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## Performing Sound of the Past: Remix in Electronic Dance Music Culture\*

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### Abstract

The term *remix*, defined as an activity of taking data from pre-existing materials to combine them into new forms according to personal taste, relates to various elements and areas of contemporary culture. Whichever model used, consideration of the remix depends on recognition of pre-existing cultural codes. Therefore, as a second layer, the remix relies on the authority of the original and it functions at the meta-level. The audience may see a trace of history with the pre-existing object and the meaning creates in the viewer(s), reader(s), listener(s) or, in the contemporary world of DJs and popular electronic dance music culture – in dancer(s).

With the aim of specifying modes of creating particular ambients, this paper will consider and examine the song *Why Don't You?* remixed by Marko Milićević, a Serbian DJ also known as Gramophonedzie, and illuminate how material from the past can create a constructive (musical) dialogue.

### Keywords

pre-existing material, remix, Gramophonedzie, performing audience, clubbing ambient

### Introduction

The first time when on the radio I listened to the remixed song *Why Don't You?*, I was quite of surprised how DJ accessed to musical material from the past. The song affected me with a sense of the past although it was skilfully woven and shaped into a new, very danceable sound of electronic music.<sup>2</sup> My experience of the listening and fasci-

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<sup>2</sup> Electronic dance music (shortly EDM) is an umbrella term covering various (sub) genres of popular electronic music (e.g. techno, house, drum 'n' bass, trance), performed in clubs, or in alternative spaces, for dancers gathered around the disk-jockey (shortly DJ). Mark J. Butler elaborates: "One of the most distinctive characteristics of electronic dance music is the way in which it is produced – namely, through the use of electronic technologies such as synthesizers, drum machines, sequencers, and samplers. Although increasingly common in popular music in general in recent years, these technologies

nation about how the pre-existing material was, metaphorically speaking, *re-lived* in the new context, immediately opened up numerous questions. Looking from the historic perspective, I was wondering if Kansas Joy McCoy, Delta blues musician and songwriter, could even imagine what would happen to his autobiographical song titled *The Weed Smoker's Dream* that he performed and recorded in 1936 accompanied by the ensemble Harlem Hamfats? Regardless of the fact that McCoy soon after changed some lyrics and gave a new title *Why Don't You Do Right?*, perhaps he could believe that the song will attract the attention of jazz musicians who were moving to become stars in the USA during the first half of the twentieth century. However, he could not know that the song would travel through time and diverse musical contexts, linking genres from blues to electronic dance music.

Moreover, not only was this song performed, among others, by famous soprano Kiri Te Kanawa, accompanied by trio Andre Previn (piano) – Ray Brown (double-bass) – Mundell Lowe (guitar), by the band The White Ghost Shives, but it was also one of the main soundtrack themes for *Who Framed Roger Rabbit* in 1988. Finally, two decades later, it arrived into the field of popular electronic dance music and opened up different perspectives for linking with music material from the past. Namely, Belgrade's DJ Marko Milićević, also known as Gramophonedzie, produced a remix of the song.<sup>3</sup> He used the version with which Peggy Lee, a famous jazz singer, debuted in New York in 1942 accompanied by Benny Goodman's ensemble.<sup>4</sup> On March 1st 2010 Positiva Records and Virgin Records released the remix with the shorter title *Why Don't You*. Soon after, the remix reached top positions of world chart lists (e.g. Number 1 in the UK Dance Chart) and received good reviews. Gramophonedzie's international success also began in 2010 after gaining an MTV Europe Music Award for the remix, in the category "Best Adriatic Act".

This paper aims to demonstrate how materials from the past can create a constructive (musical) dialogue. At the first level of analysis, I explore the ways in which Gramophonedzie created the track<sup>5</sup> in relation to the original material. I aim to illuminate how jazz song

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have always formed the backbone of musical creation in EDM, in which a traditional instrument or a live vocal is the exception rather than rule. In other ways, however, live performance is essential to EDM, although as with studio production it is always technologically mediated" (Butler 2006: 33).

<sup>3</sup> As one of the most important artists from the second wave of EDM development in Serbia, Marko Milićević started as a professional DJ in 2000, after participating at the project of Red Bull Academy in Dublin. He initially played in several Belgrade clubs under the name Marko Hollywood and later changed to Gramophonedzie.

<sup>4</sup> The song version from 1947 is a part of compilation album *The Best of Peggy Lee: The Capitol Years* released by Blue Notes Records in 1997.

