Digital Mastering Project - Sequoia
Full Sail University

PRE-MASTERING PLAN

Group 6
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Melissa C. Hoover

PROJECT INFORMATION

About The Music

The music for this project consists of five songs, with their song information, that were provided to us by the school. The five main project songs are a collection of mid-tempo, guitar driven songs that display acoustic, folk rock, alternative and country characteristics. They are dynamic songs, performed by High Road Sound. The names of the songs are *Blindfold, Fingerprints, Judgment Time, Nuttin But Trouble and When I Die*.

About The Production

Rikk Palmer produced four of the five songs with Phil Seaford as the Mix Engineer. The other song *Blindfold* was actually produced by Chris Domingo and Rikk Palmer was the Mix Engineer. The songs are under the label of Dick Q Records released in 2009.

About The Songs

"Blindfold" – A smooth groove with smooth vocals. It has a nice guitar arrangement to it.

"Fingerprints" – This tune has a slow tempo with a folk groove to it. There is also a nice bass line to the entire song.

"Judgment Time" – This tune has a mid-tempo folk feel to it with a catchy guitar riff and deep vocals.

"Nuttin But Trouble" – This tune has a rock edge to it mainly because of the electric guitar. It's mid-tempo with nice vocals and a nice groove.

"When I Die" – The tune is a mid-tempo tune that sounds like it's two-step with a country folk feel to it.

SONG # 1
Title: *"Blindfold."*
Engineer: Rikk Palmer
Song # On Demo: 1

Producer Notes:

There is a hum throughout the track. Remove it without compromising the recording. The low end needs to be tightened up and possibly centered. The track is pretty hot; it may come up 1db but watch the peaks. The mids could use a light reverb or widened using stereo phase. The track has a long fade out; make it earlier but with a smooth ending. There are a few guitar slides in the breaks that may need to be spectral cleaned. A few pops and clicks may also need to be cleaned up. The overall RMS might be slightly low.

Overview:

The tune has nice drums, guitars, bass and vocals. It's has a mid-tempo groove to it. The balancing of the instruments is good but the overall level of the song seems a bit high. There are nice guitar riffs in there as well. The vocals come across smooth and well balanced. The effects, harmonizing and double-ups of the vocals also give the song movement.

Edit Decision:

Equalization and cleaning needs to be done. A de-noiser will be used to deal with the hum in the song and some spectral cleaning as well as a de-clicker will be used to remove any clicks, pops or other artifacts. Overall level will also be brought down a bit, between .5dB and 1dB. Fades will also be added/edited.

Processing:

EQ: boost lows and possibly mids between 40Hz – 770Hz to give lows more presence. Center the lows a bit by adding a multiband stereo enhancer and reducing the stereo bass image to about 73.0% with a 1.5-2dB boost in Gain. We may also cut a bit of the lows around the 270Hz range to tighten up the bass as well. Make sure the other frequency ranges fit in with the bass edits and boost around 16kHz – 20khz to add some air.

Compression: We don't think we'll be using compression for this song.

Limiting: We don't plan on using Limiting. Instead, we'll monitor the Peak and RMS levels and do an overall lowering of levels if needed by maybe 1dB or so.

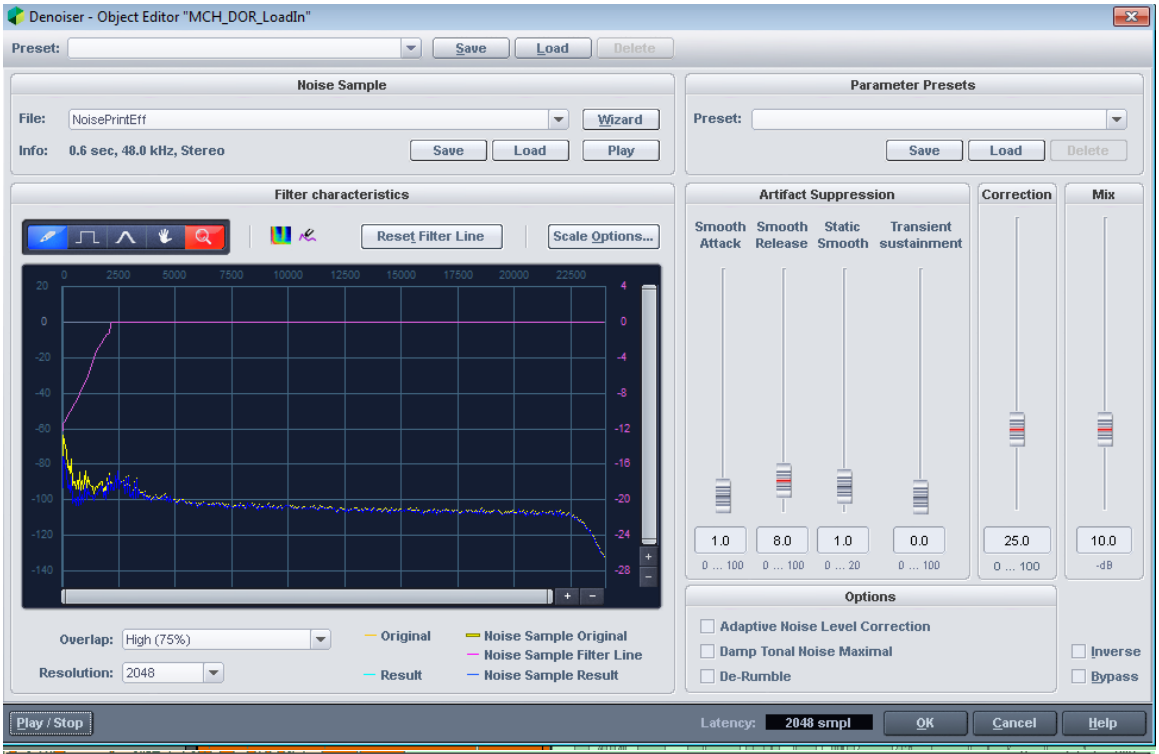
Stereo Image: We added a multiband stereo enhancer to widen the mids instead of using reverb.

