

“No Lies”

Skinny Grins

AES Member Number: 94854

Music by: Stefan M. & Anna R.

Vocals: Anna R.

Guitar: Dan B.

Guitar: Stefan M.

Drums: Felipe F.

Bass: Bjorn W.G.

Keyboards: Diego F.

Session Plan

The track “No Lies” performed by the band “Skinny Grins” was created with the combination of real and virtual instruments, including drums, guitar, piano and different types of synthesizers and effects. In addition, an extensive use of percussive loops was explored during the creative process with the intent of generating distinct sound textures.

The production of the song started with a recording session where drums, bass, guitars, and vocals were tracked. After discussing during the pre production stage, we decided to record the band playing together in order to capture a “live performance” feeling. The approach was successful as the band made several prior rehearsals and, also, because they were used to play live gigs together weekly. The drums were the only instrument placed in the live room while the other musicians played in the control room. After tracking all the instruments the vocals were also recorded during the first recording session. All the keyboards, synthesizers and additional percussion were recorded in a later stage, followed by the editing and mixing stage.



Control Room



Live Room

Recording Session

Input List

| Channel | Instrument | Microphone | Preamp |
|---------|----------------|--------------------|--------|
| 1 | Bass Drum | ShureBeta 52 | SSL G+ |
| 2 | Snare Top | Shure SM57 | SSL G+ |
| 3 | Snare Bottom | Shure SM57 | SSL G+ |
| 4 | Hi Hat | Shure KSM 141 | SSL G+ |
| 5 | Tom | Sennheiser MD421 | SSL G+ |
| 6 | Floor Tom | Electro-Voice RE20 | SSL G+ |
| 7 | X OverHead (L) | Shure KSM 141 | SSL G+ |
| 8 | Y OverHead (R) | Shure KSM 141 | SSL G+ |
| 9 | Room (L) | SE Gemni | SSL G+ |
| 10 | Room (R) | SE Gemni | SSL G+ |
| 11 | Bass | D.I. BOX | SSL G+ |
| 12 | Guitar 1 | D.I. BOX | SSL G+ |
| 13 | Guitar 2 | D.I. BOX | SSL G+ |
| 14 | Vox | Neumann TLM 103 | SSL G+ |

Recording Session

Drums



Overhead and Room Microphones - (Stereo Microphone Techniques)

For the Overheads the XY stereo technique was used by placing a pair of Shure KSM 141 pointing down at a 90° angle to each other, to create a realistic image of the drum kit. A pair of SE Gemni microphones was placed four meters away from the drum kit in order to get as many early reflections from the walls and ceiling as possible and a more reverberant version of the drum kit.

Bass Drum

I placed a Shure Beta 52 just outside it aiming two inches above the beater point, to get a more consistent sound and to avoid the excessive “clicky” sound from the beater.



Tom

I placed a Sennheiser MD421 three inches into the head above the rim at a 45° angle pointing down at the center of the head to get more low frequencies and the natural resonance from the instrument. I choose the single top microphone technique to have a more consistent and clear sound.



Floor Tom

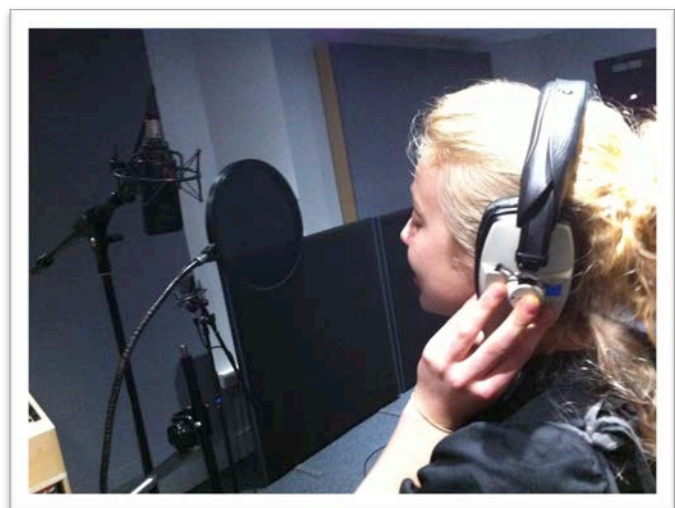
After trying the Sennheiser MD421 I thought it sounded “thin” and its sustain was too short. So I decided to try the RE20 and got a much longer sustain by placing it toward the middle of the skin.



Vocals

Lead Vocal

Following the recording of Drums, guitars and Bass, the lead vocal was recorded in the live room using the Neumann TLM 103 Microphone through the SSL G+ console pre-amp.



Guitars and Bass

Both electric guitars and the bass were recorded performing simultaneously along with the drums, and the original take was used. They were recorded through D.I.Boxes into the SSL G+ console. Later, guitar amplifiers emulators were applied to them in the DAW Logic Pro. Guitar 2 has a clean sound, while guitar 1, which played the main riff and choruses' power chords, has a more distorted sound. Additional effects were added to both guitars, including delays, spring reverbs and chorus.



Guitar 1 Amp Simulator



Guitar 2 Amp Simulator



Guitar Effects



Bass Amp Simulator

Keyboards, Synths and Loops

Pad Synth

The source used for the Strings Pad synth sound was the Arturia Analog Factory. I decided to use this synth to make reference to classic synth sounds.



Strings synth

The emulation of the Yamaha CS80 analog synth was used to create melodic lines.



Hammond Emulator

The Logic's EVB3 was used to create the Hammond sound, it was mainly used to emphasize the build up sections right before the choruses.



Brass Sounds

Sculpture was the synth used to create the brass section.



Clavinet

The EVD6 synth was used to create the clavinet lines.



Percussive Loops – Drum Synth

All the additional loops were created using Logic's Ultrabeat. Shakers and percussive sounds were also programmed through the synth.



Editing and Mixing

Drums Editing

I edited the drums in order to keep it perfectly tempo matched in all bars as I introduced many different drum and percussive loops in the different sections throughout the song.

Lead Vocal Editing

I performed a comping from seven different vocal takes. After the processing performed in the SSL G+ console I printed the compressed and equalised signal in Logic and performed the final automation.



Mixdown

The track was mixed using Logic Pro and combining the processing of the SSL G+ analogue console and digital plugins. Firstly I bounced all the Loops and Synths recorded in Logic into audiotracks. Following, I sent all channels individually to the console in some cases and have also created stereo buss groups and applied panning, filters, EQ, dynamics and additional gain in the console when needed.

In the final stereo buss the SSL Quad Buss Compressor was used with a slow attack, ratio of 2:1, auto release and 3db of gain reduction in the loudest parts, just to make it glue together a bit more, and finally bounced back to Logic Pro.

