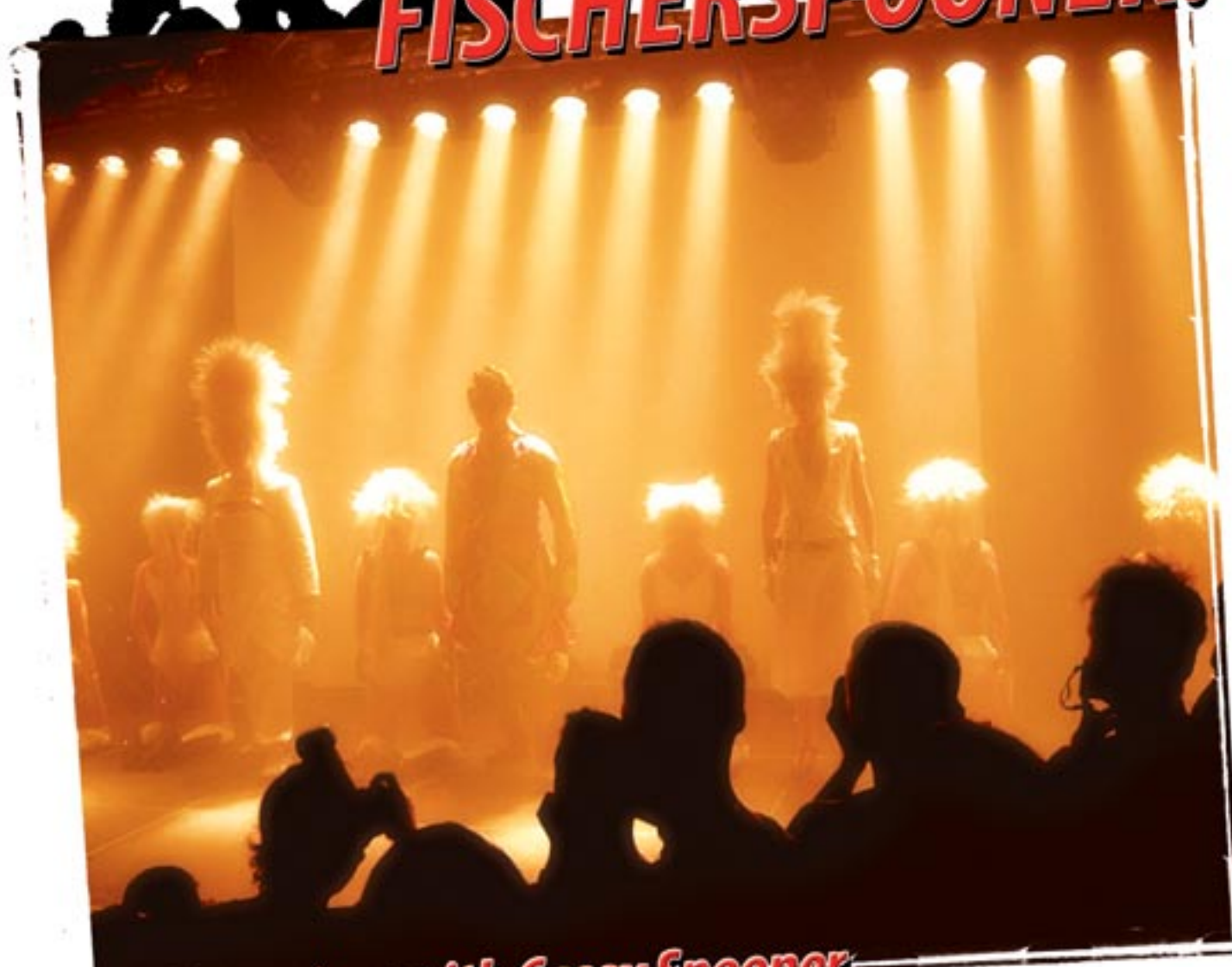


# eyecandy

Spring 2004

{film, digital media, electronic music}

## FISCHERSPOONER!



### An Interview with Casey Spooner

Also in this issue:

*Screenplay Transformation: From Dialogue to Visual Spectacle*

*Activating the Medium: A Photo Essay*

*1960s TV Show Remakes*



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# eyecandy

Film, Digital Media, Electronic Music  
University of California, Santa Cruz  
Spring 2004

**Editor:** Ekaette Akpan  
alpha\_omega81@yahoo.com

**Publisher:** Jose M. Hernandez  
jozecuervo@jozecuervo.com

**Assistant Editor:**  
Sara Torello

**Production Staff:**  
Eleanor C. Biddle  
Suzanne Karnes

**Business Manager:** Anita Magana  
amagana@ucsc.edu

**Photographer:**  
Tyson Dai

**Writing Staff:**  
Sumit Agarwal  
Eric Danch  
Suzanne Karnes  
Nellie Kim

**Advisor:**  
David Crane

*eyecandy* is a quarterly, student run film and digital media journal founded in the fall of 1999. *eyecandy* focuses on analytical, critical, and theoretical issues in film and digital media, as opposed to the more evaluative criticism found in popular press. *eyecandy* examines film and digital media in relation to other significant issues such as art form, social and cultural theory and politics. Above all, *eyecandy* is a forum for writers from all fields to discuss and raise issues about film and digital media as a popular phenomenon and area of critical study.

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Table of contents images (top to bottom):  
Cary Grant (left), Ralph Bellamy, and Rosalind Russell (right) in a scene from *His Girl Friday*;  
Casey Spooner from *Fischerspooner*; *Activating the Medium*;  
cartoon from the opening of *Bewitched*.  
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Production Designer; Carlos Veron, Lighting Director  
Cover Image Artwork: Jose M. Hernandez

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# Screenplay Transformation: From Dialogue to Visual Spectacle

By Suzanne Karnes

While sitting on the cozy sofa devouring a large tub of buttered popcorn, I watched my favorite movie of all time, *His Girl Friday*. Adapted from the original stage play titled *The Front Page*, the 1940 screwball adaptation's main component consists of witty and playful dialogue spoken at a rapid-fire pace between the two main characters.

As I observed this intriguing tale about a newspaperman (Cary Grant) who, still in love with his ex-wife (Rosalind Russell), tries to persuade her to continue reporting and prevent her from remarrying someone else, I became completely engaged with the smooth, carefully crafted lines bursting out of the characters' mouths.

Why are dialogue-driven screenplays rarely, if ever, shown on the contemporary big screen? The commercial films that dominate the box office focus more on visual sensation rather than dazzling wordplay.

To address this issue, I consulted several sources about how technological innovation and the introduction of television play a part in the shift. Many early films — *Casablanca* (1942), *The Philadelphia Story* (1947), and *All About Eve* (1950) — are cleverly written and include memorable lines that have become signature catch phrases. The films revolve around the characters' personal lives and emotions rather than focusing on heroes saving the world from supernatural villains in blockbuster hits like *The Matrix* trilogy and the *X-Men* films.

Shelly Stamp, who specializes in early cinema history, provided some context: "The medium starts out as a silent medium, and then sound is added, and it becomes, especially in the '30s, a medium that is all about talking and verbal humor," she said. "What happened in the '30s when sound came into Hollywood is [that] a whole bunch of plays were adapted for movies, and playwrights came to write in Hollywood. So there was a real emphasis on dialogue and verbal repartee and that has really, really shifted," Stamp explained.

In *Framework: A History of Screenwriting in the American Film*, Tom Stempel outlines both the structure of silent screenplays and the shift to sound. During the silent period, "scenario" or "title" writers not only wrote the story for a film but also concentrated on writing emotional tone, specific visuals, and character gestures. Dialogue was only written so that actors could get a feel for the story.

Such dialogue was deemed too literary when

sound was implemented in the late '20s, so film demanded writers who could write realistic dialogue. The studios hired novelists, playwrights, and journalists from New York and New England and moved them to Hollywood — among them William Faulkner and F. Scott Fitzgerald.

Stempel argues that scripts became more specific and sound made movies less open to individual interpretation. Since dialogue was the new trend, scripts that needed only one or two writers now took four or five. Consequently, the screenwriter's place in cinema became limited; he or she developed the ideas and the overall concept, but had little control over the final movie.

