

# UC Riverside

## UCR Honors Capstones 2019-2020

### Title

Jam To Your Own Tune: Eden - Extended Player (A Report Of Expressiveness Through Music)

### Permalink

<https://escholarship.org/uc/item/2x9154gh>

### Author

Malilay, Joshua

### Publication Date

2021-01-11

### Data Availability

The data associated with this publication are within the manuscript.

JAM TO YOUR OWN TUNE:  
EDEN - EXTENDED PLAYER  
(A REPORT OF EXPRESSIVENESS THROUGH MUSIC)

By

Joshua C. Malilay

A capstone project submitted for  
Graduation with University Honors

May 31, 2020

University Honors  
University of California, Riverside

APPROVED

---

Dr. Ian Dicke  
Department of Music

---

Dr. Richard Cardullo, Howard H Hays Jr. Chair, University Honors

## Abstract

Since the beginning of time, our early human ancestors have searched for ways to express themselves, from cave paintings, different types of clothing and tools, to jargon rhythmic vocals. The human mind is capable of expressing itself in multiple ways when simple sentences sometimes cannot suffice. One of those ways is through the creation of melodies, harmonies, and rhythms to make music. This project explores that creative process with a collection of songs, as each song is influenced from different genres and artists that have inspired me throughout my life. These songs are widely influenced by past and more modern artists and bands' music including, but not limited to: The Beatles, Stevie Wonder, Jimi Hendrix, Bill Evans, D'Angelo, John Mayer, Frank Ocean, Tom Misch, Daniel Caesar, Rex Orange County, Dijon, and Beabadoobee. From this collection of songs, the listener will experience a variety of sounds that evoke different emotions, each expressed from vocals, various instruments, and electronic interfaces. These songs show the influence of each artist that has creatively impacted me throughout the entire process. Furthermore, the songs in this project highlight the many stories and associated emotions drawn from my experiences throughout my undergraduate career.

## **Acknowledgments**

I would first like to thank Dr. Ian Dicke for being an incredible mentor and an understanding individual as I was not the best mentee throughout this entire process. Dr. Dicke was beyond helpful and phenomenal in providing me the invaluable feedback that I needed to kickstart my project and send me into full acceleration for its completion. I would also like to send a huge thank you to Aaron Menezes, Ashton Ventic, Jacob Resurrecion, and Martin Mamangun for being my best mates throughout this process, even though I got quite pestilent at times during our sessions and discussions. Your guys' desire to create more honest art was exactly what inspired me in my creative writing and production. Throughout the many stressful nights working on this project, you guys kept me moving forward and never gave up on me. I am more than grateful. Lastly, thank you to anyone who is or will listen to this project. I had so much I wanted to say, and I hope you enjoy the final product.

## Table of Contents

Abstract .....	i
Acknowledgements .....	1
Introduction: Why Music? .....	3
Link to Music .....	8
2017 .....	9
Nostalgia OD .....	14
Soft Glass Interlude .....	18
Muse (Living Room) .....	20
On My Mind .....	22
Conclusion .....	25
Bibliography .....	26

## **Introduction: Why Music?**

It may be somewhat strange to know that although I am not pursuing a degree in music, but rather a biological and medical science degree, I decided to probe the right hemisphere of my brain for a change and dive into storytelling and melodies for my senior Capstone project. As a Biology major in the beginning of my third year at the University of California Riverside (UCR), I was initially set on following my respective fields of science and medicine to do my Capstone project on. Everything had already been lined-up for me, as I was volunteering at a local hospital receiving clinical experience and working as an undergraduate researcher in the Dillman Lab at UCR Genomics. I had a potential research project available to me in my lab already as well, investigating how parasitic nematode fatty-acid and retinol-binding proteins modulate host immunity. As a student in the natural sciences, my brain was more accustomed to critical thinking, analyses, and facts – not so much creativity and emotion.

As interesting, accessible, and challenging the immunological research topic seemed to me, it felt as though some other external force was telling me to go down another route, to explore other areas of interest and passions I had in my life. That interest was music. I had grown up in a musical family, and it was apparent that music was always an integral part of my culture and everyday life. It was an entity I easily could not live without. From experiences with choir in my youth, to large family parties that exposed me to different genres and styles, to releasing small demos online, and playing gigs at UCR, I knew music was a viable option for me to explore for the Capstone. As University Honors indicated, the Capstone “enables you to take learning outside of the classroom and apply critical thought to the topics you are most passionate about” (UCR University Honors, 2020). Although I had very limited music theory knowledge, I took this statement into considerable thought, deciding whether to go forward with this far-

etched idea of creating a collection of artistic work I had never attempted before. I could either choose to play it safe within my scientific field or reach out of my comfort zone to explore and have fun making music.

