Modern Lyrical Interpretations of Ancient Greek Myths

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Modern Lyrical Interpretations of Ancient Greek Myths

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Terms:

Chords: a group of (typically three or more) notes sounded together, as a basis of

harmony.

Verse: writing arranged with a metrical rhythm, typically having a rhyme.

Pre-chorus: is the short section that sits between a verse and a chorus, and its main

purpose is to build energy.

Chorus: a part of a song that is repeated after each verse.

Bridge: a bridge is a contrasting section that prepares for the return of the original

material section.

Inversion: rearrangement of the top-to-bottom elements in an interval, a chord, or a

melody.

Scratch Track: an audio recording that provides information on timing and content with

the intention of being used as a reference for the final audio.

Mixing: the process of combining multitrack recordings into a final mono, stereo or

surround sound product.

Mastering: the process of preparing and transferring recorded audio from a source

containing the final mix to a data storage device, the source from which all copies

will be produced.

Abstract:

The purpose of this Creative Thesis Project is to see if ancient Greek myths and their many themes and retellings can be modernized and put into a lyrical and musical format and still retain their true meanings as well as resonate with a new, younger audience. Success will be determined by how effectively the lyrics of these songs convey the overarching elements and themes of each myth as well as how cohesive the project is as whole. The project will see how music and modernization affect the overall messages and interpretations of the myths.

Link to Recordings:

https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1HRHT_2sVcJYz9g8hIQj78QxpyIxSbW1H?usp=sharing

I: Lyrics

(INSTRUMENTAL)

In the winter she comes, and they keep each other warm,

but with the first sign of spring, she is gone.

So he hopes and he prays and he waits for the day

when it snows and she's back in his arms.

CHORUS

And he says, "Oh, Persephone where could you be?

Why do you need to hide from me?

Oh, Persephone I'll let you be free

if from time to time you'll come back to me."

Oh, Persephone he is down on his knees

begging you, please, for more time.

But like clockwork, you go and leave him alone

and come back only when he's doing just fine

CHORUS

And he says, "Oh, Persephone where could you be?

Why do you need to hide from me?

Oh, Persephone I'll let you be free

if from time to time you'll come back to me."

INSTRUMENTAL

BRIDGE

He's burning in the flames

of the place where he reigns.

There's no lonelier place to be king.

He's burning in the flames

of the place where he reigns.

There's no lonelier place to be king.

CHORUS

And he says, "Oh, Persephone where could you be?

Why do you need to hide from me?

Oh, Persephone I'll let you be free

if from time to time you'll come back to me.

Come back, come back to me."

He was big and strong and tall,

as powerful as a god.

He saw her and knew what he wanted and

what he wanted he got.

She was young and fresh and pure.

She wanted to do what she loved.

She knew she'd have to pay a price,

but she didn't know how high the cost.

PRE-CHORUS

And now the blames laid at her feet

if only she wasn't such a beauty.

They say she's hideous in her defeat,

her character covered in bruises.

CHORUS

They hardened her heart

mocked her scars

made her a monster, it's said.

But she just smiles.

She knows the secret.

It's not a curse, it's a gift instead.

He moved on to bigger things,

no obstacles in his path.

And if he was ever asked

He'd say, "oh that's all in the past."

Meanwhile she found a new start,

hoped it was better than the last.

With jaded eyes and stone heart

she watched him repeat the past.

PRE-CHORUS

And now the blames laid at her feet

if only she wasn't such a beauty.

They say she's hideous in her defeat,

Her character covered in bruises.

CHORUS

They hardened her heart

mocked her scars

made her a monster, it's said.

But she just smiles.

She knows the secret.

It's not a curse, it's a gift instead.

She realized there were countless others

and like her they all needed help.

To her surprise she found the power

in the hand that she'd been dealt.

She was older and wiser and stronger

and no longer afraid.

She realized the power of stories

in voices that were raised.

PRE-CHORUS

Now they've stopped carrying the shame.

