

Drifted Apart A Project Proposal.

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Introduction

Creativity and storytelling are two essential aspects of Digital Media and Communication. This essay aims to outline the creative project that I have chosen for my Independent Project. The project involves creating an *official lyric video* for the alternative rock song "*Drifted Apart*" (2023) from the album "Waves II" by *Stevie Delacruz*, a talented music producer based in Fallbrook, California. This project aims to create a visual representation of the lyrics that narratively complement the music, thus enhancing the overall experience for the audience. The essay will dive into the inspiration behind the project and its nature, theme, concepts, and technical aspects while outlining processes that went into perfecting the project.

Nature of the Creative Project

The project is interdisciplinary in nature, combining elements from music, animation/motion graphics, live-action video, and graphic design to create a unique *lyric video*. The song "Drifted Apart" and its theme will be the original music that would serve as the foundation for the video.

The lyric video is mainly motion graphics and other elements that represent the song's lyrics, creating an engaging visual experience for the viewer. The live-action elements add a layer of realism, ground the video in tangible reality, and be more relatable to the viewer.

Various digital tools and software were used to create this video, and these tools (mentioned in the technical aspects section) were chosen as they are industry-standard and can be effectively used to bring the creative vision to life. Overall, the nature of the project is to demonstrate how different mediums can come together to create a compelling and engaging piece of content.

Theme and Concept - Storyboarding

The song "Drifted Apart" is a deeply emotional song about love, loss, feelings of defeat, and feelings of helplessness and resignation. The song (and album as well) seems to be inspired by bands like Arctic Monkeys and The Neighbourhood. Below is the monochrome artwork on the album cover. The grayscale nature of this album cover will support my decision to make the video monochrome later. This track has been uploaded to Soundcloud, and its duration is 03:46. The genre is alternative rock.

Link to the song: <https://on.soundcloud.com/Z7zxx>



"Can't heal your scars, I tried to give my best
Fell from the start but I thought that you would win
My heart can't follow only to fall again
Drifted apart, I've given you your chance

Lately I've been thinking trying to find a reason to take you back
Just wanted to believe that you were on my team when my mind attacks
Was hoping not to waste my time, I didn't think you'd leave like that
Now I got my own disguise called a smile when I'm feeling sad
I didn't think you'd leave like that

Can't heal your scars, I tried to give my best
Fell from the start but I thought that you would win
My heart can't follow only to fall again
Drifted apart, I've given you your chance

I told you I'd be honest even if I fall in your prison cell
I tried to make you stronger, I gave you every promise to treat you well
I had a lot of plans for you cuz I couldn't see you go through hell
Just wanna say I'm missing you and I hope this life treats you well
Cuz I couldn't see you go through hell

F*ck

Can't heal your scars, I tried to give my best
Fell from the start but I thought that you would win
My heart can't follow only to fall again
Drifted apart, I've given you your chance

Can't heal your scars, I tried to give my best
Fell from the start but I thought that you would win
My heart can't follow only to fall again
Drifted apart, I've given you your chance"

The artist behind the song, Stevie Delacruz, was kind enough to provide the lyrics sheet for the song, which was a critical component during the different production stages.

After creating a project plan, I created a structure and story for the story in storyboards. The MC (Main Character) in the music video is a man in his late 20s troubled by thoughts of his past and his past lover. The first 3/4^{ths} of the music video contain abstract silhouettes, lyrics, and motion graphics, symbolizing his thoughts. The last quarter of the song, however, shows a sudden (and unexpected) shift into Live-Action Footage, combined with a text matte effect, where he is seen driving away

into the mountains and trying to 'walk away from it all.' This is symbolic of the MC 'snapping back to reality' and

realizing that what happened in the past cannot be changed. The ending scenes of the video also have sudden shifts back into the silhouette world in the form of a strobe effect, which symbolizes the conflict and pain that the MC feels. However, in the end, he is seen walking away while shaking his head, seemingly finally moving on after feeling frustrated

Background and Inspiration

The inspiration for the project stems from my deep appreciation for music and music videos. Music has been a significant part of my life as it provides comfort, motivation, and expression. Music has also acted as a force of inspiration for me to create artwork long before I began my undergraduate studies. The opportunity to combine this interest with academic pursuits was exciting.

