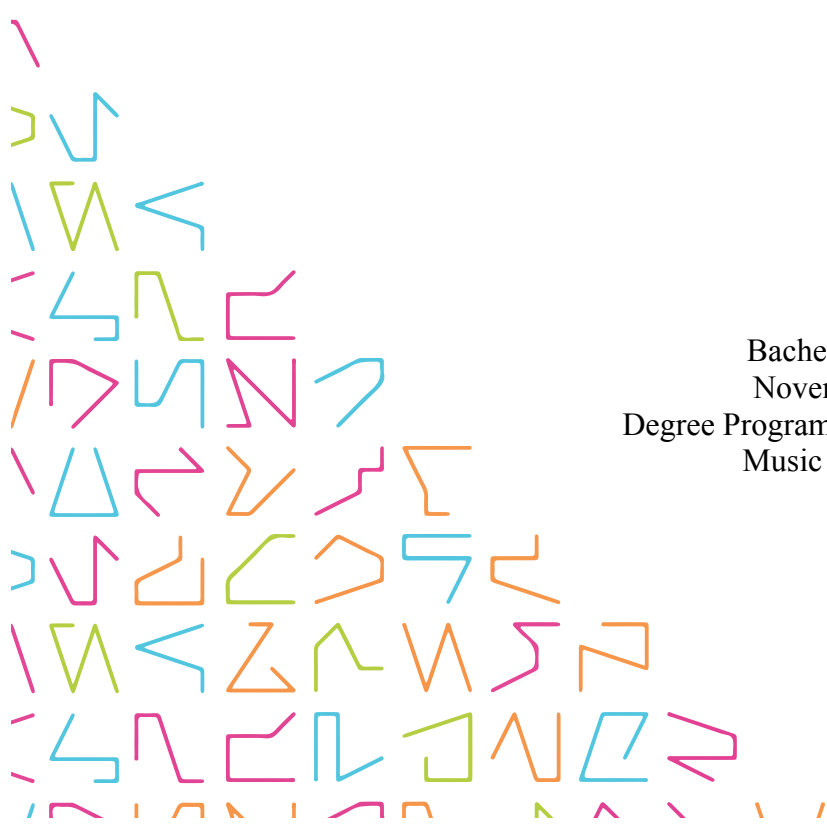


VOCAL PRODUCTION IN POP MUSIC

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ABSTRACT

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The purpose of this thesis is to provide an overview of vocal production methods that are commonly used in pop music. It is written as a guide for people who want to learn about vocal production in general or improve their skills as vocal producers. The thesis looks into the matters of vocal production that stay the same regardless of the musical genre and aspires to address the distinctive features of vocal production in pop music.

The majority of the data was collected by interviewing professionals in the industry, but also books and Internet sources were used to gather information about the subject. The thesis contains a media part of three songs where these methods have been put into practice, and a report that goes through the productions of these three work samples step by step.

Key words: vocal production, artist, producer, recording, editing, processing.

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GLOSSARY

| | |
|--------------------|---|
| 3D | Three-dimensional |
| A&R | Artist and repertoire |
| DAW | Digital audio workstation |
| EQ | Equalizer |
| Hz | Hertz |
| kHz | Kilohertz |
| Bus track | Audio tracks can be routed to a bus track where they can be processed as a group. |
| Dry signal | Audio without reverb and delay. Depending on the context, dry signal can also mean unprocessed audio. |
| Instrumental track | Audio track of a song that does not include vocals. |
| Low mids | Lower middle frequencies |
| Mids | Middle frequencies |
| Multitracks | Separate individual tracks of an audio production. |
| Proximity effect | Increment of low frequencies when the sound source is close to a cardioid microphone. |

1 INTRODUCTION

The role of the vocals in pop music is so critical that it makes the matter of vocal production extremely essential in order to accomplish songs that are appropriate according to the guidelines of pop music. Vocals are so important because they usually contain the most of the melodic information of pop songs and the melody is the core aspect of pop music (Express 2015).

Vocal production comprehends several elements that together create the concept of vocal production. Vocal production can be divided into three main sections: pre production, recording and post production and each of these sections contain several stages that will be gone through and explained in detail in this thesis. Special and memorable vocals are the essence of vocal production and the producers have a big role on getting the best out of the artists. For this reason the psychological side of vocal production is covered in the thesis at least as comprehensively as the technical side of matter.

This thesis explores the different elements of vocal production from the angle of a producer and tries to offer practical guidance for people who want to improve their skills in vocal production. There are producers who are specialised in vocals and therefore often asked to do the vocal productions instead of the producers who are in charge of the instrumental track. In the pop scene of the United States the vocal producers get even copyright splits for their input because their vocal arrangements are so significant that they are seen as a part of the compositions. However in many cases the producers who do the instrumentals operate also as vocal producers. (Sarin 2018.) In the practical part of the thesis I will tell how I applied these methods in three songs where I was operating as a vocal producer.

2 EXPERT INTERVIEWS

2.1 Patric Sarin

Patric Sarin is a Finnish songwriter and a vocal producer. He has been working with such artists as Isac Elliot, SAARA, Antti Tuisku and Mikael Gabriel. (Vuorela 2017.) He is currently working at HMC publishing as a creative director (Warner music).

2.2 Jukka Immonen

Jukka Immonen is a Finnish music producer and a songwriter. He has been working with artists such as Jenni Vartiainen, Lauri Tähkä, Vesala and Anna Puu. (Genelec 2018.) He is also a founder and a creative director of management-, record label-, and publishing company The Fried Music Oy (Fried music).

2.3 Eetu Kalavainen

Eetu kalavainen is a Finnish music producer, songwriter and artist. His artist project eetu is signed to Warner Music Finland and he is signed as a writer and a producer at Fried Publishing. (Eetu 2018.)

2.4 Johannes Naukkarinen

Johannes Naukkarinen is a Finnish Music producer and songwriter. He has been working with such artists as Nelli Matula, Mouhous, Lukas Leon and Profeetat. (Naukkarinen 2018.)

3 PRE-PRODUCTION

3.1 Preparations

There are plenty of things the producer has to take under consideration before the artist comes to a vocal recording session. In case the producer is not familiar with the artist, listening artist's previous work should give an idea what is about to come and getting acquainted with the artist's background will make the session easier as the producer has some knowledge about the artist. If the producer happens to know someone who has been working with the artist earlier, it is worth to ask what kind of methods the artist prefers. (Cappelino 2017.)

When the producer has not been involved in the process of song writing, the producer should carefully listen to the demo of the song that is about to be recorded, and analyse all the things that already work well and what are the things that should be done differently (Sarin 2018). In case the producer has a suggestion to alter something in the composition or lyrics, it should be discussed and agreed with the songwriters in good time before tracking the vocals (Immonen 2018).

By listening the demo, the producer forms a vision about the vocal production for the song and starts a conversation with the artist and A&R to make sure that all are on the same page and there is a clear direction for the production. Without a shared vision with the whole team, it is hard to get the production done properly. (Sarin 2018.)

Organizing the session in the DAW saves time for the recording, as it speeds up the navigating and smoothens the workflow. Producers need to make sure that they understand what part is the chorus and what is the verse, in order to make the communication easy and fluent as possible. With a copy of the lyrics the producer can follow the song and make sure the artist is singing the right words. (Cappelino 2017.)

3.2 Microphone and its positioning

When the producer is about to work with an unfamiliar singer, it would be ideal to have a microphone testing to find out what microphone would be the best fit for the singer's voice (Cappellino 2017). However some producers don't put that much an effort on choosing a right microphone, but they rather use the same microphones that will fit for most of the singers (Sarin 2018).

The distance between the microphone and the audio source makes a difference in the sound. With a dynamic microphone, the distance between the vocalist and the microphone should not be more than a couple inches as dynamic microphones are usually designed for close miking. As the singer steps further away from a dynamic microphone the sound gets rapidly unnatural and less full. (Gibson 2007, 12.)

Condenser microphones are more flexible with the distance; they are able to capture a full sound even if the singer would be moving back and forth during the recording. With a condenser microphone it is possible to get full and present vocal sound even from the distance of two feet. The more there is air between the singer and the microphone, the more the room reflections will be heard on the recording. (Gibson 2007, 12-13.) As dry and highly present vocal sound is a trend in a modern pop music, the recording room's acoustics should be treated in a way that standing waves do not occur and any unwanted reverberation won't get caught on the recording and reduce the intimacy of the vocal sound (Sarin 2018). All the reverbs and delays are normally added afterwards during the mixing phase (Gibson 2007, 12-13).

A common microphone position for vocal recording is the microphone set right in front of the singer, aimed directly on the singer's mouth. This positioning usually creates the most desirable and natural sound. However some small issues might appear when the microphone is set this way. The singer sometimes makes unwanted noises such as smacking lips, hissing noise as air is running through the nose, or strong breaths. (Gibson 2007, 14.) Moving the microphone a few inches up above the singers mouth and aiming it back on the mouth should help to get rid of the unwanted sounds. It can also make the singer's timbre less nasal, which might be useful in some cases. (Gibson 2007, 14-15.)

The pronunciation of the letters P and T makes the air explode from the singer's mouth in a way that could cause problems; when the air hits the microphone, its sensitive capsule gets overloaded, which causes a loud pop sound that might be damaging for the recording. A pop filter is an item set between the singer's mouth and the microphone to eliminate these loud pop noises. Pop filter breaks up the airburst before it gets to the microphone's capsule. (Gibson 2007, 17-18.)

Many dynamic microphones have a windscreen built in them but condenser microphones usually require a separate pop filter that is attached on the microphone stand and placed in front of the microphone (Gibson 2007, 18-21). If a pop filter does not solve the problem, changing the microphone's angle in relation to the singer's mouth should do the work. When the microphone has been moved to the side a bit, the explosive air goes past the microphone. Changing the microphone's position affects the vocal sound so the producer has to consider what position is the least harmful for the production. (Gibson 2007, 24-25.)



PICTURE 1. Pop filter placed in front of a condenser microphone (Puukari 2018)

3.3 Creating a safe place

When the artist arrives in the studio it might not be the best idea to start recording right away. At least with an unfamiliar artist it is good to get to know each other by sitting down for a couple of hours and discuss anything but music. If there is some kind of a living room in the studio facilities, it could be more comfortable place to have a conversation than the studio. This way the artist could have an easy and a relaxing start for the workday. Once heading back to the studio the producer can move on to talk about the music and slowly start working on the song. (Sarin 2018.)

It is common that the artists begin to doubt their abilities as singers and question their artistry in general during the studio sessions. Troubles in their personal lives might cause stress that reflects on their self-confidence and therefore singing. (Harrell 2017.) This makes them insecure and scared of singing because they worry about letting people down. The bigger the artist, the bigger the pressure to produce great recordings and remain successful (Berger 2014.)

Artists tend to have more fragile personalities than people on average, which is seen essential to the ability to create significant art (Gregoire 2015). However this creates challenges as artists have to be very sensitive and open hearted in order to deliver a deeply emotional performance, and at the same time, they are publicly criticized. When people are vulnerable they get afraid of failure, and fear that they do something stupid, that would lead to shame. (Berger 2014.)

In these situations the producer is the person whom they should be able to rely on helping them to overcome these issues. The studio has to be fear-, shame- and judgement free space where the artists can feel fully safe and have freedom to express themselves in all the ways they want to. (Berger 2014.) Relaxed and casual vibe is the key to opening up the artists to present their inner being and all their wildest ideas that could possibly evolve into something special, like a main hook of the song. Besides being relaxed they should be eager to show how good they are at what they do because a careless artist does not have the drive, which is needed to deliver a magical vocal take. This all comes down to the relationship and the trust between the artist and the producer. (Kalavainen 2018.) Great things can happen when people let go of the fear and have the courage to strip down their guard and be themselves (Blatt 2014).

3.3.1 Spreading positivity

To create and maintain a safe environment for the artist, the producer needs to remain positive throughout the session and remind the artist that having fun is all that music is really about. Artists face enough of negativity in the outside world and they do not want to deal with it in the studio. (Harrell 2017.)

When the producer shows genuine excitement towards the project, the artist will automatically start to feel better and more confident. It is good to express the excitement not only in words but also physically by nodding one's head and moving one's body in the rhythm of the song. This makes the artists work harder as they see someone reacting on what they do. A passive producer, who sits completely still and only stares the computer screen, makes the artist feel unimportant, which could make the artist become passive as well. (Harrell 2017.)

If the vocalist has some issues with singing, the producer should mention about them in positive manner, constructively, rather than pointing out straight to the problem. A good example of a positive feedback could be: "That was great, lets do the same with little bit more energy". Once the producer blurts out something like: "That was awful, you sound even worse than usual" the session would be over, as the comment would offend the artist. (Weiss & Calilhanna 2012.) Some artists do not appreciate being counselled at all on their singing during the recording, and therefore it is so important to get to know the person in order to keep the artist in good spirits. Even one thing said in a wrong way could make the artist feel irritated and thereby ruin the whole session. (Sarin 2018.)

There are no rules for treating the artist that would apply in every case. The producer can learn the best ways to work only by going through the trouble of getting to know every artist as an individual person. If the producer ignores this phase of the production, he or she won't get those magical takes that capture true emotion but can end up in having mechanical and dull results. This matter comes back to the fact that artists need to feel safe in order to perform well, and they cannot feel safe if they do not know the person they are working with. This does not mean that the producer should go for a beer with everyone and become the dearest friend for all the artists, but sending some messages before and after the session could help to develop the relationship on to the level where it would be appropriate to be. (Sarin 2018.)

Artists love being praised for what they do and praising them for their talent is the most nurturing thing a producer could offer. Their hunger for admiration is so great that they do not only expect it from their fans, but also from the people they work with. Learning to be better on pretending to be fond of someone's music and style could help to gain and maintain working relations for a vocal producer. Obviously it would be more convenient to work only on music that the producer truly cares about but especially a producer who is new in the field might not have the luxury of choosing the projects he or she wants to do. However in some cases it is impossible to find a common ground with the artist, and it might be only because the chemistry is not right. In these cases it is good to notice and accept the fact that one does not have to be the right match for every artist out there. (Sarin 2018.)

In the end it does not matter how the session has gone, if the artist is happy with the result. Once the artist and the producer become more familiar with each other and start building up their mutual trust, they create their own culture where they can talk and behave in their own manner. The communication becomes more straightforward and the producer can say things that could not be said to some other artists. In order to keep the artist on a positive set of mind, the producer should avoid playing the vocal tracks that have no tuner and processing on them because everyone's vocals would not sound flattering on a busy pop track in case they are not processed. (Sarin 2018.)

3.3.2 Overcoming problems

No matter how positive and enthusiastic atmosphere the producer is able to create, sometimes artists have a hard time to get their vocals together. In these cases it might be a good idea to step outside the studio and go for a walk or do and talk about something that has nothing to do with the song. It helps them to reset their mind-set and forget all the negative thoughts and have a fresh start. (Harrell 2017.)

If the artist is singing in a separate room or vocal booth, it might help to move the microphone to the control room where the producer is staying because the communication is easier, as the two people can interact in the same space. The same thing could work in other way around for some singers, if they prefer to have a space of their own where

they cannot be seen and that allows them to move freely and do their own things. (Immonen 2018.)

One trick is to change the microphone to a handheld dynamic microphone for example Shure SM7 or Shure SM57. The main goal is to capture the right vibe even though it would compromise the sound quality because quite often the sound technical issues can be dealt with in post-production but it is not possible to redo a human emotion with software. Also singing without headphones or creating some kind of uplifting condition might help the artist to forget the negative thoughts. Once the bad mood is gone the vocalist can put the headphones back on and return to a more suitable microphone. However it is usually better to do something differently than keep instructing how the artist should sing. (Immonen 2018.)

Some artists love the attention so much that bringing in people to the studio to follow the recording could make the artist perform better. In case the artist has a strong craving to shine and be accepted, one person monitoring the session might not be enough to get the artist to bloom. (Sarin 2018.)

If the artists do not know how to interpret the songs, and they leave all the decision making for the producers, it can be difficult position for the producers because they would have to be the artist for the artist. The will to interpret songs in their own manner should be the core of their whole artistry. It might be wise to consider is it worth to work with these artists at all, at least just yet, and wait for the artists to find their own angle for the music. Once the artists have a vision about their own artistry, then the producer can help them to develop it. (Naukkarinen 2018.)

3.3.3 How to stand out as a vocal producer

Artists can be difficult people to work with because some of them have big egos, and at the same time they can be really insecure. However things usually get easier once they start to trust their producer (Sarin 2018.) One part of this trust is to make the technical side of the production invisible. This requires that all the gear used in the session is working properly and the producer knows how to use it fluently. A struggling producer could make the artists nervous about some crucial mistakes such as accidentally delet-

ing all the recordings when all the artist's energy should be used for the performance. A skilled and experienced producer has relaxed and peaceful appearance that informs that he or she is in control. The relation between the artist and the producer should always be in the centre, because that is where all the magic comes from, the gear is just a tool created to capture it. (Harrell 2012.)

