Berklee College of Music

DAVE SHIVAT:

TRANCENDENCE, THE EMERGENCE OF AN ARTISTIC IDENTITY

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the

Degree of Master in Music Production, Technology and Innovation

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Abstract

The basis of this project was to create the emergence of an artistic identity. The idea consisted on inventing a creative persona that throughout a look, a sound, and a concept incorporated Contemporary Christian music within Trance (Electronic Dance Music) as an EP of 5 songs and one remix. Essential resources needed for the completion of this project came from people contributions and the facilities provided by Berklee College of Music in Valencia, Spain. The overall purpose of this project was to represent the world of Christianity through the language of Trance. Current generations, as well as the emerging ones not only will connect to this music genre, but also will relate better to the world of spirituality.

Keywords: artistic identity, contemporary Christian music, remix, trance electronic music.

Acknowledgements

I am blessed for being able to embark on this journey. Back Home, I was often being told that pursuing this musical dream was almost impossible. I knew this would not be an easy adventure and career to follow, but I had spent six years collecting all my talents, experiences, and education to make this dream come true. I would like to first thank Dr. Soo Wincci for her indispensable guidance and support in this entire journey, Ben Cantil for his incredible motivation, Nacho Marco for his well-directed advice, Diego Amorocho for his honest, sincere and trustworthy friendship and not to forget those who never gave up on me and encouraged me to continue to pursue my dream without fear.

After graduating from my Bachelor of Science Degree, I finally took up my courage to apply to my dream school which is Berklee. I am grateful to be accepted to MPTI. I left everything back home and came to Valencia. Thankfully, my parents and my true friends had helped me in various ways in supporting my dream. They gave me so much encouragement and financial support throughout the whole journey and we grew stronger than before and sailed through the storm together.

Lastly, I want to give all honor and glory to God for providing me the strength to overcome all obstacles along this transforming journey.

1. Introduction

In the late 1960s, Christian music had massive influence to the world with the various circulation images of church, hymnals, and organs. "Traditional" was the word of the past, but this had evolved. In the last thirty years, Christian music had been evolving and growing in an unprecedented speed. [1]

Pipe organs have been set aside for the substitution of electric guitars and drums. Hymnals have been replaced by hard-hitting lyrics which illustrate the scene nowadays and God is being portrayed in a modern way. Christian music had evolved further beyond the church and can be found invincibly on radio, TV, concert halls and at huge rallies and festivals. It had expanded to include a vast array of styles like rock, metal, rap, country, gospel, urban gospel and pop which Christian can definitely find something which interest them.[2]

Hence, the main objective of this research is to illustrate the evolution of the artist brand of "Dave Shivat" which includes the process of integrating both musical styles of Trance Electronic Music and Christian Music to reinvent his music artistry.

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[1] Jones, Kim. "The Changing Face of Christian Music." Learn Religions. June 25, 2019. Accessed July 03, 2019. https://www.learnreligions.com/the-changing-face-of-christian-music-710628.

[2] "Entertainment." Learn Religions. Accessed July 03, 2019. https://www.learnreligions.com/christianity-entertainment-4684883.

2. Review of The State of Art

2.1   Electronic Dance Music

Electronic Dance Music, which is also known as EDM, refers to the term for a panoply of musical styles that emerged in the mid-1980s. [3] Rather than designating a single genre, electronic dance music (EDM) encompasses styles ranging from beatless ambient music to 200 beats per minute hardcore with house music, techno, drum and bass, dubstep and trance are among the most notable examples.

Several defining features which characterize electronic dance music includes its recognition for delivering inorganic sounds and timbres, frequently produced by cheap early-1980s gear such as the 303-bass synthesizer and the 808-drum machine and both made by Japanese electronics firm Roland or built from samples of previous recordings.[4] Live instrumentation and singing were often featured but it was usually used as a garnish rather than the main dish. Most importantly, this type of music was created specifically for the social function of dancing all night.

A strong emphasis on rhythm is therefore common to most styles of EDM, while ambience music which focuses less on maintaining the beat provides an aural cushion for settling down at the end of the night. Furthermore, EDM recordings are produced primarily to be played in dance clubs by disc jockeys (DJs) with a mix of other records of the same type rather than catering it to home listeners.

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[3] Matos, Michaelangelo. "Electronic Dance Music." Encyclopedia Britannica. November 23, 2016. Accessed July 03, 2019. https://www.britannica.com/art/electronic-dance-music.

[4] Romero, Jorge. "¿Qué Es El EDM?" LOS40. February 01, 2019. Accessed July 03, 2019. https://los40.com/los40/2019/02/01/actualidad/1548979340_136795.html.

2.2   Contemporary Christian Music

Contemporary Christian Music [5] is a genre of modern popular music which focuses its lyrics on matters concerned with the Christian Faith. The Contemporary Christian Music industry had grown over the years. Album sales had increased from 31 million in 1996 to 44 million sales in 2000.

