

--- On Mon, 1/12/09, Tricia Kate Roberts <proberts@isa.nl>
wrote:

> From: Tricia Kate Roberts <proberts@isa.nl>
> Subject: Music
> To: chrisadams@swbell.net
> Date: Monday, January 12, 2009, 4:46 AM
> Hello, this is TK Roberts (Anna's sister), sorry I took
> so long before
> emailing you, I had exams all last week.
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> Anyways thank you soo much for the CDs, it is really
> helpful to hear
> them.
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> I was wondering if I could ask you a few questions about
> your work?
>
> No, Absolutely Not. Just kiddin' go ahead ;)
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> [In making your music what materials do you use, like for
> recording or
> producing the music?]
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> -For recording anything outside of a recording studio i use a
Portable Digital Field Recorder. i specifically use the Edirol
R-09 by Roland, but there is an entire market of such products
(here is a helpful website to approach concerning different
types of field recorders: [http://www.auditory.org/
recorders.html](http://www.auditory.org/recorders.html)). Before i went to digital, i exclusively
worked with analog tape. Portable Tape Recorders now days might
run around 30\$ at a Radioshack, while the Digital Recorders can
run any where from 150-2000\$. Tape has its own unique fidelity
and overall nostalgic timbre, but it will not pick up on all of
the micro-inflections of sound that a digital recorder is
capable of capturing.

As For Producing Music: I feel a bit confused when i hear the
term "Producing" these days. I'm not really sure what
"Produceing" Music means, but I create music like there's no
tomorrow (because who knows if there is?). Right now in my life
I have created over 400 composed pieces of music, or over 24hrs
of music and have recorded over 1000 samples of my life. I am
21 years old. As far as how I organize the sounds i have
captured from my life into the composed music that you hear, i
use a sequencer software program called Acid Pro by Sony, which

unfortunately is only available for Windows so I partitioned my Mac's Hard Drive With Boot Camp so I could run both Windows and Mac OS X. The Program has a great Pitch Shifting algorithm, which is the main compositional technique i use in my music besides listening. Other techniques include slicing the recordings and panning and volume automation. Also reversing the recordings is a lot of fun. I found Acid Pro to be particularly user friendly in it's design of editing tools and it's simple appearance. I would recommend it highly for anyone who is interesting in collageing sound together. The newest version is pretty pricy right now (around 300\$), but if you searched for a student version it would cut the price down a bit, and also compared to other music software it's well priced for how awesome it is. But really software is secondary to imagination.

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> How do you decide what you want your music to sound like,
> do you have it
> planned before, or do you just create it as you go?

>

> O, yeah these are some good stories here: when ever I have tried to "plan" out how i "want" it to sound i end up in failure to my "plan", but the music seems to take a life and personality unto its own and will tell you where it wants to go, how it wants to express itself , and i just have to be open-minded enough to recognize what i'm being told and enact upon such impulses. When i was younger i tried out ABAC, ABBA, ABAB CDCDE, and other such literary structures for music (i used to make techno, punk, metal, ska, and rock music), but gradually gravitated toward the realm of the free verse. Free verse allows for a constantly changing and EVOLVING piece of music which i have become rather fond of. You have to keep in mind my perspective as the creator, where i listen to every nuance of each track literally hundreds of times over, so the music has to be constantly interesting and constantly re-capturing my own attention or else i will just end up not working on the music if i think its boring.

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> How do you actually make it?

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> What is so interesting about this type of music that i create is that it is all made from moments of my life, because i had to be in a certain location at a certain time and hear a particular sound that triggers something inside to be like "wow, that's captivatingly beautiful, let's record it" and thats where i pull my recorder out of my pocket (by the way i try to carry it on me

at all times, you never know when inspiration is going to come). So i guess my first step is to live my life and simply listen to what is around me at all times, really focusing into the moment itself.

From there i store the sounds on a huge 1 terabyte external hard drive (thats 1000 megabytes). I usually create folders that contain samples from particular sections of time of my life for instance, this summer i went to chile to ski on a volcano with my family and recorded tons of sounds there, so i have a folder named Chile Sounds (I also love to photograph, so there is a neighboring folder named Chile Sights). And Within These Folders I try to go through each recording and name it in some way either to what sound is predominate within the the recording or where the recording took place or a short phrase of what is said if the recording is mostly people talking. Many times i do not get the time to go through all of my recordings so there are a lot of recordings with the file names R09_0045 R09_0046 R09_0047... these are the automatic file names that are given to the recordings on my Edirol R09 before i import them onto my external hard drive.

