

Editorial Introduction

Elizabeth Garber & León De la Rosa-Carrillo
Past Editor Guest Editor

The *Journal of Cultural Research in Art Education*'s volume 32 features a group of three articles on the topic of remix and another seven on a range of critical cultural topics in contemporary art and visual culture and its education. The editorial for the remix mini-theme, penned by guest co-editor León de la Rosa-Carrillo, suggests remix as a way of thinking about the workings of cultures (past, present, diverse across ethnicities, races, nations, genders, abilities and interests, beliefs, and other factors that contribute to the weaving of cultures and their many derivations) that involves active and knowing re-creation. León dynamically brought to life for colleagues and faculty many of the concepts of remix during his time at the University of Arizona, and fills out the editorial background on remix for this issue.¹ Following this, readers will find an overview of the seven articles outside the theme, but still very much in the center of this journal's focus on cultural studies research. But first, remix.

The mini-themed issue from Volume 32 of the *Journal of Cultural Research in Art Education* focuses on Remix, which reminds me of two passages from Mark Amerika's *Remixthebook* (2011, locs. 2062 & 2199) where the author forgoes any sense of detachment and announces what he is reminded of by his own writing. But regardless of what Amerika recalls it is his very act of recalling, and calling attention to it, what has since become an essential part of how I understand remix and, it occurs to me, an adequate point of departure to talk about

1 Readers interested in remix will enjoy (yes, enjoy) the experience of reading Dr. de la Rosa-Carrillo's very visual dissertation, *On the Language of Internet Memes*, an intelligent and playful look at internet memes such as image macros and animated GIFs made by students. He analyzes these productions through remix theory, actor-network theory, object oriented ontology, and glitch studies, arguing that internet memes can be understood as an actor-network in which the elements of memes come to interact among themselves, aside from human interplay. The form the dissertation takes moves from scholarly written word to remixed images in providing readers with more than an understanding of these concepts, but with experiences of remixing digital memes.

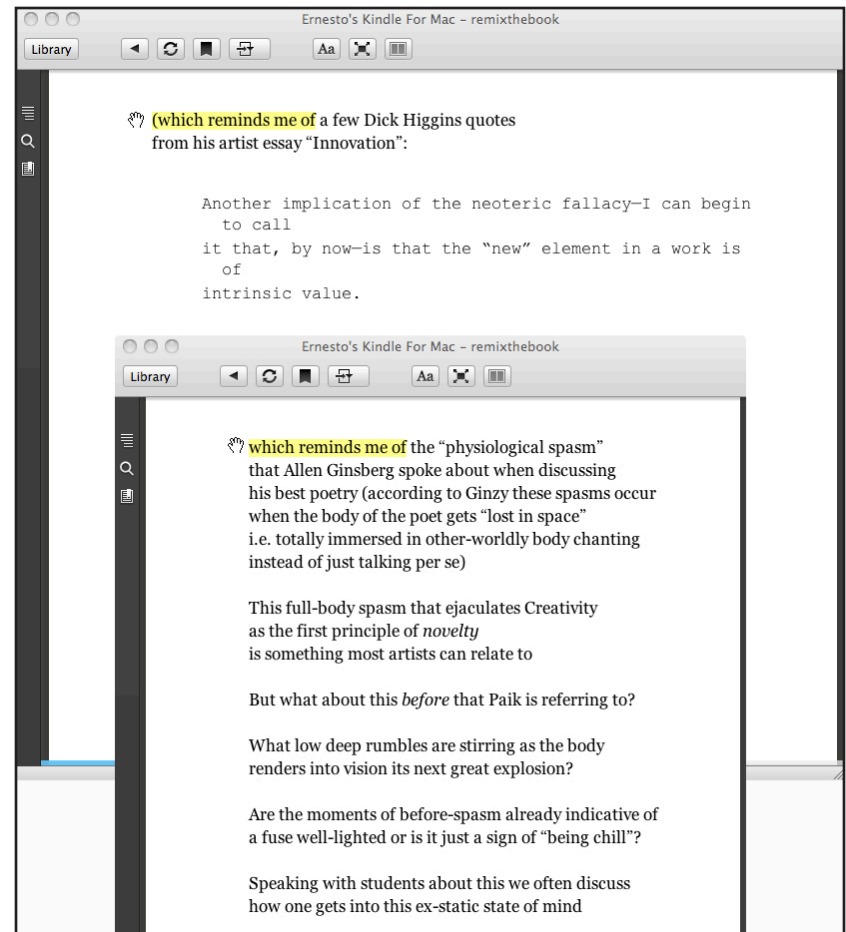


Fig. 1 Amerika, 2011, locs. 2062 & 2199.

