

## **CMM Portfolio Reflection**

When we initially got assigned the task and groups were made, we were all put in touch with each other via Beebop. We had to establish the best way of communicating with each other and we determined that it was WhatsApp and Zoom meetings. During our first meeting we looked over the actual assignment and figured out what we were going to do. Daniel wanted to get a sense of what everyone does so we were all sharing our backgrounds and I said that I was an artist. From there, we decided to just work on my music for the assignment. It made it easier because we didn't have to go looking for an artist to work on and it could be less hypothetical, allowing more structure. I then sent them my website, and showed them what I was currently working on. At that time, I had just released an NFT project which is something they took interest in. I also had a bunch of songs that I have been working on and I sent them a playlist to decide which song we wanted to use for the assignment. Over the next couple of days, they decided on a song, and checked out all my socials and released work. They started to point out things that I could work on from the marketing side as they felt the creative side was strong. In our second meeting, my group members asked me how I work, who I work with, and what my goals are for the future. Once these were all discussed we were able to establish next steps, and a general plan for this assignment and what to do with the allotted budget. We had also established roles in our second meeting and from these roles, they specified what information they needed from me as an artist. Daniel was in charge of the details and the organization of the portfolio. He used Trello to store all of our research in an organized way that we could all access. Tafadzwa was in charge of looking at analytics and putting together a budget breakdown. I provided her with all of the numbers she asked for and helped her understand how much money I usually spend on releases. I was in charge of curating all of the information for the portfolio as well as all of the creative content for it. For this project I also took

on the role of *Reflective Practitioner*. This term was coined by Donald Schon in 1983 and was discussed in a book titled *Visualizing Research: A Guide to the Research Process in Art and Design* (Gray, Malins, 2007). They explain it as “a generator of the research material – art/design works, and participant in the creative process” (Gray, Malins, 2007). When my group members were asking me to explain my creative process and what my art means to me, it was difficult for me to articulate it in a way that would be able to be written out in a professional manner. “Schön proposes that much of this activity is personal knowledge, not usually articulated, sometimes indescribable, and that it relies on improvisation learned in practice. In fact he likens it to an intuitive ‘art’ – ‘knowing-in-action, the characteristic mode of ordinary practical knowledge’. This kind of ‘knowing’ is dynamic – knowing how rather than knowing what. Schön identifies that the professional’s inability or unwillingness to articulate this kind of knowledge has led to a separation of academic and professional practice” (Gray, Malins, 2007). This is exactly the issue I ran into, however I was able to identify my weaknesses as a result of this task. Part of what they wanted from me was a clear description of what I do as an artist and what the songs we focused on meant. This made me sit down and really think about those questions. From there I was able to clearly explain and articulate what they wanted from me. I don’t think doing it was difficult, I just had to put the time and thought into that. I also then realized that questions they were asking me that I thought were irrelevant, were actually thought provoking towards articulating the meaning behind my songs.

Once the Trello was set up properly, we started to input all of the required information. For most meetings, it felt like they were just asking me a bunch of questions about my past work to get an idea of what I have done before. I felt like it was kind of counterproductive because we should be just developing a plan for this particular song. My group members were also asking me for contracts that I have received in the past, however I did not want to provide them with those things because they are personal and contain confidential information. I also felt like they

were irrelevant to the task at hand. Daniel decided to create a write up idea for a music video if we were to release the chosen song however I expressed that it didn't really align with the rest of my content. The iconography, branding, typography, and imagery was already completed as I work on that regularly as part of my own artist career. I think that by using myself as the artist for the project gave us an advantage since some of the stuff was already done and we knew what worked and what didn't. With that being said though, as we started to put together the google doc with more detailed explanations of things, Tafadzwa suggested that we use a song that I released last week since it is more recent and I had created the content for that. We figured that most of the writing for the other song we did would still be applicable, the only difference is that we would have more to talk about content wise. Once that was agreed upon, we were able to take the new content and go off on our own and develop our individual portfolios.

For my specific portfolio I decided to make it look more professional and something that I would actually send out to industry professionals while still trying to adhere to the task. The goal was to take what we have done as a group and turn it into a story that could be told. Susan Gair and Luyn Van Ariella talk about this in a book titled *Sharing Qualitative Research: Showing Lived Experience and Community Narratives*. They mention that "the nature of social learning in community storytelling projects Learning with collaborative community- based story projects occurs at three clear junctures, and such projects sit in a broader social learning system...In the first layer, the storyteller is an individual who works with a facilitator to co- create their story. At the second or middle layer, the facilitator is engaged within a learning organization that seeks in turn to fulfill the mission and purpose of the organization. The third, or macro layer, is how the organization, and the stories they produce, appeal to particular publics, including intimate publics...and the general broader public, to educate others with stories from their communities through spreadable media online and on broadcast platforms" (Gair, Van Ariella, 2016). This is the exact approach we took as a group in terms of developing a story to pitch to the public,

Amar Chhina  
CMM Portfolio Reflection  
April 15, 2022

professionals, and the media. I included artist photos from a photoshoot I did on April 9th as well as screenshots from a video I shot on April 11th. I think that these visuals came in handy for the project because it made my portfolio look more visually appealing. The video was for the song that was part of the release we chose to do as well. I also aimed to make it visually appealing rather than making a plain document. Iconography, colour scheme, and typography are all consistent with my branding on my website, logos, and socials.

I think technology and the ease of access to it made this entire task easier to complete. Creating a professional looking portfolio can be difficult to do without the right tools. For example, access to high quality images, custom fonts, and professional applications all make a difference. My portfolio was created in Adobe Indesign with the content that was in the shared group drive. I took what we had and tried to make it visually striking - something that you would want to read if an artist sent it to you. Furthermore, technology has also made other aspects of this project much easier. For example the Trello board that Daniel put together. Due to the fact that we could work at our own pace and independently add our work as we complete it makes it more convenient. Speaking of convenience, being able to connect anytime over Zoom to discuss ideas allowed us to work in a comfortable schedule that suited all of us. Tafadzwa was only able to meet after 9pm due to her work schedule and Daniel was only able to meet until either 10 or 11pm due to his work schedule. So there was very little room for flexibility. I usually prefer to meet during the day or in the morning so having late night meetings was annoying for me, but I had to make it work.

I think there were a few things in our group dynamic that worked well and some things that didn't work well. What I thought worked well was the communication in the group. We had good long discussions that allowed us to work through things in detail. I also think that

eagerness to finish the project also worked well. We had our first group meeting a day after we were all put in touch via Beebop. Furthermore, Daniel ensured that almost all of the meetings were recorded for us to go back and watch them, or if one person could not attend a meeting. I also think that the group's organization was really good as well. From the Trello board to the Google drive, everything was done in a timely manner and in detail. If anyone had any issues with a certain task, others would be able to help. Our willingness to help each other and learn from each other was also what made the group dynamic flow so well. According to *Musical Creativities in Practice* by Pamela Burnard, she says that "Ultimately the forms creativity takes are increasingly the products of creative habits and the dispositions of individuals working in partnerships" (Burnard, 2012). That being said, there were also some things in the group that I think could have been improved. Some meetings were less productive than others due to some discussions going off topic. I think that was the biggest issue within the meetings, especially since the times we could meet were very limited. Limited availability was also a prevalent issue amongst the group. I was always in studio sessions, Tafadzwa was always working (and still working in meetings), and Daniel was only available up until a certain time. Obviously we have to make it work with our professional schedules so availability is not really anyone's fault since the task was complete at the end of the day. However I think that having more flexibility would have allowed us to be more productive in meetings.

Overall I think this task was a good learning experience for the group as a whole. I know Daniel learned quite a bit as he expressed that strongly in our last few meetings. I personally thought that my biggest takeaway was the experience working in a group that was fully online. That was the first time I worked entirely remotely on a project without interacting in person. I thought it was a good experience for the first time, however I still prefer in person collaboration. I also think that it was a good way for me to think deeper into what I do and think of more creative ways to tell my story to the public. This Creative Music Management Portfolio is a great way to

Amar Chhina  
CMM Portfolio Reflection  
April 15, 2022

start the semester and go back to the basics of looking at an artist and how they work. I'm eager to see what's next in the program.

Amar Chhina  
CMM Portfolio Reflection  
April 15, 2022

## Reflection

Burnard, Pamela. *Musical Creativities in Practice*. Oxford University Press, 2012.

Gair, Susan, and Van Ariella Luyn. *Sharing Qualitative Research: Showing Lived Experience and Community Narratives*. Routledge, 2016.

Gray, Carole, and Julian Malins. *Visualizing Research: A Guide to the Research Process in Art and Design*. Routledge, 2007.