

DL838 Creative Music Production, Thesis

Cian Fahy, 27/04/2026, Peter Jones (Mentor)

Implementing Musical Characteristics from Different
Genres into an EP to Transition through three songs

Contents

Introduction.....	3
Literature Review.....	4
Genre Studies.....	4
Genre-Related Studies.....	5
Production Focused Sources.....	6
Sources Regarding Mastering.....	7
Methodology.....	8
Analysis.....	11
Discussion.....	13
Conclusion.....	15
Abstract.....	16
Appendices.....	17
Bibliography.....	19

Introduction

This thesis will explain the overall process of creation, as well as demonstrate the results found based on a project with the research question 'Can musical characteristics from Rock, Pop, and House be implemented into an EP to seamlessly transition through three tracks?' The information required in order to carry out this task was gathered by researching genre studies, the art of consistency and transitions in music, breaking down popular songs that fall under the category of the genres under investigation, and watching tutorials on segments related to the construction of an EP in this format. Doing this provided the knowledge that was needed to be able to write and produce not only an EP which consisted of three songs of different genres, but one that was able to transition smoothly through each song, as per the main focus of the project. The answer to the research question was then discovered through the results of a multiple-question survey that was offered to and filled out by ten participants whilst or after they listened to the EP and hence examined whether the transitions were seamless or not and to what effect. The inspiration for this project came from a passion and appreciation of all music genres and what each individual genre brings to music, and it also stems from an admiration of transitions performed either at live settings by DJ's or demonstrated in albums, EPs, and mixtapes, a notable mention being the transitions demonstrated on The Weeknd's album, 'Hurry Up Tomorrow'. The literature review will involve pieces that allowed for the study of the three individual genres, Rock, Pop, and House, as well as readings that research items on theory, musical techniques, musical characteristics, writing, composition, recording, production, mixing, and mastering. The overall aim of this research was to discover how to define each of the genres: Rock, Pop, and House, through musical characteristics, and to better understand how one could apply different musical techniques in the production of an EP in order to transition through songs seamlessly. The methodology will explain the means in how research was completed, along with the process involved in the creation of the EP. The analysis will express in further detail why certain actions were taken during the production of the EP, following what is mentioned in the methodology. The discussion will express and break down the results that were gathered and confirmed after the completion of the entire project. These results relate to the success or failure of the research, making of the EP, and the survey. The discussion also involves a reflection of the total process which includes answers to internal thoughts about the finished project. Finally, the conclusion will include a quick summary of the full experience of carrying out this project, and how it may inspire future events.

Literature Review

Genre Studies

Different people have various perspectives on the definition of specific genres. This is due to bias and experience. In this project, it was important to determine how the genres rock, pop, and house would be defined. This was accomplished through research done on genre studies, as well as studying the analytical data that is expressed in playlists and charts in online streaming services such as Spotify and Apple Music. In *'Song means: Analyzing and Interpreting Popular Recorded Song,'* by Allan F. Moore, the author explains how popular songs create a sense of meaning for the listeners. Allan F. Moore is an academic researcher who has contributed to research in popular music and musicology. This literature provided an understanding of recording, production, and mixing methods that were used in the construction of the EP. For example, Moore discusses how Robert Plant acts as a protagonist of the song 'Hey Joe' in his vocal performance, rather than it being 'Robert Plant' singing himself, the man who used to sing with Led Zeppelin. This concept is established due to Plant's expressive, breathy, blues-inspired singing on the track. These ideas were adapted and put into use when choosing the style of singing that was utilized in each song on the EP. Page 75 of this book states that "The standard rock beat implies a bar consisting of four beats. The kick drum can be heard on the first and third of these, the snare drum on the second and fourth and, in many cases, sticks used on the hi-hat (foot cymbal) subdivide each beat into two. Although the snare drumbeat (the backbeat) appears most audibly apparent, the kick drumbeat is normally assumed to be 'stronger'". On page 254, it is explained that the song 'I want you (she's so heavy)' by 'The Beatles' concerns a troublesome interpersonal relationship so it was decided that this and romance should be two important themes expressed in the lyrics of the pop song in the EP.

