

RETHINKING IAP

Messing with more tape recordings recently, I have to say I think the most beneficial aspect of IAP in the creative process is the recontextualization it can give you. As a solo artist, it is especially invaluable, as it creates a process of making art that becomes reactive to things you couldn't have done in a single area alone.

By giving myself a method to perform and record something distinctly as a musical exploration alone, with no pressure to get anything "right", I'm able to come back later as a producer and manipulate that performance into something with more structure or emphasis on the parts I like the most. The way this feedback loop can be repeated throughout projects creates results where I can end up with something I never would have imagined, which is what I love.

Adding the element of video performance to the equation changes things, and it's something I strive to incorporate more as I become more familiar with the hardware I currently have. While there's always a time and a place for things to be produced thoroughly and deliberately, just hitting record and witnessing a live manipulation of sound production will always have its place as an engrossing medium to participate in. This is why live music is such a big thing, even when we have the fully mixed and mastered songs available to us freely, we love to see the process unfold right in front of us, it's a magic of its own. Because of all this, I'm a bit obsessed with learning the ins and outs of the production process, and that applies to both the meticulous craft of making things inside of Digital Audio Workstations with unlimited tracks and effects, but also the live performance process of getting things sounding as tight as possible via direct outputs alone. Being in a world where we have the ease and convenience of combining these two methods is exciting, if a bit more daunting with the amount of decisions to factor in and potential for analysis paralysis.

I feel like this course gave me more insight on the ways in which we interact with mediums and our perception of what it means to use them. The more we think about what it means to use technology, whether it's a simple paintbrush or the most advanced computers, the more we can realize it means becoming a human with extended capabilities. I remember watching a nature documentary once that discussed the importance of tools in the evolution of humanity, and our unique capability to do so. The important aspect that comes from it however is that in our brains, a tool we're using isn't seen as a separate object from ourselves, but instead a literal extension of the body. For example if a sword is being used, according to the brain, you now have an arm with double the length to manipulate. This applies universally to the world of arts and the various mediums that we incorporate, as the most skilled artists in any genre are able to translate

ideas from their head through “pen to paper,” having their ideas come across as seamlessly as possible with the tools at their disposal.

Obviously the most difficult part to integrate into an online course is the physical interaction involved with different workspaces and production processes. Being someone that wants to learn the tools of my trade in more of a “professional” studio environment as well, this can be hard to grapple with, especially when I know that campus students have a dedicated recording space to deal with this learning aspect. It’s not a necessity to understand the concepts and techniques behind what’s going on, but I do have to wonder how I will learn the workflow of a fully equipped space later on. I’m wondering if I can even intern at a studio before switching jobs, just to be sure I can keep up with what’s going on, although ideally I’m able to find something that can show me the ropes as we go.

I think the more we emphasize what we can do with the modern tools available to us as average consumers, the better. Since our online education of the arts is essentially boiled down to becoming a solo production studio, it becomes essential to realize what we’re capable of doing with the utilities available to us on our computers. I’m glad I’ve had a head start in this area with some experience I’ve had throughout my life, but focusing as much as possible on how we can achieve these things in our own way, outside of the studio, is critical for our growth as independent creators.