<sup>5</sup> A track in electronic dance music is similar to the song or shorter composition (Butler 2006: 9).

can be skillfully *applied into* and *performed in* electronic dance music. The second level of my analysis directs towards the official music-video. I hope to examine and highlight ways in which basic ideas of musical remix, which I generally understand as *performing old in new*, are embodied *in* and *through* the video image. The results of these two levels of analysis will open up a space for exploring ways in which remix functions at a live performance as a part of longer DJ set<sup>6</sup>. Also, it will crystalize modes in which remix creates a bigger structure that combines music, video, ambient and dancers. My aim is to show how repetition of pre-existing material takes place and how it becomes repetition with a difference. In addition, my goal is also to consider remix and to show how sound material can be (re)shaped and extended beyond music, entering into a video image and live DJ performance.

### *Determination of remix*

We live in times where the combination of different materials emphasise ideas of repetition and representation as important procedures that are in constant flux. In this light, repetition becomes an important mode of production while authors transform pre-existing material aiming to create new works, as well as new forms of re-presentation. This statement is supported by the fact that from the very beginning of the twentieth century to date a significant number of artists have re-produced not only fragments, but also whole works done by other artists, furthermore they use available cultural products. This not only raises questions of what is repeated and represented in a new context, but also how repetition within performative present took place, illuminating a new perspective for interdisciplinary research. Remix stands out as one of the most important contemporary concepts which circulate throughout art, media and culture. Nonetheless, a large number of objects informed by remix principles are also around us. On one hand, remix describes various elements and areas of contemporary culture. On the other – lifestyles fields such as fashion, design, even food feature its basic elements. It leads to the fact that ideas of remix allow people to think and understand how re-using of material can be inspiring, productive and efficient (Navas 2012).

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<sup>6</sup> A set presents a single, continuous live DJ performance in clubs, alternative spaces or at radio programmes. The set usually lasts from one to four hours. DJ unifies it by keeping a constant tempo and making, as much as possible, a minimal distinction between selected tracks. A peak of performance DJ reaches during the mid of playing. Although usually one DJ performs a set, sometimes performance involves two DJs who alternate back and forth. Using EDM terminology, when playing simultaneously, DJs perform back-to-back set.

Remix circulates and stands in its wider context within the theoretical, interdisciplinary discourse of postmodernism.<sup>7</sup> Development of remix took place from 1960s, the period when critical thinkers began to determine and assess the social developments of the time. Therefore, it is strategically connected with influences of postmodernism, the globalisation process and new media. Eduardo Navas, an interdisciplinary artist and researcher who focuses on the crossover of art and media in culture, in his significant study *Remix theory: the aesthetics of sampling* highlights that remix is like a virus; it has “mutated into different forms according to the needs of a particular culture” (Navas 2012: 126). Although, by itself, remix has no form, it creates parasitical effect that constantly shifts taking various shapes (Navas 2012: 126). Through analysis of the examples of contemporary artists, art historian Nicolas Bourriaud in his book *Postproduction* marks a shift from “the art of appropriation” toward a culture of the use of forms, moreover “a culture of constant activity of signs based on a collective ideal: sharing” (Bourriaud 2007: 9). Thus, remix – widely conceptualized as re-production and re-combination of sources that were already at play – has become an attitude that illuminates contemporary time.

The basic ideas of remix appeared as the outcome of a long process of experimentation with diverse forms of mechanical recording and reproduction. As Navas explains, the ideas started in the nineteenth century, in capturing sound, complemented with a strong link to capturing images in photography and film and following the primary determination: to document the material and re-live it later in other contexts. Principles of remix, therefore, based on the techniques of sampling<sup>8</sup>, mark the whole over the fragment, recycle content and form and become a re-interpretation of already known material.

All these facts indicate that remix highlights the practice of choosing one among many materials and modifying it according to personal intention. Not only does the selection of material becomes important defining element, but also consciousness of how to work with it. In more precise words, remix can be understood as an activity of taking data from pre-existing materials to combine them into new

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<sup>7</sup> For more information about compositional procedures based on pre-existing materials in postmodern artistic music see: M. Veselinović-Hofman (1997) *Fragments o muzičkoj postmoderni* [*Fragments on Musical Postmodernity*], Novi Sad: Matica srpska, and V. Mikić (2009) *Lica srpske muzike: neoklasicizam* [*Faces of Serbian Music: Neoclassicism*], Beograd: Fakultet muzičke umetnosti u Beogradu, Katedra za muzikologiju.

<sup>8</sup> Sampling, which arose in the second half of the twentieth century and made remixing possible, relates, in its broadest sense, to “an act of taking fragment not from the world but an archive of representations of the world” (Navas 2012: 12). As well as remixing, sampling is necessary for acts of appropriation and recycling.

forms according to personal taste. It means to take pre-existing material and making it different, but recognizable, while the act of choosing material from the past and entering it into a new environment becomes important. Unlike sampling, where the emphasis is usually to mask the identity of the sample, remix tries as much as possible to keep an intact aura of the original (Navas 2012).

