

In The Mix

An Exhibition of Black Diasporic Studies, Remix Culture, Astrology and Sound

by

Charlie Star Charles

A thesis exhibition

presented to the University of Waterloo

in fulfilment of the

thesis requirement for the degree of

Master of Fine Arts

in

Studio Art

University of Waterloo Art Gallery, May 16-June 1, 2024

Waterloo, Ontario, Canada, 2024

© Charlie Star Charles 2024

Author's Declaration

I hereby declare that I am the sole author of this thesis. This is a true copy of the thesis, including any required final revisions, as accepted by my examiners.

I understand that my thesis may be made electronically available to the public.

Abstract

Music speaks louder than any individual voice, and the music is saying that the old boundaries no longer exist. The present moment has been deleted. Any sound can be you: that's the idea of the nomad idea. Sound and signification: this is the electromagnetic situation. ¹ - Paul D. Miller, a.k.a DJ Spooky

As a Black biracial woman disconnected from my heritage, I research Afrosonic music histories to connect to my Afro Caribbean culture, while gaining a deeper understanding of the historical and social context of music in the broader Black diaspora. My thesis exhibition, *In The Mix*, encapsulates this research through a site-specific, interactive installation that incorporates sound, music, collage, personal family photographs and archives, disc-jockeying and experimental turntablism. In addition, as a unique expression of my multifaceted identity, I incorporate astrology as a theoretical and formal framework to analyze unseen elements behind musical releases, as well as to create sonic compositions that evoke ideas of time and space.

Through my engagement with remix culture, I utilize both audio and visual samples from existing works and create new works.² This process of recombination and repurposing of existing work has enabled me to promote a more nuanced and varied understanding of the complexities of Black identity and diaspora. I embrace a more inclusive and diverse range of perspectives in hopes that my work can resonate with a wider audience and contribute to a more comprehensive narrative of the Black experience.

¹ Miller, Paul D. *Rhythm Science*. Mediawork/MIT Press, 2004.

² A remix refers to “a rearrangement of something already recognizable” (Navas, 67). Remix theory supposes “a form of discourse in culture at large, leading to the concept of “remix culture” as an act that is valid in all forms of communication and creative production” (Navas, 68).

Acknowledgements

To my advisors, Bojana Videkanić and Jessica Thompson, I'm grateful for the ways you believed in me and gave me the confidence to succeed. I truly feel blessed to have had you on my team throughout my time in the program. Thank you for sharing your expertise and care, and providing resources, guidance, and encouragement. Your mentorship, kindness and support were invaluable.

I appreciate my fellow cohort mates Ashley, Behnaz and Jill, for the camaraderie and support shared. Our adventures, conversations and laughs made me feel included and kept me motivated and inspired. Though you weren't in my cohort, Racquel, your presence and friendship warmed my heart in meaningful ways. Thank you.

I had a huge learning curve integrating digital technologies in my practice and I'd like to extend a special thanks to Tim Walker, for going above and beyond what was required. You were a huge help for me on many of my digitally based projects. Thanks also to Cam McKittrick, Henry Adam Scott, Carlos Fernandez and Andrew Rinehart for sharing your expertise in sound design and audio engineering and showing enthusiasm for my projects.

Love to my partner, Trevor. Thank you for riding the grad school rollercoaster with me. Your love, patience, support and humour got me through the toughest times. Love to my mother for also being a huge supporter. Thank you for indulging my whims and discussing far out astrological notions with me. Love to my brother, Jesse, for sharing your audio installation skills and resources with me.

I am grateful for everyone in the department at large for providing me with the space and resources to undergo a research-creation project. I would not have been able to meet my ambitions without the support of many people, and I feel fortunate to have been surrounded by such generous individuals.

Land Acknowledgement

Having undergone graduate studies at the University of Waterloo, I wish to acknowledge the land on which it resides. The University of Waterloo is situated on the Haldimand Tract, the land that was promised but never honoured to the Six Nations that includes ten kilometers on each side of the Grand River. For thousands of years, it has been the traditional territory of the Attawandaron (Neutral), Anishinaabe and Haudenosaunee peoples. As a Black biracial woman with ancestral lineages in Canada and the Caribbean, I am grateful for the privilege to conduct research and cultural work which engages this land.

I further wish to acknowledge all Treaty peoples – including those who came here as settlers – as migrants either in this generation or in generations past - and those who came here involuntarily, particularly those brought to these lands as a result of the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade and Slavery. Having migrated to Canada at a young age, I recognize the systemic racism and oppression inflicted on Black and Indigenous communities and wish to acknowledge their resilience and strength in the face of adversity. In my role as a member of these communities, I continue to be inspired and fuelled by their stories and experiences to create a more inclusive and equitable society.

Contents

| | |
|---|-----|
| Author's Declaration..... | ii |
| Abstract..... | iii |
| Acknowledgements..... | iv |
| Land Acknowledgement..... | v |
| List of Figures..... | vii |
| 1.0 Finding Blackness..... | 1 |
| 2.0 Mixed Methodologies..... | 4 |
| 2.1 DJ Scholarship..... | 5 |
| 2.2 Sampling and Remixing..... | 9 |
| 2.3 Astrology..... | 13 |
| 2.4 Collage..... | 16 |
| 2.4 Experimental Turntablism and Live Remix Sets..... | 16 |
| 3.0 In the Exhibition..... | 18 |
| 3.1 Afrosonic Listening Lounge..... | 19 |
| 3.2 Astral Records..... | 24 |
| 3.3 Tracing Echoes..... | 32 |
| Bibliography..... | 38 |
| Appendix: Audio and Remixes..... | 43 |

List of Figures

Figure 1. JoAnn Weir, Family portrait, Marigot, St. Martin, 1991

Figure 2. Rachel Crawford, Inside the Ford Plant, 2006

Figure 3. Mike Long, DJ Rasta Princess at Strangewaves Festival 2, 2016.

Figure 4. Charlie Star, Screenshot of soundwave file in Audacity, 2023

Figure 5. Charlie Star, Screenshot of image hacking in Audacity, 2023

Figure 6. Charlie Star, *Riot Grrrl Reggae Glitch Collages*, 2023

Figure 7. Astrology chart generated for *Nightclubbing*, Astro.com, 2024

Figure 8. Jean Stevenson, view of exhibition including *Afrosonic Listening Lounge*, 2024

Figure 9. Jean Stevenson, view of lounge in the exhibition, 2024

Figure 10 Charlie Star, Wallpaper design #11, 2024

Figure 11. Jean Stevenson, detail pics of speakers 1-3 in *Afrosonic Listening Lounge* installation, 2024

Figure 12. Charlie Star. *Nightclubbing*, Glitch Collage, 2023

Figure 13. Charlie Star, *Nightclubbing Astro Chart*, 2023

Figure 14. Charlie Star, *Nightclubbing Astral Record*, 2023

Figure 15. Jean Stevenson, view of live remix sound set performance, 2024

Figure 16. Jean Stevenson, view of music production and performance set up, 2024

1.0 Finding Blackness

In The Mix is an interdisciplinary exhibition which brings together my exploration of Black diasporic music and remix culture in a site-specific, interactive installation that incorporates sound, music, collage, personal family photographs and archives, disc-jockeying and experimental turntablism. Apart from my academic and intellectual interests in Afrosonic histories and identities, the core of my research is situated in my personal history which I started to explore more earnestly and in an academic setting. Having grown up as a Black biracial woman disconnected from my Afro Caribbean heritage, I experienced a great deal of grief and longing marked by parental loss, migration, and poverty, coupled with the challenges of having to navigate between two racial identities within mainly white communities and institutions. Focused on Black diasporic music and culture, the aim of my research is to examine intersectionalities that exist within Black identities to better understand the nuances of my own heritage and reconcile seemingly disparate aspects of my identity. *In The Mix* takes its title from a chapter in Alexander G. Weheliye's book, *Phonographies: Grooves in Sonic Afro-Modernity*, where he discusses the notion of the "mix" as it appears in Black cultural productions throughout the twentieth century. He references the "mix" as an "amalgamation of components, or rather, the process of (re)combining cultural expressions rooted through the sonic" (73-74). For me, this title also speaks to my mixed identity and the formal and conceptual methods I blend in my studio practice. In other words, to position myself "in" the mix further affirms my place of belonging in the Black diaspora.

To provide a little context, I was born to an interracial couple on the island of St. Martin, in the Caribbean and moved to Canada just before my sixth birthday.³ In 1981, my mother left Canada to live in St. Martin, where she sustained a life abroad for fifteen years, subsequently giving birth to my brother and me. During her time in the Caribbean, she embarked on an independent study of herbal medicine, which connected her to the Rastafarians on the island. That is how she met my father, who was a Rastafarian

³ My mother is French Canadian and my father was Afro Caribbean

with an established herbal medicine practice and a shop.⁴ He was known as a *Bush Doctor* throughout the Caribbean and was travelling to St. Martin from his home island, Dominica.⁵ When I moved to Canada with my family in 1995, we settled in Brantford, Ontario, because it was within proximity, but still distant enough to where my mother's family resided in Hamilton. My father did not join us as my parents had separated a few years before our move to Canada. My connection to my father and his family consequently diminished over time with only sparse phone calls, until I learned of his passing in 2004.⁶ My primary parental relationship for most of my life has been my mother, and I admire her greatly for raising two biracial children on her own.



