

## **CREATIVITY (Capital C) has been hijacked by the artists**

Think of the scholar as a medium. Think of the scholar as a postproduction medium. What does it mean to be an avant-garde scholar tuning their instrument so that they can then BECOME something like a meta-medium? Remix theory takes the inherent properties and the possibilities of the new medium (the Internet) as its basics and not the properties of the specific media it incorporates or reflects upon (be they textual or sound- or image-based). In this regard, think of the scholar as a kind of remixological filter. Even THIS is a kind of generative remix performance where the scholar selectively samples from and filters or manipulates the data as a way to open up more creative potential. The power of remix lies in its selectivity, the filter it imposes, where the 'author' becomes a 'remixer', the remix an object of interaction. The philosophy of the remix is essentially 'rhizomatic', the methodology collaborative and processual, focused on the added value of the various media in the communication process. The remix as concept and practice is not new; new are the increased possibilities and the ease to share and recombine media in the digital environment in a collaborative manner. Notions of authority, originality and authenticity get challenged in remix theory, where the remix is a collaborative crowd effort, the reception point is only one part in the process of information and culture transmission and the producer becomes the consumer and vice versa.

One can observe however how over the course of history the media that scholars work with may change but the assortment of potential trajectories scholars follow tend to stay the same. This serves to show the strength, the reach and the impact notions of stability, authorship, and authority (echoing the rhetoric of printed publications) still have within the digital environment. In reality, the authority of the author is thus not challenged. Does the Internet and its online social networking apparatus open up potentially new trajectories for scholars to "make history"? It already has ... but not to the degree it still needs to in order to usher in a dramatic shift in the way we position both the scholar and the scholarly work in contemporary network culture. This serves to show how even in our explorations of the new medium, it is very hard to let go of the kind of essentialist notions that we have inherited from the rhetoric of print publications. There are some 'knowledge practices' we have adopted and grown accustomed to, such as authorship, stability and authority. Digital and online media offer the potential to increasingly critique these notions where thinking a knowledge system beyond these notions increasingly seems to become a practical reality. Remix is a liminal concept in this way; it stands on the border of these customary ways of thinking. It shakes them up. It poses a potential crisis.

Here's a question: if we are all scholar-mediums, how do we trigger novel states of creativity? Remix Theory can be seen as a new way to critically think the potentiality of the book, as a way to think beyond the book, as a strategy to explore its multiple potentialities, to challenge established notions like stability, identity and materiality that are all bound up with (printed) books and at the same time with our current conception and practice of knowledge. Remix is a cultural and a political phenomenon, it can be seen as a resistance against essentialisms. It can be used as means to critique the essentialist doctrines at work within the Humanities. Remix Theory can be a framework to question issues of authorship, stability, authority and originality within these disciplines and within science at large, just as much as it has

been a framework to question these in for example music, art and poetry. Finally, the way it mixes theory and practical methodology, and the way it mixes media can be seen as both a commentary on and an inspiration for the (digital) humanities. And although, as we have argued before, it does not fundamentally challenge or alter these concepts, it is a (necessary) step in the right direction, towards a more fluid conception of the humanities. Remix theory is a strategy to explore its multiplicities.

Scholars always have to develop and reconfigure their SENSE of measure over time. Exactly how DO scholars or hackers or creative remixers develop a sense of measure over time? The remix scholar whose sense of measure enables them to BECOME a postproduction medium sampling from the vocabulary of critical thought is what we would call A CONTEMPORARY THEORIST. By re-claiming creativity for the scholar as their birthright we can begin to open up the neural pathways to prophetic illumination.

We need new ways of expanding the narrative of the monograph in a 'remixed' manner or fashion. The stable form of the text-based version gets challenged by the input of 'foreign' elements, be they from other narratives, other voices or other discourses. For the contemporary writer as interdisciplinary media scholar the lyrical conceptual poetic narrative movements come in wildly assorted forms everything from dance to cinema to performance art to the scribbling of pen or pencil on paper. This enables the postproduction scholar to intuitively mirror the neuron activity of the ones who came before, something that feels like a deep interiorization of someone else's creative rhythm mediumistically syncing with whatever filters one turns on at any given time during the remix performance. These elements are then inserted (or not really 'inserted' as they have increasingly been part of the creation process from the start) into the narration in a continual manner, melting together into a new never-ending ever-updateable 'form'. We can also go beyond these categorizations, where there is the possibility to include all forms of experimentation in one 'digital humanities project' or 'publication': a web-based wiki-shaped networked narrative.

