February 23, 2020

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Hounds Of Winter Week 6

Listen to “The Hounds of Winter” from Sting’s Mercury Falling (Hugh Padgham producer/engineer).

In addition to paying attention to balances and panning, focus specifically on the timbre of the various drum elements (kick, snare, hat, toms, cymbals), bass, piano, guitars and vocals.

You can use the Mix Visualizer to create a balances and panning chart.

Post this, as well as your written analysis of this track. Be sure to discuss balances, panning, and EQ. Try to associate an adjective with each element.

20Hz	31.5Hz	63Hz	125Hz	250Hz	500Hz	1kHz	2kHz	4kHz	8kHz	16kHz	20kHz

SUBJECTIVE:

WARMTH	BODY	PRESENCE	BITE	SIZZLE

Vocals

Bass

Kick

Snare

Guitar (electric)

Organ

Low Tom

Medium Tom

High Tom

Acoustic Guitar

Hi Hat

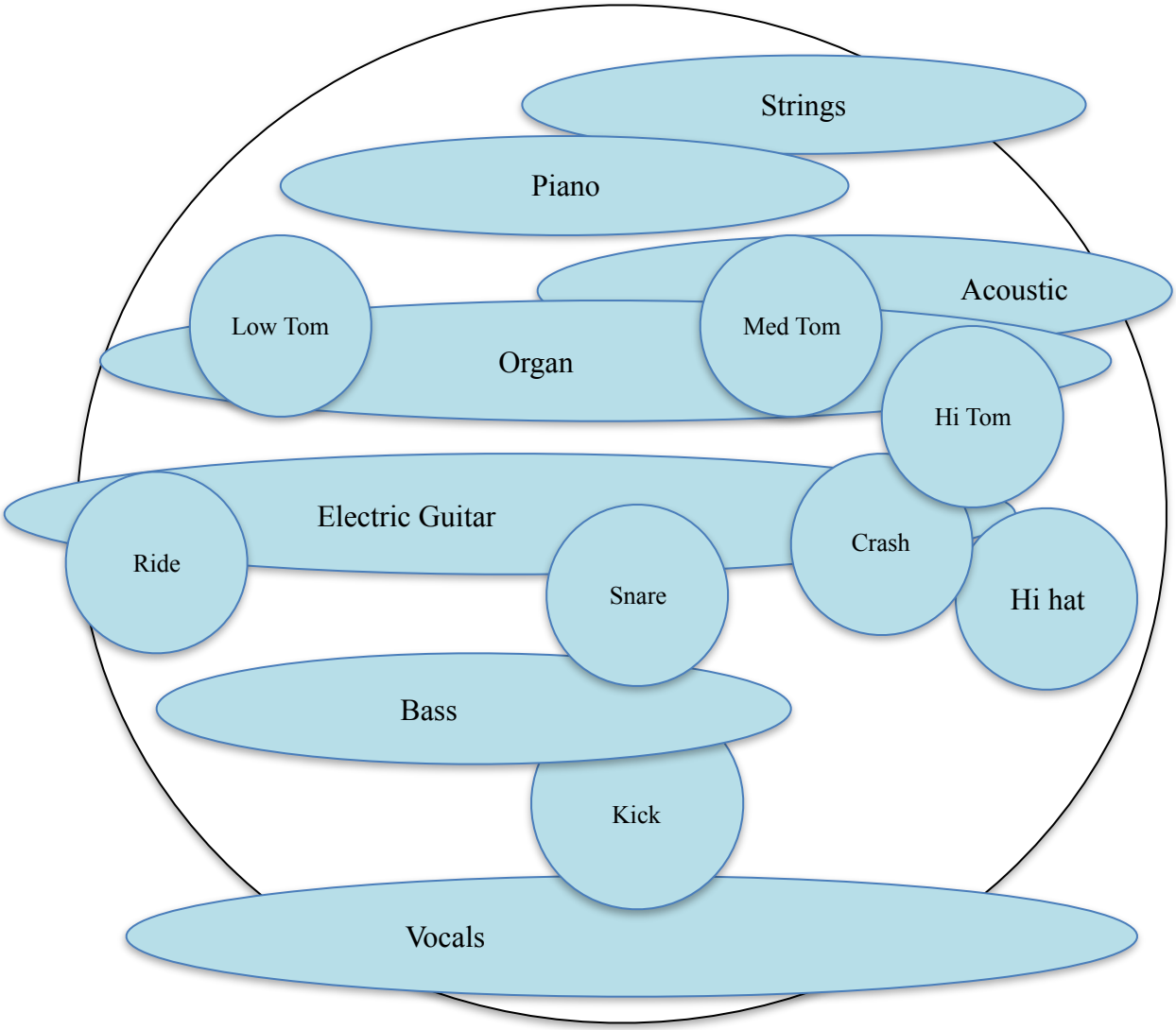
Crash

Ride

strings

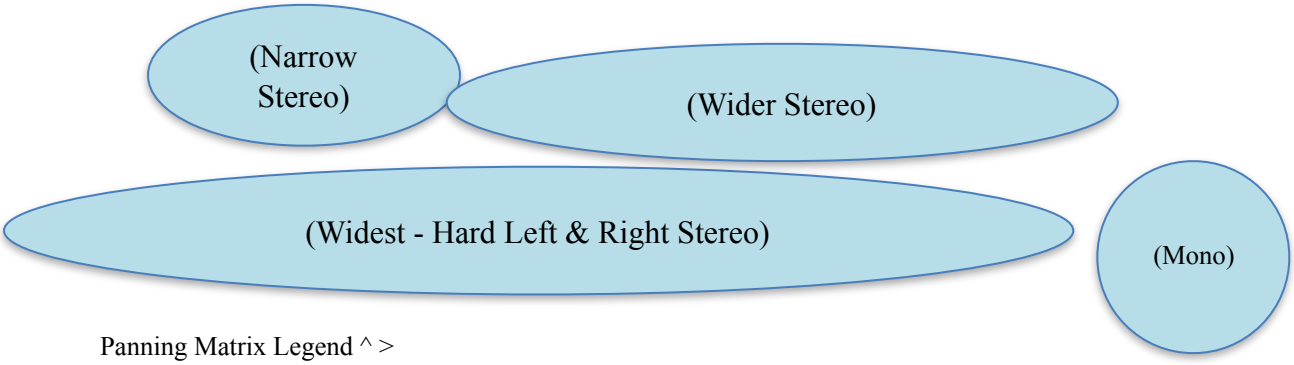
piano

QUIET / BACK



RIGHT

LOUD / FRONT



Panning Matrix Legend ^ >

Descriptors

Vocals: full bodied (extended the entire frequency range from 63hz- ~19000hz). Warm/Clean.

Bass: Round & Mellow/Warm

Kick: Round, Heavy

Snare: Punchy, somewhat thick

Guitar: Articulate,

Organ: Neutral, Musical

Low Tom: Robust (hard to tell because they hit so infrequently)

Medium Tom: Robust (hard to tell because they hit so infrequently)

High Tom: Robust (hard to tell because they hit so infrequently)

Acoustic Guitar: Present

Hi Hat: Silky, clean

Crash: Attacky, clean

Ride: defined, clean

strings: Thin, undefined

piano: Thin, undefined

Overall Analysis

I am not in my usual listening environment (I am using my headphones as I am traveling), so some of my judgements may be off as a result.

With regards to panning, drum elements seemed to be recorded in mono, and the melodic instruments recorded in stereo. While there was certainly directional panning with regards to the melodic instruments, for the most part, all instruments aside from the acoustic guitar and strings could be heard in both headphone simultaneously. The stereo width varied, with the electric guitar and the organ seemingly having the widest panning. The acoustic guitar, bass, strings, and piano had somewhat wide

pannings. These elements could be heard more clearly in one ear than the other. The kick, snare and vocals seemed to be panned straight down the center. The rest of the kit seemed to be panned audience perspective, with the hat and crash on the right, and the ride and floor tom on the left.

