

BA Creative Music Production,

Professional Project

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**How the Explanation of Process Effects Audience
Enjoyment**

April 27th, 2026

Dr. Brian Carty

Declaration

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Date:27/04/2026

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Abstract

This thesis studies investigate whether an explanation of the creative process affects audience enjoyment of a musical piece and whether how the explanation is presented has any effect. With some artists building their whole career around a veil of mystique, this thesis aims to illustrate that a deeper view into an artist's work can create a deeper connection to the artist and the piece of art they have created.

A mixed methodology approach was applied during this study involving an audio, video and in-person surveys. Participants across all three surveys were given the same song and asked a range of questions. Three songs were produced to form an EP and then the song with the richest historical and cultural background was chosen, this was done to enhance the talking points of creative process.

The findings showed that there was an increase in audience perception after receiving information about the creative process and there was an even bigger increase when comparing audience perception between the video and in-person survey indicating that in person is a superior way to convey this sort of information.

Introduction

This thesis examines how introducing listeners to the production techniques behind a musical piece can affect the listener's enjoyment of the piece and investigates how different mediums of conveying that information and how that influences their appreciation.

With artists and producers trying to achieve a greater connection to their audiences, this thesis aims to demonstrate the benefit of introducing the listeners to the creative process which is usually kept hidden from audiences. Web series like Genius's "Deconstructed" where producers break down their biggest tracks or Tracklib's "Sample Breakdown" where they show what samples producers used and how they were utilised in the song, both of these web series have explored the idea of producers breaking down their most well-known tracks, yet relatively little academic research has been undertaken on this subject, especially within the musical field.

This thesis aims to highlight the potential opportunities artists and producers currently overlook by not engaging with their audiences through their creative process and further aims to promote an open discourse between creatives and their listeners.

Literature Review

Origins of Sampling

This section establishes the basic history of sampling and its core techniques in the genre. With a rich history, sampling in the way we know it, now can trace its origins to the Bronx in New York during the early 1970s. In 1973 Jamaican DJ Kool Herc is credited with pioneering the early style of sampling, which involved rewinding the beat-heavy percussion portion of R&B songs. DJ Grandmaster Flash perfected the art of mixing familiar R&B records, allowing locals to rap continually over the multiple songs.

Scratching records is the process of rotating the vinyl back and forth against the stylist. This was accidentally discovered by DJ Grand Wizard Theodore in 1975. Afrika Bambaataa broadened the sonic palette, introducing early electronic instruments such as the drum machine and synthesizers and integrating a wider array of global sounds. "Thus, hip hop music gained its distinctiveness by building on previously recorded songs; that is, by sampling. Much akin to visual collages, sampling is viewed within the hip hop community as a musical tapestry."¹

The 1970s is historically viewed as the manual manipulation era, however due to technological advances, the 1980s would have a vastly different outlook. Run DMC's first song "It's like that" was made with an Oberheim DMX drum machine. While not a traditional sampling machine it shows the early use of digital hardware in this genre. The main switch came in 1988, after the release of the Akai MPC 60. In the same year Public Enemy released their album "It Takes a Million to Hold Us Back" with famous production from the Bomb Squad. The number of samples used in this album is unknown but is estimated to be within the thousands.

In 1993, Wu-Tang Clan released “Enter the Wu-Tang (36 Chambers)” which was another pivotal moment for sampling. RZA, the producer of the group, popularised the method of looping a melody and drums while also using other production techniques like harsh compression. This sound of gritty lo-fi aesthetics and chopped soul samples would go on to define the sound of the early- to mid-1990s.

Throughout the mid to late 90s the genre saw a massive influx of producers and techniques as sampling began to define to genres of house and rap music. This led to multiple producers creating names for themselves with their own production styles. A good example being J Dilla, who used micro chopping combined with heavily swung drums to create some of the most iconic underground rap beats of the time. In house music, Armand Van Helden was using unique loops to their fullest extent with his work on the Tori Amos “Professional Window” remix.

Throughout the 2000s, to present day, many other producers and techniques are being invented and improved upon, leading to today where sampling has leaked into almost every genre and is one of the most popular styles of producing in today's music landscape.

Sampling Law

When discussing the legal situation in Ireland, as it relates to music sampling, there are four main examples we must look at: Section 17, Section 37, Section 43 and Section 50 “Fair Dealings” of the Copyright and Related Rights Act 2000.

Section 17 states “*copyright is a property right*” meaning creators reserve the right to authorise certain activities in relation to their work. This section also establishes what falls under copyright law within Ireland: “*Copyright subsists, in accordance with this Act, in — **original literary, dramatic, musical or artistic works, sound recordings, films, broadcasts or cable programmes***”. This affects music sampling in two different areas of copyright, composition and master recordings, as these fall under two separate sections of copyright law.

Section 37 details the copyright owners' legal rights as to how they wish to manage their

work. The owner can authorise others “to copy the work; to make available to the public the work; to make an adaptation of the work or to undertake either of the acts referred to in paragraph (a) or (b) in relation to an adaptation,”. Both “copy the work” and “to make an adaptation of the work” apply in the case of this project, as every sample used can be seen as a copy, and every sample chopped or manipulated can be seen as an adaptation. Also referenced is the “substantial part” rule which applies as there is no direct amount of work required for it to be classed as a “substantial part”.

Section 43 links back to Section 37, specially referring to the definition of adaptation.

This section states, “Without prejudice to the generality of section 37 (1)(C), in this Part, “adaptation” in relation to— a literary or dramatic work, film, sound recording, broadcast, cable programme or typographical arrangement of a published edition,

includes-

(i) a translation, arrangement or other alteration of the work,

(ii) a version of a dramatic work which is converted into a non-dramatic work or the conversion of a non-dramatic work into a dramatic

work, and

(iii) a version of a work in which the story or action is conveyed wholly or mainly by means of pictures in a form suitable for reproduction;”. This links back to sampling being seen as a adaptation of musical works and thus protected by copyright law, “a musical work, includes a translation, arrangement or other alteration or transcription of the work;”

Finally, in Section 50 “Fair Dealings”, exceptions to copyright infringements are discussed: “Fair dealing with a literary, dramatic, musical or artistic work, sound recording, film, broadcast, cable programme, or non-electronic original database, for

the purposes of research or private study, shall not infringe any copyright in the work.”

