There is a common mode of cultural production which we may fairly term ‘pastiche’ and which may be defined as art which imitates other art in such a way that the fact of imitation is evident. To put it a little more elaborately: Pastiche is a form of artistic imitation in which the knowledge that it is imitation is defining at the point of production and reception and is usually marked textually.

Thinking about pastiche opens out onto perennial concerns of Western aesthetics such as imitation and influence, allusion and intertext, concerns that proliferated through the course of the twentieth century. It also opens out onto long-standing issues within media and popular culture studies: Genre, cycle and formula, trend, fad and fashion. These two sets of concern have perhaps not always sufficiently attended to one another. More recently, pastiche has become a key term in attempts to characterise contemporary culture’s postmodernity, negatively\(^1\), positively\(^2\) or depending\(^3\).

I said that we may ‘fairly’ term this mode pastiche to acknowledge that the meaning of the word is hardly one agreed on. Gérard Genette\(^4\), who tries to bring some clarification to the term and associated notions like parody, has ruefully to admit that he cannot impel people to use words consistently in the way he proposes. However, two aspects of the use of the term may be addressed here. First, the original meaning, of a work combining a number of different styles, seems\(^5\) to have less currency now (except perhaps in relation to music and architecture and at any rate in English usage) and will not detain us. Second, Fredric Jameson and Linda Hutcheon tend to treat the term in ways that close off from consideration a whole tranche of cultural production. Jameson defines pastiche as «blank parody»: Because pastiche does not (or need not) have ironic or satirical intent, it is for Jameson just pointless copying; it is however Jameson that blanks what pastiche does rather than the practice itself. Hutcheon on the other hand mainly uses the term interchangeably with parody. While one might consider parody a sub-category of pastiche, it seems a pity not to be open to the potential of evident imitations which do not, like parody, mock that which is being imitated.

I would also like to remove any evaluative overtone from the term. Despite the importance of pastiche in high cultural tradition, pastiche is widely regarded in common usage to be essentially trivial. In the introduction to his collection *Poetastry and Pastiche*, D.S. Raven argues that he has used the term because «as it seems to me, [it] is associated relatively little with the moral judgements often passed on derivative arts». Yet the very association of pastiche with poetaesting, and his later defensive observation that, while «derivative writing is less “worthy” than what is strictly “original”, it still need not be regarded as positively vicious», betray the widespread negative association of the term.

Hostility to pastiche stems in part from what Darko Suvin identifies as the «originality fetish» of modern Western culture, its «anxiety of influence». This logically places cultural production based on imitation in an inferior position, leading on the one hand to the strenuous reaching for the impossible goal of imitation-free art and on the other to the consigning of openly imitative art to the status of at best divertissement or the prentice work. Moreover, relations of originality and influence tend to work in terms of a challenge to male forbears, so that pastiche is also associated with the low status feminine and effeminate. Pastiche also evades the two great modes of modern political art. It cannot be naturalistic (because it cannot avoid showing that it is not just showing life but an imitation of showing it) and, though it foregrounds the constructedness of a work, it does not necessarily seek to distance the viewer in the manner promoted by twentieth century critics. This does not mean that pastiche cannot be political, but it does not do what is required of most political art: It will not produce certainty of point of view and it cannot deny its inside/outside complicity in that which it imitates.

I will return to the last point after discussing some instances, all filmic. My main purpose is to point to the expressive potential of pastiche. Before at the end turning to the implications of this potential, I will note some of the complexities of using the term that the examples make apparent.


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8 Raven, *Poetastry and Pastiche*, p. 5. His emphasis.

9 *Ibíd*, p. 6.


11 This is the implication of most of the works discussed as pastiche by Genette, *Palimpsestes. La Littérature au second degré*, pp. 107 ss.; Debussy's *Hommage à Rameau*, Ravel's *Le Tombeau de Couperin*, Flaubert's *Le Tombeau de Chateaubriand* and Proust's *Pastesches et mélanges*, exercises in style and/or the paying of dues by a fledgling artist to predecessors.