In their pain they found beauty.

They watch him curl up in defeat

his character covered in bruises.

CHORUS

They hardened their hearts

mocked their scars

Made them into monsters, it's said.

But they just smile.

They know the secret.

They can turn their curse into a gift instead.

PSYCHE:

Honey,

you say you love me.

And I know I should take you at your word.

But baby, oh lately,

your actions aren't matching what I heard.

PRE-CHORUS

So if

you're serious

could you do a few things for me first?

Darlin,

if you love me

could you pretty pretty pretty please

Sort out these grains of sand

from which of the many lands they came?

EROS:

Oh dear, for you I'd do it gladly.

PSYCHE:

Would you risk life and limb

to trim some flowers for me?

EROS:

Honey, if you want 'em that badly.

PSYCHE:

And would you go to hell

bring me water from the well of Hades?

EROS:

It's already done, baby.

PSYCHE:

And last but not least

could you guarantee eternal beauty?

EROS: (spoken)

Darlin' you're always pretty to me!

EROS:

I'd do all that and more

if it'd make you feel secure

when I say you're the only gal I have eyes for.

BOTH:

And when love is true

you do what you gotta do

to keep it

No matter what the feat is.

PSYCHE:

Darlin I believe

you're the man of my dreams.

EROS:

And my mama may not like you much

but you're my one true love

BOTH:

And you'll take care of me

for the rest of eternity

II: Songwriting

<div align="center">Persephone</div>

Persephone's story has been retold hundreds of times in an infinite amount of ways. One such retelling is what sparked my inspiration for my own lyrical version of her story. The book series *The Goddess Test* authored by Aimee Carter is a modern retelling of the Taking of Persephone, but one of the few I have seen that depicts Hades in a more sympathetic light. The Taking of Persephone is first detailed in Ovid's *Metamorphoses* when he describes clearly that she was an unwilling participant. This is the part that is retold so many times and depicted in various mediums. However, the part just before Persephone's taking informs readers that Cupid (Eros) had shot Hades with an arrow beforehand. Hades believed himself in love with Persephone instantly and "saw her, prized her, took her: so swift as this, is love."[1] This makes me a bit more sympathetic towards Hades. He did not choose to fall in love and he was not the one in control of his emotions at that point. In addition, *The Goddess Test* depicted Hades as a lonely king of an unforgiving realm. I read this series when I was in 7th grade and it was my first experience with Persephone's story. Therefore, it had a lasting impact on my opinion of the various retellings and their ideas of Hades's character.

In my research, I also came across an interpretation of the myth that argued that Persephone knew what she was doing by eating the pomegranate seeds and that Hades

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[1] Ovid. "Metatmorphoses." Bk. 5. Trans. A. S. Kline. Poetry in Translation. A. S. Kline, 2002. https://ovid.lib.virginia.edu/trans/Metamorph5.htm.

was "the only person who'd ever treated [her] like an adult" and "she was beginning to fall in love with him."[2]

With these interpretations in mind, I began to write *Persephone*. I actually completed the lyrics and music for this song in the summer of 2018. I do not have a particular writing process and I was not thinking of or reading anything about Persephone at the time. But I had had a melody stuck in my head for a few days when I sat down with my guitar to write something using that melody. As soon as I started to play, the words "Oh Persephone, where could you be?" floated off my lips and all the interpretations I had read and remembered came back to me. I knew that the story of Persephone was how the Ancient Greeks had explained the seasons, and that's where the lines "In the winter she comes" and "at the first sign of spring she is gone" came from.

Aimee Carter's Hades character influenced the bridge of the song heavily. Since people often equate the Underworld (Hades's realm) with Hell, though they are two very different things, I wanted to play on that a bit so even people with little to no understanding of the myth would understand whom I was referencing. These influences are where the lines of the bridge "he's burning in the flames/of the place where he reigns/there's no lonelier place to be king" come from.