Figure 1. Family portrait, Marigot, St. Martin, 1990, photo credit: JoAnn Weir

⁴ Though popularized globally through Bob Marley, Rastafarianism is considered taboo in the Caribbean, and my father's family, as Seventh Day Adventists native to Dominica, didn't approve of my father's spiritual lifestyle, which set him apart from his family. As my mother remembers, his shop in Dominica was called *Kalbass Healing Center*

⁵ Bush Doctor refers specifically to Rastafarians who consume, trade, and sell herbs (Aston Philander, Lisa E.)

⁶ I received the news a week before his funeral and couldn't attend due to the distance and short notice. I did, however, learn I had four additional siblings I share through my father.

Growing up in a single-income family was especially hard because I was exposed to the daily struggle of making ends meet, but nonetheless, I always felt loved and cared for. Still, my brother and I grew up as the only Black people in my mother's family, and this experience was mirrored at our schools and neighbourhood. In the absence of any significant ties to strong Black communities to help shape our mixed identities, my brother and I explored Blackness mostly through pop culture. Music and media provided a window into Black culture, allowing us a window into a community we didn't have direct access to. Watching programs on *BET* such as *The Bernie Mac Show*, *Chappelle's Show*, and the *Fresh Prince of Bel-Air* helped us form a sense of belonging, however, it also raised questions about authenticity and the extent to which stereotypes, or limited representations influenced our perceptions.

As I navigated confusion about my identity, I found my mother's perspective helpful, as she provided a more nuanced and holistic view of the world. Through her studies, she discovered connections between herbal medicine and astrology, believing that astrology could also be useful in effective treatments for her clients. This centering of astrology was then applied to many different aspects of her life, resulting in her more holistic perspective, and understanding of the world. When I began studying astrology myself, my mother's holistic and astrological practice greatly influenced me. She taught me to view astrology as a tool to explore aspects of my identity and personality. As the study examines a broader and collective human experience, it has helped me transform limiting notions regarding race, gender, and class. By integrating astrology into my artistic practice, I aim to explore how cosmic energies and celestial alignments highlight the interconnectedness between cosmic forces and cultural narratives. Afrofuturist ideas of time and space are also symbolically implied when referencing cosmology through astrology to reimagine and reshape a narrative of identity, race, and history.

These aspects influencing the artworks produced along with site-specific aspects of the exhibition, I wish to provide viewers with an expanded representation of Black identity and to also prompt a renewed discussion on intersectionality and Black identity within Black music production. This paper is a companion to the works on display and includes embedded links to audio compositions made for the exhibition and during my studies.

2.0 Mixed Methodologies

The works produced for my thesis installation draw from several methodologies, including DJ Scholarship, audio-based sampling and remixing, astrology, collage, experimental turntablism, and improvisational musical performance.⁷ To bring these different practices together, I utilize multiple visual layering techniques, as well as overlapping and juxtaposition of sounds and images. In addition to the methodologies listed, I also incorporate my lived experiences and societal position as a Black biracial woman, which situates my work in the context of a Black feminist praxis. In *The Social Construction of Black Feminist Thought* (1989), Patricia Hill Collins states that, “like other subordinate groups, African American women not only have developed distinctive interpretations of Black women's oppression but have done so by using alternative ways of producing and validating knowledge” (Collins, 746). Centering the experiences and perspectives of Black women, a Black feminist praxis acknowledges the ways in which systems of power and oppression intersect. It emphasizes the importance of self-definition, self-empowerment, and collective action in challenging and dismantling these systems. Intersectionality is a key concept in Black feminist praxis, as it recognizes that individuals experience multiple forms of oppression based on their race, gender, and other intersecting identities (Collins, 747). By referencing the unique challenges that I have faced as a Black biracial woman, my work seeks to center intersectionality and to create spaces that celebrate multiple identities and lived experiences.

As part of my research and practice, I focused specifically on sound and music, because these have historically been sites of creativity and reinvention for Black diasporic cultures (Weheliye, 20-21). These sites have been key in challenging existing power structures and in creating spaces for Black communities to express agency and identity. To participate in Black music traditions and create unique compositions, I use digital and electronic technologies, as well as traditional music practices such as disc-jockeying, turntablism, sampling, and remixing. In using Black archival music to reference Black diasporic cultural traditions, I bring my unique Afrofuturist perspective into my work through my creative

⁷ See Lynée Denise for DJ Scholarship

reworking of the materials based on my own interpretation, which is largely astrologically oriented. While my biased interpretation adds a personal touch and authenticity to my work, I do acknowledge that it may limit the broader understanding and representation of Black diasporic cultural traditions. This is why I strive to include multiple perspectives in my work.

2.1 DJ Scholarship

[T]he active intervention of the critic or DJ is to always historize and question existing histories.

Alexander Weheliye
Phonographies: Grooves in Sonic Afro-Modernity Modernity (74)

Music has played a significant role in my life. During my self-conscious adolescent years, I was fortunate to find myself in a local artistic and musical fringe community that offered me the opportunity to experiment and express myself creatively. Thanks to the Ford Plant, which was an all-ages music venue located in downtown Brantford (2004-2011), I had a space to frequent as an underage teenager, where I developed a deep appreciation for music making social connections outside of school. The Ford Plant introduced me to a wide range of genres and artists that I may not have discovered otherwise. From punk rock artists such as the Sourkeys and Blank Mind, to indie artists such as Timber Timbre, Controller.Controller, and Cadence Weapon, the venue's diverse lineup exposed me to new sounds and expanded my musical horizons. By attending live shows and exchanging mixtapes, music allowed me to express myself and connect with friends. This experience played a pivotal role in shaping my musical taste and sparked a lifelong passion for exploring different genres, supporting local artists, and expressing myself through the arts.

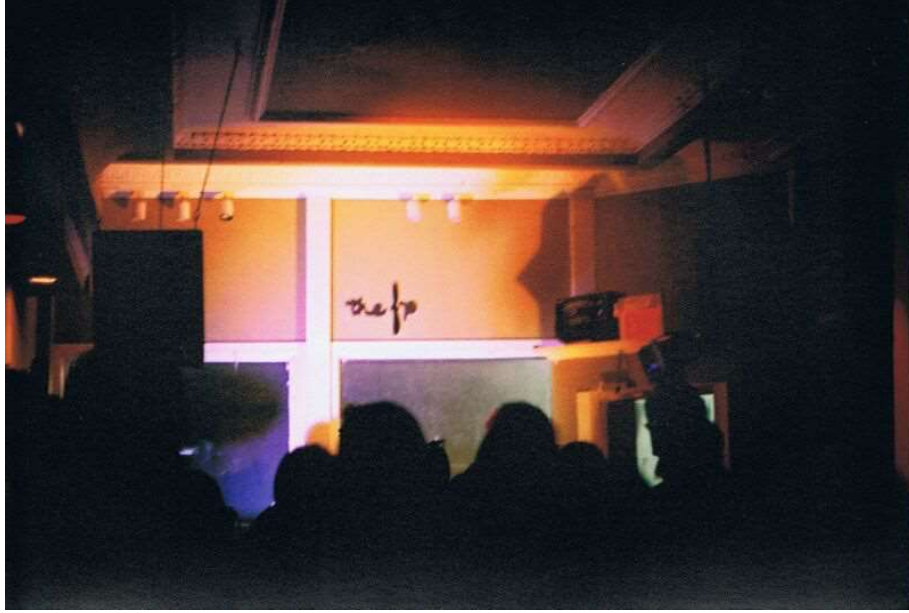


Figure 2. Rachel Crawford, Inside the Ford Plant, 2006

With music and visual arts as self-expressive outlets that continue to reside at the center of my social world, I often fluctuate between the two disciplines. After visiting my birthplace in the Caribbean in 2013 – for the first time since leaving – I embarked on a music-centered project to explore and feel more connected to my heritage. I began collecting music that had associations to the Caribbean, starting with Reggae, Rocksteady, Ska, Dancehall and Dub – all of which my mother played as we were growing up. As a young feminist, it was especially important for me to place a focus on discovering female-fronted Reggae acts, which led me to starting to DJ in 2015 under the moniker *DJ Rasta Princess* (Fig.3). Later that year, I came across DJ Lynée Denise’s methods of 'DJ Scholarship', a term which she coined in 2013 to define “how knowledge is gathered, interpreted, and produced through a conceptual and theoretical framework, shifting the role of the DJ from a party purveyor to an archivist and cultural worker” (Denise, “bio”).



