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Design Document For Ken O'Keefe Revolution

DE0968 Sound Design



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Introduction

Sound Design

I was tasked to produce a sound portfolio that demonstrates that I am not only engaging with the medium but also that I understand how it can be used to enhance my creative outputs. I was also required to provide comprehensive documentation that illustrates the processes used to create my sound portfolio. We had to take an inspirational speech or monologue and turn it into a music track and also create a film to go with the sound track. There should be an emotional connection made with the audience that is enhanced by the sound track. The software I will use to create this portfolio are the Ableton Live 9 music production software and Final Cut Pro movie editing software.



Research

Inspiration

My first area of research was in the spoken word. We were to use a speech or monologue from someone who inspired me. I knew instantly who I was going to use as my inspiration.

Ken O'Keefe is an ex- US Marine who renounced US citizenship at the US Embassy in Vancouver, Canada. on March 1, 2001. He now holds Irish, Hawaiian & Palestinian citizenship; but ultimate allegiance is given to all life and to planet Earth. A lawfully declared world citizen, stating that his ultimate allegiance is to his entire human family and to planet Earth

Ken is a military activist and speaks out against the US political machine that is posting it's bases all over the world at an alarming rate in an attempt to create an 'American Empire' greater and stretching further than that of the old 'British Empire'. He is not afraid to speak his mind in public when some say he should stay quiet.

He is a fervent campaigner for the freedom of the state of Palestine and it's people and is an anti-Zionist



"I believe the world is what we make of it and that we have, as a human duty, the obligation of working to hand this world over to our children in a better state to that which we inherited it." **Ken O'Keefe**

Further Research

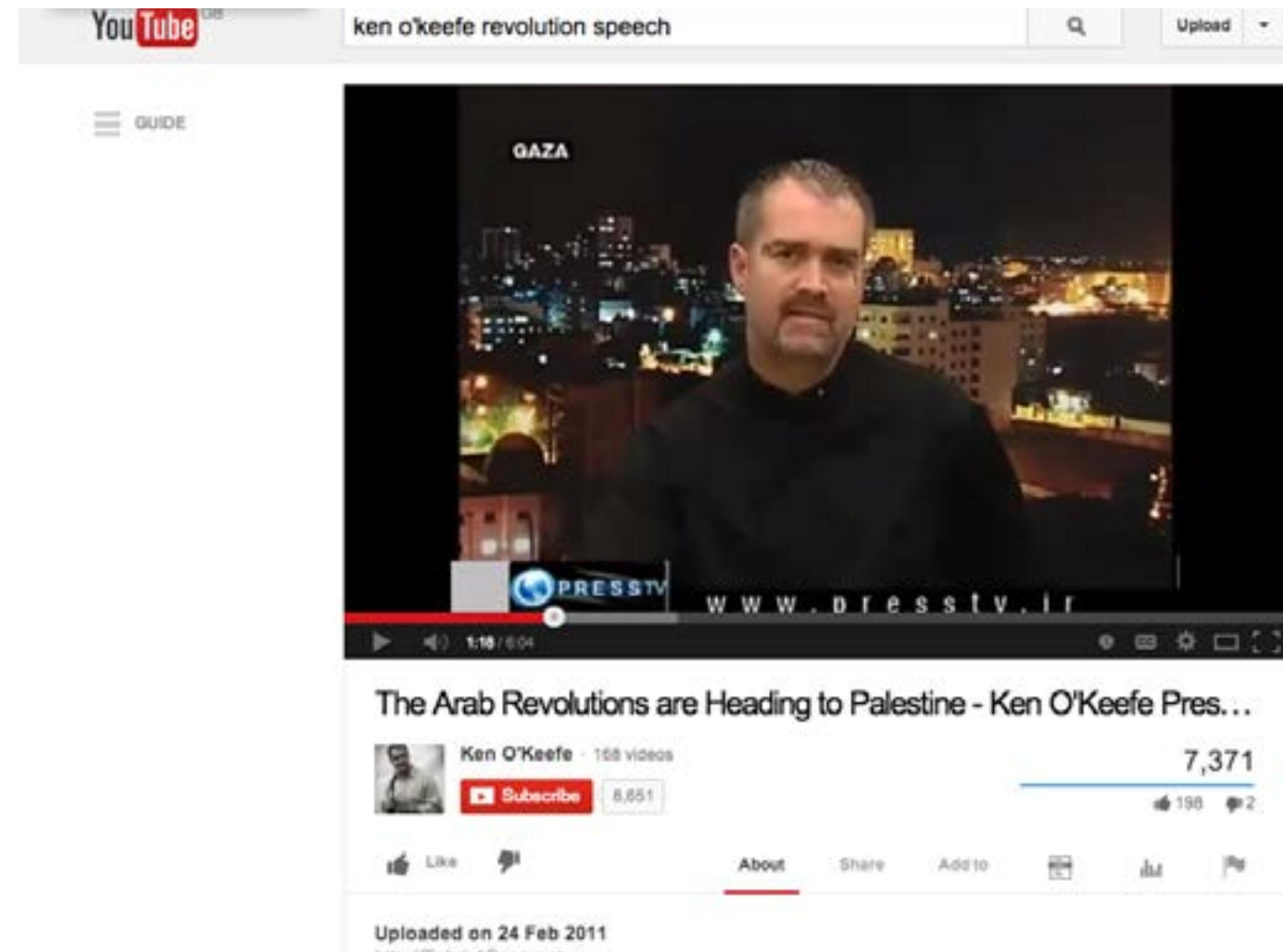
You Tube was my next port of call. I remembered seeing a news interview with Ken O'Keefe during the Egyptian revolution in 2011. I looked for it and found it quickly, It is thought provoking and inspiring with an empathy for his fellow people in the world, that is eloquently stated and ends with a message of hope for the people in Gaza.

