

## *A Remixed Story of Stray Cinema: The Lecture Machine*

Dan James (Dan Untitled)

In April 2011, I performed a piece entitled *A Remixed Story of Stray Cinema*, in which I streamed live video for an online audience<sup>1</sup> and for an onsite audience in Barcelona.<sup>2</sup> My collaborator Michelle Hughes had videotaped herself giving a talk, and she sent me this footage in advance of my performance. In the first section of the piece, the audiences (online and onsite in Barcelona) saw Hughes' discussing the origins of Stray Cinema.<sup>3</sup> After playing back her pre-recorded video to the audiences, I cut in additional material and remixed the video live. In the remixed section I unveiled a sub-plot - a love story that had developed between Hughes and another filmmaker Ryan A. Lloyd.<sup>4</sup>

*A Remixed Story of Stray Cinema* can certainly be seen as a performance piece in its own right, but it is important to bear in mind that the piece was initially created for a very context-specific set of audiences (as I shall expand in due course). I do not focus here on addressing the piece as an isolated performance *per se*, but on locating and discussing the piece as a glimpse or snapshot - a *performative iteration* of a much wider project. While the narrative content of the piece itself was relatively easy to grasp (conveying the genesis of a project, followed by unveiling a love story), the performative implications of *A Remixed Story of Stray Cinema* are much more nuanced, complex and layered. These nuances are not readily apparent in viewing the performance itself, but they sit in relation to the critical issues inherent to the broader Stray Cinema project.

At the outset, it is important to note that *A Remixed Story of Stray Cinema* was a hybrid of networked performance and audiovisual remix performance. As such, the piece could be potentially analysed according to those modes of cultural practice. In this paper, however, I would like to focus my investigation on another layer of hybridity - hybridising performance with the delivery of a lecture.

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<sup>1</sup> The online audience watched live at <<http://www.straycinema.com>>.

<sup>2</sup> The onsite audience were attending the Stray Cinema screening event at a university venue in Barcelona. I will provide more specific details about the context when I discuss it in the section 'Performance and the Lecture Machine' below.

<sup>3</sup> This video can be viewed at <<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9dTj-FXe5sc>>.

<sup>4</sup> With regard to my definitions in the introduction of this thesis, it is worth noting here that Hughes uses the two terms 'remix' and 'mashup' in an apparently interchangeable manner with her phrase "remix me, mash me up". Although I had no control over what she said in the footage she recorded, I do stand by her choice of words, because I think that my tenets of what constitutes a mashup still hold in this case. As opposed to the broader term 'remix', a product is more specifically a mashup if there is prior recognisability of the source material, and if the new product involves the modification and recontextualisation of the work of others. Although the source sampled (Hughes' talk) would not be recognisable as a cultural product to the general public (video footage of her talk was captured specifically for my performance and was not available in the public domain prior to my performance), the material would still be recognisable to the audiences watching the piece, because in the chronology of the piece itself the audience would have seen the material played unadulterated before I remixed it. I mixed the (by that point recognisable) footage of Hughes' talk with a number of other sources. The audience would be unlikely to have ever seen Hughes and Lloyd's own wedding photos prior to seeing the piece, but even seeing them for the first time they are instantly recognisable as wedding photos.

Like all performance, *A Remixed Story of Stray Cinema* was a highly context-specific piece. In order to provide any depth to this discussion, I need to offer some contextual information from a number of different angles. Since Stray Cinema is a pioneering project in the open source film movement, the project itself needs to be located within that broader sphere of creative practice. I will overview and discuss this field in the section entitled 'Open Source Film'. Since this paper discusses a hybridisation of performance and lecture, I need to provide additional context for my own other work that hybridises lecturing with performance. I will discuss this in the section entitled 'Lecture as Performance'. Finally, I need to locate the broader contexts that this particular performance/lecture traverses. I do not solely represent myself here, I collaborate with others in my work on this project. The piece itself was simultaneously offered for our online community and also for an onsite audience in Barcelona. The onsite audience encountered the piece as part of a public programme through a university in Barcelona. There are a lot of different contexts and subject positions traversed, and I will discuss these issues in the section entitled 'Performance as Lecture Machine'.

