

Berklee College of Music

Women in Music Berklee: Reflection Paper

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Master of Arts in Global Entertainment and Music Business

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I. Introduction

The gender divide all across the nation is staggering when it comes to any industry with a masculine history in leadership roles. Particularly the gender gap in the music industry is evident. All around the world we're seeing women take a stand and creating an alliance with one another to fight for equality. There are now numerous collations like She said so, Decades, She is the Music, and Women in Music working to make a change. I was immensely excited to be a part of Women in Music Berklee as this year's Production Manager. Over the course of six months, my teammates and I consisting of Constanza Rivera, Maria Guzman, Clara Barberá and organized and executed a total of thirteen events, album launch, and three curated live performances.

II. Process

From very early on I could tell this group's dynamic was different from any other teams I have been on in the past. Due to the fact that I had done school projects with MJ (Maria) and Connie (Constanza) before, I was rightfully skeptical about how our working relationship would pan out over the course of six months. As the role of Production Manager, I was in charge of planning and executing every event. However, as the course of the semester furthered I took on a greater role as overall Operations Manager because I felt my teammates weren't taking enough initiative in their roles to grow Women in Music Berklee from the previous year. Although the events were successful I honestly struggled physically, emotionally, and mentally with the amount of coursework from my program, practicum, and this project. I had to rely on the help from my colleagues outside of the project to get the job done. At times I was doing the marketing role, finalizing album details, and the overall narrator for things that should have been my

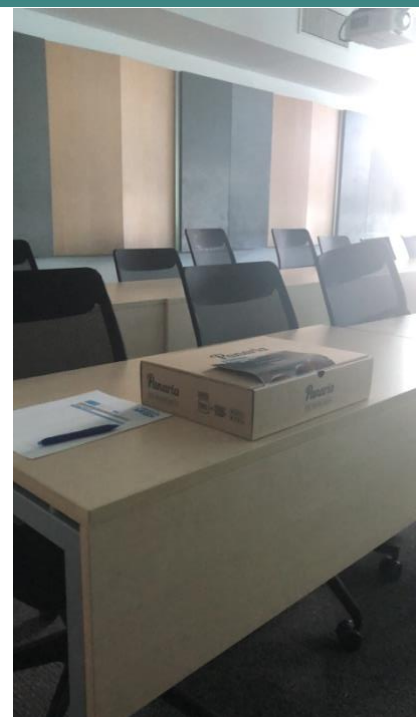
teammates' responsibility. It got to the point where they weren't even showing up nor communicating their absences in weekly meetings spearheaded by Clara Baberá as well as other events planned by Women in Music. Often it became very difficult in handling business without a clear channel of communication. My hope was that this year we would come together instead of working on two different teams to get the job done. However, this was not the case. As mentioned above, I had to pull in people from outside of the team to facilitate the running of Women in Music. One of these people was the Student Affairs Graduate Fellow, Jasmine Pkok. Throughout this year, she was my greatest ally. She was most helpful when I needed communications to be sent out to the student body, help reserving rooms on campus and overall advice about leading an organization alone. Our mentor, Clara Barberá, especially was an amazing supporter as well. She really helped to guide me in the right direction to make sure I was on track for success and that I wasn't going overboard with my ideas. It was evident that she had the same passion I had for the cause. However, because Clara is the Director of Student Affairs, it was difficult at times to fit into her busy schedule which ultimately left more pressure on my hands because she trusted I would get the job done. I did understand that last year's team was organically amazing. However, I think that a little more time spent molding the team dynamic would have led to a greater outcome with even more accomplishments this year. For instance, having interviews with the candidates that applied for these positions to truly understand where their passion lies for this organization. All in all, this year was a learning experience for all of us.

III. Results

Below are some following events that were accomplished by the Women in Music Berklee team in the amount of six months. These were the most time consuming and strenuous to complete and most rewarding at the same time.