remix in terms that might prove relevant to this journal. I think of remix as a practice of active remembrance, brought about not only by engaging and rearranging existing pieces of culture (songs, advertisements, lesson plans, civilizations) but by recognizing in them—being reminded of—the universe of references and potential relationships that each artifact holds within. When I remix, the resulting, new creative blends I make (Knobel & Lankshear, 2008) respond to embedded influences, actualize implicit relationships and attest to this very process both in form and content. These are of course the type of remixological endeavors that the socially networked Web 2.0 has turned into an everyday practice (Caplan, 2014) by virtually collapsing each

Remix means to take cultural artifacts and combine and manipulate them into new kinds of creative blends. Until recently, it mainly referred to using audio-editing techniques to produce “an alternative mix of a recorded song that differed from the original...taking apart the various instruments and components that make up a recording and remixing them into something

Like no other technology before it...

even the laptop and tablet - the phone is a mobile remixological machine. Every user is an everyday remix-artist, a VJ, DJ, slam poet. Every moment is a network performance. Every time the phone boots up the performance starts. Every App a cue to remix. Even without a human object connecting and conducting the performance, streams of data and imag(in)ings flow. Words collide in dialectic images. Algorithms on far-away servers generate samples for the remix performance. Ads flash across the screen, Likes alert and Shares notify. Software preferences arrange the samples and

Fig. 2 Knobel & Lankshear, 2008, p.1

reference, every point of departure and all content into an endless stream of posts, hashtags and trending topics. Remix then, it seems, is but a click or a keyword

Fig. 3 Caplan, 2014, Remix section

search away. But remix is by no means wholly dependent on digital technology, social media nor the algorithms that fuel them, rather when Rome remixed Greece (Manovich, 2005) the resulting empire was a blend of manipulated customs, mythologies and ideals that embodied an active and dynamic remembrance of Greek culture.

We can find precedents for this “remixability” – for instance in modern electronic music where remix has become the key method since the 1980s. More generally, most human cultures developed by borrowing and reworking forms and styles from other cultures; the resulting “remixes” were to be incorporated into other cultures. Ancient Rome remixed Ancient Greece; Renaissance remixed antiquity; nineteenth century European architecture remixed many historical periods including the Renaissance; and today graphic and fashion designers remix

Fig. 4 Manovich, 2005, p.1

Similarly Ferguson, in his Everything is a Remix (2012) video series, equates Remix to a type of folk art that

anybody can engage through a Copy-Transform-Combine process. His quick look into Led Zeppelin’s well-documented penchant for lifting riffs and lyrics from old blues songs speaks to the nature of remix as a process that shows through even when uncredited and, arguably, unintended. In this case, even if Zeppelin meant for these compositions to pass off as wholly original, the songs themselves reveal their source material and can’t help but shine a light on every blues tune that the band ripped off, or channeled, or actively recalled during their writing / remixing sessions.

2:26 - 2:27	Back to Zeppelin.
2:27 - 2:31	By the mid-1970s Led Zeppelin are the biggest touring rock band in America,
2:31 - 2:35	yet many critics and peers label them as
2:35 - 2:36	rip-offs.
2:36 - 2:38	The case goes like this.
2:38 - 2:41	The opening and closing sections of “Bring it on Home” are lifted from a tune by Willie Dixon
2:41 - 2:44	entitled — not coincidentally — “Bring it on Home.”
2:48 - 2:52	Performed by Sonny Boy Williamson
2:52 - 2:56	“The Lemon Song” lifts numerous lyrics from Howlin’ Wolf’s “Killing Floor.”
3:08 - 3:13	“Black Mountain Side” lifts its melody from “Blackwaterside,” a traditional arranged by Bert Jansch.
3:17 - 3:20	(Traditional, Arranged Jansch)
3:20 - 3:27	“Dazed and Confused” features different lyrics but is clearly an uncredited cover of the same-titled song by Jake Holmes.
3:27 - 3:31	Oddly enough, Holmes files suit over forty years later in 2010.
3:40 - 3:44	And the big one, “Stairway to Heaven” pulls its opening from Spirit’s “Taurus.”
3:44 - 3:46	Zeppelin toured with Spirit in 1968,
3:46 - 3:49	three years before “Stairway” was released.
4:04 - 4:08	Zeppelin clearly copied a lot of other people’s material,
4:08 - 4:10	but that alone, isn’t unusual.

