Bridging the Gap Between Horror Films and Writing Music: How Both Can Collectively Be Used As A Coping Mechanism

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Introduction

Everyone copes with the stress of daily life in a different manner. A common coping mechanism for a plethora of people is consumption and participation in the arts. As a person with diagnosed anxiety, I avidly use these methods to cope. I am a singer and songwriter and have used these outlets to express myself for the majority of my life. Writing and performing music is a common and socially acceptable way to channel negative emotions in a positive manner. However, when it comes to consuming the arts to cope, I do not do so in a way that many may think. Instead of coming home and watching a happy movie to make me feel better after a stressful day, I am drawn immediately towards a film in the horror genre. Many may find this strange and/or counter intuitive. How would watching something that makes you anxious make you feel less anxious? In actuality, many others do the same thing and it has validity. My goal is to merge my two biggest coping mechanisms and create a horror based EP. In this paper will explor the question of how would use elements of horror, typically seen in film, in the songwriting process as a means of coping with anxiety?

How Art Can Heal

According to The American Art Therapy Association, art can be used in part with more common psychological practices to help in healing an individual's mental state.

> Art Therapy is an integrative mental health and human services profession that enriches the lives of individuals, families, and communities through active art-making, creative

> process, applied psychological theory, and human experience within a psychotherapeutic relationship. (American Art Therapy Association, 2017)

The best thing about art therapy is that all different art forms can be used in some shape or form in this process. For the purposes of my topic, we will be looking at how elements of horror film and music can be used collectively to enrich my life and psychological well being.

Using Fear to Cope

What does it mean to use fear as a coping mechanism? It sounds awfully strange and nonsensical to most. When we think of fear, we get a feeling of induced panic and our instincts to fight, flight or freeze kick in. It is for those very reasons that a good majority of people do not want to be scared. They would like to avoid it at all costs and live in safety. They probably would not even want to sit in front of the silver screen and intentionally watch something that is meant to frighten them. It makes sense for people to not want to deal with the anxiety that comes along with fear, but what about those who do it on purpose? There are a number of people that willingly put themselves in the face of horror, on a frequent basis, and find it to be downright enjoyable. These are the people that go to horror movies on opening night, these are my people. Contrary to popular belief, us horror addicts are not sociopathic (at least the majority of us). According to renowned psychologist Sigmund Freud, as interpreted by Elizabeth Cowie,

> ...every anticipated real danger is accompanied by the fear that one will be unable to deal with it--thus there is anxiety about the real danger and the anticipated helplessness, which may be more or less realistic. It is the latter that appears inexpedient in the human, marking the eruption of irrational “fear”. (31)

To simplify, if one is prepared to be threatened, there is an underlying thought that one day there will be a threat that can not be stopped and they will irrationally fear that threat. This description of irrational fear fits the Merriam Webster dictionary description of medical anxiety or anxiety disorder(Webster, Merriam. *Merriam-Webster's collegiate dictionary*. Springfield, MA: Merriam-Webster, 2003.) Being someone diagnosed with an anxiety disorder, why would i use anxiety(fear) to cope with anxiety(disorder)?

This becomes a question that deals with meta emotions. Meta emotions are the emotions that one has about another. For instance,

> One can be ashamed of losing one's temper, be afraid of falling in love, or enjoy being startled. The idea that human emotions form this kind of evaluative meta-structures may explain why intrinsically unpleasant emotions like anger, fear, or sadness are valued under certain conditions, and why intrinsically pleasant ones like joy or love are at times unwelcome (Bartsch 46)

