

Call for Contributions

Vicarious Vocalities / Simulated Songs RMA Study Day Remembered, Shared, and Created Voices in Popular Culture

Monday 27th of September, 2021

Following the rich discussions of the Vicarious Vocalities conference in September 2020 (a virtual conference hosted by the University of Portsmouth), this Study Day aims to bring together scholars of all stages to explore the abundant forms of simulated, copied, or imitative voices in popular culture. With previous conference papers presenting on topics ranging from Hollywood dubbing and Bollywood playback singers, lip-sync performance and TV talent shows, and cyborg voices and voices of the divine, we hope to think creatively and expansively about vicarious vocalities in myriad forms, and analyse such voices within an interdisciplinary and multimedia framework.

The Study Day aims to weave together multiple research avenues of voice studies, constructing a polyphonic discourse. While this list is not exhaustive and we hope to be surprised by new areas of research presented, we are interested in continuing to forge connections between areas such as ventriloquism (Steven Connor 2000), tribute acts (Shane Homan 2006; Georgina Gregory 2016), lip-syncing (Carol Langley 2006; Jacob Bird 2020; Merrie Snell 2020), karaoke (Rob Drew 2001; Kevin Brown 2015), vocal emulation in bio-musicals and biopics (Millie Taylor 2012; Ben MacPherson 2020), talent shows (Jennifer Fleeger 2014), and vocal queerness (Wayne Koestenbaum 1993; Freya Jarman 2011).

Sample lines of enquiry may include:

- Case studies of particular performers, performances, or techniques
- Fetishised vocality on television shows (e.g. *Carpool Karaoke* (Apple, USA); *The Stand Up Sketch Show* (ITV, UK); *Hidden Singer* (JTBC, South Korea))
- Ventriloquism and its variations
- Overdubbing, ghost singing, and playback singing across cultures
- Singing or speaking along with your (recorded) self (and its representation in performance)
- Vocal simulation in bio-pics and bio-musicals
- Tribute acts
- Cover bands
- Karaoke and amateur 'imitation'
- Mismatched media (e.g. *Haribo* sweet commercials; the 'white voice' of Boots Riley's *Sorry to Bother You* (2018))
- Satirical impressionists on stage and screen
- Lip-syncing and its many manifestations
- The fetishised 'othering' of artificially-enhanced voices in popular culture
- Autotune practices

The previous conference was constructed around three strands: Lost, Stolen, and Borrowed Voices. This Study Day will similarly seek to explore our presentations in three strands: Remembered, Shared, and Created Voices.

Extending the intended interdisciplinary scope of this Study Day, we are open to contributions of all types, included though not limited to: 20-minute papers; panels; works in progress; performances; digital posters; etc. We hope that, through the digitised and mediated form of the online Study Day, the event will be open to people of all academic research backgrounds to exhibit their work in exciting ways. Postgraduate contributions are especially welcome.

Anonymised abstracts of 250 words should be submitted, along with a separate 100-word biography (including institutional affiliation as appropriate) to vicariousvocalities@gmail.com by the 16th of August, 2021. You will be notified by the 31st of August if you have been invited to present.

Proposals should include a provisional title, a key theoretical or contextual framework, and indicate which theme you have taken (Remembered, Shared, or Created) as well as the format of your presentation (paper/panel/performance etc.).

Any queries or questions may be sent to the convenor of the Study Day, Dr Jacob Mallinson Bird (jacob.bird@queens.ox.ac.uk)

We look forward to discussing these fascinating ideas together!

The conference committee.

(Details of the previous conference may be found at: <https://necs.org/node/119054>)