

Final Reflection

I have finally done it. I have completed my four years at New York City College Of Technology. It is hard to think how far I've come since I first joined my very first Zoom college course. I knew from the very beginning that college was not going to be easy, especially in the midst of a pandemic and it truly wasn't. I came in with the mindset of never taking things for granted and pushing myself to the very limits. As I progressed through the first three years, I knew it wouldn't be easy but everything would have prepared me for the future. As I hit my Junior year that is when I started to hear the phrase "Culmination" from faculty and peers and it gave me chills. I was halfway through my Junior year and I still didn't know what to do for my culmination. Every time that someone asked what I was doing for culmination I just shrugged my shoulders. I kept putting off coming up with ideas for culmination but I knew time was ticking, I had to think of something. It was towards the end of the semester in a conversation with Professor Elliot in which they asked me what I wanted to do for Culmination and I still couldn't come up with any ideas. They knew I wanted to do something in relation to Audio, So that is when the Idea of doing something with EIS came about. As soon as the suggestion came about, I knew I wanted to do it. After, thinking about some ideas about EIS, I came up with possibly doing a system design for the show but, I was still uneasy about it. I knew that this would be a great opportunity to push myself to the limits, something that I told myself I would do before starting my journey at City Tech. After I got the approval from Elliot, I knew it was time to get started as this project requires lots of planning.

I first had to think about the details of the project, previously I had only thought of the bigger picture. This is when I started to do some digging around as to what is EIS. I had previously worked on the show but, I never really understood the meaning of it. I figured this would be a great opportunity to dig deep into what EIS is and how it came about. After reading more about EIS I was able to start the planning stages of the project. I first drafted up a proposal and it helped me in figuring out the little bits that I hadn't thought about previously. As I was creating the schedule, I took a glance at the production schedule and found out that EIS was placed in a very awkward spot this year. It occurs the Friday that we come back from spring break. This meant that I essentially had Two days of rehearsals, and that made me feel a little uneasy. However, I knew I had to conquer and keep the project moving as I told myself to take on difficult

challenges. Once, I had finished drafting up a proposal, I sent it out and got approval from multiple faculty members.

Now it was time to put the plan into action. I met with Elliot as my first task and gave them a rundown of how I envisioned this project to work. After ensuring that Elliot was on board, I took a look at the current system in the theater. Since I had the opportunity to set up the system a semester ago, I had a good understanding of how everything works together. This made my life easier, as I didn't have to learn a whole new system in a small timeframe. Next, I drew up a rough sketch of the system in the theater. This will help me during the design stages of the project. This is when I started to reach a stalemate in my project. Since EIS is in May, there were no tech lists from performers as it was still way too early. After a two-week stale mate, I finally got an email from Elliot telling me to join the faculty Production meeting, as Adam Wilson has an update regarding EIS. After attending the meeting, I was able to get a tentative tech list from performers. I had to work with what I had, so I created a smaller system block diagram for each group. Group one was pretty simple and only involved three mics going into our input rack on the stage and three monitors for each person in the group. Group two, which was Adam Wilson's group involved taking the XLR out from his interface into our input rack, and also stereo monitors. Group Three involved 1/4-inch stereo outputs from the interface into Active DI boxes out to our input rack. Lastly, Group Four was pretty similar to Group Three's setup. It includes stereo 1/4" outputs from the audio interface to Active DI boxes out to our input rack. The performer also requested a mic splitter, which I had to ask around if we had. As for the monitor situation, groups 2,3,4 will be sharing the same monitors, which meant it had to be moved around during the show. During the design stages, I had a plan that would involve not moving the monitors. This plan involves a passive monitor system. In this case, we would run 9 monitor speakers that will be run to an amp rack backstage. This would involve less movement of monitors on stage and cleaner cable runs. However, I decided to stick to the active system as it involves fewer components and reduces the risk of equipment malfunctions. Once, I had my system diagrams all ready to go, I had another meeting with Elliot to get confirmation on the added components. Once approved it was time to get to work.

On April 16th, that is when I joined the tech production crew. I gave them a rundown of my project and the equipment lists for each group. I supervised the crew as they worked and was able to correct any issues as they arose. Once all the equipment was pulled, we were able to lay them out into the theater. This gave me a chance to plan out the cable management for each group. As I was laying out the cables, I realized that I could use an XLR snake to reduce the amount of runs to the input rack. I

looked with Elliot in the closet and was only able to find the input snakes and no output snakes. In this case, we were able to flip one of the snakes and that would provide the output connections. The other end would require a shorter XLR to the input rack. This made the cable management much neater. After we got a good gist of how the equipment would be laid out, we decided to pack it in for the day. At this point, I have begun the process of patching the board to the correct channels. This took some time but, I was still able to get it done by the end of the day. The following days were spring break and I felt that I already made lots of progress and tried not to worry about it during the break. After the break, it took a few minutes for me to get settled back in after a long break. We were able to get all the equipment out and lay them out as planned. During this time, Adam Wilson is setting up his fretless guitar for his performance. Once, setup I was able to bring his guitar up in the house and it sounded great! Next, we had to check the monitors. This gave me a little bit of a problem, one of the monitors was not receiving a signal. After doing some minor troubleshooting, I was able to fix the issue and it had to do with putting the channel in pre-fader and not post-fader. After Adam finished rehearsing his performance, I called it a day and started to strike equipment that could not be left out. I was pretty satisfied with the amount of work that we were able to get done that day, all that was left was a good night's rest.

On May 3rd, I woke up feeling good and confident. I was able to get to campus at around 10:30 and my deck crew arrived around 11:00 am. Once, they were all here I gave them a rundown of what to expect for the day. We started by pulling the equipment that we put away the previous night. We started prepping by the order in which the performers arrived. So, we started with group 4 then 3,2,1. Moments later I learned that group 1 has dropped from the performance list. I was quite disappointed but, things happen and there is nothing you can do about it. After some time, the first performer which was Dafna arrived at the theater. She was getting ready and she asked if we had a mic splitter which we did not have. Luckily, she was nice enough to let us borrow hers for the day. We got her set up all up and running and were able to bring it into the house to see how it sounded. Once, she was satisfied with the mix, I wrote down the levels for her channels. Next, Freida and Kyle showed up and we were able to set up their setup. As we were setting up, my deck crew told me that it wasn't convenient for them to move the monitors to three different groups across the stage. After thinking about it, I decided to scrap the idea of moving the monitors and told them to get another set of monitors to use for their group. That would result in one less group that they would have to move the monitors to. Once that was settled, I was able to set levels for their performance. Lastly, I had to set levels for Adam Wilson's bit, it was all good until, he noticed that the monitors had a big gain difference. I found this quite weird as I am positive that I was sending the same level to both speakers. After some troubleshooting and help from Professor John Robinson, we were able to determine that there might be some hidden

settings on the board. In the meantime, we were able to set the levels of the monitor by ear. Once that was resolved all the performers were satisfied and it was just a waiting game until show time. Finally, it was showtime and I was able to create a front-of-house mix for the audience. The show was a success and I was pretty pleased with the results. Once the show ended, the team started to break everything down and put them back in the original places. The team did great and I could not have imagined a better team.

Overall, This project was a success and would not have been possible without the help of faculty members and students. It wasn't easy and I knew it would be a challenge. That is one of the main reasons that I took this project. I loved taking challenges and risks so it was only fitting to do this project. I learned many new technical skills as well as learned how to improve my leadership skills. Leading a team is not easy and requires lots of trust from everyone in the team. This project was a big stepping stone in my college career and I am proud of how far I've come.