The church initially dismissed the growing popularity of "Rock N 'Roll" music in the 1950s because it was believed to encourage sinfulness. As evangelical churches adapted to be more appealing to the mass, the musical styles used in worship changed as well by adopting the sounds of this popular style. [6]

The "Jesus Movement" of the 1970's was when things really started changing and Christian music began to become an industry within itself. Some of the pioneers of the times were:

- **Larry Norman** - A true pioneer in Christian alternative rock since the 1960's, he is called the "father of Christian rock" by many.

- **Marsha Stevens** - The leader of Children of the Day is called the "mother of contemporary Christian music" by The Encyclopedia of Contemporary Christian Music.

- **Nancy Honeytree** - Nancy carries the nickname the "First Lady of Jesus Music", she was one of the few female artists to emerge from the Jesus Movement.

- **Chuck Girard** - He was one of the first Contemporary Christian artists, getting his start in a church in California.

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[5] BiblioCommons. (2018). Grammy Winners for Best Contemporary Christian Music *Album 1997-2018 - Santa Clara County Library*.

[6] "Origins and Development." Learn Religions. Accessed July 03, 2019. https://www.learnreligions.com/christianity-origins-4684896.

2.3   Trance Electronic Music

Trance music [7] is a form of electronic dance music (EDM) characterized by hypnotic rhythm and sound with the aim of helping the audience to reach a heightened consciousness. It is known for having a song tempo generally ranging between 128 to 142 beats per minute (BPM). Trance has its origins in musical genres such as House, Techno, Pop, classical music, film score, and ambient music.

2.4   Christian Electronic Dance Music

Christian Electronic Dance Music[8] otherwise known as CEDM is a genre within Christian music. Mostly said that producers just create Christian dubstep and Christian electronic, there are now many other forms of CEDM including deep house, techno, trance and much more.

Some of CEDM's most notable artists include Hillsong Young & Free, Neon Feathers, Kye Kye, LZ7, Owl City, Capital Kings, And Then There Were None, Scott Blackwell, The Brothers Martin, Code of Ethics, Purified, Mortal, Mad at the World, Leiahdorus, Andy Hunter, Joy Electric, V*Enna, Urban Rescue, Dash, Matthew J. Bentley, Biotronix, FreeG, Harmegiddo, Matthew Parker, Audile, DJ Jireh, DJ Hiz Glory, G-Powered and Salt of the Sound.

3.   Description

Trancendence is a project with a purpose to evoke a sense of existence or experience beyond the ordinary or physical level. Trancendence is a project that involves the creation of a five-song Ep

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[7] En.wikipedia.org. (2018). *Trance music*.

[8] Stevo. "CEDM: Discover New Christian Electronic Dance Music Songs." EDM Sauce. May 30, 2017. Accessed July 04, 2019. https://www.edmsauce.com/discover-new-music/cedm/.

and one remix from the song "Cut Away" by the artist "Soo Wincci". In which, the personal artist brand "Dave Shivat" transforms himself from being a recording engineer into a hybrid Latin contemporary Christian electronic music producer. Subsequently, collaborating with artists from various backgrounds and diversity has led this project to grow and expand within different ramifications geographically. Therefore, the creation of the project has opened the doors for multi languages such as English, Chinese, Malays and Spanish. Each part of the project will be further explained in the next section.

3.1 Trance Electronic Christian Music

In 2018, Billboard [9] released a market statistic that proved the value and worth of the electronic dance music market. In this statistical statement, the company showed a 12-percent growth within one year which many changes took place within this musical revolution. Since then EDM had been incorporated in various genres and subgenres.

It is clear that part of the success of EDM [10] is because these scenes are popping up all over the world, pushing it to become the one of the furthest reached genres in contemporary music. In support of this, the concept of this project has excellent potential to succeed, not only because of the integration of two different genres into one but because it is compilating genres that are exponentially growing over time. The inclusion of Trance and Christian music will undoubtedly create attraction within the Christian community as well as for many EDM listeners.

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[9] Stats, S. (2018). Electronic Dance Music (EDM) Statistics and Facts - Statistic Stats.
[10] Billboard. (2018). The 30 Best Trance Music Songs Ever.

The development process for this project began with a selection of musical material including compositional ideas, musical references, and artists related to the concept. The initial musical references for Trance came from artist like; Armin Van Buuren, Dash Berlin, Ferry Corsten, Paul Oakenfold, Marcus Schultz, Above & Beyond, seven skies and Andrew Rayel.

On the other side, musical references for Christian music at this point come from artist like; Jesus Adrian Romero, Marcos Witt, Kari Jobe, Britt Nicole, Alex Campos, Tercer Cielo, Mary Mary, and Natalie Grant. Most of the already mentioned artists from both musical genres are Grammy winners and, therefore have the potential to impact the evolutional process of this project positively.