Interaction with the artists is the best way to be distinguished from other producers. The producers should be able to connect themselves with the song and its lyrics so they would know when the emotion of the vocals comes across in a proper way. If the producers only press record and do not pay any attention on the artists and the emotion in their voice they are not going to achieve great performances. (Sarin 2018.)

Producers who can sing well and have some experience as an artist have an advantage because they are able to relate on the artist and therefore it is easier to guide them. They can also sing backing vocals to the songs, which can be beneficial for the production. The producers have to choose the right projects that suit for their skills in order to get good results and succeed. By doing that they ensure that they are able to deliverer what is asked. In case the producer is not familiar with the music style of some project he or she should at least study it carefully before starting to work on it. (Sarin 2018.)

3.3.4 Comfortable studio facilities

Comfortable surroundings are one important aspect to get the vocalist in the right mood for singing. In case the recording space is too sterile or otherwise dull, decorating the room with artist's own furniture and items might help the artist to get more comfortable. (Jones 2017.) Also bad air condition might have a negative effect on the brain's activity, which can make the vocalist feel tired and unfocused (Collins 2016).

Dimming lights is one of the good features to have in the vocal booth, as some artists might prefer shadier lights instead of bright fluorescent lamps (Singaram 2016). In a long session, colour-changing lights could help to refresh the environment without having to move to other space or changing the decoration (Jones 2017). Some artists like to have candles or incenses in the studio to get them on the right mood (Sarin 2018).

4 RECORDING

4.1 Headphone mix

Creating a new session in the DAW for the vocal recording and importing the instrumental bounce of the song to the session could save the computer's processing power (Mathews 2015). That way making the headphone mix gets easier as the signal routings for the listening can be quite complicated inside the main session (Immonen 2018). Having only one stereo-track for the instrumental in the recording session leaves room for vocals' real time processing; if there are too much plugins in the session, the buffering size needs to be increased, which creates monitoring latency. Latency is a major mood killer because it confuses the singer in timing. (Mathews 2015.) The only downside in this is that the producer has to go back to the main session and make a new bounce, if the artist wants to change something in the instrumental mix (Immonen 2018).

The balance between the instrumental track and the singer's voice is the key factor in order to achieve a pleasant headphone mix. If the singers hear their own voice considerably louder than the music, it makes them shy and cautious, even though their voice would actually be too quiet. This has also a tendency to make singer's pitch flat, because of the lack of energy. The same thing happens vice versa when the music is set too loud compared to the vocals; singers try to hear their voice by singing too loud and the pitch might get sharp. (Singaram 2016.)

Vocal processing in the singer's headphones makes a huge difference because that is the main reference as they sing. Setting compressor, EQ and reverb the way the singer is comfortable with will most likely improve their performance. The majority of the singers tend to appreciate their vocals being quite compressed in their headphones because compression makes all the smallest nuances in their voice audible, which helps them to deliver more accurate performances. It does not matter if the artist is singing loud or quiet, the compressor keeps the volume on a stable level. (Immonen 2018.)

On the other hand too comfortable listening may cause some problems with the artist's delivery, since everything would sound too perfect by default. The vocalists might get

lazy and careless with their singing and would not give everything there would be to give. One trick to prevent this is to take one headphone off, which allows the singers to hear their voice flowing naturally within the room. This might make the singers work harder for great vocal takes since the heavy processing would not hide their flaws. The same thing applies to the producer; listening the vocalist singing without hearing the instrumental on the headphones could help the producer to hear how the vocalist is actually singing. However not all the artists are very good singers, and they might have problems with timing. In these cases the producer has to hear the beat in order to help the artists to sing more accurately. (Sarin 2018.)

Some artists have a specific taste on headphones so reserving a couple of different kinds of headphones on the set could be a smart move. Some prefer closed back headphones such as Sennheiser HD 25 and others like more Hi-fi type open back headphones. (Immonen 2018.) In closed back headphones the main principal is the strong sound isolation that prevents any disturbing sound leakage ending up on the recording (E-home recording studio). Leak-tight isolation could create an uncomfortable listening environment for some singer so they would probably like to go with open back headphones for their natural sound. In case the artist is not happy with any of the options, taking the one headphone off the ear is always a good idea. (Mathews 2015.)

4.2 Recording the lead track

The lead track is usually the very first thing to be recorded, as everything builds up around it. A good way to start the actual recording is to go through the whole song couple of times, before focusing on a certain part. That way the producer gets a nice overview of the situation, and is able to spot challenging parts that might require more work to get done. It is also a good way to get singer's voice warmed up and it also prevents getting stuck in a challenging part right at the beginning of a recording. (Immonen 2018.)

The artist might get frustrated if the producer makes the singer wait too long in between the takes (Immonen 2018). When there is a momentum happening with the artist, the producer does not want to waste time but act fast and get the most important parts of the

song recorded right away (Sarin 2018). Too much thinking usually kills the feeling and emotion, which is crucial for maintaining the so-called flow mode (Harrell 2017).

In case the artist does not like to wait at all in between the takes, looping could be one solution for the problem. Looping is a technique that allows a vocalist to sing a selected part of a song multiple times without having any breaks in between. Highlighting the section that needs to be recorded on the timeline and setting the looping mode on makes this technique activated. (Kalavainen 2018.)

Singing in tune should not be an issue during the recording, because that can be taken care of in the editing phase and the focus should stay on the delivery and emotion. This matter will be looked more into in the editing section.

4.3 Backing vocals

Once there are enough takes for the lead track it is time to move on to the backing vocals. Backing vocals are an important element when it comes to the pop vocal sound, as other genres tend to rely more on the lead track (Immonen 2018). They add colour and depth to the songs and make the hooks stand out (Kiang 2013). The backing vocal arrangements can be predetermined, but they are often done during the recording because the lead track defines what more each part requires. Once the lead vocal track is done, it is easy to recognise the spots that would benefit from some extra vocal layers. (Immonen 2018.) Backing vocals require rather detailed work to get them right. Tightness is the key word and it concerns both timing and the pitch as the goal is to blend the backing vocals with the lead track in a way they sound almost as one, but wider and bigger. (Kiang 2013.)

Recording backing vocals with another microphone could make the mixing easier as the backing vocal sound would differ from the lead sound by default. In case the lead track is recorded for example with a Shure SM7 that has lots of body in its sound, the backing vocals could be recorded with a condenser microphone, to add sense of space and air. (Immonen 2018.) Microphones that have less middle frequencies are good for backing vocals because stacking vocal tracks that consist lots of mids has a tendency to make the mix muddy. Some producers like to record their own vocals for the songs because

blending some other voice with the lead vocalist's voice often creates a desirable result. (Sarin 2018.)

Otherwise there are no technical differences between backing vocals and the lead vocals. The same things apply, such as making sure there are no disturbing room reflections and not too much proximity effect. (Kiang 2013.) If there is a need for backing vocals to sound distant, the singer can simply move a few feet away from the microphone and the sound would become more distant (Immonen 2018).

Backing vocals require patience and accuracy from the producer as well as from the artist in order to get them done well and efficiently. The same parts need to be repeated over and over again, in different harmonies and sounds; therefore the producer has to pay close attention on every take in case the artist is singing wrong lyrics. Even one wrong word can mess up the unity of the backing vocals. It does not matter if the melody is not correct on every take because the flaws in the pitch can be fixed during the editing phase. Backing vocals are edited in more drastic manner than the lead because they do not need to sound as natural and authentic as the lead track because a single backing track is only a small part of a huge wall of vocals and it won't be heard in detail in the final mix. (Naukkarinen 2018.)

The problem with many vocalists is that they sing backing vocals the same way they would sing the lead track. Backing vocals are not supposed to have the same interpretation as the lead track because backing vocals' job is to support the lead, not to overshadow it. They need to remain neutral and steady in order to not attract too much attention. This matter does not apply to the doubles because some producers considered them as a part of the lead vocals and they should have the same emotive interpretation as the original lead track. (Sarin 2018.) Doubling the lead is a common practice in pop music and it is used to lift up certain parts of the song by making the lead vocals appear bigger and wider. Sometimes doubles are used through out the whole song to make the overall vocal sound more massive. (Kalavainen 2018.) Doubles are built in a way that the original lead track is placed to the centre of the mix and the other usually two or four doubles are panned hard left and right, to make the lead vocals cover the whole stereo spectrum (Sarin 2018).

Doubling the melody from octave higher could add sense of air to the vocal sound. High octave doubles can be used for highlighting single lines or entire parts of the song and it's common to put some reverb on them to emphasize their airiness. Low doubles provide more body and weight to the vocal sound as the fundamental note is resonating on lower frequencies. Unlike high doubles, low doubles are usually left dry and highly present in the mix. (Kiang 2013.)

Backing vocals can be made from the lead track when there would not be a need for recording backing vocals at all. Software programmes like Melodyne, which I am going to tell more about in the vocal tuning and timing section, and Harmony engine by Antares make trying out new vocal harmonies really easy as the producer can hear right away if they are going to work well for the part. The harmonies that have been drawn in Melodyne won't probably sound very natural but it does not matter if they are set low in the mix. The colour of the harmonies does come through even though they would not be upfront in the mix. (Sarin 2018.)

The aesthetics of the backing vocals in pop music have been changing during the years. Back in the '90s boy bands such as Backstreet boys had a huge amount of vocal tracks in their songs. Nowadays the individual tracks are not as distinguishable as they used to be because they are used in different form. Now they are a lot tighter and their only purpose is to support the lead track, so they are not supposed to stand out. (Sarin 2018.)

The timing needs to be tight and the pitch should be on spot as well. However if the vocal tracks are too identical, it can do some damage to the stereo image. Wide stereo image is usually desirable for the choruses and small variations in the pitch and timing increases the width of panned backing vocals. Editing the backing vocals in to perfection has a tendency to cause phasing problems that narrow down the stereo image and make it sound almost mono. (Naukkarinen 2018.) According to Brian May (May 2002) Queen's lead singer Freddie Mercury was able to sing his doubles so accurately that they would start phasing without any editing.

Ad libs are usually the last thing to be recorded. Ad libs are improvised vocal lines that are used to fill the spots in the song that feel empty or otherwise require extra vocal information. They are often written before the recording even though they are meant to sound spontaneous. (Immonen 2018.) In case the vocalist is natural with ad libs the pro-

ducer can just press record and let the vocalist sing what ever comes to his or her mind. Later on the producer would go through the lines and pick the best ones. (Sarin 2018.)

4.4 Vocal recording in a song writing session

In pop music scene it is rather common to record the final vocals already in a song writing session. Many times the emotion is better on the vocals that have been recorded in the writing session, as the enthusiasm about a brand new song tends to help the emotion to come out more genuine and without forcing. Co-write sessions can be really fast forward type of situations where there is no time to overthink things, which is good, because usually then something special happens. (Immonen 2018.) Consequently the interpretation is free and intuitive on demo vocals. Once the singers have been listening the demo multiple times, they get used to its vocals, and in the final recording session they try to imitate the demo vocals, and get frustrated for not sounding the same. However, this does not apply to all singers; some artists like to take their time on listening the song and by learning it carefully they are able to interpret the song in their own manner. (Naukkarinen 2018.)

The producer should prepare for a co-write session with gear that can be used for the final vocal recording. It is good to make the post-production as easy as it can be even though it is possible to get rid off many unwanted issues like clicks and background noises that appeared during the recording. The gear should be already set up when it's time to record, because setting up the microphone for fifteen minutes in the middle of the session might make the artist feel irritated. It is good to have a pre amp and a microphone that are easy to move around and that are able to provide good sound quality for the final vocals because the song writing sessions might not always be in studios that are full of high quality gear. (Immonen 2018.)

5 POST-PRODUCTION

There are no rules on how the vocals should be treated in modern pop music post-production; everything is permitted as long as it works well for the song. The vocals can be edited in a drastic manner and processed as they were any other instrument so they don't necessarily need to sound natural. (Sarin 2018.) In the next bits I will discuss about different methods that are used in the pop music vocal post-production.

5.1 Editing

5.1.1 Comping

Vocal comping is a common practice in pop music because it's a good way to accomplish smooth and almost perfect pop vocals. Comping is a technique where the producer combines the final vocal track out of several takes. It is unusual that an artist sings a song through two times and the producer uses the better take. Even the best singers on earth, who are actually able to deliver great performances on a single take, use comping because it can make them sound even better. In pop music the result is the only thing that matters and the means how one gets there are irrelevant. The emotion on the vocals will stay authentic if the comping is done right even though the final track would have been assembled from several takes. (Neil 2015.)

Once the vocals have been recorded, it is up to the producer to decide which takes end up into the final version. Usually there are 4-10 takes recorded from each part of the song and the producer builds the final vocal track from those takes by choosing only the very best lines from each recording. The lines can be divided in words and even the words can be divided in syllables, so it might require really detailed work in order to make the vocals to sound as perfect as possible. (Neil 2015.)

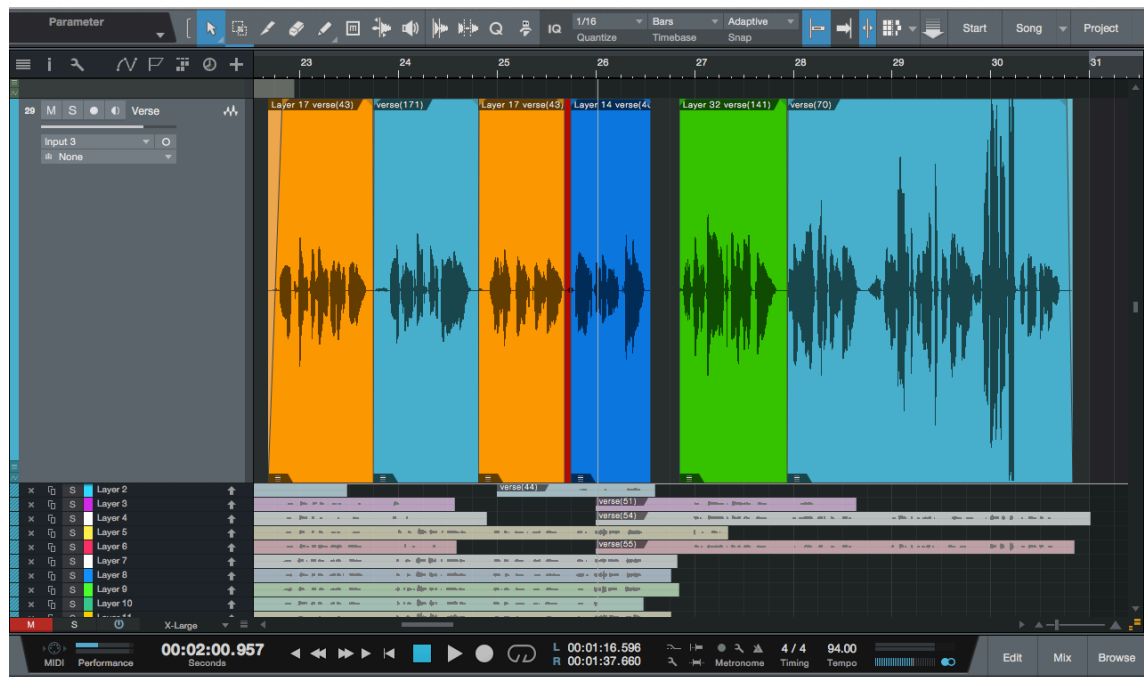
The producer is not only measuring the technical delivery but also the tone and over all emotion. It is good to have the instrumental playing in the background while going through the takes to make sure that the lines fit in with the music. The vocals should be

magical and memorable so comping should be focused on finding something out of ordinary that stands out and makes the song more special. (Neil 2015.)

Comping can be very time-consuming task, as it goes in to the smallest details. It can take time from hours to days, depending on the producer. Choosing the best lines is not the only hard thing, but also making them go well together can be nerve-racking. Edits need to be unnoticeable in order to make the vocals sound believable and the feeling needs to stay coherent. It is not usual to hear comping so bad that you can notice it, mainly because backing tracks cover the flaws on the vocals. Especially hard knocking drumbeats help to get away with the problems of a lousy comping. The comping is usually done in a DAW by using playlists. Playlists allow to record many takes on one track and the producer can easily pick the best parts from playlist track on to the master track. (Neil 2015.)

Taking some time in between the recording and comping gives a better perspective on the vocals. Continuing after a break with a fresh mind will lead in to better results, as decision-making gets harder as the session lasts longer. Marking down the best takes during the recording saves time from comping. Marking one good take to build the final lead track around is a practical technique for comping. (Immonen 2018.)

Pop vocals are commonly considered as plastic and fake but that does not really concern comping but rather other vocal processing methods such as overdone tuning. Comping is doing quite the opposite because it gives freedom to the artists to try out more edgy ideas without a fear of ruining a solid take. In case an artist tries something unordinary and it goes wrong, it does not matter because the bad part is easily replaceable with a better one. Interesting performances are the ones everyone is looking for, because they draw attention and will be more likely to be remembered later on. Comping is especially used for making the music more magical. (Neil 2015.)