The interview is available @ <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=POSnPk7x-TQ>

Ken talks with a passion that is infectious , giving quite stirring and rousing accounts of eye witness views of the atrocities that America commit world wide.

His blog is worth a look and is at <http://kenokeefe.wordpress.com/>

I downloaded the video from You Tube using Wondershare 'All my Tube' download software and then put it into Adobe Premier Pro CC to extract the sound track from the video file. I then exported the separated audio file as a .wav file and was able to use it in Ableton as an audio sample.

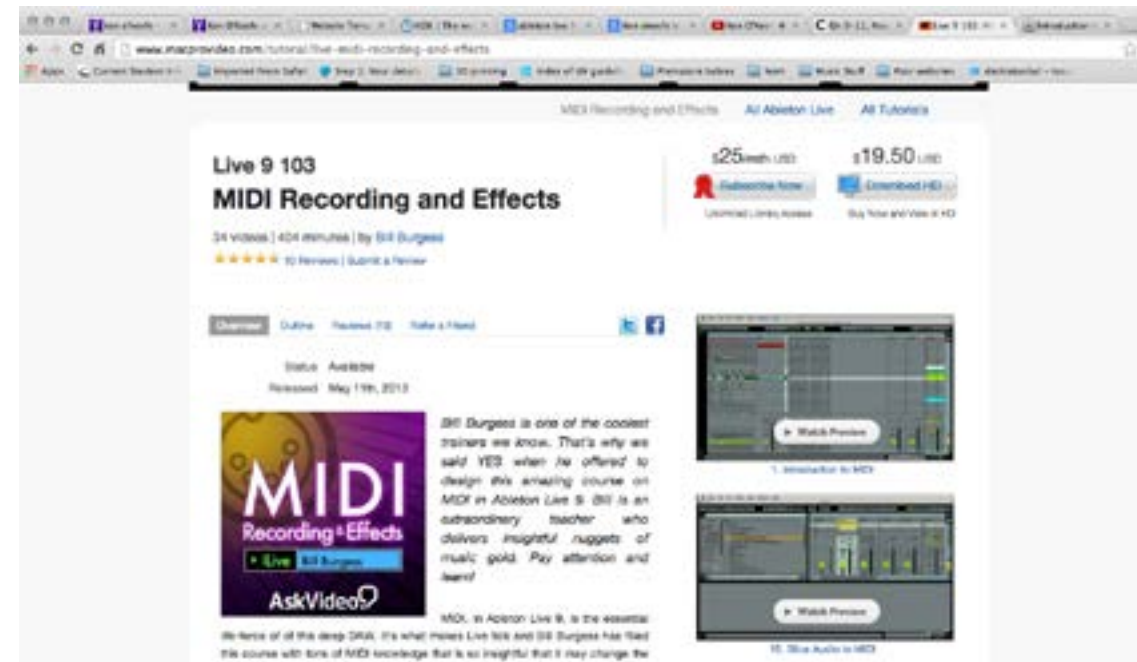


Ableton Live 9

I had to create my sound track using Ableton live 9 music production software. I had never used this software before therefore I had to do some quick tutorials from:

<http://www.macprovideo.com/tutorial/live-midi-recording-and-effects>

These are tutorials that you need to pay for or subscribe to but they have small snippets at the start for free. I found these to be very helpful to gaining insights in to how each section works.



Screenshot from Macpro video website

Coupled with the training sessions given by our tutor, I was able to gain a better understanding of the software and further my knowledge in music production and how a sound track can enhance a project.

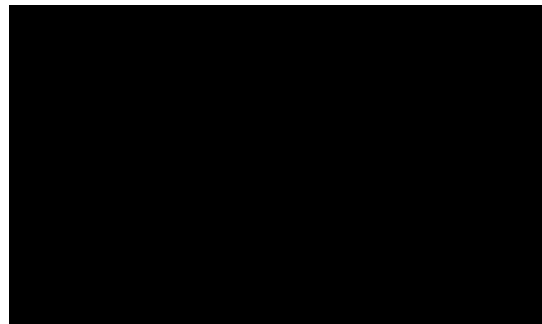


Film Clip of Trevs tutorial

Concept Development

Concept 1

I am predominantly a fan of techno music but I wanted to stay away from that genre for this track as it is quite aggressive and doesn't instill much in the way of sympathy, so for the first concept I tried a slower tempo guitar music. I wanted to try and program my own drums so I used this concept as a learning curve. After getting used to the user interface of Ableton Live 9, I experimented with different drum sounds and managed to program my own drum beats using midi tracks. This works by assigning a drum sound to a midi key using the sampler, I repeated the same actions for cymbals and toms. I then tried to mix my drum loops with different guitar samples from the Ableton library, until I found the one that complemented the feel of the track.



Concept 1 Audio Track



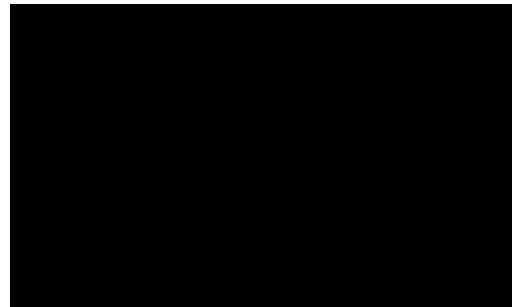
Concept 1 Midi Tracks



Concept 2 Guitar Samples

Concept 2

For the 2nd concept I tried composing a techno style of track. Rather than programming my drums this time I used pre existing drums loops from the Ableton library and focused on editing and mastering. I investigated different types of equalization and layering drums. I then added my own midi drum loops such as hand claps and toms and continued to experiment until I was happy with the composition. I added my chosen spoken word samples using the same method as the drums, I used midi tracks and assigned segments of the audio sample to the midi keys. However I discovered that it was easier to cut segments from one audio track into another audio track and drag them into the positions that I wanted them.