Figure 3. DJ Rasta Princess at Strangewaves Festival 2, 2016. Photo Credit: Mike Long

Learning about the DJ Scholarship method was a catalyst to the way I viewed my own DJ project, and it made me realize that a DJ practice could be distinctly intentional and research-based. Entering UWaterloo's MFA program, I wanted to dive deeper into this ethos of DJ Scholarship and through it further develop my practice-led thesis research. I initially picked up where I left off with my *Rasta Princess* DJ Project, focusing on music from the Caribbean to engage with Afro Caribbean heritage, however, the focus quickly expanded as I became more aware of the vast diasporic transnational music networks. With the permutations and legacy of slavery and the dynamics of colonization (Veal, "Musical Exchange"), the Black diaspora is marked by "the migrations, discontinuities, fractal patterns of exchange and hybrid glory that join the Black cultures of America, Britain, and the Caribbean to one another and to Africa" (Lott). Paul Gilroy called this transnational concept of the Black diaspora "*the Black Atlantic*", which is a common referent in Black cultural media today. In understanding myself as a diasporic person, I wanted to focus more widely on Black cultural ideas to examine the multiplicity of Black experience as it is expressed in music. My practice-led research thus became centred on blended musical formations, and my interests expanded to cross-cultural dialogues existing through musical exchange.

As a music collector, I source my materials predominantly from music albums. When collecting albums, I am guided interchangeably by the four cultural practices of DJ Scholarship that Denise introduces in her Williams' College video presentation and course, Syllabus as Mixtape: *DJ Scholarship as a Pedagogical Practice: "Music, Migration, Blues People and Wayward Women"*: 1. Chasing samples; 2. Digging through the crates; 3. Studying album cover art; and 4. Reading liner notes (Denise, 06:45-13:05). These practices encourage a pedagogical sensibility to track music and cultural movements to identify how Black music, culture, and ideas travel. Tracking Black cultural movements with a pedagogical sensibility has allowed me to recognize not just the value and significance of Black music, culture, and ideas, but also the power dynamics involved in their dissemination and appropriation. The DJ Scholarship method opened a framework for understanding the historical, social, and political contexts in which music movements emerge, fostering a more nuanced and informed appreciation of Black cultural contributions to society.

Building a vinyl record collection has been particularly important because it serves as both a musical and personal archive. Records are not only a material that produces sound and music, but they are also pieces of art and archival material that grow in value over time. Notably, vintage records preserve origins and memories, and their continued material existence means they can be passed down generation to generation, ensuring that legacies are remembered. As I engage with music archives, I think about the place, time, and communities from which they are sourced from and place my experience within the context of the musical movements that shaped my culture. Questlove (Ahmir K. Thompson) similarly pursues this idea in his book, *Music Is History*, where he charts history through music and traces music through history from 1971-2021 (13). Questioning "[h]ow much history can we truly know", he brings forward both events and songs to "look more closely and more critically, trying to unpeel and uncover" hidden or forgotten parts of history (Questlove, 13). Considering the prevalent marginalization of Black music in historical archives, Black music archives are uniquely positioned to provide access to a shared Black history as a result. Since music has been central to all aspects of Afrodiasporic social life from African traditions to modern western Black culture (Maultsby et al.), studying Black music is another way

to study Black history. This being said, because music is distributed through mainly white forms of production, much Black music has been lost, was never recorded, or was credited to white artists. Record labels and mainstream media have historically dominated the music industry, marginalizing, and erasing many Black artists. This has led to the loss and underrepresentation of significant Black music in historical archives, perpetuating the need to build Black music archives as a valuable resource for accessing and preserving Black history. Building my own record collection as a personal archive also allows me to expand it to become a basis for research and source material for art, as I benefit from learning the social and historical significance of songs, albums, and/or artists. With historical information and context, I then make creative and expressive aesthetic decisions.

2.2 Sampling and Remixing

Through a combination of Digital Audio Workstations (DAWs) and Photoshop, I create visual and audio collages using Black music archives as my raw material. I work with DAWs such as Audacity and Ableton to remix sound and music samples and produce mashups that integrate various aspects of each track alongside my own music. Once I have acquired, converted, and uploaded a song's mp3 file, I import it into a DAW, where a visual soundwave file will be generated (Fig. 4).

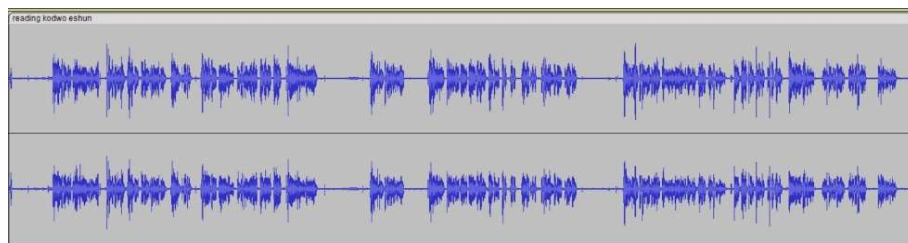


Figure 4. Charlie Star, Screenshot of Soundwave file in Audacity, 2023

As a novice DJ, I learned how to mix music using audio mixing software programs. In performing as a DJ for a live audience, the use of a DJ controller became helpful as it allowed me to extend beyond my computer, and engage a more embodied, instinctive response. A DJ controller enables easier control of volume, frequency, EQ, and other aspects of mixing through analog controls such as knobs, encoders, jog wheels, faders, and touch strips. Through utilizing these controls, I became excited about some of the unique sounds I could produce from existing recorded material and realized that my interests were not

only in cueing songs for others, but also in remixing and producing original compositions from existing songs. In my first compositional experiment, [*Cosmic Turning of Tough Times*](#), I sampled rhythm and vocals from the song “Time Tough” by Toots and the Maytals, released on their 1975 album, *Funky Kingston*. Reusing elements from the song’s chorus, I selected “Time tough (time tough)” and “(higher and higher)” to create two samples. I chopped and slowed down the tempo of those samples, which allowed for new sonic textures to come through. Then I juxtaposed, layered, and looped the two samples consistently throughout the remix, which upheld a distinct new rhythm and composition that I further mixed with signal processing effects such as echo, reverb and delay.

In *Remix Theory* (2012), Eduardo Navas defines remix as, “the activity of taking samples from preexisting materials to combine them into new forms according to personal taste” insisting that “remix is supported by the practice of cut/copy and paste” (65). In this sense, remixing is a practice that can be linked to a collage practice because of the way that it pulls from many diverse sources to form something new. Both disciplines (audio and visual collage) engage with archival material, make historical connections, and through that, as Navas contends, “play a vital role in mass communication, especially in new media” (65). A lot has been written and discussed on the subject as it pertains to its typology, however, I find an affinity with what Mark Campbell suggests in *Afrosonic Life*, that, “If we understand remixing as an activity invested in participating and restructuring, or re-narrating the dominant codes of our present moment, then we can draw a connection between remixing and notions of liberation” (103). Today, remixing is theoretically considered in relation not only to music, but to a greater cultural phenomenon that converges with participatory cultures and free exchanges of ideas. Remixing can commonly be identified in various forms, from music to visual arts and literature, as writers reinterpret classic stories or reimagine existing ones. For instance, Paul Miller, A.K.A DJ Spooky, takes principles from disc-jockeying and applies them to the visual arts, science, and history. He transformed D.W. Griffiths' 1915 film, *The Birth of a Nation* into a contemporary critique on race relations and mythmaking in America with his multi-media film project *Rebirth of a Nation* (2004) (Griffin). While Miller's remix focuses on the intersection between music and cinema, he also uses technology to push the envelope in

each of his chosen media. Reinterpreted works like *Rebirth of a Nation* further challenge notions of private and exclusive ownership by appropriating and recontextualizing existing copyrighted material. By subverting traditional notions of authorship, remixed works question the power dynamics inherent in corporate copyright culture and various ‘high art’ hierarchies and encourage a more open and inclusive approach to creativity and cultural production. This process allows marginalized communities to tell their own stories and challenge dominant narratives, as seen in Miller's work.

In my own remix practice, I apply a range of audio editing and digital signal processing techniques to create new sonic textures out of existing sound.⁸ With visual materials, I engage in a process of image hacking (Fig. 5) which renders the original elements distorted, mixed, and bent (Fig. 6).⁹ My practice is thus further influenced by glitch aesthetics — a process of deliberately using digital or analog errors by “manipulating digital code or interfering with hardware” (Chervinska). In parallel to the glitch, as a biracial woman, my identity is continuously constructed and reconstructed depending on which communities I am in. Glitches in my identity, such as my mixed race, have given me the ability to explore different perspectives on the world, which I view as an opportunity for growth and experimentation. In short, the glitch becomes one of the ways of living in-between identities.

⁸ Digital signal processing refers “to the process of converting an analog signal to a digital one for recording (through our interface), and converting it back to an analog signal for playback.” (McAllister, “What is a DSP and What Does it Do for Music?”)

⁹ To “hack” the image, I use Audacity, which converts an image to a soundwave file that can be manipulated by splicing it up and applying audio effects. (Fig.5).