This section clearly applies to this thesis, as the thesis consists of a musical work, used for the purposes of research and will not be posted publicly on streaming platforms, also no financial gain will be made from any of the songs produced for this project.

Cultural Perceptions and Controversies around Sampling

Sampling is seen as “controversial” by some in the music industry, as there is a belief that it can be lazy or seen as stealing. This has led to major moments within music history regarding sampling law and has damped some of the allure around it. In 1991 Biz Markie released his third album “I need a Haircut” which featured the song “alone again”. In this song Markie samples Gilbert O'Sullivan's “Alone Again (naturally)” and had asked for permission to use it, which is called a clearance or a license. The clearance was not granted, and Markie released the song despite this. “This firm represents a recording artist professionally known as Biz Markie, who has recorded a composition for Cold Chillin’ Records entitled “Alone Again” which incorporates portions of the composition entitled “Alone Again Naturally” originally recorded by Gilbert O’Sullivan (the “Original Composition”). Biz Markie would like to obtain your consent to the use of the “Original Composition.”²

These decisions led to law being changed to where the artist had to get clearance over the original songwriter before being allowed to release their song. The music style of bands like Public Enemy and the Bomb Squads was destroyed overnight. Having to clear 13 samples for 1 song became unprofitable. Artists would sometimes request 100% of the royalties in exchange for the use of a sample. Pitchfork, one of the largest music publications wrote “Overnight it became forbiddingly difficult and expensive to incorporate even a handful of samples into a new beat ... Producers scaled back their

creations, often augmenting one choice groove with a bevy of instrumental embellishments."

Another famous case of sampling is that of The Verve's use of "The Last Time" by the Rolling Stones, in their song "Bittersweet Symphony". Allan Klein, who owned the publishing to the song, hated sampling and only allowed the song to be released if Mick Jagger and Keith Richards got songwriting credits. Klein also insisted he got the rights to the compositions. This would go on to haunt the band who essentially had no creative control on how their song was used, while Klein accepted most offers that came to him such as allowing the song to be used in the Nike commercial "I can" that premiered during the Superbowl. The band, having no control was paid \$175,000 for the ad, and decided to donate it to charity instead.

These two cases show major flaws in sampling laws, as the world of licensing and original ownership is a confusing one, especially in the case of The Verve. The loss of their publishing rights damaged them financially and cheapened the meaning of their song, as it could be now used in any manner without their permission. It is very important in music publishing that correct credit is given out and artist are fairly compensated for their work. However, artists who use samples should also be assured they are financially compensated fairly.

In 'Sampling, Looping and Mashing' - Tonya Evans states "...copyright law is not only inadequate to honour its goal to promote innovation and creativity but in fact thwarts the very advancement and valuable social benefits of robust creativity and innovation born out of a creative genre like hip hop. Accordingly, Congress should act swiftly to provide clear guidance on how courts and the industry should address concerns raised by sampling and reform music copyright to require all courts to apply traditional analyses of substantial similarity and de minimis use."

Comparing Video-Based and In-Person Learning

Video Based Learning is learning that is facilitated by video. In the case of this thesis, a video essay will be created to enhance the music that is being showcased as part of one online survey. As media advances, people trust sites such as YouTube, to provide educational videos that are accurate. For example, 62% of Germans use YouTube either occasionally or frequently as a search engine, this shows a growing interest in video form learning. However, in saying this some videos can be hampered by their poor narrative ability and the ability to engage an audience within the topic. This can lead to clickbait or misinformation for the sake of engagement. It is harder to keep a person's attention when they're not Infront of you as you have no real way to gage their interest in the topic.

In face-to-face learning, it's a lot easier to see if your audience is engaged in the topic as you can view their reactions in the moment. The main gripe with in-person learning is that it can be a lot more inconvenient for the audience. You will usually have to leave and go somewhere in order to view the lecture or talk whereas with video you can view it anywhere. Although this can also be seen as a benefit for face-to-face learning as you are more likely to be engaged with a topic if you're not in the comfort of your own home.

The consensus is that where possible students prefer in-person learning compared to online. In the study "In-Person Versus Online Learning About Students' Perception" Islam Mohammed Alhassan asked 65 female students which they preferred. 52.6% of the students preferred in-person learning over online learning, and 41% of the students agreed that some teaching activities could only suit in-person learning

Implications for Audience Understanding and Reception

Audience perception of art is something that has puzzled artist for years. It's something that is hard to quantify as art itself is hard to quantify. In this thesis, understanding how audiences connect with and interpret music is important, because it can show which

type of explanation—online or in-person—works better. It also has practical value for other artists, showing whether explaining their creative process can help audiences really get the story or message behind their work.

In the study “How does Information about Creative Process Affect Audience Appreciation of Artwork?” by Takumitsu Agata and Takeshi Okada, the two professors monitored thirteen pairs of graduates and undergraduate students. These students were shown an art exhibition with their conversations recorded. They were also shown a process exhibit that helped explain the artist's creative process. Students spent on average 48.3 minutes viewing the art exhibition and 26.8 minutes viewing the process exhibition. The students were asked if their views had changed after learning about the creative process behind the art. On a scale of 1 being not changed and 5 being changed, the average score was 3.81, with 81% of students saying it had changed their view on the piece.