Reverb: No reverb needed

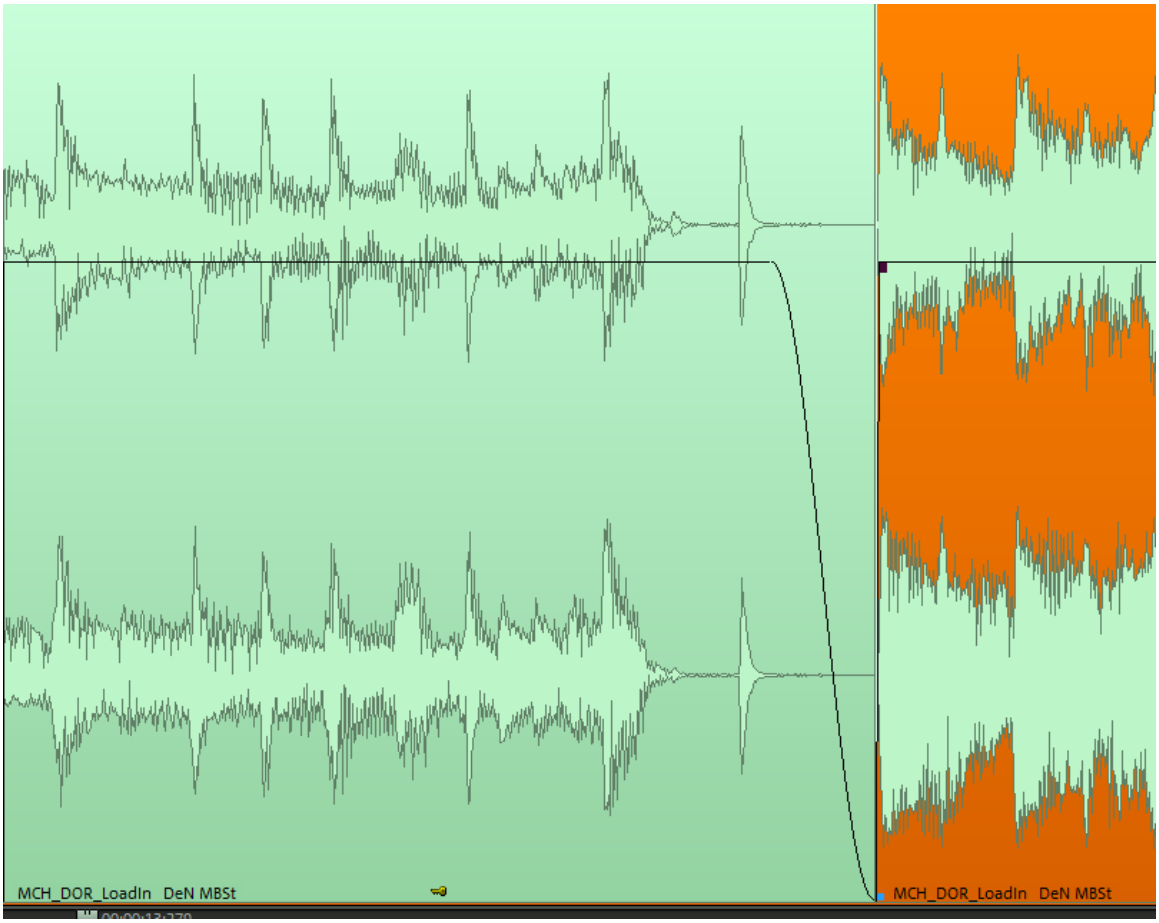
Coding Info:

Artist: HIGH ROAD SOUND
Producer: CHRIS DOMINGO
UPC/EAN: 1234567880
ISRC: US-8FF-09-00010
LABEL: DICK_Q_RECORDS

Gear & Plug-In:


Denoiser - Object Editor "MCH_DOR_LoadIn"
Preset:
Save
Load
Delete
Noise Sample
File:
NoisePrintEff
Wizard
Info:
0.6 sec, 48.0 kHz, Stereo
Save
Load
Play
Parameter Presets
Preset:
Save
Load
Delete
Filter characteristics
Reset Filter Line
Scale Options...
Artifact Suppression
Smooth Attack
Smooth Release
Static Smooth
Transient sustainment
1.0
8.0
1.0
0.0
0 ... 100
0 ... 100
0 ... 20
0 ... 100
Correction
25.0
0 ... 100
Mix
10.0
-dB
Overlap:
High (75%)
Resolution:
2048
Original
Result
Noise Sample Original
Noise Sample Filter Line
Noise Sample Result
Options
Adaptive Noise Level Correction
Damp Tonal Noise Maximal
De-Rumble
Inverse
Bypass
Play / Stop
Latency:
2048 smpl
OK
Cancel
Help


Multiband Stereo Enhancer - Object Editor "MCH_DOR_LoadIn"
Preset:
Dialog opening parameters
Save
Load
Delete
A
B
C
Filter Settings
View dB:
lin.
log.
Freq.:
lin.
log.
0.02
0.07
0.24
0.75
2.4
7.6
24.
Split-Freq 1:
0.24 kHz
Split-Freq 2:
3.20 kHz
Bass
Mid
High
Stereo:
Mono
Exp.
73.0 %
150.0 %
100.0 %
Pan:
Gain:
1.7 dB
0.0 dB
0.0 dB
Solo
Maximize
0.0
0 ... 100
In Out
clip
dB
Reset
Mode:
Multi Band
Direction Pan
Band Separation:
Normal
Phase Correlator
Reset
Bypass
Play / Stop
Latency:
367 smpl
OK
Cancel
Help



Above is a Fade Edit done in the middle of the track where it breaks down in an attempt to try minimizing the presence of noise since overusing the de-noiser would cut into the other transients of the song.

SONG # 2
Title: *"Judgment Time"*
Engineer: Phil Seaford
Song # On Demo: 3

Producer Notes:

There are unwanted artifacts before the first guitar hit. There is a noise issue right before the first hit. There is some lost energy in the 3-5k range. In the 1-2k range it needs to be softened. The vocal is somewhat lost in the mix try and fix that. The low end needs to be controlled but there is room to add lower frequencies. The problem are in the low end is roughly 90-200HZ. I would also add some air to the top end. There're some issues on the back end. Might be a mic or digital pop that needs to be cut or cleaned up. Overall the mix lacks vibrancy, give life back to this mix.

Overview:

This song has a very folk/country fill to it. The driving instruments seem to be the bass, guitar and vocals. There is also to back up harmony that you can hear in the chorus section. Overall the tune seems a bit dark in nature and is also reflected in the lyrical content. It's a very nice song for its style/genre of music.

Edit Decision:

A De-Noiser, De-Clicker and Spectral Repair tools will be used to clear up clicks, pops and any other unwanted artifacts in the songs. Boosting of certain frequency ranges as well as making sure they balance would also be needed to try and lively up the song. Boosting of highs would also need to be added to give the song some air. The lower frequency ranges would need to be shaped a big more with EQ and maybe some compression as well. Once the song is done and printed down, fades will also be applied where needed.

Processing:

EQ: Shape and maybe reduce the low frequencies if needed around 90-200Hz and lower the mids around 1-2k to reduce the presence and to help them to sit well around the other frequency ranges. Boost around 3-5kHz to give the song more energy in that area. The lows could also be boosted in certain ranges from around 40-80Hz, and maybe 250 – 450Hz. Boost highs around 16kHz-20kHz to add some air to the mix.

Compression: Use some compression on the low band to help control the lows frequencies a bit more. Also the mids could use some compression as well.

Limiting: We don't think we'll be using limiting. Instead we'll monitor the overall levels of the mix and reduce the level by trimming or another method if needed.