Screenwriters had three ways to change their status: they could work within the studio system and become producers and/or directors; they could unionize, which they did as the Screen Writers Guild; finally, they could try to change the political system by joining the Communist Party.

However, the latter led to the blacklist, which posed threats to screenwriters who already had little power.

Stamp also noted that in the old studio hierarchy of the '30s, '40s, and '50s, screenwriters did not have a lot of power. "They probably had most power in the '30s, in that era that produced something like *His Girl Friday*, and then got less and less power as they were displaced by producers, directors, and stars," she said. "There is the paradox again because at the moment when conservative politicians are trying to route out the contaminants within Hollywood, they focused on screenwriters as principal architects of some ideological subversion," Stamp said.

However, the birth of television in the 1940s gave new status to screenwriters. "The power structure in television really favors screenwriters, and the screenwriters are often considered the authors of the TV series," Stamp said. Unlike the film writer, the television writer had complete control over the script to make it flawless.

L.S. Kim, professor of television, explained that television scripts concentrate on what the characters say rather than what they do in order to keep the shows alive and running. "If you had an ending in television, your show was a failure," Kim said.

This use of dialogue to drive the story that was frequently practiced in the '30s, '40s, and '50s films is now used in television. Did movies shift back to visual spectacle



to separate themselves from television? Since the industry has moved toward technological innovation and the viewer has taken pleasure in its new trends, perhaps the introduction of special effects plays an important role in the shift in screenplays from dialogue to visual.

Stamp explained the technological shift by questioning the abundance of media fed to audiences. "Visual spectacle, especially in the '80s and '90s, has really taken over the art of dialogue and character development," she argued. "Does it have something to do with our late 20<sup>th</sup> century supersaturated media culture where we're just bombarded by images all the time—advertisement images, television images, and internet images. Is that part of what films are responding to?" She sat back in her chair and shrugged, "I don't know."

Gerald Mast and Bruce F. Kavin's book, *A Short History of the Movies*, states that the computer has found its way into practically every aspect of filmmaking since the late 1970s. In 1990 it was Dolby Digital Surround Sound that made possible state-of-the-art sound editing and mixing, and with special effects, computer generated images could be superimposed onto real images.

From the '80s to the present, special effects have become the new visual overload for audiences to consume. The sounds of explosions, airplanes, gunshots, traffic, and spaceships have become more important than dialogue. Sound has become an image's "side-kick"—inferior to the visual.

Moving away from historical analyses, I will now concentrate on the viewer. For example, Stamp said, "I'm the kind of viewer with new films where I can get quite easily bored by extended fight scenes or extended scenes of violence without any narrative exposition or character development."

However, Stamp admitted her personal preference could be generational. She grew-up watching films that had a story to tell—not an image to sell. Considering her comment, I thought about what drew me to older films besides their narrative and dialogue composition. Chip Lord, Film and Digital Media department chair, explained the reason simply. "I think, in part, we look back at those films and the scripts seem more interesting because of the historical distance."

Films like *His Girl Friday* appeal to me because they

"Now get this you double-crossing chimpanzee... If I ever lay my two eyes on you again, I'm gonna hammer on that monkey skull of yours until it rings like a Chinese gong!"

are foreign to my generation, and although they are older films, they feel newer when watched. Without the use of special effects, these classic films focus solely on the emotions of the characters. Many blockbuster films today target younger audiences because they watch the violence and like the visual effects fed to them. They grow up in a culture surrounded by commercials, new trends, and consumption.

But people still enjoy good stories. Like Stamp, Lord also prefers films that have a message: "I don't like big blockbuster adventure films. I've seen enough of the thrills and spills of the car chases and the special effects to know that they are not very satisfying to me. I'm more interested in seeing something truthful about people interacting." If viewers like Stamp, Lord, and myself favor meaningful stories that we can relate to, then I still wonder why great films like *His Girl Friday* are not being written.

On the other hand, Lord explained that carefully crafted scripts do exist. "It's harder to get them made or they are being made by completely independent filmmakers," Lord noted. It requires working hard to find stories that are sincere, truthful, and heartfelt. "You don't have to work hard at all to find *The Matrix* or *Dumb and Dumber 2* because it's in your face all of the time."

