
Senior Projects Spring 2020


Bard Undergraduate Senior Projects

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“Saitama” & “Conversations with Cage & Frisell”

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“Saitama” & “Conversations with Cage & Frisell”
Forays into Electronic Music and Electric Guitar Improvisation

Senior Project Submitted to
The Division of the Arts of Bard College

by
Jacob McConnaughy

Annandale-on-Hudson, New York

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for your countless hours of help over the years and helping support my artistic journey here at Bard, for helping show a fellow guitarist what it means to explore ideas in electronic music

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To my mother

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“Saitama”

For the first part of Senior Project, I embarked on a goal to gather as much material as I could to form a coherent album that could be released to the public on streaming platforms that focused on electronic music. With a Roland Juno-60, a vintage analog synthesizer from the early eighties, I sat down everyday and hit record and let myself be taken away by the sounds and textures that I was able to conjure. The finished project combines previous ideas and culminated in the release of a full length album entitled Saitama.

“Conversations with Cage & Frisell”

With the second stage of the Senior Project, I decided to pivot largely to an instrument I felt I had long neglected in my work with electronic music, the guitar. I felt it had a lot to offer in terms of pedagogy and skill, as well as unexplored sounds of polyphony that rivaled the synthesizer. With that I spent the semester experimenting with improvisation with the electric guitar, preparing for a performance that was pivoted towards a live-streamed performance due to the onset of Covid-19. Along with that I set off to study works by composers Lou Harrison and John Cage, reimagining Cage’s work for the electric guitar. I was inspired by the work of guitarist Bill Frisell and his blending of genres and adaptations of the guitar pedal as an instrument itself. The final product is meant to be a blending of these ideas and sounds into a final performance that reflects the sounds of electronic music while at the same time paying respect to the art of the guitar and 20th century composers.

Music released can be found below

https://open.spotify.com/album/6keHQY5NcDbNEQ9C4azo4U?si=9HYNOWxmRPO_Ckr5o9R7vQ

<https://music.apple.com/us/album/saitama/1501254537>