SAP62

Adv. Recording And Mixing

Logbook/Report

NAME: Wisnu Ikhsantama
STUDENT ID: 10048
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Executive Summery

This logbook is about the SAP62 final assignment to produce an already published song into a different genre. The objective of the assignment is to reinterpret a piece of music into another genre.

Assignment Overview

The assignment is to record and mix an already published song into a different genre. The objective of the assignment is to reinterpret a piece of music into another genre. It is done by producing a new song and going through the pre production phase and also the production phase, which consisted of recording, mixing, and mastering.

Pre-Session Planning

Overview and analysis of the original genre

The original genre of ABBA's Dancing Queen is Pop-disco. The instruments were drums, strings, piano, bass, guitar, and vocals. The song is using 4 on the 4 drums beats that make people going to dance. The beat is usually found in disco songs. Disco is a genre of music that was popular in the 1970s, though it has since enjoyed brief resurgences including the present day. The term is derived from discothèque (French for "library of phonograph records", but subsequently used as proper name for nightclubs in Paris). Its initial audiences were club-goers from the African American, GLBTQ, Italian American, Latino, and psychedelic communities in New York City and Philadelphia during the late 1960s and early 1970s. Disco also was a reaction against both the domination of rock music and the stigmatization of dance music by the counterculture during this period. Women embraced disco as well, and the music eventually expanded to several other popular groups of the time.

Musical influences include funk, Latin, psychedelic and soul music. The disco sound has soaring, often reverberated vocals over a steady "four-on-the-floor" beat, an eighth note (quaver) or 16th note (semi-quaver) hi-hat pattern with an open hi-hat on the off-beat, and a prominent, syncopated electric bass line sometimes consisting of octaves. The Fender Jazz Bass is often associated with disco bass lines, because the instrument itself has a very prominent "voice" in the musical mix. In most disco tracks, strings, horns, electric pianos, and electric guitars create a lush background sound. Orchestral instruments such as the flute are often used for solo melodies, and lead guitar is less frequently used in disco than in rock. Many disco songs employ the use of electronic instruments such as synthesizers.

Overview and analysis of the new genre

The original song will be reproduced to glam metal genre. Glam metal (also known as hair metal/sleaze metal (and often used synonymously with pop metal) is a subgenre of hard rock and heavy metal. It combines elements of this genre with punk rock and pop music, adding catchy hooks and guitar riffs, while borrowing from the aesthetic of 1970s glam rock.

It arose in the late 1970s and early 1980s in the United States, particularly on the Los Angeles Sunset Strip music scene, pioneered by bands such as Kix, Hanoi Rocks, Mötley Crüe, Quiet Riot, and Bon Jovi. It was popular throughout the 1980s and the beginning of the 1990s, bringing to prominence bands including Poison, Cinderella and also Bon Jovi.

Musically, glam metal uses traditional heavy metal songs, incorporating elements of hard rock and punk rock, while adding pop-influenced catchy hooks and guitar riffs. Like other heavy metal songs of the 1980s, they often feature shred guitar solos. They also include extensive use of harmonies, particularly in the characteristic power ballads, slow, emotional songs that gradually build to a strong finale. These were among the most commercially successful singles in the genre and opened it up to a wider audience that would not have been attracted to traditional heavy metal. Lyrical themes often deal with love and lust, concerns inherited from blues music, with songs often directed at a particular woman.

Aesthetically glam metal draws heavily on the glam rock or glitter rock of the 1970s, often with very long backcombed hair, use of make-up, gaudy clothing and accessories (chiefly consisting of tight denim or leather jeans, spandex, and headbands). The visual aspects of glam metal appealed to music television producers, particularly MTV, whose establishment coincided with the rise of the genre. Glam metal performers became infamous for their debauched lifestyles of late-night parties, which were widely covered in the tabloid press

Reinterpretation implementation strategy

There are a few strategies that I use to reinterpret the song

1. Using energetic drums beats
   Make the drums beat more “rock” feel.
2. Changing the instruments
   For the new song, I use an acoustic drum, electric bass, and also electric guitar.
3. Adding solo guitars.
   Solo guitars are the key on glam rock genre.
4. Use of distortion and 2 layers of rhythm guitars.
   For the bass and guitar, I make the sound distorted to make it harsh and raw, and also layering the guitars for making it tighter

