



Amsterdam School for Heritage, Memory and Material Culture

Workshop
Archaeologies of Computerised Video Editing



Friday, 29 May 2026
10:30–17:00

University of Amsterdam, BG1, Room 0.16
Turfdraagsterpad 9, 1012 XT, Amsterdam

Free entry. Please register at j.anger@qmul.ac.uk

The digitisation of film and video editing is often associated with increasing accessibility and democratisation. The availability of digital files and the spread of ready-to-hand editing software have facilitated an “anyone can be an editor” attitude, further amplified by the videofication of social media and the rise of generative AI video tools. Nevertheless, this ubiquity of editing has not been matched by a comparable understanding of the human–computer assemblage in which it has evolved since the 1980s. Once – albeit somewhat simplistically – grounded in intimate familiarity with physical materials and machines, editing has become a site where “human” agency and “technological” automation are negotiated and mutually transformed.

This workshop returns to the early history of computerised video editing (and back again to the present) in order to examine how current tools and software, along with their affordances as well as limits and biases, were established. It asks how these systems have shaped our notions of what counts as “proper” editing (or montage), and which forgotten or marginalised features and suites might be reactivated to develop practices that are more aware of their technological and historical underpinnings – and, as a result, more capable of producing change in playful, reflexive, and collaborative ways.

The workshop is organised around three interrelated points of friction that conditioned early discourses and practices of computerised editing:

1. *Professionalism vs. amateurism*, zeroing in on the impact of increased accessibility on professional boundaries and claims to expertise;
2. *Agency vs. automation*, focusing on how early editing software configured creative choice and labour through interfaces and automated functions;
3. *Post-production vs. liveness*, examining negotiations between linearity and non-linearity, between on-the-fly editing and retrospective manipulation, as well as questions of real-time computer processing, and the temporality of editing practices more broadly.

Due to the transmedia character of these developments, the workshop is conceived as a cross-disciplinary forum bringing together scholars in film and media studies, researchers in computing and software history, and practitioners including artists, archivists, and curators. Special attention is given to practices not traditionally understood as montage – such as VJing, early computer graphics, or software emulation – which nonetheless play a crucial role in reframing video editing along the three axes. In collaboration with LI-MA and their Amiga NU Project, the workshop will show how media-archaeological approaches to computerised video editing are inseparable from preservation – of both specific machines and the gestures and operations through which they were used.

Morning session (10:30–12:45)

10:30–10:40 – Welcome & opening remarks

10:40–11:00 – Methodological introduction

Jiří Anger (Queen Mary University of London, UK): *How Computers Became Video-Editing Machines*

11:00–12:00 – Panel 1: Editing With and Against Software (Practice-Based Approaches)

Amanda Egbe (University of the West of England, UK): *Occlusions and Afterlives: Editorial Agency Between Archive, Interface, and Automation*

Zachary Furste (University of Amsterdam): *Emulation as Software Archaeology: A Demo Lecture*

12:00–12:30 – Open discussion

12:30–12:45 – Compilation screening: video editing manuals and advertisements

Lunch break (12:45–13:45)

Afternoon session (14:00–17:00)

14:00–15:00 – Olivia Schoenfeld (LI-MA): *Editing on the Amiga: Lecture and Live Demonstration*

15:00–16:00 – Panel 2: Hybrid Editing Techniques Across Media (History and Theory)

Tim van der Heijden (Open University of the Netherlands): *The Casablanca Video Montage System: “In Between” the Analogue and the Digital*

Rossella Catanese (University of Tuscia, Italy): *Visual Remix: VJing as a Live Editing Practice*

16:00–16:15 – Coffee break

16:15–16:30 – Response: Christian Olesen (University of Amsterdam)

16:30–17:00 – Final discussion and synthesis