

MUS113 Project Documentation

MUS113.1 Project Development and Pre-Production

Student Name:	
Student Number:	

This planning document will help you focus your 'MUS113.1 Project Development and Pre-Production' project conception, planning, and submission. Please feel free to add sections if you think you need to. You can delete the guide text and replace it with your own. This serves as a guide for key elements.

Please submit this document to Campus Online by the due date and time.

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(Don't forget to refresh me when you're done updating!)

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1. Project Conception

1.1 Group Details:

Name	Student Number

1.2 Project Type:

Give a brief description of the type of project your group is completing. E.g. A thematic EP or compilation, Composition to video, Podcast with recorded voice and thematic music

__ and __ are doing a thematic EP. For each track we are focusing on one of the main four elements; fire, air, earth and water. We want to explore the four elements through sonic textures, symbols, and more specific music components such as polyrhythms and lyrics.

1.3 Project Theme or Style:

In terms of genre, we are wanting to explore RnB/Neo-Soul genre conventions, but taking mostly a contemporary approach to the whole project.

For each track, we want to explore different sonic textures. For example:

'Water' might include pluck synths with reverb, big reverb pads using LFO's to create the feeling of a tide coming in and out and samples of moving water.

'Earth' might include percussive sounds, maybe muddier, exploring elements of earth such as trees (woody sounds). Additionally, exploring earth through symbolism in lyrics, different angles/perspectives on earth, maybe some social commentary.

For 'Fire', we might convey a sense of ferociousness and high tension with extended and augmented chords and odd

time signatures, and a high tempo to convey emotions generally related to fire.

And lastly, for 'Air' we might induce cavernous reverb on resonant percussion (like a gentle breeze through a cave) and spacious rhythm patterns.

2. Project Pitch Outcome

2.1 Green Light Received?:

Did you receive a 'green light' for your group's production pitch?

Yes

2.2 Feedback Received:

Give a brief outline of the feedback your group received during your pitch presentation, including any foreseen issues with the project and or changes that need to be done before proceeding.

From teacher:

I really like this idea for the thematic EP. You have both outlined the roles and responsibilities of each person in the group. Exploring the themes in terms of musicality and symbolism affords an avant-garde approach that will allow you to be more abstract in the musicianship and wrangling of sounds. That said, remaining contemporary will make the music accessible and the amalgamation of your disparate musical backgrounds could really work, when centred around such a strong theme. As mentioned in the feedback, speak to the tech team about the best way to capture audio externally, and legislate for extra-curricular activities to capture these. These should be established in the Project 1 documentation. That you are already using a shared playlist to build ideas bodes well for the organisation of this ambitious project. Great work, so far. Please keep me in the loop and reach out if you require any help organising equipment.

3.Planning

3.1 Musical and Production Considerations:

Create a list of attributes using the 'Active Listening' techniques outlined in reading 2 of the week 2 pre-class activity. Include an analysis of sound, harmony, melody, rhythm and form.

Attributes of particular chosen references:

Breathing Underwater - Hiatus Kaiyote:

- Steely guitar, leading into more low range instruments.
- Breathly vocals in the background with simple harmonies throughout.
- Synth also has a steely timbre, and some distorted textures. The steely synth sustain is pretty short as well as the attack; it is bright.
- Electric jazz piano in the background scattered throughout, kind of mimicking the song's intro arcade game sample. The more electric jazz synth is also bright yet has a longer sustain, but short attack and also has a bit of reverb.
- Reverb on the synth creates a constant sense of push and pull and creates a lushness along with the vocals.
- The song structure is broken into a very ambiguous form, weaving together and cross referencing the intro, pre-chorus, chorus and bridge.

Lest We Forget - Esperanza Spalding:

- Boxy sounding electronic drums
- Reverberated vocals that layer as the song progresses, creating rhythmic harmonies.
- Bright guitar with slight delay and reverb.
- The song structure is also slightly ambiguous, almost like a continues AAA structure, except for the repetition of the intro but with more instrumentation.

