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CHAPTER 1

The Eye Filmmuseum: Beyond the Canon, the Fragment and Remix

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ABSTRACT

Chapter 1 examines the experiments with digital archival remix at Amsterdam's Eye Film Museum (Eye) within the longer history of its institutional predecessor, the Netherlands Film Museum (NFM). Staring in the 1980s, the NFM's focus shifted from canonical avant-garde films to lesser-known titles from the transitional period (1907 to 1916) and unidentified early film fragments. Inspired by found-footage filmmaking, curators began splicing unidentified early film fragments together, creating what came to be known as the Bits & Pieces compilations. These innovations paved the way for Eye's later remix experiments, including Celluloid Remix and Jan Bot, which I analyze through Gadamer's concepts of part and whole, pointing to their limits as alternative forms of non-linear historical discourse.

KEYWORDS
Netherlands Film Museum; found-footage; sample; participatory; algorithm; non-linear historiography

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On April 4, 2012, Queen Beatrix of the Netherlands inaugurated Eye Filmmuseum's (Eye) new hypermodern building.[1] With its aerodynamic structure and imponderable shape, the Eye building sits on the banks of the river IJ in the northern neighborhood of Overhoeks, the regeneration of which the new museum helped accelerate. Since then, Eye has held yearly parties—Eye Galas—to celebrate the anniversary of the Dutch film archive's new venue.[2] At Eye, visitors encounter various temporalities, formats, technologies, and experiences of and with moving images. As Chief Curator Giovanna Fossati illustrates:

> When you are in here, ideally you could link every single *dispositif* that is available to the whole experience of being in the building by looking at the city from what recalls a Cinerama window, diving into the collection in the *Panorama* exhibition, walking around the museum with the virtual Eye Walk, and then finally watching the 4K restoration of *Lawrence of Arabia* in one of our cinemas as the main feature of your whole experience.[3]

The museum's move from its former home in Vondelpark to the larger spaces of the Eye building has encouraged curators to experiment with alternatives to theatrical film programming by mixing exhibition apparatuses, technologies, media, and archival material from different historical periods. Such experimentation—less preoccupied with conveying film-historical linearity than giving new visibility to formerly neglected archival material—has a history dating back to the late 1980s.

In 1987, the appointment of Hoos Blotkamp as director of what at the time was called the Netherlands Film Museum (Nederlands Filmmuseum, NFM) and of Eric de Kuyper as her deputy in 1988 inaugurated a period of intense experimentation, particularly with color film restoration and the preservation and exhibition of film fragments found in the archive's vaults.[4] Due to the incomplete nature of film fragments, often only a few minutes long, archivists generally struggled not just to identify their titles but also to determine their genre or whether they were fictional or non-fictional material. For these reasons, in many film archives, film fragments remain unpreserved, laying on a shelf or ending up in the trash. In the late 1980s and throughout the 1990s, however, the NFM began to save, preserve, and display these early film fragments, which often sparked a sense of "surprise, astonishment, [and] magic."[5]

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It resorted to collating these snippets into Bits & Pieces compilations, as archivists called them, provisionally numbering and splicing together each excerpt, duplicating the resulting compilation onto safety film stock, and making them available to curators, programmers, and filmmakers to recombine and exhibit in different settings.[6] In those years, the NFM displayed early and silent film fragments through dedicated film programs at the museum, film festivals, on TV, and on DVD.[7]

At the time, the preservation and display of unidentified film fragments and the color restoration of relatively unknown titles, such as the Italian diva film *Flower of Evil* (*Fior di male*, 1915), seemed unorthodox choices compared with international archival practices.[8] Between the mid-1980s and the mid-1990s, in close collaboration with the Dutch film laboratory Hagefilm, the museum began building technical expertise in silent film color restorations, which it showcased internationally at film festivals, archives, and cinematheques. By bringing attention towards under-investigated areas of historical research, such as early film color application and early non-fiction film genres (including early scientific, animated, and colonial films), the NFM pioneered revisionist epistemologies, historiographies, and archival and curatorial practices. Such work exposed the limits of traditional film histories, which, according to de Kuyper, had for too long conceived their field of inquiry as "a homogeneous one, a smooth and perfectly closed object, linear and logical, with its beautiful dramatic moments ([such as] the emergence of sound!), and of course, lesser-known or less valued domains."[9] Since then, the museum's preservation of silent film color and early film fragments, encapsulated in the Bits & Pieces project, has inspired the work of several filmmakers, including Peter Delpeut (who worked at the NFM as assistant to and then as deputy director), Gustav Deutsch, Peter Forgacs, Bill Morrison, Fiona Tan, and Sandra Beerends, all of whom have reused this unusual material in their found-footage work.[10]

Twenty years later, a thirty million euro grant from the Dutch government enabled the digitization of approximately 20 percent of the museum's collections, including the Bits & Pieces, thereby transforming these early film fragments into digital samples. Thanks to this mass-digitization program, known as Images for the Future, the museum brought the curatorial and historical experiments it began in the 1980s and 1990s into the realm of digital media and technologies.[11] Throughout the 2000s and 2010s, the museum launched several digital projects whose common goal was to encourage users to explore, interact, and play with its digitized collections of early and silent films, exploiting the aura of novelty surrounding digital media. These web-based initiatives included the mash-up platform Scene Machine and the remix contest Celluloid Remix, which invited users to remix samples from the Bits & Pieces digitized collection, inspired by the practice of found-footage filmmaking.

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Its latest experiment with digital remix was Jan Bot (discontinued in March 2023), an AI-powered platform that automatically generated short remixes of Bits & Pieces samples based on daily news trends.[12]

Eye is certainly not the only film museum to have invested in digitizing archival collections, digital dissemination, and innovative audience engagement strategies. However, what makes the Dutch case unique is that, in doing so, the museum has also helped theorize revisionist archival practices and historiographies revolving around early and silent cinema and introduced new modes of audience interaction with the material on display. By bringing film heritage to the digital and algorithmic age, curatorial initiatives like Jan Bot, and Celluloid Remix have produced hybrid analog and digital media practices and aesthetics. Through a set of practices the museum refers to as "crowd curatorship" and the automation of curatorial work, the museum has rethought the interaction between users (including historians, cinephiles, and filmmakers) and the archive.[13]

The first part of this chapter situates Eye's recent digital initiatives within the museum's longer history, highlighting shifting correlations between archival practices and the historical understanding of early and silent cinema.[14] Starting from the museum's origins in the work of the Dutch film society Filmliga, committed to a rigid modernist agenda and artistic film canon, I concentrate on the NFM's progressive shift of focus from the Uitkeijk collection of canonical avant-garde films to the Desmet collection of films from the transitional period (between 1907 and 1916). Greater circulation of films from the Desmet collection in international festivals and in-house programs in the 1980s and 1990s led to revisionist historiographies, rediscovering the specificity of transitional cinema, non-fiction film, the use of applied color techniques in silent cinema, and the work of firms such as Vitagraph, Selig, Ambrosia, and Nordisk, which historians had until then considered minor. This work set the stage for the more daring archival experiments inspired by found-footage filmmaking starting in the late 1980s and epitomized by the Bits & Pieces compilations.

Against the background of the NFM's institutional and curatorial history, the second half of this chapter foregrounds the cultural, technological, historiographic, and epistemological stakes within Eye's digital remix strategies, which have become a pillar of its curatorial interventions. I compare Deutsch's found-footage film *Film Ist. (1–12)* (1996–2002), user-generated remixes, and Jan Bot's automated archival remixes, all of which recycle digitized fragments from the Bits & Pieces collection. I examine the kinds of historical understanding and discourses these works of archival recombination produce by mobilizing Rosalind Krauss's distinction between "reflexiveness" and "autoreflection" and the semiotic concepts of syntagm and paradigm within the

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framework of philosophical hermeneutics. As I argue, the shift to evermore automatic modes of appropriation and recombination has made the discursive, interpretative, and historical links that articulate archival remix increasingly tenuous, leading one to question the overall curatorial efficacy of some of these projects.

FROM THE CANON TO THE DESMET COLLECTION

It is tempting to seek parallels and continuities between Eye's recent curatorial experiments with Bits & Pieces and digital remix and the museum's earlier history. For instance, the programming strategies of NFM's institutional progenitor, the Dutch Film League (Nederlandsche Filmliga), in the late 1920s appear to anticipate a certain sensibility for early cinema and a penchant for juxtaposing historically heterogeneous materials. Founded in 1927, Filmliga was a key actor within the film cultural network that shaped the formation of the Dutch film archive. The prints of avant-garde films that Filmliga's partner cinema de Uitkijk ("the Outlook") purchased for distribution ended up constituting one of the museum's most precious collections.[15] NFM founders Piet Meerburg, Paul Kijzer, and Jan de Vaal formed their sense of film appreciation through the film club's avant-garde film programs, lectures, and film magazine.[16] One of Filmliga's earliest programs on October 20, 1927 included two early films, the 1907 Pathé drama *Will Grandfather Forgive?* and Segundo de Chomón's féerie *L'Obsession de l'or*, alongside René Clair's *Entr'acte* (1924) and Alberto Cavalcanti's avant-garde documentary *Nothing but Time* (*Rien que les heures*, 1926).[17] Such exhibition practices followed in the footsteps of the French cine-clubs' eclectic programs, mixing avant-garde, early, and scientific films. However, as film historian Hans Schoots notes, rather than being "an ode to the infinite possibilities of the medium of film or a tribute to early cinema," the Filmliga program was inspired by rigid modernist principles about what types of films were to be appreciated as art.[18]

From the pages of the club's magazine, also called *Filmliga*, leading theorist and critic Menno ter Braak claimed that such a varied program aimed to illustrate the "uncountable detours" that film had encountered in its struggle to emancipate from mass entertainment and its obsession with drama and photographic realism. An elitist educational agenda that strictly distinguished good films from bad ones and art films from cinema's presumed commercial aberrations shaped Filmliga's programs. As ter Braak argues, in featuring "no close-ups, no independent expressions, [but] only cliché's [*sic*] of reality reproduced in ridiculously enhanced melodramatic style," early cinema lacked the medium's self-reflexive "consciousness of the power of cinematography." In

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"avant-guerre cinema"—as early cinema was referred to in the Netherlands—he concludes, "Film is not born yet from the cinema." Against this radical modernist teleology, early cinema was nothing but a "prehistoric mistake."[19]

Filmliga's educational program and strictly defined artistic film canon profoundly influenced the NFM's genesis. Discussions about the creation of a national film archive in the Netherlands had begun as early as 1919, leading to the creation of the Dutch Central Film Archive (Nederlandsch Centraal Filmarchief, NCF), whose mission was to collect films of cultural, historical, and social value as records of life in the Netherlands.[20] Conversations between de Vaal (at the time a film collector), Meerburg, Kijzer (respectively founder and programmer at the Kriterion arthouse cinema in Amsterdam), and David van Staveren (who was the director of the Board of Film Censors and had previously been involved in the NCF) resumed after WWII. In 1946, they founded the Dutch Historical Film Archive (Nederlandsch Historisch Filmarchief, NHFA).[21] It was only when the archive acquired the Uitkijk collection of avant-garde films in 1952 that the NHFA dropped the term "archive" from its name in favor of "museum," morphing into the NFM and moving its premises to the Stedelijk Museum of modern arts.[22] The collection included films such as Alberto Cavalcanti's *News in Brief* (*Faits-divers*, 1923), Germaine Dulac's *The Seashell and the Clergyman* (*La coquille et le clergyman*, 1928), and Man Ray's *The Starfish* (*L'Étoile de mer*, 1928).[23] De Vaal became the museum's first director, a position he held until 1984.

The Stedelijk Museum's incorporation of film among the officially sanctioned high modern arts followed in the footsteps of Alfred Barr's establishment of the Film Library at the Museum of Modern Arts (MoMA) in New York.[24] The NFM's "designation as a museum, and its presence among historically legitimised art forms in the Stedelijk Museum," film historian Bregt Lameris highlights, "were clear indications of film's trajectory towards its consecration as an art."[25] In its newfound home, the NFM was equipped with its own offices and a dedicated auditorium, where it started its season of weekly screenings, film lectures, courses, and public events with international guest filmmakers. Echoes of Filmliga's prescriptive educational programs kept resonating in much of the film museum's work in the following years, including its mandate to inculcate a "correct understanding of quality film."[26]

The Uitkijk collection of avant-garde films was pivotal in establishing the NFM's reputation nationally and internationally, helping de Vaal build networks with other members of the International Federation of Film Archives (FIAF) and expand the museum collections. FIAF had established a system of archival distribution, enabling relatively small archives (such as the NFM) to trade obscure titles for more acclaimed ones in other archival film collections elsewhere. As the sixty-six avant-garde films in the Uitkijk collection were representative of the

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art film canon, they became a popular currency within this exchange network.[27] Therefore, as salvaging the art film canon remained an international preservation priority, it should not be surprising that the NFM's Uitkijk collection held such an enduring prestige even while many of its titles could be found also in other archives.[28] For a long time, its unchallenged status overshadowed other material in the museum's vaults, such as the Desmet collection, which consists of more than 900 unique nitrate film prints, promotional material, and business records from the transitional period between 1907 and 1916.

