



Joseph's Shed /// Session One - Flight 134 - Reflection

Update on 2019.04.16 by: Joseph Lafond

The song and accompanying video, Flight 134 was the result of a three day recording session undertaken to test Joseph's Shed capabilities as a recording studio. Working through the production process in an experimental way we were able to gain insight as to how we want to conduct future sessions. The players were: Joseph Lafond on bass, Josh Mayo on drums, and Dan Skoler on guitar.

The idea behind the reflection was to talk about how the session went and look at how we can better prepare for future sessions. Below are our reflections, turned into ideas, arranged chronologically in the order of the recording process.



Although it looks like there is some deep thought going on, I assure you, there isn't!

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Before pre-production

- Determining the goals of the session
 - Collective discussion
 - Producers decisions
- Choosing personnel for the session
 - This depends on the goals of the session. How many people we think we can manage and stay focused is important. Smaller numbers are easier to deal with.



Who would want to do anything with these people?

- Lead Time
 - We need to confirm the session dates with enough lead time to give the players time to save up money for flights and take time off from work. This is perhaps largest hurdle to overcome because we are all busy and no one is made of money.
- Discussing options for recording style
 - Complete Isolation. Only people essential to the recording.
 - Players isolate themselves for an amount of time then, invite all the friends to be audience for recording session. Has the potential for higher vibe quality.

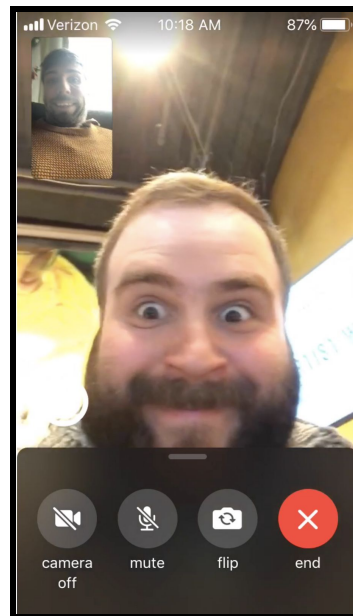
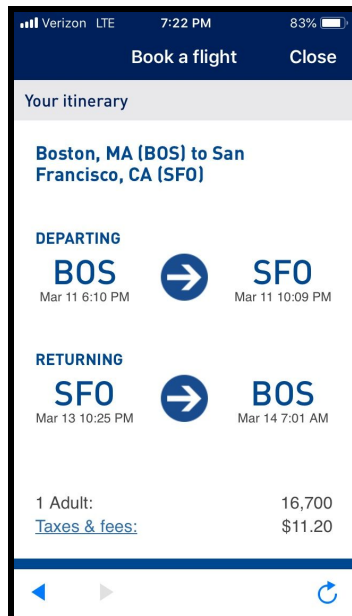
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- Identify creation strategies
 - Determine as a group the way we want to create songs.
 - Ways we can create songs
 - One person brings a trace, half-developed or full song idea..
 - We use the best parts of jams recorded from the past as inspiration.
 - Flesh ideas out before hand and bring them.
 - Utilize ideas as inspiration during the session.
 - We jam for a bit in the beginning of the session, record it and then arrange something.

Pre-production

- Logistics
 - Work out any logistics issues, communicate, and create backup strategies if plans change



Yup, it is exciting...

- Songwriting/Sharing Tunes

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- Depending on the creation strategy, everyone is responsible for bringing something to the session.
- Sending preliminary songs to the group for study can help speed up the process. During Facetime Dan played the lick that ended up becoming Flight 134. Joseph was able to record that and practice to it.
- Personal Responsibility/Preparation
 - Physical preparation
 - Be mentally, physically, and emotionally healthy before committing. Your life is more important than any one session.
 - Proficiency
 - For a successful session, every player should have their chops.
 - Recognize that there are multiple proficiency levels in the group and each player brings different value to the session in different ways.



The shed (and any other space) is ready for us, it's our job to be ready for it.

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Production

The easy, three-step process of recording... ;)

Travel > Setup > Jam > Rehearse > Arrange > Rehearse > Record > Strike > Mix > Release

- Travel
 - Traveling can take a lot out of a person. We should recognize this in the first days of the session. Ease into it. Build in down-time and mini-adventures.
- Setup
 - Having a small, skilled team perform the setup can be more efficient. Potentially schedule sectionals during the setup time to keep everyone engaged.
- Jam
 - Doing it live - is mainly how we have operated in the past. For Flight 134, we tracked both live and individually. We determined the live tracks, although not as technically perfect, felt and sounded better.
 - Since Josh's surprise party in January 2016, we have been getting together, jamming, and creating some amazing material --- all on the spot. We should own that fact.
 - Skoler said it best: "We Play Funk". Let's own that too!



We really are at our best when simply groovin'.

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- Rehearse
 - Bring forward the material that has been created during pre-production. This is a critical time when the group is synced together and is beginning to focus deeply on the project goals.
- Arrange
 - Sectionals
 - More efficient with time.
 - Allows us to learn the parts from people who know them, everyone else can be useful elsewhere.
 - Group Arranging
 - Can happen during rehearsal -or- arranging. Dan brought the melody to Flight 134 and once together, we as a group arranged the song.
 - Challenge ourselves to create higher quality music
 - Challenge issued before getting together to write cool songs.
 - Challenge each other during arranging to add dynamic elements.
- Rehearse
 - Songs should be finalized and run over, and over, and over.
 - If you get stuck on a lick:
 - Sometimes keep trying to get it.
 - Other times, bail and move on, you can always come back to it.
 - Create another lick - change it so we can move on and keep the flow going.
 - Getting stuck individually has the potential to throw off the group energy and flow. The Producers job is to balance the group and individual abilities to promote progress.



*Here you see Dan having fun, not stuck on a lick.
Remember it's cool to move on if needed to get more of these moments!*

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- Recording
 - Warming Up! We need to include time to warm up. Before “official” recording begins, someone should ask “does everyone feel warmed up?”
 - Be not high before we start (can get high later).
 - Know the Stresses of Recording Live
 - Mental - Able to produce the playing we all want.
 - To many takes can turn you against yourself.
 - Emotional - Able to feel good about playing.
 - Harness the positive flows.
 - Get creative in breaking through creative blocks.
 - Physical - Have the chops to achieve playing.
 - Take breaks and be smart with the order of operations.
- Mix/Master/Multi-Cam Edit
 - Know that you may not be able to mix/master during the first session. Dedicate someone to finish the project with deadlines. This is the last critical element, post-production is the land of unfinished dreams.



We experimented with mixing in between recording sessions

- Strike
 - Build in time for a wholesome cleanup.
 - These sessions are happening because we love each other and love playing music!

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Post-Production

- Mix/Master/Multi-Cam Edit
 - Be smart with the edit. Save a backup before you begin mixing.
 - Know that this takes time. Flight 134 was an 8 day session start to finish. 3 days together, 5 apart before we were able to come to consensus on the mix/master we felt sounded great. We were razor focused on the goal; putting out a single, and it allowed us to keep the energy flowing.

Release/Reception

- Have fun with this. Share far and wide. Maybe even put it on streaming services!



The crew of Flight 134

WATCH: Joseph' Shed /// Session One - Flight 134 - on Vimeo

<https://vimeo.com/324876415>

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