3.2 Music References:

Reference 1

Title	Link to Reference
'Them' by Nils Frahm	https://open.spotify.com/track/2tr4oclswJ6v3dfDII01HD?si=dd51710595de4fd5

I like the textures, and the deep resonance of the bass. It has an organic feel, like it was played in a small room (that kind of muffled texture giving a sense of movement). The chord progression is relatively simple but as it is played in $\frac{3}{4}$ timing and in an arpeggiated style, the track is given a lively rhythm. The soft use of guitar helps elevate the harmonics of the track and give it emotion and dynamics. The slight distortion of the piano and violins gives the track a melancholic atmosphere; in addition, the use of major and minor chords in juxtaposition with each other creates a subtle tension. This track correlates both electronic and live music sound production, which is what ____ and I plan to incorporate in our own music.

Reference 2

Title	Link to Reference
Hiatus Kaiyote - Breathing Underwater	https://open.spotify.com/track/4UOSM66BYQRD4YbOIkcTO8?si=c764f524c15545fd

This track has a lot of different textures and layers, and interesting rhythm changes. I like the use of live instruments but also some possible samples. The lyricism provides a story to the rhythmic patterns and use of textures; this is a great example of the kind of music I think ____ and I are aiming to make. Although this is quite a complicated piece, it exemplifies experimentation, drama, symbolism, and sonic textures that ____ and I have already started incorporating in our demos.

Reference 3

Title	Link to Reference
Lest We Forget - Esperanza Spalding	https://open.spotify.com/track/4yrsGZdBgkqAnCfc4bBJ42?si=3b3f0904625c4a4a

Both ____ and I have chosen this track as a reference; personally, I like it for its textural nuances, and how the melody sits slightly ajar to the drum pattern, creating a really interesting and meditative polyrhythm. Additionally, I like how it has somewhat of a spoken delivery, focusing on poetic and symbolic lyricism, exploring organic textures, and acoustic and electronic instrumentation. I would love to experiment with ____ on vocal harmonies, maybe figuring out a vocal pattern similar to Spalding's for the 'Air' track, with the use of reverb to create a sense of atmosphere as discussed in our presentation.

4. Scheduling

4.1 Timeline and Milestones

Milestone	Date	What to do	Complete?
Concept Pitch Presentation	Week 2	Work with Caleb on Pitch Presentation outside of class. Organise Google Slides over Slack with Caleb.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Mid-Point Reflection	Week 2	Follow the Mid-Project Reflection template; discuss working with Caleb and future planning. Also, discuss positives and challenges of the project so far.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Instrumentation Complete	Week 3	Caleb has sent a demo; create chord progression and vocal work over drum rhythm. Create a demo of your own to send to Caleb.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Draft Vocal Recorded	Week 4	For the demo, I am choosing not to do any vocals, as I want to highlight the instrumentation/choice of textures and melodies for the elements.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Demo Completed	Week 4	Add EQ and FX to necessary tracks; add more structure to the demo.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Final Reflection	Week 4	Complete reflection after completing the demo so as to provide extensive information on the whole process of making the demo.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<i>Final Production Timeline</i>	<i>Week 5</i>	<i>Create a schedule and list of milestones for Project 2 Final Production</i>	

3.2 Studio Session Information:

Date and Time	Studio	Session Purpose	Performer (If appropriate)
<i>Week 5 - Friday 20th of October (9am-1pm)</i>	<i>Studio 3 Live 2</i>	<i>Record Chord Progressions and possibly vocals</i>	
Week 7 (Date not yet decided)	Not yet decided	Experimentation and possible live instrumentation recording	
Week 9 (Date not yet decided)	Not yet decided	Backup sound vocals	
Week 10 (Date not yet decided)	Not yet decided	Full recording session (vocals, instrumentation, etc.) Possible mixing of certain tracks.	

5. Deliverables

Document below any required file links and use the checklist to ensure you have not missed anything from your submission.

