

Orion-Cygnus Mix



https://soundcloud.com/uhqi/orion-cygnus-mix?si=59a470b50a814a7e8de1119c54ae815b&utm_source=clipboard&utm_medium=text&utm_campaign=social_sharing

Since I was a kid, I've always been intrigued by exploring new places. I liked discovering new things that I don't get to see everyday. This took the form of exploring hotels during vacation as a kid and venturing into abandoned mental hospitals in rural Tennessee as a teen. This trait is a defining part of my personality and my inspiration for this art piece. I've always been interested in the idea of how being in an unfamiliar space can make us feel alien and new.

I never grew up playing an instrument or seeing myself as especially musically talented. I also didn't grow up around a lot of music in general and if so, it would be religious or cultural. Music outside my home culture came later for me, mostly through my older siblings and whatever they were into at the time. By the time I started finding things on my own, I was still a kid discovering random Minecraft remixes and early electronic stuff online. This distance made music feel like a world I had to uncover on my own. Every new sound felt like a discovery. I was always digging for something new that I've never heard before. That mindset still shapes my creativity today.

For my art piece, I wanted to turn that instinct into a DJ set that feels like a journey through the Milky Way. I called it Orion Cygnus Mix, named after the Orion-Cygnus Arm where

our solar system sits. Each shift in sound invites the listener into another phase of the journey, room by room, track by track."

The mix is seven tracks, and I structured it like an actual space journey. The first track is calming and hopeful - the kind of feeling you'd have right before launch, looking up at what's ahead. The second track shifts into something more exploratory and structured. It's repetitive in a way that mirrors how organized a space team has to be when preparing for a journey. Everything has to be precise and methodical.

By the third track, things become blissful. This is when you've left Earth's atmosphere and everything calms down. You're starting to get used to your new environment, looking around and noticing details you couldn't see before. The fourth track introduces something distinct and new. It has a few spikes in vibe and volume that emulate unexpected obstacles or challenges in the journey - the kind of moments where things don't go according to plan and you have to adapt.

The fifth track is where those obstacles intensify. It has sounds that feel like alarms going off. The BPM gets higher here. I wanted to push that sense of urgency and tension, like something critical is happening and you need to respond. The sixth track is faster and more sophisticated - digital and mechanical. It represents navigating those challenges through precision and technology, moving forward with more complexity.

The last track is mature, a little alien, and repetitive. It felt like the right finale. Something that acknowledges you've traveled far from where you started, and you're in a space that doesn't feel like home anymore.

What interests me a lot about human understanding of the cosmos is how we project human narratives onto cosmic phenomena. Space isn't actually a journey with clear phases or emotional arcs but rather a vacuum filled with violent, chaotic activity like exploding stars and colliding galaxies. But as humans, we can't help but turn it into something we can understand through familiar structures like beginnings, obstacles, and resolutions. This mix does the same thing. I'm taking the abstract idea of the Orion-Cygnus Arm and turning it into a narrative with tension and release, calm and chaos, even though the actual arm is just a region of space with no inherent story.

The progression through the tracks mirrors how we try to make sense of the unknown. We start with hope and structure because that's how we approach exploration. We build systems and logic to navigate unfamiliar territory, like Niven's characters using observation and reasoning to survive. But eventually we hit moments that feel alien and incomprehensible, where the sounds don't resolve into anything comforting. That's closer to what space actually is: something that doesn't care about our need for resolution or meaning.