Similar genre-defining elements discussed in the book *'The Foundations of Rock: "From Blue Suede Shoes" to "Suite: Judy Blue Eyes,"* by Walter Everett were also constructively helpful whilst composing and producing the rock song in the EP. These elements include instrumentation (the roles of different instruments within the composition, like guitar, piano, drums, and vocals), and compositional techniques used in forming the structure of the song, focusing on phrases, sections, melodies, and harmonies. Everett explains the value of regular rhythm patterns like quadruple, triple, and duple meters; the backbeat and offbeat; the groove and more. The backbeat pattern works against the meter. In this rhythm, the drummer hits the snare on the even numbered beats during the meter, usually beats two and four, often found in the drum rhythms in the genres pop, and rock, which is relevant to this project. Page 27 expresses the meaning of quadruple meter, ONE two THREE four. Examples of this pattern can be heard in 'Hound Dog' by 'Elvis Presley' and 'Hey Jude' by 'The Beatles' and this idea was inherited in the rock song. This piece of literature also explained that through high gain level, distortion compresses the signal, boosting the volume of quieter parts of the waveshape, which thereby also allows the guitar string to sustain its voice much longer than it could without such intervention. This can be heard in 'Sunshine Of Your Love' by 'Cream', and 'American Woman' by 'The Guess Who', mentioned

on page 73 of foundations of rock. The second guitar solo with the high gain sound heard in the rock song was inspired by this. Pg 85 of foundations of rock explains how main guitar accompaniment doesn't always have to be strummed but can be fingerpicked instead. This happens in 'The Boxer' by 'Simon and Garfunkel' and encouraged the main guitar in the rock song which continuously repeats throughout the entire song.

Rhythm, meter, and repetition were all very important aspects in this project. Such features were learned and modified for the house song in the EP. Certain musical characteristics that are key in the format of house music, such as groove, timbre, and structure were studied when examining the genre study: '*Unlocking the Groove: Rhythm, Meter, and Musical Design in Electronic Dance Music*,' by Mark J. Butler. The author touches on how there is a difference between structure of a song, and structure of a set, in electronic dance music. Various sections of this genre study were visited when deciding the form of the house song, and other areas of focus in dance and electronic music.

Genre-Related Studies

'*On large-scale genre classification in symbolically encoded music by automatic identification of repeating patterns*', by Andres Ferraro and Kjell Lemström is a conference paper that covers the importance of repetition in music and exploring the relations between musical genres due to genre specific patterns. The main aim in this research was to automatically identify repetitions that are intrinsic from specific genres. As understanding and identifying genres was a crucial part of the overall project, the information found in this paper was used to an advantage in terms of knowledge applied during the composition stage. This paper explains that the identity of a genre can often be traced back to characteristic patterns, such as a strong rhythmic foundation in the 4/4 time with the backbeat on beats 2 and 4 in a lot of rock music, same with the heavy use of electric guitars with large distortion and power chords. As well as this, in pop music we can find common characteristics like catchy melodies and choruses, and relatable lyrics. Finally, with house music, a normal tempo for the genre is roughly somewhere between 115-130-bpm, the time signature is almost always 4/4 with a kick on every beat and syncopated hi-hats and percussion feature regularly. When researching and studying these genres, material found regarding repeating characteristics such as these were highly beneficial for the composing and writing of a song.

An understanding had to be attained of how timbral characteristics shape genre identity, and how these characteristics could be gradually transformed. The paper '*Timbre-enhanced Multi-modal Music Style Transfer with Domain Balance Loss*', by Tsai-Jyun Fan, Chien-Yu Lu, Wei-Chen Chiu, Li Su, and Che-Rung Lee explores how one music style can be converted into another using systems, by modelling timbral and structural features. A new function is proposed in the paper called 'domain balance loss' "So we proposed a new loss function, called domain balance loss, which constrains the discriminator from two fake data, one is

from the within-domain reconstruction, and the other is from the cross-domain translation.” Understanding genres through timbres like this was highly effective when considering timbres found in different types of music, for example, bright synths with polished vocals in pop music. This paper was used to consider other elements that could have been adapted when transitioning from one song to another, rather than just relying on a single element such as the key of a song, or the tempo.

