

Reconceiving the Symbiosis of the Audio and the Visual through Podcasting Praxis

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Just over two years ago myself and Dr Neil Fox began recording *The Cinematologists Podcast*. We envisioned the programme as an extension of our pleasure in discussing specific films but also as a vehicle for analysing transformational effects of the digital on all aspects of cinema. We had both become avid podcast listeners - not just film related but programmes focused on politics, comedy, writing, music – sensing that some of the most articulate, insightful and relevant debate was taking place in this still somewhat idiosyncratic audio space. Film podcasts take on a diverse range of styles, genres and structures - classic review shows, film practice advice programmes, longform interviews, historical and documentary, fan forums, high-brow cinephilia – reflecting the expanding milieu of a form the fundamental identity of which is still contested. Central to our format was the live recording in the cinema auditorium, focusing on a specific film screening, with audience debate an essential component. Our aim was to explore and utilise the characteristics of an audio medium to capture the sensibility of the cinema-going experience, and the enjoyment of discussing a film after you have watched it.

Becoming a podcaster imparts a range of technical skills - sound production and editing, online distribution, social media marketing and audio presentation – which, beyond their instrumental value, provoked questions around the relationship between languages of mediation and the ontology of knowledge. Furthermore, the experience of podcasting seemed to exist in area of community, and respectful and reasoned debate. A space of sanity in the chaotic abyss of online discourse. The practice of podcasting thus began to engender a reflective analysis of the very structures of academic practice: the shrinking time and space in the university for unencumbered thought, the mill of written publication, the uneasy relationship between theory and practice, disseminating one's research beyond the university, and the possibilities/pitfalls of the internet as a public forum. This experience I conceive of as a kind of positive destabilization; an exciting and potentially revelatory disruption of the boundaries that tie disciplines and fields of inquiry to specific forms of expression and institutional practice.

In this sense, I have come to think of podcasting as a liminal praxis: a mediatory practice that emerges out of an idiosyncratic yet fluid set of technological, economic, creative, social and disciplinary conditions, and which, concomitantly, imbues a questioning of the logics and effects of the mediation itself. In this paper I analyse the ways in which podcasting's liminal praxis, has reconfigured my approach to watching, discussing and communicating my academic and personal interest in cinema. Using a specific episode of

The Cinematologists entitled 'Knowing Sounds: Podcasting as Academic Practice'ⁱ, I discuss how three core elements of the podcast production – oral dialectic, repurposing of cinema music and sound effects, sound editing as a tool of communication – combines to create solely aural experience that emerges from, but also potentially expands, the cinematic imagination.

ⁱ <http://www.cinematologists.com/podcastarchive/2016/11/10/episode-32-knowing-sounds-podcasting-as-academic-practice>

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Biography:

Dr Dario Llinares is Principal Lecturer in Contemporary Screen Media at the University of Brighton. He has published work on a range of topics including the Astronaut in American Culture, British Prison Film, the Cinema as Time Machine, Second Screening as Meta-cinema, and Podcasting as Academic Practice. His current research focuses on the status and practice of cinema-going in the digital age. He is also the co-founder and co-host of the *Cinematologists* podcasts.