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PERFORMING DOCUMENTATION
IN THE CONSERVATION OF CONTEMPORARY ART

Cover
Ângela Ferreira, *Double-Sided*, CAM-FCG, 1996-2009
View from the installation in the exhibition "Professores", 2010
Photo: Paulo Costa
Courtesy: CAM — FCG's Photo Archive and Ângela Ferreira

EDITORIAL

Performing Documentation in the Conservation of Contemporary Art is the title of the international conference held in Lisbon, in June, 2013. This issue of Revista de História da Arte offers updated and expanded versions of a selection of the papers presented in the conference, and a few additional contributions. The aim is to provide access to current research by exploring the many aspects associated with documenting contemporary art and focusing on problematic issues identified and discussed by researchers from major institutions in Europe and the USA whose mission is to collect, exhibit and disseminate knowledge about contemporary art.

The variety of topics and issues addressed shows how vast, complex and diversified the fields of theory and practice of documentation as a strategy for preserving contemporary art are. It underlines the continuing need for museums, collectors and universities to join resources to make sure that future generations may experience and understand our contemporary artistic expressions and that what is documented and preserved is the "real thing", while making allowances for change, opening space for reinterpretation, ensuring the possibility of presentation in different contexts, providing access and promoting public participation in the process.

The organization of this publication presented a challenge as most articles cover a variety of aspects and some could be included in more than one chapter. Coming from private collections, museums, archives, research and training institutions, authors address common issues and illuminate fluent transitions between practices of presentation, documentation, preservation and (re)interpretation of works of art.

By way of introduction to the diverse range of situations discussed in the publication, Renée van de Vall identifies, in addition to the traditional paradigm of scientific conservation, the emerging "performance paradigm" and "processual paradigm". Given the nature of current art practices and the evolving status of many works of art Van de Vall calls for a documentation practice that registers "doubts, disappointments, and the arguments pro and contra particular decision" to enable ethically sound conservation choices.

In **Preserving the ephemeral** Irene Müller addresses the problem of performance transmission and its relation to the archive, suggesting that losses and blind spots may be opportunities that can add value to the artworks. Gabriella Giannachi enters the world of mixed reality performance introducing methodologies for documentation of the user's experience of such works and analyzing the role of the produced documentation for museums. From the curatorial project's point of view, Liliana Coutinho addresses performance art documentation looking specifically at the social and political dynamics associated to some of these events. Finally, Vivian van Saaze discusses the role of memory in the preservation of artworks that cannot be documented by written or visual records.

In **Documentation in progress** Andreia Nogueira and Hélia Marçal examine the complexity of documenting connections between different artworks that are both autonomous and part of ongoing projects. Teresa Azevedo charts an artist's

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quest to find the ideal format to present in a single space and moment a two-part installation work. Both articles underline the need for museum collections with works that are part of evolving projects to increase interaction, information exchange, and joint monitoring to prevent loss of meaning. Claudia Marchese and Rita Salis discuss the challenges of documenting a private, rather than a public museum collection and stress the role of the collectors in the process.

Reimagining documentation shows how continuously emerging new forms of artistic expression challenge our traditional documentation practices and call for more imaginative strategies. Sanneke Stigter examines the process of documentation when the conservator takes the role of a co-producer and reasons in favour of an autoethnographic approach. Julia Noordegraaf argues for a more radical freedom of interpretation in the execution of time-based media installations and emphasizes a shared responsibility among all stakeholders for documenting and remembering these works. Based on an analysis of today's network cultures and artistic open source strategies, Annet Dekker proposes 'processual' conservation practices that consider distribution and development. And finally, Cristina Oliveira focuses on artworks that use living beings and explores aspects of documentation far beyond our traditional views and experiences.

In **Capturing, structuring, and accessing** Rebecca Gordon explores the complex interrelation of layers of documentation in performance art and introduces the idea of the 'meta-score'. From the museum perspective, Allessandra Barbuto discusses the elements of performances and the practice of their documentation. She builds a persuasive argument for an improved structuring of the acquisition processes. Joanna Phillips presents a new model for documentation of time-based media works that also considers decision making processes. The additional efforts to document these processes would allow a better understanding of what determines different manifestations of artworks. And last but not least, Glenn Wharton reviews the current museum culture of documentation. As a result he argues that the activation of institutional archives by promoting public contributions in a form of *crowd documentation* would offer new directions for the ever growing challenge of documenting contemporary works of art.

This issue of Revista de Historia da Arte involved the joint efforts of many colleagues. We are most grateful to all authors who not only provided the rich content, but also demonstrated great patience in the editing process. We thank the reviewers who thoughtfully read and commented on all contributions. We would like to express our gratitude to Alison Bracker who provided an invaluable contribution to this publication with her experience in text editing and her profound knowledge of the field. The publication was made possible through the financial support provided by the Instituto de História da Arte (IHA) and the Network for Conservation of Contemporary Art (NeCCAR).

DOSSIER

BY WAY OF INTRODUCTION

DOCUMENTING DILEMMAS

ON THE RELEVANCE OF ETHICALLY AMBIGUOUS CASES

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ABSTRACT

This paper argues that documentation best serves the conservation of contemporary art when it does not only collect and record information about the work, but also records the dilemmas conservators have felt themselves confronted with when deciding their conservation strategy. The reason is that in the last two decades, in and through evolving and reflective practice, a situation has arisen in which new ethical paradigms are emerging, appropriate for different types of work and different logics of perpetuation. The paper outlines three different paradigms with corresponding paradigmatic cases, arguing that only a case-by-case method of ethical deliberation (casuist ethics) will help articulate the appropriate principles and guidelines for the newer paradigms. Documentation of conservation-ethical dilemmas is needed to enable this deliberation. Moreover, most cases will remain rather messy; many artworks consist of heterogeneous assemblages of objects, ideas, and practices that all imply their own logic of perpetuation. Other artworks hover between different paradigms, or pass from one paradigm to another in the course of their biographies. Therefore the documentation of dilemmas will continue to be required to facilitate a casuist approach to taking responsible decisions, and developing a body of professional experience.

KEYWORDS
CONSERVATION THEORY | CASUIST ETHICS | SCIENTIFIC CONSERVATION PARADIGM | PERFORMANCE PARADIGM | PROCESSUAL PARADIGM

RESUMO

O presente artigo defende que a documentação serve da melhor forma a conservação da arte contemporânea quando não apenas reúne e regista informação sobre a obra, mas regista também os dilemas com que os conservadores se sentiram confrontados ao decidir a sua estratégia de conservação.
Nas últimas duas décadas, através de uma prática reflexiva e em transformação, novos paradigmas éticos, apropriados para obras de diferentes tipos e a diferentes lógicas de perpetuação, estão a emergir. O presente artigo apresenta três paradigmas distintos com casos paradigmáticos correspondentes, defendendo que somente um método de deliberação caso a caso (ética casuística) ajudará a articular os princípios e orientações apropriados para os novos paradigmas.
É necessária documentação dos dilemas éticos da conservação para possibilitar essa deliberação. Por outro lado, a maioria dos casos permanecerá bastante confusa. Muitas obras de arte consistem em assemblagens heterogéneas de objetos, ideias e práticas com as suas próprias lógicas de perpetuação. Outras obras de arte pairam entre diferentes paradigmas, ou passam de um paradigma para outro no decurso das suas biografias. Portanto, a documentação dos dilemas continuará a ser necessária para possibilitar uma abordagem casuística à tomada de decisões responsáveis e ao desenvolvimento de um corpo de experiência profissional.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE
TERIA DA CONSERVAÇÃO | ÉTICA CASUÍSTICA | PARADIGMA DA CONSERVAÇÃO CIENTÍFICA | PARADIGMA DA PERFORMANCE | PARADIGMA PROCESSUAL

Introduction

Numerous authors have pointed to the difficulty of applying established conservation-ethical principles such as authenticity, minimal intervention, and reversibility to contemporary works of art. Due to the complicated nature of contemporary artworks, their inherent variability, and reliance on technologies that become obsolete very rapidly, conservation seems to have no single set of clear principles or value system to guide conservation decisions and conservators have to find other beacons to navigate by (e.g. Real 2001, Buskirk 2003, Barker and Bracker 2005, Wharton 2005, Laurenson 2006, Weyer 2006, Hummelen & Scholte 2006, Scholte & Te Brake-Baldock 2007, Wharton & Molotch 2009, Scholte 2011, van Saaze 2013a and many others).

I'll argue that in the last two decades, in and through evolving and reflective practice, a situation has arisen in which new ethical paradigms are emerging, each embodying a different logic of perpetuation.[1] Next to the established paradigm of "scientific conservation," for which the preservation of the material integrity of the work as a physical object is the central aim of conservation (cf. Clavir 1998; Villers 2004; Muñoz Viñas 2005), I discern two other models (often taken together in theoretical reflections): the "performance paradigm," in which the core of the work is considered to consist in its concept, which should be realized through the faithful performance of a set of instructions stipulating the features defining the work's identity; and the "processual paradigm," in which not the correspondence of an eventual result with a pre-existing concept, but the process, is assumed to be the core of the work. In the latter case, the main aim of conservation is support of the work's continuation through transmission of the required information, skills and procedures to the designated participants or stakeholders.

We can safely state that nowadays different value systems with correspondent strategies exist (be it often implicitly) side by side, and may all in their own way be relevant. Sometimes they may conflict; sometimes they won't. In concrete cases, preserving (at least some of the) authentic parts of the work may be just as urgent as respecting the work's immaterial idea, which might ask for properly engaging specific groups of people, and playing according to the rules of the game. However, very often situations arise in which conservators have to choose between values without the consequences over time of those choices being clear yet. Contemporary conservation literature abounds with examples in which preserving one feature of the work may be harming another: for instance *Gismo* by Tinguely, which should move and make sound, but cannot do this without damage to its parts (Beerkens et al. 1999), or Jamelie Hassan's 1981 work *Los Desaparecidos*, where visitors should have been allowed to walk amidst the 74 porcelain pieces displayed on the floor, but weren't because of the danger of breaking the pieces (Irvin 2006).

In this situation of a plurality of emerging, as yet not clearly articulated, and possibly conflicting paradigms, it is of major importance to develop a shared body of professional experience enabling conservation professionals to collectively establish the conditions for responsible, reflective judgment of concrete cases. Establishing these conditions amounts to: 1) articulating ethical principles and

[1] Following the casuist approach to ethics outlined by Jonsen and Toulmin, which I will explain below, I understand the term "paradigm" as a theoretical construct denoting a more or less coherent cluster of ethical values, guidelines, strategies, and practices defined by "paradigmatic cases," "central, unambiguous kinds of cases … that those [values, guidelines, etc,] are commonly understood to cover." The paradigm cases clearly exemplify a specific logic of perpetuation. However, as "every moral maxim, rule, or other generalization applies to certain actual situations centrally and unambiguously, but to others only marginally or ambiguously" (Jonsen and Toulmin 1988, 8), in many cases, several paradigms may apply simultaneously. The value of discerning the paradigms is in analytically clarifying the ethical complexity of these cases.

guidelines that form an alternative to the standard ones of minimal intervention and reversibility; 2) facilitating deliberation about all those cases that fall in between in some way or another. Both aims require a sharing of not only best, but also less fortunate practices, of the arguments pro *and* contra particular decisions taken in concrete cases, of remaining doubts, of interventions that turned out to be wrong on the long run. Documentation, I will argue, best serves the conservation of contemporary art when it does not only collect and record information about the work and its history, but also the dilemmas conservators have felt themselves confronted with when deciding their conservation strategy.

Ethics in times of historical change

The point I would like to make is *not* that the ethics connected with "scientific conservation" no longer make sense. There are plenty of examples where the conscientious observation of the principles of minimal intervention and reversibility of treatments have resulted in generally admired restorations. The point is rather that their applicability to *all* possible cases is contested: new types of art have emerged that no longer fit the paradigm. We could say that we are witnessing a period of transition in which the relevance of existing ethical principles has shrunk, and new practices have emerged for which the old principles and guidelines are no longer fully applicable. Additionally, more adequate guidelines still have to be invented or adequately articulated.[2] Documentary practices, I will argue, should be aimed at facilitating the articulation of these guidelines and delineate the domains for which they are relevant.

To illustrate what this historical transition could mean and why the documentation of dilemmas is important, I would like to refer to a historical example given by Jonsen & Toulmin, the way moral theology of the 15th and 16th century struggled with the condemnation of usury. Jonsen and Toulmin argue for a casuist approach in ethics (Jonsen and Toulmin 1988; cf. Brody 1988, 2003; Nordgren 2001; Cherry and Smith Iltis 2007). Such an approach does not necessitate a reversal of existing practices, but a rethink of their implications for ethics, and for the kind of directions we expect of ethical codes. The main point is that rather than understanding moral reasoning as a theoretical science, a body of sure knowledge (*episteme*) based on general principles that should be applied to individual cases, the casuist approach treats it as a form of practical wisdom (*phronesis*) starting from the details and circumstances of particular situations, and arguing from these cases to more general rules or guidelines. This reverse reasoning is not simply inductive, however, because induction assumes that there is a common evaluative framework that these cases share — and that is exactly what is disputed. Casuist approaches assume that the default condition of moral deliberation is that value systems may and do conflict, but that this does not preclude agreement on concrete cases. Rather than starting from general principles or guidelines, one has to start from paradigm cases, examples that are generally recognised as morally good or bad practice.[3] From there, the procedure has to evolve step by step. By comparing the similarities and differences of the problem at hand with relevant paradigmatic examples, the casuist seeks to find out whether the former may be resolved in

[2] An interesting text that acknowledges the insufficiency of standard ethical principles for technology-based artworks and proposes five different options for how to proceed in case of technical malfunctioning is Bek (2011); there is no recognition, however, that *other* ethical principles might have to be articulated to justify these options.

[3] 'Starting from' is to be taken in an analytical sense: one never starts from scratch. Tsalling Swierstra has pointed to the "hermeneutical interaction between [ethical] problem and solution": problems can only be apprehended on the basis of existing ethical norms and values, themselves being solutions to previous problems; once perceived, however, they may give rise to a re-interpretation of amendment of the existing ethical repertoire. (Swierstra 2002, p. 21; author's translation)

a like manner or not. The systematic comparison of cases becomes particularly urgent in times of historical change, for which the debates on usury are a telling example. What makes this history instructive for the ethical deliberations in contemporary art conservation is that it shows why and how a generally accepted ethical paradigm — in our case, that of scientific conservation — may lose relevance, and what is required to complement it with newer, more adequate paradigms.

Following the handbooks for moral counselling used by priests and other Catholic officials since the Middle Ages, Jonsen and Toulmin show how in the 15th and 16th century it became a problem that the lending of money for profit was considered to be usury and therefore sinful. The Scriptures (both Old and New Testament) condemned the lending of money or victuals for profit. This prescription had a clear rationale in a subsistence economy with only little monetary circulation and low demand for credit: only people in great need would borrow — for instance after the failure of a crop or the loss of a flock — and it was considered shameful to gain financially from their misfortunes. Although there were also loans given in less extreme circumstances, the generally accepted moral paradigm — the exemplary case that people referred to when judging a practice as usury — was money given in times of distress. (Jonsen and Toulmin 1988, 183). From the fifteenth century onwards, with the rise of mercantile capitalism and the growth of nation-states, the prohibition of usury became a hindrance to investing money in commercial enterprises or state financing. More and more exceptions to the rule were allowed, and formulations invented in which it was made clear that rather than lending money against profit to a person in distress, these exceptions concerned participating in a joint partnership: for instance, a partnership between a merchant and a sea captain. Rather than profiting from someone's misfortune, the interest might be considered a reward for risk-taking, an insurance against loss, or a compensation for other economic uses the lender could have made of his money. In changing economic and political circumstances, the Church's moral prescriptions gradually changed. The earlier definition of usury changed from "where more is asked than is given" or "whatever is demanded beyond the principal" into "interest taken where there is no just title to profit" (Ibid, 193).

What is important for Jonsen and Toulmin, and instructive for my argument, is the case-by-case procedures through which moral theologians tried to formulate a new ethical paradigm.

The morally relevant differences among various forms of economic activity thus became apparent only as the result of case analysis. As each new case appeared, representing some new form of economic transaction devised by merchants, traders or landlords, it was measured against the relevant paradigmatic case: a loan made to someone in distress. In the eyes of all the moralists, the taking of profit on a loan to one in distress was clear immorality. It was simply theft and so contrary to the virtue of justice. How did each of the new cases differ from this paradigm? Did the structure, function and purpose of the new arrangement include morally relevant circumstances? If so, did they justify or excuse the activity? Did they aggravate or alleviate guilt? Did the new circumstances radically

change the nature of the case? These questions were insistently asked and answered as the debate over usury moved through the sixteenth century. (Ibid., 191)

Transitional moments in contemporary art conservation: the emergence of a second paradigm

The situation prevailing in contemporary art conservation over the past two or three decades bears much resemblance to the perplexities with which Catholic moral theologians were confronted. The point is not that older moral prescriptions have all of a sudden lost validity for the cases they were meant for; the point is that new types of cases have emerged for which they do not make sense — at least not automatically. Think of the two successive restorations of — first — Barnett Newman's *Who is Afraid of Red, Yellow and Blue III* and — second — Newman's *Cathedra*. One could say that these two restorations together mark the ethical paradigm of scientific conservation, and the principles of minimal intervention and reversibility. The first case is paradigmatic by constituting a generally deplored worst-case scenario; the second case is the complement of the first, in being generally applauded as a meticulous and conscientious observance of the ethical guidelines, and a very successful restoration as well (Hummelen 1992; Bracht et al. 2001; Matyssek 2012). However, what is completely unthinkable (although it has been done) in the case of Newman, rolling over a painted surface, has become (with some exaggeration) common practice in the case of Sol Lewitt's *Wall Drawings*. Take *Wall Drawing #801:Spiral*, currently on show in the cupola of Maastricht's Bonnenfantenmuseum. It was first executed in 1996 and has been removed and re-executed twice since then, the last time after the death of LeWitt himself, with nobody raising an eyebrow at either its removal or its reconstruction.

LeWitt's work is a good example of the second paradigm, which I have called the performance paradigm.[4] One of the texts establishing the paradigm as a viable alternative was Pip Laurenson's 2006 paper "Authenticity, Change and Loss in the Conservation of Time-Based Media Installations."[5] Instead of aiming at preserving a work's *authenticity*, she argued that one should try maintaining its *identity*, which lies in its work-defining properties. Time-based media installations, Laurenson argued, and in fact installations in general, are works that resemble notated music or theatre plays more than sculptures or paintings, because they are created and recreated according to instructions, just like a script or score stipulates what properties are essential and what properties merely accidental or variable. This does not mean that all executions turn out in the same way. There is room for variation and interpretation by the persons recreating the work, and adaptation to new circumstances; however, each new instantiation goes back to the instructions defining the core of the work, which as Laurenson notes, may be "thickly" or "thinly" specified (Laurenson 2006).

Another, later example of a thickly specified installation is Olafur Eliasson's *Notion Motion* (2005), in the collection of Museum Boymans -Van Beuningen in Rotterdam. Apart from some technical equipment, the work mainly consists of large water basins and wooden walkways; water and wood are thrown away after the exhibition, the most important

[4] This term has its drawbacks. It suggests that the paradigm is exclusively linked to performance art, whereas it applies to a much wider range of contemporary art genres (like conceptual art or installations) and there are examples of performance art that might better be described as "processual." I have decided to maintain the term, because the practice models itself on the example of what are traditionally called "the performance arts," like theatre plays and musical performances, to the extent that these are working with scenarios, scripts, or scores that can be executed by others than the writer or composer.

[5] See also Groys 1996 for an earlier proposal.

physical item remaining in the collection being the set of instructions.

> **Since *Notion Motion* is built anew every time it is installed and new materials are used, physical preservation has no relevance at all. Precise documentation, both of the material aspects and the concept, on the other hand, are extremely important. Only through this, it is possible to preserve the work for the future. It is the preservation of a splash. (De Groot, Guldemond & Kleizen 2007, 2)**

The same is true for the LeWitt *Wall Drawing*. As the Bonnenfantenmuseum's website reports, "At the root of every wall drawing by Sol LeWitt lies a precisely formulated assignment, or concise work description. This contains all the painting instructions which his assistants — often artists — have to follow as precisely as possible."[6]

One of LeWitt's most famous statements confirms this practice: "[The] idea or concept is the most important aspect of the work. When an artist uses a conceptual form of art, it means that all of the planning and decisions are made beforehand and the execution is a perfunctory affair. The idea becomes a machine that makes the art." (Lewitt 1967) LeWitt himself made the comparison of his wall drawings with musical performances: "I think of them [wall drawings] like a musical score that can be redone by any or some people. I like the idea that the same work can exist in two or more places at the same time."[7]

Comparable to musical scores, *Wall Drawings* may vary according to certain parameters, such as the place of execution and the interpretation of the performers. *Wall Drawing No. 652*, for instance, was first executed in 1990 in the Indianapolis Museum of Art, where it covered three walls surrounding a grand staircase. In 2005, LeWitt supervised a remake by a team of assistants in the Pulliam Great Hall on a 34-foot-high wall that measures 60 feet in width and executed in acrylic paints rather than ink. According to the museum's website, "[a]side from the change from inks to acrylics, the only difference in the new version is that it needed to be extended downward and outward to accommodate the larger expanse of wall surface."[8] Wall drawings can be removed and redone — not by reproducing a first installation but by a new interpretation. Thus, in the Carnegie Museum of Art in 2007, a team of local artists under the direction of one of LeWitt's studio members repainted two adjacent *Wall Drawings*, *#450* and *#493*, acquired in 1985 and 1986 respectively.[9]

The ethical appropriateness of re-doing the *Wall Drawings* now seems very clearly cut. However, re-executing LeWitts has not been an undisputed practice from the beginning. Not long after the scandal of the restoration of *Who is Afraid*, Kröller-Müller Museum's curator Marianne Brouwer suggested remaking a Sol LeWitt *Wall Drawing*. The museum's existing wall drawing had been smudged by a visitor's fingerprints, which compromised its optical qualities. As LeWitt was a conceptual artist, Brouwer had good reasons to suppose that there was no objection against re-executing his work. Yet Brouwer's suggestion was challenged at the time by one of the museum's free-lance conservators, who argued that recreating was against the current Code of Ethics. (Sillé 1999; van Wegen 1999)

[6] http://www.bonnefanten.nl/en/collection/current_presentations/spiral_sol_lewitt. Accessed 13/02/2013

[7] From Andrea Miller-Keller, 'Excerpts from a correspondence, 1981-1983', in Susanna Singer, ed. *Sol LeWitt: Wall Drawings 1969-1984*, exh. cat. Amsterdam Stedelijk Museum 1984; quoted by Roberts 2012, 193)

[8] This relocation is not mentioned on the museum's website text; it is however in a announcement in *artdaily.org*: http://www.artdaily.com/index.asp?int_sec=2&int_new=14676#.URzA5jtvIiE. Accessed 14/02/2013.

[9] *Carnegie — Another Look* (Summer 2007): http://www.carnegiemuseums.org/cmag/article.php?id=27. Accessed 14/02/2013.

In the aftermath of this debate, moreover, it also became clear that there are limits to what is permissible or not. Eventually, the artist told Brouwer in an interview in 1995 that whereas in theory his earlier *Wall Drawings* could be executed by anyone, some of them required specific skills; those done in pencil, for instance, could only be done by two American specialists (van Wegen 1999, p. 209). This must have convinced her to reconsider her initial position; in an interview in 1998, she criticized Den Haag's Gemeentemuseum for demolishing a LeWitt wall painting in the course of the building's renovation. Whereas director Hans Locher declared that the removal of the painting had no consequences, because the certificate and instructions of the work were being conserved, Brouwer commented that "A LeWitt lives on the wall;" "you cannot simply move it, it is more fragile [than a Newman or a Mondrian], it depends on our good faith" and "now we know that the history of the work's genesis and its location are essential as well"[10] (Suto 1998, author's translation).

Brouwer's revision touches on an important point. Although LeWitt may have stated once that the execution of his works was a "perfunctory affair," in fact he became increasingly precise about who was doing the re-execution, where, and how. Whereas in 1974 he still maintained that the execution required few technical skills, in subsequent years he

> **...attributed increasing importance to production methods. The walls had to be prepared in a particular way; the wall drawings were carried out according to strict application techniques; new, more demanding materials made their appearance, and the works themselves were bigger and bigger. All of these factors ultimately called for constituting a team of professional drafters (Gross 2012, 21).**[11]

Since LeWitt's death in 2007, the LeWitt studio has supervised re-executions of his works. In 2013, for instance, the Centre Pompidou in Metz showed thirty-three of LeWitt's wall drawings, all black and white, executed by a team of 65 art school students and 13 young artists under the supervision of 7 professional assistants.[12] The assistants had been accredited by the LeWitt estate, with the head assistant John Hogan, with 33 years of experience, as "chef d'orchestre." Chief assistant Hogan emphasised that LeWitt is the composer, and the drafters are his interpreters: they do not adapt but interpret his instructions. In the interpretation, everything counts: the sizes of the pencils and chalk sticks, the wringing of the cloths used for the washing of the ink, the number of paint layers. Critic Bénedicte Ramade has remarked that this extreme perfectionism might surprise and shatter the image one might have formed of conceptualists neglecting realization. On the contrary, there are, for instance, five phases required for appropriately sharpening the points of the crayons (Ramade 2012).

This increasing precision on the part of the artist and his estate may warn us that even if, in a general sense, there is a great difference between what is permitted in the case of a LeWitt *Wall Drawing*, and what is permitted in the case of a Newman colour field painting, we cannot simply derive the guidelines for the perpetuation of a *Wall Drawing* from the work's ontological typology. We still have to look at the characteristics of a particular work (is it in pencil or in ink,

[10] In the mean time, the painting has been re-executed in its original location. Conceptuele werken sneuvelen bij renovatie van Haags Gemeentemuseum. Wilma Suto, *Volkskrant*, 13/11/1998.

[11] See also Roberts 2012 and Lovatt 2010.

[12] http://www.centrepompidou-metz.fr/en/sol-lewitt-wall-drawings-1968-2007#onglet-1. Accessed 14/02/2013.

made for a particular site or not?), and how it is situated in the history of the artist's evolving practice, to know under which conditions it may be re-executed, how, and by whom.

The processual paradigm

Although LeWitt's works leave room for variation, the wall drawings are not completely open-ended. If we take them as paradigm cases for the second paradigm, we can see that they differ from the third one — of genuinely processual works — in respect to the criteria governing their results. Whereas — like in the performance of a notated score — there should be compliance in the execution with the stipulations spelled out in the instructions, a fully processual work leaves the form of the outcome undefined. Processual works would be all those works that are intended to change and develop according to uncontrollable factors or interventions from inside or outside the work, be it the weather, material decay, visitors' interactions or participation, or collaborative contributions by artists or public. Rather than faithfully performing a script or score, here the characteristic rationale would be to play according to the rules of the game. Where the performance paradigm requires going back to the instructions time and again, an exemplary processual work evolves from one stage to the next. I am aware that the distinction with the previous model is a fluid one; however, if we were to compare both with music, then the performative model would resemble notated music like classical symphonies, whereas the processual model would resemble improvised music.

As an example of a processual work, we might look at *Mission Eternity* by the Swiss-based art group etoy, as it is described by Josephine Bosma. In her discussion of this work, Bosma has argued that in cases like this, rather than preserving or returning to a *past* state, conservation would mean supporting or maintaining the "life" of the work (Bosma 2011, 164-191). *Mission Eternity* invites people to prolong their life after their physical death by uploading their immaterial life to an "Arcanum Capsule," a digital file, and leaving their ashes in a kind of mausoleum, the "Sarcophagus." They live on as a cluster of data, texts, or videos through a file-sharing software, the "Angel Application," which keeps their memory alive. Participants are not only asked to store and share their data, but also to take part in the development of the Angel Application, which is based on open source.

> **[This] means that everybody can add changes, modifications and upgrades to the core of the *Mission Eternity* project. Etoy allows participants, the active audience, to continue the *Mission Eternity* in any way they see fit. In many ways, the work can develop far beyond any one artist's influence. (Ibid., 175)**

For works like *Mission Eternity*, conservation would mean continuation and development, rather than preservation or re-creation. Continuation should not take place in a separate and protected environment like a museum, but "out there" in the real (or virtual) world, where the work should be kept alive by the continuous engagement of the public — the people involved in the work — rather than by a team of experts working from instructions. As such, Bosma argues, conserving a work like this necessitates a loss of

control — even more poignantly: conservation only occurs *through* loss of control (Ibid., 166). Therefore, it is processual works (or the processual aspects of performative works) that most profoundly challenge the institutional and professional parameters of conservation.

This challenge was recognized by the Van Abbe Museum when it acquired another work we could call processual: *No Ghost Just a Shell* initiated by Pierre Huyghe and Philippe Parreno in 2002 (van Saaze 2013a, 169). This work was a collaborative project by 25 artists or artist groups, who all contributed to the life of a virtual Manga character AnnLee. Although the initiators proclaimed AnnLee's death in 2002, the work has not stopped evolving, with new works featuring AnnLee popping up since 2002, and new versions of the project acquired by other collections. Vivian van Saaze, who has followed the re-exhibition of the project (Van Saaze 2013 a &b) noted that, "such collaborative projects ask for a collaborative attitude from their collectors" in order to "ensure the perpetuation of *No Ghost Just a Shell* and its vivid and hybrid character" (van Saaze 2013b, 175).

To conclude: there are no short cuts in ethics

In this discussion, I have delineated three distinct paradigms, defined by paradigmatic cases: a generally accepted, but nowadays relatively less relevant paradigm of scientific conservation; an increasingly acknowledged performance paradigm; and a still very experimental processual paradigm. I argue that documentation should include conservation dilemmas in order to better enable the profession to articulate the domain of relevance and guidelines for these new paradigms in a comparative case-by-case approach.

Although the challenges of conserving contemporary art for documentation have received much attention, and several professional organisations have been developing new methods and systems to improve documentation,[13] these initiatives pay only little attention to the recording and sharing of dilemmas. The Variable Media Initiative, for instance, is an innovative approach in which artworks are acknowledged to embody different behaviours. The initiative asks for different conservation strategies, and artists' opinions about the works' future conservation are assembled, but, crucially, there is no entry for conservation discussions and dilemmas.[14] The same applies to the Docam Documentation Model[15] and the Inside Installations Documentation Model — 2IDM.[16] Necessary and useful as these models are, they focus on the best ways to record and make accessible factual information about the works, including their more ephemeral and experiential aspects, and the intentions of their makers.[17] Only the Model for Condition Registration developed by the *Modern Art: Who Cares?* team has an entry "weighing the options for conservation." It asks conservators to record the discussion behind the selection of a conservation option, and to explain the reasons for selecting the option chosen. This is a step in the direction I would like to plead for, and I hope that this example will be followed more broadly. Only by systematically recording and sharing doubts, disappointments, and the arguments pro and contra a particular decision is it possible to clarify for which cases what kind of conservation strategies would be ethically appropriate, and whether guidelines that have proven to be adequate for one case may be safely translated to another.[18]

[13] For an overview of the challenges and of initiatives taken to address them see Heydenreich (2011).

[14] http://variablemediaquestionnaire.net/; accessed September 1 2014.

[15] http://www.docam.ca/en/documentation-model.html; accessed September 1 2014.

[16] http://www.inside-installations.org/ accessed September 1 2014.

[17] Cf Hummelen and Scholte (2006).

[18] Cf Swierstra op.cit., author's translation]: "Just like technology, ethics is always about tinkering, in order that a fit may grow between norms and facts. It is always an open — ethically normative — question whether an ethical solution can be transported to another problem situation. Whether a norm (or vocabulary) has been appropriately relocated from (old) empirical situation A to (new) empirical situation B can only be determined by investigating whether there are — in the light of this transport — relevant differences between A and B that make this transport undesirable."

It may now seem that once the appropriate paradigms are sufficiently articulated, the ethics of contemporary art conservation could return to a normal state of rule application, and do away with both the case-by-case approach and documenting dilemmas. As soon as we have determined whether a work falls under a certain paradigm, we would be certain how to act. However, I am afraid this will never happen. In the practice of daily conservation work, most cases are messy; many artworks consist of heterogeneous assemblages of objects, ideas, and practices that each have their own logic of perpetuation, while other artworks hover between paradigms, or pass from one paradigm to another in the course of their biographies.

Returning to LeWitt, we may for instance note that, despite the fact that an established practice of recreating his *Wall Drawings* has developed, perplexities still occur, as when in 2008 a museum conservator asked on the forum *cool.conservation* whether the museum should adopt "more invasive" measures than consolidating existing paint layers to repair a *Wall Drawing* — a phrase that would be typical for the rule of minimal intervention belonging to the scientific paradigm.[20] Apparently, the fact that a *Wall Drawing* as a whole may be re-executed (and in this particular case *had* been re-executed just a year before) did not by itself imply a clear-cut guideline for what to do when a *part* of it was damaged. We may furthermore ask ourselves whether the perpetuation of LeWitt's work in the future will continue to be so tightly controlled, and whether it would instead move more into the direction of the processual paradigm — as the project FREE SOL LEWITT by the Danish artist collective SUPERFLEX for the Van Abbe Museum seems to imply.[21]

This means that "there are no short cuts in ethics:" no standardized procedure can ever substitute for the careful, informed, sensitive, and imaginative exercise of judgment of individual cases.

> **There are no short cuts in ethics. We have to interpret and balance the relevant principles in each case or type of cases, and the result depends, in part, on which cases we choose as prototype cases, i.e. on our previous experience of problem-solving, and in part on how we carry out the metaphorical extensions to non-prototypical cases. This means that different persons may come to different conclusions (Nordgren 2001, 36-7).**

The good news is that much already happens in the field to develop this collective art of careful judgment, in particular through conferences, research publications, and networks[22] — but it could be done more systematically and more openly: only through sharing both good and bad experiences will we learn how to care for the artistic heritage of the future.

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[20] http://cool.conservation-us.org/byform/mailing-lists/cdl/2008/0888.html Accessed June 13 2013. The measures in case would be: removing tape joining the dry sheets on which the wall drawing had been applied, filling the gaps underneath, and repainting the removed areas.

[21] "A metal workshop was created in the Van Abbemuseum where copies were produced and distributed for free to the public. The copied work is 'Untitled (wall structure), 1972 and was acquired by the Van Abbemuseum in 1977. " http://www.superflex.net/freesollewitt/

[22] For an exemplary case of museums engaging in 'casuist practice': see the Platform Conservation Issues — the former 'Balansgroep' — of the Dutch SBMK. http://www.sbmk.nl/agenda/archive; accessed september 1 2014.

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PRESERVING THE EPHEMERAL

PERFORMANCE ART, ITS "DOCUMENTATION," ITS ARCHIVES

ON THE NEED FOR DISTINCT MEMORIES, THE "QUALITY OF BLIND SPOTS" AND NEW APPROACHES TO TRANSMITTING PERFORMANCE ART

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ABSTRACT

Archives must be both actively appropriated and initiate action in order to remain culturally relevant as a medium of transmission. This applies to all archives but especially to those concerned with performance art. The project 'archiv performativ: a model for the documentation and reactivation of performance art' at the Institute for Cultural Studies in Zurich focused on the question of how to provide access to material from performances in order to facilitate the representation and understanding of this art form. This article illustrates two examples and with reference to archival and performance theory highlights some possibilities for dealing with both the medial diversity and the subjective 'voices' transmitting a performance. Furthermore the evaluation of the polyphony represented by different artefacts is also discussed.

KEYWORDS
PERFORMANCE ART | DOCUMENTATION | ARTEFACTS | ARCHIVE TRANSMISSION

RESUMO

Os arquivos devem ser utilizados ativamente e promover a ação para que permaneçam relevantes meios de transmissão. Isto aplica-se a todos os arquivos mas especialmente aos arquivos que se ocupam da arte da performance. O projeto "archiv performativ: um modelo para a documentação e reativação da arte da performance" do Instituto de Estudos Culturais em Zurique focou-se nas questões de como oferecer acesso a material de performances de modo a facilitar a representação e compreensão desta forma artística. Este artigo ilustra dois exemplos e, com referência ao arquivo e à teoria da performance, sublinha algumas possibilidades para lidar com a diversidade medial e as "vozes" subjetivas que transmitem uma performance. Para além disto, a avaliação da polifonia representada por diferentes artefactos é também debatida.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE
ARTE DA PERFORMANCE | DOCUMENTAÇÃO | ARTEFACTOS | *ARCHIVE TRANSMISSION*

When dealing with performance art and its various forms of transmission, one is entering controversial territory strewn with theoretical claims and overlapping discourses. Hence there is (still) disagreement within the field of performance theory regarding the interpretation of performances as "works," and the relationship between the artistic concept, its performance, and medial testimonies.[1] In the last ten years, however, several exhibitions and projects have been dealing with performance materials and various forms of mediation,[2] showing that a theoretical paradigm shift has taken place.

Overview of the research project

One research project in this field was *archiv performativ: a model for the documentation and reactivation of performance art,* which was carried out from 2010 to 2012 at the Institute for Cultural Studies in Zurich.[3] The project's interdisciplinary core team consisted of performance artist and curator Pascale Grau, cultural theorist Margarit von Büren, and me.[4] The point of departure for the project was our observation that the transmission of performance art, at least in Switzerland, is much impeded or even prevented by the difficult access to materials from performances since the 1970s. Due to this fact and our theoretical premises, we formulated the following questions: Which materials are most often collected and used? Which specific qualities and properties do these archival items have? How and in what way are the users of these materials inspired to attempt different forms of transmission? To what extent are media-inherent parameters responsible for a certain intensity of transmission?

The project was devised to conduct use-oriented basic research. To start our research, we questioned institutions and performance projects, examined archives and conducted interviews with collectors and users of performance documents. Based on a qualitative evaluation of this survey, we then applied the findings of this research in the exhibition and mediation project *archiv performativ: a model* in Basel, where four research teams worked with the artefacts supplied on specific questions concerning the documentation and transcription of performance art. At the conference *Recollecting the Act. On the transmission of performance art*, we presented the results of our research, as well as comparable projects and organized live performances.

Theoretical context: Documentary evidence

On the strength of our evaluations, we proposed to establish a document pool as extensive as possible, in order to facilitate the transcription and representation of performance art. Documents related to a performance — or artefacts, as we decided to call them, in order to use a more neutral term — are the basis from which we will be able to critically read, assess and transmit performances in the future. For this reason, we regarded it as essential to link documentary methods and forms in performance art with discourse on the documentary in art contexts in general.

The documentary in artistic practice

Filmmaker and art theorist Hito Steyerl has pointed out that in the discourse on the documentary, two fronts have always collided: on the one hand, those who hold on to the possibility of reproducing reality using technical apparatus,

[1] Cf. Peggy Phelan's argument that performance is identified primarily by its disappearance (Phelan 1996). In the late 1990s the discussion shifted from an ontological to a phenomenological approach towards performance documents, among others Amelia Jones (Jones 1997), Philip Auslander (Auslander 1999, 2006) or Barbara Clausen (Clausen 2006) have argued for it.

[2] Cf. the Swiss projects *Performance Saga* (Katrin Grögel, Andrea Saemann) http://www.performancesaga.ch/ and *Performance Chronik Basel* (Muda Mathis et al.) http://www.performancesaga.ch/ as well as: *re.actfeminism* (Bettina Knaupp, Beatrice E. Stammer) http://www.reactfeminism.de/; *bo-ring* (Julia Kläring, Virginie Bobin) http://www.bo-ring.net/; *What's Welsh for Performance* (Heike Roms) http://www.performance-wales.org/. Cf. other projects and publications mentioned in the footnotes. All websites last accessed 16.6.2013.

[3] For further information see the project website http://www.zhdk.ch/?archivperformativ.

[4] In addition, two project interns joined the team: Julia Wolf (student ZHdK MA fine arts) and Veronika Merklein (performance artist).

[5] Steyerl 2008.

and hence the truthfulness of the documentary recording; and on the other hand, those who work on the premise that documentary images represent a construct, and are shaped by power relations.[5] Steyerl assumes that documentary forms are always interested in producing truth and speaks in this context of "documentality."[6] Thus, the "truth" is a product that is constructed via documentary codes; e.g. black and white photos or interviews. This "documentality" works with authentication strategies — for example with documentations portraying performances or interventions that illustrate certain effects in the social/political field, and therefore create other, new realities. Steyerl makes the point that many artworks adopt this style, and act as if they are interested in *the* truth rather than examining causes. She suggests examining what documentary images express rather than what they represent.[7]

The documentary in the field of performance art

Consequently, it seems appropriate to question or even broaden the concept of documentation of performance art. All of its forms are a translation into another medium, and therefore a transcription producing artefacts. For this reason, performance documentation should be understood as all available artefacts: those used or made during the development of a performance, as well as materials and media used or created during the live moment: all medial recordings made in the context of the performance, and the oral and written testimonies made subsequent to a performance, or to publicize the event. Still, another important factor has to be taken into account, namely the status of the artefact. Often the physical remains of a performance or photographs are considered not only as artefacts, but also as an artwork itself. This act of denotation, be it by the artist or by the estate, entails both questions of (legal) authorship and shifts of meaning. This change of status feeds back on the way (performance) art history and theory deal with the re-ascribed significance and the context of origin of such artefacts.[8]

Where performance documentation is concerned, the question of the documentary, or the production of truth and knowledge, arises from a slightly different angle. The intention of creating a link with the live moment is of course inherent in performance documentation. The documents are supposed to provide evidence that the event actually took place. While performance theory worked against history writing for 30 years, concentrating entirely on presence and the live experience, and discouraging any kind of documentation, in the 1990s, the discourse shifted from an ontological to a phenomenological dimension of providing evidence on the premise that what appears in documents can provide realisation and knowledge.[9]

Amelia Jones has prompted a change in the way performance documents are evaluated. Back in 1998, she claimed that performance needs photography to assert the event in the first place: The performance only becomes a work through its documents.[10] Her argument is closely linked with the demand for abandoning the modernist understanding of the work as an "object" in favour of postmodern concepts of representation and indexicality. Performance can also be understood in terms of Derrida's idea of the supplement, which sees the describer as shifting the described rather than substituting it.[11] In this sense, the performance makes various forms of supplement visible, from the performer's body and the immediate narrative up to its documents.

Philip Auslander, on the other hand, postulates that documents can sometimes be the event and not necessarily just a testimonial.[12] He is referring here to the fact that since the 1970s performances have been created especially for the

[6] Steyerl 2004, 92. She is drawing here on Foucault's concept of governmentality, which is defined as a specific form of exercising power that operates through the production of truth; cf. Foucault 1987, 243–261.

[7] Steyerl 2008, 14–15.

[8] Cf. as a prominent example Marina Abramovićs photographic series based on performance photographs, e.g. *Art Must Be Beautiful, Artist Must Be Beautiful*, 1975–2010, 20 framed gelatin silver prints and one framed text panel, edition of 3 with 2 APs; or: *Rhythm 0*, 1975, published 1994, gelatin silver print with inset letterpress panel and framed text panel, edition of 16 with 3 APs (AP 1/3 Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum New York, Gift by Willem Peppler 1998).

[9] Cf. Auslander 2006, Clausen 2006 and Clausen 2009.

[10] Jones 1997.

[11] Cf. Derrida 1992, esp. 244–263.

[12] Auslander 2006, 27.

camera without being preceded by a performance before an audience. Barbara Clausen underlines this by giving a number of examples of live performances that can only be received in their entirety in a mediatized form. She cites, for example, Peter Weibel's subversive intervention *Polizei lügt* [police lies] in Vienna (fig. 1). This action is only intelligible from the photo that was deliberately taken from an angle that allows the subversive message to be read. So, "Weibel's status as a performer is not proven until the documentation is received."[13]

The third influence to be mentioned here is Rebecca Schneider's work. She has determined that performance itself is a form of document, since cultural practices are transmitted through it.[14] In dance, for example, historical codes are embodied and passed on in the form of a repertoire. By a document, she not only understands a stable item of value that is preserved, but everything that encourages an action, which is, then, performative and embodies both the disappearance and appearance of something.

Taking these views into account, we can venture a new definition of performance documentation. Following up the actual discourse, the priority is not to reconstruct the event as exactly as possible through artefacts, but to consider performance documentation as a flexible cluster of manifold "pre- and after-lives" of a live event affiliated to various forms of authorship and intertwined processes of media transfers. If one assumes that performance produces realisation, and documents produce a performance in the first place, this must influence how one works with the documents of performance art in terms of history, mediation and storage.

Reactivating performance art: Transmitting, transcribing

More than other art forms, performance art is disadvantaged by the fact that it cannot be transmitted without consideration of artefacts, and so does not become inscribed per se in history. Our investigation looked at artefacts and their potential for transmission and representation, as well as at strategies of transcription by means of scientific and artistic practices.

Sigrid Schade and Silke Wenk define *transmitting* in terms of allowing cultural processes of memory-building to be examined via performative practices and their agents. Moreover, they argue that performative practices of transmission are always based on practices of repetition, and repetition means that a deviation from the "original" takes place, whether it is intended or not.[15] The terms "transmission" and "transcription" can be used synonymously on the premise that transmission always constitutes a form of transcription. Transcription includes various methods such as re-enactments, re-performances, and other strategies of appropriation in artistic formats. These methods generate different forms and levels of transmission intensity: from historical faithfulness to the "original" in re-enactments to interpretative translation in a re-performance, and even re-writing or transforming in an artistic work. Transcriptions can be classified as instances in which the element of alteration or deviation is recognisable, hence also artefacts.

The "living" archive as the basis for transmitting performance art

For the practice-oriented research part, we developed *archiv performativ: a model* in the Klingental exhibition space in Basel. It employed a scenography that divided the space into a number of distinct areas to be used for exhibition and live performance or lectures, research, and exchange.[16] While it was a publicly accessible site, where selected

[13] Clausen 2009.

[14] Schneider 2001.

[15] Schade and Wenk 2011, 121–124.

[16] The concept was designed by artists Michael Meier and Christoph Franz (http://www.meierfranz.net/).

FIG. 1 Peter Weibel, *Polizei lügt*, 1970/71, photograph, 12.5 x 18 cm, from the series *Anschläge [attacks]*. Courtesy Galerie Anita Beckers, Frankfurt.

materials from the archive of Basel's Kaskadenkondensator were on view,[17] its various spaces simultaneously served roughly 20 artists, curators, researchers and students from Switzerland and abroad as laboratories for experimentation and research (fig. 2-4). Our intention was not to exhibit artefacts in the sense of aura-imbued art objects, but to create a space where people conducting experimental research with artefacts classified according to type could interact.[18] The aim of the whole setting was to discuss and present different methodological forms of access and theoretical approaches to transcriptions in a process of reciprocal exchange between various scientific and artistic fields — in other words, to conduct research as a performative process.

By working under trial conditions, we examined the hypothesis that archives, as guardians of memory, must be actively appropriated and initiate action in order to remain vital. This understanding not only draws on Foucault's concept of archive,[19] but also on more recent models of archival practices and theory. While Foucault sees the archive as a method of constantly restructuring, transforming and constructing knowledge through agents grounded in specific discourses, online archival projects place the emphasis on accessibility or "re-using" rather than storage.[20] In line with performance theorist and curator Heike Roms, archival theory now stresses that documents only become evidence through the actions of the archivists who construct testimonials by means of filing systems, classification and the like.[21]

Working in and on an archive, one must make visible, or bear in mind, the selection procedures and omissions that determine the archive.[22] Consequently, the archive can be understood as categorized memory. Wolfgang Ernst puts it like this: "Like every form of memory, it is less a site of historical storage than a site of keeping [memories] at hand, making [them] available and allowing [them] to be updated; [...]."[23]

Findings of the case studies

The following two examples shed some light on the specific transmission qualities artefacts can develop. Since both performances were developed in the context of the project, my report is based on in-depth knowledge of them and of their artefacts. However, I would like to step back from my involvement and approach them as an impartial but interested user.

Axel Töpfer / Boedi S. Otong, *Besenstudie #12*, September 9, 2011[24]

The project team invited artist and filmmaker Axel Töpfer to create another edition of his previously developed *Besenstudie* [broom study] concept for the model archive. The original concept involved inviting the public to participate in a performative installation of materials the artist supplied, such as aluminium foil, paper and adhesive tape. The performance marathon took place in April 2011, where each participant had an "estimated 30 minutes" for his / her action. All the material was put back in its original position for each successive performance. For *Besenstudie #12,* Töpfer invited Indonesian artist Boedi S. Otong to work with the same materials once again. Töpfer linked this performance with his own interest in subjective

[17] The archive comprises materials from 1998 to 2008, from which 44 performances, or rather their artefacts, have been selected.

[18] Cf. Büscher 2009, referring to Joan Jonas' installation in the exhibition *After the Act. Die (Re)Präsentation der Performancekunst*, Museum Moderner Kunst Stiftung Ludwig Wien, Vienna 2005.

[19] Cf. Foucault 1981, 183–189.

[20] Cf. Fertig 2011, 5–6.

[21] Roms 2010.

[22] Cf. Ernst 2009, 187.

[23] Ernst 2009, 186.

[24] Cf. project case study http://www.zhdk.ch/index.php?id=40508.

FIG. 2 *archiv performativ: a model*, Ausstellungsraum Klingental, Basel, 2011. Courtesy *archiv performativ*.

FIG. 3 *archiv performativ: a model*, Ausstellungsraum Klingental, Basel, 2011. Courtesy *archiv performativ*.

FIG. 4 *archiv performativ: a model*, Ausstellungsraum Klingental, Basel, 2011, lecture performance by Donna Kukama and Katrin Grögel. Courtesy *archiv performativ*.

camera work, and staged himself as a filming performer, or as a performing filmmaker. The 25-minute performance consisted of Otong improvising an examination of the material with his body and voice while Töpfer moved around him with a handheld camera, filming from different angles, including extreme close-ups.

Concerning this performance, the "archive" consists of artefacts, which include a concept draft by AT incl. list of materials, April 2011; 14 photos of the material "before / after" by AT, April 2011; a video recording in full wide shot and slightly moving camera by Julia Wolf; a 2nd video recording in live editing and intensely moving camera by AT; the materials for the performances, now held by AT.

While the text artefacts tell us about the intention and context of the performance, they also point to the role of the concept text as a score and prompt the intentional transcription of the materials by each performer. This knowledge signals two things for the analysis of the other artefacts: For one, the material used in the performance should be understood as "usable resources" which, though performatively charged and changed by each performance,

are always returned to a re-usable form again. These materials do not have the status of relics, in which the traces of performative actions are stored and enclosed, and which are attributed with the function of transmitting aura and encapsulating emotions. For another, the photos of the material are involuntarily interpreted as documents of a process and take a supplementary role as bearers of information. They function no better as a visual distillation of the performance than they convey the concept it is based on.

The term documentation in a performance context often refers to photos or video recordings. The latter, especially, is widely considered to faithfully capture the live moment. This view is informed by the individual's own expectations, which see the technical audio-visual recording as a documentation of reality and not as the construct of a medial reality. The full film in wide shot is only supposedly the product of neutral and objective observation. Hence anyone embarking on an art-theoretical analysis of this artefact type must critically reflect on their own wishes for authenticity and truthfulness and take the omissions of such media into consideration. The second video marks the other extreme in this spectrum: Made by using a handheld camera, live editing, the night shot function and manipulating the camera syntax it constructs the event anew (fig. 5). Töpfer articulates his authorial position and involvement in the action. It is clear that he is explicitly interested in a specific visual aesthetic, imbuing the viewer's perception with emotion. Here, Gilles Deleuze's theory on movement-images and affection images is called to mind, which sees the image not as static, but "as movement" and "in movement," and attributes the images, detached from their spatial context, with an affective dimension.[25]

The two videos make clear how mutually referential artefacts are. The "documentary" recording includes a view of the filmmaker, contextualising his position in the performance (fig. 6). The subjective video requires the user to apply interpretation strategies to a far greater extent. By showing a view from within the performance, it not only conveys a form of "reception" that is generally denied to the public, but its author also inscribes himself directly, even physically, in the recording (fig. 7). On an artistic and theoretical level, it offers a range of stimuli for transcriptions, or analyses, going beyond its immediate transmission function. Here, Töpfer's shift in position becomes manifest, from concept author to co-performer and author of an artistic video work, which links the score — the handling and charging of certain materials — with Otong's action and medially transforms it in terms of visible content.

Dorothea Rust, *Re-enactment*, September 2, 2011[26]

The point of departure for Dorothea Rust's performance was her interest in the potential of artefacts for inspiring creativity and memories, especially used objects and descriptions. Specifically, the artist drew on an eyewitness report on her performance of 2008 from the Kaskadenkondensator's archive[27] and, as a consequence, on some of the utensils she used at the time. Rust used the descriptive-interpretative report on the one hand as a script for dramaturgical action, on the other hand as functional material, involving it along with other items, such as green wellington boots, a potato fork, music from a laptop, and a

[25] Deleuze 1989, 86–96.

[26] Cf. project case study http://www.zhdk.ch/index.php?id=40502.

[27] The performance *Dance MaEdlEy II tanzt* took place in March 2008. Cf. *Kaskadenkondensator. Saisonrückblick 2007/08*, texts by Markus Goessi, 10–11.

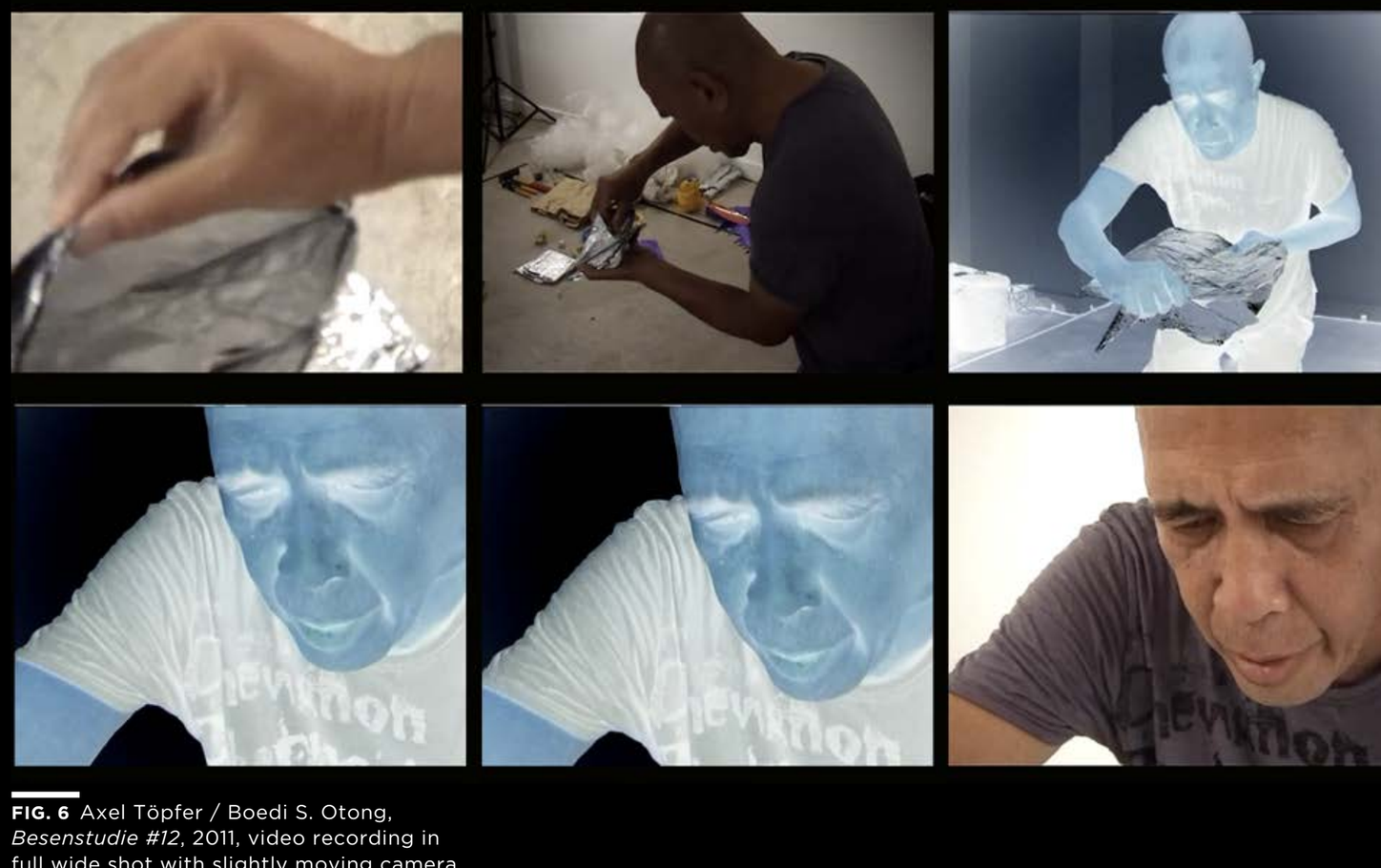


FIG. 6 Axel Töpfer / Boedi S. Otong, *Besenstudie #12*, 2011, video recording in full wide shot with slightly moving camera by Julia Wolf, video HD, 16:9, 3 stills. Courtesy *archiv performativ*.

FIG. 5 Axel Töpfer / Boedi S. Otong, *Besenstudie #12*, 2011, video recording in live editing and intensely moving camera by Axel Töpfer, Mini DV, 4:3, 6 stills. © Axel Töpfer / courtesy *archiv performativ*.

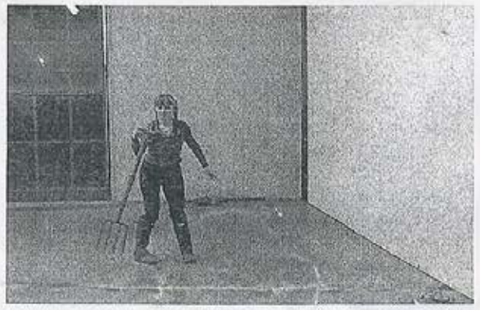
FIG. 7 Axel Töpfer / Boedi S. Otong, *Besenstudie #12*, 2011, video recording in live editing and intensely moving camera by Axel Töpfer, Mini DV, 4:3, 3 stills. © Axel Töpfer / courtesy *archiv performativ*.

Kopie saisonrückblick 04/08

sehen konnte und ihr Gesicht fast ganz verdeckt wurde.