Taking this into account, I will separate the initial emotion as the primary emotion, and the meta emotion I have about fear as the secondary emotion. When talking about the primary emotion of my own anxiety, I experience the secondary emotion of anger or resentment. When my anxiety flares up and I go into a panic attack I am often plagued with the wish that I was not like this and that I should not have to deal with such an intense emotion on a frequent basis. I wish that I could deal with my irrational life fears in a better manner, and since I am not able to, I get angry with myself although it is not directly my fault. However, when I think of fear in the context of a horror movie I experience the secondary emotion of joy. No, I am not joyous to see people being murdered for that would be a more problematic issue. I feel joy because this is a contained fear. I

know that these horrific events are fictional and cannot harm me. This is a fear that I can digest in a healthy manner. For that reason, I am drawn to horror. Somewhere deep in my mind I believe, if I consume enough "safe" fear, I am desensitizing myself to fear as a whole. If I successfully learn to desensitize myself to fear in as many ways as I can, maybe eventually I can do so in a way to desensitize myself to the irrational fears I have about daily life. I can stop getting scared because I'm already "living in fear" by consuming horror media. In fact, this "desensitization" is actually a process called habituation in psychology.

Habituation and habituation procedures are usually tested on infants. Psychologists will introduce a stimulus to an infant over a long period of time and test the infants interest or attention to that stimulus. At the beginning the infant is very interested in the stimulus, but over time that attention and interest decline. After the decline, the psychologists will introduce a new stimulus along with the one they have already been introduced to. When this happens, the infant is most likely to give attention and have an interest in the new stimulus rather than the old. This is because the infant has habituated to the initial stimulus. It is used to it and the novelty has worn off. It will not arouse the same excitement as it did initially unless the stimulus is removed or overshadowed for a long time where the initial stimulus will be somewhat forgotten and become somewhat "new" again. This concept is exactly what I am trying to achieve when it comes to horror media. If I am constantly exposed to this media, the amount of excitement I receive from it will decrease. The excitement in particular I am trying to decrease is the fear element. If I am habituated to fear, a safe one as previously stated, then it will not have the same effect on me as it would to someone who is not habituated to this certain stimuli (Goldstein, E. B. Sensation and Perception, 9e.. [Chegg].) By using a combination of meta-emotions about fear

and anxiety and habituation to fear I am able to overcome and cope with my anxiety by consuming horror media, specifically horror movies.

Songwriting Therapy

Participating in the arts through music is a less complex and more accepted coping mechanism compared to consuming horror. By participating in the arts you can work out all the deep inner workings of your soul in a constructive manner. Many people in need of release do exactly this and it has been proven to work wonders on improving someone's mental well being. This exact reason is why there is an entire field of different art therapies. For the purposes of my topic, we will be looking at music therapy, with a concentration in songwriting. Several institutions have done studies on the efficacy of music therapy and how well it works in aiding those with different psychiatric disorders such as depression and anxiety. The results have all been similar in the fact that there is a proven relationship between participating in music therapy and developing a better mental wellbeing.For example, in 2018, Sharanabasappa Algoodkar and Sunitha G, professors at the Sapthagiri Institute of Medical Science and Research Centre, conducted a study to see if the use of music therapy with Indian classical music would reduce symptoms in patients with depression. It resulted in a significant decrease in symptoms for the patients involved (41).

Songwriting in particular has been proven to have the same effects with a few added benefits. Felicity Baker,Tony Wigram,David Stott and Katrina McFerran conducted a survey in 2009 to explore what benefits the patients receiving clinical songwriting therapy were receiving.

> The survey identified that the most frequently endorsed goal areas align with the literature base and included a) experiencing mastery, develop self-confidence, enhance self esteem; b) choice and decision making; c) develop a sense of self; d) externalising thoughts, fantasies, and emotions; e) telling the client's story; and f) gaining insight or clarifying thoughts and feelings(105)

Songwriting has also proven to promote a better mental wellbeing, not just a clinical setting, but a classroom setting. Patricia E. Riley of the University of Vermont, collected data from two sections of an introductory songwriting course to examine the benefits students were receiving from the class activities. In class activities included things such as examining existing song lyrics and having the students write their own original songs. She collected her data through reading the student's final paper and their songs. She found that

> Songwriting appears to facilitate student development through enabling emotional stability, offering therapeutic benefits, and providing a vehicle for self-expression, self-discovery, and overcoming challenges (Riley 1).

Based on these studies alone, it's been proven that music therapy, particularly songwriting, is an extremely beneficial and positive coping mechanism.