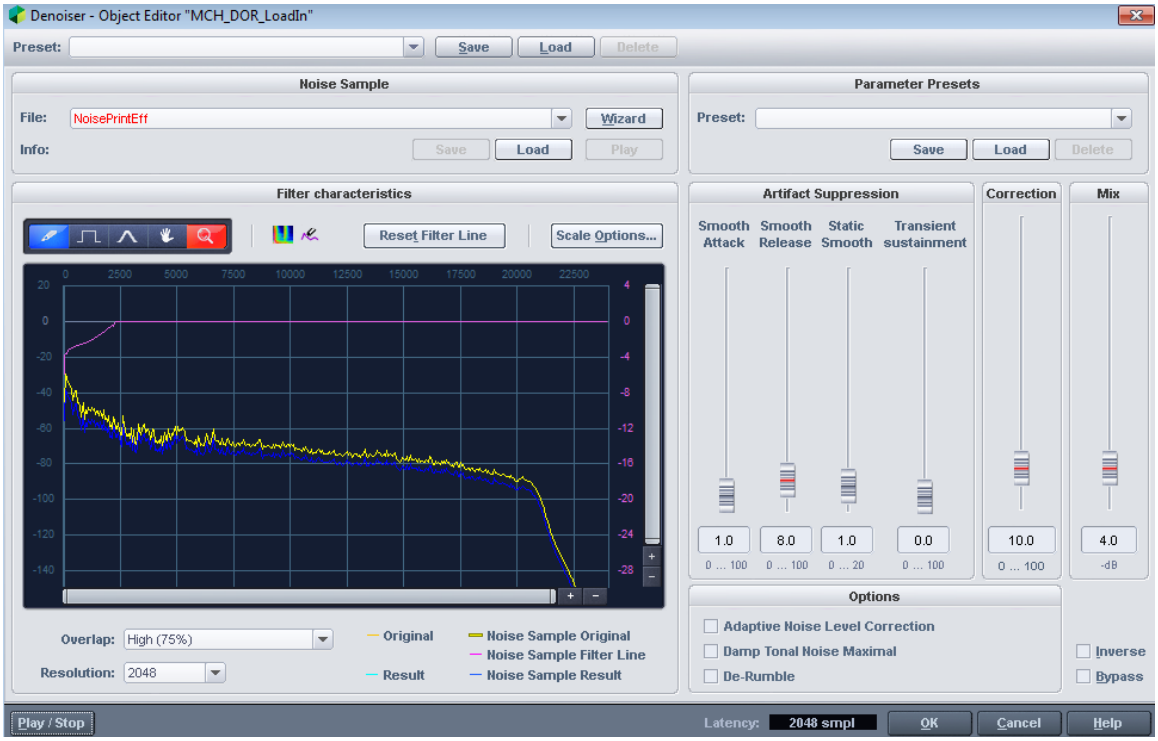
Stereo Image: We think the stereo image is ok for the song but will still use the Multi-band stereo enhancer to monitor the various frequency ranges in the song that may need editing.

Reverb: No reverb needed.

Coding Info:

Artist: HIGH ROAD SOUND
Producer: RIKK PALMER
UPC/EAN: 1234567880
ISRC: US-8FF-09-00012
LABEL: DICK_Q_RECORDS

Gear & Plug-In:


Denoiser - Object Editor "MCH_DOR_LoadIn"
Preset:
Save
Load
Delete
Noise Sample
File:
NoisePrintEff
Wizard
Info:
Save
Load
Play
Parameter Presets
Preset:
Save
Load
Delete
Filter characteristics
Reset Filter Line
Scale Options...
Artifact Suppression
Smooth Attack
Smooth Release
Static Smooth
Transient sustainment
1.0
8.0
1.0
0.0
0 ... 100
0 ... 100
0 ... 20
0 ... 100
Correction
10.0
0 ... 100
Mix
4.0
-dB
Overlap:
High (75%)
Resolution:
2048
Original
Result
Noise Sample Original
Noise Sample Filter Line
Noise Sample Result
Options
Adaptive Noise Level Correction
Damp Tonal Noise Maximal
De-Rumble
Inverse
Bypass
Play / Stop
Latency:
2048 smpl
OK
Cancel
Help


Declicker / Decrackler - Object Editor "MCH_DOR_LoadIn"
Preset:
Dialog opening parameters
Save
Load
Delete
Declicker
Sensitivity
Mix
32.00
14.82
0 - 100
-dB
Red.
Left
Right
2.0
4.1
6.1
8.2
10.2
Declicker
Decrackler
View Options...
Decrackler
Sensitivity
Mix
30.00
16.74
0 - 100
-dB
Inverse
Bypass
Play / Stop
Latency:
2484 smpl
OK
Cancel
Help

SONG # 3
***Title:** *"Fingerprints"*
Engineer: Phil Seaford
Song # On Demo: 2

Producer Notes:

There is a balance issue in the track. Try and balance this without panning too much of the material. The low end is rumbly. The bass and the kick need some type of separation. The guitars are really high in certain areas. Try and control the peaks as well as EQ them. There is a mid range issue overall that needs to be addressed. The ocean fade out is too long. There is also a noise issue masked by the ocean sound. Use noise reduction but be careful to not take away from the ocean sound effect. Bring the RMS up about 1.5db.

