

MUS 735

Discussion - Hitchcock, Chapter 12

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In what appears to be a free-for-all of genre and style mixing, what benefits and/or consequences do you see in the development of music that combined often rather disparate components? Do you think this has a bearing on the music you currently teach? Why or why not? Include at least two musical examples to illustrate your position.

I think the flexibility of mixing genres without restraint can largely serve to benefit the music industry as a whole. I think about a piece like Old Town Road, which combines rap and modern country genres: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r7govpFAGrQ> A benefit of combining two genres such as this is that you could widen the appeal to a larger audience, or attract audience members to a genre of music with which they were previously unfamiliar.

Another benefit of combining genres that were wildly different is the creation of new subgenres. A possible consequence of this could be the redefining or diluting of an established genre, which might be a negative byproduct. Here is an example, and I will preempt this by saying I am not a fan of the following piece, but I do believe it serves as an example of this. Zeal & Ardor is a Swiss avant garde band that combines black metal music (an extreme subgenre of heavy metal music) with spirituals and slave songs. Here is an example in their song *Row Row*: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O3IxATTgDNc>.

I'm afraid I don't have a strong feeling on whether this has a large bearing on the music I currently teach, other than to say that the more diversity and evolution that our repertoire can experience, the wider our scope will be and our students will benefit all the more. That said, I feel like I have a very narrow scope in my band repertoire after having researched subgenres and genre mixing.

Some would cringe at the discussion of Ozzie Osbourne in the same chapter as Steven Reich or Philip Glass. What do you feel is the value of the development of rock (or other popular styles) discussed in this chapter, as compared to the heavily commercialized trends of the present? Post at least two examples to support your position.

I feel like the development of rock as it began to blend with minimalist music was very important, as it began the trend toward mixing styles and genres, a trend that has continued to present. Terry Riley is mentioned (Hitchcock, page 334) as having traveled to Europe and India,

focusing on improvisatory performances in just tuning. During this period, he released an album widely believed to be the first minimalist work to experience success with jazz and rock audiences of the time. This may have been a big proponent of the blending of genres in the future. Admittedly, this music is intriguing and held my attention for much longer than I would have expected.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hy3W-3HPMWg&t=1038s>

At the same time, some mainstream bands were beginning to experiment with minimalism, including The Beach Boys. Their album “Smiley Smile,” released in 1967, was considered to be an experiment in “protominimal rock.” While it wasn’t particularly successful in the USA (it was their lowest-selling album to that point), I feel like it marked yet another step in the melding of genres, particularly given their notoriety.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=67FKMvVrDAs>