PICTURE 2. Comping in action (Puukari 2018)

5.1.2 Vocal tuning and timing

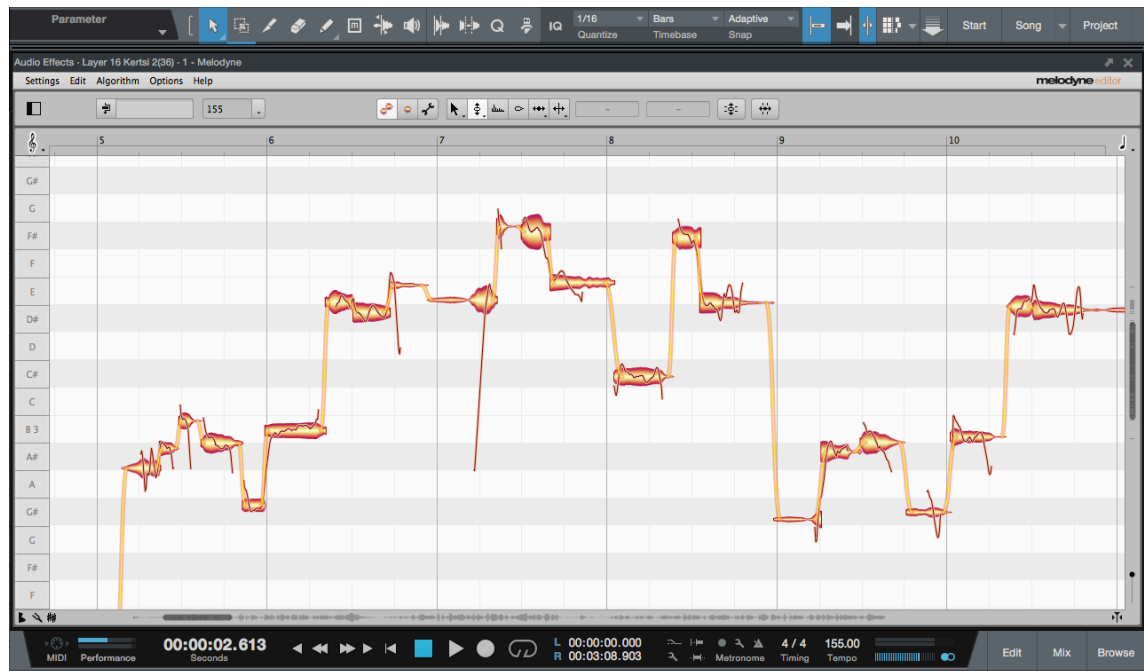
Tuning tools for vocals are so advanced nowadays that there is no need to stress about the pitch during the recording. In case the vocalist is an established artist in the industry, the pitch should be quite good anyway so it is rare to have a situation where the vocals could not be fixed in Melodyne or some other tuning software. Encouraging the artist to focus on the interpretation is always better than making them worry about the pitch. If a producer would instruct an artist to sing better in tune, it would be about singing it in more correct manner, which is a weird concept in music in general. A fixation on the pitch will more likely make the artists doubt their skills rather than help them achieve the flow mode where all the good things happen. (Immonen 2018.)

There are plenty of singers who can sing in perfect tune but there are just handful of vocalists whom are able to deliver performances where the emotion truly comes across. This makes the question about singing in tune in a studio a secondary matter. In the studio the main goal should always be about obtaining a great record, so capturing takes with perfect pitch would only slow down the recording process, as the tuning is so easy these days. However in some cases there might be an important line that needs to go strictly in a certain way and if the producer knows that any of the current takes cannot

be fixed without problems, it makes sense to record the part a couple times more to capture that one golden take that has everything in it. (Immonen 2018.)

Even though vocal tuning is a major factor in pop vocal production it does not mean it is appropriate to go too far with it. The sound that comes from hard vocal tuning does not work in every song. (Immonen 2018.) In fact it is rather unusual to hear heavily tuned vocals in modern pop songs; the vocals are usually in an accurate tune but the tuning has been done so carefully that the pitch manipulation is not obvious. Natural sounding vocals that are inhumanly in tune have probably been tuned in Melodyne or some other similar software. In Melodyne it is possible to make really subtle changes on the pitch that cannot be recognized in the final mix. (Naukkarinen 2018.)

In case there is only a real time autotuner on the vocals, it is possible that the melody goes wrong at some point. A real time autotuner forces the note to the closest note on the scale so if the vocalist is singing heavily out of tune, the corrected note might be a wrong one. Opening the vocal track in Melodyne and fixing the notes that are drastically out of tune should prevent this problem. The autotuner can be kept on while doing the changes in Melodyne, so the producer would hear when the note is close enough for the tuner to correct it right. This way every note does not need to be fixed manually in Melodyne since the autotuner takes care of the over all pitch. Even though the whole track would have been carefully edited in Melodyne, it still might be worthwhile having an autotuner with slow retune speed coming after the Melodyne, to keep the tails and the vibratos under control. After a long day of editing the notes in Melodyne might be slightly off the pitch centre since one's ears have become tired. The autotuner is a good back up in these cases. (Sarin 2018.)



PICTURE 3. Layout of Melodyne Editor (Puukari 2018)

Sometimes leaving some tracks completely without tuning could make the part sound more special. The untuned vocal tracks usually blend really nicely together with tightly edited tracks because those little bit pitchy vocals bring life and variability to the sound. (Sarin 2018.) As with comping, it is good to listen the edits the next day with a fresh pair of ears, because it is really easy to over do the tuning once you start doing it with your eyes (Immonen 2018).

Pitch might not be the only issue on the vocals that would need some fixing. Bad timing might ruin otherwise a solid vocal take, but fortunately also timing can be corrected smoothly with modern editing tools. Before fixing the timing the producer needs to know how the corrections should be done. The nature of the song defines how the vocals should flow on the beat. (Walden 2017.) For example the timing on electronic dance music songs used to be corrected tightly on the grid, which made them sound sterile and static (Sarin 2018) but some other kind of songs might require more groovy vocals, that do not hit on the grid on every syllable. Slower songs probably need less correcting, as it could be enough to check that the most important beats are hitting at the right time. Sometimes the vocals could be more effective when they are off grid and that is why it is always important to work by the ears, and not the eyes. Staring the grid can easily fool the producer to think that the edits are good when the syllables hit perfectly on the grid. Before editing the vocals it is good to remember to copy the original

track to a new one, so the producer can always go back to it if the edits turn out to be bad. (Walden 2017.)

In case the vocalist's interpretation is too stiff for the song and the editing is not helping, the producer could try this one timing trick. Revoice Pro is an editing software that allows to copy the pitch and timing from a master track to other tracks. It analyses the qualities of the master track and duplicates them to the other ones. In case the producer has written the song and knows how the groove should go in order to make the song work well, the producer could sing the song and transfer the groove to the artist's performance with Revoice Pro. The producer has to be really careful with these kinds of actions, as some artists might not appreciate that their singing is modified this way. Also the producer's version cannot be too different from artist's performance because drastic corrections make the vocals sound unnatural as the software artefacts become audible. (Sarin 2018.)



PICTURE 4. Layout of ReVoice Pro (Puukari 2018)

5.2 Processing

5.2.1 Compression

Vocals are extremely dynamic element and they usually require a great amount of compression in order to maintain a pleasant balance between all the instruments. When the other instruments stay rather consistent in volume, vocals tend to get quieter and drowned out in the mix, as they can get uncomfortably loud when the singer is putting more power behind it. (Beck 2002, 18.) Besides evening out the dynamics, compressing is used in pop vocal productions to increase the overall vocal energy in order to maintain the vocals' presence in the mix as instrumental tracks can be quite busy (White 2018).

There are two basic functions in compressors, threshold and ratio. Threshold defines the point when the compressor becomes active; once the input signal goes over the threshold point, the signal gets compressed. Ratio determines how much the signal going above the threshold gets compressed. Ratio settings are usually shown in comparison values, for example 3:1. The larger the first number is, the more the signal will be compressed. (Beck 2002, 19.) Some compressors also have an option to alter attack and release values. Attack tells how fast the ratio applies after the input signal goes above the threshold and release defines how long does it take to stop compressing after the signal drops below the threshold. (Beck 2002, 20.)



PICTURE 5. Wave's H-COMP compressor (Puukari 2018)

Parallel compression is a technique where the audio signal is duplicated on to two tracks and the other one is compressed heavily, while the other one is kept dry as in no compression at all. Parallel compressing increases the natural feel of the vocals because the track with no compression lives its own life along the compressed one. This technique could suit on a song that has more vocal dynamics that need to be preserved. Parallel compression allows the vocals to jump out in the parts where the singer is singing more powerfully, as vocals that do not have parallel compression on them would stay more still. (Kalavainen 2018.) Also distortion is used a lot on vocals nowadays as it makes them more compressed and cut through the mix (Sarin 2018).

5.2.2 EQ and multiband compression

EQ is commonly used to fix problems concerning audio source's frequencies. These problems usually originate from the vocalist or the microphone but if it is not possible

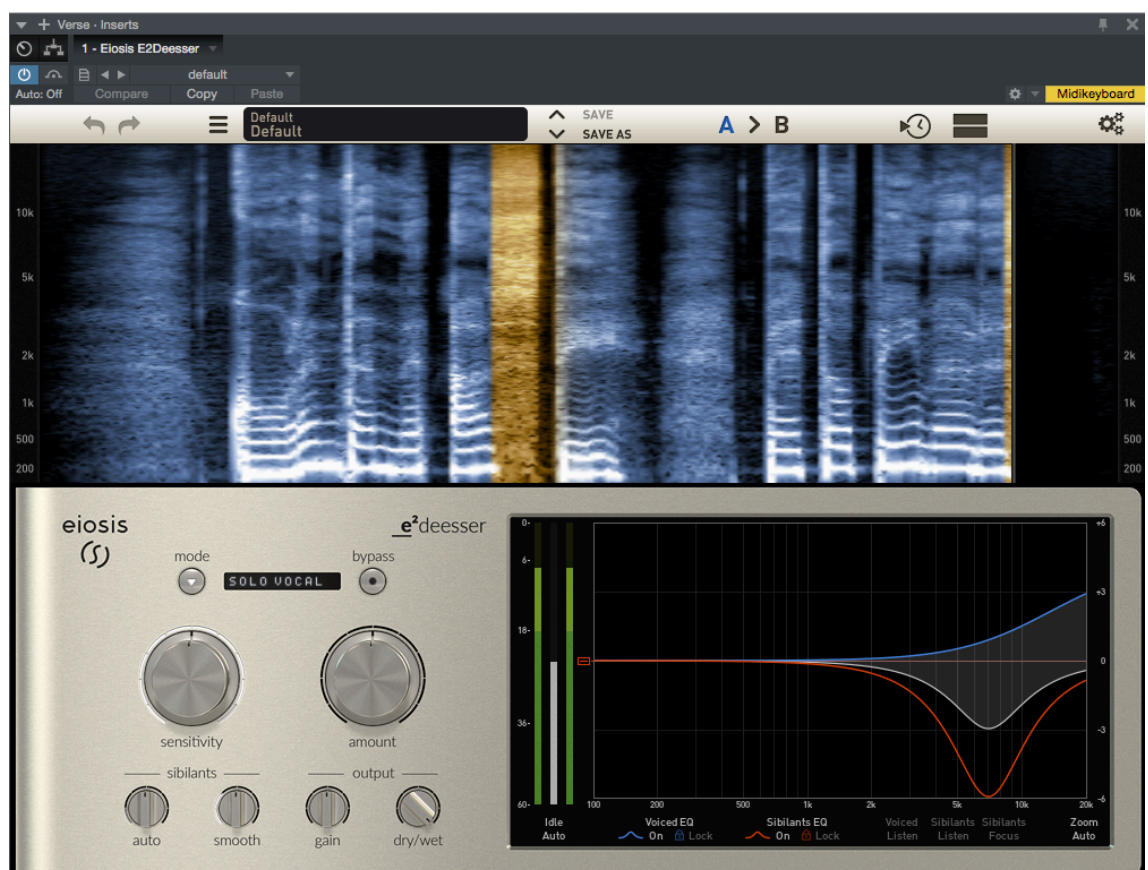
to do any changes on them, EQ is a tool for correcting these undesirable tones. In vocals these undesirable tones could mean for example muddiness, harshness or nasalness. ‘B’, ‘P’ and ‘M’ sounds produce great amount of inaudible low frequencies that steal room in the mix from instruments that justifiably contain low frequencies. Some microphones and preamps have a high pass filter built in them, but additional filters may be needed to get rid of all the useless low end. (White 2018.) Adding a high pass filter and a low shelf cut could also ease up an exaggerated proximity effect (Weiss 2017).

Some microphones tend to add too much low mids to the vocal sound especially if the vocals are recorded in a small room. Cutting somewhere around 300-600hz should make the vocal sound less stuffed. However taking too much off could make the vocals lose their body so it is wise to be cautious with the EQ. In case the vocals sound too thin, boosting frequencies below 250hz should bring up the missing low end. Some microphones, especially dynamic ones have a darker high end and as the pop vocals tend to be rather bright in the mix, vocals that are recorded with a dynamic microphone might require some high end boosting. (Weiss 2017.)



PICTURE 6. Studio one's stock EQ (Puukari 2018)

Sibilance is a common problem with vocals as ‘S’ and ‘T’ consonants create sharp and cutting sound in the higher frequencies. The highest peak of sibilance usually lies somewhere between 5kHz and 8kHz. Hard compressing enforces the sibilance so it is rather a rule than an exception to have issues with sibilance on pop vocals. Multiband compressors called De-essers are good tools to smoothen down the disturbing sibilance peaks. The producer can adjust the de-esser to take down the specific frequencies that the vocalist in question generates with his or her consonants, as every vocalist generates different kind of sibilance. Threshold is a feature that makes the multiband compressors superior compared to the EQs when dealing with sibilance. Multiband compressor activates only on the peaks that go over the threshold while EQ would cut down the frequencies also when it would not be needed. (Schlette 2012.)



PICTURE 7. De-esser in action (Puukari 2018)

5.3 Mixing

5.3.1 Role of a vocal producer in mixing

The track producers do not usually mix their songs themselves but rather use separate engineers who are specialised in mixing. The same thing applies to vocal producers; it is rare that the vocal producer does the final vocal mix. A common practise is that the vocal producer sends tuned but unprocessed vocal tracks to the mixing engineer who then does the final processing and mixing. Vocal producers usually send a vocal mix of their own along with the multitracks to show the mixing engineers how they thought that the balance and processing and effects should sound in general. If the mixing engineer would put for example some harmony too loud in the mix it might ruin that part of the song. With these guidelines the mixing engineer is able to do the mixing so that it matches the producers vision, but only with better sounds. However there might be cases where the artist's production team ends up using the vocal producer's vocal mix in the final version if they think that it is good enough and suitable for the song. (Sarin 2018.)

5.3.2 Placing the vocals to the stereo field

The lead vocals are almost always placed in upfront and centre in the mix but there are plenty of different ways to place the doubles and other backing vocals in the mix (Moss 2018). Some producers might like to have one track of harmony placed to the centre while others record two or more takes of harmonies to pan them left and right, to create a stereo impression (Sarin 2018). The stereo impression can be made also with one track using stereo plugins such as Soundtoys Microshift. These stereo-plugins are usually blended with the dry lead track to make the lead appear wider. (Kalavainen 2018.)

In case the doubles on the side sound too separated from the lead track, adding a third double to the centre and processing it differently than the lead track might help to tie down the side doubles with the lead track. Adding Microshift or some other stereo-plugin to the centre double could also decrease the gap between the lead and the side doubles. (Sarin 2018.)

5.3.3 Reverbs and delays

As highly present vocal sound is desired in pop productions nowadays, reverbs are not as obvious as they used to be, especially in the '80s vocals were drowned in reverbs as producers wanted to use their expensive digital reverb units. Having lots of reverb on vocals tends to move them further back in the mix, so in modern pop music reverbs are used to make the vocals to sit in the mix more comfortably rather than using them as an audible effect. (White 2018.)

Increasing pre-delay value on vocal reverbs helps to keep the sound more present, as the reverb does not come in simultaneously with the dry vocals (White 2018). Sending the dry vocals to a delay that output is set to go to a reverb can do the same kind of an effect (Naukkarinen 2018). Cutting off the high frequencies from the reverb leaves room for the higher frequencies of the dry vocals and therefore maintains their position in upfront (White 2018).

Since the lead vocals are so dry, making some ad-libs and backing vocals coming from further back from a reverb adds depth to the vocal mix. Many vocal productions are two-dimensional as they play only with stereo spectrum but using this reverb trick adds 3D effect to the production. (Naukkarinen 2018.)