Production Focused Sources

As well as musical characteristics, it was also beneficial to learn various techniques that could be used while in the mixing stage of the project. Studying these techniques boosted the overall quality of the EP, so that the most professional sound was achieved. By investigating *‘Mixing Audio: Concepts, Practices, and Tools’*, by Roey Izhaki, information was obtained on the use of things such as EQ’s, automation, crossfading, compression, transient shaping, perceived loudness and more, giving insight on how to create a transition. For example, in the chapter about compressors, Izhaki mentions how compressors can have a wide range of applications. Some of the uses include making sounds bigger, denser, and fatter, accentuating the inner details of sounds, balancing levels, softening or emphasizing dynamics, bringing instruments forwards or backwards in the mix etc. Bringing an instrument like an electric guitar forward for a rock melody, from being in the background of a pop song was one way that was learned to be a successful option to aid the transition of two songs of different genres so therefore, this research reference was a strong aid for the project at hand.

In the research paper, *‘Off the beaten track: using deep learning to interpolate between music genres’*, Tijn Borguis discusses a system that can be used to blend tracks of different genres together, using their drum patterns or rhythms rather than the common crossfade technique that most DJs use in live performances. This was regarded as a highly useful academic source for this project as the introduction of new genres within the EP appeared too obvious if simply using crossfades. Therefore, crossfade transitions were avoided at all costs. This reference was mainly used for percussive purposes. It is even mentioned in this paper that “the complexity associated with other aspects such as melody, harmony, and timbre, that are relevant for genre in other musical domains can be sidestepped”. However, the lessons learned from studying this paper were interpreted and adapted so that, the idea of changing one musical element at a time such as the drums in this example, can be adapted where that the same idea could be experimented with on other instruments in each track, and not primarily the drums. An example of this format applying to multiple instruments could have been having drums, or maybe guitar chords slowly speeding up from the end of one song to the start of another.

Sources Regarding Mastering

Transitioning can sound as if it implies an obvious change, whereas if making those transitions as unnoticeable as possible, it can be important to create a sense of consistency to help the tracks flow. A consistent, professional standard needed to be maintained over the course of the entire project. This refers to the composition, mixing, and mastering. The book, 'Mastering Audio: The Art and the Science', by Bob Katz dives into what mastering means, focusing on specifics such as decibels, and how to judge loudness the right way. Other important focuses of the book are the mastering techniques themselves, like equalisation and noise reduction, and it shares advice on how to make better recordings in the 21st century, which touches on questions like 'monitor gain vs. monitor level'. These practices were put into use after the mixing process of the project was finished.

Methodology

Multiple methodologies were utilized during the course of this project. The reasons that these specific methodologies were chosen was to aid research in the field, to help come up with ideas which involved collecting references for specific areas of each song or transition, to enhance the process and workflow of production, and to better understand the reasons for the results of the overall research question of the project, 'Can musical characteristics from Rock, Pop, and House be implemented into an EP to seamlessly transition through three tracks?' Genre studies and artistic research were carried out when studying the sources that have been mentioned previously in the literature review, along with analytical research done when studying playlists and charts on popular music streaming service platforms, as well as then songs that come from artists that were featured in these charts or playlists. The writing, compositional, production, mixing, and mastering stages of making the EP all fell under the concept of practice-based research and experimental research, and finally, the objective of the survey which was given out after the EP was finally completed, was to collect data from multiple sources in order to determine whether or not a listener believed that the transitions were seamless or not, and to what amount, as well as then to understand how well different people perceived the flow of the EP to be. This survey was carried out online, and it made use of a Likert scale as a scale for grading when answering each of the questions that were asked. Below is a thorough explanation, regarding the complete process of the methodology that was executed from the start of the project, when the research stage began.

