

Ethical Concerns in The Age of Digital Sampling:

Copyright vs Creativity

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Abstract:

Sampling has become a benchmark signature of many genres and aspects within digital music production, reshaping the landscape and blurring the boundaries of musical and creative expression in unprecedented ways. This dissertation aims to delve into the historical relevance and impact of sampling as an artform, from its earliest inception in the days of Musique Concrete, to its relevance as a modern tool and creative technique which has saturated our contemporary approach to digital music production. This study and my areas of research aim to provide a multi-faceted analysis on the importance of sampling, as a practice relevant to my own study as well as providing a more in depth analysis of the wider impact and legal implications of this controversial approach to composition.

A significant aspect of this dissertation involves exploring the ethical concerns and dilemmas that arise from sampling as a production technique, and how this can have ramifications on the artist due to copyright licencing and fair usage rights. In trying to navigate the complex web of copyright law, intellectual property, and artistic originality, I have considered the moral complexities associated with this popular music production technique. I evaluate landmark legal cases and seminal works that have shaped the evolution of sampling and its boundaries, as well as highlighting the importance of personal responsibility and striving towards a professional outlook in my own creative process.

I delve into the profound influence of sampling on popular music culture, highlighting its role in shaping

the evolution of music across a variety of genres. Using examples I discuss the historical and ethical aspects of sampling and the tension between creativity and intellectual property. In addition to exploring the ethical aspects of this technique, this dissertation also aims to provide examples of practical uses of sampling services in the modern music industry.

I present alongside this dissertation, a body of work informed and inspired by my research and provide an objective reflection on my own creative workflow, and seek to analyse the relevance of this technique, how it has shaped my creative approach and helped to maximise my creative capacity and as both a listener and an aspiring artist/music producer.

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Literature Review

1. Introduction

Music sampling, is a practice rooted in the reconfiguration and rearrangement of previously existing sound recordings to create something new. This method has a storied history that is echoed throughout a range of musical genres and artistic disciplines. In its earliest roots tracing back to early 'musique concrète' experiments in the mid-20th century, sampling has evolved into an omnipresent artform, influencing not only the music we hear but also extending its creative tendrils into the realms of film, visual art, and popular culture.

The historical relevance of music sampling is profound, marking pivotal moments of innovation and cultural transformation. From the pioneering work of artists like Pierre Schaeffer and John Cage to the trailblazing hip-hop producers of the 1970s, sampling has continuously challenged and expanded the boundaries of musical expression.

Yet, the journey of sampling is not devoid of controversy and open to interpretation and debate due to legal implications. The ethical and legal areas of sampling, particularly the importance of sample clearance and licensing, have become important focal points. While sampling provides a canvas for artists to reimagine and remix the past, it also raises difficult questions about intellectual property, artistic ownership, and creative originality. This dissertation embarks on a comprehensive exploration of sampling, delving into its historical significance, its omnipresence in contemporary culture, and the ethical and legal considerations that accompany this creative practice.

I seek to unravel the multifaceted tapestry of sampling, examining its impact on music and art while navigating the intricate nature of intellectual property rights and copyright ownership. In my research and personal creative practice, I aim to shed light on the transformative power of sampling on aspiring musicians and producers, and its enduring relevance in the landscape of artistic expression.

A Brief History of Sampling

Although the prevalence and influence of sampling have nestled their way into the toolbox and arsenal of musicians and producers from a wide range of genres and musical styles, we must first trace some steps backwards to the originators and pioneers of avant-garde and experimental approaches to composition and creativity. [1]

One such figure who is widely regarded as a pioneer of Musique Concrete [1.2], is the French composer, musicologist and engineer known for a ground-breaking approach to music that led significantly to the emergence of sampling as a universal artform. Pierre Schaeffer was born in 1910, Nancy, France where he lived and studied, eventually training as composer and studying at the Paris Conservatoire. His contributions and avant-garde approach were highly focused on the manipulation of sounds and recordings rather than relying on traditional instruments of musical notation.