After storing the sound files i boot up my windows side of my computer and use Acid Pro to collage my life into beautiful music. I usually start by exploring through my samples until i find a sound that triggers something particularly deep inside me or i might have a specific moment in mind and i'll search through my collection for that moment of time. I will then listen to the moment pick out a section of that moment and edit how it begins (it's attack) and how it ends (it's decay). For example, i'll be recording some birds out side and decide to hit this metal railing next to me and then a helicopter will fly over head. So i would listen for where i hit the metal railing and crop out where the sound begins and ends and copy that small section of the moment of me hitting the railing 5 times. I then pitch shift one of those copy's down an octave (so it becomes longer in duration and lower in pitch) and another copy up and octave (so it becomes shorter and higher in pitch) and the other two down 2 octave and up 2 octaves respectively. So I now have created 5 sounds out of one. The lowest can be used a kick drum sound the highest as a hi-hat sound and the middle sounds i can improvise with as snares. I then will go back to the full moment and listen to where the helicopter sound comes in and crop it out and edit how it begins and how it ends in such a way that if repeated will sound like a instrument playing a note. I then copy the section as many times as i need to in differing

lengths and pitch shift each copy individually to create a melody out of the helicopter sound, then i will copy those parts and pick out the basic notes of the melody and pitch shift them down 2 octaves to create the bass line. After i have created a pleasing beat and melody i go back to the full moment once more and listen to where there is only the birds chirping and crop out that section and lay it over the rest of the composition as a sort of ambient track. Sometimes i will pitch shift these moments up or down depending how they interact with the rest of the sounds. Pitching the birds down can make great drone sounds while pitching them up can create crystal like sounds. For some of my compositions which are more ambient and environmental i use this last technique exclusively. I edit the panning and volume automation while i am aligning and editing all of the samples. This is really a description of how i create a song out of one moment of time, but for most of my compositions i expand these techniques for over 12-200 different moments on average. The most i've ever used was about 306 different moments of my life just cascading past the listener at a ridiculous intense speed. Some of my favorite sounds i've recorded are: a plane flying overhead in the rain in Dallas (the rain acted as a unique filter of the sound), a friend of my screaming underwater on acid in the CalArts pool (i put an unlubricated condom of a dynamic microphone and tied a rubber band around it so it would not get wet), a screeching water faucet at the house i grew up in in Dallas, my dad and I whistling into an empty wine distillery tank in Chile (some of the most amazing natural reverb i've ever encountered), this acoustic phenomenon that happens at the Kelso Dunes (when you walk in the sand dunes it creates a sort of flump sound), my friend singing when i hooked up a contact microphone to her chest so you could hear through her lungs (a contact microphone picks up vibration through solids rather than through air), hooking up the same contact microphone to a cactus and plucking the rather long spines (sounds like a kalimba or thumb piano), and although i'd rather not say it; my own voice (i've been able to generate some intense ass sounds out of this body which i interact with this world in).

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> When you create your music, what do you want your listeners
> to take from
> it?
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> To be honest i don't really think about what other people might get from my music when i'm creating it. I'm just so zoned into what i'm doing at the time that it never crosses my mind. Now i can tell you what other people have said to me what they personally received when listening to my music:

A great number of people tell me that they like to do "things" while listening to my music, because it gets them in the "zone". Very broad, but lets continue. For instance working out, writing, painting, driving, drawing, thinking, dancing, you name it. My music i feel is a great vessel to settle the listener into a state of active meditation. I have discussed this with other people and they seem to agree that the music's constant activity, yet smooth transformations keep the mind active and awake without being totally jarring or boring. Although my music is not necessarily drug music, i have had people tell me that they set aside time to smoke cannabis or take psychedelics and really focus in or zone out to my music with fascinating and mind-broadening results.

Other people have come to me with revelations of how they realized that every moment can be sacred or that any sound can be beautiful as all of my music is made from everyday sounds within the moments of my life. (I actually address these ideas in my soon to be released album 'Love Every Atom')

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> [Do you work under themes? Is there an overall message with your work?]

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> Truly again, i do not think about these ideas much, i usually just sit down at the computer and work work work play play play. If i were to think of a message right now it would be "Listen to yourself and Listen to this World around you... you might just learn something." or in other words "Be Here Right Now"

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> Thank you again so much for helping me!!

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No problem, I am always more than happy to share!
If you have any other questions feel free to ask.

Namaste/In' Lakech/Mahalo

-Christopher M. Adams

> TK Roberts

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