


УДК 316.774 : 7.092 (4)
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 «Theory and history of culture» (art criticism)

FROM DISCO HISTORY DISCO PERSONALITIES (MUSICOLOGICAL AND COMMUNICATIONS RETROSPECTIVE ANALYSIS)

Синеокий О. З історії диско персоналій (музикознавчо-комунікаційний ретроспективний аналіз). У статті представлено аналіз розвитку диско-комунікацій. Об'єктом дослідження є диско як сектор музичної індустрії зі своїми специфічними корпоративними правилами та особливостями. Предметом даної публікації виступають закономірності розвитку і функціонування диско як особливого соціального та музичного феномена в ХХ столітті. Методологічну основу складають історико-музикознавчий і соціокомунікаційний підходи. Виклад матеріалу проілюстровано найбільш яскравими прикладами з всесвітньої історії диско. Результати можуть бути використані в навчальному процесі з «Історії музичного мистецтва».
Ключові слова: диско, рок, звукозапис, музична індустрія, соціокультурні комунікації, лейбл, шоу-бізнес, музична культура.

Sineokij O. From Disco History Disco Personalities (Musicological and Communications Retrospective Analysis).

This article presents an analysis of genesis the disco communications. The object of the study is to drive as a sector of the music industry with its specific corporate rules and features. The subject of this publication are the patterns of development and operation of the disc as a special social and musical phenomenon of the twentieth century. The author carries out a detailed description of the western disco scene of the 1970's – 1980's. From the standpoint of the development of social and cultural communication in the music industry to analyze the history of disco, in which the author discussed in detail little-known pages of disco business. The interdisciplinary nature of the study of the phenomenon of disco as a subculture, as the scientific description of this phenomenon, caused the use of methodological tools in the study of art history and cultural studies. First of all, we should note the books of the Disco researchers as: Abe Peck, Michael O'Harro, Albert H. Goldman, Karen Lustgarten, Jack Villari and Kathleen Sims Villari, Roy Madrid, Janet J. Jasek, Ray Fox-Cumming, Kitty Hanson, Andy Blackford, Deney Terrio, Alma Heaton and Don Zimmerman, Ann T. Kilbride, Nancy P. Bruning, Andy Blackford, etc. The methodological basis of the study make up the historical and musicological and sociocommunication approach. The novelty of the research is scientific substantiation of the position according to which the disc is a multi-level construct in a complex system of social and cultural communications and music technology. Statement of the basic material is illustrated by the most vivid examples of the global history of disco. The results can be used in the educational process of the «History of Music Arts».

Key words: Disco, Rock, Recording, Music Industry, Sociocultural Communications, Label, Show Business, Music Culture.

Синеокий О. Из истории диско персоналий (музыковедческо-коммуникационный ретроспективный анализ).

В статье представлен анализ развития диско-коммуникаций. Объектом исследования является диско как сектор музыкальной индустрии со своими специфическими корпоративными правилами и особенностями. Предметом данной публикации являются закономерности развития и функционирования диско как особого социального и музыкального феномена в ХХ веке.



Методологическую основу составляют историко-музыковедческий и социокоммуникационный подходы. Изложение материала проиллюстрировано наиболее яркими примерами из глобальной истории диско. Результаты могут быть использованы в учебном процессе по «Истории музыкального искусства».

Ключевые слова: диско, рок, звукозапись, музыкальная индустрия, социокультурные коммуникации, лейбл, шоу-бизнес, музыкальная культура.

Disco songs were arranged and composed by experienced arrangers and orchestrators, and producers added their creative touches to the overall sound. Recording complex arrangements with such a large number of instruments and sections required a team that included a conductor, copyists, record producers, and mixing engineers [1]. Mixing engineers had an important role in the disco production process, because disco songs used as many as 64 tracks of vocals and instruments [2, 254].

One of the first explorers to the General public disco music of the 1970's was an Italian composer, producer and performer, a pioneer of electronic music, composer of music for films *Giorgio Moroder*. Later he wrote music for various performers, his special known collaboration with singer Donna Summer.

