

Track 1. Red Disciple – by Zach del Rosario

Red Disciple is the product of a fever dream; I woke one morning out of a febrile sweat with a single riff running through my head. I spent the following day twisting and building on this idea to create the piece, drawing from disparate sources of psychedelic King Crimson and groovy Freddie Hubbard.

Hubbard's 'Red Clay' was a major inspiration for the piece Red Disciple: The groovy middle section of the piece was heavily inspired by the bass work in Red Clay. The rhythmic subdivision of Red Clay is centered around four measures of 4/4 - the first two of which have a single emphasis on the third beat, while the last two which have emphasis on the second and fourth beats. This creates an interesting rhythmic pattern which I tried to replicate in my own piece.

King Crimson's 'Indiscipline' was also a major influence for Red Disciple. The intro for Red Disciple is very similar to that of Indiscipline - both are very sparse, bassy, and percussive. The main riff is also indirectly inspired by Indiscipline - both are written in 5/4, and though Indiscipline seems to meander more and is far more psychedelic, the main riff for Red Disciple is in many ways a harder take on Indiscipline.

The resulting piece is a cross-pollination of jazz and progressive rock, with an arrangement harkening back to the sparse old days of early rock.

Track 2. Full Commotion - by Jea Young Park

Full Commotion was influenced by the course Human Factor Interface Design (aka HFID), which gave me materials to think about how the digital world has shaped the way people think and interact with one another. For the song itself, the inspiration came when I was taking the T toward Braintree station. Because I was so heavily influenced by HFID at the time, the busy train seemed as if it were an analogy to the information-inundated online world where helpless Internet personas get swept away. The musical composition reflects this thought and the bustling sounds of a train in a heavy electronica composition. The diverse computer-generated sounds plant this song firmly in the synth rock genre, giving so much diversity in one three-track album that we are producing.

One key feature of this song is that it presents the voicing talents of all four band members – Zach, Kris, Mariko, and I. Plus, it was planned since the lyric writing stage that our vocal recording that the four voices would span the entire left-right soundscape in a stereo speaker. This provided the biggest music production challenge for this production of the project: we need to preserve balance and presence of four different singers with different vocal qualities and techniques. We have been getting the mixing work through collective listening and editing. The mixing process, however, cannot improve the quality of the sample itself, which we could have

recorded better using condenser microphones instead of dynamic ones. The vocal mixing experience we gained at this stage will help us to mix our next and very last song, Memories.

Track 3. Memories – by Kris Groth

“Memories” was a song that just happened. It wasn’t born out of a fever dream or inspired by how we interact with machines today. The song itself was an elaboration on a 13/8 arpeggiated chord progression that I just happened to come up with about a year and a half ago and catalogued in my idea bank. When starting this project, I tried writing entirely new material without much success, so I looked through my idea bank and the ideas just flowed for this particular piece.

While there is no definite inspiration for the creation of this song, there are still many intentional nods to works by professional artists, particularly the band Opeth. Opeth is a Swedish progressive metal band. Their music is all too often lumped in with over-the-top death metal acts and just plain noise. This, however, is not the case. Sure, they have some very abrasive vocal parts from time to time, but that does not diminish their musical genius. Opeth is one of the most ‘*together*’ bands I have ever listened to and seen live. Their recordings are flawless, mastered beautifully, and surprisingly clean for such a heavy style. The music itself is elaborate. It is characterized by complex and pleasing harmonies, “dope” polyrhythms, and incredibly lively melodies. What amazes me the most about this band is the wide range of emotions that they manage to convey in a song, much less an entire album.

I’ve taken huge amounts of inspiration from Opeth’s style in composing my own song “Memories.” Particular examples include the clean and ethereal interlude near the end of “The Baying of the Hounds,” the luring and almost defeated sounding final melody of “The Drapery Falls,” and the overall structure of “Dirge for November.” This song wasn’t meant as a sort of tribute to Opeth, but the feel and style of it just lent itself so well to many of the things they do. And the ending was inspired by the bit-crushed ending to “Bleak.”