Rock West (J. Dahl, 1994), Devil in a Blue Dress (C. Frankliin, 1995), The Last Seduction (J. Dahl, 1995), LA Confidential (C. Hanson, 1998), to name just a few. James Naremore discusses the ways that such films, often dubbed neo-noir, do and do not imitate the film noir of the 1940s and 50s\(^{13}\). For Jameson, neo-noir is a prime postmodern bad object, «in which the history of aesthetic styles displaces “real” history»\(^{14}\). Jameson’s putting of ‘real’ in quotes suggests however the problem of historical knowledge, to wit, that the past was real, for sure, but it’s not there now and we can only know of it through what it has left behind, a great deal of which (images, accounts) were already representations of their time (their present, our past). Pastiche is always implicitly aware of this. For Jameson, such awareness displaces knowledge of history, of this ‘real’ that he is himself so cagey about. Perhaps it does on occasion, but it might be that it also sometimes enables an engagement with history through a recognition of the sources of our limited, skewed but not therefore simply untrue knowledge of it.

Neo-noir movies are not studies of the past. The majority are not even set in the past (and even those that are – Chinatown, Farewell My Lovely (D. Richards, 1975), Devil in a Blue Dress – signal their time of production, notably in stars, technology – e.g. colour, steadicam – and designers’ modifications in dress and decor). This means that the films present the present within an awareness of the frameworks from the past that shape our understanding of the present. Thus the noirish treatment in these films of such themes as «universal guilt and social malaise»\(^{15}\), sexual treachery and its allure, may be a way of acknowledging that we get many of our ideas and feelings about such matters from film noir. At the same time, because they are pastiches, they do not merely allude to these, but inhabit them, feel and allow us to feel their fascination and explanatory power. In other words, the films, the makers and we are complicit with the models that are being evidently imitated, all simultaneously aware of them as models yet successfully, happily interpellated by them. We are thrilled, fascinated, seduced, all the while knowing that such feelings are neither innocent nor newly minted.

My second example is the opening credits sequence of Seven (D. Fincher, 1995), designed by Kyle Cooper. These are an evident copy – a pastiche – of the US underground film tradition: a fast montage to rock music of shots that are discontinuous\(^{16}\) and characterised by off centre composition, scratching, double exposure and other such qualities that would be regarded as mistakes in conventional film making practices\(^{17}\). Underground film is generally identified as emerging in the 1940s, but it has had a continued afterlife, remaining one of the commonplaces of Western art school culture and becoming thus associated with the rock music culture that has had such close links with art schools\(^{18}\). Despite their grunginess, underground film and much rock, as opposed to pop, music have high cultural status. One may suspect that the use of underground pastiche at the start of Seven is of a piece with the film’s general wish to display its high-brow credentials (allusions to Aquinas, Dante, Chaucer, Shakespeare and Milton, diegetic use of Bach and Thelonius Monk, an aberrantly dark and noise-laden aesthetic); one could use these to criticise the film in terms of postmodern thinness: The allu-

