

MA Commercial Music
Production
Assignment
X
Tileyard Education,
University of Wales Trinity Saint David

The 'Legendary' Project

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CREATION ELEMENT C1 -
WRITTEN PROPOSAL

Written Proposal

The 'Legendary' Project

INTRODUCTION

In the following written proposal I will synthesise and explain what I want to achieve with my final body of work as part of the Commercial Producer MA at Tileyard Education. I will explain the concept of my final project and its importance. I will also focus on the research methodology and the reasoning behind my choices.

WHAT AM I INTENDING TO CREATE ?

For my final project I am intending to create a series of songs, to be released separately as part of a coherent body of work. I am intending to name this project 'Legendary'. The tracks will stand together under the same concept. Each one of them represents a side of the London queer community - a community I have been emerged in 10 years ago and one that has always deeply inspired my craft as an artist. The tracks are all different genres, but at the very core, they have the same essence and aim - to spark up a desire to celebrate and enjoy life in all its forms.

The portfolio is a mixture of different fractions of the queer community and is therefore a mix of different genres. One of the purposes is to serve every genre and do them justice, but at the same, it aims to push boundaries and cross over on some levels through the juxtaposition of contrasting genres. For example, mixing a voguing club track with gospel vocals.

The project also wants to pay homage to my personal two favourite decades in music and pop culture - the 80s and the 90s. Taking this into consideration, one of the most relevant sources of research would be looking into the trends and different creative processes that are somewhat specific to these eras, like sampling. (Harkins, 2019)

In order to understand the reasons behind the inspiration for my final project, which I intend to call 'Legendary', in the following paragraphs, I will dive in deeper into the main themes of the project.

VOGUING

The Vogue's and the ballroom scene. Inspired by the documentary film that catches the gist of the late 1980s New York ballroom scene 'Paris is Burning', (Paris Is Burning, 1990). The ballroom scene is still present in London's 2022, through events like Pxssy Palace and others. Initiated by the transgendered and queer African-american youngsters of the 1980s the ballroom culture was brought to the forefront of mainstream music by Madonna (Vogue, 1990). Since then it has transformed and for the last 30 years it has reached an international level being present in almost every major city around the world.

On a personal level the ballroom community is something that I have always been fascinated with, and coincidentally enough it happens that so have some of the collaborators on this track. For The Culture Collective is a fully experienced queer gospel choir whose members are predominately people of colour. They have agreed to make a voguing track with me. There is a lot of research that will go especially into the recording side of this process. Most of the members are well experienced and so when recording, their advice will be followed alongside Sean Hargreaves and Casey Wensem (Wensem, 2017).

FASHION RAVERS

Inspired by a subculture that was born in the late 1980s London, the raving scene has inspired me immensely, not only through its current presence but also through how timeless and iconic this culture has become since the 1990s. Beyond the music I have always witnessed it first hand, how this community has always been the first to start trends which would be ultimately followed by big fashion designers finally impact the whole world. Therefore a conscious decision was to collaborate with a legendary member of this community who I have worked with before, Spanish East London based fashion designer Chema Diaz. Chema is a big fan of gabber (Dicker, 2019) and his collections are inspired by London rave culture. Our track will be the epitome of raving London.

ALLIES

The queer community has always had amazing allies. I am looking to celebrate them and show gratitude by giving them a voice and including them in this legendary project. Darcy Blu and Chiara Filomeni are two of my colleagues and they are incredibly talented singer and songwriters and their point of view is relevant. We are emulating the sound of the 80s with our tracks and the two songs will be substantial additions to the legendary project.

DRAG QUEENS

Drag queens are an iconic part of queer culture. This is an art form that has been present for hundreds of years. Now, thanks to Ru Paul's infamous tv show 'RuPaul's Drag Race' drag queens around the world have reached an incredible level of fame and have managed to become part of universal entertainment and pop culture. I also from a commercial perspective that drag queens had to have a fair representation as part of my project. Often drag queens come from performing or music backgrounds just like my 2 collaborators Polka Dot and BARBS and collaborating with them has been like collaborating with any other regular musician and beyond.

THE TRANS COMMUNITY

The members of the community have always had incredible journeys and such overwhelming but inspiring stories to tell. Jadeya is an artist I have worked with before a lot and we are planning to include her just fresh of her gender affirming surgery onto the Legendary project. Jadeya is a talented rapper and will bring an amazing perspective onto the track included on the portfolio. Sampling is again a process which is essential in writing this song.

The Legendary project will include other artists that are members or allies and are relevant through sound and style. This will include references of the 1980's to artists like Madonna and Sabrina and it will combine elements of disco, funk and euro pop.

WHY AM I TAKING ON THE PROJECT ?

Beyond the technical challenge that this `project represents to me as a producer and writer, most importantly, The main focus of my project is to give back to the people that have taken care of me for the 10 years, ever since I immigrated to the UK and the people that have become my second family. My main focus is to celebrate and pay homage to my community and the culture that has brought me so much inspiration and made me the artist and the producer I am today.