Unterdessen schwoll der Rhythmus von Ruedi Schill so an, dass es zu einem richtigen Trommeln wurde. Vorsichtig tastete sich Monika Günther mit seitlich ausgestreckten Armen in den Raum vor. Ganz langsam fing sie an, sich zu drehen, schneller und immer schneller. Einige der Gegenstände fielen aus dem Kreis, fielen von der Künstlerin ab, andere schwebten an ihr hängend durch den Raum. Rudi Schill - immer die Partnerin fixierend- stampfte weiter mit ganzem Körpereinsatz. Als der Höhepunkt überschritten war, verlangsamten sie beide zusammen ihr Tempo bis zum Stillstand und eine angenehme Ruhe breitete sich aus.

Projektverantwortung: Markus Goessi



re-enactment

→ **die//reihe ‚tanzt' mit Dorothea Rust**
Mittwoch 05. März 2008

Wortgast: Annamira Jochim, Kunsthistorikerin (Zürich).

Dorothea Rust zeigte die 4. Performance in unserer Tanzreihe.
Sie überzeugte mit ihrer Kraft und dem Willen, mit Hilfe des Körpers, festgefahrene Denk- und Handlungsmuster aufzugreifen und zu hinterfragen. Dabei provoziert und kokettiert sie, zeigt Absurditäten auf und eröffnet somit einen Raum für neue Deutungsmuster.

Als erstes holte Dorothea Rust all ihre Utensilien hervor: eine Kiste mit Äpfeln, eine Pflanze im Metalleimer, der auf einem kleinen Brett mit Rädern stand, eine Umstechgabel und ein paar grüne Gärtnerstiefel. Dann zog sich die Protagonistin um und begann sich fortzubewegen. Schon bei den ersten Schritten wurde deutlich, dass die Stiefel um einiges zu gross waren. Trotzdem kletterte Dorothea Rust auf den gegebenen Mauervorsprung im Kasko und tastete sich langsam zur Nische. In der Nische befanden sich fünf an Schnüren befestigte grosse Steine, welche Dorothea Rust einen nach dem anderen - an den Schnüren- mit einem Plumpser auf den Boden befördert.

Danach nahm die Künstlerin alle Schnüre in eine Hand und schleifte die Steine auf dem Boden

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in Richtung Ausgang, wo sie alle Steine auf einmal an den Schüren aufhob und sie mit Getöse wieder auf den Boden fallen lies. Dann schleppte sie sich mit den Steinen wieder zurück in die andere Ecke und hob die Steine erneut in die Luft und liess sie zurück fallen.

Plötzlich sprang die Künstlerin über die Steine hinweg, kehrte sich um und nahm die Schnüre wieder in die Hand und - als ob die Steine ein Pferdegespann geworden wäre- trieb sie diese mehrmals an und begann dann die Steine kraftvoll, donnernd durch den ganzen Raum zu schleifen, bis die Steine sich Teils von der Schnur und Teils aus der Hand der Künstlerin gelöst hatten. Mit der Umstechgabel stiess die Protagonistin die Steine weg und zugleich wurde die Gabel im weiteren Verlauf als Ton und Bild machendes Objekt eingesetzt. Dabei folgte das Objekt nicht nur dem Körper, sondern der Körper folgte auch dem Objekt, was dem Ganzen eine skurrile Wendung gab.

Danach holte Dorothea Rust die Pflanze auf dem Rollwagen herein und bat die Zuschauer um Mithilfe. So wurde der Pflanzentopf zwischen dem Körper der Künstlerin und dem Körper eines beliebigen Gastes schwerfällig bis graziös durch den Raum balanciert. Einmal zwischen den Bäuchen, einmal zwischen den Hüften, einmal zwischen den Köpfen und einmal zwischen den Brüsten, beinah wie ein Walzertanz.
Dann erklärte Dorothea, dass dies der erste Teil war, nämlich die Erschaffung der Welt und dass der zweite Teil den Sonntag darstellen soll, an dem man sich auszuruhen hätte.

Dorothea Rust legte sich bäuchlings auf das Rollwägelchen und liess das Lied „Sunday morning" erklingen, welches sie inbrünstig mitsang, während sie liegend durch den Raum schwebte. Dann stand sie langsam auf, ging zu den paarweise mit einer Schnur verbunden Äpfeln und legte sich diese über die Schultern. Sie bewegte sich zur Musik und die Äpfel begannen leicht zu hüpfen und zu rotieren, was Dorothea Rust animierte, eines der Paare in der Luft zu schwingen. Mitten in dieser wilden Drehung forderte die Künstlerin die Zuschauer auf, einen Apfel zu nehmen, was allerdings ein schwieriges Unterfangen war.
Als sich dann doch alle einen Apfel hatten ergattern können, liess die Künstlerin ein Lied aus den 60gern spielen, stellte sich mit je einem Apfel in den Händen mitten in den Raum und begann eine Art Zitterapfeltanz.
Die Äpfel hopsten und der Busen hopste aus den Knien gesteuert, nur die Stellung der Arme wurde verändert. Auch hier eine skurrile Körpererzählung oder eine Neudefinition der Verführung?
Hier endete die Arbeit und hinterliess ein heiteres aber auch irritiert provoziertes Publikum.

Projektverantwortung: Markus Goessi

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FIG. 8 Dorothea Rust, *Re-enactment*, 2011, scan of the used performance report from 2008 with markings by DR. © Dorothea Rust / courtesy *archiv performativ*.

bag of apples. The central elements of the approximately 40 minute-long performance were the text read out by the performer, her extempore speaking, and her different actions, which constantly contradicted her words.

Among other items, the following artefacts are available on this performance: a scan of the used performance report from 2008 with markings by DR; an unedited audio recording, made on a mobile recording device with a stereo microphone by the author; a picture series by Pascale Grau comprising 92 photos; a 2nd picture series by Urs Schmid comprising 38 photos.

The re-used performance report provides us with a script and most of the spoken text (fig. 8), while also filling the gaps in information left by the photo series. But it

FIG. 9 Dorothea Rust, *Re-enactment*, 2011, picture series by Pascale Grau, 3 photos. Courtesy *archiv performativ*.

gives no evidence of the concept of the performance as a re-enactment; this must remain supposition evoked by the title of the performance.

Regarding the audio recording it is self-evident that this artefact alone cannot convey the visual aspects of a performance. Nevertheless, in view of the significance of sounds and speech in this performance, this very rare documentation format is a valuable artefact. The audio recording not only conveys the striking auditory level of the performance and its temporal duration in real time, but also the essential features of the concept. Since the reception of acoustic events always factors in spatial and temporal dimensions, as well as the physical presence of the listener, it overcomes the spatial separation of speaker from listener.[28] According to theatre studies scholar and dramaturge Vito Pinto, acoustic phenomena generate interactive spaces akin to ephemeral medial events, which can evoke certain emotions, associations and memories in the listener. Thus "medial spheres [...] are part of the atmosphere, which can stimulate an event or a specific spatial constellation, and at the same time part of the receiver who, with his individual mood and sensitivities, contributes his influence to the ephemeral event [...]."[29] The recording stimulates the individual listener's imagination: it evokes images which — though largely incongruent with the actual events — can be related to the listener's own ideas and experiences, and so enable each listener to reconstruct the performance anew on a subjective level.[30] Precisely on account of the lack of "visual distractions," the audio recording constitutes an acoustic event that transcribes the performance as an independent audio-play.

The two picture series were taken by different photographers. The series by Pascale Grau tries to capture as many moments as possible and especially to include images of the audience (fig. 9). In this way, it comprehensively reproduces the action of the performance — albeit fragmentarily and from a subjective perspective. These can certainly be regarded as sequential photos, then, conveying the momentum of the performance and so generating a visual narrative. The second series by Urs Schmid shows much more of an autonomous interest in each individual picture, in the image as such, via picture composition and its formal aesthetic qualities (fig. 10). A photographic style can be discerned in these photos which, even during the subjective experience of the action and movement continuum, concentrates on

[28] Pinto 2009, 88.

[29] Ibid.

[30] Even someone who does not speak the language spoken by the performer can gain insight from a perception of the aural level of the performance — its sounds, the audience's reactions, the atmosphere, the acoustics of the space.

FIG. 10 Dorothea Rust, *Re-enactment*, 2011, picture series by Urs Schmid, 3 photos. © Urs Schmid / courtesy *archiv performativ*.

"photogenic" moments or — since they were subject to a selection — specifically pinpoints such "strong" images as worthy of transmitting. Though different, both series can be regarded as individual, visual interpretations of an event that will have a fundamental influence on future readings of this event and will no longer be separable from them.

Conclusion

To conclude I would like to return to our understanding of archives and handling of artefacts. In the case of the examples described above, the range of archival holdings is wide and varied. This is not always the case. But even more rudimentary archive stocks usually contain different kinds of artefacts (e.g. photos and texts). When considered individually, they provide just one piece of the puzzle leading to an understanding of the performance. They convey a fragmentary, subjective view and stem from different producers. Their different medialities predestine them to convey certain facets of the performance and leave others in the dark.

Rather than complaining about missing documents, gaps in information and media-inherent blank spaces, it seems more fruitful to take a more "courageous" approach. However, this requires finally abandoning a theoretical understanding of performance that sees the live moment as the only valid articulation, and instead embracing a view of artefacts as adequate medial representations. This approach strives towards performance documentation as a compilation, involving various agents and methods. In this way, the lack of a video recording of Dorothea Rust's performance could prompt experimentation with a combination of visual and audio traces stemming from different medial sources. This "documentation" (e.g. in the form of a photo series edited to match the sound recording) would be clearly seen as an audio-visual construct that makes its qualities and stimuli obvious. This would be one — rather pragmatic — suggestion for shifting from working *in* the archive to working *on* the archive.

The need for memories mentioned in the subtitle of this paper does not need to be expanded on. The "quality of blind spots," on the other hand, does. This formulation

points to an understanding of the archive that regards the traditional ideal of completeness and conception of the archive as an administrative and disciplining organ as problematic and outdated. In the context of today's increasingly digital archives, it seems more than appropriate to emphasize their genuine function of producing knowledge and hence their usage and accessibility.[31] If one focuses on the origin of knowledge, appropriation practices such as copying, retelling and repeating, which all involve a shift away from the "original," suggest themselves. Fragmentary data, inaccurate copies, and lost or, even more so, destroyed documents are perceived on an emotional level as painful losses; in a scientific context they cause irritation or frustration. In my view, performance archives are precisely the place where such losses, or whatever has been forgotten or neglected, can generate a productive quality, which in turn prompts strategies and forms of action that also do justice to the artistic "object."

Translation: Charlotte Kreutzmüller, Berlin

[31] Cf. Faßler 2012.

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DOCUMENTING THE USER EXPERIENCE

THE CASES OF BLAST THEORY'S *RIDER SPOKE*, TATE'S ARTMAPS, RAMM'S MOOR STORIES, ANDPLACEIFY

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ABSTRACT

This paper discusses the challenges of documenting highly subjective mixed reality experiences, from artworks like Blast Theory's *Rider Spoke*, which consists of an interactive audio-tour users experience whilst cycling in a city, to encounters with digital artworks and artifacts "in the wild," i.e., outside the museum space, like Tate's ArtMaps, Royal Albert Memorial Museum and Art Gallery (RAMM)'s Moor Stories, and Placeify, which all allow users to encounter and annotate museum collections outside the museum through a variety of media. After introducing a number of methodologies for the documentation of the user experience of such works and environments, this paper analyses what kinds of values these documentations bring to users and museums. Finally, this paper looks at the implications of these findings for the curation and preservation of "living" performative archives.

KEYWORDS
MIXED REALITY | DOCUMENTATION | USER EXPERIENCE | MOBILE INTERPRETATION | LIVING ARCHIVES

RESUMO

O presente artigo discute os desafios de documentar experiências muito subjetivas de realidade híbrida em obras como *Rider Spoke* do coletivo Blast Theory que consiste num guia audio interativo para utilizar enquanto circulando de bicicleta numa cidade, ou em encontros com obras de arte e artefactos digitais fora do museu como os Art Maps da Tate, as Moor Stories do Royal Albert Memorial Museum (RAMM) e ainda Placeify que permitem que os utilizadores contactem e anotem coleções museológicas fora do museu através de uma variedade de *media*. Depois de apresentar uma série de metodologias para documentar a experiência do utilizador com este tipo de obras e ambientes, analisa-se o valor que esta documentação traz aos utilizadores e aos museus. Por fim, o artigo examina as implicações destas conclusões para a curadoria e conservação de arquivos performativos "vivos".

PALAVRAS-CHAVE
REALIDADE HÍBRIDA | DOCUMENTAÇÃO | EXPERIÊNCIA DO UTILIZADOR | INTERPRETAÇÃO MÓVEL | ARQUIVOS VIVOS

Documenting mixed reality performance

Over the last few decades, there has been a proliferation of art forms that can be broadly described as mixed reality performances; i.e., works that integrate physical and digital components and that variously involve a performative element (Benford and Giannachi 2011). The choice of the term "mixed reality," an expression that derives from Paul Milgram and Furnio Kishino's taxonomy of mixed reality displays (1994),[1] implies that in dealing with such works, we have to look at — and hence curate (or orchestrate), document, and preserve — both their physical and digital components, as well as what results from their ephemeral co-habitation: the "mixed reality" that Milgram and Kishino refer to, which is the product of an individual encounter with such components at a particular moment in space and time. It is the event produced by this highly subjective encounter that we must think of as the "work" in question, and it is therefore data about this complex and ephemeral ecology that we need to gather in order to curate, document, and preserve this kind of artwork.

Blast Theory's *Rider Spoke* (2007-) epitomizes the problematic of documenting mixed reality performances, and for this reason it was chosen as the subject of a Research Councils UK (RCUK)-funded investigation into novel forms of documentation and archiving (2009). *Rider Spoke* was a location-based game for cyclists developed by Blast Theory in collaboration with the Mixed Reality Laboratory at University of Nottingham as part of an EU-funded investigation into pervasive games called IPerG. The work, which combined elements of performance, game play, and interactive technology, facilitated participants in cycling around a city to record personal memories and reflections in response to questions about particular themes, locations, and contexts (see Fig.1). Structurally, and typically for Blast Theory, the piece was organized in three parts: 1) a prelude that started when participants arrived at a hosting venue, where they received a set of instructions and a brief on safety about cycling; 2) the performance itself, which lasted about one hour; and 3) an epilogue that occurred after the work, as participants were prompted by the company to make a promise for the future. Throughout the piece, participants, who were encouraged to embrace a role, often fictionalized their context and visibly shifted from passive modes of spectatorship to active modes spanning interaction, participation, and performance. The piece was locative, mobile, hybrid, and its experience was highly subjective.

The investigating team, comprising staff from the Universities of Exeter and Nottingham, and personnel from the Ludwig Boltzmann Institute Media.Art.Research in Linz, carried out a documentation of nine participants of *Rider Spoke* focussing specifically on part 2, the performance. The aim was to capture multiple aspects of the experience, with a view to create a media-rich archive using cloud computing at a later date. Influenced by hybrid documentation approaches (Jones and Muller 2008), and the Mixed Reality Laboratory's experience with the Digital Replay System, used by the Lab primarily in social science research, the team collected hybrid and variable data from participants and, to capture IPerG's interdisciplinary research aims, gathered further interview materials from the artists and technologists involved at a later point. Equipment used included GPS to record location

[1] Milgram and Kishino describe a "virtuality continuum" which covers a spectrum of forms of mixed reality from physical to virtual environments, and including augmented reality, i.e., physical environments overlaid with digital information, and augmented virtuality in which virtual environments are overlaid with physical information (1994).

FIG. 1 *Rider Spoke* by Blast Theory. Copyright Blast Theory.

and visualize individual experiences on a map; in-game audio along with the participants' responses to the game and environmental sounds; and video captured from two key vantage points. These were a 'chase cam' mounted on the bicycle of a documenter following the rider, which delivered an over-the-shoulder, third-person perspective (Fig. 2a), and a 'face cam' upwardly mounted on the handlebars of a participant's bicycle, which delivered a head-on perspective of the rider (Fig. 2b). All nine participants were interviewed after the experience (see Giannachi et al 2010 and Giannachi et al 2012).

At a subsequent point in time these documents were collated in CloudPad, the archival tool developed by the team especially for this project. CloudPad in itself offered a novel technical approach to the archiving and replay of pervasive media experiences by making use of Web 2.0 technologies rather than grid technologies. CloudPad users were empowered to view the repository as a living archive in which they could leave their own impression of their experience (both of the original event recordings as well as any thematic connections or annotations provided by other users). To enable this capability, the CloudPad made use of server-based storage, which means that media from a variety of different sources could be included in a presentation (e.g., YouTube videos synchronized with images from Flickr). This integration was accomplished through the use of HTML5, an emerging web standard enabling collaborative interactive applications to be structured to run inside a web browser. Based on our work on designing trajectories through mixed reality experiences (Benford and Giannachi 2011), and informed by Suzanne Briet's distinction between different forms of documentation (e.g. primary, secondary, and auxiliary),[2] the archive's architecture was designed as follows: each of the nine participants' experiences of *Rider Spoke* was described as a historic trajectory through the work (constituting, in Briet's terms, a primary document; see

FIGS. 2A AND 2B A historic trajectory through the Linz documentation showing third- and first-person perspectives of a *Rider Spoke* participant.

[2] Briet's seminal *What is Documentation?* (1951) presents documents as signs, thus challenging the view that documents are proofs of a fact, and situating 'the practice of documentation within a network of social and cultural production' (MacDonald 2009, 59). Briet discusses the use of primary and secondary documents, whereby she refers to initial documents as "primary documents," and to documents that are created from the initial document as "secondary documents." She notes that documentations are contextual, and rather than delivering remains of an isolated event, they form a matrix or network of signs. This, she notes, can lead to creation "through the juxtaposition, selection, and the comparison of documents, and the production of auxiliary documents" (2006, 16).

FIG. 3 A canonic trajectory of the Linz documentation replayed through CloudPad and annotated by Matt Adams from Blast Theory.

Figs. 2a and 2b); experts — e.g., the artists or technologists involved in the project — could edit these and create a number of canonic trajectories (constituting, in Briet's terms, a secondary document) that could illustrate specific aspects of the work (see Fig. 3); users of the CloudPad archive, by further annotating these materials, could create sets of participant trajectories, which were thought of as adding creative value to the archive over time by offering additional interpretation in relation to the live event or its documentation (constituting, in Briet's terms, auxiliary documents).

Research into the documentation and archiving of works such as Blast Theory's *Rider Spoke* shows that there is a value in breaking down a mixed reality performance into different components. In the case of *Rider Spoke*, there is the prelude, in which the rules of the work are often explained and performance rituals initiated; the performance itself, where the mixed reality experience occurs; and the epilogue, which often contains a legacy of some kind aimed at extending the work beyond the live moment. It is crucial to document but also preserve what occurs in the digital world (which is usually archived by the technology providers rather than the artists), as well as what occurs physically — for example through first person capture and third party observation — and, possibly, to juxtapose these data in order to identify discrepancies and coincidences among them. Because all performances have a high level of individual variation, depending on the specific interactions users choose, a number of them need to be documented and, preferably, preserved to arrive at an understanding of the broader operation of a given work. To reflect the plurality of the research that is often involved in creating these works,

documentations also benefit from annotations about the research and creative processes as well as the performance by the artists or technologists involved. Capturing live engagement and juxtaposing it with users' memories can produce further qualitative data. Finally, to constitute tools that prompt creative engagement, documentations benefit from subsequent annotations by users, whether they were "originally" involved in the work or not.

To sum up, the documentation of mixed reality performances should ideally take into account the research and creative developments that were necessary to generate a work (the process), the work itself (the product), and the aftermath (the legacy), bearing in mind that the 'work' itself is the result of ephemeral encounters spanning digital and physical environments over space and time, through ecologies of interfaces that often prompt a multitude of roles or modes of engagement. These various components are best captured via a plurality of tools and documentation strategies aiming to document the work before it exists; as it occurs "live;" and after it has "ended," as it persists in users' memories. Once these rich documentations have been created, the crucial question, in terms of the facilitation of further mobile interpretation, is how best to engage the public with the archives that host them and, in turn, document the public's response to them, so as to create not so much a live performance archive, but rather a "living performative archive."

Documenting mobile interpretation

Geoffrey Batchen suggested that the archive is no longer "a matter of discrete objects (files, books, art works, etc.) stored and retrieved in specific places (libraries, museums, etc.)," but rather it "is also a continuous stream of data, without geography or container, continuously transmitted and therefore without temporal restriction (always available in the here and now)," which means that "*exchange* rather than storage has become the archivist's principal function" (1998, 47, added emphasis). This section will look deeper into what exchange means for users, as well as museum curators. Inspired by Jacques Derrida's suggestion that archivisation "produces as much as it records the event" (1996, 17), we will explore how archives can facilitate mobile interpretation "in the here and now" by operating as sites of mobile "knowledge production" (Osborne 1999, 52 and Withers 2002, 304) and portable "centre[s] for interpretation" (Osborne 1999, 52); looking at how they can afford performative encounters (Giannachi et al 2010) and facilitate creative engagement with art, heritage, and popular and material culture in a "mixed reality" context. In particular, this section will analyse how mobile interpretation and creative engagement with such archives could generate new knowledge that is of value to users and museums; how encountering archival materials outside museums could bring return visitors as well as new visitors to museums; how the self-documentation of one's encounter with art could constitute a rewarding free-style mobile learning experience; and how it could stimulate memory production and augment individual and communities' sense of presence and identity.

Self-documentations, like diaries and other social media, well capture what occurs individually or socially when a work, or its digital reproduction, is engaged with "in the wild," including a "mixed reality" context. They can be used

as tools that facilitate user's sense of being present, i.e. as means to augment one's self awareness in relation to one's physical and digital environment, and as a means to stimulate reflexivity about the nature of such an encounter. Here we will see how self-documentations can facilitate engagement with museum artefacts outside the museum, and not substitute for, but rather stimulate museum visitation and even repeat visitation. We will also show how self-documentations can be used as a mechanism to afford creative engagements with art, heritage, visual and material culture, facilitating cultural tourism and mobile learning, and helping to generate a sense of identity among diverse communities.

The first case study is ArtMaps, an interdisciplinary collaborative project between three departments at Tate (Tate Learning, Tate Online and Tate Research) and researchers in Computer Science (University of Nottingham) and Performance and New Media (University of Exeter), funded by RCUK Horizon (2012-14) as part of the digital economy programme. ArtMaps consists of a web and mobile app that allow users to explore artworks in the Tate collection in relation to the places, sites, landscapes, and environments that informed or led to their geotagging (which had been carried out manually by Tate prior to the start of the project). The app, which uses a Google Map as interface, can locate their users and bring up works in the Tate collection that are geotagged in relation to places near them. Users could then look at these works on the map and/or explore them in situ, reflecting on how what they see in the works relates to their surroundings (see Fig. 4). Alternatively, through a search function, they could explore works in any locality.

FIG. 4 An ArtMaps user looks at Ambroise McEvoy's Bessborough Street, Pimlico near Moreton Street, London, in relation to the site as it is today.

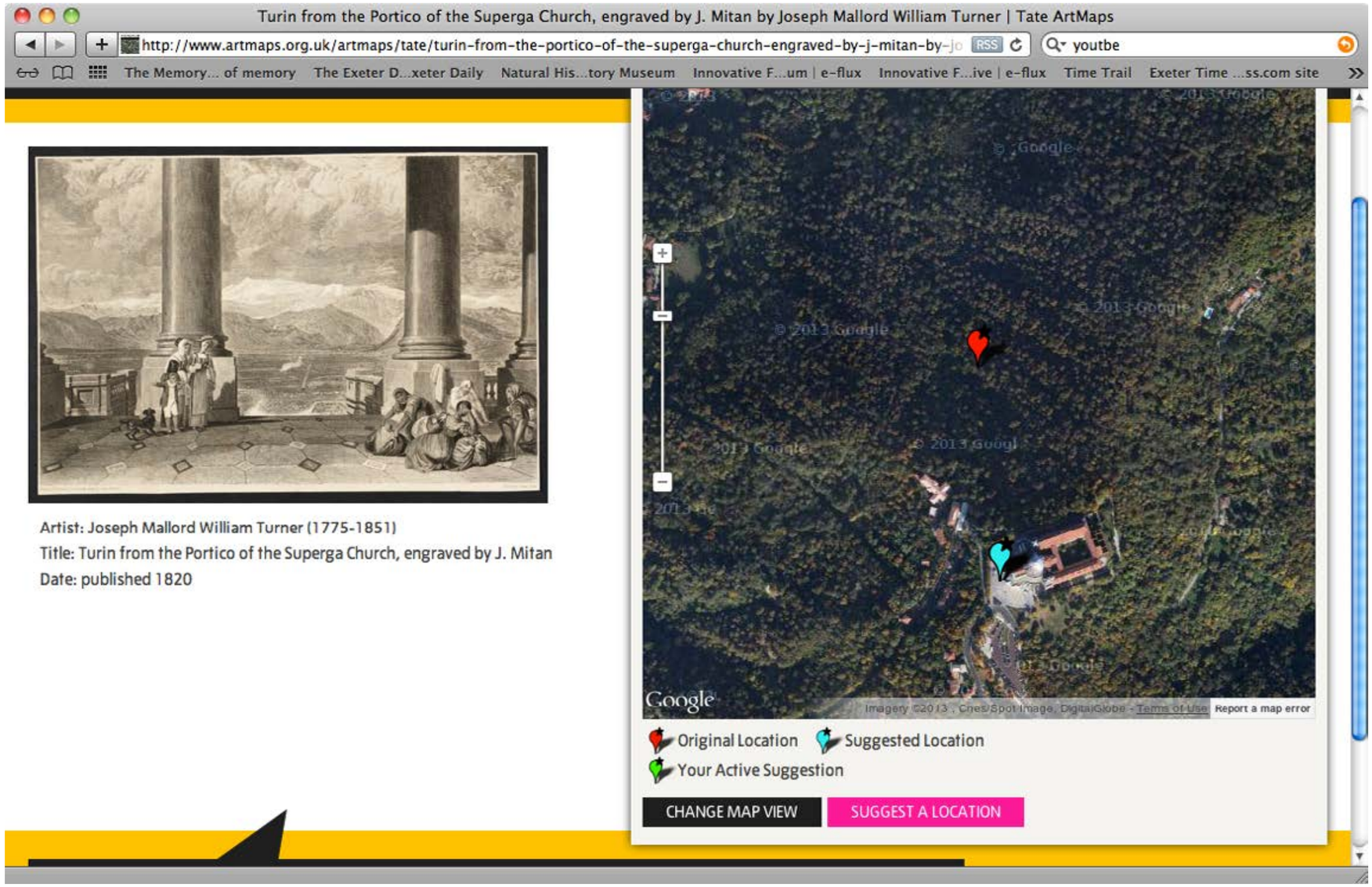


FIG. 5 A user participates in a crowdsourcing exercise by moving the red pin geotagging a particular work to the correct location (where the blue pin is now) on ArtMaps.

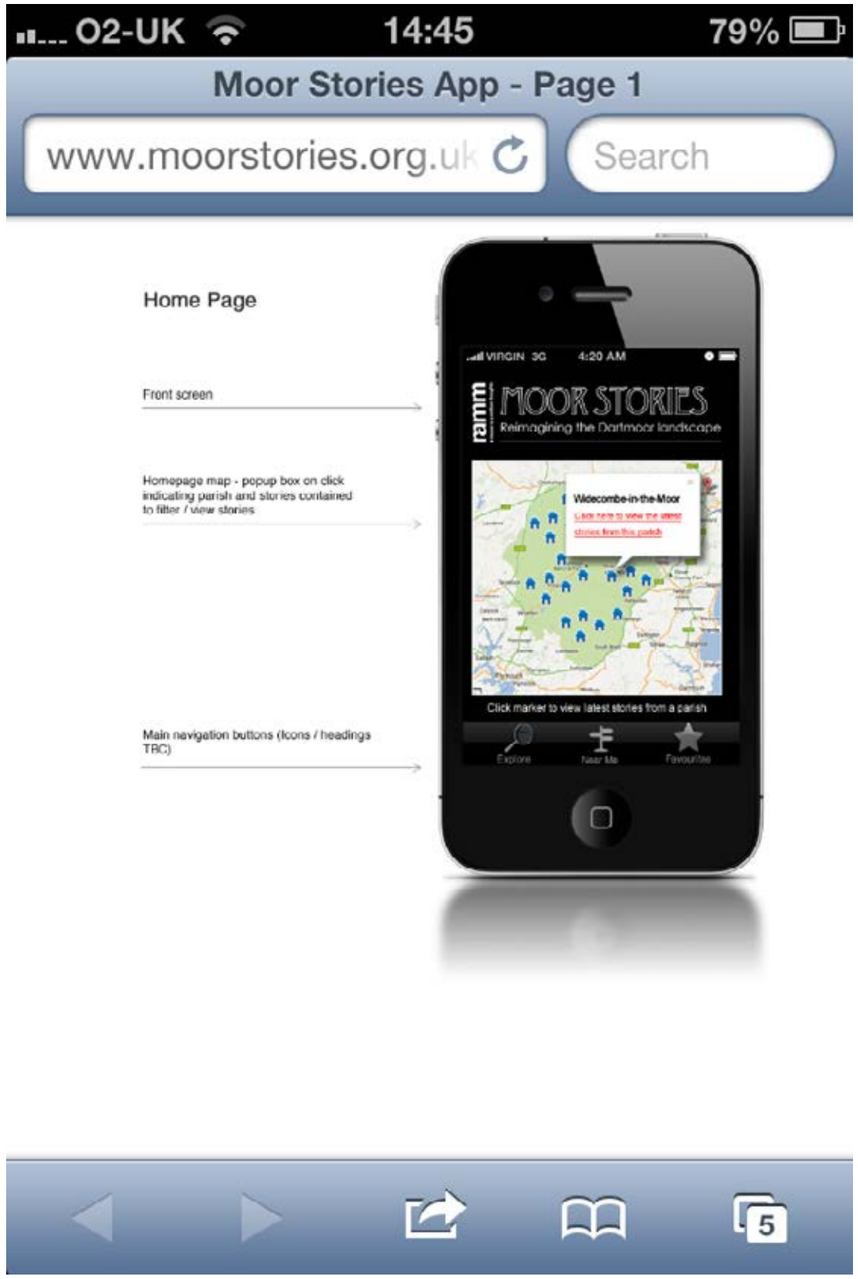
The original aim of the project was for the app to facilitate crowdsourcing so that Tate's knowledge of the artworks' geolocation could be improved upon. Users could move an object on the map, as is the case of this user, who relocated Turner's painting taken from the Basilica of Superga in Turin to the precise site, the portico, from which the view Turner painted can be seen (see Fig. 5). Initial research into the creative free-style mobile learning potential of the mobile app, however, showed that ArtMaps could also become a self-documentation tool of what users experience when encountering artworks outside the museum as part of a mixed reality experience. To allocate a location to a non-representational work, such as an abstract work, or a performance, is, of course, not a straightforward process, and to capture users' thinking in relation to what constitutes the place of an artwork generated interesting information for Tate's learning and interpretations departments. Additional functionalities were thus added, as well as a series of instructions, to prompt users to self-document their encounter with the work through text.

An initial set of public events organized by Tate in 2012 to test the app's functionalities found that ArtMaps users, both individuals and groups, appreciated the opportunity to use art as a means to map and observe their surroundings, relate the artworks they encountered to what they saw, reflect about them in relation to what constitutes a sense of place, and self-document their response to this encounter and related findings (see Fig.6). Subsequent engagement events that took place in 2013 and 2014 showed that participants felt that ArtMaps could reach, through its dissemination via social media, audiences who would not ordinarily visit museums, and that it encouraged museum visitation or repeat visitation because ArtMaps users became interested in seeing the original artworks after engaging with them digitally. It was also noted that the use of self-documentation in ArtMaps can capture not only what individuals or groups experience in their encounter with a work of art "in the wild," but also offer information to Tate about the geocoding and mobile interpretation of these works that may be of value to different departments.

The second and third projects, Moor Stories and Placeify, constitute an attempt to see how findings about how users self-document their encounter with artworks operate with diverse kinds of artifacts (especially digital heritage, and visual and material culture) for different kinds of museums and communities of users. In particular, the aim was to see how self-documentation worked as a means to stimulate reflection and prompt memories, *and* as a tool to generate valuable materials for museums. The first project, Moor Stories, is a collaboration between University of Exeter, RAMM and 1010 Media, and is funded by Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC) REACT (2012-13). The second, Placeify, is a collaboration between University of Exeter, RAMM, 1010 Media, Exeter City Football Club Supporters Trust, and is funded by Research and Enterprise in Arts and Creative Technology (REACT) HEIF (2013).

Moor Stories is a web app that aims to facilitate creative encounters between objects in RAMM's collections pertaining to Dartmoor (primarily flints, pottery, drawings, paintings, wood, and stone carvings) in situ, on Dartmoor, to prompt memories about them among the communities that live where the objects were originally found. As in the case of ArtMaps, Moor Stories aims to aid mobile interpretation and stimulate free and mobile learning among different user communities, including schools, cultural, and historical organizations, such as local history societies, and tourists. Preliminary workshops with schools and local history societies in Exeter and on Dartmoor have confirmed that the tool can facilitate creative responses (for example among children who used it to create fictional stories about how imaginary characters would have used objects in RAMM's collections at the time they were in use on the moor) and encourage the sharing of historical knowledge between museum curators and local history societies and museums on Dartmoor. Research into RAMM's Harry Hems collection of Victorian architectural carvings, for example, generated awareness in parishes that a number of the medieval woodcarvings in their churches had been replaced by Hems with his own work. Likewise, consultations with local history societies revealed that objects in RAMM's collections are associated with artifacts in rural archives, thus generating

FIG. 6 A family responding creatively to a task set by the ArtMaps team during the second public engagement event held in London in October 2012.



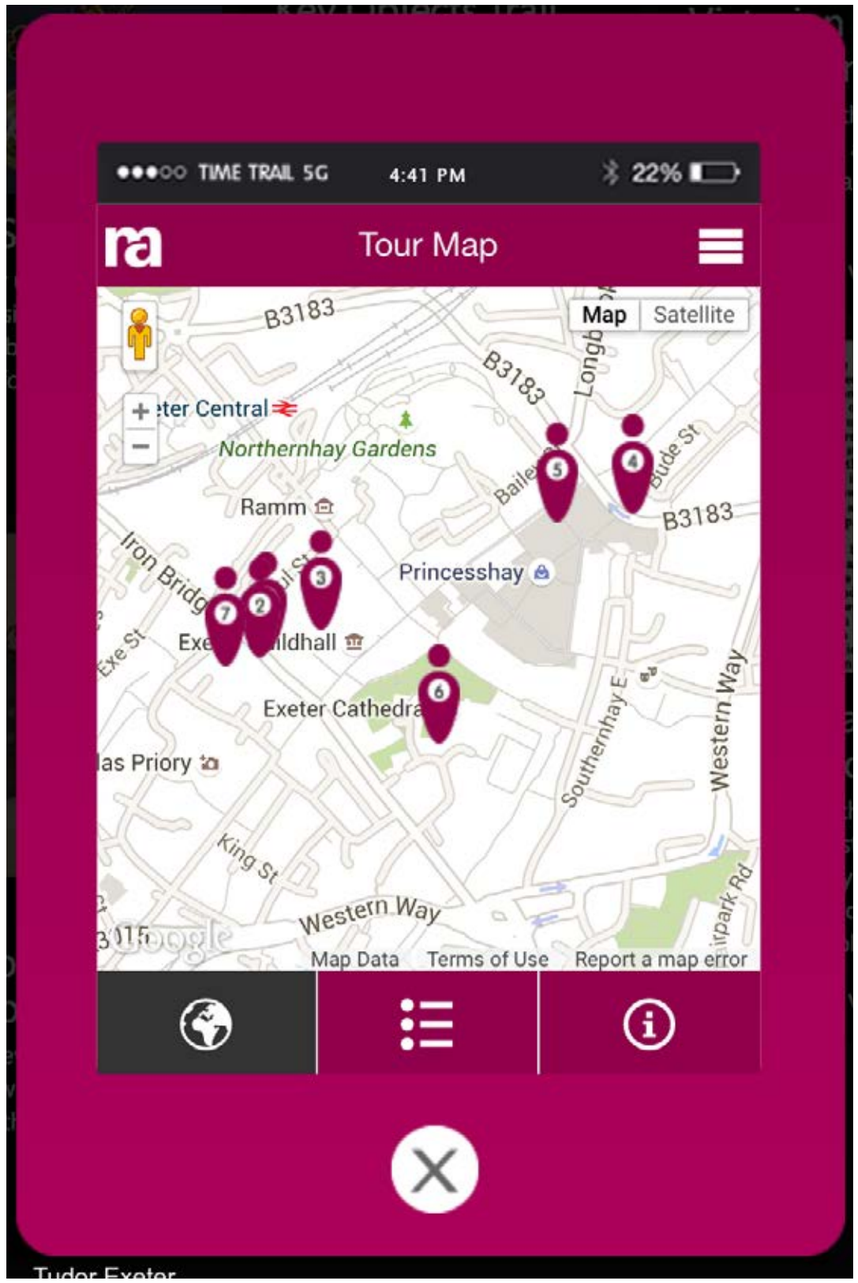


FIG. 7 The Moor Stories interface.

FIG. 8 The Exeter Placeify app's map interface.

new knowledge about the history of Dartmoor's heritage in RAMM and beyond.

Placeify is a web app offering users the experience of learning about and engaging creatively with history, heritage and RAMM's collections through a series of trails, which can be experienced both inside and outside the museum. The prototype was a development of RAMM's existing Time Trails, widely used by the BBC and Usborne, through which users can explore different objects in RAMM's collection via three types of tours: 1) Museum tours, linking objects on display; 2) Exeter tours, presenting Exeter's history through the archaeological record and material culture of Exeter; 3) Devon tours, linked to exhibitions, and encouraging the exploration of Devon's wider heritage. Placeify aims to allow users to experience trails curated by RAMM (e.g., historic trails, such as our Roman, Tudor, Victorian, and

WW2 trails, or thematic trails, such as life-style and sport trails). Additionally, Exeter City Football Supporters Trust commissioned three trails, one for the general public, one for children and one for its senior citizens. At the point of writing, a number of organizations in the South West of England adopted Placeify, including Topsham Museum, Sidmouth Museum, Tiverton Museum, Newton Abbott Museum, Barnstaple Museum, Royal Cornwall Museum, Mevagissey Museum, The Museum of Witchcraft, Wheal Martyn, Padstow Museum, Bodmin Museum, Exeter Civic Society, Fairfield House, Devon Garden Trust, the Exeter School and St Ives Archive. Users can annotate any of these trails by adding text and images. They can also generate their own trails. These can be used as explorative teaching tools, facilitating mobile interpretation, free style mobile learning, and generating appreciation of heritage and visual and material culture. They may also aid tourist guides or be used as cultural tourism maps; promote leisure, sport and businesses; facilitate reflection; and stimulate a sense of presence and identity among different communities.

Initial findings about this project in relation to the Tudor and Exeter City Football Club Supporters trails revealed that users see Placeify as a means to generate new or lost knowledge about heritage, and that it is the absence of the artifact from the site associated with it, or the changed function of the site, that prompts users, especially in the case of the football supporters trail, to remember the operation of the site at the time when the original documentation was captured. This replay of archival materials, paired with self-documentation of one's encounter with these materials, can aid communities to embed (i.e. make present) their oral histories in environments from which they have been removed. In ArtMaps users are encouraged to think about what it means to attribute a location to a work reflecting, for example, as to whether a work is its content, or part of it, or the view from which the content was generated. In Moor Stories they are encouraged to associate oral and local histories to artifacts in the museum's collection reconnecting the collection with the histories associated with it. Finally, in Placeify users are encouraged to relate past stories to existing sites, linking a restaurant, for example, with all the histories and documents associated with it in the aftermath of a sports event. Again, as in the case of Blast Theory's *Rider Spoke,* it was found that the distinction between original documents (the items from collections at Tate and RAMM, and the archive at Exeter City Football Club Supporters Trust), secondary documents (the digitalized images and their annotations by project partners) and auxiliary documents (user-generated self-documentations of the encounter with primary and secondary documents) is a useful tool to distinguish between the values brought by different types of documents and the kinds of trajectories they may afford when associated with spatial and temporal coordinates on a map.

We have seen how self-documentation can be used as a process through which to annotate our encounter with art, or even be part of a work of art. We have also seen how self-documentation can facilitate mobile interpretation and establish presence, prompting community engagement, generating cultural awareness and making possible the preservation of oral and local histories. Finally we have seen that not only do self-documentations facilitate mobile

interpretation, they show us, if preserved, how interpretation of a given work of art or artifact changes over time. Thus, self-documentations not only produce novel information about an artwork, capturing what occurs during our encounter with it outside of the museum, it also generates a living archive of our interpretation of such encounters, including information about the roles we sometimes embrace to literally perform what these archives afford. The question then is, what level of mobile interpretation should museums support, what interfaces are best suited to facilitate these processes, and what are the implications of these findings for the preservation of these living performative archives?

Mapping the living performative archive

The mixed reality performance *Rider Spoke*, as well as mixed reality environments of ArtMaps, Moor Stories, and Placeify, all offer novel ways of encountering archival materials. To facilitate exploration, they all entail some level of meandering, both physical and mental. They also entail a degree of performativity (they prompt actions), they incorporate growing amounts of user-generated materials, and the latter three deliberately use a map as interface (the former uses GPS and so also, unbeknown to participants, has the ability to visualize a participant's ride on a map). This section analyzes the value of these map interfaces, what level of mobile interpretation should be offered and encouraged, and postulates what their role might be in relation to self-documentation and living performative archives, particularly in terms of their preservation.

Maps are crucial to facilitate the encounter with documentation, and prompt self-documentation, within living performative archives. Having been famously described as "graphic representations that facilitate a spatial understanding of things, concepts, conditions, processes or events in the human world" (Harley and Woodward 1987: xvi), maps are necessary orientation tools for mobile interpretation, i.e., the production of knowledge "on the go." We know that maps have often changed the way that people look at the world. We also know that, historically, map makers have wiped out entire areas simply to persuade people about where or how they should travel (such as the map Columbus used on his explorations, which shows that there is hardly any distance between Europe and China by sea) or visualized the importance of certain socio-political groups by representing them at the 'centre' (typically, Google maps put 'us' at the centre, wherever we may be). Therefore, maps are instruments of navigation, but also tools for the establishment of power, authority, presence, and identity. Anthropologist Tim Ingold, for instance, notes that knowledge about the environment is in fact determined while we are "on the move" within it. In other words, the traveler maps — i.e. he 'knows as he goes' (2000: 231) — and for him, mapping is writing (2000, 223). Thus, a map is a navigational tool, but this tool is in fact generating and facilitating "a social construction of reality," a "system[s] of signs" (Wood 1993, 52). In all works discussed in this paper we map, we write the signs through which we choose to perceive our environment. At the same time, we place ourselves within this environment, self-documenting the mapping of our knowledge onto an existing cartographic view. In other words, we map-make, we document the processes through which we generate this knowledge onto a

map so that others may use it. However, in these case studies we need to map both physical and digital environments: we need to map a mixed reality.

Additionally to mapping, and map-making, Placeify uses trails. A trail is a story about places and their subjective experience. Cartographically, trails have no value precisely because cartographies pretend objectivity and often attempt to hide a point of view, whereas trails are subjective. Maps in fact rarely show movement; rather they show places, temporary rests from the rhythms of life, which may be worth remembering. Conventionally, places are configured on cartographic maps as enclosed dots, indicating that something is or has been present there. As we know, maps are about presence. This is why it is important that we map, that we establish our presence in space. Trails, on the other hand, join places and implicate more or less subjective movement. Trails are not roads; rather, trails are subjective paths, points of observations, marking individual decisions and world-views. Trails too are about presence, but not so much of an object as of a subject, a person. In mixed reality, trails mark movement in space as well as trajectories through data.

The level of mobile interpretation that these map interfaces can offer, given the size of the mobile interface, is usually limited to just a few hundred words, an image, and some factual information: enough, perhaps, to stimulate a museum visit or offer information about objects not ordinarily on display. But how much to preserve in terms of the user-generated materials is still an open field of investigation. These projects have prompted RAMM and Tate to reflect about the challenges for preservation of such hybrid user-generated materials that are often hosted via different types of social media, which, like Posterous, home to the first iteration of ArtMaps, can be withdrawn from the market or which may, over time, start charging and become expensive. The very porosity of living performative archives, the fact that they facilitate mixed reality experiences outside the museum, for which the exchange (Batchen 1998, 47) between components, sites, institutions, and users plays a fundamental role, is therefore what makes these novel kinds of engagement with documentations both exciting and yet challenging in terms of preservation practices. There are legal challenges about who owns the user-generated content; ethical challenges about allowing users to follow trails generated by other users; accessibility and interpretation challenges to do with the fact that we are dealing with archives that entail mixed reality and are more akin to ambients and environments than rooms or architectures; and preservation challenges to do with the varying quality, volume, and hybridity of materials.

To sum up, cartographic maps show a “bird-eye’s view” (Gibson 1979, 198-9) — they show what pretends to be an “objective” reality. Trails, on the other hand, show paths — they show ‘subjective’ points of view. Maps, like museums, are attempts towards more or less holistic world-views. Trails are individual stories; they mark the subjective experience of space. In *Rider Spoke,* ArtMaps, Moor Stories, or Placeify, self-documentations constitute attempts to generate new documents, trails, stories, or viewpoints that use art, heritage, material culture, and visual culture as a way of revisiting sites, histories and museum collections in a mixed reality context.

Here, self-documentation facilitates not only the act of map-making, stimulating our self-awareness of our relationship with these environments, but also generates a living performative archive that can be used by others, building a growing picture of how and possibly even why we need to interpret art and heritage outside the museum. These individual journeys, increasingly, offer valuable knowledge to museums, and it is the documentation and preservation of this knowledge that we need to focus on to make sure that the legacies of these processes are preserved for posterity. This is because it is these individual encounters that extend the notion of what an artwork, a heritage site, or a once-loved object of visual and material culture is at a particular point in time and history, precisely because the artwork is not just the object, but the network of processes that capture its reception over time.

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DOCUMENTING PERFORMANCE OR ACTIVATING SOCIAL RELATIONSHIPS?

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ABSTRACT

How does a curatorial art project dealing with the ephemeral nature of performance address the social dynamics associated with the original events? How can documents be perceived not only as mnemonic vehicles of the past, but also as agents nurturing our present times? Two exhibitions will form the groundwork to deal with this question: *À la vie délibérée — Une histoire de la performance sur la Côte d'Azur de 1951 à 2011* (Nice, 2011), which gives us an unusual social and artistic view of the French Riviera, and *Perder la forma humana. Una imagen sísmica de los años ochenta en América Latina (*Madrid, 2012), which addresses the way performative actions expressed ways of living together that were alternative to those imposed by the political situation in which they were produced. I will take account of the uses of documentation in the exhibition context as the materialization of the threshold that remains between art and a wider social domain.

KEYWORDS
DOCUMENTATION | PERFORMANCE | SOCIAL RELATIONSHIPS | EPHEMERAL | EXHIBITION

RESUMO

Como é que um projeto curatorial, que lida com a natureza efémera da performance, retoma e se implica nas dinâmicas sociais relacionadas com os eventos que lhe deram origem? Como é que os documentos então produzidos podem ser posteriormente percebidos, não só como veículos mnemónicos do passado, mas também como agentes do tempo presente? Tomarei como referência duas exposições para pensar estas questões: *À la vie délibérée — Une histoire de la performance sur la Côte d'Azur de 1951 à 2011* (Nice, 2011), que apresentou uma perspetiva artística e social pouco habitual da Riviera francesa, e *Perder la forma humana*. *Una imagen sísmica de los años ochenta en América Latina* (Madrid, 2012), que mostrou a forma como ações performativas exprimiram modos de viver em conjunto alternativos aos impostos pela situação política nas quais foram produzidas. Abordarei o modo como a documentação de ações performativas foram usadas nestas duas exposições, enquanto materialização do intervalo que reside entre o lugar da arte e um espaço social mais amplo.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE
DOCUMENTAÇÃO | PERFORMANCE | RELAÇÕES SOCIAIS | EFÉMERO | EXPOSIÇÃO

Documents between action and mnemonics

The growing openness to performative actions in what was once a conventional exhibition space, as well as the emergence of historical studies about artists and periods of artistic production where performance takes a large place, challenges not only curatorial practice but also the function of museums. Those modes of artistic production are often clearly engaged in a social domain of action, overtly exceeding the artistic context and its modes of institutional organization. The question I want to address in this paper concerns the way in which curatorial projects dealing with past artistic practices can address the social dynamics associated with the original events, presenting documents not only as mnemonic vehicles of the past, but also as crucial elements of re-instantiation of performance events, as agents nurturing our present times.

Two recent exhibitions will serve as basis to further develop this issue. The first is the exhibition À la vie *délibérée — Une histoire de la performance sur la Côte d'Azur de 1951 à 2011*, presented at the art center Villa Arson (Nice, 2012), and the second, the highly politicized exhibition presented in Museo Reina Sofia, *Perder la forma humana. Una imagen sísmica de los años ochenta en América Latina (Madrid, 2012).* It is impossible, in the length of this essay, to recount what happened in those exhibitions, as they were almost encyclopedic in their ambitions. I choose to underline a perspective on each exhibition that allows me to deal with the initial question. In the end, grounded in the definition of the performative by Shanon Jackson, as a practice that "foreground[s] its fundamental interest in the nature of sociality" (Jackson, 2011, 2) I will defend that there is a performative turn of the art institution. This in turn underlines the political agency of the art institution, accomplishing and revealing, in its full spectrum, its place in the realm of social relationships, i.e., relationships concerning and acknowledging the existence of the Other, in its differences and non instrumentality, as a legitimate other.

À la vie *délibérée* was part of a five-year research project on the history of Performance Art at Côte d'Azur, from the first interventions by the *Letristes* and Guy Debord at the Cannes Festival in the beginning of the fifties, through Ben's and Filliou's actions in the sixties, the "Reading for all" performances enacted by Guignol's band in the 2000s. The exhibition was divided into several sections, organically intertwined: performances happening at the Cannes Festival, in stores, offices and shopping malls, in the streets and city squares, in the countryside, at the beach, in sports complexes, in municipal galleries, at home or in alternative spaces, in community centers, hospitals and universities, and, finally, in the museum. Along with the exhibition, a catalogue in newspaper format was published, a four-day conference on documentation was organized[1], and a website was launched (performance-art.fr). This website aimed to archive all the findings of this research and proposed a methodology for further similar researches, acting as a valuable resource to future studies on the subject.

From the first and main objective of the exhibition, situated in the sphere of art history, emerged an alternative sociological view of the south of France. Departing from the image of luxury that formed its benchmark, such a scenario turned this research project and this exhibition into a sociological and anthropological study on the region.

[1] The proceedings of this conference, titled *La performance: vie de l'archive et actualité* are published at Cuir, Raphael (ed.), *La performance: vie de l'archive et actualité,* Paris: Les Presses du Réel, 2013.

The curators — Eric Mangion and Cédric Moris Kelly — did not want to work with re-enactments. Aware that the original experience is forever lost and that those works existed in a strict co-dependency with the social reality from which they emerged, the curators worked only with documents such as articles from newspapers, posters, invitations, notes of preparation, and artists' interviews. Further, being conscious of the risk of fetishizing the document, the curators decided to create a kind of meta-documentation, barring access to the original documents. The original documents were represented in the exhibition by their copies, attached to the wall with a sticker that also served as an identification label. Like a Brechtian act, the copy emphasized the distance that we, the spectators, have from the actual moment of the performance. The aim was to show only what was necessary, in order to create the conditions for spectators to immerge themselves in the constellation of available data, and let them be free to evoke, in a more or less accurate way, the experience of the work[2].

Rejecting the re-enactment

A characteristic shared by À la vie *délibéré* and *Perder la forma humana was* the exclusive use of documentation, putting aside any attempt to re-enact the original experience. Here, the risk of the re-enactment was felt as the production of a kind of a frozen surrogate, and, at its worst, a parody abstracted from the social and historic contingencies from which it emerged. It was through documentation that the highly politicized exhibition presented in Museo Reina Sofia, *Perder la forma humana. Una imagen sísmica de los años ochenta en América Latina,* showed the micro-political actions produced in the context of the South-American dictatorships in the eighties. The documentation in this exhibition was more diversified, and the type of objects exposed didn't undergo the same process of duplication of À la vie *délibéré*. The actions remembered were made present through all different sorts of media, from videos to photographs, flyers, posters, newspapers excerpt, paintings and publications. The actions that were represented through those materials were shown as expressions of ways of living together, differing simultaneously from those prompted by official politics and from alternatives presented by parties and ideologies that were opposed to the regime in place.

If, by acting on the political and sociological perception of the region of the Côte d'Azur, Á la vie *délibérée* was already opening a new space of sociality, *Perder la forma humana* presented a yet more radical proposition in what concerns the intertwinement of the social sphere of action and the museum. In this exhibition, we were presented documentation issued from actions of social activism, united under the term of "artistic' activism" by *Red de Conceptualistas del Sud*, a web of curators based in Latin America. Some of the actions represented in this exhibition were not primarily intended to be part of the art context, since art institutions were considered part of the same political configuration that they intended to diverge. Wanting to act politically, their actions were intended to overcome the separation between the aesthetic experience and daily life, something that was deemed impossible in the way art institutions were configured in those times. Neither art of propaganda or *guerilla*, this "artistic activism" was the expression of the emergence of forms of micro-politics

[2] Being a speaker at the conference *La performance: vie de l'archive et actualité,* I had the opportunity to discuss in depth the issues around this exhibition both with other speakers at this conference and with the curators. Other than in the discussions and in the publications around the exhibition, their aims and curatorial strategies were detailed in a guided visit to À la vie *délibéré*, exclusive to the speakers participating at the conference.

that undermined any idea of a homogeneous community, reverberating seismically in a wider sphere of existence[3]. Responding to the urgency of their present, they appeared as acts of liberation of ways of being and of being with others, aiming at the reconstruction of emotions and affections in order to recuperate the social tissue.

The exhibition *Perder la forma humana* re-signified those emotions and social relationships in the context of the artistic experience. We were not presented with a disinterested art object, but with highly politically engaged social propositions. The precarious material supports, presented now in the museum and related to those acts of artistic activism, were a point in this relational space, a mark in the network constructed by those emotions and social relationships. This exhibition was not a "museification" in the sense criticized by the art practices depicted, but a test of a possible relationship between art intervention groups and formal institutions, and of the art museum as a place where we can create forms of critical visuality, breaking conventions without separating art and activism. How has art come to be seen as a possible space to activate this critical enquiry?

Autonomy and the reinstatement of the political

The nominalism inherited by the Duchampian tradition — Thierry De Duve's, for instance —, or Arthur Danto's theory of the transfiguration of the commonplace, could be brought to the forefront, as it opened the space where the ordinary life could enter the sphere of the artistic experience. However, in the case of those exhibitions, and mainly in the case of the exhibition *Perder la forma humana*, we are not dealing so much with the "transfiguration of the commonplace," where art allows for an ordinary object, or event, to provide a higher degree of experience that allows it to move beyond its banal existence. Nor are we reclaiming, through nominalism, new possibilities for what can be defined as art, by naming an event thus allowing a certain idea of art to emerge from a complex dynamics of artistic, aesthetic, formal, ideological and social contexts. With those two exhibitions we are approaching the terrain of the most ordinary social relationships, and revealing art as a place of reinstatement of political questions involved in those performances as social acts in its most intense state. Simultaneously, we are testing and examining the role of institutions while they participate in this intensive state that characterizes micro-political events, or, in the days that we live in, maybe we can speak about macro-political events coming from non-institutionalized gestures and actions. Beyond the philosophical tradition of nominalism, there are other theoretical tools that will help us to make the bridge between the actions documented here and the artistic context.

John Dewey, a central voice in American philosophical pragmatism, gave us, in his 1934's book Art as Experience, an operative definition of art and the expressive act implied in all artistic experience. These notions are still useful to understand the political or socially engaged actions presented in exhibitions such as *Perder la forma humana* as artistic acts. For Dewey, there are aesthetic processes engaged and emerging in all human experience. When Dewey refers to art as experience, he is thinking about an accomplished experience, as opposed to a scattered or

[3] " (...) conciliar una política de la memoria o la denuncia de la tortura com la necesidad de recomponer los vínculos sociales tras la abrupta cesura que los golpes de Estado perpetraron sobre las aspiraciones revolucionarias setentistas. Así, la centralidad de la política es desplazada de la búsqueda de la toma de lo poder a la generación de afectos comunitarios y de antagonismo en el espacio público, anticipando de esse modo algunos elementos del activismo contrahegemónico de décadas posteriores. En la construction de esos afectos cumplen un rol fundamental las relaciones entre los cuerpos y el recurso a suportes precarios y socializables como la serigrafia, las impresiones o los afiches. Todos ellos contribuyen a articular la experiência dela protesta, escenificando una política de la multitud en la que la convivencia entre lo singular y lo colectivo contrastan com la apelación setentista a la idea de pueblo como sujeto social homogéneo." "Perder la forma humana. Una imagen sísmica de los años ochenta en América Latina" (cat.), Madrid: Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, 2012, p. 14.

vague experience. The artistic experience is one that stands out from the general stream of consciousness,

> **a situation, whether that of eating a meal, playing a game of chess, carrying on a conversation, writing a book, or taking part in a political campaign, [that] is so rounded out that its close is a consummation and not a cessation. Such an experience is a whole and carries with it its own individualizing quality and self-sufficiency. It is *an experience*" (Dewey, 2005, 37).**

It is the experience as an event, as a milestone in the course of the general experience that marks the rhythm of life, of history, as a source for configuring acts of expression. The act of expression, argues Dewey, is an act which, starting from an impulse that meets the natural resistance in the environment to which it is addressed through emotion, transforms obstacles and poor conditions into favorable agents:

> **An environment that was always and everywhere congenial to the straightway execution of our impulsions would set a term to growth as surely as one always hostile would irritate and destroy. Impulsion forever boosted forward would run its course as thoughtless and dead to emotion. For it would not have to give an account of itself in terms of the things it encounters, and thus they would not become significant objects. The only way it can become aware of its nature and its goal is by obstacles surmounted and means employed" (Dewey, 2005, 62-63).**

It seems to me that overcoming obstacles, becoming an act of expression, and configuring an accomplished experience was at the center of most of the actions presented in *Perder la forma humana*.