In terms of the format in which the songs run within the EP, the order that was selected for creation as well as placement was researching and therefore creating the rock song first, followed by the pop song and then the house song. The reason behind this was because there was a logical belief that that order would give way for the most natural sounding transitions as the rock genre broadly shares a lot of similarities with pop and the same can be said for pop and house. This is mainly due to the resemblance of instrumentation in a lot of songs, as well as the acceptance of subgenres. For example, there are many classic rock and classic pop songs that contain an acoustic guitar, and the same can be said for dance pop and house. This is due to dance pop stemming from pop and taking more of an electronic approach which can also be applied to house. As well as this, most dance pop and house songs tend to stick to a 4/4 time signature, often with a kick on every beat. Therefore, because of the rationale explained above, the genre of rock was researched first, and the creation of the rock song began primarily because of this. The first step was to find what people classified as rock, considering rock songs, albums, artists, and bands. Spotify playlists were searched for under the text 'Best rock songs', and similarly, a playlist was found with the title 'Best Rock songs of All Time', created by 'IndieMassive Hits'. The playlist had over a quarter of a million saves so it was understood that this would be a great place to find references for vocals as well as different instruments. Acoustic guitar was chosen as the primary instrument within the rock song that would continue throughout the entire tune. A personal liking of the band 'Metallica' entertained the idea of choosing a guitar played in an

arpeggiated fashion that would repeat constantly throughout the song as well as adding specific effects suitable for the song because of the reference such as a subtle reverb and a chorus ensemble. This decision aided the melodic structure of the song as a whole. The thought of singing in a low tone and pitch was generated by frequently listening to vocal performances by singers such as 'Johnny Cash' and 'Nick Cave' in songs such as 'Hurt' and 'Into My Arms'. This carved a path for the way of singing that was demonstrated throughout most of the first song, the rock song, in the EP. Vocal harmonies expressed at the beginning of the song were inspired by the harmonies shown in the opening of the song 'Bohemian Rhapsody', by 'Queen'. After the introduction of the rock song, a more upbeat section begins. This is due to the entrance of a drum kit as well as a melodic driven electric guitar solo. The idea of the electric guitar solo taking over the song was adapted from the guitar solo that can be heard in the song 'Free Bird' by 'Lynyrd Skynyrd', and the drum pattern and sound gained inspiration from the highly acclaimed 'Back in Black', performed by the band 'ACDC'. Following this passage of music in the song, a change in vocal performance can be heard for a short duration. The low tone and pitch singing becomes a high pitched, rough vocal execution, with the idea of this stemming from similar vocal performances that can be noticed in songs like 'Sweet Child of Mine' by 'Guns and Roses', and 'Thunderstruck' by, once again, 'ACDC'. The guitar repetition heard at the end of the buildup to the outro in the song 'The Chain' by 'Fleetwood Mac' motivated a plan to adapt this idea and place it in the build up before the second electric guitar solo occurs, and then the high gain sound of that electric guitar being played in the solo was caused by a liking the guitar motif at the start of 'Iron Man' by 'Black Sabbath'. Finally, the reasoning for including a piano at the end of the rock song was to have a dominant instrument that led into the beginning of the pop song and featured heavily in it. Piano was chosen because of appreciation towards the piano performances in the songs 'Bohemian Rhapsody' by 'Queen' and 'Tiny Dancer' by 'Elton John'.

'5 Different Ways DJ's Can Mix Between Any Genre' YouTube video gave the idea to decrease the tempo slowly to transition, and also to use a low pass filter to introduce new sections so an original spin was put on the idea by removing the low end of the drums which pretty much completely filtered out the kick from the drum kit for the first two/four bars. This was achieved with automation. The kick was then introduced by returning the low end of drum kit again with automation on the EQ for when the bass is introduced.