In a music production course I took during the first quarter of my third year at UCR, I was introduced to the techniques and complexities of recording, mixing, and mastering music through a visiting instructor by the name of Bradley Butterworth. Initially, I took the class because it would fulfill a general education requirement for me. Later, I found it to be one of the most interesting classes I had taken at UCR. In that class, we grazed the surface of production, and I became acquainted with many creative and inspiring students who wanted to pursue a career in music. Although I was not on the same trajectory as them in terms of a professional career, I was enthralled by the amount of knowledge I had gained. It was such a welcoming and creative environment, allowing me to re-explore my love for music. From my colleagues, I was essentially forced to be more creative and to be in a different headspace than what I was used to.

Throughout the quarter in that class, we were to work on recording and producing our own tracks, with each assignment no longer than two minutes. Over time, I started to grow quite familiar with the digital audio workstation (DAW) we used in the class, Logic Pro X. Through our work at the UCR off-campus studio, Experimental Acoustics Research Studio, or EARS for short, I was able to understand more of the recording methods and techniques that went into production, as well as have the access to the equipment and digital interfaces that I could not normally afford on my own. I instantly fell in love with it all. The entire process of recording, sitting down at the mixing desk to place and configure the different frequencies in the mix, and finally polishing up the track during the master. I became almost obsessed by the struggle of listening through an entire track, not liking a certain aspect of it, and having to go back into the

studio to figure out what was wrong that made it sound the way it did. It was a newly found passion that related to the same struggles I would encounter in my research lab. I enjoyed the process of running an experiment, (or mix, in this case) identifying the issues and roadblocks in the results, and then going back to see how different variables could be adjusted in the process. In a way, the mixing process became my second research lab, which I was able to find a connection with and work around.

For the final assignment of that class, we were to fully produce and master a track utilizing all of the knowledge we had acquired throughout the quarter. We were all split into random groups of five and had to collaborate on a single track. With the collaborative effort of my newfound friends, Benjamin Palmer, Justin Cabute, Darryl Matsune, and Perry Verzosa, we were able to produce a psychedelic rock influenced track known as ‘Nostalgia OD’ which I would later decide to incorporate on my Capstone project, Eden – EP. From an article I read through my Capstone work, Sandra L. Nelson ‘s words from the University of Colorado really spoke to me. In her textbook, *Creativity in U.S. Music*, she states that “Today’s music standards for creativity include creative musical experiences along with performing and listening to music” (Nelson 141). Nelson expressed that in order to be inspired and creative, the artist needs to put him or herself in the environment where they will be exposed to situations where they can be creative. From this class, I was welcomed into a creative workspace that allowed me to gain invaluable knowledge about music production, as well as build my confidence to play small gigs at UCR during my third and fourth year. These gigs included the annual UCR’s Spring Nooners, UCR’s Kids-Rock Charity Concert, and other club or organization events. My instructor, Bradley Butterworth provided me the framework on how to start making music. He reminded me and all of my colleagues that anyone can make music, and that it is an attainable task that can be



done anywhere, as long as you are motivated, inspired, and creatively thinking. Going forward from the experience of the class, I had my mind finally set on the idea of creating an album or collection of songs for the Honors Capstone project. I knew I wanted to make some music.

During the next year, I spent many hours writing down memorable stories I had throughout my undergraduate career at UCR. I did not know exactly what I wanted to say or how I wanted to say things in the songs in my Capstone project, but I knew I had to get the general ideas down onto a paper to visualize my thoughts. In order to get myself in the right headspace and grab inspiration for writing the songs, I listened to a wide range of music, from jazz, rock, R&B, alternative rock, bedroom pop, psychedelic pop, and electronic music. Some of my greatest influences on the EP were from artists and bands such as The Beatles, Stevie Wonder, Jimi Hendrix, Queen, John Mayer, Tame Impala, Frank Ocean, Tom Misch, Rex Orange County, Beabadoobee, and many others from the past and present. These artists, among the many, inspired a lot of my writing and the way the songs are sonically. I would go through many records and search up lyrics online from these artists to get a glimpse of their mindset when writing. In *Teaching for Creativity in Music Performance*, an article by David Graham from the Scarborough Board of Education, he expresses that “Performers of music are involved in a process of interpretation, which is an essence an act of recreating past art” (Graham 24). What I took from Graham’s statement was that music was recycled over the years. Current artists take inspiration from artists before them and incorporate pieces of their work to emulate their sound or style. With this EP, I aimed at taking ideas from all the artists who have inspired me throughout this process by going through many albums and genres. Some artists I tried to emulate expressed more in-depth songwriting like Stevie Wonder and The Beatles, while others were more straightforward with what they had to say, such as Rex Orange County and

