Audio Project Reflection:

For my Audio Project I read one of Aesop’s fables and supplemented it with atmospheric elements, sound effects, and music. I did all of this in Logic Pro X with its live recording feature for the vocals and music. For the atmospheric elements and sound effects I used various samples in sample packs that I’ve gotten over the years. The fable I picked to read was “The Owl and The Grasshopper.” It tells the story of how an owl tricks and eats a grasshopper using flattery. I picked this option because I couldn’t settle on a personal academic essay to recite. I chose this particular reading because it was one of the longer stories.

My creative process for this was recording my voice using the tracking vocal track in Logic that has a DeEsser preset. I’ve never used a DeEsser before because I usually remix tracks and have never in depth went in to clean up my voice recording for a project. A DeEsser apparently gets rid of sibilance “shhh” sounds in the vocal. There was also a compressor preset on the track that I just left and put another compressor on top of it because I didn’t want to alter anything on the original track. I eq’ed out the lows and highs of the vocal, boosted the 500hz range by 2db, and lowered the 2500hz range by 7db. This is because the 2500hz is a sensitive range for the ears and since I wanted the listener to focus on the voice I wanted to make the track more desirable to listen to. There were also spikes in the volume sometimes so I added a compressor to keep the volume down. Lastly the track is sent to two different busses with different reverb plugins on them. They were presets and I liked how they sounded so I didn’t mess with them. Busses are essentially additional outputs for the sound being sent so the voice signal is being sent through the original output 1 but also through bus 1 and bus 2 output. The reason for doing this over just putting reverb on the original track is so that if you have additional tracks that you want to have the same reverb on you can just send them to those busses rather than having another reverb plugin on them.

The second recorded track is the guitar. I made up a simple 4 chord finger picking progression, I’m not sure what key it’s in, and just played that for the entirety of the recording. I chose to finger pick over strumming so that it was less loud and blended in better as background noise. The track has the same plugins and settings as the vocal track.

All of the samples I used including the page turning sound effects, outside foley and atmosphere, and barred owl, cricket, swooping, and chomping noises were taken from sakuraburst sample packs that I bought of Samplify a while ago. The person selling the sample pack personally recorded these and has given full permission to use the samples to anyone using the pack. This is standard practice for most purchasable sample packs. I used the page turning sound effects because they fit the storybook theme and the outside bird, wind atmospheric elements for the setting of the story. At the parts where there is supposed to be dialogue between the owl and grasshopper I used samples of the respective animals. All of these samples were eq’ed and mixed to fit in a certain frequency range for the project and not overlap the vocal too much. The final thing I added was a pad preset in the alchemy synth that serves as a kind of drone and fills up more space in the mix.

For this project I used a DeEsser for the first time and learned what it did. This was also my first time creating a sort of atmosphere for a voice recording instead of creating music around it. Foley in sample packs is usually meant for placing in the back of a song as a barely noticeable element to give the song a kind of creative uniqueness. This project was the first time I used foley and sound effects as essential parts of a song. The vocal for the track is a bit unprofessional as I cough and stutter on a few sentences but I ultimately decided to keep it because I’m still sick and it’s difficult finding a quiet place to record audio in our four-person suite. Also I would have to rerecord exactly over the previous vocal or else I would have to time the special effects differently.