I wrote this song in third person but from the perspective of someone sympathetic towards Hades's feelings. I imagined Hades missed Persephone whenever she was away but that her feelings changed with the seasons as well, which Ovid references briefly in

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[2]"Greek Mythology: Hades and Persephone."Brave New World. 2015. https://sites.psu.edu/tetirclblog/2015/02/05/greek-mythology-hades-and-persephone/comment-page-1/.

Metamorphoses when he writes, "Now the goddess's looks are glad that even Dis [Hades] could see were sad, a moment ago."[3] This prompted the lyric "like clockwork you go/and leave him alone" as well as "he is down on his knees/begging you please/for more time." I was once again writing from a place of empathy for Hades.

I tried to capture Hades's voice in the chorus. I imagined him being hurt every time Persephone left, wondering why he wasn't enough to keep her there but trying to be understanding and give her the space she needed. Telling her "I'll let you be free/if from time to time/you come back to me." This is personally my favorite line in the whole song.

When writing the accompaniment to *Persephone*, I started with just vocals and guitar. I had been doing a lot of work with inversions in my Songwriting for Guitar class in the Spring 2018 semester, so I tried to work a few into the instrumentation. I also wanted to try a melodic instrumental introduction on guitar so I plucked around until I figured out how to transpose the melody of the chorus onto the guitar. During the production process my friend and producer, Eryn Bird, suggested adding piano and drums to some parts and implemented the idea. Joshua Brown then added slide guitar during the second instrumental break, which I hadn't thought to do but it sounded amazing and the collaboration made the instrumentation sound fuller and more professional.

I chose a folk/singer-songwriter sound for these songs because I wanted to keep the recording process simple and many of my musical influences are folk musicians. Folk and singer-songwriter are my chosen genres and I think they lend themselves more

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[3] Ovid. "Metatmorphoses." Bk. 5. Trans. A. S. Kline. Poetry in Translation. A. S. Kline, 2002. https://ovid.lib.virginia.edu/trans/Metamorph7.htm.

towards storytelling which is ideal for this project. I did not make the conscious decision

to put this song in the 6/8 time signature but I do find that it gives the song the feeling of

a waltz, which is a traditionally romantic dance and fits with the romanticizing lyrics

about Hades.

Medusa is another figure from Greek mythology that is typically depicted as the villain, when in actuality, she is the victim. The first time her story is told is also found in Ovid's *Metamorphoses*. Medusa has long been known as the monster with snakes for hair whose gaze turned people to stone, but she was not always a monster. She was "once most beautiful, and the jealous aspiration of many suitors."[4] But one day she was raped by Poseidon in Athena's temple. The translation I read by A.S. Kline used the word "violated" to make it very clear that this was not Medusa's choice. Athena then punished Medusa with a head of snakes and the curse that anyone who looked into Medusa's eyes would turn to stone.

This was seen as a curse for hundreds of years, but modern writing has turned the narrative around. There are many articles like the one one published by *The Atlantic* that argue that Athena was trying to protect Medusa by giving her snakes for hair and a stone-cold gaze. Athena was expected to punish Medusa for defiling her temple, however involuntary it was. So she took away Medusa's most beautiful feature, her hair, and replaced it with snakes, which men would interpret as a punishment. Women, on the other hand, may see that as something that would deter men from approaching her and would make men afraid of her, when normally it is women who are afraid of men.[5] Women may see it as a gift, instead of a curse.

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[4] Ovid. "Metatmorphoses." Bk. 5, 6. Trans. A. S. Kline. Poetry in Translation. A. S. Kline, 2002. https://ovid.lib.virginia.edu/trans/Metamorph5.htm.

[5] Leonard, Miriam and Zajko, Vanda. *Laughing with Medusa: Classical Myth and Feminist Thought.* Oxford: OUP Oxford, 2006. Ebook.

