

Call for Articles, Podcasts, Videos, and Photo Series

# SAMPLING POLITICS TODAY

the first digital, open-access publication on the upcoming  
Norient Space «The Now in Sound»

Musicians and sound artists in the 21<sup>st</sup> century often engage with politics in their music. However, this politics comes in new shapes and formats and is at times hidden from listeners and audiences. One way of bringing the political into music is the technique of sampling. So in «Sampling Politics Today» we are focusing on precisely this topic. We are looking for articles, podcasts, videos, photo series, or contributions in other formats that will lead to our first publication on the new Norient Space «The Now in Sound».

The production method and cultural technique of sampling has today become a lingua franca for artists all around the globe. Sampling means the process of working with foreign musical or non-musical material in order to compose a larger piece of music. Musicians and producers sample instruments, field recordings, media materials, and previously released music in tracks and performances. In doing so, they transform the meaning of their source material, especially with regard to its cultural and political contexts.

This interdisciplinary, digital publication will examine the socio-political potential of sampling. Given our broad understanding of “the political” as a signifier of the social, we aim to examine the relation between sampling and the political in at least six different sections:

- a) **Sampling political material.** This is a common strategy in popular music. Examples range from the popular sampling of political leaders and activists in hip hop to Matthew Herbert’s highly conceptual sampling art and the processing of police sirens and gunshots. If possible, we should like to cover concealed sampling strategies as well, where political material is processed without being visible or audible to a larger audience.
- b) **Sampling with political intent.** If the sampled material is not political as such, it could be used in combination with intentions or concepts that are political in nature.
- c) **The problematization of sampling strategies.** Processing external sound material (such as ethnographical recordings) has always stoked controversy among scholars, journalists, and fans. In most cases, they criticize an imbalance of power between the sampling artists and the actors of the sampled sources.
- d) **Provoking conflict.** The British techno DJ Dax J sampled a Muslim call to prayer in a live set at a nightclub in Tunisia in spring 2017. The harsh reaction on the part of the authorities meant that Dax J had to flee the country immediately to avoid being arrested. This is an example of sampling practices that can directly provoke conflict.
- e) **Sampling in politicized contexts.** Non-political samples or sample-based music devoid of any political intentions could be played in politicized contexts. One example would be the use of sample-based music as propaganda or within a political campaign. The meaning(s) of the sampled materials might change considerably in such contexts.

- f) **Sampling in conflict with the law.** Sampling strategies could be in conflict with the law, particularly if they process copyrighted samples without clearing the rights.

Submissions should either deal with one of these perspectives, or create others. These submissions may be made in various forms (as articles, podcasts, videos or photo series). Articles should be short (between 400 and 1000 (!) words) and should focus strictly on one principal argument, with a thesis, statement, or observation. We aim to encourage a focus on sonic phenomena (all kinds of sounds and tracks), and a perspective on creative processes in musical production (creative choices and decision-making).

The submissions will be published in early 2020 as the first digital, open-access publication on the new Norient Space «The Now in Sound», edited by Dr Thomas Burkhalter and Hannes Liechti, MA. Submissions can be made in English or German.

Proposals should be e-mailed to Hannes Liechti (hannes@norient.com) by **September 1, 2019** (in Word format, length: 100 words, including a biographical note and contact information). You will be informed about the selection of your submission by September 30, 2019.

For writers, artists, and producers who are not funded by an institution, we can offer a small fee. Please get in touch with us.

The publication is part of the project *Glocal Sounds – Re-Working and Re-Coding Place* at the Bern University of Arts (HKB), funded by the Swiss National Science Foundation SNSF.

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## ABOUT NORIENT

Norient explores the world through music, sound, and noise while challenging canons and mainstreams. It offers insights into the strong, fragile and experimental (artistic) positions of today and aims to initiate new dialogue around the possibilities, dreams, hopes and fears of contemporary life in a globalized, digitized, and urbanized world.

The last two years have seen us engage in re-thinking and re-inventing Norient, and with our exceptional team of coders and designers, our new website – the Norient Space "The Now in Sound" – is almost complete. Its core is two-fold: first, it represents a contemporary digital sound & media-art gallery; secondly, it will facilitate space and places for thinkers, cultural creatives and artists to discuss and reflect on sound from different angles. It will bring together quality journalism, multi-disciplinary and multi-sited academic and artistic research, in-depth documentaries and films, engaged photography and other audio-visual and experimental formats, both online and offline.

Our goal is to become a community of practice and knowledge to encourage, support and learn from each other, to highlight and share each other's publications and releases, to counter, as a community, the defining power of algorithms, and to reach people in and beyond academic circles. The Norient Space «The Now in Sound» is a prototype and will grow organically with its contributors.