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Constructing the Good Life: Posthuman Musical Identities

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This essay proposes posthumanism as an alternative cultural framework for the formation of "the good life", focusing on issues of identity and virtuality created through irony and hybridity in modern musical cultures. Music by Avalanches and Ibibio Sound Machine will be examined, considering how posthumanist interpretations affect their reception and anticipate the future of music as a method of individual and communal expression.

To study forms of music making is to mine a rich seam of socio-political expression throughout history. Living in an era of capitalist globalisation and growing austerity measures, there is an increasing struggle to find true satisfaction in life, and we can but chase the "good life" promised in decades past. In the West, we attempt to form meaningful identities and relationships within archaic social structures which uphold and endorse inequalities through social, cultural, political and economic oppression, and we can hear these struggles and possible solutions in contemporary music. There is a thirst for new governing philosophies and cultural perspectives to help interpret such possibilities, and one such perspective is the posthuman school of thought, which examines the liminal interactions and hybridity between humanity and technology. As we shall see, posthumanism carries a message of empowerment and autonomy, allowing us to create the "good life" for ourselves, by rejecting identification with conventional but oppressive social structures. Posthumanism is fundamentally optimistic, interested in constructing a new reality expressed through an acceptance of "fractured identities" (Haraway 74). Rather than seeking organic unity in the human body, posthumanism celebrates the potential offered by growing hybrid relationships between man and machine.

Through the works of a number of influential posthumanist writers, including N. Katherine Hayles, Neil Badmington, Donna Haraway, Robert Pepperell and Andy Clark, I will examine theories of what it means to be posthuman and how it is possible to apply these to the practice of "musicking". I borrow this term from Christopher Small, to refer to the social, artistic, cultural and political practice of "making music". He explains:

> To music is to take part, in any capacity, in a musical performance…. The act of musicking establishes in the place where it is happening a set of relationships, and it is in those relationships that the meaning of the act lies. They are to be found not only between those organized sounds which are conventionally thought of as being the stuff of musical meaning but also between the people who are taking part, in whatever capacity, in the performance; and they model, or stand as metaphor for, ideal relationships as the participants in the performance imagine them to be: relationships between person and person, between individual and society, between humanity and the natural work and even perhaps the supernatural world. (13)

If we create our identities through relationships, we represent our ideal relationships through the music we engage with; our choice of musical activities and the relationships they represent also suggest how

we ourselves want to see relationships, and identities, to be established in our communities and the wider world. Therefore, within this discussion, rather than closely examining music from the Western music canon from a traditional theoretical perspective, it would be more useful to find examples of popular musical cultures (outside the academy) in which musician and intelligent technology collide, and discover how their existence and significance might be considered posthuman, expressing the experience of a "good life" reimagined and reconstructed according to posthumanist philosophies. There are a multitude of musical cultures that could be held up as examples of posthuman musicking, but my particular focus falls into two camps: the irreverent, ironic sampling of plunderphonics-inspired music, demonstrated by the Avalanches' popular song "Frontier Psychiatrist"; and the impact of the digital revolution on the music of diasporic musicians, demonstrated here through Ibibio Sound Machine's 2014 self-titled album.

"Frontier Psychiatrist" is an excellent example of a sample culture that thrives on the fusion of unexpected existing musical elements to generate new music and represent constructed ideas and identities. Created from several thousand spliced samples woven together into a dance tune, "Frontier Psychiatrist" is darkly humorous and nonsensical, suggesting a multitude of implied meanings but through a strong use of irony, not demanding consensus from them. It is instantly recognisable, and its constructed identity will be later examined through a posthuman lens. *Ibibio Sound Machine* is an album that crossbreeds Afrobeat, disco, funk, jazz, African spirituals, the Yoruban language and its cultural references via the singer Eno Williams and her myriad musical influences, as well as the hybridity of her Nigerian ancestry and British upbringing. This work is relevant to my discussion also for its constructedness, but its significance lies in the temporal and geographical span of influences – made possible by developments in communication technology that extends our community far beyond the spaces in which we live – rather than electronic sampling. Williams's music shows how our individual frame of reference can move beyond the limited expectations of the "good life" and offers a more liberated expression of existence beyond our "traditional" communities.