Does this intertwinement with the social realm of life undermine the autonomy of the art? No. Autonomy does not mean separation, but the contrary. As Michelangelo Pistoletto stated recently, if we understand the potential of the action of the artistic gesture, we can understand its experience as a "principle of change":

> **Identifying art as a principle of change, as something free, autonomous and responsible, I'll place it in the center of the social transformation because, if I don't transform the actual society, the society will transform art and I lose autonomy. For art to be autonomous, we need to place it in the center of the transformation of everything. If art doesn't transform the world, it will lose its autonomy[4] (Diez and Pistoletto 2011, 12; my translation).**

Clearly, for Pistoletto, art is not autonomous if it does not create performative connections with the socio-cultural environment to which it belongs. This, I believe, is the sense of the word "activism" in art institutions: the consciousness of its actions in a wider sociological system, helping to shape and to produce the circumstances of reality and their belonging, or, as the German art historian Dorothea Von Hantelmann stated, in "the way in which these circumstances constantly get produced and reproduced via practices and actions" (Hantelmann, 2010, 151). In this context, the relationship between art, document, and

[4] "Una vez identificado el arte como el principio del cambio, como algo libre, autónomo y responsable, lo pongo en el centro de la transformación social, porque si yo no transformo la sociedad actual, la sociedad transforma el arte, y yo pierdo la autonomía. Para que el arte sea autónomo hoy, hay que ponerlo en el centro de la transformación de todo. Si el arte no trasforma el mundo pierde su autonomía. Y este es el signo (señalado por el gran símbolo del infinito que está colgado en la sala) de la autonomía del arte, que propone al mundo una dirección, una manera de concebir las cosas, que es la Cittadellarte: una intervención en todos los ámbitos según la consciencia y el conocimiento. Esto es importante. Conciencia individual, porque siempre se vuelve a la conciencia individual, a las pequeñas cosas, a cómo se consume, a cómo nos movemos... No podemos ser extremistas, pero el camino es un cambio. Cuando me preguntan " cómo hacemos para cambiar?", o « cuál es la señal que representa ese cambio ? », yo, como artista, siento la responsabilidad de dar un símbolo, un símbolo que no es individual sino común, un símbolo del cambio: un vientre natural que tiene significado porque está entre la naturaleza y lo artificial. Pasamos así del concepto masculino, que es el que ha llegado has hoy, y que viene des de el Renacimiento, donde el hombre era el centro el universo, a un ombligo que es un signo que tenemos todos y que está ligado a la maternidad. Un hilo que se corta pero que se une con otros hilos y crea la humanidad. " Díez, Celia, Pistoletto, Michelangelo. junio-julio 2011. " Entrevista: Michelangelo Pistoletto , El arte al centro de todas las cosas", *EXIT Express*, n.º 59, p. 12.

reality is not only a relationship of representation, because when art, language, or, in these cases, documents relate to reality, it is not only to depict it, but also to produce it. So, the collection of documents presented in the exhibition *Perder la forma humana* does not merely constitute an archive, a representation of a history, and the enunciation of events that once happened and, in a Foucauldian sense, of "discourses that have just ceased to be ours"[5] (Barry 1997, 31).

Art and act

If the documents presented in these two exhibitions are more than an archive and more than fetishes, it means that the action they perform in the art context where they are exhibited becomes an action akin to that of the artwork. David Davies refers to this in his book Art as Performance, where he states, against analytic contextualism, that "Artworks in the different arts [...] must be conceived not as the products (decontextualized or contextualized) of generative performances, but as the performances themselves." (Davies 2004, X) The art works are understood as acts that are creating, and constantly recreating, the context of their reception, i.e., the art museum. In the case of the two exhibitions, this question becomes more and more important, as we are dealing with artistic proposals that are also intended to be acts with a wider effect in the social domain. They do not exist outside this act.

In this context, the risk of transforming documents into *things* in the archive, or to submit them to a process of reification needs to be addressed if we want to avoid the fetishization of experience, or to create inanimate substitutes of experience that would not allow those documents, signs of relationships, to seismically reverberate in the wider political sphere of action, and in our consciousness.

From the latin 'res' (thing) and 'facere' (to make), the term 'reification' literally means to make a thing. Applied to the social realm, it is a process where social relationships become fixed, transforming human beings into objects with their places in society forever assigned. However, looking at an art object or a document as a *thing* may help us to understand the potential that documentation has to reactivate the social relationships nestled in it. In the essay, "Moving as Thing: Choreographic Critiques of the Object", André Lepecki shows us that a *thing* is no longer a process of reification of social dynamics, but a relational space in which we can produce "subjectivities non-subjugated" (Lepecki, 2012, 78). For Lepecki, to become a *thing* is to let the object, the document, exist beyond the intentions of the subject that is dealing with it (the curator, for instance, or the visitor of the exhibition)[6]. In the case of documentation, it is to let the object that it documents exist beyond the intention of documenting a previous experience, in order to allow it to open a space of experience in present times, and to become an agent that deals and acts with the context of its reception, akin to a subject that acts and has intent.

We can find a brief and simple example of becoming a *thing* while documenting an action in *Perder la forma humana*, performed by the Chilean group C.A.D.A. — Colectivo de Actiones de Arte, presented in the exhibition and also part of Museo Reina Sofia's main collection. C.A.D.A. enacted pervasive street actions in the streets of Chile in the period of Pinochet's dictatorship. One

[5] "It refers to the rules of DISCURSIVE PRACTICE through which past statements achieved both their enunciability as events and functioning as things. For Foucault, the archive comprises "Discourses that have just ceased to be ours," and its analyses serve to establish "that we are difference that our reason is the difference of discourses, our history of difference of times, our selves the difference of masks", Smart, Barry, "Archive", Payne, Michael (ed.). 1997. *A Dictionary of Cultural and Critical Theory*, Oxford and Massachussets: Blackwell Publishers, p. 31.

[6] Is to see the object in a perspective that changes its existence and its effectiveness: "But isn't letting an object be (...) already a provocation in the object of a substantial transformation? Isn't letting be already a move toward disobjectifying the object, a move that turns the object into a mere thing — if we understand that a 'thing is neither an instrument, nor a utensil, nor a means,' as Mario Perniola, closely following Heidegger, reminds us in *The Sex Appeal of the Inorganic*?", André Lepecki, ibid., pp. 76-77.

of the most enduring actions was “no +” (no more), an action occurring all over the country, intended to be completed and appropriated by everyone wishing to say “no more” to the social situation of Chile. The expression “No +” was spread all over the country by means of graffiti or posters of various sizes. Next to it we would find images or words expressing all kinds of violence. In the exhibition at Museo Reina Sofia, this performance was presented by a framed newspaper article, a film documenting some of those street actions, and a small text presenting and contextualizing C.A.D.A. actions. We could also find a pile of white posters saying “no +”. Those posters were not only a document, but also an invitation to the visitor to take one and let the proposition act on its experience, outside the museum, reactivating today the original proposition.

The exhibition as a public space

In these exhibitions, both wanting to give us an extensive account of their subject, are we dealing with an attempt to give an accurate memory of the past, or are we mostly thinking about our present times? Both things happen. Memory concerns the past, but the selection procedure that is implied in the construction of each and every memory expresses how we deal with the past in a very pragmatic way concerning present needs and future aims. These exhibitions, being acts of memory, are acting in the present and preparing the field of experience for future times. The symbolic memory of the Côte d’Azur as a place other than the luxurious image we often have of it, and where there are multiple social layers existing simultaneously, enlarge the scope of future action in that geography. The memory of the latin-american micro-political gestures - political in the widest sense: as the site of activity concerning the way our behavior creates the common ground in which we are living together[7] —, shown in Madrid addressed a political discussion that was at the time of the exhibition occurring in that city, expressed in repeated manifestations against the economic politics being put in place in Spain after the 2008 blooming crisis. If performance is a kind of mutable art that presents itself in a different way depending on its contexts, the activation of the performative aspect of those documents must include the experience of reflecting on the way it can act in a new social context where, becoming visible, it now takes part and participates.

The exhibition strategies of documentation, as well as its contextual time frame, adopted in those two examples opened the possibility of restitution of social relationships to our present, where documentation becomes a medium of expression that allows those artistic proposals to nurture the present social context of its reception. Both museums achieved this goal by creating the conditions for this encounter between past actions and present circumstances through the exhibition and discourse stimulated by the display, by presenting itself as a public space of encounter and discussion, and also by promoting activities of mediation and engagement with spectators through which a terrain of public discussion is created.

[7] I recall the concept of common, given by the French philosopher François Jullien, “ce à quoi on prend part, qui est en partage et à quoi on participe” [*that in which we take part, which we share and in which we participate*], Jullien, 2008, p. 39.

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IN THE ABSENCE OF DOCUMENTATION

REMEMBERING TINO SEHGAL'S CONSTRUCTED SITUATIONS

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ABSTRACT

Museum practices of collecting and conservation have a long history of documenting artworks as a form of "materialised memory". On the sale of his work, the artist Tino Sehgal (London, 1976), however, does not allow for any form of visual documentation or material traces. Instead, knowledge of how to perform his pieces is intended to travel from person to person, from body to body in the form of narratives, movements, and through rehearsals. How can this work survive in contexts that seem to be so heavily dependent on written and visual documents? What are the challenges presented by these works, and how do museums respond to these challenges? Informed by empirical research into museums' strategies of acquiring Sehgal's work, this essay will argue that different notions of memory are brought to the fore through these collecting and conservation practices, thereby challenging existing documentation strategies and practices of remembrance.

KEYWORDS
DOCUMENTATION | PERFORMANCE ART | COLLECTION MANAGEMENT | PRACTICES OF REMEMBRANCE

RESUMO

As práticas dos museus de colecionar e conservar têm uma longa história de documentar obras de arte como uma forma de "memória materializada". Contudo, quando vende uma obra, o artista Tino Sehgal (Londres 1976) não permite qualquer forma de documentação visual ou vestígios materiais. Em vez disso, o conhecimento de como concretizar as suas performances deve passar de pessoa para pessoa, de corpo para corpo na forma de narrativas, movimentos e através de ensaios. Como é que este tipo de obra pode sobreviver em contextos que parecem tão dependentes de documentos escritos e visuais? Quais são os desafios que estas obras apresentam e como respondem os museus a esses desafios? Baseado em investigação empírica das estratégias utilizadas por museus na aquisição de obras de Sehgal, este artigo defende que diferentes noções de memória são convocadas por estas práticas de colecionar e conservar, desafiando as estratégias existentes de documentação e as práticas de reminiscência.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE
DOCUMENTAÇÃO | ARTE DA PERFOMANCE | COLEÇÃO | GESTÃO | PRÁTICAS DE REMINISCÊNCIA

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Introduction

The documentary life of an artwork within the museum generally starts even before an artwork is accessioned into a collection. The curatorial staff will have produced a pre-acquisition form describing the work and indicating its value for the collection to convince the board of directors. Then, once the work is acquired, a new museum record is created, and the artwork receives an inventory number. The artist or his gallery sends an invoice, and the legal department follows up on the documents guiding the transfer of ownership. The conservation department produces additional records such as detailed photographs, condition reports, and scientific analysis. In the event that the contemporary artwork does not provide sufficient information to go by, an artist interview may be recorded and transcribed. When the work is exhibited, curators and technicians pull out photographs and installation instructions to guide the presentation of the work. And when the work travels, it is accompanied by the necessary documentation such as loan forms, insurance papers and condition reports. Although it is commonly acknowledged that documentation is always open to more than one interpretation, and always partial and fragmented, producing written and visual documentation of artworks is a crucial part of museum practices. Collection managers, conservators, and registrars go to great lengths to gather key information about the museum's object for future reference. While being aware that an object is always richer than its documentation and that documentation is never neutral, never sufficient, nor complete, professional standards are underpinned by a strong belief in written and visual documentation *as if* evidential, fixing, recording, noting, and holding. And, indeed, generally considered to be more reliable than oral forms of documentation. In short: An artwork's visual and written documentation as a form of *materialised* memory is considered invaluable to its perpetuation. This is the case for traditional art objects, but even more so for complex, variable, contemporary artworks such as installations, conceptual art, and performance-based artworks, which fully rely on documentation for their future existence (c.f. Buskirk 2003; Muñoz Viñas 2004; Kraemer 2007; Hummelen and Scholte 2006).[1]

But what if these records and documentation procedures are taken away? What if there are no memory holders such as artist's sketches, condition reports, curatorial records, registrar's files, artist's interview recordings, installation guidelines, or images to fall back on? Are museums, as custodians of our cultural memory, completely dependent on visual and written documentation strategies for their collection care, or do other forms of remembrance also play a role? To address these questions, I will examine how the recent acquisition and conservation of Tino Sehgal's (London, 1976) artworks perpetuate in a museum context. Sehgal's artistic practice is particularly interesting, as he objects to visual documentation and material traces, thereby challenging museums not only to re-think common notions of documentation and practices of remembrance, but also to act accordingly. What is needed for his works to endure in this specific institutional context?

While a lot has been written on the reception of Sehgal's works and unorthodox artistic strategies, there is almost no literature to be found on the actual consequences of

[1] The recent proliferation of documentation guidelines and collection databases re-affirms this tradition as they emphasise the significance of documentation as a form of materialised memory for the conservation of contemporary art.

the ban on documentation for the museum as a collecting institution.[2] How can this work survive in contexts that seem to be so heavily dependent on written and visual documents? Will, as curator and art critic Claire Bishop suggests, "oral conservation eat the works into oblivion?" (Bishop 2005). Or will museums be able to develop sustainable remembrance procedures while still accommodating the artist's carefully constructed mandates? In order to answer these questions, I will first take a closer look at Tino Sehgal's art practice and explore the reasoning behind the prohibiting of documentation. This is followed by a more detailed discussion of a variety of museums' attempts to keep the memory of Sehgal's works alive in order to be able to re-perform them in the future. The analysis is based on empirical studies conducted between 2008-2012 at several European and American museums that have acquired Sehgal's pieces for their collection.[3] Through cross-organisational comparison, the article points towards the tensions that arise from the difference between the way museums deal with memory by way of (written) documentation, and the way Sehgal deals with it.

On the prohibition of documentation

Tino Sehgal's "constructed situations" or "living sculptures," as he tends to refer to his works, thereby avoiding the term "performance," break with the most fundamental convention of the visual arts: the material object. Instead of a material object, his works consist of words and songs, choreographed movements, or a conversation with a museum visitor: "A situation between two people" (Von Hantelmann 2010, 132). His pieces are live encounters, often executed by museum attendants, or hired actors or dancers, carrying out instructions conceived by the artist and learned through rehearsals.

Sehgal studied political economy and dance in Berlin and Essen and began to work as an artist in 2000. Before entering the visual art world, he became known for productions with choreographers Christine De Smedt and Xavier Le Roy, and artist Jérôme Bel. Works such as *Instead of allowing some thing to rise up to your face dancing bruce and dan and other things* (2000), *Kiss* (2003), and *This is so contemporary* (2005) evolve around movements and draw heavily on his choreographic background. Others are more politically oriented and based on conversations or singing, addressing topics such as propaganda (*This is Propaganda*, 2002), market economy (*This is Exchange,* 2002), or the meaning of progress (*This Progress*, 2010). In *These Associations* (2012), executed in Tate's Turbine Hall, movement, conversation, and singing came together in a piece involving several hundred interpreters over a period of several weeks.

What particularly sets Sehgal's work apart from other artistic practices is the rigorousness of his restriction on the production of all forms of documentation concerning his work.[4] Instead, knowledge of how to perform his pieces is intended to travel from person to person, from body to body in the form of narratives, movements, and through rehearsals. On the sale of his work, the artist stipulates that there is no written set of instructions, no written receipt, no wall labels, no catalogue, and no pictures. Ownership entails the right to (re)present the work. Sale is done by conversation and by a handshake, and instead of a contract,

[2] With some exceptions such as: Umathum, Sandra. 2009. "Given the Tino Sehgal Case; How to Save the Future of a Work of Art that Materializes Only Temporarily." *Theatre Research International* **34** (2): 194-199. Giguère, Amélie. 2012. *Art Contemporain et documentation: La muséalisation d'un corpus de pièces* éphémères *de type performance*. Université du Québec à Montréal and Université d'Avignon et des pays de Vaucluse. And Laurenson, Pip and Vivian van Saaze. 2014. Collecting Performance-Based Art: New Challenges and Shifting Perspectives. In: Remes, O., MacCulloch, L. and Leino, M. (eds.). *Performativity in the Gallery. Staging Interactive Encounters*. Oxford, Bern, Berlin, Bruxelles, Frankfurt am Main, New York, Wien: Peter Lang, 27-41.

[3] Research was conducted at the Guggenheim, New York; The Museum of Modern Art, New York; The Van Abbemuseum, Eindhoven; and Tate, London. The research is also informed by investigations undertaken for *'Collecting the Performative: A research network examining emerging practice for collecting and conserving performance-based art*. This two-year research project (2012-2014) draws upon the practices of dance, activism, and theatre in order to understand how legacy is created in these disciplines that have informed performance art — and to learn how this may inform museum practices of collecting performance-based art. Project website: http://www.tate.org.uk/about/projects/collecting-performative

[4] Although less strict, other contemporary artists such as Roman Ondák have also refused the documentation of their work.

the residue of the acquisition meeting is a narrative, or rather a set of narratives of those present at the meeting.
The specific conditions set by Sehgal allow his situations to function *as if* they are objects. Rather than a one-time performance, many of his works are intended to be structurally repeatable and have to be on par with the ordinary length of an exhibition display. As his works always come in a limited edition, it is also in that sense that his practice copies the strategies of material artworks in order for them to apply to the workings of the art market and collectors. In the words of Dorothea von Hantelmann: "As art Sehgal's works fulfil all of the parameters of a visual artwork except an essential one, its inanimate materiality. While James Coleman and [Daniel] Buren start from an object, which they lend an event-like quality, Sehgal starts from an ephemeral event, like singing, moving, or speaking, lending it an object-like quality." (Von Hantelmann 2010, 130-131) Sehgal frames his practice of producing ephemeral events as a critique on the mode of production that comes with material object:

> **It struck me as a very interesting thing to rethink how economics could work, and I thought that the mode of production that is inherent to dance is an interesting model for this. While visual art proposes that we can extract material from natural resources to then transform it and have a product that is there to endure, dance transforms actions to obtain a product or artwork and produces and deproduces this product at the same time. (quoted in Obrist 2010, 827)**

Elsewhere Sehgal argues:

> **I don't make photographic or filmic reproductions of my work, because it exists as a situation, and therefore substituting it with some material object like a photo or video doesn't seem like an adequate documentation. Also, my works take a form that exists over time — as they can be shown over and over again — so they're not dependent on any kind of documentation to stand in for them. (quoted in Griffin 2005, 2)**

In other interviews he has also stressed the importance of oral culture as a form of remembrance: "(...) it is really important for me to recall that our oral culture of remembrance is still the most powerful instance of knowledge transfer in our society today" (quoted in Moehrke 2011, 116). From this perspective, the artist seems to concur with the classical discourse in performance studies where documentation is presented as a threat appropriating the live event. The rhetoric is one of a well-known dichotomy: his "situations" — like dance works — persist through the body and through oral representation, and are therefore "naturally" subject to change, and opposed to the permanence of the material object.[5] In this view, documentation via images may undesirably fix the work or become a substitute for the work. Besides an alternative production mode, Sehgal's prohibition thus also induces a claim for another knowledge culture: one that relies on living memory rather than documentation. With his ban on the production of written and visual documentation, and the emphasis on oral and bodily forms of memory, his practice seems to evoke the traditional duality

[5] For more insight on the complex relationships between performance and its documentation, see for example: Auslander (2006), Reason (2006), and Schneider (2011).

of documentation (archive) and other forms of transmission, such as through dance and oral transfer (repertoire).[6] Yet, by bringing a *supposedly* very different mode of transfer into the visual art domain, by injecting one institutional practice (dance) into another (fine arts), his work draws attention to notions such as embodied knowledge and oral history that are commonly overlooked in museum practice because of its emphasis on visual and written documentation forms. Although these traditions of transfer seem to stand miles apart from museum practices of documentation, they are arguably also part of common museum conservation strategies. Sehgal's works make visible a knowledge culture that is already existent in museums, but hardly addressed due to the persistent orientation on producing physical records. Writing about the conservation of Sehgal's work *This is Propaganda* (2002), Pip Laurenson, head of Collection Care Research at Tate observes, "Being prohibited from documenting the installation was difficult; however it caused us to reflect on the limitations of even the best documentation and the role of memory in the museum. (...)" (Laurenson 2007, 30).

Strategies of remembrance

Conservators, curators, and registrars alike stressed the "unnatural" and unsettling situation in which they found themselves trying to comply with the artist's wishes by not falling back on paper as memory aid. A registrar who had an active role in the processing of the acquisition at MoMA, The Museum of Modern Art, New York, explains: "We do have some documentation though. We were not permitted to take notes of the performance during the meeting, but we were permitted to draft notes which relate to the administration of the work such as for keeping track of interpreters, documenting the preparation time prior to installation, costs and so on."[7]

Despite the ban on documentation, outside the museum, Sehgal's works — perhaps more than any material artwork — evoke an ever-growing body of visual and written documentation. A search online reveals an enormous production of clandestine pictures and videos taken during exhibitions. Besides photos and videos, blogs and articles comprising witness reports from members of the audience, as well as from interpreters, all express a desire to share something of their experiences with the works. As far as is known, this "unauthorized" and "user-generated" visual documentation created by visitors is not yet taken into account or archived by the museums. One of the reasons being that it is considered to be material produced against the artist's wishes. In addition, it may be the case that this material created by visitors is not considered to be documentation of the artwork but rather responses, interpretations and comments on the work. Presumably, in time, these "folksonomies" will gain in importance and may even provide a foundation for museums to base future re-iterations on when the artist or his producers are no longer available. As present, however the material produced by visitors are generally not considered to be documentation of the performance, which is in need of archiving. Or, as Mary Richards observes, at present, "No material evidence of Sehgal's work officially exists" (2012, 72).

Compared to other collection documentation files, the Tino Sehgal files at the diverse museums are indeed remarkably thin. Usually they contain a copy of Sehgal's curriculum vitae;

[6] In *The Archive and the Repertoire: Performing Cultural Memory in the Americas* (2003) Diana Taylor convincingly argues the need to move beyond the dichotomy.

[7] Interview with Sydney Briggs, Associate Registrar at MoMA, 30 November 2010.

a selection of reviews; correspondence between the gallery, the conservator, the curator, the artist, and legal advisors. In some cases, documentation related to the production process is included containing the names of the interpreters, and the names of the staff members responsible for the realisation of the piece.[8]

At Tate, hardly any records of the first and still only enactment of *This is Propaganda* (2002) at Tate Britain remain. Even a list of the names and contacts of the interpreters was missing from the file. However, as Sehgal stipulates that his performers get paid, eventually their contacts could be retrieved through the HR department. It is presently understood that perhaps staff members may document information that is necessary for the work's production — but not the actual performance — which shows how, like in the case of MoMA, a distinction is made between documentation related to the administration of the work and documentation of the work. It also demonstrates that in the process of transfer, what is meant by documentation and what the rules of engagement are, is not always clear.

The method of transfer is described as "teaching", where the artist or one of his producers instructs museum staff how to produce the piece. It means that the curator or conservator, based on the directions of the artist, has to choose a space, learn how to audition the "interpreters", and learn how to teach them their parts.[9] In theory, this mode of operation — delegating the responsibilities to one person in the museum (often the curator in charge of the production of the first enactment in the museum), who then realizes the piece — would imply that the artist is no longer needed as a conveyor of the work. In practice, however, the liaison between artist and the work is robust, as museums display less confidence to re-perform the works without the involvement of the artist, one of his producers, or earlier dancers.

In preparation for the re-performance of *Kiss* in March 2010 at the Art Gallery of Ontario (AGO), the artist was consulted by phone. A common practice is to re-invite the previous interpreters, as was also the case at AGO, where the piece was re-performed by the same dancers from the initial performance, in consultation with a dancer who had performed the piece elsewhere (Giguère 2012, 327).[10] Memory of the work becomes dispersed, and is no longer contained or controlled by the museum. By editioning the work, the more people in and outside the museum organization learn to enact it and the more chance it has to survive. In the case of a work like *Kiss* (sold in an edition of three), with shifts lasting up to three hours before a new couple takes over, this means that, over the years, hundreds of interpreters have enacted the piece.

Sehgal's work thus depends heavily on the interpreters of his work, but they are mostly not employed by the museum. His practice thus seems to rely on institutional memory (information held in the memories of museum staff members) as well as a specific form of collective memory (namely dispersed beyond the museum organisation). Its perpetuation depends upon the mode of memorization as *distributed* memory.[11] Rather than accommodating traditional strategies of containment, such as in-house documentation and centralization of archives, museums acquiring his works are challenged to encourage and foster distributed memory as a means of circumventing memory loss.

The activity of remembrance of the work will most likely only be prompted in the event of a re-performance. For several

[8] See also Amélie Giguère's research into the acquisition of *Kiss* by the FNAC and the Art Gallery of Ontario, available at: http://www.archipel.uqam.ca/4942/.

[9] See for example: http://www.ft.com/cms/s/2/ef939b02-d19f-11df-b3e1-00144feabdc0.html and http://www.tate.org.uk/about/our-work/conservation/time-based-media

[10] In her PhD thesis Giguère provides insight in how Sehgal's work *Kiss* is acquired by the FNAC in Paris and the Art Gallery of Ontario (AGO), Canada. Her research is based on interviews with the responsible museum professionals and her experience as an assistant on the occasion of an exhibition of *Kiss* in March 2010 at AGO.

[11] A useful analogue is provided in computer science where distributed memory systems are referred to as multi-processor machines comprised of several processors each holding individual memory. A disadvantage of distributed memory is that it does not offer a unified space in which all data can be found. Interprocessor communication through network design is therefore more difficult and expensive; it requires the programmer to think about data distribution. See on the notion of 'distributed memory' in computer science: Patterson, David A. and John L. Hennessy. 2007. *Computer architecture: a quantitative approach*, Fourth Edition, Morgan Kaufmann Publishers, 201.

museums, this awareness led to an attempt of community building amongst the interpreters, to trace the networks, stay in touch with the interpreters, and ideally rehearse the piece once a year in order to keep the memory alive. At Tate this was referred to as a "re-fresh meeting." The registrar at MoMA explains:

> **One of the other things that I have been thinking about is: now that Tino is off doing new pieces, new works, how do we help the interpreters to maintain this memory? Because if a dancer works less, if you cannot actually dance and repeat a choreography, you will forget it. As we cannot record it, they cannot look at it and really have to remember it.**[12]

The registrar is not alone in stressing the responsibility of the museum in keeping alive the possibility of going back to the interpreters. Other interviewees have also argued that the solution is to re-perform the work frequently, or find other ways to encourage the interpreters to memorise the movements, the words, or the rules of the work. Tino Sehgal's practice thus brings to the fore how museums are urged to buy into these relationships and nourish the networks on which the works depends.[13]

Many of the above-expressed concerns speak to difficulties that are considered to be perennial problems in the shift of responsibilities when an artwork enters a collection. In the case of Sehgal's work, especially the fear of not "getting it right," and the fear that the institutional memory will erode — and thus that the work will be forgotten — come to the fore. As we have seen, one of the implications of acquiring Sehgal's work is that the museum is forced to buy into relationships with memory holders. For the Tate, this prompted the question of whether the limits of what the museum is capable of have been reached. Re-executing *This is Propaganda* requires selecting interpreters, setting up rehearsals, giving directions as to how to perform, and keeping the interpreters engaged and focused, among other responsibilities. All this is considered to fall outside of present curatorial expertise, and requires different skills from curators and conservators, as they are dealing with the production of an event rather than an object.[14]

There seems, however, to be a shift in Tino Sehgal's approach towards the responsibilities that became apparent during the "remembrance meeting" organized by Tate in 2012 and involving the original interpreters of *This is Propaganda* and the artist. Initially, museum staff members were to become the work's keepers and authorized installers, but recently Sehgal seems to have shifted this responsibility to his producers — a strategy that is not uncommon for museum works that require some degree of performativity (Laurenson and Van Saaze 2014). For *This progress*, a work acquired by the Guggenheim, there are now three officially recognized "installers" (thereby taking it out of the hands of museum staff): Sehgal, and his immediate co-workers Asad Raza and Louise Höjer. These are, according to Mary Richards, "recognized repositories" of the work who "are contractually obliged, at an appropriate moment, to pass their knowledge of the work on to someone younger than themselves (…)" (Richards 2012, 76). While museum staff members were appointed as keepers of the work in most of the previous acquisition cases, practice shows that, despite

[12] Interview Sydney Briggs, Associate Registrar at MoMA, 30 November 2010.

[13] Interview with Sydney Briggs, Associate Registrar at MoMA, 30 November 2010. See also Laurenson and Van Saaze 2014, 36-37.

[14] See Laurenson and Van Saaze 2014.

the model of dispersed memory, especially with the more complex works, the artist maintains his engagement in the works' perpetuation, even if he is no longer the owner.

Conclusion

This essay pointed towards the unsettling nature of non-documented artworks in respect to standard processes and systems of museum care. It looked at the difference between the way museums deal with memory by way of (written) documentation, and the way Sehgal's artistic practice challenges these procedures. Rather than following an institutional approach of exploring how Sehgal's works are best to be integrated into the museum's regular processes and systems, I focused on the points of friction and tension and the disruption that is caused when these works enter museum collections.

In an attempt to capture and keep the memory of the work alive, some museums organised "re-fresh" meetings and re-enactments that facilitated an ongoing engagement with the interpreters and the artist or his producer as memory holders.

The acquisition of Sehgal's works, and particularly the ban on producing documentation of the performance, not only drew attention to a "seen but unnoticed" aspect of conservation — that of embodied and oral memory — it also raised awareness for different forms and understandings of what is considered to be proper documentation. In addition, it shed light on a particular feature of memorisation: namely its dissemination, and the challenges that arise from this. In theory, the handing down of Sehgal's work to the museum is well thought-out. The specificities of the sale provide a protocol for the museum allowing the work to persist. This essay has, however, demonstrated that, in practice, the handing down of his artworks is less simple than most literature suggests.

While the research into several museum practices provided insight into different solutions, the question remains as to whether the prohibition of documentation leads to erosion, neglect, or even disappearance of the work, or actually encourages a more rigid transference than expected. In case of the latter, this would go against the still dominant understanding of documentation as a kind of objectified fixed knowledge, in opposition to oral history as both living memory and a more subjective and fluid mode of preservation. Do the anxiety to forget, and the wish to remember in this case, in fact lead to less leeway in re-iteration and more uniformity than transmission based on living memory and through oral communication would at first sight suggest? Perhaps it is too soon to answer these questions. In each effect, it would require a long-term comparative study of the practices of remembrance *and* the successive re-iterations of these works in different museum collections.

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DOCUMENTATION IN PROGRESS

THE CHALLENGES OF DOCUMENTING FRANCISCO TROPA'S OEUVRE

VARIABILITY AND INTER-ARTWORKS RELATIONSHIPS

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ABSTRACT

As part of the "Documentation of Contemporary Art" research project, several installations by Francisco Tropa (b. 1968, Lisbon) were studied. These installations were, at first, part of three different projects initiated by the artist, and later become autonomous and dispersed into several different collections. This paper addresses the documentation process of these installations, regarding both its challenges and the applied preservation methodologies.
Tropa's works are meant to change as part of a living process, creating different trajectories. According to the artist, artworks from the same project establish tangible and intangible relationships among them. The documentation process of such a variable and interconnected *œuvre* presented unpredictable challenges, which ultimately acted as a catalyst to analyze the documentation process itself.
As a result of this analysis, new theoretical frameworks are proposed and the role of the conservator is reflected upon regarding the ways it affects the preservation of variable and interconnected artworks.

KEYWORDS
FRANCISCO TROPA | DOCUMENTATION | PERFORMANCE-BASED ARTWORKS | PERFORMATIVITY

RESUMO

No âmbito do projeto de investigação "Documentação de Arte Contemporânea", foram estudadas diversas instalações do artista português Francisco Tropa (n. 1968, Lisboa). Estas obras fazem parte de três projetos artísticos do autor, que se tornaram autónomas, dispersando-se por várias coleções.
O presente artigo reflete sobre o processo de documentação destas instalações, tanto a nível dos desafios colocam como das metodologias aplicadas na sua preservação. Estas obras estão em permanente mudança, criando diferentes trajetórias. Segundo o artista, algumas peças do mesmo projeto estabelecem relações tangíveis e intangíveis entre si, razão pela qual o processo de documentação destas obras apresentou desafios imprevisíveis que serviram como catalisador para repensar o próprio processo.
Através desta análise, são propostas novas direções teóricas e o papel do conservador é debatido relativamente à forma como condiciona a preservação de obras variáveis e relacionadas.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE
FRANCISCO TROPA | DOCUMENTAÇÃO, | OBRAS DE ARTE BASEADAS EM PERFORMANCE | PERFORMATIVIDADE

Introduction

Since the dematerialization of the art object in the 1960s, conservation theory has been facing new challenges. The ephemeral nature of many contemporary artworks, together with the growing importance of preserving their intangible features, continuously calls for newer conservation methodologies.

As contemporary artworks became multiple, both physically and conceptually, by being composed by several elements and by converging different meanings in the same piece, connections among materials, techniques, and meaning have become more specific and complex.

This increasing complexity — owing to the use of non-traditional materials, the multiplicity of objects and meaning, and the absence of connection between media and representation — has led to new ways of communication and preservation that consider the documentation of the artist's intention, the meaning of materials and techniques, the creative process, and of other essential intangible features (Hummelen 1999). The artwork does not communicate with the audience (and therefore with the conservator) in a straight line, but via a conflicted path full of reinterpretations and even misinterpretations. Nowadays, interviews with artists, their assistants, and other collaborators are encouraged, and conservators consider the artist's discourse to be a window into the soul of the artwork, and into the artist's intentions (Beerkens *et al* 2012). Artists however, may change their discourse with time, and that may also change the way their intentions are perceived by conservators. More recently, Renée van de Vall et al proposed a biographical approach to the conservation of contemporary art: artworks do not exist in a single state but rather undertake a trajectory, which is, in itself, part of its existence (van de Vall et al 2011). From this perspective, the documentation of the artwork's trajectory is essential because it "may be considered part of conserving the work. Not only because examination of decisions taken in the past and the work's exhibition history underlies sound decisions in the present, but also because each new chapter added today makes decisions transparent for conservators in the future" (van de Vall et al 2011, 7). Conservators may influence an artwork's trajectory through their interpretation of previous paths and decisions. According to some authors, conservators might even be acknowledged not only as co-producers, or interpreters, but also as managers of change (van de Vall et al 2011; van Saaze 2009).

Within the scope of the research project "Documentation of Contemporary Art,"[1] several complex artworks have been documented. In the study of complex installations by the Portuguese artist Francisco Tropa, the documentation methodologies were scrutinized and the conservator's role was reviewed. This paper aims to reflect upon those issues, while probing for new theoretical frameworks for the preservation of these works. In this process, the challenges involved in the preservation of Tropa's works are detailed, and the documentation process is scrutinized.

Francisco Tropa and his oeuvre

Francisco Tropa, one of the most important Portuguese artists of his generation, works with diverse materials and techniques. His artworks are difficult to define, or even to describe. The materials he uses include sand, water,

[1] Project funded by Fundação para a Ciência e Tecnologia — PTDC/EAT-MUS/114438/2009.

sound, and wood, and his media vary from performance to installation, sculpture, engraving, film, and slide projection, among others. Although different in conception, shapes, materials and techniques, his artworks are meant to be instruments, mechanisms or devices. These devices are designed to somehow play with the audience, to make spectators think. This happens, for example, when Tropa constructs measurement instruments intended to measure our ideas about art and the world, instead of measuring physical quantities (Menegoi 2012). According to Alexandre Melo (2007), by presenting these enigmas to the audience, Francisco Tropa seeks to question the role of the artist and the nature of the creative process. Moreover, Tropa usually creates big projects, composed by several installations/events, which also comprise other small and autonomous works.

As part of the research project "Documentation of Contemporary Art," twelve different installations by Tropa were studied and documented. These installations were produced as part of three different projects (*Casalinho*, *L'Orage*, and *The Assembly of Euclid*), which then became autonomous and dispersed into three collections (Serralves Museum, Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation — CAM — Centro de Arte Moderna, and Caixa Geral de Depósitos; vide Fig. 1).

Installations have no fixed form or materiality, changing with time and space, and are highly dependent upon spectators' perceptions. Although these issues were

FIG. 1 Francisco Tropa's studied works. The columns on top represent the works present in each collection: Serralves Museum, Caixa Geral de Depósitos, and Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation — CAM. In this scheme, each work has a colour that associates it with its main project: Casalinho (Blue), The Assembly of Euclid (Orange), and L'Orage (Green).

expected in the documentation process of these twelve installations, other unforeseen challenges emerged. First, Francisco Tropa's works are indeed changing in time and space, not only due to their nature as installations, but also due to the artist's intentions for them. The artist actively demands change for his works. Second, while initially it was possible to understand that some of these twelve works could be interconnected, it was only during the interviews with the artist that the extent of those connections became clear: not only are those connections at the core of the artist's creative process, but also they are intrinsically related with the way each work changes. These two characteristics of Tropa's oeuvre, **intended variability** and **inter-artwork relationships**, were present in all stages of the documentation process, and several questions surfaced: how to document interconnected works and their intended change? To which degree are these works connected, and how do those connections affect each artwork's biography? How can these works be documented and preserved, while they are at the same time intentionally changing each other's trajectories? To what extent is the conservator allowed to change a work? And ultimately, where is the borderline between the conservators' creative actions and the artist's intentions?

Variability and preservation

The artist Francisco Tropa realizes and expects that his artworks will change in every exhibition. As stated by him, no installation "will ever be assembled twice in the same way."[2] His artworks are meant to be infinite in possibilities and interpretations, and are intentionally designed to change. For him, "a good artwork should be in permanent motion, and thus in permanent change."[3]

The preservation of Tropa's artworks demands the preservation of change as a living persistent process. His artworks morph every time they are reinstalled. They are as diverse as the minds that read them. They do not follow a path towards ephemerality but rather to multiplicity, and yet, by continuously changing, they are still as ephemeral as time. The artwork's biography paradigm emerges. In fact, according to the definition of "artwork's trajectory" (van de Vall *et al* 2011), it is possible to argue that only a proper documentation can define the limits of acceptability of future change. This documentation needs to regard the artist's intention and the exhibition history of the works, which should not only comprise a textual compilation of past exhibitions, but also images, videos and oral testimonies. By presenting documents in different media, a complete view of the changes artworks undertake is provided, allowing for more informed decision-making regarding future changes. Although this multimedia approach integrates the conservator's personal view of the work, it is only through this process that conservators can ensure the proper preservation of the intended change.

Regarding Francisco Tropa's works, it is interesting to note the remarkable changes they went through over the years. The work *Une table qui aiguisera votre appétit — le poids poli* (2003) is an example of how these changes are transversal: not only do they occur from exhibition to exhibition, but they also exist during the exhibition itself.

This piece comprises a table covered by a tablecloth, with several elements on top, including a green bottle and

[2] Francisco Tropa, personal communication with Andreia Nogueira, Hélia Marçal, and Rita Macedo, June 8, 2012, at the artist's atelier.

[3] Ibid.

FIG. 2 "Une table qui aiguisera votre appétit - le poids poli" in the exhibition «L›Orage», CAM (2003). (© DMF).

FIG. 3 "Une table qui aiguisera votre appétit — le poids poli" at different exhibitions: 2009 — "Colecção #2 (Francisco Tropa)", Culturgest (Lisbon); 2011 — "Zona Letal, Espaço Vital. Obras da Colecção da Caixa Geral de Depósitos", Museu de Arte Contemporânea de Elvas; and 2012 — "Zona Letal, Espaço Vital...", m|i|mo (Leiria). *(© Culturgest and Susana Pomba)*

FIG. 4 Detail from "Une table qui aiguisera votre appétit — le poids poli" in the exhibition "Colecção #2 (Francisco Tropa)", Culturgest (2009), on two different occasions. *(© Culturgest and Susana Pomba)*

a glass of wine, plates, a bowl, a knife, cheese, several garlic heads, bay leaves, a napkin, apples, grapes and pepper corns. Connected to the table is a suspended stool, on which a set of weights is displayed (see Figures 2-4). In several exhibitions of *Une table qui aiguisera votre appétit — le poids poli* (see Figures 2-4), some of these elements changed. In this case, freedom is clearly given by the artist to the conservator/curator to choose the number of apples, cheese pieces, and garlic heads or, even, to withdraw the napkin. And although those modifications change the materiality of the work, they do not have a significant impact upon the artist's intention of representing everyday life, or the dichotomy between balance and unbalance. During the exhibition itself, on the other hand, organic materials are replaced when they start to show signs of deterioration. This is visible by comparing the images related to the exhibition *Colecção #2 (Francisco Tropa)* held at Culturgest (Lisbon), in 2009 (see Figure 4).

There are other works from Tropa where this intentional variability is clearly visible. This is the case with *Grotto* (2006 — see Figures 5 and 6). This work comprises a glass ampoule, a light projector and several slides. When light is projected through the slides, a grotto is simulated. The projections differ according to the context of the exhibition and the person responsible for assembling it. In this case, the conservator/curator chooses the slide to project and defines the distance between the wall and the glass. The glass ampoule is suspended from the ceiling, and is positioned in front of the light projector. The final projection includes the grotto (produced by the slides), and the ampoule's shadow (Figures 5 and 6). The artist states:

> **[The glass ampoule] has to be more or less fifteen centimeters from the wall. Between eleven to fifteen centimeters… The outline of the grotto can be a little bigger or smaller (…). I have several slides that can be placed [in the projector]. Some are smaller and others are larger… When using a zooming projector, the length of the light projection is easy to control. You just have to look to some pictures and do more or less the same.**[4]

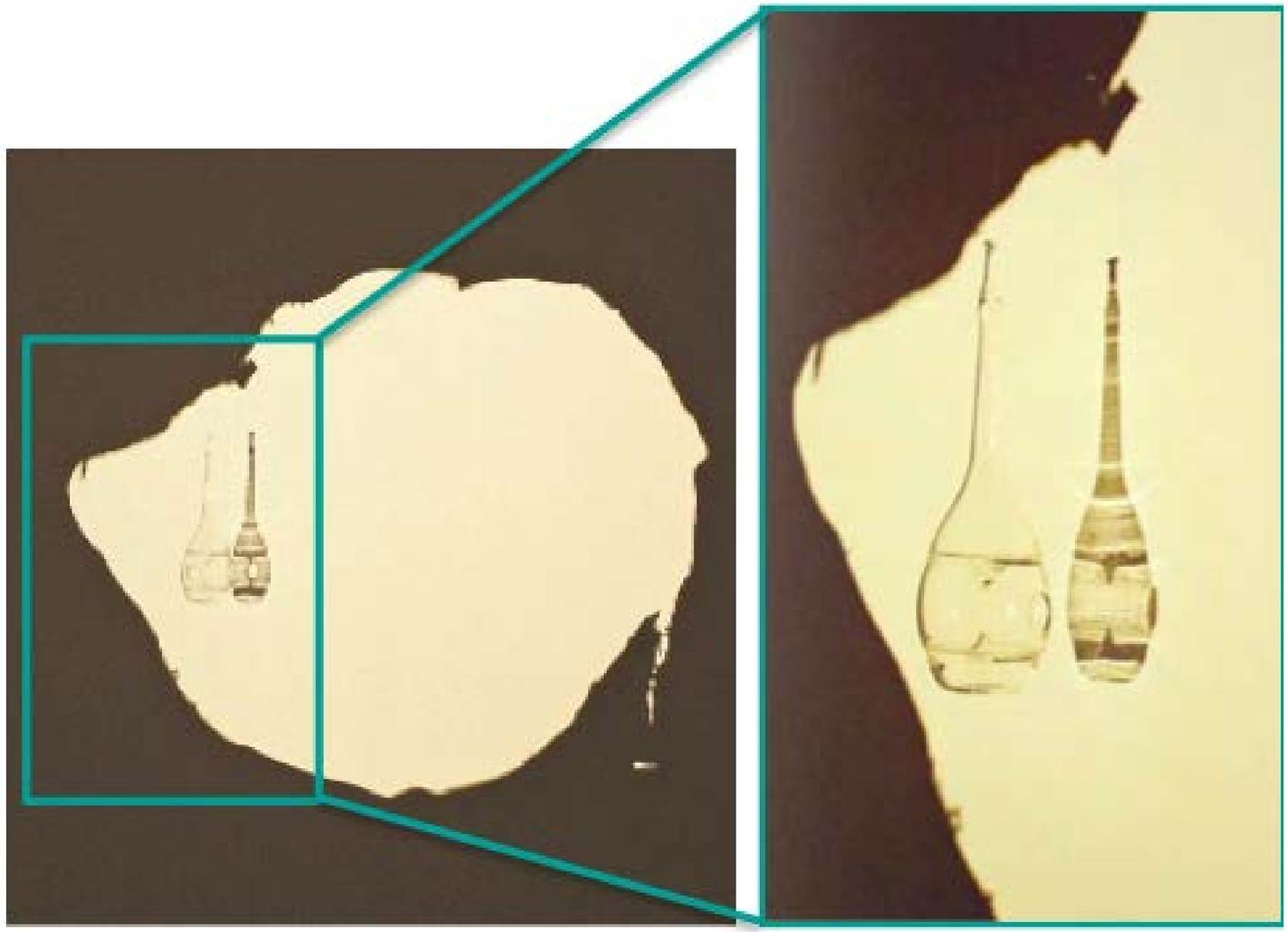
[4] Ibid.

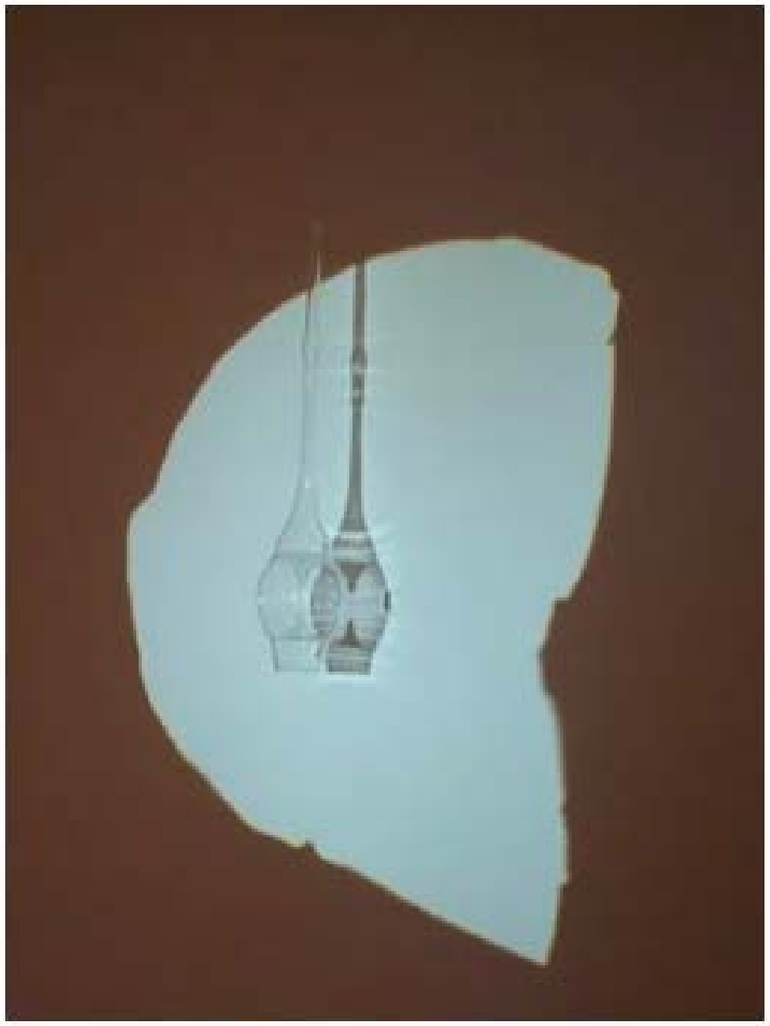
By documenting and reinstalling these works, the conservator is contributing to the artwork's biography not only by documenting the history of the work, including the exhibition history, but also by performing the artist's instructions, actively changing the work's trajectory. From this perspective, it is possible to consider that every conservation action has a degree of authorship.

In the case of Francisco Tropa's works, however, this approach has to be further developed, as his works establish tangible and intangible connections between them. Indeed, those relations, besides being essential for the artworks' meaning, also affect their trajectories.

The preservation of the inter-artworks relationships

There are multiple connections among Francisco Tropa's works. While some can be clearly expressed, others are harder to disclose. At first glance it is possible to understand some of these inter-artwork relationships. For example, as detailed in Figure 1, both *Une table qui aiguisera votre appétit — le poids poli* (see Figures 2-4), and *Models for L'Orage* (2002 — see Figure 7) were produced within the same project, *L'Orage*, and hence are related to each





other: while the latter is composed of four mockups, representing four different spaces, *Une table qui aiguisera votre appétit — le poids poli* is represented in one of those mockups (see Fig. 7). This connection could be quite simple to recognize; however, after the *L'Orage* exhibition, these two artworks became part of two different collections (i.e. Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation — CAM, and Caixa Geral de Depósitos), and have never been exhibited together ever since.

With these relationships and the enigmatic nature of his artworks, the artist is giving audiences, and thus conservators and curators, the opportunity to solve riddles. As explained in the interview, "things are installed like this so you can make an effort to discover the reason why."[5] The artist considers his artworks as "indecipherable enigmas" (Faria 2006), and are meant to be "empty containers" designed to be filled by the spectators' own experiences. Interpreting Tropa's works through their interrelationships is, however, not only demanding for audiences, but also for conservators. When considering their physical nature, conservators may pay attention to a particular material, color, shape, or technique. Considering intangible relationships, on the other hand, means that conservators have to preserve, for example, the spatial arrangement of the

FIG. 5 "Grotto" at the exhibition "The Cyclist's Trance", held at Galeria Quadrado Azul (Porto) in 2006 *(© Pedro Tropa).*

FIG. 6 "Grotto" at the exhibition "Serralves 2009. A Colecção", held at Serralves Museum (Porto) in 2009. *(© Rita Maltez)*

[5] Francisco Tropa, personal communication with Andreia Nogueira, Hélia Marçal and Rita Macedo, March 3, 2012, at the artist's atelier.

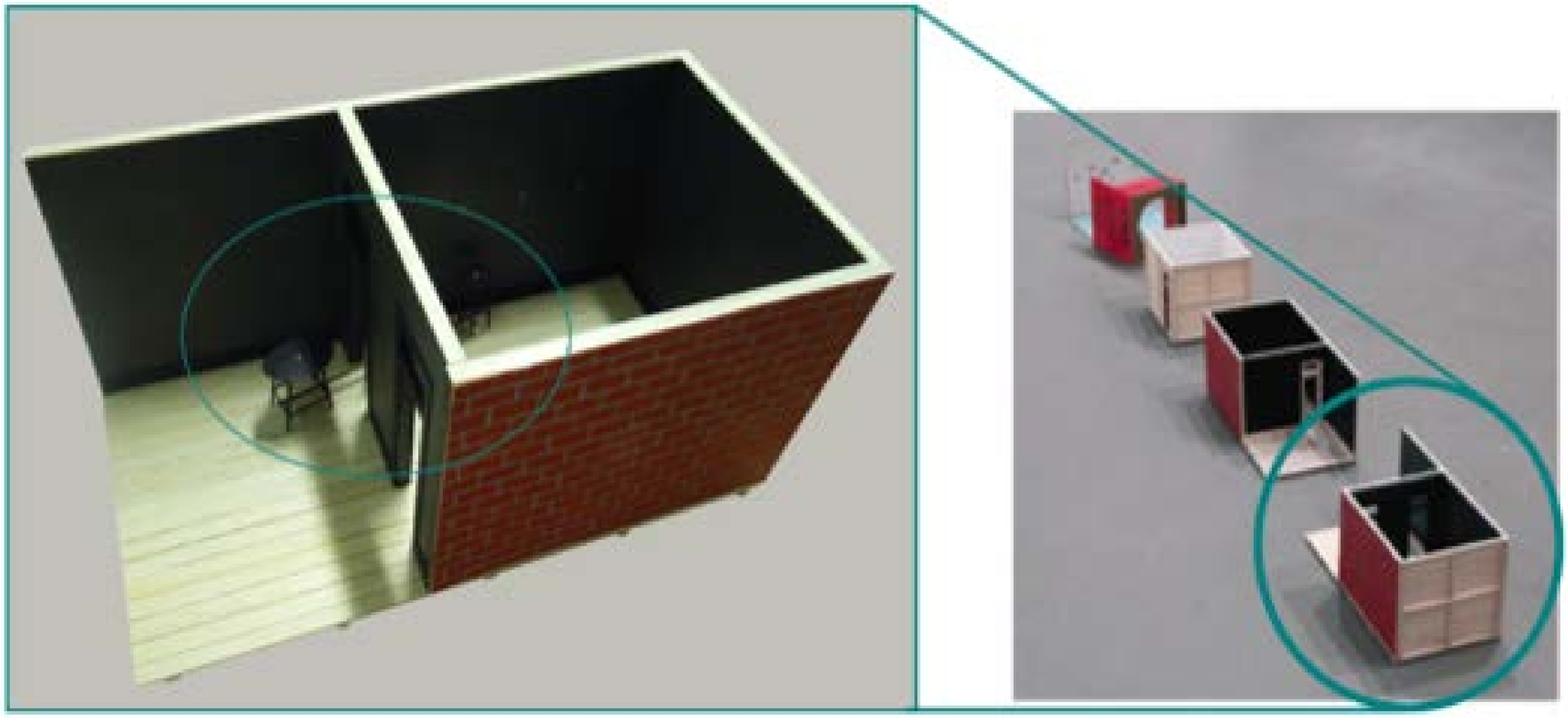


FIG. 7 "Models for L'Orage" *(© Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian - CAM)*

artworks. Moreover, it is very difficult to present, preserve, and document the dual nature of any of these works, which are simultaneously part of a project (and thus part of the project's trajectory), and individual artworks (with their own biography).

According to Tropa, the works that became autonomous from the project *The Assembly of Euclid* (see Figure 1) should be interpreted via their interrelationships because their conceptual frameworks are connected. These works are, however, dispersed into two different collections (Serralves Museum and Caixa Geral de Depósitos) and have never been exhibited together. While *Body* and *Head* were first presented in 2005, at *The Assembly of Euclid* installation,[6] *Grotto*, *Policemen*, *Sentry,* and *Temple of Allegories*, were exhibited in 2006, at *The Cyclist's Trance*[7] installation. The films *Snail* and *Giant* were first showed in 2006, at *The Mark of the Breast* installation.[8] Although these three installations are the core of the project *The Assembly of Euclid*, they were presented in three different occasions and locations.

In addition to the conceptual connections these works establish, they also exhibit tangible relations: *Sentry*, for example, is connected to the work *Body*, and to the film *Snail* (see Figure 8).

The work *Sentry* includes a white sentinel, which is produced by painting white clay on glass. Additionally, the work *Body* shares the material features with the work *Sentry*, by representing a skeleton painted with white clay. These two artworks also share the indexicality of the color white with the film *Snail*, where a white hand also appears. According to the artist:

> **The sentry is painted with clay… why is the skeleton [of the Body] painted with clay…? You will have to figure out what was painted with clay, what has that particular kind**

[6] This exhibition was held at Cordoaria Nacional, in Lisbon

[7] This exhibition was held at Galeria Quadrado Azul, in Oporto

[8] This exhibition was held at Culturgest, in Oporto

FIG. 8 "Sentry" (2006), "Body" (2004), and "Snail" (2006). *(© Pedro Tropa and André Maranha)*

of white… The relations exist where things bind…. That is also related to the hands appearing in the film [Snail]… The project [The Assembly of Euclid] is just one thing, made in several steps… This is why it is so complex, because it is a machine of relations.[9]

Indeed, the white clay from *Sentry* and *Body*, and the white hand from *Snail* are related to the very concept of *The Assembly of Euclid* project: the dichotomy between life and death. If the white clay is replaced by white or even yellow acrylic paint, the relationship between the works disappears. In this case, conservation is not just a matter of preserving a specific artwork, but also relies on the preservation of the inter-artwork relationships, by maintaining that particular material and color, and documenting that specific conceptual framework. This task, however, is particularly challenging, since these works do not belong to the same collection.

Both *Body* and *Snail* are currently part of the Caixa Geral de Depósitos collection, and *Sentry* belongs to the Serralves Museum collection. Therefore all museums involved need to work together sharing information in order to preserve Francisco Tropa's intention to provide interconnected puzzles to audiences.

Considering this connectivity and the intended variability, which are both characteristic of Tropa's oeuvre, it is important to understand that this network of trajectories affects each work's variability and vice-versa. And although Francisco Tropa's artworks are meant to change as living processes, these changes need to be informed by scrupulous and flexible documentation. This characteristic ultimately acted as a catalyst to rethink documentation methods and strategies, and helped to propose a theoretical framework that can be applied to cases similar to Tropa's challenging artworks (Marçal et al 2013).

[9] Francisco Tropa, personal communication with Andreia Nogueira, Hélia Marçal, and Rita Macedo, June 8, 2012, at the artist's atelier.

Documentation framework

Documenting contemporary works is an essential step for their preservation. When producing this documentation, conservators usually try to provide an as far as possible objective view of the work by carefully detailing its physical characteristics and by analyzing the meanings. In complex installations, such as the ones by F. Tropa, documenting their intended variability and inter-artwork relationships becomes more important than any details about their materiality. Moreover, considering any decision as context-dependent, the documentation step should justify past decisions, based on past contexts, and serve as a foundation for new decisions. For that reason, a detailed justification for any reinterpretation strategy should be registered as part of the work's biography.

Methodologically, the proposed documentation framework consists of three phases: data gathering, data production, and data evaluation, and is part of a decision-making model explained elsewhere (Marçal et al 2013).