The NFM acquired this vast collection comprising films, promotional material (such as posters, flyers, and programs), and a business archive (including invoices, rental books, sales lists, telegrams, and insurance policy documents) in 1957.[29] It had belonged to Jean Desmet, who, from humble origins in the fairground business, had built a career as a cinema owner and independent international distributor in the 1910s.[30] As purchasing film prints (rather than renting them) was common practice among film distributors at the time, Desmet amassed a vast repository of dramas, comedies, and travelogues of various lengths, mainly from France, the United States, Italy, Germany, and Denmark.[31]

Throughout the 1960s, the NFM screened nitrate film prints from the Desmet collection at the auditorium of the Stedelijk Museum. Between 1961 and 1966, it held retrospectives titled Images Fantastique at the International Film Week in Arnhem (the precursor of the Rotterdam International Film Festival), reenacting early traveling cinema with titles such as the 1911 Pathè comic short *Rosalie et son phonographe* (Rosalie and her phonograph), the 1912 Italian short drama *The Ship of Lions* (*La Nave dei leoni*), and Maurice Tourneur's two-reeler *La Bergère d'Ivry* (The shepherdess of Ivry, 1913).[32] However, despite such occasional programs, the museum never considered the preservation of the Desmet collection its top priority in the thirty years following its acquisition, also due to insufficient state funding. In line with FIAF's standards, for instance, the museum often traded unique nitrate prints of foreign titles from the Desmet collection with other archives—eager to preserve the widest possible portion of their national film heritage—in exchange for films deemed more valuable. According to film historian Ivo Blom, in the mid-1970s, de Vaal shipped thirty-two unique Danish nitrate films to the archive in Copenhagen, which preserved them but returned only two 16mm duplicates to the NFM.[33] By 1986, when a substantial grant became available for preservation, only fifty-nine Desmet films had been preserved and often by archives abroad.[34]

Under the interim management of Frans Maks, who succeeded de Vaal in 1984, and Hoos Blotkamp starting in 1987, the NFM began to devote considerable efforts to exhibiting the Desmet collection more widely. In 1985, the museum appointed Frank van der Maden as collection curator and held its first Desmet-focused exhibition at the Vondelpark Pavilion, where the muse-

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um had moved in the early 1970s.[35] The following year, a color restoration of the largely unknown 1915 Italian drama *Flower of Evil*, produced by Cines and directed by Carmine Gallone, premiered at the Pordenone Silent Film Festival. Many in the audience marveled at Italian diva Lyda Borelli in a beautifully photographed green-toned scene, where she sneaks in and out of Count van Deller's villa before walking to the beach and repenting of her sins against the dramatic silvery backdrop of a dawning sun. For many critics and historians, it was like rediscovering a neglected portion of a film history in need of revision. In a letter to Blom, film curator Paolo Cherchi Usai recalls the event as follows:

> It was a declaration of war against the assumption that Italian cinema of the silent period was a known entity. It was the proof that much, much more could be seen and told about it. It was an indictment of the false representation and false consciousness of film history as a crystallized set of periodizations.[36]

This kind of sentiment demonstrated the potential impact of revisionist approaches bringing films previously deemed to have little historical value into the public view. In the following years, the Desmet collection enjoyed unprecedented visibility in Pordenone. A 1987 retrospective of Vitagraph films in collaboration with the British Film Institute (BFI) National Archive was followed by a program of 1910s Messter films titled Before Caligari in 1990 and a series of Éclair films in 1992. These retrospectives showcased the quality of the NFM's color restorations, which became a trademark of the Desmet collection.[37] They shed light on the richness and variety of color technologies and processes used in early and silent films, 80 percent of which had been colored with dyes, stencils, color baths, and tints.[38]

While the Desmet collection's wider circulation in the mid- and late 1980s led to greater awareness of its historical value and specificity, the NFM continued to hold surprisingly tight to aesthetic hierarchies it had inherited from previous administrations. As the museum's 1989 report illustrates, based on qualitative grounds, the museum deemed sufficient preserving only a limited selection of Desmet films for the purpose of historical research and film analysis. Compared to the Uitkijk collection, which, according to the report, reflected a "conscious qualitative choice, … intended to counterbalance what was usually on offer in the regular cinemas," the Desmet collection appeared as a heterogeneous archive, lacking coherent rationale and aesthetic interest.[39] Based on these premises, the practice of trading unique Desmet films in exchange for duplicates of the same or other titles considered more prestigious continued until at least the late 1980s, further jeopardizing the collection. In 1989, several film historians sitting on the museum's board, including

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Karel Dibbets, resigned in protest of the draining of the Desmet collection abroad—a polemic that Dutch newspapers referred to as the "Desmet affair."[40]

Extensive research into the so-called transitional period (in which Jean Desmet had been most active) offered crucial coordinates to better understand the collection's significance in the following years. The collection documented Desmet's business expansion—from his early traveling cinematograph to the opening of the 1909 Cinema Parisien in Rotterdam and the 1912 luxury Cinema Palace in Amsterdam—offering a time capsule from this hitherto scarcely known period in cinema history.[41] Within the Dutch context, characterized by the absence of a strong production sector, Desmet was able to build an empire, operating as an independent international film dealer, distributor, and exhibitor. However, the introduction of increasingly longer, more elaborate, and prestigious cinema programs, which in the early 1910s popularized international silent film stars such as Asta Nielsen and Henny Porten, marked Desmet's gradual demise. Fueled by higher production values and the emerging star system, the soaring popularity of feature films led to the introduction of exclusive exhibition licenses and progressively more vertically integrated networks of distribution, driving exhibitors like Desmet out of competition.

According to former MoMA curator Eileen Bowser, the Desmet collection holds "special value because it is from a period when so few films survived." As she argues, archivists at MoMA's Film Library "certainly began to have a new idea of the importance of the Vitagraph production," for instance, only "after the Desmet Collection began to become accessible."[42] The study of the collection and the international circulation of until then forgotten films by such companies as Vitagraph, Selig, Ambrosio, and Nordisk cast new light onto early and transitional cinema, making their formal characteristics legible to a larger group of archivists, curators, historians, and spectators.

Throughout the 1990s and 2000s, various NFM initiatives reflected this newly acquired awareness. In 1991, Delpeut's archival collage film *Lyrical Nitrate* (*Lyrisch Nitraat*), entirely made up of fragments of early travelogues, ghost rides, and dramas from the Desmet collection, premiered at the Berlin International Film Festival.[43] In the same year, the archive issued a series of 16mm film compilations dedicated to early Italian, French, and US cinema, titled Amore e Lotta, À la Campagne, and A Changing Society.[44] In the mid-1990s, the NFM held several international workshops about non-fiction films in the 1910s and color in silent cinema.[45] In 2003, Blom published the first English-language book-length study of the collection, *Jean Desmet and the Early Dutch Film Trade*, based on a decade-long study of countless archival records and films. In 2007, MoMA featured an entire program titled Jean Desmet's Cinema of Sensation and Sentiment, followed by a second one dedicated to early film comedies from the collection a few years later.[46] The arc of the col-

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lection's changing fortunes concluded with its inscription in the UNESCO Memory of the World Register in 2011.[47]

The recovery and rediscovery of the Desmet collection happened in the context of a radical paradigm change that had begun at the end of the 1970s. Contrary to the earlier art historical approach, focused on films as autonomous works exemplary of cinema's formal development, the new film history, as I mention in this book's introduction, regards early cinema as embedded in an intermedia matrix of theatrical entertainment, illustration, optical and photographic apparatuses, and science. Up to that point, historians and archivists had concentrated chiefly on the masterpieces of the silent era, neglecting the vast variety of material sitting (and progressively deteriorating) in archival vaults, including early, ethnographic, transitional, orphan, and unidentified films, as well as film fragments. By uncovering early cinema's historical specificity—its remediation of tropes circulating in other media, modes of addressing spectators (encoded in its formal characteristics), and exhibition contexts—the new film historians redefine early films as essentially different from the kind of cinema that came afterwards.[48]

The new film history advances an epistemological revision of the terms that have previously defined historical investigations into early and silent cinema and the interpretative work of archivists and curators. In philosophical hermeneutic terms, such an epistemological shift alters the correlation between the phenomenon under investigation, what Gadamer calls the *part*, and the unity of discourse establishing a coherent historical context (a *whole*) to read the *part*. The new film history abandons an explanatory model previously centered on cinema's incremental process of institutionalization and formal and artistic development, repositioning early films (the *part*) within a new historical discourse (a revised historical *whole*) describing a much less linear time frame, in which cinema existed as an optical, scientific, and imperial attraction, rather than exclusively as a medium of "narrative integration."[49] Within a reiterative movement that Gadamer defines as a hermeneutic circle from *part* to *whole* and back to the *part*, a revised understanding of early cinema's contextual history has enabled historians to appreciate the merits of individual early film titles, the diversity of their expressions, their technical innovations, and artistic experimentation with, for instance, the use of color.

Inspired by these revisions, the reevaluation of the Desmet collection led to a better understanding of what a film collection was, at the intersection of film's material histories and archival practices. Historians and archivists began understanding a film collection like Desmet's as "a corpus, with its own history, life and patterns of making, unmaking, exploitation, survival, rediscovery, and new archival and scholarly use." In Cherchi Usai's words, the films of the Desmet collection are "a healthy reminder that films do not exist

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in a void, but are 'made' constantly, after they are shot, printed and shown."[50] According to Blom, "it is only when we recognise a repository of objects as comprising a self-contained *whole* with an individual history and a specific context, that it becomes a collection."[51] The value of the Desmet collection lies in the completeness of the records that accompany its many unique film prints—publicity material, correspondence, invoices, programs, lists of acquisitions, sales, and rentals—which make it "unparalleled in the world, in terms of both size and content." It tells a micro-history that in UNESCO's words, "exceeds the boundaries of film history and has great value for the socio-historical description and appreciation of one of the most important decades in modern history."[52]

In a sort of hermeneutic circularity, these epistemological shifts and historiographic revisions in turn fueled a progressive redefinition of the museum's archival policies and exhibition practices, prompting new curatorial challenges. In an interview with Blom, Blotkamp illustrates some of the questions these changing paradigms raised, explaining:

> the big audience doesn't care whether a film comes from a collection. They come for the films, for the filmmakers. ... When you have two equal films, and one is from the Desmet Collection and the other is not, and you only have money [to preserve] one, you are posed a moral dilemma.[53]

Thanks to Blotkamp's fundraising, the museum secured adequate financial resources to address such a predicament. In 1990, a major four-year grant enabled the NFM to inventory its holdings, preserve them on a larger scale, and experiment with new exhibition approaches.[54] The museum uncovered a wealth of films that had previously been deemed lost, forgotten, or remained unidentified, such as Frank Borzage's *The Good Provider* (1922) and Fritz Lang's *Harakiri* (1919). However, "for one 'great title', for one film by a great master," the NFM's deputy director de Kuyper notes, "there were dozens of less important films from less important directors, and hundreds of forgotten films from forgotten filmmakers," along with material impossible to identify.[55]

BITS & PIECES OF FILM HISTORY

Building on this revisionist work, at the end of the 1980s, archivists Delpeut and Mark-Paul Meyer started experimenting with a new and, relative to the era, peculiar way of preserving and exhibiting early and silent films. Inspired by the variety, colors, and randomness of the unidentified early film snippets they found in the NFM's vaults, they sought ways to preserve this material, which the museum

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would have customarily neglected or discarded. Due to the practical problem of duplicating such short segments of film strip, Delpeut and Meyer resorted to editing them one after the other. As preserving "a fragment of 20 meters is impossible for a lab," the way round at the time, explains Meyer, was "to collect 10–20 of them and then put them on one reel, to make rolls only with colour fragments or black-and-white fragments, so that they can copy them in one go."[56] These resulted in the Bits & Pieces compilations of early film fragments.

The first Bits & Pieces compilation, for instance, contains ten different film fragments numbered from one to eleven (number three is missing).[57] Interpolated between two predominantly sepia-toned snippets, sits fragment number three, a two-minute-long segment featuring a fictional noble Japanese poet, whose name, we learn, is Li Kiang. The segment opens with a vivid blue close-up of the poet in meditation, followed by a close-up of his hands as he pulls out of his gown a potion that he hopes will bring an end to his terrible nightmares. Three beautifully hued shots succeed one another: an ochre-cultured iris shot of his eyes, a sepia-toned sequence of an award ceremony in Li Kiang's honor, and a wisteria-colored panning shot of his home, surrounded by a garden and creek. The fragment concludes with a montage alternating again between a blue-themed close-up of the poet with eyes closed, a shot of his healer's blessing in sepia, and a final close-up of Li Kiang in blue. A title card reads, "Three drops ... no more! Ten drops would forever destroy Your eyes." Just as it appears to be approaching its narrative climax, the fragment interrupts, leaving us wondering about the effects of Li Kiang's potion—a denouement we will most likely never know.

As fragment number three illustrates, the Bits & Pieces present random cross-sections of longer narratives, lacking a coherent arc unfolding from beginning to middle and end. Despite the preponderance of unidentified film fragments in archival collections worldwide, in the absence of international preservation standards for them, archivists struggle to index these scraps of film, typically disposing of them.[58] As unidentified fragments, "these pieces of film are not only bereft of legal status," Delpeut notes laconically, "they are not even orphans, as they are written off before they were written in."[59] They are simply "non-existent in the eyes of [a] film history ... based on 'identities' procured by 'works' and 'authors'," as de Kuyper provocatively highlights.[60] In many film archives, as Delpeut explains:

> fragments are disappearing in the trash. ... "But they are often so beautiful ...," we regretfully sighed again and again in our weekly meetings. Eventually, the solution turned out to be to make a small collection of the most beautiful fragments. ... Now these are preserved, each with its own number, and more importantly, they are used, that is: shown.[61]

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FIGURE 1.
Fragment no. 5, *Bits & Pieces Nrs. 1 t/m 11*. Courtesy of Eye Filmmuseum.

