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Technology vs Live Instrumentation: An Analysis of the Creative Process Behind the Beat Maker

In hip-hop, beat makers are the driving force behind every major and local artist who enters the genre. There would be no groove, bounce, or genre, without the aid of the beat maker. In a world that is dominated by advancing technologies, music is progressing rapidly. My research aim was to evaluate if our definitions of what it means to be a musician and or a composer have progressed as well.

In understanding the process by which beat makers create their works, one can see that the differences between the two mainly lies between the acquiring of distinguished but similar skill sets. For those who used strictly live instrumentation, the skill set acquired was the result of a traditional route, which entailed the process of mastering music theory along with mastering the techniques of an instrument. In the case of the beat maker, the skill set required to truly thrive derives from the mastery of your technology. Whereas the live instrumentalist becomes one with their respective instrument, the beat maker has the ability to access a wide array of instruments through their technology. Although this is ideal in most cases, this presents a situation where the beat maker grasps the concepts of multiple instruments but does not master them individually. Through the process of qualitative research, I will look into the perception and process of beat makers as the composers of hip-hop. I will also investigate and compare the contemporary creative processes of live instrumentalists to that of beat makers.