

**5010 MAPA- MUSIC PRODUCTION**  
**CW2- PRACTICAL WORK: RECORDING**  
**PORTOFOLIO + RESEARCH (50%)**

Dr. Dre is an American rapper, record producer, entrepreneur, actor, and audio engineer. He is, probably, the most important man in the hip-hop industry, being one of the best producers and rappers, and, also, one of the richest rappers in the world.

His real name is Andre Romell Young, and he was born on 18<sup>th</sup> of February, 1965, in Compton, California. His first stage name is, actually, "Dr. J". At first, he began as a DJ. At the club, he met rapper Antoine Carraby, who later became a member of DJ Yella of N.W.A.

In 1986, Dr. Dre met O'Shea Jackson, also known as Ice Cube, who collaborated with him to record songs for Ruthless Records, a hip hop record label run by Eazy-E. N.W.A and West Coast rapper Ice-T are credited as seminal artists of the gangsta rap genre.

His first album is called "The Chronic", with Suge Knight as executive producer.

Ice Cube left N.W.A. in 1989, because of financial disputes, and, in 1991, Dre had a dispute with Easy-E, and decided to leave the group, when it was at the peak of its popularity. His bodyguard at that time, Suge Knight, and the N.W.A lyricist, The D.O.C. helped Dre to close the contract with the record label. After this, he founded Death Row Records, which used Dr Dre as their flagship artist. In 1992, he releases his first single, the title track of the film "Deep Cover", in collaboration with Snoop Dog, whom he met through Warren. G.

His second album is 2001, which includes a lot of collaborations, including:

- Devin the Dude;
- Snoop Dog;
- Kurupt;
- Xzibit;
- Nate Dogg;
- Eminem;
- Knoc-turn'al;
- King T;
- Defari;
- Kokane;
- Mary J Blige;

-Hittman.

AllMusic described the sound of the album as “adding ominous strings, soulful vocals, and reggae” to Dr. Dre’s style.

He also helped Eminem getting attention, by producing his first album, “The Slim Shady LP”, after moving to Aftermath Entertainment.

He is constantly evolving his production style over the years but combining the new things with his roots, re-shaping elements from previous work. At the start of his career as a producer, his beats were in the electro-hop style, which is present in the popular song “Boyz-n-the-Hood”, which is produced by Dre. The key element of his songs, at that time, was sampling. From “Straight Outta Compton”, Dr. Dre uses live musicians to reproduce old songs or melodic lines, instead of sampling them. “The Chronic” is thought to be one of the most well-produced hip-hop albums of all time. Musical themes included hard-hitting synthesizer solos played by Wolfe, bass-heavy compositions, background female vocals, and Dre fully embracing 1970s funk samples.

Dr. Dre has said that his primary instrument in the studio is the Akai MPC3000, a drum machine and sampler and that he often uses as many as four or five to produce a single recording. But, he also tried to avoid sampling as much as possible, preferring live musicians, in order to have more control and flexibility to change the song’s rhythm and tempo.