Devoid of definite historical context, authorship, production credits, and title, many of these fragments display what André Habib calls the "aesthetic autonomy of the ruin," appealing to archivists' sense of surprise and marvel.[62] By recuperating these ruinous traces, the NFM invoked, in de Kuyper's words, a revisionist "aesthetic of film history."[63]

The Bits & Pieces compilations feature what Habib defines as a "poetics of ruins," in which the fragment has the power "through its debris, of bringing to the present a past life that time has dismantled."[64] With its oddly truncated brevity, fragment number five from the same compilation, for instance, stands out as a present trace of cinema's past, picturing the pathos of its silent female performer, paradoxically cut off from its unknown narrative coherence. Though only a minute long, this bright, red-toned segment beautifully captures the emotional climax of a family drama as we see the extended duration of its protagonist's grief (see figure 1). She clings to what looks like her desperate mother, breathes heavily, stands up with her eyes closed, holds her head in pain, then opens her eyes, and as her sigh is emphatically about to turn into a cry, the film suddenly interrupts. While this mutilated sequence is testimony of a loss, "this residue of the combined forces of coincidence and willful indifference," Delpeut argues, "often has a fascinating attraction." What once was "*part* of a larger *whole*," as he poetically sums up, "time, in its strange ways, made into an indefinite image fragment valuable in and of itself."[65]

These eccentrically truncated excerpts disturb our habitual narrative and historical reading modes, poking at the viewer in the guise of what Roland Barthes defines as *punctum*, an accident, a punctuation mark, a fracture.[66]

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Like a photograph's *punctum*, a film fragment is in his words "a 'detail,' *i.e.*, a partial object."[67] According to Mary Ann Doane, the *punctum*'s singularity is "an effect of the indexicality of the image," understood as "an absolute particularity ... opposed to the culturally generated meaning of the photograph (which Barthes labels the *studium*)."[68] With their excised dramatic details, or *puncta*, the Bits & Pieces fragments arouse an intense affective reaction, a "sympathy" and a "tenderness," to use Barthes' expressions, which transcend the culturally coded work of historical interpretation. As Habib observes for Delpeut's *Lyrical Nitrate*, fragments here function as allegories of the memory and history of early and silent cinema, objects of longing and melancholic contemplation. With their singularity, the Bits & Pieces allegorically project us towards a partially lost past. As film historian Nanna Verhoeff observes, they act as details that hermeneutically "strive towards *whole*ness."[69]

As Delpeut argues, preserving and exhibiting film fragments invites a reconsideration of "the archive as a *whole*" by questioning "its function, its purpose, its rationale, its endurance, its influence, and aura."[70] Based on incomplete archival evidence, film history is an inevitably partial, unexhaustive, and heuristic endeavor that needs constant revision and expansion. As Verhoeff notes, "every object found in a film archive is a fragment of an irretrievable, ever-widening *whole*: the 'complete' film, the 'genre,' the program, the cultural habits of watching films, the culture."[71] In her analysis of fragments of early Western films in the Bits & Pieces compilations, Verhoeff advocates a "post-archaeological attitude" to archival research and film history, one that "endorses fragmentation rather than attempting to overcome it."[72] In place of traditional archival and curatorial approaches inspired by ideals of historical reconstruction, coherence, and integrity, the Bits & Pieces embrace the singular beauty of film fragments as allegories of a history that has foregone completeness and linearity. As de Kuyper claims, such a history "would have a very different developmental line" from that of established historiographies by rewarding disruptions and discontinuities and accepting that we often "work with 'fragments of a history of film' where the holes and losses are even as significant as what is still there."[73]

The NFM translated its curatorial practice, inspired by the aesthetics and politics of found-footage filmmaking, into a revisionist and non-linear historical discourse. In the book accompanying Eye's inaugural exhibition, *Found Footage: Cinema Exposed* (2012), Fossati argues that found-footage filmmaking performs some of the same processes at the basis of film archival practice, such as "selection, decontextualisation, re-contextualisation, and presentation of (parts of) films."[74] We can see this principle at work in one of the most recent Bits & Pieces compilations, *Nrs. 610 t/m 623*.[75] It gathers a series of exoticized views, including actualities (such as the disturbing footage of a Ku Klux Klan

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parade in Washington, DC), travelogues, Osio Koffler's animations of silent film celebrities Lya de Putti and Emil Jannings, and excerpts of feature films. Fragment no. 610 places the camera on a sleigh in Alaska. The no. 614 takes us amidst the passengers on the North Sea Canal ferry, and we end up flying over the snowy peaks of the Mont Blanc in no. 617. As with the images recycled and assembled in found-footage works, one may read the fragments in the Bits & Pieces as severed from their original historical and textual contexts. As Catherine Russell notes, they yield "incomplete information in which the referent is rendered as a singularity, an eruption of the real within a system of ethnographic representation."[76] Even so, by juxtaposing the singularity of these images (as hermeneutic *part*s) one next to the other, the Bits & Pieces compile them into a signifying unit (an interpretative *whole*), enabling us to read them as traces of perceptive attitudes and modes of representation emerging at the turn of the nineteenth century. The Bits & Pieces compilation *Nrs. 610 t/m 623* highlights a continuity of contexts across its different imageries, underscoring film's early fascination with simultaneous movement, mass gatherings and entertainments, and a new mobile perspective captured for the first time by cinema's unfastened camera. More than a century after it was originally shot, this footage circulates as an ethnographic record and allegory of a distant and partially alien past—"the time of the Other."[77] Reassembled, these images mediate what we may call, paraphrasing Russell's words, a "temporal discontinuity," or in Gadamer's terms, the temporal distance between us and this past visual culture.[78]

Throughout the 1990s, Delpeut and Meyer enjoyed remarkable curatorial freedom and modeled their archival and curatorial work on found-footage filmmaking. Delpeut's filmmaking work, exemplified by archival compilations such as *Lyrical Nitrate*, *The Forbidden Quest* (1992), and *Diva Dolorosa* (1999), often overlaps with his archival ethos. As he writes in the Dutch magazine *Skrien* in 1990, besides being a keeper and a guardian, "perhaps the archivist should consider himself [*sic*] ... a filmmaker, too, an editor of a beautiful, perpetual film."[79] With Bits & Pieces, found-footage filmmaking became a catalyst of experimentation in the field of film exhibition and a model of audience engagement. From the very start, Delpeut and Meyer conceived these compilations less as a finished product than as an inventory of raw archival material that enabled further historical research and recombination. The principle behind Bits & Pieces, retrospectively explains Meyer, "was that reels could be divided in separate fragments (respecting the integrity of the single snippet) and that new combinations could be made."[80] The loan history of the 35mm print of compilation *no. 12 t/m 20*, for instance, shows many examples of creative reuse, despite the laborious process of extracting and reediting analog fragments. They range from a screening of fragments in the 1991 program

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Lost & Found at the Rotterdam Film Festival to their repurposing in Deutsch's 2002 archival essay film *Film Ist. (1–12)*.[81] In 1995, Meyer and Delpeut included various Bits & Pieces fragments in two compilations broadcast on the Dutch TV channel VPRO as part of a series called *Cinema Perdu*, showcasing the museum's collections.[82]

Since the late 1980s, dozens of curators, filmmakers, musicians, and scholars have repurposed early and silent film material from the NFM's vaults. In her 1992 compilation film *Mode in beweging* (Fashion in motion), for instance, fashion historian José Teunissen investigates the interplay between the body, motion, and fashion between the 1910s and the 1930s, reusing newsreels and fashion films by Pathé and Gaumont from the NFM's archive.[83] In 2000, DJ Spooky incorporated several Bits & Pieces into a 16mm film screened at the Louvre as part of his DJ set Les Vestiges: de la techno au Louvre?[84] Inspired by the Bits & Pieces, these experiments anticipate the ease of access, duplication, and recombination digital media and technologies would have begun making possible in the 2000s. Looking back, Delpeut notes, "we were dreaming of the possibilities the digital would have brought."[85] When funding enabled the digitization of the NFM's collections, the Bits & Pieces provided not just curated material for the museum's growing digital repository but also a successful curatorial and historiographic precedent for Eye's later experiments with digital remix.

INTO THE DIGITAL AGE

In the late 1990s, the NFM began carrying its innovations in early and silent film preservation, restoration, and exhibition into the digital age. It did so with "the ambition to bridge analog and digital," to use Fossati's words, by testing boundaries and meshing analog film aesthetics and techniques with digital tools and the aura of novelty surrounding new media practices.[86] The museum took its first steps into the digital domain in 1996, when it embarked on a project to digitize about one thousand films in its collections, transferring them to Digital Betacam tapes and MPEG1 files at Standard Definition.[87] Since then, the NFM has established itself at the forefront of digital archival experimentation. Three axes define its current curatorial approach: digital access to its collections, participatory dissemination practices, and the digital remix of archival material of different provenance.

Between 2000 and 2003, the NFM joined the 2.29 million euros project Digital Film Manipulation System (Diamant), co-funded by the European Union to develop software for the digital restoration of archival films.[88] Based on the collaboration between the NFM, Laboratoires Neyrac Paris (special-

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ists in film restoration), three IT research centers, and private software and hardware developers, the new Diamant software allowed archivists to correct scratches and dust on the film emulsion, stabilize the image, and eliminate flickering effects.[89] The acquisition of new digital skills and tools led the museum not just to explore the potential for digital image manipulation in restoration projects, but also experiment with new modalities of archival film release and exhibition.

In 2002, the NFM conducted its first digital restoration experiment on the 1931 silent film *Zeemansvrouwen* (Sailor's wives). Somewhat ironically, it was the last silent film to be produced in the Netherlands, despite initial plans to release it as the first-ever Dutch sound film with studio-recorded dialog. Taking inspiration from that initial ambition, restorers transformed the film into a talkie with a music score composed by musician Henny Vrienten and dialog reconstructed from the homonymous theatrical play by Herman Bouber and lip-reading.[90] One of the most delicate and innovative aspects of the restoration, carried out at Digital Film Lab in Copenhagen, involved stretching the film from 22 frames per second (fps), in the original silent version, to the 24fps speed of sound film.[91] The result, showcased at the NFM's 2003 Filmmuseum Biennale, is in Fossati's words, "a new version, not a restoration," which challenged "not only the limits of the technology … but also those of film restoration ethics."[92] This was the first of the museum's projects where the manipulative potential of digital technologies was put in the service of creative, unorthodox interpretations of historical material. In drawing together historically disparate source elements, including the nitrate print of *Zeemansvrouwen*, Boubler's play, and Vrienten's score, this restoration features the same recombining logic that had animated Bits & Pieces.

The restoration of *Zeemansvrouwen* inaugurated a series of daring restoration projects that reinterpreted silent films in a revisionist spirit, digitally remediating them to appeal to contemporary audiences' curiosity. In 2004, the NFM performed an even more ambitious digital restoration of Sam Wood's long-lost film *Beyond the Rocks* (1922), which had recently resurfaced in the museum's vaults. The museum produced seven restored versions of the film: two silent film prints (with Dutch and English title cards), two sound film prints with Vrienten's composed score, one DCP, and two DVD versions with two different soundtracks.[93] After digitally scanning the film's battered nitrate print, restorers at the Hagefilm laboratory and NFM archivists used the newly available Diamant software to thoroughly clean, stabilize, and eliminate excessive flickering from the images. Digital interventions included grading, doubling every third frame to stretch the film from 18 to 24fps of sound speed, and adapting it to the Academy ratio.[94] Such an ambitious use of digital techniques allowed the NFM to tailor different restored versions (analog and digi-

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tal, silent and sound, Dutch and English) and exhibition experiences to various audiences. The restoration of *Beyond the Rocks* has since screened widely: in the Classics section at Cannes, on Turner Classic Movies, on the Dutch public television, and in archival film festivals such as Il Cinema Ritrovato in Bologna and the Pordenone Silent Film Festival.[95] Beyond maximizing the film's audience outreach and circulation, its seven incarnations display varying degrees of digital manipulation, demonstrating the unprecedented power of adaptability, malleability, and reproducibility of digital technologies.

