

Hey guys! I'm Katie Piedra, and you're listening to the Sound of Stuff. In this podcast, I take my sound design to a different level than I typically do and attempt to create music from unconventional instruments.

If you haven't listened to Episode 1, where I use a book to make the song Tongues, you should really check that out before listening to this one. It's where the concept for this podcast was born, and it also goes into much more detail as to how I make songs using our software. Because of that, in this podcast and going forward, I'm gonna focus more on what makes my new song special rather than the nitty gritty specifics of audio editing. The first episode will be linked in the description, so feel free to listen to that if you haven't yet.

On with my new project then! So, when I randomly generated an object, the first thing that came up this time was – ironically – a piano, which is in fact a very conventional instrument. So I contemplated if I should just generate a new object. But after a minute of thinking, I decided against that. Mainly because I had the idea to use everything but the keys of a piano that I could. This included the pedals – the wooden bench – and the hammers.

And after going through the sounds I collected, I also decided to make an original piece of music. I wanted to see if my process would be different for inventing a piece of my own, and it certainly was.

So without much further ado, this is my next song in my Sound of Stuff series, which I later decided to call Unfitted. I'll explain that later. Enjoy.

So yeah. That was Unfitted, an original composition. Basically, a lot of things went into inspiring this piece of music. Uh, if you've ever heard of any of the artists such as the xx's or Billie Eilish or really any minimalist modern music today it was inspired a lot by those, mainly because I tried to stick to just a few basics and see what I could do with them.

Probably one of my favorite parts of this entire song would be the bit in the middle where I kind of distance myself from really any type of melody whatsoever. And, kind of do an audio-stereo mix between the left and the right channels. And, as nerdy as that might sound, it

actually fits really well in this piece, because of how kindof eclectic it is. And I guess that brings me into my next point as to why on earth I named this song Unfitted.

As you can tell, the time signature, or the way that the beat lands in each measure of this song isn't what you normally hear. So what you normally hear on the radio would be considered 4/4 time: four quarter notes to each measure and the quarter note gets the beat. Whereas in this piece I decided to create it in 7/8 time, which would be the 8<sup>th</sup> note gets the beat and there are 7 of them in a measure. And, I decided to do that for two reasons. One, because I thought that at first just using piano recordings would be too easy, which turned out to be not necessarily the case. And secondly because I thought that it would make a much more interesting piece of music in general because quite frankly I'm kindof tired of turning on the radio station and hearing nothing but the same song-ish just in different formats over and over and over again. And while I still ended up what they call a four chord structure in this song I think I kindof achieved a different texture regardless.

Now you might have heard what I kindof did with each of the effects that I took with the piano. Um so for the pedal I ended up creating a bass type beat out of it, and I essentially just brought up the volumes and increased the reverb. Whereas with the wooden knocking I sortof created a rim click type thing that you might hear on a snare drum. And the hammer actually that's the hammer moving, that's like something wrong with the piano I recorded with, but it sounded really cool. So that's the hammer moving in the piano. And I decided to create a sortof high pitched clicking sound that I think contrasts the elements of the deeper parts of this song really well. And yeah, that's basically what I ended up doing with each of those.

So while it doesn't sound too complicated on the surface it was actually kindof difficult. Because, a piano doesn't really have a whole lot of higher sounds to begin with, if you like don't really involve any of the wood. So, the other high pitched sound that I could create was tapping on the nylon of the keys, and that kindof sounded awful. It just sounded like a high pitched really annoying tapping like – it got on my nerves before it would get on yours so I decided to not include it. And, after a while, after a lot of reverb and pitch lowering I guess, I managed to create something that I kindof like, so I hope you like it too. And I put it into a 7/8 structure.

And lets just say the first draft of this song was pretty atrocious. I can play a little clip of it here for you if you so desire.

But yeah, I was basically all over the board. I wasn't exactly sure where to start with creating a new piece of mine, I wasn't – I only ever created, at one point I had created an entire score for kindof an ensemble but I had only arranged pieces, so this is pretty much my first attempt at making an actual song all by myself. And it ended up working out but it took a long time. So what I ended up doing for inspiration purpose is , online you can find a whole slew of chord progression generators, and I essentially just kept listening to certain ones, finding chords that I liked, preferably in a minor key because minor keys would be a little more, what I would consider sad and kindof ethereal which is kindof what I was going for with this piece. So after a while I managed to actually get a chord progression that I enjoyed, and I actually used the same vibe notes from my previous episode, I just chopped them up a little bit differently, and towards the end of the song I actually played them in reverse, so that's what I ended up doing for the actual chords, I just arranged those notes differently. And you can clearly tell that from the first draft to the last draft there was a number of changes and improvements based on just what you hear. It's pretty obvious. So that was kindof an adventure in and of itself. And then, trying to create a melody that wouldn't get redundant, but would still be a theme that I could translate throughout the piece was really complicated as well, I wasn't anticipating it to be that difficult. But I think I settled on a more jazzy type off beat feel, and that's also a good thing then that I chose my 7/8 time signature, because typically when you hear jazz music, especially skat or improv, its not really confined to a typical structure. So I decided to kindof go along with that I think.

But yeah, I guess from start to finish this song was kindof a journey in trying to figure out how to make a song in and of itself, and you can kindof tell in the beginning it's kindof basic, it doesn't really start with anything to interesting. I do add a lot of wind chimes in, and I think that was really good touch on my part, only because it adds some audio interest I would say? It adds different textures to listen to. And I think that's a big thing for me at least, not listening to the same sounds over and over again, it adds more interest to listening to other things while you're listening. So I added that also to keep a theme going thoughtout the entire song. And towards

the middle of the piece I decided I was bored with keeping that same exact chord variation and I wanted to change it up. So I ended up reversing and pitch shifting the chords in order to create almost a more – uh I would say spooky – feel, and kind of ran with that for the entire theme. I actually ended up reversing the hammer to create the fade in for the next section of the piece, I just played that in reverse as well.

But yeah, I think for the most part this song is pretty self-explanatory. You can kind of tell what I did with what instrument and where, especially because it's so minimalist, but I think it still turned out as one of my favorite creations that I've made to date. And idunno, I feel like it's something that I would consider listening to in my free time. Which if you are listening to things in your free time, which if you are listening to things in your free time, you should check out WHJE, 91.3. Or you could go to our website, [whje.com](http://whje.com), to check out more podcasts like this one.

So yeah, that was my second episode of the Sound of Stuff, I hope you enjoyed and I will see you in the next one.