

Your name: Shin-ting LIN

Song name: 趙翊帆 x 張晉瑚 - 關於沒有結果的感情的歌

First impressions (30-sec snap judgment A&R listen)

- Good blend of Mando Pop and R&B in terms of songwriting and production. I love the vocal melodies and flow.
- Very pleasant mix and production to listen to; the mix is very "correct" nothing seems to be very off technically. Solid job!
- I love the intro vibe and how the arrangement develops smoothly from section to section, and the mix compliments that well, keeping the sonic consistency throughout the song.
- I love the vocal tone throughout the song. Very clean, well compressed, works well in the instrumental. The balance and the tone of the instruments are appropriate as a pre-mixed beat.
- I'm not a fan of the kick drum, and the mix seems a bit too heavy on the overall compression/limit; it lacks the punch and excitement I am looking for. The vocal tuning between the lead vocal and background vocals seems off, which makes it slightly distracting from time to time. The background vocals arrangement is a bit too much when there's a lot of things happening in the music simultaneously.

Overall thoughts on the mix

- Overall, it's a clean mix, great job! I can enjoy the song from top to bottom without disturbance.
- The arrangement gets busy at specific parts of the song, but you present all the elements quite well in the mix, the transitions are smooth.
- The kick feels very wide somehow, and the tone is quite strange; there's a lot of high-end information, but it doesn't have a lot of low-end information. Aside from the bass, it's the only element in the low end to support the mix — but you have a great tone on the bass. You might want to make the kick mono and give it more body and low end to make it appropriate for the genre.
- It's hard to mix vocals sung in Mandarin because of the pronunciation, making it difficult to mix the vocals bright and presence while keeping it smooth. But you did a good job. I'll still pay a bit more attention around 2.5khz-3khz and de-esse slightly more at certain spots. The lead vocal gets harsh occasionally, especially at a high level. Try to employ multiband EQ or compression for more control.

Your song/mix feedback was done by Matt Sim

Book Matt on SongChecks here (<https://bit.ly/3rvOy2Y>)

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- Pay more attention to the lead vocal level and tone in different sections. There's a little bit of inconsistency, especially when the beat mix is very consistent, that sticks out.

Section by section thoughts

- INTRO 0:00-0:23
 - I love the filter on the entire section. The vibe is great.
- VERSES
 - @1:09 Very cool filter on the vocals and the Saxophone.
 - Be careful of the 1.6khz build-up in that section.
 - The filtered Saxophone and background vocal fought with each other in the frequency spectrum here around 1khz.
 - Lead vocal can be a tad brighter here, similar to the section before. Right now, the lead vocal is a bit overpowered by the music.
 - @2:05 Lead Vocal needs to be louder; Saxophone also overlapping with the BGV; I think there's an arrangement problem here.
- HOOK (0:23 - 0:45, 1:30 - 1:54)
 - The Lead Vocal feels a tiny bit phasey here (maybe because of some stereoization?). The mid-range is not as solid as the verse vocals somehow.
 - Background vocal tuning is clashing with everything else here @0:29-0:33. You might want to fix the tuning or turn them down, so they don't stick out.
 - You could use some subtle quarter note or $\frac{1}{8}$ delay on the vocals to add more depth. Right now, the vocals seem too dry and not interesting enough.
 - @0:40 nice reverb throw, highlight that more!
 - @0:44 the lead vocal tone changes, the mid-range is better than before, but now it's too darker, not cutting through the mix enough; maybe try making it slightly brighter or louder. But this is my favorite lead vocal tone in the hook throughout the song.

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- @0:48 The background vocals with the telephone effect on the side have a tad too much 900hz. @0:50, the filtered background vocal kind of masking everything else, probably can mute those here.
- @1:36 The lead vocal and background vocals are all masking each other. The bass is playing high up with the fill-in, so it needs to be more sensitive to how the beat is interacting with the vocals here.
- Similar comments for the last chorus.

- BRIDGE/BREAK
 - @2:18: The lead vocal is a bit too harsh here, and that doesn't fit the instrumental. It's also a bit too aggressive with the "s" and the 3khz. Overall, it has been a similar issue throughout the song. I'm just pointing out the worst here.

What rules (things you nailed)

- Lead vocal tone is excellent, 9.5/10.
- The general vibe on the song is there; you made some creative ideas on the effects like reverb throw and filtering on the vocals to match the beat. I think that's great!

What does not (things we need to work on)

- I am thinking about the consistency of lead vocal tone and lead vocal balance vs. the instrumental. On the vocal bus, I might add a multiband compression to keep the tone of the multiple lead vocals within control and listen in mono and make sure the lead vocal level is consistent. Sometimes, the lead vocal is slightly on top of the beat, and sometimes is more in the beat.
- The use of delays instead of reverbs. The beat itself has many reverbs going on, and adding more reverbs on the vocals is probably not a great idea; therefore try experimenting with delays to create depth and space.

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- The reverb you have tonally blends with the music. However, I would suggest a longer pre-delay time, so there's more separation between the reverb and the lead vocal so that the lead vocal will be less washy. If you picture it, the lead vocal should be upfront, then the beat behind it and the vocal reverbs further back.
- Be more sensitive to what's going on with the arrangement. It might not be your fault when there are a lot of things happening in the arrangement that don't work well together. E.g., there are numerous stacks of out-of-tune harmonies with saxophone in the song or when the bass is doing a busy fill-in that covers the vocals. The arranger/producer, 90% of the time, didn't hear that in the rough mix when things weren't clear, and a lot of the arrangement flaws were masked. As a mixer, we should point them out to the producer and see how we can fix them or try to hide those defects.
- I do realize the beat is a premixed stereo instrumental. It's not ideal, but we have to do what we have to do still. You can still mix the beat as much as you can, e.g., summing the sub low into mono, so the kick drum would be more focused in the center and then process it further. You can also use the multiband eq or compressor to control the overall tonal balance on the beat to carve out more frequency space for the vocals.
- Background vocals sometimes get too muddy and mask the mix a bit. The mix could benefit from that with even more clarity if they can get similar treatment like your lead vocal processing.

What would I reference if I was mixing this?

- I think Ching G Squad's Freeway: same language, similar beat and vibe, multiple lead singers. But I would de-esse more and make the vocal smoother for your song.

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Overall mix rating: scale of 1 - 10 (1 = remix it, 10 = Grammy time)

- I'll give it an 8/10. Overall the mix is at a great spot already, the arrangement is not perfect, but you tackled it and made everything presentable and convincing. The overall vibe and the EQ/Balance/Compression on all the elements are close to perfect.

Final thoughts

- This song has a reasonably busy arrangement, especially with lots of background vocals at certain parts of the song, but the energy level is pretty static. More punch from the drum would help a bit, as well as changing the reverbs and delays in different sections could help make the arrangement more interesting and dynamic.
- It's time to experiment with special effects, automations and highlight a few moments and see if it elevates the song. The mix is super safe right now, don't be afraid to make bold moves and make it cool. There's also room to improve with the low end, which separates the pro from the average mixer. You haven't found the proper tone for the kick and bass yet to make it stylistically correct. I do believe you have the ability to refine the premixed beat further.
- The background vocal mix gets muddy sometimes.
- I also think this song needs more depth which could be achieved by playing with delay and reverb on the lead vocals and background vocals.

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