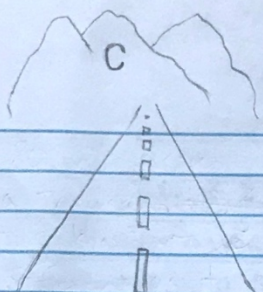
Beabadoobee. In my Capstone project, I attempted at incorporating both of these styles without trying to overdo anything. I realized the more I stayed true to my story and the emotions that I felt during those experiences, my lyrics and the story within the song came to life. I found that music was a lot like storytelling, and like a story, there were dynamics and arcs to complement it.

Although I had gained a lot of the knowledge on producing music, I still needed the guidance on whether certain sounds or instruments were sonically suitable within some of my tracks. With the guidance of the amazing composer and associate professor at UCR by the name of Dr. Ian Dicke, I was given invaluable feedback and clarity for my project. As my Capstone mentor, he provided me with some of the best ideas on how I could improve my project. In the second meeting I had with Dr. Dicke, he explained to me what I could be incorporating in order to liven up the song and add more dynamic. Although I was a little discouraged by his constructive criticism at first, I saw it as motivation to do my absolute best on this project. I was going to show Dr. Dicke and most importantly, myself, that I could complete this project and submit a great EP. With Dr. Dicke's clarity and needed feedback, I knew how I was going to go forward with my Capstone project.

The following is a collection of the handwritten lyrics of the songs in order of appearance on the EP. These images are of the original sheets of paper I wrote the lyrics and ideas on. These songs, written and edited in a class notebook over the span of about a year and a half were reflective of the stories and memories I had during my time at UCR. This EP serves as a storytelling device that encapsulates the many different emotions I felt. From regret, to nostalgia, to love, and to growing-up, I tried to tell my stories in the most honest and accurate way possible.

Attached here is the link to listen to the songs as you read through:

**[https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1CEXirOp85iS0iBA7Qd4NZ-fDpq4\\_ydbn?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1CEXirOp85iS0iBA7Qd4NZ-fDpq4_ydbn?usp=sharing)**



# 2017

By: Joshua Malilay on 08/16/19

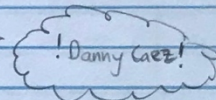
80 mile drives  
a thousand ~~taught~~ words  
the kids that we were  
different as it seems

~~the were we?~~ ← than it used to be\*

2017

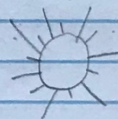
prechorus

oh, will it ever be the same?  
some things have changed  
will it ~~ever~~ be okay?



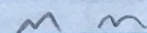
Chorus

but hold ~~x~~ tight and don't look back today  
we can't stop the sun it's ~~in~~ away  
and though it will change our faces grey  
we'll still be those kids we knew yesterday



verse 2

and now time it ~~is~~ flies  
rhythms have changed



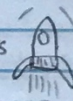
summers don't feel the same



I wish I could tell, tell you how I felt

and what I ~~wish I didn't say~~ regret that day

lightyears



oh, will it ever be the same?  
I know that we've changed  
there's none left to say ☹

Chorus (again)

Bridge?

Some things they change when we don't want them to  
but we still got to try and make it through  
and although the time has changed our views  
I'll always keep a place for you

-End-

'2017' was a piece I wrote on August 16, 2019 as I was going through a dusty box in the corner of my room. Initially, I was digging into the box to find my old TI-84 scientific calculator for my statistics homework due that night. As I was rummaging through, I came upon a stack of some old 35mm film pictures that contained me and my ex-best friends from the beginning of our first year in college. With 'Edge of Desire', a song by one of my all-time favorite artists, John Mayer, starting to play in the background of my shuffled Spotify playlist, I began to reminisce of the great times we had together. The most notable moments were during our car rides back to the dorms in Riverside on Sunday nights as we blasted Daniel Caesar's music from the radio and sang along the entire hour and fifteen minutes of our drive. At the time, we were oblivious to the realities of the world and had no real responsibilities. Our mindset was just to "live the college freshman life." We were just a couple of kids having fun, not knowing what the future had in store for us.