Translating Ideas Through Different Art Forms

Now that we know the background of both of my preferred coping mechanisms, how does one combine the two? It would be an easier task if the horror genre was not so restricted to just film. There are romantic movies and love songs so why can there not be horror movies and

songs that carry those same themes? To bridge this gap, we need to explore the similarities between music and narrative and metaphors in horror that can be translated into lyrical content.

The two biggest similarities that music and narrative have are structure and the ability to convey a message or story. Music has structuralist writings, in that individual texts consist of identifiable kinds of object arranged in partially predictable patterns (Maus 3)."

Although Maus is making these comparisons between music and literary narrative, the same principle applies for narrative in film. In music there is your subject matter and patterns of rhymes and an endless amount of ways to be structured as does narrative.

> Sonata form includes an "Introduction" - "First group" - "Transition" - "Second group" - "Closing group" and so on; some members of the succession are optional, some are not.5 So tonal music, as depicted by conventional analysis, resembles narrative, as depicted by Formalist and Shms that will tell the musical story around the subject matter. In film there is your main concept and a pattern of events that will tell the story surrounding this concept. After breaking it down to that level it is a matter of translating these patterns across mediums.

When it comes to writing songs, the lyrics are your poetry. In the words of author Robbie O'Connell

> ...:Poetic devices such as alliteration, assonance, simile, metaphor, allegory, personification, hyperbole, irony, antithesis, and characterization all come into play and a knowledge of these may help you to express your ideas with more clarity (6).

Horror so happens to be a genre that has metaphors that are directly associated with its' main concepts. Two of these metaphors are the presentation that "evil is dark" and that "evil is down" (Winter 151).

These metaphors take place in just about every horror movie there is. "Evil is dark" takes form in the way that the majority of horror films are shot. There is usually little to no light especially in the scenes that are most likely to frighten the audience. References to "the darkness" are usually made as well and all the things that have some sort of malevolency factor to them are referred to as dark or being a dark entity.

"Evil is down" has been a prevalent horrific metaphor since biblical times. The scariest place in the afterlife, hell, is located below us. When a character in a horror film goes into the basement of a house, there is an already looming sense of doom just by them going down the stairs. These visual metaphors are the basis in creating fear in a horror film.

Again, it becomes a matter of being able to translate these artistic ideas across the medium of film to music. Musically, conveying an idea of darkness would include a lot of minor keys. These kinds of keys are used more so in serious or sad songs to put the listener on edge. That same edge can be used to invoke fear. Also, instead of it being an unspoken, visual representation of a metaphor like it is in film, I would need to verbalize said metaphors. Themes of darkness and evil lurking below would need to be expressed poetically to be translated into a musical context. Although creating horror based music is a more unheard of occurence, many dark and horrific poems exist. One person that I could look to for inspiration in this category would be the late Edgar Allan Poe who was known for writing poems in the horror genre (Quinn, Arthur Hobson. *Edgar Allan Poe: a critical biography*. JHU Press, 1997..). It all comes down to

a means of translation between mediums to create art that incorporates both horror and music collectively.

Conclusion **of Literature Review**

Both horror films and music have held such a dear place in my heart. These art forms have comforted me as well as many others in ways that nothing else has been able to do. Although indulging in both of these things separately has helped me cope with my anxiety up to this point in my life, after having the idea to merge my two favorite things, I could not stand back and not try to create something that encompasses the best of both worlds. It is the breaking down of barriers like this that will allow the arts to grow and flourish over time. If the barriers are not broken, the world will end up with art that is too similar in one way or another. For the sake of my own coping and the sake of being creative, I shall build the structurally sound bridge between horror films and music.

Autoethnography

My first experiences with horror were unlike most. Many people have their own convoluted version of the same story of watching a scary movie when their parents advised against it. It shook them to their core for a while and I guarantee whoever is telling the story can remember the exact movie and every gruesome detail that traumatized their `pure' brain. They either grow to appreciate the genre or cling onto that initial trauma so hard that they are never able to stand the sight of anything scarier than Spirit Halloween decorations. Although these typical stories do invoke a true sense of terror to the individual, I had more of an immersive experience.