The results of this study show that when information is shared to the audience about the creative process, it has an overall positive effect on their appreciation for the art. They were also able to relate the art to their own personal life experiences after understanding the artists own creative process. This allowed them to see the artists process as similar to their own, which allowed them to increase their appreciation for the artist's work. In the context of this thesis, this study backs the idea that showing not only an artist art, but also their creative process in a relatable way will increase the audiences understating and appreciation of the art. Once an artist can be perceived as relatable, it can help demystify the allure that may surround them and their art. In some cases, it may be beneficial to have a mystifying aura based around your art, but this can lead to a disconnect between you and your audience and may not be sustainable long term.

Methodology

This thesis employs a mixed method design, combining sample-based production alongside listening, viewing and in-person surveys. The aim of this study is to quantify audience enjoyment of a musical piece after receiving information based on its production, and to determine whether the listeners' appreciation of the work increases or decreases depending on how the information is provided.

Three songs were created using only samples. All songs fit within the house genre and used samples from various genres. After creating all three songs, one song was selected to be used for the surveys as the elements within the piece had the most interesting cultural background and history. This allowed for the video essay and in-person talks to have more historical context.

In the surveys distributed to participants both qualitative and quantitative data were collected. Qualitative data refers to the subjective feedback provided by participants of the surveys based on the quality of the musical piece supplied within the surveys, while quantitative data refers to age ranges and levels of production skill.

This method was adopted to ensure a balanced and nuanced approach to this study and to have the most comprehensive results.

Production process

Party Time

The main musical piece used for the three surveys was built only using samples. Five individual samples were used across the song, and no instrumentation was added by any person. The samples were manipulated through multiple production techniques to acquire the desired sound.

The first sample found and what became the main hook of the track was Nu Style (Mandragora Autumnalis remix). Released in 1991 by production duo Robert Arduini and Ciro Pagano, to Italian dance label Time Records. This fast-paced euro dance track was found using samplette.io, an online webpage which allows users to filter through YouTube videos to find samples. For the track, the opening twelve bars of the sample were taken and looped throughout the first section of the musical piece.

Due to the sample having both melodic element and bass elements, the track was duplicated and a heavy EQ was applied to separate the bass from the piano sections within the sample. Everything above two hundred hertz was removed and everything below forty hertz was removed in the bass section, also a limiter was added to boost the gain by two db.

On the main section of the new style track three EQs were added one removing everything below two-hundred hertz another reducing frequencies that clash with other elements within the track and one removing some high-end frequencies that were causing hissing in the track. OTT a multi-band compressor, was added boosting the highs and the mids while completely removing the lows. After this a volume sidechain was added which only affected everything below 350 hertz, then finally, a limiter was added to compression sidechain the piano section of the song to the drums, the same sidechain was also applied to the bass as well.

The drums were sampled from HQ by Master H, a four-bar section of the intro was taken and was looped throughout the track. The sample was found using samplette.io. Compression was added with the threshold of minus twelve dB, a ratio of 7.5/1, a gain of plus nine, an attack of ten milliseconds and a release of two-hundred milliseconds. Next two EQs were added one removing everything below forty hertz and the other reducing frequencies that clashed with other elements of the song.

The vocals sampled were from Tonight Its Party Time by Outta Control. This sample again was found using samplette.io. A two-bar section of the track was sampled and was looped in various sections of first half of the song. A ping-pong delay was added with the timing set to four, then a reverb with everything below three hundred hertz removed, followed by two EQs with one removing everything below one hundred hertz and the other reducing frequencies that were clashing with other elements of the mix. Finally, a limiter was added to compression sidechain the vocals. The vocals were also slowed down to 90 bpm and chopped slightly on the outro section of the track.

For the break section a vocal from **ចាំនៅតែចាំ** (Still Remember) by Ros Sereysothea was used, the vocals were stem separated from the rest of the track and processed with a reverb, ping-pong delay with the timing set to three, two EQs, one removing everything below 200 hertz and removing everything above ten-thousand hertz, the other EQ removed some harsh frequencies that were causing hissing and also reduced some high and low frequency's. Also, a Shaperbox automation was added on the first bar which chopped the vocal rhythmically.

The same sample was also used on the outro section with a different section of the track being used. It was stem separated again, isolating just the vocals. Through Serato Sample, the vocals were chopped to match the rhythm of the other elements of the outro section. Then two EQs were applied with one removing everything below 200 hertz and anything over ten-thousand hertz and the other EQ reducing about six dB from 5000 hertz. A reverb with all the low-end removed was added along with a ping-pong delay with the timing set to two. And finally, a limiter was added to gain stage the sample, with eighteen Db being added.

The final sample added was “Better in the Dark” by Jordanna and Tv Girl. Very little processing was added, only a limiter to stop clipping and a Shaperbox automation which was applied every four bars, the Shaperbox rhythmically chopped the sample.

Audio-Based Survey

The first survey centred on a track within the house music genre, produced solely through sampling-based techniques. Participants were asked their age range, how

frequently they listened to music and their experiences with music production techniques. Next participants were asked if they were aware of sampling and their definition of sampling within music production. Participants were then asked to engage in a listening test where the full song was played. Finally, participants were asked if they felt the song was professional and would not sound out of place within its genre.

In-Person survey

The second survey conducted, was the in-person survey. Two different sets of participants were asked to listen to a talk breaking down the history and background of the samples used within the piece and the production techniques used. They were then given an online survey to fill out after the talk had finished. Participants were asked if they were aware of sampling before the talk and if this track sounded professional within its genre. Then they were asked if the explanation of the artist's creative process added to their enjoyment of the musical piece and if their knowledge of sampling improved. Finally, participants were asked their opinion on artists sharing their creative process and if they had any other comments they wished to make based on the survey.

Video-Based survey

In the final survey, participants were asked their age range, how often they listen to music and their experience level when it comes to music production. Then participants were asked to view a video essay on the history and background of the samples used within the production of the musical piece and the production techniques used. After completing the participants were asked if they were aware of sampling prior to the talk and if the track sounded professional within its genre. Next, participants were asked if their enjoyment of the track improved and if their understanding of sampling improved. Finally, participants were asked their opinion on if artists should explain their process to gain a deeper connection to their audience and if they have any other comments relating to the survey.

