UNTITLED (DISSERATION 4.2)

A Dissertation Submitted to the Committee on Graduate Studies in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Doctor of Philosophy in the Faculty of Arts and Science

TRENT UNIVERSITY

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ABSTRACT

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Dorothea Hines

Untitled (dissertation 4.2) offers a performative take on the political implications of digital archives. I argue that technological developments and their increasing ubiquity has not resulted in more reliable archives; it has facilitated the exacerbation of what Jacques Derrida calls *mal d'archive*—or archive fever—which refers to the institutionally supported passion to preserve that is perpetually threatened by the inevitably of loss. A performative perspective, specifically derived from the work of contemporary performance theorists and artists, affords a contemporary archival practice that not only accepts, but is informed by *mal d'archive* because it shifts the focus from what is preserved to how it has become and continues to be preservable through archival acts. This is important in our contemporary moment because the ubiquity of digital technologies has exacerbated the symptoms of *mal d'archive*: a rapid increase in both the formal and informal production of preservable content, and consequently, as Derrida reminds us, archival violence.

Untitled (dissertation 4.2) also includes a performative engagement with *mal d'archive* through two interludes. The first interlude features what I am calling "glitch-utterances," which refers to the visual representations of technological mishaps. The documents in the second interlude—an iteration of the exhibition catalogue that resulted from my 2020 artist residency at the Art Gallery of Peterborough—engage with the productive function of the archive because they performatively constitute the exhibition as having happened regardless of whether or not it actually occurred, which, significantly, it did not.

I conclude *Untitled* (dissertation 4.2) with a look at the ecological impact of digital archives—perhaps an "ecological fever." It is not my intention to offer a solution for this "ecological fever," nor address its full impact. My aim is to conclude this dissertation with a supplement of sorts: a look at the ecological impact of digital archives because I feel it is irresponsible not to given their increasing ubiquity. With this in mind, the glitch-utterances featured in both interludes can perform an important role in calling attention to the technological materialities and computational processes that are rendered invisible by Big Tech companies via metaphors—the ethereal Cloud metaphor, for example. These glitch-utterances point to the very material substrates that support the virtual, and can thus act as an important reminder of the ecological consequences of digital archives, which, like archival practices, are tied to institutional agendas.

KEY WORDS: Performativity, Archive, Digital Archive, Curation, Documentation, Multimedia Performance

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> Can we imagine a book without a title? We can, but only up to the point when we will have to name it and thus also to classify it, deposit it in an order, put it into a catalog, or a series, or a taxonomy. It is difficult to imagine, or at any rate to deal with, with a book that is neither placed nor collected together under a title bearing its name, its identity, the condition of its legitimacy and of its copyright. And in connection with titles, it happens that the name of this place, Bibliothéque, gives its title to a place which, as it already does, will more and more in the future have to collect together (in order to make them available to users) text, documents, and archives that are further and further away from both the support that is paper and the *book* form.
>
> — Jacques Derrida, *Paper Machine*[1]

> Since I started doing videos and performances, I have been obsessed with titles. I always had a hard time picking a title for a new performance or a new video. I was looking for attractive titles; titles that sound light but intellectual, beautiful and at the same time intelligent; deep and catchy. A title that is easy to memorize, easy on the ear, and easy on the tongue…I used to believe, as we say in Arabic, a letter is understood from its title. It took me a long time to understand a title doesn't have to be related to the work. The moment a title or a name is given, it acquires its own meaning, its own dimension. It takes a different meaning from what we had intended. The same way you can hate or love a name because of its holder. My relation with titles and names has changed.
>
> — Rabih Mroué, "Make Me Stop Smoking"[2]

[1] Jacques Derrida, *Paper Machine,* trans. Rachel Bowlby (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2005), 7, original emphasis.
[2] Rabih Mroué, "Make Me Stop Smoking," in *Perform Repeat Record: Live Art in History,* ed. by Amelia Jones and Adrian Heathfield, trans. by Ziad Nawfal (Chicago: Intellect, 2012), 277-278.

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It occurred to me only after I presented my dissertation title as an academic text—perhaps non-title—that many people had little idea about (1), what my dissertation topic was, and (2), what it referred to (or that it referred to something at all). "*Untitled* (dissertation 4.2)" received attention because of its indeterminacy, and this attention generated mixed responses (and arguably continues to do so). Many of my peers and faculty members thought it was a joke, or a reference to some obscure element of culture they had yet to be privy to, or suggestive of a student who hadn't thought about the title of her dissertation, and needed to submit something to satisfy the bureaucratic requirements demanded by Trent University; a place holder for the forthcoming "real" title.

I'll admit, this "not exactly a title" that serves as the title of my dissertation reveals almost nothing about my dissertation; that is, it does reveal something. In addition to enacting key concepts of my dissertation, "*Untitled* (dissertation 4.2)" refers and contributes to a history of untitled titling—with, I'll admit, a bit of fun poking:

> Keith Boadwee's ***Untitled* (purple squirt)**, 1995; Fred Tomaselli's ***Untitled [Expulsion]***, 2000; Petah Coyne's ***Untitled #695 (Ghost/First Communion)***, 1991 and ***Untitled #961 (Mary, Mary)***, 1991-2000; Allan Sekula's ***Untitled Slide Sequence***, 1972; Rirkrit Tiravanija's ***Untitled (Free),*** 1992; Sherrie Levine's ***Untitled, After Edward Weston I***, 1980; Richard Prince's ***Untitled (four women looking in the same direction) #1-#4***, 1977-1979; Martin Kippenberger's ***Untitled* (from the series *One of You, a German in Florence*)**, 1976-1977; Rachel Whiteread's ***Untitled (Amber Double Bed)***, 1991; Ana Mendieta's ***Untitled (Blood Sign No.2/Body Tracks)***, 1974, and ***Untitled* from *Silueta Series***, 1997; Yinka Shonibare's ***Untitled,* from the 'Effnick' series**, 1997; Carrie Mae Weems' ***Untitled* from the *Kitchen Table Series***, 1990; Nancy Burson's ***Untitled* from He/She series**, 1997; Lynda Benglis', ***Untitled***, 1974; Günter Brus' ***Untitled***, 1965; Robert Gober's ***Untitled***, 1990, ***Untitled***, 1991, and ***Untitled*** 1995-1997; Robert Ryman's ***Untitled (Orange Painting)***, 1955, and ***Untitled***, 1961; Felix Gonzalez-Torres' ***Untitled (Perfect Lovers)***, 1987-1990, and ***Untitled (USA Today)***, 1990; Glenn Ligon's ***Untitled (I Am Not***

Tragically Colored), 1990, and ***Untitled (I Feel Most Coloured…),*** 1990; Cindy Sherman's ***Untitled Film Stills*** of the late Twentieth and early Twenty First Centuries: ***Untitled Film Still #7, Untitled Film Still #39, Untitled #167, Untitled #100;*** Donald Judd's ***Untitled* (box with trough)**, 1963, ***100 Untitled works in mill aluminum***, 1982-1986; Robert Morris' ***Untitled (Table), Untitled (Corner Beam), Untitled (Floor Beam), Untitled Corner Piece,*** and ***Untitled (Cloud),*** all exhibited at the Green Gallery from December 1964 to January 1965, and, further, his ***Untitled (Three L-Beams),*** 1965-1966, and ***Untitled (Tan Felt),*** 1968.

And let's not forget the many "*Untitled*" variations:

Raymond Pettibon's ***No Title* ("What's Better Science")**, 1985, and ***No Title (I think the pencil),*** 1995; Mark Rothko's ***Number 3/No.13 (Magenta, Black, Green on Orange),*** 1949, ***No.21***, 1949, ***No.5/No.22***, 1950, ***No.6,*** 1951, ***No.61 (Rust and Blue)***, 1953, and ***No.1 (Royal Red and Blue)***, 1954; Jackson Pollock's ***No.1,*** 1948, ***Number 1A***, 1948, ***No.5***, 1948, ***Number 13A: Arabesque***, 1948, ***Number 17A***, 1948, ***Number 23***, 1948, ***Number 12***, 1949, ***Number 1 (Lavender Mist)***, 1950, ***One (Number 31, 1950)***, 1950, ***Number 32***, 1950, and ***Number 14, 1951,*** 1951; Ad Reinhardt's ***Number 43 (Abstract Painting)***, 1947, ***Number 22***, 1949, ***Yellow Painting***, 1949, ***Number 107***, 1950, ***Abstract Painting (Blue)***, 1952, and ***Abstract Painting, No.5,*** 1962; Sarah Charlesworth's ***April 21***, ***1978***, 1978; Ronald Bloore's ***February 12, 1985***, 1985, ***June 5, 1985***, 1985, ***July 11-12, 1985***, 1985, and ***Undated,*** 1985; Robert Ryman's ***VII***, 1969; László Moholy-Nagy's ***EM1, EM2,*** and ***EM3,*** 1923; and Kazuo Shiraga's ***Work II,*** 1958.[3]

[3] The allure of untitled titling, as a brief introduction, was to minimize inadvertent meaning. American Minimalists, for example, like the aforementioned Donald Judd and Robert Morris, used untitled titling to trivialize meaning granted by the title of an artwork; they aimed to emphasize the viewer's experience with an artwork in a specific context. Similarly, the aforementioned László Moholy-Nagy's untitled variation, *EM1, EM2,* and *EM3,* emphasizes the materiality of the work itself: "EM" refers to the German word *emaille* or enamel in English, and the numbers refer to the respective scale of the paintings—1 being the largest, and 3 the smallest.

The last title could refer to "work" as in labour or "work" as in art"work," similar to art "piece." Both are probable given Shiraga's method of "action" painting, and the common use of "work" when referring to an art"work" or a "work" of art. Perhaps I should have titled my dissertation: "*Untitled* (dissertation work)," referring to the (laborious) work involved in writing a dissertation. Or: "*Untitled* (action: dissertation)," which I imagine is a forewarning to the labour of reading this dissertation—you're welcome. Or: "*Untitled* (dissertation piece)," which suggests that it is a fragment of some on-going-never-whole-academic-text similarly implied by "*Untitled* (dissertation 4.2):" a remark on the previous manifestations of this particular dissertation, and a nod towards an unknown number of possible manifestations to come—not to mention Microsoft Word's automatic titling algorithm for documents that have yet to be titled and thus archived ("Document4"), and common tech-update titles ("2.0," "patch 2.1," etc.).

These are all probable interpretations of "*Untitled.*" And I hope that these initial thoughts revealed the risks of titling an artwork(s) "*Untitled,*" and, by extension, this academic text (I often consider my academic "work" to be a series of performance art "works," which I will later explain). The following is more of a direct outline of said risks:

- Inconvenience for curators, critics, and viewers who lack a more descriptive title when referring to an artwork (especially if an image of the artwork or the artwork itself is not available); how does one effectively and efficiently refer to both *Untitled* and *Untitled* without the use of captions, descriptions, or images?
- Curators, critics and viewers may take it upon themselves to give an "*Untitled*" artwork a more descriptive title for the sake of convenience: until early 2018, I had only ever known Ana Mendieta's *Untitled (Blood Sign No.2/Body Tracks)* as *Body Tracks*

(indicating that her ambiguous "*Untitled*" was dropped in favour of her more convenient parenthesis description).

- The (more descriptive) title of an artwork (not "*Untitled*") can be used to help convey the meaning and/or intention of the artwork; a title can thus take on an active role—as a tool—to help convey meaning and intention, which is minimized, if not lost altogether, with "*Untitled.*"

In summary: indeterminacy. However, these risks are not enough for me to "title" my academic texts, that is, they aren't reason enough to provide a more descriptive, a more conventional, "title" for my academic texts.

So, I Googled: "should an artist title their artworks?" (I will later ask: "what does '*Untitled*' afford?"). *Light Space Time: Helping Today's Artists to Market Their Art* was the first website that came up after asking Google the question. It's a website that *help[s] today's artists to market their art.* There is little to no indeterminacy in this title (although I feel like the phrase, "Light Space Time" references something I am unaware of). In answering the question, *Light Space Time* recommends that artists should title their artworks. This "title" does not include "*Untitled*"; put differently, the title "*Untitled*" is not an adequate title for an artwork. They present the following four reasons for "titling" an artwork:

1 A title "helps the viewer distinguish that particular piece of art from all other pieces of artwork.

2 A title provides an art judge or an art jury with a deeper insight into that piece of art. This also holds true for galleries and art buyers.

3 A title guides and provides a hint to the viewer about what the artist was thinking when the work was created. An untitled piece leaves the viewer with only their

own interpretation (which may be totally wrong).

4 A title will help your art to be discovered when someone searches online for art. For SEO (search engine optimization) purposes, you should also have a description of the art since search engines cannot 'see' the art. They only recognize descriptive words."[4]

Light Space Time also provides helpful tips for artists who find titling their work difficult; these include (1), consulting a friend or family member who can help "stimulate your imagination for naming your art." (2), "For cataloging and sales purposes…remember that [the title of your artwork] is a 'forever' name…buyers of art want to know that [your] art is unique and a distinctive title for each piece will help confirm that." (3), "[L]ook for inspiration in titles from songs, poems, famous artists, colours, etc." (4), "Keep your titles short and to the point. Use a thesaurus to find synonyms." And (5), "if none of these ideas help you create a title, try an online title generator to get ideas about the title of your art. They ask for keywords (describing the art) and then provide you with possible combinations of titles."[5] I'm most interested in the last one because there's an element of decontextualization; similar to SEO, online title generators cannot "see." Titles generated for this dissertation from *Portent* and *Awesome Titles* include:[6]

[4] "Should an Artist Title Their Artworks?" *Light Space Time: Helping Today's Artists to Market Their Art,* last modified on March 2019, https://www.lightspacetime.art/should-an-artist-title-their-artworks/

[5] Ibid.

[6] "Portent's Content Idea Generator," *Portent,* accessed April 2019, https://www.portent.com/tools/title-maker and "Awesome Titles," *Title Generator,* October 28, 2018, https://www.title-generator.com/index.php

HOW “NONTITLED TITLES” ARE PART OF A VAST RIGHT-WING CONSPIRACY

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AT LAST, THE SECRET TO UNTITLED IS REVEALED!

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Note: these title generators didn't allow me to enter many descriptive words—only one subject and keyword respectively—and they seem to generate clickbait titles. This said, I am not a SEO expert; these may be excellent titles for SEO, specifically because the goal for SEO is to increase online visibility. There is also the possibility that I am an ignorant title generator user. User title generator abilities aside, the gap between academic text titles and artwork titles seem to be too large to use an online title generator if using one is considered adequate to help title an artwork with SEO in mind.

I have considered the risks of titling an artwork "*Untitled*"; and the four reasons presented by *Light Space Time* paired with the three risks I outlined above (some of which overlap) make a compelling case for "titling" artworks, that is, not using the title, "*Untitled.*" Given this compelling case, why is there a history—arguably an obscure one—of "*Untitled*"s? Why do I continue to encounter contemporary submissions into this history? And why do I often feel compelled to use the title "*Untitled,*" specifically for academic texts?

As I previously alluded to, the second half of this note on titles will attempt to answer these questions through another question: "what does '*Untitled*' afford? Further, do the affordances of '*Untitled*' outweigh the risks?"

The affordances of descriptive titles distilled from the aforementioned risks include: titles can help distinguish a particular artwork; titles can aid in conveying the artist's intention of their particular artwork; and titles can be used to conveniently refer to a particular artwork (assuming it is a more descriptive title). In addition to these, I would like to consider three affordances of "*Untitled,*" which I hope will reveal that the benefits of "*Untitled,*" in some contexts, outweigh the risks.

Before I consider the affordances of titles, I would like to address what is likely obvious. Titles carry a past instance of authorial naming: "I," as the creator of this artwork, name it; "I," as the author of this text, name it. "Authorial naming" connotes "author" of an artwork with the "authority" to name it. But titles carry more than this past instance. As Jacques Derrida explains in the first epigraph of this note, titles participate in discursive regimes. And this participation is both, at least in part, constitutive and continuous. This is a performative take on titles; first proposed by J.L. Austin, and elaborated upon by Derrida and Judith Butler, to only name a few.[7] In *How To Do Things With Words,* Austin challenges what he identifies as a common assumption that a statement can only be used to describe something, or state a fact that is either true or false. As such, he prefers the term "constative statements" because he maintains that not all statements merely describe something.[8] Further, to define statements as solely constative, Austin warns, is to risk overlooking other kinds of statements, specifically "performative statements," "performative utterances," or "performatives"; "the name is derived, of course, from 'perform,'" he explains, "the usual verb with the noun 'action:' it indicates that the issuing of the utterance is the performing of an action…."[9] In other words, to say something is to do something in the moment of saying. In defining the difference between constative and performative statements, Austin proposes his speech act theory, which marks a shift from language as

[7] I will address Derrida's elaboration later in this note on titles, and in my first chapter. Butler expands upon Austin's notion of performativity in *Gender Trouble* (1990), and again in *Bodies that Matter* (1993). She specifically highlights the notion of gender in discursive regimes, arguing that performativity is inherent in statements about gender. These statements, like the performative utterance "It's a girl" spoken during an ultrasound, mark a series of discursive practices that are constitutive of a "girl" (commonly the purchasing of everything pink opposed to its "It's a boy" blue counterpart).
[8] J.L. Austin, *How To Do Things With Words* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1962), 1-3.
[9] Austin, 7.

representation to language as action.[10] The force of an utterance, for Austin, is its performative effect in what he calls a "total speech situation," which includes its intended effect.[11] Both constative and performative utterances possess the potential to produce action, albeit different kinds of action. To explain, he defines three speech acts or types of verbal actions: locutionary, illocutionary, and perlocutionary. A locutionary verbal action is the production of a meaningful utterance. An illocutionary verbal action is the doing of something in the moment of saying. And a perlocutionary verbal action is the production of an effect after the moment of saying.[12] Identifying the verbal action of an utterance, according to Austin, means distinguishing between the act of doing something, the act of achieving something, and the act of attempting to achieve something.[13]

Significantly for this note on titles, Austin distinguishes between authentic performatives and parasitic performances. The doing in the performative moment of saying is hollow or rendered void, he argues,

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[10] In *Course in General Linguistics* (1959), for example, Ferdinand de Saussure theorizes the *sign* as the basic unit of language, comprising of two parts: a *signifier* (the sound and image, or what he terms the sound-image, used to convey the sign), and a *signified* (the sign's concept). The sign, signifier, and signified are integral parts of Saussure's semiotic method. Significantly, there is no inherent relationship between a sign's signifier and its signified, which is to say that the meaning of a sign is arbitrary (Ferdinand de Saussure, *Course in General Linguistics*, Trans. by Wade Baskin [New York: McGraw-Hill, 1959], 65-70).

[11] Austin, 52.

[12] Austin, 98-102. He provides the follow example to help distinguish between locutionary, illocutionary, and perlocutionary verbal actions:

> Act (A) or Locution
>
> He said to me 'Shoot her!' meaning by 'shoot' shoot and referring by 'her' to *her.*
>
> Act (B) or Illocution
>
> He urged (or advised, ordered, &c.) me to shoot her.
>
> Act (C. *a*) or Perlocution
>
> He persuaded me to shoot her.
>
> Act (C. *b*)
>
> He got me to (or made me, &c.) shoot her (Austin, 101-102, original emphasis).

[13] Austin, 101.

> if said by an actor on the stage, or if introduced in a poem, or spoken in soliloquy. Language in such circumstances is in special ways—intelligibly—used not seriously, but in ways parasitic upon its normal use—ways which fall under the doctrine of etiolations of language. All this we are excluding from consideration [of performative utterances]. Our performative utterances…are to be understood as issued in ordinary circumstances.[14]

It is unlikely that Austin would consider the general use of authorial titles—"general" meaning, not uttered on a theatrical stage—as parasitic performatives, as they are issued in ordinary circumstances. However, this is what I am suggesting, and this suggestion marks the shift from Austin to poststructuralist thought, specifically a Derridean take on Austin's performatives. For Derrida, all utterances are repetitions, like the parasitic performative uttered on stage is a repetition of its respective script. In short, all authentic performatives are parasitic. Further, it is through citation that utterances-as-repetitions convey meaning; as such, this meaning is not singular, original, or fixed to any one context. This is not to say that meaning isn't deictic; Derrida is clear in saying that meaning is altered by contextual nuances. Meaning conveyed is thus deeply tied to both its historicity, and to the performative moment in which it is conveyed in a specific context.

This brings me to the three affordances of "*Untitled*" that I aim to address:

(1) titles can serve as sites of performatives.

(2) In addition to constituting the authority of the artist as "artist" and artwork as "artwork," titles problematize said authority because they have been cited and can continue to be cited. And,

[14] Austin, 22.

(3) They can serve as a document of the authorial performative act. This document re-presents the authorial performative act in a specific moment, which performatively separates the act and the title as a re-presentation of it.

To explain, I would like to revisit the four reasons *Light Space Time* gives in favour of descriptive titles.

1. A title "helps the viewer distinguish that particular piece of art from all other pieces of artwork."

A descriptive title can be used to distinguish a particular artwork by performatively pointing to it. In this performative act, a title, as a linguistic sign written or spoken, can serve as the contextual site on which its consigned artwork is performatively distinguished. Significantly, the title also serves as the site for the inaugural authorial performative act, in which the artist performatively constitutes herself as "artist" and her artwork as "artwork." A title constitutes the "artist" and "artwork" every time it serves as the site of performative pointing to as a means of distinguishing its consigned artwork (*Light Space Time* refers to the viewer using an artwork's title to distinguish it from other artworks). While "*Untitled*" does this, it doesn't do so as clearly as a more descriptive title does. It provides the context in which its consigned artwork is performatively distinguished (in some cases less clearly than descriptive titles…often less clearly), and, significantly, it performatively distinguishes the performative act of titling itself by defamiliarizing the relationship between a title and its artwork via its lack of description. This is a third performative moment; one that takes advantage of the title as a linguistic sign to point to the performative act of titling because the sign's ability to signify its consigned object is lessened and, in some cases, removed altogether. It is through this third performative moment that

"*Untitled*" asks readers and viewers to pay attention to the constitutive and continuous authorial performative act in addition to distinguishing a particular consigned artwork (again, in some cases, less clearly than descriptive titles). My use of "consign" derives from Derrida's notion of the term in *Archive Fever*. "*Consignation* aims to coordinate a single corpus," he defines, "in a system or a synchrony in which all the elements articulate the unity of an ideal configuration."[15] To consign, in other words, is to gather signs into a unified arrangement, the act of which performatively constitutes the arrangement. Thus, there is no inherent quality in the signs that makes them unified; they must be consigned as a unified arrangement—consigning is as much an act of production as it is an act of collection. Derrida directly addresses the act of titling in *Paper Machine.* He argues that the act of titling is not merely an act of naming, but also an act of classification, organization, and categorization via a consigning authority.[16] With this in mind we can conclude that to title an artwork is also to consign it, and to performatively point to it is to enact the authority of its consignment on the site of the title.

2. "A title provides an art judge or an art jury with a deeper insight into that piece of art. This also holds true for galleries and art buyers."

Distinguishing between site and cite marks two important aspects of performative titles. To claim that a title is a site risks suggesting that the title itself is not an active participant in the performative act of titling; it suggests that a title grants the context in which the artist performs the act of titling constituting her authority as "artist." In this case, the artist maintains her status as authorial "artist." However, considering cite problematizes the artist's authority as "artist."

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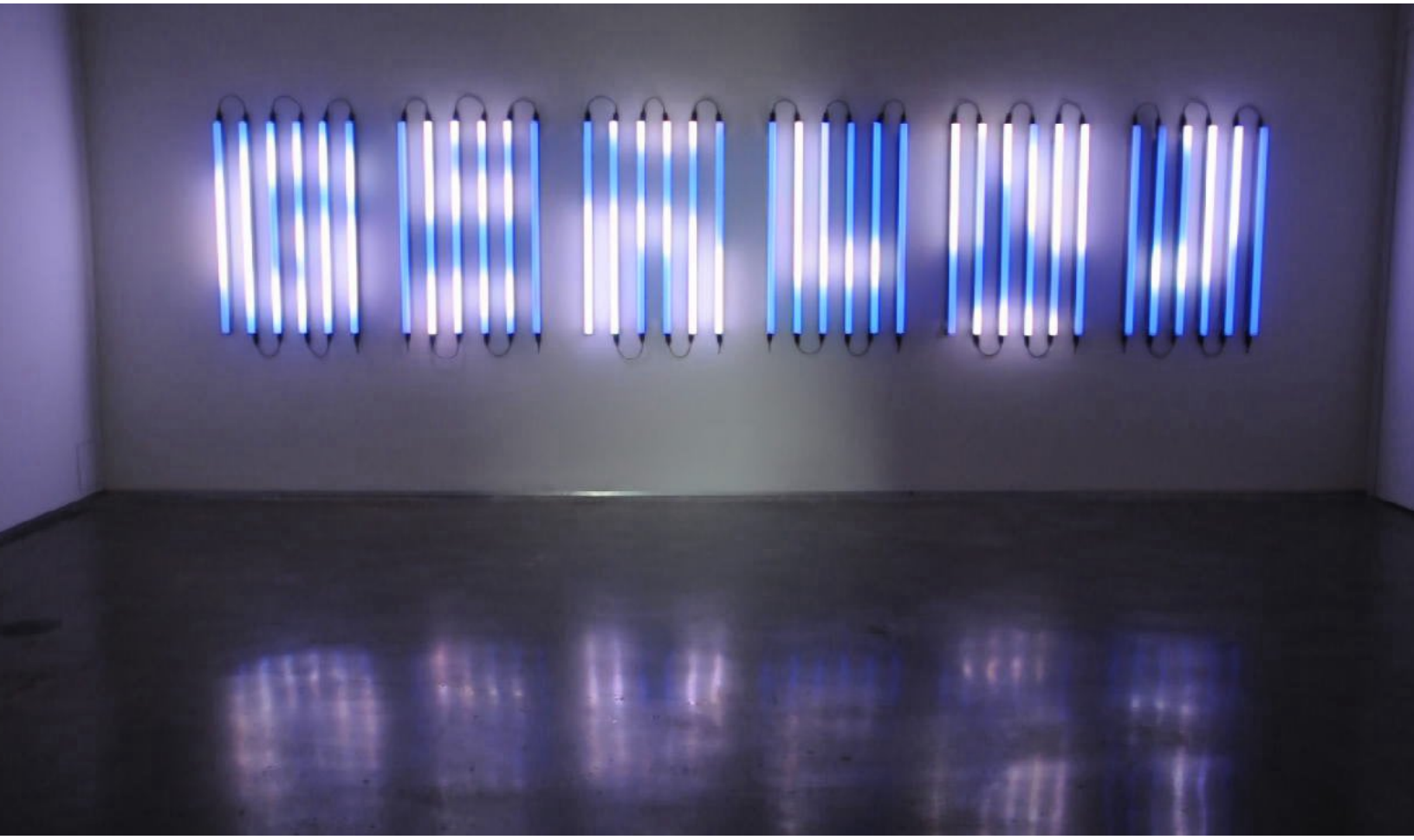
[15] Derrida, *Archive Fever: a Freudian Impression*, trans. by Eric Prenowitz (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1996), 3, original emphasis.
[16] Derrida, *Paper Machine,* 7.

"Cite" implies that the title is capable of performing in the absence of the artist. Derrida pushes this further, claiming that in order to convey meaning, a sign must be repeatable, and thus readable even, if "the moment of production is irrevocably lost and even if I do not know what its alleged author-scriptor [and I add, artist] consciously intended to say at the moment he wrote it…."[17] This suggests that the performative act itself constitutes the authority of the "artist," not an inherent authority within the "artist" herself. Authors thus do not grant titles to that which they author—artists thus do not grant titles to their artworks—the performative act of titling grants the author the authority of "author"—and "artist"—and this authority is enacted every time a title is used to cite the author as "author"—and the artist as "artist."

