I am Ironfist:

By: Nicholas Zeigler-Heil

Proposed Culminating Experience:

I will employ Internet branding techniques to help start my career as an electronic artist, producer, producer under the name "Ironfist". I will create a Youtube channel and develop my already existing Soundcloud page that showcases my skills as a producer, DJ, and multi-instrumentalist. This will create a global platform in which to distribute my music, as well as give me a unique visual aesthetic to showcase my music, image, and the Ironfist brand. I believe that a musician's visual image has become vitally important, if not integral, in aspiring to the rapidly growing and ever evolving professional platforms of the 21st century. Visual imagery has become the standard as a way to promote artistic content. My Youtube channel will incorporate music videos, live DJ performance sets utilizing turntables, and a vast array of music instruments, basic video tutorials of scratching and a breakdown of my DJ sets, and behind-the-scenes footage from both video production and live performance. This will incorporate a focused vision on fashion, costumes, and some basic acting. Audiences must remain engaged in order to sustain attention and interest. One way to achieve that is through fostering an interactive element to my music and give the audience a unique experience. I am researching ways to make my Youtube videos more

interactive by creating boxes that can be clicked to alter the ending of music

videos and/or serve as links to see bonus or alternate footage. This

combination of nonlinear media could serve as a way to make my content

stand out. I believe that engaging the audience by providing platforms in

which they can interact with an artist's content is an innovative avenue that

will be explored by aspiring artists in the future.

As well as utilizing the convenience and accessibility of

YouTube, I plan to use social networking to help make my brand

become more viral and accessible. Applications like Instagram,

Facebook, Twitter, Soundcloud, and Spotify, can serve as invaluable

self-promoting tools if used tactfully. They can give my projected

audience more behind-the-scenes content. This form of interactivity

can possibly help make the audience fell more involved in my creative

process, as well as who I am as an artist. While some may make the

case that this reliance on technology may be contributing to the

disconnection of interpersonal interaction, I see the innovations in

social media as a way to connect to fans and supporters who believe

in my music in a way that has never been achieved before. I also

believe that as this type of technology continues to improve, its

awareness and user comfortability will continue to increase.

How the work contributes to the profession:

The job of an innovator more often than not is to take already existing

tools, and to utilize and expand on them to make something new. I believe

that as an electronic artist my culminating experience will contribute to the

profession by creating a profile and portfolio for my music and can also

serve as a press kit that can be distributed to prospective clients. This

interactive portfolio gives a true and accurate representation of my work,

and can be useful when I am trying to book shows, work with artists, or get

sponsorships. The use of employing the Internet to display artistic content is

not new, but I plan to innovate this model by incorporating more audience

interaction. I believe that electronic activity is the next logical step for

getting artists' names out, and I plan to use my Ironfist brand as a vessel in

which to explore deeper into uncharted waters.

Plan of Action:

I began developing and implementing my culminating experience during my first semester at Berklee Valencia. I have been taking advantage of the support and tools that Berklee has afforded me to take the beginning steps. My Music Technology Innovation curriculum has allowed me to continually strengthen my production and engineering skills. I am a member of the Berklee's DJ collective, and have continued to gain performance experience to better understand my desired audience's demographics. I have also started networking with other artists such as rappers and singers, as well as producers, and students in the Global Music Business Masters program. Working with a collaborative group, fostering relationships by building a small network and team, has helped me develop content. This has helped me to start develop songs, and I am discovering how these can be turned into a soundtrack that will complement a video. My next step is to continue a challenge that I have set for myself this semester. The challenge is create or produce a new song every week for my music video production. My plan is to also finish two EP's ranging from 3-5 tracks, that I will make available on the social music-streaming site Soundcloud as well as You Tube. My plan is make at least one of the EP's into two a short film. This means I have to have a clear and focused concept on what the creative statement is. I have

already started working on these EP's, and I'm already 2/3rds's of the way

finished with EP 1. I plan to have all of the instrumentals of the first EP

done before the start of the Summer Semester. I have completed tracks for

the other EP as well. My deadline is to have both of these completed and

uploaded on Youtube by July 1st. In addition I have completed material for a

DJ Mixtape that I can upload to Soundcloud. This Mixtape will feature

music created by me and will be a continuous compilation. I will promote all

the videos and the behind-the-scenes process by using social media. I also

will develop two performance DJ sets or sound a likes some popular songs

that will have recently been released. For my first Video for the Music

Video Production class I created a comical Mash up of a popular song mixed

with an Oscar nominated song. To date, it is my most popular video and I

plan to create one more such song that has a similar flavor. I have been using

Ben Cantil's MTI-613 Electronic Dance Music Composition course to help

develop the content during the spring semester. Since the tracks have to be

current, I plan to release one in the beginning of the year, and another in

either April or May. While I accumulate content for my Youtube Channel, I

will reach people and build a small Internet promotion team to push some of

my videos. This team will include some of the Global Entrainment and

Music Business students. In addition, I have been gaining work as a

producer throughout Berklee's campus, and I will continue to work with various artists to build my production skills and make music to help other artists creative vision and not just my own.

My Timeline for my Culminating Experience is as follows:

December 31st: 3 possible tracks I can use for my music videos

January 26th: Begin shooting for first music video

February 19th: DJ Mixtape Completed

February 20th: First "concept" music video completed

April 15th: Live "Battle" DJ performance set completed

June 17th: Have at least 3 Scratch Tutorial videos uploaded

July 1st: Complete first EP completed. Have at least 10 songs, videos, and/or mixes uploaded to Youtube and Soundcloud

June 1st: Have my second EP/Short Movie completed. It will be interactive

List of Materials and Resources:

In order to successfully accomplish my Culminating Experience I will need various musical equipment, software, and production equipment available for my use. While I have access to most of the equipment below already, the ultimate task is to master how all of these pieces can function together:

- (2) Numark TTX Turntables

- MPC controller

- NS7 ii

- Akai APC

- Akai Keyboard

- DJ Mixer

- Bass Clarinet

- Bass Guitar

- Dobro

- Acoustic/ Electric Guitars

- Serato DJ/ Serato Video

- Ableton Live 9

- Various mid plugins such as (Kontakt, Izotope, and Soundtoy's)

I will also need access to a video camera that will allow me to upload videos to my computer, as well as some video lighting. In addition, I will need a small team of people to help make everything successful including:

- Cast for Videos (Rappers, Musicians, Extras)

- Costume/ set designer

I will also need a basic understanding of film and how to successfully direct, produce, and edit videos as well as understanding basic set design.

Conclusion:

In conclusion, my culminating experiences solves a problem: How does a musician stand out and make their music known in a rapidly growing market that is becoming more globally accessible? I believe that interaction paired with a solid visual representation and social media is one path to do so. While I'm sure there are many other ways to answer that question, this is what I would like to invent, and perhaps other artists, whether musical or otherwise, will follow suit.