

## EDITORIAL

Archives have traditionally been the result of individual or collective decisions taken on political, institutional or business grounds in order to preserve documents and make these accessible for use. In the current digital 'era of plenty',<sup>1</sup> which enables an unprecedented creation of, and access to archival content, it seems that the very definition of an archive and its usage is being challenged.

As a journal that aims to bring together archival expertise and academic knowledge on television history and culture and the role of archives in mediating the past, *VIEW* is proud to present an entire issue dedicated to 'Archive-Based Productions.' Unlike other issues, this issue features the most contributions written by archive professionals, which can be found in the Discovery section of our journal. These archival discoveries complement the more scholarly explorations, which offer a broader perspective on archives as 'launch pads' for new productions. This angle is wonderfully explored by **Vana Goblot** in her article entitled "The Television Archive on BBC Four: From Preservation to Production," by using striking examples of BBC Four television programmes.

The ten papers that we have selected for publication investigate, study, report on and highlight the ways in which audiovisual archives are accessed, reused, reedited and reinterpreted over time, for various programme genres and for various other purposes. Some of these articles reinforce **Vana Goblot's** argument that "memory, nostalgia, aesthetic and moral judgement and, crucially self reflexivity are all at play in archive based program making."

The timespan covered by the collection of articles in this issue stretches from the very early time of broadcasting to the current context of the changing media ecology in the 'age of abundance' and the growing online accessibility of archives and productions re-using these archives ... which in turn become archives themselves.

### 1 The Archive as Monument/Document

In line with Foucault's views on the archive,<sup>2</sup> the bulk of articles in this issue refer to the archive either as *monument*, as historical illustration with a strong memory value, or to the archive as *document*, an object to be critically questioned, studied or investigated.

Discussing the case study of the Franco-German program, *Histoire Parallèle/Die Woche vor 50 Jahren*, **Jean-Christophe Meyer describes in his article** the comparative approach chosen by the French historian Marc Ferro, anchorman of the programme, for studying an event that had occurred between the beginning of WWII and the mid 1950's and doing so, through the lens of newsreels from several countries. "For twelve seasons (...), history became a subject open to post modern innovation (...)" states the author. The programme was indeed very purposely not based on the assumption that images tell stories, but on the contrary, on the postulate that TV programmes should be telling stories about the images presented as documents.

In line with the view on archives as documents, a couple of articles propose a reflective approach to television history. Beyond their power to spark emotions and remembrance, 'old' programmes are discussed for their merits of being showcased in new programmes as 'valuable cultural artefacts'. With that perspective in mind, they are used in new productions to shed light on the evolution of the media and of society.

1 John Ellis, *Seeing Things: Television in an Age of Uncertainty*, I.B. Tauris, 2000; Andreas Fickers, "Towards a New Digital Historicism? Doing History in the Age of Abundance", *VIEW Journal of European Television History and Culture*, Vol 1, No. 1, Spring 2012, pp. 19–26.

2 Michel Foucault, *The Archeology of Knowledge*, Pantheon Books, 1972.

**Lisa Kerrigan's** article 'Plundering the Archive and the Recurring Joys of Television' looks at *Plunder*, a programme, introduced by its producer and presenter Michell Raper, as "(...) the programme in which television lives in the past – its own past", and "described in the BBC radio and television listings magazine Radio Times as a 'weekly raid on the archives of BBC television.'" The author explores how in sixty episodes produced over two years, "archive material was used (...) and how the concept of 'the archive' was extended to include reminiscences and recreations as substitutes for archive footage." **Vana Goblot's** study of three archive-based programmes on BBC Four underlines the fact that "'deep' archive has a mediated rather than lived 'memory imprint' on viewers." She stresses the fact that "television archive (...) has evolved to become a vital component in the production process of 'uncovering' a little known past, rather than simply reminiscing about the already seen and familiar."

## 2 The Archive as Relationship to the Past

Several articles elaborate on the ability of an archive document to produce meaning beyond the original intention when reused in new productions; on its capacity to reenact, reconstruct or interpret the past; and, of course, on its role in enhancing, promoting or hindering remembrance. Other articles question issues related to objectivity, authenticity and representation by discussing the role of archives as evidence.

In her article "Goodwill ambassador":The legacy of Dutch colonial films," **Gerda Jansen Hendricks** looks at colonial films commissioned and produced by the Dutch Government during the decolonization period (1945-49) and the ways in which these propaganda films have been consequently re-used in new productions. Jansen Hendricks shows how the re-use of these films had their "original message turned upside down" and the production context disregarded, giving rise to an "imperial mythology" that has come to dominate Dutch collective memory.