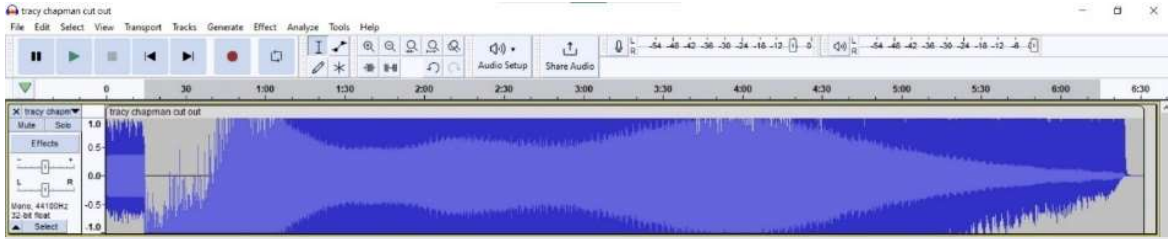


Figure 5. Charlie Star, Screenshot of Image Hacking in Audacity, 2023



Figure 6. Charlie Star, Riot Grrrl Reggae Glitch Collages, 2023

In *Glitch Feminism: A Manifesto*, curator and writer Legacy Russell champions the underrepresented, marginalized, sectional, and fringe communities. Defining glitch as a disruption, “an error, a mistake, a failure to function”, Russell repositions the narrative of not fitting into societal norms as something to be celebrated, for it functions as “a vehicle of refusal, a strategy of non-performance” (7). She emphasizes that, “glitch aims to make abstract again that which has been forced into an uncomfortable and ill-defined material” (8). The deliberate act of glitching in my own work, not only disrupts traditional aesthetics but is also meant to prompt viewers to question their preconceived notions of how Black identity and culture can be expressed. By embracing glitch, I can explore unconventional and unexpected visual and sonic landscapes, push the limits of previous expressions, and create a unique expression that celebrates my capacity to be different.

2.3 Astrology

Through studying astrology, I have gained a deeper understanding of the interconnectedness of the universe and the subtle energies that shape our lives. This has allowed me to see beyond the surface and appreciate the hidden influences that impact our relationships, personal growth, and life's journey. Though the study is primarily derived from the movement and relationship between the cycles of celestial bodies (Bloch and George, 3), as a branch of metaphysical science and philosophy, astrology encompasses a wide range of associations that makes the study ideal for interpreting meaning from the various social affairs of people and events. Astrology and metaphysics serve what Kit Fine identifies as “a foundation, not for reality as such, but for the nature of reality” (10). He suggests that,

[M]etaphysics should attempt to provide a foundation for all truths eidictic as to content; and what then provides the foundation are the metaphysical truths that are eidictic as to content, along with the possible addition of other ‘auxiliary’ truths that are not eidictic as to content (11).

In other words, metaphysics and astrology provide a universal and philosophical understanding of *what* the nature of things are (Fine, 12), and goes *beyond* physical reality to consider existential questions such as: *Who am I? What is my purpose?* Thinking broadly about the world is not to reduce, dismiss, or simplify reality, but to consider the bigger picture of human existence. I feel privileged to have a parent

who instilled in me this viewpoint. This perspective has helped me to see beyond my limitations and to strive for success. It has also allowed me to see opportunities where I previously could not see them.

Modern astrologers study “the planets, stars and other heavenly bodies based on the idea that they symbolically reflect (not cause) human personalities and affairs (Herring, 9). When reading an astrology chart, “the planets are regarded as basic life-forces that take on different forms, depending on their zodiacal sign position and on the way they relate to one another” (Treindl et al.). Aspects formed between planets describe these relationships, and astrological houses show how they are expressed in the spheres of life they represent. By interpreting the roles of the planets and their qualities (the elements, signs, and houses), astrologers identify patterns based on an existing symbolic language system and synthesize the information to receive “a comprehensive analysis of a person and their potential” (Treindl et al.).¹⁰ I closely engage with what is known as “Electional Astrology” which “proposes that a chart can offer information for events, e.g. starting a business, weddings, contracts, travel, etc.” (Treindl et al.).¹¹ Referencing significant dates related to albums, I generate retroactive astrology charts to discern information about its characteristics in time and history. When analyzing connections between artists and albums, I compare charts separately to identify patterns in their connection.¹²

I use astrology to deepen my understanding of the materials I choose to work with. My material selection is influenced by the questions I discover as I listen to the albums in my collection. At times, my attention is drawn to lyrics, or the rhythm of a beat, while other times my attention is drawn to images presented on an album. In my quest to understand history through music, I pay close attention to the year an album was released. Having access to significant dates (release dates, appearances on popular charts, etc.) additionally allows me to generate astrology charts. With free websites like Astro.com, I can input dates related to my sample selection and generate an astrology chart.¹³

¹⁰ Derived from a natal chart, which is calculated by the date, time, and location of a birth/event.

¹¹ specific to Western Astrology

¹² Connections could include one artist sampling another, song covers, having similar aesthetics or genre styles, etc...

¹³ astro.com> free horoscopes> horoscope drawings & data > chart drawing, ascendent

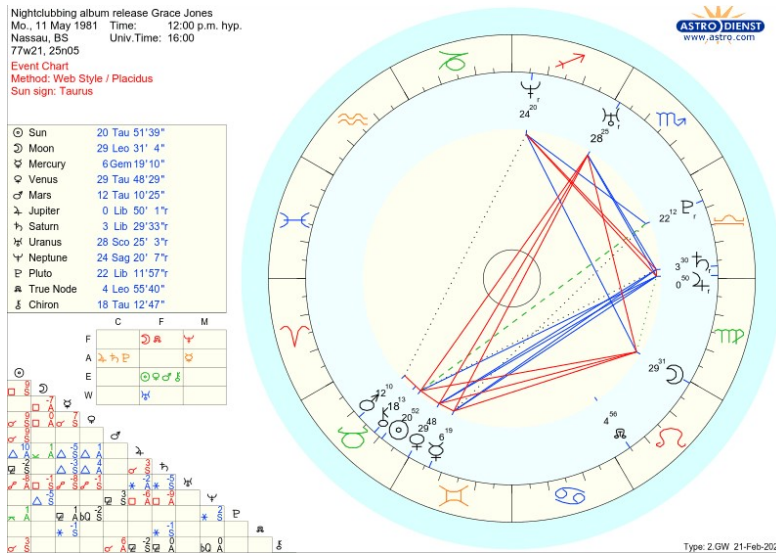


Figure 7. Astrology chart generated for *Nightclubbing*, Astro.com, 2024

For example, figure 7 depicts a chart generated for the album *Nightclubbing* (1981) by Grace Jones. The chart shows that the album has expansive qualities, based on the positive aspects that Jupiter makes with Venus, Mercury, and the Sun.¹⁴ This aligns with the historical evidence of *Nightclubbing* receiving positive reviews, with critics such as Andy Beta from Pitchfork noting how “Jones reinvented herself while also altering the face of modern pop”, and that the album “cemented her iconic status in pop culture” (Beta). This additional information I gain from interpreting the planets and their aspects in an album’s chart reveals the intricacies and subtleties that may be overlooked, providing a more meaningful interpretation of the artwork. Additionally, it gives me insights into broad-ranging social trends and helps me reflect on what kinds of themes I want to work with for a piece.¹⁵

To summarize, an album from my collection is selected, song samples are pulled, and art from record sleeves are adapted to produce works based on my interpretations of the astrology in conjunction with historical events. A unique combination of my astrology practice and research is then expressed as

¹⁴ In the chart generated, Jupiter trines (makes a harmonious aspect) to Venus, Mercury and the Sun. In *Planets in Aspect*, Robert Pelletier discerns that Jupiter (representing benevolence) and the Sun (representing creativity) in a trining aspect provides “an abundant creative potential” (180), Jupiter and Mercury (representing ideas and communication) in trine provide “a high level of comprehension...(with) inspiration that provide ideas for fulfilling creative potentials” (195) and Jupiter and Venus (representing relationship dynamics) in trine provides “pleasant social activities” (202).

¹⁵ See Paul Clement’s article “Astrology, modernity and the project of self-identity” in *Culture and Religion* (2020) 21(3), 259–279 for more on Western and modern astrology.

handmade records, whose sound samples are used in my remix compositions. By infusing astrological insight into the composition process, I strive to create a multidimensional experience that resonates on both an auditory and metaphysical level. This approach opens new possibilities for storytelling and emotional exploration in music.

2.4 Collage

Considering my research on music of the Black diaspora, and efforts to understand and contextualize this history using astrology, collage became a natural way to disseminate my research as it allows me to combine ideas from various backgrounds. In the *Frame and the Mirror*, Thomas P. Brockelman links collage to a distinctly postmodern expression as he examines issues of representation. He states that, “[c]ollage attempts to embody a kind of immediate presence beyond the necessity of representation” (1). With collage, I can take existing objects and ideas as raw material and rework them to introduce new signifiers and connections. The technique further encompasses “a unique way of approaching the problem of linking the micro- and macro-levels,” making collage an effective way to suture my personal experience to the larger Black social diasporic reality (Delanda, 17). Through collage, I join and juxtapose images, sounds and other material from different time periods and cultural contexts, allowing new connections and associations to emerge.