In the first step of documentation, conservators gather relevant published and unpublished information regarding the artist and the work under discussion. If information is non-existent in the traditional channels (e.g. catalogs, archives, etc.), other channels (e.g. social networks, blogs, etc.) could be consulted. In the case of Francisco Tropa's *Une table qui aiguisera votre appétit — le poids poli*, for example, information found online, namely in personal blogs, proved to be highly important for the artworks' history. Indeed, although it was known that the organic materials on the table should be replaced during the exhibition, there was no documentation to sustain whether that happened in other exhibitions until the image by Susana Pomba (Figs. 3 and 4) was gathered in her blog "Dove's taste of the day" (http://www.missdove.org/). With Tropa's *Grotto*, this source of evidence became even more important. The artist explained in the interview that the grotto's projection should change in every exhibition: there are several different slides, with different shapes, that can alter the projection, and it is up to the conservator or curator to decide which slide to use. However, in every published document, from catalogs to flyers of different exhibitions, the image is always the same (Fig. 5). By persistently publishing the same representation of Francisco Tropa's *Grotto*, only one variation of this artwork is recorded, and thus, preserved for the future.

In this case, the most relevant step in data production is the artist interview. The interview provides the conservator a window into the soul of the artwork, into his intentions, and could be tempted to restrict documentation's reach to the limits of the work's physical parts (van Saaze 2009). In the study of the twelve installations by Francisco Tropa, this tool was crucial. The scarce documentation available before the interview included some photos, catalogues, art criticism texts, and basic inventory sheets. With this information it was possible to understand that Tropa's works were distributed by the three artistic projects — *Casalinho* Project, *L'Orage* Project, and *The Assembly of Euclid* Project. As it was impossible to separate the works from the projects, the artist's interviews were based on theme semi-structured interviews[10] (Beerkens et al 2012). It was only after the artist's interviews that the extent of the inter-artworks relationships was disclosed. The theme interview, by studying several works at once, instead of an artwork as an independent

[10] According to Beerkens *et al* (ed, 2012), a theme interview is a type of interview that focuses on a specific group of artworks from the same artist. The main "advantage of this approach is the exchange of knowledge and data about several comparable artworks" (Beerkens *et al* 2012, 21).

entity, allowed for deeper insight into the artworks' interrelationships. All documentation produced about these works not only considered the identification of the artworks, incorporation and legal rights, location, general description, creative process, techniques, materials and their meaning, material description, technical description, exhibition conditions, storage, transportation, and condition (Laurenson 2006), but also reflected upon their exhibition history, interconnected works, and each artwork's biography.

The final step of this documentation framework is data evaluation. This step is of utmost importance, considering that the documentation gathered and produced will be the basis for a conservation decision. After all, as the psychologist S. Plous stated, "good information does not guarantee good decisions, but bad information pretty much guarantees bad decisions" (Plous 1993: 54). It becomes clear that before making any decision, conservators need to ensure that the available information is reliable enough to support the decision. For that reason, after the interview it is important to critically analyze the artist's discourse. Considering the importance of the artist interview to the decision-making process, a reference framework for interview data analysis in conservation is proposed (Marçal et al 2013). This framework, based on content analysis, can be of value in the decision-making process, mainly due to its promises of data structuring. With this tool the artist's discourse can be labeled through the definition of selected categories (e.g. Future reinstallations, Past exhibitions, etc.), and this labeling, when applied to conservation, helps to organize interviews, which are usually shared as raw data, and therefore difficult to consult. Furthermore, data evaluation must go beyond the artist's interview, including also the analysis of past treatments/re-installations, and the assessment and prioritization of the values that are involved in the final decision. From this perspective, we suggest that the final documentation should be submitted to a peer review process, where two different conservators make the final decision regarding data evaluation and further conservation options.

Final Remarks

The process of documenting Francisco Tropa's artworks was undoubtedly complicated by their intended variability and their inter-artwork relationships. His artworks are a "machine of relations,"[11] and one of the biggest challenges regarding their preservation is therefore to establish and preserve the connections among them. It was possible to understand that Tropa's works, like other installations, range in degrees of variability. The conservator's role cannot be detached from those degrees of variability. Conservators inevitably act as managers of change every time they act upon the artwork. Every act of documenting and every decision made are acts of change, managed by the conservator. In some works, such as Francisco Tropa's *Grotto*, however, the conservator acts not only as a manager of change, but also as a co-producer, by directly and intentionally influencing the work's characteristics. For example, it is the conservator or curator who choses the grotto's projection, and that inevitably, and creatively, changes the work. While the definition of degrees of variability could imply a quantitative approach to this issue, any attempt to quantify the conservator's limits within a specific context would certainly fail. The documentation

[11] Francisco Tropa, personal communication with Andreia Nogueira, Hélia Marçal, and Rita Macedo, June 8, 2012, at the artist's atelier.

and preservation of any complex and variable installation cannot be devoid of subjectivity, and as such, cannot be measured or represented in quantitative units. On the other hand, those acts of co-creation have repercussions in the projects' trajectories, as well as the trajectories of every single work. The different representations of *Grotto*, past and future, will influence *The Assembly of Euclid* project in unpredictable ways. Each trajectory, from every autonomous work, is dependent of other trajectories. Similarly, changes in the path of a single work may cause alterations to other paths, as in the case of *Sentry*, *Body*, and *Snail*. Instead of discussing the trajectory of each project, it is probably best to consider them as "networks of trajectories", where each work's biography is intertwined with the paths of other artworks belonging to the same project. Under this theoretical framework, as a final phase for their documentation, artworks under the same project should be re-installed (or reinterpreted) in the same context. That would provide invaluable data regarding the artworks' inter-relationships, and the way they are perceived by audiences. Moreover, an online platform for Tropa's *oeuvre,* where institutions and individuals could share data regarding the different exhibitions and variations of his works, could help define their networks of trajectories. Through this process it would be possible to interrelate different data, from different sources, and ultimately to optimize the decision-making process regarding the preservation of Tropa's works.

Examples similar to Tropa's artworks blossom throughout the art world today. Performance artworks, which go beyond the variability exhibited by Tropa's works, and sometimes explore indexical relationships with other artworks, are an example of this growing reality.

Acknowledgments

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INSTANCES OF DOUBLE-SIDEDNESS ON DOCUMENTING *DOUBLE-SIDED* BY ÂNGELA FERREIRA

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ABSTRACT

In 1996, Ângela Ferreira (b. 1958, Mozambique) initiated a double site installation project consisting of two site-specific installations: *Double-Sided Part I*, 1996, Marfa, Texas; and *Double-Sided Part II,* 1997, Nieu-Bethesda, South Africa.[1] It confronts Donald Judd's and Helen Martins' homes, work places, natural environments, and artistic practices by displacing some features of one's space to the other and vice versa.

A second moment of this project began when Ferreira decided to show side by side in one single work the two earlier installations of which the only remnants are their photographic documentation. This evolving process includes, since 1997, ten different versions of *Double-Sided*, each being an attempt by the artist to find the best format to present the concept that originated the work. Each time a new version is produced it takes a new configuration, revealing the project's openness and nomadic-nature.

This paper follows the process of documenting *Double-Sided*, enhancing its complexity, pointing out difficulties in the musealization process and demonstrating the relevance of the documentation of process-based artworks in order to contextualize and support decisions in future re-installations.

KEYWORDS
DOCUMENTATION | PROCESS-BASED ARTWORKS | RE-INSTALLATION | ÂNGELA FERREIRA | DOUBLE-SIDED

RESUMO

Em 1996, Ângela Ferreira (1958, Moçambique) deu início a um projeto entre dois lugares distantes, composto por duas instalações *site-specific* relacionadas uma com a outra: *Double-Sided Part I*, 1996, em Marfa, Texas e *Double-Sided Part II*, 1997, em Nieu-Bethesda, África do Sul.* O projeto coloca em confronto as habitações, os espaços de trabalho, os contextos naturais e as práticas artísticas de Donald Judd e de Helen Martins através do deslocamento de algumas características do espaço de um para o de outro e vice-versa. Um segundo momento do projeto teve início quando Ferreira decidiu mostrar, lado a lado num só trabalho, as duas instalações iniciais, das quais os únicos vestígios são as fotografias que as documentaram. Este processo em evolução inclui, desde 1997, dez versões diferentes de *Double-Sided* sendo cada uma delas uma procura da artista em encontrar o melhor formato para expor o conceito que deu origem à obra. De cada vez que uma nova versão é produzida adquire uma configuração distinta das anteriores, revelando assim a abertura do projeto bem como o seu carácter nómada.

Este artigo apresenta o processo de documentação de *Double-Sided*, evidenciando a sua complexidade, apontando algumas dificuldades no seu processo de musealização e demonstrando a importância da documentação de obras de arte *em processo*, de modo a contextualizar e suportar quaisquer decisões em futuras reinstalações.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE
DOCUMENTAÇÃO | ARTE PROCESSUAL | REINSTALAÇÃO | ÂNGELA FERREIRA | *DOUBLE SIDED*

Introduction: the artist and the project

This paper is based on the documentation process, developed during the research project "Documentation of Contemporary Art"[2] for the works by Ângela Ferreira in the collection of Museo Extremeño e Iberoamericano de Arte Contemporàneo, Badajoz (MEIAC) and of Centro de Arte Moderna, Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation, Lisbon (CAM-FCG). The goal was to provide each of those museums with information relevant to decision making when re-installing the works in the absence of the artist. Interestingly, this research had an impact on the way that the artist herself now thinks about her own practice and exhibition options.

Despite the apparent simplicity of some of Ângela Ferreira's objects and installations, her work relies upon a complex, profound, and often long investigation that leads to the final piece and is also extremely relevant for its comprehension and fruition. The task was to document all the processes behind the creation of the above-mentioned works, while placing them in the still open process of producing *Double-Sided*.

Ângela Ferreira was born in 1958 in Maputo,[3] Mozambique, where she spent her childhood. In 1973 Ferreira moved to Lisbon, Portugal, for two years, witnessing the revolution of 25th April 1974, which ended a long authoritarian and colonial regime. In 1975 she moved to Cape Town, South Africa, where she studied sculpture at Michaelis School of Fine Arts, concluding her BA in 1981 and obtaining her MFA in 1983.

Ângela Ferreira exhibited her work for the first time in Portugal in 1990 at CAM, Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation, after which she permanently moved to Lisbon and began teaching at the School of Fine Arts of Lisbon University. However, she has always maintained strong links with South Africa (she has dual citizenship, South African and Portuguese) and lived in Cape Town again between 2000 and 2003. Ângela Ferreira currently lives in Lisbon, where she teaches and develops her artistic projects.

The artist's personal history is relevant to her work, which has been accurately described as follows:

> **Ferreira's artwork has been indelibly marked by her personal history of multiple geographical and cultural displacements. Throughout a career of almost three decades, she has focussed on issues of colonialism, post- and neo-colonialism, and how the art historical canon of Western modernism, with an emphasis on modernist architecture, has been connected to the colonial enterprise. This artistic approach has been undertaken through multimedia installations encompassing predominantly sculpture, photography, drawing and text, but also architectural installations, video and performance. Moreover, Ferreira's methods have often involved long periods of research, documentation and collaboration, as well as a reworking of previous projects according to new geographical and cultural contexts of exhibition. As a whole, the result is a complex body of work which, although manifesting a sculptural elegance indebted to both constructivism and minimalism, is also driven by postmodernist strategies of juxtaposition, fragmentation, historical and art-historical reinterpretation and political critique. (Oliveira 2012, 36-37)**

* Como veremos, existem diversas obras relacionadas com este projeto, todas com o mesmo título. Para facilitar a compreensão, sempre que neste artigo menciono *Double-Sided* sem datas, refiro-me à globalidade do projeto, que inclui todas as obras com o mesmo título.

[1] As we will see, there are many and different artworks related to this project, with the same title. For the purpose of this paper, whenever I mention *Double-Sided* without any dates, I'm referring to the whole project, which includes all works with the same title.

[2] "Documentation of Contemporary Art" was a research project developed by researchers of Instituto de História da Arte (IHA) and funded by Portuguese Fundação para a Ciência e Tecnologia (FCT). I worked on the project as a research fellow, documenting works by the artists Ângela Ferreira and Luisa Cunha.

[3] Lourenço Marques at the time.

Double-Sided runs through the complex and diversified production of Ângela Ferreira since 1996. The project originally comprised two complementary site-specific installations produced in two different continents and several months apart: *Double-Sided Part I*, in April 1996 in Marfa, Texas, USA, and *Double-Sided Part II*, in January 1997 in Nieu-Bethesda, South Africa. When visiting the Chinati Foundation (Donald Judd's studio compound in Texas), Ferreira was invited for an artistic residence. She was not enthusiastic about this opportunity, as she was turned off by what struck her as a display of wealth and power. Afterwards, Ferreira went on holiday to Nieu-Bethesda where she visited Helen Martins's Owl House. She was mesmerized by the resemblances between the two distant places' landscapes, but also by the contrast between both artist's work and way of life, and decided to do the residency at Marfa after all, where she took an old building and turned it into Helen Martins's Owl House, recreating its interior. "[Martin's] natural, opulent aesthetic was quite a contrast with Judd's modern, clean look," explains the artist (Bosland and Perryer 2012, 53). A few months later, Ângela Ferreira went to Nieu-Bethesda and recreated Donald Judd's studio there. As the artist recalls, this "was a very important project in my life. It took over a year to make and nobody ever saw it in its entirety, except for me." (Bosland and Perryer 2012, 53)

Ângela Ferreira's intention was admittedly to underline the abyssal differences between the two artists' life, work conditions, and artistic productions,[4] and to highlight the contrasts between a high-powered American male artist and a barely known South African female artist:

[...] my intention was to imply a "sharing" of their [Helen Martins and Donald Judd] spaces by taking a bit of the one to the other and vice versa. It is intended as a generous act of bringing connections into action across oceans and continents, but it is simultaneously intended as aggressive and political to highlight the incredible imbalances which exist between these two continents.[5]

Ferreira's strategy of displacement was not meant to be a comparative study; instead her goal was to "establish a much more ambiguous and personal relationship,"[6] situating the meaning of *Double-Sided* in an "abstract space in-between the two installations."[7] When *Double-Sided Part II* was presented, Ângela Ferreira, realizing that she had been the only person to have ever seen both parts, decided to transform them into one single work in which the two *scenarios* could be shown side by side, underlining even further the political, social and artistic contrasts. About this idea Ferreira stated, "The third and final part of this project is planned to take place in Lisbon, and will simply consist of the showing of all the documentation and the launching of a publication which will bring it all together."[8]

However, bringing "it all together" proved to be a difficult and complex task. The artist still searches for the best format to present *Double-Sided* as one single work, having produced, from 1997 to 2012, ten different versions.

Documenting *Double-Sided I/II*, MEIAC, 1996-1997 and *Double-Sided*, CAM-FCG, 1996-2009

When investigating the two works — *Double-Sided I/II*, MEIAC, 1996-1997, and *Double-Sided*, CAM-FCG,

[4] ÂngelaFerreira talking about *Double-Sided*, 1996-2009, Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation, CAM, June 2013. Available in http://vimeo.com/70394162

[5] Ângela Ferreira, 10 January 1997, Nieu-Bethesda. Excerpt from the original statement accompanying the installation *Double-Sided Part II*.

[6] Ângela Ferreira, 10 January 1997, Nieu-Bethesda. Excerpt from the original statement accompanying the installation *Double-Sided Part II*.

[7] Ângela Ferreira, 10 January 1997, Nieu-Bethesda. Excerpt from the original statement accompanying the installation *Double-Sided Part II*.

[8] Ângela Ferreira, 10 January 1997, Nieu-Bethesda. Excerpt from the original statement accompanying the installation *Double-Sided Part II*.

1996-2009 — the main goal was to produce documentation to support museum professionals regarding decisions to be made in future re-installations. Because the apparent simplicity of both works conceals a very personal and complex concept that should always be kept in mind when installing them, the main methodological decision was to document *Double-Sided* as an ongoing project, detailing every version created so far, as opposed to documenting each of the works — MEIAC's and CAM's — as an isolated entity.

A complete awareness of all the aspects related to the work (Leeuw 2005, 214) and, in the specific case of *Double-Sided*, all its versions, can help to create the necessary tools for a correct understanding of the artist's intentions, and allow for future reinstallations that respect them (Urlus 2005, 347).

The first step in the documentation process of *Double-Sided* was the elaboration of a complete timeline of all of the exhibitions in which a new version of the work was shown. This allowed the whole project to be characterized through its multifold existence and multiple materializations over time. It also revealed the interrelated and interwoven character of the individual works generated on the occasion of every subsequent exhibition venue, as well as the difficulty of finding a suitable title for each of those individual works.

Instances of *Double-Sided*

The identification of all the versions of *Double-Sided* produced so far is arguably one of the most important contributions of this documentation process. It was the first time all of this information was gathered from dispersed sources. The artist herself didn't have an exact idea of how many versions she had produced so far. Also, because most of the versions were temporary ones, this was a way to perform an exercise of remembrance, of utmost importance in process-type artworks (Leeuw 2005, 216-217). And finally, it constitutes the core of the documentation of *Double-Sided*, as "besides material analysis, art historical and theoretical research is above all required to establish a criteria for the conservation" of modern and contemporary art (Sillé 2005, 18).

For the purpose of this paper, I use the terms "temporary" and "fixed" to distinguish the status of each version. Because each piece is an installation artwork and thus "only comes into being as [a] work of art through the process of being installed" (Scholte 2011, 11), we could assume that all versions are temporary. However, when a version of *Double-Sided* is acquired as part of a museum collection, it becomes a "fixed" version and should always be presented with the same formal configuration. By contrast, each time the artist creates a new version of *Double-Sided* that is not then acquired, it assumes a "temporary" status, disappearing when dismantled.

Ângela Ferreira had the first opportunity to materialize the idea of bringing together *Double-Sided Part I* and *Double-Sided Part II*, in a group exhibition in 1997,[9] and this was the beginning of *Double-Sided*'s many instances:

- *Double-Sided I/II*, MEIAC, 1996-1997[10] (Fig. 1). The first version, and since 1998 an artwork fixed in its configuration as part of the MEIAC's collection. It consists of 35 photographs and two texts about the project,

[9] "União Latina Visual Arts Awards 1996", Centro de Arte Moderna, Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation, Lisbon, 18 February to 16 March 1997.

[10] Technical data: 35 photographs, ilfochrome, 30 x 40 cm (each); 2 texts, vinyl, 195 x 120 cm and 205 x 120 cm.

FIG. 1 *Double-Sided I/II*, MEIAC, 1996-1997. View from the installation at "Prémios de Artes Plásticas União Latina 1996", FCG, Lisbon, 1997. Photo: Ângela Ferreira. Courtesy of MEIAC

which should all be installed on the wall according to the available space (Fig. 2). In order to perform a correct installation each time the work is shown, the museum has diagrams by Ângela Ferreira for two different exhibition options according to the space available.

- *Double-Sided*, Johannesburg Biennale, 1996-1997[11] (Fig. 3). Produced for the exhibition "Graft", in the 2nd Johannesburg Biennale, "Trade Routes: history and geography."[12] Temporary version, dismantled after the exhibition and currently non-existent.

- *Double-Sided*, Bonn, 1996-1999.[13] Produced for the exhibition "Tage der Dunkelheit und des Lichts. Zeitgenossische Kunst aus Portugal"[14] at the Kunstmuseum in Bonn. Temporary version, dismantled after the exhibition and currently non-existent.

- *Double-Sided*, BHP Billiton, 1996-2003.[15] Produced specifically to integrate the art collection of BHP Billiton.[16] Fixed version, installed at first in the company offices in Johannesburg, and currently in storage.

[11] Technical data: 19 photographs; recreated version of *Double-Sided Part II*.

[12] From 12 October to 12 December 1997. The group exhibition "Graft" was curated by Colin Richards at the South African National Gallery.

[13] Technical data: 2 color photographs, digital print, 100 x 120 (each); 2 texts, vinyl, variable dimensions; 1 table; 2 benches; 1 globe; 2 books (Emslie, Anne .1991. *The Owl House*. London: Penguin Books and Judd, Donald.1994. *Raume Spaces*. Ostfildern (Ruit): Hatje Cantz). The table, benches and globe belonged to the museum.

[14] "Days of Darkness and Light. Contemporary Art from Portugal",Kunstmuseum, Bonn, Germany, 1999

[15] Technical data: 2 color photographs, digital print, 100 x 120 cm (each); 2 texts, vinyl, variable dimensions; 1 shelf, wood, 100 x 25 x 15 cm; 2 books (Emslie, Anne.1991. *The Owl House*. London: Penguin Books and Judd, Donald.1994. *Raume Spaces*. Ostfildern (Ruit): Hatje Cantz)

[16] BHP Billiton is a mining and petroleum company created in 2001.According to its Art Collection curator, Natasha Fuller, who kindly answered to my questions, the company is interested in acquiring artworks form emerging artists from South Africa, with a special interest in artworks that engage with personal or public political issues, as well as with issues of identity. There are no photos of the work, nor records of it ever having been exhibited elsewhere.

FIG. 2 *Double-Sided I/II*, MEIAC, 1996-1997. View from the installation at ARCO'98, Madrid, 1998. Photo: Courtesy of MEIAC

FIG. 3 *Double-Sided*, Johannesburg Biennale, 1996-1997. View from the installation in the exhibition "Graft" at the South African National Gallery, Cape Town, 1997. Photo: Ângela Ferreira

- *Double-Sided*, Chiado Museum, 1996-2003[17] (Fig. 4). Produced for the retrospective exhibition of Ângela Ferreira's work, "Ângela Ferreira. Em sítio algum/ No place at all." in 2003 at Chiado Museum.[18] Temporary version created with elements from MEIAC's work combined with new ones in a new configuration; dismantled after the exhibition, each element returned to its owner, and currently non-existent.

- *Double-Sided (Parasol),* 1996-2008.[19] Produced for the exhibition "Front of House"[20] at the Parasol Unit Foundation for Contemporary Art in London, 2008. Temporary version created with elements of existing ones in a new configuration; dismantled after the exhibition, each element returned to its owner, and currently non-existent.

- *Double-Sided (and left to right like I. Burn)*, Art Gallery of New South Wales, 1996-2009[21] (Fig. 5). Produced for the exhibition "The Great Divide,"[22] in 2009. Originally a temporary version dismantled and kept in storage at the Art Gallery of New South Wales. Acquired by the Gallery in 2013, and since then fixed in its configuration.

- *Double-Sided,* CAM-FCG, 1996-2009 (Fig.6).[23] An artwork fixed in its configuration since 2009 as part of CAM-FCG's collection. It consists of two large color photographs, one red bookcase, and two books resting on its top shelf. In order to perform a correct installation each time the work is shown, the museum was given the installation guidelines that should be followed every time the work is installed.[24] According to the artist, the books are to be handled by visitors by way of informing them

[17] Technical data: 35 color photographs, ilfochrome, 30 x 40 (each); 2 texts, vinyl; 1 globe; 1 table; 2 benches and 2 books (Emslie, Anne.1991. *The Owl House.* London: Penguin Books and Noevel, Peter.ed.2003. *Donald Judd: Architecture*. Ostfildern (Ruit): Hatje Cantz). The table, benches and globe belonged to the museum, and the photographs and texts were part of the version belonging to MEIAC's Collection.

[18] From 23 October 2003 to 18 January 2004.

[19] Technical data: 2 color photographs, light jet prints mounted on aluminum, 120 x 150 cm (each); 2 books (Emslie, Anne.1991. *The Owl House.* London: Penguin Books and Noevel, Peter. ed. 2003. *Donald Judd: Architecture.* Ostfildern (Ruit): Hatje Cantz)

[20] "Front of House," Parasol Unit for Contemporary Art, London, 16 April to 29 May 2008.

[21] Technical data: 4 color photographs, 2 light jet matte prints and 2 light jet gloss prints mounted on aluminium, 120 x 150 cm (each); 1 bookcase, mdf wood structure, 100 x 100 x 31,5 cm.

[22] "The Great Divide," Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney, 19 February to 14 June 2009.

[23] Acquired in 2009 for the collection of CAM-FCG and shown there in the exhibition "Professores", 14 October 2010 to 2 January 2011, and more recently in "Sob o signo de Amadeo. Um século de arte", 26 July 2013 to 19 January 2014. Technical data: 2 color photographs, light jet prints mounted on aluminium, 120 x 150 cm (each); 1 bookcase, wood structure, 100 x 100,5 x 31,5 cm; 2 books (Emslie, Anne. 1991. *The Owl House*. London: Penguin Books and Noevel, Peter. ed.

FIG. 4 *Double-Sided*, Chiado Museum, 1996-2003. View from the installation in the exhibition "Ângela Ferreira. Em Sítio Algum / No Place at All," National Museum of Contemporary Art - Chiado Museum. Photo: Mário Valente. Courtesy of Direção-Geral do Património/Arquivo de Documentação Fotográfica (DGPC/ADF)

about the two artists to whom they refer — Helen Martins and Donald Judd. Unlike *Double-Sided I/II*, MEIAC, 1996-1997, this version doesn't have any explanatory texts as part of it — a characteristic of most of the recent versions of *Double-Sided* — so having the books and the potential to read them while looking at the photos on the wall is very important to help viewers understand and contextualize the work (Figs. 7 and 8). This version, together with MEIAC's, is one of the works documented for the project "Documentation of Contemporary Art," mentioned above.

- *Double-Sided*, Filomena Soares Gallery, 1996-2010.[25] Presented in the exhibition "Display: Objects, Buildings and Space," at Palácio Quintela, Lisbon[26] in 2010, and since then a fixed version, currently belonging to Filomena Soares Gallery, Lisbon.

- *Double-Sided*, Stevenson, 1996-2012[27] (Figs. 9 and 10). Produced for the exhibition "Trade Routes Over Time"[28] at Stevenson Gallery, Cape Town. Temporary version, dismantled after the exhibition and currently non-existent, but with some parts kept in storage at Stevenson.

2003. *Donald Judd: Architecture*. Ostfildern (Ruit): Hatje Cantz)

[24] When writing this paper, *Double-Sided*, CAM-FCG, 1996-2009 was presented at the exhibition "Sob o signo de Amadeo. Um século de arte", CAM, 26 July 2013 to 19 January 2014. This was a great opportunity for the validation by the artist of the work's correct installation.

[25] Technical data: 2 color photographs, light jet prints mounted on aluminum, 120 x 150 cm (each); 1 bookcase, wood structure, 132 x 130 x 34 cm; 1 table, wood and iron, 150 cm diameter; 2 books (Emslie, Anne.1991. *The Owl House*. London: Penguin Books and Noevel, Peter. ed. 2003 *Donald Judd: Architecture*. Ostfildern (Ruit): Hatje Cantz)

[26] From 17 December 2010 to 30 January 2011. An exhibition organized by ExperimentaDesign who was in charge of the space at the date. Six Lisbon art galleries were invited to propose works related to the exhibition theme. One of the works shown by Galeria Filomena Soares was a version of *Double-Sided*.

[27] Technical data: 1 bookcase, superwood; 2 color photographs, prints on wallpaper mounted on the bookcase, 100 x 127 cm (each); 2 books (Emslie, Anne.1997. *A Journey through the Owl House*. London: The Penguin Group S.A. (revised edition) and Raskin, David. 2010. *Donald Judd*. London: Yale University Press.); folded sheets of paper.

[28] "Trade Routes Over Time", Stevenson Gallery, Cape Town, South Africa, 4 April to 19 May 2012.

FIG. 5 *Double-Sided (and left to right like I. Burn)*, Art Gallery of New South Wales, 1996-2009. View from the installation in the exhibition "The Great Divide," 2009. Photo: Ângela Ferreira

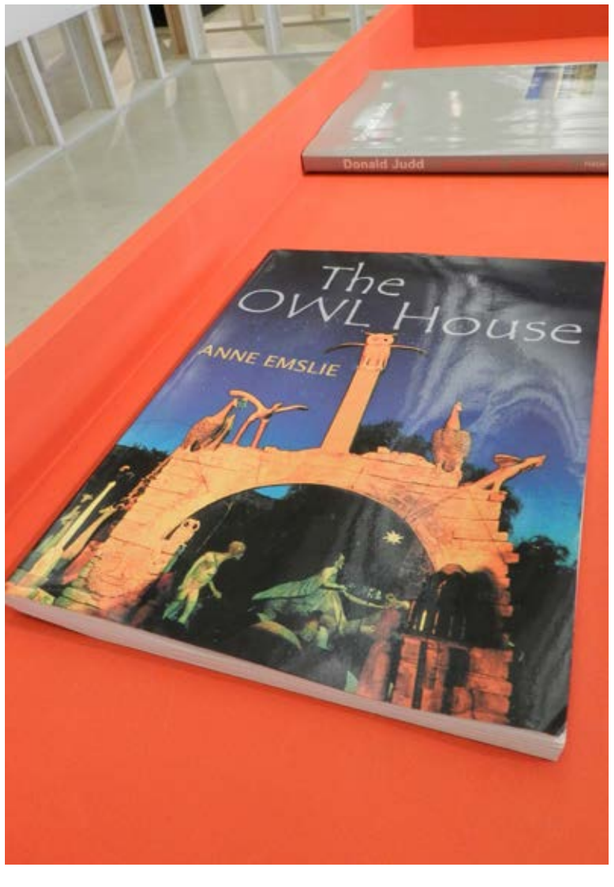

FIG. 6 *Double-Sided*, CAM-FCG, 1996-2009. View from the installation in the exhibition "Professores," 2010. Photo: Paulo Costa. Courtesy of CAM-FCG's Photo Archive

FIG. 7 *Double-Sided*, CAM-FCG, 1996-2009. View from the installation in the exhibition "Sob o signo de Amadeo. Um século de arte", CAM, 2013. Detail from the books on shelf. Photo: Teresa Azevedo

FIG. 8 *Double-Sided*, CAM-FCG, 1996-2009. View from the installation in the exhibition "Sob o signo de Amadeo. Um século de arte", CAM, 2013. Photo: Paulo Costa. Courtesy of CAM-FCG's Photo Archive.

One and several works of art

As mentioned above, one important aspect of *Double-Sided* is defined by the project's openness and "in-process" nature. The "nomadic aspect of the artist's position and, at times, of the inconclusive configuration of the work itself" (Lapa 2003, 32) contributes to the importance of *Double-Sided* in the whole of Angela Ferreira's work.

Because Ângela Ferreira herself is still searching for a format that is true to the initial installations, and because she assumes that each time a new version is produced it should take a new configuration, she renders the project open to changes and variations due to various factors: differences in exhibition spaces and contexts, available technology, amount of funding — all of these aspects keep *Double-Sided* a variable and open project.

When a new version is to be created, it serves as a means for Ângela Ferreira to experiment with new ways of showing *Double-Sided*: she can introduce new elements and/or use ones from previous temporary and dismantled versions. This is why we can refer to *Double-Sided* as an artwork constituted by several independent artworks that are inevitably related with each other.

An example is the version exhibited at the 2nd Johannesburg Biennale: having a whole room available, Ângela Ferreira recreated *Double-Sided Part II* and, together with some documentation of *Double-Sided Part I*, presented a whole new version, and the only one so far to recreate part of the original installations.

In the version exhibited at Kunstmuseum, Bonn — and for the first time — only one picture of each of the two initial installations was used, and in a large format. The artist explained that this was due to the availability of time, money, and technology at that specific moment, which allowed her to transfer all the documentation photographs

FIG. 9 AND 10 *Double-Sided*, Stevenson Gallery, 1996-2012. Views from the installation in the exhibition "Trade Routes Over Time", 2012. Photo: Mario Todeschini. Courtesy of Stevenson, Cape Town and Johannesburg

of *Double-Sided* into high resolution digital copies. With this change, the artist opted for the use of only two photographs in the work. Since then, whenever a new version has only two photographs, those are the two that are used, a remarkable constant in subsequent versions.

Another example is *Double-Sided (and left to right like I.Burn)*, Art Galley of New South Wales, 1996-2009: the technical data of the exhibition refers to the two books, which, as the artist confided, she decided at the last minute not to use.

This variability can also be found in the use of elements from previous versions, and in the temporary production of new ones. For example, the version produced for the exhibition at Chiado Museum consisted of the 35 photographs from the work owned by MEIAC, *Double-Sided I/II*, 1996-1997, combined with new elements, such as a table and benches. And the books used for the version shown at Kunstmuseum are those that now belong to the version owned by BHP Billiton, and are also those used by Ângela Ferreira in her initial investigation for the project (they are signed and dated by her, and have papers marking some pages). Another example is the work shown at Palácio Quintela: it is stored at Filomena Soares Gallery,[29] Lisbon, and some elements have been loaned independently to produce other temporary versions, like the books and the two photographs (courtesy of the gallery) used to produce *Double-Sided (Parasol)*, Parasol Unit, 1996-2008, mentioned above.

Naming *Double-Sided* many instances

The ambiguity and complexity of the concepts behind *Double-Sided* surfaces in the continuing effort by the artist herself to find a fitting format for naming the works. Ângela Ferreira assumes that when the two initial *scenarios* are put together as one single installation, "a third work exists: *Double-Sided.*"[30] Therefore, this is the title given to all new versions, because, even though each one is an independent artwork, they are all the same quest for a solution.

Now and then the artist decides to add some more information to the title: for example, the version produced for the exhibition at Parasol Unit was titled *Double-Sided (Parasol)*; and the version created for "Front of House" was an homage to the Australian conceptual artist Ian Burn, and thus titled *Double-Sided (and Left to Right like I. Burn)*. The work belonging to the MEIAC collection is titled *Double-Sided I/II*, which clearly relates to bringing together *Part I* and *Part II* to the same time and place as one single work.

For the purpose of our investigation, and to help distinguish each version, the artist herself suggested using the initial date — 1996 (the year of *Double-Sided Part I*, the beginning of the project) — and the year to which the work refers, together with the place in which the work was produced. Following this method, the version produced for the 2nd Johannesburg Biennale would be referred to as *Double-Sided*, Johannesburg Biennale, 1996-1997, and the version presented at Ângela Ferreira's retrospective exhibition should be *Double-Sided*, Chiado Museum, 1996-2003, to name some examples. Although not quite part of the title, the dates and places should always accompany it as a means to easily distinguish each version.

However, distinguishing each version by its title falls short of the accuracy and detail that museum documentation needs. For instance, it does not allow conservators to "distinguish which attributes of each installation are the same, and which are different." (Besser 2012, 8). Howard

[29] The art gallery that represents the artist.

[30] Ângela Ferreira, in the foldable paper published by Stevenson Gallery, Cape Town as part of the Trade Routes Project, 2012.

Besser, acknowledging that "this problem [...] is not unlike what librarians face with distinguishing between different versions or editions of a given work" (Besser 2012, 8), proposes the use, for museum documentation purposes, of the same conceptual structure used for bibliographic records. According to this system, all versions of a given work would be grouped together hierarchically, "where versions in the lower orders of the hierarchy inherit descriptive metadata from those versions above them" (Besser 2012, 8), and the only metadata added to the lower orders is that which describes the ways in which it differs from those above.

Conclusion

In this paper I discuss issues concerning the documentation process of a specific kind of process-based artworks — open and ongoing — with regard to Ângela Ferreira's *Double-Sided* project.

I mainly documented the transformation of *Double-Sided* through time, a work of art that the artist herself still hasn't closed. Rather than its materiality, I registered the concept behind *Double-Sided,* as well as Ângela Ferreira's ideas and options, so that this information can support any future decisions.

Another important aspect I took into account in the specific case of documenting *Double-Sided* was the different status of all the versions created so far: some are in museum collections; others have been dismantled and their parts used (or are available for use) in new instances; and others don't exist anymore.

As already mentioned, all of the versions created so far were documented and specially, accurately identified, which was a difficult task. Adopting the system used by librarians to distinguish between different versions of a given work, as proposed by Besser, would be a valid option, provided that it is tested and adapted to a museum context.

Finally, one crucial aspect of this documentation process was the close and continuing dialogue with the artist, who provided new and valuable information about the whole project (personal histories, photographs, texts). Discussions with Ângela Ferreira in key moments of the investigation were essential to clarify questions, validate hypotheses, and sometimes even raise new doubts that always pushed the investigation further on.

Ângela Ferreira is very much aware of the role of documentation in the development of her work that, with *Double-Sided*, "assumes the substitution of the object by its documentation and vice-versa." (Lapa 2003, 32).

Participation in this project motivated Ângela Ferreira to reevaluate ways in which to use documentation in her own creative process. In keeping with the evolving nature of this continuing project, in the latest presentation of *Double-Sided*, CAM-FCG, 1996-2009,[31] the artist felt the need to complement the label with a short text contextualizing the genesis of the work, which from now on should always accompany it (Fig. 11).

Although initiated mainly for conservation purposes within museums, this documentation process ended up being admittedly essential to Ângela Ferreira as a means to identify and progress questions that can eventually surface in her future work.

[31] For the exhibition "Sob o Signo de Amadeo. Um Século de Arte" From 26 July 2013 to 19 January 2014, CAM-FCG, Lisbon.

FIG. 11 *Double-Sided*, CAM-FCG, 1996-2009. General view from the installation in the exhibition “Sob o signo de Amadeo. Um século de arte”, CAM, 2013. The texts are located on the bottom right of the wood wall, near the technical data. Photo: Teresa Azevedo

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MEMORY SAVING: DOCUMENTING LA MARRANA ARTEAMBIENTALE'S TECHNOLOGY-BASED INSTALLATIONS

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ABSTRACT

This paper explores the documentation project of La Marrana Arteambientale, a private collection of environmental art that was founded in 1997. The total absence of documentation regarding the conservation of these artworks is the premise for the development of the project we present, based on the integration of different research methods, such as source analysis, interviews with the collectors and artists, and reporting on the data and conditions of the artworks. These allowed us to begin tracing the collection's history and to document the conservation practices employed inside the collection, focusing on the technology-based artworks. The aim is to form a systematic archive of La Marrana artworks and to provide a model for future conservation procedures. The results of the three technology-based artworks examined revealed information about the creative process, about the relationship between the artists and the collectors, and about conservation problems, thus pointing out how important it is to document the collection with a view to its future preservation challenges.

KEYWORDS
SITE-SPECIFIC ART | ENVIRONMENTAL ART | TECHNOLOGY-BASED ARTWORKS | DOCUMENTATION | INTERVIEWS

RESUMO

O presente artigo explora o projeto de documentação de La Marrana Arteambientale, uma coleção privada de arte ambiental fundada em 1997. A total ausência de documentação relativa à conservação destas obras é a premissa para o desenvolvimento do projeto que apresentamos, baseado na integração de diferentes métodos de investigação, tais como análise de fontes, entrevistas a colecionadores e artistas, e relatórios sobre informações disponíveis e estado das obras.
Estes métodos permitiram começar a delinear a história da coleção e a documentar as práticas de conservação usadas, focando-nos nas obras de base tecnológica. O objetivo é formar um arquivo sistemático das obras de La Marrana e oferecer um modelo para futuras ações de conservação.
Os resultados relativos a três obras de base tecnológica examinadas revelaram informações sobre o processo criativo, sobre a relação entre os artistas e os colecionadores e sobre problemas de conservação, mostrando assim a importância de documentar uma coleção com os olhos nos futuros desafios à sua conservação.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE
ARTE *SITE SPECIFIC* | ARTE AMBIENTAL | OBRAS DE ARTE DE BASE TECNOLÓGICA | DOCUMENTAÇÃO | ENTREVISTAS

Introduction

Documenting contemporary art, particularly technology-based and performance-based artworks, requires not only an in-depth, multidisciplinary study of sources, but also a strong relationship between the different parties involved in the process (artist, conservator, technicians, curator, and collector). It becomes even more complex in the case of private collections, especially those that grow year after year and contain heterogeneous works of art exhibited outdoors. Documenting a collection's development and its changes in these cases is indeed difficult, since there is a greater risk of losing information. Based on these premises, we set up a project aimed at documenting La Marrana Arteambientale's collection in order to provide the collectors with a useful tool, and to establish a model that could be used for other collections. The collectors' willingness to make their artworks fully available to the public further enhances the importance of the documentation project.

La Marrana Arteambientale Collection

La Marrana Arteambientale[1] is a collection of site-specific outdoor artworks, displayed by Grazia and Gianni Bolongaro since 1997 in their private house in the Montemarcello Magra Natural Regional Park (Montemarcello, Ameglia, La Spezia, Italy) (fig. 1).

The Bolongaros' passion for art goes back generations. Grazia Bolongaro's grandfather, Alfonso Marino, was an important collector in the first half of the 20th century in Naples; he mostly collected works from 19th century Italian artists. Conversely, Grazia Bolongaro's father and uncle began to collect Italian art from the 20th century, especially from the 1950s[2]. The Bolongaros have continued in this direction, focusing on contemporary artists. Nevertheless, the idea of a collection with site-specific artworks was not immediate; it arose more than fifteen years after they bought the Montemarcello property in 1980[3]. Since the beginning, their innovative aim was to open the collection to the public and introduce people to contemporary art. Every year, since 1997, a new artwork has been created, while more recently exhibitions involving video art have been organised, such as those displaying the works of Tracey Emin in 2011 and of Marina Abramović in 2012.

Compared to other similar Italian collections, La Marrana Arteambientale stands out for its specific features. First of all, since it is located in a Regional Natural Park in Liguria, the artists' projects are influenced by certain restrictions: for example, artists cannot modify the environment by cutting trees or other plants and they can only create temporary works of art that can be moved if needed. Secondly, it is characterized by the presence of technology-based artworks displayed outdoors, such as *La cura di Bellezza (Beauty treatment)* by Philip Rantzer (2000), *155 A.C. (155 B.C.)* by vedovamazzei (2001), and *Interiorità o Luna sulla collina (Interiority or Hill-sided Moon)* by Magdalena Campos-Pons with the collaboration of Neil Leonard (2003). These works are complete only with the active participation of the public. Moreover, some of the works result from performative actions, such as *La forma della montagna (The shape of the mountain)* by Hamish Fulton, and *Sentiero Sfera (Path Sphere)* by Claudia Losi (fig. 2), both of which originated during a walk together through the Apuan Alps in 2007[4].

* The following chapters are by Rita Salis: *Introduction*, *La Marrana Arteambientale Collection*, *Problems related to Technology-based Artworks exhibited outdoors*. The following chapters are by Claudia Marchese: *The Documentation Project*, *Methods*, *Maintenance of the Collection*, *Conclusions*.

[1] For information about the La Marrana collection please check: http://www.lamarrana.it/ita/index.htm. The website mentions year 1996 only with regard to the creation of the cultural association, while the official date for the start of the collection is 1997. Accessed 4 July 2013. Also check Buffatto 2000.

[2] See Marchesoni 2010, and Interview with Grazia and Gianni Bolongaro, 12 May 2013, carried out during this project (hereafter "Interview with the Bolongaros").

[3] In 1996, the Bolongaros founded the Cultural Association "La Marrana", which dedicated its first event to an exhibition on Fausto Melotti (Buffatto 2000, 61).

[4] See Di Pietrantonio 2007.

FIG. 1 Lorenzo Mangili — *Start Station (Caballa di Goethe)*, 2003 (Marble, bronze, and painted iron, stainless steel, optic fiber and electronic equipment) [Claudia Marchese, 11 July 2011, © Claudia Marchese]

FIG. 2 Claudia Losi — *Sentiero Sfera (Path Sphere)*, detail, 2007 (two silk balls, birch and larch wood, glass, aluminium) [Claudia Marchese, 11 July 2011, © Claudia Marchese]

Since the beginning, the connection between artworks and performance events has been very close, and sometimes the execution of new works has been combined with shows involving theatre, music, and dance. For example, for Fausto Melotti's exhibition in 1996, mimes from Milan's Piccolo Teatro acted out aphorisms written by Melotti himself; for Philip Rantzer's exhibition in 2000, a concert of contemporary Jewish music (klezmer) was organized[5]. One of the collectors' main interests is to follow the changes of contemporary art language. As they have stated, they would like "to 'challenge' visitors with new languages to make them consider art an expression of our times."[6]

Despite La Marrana Arteambientale being an important collection on the Italian scene, few studies have been dedicated to it. In 2000, Maria Luisa Buffatto published an article in which she described how the collection began and its earlier activity. In addition, some articles have been published online in Italian contemporary art journals such as "Undo.net," "Artribune," and "Exibart," often presenting La Marrana's annual exhibitions. A catalogue is usually produced during the artists' exhibitions, but to date there is no catalogue of the entire collection. Furthermore, over the years, some interviews with the collectors have been published, but none of them have focused on the conservation of the artworks[7].

The Documentation Project

The documentation project started after the conclusion of the collateral workshop organized in July 2011 for the students of the Post-Graduate Specialisation Course in "Conservation and Restoration of Contemporary Works of Art" at the Opificio delle Pietre Dure in Florence (April 2011-May 2012), and planned by the cultural associations "Lo Spino Bianco" and "La Marrana." The freelance Conservator Antonio Rava was the tutor of the workshop; Francesca Bettini and Caterina Toso, Conservators of the Opificio delle Pietre Dure, also participated in this experience by providing invaluable help[8].

During our stay in La Marrana, we realized that, from a conservation perspective, the artworks completely lacked any sort of cataloguing or documentation. It was clear, however, that the collectors felt that the conservation of the artworks was quite important[9], particularly considering their heterogeneous nature. Based on the above-mentioned issues, we decided to set up our project, focusing on the integration of several research methods, such as in-depth analysis of the artworks, interviews with the collectors and artists, study of the sources, creation of technical records including data on the artworks and their conditions, and documentation through photographs and videos. The project was developed starting from previous experiences, which considered documentation as a fundamental precondition for the conservation of artworks[10]. The documentation of La Marrana Arteambientale began with eight case studies chosen for their history and their related conservation problems: *...Plink!* by Mario Airò, (2001); *Il Sogno* (*The Dream*) by Kengiro Azuma (1998); *La tenda di p* (*Tepee of p*) by Cecilia Guastaroba (1999); *Located world, La Marrana* by Joseph Kosuth (2003); *Sentiero sfera* (*Path Sphere*) by Claudia Losi (2007); *Casa de La Marrana (casa dei rovi)* (*House of La Marrana (Bush house)* by Luigi Mainolfi (1999); *La cura di Bellezza* (*The Beauty treatment*) by Philip Rantzer

[5] Interview with the Bolongaros.

[6] *Ibidem*, translation from Italian; see also Marchesoni 2010.

[7] See, for example, Marchesoni 2010, Ceresoli 2012, Marsala 2012.

[8] We would like to thank Letizia Montalbano, Director of the Post-Graduate Specialisation Course and also Director of the Top Level Training School of the Opificio delle Pietre Dure, together with the associations and the Conservators involved in the workshop, for giving us the possibility to enjoy this experience. Special thanks go to Grazia and Gianni Bolongaro for their cooperation and help. We would also like to thank the other students who took part in the workshop and started the documentation project with us: the Art historian Federica Pace and the Conservators Marta Cimò and Serena Francone.

[9] In 2010, the collectors indicated the "attrition" of the artworks as being one of the main difficulties involved in creating an outdoor collection. See Marchesoni 2010.

[10] Among them is the study that produced the well-known conference *Modern Art: Who cares?* (Hummelen, Sillé 1999). Another significant reference is *Inside Installations: Preservation and Presentation of Installation Art* (2004-2007) (Scholte, Wharton 2011). In 2006, the project *DIC-Documentare Installazioni complesse*, in the wake of *Inside Installations* (Ferriani, Pugliese 2009), was a crucial experience for the Italian panorama.

(2000); *Fonte nel giardino di Grazia e Gianni* (*Fountain in Grazia and Gianni's garden*) by Ettore Spalletti (2006)[11]. This project is still in progress and this article focuses on only a small part of it.

Methods

Upon our arrival at La Marrana, we recognized the importance of recording the Bolongaros' recollections. Indeed, the Bolongaros could be considered the bearers of La Marrana's historical memory, since there is no written documentation of the events involving the artworks over the years. We carried out an interview in order to take an in-depth look at some macro topics, such as the creation of the collection, the relationship between the collectors and the artists involved, and the relationship between the artworks and the environment. The purpose of our interview was also to learn about the current maintenance, conservation, and documentation procedures in order to suggest more complete and appropriate strategies to the collectors, especially regarding documentation of the artworks. Furthermore, recording the collectors' memories allowed us to gather information about the artworks' creation processes, and also about the changes, alterations, and interventions that have occurred throughout the years.

This project also includes interviews with the artists as an essential means of verifying whether their points of view and conceptions correspond to those of the Bolongaros, as well as, of course, to enhance knowledge of the artworks. Starting from the existing models and other previous experience[12], we developed an interview model that focuses on the following topics: the creative process, the materials and techniques used, and the artists' opinion about ageing and conservation problems. All this provides an important tool for the future conservation of the works.

All the information gathered through direct analysis of the artworks, interviews, bibliographical research, and the study of the private archive "Archivio La Marrana Arteambientale" is useful to produce technical records for each work. The data recording model consists of four parts that consider the historical development of the artworks. The first is a general overview of the artwork and the artist; the second is the analysis of the artwork itself; the third is the documentation of previous maintenance and restoration work, together with a study of conservation problems; and finally, the fourth is a proposal for maintenance and intervention. General and detailed photographs, including details of degradation, complete the written documentation.

To conclude, the aim of this project is to form a comprehensive and systematic archive of La Marrana artworks in order to address future procedures related to monitoring, preventive conservation, and restoration. Our purpose, therefore, is also to continue analyzing and documenting the artworks that have still not been studied and to start interviews with the technicians involved. Furthermore, the project intends to provide the collectors with a model to better document new artworks that will be added to the collection in the future.[13]

In this paper, we focus on technology-based artworks. For this reason, first, we enriched the Bolongaros' interview by including questions that could provide more detailed information about the documentation and conservation problems of these works. Then, we prepared short

[11] The authors of this study are Marta Cimò, Serena Francone, Claudia Marchese, Federica Pace and Rita Salis.

[12] See, for example, ICN, SBMK 1999; Pugliese 2006; Scholte, Wharton 2011, part 3; and for the artists' interview method see also Beerkens 2012.

[13] 'The project, which the aforementioned students of the workshop (Cimò, Francone, Marchese, Pace, Salis) took part to, was presented by Cimò and Salis at the seminary 'Lessico giuridico nel restauro dell'arte contemporanea — normativa di riferimento', held by the cultural association "Lo Spino Bianco" and Castello Malaspina di Fosdinovo (Castello di Fosdinovo, Fosdinovo (MS), Italy, 19 September 2012).

questionnaires for the artists involved[14] in order to document their point of view on these topics. Above all, we wished to understand whether specific measures were taken during the creation process to protect the works, given that they are outdoor installations.

First Results

Maintenance of the Collection

The comparison between different sources allowed us to begin tracing the collection's history and documenting the conservation practices employed in La Marrana.

The Bolongaros had an active role during the production of the works. As they explained, "The artist presents us a project that must take into account the specific restrictions of the Park. We discuss the project together and, if necessary, the artist changes it and adapts it to these restrictions. Finally, we approve the project and sometimes we sign a contract which describes the intervention in detail."[15] Often they recommended trustworthy technicians[16] who worked very closely with the artists. Sometimes the Bolongaros were even more present than the artists themselves; for example, during the installation of the artworks.

The role of the collectors was crucial, not only during the production of the installations, but also throughout subsequent years. In the absence of a conservator, they established the maintenance procedures for the entire collection. The Bolongaros pay serious attention to caring for the nature of the park (fig. 3), and the same attention is dedicated to the works of art, which are all protected by special plastic covers when there are no visitors. The artists themselves have recognized this attention and pointed it out during interviews. For example, in the interview with vedovamazzei, when recalling the Bolongaros, Simeone Crispino said, "The best thing in a collector is not the love for the artwork, but the obsession for its conservation."[17] Regarding the part played by the artist in choosing the maintenance strategies, the collectors' position changes depending on the case. Sometimes they decide not to consult the artist because, according to them, artists are not able to evaluate the technical aspects of the degradation progress. According to the Bolongaros, it is not necessary to consult the artist when they believe that maintenance will not alter the artwork's concept. Different maintenance interventions have been carried out over the years without a time schedule on some elements such as cassettes and CD players, lights, photocells, and components of the audio-video systems. These interventions have become common practice and are performed by local technicians. All the maintenance carried out on technical elements is not archived, so it is not possible to trace the different models and trademarks used during the first installations and in the subsequent replacements over the years[18]. For this reason, an important future target is to create a model for recording all of these interventions.

Problems related to Technology-based Artworks exhibited outdoors

We decided to analyze three different case studies that made it possible for us to understand in depth the issues connected to the collection's technology-based artworks.

[14] We met the duo vedovamazzei in Siena on 19 May 2013; moreover, we sent the questionnaires by email to Magdalena Campos-Pons and Neil Leonard, Ottonella Mocellin and Nicola Pellegrini, and Philip Rantzer. We also contacted Claudia Losi and Hamish Fulton, authors of two performance-based artworks of the collection. At present, Losi (30 May 2013) and Campos-Pons (3 July 2013) have answered the questionnaire; Rantzer and Nancy Fulton, Hamish's wife, answered the email, but they have not yet filled in the questionnaire. We would like to thank all of them for their cooperation.

[15] Interview with the Bolongaros, translation from Italian.

[16] It has not yet been possible to trace all the technicians involved over the years in the collection's maintenance.

[17] Interview with vedovamazzei, 19 May 2013, translation from Italian.

[18] 'For an overview on the problems concerning conservation of technology elements in contemporary artworks see Breuil, Dazord 2013.

FIG. 3 Tiziana Priori — *Tutte le cose sono collegate (Everything is linked)*, 2009 (sage, seeds, stones, grass) [Claudia Marchese, 11 July 2011, © Claudia Marchese]

The first two works of art are the installations *Interiorità o Luna sulla collina* (*Interiority or Hill-sided Moon*) (2003) by the Boston-based artist Maria Magdalena Campos-Pons (Matanzas, Cuba, 1959)[19], and *155 A.C.* (*155 B.C.*) (2001) by the Italian artist duo vedovamazzei, comprising Simeone Crispino (Naples, 1964) and Stella Scala (Naples, 1962)[20]. The first is composed of an opalescent hemispherical structure (fig. 4) surrounded by eight other smaller spherical ones (fig. 5) that, through videos, sounds, and lights embedded inside the work, recall César Vallejo's poem *Deshojación sagrada*, and reflect on the relationship between the interiority of the human being and the universe. The second is composed of a wooden bench and an audio system (fig. 6). When someone sits on the bench, the artwork emits sounds that recall the noises of a battle. The artists were inspired by the battle won by the Romans under Consul Marcellus against the Ligurians in the area of Montemarcello[21].

Both installations were realized with the help of local technicians. Campos-Pons collaborated with her husband and composer Neil Leonard[22], but also with a technical assistant who was working at La Marrana at the time. Vedovamazzei was not present during the work's execution[23]; the artists saw the artwork only after it was completed by technicians who were recommended by the collectors themselves. As they explained, "We were interested in the fact that someone could sit on a bench and activate a mechanism, but we could never figure out how to get to the finished project. When we explained our idea to the technician, he was very good at interpreting our thinking."[24] The interviews demonstrated that the artists thought about conservation strategies during their creative process. For Campos-Pons: "Both video and sound equipment are housed within a sphere made of resin and alabaster dust. The sphere is pretty much sealed to prevent water from entering it."[25] Crispino and Scala were even more resolute, saying, "We would have changed our project if it would not have been possible to conserve the work outdoors."[26] The technical elements of these two installations are hidden from the spectators' view; as for other artworks of the collection, this allows them to be better protected in watertight enclosures[27]. Moreover, in winter, all these elements are deactivated.

Regarding maintenance, vedovamazzei decided to delegate the decisions to the technicians who had physically executed the work. During the interview, the collectors also said that repairing or substituting the CD player of the audio system was part of maintenance, due to the frequent short circuits, especially in winter. In the case of *Interiorità* o *Luna sulla collina* (*Interiority or Hill-sided Moon*), the Bolongaros played an important role in deciding to purchase more video screens than those needed, in order to replace the originals in case of damage. So far, no problems with the conservation have occurred to this installation; however, the artist is aware that some components will probably need to be replaced in the future and has stated that she would be "happy to start a conversation in that direction."[28]

The third artwork is *La cura di Bellezza* (*Beauty treatment*) (2000) by the Israeli artist Philip Rantzer (Polyiesht, 1958)[29] (fig. 7). This is a peculiar case study for its history, complexity, and related conservation problems. Compared with the other artworks of the collection, this installation

[19] Hassan, Scardi 2005.

[20] Chiodi 2006, 305-323.

[21] Di Pietrantonio 2001.

[22] For the music of the installation see https://soundcloud.com/neilleonard/sets/mil-maneras. Accessed 4 September 2014.

[23] They were involved in the creation of the public artwork *Go wherever you want, bring me wherever you wish* (2000) produced during the exhibition in Hann. Münden "3 Räume 3 Flüsse. Ihr wart ins Wasser eingeschrieben" http://www.hann.muenden.de/index.phtml?NavID=295.469&La=1. Accessed 4 July 2013.

[24] Interview with vedovamazzei, 19 May 2013, translation from Italian.

[25] Questionnaire completed by Maria Magdalena Campos-Pons, 7 July 2013.

[26] Interview with vedovamazzei, 19 May 2013, translation from Italian.

[27] Interview with the Bolongaros.

[28] Questionnaire completed by Maria Magdalena Campos-Pons, 7 July 2013.

[29] Szeeman, Liveriero Lavelli 1999, 74-76.

FIG. 4 Maria Magdalena Campos-Pons — *Interiorità o Luna sulla collina (Interiority or Hill-sided Moon)*, detail, 2005 (translucent polymers, audio-video system, lights) [Nuvola Ravera and Davide Pambianchi, July 2012, © Nuvola Ravera and Davide Pambianchi]

FIG. 5 Maria Magdalena Campos-Pons — *Interiorità o Luna sulla collina (Interiority or Hill-sided Moon)*, detail, 2005 (translucent polymers, audio-video system, lights), courtesy M.M. Campos-Pons

FIG. 6 Vedovamazzei — *155 A.C. (155 B.C.),* 2001 (wooden bench, audio system, light) [Claudia Marchese, 11 July 2011, © Claudia Marchese]

FIG. 7 Philip Rantzer — *La Cura di Bellezza (The Beauty treatment)* total view, 2000 (five wooden houses, mixed media, courtesy "Archivio La Marrana Arteambientale"

has a specific relationship with the environment. As Rantzer explained, "I never do outdoor artworks because I don't like to dirty nature with sculpture."[30] For this reason, the installation consists of five small wooden houses called "Memory Boxes," containing mainly recycled objects and obsolete technologies related to the artist's personal life (fig. 8). The key elements of this complex work are memory, history, evocation, and irony[31]. Since its installation, *La cura di Bellezza* (*Beauty treatment*) sustained damage and its condition led to various maintenance interventions. The most frequent consisted of replacing deteriorated wooden parts, replacing damaged electronic parts, and cutting sick pine trees that in 2000 surrounded the artwork; however, none of these have been documented. It is not possible, for example, to know the date of some interventions, such as the replacement of the damaged cassette player of the Memory Box *Cara Bene...* (fig. 9) with a CD player. Rantzer had chosen the cassette player from a car in Tel Aviv because of its connection to his personal history. In this case, the collectors would have liked to have preserved the work's "original characteristics," because, in their opinion, an intervention would have changed the entire "concept" of the work. In the end, they decided to support the artist's opinion[32], and the original cassette player was not preserved. In this particular case, our interview was useful to document the disagreements that emerged, and so better set up a conservation approach for the future. Despite Rantzer's acceptance of the replacement of some elements of his installations, preventing the progress of damage would have been a more effective strategy, according to the Bolongaros.

Conclusions

The collection created by Gianni and Grazia Bolongaro stands out for its complexity and heterogeneity. The outdoor installation of the works of art increases the chances that they may deteriorate since they are highly subject to atmospheric agents, especially in the case of technology-based works. The artists have understood the importance of preventing damage and have often accepted cooperation from reliable, local technicians. The role of the Bolongaros, given their very close relationship with the artists, is essential for giving advice about local technicians and suggestions regarding the installation process. In the past, sufficient attention was not given to documenting the damages and changes affecting the works, or to the treatments undertaken. In addition, a planned and coherent maintenance programme was not developed. In the case of Campos-Pons' installation, the Bolongaros were farsighted in the storage of some technical elements; however, it would be advisable to further reflect on replacement issues.

Documenting this collection is essential for its future conservation, and is also a great challenge both for the installations realized so far and those upcoming. Thanks to this project, several pieces of the collection's background, which otherwise would have been lost, have been traced. Furthermore, we began to set up an approach for the future maintenance and preservation of the collection. The presence of a conservator in the collection would allow the planning of interventions and would help the collectors better understand the boundaries between ordinary maintenance and restoration, between the choices of the artist and the work of the technician, and between alteration

[30] Interview with Giacinto Di Pietrantonio, see http://www.lamarrana.it/eng/frame.asp?Sezione=mos, Accessed 4 July 2013.

[31] Di Pietrantonio 2000.

[32] According to Rantzer: "The five buildings located in Monte Marcello are not immune to the scars of time. [...] My work does not freeze when coming out from the door of my study, it seems reasonable that it continues to require care, maintenance and attention", private e-mail, 21 August 2011, "Archivio La Marrana Arteambientale", translation from Italian. The intervention may have been carried out before 2010 (Marchesoni 2010) and, as far as the Bolongaros recall, between 2004 and 2007 (Interview with the Bolongaros).

FIG. 8 Philip Rantzer — *Ti voglio bene ma sono stanco (I want you but I am tired),* room 5, detail, 2000 (wooden house, reused objects, audio-system, electric engine) [Rita Salis, 11 July 2011, © Rita Salis]

FIG. 9 Philip Rantzer — *Cara Bene... (Dear Bene...)* room 4, detail, 2000 (wooden house, reused objects, audio-system, electric engine), [Serena Francone, 11 July 2011, © Serena Francone]

and respect for the concept of the artworks. These would be very useful for all the case studies described, especially for *La cura di Bellezza* (*Beauty Treatment*) by Rantzer, due to the coexistence of technology and recycled objects. In our opinion, these are fundamental steps that can help create a coherent methodology for documenting and preserving La Marrana, and so keep track of its conservation history.

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REIMAGINING DOCUMENTATION

CO-PRODUCING CONCEPTUAL ART: A CONSERVATOR'S TESTIMONY

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ABSTRACT

Installing a conceptual artwork together with the artist may shift the role of the conservator to that of co-producer. This enforces a critical reflection on the notion of art conservation and the function of documentation. During the materialization of Jan Dibbets' variable installation *All shadows that occurred to me in… are marked with tape* (1969), valuable information was gained, but also constructed as part of the interview conducted while installing the work together. When documenting this participatory practice, a critical point arises because the dynamics on the floor turn static in documents, losing the context of time and place, action and reaction. By emphasising critical reflections *in* documentation, on both the dialogue with the artist and the mediation of the artwork's physical form, adopting an autoethnographic approach, the artwork could be transmitted to the future *by* documentation in a more transparent way. I propose a "conservator's testimony" to provide this transparency.[1]

KEYWORDS
AUTOETHNOGRAPHY | ARTIST INTERVIEW | ARTIST PARTICIPATION | CONSERVATION DOCUMENTATION | PERSONAL TESTIMONY

RESUMO

Instalar uma obra de arte concetual com o artista pode deslocar o papel do conservador para o de coprodutor o que obriga a uma reflexão crítica sobre a noção de conservação e a função da documentação. Durante a materialização da instalação variável de Jan Dibbet, *All shadows that occurred to me in … are marked with tape* (1969), informação valiosa foi obtida, mas também construída, resultante da entrevista efetuada durante a instalação conjunta da obra. Quando se documenta esta atividade participada, surge a questão crítica de uma ação dinâmica se tornar estática nos documentos, perdendo-se o contexto do tempo e do lugar, ação e reação. Enfatizando reflexões críticas *na* documentação, quer no que respeita ao diálogo com o artista, quer no que se refere à mediação da forma física do objeto, adotando uma abordagem autoetnográfica, a obra pode ser transmitida *pela* documentação, de forma mais transparente. Proponho um "testemunho do conservador" para providenciar essa transparência.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE
AUTOETNOGRAFIA | ENTREVISTA AO ARTISTA | PARTICIPAÇÃO DO ARTISTA | DOCUMENTAÇÃO DA CONSERVAÇÃO | TESTEMUNHO PESSOAL

Introduction

Seemingly small choices made during the materialization of variable conceptual artworks are crucial for the final result, yet rarely recorded since documentation practices generally start after a work is finalized. However, crucial information can be obtained during the process of materialization, especially when performed together with the artist. During this participatory practice data are not only collected, but also generated; the artwork's form is explored in dialogue and shaped as part of mutual activities, driven by the given circumstances. When these dynamics are to be captured in documentation, the chance exists that this fixes the informal and adaptive character of the artwork, which may limit the freedom of future executions.[2] This demonstrates the ambiguous role of documentation, since it can only partly reflect the practices it refers to, whereas documentation is readily used as a source for guidelines to reinstall artworks. The question then is, what kind of documentation best acknowledges personal input and ensures the continuation of the artwork according to its concept?

Living Record and Personal Testimony

Conservators are trained to keep possible interference at a minimum, including when conducting artist interviews. We ask open questions, keep silent, and reflect on the co-constructed source afterwards (Portelli 2003; Saaze 2009a; Beerkens et al. 2012). Nonetheless, challenging situations occur when working with artists. Conservators have addressed the issue that artists change opinion over time (Stigter 2004), have recognized that the outcome of the interview influences decision-making (Gardener et al. 2008), and have put forward the possible conflict of interest between the artist and the conservator (Sommermeyer 2011). This illustrates that the artwork's possible future appearance is being constructed, either in an interview or on the floor while installing a work, and when engaging with the artist or not, because of the fact that always choices are made.[3] Thus, not only are interviews co-constructed, variable conceptual artworks are too, since they have to be materialised by someone. They are living records of joint input.

To reveal what happens during the process of producing an artwork's manifestation, I would like to introduce a "conservator's testimony," a personal account of the influence of interactions between stakeholders and contextual input, and the way the artwork is being perceived during conversations, participatory practices, conservation treatments, and reinstallation practices. Generally conservators do not include reflective personal experience when working with the artwork in conservation treatment reports, because they are supposed to act as neutral mediators. However, conceptual artworks may demand actions that have a bigger impact on the artwork's appearance than is the case for traditional artworks. A testimony will acknowledge individual input and will provide reflection upon all practices surrounding the materialisation of the artwork, revealing the interplay of dynamics that shape its final appearance.

To study the artwork as a living record while acknowledging personal input, I will adopt an autoethnographical approach, a qualitative research method based on ethnography and tailored to study one's

[1] This article is based on my forthcoming PhD thesis *Between Concept and Material: Working with Conceptual Art — A Conservator's Testimony* at the University of Amsterdam.

[2] On the influence of documentation on installation artworks, see also Irvin 2006.

[3] For various ways of working with artists, see Huys 2012.

own practices.[4] Rather than the analytical approach of an outsider, helped by archival research as adopted by Irvin (2006), for example, or that of a silent observer during the practice of installation in the manner of Yaneva (2003a + b) and Van Saaze (2009b, 2013), I aim to present a critical reflection upon my own role as the museum's conservator "doing" the artwork.[5] I will draw from my experience of working with artist Jan Dibbets on his variable artwork *All shadows that occurred to me in.....are marked with tape* from 1969, hereafter referred to as *All shadows....*[6]

In my dual role as both conservator and researcher, I had to shift between insider as museum professional and outsider as a participant observer. The autoethnographic approach makes this insightful and demonstrates that a complex artwork is never reinstalled in a neutral way, but depends upon choices, and often upon choices that are made on the spot. This implies that a subjective approach is incorporated into conservation practice, whereas this is never really articulated in current forms of documentation. This deserves more attention because when a variable artwork is correctly installed, it could be considered conserved for that moment as having progressed in time. The installation enters the public eye in this form. The choices, adaptations and alterations that are made should be made explicit to conserve the work's essence, because every installation moment becomes part of the artwork's biography, further shaping its identity (Vall et al. 2011).

All shadows that occurred to... me?

All shadows... is a crucial work in the oeuvre of Jan Dibbets (1941 Weert), one of the most important conceptual artists from the Netherlands. In 1969 he realised the work for the first time in Haus Lange, Krefeld (fig. 1). This was at a pivotal moment in his career when he had just started working with photography. Even though *All shadows...* is created in a completely different medium, it clearly illustrates Dibbets' fascination for light and time. *All shadows...* consists of lines of masking tape on the walls and the floor in an architectural setting, marking sunlit areas in successive stages. In combination with the actual real shadows in the room, one will notice a difference with the taped ones. *All shadows...* is a pattern of after images; new shadows will never hit the exact same spot again (fig. 2). This makes the viewer aware of their own presence in time and space, which was exactly Dibbets' intention. "As a visual artist I am trying to change our spatial experience," he stated in 1969, stressing the impact of the work as a spatial intervention.[7]

The more than 40-year-old artwork still challenges the foundations of art conservation because it is physically destroyed after each exhibition and then waits to be reinterpreted again for the next show. Moreover, *All shadows...* varies according to time and place, which is illustrated by its exhibition history. The first instalment in Krefeld took over 5 days.[8] This was reduced to one-day sessions at the Paris and Milan affiliations of Galerie Lambert in 1970.[9] A full decade later Dibbets used the principle on a freestanding wall for the exhibition 'Murs' in Centre George Pompidou in 1981.[10] The work was then left dormant for almost a quarter of a century, until it was requested for an exhibition in Kassel in 2005.[11] This time Dibbets delegated the making process. The event must have awakened the work in the eyes of the artist, because the following year

[4] On autoethnography see Ellis, Adams, Bochner (2011). For argumentation for the use of autoethnography to investigate research practices see Duncan (2007).

[5] The notion of 'doing artworks' is borrowed from Vivian van Saaze (2009b).

[6] The complete title is to be filled out according to time and place. Dibbets provided the museum with the title in Dutch upon acquisition, *Alle schaduwen die mij zijn opgevallen in ..... zijn afgeplakt met tape*, which was registered by the museum accordingly. The title has been expressed in different languages and varied over time, see Stigter 2014.

[7] Weijers 1969, s.p. All translations to English by author.

[8] See Wember and Dibbets 1969, s.p.

[9] The Paris iteration is falsely assumed to be the first one in Moure et al. 2004, 251, 532.

[10] Depicted in the accompanying catalogue (Pacquement 1981, s.p.).

[11] The exhibition catalogue shows the early Paris iteration (Moure et al. 2004, 251).

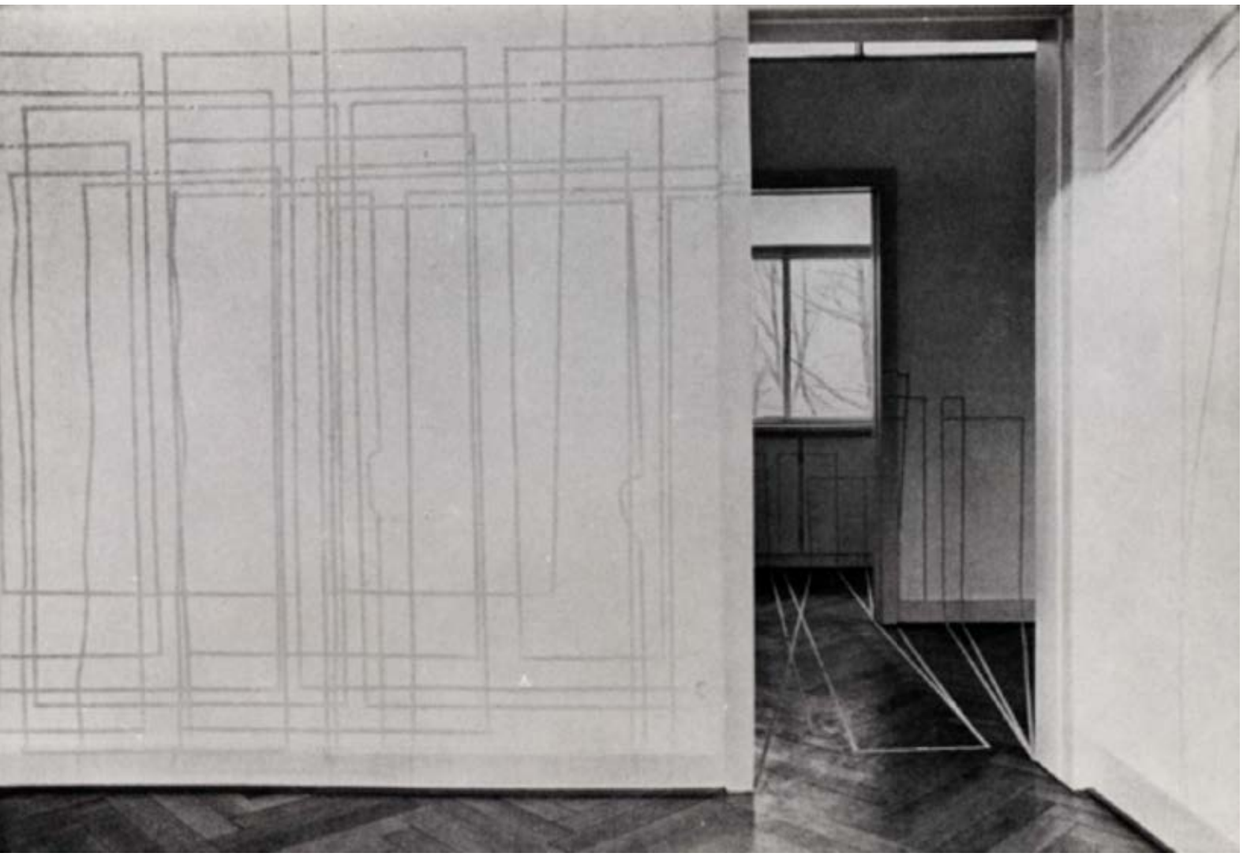

FIG. 1 Jan Dibbets, *All shadows...* in Krefeld 1969, entitled: *Markierung van Lichteinfallen und Schattenbetrachtungen durch Klebeband an den Wänden und auf dem Fußboden eines Raumes im Museum Haus Lange Ausgeführt von 8 bis 12 Dezember 1969.* Haus Lange. Document KM 131.364-1c, depicted in: Wember and Dibbets, s.p..

FIG. 2 Jan Dibbets, *All shadows...* detail. Masking tape, dimensions variable. Kröller-Müller Museum, KM 131.297. All photographs by author, Kröller-Müller Museum, April 10, 2009, unless noted otherwise.

Dibbets himself produced a small floor version of *All shadows...* for the sculpture biennale in Carrara in 2006.[12]

In 2007 I became involved in the life of *All shadows...* when Dibbets recounted that the work had never entered a collection.[13] He later remembered that the work could have been sold to famous art collector Giuseppe Panza di Biumo, who acquired Dibbets' entire show at Lambert in Milan in 1970 — over the phone.[14] The gallery owner failed to describe the shadow piece to Panza, clearly not considering it a sellable work at the time, probably because of its informal quality and temporal nature. This provided the Kröller-Müller Museum the opportunity to acquire *All shadows...* nearly 40 years later, taking up the challenge of managing the work.[15]

A conceptual artwork, such as *All shadows...*, turns traditional museum practices completely upside down. The title alone is already provocative, discharging the idea of authorship because of the personal pronoun in it: *All shadows that occurred to* me.... This must refer to the artist. However, Dibbets made clear that his involvement in materializing the work is not imperative at all.[16] But could the artwork really be determined by the shadows that occurred to *me*?

[12] For a detailed account of the artwork's exhibition history, see Stigter 2014.

[13] Dibbets, audio recorded interview by author, April 6 2007, Kröller-Müller Museum archive.

[14] Dibbets, video recorded interview by author, November 11, 2011. Conservation archive University of Amsterdam and Van Abbemuseum, Eindhoven.

[15] Acquired with support from the Mondriaan Fund.

[16] Dibbets, see note 13.

With the commission to re-install *All shadows…* from scratch, I seemed to be entering a zone of creativity, something that is normally restricted to the artist or authorised assistants. This forced me to reflect upon my own role, because how can *production* become part of *conservation*? There are no established guidelines for this part of the profession. Outsiders such as Yaneva, Irvin and Van Saaze observed that museums have had a hand in shaping complex artworks, but what this means for the role and responsibilities of the art conservator is not discussed.[17] Insiders, conservators at least, are reluctant to acknowledge that they are steering artworks, because their role usually aims at minimal intervention, holding them back from interfering in the first place.[18]

However, the ephemeral as well as variable character of *All shadows…* requires conservators to actively perform the work, because it evokes fundamental questions about what it is that needs to be conserved, and on how the artwork should be transmitted to the future. After all, when the work is not exhibited, there is nothing tangible left but documentation. Preparatory research from archival material, provides just half of the information that is needed compared to what could be learned from the actual instalment of the artwork, especially when in cooperation with the artist. In contrast with more conventional artworks that preferably do not change, *All shadows…* is in flux and should be progressed in time. To find out how this process takes shape I look at precisely these process-based activities, documenting them by means of a personal testimony, being both witness and participant at the same time, becoming part of the living record.[19]

Preparations and Choices

The sale transaction of *All shadows…* consisted of an exchange of documents.[20] By way of transferring guidelines, Dibbets offered his help for the first instalment of the work. Then director of the Kröller-Müller Museum Evert van Straaten discussed possible sites for installation in the museum together with the artist. A gallery with small upright windows was chosen. However, Dibbets made clear that the work is by no means restricted to this site. The lines could even be applied in various rooms at the same time; according to Van Straaten's notes, "we are the owner and could even tape around the whole museum. Dibbets allowed a maximum of freedom, and he especially advised not to be too precise in carrying out the work. No problem when the sun moves too fast and you forget a line."[21]

It took more than a year to find the right moment to install the work, largely due to the relatively poor weather in the Netherlands. Sunny weather is definitely essential for the making process. For the other ingredients I was commissioned to buy ordinary masking tape and small snap knifes at the hardware store. This sounds simple, but the truth is that the process of making choices now continued independent of the artist. The store I picked was close to my home at that time and it carried the brand Tesa, of which I chose type Classic. This was slightly more expensive and made me believe that it offered better workability and longer durability. Furthermore, I could choose between 19 mm and 25 mm in width and I chose the first, according to what I understood as the ordinary type. Dibbets confirmed this was indeed the correct material.

[17] Instead, the function of the museum is discussed. Yaneva 2003, Irvin 2006, Saaze 2009b.

[18] On a conservator's deliberations on steering an artwork's appearance, see Stigter 2011, especially 78-79.

[19] The term testimony is used in the sense that it is used in oral history, producing life stories by personal testimonies. It should not be confused with a testimony in court, cut short of cause and context. A conservator's testimony is understood as a personal account and thorough analyses of the context in which the research material is brought together, studied, interpreted and translated into practical measures, including critical reflections on conclusions and research findings.

[20] The invoice is catalogued as certificate, KM 131.363, and the rest as documentation, KM 131.364, both specified as related objects to the artwork.

[21] Evert van Straaten, e-mail message to author, February 7, 2008.

These details may seem of minor importance; indeed, they were never explicated before, yet it is this material that will determine the artwork's final appearance. By meticulously describing the first phase of preparation, I aim to point out that when in charge of managing a conceptual artwork such as this, choices are made before you know it. Already the first phase in the art-making process is out of the artist's hands and determined by third parties co-producing the work's physical appearance: the artist as the initial creator, the museum director in allocating a site, and the museum conservator in gathering materials and assisting with the work's materialisation. The installation of artworks is generally not recognized as a collaborative process, whereas for the purpose of conservation it is important to distinguish between the artist's hand and the input of others when one wants to remain conscious of who is actually shaping what in each iteration of the artwork. Hence, my suggestion for a conservator's testimony.

Dialogue and Negotiation

For the materialization of *All shadows...* Dibbets asked for two people who could work with their hands because he claimed to have two left hands himself. I and contemporary art conservator Evelyne Snijders became Dibbets' right hands. Some time before, I had observed the sun entering the room around 8.30 a.m., and Dibbets appointed this the moment to start. However, on the morning of April 10, 2009 there was no sun to be seen; therefore we started with an interview instead.[22] When the sun gradually appeared, Dibbets immediately marked the first sunny spot on the wall with tape. First his wife Kaayk, who joined us every now and then, helped unwind tape from the roll, while Dibbets tore off the right length and adhered it to the wall, along the borders of the projected light (figs. 3a-c). Then the sun vanished.

When the sun reappeared, the light entered through several windows at once and a very hectic working process started. We had to work quickly, not only in case the sun disappeared again, but especially because of its rapid movement (fig. 4). Whereas we had started marking each of the sunlit areas individually, the art-making process gradually became more systematic. We learned by doing that it was more efficient to tape the top and bottom of a whole row of projected windows in one go. A quick pencil mark on the tape indicated the spot for the risers and where the excess of tape could be cut away. This procedure guaranteed a structure with straight lines, a feature that became significant of this iteration (fig. 5).

Two artworks by Carl Andre exhibited in the same room also influenced the artwork's appearance (fig. 6). They were left in place at Dibbets' request. We stopped taping where the wooden sculptures stood and continued behind them as if the lines ran through underneath the sculptures. However, the shadows of the sculptures themselves were not marked with tape. This observation made me believe that I could set a guideline — namely that only architectural features determine the areas to be taped, which was also true for the latest executions of the work. When I asked about it, Dibbets confirmed my assumption at first.

JD: "It is simply about the shadows that enter the room. And this piece also makes a shadow, but we are not going to include that. It just has to be the wall and the floor".

[22] All communication during the installation process is recorded with a digital voice recorder by lack of a video camera that day. All produced documents are filed in the conservation archive of the Kröller-Müller Museum, Otterlo.

FIGS. 3a-c. Jan and Kaayk Dibbets started the making process of *All shadows...*

FIG. 5 Jan Dibbets, *All shadows that occurred to me in the Kröller-Müller Museum on Good Friday 2009,* 1969, 2009.

FIG. 6 Jan Dibbets' *All shadows...* 1969, 2009, and Carl Andre, *Philemon* and *Boucis,* both 1981, western red cedar. 92,5 x 93 x 92 cm. and 91 x 91 x 91 cm. Kröller-Müller Museum.

FIG. 4 Jan Dibbets with conservators during the installation of *All shadows...*. Photo: Toos van Kooten / Kröller-Müller Museum.

SS: "So the architecture…"
JD: "The architecture determines the form and not what is in the room. Chairs and all have nothing to do with it. So you imagine the room empty. If it would contain a desk you would tape until there and then you continue."
SS: "So whatever the windows dictate?"
JD: "Yes."[23]

Perhaps I forced the artist to set a guideline at this point, while the 1981 execution did include shadows of nearby sculptures. However, Dibbets considers this version the least successful.[24] I could easily use this pronouncement to defend the architectural parameter we had just formulated. Yet, I reflect on it instead to provide transparency on my double role as conservator / co-producer with the responsibility to be neutral, anxious to manipulate the artwork's appearance, but eager to set guidelines for the future — too eager perhaps. The interview excerpt, clearly a narrative construction, illustrates how easily a mutual agreement is established. Albeit in accordance with the artist, my account should make clear that this is only one thought and context-determined. Indeed, right after I thought to have found a consistency for *All shadows…* Dibbets deviated from his standpoint, the moment he saw long narrow shadows cast by the antique display cases in the adjacent gallery (fig. 7). He hastily added that *those* kinds of shadows could be included as well. Aware of this contradiction, Dibbets finally concluded, "It is a bit to your own liking."[25]

The example makes clear that the artist's interview statements are not to be taken as unconditional truth, but demand careful interpretation. Moreover, the conversational rapport is aimed at understanding and communicating the artwork as it is established in dialogue with the artist *and* the artwork, mediating its form. Our mutual input shows that neither the role of the artist, nor that of the conservator is fixed. The interactions between the material, the site, the artist, and the conservator make that the artwork's materialization takes form as a result of negotiations. Therefore guidelines would be only relatively useful, given that the artist adjusts them in response to immediate circumstances, depending on site-contextual input. This demonstrates the added value of combining an interview with participatory practice, which provides an extra dimension to both engaged listening and participant observation.[26] The art-making process itself is invaluable to witness and experience. Some information would never have come to light without the situation at hand, illuminating aspects that would otherwise be left unnoticed, let alone discussed.

Interpretation and Evaluation

While discussing the work with Dibbets during its installation, I noted that he was not keen on providing answers that would direct the terms and conditions for *All shadows…* too much, almost challenging the conservator to set guidelines. This suggests that *All shadows…* is more about liberty and adaptation to circumstances than could be captured in specifications.[27] The experience of co-producing the work enabled me to read between the lines, because what the artist said was not always in keeping with what was observed. For example, whereas Dibbets was hesitant about using the word "perfect" for *All shadows…*, conscious of the work's informal character, in practice he carefully cut the tape endings into sharp tips to

[23] Dibbets, audio recorded interview by author, April 10, 2009.

[24] Dibbets, personal communication, November 22, 2011.

[25] Dibbets, see note 23.

[26] On engaged listening in interview practices and participant observation in ethnography, see Forsey 2010.

[27] This is confirmed by Dibbets after reading the preliminary draft of my findings in this article. Personal communication by telephone, March 2, 2012.

FIG. 7 Antique display cases, by H.P. Berlage casting distinctive shadows on to the floor in the Kröller-Müller Museum, which appealed to Jan Dibbets.

FIG. 8 Jan Dibbets at work, carefully cutting the tape endings in sharp tips to complete the geometrical forms in *All shadows…*.

complete geometrical forms (fig. 8). Yet, both Dibbets and his wife stated several times that he is not very precise in the execution of his work. This alleged nonchalance expressed in words could easily be misinterpreted for indifference, especially if Dibbets' careful way of working had remained unnoticed. This furthermore makes clear that annotations are indispensable to interpret interview transcriptions, which otherwise lack these observations.

Also contradictions became apparent. For example, it first seemed as if the work allows some wear.

JD: "If you tape on the floor, you will damage it by walking and that is actually part of it. So you don't need to be too precise. You can either repair it, or let go, and then you just take it away."[28]

Later Dibbets stated that the work should not look too sloppy in a museum context.

JD: "It is a construction that consolidates light. You would want to have it, well, 'perfect' I would rather not say, but that may be just the word: as perfect as possible."[29]

Then, to what extent is wear and tear tolerated? Only after posing closed questions were some boundaries established.[30] The work could bear stains caused by visitors walking over it, but when the lines become disrupted the work is considered damaged. This makes sense. After all, when the overall structure is altered, the relation to the architectural setting is lost.

[28] Dibbets, see note 23.

[29] Ibid.

[30] This runs counter to the advised artist interview technique, because closed questions are steering, whereas open questions allow the artist to elaborate on self chosen aspects in their own words. Beerkens et al. 2012: 50.

Meanwhile it had become clear that our role, that of me and my colleague, had shifted from that of restrained conservators to co-producers of the artwork, exemplified most by our initiative to mark the sunny spots on the windowsills. Whereas the artist agreed to their inclusion, I am convinced that if we had not pointed out the sun on this spot, the area would not have been marked with tape (fig. 9). Without being too conscious of this action then — we just worked along as in a practical experiment to get to grips with the variability, eager to establish boundaries for *All shadows...*— it seemed like a test to see if we understood the artwork correctly and were able to make choices on our own. How far could we go? The artist was there to guide us.

A renewed look at old photographs was useful in this respect, because it turned out that the windowsills had been included previously in the early executions in Krefeld and Paris. Our contribution could thus be justified by what was later recognized on the photographs. Nevertheless, we had been taking liberties and shaped the artwork partly on our own initiative. A colleague who read my preliminary report proclaimed jokingly, "Now you went a step too far."[31] Although I thought I had made ourselves accountable by carefully describing our actions, fuelled by my ambiguous attitude towards the idea of co-producing an artwork because of the strict line that is drawn between conservation and creation — a line that should not be crossed — apparently I had not reflected critically enough upon my own involvement, which was still in the cooperative mode. The alleged neutral role of the conservator and the quest for minimal intervention were at stake. Peer discussion therefore proved helpful to the evaluation of personal practices, resulting in a well-articulated and critical testimony.

Research and Practice

Working with the artist took place within a rather loose framework, yet decisive choices were made, taking the artwork from an open-ended concept to an explicit expression. This is even true for the completion of the title, which finally became *All shadows that occurred to me in the Kröller-Müller Museum on Good Friday 2009*. In fact, the idea of the work has nothing to do with this religious holiday, nor is its realization restricted to this one day. It just happened to be that day. Dibbets' suggestion to include this in the title for this occasion underscores the artwork's informal character and relatively arbitrary articulation. At the same time it does define time as a key component of the work.

As has already become clear from the previous example, working with the physical artwork improved the reading of photographic documentation. By adopting Dibbets' art-making process and working with the materials my eyes became better, observing more details, enabled by a combining of explicit and tacit knowledge. For instance, by taking a renewed look at the documentation, I suddenly noted small white marks on some of the taped lines in the earliest manifestations of *All shadows...* (fig. 1). When pointing them out to Dibbets, he explained that these are white stickers on which he had indicated the time.[32] Further study of the photographic documentation made clear that this feature had already disappeared after 1970.

The information about the time labels was new to us, and Dibbets had forgotten about it.[33] This not only illustrates

[31] During a discussion for which I would like to thank IJsbrand Hummelen, as part of the New Strategies in the Conservation of Contemporary Art research group, December 16, 2011. See Vall et al. 2011.

[32] For this purpose he had used Letraset transfers. Dibbets, see note 14.

[33] Ibid.

FIG. 9 Conservator Evelyne Snijders during installation process of *All shadows...* marking the sunny spots on the windowsills with masking tape.

that the practice of working with the physical artwork serves in-depth research, illuminating archival documents from a new angle, but it also demonstrates the general importance of studying the materialisation of conceptual art. The rediscovery of the long gone labels, barely noticeable on the old photographs, enriches the early stages of the artwork's life. They must have formed an important contribution to the experience of the work. Dibbets confirmed this when I asked him about their function: "It is interesting for the visitor to see how the moment that he perceives the work relates to the moment when the work was executed."[34] The labels thus lent the work a more narrative character, adding chronology, making time and precision more explicit, as has also become clear from the way Dibbets pinpointed the work's temporal title. Now the question arose whether the labels should — or could — be incorporated in *All shadows...* again. Dibbets answered that he would not prevent anyone from doing so, but claimed at the same time that there is no need for it.[35] This apparent indifference could be seen as a way to justify their absence for such a long time. In the end, however, the owner of the artwork is left free to decide.

Conclusion

Since the form of Jan Dibbets' work *All shadows that occurred to me in...* is open-ended, unforeseen fixation by dogmatic guidelines was avoided and a conservator's testimony was compiled instead. The autoethnographic account includes a thorough reflection on participatory observations and narrative constructions, helped by peer judgement, to pinpoint the conservator's role in relation to the artwork's articulation and continuation. This approach reveals that practicalities and site-contextual aspects provoke questions that would never emerge from the literature and archival documents alone. Moreover, working with the artwork's physical material greatly improves how one reads the archival documents, leading to a deeper understanding of the work's form and content and a more accurate biographical account. It has also become clear that the work's appearance is determined in dialogue and within a given set of circumstances. An autoethnographic approach and a personal testimony provide a transparent view on these processes. It could even be suggested that this form of documentation adheres to the idea of reversibility. Moreover, apart from being informative and transparent by drawing up a personal testimony, it makes clear that the information will be interpreted in turn. If potential guidelines will be deduced from a conservator's testimony, this is done in awareness of the new personal input interpreting the material. This demonstrates the value of following autoethnographic methodology in conservation documentation. It raises awareness and forces critical thinking. Ideally the artwork's iterations will be followed continuously in a similarly critical manner, enriching the work with new testimonies as input for decision-making prior to future installation moments, keeping a close eye on the artwork's continuation in time.

[34] Dibbets, e-mail to author, November 1, 2011.

[35] Dibbets, see note 14.

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DOCUMENTING THE ANALOGUE PAST IN MARIJKE VAN WARMERDAM'S FILM INSTALLATIONS

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ABSTRACT

Dutch visual artist Marijke van Warmerdam is best known for her film-based installations, which present simple settings or actions, such as a girl performing a handstand, in short, 16mm film loops that are projected in the gallery space. In 2011 van Warmerdam took the decision to digitize most of her film installations. From a conservation perspective this is remarkable, since the disappearance of the analogue 16mm projectors from the gallery space significantly alters the experience of van Warmerdam's film-based works. However, with reference to recent ideas from performance studies, in particular the notion of "dramaturgy," I argue that there is no inherent difference between the analogue and digital versions of her installations. The case serves to explore a more radical freedom of interpretation in the execution of time-based media installations and proposes a perspective on documentation that shares responsibility among all different stakeholders, extending the "ecosystem" of time-based media conservation beyond the museum's walls.

KEYWORDS
ANALOGUE FILM | DIGITIZATION | PROJECTION | FILM INSTALLATIONS | MARIJKE VAN WARMERDAM

RESUMO

A artista holandesa Marijke van Warmerdam é sobretudo conhecida pelas suas instalações de filmes que apresentam situações ou ações simples, tais como uma rapariga a fazer o pino. São instalações de filmes de 16mm em *loop* projetados no espaço da galeria. Em 2011, van Warmerdam decidiu digitalizar a maior parte dos filmes das suas instalações. Do ponto de vista da conservação, isto é notável uma vez que a ausência, no espaço da galeria, dos projetores de 16mm analógicos altera significativamente a experiência das obras em filme de van Warmerdam. Contudo, baseada nas ideias recentes do âmbito dos estudos de performance, em particular a noção de "dramaturgia", defendo que não existe diferença fundamental entre as versões analógicas e digitais das suas instalações de filmes. O caso serve para explorar uma mais radical liberdade de interpretação e de apresentação de instalações de *time-based media* e propõe uma perspetiva, sobre a documentação, de partilha de responsabilidade entre os diferentes *stakeholders* alargando o "ecossistema" da conservação de *time-based media* para além das paredes do museu.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE
FILME ANALÓGICO | DIGITALIZAÇÃO | PROJEÇÃO | INSTALAÇÕES DE FILME | MARIJKE VAN WARMERDAM

Introduction

In 2011 the Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen in Rotterdam organized a monographic exhibition dedicated to the work of the Dutch artist Marijke van Warmerdam (born 1959), entitled *Close by in the distance*.[1] Van Warmerdam is best known for her film-based installations, which present simple settings or actions, such as a girl performing a handstand (*Handstand*, 1992), in short film loops that are projected in the gallery space. The exhibition also included a selection of non-filmic works, such as photographs, prints, and sculpture. On the occasion of the retrospective, her film-based works were digitized by EYE Film Institute Netherlands; in the exhibition they were for the first time shown as digital projections.

In this article I investigate the transition from analogue to digital film projection in van Warmerdam's work. First, I will focus on her oeuvre and the role of analogue film in it. Then, I will discuss the digitization on the occasion of the 2011 exhibition, and investigate to what extent the transition to digital impacted the appearance, meaning, and interpretation of these works. What, exactly, is lost? How are we to document the analogue origins of Van Warmerdam's work, and how are we to "perform" this documentation in the future conservation and exhibition of her works? In order to answer these questions, I refer to the field of performance studies, in particular the conceptualization of dramaturgy as both the composition of plays and the process that generates the composition in the play's performance. Based on this analogy with theatrical performance, I argue for a more radical freedom of interpretation in the execution of time-based media installations. Finally, with reference to ideas from the field of memory studies, I propose a perspective on documentation that shares responsibility among all different stakeholders, extending the "ecosystem" of time-based media conservation beyond the museum's walls.

Marijke van Warmerdam

Marijke van Warmerdam was trained as a sculptor at the Rijksakademie in Amsterdam, and in New York and Berlin, and lives and works in the Amsterdam area. Characteristic for Van Warmerdam's work is the fact that her films lack any form of narrative. The films focus on simple, everyday actions or settings, such as the swirls of milk poured into a glass of water (*Dream Machine*, 2006), a man taking a shower (*Douche* [Shower], 1995), or the white condensation patterns that airplanes leave behind against a deep blue sky (*Skytypers*, 1997). In addition, Van Warmerdam realizes unreal or fantastic scenarios in her films, whereby simple objects become involved in a strange occurrence, such as a hat dancing in thin air (*Le retour du chapeau* [The return of the hat], 1998); parrots turning a somersault on their perch (*Rrrolle — Red*, 2011, and *Rrrolle — Blue*, 2011); or a storm with rain, lightning, and hail breaking out over a bathtub (*Weather forecast*, 2000). Because of the complete lack of narrative, your eyes are drawn to the formal arrangement of the images, their colors, pattern, and rhythm — their emphasis on the elapse of time.

Because of its documentary, observational nature, Van Warmerdam's work is close to life. As the artist herself says, "I like art especially when it is mixed with life. Art can give a twist to life and vice versa. I really enjoy it when a work

[1] *Marijke van Warmerdam — Close by in the distance*. Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen, Rotterdam, 29 October — 22 January 2012.

comes very close to life and almost merges with it but stops just short."[2] Her works foremost invite us to focus on minor details of reality, settings, objects, or simple, everyday actions that we normally overlook. She uses the highly constructed setting of a film shoot to highlight the beautiful and miraculous aspects of reality, such as the drops of water dripping from the inside-out pockets of a boy's swimming trunks in *Lichte Stelle* (2000).

Van Warmerdam uses film, but she considers herself a *visual artist*, not a filmmaker. In an artist's interview conducted in 2003 and 2004 with Jaap Guldemond (then curator of the Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen) and Mark Paul Meyer (curator at EYE Film Institute Netherlands), she indicates that her film-based works are deliberately created for the gallery space, instead of the black box of the cinema theater (Guldemond and Meyer 2012: 139). The artist emphasizes the sculptural character of her work: the looped film, the projector, the projected image on the wall or screen, and the positioning of the installation in the room are all part of the entire work and enter into a relationship with the space in which it is exhibited (Guldemond and Meyer 2012: 141). Rather than in the traditional cinema theater, where the projection setup is hidden from view, then, her works should be displayed in galleries that are sufficiently lit to be able to distinguish all elements of the installation.

The use of space in Van Warmerdam's film installations can be roughly divided into two categories. First, there are installations that immerse the viewer in the work, such as *Kring* (Circle, 1992), a film portraying a circle of people recorded at a square in Marrakech by a rotating camera, which is projected on the four walls of a room by a rotating 16mm projector placed on a pedestal in the center of the room. The fact that the rotating projector mimics the rotation of the camera generates a flashlight effect, lighting up the people as the projector moves around. This setup encompasses the viewer and evokes the impression that one is being observed by the people portrayed (Guldemond and Meyer 2012: 143). A second category comprises works projected on screens or walls installed in a larger space, where the viewer can walk around them, as in the case of *Vliegtuigen* [Aeroplanes] (1994) (Guldemond and Meyer 2012: 141). Besides the use of space, another element that determines the sculptural character of her work is the size of the projection. *Kring*, for instance, should ideally be projected with the film image having a projection height of 240 cm, so as to make the people portrayed appear life-sized. In addition, Van Warmerdam prefers the image of *Kring* to start on the floor, to "ground" the people portrayed, as it were. So, in many cases the decision to "ground" the projections creates a fluid transition between the reality of the viewer and the filmed reality. This is the case in *Handstand*, where the lower part of the image also depicts a floor (Guldemond and Meyer 2012: 143).

Digitizing Van Warmerdam's Film Installations

As Van Warmerdam explains in the artist's interview, she prefers the photographic quality of the film image above that of video because of its higher and more stable image quality. Yet, by the time of her solo-exhibition at Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen in 2011, the quality of digital images had improved to a degree that for her it very nearly approached that of analog film. Also, it has become increasingly difficult

[2] Marijke van Warmerdam, quoted in the press release for her solo exhibition "Marijke van Warmerdam: Enkel, dubbel, dwars" [single, double, crosswise], Van Abbemuseum, Eindhoven, 23 February — 13 April 1997, accessed February 25, 2014, http://alexandria.tue.nl/vanabbe/public/publiciteit/persberichten/1997/PersberichtNEDWarmerdam.pdf [my translation].

to find the hardware needed for the analog projection of her works: the EIKI 16mm film projectors with xenon lamps that she prefers can only be found with great difficulty in second-hand markets, and have become quite expensive. A third factor is the disappearance of the expertise required for operating analog projection technology: Ruud Molleman, the technician who was responsible for most of the technical modifications made to Van Warmerdam's projectors, has recently retired (Monizza 2013: 74).[3] So by the time of the Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen show, where 20 of her film loops were to be projected, Van Warmerdam was more or less forced to find a different solution (Monizza 2013: 69-70 and 73).

In preparation for the exhibition, EYE Film Institute Netherlands digitally transferred and restored several of the artist's film loops. After a long process involving the artist; curators at two museums (Stedelijk Museum and Boijmans van Beuningen Museum); collection specialists at EYE; technicians at the projection equipment provider Beam systems; technicians at Cineco laboratories for film scanning and grading; as well as different technical solutions and equipment, the films were eventually presented in the form of Apple ProRes HQ 422 files, played with QuickTime, and projected using Panasonic PT-DZ570E projectors, which were hanging suspended from the ceiling or, in the case of *Handstand*, positioned on the floor (Monizza 2013: 77).[4]

In the 2003/2004 artist's interview, Marijke van Warmerdam already indicates that she could imagine a future where a work like *Handstand* will be shown as a digital projection. She says that, in such a case, it would not make sense to emphasize the physical presence of the projector with a pedestal, since a lightweight beamer does not require the sturdy table an analog film projector needs, and thus there would be no logical connection between the two. She also clearly indicates that the sound of the projector is not important to her: she does not consider it an essential part of the work. Moreover, she indicates that maintaining the sculptural aspect of her works is important, but that this can be achieved by other means — emphasizing the visible and audible presence of the projector is not a requirement to achieve the sculptural presence of her film installations (Guldemond and Meyer 2012: 144).[5]

For curators, conservators, and conservation theorists this is quite a striking view, since the disappearance of the 16mm film projectors in the 2011 exhibition, including, in most cases, their visible presence and the characteristic noise they produce, significantly alters the aesthetic experience of Van Warmerdam's works. However, as we will now see, from the perspective of contemporary performance theory, Van Warmerdam's decision to go digital makes perfect sense.

Time-based Media Installation as Performance

The Van Warmerdam case demonstrates what has been pointed out by numerous authors who have investigated the challenges posed to museum practice by time-based media art: namely, that these works are process-based, composite, and variable over time and space (see, for example, Grau 2007; Paul 2008; Shanken 2009; Graham and Cook 2010). Time-based media installations like those of Van Warmerdam fit in a tradition of works that cross-over between cinema, painting, and installation and that create a sense of "theatricality," in that they transcend the boundaries of

[3] However, Molleman still supplies artists, museums and galleries with the 16mm film loop projection equipment he developed through his company Studio 2M, assisted by Seab Deuling. See http://www.16mmfilmlooper.com/. I am grateful to Ruud Molleman for explaining the details of the projector and filmlooper system to me in a personal conversation in Amsterdam on March 3, 2014.

[4] Simona Monizza, collection specialist experimental film at EYE Film Institute Netherlands and responsible for the digitization of Van Warmerdam's films, has described the digitization process in great technical detail (2013).

[5] However, this does not imply that the artist neglects the presence of the projection equipment; projection, screen, and equipment are all taken into account and, regardless of their physical location, should look good in exhibition setups. Personal communication to the author, 17 October 2014.

space and incorporate a dimension of time (Valentini 2009: 54). In conservation theory, it has been recognized that one needs to reconceptualize the paradigms for each of these disciplines in order to develop a coherent framework for their long-term preservation (see, for example, Noordegraaf et al. 2013).

In the field of time-based media installations, inspiration for the reconceptualization of their conservation and exhibition has been found in the performing arts, in particular by recognizing that each exhibition of these works should be seen as an execution of the script or score that defines their core components (Laurenson 2006).[6] Researchers have shown how these works challenge the traditional "hands-off" or preventive approach of traditional conservation and require a more interventionist approach, recognizing the fact that the conservation of installation art, like the production of theatrical or musical performances, is an ongoing process, involving multiple actors and perspectives (Van Saaze 2013). As Pip Laurenson, Head of Collection Care Research at Tate, has pointed out, most contemporary time-based media artworks depend on a complex "ecosystem" for their production and distribution that extends beyond the walls of the museum: "There is a point where the conservator cannot develop all the in-depth expertise demanded by these works and a more distributed model is needed, supported by new alliances both inside and outside the museum" (Laurenson 2013: 41-42).

In the case of Van Warmerdam, the analogy with the performing arts is useful to understand the impact of digitization on the meaning and appearance of her film installations. In particular, the notion of "dramaturgy" can help to conceptualize the composition of Van Warmerdam's installations as the result of a collaborative practice of human and non-human (technical) actors, and to distinguish between those elements that belong to the works' core, and those that may be subject to change.

Contemporary approaches to dramaturgy define the concept as referring to a play's or performance's composition or structure — the constellation of elements that gives the play its appearance and meaning. Besides, it is also conceived as a process: an activity that concerns an engagement with the work's composition. In the words of the British theatre studies scholars Cathy Turner and Synne Behrndt, dramaturgy as an activity refers to the "engagement with the actual practical process of structuring the work, combined with the reflective analysis that accompanies such a process" (Turner and Behrndt 2008: 3). Although in many cases, especially in continental Europe, the creation and analysis of the composition of a play involves the work of a professionally trained dramaturg, Turner and Behrndt emphasize that this professional role does not coincide with the notion of dramaturgy as the compositional aspect of performances: a play always has a dramaturgy, even if no dramaturg was involved in its production.

Important for our purposes is the fact that dramaturgy as defined in performance studies distinguishes between the composition of a play-as-script and the composition of the play-as-performed. Turner and Behrndt, with reference to the work of the French theatre studies scholar Patrice Pavis, stress that "the performance must be considered as an independent occurrence, which cannot be explained as a realization of authorial (or directorial) intention" related to

[6] See also Richard Rinehart's unpublished paper (2005), "A System of Formal Notation for Scoring Works of Digital and Variable Media Art", http://www.bampfa.berkeley.edu/about/formalnotation.pdf.

the script: "In analyzing performance, we cannot assume that the script exists in causal relationship to the event" (Turner and Behrndt 2008: 6). Consequently, dramaturgy is tied to two different temporalities: the dramaturgy of the play text remains more or less the same and transcends space and time, whereas the dramaturgy of the play in performance is a unique live event that is always situated in space and time.

Additionally, the notion of dramaturgy is useful in recognizing that the production of complex works and their performances are collaborative activities, in which the activities of all actors involved affect the appearance and structure of the resulting work: "All theatre and performance makers whose work provokes or suggests new compositional strategies are involved in changing dramaturgies" (Turner and Behrndt 2008: 6). Recognizing that dramaturgy, understood as the composition of an artistic work, is the result of a collaborative activity, in combination with the distinction between the play-as-script and the play-as-performance outlined above, also allows us to reconceptualize the role of artistic intent in the execution of works: it prevents an automatic transposition of the intention of the play as written by its author to the play as performed by a specific group of theatre makers at a given time. In fact, in theatre the interpretation of a play at each new performance is critically evaluated for the ways in which it manages to translate the original intention of the text to the contemporary context in which it will be seen and heard.[7]

The conceptualization of the composition of time-based media artworks in dramaturgical terms allows for change, and, rather than emphasizing what is lost, stresses the value of what is gained in adapting scripts to the ever new ways in which we see and read the world (Turner and Behrndt 2008: 6). In this sense, a dramaturgical perspective does more justice to the actual practice of installing and experiencing new versions of time-based installation artworks. For example, the Dutch conservation science scholar Vivian van Saaze describes how the decision to replace the three television monitors originally used for the installation of Miguel-Ángel Cárdenas' work *25 Caramboles and Variations: A Birthday Present for a 25 Year Old* (1979) with three flat-screen plasma screens for the 2003 installation of this work, may seem quite controversial from a traditional conservation ethics perspective (2013: 15). However, if seen from a dramaturgical perspective, this decision makes perfect sense. The artist himself, who was involved in the reinstallation, indicated that he preferred his work to evolve with developments in technology, so preferred the "present-day feel" of the installation with the flat-screens (Van Saaze 2013: 14). In addition, the "obviously anachronistic approach" was not noticed by audience nor press (Van Saaze 2013: 14-15), another indication that the installers succeeded in the realization of a dramaturgy that meets contemporary expectations. Moreover, such a perspective does not preclude a performance that deliberately emphasizes the historical context in which a work originated: as long as the historical technology remains available and can be kept in working condition, it is possible to realize a "historical adaptation" of the work. This is no different for media art then it is for the performing arts, where, for example, for an execution of the ballet *Sleeping Beauty*, one can choose between Marius Petipa's 1890 classical

[7] In her seminal text on authenticity in time-based media artworks, Pip Laurenson has already used the model of two-stage art forms such as theatrical or musical performance to conceptualize the realization of time-based installation works of art as the result of, first, their conception by the artist, and, second, the act of installing the works (2006). However, whereas Laurenson maintains a role for the artist/author in defining the "work-defining properties" that are transposed from the artist's conception to the installed version, the concept of dramaturgy as presented here even more radically liberates performed instances of artistic work from the author's intent.

choreography or Mats Ek's 1996 reinterpretation of the work, staging the princess as a heroin addict.

Looking back at Marijke van Warmerdam's case from the perspective of dramaturgy, then, the analogue and digital versions of her 16mm film installations can be seen as two different executions of the same script. The fact that the analogue origins of the works are obscured in the 2011 exhibition does not pose a problem for the artist, since the photographic and sculptural quality she desires for her work can also be realized with current digital technology. From a film theory perspective, as I have argued elsewhere, the phenomenological qualities that are central to the work can also be maintained in digital projection (Noordegraaf 2014). And, as with the Cárdenas case described above, audiences and critics did not perceive the change in the visual and aural appearance of the original installation and highly appreciated the 2011 mise en scène, with the works projected on seemingly floating screens in the museum's large exhibition hall.[8] Finally, from a conservation point of view, one can argue that the technology used for the digital versions of the film-based works does not belong to their "work-defining properties" (Laurenson 2006), which means they can easily be replaced by similar ones — provided that the overall ensemble of projection, screen, and equipment looks good. However, this is different for some of Van Warmerdam's other installations, where the sculptural quality that she values so highly would be severely compromised if projected digitally. An example is *Kring*, where the rotation of the projector mimics that of the camera and thus directly refers to the original setting of the analog recording — in this case, the projector is part of the work's core.

What remains, however, is the question of the extent to which the analogue origins of Van Warmerdam's work have to be documented, in order to ensure that later executors of the "scripts" of her film installations have something on which to base their decisions. Or, in more general terms: how much documentation is required for deciding which dramaturgy is relevant for a specific performance of the work, and how do we ensure that the history of performances is not forgotten? That brings us to the last section of this article, on the performance of documentation.

Performing the Documentation of Time-based Installation Art

Conservators and conservation scientists have long recognized that, because of their reliance on technologies that are subject to rapid obsolescence, time-based media installations rely for their survival on documentation of their creation, exhibition, appearance, functionality and experience. For many conservators, creating extensive documentation provides the promise of being able to capture some of the processual and fluid nature of these works (Dekker 2013: 149). In the past decades, therefore, various museum curators and scholars have joined forces in developing elaborate models for documenting time-based media installations, such as the Variable Media Questionnaire developed by the Variable Media Network, the guidelines developed by the Matters in Media Art project, and the Media Art Notation System developed by Richard Rinehart (all discussed in Dekker 2013). The strength of these models is that they identify those elements of a work that are critical to its function. This can include, for example, the way visitors

[8] As in the review of the exhibition by Joost Zwagerman. 2011. "Beschouwing: De tentoonstelling Dichtbij in de verte van Marijke van Warmerdam." *De Volkskrant*, 21 December.

interact with a work, in which case a video registration can serve as documentation of the desired functionality.[9]

At the same time, it is clear that documentation will always give only a partial and sometimes arbitrarily chosen perspective on the original work. The response of conservation scientists has been to develop increasingly fine-grained models for the documentation of performance-based works, such as the three-tiered model for the documentation of the work of the British performance group Blast Theory by Annet Dekker (2013). As an alternative, the dramaturgical approach to conservation I propose here accepts that it is never possible to completely capture the manifestation and experience of every performance of a work. Rather than emphasizing what information and knowledge is lost, it focuses on what is gained when a script is reinterpreted at each new performance. Moreover, in the performing arts, the task of documenting past performances is the responsibility of many different stakeholders: critics write reviews and conduct interviews with makers documenting their motivations; theatre scholars and musicologists analyze and document the dramaturgy of performances in publications; actors, musicians, and dancers keep embodied memories of past performances; companies create program booklets and photo and video registrations; and visitors keep individual memories of their experiences. In the case of time-based media installations, I would argue, we can similarly distribute the responsibility for documenting and remembering among the various actors that form the "ecosystem" around these works.

The German literary scholar Aleida Assmann has conceptualized how the interaction between remembering and forgetting in such cultural "ecosystems" takes place. In her model of cultural memory — the way a society creates a framework of reference that transcends the individual life span of its members — forgetting is inextricably linked to remembering: "As in the head of the individual, also in the communication of society much must be continuously forgotten to make place for new information, new challenges, and new ideas to face the present and future" (Assmann 2008: 97). As she states, forgetting is the norm, whereas remembering is the exception, and "requires special and costly precautions" in the form of cultural institutions (98). Assmann distinguishes between two types of forgetting and remembering: active and passive. Contrary to active forgetting, which involves acts of violence and destruction, information or objects that are "passively forgotten" (lost, neglected, abandoned) may still be retrieved later, for example through archaeological methods. Once retrieved, the documents or objects may also again be remembered: when stored in the archives of cultural institutions, they become part of what Assmann terms our "reference memory" — the collection of documents or objects that we deem worthy enough to keep in order to prevent their disappearance. In order to be *actively* remembered, finally, the documents can be reactivated in society's "working memory," the realm of cultural memory that Assmann associates with the canon: "It is built on a small number of normative and formative texts, places, persons, artifacts, and myths which are meant to be actively circulated an communicated in ever-new presentations

[9] For example, see the documentation of David Rokeby's multimedia installation *The Giver of Names* (1991-) assembled by Caitlin Jones and Lizzie Muller in the context of the DOCAM project, http://www.fondation-langlois.org/html/e/page.php?NumPage=2121.

and performances" (100). With this model in mind, I would argue, we can trust that the cultural institutions we have built for the documentation of our time-based media installations — besides museums and archives, and including critics, art historians, visitors and the artists themselves — will jointly build the basis for the continued performance of that documentation that will ensure that the legacy of time-based media installation art keeps reoccurring in our active, working memory in constantly new and updated ways.

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THE CHALLENGE OF OPEN SOURCE FOR CONSERVATION

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ABSTRACT

In this chapter the main focus is on artists who create their work by applying open source strategies. Such artists work according to a specific mentality, while practicing art in ways that move beyond the object and stress the processual characteristics of todays network cultures. Exploring a way to comprehend such open practices in this article I address the consequences of such practices for conservation. In other words, what challenges arise when an artwork, or parts of it, can be copied, used, presented, and distributed freely and by everyone? While exploring the ideology of open source by analysing the artwork *Naked on Pluto*, I argue for a conservation practice that builds upon the idea of the "processual," which stresses the value of distribution and development through which knowledge and practices survive. In the end, I will focus on how these artworks might influence the role of the conservator.

KEYWORDS
CONSERVATION | OPEN SOURCE | PROCESSES

RESUMO

O presente artigo foca-se sobre artistas que produzem o seu trabalho utilizando estratégias de código aberto. Estes artistas trabalham de acordo com uma mentalidade específica produzindo arte que se situa para além do objeto e sublinham o carácter processual da atual cultura em rede. Explorando um modo de compreender este tipo de práticas, neste artigo considero as consequências destas práticas para a conservação. Ou seja, que desafios surgem quando uma obra de arte, ou parte dela, pode ser copiada, usada, apresentada e distribuída livremente seja por quem for? Enquanto exploro a ideologia do código aberto analisando a obra *Naked in Pluto*, defendo uma prática de conservação assente sobre o ideia do "processual" que sublinha o valor da distribuição e desenvolvimento através das quais sobrevivem o conhecimento e as práticas. Por fim, foco o modo como estas obras podem determinar o papel do conservador.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE
CONSERVAÇÃO | CÓDIGO ABERTO | PROCESSOS

Naked on Pluto

Naked on Pluto (2010) by Dave Griffiths, Aymeric Mansoux, and Marloes de Valk is a multiplayer text adventure that uses data available on Facebook.[1] The project can be experienced in different ways: as an online game with a dedicated website, as an installation that presents certain components, as a research blog, or in video documentation and workshops. As such, *Naked on Pluto* is an assemblage of different projects that circle around a "Plutonian identity." Before moving into the function and the relations between the various elements of the work, I will first explain the concept behind the work, and more specifically the game.