Introduction to the band and band members

The band is Katroxx, a glam metal band from Jakarta. Formed in 2012. The band is my highschool friends.
The members are:

Drummer: Gilang Novian
Bassist: Rendy Aditya
Guitarists and backing vocals: Ryan Arif & Raven Ramadhan
Vocalist: Bagus Tricahyo

Introduction of other people involved

Producer, recording, mixing, and mastering engineer: Wisnu Ikhsantama
Arranger: Ryan Arif
Assistant engineers: Giancarlo, Solideo Kevin, and Rijal Hamdi.

Timetable and structure of project

The timetable for the assignment is as follows:

Date	Activity
April 11th-13th	Pre Production
May 9th	Drums recording
May 16th	Guitars recording
May 23th	Bass and backing vocals recording
June 27th	Vocal recording
June 28th - July 13th	Editing and mixing
July 14	Mastering & Finalization

Recording Sessions

Intention of the Recording Session

The intention of the recording session is to record the instruments and get the sound that will match the rock genre.

I use four different recording sessions, one for each instrument. First, I recorded the drums. After that, I recorded the guitars. The basses and backing vocals gets recorded on the third session because the lead singer was studying in another city. Finally the fourth session is the vocal recording.

Microphone Selection

AKG D112	
Shure BETA52	

Shure SM57	
Shure Beta57A	
AKG C1000	

Sennheiser MD421	
Rode NT5	
Rode K2	

AKG C414	

Microphone placement

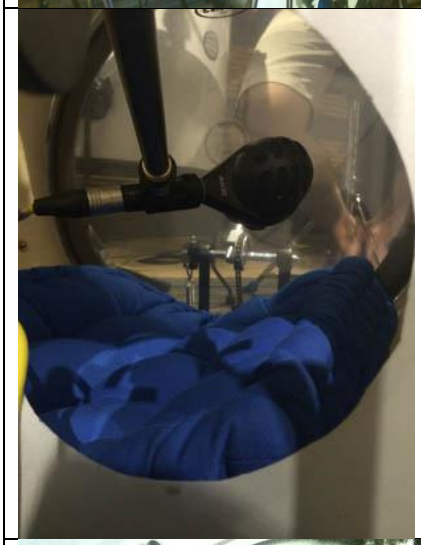
Drums: Mapex Horizon Birch
Kick In: AKG D112
Kick Out: Shure BETA 52
Snare Top: Shure SM57
Snare Bottom: Shure Beta 57A
Hi Hat: AKG C1000
Toms: Sennheiser MD421 without roll off
Overheads: Rode NT5 (one above the left crash, one above the right crash near the floor for making snare and kick more center)
Ride: Shure SM57
Room: Rode K2

Bass: Fender Jazz Bass
Recorded using Ampeg Portaflex and miked with AKG D112 (Simulated on Line6 POD HD)

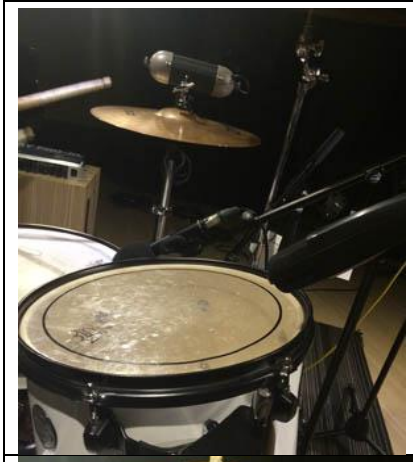
Guitar A (Ryan): Gibson SG and Fender Telecaster (for solos)
Recorded using Soldano SLO100 and miked with off axis Shure SM57 (Simulated on Line6 POD HD)

