**Crosstown Traffic; ARP Conference Proposal**

**Abstract**

**Rewinding the Archive: Creative applications of sounds from the past**

**Simon Connor and Justin Richards**

The preservation and digitisation of archive recordings is currently receiving much attention with the British Library’s ‘Save Our Sounds’ campaign. Resultant questions surely are now; how such material can be utilised or experienced?

This joint practice-based paper will explore the creative possibilities of archive audio material in it’s application to documentary film soundtracks, live performance and record production.

Simon Connor will draw on his experience as sound designer for the film *Action Space,* exploring how archive recordings can offer new sonic possibilities for the soundtrack and live performance, through collage and manipulation, whilst maintaining a grip of the authentic, or a representation of the past. This will focus on the Action Space archive; over a hundred hours of reel-to-reel tapes of musique concreteexperiments, musical performances and group meetings of the arts group Action Space, active between 1968-78. These recordings were digitised, catalogued and combined into a new tape piece for the film’s soundtrack and as part of Action Space Live.

Record producer Justin Richards has been working on a long-term project with Gammer; co-writer of several albums with Vini Reilly of the Durutti Column in the 1980’s. Gammer has been resurrecting old releases and previously unused recordings, with the aim of producing a new set of sonically enhanced albums. The project initially required technical correction techniques from audio restoration software, however the artist’s vision has demanded more unusual creative production approaches, for example; changing the lyrics on a stereo master, or sourcing material from Dictaphone recordings. The combination of musical creativity alongside specialist software has produced some surprising results.

This session will feature audio examples from both projects, examining the creative applications of personal audio archive material in modern-day releases.

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**Key Words:** Archive Recordings, Film Soundtrack, Record Production