Fig. 5 Everything is a Remix with subtitles, 2011

Bradshaw and Bergstrom, whose article opens this mini-themed issue, make note of a similar instance when one of the authors recognizes a song from the '80s even through it's a new, remixed guise that her 15-year-old daughter believes to be new. This particular song's remix however claims much older source material as Bradshaw is then made to recall a similar experience with her own mother regarding the same song originally, it turns out, from the '60s. As Bradshaw and Bergstrom struggle and get tangled up searching for the significance of remix as a practice, a philosophy, and a concept their article splinters into two columns, each voicing one author and allowing readers to perform a remix of their own as they dart from one side to the other examining the arguments that each writer advances and the anecdotes they tell.

Wolfgang and Ivashkevich's article is a visually engaging piece that focuses on the sense of agency afforded to remixers by appropriating and rewriting consumer culture. Not only do the authors share a handful of collages and video mashups generated by teenage girls during a juvenile arbitration program, but they also offer their own feminist readings and reactions to these pieces of remixed content adding yet another layer of messy complexity to the remix process. The work by Wolfgang, Ivashkevich, and their teenage learners brings into focus a significant aspect of remix culture: the inherent fluidity of the line that separates a media producer from a consumer of mediated messages. Lessig (2008) has coined the notion of an RW culture where

ning of human civilization), ordinary citizens “read” their culture by listening to it or by reading representations of it (e.g., musical scores). This reading, however, is not enough. Instead, they (or at least the “young people of the day”) add to the culture they read by creating and re-creating the culture around them. They do this re-creating using the same tools the professional uses—the “pianos, violins, guitars, mandolins, and banjos”—as well as tools given to them by nature—“vocal cords.” Culture in this world is flat; it is shared person to person.⁸ As MIT professor Henry Jenkins puts

Fig. 6 Lessig, 2011, p.28

readers are just as likely to become *writers* by developing the necessary skills, engaging the available tools and immersing themselves in an environment that encourages remix.

Denmead's article, which closes out the remix-themed portion of this issue, explores yet another aspect of remix culture, as he revisits notions of community that once shaped his own practice as an art educator. In remixing Greene's seminal *Releasing the Imagination* (2005) with Pope L.'s *Skin Set* (2013) he creates a new text that is equal parts found poem and DJ-inspired literary mix that propels the source material into previously unrealized depths of interrelational complexities. Perhaps this is what Miller (2004), a DJ and an academic himself, means when he asks for two turntables and offers a universe in return.



Which reminds me of the universe of Fig. 7 Miller, 2004, pp. 126-127 cultural research in art education that exists beyond remix. A universe that this JCRAE issue samples in the form of seven other articles that explore non-remix themes but can equally be remixed if readers choose to. Happy remixing.

Outside the active and knowing employment of the remix theme, Manisha Sharma, in her article “Mythical Beings and Becoming,”

and Nurit Cohen Evron, in “Stories of Becoming an Art Educator,” both provide research on becoming art educators from, respectively, Indian- and Israeli-influenced perspectives. Sharma interviewed 17 art educators in India to understand the influence of social constructions of gender on the educators’ decisions to join the profession. These stories are analyzed through Barthes’ theoretical concepts of myths as originary stories—she describes the myth of *Laxmana-rekha* as an originary story of gender in India—and Deleuze and Guattari’s idea of becoming as an endless state. Cohen Evron revisits her own becoming as an art educator based on personal, professional, and institutional experiences amidst the continuing conflicts within and around the borders of Israel. She describes how these experiences come to bear on teaching art as critical pedagogy.