When I was on the cusp of five years of age, my parents decided to move into a house in the suburbs. To a couple so accustomed to living in the projects, this house was a dream. They had finally overcome their struggle in poverty and wanted their child to grow up in a quiet neighborhood with a yard and a fence. Little did they know, there was something off that would be sure to cause some friction in the household. Just days after moving in, it became apparent that my family and I were not the only entities that were present in the house.

Day 3 after the move in, my mother is putting away boxes of dishes in the kitchen. Over the course of my life, my mother has told me this story dozens of times. Each time she recalls her initial experience, there are no variances in the details she gives. She lifts her head up as one does after getting up from a crouching position and she sees a man. It was not the outline of a man like they usually portray it in those ghost encounter television shows. No, this was a full spitting image of an African-American man, about six feet tall, wearing plaid pajamas who was walking from the living room, past the kitchen and down into the hallway. It was as if this man was taking a gander through the huge Bay Window like it was his ritual to do so after waking up in the mornings. My mother was not frightened, moreso she was concerned. The next day she had gone to our neighbors to further introduce herself. She decided maybe it was a good idea to ask my neighbors if they knew anything about the man she had seen. Upon describing what the man looked like, my neighbor interjected and had told my mother that that was the spitting image of the man who used to live in the house before us. He lived there with his wife and after he passed away, she decided to sell the house. The paranormal encounters did not stop there but grew in prevalence as I grew in age.

It has been spoken about frequently on my mother's side how the women in our family are very susceptible to spirits and entities. My grandma had told many stories of how she used to see her mother at the foot of her bed every night for years after her passing. My mother would continue to tell me that every night some sort of energy would walk out of the closet in her room and hover over her as she slept. She described the terror she faced on a daily basis in great detail. Around midnight, like clockwork, she would hear the floor creaking coming from the closet door as if someone were trying to come forward without making loud footsteps. Then she would feel nothing but coldness less than 6 inches away from where she rested. This would go on for almost the entirety of eleven years we lived there. With all the talk of spirits and how likely I was to become sensitive to them, it felt like there was a countdown until I was going to have to learn how to deal with them too.

When I was 11 I saw my first horror movie in theatres. My family never watched them because they said it reminded them too much of the real thing no matter how exaggerated the movies tended to be. The movie to take my horror-ginity was *Insidious*. The film was about a couple who moved into a haunted house where their comatose son is being "possessed" by a malevolent entity. This film encapsulated all the fears I had in the back of my mind. "What if something like this happens to me?" I thought during the film. The rollercoaster ride of jump scares and eerie audio had me more on edge than I had been before from a film. In retrospect, I wish seeing that movie could have been my first encounter with something being "scary." B the end of the film I was nearly exhausted, but then something changed. It ended. The lights came back on, everyone arose from their seats and we just went home. We were safe. How scary could watching movies really be if you think of the end? At the end, you are unharmed, sitting

comfortably and are free to go about your life. There was a sort of comfort in the feeling of knowing that all these disturbing images that were just plastered in front of you were just someone's ideas, thoughts. When I thought about it like that, I knew if I could just keep watching, keep getting accustomed, I wouldn't let any idea or thought hurt me, at least in that way. At this point I was using the psychological concept of habituation without even truly knowing what it was.

A few years later however, those ideas that were captured in movies became a first hand encounter for me. The entities in my home felt it necessary to start tormenting me as if they knew, “she’s older now, she can recognize and handle what we want to dish out.” I would hear whispers. Once, I left my room one moment and then came back to find a bowl I left on my nightstand in half. Half of it lay resting on the stand as I left it, the other half nowhere to be found until days later. I would open my room door to find it in the center of my floor resting as if someone delicately placed it there. On Easter, a chocolate cross that displayed a representation of Jesus had melted and was hot to the touch. It seemed impossible because it was in a freezing cold room surrounded by other chocolates that remain cool and solid. Was it more than just spirits? Were there demonic entities afoot as well? Little things like this would occur on a daily basis. One day it even resulted in both me and a friend of mine being overcome by something we have no explanation for. I had been told I began braiding our third friend’s hair while humming some sort of demented lullaby when suddenly I started ripping her hair out and I collapsed. I vaguely remember the incident, but more so I remember having no control of my limbs. I could not stand to live in these circumstances. I knew there was no way I was leaving this house, so I needed to learn to deal with the powers at be. I flashed back to that previous thought I had after

