

Mentor Visit Assessment #3

Date: 2/26/2021

Subject: Third Mentor Visit With Cody

Assessment:

Yesterday Cody and I had our third mentor visit. During the “Great Freeze of Frisco”, I spent a great deal of time with a guitar in my hands. I was constantly looking for new ideas and, in all honesty, trying to make a mistake that sounded good. After some time I came across a chord progression that I was happy with, in that it was unique and brought emotion out of me. During our meeting yesterday, I introduced the idea to Cody in the hopes that he would have some criticism. In reality, he was quite the fan of what I wrote! This made me incredibly happy. Cody is a very talented musician and songwriter, and I was honored to have earned his approval. What Cody did help me with is something called “playability”. The original progression that I wrote was quite difficult to play due to the way my fingers were splayed out across the neck of the guitar. This made transitions between chords throughout the song very difficult and I could not play the song “up to speed” despite having written it. Cody helped me find new ways to play the same chords on the neck so that, in the case that I have to perform the song, it is actually doable. In the process of exploring new ways to play the chords, we found a configuration that was actually much more pleasing to the ear, and more interesting, than the original way that I wrote it. It was still the same chords, though thanks to Cody’s knowledge of the fretboard, we were able to make the progression more playable and more entertaining. Following this we worked together on writing a chorus, for which I had some preliminary ideas. Cody and I played the progression a few times and came to the conclusion that the chorus I had written, in context with the verse section, wasn’t very pleasing to the ear and left quite a lot of dissonance behind. Using some new chords that he showed me, Cody and I came up with a

decent chord progression for the chorus, and it is my homework to polish up the chord movements and timing.

Now that the chords are (mostly) finished, I am tasked with writing lyrics for the song. Like some of my favorite artists, such as Radiohead, Pink Floyd and Tame Impala, I do not want the lyrics to be the central focus of the song. Instead, I think the vocals should act as a contributor, or as another instrument, in the song. I greatly appreciate the mystery and strong emotions that are elicited from songs that leave the lyrical importance up for interpretation from the listener, which is why I want to do the same.

Overall, the meeting with Cody yesterday was both very informative and very encouraging for me as a songwriter. This chord progression showed me that I have the creative capabilities to write something that is interesting and fun to listen to, and that, with Cody to help me, I will make good music this year. Bright days are ahead.