During the first two sections I will predominantly provide context from creative practice. In the third section, I will provide additional practical context, but I will also explore how a performative iteration such as *A Remixed Story of Stray Cinema* might expand the performance paradigms of Jon McKenzie. The term 'performance' can mean different (but overlapping) things when it is applied to cultural outcomes, to organisations, or to technology. McKenzie analyses these divergent meanings of the term in his research. In *Perform or Else*, McKenzie posits the notion of the 'lecture machine' to describe hybridised iterations where cultural, organisational and technological performance are all at play at the same time. Since *A Remixed Story of Stray Cinema* is such a hybridised iteration, McKenzie's framework will form the basis of my discussion that closes this paper, analysing the imperatives faced by such hybridised performances, and the key critical issues that arise.

## Open Source Film

Written in 1999, Eric Raymond's essay/book *The Cathedral and the Bazaar*<sup>5</sup> is commonly cited as a manifesto for the open source movement. The text primarily addresses software engineering methods (based on the development processes of the Linux kernel), but Raymond's writing seminally positions open source as more than simply a file sharing methodology. First and foremost, open source is described as a philosophy - it starts with individual vision, but then this vision is amplified through the effective construction of

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<sup>5</sup> The full title of the text is *The Cathedral and the Bazaar: Musings on Linux and Open Source by an Accidental Revolutionary*. The title of the text is commonly abbreviated to *CatB*. This material was first presented at the *Linux Kongress* in 1997, and it was published in written form in 1999. Raymond's text itself is updated on an ongoing basis through the website <<http://www.catb.org>>, and is currently at version 3.0 at the time of writing.

voluntary communities of interest. Open source is a movement that is increasingly applied to other disciplines - the philosophy does not only apply to software developers. The essential underlying principle (in any context) is that if source material is shared freely, then others can develop and build upon the products that were initially created, making derivative products, variant versions and so forth. It is well outside the scope of this research to discuss the broader impact and critical issues surrounding the open source movement as a whole, but to date the term has been applied in fields ranging from biotechnology<sup>6</sup> to religion.<sup>7</sup> While there are numerous interesting examples in other creative disciplines such as music,<sup>8</sup> I will focus here on open source film projects.

The genesis of the open source movement in film was a documentary project released in 2002 called *Dancing to Architecture*.<sup>9</sup> The project centred on the *This Is Not Art* (T.I.N.A.)<sup>10</sup> festivals which are held annually in Newcastle, Australia. The raw material for *Dancing to Architecture* documents "over 140 hours of interviews, presentations and workshops, events, exhibitions, performances and time-lapse recordings."<sup>11</sup> This raw material was uploaded to the project website, where it remains available for anyone to download and use.<sup>12</sup> The project team created their own 25 minute edit of the footage - a piece which offers a chaotic and anarchic audiovisual impression of the festivals, narrated by a text-to-speech voice.<sup>13</sup>

In 2004, the road trip movie *Route 66*, was launched by the German netlabel V.E.B. Film Leipzig. As with *Dancing to Architecture*, *Route 66* and all source footage were made available for free download on the netlabel's website.<sup>14</sup> In 2006, more open source films were launched: the animated short film *Elephant's Dream* and the feature-length comedy *Boy Who Never Slept*.<sup>15</sup> The film and all source files were also released for free download for both *Elephant's Dream*<sup>16</sup> and *Boy Who Never Slept*.<sup>17</sup> *Elephant's Dream* is open source

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<sup>6</sup> See, for example, Jefferson, R. (Fall 2006). "Science as Social Enterprise: The CAMBIA BIOS Initiative". *Innovations 1* (4): 13-44. doi:10.1162/itgg.2006.1.4.13

<sup>7</sup> See, for example <<http://www.opensourcereligion.net/>>.

<sup>8</sup> One key local example of the open source methodology/philosophy applied in music is the Wellington electro musician/producer Module's album *Pattern.Dot.Life* (2008). There are three stages to this project. With Version 1.0, Module released a live album (with remix kits available for people to freely download, enabling them to create their own remixes of his music). For Version 2.0, Module will release an album featuring studio versions of his compositions, along with ten selected remixes uploaded to the project website during 2011 by participants. The third (upcoming) stage of this release is set to be another live album and DVD release at some point in the future, but this is currently on hold due to the artist's other commitments (in personal communication: email correspondence with the artist). The project's official website is (<<http://www.patterndotlife.co.nz/>>).