\(^{13}\) NAREMORE, More than Night: Film Noir in its Contexts, pp. 196 ss.
\(^{14}\) JAMESON, Postmodernism, or the Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism, p. 67.
\(^{15}\) NAREMORE, More than Night: Film Noir in its Contexts, p. 207.
\(^{16}\) That is, they do not work to create a spatial, temporal or narrative coherence (as in mainstream fiction film) nor do they work in a dialectically associative way (as, canonically, in Soviet ‘montage’ cinema).
\(^{17}\) On underground film, see D. NOGUEZ, Une Renaissance du cinéma: le cinéma 'underground' américain, Klinsieck, Paris 1985.
sions are superficial, even sometimes inaccurate, while Bach's Air on a G String is very Classic Lite. However, the underground pastiche, at any rate, does more than this. It points to a thread running through the film of allusions to kinds of art that are at once alternative/avant-garde and connected to evil. Underground films themselves made this connection, notably in the work of Kenneth Anger, who is often presumed to have inaugurated the montage-to-rock formula and who explicitly saw his films as linked to the practices of Magick, of his «working Evil in an evil medium»19. The connection is also present in the music accompanying both sets of credits. The opening credits use Closer from the album The Downward Spiral (1994) by Nine Inch Nails, a group with a well-known fascination with the multiple murder and Satanist Charles Manson, in whose house The Downward Spiral was recorded. The end credits music is «The Hearts [sic] Filthy Lesson» from I. Outside is art school graduate manqué David Bowie; the album is sub-titled The Nathan Adler Diaries: a hyper cycle and the accompanying booklet presents parts of these diaries, written by a detective specialising in art-murder (as of the horrifically described «art-ritual murder of Baby Grace Blue»), and placed historically in relation to such figures as «the Viennese castrationists», Guy Bourdin and Damien Hirst, to which we might add Helmut Newton, The Eyes of Laura Mars and America Psycho. All of this is explicitly linked to the activity of the film's serial killer, Jonathan Doe. A cop at the scene of one of the murders says of the body they discover that it's like «some kind of friggin' wax sculpture or something»; the owner of a leather sex shop, who sells Doe a torture instrument, tells the cops that he thought Doe «was one of those performance artists... the sort of guy that pisses in a cap on stage, then drinks it – performance art». These references, for all their jokiness, underscore the strong sense of staging in each murder, each location laid out, each body arranged, to express the meaning of the act (namely, the condemnation of a specific sin). This, finally, connects to a wider theme in the cultural construction of serial killing, that it is meaningful and expressive, best understood, at any rate on its own terms, as aesthetics and ritual, theatre and performance.

The allusions, including the underground pastiche, to the art-evil nexus refer us to such a discourse while distancing Doe and the film from total identification with them. Doe after all really kills people, while the film, unlike Kenneth Anger or Nine Inch Nails, holds back from 'doing' evil (nothing in the rest of the film has this 'evil' aesthetic). At the same time, the use of pastiche underground (as opposed to the mainly verbal references of the other allusions) enables us to feel the fascination. The opening credits in fact show Doe making up his scrapbooks in preparation for and as a record of the murders, but we are unlikely to realise this on first viewing. Rather, the sequence addresses us directly with the fascination of playing with evil, presents it to us rather than representing it for us. If we respond to its hypnotic beauty, we are implicated in evil and the beauty of evil even while also being able to retain a moral position. This is the very position of the film as a whole, that we are all implicated in evil even if we take a moral position outside it. However, while the film can express this verbally through the character of Somerset, it can only do it fully through a pastiche, which at once imitates evil doing and yet, because we know it to be an imitation, is not itself evil doing. Importantly, I am trying to avoid saying that the technique distances us, or makes us reflect upon our own implication in evil. This is not just because one should always try to avoid formulating aesthetic analyses in terms of what a work does to us, but because

I want to point to the potential of a complicit affective address to the audience that can add complexity to our pleasure and interest (and the pleasure of our interest) in a film about killing and wickedness.

The third example (or set of examples) comes from the film music of Nino Rota. Film music uses pastiche widely and as a matter of course to help set time, place, milieu and genre. Rota’s practice is to introduce a pastiche element and then to make its associations work by shifting its narrational position. The reference of the pastiche is generally immediately recognisable: in Zaza (R. Castellani, 1942, a Isa Miranda melodrama) a turn-of-the-century café chantant song sung by the eponymous heroine; for the affair between Natasha and Anatole in War and Peace (K. Vidor, 1956), a Viennese waltz; for the main theme of the Godfather films (F.F. Coppola, 1972, 1974)20, a ‘Sicilian’ melody, its national character suggested primarily through instrumentation (wavery horn playing, mandolin, accordion); in La strada (F. Fellini, 1954), bubbling music for small, itinerant circus band. Once introduced, Rota and his directors play fast and loose with their subsequent use. Zaza’s song is performed on stage but thereafter used on the non-diegetic21 soundtrack to chart the course of her ultimately unhappy love affair. The same procedure (diegetic music becomes non-diegetic) is true of War and Peace, but the opposite is the case with the Godfather films, where the main theme is introduced non-diegetically over the credits but then used throughout both non-diegetically and also diegetically, for instance as dance music in the both films’ opening sequences, Connie Corleone’s wedding and Michael Corleone Jnr’s first communion party. La strada is different again. Here the music played by three clowns parading through the countryside is transformed first into very grand music with a heavy tread played by a provincial town band for a church procession and then again into tinkling accompaniment to a high wire act: In other words, there is no shift between diegetic and non-diegetic, all is diegetic, yet shared by two distinct sources (circus and church) in a way that is socially unimaginable.

In each case, by starting with a pastiche, a certain register is set up, whereby we are allowed to feel the emotional appeal of the music and yet also able to recognise its historical and constructed character. This within-and-without the music forms the basis of its subsequent narrative work. Zaza’s song expresses her exuberant self-confidence in her sexual allure; it is this that attracts Alberto, a married man, to her; the non-diegetic use of the song’s melody at first underscores their mutual pleasure in her sexiness but then, instrumentally, harmonically and in tempi transformed, it comes to express the tragedy of their relationship coming to an end in the face of his married respectability. The consistent use of the theme underlines the sense that what makes Zazá attractive to Alberto, an abundant sexual confidence, is also what makes her impossible as a wife to a man in his social position. The use of pastiche indicates that what Zazá and Alberto are caught up in is a cultural construction and social placing of sexy femininity, but because it is pastiche this is not being made as a point but rather conveyed through the way cultural constructions and social placings are actually felt and lived. Similarly, Ware and Peace mobilises the famed seductiveness of the waltz for the, to Natasha, enchanting romance with the notorious seducer Anatole.

The Godfather theme sets a signature of nostalgia for Sicilianness that gradually

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20 Rota’s themes were used again in Godfather Part III (1990) but he himself had died in 1979.
21 For once a bit of jargon is a useful short-hand: the ‘diegesis’ refers to the fictional world presented by a film; what is non-diegetic is what is not shown to have a source in that world, of which most film music is a prime example.
becomes sinister through the course of the films while never wanting us to forget the power of its nostalgic appeal. At its first diegetic introduction it may on initial viewing do little more than remind us of the presence of the idea of Sicily in this American setting. By the final moments of the opening sequence of *The Godfather Part II*, however, where the Americanness of the event is more strongly marked and where we know so much more of the methods and hold of the family, Michael and Kay Corleone dancing to the main theme is much more ominous, hinting at (and allowing us to feel) the impossibility of Michael's ever breaking free from «this Sicilian thing» (as Kay calls it). With *La strada*, the passing of the theme between circus and church suggests an equivalence between them, which, in the light of other films by both Rota and Federico Fellini (usually together), works in both directions, suggesting the tacky spectacularity of the church and also the real sense of wonder that the circus can engender. Here, as in all the other examples of Rota’s music discussed above, there is a recognition of the cultural and historical constructedness of the emotions of popular music, which never stops the music having its emotional appeal. This is one of the most interesting potentials of pastiche.

Before turning to further consideration of the last point and the potential of pastiche as a notion, I want to signal a number of the complexities thrown up by my examples. If part of my purpose it to put pastiche on the map of cultural enquiry, it will be as well to indicate the kinds of theoretical and methodological difficulties this will involve.

First, my examples indicate different usages of pastiche: neo-noir suggests whole films as, or inflected by, pastiche, whereas the case of *Seven* refers only to a short section of the film and the Rota examples to an element used throughout films that are not otherwise pastiches. Pastiche is a resource more than it is a category.

Second, while much work has been done on how parody is marked in a text22, this has yet to be done for pastiche. Apart from knowing from some other source that such and such is meant to be pastiche (with all the attendant problems of such kinds of knowledge), the only ways that one might be alerted to the possibility in the above examples that there is something going on are the stylistic difference between the credits sequence of *Seven* and the rest of the film and the narrational plasticity of the musical material in Rota’s work.

This means, thirdly, that one has to ‘get’ the fact that the something going on is pastiche23 and to get what is being pastiched. Most of the time we are all enormously competent at this very complex activity, at any rate with work produced within our own lifetime and culture. Not getting the fact of pastiche or what is being pastiched may not spoil the basic understanding or pleasure of a work, but it may involve missing out on a dimension. If you can’t precisely locate the reference to café chantant, Viennese waltz, Sicilian and circus music in Rota’s work, this may not matter much, but if you don’t realise there is pastiche at all, then the possibilities for ironic attachment that the films open up are liable to be lost. Not getting the underground pastiche in *Seven* does matter, in the sense that the sequence becomes merely odd, only explicable as an evocation of the killer’s obsessive scrapbooking.

Fourth, though, understanding what that referencing involves is itself not straight-
forward. Pastiche must logically reference something that precedes it; though it need not be much before it and may be to all intents and purposes contemporaneous with it, generally pastiche references something historically past. However, on closer inspection, much pastiche turns out to be historically inaccurate or highly selective imitation. The underground invoked by Seven’s credits is thematically and in its montage-to-rock organisation closest to Kenneth Anger but it actually looks more like Stan Brakhage or Hollis Frampton. Neo-noir uses chiaroscuro lighting but on the one hand not skewed angles or voice-over and on the other hand, colour, producing a significantly different aesthetic; it also uses jazz as the aural marker of noir, whereas, as David Butler has shown, jazz was quite rare in 1940s/50s film noir, especially at the non-diegetic level. Zazà’s (Isa Miranda’s) voice and delivery is utterly different from that of the singers its references, such as Maria Campi or Zara, the Godfather theme is based upon an amalgam of Mediterranean (including Arab) ideas and one may wonder whether Rota did not invent what has now become accepted as old-time circus music. Pastiche imitates widespread perceptions of the art to which it refers rather than being an archaeologically precise reproduction of it. Yet it does also involve the idea of pastness and perhaps of origins. The complexities of what then is going on in pastiche’s referencing will take some unravelling: now acknowledging the presence of the past in the present, now marking the fact of pastness as doneness, perhaps nostalgically, perhaps critically, never any of this necessarily or securely.

All of these points are brought into focus if one considers the relationship of pastiche to genre. Pastiche is generic in the sense of being a kind of treatment, comparable to burlesque, homage, parody, naturalism, minimalism and so on (all of which imply another, as it were unmarked, transparent category, that is, a prevailing norm of treatment).

Also (and this is what I want to consider a little more here), pastiche depends on genre: it needs to have recognisable kinds of aesthetic form to imitate and reference. One might even say that pastiche (like homage and parody) affirms the contours of a genre against the greater fluidity and provisionality of generic categories that recent genre theory indicates. However, precisely because of the undeveloped account of what might constitute the textual marking of pastiche, it may not always be easy to demonstrate textually where normal generic production leaves off and pastiche begins. It is partly the contextual fact that neo-noir, Zazà and Seven refer through imitation to generic tropes that are no longer in normal (unmarked, unpastiched) production that allows one to recognise them as pastiche. One could further demonstrate that they are pastiche by pointing to the difference, touched on above, between their formal properties and the originals to which they refer: Jazz was significant in classic noir, but not always and seldom non-diegetically; Seven, as noted, mixes two accurately reproduced but chronologically distinct modes of underground film; Zazà’s song is entirely correct in its structure and call for audience participation, but not in its delivery and pacing. One may also know that something is a pastiche from the immediate textual context – Andrzej Wajda’s Człowiek z Marmuru (Man of Marble, 1976) contains extensive pastiches of newsreel and propaganda film in the Stalinist years as part of its protagonist’s search for the truth about a legendary Stakhanovite worker, while both Hearts of the West (H. Zieff, 1975) and Westworld (M. Crichton, 1973) involve pastiches, respectively, of Western films and the mise-en-scène of the Western.

