Berklee College of Music

INWINCCIBLE 360:

A MUSIC ARTIST PRODUCER INNOVATOR PERSONAL BRAND EXPERIMENT

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the

Degree of Master of Music in Music Production, Technology and Innovation

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Abstract

The international music scene has evolved with the explosion of technology. Artists must have diverse or hybrid skills in order to create a unique personal brand identity to break into the international music scene. Also, it is important to cultivate the knowledge of new software, technology and music production skills in order to communicate on the international music arena. However, there is a lack of artist personal brand research and experiment in the music production and innovation areas. Therefore, this personal brand experiment aims to reinvent own artist personal brand "Soo Wincci" into a hybrid music artist producer innovator personal brand called "Inwinccible." This project will first analyze the current state of art for traditional mask changing, some cultural world instruments, aerial circus art, technology arts, experimental electronic music and 360 music video. Then using technology, innovation and electronic music production skills to produce a new hybrid combination of audio and visual experiences into an innovative 360 music video project titled "Inwinccible 360".

Keywords: 360 music video, electronic music, experimental music, inwinccible, mask changing, music production, music technology.

Acknowledgements

This had been a priceless journey for me. Back Home, I was often being told that my international music dream was impossible. I knew that I am not naturally gifted nor I have the luck, hence 10 years ago after winning Miss World Malaysia 2008, I decided to plant a crazy strategy for my international music dream. I spent 10 years in collecting all my talents, experiences and education. I would like to first express my gratitude to all my mentors and teachers back home for not giving up on me.

After graduating from my PhD, I finally took up my courage to apply to my dream school which is Berklee. I am grateful to be accepted to MPTI. I left everything back home and came to Valencia. However, I bear major consequences and I almost wanted to give up half way due to my financial status. Thankfully, my school, teachers, classmates, parents and my true friends back home, each of them had helped me in various ways to support my dream. They gave me so much encouragement and financial support throughout the whole journey and we grew stronger than before and sailed through the storm together.

I would also like to thank all the faculty members, teachers, staff and students in Berklee Valencia as each of them had helped me in various way to build my "Inwinccible 360" project.

Lastly, thank God for this miracle Inwinccible journey and guidance.

1. Introduction

In this digital era, technology and information are growing at an unprecedented speed impacting the music industry. Digital technology and a wide range of new media have made the process of music making easier and this had become the common mode of production for the digital generation.¹ However, technology is not in the driver's seat but rather the power of innovation lies within the hands of human being.² This had also enabled artists and producers to go DIY style.³ Hence, it is important for artist or music producers nowadays to cultivate and utilize technology skills in order to be an innovator to grow their sonic art into the next level.

On the other hand, there are also much misconception about technology. As everything transforms into the digital world nowadays, people often think that technology acts as a tool to destroy traditional art forms.⁴ Instead, it should be a tool to bridge the gap between traditional arts and technology arts. Also, it is important for artist or music producer to build their own unique personal brand identity⁵ rather than just competing with each other in a rat race.⁶

Hence, the main objective of this research is to dedicate own artist personal brand named "Soo Wincci" as the subject of this experiment to reinvent into a new hybrid music artist producer innovator personal brand called "Inwinccible". Subsequently, new technology and electronic music

¹ Brent Luvaas, *DIY Style: Fashion, Music and Global Digital Cultures* (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2012), 11-12.

² Randles, C., *Music Education: Navigating the Future* (New York: Routledge, 2015), 10-13.

³ Barendregt, Bart and Wim van Zanten, *Popular Music in Indonesia since 1998, in Particular Fusion, Indie, and Islamic Music on Video Compact Discs and the Internet* (Yearbook for Traditional Music, 2002), 67-113.

⁴ Cynthia Goodman, "Arts and Technology: Bridging the Gap in the Computer Age," Siggraph, 1982.

⁵ Nicholas Carah, *Pop Brands: Branding, Popular Music and Young People* (New York: Peter Lang, 2010), 10-11.

⁶ Hisham Dahud, "Stand Out from The Crowd: How to Build a Unique Artist Identity," DJ Techtools, 2016, accessed April 23, 2018, http://djtechtools.com/2016/05/23/finding-unique-artist-identity/.

production skills were being cultivated in order to innovate some traditional performing arts and world instruments in creating a new hybrid combination of experimental world electronic pop music and 360 music video.