<sup>9</sup> The full title of the project is *Dancing to Architecture - A Motion Picture about T.I.N.A.* The official project website is <<http://www.minskimedia.com/projects/dta.html>>.

<sup>10</sup> The official website for the T.I.N.A. festivals is <<http://thisisnotart.org/>>.

<sup>11</sup> <<http://www.minskimedia.com/projects/dta.html>>. The downloads are licenced under a Creative Commons attribution licence.

<sup>12</sup> The source files are available at <<http://www.minskimedia.com/projects/dta-archive.html>>.

<sup>13</sup> <<http://www.minskimedia.com/projects/dta.html>>.

<sup>14</sup> <<http://vebfilm.net/free/>>. The source files are licenced

<sup>15</sup> The film itself can be accessed by members to the site here: <http://moviepals.org/boywhoneverslept>. The raw footage can be downloaded from <http://moviepals.org/solomons-corner/boywhoneverslept/watch-and-download-free-movie-bwns>

<sup>16</sup> The movie and source files are available at <<http://www.elephantsdream.org/download>>.

in an additional sense from the other films - in this case they entirely used open source graphics software in the film's production.<sup>18</sup>

While all of these films were open in the sense that the source files were made available alongside the completed films, none of these projects allowed for the open and participatory processes to play out *before* the production team had completed their own version of the film. One ambitious project founded in 2006, however, aimed to enlist participatory processes at all levels of the production, starting at the funding for the project itself. *A Swarm of Angels* (fig. 7) aimed to enlist 50000 members ('angels') who each contributed £25, generating a budget of over £1000000 for the film's creation. These members were then allowed to collaborate in key creative processes such as scriptwriting, music composition, modelling, and the film crew itself was also to be recruited as much as



Fig. 7: *A Swarm of Angels*, concept/preproduction image, 2006.

possible from the membership base.<sup>19</sup> While the project had contributors and advisors who already had high profiles as public figures,<sup>20</sup> it generated substantial media attention and it won awards in the first two years after its launch,<sup>21</sup> *A Swarm of Angels* has not recruited more than 1000 members to date, so no film has yet come into fruition from the concept.

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<sup>17</sup> The movie and source files are available at <http://moviepals.org/boywhoneverslept> for logged in members of Movie Pals.

<sup>18</sup> The film was predominantly created using the 3D software suite Blender, and a number of additional free and open source platforms. Some audio was processed using Reaktor, and the final copy was rendered on a cluster running Mac OSX (both of which are proprietary), but the entire graphics production was done using Blender.

<sup>19</sup> <http://www.zdnet.com/blog/social/a-swarm-of-angels-crowdsourcing-film-production/118>

<sup>20</sup> *A Swarm of Angels* was founded by Matt Hanson, who also founded the widely successful Onedotzero film festivals (<http://www.onedotzero.com>). Amongst the advisors were the blogger, journalist and science fiction novelist Cory Doctorow, the graphic novelist Warren Ellis, and the musical mashup producer/performer Eric Kleptone (of The Kleptones).

<sup>21</sup> *A Swarm of Angels* won the R&D/Innovation category of Britain's *Digital Elite* awards in October 2007, and won 2006's *Next Big Web Thing* award.



Fig 1: Video still from Stray Cinema raw footage filmed in London in 2005.

As Hughes notes in her talk, the first round of raw footage for Stray Cinema (fig. 2) was filmed in 2005 and released online in 2006. This places Stray Cinema amongst the world's first open source film projects. Like *A Swarm of Angels*, Stray Cinema engages with participatory processes from the outset, releasing the raw footage into the public domain before the directors of the footage have created their own cut of the film. The unique facet that distinguishes Stray Cinema from any of the aforementioned early open source films is the fact that we hold events to culminate each round - navigating the project out of the online world into our real-world screening events. At these screening events, the top community-created submissions (as voted by our online community) are screened alongside the director's own cut. The first Stray Cinema screening event was held in London in 2007,<sup>22</sup> and there has been one more completed round of Stray Cinema since the London round. Raw footage was filmed in Barcelona in 2009 by Raúl Broceño and Roger Caubet, and that round closed with the screening event in Barcelona (28 April 2011, see below for some additional contextual information). The latest round of footage was announced at our Barcelona screening event during my performance *A Remixed Story of Stray Cinema*, and