This is clear in both the second and third reasons *Light Space Time* offers, which assert that a title can offer "deeper insight" into its consigned artwork, and, later in the third reason, able to convey the artist's intentions, both of which, they state, may not be possible without the inclusion of a (more descriptive) title. "Deeper insight" depends on the historicity—that is, the quality of an object that suggests it has a history—conveyed by an artwork's title. As mentioned, any deeper insight relies on its status as a repetition; it has and will continue to be a repetition of meaning—"parasitic" to cite Derrida's use of Austin's terminology. Thus, a title is able to convey "deeper insight" because it has been cited. As such, the "deeper insight" conveyed is not linear, singular, original, or fixed to any one context; it changes depending on the context in which it is cited. It is, further, influenced by the viewer's personal encounter(s) with the signs'—titles are often comprised of more than one—historicity: the viewer too plays a performative role in a title's ability to offer deeper insight. A more descriptive title thus does not guarantee clarity

[17] Derrida, *Limited Inc.,* trans. by Samuel Weber and Jeffrey Mehlman (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1977), 9.

in providing “deeper insight”; uncertainty and indeterminacy remain a possibility regardless of the amount of description conveyed via a title. This is not to say that a more descriptive title cannot meaningfully and beneficially influence how one “reads” an artwork. Consider the insight offered by the following titles: (Ben Rubin) ***The Language of Diplomacy*** (2011), (Shirin Neshat) ***Fervor*** (2000), and (Janine Antoni) ***Lick and Lather*** (1993).



3. "A title guides and provides a hint to the viewer about what the artist was thinking when the work was created. An untitled piece leaves the viewer with only their own interpretation (which may be totally wrong)."

Intentionality is key for Austin's performative utterances:

> Where, as often, the procedure [an accepted conventional procedure with an accepted aim] is designed for use by persons having certain thoughts or feelings, or the inauguration of certain consequential conduct on the part of any participant, then a person participating in and so invoking the procedure must in fact have those thoughts or feelings, and the participants must intend so to conduct themselves…."[18]

Significantly, performative utterances are not true or false, but felicitous or infelicitous. An utterance is felicitous if it achieves its intended effect, infelicitous if it does not, which, for Austin, is integrally tied to the intention of the speaker conveyed in what he calls a unique "total speech situation." Derrida problematizes Austin's notion of intentionality, which, he argues, assumes a pure presence that is not only impossible, but is an illusion of language:

> One of those essential elements—and not one among others—remains, classically, consciousness, the conscious presence of the intention of the speaking subject in the totality of his speech act. As a result, performative communication becomes once more the communication of an intentional meaning…The conscious presence of speakers or receivers participating in the accomplishment of a performative, their conscious and intentional presence in the totality of the operation [what Austin terms "total speech situation"], implies teleologically that no *residue* escapes the present totalization.[19]

He argues that Austin's felicitous performative is dependent upon an established convention(s)

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[18] Austin, 15.

[19] Derrida, *Limited Inc.,* 14, original emphasis. Derrida uses the term "total context" to refer to what Austin calls "total speech situation."

that "is intrinsic to what constitutes the speech act itself."[20] This conventionality is citational; integral to a speech act is thus "escaped residue" from one total speech situation cited in another. Thus, an utterance's total speech situation requires the citing of something outside of its temporal and spatial context for it to be felicitous; it requires the citing of something absent in the utterance's context, which makes it performatively present. In other words, an utterance's total speech situation is not merely its temporal and spatial context.

For titles, misinterpretation remains a possibility even if an artist uses a descriptive title to convey their intentions. This is to say that neither the titling artist nor titled artwork can account for all of the factors that contribute to and effect a viewer's interpretation of said artwork; casual viewers, art judges, art juries, galleries, and art buyers will cite whatever escaped residue they choose from past total speech situations to help them interpret an artwork in addition to the contextual nuances that affect their interpretation of an artwork, which, regardless of how detailed her installation notes are, the artist cannot fully account for. The titling-artist can use a descriptive title as a tool to help convey her conscious intentions; however, her intentions remain subject to ambiguity and, in turn, (mis)interpretation. Further, an artist's conscious intention is only ever partially intentional; as Derrida reminds us, there is no experience that consists of pure consciousness or pure presence in a total speech situation:

> Because this unity of the signifying form only constitutes itself by virtue of its iterability, by the possibility of its being repeated in the absence not only of its 'referent,' which is self-evident, but in the absence of a determined signified or of the intention of actual signification, as well as of all intention of present communication.[21]

[20] Derrida, *Limited Inc.,* 15.
[21] Derrida, *Limited Inc.,* 10.

In other words, a written and spoken sign must be citable and iterable not only in the absence of its referent, but also in the absence of the referent's established and generally accepted connotation, and the writing and speaking present subject's intention. This claim has two implications. The full meaning of a referent—its established and accepted connotation(s)—is partially lost in its written and spoken sign; and a writing and speaking subject's conscious intention is, at best, partially intentional not only to readers and listeners, but also to herself. Artist Rabih Mroué acknowledges this. Titles, he explains in this note's second epigraph, continuously acquire meaning(s) regardless of their author's intentions. His solution: "a list of good titles" that can be chosen for any future project. Thus, the title of his text, "Make me stop smoking," which nothing to do with smoking.[22]

It is worth noting that, for Derrida, both citation and iteration aim to reproduce something that already exists.[23] There is, however, a difference between the two. To cite is to invoke the context of the citation's inaugural authority. Any sign, or series of signs, can be cited with the use of quotations marks, which can include the citation of a prior citation(s), ad infinitum. Signs too can be repeated, which is to say iterated; this is, however, not the same as citing them. To iterate, is to use established signs in a new context without directly invoking the authority of

[22] Mroué, 277. In addition to "Make me stop smoking," Mroué offers the following list of titles for projects that don't exist yet: "List #13, Covered with Honey and Blood, I the undersigned, Out of Dust, Switzerland is no longer Lebanon, Life is Short although the day is long, A birthmark on my left toe, Come in Sir we are waiting for you outside, Cry me cats and dogs, The general security of Hezbollah denies any responsibility for what might happen tomorrow, You'd be so nice to leave me so soon, My wife and I love Al Pacino but she loves him even more, Is there any chance of dying after dying, Stolen moments, Distracted bullets, Eye is complete darkness, Wings of desire or gone with the wind, The sun sets tens of times a day, Borrow your expressions, Round corners, The old man who is still thinking of his mother and of the way he had licked her ear by mistake, Something of Something, Learning to survive the desire to simplify, Tate mon amour, Who's afraid of representation?" (Mroué, 278).

[23] Derrida, *Limited Inc.,* 40.

their inaugural context. To iterate is to alter according to Derrida: "Iteration alters, something new takes place." This said, he is clear in stating that the act of citing too alters: the practice of *both* citation and iteration "constantly *alter,* at once and without delay…whatever it seems to reproduce."[24] Thus, all citations are iterations, however, not all iterations are citations, and all reproductions—citations or iterations—are in part productions.

This is not to say that all titles can't be helpful due to the risk of (mis)interpretation. How else are you supposed to know that Janine Antoni **lick**s the brown (chocolate) self-portrait bust **and lather**s with the white (soap) self-portrait bust? The soap scum and subtle teeth marks are not communicated in the photograph, nor is the typical sense of unease evoked from seeing soap and chocolate presumably used and consumed so closely together. In this context, both the title and the photograph point to the artistic performance inherent in ***Lick and Lather***. This said, information is still lost when "viewing" ***Lick and Lather*** through both forms of documentation (the photograph of the performance/installation and the title, which I will explain below): the smell of soap and chocolate, for example, or the slowly decreasing in scale of both self-portrait busts.

The title of an artwork can, further, mediate the viewer's experience; viewers can give a title too much power in shaping their experience of an artwork. Not directly matching the above images with their corresponding titles was an intentional choice. Putting aside that I have already revealed ***Lick and Lather***'s corresponding image, and assuming you are unfamiliar with the other two artworks, "**fervor**," "**language**," and "**diplomacy**" can be the source of meaningful interpretation for both of the remaining images.

[24] Derrida, *Limited Inc.*, 40, original emphasis.

4. “A title will help your art to be discovered when someone searches online for art. For SEO (search engine optimization) purposes, you should also have a description of the art since search engines cannot ‘see’ the art. They only recognize descriptive words.”

The final affordance I will consider is the title as a document of the inaugural authorial performative act. A document is a means of conveying a past live performance in a future live moment. This moment of conveyance is a second live performative moment that mediates a viewer’s experience of the past inaugural performance via the documenting medium. The inaugural authorial performative act is captured and conveyed through the title as a document; this accounts for a title’s constitutive power in all performative moments of pointing to. The title as document affords the artist as “artist” and artwork as “artwork” re-presentation in future live moments. Similar to a photographic document of a live performance, the title as document re-presents the authorial performative act in future live moments—it cannot re-present itself due to its ephemerality, nor can the artist be present to authorially distinguish her artwork in all performative moments in which it is distinguished; as previously stated, a title must be able to do so in its artist’s absence. It is worth noting that an artwork’s title is often not dissociated from its credit line, which commonly includes the artist’s name, title, date, medium, and dimensions—provenance and current archival location is also needed depending on context and citation style. The performative and authorial act of titling thus includes the constitution of the artwork’s credit line, which, when re-presented in future live moments, is what Karen Barad terms a performative representation. In “Posthumanist Performativity: Toward an Understanding of how Matter Comes to Matter,” Barad offers a performative relationship between a referent and its representation. A representation is not a mere copy of the referent it was tasked to represent, but is, at least in part, constitutive of the referent itself. Barad’s notion of performative representation

is similar to Austin's distinction between performative and constative utterances. A representation does not merely describe its referent as a constative utterance, but performatively and, as Barad stresses, continuously constitutes the referent itself like action incited during a performative utterance.[25] Hence my use of "re-presentation:" representation as a performative re-presentation, the presentation of which, in a specific context, is, at least in part, constitutive of that which it represents. In summary, a title, as document, re-presents the inaugural authorial performative act: to make present again. The presence felt, however, is the present documenting medium (its title, which is a part of the artwork's credit line) as it performativity points to that which it re-presents, and thus, although making present, it both constitutes and alters the experience of the inaugural authorial performative act, and further, the relationship between the "artwork," "artist," and title in a specific performative moment.

Light Space Time's fourth reason in favour of descriptive titles is an extreme example of this. As far as a search engine is concerned, an artwork exists solely as its title and, as *Light Space Time* states, a descriptive title can increase an artwork's online visibility, which includes visibility for its artist—however, a second description is necessary because a search engine cannot "see" art. Google, Bing, and Yahoo searches for "*Untitled* (dissertation 1)"—it was "1" at the time of searching (there are indeed multiple versions of this dissertation)—generate a pdf. From University of British Columbia Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies, *Navigating Your Final Doctoral Examination*; Phantom Video Productions' *Disassembly of a Dissertation*, episode 1 on YouTube; and Rod Jones' artist statement on *La dulcinea* "Untitled [dissertation #1]" respectively. It seems that my title's lack of description renders my search unsuccessful. In other

[25] Karen Barad, "Posthumanist Performativity: Toward an Understanding of How Matter Comes to Matter," *SIGNS* 28*,* no.3 (2003): 804-811.

words, the inadequacy of *Untitled* (dissertation 4.2) as a means of re-presenting its consigned artwork marks an infelicitous performative moment. However, the nuances of all three contexts in which my title as document attempted to convey the dissertation I consigned it to also play a role in its infelicity. For all three search engines, online visibility is a significant part of these contextual nuances, which includes the amount of times a website has been cited (or hyperlinked) by other websites, the amount of "traffic" or "hits" it gets, the amount of prolific keywords it contains (words most often searched by search engine users), and IP and Internet browser preferences. These contextual nuances arguably hold greater influence than a title's description (or lack of description), which I will soon elaborate upon. Taking this into account, it seems that my generated clickbait titles are indeed more likely to result in a felicitous search or, at the very least, increase my online visibility.

More descriptive titles can too generate infelicitous performative searches. A common academic titling practice (1), titles a text and (2), offers a description of both the previously stated title, and the text it is consigned to; in other words, it is a title that has built into it a additional description. This can be seen through the common use of a colon. *Title : (title)* or *Title : (additional description offering contextualization for both the previous title and the following text)* (in addition to my chapter titles, see footnote 26 for examples). However, these built in descriptions do not guarantee search engine felicitousness, they too can lead to infelicitous searches depending on the contextual nuances.[26] Significantly, these contextual nuances are

[26] In a conference paper version of this note on titles presented at Queen's University's *Context & Meaning XVIII: Pay Attention*, February 2019, I searched my fellow panellists' paper titles with the following results: the first link generated by Google, Bing, and Yahoo searches respectively for Julian Rose's (Princeton University) *Crisis of Contemplation: The Art Museum in the Attention Economy* was Borris Groy's *Media Art in the Museum*; *RT: Question More*'s "'This is Art War!' Italian museum burns paintings to protest austerity cuts"; and Bonnie Pitman's article in *Daedalus* "Muses, Museums, and Memories" on Jstor. Danielle Animée

highly dependent upon the specifics of the algorithms themselves because of the ubiquity of search engines—which serve as digital archives due to of the collection of metadata, including previous searches. This is a trend James Bridle comments on in *New Dark Age: Technology and the End of the Future*. "YouTube recommendation algorithms," for example, "work by identifying what viewers like," he explains.

> Entirely new and uncategorized content has to go it alone on the network, existing in a kind of limbo that can only be disturbed by incoming links and outside recommendations. But if it finds an audience, if it starts to collect views, the algorithms may deign to place it among their recommended videos…thus increasing its 'discoverability'…if it's properly titled and tagged to identify it in an algorithmically friendly way, the system can group it with other similar videos….[27]

which further increases the video's discoverability. In other words, the more you view a video or algorithmically related videos on YouTube, the more likely your search for it will be felicitous (assuming you are viewing and searching on the same Internet browser and IP address). This is, however, complicated by the fact that YouTube content creation is a business with clear

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Miles's (Concordia University) *Still Questioning the 'Ideal': Decolonizing Strategies for Exhibitions of Classical Antiquities in Survey Museums* was a pdf. of Deborah K. Morgan's MA thesis from San Francisco State University, *Museums Decolonizing with Holistic Intentionality: Curatorial and Descendant Community Processes* (for both Google and Yahoo); and Bing generates her graduate student profile on Concordia's Department of Art History MA page. Animée Miles's descriptive MA thesis title did successfully re-present her MA thesis. This, however, was more likely to do with contextual nuances than her descriptive title, because the result was search engine specific. Further, the same search on Yahoo a day later resulted in her graduate profile, which confirms the influence of my web browser and its search history irrespective of my chosen search engine. This search exercise was not meant to criticize my fellow panelists. Nor the use of built in description titles—I would argue that, in the context of the conference, their titles meaningfully re-presented their respective paper presentations to a greater extent than my own—my intention was to show that a sign's historicity, in addition to contextual nuances, influence a title's ability to adequately re-present its consigned object, built in description or otherwise.

[27] James Bridle, *New Dark Age: Technology and the End of the Future* (New York: Verso, 2018), 217.

economic stakes: in short, the more views you get the more money you make. The K-pop hit *Gangnam Style,* for example, earned $8 million dollars from its first 1.23 billion views (which is approximately .65 cents per view).[28] "Algorithmically friendly" titles are thus informed by YouTube's recommendation algorithm, and fueled by the incentive of economic gain. Tactics have consequently been developed by YouTube content creators to increase their online visibly (not unlike *Light Space Time*'s recommendations). One such tactic, Bridle explains, "is a kind of keyword excess, cramming as many relevant search terms into a video title as possible. The result is what is known as word salad," which is a random sample of popular key words from a specific genre of videos.[29] If you look on children's YouTube, for example, you'll likely see the following or similar word salad titles: *Surprise Play Doh Eggs Peppa Pig Stamper Cars Pocoyo Minecraft Smurfs Kinder Sparkle Brilho* or *Cars Screamin' Banshee Eats Lightning McQueen Disney Pixar* or *Disney Baby Pop Up Pals Easter Eggs SURPRISE.* Significantly for Bridle, these messy assemblages of keywords point "to the real audience for the descriptions: not the viewer, but the algorithms that decide who sees which videos. The more keywords you can cram into a title, the more likely it is that your video will find its way into the recommendations, or, even better, simply autoplay when a similar video finishes."[30] This is to say that the logic of contemporary algorithms not only privileges certain videos at the expense of others (in the case of YouTube), but also certain titling practices, or consigning practices, at the expense of others—which is perhaps necessary due to the increasing amount of archival content available on digital platforms like YouTube. Ironically, it seems that titles, dependent upon algorithms, must be not quite intelligible (to us) to be felicitous in our contemporary digital moment.

[28] Bridle, 218.
[29] Bridle, 219.
[30] Bridle, 220.

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Titles performatively point to their consigned artwork (arguably some do this better than others), but unless the artwork *is* the title, it will never completely capture and communicate that which it acts as a title for. Degrees of ambiguity exist in inherently inadequate titling systems. What "*Untitled*"—as a site, a performance of citation, and a document—affords is the ability to accentuate the performative relationship between titles and their consigned artwork, between referents and that which they represent. "*Untitled*" calls attention to the fact that all titles are at risk of being inadequate or, to once again cite Austin, infelicitous. I may present *Untitled* (dissertation 4.2) as its "author"; however, its word signs cannot be fully faithful to my intentions as its cited "author." So, like Mroué, I present *Untitled* (dissertation 4.2) accepting the fact that it will inevitably connote something that I did not intend—and apparently already does as my Google, Bing, and Yahoo search results have proved. Perhaps I should present a title more felicitously put in our increasingly informed algorithmic culture:

SURPRISE PLAY DOH EGGS PEPPA PIG STAMPER CARS POCOYO MINECRAFT SMURFS KINDER SPARKLE BRILHO CARS SCREAMIN' BANSHEE EATS LIGHTNING MCQUEEN DISNEY PIXAR DISNEY BABY POP UP PALS EASTER EGGS SURPRISE

A Dissertation Submitted to the Committee on Graduate Studies in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Doctor of Philosophy in the Faculty of Arts and Science

TRENT UNIVERSITY

Peterborough, Ontario, Canada

Cultural Studies Ph.D. Graduate Program

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Exergue: a more formal introduction to *Untitled* (dissertation 4.2)

> The question of a politics of the archive is our permanent orientation…This question will never be determined as one political question among others. It runs through the whole of the field and in truth determines politics from top to bottom as *res publica.* There is no political power without control of the archive, if not of memory. Effective democratization can always be measured by this essential criterion: the participation in and the access to the archive, its constitution, and its interpretation.
>
> — Derrida, *Archive Fever: A Freudian Impression*[31]

> The Internet Archive, a 501(c)(3) non-profit, is building a library of Internet sites and other cultural artifacts in digital form. Like a paper library, we produce free access to researchers, historians, scholars, the print disabled, and the general public. Our mission is to provide Universal Access to All Knowledge.
>
> — Internet Archive, "About the Internet Archive"[32]

In "The Disappearance of Archives," contemporary archivist Rick Prelinger distinguishes between the terms "archives" and "archive." "Archives," he maintains, are "formally recognized and/or 'outsider' places of collecting, preservation, access, and archival labor…." The "archive," in contrast, refers to "conceptual, philosophical, artistic or psychoanalytical constructs centered around archives and/or archival processes."[33] It is important to note, however, that these two notions overlap in practice; formally recognized "archives" are organized by the institutional logic of their "archive." Similarly, in *Archive Fever,* Derrida traces the term "archive" from the Greek term *arkhē* connoting commencement *and* commandment.[34] Any theory of the archive, he argues, is a theory of institutionalization, which needs to take into account the *arkhē* as

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[31] Derrida, *Archiver Fever,* 4, original emphasis.
[32] "About the Internet Archive," *Internet Archive,* accessed June 2020, https://archive.org/about
[33] Prelinger. 204.
[34] Derrida, *Archive Fever*, 1.

comprised of both *arkheion*—a physical place where archival materials commence—and *archon*—a magistrate who commands archival authority through the performance of various institutional practices.[35] In other words, the *arkhē* is a place where things formally commence ("archives") governed by a commanding logic ("archive").[36]

Prelinger argues that the increasing ubiquity of digital technologies—particularly the World Wide Web and the Internet as facilitators of platforms like YouTube and the Internet Archive and the mass collection of metadata on various platforms (including the aforementioned platforms)—has problematized the institutional logic of the "archive."[37] This, he argues in accordance with his title, has led to the disappearance of "archives."[38] Unmediated archival longevity—or what he terms the "archival compact," which, although poorly observed, served as the foundation of Twentieth Century archival activity—has consequently been "traded in for the appearance of openness, an absence of latency, an omnivorous collecting policy…and the

[35] Derrida, *Archive Fever,* 2.
[36] Michel Foucault's *The Archaeology of Knowledge and the Discourse on Language* is a seminal contribution to this understanding of the archive. The archive, for Foucault, is first a governing system of power and order: "The archive is first the law of what can be said, the system that governs the appearance of statement as unique events." Significantly, and Derrida later takes this up via his understanding of the consigning authority of archival law, "the archive is also that which determines that all these things said do not accumulate endlessly in an amorphous mass…." The archive ensures that "they are grouped together in distinct figures, composed together in accordance with multiple relations, maintained or blurred in accordance with specific regularities…." (Michel Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge and the Discourse on Language*, Trans. by A. M. Sheridan Smith [New York: Vintage Books, 1972], 129).
[37] Prelinger was, notably, an early contributor to the Internet Archive. He is also the founder of the Prelinger Collection, which, in association with the Internet Archive, is an archive that houses thousands of free to view U.S. cultural films. See "Prelinger Collections: Prelinger Archives," *Internet Archive,* accessed December 2020, https://archive.org/details/prelinger
[38] Rick Prelinger, "The Disappearance of Archives," in *New Media Old Media: A History and Theory Reader,* ed. by Wendy Hui Kyong Chun and Anna Watkins, (New York: Routledge, 2016), 199.

appearance of near-universal availability."[39] By this he means that we can no longer rely upon the "archival compact," and the unmediated and change resistant collection, organization, and preservation of archival materials by an "archives" for which it strived for—assuming that we ever could. Thus, the "archival compact" has been replaced by "a noncommittal handshake" he argues, which is a term he uses to evince the instability and unreliability of archival materials.[40] YouTube in particular for Prelinger is "the biggest element of subversion against the structure, practices, and hegemony of established archives…." because

> YouTube convinces us of conditions that we know to be true yet resist accepting: that the drive to preserve everything is quixotic, that comprehensive archival projects cannot succeed in an age of infinite media, and that we must accept the inevitably of loss and make it part of our archival practice.[41]

I do not contest the fact that technological advancements have significantly impacted archival practices; critical changes have been made to how archives—and analogous institutions including libraries, museums, and galleries—organize, preserve, and exhibit their collections. However, I fear his juxtaposition of the historic "archival compact" and contemporary "noncommittal handshake" risks implying a clear distinction between Twentieth and Twenty First Century archival practices.[42] In this dissertation, I argue that Prelinger's critique of contemporary digital archives is reminiscent of Derrida's some 30 years earlier. I will also be arguing that performance artists and theorists have both anticipated and productively addressed this critique.

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[39] Prelinger, 201.
[40] Ibid.
[41] Prelinger, 203-204.
[42] I use "archives" here, and hereafter, not to connote Prelinger's understanding of "archives," distinct from "archive," but Derrida's understanding of the *arkhē.*

With reference to Sigmund Freud's death drive, Derrida describes archival logic in his 1995 text *Archive Fever* as "*mal d'archive,*" usually translated as "archive fever," meaning

> never to rest, interminably, from searching for the archive right where it slips away. It is to run after the archive, even if there's too much of it, right where something in it anarchives itself. It is to have a compulsive, repetitive, and nostalgic desire for the archive, an irrepressible desire to return to the origin, a homesickness, a nostalgia for the return to the most archaic place of absolute commencement.[43]

Derrida describes two aspects of *mal d'archive*, or archival logic, in this quote. The first is a passion to preserve integral to which is an inextinguishable drive to reach a source of all knowledge—or, as the Internet Archive claims in the second epigraph of this exergue, "All Knowledge."[44] This passion to preserve, however, is constantly threatened by loss, which is the second aspect of *mal d'archive.* This is what Derrida means when he says, "never to rest…from searching for the archive right where it slips away." Significantly, the archive "anarchives itself," meaning it annihilates itself in the passionate act of preservation. Thus, *mal d'archive* highlights the fragile and precarious nature of the archive—digital or otherwise; there are no beginnings in the archive; there are only middles, discontinuities, and indexes of loss.

Exacerbated, the state of *mal d'archive* has drastically increased the amount of archivable material in addition to archive-worthy material. Archival practitioners have also been affected; the act of archiving is no longer reserved for institutionally supported *archons*, nor is it limited to the brick and mortar walls of an *arkheion.* As the second epigraph suggests, which I will latter address in more detail, digital technologies have facilitated the democratization of archives and archival materials (or, at the very least, a mission to democratize archives and archival

[43] Derrida, *Archive Fever,* 91.
[44] "About the Internet Archive."

materials); this comes with significant implications according to Mike Featherstone. "The boundaries between the archive and everyday life," he explains in "Archives," "become blurred through digital recording and storage technologies."[45] In other words, archiving is becoming less specialized and authoritative, which is to say less distinguished from daily activity via the ubiquitous use of cell phones and computers, for example, and platforms like YouTube. There is little distinction between the archive and daily life if everything can be archived by everyone or, as Featherstone elaborates, "Life increasingly becomes lived in the shadow of the archive…." because "Archive reason with its thirst for detail sees everything as potentially significant and archivable."[46]

This increase in archive-worthy material does not, however, mean an increase in archival reliability contra to what technological development might imply. Featherstone emphasizes this point by outlining the volatility inherent in digital archives. Digital technologies have shifted "the archive as a physical place to store records," he explains,

> to that of the archive as a virtual site facilitating immediate transfer…The digital archive then should not be seen as just a part of the contemporary 'record and storage mania' facilitated by digital technologies, but as providing a fluid, processual, dynamic archive in which the topology of documents can be reconfigured again and again.[47]

By this Featherstone means to point out the volatile consequences of increased accessibility and flexibility that digital archives afford. This said, he does not believe that this is a new development as Prelinger does. He too argues that the affordances and consequences of digital archives are evocative of Derrida's pre-digital *mal d'archive.*[48] Digital archives remain prone to

[45] Mike Featherstone, "Archive," *Theory, Culture & Society* 23, no. 2-3 (2006): 591.
[46] Ibid.
[47] Featherstone, 595-956.
[48] Featherstone, 956.

archive fever even though they aim to preserve more reliably than their pre-digital counterparts. It seems that the ubiquity of digital technologies has not so much altered the archive, but exacerbated and made public the fever that threatens the archival compact of the Twentieth Century; the archive has always been involved with some form of "noncommittal handshakes" to use Prelinger's terminology. The second epigraph, a snippet from the Internet Archive's "About" web page, highlights one such archive; I use it here as an exemplar of contemporary digital archives.

Since 1996, the Internet Archive has developed a variety of programs to aid their mission: "to provide Universal Access to All Knowledge."[49] The Wayback Machine is one such program. Launched in October 2001, the Wayback Machine aims to archive all accessible web pages. It presents users with an archive of the Internet allowing them to "go back in Internet time" to visit over 446 billion web pages up from 273 billion web pages from 361 million websites in October 2016, which at that time took up over 15 petabytes of storage.[50] The Wayback Machine preserves web pages by "capturing" them at various moments in time. They become "web page captures" or "web captures" when they are catalogued in the Internet Archive.[51] Significantly for its creators, the Wayback Machine is driven by the desire to prevent cultural loss, which further enforces its status as an archive. After referencing the loss of early film archives, they state:

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[49] "About the Internet Archive."
[50] Vinay Goel, "Defining Web pages, Web sites and Web captures," *Internet Archive Blogs,* October 2016, https://blog.archive.org/2016/10/23/defining-web-pages-web-sites-and-web-captures/
446 web pages as of October, 2020; 542 billion web pages as of March, 2021. 1 petabyte is 1,000 terabytes or 1 million gigabytes.
[51] Goel.