Overview:

Fingerprints starts off with the crashing of waves and a harmonica playing the intro melody with an electric guitar. There is also a crashing of cymbals before the main song starts up with the vocals. The song needs to be balanced a bit more but it has a nice slow groove. The low end of the percussion section seems a bit lost or hidden in the mix. The Guitar riffs are good and only need some peak control.

Edit Decision:

Subtle noise reduction with a De-Noiser will be applied to reduce some of the noise without affecting the ocean sounds. A De-Clickers and Spectral Repair will be used to remove any pops, clicks or other unwanted artifacts. The song needs some balancing maybe with the boosting, cutting and editing of certain frequency ranges via an EQ. Consider using a peak limiter to control the high ends of the guitars. Maybe reducing some of the mids or running them through a compressor would help shape and control those frequency ranges a bit more. Once everything is done and printed down, fades will be added.

Processing:

EQ: Balance out frequency ranges by boosting and reducing or cutting where necessary. Separate bass and kick by locating their frequency ranges and editing where necessary.

Compression: Pass the lows and mids through a compressor with subtle compression for a bit more control and to also help separate kick and bass frequency ranges.

Limiting: Possibly use a peak limiter to control the high ends of the guitars.

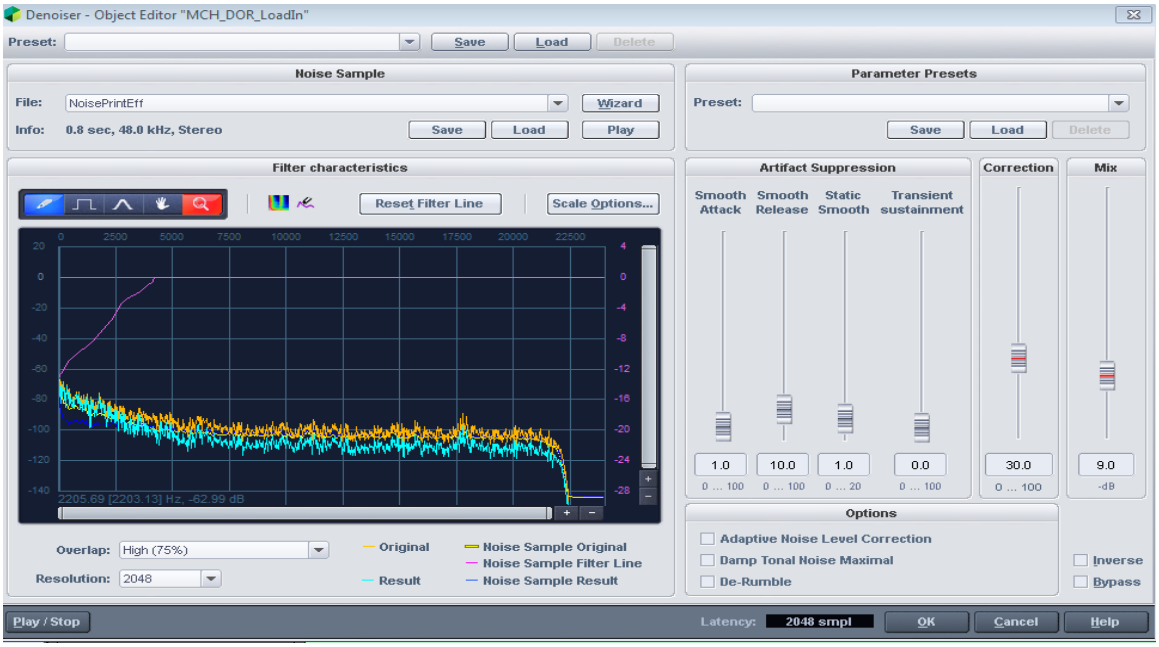
Stereo Image: Use Multi-band stereo enhancer to help monitor and locate the necessary frequency ranges that need boosting, cutting etc.

Reverb: No reverb needs to be added.

