

Follow your Fire Found Fresh by Fan Favorite

Consider any given movie theatre. Most movies are either sequels or spinoffs. Consider any given cereal aisle. Most options are either some mix of two types of cereal or an original cereal with some bizarre twist, for example “Cap’n’Crunch Oops! All Berries”. Consider any given car dealership. Are there really any all new cars, or are they all just typical cars with some small addition, like back seats that fold automatically. Almost all aspects of life feature a surprising lack of what may be considered typical originality, and music is no different. A large portion of songs produced are covers, remixes, samples, etc. Many bands feature other artists in their songs, which can be considered a form of mashup even. Since so many songs nowadays can be traced back to inspiration from other previous songs, should they then be considered unoriginal?

Dance remixes fit into a specific category of music that many people consider somewhat “unoriginal”. The remixes that fit under this category typically take the structure of some original song and switch up the beat, instrumentation, pitch, tempo, etc. until the song is upbeat with forward momentum. People who do not particularly like this genre of music are quick to dismiss it as somewhat lazy, but what is not being considered in that accusation is the rhetorical situation of the production of such songs. The speaker, audience, context, and sometimes even topic of a songs remix can be completely different than that of the original song. The song Follow Your Fire, by Kodaline was remixed by a popular dance artist Syn Cole, which gave the song a completely new meaning. The difference in the two songs is a great example of how the same song can represent two separate ideas from two separate artists for two separate audiences.

Before delving into the songs themselves and how they differ, it is important to acknowledge the two separate artists and their backgrounds. A bands reputation can greatly influence how their music is likely to be received by their audience. The original song Follow Your Fire is written by the band Kodaline. Kodaline is an alternative band from Ireland that is known for their upbeat feel good songs. The band has a very clean reputation and is seen by much of their fanbase to be determined and hardworking due to their slow climb to fame. Although the official genre of the band is alternative, the members started out as more of a modern rock band, and have also produced some more pop leaning hits. Kodaline is by no means a new band, but they have only put out three full length albums, making their audience potentially more accepting to new ideas. As the type of music they have been producing is somewhat broad, Kodalines fans will be likely to follow along as they grow and find their sound.

Syn Cole, the artist of the Follow Your Fire remix, is a dance artist from Estonia that is known for his electronic dance music (EDM) beats. He is not very widely known, but his fans expectations are clear. Coles music is usually typical dance beats, so his fans are looking for something upbeat that moves, giving him a little less freedom with what he produces in comparison to Kodaline. Although he could potentially venture into other genres and retain some

fans, most people that listen to him know what they want to hear, and if they do not hear that they will leave. These reputations and audience expectations are one way in which the original song and the remix are already set up to work differently from each other. Before the songs even came out, they were set up to be accepted in a certain way by each artists respective audiences.

Kodaline and Syn Cole clearly differ greatly in many ways, making it no surprise that their versions of the song Follow Your Fire sound drastically different. The way that Kodaline wrote the song seems sentimental and nostalgic. The lyrics of the song tell the story of a teenage couple on top of the world. Each verse describes specific scenes of high school love, like carving each other's names into tree bark, or stealing a parent's car and driving around all night. After all of the reminiscence of the verses, the chorus asks the question "did you follow your fire?", bringing the reality that this perfect couple ended many years back. The idea of the song is more or less "you always had so much potential, I hope you chased every dream". Kodalines song is personal and relatable, sounding positive yet having an underlying melancholy heart which is underlined with the slower speed yet somewhat energetic chorus.

The remix of the song made by Syn Cole has the exact same words as the original, but it seems to put the emphasis on slightly different lyrics, giving the tune a new light. Syn Coles version is a bit faster paced, making the verses appear to go by fast, and function more as build up to the choruses than their own important pieces to the song. This deemphasis of the verses consequently takes away some of the personal effect of the detailed lyrics that Kodaline had put in place. All of the specific accounts of teenage love that Kodaline had outlined are overlooked and somewhat stripped of meaning as they take the back seat to the beat of the song. The chorus of Syn Coles remix is, as stated, the same lyrics, but without the background nostalgia of the verses, they seem far more positive. Phrases like "We had the songs that we sang along to, you had the moves to make me dance with you, I always saw you reaching and catching stars" show pure and happy sentiments, unburdened by the inevitable end. With an intense dance beat underneath, the listeners are less likely to pay attention to the lyrics of remixed songs such as this one. As dance listeners, most of Syn Coles fans will probably be listening more to the sound of the song, whereas Kodalines fans may want to look a little deeper at the lyrics.

Obviously the two songs are going to be drastically different in essence as one of them is a chill alternative song and the other is a fast-paced dance song, but the difference is not as simple as turning the metronome up a couple clicks. The music itself can trigger emotional responses based on the alignment of lyrics with beats, and both Kodaline and Syn Cole have displayed this in their own ways. Kodaline used a slower more relaxed tune to create a nostalgic mood, while Syn Cole was able to turn that around and establish a more happy go lucky vibe with a movable beat. Both artists were also able to successfully assess their audience and create something that their fans would be pleased with. For Kodaline, the process was most likely a simple one, consisting in taking some creative liberties and calculated risks to produce an alternative song that their audience could vibe with. Syn Cole on the other hand took

Kodalines hit song and his own prior knowledge of successful EDM tracks to add more elements that would make his new tune more attractive to his specific audience.