Another main focus is to experiment with things I have never done as a producer before and expand my knowledge. I want to do things that haven't been done before and mix genres that haven't been mixed before and bring them together just like bringing together the different parts of the queer community.

WHAT ARE THE BENCHMARKS FOR SUCCESS AND HOW WILL THEY BE MEASURED ?

When it comes to measuring the success of my final project, delivering it before the deadlines is without the doubt the most important box to tick. Because the whole project is a celebration of my community, I believe another important aspect is how the music is received by the targeted audience. This can translate in quantitative data - like streams and numbers reached on streaming platforms. I strongly believe in the power of collaboration when it comes to the creative side of things, but also when we look at uniting fanbases. When it came to choosing my collaborators I made sure that they have already had a considerable fanbase.

I think focusing on peer feedback and the input they can bring to my material is also important. Throughout the process I am planning on getting feedback from as many peers, lecturers and music industry professionals as I possibly can.

HOW DO I INTEND TO APPROACH THE PROJECT ?

As a producer, I am looking to expand my knowledge and learn from other people as much as I can. For example, as mentioned earlier, one of the iconic moments that are planned to happen as part of this incredible project, is writing with and recording a queer gospel choir, called 'For The Culture Collective'. They have almost 50 members. In a conversation with Sean Hargreaves, I was initially hesitant towards engaging with recording such a large amount of people, but Sean showed incredible excitement and was deeply encouraging. He stated he will be actively and directly involved in this. He offered me to record the choir in the gallery and ensured me I have his full support. Having this said, one of the best practices is staying focused, listening and grasping as much knowledge as I can from people like Sean, who are so vastly experienced.

Prior to this, of course, planning and researching recording and miking techniques are essential. The Commercial Producer course has taught me a lot when it comes to production and studio behaviour and approaches and beyond. I am confident and ready to apply all the knowledge that I have gained so far on the course in real life.

As a human being, the mindset that I am going into this project with translates to more of a promise - that everyone will have the chance to express themselves in the most comfortable way. I want to nurture my collaborators and bring out the best in them. I am aware that the majority have a very strong message to convey and I want to be able to bring that out in the most genuine, organic and natural way possible. Of course efficiency is key. This is why, even though I know 80% of them personally, I find it extremely important that we take time to discuss exactly what it is that we want to achieve and what it is that we want to express and how, prior to studio session. I always make sure that each collaboration is carefully roadmapped.

As mentioned earlier referencing and sampling is a big part of this project so, it is essential that research into the possibilities of using other people's work here is important and has to be done in a relevant and refreshing way.

ALTERNATIVE APPROACHES THAT I COULD HAVE TAKEN, AND WHY I DECIDED AGAINST THESE

My initial idea for the final project was to write an album for my own artist project. Based on my previous experience with releasing an album with my band CRISP&CLASY, I gathered that, considering that the format of music nowadays has changed drastically, albums do not necessarily live such a long life as they used before and that the audience expects more often single releases rather than bigger bodies of work. This is a crucial reason why I have made the choice of releasing the tracks in collaboration with a series of artists and not as part of an album or an EP.

THE TIMELINE FOR MY PROJECT

It is safe to state that my project would require a number of around nine to ten songs, considering that the average duration of a track is three minutes. For commercial purposes, I am not intending to make tracks that are over 4 minutes long, as generating material that is radio or club friendly is important for this project. As a safety measure I am planning on finishing more than 10 songs for this project, in the case of some tracks turning out not to match the quality standard of the others.

Researching already existing music for sampling purposes is a big part of my final project. Working with a diverse range of artists so far, I have noticed that sampling brings magic into the writing and production process. Artists usually get very excited when a track they identify with is being included into our work.

Focusing more on the timeline, we have to consider that as of now, 80% of the songs are in a rough demo stage and 50% have finished production and songwriting. The first step is finishing writing and producing all of the songs or at least achieving much of a polished rough demo stage as possible by the end of May.

May is a month that is dedicated to fully finishing writing and locking in the production of as many songs as possible.

June is a month that is dedicated fully to mixing all the songs and focusing on recording the gospel choir parts and possibly the live string parts. The gospel choir recordings are detrimental to the original voguing song. This is a track made with and especially for the choir.

I am planing that by mid June 2022, I will have finished mixing the first half of the songs and ultimately finished the mixing process all around by the end of the month. The first 2 weeks of July are fully dedicated to mastering all the tracks.

CONCLUSION

Creating a body of work of this proportions is something that I have personally never done before. I am incredibly humbled by the openness of my collaborators and my lecturer's support and I am deeply impressed by how smoothly the process has run so far. I am aware of the tightness of the deadlines but I am positive that the legendary project will be finished accordingly and successfully.

I am excited to bring this vision to life. As a producer I am overwhelmed with enthusiasm anticipating how mine and my collaborators audiences will feel listening to the 'Legendary' project. As a queer artist I can only hope I will be able to do my community justice and that it's celebration will be appreciated by my fellow members and everyone else. I am hoping to bring queerness to the forefront of mainstream as it hasn't been brought before and hopefully raise more awareness and further educate.

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