Trance Electronic Music has been of significant value to "Dave Shivat" since he was a child. This music genre apart from being part of his religion, has been also characterized for the versatility of musical elements that it integrates to generate different emotions in the listener. Usually, this music follows a structure in which there is a development of intensity followed by a space, leaving melodies or atmospheres to stand alone for an extended period before gradually building up again. Trance is known for being most of the time instrumental. However, vocals have the potential to mix in very well. Usually, Trance blends well with mezzo-soprano to female soprano soloists. Nonetheless, it has become a popular trend to incorporate male vocals as well.

Having mentioned this, the musical genre "Trance" within this project plays a significant role in incorporating Christian music. Trance musical content as compared to many other subgenres of the Electronic Dance Music world invites the listener to venture into a state of meditation, emotions, and spirituality. Experiences that undoubtedly makes part of the Christian faith. Of course, it is of great importance the prior selection of sounds and instruments taking place in the "EP" to transmit the desired effect to listeners.

3.2   Implemented Technology

Logic X (fig. 1) served as the Digital Audio Workstation for the start in creating the initial ideas of the project, which were then all transferred and developed in Ableton Live (fig. 2) These two main DAWS facilitated and enhanced the making processes for the entire 6 tracks of the project.

Protools (fig. 3) served as the platform for recording all vocal takes and the mixing, mastering process of each of the music created.