The design of the pop song was greatly influenced by the piano at the end of the rock song, which became the fundamental instrument that was used within the instrumental, along with the drums. The purpose of the piano was to repeat a slow, descending chord pattern. This idea spawned from the descending motion of the piano on 'Dirty' by 'KSI' and also the bass guitar on the song 'Stairway to Heaven' by 'Led Zeppelin'. So therefore, the idea was adapted to a different instrument, being the piano. The reason that the piano was chosen to have a slow and somber expression was to replicate a sound that was heard in the song 'All of me' by 'John Legend'. After playing through many songs within the pop playlist on Spotify, it was understood that a large amount of the songs contains lyrics regarding romance, or love, so it was decided that this was the theme that should be stuck with when

writing the lyrics for the pop song. For reference, lyrics of the same sort can be heard in songs like, once again, 'All of me' by 'John Legend', 'Just the way you are', by 'Bruno Mars', and 'Until I found her' by 'Stephen Sanchez'. The effects on the vocals heard on 'Until I found her' also influenced the vocal sound on the pop song, where the aim was to recreate a sound with quite a strong reverb vibe, with a high decay. It needs to be mentioned that a big motivation for using a piano and especially vocals sung with a warm vibrato was the song 'Glimpse of us' by 'Joji'. The low formant vocal sample sounding chorus was inspired by the sample heard in 'One Dance' by 'Drake', which also repeats multiple times throughout that song. As the production of the pop song continued, an unexpected flow or structure was formulated in that the typical form of ABABCB was not being adapted but instead, just by chance, the song was naturally taking on the structure of a buildup and growing movement. It was decided to build on this and take inspiration from the song 'Fix You' by 'Coldplay', which follows a dynamic buildup idea also. The sawtooth bass from 'Blinding Lights' by 'The Weeknd' was used as a vision for the bass that can be heard entering right after the beginning of the pop song.

Once again, it was decided that a change in tempo was necessary in order to transition smoothly into the house song. Therefore, the tempo increased over two bars from 55bpm to 60bpm, as house songs are typically between 115bpm and 130bpm. Because of this, this common house trait of utilizing a kick drum hit on every beat was changed to having it on every half beat, giving an understanding that the house song is being produced with a tempo of 120bpm in mind, rather than 60bpm. The Spotify playlist 'HOUSE MUSIC 2026 (TOP 100)' made by 'UNCOMMON' and 'UNCMN' instigated a lot of the decision making within the house song. Sticking to the constant piano was due to the constant piano heard in the song 'Afraid To Feel' by 'LF SYSTEM'. The same sample used in the pop song was also used as the first vocals heard in the house song, allowing for a relatable moment between the two songs to promote the idea of consistency and flow amongst the two genres. It became clear that a lot of songs in the house genre heavily relied on the use of samples for vocals so a similar idea was done for the composition and production of the house song. Examples of sample-heavy house song that exist in the previously mentioned Spotify playlist include 'I Only Smoke When I Drink' by 'nimino', and 'if I could go back' by 'Drics' and 'Courtney Storm'. The same song, 'if I could go back' also formed the idea of slightly releasing cut off frequencies in the build up to a drop, which was imitated and occurs twice in the house song. Finally, the song 'Move' by 'Adam Port', 'Stryv', 'Keinemusik', 'Orso', and 'Malachiii', was the reasoning behind making the house song's overall vibe be quite chill as opposed to extremely heavy, heard in other songs in the playlist and it was also the reason for the use of the risers heard in the song.

Analysis

Referencing again the subject at hand earlier, being the decided order of placement for each of the songs in the EP and the similarities that certain genres share with others, what follows is a quick, detailed explanation of this: A big factor that is shared genetically in both rock and pop a lot of the time is catch hooks or melodies. Such can be heard, for example, in the opening guitar pattern of the song 'Sweet Child o' Mine' (rock) by 'Guns N' Roses', as well as the catchy hook of 'Uptown Funk' (pop) by 'Bruno Mars'. As stated above, these kinds of similarities were studied, in this circumstance, to decide upon the order of the EP, so not all these examples were used in the production process. Other examples include, as written in the methodology, instruments that correspond to each genre. For instance, the strong guitar heard in 'Back in Black' by 'ACDC', and the use of rock styled guitars in 'Since U Been Gone' by 'Kelly Clarkson'. There are many more comparable features between rock and pop like similar themes and mainstream popularity on radios etc. For pop and house, once again, numerous likenesses appeared. The 4/4 constant rhythm is one example. This can be heard in both the songs 'One More Time' by 'Daft Punk', as well as 'Cant Feel My Face' by 'The Weeknd'. Electronic production instead of mainly instrumental is a big feature of house music and also a lot of modern pop songs in particular, namely, 'Animals', from 'Martin Garrix', in addition to 'Blinding Lights' by 'The Weeknd', and 'Bad Guy' by 'Billie Eilish'. Catchiness and mainstream appeal also apply to house music, which meant that all three of the songs within the EP shared this trait, making it easier to come up with ideas for each song within the production stage of the project.

