

DIGITAL SAMPLING/REMIX CULTURE FORUM

BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

The genesis of the Digital Sampling/Remix Culture Forum, Workshop, Film and Music Showcase was a chat some years ago that I had with friend, and founding member of The Avalanches, Darren Seltmann. That conversation triggered my interest in the legal, creative and cultural issues of digital sampling and the remix culture and led, finally, to the event held on Friday 6 July 2012 at the Deakin University Waterfront Campus in Geelong.

My aim was to get as many people as possible interested in the whole topic — whatever their angle might be. And I was especially keen to do so in Geelong, which doesn't get the opportunity or access to these sorts of events. All the program events — the Forum, Workshop, Film and Showcase — were free and this allowed more than 120 people to attend and enjoy one or more of the day's events.

The day began with the Forum. A range of speakers, including audio/visual DJs Naysayer and Gilsun, Australian Copyright Council Executive Director Fiona Phillips, and Australian Law Reform Commissioner (ALRC) Professor Jill McKeough, discussed the cultural, artistic, economic and legal implications of collage, homage and digital sampling.

The keynote address was given by Kembrew McLeod. Kembrew is an independent film-maker and Associate Professor of Communications Studies at the University of Iowa. He delivered a fascinating and visually stunning paper on 'Creative Licences and Legal Red Lights: The Art and Law of Digital Sampling Explained'. A further highlight of the day was the Australian premiere of the documentary *Copyright Criminals* which Kembrew wrote and produced. *Copyright Criminals* traces the history of music sampling, where for more than 30 years, hip-hop performers and producers have been re-using portions of previously recorded music in new, otherwise original compositions (<<http://www.copyrightcriminals.com/>>).

We were fortunate also to have most of the speakers videoed by Caroline Coles and Glenn McNolty from Deakin Learning Futures and these can be freely accessed at the following link on the Deakin Law School website (<<http://www.deakin.edu.au/buslaw/law/news/digi-sample.php>>).

The Forum speakers and the ensuing public discussion has already made an important contribution to the wider public debate on the review of Australian copyright law being undertaken by the ALRC. To this end, the ALRC published an Issues Paper, 'Copyright and the Digital Economy, on 20 August 2012 (<<http://www.alrc.gov.au/publications/copyright-ip42> >).

This collection of published papers is an important record of the Digital Sampling/Remix Culture Forum. It begins with the Forum's opening address delivered by Professor Jill McKeough. Importantly, this outlines the nature and scope of the digital copyright inquiry that Professor McKeough is undertaking for the ALRC. It sets the scene for Kembrew McLeod and Peter DiCola's paper that is based on the fantastic keynote address that Kembrew gave at the Forum. Thereafter follows a series of fascinating and diverse papers from Forum speakers Elizabeth Adeney, Wellett Potter, Matthew Rimmer and Dilan Thampapillai. We hope the ideas and proposals that they contain will inform the ongoing public conversation regarding the impact that digital sampling and the remix culture has, will and ought to have on the shape of our laws.

Thanks to the School of Law, Arts Victoria and the Victoria Law Foundation for making Digital Sampling/Remix Culture possible and to all those who attended and contributed to a fascinating and thought-provoking day.

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Digital Sampling/Remix Culture Convenor