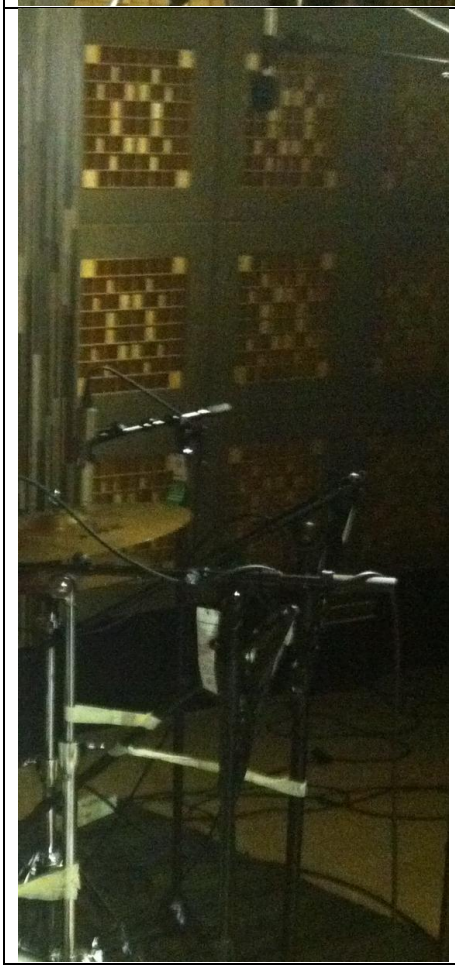
Guitar B (Raven): Gibson Les Paul and Fender Telecaster (for solos)
Recorded using Marshall JCM800 and miked with off axis Shure SM57 (Simulated on Line6 POD HD)

Vocals:
AKG C414 about 3 inches from the source, with a pop filter in-between. Polar pattern set to cardioid, without roll off.