2.4 Experimental Turntablism and Live Remix Sets

Although artists have been using turntables since the 1930s, the term "turntablism" was coined and popularized in the 1990s by Luis "DJ Disk" Quintanilla and Chris “DJ Babu” Oroc (Chiaverina) to describe techniques originating from hip-hop and dub music where DJs began creating original compositions by manipulating records on the turntable. Techniques such as break-beat, scratching, transformer scratch, crab and Beat Juggling were developed, allowing DJs to be more creative with their music (“The Art of Turntablism”). Experimental turntablism refers to work that falls outside of traditional guidelines. Abstract turntablists, such as sound artist and DJ Maria Chávez, explore different styles and techniques, pushing the boundaries of what can be done with turntables. Incorporating broken

needles, records, and non-musical sounds, Chavez destroys and scratches records, and gets up to all kinds of tricks, making her performance an equal part of the music (“Maria Chavez +”). To further expand the possibilities of turntablism and blur the line between music and noise, some of the specific techniques Chávez uses in her [performances](#) include manipulating the speed and direction of the turntable, creating rhythmic patterns by scratching, tapping and layering records as they are playing.

Taking on an experimental approach to turntablism, I make sonic sculptures that mimic vinyl records and incorporate their sonic elements in my music production through a live input from my turntable. This setup allows me to rework elements from existing songs, as well as integrate new sonic compositions into my remixes. In this way, I can explore a range of sonic possibilities and create experimental sounds that fall out of the realm of traditional disc-jockeying techniques. Through exploring these possibilities, I take an improvisational approach every time I practice and perform.¹⁶ Disseminating my research on Black music through improvised performance allows “conscious as well as unconscious selection[s] from a reservoir of musical sound expressions that have been acquired over time” (Shehan Campbell, 122). Improvisation not only gestures to stylistic expressions from African music origins, but also becomes a way of finding new musical articulations accumulated from the “backlog of sounds” that “find a place in expressive music making for all that [I have] heard, felt and internalized from earlier experiences” (Shehan Campbell, 119). Thus, improvisation in my work becomes a mean by which I explore possibilities in sound and music, ultimately becoming a better music playing practitioner. The more I experiment and improvise, the more I develop a deeper comprehensive sense of music.

¹⁶ Considered a “Principle of Black Music”, improvisation is a “spontaneous composition of music on the fly” (Parker, 0:03) that encompasses “the art of finding freedom through limitations” (Parker, 0:08).

3.0 In the Exhibition

In my thesis exhibition, I have created a room-sized collage installation comprised of Black music archives (records, tapes, CDs, magazine clippings, posters etc.), personal family photographs, sample-based and digital audio mixes, smaller digital collages, and sonic sculptures that mimic records. The exhibition is brought together in a lounge-like environment that merges two series made during my MFA studies: the *Afrosonic Listening Lounge* (2023-) and *Astral Records* (2022-). The installation continues in and subverts the long history of socially engaged art by transforming the white cube into a space of sonic interaction and by elevating the sounds of the Black diaspora into the realm of contemporary art. Socially engaged art has a long history dating back to the early twentieth century with movements such as Dada and Surrealism. In *Beyond The Sovereign Self* (2024), Grant H. Kester explores the ways in which socially engaged art practices have transformed our understanding of aesthetics, and particularly the aesthetics of autonomy. He contends “that contemporary socially engaged art encourages us to think differently about the relationship between art, the aesthetic, and the political” (6). My installation continues in this tradition by creating a space that not only showcases art but actively involves visitors in the process, fostering a sense of community and dialogue. Visitors are offered designated seating areas with additional material to touch, read and otherwise engage with. By further creating a sonic environment that encourages the public to listen deeply, I hope to inspire meaningful dialogue and understanding about the complexities of the Black experience and the role music plays in shaping social dynamics.

3.1 Afrosonic Listening Lounge

The *Afrosonic Listening Lounge* is an installation work consisting of a wall-mounted piece containing my record collection along with personal memorabilia and other visual elements from my personal Black music archive, an accompanying sound piece, and a lounge area (Figs.8-9).¹⁷ For my thesis exhibition, I have also designed a large-scale wallpaper composed of images of album art which is set up on the wall behind the archival installation, creating a multi-layered installation (Fig.10). The sonic elements are a mix of samples sourced from music, documentaries, artist interviews, podcasts, my environment and more, composed together into a sound collage. By focusing on and exploring different subgenres associated with music genres of the Black diaspora, the series highlights the contributions of artists, thinkers and activists who have expressed diverse aesthetics, theories and practices connected to Black identity and music over the centuries.

¹⁷ The title riffs from Mark Campbell's book, *Afrosonic Life* and academic-led space *Afrosonic Innovation Lab*, which both explore "Black music and sonic cultures from across the African diaspora" (Adampolous).



Figure 8. Jean Stevenson, view of exhibition including the *Afrosonic Listening Lounge*, 2024
[Listen to the accompanying sound piece here.](#)



Figure 9. Jean Stevenson, view of lounge in the exhibition, 2024



Figure 10. Charlie Star, Wallpaper design #11, 2024

With the *Afrosonic Listening Lounge*, I explore ways in which music serves as a site of resistance. In *Sound As Resistance* (1995), Robin Balliger speaks to the ways music functions in society. Analyzing the significance of text and lyrics in songs, she brings forward that as a medium of communication, words in music are particularly significant in cultures and historical periods without written texts, where written texts are only available to a privileged group, or in which the written word is deliberately subverted (14). She argues that,

[F]or oppressed peoples under slavery, in colonial contexts and the underclass of global capitalism, music has often been a central site for the intervention in dominant discourses and for creating forms of expression that are culturally affirming (14) ...orality has played a major role in contesting the universalizing discourses of empire. Locating a position of vocality and self-representation is central to creating a counter-narrative, positing a counter-essence and in critically attacking the legitimacy of ‘objective’ knowledge and truth (15).

To Balliger, a new cultural sensibility and a struggle for a new culture can be formed when music is used as a site of challenge and resistance to dominant ideologies. Hip Hop, for example, uses innovative

techniques in music such as sampling and scratching to address social and political issues, continuing the tradition of activism and resistance established by the Civil Rights Movement (Alridge, 226-229). By addressing the cultural, social, and political implications of Black music through audio and visual archival material, my aim is to bring attention to the instances where music has been expressed as – and instigated – social movements. The series also examines how these genres have been shaped by and reflected the changing times, and how they continue to influence and evolve today. This series ultimately provides a tribute to the resilience and power of Black culture.

In developing this project, I was influenced by the work of contemporary visual artist Mickalene Thomas. In 2019, Thomas exhibited a collage series and multimedia installation entitled [*Femmes Noires*](#) at the Art Gallery of Ontario. Referencing prolific visual artists and Black pop culture icons such as Eartha Kitt, Whitney Houston and Diahann Carroll (Parris), Thomas applied a collage technique to depict Black women as “nuanced beings, unable to be fixed and defined by a single perspective” (Parris). Thomas manipulated, juxtaposed, and layered images to “upend and overturn familiar representations and monolithic notions of Black women today” (AGO, “Mickalene Thomas: Femmes Noires”). Accompanying her collages and other mixed media works, Thomas installed a vibrant and colourful site-specific lounge for viewers to interact and be immersed in, transforming the sterility of a traditional gallery space.

Similarly, the *Afrosonic Listening Lounge* is a multimedia, site-specific installation where viewers can immerse themselves in an environment that stimulates reflective (re)considerations of contemporary representations of Black diasporic culture and sound. Archival material is exhibited alongside each other in their original states to juxtapose how they are represented. The juxtapositions are meant to evoke a critical dialogue about the myths and stereotypes associated with Black culture. The installation also encourages viewers to further explore these topics through interactive listening sessions. Sound has a unique power to evoke emotions and create a visceral experience for the audience. By using sound as a medium in this installation, I hope to tap into the power of auditory stimulation to immerse

visitors in a multi-sensory journey that prompts them to question and reflect upon the diverse narratives within the Black diaspora.