This line of thought led me to realize the parallels between Medusa's story and the stories of the thousands of women taking part in the #MeToo movement. Medusa was violated in a place where some versions of the myth say she was a priestess.[6]

Essentially, Medusa was violated in her place of work by a man who was much more powerful than her simply because he thought she was beautiful. And she is the one who has to face the consequences of that time. These interpretations in addition to the very prevalent #MeToo movement gave me the perfect modern spin on Medusa's story. I wrote the line "as powerful as a god" to clearly denote both the power imbalance in many assault victims' stories while alluding to Medusa's story specifically. The pre-chorus is very important to the story in the song. "Now the blame's laid at her feet/if only she wasn't such a beauty" is addressing the victim-blaming that happened to Medusa in the story and happens to harassment victims today. During the chorus I wrote the line "they...made her a monster/it's said" because while they physically made Medusa a monster within the myth, we make women into monsters or "angry women" when we victim-blame them and make them social pariahs by discounting their stories and then we as a society wonder why they are lashing out. One of the themes I noticed in Medusa's story and many of the other myths is the monsters are not born, they are made.

I wanted to make sure I not only wrote Medusa as a victim but also as a survivor and a hero and this is where I took more creative liberty and further incorporated the #MeToo movement. In the second verse of the song, Medusa sees what happened to her happen to another woman, this is written in the last line of the second verse "with jaded eyes and a stone heart/she watched him repeat the past." The pre-chorus after the second

[6] Cixous, H. (n.d.). Medusa's Orgasm. Retrieved September 1, 2020, https://www.vanderbilt.edu/AnS/english/English295/albright/monster.htm

verse has the same lyrics but this time it's about his second victim's experience with victim-blaming. After the second chorus the narrative takes an uplifting turn when Medusa realizes that by sharing her story she can stop Poseidon from hurting and raping other women. Like with the #MeToo movement, Medusa finds strength in numbers after others share similar stories and they expose Poseidon in the song. The third pre-chorus shows this switch in narrative with the lyrics "they watch him curl up in defeat/his character covered in bruises." The third chorus also uses "they" instead of "she" which illustrates that Medusa is no longer alone in her pain and no longer seen as a monster.

        I wanted to give Medusa a happy ending. After all she went through, she deserves it.

Eros and Psyche's story was the most difficult to write, in part because it is the longest and most complicated of the three myths. The lovers' story was first seen in *Metamorphoses* penned by Lucius Apuleius Madaurensis. In the book, Psyche is the most beautiful of three daughters of the King. She was so beautiful in fact, that some people begin to worship her instead of Aphrodite. Aphrodite takes great offense to this and through an oracle, tells Psyche's family that she is destined to marry a terrible beast and to leave her on the top of a mountain to meet her new husband. She sends Eros (better known as Cupid) to go make Psyche fall in love with the worst beast, but Eros catches a glimpse of Psyche and falls in love with her himself. So he takes her as his wife and they live in a gorgeous castle, but Eros has only two rules: 1. Psyche cannot see her family and 2. She can never physically see Eros.

One day she breaks the second rule by having her sisters over to her new home. Her sisters are ridiculously jealous of the wealth Psyche is living in, so they seek to ruin it. They realize she has never actually seen her husband and play on Psyche's insecurities asking her things like "what if he has horrible fangs or tentacles?" These things bother Psyche so much that one night she waits until Eros is asleep and lights a candle to see what he looks like. She doesn't find a monster in bed with her, but a god. Eros wakes up to see her looking at him and furiously flees into the night.

Psyche is devastated without her love and also finds out during her time without Eros that she is pregnant with his child. She seeks out Aphrodite (Eros's mother) for help to bring him back to her. Aphrodite was still threatened by Psyche, though, and was

furious to find out her son had fallen for her charms too. So she told Psyche if she could

accomplish four specific tasks she would help her.

The first task was to sort a great pile of barley, lentils, poppy seeds, and beans

before Aphrodite returned. When it looked like she was not going to be able to

accomplish the task, a group of ants helped her sort them. For the second task she had to

gather a hank of wool from the shining gold sheep. A reed tells her how she can do this

without being killed by the vicious animals. Next, Aphrodite gives her a crystal vase and

tells Psyche to fill it with water that feeds the spring of the river Styx. An eagle flies the

vessel to the spring and fills it for Psyche. And finally, Aphrodite asked Psyche to bring

her a box of Persephone's beauty cream. This is the task where Psyche makes the mistake

of opening the box and falls into a deep, eternal slumber. Eros comes upon her and saves

her. He then convinces the gods to let Psyche drink the ambrosia from Olympus so she

can become immortal and live happily ever after with him.

There are two things I noticed would make for a good song from this story. One

of the main themes of the story is that without trust, there cannot be love. However, I

thought writing about the tasks would be more interesting. I originally planned to write a

song sort of like Simon and Garfunkel's *Scarborough Fair* which also involved lyrics

about asking a lost love to complete seemingly impossible tasks. I could not figure out a

good way to modernize the tasks and this presented a problem.

I discussed it with some of my friends until my roommate, Hannah Gerst,

suggested I frame it in a way of "what would you do for my love?" The song

immediately began forming in my head after she said that. I switched the gender roles but

otherwise the general idea is the same. I tried to keep the same sentiment behind the tasks but modernize or generalize them a bit.

Instead of sorting seeds, I chose to make the first task sorting grains of sands from various beaches. For the second task I thought instead of collecting wool, collecting flowers would be more applicable. I did work in the idea of danger with the line "would you risk life and limb?" Once again, for the third task I equated the Underworld with Hell, simply because that is what the general population thinks of when they think of the Underworld. I also changed the spring to a well so the line became "would you go to Hell/bring me water from the well/of Hades?" Finally, since Aphrodite asked for Persephone's beauty cream I went with the idea of wanting eternal beauty, I did not delve into the part where it's not actual beauty cream and it puts her to sleep.

For the male part I wanted to make it clear that he was reassuring the female part would feel secure in their love because testing your partner like that normally comes from a place of insecurity and that was a theme within both the original story and the essays interpreting the myth that I read during my research.[7]

I wrote this as a duet because I thought it would be upbeat and the rest of the songs are a bit slow and sad. As I was writing it I was using *Home* by Edward Sharpe and the Magnetic Zeros and *Anyone Else but You* by The Moldy Peaches as reference songs for the style I was trying to achieve. *Home* has the back-and-forth duet style I wrote in, and *Anyone Else but You* has the bouncy, rhythmic strumming pattern that I used when writing and recording the guitar part. My friend, John Coates, has a smooth and low

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[7] Wernmei Yong Ade. "Love, Alterity, and Gender Relations: Re-thinking the Myth of Eros and Psyche." *At the Interface/Probing the Boundaries* Vol. 108 (Oct. 16, 2018): 61-74.

country baritone and recorded the male duet parts. The only other instrumentation are some light drums and a mandolin . I tried to keep the instrumentation simple to speed up the recording process.

I did not write a song for Orpheus and Eurydice, but I did quite a bit of research while trying to write the song and felt it prudent to include the work I had done.

The story of Orpheus and Eurydice was originally found in Ovid's *Metamorphoses*. Orpheus is an incredible musician trained by Apollo himself. He fell in love with Eurydice and they got married, shortly after Eurydice was bitten by a snake and died. Orpheus was overcome with grief. He went down to the Underworld to beg Hades for his wife back. He plays Hades a song that moves him so much that he agrees that Orpheus can take his wife back with him, but as always in Greek mythology, there was a catch. She had to walk behind Orpheus the whole time and Orpheus could not look back to check if she was there until they crossed over the threshold to the living realm again. Orpheus agreed, but as soon as he crossed into the earthly plane he turned back to see if she was with him, and she was, but she had not yet crossed over the threshold. Therefore, she had to remain in the Underworld and was lost to him forever.