2. Review of The State of Art

2.1 Aerial Circus Hoop

Aerial hoop is a type of performance in which one or more artists perform aerial acrobatics while hanging from a hoop.⁷ The aerial hoop is a circular steel apparatus suspended from the ceiling, on which circus artists may perform aerial acrobatics.⁸ It can be used static, spinning, or swinging.

Tabs are the connection points where the aerial hoop attaches to the rigging. Most aerial hoops connect at either one point (single tab configuration) or two points (double tab configuration). The number of tabs an aerial hoop has will depend on how it will be used, the intended effect, and the performer's comfort level. On the other hand, double tab hoops hung from two points (at equal or wider spacing as the tabs on the hoop) will swing like a trapeze (or a child's swing) and do not spin. The double tab hoops connected to a single aerial point, the hoop can spin and swing in a multi axis plane i.e. a pendulum swing or a circular flight pattern. All double tab hoops have the ability to hinge from the tab points when the artist hangs from the top portion of the hoop making this style very different in acrobatic capacity than a single tab hoop. Whereas single tabs hung from a single point can spin, and swing along more than one axis i.e. a pendulum swing or a circular flight pattern.

⁷ "Chloe Gardiol Aerial Hoop Cry Me A River," YouTube video, 4:19, video created by Chloe Gardiol, posted by Chloe Gardiol, Aug 27, 2013, accessed December 10, 2017, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T_aQErxgt1E.

⁸ "Aerial Hoops, Quidam by Cirque du Soleil," YouTube video, 6:28, video created by Danila Bim, posted by Danila Bim, July 25 2016, accessed December 10, 2017, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=znCWDsiDV5Q.

Aerial hoops can be hollow or solid. Lighter hoops will spin more easily; once a solid hoop gets momentum, it will stay spinning for much longer. Sometimes aerial hoops have crossbars or hand or foot loops to aid the performer.⁹

Aerial hoop for live performance is being controlled by electrical hoist. However, usually the aerialist would need another person to control the movement of the hoop with the electrical hoist.

On the other hand, majority aerialists perform their routine to a song on the market, there are not many songs custom made for the circus art.

2.2 Traditional Asian Mask Changing

The traditional Asian mask changing which is known as "Bian Lian" is an ancient Chinese dramatic art that is part of the general Sichuan opera. Performers wore bright coloured masks then they would change from one face to another almost instantaneously with the swipe of a second.¹⁰ This is a very precious traditional art. It had evolved into LED mask changing.¹¹

Although changes had been done with the costumes, there are still loads of room of innovation.

⁹ "Alyona Pavlova - Cerceau Aérien / LE PLUS GRAND CABARET DU MONDE," YouTube video, 6:35, video created by Patrick Sebastien, posted by Patrick Sebastien, accessed December 10, 2017, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ottqRs3aYss.

¹⁰ "World Class Mask Changer," YouTube video, 4:51, video created by Utah MTB, posted by Utah MTB, accessed December 10, 2017, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-fWVAN0Er_4&t=58s.

¹¹ "LED Mask Changing," YouTube video, 1:15, video created by Signature Moments, posted by Signature Moments, accessed December 10, 2017, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bI_3EAzTyxk.

2.3 World Instruments (Gamelan and Erhu)

There are various instruments in the world which each is a unique representative of the culture of its creation. They have been developed over generations to accommodate the needs of the musician with its specific function within the community.¹²

Gamelan is one of the world instruments which is made up of percussive instruments and it is a traditional ensemble music of Java and Bali in South East Asia.¹³ The popularity of Gamelan has declined since the revolution of pop music and it is only often being performed in traditional music.¹⁴

On the other hand, erhu is a two-stringed musical instrument from China and sometimes is known as the Chinese violin. It is often used in cultural ensembles. It is also a versatile instrument and nowadays being used in both traditional and contemporary music.¹⁵

All these world instruments should not just be used in the traditional or contemporary music context, instead it should be incorporated into the electronic music world in order to bridge the gap between both worlds.

¹² Isis Wolf-Light, "How do musical instruments reflect aspects of the culture in which they are used?," Academia.edu, accessed June 26, 2018,

 $https://www.academia.edu/8689994/How_do_musical_instruments_reflect_aspects_of_the_culture_in_which_they_are_used.$

¹³ John Wells, *Longman Pronunciation Dictionary*, 3rd ed. (Pearson Longman, 2008).

