

Chapter 4: The Sonic Collage Assignment: Aesthetics, Affect, and Critique in Audio Sampling

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4. “English Assignment” by Megan

Megan’s “English [sic] Assignment” begins simply as a series of samples from contemporary pop and dance songs lined up one behind the other, only really notable because of the rapidity of its transitions. However, the track soon becomes much more interesting as individual samples interrupt, layer over, and compete with one another for attention. Sound effects add to the maelstrom to create a disorienting experience that is only partially counteracted by the recurrence of several samples. Despite some musical motifs, the most coherent aspect of the track is its lyrical theme, with all the vocalists expressing cynical views of romantic love as they tepidly enter into new relationships. Students responded positively to Megan’s track, but were unable to express why, providing us with an opportunity to discuss the importance of affective and bodily responses to sound even if those responses are not “danceable” in the conventional sense of the term.

Transcript

[cuts between songs are rapid, sometimes abrupt]

Calvin Harris and Disciples *[from “How Deep is Your Love”]*: Ahahah ooohoo . . . ooohoo . . . Ahahah ooohoo . . . How deeply . . . How deeply?

Diplo *[from “Revolution”]*: Can you see it? The worst is over. The monsters in my head are scared of love.

The Weeknd *[from “Often”]*: Often. Often. Often. Girl, I do this often. Make that. Often. Often.

Adam Lambert *[from “Ghost Town”]*: Danana . . . Danana . . . Danana . . . Danana . . . Danana . . .

Calvin Harris and Disciples *[from “How Deep is Your Love”]*: How deep is your love? How deep is your love? Is it like the ocean? Hold me closer. Oh yeah!

The Weeknd *[from “The Hills”]*: I only call you when it’s half past five—the only time that I’ll be by your side. I only love it when you touch me, not feel me. When I’m fucked up that’s the real me. When I’m fucked up that’s the real me—the real me.

Panic! At the Disco *[from “Victorious”]*: Ah

Calvin Harris and Disciples *[from “How Deep is Your Love”]*: Oohoo

Panic! At the Disco *[from “Victorious”]*: Ah

[techno notes from Calvin Harris and Disciples “How Deep is Your Love” and then Diplo “Revolution”]

Alex Clare *[from “Damn Your Eyes”]*: —deceiving me with that look I know so well, I fall completely under

[a few notes from Fall Out Boy’s “The Mighty Fall”]:

Calvin Harris and Disciples *[from “How Deep is Your Love”]*: Ahahah ooohoo . . . Ahahah ooohoo . . . Ahahah ooohoo . . . Ahahah ooohoo . . . How deep is your—

Diplo *[from “Revolution”]*: Can you see it? The worst is over. The monsters in my head are scared of love.

[*techno beats from Diplo “Revolution” with no lyrics play for a few seconds, with Adam Lambert’s “Ghost Town” mixed in*]

Fall Out Boy [from “*The Mighty Fall*”]: Your crooked love is just a pyramid scheme, and I’m dizzy on dreams.

Bad Suns [from “*Cardiac Arrest*”]: I’ll try my best. How much do I invest? Like cardiac arrest, high voltage when we kiss.

Fall Out Boy [from “*The Mighty Fall*,” starts playing while *Bad Suns* are singing, after they say “invest”]: Your crooked love is just a pyramid scheme, and I’m dizzy on dreams.

Calvin Harris and Disciples [from “*How Deep is Your Love*,” played with other two songs]: How Deeply? How Deeply?

[*songs play over top of each other*]

Diplo [from “*Revolution*,” first few words are while other songs still playing]: Can you see it? The worst is over. The monsters in my head are scared of love.

Bad Suns [from “*Cardiac Arrest*,” distorted]: Cardiac arrest. Arrest. High voltage when we kiss. We kiss. We kiss.

Birdy [from “*Wings*”]: In the moment, we’re lost and found. I just wanna be by your side. If these wings could fly.

[*abrupt ending*]

Works Cited

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