Whichever model it takes, contemplation of the remix depends on recognition of a pre-existing cultural code. Hence, as Navas observes, material that carefully defines itself on the authority of something pre-existing has a better chance to succeed. This trace of the Past in remix must have its historical significance, something recognizable and important. Therefore, as a second layer, the remix relies on the authority, or popularity of the original and it functions at the meta-level. In that light, Navas explains: “The originality of the remix is non-existent, therefore it must acknowledge its source of validation self-reflexivity” (Navas 2012: 67). Depending on the perspective of considering remix, the experience changes. Observer(s), reader(s), listener(s), dancer(s) find(s) seeds of a pre-existing history, or something new in that which they already know. They define remix while the way how it is done and performed becomes significant.

Finally, although remix relates to the wider field of art, culture and (new) media, its roots can be noticed in popular music. Namely, Jamaican dub, a sub-genre of reggae that appeared in the 1960s, introduced *cut* and *paste* technique in popular music as a new media feature. It follows that *technical vision* indulged in creative competition with the musical. By the designation *technical vision*, I highlight the idea of Jamaican DJs using gramophone records, turntables, sequencers, samplers and other equipment to perform music. Therefore, Jamaican DJs extended the functional limits of the turntable. They recognized the potential of technology in that they had a strong desire to perform through technical apparatus paying their attention to *the moment of performing* pre-existing material as sound phenomenon. While defined in their profession by the turntable, DJs appropriated *the machine* and turned it into performing instrument. Moreover, they initiated the transformation process of the DJ from the anonymous assistant of the discotheque to the performer *per se*. As soon as the technology became available, authors recognized not only the opportunity to create alternative song versions by cutting and linking up recordings, but also the great potential of multilayered records. It was the first time in popular music that the record became the predecessor to a whole series of similar but different versions, a basic material of numerous dubs (Brewster and Broughton 2006). In addition, Jamaican dub musicians in their compositions gave credit

to the pre-recorded tracks as the starting point of creativity, showing that music is always in a constant state of flux and change.<sup>9</sup>

*'Repeat itself with the difference': Gramophonedzie's interpretation of the song as a paradigm for remix*

Actualizing the transfer of the song from the past to present context Gramophonedzie advanced the status of pre-recorded music. With regard to this, the track *Why Don't You* became the primary incarnation of the song, marking repetition of pre-existing material with the difference as the essence of remix. Gramophonedzie activates the history of popular music by copying and pasting loops of sound and places recorded products in relation to each other. With reference to Roland Barthes writings on photography, Navas highlights that "the loop repeats a moment in time, just like a photograph presents a moment in time" (Navas 2012: 31). Also, when he used samples from Peggy Lee's interpretation of the song, Gramophonedzie knew that his remix might in turn be taken as the base material of a new track or even whole DJ set. Gramophonzie explains: "The evolution of music is the question. I think that this should not be prevented. I am truly happy when I hear that some of my DJ colleagues in their live performances, playing this track, upgrade new ideas and go further" (Milićević 2011). The following analysis will shed light on two levels. The first marks content focusing on textual characteristics of the song while the second level illuminates formal musical structure both the original song and its remixed version. I hope to explore ways of their correlation.

From the textual aspect, the song narrates the story from a female perspective. A woman complains about her partner's apparent financial insolvency. She states that he was wealthy in 1922, but

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<sup>9</sup> Navas notes three phases of remix development in popular music. The first, mainly related to Jamaican dub, focused on the basic principles of dubbing (versioning) in the 1960s. In the second phase, which lasted during the 1970s and 1980s, it became part of the musical mainstream and style at the stage of American disco music, mainly related to New York City. Namely, DJs created extended versions of hit songs aiming to inspire the audience at live performance to spend as much time as possible on the dance floor. Simple repetition of fragments of popular songs set the base for contemporary clubbing remixing. At the third phase, which lasted during the mid 1980s and throughout 1990s in USA, remix became style in the popular music mainstream. It was used to increase sales of records. On the other hand, subcultures in England and shortly after in other parts of Europe, following principles of remix, started to develop new forms of popular music (e.g. trip-hop, down-tempo, break beat, etc.) based on various styles and sub-genres of EDM (Detroit techno, Chicago house, New York Garage). Moreover, Navas highlights that the fourth phase of remix is taking place from the late 1990s to date, the time when computers gained popularity and remix principles extended, as I already marked, to the other areas of culture and new media (Navas 2012: 20–22).

now has nothing and claims it is because he wasted money on other women. Each strophe ends with a refrain asking why man does not 'do right by her', and then woman throws him out, insisting that he go earn a living in order to support her. Financial crisis, as the basic motive of the song, was a common theme in the USA following the Great Depression and prohibition. Not only is the text applicable in the contemporary context of global economic crisis, but it also, as a kind of an archetypal model, fits in all close relations between partners when financial resources are limited. Unlike the original interpretation of the song, where the voice of Peggy Lee is positioned as subtle and has the role of commenting her partner's bankruptcy, in remix her voice is additionally reinforced and gets an almost commanding mode. Besides, the female voice of the young lady from the original song shifts the focus to the voice of the emancipated woman who receives an almost maternal role. It is especially reflected in the official music-video of the remix, which I discuss shortly.