> Without cultural artifacts, civilization has no memory and no mechanism to learn from its successes and failures. And paradoxically, with the explosion of the Internet, we live in what Danny Hillis has referred to as our 'digital dark age.'
>
> The Internet Archive is thus working to prevent the Internet…and other 'born-digital' materials from disappearing into the past. Collaborating with institutions including the Library of Congress and the Smithsonian, we are working to preserve a record for generations to come.[52]

The "digital dark age"—referenced in the above quote—was introduced by Hillis in 1998 at a conference titled "Digital Continuity" hosted by the Getty Centre. The "digital dark age," according to Hillis, marks the period of rapid technological advancement that results in obsolescence because more attention is paid to storing information rather than its long term preservation.[53] This is to say that immediate storage is privileged without the concern of future technological changes that render previous ones obsolete. Or as Bruce Sterling puts it in "Digital Decay," "We have no way to archive bits that we know will be readable in even fifty years. Tape demagnetizes. CDs delaminate. Networks go down."[54] Bridle's "new dark age" is a more recent take on Hillis' "digital dark age." As I mentioned in my note on this dissertation's title, YouTube recommendation algorithms work by guessing what viewers will watch based on associative titles and tags. Uncategorized videos exist in what Bridle calls "YouTube limbo" without outside recommendation.[55] Thus, as far as YouTube algorithms are concerned, and consequently viewers, these uncategorized videos do not exist. Similarly, in its mission to preserve, the

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[52] Wendy Hui Kyong Chun quoting Archive.org in *Programmed Visions: Software and Memory* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2011), 171.
[53] Stewart Brand, "Escaping the Digital Dark Age," *Library Journal* 124, no. 2 (2003): 46.
[54] Bruce Sterling, "Digital Decay," *Medium,* February 2, 2018, https://medium.com/@bruces/digital-decay-2001-b0db0ca4be3c
[55] Bridle, 217.

Wayback Machine paradoxically throws users into the "digital dark age"/"new dark age" in an effort to prevent it. Websites, for the Wayback Machine, do not exist if they are not backed up in the Internet Archive. This is to say that the Wayback Machine collapses the difference between the unknowable breath of the Internet and its stored backup—like YouTube's recommendation algorithms do with uncategorized videos.

Significantly, the Wayback Machine is only able to back up certain data types, which are not compatible with unfixed website locations. The Wayback Machine has no comprehensible catalogue system (at least not for humans) that pre-digital archives provide because there are no fixed locations on the Internet in which the Wayback Machine aims to archive. As Featherstone states, digital archives are dynamic topologies of documents that are continuously reconfigured.[56] Similarly, according to Wendy Hui Kyong Chun, "web pages link to, rather than embed, images, which can be located anywhere, and because link locations always change, the IWM preserves a skeleton of a page, filled with broken…links and images."[57] By this Chun means that the web pages preserved by the Wayback Machine are incomplete and inevitably prone to loss over time because the Wayback Machine cannot account for unfixed links that the web pages contain and, consequently, the perpetual reconfiguration to which they are susceptible to—the Wayback Machine's particular version of *mal d'archive*. From this we can conclude that the Wayback Machine does not, as its creators intended, prevent the Internet from disappearing into the past for generations to come, but shows that the digital archive, like its pre-digital predecessors, cannot guarantee a foreseeable future in its preservation of the past.

[56] Featherstone, 595-956.
[57] Chun, 171. Chun refers to the Wayback Machine as the Internet Wayback Machine (IWM) in her text.

It is important to note that considerations of the archive, and *mal d'archive* with it, are also political considerations. We cannot, for instance, discuss formally or informally recognized "archives" without considering their "archive," or institutional agendas, to use Prelinger's distinction. As Derrida reminds us in the first epigraph, "There is no political power without control of the archive, if not of memory." Further, effective democratization, for Derrida, can be measured by the participation in and access to the archive. [58] It is clear that technological advancements have led to an increase in democratization because digital archives afford a greater amount of participation and access than their pre-digital counter parts; by this I mean an increase in participatory access to both pre-existing, formally recognized archives as well as informal, personal ones. The Internet Archive exemplifies this democratization; they are clear in stating that its mission is "to provide Universal Access to All Knowledge," and it does so through projects like the Wayback Machine.[59] The Wayback Machine marks the democratization of archives because it is accessible to anyone with adequate internet access, and its visitors can contribute by submitting "web captures," adding to the increasing number of archived web pages in the Wayback Machine. Thus, rigid, read-only indexes are replaced by a dynamic and participatory form of archival access—what Wolfgang Ernst effectively terms "dynacrchive" in *Digital Memory and the Archive.*[60] Web pages are, significantly, captured more than once for two reasons; (1), anyone can capture web pages, and (2), the web pages change over time thus warranting additional—and seemingly limitless—"web captures."[61] The home page for Spiegel Online, for example, has 74,188 captures from December 23, 1996 to June 2, 2020 (as of June

[58] Derrida, *Archiver Fever,* 4.
[59] "About the Internet Archive."
[60] Wolfgang Ernst, *Digital Memory and the Archive,* ed. by Jussi Parikka (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2013), 82.
[61] Ibid.

10, 2020) because the home page is updated regularly, which consequently means that archived web pages inevitably contain broken links and images and outdated information.[62] Ernst describes this type of archiving at as a "permanent rewriting or addition…[a] series of temporally limited entries with internal expiry dates that are…reconfigurable."[63]

This said, the participation and access afforded by the Internet Archive does not come without political influence; "A science of the archive [democratized or otherwise]," Derrida points out, "must include the theory of institutionalization…."[64] In addition to their collaboration with the US Library of Congress and the Smithsonian, the Internet Archive, and the Wayback Machine by extension, receives funding from many organizations and foundations including the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, the Knight Foundation, the National Science Foundation, the National Endowment for the Humanities, and the Council on Library and Information Resources, among others. Each of these foundations comes with its own grant stipulations. The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, for example, outlines four "areas of grantmaking" to help determine whether or not projects fit into the Foundation's programmatic interests—in other words, their

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[62] "Spiegel Online," *Archive.org,* accessed June 10, 2020, https://web.archive.org/web/20131001152630/http://www.spiegel.de/

[63] Ernst, 85. While Ernst addresses the Internet as a digital archive, he is clear in stating that "the equation of Internet and archive leads to the ultimate dissolution—liquidation—of the concept…." (Ernst, 85). Thus, Ernst, like Prelinger, views the implementation of digital technology as fundamentally altering. This is arguably because Ernst is a media archaeologist. Ernst's brand of media archeology, in short, aims to analyze the archaeologies of knowledge (in the Foucauldian sense) in media. This is to say that, through media archaeology, he considers the way in which technology conditions our understanding of the world. It is important to note, however, that media archaeology differs from cultural history; Ernst does not focus on the socio-economic or political contexts of media, but the media apparatuses through which memory is articulated. Although technological advancements have critically impacted the archival institution, unlike Ernst, I am not arguing that digital technology has fundamentally altered archival institutions and their supporting practices. In other words, I am not taking a media archaeological approach. As I previously stated, I argue that the increasing ubiquity of digital technology has exacerbated what was already there: *mal d'archive* and its political symptoms.

[64] Derrida, *Archive Fever,* 4.

philanthropic mission—and successful applicants must follow their mandated reporting requirements and payment conditions.[65] This is to say that the Internet Archive's aim to "preserve a record for generations to come" and, further, "All Knowledge" is subjected to and dependent upon various institutional agendas because their funding is.[66] Similarly, participation is dependent upon adequate internet access, which, as the recent COVID-19 pandemic has emphasized, not everyone has. One's ability to participate is thus dependent on various factors like socio-economic status and access to internet infrastructure—the development of which is costly, and not every municipality can afford it.

It is clear that digital archives mark a tension. On the one hand, the digitization of archives has led to democratization in the form of greater participation and access. On the other hand, it has facilitated a rapid increase in both the formal and informal production of preservable content, which is consequently subjected to various political agendas because, as Derrida reminds us, the archive is inherently political—even democratized ones. More briefly put, the impact of democratization facilitated by digital technologies is the exacerbation of *mal d'archive* and its political symptoms.

As I previously quoted, Prelinger advocates for an archival practice that not only accepts, but is informed by the inevitability of loss in our contemporary digital moment. Such a practice has been adopted, albeit not in the archival setting. In "Dwelling on the 'anarchival:' archives as indexes of loss and absence," Carolin Huang emphasizes Derrida's *mal d'archive* arguing that its influence is often left unacknowledged in contemporary archival work. She claims that the "anarchival"—which, as I previously mentioned, is the term Derrida uses to refer

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[65] "Grantmaking Policies and Guidelines," *The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation,* accessed June 2020, https://mellon.org/grants/grantmaking-policies-and-guidelines/

[66] "About the Internet Archive."

to the archive's precarious nature—has been more actively taken up in the contemporary art setting than the archival setting: Raqs Media Collective, Joyce Salloum, Akram Zaatari, and the Atlas Group, for example.[67] Performance artists and theorists in particular have productively addressed the role of documentation in relation to the live event by shifting the focus from what is preserved to how it has become and continues to be preservable through multiple archival acts. This is to say that many performance artists and theorists have not only been informed by *mal d'archive,* they have also critically and effectively addressed the inherent political nature of archives and archival acts. I contend in this dissertation that the tension of contemporary digital archives was anticipated by performance artists and theorists decades earlier. It is through a performative perspective that we can productively address the political stakes of contemporary digital archives. A performative perspective, in short, can effectively meet Prelinger's call for an archival practice that both accepts and is informed by the inevitability of loss in our contemporary digital moment.

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I address the early performance debates in my first chapter Event: a performative approach to digital archives. I begin with influential performance theorist Peggy Phelan's challenge for performance writing as an archival practice. For Phelan, the archival act of writing about performance is a means of coming to terms with what has been lost; in other words, it serves an elegiac function. Documentation, further, memorializes a past performance, serving to help remember and commemorate what has passed on. Phelan's memorial focus arguably derives

[67] Carolin Huang, "Dwelling on the 'anarchival:' archives as indexes of loss and absence," *Archival Science* 20 (2020).

from her ontology of disappearance. In short, a performance, according to this ontology, becomes a "performance" in its disappearance, and is ontologically nonreproductive. Many performance theorists have responded to Phelan's ontology of disappearance by contesting it, including Philip Auslander, Amelia Jones, Monica E. McTighe, Mechtild Widrich, Donia Mounsef, Steve Dixon, and Jessica Santone. With their respective nuances, and reminiscent of Barad's performative representation, these contemporary theorists view documentation as, at least in part, performatively constitutive of the event it has been consigned to represent. In doing so, they problematize the assumption of earlier theories—primarily Phelan's ontology of disappearance—that a live performance precedes its consigned document as the privileged original event. What these theorists have in common is their use of Austin's speech act theory—specifically their use of Austin's "performative utterance," which I explained in my note on this dissertation's title. With this in mind, the act of documenting, written or otherwise, performatively produces the "performance" as it comes to be understood, opposed to offering a description of it—Austin's "constative utterance."

Phelan's understanding of performance writing cannot account for this performative production because it privileges the original live event at the expense of its (assumed) subsequent and constative documents. The aforementioned contemporary performance theorists not only account for the productive function of the archive, but, significantly, the continuous production of the "performance" through various archival, and thus political, practices. These documents, which are made to be preservable, are continuous and performative sites of production, and are thus also sites of inevitable loss (they continuously and performatively produce something at the expense of something else). It is through this performative perspective that we can understand the archive not as a commemoration of the past or insurance to guarantee a foreseeable future,

but as a continuous and performative constitution of documents and the events they serve to represent, which remain, and now more so than ever due to the increasing ubiquity of digital technologies, perpetually threatened by loss, and subject to the political consequences of the *mal d'archive.*

As I previously mentioned, considerations of the archive are also political considerations. For Derrida, the document plays a key role in this because it engages in a continuous act of becoming saved, fixed, controlled, and thus institutionalized; significantly, he explains, this "alerts us to all of the institutional, juridical, political dimensions that we must also debate."[68] I take up this debate in my second chapter Exhibit: a performative approach to exhibitions and their institutional substrates. I argue in my first chapter that the tension of contemporary digital archives was anticipated by performance artists and theorists decades earlier. In a similar sense, there is a long history of gallery and museum institutional critique that we can draw from to productively address the political stakes of contemporary digital archives. In this chapter, I argue that archival and curatorial acts are not only similar, they are inseparable practices, with the former emphasizing preservation and the latter exhibition, historically speaking. To curate is to not only to exhibit, but also to preserve through various archival documents, meaning documents that have been made archivable in the logic of the archiving institution—exhibition reviews and catalogues, press releases, wall labels, work orders, accession numbers, etc. Similarly, archived "stuff," according to historian Carolyn Steedman, "just sits there until it is read, and used, and narrativized," that is, exhibited in such a way that makes sense of it in a future context.[69]

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[68] Derrida, *Paper Machine,* 7.
[69] Carolyn Steedman, *Dust: The Archive and Cultural History* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2002), 68.

In *Curationism: How Curating Took Over The Art World And Everything Else,* David Balzer describes what he calls our contemporary "curationist movement." He claims that this movement is marked by "curatorial impulse," which is the crazed impulse to select, organize, and exhibit things of value.[70] With the drive to differentiate, people, places, and things are curated in the hopes of creating value through association. As mentioned, curation has historically focused on the exhibition of art objects in a gallery or museum setting; however, the "curatorial impulse," fuelled by the ubiquity of digital technologies, has made everything available for curation by everyone, according the Balzer—reminiscent of Featherstone's argument about the increasing ubiquity of the archive and archival practices. This has led to an increase in not only preservation, but also exhibition. Significantly, many digital archives have shifted the focus from preservation to exhibition via immediate participatory access; this is the case for both formal and informal digital archives—for example, the digital collections of established galleries and museums made publicly available online, and social media platforms respectively. It is for this reason that I focus on curatorial practice in this chapter as a practice of exhibition inseparable from and from which we can better understand the violence inherent in archival practices. Any exhibition wall (gallery, museum, Google, Facebook, YouTube, Instagram, TikTok, etc.) is not a neutral site, but actively contributes to our digitally exacerbated state of *mal d'archive*. By the end of this chapter, and with reference to theorists and activists including Mieke Bal, Lisa Corrin, Gyan Prakash, Kayleigh Bryant-Greenwell, and Syrus Marcus

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[70] David Balzer, *Curationism: How Curating Took Over the Art World and Everything Else* (Toronto: Coach House Books, 2014), 8-9.

Ware, I advocate for a curatorial/archival practice that acknowledges its consigning authority and takes responsibility for the effects of its institutional practices.

I argued in my note on this dissertation's title that the "*Untitled*" title asks readers and viewers to pay attention to constitutive and continuous performative acts, in addition to distinguishing a particular consigned artwork via a consigning authority. Instances of *mal d'archive* exhibited in various Wayback Machine "captured pages" perform a similar function via what I am calling a "glitch-utterance"—and for this reason I will later take up glitch art, which is an artistic practice that engages with technical failures in digital systems. A Wayback Machine glitch-utterance often takes the form of an error message; it is thus a sort of speech act that aims to communicate a technological mishap as a constative utterance. It is for this reason that I explore the various error messages of the Wayback Machines as glitch-utterances in an interlude, after chapter one, titled Interlude: glitch-utterances; and I later address glitch-utterances in a second interlude titled Interlude: TD2020.002.001a-w after a solo exhibition at the Art Gallery of Peterborough (AGP) that concluded my 2020 artist residency. Not only do these glitch-utterances visualize *mal d'archive* as the foundation for digital archives, they can serve as performative moments that point to technological materialities and computational processes—like the (often) infelicitous "*Untitled.*" The second interlude is, further, an artistic engagement with the productive function of the archive. The documents in this interlude—notably an iteration of the exhibition catalogue—performatively constitute the exhibition as having happened regardless of whether or not it actually occurred, which, significantly, it did not. More briefly put, I offer documentation as a model for performance in my second interlude. Derrida takes a similar approach in *Limited Inc.*—he offers writing as a model for all language. I will revisit Derrida's take on Austin's speech act theory in my second interlude.

These two interludes also serve as a transition to my concluding section titled Eco-coda: the ecological consequences of digital archives, which, as the title indicates, and at the risk of being redundant, focuses on the ecological consequences of digital archives. The exacerbated, obsessive accumulation and preservation of archival material has tangible limits. Significantly, it contributes to and is compromised by global warming—perhaps a literal "ecological fever." This said, it is not my aim to offer a solution for this "ecological fever," nor address its full impact—this is a separate project as theorists like Sean Cubitt, Jussi Parikka, Zoe Todd, Juanita Sundberg, Mél Hogan, Timothy Morton, and Bridle have shown. My intention is to conclude this dissertation with a supplement of sorts: a look at the ecological impact of digital archives because I feel it is irresponsible not to given their increasing ubiquity. With this in mind, the Wayback Machine glitch-utterances can perform an important role in calling attention to the technological materialities and computational processes that are rendered invisible by Big Tech companies via metaphors—the ethereal Cloud metaphor, for example. These glitch-utterances point to the very material substrates that support the virtual, and can thus act as an important reminder of the ecological consequences of digital archives, which, like curatorial/archival practices, are tied to institutional agendas.

Event: a performative approach to digital archives

> To yoke writing to the belated summary of the event that has passed restricts both the potential futures of that writing and the ineluctable desire to be lost for which many live events live.
>
> — Peggy Phelan, *Ends of performance*[71]

> [T]he historian who makes the stuff of the past (Everything) into a structure or event, a happening or a thing through the activities of thought and writing: that they were never actually *there*, once, in the first place; or at last, not in the same way that a nutmeg grater actually once was, and certainly not as the many ways in which they 'have been told.' So there is a double nothingness in the writing of history and in the analysis of it: it is about something that never did happen in the way it comes to be represented (the happening exists in the telling or the text); and it is made out of materials that aren't there, in an archive or anywhere else…The search for the historian's nostalgia for origins and original referents cannot be performed, because there is nothing there: she is not looking for anything: only silence, the space shaped by what once was; and now is no more.
>
> — Carolyn Steedman, *Dust: The Archive and Cultural History*[72]

In her discussion of performativity, performance, and documentation, influential performance theorist Peggy Phelan notes artist Sophie Calle who, in 1990, interviewed staff members and visitors of the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum in Boston about several stolen paintings. Calle asked them to describe the stolen paintings; she then transcribed the descriptions, and exhibited them in place of the absent paintings. "Her work suggests," Phelan notes, "that the descriptions and memories of the paintings constitute their continuing 'presence,'

[71] Peggy Phelan, introduction to *The Ends of Performance*, ed. by Peggy Phalen and Jill Lane (New York: New York University Press, 1998), 1-2.
[72] Steedman, 154, original emphasis.

despite the absence of the paintings themselves."[73] Phelan argues, with direct reference to Austin's speech act theory, that the "speech act of memory and description," what Austin calls a constative utterance, "becomes a performative expression when Calle places these commentaries within the representation of the museum."[74] She claims that Calle's transcribed "descriptions fill in, and thus supplement (add to, defer, and displace) the stolen paintings." It is because Calle's transcribed descriptions of the stolen paintings differ considerably that, Phelan argues, "The description itself does not reproduce the object, it rather helps us to restage and restate the effort

Sophie Calle, *Last Seen,* 2012*,* performance, Isabella Steward Gardner Museum, Boston. Calle returned to the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum in 2012 to create an additional artwork about the robbery titled *Last Seen.* Similar to her 1990 work, *Last Seen* features interview transcripts and photographs of the museum's "empty" walls. Unlike her 1990 work, her interviews focus on the paintingless frames that the robbers left behind, and the museum subsequently hung.

[73] Phelan, *Unmarked: the politics of performance* (New York: Routledge, 1993), 146-147.
[74] Ibid.

to remember what is lost."[75] It seems that Phelan uses "supplement" in a Derridean sense. The descriptions do not replace the stolen paintings—they are not completely constitutive of them—but supplement them in a way that (1), differs from them, and (2), defers their full presence and meaning; what Derrida calls *différance,* connoting both difference and deferral.[76] "The disappearance of the object is fundamental to performance," Phelan concludes, relating Calle's descriptions to performance in general; "it rehearses and repeats the disappearance of the subject who longs always to be remembered."[77] From a Derridean perspective, Calle's descriptions, as a form of performance documentation, reveal live performance not as site of reproductive resistance, as Phelan claims it to be, but as inherently incomplete and in need of a supplement.[78]

Phelan's emphasis for both Calle's descriptions and performance documentation is memorial; this not only has significant implications for her theory of performance art (what she calls an ontology of disappearance), but for her challenge for "performance theory and writing" as an archival practice, which she explains in her introduction to *The Ends of Performance*.[79] *The Ends of Performance* is comprised of papers presented at the 1995 Performance Studies Conference: "The Future of the Field." The goal of the text, for Phelan, is not to summarize the conference as "the belated summary of the event that has passed," but to explore the future of the

[75] Phelan, *Unmarked,* 147.
[76] Derrida, *Of Grammatology,* trans. by Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1976), 23.
[77] Phelan, *Unmarked,* 147.
[78] Phelan, *Unmarked,* 148.
[79] I interpret her use of "performance theory and writing" as both academic scholarship and any other writings about performance, including press releases, exhibition reviews, artist interviews, exhibition catalogues, artist and curatorial statements, etc., some of which can also be academic scholarship.

field through the claim: "the ends of performance."[80] Phelan's use of the term "ends" has a specific meaning in this assertion:

> In transposing and transcribing 'the future of the field' into 'the ends' of performance, I mean to indicate the congenial, albeit often secret, relation between future and ends…those pasts that we have still not encountered we label as 'ends' so that we might one day reach them….[81]

The future is the stage that promises to dramatize our pasts, for Phelan; the goal of which is to "enact them in such a way that we might begin to understand them…."[82] Phelan emphasizes the future as a means of understanding and coming to terms with the past, which, in doing so, ensures a specific future. In stating "the ends of performance," in other words, Phelan hopes to ensure the future of the field of performance studies.

In defining the "future" and "ends" of performance, Phelan refers to psychoanalysis Sigmund Freud's concept of "afterwardness." Freud, she describes,

> understood that curing the traumatic symptom required a lot of talking afterward. Talking after the event, post-talking, the often tedious recitations of events and sequences, rehearses the tongue for trickier, less sequential psychic acts. For talking after often means 'talking over,' and in that performance one might be able to discern what consciousness overlooked during the event's unfoldings. This talking after and talking over is where the curative interpretation occurs within psychoanalysis: in the rehearsing of the event that has passed, the analyst and the analysand learn how to play the past when it happens again in the future.[83]

Phelan argues that the discipline of performance studies has largely been concerned with

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[80] Phelan, *The Ends of Performance,* 1-2.
[81] Phelan, *The Ends of Performance,* 6.
[82] Ibid.
[83] Phelan, *The Ends of Performance,* 7.

diagnosis, or the "careful recitation of the facts of the event." Curative interpretation—that is, the emphasis on "the affective and ideological consequences of performance events"—is a recent development.[84] Phelan advocates for curative interpretation, in 1995, as the future of the field. She describes this future as the "truest end of performance—truest in sense that they [curative interpretations] help us move past the time of the diagnosis and bring about, enact, give us the time of the cure."[85] Thus, "disappearance" and "preservation" have specific connotations when she claims that the contemporary task for performance theory and writing is to write towards disappearance rather than preservation.[86] "Disappearance" facilitates curative interpretations, while "preservation" encourages diagnosis. The implementation of the latter, she argues, risks overlooking the "almost always elegiac function [a transformative function for Phelan] of performance theory and writing…."[87] In other words, performance theory and writing, from a state of mourning or melancholy, is a means of coming to terms with what has been lost and, in doing so, transforms the very thing that has been lost. Recall Austin's terminology, which is helpful here: preservation as diagnosis is analogous to a constative utterance (written or spoken) that describes and summarizes the past performance; and disappearance as curative interpretation is analogous to a performative utterance that produces a version of a past performance.

Phelan's memorial focus arguably derives from her ontology of disappearance. "Performance's only life is in the present" she argues in *Unmarked: The Politics of Performance.* "Performance, cannot be saved, recorded, documented, or otherwise participate in the circulation of representations *of* representations: once it does so, it becomes something other than

[84] Ibid.
[85] Ibid.
[86] Phelan. *The Ends of Performance.* 11.
[87] Ibid.

performance."[88] By this she means that performance becomes "performance" in its disappearance. It thus cannot be documented (saved or recorded); the act of which results in something other than "performance." Put differently, performance is ontologically nonreproductive. I agree with Phelan that what she describes as preservation and diagnosis is problematic particularly because it emphasizes the preservative function of the archive, and not its productive function; in other words—and in Austinian terms, which I later return to—constative utterances too transform what they aim to describe. However, I find the elegiac function of curative interpretation problematic because it assumes two seemingly clear intentions: (1), live performance desires to be lost, and (2), the purpose of performance theory and writing is to come to terms with what has been lost due to this desire, which, as mentioned, does not fully account for the productive function of the archive. For Derrida, the archive does not merely preserve documents nor house them: "the technical structure of the *archivable archiving* archive also determines the structure of the *archivable* content," he claims.[89] Put differently, archived content is not inherently archivable; it only becomes so when it is altered by the logic of the archiving medium. This is what Derrida means when he claims that "archivization produces as much as it records the event."[90] Production in the act of preservation is intrinsic to archival violence because to produce a preservable document is to consign it to archival law.