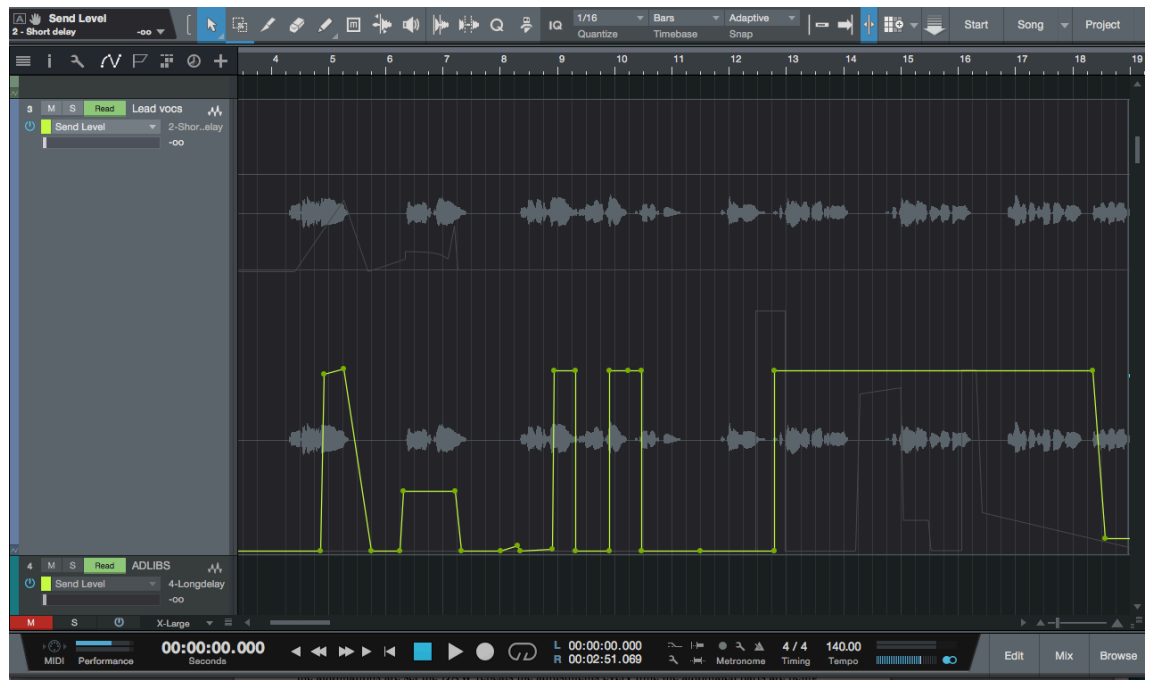
PICTURE 8. Slate digital's reverb plugin (Puukari 2018)

5.3.4 Automation

In music production automation means an adjustment that a DAW makes across the timeline of a song. First the producer needs to set the automation by drawing the wanted adjustments with a mouse in the automation window or doing it in real time using some of the automation modes that enable writing automation with a knob or a fader of a midi controller. Once the automations are set the DAW repeats the adjustments every time the automated parts are being played. (Baviec 2018.)

Automations are commonly used to make a mix feel more alive as a producer might want to have different settings in different parts of the song. Increasing and decreasing the volume and panning audio from side to side are most common things that can be done with automation but it can be used to make adjustments also for plugins and effect sends. (Levine 2018.)

In vocal productions automation can help the vocals to stay on top of the mix in case the compressing alone is not able to keep the vocals on a stable level (Inglis 2018). Volume automations can also increase the dynamic feel of the vocals in case the compression has made them lifeless and too static (Immonen 2018). It is common to make adjustments to the amount of the reverbs and delays in between different parts of the song. Also emphasizing certain words with reverbs and delays and creating tails to the end of the vocal lines are usual practices in pop vocal productions. (Inglis 2011.)



PICTURE 9. Automations in Studio one 3 (Puukari 2018)

6 WORK SAMPLES

6.1 Tapio Lempivaara – Hauras maa

6.1.1 Background of the song

I have been working with an artist called Tapio Lempivaara for some time now and in this section I will discuss about the vocal production of one of his song, Hauras maa. The song is written by Tapio Lempivaara, Joonas Pietikäinen and myself. I wanted to include this particular song from Tapio Lempivaara in to my thesis because his other material is straightforward pop music but Hauras maa is not a traditional easygoing pop song because of its dark and heavy lyrics. In the vocal production I wanted to combine these two worlds in a way the song would be radio-friendly and still preserve its dark movie-like feeling.

There were lots of acoustic elements used in the instrumental track, which made it sound warm and earthy. The lyrics tell a story about horrors of war seen through the eyes of a child and it includes themes such as death and domestic violence. The lyrics are the most essential element of the song, and the main idea for the production was to emphasise their importance, as they are the core aspect of the track.

6.1.2 Recording lead vocals

The lead vocals were recorded during the writing session. Everything went exemplary without an effort because the artist was in the right mood since we had just finished the song and the feeling from it was still fresh. Once we had the basic arrangement for the instruments ready, we recorded the vocals so we could remember all the melodies later on but the outcome was so pleasing that we ended up using it the final version. This is a good example why it is worth to use quality gear for demo vocals.

The vocals were recorded with an AKG C414 microphone with cardioid pattern on, through a DBX preamplifier going in to a Universal audio Apollo interface. DBX pre-

amplifier brought warmth and body to the sound, which is appropriate thinking about the song's aesthetics. I chose to use AKG C414 in the writing session because we have had good results with it in Lempivaara's previous productions and therefore it was a safe choice.

6.1.3 Lead vocal editing

In the writing session we did not record anything besides the lead track. Lempivaara sang the song through a few times, and I assembled the final lead track out of those few takes using the comping technique. The lead track is based on one take, and a few weaker lines were replaced by another takes so there was no need to chop the track in to little pieces. Next I opened the track in Melodyne and went through it to make sure that everything sounds, as they should. I avoided making any drastic correction in Melodyne because audible artefacts would be a major turn off in this kind of natural song that has lots of acoustic elements in it. Fortunately the artist's performance was so solid that there was hardly any pitch correction to be done.

In the chorus there is one high note where the audio gets mildly distorted because I was still staging the input gain but I had the take recorded. That one had the best delivery out of all takes so I decided to use it regardless the distortion.

6.1.4 Vocal arrangement

We settled a second session with Tapio Lempivaara and Joonas Pietikäinen where we recorded backing vocals for the song. I asked Tapio to sing doubles for the chorus, to add some width and support for the lead, but it still felt like the last two choruses needed more mass. I set the microphone on omni-pattern and we spread around the room to sing together as a choir. We did several takes and in between them we changed our vocal timbres to make it sound like there would be more people singing than just the three of us. During the processing phase I changed the formant and pitch for some of the tracks to make it appear there was dozens of people chanting the chorus melody.

Once we had the production ready, it felt that the vocals should be even more massive at the end of the song, so I started to build a new vocal arrangement for the last chorus. This time I had another microphone, Neumann U87 to make the new vocals blend nicely in the mix. The microphone went straight in to Universal audio Apollo twin interface, but the interface's console had a Neve 88RS channel strip plugin by universal audio to add some colour to the sound. Joonas was in the studio with me during that day so I asked him to join to sing more chants, and we recorded eight tracks on top of the previous ones.

In between the takes we stepped a little bit away from the microphone to create diversity in the distance to make it appear that the voices would come from different places, as it would be the case with an actual choir. I did not have to play with reverbs on the choir since this technique created natural depth in to the vocal mix.

I moved on to the harmonies. The note range of the chorus melody is quite wide and there are fast leaps and large intervals, so I wanted the harmony to be more stationary and easier to sing. Because of this the harmony line goes higher than the melody at some points and at the next point the melody takes the place of the highest note. I buried the harmony in the mix in a way people could not tell how the line actually goes, but they would feel that there is something going.

I tried to add a second and a third harmony but they were clashing with the frequencies of the instrumental track and therefore left the mix messy. Well thought arrangement makes the mixing a lot easier, so I decided to leave them out (Bacino 2017).

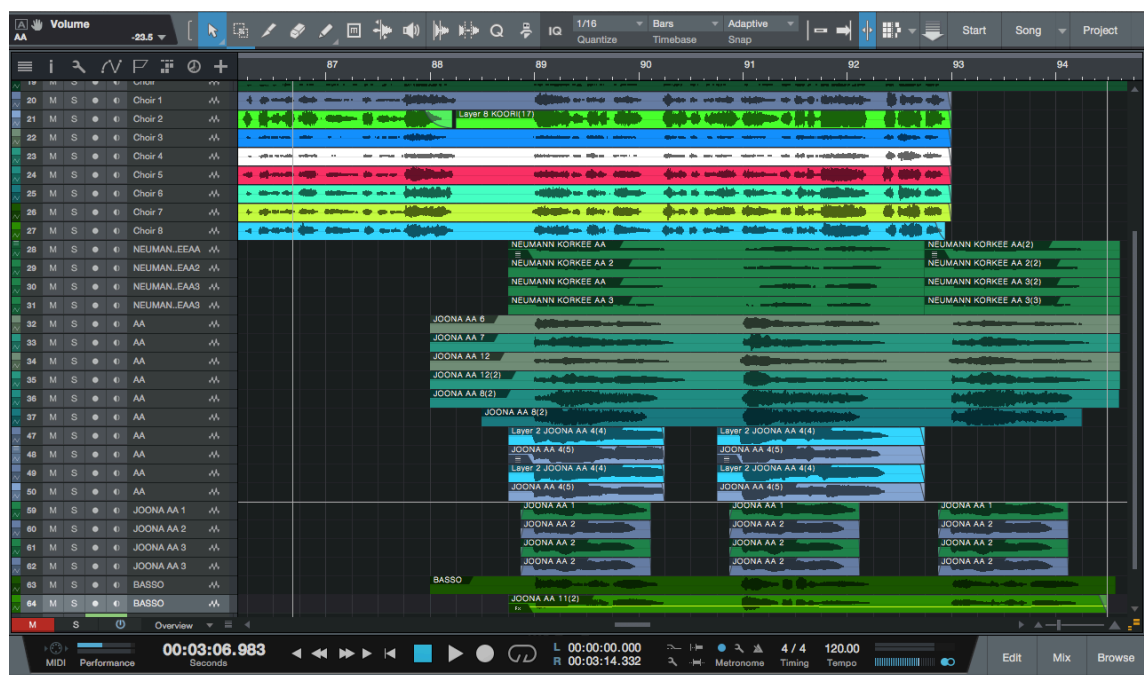
One of the vocal layers follows the root note of the chorus chords, which I added to strengthen up the bottom end. It was sung with the lyrics but I arranged it to come in only on the first and second beat of every bar, leaving the third and fourth beat empty. The arrangement made the chorus feel lighter and more dynamic even though there were lots of things happening.

The final vocal layer I made for the arrangement was a counter-melody. A Counter-melody is an additional melody that goes side by side with the lead melody (Ewer 2011). The counter-melody added movement and air on the production and it sounds like it could be coming from an orchestral string section, which supports the movie-like

feeling of the song. This counter-melody appears a couple of times before the final chorus, in the intro and in the second half of the second chorus. The idea was to offer a sneak peak for what is about to come.

The counter-melody is sung with long ‘A’ Vowel to separate it from the rest of the vocal elements. As with the root note layer, the counter melody also comes only on the first and second beat of the bar leaving some space to breath on the third and fourth beat.

In the verses I wanted to keep things as simple as possible so people would listen the lyrics, rather than focus on fancy production tricks. There are octave doubles on two lines to dramatize them and make them stand out, but there are no harmonies or any ad-libs that would keep the listener from comprehending the story of the song. In the verse there is a shady delay to fill out the blanks and create pressing atmosphere, which I consider more as arranging than mixing.



PICTURE 10. Vocal layers in Hauras maa (Puukari 2018)

6.1.5 Editing backing vocals

Because backing vocals are not as audible in the mix as the lead vocals are, I did not do any comping with them. The delivery of the backing vocals is not important, as the listener would not hear the details in the voice. With the backing tracks I focused more on the timing, and pitch so they would not disturb the experience of the song. I made sure that backing vocals were synchronised with the lead vocals, because lazy timing would mess up the clarity.

Choirs were not pitch or time corrected, because if they were, they would not sound like a choir. There were at least two voices singing on a one track, so it would be challenging if not impossible to edit them without ending up with huge amount of artefacts. Only thing I fixed for the choirs was cutting off some endings from the lines that lasted too long to make the vocals sound compact in total.

6.1.6 Processing the lead track

I started the processing from the lead track. At first I separated the verse and chorus on to two tracks because I wanted to have a slightly different processing on them. Slate's Virtual mix rack was the first plugin on the verse's lead track where I added an EQ and two compressors. I cleared out the bottom end with a high pass filter set on 80hz and I had a low frequency band on a shelf mode taking out a few decibels from 240hz to make more room for the higher frequencies. I set a Low mid frequency band to cut around 500-600hz to get rid of an unpleasant honky sound.

I used two compressors to make the compression subtler. After these two compressors the lead vocals stayed still and present, as the sound would be right in one's face. The volume did not move around anymore, as the unwanted dynamics had been taken out.

After the compressors I added Soundtoys' SieQ-plugin, which I used to boost the high end in order to make the vocals more bright and present in the mix. The high end boost made the lyrics come through as the pronunciation became clearer. I added little bit of overdrive from the SieQ to bring up the harmonics, which made the vocal sound more colourful. The high end boosting caused some sibilance on the S consonants so I put the

Eosis E2Deesser to even out the sibilance peaks. The lead track was sent to the vocal bus where it was compressed a bit more so the remaining peaks would be flattened.

6.1.7 Processing the backing vocals

Backing vocals come in on the second chorus, if the two high octave double lines in the verses do not count. The idea was to introduce new elements one by one and let to production grow towards the last chorus where all the vocal layers are out there. The chorus doubles are not as loud as I would normally set them, because they are not meant to be heard as a separate piece. I needed them to support the lead and make the choruses differentiate from each other.

I cut more low end and low mids on the doubles than the lead so the doubles would not cover so many frequencies in the mix, as the idea was to keep them light and small. Even so I wanted to spread the stereo image with them so I panned them hard left and right, and EQ'd the track on the left differently than the one on the right, which makes the sound appear wider (Thorton 2010). Also the doubles were compressed in order to keep the dynamics under control.

I did not do heavy processing on the choirs because I wanted them to maintain as natural as possible. I cut off some low end and 500hz, which was blocking the middle frequency spectrum. I did not do any compressing on the individual choir tracks; I created a bus track where all the choir tracks were compressed together.

The fact that the last chorus is so full made me come up with mixing techniques that would make room for all the vocal layers. EQ and panning are the first tools to make all the elements blend conveniently together, but in this case they were not enough. The countermelody required its own clear space in the mix because it contains new melodic information, which needed to be heard clearly, but without clashing with the lead melody. To solve this problem I used phasing plugins to create an impression that the countermelody is placed to a new, undefined location in the mix.

The counter melody starts actually in the beginning of the last chorus, but the higher frequencies are cut off to preserve room for the lead melody. This way the listener can

sense the countermelody and get familiar with it, before it comes on with full force. If the countermelody would be introduced for the first time at the very end of the song, it could be confusing for the listener, but since there has been signs about the melody in the earlier parts, the listener already recognizes it but it still retains the build up effect for the last chorus.

6.2 Skywalk – Close my eyes Feat. Martyn Ell

6.2.1 Background of the song

“Close my eyes” is a song from a Finnish DJ/producer artist called Skywalk and it is written by Skywalk and myself. Martyn Ell is featuring on the track as the lead singer. Skywalk produced the instrumental track and I took care of the vocal production. The song was released in October 2018 by Armada music’s sub label The Bearded man. I wanted to include this one to my thesis because I had to be more creative with it than usual since I had only one vocal track when I started the post-production.

“Close my eyes” is a melody-driven pop song that is targeted for radio play while Skywalk’s previous singles are more experimental. The radio potentiality was one of the factors I had to keep in my mind while I did the production.

6.2.2 Vocal arrangement

The song was originally going to be released with another artist and we were on a tight schedule with it because the publisher needed the song to be ready as soon as possible. I was not able to record the singer myself and due to the situation I received only one track of vocals and I had to manage to get a proper pop vocal production out of it.

I had an idea about a vocoder type of a choir so I copied the lead on to several tracks and added Soundtoys’ Little alterboy-plugin to all of them. Little Alterboy is designed for alternating vocal characters such as pitch and formant, and I used it to make harmonies and create an illusion that there were more vocals than just that one track. There is

a midi input featured in the Little alterboy, which allows to create new melodies with it. I wrote the melodies to a midi track and sent them back to the little alterboy. This was a relaxed way of working on harmonies because trying new ideas was so fast and easy, as the singer did not have to get back to the microphone every time someone had an idea. This method would not work if the outcome needed to be natural, as it is based on manipulating a human voice in a very drastic manner.

