

How Has My Creative Mind Led Me to Full Sail University?

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“What is risk...if that risk isn’t taken?” - Rachel cherubin

Those words have been my daily motivation to keep me going through every moment of life. Those same words have created a spark that has been burning for years on a journey towards Full Sail University. Over the years, my passion for music has grown and is still growing, exploring various instruments and styles, and I’m beyond thrilled to embark on the next chapter of my life at Full Sail.

Growing up in the church, music has always been an essential part of my life. My father provided me with amazing taste in music, from reggae to jazz and instrumental melodies. I was introduced to the wonderful world of sound. Growing up, I was fascinated by the magic of music creation, and I knew deep down that I wanted to be a part of it, and I was going to be a part of it.

My initial start into the music community started at the age of five when I began playing drums at church. It was fun at the start, but I soon realized the rhythm of my heart was leading me to a different direction. That direction came when I stumbled upon the music of John Meyer. His guitar skills and soulful lyrics drew me in, especially the songs “Dancing in a Burning Room” and “Neon.” The guitar’s ability to tell a story through the musician and dynamics used marked the beginning of my love for the instruments and all instruments to come!

Over the years, I dived into the world of guitar playing, looking for inspiration from legendary musicians like Ozzy Osbourne, Eric Clapton, and Jimi Hendrix. My dream of creating music from my own guitar (maybe even a signature) that resonated with the world, fueled my determination to keep pushing on. Not long after, my twin brother got into classical guitar which interested me further. Finally at the age of 12, I started my self-taught guitarist journey, exploring the basic and immersing myself full-time into music theory, scale, and modes.

At 13, I began playing guitar for my church’s youth group, where I discovered the number system and many more details on music theory. I longed to compose and produce my own music but wasn’t sure of the direction I wanted to take. Nonetheless, I dabbled in songwriting and shared my compositions with online music communities for feedback.

It was during this time that I came across the work of Sean Angus Watson, a guitarist whose improvisational yet structured style left an impact on me. I could listen to him play for hours and get lost in the intricate details and notes. Inspired, I teamed up with friends to start writing music. Unfortunately, our plans were ruined by the pandemic, but that didn’t deter me. At 14, I decided “Enough was Enough,” I was going to produce my own music, so using a guitar and

ukulele I had at home, I got to writing. Once we could meet again, my friends and I wrote five worship songs, three of which were produced within two weeks— an achievement I hold close to my heart and will remember forever.

Two years later, Justin Amundrud, an accomplished music producer, was introduced by my church as a new staff member. That day marked a moment for me to learn from someone in the industry. Justin's guidance expanded my knowledge of digital audio workstations (DAW) like Ableton, plugins, EQ, and Logic. This allowed me to make a significant leap from my previous knowledge of Garageband to something more current.

What followed was a game-changer from my music journey. Justin showed interest in the songs my friends and I had written and offered to fully produce them. This was huge for me, as an industry professional was going to review and remaster our work, providing feedback on technical and musical aspects. The song we produced, "No Requirements," became a hit at the public live youth event called "Neon Night." That experience has been invaluable in my creative path.

Moreover, I can reflect on the many inspirations that have shaped me—individuals like Tobias Rauscher, Sungha Jung, Jake Shimbakuro, Julian Lage and Joshua Meader. Their unique styles have broadened my musical taste and my own playing style, as well as what I look for in my music, how I want it to sound. I embrace the messiness, the challenges, the uncertainties, and endless possibilities because, as Ellen Johnson Sirleaf wisely said, "If your dreams don't scare you, they're not big enough."

As for today, I haven't produced as much as I've written, but my journey has evolved into a fascination with cinematic music, orchestral compositions, and instrumental pieces. The fire within me to create and innovate continues to burn brightly, leading me towards Full Sail University, where I hope to refine my skills, discover new limits, and turn my creative dreams into a reality. Full Sail is not just a destination, it's a place where I know I can learn, grow, and share what I have with the world, and I'm grateful for every moment, second, and chance I get.