Steedman too acknowledges this in *Dust*: *The Archive and Cultural History.* Writing—history writing in her case—is an act of production, which is to say that writing itself produces a past event that has occurred regardless of whether or not its writer was there; historians produce

[88] Phelan, *Unmarked,* 146, original emphasis.
[89] Derrida, *Archive Fever,* 17, original emphasis.
[90] Derrida, *Archive Fever,* 17.

the "stuff of the past" she explains in this chapter's second epigraph. In other words, to write about a past event is to write about something that never happened as it comes to be represented in writing.[91] More briefly put, to write about an event is to produce the event as it comes to be known regardless of what actually occurred, the writing of which is a performance of archival violence. A notable example of this is the historic and contemporary lack of Indigenous art exhibited in art galleries—not to mention the lack of Indigenous art in permanent collections. Indigenous art has historically been included in museums as "cultural artifacts," and not "artworks" in art galleries; the status of the latter was typically reserved for artists of European descent. In "Telling, Showing, Showing Off," Mieke Bal argues that the distinction between "art galleries" and "museums" perpetuates the colonial divide of "culture" and "nature," which has significant implications. She supports this claim by comparing The Metropolitan Museum of Art (the Met) and the American Museum of Natural History (AMNH). In the Met, Western European art dominates, with American art a close second. Any "other" nationality and ethnicity are framed as "marginal," "foreign," and "exotic." The AMNH largely features biology, geology, and anthropology via a particular display: animals predominate, presented in their "natural" setting. This "natural" setting is the backdrop of the animal kingdom, with a few rooms dedicated to people: Asian, African, Oceanic, and Native American. These are the peoples marginally represented in the Met; their "exotic artifacts" on the margins of the classification of "art." In summary, the ethnographic and natural history museum, AMNH, compared with the art

[91] Steedman, *Dust,* 154. Writing, as an archival practice, translates to what Steedman calls a "double nothingness." Historians—performance theorists in my case—write about an event that never actually occurred (as it comes to be represented through documentation), and they yearn for its origin that doesn't exist in the archive amongst documents that point to events that have also never occurred (for the same reasons). Nothing begins in an archive, Steedman explains with reference to Derrida's scholarship, "You find nothing in the Archive but stories caught halfway through: the middle of things; discontinuities" (Steedman, 45).

gallery, the Met, conveys a colonial discourse, loaded with hierarchies favouring European "culture" at the expense of "exotic other's" "nature."[92]

Bal offered this critique in 1992, and, yet, contemporary criticisms show that colonial agendas remain influential in both galleries and museums, which has become the recent focus of many artists and activists due to COVID-19 closures and Black Lives Matter (BLM) protests and Indigenous activisms. Tuscarora writer Alicia Elliott and Métis anthropologist Zoe Todd, for example. In *A Mind Spread Out On The Ground,* Elliott describes her experience visiting Vancouver's Contemporary Art Gallery (CAG) and the Museum of Anthropology in 2018. The CAG featured a solo exhibition titled *Two Scores,* which showcased Vancouver-based artist Brent Wadden's woven blankets. Curator Kimberly Philips describes Wadden's artistic practice as "exploratory, laborious and purposefully naïve. His solutions are often inefficient—they would confound a traditionally-trained practitioner—and his technique frequently fails to take advantage of the loom's economy of means."[93] Elliott criticizes the exhibition for not acknowledging the extensive history of Squamish weaving. As "naïve" and "inefficient," Wadden's blankets lack the artistry of Squamish blankets, which, she notes, were simultaneously on exhibit at the Museum of Anthropology as "cultural artifacts:" "I wondered whether this artist, who lived and worked on unceded Musqueam, Squamish and Tsleil-Waututh territory, had any idea of the Squamish history of weaving" Elliot concludes. "I wondered if he'd care that Squamish blankets were placed in an anthropology museum while his were given a solo exhibit in a respected art gallery."[94] This is a systemic problem, which Todd highlights in "Indigenizing

[92] Mieke Bal, "Telling, Showing, Showing Off," *Critical Inquiry* 18 (Spring, 1992): 558-562.
[93] "Brent Wadden: Two Scores," *Contemporary Art Gallery,* accessed June 2020, https://www.contemporaryartgallery.ca/exhibitions/brent-wadden-two-scores/
[94] Alicia Elliot, *A Mind Spread Out On The Ground* (Toronto: Anchor Canada, 2019), 54.

the Anthropocene." She describes her father Garry Todd's struggle as a Métis artist in Canada; he is often told by non-Indigenous curators and gallery owners that his work is not "Indigenous enough" to be exhibited.[95] Todd herself stopped making art because she "did not feel welcome in the gentrified, *intensely white* spaces where [she] perceived "real art" and "real literature" were made."[96] For Todd, "The incursion of capitalist, resource-hungry interventions in the land is perhaps unavoidable at this point in time…." Here, Todd notes the underlying colonial agendas that drive various resource management efforts and climate change policies. However, contemporary Indigenous artists like her father, Todd explains, "offer an important perspective on the intertwined and relational contention's between people and land, and through their art can craft concrete responses to the mess and violence of economies operating in the Anthropocene"—assuming they are viewed as "Indigenous enough" to be exhibited.[97] Both Elliot's and Todd's contemporary criticisms are reminiscent of Bal's some 30 years ago. And as I previously mentioned, recent COVID-19 closures, and BLM protests and Indigenous activisms have stressed the need for these criticisms. I will return to this discussion in my second chapter as an example of archival violence in museal spaces, and I will specifically address Todd's ecological concerns in my eco-coda.

Phelan's challenge for performance theory and writing does take into account the inevitability of loss; however, it is not archival loss under the threat of *mal d'archive,* but the loss inherent in performance's ontology of disappearance. Paradoxically, Philip Auslander notes, in response to Phelan, that what is consequently privileged is the commodification of death in the

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[95] Zoe Todd, "Indigenizing the Anthropocene," in *Art in the Anthropocene: Encounters Among Aesthetics, Politics, Environment and Epistemology,* ed. by Heather Davis and Etienne Turpin (New Jersey: Open Humanities Press: 2015), 252.
[96] Todd, "Indigenizing the Anthropocene," 242.
[97] Ibid.

celebration of the unique nonrepeatable live event that her ontology of disappearance praises. "[I]n mediatized culture," he explains in *Liveness: Performance in a Mediatized Culture*, "live performance inevitably brings death into the economy of repetition. Ironically, the effect of this attempt to recuperate death as a sign of the live results in the commodification of death itself, for the live finally cannot evade the economy of repetition."[98] By this Auslander means that the document marks a live performance's death—assuming the live performance is ontologically non reproductive. The commodification of death takes the form of documentation as it enters the capitalist economy of reproduction; art objects that can be sold and bought as art commodities. Auslander uses the term "economy of repetition," quoted above, which refers to Phelan's claim that performance "can be performed again, but this repetition itself marks it as 'different.'"[99] In other words, both Phelan and Auslander acknowledge that any reproduction of a performance cannot be reproduced without alteration. Phelan, however, argues that this quality allows performance to resist the economy of reproduction, while Auslander reveals that the very celebration of this quality negates her claim. He argues that the status of a unique unrepeatable event negates the nonreproducible promise of its death. There is no inherent quality of performance that evades reproduction for Auslander. Thus, a performance can reappear in its disappearance. This said, the reappearance of performance in the form of performance documentation does not serve to memorialize a previously live performance as "a spur to memory," which it is for Phelan.[100] For Auslander, the document is, at least in part, performatively constitutive of the performance itself.[101]

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[98] Philip Auslander, *Liveness: Performance in a Mediatized Culture* (New York: Routledge, 1999), 110.
[99] Phelan, *Unmarked,* 146.
[100] Ibid.
[101] Auslander, *Liveness,* 53.

I highlight Phelan and Auslander here to represent two moments in performance art scholarship that can help productively address the political stakes of the archive. Early performance theorists—arguably championed by Phelan's ontology of disappearance—maintain the following two assumptions: (1), a live performance precedes its consigned documentation as a privileged original event; and (2), performance documentation primarily serves as evidence that an original live event took place, which in turn legitimizes it as "documentation." These assumptions carry significant implications, which I will elaborate upon; namely the dichotomous hierarchical relationship between presence/absence, original/copy, and live/mediatized. These are theoretical stakes, which, as I will later address in my second chapter, become political when they are enacted through both formal and informal archival and curatorial practices. In this chapter, I outline the theorists who responded to and problematized early theories of performance through the use of Austin's performative and Derrida's elaboration of it—theorists like Auslander.

As I mentioned in my exergue, I argue that the application of the performative by theorists who responded to Phelan can be applied to the archive in general. For Phelan, the archival act of writing about performance is a means of coming to terms with what has been lost. Documentation, further, memorializes a past performance, serving to help remember and commemorate what has passed on. Many contemporary theorists contest this stance; with their respective nuances, they emphasize the performative inherent in documentation and documentary practices. It is through their work that we can see not only the inevitable volatility in archival acts—which are becoming increasingly ubiquitous—but also the performative constitution of archival value and institutional authority, which, like the document, is perpetually threatened by *mal d'archive*. I focus on the former in this chapter Event and the latter in my

second chapter Exhibit.

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Art Historian Hal Foster describes a contemporary art trend that not only engages with existing archives, but produces them as well.[102] Artists, he explains in "An Archival Impulse," draw from "archives of mass culture, to ensure a legibility that can then be disturbed or *detourné*; but they can also be obscure, retrieved in a gesture of alternative knowledge or counter-memory."[103] By this he means that artists engage with documents from both formal and informal archives to legitimize the production of their own archive—and given the ubiquity of the Internet, these documents are often what he calls "virtual readymades." In doing so, they problematize existing documents and their own as "found yet constructed, factual yet fictive, public yet private."[104]

Jessica Santone highlights a variation of this artistic practice in the archival field characterized by performance art: the drive to produce documentation. In "Marina Abramović *Seven Easy Pieces:* Critical Documentation Strategies for Preserving Art's History," Santone address Abramović's 2005 performance *Seven Easy Pieces* as a contribution to "the mediated understanding of the past that has already come after an original moment."[105] *Seven Easy Pieces*

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[102] Hal Foster, "An Archival Impulse," *October* 110 (2004): 3.
[103] Foster, 3, original emphasis.
[104] Foster, 6. Foster highlights three types of what he calls "archival art" in his text. (1), "The archive as capitalist garbage bucket" concerns art that aims to reinstate cultural remnants; Thomas Hirschhorn's *Otto Freundlich* (1998), for example. (2), "The archive as failed futuristic vision" concerns art that recalls what has been lost to highlight the failed-to-have-come-true-future it promised; Tacita Dean's *Bubble House* (1999). And (3), "the archive as partially buried woodshed" concerns art that points to its own collapse; Sam Durant's *Abandoned House #3* (1995).
[105] Jessica Santone, "Marina Abramović's *Seven Easy Pieces:* Critical Documentary Strategies for Preserving Art's History," *LEONARDO* 41, no. 2 (2008): 147.

features the re-performances of select inaugural performances including Abramović's own *Lips of Thomas* (1975), Vito Acconci's *Seedbed* (1972), Bruce Nauman's *Body Pressure* (1974), VALIE EXPORT's *Genital Panic* (1969), Gina Pane's *Conditioning* (1973), and Joseph Beuys's *How to Explain Pictures to a Dead Hare* (1965). Although some theorists, like T. Nikki Cesare and Jen Joy, argue that *Seven Easy Pieces* is a means of remembering past performances through embodied documentation—similar to Phelan's understanding of documentation and performance theory and writing—Santone proposes a Derridean understanding.[106] With reference to Derrida's *Archive Fever*, Santone describes the archive as "creative, opening to additional reading and interpretation, and destructive, always at the point of disappearing or being forgotten." She continues, "Documents are the fragments of that archive—individual historical accounts of loss. To document is to emerge from and to continue to reproduce loss."[107] Santone supports this by pointing out that *Seven Easy Pieces* is a performative event in the sense that Abramović's re-performances "rehearse[] what is essential [to the inaugural performances] while departing knowingly from the past's mythic hold, permitting loss."[108] Santone highlights Nauman's *Body Pressure* and EXPORT's *Genital Panic* to support this claim—I will describe *Body Pressure* now, and *Genital Panic* later in this chapter when I discuss Mechtild Widrich's scholarship.

Nauman's 1974 *Body Pressure* is an installation-based performance. Nauman did not so much perform himself, but instructed audience members to engage with the physical space

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[106] T. Nikki Cesare and Jenn Joy, "Performa/(Re)Performa," *The Drama Review,* no. 1 (2006): 170.
[107] Santone, 148.
[108] Ibid.

through an instructional text, which can be considered a series of perlocutionary utterances. As his title suggests, the text prompted viewers to "press" their bodies into one of gallery's walls:

> Press as much of the front surface of your body (palms in or out, left or right cheek) against the wall as possible.
> Press very hard and concentrate.
> Form an image of yourself (suppose you had just stepped forward) on the opposite side of the wall pressing back against the wall very hard.
> Press very hard and concentrate on the image pressing very hard.
> (the image pressing very hard) press your front surface and back surface toward each other and begin to ignore or block the thickness of the wall. (remove the wall)
> Think how various parts of your body press against the wall; which parts touch and which do not.
> Consider the parts of your back which press against the wall; press hard and feel how the front and back of your body press together.
> Concentrate on the tension in the muscles, pain where bones meet, fleshy deformations that occur under pressure; consider body hair, perspiration, odors (smells).
> This may become a very erotic exercise.

Abramović's 2005 re-performance featured not audience members, but herself pressing her body against a glass wall positioned in the middle of a raised platform in the centre of the Guggenheim's atrium. Her body-pressing was prompted by her own voice recording of Nauman's text. She repeated the performance every 30 minutes for seven hours. During this process, Santone explains, "the artist catalogued ways of pressing the body against a wall. Each repetition acted as a snapshot of one body's engagement with Nauman's instructions." Abramović's multiple body presses (constitutive of her re-performance) is a performance-cum-repetition for Santone, which highlights her reinterpretation of Nauman's text. In her discussion

Marina Abramović, *Body Pressure* a part *of Seven Easy Pieces,* November 9, 2005, performance, Guggenheim Museum, New York.

of repetition, Santone cites Derrida's understanding of documentation in *Paper Machine.* As I previously explained in my exergue, Derrida describes the document as engaging in a continuous act of saving, "of giving something over to a stabilizing immobility."[109] *Seven Easy Pieces,* for Santone, serves as such a document for Nauman's inaugural performance. "[W]hile her actions continue to vary," she explains, "the insistent similarity of form of her repetitions—always signified by the same body—leaves a single (almost stable) impression of the work."[110] In other words, Abramović's actions may change every 30 minutes, however, the overall impact of the performance can be seen as an enduring act aimed at continuously fixing an (Nauman's and now Abramović's) image of a body pressing very hard.[111] This said, what is at stake here is more than a desire for a past original event. Abramović takes liberties in her re-performance of *Body Pressure,* choosing to keep some aspects of the inaugural performance, while altering others—pre-recording Nauman's written instructions, for example. Thus, *Seven Easy Pieces* arguably does not commemorate or aim to come to terms with what has passed on, but performatively

[109] Derrida, *Paper Machine,* 7.
[110] Santone, 149.
[111] Ibid.

contributes to existing documentation, while highlighting the inevitability of loss inherent in repetitions.

Abramović's various acts of selection, reinterpretation, and re-performance emphasize pertinent questions of originality, authenticity, and authorship, which are central for early performance theorists like Phelan. It worth addressing the work of these early theorists to better grasp what is at stake for contemporary theorists. Questions of originality, authenticity, and authorship remain important; however, contemporary theorists have shifted the conversation from identifying what is "original" and "authentic," further, what it means to "author" an artwork, to how originality, authenticity and authorship are continuously challenged through performativity.

Crucial to Phelan's ontology of disappearance is the notion of live presence, and the assumption that liveness equals presence and authenticity in direct contrast to mediation, absence, and inauthenticity. In 1967, Modernist Michael Fried describes an influential notion of presence in *Art and Objecthood*. With specific attention to Minimalist art or what he calls "literalist art," Fried contrasts "presentness" with "theatricality" or "presence." Minimalist art "defines or locates the position it aspires to occupy," which includes the duration of its experience.[112] It is Minimalism's focus on position and duration that leads Fried to term it "theatrical." He argues that the present effect of Minimalist art is theatrical—"a kind of *stage* of presence."[113] This is to say that Minimalist artworks, like Donald Judd's sculptures, embrace the artwork's objecthood in "literal" space opposed to "pictorial" space. They further, according to Fried, require the audience to complete them; in other words, Minimalist artworks exist for an

[112] Michael Fried, "Art and Objecthood," in *Art and Objecthood: Essays and Reviews* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1998), 149.
[113] Fried, 155, original emphasis.

audience.[114] These characteristics are clear in Judd's work. In "Specific Objects," he claims that space is just as integral to the artwork itself as its medium is.[115] Judd, further, emphasizes George Brecht's and Robert Morris's specific objects that "depend on the viewer's knowledge of these objects."[116]

For Fried, "presentness," in contrast to "theatricality" and "presence," refers to the fact that "at every moment the work itself is wholly manifest," meaning it does not aim to locate its position or duration in a specific space, nor does it require an audience to complete it because its completion is an inherent quality; it does not exist for or need an audience.[117] It is the condition of Modern painting and sculpture ("the condition, that is, of existing in, indeed of secreting or constituting, a continuous and perpetual present," not a temporal and spatial presence), Fried argues, that other art forms aspire to achieve, notably poetry and music. Fried's goal in *Art and objecthood* is to distinguish between "the authentic art of our time and other work…."[118] Authentic art, according to Fried, is "presentness" incessantly manifest.

This is not the case for early performance theorists who maintain Fried's notion of "presence" and not "presentness." For theorists like Eric Bogosian and Phelan, an original live performance is a temporally and spatially limited presence. Any form of the performance taken outside of this marked temporal and spatial presence is mediated and characterized by absence. A significant characteristic of presence for both Bogosian and Phelan is liveness—as absence is for mediated forms of an original live performance. In his introduction to *Pounding Nails in the*

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[114] Fried, 163-164.
[115] Donald Judd, "Specific Objects," in *Contemporary Sculpture: Arts Yearbook 8* (New York: The Art Digest, 1965), 4.
[116] Judd, 6.
[117] Judd, 9.
[118] Ibid.

Floor with My Forehead, Bogosian argues that media degrade and contaminate original live performances. Performance, he explains, is "medicine for a toxic environment of electronic media mind-pollution."[119] This quote highlights a tradition that asserts a binary and antagonistic relationship between original live performances and media. "Live" stands for a category outside of representation, while "mediated" is marked by the absence of the "live." This assumes that an original live performance is "real," and "mediated" forms of it, further, mediated performances themselves, are supplements (in the colloquial sense) and artificial reproductions.

Similarly, as I previously described, an original live performance becomes something else once it is saved, recorded, or documented according to Phelan; it is marked as "different."[120] Performance is thus ontologically nonreproductive and, significantly, only becomes "performance" once it has disappeared. Phelan's ontology of disappearance assumes that an original live performance's authenticity as "performance art" is directly connected to its presence in a specific time and space. Any form of documentation—as reproduction and thus representation—lacks the authenticity of "performance art."

Phelan's notion of "authenticity" is similar to Walter Benjamin's concept of the "aura," which has become, like Fried's *Art and Objecthood,* an influential notion of presence. In "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction," Benjamin claims that an artwork's aura, that is, its presence in a specific time and space depreciates with its reproduction—an artwork's "aura of authenticity" thus suggests that an artwork's authenticity is its presence in a specific

[119] Eric Bogosian, introduction to *Pounding Nails in the Floor with My Forehead* (New York: Theatre Communications Group, 1994), xii.
[120] Phelan, *Unmarked,* 146.

time and place.[121] It is because of the aura's temporal and spatial specificity that denies it the ability to extend from its specific time and place.[122] For Benjamin, "to pry an object from its shell, is to destroy its aura."[123] This "prying" takes the form of reproduction; to reproduce a work of art is to destroy its aura of authenticity. The same can be said of Phelan's notion of representation and presence: an original live performance's authenticity is integrally tied to its presence in a specific time and space, which cannot be represented in any other form. Once reproduced in the common form of documentation, it becomes something else: to use Phelan's words, "A performance's only life is in the present."[124]

It is worth noting that Benjamin, as a Marxist, does not claim that the loss of the aura is a bad thing. No longer limited to a specific time and place, mechanical reproduction facilitates a radical accessibility and, significantly, the politicization of art. With mechanical reproduction, art is no longer reserved for the cultural elite with the means to access it. Kenneth Goldsmith—the creator of UbuWeb—describes a similar view in *Duchamp is my Lawyer: The Polemics, Pragmatics, and Poetics of UBUWeb.* As a digital archive devoted to public access, UbuWeb is an exemplar of the digitization of radical accessibility. "UbuWeb is dedicated to building an alternative system," Goldsmith explains, "a shadow library that provides access to its materials to anyone regardless of affiliation and free of charge."[125] The term "shadow libraries" refers to a

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[121] Walter Benjamin, "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction," in *Illuminations: Essays and Reflections*, ed. by Hannan Arendt, 217-252, Trans. by Harry Zohn (New York: Schocken, 2007), 221.
[122] Benjamin distinguishes between two types of auras: (1), cultural (manmade) and (2), natural. Transitoriness and reproducibility are characteristics of the former, uniqueness and permanence the latter (Benjamin, 223).
[123] Benjamin, 223.
[124] Phelan, *Unmarked,* 146.
[125] Kenneth Goldsmith, *Duchamp is my Lawyer: The Polemics, Pragmatics, and Poetics of UBUWeb* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2020), 39.

digital collection of content that is often not associated with a formally recognized institution; in other words, they are informal archives that provide legal and illegal public access to documents. Significantly, Goldsmith views "pirating, scanning, sharing, and archiving [as] defiantly political acts" because they draw attention to copyright practices that limit access.[126] Many digital archives share this vision, including Custodians Online, Memory of the World, Monoskop, and Guerilla Open Access. Writer and Internet hacktivist Aaron Swartz, for example, claims in the "Guerilla Open Access Manifesto" that "There is no justice in following unjust laws. It's time to come into the light and, in the grand tradition of civil disobedience, declare our opposition to this private theft of public culture." He concludes the manifesto with the following call: "With enough of us, around the world, we'll not just send a strong message opposing the privatization of knowledge—we'll make it a thing of the past. Will you join us?"[127] Both Goldsmith and Swartz advocate for the democratization of knowledge, which many digital archives, like the aforementioned Internet Archive, aim to achieve—shadow libraries, however, do so legally and illegally because, unlike the Internet Archive, they are not tied to institutional funding. Goldsmith goes as far to claim that "UbuWeb is vociferously anti-institutional, eminently fluid, refusing to bow to demands other than what we happen to be moved by at a specific moment, allowing us flexibility…."[128] By this he refers to the limitations that grants and other funding sources come with—for example, the conditions that the Internet Archive is subject to, which I described in my exergue. It is worth noting that Goldsmith can afford to work for free on UbuWeb because he holds a full-time teaching position at Pennsylvania State University.

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[126] Goldsmith, 121.
[127] Aaron Swartz, "Guerilla Open Access Manifesto," *iPub,* July 2008, https://openipub.com/?pub=GuerrillaOpenAccessManifesto.html
[128] Goldsmith, 18.

This push for the democratization, however, does not mean the elimination of rarity. The digital copy, for Erika Balsom, is both a saviour and a curse. In *After Uniqueness: A History of Film and Video Art in Circulation,* she explains that the ubiquity of digital technology has resulted in an era after uniqueness, which privileges what she terms "circulatory reproducibility." By this she refers to reproductions that are primed for mass circulation.[129] She argues that the digital copy has not only challenged the assumption that an artwork is a sole genuine object, and thus unique, it has also shifted the focus to mass circulation and democratic access—like the mechanical reproduction did for Benjamin. At the same time, however, the affordances of digital copies "throw[] authority and authenticity into crisis, prompting a reinvestment in the various forms of rarity.[130] It is for this reason that Goldsmith offers free legal and illegal access to thousands of art documents via UbuWeb, while Christian Marclay sells limited editions of his 2010 video work *The Clock* to museums and galleries with a $500,000 price tag.[131] I will return to the democratization of archival access in my second chapter.

In the tension between what Balsom describes as rarity and reproduction, Phelan's ontology of disappearance sides with rarity—recall that performance is spatially and temporally dependent; it becomes "performance" in its disappearance, and thus cannot be reproduced. It is important to note, however, that performance documentation marks both presence and absence according to Phelan's understanding of live performance. While the original live performance is absent, the presence its document conveys is not its past liveness, but the present physicality of the documenting medium. Any presence conveyed is not that of the original live performance—it

[129] Erika Balsom, *After Uniqueness: A History of Film and Video Art in Circulation* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2017), 11.
[130] Ibid.
[131] Ibid.

remains absent—but that of the documenting medium. This is not to say that performance documentation lacks any sort authenticity. Performance documents assume a prior original live performance in the ontology of disappearance—an original live performance and its subsequent documents. It is this assumption that grants the document authenticity as a "performance document." A document is thus not the performance itself, the art object proper, but an appendage of it.

This view of performance art has not gone uncriticized. Before I elaborate, I would like to offer my own criticism in the form of terminology. I have previously used, and will continue to use, "original" to describe live performance as it is conceptualized by early theories of performance art: "original performance" and "original live performance—perhaps "original alive performance" to represent Phelan's more appropriately termed "ontology of death." However, I prefer the term "inaugural" for two reasons: Derrida's take on Austin's "parasitic performatives" and Richard Schechner's notion of "twice behaved behaviour" or "restored behaviour."

As mentioned in my note on this dissertation's title, Derrida argues in response to Austin that all utterances are repetitions—like the parasitic performative uttered on stage is a repetition of its respective script. It is through citation and iteration that utterances-as-repetitions convey meaning, which is to say that meaning is not singular, original, or fixed. This said, Derrida acknowledges that meaning is altered by contextual nuances. Meaning conveyed through an utterance is thus tied to both its historicity, and to the performative moment in which it is uttered in a specific context. In short, all utterances, according to Derrida in contrast to Austin, are parasitic.

Similarity, Schechner's notion of "twice behaved behaviour" points to behaviour performed never for the first time, but always for the second to nth time.[132] It is behaviour, performed actions, that people train for and rehearse, which can be used to describe both theatrical performances (Austin's parasitic performatives) and everyday performances (Austin's authentic performatives). For Schechner, even seemingly "once behaved behaviour," that is, "original" behaviour, comprises bits of rearranged behaviour, meaning it is arranged to fit a specific context, and thus possesses the sense of "onceness" or "originality."[133]

Performances are thus not "original," but "inaugural"; never for the first time, they are tied to their specific histories of citation, and influenced by and rearranged for the specific context in which they are performed. As such, I use the term "inaugural live performance" and "inaugural performance" to refer to the approaches that have critically responded to theorists like Bogosian and Phelan—unless they maintain the performance's privileged status as Jenni Sorkin does in "Mythology and the Re-make: The Culture of Re-performance and the Strategies of Simulation." Significantly, Sorkin's approach to the relationship between performance and performance documentation shows that the distinction between early theorists of performance and criticisms of it are not as clearly defined as I have likely implied.

Unlike Phelan, Sorkin argues that an original live performance's documentation, or what she terms "documentary text-objects" and "residual documentation," can extend its aura, "compounding the work's aftereffect and adding a rich layer of detritus through which we can

[132] Richard Schechner, *Performance Studies: An Introduction* (New York: Routledge, 2002), 34-36.
[133] Ibid.

now sift."[134] This aftereffect, Sorkin argues, is an integral part of our understanding of an inaugural live performance in its absence. Sorkin, however, does not consider all forms of residual documentation as equal. She is critical of visual forms of documentation in favour of oral-aural forms of documentation, arguing that the ideal means of extending an inaugural performance's aura is not visual forms of documentation, nor the resurrection of an original live performance through its re-performance—as she argues Abramović does in *Seven Easy Pieces*—but through the testimony of discontinuous narrative, not necessarily first hand. "My proposal is simple," she explains,

> take the work out of visual circulation. This doesn't mean stop showing the photo documentation in museums or lecture halls. Quite the opposite. But the photos (or videos) do not speak for the work. The work itself demands speech, retelling, converting what was once visual/visceral into a narrative account.[135]

It is the audience's recount and retelling of an original performance that allows it "to ripen," she concludes, offering the "potential for multiplicity in interpretation and in criticism." In other words, Sorkin advocates for letting performances "loom large historically, and continue on as ghosts that haunt contemporary practice instead of resurrecting past works via re-performance."[136] She draws upon Walter Ong's notion of orality in *The Presence of the Word* (1967) to support this claim, arguing that a performance becomes "performance" not through its disappearance—although this is an important characteristic of performance for Sorkin—but through recounting and retelling via speech acts; the multiplicity of speech acts of the oral-aural

[134] Jenni Sorkin, "Mythology and Re-make: The Culture of Re-performance and the Strategies of Simulation" in *East of Borneo*, October 13, 2010, https://eastofborneo.org/articles/mythology-and-the-remake-the-culture-of-re-performance-and-strategies-of-simulation/
[135] Ibid.
[136] Ibid.

tradition is, for Sorkin, what encourages true acts of transmission beyond mere spectatorship, not visual forms of documentation or re-performances, which are supplementary (in the colloquial sense) to oral-aural recounting and retellings.

Although Sorkin claims that a performance's aura can extend beyond its temporal and spatial limitations via residual documents, she maintains the original performance's privileged status. The authenticity of any residual document is dependent upon its connection to its preceded original performance, which grants it the status of "performance document" because she, like Phelan's ontology of disappearance, privileges presence, especially in absence. Any form of residual documentation thus assumes that a live performance preceded it. Specifically, she emphasizes the importance of "being there" as a necessary prerequisite for recalling and retelling in her privileging of oral-aural forms of documentation.