Concept 2 Audio Track



Concept 2 Drum samples



Concept 2 Audio Segments

Sound Design Development

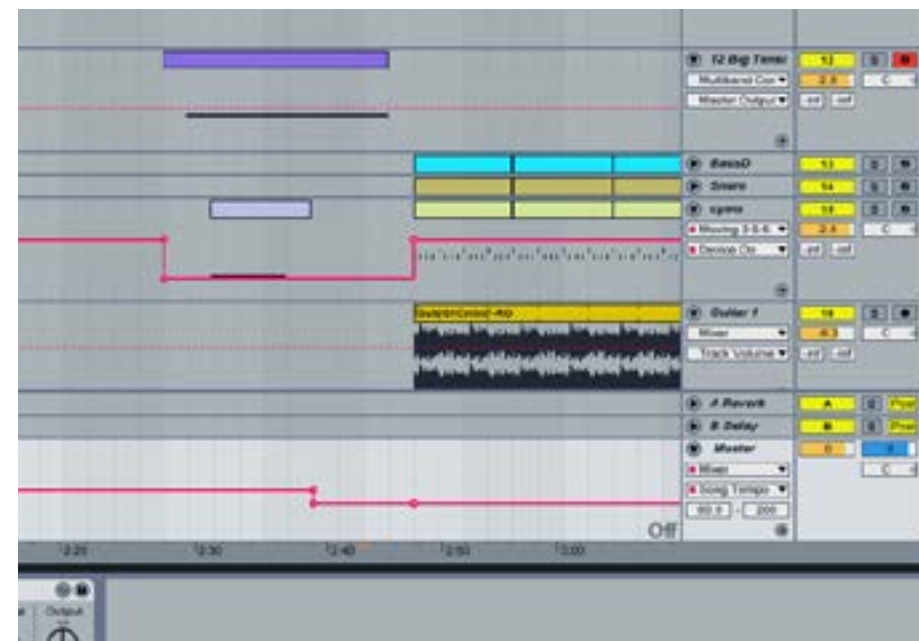
Final Sound Track Development

From the beginning of the design process I was set on producing an aurally pleasing yet sympathetic track. The interview I used was almost 6 minutes long but we needed to cut that down to 3 minutes. I really struggled with cutting it down as I felt that I would detract from the feel of the interview. I managed to cut it down to 5 minutes, and I think that I have managed to maintain the integrity of the interview.

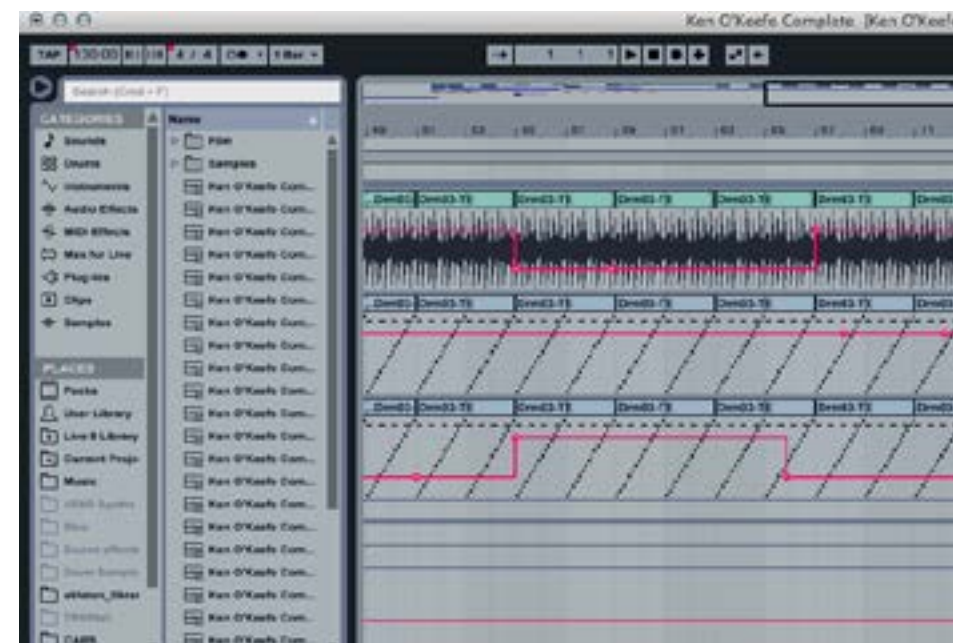
I also had a problem choosing which concept to use and expand on so I showed them to some friends and colleagues to gauge which one to use in my final project and it was suggested to me that I try joining them both together. I did not think that this would work with the two different genres and tempos of music but after some tinkering I discovered that I could automate the tempo using Ableton. I exported the midi content from concept one and imported it in to concept two and after a lot of experimenting I was happy with the result but felt that where the track changed something else was needed to emphasise that change.

I had a royalty free riser that I used for the track intro so I tried reversing this sample and placing an effect on it. This worked really well but something else was still not right so I gradually muted the drum tracks one after the other before the tempo change and this emphasized the reverse effect even more. I was really happy with how I was able to get one track to transition into the other.

As mentioned in concept 1 I experimented with different guitar samples, and in the final piece I decide to use two different guitar sounds for the change between the male and female voice on the audio track, adding to the overall narrative. To the master track I added compression which resulted in a fuller sound.