watching Insidious. If I just became so used to the stimuli of being scared, dealing with spirits, or even demons, I would not be so negatively affected by the horrors occuring where I lived. It is the same habituation principle as aforementioned by Goldstein, E. B. (Sensation and Perception, 9e.. [Chegg].) .

I started binge watching any horror movies I could. Slowly, I was so infatuated and intrigued by them, the scariness of it wore off. I got so used to the same tropes in supernatural and demonic movies it was like my actual experiences were just a cheap attempt at recreating a movie like *The Conjuring*. I gained my power and sanity back from the paranormal encounters I dealt with. My primary emotion of fear from digesting the contents from a horror movie was then followed by a meta emotion of entertainment and safety rather than being triggered and panicked by my real life experiences (Bartsch 46). When I was 16, I moved out of that house. My dad still lives there and I occasionally have to house sit. To this day my friends do not like being in that house. You can feel the malevolency as soon as you step through the threshold. I however, have it so deeply ingrained in me to be able to cope with it, it does not bother me as much as it did. Engaging in copious amounts of horror cinema gave me strength to overcome an authentically haunted house. I was able to apply the concept of habituation and desensitize myself from a normally traumatic and anxiety inducing living situation.

Music however, was a more socially acceptable coping strategy I developed at an earlier age. I was always fond of it, which the majority of people are. My sister and I would watch MTV when I was very little when MTV still had the music they implied in their name. I was a small child and looking up to my sister who 15 years my senior. Like most children do, they want to be just like their older sibling despite how annoying it may be to the older sibling in question. I was

heavily interested in whatever she did. One day when she was getting ready to go somewhere, she started singing. It was so very casual to her. At that point, and still to this day, she doesn't know how much it changed me. I thought her voice was beyond angelic. I would compliment her but singing wasn't a true passion of hers. It was just something to pass the time it seemed. It got me thinking, "what if I could do that?" I started singing in private, slowly gaining skill over time by imitating the singers on the radio. I soon shared my ability and started to perform live. Camp talent shows, school talent shows, school concerts, I did it all. Any excuse to do what I loved, I took it. It was basically the only thing I did that I was truly confident in. Until around age 13, it was all about the performing aspect for me. I was not so concerned with genre. As long as the music made me feel something and the vocals blew me away, I was all about it.

When I entered middle school I became heavily involved in the emo/alternative music scene. These songs detailed experiences with mental illness such as depression and anxiety and I had both. The music from this scene helped me realize that there are other people dealing with the same issues I am and it became a major support system for me. I would frequent concerts 3 times a month if I could during my high school years to gather with those also invested in what this kind of music meant to them. I realized that lyrics are truly one of the most poetic ways that someone can express themselves and their emotions. I would keep a notebook that no one knew of and write my emotional and mental struggles into poetry that were translated into lyrics for future songs I could make with instrumentalists of like minds if I were to find any. It was truly therapeutic for me and is to this day. I am a real life testament to the therapeutic benefits of listening to music and songwriting that have been proven by the research of Sharanabasappa Algoodkar and Sunitha G and Felicity Baker,Tony Wigram,David Stott and Katrina McFerran.

When I came to terms with the fact that both horror and music have become my major coping mechanisms to deal with my mental illness, I knew that I should most definitely fuse the two to create art that is truest to my person and would truly represent me. It is with this thought process that I came up with the concept for a debut EP under my stage name of *Arachne.*

I knew I wanted to keep the narrative element present in my music. In my opinion, things are more likely to come across as scary if there is a story to go along with it. Is someone more afraid of the thought of a ghost or hearing someone's first encounter with a ghost? My point stands. I felt it would be a really interesting idea if i could tell a horror story across three songs with interludes in between them to keep the story elements moving along smoothly. Each of the three songs could represent a common theme typically seen in horror media whilst keeping a singular story running through the course of them. The theme chosen would also be interpreted in a certain way in which I could express the clear horror theme as a metaphor for issues I struggle with due to my anxiety and depression.