***IMPORTANT: Ensure you have made any link available to download to “Anyone with the link”. If you do not, your facilitator may be unable to access your project files.*

Project Links	
DAW Project Session	
<hr/>	
Final Demo Bounce (.wav 24bit, 48kHz)	
<hr/>	
Checklist	
Have you completed all sections of this project template?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Have you completed a mid-project reflection (250 word minimum)?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Does your mid-project reflection include at least one (1) citation, using APA 7 referencing, and the full reference has been documented in “5.0 - Reference List”?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Have you completed a project-completion reflection (250 word minimum)?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Have you compressed your DAW session folder (to a .zip file) and uploaded it to Google Drive?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Have you set the share link to “Anyone with the link” and pasted the link above?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

6. Project Reflections

6.1 Mid-Project Reflection

So far, planning the EP with _____ has been a smooth and enjoyable process. We have been able to bounce off each other's ideas, working in a similar creative flow. Because I missed the first week of Trimester 3 classes, I personally have struggled a bit to keep up with my work and stay motivated; I have not been able to fully engage in my projects. However, after receiving some demo work from _____ in Week 3, I have felt more creative and motivated, and excited for beginning the process of creating the final demo and also starting the EP. So far, the easiest part of this project has been communication. _____ and I have really been able to share our ideas without too much criticism but still providing each other with encouraging and deconstructive feedback. My personal research for this project has included listening to albums that include musical components _____ and I wish to explore: sonic textures, poetic lyricism, polyrhythms, and harmony. Fortunately, I have been able to apply an adequate amount of musical knowledge to this project, using more complex chords and somewhat nuanced rhythmic patterns. As it is suggested in 'Songwriting Strategies' by Mark Simos, I began the demo by "working from chords" before any other components, "thus framing the harmony", which helped create an emotional theme and storyline (Simos, p. 8. 2014). Additionally, sharing chord progression ideas with _____ over 'Slack' and ideas on drum rhythms have helped me expand my musicality and find a musical and technical aesthetic in the demo. Although I have been able to share some of my strengths, I also feel like my musical ambitions for this project might become too overwhelming if I do not continue to keep myself motivated and consistent in my work. As I continue to research, I am hoping that I am able to manage my priorities in a way that does not limit my creative ideas.

322 words.

6.2 Project-Completion Reflection

This project was both fun and challenging. I enjoyed creating the demo, but found that I lost my sense of musical direction halfway through the process, as I got stuck in the nuances of the chord progression. I did not like where the track was going, as it felt too out-of-genre compared to Caleb's demo. However, I asked ____ for feedback by sending rough drafts of the demo, and we both agreed that it was important to experiment in the demo so we could figure out what to do and what not to do for our EP, technically and musically. Additionally, I was given helpful encouragement and criticism by ____ to continue with my demo idea.

Although I am happy with the demo, I think that if I had managed my time better, I could have created a more well structured song with more sonic textures and genre conventions that represent ____ and I's intentions for the EP. Upon reflection, I think my expectations for the final demo were too complex, and I overestimated my flexibility with time. For example, I wanted to include a lot of earthy textures from samples ____ had taken, as well as a vocal part, but I found that my chosen chord progression did not allow for a comprehensive vocal melody with a suggested lyrical cadence. Additionally, although this demo is supposed to represent the element of 'Earth', I personally do not think it clearly demonstrates any kind of earthy textures, except for the woody sounds of the congas and the use of background noise and the thunder clap samples. Nonetheless, I am happy with my chosen drum pattern and the use of strings alongside electronic drums and synths is a good representation of the ways ____ and I wish to explore both acoustic and electronic instrumentation in our tracks. Although I did not manage my time very well for this project, I still felt like I was able to deepen my exploration of sonic textures, polyrhythms, harmonic layering and deepen my understanding of Ableton software. Fortunately, by taking MUS103 last trimester, I was able to apply quite a bit of knowledge about Ableton to this project, which made it, technically, a more fluid and enjoyable experience, without the hassle of learning the basics of Ableton. For the EP, I look forward to experimenting more with Ableton's software and collaborating with ____, sharing more about how we created our demos and learning about each other's creative process.

412 words.

7. Reference List

Simos, M. (2014). *Songwriting Strategies; a 360 approach*. BERKLEE PRESS.