Using samples from the 1947 version, crossing them with multilayer rhythms, adopting a meter 'four-on-the-floor'<sup>10</sup>, as well as tempo of the original recording (M.M. 124), in remix Gramofonedzie applies the first and second musical and textual strophes. His emphasis rests on sound texture and timbre, thus enabling a multilayer composition. The logic of the concept of music is revealed in the organization of the music flow. Compared to the original track, a change in the formal musical structure of the remix determines it as *reflexive*.<sup>11</sup> Navas explains that the reflexive remix "challenges the 'spectacular aura' of the original and claims autonomy even when it carries the name of the original" (Navas 2012: 66). Looking through the perspective, it means that recognizable parts of pre-existing track must remain essential within the remix. Otherwise, the remix will not have the possibility to find cultural acceptance.

<sup>10</sup> Four-on-the-floor occurs as the effect of programmed drum-machine rhythms and characterises constant stream of steady bass-drum quarter notes. Mark J. Butler elaborates that four-on-the-floor comes from rock "in which a performer playing a drum set would need to depress the foot pedal on the bass drum (the 'kick' drum) four times per measure in order to play a four-quarter-note pattern" (Butler 2006: 78).

<sup>11</sup> According to Navas, remix in music exists in three variants as extended, selective and reflexive. Each of them is attached to the original material as a basis. The extended remix, as a longer version of the original song, contains instrumental sections making them more danceable. The selective remix consists of material from the original, but it can also contain new sections and always sounds keeping the 'essence' of the original song. The reflexive remix maximizes and combines both strategies; however, the original track must remain to be recognizable. According to Navas, the fourth type – regenerative remix – emerges from the three types but extends to areas outside of music. The principles of regenerative remix spread throughout networked culture, social spaces like Facebook and Twitter, the online search engine Google, Wikipedia, etc. (Navas 2012: 168).

Compared to the musical material of the original song, which consists of two macro parts A (instrumental segment), and B (the first and second strophe), at the macro level of the remix this is clearly evident: an added, separate part (C, C1, and C2). It is based on materials from refrain and its fragmentation at the textual, metro-rhythmical as well as musical level. Besides, the repetition of the refrain is present at the end of each part (B, C, C1, B1, and C2). The part C focuses on repetitiveness of the pre-used material, its transformation and play with fragments aiming to achieve peak of the remix. Therefore, it could be pointed that part C (C1, and repeated C2) gets characteristics of the key sound image<sup>12</sup> of the remix that achieves climax of the dramatic and sound action.

Skillfully playing with the refrain samples taken from the original song, their cutting, formatting and positioning in relation to the original, Gramophonedzie focuses on the second verse in the part C and its variants (C1, C2). The words ‘Get out!’, auditory emphasized, stand in the foreground in remixes refrain while at the end of each part (C, C1, C2) refrain exposes the verse as a whole (“Get out of here and get me some money too”). Extracted in this way, highlighted by rhythm and sound energy that creates within the remix, the part C (C1, C2) supports the hypothesis that the remix transforms female voice from one that appeals to the voice that commands.

Peggy Lee, “Why Don’t You Do Right?”, version from 1947			
M.M. = 124			
macro	A	B	B1
duration	00.00-00.12	00.12-00.35	00.35-00.58
micro	4+2	4+4+2+2	4+4+2+2
note	instrumental introduction	1 <sup>st</sup> strophe	2 <sup>nd</sup> strophe

Figure 1. Table of formal structure of the original song

As shown in the tables (Figure 1 and 2), the formal and developed structure of remix consists of seven parts, and each of them

<sup>12</sup> The idea to emphasize the key sound image, to understand it as the essence and core of track, which leads to deeper meanings, came to my mind from the theoretical concept of theater key image. The concept, as the tool for analysis, Alexandra Portmann is introducing and developing in her PhD project focusing on Shakespeare’s *Hamlet* in former Yugoslavia from 1945 to date. Inspired by the concept of image in work of art historian Aby Warburg who describes the image as crystallization of culture in certain historical moment, she develops a framework which links teatrology, performance and memory studies (Портман 2012: 63, 64).