Lord teaches a screenwriting seminar in which he emphasizes well written stories. "In my class, I always tell students one way of looking at what you're proposing to do is to ask, 'is this story the most important story in the life of the main character? Because if it's not you should be telling that story—the most important story.'"

Was the shift in screenwriting and screenplays caused by technological innovation—the perfection of the silent film, the discovery of sound, and the artistry of the computer-generated image made possible by special effects? Was it caused by new media like television or controversies like the blacklist? Could it have anything to do with the viewer's personal preference and the entrance of new aspiring writers? I think it was all of the above. For me, I will always remember Grant and Russell's witty personalities and repartee in *His Girl Friday* more than fight scenes, dance sequences, or space adventures. ■

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# The Electroclash Phenomenon: An interview with Casey Spooner

By Sara Torello

Electroclash: the pounding, electronic eighties-revival music that tries to be elitist, but is just too much disco fun to be taken seriously. Either you hate it, or you love it. If you love it, chances are you have heard of Fischerspooner, an electroclash and performance art group from the city that never sleeps. Apparently, neither do Warren Fischer or Casey Spooner, the two masterminds behind the collective. They have been caught up in a recent flurry of publicity caused by the explosion of their first album, “#1.” After the throbbing electro-crunch, post-punk inspired single “Emerge” played at Berlin’s annual Love Parade, it became a hit in clubs around the world. A recently remixed single blending the chorus of “Emerge” with the lyrics of Nirvana’s “Smells Like Teen Spirit” has been gracing the sets of prominent DJs like Felix Da Housecat, Jason Bentley, and Tommie Sunshine. The rave reviews of “#1” have earned Fischerspooner the chance to perform twice on Britain’s famous television program “Top of the Pops” and at various international art shows and music halls.

What truly sets Fischerspooner apart from other electronic music acts is their involvement with performance art and video production. Warren and Casey began performing in small coffee houses and art galleries, where they developed a signature minimalist sound and strange performance antics. With the addition of full lighting, wardrobe, a stage production team, and a dance troupe, Fischerspooner shows are truly visual spectacles. Costumes play an integral role in the show, whether they are sparkling underwear paired with glitter tube socks, or tuxedos with 10 foot tails and feathered headdresses. The performances are about conveying a visual concept for the music, and the group holds back nothing when it comes to putting on a show.

The group has just wrapped



Photo: Casey Spooner from Fischerspooner

up its North American tour, and will eventually return to the studio to work on its next album. Although their first album utilized cover songs and simple digital sampling, the new album is slated to be more diverse and sonically deep, or as Fischer explains, “It’s a digital Phil Spector ‘Wall of Sound’ thing.” Strangely, it will feature lyrics by cultural theorist and writer Susan Sontag and live instruments even though the band has no plans to give up its electronic roots. After a show at the Fillmore in San Francisco, *eyecandy* caught up with Casey Spooner, the lead vocalist and ringleader of the group.

**ec: How did you and Warren meet?**

**CS:** We met at film school. We went to school together at the Art Institute of Chicago, and we were both in a video production class. You know, we met there and started collaborating on different stuff. We made some very different things initially. I was more into spoken word, and Warren would play the classical violin.

**ec: So, how did you make the transition into pop music?**

**CS:** We knew each other, but we went

our separate ways for several years, and then we reconnected in New York. Warren and his wife Karen and I ended up working on a pitch for a TV show. We were asked to do it and it didn’t turn out so well, but we had all this incredible footage and so we decided we would make a song and cut the footage to the song. We liked the song more than the footage, and we ended up performing it. That’s how we fell into making pop music. It started as a soundtrack for this film, which we ended up ditching. But we kept the music.

**ec: Who are your musical influences?**

**CS:** Hmm.. [thinking noises].. you know, it’s kind of like everything. I don’t really discriminate. A band I really love is called Bongwater. I like it because it was this collaboration between this performer named Anne Magnuson, and this guy named Kramer, who runs the [possibly defunct] label Shimmydisc. And the thing that’s interesting about it for me to listen to now is that it’s a collaboration between a performer and an indie rocker, and it’s kind of what Warren and I are. I like Led

Zepplin, Nelly; I'll listen to anything. I'm kind of a music whore. Warren is really the classically trained, serious musician. He's the indie rocker, I'm just the good time Charley.