	Drum Set
	Kick In
	Kick Out

		Snare Top
		Snare Bottom
		Hi Hat

	Toms
	Floor
	Ride

	OH L
	OH R

  Vocals/Room mic	Room
	Guitar & bass preamp + amp simulator
	Vocal

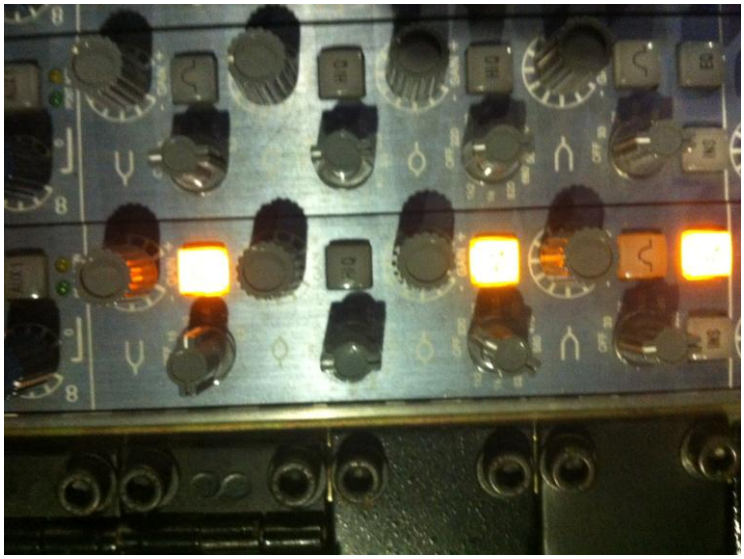
Conclusion of the Recording Session

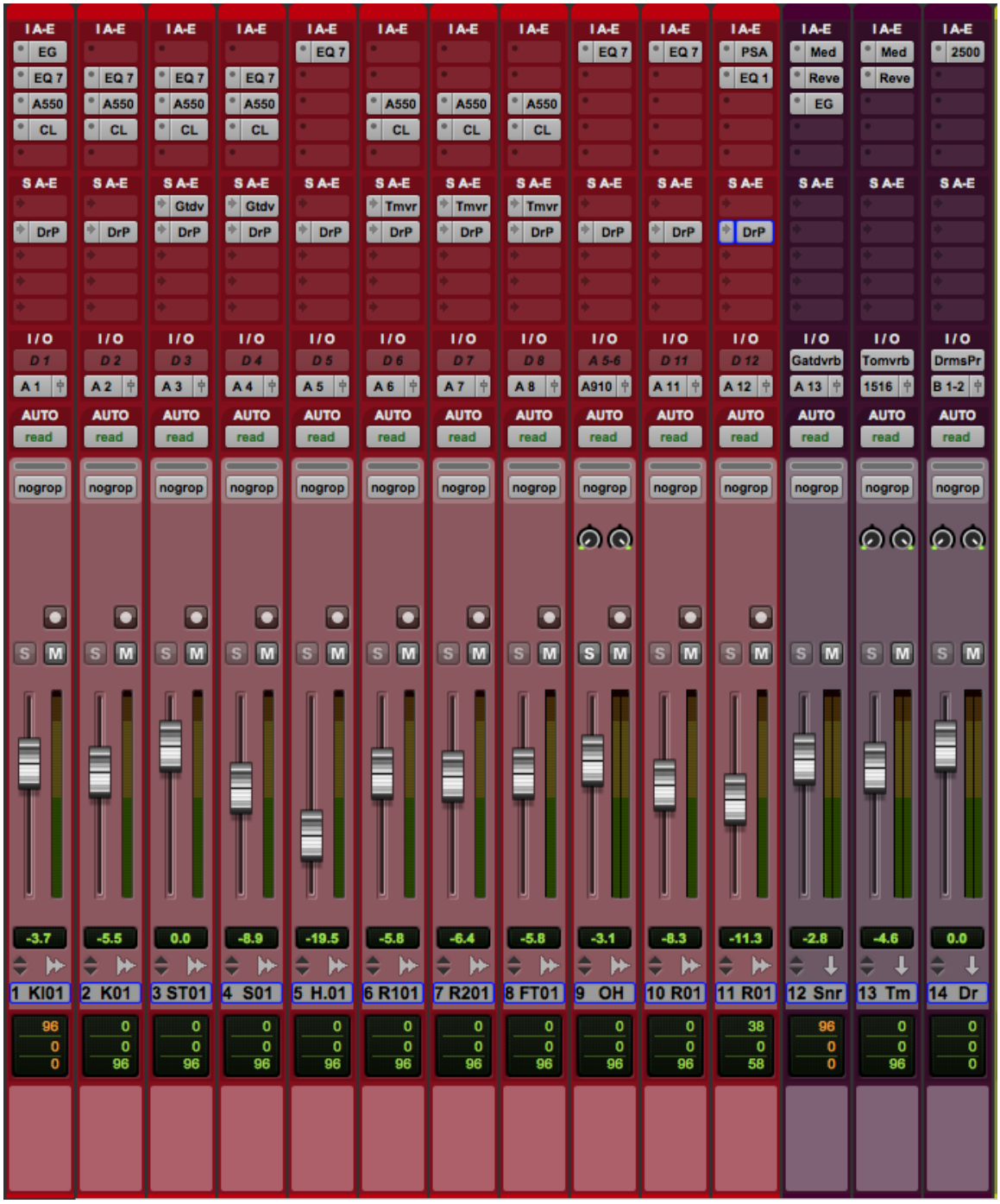
Overall, the recording session went good. I use Apogee Symphony for the main AD conversion, because I love the color of it. I use my own laptop for guitar recording and I use POD HD via S/PDIF input through my soundcard (Focusrite Saffire Pro 24DSP which has S/PDIF input to keep the guitars signal uncolored). I did not find any major difficulty while recording. The only problem is I planned to use the Rode K2 for the vocal but it turns out that the microphone were broken, so I use the Neumann U87 as a replacement but it didn't match with the vocalist character, so I pick AKG C414 for the vocals.