The restoration of *Beyond the Rocks* hinges upon the logic of digital remediation, that is, the new medium's "promise to reform its [technological] predecessors by offering a more immediate or authentic experience."[96] Eye's Silent Film Curator Elif Rongen Kaynakçi highlights the reiterative nature of such work of reinterpretation, refashioning, and remediation, illustrating the case of the 2013 restoration of Alfred Machin's 1914 *War is Hell* (*Maudite soit la guerre*), carried out in collaboration with the Cinémathèque Royale de Belgique / Koninklijk Belgisch Filmarchief. As she explains:

> We can *re-make* a film, that is, we can improve the appearance of the archival material that we already have. This improvement can be achieved on two grounds today. The first one is on the level of content and narrative as there can be a more complete version of the same film because new material has been found. The second one is from a technical perspective as we might now be able to achieve a restoration that looks better than the existing one. *Maudite soit la guerre* is an example. Although I had already worked on restoring this title in the early 1990s, and it has since been extensively shown around, its importance is renewed today within the context of the WWI centennial.[97]

In this way, the NFM reached out to an audience accustomed to ever sharper, brighter, and higher resolution moving images by tapping into the undying aura of newness, efficiency, and realism surrounding digital technologies and digitally restyling silent cinema. The success of its digital experiments, liberally blending different archival source elements, techniques, and technologies, paved the way for the museum's metamorphosis into Eye.[98]

In 2007, the Dutch government injected around thirty million euros into the mass digitization of the NFM's collections, a seven-year-long project known as Images for the Future. It enabled the assessment, preservation, restoration, digitization, and dissemination of approximately ten thousand titles (equivalent to 5,000 hours of film), kickstarting a series of initiatives hinging on the digital accessibility of increasingly large portions of the museum's archive.[99] The NFM acquired hardware, software, and skills to digitally scan, restore, and

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manage digital assets, progressively incorporating these operations within its daily workflow. The digitization of around 20 percent of the museum's collections in 2K (2048 × 1080 pixels) resolution multiplied their opportunities for circulation and new modalities of exhibition, not just on digital screens but also in theatrical projections, installations, and temporary exhibitions such as *Jean Desmet's Dream Factory* in 2015.[100] The NFM began redefining its institutional image by embracing a digital access policy conceived, as in much media discourse and scholarship at the time, as a harbinger of novelty, democratic values, transparency, participatory practices, critical reading, and creative reuse.[101] As Sandra den Hamer, who became museum director in 2007, said, "Images for the Future is the pillar under our metamorphosis into a new museum. Digital access to audio-visual heritage is as important as our actual re-housing."[102]

On December 31, 2009, the NFM merged with Holland Film, the Filmbank, and the Netherlands Institute for Film Education—three organizations that specialized respectively in the promotion of Dutch film abroad, experimental film, and national film education—to form Eye.[103] By incorporating their resources, collections, and mandates, the new organization assumed the role of "Dutch national film institute and the only museum for film heritage and the art of film in the Netherlands."[104] In the spring of 2012, the newly established museum moved to its much anticipated new venue on the river IJ in the redeveloped neighborhood of Overhoeks in Amsterdam North. Located on the formerly industrial lot of the dismantled Shell laboratory, the new building's name, Eye, is a double reference to both the Dutch pronunciation of the river IJ ("eye") as well as the visual and cinematic experience.[105] The optical motif further resonates with the building's elongated shape, which smoothly accommodates the river's bend, and the museum's new logo, a blinking eye.

Eye's site developer ING Real Estate followed the urban regeneration formula popularized by the 1997 opening of the Guggenheim Museum in Bilbao by commissioning the construction of a sculptural, eye-catching museum, which functioned as an anchor attraction within the district's redevelopment plans.[106] Designed by the Vienna-based architecture firm Delugan Meissl, the sleek aluminum clad building sits on the waterfront as a landmark of Amsterdam North's postindustrial requalification. Stretching out southwards, towards Amsterdam's historic town center, and northwards, pointing to the city's formerly industrial quarters, the museum's cusped design bridges heritage and renovation. Eye's futuristic building stands as a visual, symbolic, and architectural incarnation of the promise of seamless modernization and total transformation of the digital age.

Fossati highlights the significance of "the move from the Vondelpark, where the historical location of the film museum was based until 2012, to

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this new building" by identifying it as "one of the most radical changes in the history of this institution."[107] By providing increased room for screenings and exhibitions and attracting new audiences, including tourists arriving at Amsterdam's central railway station, the Eye building has worked as a catalyst for the archive's new curatorial practices.[108] Through the digitization program Images for the Future, the establishment of Eye, and the relocation to its hypermodern venue, the museum cast itself as an institution at the frontier of digital archival preservation, accessibility, and display. Capitalizing on the aura of newness surrounding digital media and technologies and their pledge to democratize access to film heritage and save it from impending oblivion, Eye presents itself as the ultimate mediator between film history and the digital age.

In those years, Eye began reimagining the relationship between the archive, film history, and access by modeling it on the modes of consulting information, consuming moving images, and interacting with databases in the digital age.[109] The widespread availability of a vast range of digitized information online has made universal access to content a default condition of cultural production and distribution. This new media ecology has led film archives to update their practices and rationale, integrating access among their priorities or else running the risk of becoming culturally irrelevant under the competition of commercial video-sharing and streaming platforms such as YouTube, Vimeo, and Netflix. Building on Images for the Future, with which the museum streamlined the digitization of its holdings, Eye identified providing access as essential to its mission, making its collections increasingly available online.[110]

As Fossati argues, "the technological transition to digital makes possible a more participatory form of curatorship" that encourages a revision of the traditional role of the film curator.[111] As computers and new media have enabled not just the reproduction but also unprecedented levels of manipulation and interaction with content, we have witnessed a shift from a "Read/Only" ("RO") to a "Read/Write" ("RW") culture, according to Creative Commons founder Lawrence Lessig. Inspired by the logic of computer file permissions, he describes RO cultures as epitomized by television broadcasting and centered around the exclusive and unidirectional transmission of (media) texts from professional producers to a public of recipients. As such, these cultural forms are, in his words, "less practiced in performance, or amateur creativity, and more comfortable ... with simple consumption." By contrast, RW practices allow audiences to "add to the culture they read by creating and re-creating the culture around them, ... using the same tools the professional uses."[112] RW culture is characterized by ingrained habits of appropriation, recombination, and recirculation of material often accessed without the mediation of state, cultural, and educational institutions.

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Within the field of curatorship, according to Fossati, free access to vast portions of the archive's digitized collections opens the possibility to shift power from the curator-gatekeeper—central to what she defines as the old "chaperone model" of the archive—to the user, who is now free to consult, explore, and potentially reuse the material.[113] Inspired by Henry Jenkins' notion of "participatory culture," she coins the term "crowd archiving," or "crowd curatorship," which challenges traditional top-down models of the archive by entrusting the task of selecting, appropriating, and circulating digitized archival material to audiences.[114] However, by examining several crowd-curated projects, I show that the transferal of sets of operations, such as the selection, reorganization, and repurposing of archival material in the hands of digital users does not necessarily yield critical forms of engagement with the historicity of the sources made available. As I argue in the next section, some of these examples display unreflective forms of sampling and remixing that assimilate the archival footage being repurposed to a metonymic placeholder for a generic past, jeopardizing the historical specificity of this digitized material.

DIGITAL REMIX

One of Eye's first digital projects to put the idea of crowd curatorship into practice was the Scene Machine, conceived by designer Dima Stefanova and filmmaker David Lammers and launched in 2012.[115] This web platform, now offline, allowed viewers to become architects and curators of their own experience by exploring, ordering, and editing historical film clips. By selecting up to four keywords, such as "chase," "special effects," "fire," and "mischief," users obtained a randomly generated thematic remix of clips from titles including Theo Frenkel Sr.'s 1916 crime film *Genius against Violence* (*Genie tegen geweld*), Alfred Machin's 1913 drama *Loyalty* (*Het meisje uit de bloemenvelden*), or the 1934 comedy *Het meisje met de blauwe hoed* (The girl in the blue hat).[116] The clips flowed side by side, from right to left, to form a virtual film strip made of digital samples. Hyperlinks redirected visitors to the database Film in the Netherlands (Film in Nederland), offline now, providing a comprehensive set of facts related to each movie, including synopses, film stills, the entire cast, crew, and technical data.

Another example of crowd curatorship is the *Panorama* exhibition, an immersive 360-degree projection of rows of film strips from Eye's collections. Located in the basement of the new building, this exhibition dispositif puts visitors in charge of physically navigating the space and exploring archival samples at their own pace and on consoles placed around the room. The goal of the *Panorama* installation, Fossati explains, is "to give the visitor a sense of the

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variety and diversity of films in the collection's vaults by creating a 360-degrees space for projection where you feel immersed."[117] However, if the *Panorama* arguably exhibits samples from the early and silent period as part of a specific institutional collection (rather than of an abstract film history), it nevertheless features only bite-sized excerpts that hardly account for the archive's historical complexity. The museum resolved this tension by installing small booths called Pods next to the *Panorama* exhibition, where visitors can sit down and watch selected films from beginning to end.[118] Through these dispositifs, Eye appeals to users' desires to interact freely with large bodies of digitized data and toy with the affordances of new digital tools, reaching out to audiences of non-specialists.

Scene Machine offered a brief and condensed viewing experience with archival moving images. Based on users' choice of keywords evoking different kinds of filmic attractions (such as "fire" and "mischief"), the application algorithmically generated a short remix of archival film clips which rapidly paraded on the screen before disappearing. Before one managed to read the samples' titles, they would swish away, throwing the viewer into a fast-paced encounter with images that appeared replaceable and incidental. As with the *Panorama* exhibition, the Scene Machine invited users to participate in a process of interaction where they could "choose which elements to display or which paths to follow, thus generating a new work." One wonders, however, whether a reductive conception of interactivity inspired these exhibition dispositifs, conversely encouraging, in Lev Manovich's words, a merely "physical interaction between a user and a media object (pressing a button, choosing a link, moving the body)."[119] As such, the Scene Machine inhibited users' intellectual and psychological investment into media texts and their historicity, embracing instead what media theorist Eduardo Navas calls "an assimilated form of interactivity."[120]

Unlike the Scene Machine, Eye's experiments with user-generated remix—namely the Celluloid Remix contests—conceived in analogy with the practice of found-footage filmmaking, encouraged a more substantial kind of engagement with the museum's collections. In a bid to reach and include the widest possible audience, the museum situated digital remix at the core of what it has recently defined as its "open" presentation strategies (in contrast to its "curated" ones), granting users the freedom "to decide what to see and how they want to (re)use the material."[121] In 2009, the museum launched Celluloid Remix, a competition inviting users to creatively remix digitized fragments from the archive, a project Eye expanded with the second edition, Celluloid Remix 2: Found Footage, inspired by the theme of found-footage. The museum supplied around forty-five Bits & Pieces samples online, asking participants to create remixes of up to three minutes using their own software or Eye's online

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editing tool. Unlike the *Panorama* exhibition and the Scene Machine, Celluloid Remix entrusted users with the creative task of sampling, recombining, juxtaposing, editing, and compositing an original work of remix. A jury of curators, filmmakers, and journalists, including Delpeut, Rongen Kaynakçi, and artist Aernout Mik assessed each competition entry and awarded the first, second, and third prize.[122]

The first prize winner, Dániel Szöllosi's untitled short, is a meditation on the voyeuristic regime of the moving image and the technology of early cinema and digital media. In this single shot film, three iPhones appear one next to the other facing the camera. After a hand unlocks the devices, mirroring archival images of an early filmmaker appear on the screen in the middle. The arrangement of the three phones gives the impression that the split cameraman in the middle is filming another man smiling at the camera on the left screen and a woman laughing hysterically on the right iPhone (see figure 2). Then, what looks like an electromagnetic interference causes the smartphone tryptic to crash and the archival footage previously displayed on the screens to deteriorate. This process is set to a soundtrack of whizzes, buzzes, and the overlapping noise of a jammed projector. When the phones resume, the initial archival footage reappears, with the early filmmaker sticking his head out of his camera. A hand then switches the middle screen to video mode, showing us a mirror image of Szöllosi behind his camera tripod filming himself peering at us.[123] While the central display reveals Szöllosi's act of filming the screen performance, credits appear on the two side screens.

Szöllosi's remix invites us to examine the act of filming in cinema's early days on three iPhone screens, which taken together function like a time-traveling viewing device. When activated, the sleek smartphones reveal sepia-toned and black-and-white footage from the Bits & Pieces fragments no. 83 and 364, framed within QuickTime's streamlined graphic interface. In the original footage, we see an experienced camera operator (the same reappearing in Szöllosi's remix) maneuvering a hand-cranked camera and filming people in their Sunday best, stirring self-conscious demeanors, timid smiles, and uncontrollable laughter. As it features in Szöllosi's remix, the contrast between those early images of clunky and bulky apparatuses and these hand-sized, quiet, and smoothly operating digital filming devices could not be starker. Szöllosi emphasizes this difference and the temporal distance between early cinema and digital technologies by superimposing a soundtrack of clattering projectors on the repurposed footage, as if to signify an obsolete mechanical soundscape from far away times.

Untitled oscillates between two conflicting attitudes that, in her analysis of the aesthetics of video art, Krauss identifies as "reflexiveness" and "autoreflection." According to Krauss, "reflexiveness" is a modernist "*dédoublement*

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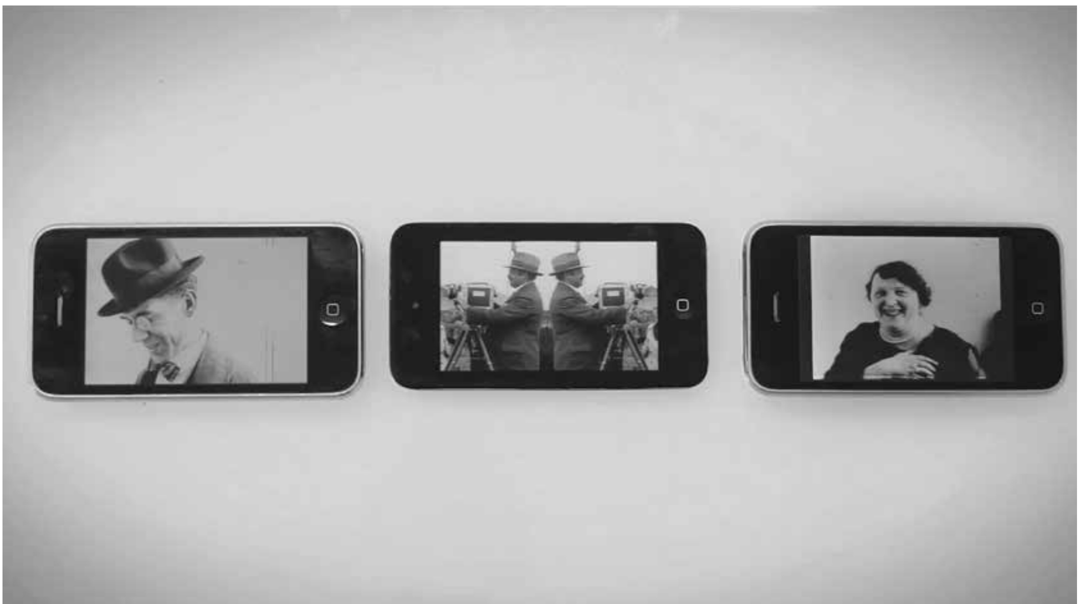

FIGURE 2.
Bits & Pieces fragments no. 83 (side screens) and no. 364 (middle screen), remixed in Dániel Szöllosi's *Untitled.*

or doubling back" that foregrounds the work of art against the backdrop of a particular medium.[124] By doing so, a maker reflexively establishes a relationship between their medium of choice and the work they created, that is, in her words, between specific "forms of art and their contents, between the procedures of thought and their objects."[125] Shifting from a reflexive to a reflective attitude, "auto-reflection," on the other hand, is, according to her, a narcissistic expression of "self-encapsulation" characteristic of much video art. As Krauss points out in the work of video artists such as Vito Acconci, Richard Serra, and Lynda Banglis, the monitor here literally turns into a mirror reflecting the videomaker's actions as they happen.[126] Similarly, Szöllosi's short enacts a narcissistic, self-reflective exercise in digital remix while also reflexively interrogating the medium's history.

Untitled doubles the voyeuristic act of filming depicted in the early film fragments by reshooting this archival footage while it plays on the iPhone screens. He reflexively places his act of filming within a more extended genealogy of moving-image technologies, scopic pleasures, and media of visual inscription. However, when an interference disrupts Szöllosi's digital screen tryptic and the time-traveling broadcast short-circuits, the middle screen discloses the filmmaker's own act of filming and illusionistic device. As the monitor becomes a mirror reflecting Szöllosi's image gazing at us, it unveils

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the film's feedback loop mechanism, displaying the filmmaker recording his act of remixing early archival samples. *Untitled* reveals the centrality of auto-reflection in moving image media, from early cinema (as, in the early archival footage, the cinematographer is himself being filmed in the act of filming) to new media practices such as smartphone recording and photography, encapsulated in today's ubiquitous gesture of taking selfies.

In other Celluloid Remix entries, the remix of early Bits & Pieces samples with newly shot material and other found images leads to exercises in recombination where the logic of auto-reflection prevails. In *Dance Battle* (2009), for instance, Leonie Annevelink films the reaction of gallery visitors as they peer through the door of a smoke-filled white cube installation whose centerpiece is her early film remix. Shot in the style of early stage performances like *Annabelle Serpentine Dance* (1894) and *Carmencita* (1894), the footage Annevelink repurposes pictures a female dancer in folk attire twirling her skirt, pirouetting, and swinging her hips.[127] These images of a hula-inspired dance number remain somewhat mysterious as the filmmaker does not identify their source, nor do they appear in the Bits & Pieces samples available on the Celluloid Remix platform. Annevelink superimposes a grainy black-and-white video of a dancing woman (possibly herself?) over the archival footage, using La-Rita Gaskin and Wish's song *Nice and Soft* as the soundtrack to her remix (see figure 3). A caption accompanies Annevelink's remix on the Celluloid Remix website: "is it the ultimate dance battle, or not?" *Dance Battle* resolves in a superficial comparison of old and new filmic depictions of dancing, premised on an uncritical othering of these century-old ethnographic images. As David J. Gunkel notes about many mash-up works, here "the creative process became more important than the product."[128] While the remix's caption possibly evokes a sense of futurity by hinting at ever-new filmed dance performances to come, *Dance Battle* fails to engage with the historical significance of the footage it recombines. It results in a self-serving, exhibitionist performance and exercise in digital remix virtuosity.

In another remix titled *Wiebelkont* (Wobbling bottom, 2009), Caitlin Sas recycles early monochrome Bits & Pieces footage (fragment 351) of a young woman in a revealing bodysuit exercising in tabletop position on a beach. As the woman sensuously swings her hips forwards and back, this footage briskly alternates with modern color images of a naked man lying on his front, set to a pressing drum and bass score. The remix ironically interrogates the sexist representational logic in the archival footage by comparing old and new erotic imageries. By zooming in on the woman's and the man's buttocks, through reverse effects, and a rhythmic montage switching back and forth between the historical footage and the digital images, this forty-three-second-long remix pairs an *old* female object of the gaze with a *new* male sexual object. The remix

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FIGURE 3.
Leonie Annevelink's *Dance Battle.*

appropriates, repurposes, and literally reverses the sexist iconography that Sas detected in the early footage, concluding with a looped montage of female and male erotic attractions and ostensibly setting right the wrongs of the past.

Each of the remixes discussed above attempt historical comparisons where the old and the new feature next to each other, outlining similarities and parallels between the archived past and the digital present, as well as stark contrasts, competitions, and reversals. However, the terms of these films' discourses appear uncertain as the historical and cultural referents of the archival images they repurpose remain elusive. Adding to the Bits & Pieces fragments' lack of textual and archival context, these remixes rework bite-sized fragments of fragments, often only a few seconds long. As reused here, these archival images mostly function as placeholders for a nondescript past, deployed merely because of their iconic and metonymic value. In the Celluloid Remixes, early film samples acquire what, referencing Siegfried Kracauer's concept of the "mass ornament," film scholar Jaimie Baron defines as an "ornamental" function. These archival samples' ontology appears now situated within a "tension between the seemingly infinite variety of objects in the digital archive and the redundancy and superficiality of these same objects."[129] Their historical specificity gives way to a signification resting exclusively upon their ornamental value in the juxtaposition of "sameness and differences in order to reveal patterns and deviations" in human behavior.[130] The early dance

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film we see projected in the cubical installation in *Dance Battle*, for instance, stands for *any* old folkloric dance, regardless of its cultural specificity, setting, time, and the conditions of its performance and shooting. This early filmic record of a hula dancer serves only as an ornamental backdrop on which Annevelink superimposes her own dance moves.

These user-generated remixes foreground a different logic from the aesthetics of citation of recognizable cultural references, which according to Lessig, animates remix culture. Instead, they mobilize a generic "archive effect," which in Baron's terms relies on the user's perception of the archival document as "coming from another time or from another context of use or intended use."[131] By circulating within new media ecologies, the historical bonds between archival documents and their referents loosen as these records enter a new regime of anonymity and interchangeability.[132] Downloadable as .mp4, .ogv, or .mov files of variable sizes, ready to be reassembled and shared, the archival samples on the Celluloid Remix platform acquire the characteristics associated with new media variability. As Manovich explains, due to their encoding and modular structure, new media objects are "not something fixed once and for all, but something that can exist in different, potentially infinite versions."[133] Within the digital archive, these early film excerpts turn into just another unit of digital data ready to be customized.

These crowd-curated remixes' ultimate referent is their makers' act of remixing, a narcissistic exercise that "represents to the user her actions and their results."[134] Paraphrasing Krauss' analysis of video art, these remixes "withdraw attention from an external object—an Other—and invest it in the Self," failing to engage dialectically with the irreducible otherness of the past and the historical meaning of the records they manipulate.[135] Inspired by philosopher G. W. F. Hegel's definition of historical understanding as dialectical experience (*Erfahrung*), Gadamer sees the ability to recognize the specificity of a historical event, text, or artifact as pivotal to the process of historical interpretation. According to Hegel, historical interpretation enacts a dialectical movement outwards, leading the interpreter to encounter the Other, acknowledge differences and mistakes intrinsic to the process of understanding, and move beyond the reader's own situatedness. Recognizing the alterity of the past also entails a movement inwards as the historian finds in the past Other something familiar and relatable that alters the interpreter's own consciousness.[136] Against the backdrop of this Hegelian dialectics of recognition, remixes such as *Dance Battle* fail to interrogate the historical specificity and the politics of the gaze at work in the ethnographic footage they appropriate. Annevelink's labor of recognition halts early on in her comparative remix as her attention shifts to exhibiting her own dance and remix performance. An analogous self-reflective preoccupation characterizes Eye's recently discon-

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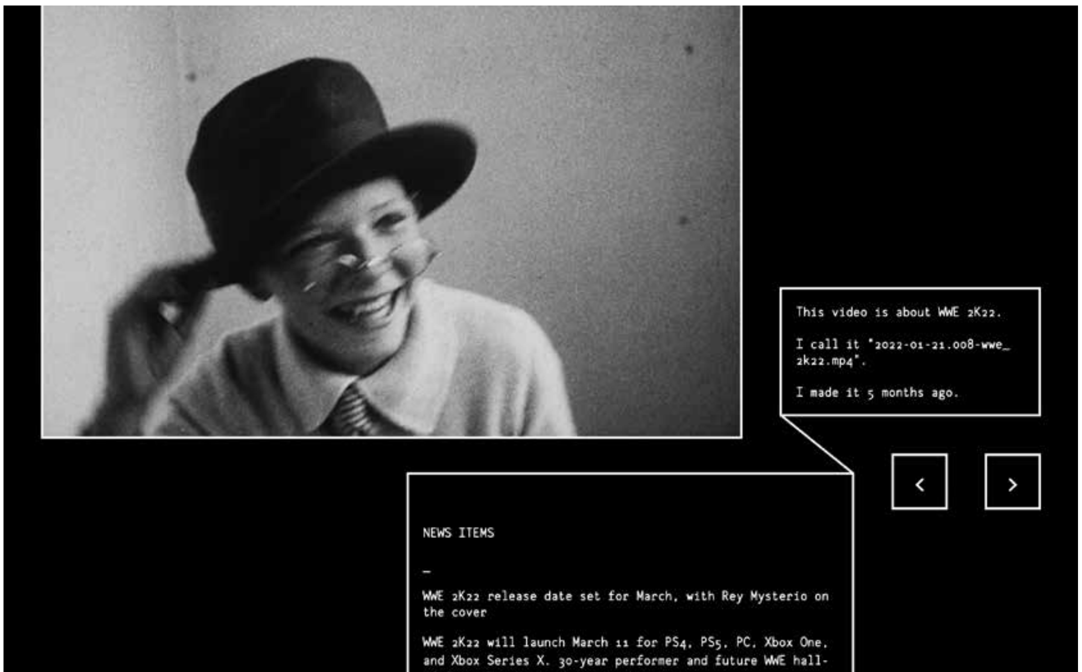
tinued AI-powered remix initiative, Jan Bot, described as "the first filmmaking bot hired by EYE Filmmuseum to make short videos from a 100-year-old film archive, taking inspiration from today's trending topics."[137]

ALGORITHMIC CURATORSHIP

Building on its experiments with crowd-curated remix and AI developments in the fields of image recognition and natural language processing, in 2017, the museum launched its first "algorithmic curator."[138] In the past six years, Jan Bot generated daily remix loops based on the day's trending topics in the Netherlands, Great Britain, the United States, Belgium, France, Germany, and Denmark, repurposing material from the Bits & Pieces collection. On January 21, 2022, for instance, Jan Bot produced a remix titled *2022-01-21.008-wwe_2k22.mp4*, inspired by news of the then imminent launch of the Wrestling Videogame *WWE 2K22*.[139] As we begin watching it, a puzzling title card in block letters reading "it bragging an adventure [*sic*]" appears on the screen. Flashing black-and-white images of a backward-facing naked woman walking sideways on a stage follow, alternating with the briefest excerpts of a different woman walking out of a department store. "Yet plenty has some plenty! [*sic*]" announc-

FIGURE 4.
Bits & Pieces fragment no. 83, remixed in Jan Bot's *2022-01-21.008-wwe_2k22.mp4*. Courtesy of Bram Loogman and Pablo Núñez Palma.



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es another title card. Then the remix intersperses a yellow-toned close-up of Asta Nielsen sensuously sipping liquor with other close-ups, including footage of two young boys making faces in front of the camera (see figure 4). After another cryptic title card reading "Rey Mysterio bragging some movie [*sic*]," a hyper-accelerated loop of Nielsen inclining her head concludes the remix, ready to start again.

As with *2022-01-21.008-wwe_2k22.mp4*, it is hard to make sense of what is going on while watching most of Jan Bot's remixes, unless one knows the bot's inner workings. As one of its creators, Pablo Núñez Palma, elucidates, Jan Bot's algorithms perform three distinct sets of operations. The first one consists in generating metadata for the Bits & Pieces fragments using image recognition software to annotate the 7,000 shots identified in the digitized collection. The tags associated with the early film samples repurposed in *2022-01-21.008-wwe_2k22.mp4*, for instance, include "mask," "movie," "dancing," and "adventure." Secondly, taking inspiration from the most frequent Google search queries on Google Trends, Jan Bot links news text to the archival clips' tags through natural language processing software, selecting the best matching shots. Lastly, through an editing algorithm still being developed at the time of its online release, the bot edits the archival samples in rhythmic montages and bewilderingly fast loops.[140]

Jan Bot's website includes a list of the tags that guided the production of each remix, allowing one to speculate about, if not deconstruct, the algorithm's associative logic. In a recent remix inspired by the news of pop band Duran Duran's performance at Queen Elizabeth II's Platinum Jubilee, for instance, the word "drummer" features as the highest-scoring tag. The bot's selection and sampling of archival material for this remix relies on the questionable semantic correlation between the word "drummer" (extracted from news articles citing an interview with Duran Duran's drummer, Roger Taylor) and the early footage of a large metallic drum, which appears in the remixed clip.[141] As archival scholar Christian Gosvig Olesen notes, the semantic word-image relations on which Jan Bot builds its remixes and "the indexical relations they suggest are in a traditional sense broken if not nonsensical."[142] The limited vocabulary on which the Eye bot's image recognition software rests does not transfer well from today's infosphere to early cinema's visual culture, highlighting the ingrained need for historical context in natural language applications. As Olesen argues, in the future, these misidentifications may inspire experimental approaches to data-driven film analysis beyond current evidentiary epistemologies governing metadata creation and mainstream use of archival footage. At present, however, they mark the liquidation of any dimension of critical engagement with the archival material in use within this algorithmic exercise.

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As with some of the Celluloid Remixes, Jan Bot's logic is more self-reflective than reflexive. The bot's remixes reflect the algorithm's complex architecture rather than meditating on the ubiquitous circulation of archival footage within online news feeds, news programs, and our information consumption patterns. In short, its looped archival montages mirror Jan Bot's own workings, linking Google Trend's and Bits & Pieces' datasets according to a shared semantics, instead of investigating the media structures that make them possible. Proof of the bot's self-referentiality is the elusive meaning of its AI-generated remixes, which become intelligible only upon grasping the specifics of its algorithmic machinations. (Of course, the same may be true of much algorithmic art).[143]

As film scholar Katherine Groo observes, archival remix "raises crucial questions for film historians," asking, what do remix's "revisions do to and for the archival object?"[144] In keeping with her concerns, one wonders what functions and meanings archival films acquire within Eye's crowd-curated remixes intended as exercises in historical interpretation. Performing a hermeneutic circle, according to Gadamer, historical interpretation enacts a double (re)contextualization of the object under examination (the *part*). On the one hand, the interpreter reads it against a historical *whole* situated in the past. On the other, they place the historical object within a new *whole*, a novel interpretative context of circulation in the present.[145] Similarly, one may read Eye's digital remixes as a hermeneutic exercise ripping historical *parts*—the archival samples they recycle—and recombining them within new compositions and discursive configurations. One can trace a genealogy of such hermeneutic exercises in recombination by tracking the reuse of Bits & Pieces fragments such as the no. 83 in the work of found-footage filmmaker Gustav Deutsch, Szöllosi, and Jan Bot over the past twenty years. As we have seen in earlier discussions of *Untitled*, fragment no. 83 features a series of sepia-toned portraits of anonymous people in medium close-up: a smart-looking man lighting up a cigarette in a display of composure; a woman giggling uncontrollably; a young woman smiling coyly; and several boys putting up all sorts of improvised performances, including impressions, box fighting simulations, and military salutes. In the humble setting of an unadorned photo booth, each captured participant displays heartwarming delight and joy at the simple fact of being filmed.

Within Deutsch's found-footage work *Film Ist. (1–12)*, fragment 83 appears in the last section titled "Memory and Document" amidst other images of personal, collective, and historical memories.[146] He edits together footage of various subjects—including recognizable figures such as Pope Leo XIII (1878–1903) and unspecified parties of friends—all acknowledging the camera with nods, salutes, benediction signs, and cheers, which over a century later seem

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to be directed at the viewer. Using the editing technique of shot-reverse shot, Deutsch playfully alternates each portrait in fragment 83 with excerpts from Bits & Pieces no. 364 (the same used in *Untitled*), showing an early cameraman hiding and peeking out of his camera apparatus. With their direct address to the camera, these archival films instigate a mnemonic process that uncannily brings the past back to life before us. As we have seen, Szöllosi similarly edits fragments 83 and 364 together, alluding to the voyeuristic act of filming, which he references and magnifies by recording his own act of filming these images. Lastly, we encounter brief looped excerpts of the same early film fragment (showing kids making poses and imitations for the camera) in the remix that Jan Bot created based on news of the launch of *WWE 2K22*. The sample's fugacious appearance in the bot's remix leaves us perplexed due to its lack of logical coordination with the preceding fictional footage of Nielsen and the title cards referencing WWE wrestler Rey Mysterio following it.

The same archival fragment appears in Deutsch's and Szöllosi's works as *parts* of discourses about film as a mnemonic device and cinema's voyeuristic drive. In Jan Bot's remix, instead, the semantic, historical, and hermeneutic links that tie together the archival film samples have loosened beyond comprehension. According to Núñez Palma, Jan Bot shares with new media forms such as Instagram Stories and photo albums a "vertical storytelling" rationale, collating "an endless non sequitur of media fragments that altogether don't seem to make much sense." In his words, vertical timelines and storytelling feature "no character development, not even a theme that gets properly explored." Unlike newspapers, which we could also understand as a form of vertical narrative in Núñez Palma's analysis, algorithm-powered vertical storytelling can lack editorial intervention and meaningful continuity. Yet, by sourcing its "content from an even wider arrange [*sic*] of sources and adapt(ing) it to the likes and dislikes of individual users," he argues, vertical storytelling captivates our imagination as a radically new form of narrativization.[147]

In his reading of *Film Ist. (1–12)*, Gunning evokes a vertical aesthetic somewhat analogous to Núñez Palma's vertical storytelling. According to Gunning, each of the film's twelve chapters—including the chapter 6 "Mirror," 8 "Magic," and 9 "Conquest"—works as a "guiding thread" addressing the question "What is Cinema?" The archival fragments appearing under each thread succeed as if "listed vertically, each one offering a new example or synonym" of the titular themes. "This discontinuous list," he explains, "rubs against the linear way we usually watch film, searching for a succession of unfolding events, each one connecting with the next."[148] In describing *Film Ist. (1–12)*'s aesthetic, Gunning refers to Christian Metz's semiotic concepts of paradigm and syntagm, whereby paradigms represent categorical groupings of elements sharing the same characteristics (or syntactic functions in the case of linguistics) and syntagms are lin-

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guistic units organizing those elements in a linear, sequential order. Metz sees the gathering of paradigmatic elements of the same kind as preparatory to the syntagmatic moment, as in Sergei Eisenstein's filming of individual shots that he later arranged in montage sequences.[149] According to Gunning, however, *Film Ist. (1–12)* subverts this logic, by presenting a succession of chapters that in his view function like paradigmatic "lexicon entries." Here, "we are watching paradigms, not constructing syntagms," he concludes.[150]

Similarly, according to Manovich, new media practices build on vast databases that reverse the hierarchy of paradigm and syntagm. By theorizing an opposition between traditional narrative and the database, conceived as new media's most distinctive cultural form, he programmatically announces: now "the database (the paradigm) is given material existence, while narrative (the syntagm) is dematerialised. Paradigm is privileged, syntagm is downplayed. Paradigm is real; syntagm virtual."[151] Jan Bot's rationale, revolving around keywords and metadata such as "dancing," "adventure," and "dinner jacket," confirms the centrality of this paradigmatic organizing logic governing much of new media practices and expressions. In projects like Jan Bot, the database transforms the ways we interrogate the archive and, in Manovich's terms, "becomes a new metaphor which we use to conceptualize individual and collective cultural memory, a collection of documents or objects, and other phenomena and experiences."[152]

Computer software, web design, the shared taxonomies of linked data, and AI applications revolve around the evermore efficient management of databases, actualizing the underlying logic of the paradigm organizing knowledge and information. Such rationale, however, keeps coexisting with syntagmatic structures, not just in the form of the linear Boolean logic at the base of computer programming, but also through the narratives we employ in our online interactions. Here, as elsewhere in new media's vernacular practices, the taxonomic ordering of data, epitomized by the metaphor of the paradigm, coalesces with discursive interpretative strategies. As Katherine Hayles argues, "no longer singular, narratives remain the necessary others to database's ontology, the perspectives that invest the formal logic of database operations with human meanings."[153] Narratives help us navigate the different temporalities in our virtual and physical lives through causal and deductive reasoning, operating as an essential "technology for human beings."[154] As Metz explains, with words that resonate with Gadamer's, Paul Ricoeur's, and Hayden White's, narrative mediates between "the time of the thing told and the time of the telling," acting as the medium through which we understand the past.[155] Like narratives, arranging a past "time scheme" within a present temporality, (meta)historical discourses act as what, adapting Hayles' expression, we may call a "hermeneutic technology."[156]

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Film Ist. (1–12) and *Untitled* reject traditional film narrative in favor of a thematically organized chapter structure (the former) and a loosely chronological set of iPhone operations (the latter). Even so, both films repurpose archival fragments within a metahistorical discourse about film. Such a metahistorical work, in Hollis Frampton's words, is "occupied with inventing a tradition, that is, a coherent, wieldy set of discrete monuments, meant to inseminate resonant consistency into the growing body" of the filmmaker's art.[157] Similarly, as a metahistorical discourse, found-footage and remix works such as *Film Ist. (1–12)* and *Untitled* situate the Bits & Pieces fragments (intended here as hermeneutic *parts*) within a new temporal scheme and sphere of intelligibility—an interpretative *whole* that Gadamer, like Frampton, understood in terms of historical tradition.[158] By doing so, Deutsch's and Szöllosi's films advance a historical mediation between early cinema and new media temporalities.

By contrast, from a hermeneutic and curatorial perspective, Jan Bot fails to fulfill its promise to bring film heritage into the algorithmic age. By employing semantics that escape discursive reasoning and coherence, its remixes stop short of performing the task of historical mediation at the core of historiographic and curatorial work. Eye initially conceived of its experiments in crowd curatorship and digital remix as a gateway to a more participatory form of digital historiography and curatorship. However, these initiatives have hardly subverted institutional hierarchies through the democratization of curatorial decisions to do with which films to restore, digitize, and screen. As Baron notes, the main challenge here remains finding ways to open archival footage "to a variety of possible meaning and orders, while also stirring the user's desire in such a way that she will keep wanting to engage and learn from the text."[159] For all of Jan Bot's shortcomings, by toying with the paradigmatic logic of new media, its remixes help us test the limits of digital remix as a hermeneutic process, historiographic method, and curatorial practice. Arguably, Jan Bot's greatest merit is to have complemented the taxonomic logic animating its remixes with critical discourses about film historiography, algorithmic art, the digital humanities, and curatorship (some of which are quoted in this chapter), archived in the bot's blog "The Meta.Log."[160] It is perhaps in this kind of generative interplay of paradigm and syntagm, database and critical discourse, that lays the future of digital archival remix.

The museum's century-long history has taken us from the Filmliga film society to the NFM to Eye, from the art film canon to revisionist curatorship and historiography, from the Stedelijk Museum of modern arts to the Pavilion in the Vondelpark to the Eye building in Amsterdam North. As we have seen, Eye's origins were steeped in modernist aesthetics as the Filmliga canonized the filmic avant-garde, an approach that influenced the formation of the NFM's collections and preservation priorities in the following decades. How-

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ever, from the late 1970s, a revisionist impulse made its way within the museum, first giving progressively greater visibility to the Desmet collection, and then introducing curatorial innovations such as the found-footage-inspired project of Bits & Pieces in the 1980s and 1990s. In the last fifteen years, experiments with digital crowd curatorship and remix, culminating in Jan Bot, have sought to establish participatory curatorial strategies and non-linear and anti-teleological discursive practices in curatorship and historiography.

The narrative I have advanced in this chapter (one of the many possible narrativizations of this curatorial history) has not taken the shape of a teleology of exponentially greater innovation and digital participation. Not only Eye's history was marked by debates that at times took the museum in opposing directions, think of the so called "Desmet affair," but its latest instances expose the very limits of crowdsourcing curatorial tasks, fragmentation, remix, and non-linear discourse. If there is one thread that may be said to have characterized this institutional history throughout, that is the recurrence of a sort of hermeneutic circularity that from the introduction of novel film exhibition practices (as with the international circulation of the NFM's color- and Desmet film restorations in the late 1980s) has led to revisionist film historiographies and then in turn to shifts again in archival and curatorial approaches. As such, the history and critical analyses that I advanced in this chapter represent just one recent occurrence in this self-reflexive, narrativizing, hermeneutic movement.

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NOTES

1 "Putting Dutch Film Culture Firmly on the Map," European Commission, accessed January 26, 2022, https://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/en/projects/netherlands/putting-dutch-film-culture-firmly-on-the-map. This chapter is based on fieldwork conducted at Eye between 2014 and 2018.