Donna Summer – LaDonna Adrian Gaines was a five-time winner of the award «Grammy» – in 1979, 1980, 1984, 1985 and 1998 and had rightfully earned the title «Queen of disco». The song «Last Dance» from the soundtrack to the film «Thank God It's Friday» (1978) had received the award «Oscar». However, it will be interesting to pay attention to rare first LP of Donna Summer – **Lady of The Night**. It was issued by the Dutch label «Groovy» in 1974. The album was quite interesting original rock music. During her career in sound recordings a specified outstanding singer General has recorded 17 albums, the latest of which, after 17-year hiatus, was released in 2008. Black Charming «Queen of Disco» Donna Summer holds the record for consecutive number of issued double album (2LPs), who took the top spot in the charts – **Once Upon A Time** (1977), **Live And More** (1978) and **Bad Girls** (1979). Donna Summer became the first in music history singer, her singles during one year four times climbed to the top of the hit parade «Billboard Hot 100». Moreover, Donna Summer is an exceptional disco star because of the extensive role she played in the creative process. Being a performer of Eurodisco, she released songs that were highly

stylized and lavishly produced, but they were not completely out of her control. She played a role in writing many of her songs, helped design the cover art for her albums, and had a strong and respectful relationship with her producers [3].

Diana Ross was one of the first «Motown» artists to embrace the disco sound with her hugely successful 1976 outing «Love Hangover» from her self-titled album. Ross would continue to score disco hits for the rest of the disco era, including the 1980 dance classics «Upside Down» and «I'm Coming Out» (the latter immediately becoming a favorite in the gay community). THE SUPREMES, the group that made Ross famous, scored a handful of hits in the disco clubs without Ross, most notably 1976's «I'm Gonna Let My Heart Do the Walking» and, their last charted single before disbanding, 1977's «You're My Driving Wheel».

An important place in the history of disco takes *Gloria Gaynor*, which first big success came in 1975 with the release of disco album **Never Can Say Goodbye**. But the most popular singer brought the single «I Will Survive» from the album **Love Tracks** (1978). This song won first place in the «Billboard Hot 100» and received the award «Grammy» as «The Best Disco Song» in 1980.

Another euro-disco act was *Amanda Lear*, where euro-disco sound is most heard in Enigma («Give a bit of Mmh to me») song (1978).

LIPPS, INC. («Lip Sync») was a disco band from Minneapolis, USA. The group (1979-1985) was best known for the chart-topping 1980 worldwide hit single «Funkytown». The group originally consisted of lead vocalist Cynthia Johnson and a changing lineup of session musicians, including David Rivkin and Tom Riopelle (guitars), Terry Grant (bass). Steven Greenberg, the creator of the act, wrote and produced most of the group's music [4].

Instrumentalists and vocalists remained integral to the disco sound, yet as the 1970s unfolded a group of engineers, producers and remixers began to play a dominant role [5]. In



those years, frequently expressed opinion, according to which musicians, especially instrumentalists, paid a disco-system secondary role. But what drives without decent bass guitars?

Most likely, many music lovers with the experience does not know the names of bass players or drummers of BONEY M. In the the main creative period of BONEY M. bass guitarist was Gary Unwin and percussion instruments often invited Studio musician Keith Forsey. These wonderful musicians recorded in the German record studios instrumental material for the same American girl Donna Summer, the Spanish Duo BACCARA and others. Session bassist who played on the album BONEY M. – **Oceans of Fantasy** (1979) was Gary King. In some compositions he specified records masterfully, using of Studio opportunities, he «ordered» two fine bass pictures – the main line and slap (i.e. second bass). By the way, the best disco group BONEY M. was created accidentally.

Few people know that it all started with a bass guitar... Instead, as the place of the group BONEY M. it was supposed to be a German singer Gilla, who also was a very good bass guitarist, matched up well with Suzi Quatro. With cooperation of Gilla (Austrian by birth, her real name is Gisela Wuchinger), Frank (sometimes Franc) Farian began his professional production career. In 1974, Gisela together with Helmut Rulofs and a guy named Henry formed a group called 75 MUSIC, which has just noticed of Farian. He decides to work with them as a producer and helps to do a contract with the company «Hansa International». The first single was a cover version of the famous Italian song «Nessuno Mai» (in German «Kein Weg Zu Weit»). They had high hopes to be a single a potential big hit, but the release went almost unnoticed by the public. However, the next single in German version of the famous song «Lady Marmalade» («Voulez-Vous Coucher Avec Moi») had sold well in the USA.