**ec: Who usually writes the music, you or Warren?**

**CS:** It starts with Warren. He composes the music and then we work with this guy named Nicholas Vernhes, who has a studio named "Rare Book Room." We have always recorded with him, so the studio is kind of our home. Warren and Nicholas will work on tracks together, and then I'll come in and we start developing a direction or idea or theme and lyrical content for the songs. Then we develop vocal melodies for the songs around those ideas.

**ec: You have a very distinct visual style, with your costumes and make-up. Was that influenced by anyone, or did you come up with the entire concept?**

**CS:** I think it's about embracing pop clichés, so you can see all kinds of crazy relationships or similarities to anything from Adam Ant to Marilyn Manson to Cabaret to whatever... For me, it really came out of this impulse I had at the time, I love saying this, at the "turn-of-the-century." New York was kind of a dead place, which was a bit frustrating. I moved to New York because I thought it was going to be the most exciting place in the world. It disappointed me a little bit. Instead of continually looking for what I wanted, I decided to be what it was that I imagined. And at that time, everyone was obsessed with the millennium; you'd hear insane stories of the city buying 60,000 body bags, and everyone buying water, and Y2K, and the imminent collapse of... (pause)

**ec: Modern civilization?**

**CS:** Yes, civilization as we know it. So, I thought 'shit, I want to rock, I want to party!' It was really about that impulse to dress up and celebrate and go crazy, if in fact our world was coming to an end.

**ec: It sounds fun even if the world isn't coming to an end...**

**CS:** Yeah, it's funny that that's where the urge came from. Then, it felt like as soon as we sort of crossed into 2000, everyone took a deep breath and a huge exhale. After that, it seems like we connected with everybody.

**ec: On stage, you stated you wanted to start a new cultural revolution. Do you have any more insight into that? Do you have a specific change you want to make in pop music?**

**CS:** There is no real aggressive agenda. It's more about making something that's exciting and fun and interesting at the same time. And popular... that's the thing that was always real frustrating to me about pop culture. It's something I enjoy, but I get frustrated because I feel like it could be so much more. The decision makers oftentimes assume the world is filled with idiots, and I resent the condescension that was inherent in pop culture. So, I really wanted something that had all the gloss and all the excitement and production of classic pop culture, but I felt like I and everyone around me are smart enough to handle something that's a little more complex or unusual or interesting. You get tired of endless inane boy bands.

**ec: And how.**

**CS:** It's also more of a personal thing. Both Warren and I have worked in the underground for years, and it becomes kind of a crutch to always see yourself in a limited world with a small audience. It's very exciting and difficult to make something that you like, but is still appealing to a lot of people, and that a lot of people can identify with. It's trying to embrace pop culture as something other than a dirty word.

**ec: I heard about Fischerspooner starting a production space?**

**CS:** Well, we have a space called FS Studios where we rehearse and do a lot of production. We enjoy not only making music, but we enjoy all of the imagery that goes around our music, and we enjoy making film work and graphic design and everything that goes

into making pop music. Now, we're starting to work with other people on their ideas as well. It's kind of nice to work on your thing, then stop and do something for someone else. We make treatments for other artists' music videos.

**ec: So, you are going to use this space as a production area for music videos?**

**CS:** Yeah, it will be like our creative think tank. When Marilyn Manson is over the whole neo-nazi...thing, we can help him. It will be kind of like a celebrity makeover think tank. Like, Michael Jackson maybe?

**ec: Yeah, get rid of that bandanna.**

**CS:** He needs some help. There's a lot there.

**ec: Do you have any upcoming projects that you are working on?**

**CS:** We are doing a big show in Venice, Italy at an art convention. We are working on new music, wardrobe, choreography, and new video projections. We just finished our first tour of the United States, and so then we will do a bigger world tour of Europe, South America, Asia, and the U.S. again and Japan. I'm kind of nervous about the Far East. I'm not ready for the SARS tour.

