

Sample minds

To sample in art is to be understood as postmodern. This kind of production of art, which can be misjudged as eclectic, is the original expression of the postmodern and which refers to the modern and modernism in order to expand it. Sampling is a shortcut of form and content, for nothing is reinvented because it already got invented before. It is leading in its structure: samples are “quotations”, that means they show their influences and the origins of the thoughts that arise from them without having to reinvent the wheel. This creates a sufficiently large space for "Eigentliches", that means for your own thoughts or for your own expression (both in form and content). Seen in this way, sampling is a form of appropriation. Depending on the type of sampling, the way of dealing with it also branches into a) the one-time use of the sampling as a kind of starting point for the then following own expression, but if b) looped, that means repeated in an endless loop, it is more a rhythm that joins in with your own expression and accompanies it in a supportive manner.

On the one hand, the looped sample can be "deprived of meaning (Sinn)" by repetition, since it loses its meaning (Bedeutung), but this rather emphasizes the rhythm of the quoted loop as a structuring momentum. On the other hand, the rhythm that is created by the looped sample can be expanded with a(n) (at best) new, additional meaning through your own expression. So understood, a sample is Nietzsche's “eternal return of the same”, without ending in a vicious circle: your own additional expression breaks the image of the Ouroboros linked to Nietzsche in favor of the snake of the Aesculapian staff, through which a spiral ascent or a further development is possible. This new picture is a continuation of a healing, it is a therapy of the expression. This gives the sample the opportunity for a spiral increase and expansion of what appears to be always the same through its own expression. The former meaning is driven into new spheres or at least brought into the present and can be thereby updated. And by that, the newly created expression is again available for a renewed and updated criticism in the sense of an appreciation.

Samples and loops and the new works of art created – because of the samples and loops shortening the way of association – turn into “[wittgensteinian] ladders [that are thrown away]” with which we had climbed further. And if we are lucky, others will follow us with their own ladders to take the same path that has always been less traveled, and go even further to find their own way. And thereby change their own lives and also potentially the lives of those who will follow them by showing what it means to be able to determine the further course of your life yourself.