It seems that assuming a linear relationship between an inaugural performance and its documents risks privileging the performance, even if the performative documents' influence on our understanding of the performance is taken into account as Sorkin does. This isn't the case for Monica E. McTighe and Amelia Jones, who utilize Derrida's concept of the supplement, or the process, supplementarity (as I have indicated, my previous uses of the term "supplement" [noun]—"supplementary" [adjective]—connote the colloquial meaning, and not the Derridean one). Derrida defines supplementarity in *Of Grammatology.* He argues that the term has two connotations that cannot be separated. First, "the supplement adds itself, it is a surplus, a plenitude enriching another plenitude, the *fullest measure* of presence." And second,

> It adds only to replace. It intervenes or insinuates itself *in-the-place-of*...If it represents and makes an image, it is by the anterior default of a presence. Compensatory and vicarious, the supplement is an adjunct, a subaltern instance which takes-(the)-place.[137]

[137] Derrida, *Of Grammatology,* 145, original emphasis.

This is to say that the supplement is a necessary, but not a sufficient part in the constitution of the thing itself. The necessity of a supplement thus implies incompleteness because what it serves as a supplement for is not inherently complete.

In *Framed Spaces: Photograph and Memory in Contemporary Installation Art,* McTighe uses Derrida's supplementarity to explain the relationship between temporal site-specific installation art and photographic documentation. She argues that the practice of photography supplements—in the Derridean sense—installation art because the analysis of photographic documents is integral to our understanding of installation artworks.[138] This understanding granted by photographs, she observes, is paradoxical: on the one hand, we lose something in the act of capturing a temporal installation while on the other, photographic documents are necessary for the historian of site-specific installation art as the object of her research. In other words, photographic documents cannot claim to capture the entire experience of an installation; yet, they are necessary components for its analysis; they, McTighe concludes, "produce a sense of the very thing they defer."[139]

The same can be said of performance—recall Calle's descriptions of the stolen paintings, which, as a form of performance documentation, reveal inaugural performances as inherently incomplete, and in need of a supplement. In *Body Art/Performing the Subject,* Jones argues that an inaugural live performance and its documentation are mutually dependent, what she terms "mutual supplementarity" (opposed to the document's dependency on the original live performance as described by Phelan's ontology of disappearance, and implied by Sorkin's

[138] Monica McTighe, *Framed Spaces: Photograph and Memory in Contemporary Installation Art* (New Hampshire: Darthmouth College Press, 2012), 1.
[139] McTighe, 9-11.

emphasis on oral-aural recountings and retellings): performance (or what Jones calls the "body art event" in the following quote) "*needs* the photograph [as a document] to confirm its having happened; and the photograph *needs* the body art event as an ontological "anchor" of its indexicality."[140] Thus, performance does not become "performance" through its disappearance, but through its relationship with its supplementary documents. In other words, live performance implies incompleteness because it requires its supplementary documents. For Jones, the status of performance as "performance" is enacted every time it is performatively experienced through its documentation.[141] And while she draws upon Butler's notion of performativity, the "performativity of performance documentation" is attributed to Auslander. In challenging Phelan's ontology of disappearance, he argues that it is the act of documenting the event "as performance," not its disappearance, that constitutes it as such. He references Austin's distinction between performative and constative utterances; documentation is not an image that describes an inaugural performance, meaning it does not simply state what has occurred (constative utterance), but produces an event as a "performance" (performative utterance).[142]

This sentiment is furthered by Bedford and Widrich in "The Viral Ontology of Performance" and "Can Photographs Make It So?" respectfully. According to Bedford, in

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[140] Amelia Jones, *Body Art/Performing the Subject* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1998), 37, original emphasis. Jones makes a key distinction between "body art" and "performance." "Body art," or the "body art event" for Jones, refers to performances that emphasize "the implications of the body (or what I call the 'body/self,' with all of its apparent racial, sexual, gender, class, and other apparent or unconscious identifications) in the work" (Jones, 13). She, further, focuses on a particular history of performance art in which the body emerged as an integral aspect of visual artwork: the 1960s to mid 1970s. While body art is a form of performance, not all performances can be termed body art. This said, Jones's theoretical work on the relationship between performance (body art or otherwise) and documentation, like McTighe's work on installation art, is not specific to body art.

[141] Jones, *Body Art,* 37.

[142] Auslander, "The Performativity of Performance Documentation," *Perform Repeat Record: Live Art in History*, ed. by Amelia Jones and Adrian Heathfield (Chicago: Intellect, 2012), 53.

adopting a viral ontology of performance, rather than Phelan's ontology of disappearance, we are forced to relinquish the belief in and attachment to the original live performance as a primary act in favour of the notion that the performance is a part of a long variegated history, which may begin with an inaugural live performance, but whose manifestations possesses the potential to infinitely extend through its reproduction as, significantly, productions in their own right.[143] In calling for a new theoretical model, Bedford notes the demonstrable fact that a performance like Chris Burden's *Shoot* (1971) lives on today through various permutations and mutations, even though it lasted only a few seconds 50 years ago. The integration of critical texts, newspaper articles, and photographic documents, he argues, extends the reach of an inaugural performance; it, in his words, "activates the performance as an event unfolding in the present."[144]

Widrich arguably provides this theoretical model. She addresses the multiple versions—multiple citations—of EXPORT's 1969 performance *Genital Panic* to answer the question posed in her title: "can photographs make it so?" Put differently, can documentation beget a performance, regardless of whether or not the temporal and spatial performance took place? By tracing multiple iterations of EXPORT's *Genital Panic,* including Abramović's *Seven Easy Pieces,* Widrich concludes that photographs do indeed make it so. In other words, photographs, as performance documents, serve as the foundation of continuous performative action, opposed to the live performance itself as Phelan's ontology of disappearance privileges.

"It is said, that, in 1969 VALIE EXPORT went into a cinema in Munich"—which was known for screening pornographic films—"wearing jeans with a cutout triangle in the pubic area," Widrich explains in her brief summary of *Genital Panic.* "Once inside the auditorium, she

[143] Christopher Bedford, "The Viral ontology of Performance," in *Perform Repeat Record: Live Art in History,* ed. by Amelia Jones and Adrian Heathfield (Chicago: Intellect, 2012), 78.
[144] Ibid.

VALIE EXPORT, *Action Pants: Genital Panic,* 1969, performance, Munich, Germany.

walked slowly through the rows, with her crotch and [the audience's] nose on the same level."[145] There are two iconic photographs of this performance. The first features EXPORT sitting outside of a rural house, wearing a leather jacket and chaps in bare feet and with teased hair. She points a machine gun at the camera with her exposed crotch—featured in crotch-less chaps—in the centre of the composition. The second photograph shows EXPORT inside of a building, sitting in front of a black wall in black heels with one leg propped up on a wooden chair—again with crotch-less chaps—and the machine gun pointed away from the camera. Both photographs were taken

[145] Mechtild Widrich, "Can Photographs Make It So? Repeated Outbreaks of VALIE EXPORT's Genital Panic Since 1969," in *Perform Repeat Record: Live Art in History,* ed. by Amelia Jones and Adrian Heathfield (Chicago: Intellect, 2012), 90.

by photographer Peter Hassmann in a Viennese suburb. They were not taken in a cinema in Munich, which *Genital Panic* is known for.[146]

These photographs have historically been considered "documentary," Widrich notes, which assumes that they serve as evidence that the performance occurred in a specific time and space.[147] However, the inconsistencies between interviews with EXPORT—1979, 1999, and 2000, which I will describe below—and the two photographs show that the performance did not take place as the status of "documentary" suggests. It seems that the two iconic photographs of *Genital Panic* problematize the validity of "documentary" documents, and their ability to serve as evidence for a temporal and spatial event.

Auslander's distinction between "documentary" and "theatrical" documents is helpful here. "Documentary" documents, according to Auslander, are records of performances through which it can be reconstructed. Significantly, they serve as evidence that the performance actually occurred. The relationship between a performance and its "documentary" document is thus thought to be ontological, with the performance preceding and authorizing its documents.[148] This is reminiscent of Phelan's ontology of disappearance. However, Auslander quotes Jones's "mutual supplementarity" which, as I have already mentioned, challenges the ontological priority of the original live performance; in short, the inaugural live performance and the document are mutually dependent. It is through this mutual supplementary relationship that Auslander claims that "documentary" documentation is not merely constative (evidence for a privileged original

[146] Ibid.
[147] Widrich, 91-92.
[148] Ibid.

live performance), but performative (in part constitutive of the inaugural live performance itself).[149]

"Theatrical" documents, in contrast, or what he calls "performed photography," are performances that are staged to exist solely in (commonly) photographic or film form; they have no prior existence as "live performances" in other words. "The space of the document (whether visual or audiovisual)," Auslander states, "becomes the only space in which the performance occurs."[150] The performance document, as a "theatrical" document, cannot act as a constitutive representation of the performance because it is the performance itself. Using Auslander's terminology, it seems that the inconsistencies between the two iconic images of *Genital Panic* and the following interviews—which I will describe in the next paragraph—reveal the images to be "theatrical," and not "documentary" as they have historically been understood to be. This is, however, not the understanding that Widrich proposes. Taking into account the inconsistencies—which, arguably all performance documents are subject to—the documents of *Genital Panic* are both "documentary" and "theatrical."

In 1979, EXPORT states the following to Ruth Askey—published in the 1981 spring issue of *High Performance:*

> Genital Panic was performed in a Munich theater that showed pornographic films. I was dressed in a sweater and pants with the crotch completely cut away. I carried a machine gun. Between films I told the audience that they had come to this particular theatre to see sexual films. Now, actual genitalia was available, and they could do anything they wanted to it.[151]

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[149] Auslander, "The Performativity of Performance Documentation," 53. Auslander's use of "constative" and "performance" derives from Austin's "constative utterance" and "performative utterance."
[150] Auslander, "The Performativity of Performance Documentation," 49.
[151] Widrich quoting EXPORT, 92.

EXPORT later rebuts this antagonistic stance in the 1999 exhibition catalogue *VALIE EXPORT: Ob/De+Con(struction),* claiming "I never went in a cinema in which pornographic movies are shown, and NEVER with a gun in my hand…."[152] She latter confirms this position during her 2007 interview with Widrich stating that "'The security would have shot me.'"[153] In the same interview EXPORT explains that *Genital Panic* was meant to actively confront and challenge the

> voyeuristic male moviegoer with a 'real' female body, instead of the mediated one that could be consumed clandestinely. 'People in the back of the cinema got up and fled the situation, because they were afraid I would come up to them as well'…thus confirming,

Widrich asserts, "that the titular 'panic' has in fact taken place, and stressing that the presence of the real woman was pivotal."[154] Using Austin's terminology, Widrich concludes that EXPORT's later account in relation to the two photographs is a felicitous performative utterance. She highlights what Austin calls "appropriate circumstances," meaning the necessary conditions that facilitate the desired results of a performative utterance or its "concrete consequences" integral to an utterance's total speech situation.[155] The magazine and the exhibition catalogue in the case of the interviews, and "the willingness of the art world to historicize the event in the reassuring form of the pictures, and also, through the pictures, to forget that they were not present at the 'real" event" are the conditions that serve as a "crutch for unstable performed meaning," Widrich explains citing Derrida's critique of Austin. In other words, the interview retrospectively assures the bodily presence of EXPORT, which creates a new audience to which said presence is present—what she terms a "reading audience."[156] The obvious insertion of the machine gun, for

[152] Ibid.
[153] Ibid.
[154] Widrich quoting EXPORT, 91.
[155] Austin, 52.
[156] Widrich, 96.

Widrich, is significant for the performativity of the photographs. "[I]t must be seen as a necessary substitute for the most prominent 'loss' in the photographic version of the work," she argues, "namely the absent bodies of her presumably male audience in an encounter outside the art world."[157] In other words, the addition of the gun suggests a sexually aggressive encounter with an audience in the pornographic cinema—sexual aggression typically coded as male (at least in 1969) now in the literal and symbolic hands of EXPORT. The photographs are thus a necessary cue for reading audiences because they "provid[e] the tension within the picture that performs and thereby instantiates the tension of the movie-theatre action." Widrich concludes, "EXPORT had to transfer the gender conflict into the photograph[s] through visual cues in order for the confrontation to remain legible."[158] The photographic documents are thus integral to the performance as both "documentary" and "theatrical" because they (1), provide documentary evidence that action did in fact take place, even if said action did not take place as it has come to be represented in the photographs—significantly, all documents are subject to this; recall Steedman's understanding of history writing, which results in the creation of archival documents that represent nothing that actually occurred as it comes to be represented in documentation.[159] And, in their theatrically, they (2), continuously and performatively enact the performance for multiple reading audiences in various contexts, which inform the concrete consequences of the photographic documents as felicitous performative utterances.

Santone too takes this position. Like her re-performance of Nauman's *Body Pressure,* Abramović's 2005 re-performance of EXPORT's *Genital Panic* (titled *Action Pants: Genital Panic* after EXPORT's title for the photographs, and not her supposed original live performance)

[157] Widrich, 94.
[158] Widrich, 96.
[159] Steedman, 154.

draws upon the performance's documentation more so than the performance itself, which now includes Abramović's re-performance of it. In other words, Abramović uses documentation as the source of re-performance, opposed to the performance itself. This can be seen in the fact that she chose to include the machine gun. "The re-performance-cum-documentation therefore stages a document of a document," Santone concludes, "neither of which fully reproduces the original performance action."[160] Her re-performance-cum-documentation emphasizes not EXPORT's inaugural action, but how it has come to be known through its documents, and the inconsistencies between them, which Abramović's *Action Pants: Genital Panic* now contributes to.


Marina Abramović, *Action Pants: Genital Panic* a part of *Seven Easy Pieces*, November 11, 2005, performance, Guggenheim Museum, New York.

Taking this into account, it seems that photographs do make it so. Significantly, photography is the privileged medium (not the original live performance as Phelan's ontology of disappearance maintains) for both Widrich and Santone. As Widrich concludes, it provides a "duel potentiality of acting as quasi-legal documentation of a past performance and at the same time as a persistent re-enactment."[161] Thus, it doesn't matter whether or not a performance occurred live in a temporal and spatial moment because performance documents serve as the foundation for performative action, and not the live original performance.

[160] Santone, 149.
[161] Widrich, 96.

Although I use Auslander's notions of "documentary" and "theatrical," it is worth noting that Widrich questions his claim in "The Performativity of Performance Documentation" in which he argues that "The act of documenting an event as a performance is what constitutes it as such."[162] For Widrich, the emphasis on the act of documenting—albeit significant in the critique of Phelan's ontology of disappearance—overlooks the "complexity inherent in the tension between acts of performance documentation," which, further, overlooks what she is interested in: "the oscillations between different instances of the performative, oscillations that in turn reveal the different audiences and the difference meanings produced in each instance."[163] As such, Widrich prefers Jones's argument in "'Presence' in Absentia: Experiencing Performance as Documentation:" "performance art lies in its ability to bridge bodily presence and its image."[164] Jones, Widrich asserts, "points out that the documentation of performance art plays its role in 'enacting the artist as public figure,' and acknowledging that it is the moment of the performance where cultural representation, and thus history, begins."[165] It is for this reason that I propose that performance documents, like all archived documents, possess elements that are both "documentary" and "theatrical." This means that documents are both mutual supplements to their inaugural events, and "theatrical" documents, which speaks to the possibility of continuous performativity, and the productive influence of the archive. In other words, a document's status as "performance document" is less about its ability to provide evidence that something occurred (as is often colloquially assumed), than it is about its ability to (1), in part performatively constitute the performance, the artist(s), and the viewers as "performance," "artist," and

[162] Auslander, "The Performativity of Performance Documentation," 53.
[163] Widrich, 97.
[164] Jones, "'Presence' in Absentia: Experiencing Performance as Documentation," *Art Journal* 56, no. 4 (1997): 13.
[165] Widrich, 97.

"viewers" ("documentary" document), and to (2), continuously constitute difference versions of the performance, the artist, and the viewers in every context it is experienced ("theatrical" document), which may or may not take into account previous versions of the inaugural performance. Widrich describes this as "a palimpsest of discourse and image" that, analogous to Bedford's viral ontology of performance,

> inexorably form this moment—including critical reviews, interviews and artist's statements, art historical texts, exhibitions and catalogues essays, and a range of performative enunciations and visual images from the artist's documents of the supposed original event to later reproductions of these images and re-enactment.[166]

In other words, using Bedford's words, "*there is no* performance outside of this discourse of text and image."[167] From this Widrich concludes that performance documentation is, at the very least, an equal ally of the inaugural live performance, and, at most, the privileged link between the performance, the performer, and the public. Thus, "Photographs point not so much to the stage version of the performance, the mechanical reproduction of which we are allowed to see," according to Widrich,

> but to an 'imaginary' performance. The reading public uses the image to point (imaginatively) towards the action, almost as an abstracted version of an indexical sign, the causal relationship of which remains unclear.[168]

Thus, a performance document does not supplement the live performance (in a colloquial sense), but serves as the "base within which the performative action unfolds."[169] In the case of *Genital Panic*, EXPORT's intentions for the inaugural performance could only be realized through the

[166] Widrich, 97.
[167] Bedford, 77-78, original emphasis.
[168] Widrich, 97-98.
[169] Widrich, 98.

documentation of it or else "'The security would have shot [her].'"[170] It is not a question of whether or not any of EXPORT's accounts of *Genital Panic*, including her photographic documents, are true or false for Widrich. What matters is whether or not performance documentation, as a performative utterance, is felicitous or infelicitous, from which we can understand the impact of performance documentation in a specific context. This is not to say that the artist's original intentions should be privileged when considering whether or not performance documentation is felicitous or infelicitous; a move that Derrida problematizes in his critique of Austin's speech act theory as I previously mentioned in my note on this dissertation's title. Integral to Widrich's view on the relationship between performance and documentation is the consideration of multiple forms of documentation and with it, multiple audiences (readers) and meanings. This is to say that Widrich takes a Derridean stance on Austin's speech act theory, arguing that the concrete consequences of performative utterances are dependent upon the circumstances in which they perform; in other words, the circumstances that inform whether or not they are felicitous or infelicitous are precarious because they change from context to context. The circumstances of the magazine and the exhibition catalogue can thus not be "interchanged with an infinite 'context'…."[171] Other contexts may or may not include the artist's original intentions, or, in the case of the *Genital Panic*'s two iconic photographs, the captured bodily presence of both EXPORT and her audience members.

At this point, it is worth noting that both Benjamin's and Phelan's arguments are more nuanced than I have described. There are aspects of their arguments that show a similarity to Auslander, McTighe, Widrich, Santone, and, specifically, Jones's "mutual supplementarity" and

[170] Widrich quoting EXPORT, 92.
[171] Widrich quoting Derrida, 94.

Bedford's viral ontology of performance. As mentioned, Benjamin argues that "to pry an object from its shell, [is] to destroy its aura."[172] While this is clear, it does not mean that the reproduced artwork wholly lacks an aura—this is a point Steve Dixon addresses in *Digital Performance: A History of New Media in Theater, Dance, Performance Art, and Installation.* In his engagement with Benjamin's discussion of the medium of photography, Dixon describes its compatibility with a different type of aura that Benjamin assigns it: it is because the photograph produces an original designed for reproduction, Benjamin argues, that the artwork produced becomes the artwork designed for reproducibility.[173] The photography's aura is thus intimately tied to its reproducibility; in other words, and to use Jones's terminology, photography's aura and its reproducibility exist in a "mutual supplementary" relationship. Dixon calls attention to the use of Benjamin's own scholarship to support both the privileging of an original live performance and its problematization: (1), evidence for the uniqueness of an original live performance's aura, and (2), evidence of reciprocal transformations in the mode of human perception, which view the reproducibility of a mediated artwork as intimately connected with its aura.[174] In this sense, reproduction renders an artwork auraless only when considering auras whose "prying from their shells" are not integral to the artworks themselves.

In her introduction to *The Ends of Performance*—published in 1998—Phelan acknowledges some criticisms of performance theory and writing: performance theory and writing exist in a parasitic relationship with an original live performance (Austin's "parasitic performative"); and they are, fundamentally, a reaction to the loss of aura and presence due to

[172] Benjamin, 223.
[173] Steve Dixon, *Digital Performance: A History of New Media in Theater, Dance, Performance Art, and Installation* (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 2007), 117.
[174] Ibid.

the mediatization and virtuality of an original live performance (Benjamin's "aura").[175] These criticisms assume that performance belongs to the ontology of disappearance that Phelan described in *Unmarked*—published five years before *The Ends of Performance* in 1993—an ontology that privileges temporal and spatial presence as the primary act; in other words, the "original live performance." This is, however, not the view of performance theory and writing that Phelan holds in her introduction to *The Ends of Performance.* Phelan acknowledges that the transmitting of information has changed in, what she calls, the "electronic paradigm." This electronic paradigm, she argues, is an epistemic event, meaning "it redefines knowledge itself into that which can be sent and that which can be stored."[176] The transcription of information in the electronic paradigm marks a "strange temporal economy," for Phelan. This economy signals "the difficulty of the end ever arriving at its true ending, or of remaining singular, fixed, gone."[177] By this Phelan points to the continuous constitution of a live performance through archival means, which denies it static meaning(s) or, as Phelan terms it, a "fixed end." It is important to note that this has arguably always been the case as her critics have shown; like digital technology and *mal d'archive*, the electronic paradigm has exacerbated what was already there. This is, however, a significant shift for Phelan given the necessity of radicalized physical presence in the 1960s and 1970s: Carolee Schneemann, Yoko Ono, Hannah Wilke, Yayoi Kusama, and the aforementioned Abramović and EXPORT, for example, utilized the live presence of their own bodies as political statements of gender, sexuality, and race.

Performance in the electronic paradigm proposes a challenge for performance theory and writing: it should demand and create its own spectator/reader/witness through the performative

[175] Phelan, *The Ends of Performance,* 5.
[176] Phelan, *The Ends of Performance,* 8.
[177] Phelan, *The Ends of Performance,* 9.

recalling of a past performance. Performance theory and writing, for Phelan, cannot aim to assimilate a past performance into itself, but seek "to extend the oxymoronic possibilities of animating the unlived that lies at the heart of performance as a making."[178] Phelan's challenge for performance theory and writing, on the one hand, maintains the ontology of disappearance's assumption that, once performed, performance disappears; yet, on the other hand, she acknowledges the performative potential of performance theory and writing, a potential that does not claim to assimilate a past performance into itself or to re-perform it, but calls attention to the electronic paradigm's temporal economy that denies wholly fixed ends.[179] Thus, the "afterlife" of a temporal and spatial performance is not its absence from life as a fixed end—its death—but a move towards engaging with unlived possibilities, which become lived through the performative relationship between an inaugural live performance and its documentation. Performance theory and writing—including academic texts like this dissertation—for Phelan, are "necessary acts, events of making, reading, longing, learning. Creating performances and writing about those performances require acts of critical and creative imagination; both contend with the imperatives carried by 'the act.'"[180]

This is reminiscent of Bedford's viral ontology of performance, even though he is critical of what Phelan's ontology of disappearance implies: "To transcribe the events of [a] moment into a textual or imagistic format [Phelan] implies [in *Unmarked*], is to subject the radical logic of a single moment to the rationalizing frameworks of language and static images, forms which are answerable to normative social codes and are thus antithetical to the free speculative stage of performance." However, as mentioned, Bedford argues that "*there is no* performance outside of

[178] Phelan, *The Ends of Performance,* 13.
[179] Ibid.
[180] Phelan, *The Ends of Performance,* 7.

this discourse."[181] Although he is critical of Phelan's ontology of disappearance in *Unmarked*, his argument is similar to Phelan's challenge for performance theory and writing in *The Ends of Performance.* She advocates for a writing practice that performatively engages with past inaugural performances in a way that denies wholly fixed ends, which involves, but is not limited to, the "rationalizing frameworks of language and images"—it is, further, important to note that language and images are not static, but serve as performative representations as Barad reminds us.[182] It is the integration and interaction of photographic and written documents (specifically those of Burden's *Shoot*), Bedford argues, "that animate[] the imagination and activate[] the performance as an event unfolding in the present."[183] While Phelan advocates for performative writing, Bedford advocates for the integration of both image and text-based documents.

This said, I am not convinced that Phelan's challenge for performance theory and writing removes the status of "original live performance" that her ontology of disappearance perpetuates. Presence, for Phelan, is intimately tied to performativity via citation. "Presence," she argues, "can be had only through the citation of authenticity, through reference to something (we have heard) called 'live.'"[184] While Phelan acknowledges the mutual dependence of original and copy, she maintains the primacy and authority of the original live performance because its documentation needs to cite it to be considered a "performance document," as Sorkin does in Mythology and the Re-make." Ironically, the citation of the original live performance by its "document" also performatively establishes it as an authentic "original live performance."

[181] Bedford, 77-78, original emphasis.
[182] Barad, 804-811.
[183] Bedford, 77-78.
[184] Phelan, *The Ends of Performance,* 10.

To be clear, my intention is not to discredit Phelan. I hope it is clear by now that I consider her ontology of disappearance as a meaningful site of inquiry, especially considering that many performance scholars and practitioners perpetuate its assumptions in our contemporary digital moment; or, to use Balsom's words, many performance scholars and practitioners emphasize rarity in response to digital reproduction. For example, Felix Barrett—Punchdrunk Theatre Company's founder and artistic director—views "the Internet as having skewed the way we read the world, making us more passive and making life too easy." He aims for interactive theatre that makes "things feel a little more difficult, to make the hairs stand up on the back of people's necks, and to make them feel 'alive.'"[185] Similarly, Judith Aston's notion of "emplaced interaction," as the foundation of live performance, stresses the importance of (physical) site specificity "as a means of expression, which has the potential to bring people together and to engage all of the senses…This seems pressing," she argues, "at a time in which simulated realities, automation and data tracking are becoming ever more part of our everyday lives."[186] It seems that "live performance" for Barrett and Aston, is not and cannot be mediatized performance.

I mention Barrett and Aston here to show that the live/mediatized dichotomy—and authentic/inauthentic, original/copy with it—continues to "loom large," "haunting" our understanding of digital performances (if I can borrow terminology from Sorkin).[187] I believe that if we are to adopt Phelan's challenge for performance theory and writing as a performative

[185] Judith Aston quoting Barrett in "Interactive Documentary and Live Performance: From Embodied to Emplaced Interaction," in *I-Docs: The Evolving Practices of Interactive Documentary,* ed. by Judith Aston, Sandra Gaudenzi, and Mandy Rose (New York: Columbia University Press, 2017), 225.
[186] Aston, 223.
[187] Sorkin.

challenge in our contemporary digital moment, we must deem the question of live/mediatized, authentic/inauthentic, and original/copy irrelevant. Auslander advocates for a similar move in *Liveness* in which he addresses live/mediated performances. He challenges the often taken for granted assumption that live and mediated performances are ontologically different. Original live performances are authentic, while reproduced and thus mediated copies of performances are inauthentic—which, as mentioned, both Barrett and Aston maintain. Auslander argues that technical mediation defines the status of "live" because it requires technical mediation to define it as such; "the live," he explains, "can only be defined as that which can be recorded."[188] Thus, unlike Phelan's claim, the live exists within the economy of reproduction; it has always been there, like precarity and volatility are for archives—digital or otherwise. The historical relationship between live and mediated performances cannot be seen through ontological difference—this is not productive Auslander argues—but through their mutual dependence (an argument reminiscent of Jones, Bedford, Santone, McTighe, and Widrich or, given their respective publications dates, vice versa); it is not productive, he claims,

> because there are few grounds on which to make significant ontological distinctions. Like live performance, electronic and photographic media can be described meaningfully as partaking of the ontology of disappearance ascribed to live performance, and they can also be used to provide an experience of evanescence. Like film and television, theatre can be used as a mass medium.[189]

Auslander outlines two common arguments that have resulted in the live/mediated hierarchization, which sustain the belief that live and mediated forms are ontologically different:

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[188] Auslander, *Liveness,* 51.
[189] Ibid. This said, Auslander is clear in stating that he does not think the live and mediated performances share an ontology, suggesting instead that live and mediated forms are not determined by intrinsic characteristics, but by historical circumstances.