The robot choir was a nice addition on the chorus, but phasing damaged the stereo image and the sound got too thin. Since the original release plan did not work out, we decided to redo the song for Skywalker and I got more time to finish the vocal production. Skywalker recorded his own vocals for the part, which solved the phasing problem and the stereo image of the chorus got wider and the sound got warm and full. Even though I could have gone for a different direction with the production now that I had new backing vocals, I still wanted to use the vocoder robot choir, rather than going with more natural approach. The robot vocals were a good fit for the electronic instrumental production of the song.

I added more vocals on the second verse and pre chorus to keep the production evolving and remain interesting. I used the same vocoder effect for the second verse but this time the backing vocals were made from the lead track. This caused again some phasing but I thought that it made the vocals more special. The phasing effect can be heard on the word “combined” as the backing vocals are playing alone in that part.

I needed to do more extreme adjustments on the lead vocals in Melodyne than usually because in some parts of the song the melody did not go as it was written. Fortunately I had everything corrected smoothly thanks to Melodyne for being such a flexible tool for these kinds of situations.

In the second pre chorus I copied the first two vocal lines to another track and moved them one bar ahead. I opened the regions in Melodyne to rearrange the melody in a way it would sound like an answer for the original line. Once I was happy with the melody I pitched it one octave up with Soundtoy’s Little alterboy-plugin which I used also to change the formant value. The singer would have sounded like a chipmunk if I had set the formant value on the same level as the pitch so kept it lower to preserve more humanlike timbre.



PICTURE 11. Little alterboy settings in Close my eyes (Puukari 2018)

6.3 Terri - Muurame

6.3.1 Background of the song

Terri is an upcoming pop artist from Finland with whom I have been working from the very beginning of her artist career. Her latest single Muurame is a nostalgic song about a small town in Finland where Terri grew up. Themes of the song are friendship and everlasting childhood. As the lyrics are about Terri's golden memories of her youth, we wanted the vocals to sound happy and carefree. The song came in to being from Terri's lyrics she wrote at work one day looking back at her high school times and the friends she hanged around with during that period of time. She sent me the lyrics and I made some arrangements to make them fit to an old melody I had in mind that would go well together with the lyrical theme.

6.3.2 Vocal recording and arrangement

We had two vocal recording sessions for the song, because we thought the feeling was not right on the first session's vocals. We started second session, where the final vocals were recorded, with a microphone testing and we tested two microphones Neumann U87 Ai and Shure SM7, of which we used the Shure SM7 for its thick sound and smooth top end. Neumann also sounded good on Terri's voice besides the sibilance in

the high frequencies that Shure SM7 did not have, therefore we ended up with the Shure SM7.

I had the microphone placed in the same room as I was doing the tracking so we could communicate without an effort. Once the microphone was set I asked Terri to sing the song through while I would be doing the gain staging. I recorded the take as I always record everything in case something special happens. I had my other hand on the input gain knob through out the session, cause I knew the parts Terri would be singing loud and I could even out the highest volume peaks by decreasing the input gain, to make my work easier in the processing phase.

Before recording and also at some points during it, we talked about what kind of interpretation would work on the song since we were not totally pleased with the previous vocals. We agreed that vocals should sound careless, naive and first of all happy. Since the instrumental has almost a punkish feeling in it for its energetic high tempo beat, the singing technique would not matter as long as the positive feeling would come across.

We started the recording on the lead vocals, and at first we went through the first verse five times after which we moved on to the second verse. I noticed that Terri sounded a bit more relaxed in the second verse so after we got that done, I suggested that we would go back on the first verse just to see what happens. I ended up using lines from the three new takes in the final version because they sounded better, since we already had solid takes from the first round and she would not have to stress about it.

Once we had all the parts for the lead track done we started to record the backing vocals and doing the arrangement for them. I had a few ideas I wanted to try, such as the harmonies in the chorus. Since the lyrics are about childhood and youth I thought it would be appropriate to set the harmonies really loud to make it almost too sweet and cheesy to underline the childlike feeling of the song. The chorus vocals included the lead, two tracks of doubles, two tracks of low harmony, and two tracks of high harmony. The chorus melody can be divided in to two, question and answer. The harmonies were arranged so that they come on the question part, and the lead answers to that line. The pattern is repeated until the last line where the harmonies play along with the lead. The only exception is the final chorus where harmonies are playing all the way through the

chorus to make it stand out from the previous choruses. Also the lead vocals have some variations in the last chorus so it would not sound copy pasted.

The verses had a few lines I wanted to emphasize by adding doubles and harmonies on top of the lead. The harmonies in the second verse's second half really jump out in the mix because I wanted to set them loud to increase the dynamic feel of the vocals. I like the idea of doing strong statements with the elements I introduce in the production. If people do not notice the things introduced, I might as well take them out. Of course this does not apply in every case, as there are songs that require more subtle aesthetics.

Ad-libs were the last thing we recorded. I pressed record and asked Terri to sing anything that comes to her mind. We recorded two tracks of those, which I would go through during the editing. I did comping for the lead track and doubles right after the session, because comping is usually one of the hardest parts of the production for me and I wanted to get over with it.

Once I got to the editing phase, I went through the ad lib tracks using a rather hard distortion and an auto tuner that had the retune speed set to almost zero. I found this one ad-lib line that stood out to me. The line had just the right naive feel that we were looking for, so I tried it on the interlude part that comes after every chorus. It sounded good, and in the end the interlude was the high point of the song because of this one short vocal riff. These kinds of fortunate incidents happen all the time in vocal productions (Sarin 2018). The lead melody of the bridge was also made from the ad-lib track. I took one short line that did not have any lyrics in it and chopped it and changed the rhythm and the pitch of the notes and I came up with the melody. I brought down the formant of the vocals to blur the line between whether the bridge is an instrumental part or a vocal part.

There was some basic editing to be done with the vocals. I edited all the tracks manually in Melodyne instead of doing it in ReVoice Pro. There was not anything that would be noticeably different from the processing methods used in the first two songs except the heavy use of Microshift on the lead vocals. I thought that the Microshift's stereo widening chorus effect worked well so I put it louder than usually.

7 CONCLUSION

As a conclusion to the matter of vocal production I have noticed that the psychological side of vocal production is universal and the qualities of it remain the same no matter what genre is in question. The musical genre does not define what kind of coaching the vocalists require from the producer; artists from all the genres need to feel safe in order to perform well and everyone wants to be encouraged. The interaction between the artist and producer is the essence of vocal production but that fact is definitely not restricted only for pop music.

The distinctive features of pop music's vocal production lie in the technical side. Processing methods in the post-production differentiate considerably from other music genres where the naturalness is essential. Pop music allows the producers to use more extreme approaches for the productions and vocal editing is a good example of that. Starting from the comping, the vocals do not try to be true in anything other than emotion. Because of this I think the emotion has a special status in pop music since it is the only thing that is expected to be true, and the right emotion is the only thing that has to be there from the beginning. After the right emotion is captured it does not matter how the vocals are being processed because the human feeling will come across even though the vocals would have been processed to a point they sound like a synthesizer.

In some other genres there are certain rules for what is acceptable in terms of vocal processing and especially editing. They tend to focus more on the credibility and authenticity of the artistry; it is not appropriate to edit the vocals because it makes artists fake. In pop music however the artists do not carry this kind of weight on their shoulders because anything goes as long as the songs sound good and they touch the audience on some level.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1. Interview with Patric Sarin

1(9)

Date of interview 26.10.2018

Interviewer: Simeon Puukari

Interviewee: Patric Sarin

PUUKARI: Miten valmistaudut lauluäänityssessioihin?

SARIN: Mä tosi tarkkaan kuuntelen sitä biisii ja sit kysyn tietenkin A&R:ilta ja artistilta miten ne näkee sen asian. Laulutuohtantohan alkaa sillä et sä ite tiedät mitä sä haluut ja sun pitää saada se jotenkin toimimaan sillei et artistikin halua sen asian. Jos se ei ihan halua niin sun pitää yrittää viedä se kiltisti siihen. Mut se on niinku eka vaihe et mä analysoin sen biisin ja miten mä nään sen ja mitä siin vois tehdä ja sit mä rupeen kyl miettii sellasii arrihommia. Tietty se liidi on se juttu et sä koutsaat sitä laulajaa koko ajan. Se on iso asia myöskin kuinka paljon sä saat irti siitä laulajasta. Millanen fiilis sulla on studiossa, se on niinku todella tärkeä. jos laulajilla ei oo hyvä fiilis niin sä saat vaan 70% irti niistä vaikka ne ois helvetin hyviä. se on periaatteessa niin et jos sä haluut noita unelma ottoja, nii sit kun artistia alkaa vittuttamaan joku asia niin se sessio on aika siinä. Jos esimerkiks rupee neuvoo niitä liikaa ja ne ei tykkää siitä, nii eka kerta ku rupee tekee niiden kaa niin pitää tutustua niihin tosi tarkkaan. Toi on iso asia tätä koko prosessii, muute sä et saa niitä unelma ottoja vaan sä saat mekaanisia hyviä ottoja jotka ei tunnu.

PUUKARI: Miten tutustut artistiin jota et tunne entuudestaan? Haluutko tavata hänet jo etukäteen ennen sessiota?

SARIN: En, en kyl se yleensä menee sillei et meillä on studio buukattuna, sit tulee sinne, sit vähän sama ku tekee sessioita nii istutaan kahvilla pari tuntii ja jutellaan vaan. Sit ekaks ei jutella ees biisistä vaan ihan vaa sillei et tutustutaan. Kun mennään studioon sitte, jos me istutaan jossain olohuoneessa tuolla studiolla kun siellä on monta studioo niin siellä on sellanen olohuone jossa ollaa vaan, ja siellä on ehkä muitakin tyyppejä

tekemässä musaa niin me hengailaan vaan. Sit kun mennään sinne studioon niin me jatketaan tota mut sit ruvetaan vähän siirtyä siihen biisiin, ja soittaa sitä biisiä ja puhutaan siitä vähän ja sit mä voin ite kertoa mun näkemyksiä siitä biisistä.

SARIN: Kun sä kuulet et nyt ollaan trimmissä nii sit mietitään mitkä on ne tärkeet jutut mitkä otetaan nyt ku sillä on hirvee fiilis.

SARIN: Artistit on tosi vaikeita, ne on ihan saakelin vaikeita tyypejä kun niillä on hirvee ego välillä ja sit ne on tosi epävarmoja samalla mut se vaatii sen et ne rupee luottaa suhun. Sä oot se joka hoitaa sen et ne kuulostaa hyvältä.

PUUKARI: Pitääkö sun ystäväystyä artistien kaa että ne alkaa luottamaan suhun?

SARIN: Kyllä mä oon niinku kavero et me laitetaan messua mut ei me olla yhteydessä sit tiätsä et ennen sessioo sen aikana ja vähän sen jälkeen ni et ollaan joo kavereita mut en mä lähe niitten kaa kaljalle, se ois ihan liian rankkaa. Mut sillon session aikana sun pitää näyttää et sulla on ainakin asiat ihan hallussa. Ja sit jos ne vetää jotai niin koko ajan pitäs sanoo et helvetin hyvä mut otetaan vielä yks, vaikkei ollukaan hyvä mut sä kuulet et siinä on se energia kohdallaan ku jos rupee dumaan niin se on siinä ja aivan siinä. Mä en myöskään soita ei-tunetettuja enkä ei-kompuroituja raitoja. Kun mä soitan niin mulla on täysplugarichaini siinä et se kuulostaa hyvältä.

PUUKARI: Pidätkö sä tuneria recatessa päällä?

SARIN: En, mut jotkut haluu, mä en käytä. Mulla on semmonen et mä yritän saada ne laulaa sillei ettei ne kuule itteensä hirveesti luureissa eikä esim reverbii eikä mitään, sillei et ne ottaa yhen luurin pois mä aina vedän ite sillei, ja et ne kuulee täysin huoneessa miten ne sen kantaa, kun muuten kompurat ja reverbit pelastaa, et ei tarvi tehdä niin paljon duunii äänen eteen. Tosta saa 10-15 prossaa parempaa kun sä oikeesti sillä tunteella vedät ja sillä voimakkuudella, eikä sillei et kompura hoitaa ja reverbit sillei et se soi koko ajan tosi hyvin. Sen takia mä en reccaa laulukopissa koskaan vaan mä istun ihan vieressä aina. Mä en ees kuuntele biisin kaa vaan mä kuuntelen ihan ilman luureja laulua et miltä se kuulostaa. Nyt puhutaan sellasista artisteista jotka osaa laulaa. Näitä artistejahan on kans ketkä ei osaa hirveen hyvin laulaa nii sit pitää kuulla pohjan kaa et onks ees tavutus lähellä ja pitää koutsaa siinä tosi paljon.

PUUKARI: Mitkä on ne jutut mitä artistit hakee sulta laulutuottajana?

SARIN: Fiilis on eka, se et jumalauta toi laulaa hyvin nyt tossa. Koska jotkut nuoret trakkijätkät ei tajuu tota, ne vaa ottaa ottoja ja sanoo et tää on varmaan hyvä. Tossa ei oo mitään sellasta et sä kytkeydyt ite tohon musaan et tuntuuks tää vaan sillei et toi on hyvin vedetty. Mieti sanat et mitä siellä lauletaan et välittyys se. Sehän on se juttu, se on se laulutuottajan ekstra juttu. Sit tietenkkin kaikki arrijutut, et tulee paljon voksu arri-ideoita, stemmoja kaikkee tollasta ja miten sä niinku stackaat ne voksut et laitat sä yhen terssin suoraan alle vai laitatsä kaks sivulle, molemmille sivulle vai laitat sä yhen wide stereo joka rupee liukuu tuolla alla. Noihan on sellasii tekniikoita et miten sä duunaat ne ja toi kokonaisuushan on sit laulutuotanto, et toi arrijuttu tekee tästä biisistä helvetin paljon paremman tiätsä kun sä laitat vastapalloon jotain stemmoja ja tollasta.

PUUKARI: Mikä tekee laulutuotannosta popin?

SARIN: Nykyään popissa laulu on kuin soitin. Kaikki on sallittua. Sun ei tarvi enää miettiä et onks tää luonnollinen vai ei vaan sä voit raiskata ne täysin plugareilla jos se kuulostaa makeelta. Nykyään käytetään paljon pitchiä ja distiä, ja tehään mitä vaan kukaan se kuulostaa siistiltä, sähän niinku sämpläät liidilaulua ja teet riffejä sillä. Sit ku se on ihan tota laulutuotantopoppi niin se on aika tiukkaa, ja siinä voi olla paljonkin stemmoja mut se ei saa kuulostaa missään nimessä kuorolta. Ku oli nää bändit backstreet boyssit ja nää nii niissä oli 250 raitaa hirveetä tööttäystä. Sen mä oon huomannu et musassa nykyään nii noi raidat ei kuulu samalla tavalla kun ennen et siellä oli ihan saatanasti lauluja, nytkin voi olla mut ne on niinku eri muodossa ja sit piirretään myöskin tosi paljon, Melodynella piirretään stemmat sillei et ne on tosi tiukat sen liidin kanssa. Terssit ja kvintit piirretään samasta liidistä et ne soi sillei vähän ku vocoder. Sit sä väännät formantit ja kaikki.

PUUKARI: Ootko huomannu et sulla tulis vaiheonglemia tosta?

SARIN: Tulee tulee, mut samalla sä raiskaat ne plugareilla, kukaan ei ees tajua mikä vaiheongelma on ketkä kuuntelee tota musaa, mut onhan tota liikenteessä tosi paljon. Sit mä käytän kans Antareksen Harmony enginee ja tällasii. Sit sä piirret ja duunaat ihan mitä vaan ja se juttu mikä kuulostaa hyvältä se jää vaan. Ja paljon enemmänhän nykyään laitetaan pitchausta ja distausta ja kaikkee tollasta. Sulla on vaikka mitä plugareita, siis tossa ei oo mitään sääntöjä enää. Totta kai sä liidin otat sillei et se kuulostaa hyvältä mut sit sen jälkeen sä voit liidillä periaatteessa tehdä kaiken jos sä haluat, riippuen

musasta tietenkin. Terssit ja nää jos ne ei tuu tosi kovaa nii ne on piirretty tuolla alla niin siellähän ne soi. Se mikä on pysyny samana on nimenomaan tää koutsaus et sä saat liidistä kaiken irti mut toi editointi ja arri ja se laulutuoanto puoli on sit erilaista.

PUUKARI: Eli nykyään on niin, että lauluraitoja on vähemmän?

SARIN: Joo, kyllä mä huomaan ite et mä äänitän tosi paljon vähemmän. Sillon mä tein yhtä tollasta poprock bändii ku Satin circus se oli ihan tollasta one directionia. Siellä vedettiin stemmoja sillei et siellä oli joku 80-90 raitaa aina. Ja se vaati sen et sä saat semmosen hirveen liun siihen mut se ei oo nykyään musassa enää. Onhan Ariana Granden noissa jutuissa tosi paljon voksuja jos kuuntelee raidat erikseen. Se on aika räkästä ja niitä ei tarvi tuplaa nii monta kertaa. Jos miettii EDM maailmaa sillon ku se oli ikäänkuin ihan sitä EDM:ää kaikkihan taimattiin ihan täysin, se menee tosi streliiliks ja staattiseks ja nykyään jos miettii et nykyään sä tuotat träkin ja sä laitat yhenkin orgaanisen soittimen mikä ei oo ihan vireessä se tuo ne värit ja fiilikset siihen. Sama pätee lauluun. Minkä takii välillä ku mä duunaan stemmoja niin mä en tuneta niitä. Kaikki muu voi olla aika tiukkaa ja sit on muutama ei ihan, ja se soi ihan helvetin hyvin siinä keskellä.

