

Digital Portfolio

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Introduction

As an independent musician in Puerto Rico questioning whether life can be sustainable long term is an ongoing occurrence. Because artists' annual income is \$6,000 less than the average wage, it is no surprise many of them must take low-commitment, part-time work (Hernández, 2013). Even renowned independent musicians, like Eduardo Alegria and his group Alegria Rampante, were subject to economic unrest and other powers that be, typical to Puerto Rico (Richner, 2023).

Independent musicians in Puerto Rico have many obstacles that restrict them to live only from their music. For this reason, they must look for jobs in other bands or doing other things that may or may not be related to music. In this research, I intend to find out if it is possible to live from music in Puerto Rico as an independent artist. Using the information from reliable sources and subject interviews, I will conduct an experiment implementing what I have learned to find out if these practices leave the artist more financially sound than before the experiment started.

Creative Management Statement

This investigation will focus on conducting an experiment using what has been learned to dictate how much these lessons improve both the discovery of *mangoeswild* music and the return on investment from the added knowledge. The investigation will revolve around the rollout of a new debut album. The debut album: *Romanticizing Being Alone* is set to be released on February 6th with a live performance of the entirety of the project on February 13th and will be promoted as an album for those alone on Valentine's Day. The context of the album is a concept record revolving around the 7 stages of grief of a relationship. Considering the album has already been recorded and two of the songs have already been released alongside music videos, the focus

is on the mixing and mastering of the remaining songs, filming the third music video and the creation and funding of the release party event. The Release party event will include merchandise and physical copies of the prior debut extended play in cassette format. Regarding the merchandise, we would be printing our clothing with Terrateniente Prints, a local Puerto Rican screen printing shop that we have a prior relationship with (Terrateniente Prints, n.d.). Regarding the music video, there is already a team of videographers named Mariela I. Padró, Isabel Ocasio, Laurie Cruz Arocho and Emil Maldonado whom the band has worked with before on the music videos for *Syndicate*, *Whatever Keeps You Sane* and *2019*. They are very professional, have a shared interest in the music and get paid handsomely. Regarding the mixing and mastering we would collaborate with Mario Negrón from Casa Fantasma who with their assistance and studio time the remaining songs of the upcoming extended play were completed (Discogs, n.d.). When considering the event, on-brand sponsoring is essential. Brands like Micheo Music, Gravity or Guitar Boutique to name a few are brands in line with the groups interests and have a connection with the band already in some way. Another sponsor worth looking into would be 71 Associates.

A good indicator of our goals is found in the current musical landscape can be found in the band Tapaboka. Who have just recently released their debut EP and were able to find a news spot in El Nuevo Día, a well-known local news to promote it (*El Nuevo Día*, 2024). As well as had an entrance charging release show in la Escalera, which was fully packed (@tapaboka, 2025). As well as bands like Epilogio who are at a higher scale yet have shown to create soundscapes closer to the music found in *mangoeswild*. While there is clear evidence of independent music flourishing in the island there are still major differences in their work than mine primarily the fact the music of *mangoeswild* is predominantly in English in a Spanish

speaking island. As well as Tapaboka's subject matter is far more activist and powerful in subject matter. My band's subject matter revolves mostly around the importance of male vulnerability in society and in art.

Notable Influences for the project include Fantasmies, Campo Formio, Draco Rosa, CIRCO and Epilogio. All Successful Artists who have fermented this culture of music in Puerto Rico and paved the way for newcomers like us. Fantasmies being notable as an english speaking musical outfit who I've had the pleasure to record with and interview. Although Fantasmies disbanded and became predominantly a studio in Casa Fantasmies; their experience in the scene holds true to this day and their push for artist empowerment and not lowballing your worth was valid advice received through the interview.

Venues worth reaching out with that garner audiences of up-and-coming artist as a good starting point includes venues like El Local, El Nie, El Nido, la Escalera, Stryer Rum and Handlebar. From personal experience all venues are easy to reach out and find a spot with, with El Local being as easy as a direct message and El Nie and Handlebar giving a proposal of what your event will entail and how many artists will be associated. Other more upscale performances can include shows at La Respuesta, Vivo Beach and Festivals like Color Caribe. All these venues are reachable first through invitation spots, La Respuesta and Vivo Beach through an opening slot of a bigger artist. As of late if you wish to host an event at la Respuesta first a payment of \$700 is required to open the slot (@larespuestapr, n.d.). Although there was something very interesting about how Color Caribe operated, the festival last year was very interactive. First, they made a post announcing that they are taking in artist submissions and choosing between the best direct submissions to their website and best engagement on the comment section of that post. Once that transpired, they enacted a set of a couple venues including said artist under

question called Road to Color Caribe where at the end they chose the winners of the time slot at the Festival Color Caribe (Somos Color Caribe, 2025).

Executive Summary

This project focuses on the challenge of financial stability for independent music artists in Puerto Rico, where many talented creators struggle to support themselves through their work alone. Based on personal experience as well as research, I set out to explore whether combining creative output with modern business strategies can improve an artist's financial situation in today's music landscape. The project centers around the case study of my own band, *mangoeswild*, as we currently navigate the creation and release of our second extended play. Using it as a real-life experiment to apply tools like press kits, professional branding, social media campaigns, live events, and strategic collaborations. In doing so, I observed how these methods can directly affect visibility, networking, and income.

