

Wear You to the Ball in Dub :: London & Berlin Versions

We were thinking of dub, the way Jamaican sound studios in the 1970s came to cut into the "original" analog tape-recordings, de-naturalize the voice, pour in reverb and echo effects, loop a drum-pattern, explode an instrumental passage, add swells and fades, subtract big slices out of the song – and still always carry the "original" song (and dance) as its double or ghost. A voice chanted over a "rhythm" (instruments all provide rhythm) can be heard vanishing into the new song that's swallowing it up.

Dub seems to rely on a form of belief, that the integrity of the song remains intact, however disturbed a version gets made of it; also that every song, one comes to realize, is subject to disturbance.

We were thinking of dub, and also of the everyday dubbing of iPods and mp3s, of the endless playlists and remixes of the morning office commute. Dubbing dub: Jamaican appropriation panning left to right in the ears of a business woman in Berlin, Paris, New York....

Bill has said he's trying to make poetry listenable for himself. Rather than "setting" the poems "to music", as in "art song" tradition, here the poem, already heard as a form of music, gets to resemble, a bit more, the "real" music existing behind it.

London Version: 23 May 2009, The Horse Hospital
Berlin Version: 29 May 2009, 7hours HAUS19

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