In 1975, Gilla recorded a debut album **Willst Du Mit Mir Schlafen Gehn?** (1975) in German, the single «Tu' Es» from this LP in early 1976 had won one of the prizes in the German «Top 10». In addition to cover versions by various artists, the album includes tracks that would later become the hits of BONEY M.: «Kein Weg Zu Weit» («Take the Heat off Me») and

«Lieben Und Frei Sein» («Lovin' or Leavin'»). Later Frank Farian gave BONEY M. the other songs of this album, including «Tu' Es» («New York City», which would be implemented as a «B»-side of the famous single «Sunny»). So, the first Gilla's album sold out well, given the fact that all songs were sung exclusively in German. The next her single was released in summer of 1976. It had two tracks: «Ich Brenne» (included in German «dozens of popularity») and its English version «Help, Help», it became a very popular in Holland). At the beginning of 1977 the exit was ready of her second LP, **Zieh Mich Aus** was ready. It included the song «Johnny» perhaps the best known hit of Gilla and various German-language versions of the famous pop songs.

By far the most successful Euro disco act was ABBA. This Swedish pop quartet – with such hits as «Waterloo» (1974), «Fernando» (1976), «Take a Chance on Me» (1978), «Gimme! Gimme! Gimme! (A Man After Midnight)» (1979), and their signature smash «Dancing Queen» (1976) – ranks as the eighth best-selling act of all time.

Other prominent European pop and disco groups were LUV' from the Netherlands and the British singer *Dee D. Jackson* (her full name Deirdre Elaine Cozier). LUV' was a Dutch female pop trio that scored a string of hit records in Continental Europe. Their songs were also popular in the «Eastern Bloc»: especially, in East Germany, Poland and Hungary.

In the 1970's *Dee D. Jackson* worked as a film producer in Munich, Germany, before moving into music, working with Giorgio Moroder and Keith Forsey. But in the second half of 1970's they referred to «Space Disco». This stereotype is closely associated with her first album **Cosmic Curves** with space themes from the realm of science fiction. The release was issued in 1978 label Carrere Records. But *Dee D. Jackson* released her first single in 1977, «Man of a Man», which has not been included in any of her albums. In a similar style it was released the second album **Thunder & Lightning** (1980). In Italy this LP was released in another cover under the title **The Fantastic**. Paradoxically, but the main hit single from this album «SOS (Love to The Rescue)» for some reason failed in the UK, in other countries it received high praise and success. In the early 1980's, *Dee D. Jackson* moved to Los Angeles. In 1981, her Greatest Hits album **Profile** was released in Germany. After



spending only months living in the USA, she relocated to Italy, and subsequently released the Italo-disco-singles «Talk Me Down» (1981), «Shotgun» (1982), «Moonlight Starlight» (1984), «Sweet Carillon» (1984) and «Heat of the Night» (1985).

LA BIONDA became another honorable and iconic disco group. The project was created by the Italians Carmelo La Bionda and Michelangelo La Bionda. In the official discography are four LP albums – **La Bionda** (1978), **Bandido** (1978), **High Energy** (1979), **I Wanna Be Your Lover** (1980). Note that before to *LA BIONDA* brothers Carmelo and Michelangelo during 1977-1978, had a first parallel project under the name *DISCO DELIVERY SOUND (D.D. SOUND)*.

Few people know that the first disc under the name *LA BIONDA* became **Tutto Va Bene**, released in 1977 by the Italian label «Baby Records». All tracks recorded in Italian. The style of this group can be described as disco combined with R'n'B and Latin music. Co-author of most songs *LA BIONDA* was English guitarist Richard W. Palmer-James (lyrics on the albums *KING CRIMSON – Larks' Tongues In Aspic, Starless And Bible Black* and *Red*, the founder of *SUPERTRAMP*, a member of multinational prog-rock project *EMERGENCY*, etc.), guitarist Mats Bjorklund, drummer Martin Harrison, bassist Gary Unwin (he took an active part in the creation of Dee D. Jackson records) and some others.

In the 1970's italian singer and composer **Paolo Zavallone** (competed under the pseudonym *EL PASADOR*) was well-known to the Soviet public. One of his the first pre-disco project was **Paolo Zavallone & His Orchestra** as instrumental music for dancing. But particularly had his great disco-hits «Amada Mia, Amore Mio» (1977), «Mucho Mucho» (1978) and «Bamba Dadam» (1978) were popular and were issued by the label «New Polaris». In the songs of *EL PASADOR* was felt some gypsy spirit...

In 1978 West German Quartet *CHILLY* was created on the initiative of the producer Bernt Möhrle at first it was a Studio rock-disco-project. The based compound of new group was formed by popular scheme 2x2: two white keys – Ute Weber and Werner Sudhoff, two black – Andrea Linz and Oscar Pearson. Almost all the musicians and arrangers on the album recording *CHILLY*

involved with other projects by Frank Farian (Gilla, *BONEY M.*, *ERUPTION*). Also they used a powerful «voices» of the man's vocal pieces performed by Brad Howell (who, incidentally, was the author of certain compositions *CHILLY*). Ute Weber was the second real voice (all women's vocal parties). The project was recorded on the label «Polydor International GmbH». During the six years of the project under the name *CHILLY* they have got six «numbered» albums – **For Your Love** (1978), **Come To L.A.** (1979), **Showbiz** (1980), **Johnny Loves Jenny** (1981), **Secret Lies** (1982), **Devil's Dance** (1983). All albums had decent success.