Listener Feedback

For the audio-based survey general listeners of music were asked to participate with very little knowledge of music production and some intermediate producers were asked to participate.

For the in-person based survey first year creative music production students were asked to participate with an intermediate level of understanding of music production were asked to participate in the study.

For the video-based survey a mix of general listeners of music, intermediate producers, and professional producers were surveyed.

All surveys were created using Microsoft forms and were analysed using Microsoft Excel.

Credibility

To have reliable and consistent results across all surveys used within this study, three measures were taken

- Using the same song through the three surveys
- Ensuring the video length and the in-person talk length be as similar as possible
- Not allowing the same participants to take part in more than one survey

Ethics

All participants who took part in any survey were required to agree to an ethics form if they wished to participate in the study. Within this consent form it stated that participants could withdraw from the study at any time. No personal data was collected from participants and all data used was solely used for research purposes.

Analysis

Audio Survey Analysis

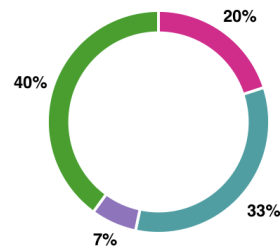
This survey consisted of 17 participants who were asked to complete a listening review of a track which solely used sampled-based production techniques, they were asked about their age range, their knowledge of sampling, production experience, how frequently they listened to music and if they believed the track shown was of a professional standard for its genre.

Participants' Age Range

2. What is your age range?

[More details](#)

● Under 18	0
● 18-24	3
● 25-34	5
● 35-44	1
● 45+	6

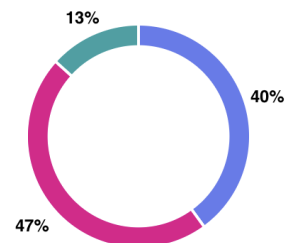


Frequency of Music Consumption

3. How often do you listen to music?

[More details](#)

● Very frequently	6
● Frequently	7
● Occasionally	2
● Rarely	0
● Never	0

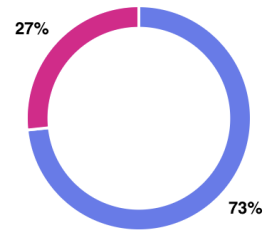


Level of Experience with Music Production

4. What level of experience do you have with music production techniques?

[More details](#)

● None	11
● Intermediate	4
● Professional	0

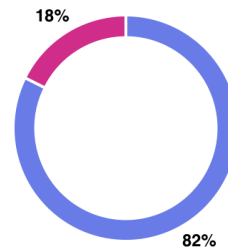


Were participants aware of sampling

5. Are you aware of sampling?

[More details](#)

● Yes	14
● No	3

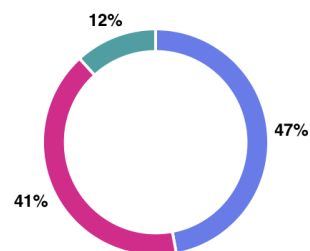


Do Participants believe the track sounded professional within its genre

7. This track sounds professional and I think it would not be out of place in a streaming playlist within its genre.

[More details](#)

● Strongly Agree	8
● Agree	7
● Neutral	2
● Disagree	0
● Strongly disagree	0



Participants were also asked what their understanding of sampling was and if they could supply their own definition of what they understood it to be. This was carried out through text and results will be discussed further in the discussion part of my study.

In-Person Survey

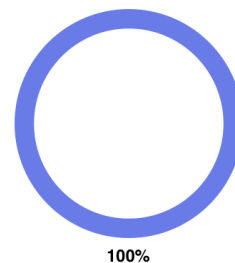
This survey consisted of 12 participants split across two separate groups of first-year Creative Music Production students. One group had nine participants and while the other had three. Both groups received the same information; however, both talks differed in length as talk one had a length of thirteen minutes and thirty-nine seconds while talk two had a length of eighteen minutes and twenty-one seconds. Both groups received information on the samples history and background and were also given the production techniques that were used within the piece. Once the talk was completed participants were asked to fill out a survey, they were asked about their knowledge of sampling prior to the talk, if they believed the track sounded professional within its genre, if the explanation of the artistic process added to their enjoyment of the piece and if their knowledge of sampling had improved.

Where participants aware of sampling prior to the talk

2. Were you aware of sampling before this talk ?

[More details](#)

● Yes 12
● No 0



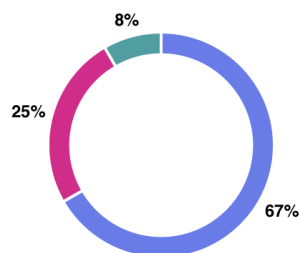
Do Participants believe the track sounded professional within its genre

3. Please respond to this statement –

This track sounds professional and I think it would not be out of place in a streaming playlist within its genre.

[More details](#)

● Strongly agree	8
● Agree	3
● Neutral	1
● Disagree	0
● Strongly disagree	0



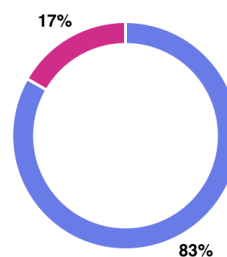
Did the participants find the explanation of the creative process improved their enjoyment

4. Please respond to this statement –

The explanation of the artistic process added to my enjoyment of the track ?

[More details](#)

● Strongly agree	10
● Agree	2
● Neutral	0
● Disagree	0
● Strongly disagree	0



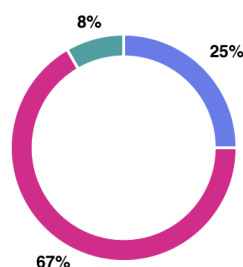
Did participants understanding of sampling improve

5. Please respond to this statement –

My understanding of sampling improved.