The game was inspired by the role social networks play in feeding the explosive market for personal data. Data on the Internet is often collected, without people's awareness, through scrapers and trackers that easily, but often in non-transparent ways, follow, direct, and extract information. This kind of invisibility obfuscates privacy settings. *Naked on Pluto* addresses the privacy issues underlying Facebook by exposing the nature and limits of the social network, while slowly pushing the boundaries of what is tolerated by the company. *Naked on Pluto* accomplishes this without violating Facebook's terms of service (Waelder 2014). The artists' extensive research into how users are exposed on social networks, how their data is used, and what having another life in a database means can be found on the research blog, alongside the various phases of *Naked on Pluto's* development. The game sits midway between old fashion text-based gaming and dystopian science fiction. Although it was not possible to play the game inside Facebook, the artists tried to mimic the aesthetic interfaces and corporate design formats as closely as possible, while still retaining their own Plutonian brand. As De Valk (2011) explains: "The design builds on the idea of overwhelming amounts of information, making it a challenge to find important information in a "tweet-like" aggregation of feeds that seems both familiar and confusing at the same time."

Once logged into the game, via one's Facebook name and password, the user is immersed in a story about surviving in and exploring the entertainment capital of the Solar System: Elastic Versailles revision 14 (EVr14), a city on planet Pluto, resembling Versailles in Paris. EVr14 runs as a corrupt artificial intelligence system. It was designed for the promotional parades of personal and ideological powers.[2] Immediately after a successful log-in, the game uses the available information on one's Facebook account, and mixes everything indiscriminately with the landscape of EVr14. A player's personal data and that of her/his "friends" become elements of a satirical, interactive fiction. *Naked on Pluto* can be seen as a caricature of the explosion of insidious online harvesting mechanisms that highlight the ambiguous character of social networks (personal intimacy versus "friends" as quantifiable assets). The goal of the game is to escape.

The structure of the game

The structure, or architecture, of *Naked on Pluto* is built in the same way that traditional games are built: The player starts with a fixed path, which opens up into problems with less rigidly defined solutions. Although the game has no defined levels, the architecture consists of different spaces that can be entered — for example, the *DanceRoom*, the

[1] The web address is: http://naked-on-pluto.net.

[2] For more information see: http://pi.kuri.mu/naked-on-pluto/ (accessed May 2015).

PalaceCourtyard, or the *Casino* — provided that the player has collected the right objects or answered a question. The game starts with a prolific textual exchange between the player and the computer, in which bots (a computer programme that performs automated tasks) mix and muddle up data, faces, and profiles, generating a framework of strangely familiar relationships. The complexity of the exchange increases as the game progresses. This intricate use of exchanges relates to the specifics of sandbox games. Gaming is generally understood as "a type of play activity, conducted in the context of a pretended reality, in which the participant(s) try to achieve at least one arbitrary, nontrivial goal by acting in accordance with rules" (Adams 2009, 3). However, sandbox games are less goal-oriented and do not follow strict rule-sets. The term "sandbox" refers more to the mechanics of play and how, as in a physical sand pit, the user is able to play creatively without specific goals.

In the case of *Naked on Pluto*, the gameplay is facilitated by using bots, among other means. The bots help players get around in the game. They might also give information, but can get information from the player as well. Often disguised, their job is to make players feel comfortable. For example, the "red velvet chatterbot," or "love-bot," tries to make "visitors feel loved, attractive and confident."[3] Love-bots are part of Elastic Versailles' intricate way of entertaining visitors and putting them into the right mind set to share personal Facebook information freely with its agents, and "soak up mountains of advertisements and spend coins like there's no tomorrow."[4] Next to receiving messages from bots, players are triggered by new and old information from people they know on Facebook. Players can free themselves from the "harassment" of the bots only by resisting the temptation and waiting until their resources run out, or until the logic of the plot loses all sense.

Naked on Pluto can be played with multiple people. Creative input can be shared with friends. In addition, players can contribute to the story by adding elements to the game, which can potentially lead to other games within the game. In other words, parts of the game world can be explored, built upon, and developed collaboratively. This ensures that players are not completely lost in the game or bored. But it also gives players a sense of agency and control over the game. To better situate a potential future of *Naked on Pluto,* I will discuss the relation to Facebook and its (dis)connection to open source.

Naked on Pluto **and Facebook**

Facebook, the "freely" accessible social networking service, started in February 2004. On its website it states that "Facebook's mission is to give people the power to share and make the world more open and connected."[5] Facebook is owned and operated by Facebook Inc. Any person 13 years of age and older can register and use the site by providing Facebook with their name, date of birth, and email address. After registering, users can create a personal profile to which they can add other users and post and exchange messages: publicly, privately, or through a text-based chat function. They can join "common interest user groups" and categorise their Facebook friends into lists, such as "Close Friends" or "People From Work." There is limited possibility to design a page, but there are multiple applications that can be used to "personalise" one's profile page. The popularity

[3] See blog entry *Naked on Pluto*: http://pluto.kuri.mu/2010/08/26/bots-bots-bots/ (accessed May 2012).

[4] Ibid.

[5] http://facebook.com (accessed May 2012).

of Facebook was still growing while *Naked on Pluto* was being developed.

The artists behind *Naked on Pluto* are concerned with certain aspects of social networking sites, in particular online privacy issues. Although it is not the goal of the game to resolve any of these issues, the artists seek to make the back-end more tangible by addressing often unseen tactics. As previously mentioned, this happens by making profile content and connected user data visible by using it in a different context. The game uses the "Facebook Connect" application (a freely available service from Facebook) and asks players for permission to access the following information (Plohman 2011, 240):

- Basic information: name, profile picture, gender, networks, user ID, list of friends, and any other information that is shared with others;
- Profile information: likes, music, TV, movies, books, quotes, "about me" details, activities, interests, groups, events, notes, birthday, home town, current city, website, religious and political views, education history, work history, and Facebook status;
- Photos and videos: photos uploaded, videos uploaded, and photos and videos of the user;
- Friends' information: birthdays, religious and political views, home towns, current cities, likes, music, TV, movies, books, quotes, activities, interests, education history, work history, groups, events, notes, photos, videos, photos and video of them, "about me" details, and Facebook statuses;
- Posts in a user's news feed.

There were several reasons to choose Facebook as a platform instead of other social networking sites. Foremost, it was used because of its size and reach. With millions of active users worldwide, Facebook has become the world's most popular social networking service. At the same time, Facebook has also fuelled discussions about online privacy with its dubious policy changes, data leaks, and discrepancies between the way it markets itself as open and self-regulatory and how it actually functions as a multi-billion-dollar business that answers to its investors (Olsthoorn 2012). Another appealing and practical aspect of using the platform is that Facebook makes it easy and possible for anyone to access their user information, without checking by whom or why. This is possible with the so-called "Facebook application." The application does not run on the Facebook platform and is outside of Facebook's control, but it authorises access to user's data (De Valk 2011). *Naked on Pluto* uses the availability and manifestations of commercial applications to question the inner workings. It is through infiltration that the workings of the system(s) are exposed. This is also one of the reasons why the artists do not want to violate Facebook's regulations, because that would mean the end of the game, and would effectively halt their efforts to make the system more visible from within.

What happens to the conservation of an artwork when a restricted commercial platform that is not easily accessible is used, particularly when its regulations and terms continually change? If it were up to the artists, it would be possible. As mentioned, they document their entire process. All steps of *Naked on Pluto's* development are freely available. However, at this moment, it is not possible to gain access

to Facebook's source code to ensure that that part of the game will function correctly. When working within a closed environment, one always has to deal with technical problems that cannot be controlled. Changes to the Facebook API might change data feeds, and in the worst case could lead to the breakdown of the game or the disappearance of data. For example, the bots that rely on data from your Facebook friends might not have access to the same data anymore, which affects the content and goal of the work since it loses the connection. For conservators, this is of course a problem that is hard to overcome. However, this is not the concern of the artists. As they see it, *Naked on Pluto* is a specific comment on Facebook and the state of social media at the time when it was developed. The game loses all meaning when that context changes.

Concerning future presentations, the artists emphasise the organisation of workshops with the game-engine instead of keeping the game technically alive. They also write about and add contextual information to the documentation of *Naked on Pluto*. It is important to note that this attitude signals the processual part of *Naked on Pluto* and, as I will argue in the upcoming sections, ensures its longevity, albeit in different forms. In the next section I describe open source strategies and analyse how these are used in *Naked on Pluto*, while showing how this way of working affects and benefits conservation. While exploring the value of open source, I argue for a practice that departs from the idea of the processual by stressing the significance and need for acknowledgement of distributed networks through which knowledge and practices survive.

Pros and cons of open source

Open source is based on and used as an engineering principle in which the software, code, instructions, and/or tools on how to work the code are open for anyone to use, change, or distribute. In the last decade, the use of "open concepts" has exploded to the point where the meaning of the word "open" can vary greatly.[6] It goes beyond this paper to go into the history and different voices that surround open source in more detail; instead, I will show how "open" is used in *Naked on Pluto*,[7] and will explore in particular its challenges in relation to conservation.

Naked on Pluto is developed in Free/Libre Open Source Software (FLOSS), and made available under a GNU Affero General Public License (AGPLv3).[8] All of the software is documented on Gitorious, a free and open source web service for managing, sharing, and viewing git repositories (the data structures). Gitorious is a way of archiving code, and is also available as an installable web application so that third parties can use the interface in their own installations.[9] Other features of Gitorious are the ability to host/clone repositories, view changes, and leave comments. Using Gitorious allowed each of the artists to work independently, experiment within their clone, and push the changes to the main repository once they were ready (Plohman 2011, 240). In short, anyone, including museum staff, can use the material on the git repository as they see fit. A downside of open source is that (external) expertise may be required in order to understand and use the software.[10] A related challenge (as discussed previously) is that it can be hard to decipher, and is not always properly documented or annotated, making it difficult to understand why choices

[6] The amount of information on the meaning and use of open source is overwhelming. See, among many others, Kelty (2008) on the history and cultural significance of Free Software. For some outstanding publications regarding the use of open concepts in art, see the edited volume by Mansoux and De Valk (2008) and Ippolito (2002) on why art must be free (as in free speech).

[7] One of the main challenges concerns the ideology that underlies the definition of 'open'. In his dissertation, Mansoux (2015) analyses and reflects upon the plurality of, sometimes overlapping, sometimes contradicting, ideological and ethical interpretations of free culture practices.

[8] This copyleft license is aimed towards server side applications and they specifically choose it to highlight and contrast the closed nature of Facebook's source code (Waelder 2014). For more information about this specific license, see http://www.gnu.org/licenses/agpl-3.0.html.

[9] This is one of the main differences from GitHub, another popular online web service with similar features that appeared around the same time (both 2008). Another difference is that GitHub consists of mostly convenience features, while Gitorious focuses on community-based features, which helps build a community around a project.

[10] This is also true for the reading and understanding of the structure of Gitorious, which is not always apparent to an outsider.

were made. As such, the learning curve of open source can be an obstacle, especially for those not familiar with the practice and ideology. This is a problem underlying many open practices. It is not easy to learn a completely new system, especially one that is often tweaked or changed to the point where multiple versions can consequently lead to compatibility problems. As Mansoux and De Valk explain, this is because, unlike many proprietary systems, open systems approach their users differently: "Its design is based on the assumption that users are capable of learning to master the system, instead of the assumptions that users are helpless" (2008, 11).

These challenges do not necessarily pose problems for conservators. For one, as open source code allows access, it increases possibilities for maintenance that can keep the work operational. Furthermore, the challenges posed by learning to programme or use open source software is countered by a lively community of users and developers that are active in helping others with their problems via mailing lists, forums, and IRC (Internet Relay Chat) channels. Another reason why open source sometimes poses problems is its incompatibility with some proprietary hard- or software systems. However, this is also a problem with many proprietary hard- and software. In addition, most proprietary systems use the concept of planned obsolescence, which means that a piece of software or technology has a limited build-in life span (Bulow 1986). Moreover, whereas the incompatibility in open source practices encourages out of the box thinking — i.e., looking for other possibilities when something is not working — the freedom of choice in many proprietary systems quickly comes to a halt when technology stops functioning, or worse, companies stop doing business. Without access to source codes, a programme cannot be developed further or adjusted to new needs. In conclusion, the use of open source strategies makes it easier for conservators to access the work, and thus maintain or recreate it.

However, one of the main parts of *Naked on Pluto* is not documented on Gitorious: the platform that the game works with, i.e., the data in and of Facebook. This means that if Facebook closes or changes its APIs, the game is useless since there is no more input data. A solution to this challenge can be found by looking at the function and distribution potential of open source, in particular as it is used in *Naked on Pluto*, and how these allow for different processes to happen.

Open source and the museum

Following the open source ideologies of the artist behind *Naked on Pluto*, the artwork can be characterised by the processes of distribution and re-use of concepts and ideas. This is an important issue for conservation, as it may have many consequences for the perception of the artwork (and, consequently, to the economic value of the work). Conservation thus faces two challenges: First, in what way can conservation work within the confines of a restricted system? And second, what are the consequences of dealing with such a process, where parts can be copied, used, presented, and distributed freely and by everyone?[11] Whereas some museums have become accustomed to the idea that an artwork can no longer be presented with the original material or equipment, how will they handle open source?

[11] Some solutions may be found in the conservation of games. The challenges of the conservation of gaming have attracted some attention among scholars and researchers. See, for example, Kirschenbaum et al. (2009); Winget (2008); and Lurk et al. (2012). The former two focus specifically on approaches to emulation that are developed in digital communities that enrich the object centered method of institutions with additional layers of information, from anecdotal narratives to contextual descriptions. Lurk et al. (2012) focuses on (mass) content preservation through emulation instead of selection of discrete aspects. However, there are no case studies yet of the conservation of processes.

Who or what will be responsible, decisive, or accountable for artworks that are open (freely available for everyone to use, share, document, collect, conserve), dispersed, distributed, and dependent on people outside the scope of the museum?

To find answers to these questions, I organised a discussion with conservators, curators, and researchers in December, 2012. *Naked on Pluto* was used as an example to study the biography of a software-based artwork that depends on third parties, and functions on open source principles.[12] Although many interesting points surfaced, ranging from the method of questioning to the possibilities of technical preservation, it became apparent that museums find it difficult to deal with open licenses. The object-oriented way of thinking about collecting and conservation, and the processual way of thinking from open practices, where the authorial role is addressed differently, may clash.

From a licensing point of view, the question about ownership is not relevant, because if someone else modifies the work, it is no longer the same work, since one of the underlying rules of some open software licenses is that changes are credited. Modification can be made, but it would have to be credited as "based on *Naked on Pluto.*" This does not mean that the artists mentioned do not have a preferred way of exhibiting, or documenting, the work. It means that there are no fixed rules. As such, anyone can present, exhibit, preserve, document, or do as they see fit with the project without permission from the artists. Potentially, even an acquisition could happen just as easily, where a gallerist or distributor could sell a work to anyone interested. More importantly, the artists see the acquisition process in reverse: The process and the development is what they are paid for, and the outcome is for everyone else to use. This means that economic "acquisitions" at institutions are related to an engagement with the practice, and not to the outcome of that process. Put into practice, this would extend the role of the museum to one of producer, or facilitator, of artworks.

In summary, the way a work develops is informed by the "licenses" that are used. Even though they are not necessarily written down, further distribution and the future of the work could be influenced. Consequently, it is crucial to first understand the meaning and function of the "licenses" used and versioning methods before trying to describe and document a work. Also, the economic acquisition model would likely differ from other practices. For example, in performance or conceptual art, the "idea," "concept," or "instruction" of the work is acquired by museums. But in most cases the institute acquires a development — and possibly an evolving — process. What, then, are the consequences of this reversed practice for conservators? How is a process conserved?

Shifting roles: from artists to conservator and curator

The production of artworks by museums is not necessarily new; museums already have a tradition in commissioned artworks. However, in most cases (for example Whitney's Artport and Tate's online commissions) these works have a different status.[13] They are not part of the collection archive, which means that the museum is not required to take care of, or preserve these works.[14] Similarly, conservators are closely (re)tracing creation processes to understand which decisions were made and, consequently, how a work can be preserved.

[12] The discussion was part of the working conference *Collecting and Presenting Born-Digital Art* (CPBDA). This particular group, moderated by Gaby Wijers (LIMA) and Paulien 't Hoen (SBMK), with special guest Pip Laurenson (Tate), discussed the process a work goes through when it becomes part of a collection and the information that is needed to keep the artwork alive in the future. They involved different roles and disciplines from artist to registrar and from curator to conservator. For more information, see http://www.baltanlaboratories.org/borndigital/ (accessed August 2013) and Dekker (2013b, 3-11).

[13] For more information see: http://whitney.org/Exhibitions/Artport and http://www2.tate.org.uk/intermediaart/archive/net_art_date.shtm (accessed May 2015).

[14] For more information about these kinds of contracts, and the difference between collection and commissioned work in relation to the Whitney Artport, see Verschooren (2007, 5-6). This is not to imply that museums are not trying to change this situation. For example, Whitney Artport (curated by Christiane Paul) is trying to bring the commissioned net artworks into the collections. Similar initiatives are undertaken by other museums. For example, initiatives of the Variable Media Network and Matters in Media Art. <?> This is a pun to the exhibition title "When attitudes become form," which was curated in 1969 by Harald Szeemann. He described a "new" group of artists who were less interested in making final objects and more interested in showing the artistic processes in an "exhibition." As he described, "The major characteristic of today's art is no longer the articulation of space but of human activity; the activity of the artist has become the dominant theme and content" (Szeemann 1969). According to Szeemann, the attitude

Although this may not be the final solution for net art, certain aspects are stable, such as some parts of the *Naked on Pluto* installation — for example the books, the marketing materials that are part of the installation and the written code. These traces can be presented in such a way that "form becomes attitude."[15] Such efforts need to recognise their contradictory or paradoxical status. As with documentation, they are reconstituent traces.[16] Next to these could be emulations of processes that open to new explorations and discoveries. As such, a museum moves from being a custodian of "dead objects" to a place where conservation of the old goes hand in hand with production of the new. In this sense, an "open conservation method" means engaging with the work on its own terms, thus following different directions. In other words, by embracing variability, the core remains. The core connects to the value (and excitement) of open source that is connected to its practice through engagement in the developing process, its extension into the future, and the re-use (of parts) of the work.

Proposing that a work is open, and can be shared among many, challenges the museum's traditional focus on the original, or authentic work. As I have explained elsewhere, this is not to say that these works are not authentic (Dekker forthcoming). In short, with artworks that are networked and/or processual, authenticity can be identified in the relations between different components and/or artworks. In other words, the question is not whether museums can deal with the notion of a value-free artwork, but can the museum be FLOSS? When adhering to an open approach (in the sense of re-creation and reinterpretation), reinstallation is less of an obstacle. It would have to be acknowledged that multiple versions — or even parts of a work — exist and are scattered around different platforms. Freedom of choice is possible and likely leads to interesting results. This process shows itself already in the practice of curating. Firstly, even though it may be possible to preserve the technical aspects of net artworks, it becomes near impossible to preserve works that rely on third parties that use proprietary hard- or software. In these cases, the value of open source seems not to matter as much. This is because alternative solutions need to be conceived that are more likely found in collaborative efforts of curators and conservators considering both of their, and perhaps other, expertises. Secondly, in cases where a project is part of a larger continuum of other online or offline projects, the question of what constitutes a work is not always easy to answer. A process such as this is more about selection, organisation, and mediation — curation — than conservation.[17] Rudolf Frieling, curator at SFMOMA, describes a position where the museum as a "producer" is able to re-exhibit works via performative strategies, including commissioning other artists to conceive new installations for collected artworks (Frieling 2014). Thus, determining what and how an artwork continues is more important than what and how to preserve it. In these cases, documentation may guide the continuation of a process.

This leads to the conclusion that the conventional roles of artists and (museum) professionals are changing. Whereas the artist may still present the initial idea, and at times even guide the development of the work after its launch, in many cases and at a certain point(s) the artwork is distributed in a way that gives various parties control over the work. Besides challenging common concepts and strategies in presentation and conservation, these artworks also show that conventional roles are turning. Artists are not necessarily the main actors anymore. For example, the public can take over parts of the work. If the work itself

of the artists greatly determined the form of the work; the practice of the artists that I am describing here turns this statement around.

[15] This is a pun to the exhibition title "When attitudes become form," which was curated in 1969 by Harald Szeemann. He described a "new" group of artists who were less interested in making final objects and more interested in showing the artistic processes in an "exhibition." As he described, "The major characteristic of today's art is no longer the articulation of space but of human activity; the activity of the artist has become the dominant theme and content" (Szeemann 1969). According to Szeemann, the attitude of the artists greatly determined the form of the work; the practice of the artists that I am describing here turns this statement around.

[16] For information about the changing meaning and function of documentation in conservation, see Dekker (2013a).

[17] It could be argued that this is just as much the practice of a conservator. Whereas I do not deny this, in cases of "versioning" the next instance of the artwork relates to production and facilitation of the new rather then treatment of the "old."

is distributed in various versions, forms and platforms, knowledge from a wider perspective is needed to consider development, presentation, and possibly conservation of what has become part of a work. This is not to imply that the role of artists is less important; artists can provide insights that are hard to obtain without them. They are important sources to understand the intentions of the work, but their perspectives should not be limited to restoring the past. Equally, their knowledge should be used to enable an open future. In this sense, Frieling (2014) signals a new role for the museum as a producer of artworks that are validated by the artist(s). However, artists do not want to be involved in all cases. Unlike Frieling's suggestion of "an 'expanded performance' where the artist, the institution and the public are co-producers" (Frieling 2014, 156), the museum is more of a facilitator of development and processes.

It would be easy to say that, when acquired, net artworks will change the structure of the museum. Although this may be true, it is more fruitful to see how a new *modus operandi* will affect other, more traditional, works of art. Such a change in perspective will bring insight into practices that are inherently processual. At the same time, this will generate new knowledge within traditional approaches and methods.

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SUDDENLY BUTTERFLIES! DOCUMENTING LIFE THROUGH MARTA DE MENEZES *NATURE*?

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ABSTRACT

This paper will address the case of *Nature?* (1999-2000), an artwork by the Portuguese artist Marta de Menezes (b.1975), which belongs to MEIAC collection. The artist explores the possibilities that modern biology offers to artists, using its techniques as new art media. In the case of *Nature?*, she altered the patterns on butterflies' wings, which are shown alive during the exhibition of the artwork. Using this case as an example, we will explore the challenges posed to museums by artworks that include live beings.
As we will see, documentation is crucial to ensure the transference of the large amount of information that is involved in the artwork's presentation and preservation. However, since it is a kind of knowledge beyond Conservation's scope, some questions still remain regarding documentation's proper format.

KEYWORDS
BIOART | CONSERVATION | MARTA DE MENEZES | MEIAC | NATURE?

RESUMO

Este artigo dedica-se ao estudo do caso de *Nature*? (1999-2000), uma obra da artista portuguesa Marta de Menezes (n. 1975) pertencente à colecção do MEIAC. A artista explora as possibilidades oferecidas pela biologia moderna, utilizando as técnicas desenvolvidas nesta área enquanto materiais artísticos. No caso de *Nature*?, Menezes alterou os padrões das asas de borboletas, que são mostradas vivas durante a exposição. Usando este caso como exemplo, analisaremos os desafios colocados aos museus pelas obras que incluem seres vivos.
Como veremos, a documentação é fundamental para assegurar a transmissão da avultada quantidade de informação necessária à apresentação e preservação da obra. No entanto, dado tratar-se de conhecimento que fica para além do âmbito da Conservação, permanecem dúvidas acerca de qual o formato de documentação mais adequado.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE
BIOARTE | CONSERVAÇÃO | MARTA DE MENEZES | MEIAC | NATURE?

Introduction

There are various ways of seeing the world and understanding the same event. Although we all acknowledge this, in everyday life, one or two explanations usually suffice. The explanation we choose varies according to our interests, our personality and our background, or it may just be (and this is often the case) the one that serves the task at hand.

When in scientific or scholarly environments, we also tend to favor certain ways of seeing the world (certain kinds of explanations, instead of others) aligning ourselves with particular branches of knowledge. It may be the complex social phenomena that fascinate us; it may be the numbers and statistics that help us to make sense of it all; it may be the understanding of atoms and molecules and all the tiny things that produce a living organism, etc... Either way, we generally choose a certain point of view regarding reality, which will dictate the way we understand it, talk about it, and communicate our findings to others. Learning different ways of understanding reality, which may include different and strange ways of reasoning, can be uncomfortable, and most of us tend to shy away from this. Nonetheless, art can force us out of our comfort zone, daring us to acknowledge new points of view. As a whole, conservation has been covering more and more topics and areas of research, trying to keep up with the new art forms that emerge. Still, artists keep presenting yet newer challenges.

In the last few decades, documentation has been widely acknowledged as a crucial strategy for contemporary art conservation. It has been evolving, and new strategies have been developing, to deal with the lack of methodology in the documentation of some features of the artworks, including the use of light, sound, movement, space or new technologies.[1] But what about artworks that include live beings and tissues?

Using the case of *Nature?* by the Portuguese artist Marta de Menezes as an example, we will explore the challenges posed to museums by artworks that include live beings, examining how documentation can help us in this case as well as its limitations.

[1] On this topic, check the results of the project *Inside Installations: Preservation and Presentation of Installation Art* (2004-2007), which comprised several experiences on the documentation of immaterial features of the artworks. www.inside-installations.org

A few notes on bioart

Since the late 1980s, some artists have been working with biologically-related concepts and materials. Although the relationship between art and biology can be traced to much earlier times — for instance in the study of human anatomy, which is still part of many art curricula (Menezes and Graça 2007) — in the last few decades, artists have developed new ways of connecting to biology and biotechnology, using their knowledge and techniques in the artwork's production. As Suzanne Anker, one of the pioneer artists in this area, notes:

> **What is novel is the adaptation and exploitation of biologically generated art that harnesses the advancing developments in technical apparatus, molecular primers, and laboratory procedures to make visible or statistically believable what has never been accounted for before (Anker 2014).**

Despite not being universally accepted, the word *bioart* or *bio-art* is frequently used when referring to artworks that

use biology and biotechnology as artistic media. As with many other ill-defined words coined to describe new artistic practices, bioart has become an umbrella concept, which is why Jens Hauser calls it an "Etymological Monster." The curator of renowned exhibitions in this area, such as *L'art biotech*[2] (2003) and *SK-Interfaces*[3] (2008), argues that a distinction has to be made between the artists who use science as media and those who conceptualize it purely as just another topic.

Despite recognizing these problems of definition, Palmira Costa (2007) highlights three of what she considers to be the main "features" of the artworks tagged as bioart. First, they tend to question such categories as natural and artificial, human and animal, nature and culture. Second, many artists include live beings in their artworks, which fuels most of the debate around bioart, as many question the exploitation of animals for artistic purposes. Third, bioart can act as a critical mirror of technoscience. The artists' response to its evolution ranges, according to Palmira Costa, from wonder to fear or skepticism.

For some artists, as in the case of Marta de Menezes the use of biology and biotechnology as artistic media is as natural as the use of other technologies and will probably have a similar evolution (Menezes and Graça 2007).

About Marta de Menezes

Marta de Menezes is a Portuguese artist, born in 1975. Despite having graduated in painting from Faculdade de Belas Artes of Universidade de Lisboa (Lisbon's University Fine Arts Faculty), Menezes left the studio behind to work in scientific laboratories. Her work is not simply inspired by science, it is produced with science.

While earning her degree in painting, Marta de Menezes became fascinated with the world of scientific laboratories, with which she came into contact through personal relationships. Even though, at first, this was mostly a visual fascination, eventually Menezes began thinking of science and scientific technologies (particularly in the field of biology) in terms of their potential as artistic media.

Having no scientific education, she has to learn the basic theoretical and practical knowledge that guides the research at each laboratory she works in. This happens virtually every time she embarks on a new project, since every new project tends to involve a new area of expertise, and therefore a new laboratory. In the last decade, she has worked with different areas of research, such as evolutionary biology, cell biology, functional magnetic resonance imaging, and tissue culture, among others. Despite being related to biology, they all represent different branches of research and concern different techniques.

***Nature*? (1999-2000)**

While finishing her degree on Fine Arts, Marta de Menezes came across a paper in the scientific journal *Nature* that introduced her to the research being done at the Institute of Evolutionary and Ecological Sciences of Leiden University. More precisely, she discovered the university's research on the evolution and development of butterfly wing patterns at Paul Brakefield's laboratory of Evolutionary Biology.

In order to identify the factors that affect how the wing pattern is formed, the researchers interfere with the normal

[2] *L'art biotech* was held in Le Lieu Unique (Nantes), between March 14 and May 4, 2003. It brought together some of the pioneer artists of bioart, such as Eduardo Kac, Joe Davis, Oron Catts, and George Gessert, amongst others.

[3] *SK-interfaces* was held in Liverpool, between February 1 and March 30, 2008, and sought to explore how artists use skin, materially and metaphorically, as an interface.

development of the wing. As a consequence, they have found ways to modify the wing pattern without changing the genes passed on to succeeding generations. Therefore the resulting butterflies display wing patterns never before seen in nature and that will never be seen again, since they do not pass on to their offspring (Menezes 2003). For Marta de Menezes, this had artistic potential that she wanted to explore.

After contacting Brakefield, Menezes packed her bags and went to the Netherlands into an auto-proposed residency at his laboratory. This was the first time that she had worked in a laboratory, and it was the first time this laboratory received an artist in residence. Neither of them knew exactly what to expect.

The artist reports that one of the first questions she was asked in the lab meetings was: "If you come here every day and do what we do, why do you call your work *art* and ours *science*?" Straight out of a Fine Arts School, Menezes had never been posed such a question, and the answer didn't come straight away. Through time, though, it became clear to her that the difference was not a matter of method, but of the questions being asked.[4] The title of the artwork that came out of that residency — *Nature?* — is a major clue to the artist's perspective. It was not the evolution of the butterfly wing patterns that mattered to Marta de Menezes, but the very distinction between what is natural and what is not. Are these modified butterflies natural beings? Do the subtle interventions in their wings make them artificial? Let us explore the methods used, in this case, to modify the butterfly wing patterns.

To conduct her experiments, the artist used two butterfly species: *Bicyclus anynana* (Fig.1), originally from Africa, and *Heliconius Melpomene* (Fig.2), from South America. *Bicyclus* have wings with brown backgrounds and prominent eyespots. *Heliconius* have brightly colored patches on a black background to warn predators that they are toxic.

During the pupal stage of the butterfly's life cycle, it is possible to interfere with the normal development of the wing (Fig. 3). Using microcautery — which means damaging specific regions of the wing with a heated needle — one can delete, modify or generate new eyespots in the wings of *Bicyclus* butterflies, or change the pattern of color patches in the case of *Heliconius* butterflies. It is also possible to graft a portion of tissue to another position on the same wing or even into another butterfly. Since there are no nerves in the wing, the procedures do not cause pain to the butterfly. The pupal wing tissue recovers after damage, leaving no scars visible on the adult wing (Menezes 2003). Menezes intervenes in just one of the butterfly wings, in order to highlight the difference between the "untouched" or natural wing and the altered one (Fig. 4).

But how did these experiments translate into an artwork, and into public exhibitions in galleries and museums?

As mentioned before, the artist wanted to question the distinction between what we consider to be natural and what we find un-natural. To achieve that, she believes that the presence of living butterflies is crucial. In her words:

> **The question of being or not being natural wouldn't be clear if people saw dead butterflies. When dead, the organism is always perceived as an object; the question of being natural or not loses its importance. (...) if the butterflies weren't alive, people would try to see the work**

[4] Personal interview with Marta de Menezes, March 12, 2013.

FIG. 1 Bicyclus anyana
Lepdata: a Database of Butterfly Wing Patterns, version 1.0, www.leptadata.org, licensed under CC- BY-NC-SA 3.0

FIG. 2 Heliconius melpomene
Source: Wikimedia Commons; author: Richard Bartz; licenced under CC BY-SA 2.5

FIG. 3 Intervened pupa
Source: www.martademenezes.com
© Marta de Menezes

FIG. 4 Bicyclus butterfly with an altered wing (on the right)
Source: www.martademenezes.com
© Marta de Menezes

in the "drawings" in the wings and not in the fact that the butterflies had been altered.[5]

Marta de Menezes' first experience with exhibiting the work attests to her conclusion. After her residency, some of the altered butterflies were displayed dead at the University's library. She reports that this experience was not really intended as an artistic presentation. It happened because the laboratory felt sorry that she would leave without showing the public what she had been doing.

As a result of this presentation, many people thought that Menezes had painted the wings after the butterflies were dead. According to the artist, even after being told about the process, many maintained their initial theory, disbelieving the explanation.[6]

Even though, at that point, Menezes was not contemplating a more serious presentation of the work, it became clear that, when she did, the butterflies would have to be alive.

A more definitive configuration of the work was created when Marta de Menezes had the opportunity to show it at *Ars Electronica 2000* (Fig. 5). That year, *Ars Electronica* exhibited three artistic projects that used biology as a medium: one from Marta de Menezes (*Nature?),* one from Joe Davis and one from the group *Tissue Culture & Art*. Each of the three was given a sort of greenhouse of 10 x 5m to work with and to do what they wished inside.

The artist wanted the public to have access to the butterflies and to be able to experience the heat, humidity and smell that one feels when sharing a space with these kinds of butterflies, which come from tropical climates. She felt this reality-check would lead people to question how natural or un-natural the butterflies really were. This implied that the greenhouse had to have a double door to prevent them from escaping.

Inside the greenhouse were different kinds of plants, all the equipment needed to achieve the right climate conditions, food for the butterflies, and the equipment to perform the interventions, which were done live, by Menezes, during the exhibition. Outside was a slide presentation with images of the altered butterflies so that the public could see more clearly the alterations, which are not so evident in moving butterflies. Menezes also included a video about the work being done at the Dutch laboratory.

The artist's enthusiasm for letting people experience the butterflies proved to be too optimistic, since many of them died during this exhibition, due to incorrect handling by the public. In later presentations, she used some of the plants inside the greenhouse as a barrier, to limit the public's access to the pupas.

Between 2000 and 2007 *Nature?* was exhibited nine times, maintaining more or less this configuration.[7] In 2006 the work's exhibition rights were acquired by the Spanish Museo Extremeño e Iberoamericano de Arte Contemporáneo (MEIAC). (Fig. 6)

Managing living materials: "These artworks literally live and die. They are an example of art with a lifespan — the lifespan of a butterfly."[8]

Since it is an installation-type artwork, the conservation of *Nature?* faces all the challenges that are common to artworks

[5] Personal interview with Marta de Menezes, Mach 12, 2013. Translated from Portuguese.

[6] Personal interview with Marta de Menezes, March 12, 2013.

[7] *Nature?* was first exhibited in 2000, at *Next Sex* in Ars Electronica 2000 (Austria). Further exhibitions include: in the Royal Pump Rooms, Lemington Spa (UK), and in the Bourneville Centre for the Visual Arts (UK) in 2005; in *Touch Me* (Croacia), in KIBLA (Slovenia), in the exhibition *META.morfosis (*MEIAC, Spain). and in ARCO'06 (Spain) in 2006; and in 2007 it was shown at the Centraal Museum, Utrecht, (Netherlands) as part of the exhibition *Genesis*.

[8] Quote from Marta de Menezes website: www.martademenezes.com

FIG. 5 *Nature?* at Ars Electronica 2000, exterior view.
Source: Ars Electronica Picture Archive, www.aec.at

FIG. 6 *Nature?* at *META.morfosis* exhibition, MEIAC, 2006
Source: www.martademenezes.com

with many elements and specific spatial configurations.[9] Alongside those challenges, it has the particularity of including live elements — the butterflies. This creates a handful of requirements which have to be addressed before, during, and after the artwork's installation and exhibition. Among the questions conservators must consider are: where do the butterflies come from? What is their destiny after the exhibition? How and by whom are the interventions made?

When we inquired of Marta de Menezes how much time was required for the preparation of the work before the exhibition, she told us that all she needed was the greenhouse to be ready and acclimatized to put the butterflies in there. Unfortunately, in her experience, this is a lot easier said than done. In some exhibitions, due to delays, the butterflies had to stay in less than ideal situations: in a museum's bathroom with a humidifier for two days, for instance, or even inside an aquarium in a curator's kitchen, in another case. This shows that when working with artworks that include living beings, ordinary events such as delays can have serious consequences. Moreover, there are numerous things to take into account that conservators, who don't usually work with living beings, won't necessarily remember.

One of the things that intrigued us from the start was: where could the museum find these kinds of butterflies? We assumed that they were sold, as are so many other exotic animals, and that there would have to be a special permit for that. The artist told us that, in fact, since they are fairly common butterflies, they have no commercial value and are not usually sold.[10] She gets the butterflies from the previously mentioned Dutch laboratory, and that is the contact she left with the museum to acquire the butterflies.[11]

Since it includes live animals, *Nature?* implies more complex maintenance procedures during its exhibition than other types of artworks. Keeping the butterflies alive involves sustaining the right climate conditions inside the greenhouse, which are 27ºC and 85 -90% R.H. It also involves feeding the butterflies with the right plants and fruits. Note that, although they are the same species, caterpillars and butterflies eat differently. For example, while *Heliconius* caterpillars eat passion fruit plants, when they are in the butterfly phase they eat nectar from flowers. When in an artificial environment — as *Nature?* is — an artificial nectar (which is usually sold for hummingbirds) has to be prepared.

The lifespan of these kinds of butterflies varies according to the season: in the wet season, in which there is more food, they live significantly longer than in the dry season, lasting several months in the first case. In *Nature?* the climate conditions inside the greenhouse mimic wet season conditions, which means the butterflies live longer, outliving the artwork. This leaves the question of what to do with them after the exhibition. Marta de Menezes chose to give them to butterfly houses. This implies the need to find nearby butterfly houses and contacting them beforehand, which can also have additional advantages. In some exhibitions, the hosting organizations borrowed the required plants from the butterfly house to which the butterflies were destined, avoiding further expenses and waste.

In the case of Marta de Menezes' *Nature?,* what is most essential about the artwork is also what is most difficult to preserve: performing the interventions on the butterfly's wings. The alteration of the butterfly's wing patterns is, indeed, what sparked this artwork's creation and remains its

[9] Due to space constraints, in this paper we chose to focus not on the installation features of this artwork, which would occupy a large portion of the text, but on the use of live beings and the challenges it poses. About the conservation of installation artworks see, among others, Riet de Leeuw (1999) , Carol Stringari (1999), William Real (2001), Glenn Wharton and Harvey Molotch (Wharton and Molotch 2009), Vivian van Saaze (2009), as well as all the contributors to *Inside Installations. Theory and Practice in the Care of Complex Artworks* (Scholte and Wharton 2011).

[10] Indeed, searching on-line, we did not find any websites that sold these species.

[11] Personal interview with Marta de Menezes, Mach 12, 2013.

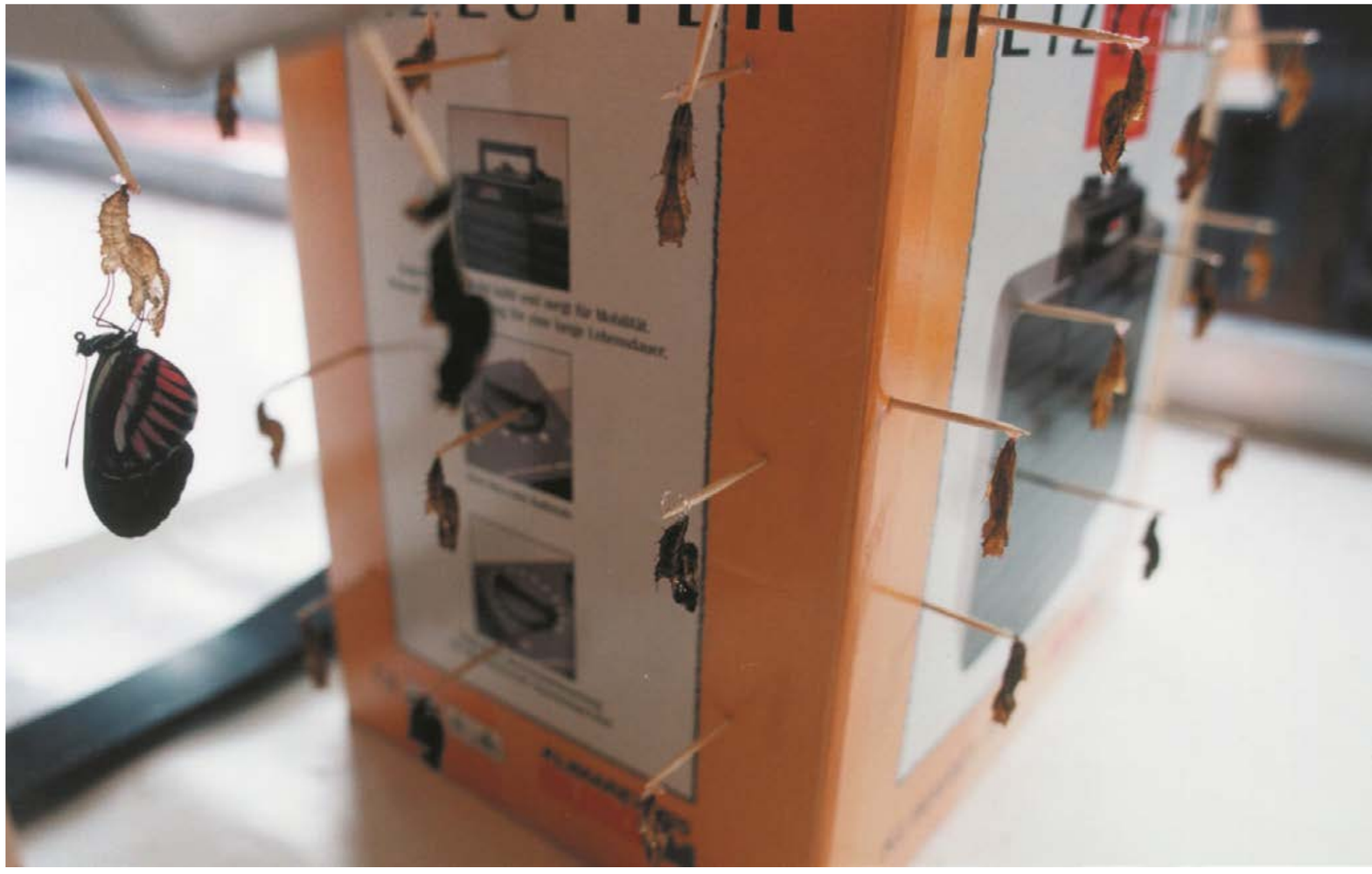
core. Without this intervention, *Nature?* does not exist. And, as we have seen before, showing dead altered butterflies is not an option.

In order to allow other people to perform the interventions, Menezes gave the museum a booklet with the procedures and background information necessary to do so, as well as a scheme of the alterations she usually does in the butterflies. There are several requirements that have to be taken into account.

First, there is a specific time window in which the interventions must be done, in order to be effective. This varies from species to species. In the case of *Bicyclus anyana*, the interventions in the pupa's wings must be done in the first twelve to eighteen hours after the transition to pupa. In the case of *Heliconius*, the interventions must be done four hours after that transition — so it is a pretty dramatic difference. The intervention area also changes from species to species. Usually, acquiring this type of information for a new species implies several months of work and testing.

The butterflies transform from caterpillar into pupa as soon as the night comes. This means that, if we control the time at which the lights go off, we can ensure that we have time to do the required number of interventions. For instance, if the lights go off at midnight, the interventions in the *Bicyclus* butterflies have to be done between 12:00 pm and 1 p.m. the next day.

When the butterflies come out of the chrysalis, their wings are floppy and they usually stay upside down until their wings harden and they are able to fly. After the interventions, the pupas must be hung on a toothpick, with a little bit of glue, to reproduce their normal position (Fig. 7).



Evidently, documentation is an essential tool for transmitting the large amount of information that is needed to ensure the artwork's survival. This includes not only the aforementioned information about the butterflies, but also the installation features of the artwork (which we chose not to explore here — see footnote number 9). However, some questions still need to be answered, namely: who should do the interventions? And how to transfer the necessary knowledge?

Menezes considers the interventions to be fairly simple, since she learned them in only one day. According to the artist, they do not require a lot of background knowledge and no biology degree. However they do require sensibility and hand skills; that is, precision when doing the

FIG. 7 *Nature?* at Ars Electronica 2000, adult butterfly that recently emerged from its chrysalis.
Source: Ars Electronica Picture Archive, www.aec.at

interventions, and the ability to quickly learn the strength you can and cannot apply when handling the pupas.

However, the ability to learn how to do the interventions solely through written documentation, without the presence of the artist, is yet to be tested. It is important to take into account the fact that Marta de Menezes learned how to do the interventions in the pupas directly from a team of experienced scientists who were by her side, available to answer her doubts. How well does this type of learning translate into written instructions? Practical knowledge is often difficult to transmit in writing since a lot of tacit knowledge is involved.[12] Moreover, we believe that, when working with live animals, there is probably a higher degree of insecurity and doubt, which museum staff will not be able to clarify in the absence of the artist. As is noted by Amalia Kallergi (2008), museum staff may not be familiar with the organisms used by the artists; their complexity and the scientific jargon likely to be involved can make it harder for the artist to communicate the artwork's needs and requirements. In that case, the problem with the bioart exhibit may be more a matter of communication, understanding and collaboration. Should the museum staff learn the procedures themselves, directly from the artist, and transmit that knowledge between them, as a sort of oral and practical tradition? We believe that some testing is needed to ensure that the instructions left by the artist really work when she is not there to clarify the doubts that will probably arise.

Conclusion

The case of *Nature?* shows that managing artworks that include living beings entails a significant increase of knowledge that has to be kept and transferred in order to ensure the artwork's survival, making documentation an essential tool. However there are still doubts about the form of documentation that will be needed, since it is a kind of knowledge that is beyond traditional conservation's scope. As we saw, the information is very specific and varies significantly from species to species. The problem that arises is then, how to transmit this kind of knowledge and to whom should it be conveyed? Who will be able to perform the interventions in the future? It is possible that the preservation of *Nature?* will require a closer collaboration between the museum, the artist, and the scientists in order to ensure a truly effective documentation.

Furthermore, the exhibition of *Nature?* implies maintaining a network of contacts related to the butterflies — places that sell them, places that can keep them after the exhibition, and places that sell exotic plants. This network will change with time, as institutions and companies close and others emerge. The absence of one of these elements would mean that *Nature?* could not be re-installed.

As the number of artists working with biology and biotechnology increases, and artworks that include live elements enter museum collections, new questions will arise and will have to be answered in the conservation field. We hope the case of *Nature?* may be a step in that direction.

[12] The problem of conveying practical knowledge through written languages is well illustrated by the case of contemporary dance, for which, despite attempts, there isn't yet a universally accepted and widely used notation system. This topic was tackled, for example, in the publication *Capturing Intention. Documentation Analysis and Notation Research Based on the Work of Emio Greco|PC* (2007)

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CAPTURING, STRUCTURING AND ACCESSING

DOCUMENTING PERFORMANCE AND PERFORMING DOCUMENTATION

ON THE INTERPLAY OF DOCUMENTATION AND AUTHENTICITY

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ABSTRACT

With the proliferation of performance and process-based practice in contemporary art comes a reliance on documentation, both for "re-performance" and preservation. From material inventories and technical specifications to artist interviews and information management, the documentation of a contemporary artwork is a loaded and complex process. This may become even more convoluted with artists who incorporate the process and grammar of documentation within their work. This paper explores the complex interrelation of layers of documentation in the work *As jane edwards and geoffrey rush* (2005) by the artist Aileen Campbell (b.1968), and questions the implications for the concept of its authenticity. Drawing on the vocabulary of the musical score, it moves the discussion on from trying to contain the work within a set of instructions, to using Richard Rinehart's concept of the "meta-score" as a way of describing and understanding this intricate relationship between performance, documentation and "additions."

KEYWORDS
DOCUMENTATION | PERFORMANCE | AUTHENTICITY | META--SCORE | INFORMATION SCIENCE

RESUMO

Com a proliferação da performance e de práticas baseadas no processo surge uma dependência na documentação para efeitos quer de "re-performance" quer de preservação. Desde inventários de materiais e especificações técnicas até a entrevistas a artistas e gestão de informação, a documentação de obras de arte contemporânea é um processo delicado e complexo. A situação pode tornar-se ainda mais complicada com artistas que incorporam o processo e gramática da documentação no seu trabalho. Este artigo explora as complexas inter-relações de camadas de documentação na obra *As jane edwards and geoffrey rush* (2005) da artista Aileen Campbell (n.1968) e questiona as implicações para o conceito da sua autenticidade. Recorrendo ao vocabulário da notação musical, desloca a discussão da tentativa de confinar a obra a um conjunto de instruções para o uso do conceito de *meta-score* de Richard Reinhart como modo de descrever e compreender a relação intricada entre performance, documentação e "adições".

PALAVRAS-CHAVE
DOCUMENTAÇÃO | PERFORMANCE | AUTENTICIDADE | META--SCORE | CIÊNCIA DA INFORMAÇÃO

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Introduction

The work of contemporary artists is continuing to push conservation methodologies and ethics into the unknown. Autonomous objects whose communication is relatively stable from one context to the next are increasingly rare. Artists are no longer bound by the limits of material classification or requirements of longevity but, since the inception of the Readymade, are free to use any material or immaterial entity available. This democratization of artists' materials has inevitably seen the proliferation of process- and performance-based practice. With this move away from "artwork as object" has come a reliance on documentation, both for "re-performance" and preservation. As Pip Laurenson asserted back in 2001, "Conservation is no longer focused on intervening to repair an art object; it is now concerned with documentation and determining what change is acceptable and managing those changes" (Laurenson 2001, 260). From component inventories and technical specifications to information management and artist interviews, the documentation of a contemporary artwork is a loaded and complex process.

This is particularly pertinent with artists who incorporate the process and grammar of documentation within their work. Adding multiple layers of documentation to the already problematic practice of identifying and preserving the component elements that contribute to the essence of the work is particularly challenging. This paper explores the complex interrelation of layers of documentation in a work by the artist Aileen Campbell (b.1968), and questions the implications for the concept of the work's authenticity. It uses Suzanne Briet's description of the document as a way to rationalize the relationship between its different elements, and Richard Rinehart's concept of the "meta-score" in considering a strategy for the work's continuation. This is addressed predominantly in relation to Campbell's *As jane edwards and geoffrey rush* (2005) (Fig. 1).

Aileen Campbell's As jane edwards and geoffrey rush (2005)

While it is not yet part of a collection, and therefore has not been subject to any coherent strategy for its preservation or re-presentation, Aileen Campbell's *As jane edwards and geoffrey rush* demonstrates well the complexity of this multi-layered relationship with documentation. As a trained chorister, Campbell uses her voice to interact with and translate specific spaces, working at the intersection of art, performance, and sound. She is particularly interested in questioning musical structures and challenging the history of the disassociation of the voice from the body in music, where female voices were traditionally ascribed ethereal attributes while the male voice was seen as grounded. She confronts this directly in *As jane edwards and geoffrey rush*.

For twenty minutes, Campbell sings a Vivaldi aria (*Nulla in mundo, pax sincera*) with a live quartet while metronomically jumping on a trampoline. The piece and the title refer to a dramatic moment towards the end of the 1996 film *Shine*, directed by Scott Hicks, when the character of pianist David Helfgott (played by Geoffrey Rush) is bouncing on a trampoline while listening to this Vivaldi aria through headphones. Campbell has explained that:

The piece and the title relate to an epiphany moment I had while hearing Jane Edwards singing the Vivaldi aria "Nulla in Mundo Pax Sincera" in the film *Shine*. I was really conscious of her being in a recording studio while Geoffrey Rush is jumping on a trampoline on the screen. I wanted to put them both in the same proximity, asking myself, "Could she maintain that beautiful sound were she on the trampoline?" In the film they use her voice as the ethereal, the lamenter. I wanted to see the female voice differently and put the action and the soundtrack together. I was both of these, so the performance is entitled "as jane edwards and geoffrey rush."[1]

As the aria goes on, Campbell's physical exertion takes its toll on the perfection of the performance (ordinarily a performer's ultimate goal), and the audience are confronted by the fallibility of her voice. With the conflicting breathing cycles for physical movement and voice production, she is forced to make decisions about sacrificing lower notes to reach the high ones. It is not necessarily about "endurance," in the way that Performance Art might use the term, but as Campbell explains, "I wanted to simply keep doing two things that are opposing each other."[2]

She first performed the work live while studying at Cal Arts in California (Fig. 1). To her bafflement, some fellow students expressed that they thought it did not look overly difficult. In defiance and curiosity she decided to perform the aria five times consecutively, along the lines of "Oh I like this song I'll listen to it five times over" Campbell explains.[3] When she came back to complete her MFA at Glasgow School of Art she decided to make the work again as a two-screen video running from a Linux programme on a specially built computer, which was recorded at Tramway, Glasgow, in 2005 (Fig. 2). This video piece was then exhibited the following year at Gimpel Fils in London, and described as a "projected DVD diptych." The introduction of a recorded element of the work provided a structure for "re-presentation" that alleviated the demands on a "reluctant performer," as she describes herself. It meant that the piece could potentially survive beyond that one moment "as something in its own right," that could provide "viewpoints which would privilege an audience looking at the film," as Campbell explains.[4]

When exhibited at Dundee Contemporary Arts (DCA) in 2008, as part of the group exhibition *Kill Your Timid Notion*, the work took on a different form again. The viewer had to decide whether to experience the work live (with Campbell on the trampoline accompanied by a string quartet) (Fig. 3) or view the performance through a live feed to the cinema space downstairs (Fig. 4). The process of recording the performance, essentially documenting it, meant that the cinema audience were privy to new perspectives, alternative angles, and close-ups of the strain Campbell was going through. However, the cult of performance inevitably drew a crowded house, whereas the mediated view did not hold as much sway as the live "event."

1. Documenting Performance

Interplay of recording and performance

This prompts interesting questions about the nature of the documentation of live performance. Is one experience more "authentic" than the other? Answering this question

[1] Simpson, Laura. 2009. "Interview with Aileen Campbell after her performance *As jane edwards and geoffrey rush* as part of *Kill Your Timid Notion* at Dundee Contemporary Arts in October 2008," *Yuck N' Yum*. http://aileencampbellinterview.wordpress.com/2009/01/09/interview-with-aileen-campbel-after-her-performance-as-jane-edwards-and-geoffrey-rush-as-part-of-kill-your-timid-notion-at-the-dundee-contemporary-arts-in-october-2008/, last accessed 20/5/13

[2] Cited in Simpson 2009.

[3] Aileen Campbell, Interview with Rebecca Gordon, digital video and audio recording, Glasgow, 20 October 2009.

[4] Aileen Campbell, Interview with Rebecca Gordon, digital video and audio recording, Glasgow, 20 October 2009.

FIG. 1 Aileen Campbell, *As jane edwards and geoffrey rush* (2005). Performed at Crazy Space / Highways Performance Space, Los Angeles, 2005. Image © Jon Austria

FIG. 2 Aileen Campbell, *As jane edwards and geoffrey rush* (2005). Two-channel video running from Linux. Exhibited at Tramway, Glasgow, 2005. Image © John Carberry

FIG. 3 Aileen Campbell, *As jane edwards and geoffrey rush* (2005). Live performance at Dundee Contemporary Art (DCA), Scotland. Image © Donald Tolmie

FIG. 4 Aileen Campbell, *As jane edwards and geoffrey rush* (2005). Mixed live feed of performance to cinema at Dundee Contemporary Art (DCA), Scotland. Image © Bryony McIntyre

will inevitably lead us to consider the ontology of both the performance and recording, and whether or not one communicates the artist's intention more fully. The audience at DCA appear to have ascribed more kudos to the live performance. However, the fact that a video recording of the performative element was exhibited on its own in 2006 at Gimpel Fils suggests on initial inspection that Campbell views the video as a work in its own right. When discussing the interplay of cinema and live performance, Campbell suggested that, "If I choose camera angles that were not available to the viewer at the performance, then that's another piece of work; that's a different work to the one you would have experienced had you been there."[5] She does not talk about the video piece as documentation but as a work in its own right, despite its allusion to the function of documentation.

An interesting connection could be made here with Suzanne Briet's treatise of the document as an "indexical sign," rather than an "embodiment of proof" (MacDonald 2009, 59). A pioneer of the European documentation movement — a precursor to the field now known as information science — she countered the definition presented by the French Union of Documentation Organisations (UFOD) of documents as evidence, offering an amendment more in line with the ideas of linguists and philosophers, suggesting that documents are "any concrete or symbolic indexical sign [*indice*], preserved or recorded toward the ends of representing, of reconstituting, or of proving a physical or intellectual phenomenon" (Briet 2006, 10). Briet went on to suggest instead that documents are examples of things or larger groupings of things. In a chapter of his translation of Briet's book *What Is Documentation?*, originally published in 1951, Ronald E. Day summarises the examples Briet gives of this indexical relationship: "a star is not a document, but a photograph of a star is; a pebble isn't a document, but a pebble in a mineralogical collection is; a wild animal isn't a document, but an animal in a zoo is" (Day 2006, 48).

Briet then develops the notion of the object of documentation as a "primary" or "initial" document. It is this primary document that, in the words of the philosopher Raymond Bayer, whom Briet quotes, "immediately becomes weighted down under a 'vestment of documents'" (Briet 2006, 10). In the case of Campbell's *As jane edwards and geoffrey rush*, we could term Campbell's live performance the "primary" document. It was this performance on which was enacted the video simulcast at DCA, which could potentially be defined as the "secondary" document: "the means and networks in which the phenomenon manifests itself outside its original frame of context" (MacDonald 2009, 60). However, using the terminology of "primary" and "secondary" suggests an underlying hierarchy, which does not accurately represent Campbell's understanding of the relationship between the two forms. Rather than seeing the video documentation as subsidiary to the live performance, it was fundamental to her investigation of reception and mediation. In the context of the DCA iteration of the piece, Campbell was performing *through* documentation.

The ontology gets slightly more complicated when we consider the video diptych of *As jane edwards and geoffrey rush* screened in London in 2006. Briet claimed that the document could act as a substitute for the "lived experience"

[5] Aileen Campbell, Interview with Rebecca Gordon, digital video and audio recording, Glasgow, 20 October 2009.