stands in various relations of dynamic dependence (A, B, C, C1, B1, C2, A1). They are positioned to create clear sound crescendo and decrescendo, with the achieved emphasis in the part C. Also, the light sheds on the logic on how the parts are connected. Namely, both strophes are exposed purely, with no added elements of EDM. On the other hand, short instrumental connectors receive a special role within the remix and appear in two ways. When in the music flow the strophe has to be presented, the instrumental connector, which comes before it, appears in its original sounding (A-B, C1-B1). However, when the key image follows, as well as the ending part A1, instrumental connectors are colored by rhythmical strata (B-C, B1-C2, C2-A1). Thus, at the micro level of sounding crescendo (with EDM platform) and decrescendo (without EDM platform) is achieved. Connectors, therefore, are not only useful for linking parts/fragments, but they also create a sound platform for exposure of following parts. Finally, frame segments (A and A1) have functions of *Intro* and *Outro*,<sup>13</sup> increasingly to introduce the sound of the remix, or to decrease it to the original sounding of the sample (A1) by reducing layers and

Gramofonedzije, <i>Why Don't You</i> , remix from 2010							
M.M. = 124							
macro	A	B	C	C1	B1	C2	A1
duration	00.00-00.39	00.39-00.58	00.58-01.17	01.17-01.40	01.40-02.03	02.03-02.26	02.26-02.35
micro	2+12+4+2	4+2+2	8+2	8+2+2	4+4+2+2	8+2+2	4
note	Samples from A Function of <i>Intro</i>	1 <sup>st</sup> strophe	Samples from refrain	Samples from refrain	2 <sup>nd</sup> strophe	Samples from refrain	Samples from A Function of <i>Outro</i>

	refrain
	instrumental connector 1
	instrumental connector 2
	instrumental connector 3

1 <sup>st</sup> strophe	You had plenty money, 1922 You let other women make fool of you, <i>Why don't you do right, like some other men do? Get out of here and get me some money too.</i>
2 <sup>nd</sup> strophe	You're <u>sittin'</u> there and <u>wanderin'</u> what it's all about, You <u>ain't</u> got no money, they will put you out, <i>Why don't you do right, like some other men do? Get out of here and get me some money too.</i>

Figure 2. Table of formal structure of the remix and legend

<sup>13</sup> *Intro* and *Outro* segments in electronic dance music have a similar function as *Introduction* and *Coda* in classical musical forms.

shortening structure. The opening part (A) from the beginning of the remix illuminates repetition and sample fragmentation which creates the impression of the new theme interpreted by clarinet.

The micro level of the structural form organization confirms that Gamophonedzie placed emphasis on the fragmentation, rhythmical repetition based on the multilayer rhythmical and sound strata. His aim was to achieve dance effects. Working with two central concepts – *cut* and *mix*, in order to obtain a *new*, remix – Gramophonedzie separates the sonic signifier (the sample) from the original context and places the *floating* sample into a new chain of signification. With these procedures remix receives the characteristics of the postmodern. On the other hand, through this example a new modality of audio memory is present: the history of popular music becomes a network of mobile segments available at any moment for (re)inscription into new mixes, sound lines and contexts. Finally, not only does the remix shows how two different times and musical experiences of the song are intertwined, but it also exposes how the new sound space could be shaped as the result of successful interweaving of two musical genres.

*'See the song': remix in the music-video*

Aiming to examine the official music-video of the remix *Why Don't You*, created in EMI production, I focus on Michel Chion's proposal for analysing films and motion sequences where the emphasis is on a combination of sound and image. Chion denotes the combination as *audio-vision* and describes it as "the perceptive process by which sound in cinema, television, and video modifies and influences the perception of what is seen. Audio-visual combination does not work as an addition of similar or opposed components but as a mixture in which sound is rarely taken into account" (Chion 2000: 202). Therefore, the following analysis will crystalize the ways in which music and video relate to each other creating a new form suitable for developing ideas. It will elucidate how two logic (sound and image) can be developed in the same way "toward an absolute point where the two will dissolve together" (Chion 1994: 213). The center of exploration sheds light on questions important for audio-visual analysis: What do I see of what I hear? How these two lines of presentation correlate? Where are the important points of synchronization? Focusing on such questions, I aim to illuminate the ways in which combination of sound and image is presented. Previously elaborated analysis of formal musical structure of the remix will be base to consider ways for making audio-visual encounter and overlap of sound and image.

The official music-video of the remix *Why Don't You* is designed so that the visual level follows the textual narrative.<sup>14</sup> Thereby the doubling of the video image and sound is achieved. At first glance, the magical power of the gramophone and gramophone record is emphasized. It brings a woman “from television”. With command-singing, she solves the problem and influences the young man to escape from almost bewitched circle and go outside in a search for a job. Looking through Chion’s audio-visual lenses, I noticed that the structure of the music-video follows musical form. It means that the music-video structure contains seven segments.