From a levels perspective, the vocal was the most present element. Next, followed the snare/rim and kick. The bass sits slightly quieter than the kick, but not by much. The electric guitar follows in relative loudness. Not far behind sits the organ, panned slightly further right than the electric guitar (which is panned further left). The acoustic guitar sits quieter than the electric guitar and organ. The hats are the loudest of the high-percussive instruments (crash, ride, hat). Next seemingly fell the ride and subsequently the crash. The toms all sat as the quietest elements of the drum kit. The quietest elements are the strings and piano, which are heard infrequently from where they sit in the mix. It is not until the end of the song that they can be clearly heard. This only occurs so many other elements drop the mix. Neither the piano or strings are very well defined with regards to how they stand out in the mix.

EQ was by the hardest facet of the song to judge. Using Audio Hijack and an 18db high and low cut, I was able to determine the following:

1. The vocal takes up a broad range of frequencies. The words of the vocal could be discerned from as low as 63hz. The only other elements heard this low were the bass and kick. The vocal could be heard along with the hats, ride, and crash at 20000hz.
2. The snare was the next elements to be heard. Overall this element had lots of low mid and high frequency energy. Along with the hats, crash, and ride, the snare could be heard as high as 19000-20000hz.
3. While predominately in the lower registers, both the bass and kick could be heard up to about 1000-2000hz. The kick had a slightly lower Eq spike than did the bass.
4. The hats, crash, and ride could primarily be described as silky. These elements had mostly high frequency energy, and could not be heard below 1000-2000hz.
5. The toms, while quiet, seemed to predominately take up 250-500hz.
6. The guitar was not overly harsh or driving, making me believe there was not a lot of extra energy added to the 500hz-1000hz range. Perhaps there was even a cut made here. 2000-4000hz seemed predominately the range that the electric guitar sat in.
7. Slightly higher than the electric guitar was the acoustic guitar, which seemed to not have as much low frequency energy as the electric guitar, and more towards 4000hz. This instrument acted very percussively (as is expected when in a full mix)
8. The organ seemed to sit above the electric guitar with regards to frequencies. While it did not seem that the organ had any particular boost made, it did seem like the lower frequencies were rolled off along with the upper most.
9. The strings and piano occupied the narrowest frequency band. Both these elements were thin and undefined. The piano seemed to sit between 1000hz-16000hz. The piano, was geared slightly towards lower frequencies than the strings, which sat about the piano starting at about 2000hz and extending up to 16000hz.

(I want to apologize incase I was way off the mark on the EQ side of things, I am very curious on Berklee's analysis regarding this track. I'm looking forward to revisiting this once I return home.)