(MacDonald 2009, 61). More recently, William Real has made a similar observation in relation to Joseph Beuys' *Actions*, noting that documentation may become the "surrogate" for a vanished work or performance (Real 2001, 221). In the case of the video of *As jane edwards and geoffrey rush*, there was no live performance; the document was the work. The video recording had become the indexical sign of the performance, even if that performance was purely to the camera in that instance. Its significance was inherently contingent on the live performance and, as such, could be described along the lines of Briet's "secondary" document. However, it was also an autonomous work. We have already noted that Campbell described it as "another piece of work… a different work to the one you would have experienced had you been there." In this sense, the video version could be described as having morphed into another "primary" document. How are we to reconcile these fluctuations in ontology?

Questioning authenticity

This depends on our definition of authenticity. There is no scope to satisfactorily address the complex issue of authenticity here.[6] Suffice to acknowledge that the traditional understanding of the term is intrinsically linked to the concept of the artwork's "original" materials as the seal of the artist's intent. Historically for conservators, "the vehicle of a message is often more sacred than the message itself, for they are the custodians of its material continuance," as Herzogenrath explained at the symposium, "How Durable is Video Art?" (Herzogenrath 1997, 27). This is of course problematic when dealing with artworks that are ephemeral, time-based, materially variable, or context-dependent, as is reflected in recent conservation literature and symposia (Scholte *et.al*. 2011; Rinehart 2007; Laurenson 2001; Corzo 1999; Hummelen and Sillé 1999). We are now familiar with the materials of a contemporary artwork being potentially replaceable, if supported by the artist's intention, and there are a growing number of strategies for dealing with the documentation and preservation of this type of work.[7] But how do we negotiate the subtleties of "authenticity" and "integrity" (Laurenson 2006; Muñoz Viñas 2005) in some works that traverse this fine (and sometimes fluctuating) line between performance, documentation, and autonomous work?

2. Performing Documentation

There is a popular metaphor in information management of "container, content and context," which is used for the description and preservation of digital resources (Tanner 2006). The term information *containers* is used to describe the "physical, primary carriers of recorded information and knowledge content," as Tanner explains (Tanner 2006, 1); essentially, the "thing", the "object", whether a letter, report, painting, or film. Traditionally, the *content* of these documents is inherently embedded in the container. When discussing this metaphor in relation to the preservation of variable media artworks, information *context* — "the context in which information arose or was fixed, used, or collected" (Smith in Tanner 2006, 3) — may be described as the knowledge and range of information necessary for the work's continuance. The information specialist Corina MacDonald suggests that this consists of the artist's intent, the social and cultural contexts that impart significance

[6] See for example: Gregory Currie, "The Authentic and the Aesthetic," *American Philosophical Quarterly*, 22 (2) (April, 1985), 153-160; Erma Hermens and Tina Fiske, eds., *Art, Conservation and Authenticities: Material, Concept, Context* (London: Archetype Publications, 2009); J. Jokilehto and J. King, "Authenticity and Conservation: Reflections on the Current State of Understanding," Paper presented at the expert meeting, *Authenticity and Integrity in an African Context* (26-29 May 2000). Unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0012/001225/122598mo.pdf, last accessed 20/08/12; K. E. Larsen, ed., *Proceedings of the Nara Conference on Authenticity in Relation to the World Heritage Convention* (Nara, Japan: UNESCO World Heritage Centre and Agency for Cultural Affairs, 1995); Pip Laurenson, "Authenticity, Change and Loss in the Conservation of Time-Based Media Installations," *Tate Papers* 6 (2006), http://www.tate.org.uk/research/publications/tate-papers/authenticity-change-and-loss-conservation-time-based-media, last accessed 10/06/13; Salvador Muñoz Viñas, *Contemporary Theory of Conservation* (Oxford: Elsevier Butterworth-Heinemann, 2005); David Phillips, *Exhibiting Authenticity* (Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 1997).

[7] This is particularly true in the area of new media art where a number of documentation models have been developed in the last ten years or so: Media Art Notation System (MANS), developed by Richard Rinehart, is a score that represents a media-independent basis for the work, http://www.bampfa.berkeley.edu/about/formalnotation.pdf, last accessed 10/06/13; Matters in Media Art (MMA), a multi-phase project designed to provide guidelines for the care of time-based media works of art, which produced a template to be used during the acquisition process as a framework to prepare the artwork for long-term preservation and future

in the work, and practices that are required to re-present it. She explains that "interviews with artists are one way of gathering this knowledge directly from the source, and use of multimedia interview formats permits nonverbal communication through example or demonstration" (MacDonald 2009, 61). In pursuing this knowledge we can gain insight into the context and identity of the work in question and the artist's understanding of the interplay between its various material and conceptual elements and any actual or potential iterations of its presentation.

Having already discussed, to an extent, the content of Campbell's *As jane edwards and geoffrey rush* in the first part of this paper, it seems fitting to spend time considering its identity as "container." This is particularly problematic as it lies somewhere between performance, documentation, and autonomous video piece, with each element assuming quite a different form. However, there may be a way to surmount this variation. It will itself involve the grammar of documentation and will require openness towards a move away from the static, singular object. Here, documentation will become both a product and a stimulus.

Vocabulary of the musical score

Reference is often made to musical notation when discussing the documentation of variable media art (e.g. MacDonald 2009; Rinehart 2007; Laurenson 2006). The structure of allographic binaries tends to be adopted as a framework with which to discuss two-stage artworks such as architecture, theatre, music, or installation art. The first stage would be a blueprint, script, score, or set of instructions, with the second stage being the realization of that notation (Goodman 1969). Richard Rinehart explains the value of using the musical score as a model for notation, particularly in relation to technology-based art:

> **The reason that musical scores provide a useful model for media art notation is that they provide the clearest example of description that compiles formalized (systematic) discrete elements into documents that aid in the re-performance or re-creation of works of art. Musical scores also demonstrate how to navigate the border between prescription (maintaining the integrity of the work) and the variability that is inherent in media art (Rinehard 2007, 182).**

This description articulates well the significance of the score in accommodating inevitable variation in these two-stage artworks, encompassing both formalised description and room for interpretation.

However, the ontological complexities that have been introduced in relation to *As jane edwards and geoffrey rush* necessitate that we move beyond binary structures. The allographic model lets us down when faced with a performance with no prior notation or instructions. This is often the case with installation art. Even if plans have been made in advance of installation, these may be modified in situ due to practical implications or creative adaptations. Therefore the artwork itself may become the "score." I use the term, not in the traditional sense of a specific combination of notes or graphics, but in Rinehart's sense of a "meta-score" (Rinehart 2007, 183). He describes the meta-score as a conceptual model, the "formal notation system" as an expression of that model, and a score as a specific instance

installation, http://www.tate.org.uk/about/projects/matters-media-art, last accessed 10/06/13; Netherlands Media Art Institute (NIMk) places emphasis on describing the artist's intention through interviews with the artist and others involved, http://nimk.nl/eng/, last accessed 10/06/13; Capturing Unstable Media Conceptual Model (CMCM), devised in 2003 by V2_ and is a conceptual model for describing and documenting new media installation based on the set of attributes, components and behaviours of variable media as distinguished by the Variable Media Questionnaire, http://v2.nl/archive/works/capturing-unstable-media, last accessed 10/06/13. For further information see A. Dekker, G. Wijers and V. van Saaze, "The Art of Documentation," *Notation / RTRSRCH 2 (2) (2010)*: 22-27; and G. Heydenreich, "Documentation of Change — Change of Documentation," in *Inside Installations: Theory and Practice in the Care of Complex Artworks*, edited by T. Scholte *et. al.* 155-171. Amsterdam, Amsterdam University Press.

of that notation. Rinehart explains that the conceptual model could be expressed using various formats, as "it defines the integrity of the score while allowing for variability in its expression" (Rinehart 2007, 183). If applying this system to *As jane edwards and geoffrey rush*, we could be said to have a meta-score (the concept of the work as demonstrated in Campbell's "performance") and various formats by which it could be expressed (the simulcast and video diptych).

The reason for introducing the concept of the score into the discussion at this point (and for titling the second part of this paper "performing documentation") is that, during a conversation about the presentation of the work in the future, Aileen Campbell was intrigued by the idea of using a script or score.[8] This is not surprising as she is used to working from scores as a musician and has encountered various styles of score as a performer in Glasgow Improvisers Orchestra. However, Campbell's idea of the score in relation to her own work is almost inverted. Rather than starting with a score or set of instructions, which then shape or enable the realisation of the performance, she is intrigued by the possibility of starting with the performance and creating a score. This stems from Campbell's interest in collaboration with the audience in executing an artwork, such as *In the Manner of Songs and Drones* performed at the Institute of Contemporary Arts (ICA) in London in 2008 (Fig. 5). Participants were given "identity badges" in different colours and were asked to follow the instructions on the projected screen, for example: "when the red circle appears, red voices follow its pattern until it disappears."

Expanding on this relationship between instructions and performance, Campbell would like to develop a method for creating a retrospective score or script of a performance already realised in order to provide the instructions for other people to perform the work in their own way in the future, "just like you might suggest of the John Cage Songbook," she explains.[9] She highlights the importance of this retrospective aspect as it makes the score "very specific to its original event, rather than to its original intention."[10] She goes on to explain that, "For me this is important because much of what I make questions the restrictions of musical structure which is most often scored in advance, rehearsed and performed. In scoring in reverse, the original event is the author of the score." This harks back to the idea of the meta-score. The "original event" is the meta-score from which further expression formats can be developed and a score created. Subsequent enactments of that score would be autonomous entities but inherently contingent to the score and, by implication, the meta-score. Campbell has suggested that these enactments could be thought of as "additions" to the work. She uses the term "addition" because, she explains, "I like the idea that a work is added to, that it doesn't finish with the hanging or performance in a gallery, that it could be expanded and the time frame of the work has not been decided upon, it could continue."[11] This enactment of the score need not be an attempt to recapture its initial form and context (as is the fashion in "authentic performance" or "historically informed performance" in music) (Young 1988; Davies 1987, 1991), but every enactment would be a new entity in itself.

How then are we to consider the ontology of these "additions"? At the risk of prompting unnecessary classification, would they be primary documents (a new autonomous work) or secondary documents (a presentation

[8] Aileen Campbell, Interview with Rebecca Gordon, digital video and audio recording, Glasgow, 20 October 2009.

[9] Campbell, personal correspondence, June 2013.

[10] Campbell, personal correspondence, June 2013.

[11] Campbell, personal correspondence, June 2013.

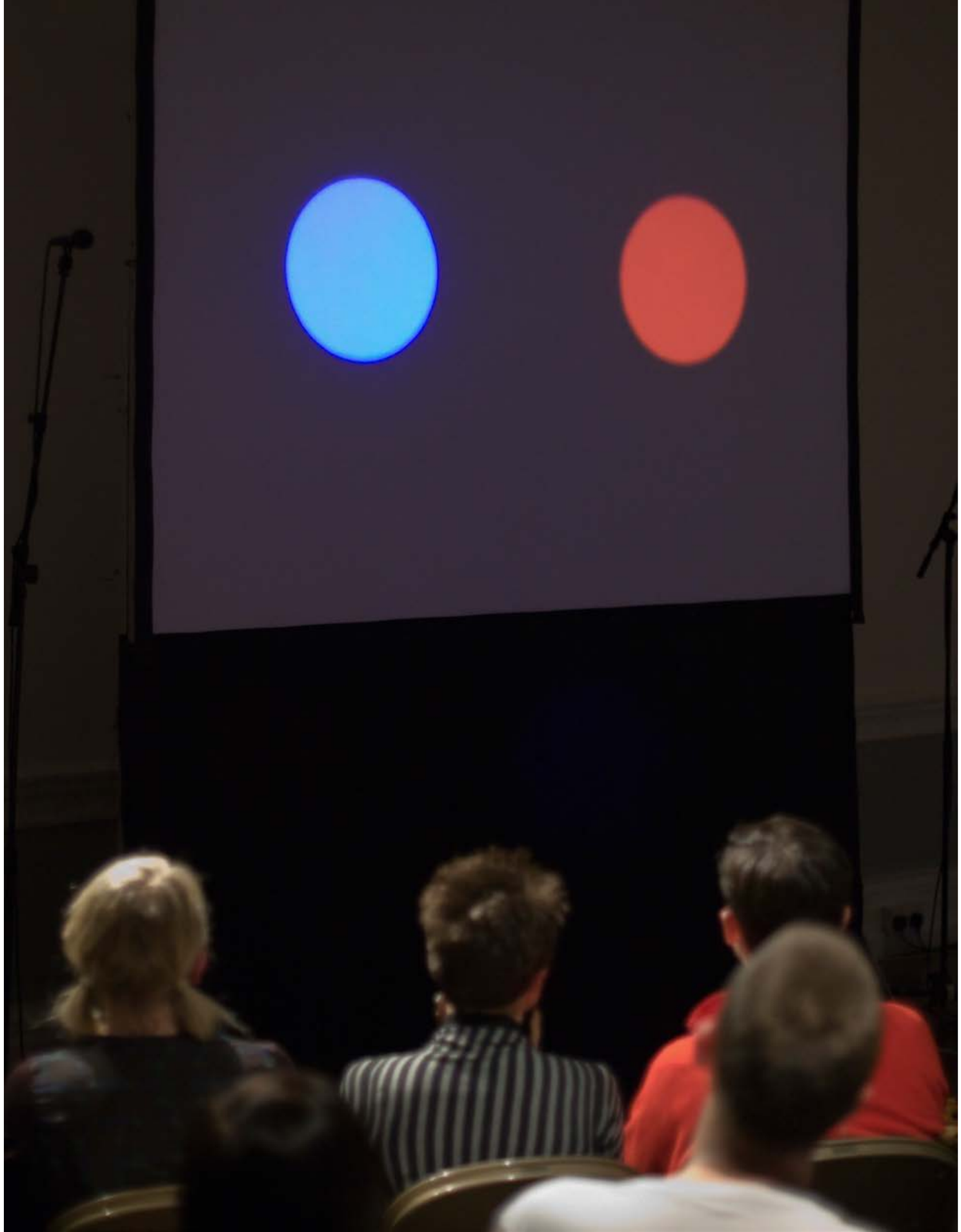

FIG. 5 Aileen Campbell, *In the manner of songs and drones* (2008). Performance and video. Performed for *Naught to Sixty*, ICA, London. Image © ICA, London

of the initial activity)?[12] Or do they somehow become part of a new classification of document that is not simply a secondary document but that operates in a new form as a distinct work, while still being inherently an iteration of the primary document? The need for distinction may seem inconsequential. Yet it is a difficult question that has the potential to reveal deeper knowledge and understanding of the work. The answer presumably comes from an exploration of the intention of the artist. The fact that she adopts the word "additions" suggests that performances ensuing from the retrospective score would not necessarily be primary documents (new autonomous works) but a way to "re-invigorate" the work, she explains, to allow the "theme" to be continued and adapted through "variation" (again to use musical terminology). They would be an extension of the overarching concept of the initial work, while simultaneously being stand-alone documents. Perhaps that would make them *extra-* or *super-*secondary documents? However, not too much weight should be given to these classifications as they are simply a fallible method of understanding and conceptualising the relationship of the different elements, concepts and manifestations of a specific work. Neither the authenticity of the work nor its ontology is necessarily tied to the distinction between "original" and "document", or "original" and "addition."

Conclusion

This paper has called upon the definition in information science of the document as "indexical sign" in order to better understand the ontological relationship between performance, documentation and "additions" in the work of Aileen Campbell. It is a complex dynamic that raises questions of authenticity and authority: is the "original" performance particularly sacrosanct; who can perform the work and in what form; are some realizations more "authentic" than others? Not least of these issues would be the relationship between the initial performance and subsequent performances, mediated by the retrospective score. Shifting focus from the delineation of the work as a set of instructions, to the work itself being the conceptual model from which a score can be created, provides a new perspective from which to understand the work, and accommodates variation while scoring the primary document for posterity.

What the score's notation will look like in Campbell's work has not yet been developed.[13] Her initial thoughts on a retrospective score for *As jane edwards and geoffrey rush* would include the familiar musical notation of the Vivaldi aria for the musicians alongside physical instructions for the performer, which may look like medical outputs suggesting breathing and pulse. They may also refer to things that the performer may become conscious of, "as say yoga may focus your concentration on a part of your body, the score may try and shift focus from the breathing and sweating to the soles of the feet on the rubber or woven surface of the trampoline."[14] The thing that particularly interests Campbell about the retrospective score is that it offers another way of looking at and understanding the work: as a series of written instructions. In the same way as the video recording allows the viewer to experience the performance differently, the retrospective score provides another structure and delineation for the work. This need not defy our

[12] It is also important to take care when discussing interchangeably the concepts of documentation and score. The two are distinct but partially overlapping categories. A score gives instructions for the generation of a performance; a document records features of a performance. A score can only be considered a document if it is produced after the performance and the instructions are consistent with the details of the initial performance. In this instance, something may be both a score and a document, but many things will be one or the other without being both. [Many thanks to a reviewer of this paper for raising this important distinction.]

[13] Aileen Campbell and I are hoping to deal with the concept of notation in relation to her work in the future.

[14] Campbell, personal correspondence, June 2013.

understanding of the work's authenticity (in the traditional sense), but instead realises it more sympathetically. It also offers the possibility of a future for the work that will "re-invigorate" it and allow it to adapt rather than fall into obsolescence. Campbell admits, however, that her interest in retrospective scoring is not purely a call to an expanded practice, but is simultaneously a move towards securing the initial performance for the future, "very much fixing an authority, an authorship."[15] While this work appears to embody flexibility and adaptation, its authenticity, as is most often the case, is not tied to definitions of the "original" but is fundamentally linked to the artist's sanctions. The introduction of the concept of retrospective scores perpetuates this dependency on the artist, or her estate, requiring the documentation of parameters for the realization and continuation of the work's integrity. Yet it offers freedom through the variation of the disparate realizations that may follow. Underpinning the work's journey into the future is this interplay of documenting performance and performing documentation.

[15] Campbell, personal correspondence, June 2013.

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MUSEUMS AND THEIR ROLE IN PRESERVING, DOCUMENTING, AND ACQUIRING PERFORMANCE ART

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ABSTRACT

Granted that documentation is the basic means by which to preserve performances and convey part of the experience to future generations, the question of *how* to better document works of this nature raises several issues. At the same time, it is difficult to provide a catch-all definition for the term "performance" that will encompass all of the variables that may come into play; e.g., the relation between the artist and the performance, between the performance and the attending artwork, and the several ways in which the public is involved. Documentation must take into consideration all of these factors. This essay discusses a number of case studies, primarily from our experience at MAXXI (Rome), regarding performances that took place at the museum and are documented as part of the museum's collection. A proposal is also made for a blueprint of artist-museum collaboration on the issue of documentation and re-performance.

KEYWORDS
PERFORMANCE | MUSEUM | DOCUMENTATION

RESUMO

Se a documentação é o meio fundamental de preservar performances e transmitir parte da experiência a gerações futuras, a questão de *como* melhor documentar obras desta natureza levanta várias questões. Simultaneamente, é difícil propor uma única definição de "performance" que abarque todas as variáveis que a integram; isto é, a relação entre o artista e a performance, entre a performance e a obra resultante, e as várias maneiras em que o público está envolvido. A documentação tem que ter em consideração todos estes fatores. Este artigo discute uma série de casos de estudo retirados sobretudo da nossa experiência no MAXXI (Roma), de performances apresentadas no museu e se encontram documentadas fazendo parte da coleção. Faz-se ainda uma proposta de plano de colaboração artista-museu sobre a questão da documentação e re-performance.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE
PERFORMANCE | MUSEU | DOCUMENTAÇÃO

One form of ephemeral art: Performance[1]

Given that the fundamental means by which to preserve and convey the art of our times to future generations lies in conservation and documentation, several complex questions specifically arise as to *how* performance art may be best documented. Is it, for instance, sufficient to gather heterogeneous documentation of a performance (e.g., photographs, video, and scripts by the artist/performer) for a substantial representation of the original *event* to be conveyed? May the original impact of a performance be otherwise recreated, perhaps through some more comprehensive form of documentation? Conversely, is it true that direct experience of an event is the only way to gather and possibly preserve the memory of a performance? And moreover, what role can museums play in preserving, documenting, and acquiring a performance? We must agree with Laurie Anderson (Goldberg 2004, 6),[2] quite naturally, that performance is indeed one of the most ephemeral forms of art. On the other hand, because museums are the foremost institutions presiding over the permanent durability and accessibility of artworks of all kinds to the public at large, a perilous gulf opens up between the museum's traditional vocation and conception and the seemingly impermanent nature of performance art. In particular, contemporary art museums have been confronted with the conundrum of whether it is possible to acquire the "action" of a performance without also acquiring the full set of its documentation and/or props.[3] Why does the acquisition of an action seems more difficult to achieve? Probably because it is perceived as being most intimately tied to the personality of the artist and the actual moment, place, and circumstances in which it took place.

More generally, the term "performance" fails to capture the full range of variables that come into play. All of the questions raised above stem from the intrinsic complexity of a multi-dimensional art form that involves several variables: the relationship between artist and action; the different ways in which the audience becomes engaged in the event; the manner and extent to which a relation between the performance and what the museum ultimately acquires is established and realized. The preservation, documentation, and acquisition of a performance by a museum must take into account the issues detailed under the three headings that follow.

1. Performance and artist. There are instances in which the artist acts as scriptwriter and/or director of sorts, whilst remaining wholly external to the performance, which is enacted by designated performers: Toscano (2010: 77-78), for instance, has lately extended Roland Barthes' notion of a "zero degree" to performance, and suggests the term "concealment" for this kind of artistic stance, which, among other things, has the effect of yielding a great deal of freedom to the performers with each performative occasion (and thus, also, a varying degree of changeability to each performance). There are also instances in which the artist either acts as sole protagonist in the action (possibly wearing some kind of costume or disguise), or manifests their presence as part of the action along with other performers, or with the audience. This aspect bears heavily on the possibility and manner in which a performance is

[1] This paper develops the subject matter of a poster presentation entitled *The Museum's Role* I gave at the Lisbon conference *Performing Documentation in the Conservation of Contemporary Art*. Moving from the discussion of certain issues with which I was confronted in my capacity as Curator and Head of Acquisitions at the MAXXI museum of Rome, considerations and suggestions are then made regarding the acquisition and conservation of performance art events. Canonical case studies and experiences are also referred to, in an attempt to frame the issues in their general form and develop viable solutions to problems that remain open to this day.

[2] Laurie Anderson: "Live art is especially ephemeral: once performed, it tends to become myth, few photos and tapes."

[3] The creation of a *Department of Media and Performance Art* at MOMA in 2006 was followed by a campaign of acquisitions of performances for the museum collection. Furthermore, both MOMA and London"s TATE Gallery have promoted research on the subject of performance art and the issues attending its acquisition and conservation. See http://www.tate.org.uk/about/projects/collecting-performative (access 20.06.2013); see also Ortiz 2012, Fairley 2014.

re-proposed and "re-exhibited" (a practice usually referred to as *re-performance*), for the different levels at which the artist is directly involved are crucial in assessing whether and how the performance may be later re-enacted. The relevant and critical point here is that while some artists theorize performance re-enactment (by the artist him/her-self or other performers) as a viable and legitimate practice, there are, on the other hand, actions that are so characterized by an artist's personality as to make it difficult, if not impossible, for the action to be in any way replicated with the intensity of the original performance. In the instance of artists whose actions are strongly characterized by their personality, it is hardly conceivable that the re-enactment of their work should result in anything other than a pale copy (or indeed a parody) of the original. To mention but a few outstanding examples, it is a fact that the extent to which artists of the calibre of Marina Abramović, Gilbert & George, and Joseph Beuys governed their performances could not but frustrate any attempt at re-enactment by anyone other than the original artist-performer.[4]

Having mentioned that some artists choose the path of self-concealment, one performance worth discussing in this regard is *H. Choreography for nudes that hide themselves* by Alex Cecchetti, performed as part of the review ACTING OUT, held at MAXXI in June 2012.[5] Three nude dancers traversed the museum space whilst attempting to make themselves unseen to the museum visitors, like ghosts or apparitions; as they appeared and rapidly disappeared, they could be perceived in the guise of visions manifesting themselves throughout the museum building. Dance was intended as an action of invisibility, as a way of measuring space. Except for a brief speech at the end of the performance (which lasted the entire day of the museum's opening), artist Alex Cecchetti kept himself behind the scenes, allowing the three dancers to establish their own dialogue with the complex architecture of the museum and its visitors. The artist, who in other pieces has been known to be a conspicuous protagonist in the action, decided this time to direct the performing bodies from afar, allowing them the opportunity to stage the intended oxymoron of "walking backwards looking ahead."[6] In this way, the artist experimented with a new and unique form of storytelling, created by himself, but told and expressed by the dancers' moving bodies.

2. Performance and audience. "As Duchamp said, the public has to be as creative as the artist" (Obrist in Abramović et al. 1998, 42). This statement by Marina Abramović emphasizes the crucial role audiences play in a performance, whether they participate actively or instead exhibit total indifference. In performance art, the relationship between artist/performer and audience is one of the factors informing the artist's specific choices, to the extent of expanding, and even totally transforming, the audience's traditional role. As Lea Vergine wrote in the introductory section to her work on Body Art and Performance: "That is enough about the norms of passive contemplation: now the public is to serve a sounding box. The relationship between public and artist becomes a relationship of complicity. [...] It is indispensable that the public co-operate with him, since what he needs is to be *confirmed* in his identity" (Vergine 1974, ed. 2007, 26). Different levels of interaction with the audience are

[4] Interestingly, however, Abramović herself re-staged actions by other artists on several occasions, as in the instance of the *Seven Easy Pieces* performance in 2005 at the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum in New York, where she enacted performances from the 1960-1970 period, selecting works by Bruce Nauman, Vito Acconci, VALIE EXPORT, Gina Pane and Joseph Beuys (Abramović 2005). The example of Abramović's recent productions is extremely interesting to the extent that it illustrates at once the viability and limitations of performance re-enactment. One issue to emerge with great clarity is how difficult it ultimately is to abstract from Abramović's *persona* when she engages in her own performances (*e.g.*, *The Artist is Present*, her solo show at MOMA, New York, which ran from 14 March to 31 May 2010). What manifestly comes to light is the extent to which the *reification* of the artist in her work and its *quasi* miraculous force strongly affect the intervention is involved in re-enactment. Given the complexity of this particular instance, in which one established artist-performer re-performs the work of other established artist-performers, we can only, at present, refer the reader to Abramović 2005 for preliminary reading, and reserve a fuller treatment of the subject (whether or not in connection with the role of museums and with curatorial stances) to a specifically devoted discussion in a separate essay.

[5] ACTING OUT. *Italian Artists in action*, Performances curated by Anne Palopoli. Rome, MAXXI Museum, 20 June 2012. http://www.fondazionemaxxi.it/2012/06/04/alex-cecchetti-h-coreografia-per-nudi-che-si-nascondono/ (access 02.07.2013).

[6] See Alex Cecchetti in an interview with Laura Barreca: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kBDw7od_Ibw (access 02.07.2013).

possible, from conscious involvement (as part of the action, or as mere spectators), to casual participation in an action performed by others. At the 55th Venice Biennale, the action *This Progress* by Tino Sehgal (awarded the *Leone d'Oro* prize) exemplified a performance in which the casual participation of the audience "enhances its meaning" (Gioni, Bell 2013, 435).[7] In this piece, a small number of people sit or lie on the ground, make vocal, musical improvisation, and move evenly, slowly, to this self-generated music. Beyond the temporal organization of the music and the smooth pacing of the movement, there is an obvious organizational structure; however, the piece remains barely noticeable to the public, whose first impulse is to find it uninteresting. The performance is, in this sense, automatic, even though the actors are not automata. Only later do spectators realize that, although the people making choices about what to do in this performance are fully conscious and willing individuals, their choices are actually subtly influenced by others and by the space in which they act. Tino Sehgal defined his action as "constructed" — an action in which the public, whether indifferent or sympathetic, conscious or unconscious, plays a key role.

3. Performance and art as matter. No relationship whatsoever need hold between a performance and the material supports (of whatever nature) employed in either performing or documenting the action. Certainly no essential relation holds between a performance and the materials attached to it, in the sense in which a finished painting is inseparable from its canvas, or other support. Nor, equally, need a performance necessarily generate "another" work of art, as in the instance of the video documentation of a performance being regarded as a "museum piece" in its own right. There are instances, then, in which we may speak in terms of a "pure action:" that which, due to its total immateriality, museums or collectors are least likely to acquire. Marina Abramović has often expressed the need to abolish "the object" as something liable to create a barrier between artist and audience, and regarded the immaterial nature of the performance as an essential feature. In her view, the absence of the object is essential to engender a direct flow of energy between the artist and his or her audience. An artist may rather decide to produce a photograph or a video of the performance, and regard these as a kind of transposition of the performance onto another medium, not as forms of documentation. Occasionally, an artist may later decide to exhibit the relics, mementos, props, or other objects used in performance. Alternatively, an artist may represent what they regard to be the basic idea of their performance by means of a wholly new object, a new work of art constructed using a different language.

Conceived as a reflection on the several concepts expressed by the Italian word *occupazione* ("employment," "job," "occupation," and "squatting"), Marzia Migliora's *Capienzamassimamenouno* is an instance of a performance constructed around a core concept (here, more exactly, a family of concepts: *viz*, "occupation" in its several senses), from which a representation in a wholly different format later originated (we may provisionally label a latter instantiation of this kind as "material artwork," as opposed to the immaterial nature of the original performance from which it is derived). Marzia Migliora's performance began with a public

[7] Categorically rejecting any kind of documentation, Tino Sehgal has his works published (or not published) in a very special way: in the catalogue of the Venice Biennale, the performance *The Progress* appears as a blank page, while in the catalogue of *Documenta*2012, his work is listed in the index as appearing on page 438. This page, however, does not actually exist.

advertisement on the museum website inviting the audience to participate in the action. On the day of the performance all the "performers" were made to wear a T-shirt with a design or writing on it that represented their personal interpretation of the word "occupation." During the action (in which the artist also participated), a host of bodies occupied the MAXXI lobby (1,000 people: 4 per square metre) giving life to a peaceful and joyous scene (fig. 1). At a later time, the artist elaborated an *installation* conceived around the same concept as the performance; the installation was displayed as part of the *ACTING OUT* exhibition, and accompanied by the following statement by the artist: "I would like to leave a trace (detritus) in the museum space: leave evidence of the act of performing, but at the same time add something and expand the reflection (modulo)."[8] In the course of the *ACTING OUT* exhibition, the space occupied by Migliora's installation was marked by a grid traced on the ground, reminiscent of the notions of a module/matrix and/or of a crossword. Within the grid, a number of objects belonging to the general domain of employment were placed, while a graph of employment figures in recent years in Italy was represented of the walls (fig. 2). Here, then, is an instance of the relationship between performance and installation being subtly established by conceptual means, since none of the objects actually used in the performance also appeared in the installation.

It is truly important for museums to consider the range of these possible relationships between the living performance and other attending elements or factors when they choose how to best preserve, document, and acquire such ephemeral and immaterial works of art as performances often are, especially when they are intended to become part of a permanent collection.

The value of documentation

> **Performance's only life is in the present. Performance cannot be saved, recorded, documented, or otherwise participate in the circulation of representations *of re*presentations: once it does so, it becomes something other than performance. [...] The document of a performance then is only a spur to memory, an encouragement of memory to become present (Phelan 1993, 146).**

A discussion on the value and limitations of the documentation of performance art has animated the debate among professionals, ranging between the extremes of those who regard performance as constitutively and absolutely grounded in the *here-and-now*, and of those who see documentation as valuable not only in itself but also with a view to future re-enactments.[9]

While, in the 1960s and '70s, the dematerialization of the work of art had stood as a critique of the market dynamics governing the art-world, giving rise to a notion of performance as a wholly immaterial event, less radical stances also subsequently emerged, and this extends to artists' current views on documentation. Some artists, we have seen, take a favourable view to the translation of performative events into photos or video, whether as documentation of the performance or as correlated artwork. In many instances, it appears that the translation

[8] ACTING OUT. *Italian Artists in Action*, exhibition curated by Monia Trombetta. Rome, MAXXI Museum, 27 june — 7 October 2012. MAXXI BASE, Archive: Archivi del Contemporaneo, Attività, Mostre-Performance 2012, ActingOut.

[9] The debate is open, and sometimes heated. Its general terms are outlined in an article by John Rockwell which appeared in the *New York Times*, commenting on the Symposium organized and moderated by Rose Lee Golberg on 30 April 2004 "NOT FOR SALE: Curating, Conserving, and Collecting Ephemeral Art", held at New York University. Among the speakers were Joan Jonas, Robert Storr, Chrissie Iles, and Hans Ulrich Obrist. John Rockwell's article was tellingly titled: "Reverberations; Preserve Performance Art? Can You Preserve the Wind?" (*New York Times*, Friday 30 April 2004, section E, p. 5) www.nytimes.com/2004/04/30/movies/reverberations-preserve-performance-art-can-you-preserve-the-wind.html?pagewanted=all# (access 30.06.2014).

FIG. 1 Marzia Migliora — *Capienza massima meno uno*, 2012 (Performance , 45', Rome, MAXXI Museum, 21 June 2012. Thanks to Teatro Valle Occupato. Words by Elena Pugliese in partnership with Patrizia Rotonda. Musical Direction and voices: Scuola Popolare di Musica di Testaccio). Photo: G. Aloisi.

FIG. 2 Marzia Migliora — *Capienza massima meno uno*, 2012 (Installation — Rome, MAXXI Museum, exhibition *ACTING OUT. Italian Artists in action*). Photo: M. D'Angelo.

of action into other material forms of art has affected the very notion of performance, leading to events designed and calibrated specifically for the (contextual and/or subsequent) production of material works. At any rate, the position of artists regarding the documentation of their works is currently far from uniform.

Flavio Favelli, an Italian artist who seldom devotes himself to performance, chose photography as the sole means to document his actions from the series *Vetrine dell'Ostensione*, staged from 2001 to 2014. Favelli decided to be photographed during his performance, which was represented behind shop windows in Bologna (2001, via Rialto; 2003, via Guerrazzi; 2004, via de' Musei; 2014, Oratorio di San Filippo Neri), in Venice (2004, Ponte ai Frari, san Polo), and in Rome, on the stage of a soundboard (2012, via Guido Reni).[10] The artist intended the photographic documentation to engender in the viewer an image comparable to that impressed on the consciousness of the original audiences. Constantly working on the theme of memory, triggered by objects or old photographs and postcards, Favelli employs photography to activate in the consciousness of those who have witnessed the performance an additional mnemonic dynamic. In 2012 he also produced a written note, describing the ideation leading to this performance, which he identified as personal memories.[11] Originally conceived for a shop window and imagined by the artist as the mirror before which, in his childhood and youth, he stood while trying on clothes and dancing to music, the *Vetrina dell'Ostensione* retains a strong theatrical attitude (Favelli 2003, 80-81). Here too, we may note, the public (whether casual passers-by or an audience desiring to attend an artistic event) plays a crucial role, although its active participation is not expected.[12]

At the same time, we find one of the most radical views in the position assumed by Tino Sehgal, who not only prohibits any form of official recording or documentation of his pieces, but also rules out the possibility of formalizing the sale of his pieces in any form, including sound and written documentation, by means of a written contract. Purchasing a *work* by Sehgal in fact involves closing a *verbal* contract in the presence of a notary.[13] As told by the Italian collector Giorgio Fasol, who acquired Sehgal's *This is the news* in 2003, the notary transcribed nothing: together with the collectors, his role was limited to listening to the story and instructions given by the artist for the re-enactment of the work at any further occasion.[14]

Documenting performance art may be fraught with misunderstandings or legal issues, as evinced by the legal dispute between the widow of Beuys (as heir to his estate) and the Schloss Moyland Museum, which owns the only existing documentation of the 1964 performance *The Silence of Marcel Duchamp is overrated:* nineteen documentary photographs taken at the time by Manfred Tischer. Beuys' widow Eva brought the case to court, claiming that these photos were not to be regarded as faithful documentation of the performance and could be exhibited by the Museum solely as photographic work by Tischer, but not as documentation of the original performance. While authorship rights are covered by *droit moral*, granting artists the rights over their work, in instances such as the Beuys-Tischer contention there is ample scope for debate over what kind of relation might *conceptually* (not legally) hold

[10] Flavio Favelli, *La vetrina dell'ostensione V*, in ACTING *OUT. Italian Artists in action*, Performances curated by Anne Palopoli. Rome, MAXXI Museum, 26 September 2012.

[11] "When my maternal grandmother Tosca left the house during the winter she always spent a few minutes in front of a mirror in the hallway [...]. I had to put myself on display because either you do these things in person or they are worth nothing." F. Favelli, note, in MAXXI BASE, Archive: Archivi del Contemporaneo, Attività, Mostre-Performance 2012, ActingOut.

[12] See the interview with Flavio Favelli: http://www.arte.rai.it/articoli/acting-out-flavio-favelli-in-azione/16950/default.aspx (access 03.07.2013).

[13] Vivian Van Saaze, *In the absence of documentation: reflection on the practice of remembrance*, oral presentation, *Performing Documentation in the Conservation of Contemporary Art*, Lisbon, Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian, 20 june 2013. Cf. Van Saaze in this publication.

[14] Antonello Tolve, *Giorgio Fasol: la collezione come forma simbolica* in <<Artribune>>, 8 ottobre 2013 <http://www.artribune.com/2013/10/giorgio-fasol-la-collezione-come-forma-simbolica/>. (access 10.11.2013).

between, for example, a photograph of a work of art and its (performative) subject. At the same time, the fact that Germany's Federal Supreme Court overturned the decision of the Higher Regional Court in Düsseldorf (which had previously decided in Eva Beuys' favor) in the Beuys-Tischer case[15] sufficiently indicates the complexity of the matter, in spite of its being fully covered by law. As for our concerns as curators and conservators, while no one disputes Eva Beuys' *droit moral* over her husband's work, the question of whether available documentation of a performance supplies a valid representation/point of view on the performance remains. Furthermore, what should museum curators regard themselves as doing when acquiring photographs instead of an action?

The choice of how to document and repeat a performance frequently emerges from a dialogue between the artist (or their heirs or studio) and museum curator. The revival of the historical performance *Ideologia e Natura* by Fabio Mauri at the *Vice Versa* exhibition, at the Italian Pavilion of the most recent Venice Biennale (Pietromarchi 2013, 112-135), was the result of an agreement between the artist's studio and curator Bartolomeo Pietromarchi. In the original work, performed in 1973 at the Galleria Duemila in Bologna, a performer repeatedly dressed and undressed the fascist uniform with "mechanical," repetitive, and stereotyped movements, while chanting to the beat of a metronome. In 2013, the curator chose to remake the original not by showing documentation of the original performance, but by updating the 1973 performance. To this purpose, the 2013 performers were instructed by Marina Mancuso, who had already staged the performance in 1994 working directly with Mauri in the course of an exhibition at the Galleria Nazionale d'Arte Moderna in Rome (Christov Bakargiev and Cossu 1994 142-145). The piece was in this case "handed down" from direct witnesses, and only the loan of the objects required to make it happen (original stage costumes and photo) was formalized, instead of the action itself. In this case, an oral tradition, together with the relevant photographic memory, constituted the basis of the re-enactment. At the Venice presentation, two different types of documentation were further displayed: a photo taken in 1973 and a video of the 2013 performance at the Biennale staged during the opening. From the point of view of a museum curator, it is rather peculiar that the terms of the loan agreement should have mentioned only the objects involved with the action. Yet this exemplifies how the experts (curators, collectors) ultimately fail to regard performance art as anything other than pure action, ineffable and intangible, and not as retaining the kind of status (and possibilities for implementation and reproduction) whereby it may be collected, acquired, or lent.

In a number of problematic cases concerning the conservation of contemporary artworks, a useful strategy may be to conduct a pre-interview with the artist,[16] especially at the moment of the acquisition of the performance, in order to understand and establish what their outlook is on a set of basic questions that have to do with the nature of the work, its status, and its conceptual and material articulation:[17]

a) Where did the performance originally take place?
b) Was it also staged at (e.g.) MAXXI, prior to the intended acquisition?

[15] Court proceedings and successive rulings are chronicled in the article: Schröer C. F., *Kein Sieg für die Kunst*, in "eiskellerberg", 03/06/2013 http://www.eiskellerberg.tv/allgemein-artikeldetail-txt/items/kein-sieg-fuer-die-kunst.html (access 15.02.2015) http://www.artquest.org.uk/articles/view/performance-art (access 20.04.2015). For further documentation on this particular case, see also: http://www.theartnewspaper.com/articles/Beuys-returns-to-Schloss-Moyland/24728 (access 15.02.2015); http://artforum.com/news/week =201037 (access 15.02.2015); http://artistsbooksandmultiples.blogspot.it/2013/05/new-ruling-in-beuys-performance.html (access 15.02.2015).

[16] http://www.zhdk.ch/uploads/media/archiv_performativ_document.pdf (pp. 5-6) (access 01.07.2013); http://www.incca.org/files/pdf/resources/guide_to_good_practice.pdf (access 01.07.2013).

[17] These questions were experimentally devised as part of the process of negotiating new acquisitions at MAXXI, and are particularly useful with regard to Performance Art, works in progress, and immaterial art. We interview the artist prior to acquisition and aim to have their written statement addressing all points that are likely to otherwise raise issues of interpretation, lead to later misunderstandings, or expose the museum to criticism on the grounds that the work or the artist's intent have been misused/misrepresented.

c) In general, what is the role of documentation and/or other props in the artist's performative work?
d) What does the artist think about the possibility of repeating the performance? In what way do they think it may be re-enacted, even after several years?
e) Does the artist think their performance should remain invariably linked to its original context (a museum, a gallery, or any other place), or can it be taken elsewhere?
f) Who may be entrusted with repeating the action in the artist's place (or in the place of the performer originally directed by the artist)?
g) Does the artist think that the original module may later be modified or adapted for re-performance?

Interviews along these lines are a tool through which the artist's point of view regarding the future of their work may be clarified and formalized. For this reason, the conservator-curator who exhibits or acquires a performance for a museum plays a key role in making sure that these questions are posed and answered, although on occasion addressing these issues in good time may mean forcing the artist's hand. Only the author of a performance (though only within a reasonably brief interval from the execution of the piece) should have the authority to sanction or reject any use or misuse of their work, while in the event of the death of the artist, only the rightful heirs to the estate may intervene (although, as the Beuys widow-Schloss Moyland Museum contention shows, this *ex post* scenario demands careful prior negotiation). Again, the interview represents an important step because artists are inclined to change their mind in the course of their life, being less interested in handing down their work when they are young, and feeling instead the need to leave a trace as they mature both professionally and personally.

In the simplest and most frequent cases, the artist relies on videos or photographs to hand down the performance to future generations. Obviously, acquiring an object that has a close relationship with the performance (photographs, video, one or more objects used during the original performance, sketches or plans) is an easier task, not least for the purposes of conservation, whereas acquiring or exhibiting so complex an "object" as a performance is demands that attention be paid to a far broader set of issues, as we have tried to illustrate.[18] It is to be hoped, then, that museums and collections will welcome a new phase in which the acquisition and exhibition of performances are standard (and better formalized) practice, without resorting to merely buying objects and material relics. It is important to frame the issue of documentation in relation to the negotiable degree of depersonalization of the action, which may, at certain conditions, be re-enacted by other performers without significant loss of meaning. Only then, after a careful evaluation of the nature of the work, will it be possible to increase the acquisition of artistic forms more closely linked to the contemporary production, in spite of their ephemeral or immaterial nature.[19]

[18] After the International Conference *Performing Documentation in the Conservation of Contemporary Art*, there was an important exhibition at MAXXI Museum, *Jan Fabre. Stigmata. Actions & Performances 1976*-2013, curated by Germano Celant (Rome, MAXXI Museum, 16 October 2013-16 February 2014). This is a meaningful example of relationship between action and relics, documentation and artwork. Negotiations for the donation of one of his works to become part of the MAXXI collection are currently under way, allowing us, as curators, to appreciate and understand in what way the artist conceives of donations and their scope and purpose.

[19] I would like to thank the artist Flavio Favelli, Maura Favero (archive manager for Gianfranco Barruchello and Bruna Esposito) and Ivan Barlafante, manager at Studio Fabio Mauri, for the valuable information they provided regarding some of the case studies discussed in this paper. Finally, I also wish to thank Mattia and Chiara; Simona, Giulia, Roberta, Fabiana and Francesca.

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REPORTING ITERATIONS

A DOCUMENTATION MODEL FOR TIME-BASED MEDIA ART

JOANNA PHILLIPS
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ABSTRACT

Once time-based media or other forms of changing contemporary art have entered a collection, more players impose upon the future experience of the work than just the artist. Curators, conservators, exhibition designers, audio-visual technicians, IT specialists, art handlers and other institutional staff can all play major roles in the complex decision-making process that leads to the realization of an artwork in a gallery space.
This paper introduces a documentation model to capture not only the technical, material, conceptual and aesthetic components and parameters of an installation, but also the team-based decision-making process that leads to the determination of these parameters. Rooted in the concept of allographicity, this model looks at the time-based media work in its two stages — its score (the work's identity and installation instructions) and its different manifestations (the work's iterations) — and documents both. The overall purpose of the model is to create a detailed record of an artwork's change over time. However, this documentation model also has the benefit of serving as a tool for institutional self-reflection, making current choices transparent to future interpreters, and thereby helping to prevent uninformed and compromising realizations of an artwork.

KEYWORDS
TIME-BASED MEDIA | ITERATION | ITERATION REPORTING | ALLOGRAPHIC | AUTOGRAPHIC

RESUMO

Quando obras de arte com imagens em movimento (*time-based media*) são incorporadas numa coleção, mais protagonistas, além do artista, intervêm na experiência futura da obra. Curadores, conservadores, designers de exposições, técnicos de audiovisual, especialistas de tecnologias de informação, produtores e outro pessoal da instituição podem desempenhar papéis importantes no complexo processo de tomada de decisão implicado na materialização de uma obra de arte no espaço expositivo.
Este artigo apresenta um modelo de documentação destinado a registar não apenas as componentes técnicas, materiais concetuais e estéticas e os parâmetros de uma instalação, mas também o processo de decisão em equipa que conduz à definição desses parâmetros. Baseado no conceito de alografia, este modelo encara as obras com imagens em movimento nos seus dois aspetos — o guião (a identidade da obra e as instruções de instalação) e as suas diversas manifestações (as iterações da obra) — documentando ambas. O objetivo do modelo é produzir um registo detalhado da alteração da obra ao longo do tempo. Contudo, este modelo de documentação possui também a vantagem de poder constituir uma ferramenta de reflexão institucional, tornando as decisões atuais transparentes para futuros intérpretes e assim contribuir para evitar materializações menos informadas de uma obra de arte.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE
TIME BASED MEDIA | ITERAÇÃO | RELATÓRIO DE ITERAÇÃO | ALOGRÁFICO | AUTOGRÁFICO

Introduction

Overall, yes, I am totally happy with it [the iteration]. Specifically, I think it is probably the smallest space that the piece can fit in.... To create a space in which it's comfortable for someone to come in and walk around, to really inhabit the space, that's deeply important to me, and that was really hard. But we managed it in this space, I think, pretty well, in the end...but that is important, and that is part of why I really prefer a larger space.[1]

When artist Sharon Hayes was interviewed by Guggenheim Conservation staff after the completed installation of her complex slide projection piece *In The Near Future* (2009), she approved the final appearance of the Guggenheim iteration,[2] but alluded to the compromises her work faced due to the spatial constraints of the exhibition space (see fig. 1). As the piece had just entered the Guggenheim collection, staff were eager to learn more about its identity, as well as evaluate the success of this particular display of the work. Although the artist was involved in almost every step of the preparation and installation of this first Guggenheim iteration, its critical evaluation — against the backdrop of the artwork's concept and previous iterations — is legitimate.

Firstly, and as this example shows, not every exhibition space or budget allows for an ideal realization of an artwork's concept and specifications. Collection staff must fully understand the degree of compromise (or even damage) that certain adjustments may introduce to an artwork in order to avoid them in the future. Secondly, and contrary to widely held beliefs, the artist is rarely the sole decision-maker behind the appearance of an iteration, especially after the work enters a collection. To realize the Guggenheim iteration of *In the Near Future*, at least 15 staff members from seven different departments, and two external contractors, all contributed their expertise and labor. In the process, the artist-provided installation instructions served as guidance, but many aspects of the work were undefined by the artist and required interpretation. The piece had to be adapted to the specific site; its layout and arrangement had to be designed; slide projectors and stands had to be sourced, tested, and selected; cabling and lensing had to be determined; and the creation of thousands of representative exhibition copy slides had to be facilitated and supervised.

Inherent in many of these planning and preparation steps are aesthetic and functional choices that deeply influence the appearance and experience of an artwork. Even if a living artist is available to give approval, detailed proposals are often — as was the case with *In The Near Future* — made by museum staff in charge of the venue, budget, equipment pool, or overarching exhibition concept. This applies equally to smaller institutions, where fewer staff may cover broader ranges of responsibility. In short, every new iteration of an installed, performed, fabricated, or otherwise reproducible artwork is the result of a collaborative endeavor, whether it is bilateral between artist and curator or taken on by a larger team.

This ubiquitous exhibition practice introduces elements to an artwork's experience that are contingent on institutional preferences and practicalities rather than artist origination. The institutional impact on the realization of artworks can

[1] Transcript of artist interview with Sharon Hayes, conducted on April 28, 2011 by Joanna Phillips and Jeffrey Warda at the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum

[2] The terms "iteration," "manifestation," "realization," "materialization," "representation," and "instance" are used interchangeably throughout the consulted literature. A discussion of terminology is urgently needed, but beyond the scope of this paper. For the purpose of my argument here, I will couple the terms "score" and "manifestation" to describe overarching principles pertaining not only to visual art, but to performative arts more generally, and will call the manifestation of a visual artwork "iteration."

FIG. 1 Sharon Hayes, *In The Near Future* (2009). Installation view at the Guggenheim Museum in 2011. © Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation, New York. Photo: Kristopher McKay

be particularly well observed where multiple editions of one artwork are owned and managed by different collections, or artworks are co-owned by multiple institutions.

While the perception remains widespread among conservators and scholars that "a 'director' (the artist or a third party) stages the work…" (Caianiello 2013, 210), it is acknowledged that "different spatial and economic conditions, as well as the co-operation of exhibition organizers, artists and technicians, influence the appearance of the work at different venues" (Heydenreich 2011, 158). Van Saaze, in her deep study of "changing artworks" in the museum context, rightly identifies the significance of collaborative interpretation practices:

> **…'artist intention' is not simply derived from the artist or the artwork, a view still commonly held in conservation practice, but is *produced* instead. Artist's intent, in other words, is the result of what is *done* in knowledge and**

documentation practices. This implies that rather than being a facilitator or 'passive custodian', the curator or conservator of contemporary art can be considered an interpreter, mediator or even a co-producer of what is designated as 'the artist's intention' (Van Saaze 2013, 116).

This paper argues that the change a time-based media work undergoes in its "career" (Van Saaze 2013, 29) cannot be fully understood or managed unless the underlying, institutional decision-making processes are also considered and documented. In the following, I propose a conceptual framework for documenting change and explore the limitations of existing documentation models to capture change and decision-making processes on a component level. I apply the concept of allographicity as a foundation for developing a two-stage reporting structure. After elaborating on the role and status of artist-provided installation instructions, I propose the *Documentation Model for Time-based Media Art* and comment on institutional prerequisites for capturing collaborative decision-making.

Documenting Change on the Component Level, Iteration by Iteration

The process of change that is inherent in a time-base media artwork cannot be understood as a continuum. Because a time-based media artwork is regarded as a "dynamic system" (Laurenson 2004, 49) that only exists when it is installed, change materializes periodically rather than continuously, and usually occurs on the occasion of the artwork's display.

To monitor and manage this periodical change, every iteration of the artwork has to be documented separately. Caianiello acknowledges that "only if every manifestation of a work is separately recorded and documented will it be possible to trace the lifecycle of an installation, and thus create a solid basis for future stagings" (Caianiello 2013, 229). She therefore calls for a "registration and documentation model that is based on the various presentations of a media art installation" (Caianiello 2013, 208).

As a method for documenting individual iterations of an artwork, the *Documentation Model for Time-based Media Art* proposes to break down each iteration into its components and parameters, and to track the change for every constituent of the iteration. Components include audiovisual materials, playback and display equipment, dedicated sculptural components, or installation accessories such as benches and pedestals. Parameters include spatial layouts, projection sizes, equipment placements, audiovisual programming, visitor interactivity, and other intangible descriptors of the artwork.

A useful analogy might be to compare the artwork to a system, which moves forward on a timeline and changes its system components and parameters when passing certain markers on the timeline. These markers represent events in the collection life of the artwork, such as exhibitions or preservation actions. Not all components and parameters of the system are necessarily changed with every event; some components may be retained — e.g., when they are dedicated to the artwork — while others might be exchanged, for example, if they have no specific significance for the piece. Regardless whether components

and parameters are retained or replaced within the system constellation, each constituent of the iteration is determined by active or arbitrary decision-making.

Limitations of Existing Documentation Models

Trying to document (1) the change of a time-based media artwork on the component level, and (2) the decisions underlying this change, proves difficult with existing documentation tools and models.

The Museum System (TMS)[3], a commercial database employed by the majority of American and some European museums for tracking and documenting their collections, prescribes the notion of the artwork as a contained entity with a fixed set of components. Reporting different iterations of the same artwork and tracking varying component constellations for these iterations is not easily possible.[4] The default information structure of TMS does not allow one to isolate components from the artwork's component list — e.g. to create a relational history of component clusters — or even to document interventions and decision-making on a component level.[5]

In order to bridge the shortfalls of TMS and other ubiquitous collection databases, a number of research consortiums have developed useful documentation models and templates. Three models are particularly relevant to conservation documentation of time-based media artworks: Matters in Media Art (2005),[6] the DOCAM Documentation Model (2010),[7] and the Inside Installations Documentation Model, 2IDM (2007).[8]

Matters in Media Art (MMA) is probably the most frequently consulted online resource for collection caretakers wanting to introduce best practices to acquiring and loaning time-based media art. MMA's detailed documentation guidelines and templates are well suited to capturing all conceptual and technical aspects of an artwork as a multi-component system. However, the MMA model is not designed to capture change or decision-making processes, mainly because it does not offer an informational hierarchy to distinguish permanent from temporary, iterational, and decision-based artwork components and parameters. For example, both basic reports, the *Installation Specifications* and the *Structure and Condition Report,* merge higher-level information such as the artwork's *Key Qualities* or the *Statement of Significance* with lists of equipment makes and models, which represent the system at a single "event on the timeline" — e.g., at the event of acquisition or loan — and which could be subject to future change. In the MMA system, the only way of creating a history of change of the artwork consists of updating and versioning the reports. Iteration-related decision-making and accounts of interpretation are not accommodated easily.

The DOCAM Documentation Model and the 2IDM do not provide templates or guidelines for the description of media artworks, but instead propose structures for organizing information on the artwork in a database environment. Unlike MMA, both documentation models are designed to document change by generating component-based records of individual iterations of the artwork. While the DOCAM model is tailored and limited to media artworks only,[9] the 2IDM proposes a more holistic approach to collection management, expanding the database structure to accommodate all types of artworks in one database. The

[3] Developed and administered by the company "Gallery Systems" in New York, see http://www.gallerysystems.com (last accessed 1/5/2014)

[4] Selected museums and collections have expanded their TMS data entry options by commissioning custom configuration or making creative use of existing functions, such as entering iterations as "related objects."

[5] Promising developments of TMS are currently underway; see "Conclusion" in this paper.

[6] Matters in Media Art, founded in 2004, is an ongoing research alliance between the New Art Trust, SFMOMA, MoMA and Tate, see http://www.tate.org.uk/about/projects/matters-media-art (last accessed 1/5/2014)

[7] The DOCAM Documentation Model is one of the five tools developed by the Canadian DOCAM Research Alliance ("Documentation and Conservation of the Media Arts Heritage") between 2005 and 2010, see http://www.docam.ca/en/documentation-model.html (last accessed 1/5/2014)

[8] The 2IDM was developed in 2007 by the working group "Documentation & Archiving Strategies" of the European research project "Inside Installations," see http://www.inside-installations.org/research/detail.php?r_id=482&ct=model (last accessed 1/5/2014)

[9] The DOCAM Documentation Model captures events in the "lifecycle of the work" ("creation," "dissemination," "research," and "custody") on different "entity levels" ("artwork," "expression," "manifestation," "item," and "component").

2IDM's information architecture is designed to document "the evolution of artworks, in particular installations" (Heydenreich 2011, 165), while also tracking the collection's object-based artworks. It supports the entry of detailed data on a component level, and all constituents relevant to collection environments. Of all three discussed models, the 2IDM offers the most versatile and inclusive documentation structure. However, just like MMA and the DOCAM model, the 2IDM lacks support for component-based reporting of decision-making processes.

Applying the Concept of Allographicity

In the past, time-based media artworks have been repeatedly compared with performative arts such as music or theater (Rinehard 2003, 25; Gfeller 2009, 166). The most critical investigation so far has been delivered by Pip Laurenson, who extended Nelson Goodman's concept of allographicity to time-based media installations, while identifying contained objects such as paintings and sculptures as autographic art (Laurenson 2006, 4). At the core of her theory, Laurenson compares time-based media works to allographic arts — music in particular — and identifies their common "two-part nature;" in their first stage of creation, these works exist as a score, or set of specifications, and in their second stage, they appear as performed instances (Laurenson 2006, 4-5). The interpretation of the score can result in successful, or less successful representations of the work:

> **In the performance of a musical work it is recognized that there is a gap between a work as represented as a score and its performance. This allows us to speak of good and bad performances while still being able to say that a work is the same work even if badly performed" (Laurenson 2006, 5).**

In the paradigm of allographicity, damage and loss to the artwork occur when the work is poorly installed, thereby introducing "...erosion of the identity of the work through its presentation in the gallery..." (Laurenson 2006, 5).