Adobe Premiere Pro (fig. 4) allowed the mash up music of the entire EP to be synchronised with the animated logo of "David Shivat" which included the respective crediting of the artists who collaborated in this project (fig. 5).
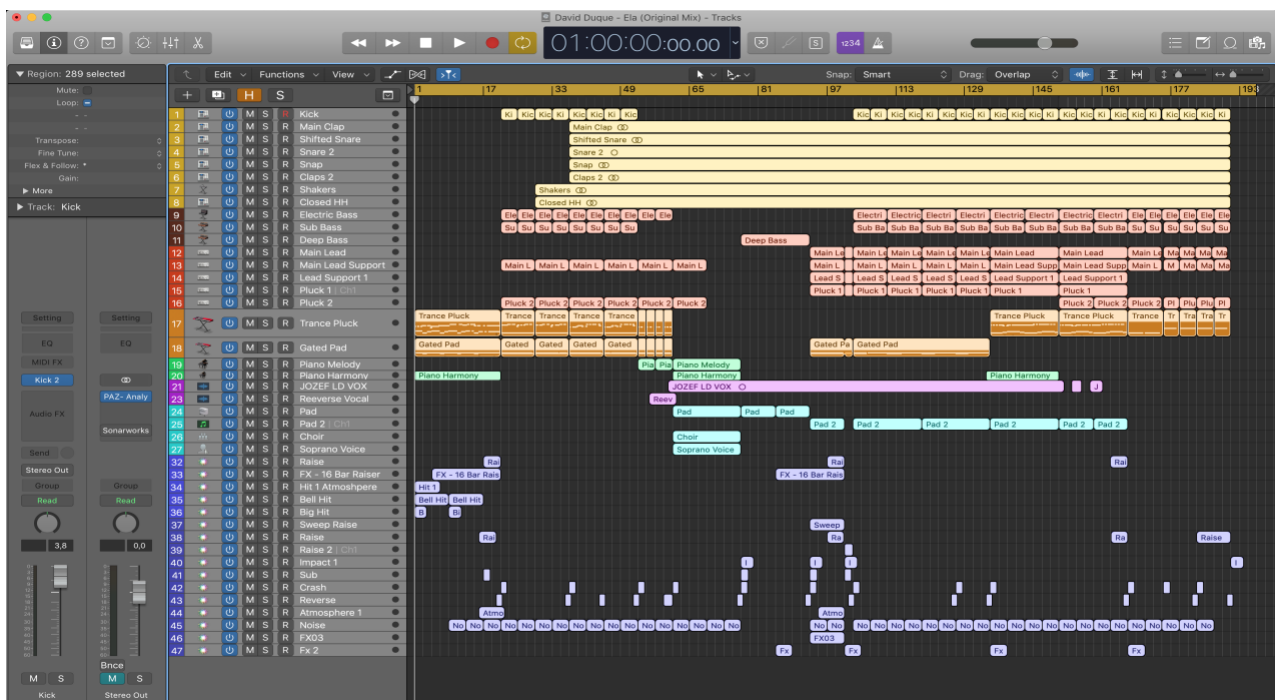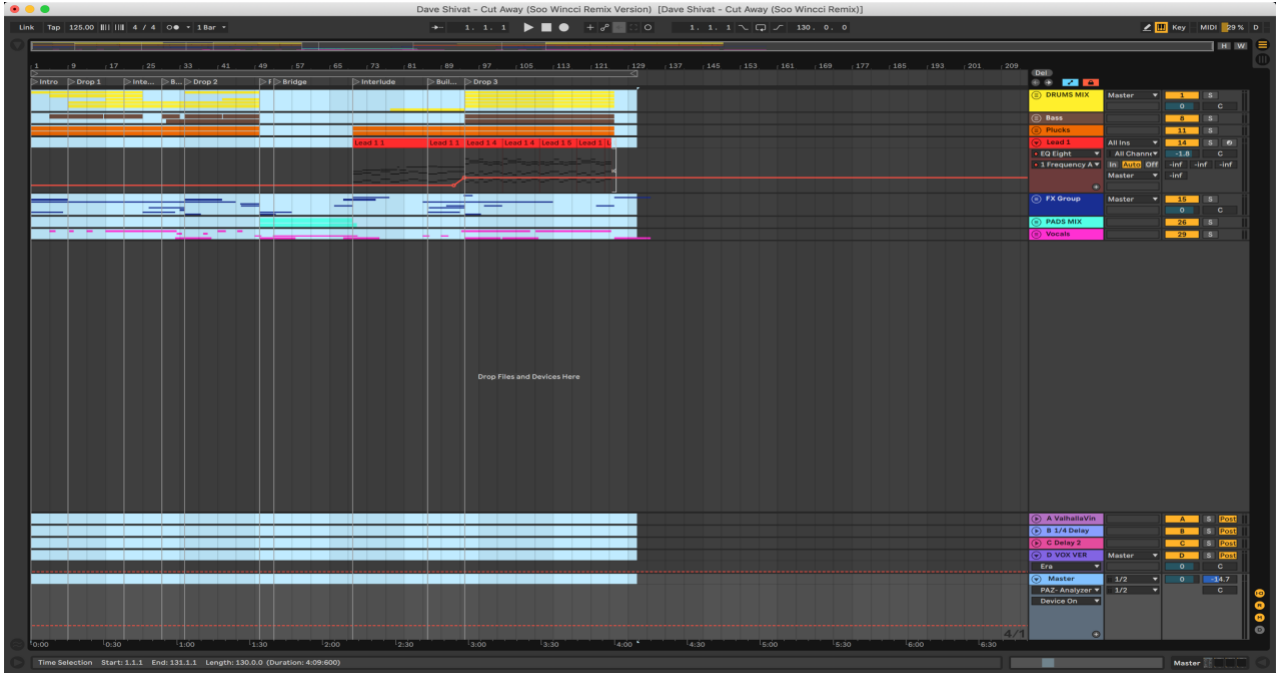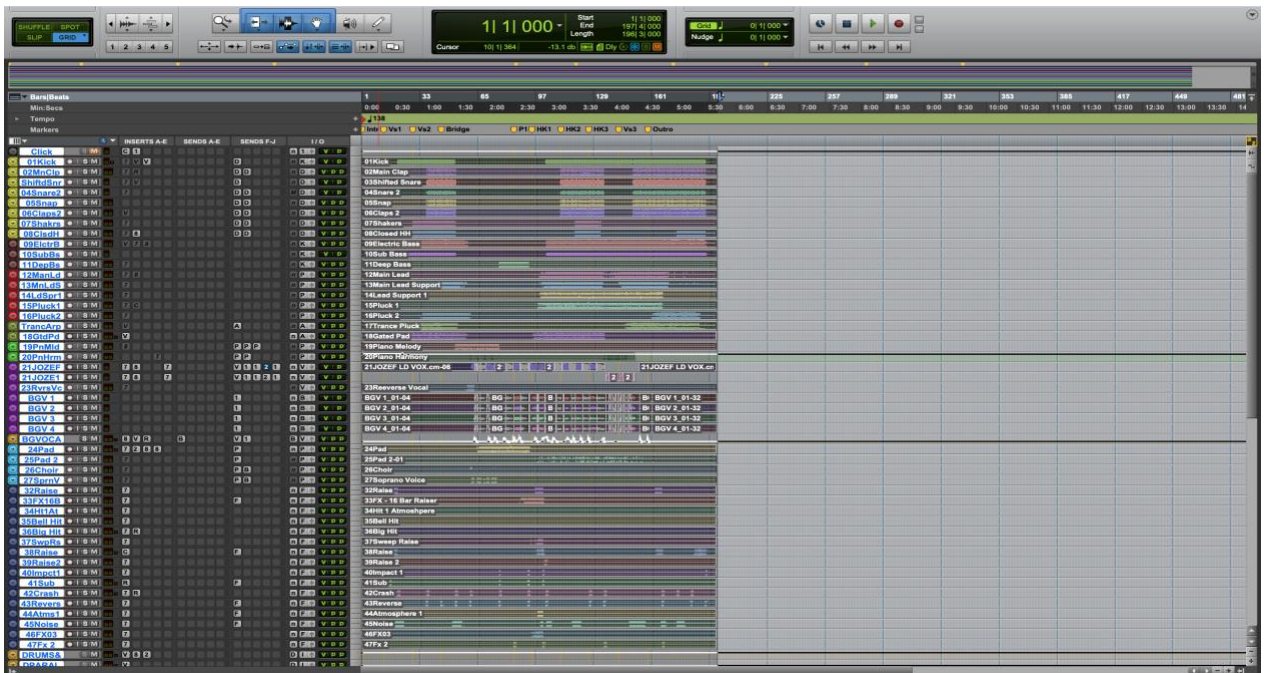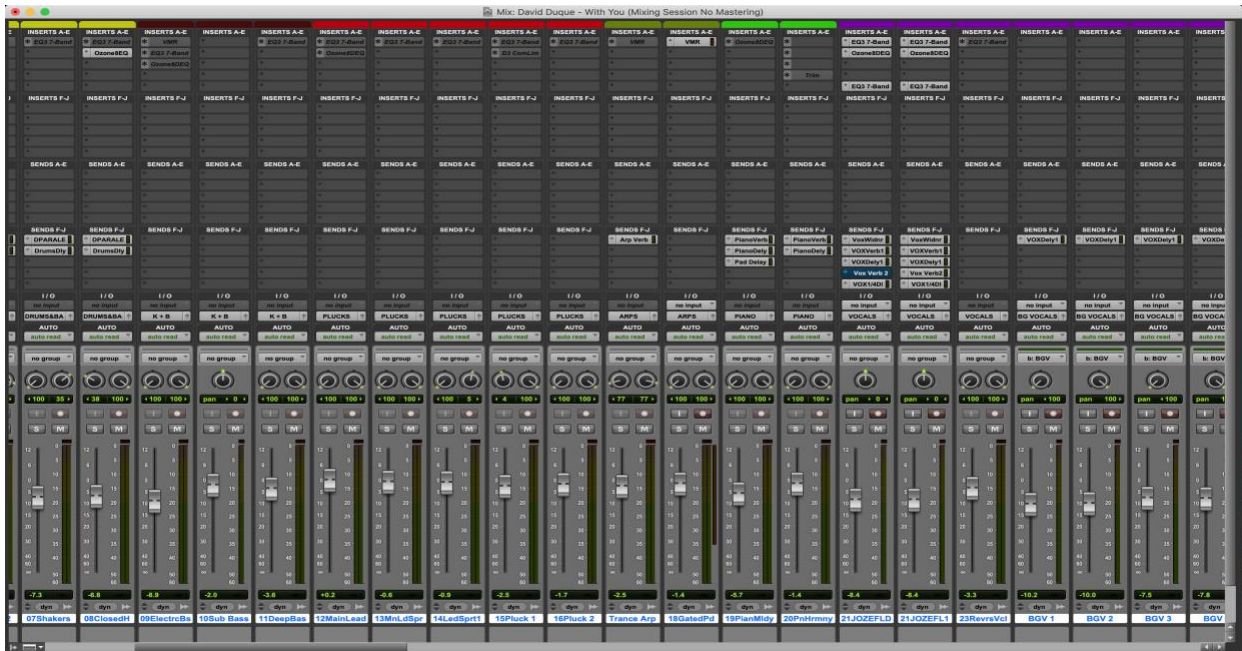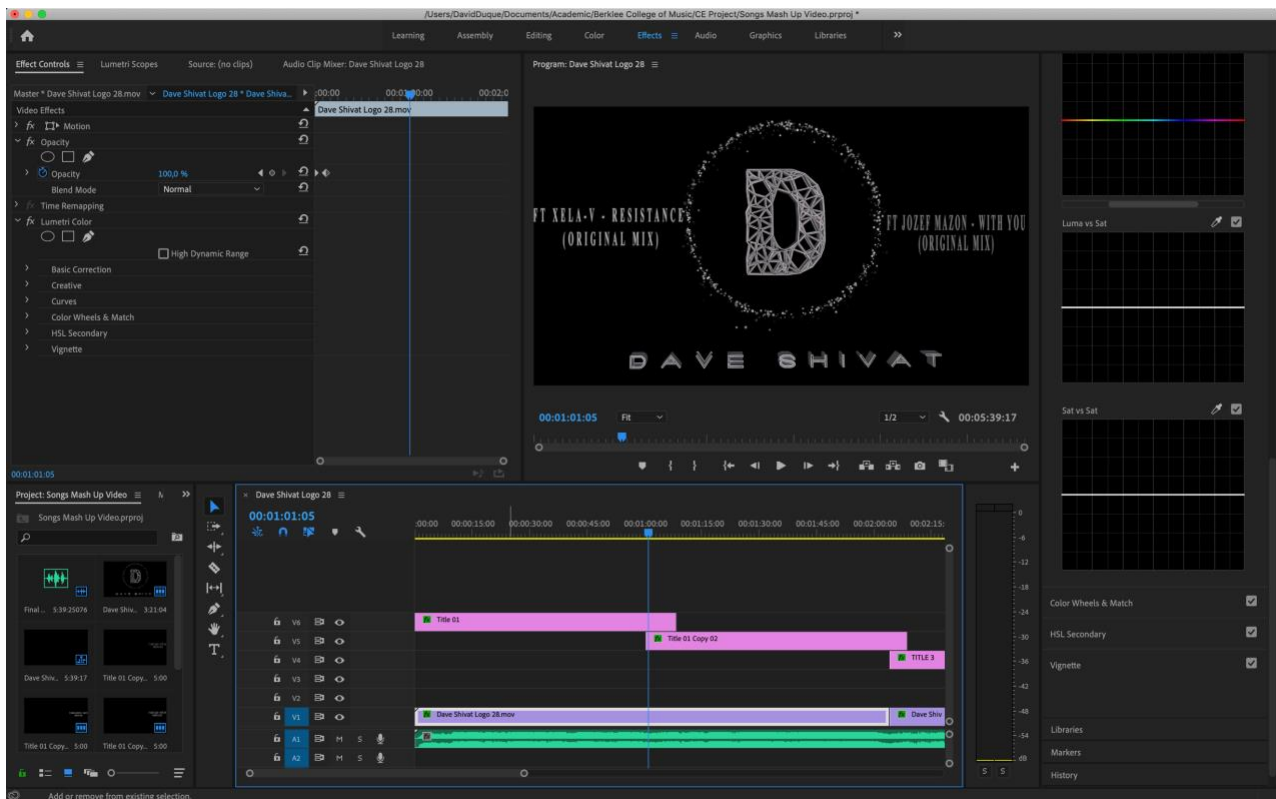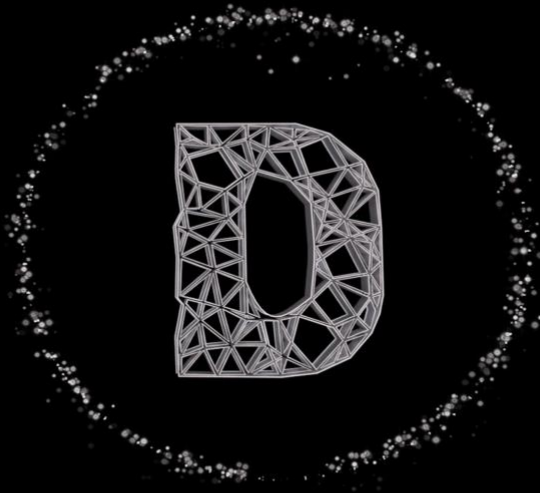