To begin, it is necessary to define a specific reading of the word "posthuman" appropriate to this article. As it is a fluid concept, generating some (temporary) parameters for its meaning within a musicological context will allow a greater degree of interrogation of its consequences. The parameters, briefly, are: considering the existence of what Pepperell terms "consciousness beyond the brain" (i); considering posthumanism as a self-identification tool, achievable now through mind-set change; considering the world as we know it as being delimited by manmade social structures, which we have a choice to accept or reject; considering innovative hybrid relationships achieved through technology as a tool for positive change; and finally, considering irony and hybridity as tools for questioning existing power relationships and social structures. I will examine these concepts through a number of key posthumanist theorists and test them against the aforementioned musical case studies.

Neil Badmington suggests that, "humanism is viewed not as progressive but as reactionary" due to its core belief in a common, unifying essence which defines humanity and which is characterised by rational thought as proposed by Descartes (2). These philosophies have been the cornerstone and justification for much of the development of the Western world. Where, then, is the point of departure that pushes us to posthumanism? It comes about through a recognition of the incomplete and

unsatisfactory identity characterised by the "liberal human subject" (Hayles 6). Badmington blames Freud, and Marx and Engels's overturning of Descartes and Hegel's idealism in favour of materialism:

> Subjectivity, in the Marxist account, is not the cause but the effect of an individual's material conditions of existence. The subject is not a given. Eternal man is no more: "he" now has a history and a contingency denied by humanism. Marx and Engels make possible a *theoretical anti-humanism*" in which there is an awareness that radically different conditions of existence produce incompatible subjectivities. (5, emphasis in original)

The rejection of inherent, essential human condition is aided by the notion of Pepperell's consciousness beyond the embodied brain, a consciousness that exists instead in the social conditions and resultant cultures that we choose to inhabit and perpetuate; as Andy Clark explains, "the mind is less and less in the head" (4). Thus, the first important parameter for this discussion is accepting a future in which our lived experience can stretch much further than the limits of our physical bodies, in a growing web of consciousness that could undermine modern isolationism and disrupt the good life's focus on individuality. This type of thinking also recognises the fundamental fragility and fallibility of the human and concedes the inevitability of our dependence on machines; but importantly, it focuses on the machine's role as working to extend our consciousness, as a tool in a web of communication – cybernetics – that we have built and continue to build. It is a recognition that our bodies are too fragile and too temporary to make a meaningful impact anywhere beyond our own lives – to transmit *a* good life – and so it is in the growing collective knowledge of the present and future, enabled by the Internet and other information technology, that efforts should be channelled.

N. Katherine Hayles further defines posthumanism as "models of subjectivity *sufficiently different from the liberal subject* that if one assigns the term 'human' to this subject, it makes sense to call the successor 'posthuman'" (6, emphasis added). While this may sound hyperbolic, Hayles is careful to identify that the "successor" is "not a literal cyborg figure", but rather a choice, a state of being that, if we wish, can be assigned to us now (4). She writes,

> It is something more complex than "That was then, this is now." Rather, "human" and "posthuman" coexist in shifting configurations with historically specific contexts … Speaking for myself, I now find myself saying things like, "Well my sleep agent wants to rest, but my food agent says I should go to the store." Each person who thinks this way begins to envision him or herself as a posthuman collectivity, an "I" transformed into the "we" of autonomous agents operating together to make a self…. People become posthuman because they think they are posthuman. (6)

Thus, a second parameter to operate within is that posthumanism is the strategy of self-identification. For example, if I, as a musicologist, categorised myself as posthuman *before* any other attributes (female, white, British, feminist, politically left-leaning, postcolonial), then that will be how I see the world, and also the lens through which I understand the phenomenon of music. Of course, the grains of those personal characteristics and values would run through my posthumanist existence (and that combination of characteristics may have influenced the initial hypothetical decision to "be" posthuman), but they would be of less consequence in my "altered consciousness". Here, another important distinction ought to be made: the progression to posthuman is a gradual, perpetual, conscious movement, not a projected myth (or hope) of a future being that has transcended the human

body; that is the vision of those who today call themselves "transhumanists". Transhumanists delay the responsibility of the ordinary citizen to apply new identification methods to themselves; as Kristi Scott explains, they wait on the promise of the "good life" shaped by physical realisations of new embodiment, even immortality, through technology.