(1), live performance engages all of the senses, while mediated forms engage only hearing and seeing; and (2), live performance fosters a sense of community in a way that mediated performance does not.[190] In response to (1), Auslander claims that all performances, mediatized or live, engage all of the senses, albeit differently and depending on context. In response to (2), whereas mediated performance focuses on relationships within the audience, live performance generally perpetuates a divide between the audience and the performer(s), and fails to achieve a sense of community, while promising to do so; mediated performance makes no such promise.[191] Mediated performance, Auslander argues, does not mean a lack of liveness or presence. Nor does live performance mean a lack of absence. Analogue and digital media can meaningfully be described as participants in the ontology of disappearance that Phelan ascribes to live performance.[192]

Dixon more directly argues against the distinction of authentic/inauthentic and original/copy in relation to live and mediated performances. With specific attention to digital performances, Dixon argues that liveness has nothing to do with media; meaning, it does not discriminate between digital/virtual or corporeal performances. "Liveness," for Dixon, is "just being there."[193] In other words, liveness does not guarantee corporeal liveness, nor does corporeal liveness guarantee presence. The same can be said about mediated performance; virtual performances do not guarantee the absence of corporeal liveness or presence. For Dixon, all art is concerned with presence, which should not be defined in opposition with absence or mediation, but in terms of interest and attention, specifically audience engagement and

[190] Auslander, *Liveness,* 52.
[191] Ibid.
[192] Auslander, *Liveness,* 51
[193] Dixon, 129.

attention.[194] With this in mind, he argues that Phelan's ontology of disappearance is less of an ontology, and more an affirmation of her preferred medium: inaugural live performance.[195]

It's worth noting that, in addition to born digital artworks—I offer some examples below—the increase in digital programming has complicated the relationship between originals and digital copies or reproductions because the latter is subject to copyright law. According to Alexander Herman, Assistant Director of the Institute of Art and Law, copyright effects museums in two ways: (1), "the museum is the creator of new content, which can be protected by copyright law…." and (2), "the museum is dealing with or using somebody else's copyright-protected content."[196] The latter is exemplified by a museum photographing an artwork in their collection for archival or programing purposes; Herman uses a painting as an example in the following quote. "Just because the museum owns the painting" he explains, "doesn't mean it owns the copyright so it will be restricted in the ways it can make copies of that work."[197] The impact of copyright on the development of digital content has been emphasized by COVID-19 global closures because many museums have pivoted to digital programming—I will further address this in my second chapter. COVID-19 closures have not only increased digital reproductions, they have also increased the reliance on reproductions for digital programming, and thus triggering copyright law.

Copyright law is a branch of intellectual property law or IP law that applies to "artistic, dramatic, musical or literary works, as well as to film, broadcasts and sound recordings."[198] In a

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[194] Dixon, 132.
[195] Ibid.
[196] Alexander Herman, "Navigating Copyright," *Muse.* Canadian Museums Association, Winter (2021): 56.
[197] Herman, 56-57.
[198] Herman, 57.

broader sense, IP law includes copyright in addition to trademarks, patents, and designs. Copyright law applies to works of living artists and, currently in Canada, 50 years after their death. This means that artist fees apply for any exhibition, digital or otherwise, of a work that takes place during the artist's life plus 50 years. While the exhibition of a digital reproduction on, say, social media may not be subject to the same artist fees as its exhibition in a traditional gallery space, the legal treatment of digital reproductions suggests that the relationship between originals and copies are far more complex than the live/mediatized, authentic/inauthentic, and original/copy dichotomies maintain.[199]

Digital performances, further, can serve as critical platforms to problematize these dichotomous assumptions. Pippin Barr's digital re-performance of Abramović's *The Artist is Present* is a productive example.[200] Barr's *The Artist is Present* is an 8-bit videogame simulation

Pippin Barr, *The Artist is Present,* 2011, 8-bit videogame.

[199] CARFAC (the Canadian Artists' Representation/Le Front des artistes canadiens) is a non-profit organization, established in 1968, that helps artists and museums navigate Canadian copyright in addition to advocating for artists' rights. See https://www.carfac.ca

[200] Barr's *The Artist is Present* is available to play on his website. You will also find his 2020 sequel *The Artist is Present 2* in which you play as the present artist herself: "It's happening! Again! The Artist Is Present! You are present! The artist is you! Put on your red dress and sit in the famous chair! Lock eyes with your audience! Be there now!" Pippin Barr, "Games," *Pippin Barr,* accessed December 2020, https://www.pippinbarr.com/category/games/

of Abramović's *The Artist is Present.*[201] I consider Barr's 8-bit *The Artist is Present* to be a sort of "speech act" that took place in response to Abramović's *The Artist is Present,* which not only reveals various institutionally driven absences inherent in her "presence," but also shows the interrelationship between art, socio-economics, and politics.

In the "Mythology and the Re-make," Sorkin claims that the "culture of re-performance" connotes sublimation or the purposeful forgetting of an inaugural performance's initial intentions that attempts to satisfy the unattainable goal of wanting to experience it first-hand.[202] In other words, to re-perform an inaugural performance is to simulate it in an attempt to make present what is absent, regardless of the artist's initial intentions. Santone's analysis of *Seven Easy Pieces* suggests this. Abramović

Marina Abramović: The Artist is Present, March 14 to May 21, 2010, Marina Abramović retrospective, MoMA, New York.

[201] Simulated re-creations of "playable" exhibitions and performances is not a new phenomenon. It is a part of a history that goes back to museum interactive CD-ROMs that served educational purposes. The 1993 *Microsoft Art Gallery* or *Micro Gallery,* for example, was an interactive, multimedia art game that featured the collections of the British National Gallery developed by Microsoft—I will address the integration of interactive virtual content in museums and galleries in my second chapter. The massively multiplayer online game (MMO) *Second Life* is a more contemporary example. It—along with other MMOs like *World of Warcraft*—has been used as a platform for many simulations and curated virtual events: for example, Eva and Franco Mattes's re-performance of Abramović and Ulay's *Imponderabilia* in 2007 (which was also re-performed at Abramović's 2010 Museum of Modern Art New York [MoMa] retrospective), and the January 9, 2007, virtual event, which simulated the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum's November, 2006, exhibition *Our Walls Bear Witness—Darfur.*

[202] Sorkin.

re-performances did not re-enact her selected inaugural performances; like the inherent loss of the archive, her re-performances were performative attempts to experience past events in the present as they disappeared.[203] While Santone maintains a Derridean understanding of re-performance, Sorkin argues that inaugural performances should remain lost. She has a more cynical view of re-performance, arguing that it is way for "artists to capitalize on…past successes…and revisit vital moments in their career," which authenticates their own authority as a "performance artist.[204] The quintessential example for Sorkin is Abramović's 2010 retrospective at the MoMA: *Marina Abramović: The Artist is Present.* She damns *The Artist is Present* because she views it as intimately linked with Abramović's *Seven Easy Pieces*, which generated the "icky sensationalism" that propelled her artist-self into "perpetual presentness."[205] Sorkin's tone is not unwarranted: Abramović is the self-proclaimed "Grandmother of Performance Art," and her *The Artist is Present*—performed at her retrospective—was and is arguably one of the most well-known and well-documented art performances. A Google search generates 1,150,000,000 search results or archived "virtual readymades" (to use Foster's terminology) as of May 2020. The impression conveyed by these primarily visual documents is reminiscent of a movie premiere; perhaps this was due to the many celebrities drawn to Abramović's "presence."

[203] Santone, 148.
[204] Sorkin.
[205] Ibid.

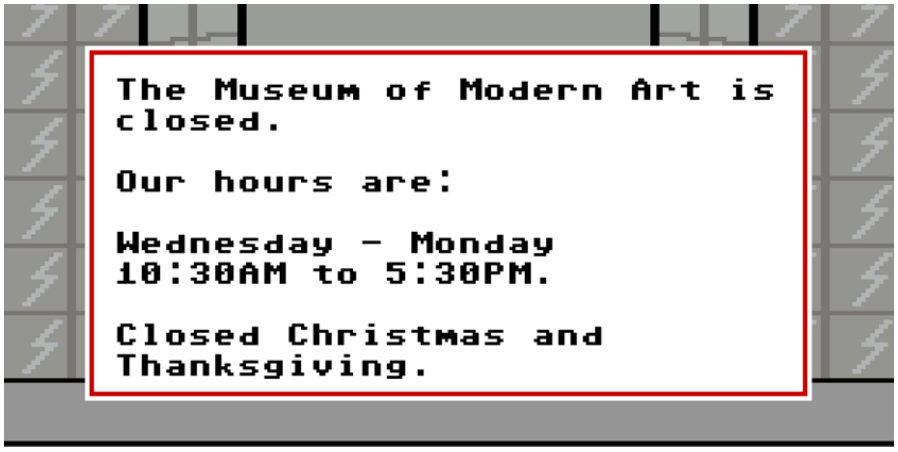
In contrast to Sorkin's claim, Barr's re-performance does not aim to capitalize on a past inaugural performance, but offers a productive platform to critique it; specifically, Abramović's tendency to perpetuate a specific understanding of performance art as granting unmediated access to a present performing artist. Barr is arguably able to do so because of his chosen medium: videogame. In *How To Do Things With Videogames,* Ian Bogost considers the performative potential and implications of videogames—the title of its text is an iteration of Austin's *How To Do Things With Words.* He argues that the medium of videogames has the ability to say something beyond itself through "procedural rhetoric"—he also uses the term "proceduralism."[206] "Procedure," in this case, is a means of structuring behaviour; it translates to the affordances and constraints, the mechanics or the functional rules of the game, that can be explored and learned through play. "Rhetoric" is the field of communication that deals with persuasive speech. For Bogost, the term "visual rhetoric" is inadequate because it doesn't account for procedural affordances of videogames.[207] Thus "procedural rhetoric:" the practice of using computing processes persuasively. For Bogost, an ideal videogame, that is, a videogame that takes full use

Marina Abramović, *The Artist is Present,* March 14 to May 21, 2010, performance, MoMA, New York.

[206] Bogost. 13-14
[207] Ibid.

of its medium's procedural potential, is comprised of performative speech acts. Using Austin's understanding of the performative, Bogost argues that successful games possess "performative play." By this he means that players perform actions within the game that simultaneously enact actions outside of it. Put differently, to perform in the game is to perform an ideology outside of the game. In short, Bogost uses a performative perspective to explain how games can say something beyond themselves as games.[208] From this perspective we can state that Barr's *The Artist Is Present,* through the use of procedural rhetoric, is comprised of a series of performative utterances that challenge the sensationalist, movie-premiere like glamour of Abramović's *The Artist Is Present* to reveal the limitations imposed (directly and indirectly) on the live presence of any performing artist by the museum institution, which is just as mediating as a camera is.

Barr's *The Artist Is Present* begins in front of the MoMA. Depending on the time of day, the doors to the MoMA are either open or closed. If they are closed, the player is greeted with the following message:

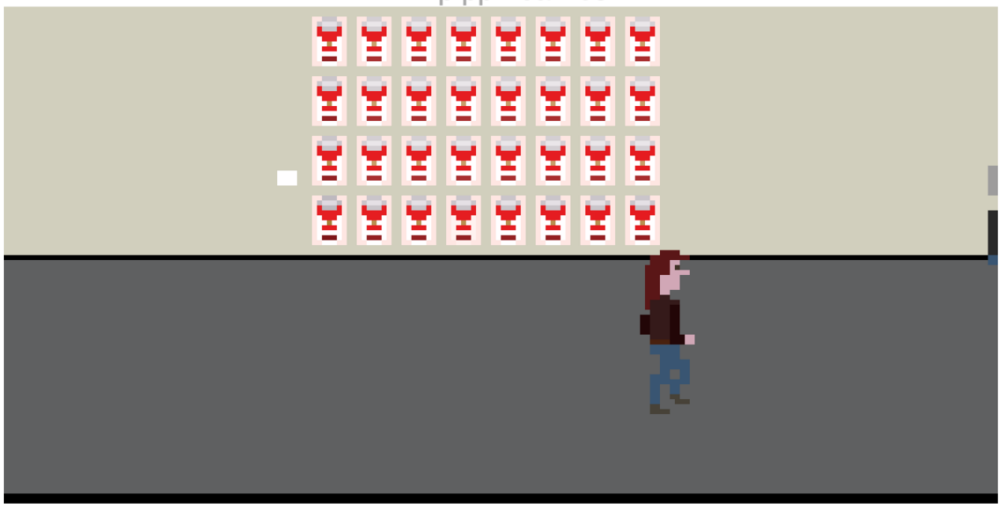


[208] Ian Bogost, *How To Do Things With Videogames* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2011), 14.

I started playing at 5:48pm on Thursday April 4, 2019, and thus was unable to enter the museum (see above image). I returned the next morning at 11:08am, bought my $25 dollar ticket, and entered the exhibit. I guided the 8-bit player character down two hallways (side scroller style), which featured 8-bit renderings of Van Gogh, Monet, Matisse, and Warhol paintings and prints. In front of these paintings, was a long line of patrons waiting to sit in front of the 8-bit Abramović (and seemingly uninterested in the artworks with absent artists). Once I saw Abramović—framed by a white-tape square on floor, and surrounded by patrons and security guards—I walked back to the end of the line, and entered the queue at 11:10am. The line hadn't moved when another patron joined the que at 11:24am, and another at 11:29am. At 12:38pm, I lost my place in line because I accidently hit the down-arrow key, which moved the player character allowing the two patrons behind me to take my place in line. At 3:16pm, I intentionally moved the player character because I forgot what she looked like, and thought she was at the end of the line; I re-queued with three additional patrons ahead of me. After waiting in line for 6 hours and 20 minutes, the museum closed at 5:30pm, and I found my player character once again outside, in front of the locked doors of the MoMA, and without having sat in front of Abramović.

www.pippinbarr.com

www.pippinbarr.com



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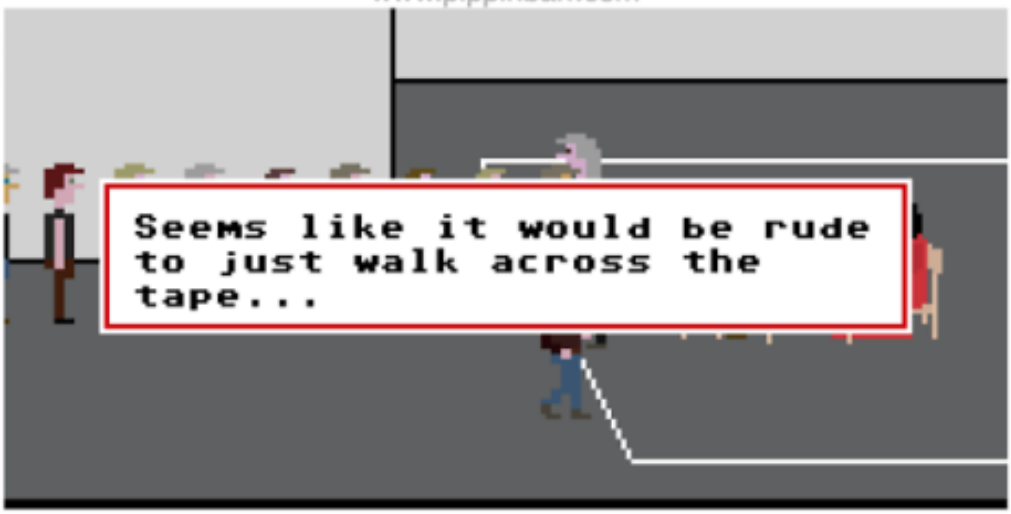

www.pippinbarr.com

As I previously mentioned, Sorkin critiques re-performance and visual forms of documentation in favour of oral-aural forms of documentation. Unlike visual forms of documentation and the sensationalist tendencies of re-performances, oral-aural forms of documentation, for Sorkin, rewrite inaugural performances through their recounting and retelling in such a way that both emphasizes and recontextualizes their inaugural intentions in meaningful ways.[209] It is this recontextualization that challenges visual documentation's tendency to mythologize inaugural performances. While Sorkin is sceptical about the culture of re-performances, Barr's *The Artist is Present* rewrites the mythic image of Abramović's "perpetual presentness" generated by the 1,150,000,000 archived "virtual readymades" available to anyone who has adequate internet access—Santone argues the same for Abramović use of re-performance in *Seven Easy Pieces.* Through procedural rhetoric, Barr's *The Artist is Present* highlights various absences and mediating limitations inherent in exhibitions: Abramović's artist-presence is mediated by a hefty ticket price, long queues, and only available during opening hours.

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I began this chapter with Phelan's challenge for performance theory and writing; a challenge that assumes a memorial perspective because it is informed by her ontology of disappearance. I would like to conclude with Donia Mounsef's critique of this perspective or what she terms the memorialist turn. In contrast to the memorialist turn, Mounsef proposes the "future performative" as a practice of archival preservation that points to possible future

[209] Sorkin.

connections rather than the memorialization of the past.[210] With reference to Derrida's *Archive Fever*, she proposes an archival practice that engages with performativity to show that, contra to common assumptions, the archive is just as ephemeral as performance art is. Mounsef's "future performative" is an archival approach that takes into account the performative perspective that I addressed in this chapter; for this reason, it is the approach that Prelinger advocates for—one that is informed by and accepts *mal d'archive,* which is to say the rapid increase in both the formal and informal production of preservable content that is constantly threatened by loss.

In "The Future Performative: Staging the Body as Failure of the Archive," Mounsef explains that the memorialist turn accentuates moments in chronology, and participates in "practices that perform the act of remembering as both a way to dramatize 'bearing witness' and as the impossible reconstruction of the past in the ephemera of performance."[211] Similarly, Phelan's ontology of disappearance privileges the original live performance as a temporal and spatial moment that cannot be reproduced. Documentation, for Phelan, serves only to spur memory; it cannot reproduce the original live performance that it aims preserve.[212] In contrast to the memorialist turn, Mounsef proposes the "future performative" as a practice of archival preservation that points to possible connections. She cites Marc Augé's *The Future* (2014) to define the "future." Augé conceives the modalities of futurity through the French distinction of *le*

[210] Donia Mounsef, "The Future Performative: Staging the Body as Failure of the Archive," *Global Performance Studies* 2, no. 2 (2019).

[211] Ibid. She highlights two forms of memorialization that are not mutually exclusive: physical memorialization—a physical or architectural structure of memory (monuments, sites, statues, buildings, cenotaphs, burials, museums, shrines, plaques etc.)—and symbolic commemoration—collective need to remember and grieve through symbolic interpretive, or representational memorials (gatherings, stories, retellings, performances, re-enactments, ceremonies, anniversaries, eulogies, vigils etc.).

[212] Phelan, *Unmarked,* 146.

futur as a controlled future because of its illusion of predictability, and *l'avenir* as the possibility of multiple futures to come that we cannot control or foresee.[213] Similarly, Derrida prefers *l'avenir* as an affirmation of a future to come "to point towards the coming of an event rather than towards some future present"[214] or what Augé calls "'the future as time of conjunction.'"[215] *Le futur*, Mounsef argues, quoting Derrida, is that "'which—tomorrow, later, next century—will be. There is a future which is predictable, programmed, scheduled, foreseeable. But there is a future, l'avenir (to come) which refers to someone who comes whose arrival is totally unexpected….'"[216] With specific attention to *l'avenir,* Mounsef proposes the "future performative," which

> sketches out a potential event while destroying its very potentiality by inscribing it on the body as the failure of the archive…performative futures are also moving, shifting, and in flux based on how the body survives its own possible destruction and how it relates to other bodies…the future performative gives us a glimpse of its possibility only to take it away in the act of performing its disappearance.[217]

By this she means to say that the archive does not guarantee a particular future as *le futur*—the future present (Derrida) or the future as time of conjunction (Augé)—promises. In offering many possible futures to come (*l'avenir*), the "future performative" emphasizes the archive's instability—its failure to guarantee a controllable and foreseeable future in its preservation of the past—revealing it to be just as ephemeral as performance is.

Phelan's challenge for performance theory and writing, as an archival practice, may account for loss, however, it is not the archival loss that Derrida and Mounsef, further, Prelinger,

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[213] Ibid.
[214] Derrida, *Archive Fever,* 68.
[215] Mounsef quoting Augé.
[216] Mounsef quoting Derrida.
[217] Mounsef.

Steedman, and Featherstone describe. The elegiac function of performance theory and writing emphasizes the loss of a temporal and spatial performance. In contrast, Mounsef's "future performative" takes into account archival loss through its unstable and unforeseeable futures to come. Put differently, the "future performative" is informed by archival logic. Similarly, the theorists that I have mentioned who challenge Phelan's ontology of disappearance take into account the performativity inherent in archival acts of preservation/production that problematize live performances as privileged original events. In other words, performing and documenting are not inherently separate actions; to perform an inaugural live performance is to also in part preserve/produce it in documentary form, and to engage with its documentation after the fact is to performatively constitute it as one such future to come.

In our contemporary digital moment where, as Featherstone argues, everything can be preserved, documents are increasingly enmeshed in our daily experience—often presented as "virtual readymades." We know from contemporary performance theory that documents, made to be preservable, are sites of inevitable loss because they are dynamic and performative representations. Significantly, we can recognize the potential for future loss that all documents possess regardless of the futures they directly or indirectly promise. Digital archives have exacerbated these characteristics, and we can turn to a performative perspective to better understand them. As I mentioned in my exergue, digital archives are what Ernst terms "dynarchive"; documents exist in relation to each other through hyperlinks to other documents that are embedded in the document itself. "The primary operations of the archive are no longer the contents of its files but rather their logistical interlinking" he explains. "Although their indexes are primarily search oriented…they are not passive but themselves constitute a logistical

document containing links to the pertinent data records."[218] The relationality that Ernst describes speaks to the performative oscillation between events and documents, which was anticipated by performance artist and theorists decades earlier. And by adopting a performative perspective, we can see acts of documentation as a move towards what Santone terms an "ever-stabilizing memory," which is to say memory that is never completely stable—regardless of the increase in readily accessible documents.[219] It is through a performative perspective that we can understand the archive not as a commemoration of the past or insurance to guarantee a foreseeable future, but as a continuous constitution of documents, and the events they serve to performatively represent.

[218] Ernst, *Digital Memory and the Archive,* 84.
[219] Santone, 151.

Interlude: glitch-utterances

> The terms 'glitch' and 'corruption artifacts' in the broadest sense refer to images and objects that have been tampered with; their creation relates to the core of the media apparatuses used to store, produce and relay information. These corrupted images can be created by adjusting or manipulating the normal physical or virtual composition of the machine or software itself, or by using machines or digital tools in methods different from their normative modalities
>
> — Christiane Paul and Malcolm Levy, "Genealogies of the New Aesthetic." *Postdigital Aesthetics: Art, Computation and Design*[220]

As I briefly explained in my exergue, glitch art is an artistic practice that engages with technological failures. It is perhaps best known for its role in experimental music and digital composition. In "The Aesthetics of Failure: the 'Post-Digital' Tendencies in Contemporary Music," composer Kim Cascone states, glitch art or the "post-digital aesthetic"—which is to say an aesthetic developed after the widespread use of digital technology—"was developed in part as a result of the immersive experience of working in environments suffused with digital technologies…But more specifically, it is from the 'failure' of digital technology that this new work has emerged…."[221] These technological failures for Cascone include bugs, application errors, system crashes, and quantization noises; however, he is clear in stating that glitches are not limited to technical failures; they also include physical disruptions common to analogue and

[220] Christiane Paul and Malcolm Levy, "Genealogies of the New Aesthetic," in *Postdigital Aesthetics: Art, Computation and Design,* ed. by David M. Berry and Michael Dieter, 27-43. New York: Palmgrave Macmillian, 2015), 15.
[221] Kim Cascone, "The Aesthetics of Failure: 'Post-Digital' Tendencies in Contemporary Music," *Computer Music Journal* 24, no. 4 (2000): 12-13.

digital recordings where the data is accessed physically—CDs and DVDs, for example. By this Casone means noise generated from dirt, dust, scratches, smudges, and markings, among other physical aberrations.

Since the mid 1990s, glitches have become a common part of everyday digital engagement, and have been taken up by visual artists. Engagement with technological failures—more specifically the visual products of technical failures—is a key characteristic of glitch art, as Christiane Paul and Malcolm Levy stress in this interlude's epigraph. For Michael Betancourt, however, artistic engagement with technological failures is not enough to define glitch art. In *Glitch Art In Theory and Practice: Critical Failures and Post-Digital Aesthetics,* Betancourt explains that glitch art "is specifically the result of aberrant and apparent 'abnormal' renderings by digital technologies."[222] By this he highlights two key characteristics of glitch art: it is (1), the result of technological failures, and (2), the artistic engagement with the visual products of technological failures. It is for this reason that glitch art can productively address *mal d'archive*—I will soon return to this point.

Glitches are indicative of the materiality of digital technologies, which means they serve a disruptive function. They disrupt what Betancourt calls the "aura of the digital," or the assumption that digitized data is omnipresent and immaterial.[223] There is an interesting connection between Betancourt's use of the term "aura" and Benjamin's. As I mentioned in the previous chapter, an artwork's "aura" is its presence in a specific place for Benjamin.[224] Betancout's "aura of the digital," in contrast, refers to (the assumption of) omnipresence.

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[222] Michael Betancourt, *Glitch Art In Theory and Practice: Critical Failures and Post-Digital Aesthetics* (New York: Routledge, 2017), 3.
[223] Betancourt, 7.
[224] Benjamin, 221.

Ironically, because of its disruptive function, an encounter with a glitch is a reminder that all data is what N. Katherine Hayles terms "embodied information" in *How We Become Posthuman*, which means that all data has a material substrate that can be located in a specific place, and is, further, susceptible to physical aberrations.[225]

Significantly, the more digital archives there are, the more material substrates there needs to be in order to support the participatory access to archived data that they afford; this commonly takes the form of server farms. Mél Hogan uses the term "'Big Data ecologies' to expose the fact that these sites are not only multiplying, but are increasingly at the behest of investors in Big Data infrastructure and run by Big Data logics."[226] Glitch art thus plays a critical role in its disruptive function, which glitch artist Rosa Menkman emphasizes in *The Glitch Moment(Um).* "Glitch artists," she argues, "reveal the machine's techné and enable a critical sensory experience to take place around materials, ideologies and (aesthetic) structures."[227] In other words, glitch art and artists not only problematize digital aesthetics, they also address the politics of hardware and software. They do so by disrupting the assumption of digital reliability and accessibility because they indicate a malfunction—often the loss of information—which affords a glimpse into the seemingly immaterial world of digital technology that Big Tech companies have created via the metaphors they use to describe their products and services—notably Cloud storage, which, Bridle explains, is both "the central metaphor of the internet" and "a very bad metaphor" because of the very material infrastructures that it relies on.[228] According to Hogan, these metaphors help

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[225] Katherine Hayles, *How We Became Posthuman: Virtual Bodies in Cybernetics, Literature, and Informatics* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999), 2.
[226] Mél Hogan, "Big data ecologies," *Ephemera: Theory and Politics in Organization* 8.3, (2018): 632.
[227] Rosa Menkman, *The Glitch Moment(Um)* (Amsterdam: Network Notebook, 2011), 35.
[228] Bridle, 7.

support the representation of Big Tech companies—Amazon, Google, Microsoft, and Facebook, for example—as leading environmental custodians, regardless of the fact that their institutional practices actively contribute to global warming.[229] It is for this reason that I return to Big Tech logics in my eco-coda.