[More details](#)

● Strongly agree	3
● Agree	8
● Neutral	1
● Disagree	0
● Strongly disagree	0



Participants were also asked their personal opinions on if artist should reveal more of their creative process to their audience and if they had any other comments about the survey and the talk. Both of these will be discussed in the discussion section of my study.

Video Essay Survey

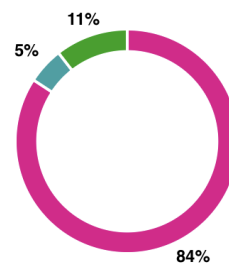
This survey consisted of 19 participants of a mixed background regarding music production. Participants were asked to watch a video roughly the same length as the in-person talk and complete questions based on their viewing. Participants were asked their age range, the frequency with which they listened to music, their experience with music production techniques, if they were aware of sampling prior to watching the video, if they believed the track sounded professional within its genre, if the explanation of the creative process improved their enjoyment and if their understanding of sampling within music improved.

Participants Age Range

2. What is your age range?

[More details](#)

● Under 18	0
● 18-24	16
● 25-34	1
● 35-44	0
● 45+	2

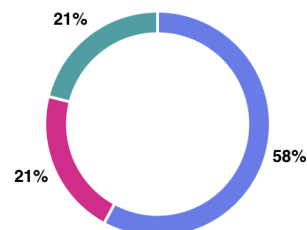


Frequency of Music Consumption

3. How often do you listen to music?

[More details](#)

● Very Frequently	11
● Frequently	4
● Occasionally	4
● Rarely	0
● Never	0

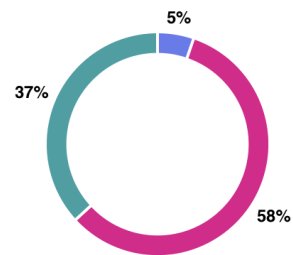


Level of Experience with Music Production

4. What level of experience do you have with music production techniques?

[More details](#)

Professional	1
Intermediate	11
None	7

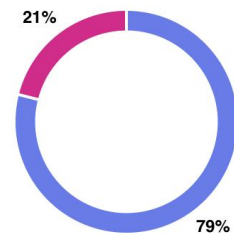


Where participants aware of sampling prior to watching the video

5. Were you aware of sampling before this video ?

[More details](#)

Yes	15
No	4



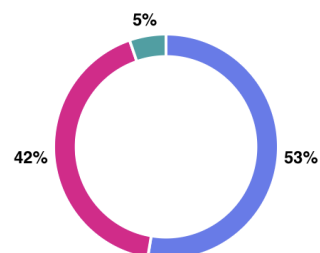
Do Participants believe the track sounded professional within its genre

6. Please respond to this statement –

This track sounds professional and I think it would not be out of place in a streaming playlist within its genre.

[More details](#)

Strongly Agree	10
Agree	8
Natural	1
Disagree	0
Strongly Disagree	0



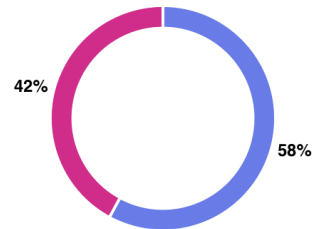
Did the participants find the explanation of the creative process improved their enjoyment

7. Please respond to this statement –

The explanation of the artistic process added to my enjoyment of the track ?

[More details](#)

● Strongly Agree	11
● Agree	8
● Neutral	0
● Disagree	0
● Strongly Disagree	0



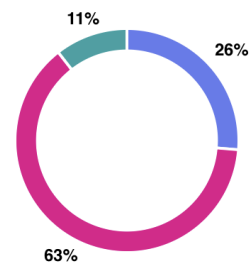
Did participants understanding of sampling improve

8. Please respond to this statement –

My understanding of sampling improved.

[More details](#)

● Strongly Agree	5
● Agree	12
● Neutral	2
● Disagree	0
● Strongly disagree	0



Participants were also asked in the personal opinion if believe artists should explain their process so the artist can have a deeper connection with the audience and if they have any other comments based on the video and the survey. Both of these will be expanded upon in the discussion section of my study.

Analysis of Audience's Perception of Track's Professionalism

Across the three surveys, each group of participants was asked if they believed the track provided in the surveys sounded to a professional standard within its genre. Participants in the audio survey were asked this question after they had completed the listening review, while participants of the video and in-person survey were asked after they had completed the talk and the video provided in the survey. Overall, 48 participants were asked this question across the three separate groups and results varied in each group.

Rating	Audio Survey	In-Person Survey	Video Survey
Strongly agree	47% (8)	67% (8)	53% (10)
Agree	41% (7)	25% (3)	42% (8)
Neutral	12% (2)	8% (1)	5% (1)
Disagree	0%	0%	0%
Strongly disagree	0%	0%	0%

Analysis of Enjoyment of the Musical Piece after Receiving Information on the Sample History and Production Techniques

In both the video survey and the in-person survey, thirty-one participants were asked if they believed their enjoyment of the track had improved after receiving information on the production techniques used, and the history behind the samples selected for the musical piece. Participants who featured in the audio only survey were not asked this in their survey as they did not receive any information on the production techniques used.

Rating	In-Person Survey	Video Survey
Strongly agree	83% (10)	58% (11)
Agree	17% (2)	42% (8)
Neutral	0%	0%
Disagree	0%	0%
Strongly disagree	0%	0%

Analysis of Participants' Knowledge of Sampling Improving After Receiving Information on the Production Process

In both the video survey and the in-person survey, participants were asked if their knowledge of sampling improved after receiving information about the creative and production processes presented in both surveys. Participants of the audio survey were not asked as they received no information on the production process.

