

Music to Grieve and Music to Celebrate: A Dirge for Muñoz

Sounding Out! Authors

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Abstract

Here is part four of the series “Round Circle of Resonance,” from the Berlin-based arts collective La Mission, who performs connections between the theory of José Esteban Muñoz and sound art / study / theory / performance. The opening salvo, written by La Mission’s resident essayist / deranged propagandist LMGM (Luis-Manuel Garcia) provides a brief introduction to our collective, some reflections on Muñoz’s relevance to

Keywords

Music (Subfield), Dance / Movement, Fandom / Fan Studies, Identity, Installation, Music

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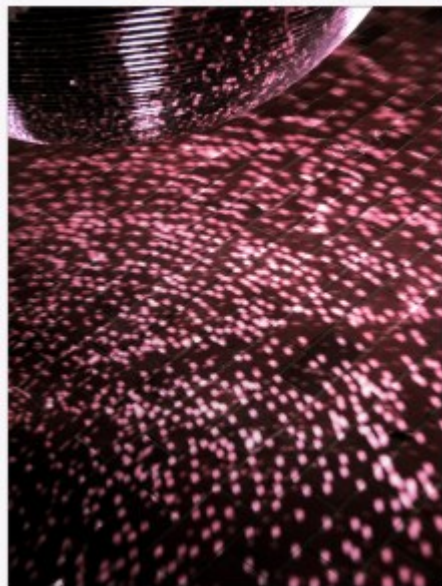


Here is part four of the series “[Round Circle of Resonance](#),” from the Berlin-based arts collective La Mission, who performs connections between the theory of José Esteban Muñoz and sound art/study/theory/performance. The opening salvo, written by La Mission’s resident essayist / deranged propagandist **LMGM (Luis-Manuel Garcia)** provides a brief introduction to our collective, some reflections on Muñoz’s relevance to our activities, and a frame for the next three missives from our fellow cultists. It is backed with a rousing sermon-cum-manifesto from our charismatic cult-leader/prophet, **El Jefe (Pablo Roman-Alcalá)**. Last week we presented our Naked Mennonite/ randy dramaturge (**Mandie O’Connell**)’s urinary performance piece. Today, our saucy Choir Boy/ Linguist (**Johannes Brandis**) shares his dirge to our dearly departed José (August 9, 1967- December, 4, 2013).

—**LMGM a.k.a. Luis-Manuel Garcia (curator)**

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Text and Music: Johannes Brandis



*“Partytunnel” by Flickr user
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As someone who is involved in the underground dance music scene, I am aware of how much we are in debt to the underground scenes created by queers of colour, who collectively shaped their own utopias through their disidentification from cultures that rejected them on two fronts – sexuality and race. I believe that there is a great lesson to be learnt from this for all us. We – regardless of our sexuality or race – must also seek to incorporate these principles in current dance music scenes, which similarly afford those involved some relative freedom from the everyday oppressions of society. It is for this reason that I wrote this piece for Muñoz, someone who did a great deal to illuminate these utopian landscapes.

In this piece, I tried to incorporate the range of (often conflicting) emotions we feel when someone passes away. On the one hand we hear the bass drum setting the timbre of the song: a sombre dirge. This is further reinforced by the melancholy melody which slowly sweeps over the slow march of the drums, undefined and ethereal. On the other hand, however, I tried to imbue the piece with part of Muñoz's high spirited and fiery character through the synchopated staccato percussion. Thus, we celebrate his life and personality while at the same time mourning his passing.

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Featured Image: "[Early hours](#)" by Flickr user Rene Passet, CC BY-NC-ND 2.0

Johannes Brandis is a dogboy. He is a handsome young gent who excels at taking drugs, getting his fingers sucked, speaking ancient languages, and having a gay dad.



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