



Curatorial > VARIATIONS

With this section, RWM continues a line of programmes devoted to exploring the complex map of sound art from different points of view organised in curatorial series.

'Variation' is the formal term for a musical composition based on a previous musical work, and many of those traditional methods (changing the key, meter, rhythm, harmonies or tempi of a piece) are used in much the same manner today by sampling musicians. But the practice of sampling is more than a simple modernization or expansion of the number of options available to those who seek their inspiration in the refinement of previous composition. The history of this music traces nearly as far back as the advent of recording, and its emergence and development mirrors the increasingly self-conscious relationship of society to its experience of music. Starting with the precedents achieved by Charles Ives and John Cage, VARIATIONS will present an overview of the major landmarks in Sampling Music, following examples in twentieth century composition, folk art and commercial media through to the meeting of all those threads in the present day.

Curated by Jon Leidecker.

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Jon Leidecker was born in 1970 in Washington D.C. to two physicists. Since 1990 he has performed appropriative collage music under the pseudonym Wobbly, aiming for extended narratives spun from spontaneous yet coherent multi-sample polyphony. Selected recent works are freely available online. <http://detritus.net/wobbly/>

VARIATIONS #6

The Library

We encounter the establishment of sound libraries, collections explicitly curated for further use: sound objects presented as authorless, unfinished ingredients. Though some libraries contain newly commissioned generic sounds, specifically designed for maximum flexibility, the most widely used sounds are often sourced from commercial recordings, freed from their original context to propagate across dozens to hundreds of songs. From presets for digital samplers to data CD-ROMs to hip-hop battle records, sounds increasingly detach from their sources, used less as references to any original moment, and more as objects in a continuous public domain.

As hip-hop undergoes a conservative retrenchment in the wake of the early nineties sampling lawsuits, a widening variety of composers and groups expand the practice of appropriative audio collage as a formal discipline. The aesthetic of the sound libraries gives rise to recombinant genres like drum and bass, the use of sampling as romanticized representation leads to the first quadruple platinum world music collage, and we encounter a novelty single that quietly heralds a musical form that would soon become known as the mashup.

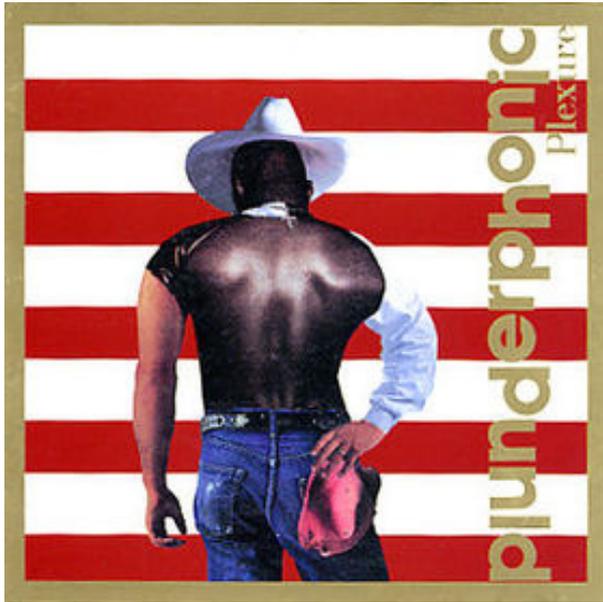
01. Transcript

Hello. This is Jon Leidecker, and welcome to the sixth episode of VARIATIONS, tracing the history of appropriative collage in music. Or, more precisely, appropriative collage as practiced during the age of recorded music, or else we'd have to go all the way back to the beginning. Before we'd become conscious of any difference between music and language. And we can't go back that far. In fact we find it difficult enough to imagine apart from concepts like 'author' and 'owner'.