In addition, the project includes an interview with Mario Negrón-González, a veteran Puerto Rican musician and founder of the recording studio Casa Fantasmés. His input helped clarify the realities of the local music industry, touching on key issues like contracts, sponsorship, artist responsibility, live performance discipline, and licensing. His experience confirmed many of the struggles I identified, while also showing the importance of long-term planning and consistent creative output.

Ultimately, this research suggests that while full financial independence as an artist remains a challenge, especially in a limited market like Puerto Rico, it is possible to improve one's financial outlook through a mix of entrepreneurial thinking, strategic marketing, and

community-building. This project offers realistic insights and practical tools for emerging artists looking to navigate the music scene with more stability and intention.

Creative Design

Music Videos and Songs:

- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RdxQx4fdj4Q&start_radio=1
- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JSq801wZv1A&start_radio=1
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0m0foPN3RyY>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=quNHTXRIC4g>

Prototypes:

https://linktr.ee/mangoeswild?fbclid=PAZXh0bgNhZW0CMTEAAaexieKeExUZQ_0EkvJ1ATKCSeuOBeBSZkl8q9oEDONPDrR5SK1AC8jO58jYeQ_aem_ZhsT017WCRRxuyUaClswLw



Digital (Audiovisual) Records and Documentation of Project Execution

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UHkFyNmAlWA>

This first video (Whatever Keeps You Sane) represents the beginning of the goal to release the band mangoewild's first debut album even having an easter egg of the album title in the music video. This is the first single released with a music video and the single is currently the bands most listened to track of the year. Its success led to collaboration with Florida based band Lychee Camp reaching the band and inviting the band to a performance at El Nie.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Sbtpf3i_XcI

This music video for 2019 is the second release for the debut album goal. Which was beneficial in keeping people engaged while continuing to strive for the goal. Also holds narrative weight in its overlapping themes with the last video. The success of the single was beneficial in the band entering Road to Color Caribe, one of the best music festivals in the island. This music video was the one chosen to register for the competition that the band was selected for. Although the band did not pass to the next step it was an honor and great opportunity to be associated with the festival in any way and it gave mangoeswild the opportunity to perform in westside of the island for the first time, having performed at La Jibarita in Mayaguez. This song opened an opportunity to discover more possible fans.

Reflection on the Experience:

If I'm being one hundred percent honest, I didn't realise I was the un-spoken leader of my project until I needed time to focus on staying up to date with my university assignments. After seeing two weeks pass by without any improvement or growth, I realized how much weight my efforts take place on the band, and it really took into perspective many of the values I learned throughout this trimester. I can't just drop the ball on my project and expect the rest of them to

pick it up. I must be consistent and organized in my decision-making process and oversee that the plan set out strategically takes place by me having organized them. With this newfound insight I trust I'll become a better leader and manager in mangoeswild and any future endeavors I create.

Conclusion and Future Plans

So far, this investigation has brought about many positives and negatives in our findings. Through our project it is estimated to be nourishing Puerto Rico's local artistic community, through per project employment of only local talent of the island in most fronts including recording of music, printing of merchandise, recording of music videos and sponsorships for events. By creating live music events in the island also boosting their venues sales of meals and beverages. It has also proven to increase the band's stream followers by 66%, since the release of the first music video back in November of 2024. That Single (Whatever Keeps You Sane) became our most streamed song behind our first single (Say No More). Wilts, the second single of that project (2019) became our most viewed music video, currently with 42K views on YouTube. Even our social media followers grew from 930 to currently at 1,430 on Instagram. Although many pros came from our findings and obviously the album nor the release event are yet to occur, I do feel that the estimated expenses and earning seem unfavorable, when regarding a living wage. I do believe struggling to lock down performances having gone through a period without a drummer for four months did take a toll on our growth per se, even the estimated earning our simply just enough to break even which is unfavorable when running a business. Moving forward I believe cutting the expenses of the music videos would be ideal to best utilize our finances and bring attention to what matters most, the music, the performance and the connection.

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Appendices

Budget:

EXPENSES

Music video:

3 videos	3 videos x \$1,750	\$ 5,250
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Songs

Studio	\$45 per hour x 8 hrs x 7 songs	\$ 2,520
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Mastering songs	\$2,500 for longform projects	\$ 2,500
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Sub – total:		\$ 5,020
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Physical Media

T shirts	\$13.09 ea x 150	\$ 1,964
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Cassettes	\$2.50 ea. X 150 + add cost	\$ 395
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Sub - total		\$ 2,359
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Overall Promotion

Submithub	\$60 x 9 songs	\$540
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Meta	\$50 x 4 songs	\$200
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Video Promo	\$100 x 3 videos	\$300
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Sub - total		\$1,040
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Fixed expenses

Copyright	All 9 songs	\$ 65
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digital distributor	\$23 per year	\$ 23
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Sub - total		\$ 97
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Total Expenses:	\$13,766
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INCOME

Show	\$750 x 24	\$ 18,000
Shirt sales	150 shirts x \$30 each	\$ 4,500
Cassettes sales	100 cassettes x \$10	\$ 1,000
Total income:		\$ 23,500

The Budget discloses the progression of decisions articulated to be financially viable in this project's goals. Obviously, the process has yet to articulate considering the end date is found on February 13th of 2026, yet our findings disclose that as of right now the project will be in the positives yet more income should be earned to be able to live off of. By adjusting the budget associated towards the Music video creation process.