The introduction is to consist of a narrator that resembles the cryptkeeper from the popular horror show *Tales from the Crypt*. He starts the audience off by explaining this is a story that does not end the way we expect. It begins by setting the scene of a woman being admitted to a sanitorium. She was found on the side of the road covered in dirt and blood. A mile up the road lay several dead bodies with markings carved into skin over their hearts. Without questioning the woman, police admit her and say she is a danger to herself and those around her. This is to represent the common experience many people have with those in authority and them encountering something to be mental illness. They are quick to jump to conclusions and believe the worst without understanding the individuals personal experiences.

It then transitions into the first song I have titled “Bedlam”, another name for a sanitorium. The song has an eerie, echo like feel to it. It is as if you are hearing it in a cell of an asylum yourself. It is this woman, personified by me, coming out of being sedated and explaining the agony of said sedation. She explains the feelings in her body as well as the nullification of her mind. Towards the middle of the song it transitions into her planning an escape so she can feel like herself again and ends with her being able to escape the asylum. I wanted to highlight the negative aspects of psychiatric medications. Although it can help, in many circumstances the side effects that affect the person that takes them can strip them of who they are and what they know. Many people I know, including myself, have been on medications that have absolutely ruined our bodies as well as any creative thinking. The horrific exaggeration I plan to use in this song will be a true testament onto how it feels to endure such harsh side effects and what lengths people will go to to feel like themselves again after experiencing them.

The first interlude has faint circus music in the background while hearing police bater overlap it. They got a lead that the escaped patient was spotted at the circus that was in the town for that night only. The creepy circus music gets louder and louder as if the audience is traveling towards it and into the mind of the woman hiding out in this circus.

The second song takes place in the circus. It is less about our escaped mental patient and more of what she observes at this circus. She sees all the acts backstage and witnesses their ugly sides. She notices the secrets hidden, serious issues, extreme lengths that the circus performers go through to put on a show for an audience that is so oblivious. This song is to shed light on the struggles we all go through behind closed doors. These struggles take up so much of our headspace and so much of our life and yet we all leave it “backstage” in order to perform the act

of being put together in front of the audience which is other people. I always feel as if I need to perform an “act” in front of people of everyday life because no one wants to see what is behind the scenes, just the main event. In reality we all share some sort of this thinking, it just depends on one's personal extremes of it.

The second interlude is less of a song structure and more so the police busting into the circus looking for our escapee. She is able to escape into the wooded area behind the circus. All you can hear is her running through foliage while a demonic voice in the background is repeating “must, find, way, back” and “my child”. The audience is left to think about this statement. Is it a testament to finding a way back to a certain location? Safety? Peace of mind? To whom is she the child of? It is up for interpretation.

The last song on the EP is to be the most impactful and dramatic. There is to be dark operatic music involved to really drive that emotion. Imagine, our escapee crawls into a human sized hole in the woods that goes straight down. The song takes place at the end destination, hell. The escaped woman sings about being back home. The psychiatric drugs are of her system and she is now empowered. She is power. Her mindset has been restored and proven. Although this woman is not a demon or the devil herself. It is safe to assume she has a tie to hell and some level of demonic powers. Her exact ties are to remain unknown and up to interpretation. After gaining her strength back by visiting the gates of hell she is ready to re-enter the human realm and exact revenge on the humans who sedated her and dsitracted her from her mission which is also unknown to the audience. It ends with police sirens rolling in, silence, and a car crash. It is to be assumed she caused them all to crash, killing all those involved. This song although seeming very horrifically literal, is all incredibly metaphorical. It is a metaphor for me finding a