This song was an ode to the past and our younger selves. In Dan Laughey's *Music Media in Young People's Everyday Lives*, he illustrates that, "Sometimes listening to certain songs that were situated on the margins of their personal music maps none the less enabled the recalling of vivid memories about a particular time in their lives" (Laughey 176). Like this statement, my song '2017' was designed to make the listener reflect on a time in their lives when their life was great and had memorable experiences. I wanted to make the listener be optimistic for the future, but also give them the time and space to feel sad. In the chorus of the song, I recognized that the sun makes us older as it drains our energy and introduces wrinkles on our skin. Throughout my time in college, slight wrinkles have formed on my face, from what I can tell – from stress and of course, the sun. Although the song does have a slight melancholic tone to it, I tried staying optimistic as I stated, "*We'll still be those kids we knew yesterday.*" This expression was meant

figuratively, as we all know there is no possible way to reverse the time and be or feel younger again. All we can do once we have gotten older is reminisce and look back on a time in our lives when we felt a certain way. '2017' is about reflecting on the good times you had and those moments you wish you could have back again.

For the production of '2017', I had the incredible support of my talented friends, Aaron Menezes and Ashton Ventic. Aaron Menezes, who would co-produce the entire EP with me, helped my visions and ideas to come to fruition. I decided to make the song in the key of E major, with a tempo of 74 beats-per-minute, and in 4/4-time signature. Since Aaron lived in Arizona and I was in Riverside, most of our mixing sessions were done over Facetime, or through a Discord server. Although we did not have the luxury of meeting in person for every mixing session, we were still able to make everything work out through our virtual sessions. Since the inspiration for this song came as I was looking through old film pictures and listening to John Mayer, I knew I had to base this song off of one his best, but most underrated songs, 'Edge of Desire.' I wanted the same guitar tones and big band feel to the song, as something that could be performed in a large stadium one day with people shouting back the lyrics. 'Edge of Desire' is a coming of age song that reflects on the good times and regrets in your youth. Like this song, '2017' touches on those moments. Since I did not have access to a real drummer, we used a musical instrument digital interface (MIDI) to lay down my beats through a sampling pack by Aaron Sterling, who is one of John Mayer's drummers on tour. Other instruments that were performed through MIDI were the piano, performed by Ashton Ventic, and the violin and cello towards the end of the song near the bridge. In the song, I recorded three separate guitar tracks, one guitar through the main microphone, and the remaining two guitars through room microphones to simulate the guitars having a live and wide feeling. The piano takes were

recorded through Ashton Ventic's electronic piano. Ashton recorded four different takes, and the last take was exactly what I was looking for in the track.

The day after, we came together again with a clean instrumental track, and I started to record my vocal tracks through my relatively cheap, Audio Technica 2020 condenser microphone. Many of the equipment that was used throughout the EP were budget items, all around one hundred dollars. In the mixing stage of my vocals, we utilized a high-pass filter, cutting about one hundred-fifty hertz of low end on the channel equalization (EQ). By doing this, we aimed to cut out any unnecessary noise caused by the low-end frequencies. Additionally, since my voice tends to be a little bright when recording, we swept the high frequency range in the mix until we found an area where it was very discernable, around twelve kilohertz and then cut a small amount of it. This eliminated any "ringy-ness" to my voice. After equalization, we added a Logic Pro X stock compressor and kept it to a low threshold. I found that my vocals sounded better when they were more natural and "live" sounding compared to an excessive amount of effects which would make them saturated. If we kept the threshold too low, the audio would have been squashed after applying makeup gain and would ultimately end up sounding like I was singing in a box.

Furthermore, slight reverberation and delay plugins were added to my voice. Normally, we would use a specific reverb plugin on my voice, but for '2017' it sounded best with another Logic Pro X stock plugin, Platinum Verb. For the reverb, we sent my vocals through an auxiliary track and used very little dryness and eighteen percent of wetness levels with a 2.2-second-long reverb time. On top of that, we utilized a delay plugin that was not from Logic Pro X stock, but rather from a music website known as 'Waves'. After listening through John Mayer's 'Edge of Desire' as a reference track, I was very inspired to have my vocals sitting wide in the mix. These

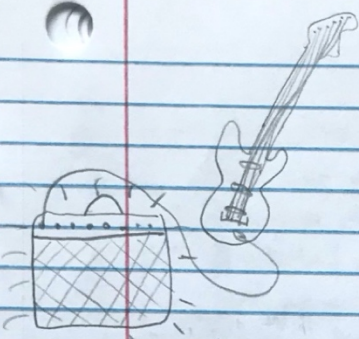
effects further brought out my voice in the mix and gave it more “punch” without them being too overpowering or thin. Although ‘2017’ was the first song featured on my EP, it was the last song to be finished for my Capstone project.



Nostalgia OD

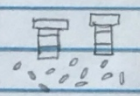
# Nostalgia OD

By: Joshua Malilay      Prod. Justin Cabute  
Co-writer: Ben Palmer      on 05/17/19



crunch!  
\* use overdrive pedal

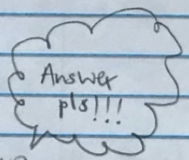
Oh yes I woke up a stranger  
my world ain't the same place ~~anymore~~ <sup>no more</sup>  
too late, I missed out on chances ~~with you~~  
what if I went back in time again?



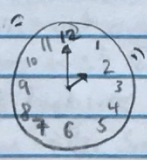
'Cause I think I've seen you in my dreams  
that's why I stay chasin' sleep<sup>z</sup>  
but this life ain't always what it seems  
I don't know what ~~she~~ means to me

main chorus

Oh, Nostalgia OD  
taking over me  
Nostalgia OD

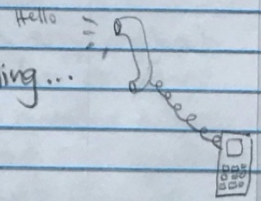


2 o'clock in the morning  
I know you're up, but not when I'm calling  
visions of you, ~~when will~~ can I get through?  
self sabotage whenever I'm plotting



2 o'clock in the morning  
my mind is ~~gone~~ gone, our memories calling...  
too much to drink, I'm overthinking  
what can I do? I still think of you...

~~should?~~



Oh, Nostalgia OD  
taking over me  
Nostalgia OD

Bridge x2

Don't say it's over, there are things that you still gotta know  
though time has gone by, you can't push these feelings at the door

(Repeat)

‘Nostalgia OD’ was a song that was originally produced by my good friend Justin Cabute in a recording, mixing, and mastering production course that I took during my third year at UCR. As I stated in the introduction, ‘Nostalgia OD’ came about as a class project that had to be turned in for an assignment. Our instructor, Bradley Butterworth explained to us that the first step in creating art is to have fun doing it. Although it is important to take your work seriously, it is also essential to enjoy the process by having fun. As Elizabeth Menard stated in her textbook *Creative Thinking in Music: Developing a Model for Meaningful Learning in School General Music*, in order to make music, “one must design environments that help learners to construct their personal understanding of music... to develop a sense of musical independence” (Menard 64). As stated before, although I was limited in my music theory and basic musical concepts, that did not stop me from wanting to create a collection of songs for this project. I continued to take the words of Mr. Butterworth to heart and surround myself with things that would inspire me to create art. Contributing to my creativity were the four other individuals that would help me make Nostalgia OD.

Before the track was actually laid down, we had discussed as a group, which included Justin Cabute, Benjamin Palmer, Darryl Matsune, Perry Verzosa, and me, that we were going to explore the psychedelic rock niche. Before we all came to this idea, I did some research on the origins of psychedelic rock and rock music in general. As stated from John Covach, a professor of music from Yale University, music tends to borrow ideas and inspiration from classical music throughout the years which lead to rock music (Covach 496). Some of our favorite artists including Pink Floyd, Tame Impala, Vinyl Williams, and many others took influence from those of the 18<sup>th</sup> century classical music at the time which helped inspire their sound and aesthetic. As we decided to ‘recycle’ ideas from those that inspired us to make Nostalgia OD, I found that statement to be

quite credible and true throughout my time creating the entire EP. On May 17, 2019 I started writing some lyrics and ideas down for the song with the help of my friend, Benjamin Palmer. Throughout the writing process of 'Nostalgia OD', Ben really helped me with my writing and brought out my stories and words to express how I felt. The song is about a past-love and the realization that you still want them in your life, but don't necessarily love them anymore. Although things did not work out between the two parties, you feel as if there is still something missing in your life that the past-love provided.

The song starts with a bass heavy drum kick that is present throughout the track. In the opening lines, I express how it feels to not have that past-love in your life anymore with "*Oh yes I woke up a stranger, my world ain't the same place no more.*" This line referred to the feeling of temporary dementia of the surrounding world when the one you once loved and spent a significant amount of time with, was no longer there for you. They have simply become the stranger you once knew before your relationship began with them. In the prechorus where I write, "*But this life ain't always what it seems, I don't know what it means to me*" I acknowledged the fact that sometimes what you feel in the present moment is not what you will feel in the long run. I ultimately expressed the uncertainty of my feelings toward this person, and rather, it was just nostalgia hijacking my mind.