**ec: But you can wear the SARS face masks, and decorate them for your shows.**

**CS:** We performed in Toronto when the whole SARS thing was going on. We performed there, and a couple days later they had the lock down. So, we did the show but kept our ears open to see if anyone was coughing.

**ec: I never considered the dangers of touring.**

**CS:** Yeah. There's a lot of people in a contained space with an insane and secretive disease taking over. It sounds like a great movie. ■

# *Activating the Medium: A Photo Essay*

*By Tyson Dai*

The Seventh Annual Activating the Medium Festival was presented by 23five incorporated and the Cuesta College Department of Fine arts. The festival was held at the SomArts art gallery in San Francisco on February 6, 2004. Activating the Medium presents sound performances using unconventional hand crafted instruments.

Libby Oda running lights for the show.

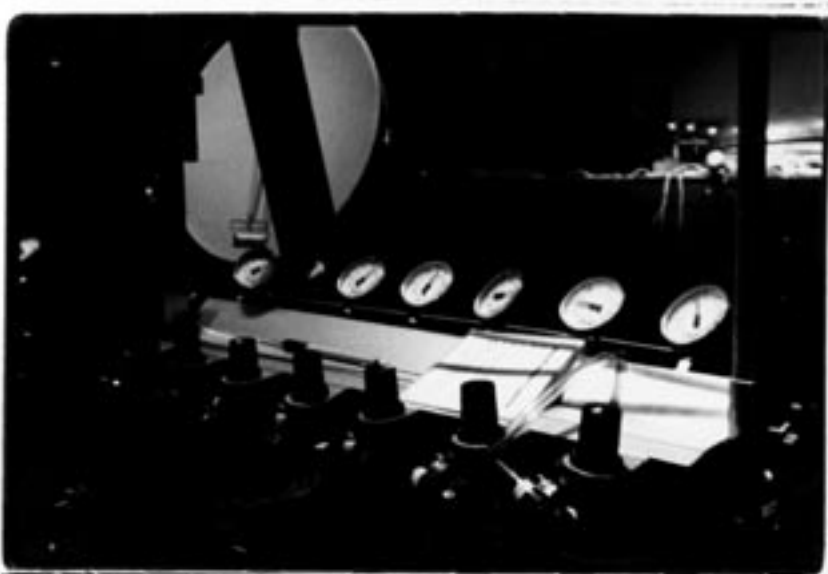




Jean Francois Laporte (Montreal, Canada) performs SIREN on air compressed boat horns



John Bischoff (Berkeley, California) performs Immaterial States



Compression system for Jean-Francois Laporte's installation "Khora"

### Activating the Medium: History (extracted from 23five.org)

Since its conception in 1998, the purpose of Activating the Medium has been to explore and introduce the art of sound to new audiences. Through performance, sound installation, and new concept technologies, we have worked to inform a new audience about the ambient and expressive aural phenomena of the sonic arts. Sound is perhaps the newest of genres, finding a permanent voice within contemporary gallery and museum systems. Sound has also found its place within both the visual and performance arts programs around the world. In order to promote the education of sound in the arts, Randy Yau and David Prochaska curated the first Activating the Medium exhibition in conjunction with Cuesta College of Fine Arts in San Luis Obispo, California. Our location allowed us to bring in artists from two major metropolitan areas (Los Angeles and San Francisco) where, over the last decade, sound and performance art have continued to build a more informed audience. To date, there have been four festivals in San Luis Obispo, bringing together sound artists from San Francisco, Los Angeles, Seattle, Chico, and as far away as Italy, Japan, Germany, and Australia. In 2000, Activating the Medium joined forces with one of the Bay Area's most prolific sound organizations, 23five. This collaboration has allowed us to become one of the most important groups of artists and performers making a professional commitment to activating the medium of sound. Our commitment is to build a larger, more educated, audience within the sonic arts and to help expose all to the ever-expanding medium of sound.