Cases like _Człowiek z Marmura_ and _Zazą_, however, raise issues about the textual marking of pastiche. How does one know that the footage in the former and the song in the latter are not the real thing? Does ‘getting it’ in the former involve waiting towards the end of the film, when the protagonist finally meets the son of the legendary worker who is played by the same actor that we have seen playing the worker himself in the footage, which indicates the level of fictionality involved? Do we need to have heard Maria Ciampi and Zara 1 to know that _Zazą’s_ song is slightly off? Such contextual aspects (whether of preceding cultural tradition or the immediate metatextual context of, as in _Człowiek z Marmura_, films within films) may often be at work, as may be the co-presence of different generic elements (which returns us to the meaning of pastiche as a work combining a number of different styles that I passed over above), which have the effect of highlighting the genre qua genre rather than merely reproducing it. It is also probably the case that there are textual features as well that signal the non-straight relationship of the pastiche to the generic material it references/imitates. Exaggeration, simplification, inappropriateness and discrepancy may all play their part, though usually in quite moderate forms, enough to signal pastiche rather than straight, uninflected generic imitation, but not enough to tip over into homage, parody or the grotesque. The exact delineation of these features needs to be done and may prove intractable.

A combination of contextual and textual features will probably most often be needed to grasp a generic pastiche as that and not as just another instance of the genre. All genre works reproduce the genre and the richest appreciation of them is made in the awareness that they are genre works, and this may not be easy to distinguish from pastiche, which also gently relies on recognition of the genre qua genre. I am willing to assert that _Shane_ (G. Stevens, 1952), _The Magnificent Seven_ (J. Sturges, 1960), _True Grit_ (H. Hathaway, 1969) and _Pale Rider_ (C. Eastwood, 1985) are all significantly marked by pastiche whereas _The Covered Wagon_ (J. Cruze, 1923), _Stagecoach_ (J. Ford, 1939) and _Unforgiven_ (C. Eastwood, 1991) are straightforward (unmarked) examples of the Western genre, while _The Man Who Shot Liberty Valance_ (J. Ford, 1962) is merely self-reflexive. However, whereas a radical transformation such as _C’era una volta il West_ (S. Leone, 1968) or a travesty with parodic dimensions27 like _Blazing Saddles_ (M. Brooks, 1974) may be easy enough to distinguish from a straight Western, it is more challenging to demonstrate the difference between the pastiche, the self-reflexive and merely another example of the genre. If I surprised you above by suggesting _Shane_, say, is marked by pastiche, would I be able to convince you from textual and contextual evidence, leave alone textual qualities alone? Conceptually the difference, between pastiched and straight genre, is clear enough, but showing it any given instance is more difficult.

All the above is the tip of the iceberg of work to be done in providing a fuller description and understanding of pastiche. I want though to end by suggesting why exploring it might be productive for cultural studies (and, which is only a sub-category of this, popular culture studies).

To begin with, pastiche is useful for understanding specific areas or aspects of cultural production. My own interest stems from an interest in film music which, as I have already indicated, is ineluctably concerned with pastiche (where it does not use the actual music of a given period or milieu). This can of course be barely marked pastiche: One may know that Rota’s music for _Romeo and Juliet_ (F. Zeffirelli, 1968) is not actu-

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27 A travesty, a category from classical aesthetics, is a ‘high’ topic treated in a ‘low manner’, which does not necessarily imitate critically or mockingly as in parody. The farting sequence in _Blazing Saddles_ is travesty but can hardly be considered parody, since farting does not figure in the repertoire of the Western, but the film does also make fun of many of the genre’s conventions.
ally Renaissance music, but nothing about it suggests any foregrounding of the fact of imitation. This will hold true for a great deal of film music, although I have been surprised by how many other classic examples (e.g. Prokofiev's *Alexander Nevsky* score, Steiner's *Jezebel*, Williams's *Star Wars*) are by no means straightforward in their use of musical imitation. Other scholars will have other interests. Elizabeth Wilson points out that fashion «has relied on pastiche and the recycling of styles throughout the industrial period»\(^2\). The much debated nature and value of Madonna's endless self-transformations may be better judged through fine calibrations of the elements of pastiche, parody and rip-off in them.

