Film Mashup as a Contemporary Aesthetic for Political Engagement

Orientation:
Avatar, *Star Wars: The Last Jedi, The Avengers, and Wonder Woman* are box office dynamite, and Hollywood is pouring billions of dollars into Science Fiction and Fantasy and raking in monster profits and with no end in sight. This economic success speaks directly to the popularity of the genre, and it's ability to connect with audiences on the unconscious level and across the global market. Colonial invasion, trade wars, slavery, and oppression form the narrative matrix of these fictional spaces that are hierarchical, violent, totalitarian, xenophobic, and genocidal– the worst extension of human politics.

Entertainment of this kind encodes alienation into fantastical vignettes built on transgression and escape. Captain America, Iron Man, and the Hulk are superhuman characters infused with radioactive powers functioning on the subatomic level. They represent latent male desires to transgress biology and re-fashion themselves into super soldiers that vicariously serve and transcend the totalitarian societies that formed them.

Methodology:
Serendipity is a way of transposing complicated systems through structural overlays to expose data congruence and disparity not observable in any single instance; a powerful model of this can be found in the online phenomenon of the film mashup.

Mashup as Strategy:
Internet film mashups have become popular strategies to reconstitute monolithic culture within the needs of the individual. Ironic, satirical, and subversive, these films are representative of a new political consciousness unbound by copyright law and commodity status – the new frontier.

Conceptual Goals:
1) Enhance student awareness about the subliminal nature of mass media
2) Become aware of the political nature of Science Fiction
3) Decode negative representations of Science and Evolution in Sci-Fi
4) Analyze the unconscious appeal of parahuman representations
5) Decode subliminal representations of power and control
6) Encode media insight with new trajectories and conclusions that students can incorporate into their own works.

Conceptual Skills:
1) Learn the basics of Power Point and Final Cut Pro
2) Understand the relationship between art and language
3) Develop editing strategies that transform ideas into images
4) Recognize importance of color theories and graphic matches
5) Understand subliminal importance of sound design and music scores

<u>Final Assignment:</u>
Complete a mashup film overlaying two or three distinct Science Fiction, Fantasy, and/or Horror films to form a thesis distinct from the source material. Give a classroom presentation that underscores the data input, design strategies, and conceptual outcomes. Upload student projects to an online media-streaming source like You Tube or Vimeo, track results.

The final projects will be screened in an open forum for students, teachers, family, and members of the community.