As a final point of critical reflection, I turn to Donna Haraway, whose image of the metaphorical cyborg – an embodied representation of posthumanist values – becomes a "condensed image of both imagination and material reality, the two joined centres structuring any possibility of historical transformation" (70). Like that of Hayles and Clark, her posthumanist cyborg is not a "literal cyborg" (although her definition skirts closer to the boundary of a transhumanist's cyborg), but is instead a way of philosophically approaching the liminal interactions between humanity and technology. Notably, in "A Cyborg Manifesto", she champions the power of irony in which contradictions need not be resolved but are used to demonstrate other truths, and through which hybridity can develop without denigrating the value or integrity of the "original" components (Haraway 30). Therefore, at the core its optimism, the posthumanism of Hayles, Badmington and Haraway is egalitarian and collective in nature, as I shall show in the context of sample culture and musical hybridity. Posthumanism rejects humanism, instead provoking us to question the source and authority of the characteristics (race, gender, class) through which we identify ourselves. Haraway declares that:

> Gender, race, or class-consciousness is an achievement forced on us by the terrible realities of patriarchy, colonialism and capitalism. And who counts as an "us" in my own rhetoric? Which identities are available to ground such a potential myth called "us" and what could motivate enlistment in this collectivity? (70)

What, indeed? What characteristics do "we" share? Haraway's diagnosis to our "fractured identities" (74) returns to the cyborg as the embodiment of posthuman thought:

> The cyborg incarnation is outside salvation history … the cyborg is a creature in a post-gender world; it has no truck with bisexuality, pre-oedipal symbiosis, unalienated labour, or other seductions to *organic wholeness* through a final appropriation of all the powers into a *higher unity*. (74, emphasis added)

Thus, Haraway suggests that the cyborg demonstrates the pointlessness of falsely claiming the achievement of wholeness during this life and frees man from the assumption of a divine right to seek wholeness or unity after death.

To study musicking in light of our fractured identities – especially in the context of hierarchical power relationships – is liberating, even radical, and essential for understanding the importance of hybridisation. In music, hybridisation is an ancient phenomenon and crucial to the development of expressive culture relevant to a contemporary audience who can identify with music that represents their social experience. Before the global communication boom during the twentieth century, it could safely be assumed that the music with which people empathised and through which they expressed themselves was that of their local or national community, with musical trends and conventions disseminated through public concerts or private social gatherings. Migrant populations would bring new sounds to an area, and often the music of the indigenous population would interact with the music brought in by new neighbours. More recently, however, the possibilities for hybridisation have multiplied through the various technological developments in audio recording, radio, computers, and

the Internet. As more of the world's populations become connected through an exchange of ideas and culture, so individual musical identities become more important than ever.

To apply the above-defined concepts of posthumanism to musicking is to embody them in a recognisable medium. The first application to consider is the quest for self-identity through methods of self-expression, rooted in both consciousness and embodiment and heavily mediated by relationships, environment, social conventions and so on. As quoted above, Small suggests that relationships formed in music can "model, or stand as metaphor for, ideal relationships as the participants in the performance imagine them to be" (13). If the complex processes of musicking can be a healthy method for individuals to express their experience of life individually and collectively, it follows that through this process, those who engage in musicking in any form are attempting to understand their existence and declare their identity through that medium. Thus, technological advancements in musicking such as synthesisers, sampling software and "plundered" musical material discovered through the Internet must be considered as "participants in the performance", and therefore part of the interactive creative process and cybernetic feedback loop of ideas and communication (Small 13). Frances Dyson argues that:

> Although posthumanism might simply involve a rethinking of what constitutes reality, the self, or the other, there is also a sense in which the magnitude of technological change is not restricted to mere notions, but, through developments in AI and ubiquitous computing, is reshaping the bodies, spaces and objects that constitute our very materiality. (70)

This reinforces the idea that, thanks to technological development and through a posthumanist lens, we are handed the opportunity to shape our own realities. We are empowered to imagine and establish a new "good life", outside of the materialist parameters of the liberal conception of the good life.

