School: School of Creative Industries

Researcher: Lee Scott

Project Title: Opera for Web and Mobile Media

UOA: 34

Research Timeline

Date	Rationale of research activities and decisions undertaken
October 2012 – June 2013	*Precursor work - sKTP: The Opera Group* Researcher undertook the role of associate on a Shorter Knowledge Transfer Partnership (sKTP) between De Montfort University and The Opera Group (now Mahogany Opera). The output of the sKPT was the prototype online opera 'The Imaginary Voyage', a work based upon the navigation 'From Paris to Paris by Sea' in Alfred Jarry's *Exploits and Opinions of Dr. Faustroll Pataphysician.* Please note that 'The Imaginary Voyage' was submitted in REF2014 by Andrew Hugill, and as such is presented in this timeline for context only. http://www.theimaginaryvoyage.com/ (desktop/laptop only).
June 2013 – January 2014	*Opera for Web and Mobile Media - Project scoping* Initial scoping of creative research in digital opera and digital symphonies that led to a refined focus on 'opera for web and mobile media'. A typology of digital opera was constructed during this stage, taking the form of a survey of works that was later organised into five

categories: Digital Scenography; Extended Performance; Mediated Sound, Co-creation, and Opera for Digital Platforms.

January 2014 –
May 2015

The Village - Preproduction and Collaborative Activity

Development of preproduction aspects of 'The Village', including world building, illustration and libretto writing. During this period collaborators were recruited using creative networks (composers), regional open calls (vocalists) and freelancer websites (illustration). The process for collaborative composition of the music of 'The Village' was as follows:

1. Researcher writes libretto and vocal lines
2. Researcher recruits composer collaborators from the UK, the USA, China and Europe. Individual discussions on the context of the opera and the co-creation process take place
3. Opera characters are assigned to collaborators. Collaborators and researcher liaise on the disposition of each character and how this may be expressed through music
4. Research auditions vocalists and records vocal lines
5. Unprocessed vocal lines are sent to collaborators, who are then given time to establish compositional direction
6. Music for episode 1 returned to researcher for feedback
7. Following agreed amendments, researcher sets music to animation. Episode 1 of 'The Village' launches in May 2015
8. Collaborators and researcher continue to generate materials week-on-week for following episodes

May 2015 –
June 2015

The Village – Release

'The Village' is released episodically, one instalment per week. Promotional channels included collaborator networks and social media. Audience evaluation is gathered via online feedback forms, and engagement metrics by a bespoke embedded data capture system.

http://www.thevillageopera.com/ (desktop/laptop only, Flash required)

November 2015   *Blog Post for ASMR University*

The use of ASMR (Autonomous Sensory Meridian Response) in 'The Village' to voice 'Harmony' attracts the interest of Dr Craig Richard, founder of ASMRUniversity.com. Researcher participates in an interview to discuss the role of ASMR in the opera, as well as his personal experience with the phenomenon.

Scott, L and Richard, C (2015) Creative researcher merges ASMR with opera [blog interview]. ASMR University Blog. Available at: https://asmruniversity.com/2015/11/29/asmr-digital-opera-the-village/

January 2016   *Capturing The Village - Seminar Talk*

Presentation on data capture techniques deployed in 'The Village' as part of a seminar series hosted by the Centre for Creative Computing at Bath Spa University.

January - July 2016   *ASMR Performance Tool*

Researcher develops a tool using Processing that aims to structure a process for directing the performance of ASMR practitioners (either in person or remotely). The tool intends to offer a means for composers to more easily work with ASMR as a means of generating affect, while not overly limiting the creative flexibility of the ASMR practitioner. The tool is trialled using a single voice artist.

The performance tool is included in this research timeline to address difficulties when creating 'The Village' of translating compositional intent to ASMR practitioners. In the wider context of opera for web and mobile media, the researcher positions the mediated ASMR voice as a potentially rich new mode of operatic expression in which headphone reproduction is – as is the case in the ASMR YouTube community - likely the preferred method of delivery.

The development and initial outputs of the ASMR performance tool were communicated in the Fourth International Conference of the Performance Studies Network at Bath Spa University in June 2017. A programme for the event is available at https://psn2016.files.wordpress.com/2015/07/programme-extracts-for-website.pdf

January 2017 – June 2019

Fragments – an opera for mobile media

Scoping, preproduction and the prototyping of 'Fragments', a locative opera set and delivered in Bath City Centre. 'Fragments' interrogates affective storytelling in the context of opera for mobile media, focusing particularly on binaural audio and song writing as tools to influence emotional resonance with urban environments (psychogeography).

June 2017

Creating Opera for Mobile Media – ISCC Symposium Paper

Symposium paper on the artistic opportunities and technical limitations of opera for mobile media through the lens of 'Fragments'.

Scott, L (2017) 'Creating opera for mobile media: artistic opportunities and technical limitations.' *In Proceedings of the Third International Symposium of Creative Computing*, 21-23 June 2017, Exeter, pp. 477-484. doi: 10.1109/ISPAN-FCST-ISCC.2017.86.

June 2017

Fragments – We Make Stuff

Presentation on the context of 'Fragments' and it's technological framework in the We Make Stuff seminar series, hosted by Bath Spa University's Media Convergence Research Centre.

Scott, L (2017) 'Fragments'. We Make Stuff: Digital Materialities and Digital Storytelling Workshop, 28 June 2017, Burdall's Yard, Bath, UK.

October 2017   *Finding Lucy Yesterday – Elastic Spaces*

This presentation for the Third International Elastic Spaces Symposium provides an overview of how binaural sound in 'Fragments' is used to situate the interactor in the past. Component media for the opera (e,g. video flashbacks) were also auditioned.

Video recording of talk available at
http://www.elasticspaces.hexagram.ca/lee-scott/

Scott, L (2017) 'Finding Lucy yesterday: temporal dislocation via binaural sound in the mobile opera, Fragments'. Elastic Spaces Third International Symposium, 11-13 October 2017, Bath Spa University, Bath, UK.

December 2017   *Voyages in Creative Computing and Digital Opera – Public Lecture*

Public lecture on digital opera, with a specific focus on creative practice within the field of opera for web and mobile media. Invite by Centre for Creativity, History and Identity in Performance at Wolverhampton University.

Scott, L (2017) 'Is that a thing? Voyages in creative computing and digital opera'. Centre for Creativity, History and Identity in Performance: Public Lecture Series, 7 December 2017, Wolverhampton University, Wolverhampton, UK.