Mixing Session

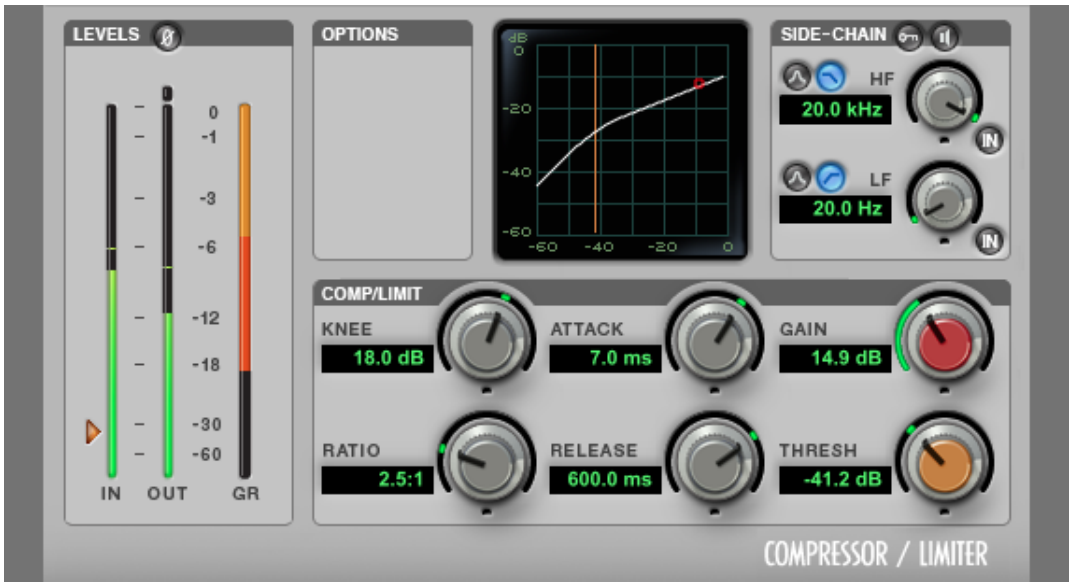
I mix all the instruments and vocal digitally using Pro Tools and lite tweaking and summing on our beloved Neve Custom 75. There are 24 tracks that were originally recorded. These 24 tracks consisted of 12 drum tracks, 1 bass track, 6 guitar tracks, and 6 vocal tracks. I then add a gated reverb for the snare drum and toms reverbs, parallel compression for drums, also reverb and delay for the vocal. I route out every channel to Neve but the vocals were on stems. There were Lead Vocals, Low Lead Vocals (which is one octave lower), stereo Backing Vocals, stereo Vocals Delay, and stereo Vocals Reverb. This totaled to 32 tracks at the end of the mixing session.

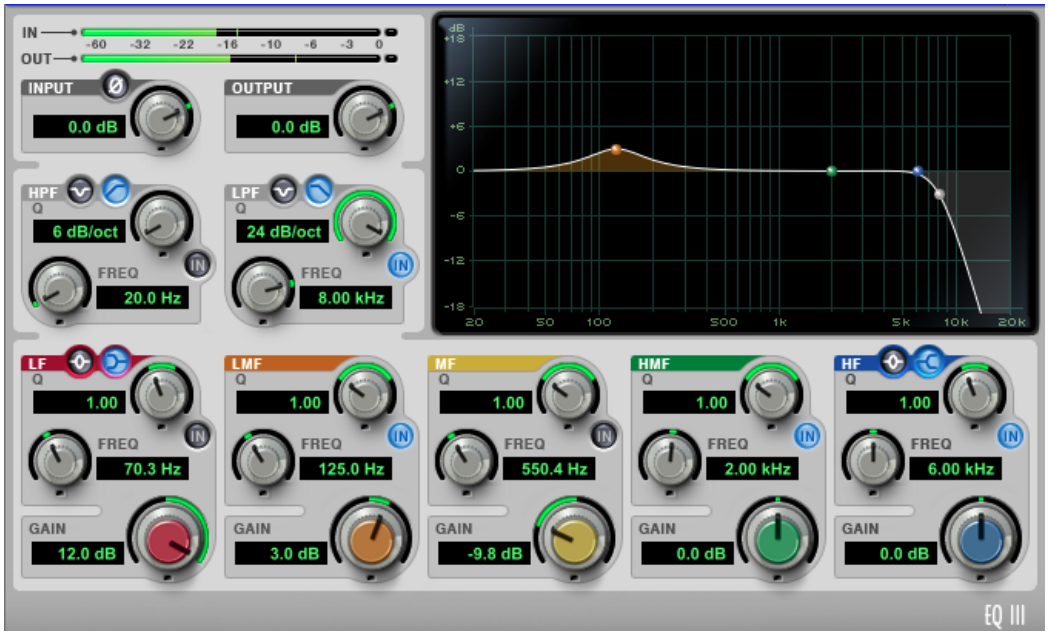
For the drum track, the 80s rock music is best known for the gated reverb snares. I use a reverb bus with 1/16 delay as the pre delay, for making 1/16 upbeat-gated reverb. Also, 80s rock music were an analog era, so there was no drums replacement needed. I also treat the drums as raw as possible, like no gate on the drums (except kick) because the 80s drums has pretty much bleed and made it own character (raw yet punchy drums). Also I do a pretty hard compression on the kick, snare and toms to get the punch needed on rock music. Then I EQ the kick to sounds fatter yet rock, boost the high frequency on the snare to make it presence, enhance the tom's tone and attack, high pass all the cymbals and overhead, and distorted the room to make dirtier sound. And after that, I use parallel compression to make it punchier. Also lately when I summed the track through the Neve, I tweak the kick to make it clicky and cut on mid low frequency so it will more presence and sounds more rock than before.