PUUKARI: Mitä raitoja sulla löytyy lauluäänityssessiosta?

SARIN: Siinä alotetaan liidistä. Se ekaks. Sit ruvetaan kattoo mitä tässä nyt tarvitaan.

PUUKARI: Sä arraat sitä siinä lennosta?

SARIN: Joo joo. Me kokeillaan ja sit ku kirjoitetaan niin me ollaan tehty demo, nii sillonhan sä kokeilet jo asioita, mut sit ku teet laulutuoannon niin sä ikään kuin boostaat sen ja katot löytyykö jotain parempaa mut aina alotetaan liidistä. Sit mietitään kertsiiin nii tehään aika usein 2 tai 4 tuplausta sivuille ja välillä jopa yks keskelle joka on vähän löysempi, ja siinä ei välttämättä oo paljon kompuraa tai sit siinä on vielä enemmän.

PUUKARI: mut se on kuitenkin prosessoitu eritavalla?

SARIN: on prosessoitu täysin eritavalla se tuo uuden elementin siihen. Jos siinä tulee semmonen et sä kuulet ne laidat ja ne kuulostaa ihan erilaiselta ja toi liidi on tossa keskellä jotenkin liian erillään noista niin sä laitat yhen tonne alle ja sen sä voit jopa vetää jollain wide tai stereo plugilla jos miettii noita cla plugareita jos on noi, se levenee vähän noita ja lähenee noita sivuja mut se ei oo ihan kiinni niissä, mut toi liidi istuu paremmin. Sit ihan perus on joko noi terssi tai kvintti hommat et kokeillaan jotain tukistemmoja. Mut ei koko ajan eikä se saa olla liian kermajunttia, se muuttuu tosi kermaseks jos sä vaan seuraat koko ajan nii sit yritetään siis perus urkunuotilla jos miettii

nii sehän soi koko ajan hyvin nii yritetään mennä terssistä kvinttiin ja alakvinttiin ja tiätsä vähän et se stemma ei oo nimenomaan yks et laula tää terssi nyt koko ajan.

PUUKARI: se luo sellasta mielenkiintoa.

SARIN: Niin ja sit se menee ristiin vaan et se liikkuu et siinä on joku idis et siinä on koukku ikään kuin et se ei oo niinku kuorolauluu et nyt sä vedät sen terssin koko biisisä. Noita kokeillaan ja silloin mä vaan kokeilen, mä laulan ite ja piirrän. Ja sanojen välissä jotain, sit mä mietin tosi tarkkaan adlibit, ne ei tuu sillei mä laitan et laula jotain. Kun mä oon tehny Saara forsbergii se on ihan saakelin hyvä laulaa, nii silloin mä annan sen vaan vetää. Mut sen jälkeen mä suunnittelen muutaman ite jotka on niinku ikään kuin selkeitä. Ja Ikelle mä teen tosi paljon tota et laula näin, sit me otetaan ne. Ne on koristeita. Ne voi tuoda lisämelodiaa jos ne on hyviä. Välillä mä laitan stemmojakin niiden adlibien päälle. Jos tulee joku hemmetin hyvä adlibi niin mä muutan sen melodian loppukertsissä siihen. Toihan on ihan normaali. Aika paljon tapahtuu sessioissa ihan sillei fiiliksen mukaan et mä sanoisin et toi laulutuoanto on aikamoista säveltämistä. Jos miettii laulutuoantoa jos ei tee omaa biisiä niin siinä pitäs melkein saada pinnoja, ja jenkeissähan siitä saakin. Laulutuoottajathan ottaa 10-16 pinnaa biisistä. Jotkut hirveet hitti arrit on noissa biiseissä ihan täysin tehty. Täällä ei yleensä, en mä oo ottanu mitään pinnoja paitsi jos mä oon arranu jotain ja säätäny sen kertsin uusiks kun se on ollu mun mielestä parempi niin ja sit ne on ollu samaa mieltä. Mut en mä väkisin hyppää mihinkään biisiin mut jos tulee selkeesti sillein et vitsi tai sit ku artistin kaa lauletaan sit yhtäkkii et sä vedit tolle et kokeillaa tää ja se muuttuu paremmaks nii siinä vaiheessa heti laitetaan tekijöille ja muille et hei meiltä tuli tällanen et mitä mieltä te ootte. Jos ne on ite sillee et ihan helvetin hyvä niin sit se seuraava vaihe on se et tosta pitää keskustella jotain pinnoja aina. Mut en mä niinku hae, se ei oo mun rooli silloin parantaa aina biisii sillei et mä rupeen säveltää mut kyl mä ehdotan.

PUUKARI: Miten miksausvaihe käytännössä tapahtuu?

SARIN: Mä laitan demomiksauksen mikä ei oo hyvin miksattu sillein mutta sillai et mitä leveleitä mä suurin piirtein käytän noissa arjeissa. Mä oon tehny Saaran sangrian laulutuoannon, siellä oli grammy miksaaja mut ne käytti mun määrät filete suoraan ja se oli mun demomiksauksii. Ne laitto sen suoraan siihen vaan ja se oli valmis. Mähän kuulin sen vaa valmiina yhtäkkii mä olin kysynyt et mitä te halutte, halutteks te

kuivina ja ei kompuroituna mä olin laittanu vaa acapellat periaatteessa muutama stems paketti ja ne käytti ne suoraan ei vastannu ees mailiin. Se oli tollanen. Mut kyl mä yleensä mä

teen demon mä miksaan siihen pohjaan sen et mun mielestä sen pitäs kuulostaa tältä ihan vaan sen takii et joku terssi ei ihan liian kovaa koska sehän mokaa sen koko biisin. Mä maalaan ruff et näin mä näen tän ja tehkööt mitä haluaa jos A&R ei oo samaa mieltä mutta tää on mun versio tästä ja näin mä haluisin nää laulut. Sit ne yleensä mikkaa ne sillein mut vaa paremmilla saundeilla.

PUUKARI: Mitä ominaisuuksia sä toivot äänitystilalta?

SARIN: Ihan vaa sillei et ei oo mitään standing wave-seja eikä mitään, koska jos sä haluat sen saundin ihan naamaan sen pitää olla ihan kuiva.

PUUKARI: Mites mikki valinnat?

SARIN: No mä käytän melkein aina Braunerii, eiku ei braunerii vaan Manley ref c:tä. Sit meillä on toi Brauner VMA.

PUUKARI: Eli käytät yleensä samoja mikkejä?

SARIN: Joo en mä jaksa vaihtaa, jengi on sanonu mulle aina et toi Manley on ihan sellanen one trick pony mut mä oon tehny kaikki mun laulut sillä, et se ei oo one trick pony, se toimii ihan hyvin. Sit on noi braunerit, esimerkiks niissä on vähän enemmän midlee vielä ja sit neumaneissa on paljon enemmän midlee.

PUUKARI: Testaatsä niitä ollenkaan ennen äänittämistä?

SARIN: En mä jaksa, toi on niin hyvä et siitä saa kyl irti. Oon mä testannu kaiken maailman mikkejä, koska se on vaan hauskaa mut jotenkin tuli sellanne fiilis et se ei oo se joka tulee myymään ne levyt. Pääasia on et se mikki kuulostaa hyvältä. Ja pitää muistaa et ku alkaa stackaa nii Manley sopii hyvin siihen koska siinä ei oo sitä midlee niin paljon niin se mahtuu.

PUUKARI: Sä varmaan tunetat vokuja?

SARIN: Sitä mä käytän aina. Liidiin aina. Ja mulla on aina sillei että Melodyne ekaks ja sit hidas tumeri seuraavaks. Jos vedät Melodynellä vaan niin jos sä oot väsyny niin sä et välttämättä ehkä ees osu ihan täysin nuottiin vaan sä tunnet sen et tässä on jotain väärää

mut hidas tuneri se aina niinku taivuttaa sen, ja nopeempikin tuneri voi tehdä noi nousut ja laskut sillei hyvin et jos sä kuuntelet vaan Melodynee nii jotkut nuotit niin sä et oo edes editoinu niitä, nii jos kuuntelet ilman antaresta nii se on väärin, sit laitat tunerin päälle niin se menee oikein. Niin mä editoin antareksen läpi. Sit ku mä oon Melodynenny sen antareksen läpi ja se kuulostaa hyvältä niin mä bouncaan vaan ton Melodynenny ja mä pidän sen antareksen ihan miksuun asti et pystyy taas et jos tarvii jotain muuttaa. Tietenkin mä saveen ne sessiot sillei vaiheittaan et mulla on ainakin 6-7 askelta et mä pääsen siihen vaiheeseen takas.

PUUKARI: Ootko koskaan käyttänyt muita laulujia taustalauluihin?

SARIN: Mähän ite laulan melkein joka biisissä. Et sillei oon. Tosi asia on se et jonkun toisen ääni jossain stackissa kuulostaa helvetin hyvältä. Se yhtäkkiä rupee soimaan. Mut en mä käytä sillei et mulla ois hirveesti laulajii siis. En melkein koskaan ihan vaa ite tai sit se artisti. Jos se artisti vetää niin sit mä sekotan oman äänen siihen.

PUUKARI: Pyydätkö sä artistia sit laulamaan eri timbrellä niitä taustauluja?

SARIN: Joo joo no totta kai sit ku tehään stemmoja niin sä et saa laulaa liidii enää ja sehän on yleensä solistin ongelma et ne vetää stemmatkin liideinä. Stemmoissa ei saa olla fiilistä vaan niiden pitää tukea tota, ne on duunissa tolle liidilaulajalle. Niin niiden pitää olla tasasii ja vaan antaa fiilistä jos sä luukutat täysin samat. Jos solisti tuplaa niin sillon pitää olla fiilistä noissa tuplauksissa, mut ne ei oo stemmoja mulle vaan ne on vielä liidejä mut ne on left right liidejä. Sit ku ruvetaan luomaan sellasta liukuu tai varmuutta niin ne stemma laulut pitää vaan tukea mut ne ei saa kuulua sillee et hei täällä mä oon ja hirveet vibrat. Modernissa popissa jos pitää olla pelkistettyä nii se ei saa kuulostaa jos sä sä vedät ne

PUUKARI: Koitatko sä saada voksustackit kuulostamaan yheltä isolta ääneltä?

SARIN: Se riippuu tilanteesta. Esimerkiks modernissa popissa jos pitää olla pelkistettyä, nii se ei saa kuulostaa, se voi kuulostaa jos sä vedät ne ihan helvetin tiukaks et left right middle et se ois ikään kuin yks joka täyttää sen koko, se on ihan ok sillon. Mut jos sä vedät ne ei niin tiukaks niin sit se on sillai outoo tuplausta ja se ei oo enää yhtä naamassa koska sulla on left right ja middle niin se ei oo yhtä naamassa vaan se menee vähän taaksepäin.

PUUKARI: Eli on tarkoituksen mukaista et ne kuulostaa tosi yhteinäiseltä?

SARIN: Nii joo, ja sit jos halua sitä varmuutta liukuu niin sulla on ne stemma niin ne on aika hiljaa mut ne on sillei et ku mutetat sen bussin ja otat ne pois ja liidi on yksin niin tulee vähän epävarma fiilis niin sehän vaan tukee sitä. Jos halua tollasta tööttäystä mikä ei oo ihan naamassa, sit sä laitat ne left right midlle tosi samat raidat ja editoit ne tavutukset nii sithän se tulee sillei kovaa mut kyllä ja kattaa sen biisin.

PUUKARI: Millasia juttuja sä oot tehny et laulajan fiilis paranis äänitystilanteessa?

SARIN: Ei mitään sen kummempia, jotain et valot pois ja kynttilät ja jotain tuoksuja et niille tulee rento olo. Sit semmonen et ollaan kokeiltu tosi oudoilla settingeillä tiätsä että jos ne on tottuneita siihen että kuulee kaiken tosi hyvin nii sillei et musa on tullu aika hiljaa ja sit sä et kuule ittees ollenkaan paitsi et ku laulat näin, nii mä yleensä teen. Tollasii vaa et kokeilee vähä et oot sä kokeillu tällasta ja jos ne reagoi hyvin siihen niin sit mennään tolla. Se raskain on se et pitää yrittää olla tosi fiiliksissä niistä koko ajan vaikka ei mee hyvin. Välillä kyl vituttaa ku päässä on sellanen et tästä ei tuu mitään ja mä en saa tätä kasaan ja silti sun pitää olla sillei et yritetään vielä vitsi toi oli hyvä. Se kehuminen on just sitä mitä ne halua. Tossa pitää miettiä millasii egoja noilla on nii sun pitää vaa tykätä siitä mitä ne tekee. Ne on artisteja. Jotkut artistithan on sellasia et pitäs melkein tuoda yleisöo studioo et ne laulais hyvin koska ne halua loistaa ja jos siinä on vaan yks tyyppi kuuntelemassa niin se ei välttämättä riitä. What ever works. Jos sä oot ite tosi kriittinen et nyt sä laulat tälle et se ei kuulosta kivalta nii jos se on niiden saundi niin nehän ottaa nokkiin ihan heti.

PUUKARI: Miten sä mainitset laulajan ongelmakohdista positiivisesti?

SARIN: Mä yritän vaan niinku sivuuttaa sen jotenkin et jollain positiivisella päästä tohon. Mut mulla ollu juttuja et hommat on kussu sillei et noi tyypit ei halua mun kaa koskaa enää ku en mä oo noin kiltti ja mä haluan et se kuulostaa hyvältä.

PUUKARI: Ootko sä valikoinu projekteja sillei et tää ei toimi mulle?

SARIN: On muutamia laulajia jotka on niin hankalia et mä en jaksa. Ihan vaan sen takii kune on vaan helvetin hankalia, ne ei oo tyytyväisiä mihinkään. Ne syyttää kaikkia muita ku itteensä kaikesta. Jotkuthan on vaa sillei et sä et osaa olla enää ystävällinen niiden kaa. Sä et vaan voi joka tyyppin kanssa toimia ja se pitää vaan todeta et se on ihan ok.

Mähän haluan myös suoriutua. Mut sit ku sä saat sen luottamuksen niin mä niinku pelleilyn kautta voin sanoo ihan hyvin et toi meni ihan vituiks. Mut ne vetääkin vituiks ja sit ne nauraa koska mä liiottelen mut mä kyl tarkotan et se meni ihan vituiks. Ja sit voi sit oikeesti laulaa. Tossa pitää tietysti olla se pohja et sä et voi ihan alussa tolle. Kaikki riippuu lopputuloksesta. Kaikki toi on hyväksyttävää jos artisti on lopussa tyytyväinen sun duuniin. Sit seuraavan kerran se on helppoo koska sit ne kuuntelee sua. Ja se et sä rytmität ja laulat niiden kaa nii alussa se ei onnistu ku ne ei tunne sua, ne on sillei et mitä vittua sä tuut opettaa mua laulamaan ku mä oon näin hyvä. Kun sessio on vähän edenny niin se on ihan ok.

PUUKARI: Taimaatko sä lauluja tunettamisen lisäksi?

SARIN: Joo kyl mä Melodynessä sit ja mä oon jopa revoicessa ite laulanu ja kopsannu mun tavutuksen liidiin. Jos se on liian kaukana siitä niin sit se ei onnistu mutta noin mä oon tehny muutamalle. Jos laulaja on vetäny vähän neliskanttisesti niin sä laitit sen siihen sun vetoon niin homma toimii niinku sä ite haluat. Pitää olla varovainen ja se pitää olla tosi tarkka, se ei saa kuulua, jos joku vetää suoraan ja sä oot vetäny sufflee. Mut toi revoice on oikeesti äärimmäisen hyvä.

PUUKARI: Mitkä on sun mielestä tärkeimpiä juttuja mitä ois hyvä osata laulutuottajana, että menestyy?

SARIN: Kyllä se on eduks että osaa laulaa ja tavuttaa. Myöskin mun mielestä tosi tärkeä sama ku alkaa säveltää jos alkaa tuottaa jotain sun pitää tajuta se musa tyyli. Sä et voi tuoda mitään hyvää jos sä et tiiä mikä on hyvää. Sulla pitää olla joku visio ja sulla pitää olla se tyyli niin hallussa et sä pystyt parantaa. Muutenhan sä et oo hyvä laulutuottaja. Jotkuthan tekee sellasta mistä niillä ei oo mitään hajua.

