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Daniel Perry

Creative Practice 2

Andrew Weatherall

Andrew Weatherall was an English musician, DJ, songwriter, producer and remixer. His career took him from being one of the key DJs in the acid house movement of the late 1980s to be a remixer of tracks by the likes of Happy Mondays, New Order, Bjork, The Orb, The Future Sound of London and My Bloody Valentine. His production work on Primal Scream's album *Screamadelica* adding samples, loops and creating a revolutionary mix of hard rock, house and rave, helped the record win the first ever Mercury Music Prize in 1992 and become one of the most celebrated albums of the 1990s.

A record producer or music producer oversees and manages the sound recording and production of a band or performer's music, which may range from recording one song to recording a lengthy album. A producer has many, varying roles during the recording process. They may gather musical ideas for the project, collaborate with the artists to select cover tunes or original songs by the artist or group, work with artist and help them to improve their songs, lyrics or arrangements.

A producer may also:

- Select session musicians to play rhythm section accompaniment parts or solos
- Co-write
- Propose changes to the song arrangements
- Coach the singers and musicians in the studio

The producer typically supervises the entire process from preproduction, through to the sound recording and mixing stages, and, in some cases, all the way to the audio mastering stage. The producer may perform

these roles themselves, or help select the engineer, and provide suggestions to the engineer. The producer may also pay session musicians and engineers and ensure that the entire project is completed within the record label's budget.

Wikipedia

Music producers and audio engineers both work on the production team for songs and musical albums. However, music producers have more of a leading and managerial role, as they are involved with what sounds should come in at different points as well as the entire aural aesthetics of a recording. Music producers usually work in music studios alongside musicians and engineers. Audio engineer, on the other hand, operate on the technical side of things. Their focus is on recording and compiling different sounds. Audio engineers, like music producers, usually work in sound studios.

Music producer are the creative front-runners of all musical recordings, whether single recordings sessions or entire albums. They manage everything from the recording to the mixing stage and then the arrangement of songs. They are knowledgeable about the composition of music so they can give advice to the artists about song selections and enhancements. Music producers may also perform tasks that audio engineers do in order to get the job done.

Job responsibilities of a music producer include:

- Organizing materials
- Choosing members of a recording team
- Listening to artists and guiding them
- Playing instruments or singing on tracks when necessary

Audio engineers work alongside musicians and music producers to develop sounds that will make a song or album into what the artist or producer is envisioning. While audio engineers often perform many of the same tasks of a music producer, audio engineers are trained to work on the technical aspect of a recording, such as mixing any tracks that have been recorded. They also hook up the recording devices connected to each instruments and microphones to capture the sounds and music. They ensure that no sound interference occurs on a recording and have a good knowledge of the ins and of the recording studio.

Job responsibilities of an audio engineer include:

- Operating and preparing sound equipment
- Ensuring that a recording environment is as conducive to recording as possible
- Editing recordings using different software and tools
- Assisting the music producer and artists

At the beginning of the records industry, the producer role was technically limited to record, in one shot, artist performing live. The immediate predecessors to producers were the artist and repertoire executives of the late 1920's and 1930's who oversaw the "pop" product and often led session orchestras. That was the case of Ben Selvin at Columbia Records, Nathaniel Shilkret at Victor Records and Bob Haring at Brunswick Records. By the end of the 1930's, the first professional recording studios not owned by the major companies were established, essentially separating the roles of artists and repertoire (A&R) man and producer, although it wouldn't be until the late 1940's when the term "producer" became widely used in the industry.

The role of producers changed progressively over the 1950's and 1960's due to technology. The development of multitrack recording caused a major change in the process. Before multitrack all the elements of a song (lead vocals, backup vocals, rhythm section, instrument accompaniment, solos and orchestral parts) had to be performed simultaneously. All of these singers and musicians had to be assembled in a large studio where the performance was recorded. With multitracking recording, the "bed tracks" rhythm section accompaniment parts such as the bassline, drums and rhythm guitar could be recorded first, and then the vocals and solos could be added later, using as many "takes (or attempts) as necessary. It was no longer necessary to get all the players in the studio at the same time. A pop band could record their backing tracks in one week, and then a horn section could be brought in a week later to add horn shots and punches, and then a string section could be brought in a week after that.

Multitrack recording had another profound effect on music production: it enabled producers and audio engineers to create new sounds that would be impossible in a live performance style ordering. Examples include the psychedelic rock sound effects of the 1960s, e.g. playing back the sound of recorded instruments backward changing the tape to produce unique sound effects. During the same period, the instruments of popular music began to shift from the acoustic instruments of traditional music (piano, upright bass, acoustic guitar, strings, brass and wind instruments) to electric piano, electronic organ, synthesizer, electric bass and electric guitar. These new instruments were electric or electronic, and thus they used instrument amplifiers and speaker enclosures (speaker cabinets) to create sound.

Following a young adulthood in the post-punk scene, Weatherall became a key figure in countercultural and occasionally mainstream British music after becoming one of the key DJs and producers in the acid house movement of the 1980's. He was recruited by Danny Rampling to play at London nightclub Shoom, and soon founded the record label Boy's Own Recordings and the production outfit Bocca Juniors.

Further musical projects included the group the Sabres of Paradise, which splintered into the duo Two Lone Swordsmen with Keith Tenniswood, though perhaps his most famous musical work was with Primal Scream on their breakthrough 1991 album *Screamadelica*. By taking the band's anthemic song writing and adding samples, loops and the euphoric energy of Ibiza, Weatherall's production made the album one of the most celebrated of the 1990's.

He remixed artists including Bjork, My Bloody Valentine and Saint Etienne; with Terry Farley, he remixed New Order's 1990 World Cup song *World in Motion*. He was an early champion of the Chemical Brothers and their debut track *Song to the Siren*, playing it in his DJ sets and remixing it. He later signed them to Junior Boy's Own, where they release their debut album.

Weatherall consolidated the trip-hop sound of the mid-1990's with his production on Beth Orton's 1996 breakthrough album *Trailer Park*. Orton described him as a beautiful soul and a genius. He continued to work as a DJ and producer until his death, with his *A Love from Outer Space* club night series and production projects like the Asphodells. He reunited with Primal Scream in 2002 to co-produce their album *Evil Heat*.

In 2006, he released his debut solo EP *The Bullet Catcher's Apprentice*, followed by his debut solo studio album *A Pox on the Pioneers* in 2009. Both were released on his Rotters Golf Club imprint. His music had sound tracked commercial advertisements for vehicles; Weatherall's "Feathers" was used for the Volkswagen Tiguan in 2007 and Two Lone Swordsmen's "Shack 54" was used for the Ford Fiesta in 2009. In 2013, The Asphodells, formed by Weatherall and collaborator Timothy J. Fairplay from Battant, released the album *Ruled by Passion, Destroyed by Lust* on Rotters Golf Club. On 1st July 2014, weatherall began hosting a monthly radio show, *Music's Not For Everyone*, on NTS Radio in London. In 2016, he released a studio album *Convenanza*, as well as a remix album *Consolamentum*. In 2017 he released a studio album *Qualia* on Hoga Nord Records.