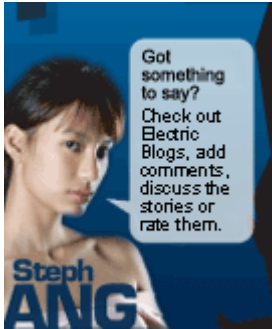


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ON THE NEWS STANDS TODAY

FRI 01 JULY 2005



ELECTRIC NEWS

Don't like the movie? Then re-make it yourself **BLOG**

Remixable films where you can sample and mix movies like a DJ is one of the things discussed at a seminar organised by Noise Singapore at the Nanyang Academy of Fine Arts recently. Journalist WOON WUI TEK and infographics journalist CEL GULAPA report

June 29, 2005



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MOVIES: SEEKING 'SANCTUARY'

Since the earliest movies, one rule hasn't changed: As a viewer, you subject yourself to the film maker's vision from start to finish.

'You're not supposed to fiddle with it.' That is how Britain-based media producer Michela Ledwidge puts it.

But she's rebelling against such control by making what she calls the world's first 'remixable film' in Australia.

You see, she thinks the coming craze will be to 'rip apart, sample and re-use' films - in much the same way as deejays or hip-hop artistes mix music tracks.

Ms Ledwidge's film, unusually, will be released under a 'creative commons' licence, which freely allows audiences to 'copy and edit the film's elements'. This means, so long as you're not doing it for profit, you can buy the DVD of her science-fiction film, load it into your computer - then use it in any way you wish to exercise your creativity.

Want to change the plot or fit in new characters?

Want to just re-edit or re-score to transform mood and meaning?

If you are familiar with the right computer software, go right ahead.

Don't know how to do any of this, but would like to try?

Ms Ledwidge's Sanctuary project might even offer some help in taking apart her film.

Join a planned online subscription service - which would allow you access to discussions by people who already have the technical know-how. Who may already be creating their own works by modifying the original.

They might give you tips on how to start or where to go.

Think it'll be too difficult?

The tools and technical software are already on the market, says Ms Ledwidge. It's just that normal movie makers and studios dislike the idea.

So perhaps this is the start of a flood of 'remixables', including local works.

COMPUTER GAMES: MACHINI-MAGIC!**Story index**

Slap, punch, stomp and spit on him

Exam shock

Sssh!

Let's meet to talk about Hitler

Blood lifeline

Good afternoon, S'pore

Up close to Beckham again? Fat chance

This S'porean moved Disney to say no

Here's your chance to be a badminton champ

Pay fees, fail exams, get degree

Durians at 14 cents a kilo in Johor

Freedom Tower to have bomb-proof base

Indonesians get Very Important Presidential SMS on drug abuse

What a dream team of visitors!

ARE YOU A BEDROOM BABE?

Spending tomorrow's money

Don't shout, we can hear you!

Creative gamers, meanwhile, can embrace the fascinating sub-culture of machinima films, which has taken Europe and America by storm.

Designer and consultant Katie Salen agrees there is 'no reason' why Singapore can't join in.

What is a machinima film?

First, to make any film, there are sets (to create the 'world' of the film) and actors to act out the script.

But in a machinima film, the 'sets' comprise the 3-D world of a video game. The 'actors' are game characters.

You make the actors move by controlling their actions (using a joystick, for instance). You add voice-overs to provide the dialogue.

The 'sets' are controlled by your knowing what backgrounds appear at different stages of the game. Then choose the ones you want for your script.

Take Red vs Blue, generated by using the Xbox shoot-'em-up, Halo.

The visuals can be as stark as alternating points-of-view of two game characters. Or there can be furious fights.

But clever dialogue and in-jokes are the draw.

Some 40 'episodes' have been made: Go to redvsblue.com and you can take a look.

Another example Ms Salen quotes is My Day at Liberty City, 'filmed' within the violent world of Grand Theft Auto: Liberty City.

There's much more at machinima.com - but the point is any dedicated gamer could flex his creative muscles, then post his work on the Internet.

No pricey cast, sets or animation team needed.

NET & BEYOND: BUG FOR ALL

The Net also helps in real-world fun fests like the Big Urban Game (BUG).

Designed by Ms Salen and two others, it drew thousands of residents of America's Twin Cities - St Paul and Minneapolis - into a playful exploration of their community.

Here's how it worked: Three huge inflatable 'game pieces' had to be moved from different locations to a given end point.

What route to take?

Anyone could go on-line, join one of the three teams and vote on what was the shortest route.

The next day, volunteer 'movers' would rush the piece down the selected routes.

Times achieved were posted. Then the whole process was repeated four times.

With each vote, the routes could be changed or fine-tuned.

And it was the team that took the least time, overall, that won.

BUG, run in 2003, was a city-wide interactive game that could conceivably be implemented here.

Ms Salen said the design team would be happy to try.

But inventive locals - school groups, say - might also dream up smaller-scale versions.

Truly, technology is turning any space into one we can play creatively in.

Seriously.

Make noise with your creativity

THE Noise Singapore Festival 2005 is an outlet for the creativity of young Singaporeans.

You can send in graffiti art, blogs, poetry, scripts, short stories, music compositions and more in the categories of Images, Mobile, Sounds and Words.

Visit noisesingapore.com for all the details. Participants must not be more than 25 years old.

The best entries will be broadcast, published and displayed at the Youth Park.

There are prizes in some cases.

The closing date for entries is between 1 and 10 Aug, depending on the category.

A panel of industry experts and arts practitioners will determine the most original and creative works.

The Noise Singapore Festival is managed by the National Arts Council and will run from 30 Sep to 30 Oct.

It is the first international spin-off from Australia's Noise festival which kicked off in 1999.

The official sponsor is MTV Networks Asia and co-organisers include the Singapore History Museum and Lianhe Zaobao's Popcorn.

The seminar, two weekends ago, on creativity and innovation in animation games and new media, was one of a series of workshops and talks being held.

So make noise now.


Singapore wants to hear and assess it.

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