

Ben Finkelstein
Cyberpunk
Artist Statement
May 4, 2023

Cyberpunk to me means many things, as I believe it's a much wider genre than people give credit. There's the side of it that seems very aesthetic based, the bright lights and holograms, neon signs and flying cars. Almost a technology utopia. The opposite would be the desolate, dark atmosphere. Where life has grown much harder and technology isn't mainly used for good. Different examples tap into different sides of it and the different sides have even more different sides, the deeper it goes it seems. The politics are another side that are even more deeply intriguing as it seems there's common themes between all cyberpunk society. So maybe the politics is what makes something cyberpunk rather than the aesthetics?

There are many recurring themes of capitalism, corporate entities becoming more powerful than the government, where money is king and people will do anything for money. The theme of technology becoming what the largest companies are selling is interesting too as technology seems to be such a desirable and necessary thing for the rich and the poor.

As far as my project goes I was trying to encapsulate all of that but in my own way. I used many atmospheric sounds and effects to simulate the feeling of being alone in some huge city and the feeling of sounds on the streets that are unavoidable. I used some hardware synths for this which for me feels more creative and free flowing but in this instance it was fun to sit in my room with my synths it felt like I was in a cyberpunk world using my instruments. The delay and reverbs I put on the hat and the snare sort of remind me of very electric sounds that might come from a car in the future or some type of electric sparking from something malfunctioning. The drums I chose are very fast and digital. The feeling of being chased or adrenaline. And the contrast between them reminds me of how quick something can switch from peaceful to intense.

Overall it's a world that I love. Whether it's the neon lights or the foggy air (my favorite is the foggy noir style). There's something special in all of it that's somewhat comforting. Maybe it's because our world hasn't quite come to that level yet which is relieving but maybe it's striving for something that is out of reach. Many different people like many different aspects of cyberpunk society and that is what makes it so special. Great class and have a good summer!

Lilliana Luján-Griffith
Cyberpunk
Final: Artist Statement
May 5, 2023

For my final, I chose to make a visualizer video for Ben's song *arch odyssey*. I chose to compile clips that I have collected over the past year and have never used. All of the clips are things that I have filmed on my camcorder. The clips of the fetus and the red silhouette of the man's body are from a project I helped another film student with last year. For the fetus, he bought a small baby toy and we hung it from a clear string in a fishbowl filled with water. On the back of the fishbowl, we put vaseline to simulate a womb type setting. We shined a red light behind the back of the fishbowl so that it would look more flesh-like. The red silhouette was a cut out of a man with a red light shined through the back as well. The clip I used of the man tapping on another man was from a music video I filmed. I was color correcting the video and in the process, the clothes were solo'd and I took a video of that part in the color correcting process.

For my video, I wanted to start talking about biology and technology. I used videos of very real things but then edited them so that they would look more manufactured. An example of this would be the driving videos which capture very natural things like trees and people but are almost hard to make out in the video as the shapes get pixelated a little and the colors shift from their natural colors to abnormal bold colors. There's also another clip of a spine which I felt looked very interesting with the different layers which added new lights and lines on top of it.

I was also very inspired by glitches and digital media for my video. This is my favorite realm of the cyberpunk world and something that I had never explored visually before so I definitely wanted to do it for this project. I also felt like this song was perfect for these kinds of visuals which is interesting because I don't think Ben was picturing these visuals when he was making this song. I know that Ben discussed his favorite style of cyberpunk being the noir style. He liked the more desert, empty world visuals from noir styled cyberpunk and that's the exact opposite of the style that interests me the most and that I used as inspiration for my visuals.

I also wanted to experiment with layers and different colors in my video to create a feeling of living in a constructed world. I didn't want it to necessarily feel cluttered but I wanted it to feel like every item had a story within itself and they were all built together to be in one big machine. An example of one of these moments would be the beginning of the video when I have three clips layered. One of them is the red silhouette clip, the other is a clip of a nightstand with a digital clock, and the other is a clip from inside of a car with a digital clock. The two clips with the digital clocks layered I feel compliment one another.

I would like to work on this video more and work on the colors. I would like to make the video less dark and make some of the colors more vibrant as I feel like that matches with my visual interpretation of cyberpunk more than the current version of the video does.