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Mr. Speice

Independent Study & Mentorship

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Interview Assessment #4

Name of Professional: Sarah Sellers

Profession/Title: Singer/Songwriter

Business/Company name: N/A

Date of Interview: November 15, 2017

Out of all of my interviews, I feel that my interview with Sarah Sellers answered some of my most burning questions, and also helped ease a little bit of the anxiety I have over putting myself in the spotlight. While speaking to Sarah Sellers about her early influences in music and how she got started in singing overall, I was able to relate very much to her. Although her first exposure to music was being classically trained on the piano, she was also involved in her school's choir and pop ensemble as well. Just like her, I am involved immensely in my school choir and am participating in my choir's pop ensemble. Knowing our similarities, I was comfortable to ask a lot of questions regarding the writing process and creating a brand in music.

Starting with the writing and composing process, Sarah Sellers told me about how there is not a set method in which she starts writing. Writing and composing new music can start from sitting down one day and writing about what is most heaviest on her mind to just playing on the piano and finding a cohesive melody. Once at least one piece of the puzzle is made (the lyrics or background music), you can fine tune the pieces and created cohesiveness throughout the newly

composed and written song. As an artist, one should strive to write about things that are personal to them and be genuine with the words they sing and the music they play. Being personal will allow the audience to build a personal connection and create a solid fanbase. To find inspiration, some of the best things you can do is listen to other artists and new music in general. That is how Sarah Sellers often finds references for her own music in the production process.

Marketing is a big part of spreading the name of an artist. Sarah Sellers even obtained a degree in marketing to help build her own brand. Much of the “creating my own identity as a singer” question that I have expressed to others in interviews lies with the branding of the artist. Branding can range from the genres they typically perform or the pictorial concepts they have for their albums. Building a brand that is unique, but still friendly to the public can become very successful. Sellers often kept different moodboards of the different fashion she liked and concepts she wanted to be a part of her brand. The most important tool in marketing, however, is the song. Too much focus on social media may not be the best, but a few advertisements can allow your music to reach an audience. Finally, I asked what it was like to work with a producer and how both the artist and the producer collaborates together on a song. She said how what’s really good about working with a producer is that they can give many ideas and help what she has in mind become something tangible. It truly demonstrated the importance of a producer and in some ways put a doubt if self-producing will flesh out the songs I write enough. It demonstrates even more the importance of a mentor in this process.

My interview with Sarah Sellers gave me much more insight into what becoming a singer-songwriter takes and the many skills that attribute to becoming better at composing music

and meaningful lyrics. I relay my gratitude to Sarah Sellers for providing me with important information for my ISM research!