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<sup>22</sup> The event was held at Ditch Bar in Shoreditch. At the screening event, the top five films were screened alongside Hughes' director's cut, and there were also performances by bands (including a networked performance by my audiovisual band Anaesthesia Associates: my collaborator Paul Bradley performed online, and I performed onsite in London).

this raw footage is scheduled for public release in September 2011. While the other two rounds offered raw material towards short films (that were yet to be completed in each case), in this new round the footage comes from a feature-length film that has been completed but not yet publicly screened.<sup>23</sup>

Over the years, Stray Cinema has built up an online community of participants from more than 25 different countries. The project was not founded as an educational resource *per se*, but at various points it has also been variously integrated as a major component of the curriculum for tertiary level courses at universities in Barcelona,<sup>24</sup> New Zealand,<sup>25</sup> and Iowa.<sup>26</sup> Our online community ranges from people having a go for the first time, to film students, to industry professionals. The underlying principle of the project is that anyone can have a go and participate.

Numerous other open source film projects have come into fruition since the movement began in the early 2000s (and the list keeps growing - the movement is gaining momentum). It is beyond the scope of this research to attempt to survey each and every one of the open source films that I am aware of since Stray Cinema launched. I would, however, like to close this section of the discussion by briefly highlighting one project in particular, since it addresses remix in both creative process and in subject matter. The Canadian documentary filmmaker and new media director Brett Gaylor is the founder of the video remix community *Open Source Cinema*.<sup>27</sup> Built on this remix community, Gaylor began filming and inviting remixed contributions towards his documentary film *R.I.P.: A Remix Manifesto* (2008).<sup>28</sup> Gaylor structures this documentary with a recurring case study of the renowned musical mashup artist Girl Talk,<sup>29</sup> but he also interviews luminaries in the field such as the lawyer and Creative Commons founder Lawrence Lessig, the musician and Brazil's former Minister of Cultural Affairs Gilberto Gil, the blogger, journalist and science fiction novelist Cory Doctorow and others. The focus of this documentary is to raise the scope of the issues surrounding remix as a cultural form, and as the title suggests, to offer a manifesto about the cultural right to remix. The film is notable because it addresses remix as subject (it is highly informative and thorough in its discussion of the key issues), but also because it engages with remix and open source processes for its own creation. In order to create *R.I.P.: A Remix Manifesto*, source footage was uploaded to the *Open Source Cinema* website, and participants were encouraged to create their own edits of this material. Excerpts of the edits uploaded by contributors were then re-integrated back into the final edit of the film. All of the source material remains available for ongoing remix. As such,

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<sup>23</sup> Ryan A. Lloyd's feature *Beginning, Middle and End* was completed in 2010.

<sup>24</sup> The Open University of Catalonia.

<sup>25</sup> Victoria University College of Design.

<sup>26</sup> Iowa State University College of Design.

<sup>27</sup> The website for this online community is <<http://www.opensourcecinema.org>>.

<sup>28</sup> This film can be viewed and/or downloaded free (or 'name your price') at the project website <<http://www.ripremix.com>>.

<sup>29</sup> Girl Talk is the performance name for Greg Gillis.

*R.I.P.: A Remix Manifesto* gives an informative lecture on the subject at hand (remix), but it also puts the creative processes in action.

## Lecture as Performance

I think it is safe to say that I have never attended a lecture where the speaker used the same tone of voice that they would normally use in a face-to-face discussion - giving a lecture is an inherently performative exercise. Further, if someone is invited to give a public talk, then it is a fair assumption that they have some level of experience and expertise in the subject they will discuss. When Hughes gives a talk about the story of Stray Cinema, for example, she occupies a position of authority on the subject - she is the project co-founder and co-producer. Because the speaker assumes a position of authority, there is an inherent power dynamic at play in any public talk. As such, a lecture is a performance. The speaker plays a role, and they address their audience in a manner that is (hopefully) suitable to the situation at hand. The speaker also performs an iteration of power and/or knowledge on a given subject.

The examples I am about to offer are located as hybrid performance/lectures. In making this distinction, I do not mean to imply that normal lectures are not performative (I have just identified that this is not the case). Rather, I make the distinction because this performativity is *implicit* with normal lectures, whereas with the pieces outlined below, this performativity is rendered *explicit*. In these pieces, the lecture, as a mode, becomes a cultural iteration of performance.

