

Research Assessment # 9

Date: 11/12/2020

Subject: Drake's "Passionfruit"

APA Citation:

Drake, "Passionfruit" More Life, Los Angeles, California, 2017.

Assessment:

In his mellow account of a complicated and long-distance relationship, "Passionfruit", Drake's use of repetition, a diverse assortment of drums, and rumbling bass lines is extremely effective in creating a sullen, atmospheric mood and accentuating the limbo-esque lyrics.

"Passionfruit" withholds Drake's lyrics for over a minute into the song, a rare thing to do in the pop/hip-hop genre. Although, the use of this strategy is, in fact, very beneficial to the vibe and experience that the listener has throughout the rest of the song. By leaving the listener to sit with the bare-bones keyboard chord progression and drum line, along with the faded bass track, the producers have created the intended feeling of the song before introducing its subject, Drake's relationship. There is a sense of feeling lost and confused, yet a strange sense of hope lingers. Once the lyrics finally come in, this feeling is completed and the subject is quickly established:

Listen

Seeing you got ritualistic

Cleansing my soul of addiction for now

'Cause I'm fallin' apart

(Drake). This excerpt details that the relationship seemed addictive, and now that they have moved away from each other in this long-distance relationship, he is experiencing something like withdrawal. The beginning of this long-distance attempt is obviously taking a toll. A later part of the song includes the following words:

Listen

Harder buildin' trust from a distance

I think we should rule out commitment for now

'Cause we're fallin' apart

(Drake). These lyrics demonstrate not only the continuation of the earlier-established feeling through the use of repetition, but also the development of his thoughts about the relationship. The writer is taking us through not only how he felt, but how the dynamic changed between the subjects.

Drake's incredible incorporation of personal experiences and meaningful music showed me a great deal of information about song-writing and mixing. Especially interesting from my perspective was the producer's choice to make the listener wait for the lyrics and experience the music on its own. For more than a minute, the producer develops the music by introducing new tracks, and yet it stays simple all the while. In withholding the lyrics, they give a hint of what the song is about through the music itself, creating an yearning in the listener for the satisfaction of a complete song. This makes the listening experience far more dynamic, and continually taking away the lyrics ensures that this dynamism remains. I plan to take this principle into my own music this year; by taking away and adding layers of a song throughout, the listener's intrigue remains high, and their emotions are constantly stimulated. A song which gives its listeners every element at once, and neglects to take any away throughout, is one without movement or emotional effect.