Will this be the future of digital scholarship in the Humanities? How would a contemporary remixologist divining their own just-in-time context for the compositional playing field of the moment jump-start a renewable tradition made out of all of the "renewable energy sources" (i.e. scholar-mediums) signaling from the past / present / future? All three forms of experimentation still offer the possibility to create or extract a 'solid form', a stable published text, whilst at the same time they give an increased insight into knowledge creation, into the process of Humanities scholarship and communication as it grows and forms and gathers strength and form. In this way these experiments form a beautiful bridge between product and process, between the old and the new, between print and digital, holding on to the best of the print past and the possibilities of the digital future. "How can artist-researchers developing new practice-based initiatives in remixology turn the immediate future into a renewable source of 'energy' that fuels their unconscious readiness potential?" Monographic experiments as a new monographic potentiality.

This is why remixthebook - which this composition samples from - is our attempt to cross-contaminate Process Theory with Creativity or creative class struggle -- and believe us, if you are a contemporary scholar, no matter what your financial situation, you are suffering through creative class struggle. One of the things remixthebook

plays with is how scholars use networked and mobile media technology to discover forms of writing that MAY introduce new patterns of meaning. The acknowledgment of the constructivist nature of stability urges us to conduct a closer analysis of the structures underlying our knowledge and communication system and how they are presently set-up. Just like stability, fluidity is an ideal type, just like openness, it is a rhetorical stance. Within an information environment it can be seen as a paradox; although information might flow, knowledge inherently needs some form of objectification or stability to be called knowledge. True liquidity is thus an impossibility, fluid knowledge is an impossibility, and, at least in our definition of the term, fluid texts are an impossibility. We can only ever achieve quasi-liquidity. This impossibility to achieve real liquidity should however not be seen as a failure, as it still has rhetorical power. As rhetoric it helps us deconstruct the structures of our object-oriented knowledge systems and it enables us to experiment with a way of thinking and practicing that (performatively) challenges these preconceptions and helps us to think and create them differently.

Unless you're a fatalist, then we should at least consider the aesthetic functions of the scholar as remix performer. It's important to keep in mind this idea of remix performance as a kind of structured improvisation, because it's this "always live" PERFORMANCE that enables the remix scholar to ride the wave of intuition. Think of the remixologically inclined performance scholar as a novelty generator, someone who positions their aesthetically fit energy bursts as an intervening sense of measure to be reckoned with. Could we say that the contemporary scholar AS remixologist or provocateur of postproduction art, EMBODIES what it means to FEEL aesthetic? Let's face it, scholars are always sampling and manipulating other scholars SENSE of measure and this is how they create a formal aesthetic over time. In remix theory the remix is seen as a process, an activity, a verb; it is a process of constantly renewing, building upon and modifying mediated and reworked cultural materials. In this process new creative work is produced: the remix. The remix occurs in a stratified structure, no longer linear but multilayered, hybrid and liquid. The remix is a collage, it combines various elements to build something new. Remixing is part of our digital culture, it is essential to our creativity and one of the main contemporary composing practices

For now we are still in the race but these scholars were the ones who taught us how to haunt the texts that came before us even as these same texts haunted us back. Memory is a form of context shaping, it determines the meaning we attribute to scholarship: we see a repetition of the past in the creation of the new. The mystery and unclear meaning of the texts is in this case what makes it meaningful to the viewer as interpreter, as 'meaning-searcher'. As a practice-based remixologist filtering the meta-perturbations of Source Material Everywhere the scholar as postproduction medium choreographs an ongoing structural improvisation projected from the deep interior sense mechanisms of other scholar-agents autopoietically postproducing a novel togetherness that reconfigures the world into yet more renewable energy that doubles a source material seducing us into our next remixological becoming. The vacuum of meaning creates potential: it creates a space for interpretation and functions as a reflection of our search for patterns and meaning. It thus offers a meta level in a way, similar to what abstract art does: it is about the search for meaning, about wanting to discover the secret context and inherent patterns in the structure of the text, like in a way abstract art is a reflection on art itself. Patterns are the new real

of our society. The visionary scholar always gyrating at pivotal locations throughout the narrative becomes a multitude of flux identities and transformations nomadically circulating within the networked space of flows. This idea of the content creator as the real medium, putting things on its head in a way, literally incorporating and mixing the different media into one single communication expression, in whatever format, could be a nice fit for thinking about what a post literate content producer should be able to do. Success in this area of practice-based research could lead to the scholar becoming a valuable postproduction medium running

... at full speed, in all directions, into the memory, into the future, into the data of the present, to grasp the unexpected, the luminous, stupefying, connections.

But let's say that you are a "creative writer" or net scholar or live A/V performer or interdisciplinary "code-smith" who accesses all available source material to cobble together your new work of conceptual sculpture. This triggers the question: Is an object finished when it at the same time constitutes a building block for another object? How would we determine the variance of value for each of these outputs? How would we differentiate the stylistic tendencies of scholars who remixologically inhabit a multitude of multi-media forms of language and how would we measure the value of their work as postproduction mediums? Experiments with new way of conducting and publishing monographs in an open manner, like for instance via liquid books or wiki monographs, might be a first step away from an object-oriented approach focused on a finalized product, towards a publishing system based more on constant, collaborative and simultaneous knowledge production.