I have made multiple album covers (including the artwork for the Waves II album) and other designs for Stevie Delacruz, a talented singer and music producer. His work is admirable, and his songs relate to me. He was delighted that I wanted to use his song for my project.

The decision to make a lyric video arose from my interest in visually appealing lyric videos that many artists upload and my interest in making lyric videos, which I have posted on YouTube purely for practice and as a hobby (refer to the references section). I have also recently created a motion graphics music video for a band called Portable Radio (2023), and the process that I went through to fulfill the client's request not only gave me experience but was also a very stimulating and fun process.

I also learned the basics of Adobe After Effects in my second year of university as part of our motion graphics module, and this project will give me a chance to refine my skills.

For the sudden switch from motion graphics to live-action video that I plan on doing, I was inspired by MGMT's official music video for their song 'Kids' (2009) and Tame Impala's 'The Less I Know the Better' (2015), as both of these videos have a mix of motion graphics and live-action clips. The monochromatic look that I hope to bring out in the video is inspired by Arctic Monkey's 'Do I Wanna Know' (2013) and the album theme that Stevie set for the Waves II album (2023) and bands like The Neighbourhood. The silhouettes were inspired by Jakey's 'South Dakota' (2018) music video.

The Processes

Pre Production:

The project's first step was choosing an appropriate song and artist to match my editing style.

The focus was to lay a solid foundation for the lyric video by analyzing the song, understanding its themes, and interpreting its lyrics. This was done by separating the lyrics into verses and marking important keywords.

[illegible]

The process was iterative and involved multiple brainstorming sessions and discussions to ensure the narrative and story complemented the song. Above is a screenshot of how the song's lyrics were broken down for interpretation and planning.

The storyboard sketching stage followed this. The storyboard serves as a visual guide for the video, outlining the sequence of scenes and how they correspond to the lyrics of the song. This stage involves sketching the scenes, planning the transitions, and deciding on the blend of animation and live-action elements. The storyboards were then compiled and synchronized with the music into a rough draft on video editing software before beginning the Production Stage. All consent forms required were also filled and received.

Production

After creating the shot list, I began the production stage. This involved filming all required scenes and extra scenes to ensure I had enough footage to bring the project to life.

The shooting stage lasted about half a month and, for the most part, went relatively smoothly. Moreover, all shots turned out to be very satisfactory. There were two phases to the production phase: Silhouette Shots, which involved me creating a professional lighting setup to create silhouette effects, and live-action scenes, which were videos of myself and of me driving my car.

Post Production

After the production stage, I began creating all graphical assets on Adobe After Effects and incorporating all the recorded clips into the main project file on Premiere Pro. Although the editing took the most time and was the toughest, I thoroughly enjoyed the process, and it was a fun challenge to ensure that all elements were cohesive and matched.

A decision was made to scale the animated lyrics to fit the frame of the video to give it a unique look. I also decided to keep the typography inconsistent, with different fonts and weights used randomly to add more interest and 'flavor' to the video.

Three drafts of the video were made, and after each draft, I would review it and note down all the changes that needed to be made until I ended up with the perfect final draft.

Technical Aspects

This project's technical aspects involve using various software and tools to create the lyric video. These tools have been chosen for their ability to effectively realize this project's creative vision.

Figma was used to collect ideas and form boards to brainstorm for the pre-production stage. It was also used to create the shot list. The storyboards required for pre-production were created with the assistance of Image-generating AI, specifically *Dall-E*, along with manual input. *Microsoft Excel* was used to create a production log to document working hours.

All motion graphics elements, lyrics, and silhouettes were made and exported from *Adobe After Effects*. The rough draft made using storyboards, animated elements, live-action footage, and synchronization of the visuals with the music was done on *Adobe Premiere Pro*. This industry-standard software allows for the manipulation of footage, like cutting, transitioning, and adding effects.

Shooting on a smartphone

In digital media, one must embrace new technologies and innovation. The use of smartphones for video content has increased dramatically over the years (Stelzner, 2022). I challenged myself to shoot the video on my Samsung S23 Ultra at 4k 30 fps. The experience was enjoyable as the footage I shot was passable and better than expected while also having a smaller device's reliability and ease of use.

Reflection

Making the 'Drifted Apart' music video, from conception to final draft, was an intense and gratifying challenge. There were many opportunities to try new techniques and styles, and I gained much experience throughout each process. The experience gained from this project will allow me to handle and create more projects.

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