In one retelling I read, instead of Eurydice being trapped in the Underworld, she was taken by the Fae and trapped in the Faerie realm.[8] This retelling actually expanded upon the years that Orpheus spent searching for Eurydice and lamenting her loss. He spiraled out of control and abandoned everything he once cared about to live as a hermit, he was so distraught. And then one day he came across her surrounded by Faeries and he followed them back to their realm, enchanted them with his music, and slipped away with Eurydice. In this story there was a happy ending.

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[8] George Allen, ed., "Sir Orfeo," in *English Poetry-Modernized Versions*, trans. J.R.R. Tolkien (Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin Co, 1975), pp. 123-137.

I originally planned to write this song from Eurydice's perspective, singing about how even in the Underworld she could hear his music and she would follow him even in death. But then, my younger brother died in July. And I, as a musician, could really see Orpheus's perspective. Therefore, I decided to go a different direction and write the song that Orpheus would have played to convince Hades to let him take Eurydice back with him, but instead of asking for Eurydice back I would ask for my brother, Adrian, back.

These were the lyrics I had come up with:

Hello, Hades.

I know you didn't invite me,

But you've got something

I really need.

I've had a long journey

I'm far from home,

I'm cold and weary,

And in this world

I'm so alone.

And if my music moves you at all,

I've got a favor to ask,

And it's not small

Let me bring him back.

I knew this would be the hardest one to write, so I saved it for last. And I kept pushing it off and avoiding it until finally, I sat down to write it and I could not make my

fingers move on the guitar. And when I did manage to do that, the chords sounded all wrong. So I tried to focus on the lyrics; I focused so much on the lyrics that by the end of the week I had half a song that I convinced myself was too cheesy and emotional to finish. That's when I realized what was really holding me back from writing the song was not the guitar part or the lyrics. It was the fact that it felt very final, writing a song about Adrian's death. It seemed, in my mind, like the final nail in the proverbial coffin.

I'm sure eventually I will be able to write this song and use it as a form of catharsis, but it will not be in time to be submitted for this thesis.

II. Recording Process

I have experience recording in both an academic and professional setting. I recorded and released my *Bittersweet EP* in 2016. The process is a fairly simple one: write the songs, choose a studio and producer, discuss expectations with the producer, and record the songs. Though I tried to keep the recording process as smooth as possible, there were some obstacles to face.

I had planned on utilizing MTSU's recording studios during Summer 2020, since that is when less people would be competing for studio time. My friends, Eryn Bird and Hannah Humphress, were going to be my sound engineers and my friend, Hannah Gerst, was going to be my producer. Sound engineers are the people who are focused on the recording process from a technical perspective. They determine the levels, effects, and overall sound of the tracks. A producer has a hand in the creative process, suggesting different effects or parts to add, change, or re-record.

Unfortunately, due to Coronavirus, access to the studios was heavily restricted. I am part of the professional organization on campus, Omega Delta Psi, which connects me with others within the recording industry both students and alumni. It was through this organization that I found out some MTSU Audio Engineering students had started a home studio and were looking for projects. The Temple Recording Studio team consists of Joshua Brown, John Shields, and Seth Howard. Since they are a new and small studio, they were very flexible with me when negotiating pricing and timing of everything. I tried to keep the 3 songs very simple, to cut down on time spent recording and therefore, overall cost. They agreed to a payment of $200 due at the end of the recording process.

We recorded on Sunday and Wednesday nights as that is when all of our schedules aligned. I never spent more than 4 hours recording at a single session.

Persephone, however, I recorded with Eryn Bird for her Studio Techniques project. For that one, I did not have to pay anything because we recorded it at MTSU Studio C during the Spring 2020 semester prior to the pandemic.

The process to record most songs is fairly simple. You first record a "scratch track." This is a part in which you play guitar and sing the song, usually to a metronome to keep time. When you record the guitar parts and any other instrumentation individually, you listen to the scratch track in your headphones so you can keep your place in the song. Once you've recorded the guitar and vocal parts individually to your satisfaction, the scratch track is removed from the song because after that you can just listen to the guitar and vocal tracks while recording the other parts.

