

Kerkhof's Manifesto: nostalgia for the future

“My own thinking about art and values is far more disillusioned than would have been possible for someone 100 years ago. That doesn't mean, though, that it's more correct on that account. It only means that I have examples of degeneration on the forefront of my mind which were not in the forefront of men's minds then.”

Ludwig Wittgenstein, 1946

24.

When we think of the cinema's future, we always mean the destination it will reach if it keeps going in the direction we can see it going now; it does not occur to us that its path is not a straight line but a series of curves and tangents, constantly changing direction.

23.

The RE:MIX is one of those tangents. It is a *possibility* of cinema.

22.

The RE:MIXER creates an *emptiness* of cinema. But this emptiness was already there, potentially. It merely needed to be filled, to be actualised.

22.1

I still find my way of RE:MIXING new, and it keeps striking me so afresh; that is why I need to repeat myself so often. It will have become second nature to a new generation, to whom the repetitions will be boring. I find them necessary.

21.

The RE:MIX is a practice of diluting, or haemorrhaging the subject in a fragmented, particled sound/vision language diffracted to emptiness.

20.

The atomic unit of the RE:MIX is not the shot, but the *fragment*, - which is a clump, a volatile conglomerate. Granular, dense and stuck together. Division of this fragment occurs only to produce still another irreducible cohesion.

19.

RE:MIXING is precisely the act which unites in the same labour what could not be apprehended together in the mere flat space of representation.

18.

The RE:MIX reminds us that the rational is merely one possible system among others: it suffices that there be a system, even if this system is apparently illogical, uselessly complicated and curiously disparate.

18.1

Each of the RE:MIXES I make is trying to say the whole thing, ie. The same thing over and over again; it is as though they were all simply views of one object seen from different angles. This is the metaphysical aspect of RE:MIXING.

18.2

A RE:MIXER is very much like a metaphysician whose aim it is to represent all the inter-relations between things.

17.

The RE:MIX has the fundamental characteristic of a denial of development. All one can do with it is to scrutinize it, not to solve it as if it had a meaning, nor even to perceive its absurdity (which is still a meaning).

16.

The RE:MIX's accuracy obviously has something musical about it (but not necessarily a music of *sounds*).

15.

The RE:MIX never describes: its art is counter-descriptive. A collection of literally “untenable moments” which constitute themselves as **nostalgia for the future**.

15.1

Working on RE:MIXING – like work in philosophy in many respects – is really more a working on oneself. On one's own interpretation. On one's way of seeing things.

15.2

I really do think in the medium, because my head often knows nothing about what the editor is doing.

14.

The space of the RE:MIX is one of pure fragments, a dust of events; this is because the RE:MIX's time is without subject.

13.

One might say that the collective body of all RE:MIXES is a network of mirrors in which each mirror reflects all the others and so on to infinity; without there ever being a centre to grasp.

12.

In the RE:MIX, what is abolished is not meaning, but any notion of finality.

11.

RE:MIXING is by nature intransigently unfinishable: the process could, in theory, go on and on.

11.1

RE:MIXING sets everyone the same traps; it is an immense network of easily accessible wrong turnings. And so we watch one man after another walking down the same paths and we know in advance where he will branch off, where walk straight on without noticing the side turning, etc.

11.2

I don't believe I have ever *invented* a line of editing. I have always taken over one from someone else. That is how Standish Lawder, Kenneth Anger, Marguerite Duras, Sergei Paradjanov, Richard kern and Franz Zwartjes have influenced me.

10.

In RE:MIXES density of texture frequently obliterates the contours of the original sound/vision line.

10.1

RE:MIXING ought really to be performed only as a *poetic composition*.

9.

Joyce's technique of verbal fragmentation provides the essential background to any understanding of the art of the RE:MIX.

8.

As in Joyce, fragments, often chosen to represent salient features of the source material, develop a strikingly individual resonance in isolation and combine to generate new and unexpected meanings.

7.

In RE:MIXES, isolated phrases can give rise to new semantic affinities.

7.1

You must say something new and yet it must all be old. In fact you must confine yourself to saying old things – and *all the same* it must be something new! A RE:MIXER has constantly to ask himself: “but is what I am RE:MIXING really true?” – and this does not necessarily mean “is this how it happens in reality?” Yes, you have got to assemble bits of old material. But into a *building*. In this sense, Schwitters Dada masterpiece, the *merzbaum*, is the first RE:MIX.

6.

The RE:MIXER poeticises the image by emphasizing its musical values (chromatic oppositions, dissonance and compositional rhyme).

5.

Semantic stutterings (loops) galvanize the source material into nervous life.

4.

The RE:MIXER compounds his audience's estrangement from the structural relations of the source material by presenting different fragments simultaneously, forcing them to grasp at momentarily comprehensible gestures within the general sound/vision overload.

3.

The RE:MIXER is fascinated with working at the very limits of coherence.

2.

Massive clusters, dynamic contrasts, aggregate rhythms, layered imagery, chromatic quagmires, major audio-visual dislocations: these are the characteristics of the RE:MIX.

2.1

One's style of RE:MIXING may be unoriginal in form and yet one's images and sounds may be well chosen; or, on the other hand, one may have a style that's original in *form*, one that is freshly grown from deep within oneself. (Or again it may, of course, just be blotched together out of old bits and pieces – like mine.)

2.2

Sometimes a RE:MIX can be understood only if it is experienced at the right *tempo*. My RE:MIXES are all meant to be viewed *slowly*.

1.

The RE:MIXER is a man condemned in advance. He must have neither romantic relationships nor object to engage his feelings. He should even cast off his own name. Every part of him should be concentrated in one single passion: the RE:MIX!