MIX NOTES (POST Mastering)

General Notes:

1. The overall EQ curve shows that your mix had very little low end (subs area) compared to the reference. I managed to bring some of it back, but it is best to have the subs area under control instead of almost non-existent. I think this was due to excessive use of High-pass filtering in the bass and kick tracks. I usually only use a HPF on low end elements (bass and kick) up to 40 or 60 Hz. After that, I aim to keep the low end under under control as oppose to eliminating it almost in its entirety.

2. I felt like your mix had too much Information on the 2-5KHz range. The bass distortion was a huge factor on this. I also like bass guitar with a “treble-y” character, but aim to make the top end of the bass live mostly between 700 and 2KHz.

3. I also felt like the guitars tracks also had too much information on the 2-4 KHZ range and not enough information in the 400Hz-1KHz area. Remember to aim for balance. Guitars with a lot of bite sound good on their own, but not in a full mix, specially if they mostly live in said area.

4. I felt like the low end of your kick was fighting too much with the bass for the same space. Try to make the kick live in the 40 - 150Hz area (and 3 to 5 KHz for the attack), and make the bass live in the 150 - 400 Hz area. This is where those juicy bass guitar frequencies are, and you will be surprised how little you’ll miss anything below that. Don’t completely eliminate it, but don’t make your bass guitar live there either. Also, consider side-chain compression for a tighter kick-bass relationship.

5. The cymbals were very quiet in the mix. I managed to bring some of the cymbal brightness back, but I am curious if you applied a LPF on them?

6. It sounded like your guitar solos were not sitting too well in the mix, and I think that the main reason for that was the lack of a proper HPF on them. I typically high-pass my guitar solos all the way up to 800Hz, sometimes even 1KHz, depending on the solo. You’ll be surprised how little you’ll miss any of the low end of a guitar in a solo, and it will sound like it sits better in the mix. I can also recommend running the solos through a compressor. The volume will sound more consistent as a result.

7. Same as the solos, I felt like the vocals were not properly pocketed into the music. Again, probably not a high enough HPF. I typically high-pass my vocals around the 400-500Hz area. The vocals will sound weak and unpleasant on their own, but you’ll find that they will sit better in the context of a full mix. Also, It is not uncommon for me to have multiple compressors on vocals. And remember to keep the sibilance under control, as it is virtually impossible to fix it in mastering.

Things to remember:

1. Our ears are the most sensitive in the 2 to 5 KHz area. Don't overdo it here. It is tempting to want to boost in that area to make something cut through, but considering cutting in the other tracks before you boost here.

2. Don't eliminate the Subs-Low end completely. Instead, aim to keep them under control with EQ and a multi-band compressor. The car is always a great place to listen for problems in the low end of the spectrum.

3. Don't be afraid to use HPF aggressively on vocals, solos, samples and other elements that are not constantly present or have no real low-end information.

4. ALWAYS test your mix with a limiter on. The limiter will make the quiet elements louder, and the louder elements quieter. This will expose potential problems that you didn't account for before and will give a quick preview of how your song will translate into mastering. Remember to turn the limiter off before bouncing, though.

5. ALWAYS mix with a reference track. It will maintain your objectivity, and will show you how things are supposed to sound in your environment. I always recommend taking a break every 45 mins and listen to the reference before resuming work.

REFERENCE TRACK:



YOUR MIX:



MY MASTER:

