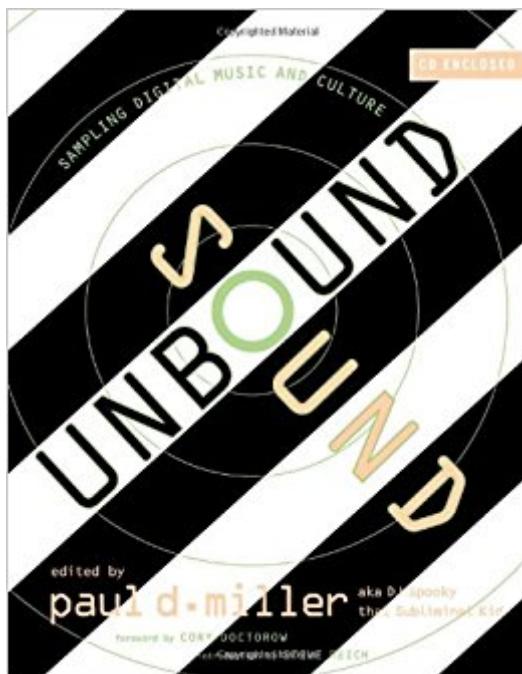


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# Sound Unbound: Sampling Digital Music And Culture



## Synopsis

If Rhythm Science was about the flow of things, Sound Unbound is about the remix -- how music, art, and literature have blurred the lines between what an artist can do and what a composer can create. In Sound Unbound, Rhythm Science author Paul Miller aka DJ Spooky that Subliminal Kid asks artists to describe their work and compositional strategies in their own words. These are reports from the front lines on the role of sound and digital media in an information-based society. The topics are as diverse as the contributors: composer Steve Reich offers a memoir of his life with technology, from tape loops to video opera; Miller himself considers sampling and civilization; novelist Jonathan Lethem writes about appropriation and plagiarism; science fiction writer Bruce Sterling looks at dead media; Ron Eglash examines racial signifiers in electrical engineering; media activist Naeem Mohaiemen explores the influence of Islam on hip hop; rapper Chuck D contributes "Three Pieces"; musician Brian Eno explores the sound and history of bells; Hans Ulrich Obrist and Philippe Parreno interview composer-conductor Pierre Boulez; and much more. "Press 'play,'" Miller writes, "and this anthology says 'here goes.'" The groundbreaking music that accompanies the book features Nam Jun Paik, the Dada Movement, John Cage, Sonic Youth, and many other examples of avant-garde music. Most of this content comes from the archives of Sub Rosa, a legendary record label that has been the benchmark for archival sounds since the beginnings of electronic music. To receive these free music files, readers may send an email to the address listed in the book.

Contributors

David Allenby, Pierre Boulez, Catherine Corman, Chuck D, Erik Davis, Scott De Lahunta, Manuel DeLanda, Cory Doctorow, Eveline Domnitch, Frances Dyson, Ron Eglash, Brian Eno, Dmitry Gelfand, Dick Hebdige, Lee Hirsch, Vijay Iyer, Ken Jordan, Douglas Kahn, Daphne Keller, Beryl Korot, Jaron Lanier, Joseph Lanza, Jonathan Lethem, Carlo McCormick, Paul D. Miller aka DJ Spooky that Subliminal Kid, Moby, Naeem Mohaiemen, Alondra Nelson, Keith and Mendi Obadike, Hans Ulrich Obrist, Pauline Oliveros, Philippe Parreno, Ibrahim Quaraishi, Steve Reich, Simon Reynolds, Scanner aka Robin Rimbaud, Nadine Robinson, Daniel Bernard Roumain (DBR), Alex Steinweiss, Bruce Sterling, Lucy Walker, Saul Williams, Jeff E. Winner.

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## Customer Reviews

What a marvelous collection! This provocative and wide ranging book is packed with a vast number of facts and theories: the sound of creation in the Vedas, the Muslim influence on early hip hop, mathematical permutations of bell patterns (Eno), the term "Emptyv" (Chuck D). The essays criss cross over many aspects of sound -- cosmic, chemical, political, economic. It sparks questions (Can sound be translated into light?) and presents bits of information like the name for Jamaican sound systems ("Houses of Joy"). Plus you get to meet fascinating characters like Alex Steinweiss (album cover artist), Motown's Berry Gordor and synthesizer pioneer Raymond Scott. And you get to consider how Bach's style might have been influenced by his job copying Vivaldi scores. Reading Sound Unbound also invites you to reconsider techno hype, as when Bruce Sterling describes laptops as 'colorful, buzzing cuddly things with the lifespan of hamsters.' I love this book! (Laurie Anderson)For the maverick rhythm scientist Paul D. Miller, sound is liquid; it spills over and slips under categories, firewalls, case law, and legal codes to find us and move us. In the same way, his important collection of sound thinkers and sound ideas calls us to remove the fake 'security' imposed on us by capital and state, and, more crucially, to reimagine freedom and reclaim our creativity. (Jeff Chang, author of Can't Stop Won't Stop: A History of the Hip-Hop Generation)Everything must be about one thing first, then it can be about many things. Paul Miller's collection of texts is about one thing: the use of scanning in music and more generally the world around us. He gives us a single structure to put very different experiences and theoretical constructs into an overarching context. The result is always interesting and often illuminating. These essays by thinkers and practitioners range widely and produce their own static and interferences, but they fall into one perceptible rhythm. A good staging of an opera uses what you see on stage to make you hear better. Similarly, these reflections make it easier to tune in to the sometimes confusing soundscape of our dislocated, interrelated, networked times. (Robert Wilson)It's a lovely eclectic collection that is a nice antidote to the usual way music and the history of music is often

