

Series: Sleep and the Rhythms of Life

Episode title: Dance Music, Wakefulness and Embodied Rhythm – Part 2

Transcript

Eric Clarke:

So you've told us some really interesting things, Michael, about the ways in which, as a DJ, you can engage people's interest, you can get them kind of hooked into the set. But what is it that you're doing that sculpts the sense of energy over, let's say, a two or three hour period? Because presumably you want to both raise people's energy. Levels at some times and lower them.

Michael Diamond:

Others one I think a lot of electronic music that is played in nightclubs across the world is relatively slow developing the musical ideas might develop over a longer period of time compared to pop music, for example, where it's just two-minute 3 minute radio snippets. A lot of the music that I'm playing is different. You know, it's the average length of a track is maybe 7 minutes. How you can get people so long? And I think it's just a byproduct of the music itself being longer.

Eric Clarke:

So the slow development of musical ideas you think in some ways expands the sense of a personal's time consciousness.

Michael Diamond:

Yeah, time slows down, music becomes the the new time. You don't really think in seconds anymore or minutes. You think in bars or phrases you know. Physical terms, if a phrase is unwrapping and unravelling over a long period of time, I think that becomes your new time constant.

Eric Clarke:

Some of the sort of terminology of dance music seems to be quite interesting in this respect, so people talk about build up, break down, drop. Can you just say a little bit about what kinds of techniques are being used in build up and a drop and a breakdown and how those might be? If you like orchestrating this, this large scale rhythm.

Michael Diamond:

The build up and drop I think would be anything that feels like there's you're going from tension to release or relief in some way, and I think a build up can be anything that causes unease or tension creates some sense of uncomfortableness.

Eric Clarke:

Or kind of rising expectation perhaps?

Michael Diamond:

Rising expectation, yeah, is a perfect way of putting it, yeah. You might remove the base. You might have a a low pass philtre that's opening up across time, which emulates the sound of an object coming towards you in nature and these sorts of things create some sort of anticipation in the listener where it feels like something is about to happen. Maybe something's coming towards you. And then release, I think it's it should give you what you're expecting in some way and be reversion back to baseline.