It remains to be debated whether the concept of allographicity is fully applicable to installation or time-based media artworks. Caianiello, for example, claims that the comparison is misleading, because media art installations, unlike music or theater, "may possess a material substance," or a "relationship to the space and exhibition situation." In her opinion, media art "falls within a grey area between autographic and allographic arts..." (Caianiello 2013, 215). And indeed, there are time-based media artworks with pronounced tangibilities, perhaps due to an aesthetic or conceptual dependency on a specific device (e.g., an artist-modified device) or technology (e.g., an obsolete technology). The behaviors and preservation needs of these tangible works resemble those of autographic artworks, and thus traditional methods of conservation and documentation apply.

However, I would argue that the large majority of time-based media works — certainly in the Guggenheim collection — can be characterized by component fluctuation, the absence of an original, the presence of specifications that require interpretation, and the fact that they only exist when they are installed. Whether based on video, film, slide, audio or software, these works regularly consist of

different components or component constellations every time they are installed. Unless the owner decides to dedicate equipment to a media artwork for logistical reasons or the dependencies indicated above, audiovisual formats and equipment components are frequently allowed to change in pace with contemporary technological development.

As soon as one or more of an artwork's components are replaceable, and any degree of interpretation is required to re-configure the piece for installation, the notion of allographicity provides a useful conceptual framework for conservation and documentation.

The structure of the proposed *Documentation Model for Time-based Media Art* integrates several aspects of allographicity: the identified two-stage nature of allographic artworks; their exclusive existence as performed/installed systems; the notion that interpretation is necessary to realize the artwork; and the consideration that interpretation can lead to a successful or less successful representation of the work's identity.

The Role of the Artist-Provided Installation Instructions

When a museum acquires a time-based media artwork, it commonly expects the artist or gallery to deliver comprehensive installation instructions with the piece. Depending on the artist's practice and complexity of the artwork, these *Artist-provided Installation Instructions* can be either brief or very detailed, including descriptions of the intended experience, floor plans and layouts, wiring diagrams, video tutorials, equipment lists, and previous installation views. The artist's instructions are an important starting point for establishing the identity of the artwork, but without critical institutional questioning and further conversation with the artist, the usefulness of those instructions can be limited. Artists will often submit a diligent description of one single iteration of the artwork, instead of providing their *criteria* for selecting audiovisual formats, equipment models or spatial parameters. The specificity of floor plans and listed equipment makes and models can suggest a dependency of the artwork on particular conditions and devices, when these may in fact be exchangeable. To successfully establish the identity of an artwork and compile guidelines for its future installation, it is essential for the collecting institution to challenge *Artist-provided Installation Instructions* and guide the artist in providing information on significances, variability parameters and conditional decision-making.

Informed by this dialogue, the conservator can identify "work-defining properties" (Laurenson 2006, 7) of replaceable equipment and other flexible constituents (see fig. 3) and distinguish between "dedicated," "non-dedicated," and "shared obsolete" equipment (Phillips 2012, 142).

The Documentation Model for Time-based Media Art

With this documentation model, I propose a modular reporting structure that allows collection caretakers (1) to separate information pertaining to a temporary iteration from higher-level information evidencing the identity of the artwork; (2) to capture individual and collective decision-making processes that determine an iteration; (3) to create a history of iterations that tracks the change of the work; and (4) to reflect on the success of a particular representation of the artwork.

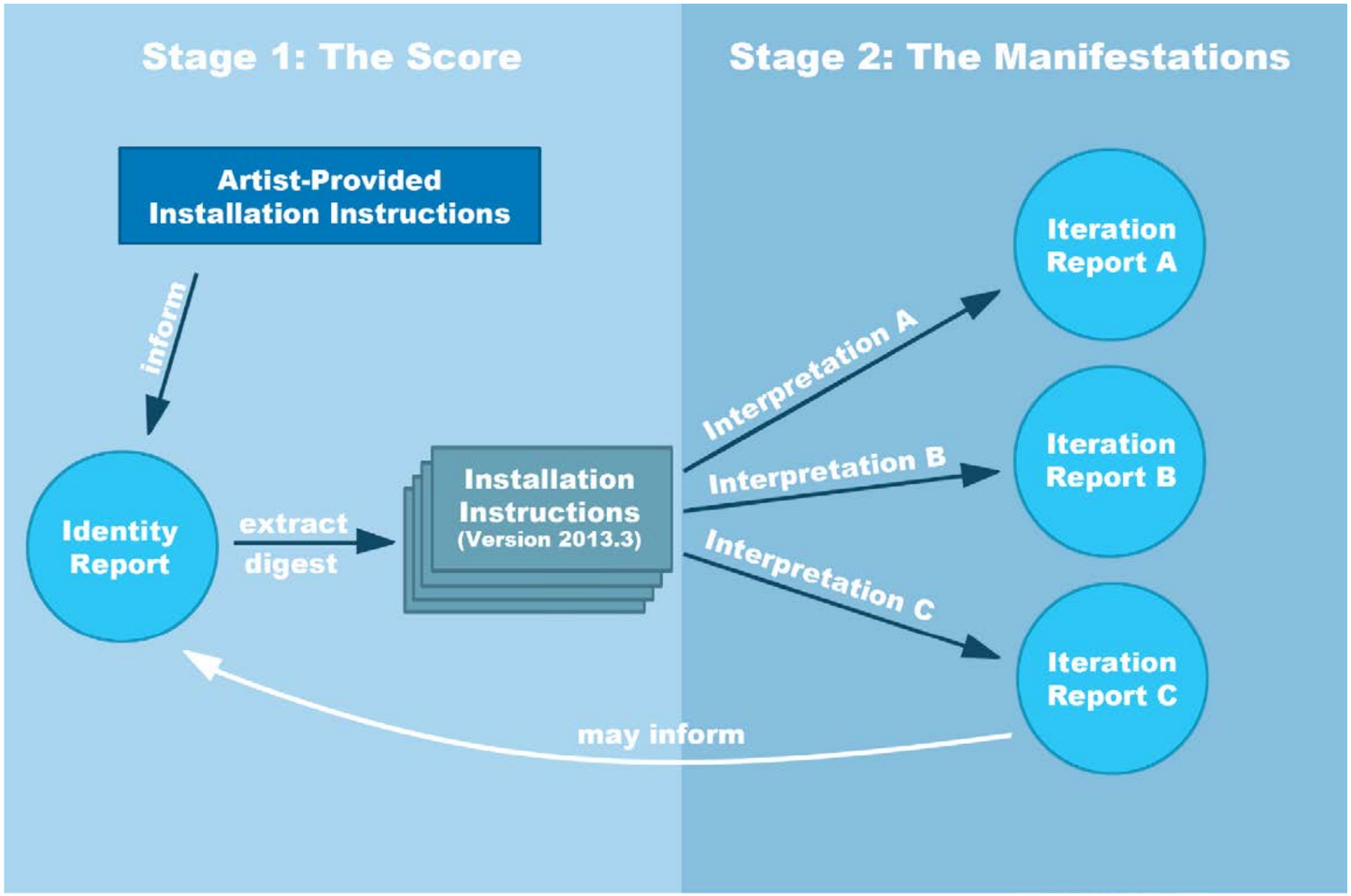

FIG. 2 The Documentation Model for Time-based Media Art. © Joanna Phillips

Employing the concept of allographicity, the documentation model structures information on the artwork in two phases, *Stage 1: The Score*, and *Stage 2: The Manifestations* (see fig. 2). The key reports are the *Identity Report* capturing the essential score of a work, and the various *Iteration Reports*, each of which captures one iteration of the work in a specific venue, and the decisions underlying the determination of installation components and parameters.

The *Identity Report* is informed by the *Artist-provided Installation Instructions*, further conversations with the artist, and research on the artwork's context and previous history of exhibition and change. It will often become enriched over time, when new insights into the work-defining parameters arise with the realization of new iterations.

The *Identity Report* specifies the intended experience of the piece, outlines its variability parameters and provides guidance for future preservation. A central part of the report

#	Device	Work-defining Properties	Equipment Category
2	Video projector (artist-approved example in 2011: Panasonic PT-DW530E)	(1) native resolution of 1280 x 800 (2) native 16:10 aspect ratio that allows to display the digitized Super 16 material without cropping (3) brightness of 4000 lumens (not too bright for the small screen size) (4) a vertical lens shift option that allows to lower the projector behind the suspended rear projection screen in order to avoid blinding the audience (5) both projectors must have same make / model / lamp hours	Class 3: Non-dedicated EQ

Exhibition Copies			
Format (resolution, frame rate, bitrate, encoding, etc.)	**Component No.**	**Decision-making**	**Produced by / Approved by**
• Format: H.264/MPEG-4AVC • Resolution 720*576 (PAL) • Frame rate (fps): 25 • Bitrate: 43 Mbps • Container: MOV — QuickTime • Size: 623.9 MB • Duration: 8 mins 51 sees	2006.867.4	The artist-provided MPEG2 exhibition copy 2006.867.3 displayed micro-blocking artifacts. Given the large screen projection preferred for this iteration, the artifacts did not seem acceptable (JP, VS and NT agreed) and JP created a new derivative from the artist-provided, uncompressed master file 2006.867.2. The new H.264 encoding displayed a softer image structure, but no disturbing micro-blocking. JP, VS, NT and the artist MS approved of the new copy 2006.867.4, which should be used in the future.	JP, VS, NT, MS

is the mapping of the work's anatomy by listing all dedicated components and identifying work-defining properties for all replaceable components (see fig. 3 and fig. 5).

Component level reports with further information on dedicated or specified components, such as Condition and Treatment Reports, Equipment Reports, Digitization Reports, and Metadata Reports for video files are all linked to or filed with the *Identity Report*.

The purpose of the *Identity Report* is not to capture specific solutions for realizing the piece in one venue, but to characterize its behaviors under different circumstances, and to create a rich description of the artwork as a system in relation to its environment. To illustrate such a conditional relationship between artwork and space, I use the example of a video installation that consists of two opposite projections, which have been shown differently in the past: as rear projections onto hanging acrylic screens, and as front projections onto opposite walls. The task of the *Identity Report* is to capture the conditions for all possible presentation modes. In this example, the report will specify that the videos *must* be shown as rear projections if the gallery space is longer than four meters, and as frontal wall projections if the space is approximately four meters long. Furthermore, the report will explain the artist's intent behind this specification: a fixed four-meter distance between the two projections is essential for the intended experience of the piece. To maintain the four-meter distance in spite of varying room sizes, the appropriate presentation mode is selected.

Since the *Identity Report* becomes a detailed and contextual documentation of the artwork, it is generally not suitable for sharing with borrowing institutions. For the purpose of loaning the work, or installing the work in the gallery, simplified *Installation Instructions* are extracted from the *Identity Report* that only contain information relevant for the realization of the piece today, with contemporary technology and in its current component constellation.[10] In response to technological developments or site-specifics, *Installation Instructions* are subject to continuous updating. Versioning and tracking the outdated *Installation Instructions* plays an important role in monitoring the change of the artwork.

The *Iteration Reports* are informed by witnessing the planning and install process of a single iteration, as well as its reception by different stakeholders, including the artist, the visitors, or the press. The report specifies all team members

FIG. 3 Detail of the *Identity Report*, capturing the work-defining properties of a non-dedicated video projector.

FIG. 4 Detail of the *Iteration Report*, stating the decision-making behind the used exhibition copy.

[10] Narrowing the "Installation Instructions" can be a tool of control for the owner of the artwork, who wants to prevent uninformed interpretations of the work. To facilitate successful iterations of its collections works, the Guggenheim's loan policy for installation works requires the borrower to seek the Guggenheim's approval of installation plans before the work is realized.

involved in the interpretation and realization process and tracks their partaking in determining specific media and hardware components, design and space parameters, iteration-specific problem-solving, and modifications of the work (see fig. 4 and fig. 5).

The *Iteration Report* captures whether a particular equipment set-up was stipulated by the artist (e.g. for aesthetic or conceptual reasons) or sourced by the media technician (e.g. because it was conveniently available). It makes transparent whether installation details represent the artist's ideal or the curator's compromise, for example, in response to a suboptimal venue. Contemporary statements and opinions on the success of an iteration, and records of noteworthy visitor reactions, allow future interpreters and scholars to evaluate previous interpretations critically. The purpose of *Iteration Reporting* is to create a history of change, which is related to the history of decision-making that determines the "career" of unstable, changing artworks such as time-based media works of art.

Identity Report

1. Artwork Identification:
- Accession number, artist, title, ©, year, medium line, edition

2. Identity of the Artwork:
- Artwork Description: Concept, content, intended experience and key qualities of the work
- Audiovisual characteristics (color, sound, native format, aspect ratio, resolution, frame rate etc.) and presentation mode (looped, synchronized, projection/monitor, speakers/head phones etc.)
- Significances of audiovisual formats and outputs, technologies, devices for the artwork
- Variability: Which of the components and parameters can / can not change, according to whom?

3. History of Exhibitions and Iterations:
- Exhibition date/title/venue (text and images)
- Description: Iteration specifics, if available: artist's statement on iteration success

4. Anatomy of the Artwork:
- Media components (production and derivative history, Media Reports for each media component)
- Playback and display devices: significant properties; categorization of equipment (dedicated, non-dedicated, shared/obsolete), example makes and models as preferred by the artist
- Other installation components (benches, props, sculptural elements etc.): categorization (dedicated, optional), work-defining properties; examples as preferred by the artist

5. Dependencies:
- Based on the meaning and significance of each component (e.g. media, software, hardware, sculptural element): dependencies of the artwork and associated preservation risks
- Preferred conservation strategies (including artist's statement)
- Suppliers of dependent equipment/component, resources of required knowhow and services

6. Installation Parameters:
- Equipment and component position in space (diagrams and plans)
- Space requirements: wall, floor, ceiling properties; light; entrance, exit, visitor flow; screen sizes; projection distances etc.
- Expertise needed to install the piece

7. Technical Requirements and Parameters:
- Wiring Plan
- Power requirements
- Sync Details
- Maintenance

8. Previous Reception of the Artwork:
- Press reviews, mentioned in publications

Iteration Report

1. Artwork Identification:
- Accession number, artist, title, ©, year, medium line, edition

2. Exhibition:
- Date, title, venue, gallery space, borrower, context of iteration

3. Iteration created/supervised/influenced by:
- Names and titles of all participants who influenced the appearance of the artwork in this iteration (including curators, conservators, technicians, artists, artist assistants, art handlers, external consultants, etc.)
- Who installed the work? Needed time and costs?
- How did the artist impact this iteration? Involved in the planning? Present during install?

4. Evaluation of Iteration:
- Was the iteration considered successful or not? By whom, why, when?
- Did the artist see and approve?
- Were there unsolved problems or suggestions for future improvements, by whom?
- Public reception of iteration? Press reviews?
- Visitor feedback/interaction? Repeated incidences, damage reports?

5. Overall images:
- installation views, as installed
- floor plans and elevations, as installed

****
FROM HERE ONWARDS, EVERY DESCRIBED COMPONENT/ PARAMETER IS INDIVIDUALLY REASONED IN AN ADJACENT DECISION-MAKING FIELD. ALL AUTHORS/APPROVERS OF DECISIONS ARE NAMED.
****

6. Space parameters, as installed:
- Space dimensions, layout details
- Wall/floor/ceiling colors and materials
- Light conditions, light locks materials
- Entrance, exit, visitor flow
- Equipment position and mounting
- Screen sizes, projection distances

7. Exhibition Copies, as used:
- File characteristics, component numbers
- Production details and reasons for choices of formats etc.

8. Equipment, as installed:
- Descriptions, makes and models, component or tracking numbers
- Mounts, pedestals
- Cable connections, wiring diagrams

9. Other installation components, as installed:
- Dedicated (e.g. sculptural) components: component numbers
- Replaceable components: descriptions, dimensions, colors, materials, fabrication plans etc.

10. Technical set-up:
- Power layout, amperage, remote controlling system

11. Iteration-specific modifications to the artwork:
- Alterations to specifications on Identity Report, adjustments specific to the site, conditions or stakeholders' preferences

12. Further Installation Details
- Step-by-step documentation of the installation process, in text and images

13. During the show:
- Security/safety (guards, signage, parental guidance etc.)
- Maintenance

FIG. 5 The information layout of the Identity Report and Iteration Report in comparison.

Conditions for Documenting Institutional Decision-Making

Witnessing and reporting the complex, inter-departmental decision-making process requires an institutional "team culture," in which all parties involved understand the significance of documentation and support its execution. Acknowledging the responsibility for accommodating documentation will often require institutional staff to change their long-established curating and exhibition practices. For example, curators, who used to maintain bilateral and exclusive relationships with artists, would be required to share their artist communication and negotiation with documenting staff. Media technicians would have to feel comfortable providing insight into problems and compromises. And exhibition managers in charge of budgets would have to approve the extra costs that would arise for creating on-site documentation at other venues.

Pulling together the knowledge and experience that is otherwise fragmented and embodied by individuals across an institution is essential to taking responsible care of allographic (and autographic) collection works.[11] Advocacy for new, coordinated documentation practices requires respectful education of colleagues. Such advocacy can profit significantly from the formation of an interdepartmental working group that focuses on the diverse issues of time-based media works in the collection.[12]

Conclusion

Although debatable, the concept of allographicity provides a useful framework for the conservation and documention of artworks that (1) do not consist of a contained, original object; (2) only exist when they are installed; (3) are based on specifications that require interpretation; and (4) are characterized by component fluctuation. Reflecting the two-stage nature of allographic arts (their score and their manifestations), the *Documentation Model for Time-based Media Art* introduces a modular reporting structure that distinguishes higher-level information pertaining to a work's identity from iteration-specific information on temporary manifestations of the work. Such a structure not only allows tracking an artwork's changes on a component level — a feature that other documentation models have achieved before — but is also the first model to acknowledge and capture the complex institutional decision-making process that determines the appearance of an artwork in the gallery space.

The documentation model was developed and implemented at the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum in 2011 and proves to be a useful tool for documenting the time-based media works in the collection. PDF templates of the *Iteration Report* and other modular reports are shared on the Guggenheim Website.[13]

In the future, the documentation model will be implemented as an integral part of a new version of The Museum System (TMS), which Gallery Systems is currently developing. The new, web-based TMS Conservation Studio application will feature the two-stage reporting structure, the concept of *Iteration Reporting*, and the reporting of decision-making processes.[14] This benchmark upgrade will also allow in-depth reporting on the component level, which is a requirement for documenting all kinds of contemporary art in a database environment. According to Gallery Systems, the release of this critical version is scheduled for the first quarter of 2015.[15]

[11] Vivian van Saaze elaborates on the fragmentation of knowledge in her case study on *One Candle* by Nam June Paik, see Van Saaze 2013.

[12] A number of major museums in the US, including SFMOMA, MoMA and the Whitney Museum of American Art, have established internal working groups that regularly convene to discuss the acquisition, registration, display and preservation of time-based media works in their custody. Pip Laurenson identifies different institutional approaches to the care of time-based media works, including the formation of round table working groups, in her latest article, see LAURENSON 2013, 2.

[13] see www.guggenheim.org/tbm-documentation (last accessed 1/5/2014)

[14] This milestone achievement is the result of Gallery System's outreach to the Conservation Working Group and individual museum conservators.

[15] Personal e-mail from Jay Hoffman, CEO of Gallery Systems, dated 1/5/2014.

If this structural upgrade is implemented in TMS, conservators will finally be enabled to extend their high standards to the documentation of contemporary art, including time-based media art, without having to separate these works from the overall collection management system. Stewards will be able to track and manage the periodical changes that some of their collection works undergo, and create a historiography of decision-making processes that cause these changes.

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PUBLIC ACCESS IN THE AGE OF DOCUMENTED ART

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ABSTRACT

Ephemerality and variability in contemporary art is fostering an age of documentation within museums. Conservators, curators, and other museum professionals spend an increasing amount of resources documenting technical details and conceptual underpinnings in an effort to provide a knowledge base for future staff that will design new exhibitions and conduct conservation interventions. The resulting archives contain information about production methods, materials, past manifestations, and artists' concerns that can inform art history, art criticism, and public understanding.

This article proposes activating these closed archives by opening them to scholars, educators, and the public. In addition to providing access for greater awareness, further benefit can be gained through participatory programming that promotes public contributions in a form of *crowd documentation.* The article traces ethical, legal, and artistic challenges to greater transparency of museum documentation. Despite these hurdles, tools are emerging that facilitate public access and participation in documenting the art of our times.

KEYWORDS
CONTEMPORARY ART | CROWD DOCUMENTATION | MEDIA ART | CONSERVATION | METADATA | PUBLIC ACCESS

RESUMO

A efemeridade e variabilidade da arte contemporânea está a promover uma era de documentação nos museus. Conservadores, curadores e outros profissionais de museus despendem uma progressivamente maior quantidade de recursos para documentar detalhes técnicos e fundamentos conceptuais num esforço para providenciar uma base de conhecimento para quem, no futuro, vier a conceber novas exposições e a concretizar intervenções de conservação. Os arquivos resultantes contêm informação sobre métodos de produção, materiais, manifestações passadas, preocupações dos artistas, que podem informar a história da arte, a crítica da arte e o entendimento por parte do público.

Este artigo propõe a ativação destes arquivos fechados abrindo-os a investigadores, educadores e público. Para além de garantir um maior grau de consciencialização, outros benefícios podem ser conseguidos através de programação participada que promova a contribuição do público sob a forma de *crowd documentation*. O artigo identifica desafios de carácter ético, legal e artístico a uma maior transparência na documentação dos museus. Apesar destes obstáculos, vão emergindo ferramentas que facilitam o acesso do público e a participação na documentação da arte do nosso tempo.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE
ARTE CONTEMPORÂNEA | *CROWD DOCUMENTATION* | *MEDIA ART* | CONSERVAÇÃO | METADATA | ACESSO PÚBLICO

Introduction

Early in 2012 I was contacted by the Architecture and Design Department at the Museum of Modern Art (MoMA) where I served as Media Conservator. They alerted me to an upcoming acquisition and exhibition of an architectural performance/installation by Spanish architect Andrés Jaque.[1] The work is a participatory, community-based project that features local residents who altered products from the IKEA retail store. The performance includes selected residents activating their re-use of the products for museum visitors, on and around an architectural construction designed by Jaque. In Figure 1, we see "disobedients" cutting hair, making music, and cooking with altered IKEA products that they use in their daily life.[2]

Realizing the complexity of the work, I immediately began working with the curatorial department to build critical documentation for future display and conservation. The pre-acquisition documentation we received from the artist's studio included a statement about the work, floor plans, images, and video from prior iterations. We asked Jaque to fill out a detailed questionnaire, and I conducted a conservation interview with him. Our documentation grew during the September 2012 exhibition at PS1, as more plans, images, videos, interview transcripts, curatorial descriptions, participant statements, critical reviews, and input from social media programming began to pile in. After the exhibition, we were left with a multitude of analog and digital files in various formats that would comprise the beginning of MoMA's documentation record. The archive will be a resource for staff at the museum in planning and executing the next exhibition.

This buildup of documentation is now common practice for conceptual, ephemeral, and variable works. Creating this documentation involves considerable time and labor to record what the work has been, what it is, and what it can be in the future. Artists fill out questionnaires, create installation manuals, and participate in interviews. Museum staff produces their own documentation through each life stage of the artwork. New documentation practices extend protocols established for more traditional collections, as the artwork portfolio builds from acquisition through each phase of an artwork's institutional life, including storage, exhibition, loan, and conservation.

Variability from one manifestation to the next forces attention to documentation, since future staff will rely on it for interpretation. It may be argued that through multiple iterations, documentation grows to define the work. Decisions that are made based on this documentation can dramatically alter public experience of the artwork.

Museum visitors experience a snapshot of how a variable work may be realized when it is on exhibition, but they cannot easily learn what museum staff knows about past iterations and artist sanctions for exhibition. For instance, *IKEA Disobedients* is a social process performance/installation that functions as a critique of IKEA's advertizing message about harmonious domestic urban life. As described in Jaque's *IKEA Disobedients Manifesto,* which was provided to the museum, the process begins long before the exhibition opens with a call for local residents who have altered the function of IKEA products. Resident "disobedients" are selected through a series of interviews, and then work with the artist's team to jointly

[1] For more information about *IKEA Disobedients* see: http://www.moma.org/collection/object.php?object_id=156886; http://cargocollective.com/anapenalba/Collaboration-ANDRES-JAQUE (Accessed July 20, 2014).

[2] *IKEA Disobedients* exhibition at PS1, September 2012.

FIG. 1 *IKEA Disobedients*. Andrés Jaque / Office for Political Innovation. Museum of Modern Art, New York. Architecture & Design Purchase Fund, 2012. Credit: Andrés Jaque / Office for Political Innovation.

design the exhibition. Knowledge about the extensive selection and exhibition design process, along with the social critique, enriches one's understanding of the work, but cannot be easily gained from experiencing the exhibit itself.

Since works such as *IKEA Disobedients* cannot be fully understood without background knowledge, scholars, critics, and the general public all deserve at least some access to museum archives. The aim of this article is to provide a window into how this growing body of documentation can be shared, with particular focus on public access and public contribution. As suggested in the following sections, attempts to make museum documentation available even to internal staff are hindered by many technical and logistical obstacles. Efforts towards greater transparency to the public face even greater barriers, including ethical, legal, and artistic concerns. Despite these challenges, museums need to open their archives for public access and to contributions from outside sources.

My focus is on variable art, including installation, media, and performance works. The reason for this is that these art forms force dramatic changes in documentation practice, as artists transfer interpretive authority to museums. Physical alterations include new exhibited objects, new exhibition equipment, and new exhibition formats. Environmental changes include new spatial dimensions, new wall and floor surfaces, and new levels of light and audio. Performance art inevitably changes as new performers activate the works, bringing their own body and their own interpretation into the gallery.

The Museum Culture of Documentation

While new art forms require new methods of documentation, recording information about collections isn't new for museums (Heydenreich 2011). In fact, it is at the core of traditional museum practice, from acquisition and cataloging to exhibitions, loans, and conservation. Museum records typically extend back to their founding documents, and include inventories with annotations about donors, prices, and information about artists. Framed objects that circulate on loans bear witness to their travels through an accumulation of exhibition labels on the back of the frames. Condition notes detail every scratch and tear, while conservation reports describe each step of analysis and intervention.

Museum professionals divide up the tasks of documentation. Curators begin documenting potential acquisitions well before they arrive in the museum. Their initial art historical and provenance research feeds into their artwork files and is picked up by catalogers who add additional information once the artwork arrives, including a unifying accession number, dimensions, medium and date of production. Registrars add tracking, storage and insurance information. Conservators contribute to the growing profile with more detailed information about condition, past conservation campaigns, and chronicles of their work. They are ethically bound by professional codes to produce and maintain accurate records from their examination, sampling, scientific investigations, and treatment, along with the rationale behind their decisions.[3] Images of artworks accumulate as they move through each stage of museum life, from standard documentation in acquisition and display

[3] European Confederation of Conservator-Restorers' Organizations (ECCO) *Professional Guidelines* http://www.ecco-eu.org/about-e.c.c.o./professional-guidelines.html; American Institute for Conservation of Historic and Artistic Works (AIC) *Guidelines for Practice http://www.conservation-us.org/about-us/core-documents/guidelines-for-practice#.UtayQGRDt39* (Accessed July 20, 2014).

to technical imaging associated with material research and conservation.

Traditionally, documentation resides in multiple places within the museum. Micro-archives exist in many departments, including curatorial, registrar, and conservation (Hölling 2013).[4] Larger museums with libraries collect secondary literature about artworks, and museums with archives collect additional materials from exhibitions, collectors, and the artists themselves. Increasingly, education departments accumulate their own information about collections that are relevant to public programming.

The culture of museum documentation shifted dramatically in recent years, as museums were engulfed in the great wave of digitization that affected all spheres of contemporary life. Analog photographs and records were scanned. New forms of documentation are now born digital. Digitization facilitates access, since data can be input and retrieved through database management. Collections databases — such as *The Museum System, EMu*, and *EmbARK* — allow museum workers to enter data and link files. Digital asset management systems provide not only access to documentation images, but to critical metadata and copyright information about the images.

With the rise of digital documentation, expectations for access grow higher. Yet museums struggle to provide that access even to curators, registrars, collections managers, conservators, educators, exhibition designers, installers, and others who need particular information about individual works within the collection. Curators need to know the nature and extent of their authority to interpret an artwork for display. Similarly, performers need to know many details about works they are contracted to perform, from costuming to choreography and interpretation. Media conservators, exhibition designers, and audiovisual technicians need detailed technical information about media formats, exhibition equipment, power requirements, and more.

Technical Obstacles and Solutions for Sharing Documentation

Digital documentation archives in museums pose logistical problems for staff with scarce time to sift through unprocessed data. Scanning, uploading, and linking data from various micro-archives around the museum helps mitigate the problem. In addition to the sheer quantity of information, there are technical obstacles to sharing electronic documentation (Jones 2008). The three challenges described in this section are developing common metadata standards, developing systems for discoverability and access, and accommodating the range of file formats used to archive the documentation.

The metadata standards that museum communities must adopt include both descriptive and structural components of the data system. Descriptive metadata refers to the content, such as “title,” “artist,” and “medium.” New descriptive fields are frequently created because of the constantly changing media and formats in contemporary art. For instance, do we call it “media,” “time-based media,” “new media,” “film,” “video,” “audio,” “software-based art,” “computer-based art,” or “Net art”? Similar problems occur in describing the rapidly growing range of new paint media, synthetic polymers, and modern alloys in contemporary art. Without agreeing on terminology within an institution, retrievability

[4] Hanna Hölling discusses micro-archives in the context of understanding the multiple incarnations of works by Nam June Paik in *Re: Paik: On Time, Changeability and Identity of Nam June Paik’s Multimedia Installations*.

and information sharing are nearly impossible. The problem is multiplied when considering cross-institutional sharing.

One project we can look to as a model for extending terminology is *Categories for Describing Works of Art* (CDWA).[5] Developed with significant resources over a period of years, CDWA provides standard terminology and a conceptual framework for describing and accessing art in information systems. Using standardized systems such as CDWA within museums facilitates information access to users.

Structural metadata refers to the underlying database design that facilitates relationships between data within the system. In a database, such structural systems may allow a user to generate reports that pull information from a variety of data fields. Information managers can design templates that cull information from different database tables into useful reports. For instance, a conservator may generate a report that combines basic catalog information about an artwork with images, prior condition records, and results from prior analysis.

A helpful project in modeling the design of structural metadata is the *DOCAM Documentation Model*, which was developed to structure information about complex media works.[6] It offers museums a method of organizing information for works with multiple artists, multiple data formats, and iteration changes.

In addition to the problem of metadata standards, a second area of technical concern is developing systems for discoverability and access to documentation once it has been archived. There is a growing range of file formats used to archive documentation, such as text (Microsoft Word, Adobe PDF), image (JPEG, TIFF), audio (MPS, WAV), and digital video files (QT, AVI, MXF). Museums need to build research tools that can technically link to these various formats. The tools must be well designed and user friendly. Researchers need to locate documentation through finding aids that provide key word searches for discovery, and visualization interfaces that are easy to navigate. Without standardized file formats, metadata, and terminology, discovery can be ad hoc within any system of documentation.

The *DOCAM Visualization Interface* offers a helpful graphic model for discovering files in multiple formats that are structurally organized according to their relationships with the artwork.[7] Well-designed interfaces allow users to easily determine the file type along with the artwork life cycle phase it is associated with. The entity level of the information is also visually categorized, moving from individual components to manifestations, with artwork being the highest level.

A third challenge for sharing documentation comes with the range of media and formats used for art production and its documentation. Museums strive to acquire archival files from media artists in the form of uncompressed or native formats. Similarly, the electronic files that staff produce must be standardized and approved for long-term stability. Highly compressed files experience loss in production, and all files can experience digital corruption from bit flipping (from 0s to 1s and 1s to 0s) over time. The files must be monitored for stability, and stored on reliable servers that are routinely backed up. In addition, files must be reformatted periodically

[5] The *Categories for the Description of Works of Art* (CDWA) project http://www.getty.edu/research/publications/electronic_publications/cdwa/ (Accessed July 20, 2014).

[6] *DOCAM Documentation Model* http://www.docam.ca/en/documentation-model.html (Accessed July 20, 2014).

[7] *DOCAM Visualization Interface* http://www.docam.ca/en/visualisation-interface.html (Accessed July 20, 2014).

to keep them legible by new software on new operating systems used by the museum.

While these technical hurdles need to be overcome within each institution, there is a growing need to share documentation about contemporary art across institutions and among professionals who use it in their research for collecting, exhibiting, and conserving the same artwork in an editioned series or similar works by the same artist.

Understanding this need for sharing among professionals around the world led to the formation of the International Network for the Conservation of Contemporary Art (INCCA). The mission of INCCA is "to collect, share and preserve knowledge needed for the conservation of modern and contemporary art."[8] One of the core projects of INCCA is the Artists Archive Database. Members of INCCA enter metadata describing unpublished research. Despite the clear value of this database, it grew unwieldy with time because of the lack of standardization in metadata and terminology. Fortunately plans are underway to envelop the content of the INCCA database into a new web-based platform with expanded application.

Developing web-based platforms for sharing information across institutions is now possible through linked data,[9] which is a method of aggregating data from different sources by using standard protocols and semantic technologies. Each institution can retain its own cataloguing systems within its own internal database as long as it agrees to a common set of semantic elements that permit mapping its digital objects through linked data systems. The art world can look to libraries and archives that already developed a number of successful Linked Data projects. Perhaps the largest and best-known Internet portal for aggregated information is *Europeana.*[10] Over 2,000 institutions across Europe contribute data about Europe's cultural and scientific heritage by agreeing upon a common standard, known as *Europeana Semantic Elements*.

The *Forging the Future* project proposes a variety of open source tools for managing documentation about media art, with potential for sharing it across institutions.[11] Of particular interest is their "metaserver" tool, which will enable databases managed by different institutions to share standardized information.

The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation is another a leader in the field through their efforts to create open source applications within the museum community for sharing information using semantic technology. *ResearchSpace* is an open-source platform that allows art history researchers to search across institutional datasets for images and texts about artists and artworks.[12] It features tools that allow researchers to save searches, collaborate in groups, and annotate findings. *CollectionsSpace* is an open-source collections management application,[13] and *ConservationSpace*, still in development, will be a conservation documentation management application.[14] *ConservationSpace* will allow multiple users at different institutions to share their documentation and collaborate on its development.

The projects referenced in this section are mostly in *beta* form. They need to be tested and refined by the professional community. Yet they offer a picture of how the technical challenges to sharing documentation about contemporary art may be overcome in the future.

[8] *International Network for the Conservation of Contemporary Art* (INCCA) http://www.incca.org/ (Accessed July 20, 2014).

[9] For more information on linked data, see Heath, Tom & Christian Bizer, *Linked Data (Synthesis Lectures on the Semantic Web: Theory and Technology)*.

[10] *Europeana* http://www.europeana.eu/ (Accessed July 20, 2014).

[11] *Forging the Future* http://forging-the-future.net/ (Accessed July 20, 2014).

[12] *ResearchSpace* http://www.researchspace.org/ (Accessed July 20, 2014).

[13] *CollectonsSpace* http://www.collectionspace.org/ (Accessed July 20, 2014).

[14] *ConservationSpace* http://conservationspace.org/Home.html (Accessed July 20, 2014).

Sharing Documentation with the Public

Clearly there is considerable technical work involved in sharing documentation among professionals at different institutions. Yet the need is there, and recent projects indicate that technical solutions are rapidly evolving. As pointed out at the beginning of the article, works such as *IKEA Disobedients* can only partially be understood through direct experience. Museum visitors would benefit from information about these works held in museum archives. Critics and scholars in part fill this need by writing about the meaning, significance, and critical success of each iteration. Their analyses would also be enriched by deeper access to knowledge held by museums. Yet the raw data of documentation often needs sifting and translation for broad distribution.

Given the need for more transparency of documentation, museums are forced to decide what should be shared from their archives. It is clearly no longer appropriate to guard all knowledge on museum servers for insiders only. Yet full transparency is problematic. In developing programs of public dissemination, museums need to carefully consider a number of factors that include professional ethical, legal, and artistic concerns.

Not all documentation about an artwork should be shared with the public, or even distributed within an institution. Information about price, donors, and contract negotiation is almost always restricted. Standard contracts between museums and artists or their representatives contain language about copyright and licensing that governs the reproduction of media, artist involvement in decision-making, payment of performers, and other negotiated agreements. Finding aids may indicate that this information is present, but information management systems need to restrict access to those with a need to know.

Decisions about when to provide public access are inevitably made on a case-by-case basis. Some artists want to share all information about their work with the public, whereas most do not. For instance, artists who generate their own source code and compiled software may consider this level of technical information proprietary, and core to their artistic production. They often express concern that others with access to it could use it for their own creative projects. Some artists won't even provide their source code to the owner, much less the public.[15]

Many artists want the public to experience their work in the gallery or online without technical knowledge about how the work was produced. This "black box" approach to exhibiting preserves the mystery or magic by offering an unencumbered experience. Other artists, such as Cory Arcangel, consider sharing code, and allowing others to modify the artwork for their own artistic production, part of their creative work. He answers the question directly on his website, "Can I use your code or modify one of your projects? Yeah, totally."[16] Given the ambiguity and mixed intentions of artists, acquiring their permission to disseminate documentation about their work is critical.

As a matter of professional ethics and responsibility, conservators produce extensive documentation associated with their research and interventions on works of art. For better or worse, most museums prefer keeping records of damage and repair from public attention and scrutiny. The results of studies that identify original materials and artist

[15] In a pilot project of thirteen software-based artworks in MoMA's collection conducted by the author and Deena Engel of the Department of Computer Science at the Courant Institute of Mathematical Sciences of New York University, two artists decided not to provide artist-generated source code to the museum. A third artist was deceased, and his code was not available to the museum. The other artists provided their source code to the museum.

[16] This quote can be found on the "About" tab of the website http://www.coryarcangel.com/about/ (Accessed July 20, 2014).

working methods, on the other hand, are often featured on museum websites and in publications since they deepen our understanding and appreciation of the work through a process of technical art history (Ainsworth 2005; Hermens 2012). An example of technical documentation that can provide an understanding of artists' working methods can be found in the analysis of artist-generated source code (Engel & Wharton 2014). Similarly, technical imaging through radiography, ultraviolet examination, and infrared photography are distributed in professional circles and often find their way to public attention.

For variable art, exhibiting documentation from past manifestations has the potential to deepen public understanding of the work. This may include floor plans, images, and videos. Most artists are happy for museums to exhibit information about their work. Andrés Jaque provided MoMA with images and videos of prior installations of *IKEA Disobedients.* In the conservation interview he suggested that they be exhibited adjacent to current performances to help visitors understand its history.[17] He also mentioned that visual documentation could be exhibited alone, as a sort of stand-in for the work. Whether exhibited documentation becomes the artwork or retains its evidentiary categorization needs considerable debate and is beyond the scope of this article. Whatever its status, artists must approve the dissemination of documentation. Tino Sehgal, for instance, prohibits the distribution of any documentation about his work.[18] The selection of what to share to some extent distinguishes museum collections documentation from public archives, whose mission is to make all of their unfiltered resources available for research. This distinction causes some museums such as MoMA to house different types of documentation in three primary resources: its institutional archive, its library, and its collection management system.

Many museums have already started sharing documentation about works in their collection. The *GLAM-WIKI Project* allows Galleries, Libraries, Archives, and Museums (GLAM) to contribute content from their archives to Wikipedia.[19] The project is open to various forms of contribution, from housing a resident Wikipedia editor within the institution to conducting Edit-a-thons, in which volunteer Wikipedia editors gather at an institution to generate Wikipedia articles from their archives (Cody 2011).

The *Artist Documentation Program* of The Menil Collection and the *Artist Interview Program* of the Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden provide us with models for disseminating interviews with artists about their materials, working techniques, and intent for conserving their works.[20] Resulting from an *Inside Installations*[21] project, the Tate shares thick documentation about Bruce Nauman's *Mapping the Studio II with color shift, flip, flop, & flip/flop (Fat Chance John Cage).*[22] Through its *Online Scholarly Catalogue Initiative,* the Getty Foundation provided funds to museums to open deep archives to the public.[23] Like other museums, MoMA now features selected conservation projects on their website that communicate technical studies and research leading to conservation interventions.[24] An example of presenting conservation and curatorial research online can be seen at the *Panza Collection Initiative* Guggenheim Museum website.[25]

Static websites may be a first stage in a movement towards more dynamic sharing of museum documentation.

[17] Conservation interview with Andrés Jaque by Glenn Wharton. MoMA. September 17, 2012.

[18] Personal communication with the artist. July 8, 2008.

[19] The *GLAM-WIKI Project* http://outreach.wikimedia.org/wiki/GLAM (Accessed July 20, 2014.)

[20] The *Artist Documentation Project* (ADP) http://adp.menil.org/; *Artist Interview Program* http://www.hirshhorn.si.edu/collection/

[21] *Inside Installations* project http://www.inside-installations.org/home/index.php (Accessed July 20, 2014).

[22] The Tate's documentation of Bruce Nauman's *Mapping the Studio II with color shift, flip, flop, & flip/flop (Fat Chance John Cage)* http://www.tate.org.uk/art/artworks/nauman-mapping-the-studio-ii-with-color-shift-flip-flop--flipflop-fat-chance-john-cage-t11893 (Accessed July 20, 2014).

[23] The Getty Foundation *Online Scholarly Catalogue Initiative https://www.getty.edu/foundation/initiatives/current/osci/* (Accessed July 20, 2014). A particularly relevant project funded through this program is the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art *Rauschenberg Research Project* http://www.sfmoma.org/about/research_projects/research_projects_rauschenberg (Accessed July 20, 2014).

[24] MoMA *Conservation Projects* http://www.moma.org/explore/collection/conservation/index#projects (Accessed July 20, 2014.)

[25] *The Panza Collection Initiative* of the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum http://www.guggenheim.org/new-york/collections/about-the-collection/the-panza-collection-initiative (Accessed July 20, 2014).

New technologies are already being employed to make museum databases more interactive. The Rijksmuseum created interactive platforms that allow visitors to search, save, edit and even download images from their website after agreeing to a creative commons license.[26] The collections database at the Smithsonian Cooper Hewitt National Design Museum is now online and queriable.[27] Seb Chan, Director of Digital and Emerging Media at the museum, suggests that, "one of the main aims of an online collection these days is to move beyond a 'view on a database' and deliver some of the affordances of a gallery experience—especially the ability to serendipitously discover new rabbit-holes down which to disappear."[28]

Museums are not only producing interactive programming, but are increasingly moving towards participatory projects in their galleries and through social media (Simon 2010). Museums are also starting to crowdsource ideas for programming through the Internet. According to the blog post that first defined the term, "Crowdsourcing represents the act of a company or institution taking a function once performed by employees and outsourcing it to an undefined (and generally large) network of people in the form of an open call" (Howe 2006). *IKEA Disobedients* is in fact a crowdsourced work of art, since Jaque finds the "disobedients" by means of a call for respondents through social media.

The current vogue of crowdsourcing may give rise to *crowd documentation* and even *crowd conservation.* According to Annet Dekker's research on net art communities, this may already be taking place through what she terms "networks of care" (Dekker 2014). Dekker suggests that net artworks are at times kept alive through a process of distributed authorship, in which networks of people contribute to the site and become its caretakers. They may perform source code maintenance in order to keep the site functional.

As suggested by Ben Fino-Radin at MoMA, why not invite the public to participate in a "public hackathon" to open up contributions from a vast pool of expertise outside of the professional circles usually enlisted to create museum documentation?[29] The Voices in Contemporary Art (VoCA) Tony Smith Project does just that, by soliciting contributions from the public to identify and document outdoor sculpture as part of Wikipedia's *Wiki Project Public Art.*[30] To conduct the project, VoCA partnered with *WikiProject Public Art*, a Wikipedia-based resource. Contributors receive free t-shirts for submitting photographs, geolocations, and artwork descriptions. The aim of the project is to "increase awareness about these works and therefore allow for the continued advocacy for their proper care and maintenance." *Crowd documentation* projects such as this have the potential to enlist volunteer efforts, empower communities, and open museum documentation to new sources of knowledge.

Conclusion

The aim of this article is to build a case for sharing museum documentation of contemporary art with the public. New technologies now provide opportunities for mashing up data from multiple institutions, while public participation opens new avenues for contributions from non-museum sources. As discussed, there are a host of technical, cultural, and legal challenges that must be overcome in order to achieve

[26] *Rijks Studio* https://www.rijksmuseum.nl/en/rijksstudio/; Rijksmuseum Creative Commons License: https://www.rijksmuseum.nl/en/api/terms-and-conditions-of-use (Accessed July 20, 2014).

[27] Smithsonian Cooper Hewitt National Design Museum Collection Database http://collection.cooperhewitt.org/ (Accessed July 20, 2014). For information on the design of this database, see http://labs.cooperhewitt.org/2013/b-is-for-beta/ (Accessed July 20, 2014).

[28] Chan, Seb. *Down the Rabbit Hole.* http://www.cooperhewitt.org/object-of-the-day/2012/12/07/down-rabbit-hole (Accessed January 10, 2014).

[29] Personal communication with author January 15, 2014.

[30] Voices in Contemporary Art (VoCA) *Tony Smith Wiki Project* http://www.voca.network/programs/voca-research/; Wikipedia *Wiki Project Public Art* https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:WikiProject_Public_art/TheArtistResearchProject/TonySmith (Accessed May 23, 2015).

these goals. A change of deep-seated museum culture that restricts access to all documentation must be overcome in some cases. In addition, any effort to make museum documentation transparent requires significant resources. Despite these obstacles, seeds of change are everywhere. I attempt to draw attention to a wide range of projects that are moving the museum world towards information sharing. In some instances, interactive technologies facilitate participatory programming that enrich user experience, and may even lead to a new form of *crowd documentation* that will allow members of the public with knowledge about museum collections to contribute information through a user data entry screen.

Throughout the article I stress the importance of honoring artist concerns about public access to documentation of their work. Some art should not be documented, just as works rooted in time and place should not necessarily be re-installed or re-performed. There are risks that documentation may corrode authenticity of experience, as defined by the artist.

I end by addressing another concern, that future knowledge of today's art may only be constructed through traces of documentation. Certainly the aim of conservation is to preserve the art, not its documentation. Yet after seven years at MoMA, I can't guarantee that all of the works under my care as Media Conservator will survive. As suggested by the authors of the DOCAM Documentation Model, "Ultimately, it is the documentation that will survive the work, becoming its historical witness and sometimes supplementing any remaining fragments or relics."[31]

The inevitable survival of our documentation in lieu of some artworks raises the question, 'will art become its documentation?' No doubt it will at least become a surrogate, as documentation stands in for art that no longer exists. Our work today is not only to document, but provide context that will allow future understanding of what was, wasn't, and what couldn't have been the art of our times.

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[31] DOCAM *Documentation Model* http://www.docam.ca/en/documentation-model.html (Accessed July 20, 2014).

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BOOK REVIEWS

JULIA *NOORDEGRAAF*, CONSETTA G. SABA, BARBARA LE MAÎTRE, VINZEZ HEDIGER (EDS): *PRESERVING AND EXHIBITING MEDIA ART — CHALLENGES AND PERSPECTIVES*

AMSTERDAM UNIVERSITY PRESS, AMSTERDAM, 2013
ISBN 978 90 8964 291 2

This publication offers a comprehensive overview of the history and theory of exhibiting media art and brings together thirty-six contributions by thirty authors, representing media curators, media theorists, media researches and media conservators from six European countries. The book is clearly structured in four parts, starting with the introduction of media art history and theoretical narratives. The following parts focus on analysis, archiving, and documentation, preservation, and restoration, access, reuse and exhibition. The reader is guided into each part by a thorough introduction by co-editors of the book.
The challenges of time-based media preservation and exhibition are addressed in depth, as well as their practical, theoretical and institutional implications. Based on previous notable research projects such as *Documentation and Conservation of Contemporary Art* (*DOCAM*) and *Inside Installations*, this publication reviews the status quo of research and current best practices.
First, the history and theoretical origins of time-based media art are outlined in a contextual framework. In the chapter*, Media Aesthetics,* Dario Marchiori critically analyzes the origins of the still confusing terminology used in the field of time-based media, with a focus on changes in the use of the hybrid term ‘media’ over time. This thought provoking discourse on the term ‘media’, invites the reader to rethink how terminology is used as a whole. Marchiori’s arguments are based on the concept of the de-territorialization of contemporary art. He questions the use of terminology that does not include the processual character of some media works.
The first part of the publication concludes with a critical investigation by Consetta Saba on how ‘allographic’ and ‘autographic’ media artworks can be translated into digital archives. Saba argues that the structure of a digital archive predetermines its preservation strategy.
The second part of the book focuses in more detail on analyzing, documenting and archiving media by understanding the artwork in a multilayered methodical process through four interrelated moments: Description, Analysis, Interpretation and Judgment. This part is followed by an investigation of different documentation methodologies and strategies by Annet Dekker, leading her to advocate for capturing more documentation material during the creative process. The case study of *No Ghost Just a Shell* by Phillipe Parreno *et. al.* presented by Vivian van Saaze serves as an example of the institutional challenges faced when acquiring a collaborative artwork that does not fit well in a Museum Management system, such as TMS. Artist’s interviews and guidelines, inspired by Cesare Brandi’s theories, that have been developed for the MAXXI collection in Rome conclude the second part of the publication.
Technology and conservation are the focus of the third part of the book. The basics of the history and technology of film, video and computer-based art are all introduced. However, translating the earlier discussed theoretical complexities of technology-based artworks into practical guidelines and solutions remains the most challenging part of the preservation process. The preservation challenges of time-based media are well researched and presented in an ethical and theoretical context, yet best practices for documentation, preservation and conservation are lacking, especially for new technologies used by artists such as complex software and internet artworks. Some contributions in this part of the

book took up the challenge to analyze and provide much needed practical methodologies for concerns such as equipment obsolescence in the chapter 7.4, film and video formats preservation protocols in chapter 8.1, and the concept of understanding the 'work logic' of computer-based art along with a documentation model in chapter 8.2. These sections are complemented by insight into media art conservation practices at the Tate provided by Pip Laurenson in a interview with Julia Noordegraaf in chapter 8.3.

The fourth part of the book entitled Access, Reuse, and Exhibition explores exhibition strategies and curatorial practices, and highlights the shift that film works undergo once they move from a cinematographic context into a museums space — the cinema effect.

The following chapters cover the experimental use of film, television, video, music video, and audio installations and their various forms of curation and perception in the museum context. They include analysis of media art festivals, site specific installations in public places and presentation on the internet. Web resources and video databases available to the public as research tools for video art are the subject of the final discussion.

In the closing chapter, Sarah Cook takes the reader to a passionate discourse of new media art. She invites the reader to explore new ways of thinking and stresses the fact that curating new media requires close collaboration with the artist(s), and has a deep impact on curatorial practice itself.

In conclusion, *PRESERVING AND EXHIBITING MEDIA ART — CHALLENGES AND PERSPECTIVES* provides a comprehensive overview of time-based media preservation and exhibition challenges in an intellectually engaging journey through each of its chapters. In addition to the narratives summarized in this review, each part of the book provides extensive notes and references. However, given the overall well structured format of the publication, the reference images provided in the center of the book, merged in one chapter, are unfortunately located a bit off context for the reader. This is the only slight criticism for an otherwise highly enjoyable and valuable contribution to the field. As conservators reviewing this publication, it points us to new areas of research to serve our mutual efforts in the ever-changing realm of technology-based artworks. The publication will be deeply enjoyed by media curators, media theorists, media archivists and media conservators alike and will serve as a welcomed addition on your bookshelf.

CHRISTINE FROHNERT AND REINHARD BEK
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Conservation of Contemporary Art

VAN SAAZE, VIVIAN. *INSTALLATION ART AND THE MUSEUM. PRESENTATION AND CONSERVATION OF CHANGING ARTWORKS*

AMSTERDAM UNIVERSITY PRESS. AMSTERDAM, 2013. 225 PP. ISBN: 978 90 8964 459 6

The anthropologist Maurice Godelier (1996) observed that every society he had studied distinguished between three categories of things: things that must be sold, things that must be given and things that must be kept. In contemporary societies we might want to consider adding a fourth category—things we want to keep but may be impossible to preserve. Contemporary creative practices present unanticipated challenges for the notion of 'things' in heritage preservation. This thoughtful and beautifully written book explores core debates and emerging strategies for preserving memories of today's art for tomorrow's generations. It should be considered required reading, not only for scholars and practitioners involved with art worlds and museums, but for everyone interested in the collection and display

of installation art and the many other new forms of creative work in "time-based" media. ("Time-based media" is a term often used by cultural heritage experts to refer to artistic and ethnographic works created using ephemeral materials, site-specific configurations, performance-based practices or technologies that rapidly become obsolete.)
Vivian van Saaze draws on extensive documentary research and fieldwork supported by the Netherlands Institute for Cultural Heritage (ICN) (which is now part of the Cultural Heritage Agency of the Netherlands (RCE)) and Maastricht University in the context of projects devoted to the conservation of modern and contemporary art. Although many of these initiatives originated in the Netherlands, the projects and participants have been active in the development of international networks concerned with developing strategies for safeguarding cultural heritage for decades. Disastrous floods of 1953 led to the "Delta Plan" for the continued preservation of the land. Almost forty years later, in 1991, a second Delta Plan was proposed, this time to protect Dutch cultural heritage from the ravages of time. Researchers soon realized that theories and codes of ethics developed for art of earlier periods when the art object itself constituted the principal record of the creative act do not apply to the fruits of many newer creative practices, raising a wide range of ethical, theoretical, ideological and practical debates of interest to a much broader constituency that the title of this volume suggests.
The book takes us on a transnational and trans-disciplinary journey through recent literature and provides opportunities to observe the complex interplay of factors and actors following them as they collect and exhibit time-based creations through the lens of strategically chosen case studies. Van Saaze investigates the interactions of cultural heritage professionals (conservation scientists, hands-on conservators (at times still called 'restorers' in some national contexts), curators of collections and exhibitions, technical support personnel and different categories of workers) with artists, their assistants, art collectors and other stakeholders as they engage with the tangible and intangible dimensions of the art they are attempting to collect, document and preserve. Van Saaze focuses on issues relevant to 'installation art' and their implications for conservation ethics and theory at the start. Acknowledging the diverse uses of the term she adopts a definition that treats 'installation art' as a general category of works that "share certain key characteristics, such as: the creation of an event, site-specificity, the focus on the theatrical, on process, spectatorship and temporality" (p. 17). In her study — although this is my interpretation and the author does not specifically acknowledge this as a source of inspiration — 'installation art' serves as what French philosopher Michel Foucault called a *dispositif* (a concept frequently translated into English as 'apparatus') or, loosely put, a vantage point that provides a way of accessing the interplay of discourses, institutions and systems of relationships that exercise power and generate meanings in interactions.
The author's discussions of her decision to adopt ethnographic methods and the ways her empirical methods of investigation relate to the theoretical and methodological foundations of the inquiry are so clear and coherent that I plan to use excerpts from this part of the book to illustrate *best practices* in my graduate research design course. Her research strategy was inspired by work outside the immediate substantive area of her book and appropriates methods developed by in the social studies of science and technology, notably Actor Network theorists (such as Bruno Latour) and the sociological approaches proposed by Howard Becker. Her ethnographic approach allows her to focus on what happens in encounters between people and the art, humans and non-humans. She wishes to avoid "taking the supposed object for granted" and this approach frees her to "explore the processes that shape the artwork within practices of collecting and conservation" (p. 27). Concepts and methods from a variety of fields serve as affordances for her research strategy but van Saaze never loses sight of her central interests in understanding how contemporary art

installations challenge and induce reconfigurations of practices in the context of cultural heritage conservation. She sets the stage with a fine introduction and critical examination of scholarship that has been (or is beginning to be) considered crucial for understanding the transformations in art conservation in the last quarter of century. The introduction and first chapter provide much more than a state-of-the art literature review (although they certainly accomplish that). One of the particular strengths of the book is that van Saaze does not merely review the literature but provides a subtle critical analysis of it. For readers unfamiliar with the literature on contemporary art conservation, she covers a 'hit parade' of leading scholars but also considers many lesser-known writers and emerging scholars. Her inclusion of work in German and Dutch not available in English-language translations is a welcome one. (The coverage of scholarship in other languages unavailable in English translation is less comprehensive, and one might have wished for a bit more attention to French, Italian, Spanish and Portuguese scholars, particularly given the quite different traditions and conditions of *praxis* of art conservation in those contexts. That may be something for a future project.)

The three chapters of the book devoted to case studies take readers on intimate voyages to spaces in art worlds that are seldom explored or examined in detail. Each chapter focuses on different (although related) themes and on issues raised by works done by different artists. Chapter two examines the theme of authenticity (and questions about the association of authenticity with unique or singular works when artists produce multiple iterations of similar works). It offers an entertaining account of the van Saaze's research and surprising discoveries related to an installation by Nam June Paik housed in the Museum für Moderne Kunst in Frankfurt. It would spoil the drama of the story to say much more, other than that the tale introduces a large cast of characters and other works illustrating the complexity of determining the legacy of departed creators. Chapter three studies ways museum professionals engaged with a living artist (Joëlle Tuerlinckx) in successive reinstallations of her work try to understand and respect the will of the artist over time. The findings illustrate van Saaze's argument that artist's intent "is not simply derived from the artist or the artwork, but is *produced*" (p. 115). Rather than behaving as "a facilitator or 'passive custodian' the curator or conservator of contemporary art can be considered an interpreter, mediator or even a co-producer of what is considered as 'the artist's intention'"(p. 115). Chapter four investigates the travails of caretakers of an acquisition by a museum of an assemblage of works centred on a manga character that was purchased and made available to other artists for a few years (c. 1999-2002) by artists Pierre Huyghe and Philippe Parreno. Here a heterogeneous mix of actors and social, economic and legal formations engage in negotiations about the material and symbolic manifestations of the artwork as the story unfolds and the artists disengage from involvement. The experiences lead van Saaze to propose that distinctions that differentiate what is put on display for public viewing (the works and interpretive texts that are often considered the "content") from the work behind the scenes (the practical actions and administrative work), are arbitrary, untenable distinctions. Van Saaze maintains that it is necessary to consider how contemporary art installations are *done* in a more holistic manner. This book makes powerful arguments for the need to re-imagine the ways we think about contemporary art while taking us on a journey through the back rooms and often hidden spaces that keep recent art alive.

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