When recording individual parts, you will always need to record more than one take. Usually you would record a minimum of 3 takes of an individual part because then the engineer will "comp" the tracks to make a single track. Essentially the engineer listens back and chooses the best parts from each take and arranges and compiles them into one single track. This ensures each part is the best quality it can be.

When recording Persephone with Eryn, this is the recording process we used. After I finished recording my guitar and vocal parts, we discussed other possible parts and Eryn added them to the song during her other studio sessions. Then she sent me the final mix that she turned in for her class and we discussed what could be improved upon. Eryn graduated in Spring 2020, so she sent me the "stems," the individual parts of the song separated instead of compiled into one coherent track, so that I could send them to

Joshua Brown at the Temple Recording Studio to do any final editing necessary. Joshua used pitch-correcting software for the background vocals Eryn had recorded, and added slide guitar over the instrumental part, as well as corrected the overall levels and effects on the tracks.

I began recording at Temple Recording Studios on September 30th, 2020.When recording Medusa, we followed the same standard of using a scratch track and we recorded about 6 takes of each part. We kept it simple and just used guitar and vocals for the song. I listened to the mix when it was done and found that I sounded like I was struggling vocally, so I lowered the key from B Flat Major to G Major and re-recorded the part. Overall, recording Medusa took about 6 hours, which due to scheduling was 3 sessions.

Recording Eros and Psyche was more complicated because it involved another person recording their part since it was a duet. So we did it in two sessions. The first one was about two hours long and it was just myself recording my vocal and guitar parts. We did about 4 takes of each part. For the scratch track I did sing both parts so that I could keep my place in the song correctly. During the second session, my friend, John Coates, recorded the male vocal part. This took about 10 takes for a total of about an hour. Afterwards, John and I left and Seth, Joshua, and John Shields recorded the percussive elements and mandolin to the song and began adjusting levels and effects.

Working with Temple Recording Studios worked out great and the mixes are great quality. Making music is a very collaborative exercise and this thesis was the perfect opportunity to utilize and create contacts within the industry.

III. Releasing Music

The last step of the recording process is also the first step of the release process. This is getting the mixes mastered. Mastering is the process in which an audio engineer prepares the file to be transferred and stored on a single device and all reproductions of the file are copied from this one file. Usually, when getting something mastered one would listen to it in various settings, ie. in the car, using headphones, using earbuds, on a computer speaker, on the TV sound system. Mastering is basically the ultimate mix and it determines how the song will sound on every device.

After mastering, it is time to focus on distribution. Distribution is how you make your song available to the public. There are many services that distribute your music to various sources but the one I chose to use was CD Baby. CD Baby's standard option for single release is $9.95/single. This option provides digital distribution to Spotify, Apple Music, Amazon Music, and 150 other digital music platforms, royalties using Youtube Content ID, making your music available to use via Instagram and Facebook stories, and sync licensing availability. This is an affordable way to release my music.

I am already registered with the Performing Rights Organization, the American Society of Composers, Authors, and Publishers (ASCAP). This ensures I will collect money if my songs are played within a public space. I am already a verified artist on Spotify through Spotify for Artists, this also allows me the opportunity to submit my songs to Spotify curated playlists which is how many songs reach popularity.

After beginning the distribution process with CD Baby, I choose a release date. My chosen release date is December 11th. Spotify does playlists called "New Music Friday." This would offer me the perfect opportunity for more publicity.

The rest of the process is about creating awareness for the new release. So my friend, Hannah Gerst, is a photographer who will take pictures that fit the modern goddess theme of my songs and edit the photos. Then I will use these photos as my cover art for each single and publish others from the photoshoot on Instagram, Facebook, and Twitter to catch my followers' eyes and inform them of my upcoming release.

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