Pastiche may also be useful in charting processes of cultural influence. One might consider, for instance, the formal processes of the development of white popular music out of black. Bing Crosby, Elvis Presley, the Beatles, the Beastie Boys, Mariah Carey, Eminem, all are inexplicable without reference to African-American music. In certain ways they have come, or been used, to occlude that connection, but very often, especially initially, the connection has been the point – these are white kids singing like blacks, with an ambiguous admixture in it of longing and envy, making and having fun. Thinking of this in these terms may enable us to hear the expressive significance of the open imitation to African-American culture as well as to trace the gradual loss of acknowledgement of this in the reassertion of white cultural hegemony. I know that people know this already, but the discussion tends to be mired in questions of black origins and white rip-off; pastiche may help to cut through this by providing a more accurate and nuanced affective and formal account of the process.

In pointing to such instances, I am not at all wishing to say that pastiche explains everything about them, much less about all culture. It is nonetheless a widespread mode, and perhaps at times a surprising one. It used, for instance, to be a common assumption that popular culture was naive and straightforward. While I doubt that anyone (in cultural and communications studies, anyway) thinks this of contemporary popular culture, especially as it is understood to be postmodern, there may still be an assumption that that's what popular culture used to be («we're all more self-conscious now» is a not uncommon opinion). Attention to pastiche throughout cultural history can disabuse of this. But this does not mean that (popular) culture being self-conscious is therefore endlessly critical and transgressive. It may be and can be, but it isn't necessarily so. At the same time there is a lesson for us in pastiche, namely that, contrary to so much twentieth century cultural theory and pedagogic practice, awareness of the historicity and cultural specificity of feelings does not stop one feeling them. Pastiche suggests that we can be aware of where our feelings are coming from without thereby being embarrassed, ashamed or self-flagellating about them. Pastiche suggest that the knowledge gain of cultural theory – emotions are cultural – need not accompany a loss of the capacity to feel, and that (popular) culture has known this intuitively all along.

This lesson from pastiche suggest finally an attitude towards culture. Just as pastiche itself embodies an orientation towards culture that is both inside and outside, complicit with yet aware of that which it references, so may our cultural analytic practices be.

A particular instance here is camp\(^3\). This has become, in its straight take-up and its gay routinisation, a kind of easy derision of cultural items, mainly popular, mainly oldish. As a now widespread phenomenon, there is not much we can do about this, but examining camp in terms of pastiche may remind us of the original complexity of its


\(^{29}\) For a scholarly summation of camp, see F. Cleton (ed.), *Camp: Queer Aesthetics and the Performing Subject; A Reader*, Edinburgh University Press, Edinburgh 1999.
attitude. Camp may have recognised the excess and performativity of, say, opera and ballet, Bette Davis and Barbra Streisand, but this was never necessarily (or even typically) derision or making fun; there were always admixtures of identifying with and recognising difference from such items, knowing the artifices of heterosexually based styles and feeling the pull of them, and so on. Camp was a within/without, aware and complicit stance par excellence.

It is something like this that I want to recommend though the notion of pastiche. Just as gay men in relation to straight culture, so cultural analysts more generally are oddly placed in relation to the culture they analyse. There has historically been a tendency to flop between two positions: Either critical superiority, high cultural and/or Marxist, or an identification and enjoyment claimed to be like anyone else’s. Neither is satisfactory. Like it not, at the moment of analysing (popular) culture we are not like anyone else30, it is a peculiar activity; and yet we do still genuinely enjoy, laugh, weep, tap our feet, surrender to the rhythm. We are, perforce, inside and outside. Like pastiche. This is a productive orientation. Adopting it, we will not be inclined to distort our account by a lack of affective inwardness, but nor will we have to ditch the possibilities of political and aesthetic reflection, the very point of cultural analysis.