The first segment (A: 00.00-00.39) focuses on the living room of a young man while the old gramophone, which he brought into the room, and dusty vinyl marked the first link between past and present. This link implicates Adorno’s view “the gramophone’s social position is that of a border marker between two periods of musical practice” (Adorno 1990: 52). The segment also contains sequences of old television where focus is on the woman’s body, as well as a young man’s dance on music played by gramophone. The sign for ambient change and the creation of a more romantic atmosphere is represented by switching the lamp on. The sequence of the door opening introduces the woman from the television. The door links two times and two realities: past represented by a woman from television, and present – the space of living room in which she enters. The effect of the past is additionally emphasized by mist on the other side of the door as well as focusing the camera on the woman’s face and body. Presented as a ghost and dressed in the black dress as a symbol of the past, this woman, in fact, alludes to Peggy Lee and performances at the beginning of her career. However, the previously mentioned transformation of the female voice in the remix, is present in the music-video. The commandment singing voice gets its visual representation in the form of an emancipated vamp lady.

The segment B (00.39-00.58) marks the woman’s entering and discovering new space. It seems as if she makes the transformation into other time and space by coquettish walk and command-singing style pointing to the disorder in the room. Her presence in a new time sheds light on a hypothesis that the woman became, compared to the sound level of the remix, the pre-existing material in which remix is created, or, in other words, original voice of the song. As the key point at the level of music, segment C (00.58-01.17) and variant C1 (01.17-01.40) becomes important in the music-video. Namely, it is based on the faster image flow which follows music, as well as solving disorders in the living room. With finger movements, the woman causes and conducts things to sort and tidy up by them-

<sup>14</sup> The official music-video can be viewed at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uT8OEt5r1U>, accessed April 23, 2014.

selves. Moreover, the compounded musical image of the segment is reflected itself into the video. It alludes and refers to the speed of solving the mess in the living room.



Figure 3. Scenes taken from the official music-video

Repetition (segments B1, C2, A1: 01.40-02.26) marks several important sequences. Firstly, blowing air into his nose, the woman makes purification and enlightenment of a young man. After this action, he started transformation and became motivated to go out in a search for a job. Secondly, after getting things done, the living room transforms into black and white image. It means that the woman, metaphorically speaking, won and occupied the present space. The position of two realities and times in the music-video (past/woman/media/public space vs. present/young man/living room/private space), compared to the music level, highlights the fact that the pre-existing song got its significant and recognizable role in the remix. Finally, as sound gains its crescendo and reaches peak in the segment C, it accelerates image flow achieving common order between music and video.

The music-video distinguishes three main points of synchronization where it gets whole sense and effect. Corresponding to the presence of an emphasis that is both visual and acoustic, the first point of synchronization is marked by the scene (00.03) where the young man brings gramophone into the living room. At the level of compounded rhythmical sound, the dashed image is presented aiming to emphasize the inputting of past elements into the present environment. Sound and image are cut simultaneously. Compared to musical remix, it is entering of the pre-existing song into the field of electronic dance music. The second point of synchronization is realized by ambient change (00.27), switching on the lamp and changing the atmosphere of usual lighter living room into more romantic and darker one. The change is also followed on the level of music. The moment of the door opening continues changing not only at the visual level, but also at the level of music. For all that, compound-

ed rhythmical and sound image from the beginning of the segment, gives place to the original instrumental introduction, or instrumental connector. Finally, the third synchronization point (00.57) also emphasizing the importance of representation of the past: woman stands in front of the door, and she is presented by dashed image, which follows musical flow.

If we observe textual narrative in the music-video, the first fact that we'll notice is different roles between male and female parts. Appearing firstly in media space, the woman presents that the young's man imagination has the power to help him in organizing life. The dominant role of the female protagonist clearly sets the base for developing relation. After her magical commanding-singing helped things to return to their places by themselves, the woman expects the young man to take initiative in finding a job and to provide financial resources for living. Altogether, it should be pointed out that the basic idea of the remix is reflected at the level of the music-video. The original song is positioned through the role and activities of the woman. After entering to new space and environment, she gets an important role similarly to that of the original song in the remix. She positioned herself in a new environment as recognizable sign from the past. The space of the living room may represent the platform for activities done by a person from the past. The hypothesis is additionally strengthened by the woman's visual ghost-like representation, sequences of old gramophone, vinyl record, as well as opening doors as the border from past to present.