Figure 1. Logic Pro X
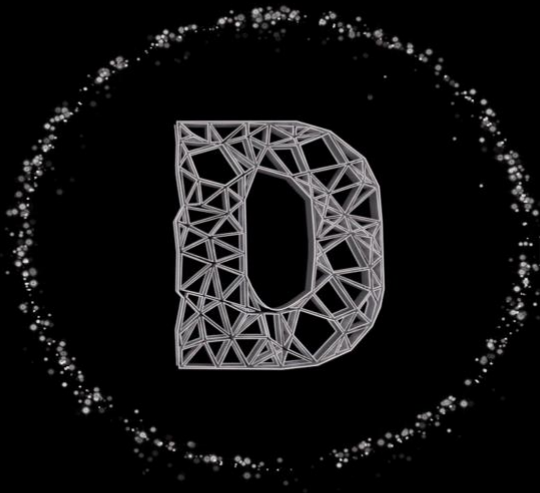
Figure 2. Ableton Live

Figure 3. Protools

Figure 4. Adobe Premiere Pro

FT GABBY COTTER - CAMINOS DE FE
(ORIGINAL MIX)
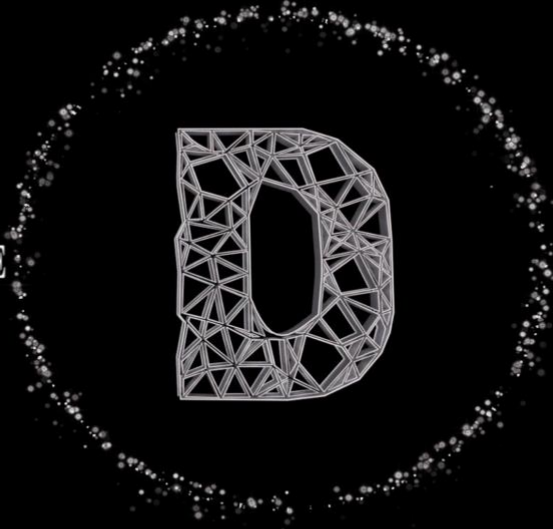
DAVE SHIVAT

FT JOZEF MAZON - WITH YOU
(ORIGINAL MIX)
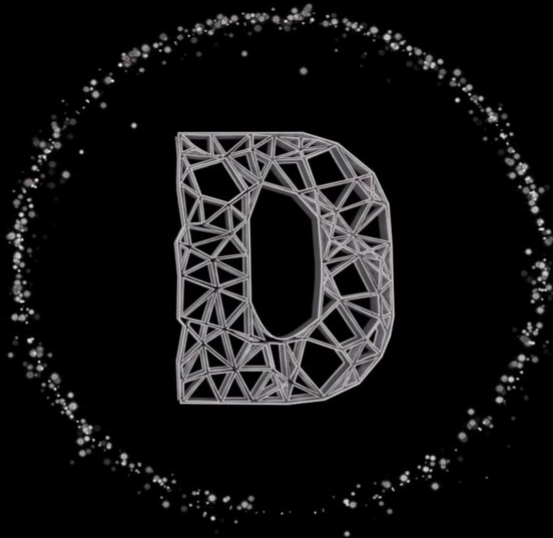
DAVE SHIVAT

Figure 5. Animated logo Ep music mash up with artist accreditation

4. Innovative Aspect

Christian Electronic Dance Music is starting to cover more electronic music genres in which Trance is already involved. From an innovative perspective, this project did not innovate. However, it is making a big difference from the aspect of having lyrics written in different languages as well as being original content. Most of the music that is being considered "Trance Electronic Christian Music" are mainly remixes from other Christian music. Additionally, the artist brand development involved in this project is setting "Dave Shivat" apart from the competitors who are considered underground in the scene of this kind.