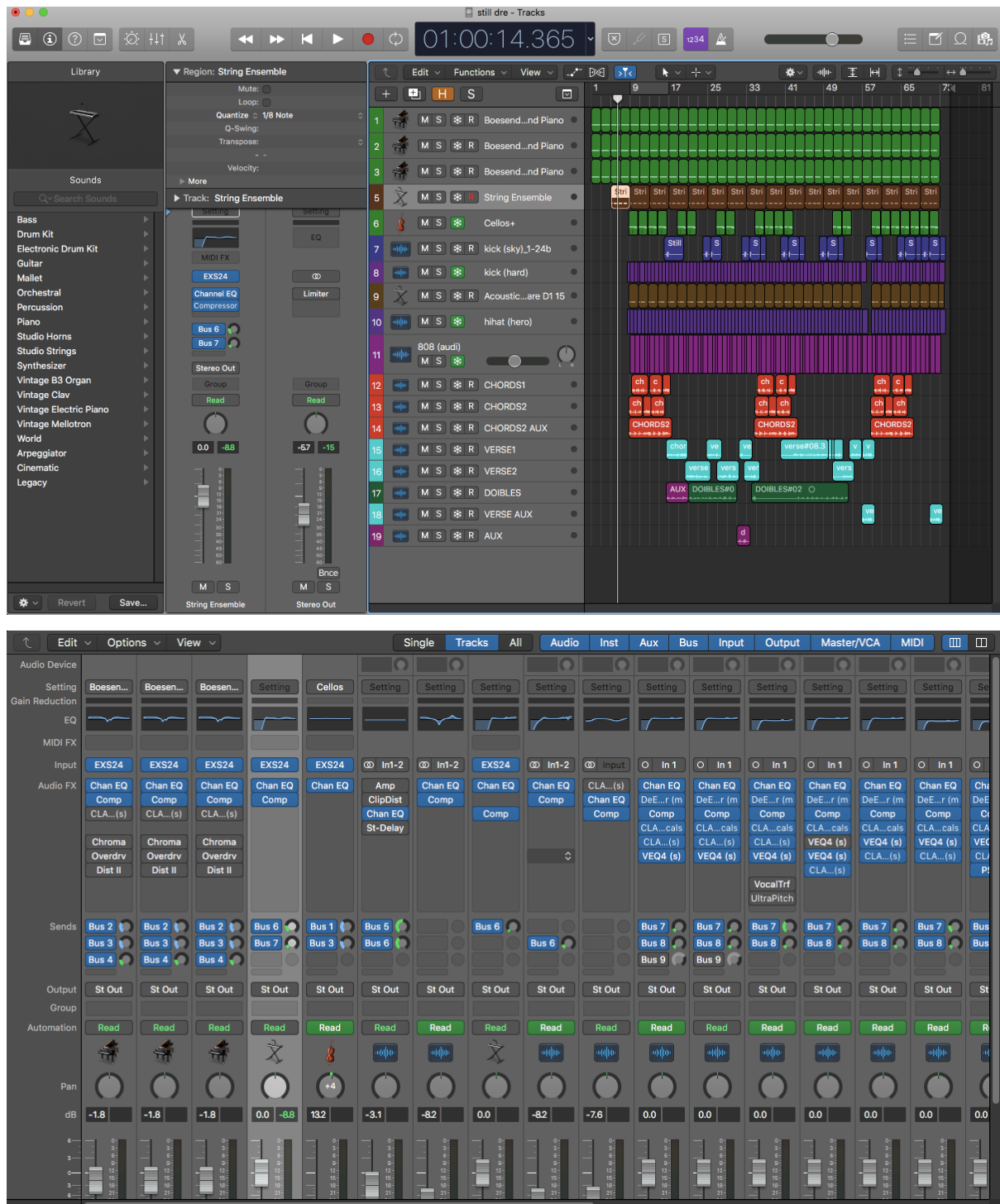
He is a perfectionist and known to pressure the artists who he works with, in order to obtain the best performance possible. In 2006, Snoop Dogg told the website Dubcnn.com that Dr. Dre had made new artist Bishop Lamont re-record a single bar of vocals 107 times.

It is acknowledged that most of Dr. Dre's raps are written for him by others, though he retains ultimate control over his lyrics and the themes of his songs. In the book How to Rap, RBX explains that writing The Chronic was a "team effort".

He is one of the people who inspired me to make hip-hop music, so, for this assessment, I decided to reproduce his most popular song, "Still Dre", adding a modern hip-hop touch, based on my own lyrics and, especially, chords. I have made all the mixes, including instruments, and voice, in Logic Pro X, but bounced everything from Pro Tools, after I finished the 5.1 pannings.

The idea that I have worked on is to try to refresh a little bit of this song. At first, I tried to reproduce it 1to 1, but, in time, I decided to add my own touch to the song. In order to achieve that modern sound, I used a pack of electronic drums, which I use in order to make trap songs. I used a kick, a snare, and hi-hats. I added an 808 bass, 2 sets of strings and a classic grand piano.

Over the song, the piano follows 3 notes, so I decided to separate them in different channels, so I can pan them separately when mixing 5.1.





The mix of the instruments is quite simple. Apart from the EQ and the compressor, I used buses to apply reverb and/or delay where needed. I used different types of reverb, based on the type of instrument or vocal part. Personally, I prefer the reverb with a longer decay, of at least 4 seconds, but in some cases, I just mix it with an early reflections reverb.

My “recipe” for the delay is always the next one: The time is between 500 ms and 1 second, and I apply a telephone effect through an EQ, so it will have a nice sound, which is more integrated into the song. I also use a lot of automation on the buses, especially on the delay, which I do not really like to be too strong during the verse. I prefer it powerful at the end of the verse and chords.

The vocals are the most interesting part. That is the section where I put the biggest effort.

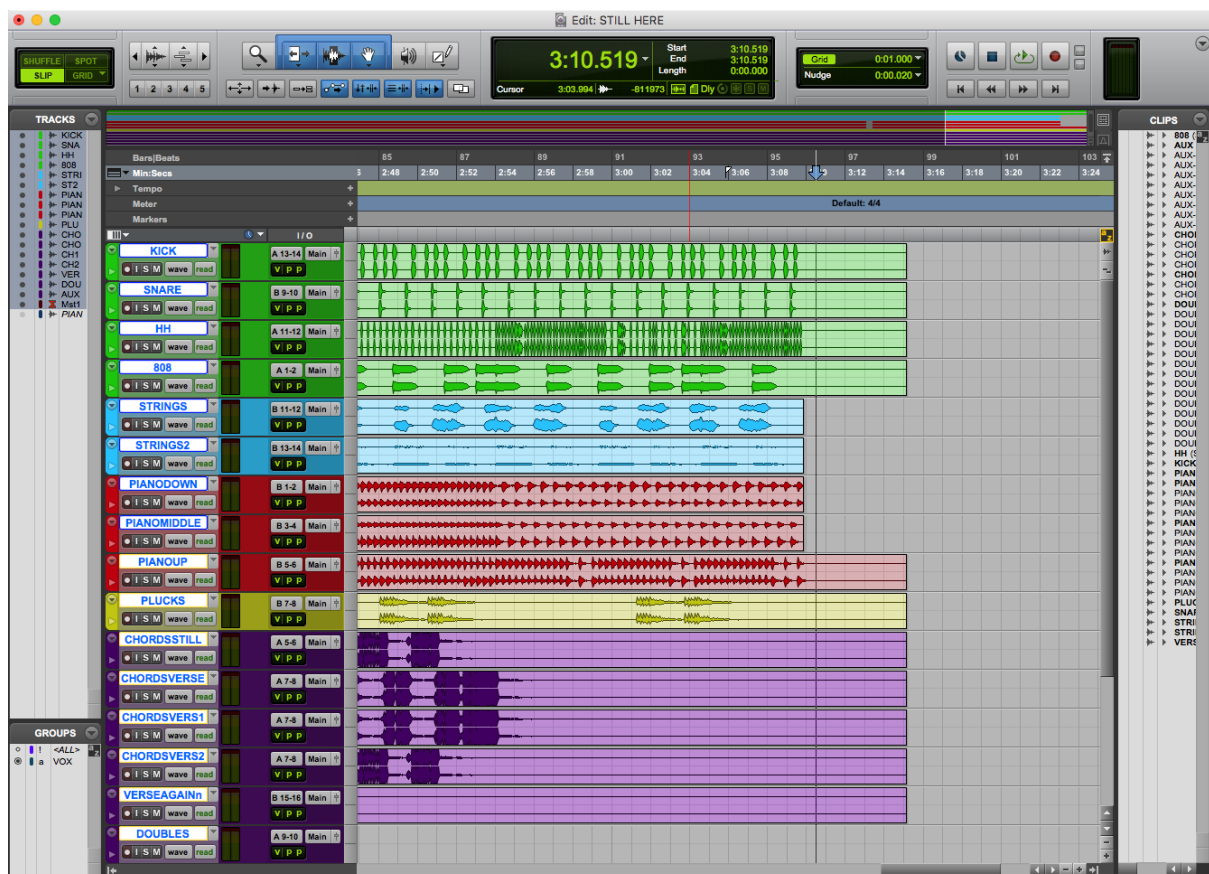
Usually, I begin with correcting the notes using Waves Tune, but, being a rap song, you do not really need that. So, I started with a de-esser, so I can remove the sibilance through the song. After this, I put the first EQ, just to remove the most unwanted frequencies and boost some of the ones which are helping me. I always cut the lows on vocals. After this, I put the first compressor, which is the stock compressor found in Logic Pro X. I like it because it has a lot of circuits, so I can extend its