2 No party was held in 2020 and 2021 due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

3 Giovanna Fossati (Professor of Film Heritage and Digital Film Culture at the University of Amsterdam and Chief Curator at the Eye Filmmuseum), interview by the author, January 20, 2014. Launched in October 2013, the Eye Walk is a virtual reality tour of the Eye building, designed for children to discover cinema history as they walk around the museum. Irene Haan (Head of Digital Presentations at the Eye Filmmuseum), interview by the author, January 23, 2014.

4 Hans Schoots, "Een Kleine Geschiedenis van EYE Filmmuseum," accessed December 10, 2021, http://www.hansschoots.nl/nieuws/nieuws20.html; and Peter Delpeut, "Questions of Colour," in *The Colour Fantastic: Chromatic Worlds of Silent Cinema*, ed. Giovanna Fossati, Victoria Jackson, Bregt G. Lameris, Sarah Street, and Joshua Yumibe (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2018), 19–29.

5 Peter Delpeut, "Bits & Pieces. The Limits of the Film Archive," *Jan Bot* (blog), *Medium*, 11 September 2018, https://medium.com/janbot/the-limits-of-film-archive-76ae5d338eae. The article originally appeared in Dutch in Peter Delpeut, "Bits & pieces. De grenzen van het filmarchief," *Versus* 2 (1990): 74–84.

6 Mark-Paul Meyer (Senior Curator at the Eye Filmmuseum), e-mail exchange with the author, September 8, 2016.

7 Ibid.

8 Eric de Kuyper, "Anyone for an Aesthetic of Film History?," *Film History* 6.1 (1994), 102; and Ivo Blom, "The Impact of the Desmet Collection: Pordenone and Beyond," *Journal of Film Preservation* 87 (October 2012), 38–39.

9 de Kuyper, "Aesthetic of Film History?," 106.

10 Peter Delpeut (former Deputy Director at the Eye Filmmuseum), interview by the author, December 4, 2021; and Elif Rongen-Kaynakçi (Curator of Silent Film at the Eye Filmmuseum), e-mail exchange with the author, February 14, 2022.

11 Elif Rongen-Kaynakçi, e-mail exchange with the author, February 8, 2022.

12 Creators Bram Loogman and Pablo Núñez Palma discontinued Jan Bot on March 31, 2023. Of the thousands of remixes Jan Bot generated since 2017, they saved only 151, which they minted and auctioned as Non-Fungible Tokens (NFTs). See "Long Live Jan Bot," Objkt.com, accessed June 8, 2023, https://objkt.com/collection/KT1JYrSZTEC67zHqwQ8k6ScS7wHarwUos2qZ. Loogman and Núñez Palma erased all other Jan Bot films from their server. Giovanna Fossati, e-mail exchange with the author, February 15, 2023; and Pablo Núñez Palma to the "A Jan Bot Update" mailing list, May 8, 2023. While limited room here prevents me from

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discussing the makers' choices exhaustively, commercial and proprietary considerations seem to have overridden Eye's access and preservation priorities in this case.

13 See Giovanna Fossati, "Found Footage: Filmmaking, Film Archiving and New Participatory Platforms," in *Found Footage: Cinema Exposed*, ed. Jaap Guldemond, Marente Bloemheuvel, Giovanna Fossati (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2012), 180.

14 For a comprehensive history of the NFM see Annemieke Hendriks, *Huis van Illusie. De Geschiedenis van het Paviljoen Vondelpark en het Filmmuseum* (Amsterdam: Bas Lubberhuizen, 1996); and Bregt Lameris, *Film Museum Practice and Film Historiography: The Case of the Nederlands Filmmuseum (1946–2000)* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2017).

15 "De Uitkijk – The Little Cinema with a Big Name," Eye, accessed April 7, 2022, https://filmdatabase.eyefilm.nl/en/collection/film-history/article/de-uitkijk-—-the-little-cinema-with-a-big-name. See also Nico de Klerk and Ruud Visschedijk, eds. *Het gaat om de film! Een nieuwe geschiedenis van de Nederlandshe Filmliga 1927–1933* (Amsterdam: Bas Lubberhuizen/Filmmuseum, 1999).

16 Lameris, *Film Museum Practice*, 18; and Miriam van Kempen, "The Diligent Dutchman: Jan de Vaal and FIAF (1946–1952)," *Journal of Film Preservation* 89 (November 2013), 66.

17 Hans Schoots, "The Filmliga Laboratory," *Cinegrafie* 12 (1999), 256.

18 Ibid., 262.

19 Menno Ter Braak, "Onze tweede matinée," *Filmliga* 1.3 (November 1927), 3. Cited and translated in Ansje van Beusekom, "'Avant-Guerre' and the International Avant-Garde: Circulation and Programming of Early Films in the European Avant-Garde Programs in the 1920s and 1930s," in *Networks of Entertainment: Early Film Distribution 1895–1915*, ed. Frank Kessler and Nanna Verhoeff (Eastleigh: John Libbey Publishing Ltd, 2007), 286–87.

20 When the NCF terminated its activities in 1933, its collection of around 1,100 reels of film, including many municipal films, was transferred to the Public Records Office (Algemeen Rijksarchief) and are now part of Eye's collections. "The Dutch Central Film Archive," Eye, accessed April 7, 2022, https://filmdatabase.eyefilm.nl/en/collection/film-history/article/the-dutch-central-film-archive; and van Kempen, 65.

21 van Kempen, "The Diligent Dutchman," 65; Hans Schoots, "Een Kleine Geschiedenis"; and Lameris, *Film Museum Practice*, 22.

22 Lameris, *Film Museum Practice*, 22.

23 Ibid., 49 and 154.

24 van Kempen, "The Diligent Dutchman," 68; and Lameris, *Film Museum Practice*, 131–35.

25 Lameris, *Film Museum Practice*, 23.

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26 Filmmuseum Annual Report no. 11 and 12 (1951), 3. Cited and translated in Lameris, *Film Museum Practice*, 138.

27 During the 1952 FIAF Conference, held in Amsterdam, members discussed the creation of an archival distribution collection (an international "film pool") of 16mm film prints of canonical titles, which de Vaal offered to help coordinate. In 1960, he revamped the project by launching FIAF's Members Film Service, a distribution library housed in the NFM's vaults in Castricum. Despite de Vaal's efforts, the film pool was operative for only around ten years and gathered no more than a few titles. See van Kempen, "The Diligent Dutchman," 68–69; and "Jan de Vaal Fund," FIAF, accessed April 7, 2022, https://www.fiafnet.org/pages/Community/Supporters-Jan-de-Vaal-Fund.html; and Lameris, *Film Museum Practice*, 48.

28 "Conserveringsplan 1989–1992" (Conservation Plan 1989–1922), Nederlands Filmmuseum: Jaarverslag 1989 (Nederlands Filmmuseum: Annual Report, 1989), 39, Filmgerelateerde Collecties (Film-related Collections).

29 Ivo Blom, *Jean Desmet and the Early Dutch Film Trade* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2003), 12.

30 Ibid., 37–76.

31 Ibid., 22.

32 For lesser-known films that, like *Rosalie et son phonographe*, did not have an English distribution title, I have included a non-italicized English translation in parentheses. Ivo Blom, "The Impact of the Desmet Collection," 38–39.

33 Ibid., 37.

34 "Conserveringsplan 1989–1992," 38.

35 Marenthe Bloemheuvel, Jaap Guldemond, and Mark-Paul Meyer, eds., *Jean Desmet's Dream Factory: The Adventurous Years of Film (1907–1916)* (Amsterdam: Eye Filmmuseum, 2014), 20; and Lameris, *Film Museum Practice*, 24.

36 Blom, "Impact of the Desmet Collection," 38.

37 According to Blom, such exhibitions showed that "a silent film did not have to be a greying black-and-white copy, riddled with tramlines, 'rain', and scratches, and printed on sound film stock. It could be a composition of luminous and stable images: an artefact alive with colour, whether tinted, dye-toned, or hand- or stencil-coloured." Blom, "Impact of the Desmet Collection," 40.

38 See Giovanna Fossati, Victoria Jackson, Bregt G. Lameris, Sarah Street, and Joshua Yumibe, eds., *The Colour Fantastic: Chromatic Worlds of Silent Cinema* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2018); and Blom, "Impact of the Desmet Collection," 20.

39 "Conserveringsplan 1989–1992," 38–39, my translation.

40 Blom, "Impact of the Desmet Collection," 36.

41 Blom, *Jean Desmet*, 34 and 89.

42 Blom, "Impact of the Desmet Collection," 40.

43 Bloemheuvel et al., *Dream Factory*, 20.

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44 Innovative programming strategies continued in November 1994 with the annual museum's Theme Days (Themadagen) where curators recreated six Desmet film programs with the aid of program notes from the collection. Blom, "Impact of the Desmet Collection," 46.

45 See Nederlands Filmmuseum, *Nonfiction from the Teens: The 1994 Amsterdam Workshop* (Amsterdam: Stichting Nederlands Filmmuseum, 1994); Nederlands Filmmuseum, *"Disorderly Order": Colours in Silent Film. The 1995 Amsterdam Workshop* (Amsterdam: Stichting Nederlands Filmmuseum, 1996); and Nederlands Filmmuseum, *Uncharted Territory: Essays on Early Nonfiction Film* (Amsterdam: Stichting Nederlands Filmmuseum, 1997). In 2015, twenty years after the "Disorderly Order" workshop, Eye organized an international symposium on color in the 1920s titled "Colour Fantastic: Chromatic Worlds of Silent Cinema." See Giovanna Fossati, Tom Gunning, Joshua Yumibe, Jonathon Rosen, eds., *Fantasia of Color in Early Cinema* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2015).

46 Bloemheuvel et al., *Dream Factory*, 20.

47 "Desmet Collection," UNESCO, accessed April 7, 2022, https://en.unesco.org/memoryoftheworld/registry/401.

48 Bloemheuvel et al., *Dream Factory*, 33.

49 See André Gaudreault and Tom Gunning, "Early Cinema as a Challenge to Film History," in *The Cinema of Attractions Reloaded*, ed. Wanda Strauven (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2006), 365–80.

50 Blom, "Impact of the Desmet Collection," 41–42.

51 Blom, *Jean Desmet*, 21, emphasis added.

52 "Memory of the World Register: Desmet Collection" (nomination form), UNESCO, 1, accessed January 14, 2022, https://zh.unesco.org/sites/default/files/netherlands_desmet.pdf.

53 Blom, "Impact of the Desmet Collection," 48.

54 Blom, "Impact of the Desmet Collection," 37; and de Kuyper, "Aesthetic of Film History?," 100–105.

55 de Kuyper, "Aesthetic of Film History?," 101.

56 Christian Gosvig Olesen, "Found Footage Photogénie: An Interview with Elif Rongen-Kaynakçi and Mark-Paul Mayer, November 8, 2013, http://www.necsus-ejms.org/found-footage-photogenie-an-interview-with-elif-rongen-kaynakci-and-mark-paul-meyer/#_edn1.

57 "Bits & Pieces, Nrs. 1 t/m 11," Eye YouTube Channel, November 6, 2013, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KQ4_gygMI0A.

58 de Kuyper, "Aesthetic of Film History?," 104.

59 Delpeut, "The Limits of the Film Archive."

60 de Kuyper, "Aesthetic of Film History?," 104.

61 Peter Delpeut, *Cinema Perdu. De Eerste Dertig Jaar Van De Film 1895–1925* (Epe: Bas Lubberhuizen, 1997), 82. Quoted and translated in English in Nanna Verhoeff,

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The West in Early Cinema: After the Beginning (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2006), 25.

62 André Habib, "Ruin, Archive and the Time of Cinema: Peter Delpeut's Lyrical Nitrate," *Substance* 110 35.2, (2006), 135.

63 de Kuyper, "Aesthetic of Film History?," 106.

64 Habib, "Ruin, Archive," 136 and 131. See also Paolo Cherchi Usai, *Silent Cinema: An Introduction* (London: BFI, 2000), 64.

65 Delpeut, "The Limits of the Archive," emphasis added. After the publication of fragment no. 5, *Bits & Pieces Nrs. 1 t/m 11* on Eye's YouTube channel, users helped identify the actress as Fern Andra. Elif Rongen-Kaynakçi, e-mail exchange with the author, November 10, 2023.

66 Roland Barthes, *Camera Lucida: Reflections on Photography*, trans. Richard Howard (New York: Hill and Wang, 1981), 25–27.

67 Barthes, *Camera Lucida*, 43, emphasis in the original.

68 Barthes, *Camera Lucida*, 26–27. Cited in Mary Ann Doane, *The Emergence of Cinematic Time: Modernity, Contingency, the Archive* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2002), 216. Here Doane defines cinephilia in the context of the archive as "love attached to the detail, the moment, the trace, the gesture."

69 Verhoeff, *West in Early Cinema*, 29, emphasis added.

70 Delpeut, "The Limits of the Archive," emphasis added.

71 Verhoeff, *West in Early Cinema*, 27, emphasis added.

72 Ibid., 33.

73 de Kuyper, "Aesthetic of Film History?," 106.

74 Fossati, "Found Footage," 178.

75 "Bits & Pieces, Nrs. 610 t/m 623," Eye YouTube Channel, November 6, 2013, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9n5eyNqbAwA.