5. New Skills Acquired

5.1Technology & Software

(i) Pro Tools

This was a very important DAW to produce, record, edit, mix and master most of the tracks involved in the EP. The knowledge acquired will definitely be useful in song production, recording and mixing in the future.

(ii) Ableton

Ableton Live allowed the different tracks to evolve in sound design and to reach more experimental sounds. Three of the songs were purely made within this DAW.

(iii) Adobe Premiere

This was the crucial video editing platform to create compelling video stories and to blend the presentation of the EP demo along with the animated logo for online deliverables.

5.2 Soft Skills

(i) Management

Skills acquired on conceptual planning, budgeting, doing proposals, music producing and team building for the project with limited budget. Also, the skill to communicate and deal with different people from different backgrounds and expertise.

6. Challenges

Trancendence was a project that encountered time limitations, concept redefinition, and a low budget restriction. The sum of many classes taken during this academic year made the development process of the project a big challenge. Additionally, it took quite some time not only to learn and explore each different software but at the same time to write, produce, rehearse, and record every part. Hence, sticking to schedule following the timeline was crucial. On the other hand, this project involved a group of artists with a busy schedule, so having late night recording sessions helped to solve this issue.

The most challenging part of the project happened when at last minute one of the tracks of the EP gotten deleted by accident with no backups at all. This incident put more pressure than usual and forced the artists to come up with a new version of the song. Fortunately, the result ended up being way better than expected.

Also, part of the challenge was to be able to analyze and take action over all constructive feedback given by faculty and peers to enhance the project.

7. Future Plans

"Dave Shivat" is planning on taking the project Trancendence into a whole new level by exposing his music and talent to the world throughout the implementation of social media platforms (Brand Awareness). Berklee had given him the exceptional opportunity to get to know artists who are being part of his solid teamwork and now "Dave Shivat" is in the process of releasing an official remix of the well-known artist "Soo Wincci." a track, which will take over Asia and potentially over Latin America upon many other regions worldwide. Visionary plans will consist of collaborations with other artists as well as the growth of social media presence.

8. Conclusion

Trancendence barely had the chance to develop its full potential. The project itself required a more considerable amount of time and research for it to create a more significant impact. Dave Shivat is a hybrid Electronic Christian music producer who is continuously evolving and developing. Trancendence is the project which not only unified two very different musical styles, but also enhanced on what had already existed by creating a strategic plan to differentiate Dave Shivat's art from his competitors. Lastly, this project aims to inspire more music artists to step out from their comfort zone and challenge the role of a producer and innovators.