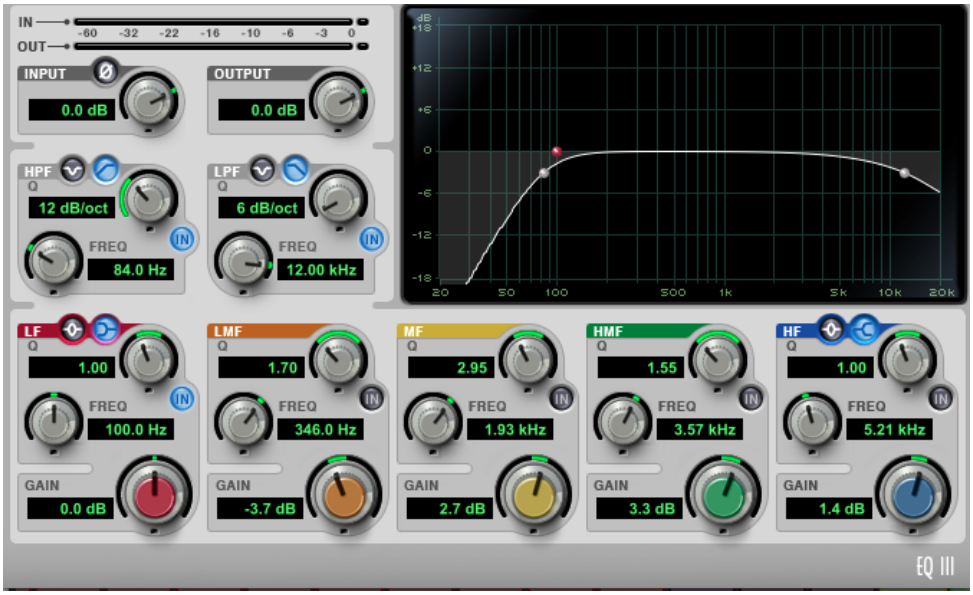


For the bass track, I just compress it and EQ it, using high gain reduction to make it sound more even and constant.





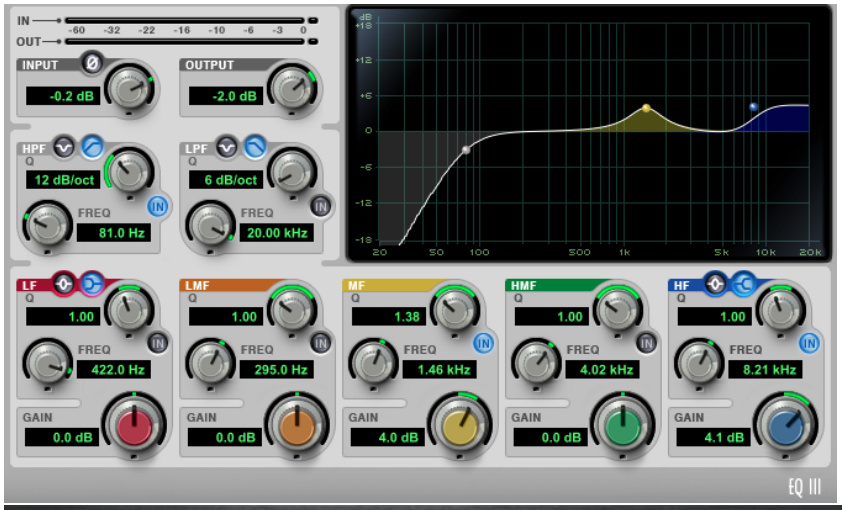
For the rhythm guitar track, I only use EQ to filter the frequency, no compression needed, because distorted guitars were already compressed by its own distortion. And also I don't want to tweak the EQ too much because I want to keep the raw sound like people in 80s do.