76 Catherine Russell, *Experimental Ethnography: The Work of Film in the Age of Video* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1999), 251.

77 Ibid., 252.

78 Ibid.; and Hans-Georg Gadamer, *Truth and Method*, trans. Joel Weinsheimer and Donald G. Marshall (London and New York: Bloomsbury, 2013), 307–9.

79 Delpeut, "The Limits of the Archive."

80 Meyer, exchange with the author, December 4, 2017.

81 "Print: KOP59562 DK 540-0: Bits & Pieces 12 t/m 20," loan history, courtesy of Meyer.

82 Delpeut, interview.

83 *Mode in beweging* (1992), Eye Player, accessed April 7, 2022, https://player.eyefilm.nl/nl/films/mode-in-beweging.

84 Olesen, "Found Footage Photogénie."

85 Delpeut, interview.

86 See "Meet the Archive #2 | Innovation in Film Archiving: Restoration, Digitization, Research and Access," Eye YouTube Channel, September 29, 2021, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q1A_71xGDcY&t=43s.

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87 Giovanna Fossati, *From Grain to Pixel: The Archival Life of Film in Transition* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2009), 277n172; and "Meet the Archive #2," Eye YouTube Channel.

88 Fossati, *From Grain to Pixel*, 203.

89 Ibid., 82 and 203.

90 Fossati provides an extensive discussion of all the phases of the restoration of *Zeemansvrouwen*. See Fossati, *From Grain to Pixel*, 231–41.

91 Ibid., 234.

92 Ibid.

93 Ibid., 235–37.

94 Ibid., 243–44.

95 Ibid., 236–37.

96 David Bolter and Richard Grusin, eds., *Remediation: Understanding New Media* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1999), 17.

97 Elif Rongen Kaynakçi, interview by the author, January 15, 2014.

98 Fossati, *From Grain to Pixel*, 174.

99 Ibid.

100 Eye Filmmuseum, "Meet the Archive #2," Eye YouTube Channel. The exhibition, held at Eye (December 13, 2014–April 12, 2015), included 2K screenings and the display of apparatuses, posters, and personal papers from the Desmet collection. See "Jean Desmet's Dream Factory—A Survey of the Exhibition in EYE," Eye YouTube Channel, May 11, 2015, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-dzoMSCeIK4; and Bloemheuvel et al., *Dream Factory*.

101 See for instance Henry Jenkins, *Textual Poachers: Television Fans & Participatory Culture* (New York: Routledge, 1992); Henry Jenkins, *Fans, Bloggers, and Gamers: Exploring Participatory Culture* (New York: New York University Press, 2006); and Henry Jenkins, Sam Ford, and Joshua Green, *Spreadable Media: Creating Value and Meaning in a Networked Culture* (New York: New York University Press, 2013).

102 André Waardenburg, "Publiek wordt zelf programmeur," *NRC Handelsblad*, January 11, 2008. Translated from Dutch in Fossati, *From Grain to Pixel*, 174. Bregtje van der Haak succeeded Sandra Den Hamer as Eye's new director on April 1, 2023. "Bregtje van der Haak to become the new director of Eye Filmmuseum," Eye, December 7, 2023, https://www.eyefilm.nl/en/magazine/bregtje-van-der-haak-nieuwe-directeur-eye-filmmuseum/846486.

103 Eye Filmmuseum, *Collection Policy (2017–2021)*, 5, accessed April 7, 2022, https://www.eyefilm.nl/uploads/downloads/blocks/eye_collectionpolicy.pdf; and Fossati, interview.

104 Eye Filmmuseum, *Collection Policy (2017–2021)*, 5.

105 Sandra Guarda, "Lost Forever: Amsterdam's Shell Terrain Transformed," *Failed Architecture* (blog), June 6, 2017, https://failedarchitecture.com/lost-forever-amsterdams-shell-terrain-transformed/.

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106 "Eye Film Institute Netherlands," Delugan Meissl Associated Architects, accessed April 7, 2022, https://www.dmaa.at/work/eye-film-institute. For a critique of Overhoeks' regeneration plans, see Carmen Pérez del Pulgar, "Dismantling the Just City: The Unevenness of Green Experiences in Amsterdam-Noord," in *The Green City and Social Injustice: 21 Tales from North America and Europe*, ed. Isabelle Anguelovski and James J. T. Connolly (Abingdon: Routledge, 2021).

107 Fossati, interview.

108 See "EYE—New Dutch Film Institute / Delugan Meissl Associated Architects," *ArchDaily*, April 10, 2012, http://www.archdaily.com/?p=223973.

109 See Johan Oomen and Lora Aroyo, "Crowdsourcing in the Cultural Heritage Domain: Opportunities and Challenges," in *Proceedings of the 5th International Conference on Communities and Technologies* (New York: ACM, 2011)," 138–49.

110 Fossati's interview with Sandra den Hamer, published in *NRC Handelsblad*, January 2008, translated in Fossati, *From Grain to Pixel*, 174; and Eye Filmmuseum, *Collection Policy (2017–2021)*, 5. Along with expanding the accessibility of its collections, Eye moved its physical archive, previously located in various locations, to a new Collection Centre in Amsterdam North. Frank Roumen, "EYE's Collection and Collection Staff are Moving House," accessed April 6, 2022, https://www.fiafnet.org/is/2/News/EYE-Collection-move.html.

111 Fossati, interview.

112 Lawrence Lessig, *Remix: Making Art and Commerce Thrive in the Hybrid Economy* (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2008), 28. See also Lawrence Lessig, *Free Culture: How Big Media Uses Technology and the Law to Lock Down Culture and Control Creativity* (New York: Penguin Press, 2004).

113 Fossati, *From Grain to Pixel*, 96.

114 Henry Jenkins introduced the term "participatory culture" in 1992 to describe the active interaction of fan communities with media texts. See Henry Jenkins, *Textual Poachers*. On the potential of remix as participatory practice and bottom-up appropriation see Henry Jenkins, "Multiculturalism, Appropriation, and the New Media Literacies: Remixing Moby Dick," in *Mashup Cultures*, ed. Stefan Sonvilla-Weiss (Wien: Springer-Verlag, 2010), 98–119.

115 "Eye at a Glance," Eye Filmmuseum, accessed April 7, 2022, https://issuu.com/eyefilmmuseum/docs/eye_at_a_glance. On the Scene Machine see also Katherine Groo, "Alice in the Archives," in *New Silent Cinemas*, ed. Paul Flaig and Katherine Groo (New York: Routledge, 2016), 17–37.

116 See also Grazia Ingravalle, "Remixing Early Cinema: Historical Explorations at the EYE Film Institute Netherlands," *The Moving Image* 15.2 (2015): 82–97.

117 Fossati highlights one of the limits of the *Panorama* exhibition, which "can show only between eighty and 100 fragments, quite a small amount if compared with a collection of 40,000 titles." Fossati, interview.

118 Ibid.

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119 Lev Manovich, *The Language of New Media* (Cambridge, MA: MIT University Press, 2001), 55.

120 Eduardo Navas, *Remix Theory: The Aesthetics of Sampling* (Wien: Springer-Verlag, 2013), 111.

121 Eye Filmmuseum, *Collection Policy (2017–2021)*, 29.

122 On Celluloid Remix 1, see "Eboman's Celluloid Remix," Filmmuseum Amsterdam's YouTube Channel, April 16, 2009, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A21z53XOW3Y; On Celluloid Remix 2 see "Over - Celluloid Remix 2," accessed February 27, 2014, https://celluloidremix.openbeelden.nl/crover.en.

123 "Untitled - Celluloid Remix 2," accessed February 27, 2014, https://celluloidremix.openbeelden.nl/media/125755/Untitled.nl.

124 Rosalind Krauss, "Video: The Aesthetics of Narcissism," *October* 1 (Spring, 1976): 57.

125 Ibid., 55–56.

126 Ibid., 57.

127 "Dance Battle," accessed February 27, 2014, accessed April 7, 2022, http://celluloidremix.openbeelden.nl/media/125313/Dance_battle.nl.

128 David J. Gunkel, "Audible Transgressions: Art and Aesthetic after the Mashup," in *Transgression 2.0. Media, Culture, and the Politics of a Digital Age*, ed. David J. Gunkel and Ted Gournelos (New York: Continuum, 2012), 44.

129 Jaimie Baron, *The Archive Effect: Found Footage and the Audiovisual Experience of History* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2014), 152 and 153.

130 Ibid., 154.

131 Ibid., 9.

132 See Jos de Mul, "The Work of Art in the Age of Digital Recombination," in *Digital Material: Tracing New Media in Everyday Life and Technology*, ed. Marianne van den Boomen, Sybille Lammes, Ann-Sophie Lehmann, Joost Raessens and Mirko Tobias Schäfer (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2009), 95.

133 Manovich, *Language of New Media*, 36.

134 Manovich, *Language of New Media*, 235n29. Remix's narcissistic exercise also recalls Marshall McLuhan's "subliminal state of the Narcissus trance" in which the medium is the message. Marshall McLuhan, "Understanding Media," in *Essential McLuhan*, ed. Eric McLuhan and Frank Zingrone (London: Routledge, 1997), 154.

135 Krauss, "Video," 57.

136 G. W. F. Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. Arnold Vincent Miller (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1979). The dialectics of archival interpretation I describe here is very similar to the ethics of archival appropriation Jamie Baron discusses via Emmanuel Levinas and Sarah Cooper. As Baron explains, an ethics of archival appropriation should invite the viewer "to see those onscreen neither as entirely others—thereby reducing them to their image, to objects rather than subjects akin

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to ourselves—nor as mimetic reflections of ourselves—thereby disregarding the specificity of their experiences and identities." Jaimie Baron, *Reuse, Misuse, Abuse: The Ethics of Audiovisual Appropriation in the Digital Era* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2021), 13.

137 Link unavailable since Loogman and Núñez Palma have taken the platform offline.

138 Eye Filmmuseum, *Collection Policy (2017–2021)*, 33.

139 I had to purchase the NFT of the remix I analyze here to avoid it from sharing the fate of thousands other remixes that Jan Bot created in the past six years, which have been permanently deleted from the server. It is now available on Objkt.com under its new title *Rey Mysterio #1003*. "Rey Mysterio #1003," Objkt, accessed, April 3, 2023, https://objkt.com/asset/KT1JYrSZTEC67zHqwQ8k6ScS7wHarwUos2qZ/127.

140 Pablo Núñez Palma, "Jan Bot's Step by Step. The Filmmaking Algorithm Explained," *Jan Bot* (blog), *Medium*, November 28, 2018, https://medium.com/janbot/jan-bots-step-by-step-822b831d0402.

141 Link unavailable since Loogman and Núñez Palma have taken the platform offline.

142 Christian Gosvig Olesen, "Jan Bot: a Surrationalist Historiographer," *Jan Bot* (blog), *Medium*, February 8, 2018, https://medium.com/janbot/surrationalist-2b49b60db941.

143 See Clint Enns, "A Brief History of Algorithmic Editing," *Jan Bot* (blog), *Medium*, November 22, 2018, https://medium.com/janbot/a-brief-history-of-algorithmic-editing-732c3e19884b.

144 Katherine Groo, "Cut, Paste, Glitch, and Stutter: Remixing Film History," *Frames Cinema Journal* 1 (2012), accessed February 8, 2019, http://framescinemajournal.com/article/cut-paste-glitch-and-stutter/#a6.

145 Gadamer, *Truth and Method*, 280.

146 I refer here to Gustav Deutsch *Film ist. (1-12)* Index DVD Edition.

147 Pablo Núñez Palma, "On Vertical Storytelling. Speculating About Social Media for the Avant-Garde Preservation of Film Archives," *Jan Bot* (blog), *Medium*, November 28, 2018, https://medium.com/janbot/on-vertical-storytelling-5fc50a6d39b0.

148 Tom Gunning, "*Film Ist.*: A Primer for a Visual World," Gustav Deutsch *Film ist. (1-12)* Index DVD Edition (booklet), 8.

149 Christian Metz, *Film Language: A Semiotics of the Cinema*, trans. Michael Taylor (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990), 36.

150 Gunning, "A Primer for a Visual World," 8. Gunning's analysis here neglects the many instances in which Deutsch reflexively uses narrative editing techniques, such as the 180-degree rule, alternate montage, and shot-reverse shot (as we have seen earlier), to compose archival fragments within a metahistorical narrative about film's changing ontology.

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151 Manovich, *Language of New Media*, 231.

152 Ibid., 191.

153 Katherine Hayles, "Narrative and Database: Natural Symbionts," *PMLA* 122.5 (2008): 1603.

154 Hayles, "Narrative and Database," 1606.

155 Metz, *Film Language*, 18. For an in-depth discussion of the intersections between Gadamer, White, and Ricoeur's see this book's introduction.

156 Ibid.; and Hayles, "Narrative and Database," 1606.

157 Hollis Frampton, "For a Metahistory of Film: Commonplace Notes and Hypotheses," *On the Camera Arts and Consecutive Matters: The Writings of Hollis Frampton* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2009), 136.

158 Gadamer, *Truth and Method*, 167.

159 Baron, *Archive Effect*, 169.

160 *Jan Bot* (blog), *Medium*, accessed April 7, 2022, https://medium.com/janbot.

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