*'Feel the rhythm': remix at the live performance*

At the third, final level of analysis, I consider changes in the remix as part of a DJ set. The fragment that I discuss was recorded at Grampohonedzie's live performance in Belgrade, on March 5th 2011.<sup>15</sup> Not only was the artist already recognized in the local community, but his international award for the remix might be one of the reasons why the live performance was well-attended. As part of a longer set, the communication process in remix occurs between: idea – DJ – remix – audience – and audiences' feedbacks to the DJ. At the very beginning of the remix (part A, video recording: 00.00-00.41) it seems as if the audience got the sense of which track is to come. In the moment of recognizing the beginning of the remix, the first instrumental connector and following part B (which exposes the first verse of the original song, video recording: 00.42-01.10), the audience starts thunderous applause, ovations, and whistling. Sensing the

<sup>15</sup> The video recording can be viewed at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oQwCJoFShmA>, accessed April 23, 2014.

incoming climax of the song and the atmosphere that was created on the dance floor, some of them began recording the performance and memorizing the moment by using mobile phones. Gramophonedzie left DJ's desk, came and stood in front of them. They greeted him with increased applause and ovations while he gesticulated with arms stretched out and moved back. It is important to stress that the audience gave support to the performance not only by dancing, but also singing the verses of the song.

The most emphasized moment in performing the remix live was reached in the part C (video recording: 01.11-02.17). As I already emphasized as the key sound image in the analysis of the formal musical structure, it became the central moment in live performance of the remix. At the music level, this part was extended and repeated several times. This leads to the conclusion that while performed live, the remix was re-shaped with the aim of prolonging the dance, to keep the audience on the dance floor as long as possible and, finally, to create specific dancing effects. Nonetheless, the part C gave clear experience of the remix highlighting its importance not only in the track, but also at live performance.

The rhythm of the part C was very well reflected and seen in the improvised bodily movements of the audience. They created their own meanings through upgraded rhythm of the remix. At the moment when the part C started, as the personal DJs note in the remix, the beat was also reflected in Gramophonedzie's body. The audience reacted to recognizable material by dancing. Besides, they generated intensification of clubbing energy while whistling, screaming, singing and recording. Exactly the part C with its musical characteristics excited dancers on the floor. Highlighted multilayered rhythmical image, playing with samples, cutting and emphasizing the fragments from the refrain created this experience. Not only was this reflected on the bodies of the dancers, but also DJ accompanied the rhythm by the slight movements of his body. Moreover, moving his right hand, Gramophonedzie created the sense that he conducts DJ players and a track on one hand while, on the other – movements of the audience. Drawing on this view, I would like to point out that musical remix at the live performance became remixed. In addition, the part C sheds light on Gramophonedzie's personal note which became an important moment of his expression.

Consequently, the remix associates several cultural meanings. Firstly, it points out the connection with the pre-existing musical material and the need for a symbolic communication with musicians from the past. For this reason, the meaning is functionally determined. Secondly, it establishes a close contact between the DJ and audience to whom Gramophonedzie presents his musical selection

and taste putting emphasis not only on his performing skills, but also to get them to trust him. It allows the creation of the clubbing experience, where the performance of the DJ becomes experience. The second meaning highlights the importance of creativity, not only by recognizing material, but also its importance (International award!), the audience expresses confidence they have in him, and his reputation, figuratively speaking, in the wider EDM community.

Nevertheless, the bodies of the dancers and the DJ performing reached symbolic communication through the atmosphere of creating, as Gramophonedzie described, “spiritual unification” (Milićević 2011). This determination relates to the second level of connection that establishes itself between DJ and the audience. Although it is impossible to reach the unification at every live performance, the connection could be achieved not only through music, but also, as I already remarked, through bodily movements by which DJ and the audience communicates. Looking from this perspective, light is shed on the fact that electronic dance music is a specific genre. Unlike other popular music genres, the particularity of successful DJ party depends on the established level of spiritual unification. In that way, the DJ gets several roles: a conductor, meta-musician (who become composer, performer, producer, sound engineer and collector) with the nomadic strategy, avant-garde musician in the digital age, but also a musical (performing) persona, according to Phillip Auslander’s designation (Auslander 2006).



Figure 4. Gramophonedzie’s live performance in Belgrade, March 5<sup>th</sup> 2010

Sharing the energy with the audience at a live performance (*here* and *now* of the musical interpretation), the DJ erases the borderline that stands between the audience and himself. In addition, as I noticed at the interview with Gramophonedzie and other DJ as well as participating in numerous live performances, by movements of his body while performing music DJ also emphasizes enjoyment and satisfaction. On the other hand, in performing music through the dance, as Mark J. Butler elaborates, the audience gets a meaning and role of ‘performing audience’. Not only do they collaborate with the DJ, but also with each other in order to create a sense of ‘vibe’ – powerful affective quality close to the experience of ‘going dancing’ (Butler 2006: 72).

The next important elements of a live performance are numerous visuals, projection of images, graphical visualizations that point out the name of the performer – Gramophonedzie, as well as light and stroboscopic effects rhythmically and thematically coordinated with the music flow.<sup>16</sup> This sheds light on the hypothesis that the performance could be thought of as simulation of virtual community where the visuals also play a vital role in the clubbing ambient and create specific dancing experience. This is confirmed by the fact that the name Gramophonedzie itself refers to improvisation of identity. Translated from Serbian language, it means not only someone who skillfully plays gramophone record, but it also marks a profession – literally, persons who’s craft is the work on turntables. On the other hand, by using the artistic name, Gramophonedzie established kind of distance between his onstage persona and off-stage life.