For the lead guitars, I use same EQ setting and insert a stompbox simulation delay plugin before the EQ. I insert it because I want to treat the lead guitars like using stompbox delay pedal but it can be controlled by me in the mixing process. If I put the delay on the recording session, it will be an issue if the delay were too much or less. So I put it on mixing process.

Then on the vocal channels, first I edit the pitch using wavestune, and reprint it using Pro Tools internal bussing. After I get the edited track. I EQ it with hi-pass

filter and boost on the vocal tone and the high frequency for making it more presence. After EQing, I compress it with 1176 simulator. The 1176 were best known as aggressive compressor that fit in on my production genre. I use high ratio (limiting) and high gain reduction to make the vocals more even and “in your face”. After the compression, I use deesser to reduce some sibilance.



I also use reverb and delay on the vocals track. I send the vocals through an aux and use convolution hall reverb because it sounds nice and make the vocals sweet. And also I use 1/8 delay for make the vocals sustains better, but not interrupt the main vocals.

After that, I balance all the 32tracks on Neve and compress it on the Neve's 2254 compressor to make it more glue to the mix with slow attack fast release setting to keep the transients/drums alive. And then print it through the Neve back to the Pro Tools.

Mastering session

I master the song using standard stereo technique, not stems mastering. I use Presonus Studio One software. What I do is only EQ the master using Pultec simulator, I boost the 100hz by 1dB to make it sounds warmer, boost the 8khz by 2dB to make it brighter, and attenuate the 20khz by 1dB to reduce the high frequency. Then I make it through C6 multiband compressor, using Mastering C preset which I love to, it become the "quality control" of the frequency/sonic. Then I maximize it using Slate Digital FG-X and tweak it to 12.4dB and the master running on approximately -7dbRMS. At the end of the flow, I add waves L2 limiter to limit it on -0.1dBFS so it will never peaking, and also use its dithering.


C6
Master
Release
ARC
Behavior
Electro
Knee
0.50
Thresh
Gain
Range
Attack
Release
Crossover
Low
Mid
High
Output


SLATE DIGITAL
FG COMP
ATTACK
RELEASE
RATIO
THRESHOLD
FG LEVEL
TRANSIENTS
LOPUNCH
DETAIL
GAIN
DYNAMIC PERCEPTION
CONSTANT GAIN MONITORING
ITP
DITHER ON
Advanced Algorithms By FABRICE GABRIEL

