Perception of Analog Synthesizer users in regards to social identity and communication

Christoph S. Kresse
Clemson University

Follow this and additional works at: https://tigerprints.clemson.edu/grads_symposium

Recommended Citation
Kresse, Christoph S., "Perception of Analog Synthesizer users in regards to social identity and communication" (2015). Graduate Research and Discovery Symposium (GRADS). 117.
https://tigerprints.clemson.edu/grads_symposium/117

This Poster is brought to you for free and open access by the Research and Innovation Month at TigerPrints. It has been accepted for inclusion in Graduate Research and Discovery Symposium (GRADS) by an authorized administrator of TigerPrints. For more information, please contact kokeefe@clemson.edu.
SYNTHESIZED
A Narrative exploring the perception of analog synthesizer enthusiast's identity and communication
The production of a scholarly Documentary Film by Christoph Kresse
Communication Technology and Society, Clemson 2015

Abstract
This document is a written reflection on the production process of the creative project "Synthesized", a scholarly rooted documentary exploring the analog synthesizer world with focus on organizational structure and perception of social identity. After exploring how this production compliments existing works on the synthesizer, electronic music, identity, communication and group association, this reflection explores my creative process and decision making as artist and filmmaker through the lens of a qualitative researcher. As part of this, I will discuss logistic as well as artistic and creative challenges. This includes, how 0 negotiated limited access, resources, time constraints, the selection of an event and potential participants according to set parameters, lighting and acoustic conditions at venues, avoiding copyright violations, obtaining proper permission to film and the scheduling of production and editing. The production of "Synthesized" is the story of my process of deepening and challenging my own understanding of the culture of analog synthesizer enthusiasts using, field observations and interviews, the gathering and exploration of relevant documents and other interpretive and creative process of knowledge production that are part of the documentary film making process. Consequently, the production process overlaps with aspects of traditional qualitative research. The paper will take a closer look at the relationship between data collection and filming, as well as footage review, editing techniques, theme selection and how they relate to qualitative analysis. It is my hope that these reflections will eliminate the notion that data collection can only be undertaken in a purely scientific manner and that the lines can blur between creative exploration and traditional research.

Motivation for the Documentary
- Filmmaker has Active part of the local synthesizer community and electronic music scene since 2007
- Scholarly interests, as there are noteworthy gaps of documentation and research in past written and cinematic works.
- Gaps include a failure to address the synthesizer community since the most recent analog revival of 2012, organizational structures, and channels of communication and identification as artists and users.
- Contribution as a valuable source of specific information and new perspectives about analog synth culture.
- For scholars, the film addresses that community, personal and artistic identities are formed through shared musical practices, highlighting the importance to fellowship and exchange as well as the power and meaning behind symbolic and ritualized behavior and relationships between technologies and movements.
- For the public it provides an interesting, entertaining, and informative introduction to the analog synthesizer scene.

Production Environment & Participants
Moogfest, Asheville, NC, April 23rd-27th, 2015
Atlanta Summer Synths Meet-Up, June 2015
Moog Music Inc., January 2015
Atlanta, Roswell, Georgia, January 2015
Interview and observation participants: Total pool of 16 artists, male and female, age range 19-70, from the US, UK, Germany, Portugal, Austria and South Korea

Production and Research Overlap
- Similarities between qualitative data collection and production of interview and observation footage.
- Filmmaker follows exact research guidelines as ethnographic researcher.
- Filmmaker is embedded in the research relevant environment, interacting with the Participants.
- Filming of interviews and observations a transparent and fluent process, allowing the Filmmaker to use creative and artistic vision to conduct research.
- Multimedia production work compliment archiving and documentation as it preserves moments in time in a lively manner.
- Footage Review cycles and timeline sequence creation resembled a creative way of data coding (identifying themes, concepts, and similarities to existing works, as well as new insight)

The Documentary Making Process
Archiving and Pre-Production Process
(Event, location and participation selection)
Production Process (Filming Interviews and Observations)
Post-Production Process (Review cycles, identification of gaps and decision making to collect additional data)
Additional Production Excursions
Video Editing Process (Establishment of Timeline Sequence and reviewing Footage)
Overdubbing Sound and Scoring Music to Picture

Results and Conclusion
Documentary Film Production:
Acknowledgement of challenges during production process in regards to logistics, technology and artistic vision.
New Insights and Concepts:
Strong analog technology sentiment of all participants, no resistance towards the digital domain. Digital Tools seen as artistic addition to analog instruments.
Acknowledgment of a symbiotic relationship between Mainstream and Underground and the importance of mega events to promote analog synthesis.
Events, gatherings and synths meet-ups crucial for the member’s communication and exchange on local and trans-local level. Identification through artistic output more important than the actual technology