assume that to obtain that effect, first of all, a cut to the low end has to be done; then, I believe that adding a stereo imager to make it wider and finally a reverb to give it that airy feel is what makes the sample sounding the way it does. But if we consider how Kingbjnmn does it, by his approach on his single “All night” featuring Sheen (Reynolds, 2019), we can tell that the sample has been cut both on the highs and the lows. By doing this I believe that his intent is to create more space for the voice and the body of the rest of the instrumental which in his case is given by a strong 808 backed by a punchy kick. Also, I hear that a warm vintage effect has been applied and this usually comes from either Izotope Vinyl or Retro Color RC-20. When it comes to drums, I would say that my first references are Eestbound and Wondagurl. Their collaboration on Tre Capital’s “City Going Crazy” is still a benchmark for me when it comes to drums programming and equing. Like Dyan Rosen said in his interview for Vice, “Together, the two artists are symbiotically shaping hip-hop’s sound” referring to the Toronto producers (Rosen, 2015). A producer that Inspired me so much I would say is Boi-1da. This guy has been able to bring his dancehall sound from his Jamaican heritage and get “Work” by Rihanna “6 x Platinum No. 1 in the US” (Roberts, 2020). So, this will really encourage me to try and bring some of the African influences that are already embedded in me.

Team: In this section, I am going to illustrate the people that are going to Help me to give life to “The Journey”.

The people helping me with the making of this music are Kyem, Rachel, Eliud, Precious, Tatiana, Elijah, Wilfred, Godwin and Ryan. I am a firm believer that teamwork makes the dream work. Each individual helped me to accomplish a key factor.

Kyem is the first artist featured in this project. I have personally known him for quite a while. I believe my first encounter with him was at the elementary school where we used to go in Travagliato, a small town in the province of Brescia, Italy. Together we built his studio in his garage. Even though I did not have money at the time because I was still a young scholar, I gave him my support and whenever he asked of me, I was ready to give him a hand and help him out with everything that was in my power. We both had issues with being accepted when we were at school because bullies were blinded by racism, and we looked like easy prey. That is the reason why we even got closer because we were sharing the pain that got channelled all in our music.

Rachel is the only girl that is featured as a singer only. She is the greatest Jorja Smith fan I have ever seen. Rachel has been through a lot in life, So when I met her and she told me about her passion fading away, I knew that something had to be done to rekindle the flame that once fed her passion for singing and music. At the end of the day, even in the big music industry, we see artists that feel like they are not built for this. Bryson Tiller is one of them; he “never wanted to be an artist” but in that same period, he ended up having his album “True to self” his “first No. 1 on the Billboard 200” (Lamarre, 2020).

Eliud is the person in charge of the mixing and mastering. He started his journey with music by playing bass, and it was at the age of sixteen that he heard about me and met me. With him, it was instance fireworks and from bass, he moved to music production, and this brought him to realise that the peak of his talent could be expressed through mixing and mastering. The reason why I choose him as my engineer is simple: Eliud being one of the closest people I have been with both in and outside music, is the only one that can understand and at the same time has the versatility to adapt to every creative piece that might seem like a challenge to other people.

Precious, alongside Tatiana, is part of my songwriting team called TRiP to Heaven (the uppcase letters are the initials of our names).

Precious is heavily influenced by her faith, this being Christianity. Her relationship with God inspires her lyrics. The people that she looks up to when it comes to writing songs are Victoria Orenze and Theophilus Sunday. Her musical background varies a lot from Adele to Beyonce to Frank Ocean. Working with Precious is a relaxing experience because of how she portrays herself. She is the type of person that writes based on the input that she receives. The reason why she has been selected for the making of this music project is because of her ability to fix verses, adlibs

Tatiana, as mentioned earlier, is also part of TRiP to heaven. Originally a poet, her writing style focuses a lot on storytelling, imagery and rhyming. Her obsession with music is due to her family’s musical background where she inherited her father’s taste in music, specifically hip hop and above all RnB. This was reflected even in the way that she was carrying herself arousing in me this curiosity of what a little girl from London could do on an RnB instrumental. Her favourites are Nas, Common and like any other girl growing up in 90s, Lauryn Hill who “icon status through the strength of her debut solo album alone” (Tensley, 2018).

Elijah is my drummer whenever I need some live drums on any type of production. This is the guy that I have been with throughout this musical journey. Since we were at a very young age, we

understood that music would have been a great chapter of our lives, since we were playing together in our home church. About his background, he was noticed by his parents by the way he was playing on the dining table with the silverware until glass was broken. So, when he was eight years old they took him from two teachers, one with a strong theoretical understanding about rock, blues, and jazz, and another one who was specialized in African rhythms. This resulted in him being a product of both worlds and this is why I choose to link up with him on this musical project of mine.

Wilfred better known as Kofi is one of a kind. He is the last on board. This guy is one of the most talented bassists and producers I have ever met in person. Our first encounter was in August 2017, in London at a concert. At first sight, I heard that the touch was different. The way that he was grooving on the songs and the synergy that he was creating with the drummer was just amazing, a pleasure to the years. Of course, by being a musician for quite a while, I have encountered many bassists, but the reason why I chose to contact Kofi instead of anyone else, was because, like Paul McCartney, he will always choose to “see the expressive potential of a great bass line” (Bernstein, et al,2020).

Godwin in all of this is the good Samaritan, that when he saw that I was in need, helped me without asking anything in return. Today he is my main artist and with Elijah and me, he is co-founder of the label that we know is going to challenge other music labels: Eaden Music. Grew up listening to a variety of music genres including Jazz, Blues, Pop and RnB, Godwin has developed a strong music taste that makes him versatile hence, a very good writer that I am honoured to have with me to make these songs come to life.

Ryan last but not least, is a super talented guitarist whose versatility to me is still unmatched. Very technical and precise, his speed on the strings was a key factor that made me consider him a valuable candidate for the project. Met him through Elijah, he demonstrated to be eligible by showing us his impeccable work ethic.

Objectives:

With this project, my objectives are to pave the way for every artist that is shy or fearful to sing or rap about his faith in Jesus Christ in the most real of the ways. I would say most real of the way because in this music project I will deal with sensitive topics that to the eyes of the world would be not considered sins but according to the Bible, they are. But not only that, I think that this will help me also to understand my identity as an artist. Since I have started producing, I have always been in the dark, trying to let the artist shine. Not that I don't like my position, I am always willing to let the artist shine; I just think that it is not a bad idea trying to figure out how the producer that I am can work with the hidden artist that I will unveil. I expect to learn skills that will make me an all-around figure in the process of making an album. To accomplish that I will be in every step of it. So to facilitate the workflow to the engineer, I am going to put my hands on Melodyne. Melodyne is “a software tool that allows you to manipulate pitch, timing and formant” (Cooper, 2020). The reason why I choose to use this software instead of Autotune is because Melodyne “it is so much more than Autotune” (Music gateway, 2020). Commercially I plan to be able to obtain a sound that can compete with the number ones, on the charts and my way to be able to measure that is by sending the songs to the Grammy Award-winning producer and engineer Rob Chiarelli. I met Rob through Godwin because while working on a project with him, he wanted an engineer that could understand a type of sound similar to the one of Jonathan McReynolds, so when he thought about who could understand that type of sound, he realised that no one better than the person who created it could have. So he got in touch with him, and in the process he made me and Rob meet since I was the producer, hence the first point of contact when it comes to stems and other matters regarding the production of the song. So, I firmly believe that a person that has been in this industry for a long time and has achieved a good number of Grammys can help me to know at the end of this project where do I stand as an artist and producer.

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