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RANDY YAU  
MARKETING GRAPHIC DESIGNER

CORPORATE HEADQUARTERS  
400 ALABAMA STREET SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94112 USA  
T. 415 486 1227 F. 415 486 1250 THE.SAK.COM  
RANDY.YAU@THE.SAK.COM

# Give My Regards to Oblivion: 1960s TV Show Remakes

By Eric Danch

It has often been my common practice to dismiss the cinematic remake, particularly that of mainstream Hollywood, as desperate thinking by lesser artists who fill their unimportant schedules obsessing over new ways to think completely unimaginatively. Without doubt, this perspective has its merit, but it cannot stand alone in answering the question of why we are seeing an unprecedented amount of remakes. Historically, remakes are nothing new to Hollywood or foreign film industries. One need only search a film database like *imdb.com* in order to discover how many "classics" are anything but originals. Take for instance *The Maltese Falcon* (1941) starring Humphrey Bogart. Not only is this a remake of a 1931 Roy Del Ruth film of the same title, but both films are direct adaptations of Dashiell Hammet's novel, *The Maltese Falcon* (1929).

The remake can also be traced going in the other direction, in that a current film can masquerade as something new to younger generations. Joel Schumacher's recently announced film, *A Star is Born*, will most likely prove to be such a film. Schumacher, already credited with two of the Batman feature length movies, and about to release his very own remake of *Phantom of the Opera* (2004), can now add angry Barbara Streisand fans to his list of achievements by choosing to tarnish the 1977 version of *A Star is Born*. Yet, even the 1977 Streisand version is a remake of the 1954 version with James Mason and Judy Garland, which is a remake of the 1937 version starring Fredric March and Janet Gaynor, itself a remake of 1932's *What Price Hollywood*.

In addition, there is always an economic angle that must be factored into the decision making process. For instance, the remake is an ideal platform to showcase new special effects and keep financially struggling companies like Industrial Light and Magic afloat. Remakes also serve as a nostalgic calling-card for the older demographic, while being able to lure in the younger one with contemporary star-power. Finally,



Zoiks! The cast of the new Scooby-doo remake films.



The original Rocky and Bullwinkle crew - can't beat the real thing!

remakes allow for collectively recognized iconographies to lucratively morph into everything ranging from Happy-Meals, video games, soundtracks, and 'making-of' productions to the occasional theme-park attraction, and an often inordinate array of merchandise.

However, the economic incentive doesn't seem entirely responsible, either as a point of origin or as the dominant catalyst, and as briefly mentioned above, remakes are nothing new in and of themselves. However, what is different about the new explosion of remakes is that most are based on popular 1960s TV shows.

Accordingly, film scholar Robert Keser noted, in a recent article in *Bright Lights Film Journal*, that if a time traveler from the 1960s found him or herself in front of current movie marquee, he or she would be convinced that the time machine had malfunctioned. In support of this claim, and in no particular order, consider the following list of 1960s TV shows made into movies in the recent and coming years: *Lost in Space* (1998), *The Avengers* (1998), *The Mod Squad* (1999), *Rocky and Bullwinkle* (2000), *Mission Impossible I,II & III* (1996,2001,03), *Scooby-Doo 1&2* (2002,04), *Spider-Man 1&2* (2002,04), *I Spy* (2002), *Hulk* (2004), *Mr. Ed* (2005), *Bewitched* (2005), and *Batman 5* (2005).

This apparent symbiotic relationship between 1960s TV shows and their current blockbuster re-imaginings should not pass us by without critical attention. In other words, these nostalgic revivals need to be understood as more than just some cheesy fetish or mere coincidence. For instance, it is significant that all of these film narratives were originally conceived during one of the most socially turbulent periods in US history. In particular, a period of US history that encompassed an unprecedented break-down of gender and racial barriers, major political assassinations and controversy, radical environmentalism, the Civil Rights Movement, second wave Feminism, and maybe most importantly in relation to today, massive anti-war protests nationwide.