Rating	In-Person Survey	Video Survey
Strongly agree	25% (3)	26% (5)
Agree	67% (8)	63% (12)
Neutral	8% (1)	11% (2)
Disagree	0%	0%
Strongly disagree	0%	0%

Discussion

Introduction

This section will delve deeper into the findings within my analysis and will compare the results across the three surveys. The results will be examined and linked back to other studies talked about within the literary review, these will then be used to address the study's research question "How the Explanation of Process Affects the Audience Enjoyment" and reinforce the study's findings. The limitations within this study will also be acknowledged.

Interpretation of tracks perceived professionalism

The only question to be asked across all three surveys gives the widest range of results to examine. Looking at the audio-based survey 88% of participants agreed the song sounded professional, for the in-person based survey 92% of participants agreed it sounded professional, while in the video survey 95% of participants believed it sounded professional. Every participant across any of the three surveys believed it did sound professional. The in-person survey had the largest amount of Strongly agrees towards this question with 67%, while the audio-based survey had the lowest with 47%, it also had the greatest number of neutral responses with 12%. This aligns with the study by Takumitsu Agata and Takeshi Okada, which showed that explaining the creative process will on average improve the audience's level of appreciation of the work.

Within the interview with Takumitsu Agata, he was asked, "Do you think understating the creative process changes how people judge quality?", he responded " I believe that judgments of quality also change. Unlike popular music, in contemporary art, some viewers may find themselves unable to determine how to approach a work when they encounter it without any contextual information. Such viewers are unlikely to evaluate the work highly. However, once they learn about the process and come to understand the elements that have been carefully refined within the work, they can recognize its creativity and interesting qualities. Therefore, in many cases, this leads to

a higher evaluation of the work.” This study furthers this claim as, although the piece shown was not a contemporary piece of art, the complexities of music production are often unknown to the average person. Exploring these techniques will expand someone's appreciation of the work, as they see how much effort goes into the production of a piece that is only two minutes and thirty-six seconds long.

Interpretation of the Enjoyment Improving After Hearing the Creative Process

The comparison between the response from the in-person survey and the video survey was sizeable. 83% of participants strongly agreed that it had improved their enjoyment, while only 58% of the video essay participants strongly agreed that it improved their enjoyment. This would corroborate Islam Mohammed Alhassan’s study, which found students prefer in-person learning when given the choice between online or in-person but also furthers it.

The in-person section of the methodology had the least number of participants, but the people who did show up were the most engaged and were there as they wanted to know more about the subject. When a survey is sent out online, it can be easy to coast through it and not pay full attention, but when participants have dedicated time out of their day to sit down and listen to someone talk about something they are passionate about, it is more likely that listeners would show a greater appreciation of their work.

Additionally, with the video survey, the average time taken to complete the survey was only eight minutes and thirty-seven seconds while the video itself was over ten minutes, indicating that the participants did not watch the video all the way through, which would be another reason that in-person discussion makes for a more efficient way of communicating, as in both talks no participant left until the talk was concluded.

Interpretation of Improvements in Participant Sample Knowledge

The results for these surveys are essentially the same with the video survey having 26% in strongly agree and the in-person having 25%. There could be a few reasons for this, one explanation could be that the in-person survey participants were already aware of

sampling techniques as they were creative music production first year students and would have prior knowledge of the techniques. For the video essay participants may have felt the video did not illustrate the techniques well enough, which led to fewer strongly agree responses compared to the other surveys issued.

The majority of participants did say that their sampling knowledge slightly improved, which is a benefit to the study hypothesis. If the study were to be redone, this would be a section which is revisited and potentially changed as to have non-music production students surveyed to see if the results would differ.

Interpretation on Participants' Opinion Whether Artist Should Explain Their Creative Process

In the video and in-person surveys participants were asked if they felt artists should explain their creative process, overall, the sentiment seemed to suggest that they did agree that artists should share their creative process with the audience. One person in the in-person survey stated, "Yes going through the creative process definitely makes me appreciate the song much more", while another in the video essay survey stated, "I agree that to increase connection and artist should explain their process. Getting a peek behind the curtain really helps understand why decisions were made, and as a result, I as a listener gain more respect for the process and the final result as a whole." A minority of people did disagree and felt that the mystique of the creative process added to their enjoyment of a piece of art, while understanding this point of view, the findings within this study challenge this idea.

In the interview with Takumitsu Agata, he was posed this question "Some people argue that explaining the creative process removes the mystique from artistic work, did you find any evidence of this?" he responded "We did not obtain any particular evidence supporting this claim. From a personal perspective, I would argue that if a work loses its sense of mystery simply by having its creative process explained in words, it may not be a work of particularly high value. The true mystery of artistic creation resides rather in those aspects that cannot be fully explained even by the artist. What we were able to describe as the creative process in this study was primarily the consciously and

verbally articulated aspects of the artist's thinking, especially those related to the development of the work's concept. While such information provides a useful perspective for viewing the work, it does not, of course, allow one to fully grasp all of its appeal. Although I do not deny that there are works or elements that may feel more engaging when their mystery is preserved, I believe that truly outstanding works do not lose their appeal even when such processes are explained."

Production process for the other musical pieces

Make Me Wanna Cry

The song revolves around a sample from Faye Webster's track titled "In A Good Way" and takes multiple elements from throughout the song. No instrumentation was added, but samples were manipulated to fit the desired sound.

For the main samples four separate loops were taken and placed throughout the song, with little chopping or editing done in the verse sections, but some minor editing to quantise the track so everything was on time. For the drop section the sample was chopped quite heavily at the end of every bar, to add a more upbeat feel to the song. The main element of the sample was processed with a compression side chain connected to the kick, a ping-pong delay and reverb with some frequency lowered. Two EQs, one removing everything below one hundred and twenty hertz and the other reducing harsh frequencies at ten thousand hertz by six db. Finally, a low pass filter was added in the intro section on an automation for one bar.

