



UNIVERSITY OF
CAMBRIDGE

Review of
the year
2009–2010

CRASSH

A digital archive



CRASSH now films an increasing number of its events and makes them available in our Media Gallery, and via the University's Streaming Media Service (SMS) and YouTube channel.

Since first filming all the papers delivered at the July 2009 conference, *Changing the humanities/the humanities changing*, the Centre has added over 50 more videos to a growing digital archive.

The recent migration to YouTube has shown evidence of a real interest in videos of CRASSH events. Over 1,000 people watched a lecture given by Professor Sheldon Pollock (Columbia) within the first month of the video being uploaded. Statistics available from YouTube also demonstrate that viewers are watching CRASSH media from all over the world. Whilst there are large numbers of viewers from across Europe, the US and Australia, it is also clear that people are tuning in in India and from a number of countries in Africa.

Filming part of or all of an event – including the making of a short conference trailer – is now an option CRASSH offers to all its event conveners. Filming and post-production is all done in-house to a very high standard.

Profile: CRASSH Media Gallery and the World Oral Literature Project

Mark Turin, Research Associate, World Oral Literature Project

I direct the World Oral Literature Project, which is affiliated to the University of Cambridge Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology. I am also presently a Research Associate at CRASSH, where I serve on the steering committee for Digital Humanities.

As an urgent initiative to document and make accessible endangered verbal arts before they disappear without record, the World Oral Literature Project was established in 2009 to support communities and fieldworkers engaged in collection and preservation projects. We celebrated the end of our first year at Cambridge with a workshop to which we invited anthropologists, linguists, archivists, museum curators, librarians, publishers and indigenous researchers. The event was a great success, as it provided a collaborative environment for scholars to discuss and be exposed to new techniques and fieldwork methodologies. But it was thanks to CRASSH's online Media Gallery that the impact of the December workshop continued to be felt long after our meeting was over.

We asked CRASSH's Computer Officer, Glenn Jobson, to help film the proceedings – not just highlights, but the entire event. As we had received far more applications to present and attend than could be accommodated in our two days, recording all 18 of the presentations proved to be an important way to connect with people who were not been able to make the journey to Cambridge.

Through the Media Gallery, videos of the presentations continue to be watched and downloaded, and some have been accessed well over 300 times. All of the raw video files are securely backed up to DSpace@Cambridge (the University's institutional repository), and served up online in a number of different formats through the excellent Streaming Media Service (SMS) at Cambridge. We regularly receive emails from researchers around the world expressing their thanks for providing free online access, without payment, subscription or password, to an event that was held in Cambridge over those two days last December. Other colleagues have let me know that they have incorporated segments of the videos into their course materials and curricula.

As we prepare for this year's workshop, generously supported by a CRASSH conference grant, we will once again request that all presenters allow their talks to be filmed; and I would encourage other conference conveners to explore the potential of connecting with wider audiences through video or audio-casting the proceedings of their meetings.