Being that acoustic guitar was the primary instrument at display in the rock song; it would be important to note some rock songs that contain this also. Famous mentions include 'Wish You Were Here' by 'Pink Floyd', 'Stairway to Heaven', by 'Led Zeppelin', as well as 'Hotel California' by 'Eagles'. The decision to contain more low-pitched vocals than not was due to lack of ability in reaching higher notes in the soprano region of singing so this idea was portrayed in each of the songs on the EP in different tones at times. The one high pitched area of the vocals in the rock song that was influenced, again, by 'Sweet Child of Mine' and 'Thunderstruck' took a lot of vocal strain to perform and required multiple takes to get a take of the appropriate quality necessary for the idea. The electric guitar solo in 'Freebird' was imitated in that an attempt was made to capture a similar 'Wah', wavy, bending sound.

The tempo changes for each song. First, the rock song is 80bpm, which then changes to 55bpm one bar before the pop song, which adds an effect that mimics the sound of something quickly rewinding, giving way for the entry of the pop song, and finally, the last two bars of the pop song feature a slow increase in tempo from 55bpm to 60bpm, or respectively, 120bpm, which was what was in mind when producing the house song. The third track then stays at 60bpm for the duration of the song.

As said in the methodology, the pop song, although it is its own song, does act as a build up idea after the rock song to make way for the drop of the house song and its 4/4 kick drum

rhythm. This was done by including a slow drum sample which was created from scratch and a certain emptiness to the song that allowed for a feeling of expectancy. Then, of course, the riser that leads into the house song provides a method for building into a new section as it uses its crescendo, growing nature to make the house song's first beat more impactful. The sawtooth bass, inspired by 'Blinding Lights' is also an example of the electronic production that was talked about previously, relating to both pop music and house music. When listening and studying songs in the house playlist that was found on Spotify, it appeared that in almost every song, not only did samples feature thoroughly, but also, if there was a singer on a track performing verses and choruses, they would usually have some effect, or technical/electronic effect on their voices, such as heavy autotune, rhythmic sidechaining, and vocal chops.

Further analysis will be mentioned and reviewed in the discussion section of this thesis, which follows. This will include more analysis relating to the results that were gathered from the survey after the EP production, mixing, and mastering was finished.

Discussion

To fully answer the research question, 'Can musical characteristics from Rock, Pop, and House be implemented into an EP to seamlessly transition through three tracks?' without any bias, it was important that a fair test was planned to collect the required results or in this case, the answer to the research question. Therefore, before the creative stage of the project, it was decided that a survey would be necessary in order to generate the outcome. Each question in the survey could be answered on a scale of one to five. The data that was collected from the survey was both positive and negative in relation to the initial goal that was set out to be completed.

The initial plan was to carry out the survey in this project mentor's class in IADT, where no members of the class were familiar with the project manager, to avoid any possible bias, but regrettably, the last stages of the production part of the project got delayed due to a lack of time remaining to complete the overall project without any pressure. Because of this, instead, the survey was sent out online through a Microsoft forms link to friends and family, however they were kindly informed to be as honest as possible with their answers and that any of the answers that they gave, no matter how positive or negative, would be helpful in order to answer the research question at hand. They were asked to listen to the audio file link within the survey and complete the survey within a maximum of one or two days at most if possible. Thankfully, the ten participants who took part in the survey complied with this request so there was no further stress in waiting for data to be collected to be reviewed.