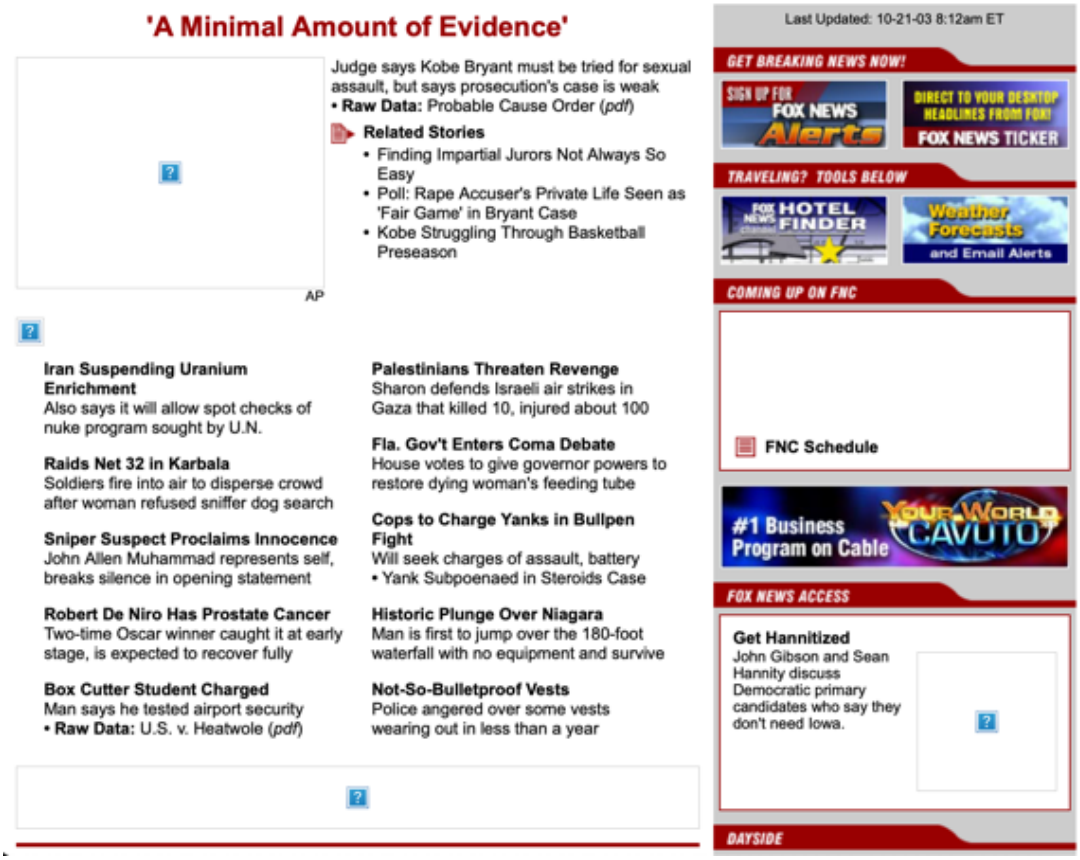
I mentioned in my exergue that Wayback Machine glitch-utterances often take the form of error messages. It is important to note, however, that these error messages are not glitches proper. By this I mean to say that a Wayback Machine error message is not materiality itself, but a representation of materiality; it is a speech act informing the user that information has been lost. More specifically, it is constative utterance that describes (1), a technological failure—to adequately archive a web page—and (2), an unsuccessful (or infelicitous) action of the user/participant—to access it. In short, these glitch-utterances visualize *mal d'archive* as the foundation of digital archives—as sites of both preservation and loss.

As I previously stated, I engage with these glitch-utterances in my first interlude, which showcases seven exemplary glitches-utterances that I encountered while perusing the Wayback Machine's "captured pages." After collecting these glitch-utterances, I imported them into Audacity, which is free, cross-platform, open-source software for recording and editing sound. This turns each glitch-utterance into an audible utterance—notably a locutionary utterance for sound editing software, and not for humans like YouTube's recommendation algorithms—which can be heard here: https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1yKm6kUBMjWKL_VeaUvTFPnGyTTky67xp?usp=sharing

[229] Hogan, "Big data ecologies," 633.

I then exported the generated sound as a RAW (header-less), uncompressed file, and opened it in Photoshop to create a visual image. A RAW file has minimally processed data from its capturing medium—digital camera, image scanner, etc. The file header of a RAW image contains information about the file's byte-ordering—a group of binary digits, or, more commonly, bits. This process is what Menkman calls "data bending" in *A Vernacular of File Formats: A Guide to Databend Compression Design.* When a "RAW image is saved without a header," (header-less) according to Menkman, "the computer doesn't know the dimensions or any other crucial information that is needed to reconstruct the image out of the image data."[230] The RAW file will thus appear distorted (glitched) when opened. Menkman's "data bending" is also termed "misalignment," which, according to Betancourt, refers to "matches between encoded data and its decoding, resulting in aberrant results when rendered for a human audience."[231] It is through this process that I am able to turn the initial glitch-utterances, as constative utterances, into performative utterances. Or, in glitch art terminology, I am able to create machine noise from representations of machine noise—recall that the initial glitch-utterances are not materiality themselves, but representations of materiality. The collected glitch-utterances in this interlude visualize *mal d'archive* as the foundation of digital archives—as sites of both preservation and loss, while the exported RAW sound files, visualized through Photoshop, performatively enact technological materialities and computational processes, and thus disrupt the "aura of the digital."

[230] Menkman, *A Vernacular of File Formats: A Guide to Databend Compression Design* (Amsterdam: Network Notebook, 2010), 3.
[231] Betancourt, 134.



Glitch-utterance 1: "A Minimal Amount of Evidence," *Fox News*
Captured October 21, 2003
23 Captures total

INTERNET ARCHIVE
WayBackMachine

Loading...

http://www.imdb.com/media/index/rg85957120?ref_=hm_snp_t1 |
07:07:02 June 19, 2015

Got an HTTP 302 response at crawl time

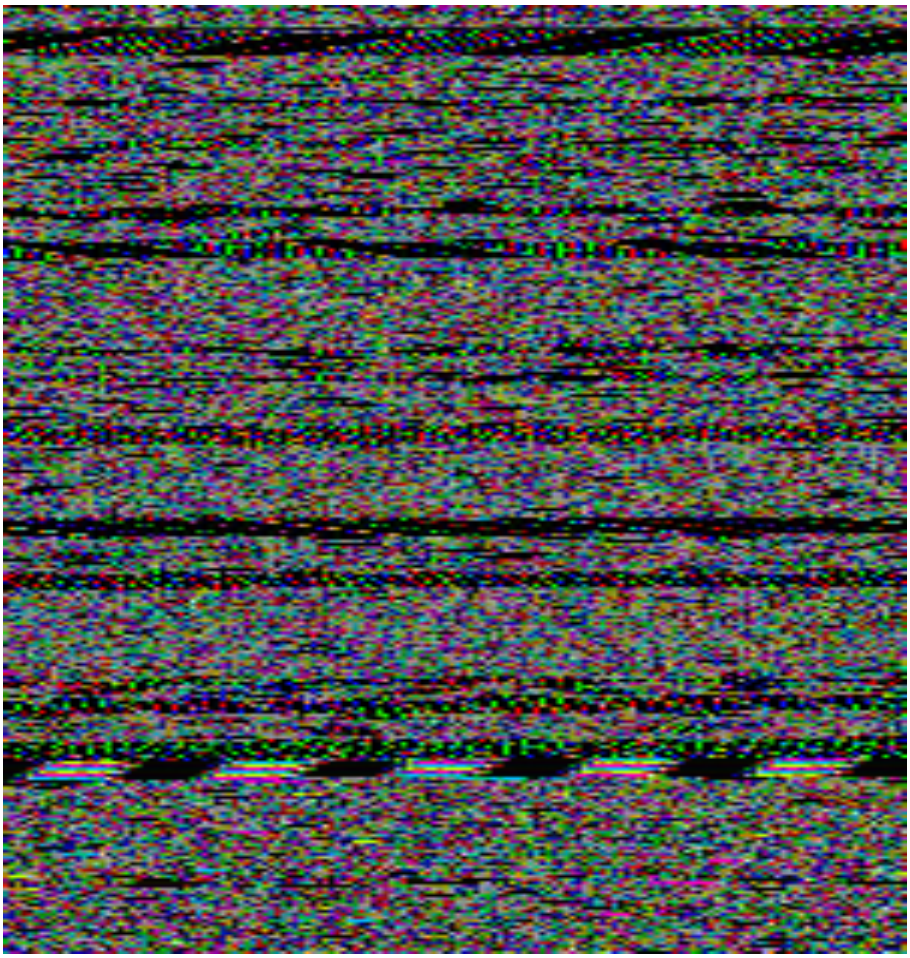
Redirecting to...

http://www.imdb.com/gallery/rg85957120?ref_=hm_snp_t1

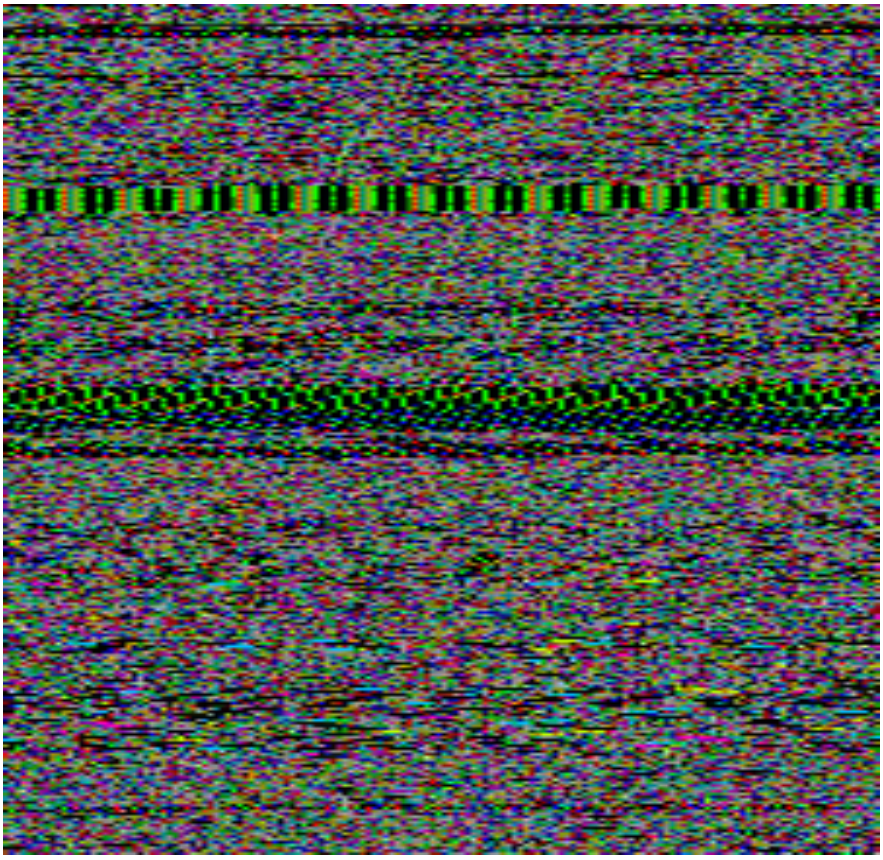
Impatient?

The Wayback Machine is an initiative of the Internet Archive, a 501(c)(3) non-profit, building a digital library of Internet sites and other cultural artifacts in digital form. Other projects include Open Library & archive-it.org.

Your use of the Wayback Machine is subject to the Internet Archive's Terms of Use.



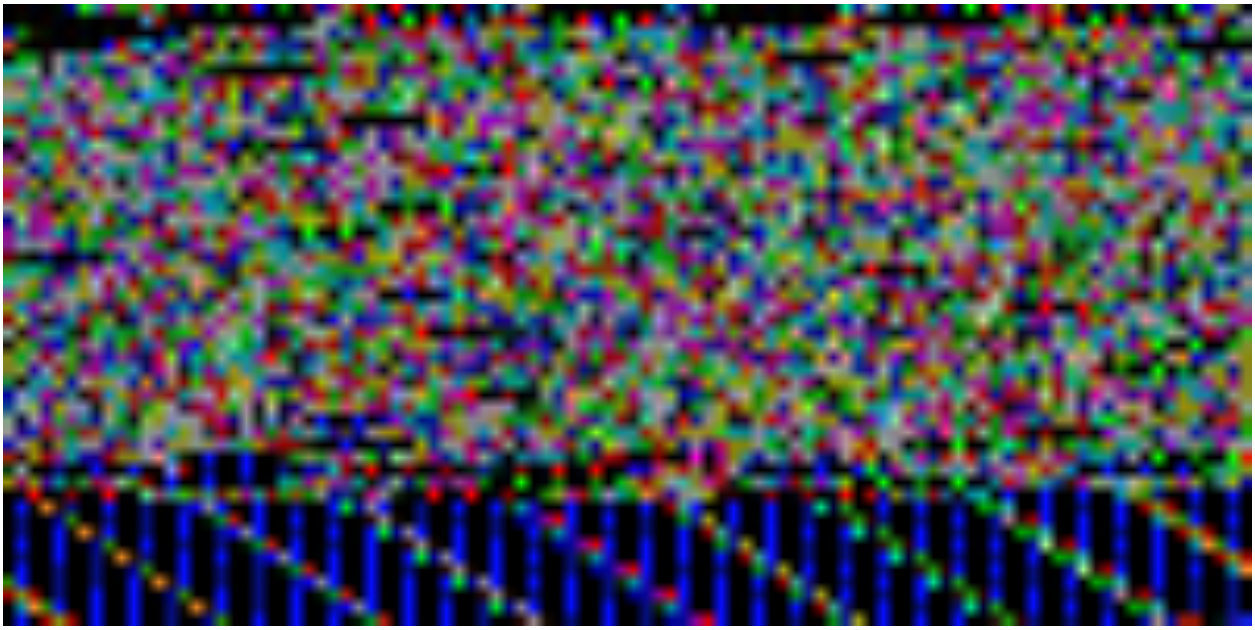
Glitch-utterance 2: "Lumiere 2013 Closing Ceremony," *IMDB*
Captured June 19, 2015
1 capture total



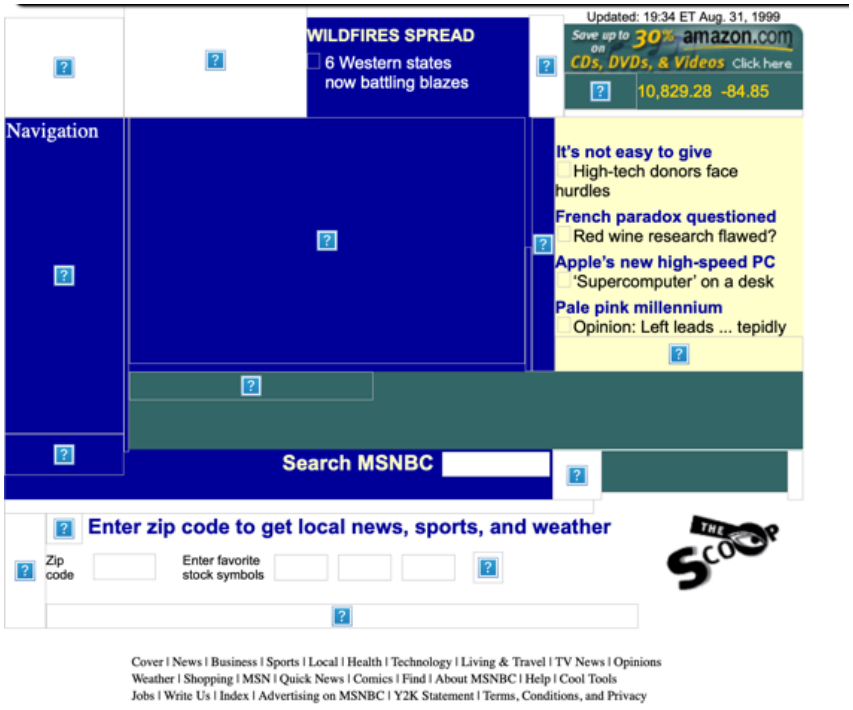
Glitch-utterance 3: "Word of the day: 'mickle,'" *reference.com*

Page not found

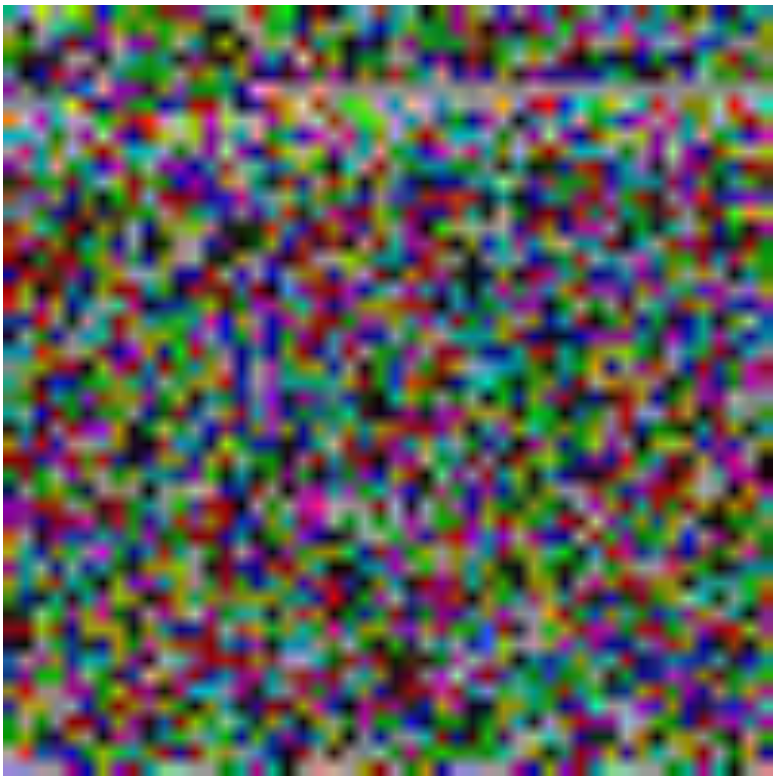
We're sorry, the page you have requested is not available.



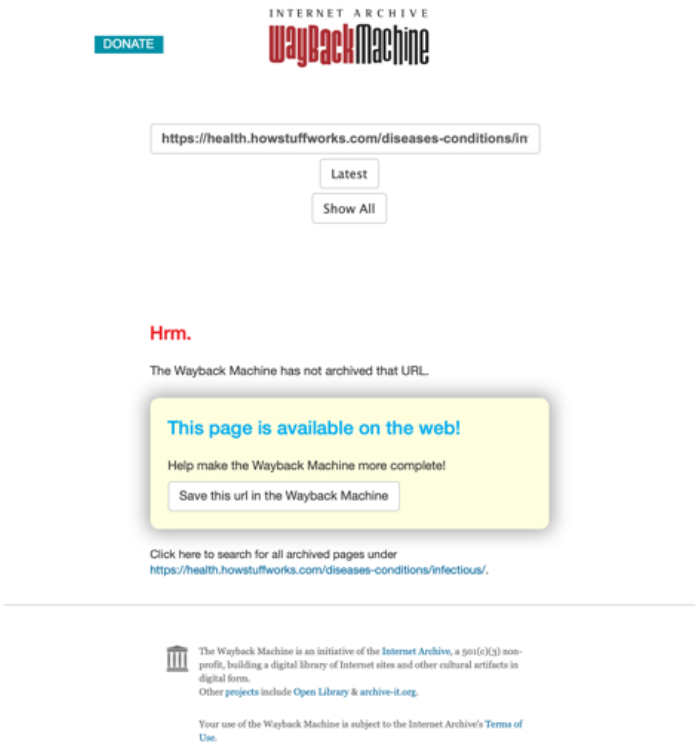
Glitch-utterance 4: "All the cool stuff in GeoCities is caught in BackWeb," *GeoCities*

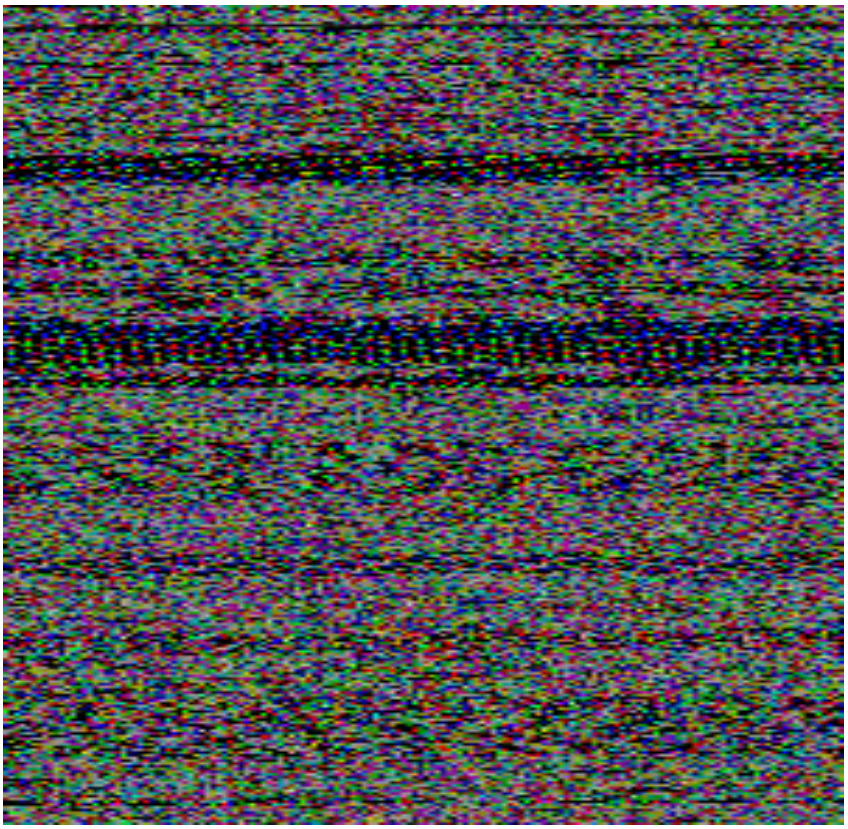


Glitch-utterance 5: "Home page," *NBC News*
Captured September 1, 1999
63 captures total



Glitch Utterance 6: "Living Overseas," *Wikihow*
Captured November 15, 2013
927 captures total





Glitch-utterance 7: "When Does an Epidemic Become a Pandemic?," *How Stuff Works*

Exhibit: a performative approach to exhibitions and their institutional substrates

> It is important that we think of our archival practices and processes as critical interventions, as deliberate and conscious acts, rather than a passive set of objective tasks which must be followed with no thought as to why or how these are done.
>
> — Kristen Wright, "Archival interventions and the language we use"[232]

> The failure to question the presumed objectivity of [archival] practices as well as the influential role of archivists in shaping the human record raises serious questions about the issue of social responsibility…Nothing is neutral and nothing is objective.
>
> — Joseph Deodato, "Becoming responsible mediators: the application of postmodern perspectives to archival arrangement and description"[233]

In "Archival interventions and the language we use," archivist Kirsten Wright describes archives and archival practices as "critical interventions."[234] By this she means to highlight the fact that archives are not neutral, but inherently political. As I explained in my exergue, this is not a new claim; Derrida had recognized the archive's political nature in *Archive Fever* some 30 years ago. For Wright, however, it is important that we address the politics of the archive in our contemporary moment because there have been "fewer discussions into transitioning into practical actions which can be taken by individuals and organisations…." Significantly, these practical actions, she stresses, need to take as their starting point the non-neutrality of archives

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[232] Kristen Wright, "Archival interventions and the language we use," *Archival Science* 19 (2019): 345.
[233] Joseph Deodato, "Becoming responsible mediators: the application of postmodern perspectives to archival arrangement & description," *Progressive Librarian* 27 (2006): 52-54.
[234] Wright, 345.

because the archive is inherently political.[235] The increasing ubiquity of digital technology has led to the democratization of archives in the form of greater participation and access, which has facilitated a rapid increase in both the formal and informal production of preservable content. However, as Derrida and, more recently, Wright remind us, democratization does not mean the lack of institutional influence; the production of preservable content—both formal and informal—is consequently subject to archival violence.

Librarian Joseph Deodato highlights archival violence in this chapter's second epigraph. Like Derrida and Wright, Deodato addresses the inherent violence of archival logic, which takes the form of various institutional practices. In "Becoming responsible mediators: the application of postmodern perspectives to archival arrangement and description," Deodate turns to post structuralist theory—notably Derrida's deconstruction—to critically address archival theory and practice, which "has for the most part," he explains, "remained squarely rooted in earlier traditions of nineteenth-century positivism." Similar to Wright, Deodate stresses the need to critically address contemporary archival theory and practice because "archivists have managed to avoid the external scrutiny and internal pressures to which other disciplines have long been subjected to." The work of archivists, he further explains, has been done in "relative obscurity"; however, the increasing ubiquity of digital technologies—notably, the collaborative and democratized participatory access that they afford—"has led to greater visibility" of archival practices, and, significantly, the "impetus to a revaluation of traditional principles…." [236] Deodato specifically addresses archival description as a form of archival violence. I describe archival description here as an exemplar of the productive and political function of the archive—

[235] Ibid.
[236] Deodato, 52.

recall that a document, for Derrida, engages in a continuous act of becoming saved, fixed, controlled, and thus institutionalized. The document is performatively produced as a "document" by the archival institution via its particular brand of archival logic—and, like the performative act of titling, the archival institution is simultaneously established as a consigning authority. It is for this reason that the document "alerts us to all of the institutional, juridical, political dimensions that we must also debate."[237]

Archival description, Deodato explains, provides contextual information about archival materials; further, it contextualizes the specific arrangement of archival materials, or, in other words, its consigning logic. And similar to Wright's use of the term "intervention," Deodato argues that archival description is a form of "mediation."[238] By this he means to say that archival descriptions play a key role in the productive function of the archive; they performatively produce the very documents they serve to describe, and are thus common sites of archival violence. Archival descriptions, Deodato concludes, are not objective recreations "of some prior existing reality, but representations shaped by the individual subjectivities of the archivist, the institutional requirements of the archives, and the broader cultural and intellectual climates in which they operate."[239]

In "RadTech Meets RadArch: Towards a New Principle for Archives and Archival Description," now ex-archivist Jarrett M. Drake claims that provenance has historically been the guiding principle for archival description, which carries significant implications, especially in our contemporary moment. "Provenance," Drake explains,

[237] Derrida, *Paper Machine,* 7.
[238] Deodato, 56.
[239] Deodato, 55.

> thrives with the presence of a clear creator or ownership of records and with a hierarchical relationship between entities, both of which reflect the bureaucratic and corporate needs of the Western colonial, capitalist, and imperialist regimes in which archivists have most adhered to the principle.[240]

Drake identifies two features of provenance in this quote. First, provenance privileges authorship and origin. This feature is reminiscent of Phelan's ontology of disappearance, integral to which is her memorial approach to performance theory and writing as an archival practice. With the artists and theorists who responded to Phelan's ontology of disappearance in mind, my argument in the previous chapter problematizes the authority of ownership and origin via a performative perspective. In short, a performative perspective affords an understanding of the archive as a continuous constitution of documents, and the events they serve to performatively represent. This perspective problematizes the authority of authorship and origin because it shifts the focus from what is preserved to how it has become and continues to be preservable through multiple archival acts by various archival institutions with—and I will later return to this point—their own claims to authorship and origin.

The second feature of provenance that Drake identifies concerns the inherent political nature of archives. Archives that acknowledge this principle, he argues, inevitably justify and perpetuate colonial, capitalist, and imperialist values.[241] For example, Drake points to biographical notes as a form of archival description that contains provenance information. "[A]rchivists often write massive memorials and monuments to wealthy, white, cisgendered and heterosexual men," in biographical notes he explains, "including selective details about the

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[240] Jarrett M. Drake, "RadTech Meets RadArch: towards a new principle for archives and archival description," *Medium,* April 6, 2016, https://medium.com/on-archivy/radtech-meets-radarch-towards-a-new-principle-for-archi ves-and-archival-description-568f133e4325

[241] Ibid.

creator that have minimal bearing on the records, and instead serve to valorize and venerate white western masculinity."[242] To support this claim, Drake highlights John Foster Dullues's (1888-1959) biographical note, which describes his career as the Secretary of the State for U.S. President Dwight D. Eisenhower with words like "distinguished," "significant," "prestigious," and "prominent." Significantly, these words, Drake observes, are generally not used to describe marginalized individuals, including black, Indigenous, and people of colour (BIPOC).[243] The principle of provenance, Drake concludes, continues to be "*the* central organizing unit for description in most archival repositories and archivists must come to terms with the ways in which we incorporate the privilege, power, and patriarchy of provenance into our everyday practices."[244] Similarly, both Wright and Deodato call for archival responsibility and accountability in our contemporary digital moment: Wright advocates for archival transparency by "exposing…what archivists do—how and when decisions are made (and by who); how collections are processed and described; and resulting implications for access and use...."[245] And Deodato emphasizes the multiple contexts that consequently influence archival content: "Adequately documenting the provenance of records requires more than simply identifying the office of their creation, but also their social and cultural contexts, functions, and custodial history (including their history under archival custody)."[246] I will return to Drake, Wright, Deodato when I address race-based archival violence.