I will now turn to existing studies of musical hybridisation, in reference to which Paul D. Green has commented that:

> Ethnomusicologists and ethnographers who study world music cultures have until recently tended to ignore electricity-based technologies in their studies of music making, community building and performativity. We have tended, for example, analytically to favour technologies (such as instruments) made of organic components over those that originate with a western hardware manufacturer, even when such technologies are used with immense creativity. (4)

I argue that this is also true in the Western art music world, as it seems to stem from a similar bias as the "historically informed performance" movement, which privileges an idealised, romantic view of historic musicking whilst rejecting modern technologies and methods of enabling musicians. From a posthumanist perspective, this privileging of "organic" music is problematic for a number of reasons, particularly in the context of Haraway's deep suspicion of the search for "organic wholeness [or] higher unity" (74). First, this school of thought fails to acknowledge the idea that so-called historic instruments are merely tools designed to extend human capability, and that they were once as revolutionary and perhaps as contentious as modern technology so distrusted by traditionalists. As Robert Pepperell suggests in his chapter on "The Posthuman Manifesto", part of his study *The Posthuman Condition*,

> Creativity does not consist in the production of anything that is completely new. Creativity consists in combining that which already exists, but which had previously been held as separate. Creativity and aesthetic appreciation are both functions of the Human ability to modify the connections in their thought paths, or to have them modified. (186)

Thus, the creative fusion of two previously "separate" cultures, traditions, or styles can be considered a natural and valuable development in a community's search for the artistic means to express their reality.

Second, such determination to retain "local" sounds rooted in their origins is contrary to the priorities of hybridity and progress in the context of posthumanism. Posthumanism makes us question the logic of conservatism and perceived authenticity, in which we deliberately limit ourselves to the parameters and boundaries of our heritage for the sake of representing the "original" experience rather than constructing our own identities. Recalling the notion of technology as a tool, Clark suggests that:

> It is the mind-body-*scaffolding* problem. It is the problem of understanding how human thought and reason is born out of looping interactions between material brains, material bodies, and complex cultural and technological environments. We create these supportive environments, but they create us too. We exist, as the thinking things we are, only thanks to a baffling dance of brains, bodies, and cultural and technological scaffolding. (11, emphasis in original)

Furthermore, posthumanism can be considered an egalitarian philosophy whilst the deification of so-called organic or primitive music in musicological circles can be reductive and simplistic and devalues the work or musicians who engage in newer hybrid forms. This is not to say that those engaging in more traditional musicking, particularly those championing region-specific historic music, should be ignored or undermined; rather, I wish to question the higher value placed on such musicking over the practice of those who create musical identities and relationships with and through newer music technology such as sampling software and synthesisers.

This article's sampling case study, Avalanches' "Frontier Psychiatrist", has created an identity through its irreverent and playful collage of seemingly unrelated and nonsensical excerpts of recorded dialogue, spliced together over an eccentric collection of existing musical material. *Since I Left You*, the album (released in 2000) from which the track in question is taken, allegedly contains samples of over 3,500 vinyl records:

> They began sampling bits and bobs from records found in trading magazines and op-shop bargain bins, stitching them together using a[n] Emagic, a discontinued audio workstation that [Robbie] Chater and [Tony] DiBlasi still use today. "Luckily, there were so many $2 records in op shops around at the time that once you had a sampler you didn't need much money to have access to all these fantastic sounds," Chater [said]. "It seemed like such a fantastic way to create exciting sounds, and cheaply". (Levin)

The resulting 4'44" of music displays a virtuosic craftsmanship of turntable manipulation, and, importantly, creates absurd, surrealist humour from the snatches of spoken word. The above description of their creative process demonstrates the mind-set of the posthuman musician, to the extent that they eschew the organic and create technologically enabled art whose hybridity resists any stable identification. They used sampling technology to plunder older source material – vinyl – to achieve their imagined music, and by isolating samples from their original context and splicing them together, Chater and DiBlasi displaced any existing sense of time and place, creating a new, unique virtual space. The piece can be enjoyed as art, a catchy pop song, and even as an ironic comment on the West's penchant for diagnosing children with psychological problems at an early age. The lyrics of the refrain run:

> That boy needs therapy, psychosomatic
>
> That boy needs therapy, purely psychosomatic
>
> That boy needs therapy
>
> Lie down on the couch. What does that mean?
>
> You're a nut! You're crazy in the coconut!
>
> What does that mean? The boy needs therapy
>
> I'm gonna kill you, that boy needs therapy
>
> Play the kazoo, let's have it tune
>
> Now when I count three
>
> That, that, that, that, that boy, boy needs therapy
>
> He was white as a sheet
>
> And he also made false teeth. ("Frontier Psychiatrist")