usability. In the last time, I started to use CLA Vocals, from Waves. It basically adds a little bit from everything in the voice. I use it to make a slight change in the colour of the sounds, a little bit treble, bass(if needed), some reverb and some delay. After it, I put the second compressor, the CLA-3A, which is my favorite. It simply just adds a lot of power to the voice, making it evident and really clear. And, at the end, I put a colour EQ, a knob-based one, just to finish the shape of the sound.

After finishing the equalizer and compression part, I am adding reverb and delay through buses. I have made separate reverb and delay buses for the vocals because I use different settings. I used the Chroma Verb, because it has an EQ integrated, and applied a soft compression as well, just to keep the reverb at the same level.

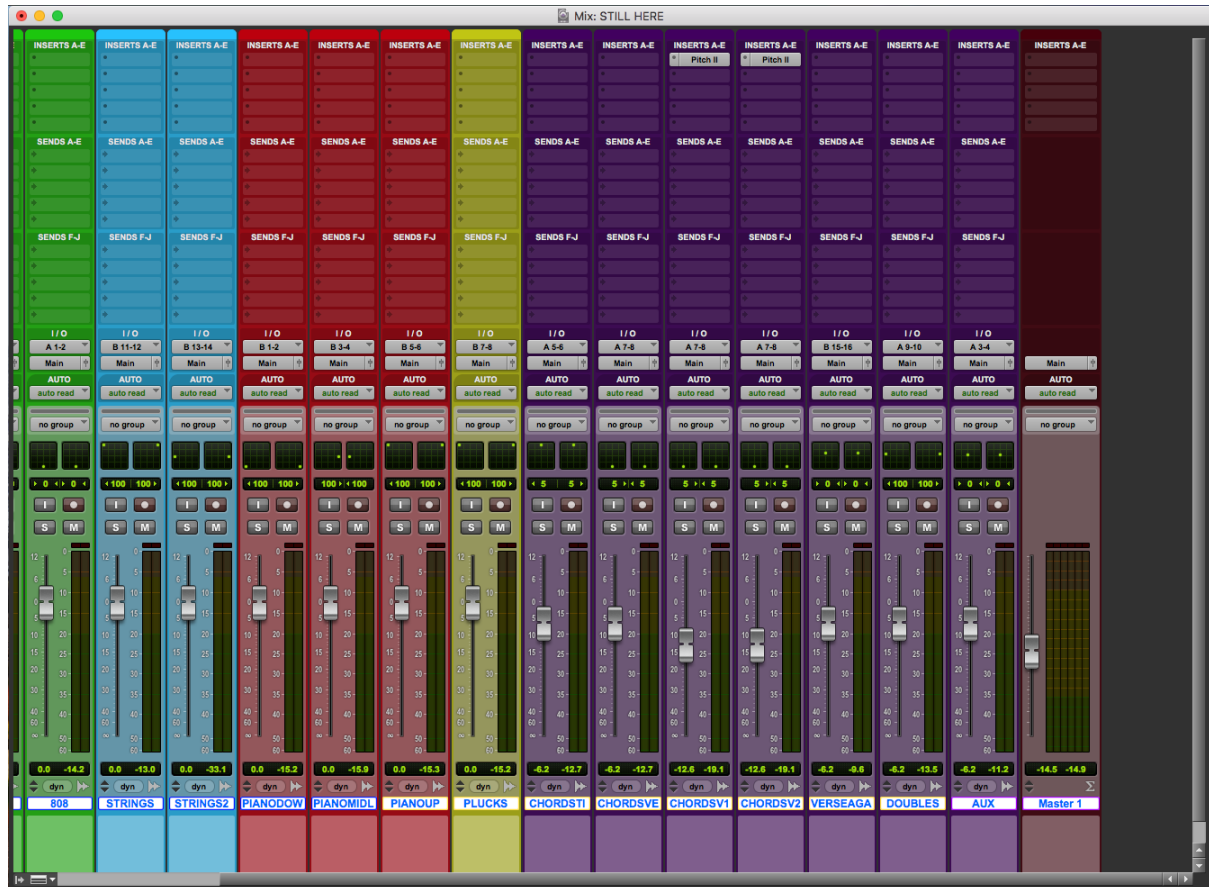
For the doubles and auxiliaries, I just used automation to make the reverb stronger and to put the level a little bit lower.