Various instruments, from simulated to real, were used on this track. The beat was composed on FL Studios, a type of DAW, with stock drum sets. To help me with the mix, I had the assistance of Perry Verzosa and Jacob Resurrecion, who are amazing and talented audio engineers. A stock bass was also added in order to provide more depth and substance to the track. With the bass, we utilized a high-pass filter, cutting about one hundred-fifty hertz of low end to minimize the track from sounding 'muddy.' Afterwards, two synths were added to the track,

panned to the left and panned to the right, all from FL Studios as well. By panning the tracks, it helped achieve a stereo and panoramic recording. In my vocal recording sessions that were done with an Audio Technica 2020, the process took around a full day to complete. With my vocals, we shaved about twelve kilohertz to reduce the brightness yet again in my voice and then added slight autotune, just for effect. 'Nostalgia OD' was based off its reference track, 'Yes I'm Changing' by Tame Impala. Like 'Yes I'm Changing', 'Nostalgia OD' incorporates heavy drums, bass, and a driving synth throughout the duration of the song. We did automate the track as well, turning down the synth and drums during the second verse. This was done to add more dynamics to the song and leave the listener on their toes.

As soon as we thought the track was ready to be finalized in the mix, I contacted my friend, Aaron Menezes to see if he wanted to hop on the track and add a quick guitar solo. My request for the solo was very specific to him, in that I wanted a lot of overdrive and distortion added. I gave him multiple reference tracks and sang what I wanted him to play. In the end, the guitar solo worked perfectly and sat well into the song. 'Nostalgia OD' was one of the most experimental tracks I had created during the making of the EP.

## Soft Glass Interlude

‘Soft Glass Interlude’ was the second to last track that was completed on the project. With this song, I wanted to incorporate an instrumental break and moment of relaxation in the EP. For this reason, I did not create a separate sheet with lyrics. I was inspired by an artist by the name of Rex Orange County, who released a song off his 2017 album, ‘Apricot Princess.’ His song, called ‘Rain Man’, was a very soulful and jazz-inspired piece, and I wanted to have a track that was inspired by that. I recall when I first listened to ‘Rain Man’, I was entranced by the sentimental opening piano and saxophone smoothly gliding into the song.

With the help of my good friend, Ashton Ventic, I was able to express exactly how I wanted the interlude to sound, and how I wanted it to be inspired by ‘Rain Man.’ I made the track in the key of D major and told Ashton to play without a metronome. Although I did not know how to properly compose music, I was able to give Ashton my ideas and melodies for him to then make them come to life. I initially desired to add some light vocals and ambient sounds during our virtual mixing sessions, but after listening to the track repeatedly for a couple months, I knew I would do the track an injustice if I sang anything on it. ‘Soft Glass Interlude’ sounded incredible how it stood already, and not a word had to be said or sung.

Ashton played through an Akai electronic piano and had used Arturia plugins that had beautiful keyboard emulations of Rhodes, grand pianos, and organs. Stacked on top of his playing were nicely timed and open reverberations for a wide sounding effect. I spent an enormous amount of time with Ashton exploring different emulations trying to find the perfect choice. At the end of our search, I settled on a classic grand piano since I loved the natural sound of it the most. Furthermore, I admired how the piano sounded as it faintly reminded me of my adolescence and the good times I had with my old friends. This track illustrated that as I have

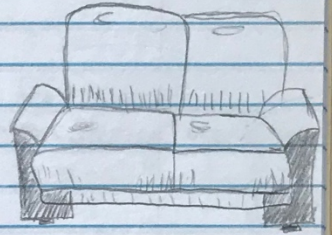
gotten older, I have become a stronger and wiser individual through my experiences, but from time to time, I do soften as I think of the easier and happier childhood I had.

Muse (Living Room)

# Muse (Living Room)

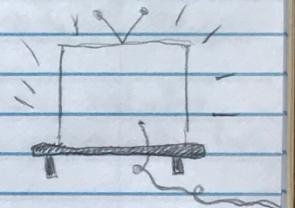
By: Joshua Malilay on 05/21/19

There's nothing else I'd rather do  
than lay with you  
Our hands ~~are~~ locked in the living room  
and you're my MUSE

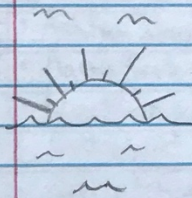


There's not a single day  
that I don't feel this way  
Just ~~can you~~ tell me we'll always be the same

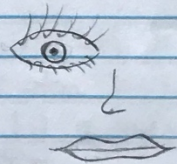
Ah ah ah (Oooo)  
Ah ah ah (Oooo)



You don't know what you've given me  
I can finally see (breathe)



Sun-kissed skin and hazel ~~green~~ glares  
~~I'm~~ lost in you, dear

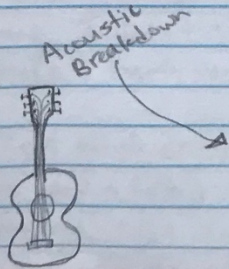


Nothing compares to this  
You're my everything, my bliss  
Just tell me we'll always be this way

Ah ah ah (Oooo)  
Ah ah ah (Oooo)

- End -

- Me & Jas Dialogue -



Tangled and wrapped up in your sheets  
my finger tips dance across your cheeks  
there's nowhere else I'd rather be...