The above excerpt comprises ten to twelve different samples, each lasting only a few seconds but which create a collage of disjointed phrases which, strung together, give an overall impression of a conversation between a disturbed child and number of different voices trying to "fix" him. Because the spoken-word samples are taken from a range of source, including the mid-twentieth-century slapstick comedy duo Wayne and Shuster and the films *Lawrence of Arabia and Polyester*, there is really very little sense of when, or where, this music was made. A small personal anecdotes illustrates the extent of this: despite having enjoyed this song and the album for a number of years, it was only while researching this article that I discovered Avalanches come from Australia; in fact, it had not occurred to me the musicians were from a particular country at all. The music hung in a virtual audio landscape, not demanding a biographical semiotic reading, instead offering a playful, near-anonymous musical collage with a good beat. Novelist and music fan Nick Hornby suggests a reason behind the popular appeal of Avalanches:

> I suspect that the oddness comes about because, just as robots cannot feel love, music that has been produced from this number of samples cannot induce any recognition of mood in the listener. There was, one suspects, no one overwhelming sentiment that inspired it, and particular response expected; this is music created for the hell of it, and it shows…. But if most music is about self-expression, then the self expressed during its composition and performance is evidently a feeling self (even if that feeling is alienation, or ennui, or confusion) and it's disorienting to hear something as emotionally imprecise as this. (72-3)

This recalls Haraway's against organic wholeness and higher unity; while the song demonstrates humour and is built on beats that invite the listener to dance, it does not, as Hornby remarks, actually *express* a precise emotion. The music is heavily ironic, not offering answers to the questions posed or attempting to resolve contradictions within its mix of wry humour and bizarre fragmented voices, disturbingly but entertainingly disembodied. If we listen with posthuman ears, the song can be heard as the music of Haraway's cyborg:

> From another perspective, a cyborg world might be about lived social and bodily realities in which people are not afraid of their joint kinship with animals and machines, not afraid of permanently partial identities and contradictory standpoints. (74)

From this perspective, the notion of posthumanism as consciousness beyond the embodied brain does not sound so far-fetched. Through a permanent connection to a vast, affordable web of knowledge and musical material (Clark's mental "scaffolding", evident in the form of databases such as Spotify and song recognition software like Shazam), and an acceptance of a partial identity, musicians are freed from having to prove outright emotional truths in their music; rather, through playful use of irony and liberation from any historical or geographical situatedness in "plunderphonical" music, they are empowered as individuals and as a group. This comes to constitute, in Haraway's words, "the ultimate self untied at last from all dependency, a man in space" (75).

Musicking is no longer restricted to an elite, educated, traditionally male demographic; all hierarchies are deconstructed. The old-fashioned composer-performer-audience hierarchy and privilege is undone through confusion over authorship and ownership. Additionally, the masculine hegemony commonly found in musicological texts that classes composers as male persona and performers as subordinate and as female persona is revealed as an out-dated construct and made inapplicable. Posthumanism suggests an alternative to the hierarchy within existing social, and by extension musical, infrastructures. The message is one of empowerment, of a new kind of good life experienced through a reimagining of old social structures. Haraway comments that "the theoretical and political struggle against unity-through-domination or unity-through-incorporation ironically not only undermines the justifications for patriarchy, colonialism, humanism, positivism, essentialism, scientism, and other unlamented –isms, but *all* claims for an organic or natural standpoint" (76). If the nature of contemporary posthumanism exists as a state of mind, then instead of waiting for a true post-hierarchical political state (envisioned, for instance, by Marxism), the posthuman has a responsibility to try to challenge oppression and encourage social justice and the redistribution of wealth through true equality of opportunity. By recognising the constructedness of categories like class, race and gender, and by welcoming relationships between the mind, body and modern technology, the possibility for far greater equality of opportunity seems more achievable. In relation to music and musicking, this has far-reaching implications. The reality, championed by Avalanches and evident today in the enormous electronic music scene, is that anyone with access to music production software and an Internet connection can create an online musical presence and connect to an audience with similar tastes anywhere in the world. Further, anyone can "plunder" ideas and existing musical material for new hybrid musical creations. Sample culture is no longer a new phenomenon, but each new generation of sampling musicians has adapted their technique according to available technology.