The first inquiry in the survey posed the question, 'How confident are you in identifying different music genres generally?' This was thought to be an important question to ask before continuing further with the survey as it would determine whether any or all of the participants that took the survey had a natural capability to tell apart styles and genres in music. Of course, each respondent answered this question 'in their own opinion', but it was viewed as being the best possible way of making sure that the questions that followed would be as accurate and as factual as possible. Out of the ten respondents, the data showed that one person was not very confident in their ability to identify different music genres generally, four people sort of confident, three people were very confident, and two people were extremely confident. This showed that the majority of people were relatively confident in their ability to separate music genres from one another, which aided the cause of the following results.

It was favourable that nine out of ten of the participants gave either a score of very well or extremely well for how well they believed the three songs flowed overall. This was informative in that it meant that each of the songs were continuously produced well enough in a way that there was thought to be no unnecessary sections in any of the songs. When asked 'How much of the experience felt abrupt', once again, the majority of respondents answered 'None' or 'A little bit'. Looking back, this could have been planned and executed better in the production stage as it often felt as if there was a rush to get through mixing a

song to allow enough time to complete the next, but also, sources stated in the methodology and literature review of this thesis are now believed to be of big help when understanding how to transition through genres. Most people, being eighty percent answered that the quality of the music stayed very or extremely consistent throughout its entirety which again backed up the fact that the production of each song was given equal attention. Finally, the last question provided that the changes in style between the three tracks were 'a little' or 'quite noticeable', as all participants gave one of these two answers.

Overall, the survey process was thought to be a success, and as a summary, it is felt that few parts of the experience felt abrupt and the changes in style were mostly noticeable, however, the three tracks flowed very well. This explains that the initial aim was not completely met, because the transitions were not as seamless as they were set out to be, but the changes in song were not purely instant sounding either.

It is understood that the results from this survey mean that the answer to the research question, 'Can musical characteristics from Rock, Pop, and House be implemented into an EP to seamlessly transition through three tracks?', is no, because the transitions themselves were not totally seamless, but it is comforting to know that the work done on this project was not done without reason, as not every participant was able to identify the transitions immediately, and, although the reply to the research question is negative, it still establishes a definite answer, which is very constructive.

It would have been preferable for the survey to be held at the intended location and time, but it is thought that the method that was carried out was still appropriate.

The initial goals were definitely met when carrying out the different tasks included in this project. Extensive research was done on the music genres being investigated, along with research done on transitioning through these genres. The creation of the EP was created, a survey was successfully carried out and finally, this survey provided enough information to answer the research question and complete this thesis.

It is believed that this subject should be further studied as it could lead to a possible breakthrough for upcoming artists in that the knowledge gained from learning about similarities and differences between different music genres could promote more musicians to extend their creativity in the future.

The most surprising aspects of the knowledge gained when doing this project were probably just how many different factors can influence a piece of music in being a certain genre, as well as the large number of commonalities that different genres contain, whether that's to do with rhythmic patterns, instrumentation, mixing strategies etc.

Each process of this project was highly rewarding, but if any changes could be made, the main one would be to attempt to spend some time recording and producing in the studio for each of the songs on the EP.

Conclusion

This conclusion will include a quick summary of the aims and process of this major project and will also share thoughts on the findings and future after the project.

To state again, the aim of the project was to design a three song EP, each song a different genre, which focused on utilizing smooth transitions between each of the songs. This entire process as a whole was a very entertaining and interesting experience. The main thought that was constantly repeated through the process was that the project would not be a failure if the results of the survey that followed turned out to be negative as it would still answer the research question at hand, 'Can musical characteristics from Rock, Pop, and House be implemented into an EP to seamlessly transition through three tracks?' The survey results indicated that most people perceived the EP to be relatively consistent and believed that the transitions were smooth. These results can be understood and adapted in two different ways. Because the survey questions are opinion based, the majority results from the answers to the survey could be taken as not factual, but for the sake of determining an answer to the research question, the mixed outcome of the survey will be taken to mean that the answer to the research question is 'No'. Many skills were developed over the course of this project, both musical and non-musical, such as organization skills, risk management skills, project management skills, and the skill of working independently. A big concept that was taken away after all elements of the project were finished was that planning and dividing the time amongst the different areas and parts of the project efficiently, was crucial. Doing this allowed for a consistent, smooth workflow throughout the course of the project, without any panic or disruption arising. It is understood that the result of the project may have varied if specific circumstances were different, such as having more time to work on the project, or having access to better equipment for the producing stage of the project, however the outcome was satisfactory. If a similar or identical project idea was repeated in the future, it would be planned more specifically, every day, and there would most likely be a decision made to do a lot of the producing work in a studio, where more suitable equipment would be available, such as mics, a mixing desk, etc.