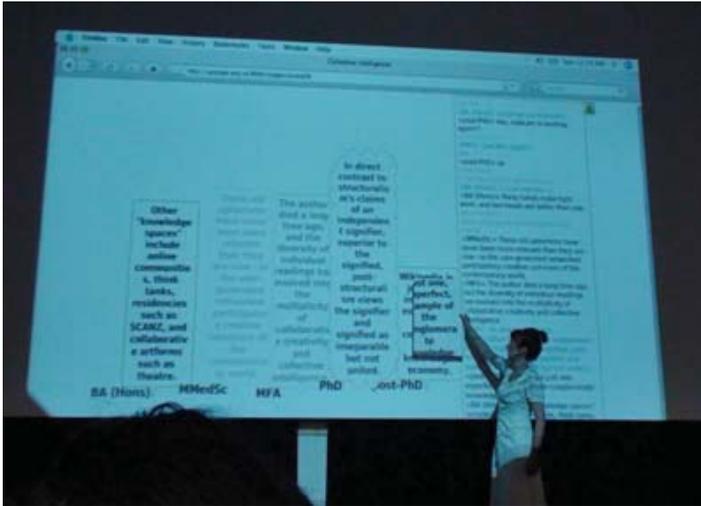
During 2008, I was invited to join a panel discussion called *Shareware: The Online Subject*, in which there were four onsite speakers (myself included).<sup>30</sup> In response to the invitation (and the subject matter), I suggested that I should bring along some additional online presences for the occasion. I arranged to have a video projection in which different characters appeared behind me (and the other panelists) as avatars in the UpStage platform.<sup>31</sup> The online participants were Jamieson and Smith (my collaborators for the UpStage festivals, from Brisbane and Harihari, where they were respectively based at that point) and also another UpStage regular, Tara Rebele (contributing from Georgia, U.S.A.). These online contributors were akin to the misbehaving students one might find at the back of a classroom - the artists kept piping up and playfully challenged and undermined whatever I said. I had disabled the UpStage sound for this presentation, but their comments appeared in text form as speech bubbles.

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<sup>30</sup> The panel was chaired by Dr. Geoff Stahl, and the other onsite panelists were Anita Brady and Lalita Rajasingham.

<sup>31</sup> *Shareware: The Online Subject* took place at the Adam Art Gallery in Wellington (16 August 2008). The panel discussion was presented in conjunction with the exhibition *The Subject Now* (26 July - 5 October, 2008).

In a more recent piece, working together with a group of collaborators based respectively in Harihari, Brisbane, Georgia and Mexico City, I was an online performer for the hybrid performance/lecture *Enacting Collective Intelligence: A Hybrid Mashup of Theatre and Theory* (2009, fig. 2).<sup>32</sup> In this Dada-esque parody of academia, a number of people gave simultaneous lectures about different subjects - all at the same time. Each of the



performers typed in their text comments online, and this text was spoken aloud onsite by their projected avatar (using text-to-speech). An onsite performer (Jamieson) attempted to channel the content that was being delivered - she spoke with the tone and demeanour of a normal lecturer, attempting to make sense out of content

that became increasingly fragmented and nonsensical.

Fig. 2: Helen Varley Jamieson, Vicki Smith, Dan Untitled, Tara Rebele and Miljana Peric, *Enacting Collective Intelligence: A Hybrid Mashup of Theatre and Theory*, 2009 (performance still of Jamieson onsite in New Plymouth).

The tone was markedly different for each of these two performance/lectures. As part of the panel discussion *Shareware: The Online Subject*, I spoke with the normal tone that one would expect of a guest speaker at a public discussion forum - I contributed to the discussion wherever and however I saw fit, and I responded to any questions asked. Jamieson and Smith, however, tried to complicate, problematise and subvert my discussion however they saw fit. I could see their commentary on-screen in front of me too, but because I was focused on talking with and listening to the other panelists, I could not pay close attention to what they were saying. I simply gave my perspective on the issue at hand, but I could see the audience laughing while I said things that were not all that funny. The contributions of the online participants was not solely subversive - their presence actually served to reinforce my discussion about the nuances of online subjectivity. They

<sup>32</sup> *Enacting Collective Intelligence...* was presented to an onsite audience at the Govett Brewster gallery in New Plymouth, 8 February 2009.

playfully undermined whatever I said, but in doing so, they educated the audience about what online performance is like, and thus reinforced my subject matter. I was discussing the fluidity and multiplicity of roles in online performance, and that is precisely what these online contributors enacted.

