

Love and Subtractive Synthesis

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“... and then the filtered signal goes to its ADSR envelope and then to its output.” Jenn was showing me her analog synthesizer design, carefully mapped out on a giant sheet of butcher paper, swiped from the art room. “And you have to use a separate mixer to get the final signal but that’s okay since I can use the one you got me for Hanukkah.” She’d been practically shaking with excitement all day, or at least since 7:45, when we met to hang out before homeroom. At 3:00, I discovered her waiting for me outside my Physics class; apparently, she had faked a bathroom emergency to get out of Economics early. Her excitement grew geometrically since then: her cheeks were brightly flushed and she only paused for a breath after every third sentence. “Oh!” She jerked her hand from mine to point at a precisely drawn line on her diagram. “And also, oscillator one can be used as a modulator for oscillator two.” After pausing for a moment (for the first time all day!) she turned to look toward me, her eyebrows raised questioningly.

I grinned. “Cool.” Her face blossomed into a radiant smile and she tackled me to the carpet with a big hug and a wet kiss.

I carefully watched my steps as we walked through the front gate. The morning was chilly; Jenn warmed me by squeezing me tightly and herself by talking about her synthesizer. “And I found some good temperature-stable resistors in a catalog from Germany... oh, and Daddy says we can use his soldering station so we’ll have two and we can work on it together, and—” Jenn stopped abruptly and took a step back. I looked up at 200 pounds of 19-year-old senior, commonly known as “Jared.”

“Hey, Linus!” My name isn’t Linus. “You and Junn-ifer here totally have my vote for Prom King and Queen.” He continued without pausing, “Or is it Prom Queen and Queen?” He chuckled at his un-spontaneous cleverness. I glared over my glasses at his blurry head for a second, then looked down at his shoes: unnecessarily complicated-looking Nike cross-trainers.

“Thanks Jared,” I muttered. Jenn and I separated and stepped past him.

“Hey, wait a second!”

I sighed and spun around. “What?” Jared’s fist was coiled back; it hovered there a minute, then sprung forward into my stomach. I fell down.

Prom Night arrived quickly. I rang her doorbell at 7:00 sharp and her father greeted me at the door. “She’ll be down in a bit,” he told me. “Have a seat.”

I sat in the living room, grinning nervously at Jenn’s dad. I had no reason to, I realized—I met him almost a year ago, and I’d had dinner at Jenn’s house several times. I relaxed a bit and looked at the hardwood flooring. “So how’s school?” he asked.

“Uhm, okay, I guess. A.P. tests are coming up...”

“They are indeed—which are you taking again?”

“Physics, calculus and English.”

“Aha, excellent. I’m happy that my daughter found such a bright fellow as yourself. You remind me of myself when I was your age: sharp

and hard-working.”

“Thank you, sir.” I cleared my throat.

“Say, would you like to smoke a doobie with me?”

“What?”

“Ah, here’s Jennifer.” I turned to see Jenn stepping down the staircase. Her hair was pulled back in a ponytail, and she was wearing a grey sweatshirt and plaid pajama bottoms. Her feet were bare.

“Hi.” She smiled.

“Hi.” A half-hour later we were seated across from each other in the basement, looking over a cheese pizza, two two-liter bottles of Coke, and an assortment of electronic parts.

“You want to work on the VCOs?”

“Sure.”

We worked without a break all evening and well into the morning, passing schematics and pizza back and forth, and snorting at each other’s jokes. By 2:00, we had built the basic components—oscillators, filters and amplifiers—all that was left was to put them together. At 4:00, we gathered our work and crept upstairs to Jenn’s room. She sat on the edge of her bed, bouncing anxiously while I ran cables from our synthesizer to the mixing console, and from that to my viola amplifier. “Ready?” I asked.

“You do it,” she said, bouncing faster than before. I flipped some switches and watched the LEDs glow red. Licking my lips, I carefully pressed one the controller’s plastic keys. A banshee-like wail screamed from the amplifier. Jenn squealed and leapt from the bed, once again tackling me with a hug and kiss. We played Gary Numan songs for about half an hour before finally collapsing into sleep.

“. . . unh hunhn unh unh huhn.” Jenn squirmed frantically on her flowered bedspread while I carefully lapped at her pink slit. At the same time, my right hand fumbled with a condom we’d swiped from her dad’s room. “Oh oh God mmmnf. . .” She’d been panting and shuddering with pleasure all afternoon, since we found ourselves in an empty house. At 3:00, the sunlight that poured in through the window, making us sweat, finally coaxed us awake. After pondering her parents’ weekend work schedules, she whispered that we were alone. In no time, we had undressed each other and were busy kissing and fondling. Her excitement grew exponentially since then: a deep flush was spread over her neck, chest and breasts, fading into her cream-colored complexion just above her pink nipples. She was breathing rapidly, occasionally gasping for air. “Oh!” Her hips jerked up at my face and her thighs clenched together. After shaking for a few moments, she relaxed her hold on me and I climbed onto the bed next to her. She looked at me and smiled, and I also looked at myself, in the reflection of her glasses. “I love you.” Sliding her hand down my arm, she took the still-unapplied condom from me and carefully unrolled it over my erection. Her legs snaked around my waist and we both sighed as I pushed myself into her.

I removed my glasses, gazed at the incredibly beautiful swirl of fair skin, pink lips and chestnut hair in front of me, and lightly kissed the corner of her mouth. “I love you, Jenn.” Her face blossomed into a radiant smile, and she squeezed me with her inner muscles and silenced me with a wet kiss.