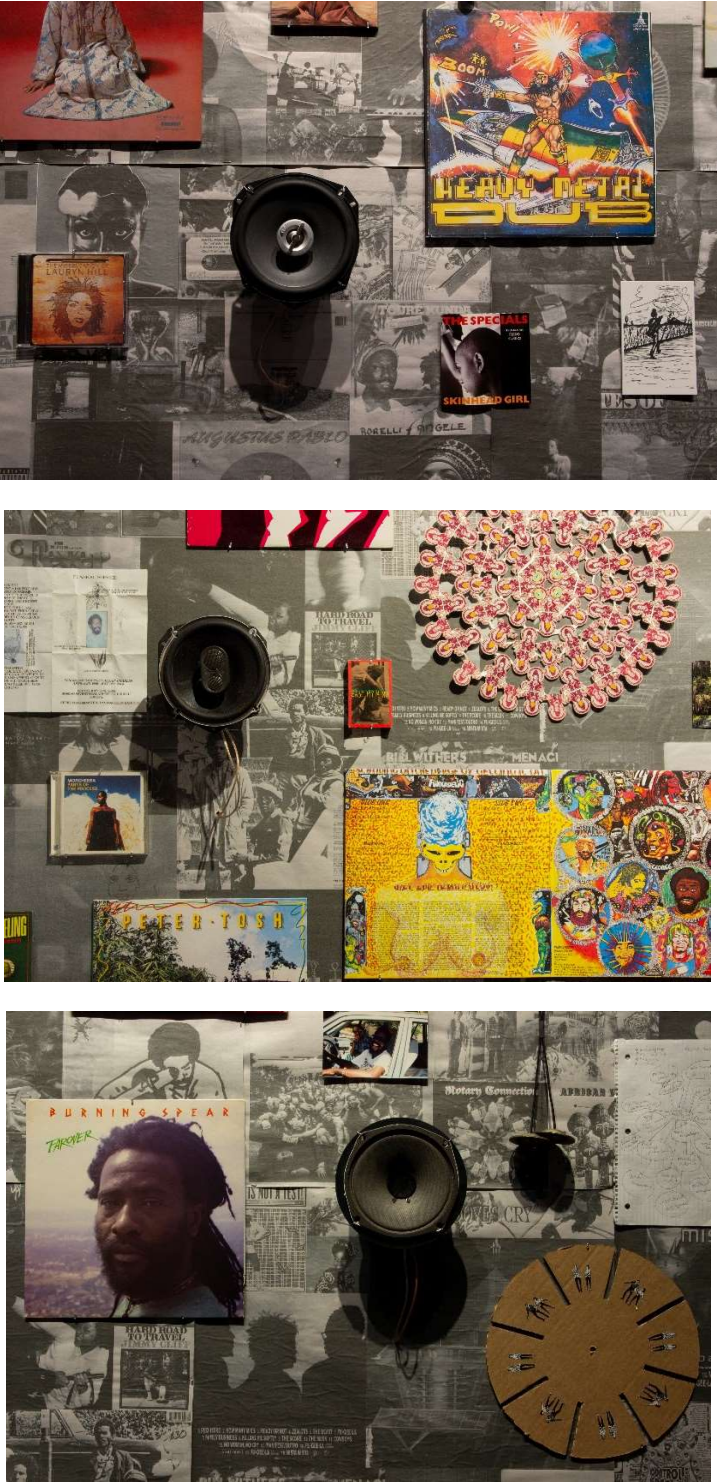


Figure 11. Jean Stevenson, detail pics of speakers 1-3 in *Afrosonic Listening Lounge* installation, 2024¹⁸

¹⁸ Three of eight speakers pictured.

Amidst the wall installation for my thesis exhibition, eight speaker drivers are mounted to create a multilayered sonic composition (Fig. 11).¹⁹ In addition to serving as a mixed playlist, I reference techniques of call and response, using looped sections of songs and repeated phrases.²⁰ This technique is used to create a hypnotic effect and a soundscape that evolves over time. Sounds move between the eight speakers at varying intervals of time to stimulate different senses. For example, in one section of the composition, a call and response pattern is established between two or four speakers, with one pair of speakers playing phrases and the others responding with a rhythmic pattern. As the composition progresses, additional speakers join in with accented and unique sounds, creating polyvocal and polyrhythm layers, and an interactive sonic experience that continuously evolves and engages the listener's senses.²¹ This polyvocal, polyrhythmic principle is similarly seen in Janet Cardiff's work, specifically in her audio installation, *The Forty Part Motet* (2001), where she places forty speakers in a circle. As the audience moves around the installation, they are surrounded by the voices of forty singers singing the same song.

3. 2 Astral Records

In my sonic sculpture series *Astral Records*, designed records mimic vinyl records to produce sounds when played on a turntable. I was inspired by Haroon Mirza's *50 Locked Grooves*, which is a series of mixes produced from the sounds of fifty different handmade records made from glass, cardboard, Sellotape, and other household items (Wilson). Mirza's set up and mixing process includes multiple turntables and a mixing board, which he uses to manipulate the sounds from the records. Mirza's approach in *50 Locked Grooves* intrigued me and felt accessible to my skills because it was open-ended

¹⁹ I place an emphasis on the speaker driver's aesthetics. This focus on appearance has resulted in speaker drivers that are smaller and lighter than traditional speakers but lack the same sound quality. By relying on speaker drivers alone, sound physics are compromised. I resolved this issue by using mini amplifiers to augment the sounds. This makes the speaker drivers produce a similar sound quality as a traditional speaker, but without the bulk and weight.

²⁰ "The call-and-response, a pattern of two distinct phrases played by different musicians in which the 'response' is a commentary on the 'call,' (that) has existed since the dawn of Africa's language-proficient communities." (Keegan, 09).

²¹ Two or more established rhythms, vocals

and experimental. As I imagined the ways that I could produce my own handmade records, I formulated the idea of using astrology chart designs. In taking inspiration from Mirza's audio production set up with his *50 Locked Grooves*, I similarly use a turntable and apply a range of signal processing effects through my DJ controller to play and manipulate sounds produced in the *Astral Records* series. The sounds are meant to suggest the sounds of planetary alignment activity specific to albums being interpreted.²²

Using blank records as base structure, I create visual elements that mix glitched and collaged album art and astrology charts to layer on top of the record's surface.²³ The glitched and collaged album art are printed on vinyl sheets and the designs of astrology charts are cut out of the collage using a vinyl cutter. With these vinyl sheet prints, I peel off the intricate line details that make the astrology chart design, and the surface of the record receives an implied "groove" from two surface layers that the needle of a record player passes over. Once placed on a turntable, the record generates an auditory response from the engraved lines that detail the astrology chart design.

²² While the planets themselves don't produce sounds audible to the human ear, NASA has published findings that prove that planets produce ion-acoustic waves that translate as low radio frequencies which can be converted to sound waves to make the patterns audible (NASA, "Bizarre New Sounds"). Listening to the converted audible patterns produced from planets that NASA captured, I was surprised to find how similar they were to the sounds produced with the *Astral Records*!

²³ Check out *BLANQ* records for more details.



Figure 12. Charlie Star. *Nightclubbing*, Glitch Collage, 2023

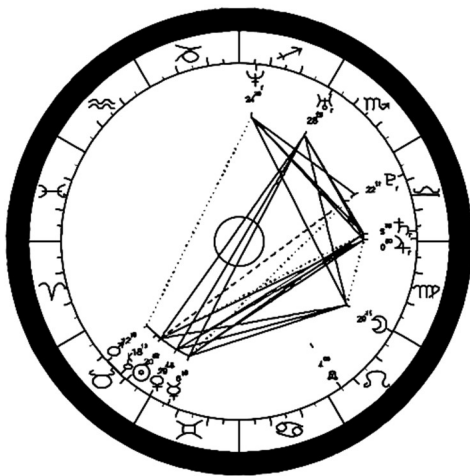


Figure 13. Charlie Star, *Nightclubbing Astro Chart*, 2023



Figure 14. Charlie Star, *Nightclubbing Astral Record*, 2023

As seen in my reinterpretation of the album [Nightclubbing](#) (1981) by Grace Jones, I made a glitch collage out of the album cover (Fig.12), and remixed elements from the sounds produced from the handmade record with Jones' song "Use Me," which appears on the album.²⁴ As seen in Figure 11, an astrology chart design was generated based on the album's release date, which was then traced and digitally rendered as a vector file (Fig.13).²⁵ That design was then overlaid and

²⁴ The song is an interpretation of Bill Withers' song "Use Me" (1972) (Beta)

²⁵ According to *Apple Music*, *Nightclubbing* was released May 1, 1981

cut out of the collage printed on a vinyl sheet and placed on top of a blank record (Fig. 14). After digitizing the sounds produced from the record, I placed them back into my archive for future remixes. The arrangement for my remix of "Use Me" begins with the sound of the [Nightclubbing Astral Record](#) with various signal processing effects applied with my DJ controller. Using a sample of the chorus, I gradually faded and looped in the vocals, alternating between clarity and distortion. [Listen here](#). Breaking down visual and sonic material in this way reconnects me to my exploration of glitching techniques and results in unexpected and surprising outcomes that inspire my original work.

3.3 Tracing Echoes

As a culmination of my research practice, I performed a live remix sound set during the opening night of my thesis exhibition, remixing the distorted sounds from the *Astral Records* series with song samples from my record collection (Fig.15). When I engage with live sound and experimental turntablism, I draw inspiration from dub music engineering techniques, as well as the "hauntology" genre. Both concepts are based on cultural memories, nostalgia, temporal displacement, and "being haunted by a past that anticipated a future that never occurred" (Slayton). These notions resonate with me as a Black biracial woman disconnected from my heritage. The motifs appear as decayed samples with the use of several signal processing effects such as echo, reverb, delay, and various EQ filters.