¹⁴ Bramantyo Prijosusilo, "Indonesia needs the Harmony of the Gamelan," The Jakarta Globe, 2013, accessed 26 June, 2018, https://web.archive.org/web/20130115102945/http://www.thejakartaglobe.com/commentary/indonesia-needs-the-harmony-of-the-gamelan/423530.

¹⁵ Yuen Shi Chun, "The Hong Kong Chinese Orchestra's Eco-huqin Series," Wayback Machine, accessed 26 June, 2018,

https://web.archive.org/web/20130704041338/http://www.hkco.org/HKCO_Friends.aspx?channel=1&pagenumber=8 &lang=E.

2.4 Real Time Light Projection on Face

The latest state of art for real time light projection on face is an act created by Nobumichi Asai¹⁶ in collaboration with Omote¹⁷ which combines real-time face tracking and projection mapping to apply a computer-generated set of makeup, which can be as static or dynamic.

This technology art is still quite new and should be used more in live performances in a creative way.

2.5 Experimental Electronic Music

Experimental electronic music had been evolving rapidly. Many artists had been using their creativity in inventing new types of experimental electronic music. The range of the music had been really wide and went beyond imagination.

However, seldom traditional instruments were incorporated, there is a need to add in more traditional instruments or different diversity of artist to bridge the gap between traditional instrument sound with digital sound design.

¹⁶ "Amazing Real Time Face Tracking and projection mapping by Nobumichi Asai," YouTube video, 2:03, video created by artFido, posted by artFido, accessed December 10, 2017, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0Vj4ts2UNWo.

¹⁷ "OMOTE REAL TIME FACE TRACKING & PROJECTION MAPPING+ on Vimeo," YouTube video, 2:18, video created by MrZef77, posted by MrZef77, accessed December 10, 2017, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fbT9JVKSsyk.

2.6 360 Music Videos

With YouTube and Facebook platform supporting 360 music video, many music artists had been experimenting with 360 Music Videos.

One of the example, Mike Shinoda, the multi-instrumentalist and producer of the rock band Linkin Park, has taken on the stage name Fort Minor for his revamped hip-hop career. Produced by the uprising creative, the song "Welcome" is made into a 360 music video displaying scenes from Venice Beach, California. In the video, one would be introduced to the people that belong to the community of Venice and cut up sections of a time-lapse featuring a striking graffiti mural.¹⁸

On the other hand, "Waiting for Love" by the Swedish producer Avicii is still one of the most popular 360 music videos to date. In the video, there are doors outlining 270 and a group of TV screens taking up the remaining 90.¹⁹ This provided the chance to sit down and watch the video while comfortably turning one's head. The skilled dancers grabbed audience attention as they perform a choreographed dance coming in and out of the doors. Another appealing aspect of the music video is that it faded in and out of various hues and saturation color combinations. These effects were made to match the rhythm of the beat of the song.

Many of the 360 Music Videos are still very raw, there are still loads of room for innovation and creativity. Also, it is usually hard to set up lighting for 360 music video, hence new dimension of 360 music video should be innovated without ignoring the lighting for the subject.

¹⁸ "Welcome [Standard Version] - Fort Minor (Official Video)," YouTube video, 4:38, video created by Fort Minor, posted by Fort Minor, accessed December 10, 2017, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xEoMC7czIxA.

¹⁹ "Avicii - Waiting for Love (360 Video)," YouTube video, 3:52, video created by AviciiOfficialVEVO, posted by AviciiOfficialVEVO, accessed December 10, 2017, http://www.uotube.com/wateb?y=adol_December 10, 2017,

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

3. Description

Inwinccible 360 project is to use own self as the subject of experiment to transform from an artist personal brand "Soo Wincci" to a hybrid artist music producer innovator brand called "Inwinccible". Subsequently, forming a music production team with members from various background and diversity. Then using technology, innovation and music production skills to experiment and reinvent various performing arts collected such as traditional mask changing and aerial circus arts, world music instruments such as gamelan and erhu to produce a new combination of experimental world electronic pop music and a new hybrid 360 music video. This whole project is being entitled as "Inwinccible 360". Each part of the project will be further explained in the next section.

3.1 Artist, Music Producer and Innovator

This project involves the artist brand named "Soo Wincci" as the main subject of experiment. She will challenge the role as an artist, music producer and innovator to reinvent herself into a hybrid brand called "Inwinccible". Her scope of work will involve not just performing but also producing, directing, innovating, creating, experimenting, team building and leading this whole project.