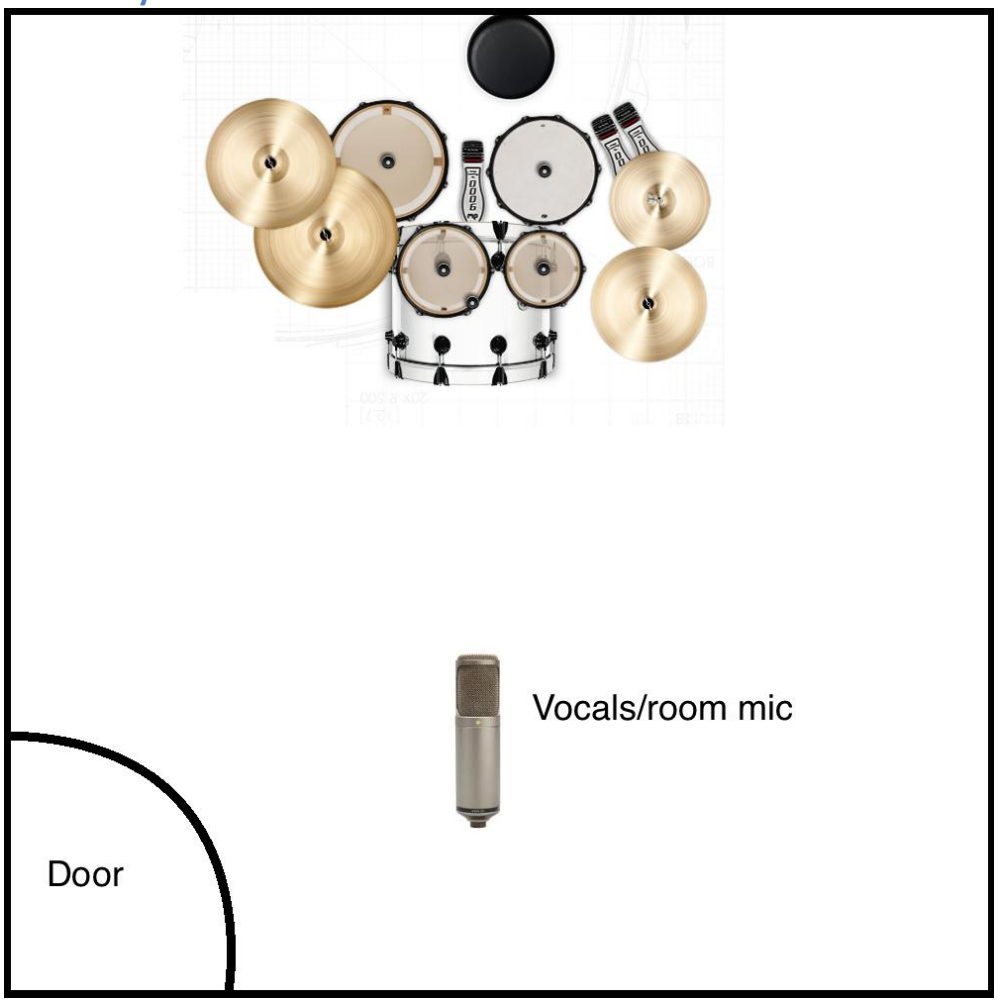

L2 ULTRAMAXIMIZER
THRESHOLD
OUT CEILING
RELEASE
ATTEN
-0.1
1.00
ARC
0.0
IDR
QUANTIZE
24 Bits
DITHER
Type1
SHAPING
Normal

Final Project Conclusion

This assignment makes me understand the engineer's role in the real industry, how the producer produce the song, how the arranger arrange the song, how the musician rehearsing, how the pre production done, etc. In the end of the day, the student is about being professionals in the industry, and this subject teaches us how to do a production. The song is well build by ABBA so I don't need to put major changes in musical aspect. The main issue is about the lead vocalist that has issues in English pronunciation and the pitch control. But above all, the production is fun and makes me understanding how to be a professional in the industry.

Appendix

Studio Lay Outs



Tracking Sheet

TRACKING SHEET BAND: Katroxx SONG: Dancing Queen (ABBA cover)

STUDIO: SAE JAKARTA STUDIO 1 CONSOLE: NEVE CUSTOM 75 ENGINEER: Wisnu I.

Source	Mic/DI	Tie	Pre	Outboard	PT Input	Other
Kick In	AKG D112	33	33	-	33	-
Kick Out	Shure BETA52	34	34	-	34	-
Snare Top	Shure SM57	35	35	-	35	-
Snare Bottom	Shure BETA57A	36	36	-	36	-
HH	AKG C1000	37	37	-	37	-
RT1	Sennheiser MD421	38	38	-	38	-
RT2	Sennheiser MD421	39	39	-	39	-
FT	Sennheiser MD421	40	40	-	40	-
OH L	Rode NT5	41	41	-	41	-
OH R	Rode NT5	42	42	-	42	-
Ride	Shure SM57	43	43	-	43	-
Room	Rode K2	44	44	-	44	-
Bass	POD HD Desktop	-	-	-	-	Tracking via S/PDIF
Guitars A + Lead	POD HD Desktop	-	-	-	-	Tracking via S/PDIF
Guitars B + Lead	POD HD Desktop	-	-	-	-	Tracking via S/PDIF
Vocals	AKG C414	8	33	-	33	-