The UK Guardian recently wrote a small story about the practice of remixing which began by reassuring its readers with this sentence: 'The rewriting of works by other composers is a venerable tradition, going back to at least the time of Josquin.' Of course the fifteenth century was hardly the first time that someone had used a previously existing piece in his own work. What was actually still somewhat new was the concept of the composer itself, someone claiming sole authorship of a work. The concept of the composer was enabled by the emergence of written notation in the nineteenth century. Originally a way for the church to document existing plainchant melodies, it soon became a generative tool in its own right. Slowly the transcribers became composers, creating works by borrowing a pre-existing sacred melody, the cantus firmus: almost all works were variations on the known tradition. And so most early works were left unsigned; we only have the names of polyphonic masters Leónin and Perótin thanks to the anonymous historian who named their works as the best of their age. But by the fourteenth century, notation had become less a tool than the master of musical progress. As notation conferred immortality to generations of composers, the men once seen as simple craftsmen following innate laws of harmony slowly gained in authority. By the Romantic nineteenth century, they were gifted geniuses, inventors of their own rules, their music the apparent product of unbounded self-expression.

In some ways, the arrival of sound recordings challenged this growing authority by offering this same immortality to improvising musicians. Records documented music more accurately as a social practice. But recordings also consolidated the redefinition of music begun by the previous literary medium. Now, more than ever, music was an object, a property. Something not just experienced, but owned. And increasingly, something a consumer must own in order to experience.

So these final associations with property are actually very recent developments, definitions gone invisible. The concept of the individual composer remains largely alien to cultures outside of the West, where music, developed as part of an oral



[John Oswald *Plexure*, 1993]

culture, can have innovators, but can not have owners. Which brings us back to our history of appropriative collage, which only seems to us to be a revolutionary new practice. More accurately, this podcast is the story of how the technology of recorded music is naturally leading the West back towards core musical practices of mimesis, variation and social collaboration. Practices which were discouraged by the previous medium of notation because it was incapable of documenting them. And even though most of us intuitively recognize these practices to be at the core of what music actually is, our culture has made such a fetish of the author, of property, of the individual, that this new music seems somehow threatening. The law suggests that it is illegal to sell this music, even illegal to give it away. From our current perspective, sampling raises unanswerable questions, all of which have nothing to do with what the music is actually trying to tell us. The music is trying to answer the next set of questions, and it's left to us to figure out what those questions actually are.

[Public Enemy 'Pollywanacraka / Who Stole the Soul', 1990]

[John Oswald 'Plexure: Massive', 1993]

For a few years around 1990, the differences between art and popular music collage became slightly harder to hear. That first track was Public Enemy from their 1990 album *Fear of a Black Planet*, followed by John Oswald's *Plexure* from 1992. The former sold one million copies the first week of its release; the second was an import-only CD on John Zorn's Japanese record label. *Plexure* is a 20 minute collage sampling approximately one thousand pop songs, all sourced from those previous ten years, the first decade of the compact disc. What seems at first to be endless variation is in fact a piece strictly organized by tempo, slowly ascending from 80 to 140 beats per minute and beyond, one long accelerando with all of pop's song structures and repetitions spliced away. Only the sounds themselves are left, the production styles holding an entire genre of pop music together.

If *Plexure* represented the avant-garde horizon on its release, the practice of sampling seemed to intrinsically lead hip-hop artists away from traditional songwriting forms as well. There are still verses and choruses on Ice Cube's 'Jackin' for Beats', even though the music itself changes completely every eight bars. Notably, Ice Cube's lyrics directly liken the practice of sampling to theft. And if the liner notes do give shout outs to the six rap groups this song samples, it doesn't mention the songs those groups were sampling from. By 1991 we are already layers deep.

[Ice Cube 'Jackin' for Beats', 1990]

Huh, and even if you're down with my crew
I jack them too
And then we'll freak it
Kick that bass, and look what we did
Fade the grade, played, and made a few mil
And I keep stealin'

Ice Cube will take a funky beat and reshape it
Locate a dope break, and then I break it
And give it that gangsta lean
Dead in your face as I turn up the bass

So you think you're protected
Well you are til you put a funky beat on a record
Then I have to show and prove and use your groove
Cause suckers can't fade the Cube

For a brief moment, it seemed that hip-hop was not only pointing in the same basic direction as the most extreme music being made by the avant-garde, it was going multi-platinum with it. We'll never know how much further out hip-hop might have travelled. But it is now history that immediately after the lawsuits, the music changed direction.