Granted, the above has been by no means an



exhaustive recap of the sixties, nor is it intended to argue that we are experiencing any kind of repeat of the sixties. Instead, the point is that whatever entertained audiences then seems to produce a similarly popular response today. I don't think it's a gross generalization to argue that the formulated TV entertainment provided during Vietnam and the Cold War is directly connected to what's filling our cinema marquees in the context of Iraq and the war on terrorism. Thus, the big question concerns whether or not we are consuming and processing this form of entertainment differently now and to what effect. In other words, how are we reading these texts? Are the narratives igniting reflection or irony about the real world, or are they just cashing in on a public susceptible to temporary escape via spectacle? Finally, how can the answers to these questions inform a critical discussion about how these 1960s TV show remakes function within the current social context, namely, the war in Iraq and the war on terrorism?

Keeping these questions and subsequent critical engagement in mind, the first thing that we must ask ourselves is what did audiences like about these 1960s TV shows anyway? What was it about Scooby and the gang that kept viewers coming back every Saturday morning? Did it quench an insatiable thirst for discovering that some old has-been wearing a mask was *actually* the monster? What about the Batcomputer and its ability to formulate a definitive answer to any question based on nothing more than Adam West's refreshingly vague, yet poetic, logic did people like so much? What about Boris and Natasha's chronically flawed plans to rule the world did fans find so endlessly entertaining? In other words, these narratives weren't preaching that "the times they are a-changing" like other forms of entertainment at the time. In contrast, they provided a formulaic and reassuring happy-place that found a largely frustrated and ineffectual audience. Given this perspective, is it all happening again, except this time with better special effects providing a more immersive happy-place complete with theme-park rides, video-games, and Happy-Meals?

Such reassurance does have its charm when the alternative is to subject oneself to fear-based news and political pundit programming that broadcasts the horrors of war, the probability of more war, and a volatile economy, all the while coupled with an increased loss of civil liberties inherent in such documents as the Patriot Act. Furthermore, in an attempt to contextualize the appeal of what 1960s TV shows once offered, one could argue that making sense of current political rhetoric, especially like the most recent State of the Union Address, does require something like a Batcomputer. Moreover, I don't think it's terribly out of line to characterize our current geopolitical presence as something many at home and abroad might imagine originated from the Boris and Natasha think tank. Thus, it should come as no surprise that within this context we have ample incentive to obsess over superpowers, super technology, and count on the

predictability of the enemy in order to smother the fact that we actually feel increasingly powerless and insecure.

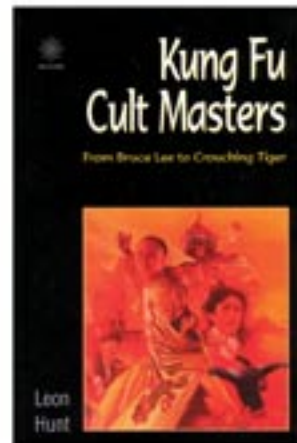
Nonetheless, an argument that a politics of (re)assurance is communicated via entertainment is by no means limited to the 1960s. Consider Steven Spielberg and his gifted ability to recreate idealized realities in order to provide feel-good ideological security and thus displace real fear in films like *Close Encounters of the Third Kind* (1977) or *The Raiders of the Lost Ark* (1981). However, the current remake phenomenon is much more distanced from reality and encompasses a much larger demographic. For instance, Spielberg typically grounds his films historically or in culturally understood environments in order to draw on preexisting stereotypes and clean binary oppositions. Such examples include *Schindler's List* (1993), *Raiders*, *Indian Jones and the Last Crusade* (1989), *Amistad* (1997), and the more recent *Saving Private Ryan* (1998) in order to confront safe "evils" like Nazism and slavery. Yet, in the current 1960s TV show remakes, historical background is almost completely absent, creating a sense of timelessness and placelessness. In support of this claim, where and when do Scooby and the gang or Rocky and Bullwinkle live? Does it matter where Mr. Ed's stable is? Planet Krypton?

So what can be said about the combination of abstracted timelessness and placelessness, the aforementioned false sense of agency derived from narratives of assurance, and the fact that current remakes are much less confined (i.e. NETFLIX, DVD, and the web) to television or theaters as their predecessors were in the sixties? At first glance it would seem as if we are not exactly on our way to changing hearts and minds. Yet, maybe this is in fact exactly what we need. Maybe creating such ridiculous distractions from reality will force us to start considering, at least with laughable irony, why something like the Batcomputer and our President might complement each other. ■



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