Similar to the previous song the main sample was duplicated, and the bass was removed and placed onto a separate mixer track. On the bass, an EQ was added removing all frequencies above one-hundred and fifty hertz, and everything below twenty hertz. Next, an R Bass stereo was added, this plugin adds harmonics to the bass sample to make it seem fuller. Finally, a limiter was added, reducing the bass by three db and side chaining the bass to the kick.

For the drums both samples were taken from splice and have no processing on them as they already fit the desired sound. All riser and effects were also taken from splice and didn't require any processing.

This sampling style would be most similar to J Dilla's micro chopping mentioned in the literary review.

Madness

The final musical piece made was built around five separate samples ranging from multiple different genres. Some instrumentation was added within the bass section, that will be expanded upon in the breakdown of its production process. Multiple samples were manipulated to achieve the desired sound.

The main sample used within the first section of the song is "American" by Dalida, taking a two-bar string section from roughly two minutes and twenty seconds into the song. This is looped throughout the main drop section of the song. The processing on this sample consisted of two EQs one removing everything above twelve-thousand and six-hundred hertz and everything below one-hundred and fifty hertz, while the other EQ removed four dB from the mids targeting around seven-hundred hertz. Next a limiter was added boosting the sample by three db, a volume automated sidechain was added which only applied to the sample when the drums were being played. OTT was added boosting the highs and the mids, while removing all the lows. Finally, a low pass filter was added to the build-up section of the track and was automated to decrease as the sample got closer to the drop.

For the bass the notes from the sample were taken and applied to a serum patch, this can be seen as an interpretation of the sample. On the bass, a limiter was added boosting the gain by one point five dB, a volume sidechain was added along with R Bass stereo. Then two EQs, one heavily reducing frequencies around one-thousand hertz to three thousand hertz, while the other removed everything below forty hertz.

The vocals, that can be heard throughout the song are taken from “Top Billin” by Audio Two and appears at one minute and three seconds into the song. The sample was brought into Serato Sample and was chopped rhythmically. On the sample, a limiter was added with the gain boosted by eight db, next two EQs were added one removing harsh frequencies in the highs while the other removed below two hundred hertz and everything above ten thousand hertz. A ping-pong delay and a reverb were also added. The vocal you can hear at the start of the song comes from the intro of “Boy Better Know” song “Too Many Man”.

The drums in the main section were taken from a sample CD from the 90s called “Best Service - House Definition VOL-1” and only has an EQ applied which is removing frequencies that clash with other elements of the song.

On the breakdown section the drums are sampled from another sample CD from the 90s named “Best Service - Dance Mega Jungle Rave”. The sample is chopped every two bars and Shaperbox automation is also added every two bars. A limiter is applied reducing the ceiling by minus two db. And finally, a compressor is added with the same setting as the drums in “Party Time”.

The sample used on the outro section of the song is “Tezeta (Nostalgia)” by Mulatu Astatke. There is very little processing added but a ping-pong delay and reverb were applied, along with a volume automation.

This sampling style would be most like “RZA style of looping”, mentioned in the literary review.

Limitations

The smaller sample size of the in-person lecture could have a potential effect on the results; however, given the increases in percentages compared to the other surveys, it would be hard to argue that the in-person didn't have a better impact on the participants.

The video essay potentially could've had more information to do with the samples and having dived deeper in their background, and the quality of the video overall may have had an impact on the participants' reception to the questions.

The age range of the audio-based survey may have altered the perceived professionalism, as older people tend to not enjoy house music as much on average, in comparison to the younger generation.

Conclusion

Findings

This study was made to find out if audiences appreciate work more knowing the creative process behind a sample-based house song, using a mixed method approach combining viewing, listening and in-person surveys.

The findings across the three surveys support the idea that it will increase audience enjoyment of the track and increase its perceived quality from the audience. The audience will also enjoy the song more after having the creative process explain to them, this in turn this will allow the audience to have a deeper connection to the art.

The findings also support the idea that in-person teaching is superior to video teaching in terms of engagement and enjoyment. However, both ways of teaching receiving no explanation at all.

Final Conclusion

Audiences will respond more positively to a musical piece if an explanation of its creative process is provided. The notion that great art is not supposed to be explained is

an outdated taboo. Explaining the techniques used to produce any art should not take away from the artistic value that the piece offers. If a piece of art loses all its value after its creative process is explained by the artist, should it be considered high value art to begin with. A truly valuable and thought-out piece would have value before and potentially gain value after the explanation. It also allows the audience to understand the piece more and have a more personal and deeper connection to the work done by the artist.

When it comes to presenting this information, all the findings indicate to in-person being vastly superior compared to video. A connection is easier to gain when a person is passionately talking about something in person, this can get lost through video form even if more effort is put into the video, like in the case of this study where no script was prepared for the in-person talk, while for the video multiple scripts were prepared in order to try to engage the audience more. True passion stems from a want or need for connection, in-person interactions allow the speaker to view these connections and engage with them, leading to a better product overall for both the speaker and the audience.

Future Research

There are multiple different areas left to explore within this topic. A larger sample size, with more diverse participants could potentially change the outcome. Including more musical experts could change the results of the perceived professional of the track provided.

A live instrumentation comparison could also be done to see if audiences appreciate the skill of a live performance more compared to the audio file equivalent, even after being shown the creative process for the song. This was something considered for this study, where the song that was produced would be played on an MPC or an equivalent style of instrument after discussing the background and history of the samples.

Other genres could also be explored, if a breakdown of lyrics is explained it could increase the audience's connection to the song or potentially make them lose interest as it does not match their perception of what the song means.

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Appendices

Appendix A

Interview with Takumitsu Agata from Chiba University

Question 1

Your study found that explaining the creative process deepens audience appreciation, why do you believe this happens?

Response

In the case of contemporary art, viewers often find themselves in a situation where they do not know how to approach or interpret a work. Information about the creative process can help them understand what the artist was particularly trying to pursue in the work, thereby providing a perspective from which to view it. This, in turn, deepens their appreciation. Moreover, the creative processes explained in this study focused not on visual elements, but on the formation of the "concept" of the artwork. For viewers with little prior experience of contemporary art, this information can serve as an entry point for recognizing the existence of such concepts, which in some cases further enhanced their engagement with the work.

