

MUSICAL ACCUMULATION

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In today's paradigmatic stages of groundless latest capitalism, the band takes the form of spam. Market research finds newly varying stylistic archetypes to render through sound, lyric and posture, and interrogates the listening population with such revisionist personifications; a self-generating auditory propaganda machine, as it were.

Nevertheless, many artist types maintain an override optimism to start new bands. "Hey, let's start a band!" Now, the band isn't necessarily a futile endeavor; there are of course still "good" contemporary groups, just as there is once in a blue moon such a thing as "good" spam (e.g. social mobilizing during the Arab Spring and Occupy). The sticky problematic in this exquisite permutation of a creative act is as follows: how does a band bypass or at least temporarily evade the debilitatingly inconsequential world of "bad" spam while still intrinsically participating in and thereby inadvertently nurturing this spammed musical terrain? How does a group start a band with, as a well known boy-band once enumerated, "no strings attached"?

One poor, albeit well-tried schema for this righteous attempt to transcend musical mediocrity is to perform a type of do-it-yourself crowdsourcing research project, by which a band will surely kickstart a new hybrid musical identity optimally informed by many genres, and standing distinct in its singular sound. Some might call this project "appropriation"; an arcane generative process which precedes the better known reappropriation (as popularized in commercials, history and cinematic montage). Appropriation is lovely, yet in most cases untenable for a burgeoning band without falling prey to musical spamification. What is much more readily doable than appropriation is a process called *transcompartmentalization*¹. Music industry think tanks and savvy creatives alike boast with pride the superb results of this evolving process, with such new game-changing and mind-blowing musical genres as "indie-techno-psych-core," "post-chill-rock-thrash" and "soul-grunge-house-wave."

But alas, *transcompartmentalization* smells like corporate hegemony. No, let's not start more bands with these preemptive categorical idealizations and juxtapositions as a well-fed excuse for ideology analogous to financialization—let's not be the lumpen proletariat of genre-practitioners—for when have the productivists of today ever written a tune of consequence? No, no more, lest we further dilute the punk syntax in exchange for amorphous cultural spam and noncommittal, algorithmic bricolage.

And what's more? Bands keep accumulating, like a phone company's archive of text messages and geotags; like parking lots. There isn't a Darwinian mechanism to band survival in which fitness might equate to aesthetic ramification. Instead, bands can almost indefinitely survive on the life support of social media, musical equipment and entrepreneurship. The only plausible means of resuscitating the band from this potpourri of militant extraneousness is to work towards regaining a *grammatology of the band*. Therein artists will delimit this creative format, reinstitute the punk syntax and come back to perform with an absolved sense of both atonement and style.

Exhibit 1:

