

21M.380 · MUSIC AND TECHNOLOGY
RECORDING TECHNIQUES & AUDIO PRODUCTION

GUEST SPEAKER: AL KOOPER

SESSION 27 · MONDAY, DECEMBER 12, 2016

1 Announcements

- Return WR2
- Who's planning not to be here on Wed? Because:
 - Group picture
 - Subject evaluation
- Please bring laptops on Wednesday!
- [REDACTED]: Please submit pics from rec session!
- Mx3 assignment: Submit on time!

2 Guest speaker: Al Kooper

2.1 Introduction & career overview

- Songwriter, arranger, studio musician, producer
- Played on Bob Dylan's *Like a Rolling Stone*
 - Rolling Stone magazine: "Greatest song of all times" (Jay-Z 2011)
 - Al played Hammond organ (famous intro)
- Also played with:
 - Jimi Hendrix (*almost* at Monterey pop festival 1967)
 - The Who
 - BB King
 - Rolling Stones
 - George Harrison (The Beatles)
- Joined *Blues Project* early (1965)
- Founding member of *Blood, Sweat & Tears* (1967)
- Discovered *Lynyrd Skynyrd* (1972)
 - Production and background vocals on *Sweet Home Alabama*

2.2 Sound examples

- Bob Dylan – *Like a Rolling Stone* (1965). Original 4-track:
 1. Mike Bloomfield (electric guitar)
 2. Bob Dylan (vocals, electric guitar, harmonica)
 3. Al Kooper (Hammond organ) & Bobby Gregg (drums)
 4. Joe Macho Jr. (bass guitar) & Frank Owens (tack piano)
- Blues Project vs. Al Kooper – *No Time Like the Right Time* (1967 vs. 2010)
 - The Blues Project recorded this in 1967 (producer: Tom Wilson)
 - Al always wanted to recut it & did so in 2010 (but never published)
 - Al performed everything except drums, bass, sax
 - 120 tracks
- Lynyrd Skynyrd – *I Ain't the One* (1972)
 - Example of how effects had to be *performed* at recording time
 - Here: Echo on snare drum (Al's idea; done with echo chamber) and backward tambourine (borrowed from Beatles)
- The Tubes – *Up from the Deep* (1975)
 - From their first album *The Tubes*
 - Among the records that Al produced, this is his favorite
 - Al's first 24-track production
- Al Kooper – *I Cried So Hard* (2008)
 - From his *White Chocolate* album
 - 80 tracks

2.3 Talking points

- Role of the producer
- Role of the album
- Importance of pre-production
- Streaming services and their impact on musicians
- Importance of developing one's personal musical taste
 - “90% of what I listen to are not popular artists”
 - “I'll go to soundchecks, and if I like the band, I'll buy them dinner.”

References & further reading

Jay-Z (2011). *500 Greatest Songs of All Time*. *Rolling Stone's definitive list of the 500 greatest songs of all time*. URL: <https://www.rollingstone.com/music/lists/the-500-greatest-songs-of-all-time-20110407> (visited on 12/11/2016).

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