



TRACKNOTES
FEEDBACK REPORT

SAMPLE REPORT · NAMES & DETAILS CHANGED

WHOLE-PROJECT READ · EP

L&viathan

six-track EP

Six tracks of abstract, bass-led instrumental electronica. A full read across the project, with a technical mix and recording pass on each track.

ARTIST
Rokoko

SERVICE
EP · £180

STAGE
Final mix (pre-master)

DATE
Sample

THE READ

This is a strong body of work with a *genuine identity*: submerged, restless, harmonically rich, and more developed than most instrumental material that leans this experimental.

The tempo shifts and sudden dropouts are wicked man. Almost nothing here needs rescuing IMO. The technical notes are small and track-specific, a possible clip on track 2, some dense pad layering on a few, a hiss on track 6 that mastering could accentuate.

The sub you were worried about, and the low mids you were bracing for on track 5, are both in better shape than you feared. These really are just little tweaks, and the EP is in good enough shape to master as it stands.

01

THE EP AS A
WHOLE

The murky, submerged feel is the strength here, not something to clean up. There is a lot going on harmonically, and the tracks move through distinct phases rather than riding a single loop, so they read as composed pieces rather than beats. The little tempo shifts, dropouts and bridges in the arrangements are the best thing about the project. That developmental quality is exactly what carries instrumental music that has no vocal to lean on.

There is a real tension running through this kind of music, and you are sitting right on the productive edge of it: the balance between a regular groove you can lock into and fully abstract territory built on dissonance and off-key sound. You are drawing on something close to *musique concrète*, that 70s-soundtrack world of industrial textures and detuned synth notes, and bridging it with actual grooves. The risk at the abstract end is always that a piece stops being something you can nod your head to; the risk at the groove end is that a four-bar loop, however good, gets boring without a vocal on top. You are navigating that line well. The two tracks that land most fully, *Deep Water Signal* and *Barnacle Choir*, are no coincidence the ones with a more regular groove under all the harmonic invention.

One thread worth carrying into the individual notes: on a few tracks the layering gets dense, several pad or VST lines playing together at once. That can sound amazing, and often does here, but it can occasionally feel a touch cluttered where there is not a solid rhythmic bass carrying it underneath. Where it works, it is because the low end is anchoring everything.

OFF THE BRIEF, BUT WORTH SAYING

One bonus tip, since you did not ask for composition notes but this might be useful. On the busier tracks, track 3 especially where you have those thin bell lines carrying a lot of interest, you could try laying a single-note drone underneath, in the key you are writing in: either one note or the root chord. They do this a lot in Indian classical music, starting with a one-note drone and improvising everything over the top, so there is always a harmonic foundation holding it together. It can keep looser playing rooted in a sense of space, and it can sit anywhere in the range, a low note, a mid, or a high string sitting quietly in the mix and covering a broad frequency band. You could lay the drone first, play over it, and pull it out afterwards if you do not like it, though often it just brings everything together with the bass. Worth a go on a melodic passage if you fancy it.

02

SUB & LOW END

You flagged that you cannot monitor the sub, so you have no read on how the bottom is translating. That is a completely understandable gap, and it is one of the more solvable ones. Sub is fairly easy to rein in where needed in mastering: often it is just a resonance or two that can be compressed down. It is better to catch it in the mix if you can, but it is very fixable at the master. I will pay particular attention to the sub regions when I master, precisely because you have not been able to check them, and make sure nothing is booming too hard down there. So this is one you can consider handled rather than something you need to solve blind.

03

RECORDING
QUALITY

Everything sounds rich. Tellingly, I often cannot tell what is a live instrument, what is a synth, and what is a sample, the sources are blended that cleanly. That is a compliment to the capture: badly recorded live elements usually announce themselves the moment they sit next to a clean synth, and yours do not. Whatever the balance of live to programmed here, it is holding together as one sonic world.

04

TRACK BY TRACK

tracks one to three

01 Deep Water Signal

■ READY TO MASTER

Probably the standout. It flows seamlessly, you genuinely do not know what is coming next, and the processed vocal fragments when they arrive are a real high point. This is the track where a solid groove sits underneath the layering and the whole thing just works as a piece. I would happily leave this one exactly as it is.

02 Kraken Teeth

■ MINOR TWEAK

More abstract, less groove-led, and it earns that. One thing you might look at: there may be a slight clip on the attack of some of the bass hits, around the 1:04 mark for example. It reads almost like a small glitch, so you could check whether it is in the chopped audio itself or whether the instrument's attack wants smoothing. Not the end of the world at all, but perhaps worth a quick pass on the files or the settings to clean it up if you fancy it. Otherwise, lovely.

03 Salt Cathedral

□ CREATIVE CALL

The drums and bass lock in nicely and leave a lot of space, which is where a lot of the track's quality comes from. One thing you might look at: the thin bell parts that arrive around halfway are perhaps doing a little too much. They take centre stage and pull you slightly out of the groove, the second bell line especially, around 1:52, maybe tips a bit OTT. You could try backgrounding them, or washing them out a touch, so they sit under the groove rather than alongside it. Take it with a pinch of salt though, it is a creative call rather than a problem. The intro and the half-time drop are lovely either way.

04

TRACK BY TRACK

tracks four to six

04 Trench Mouth

■ READY TO MASTER

This one has a flooded-arcade vibe, all rusted menace, and I mean that as a compliment. The dissonance gives it a jolting, jarring groove that is more abstract than the rest of the EP, and it works. A few elements sit mildly out of tune in a dissonant, almost jazzy way. If that is the intention, and it reads like it is, I would keep it. Just something to be aware of: it makes for a deliberately uncomfortable listen, so it is worth it staying a choice rather than an accident.

05 Léviathan

■ READY TO MASTER

You were braced for a low-mid problem here. I have no concerns about it at all. The track rolls out unpredictably, which is exactly what you want in this style, and when the drum-machine elements come in later they pull it all together. The low mids sound good. If there is any frequency overlap from all the instruments you have stacked in there, it is not detrimental. This is a case of your ear on the room worrying about something that resolved itself in the writing. Good job on it.

06 Barnacle Choir

■ MINOR TWEAK

The drums are great, nice and varied, and one of the reasons this lands alongside *Deep Water Signal*. Is that a live vocal around 1:12? It sounds genuinely good, and it is a great way to bring a bit of humanity into produced music, so I would keep doing it. One thing you might be aware of: there is a burst of hiss around 2:08 that mastering may accentuate. The forgiving thing about abstract instrumental music is that a technical artefact often just reads as intentional, so this is not essential at all. But if you did want to tighten this one, that would be the spot to look at.

05

REFERENCES

You gave four, and asked which is most useful and whether a narrower ref would help. It would, and you have effectively already found it: of the ones you supplied, the two deep-dub records are the closest match, the same slightly strange, submerged instrumental world you are working in. That is the one I would lean on for space and clarity. The others, the two broken-beat picks especially, are further off: they lean more traditional in their rhythmic feel, with noticeably less going on harmonically than your tracks carry. They are still useful for warmth and tone as a general target, but they are not quite the right structural comparison for material as busy and abstract as yours. So the honest answer to "which ref": the closest-feel one, for how it uses space, and treat the rest as mood rather than blueprint.

06

A FEW THINGS YOU
COULD LOOK AT

None of this is essential, and I am happy to master these tracks as they are, so if you would rather keep them exactly as you submitted them, that is a completely valid choice. Abstract instrumental music carries so-called imperfections better than almost anything. But if you did fancy tightening a couple of things before it goes to master, these are the spots:

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- 02 **The track 2 clip.** You might check the bass attack around 1:04, in the audio files or the instrument settings, in case it wants smoothing.
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- 03 **The track 3 bells.** If you wanted them to sit back a little, backgrounding or washing out the lead lines around 1:52 could be where to start, but only if it appeals.
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- 06 **The track 6 hiss.** Around 2:08, just worth being aware it may get accentuated in the master. You could tame it for a tighter result, or leave it for the texture, genuinely no wrong answer.
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Tracks 1, 4 and 5 I would happily leave exactly as they are. Whenever you are ready, I would be glad to get my hands on it and master it, with particular care on the sub regions we talked about.

Forest DLG

HEAD ENGINEER • STUDIO KMJ45

studio@kmj45.com

kmj45.com