Bastard Pop
Mashup, Remix and Cut-and-Paste Culture

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Data Mashups

A web application that combines data from more than one source into a single integrated tool.
The remix is the very nature of the digital...The recombinant (the bootleg, the remix, the mash-up) has become the characteristic pivot at the turn of our two centuries (William Gibson, 2005)
Steve Albini and Mashup Critics
- Mashups are cheap and lazy
- Reuse and Recycle the work of others
- No particular talent or artistic genius
- Illegal use of the work of real artists
Brett Gaylor and Mashup Fans

- Mashups are innovative and original
- Empower consumers to be producers
- Challenge the culture industry
- Create the “folk art of the future”
New and original art
Hardworking artists
Folk art of the future

Not original art
Lazy and Talentless
Copyright Criminals
Shared Values:
- Artistic Innovation
- Creativity and Originality
- Figure of the artist
Gets the mashup right, but for the wrong reasons

Gets the mashup wrong, but for the right reasons
1) For the Record: The Original Metaphysics of Recording

2) Mash-up & Remix: The Art of Recombinant Rock and Roll

3) Conclusions: The Significance of the Mashup
1) For the Record:
The Original Metaphysics of Recording
Plato’s *Phaedrus*
First recorded account of recording technology
Writing has this strange quality, and is very like painting; for the creatures of painting stand like living beings, but if one asks them a question, they preserve a solemn silence. And so it is with written words; you might think they spoke as if they had intelligence, but if you question them, wishing to know about their sayings, they always say only one and the same thing. And every word, when once it is written, is bandied about alike among those who understand and those who have no interest in it, and it knows not to whom to speak or not to speak; when ill-treated or unjustly reviled it always needs its father to help it; for it has no power to protect itself. (Plato, 1982: 275d-e).
Speech is alive because it is animated by the breath of a living speaker; while writing, which utilizes artificial and external apparatus, is dead and lifeless (Plato)

1. Recordings are secondary and derivative
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The captivity of all manner of sound-waves heretofore designated as “fugitive,” and their permanent retention (Edison, 1878).
The common assumption is that the live event is “real” and that mediatized events are secondary and somehow artificial reproductions of the real (Auslander, 1999).

1. Recordings are secondary and derivative
2. Recordings preserve live performances
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“His Master’s Voice”
Music ceases to have interest for us...the instant we become aware of the fact of literal repetition, of mechanical reproduction, when we know and can anticipate exactly how a given phrase is going to be modeled, exactly how long a given fermata is to be held, exactly what quality of accent or articulation, of acceleration, or retard, will occur at a given moment (Sessions, 1950).

2. Recordings preserve live performances
3. Recordings are promiscuous bastards.

Their reproduction with all of their original characteristics at will, without the presence or consent of the original source, and after the lapse of any period of time (Edison, 1878).
3. Recordings are promiscuous bastards
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1) Recordings are secondary and derivative

2) Recordings copy and preserve live performance

3) Recordings are promiscuous bastards
2) Mash-up & Remix: The Art of Recombinant Rock and Roll
1) Mash-ups complicate and suspend common assumptions about origin and originality.
2) Mash-ups are exceedingly and unapologetically redundant
The detail made available by recordings can increase our understanding and appreciation of the living thing (Brown, 2000).
The beginning of the chorus is replaceable by the beginning of innumerable other choruses. The interrelationship among the elements or the relationship of the elements to the whole would be unaffected. In Beethoven, position is important only in a living relation between a concrete totality and its concrete parts. In popular music, position is absolute. Every detail is substitutable; it serves its function only as a cog in a machine (Adorno, 1941).
3) Mash-ups question and undermine authority
Critics have long debated who 'creates' a pop record: the artist listed on the sleeve, the producer behind the scenes, the composer in the wings, or the sometimes anonymous studio employees who actually play the music (Walker, 2003).
3) Conclusions
The Significance of the Mashup
- Originality
- Creativity
- Authenticity
- Artistry
• Derivation
• Plagiarism
• Inauthenticity
• Promiscuity
• Repetition