[Gang Starr, 'Jazz Thing (Movie Mix)', 1990]



[Carl Stone]

Some artists pursued obscurer sources to sample, or strengthened hip-hop's connections with its musical history by reaching back beyond seventies R&B and soul samples to earlier examples of jazz history. But the overwhelmingly preferred approach was to go back to basics, to keep the licensing manageable by making entire songs from only one or two basic loops, pushing the structure of rap songs away from collage and towards being a simple cover version of the sampled tune. Released late in 1992, Dr. Dre's overwhelmingly influential album *The Chronic* signaled the new direction while rolling the clock to the earliest days of studio hip-hop – re-recording the music from a sample, then looping the new performance. This allowed for more flexibility in licensing. *The Chronic's* success showed a business-friendly way out for commercial hip-hop made with sampling, a more direct approach a world away from the experimental riots of the previous few years.

In the late eighties, Bob Ostertag returned to music after spending ten years as an activist and journalist documenting the revolutions and counter-revolutions in Nicaragua and El Salvador. Before that decade away, he had been improvising music in New York with John Zorn and Fred Frith, playing modular synthesizer and experimenting with cassettes of TV and radio broadcasts, such as on the 1982 live album *Voice of America*.

[Bob Ostertag & Fred Frith 'Voice of America Part I', 1981]

On his return, he bought an Ensoniq digital sampler with a focus on real time improvisation with samples, as heard here as a member of Fred Frith's group Keep the Dog.

[Keep the Dog 'True Love (Schorndorf)', 1991]

Even after scrambling his field recordings into pure sound, they remain documents of real events. An orphaned boy in El Salvador, swearing revenge on the National Guard as flies swarm the grave of his father becomes the material for a 45 minute piece. Or melodies traced from shouts recorded during a protest for gay rights turned riot become the vocals for a string quartet. His four album series *Say No More* is a prolonged exploration of the practice of composing from recorded improvisations. On the first album, Ostertag commissioned solo recordings from three free jazz musicians, then composed the tapes into a virtual trio. For the second, the musicians treated the first album as a score, and performed it together as a trio, live in real time. The third album was Ostertag's remix of the second album, and the fourth completes the room of mirrors with a final live interpretation of the third. Here's the same section, from the first and second versions of 'Say No More'.

[Bob Ostertag 'Say No More', 1993]

[Bob Ostertag 'Say No More in Person', 1993]

Appropriative collage has deep ties to the development of Minimalism, music that explores repetition and complexity generated from a minimum of means. The early sixties appropriative tape collages by Terry Riley and Steve Reich were, for each of them, the breakthrough works that directly inspired their later work for phasing instruments. As a self-described 'recovering minimalist', Californian composer Carl Stone's work stood in stark relief to other collages chasing the samples-per-second threshold ever higher. Instead he discovers short phrases of sound, the ones over far too soon, and teases them out into longform, hypnotic worlds. Even when he juxtaposes eastern folk music and western pop into unlikely world music, he gives you enough time to imagine what it'd be like to live there. Using digital techniques of scanning and then timestretching, 'Shing Kee' from 1986 turns four seconds of a song by Schubert into a 16 minute piece, 25% of which you are hearing right now.

[Carl Stone 'Shing Kee', 1986]

Formed in Iowa City in 1986, an art collective named The Tape-beatles concisely defined plagiarism as a 'collective vision', and put their own registered trademark after the word. Growing out of early eighties xeroxed zine collage culture, their extensively collaged album packaging took on the format of corporate reports to



[The Tape-beatles]

shareholders as well as catalogs for their patented concepts such as Desire and even Credit itself. Perhaps their defining statement is their powerful 1993 film collage *The Grand Delusion*, which set sonic samples from the US Persian Gulf war against documentary images from WWII, illuminating the recycled ideology used to justify the later war. But the audio document that brought them to everyone's attention was the 1991 CD *Music with Sound*.

[The Tape-beatles 'Different Tool / I Can't Do It', 1991]

With precedents in the dub mixes of Adrian Sherwood and Mark Stewart, Jack Dangers led industrial dance music back towards Burroughs' media cut-ups with Meat Beat Manifesto's relentless and legendary debut album *Storm The Studio*. Each of the four sides contains several utterly different versions of the same song. This is part four of 'I Got the Fear'.

[Meat Beat Manifesto 'I Got the Fear Part 4', 1989]

Holger Hiller's songs moved even further into reference and self-reference in the early nineties, releasing the pop album *As Is* and then, the remix album *Demixed*, still welding pop hooks out of sounds mined from twentieth century avant-garde orchestral and tape music. For those who never thought they'd be dancing to Stockhausen, this is 'Sur la Tête' from 1991.

