



On September 5-7, 2022, the **Workshop “Orality and Cinema in Kenya: the Practice of Film DJs and Audiences”** took place in Naivasha, Kenya, as part of the Thyssen-project of CEDITRAA member Matthias Krings, supported by the Center for Intercultural Studies (JGU), as well as with the participation of CEDITRAA member Nico Nassenstein. As conveners acted Matthias Krings (JGU), Claudia Böhme (Uni Trier) and Solomon Waliaula (JGU).

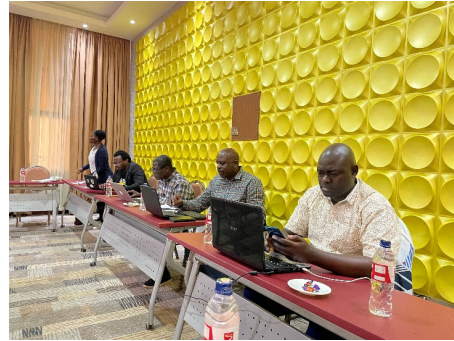
Film Deejaying is a cultural phenomenon where a local artist mediates a foreign film for local audiences by suppressing the audio element of the film as initially produced and superimposing his/her own voice and interpretation on the motion picture. It has been a thriving cinema practice in East Africa since the late 1980s but became part of the mainstream popular culture in Kenya in 2006 with the emergence of DJ Afro who became the face of cinema translation as an art form and entertainment. The DJ acts as a mediator between the foreign film and the audience and uses orality to achieve this aim and works with a multi-medial variety of resources at his/her disposal. The multi-mediality of film narration derives from two distinct sources; namely the oral tradition and the contemporary electronic based media. The product of the new art form emerges out of the aesthetic manipulation of these different media. The DJ’s role as a mediator is therefore complex since the film narrator brings together a variety of media from oral tradition and electronic media and renders this bricolage to the audience. On the other hand, the audience has a certain aesthetic expectation from the performer: they know what and how the story should be told but they cannot perform this role on their own. Therefore, they place the responsibility of performance upon the narrator. In addition, advances in technology have made it possible for cinema narration to expand its reach beyond live audiences in cinema halls to publics that watch recorded versions on television as well as uploaded versions on Youtube. Furthermore, popular culture has borrowed elements from cinema narration art and performance in the production of new

forms of comedy and social commentary on social media. As a result, while the traditional practice of film translation still exists, new variations of the genre have emerged that affirm the productive and adaptive nature of film narration as an art form.

The broad aim of this workshop was to investigate the resilience of the film DJ as an oral artist and the variations and adaptations that emerge from the film narrator’s artistic practice. This was a unique workshop because it brought together academics, artists, and audiences in the field of cinema narration in East Africa who reflected on the practice of film commenting over the past two decades. The four themes of this workshop were as follows: firstly, theorization of cinema narration in the context of orality and media; secondly, the social contexts and cultural productions of cinema narration and commentary in East, Central, and West Africa; thirdly, audience engagement with live and recorded performances of film narration; and lastly, conversations on cinema narration between academics, artists, and audiences.



Workshop “Orality and Cinema in Kenya: the Practice of Film DJs and Audiences” in Naivasha, Kenya on September 5-7, 2022



ORALITY AND CINEMA IN KENYA

THE PRACTICE OF FILM DJs AND AUDIENCES

LAKE NAIVASHA RESORT, NAIVASHA, KENYA 5-7 SEPT, 2022

WORKSHOP PROGRAMME

DAY ONE: TUESDAY 4TH SEPTEMBER 2022		
Time	Activity	Facilitator
8:20 am - 8:30 am	Arrival and Registration	Raina Muregi
8:30 am - 9:00 am	Opening Ceremony	Claudia Böhm
Session One: Orality and Media		
Chair: Claudia Böhm		
9:00 am - 9:40 am	The Film Commentator and Changing Configurations of Media	Martha King (University of Mainz)
9:40 am - 10:20 am	Orality and its Multimedia	Jill Obunga (Moi University)
10:20 am - 10:40 am	Discussion	
10:40 am - 11:00 am: Tea Break		
Session Two: Technology, Adaptation, and Film Commentaries		
11:00 am - 11:40 am	Narrative Adaptation in Film as Contemporary: the Case of Hollywood	Patrick Oduo (University of Lagos)
11:40 am - 12:20 pm	Technological Affordances and Film Narration in Kenya	James Oguno (University of Lagos)
12:20 pm - 12:40 pm	Discussion	
Session Three: Film and Reflections		
12:40 pm - 1:00 pm	Cinema Narration: Art and Entrepreneurship	Lewis Njiru (Moi University)
1:00 - 1:20 pm	Cinema Audiences: Voice, Habit, Culture	Raina Muregi (Moi University)
1:20 pm - 1:40 pm	Discussion	
1:40 pm - 1:50 pm: Lunch Break		
Session Four: Live Performance		
1:50 pm - 5:30 pm	Live Film Narration Performance	Moderator: Solomon Wainaina, University of Mainz
5:30 - 6:00 pm	Open Q & A	Moderator: Solomon Wainaina, University of Mainz
DAY TWO: WEDNESDAY 5TH SEPTEMBER 2022		
Chair: Jill Obunga		
See: Lewis Njiru		
9:00 am - 9:30 am	The Ethnography of Film Audiences in Eldoret and Nandi, Kenya	Solomon Wainaina (University of Mainz)
9:30 am - 10:00 am	The City and the Marginalisation of Cinema Narration	Mareen Amine (Moi University)
10:00 am - 10:30 am	Cinema Narration in the Refugee Space: The Case of Kakuma Refugee Camp	Claudia Böhm (University of Frier)
10:30 am - 11:00 am	Discussion	
11:00 am - 11:30 am: Tea Break		
Session Six: Informal Communities in Public Spaces		
11:30 pm - 11:50 pm	Managing Communities in Complexities: Informal as Performed Sex, Education and Transgressive Narration	Nani Nansenang (University of Mainz)
11:50 pm - 12:20 pm	Commentary on Wedding Ceremonies in Kenya: The Case of Aunt Wamwartha	Fred Mwangi (The Technical University of Kenya)
12:20 pm - 12:40 pm	Discussion	
12:40 pm - 1:40 pm	Round Table on the Economy of Film Narration	Fred Mwangi (Technical University of Kenya) Wangi Jumbi (Moi University) Mwangi Mwangi (Kisumu), Eric Ngunjiri (Nairobi) Yvonne Gaud (Linz), Berni Lelak (Naivasha)
1:40 pm - 1:50 pm: Lunch Break		
Session Seven: Adaptations and Transformations of Cinema Narration		
1:50 pm - 4:30 pm	Performances	Steve Wainaina (Nairobi)
4:30 pm - 5:00 pm	Discussion and Reflections	
5:00 pm - 5:30 pm	Complementary Dinner and Closing Ceremony	Martha King (University of Mainz)

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