In the 1940s he began developing a unique style referred to as 'concrete music', which involved heavily on editing, manipulating, rearranging and reassembling sounds to create new musical recordings.

On May 1948, P. Schaeffer states:

"I have coined the term, musique concrete for this commitment to compose with materials taken from the 'given' experimental sound in order to emphasize our dependence, no longer on preconceived sound abstractions, but on sound fragments that exist in reality and that are considered as discrete and complete sound objects." Pierre Schaeffer

In this way, Schaeffer takes on a deconstructionist approach, reducing the abstract elements of music and sound in the traditional sense, to its most raw elements and driving a wedge of experimentalism and unorthodox understanding between the traditional connotations of noise and instrumentation. Pierre also states:[2]

"Sound is the vocabulary of nature." - Pierre Shaeffer

His experimentation and non-linear approach to composition and also recording, led the pathway to new musical developments and innovations that would become universal modalities among active producers and aspiring musicians in years to come. These new musical developments led to a variety of changes among techniques and brought new tools to the table in the forms of sound manipulation, tape recording, and even the ways that we perceive and listen to music.

Another individual whose contributions and legacy have greatly influenced and shaped the development of sampling in modern music culture, was the Canadian composer Jon Oswald, who helped to coin and popularise the term or phrase 'plunderphonics.' [3] In his essay, Jon outlines the foundations for his newly coined term, and tries to ask some serious questions about those adopting a similar creative approach. The Cambridge dictionary defines the term 'plunder' in the following terms, 'to steal or remove something precious from something, in a way that does not consider moral laws or is more severe than it needs to be:' [4]

Since typically the term 'plunder' means 'to steal goods from a place or person', or also the 'dishonest acquisition of property', the term 'plunderphonics' refers to the emergence of a new musical genre in which tracks are constructed by sampling previously existing and recognizable musical works.[5] The importance of Jon Oswald and his ideas and contributions to music lay in the grey area which resides in between the two polar opposites of creative ingenuity versus the notion that sampling encompasses and aspect of stealing or plagiarising the work of another artist. Jon argues that 'plunderphonics' is an artform that places emphasis on recontextualization, deconstruction, mash-up style rearrangement and composition of a New Work. This can involve the cutting, looping, and pitch-shifting of pre-existing sound recordings or samples, along with other forms of digital processing, into a new creative work.

In essence, plunderphonics is a form of sound art that challenges traditional notions of ownership and creativity by appropriating and repurposing existing audio recordings to create new and unique compositions.

Some would argue that using or integrating the work of another artist in your own recording without direct permission constitutes an act of theft, however I will continue to explore this further in my dissertation as some research would suggest that this is not the case. Many would argue that sampling and its evolution from Jon Oswalds original visions for a 'plunderphonics' genre, ushers in a new creative approach which seeks more than just copying or mimicking the work of a previous musical recording.

Since this re-mixing, and re-arrangement is based on the influence and inspiration of a previous work as opposed to an outright intellectual theft. The term plunderphonics raises serious and important questions concerning the validity of it as a genre, as well as its effect on modern forms of sampling. These are often considered to be controversial areas with particular points of interest revolving around the matters of copyright and intellectual property.

In his essay, Oswald extrapolates on the observable results of his plunderphonics vision, an example of this is presented in his mention of Jim Tenneys composition, "Collage 1" [6], an experimental tape-recording composition which is lifted from a previously existing radio hit, "Blue Suede Shoes" by Elvis Presley. Using manual cutting techniques, and tape manipulation the originality of Presley's composition is rearranged to a degree that is almost unrecognizable. Many would argue, that this constitutes the validity of a new creative work, blurring the lines yet again between creativity and theft.

"Piracy or plagiarism of a work occur, according to Milton, "if it is not bettered by the borrower".