[Holger Hiller 'Sur la Tête', 1991]

One of the more influential, widely seen, and yet underdocumented collage artists of the nineties, Emergency Broadcast Network's videos were displayed at the Lollapalooza festival and on U2's ZOO TV Tour. Founding member Brian Kane authored the pioneering Vujak video software which allowed them to achieve the same kind of rhythmic density with audiovisual samples as other bands had achieved in music alone. In 1992, their 20 minute remix of cable news coverage of the first Gulf War spliced away the distance between war and advertising. After landing a major label deal, they finished a 45 minute video 'Telecommunication Breakdown' which was then deemed unreleasable, filled with too many clips of known figures such as Dan Rather and Bill Clinton to even attempt to license. Missing the point of the work entirely, the label offered them a huge budget to reshoot and redo the work using new footage with actors reading the same lines, and the group came apart under the strain. Still commercially unreleasable two decades later, this is their cutup of George Bush the senior, from 1993.

[Emergency Broadcast Network 'We Will 'Raqu You', 1993]

After countless cassette releases of textured drones fashioned out of both live instruments and churned media murk, in the early nineties the Big City Orkestraw began releasing Compact Discs, including the notorious, and self-explanatory full length album *Beatlerape*.

[Big City Orkestraw 'Bulldog', 1994]

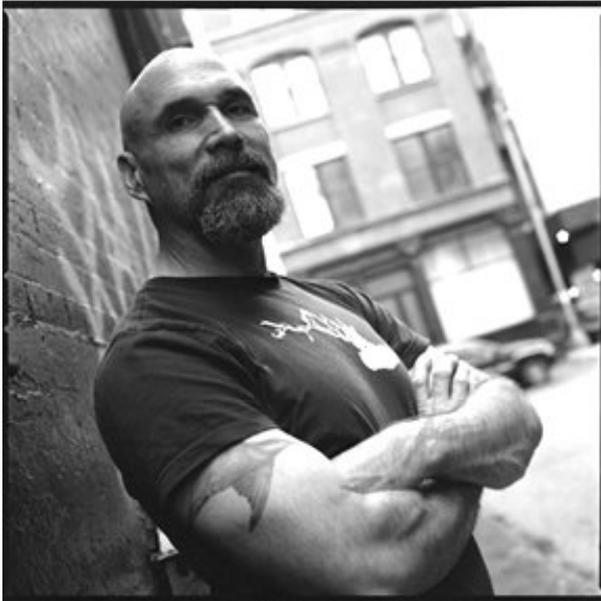
Culturecide's 1986 karaoke opus *Tacky Souvenirs of Pre-revolutionary America*, re-equalized intact original songs to make room for vocals that mock and destroy them. Relieving themselves all over the concept of the celebrity charity single, this is 'They Aren't the World':

[Culturecide 'They Aren't the World', 1986]

Steve Fisk released several cassette albums of songs fashioned from looped music and talk radio samples through the eighties, eventually released on CD in the nineties as *Over and thru the Night*.

[Steve Fisk 'Topeka Hello', 1981]

You can't accurately represent the experience of one of Wayne Butane's 90 minute cassette albums with a short excerpt. The whole point is that they go on forever, an endless stream of endless toilet jokes that slowly reveal themselves to be an incomprehensibly total way of life once you realize that he has assembled



[Bob Ostertag]

dozens of these albums since the early nineties. This is an excerpt from his compilation of early works, entitled 'Backwash'.

[Wayne Butane 'Backwash', ~1993]

Active from the mid-eighties, hailing from Toronto, Sucking Chest Wound's politicalized multimedia concerts were best represented by their 1992 portrait of America, *God Family Country*.

[Sucking Chest Wound 'Mary Dear', 1992]

Following in the footsteps of Milan Knížák and Christian Marclay, other musicians began exploring the turntable as an instrument outside of the context of hip-hop. The group GUM released the album *Vinyl* in 1987.

[GUM 'Sporadic Acts of Violence', 1987]

From Montreal, Martin Tétrault would cut slices from multiple records together and play the resulting discs in improvising ensembles. In collaboration with René Lussier, this is from the album *Des Pas et des Mois* from 1990.

[Martin Tétrault (with René Lussier) 'Leurs Personnalités', 1990]

After a series of 80 cassette releases ranging from pop to noise collage, the group Crawling With Tarts began focusing on the turntable with their series of *Grand Surface Noise Operas*.

[Crawling with Tarts 'Orses Opera', 1993]

The concept of the usable sound library came into focus for many musicians as they encountered the presets that came with early samplers. For instance, the immortal Fairlight classic Orch5.

[Fairlight 'Orch5 Library Sample' (sampled from Stravinsky's 'Firebird' by David Vorhaus)]

This recording of a full symphony orchestra playing a single note appears on countless songs. When Kate Bush, Afrika Bambaataa and Mantronix used it on their records, they used it because it was available and because it fit. They were not using it to reference Stravinsky, even though it is a sample from an old recording of The Firebird. There are no footnotes in music; the sound library disconnects sounds from their authors.

Here is a moment from Jean-Michel Jarre's 'Diva' in 1984.

[Jean-Michel Jarre 'Diva', 1984]

And this is a moment near the ending of Prince's *Black Album* from 1988.

[Prince 'Bob George', 1988]

And here's a moment from African Head Charge's album - produced by Adrian Sherwood in 1986.

[African Head Charge 'Some Bizarre', 1986]

The common denominator is almost certainly Fairlight Library Disk 27, 'Effects 4', sample #1: 'Bizarre'. And whoever assembled that library obviously had a copy of Frank Zappa's 1969 album *Uncle Meat*.

[Frank Zappa 'Our Bizarre Relationship', 1969]

To enjoy this sound as music we do not need to know that this is a sample of Suzy Creamcheese. These artists were not intentionally sampling a Zappa album. They were helping themselves to the sound library. And there are no footnotes in music; the library, through use, distances a sound from its author. Though it is



[Psychedelic Skratz Bastards *Battle Breaks*, *Dirt Style Records*, 1992]

only Suzy's voice, we can increasingly enjoy sounds, freed from the imperative to know what, or who, is making them.

[Meat Beat Manifesto (sampling Suzy Creamcheese) 'Hello Teenage America', 1990]

We increasingly live inside Pierre Schaeffer's original conception for *Musique Concrète*: sound disconnected from the events that caused them. Sounds freed from the need to refer to anything. They have stopped being documents, and become mere objects. The Bomb Squad's loops of R&B sax squeals are long enough that you can still identify them for what they are. But DJ Muggs' blasts of Junior Walker are so short, that it no longer serves as a reference. It becomes just a sound. So much so, that when DJ Muggs used apparently the same sound in a song for Cypress Hill, it was not immediately apparent that the sound was no longer that of a live soul band, but rather something completely different.

[Mel and Tim 'Good Guys Only Win in the Movies', 1969 (sound of horse whinny)]

This was, in some ways, a response to the sampling lawsuits; there was still a common sense assumption that short samples had to be acceptable. In this environment, hip-hop producers turned into vinyl cratediggers, searching out obscurer sources, pushing some hip-hop towards further and further into the abstract, as heard with RZA's production for The Wu-Tang Clan's *36 Chambers*, or GZA's *Liquid Swords*.

[Genius / GZA 'Swordsman', 1995]

The concept of the sound library continued to manifest itself beyond the domain of sampling presets. Between 1986 and 1991, a series of bootleg compilations called *Ultimate Breaks and Beats* bootlegs compiled odd assortments of rock, pop and R&B tunes. From Funkadelic to the Monkees, Billy Squier to James Brown, the only thing these songs had in common were proven breaks, completely indispensable to DJs. In the age of the CD it was becoming increasingly hard to find the vinyl originals, and this was a library assembling them in one place. These albums were not meant for listening. They were performance tools.

Once this corner was turned, increasingly esoteric releases began targeting the DJ. Full track compilations began to seem like a waste of vinyl when all DJs needed were a critical few seconds. In the late eighties, DJ tools like Simon Harris' *Beats Breaks and Scratches* series would provide three minute long loops of those breaks, eliminating the need for DJs to clockspin back and forth between two copies of the same record. Each side would then end with several dozen brief familiar soundbytes to scratch with. By the early nineties, the creative development of these DJ tools went into overdrive as they became more widely known as Battle Records.

[DJ Qbert 'Gag Seal Breaks', 2001]

[Psychedelic Skratz Bastards 'Battle Breaks', 1991]

Battle Records were seen by some as cheating – putting all the sounds on one disc eliminated the detective work. But there was no denying the sonic variety enabled by these tools. Created by musicians for musicians, the impact of Battle Records on hip-hop is obvious in hindsight, records made of nothing but the hottest bits from dozens of other records: Battle Records were libraries, organized as compositions that were designed for further use.

[Dirt Style 'Battle Records', ~nineties]

That was a series of edits designed for scratching solos release on the Dirt Style label, featuring Skratz Seal. After a period where the studio producer had dominated, turntablism was restoring focus to the DJ as a live musician. On bootlegs like DJ Q*Bert's *Demolition Pumpkin Squeeze Musik* from 1994 and Mix Master Mike's relentless *Musik's Worst Nightmare* from 1996, you hear a constant stream of chaotic edits, but the beat never slips. This is a clip from 1996.

[Mix Master Mike 'Musik's Worst Nightmare', 1996]



[*Ultimate Breaks and Beats, Volume One*, 1986]

By the mid nineties, sample libraries began to be offered as pre-looped files on data CDs, sampler ready. Many of these loops were original generic productions, some carefully reperfomed clones of popular drum breaks. Though many more were simply swiped directly from commercial recordings. It was as if these ingredients were simply becoming public domain. Such as this drum solo from the track 'Amen, Brother' performed by the Winstons.

[The Winstons 'Amen, Brother', 1969]

In the decades since that 5.2 seconds drum solo was recorded, it has become the rhythmic basis of thousands of hours of new music. Popularized again on the first volume of *Ultimate Breaks and Beats* in 1986, it was sampled as an intact loop in many hip-hop songs. But in the early nineties it crossed over into hardcore dance music like jungle, before becoming the genetic core of a new genre called drum and bass. Part of this appeal was in how good this loop sounded when you sped it up; superhuman but still plausible. And also, infinitely editable.

[Remarc 'Drum n' Bass Wise (remix)', 1994]

[Eko 'Distant Hopes', 1994]

[Squarepusher 'Port Rhombus', 1996]

[Lesser 'The Anal Retentive Last Stand', 1998]

[Hrvatski 'Cirrus Minor', 1998]

It is worth mentioning that neither the Winstons or G. C. Coleman, the drummer of the Amen Break, has ever been paid for the use of their music. Nor has Clyde Stubblefield, the drummer who improvised what is probably the second most sampled drum break in the world, in the song 'Funky Drummer' by James Brown. As the owner of the publishing, James Brown died rich; Clyde Stubblefield is a career musician without the health insurance to cover his kidney dialysis. You can copyright a beat, but it's seldom the drummer who gets to do it.

In the early nineties, if major labels were beginning to be more careful about licensing, the truth remains that the only lawsuits they were really worried about the ones from other major labels, and not independent artists. In the background I'm playing the first track from the album *Music with Sound* by the Tape-beatles.

[The Tape-beatles 'Beautiful State', 1991]

Now compare that with the first track on *Live 93*, an album of live concert mixes by The Orb.

[The Orb 'Plateau', 1993]

The Orb's album contains a sample list which mentions other major label properties like Steve Reich and Ennio Morricone, but does not mention their two minute sample of the Tape-beatles, or in fact many of the other subtle, extended samples quietly layered on every track. The Orb are brilliant at what they do. And the Tape-beatles certainly don't mind, having invented plagiarism. But there is a delicious irony in that the Orb's label, Island Records, was the exact same entity which one year previously had sued Negativland and SST records for \$90,000 over the artwork and samples used on their single 'U2'. Or another irony in that the band U2 spent the two years after this lawsuit touring the world with their multimedia ZOO TV concert, remixing sounds and images pulled live off of local TV feeds onto huge videoscreens for U2's stadium-sized audiences.

As my friend Vicki Bennett likes to say, the term avant-garde comes from the military. The advance ranks are the ones who get shot. And the people standing behind them are the ones that live to take the fort. And this is pretty much what we see with the lawsuits against Negativland and John Oswald, not to mention hip-hop practitioners like Public Enemy and De La Soul who had their pioneering creative methods confiscated from them immediately after their success. Or, as Boogie Down Productions put it in their skit from 1992:



[Emergency Broadcast Network]

[Boogie Down Productions '13 and Good (Skit)', 1992]

Record Label Executive: 'You know, it's a really funny world we live in. It was just yesterday that we were taking the rock and roll from the blacks, and now today in the nineties, when they use samples of rock and roll we're suing their asses! You gotta love it!'

If the purpose of copyright law was to protect authors, to stand between power and artists, by its nature, the law tends to stand closer to power than it ever can to art. Power usually finds a way to circumvent any legal restrictions upon it. A story which best illustrates the legal and moral grey areas on both sides of this debate lies behind the release of the 1992 album *Deep Forest*, a French concept album setting the field recordings of indigenous songs and rituals of the pygmies of the African Rainforests to modern techno and electronica. Their major label was fairly cavalier about securing the rights to the songs recorded by ethnomusicologists Simha Arom and Hugo Zemp. In fact, Zemp, hearing their music, initially refused to grant his permission. But he eventually gave his assent during a telephone call from his colleague, the musician Francis Bebey, who assured him it was for a good cause, a non-profit Earth Day commercial on the subject of saving the rainforests.

Of course it was also intended to be a commercial CD, which went on to sell four million copies. Tracks from the album were licensed as commercial jingles to Sony, Coca-Cola, Neutrogena, Porsche and the Body Shop. Once the many millions were rolling in, the label settled out of court with the owners of all the samples they hadn't cleared in advance. But watching his recordings used to signify elemental purity in soda commercials left Zemp feeling steamrolled. Particularly when he learned that the single 'Sweet Lullaby' had used the song of a woman named Afunakwa, whom he had recorded on the Solomon Islands, 8,000 miles away from the nearest pygmy. Afunakwa had become an unwitting lead vocalist on a concept album that opens with this speech:

Dan Lacksman, producer of *Deep Forest*: 'Somewhere, deep in the jungle, are living some little men and women. They are... our past. And maybe... maybe they are... our future...'

[Deep Forest 'Sweet Lullaby', 1992]

So here we are with a wildly successful single, validated by the marketplace, nominated for a Grammy. The commercial heir of the world music collages initiated in the sixties by composers like Stockhausen, Tenney and Czukay. What if Zemp had simply said no to this song's release? But the charges of cultural imperialism once leveled against Byrne and Eno's surrealist *My Life in the Bush of Ghosts* echo again louder here. Do we have the right to take the ritual music of another culture out of context, and use it for our entertainment? Especially at the moment when our culture has almost completed the destruction of theirs? And the answer is, of course, yes – the music will stand of a twisted and beautiful document of the fact that that is exactly what happened. The music is a precise document of the reality. And we are left in this case with a song, and a lead singer who is audibly innocent of the fact that she will be remembered by an audience of millions. It's not every pop single that has the power to simultaneously suggest innocence and colonialism, individuality and forced assimilation, but that's collage for you. Even as background music used for an advertisement, it quietly unravels the concept of music as one individual's property. In fact, it does this particularly well as background music. It is a lullaby with a philosophy which continues to whisper to us long after we've gone to sleep.

[David Toop & Max Eastley 'City of Night', 1994]

In one sense, the composer can be simply defined as someone who puts things together. Perhaps even only two things. When the Evolution Control Committee released *The Whipped Cream Mixes* in 1994, it became a college radio hit in the tradition of the novelty single, à la the Happiness Boys or Buchanan and Goodman. But at the time, it was also a provocation of how far you could push the Fair Use argument, taking not fragments, but two intact elements from different songs to create something undeniably new. Matching Public Enemy



[Evolution Control Committee]

accapellas with sixties latin easy listening master Herb Alpert, no one could confuse this song with either original, and the track required the originals in their entirety to succeed. A new song with an inexplicable third author, for how else to explain what you are hearing? This comedy record was not a joke. And the full implications of this technique would resurface on a global scale at the start of the next decade. This side one of *The Whipped Cream Mixes* by the Evolution Control Committee, the godfather of the mashup.

[The Evolution Control Committee 'Rebel without a Pause (Whipped Cream Mix)', 1994]

But wait, there's more. This has been the sixth episode of VARIATIONS. Thanks for listening.

02. Acknowledgments

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[Deep Forest video]