3.2 Diversity Music Production Team

A team called "Inwinccible 360 Music Production Team" were created with artists, musicians, engineer, sound designer and music producers from various background and diversity. This gave different colours and perspective to the whole production creating a world dimension to the audio and visual experiences.

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This project also collaborated with another music production team called "UpCraft Music" which did the opening background music for the intro of the 360 Music Video.

3.3 Technology Mask Changing and Aerial Circus Art

Technology mask changing (fig. 1) is being created by making the mask layer in Photoshop then mask visuals on After Effects and Adobe Premier. Subsequently, it is being projected and mapped via Resolume (fig. 2) on the face mask while incorporating traditional mask changing technique together (fig. 3). Resolume is being used here as it is suitable for small scale light mapping, however the lighting could be less visible on camera, hence the lighting of the surrounding must be dark.

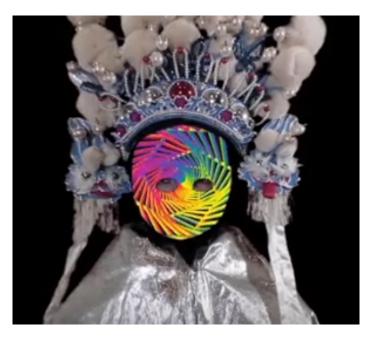


Figure 1. Technology Mask Changing

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Figure 2. Technology Mask Mapping on Resolume



Figure 3. Traditional Mask Changing

Aerial Hoop is being performed and shot on green screen (fig. 4). Then using After Effects to key in the background to create a space effect (fig. 5). After Effects is a great tool for keying background effects smoothly. However, the percentage of grain must be balanced equally otherwise there will be too much noise in the footages.



Figure 4. Aerial Hoop on Green Screen

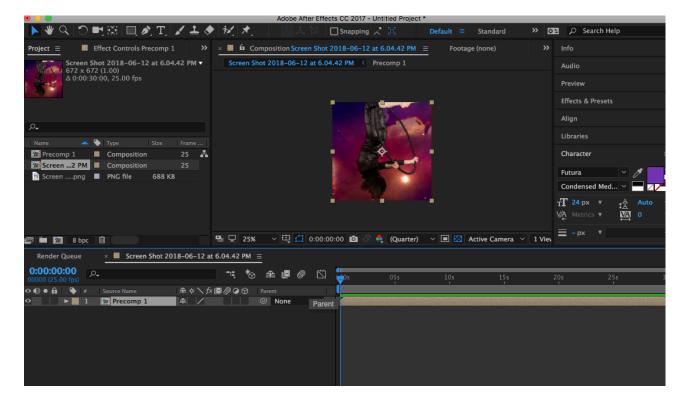


Figure 5. Keying Background on After Effects

3.4 Experimental World Electronic Pop Music

The song "We Are Inwinccible" is being created with the utilisation of world instruments such as Gamelan and Erhu, acoustic instruments such as Piano, midi instruments such as key board and synth into electronic music production. Some different languages such as Malay, Chinese and Spanish were added into the main lyrics, but the overall lyrics was in English. Also, with the combination of different diversity of artists and musician this gave birth to the hybrid genre of experimental world electronic pop music.

This electronic song is being created on Ableton (fig. 6) but some of the instruments were recorded in Pro Tools to get the live instrument sound. Then all the tracks were bounced individually and mixed in Pro Tools to get a better mix (fig. 7).

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Figure 6. Electronic Song Production

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Figure 7. Recording and Mixing on Pro Tools

3.5 360 Music Video

All the footages were being shot using normal camera on green screen. Then using After Effects to key in all the background. Subsequently, editing is being performed on Adobe Premiere. After editing, the different clips were being stitched and modified on After Effects to make the rotation effect and also a preparation before the 360 metadata injection (fig.8). Lastly, an application called 360 video metadata was being downloaded and the clip is being injected with 360 metadata (fig.9) to create the 360 video effect on YouTube.