I vividly remember the moment when I wrote ‘Muse (Living Room)’ back in May 2019. The song was almost as transparent as its title. On that scorching hot day of May 20, I recall my girlfriend, Jas, and I relaxing on her couch in her living room since the heat was too immobilizing to hang out outside. We were watching a funny “chick-flick” movie and laughing hysterically at a scene where the guy who is pursuing a girl, badly embarrasses himself. It was in that moment when we were not doing much, but simply enjoying the company of each other and laughing, that I realized I loved those small, frivolous moments with her. I decided to write a song about her the next morning when I woke up. Thus, as the song title shows, she was my muse. In the song, I continued to express my contentment in the prechorus stating, “There’s not a single day that I don’t feel this way, just tell me we’ll always be the same.” In this line, I showed that these moments I had with Jas were irreplaceable and incomparable. I would not have traded those moments for the world.

Towards the midway of the song, the more “produced” first half fades out and an acoustic break comes in. The audio catches a short, negligent conversation I had with Jas about our time at Disneyland. This portion was recorded through my phone recorder without her awareness in order to capture the candid conversation between us. Afterwards, I sang straight into mic of the phone, keeping the audio raw and natural with no post processing other than boosting the gain. Later, I would receive her approval for its use in the song. My last few lines in the song, “Tangled and wrapped up in your sheets, my fingertips dance across your cheeks, there’s nowhere else I’d rather be” concluded with how peaceful our day went afterwards. That is what ‘Muse (Living Room)’ was all about, enjoying the company of your significant other.

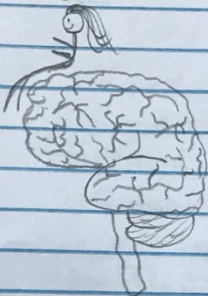


On My Mind

# On My Mind

By: Joshua Matilay

"on my mind"



I just gotta say (Key of D major)  
that you're beautiful everyday  
ain't no other girls that be standing in your way

I'd  
You know ~~I'd~~ be a fool  
to see you walk away from me  
'cause baby you know you got me...  
there ~~isn't another~~ ain't other place that I'd rather be

Chords: Dmaj7,  
Am7, Gmaj7,  
Bbmaj7

Chorus

You know why I do the things that I do  
girl you know it's 'cause I'm crazy about you  
I know I ~~can~~ fuck up from time to time  
but you know that you're the only thing on my mind

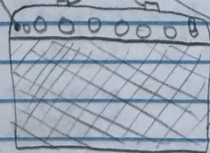
oh you know that  
I ain't frontin' baby...

\* Needs guitar solo

Even the sun can't outshine you  
you light up my days in every kind of way

\* Could use  
a key's section?  
\* Piano break-  
down solo?

And ~~those~~ your eyes, ~~those~~ those eyes  
girl I get so hypnotized, can someone tell me why?



Chorus

Now I've made mistakes, and you've been away  
but let's not let us go to waste...

I'm thinking about you and everything that you do  
girl don't you know I ~~love~~ need you!

Chorus (closing)

- End -

The last song on the EP, 'On My Mind' was yet another love song I had written for and about my girlfriend, Jas. This song, as a matter of fact, was written before any other song on the project earlier in 2018 after one of my first few dates with Jas. 'On My Mind' represents the affection and infatuation I had for her after a month of getting to know her better. Our connection was instant, and she made me feel like I had never felt before compared to my past relationships. While I was at work one day at Downtown Disney, my mind kept playing tricks on me as I thought I would see her many times walking throughout the resort. Every time the suspected girl turned an angle, however, it was not Jas. This happened continuously throughout my day at work. I recently spent so much time with Jas that I had gotten so accustomed and fond of her presence. I was so entranced with the thought of her that my mind started to deceive me. That very night while I drove home, I turned on my R&B radio station. I had recently been turned onto D'Angelo's R&B music from my friends at school. The first song that instantly played was D'Angelo's 'Untitled (How Does It Feel). As I was driving, I started to come up with another melody in my head that was based off that first song I heard. This song came to be 'On My Mind.' I was very interested in the sounds and melodies D'Angelo was able to come up with in his music. I started to do my research on the origins of his music and his influences. I found that African American folk, gospel, and most importantly, jazz was what gave him his unique sound. In *The Rock, Pop, and Jazz in Contemporary Musicological Studies* by Yvetta Kajanová from the Croatian Musicological Society at Comenius University, she touched on the importance of jazz in modern R&B music in that it originated from what ethnomusicologists call it the foundation of non-classical music in the twentieth century (Kajanová 350). Jazz ultimately paved the way for the more modern pop, rock, country, and hip-hop music we hear today. As I continued my further research on D'Angelo, I found that he was raised by a pastor whose

predominant music in the church was from gospel and jazz. With this in mind, I aimed to retain that same gospel, soul, and jazz tones in ‘On My Mind.’