Michael Veal brings forward in *Dub: Soundscapes and shattered songs in Jamaican Reggae* (2013), that "in order to understand a music's broader resonances, we need an informed understanding of the way social codes are sublimated into the codes of musicalized sound, in order to understand the way they are manipulated to produce social meaning" (22). He suggests that the echo effect in Dub music for instance can be both temporal and spatial, creating a sense of both distance and intimacy (Veal, 198). Veal's multifaceted analysis of the echo effect

highlights the capacity music has in expressing feelings, ideas, and emotions. It also demonstrates how sound can be used to create powerful social and political messages.

As a Black biracial woman with a varied taste for sound, I create soundscapes that reflect my identity and the diverse cultures I am a part of. My current music production and performance set up utilizes a Traktor DJ Controller with the addition of a turntable as a live input, as well as a MIDI controller (Fig.16). I sync my DJ controller's audio mixing software with Ableton to mix song samples with virtual instrument compositions, layer decaying samples with various signal processing techniques such as echo and transform existing compositions into new sounds that reflect my personal tastes and expression.

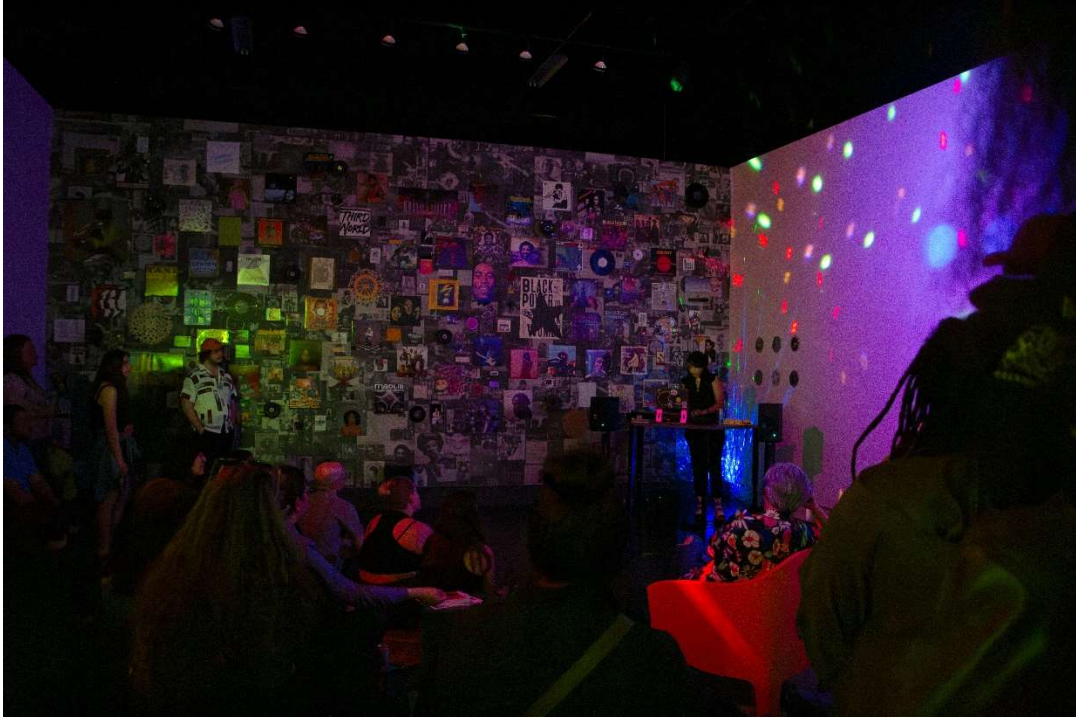


Figure 15. Jean Stevenson, view of remix sound set performance, 2024.

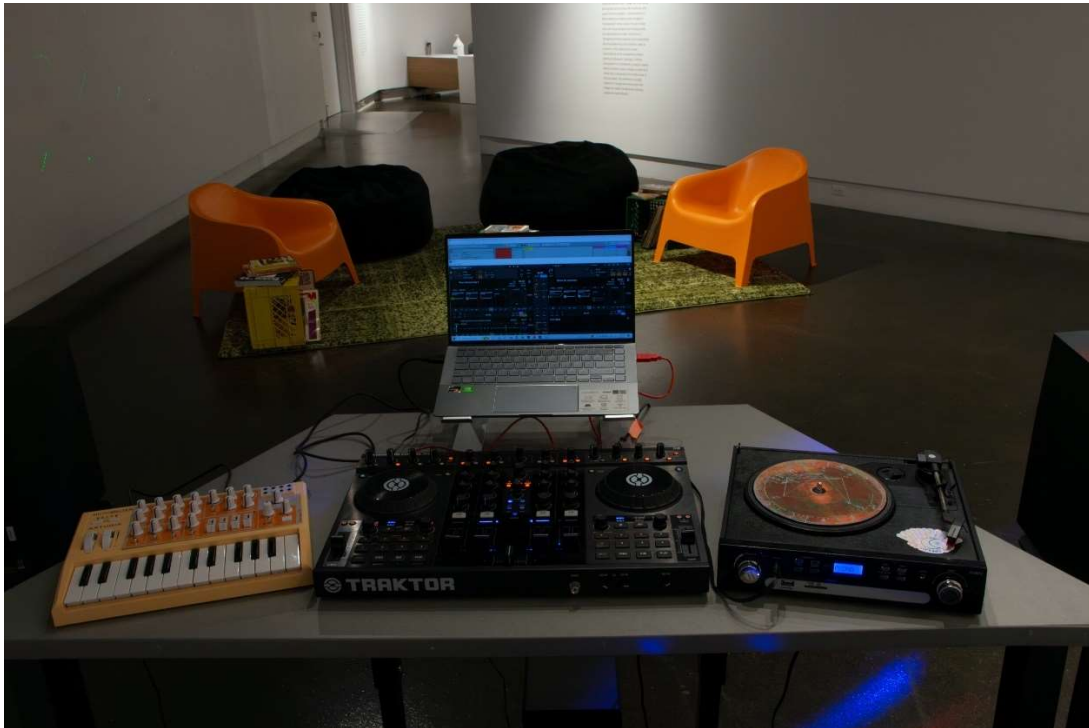


Figure 16. Jean Stevenson, view of music production and performance set up, 2024.

With my interest in astrology, thematically speaking, I am inspired by cosmic and existential exploration and Afrofuturist narratives. On top of the experimental sonic landscape created from decayed song samples, I additionally sample soundbites from figures such as Sun Ra who speaks about transcending Black people to a more peaceful planet through music, as well as Neil deGrasse Tyson and Carl Sagan who speak about humanity's connection with the universe. I draw from their perspectives to create a narrative that speaks to my own struggles and aspirations, that evoke ideas of time and space, and that encourages others to explore their own journey.

4.0 Replay

Love is life and life is free
Take a ride of life with me
Free your mind and find your way
There will be a brighter day
Erykah Badu, "*Didn't Cha Know*" (2000)

The motivation to examine my racial identity came from my frustrations with the current social climate. During these polarizing times, there is a lot of noise about 'identity politics'. Equity, diversity, and rights are not only under attack, but it is becoming increasingly difficult to tell the difference between what is truly important and what is merely rhetoric. I fear these complications have far-reaching consequences. Not only do they undermine the progress made towards creating inclusive societies, but they also perpetuate systemic discrimination and create divisions that hinder the collective efforts needed to address pressing social issues.

As a Black biracial woman disconnected from my Afro Caribbean heritage, I felt compelled to explore my racial roots to discern my identity and needs on my own terms. Researching music of the Black diaspora has helped me to better understand my history and my identity. I have also gained a new appreciation for the diverse ways in which Black identity is expressed. This knowledge has strengthened my connection to my heritage and given me a newfound sense of pride. It has also enabled me to explore my own creativity and find ways to express myself through music. By weaving all of this with my love of astrology, the work embodies a vision of Afrofuturism where I conceive of universal possibilities for a more just and equal world – a world where marginalized communities are empowered, where spirituality and cosmic connections shape social justice movements, and where collective liberation becomes a reality. Through my exhibition, I hope to create a sense of empowerment for those who feel marginalized and unseen. In the face of adversity, I want to inspire people to think about what

makes us similar while also celebrating what makes us different, and to foster more empathy and understanding.