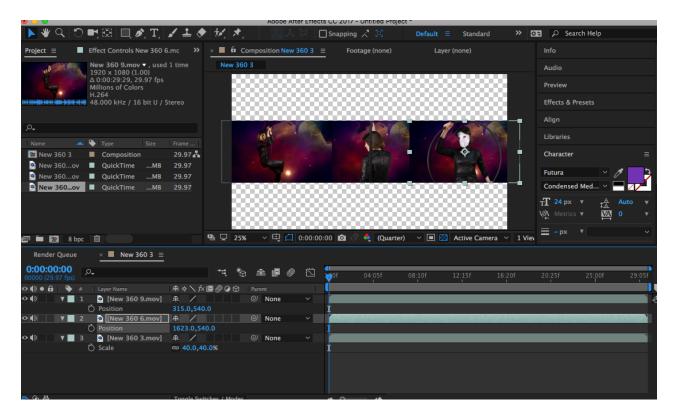


Figure 8. Stitching Videos in After Effects



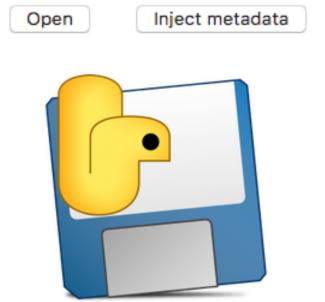


Figure 9. 360 Video Metadata

4. Innovative Aspect

4.1 2D in 360 Music Video

The first innovative aspect of this project is the creation of 2D footages in 360 dimension. Usually, most 360 videos are being shot using 360 cameras or with 6 different cameras. However, in this project just one camera was being used and the concept of this project created a new concept for 360 Music Video with lower cost.

4.2 Experimental World Electronic Pop Music

Different world instruments, languages and various diversity team members were being experimented and added into this production. This project managed to produce a hybrid genre of experimental world electronic pop music and the title of the song is "We Are Inwinccible".

4.3 Technology Mask Changing

Traditionally mask changing is often being performed with just the changes of Chinese mask. However, this project incorporated technology light mapping on the mask which bridge the gap between technology and traditional arts.

5. New Skills Acquired

5.1Technology & Software

(i) Pro Tools

This is an important DAW to produce, record, edit, mixing and mastering for Inwinccible 360 project. This knowledge would be useful in song production, recording or mixing in the future.

(ii) Ableton

The sound design, song arrangement, electronic and song composition of the song was made in this DAW. Also, this software enables endless experiments on electronic music production in the coming future.

(iii) Resolume

This software was being used for visuals mapping and light installation for technology light mask changing. This is a very important software for more visual creation and light mapping on various art of object.

(iv) Adobe Premiere

The main video software to edit and create the footages for the 360 Music Video. This is also very important tools to create promotional and behind the scenes videos for story telling or multimedia videos for pitching purposes.

(v) After Effects

This software is essential for the creation of 360 music video in this project manually by stitching the footages together. Also, many effects could be made and developed in this software to create more innovative visual experiences in 360 music video dimension.

(vii) 360 Video Metadata

This is a free application to transform normal video footages into a 360 Video in online platform such as YouTube. This allows 360 videos being uploaded into the online world without losing its quality.

5.2 Soft Skills

(i) Music Artist and Producer

The most important soft skills cultivated a producer ranges from the skills of conceptual planning, budgeting, doing proposals, music producing and team building for the project with limited budget. On the other hand, learning how to strike a balance as a music producer and artist at the same time is really important. Also, the skill to communicate and deal with different people from different backgrounds and expertise is one of the most important soft skills in any industry.

(ii) Music Video Director & Editor

The music video production enabled the acquisition skills as both a director and editor in in story developing, planning, directing, shooting and editing music video. The most essential skills earned to able to transcend own mind vision onto artist and also guide them throughout the whole shooting process.

(iii) Innovator

The usage of all different elements, technologies, talents and diversity into building something different and innovative in this projects transformed one artist music producer into an innovator. As an innovator, one must learnt how to take risk and dare to fail to push boundaries as this is one of the most important criteria as a leader in this ever-changing industry. Also, innovator plays an important role in not just creating but also using technology to protect and bridge various art forms, instruments and diversity together.

6. Challenges

Inwinccible 360 is an ambitious project with limited cost and time. There were too many parts for this one project, it took quite some time not only to learn and explore each different software but at the same time to write, produce, train and record every part. Hence, sticking to schedule and timeline was crucial. On the other hand, this project involved a group of artists with busy time schedule so this was being solved by having late night rehearsals and each artist self-recorded their instruments part themselves to speed up the music production.

The most challenging part was the 360 music video creation. Initially, a 360 camera was being utilized but the resolution of the footages was too low, then six Go Pro cameras were being considered for the music video production, however the flaw was the subject could not be lighted. Hence, much researches were spent on the 360 music video production in figuring a new way to produce a 360 music video. After months of researches, test and errors, footages were being shot in normal camera on green screen so that the subject and background could be under control then it was manually stitched on After Effects and lastly 360 metadata was injected to create a 2D video in 360 dimension.

