

## Blending Katajjaq and Electronic Dance Music in Tanya Tagaq's "Uja"

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Canadian singer-songwriter Tanya Tagaq employs a solo adaptation of the Inuit throat-game duet *katajjaq* in her musical style, fusing the vocal techniques of her traditional culture with elements of electronic dance music (EDM) and experimental pop. This paper explores how Tagaq's adaptation both preserves and modifies the periodic rhythmic structures of *katajjaq* through close analysis of "Uja" from her 2014 album *Animism*.

In "Uja," a 4/4 meter is established with percussion instruments, and vocal parts complement rather than contradict this meter. Even in isolation, the vocal parts would suggest a periodic meter rather than freer (but still periodic) improvisation. The overall formal structure also reflects the norms of EDM, as the textural density process follows typical structures in that genre. However, in other songs, Tagaq's *katajjaq* does reflect an improvisatory attitude, and other instrumental parts embrace this aesthetic. Similarly, in her live performances of "Uja," improvisation in both vocals and instrumentation is plain, and the EDM structures mostly absent, leading one to question what musical elements truly constitute the song itself. Perhaps, like the cultural practice that inspires her, Tagaq is more interested in the game of music-making, rather than in fixing a particular song in our collective memories.