Cala Coats presents a case study of a community of makers who turned a decommissioned missile base into an art and community space and a residence. Far beyond the description of the work, she helps us understand the space and the social relations of the participants through Guattari’s three ecosophies, the psychic, the social, and the environmental. “Transversalizing Ecologies of Control” is accompanied by Coats’ images of the re-purposed base.

In “The Spaces in Which We Appear to Each Other,” Cathlin Goulding presents resistance stories of Asian American Riot Grrrls through their zines. The zine authors (including Goulding) examine identity and self, gender norms, stereotypes of Asians, mixed-identity and racial binaries, white privilege, invisibilities and hyper-visibility, language and family, and social in/justice. Goulding argues that zines are a type of pedagogy that foster active voice and self-learning in makers and teach fellow zinesters and readers in an informal yet penetrating manner, through text and visuals.

Ruth Smith worked with Somali women living in the Midwest to deepen understanding of the wearing of hijab. The five women made photographs and wrote narratives that show their process of decision in choosing if and when to wear hijab. Smith’s article on this participatory action research project, “Dumarka Soomaaliyeed Voices

Unveiled,” is accompanied by the women’s photographs and narratives. She argues that, when exhibited, they activated public space to interrupt misperceptions of Somali women and presented multiple stories through which to understand women and modesty in Somali culture.

Kay Kok Chung Oi created five paintings about prostitutes and prostitution in early Singapore that were shown in an exhibition in Singapore. The paintings were interpretations of a scholarly work on the subject by historian James Frances Warren. In her article “Art as Exhibition,” she provides a context for understanding what the paintings have to teach us about the cultural contributions made by these immigrant women from China and Japan to building Singapore and the personal sacrifices involved. Reproductions of the paintings accompany the text.

Rounding out this issue is Mary Stokrocki’s article on a case study of San Carlos Apache students’ visual responses to a prompt she gave them to share their “special mountain home.” Place, animals, and sacred ceremonies were found to be culturally derived themes, whereas inclusion of a pick-up truck, fishing and hunting scenes, and domestic and social life suggested slow social change.

Volume 32 is a strong sampling of cultural aspects of research in art and visual culture education today, with several articles enhanced by theoretical analysis that helps us not only deepen our understanding of issues important to our field but to re-think them. The issue is also strongly visual, indicating a very positive trend in our field to incorporate the visual elements of what we do.

I have enjoyed working closely with each author and her/his ideas and research process over my three years as Senior Editor and look forward with excitement to where our new Senior Co-Editors, Karen Hutzler and Ryan Shin, will take the journal. It has been a privilege to work with León de la Rosa-Carrillo as Guest Editor in developing this issue. *JCRAE* is supported by an active and insightful Review Board whose work contributes to making scholarship represented in this

issue critical. Layout for this issue is the work of León de la Rosa-Carrillo (also Guest Editor): profound thanks to him for this undertaking. Thanks to University of Arizona Interim Director Martina Shenal for support of Managing Editor Chun-Chieh Chen's position and to *jCRAE's* parent organization, USSEA, and especially President Alice Wexler, Past President Steve Willis, and the USSEA Board for their support of the journal. A continuing thanks to readers for their interest in and support of cultural research in art education. We invite your contributions, and hope you will join or renew your membership with USSEA at ussea.net.

References

- Amerika, M. (2011). *Remixthebook* (Kindle ed.). Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- Caplan, P. (2013, October 19). *Everyday Remix - Remix* [App-Book]. Retrieved from <http://www.theinternationale.com/everydayremix/#remix>
- Everything is a Remix with subtitles. (2011, November 22). Retrieved from <http://www.amara.org/en/videos/1YEplHRVXz2/en/9204/>
- Ferguson, K. (Director). (2010) *Everything is a Remix* [Video Series] USA. Available: <https://vimeo.com/14912890>
- Knobel, M., & Lankshear, C. (2008). The Art and Craft of Endless Hybridization. *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy*, 52(1), 22-33. Retrieved from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/30139647>
- Lessig, L. (2008). *Remix: Making art and commerce thrive in the hybrid economy* (PDF ed.). New York, NY: Penguin Press.
- Miller, P. (2004). *Rhythm Science*. Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press.