Since 1977 in France it was gradually formed the own national school disco, the most typical representatives of which can be considered a singer Dalida (real name is Yolanda Christina Gigliotti), *VOYAGE* (music producer – Roger Tokarz, a major record label – «Sirocco Records»), *BELLE ÉPOQUE* (the founders of this women trio is a composer and music producer Albert Weyman and his sister a singer Evelyn Lenton, in the 1960's she worked with the record company «Barclay Records» and acted on «warm-up» of many famous rock bands, particularly such as *THE ROLLING STONES* and *THE BEATLES*. The trio released a single 12-minute disco-nonstop «Bamalama», compiled from new tunes and songs that Evelyn Lenton sang back in the 1960s her performance was filmed for the new year programs in France, Holland and Germany, and in a few months it was show by Soviet TV in the Christmas edition to the program «Melodies & Rhythms of Foreign Estrade». The basic LP *BELLE ÉPOQUE* is **Miss Broadway** (1977), **Bamalama** (1977), **Now** (1979). The major record labels – «Carrere» and «EMI». Also it should be noted the French group *ROCKETS*. In the US the album was produced by the label «Tom N' Jerry Records» under the name «Tom' n 'Jerry's Rockets». It is important for disengagement of the Detroit rock'n'roll band under the same name. *ROCKETS*, whose members are known for their image of «aliens from space», held the scale show with a cascade of special effects. *ROCKETS* can be attributed to «Space Rock-Disco» as double subgenres. From 1976 to 1983 Claude Lemoine was the producer of the most successful releases. The founder of Belgian techno-project *TELEX* is a former DJ and a member jazz-rock group *COS* Marc Moulin, the

major labels – «RKM», «Disques Vogue», «Virgin Records». The band's debut album **Looking for Saint Tropez** (1978) contains one of the first published in the global recording exclusively electronic dance compositions – the international hit «Moskow Diskow» (*Techno-Pop*). The German group KRAFTWERK also had an influence on *Kraut-Disco*. Although the self-consciously technological KRAFTWERK are not normally associated with disco, recordings such as «Trans-Europe Express» were popular with many DJs. PUSSYCAT (1975-1985) was a Dutch pop group from the Netherlands, driven by the three Kowalczyk sisters: Toni, Betty and Marianne [6]. In 1975 they recorded their first big European hit with the song «Mississippi». BACCARA is a female vocal duo formed in 1977 by Spanish artists Mayte Mateos and María Mendiola. The pair rapidly achieved international success with their debut single «Yes Sir, I Can Boogie», which reached number one across much of Europe and is one of the best-selling singles of all time. A successful follow-up single («Sorry, I'm a Lady») and European tour led to a number of album releases, numerous television appearances and the duo's selection to represent Luxembourg in the Eurovision Song Contest 1978 [7].

The term «Pop Music» is broader in scope than the term «Rock Music».

On the one hand, the concept of «Popular Music» and «Pop Music» are correlated as a whole and part, and the other hand is quite different phenomena, where there is a visible correlation: Pop Music is part of Popular Music; Rock Music is part of Pop Music. All this gives a reason to believe that disco music is not only a part of pop music, but takes its own sector in rock music. It is following that no musical, but the communicative aspect of disco is crucial. Disco intruded into the life of the company, acts deep. Since 1965 on the basis of social protest the so-called «Underground Pop Music» emerged. Until the early 1970s in the U.S., the rock was a single organized musical communication. The late 1960's – early 1970's it is positioned as an aesthetic revolution – the period of the revival of audiovisual art [8]. After the groups born in the 1970's, knowing as already media a new sound of the music & dance revolution, nothing in the world could not remain unchanged.

In general, the *Disco Culture* is defined as a complex, dynamic, multidimensional phenomenon of socio-communicative nature, with roots in popular culture... It's a great communications, but may be copyright infringement.

The digital-information revolution XXI century has changed the disco society nowadays. But we cannot ignore some of the legal issues connected with the digital restoration of phonographic *Disco* rarities.

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Надійшла до редакції 18.11.2015