G-ALL Talk

We held an Informational Session for WIM as a great way for students to understand our cause, how to get involved, and for us to learn more about them. For the session, I purchased a platter of sandwiches, I created a sign-up sheet for students to sign upon arrival, presentation, and a type-form to send to those who attended the event afterward. Although I was completely prepared no one came, my team members were even late to the meeting. Although I was very frustrated, I learned early on that I had to be more hands-on when it came to marketing for WIM as well as executing my role. As this was our first official event marketing should have placed posters all around campus, multiple Instagram post, and emailed through student affairs for students to know about it. It was a learning experience for our team because undergrads didn't have class on Fridays and most would be traveling throughout the week. We did take this into account when planning the other events.



Femaletronica

On March 8th, 2019, She knows Tech and Women in Music Berklee came together to orchestrate Berklee's first-ever *Femaletronica*. This event took place at Contrapunto's outside venue. Femaletronica is an all-



female electronic concert celebrating International Women's Day. Working with Jasmine Pkok, SKT's founder was stress-free and fun. She truly had every piece of the organization of the event under control. For this event, I was merely administrative help with organizing the communication for performers and the production team. I also ran errands for the event and prepared a small introduction before the beginning of the concert to explain what WIM was all about. The event ran smoothly and exceeded the target of 100 plus attendees, all ranging from Berklee Valencia students, faculty, and members of the Valencian community

Girl Talk with Yvette

On March 13th, 2019 eleven students were selected to join us in an intimate dinner at Sorsi e Morsi Restaurant with Yvette Noel-Schure. A week prior I created a type-form with two questions to survey the students to see who would benefit most if they attended this event. Because our funds were limited WIM could only afford to pay



for no more than fifteen meals including the team, and Yvette's dinner. Planning this event was extremely difficult because the week prior Femaletronica was happening and I was also planning Yvette's award ceremony that took place two days later. It was hard to confirm a restaurant that was in close proximity to the school, friendly to the vegan diet, and away from busy streets because Las Fallas had just started. Even with all of those difficulties I was able to pull it off. The conversations at the table were heartwarming and encouraging. The students left with their bellies and hearts full. I will never forget this day.



Berklee College of Music honors Yvette Noel-Schure with ‘Master of Global Entertainment’ Award Ceremony

On March 14th, 2019, Yvette Noel-Schure received Berklee’s first Global Entertainment Award in the Berklee Library. When starting to plan this event with the WIM team and Emilien Moyon, Global Entertainment and Music Business Program Director, I knew that this event had to be top-notch. The memorable poster and slideshow were created by the GEMB student Casey Miller. Because there was a capacity for the library, I had to create an RSVP typeform in order to ensure that every attendee would have a seat. I then selected two separate bands to perform at the beginning and end of the ceremony. One band included three percussionist and live DJ to play songs from past and present artist Yvette had worked with during her career all over a live island beat. The other band arrangement was one singer, electric guitarist, and percussionist who

performed three songs as well. My next task was to have another form of art represented in the ceremony. The talented GEMB student, Zoe Schneider, performed a heartfelt spoken word bibliography about Mrs. Noel-Schure. Followed by this performance, I was blessed with the opportunity to interview Mrs. Yvette during the ceremony. Although I was currently sick and very nervous, I can now look back and say I am very grateful for the opportunity to step outside of my comfort zone. Mrs. Yvette was overwhelmed with the amount of love, support, and detail put into this event. It was pretty cool to see that the ceremony had made it to top media news on Billboard and Variety's publications. Sadly, my team was not helpful in organizing anything during this event besides ordering Grenadian flags for the ceremony from Amazon.

Acceptance of Self Workshop

On April 24th, 2019 in Sala Blanca nineteen students celebrated Mental Health Awareness Week. I partnered with Maria Zara, Berklee's counselor, to the kick off the Mental Health Awareness Week. It was Maria's great idea into bringing Sierra Cornell, Berklee's yoga ambassador, to help facilitate this



workshop. Maria's lecture and mindfulness activity focused on supporting one another, acknowledging struggles, celebrating the resiliency, and continuing to work toward positive body imagery and mental health. Even though I created an RSVP type-form for this event I was particularly shocked at the number of students that participated. However, sadly no one from the WIM team joined in attending this event.

Hike for the Mind

On April 28th, 2019 forty students and two representatives from the WIM team traveled to Chulilla Hiking Trails to hike 15km in honor of Mental Health Awareness Week. I organized this excursion with International VIP Valencia tours, a local tour



company that specializes in student-based activities. It was especially difficult for me to find a company within our budget that included transportation, English speaking guide, and necessary insurance coverage. I also created a document that had every participants passport, personal contact and emergency contact, and allergy information in case of an emergency. Although one student sprained his ankle, I received over fifteen personal emails over the following week inquiring about the next hiking trip. I believe that this event should be available to students every year going forward.

Musaico Music Festival

On May 4th, 2019 the Women in Music Berklee band graced the stage to perform the top four songs from our newly released album *SOMEONE*. Because I was already involved with Musaico as the Partnerships & Sponsorships Manager it was easy to secure a spot on the B stage.



The songs were selected by the Artistic Director, Casey Driessen. I schedule three rehearsal with and curated an all-female universal band to make sure that our set wouldn't go over the allowed 20-minute set. It was very difficult working with the artist due to time conflicts because most of them were also part of other festival performances. The week before the festival I was at school until 2 a.m. each day working on the performances and Musaico. At the last minute, our pianist had to drop out because of a back injury, she was replaced with a male counterpart who supported WIM's cause. I had the opportunity to go on stage to introduce and explain what WIM is all about. All the while the performance went well and our streams from the album increased. I was also able to secure WIM a promotional table in Musaico's "Social Village." Along with our upbeat performance, WIM's informational merchandise (banner and stickers) expounded our mission and efforts to the Valencian community that attended the music festival.

IV. Next steps

As this year comes to an end, I can't help but smile in amazement at all that was accomplished in this small amount of time. Women in Music Berklee is just getting started, and I can't wait to see the next group of women and men to take what we have built and create greatness.

Before the next team is selected I think there should be a reevaluation of the team roles. Firstly, I think this organization would benefit from having four members instead of three. It could be the current student affairs graduate fellow assisting or another GEMB student given a role, this addition could help the overall success of the organization. I think the role of Artistic Curator was quite useless and at times left Connie with nothing to do. I think the following roles and job descriptions would be more beneficial for the organization.

- Operational Manager
- Production Coordinator
- Communications & Marketing Coordinator
- Partnership Coordinator

Secondly, I think implementing check-in meetings with the supervisor three times during the semester would also be helpful to ensure that the student is doing well and on track with their CE.

This year we have pushed the door open on creating a lasting relationship with HQ in New York. I would like for the next chapter to have an informational page on the WIM website and for them to promote our content more frequently on their main social media channels. Personally, I would love the opportunity to take what I have started back to my hometown, Houston, Texas. I had the opportunity to sit down with Neeta Ragoowansi, Women in Music's

Global Co-Chair of Chapter Expansion, on starting my own chapter post-graduation. My goal is to have Women in Music Houston by 2020.

V. Contribution to my profession

Ultimately, Event Production is the career path I want to follow within the live entertainment industry, my position at Women in Music Berklee will allow me to continue to further develop my skills and support, tangibly, that I am capable of thriving under pressure. Working in the live industry I will always be on some type of team and this CE has taught me about cultural differences in expectations and how to always remain respectful at the end of the day. I would say this project has been an eye-opener for me. This position has taught me the art of delegating task and being an assertive leader. These are the following things I also learned:

- Learning patience- being very well-organized and be able to remain calm and clear-headed at all times.
- Team management- establishing a project plan for each portion of implementation and holding internal and external partners accountable.
- Making sure that I give recognition towards my teammates or employees for successful completion of the task I delegated.
- Great communication, both verbally and in writing.
- Stamina is essential. Being kind to my body during stressful situations so I don't get sit.
- Even when I am stressed to still enjoying the process!

VI. Conclusion

With everything that I have learned from Women in Music Berklee, I want to continue the legacy to inspire all people and especially women of color to make their mark and use all of

their gifts to make a profound existence. I truly believe that together we can break barriers, shatter glass ceilings, and create opportunities with and for all women. Everyday creates a new opportunity for women in music to take it one step further towards our goal in advocating for diversity and inclusion in the entertainment industry. I believe we are the catalyst to bring women of all ethnicities together to ignite passion and promote empowerment, sustainability, and advancement.