



Session Plan

THE CANNY BAND

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Student No: 97948
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Band Overview

What they say - "A collaboration born from a love of traditional music and fuelled by student poverty, The Canny Band are an eclectic trad trio based in Glasgow."

Their music is mostly self-composed and sits in the contemporary/progressive traditional music style. Instrumentation consists of Melodeon, Piano and Bodhran, however, it's likely that upright bass and guitar (by myself) will be added to album and there is also potential of collaboration with a singer on 1 or 2 tracks (tbc in the next week or so).

All the musicians in this band are critically acclaimed in their own right, they all came through the Traditional and Classical Music Degree Courses at the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland and Pianist Michael is the current BBC Radio Scotland Young Traditional Musician of the year.

Band Contact Details/Role

Name	Role in Band	Email	Phone No.
Michael Biggins	Pianist	michaelbiggins8@gmail.com	07808 313 244
Sam Mabbett	Melodeon	sammabbett@gmail.com	07754 855 155
Callum Convoy	Bodhran & Percussion	callumconvoy@icloud.com	07884 586 585

Studio Personnel

Name	Role	Email	Phone No.
Scott Turnbull	Co-Producer & Engineer	scott@smtmusic.co.uk	07966 423 806
Michael Biggins	Producer	michaelbiggins8@gmail.com	07808 613 244

Recording Location

Address: Paxton House, Paxton, Berwick-upon-Tweed TD15 1SZ

The recording will take place in the Picture Gallery at Paxton House (see image below), this allows us the use of their Steinway Model B Grand Piano. The room has a wooden floor, with a large portion of the center section covered by carpet. This gives it a nice ambience without being too reverberant. I believe this will benefit the overall recording in a positive way.



Tracking

Tracking will be done live with the two musicians playing together, likely without a click track for the most part. This is to enhance the feel of the tracks, and allow them to lock in together the way they're used to playing live. Piano and Bodhran will make up the basis of all the music on the album, so tracking in this way should really help the vibe, even with other elements being overdubbed in the studio afterwards.

Equipment Required

Scott

MacBook Pro 16 inch (2019)
 Apogee Quartet
 2x Adam A3X
 Sennheiser HD600
 Audio Technica M50X
 Behringer HA8000
 SE z5600
 1x Tall Boom & 1x Short Boom Mic Stand
 All cabling inc. data, power and audio

SAE

2x Neumann U87 (verbally approved by Orvar 19/04/21)
 2x AKG C414 XLS
 2x Neumann TLM 103
 ElectroVoice RE20
 Sennheiser MD421
 2x Neumann KM 184
 Focusrite Octopre mkii
 8x standard boom mic stands

Tracklist

Instrument	Microphone	Apogee Channel	Focusrite Channel	Mic/Line	+48V?
Piano L	U87	1		Mic	Yes
Piano R	U87	2		Mic	Yes
Piano Mono (soundboard)	TLM103		1	Mic	Yes
Piano Mono (Under)	z5600		2	Mic Ø	No
Piano Room L (Decca)	KM184		3	Mic	Yes
Piano Room R (Decca)	KM184		4	Mic	Yes
Bodhran (front skin)	TLM103	3		Mic	Yes
Bodhran (rear)	RE20 or 421	4		Mic Ø	No
Omni Room L	C414		5	Mic	Yes
Omni Room R	C414		6	Mic	Yes

Instrument Notes

Instrument	Notes
Grand Piano	<p>Neumann TLM 103 microphones will be used as the main stereo pair spaced over the hammers of the piano, a single 414 will be used as a mono mic on the soundboard. I discovered this 3 mic technique in a Warren Huart video (Huart, 2017) some time ago, and having listened to multitracks recorded this way, I like the results. A stereo pair of Neumann KM184 microphones in XY configuration will be pulled back just outside the lid of the piano to capture a more ambient sound. These may contain more bleed from the Bodhran, however, I think it may be useful to blend with the more direct sound of the other mics in areas where the piano is more isolated.</p> <p>I think the slightly present frequency response of the TLM103s will be beneficial in getting the piano to cut through the busier tracks, especially for more rhythmic sections and where it takes the lead melody.</p> <p>There may be tracks where an omni stereo mic technique may be used to capture a more natural sound. Similar to how many jazz and big band engineers, such as Al Schmitt do it. However, bleed would be a big issue here so it could only really be done when piano is playing solo. If it turns out that there are tracks which may suit this technique, then I may experiment. The primary plan will be to do it as described above though.</p>
Bodhran	<p>The front skin of the Bodhran will be mic'd with a 414 positioned slightly above, pointing down to where the skin meets the body of the drum, to avoid too much hand noise. An RE20 will be used in the rear of the drum to capture more of the tone of the shell and low end.</p>
Room	<p>A pair of Lewitt LCT 640s will be used in omni polar pattern further back to capture an overall picture in the room. Final position for these will be decided on the day. These mics also allow for the polar pattern to be changed post the recording, so if finer adjustment is necessary then it leaves options. These will most likely be used sparingly in the mix, but will be useful in slower/quieter sections as a natural ambience.</p>

Day Plans

Session 1 28 th April 2021	Details
8.30am	Arrival and equipment Setup
9.45am	Band Arrives
10am	Soundchecks, final microphone positioning and setting of cue mixes (where/if required)
10.30am	Begin recording
1pm	30 min break
1.30pm	Recording
6pm	End of day – Setup remains in place

Session 2 29 th April 2021	Details
9am	Arrival and checks of setup
9.30am	Begin recording
11.30am	15 minute break
11.45am	Recording
2.30pm	30 min break
3pm	Recording
5pm	Listening – any final overdubs
6pm	Tear down – out by 6.45pm

2 days to record 8-9 pieces of music may seem slightly ambitious, however, the band are confident this is doable and are used to playing together in this way, so I'm also optimistic. A more detailed plan of the order in which tracks will be recorded will be established in pre-production with the band nearer the time.

Budget

Qty	Description	Cost
2	Days room hire	£60.00 per day
1	Piano Tuning	£70.00
	Total	£190.00

Costs for this session will be covered by the artists.

Reference Tracks

Sandwood, by Duncan Chisolm (Chisolm, 2017) - Whilst this album may not be directly comparable to the production I'm working on in terms of musical style given the vast instrumentation used. I do however like the piano and bodhran sounds specifically on it. I also like the sense of depth and width throughout the whole album and it will be a useful reference through this whole project.

Working Hands, by Jenna Reid (Reid, 2019) – Again, this isn't entirely comparable musically, however the piano sound is a very useful reference. It was recorded at Castle Sound Studios on their Steinway and the pianist on this album is also a major influence to the one I'm working with.

Over The Moon, by Catriona Macdonald (Macdonald, 2007) - Piano on this album was also recorded at Castle Sound, however, it is more isolated within the arrangements here, so I feel this could be helpful when fine tuning stereo imaging.

Bibliography

Chisolm, D., 2017. *Sandwood*. [CD] Copperfish Records. Available at:
<https://open.spotify.com/album/1LFHmWrvRQeoZJatu7QLed?si=d_3-y73WT2GVMs0Mef2XQA> [Accessed 30 March 2021].

Huart, W., 2017. *\$1700 vs. \$100000 Microphone Setup?*. [video] Available at:
<<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EMLZI52az6g&t=513s>> [Accessed 30 March 2021].

Macdonald, C., 2007. *Over The Moon*. [CD] Peerie Angel Productions.

Reid, J., 2019. *Working Hands*. [CD] Glasgow: Lofoten Records. Available at:
<<https://jennareid.bandcamp.com/album/working-hands>> [Accessed 30 March 2021].