Appendix A. Plan of Action and Projected Timeline
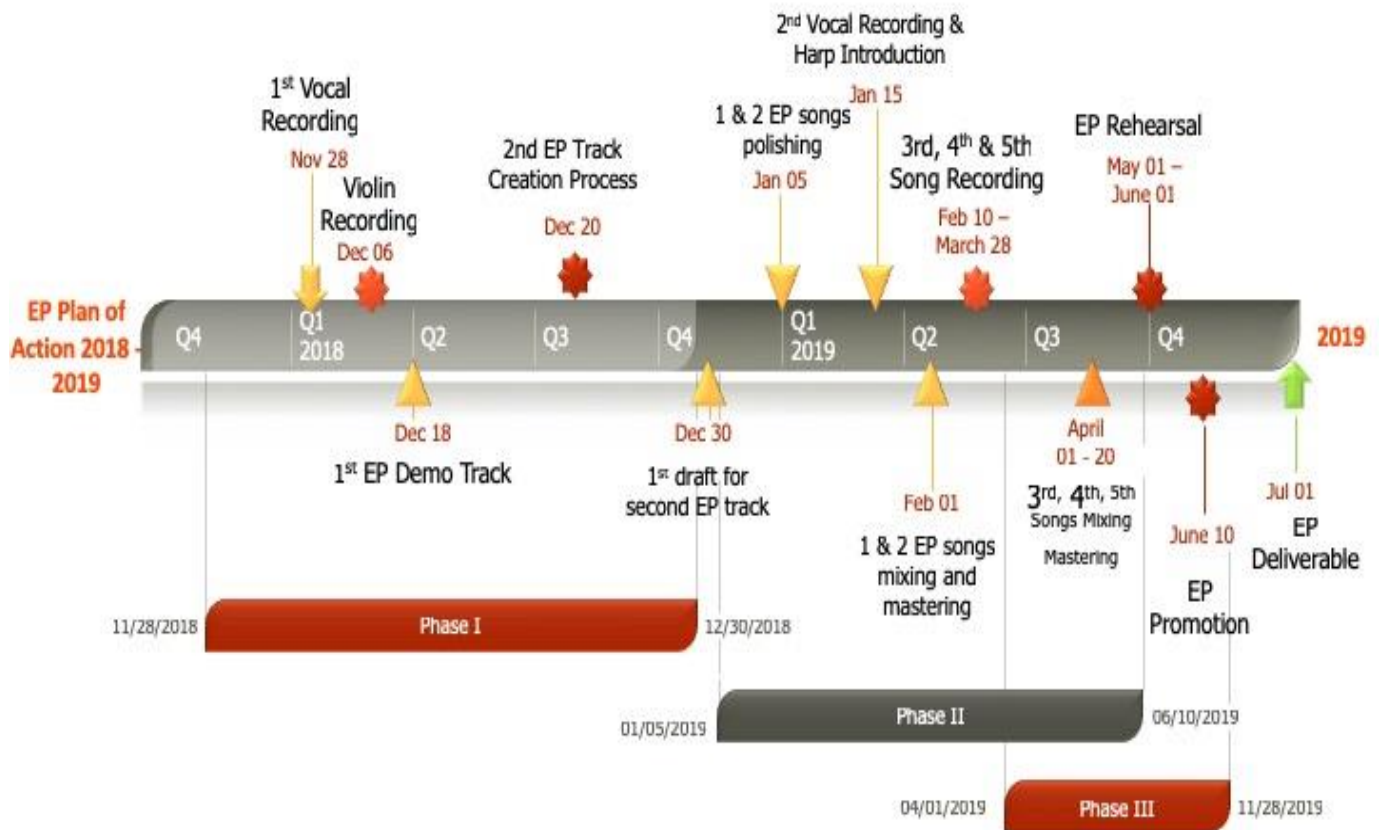
Appendix B. Budget and Cost

ITEM	PROPOSED	REAL	ATCUAL (RUNNING)			SUBTOTALS
			INITIAL	AFTER 1 MONTH	FINAL	
MATERIALS (disposables)						
Hard Drives	$500	$0	$0	$0	$500	
Memory sticks	$50	$16	$0	$0	$50	
Memory cards	$60	$20	$0	$0	$60	
						$610
EQUIPMENT						
HARDWARE						
MICS (rental) 10 days	$1.300	$0	$0	$0	$1.300	
INTERFACE (purchase) 120 days	$1.300	$0	$0		$1.300	
COMPUTER (purchase) 120 days	$2.500	$0	$0		$2.500	
CAMERA (Purchase) 10 days	$1.200	$600	$0	$0	$1.200	
SOFTWARE						
ABLETON (purchase)	$750	$0	$0	$0	$750	
SPECTRASONICS OMNISPHPERE	$479	$0	$0	$0	$479	
IZOTOPE OZONE 8 (Purchase)	$1.000	$500			$1.000	
SERUM (Purchase)	$189	$130			$189	
ADOBE PREMIERE CC 2018 (4 month Rental)	$48	$0			$48	
SPIRE VST (Purchase)	$189	$0			$189	
MAX MSP (purchase)	$399	$0	$0	$0	$399	
						$9.354
PERSONNEL						
MUSICIANS 3# of players x $30 x 12hr	$1.080	$0	$0	$0	$1.080	
ENGINEERS 1# (EP Mastering Cost)	$500	$0	$0	$0	$500	
CAMERAMEN 1# x $25 x 10 hr	$250	$0	$0	$0	$250	
DIRECTOR	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	
CLOTHING	$300	$300	$0	$0	$300	
MIXERS (EP Mixing Support)	$150	$0	$0	$0	$150	
EDITORS	$300	$0	$0	$0	$300	
						$2.580
STUDIO						
BERKLEE Studio x $150 x 2hr x 20 days	$6.000	$0	$0	$XX x 1 mo	$6.000	
HOME (4 month Rent)	$0	$0	$0	$XX x 1 mo	$0	
						$6.000
CATERING						
MEALS cost/person x #persons x meals	$1.280	$0	$0	$XX x 1 mo	$1.280	
						$1.280
OVERHEAD						
RENT (Includes all extra supply expenses)	$1.000	$1.000	$0	$XX x 1 mo	$1.000	
POWER	$0	$0	$0			
WATER	$0	$0	$0			
GAS	$0	$0	$0			
INTERNET	$0	$0	$0			
PHONE	$40	$40	$0		$40	
						$1.040
FEES						
YOUR FEE	$5000	$0	$XX	$XX	$5.000	
YOUR PARTNER'S FEES	$3000	$0	$XX	$XX	$3.000	
						$8.000
TOTALS	$20.864	$2.606	$0	$0	$28.864	$28.864

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