**Andrea Meuzelaar's** article "Compiling an European Immigration History: The Case of *Land of Promise*" argues that "the abundance of archival material does not necessary lead to innovative forms of televisual historiography." She provides a thorough analysis of archival storytelling on post-war immigration in Europe based on the three parts Dutch documentary *Land of Promise*. This compilation film series follows Bill Nichols' 'expository mode' of depiction, relying "heavily on the informing logic carried out by the spoken word" and deceptively inviting "the viewer to understand the images as evidence or illustration of what is said."

An archive is also often used as proof and evidence for reflection on and documentation of what once existed. In "Visions of Reconstruction: Layers of Moving Images," **Floris Paalman** highlights a fascinating case of post-war urban reconstruction supported by initiatives of collecting historical footage as part of city film archives. "However, reconstruction plans needed images to imagine future cities, to provide directions, to explain the plans and gain support, and to monitor the results once the plans were carried out". Paalman clearly refers to archives as visual milestones of an era, as a way to maintain and perpetuate memories, and in the end to reconstruct the past.

Drawing upon media archaeology and looking specifically at the reconstruction of the city of Rotterdam, Paalman attempts to offer answers to the question: "what is a city like when it's no longer there" ... and needs be reconstructed?

## 3 Authorship

The use of archives in documentary productions raises challenges and controversies in relation to the issue of authorship. **Paul Kerr's** article "Authorship, Autobiography and the Archive: *Marilyn on Marilyn*, Television and Documentary Theory" draws upon the author's experience as director of the archive-based documentaries *Marilyn on Marilyn* and *Billie on Billie*. Kerr argues that "both first person filmmaking and archive-based work raise fundamental questions for documentary authorship". Kerr's argument that Jaimie Baron's 'archive effect' could develop into an 'archive affect,' - "that is to say not just an epistemological effect but also an emotional one" - is an understanding that may be shared by many contributions featured in this issue.

## 4 Amateur Footage as Archives

In his “*Eyewitness of History. Italian Amateur Cinema as Cultural Heritage and Source for Audiovisual and Media Production*,” **Paolo Simoni** discusses the status of amateur footage or home movies as archive sources and the “cultural potentials of amateur footage as shared heritage and collective memory”. His article compares the local strategies and support to collect and preserve the ‘hidden heritage’ of amateur footage in Italy to other European contexts.

## 5 Ethics and Creative Re-Use of Archive Material

While digital technologies have provided tremendous opportunities for the creative re-use of archives as a means of expression, **Leo Goldsmith**’s article “Scratch’s Third Body: Video Talks Back to Television” provides a historical perspective to these practices by looking closely at *Scratch Video*, “a short lived, but no less influential video movement that arose in the United Kingdom in the early 1980’s.” The article presents “looping and scratching” practices of appropriation that might have paved the way for current media sampling and remixing practices. As defined by a group of practitioners, *Gorilla Tapes*, Scratch was “a way of talk(ing) back to television:” by using television images as raw material, “Scratch refashioned TV’s images into an unstable union of mass media critique and music-video/advertising aesthetics” and provided grounds for a critique of institutional broadcasters and commercial TV.

**Steve Bryant**’s cautionary article “Archive Footage in New Programmes: Presentational Issues and Perspectives,” tackles the creative re-use of audiovisual archives from a different perspective. Bryant acknowledges that “technologies and film and programme-making conventions change, and as they change, so attitudes to the correct re-use of materials change with them, led by innovation and error.” Relying on several recent examples of archive-based TV documentaries, this contribution discusses these changes, “focusing particularly on the issue of how introduction of widescreen television affected and continues to affect the aspect ratios in which archival footage is presented.” The article is written from the perspective of a television archivist involved in “both the preservation of material and their supply for re-use” and questioning his role as custodian for footage integrity and authenticity.

We are very pleased with this exciting and diverse issue on “Archive-based productions”. Thanks to all the contributors. Enjoy reading!

**Mette Charis Buchman and Claude Mussou**

## Biography

Mette Charis Buchman is a senior manager of archive research at Danish Broadcasting Corporation (DR). She has a long career in the areas of preservation, processing, presenting and reusing archival materials. She is a jury member for the Archive Achievement Award of the International Federation of Television Archives (FIAT/IFTA). She holds a MA and a BA in Film and Media Studies and an MA in Cultural Studies from Copenhagen University, a BA in Information and Library Science from The Royal School of Library and Information Science, and a MA in Women’s studies from South Florida University, USA.

Claude Mussou has master’s degrees in American literature and Journalism from the Sorbonne. She has been working at the National Audiovisual Institute (Ina) in France for most of her career. She has recently been appointed as head of the **InaTHEQUE**, which makes Ina’s collections available for research, as well as supports and promotes academic use of archives. She is also an appointed member of the Television Studies Commission of the International Federation of Television Archives (FIAT/IFTA).