Finally, I return to where I began: to the question of hybridity. This article has already explored the notion of man/machine hybridity, but there is further scope to briefly discuss hybridity between native and diasporic cultures and across geographical and temporal chasms *via technology*, creating new virtual landscapes through music. Ibibio Sound Machine, a contemporary multinational band, embodies some of these ideals. In an interview, the singer Eno Williams explains the formation of their self-titled album in the context of her dual identity of London birth and Nigerian ancestry:

> "We had spoken about that fact that the language had been very little documented, musically, and that it would be interesting to try using that as a starting point," she said. The language was Ibibio from southeast Nigeria. Williams has Nigerian parents and she was born in London. Her grandmother used to tell her folk stories. Now those folk stories make up at least half of the

album's lyrics. From the titles you can guess that the heroes of these stories are wise or trickster animals, "Uwa the Peacock (Eki Ko Inuen Uwa)", "The Tortoise (Nsaha Edem Ikit)", and "The Talking Fish (Asem Usem Iyak)". (Sole)

Moving between the genres of Afrobeat, disco, pop, funk and African spirituals, the album is hard to categorise. The musicians successfully create an identity which audibly references its multitude of influences but does not rest on parody or pastiche. To build an album around the modern reimagining of an ancestor's folk tales from a distinctly different context to the one in which the album was created perpetuates a cybernetic feedback loop between different generations without excluding any listener based on arbitrary inherited characteristics or geographical (or temporal) location.

However, if gender and class are social structures, then race and subjectivity in music must be considered one, too. In the postcolonial world, it has been suggested that diasporic musicians have unique access to a liminal creativity and collective "cultural memory" (Floyd 8). In the post-race realm envisioned by posthumanism, it could be philosophically problematic when music like Ibibio Sound Machine straddles two cultures, one of which was historically oppressed, and forms a musical identity from oppressive dichotomies that arose from humanism. Translating an older culture to a newer medium whilst trying or trying not to retain its pre-colonial meaning and sensibilities provokes difficult questions of semiotics and value judgements. On the other hand, such music does not demand of the listener that they interpret the Ibibio language or its historical meaning. The feedback loop between creator and listener is flexible. Indeed, there is the ghost of a metanarrative to be sketched out here: the stores of wise or trickster animals are, as Floyd writes, traditional symbols of irony, signifying, and "doubleness" in many West African storytelling cultures, and, through Ibibio Sound Machine, they are represented in modernised and hybridised form; and, perceived through an ironic, posthuman lens, Williams's music has no need (or desire) to dialectically balance the contradiction. In her music, she rejoices in her complex history, finding identity in all and none of it as her consciousness extends, finding identity in all and none of it as her consciousness extends beyond her own brain and encompasses her Nigerian grandmother, the synthesiser in her London studio, and spirals outwards exponentially across the Internet and digital media.

There is more scope for discussion here. Although the topic of semiotics was only fleetingly addressed in the last paragraph, a wider study of applied hypothetical posthuman semiotics in musicology is needed. For example, if posthumanism signals the end of the liberal human subject, what issues related to the "human condition" can we expect to see signified through music, if any? Will future music sound like "Frontier Psychiatrist", slightly mocking and emotionally anonymous? Will we reject all musical material formed under the oppressive social constructs of the humanist state? Does hybridised music retain any local significance? If we no longer expect to share a "core humanity", should posthuman musicologists no longer try to seek meaning in music through empathy with unfamiliar cultures (Badmington 2)? If the posthuman musician of the future is part of the global digitised community, can s/he ever be in exile, representing a diaspora? For the moment, in conclusion, I would argue that contemporary musicking can boldly demonstrate the posthuman ideal of self-constructed identities as a tool for liberation, equality and greater empathy with the lived experience of others; I return to Haraway's description of the cyborg as "a condensed image of both imagination and material reality, the two joined centres structuring any possibility of historical transformation" (70). The new

reality of the good life is one of unresolved ironic cultural tensions found in the hybridity of our self-constructed posthuman identities and rejects the arbitrary characteristics attributed to us, and thus rejecting the clash of those characteristics that has caused such conflict in the modern world. Avalanches and Ibibio Sound Machine have transformed historical musical material in order to express their own experience, or indeed any experience they wanted to express, through a hybridisation of contradictory elements, content to remain unresolved and, through the "imagination and material reality" of musical technology, are empowered to create new virtual spaces in which to exist (Haraway 70).

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