Abstract

This project aims to have a three song EP, which contains one rock, one pop, and one house song. The aim is for each transition from song to song to be as seamless as possible. This project was practice-based and provided insight into how different musical genres operate.

Appendices

Survey Questions & Results

- How confident are you in identifying different music genres generally?
 - 0% - Not at all
 - 10% - Not very confident
 - 40% - Sort of confident
 - 30% - Very confident
 - 20% - Extremely confident

- How well did the three songs flow overall? (Flow meaning: the balance between vocals and instrumentation)
 - 0% - Not at all
 - 0% - Not very well
 - 10% - Kind of well
 - 60% - Very well
 - 30% - Extremely Well

- How much of the experience felt abrupt?
 - 40% - None
 - 50% - A little bit
 - 10% - Some parts
 - 0% - A lot
 - 0% - All of it

- How consistent was the quality of the music in its entirety?
 - 0% - Not consistent at all
 - 0% - Not very consistent
 - 20% - Kind of consistent
 - 50% - Very consistent
 - 30% - Extremely consistent

- How noticeable, if at all, were the changes in style between the three songs?

0% - Not noticeable at all

40% - A little noticeable

60% - Quite noticeable

0% - Very noticeable

0% - Extremely noticeable

Bibliography

- Moore, Allan F. *Song means: Analysing and Interpreting Recorded Popular Song*. Taylor & Francis Group, 2012. <https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/iadt-ebooks/reader.action?docID=1108317&c=RVBVQg&ppg=1>.
- Everett, Walter. *The Foundations of Rock: From “Blue Suede Shoes” to “Suite: Judy Blue Eyes”*. Oxford University Press, 2009. <https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/iadt-ebooks/detail.action?docID=415883>.
- Butler, Mark J. *Unlocking the Groove: Rhythm, Meter, and Musical Design in Electronic Dance Music*. Indiana University Press, 2006. <https://www.scribd.com/doc/256825608/Unlocking-the-Groove>.
- Ferraro Andres, and Kjell Lemström. *On Large-Scale Genre Classification in Symbolically Encoded Music by Automatic Identification of Repeating Patterns*. 2019, Universitat Pompeu Fabra & University of Helsinki PDF, <https://repositori-api.upf.edu/api/core/bitstreams/4aef9065-3cec-4356-8d6f-3c0825e1a45b/content>.
- Fan, Tsai-Jyun, et al. “Timbre-Enhanced Multi-Modal Music Style Transfer with Domain balance Loss.” 2020, <https://people.cs.nycu.edu.tw/~walon/publications/fan2020taai.pdf>.
- Izhaki, Roey. *Mixing Audio: Concepts, Practices, and Tools*. 4th ed., Focal Press, 2023. http://orga.blog.unq.edu.ar/wp-content/uploads/sites/72/2019/09/Mixing.Audio_Concepts.Practices.And_Tools.pdf
- Borghuis, Tijn, Alessandro Tibo, Simone Conforti, Luca Cenciello, Lorenzo Brusci, and Paolo Frasconi. “Off the Beaten Track: Using Deep Learning to Interpolate Between Music Genres.” *arXiv*, 2018, arXiv:1804.09808. <https://arxiv.org/pdf/1804.09808>
- Katz, Bob. *Mastering Audio: The Art and the Science*. PDF file, fractales12.com, https://www.fractales12.com/pictures/mastering/Bob_Katz.pdf.
- “5 Different Ways DJs Can Mix Between Any Genre.” *YouTube*, uploaded by Crossfader, 23 Nov. 2023, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-guuK6_RbyA