

From David Schiff's *The Music of Elliot Carter*, I learned that the composer had used a "cross-cutting" technique in some of his works from the 1960s and 70s. Like a DJ crossfading between two records, Carter would shift between two different musical sections, each with its own developmental trajectory. I liked the idea of simultaneous development that this cutting allows; one section doesn't follow, or prepare for, the next, but the two evolve in alternation.

The first version of this work consisted of two independently written pieces, which I could cut together live. It worked but felt limited, so I decided to add more material into the cutting process, and to speed it up. What resulted in the end was a loop that could be cut or chopped up by eight other sound files, themselves chopped as well. These eight (or fewer) files sometimes exist on their own and sometimes coexist with the loop, which they obscure; in both instances, the music is always homophonic in that nothing ever overlaps with anything else except for two-millisecond crossfades between samples. The rate of sampling can become so quick that this homophonic process sounds more like polyphony, as numerous fragments come together in rapid succession—a simulation of more layered sound or a "whole." (Sine and phasor tones and improvised saxophone do introduce simultaneous voices; however, the samples material never overlaps.)

*Chopper Remix* has another broader connection to DJ culture: it's a remix of a remix of a remix (licensed under the Creative Commons NonCommercial Sampling Plus 1.0 License). The work's first studio version was part of remixin.org's iterative remix project. Three works functioned as "seed tracks," and successive rounds of remixes ("remix trees") followed. Perhaps more of a derivative work than a typical remix, this work's seed track was Charles Dodge's "Canons for Larry (123)". West Coast DJ Ruoho Ruotsi remixed Dodge's piece, and Parsec remixed that one. My own third round remix took elements from Parsec's track and worked them into my chopping software. The piece begins with chopped up samples from my own remixed groove. That groove appears in full form in the following section, and I solo on processed alto sax. The next and last section brings back the groove in obscured form, integrating a new set of eight samples into the chopping mechanism. The new sounds include vocal recordings of George Bush and an unidentified German male, bass clarinet and alto sax licks, crackling fire, and computer generated audio. Almost all elements of the live version are improvised, with highly flexible structure and pacing.

Through its various layers of fragmentation—in terms of the iterative remix project and the intricate fragmentation of groove and individual sound files—and its distortion of original material by means of rearrangement as opposed to manipulative audio effects, *Chopper Remix* is meant to challenge traditional notions of part, whole, development, and narrative in music.