Stravinsky added the right of possession to Milton's distinction when he said,. "A good composer does not imitate; he steals." An example of this better borrowing is Jim Tenney's "Collage 1" (1961) in which Elvis

Presley's hit record "Blue Suede Shoes" (itself borrowed from Carl Perkins) is transformed by means of multi-speed tape recorders and razorblade. In the same way that Pierre Schaeffer found musical potential in his object sonore, which could be, for instance, a footstep, heavy with associations, Tenney took an everyday music and allowed us to hear it differently. At the same time, all that was inherently Elvis radically influenced our perception of Jim's piece."- Jon Oswald

Impacts on Popular Culture...

Sampling as a production technique in the world of contemporary music is a topic of much fascination, as it draws many parallels between genres of music and the historical evolution of musicology. Sampling is a tool and practice that helps keep us better connected to music of the past, often times producers and DJs will sample rare and obscure works from a previous era, in order to honour and pay homage to the lineage of musical inspiration that came before them. However this creative and musical tradition opens the door to the discussion of legality as it pertains to sampling copyrighted works without obtaining 'sample clearance.'

As a production tool and technique, sampling occurs when a segment of an existing audio recording, such a song, speech, or sound effect is isolated and extracted, reimagined and incorporated into a new creative work. In this way, sampling allows us to create new musical compositions, by taking influence and direction from music of the past and helping to inform and cultivate ideas which can drive to push music forward in the modern era. Sampling is an important and valuable tool, and one that should be treated with respect - as it has shaped the landscape of popular music in ways that are most certainly taken for granted.

The questions arising from sampling, and its controversial use case arise from the legal and ethical implications surrounding the previously mentioned issues of copyright ownership and intellectual property.

Throughout the 1970s and 80s, the popularisation of hip hop music is based on a decades old tradition of sampling, where producers would search tirelessly through records trying to find highly sought after drum breaks, or particular instruments for the intention that those sounds, samples, and previously existing recordings can be re-imagined into a new creative composition through the use of hardware sequencers, samplers and drum machines.

Sampling in this sense, it can be said is responsible for the birth of several genres, most notable among them being the foundational role that sampling played in the emergence of hip hop as a underground artform. Samplers and drum machines were flavour of the day for artists engaged in these genres, with the emergence of devices like the Akai MPC which allowed users to mesh samples into a new creative composition by layering, looping, and rearranging the sound recordings through the use of software and hardware samplers. In an article written by Mark Exarchos, highlighting the important cultural and social impact that hip hop had on modern culture, he also emphasizes the creative directions and possibilities explored through the use of turntablism, and sampling culture among hip hop producers.

"The significance of this discovery—and Marli's influence on a genealogy of producers associated with Boom Bap, such as DJ Premier, Pete Rock, Q-Tip, RZA, Prince Paul, DJ Shadow, J Dilla and Madlib—is that it empowered rap producers to transition from 'surface manipulators' (user of drum loops or breaks referential to a turntable affordance) to drum 'scientists': samplist programmers who could come up with new patterns altogether, layer multiple drum sounds upon one another and create original rhythms out of minimal sonic segments from the past." [7] - Mark Exarchos, 2019, p. 9

In this context, despite the legality and copyright issues surrounding music production and sampling, Exarchos describes highly revered producers in the genre and 'samplist progammers' and gives credit to them as innovators in their field. Conversely, there are others who would argue and make the deliberation that the traditional popularity of sampling is underscored with a notion of theft and plagiarism, particularly in the case where artists of older eras have not adequately been cited or offered any financial incentive to allow a previous sound recording, to be used in a new creative composition.

Sample clearance is the process of obtaining legal permission, through the correct and proper licensing, in order to use a copyrighted sound or section of a musical composition in a new musical work. The importance of this process is especially relevant when considering that many modern artists have found themselves in breach of copyright protection laws, and many artists have been sued to large amounts of money for proceeding with a new creative work without obtaining the correct clearance for any samples used. [8]

The difficulties posed in this, are based on identifying and and contacting legal copyright holders, as this can sometimes often vary between record labels, music publishers, and individual artists. An artist would have to negotiate a licensing agreement with copyright holders, in order to request and obtain legal permission, or 'sample clearance' in any new creative work of their own. These negotiations can set the terms and limitations of the sample being used, including the duration, territory and fees involved. Once the terms are agreed upon, and the correct licensing is obtained - the artist is free to use a pre-existing sample in a new creative work - however these clearance licenses can sometimes cost thousands and thousands of pounds, leaving many artists in a position where they simply cannot afford to pay for sample clearance. This has led to an enormous number of legal disputes and lawsuits relating to creative ownership for producers and copyright holders alike.

The most difficult issue that aspiring producers and artists face due to this, is the complex and considering of 'what is an artist supposed to do if they cannot afford to pay the licensing fees required when seeking correct sample clearance?' This is true especially for low-earning, unsigned and independent artists, as well as household names and industry giants who have also swerved the legal responsibility of sample clearance in their own work. Further in this dissertation we will examine some legal cases and disputes between copyright holders and artists who have been sued, for using samples without obtaining correct clearance and legal permission, and how unintended consequences of sampling as an artform can have a

heavily detrimental effect on the financial position and livelihood of the artist. We will also look at new innovations within the wider music industry, helping artists to tackle and negotiating the legal framework of sampling, copyright licensing, and clearance in the modern era. The ethical dilemma arises from the fact that to sample, or use the work of another artist in your own recording - involves recognizing that Previous Works or sound recording are protected under copyright laws, and copyright owners or even the original artists themselves from which these samples originate, deserve to be credit and financially reward if their music is revived, reused, and popularised by a contemporary artist. A very good example of this is David Axelrod, who is a famous American composer, producer and arranger. His music is considered among seminal works, highly respected and revered by DJs and producers alike. Most famously, his work "The Edge" was sampled by Dr. Dre and Eminem, in the song The Next Episode, featuring Snoop Dogg.

David Axelrod is an artist highly respected and adored by the hip hop community, his album "The Edge" was sampled by Dr. Dre in the aforementioned song, however Axelrod himself was facing a situation of economic hardship prior to the use of his sample appearing in Dr. Dre's production. Despite being someone who was initially deeply suspicious of sampling as an artform, an article from the Guardian mentions that Dr. Dre is an important figure and catalyst for the revival of Axelrods' career, due to the large amount of royalties which Axelrod received from his appearance on the song, "Forgot About Dre." This song, which used a small snippet or sample from Axelrods album, "The Edge" is still a song which represents and holds significant value to admirers of the genre. The song performed by Dr. Dre and Eminem is a standout track, and also represents a commercial hip hop release which received Gold certification in Germany and Denmark, as well as receiving Platinum certificated twice in the UK market.[9] This enormous reception and positive response to the work, as well huge amount of money generated from album sales and streams meant that David Axelrod was handsomely recuperated financially by the income which that new creative work generated.

Axelrod once stated:

"I hate sampling because it takes jobs away from musicians, but it allows me to have fun. It's screw-you money."

However it seems that Axelrod would eventually change his position and moral outlook on the emergence and impact of sampling particularly within the hip-hop genre, since he is an artist and composer highly regarded by many in the field. It is only fair and just that he be deserving of financial benefit and royalties from the money generated from any new recording which sampled his prior work, and the same would apply for many other recording artists. Axelrod acknowledges this with the following statement, taken from an article published by The Guardian, 2017.

"I wasn't into sampling until I started getting cheques," he told Mojo. In his case, like so many others, hip-hop takes but it also gives back. - David Axelrod [10]

1.4

Plagiarism vs Innovation - and Landmark Legal Battles

In the area of musical creativity and an ever expanding age of technological innovation, there is a strong and perpetual tension existing between the opposites of plagiarism and innovation. This disparity has spawned countless legal battles and lawsuits within the wider music and entertainment industry surrounding the growing number of copyright violation claims particularly in America. [11]

Despite the fact that the subject is open to interpretation and the definitive extent to which sampling is a type of plagiarism remains up for debate and a subject of much attraction. Among the difficulties faced by artists in this position, can be very high cost of obtaining permission or sample clearance licences from the copyright owner. This can make the cost of releasing music which relies on sampling, to be both expensive and legally burdensome despite its prevalence in the mainstream communities of music producers and artists.