Coding Info:

Artist: HIGH ROAD SOUND
Producer: RIKK PALMER
UPC/EAN: 1234567880
ISRC: US-8FF-09-00011
LABEL: DICK_Q_RECORDS

Gear & Plug-In:


Denoiser - Object Editor "MCH_DOR_LoadIn"
Preset:
Save
Load
Delete
Noise Sample
File:
NoisePrintEff
Wizard
Info:
0.8 sec, 48.0 kHz, Stereo
Save
Load
Play
Parameter Presets
Preset:
Save
Load
Delete
Filter characteristics
Reset Filter Line
Scale Options...
2205.69 [2203.13] Hz, -62.99 dB
Overlap:
High (75%)
Resolution:
2048
Original
Result
Noise Sample Original
Noise Sample Filter Line
Noise Sample Result
Artifact Suppression
Smooth Attack
Smooth Release
Static Smooth
Transient sustainment
1.0
10.0
1.0
0.0
0 ... 100
0 ... 100
0 ... 20
0 ... 100
Correction
30.0
0 ... 100
Mix
9.0
-dB
Options
Adaptive Noise Level Correction
Damp Tonal Noise Maximal
De-Rumble
Inverse
Bypass
Play / Stop
Latency:
2048 smpl
OK
Cancel
Help

SONG # 4
Title: *"Nuttin But Trouble"*
Engineer: Phil Seaford
Song # On Demo: 4

Producer Notes:

There are some sound effects (ocean sounds in this track) be sure not to confuse them with noise, they are meant to be in the song. The real goal with this track is to bring the vocal forward in the mix without adding color because it already has a nice tone and airy quality. Lets bring this track up @ 2dB we don't want this one to be too loud. My suggestion with the compression is to use the TUBE_TECH very subtly one each band to give a bit more definition to the rhythm of the song. The fade to the ocean sound at the end of the song is a bit drawn out so start the fade so that it ends in a bit more reasonable amount of time.

Overview:

This track has a southern rock feel to it. It has good energy, the guitar, vocals, bass and percussions have a good balance. The vocals have a good presence and the overall song has a good stereo image. It's a mid-tempo groove with a catchy hook and guitar riff. Overall this mix is already very good and we don't think too much needs to be done to it.

Edit Decision:

A De-noiser, De-Clicker and Spectral repair will be used to remove or reduce any noise, pops, clicks or other unwanted artifacts. It's possible that the vocals may need to be balanced a bit more with the rest of the mix. It's possible that a De-Esser may be needed for some sibilance in the vocals. The high ends of the guitar could be controlled a bit more too. Once everything is done, fades will be applied.

Processing:

EQ: Subtly boost the high frequencies between 16kHz-20kHz to add a bit more air to the mix. The low ends 40Hz – 300Hz could probably use some boosting while the mids 900Hz – 3kHz could be reduced a bit. The high ends may need some shaping maybe between 4k-7k.

Compression: We'll probably use some very subtle compression for the lows, mids and highs for a bit more control and definition.

Limiting: We don't think a limiter will be used. Instead we will monitor the overall levels of the song and reduce them by trimming or using another method if needed.

Stereo Image: Multiband Stereo Enhancer plugin will be used to monitor and locate certain frequency ranges that may need editing.

Reverb: We don't think reverb is needed.

Coding Info:

Artist: HIGH ROAD SOUND
Producer: RIKK PALMER
UPC/EAN: 1234567880
ISRC: US-8FF-09-00013
LABEL: DICK_Q_RECORDS

Gear & Plug-In:


Denoiser - Object Editor "MCH_DOR_LoadIn"
Preset:
Save
Load
Delete
Noise Sample
File:
Buzz_50Hz_Bright_1
Wizard
Info:
4.1 sec, 48.0 kHz, Stereo
Save
Load
Play
Parameter Presets
Preset:
Save
Load
Delete
Filter characteristics
Reset Filter Line
Scale Options...
25260.39 [25242.19] Hz, -132.60 dB
Artifact Suppression
Smooth Attack
Smooth Release
Static Smooth
Transient sustainment
1.0
10.0
1.0
0.0
0 ... 100
0 ... 100
0 ... 20
0 ... 100
Correction
41.0
0 ... 100
Mix
12.0
-dB
Options
Adaptive Noise Level Correction
Damp Tonal Noise Maximal
De-Rumble
Inverse
Bypass
Overlap:
High (75%)
Resolution:
2048
Original
Result
Noise Sample Original
Noise Sample Filter Line
Noise Sample Result
Play / Stop
Latency:
2048 smpl
OK
Cancel
Help


Declicker / Decrackler - Object Editor "MCH_DOR_LoadIn"
Preset:
Dialog opening parameters
Save
Load
Delete
Declicker
Sensitivity
Mix
38.00
11.53
0 - 100
-dB
Red.
Left
Right
2.0
4.1
6.1
8.2
10.2
Decrackler
Sensitivity
Mix
30.00
12.22
0 - 100
-dB
Declicker
Decrackler
View Options...
Inverse
Bypass
Play / Stop
Latency:
2484 smpl
OK
Cancel
Help

SONG # 5
Title: *"When I Die"*
Engineer: Phil Seaford
Song # On Demo: 5

Producer Notes:

Keep the intro for the live feel but try and reduce some of the noise. The hats in the song need to be toned down. Use some compression to get some separation the mids and highs. Get the snare to snap out of the mix. There are some harsh "s" in the vocals. Try and control these without dropping out the highs. EQ the principal frequencies in the vocals to get them to pop. Bring the RMS up 1db.