categorized into high/low, pop/classical, or black/white. I like Sterling's analogy between our beloved high tech media and inscrutable indecipherable archaic media like Incanquipus. From Raymond Scott to the hidden racism in digital circuitry to a history of easy listening there is enough inspiring weirdness here to fuel some musical fires for a good while. (David Byrne) Paul Miller has grabbed disparate philosophies and references from the past five hundred years and tied them into a neat and interesting narrative on music, sound, and current thought in our time. Sound Unbound is an excellent reference on art in the popular context in the twenty-first century. (Branford Marsalis ) Paul Miller is one of the best cultural radars in the world today. He always picks out the most relevant people working today and reveals previously unseen connections. If you want situational awareness about the world of sound, music, performance, computers, and ideas, read this book. (Lev Manovich, Visual Arts Department, University of California, San Diego)...this is a provocative and intriguing text, of interest to anyone working in or studying contemporary experimental music. (Dave Valencia Library Journal)

Paul D. Miller, aka DJ Spooky, That Subliminal Kid, is a composer, multimedia artist, and writer. He is the author of Rhythm Science and Sound Unbound, both published by the MIT Press.

Useful book.

this book gives a multilayered analysis of sound, music, space, and video allusions (not to be mistaken for hallucinations). very thought provoking and forward thinking as far as the art of music is concerned. still plowing through the seismic space of text. but so far so good.

This book was extremely helpful in writing a research paper that I have been working on! Quality work and overall a really great buy!

This book shows off Paul Miller aka DJ Spooky's two biggest strengths, the mashup and the teamup. The big name roster didn't deliver scraps; they all provide thoughtful and entertaining essays, for example Jonathan Lethem's essay also features the key to that same essay showing where he "plagiarized" just about ever phrase in the proceeding few pages. Saul Williams, provides a pensive meditation on words as magic, something I was more used to hearing out of Grant Morrison or Alan Moore, but Williams is sincere and Smart. And the inclusion of unsung geniuses like Alex Steinweiss, the inventor of the record jacket (before him there was no art on albums, you

only saw their spine at the store) pushes it over the top and into the zone. The included CD is way cool in and of itself; it's easy to poopoo such ambitious works, but Spooky lays it all down with love not pretense, throwing snippets of James Joyce, Gertrude Stein, Allen Ginsberg, William Burroughs -- all actual spoken word from the Sub Rosa archive over some avantgarde classical like John Cage, and then enriched by textured groovy beats... Spooky's having a ball and sharing the fun

This anthology includes essays by David Allenby, Pierre Boulez, Catherine Corman, Chuck D, Erik Davis, Scott De Lahunta, Manuel DeLanda, Cory Doctorow, Eveline Domnitch, Frances Dyson, Ron Eglash, Brian Eno, Dmitry Gelfand, Dick Hebdige, Lee Hirsch, Vijay Iyer, Ken Jordan, Douglas Kahn, Daphne Keller, Beryl Korot, Jaron Lanier, Joseph Lanza, Jonathan Lethem, Carlo McCormick, Moby, Naeem Mohaiemen, Alondra Nelson, Keith and Mendi, Obadike, Hans Ulrich Obrist, Pauline Oliveros, Philippe Parreno, Ibrahim Quraishi, Steve Reich, Simon Reynolds, Scanner aka Robin Rimbaud, Nadine Robinson, Daniel Bernard Roumain (DBR), Alex Steinweiss, Bruce Sterling, Lucy Walker, Saul Williams, Jeff E. Winner.

Great Book. A lot of intelligent essays on very relevant topics. As someone who enjoys sampling digital music, I find it very helpful to hear what my peers are thinking about the varying issues surrounding the activity. Some ideas are new to me and get my gears spinning, some of them are problems I've wrestled with myself, such as the moral dilemma embedded in the digital sampling culture. Is it thievery? Should laws be enacted to punish it? Should we do it at all, out of respect for the original artist? Some essays are more difficult to follow on account of references to so many artists and their works that I am unfamiliar with. However, others are a quick and enjoyable read that are pleasantly easy to comprehend, while still no less important to the book as a whole. Again, great read.

I just finished this one. If you're looking for insight from the myriad influential contributors, you'll find that and much more here. The book's themes run deep, weaving together music history and theory with meditations on technology, perception, and cultural zeitgeist. I went in curious how the ideas of Brian Eno, Bruce Sterling, Cory Doctorow, and Chuck D would cohere under the editorial hand of DJ Spooky. Color me surprised - it's an enlightening trip! A must-read!

This book is excellent. It comes with a CD of some really excellent mashup too. I've really enjoyed the different writing styles and the great anecdotes that present themselves in this compilation of

what is essentially a book of post-graduate papers on music and it's evolving relationship with the world. Delightfully rich with first person experience and gives you something to listen too in the background. Yummy for my sonic tummy.

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