Appendix 1. Interview with Jukka Immonen

1(9)

Date of interview 31.8.2018

Interviewer: Simeon Puukari

Interviewee: Jukka Immonen

PUUKARI: Ootko laulutuottajana pystynyt vaikuttamaan biisin sävellykseen tai sanoihin, jos oot huomannut niissä kohtia jotka ei sun mielestä toimi?

IMMONEN: Joo, kyllä sitä tehään ja ne tietää yleensä ennen kun aletaan trækkaan et ne tietää jo siinä vaiheessa ku sitä tuotantoo on vähän jo tehty sit voi jo käydä keskustelua oisko tässä tämmönen. Joskus on sillei et tulee jotain posthookkeja ja tollasii rakennettu jälkeenpäin sit ku sitä tuotantoo on tehty. Jos sulla on vaikka akkaridemo biisistä niin kyllähän se kasaantuu siinä ja kaikki muuttuu matkalla koko ajan. Ei nyt oo vielä ainakaan kukaan kiukutellu. Kyllä mä lähtökohtasesti lähen siitä, ton tekstin kanssa ehkä on semmonen et se saattaa vielä elää matkalla ja sitä voidaan lennostakin sitä puljaa mut lähtökohtasesti lähden siitä et jos mä koen et joku on niinku vituillaan kyllä mä lähen sit korjaan sitä en mä jätä sitä vaan sen takii et nyt mä en oo tässä säveltäjänä. Se nyt on enemmän semmosta sovittamis tuottamista mitä ikinä, mut on palkattu siihen et mä teen siitä paremman niin mä teen sitä sitte.

PUUKARI: Mikä on isoin ero siinä että sä tuotat sun omaa biisiä versus toisen säveltämää?

IMMONEN: Omissa trärkeissä on vaan sillai et se lauluraita on huomattavasti aikasemmin, et se on mulla heti siinä alussa. Ja totta kai kun se prosessi on pidempi niin se kasaantuu siinä matkalla.

PUUKARI: Eli reccaat laulut ennenku alat tekee lopullista trækkiä?

IMMONEN: Joo joo joo, joskus on ollu ihan hirveitä demomyslei minkä päälle on jengi joutunu laulaa. Siinä ei tuu rakennettu vääriä asioita, kyl se tunnelma pitää löytää siitä sillei. Se on eriasia jos tietää laulajan ja artistin hyvin kenen kaa sä teet, sillä ei oo niin paljoo väliä kun sä pystyt mielessä aattelee mitä se tulee olee ja pystyy kuvittelee vaikka siinä ois joku raffimpikin raita. Mut kyllä mä tykkään et se lauluraita on niinku kunnossa tosi alussa.

PUUKARI: Miten pitkälle te tuotatte niitä tässä vaiheessa?

IMMONEN: Kyl mä teen siitä fiiliksestä aika sillei, niitä voi sit peruuttaa taaksepäin jos tuntuu mut mä koitan saada sen tunnelman siihen kasaan hetu alussa.

PUUKARI: Millasia keinoja sulla on parantaa artistin huonoa fiilistä äänitystilanteessa?

IMMONEN: Joo kyllä siinä pitää mennä sit tyyppi kerrallaan. Jos mä teen uusien tyyppien kanssa ja mä tiedän että he on pystyneet hemmetin hyvään aikasemmin niin mä varaan siihen sit sillai, et mitään aikatauluu ei kannata pitää, varaa siihen niin paljon aikaa ku tarvis. Ja sitte kannattaa tutkii ku jotkut ei niinku parane siitä et niitä laulaa helvetisti, nii se pitää opiskella ite et mitä sille tapahtuu et meneeks se 7-8 taken jälkeen vaan huonommaks ja sit sä vaan kiusaat ihmistä siellä kopissa, vai alkaaks se paranee. Tietyt tyypit alkaa soimaan vasta siinä 10-15 taken aikana. Se on tosi tyyppi kohtanen. Sit jos näyttää et ei lähe yhtään, niin sit vaan peli poikki, kävelyllä ja jotain muuta. Et antaa sen ajan, ja vaikka on kuinka harjaantuneita ja kilsoja vuosikymmeniä ja kaikki nii jotkut ei edelleenkaan pidä siitä reccitilanteesta, se on vaan niinku se on jännä semmonen. Mitä on tässä viimesen 6-7 vuoden aikana niin mä oon lopettanu tiettyjen tyyppien kanssa ton kopin käytön kokonaan että mä äänitän samassa tilassa jolloin se kommunikaatio on heti parempaa. Nykyään mä äänitän kaikki tässä. Sit on joitain tyyppejä keistä mä tiedän et ne haluu olla siellä omassa kuplassaan ne haluu liikkua, niin sit mä rakennan niille tavallaan sellasen kopin mistä ei nää.

PUUKARI: Samaan tilaan kuitenkin?

IMMONEN: Eritilaan siis, nii et sekin on eri tila. Siinä kannattaa sit kokeilla kaikkee. Yks mikä on hyvä juttu et vaihtaa esim konkkamikistä johonkin kädestä pidettävään SM7:aan tai 57:aan. Tai johonki Pärjää sit sen saundin kaa mielummin et sä saat sen tunnelman oikeeks. Se eellä mennään aina. Joskus on sillee et ottaa kuuntelun sillee et laulaa tarkkaamossa ilman luureja. Ja kaikista tollasista voi sillain sit et vaikka tekisit 2-3 teikkii ja sit palaat takas siihen, tavallaan et saat sen snap out of it jostain sellasesta könköttämisestä. Se tilanne pitää laukasta, sitä paskaa voi aina jauhaa mut mun mielestä on parempi tehdä jotain eritavalla et se lihasmuisti alkaa tehdä jotain eri juttuja ku et sä opastat et laula näin tai laula näin. Se on sillei et sä tavallaa laitat lunta eteen ja annat tyyppin joko laskee tai tulla perse edellä. Noiden mikkivuotojenkin kaa pystyy puljaa ku kattoo vähän et mitä mikkii pitää ja vähän miten lujalla pitää niin se on aika pienestä sit kiinni et kyllä se selviit sitte.

PUUKARI: Äänitkö lopullisia lauluja cowrite sessioissa?

IMMONEN: Joo tosi usein. Se on aika tyypillistä nykyään et tietyillä tyypeillä melkein aina niistä sessioista jää niitä lauluja. Siinä pysyy se into ja ne niin usein on jotenki fiilikseltään parempi ne mitkä on siinä sessiossa vedetty hirveen hässäkö kesellä ja sä joudut lukee tekstii paperista, siinä on joku niinku se on jännä ku sitä ei niinku mieti. Se on tosi aitoo ja sit vaikka se tuntuu et emootiot ei oo kohallaan siinä hetkessä ja kauhee hässäkö ja mä en itekkää muista tätä niin silti siinä on jotain mikä on spesiaalia. Ehkä tärkein on se et muistaa äänittää ne sillei et sä voit lähtökohtasesti käyttää niitä, se on sillei hyvä. Ja kyllä sitä sit aikamoisesta strurbaloinnista sit kumminkin selviä jos siellä on klikkiä, nii pystyy sit siivoo ja säätää. Mä ite uskon sellasee nopeutee, et jos pitäs alkaa laulaan ja sulla menee 15 minuuttia et sä laitat jotain mikkejä pystyyn ja kuunte-luita niin sit mä joskus vaa sillei et ota 57 käteen ja ilman luureja ja vedetään vaa heti. Niin niistä on vähä oppinu sillei et koittaa sen verran valmistella ennen sessioo et sulla on ne laulukamat helposti nopeesti siinä vieressä. Siinä menee fiilis ja muutenki aina ja mun mielestä toi nopeus on muutenkin aina et sitä kannattaa niinku reena et sä oot sil-lei ettet muni niitten kanssa vaan oot aina recci päällä ja tunnet sun vehkeet.

PUUKARI: Sä kirjoitat varmaan muuallakin kun näissä studiotiloissa?

IMMONEN: Joo

PUUKARI: Pidätsä siellä etarii ja mikkiä messissä?

IMMONEN: Joo mulla on muutamat luottokamat millä mä tiän et mä saan sen liidin tehtyä. Noi UAD:n etuset on sellasii millä pärjää nykyään se neve 73 sieltä ja riippuu tyypistä mut aika monet selviä sillä 57:lla esimerkiks. Niillä saa ihan toimivii liidejä kyllä aikaseks, ja niitä ei tarvi hirveesti roudaa. Mut et sitte toisaalta jos sulla on yks hyvä mikki mukana niin sillä sit. Mut ehkä tossa on tärkee tietää ne kamat, UAD on sen takii kiva ku sä avaat sen ja se on saman tien se ketju selkee. Ja sä tiät mitä sä teet siellä ei tarvii lähtee epäröimään, mikki vaan pystyy ja alat vetää niin sä tiedät heti et se on hyvä.

PUUKARI: Mikä biisin osa ensin lähet yleensä äänittämään?

IMMONEN: Mä koitan laulaa eka kokonaan yleensä aina. Mun perus setuppi yleensä on et laulais sen kaks kertaa kokonaan, sit sä ite kuulet et tässä on se dynamiikka kun

tän laulaa läpi. Siitä ei saa oikein mun mielestä hirveesti kuvaa jos sä alat tahkoo jotain säkeistöä ja et mä sillei koitan paikantaa ne ongelmapaikat heti sieltä, et jos sä laulat sen

2-3 kertaa läpi niin siinä saa lämmöt samalla jos ei oo hirveesti laulanut ja siinä saa vähän pääsee siitä kiinni, ja sitä se ei mee siihen niinku hinkkaamiseksi heti heti alkuun. Koittaa laulaa vaa läpi muutaman kerran sitä jos on saundin kaa jotain et sitä tarvii tviikkaa matkalla niin sitä pystyy tekee. Sit on tärkeintä se kuuntelu et mä koitan siihen laittaa ennenku artisti tulee niin laittaa siihen tavallaa sillee. Lähinnä siis sillei et miltä se tuntuu sinne luureihin, mä teen aika valmista saundii jo lähtökohtaisesti. Nykyään mä vedän Oppoilla aika moni tykkää niillä vetää ne on avoimet ja niissä on aika kiva saundi mut kannattaa pitää kahet erityyppiset et pitää vaikka yhet hd 25:set mitkä on tosi tumpulat ja sitä hifimmät jotka on vähän avoisemmat. Se saundi mikä siellä luureissa on, niin sehän on se sun referenssi kun sä laulat et kuinka paljon sä kompuroit sitä et kuinka paljon sä kompuroit sitä kuunteluu, mitä siellä on tiloissa, ja kaikkee semmosta.

PUUKARI: Alatko kattoo stemmoja vasta kun tiät et sulla on otot mistä sä saat liidin rakennettua?

IMMONEN: Joo, joo ja yleensä mä komppaankin sen liidin ekaks.

PUUKARI: Pidätkö sä tauon siinä?

IMMONEN: Joo, kyl ja mä usein vaihan eri mikin siihen, mä teen eri mikillä sitte backing voksut, siitä saa vähä. Ja sitte ja usein se liidi mikki on sitte niinku, jos sä vedät vaikka jollai SM7:lla tai jollai nii ei sun niinku sillä niit tuplii kannatta välttämättä lähtee tekee, sitä ottaa jonkun Manleyn tai jonkun siihen millä saat vähän enemmän ilmaa ja tilaa sinne. Mut sanotaan näin et jos tietää et on vaan yks päivä tehdä kaikki laulut sitä vaa sellasii erilasii et joskus saattaa olla just se liidi eri mikillä sitte backing voksut eri mikillä sitte jotain vaikka semmost yleis häröilyä niin mä saatan laittaa niinku hirveen niinku efektichainin sinne valmiiks et sä vedät jonkun särön ja dilsan kanssa et sinne saa sellasta yleishässäkkää. Se vähän niinku riippuu genrestä et mitä tehdään.

PUUKARI: Jos sä teet semmosta niin sanottua perus poppia niin mitä elementtejä sä reccaat ja miten paljon?

IMMONEN: No se vähän riippuu, nyt jotenkin välillä tendenssi on ollut vähän se et nyt on ollut ehkä vähän vähemmän sitä et jossai vaiheessa niitä lauluja oli kauheesti mitä tuli äänitettyä mut sitä samaan aikaan mä koitan tehdä sitä arrii siinä matkalla et mä en

välttämättä laula 18 kertaa kertsii liidiä vaan tekee sitä voksu arria et siellä tapahtuu eri osia eri sanoja painotetaan eri mikeillä ja tuplataan jotain ja jostain tulee jotain semmosii et se on enemmän semmosta arri duunii sitte ku että vaa träkätään lauluja paljon. Et koittaa rakentaa niitä juttuja, mä en niitä kauheen usein mieti etukäteen, et ne tulee siinä sit ku

se liidi alkaa muodostuu siitä niin, tuntuu et toi kohta tuntuu vähän, tai sä tiedät et tonne sä tarvit jotain anyways nii sit tavallaa ku laulaja on paikalla niin sit sä voit et tehdä tommonen joku tämmönen millä saat tehtyy noita hassutteluit. Sit yhtäkkiä joku delay oikeessa paikassa ratkasee et sä et tarvikkaan siihen mitään. Jos sä et tiä mitä liidissä tulee se liidi kumminkin määrittää niin paljon mitä sä tarviit ja mitä vähemmän sitä ylimäärästä paskaa sinne tarvii työntää niin sehän nyt on aina parempi sitte taas.

PUUKARI: Ootko sä tehny jotain ei niin pop tuotantoja, ja jos oot niin miten ne on eronnut poppituotannoista?

IMMONEN: Joo, varmaan siitä et just se et noiden tuplien ja tommosten käyttö et se on tosi liidi keskeistä sitte. Et se liidi on tavalla niinku se keskiössä oleva asia et sä et tee millään raidoilla tai massalla vaan sä keskityt siihen liidiin. Et se on se isoin ero et en mä ehkä muuten, jos performanssi on kumminki se mikä on se tärkein niin se nyt on ihan sama onks se listapoppia vai jazzia. Se on aika samanlaista et se on ehkä enemmänkin siitä teknisesti et miten paljon sä otat vaikka matskua talteen et sit kannata välttämättä lähtee seittämää eri mikkiä pystyttää ja kaikkee tollasta.

PUUKARI: Mites jälkituotannon kanssa?

IMMONEN: Siinä sit se tunereiden ja dynen kanssa sitte et sen kannatta sit olla et sillähän sä tavallaan määrität sen. Esimerkiks sellaset mitä tulee tehtyä sitä ei niin lista asiaa niin on varmaan sit mainos kamaa ja tommonen. Tässä viime aikoina on tullu tehtyä yks nesteen proggis Salokosken Emman kanssa ja Joonan kanssa tehtiin se kalevalakoru ja tommosii jossa se filkka on isossa roolissa ja sit siellä saattaa olla yks joku muhjusaundi ja se liidiraita et ei oikeestaa mitään muuta. Nii sit välttämättä se, kyllä mä dynellä käyn ne tarkasti läpi mut sit välttämättä aina niinku et mielummin editoimalla ja tolle koittaa saada sen.. mun mielestä siinä pitää luottaa siihen omaan estetiikkaankin aina et aina se vire ei välttämättä oo se hyvä juttu. Siinähän se usein menee pieleen kun sulla on se autotune siinä. Mun mielestä sen tunerin käytönkin, ja mä käytän sitä ihan automodella

aika usein, mut sit samaan aikaan mä yritän kuunnella sitä ilman. Ja varsinkin poppituotannoissa se usein, jos jossain vaiheessa hävii et tää ei meinaa tuntua miltää niin sit usein on se et ottaa sen pois, ja ottaa sen tietyissä osissa pois seki tekee sillei et jos sulla on vaikka laulutuplia ja sulla on siinä liidissäkin se tuneri se ei vaan soi. Siitä tulee niinku instrumentti yhtäkkii mut sit ku otat sen liidistä pois siellä alkaa tapahtua vireessä eloo. Stereokuva leviää ihan sikana, jos sä vedät siihen niinku taustoihin ja backing voksuihin täpöt päälle niin se ei vaa oo levee, se tekee siitä semmosen jötikän.

PUUKARI: Taimaatko sä voksuja?

IMMONEN: Teen taimausta joo. Sillon tällöin käyttäny sitä vocal alignii, mä huomaan et mä oon vähän laiska sen kaa et mä en niinku jaksa käyttää sitä. Mä oon toolsilla niin kauan tehny sen, mä oon sen kanssa niin nopee et mä pystyn tekee käsin sen sitte dynelä. Hyviähän ne on mut siinä on joku sellanen et jos sä vaan suraat sen niin sit on tavallaa et mitä se oikein teki. Jos mulla on liidi käyty sillein kunnolla läpi ja sit mulla on backing voksut niin mä oikeestaa vaan sit katon sieltä niinku konsonanti ja about ne hännät paikalleen ihan siis käsin, eli siis mä en tee sitä venyttelyy vaan mä katon et mä tavallaan vocal alignaan sen käsin. Slaissaan sitä audioo laitan niitä sillei paikallee sit jos paat sen liidin mutelle ja kuuntelet niitä backing voksuja niin sit se on aika rajun kuulosta mut ei sitä kuule sen liidin alta. Pääasia et ne konsonanti on paikallaan siellä.

