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### The Insanity of “The Mind Electric”

In this artifact analysis, I will analyze the song “The Mind Electric” from the album *Hawaii: Part II* by Miracle Musical. *It is generally accepted by fans of the album that all the songs in the album are connected into one cohesive story*, though most fans cannot agree on what exactly the story is due to the interpretive nature of the album as a whole. Because of this, I will be using some supporting evidence from the other songs in the album in my analysis of “The Mind Electric”. This analysis will describe and interpret the events of the song and showcase how it uses its medium and relationship to the rest of the album to uniquely portray the protagonist, Simon, going insane.

Beginning with the second half of the song, “The Mind Electric” portrays Simon going to a court hearing for the crime of murdering the girl he loved. This is going off the events of the song “Murders” which is two songs before “The Mind Electric”. Though, in “Murders” it is unclear whether Simon actually committed the crime or if it was done by a mysterious third party. I believe that “The Mind Electric” can shed light on this, however. The line “I’ve a good heart albeit insane” would seem to be Simon admitting guilt to the crime, but something odd occurs here in the song. *As the word “insane” is sung, the song distorts in such a way that the word could be heard as either “insane” or “innocent”*, leaving the truth intentionally obscured.

*This means that there is a distinct possibility that, despite his admission, Simon is not only innocent, but completely sane going into the song's narrative.*

After the trial, Simon is sent to get help for his supposed insanity. The particular iconic line used here is: “Condemn him to the infirmary”. The word choice here feels menacing, and the word “condemn” specifically holds very dark connotations. This is further emphasized by unsettling distortions in the music immediately following the line. Within “the infirmary” Simon is subjected to electroconvulsive therapy (ECT), which we can determine because of the lines “...circuitry of fright” and “...as lightning strikes mine temples thus.” This appears to drive Simon insane, or more so, as indicated not only by the narrative itself but by increasing distortion in the music, particularly around the points where the therapy is supposedly administered.

At the end of the song, the distortions cease, presumably because the ECT is done being administered. Despite the ECT itself being over, it appears to have left an immeasurable effect on Simon's consciousness. This is indicated primarily by the line “Someone help me understand what's going on inside my mind,” followed by one of my favorite lines of the song: “Doctor I can't tell if I'm not me.” This is all further supported by the subsequent song “Labyrinth” which portrays Simon lost within his own mind. This is indicated by many lyrics including “Imaginary mind. Imaginary lines,” as well as the line “I'm trapped,” being repeated six times as the song concludes.

Having his mind jumbled by the ECT appears to have caused Simon to have forgotten that his lost love was ever killed to begin with, as shown in the song “Stranded Lullaby”. This is primarily shown in the line “I'd like to know why you are all alone while I'm lost at sea”. Simon, believing her to still live, goes out to sea to look for her, which is not something a sane person would be likely to do. This all culminates in the finale of the album, “Dream Sweet in Sea

Major”, in which Simon dies alone at sea, finally reuniting with his lost love in the afterlife. This is supported by many lines in the song, some examples including: “It feels like flying, but maybe, we’re dying,” and “Joy mirages kingdom come”. All these events are direct consequences of the events of “The Mind Electric”, and I believe they all help hammer home how ECT drives Simon to complete insanity.

There is still one more aspect of “The Mind Electric” I would like to discuss, and it is something that must always be addressed when analyzing the song: the first half of it is entirely in reverse. The actual contents of the first half are identical to the second half, sans the distortions discussed earlier. *This effect serves to unobtrusively help indicate how the ECT jumbled Simon’s brain, as well as working to set the scene for the second half of the song.* It makes it so everyone entering the song immediately feels uncomfortable and thoroughly menaced.

The unique musical and narrative techniques used in “The Mind Electric” help it immersively represent the experience of Simon being driven mad by ECT. The dark events of the song are also crucially important to the remainder of the album, which serves to increase the importance of the song itself by further contextualizing it. In conclusion, “The Mind Electric” tells the depressing story of a likely-innocent man being driven to insanity and eventually dying because of it, which is all uniquely represented by certain aspects such as half of the song being backward, distortions in the music, and a narrative strengthened by the other songs in *Hawaii: Part II*.