While *Shareware: The Online Subject* was framed as a public discussion, the piece *Enacting Collective Intelligence...* was directly framed as performance (in a cultural sense), but this performance enacted the mode of delivering a lecture. We scripted the first part of the piece so that Jamieson (onsite at the venue, reading out our textual prompts) made sense, and gave a coherent introduction to the 'talk'. This semblance of order soon dissolved into anarchic chaos, with numerous voices all speaking at once in a cacophony, followed by an animated image of an aneurysm. After this cacophony, there was a period of stillness (with relatively little textual input), followed by a coherent conclusion. In the first presentation, I was performing the *role* of public speaker (and others subverted/reinforced what I said), in the latter piece, we all collaborated to perform in the *mode* of a lecture.

To further complicate the issues at play, for each of the pieces I have described (and in a few other performance/lectures not detailed here), it is interesting to note that in each case it has been a collaborative effort. As such, I do not solely speak/perform from my own subject position, I enact and represent numerous people, who occupy numerous different subject positions.

### Performance as Lecture Machine

According to Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari, humans are considered to be processual machines, forming assemblages and relations with other machines, and evolving to create new forms. These formations that occur strongly influenced the hactivist and performance scholar Jon McKenzie's conception of a 'lecture machine', a term he uses to refer to "any system that processes discourses and practices, any assemblage that binds together their words and acts, or, alternatively, that works to disintegrate their bonds and erode their forms and functions".<sup>33</sup> Lecture machines provide integrated iterations of power and knowledge that traverse and hybridise cultural, organisational and technological performance. The Internet as a whole is a good example of a lecture machine; it is an incredibly complex citational network of discourses and practices, conflicting but yet coexisting paradigms of knowledge.

In this section I will discuss how complex the hybridity can be in a lecture machine - cultural, organisational and technological performance each have their own cluster of imperatives at play, and in some instances these imperatives can be at odds with one

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<sup>33</sup> McKenzie, J. *Perform Or Else: From Discipline to Performance*. London, Routledge, 2001, p. 21.

another. In McKenzie's own text, the key example he analyses is the 1988 launch (and subsequent tragic explosion) of the Space Shuttle Challenger. In that instance the cultural, organisational and technological imperatives at play were at odds with one another. Different parties focused on their own area of expertise, but since the underlying imperatives of these specialist groups were in conflict, important factors were overlooked (leading to the disastrous outcome). In investigating the performance imperatives at play in my own work, I will start with a seemingly simple notion, where one party collaborates with another to produce a cultural outcome.

As with the performance/lectures outlined above, Stray Cinema is a collaborative - project right to the core. I have collaborated with Hughes for a number of years (since I joined the project team in 2007<sup>34</sup>), working on the project through a number of twists and turns since. We now identify ourselves as co-producers of the project. While Hughes directed the video footage for the 2006-2007 round (in the film industry sense of the term 'director'), we do not direct the aesthetic content of the films in our current roles. Beyond basic guidelines for submissions, we do not place limits on what is uploaded to the project website. Nor do we decide what is screened at the screening event (our community decides by voting). In our roles as co-producers, then we act as facilitators for the project as a whole. As such, we are responsible for Stray Cinema's cultural performance, in that we frame the concept and public presence of the project as a whole. While we do make aesthetic decisions about what each new round of raw footage will be,<sup>35</sup> we do not dictate the aesthetics of each of the individual videos submitted.<sup>36</sup> The performance of Stray Cinema in a cultural sense is deeply interrelated with the project's organisational and technological performance (with issues such as the upkeep of the website, and the complex technical facets of the screening events). As such, Stray Cinema is a lecture machine, facilitating new formations of subjectivity to come into being at every twist and turn.

At each step along the way, the fundamental challenge that Hughes and I keep returning to is the question of how to retain accessibility for our audience. If we want our audiences to participate, they need to be able to access and understand the material at hand. We need to keep our public profile (the text on our website, press releases, and so forth) simple and easy to understand, even though the underlying issues at play are actually rather complex. Stray Cinema pivots on the fact that people from all walks of life are accessing the material and participating. The project is thus underpinned by the imperative that these people all

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<sup>34</sup> In the early days, Hughes invited me to a role as technical logistics manager for the London screening event in 2007, and she had the hybrid role of director (of the first footage) and producer (of the project as a whole).

