

Writing Shadows Part's 1 and 2

I wrote these two pieces the second time I collaborated with Vincent Thomas for the mens repertory dance division at Towson University. For these I took videos of the choreography and counted the beats while taking the video so I could put the music to a set tempo. I watched the videos back and composed the music around what was choreographed. I looked for significant changes in the dance and used that as a way to enter a new section or phrase, all the while trying to stick to some sort of form.

The main idea behind these pieces was “Men” and what the pre conceived stigmas of what it means to be a man. In Shadows part 1 Vincent was hopping I would incorporate words into the piece somehow. To accomplish this I made a list of words people associate with men, and recorded my friends saying them. I then took the audio samples and panned them around to create a wall of voices. I put this over a beat to keep the songs tempo driving forward. The rest of it was mainly through composed although I do use some ideas that become the main theme in Shadows part 2.

In part 2 I relied heavily on a sampled electric bass sound for the songs main idea. The bass just seemed like best way to sonically represent “Men.” But as the piece unfolds the bass theme modulates to the IV and then back to the tonic key up an octave as to slowly make the piece more “feminine” by slowly introducing more material in the higher frequencies.

I composed both of these pieces in the DAW Ableton Live 8.