Question 2

Do you think understating the creative process changes how people judge quality?

Response

I believe that judgments of quality also change. Unlike popular music, in contemporary art, some viewers may find themselves unable to determine how to approach a work when they encounter it without any contextual information. Such viewers are unlikely to evaluate the work highly. However, once they learn about the process and come to understand the elements that have been carefully refined within the work, they can recognize its creativity and interesting qualities. Therefore, in many cases, this leads to a higher evaluation of the work.

Question 3

Was there any evidence that too much explanation could overwhelm the participant?

Response

Some viewers reported feeling overwhelmed when they realized that what they had imagined to be an “intuitive” creative process was in fact the result of prolonged trial and error and accumulated thought. On the other hand, it can be said that there was little evidence of confusion among viewers.

Question 4

Some people argue that explaining the creative process removes the mystique from artistic work, did you find any evidence of this?

Response

We did not obtain any particular evidence supporting this claim. From a personal perspective, I would argue that if a work loses its sense of mystery simply by having its creative process explained in words, it may not be a work of particularly high value. The true mystery of artistic creation resides rather in those aspects that cannot be fully explained even by the artist. What we were able to describe as the creative process in this study was primarily the consciously and verbally articulated aspects of the artist’s thinking, especially those related to the development of the work’s concept. While such information provides a useful perspective for viewing the work, it does not, of course, allow one to fully grasp all of its appeal. Although I do not deny that there are works or

elements that may feel more engaging when their mystery is preserved, I believe that truly outstanding works do not lose their appeal even when such processes are explained

Question 5

Do you think explaining the creative process on how a song is made would improve how it is perceived?

Response

It is quite possible that learning about what a musician particularly experimented with or struggled through in the creation of a work can prompt listeners to notice new aspects of it. In more extreme cases—such as contemporary music or works by concept-driven musicians like Matthew Herbert—understanding the creative process can be essential for appreciating the interest and originality of the piece. Personally, I also recall that when new albums by artists such as Radiohead or Björk were released, reading interviews helped me understand the music more deeply and led me to perceive it in a more positive way.

Appendix B

Response to what is your understanding of sampling in the audio only survey

Taking small cuts of other music and using it in your own songs

Audio sampling is about converting one type/quality audio stream to another. Mixing sampling is where you take a bit from another tune and use it in a new one. Opinion sampling is where you ask a representation group of users for their opinion on something (like this survey)

Use of small parts of other music that creates its own song

Taking a piece of a popular track and using it in a new track

Don't know

Have no idea

Using other artists' music in your own music

Taking pieces of songs and using them in a different song.

Taking a small slice of an existing song or recording a noise

Using a song or sound snippet to make a new song

Taking parts of other music and using it as part of new music you generate

Taking a section of music

Taking a section of music and putting it into another song

Using a piece of existing music to add to other music.

Playing short parts of songs

When an artist uses a part of an already released song in their new song

Taking a snippet of one song to add to the other

Appendix C

(Video Survey)

Do you think artists should explain their process to increase connection to the audience ?
Yes
Yes, I'd find it interesting for certain artists but not all
Yes
I think on occasion, especially for their bigger tracks as it would be interesting to see what aspects make the track unique and contributed to its popularity
Not necessarily
Yes
Not necessarily. Enjoyment of music to me is a deeply instinctive or emotional thing. Dance music particularly appeals to an almost primitive instinct to dance - but I think explaining can definitely be additive, but not necessary.
I agree that to increase connection and artist should explain their process. Getting a peak behind the curtain really helps understand why decisions were made, and as a result, I as a listener gain more respect for the process and the final result as a whole.
Yes
Not all the time. But an appreciation of all the work that goes into the production is appreciated.
No I don't think so. I thought they explained the choice of sample and the effects they made to each sample very well
Yes definitely
Yes
Only if they want to, it's not necessary though. Sometimes you just want to be enjoy music without an understanding
I think it builds a connection with audience and artists but it's not always necessary
Yes
Yes I think it would be very beneficial

I strongly believe they should

Yes because it's always interesting to hear how much thought and inspiration from different places have gone into the creation of the songs giving a deeper appreciation for each track

Appendix D

(Video Essay)

Any other comments ?

Learning the production process of my favourite artists through breakdown videos on YouTube made me understand the artist more and their thought process in making track and in turn increased the connection I felt with the artist

No

I think different forms and genres of music can benefit from explanation. lyrical or poetic music for example like Dylan or Cohen - but often the artist themselves are reluctant to explain and it is left to their biographers or obsessive fans. But definitely knowing how something was made can add to a deeper enjoyment like Van Morrison's Astral weeks, U2's Achtung Baby and The Rolling Stones exile on Main Street. Certainly, seeing Get Back - the documentary exploring the Beatles making Let It Be made me appreciate the album in a whole new way.

The video provided really clarified elements of the samples, the effects and how the piece was arranged. The inclusion of screenshots and then ending the video with the final piece supported by the waveforms as they appeared also added to my appreciation of the final result. This showed a level of care and consideration that improved my connection to the piece of music.

0
Very explained video and song is very sampled and assembled
No
A very well thought out song and essay describing it

Appendix E

(In-Person Survey)

Do you think artists should do this to increase connection to audience ?
Yes
Yes
Yes
Yes
Use familiarity
Yes
To an extent, some things should be left secret
Yes

Yes going through the creative process definitely makes me appreciate the song much more
Yes it would make me more interested in the artist to see their creative process
Yes
Yes I find listening to a process behind how a song was made regardless of if it's sampled or not

Appendix F

(In-Person Survey)

Any other comments ?
I really enjoyed the track !
Brilliant
Really cool info on sampling