After I finished the mix in Logic Pro X, I bounced all the stems and went to the SSL Studio, where I used Pro Tools to make the mix in 5.1.



When it came about this, I decided to pan just using my ears. I have stayed and analyzed the whole song, and then I panned most of

the stems separate. I have split the chords into two channels, making them bounce between them: Middle and Back. I kept the verse into the middle part, so I can hear them properly, and put the doubles in the back.



For the instruments, I used the latch option, so I can move them through the sound field live, just using my creativity.

I have met some problems as well while making the song.

The first one, and the most annoying one is that, for some reason, the doubles were not recorded correctly, even though I recorded them straight after I recorded the verse part. They were, basically, destroyed from the beginning, and I realized that only when I started the mix in 5.1. At first, I thought that my laptop is the problem because it uses to crash many times and make a distortion sound in the background while playing the song in the session, and I thought that after bouncing the stems, the problem will disappear. In order to resolve this, I doubled some portions in the chords and vocals, added a pitch modifier and created other doubles.



The second problem, where all the fault is mine, is that, when I bounced the 5.1 mix, I did not realize that it is in 44.1 kHz, instead of 48 kHz, and I hope that it is still all right.

Overall, this is the most complex project that I have worked on, and I am pretty happy with the result. Thank you very much, and I hope that you will enjoy it!

P.S. – Sorry for the lyrics, I tried to sing as good as I could.

## ***LIST OF REFERENCES***

- 1.En.wikipedia.org. (2019). *Dr. Dre*. [online] Available at:  
[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dr.\\_Dre#Production\\_style](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dr._Dre#Production_style) [Accessed 5 Dec. 2019].
- 2.HUEY, S. (2019). *The Chronic - Dr. Dre | Songs, Reviews, Credits | AllMusic*. [online] AllMusic. Available at:  
<https://www.allmusic.com/album/the-chronic-mw0000093671> [Accessed 5 Dec. 2019].
- 3.EDWARDS, P. (2009). *How to Rap: The Art & Science of the Hip-Hop MC*. CHICAGO: CHICAGO REVIEW PRESS, p.288.
- 4.Dubcnn.com. (2006). *dubcnn.com // Snoop Dogg Interview Part 1 (July 2006) // West Coast News Network //*. [online] Available at:  
<http://www.dubcnn.com/interviews/snoopdogg06/part1/> [Accessed 5 Dec. 2019].
- 5.RO, R. (2007). *Dr. Dre: The Biography*. Thunder's Mouth Press, p.308.