Moreover, too much time was spent on the 360 music video production which left lesser time for the song production. However, this is being solved by bring more members into the team to polish and produce the whole track. Lastly, the balance among artist, music producer and innovator was difficult to strike in the beginning as too much roles were being put onto one person. However, this was being overcome by having a clear vision, always stay focused and getting constructive criticism and help from advisor, peers and teachers.

7. Future Plans

Inwinccible 360 is just the beginning of a music artist producer innovator personal brand experiment. This project will slowly be developed each year by adding more diversity of team members and elements such as different technology, skills, talents, languages, world instruments and sound designs into the project while polishing the existing skills and software. Also, 360 ambisonic audio might be added into the project to create a full spectrum of 360 audio and visual experiences. Slowly, it could be developed from online 360 music videos into 360 albums, 360 showcases and one day an immersive 360 concert. The Inwinccible 360 future plans projection are shown in figure 10.



Figure 10. Inwinccible 360 Future Plans Projections

8. Conclusion

In conclusion, this is a hybrid music artist producer innovator personal brand experiment. In this project, various elements of traditional performing arts, world music instruments, electronic music and diversity were being combined to create a new hybrid experimental world electronic pop music genre for this Inwinccible 360 project. Most importantly, the balance role as a music artist, producer and innovator were being experimented. This Inwinccible 360 project also hopes to keep on challenging its limits by innovating and creating more new breakthrough hybrid 360 spectrums of audio and visual experiences for the audience in the near future. Lastly, this project aims to inspire more music artists to step out from their comfort zone and challenge the role as a producer and innovator.

Appendix A	. Plan	of Action	and	Projected	Timeline
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Timeline	Plan of Action
September 2017	Brainstorming & Cultivating New Skills in Music Production
October 2017	Collecting More References & Ideas
November 2017	1 st Draft of Music Composition, 1 st Draft Story Board, 1 st Draft Transition of Arts & Searching Venue & 360 Music Video Shooting & Budget
December 2017	Circus Training, Ingredients Purchasing & Song Demo Ready
January 2018	Final Confirmation of Project & 2 nd Phase of Polishing CE
February 2018	Rehearsal & Shooting Prototypes
March 2018	Prototypes Presentation
April & May 2018	Post Production & Final Touch Up & Submission
June 2018	CE Defence

Appendix B. Budget and Cost

Inwinccible 360 Budget Proposal

Item									
EXPENSE	Proposed	Real	After 1 Month	After 2 Months	After 5 Months	Final Total			
Materials (disposables)									
Hard Drives	\$250.00	\$0	0	0	0	0			
Memory Cards	\$100.00	\$0	0	0	0	0			
Software	\$200.00	\$0	0	0	0	0			
Subtotal	\$350.00	\$0	0	0	0	0			
Equipment									
Hardware									
Mask Changing Ingredients	\$100.00	\$100	\$100	\$100	\$100	\$100			
360 Camera (Purchase)	\$350.00	\$0	0	0	0	0			
Subtotal	\$650.00								
/enue									
Bunker	\$100.00	\$100	\$38	\$70	\$100	\$100			
Subtotal	\$100.00	\$100	\$38	\$70	\$100	\$100			
Own Fee	\$3,000.00	\$0	0	0	0	0			
ubtotal	\$3,000.00	\$0	\$38	\$70	\$100	\$100			
Total	\$4,100.00	\$200	\$138	\$170	\$200	\$200			

Appendix C. Lyrics

We Are Inwinccible

We Are Inwinccible We Are Inwinccible We Are The Inwinccible

Aku Inwinccible Yo Soy Inwincible 我就是 Inwinccible

We Are The Inwinccible We Will Fight For Our Dreams We Will Keep Going On Till The End

We Are Inwinccible We Are Inwinccible We Are The Inwinccible

Aku Inwinccible Yo Soy Inwincible 我就是 Inwinccible

oooo oooo oooo oooo yaaa yaaa hooo hooo hoou

No Matter How Hard It Is Never Give Up Your Dreams We Will Always Be There For You Fighting Stronger Than Before Yeah Yeahhhhh Inwinccibles ~~~~

Aku Inwinccible Yo Soy Inwinccible 我就是 Inwinccible

We Are Inwinccible We Are Inwinccible We Are The Inwinccible

Inwinccible Inwinccible Inwinccible

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