If an artist release a piece of music which contains the use of samples without properly obtaining the owners permission, this can result in a claim for copyright violation.[12] As this is a form of copying and usually a re-mixing or re-arrangement from a previous sound recording, despite the notion of many DJs and producers honouring the musical heritage of those artist they wish to re-mix or sample, it is still necessary to apply for the correct permissions. Failure to do this can, and has resulted in lawsuits within the wider music and entertainment industry which has helped us to realize the boundaries and constraints of this technique. The issue of contention and controversy within this creative approach is due to the idea that one artist can build on what another artist has done, in a way that uses the work of one artist within the creative ideas of your own, without directly seeking permission.

An example of this in popular is the 1994 song "Shakermaker" by Oasis, who were sued by a band called 1970s band, The New Seekers - who performed a song for a Coca-Cola advert, claiming that the melody and lyrics were both used by Oasis in their own composition. The name of the New Seekers song in question was called "I'd Like to Teach The World to Sing" and rose to prominence as the advert the music was featured in allowed the music to be heard and recognized worldwide. As a result, Oasis were forced to change the lyrics to their song "Shakermaker" and also ordered to pay \$500,000 AUD in compensation as a result of not seeking permission to use the lyrics and melody as direct inspiration of their own composition.[13]

Another example of the friction between artists with regarding to legal cases, can be found in the 2016 lawsuit filed against Ed Sheeran by the heirs of Edward Townsend, based on the hit song by Ed Sheeran "Thinking Out Loud". Townsend was a co-writer with Marvin Gaye, who collaborated on the 1973 song "Let's Get it On". The lawsuit claimed that Sheeran's hit was a copyright infringement on the aforementioned composition by the aforementioned "Lets Get It On" by Towsnend and Gaye. The lawsuit claimed that the copyright infringement was based on similarities of the melodic and musical structure, however the case was settled in 2018 when Ed Sheeran was found not liable for copyright infringement and agreed to give Townsend heirs a songwriting share on the credits of "Thinking Out Loud" as well as a

percentage of royalties. [14]

Another culturally significant case, known as the "Blurred Lines" lawsuit, concerns a case brought against Robin Thicke and Pharrell Williams who produced the aforementioned track that was released in 2013. The legal dispute revolved around the allegations that musical elements were directly taken by Thicke-Williams from Marvin Gaye's 1977 song "Got To Give It Up". The two songs were closely related in melody and groove, forming the basis of the lawsuit. In March 2015 a decision was made on the case, which favoured the heirs of Marvin Gaye Estate, and a judge ordered a \$7.4 million dollar payment awarded to the Gaye family, as the judge has proclaimed that although the song didn't directly sample or copy the aforementioned "Got To Give It Up", the new work created by Thicke-Williams was strongly resembling the vibe and overall mood enough so to justify copyright infringement. [15]

As a tool and technique, sampling is a unique artform that blurs many boundaries between originality and re-imagining. It allows artists to weave together and draw lineage from a range of sounds, styles, eras and genres to create something entirely new - while at the same time paying homage to the past. Within sampling can be found a transformative approach, turning existing works into fresh compositions, however this creative process usually hinges on the "De Minimus" rule, which is a legal doctrine taken from the Latin phrase that means "about minimal things." In a legal context, it is used to refer to those matters which are trivial or inconsequential, often not warranting the attention of the courts of legal institutions. In this way, many artists can claim the "de minimus" defence, as the law recognizes that not all forms of borrowing or or inspiration constitute copyright infringement.[16]

In an academic paper written by Alex K Lubin for Seton Hall Law University [16.5], Lubin reemphasizes the "de minimis" rule and recognizing its important in the application of digital music production. Lubin states:

"modern styles of music such as hip-hop and electronic music, call for numerous samples and consider the act of digital sampling as a vital aspect of the music culture. Since the inception of these modern genres of music, the increase in the frequency of digital music sampling has led to litigation regarding its legality." [Lubin, 2014, Seton Hall University, p.4]

Knowledge and Understanding:

Taking inspiration from a wide variety of genres and earlier musical recordings, can provide musicians, producers and artist to reinvigorate forgotten music of the past into new musical recordings, and this wave of influence can be identified across a wide variety of musical styles. In my own creative work, I have sought to carefully consider the intricacies of digital music sampling in my own compositions, in a way that aims to bring new life to older musical traditions, reinventing and taking inspiration from music and recording artists of the past, and adapting these musical in a way which represents musical styles and traditions more closely related to the modern and contemporary scope of popular music. In pursuing the creative possibilities of digital sampling in my own work, I have recognized and incorporated methods and techniques in which a sample can be used and re-imagined in a way that it no longer resembles the original recording or composition.

The adoption of this approach has acted as a catalyst for me to familiarise myself with modern digital production methods and techniques relating to sampling, and through repetitive practice and the experimentation of a trial-and-error based approach. The importance of sound selection is of utmost importance to any modern digital music producer who relies heavily on sampling, sequencing, and the infinite possibilities of how a pre-existing sound recording can be used to inform a new piece of work. Using hardware like drum machines, midi-pad controllers, and other musical workstations allows the artist to use portions of a sound recording, modify them, play them back as sequences, or even completely re-arrange the sequential order of a prior recording in a new and innovative way.

Although these techniques balance carefully on the verges of originality and the 'borrowing of ideas' in the modern music era, I have also tried to highlight the legal and copyright implications and ramifications involved when creating and releasing new music without obtaining proper clearance and licensing for the sound recordings of other artists. This has led me to discover and utilise music from Tracklib, among other online communities mutually shared my music lovers, and producers. The emergence of Tracklib has

transformed and revolutionized the ways in which samples can be used for digital production. Tracklib is a subscription based service for sample clearance, as well as a very large digital collection of original songs spanning several decades [17]. With over 100,00 songs across over a dozen styles and genres, Tracklib is a deep and carefully curated treasure trove of historical music which can provide endless inspiration and creativity for aspiring producers and artists.

Users of Tracklib are given access to large and expansive repository of music, with several tiers of membership allowing users to pay an affordable amount relevant to their creative capacity and skill level, while also gaining access to high quality a growing library of music, as well as also providing an affordable and essential licencing agreement fundamental to the release of new music using samples sourced from this company. Tracklib not only provide a catalogue of music for users to choose from, but three tiers of licensing are offered which allow the producer or artist to pay a one-off nominal fee which covers the licensing requirements associated for proper permission and use of another artists recording. [18]

In addition to this, users of the service must also agree to a percentage based revenue split with Tracklib, of any earnings and monetary gain resulting from their musical productions. These revenue splits are based on the length of samples being used, starting with 2 seconds or less of sample time, 15 seconds or less, and up to 60 seconds. The revenue split for these will be 2%, 10%, and 20% respectively - with up to 60 seconds or less of a prior recording sample being used resulting in a 20% revenue split with Tracklib. The licensing fee can be as low as \$50 USD per licence, making this a unique, innovative and ultimately very affordable and reasoning way in which artists and producers can use samples freely in their own work, while also avoiding any legal or copyright strike violations which can result from the unlawful use of samples without obtaining the correct licensing and permission.

Consequently, Tracklib has become an enormous success for practicing professionals as well as aspiring artists, by alleviating both the financial and legal obstacles resulting from sampling as they provide a reliable, cost-effective and very straightforward approach to licensing agreements required before a new

creative work can be properly released and published without any consequences. In the past, these processes have been highly convoluted, many times attributed to the fact that the original artist or musician of a sound recording, may not always be the original copyright holder to his or her own recordings. Often times identifying and establishing contact with an original copyright holder, or musical publisher can be a complex and arduous task, and can often result in licensing fees which are unaffordable to many producers and might also greatly exceed the expected revenue they are expecting from their own musical recordings. Tracklib has effectively found and implemented a viable solution to these dilemmas, by offering a service that did not seem to exist prior to its emergence.

Transferrable Skills and Self Evaluation

In harnessing and utilizing the techniques and principles previously explained, I have created a body of work, consisting of several tracks, and compositional ideas many of which are firmly built around a foundation which is informed and inspired by the practice of digital sampling. I feel that the historical and social impact of sampling in modern music, as well as its cultural significance across musical genres including but not limited to hip-hop, and other forms of contemporary culture - have helped to define my personal taste, style, and approach to musical composition. This has provided me with many degrees of inspiration, and also invigorating my imagination for how new creative and musical ideas can be imagined, I have also tried to evidence this through several productions in which there were no samples used. Learning to carefully craft and compose my own original and authentic musical phrases, chord progressions, percussive rhythms, as well as experimenting with the dynamic and playful relationship between musical instruments and layers of sound has helped to spark a great flame of creativity in my own production ideas.

I aim to release a continuation of the body of work presented alongside my research, much of which is a collection of musical ideas and productions which are demo tracks, and not fully mastered or finalized compositions. There are many issues and technical aspects which must be overcome when using digital sampling as a creative tool, among these are changes to the pitch, changes to speed and bpm of an original

recording, cutting/slicing or rearranging parts of a pre-existing recording into a new musical idea while at the same time maintaining a natural and recognizable sense of sonic development in a way which qualifies the new work as an original or authentic idea. In this sense, it is not merely the style or artist being sampled which informs the compositional impact of the new work, but the way in which sections or parts of these recordings can be manipulated and rearranged into new ideas that constitute a sense of creative originality and artistic growth.

On reflection I feel I have gained an invaluable level of insight into the multi-faceted areas of digital music production, ranging from the originality and authenticity of ideas, musical techniques and methodologies found in contemporary music, an appreciation for a wide variety of musical genres and periodic eras, as well as evaluating the important steps needed to be taken before releasing a professional body of work which adheres to commercial music standards.

Adapting tools and services like those offered by Tracklib in my own creative approach, has given me a more thorough understanding of the steps needed in order to transition from a casual-musical experimenter, to a more well-rounded and informed individual aspiring for recognition in the music and entertainment industry. Artists and producers can have creative freedom to use samples and express themselves creativity without implications of plagiarism or copyright violation, while at the same time entering a licencing agreement which mutually benefits both the artist/producer and the original artist being sampled. It is this mutual agreement which fundamentally makes it both affordable and accessible for the aspiring producer, and an invaluable tool which is too important to be dismissed in the modern age of digital music and audio production. In addition to this, Tracklib provides a level of service based on an agreement, which helps bring the artist or producer closer to an environment where the tracks and productions they create can be legitimately released, and monetized - and is an agreement which benefits all parties involved.

The tracks and compositions I have included as part of this assessment represent the relevance of digital

sampling in my own creative workflow. Digital sampling has created a bedrock of ideas upon which new ideas can be formed, among these ideas are also the potential to work with other sessions musicians, vocalists, instrumentalists, or recording artists to create new work. Many reputable musicians have been able to make a sustainable income, from selling or leasing their copyrighted recordings for use in productions by other artists. Most notably is the use of drum packs, audio libraries and sample-packs which have become a worldwide trend in online music and production communities, with many artists creating several volumes of sample packs, across a range of styles and instrument types. This helps to lift the creative capacity for many people in the music industry, provide access and permission to use pre-existing audio recordings which may often be outside of their grasp, or often using vintage/analogue equipment which is rare, expensive, and inaccessible to those adopting a low-cost, DIY-approach to music making. Modern digital music production tools and software, have now equipped us with more skills and ways of expressing our creativity than ever before, and these innovations have led to new peaks being discovered in musical creativity which as a result, enriches our senses of enjoyment and appreciation toward the transcendent nature and language of music.

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