During the interpretation of the remix, the audience had an opportunity to watch on the three screens remixed fragments taken from the official music-video and other materials that followed music beat. One screen was positioned on the wall behind the DJ while the other two were in dancing space, in front of Gramophonedzie. Projected video material also contributed to creating and achieving a specific audio-visual-dancing experience and clubbing ambient. Visual images appeared as a remix of the official music-video, which, together with music, made an intermusical relationship. Therefore, remix upgrades to higher, multimedia level at the live performance. For all these reasons, it could be highlighted that musical remix at live performances goes beyond music and could relate to the events outside itself after all.

In the moment of live performance, as the example showed, remix presents not only recognizable pre-existing material but also opens another interpretative level. I mark it as the meta level of ref-

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<sup>16</sup> The lack of official VJ (veejay or video-jockey) is the reason I put detailed video analysis of the live performance on the side.



erentiality. At this level, respectively at the *here* and *now* of performance, the auratic DJ interpretation creates and reaches particular clubbing ambient. The dance floor, therefore, becomes a space for musical dialogue between past and present, as well as the authentic place of musical and visual experience whose meanings are created in the performing audience. Mark J. Butler adds that the dance floor is a space “where the music really happens” and means it (Butler 2006: 15).

### Conclusion

Circumstances in which the product of technical reproduction can be used, according to Walter Benjamin, devalues the here-and-now, the aura is lost by limiting itself to trace of artistic and artistic-media mediation (Benjamin 1968). Theodor Adorno interprets aura as a struggle for work and with work in life, making a distinction between aura analog to magical effect and aura as effect produced by the culture industry (Adorno 1979). In the epoch of mass media reproducibility, as Ives Michaud elaborates, the separation of an artistic piece and aura has already happened: the spirit or the effect came out from the work of art to the world. The separation of the piece from its aura and the autonomous work of art turns into a social event (Michaud 2004). Looking from these perspectives, it could be concluded that *in* and *with* the remix *Why Don't You*, Gramophonedzie let the ghost out of the ‘apparatus’ back into physical reality. Besides, he formed with it a sort of a virtual orchestra that included musicians from the past. By remixing realities at the live performance Gramophonedzie’s achieved the aim to create unique, auratic space-time dimensions binding music, performing audience and visual equipment.

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## ИЗВОЂЕЊЕ ЗВУКА ПРОШЛОСТИ: РЕМИКС У КУЛТУРИ ЕЛЕКТРОНСКЕ МУЗИКЕ ЗА ИГРУ

(Резиме)

Ремикс се, као активност преузимања материјала из већ постојеће целине како би се, према сопственом укусу, обликовале нове форме, јавља у уметности, медијима, култури; повезан је са утицајима постмодерне, процесима глобализације и новим медијима, а користи се и у описивању најразличитијих феномена: музике, визуелних уметности, интернета, моде, дизајна итд. Међутим, без обзира у којем се облику појављује, само разумевање ремикса зависи од познавања већ постојећег културног кода. Из тог разлога, он се узда и ослања на ауторитет оригинала, те функционише на метанивоу. Публика у ремиксу може запазити траг прошлог, док се његова значења генеришу у посматрачима, читаоцима, слушаоцима, а када говоримо о свету ди-џејева и популарне електронске музике – и у играчима.

Београдски ди-џеј Марко Милићевић, познат као Грамофонџије (Gramophonedzie), написао је ремикс нумере *Why don't you*, верзију са којом је чувена џез певачица Пеги Ли (Peggy Lee) дебитовала у Њујорку 1942. године уз пратњу ансамбла Бенија Гудмена (Benny Goodman). Примером овог ремикса, који је објављен 1. марта 2010. године и убрзо одликован европском наградом MTV, предочавам начине на које се, коришћењем материјала из прошлости, може креирати конструктиван (музички) дијалог. На првом нивоу анализе показујем како је ди-џеј Грамофонџије креирао ремикс у односу на оригинални постојећи материјал, односно како је џез нумера вешто уткана и изведена у електронској музици за игру. На другом нивоу, моја пажња је усмерена на званични музички видео-спот, кроз који представљам како се основна идеја ремикса, коју схватам као извођење старог у новом, отеловљује у видео-слику. Резултати ових анализа отварају простор за испитивање начина на које ремикс функционише у извођењу уживо, као део ди-џеј сета, стварајући структуру која повезује музику, видео, амбијент, ди-џеја и играче. Мој циљ јесте да покажем како понављање постојећег звучног материјала постаје понављање са разликом, док сâм материјал може бити (пре)обликован и проширен изван музике.

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