PUUKARI: Millanen chaini sulla on voksuissa äänittäessä?

IMMONEN: Mulla on niinku varmaan sellanen ihan perus on neve, 1176.

PUUKARI: Miten lyttyyn sä sen laitat?

IMMONEN: Mä yritän saada sen sillei se on periaatteesa jo aika valmis. Sit kuuntelussa mä pidän vielä toisen mokoman ja vähän ehkä tilaa. Ne on aika länässä, jengin on kivempi laulaa vaikka kui sanois ettei ois kompuraa tai muuta niin mun filis on se et mitä enemmän iholla se on sillee et sä pystyt kuulee jokaisen nyanssin mitä sä vedät plus et sä pystyt laulaa lujaa hiljaa kaikkee sit se pysyy tässä iholla niin kyllä se tuntuu olevan se parempi ratkasu aina.

PUUKARI: Miten sä saat pidettyy voksut eloisana vaikka ne on tosi kompressoitu?

IMMONEN: Varmaan sis just se et sen volan kaa jälkikäteen puljaaminen, mä teen sit niinku automaatiol niitä. Jos on sillei suht paljon kamaa niin kyl se on aika usein se et se on vaan niinku lytyssä ja feissillä ja siinä niinku läsnä.

PUUKARI: Äänitähkö backing voksuja kauempaa?

IMMONEN: Joo jos sä haluat efektiivisesti jotain. Jos sulla on selkeesti huutoja kauempana jotain sellasii niin sit tekee ne kauempana ja useempi tyyppi. Mut ei mulla backing voksuissa oo sellasta et mä vaihan mielummin sen mikin et saan sen soimaan ku en mä nää siinä mitää nii, mut toi on vähän tommosta et pitää mennä tilanteen mukaan et jos tuntuu et tää ei tunnu hyvältä niin peruuta metri. Mut harvoin tuntuu et backing voksuissa on semmonen et peruuta metri ja sit se on yhtäkkiä parempi.

PUUKARI: Huolehditko sä vireestä äänittäessä?

IMMONEN: En yhtää, mun mielestä sen vireen kaa se on ihan turhaa. Sen joutuu käymään anyways läpi niin et jos mä selkeesti tiedän et toi ei oo menny kertaakaan hyvin joku tärkeä tai joku mitä mä en saa piirrettyy kuntoon niin sit mä otan totta kai, se on joku sellanen niekku minkä mä tiedän et tota mä en pysty virittää koska mä tarviin sen niekun tasan sellasenaan laulamalla. Et se alkaa haisee paskalle jos sitä yrittää virittää. Mut kyllä niinku mun mielestä ku miettii poptuotantoo niin ja lähdetään siitä et vireet on jo sillei about kondiksessa niinku ne usein on nyt sillee et ne on sillei ihan hyviä et ei niissä mitään hätää, niin en mä niiden vireiden takia träkkää ainuttakaan. En ees muista tällasta tilannetta, et laulataan jotenki enemmän vireessä. Toi kysymyskin on vähän niinku et laula tää niinku paremmin tai oikeemmin. Jos sä alat miettii enemmän sitä et oot sä vireessä niin sähän paskot ihan täysin sen performanssin päälle ja kun miettii nykyisiä työkaluja niin miksi helvetissä jonkun pitäis laulaa vireessä ihan oikeesti. Tuolla on vireessä laulavia laulajia kilokaupalla mut niitä joilla on hyvä performanssi niitä ei oo ihan niin kauan. Se performanssi eka ja tekniset asiat jotenki tokana.

PUUKARI: Miten sä toimit adlibien kaa? Otatko ne vaan vikana kun kaikki muut on nauhallalla?

IMMONEN: Joo ja sit niiden adlibien kaa mä yritän miettii vähän etukäteen, varsinkin riippuen tyypistä et mitä sä haluat sieltä. Missä sulla on paikkoja mihin sä tarviit niitä, et miettii vähän et säkeistöön mä tarvin yks kaks tollasta ja kertsiiin. Oon huomannu et jos laitat alusta asti biisiin pyörii neljä kertaa niin sulla on 800 kaikkee kivaa riffiä niin mä koitan säästää itteeni ihan kylmästi siinä et mä koitan miettii et lauletaan tohon tollanen ja varsinkin tyyppien kaa keille se adlib homma ei tuu niin himasta niin mä koitan

sillee et tehää toho about tommonen ja annan eka kokeilla ja jos sieltä ei tuu sitä mitä haluu niin sit vaan koittaa ite et vedä tohon tälle ja vedä tohon tälle. Joiltaki sit tulee sillei et ne saattaa tukottaa sen täyteen kaikkee kivaa niin sit vaa recci päälle ja alkaa ottaa.

PUUKARI: Onko laulaja samassa tilassa kun sä komppaat?

IMMONEN: Aika usein jengi ei haluu olla ja sit mä itekin tykkään itse asiassa etten mä ala saman tien komppaan, riippuen päivästä. Mä tykkään tulla seuraavana päivänä kuuntelee sen. Mä jätän sen yleensä sen teikin siihen tai merkkeen sen mikä oli se et tää oli tää et mä otan yhen teikin minkä ympärille tehään. Tää on niinku yleisin tapa laulajien

kanssa. Ellei se oo sit sillai et se on ihan silppuu ja tiiät etukäteen et sulla on 32 teikkiä ja tuolta toi ja tuolta toi niin sit se on ihan sama anyways ku joutuu kuunnella kaikki läpi sit se on kiva tehdä tuorein korvin. Mulla menee siihen päivä tehdä lauluraidat hyväks anyways.

IMMONEN: Mulla on laulusessiot melkein aina sillei et mä otan stereoträkin ulos, et mä otan uuden session. Jengi on sit joskus sillei et voit sä laskee tota haitsuu, mä oon et no voin mut kui tärkeä se nyt on et lauletaaks vaa vai. Siinä on se ongelma et mä en saa sitä mikserii rakennettuu siihen kuuntelu sellaseks kun mä haluan ku miksu sessiossa on kaikkee paskaa kilokaupalla se on täynnä kaikkee delay komppii ja muuta.

PUUKARI: Sanoit että popissa kaikki keinot on sallittua. Onko kuitenkin jotain juttuja mitkä menee sulle yli?

IMMONEN: Ehkä noi niinku tuneri jutut ja noi kun on kahta auto tuneer peräkkäin, mä siis tykkään siitä efektistä minkä se tekee mut se ei oo kaikkien juttu. Siinä pitää valita staili tosi tarkkaan. Se ois tos

PUUKARI: Jos miettii vaikka Jenni vartiaista niin se ois aika jännä jos siellä ois kovat tunerit.

IMMONEN: Nii se ois tosi outoo ja sit ku miettii tonellisesti ku se on tosi alarekkari kamaa pullasta ja isoo niin jos sulla on siellä tuneri niin siitä tulee vaan vitun outoo. Sit jos on vähän kireempi saundi ja pienempi saundi ja läpätunkevampi niin se tekee ihan sairaasti se kuulostaa ihan vitun hyvältä ku siinä on tuneri. Mä ite tykkään siitä cherin

muljusta tosi paljon musta se on musikaallista asiaa. Mut lähinnä just se että noiden formanttien ja muiden kaa innostuu välillä liikaa, et mikä on sit liikaa.

PUUKARI: Siinä varmaan auttaa se tauon pitäminen.

IMMONEN: Niin.

PUUKARI: Joskus ku tekee pitkään tunetusta niin sitä alkaa tekee enemmän silmillä ku korvilla.

IMMONEN: Just nii, se on totta. Toi on just se et se on melkein pakko tehdä ja sit tavallaa panna Melodyne bypassille ja kuunella se editti sieltä ja et täähän on paskempi. Hyvin usein käy sillei et sä oot tehny koko raitaa sillai puoltoista tuntii.

Appendix 3. Interview with Eetu Kalavainen

1(2)

Date of interview 2.9.2018

Interviewer: Simeon Puukari

Interviewee: Eetu Kalavainen

PUUKARI: Kukas olet ja mitä teet?

KALAVAINEN: Oon Eetu Kalavainen, tuottaja, biisinkirjottaja ja artisti. Mun artisti projekti on sainattu suomen warnerille ja mulla on kustaridiili fried musicilla.

PUUKARI: Mistä se hyvä viba äänityssessioon tulee?

KALAVAINEN: Se on saman aikaan semmonen et pitäs olla turvallinen olo koittaa mitä tahansa, semmonen rento et asiat ei oo liian vakavia mutta myös vähän semmonen että nyt pitää näyttää.

PUUKARI: Et tarvii sellasen motivaation et nyt tehdään hyvin?

KALAVAINEN: Joo, mut sit tarvii olla sellanen perus turvallisuus kunnossa. Mut siinä tarvii olla tavallaan vähän niinku tuli perseen alla mut sit sillai et sä tiiät et tässä on ihan fine olla.

PUUKARI: Millaisia tekniikoita käytät äänittäessä?

KALAVAINEN: Esimerkiks semmonen ihan yksinkertanen juttu minkä mä opin Henkalta on se et laittaa loopille ja tekee sellasen loopin et sä voit laulaa monta kertaa sen yhen lainin ihan vaa sillai uudestaan ja uudestaan eikä tavallaa et otto, mietitään sit taas vaan.

PUUKARI: Millä tavoin prosessoit liidiraitaa?

KALAVAINEN: Joskus on sillai et mulla on kuiva käsittelemätön liidi, ja sit mulla on toinen aika kompuroitu, mikskä sitä sanottiin?

PUUKARI: Parallel kompressointi?

KALAVAINEN: Nii paraller compression! Välillä tuntuu et se tuo jonkun luonnollisuuden siihen. Se on usein semmosissa missä on isompaa dynamiikan vaihtelua. Joisain kohissa se sit vähän pomppaa sieltä ja tehostaa tiettyi kohtia. Sit mulla on se sama otto sillei et mulla on siinä Microshift, ja siinä mixi ihan täysillä. Käytännössä se on niinku sillai et mä katon sen liidin sillai et se on about tässä tasolla ja sit mä nostan sitä

Microshiftiä sillei et se leviää vähän. Tuplauksia mä en hirveesti käytä sillei et ne on koko ajan. Kertseihin sit tulee vasemmalle ja oikeelle eri otot. Mut monethan tekee kans niin et se pää laulusaundi rakennetaan tuplauksilla koko biisin läpi.

Appendix 4. Interview with Johannes Naukkarinen

1(3)

Date of interview 2.9.2018

Interviewer: Simeon Puukari

Interviewee: Johannes Naukkarinen

PUUKARI: Kuka olet ja mitä teet?

NAUKKARINEN: Oon Johannes Naukkarinen, tuottaja ja biisinkirjottaja. Oon tehny duunia muun muassa Nelli Matulan, Profeettojen, Mouhousin ja Lukas Leonin kanssa.

NAUKKARINEN: Se on osa laulutuantoo et miten se biisi lauletaan, se on osa sitä prosessia. Ku on tehny sellasten artistien kanssa töitä keillä ei oo omaa leimaa, jotka kysyy multa et miten mun pitäis laulaa tää. Nii tietyllä tavalla se on vähän vaikee kohta kun ei oo ite tekninen laulaja, parempi ois et ne kysyis et laulanko mä näin vai näin et pitäskö tähän laittaa tällanen et ok tällanen ois aika siisti saundi tää ois aika ärsyttävä saundi. Sellanen tietynlainen itsetietoisuus siitä omasta tulkitsemiskyvystä on tosi tärkeä. Koska jos mite mä laulan tän, jos se on semmonen ihan paperista luettu et laulan tän niinku laulaisin musiikintunnilla, niin siitä on tuottamalla enää vaikee saada mitään. Ellei se trademark oo se et ei oo mitään tulkintaa. Mut yks helvetin kova laulaja jolla ei oo mitään tulkintaa mikä toimii ihan törkeesti nii Rob Swire, Pendulumin laulaja. Se on ihan ilmeetöntä ja viivasuoraks dynetettyä mut se toimii kun siinä on se mystisyys. Et tietyllä tavalla sekin voi olla voimakeino mut jos siinä kuuluu

PUUKARI: Onks sulla ollu sellasia tilanteita missä suhun ollaan nojaututtu liikaa sen tulkinnan kanssa? Onks niistä sit selvitty, onks niitä biisejä julkastu?

NAUKKARINEN: Onhan niitä tilanteita. Sanotaan näin että sellaset artistit ketkä ei tiä miten pitäis laulaa tai ei oo omia vaihtoehtoja tai oo ees kokeilunhalusia vaan kysyy suoraan niin ne on sellasia artisteja joitten kanssa ei oo tullu mitään kauheen pitkää tulevaisuutta niinku mulla tai kellään muullakaan just sen takii ku se artistiuden ydin on se et sä haluat tulkita.

PUUKARI: Onko sulla jotain erityishuomioita backing voksujen äänittämisestä?

NAUKKARINEN: Backing voksujen kanssahan saa kyl olla sillei aika tarkkana ku niissä pitää ottaa paljon ottoja ja sit samoja kohtia monta kertaa peräkkäin eri melsuilla ja erilaisilla saundeilla nii pitää sit kuunnella et sanat tulee oikein. Jos siellä jossain otossa lauletaan väärin joku sana niin se pilaa sen koko läjän. Mut se ei haittaa jos se melsu ei

mee ihan oikein joka otolla ku niitä voi edata ihan reilusti dynellä eikä niitä edittejä sit kuule ollenkaan sieltä kaiken seasta.

PUUKARI: Vedätkö sä laulut narulle yleensä kirjoitussessioissa vai onks teillä lauluäänitys sessio erikseen?

NAUKKARINEN: Se riippuu ihan, usein on käyny nii et vedetään nyt demo tähän ja sit sillee sä ootkin miksannu sen biisin loppuun et tähän saundaa hyvältä miks tätä tarvis vaihtaa. Jos mulla on omakohtanen biisi et mä ite laulan, nii sit se usein saattaa jäädä se demo ku se on sen hetken fiilis ja se rakentuu paljon sen saundin ympärille se biisi. Musta tuntuu et demovaiheessa tulee yleensä parhaat ku se biisi on freshi ja se tulkinta on niinku vapaa. Mut sit jos sun pitää äänittää se biisi uusiks niin sit tuntuu et sä oot ihan hukassa et mitä mä tein viime kerralla, et tää ei saundaa yhtä hyvälle ku alku peränen. Mut sit usein artisteilla on se et ne diggaa opetella sen biisiin ja kuulla sitä ja sit ne tietää miten sen tulkitsee ja näin.

PUUKARI: Miten sä tunetat ja taimaat voksuja?

NAUKKARINEN: Viritän ja taimaan raidat sillei samalla lailla et tuplan nuotti jos siellä on jotain legaatto nuokkuja et ne on samanlaisii. Mut sit jos ne edaa liian tiukoiks ja kaikki viivat ihan suoriks niin jos sulla on leadi keskellä ja tuplat sivuilla et se voksu saundi levenis niin se stereokuva saattaakin vaan kaventua jos kaikki on ihan täydellisessä synkassa. Mut toi tunetus on sellanen nykyään et eihän normikuuntelija kuule et ne niitä lauluja on tunetettu ku dynellä saa korjattuu kaikki niin hyvin. Tosi tarkastihan ne on aina vireessä mut ei siellä kuule semmosia tunderin glitsejä melkein ollenkaan.

PUUKARI: Miten sä efektoit liidiä?

NAUKKARINEN: Liidiin mä en yleensä laita reverbiä, joskus mut en aina. Sit vaa duunaa siihen hyvän delayn mikä on aika märkä reverbissä sit siihen tulee tila siihen liidiinkin. En mä hirveesti yleensä kaiuta sitä kuivaa liidi voksu.

PUUKARI: Miten sä miksaat adlibit?

NAUKKARINEN: Mä diggaan tehä adlibeistä tosi sellasii kaikusii et siitä tulee vähän delay reverbi mattoo siitä adlibistä. Siitä tulee siistii 3D:tä kun adlibit tulee kauempaa, sillei et se kerrosta sitä. Mun mielestä voksuutuotannossa on aika tärkeetä et siellä on eri layereitä et kaikki ei oo ihan naamalla. Se et mite pelaa reverbi ja kuivan suhteella ja saa

sellasta kolmiulotteisuutta siihen et se kuulostaa siltä et se adlib tulee pelkästään tilasta vähän kauempaa. Samalla saa vähän kokoo biisille. Muutenkin tuntuu et on hirveen paljon 2D laulutuohtantoja et kaikki on naamalla ja se on siinä.

Appendix 5. Work samples

Here are the links for the work samples:

Tapio Lempivaara - Hauras Maa

<http://phonofile.link/hauras-maa>

Skywalk Feat. Martyn Ell - Close My Eyes

<https://tbn340.lnk.to/CME>

Terri - Muurame

<http://phonofile.link/muurame>