Tempo Change Automation



Layering drums

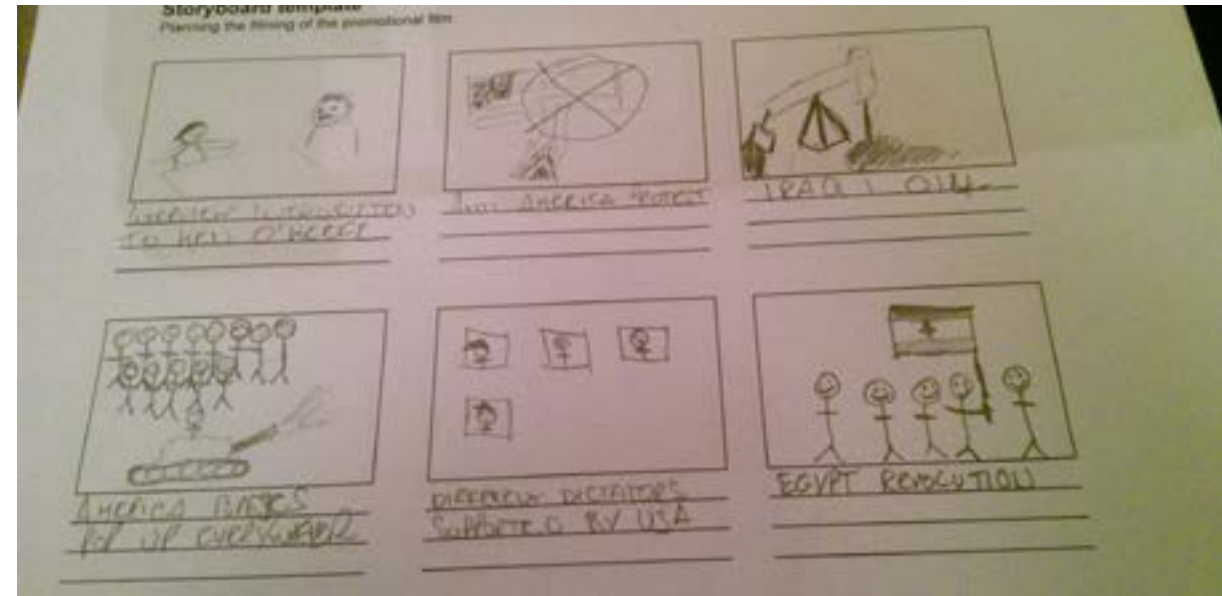
Film Design

Movie Development

Whilst developing the film for the sound track I had to consider the interview and what was being said by Ken O'Keefe, it was a frank look at the state of the middle east which started off quite aggressive in tone but towards the end became a message of hope for the people of Palestine.

I started by listing some keywords and phrases from the sound track, from that I developed a small storyboard I then went looking for the appropriate material online. I gathered a few films from You Tube and again extracted the audio tracks. This time placed my finished sound track into Final Cut Pro and started editing the footage to fit my sound track.

To begin with I used a simple animation for the introduction with the riser and then the interviewer introducing Ken O'Keefe to the audience I then went into a sequence of moving images that were quite aggressive in tone to fit with the aggressive techno of the first half of the sound track, I then gathered together hundreds of still images in Adobe After Effects and using lots of different pans and transitions I tried to tell the story with the same passion that Ken O'Keefe had in the interview.



Storyboard



Screen Recording of Film

Evaluation

Critical Analysis

In the making of this sound track I enjoyed tackling the different genres of music and was intrigued by the prospect of joining my two concepts together. It enables the track to engage the listener on two different emotional levels. The techno rhythm emphasized the aggression and the want to rebel, whereas the second part was more sympathetic to the spoken word of Ken O'Keefe and is in stark contrast to the violence of the first half. I feel that this was only emphasized more by my choice of images used in the film, again the film starts off with a violent edge but transcends in to images of jubilation and instills in us an empathy in our fellow man that leaves you with a feeling of hope for the people of the middle east.

This was my first real journey into sound production. I really enjoyed this module and found it to be a very useful introduction into Ableton and it left me with the confidence to continue using the software as a tool to enhance my future projects.



Completed Film available at : <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C-gqLaRFfs4>

Thanks For Reading