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Independent Study & Mentorship

14 September 2017

<div align="center">How It's Made: Music</div>

<div align="center">Research Assessment #2</div>

Date: September 14, 2017

Subject: Music Production Programs

Works Cited:

Robertson, Benjamin J. "New tools, new value: producing music after the individual." Music,

    Sound, and the Moving Image, vol. 9, no. 2, 2015, p. 207+. Academic OneFile,

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Music production has come a long way since the times of the great classical composers such as Beethoven and Mozart. What was once written on paper and can only be remembered of its tune in memory can now be digitally transcribed and recorded into a tangible audio file to go back to listen to. The tools in music producing and composing has developed incredibly since the beginning of technology and has tremendously impacted the music industry. To become more informed about the technology used in today's large music productions, the overall development of these technologies and usage will be assessed in order to have an idea of the tools that could be utilized for my own album production in the future.

The article read delves deeper into how the creation of music editing software has changed the game in music production and composition. One surprising name of a software that was referenced back to multiple times would be the Audacity program. This is surprising due to my previous knowledge behind this program before pursuing music composition and production as a topic in ISM. Past experiences with Audacity had allowed me to edit music files, and to see that this was one of the prime music editing software used by other music producers brings to the question whether this program could be a tool to help me develop my compositions into something tangible. Audacity and other music programs such as ACID Pro and Adobe Audition allow to "perceive and manipulate" music according to the article. On a interesting note, it was different to see an article where the interviewed music producers put the emphasis on that the visualization of music proved to be very critical in their own music creation. Traditionally, there was the idea in how music is merely recorded and pieced together with no formal record of the notes used besides scratch work. However, on the contrary to my previous idea, technology has allowed the composition to be done digitally within these programs. Music theory knowledge will play a great role in understanding the different arrangements in written music and how to manipulate the notes in order to produce the notes and melodies one is aiming for.

The versatility of these music programs is highlighted throughout the article with an intriguing tool that the music program Adobe Audacity. DJ Earworm, a music producer that I have listened to previously, speaks about the layering tools that allows the program to detect different layers within a track such as the vocals, underlying harmonies or the bass in order to extract them and manipulate them into remixed pieces. This is a prominent tool used by music producers and DJs that are involved with creating mashups with other tracks such as DJ

Earworm himself. This brings into the question if this can apply to my own music creation. If layers can be extracted, can other layers be made? Often music programs are set in multiple rows that visualize the waveform of particular pieces of audio that were recorded separately. These individual sound layers can reach many numbers, but are ultimately compounded together into the single MP3 file that holds the completed track. Getting well versed with the layering tool is critical in the development of my personal music production knowledge. This tool has also sparked the idea of producing my own mashups as an original work and a way to dip my feet into the water of producing technology. Utilizing these programs will further allow the growth for me as a producer as I can apply these skills into original music works without the sampling of another artist's' music like in mashups.

Lastly, the development of the new tools and software that are available for music producers has spurred a number of self-made artists and producers. A music producer that was highlighted was Danger Mouse. Although his identity as an artist has not made the headlines of mainstream media, the music he has worked on sure has done this and garnered him many prestigious awards. This is particularly interesting and relatable to my own journey in that Dark Mouse had originally started by producing and mixing music by himself with the use of music programs. His acclaimed yet slightly controversial album, The Grey Album, combined many elements such as Jay-Z's vocals and The Beatles' instrumentals, proving the power technology has come to to allow the autonomy of musicians in creating their own music from samples of other works from other artists.

Music programs such as Audacity, ACID Pro, and Adobe Audition opens the doors to up and coming music producers and artists by providing a platform that allows them to express their

own creativity and musicality that they would not have been able to do years ago without the constant improvements in technology and software made in the music industry. For individual producers like me, these programs make creating quality tracks with ease and with no limit in one's expression to go above and beyond with their songs.