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Music Project Proposal

Rationale

My reason for this proposal is to produce a piece of music that takes the theoretical considerations of the Western common practise tradition and applies it to a more modern musical context. This will make it accessible to a modern audience while also retaining the aesthetic value of Western common-practise traditions such as counterpoint and voice leading. It will be a good opportunity to develop my skills as a composer to release a piece of music to a specification, which is not something I have much prior experience with.

Intended Final Product

The final product outlined in this proposal will be an original composition for solo classical guitar, which I will then record and release as a single. The piece itself will be a few minutes in length and may include space for collaboration with other musicians. Additionally, I plan to work with photography/media students to create promotional material to a professional standard.

Musically I'd like to follow a main topic or idea, this could be an experience/emotion, such as grief, loss, or something like a place or season (see Vivaldi's "Four Seasons" Concerto).

Ideally this would be something relevant to a modern audience of listeners, however there

are no lyrics so the effect of this might be less obvious and more difficult to get across musically.

Strengths and Weaknesses

I foresee time management and organisation presenting a challenge during this project, so I have chosen to include some milestones that I can focus on with deadlines to complete them by (left column). My recording and production skills are also areas I'll need to consider when carrying out this project, for which I have some research sources which I can consult, as well as facilities at the college to help with this.

As I've chosen to release a single, I feel like I can be more focused and ambitious with my compositional techniques, which is an area which I feel confident in. Guitar is also my principal instrument – this should help to expedite the recording process, as I'll be sightreading the piece I've written.

Planning and Timescales

Week Beginning	Goal	Resources Needed
6 th Feb	Look into possible themes for the piece. Listen to key artists in the style, figure out how this can be applied to my own work.	Guitar
13 th Feb	Continue research on inspirations/influences, come up with an overall structure for the piece (waltz? sonata?).	Guitar
20 th Feb	Decide on a final theme for the piece.	
27 th Feb	Begin writing the piece in Sibelius, developing the	Access to Sibelius

	musical ideas which I have come up with in the previous weeks.	
6 th Mar	Discuss ideas with other musicians, decide where this fits into the composition, and if it would be feasible to include this.	Meeting with HE Music Students to discuss project.
13 th Mar	Continue working on the piece.	
20 th Mar	Continue working on the piece.	
27 th Mar	Finalise materials needed to record the piece (scores, alternative notation if needed for ensemble).	Charts/part scores. Access to recording equipment (condenser mic, DI box).
3 rd Apr	Create a test recording.	Ableton.
10 th Apr	Get in touch with photography/film students to produce promotional materials. Final recording and post-production on the recording.	Access to cameras, college media facilities.
17 th Apr	Final promotional materials ready for release.	Film/photo reel, finished track.
24 th Apr	Release the single to the public.	Space to upload/promote work on social media.
1 st May	Reflect on the project, and evaluate what problems were faced and what was successful about it.	Feedback from others, social media analytics.

Inspirations and Influences

The project will be broadly inspired by pieces from the classical/romantic period of guitar repertoire – key figures such as Francisco Tarrega, Heitor Villa-Lobos, and Fernando Sor. To keep it more relevant to a modern audience I would like to experiment with different production/sequencing techniques I have been learning about, possibly recording different instrumentation (keyboard/synthesizer), keeping in mind time constraints. I think this would be manageable but is a musical risk. Stravinsky’s “Ebony Concerto”, written for a jazz

ensemble, and the works of neoclassical artist Jason Becker (“Air”), are two examples of contemporary music with a more classical compositional style.

Evidence Checklist

- Score parts
- Audio recordings
- Meetings with collaborators
- Video footage
- Photography reels
- Screenshots of social media/promotional materials
- Feedback and reception
- Personal reflection/blog articles

Potential Research Sources

Godfrey, J. (no date) *Principles of idiomatic guitar writing by Jonathan Godfrey - Core*.

Available at: <https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/213837958.pdf> (Accessed: February 8, 2023).

Key considerations when writing parts for classical guitar. This will help me to write more natural sounding music that's playable and within the limitations of the instrument. This will be important when I perform this piece for recording.

Moylan, W. (2002) *The art of recording: Understanding and crafting the mix*. Boston, MA: Focal Press.

Techniques I can use to create a high quality recording/mix of the piece, as well as how the recording process itself informs the music. I can use this information to also understand and recognise the sounds that other artists have recorded and apply this to my own piece of music.

Sturman, P. (2012) *Harmony, melody & composition*. Melbourne, Vic.: Vision Australia Information Library Service.

Assis-Brasil, G. (2021) *The guitarist's Guide to Counterpoint, Premier Guitar*. Available at: <https://www.premierguitar.com/the-guitarists-guide-to-counterpoint> (Accessed: February 16, 2023).

Fox, J.J. and Mann, A. (1971) *The study of counterpoint: From Johann Joseph Fux's Gradus ad parnassum*. New York: Norton.

Approaches to writing this type of music, in particular counterpoint and functional harmony, which is a key feature associated with the sound of classical music.

Feist, J. (2013) *Project Management for musicians: Recordings, concerts, Tours, studios, and more*. Boston, MA: Berklee Press.

This book contains some useful information about organising and carrying out a music project, including risk assessment, planning and development, and budgeting. All of this would be helpful to learn about, being that this is what I'm least skilled at above all else.

Hutchison, T.W. (2009) *Record label marketing*. Focal Press.

Some strategies I can use to promote and market my work using new media, to allow them to reach a wider audience. The book has some insightful commentary on how record labels handle publicity and build an audience/market works in a modern digital space.