<sup>35</sup> After Hughes' own initial round of footage in London, the Barcelona footage was decided upon by proposal. Lloyd's new Melbourne footage took the phrase 'by proposal' to whole new levels.

<sup>36</sup> The project is geared to appeal to established filmmakers, film students, and any other people who want to have a go and make a cut. As such, the aesthetics (and the technical calibre) of the different films uploaded by participants varies significantly.

need to be able to get their heads around the project (no matter what their background or level of expertise), in order that they might continue wanting to participate.

The 2011 Stray Cinema screening event was part of a public programme called *Open Cinema Week*, which was held at the Open University of Catalonia in Barcelona (hereafter U.O.C.<sup>37</sup>). As such, there was another layer of collaboration at play beyond my co-production collaboration with Hughes. Dr. Antoni Roig<sup>38</sup> invited me to work with him to organise *Open Cinema Week*, and we each developed different facets of the public programme. There was a day in the programme dedicated to the Stray Cinema screening event, but the *Open Cinema Week* also included screenings of student work and talks by Antoni Roig and Joan Carlos Martorell.<sup>39</sup> In an organisational capacity, Roig made the arrangements on the Barcelona end, and I prepared whatever I could contribute from New Zealand.

My role in preparing the public programme focused on formulating what would happen for the Stray Cinema day itself, but I prepared three different contributions to the proceedings overall, each delivered live-to-web from New Zealand. On the evening of 27 April,<sup>40</sup> I gave a more general lecture about audiovisual remix performance practices in New Zealand. For the screening event itself on 28 April,<sup>41</sup> I screened Hughes' *Story of Stray Cinema* in its entirety and then remixed it live. I also played a mashup D.J. set as an afterparty to the screening event.<sup>42</sup>

It should be readily apparent that there are numerous performance issues derived from McKenzie's framework that apply to *Open Cinema Week*. A thorough discussion of *Open Cinema Week* in terms of all of the different performance imperatives at play, or even a more focused discussion solely about the imperatives underpinning the Stray Cinema screening event itself, would be far too nuanced an endeavour to attempt here. I would, however, like to make a few key points.

*Open Cinema Week* existed, first and foremost, in order to celebrate and promote dialogue about the open source film movement. As such, the project as a whole was a lecture machine, producing a formation of knowledge about open film. The project was presented for two key contexts: the university audience in Barcelona, and parts of it for the Stray Cinema online community. Both parties were already, to a degree, familiar with the idea of

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<sup>37</sup> U.O.C. is the Spanish abbreviation of the university's name.

<sup>38</sup> Dr. Roig is director of the undergraduate programme in Audiovisual Communication and director of the postgraduate programme in Audiovisual Media Innovation UOC-Digitalent at U.O.C. Roig was another of the invited guests at the *Remix Cinema* workshop at Oxford (where I performed *Breakfast Party at my Studio*).

<sup>39</sup> Martorell is a new media entrepreneur from Barcelona renowned for his short films and web projects. Like Roig, Martorell also spoke at the *Remix Cinema* workshop.

<sup>40</sup> Barcelona time, which was 5 A.M. the following day Wellington time.

<sup>41</sup> As above, this was 5 A.M. the following day for me.

<sup>42</sup> Hughes' original talk (without the remixed section) and an excerpt of my D.J. set have been embedded onto our site here: <<http://www.straycinema.com/screening>>.

opening up film content for participation, and with the more general methodologies of remix. The project, as a whole, was geared towards people who were already interested in the field/subject. They were attending because they wanted more.

Both *Open Cinema Week* and *Stray Cinema* facilitate cross-cultural engagement. Providing free and open access to information is a core part of the underpinning philosophy, so making the information retrievable cross-culturally was a necessary part of the process. Roig is fluent in English, but I can barely speak a word of Spanish, so all of our internal communication took place in English. In order to properly engage our audience, however, all public communication needed to be bi-lingual.<sup>43</sup> When I gave my lecture on 27 April, Roig translated for me onsite in Barcelona. Because of the time delays that are inherent to a webcast video signal (it usually takes about 30 seconds from broadcast to reception), it was not feasible to use a real-time audio feed back from Barcelona, so I had to guess at how long to pause for the translation of each phrase. I was speaking coherently in English, Roig was speaking coherently in Spanish, but sometimes my pauses were too short and information was missed - the audience in Barcelona could only get an approximation of my lecture. We did the best we could, but even at the best of times, lectures will always lose something in translation into another language.

### ***A Remixed Story of Stray Cinema***

With *A Remixed Story of Stray Cinema*, the translation could not take place in real-time. I prepared and added subtitles in advance (translated by a friend in Wellington, and proofread by Roig).<sup>44</sup> Because of my aesthetic tendency towards quick jump-cuts when remixing, I needed to keep it simple and heavily script the flow of information so that the narrative would remain coherent once translated. In that regard, a remix that focuses on narrative continuity and clarity (in this case remixing the story of *Stray Cinema* in order to convey a love story) is quite a different piece from a remix that focuses on musical flows and/or flows of juxtaposed images that may intentionally conflict with one another. In the case of this piece, the parameters were very tight and I needed to strictly adhere to a chosen structure in order to retain coherence for a cross-cultural audience. Conversely, in the case of my D.J. set (the afterparty), the flows were musical, and I did not need to be so prescribed in my approach.<sup>45</sup>

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<sup>43</sup> The online community for *Stray Cinema* comes from about 25 different countries, but since the project is sustained with a website in English, it is fair to assume that most of our participants (the online audience) can be addressed in that language.

<sup>44</sup> The cross-cultural issues get even more complex here. My friend who translated is Argentinan. She is fluent in Spanish, but the Spanish spoken in South America is slightly different from that spoken in Spain itself, so Roig had to make a number of corrections to her translation.

<sup>45</sup> I sometimes (not always) take lyrical content into account in my mixing too (if performing for an English-speaking audience these juxtapositions can be engaging), but this is by no means always the case. Sometimes my musical juxtapositions are deliberately and decidedly absurd.

The issues of translation and cross-cultural retrievability derive from *organisational* imperatives (communicating effectively to our audiences), but these imperatives impact on the *cultural* reception of a performance piece such as *A Remixed Story of Stray Cinema*. My performance in this case was deliberately simple and thematically obvious, because the imperatives underpinning the piece were so complex and hybrid. The piece needed to be understandable in two different languages, I wanted to be informative (retaining but yet subverting the clarity of Hughes' talk), I wanted the piece to promote the project as a whole (and to launch Lloyd's new footage), I wanted to address remix as a mode (enacting the remix process itself for an audience, embodying the ethic of 'tell your own story'), and I wanted to balance my sense of humour with an honest celebration of good things happening for my friends (Hughes and Lloyd's love story). I decided to use the inherent 'cute-ness' of the alternate narrative to subvert the 'lecture-ness'. I used a deliberately over the top tone of voice, and a series of graphics that were reminiscent of a cheesy corporate powerpoint presentation, in order to convey the alternate narrative.

The recent open source film project *R.I.P.: A Remix Manifesto* (outlined earlier in this chapter) is a documentary *about* remix, but it also *is* a remix (in its process, and in the aesthetic form that transpires). As such, it educates the viewer about a cluster of issues inherent to appropriating, modifying and recontextualising creative content, but it also engages a group of participants and enacts these very same concepts. Where *R.I.P.: A Remix Manifesto* was a major international project for the team (which took several years in the making), performance is not the exclusive domain of such major outcomes. Performance equally applies to smaller, more context-specific iterations - it applies to any new formation of knowledge that is iterated. The integration of subject and process is thus equally valid when iterated at a local level, as was the case with *Shareware: The Online Subject*. In that context (a panel discussion at a gallery in Wellington), online performers subverted what I said, but they also enacted and reinforced my subject matter.

*A Remixed Story of Stray Cinema* was first and foremost a lecture. Hughes gave a talk about Stray Cinema, and I remixed the material. By remixing the material, I was conveying a new and alternate narrative (a love story), but more importantly I was enacting the very process of manipulating video material. I intervened into what Hughes had said, but in doing so I reinforced the content too, by *demonstrating the processes at play in video remix*. *A Remixed History of Stray Cinema* was a quick iteration, and it was devised for a specific set of contexts and audiences. Like any lecture, however, audiences should be able to come away having learnt something from someone who has experience and expertise with the subject matter. Like any lecture with substance, the underlying issues may be far more complex and nuanced than how these issues present themselves at face value.