Overview:

This tune has a catchy upbeat feel to it. It also has a live feel to it. The lyrics are also catchy. The tune has percussion (spoons), upright bass, vocals, harmonica, and guitar (banjo). The spoons are quite apparent in the tune. You can also hear the snare punch clearly. Some sibilance is also present in the tune. The intro and ending of the song seems to have a lot going on with noises from the band and other noise going on.

Edit Decision:

We plan to use a De-Esser to reduce some of the sibilance in the song. A De-Noiser, De-Clicker and Spectral Repair will also be used to reduce some of the noise, pops, clicks and any other artifacts in the song without taking too much away from the live feel. Also the mids and high end could be reduced a bit in the mix for a bit more balance. The lows may need some boosting. Once everything is done, the fades will be applied.

Processing:

EQ: Edit the frequency range of the snare to reduce the sharp end of the hit and lower it a bit in the mix. Reduce some of the highs between 5-8k or wherever the sibilance lies in the highs to help reduce the problem.

Compression: Use compression over the mid, low and high bands for some control and definition of the frequency ranges and to help separate the mids and highs.

Limiting: We don't think we'll use limiting but instead we may trim the overall levels if they are too hot.

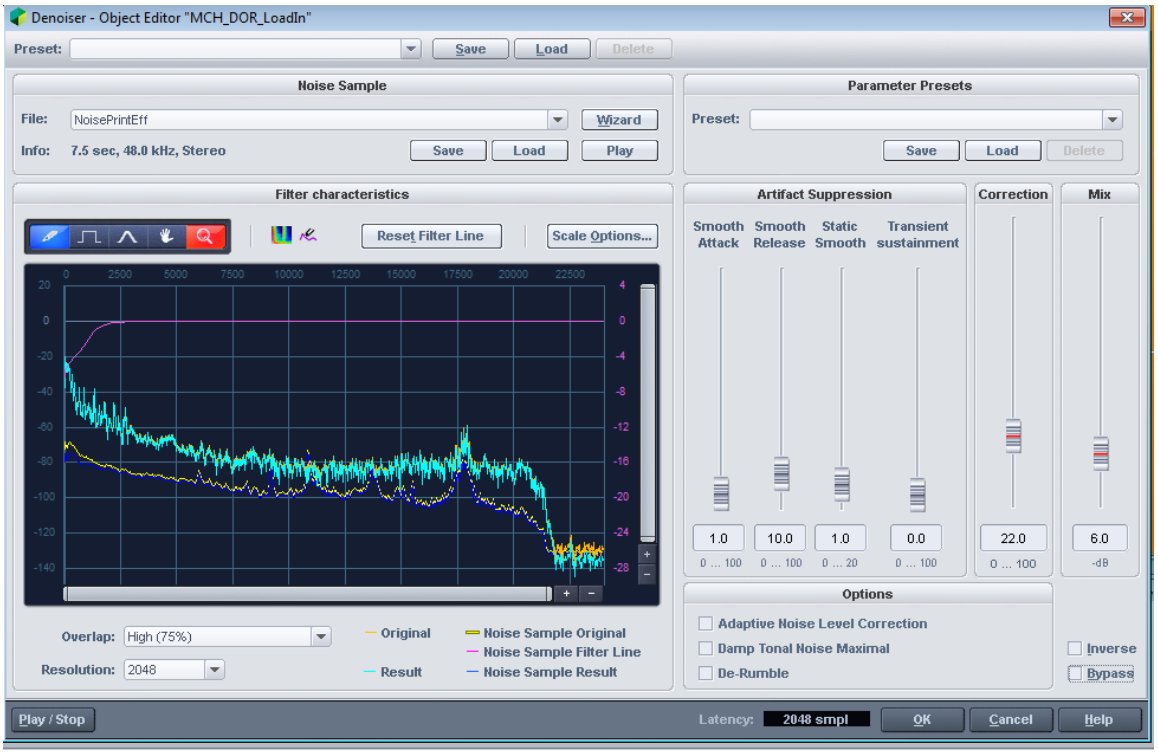
Stereo Image: Stereo image of song seems good. We will use the multiband stereo enhancer however to monitor and pinpoint certain frequency ranges that needed editing.

