

Memorative signs and material constituents: Live media practice and the activation of popular music

In response to the working group call this year, I am sharing developments in a current strand of research, aspects of which were presented as part of the interim event in April. Here, I explored music as a 'memorative sign' (Rousseau in Boym 2001: 4); specifically how different modes of nostalgia related to a sonic past could be activated through live media practice - mixing sound, image, object and text - in the present. The focus for this presentation was working from Boym's two strands of nostalgia, 'restorative nostalgia' which 'stresses *nostos* and attempts a transhistorical reconstruction of the lost home' and 'reflective nostalgia' which 'thrives in *algia*, the longing itself and delays the homecoming – wistfully, ironically, desperately' (2001: xviii). Experiments so far indicate that both approaches have some value in evoking and holding affective and nostalgic states through and within a live media space.

In developing these approaches, I am now focusing on a more detailed consideration of what the live media mode of activating popular music does. Van Dijck claims that in listening to music, 'memory will be enabled and constructed through its material constituents' (2009: 114). As such, the variety of technologies and modes I employ, both to play and play with popular music in my live intermedial practice, will be considered, according to how each 'enables' and 'constructs' memory. Equally, I will consider how these 'material constituents' and modes of activation create 'spaces between individuals and communities' where 'memory gets shaped and negotiated' (117) as part of the live media event. As such, this is a mixed mode presentation, including elements of live media practice, which are framed through exposition of the ideas surrounding the development of the research, as indicated above.

References

Boym, S (2001) *The Future of Nostalgia*, New York, Basic Books

Van Dijck, J (2009) 'Remembering Songs through Telling Stories: Pop Music as a Resource for Memory' in *Sound Souvenirs: Audio Technologies, Memory and Cultural Practices*, Amsterdam, Amsterdam University Press

Technical Requirements

Projector, sound system, table for equipment

Jo Scott is a live media practitioner-researcher and lecturer at the University of Salford. Jo completed her practice-as-research PhD project at the Royal Central School of Speech and Drama in 2014. Her research interests are the role and actions of the live media performer, the distinct nature of intermediality which is composed and activated in real time and the creation, activation and experience of the events created through live media modes of practice. Jo has presented her practice-as-research in a range of forms and at various events and symposia, from London to San Francisco, and is now focusing on publishing in relation to these interests.