

Creative Process for “Add the Heart” by Nick Zazove

I started the beat and melodic line for “Add the Heart” in a Neuköln, Berlin cafe in October 2022. I used only my laptop. It comprised a repeating 4/4 drum beat and 6/8 free contrapuntal melodies each with different tonal centers. Somehow, the metrically divergent drum pattern and overtone-rich synths weave its wildest parts together. The project file actively uses about 130 tracks and multiple bus sums within most instrument sections for the orchestration: vocals, woodwinds, horns, bass tracks, and EFX, percussion, drum kit, synths, mallets, and gamelans.

The song makes heavy use of resampling. For instance, I bounced in place a portion of the gamelan section from verse one, then imported a tiny snippet into Logic’s Alchemy granular synthesis plug-in. I further modulated the “position” of the playhead with respect to the velocity information and emphasized the transient with a multiple segment envelope, producing a pitched arpeggio. Then, I bounced this new pattern into place, and manually sliced the waveform into an *awesome* percussive loop for what I call the “Take the Story” breakdown. The song contains no input from outside source material.

The technical aspect of the music video for “Add the Heart” directly reflects my audio and video editing skills. For my senior history seminar at college, I created a documentary about the band Sonic Youth from found footage, which served as a reference for my research methods. The lyrics and visual continuity engage in dynamic interplay to speak about systemic racism and the digital era’s normalization of oversaturated information streams.

Creating this video was my first experience coding, and encouraged new creative paths. Certainly without “Add the Heart,” I would not have started teaching myself After Effects or Max/MSP— programs which I intend to use throughout my entire career generating audio, visuals, and developing software.