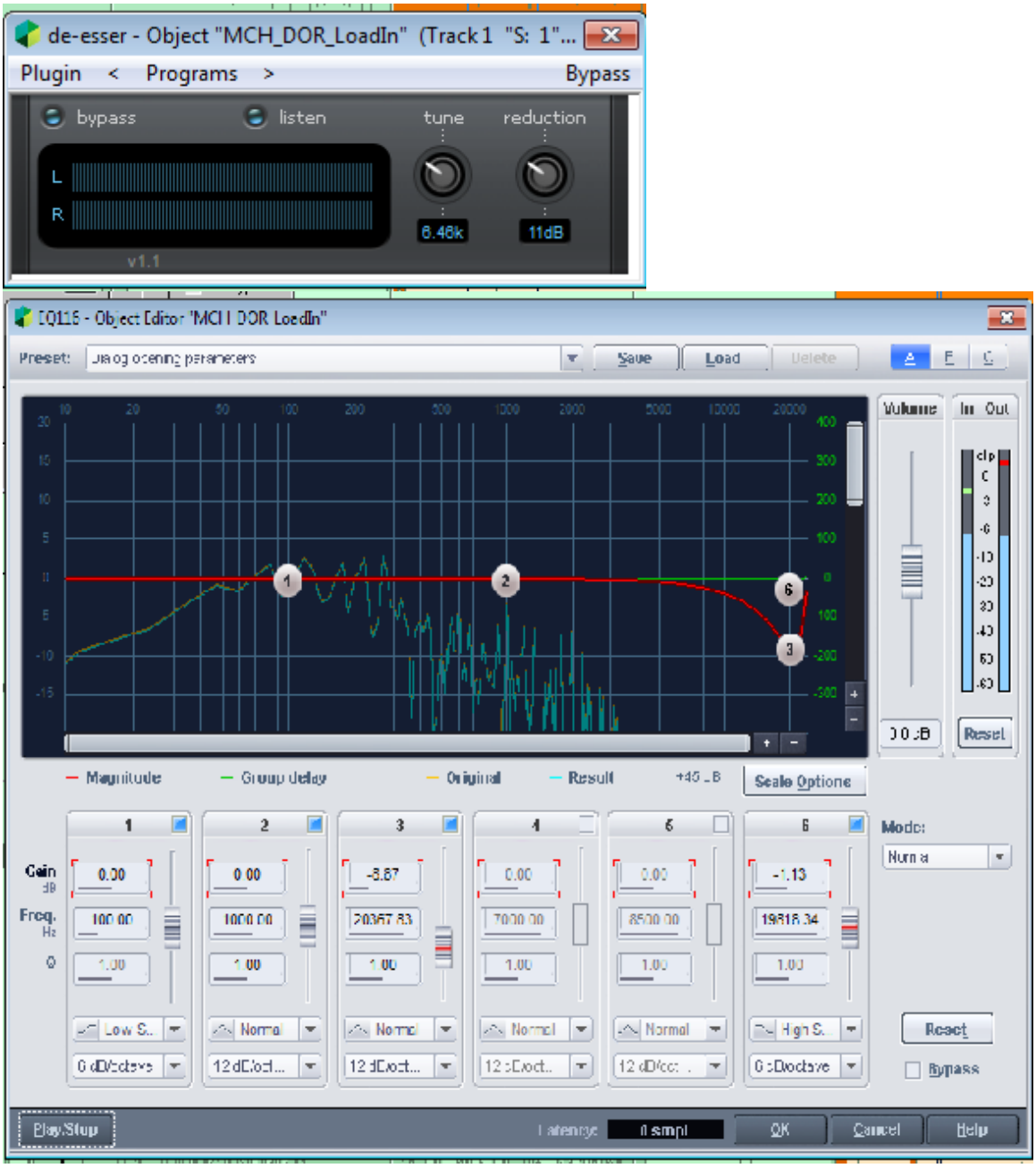
Reverb: No reverb seems to be needed.

Coding Info:

Artist: HIGH ROAD SOUND
Producer: RIKK PALMER
UPC/EAN: 1234567880
ISRC: US-8FF-09-00015
LABEL: DICK_Q_RECORDS

Gear & Plug-In:




de-esser - Object "MCH_DOR_LoadIn" (Track 1 "S: 1"...
Plugin < Programs > Bypass
bypass
listen
tune
reduction
L
R
6.46k
11dB
v1.1
EQ16 - Object Editor "MCH DOR LoadIn"
Preset:
Save
Load
Delete
Volume
In Out
Reset
Magnitude
Group delay
Original
Result
Scale Options
Mode:
Gain
Freq.
Q
Reset
Bypass
Play/Stop
OK
Cancel
Help