sort of faith in Laveyan Satanism. Unlike many would think, this form of Satanism is non-theistic. This religion uses Satan as a figurehead for other beliefs that have a genuinely good message behind them. Without bringing theistic religion into the mix to better explain it, I will simply say that this kind of Satanism says that you are in control of your life. You are the god of your own existence and your choices will determine how your life will go. It preaches a complete release of judgement of mortal sin we all commit instead of condemning ourselves for it. It preaches love and acceptance and forbids vile, unjust acts. Although the term Satanism scares people before they could truly learn about the religion, it is truly something people should research and understand. I found that all my life I identified with these ideals and did not even know until recently that they fell under this non-theistic religion. This song is a testament into how I have given myself mental power back by incorporating the ideals of Satanism into my life. Although the song may seem extreme, Lavey also played into the public's preconceived notions of Satanism. I feel this is my way of playing into that as well. Many people will be quick to judge before doing their proper research and those that do would not understand the ideals in the first place.

Creating this EP is very personal to me. By creating this, I am able to express my internal struggles, thoughts, and beliefs. By putting the mask of the horror genre over these very personal ideas in my music I am able to somewhat hide how truly vulnerable I am. That helps with anxiety within itself. By creating this I am using exposure therapy in terms of exposing myself to the horrors of daily life through the therapeutic device of songwriting. All together, making this is like giving myself a major self therapy session. I am able to use these coping mechanisms to

become more okay with the serious topics that are in between the lines of these songs. I am truly able to bridge the gap between horror and music in this piece of work.

Conclusion

By participating in the arts, one can free themselves from the demons that plague them. Having an outlet to delve deep into yourself and the world around you is something that anyone and everyone can benefit from. There are countless possibilities through countless medium that intertwine more than many may think. Not many people would normally put the fear and suspense of horror movies and the emotional depth of music together but as we can now see, the contrast of the two mediums create a hybrid that can help people in an entirely new way. This model of fusing two very different mediums can be used by others as well. For instance, one can combine the culinary arts and visual arts. Someone who loves cooking can also incorporate their love of visual art into their food. They can experiment with using different colors in their dishes so the outcome looks like a Jackson Pollock painting or plating their food in such a way where it looks like a gravity defying sculpture that looks like it can be in the Museum of Modern Art. have combined mediums of art for a long time, it is a matter of time to commingle mediums and genres that have never been seen together before.

It is important as artists and consumers of art for us to push the boundaries. Art is about expression, yes, but it is also about discovery. Discovering things within yourself, discovering the minds of those around you, discovering bits of the world you did not know existed, discovering feelings you did not know you had. If we do not push the boundaries of how we create art then we will soon be out of things to discover. We as people have so much more to give and we can give that knowledge and that culture to the world by creating something that is

entirely new. We can capture the essence of the human experience and it's evolution through our art and it is time to showcase that we are evolving.

With the case of merging the horror genre and music together, there is a vast amount of research that can still be done. For example, we could learn how the body reacts to both music and horror. There could be a study in which one is asked to listen to music unrelated to horror and there heart rate is taken. Then the test subject would do the same thing whilst watching a horror movie. Lastly, they could have their heart rate taken while listening to horror based music. B cross checking the individuals heart rates over the three trials we can see if the average heart rate between the music alone and horror alone would mimic the heart rate of the horror based music. We could also conduct a similar study but with checking what parts of the brain respond to all three scenarios. That could segway into an entire psychological analysis of horror, music and their hybrid on the brain. Due to the fact that only a select amount of people use horror and music collectively, outside of creating horror movie scores, there is a vast amount of research and also art that can be done on the subject.

By creating this EP I have successfully been able to connect my two favorite art forms and have been able to heal psychologically. I never truly knew how to cope with the paranormal encounters I faced as a youth. It was not something one could just openly speak about. The fears and insecurities my anxiety plagued upon me fell under the same umbrella. No singular genre could help me process the pain and confusion I was going through. Taking the step to put two very different ideas together to create an outlet specifically for my circumstance was a great decision. I hope other people can see how they can personalize their creative outlet to fit their own life experience.

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