Although ‘On My Mind’ was not recorded in a grand or expensive studio, like Electric Lady Studios where D’Angelo recorded many of his albums, I tried my best at attempting to emulate the same live sounds he incorporated in his music. Many of the tracks that I would use in the song were one-take recordings in order to reproduce the same sound and feeling as if it were performed live. For ‘On My Mind’ I used my Fender Nashville Deluxe Telecaster using the bridge pickup to capture the warmth and roundness of the humbucker pickups. With the help of my friend Aaron Menezes who co-produced with me, we added another beat from the Aaron Sterling drum kit set. Furthermore, with Ashton Ventic’s help again, we added a tranquil piano solo after the guitar solo in the song. This created dynamic in the song as the song reached its peak with the guitar solo, and then was brought back down with the piano solo. The piano solo was highly inspired by Tom Misch’s piano solo in his song ‘Movie’ which was a heavily influenced R&B and jazz track.

In regard to my vocal tracks, in the mixing process, we utilized another Waves compression plugin for my vocals through “Renaissance Vocal.” This plugin gave my voice a more “in your face” and intimate sound, and ultimately made it sound like I was in the room performing with the listener. Additionally, we used a default Logic Pro X reverb plugin known as Space Designer with about thirty-five percent dryness and seventeen percent wetness. This effect helped me emulate D’Angelo’s vocal effects, while also applying my own styles and tastes. In my opinion, ‘On My Mind’ was the most enjoyable song to produce and work on throughout the entirety of the EP.

## **Conclusion**

For my Capstone project, I decided to take an unconventional route compared to what most University Honors students did with their project. Although I had little to no experience in music theory and professional production experience, I was able to provide my best compilation of songs based on the experiences and stories I had throughout my undergraduate career at UCR. For my Capstone project, I wanted to show to my audience and prove to myself that I could handle the two dichotomies of logic and reasoning through my scientific side, and creativity and emotion through my artistic side. With the mentorship of Dr. Ian Dicke, support from my good friends, Aaron Menezes, Ashton Ventic, Jacob Resurrecion, Justin Cabute, Benjamin Palmer, Darryl Matsune, Perry Verzosa, my girlfriend Jas, and many others who have pushed me to be honest with myself during the entire process of this EP, I am truly grateful and proud of the progress I had made with their guidance.

To all that have heard or will hear this EP, I hope this project provides enjoyment to your ears, soul, and mind. While this Capstone project is merely a slight glimpse into my identity, I hope that anyone who listens to it understands the thoughts and the stories that I have experienced throughout my time at an incredible institution like the University of California Riverside.

## Bibliography

- Covach, John, and Graeme M. Boone. *Understanding Rock: Essays in Musical Analysis*. Oxford University Press, 1998.
- Graham, David. "Teaching for Creativity in Music Performance." *Music Educators Journal*, vol. 84, no. 5, 1998, pp. 24–28. *JSTOR*, [www.jstor.org/stable/3399126](http://www.jstor.org/stable/3399126).
- Kajanová, Yvetta. "The Rock, Pop and Jazz in Contemporary Musicological Studies." *International Review of the Aesthetics and Sociology of Music*, vol. 44, no. 2, 2013, pp. 343–359. *JSTOR*, [www.jstor.org/stable/23594803](http://www.jstor.org/stable/23594803)
- Laughey, Dan. "Music Media in Young People's Everyday Lives." *Music, Sound and Multimedia: From the Live to the Virtual*, edited by Jamie Sexton, Edinburgh University Press, Edinburgh, 2007, pp. 172–187. *JSTOR*, [www.jstor.org/stable/10.3366/j.ctt1g0b5k8.15](http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.3366/j.ctt1g0b5k8.15).
- Menard, Elizabeth. "Creative Thinking in Music: Developing a Model for Meaningful Learning in Middle School General Music." *Music Educators Journal*, vol. 100, no. 2, 2013, pp. 61–67. *JSTOR*, [www.jstor.org/stable/43288816](http://www.jstor.org/stable/43288816).
- Nelson, Sandra L. "Creativity in U.S. Music Textbook Series: 1912-1953." *Journal of Historical Research in Music Education*, vol. 25, no. 2, 2004, pp. 128–141. *JSTOR*, [www.jstor.org/stable/40215286](http://www.jstor.org/stable/40215286).