Bibliography

- Adamopoulos, Tina. "Afrosonic Innovation Lab Provides a Thriving Space for Music of the African Diaspora." *University of Toronto Scarborough News*, 6 Oct. 2023, utsc.utoronto.ca/news-events/breaking-research/afrosonic-innovation-lab-provides-thriving-space-music-african-diaspora.
- Alridge, Derrick P. "From civil rights to hip hop: Toward a nexus of ideas." *The Journal of African American History*, vol. 90, no. 3, July 2005, pp. 226–252, <https://doi.org/10.1086/jaahv90n3p226>.
- Aston Philander, Lisa E. "Hunting knowledge and gathering herbs: Rastafari Bush doctors in the Western Cape, South Africa." *Journal of Ethnobiology*, vol. 32, no. 2, Sept. 2012, pp. 134–156, <https://doi.org/10.2993/0278-0771-32.2.134>.
- Balliger, Robin. "Sound as Resistance." *Sounding off!: Music as Subversion/Resistance/Revolution*, edited by Ronald B. Sakolsky and Fred Wei-han Ho, Autonomedia, Brooklyn, NY, 1995.
- "Bio." *DJ Lynnée Denise*, <http://www.djlynneedenise.com/bio>.
- "Bizarre New Sounds of Jupiter from NASA – NASA Solar System Exploration." *NASA*, NASA, 30 Dec. 2000, solarsystem.nasa.gov/news/12214/bizarre-new-sounds-of-jupiter-from-nasa/.
- Bloch, Douglas, and Demetra George. *Astrology for Yourself - How to Understand and Interpret Your Own Birth Chart*. Weiser Books, 2006.
- Brockelman, Thomas P. "Introduction: Collage and the Postmodern." *The Frame and the Mirror*, Northwestern University Press, 2001.
- Campbell, Mark V. *Afrosonic Life*. Bloomsbury, 2022.

- Campbell, Patricia Shehan. "Learning to Improvise Music, Improvising to Learn Music." *Musical Improvisation: Art, Education, and Society*, edited by Gabriel Solis and Bruno Nettle, University of Illinois Press, 2009.
- Chervinska, Nadiia. "Glitch Art: Exploring the Aesthetics of Digital Error and Distortion." *Depositphotos Blog*, 25 Aug. 2023, blog.depositphotos.com/glitch-art.html.
- Chiaverina, John. "Tracing the Blurry Lines of Experimental Turntablism." *Refraction*, www.refractionfestival.com/editorial/experimental-turntablism. Accessed 7 May 2024.
- Collins, Patricia Hill. "The Social Construction of Black Feminist Thought." *Signs*, vol. 14, no. 4, 1989, pp. 745–73. *JSTOR*, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3174683>. Accessed 8 May 2024.
- Curran-Troop, Hannah, and Annelot Prins. "Book Review: Glitch Feminism." *Saje Journals*, *European Journal of Cultural Studies*, 2022, journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/13675494221078876.
- DeLanda, Manuel. Introduction. *Assemblage Theory*. Edinburgh University Press, 2016.
- Denise, Lynee. *Syllabus as Mixtape*. *YouTube*, Williams College, 11 Jan. 2022, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FcUf11DIptM&t=768s&ab_channel=WilliamsCollege. Accessed 4 Nov. 2022.
- Dweller, and Ryan Clarke. "Katherine McKittrick, a Conversation on Black Dreamcatchers." *Katherine McKittrick, a Conversation on Black Dreamcatchers*, Feb. 2023, dwellerforever.blog/2023/05/katherine-mckittrick-a-conversation-on-black-dreamcatchers.
- Eric, Lott. *Praise for The Black Atlantic — Harvard University Press*, www.hup.harvard.edu/books/9780674076068. Accessed 10 Mar. 2024.
- Fine, Kit. "What Is Metaphysics?" *Contemporary Aristotelian Metaphysics*, Cambridge University Press, 2012.

- Gilroy, Paul. *The Black Atlantic: Modernity and Double Consciousness*. Harvard University Press, 1993.
- Griffin, Dominic. “DJ Spooky Transforms a Racist Classic with ‘rebirth of a Nation’ at the Kennedy Center.” *DCist*, 19 May 2017, dcist.com/story/17/05/19/dj-spookys-rebirth-of-a-nation-come/.
- Herring, Amy. *Essential Astrology: Everything You Need to Know to Interpret Your Natal Chart*. Llewellyn Publications, 2016.
- Keegan, Nathan. “Call-and-response: An ancient linguistic device surfaces in Usher’s ‘Love in this club.’” *Elements*, vol. 5, no. 2, 15 Nov. 2005, <https://doi.org/10.6017/eurj.v5i2.8895>.
- “Maria Chavez + Slowpitchsound + Mat Ball.” *SUONI PER IL POPOLO*, suoniperilpopolo.org/program/maria-chavez-guests. Accessed 7 May 2024.
- “Maria Chávez.” *URSSS*, www.ursss.com/2016/07/maria-chavez/. Accessed 7 May 2024.
- Maultsby, Portia K. et al. *Timeline of African American Music*. Carnegie Hall Archives, New York, timeline.carnegiehall.org. Accessed 02 Nov. 2023.
- McAllister, Max. “What Is a DSP and What Does It Do for Music?” *Produce Like A Pro*, 31 Mar. 2023, producelikeapro.com/blog/what-is-a-dsp/.
- “Mickalene Thomas: Femmes Noires.” *Art Gallery of Ontario*, 29 Nov. 2018, ago.ca/exhibitions/mickalene-thomas-femmes-noires.
- Miller, Paul D. *Rhythm Science*. Mediawork/MIT Press, 2004.
- Navas, Eduardo. *Remix Theory: The Aesthetics of Sampling*. Springer Vienna, 2012.
- Nelson, Alondra. “AfroFuturism: Past-Future Visions.” *Colorlines (Oakland, Calif.)*, vol. 3, no. 1, 2000, pp. 34–37.

- “Nightclubbing by Grace Jones on Apple Music.” *Apple Music - Web Player*,
music.apple.com/us/album/nightclubbing/1564514397. Accessed 7 May 2024.
- Parker, Adam Longman. “Afriqua’s Principles of Black Music: Improvisation.” *Ableton*, 29 Mar. 2022, www.ableton.com/en/blog/afriqua-presents-principles-of-black-music-improvisation/.
- Parris, Amanda. “The Art World Often Excludes Black Women. Mickalene Thomas’s Superpower Is Making Them Visible | CBC Arts.” *CBCnews*, CBC/Radio Canada, 7 Dec. 2018, www.cbc.ca/arts/the-art-world-often-excludes-black-women-mickalene-thomas-s-superpower-is-making-them-visible-1.4936697.
- Pelletier, Robert. *Planets in Aspect*. Para Research, 1974.
- Questlove, and Ben Greenman. "Introduction." *Music Is History*. Abrams Image, 2021.
- Russel, Legacy. *Glitch Feminism: A Manifesto*. Verson, 2020.
- Sacher, Andrew. “Moor Mother Announces New LP ‘the Great Bailout,’ Shares Song Ft. Lonnie Holley & Mary Lattimore.” *BrooklynVegan*, 7 Mar. 2024,
www.brooklynvegan.com/moor-mother-announces-new-lp-the-great-bailout-shares-song-ft-lonnie-holley-mary-lattimore/.
- Slayton, Spencer. ““cultural Ghosts: Hauntology and the Caretaker.”” *The UCLA Herb Alpert School of Music*, 25 May 2021, schoolofmusic.ucla.edu/cultural-ghosts-hauntology-and-the-caretaker/#:~:text=Hauntology%20is%20a%20musical%20genre,a%20future%20that%20never%20occurred.

Spice, Anton. "50 Locked Grooves by Haroon Mirza Drop on Double Vinyl." *The Vinyl Factory*, 23 Nov. 2017, thevinylfactory.com/news/50-locked-grooves-by-haroon-mirza-drop-on-double-vinyl/.

"The Art of Turntablism | History Detectives." *PBS*, Public Broadcasting Service, www.pbs.org/opb/historydetectives/feature/the-art-of-turntablism/. Accessed 7 May 2024.

Treindl, Alois, et al. "Introductory Reading." *Introductory Reading - Astrodienst*, www.astro.com/astrology/in_lit_intro_e.htm. Accessed 7 May 2024.

Veal, Michael E. *Dub: Soundscapes and Shattered Songs in Jamaican Reggae*. Wesleyan University Press, 2013.

Weheliye, Alexander G. *Phonographies: Grooves in Sonic Afro-Modernity*. Duke University Press, 2005.

Wilson, Scott. "Poly Kicks to Release 50 Locked Grooves by Haroon Mirza." *Fact Magazine*, 13 Jan. 2016, www.factmag.com/2016/01/13/haroon-mirza-50-locked-grooves-poly-kicks/.

Young, Rob. "Pierre Schaeffer and the Birth of Musique Concrète." *Frieze*, 1 Jan. 2012, www.frieze.com/article/music-22.

Appendix: Audio and Remixes

Charlie Star, [*Funky Kingston Astral Record*](#), 2022, sonic sculpture sound, full length, 1 minute and 26 seconds.

Charlie Star, [*Cosmic Turning of Tough Times*](#), 2022, audio remix, full length, 4 minutes and 3 seconds.

Charlie Star, [*In The Mix: installation audio*](#), 2023, audio collage, full length, 1 hour 48 minutes and 5 seconds.

Charlie Star, [*Nightclubbing Astral Record*](#), 2024, sonic sculpture sound, full length, 1 minute and 2 seconds.

Charlie Star, [*Use Me x Nightclubbing Mashup*](#), 2024, audio remix, full length, 1 minute and 9 seconds.