At this point, it goes without saying that digital archives have made archival content readily available via democratized participatory access—albeit politicized access. Thus, many

[242] Ibid.
[243] Ibid.
[244] Drake, original emphasis.
[245] Wright, 345.
[246] Deodato, 54.

digital archives have shifted the focus from preservation to interactive exhibition. Formal archives, like the Library and Archives Canada (LAC) and the Archives of Ontario, for example, have digitized their collections for public access, while collecting their users' metadata.[247] (This said, it is important to note that the digitization of archival material requires substantial technological and financial means; I will later return to this point). And social media platforms, as informal digital archives, for example, provide personal exhibition spaces, while collecting their user's metadata: Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, TicTok, among others—the 2018 Facebook-Cambridge Analytica controversy showed how social media platforms serve as archives for massive amounts of metadata, and, significantly, how this data can be politically leveraged.[248]

As I previously argued, the tension of contemporary digital archives was anticipated by performance artists and theorists decades earlier. In a similar sense, there is a long history of gallery and museum institutional critique that we can draw from to productively address the political implications of contemporary digital archives—as an introductory note, the term "institutional critique," in the art discipline, refers to the political art practice that developed in the 1960s and 1970s, which sought to problematize the gallery and museum institution as a cultural meaning making site. I mentioned in my exergue that digital technologies have exacerbated the precarity and volatility of archives. Thus, digital archives not only remain prone to *mal d'archive*—even though they aim to preserve more reliably than their pre-digital

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[247] "DigiLab," *Libraries and Archives Canada,* accessed September 2020, https://www.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/services-public/Pages/digilab.aspx and "Archives of Ontario," *Ministry of Government and Consumer Services*, accessed September 2020, http://www.archives.gov.on.ca/en/access/our_collection.aspx

[248] Merrit Kennedy, "'They Don't Care:' Whistleblower Says Cambridge Analytica Aims to Undermine Democracy," *NPR,* March 27, 2018, https://www.npr.org/sections/thetwo-way/2018/03/27/597279596/they-don-t-care-whistleblower-says-cambridge-analytica-seeks-to-undermine-democr.

counterparts—they have also exacerbated its political symptoms. Both Deodato and Drake highlight the precarity and volatility of provenance, for example. Shared stewardship over documents afforded by platforms like Dropbox and Google's Drive and SharePoint have emphasized how subjective and complex claims of authorship, origin and, further, custody are when archival institutions are involved. Drake, in particular, asks: "Can two distinct persons or corporate bodies both lay claim to custody, and if so, does that conflict with the principle that the fonds of one creator be separate from the fonds of another?"[249] This is further complicated if shared documents are stored on remote servers owned by a third-party service provider. Moreover, it's important to note that the concept of provenance was developed in the West during a time in which some people were legally excluded from ownership. "It's application in archives…." Drake explains, "reflects the limitations of state regimes in the West to recognize fully the human rights of [BIPOC]."[250] Recent COVID-19 closures and BLM protests in response to the deaths of George Floyd, Ahmaud Arbery, and Breonna Taylor—among many others—have stressed the effects of racist policies and practices justified by provenance that continue to govern many formal and informal institutions, and, significantly, the importance of critically addressing them in our contemporary digital moment.

As I hope my title suggests, the focus of this chapter is on exhibitions and their supporting institutional substrates. I showed at the end of my previous chapter that acts of performing and documenting are not inherently separate actions—recall that to perform an

[249] Drake. His use of the term "fonds" in this quote refers to French archivist Natalis de Wailly's "*respect des fonds.*" de Wailly introduced "*respect des fonds*" in 1841 as another term for provenance, which, as I have previously explained, demands clear authorship and origin, or, as Drake puts it, "in order to preserve context, records of different origins, or provenance, must not be mixed with those of other origins."
[250] Ibid.

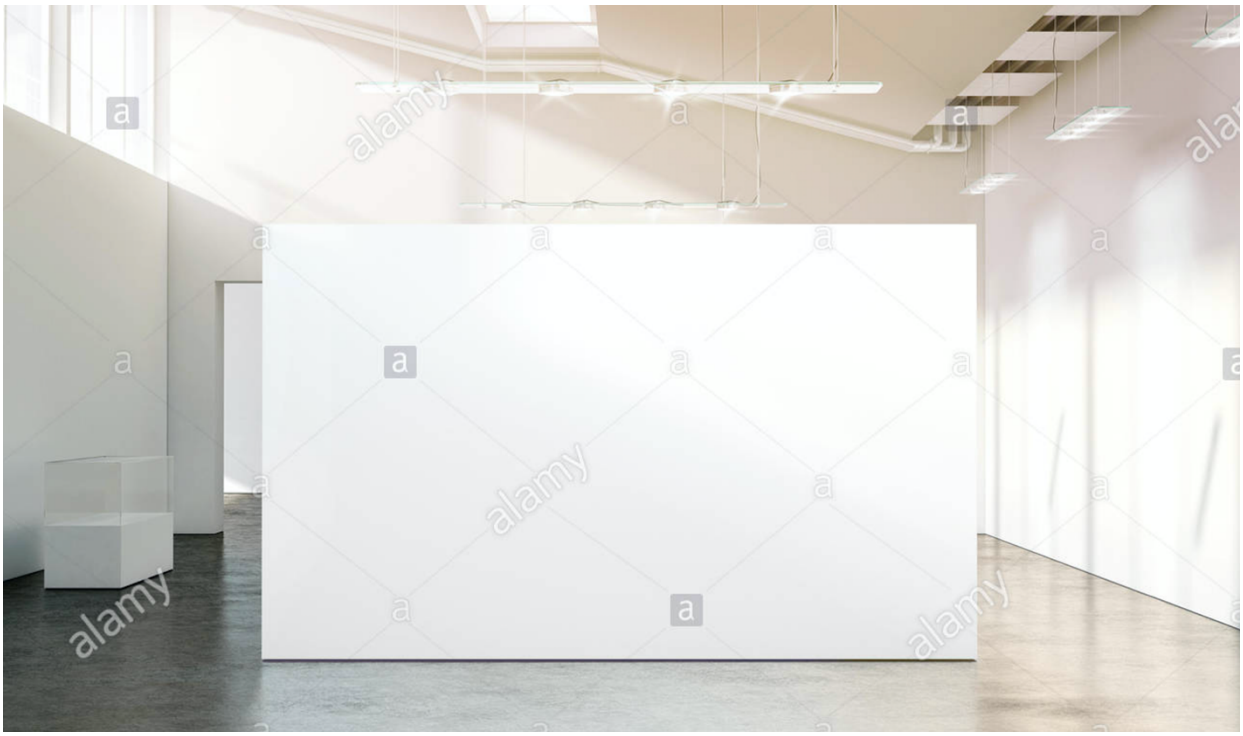
inaugural live performance is to also in part preserve/produce it in documentary form; and to engage with its documentation after the fact is to performatively constitute it as one such future to come. In a similar sense, I argue that archival and curatorial acts are not only similar, they are inseparable practices with the former emphasizing preservation and the latter exhibition, historically speaking. To curate is to not only to exhibit, but also to preserve through various archival documents, which are made to be archivable in the logical of the archiving institution—exhibition reviews and catalogues, press releases, wall labels, work orders, accession numbers, etc. And in a similar sense, archived "stuff," according to Steedman, "just sits there until it is read, and used, and narrativized," that is, exhibited in such a way that makes sense of it in a future context.[251] Significantly, to curate is to commit an act of archival violence because it is highly selective; it is a command to pay attention to selected content—and what is not selected becomes a performative representation (in a Baradian sense) of those without power, or what archivist Rodney G.S. Carter terms "archival silences."[252] It is for this reason that I focus on curatorial practice and institutional critique from which we can better understand archival violence inherent in archival practices.

Over the course of two months in 2001, Vienna's Museum of Applied Arts (MAK) hosted a symposium entitled *The Discursive Museum.* The lectures and roundtable discussions were then published in a volume of the same name. In his opening remarks, curator and editor Peter Noever outlines the symposium's concerns: "Art is vanishing." There are fewer tangible artworks, and "Even when these works do emerge, they seem to be less often destined for

[251] Steedman, 68.
[252] Rodney G. S. Carter, "Of Things Said and Unsaid: Power, Archival Silences, and Power in Silence," *Archivaria* 61 (2006): 215.

museums, or even able to endure the test of time as mere objects."[253] The goal of the *Discursive Museum* symposium, further, the published volume, was and is to critically address and re-evaluate the discourse of the museum in light of what Noever calls our "present crisis," which is the fact the museum discourse no longer serves the objects it is tasked to serve.[254]

For Noever, the empty MAK exhibition space (emptied for the duration of the symposium) is not insignificant. In Noever's words, the empty exhibition space "bear[s] witness to the present crisis."[255] In doing so, Noever, and his fellow curators, theorists, and artists, create



As the water marks indicate, this is not an image of MAK's empty gallery space. The image published in *The Discursive Museum* was not available for reproduction in *Untitled* (dissertation 4.2). However, Alamy's stock image of a digitally rendered empty exhibition space was available, which was the first image generated from the following Google search: "MAK empty exhibition hall." I use it here as a "virtual readymade" to (1), stand in for MAK's empty exhibition space, and (2), point to not only MAK as an object of critique, but also to Google as a digital archive and exhibition site that has made this image readily accessible for me, while archiving my activity on their website.

[253] Peter Noever, *The Discursive Museum* (New York: Distributed Art Pub, 2001), 7.
[254] Ibid.
[255] Ibid.

a discourse within an established discourse in order to critically examine it from within, which, in this case, is symbolically represented by MAK's bare walls, originally tasked to house and exhibit art. In focusing on a particular characteristic of contemporary art—the creator of art objects is also a theoretician of aesthetics—Noever calls for museums to take on this characteristic as a museographical practice. In other words, art is increasingly becoming discursive, which, has become, Noever argues, the precondition for aesthetic objects. If the museum is to be of service to art, it must become the object of its own discourse, as the artist is both the creator and theoretician of aesthetics. The museum, Noever concludes, "cannot just be a place where discourses configure themselves…it must become the subject of discourse itself."[256] The focus, for Noever, is critical self-reflectivity.

This is not the first time that the discourse of the museum has been critically addressed and re-evaluated. Brian O'Doherty, for example, has problematized the gallery in *Inside the White Cube: The Ideology of the Gallery Space.* First published in 1976, O'Doherty describes the gallery as a "white cube," which refers to the assumption that the (often) white gallery walls, tasked with exhibiting art, are neutral. "[T]the gallery space is no longer 'neutral,'" he explains.

> The wall becomes a membrane through which esthetic and commercial values osmotically exchange. As a molecular shudder in the white walls becomes perceptible, there is a further inversion of context. The walls assimilate….[257]

By this he means that context (the gallery) consumes its content (exhibited artworks), and becomes it. The gallery is thus not a neutral exhibition space, but a product eager to exhibit itself along with the artworks it is tasked to exhibit. Bal argues a similar point. In "Showing, Telling,

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[256] Noever, 8.
[257] Brian O'Doherty, *Inside the White Cube: The Ideology of the Gallery Space* (San Francisco: Lapis Press, 1999), 79.

Showing Off," she exposes the museum's tendency to preserve itself in addition to performing its vocational goals, including the preservation of artworks and artifacts and public education, among other services. She calls this the "metamuseum," which has been theorized by both museum scholars and practitioners in their challenging of the "essential" and "historical" colonial fictions embedded in the "museum."[258] Significantly for Bal, exhibitions are utterances of museum discourse—the foundation of which is the "metamuseum." By this she means that exhibitions performatively establish and justify the museum's institutional authority and validity, which includes its museological ideology, and its supporting museographical practices.[259]

Like archival descriptions, exhibitions, as performative utterances, play a key role in establishing the authority and validity of their museum or gallery substrate. For Bal, viewing exhibitions through a performative perspective challenges the assumed neutrality of museological ideologies and museographical practices, similar to O'Doherty's "white cube" and Noever's "discursive museum." I refer to Bal, O'Doherty, and Noever here to point the long history of gallery and museum institutional critique that we can draw from to address the political implications of contemporary digital archives. Starting with Balzer's critique of contemporary curatorial trends—which I introduced in my exergue—I outline various performance practices that engage with institutional critique in this chapter. As I previously mentioned, recent COVID-19 closures and BLM protests have stressed the effects of colonially rooted racist policies and practices that govern many formal and informal institutions, and, significantly, the importance of addressing them in our contemporary digital moment. It is for

[258] Bal, "Showing, Telling, Showing Off," 560-561.
[259] Bal, "The Discourse of the Museum," in *Thinking about Exhibitions,* ed. by Reesa Greenberg, Bruce W Ferguson, and Sandy Nairne (New York: Routledge, 1996), 214.

this reason that I discuss how a performative approach has and continues to productively address race-based archival violence in the gallery and museum institution. I apply this performative approach to contemporary digital archives throughout this chapter, and, in doing so, I hope to productively address the political stakes of digital archives that Drake, Wright, and Deodato describe. I argue that the increasing ubiquity of curatorial acts emphasizes the production of archival value and authority, not only for established galleries and museums, but also for amateur curators like myself and Big Tech companies like Google. In other words, we now have a greater sense of authority to curate and exhibit as a result of the participatory access that digital archives afford. Like Wright, Deodato, and Drake, I aim to show by the end of chapter that we need to acknowledge the responsibility that this sense of authority comes with because it often leads to instances of archival violence.

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The increasing emphasis on exhibition facilitated by digital technologies speaks to what Balzer calls the "curatorial impulse," that is, the feverish impulse to select, organize, and exhibit. Curation, Balzer argues, is everywhere, that is, transdisciplinary.[260] By this he means to say that curation now occurs in and through all aspects of daily life; it has exceeded the Art History, Visual Studies, and Curatorial Studies disciplines to saturate a variety of realms: business, retail, event planning, social media, musical playlists, to name a few. Hence, the title of his book: *Curationism: How Curating Took Over The Art World And Everything Else.* Balzer's argument is reminiscent of Featherstone's—recall his claim that the act of archiving is becoming less specialized because of the increasing ubiquity of digital technologies; in other words, there is

[260] Balzer, 16

little distinction between the archive and daily life if everything can be archived by everyone.[261] Similarly, Balzer points out that acts of curation are becoming less specialized due to the affordances of digital technologies; there is little distinction between curation and daily life if everything can be curated by everyone.[262]

For Balzer, "curationism" refers to "creationism," which connotes theologically based divine authorship and grand narratives.[263] The grand narrative of "curationism" offers the curator as an imparter, presenter, and creator of value. Significantly, Balzer also uses the term to "poke fun at the contemporary art world…." a world, he notes, laden with "-isms" and pretentious language.[264] Balzer is not the only contemporary art world critic that has commented on this trend. It has been parodied by writer James Ross and designer Joke De Winter in "Artybollocks Generator," from which I generated the following artist statement to function as sort of abstract for this academically curated dissertation:

> My work explores the relationship between Bauhausian sensibilities and life as performance. With influences as diverse as Machiavelli and John Cage, new combinations are manufactured from both simple and complex discourses. Ever since I was a teenager I have been fascinated by the ephemeral nature of the human condition. What starts out as contemplation soon becomes corrupted into a carnival of lust, leaving only a sense of what could have been and the chance of a new understanding. As shimmering phenomena become distorted through studious and personal practice, the viewer is left with a tribute to the inaccuracies of our world.[265]

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[261] Featherstone, 591.
[262] Balzer, 16.
[263] Balzer, 8.
[264] Ibid.
[265] James Ross and Joke De Winter, "Artybollocks Generator," *Artybollocks,* accessed March 2020: https://www.artybollocks.com

And if an artist statement isn't authenticating enough, the same website can generate an artist certificate authorized by the Artistic Practice Licensing Authority—assuming you agree to the following terms and conditions:

- At least occassionally [sic] produce works of art.*
- Study learned treatises on 'real artists,' their qualities, achievements, practices and heroic struggles, for the purpose of understanding how hopelessly short of their standards you fall.
- Constantly question, to yourself and others, whether you and your work are good enough to ever be a proper artist.
- Mutter under your breath at least daily that someone will expose you soon.

- Cultivate brow-furrowing, chin-rubbing and other anxious mannerisms appropriate for artistic practice.

> * Under exceptional circumstances the authority may accept 'talking about producing it a lot' or 'going to start it next week' as substitutes for this condition.[266]

Balzer's "curationism" and Ross and De Winter's "Artybollocks Generator" parody the consigning authority of art institutions. Significantly—and reminiscent of both Jones and

[266] Ibid.

Widrich—they highlight the performative function of the archival institution to reveal its role in establishing artists as "artists" and curators as "curators."[267]

As I previously mentioned, "curationism," in Balzer's terms, marks the acceleration of a "curatorial impulse," that is, an impulse to select, organize, and present things of value. And, in line with the grand narrative of "curationism," the value of a curated object, or a group of objects, is often created in the act of selecting, organizing, and presenting, which simultaneously establishes the curatorial authority of the "curator" and their institutional substrate—like, perhaps, the Artistic Practice Licensing Authority does for itself upon issuing an artist certificate, and thus the status of "artist." This "curatorial impulse" has become, for Balzer, a dominant way of understanding and being in the world, and is integral to what he terms the "curationist movement:"

> I contend that since about the mid-1990s, we have been living in the curationist movement, in which institutions and businesses rely on others, often variously credentialed experts, to cultivate and organize things in an expression-cum-assurance of value and an attempt to make affiliations with, and to court, various audiences and consumers. As these audiences and consumers, we are engaged as well, cultivating and organizing our identities duly, as we are prompted.[268]

This period marks the development of the "star curator" and the "celebrity curator." It is particularly the development of the "celebrity curator" that exemplifies the capitalist use of curation, which Balzer describes in the above quote: businesses and institutions work with credited celebrities turned curators to guest curate products with the goal of promoting and increasing consumption—audience members become consumers—affiliation, and brand identity.

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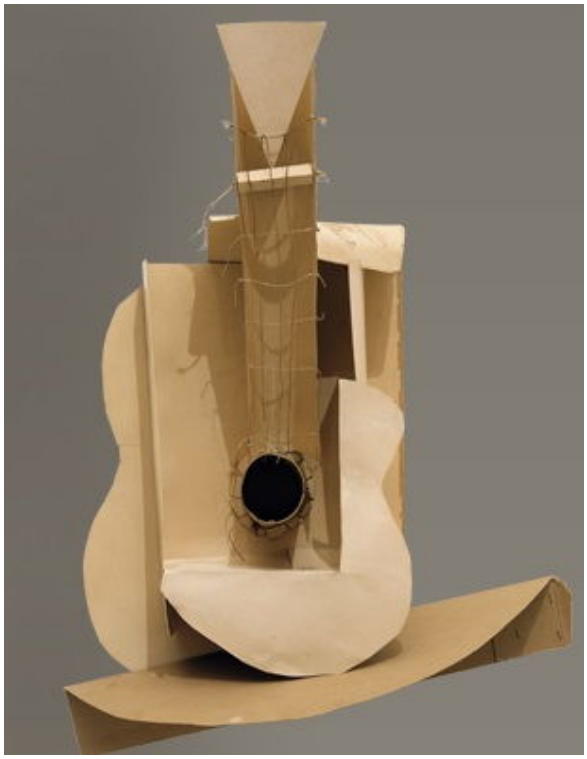
[267] Jones, "'Presence' in Absentia: Experiencing Performance as Documentation," 13 and Widrich, 97.
[268] Balzer, 8-9.

("Celebrity curators" are perhaps more aptly termed "curatorial celebrities" or "curatable celebrity" or "curated celebrities" because it more directly emphasizes their curated status of "celebrity curator"). Curatorial skill is not required to be a celebrity curator because the prerequisite for the "celebrity curator" is celebrity status. In other words, they must already be famous; after which, they can take on the role of a curator regardless of their (often lack of) curatorial skills. This points to another contemporary curatorial trend that Balzer addresses: deskilling and reskilling as a curatorial practice, which most directly speaks to the decrease in curatorial specialization due to the increase in participatory access to digital archives.

First used in the art world as a metaphor by artist Ian Burn in his 1981 essay, "The Sixties: Crisis and Aftermath (Or Memories of an Ex-Conceptual Artist)," the term "deskilling" refers to the effort to minimize or to eliminate skilled labour.[269] An early example of deskilling is the late Nineteenth Century Impressionist movement when artisanal competency of virtuoso draftsmanship and painterly finish was displaced by visually separate brush strokes, showing the manual application of pigment. Cubist collage is another, arguably more extreme, early example of deskilling. Found materials like cardboard and newsprint displaced not only artisanal competency, but also the function of painting and drawing altogether. For the celebrity curator, the specialized skill of curation is displaced by celebrity status. One need not be a curator proper to curate, that is, one doesn't need to have formal curatorial experience, or a Curatorial Studies degree to be a curator. The reskilling of the celebrity curator comes with the curated status of

[269] Ian Burn, "The Sixties: Crisis and Aftermath (Or Memories of an Ex-Conceptual Artist)," in *Art and Text,* ed. by Paul Taylor (Prahran: Prahran College of Advanced Education. 1981), 52. "Deskilling" derives from economics, and is used to describe the process by with skilled labour was radically minimized or eliminated by the implementation of technology. The factory assembly line developed and implemented during the Industrial Revolution (mid Eighteenth century to late Nineteenth century) is exemplary of deskilling because it requires semiskilled or nonskilled workers to operate.

Camille Pissarro, *La Jardin à Pontoise*, 1877, oil on canvas.



Pablo Picasso, *Maquette for Guitar,* 1912, paperboard, thread, string, twine, and coated wire.

"celebrity curator." It not only involves the affiliation between an institution and an individual's celebrity status, but the granting of the title "celebrity curator"; a title that carries the skill of curator and with it, its reskilling. The celebrity is thus curated as a "celebrity curator." For example: actor James Franco celebrity curated *Rebel* at Los Angeles's Museum of Contemporary Art (May 15 to June 23, 2012); musician Pharrell Williams has celebrity curated *This Is Not a Toy* at the Design Exchange, Toronto (February 7 to May 19, 2014); and rapper Drake celebrity curated the music for the exhibition *I Like it Like This* at Sotheby's, New York (April 28 to June 12, 2015).

Deskilling is perhaps most evident in more informal acts of curation: social media influences and Google's search engine, for example. As title suggests, "social media influencers" influence markets on social media platforms because they have millions of followers. Each is a

self-identified expert in their respective field; this, in addition to millions of followers or subscribers, grants them credibility. As third-party endorsers, social media influencers make a living through their credibility and product placement. In this sense, they are a social media variation of "celebrity curators." According to the influencer marketing agency Mediakix, PewDiePie, for example, has 119.8 million total followers, and makes $12 million dollars a year as of January 2019.[270]

The list of websites generated from a Google search is another example of a deskilled and informal curatorial act. With a click of a button, Google's search engine, as a technological algorithm, presents websites based on archived metadata that is personalized to the user's web browser and IP address. Significantly, a search result is influenced by paid advertising, hyperlinks, and global popularity, which is to say that the more visits and internal and external hyperlinks a website has, the more likely it will make the first page of a search—unless someone has paid for it to be there. In other words, Google's search engine does not result in a neutral search, but a curated display of websites. And it is important to note that any display of websites curated by a search engine can have significant political implications. In *Algorithms of Oppression: How Search Engines Reinforce Racism,* Safiya Umoja Noble outlines how algorithms reinforce pre-existing, oppressive social relationships. "On the Internet and in our everyday uses of technology," she explains, "discrimination is…embedded in computer code and, increasingly, in artificial intelligence technologies that we are reliant on, by choice or not."[271] It is commonly assumed that digital tools, like Google's search engine, are neutral.

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[270] "The Top 25 Influencers Marketers Must Know In 2019, "*Mediakix,* January 2019, https://mediakix.com/blog/top-influencers-social-media-instagram-youtube/

[271] Safiya Umoja Noble, *Algorithms of Oppression: How Search Engines Reinforce Racism* (New York: New York University Press, 2018), 1.

However, the people developing digital tools are not. In 2017, Google engineer James Damore's anti-diversity statement titled "Google's Ideological Echo Chamber" went viral. This statement, what Noble calls an "antidiversity screed" in the following quote, revealed underlying sexist and racist values held by many executives and employees at Google. "What this antidiversity screed has underscored for me…." Noble concludes,

> is that some of the very people who are developing search algorithms and architecture are willing to promote sexist and racist attitudes openly at work and beyond, while we are supposed to believe that these same employees are developing 'neutral' or 'objective' decision-making tools.[272]

Noble's main goal in *Algorithms of Oppression* is to address the way in which Big Tech companies like Google have commercially coopted BIPOC identities through ostensibly neutral digital tools like search engines. For example, the Google searches "black girls," "Asian girls," and "Latino girls," she explains, results in hypersexualized content—often pornography—which is not the case for "white girls."[273] Taking this into account, Google's (often assumed to be neutral) search engine is more akin to Deodato's understanding of archival descriptions as mediators, and Wright's understanding of archival acts as interventions—albeit at a exacerbated scale.

Historically, the highly skilled status of "curator" has typically been reversed for those working with art objects in art galleries. It is, however, critical to note the authority of its less "artwork" focused counterpart: the "museum." While a "gallery" is characteristically concerned with "artworks," a "museum" is characteristically concerned with "cultural objects" or "artifacts." Both, however, are concerned with the selection, organization, preservation,

[272] Noble, 2.
[273] Noble, 2-4.

exhibition, and education of cultural objects. It is, further, worth noting that this divide is not clearly defined. Many "galleries" that focus on preserving and exhibiting artworks use "museum" in their title—like the aforementioned MAK and MoMA, for example. "Artwork" or "cultural object" or "artifact" aside, galleries and museums share similar functions, and these functions performatively establish and maintain their institutional authority. It is for this reason that I use the terms interchangeably.

In *Museums in Motion: An Introduction to the History and Functions of Museums,* Edward P. Alexander and Mary Alexander define five functions of museums, which can be applied to galleries: (1), collection; (2), conservation and restoration; (3), research; (4), exhibition display; and (5), education and public service. Collection, they explain, is comprised of four goals: (1.1), physical security; (1.2), social distinction; (1.3), pursuit of knowledge and connoisseurship; and (1.4), a drive to achieve immortality. Although they initially describe the latter four goals in collection, Alexander and Alexander observe a contemporary shift: a museum does not need to have a permanent collection to be considered a "museum."[274] The same can be said of galleries. Some of these collection goals, further, are applicable to the other four functions: (1.1), physical security with (2), conservation and restoration; and (1.3), the pursuit of knowledge and connoisseurship with (3), research and, to a degree, (5), education and public service. (1.2), Social distinction and (1.4), the drive to achieve immortality speak to Bal's "metamuseum," which is arguably a tendency that exists in galleries and museums that do not have permanent collections; they too need to sustain themselves in order to execute their vocational goals—I am specifically thinking about non-for-profit galleries and artist run centres,

[274] Edward P. Alexander and Mary Alexander, *Museums in Motion: An Introduction to the History and Functions of Museums* (Lanham: Alta Mira Press, 2008), 7-13.

which often need to provide long term sustainability plans for grant applications. It is the institutional practices or museographical practices that both convey vocational goals and sustain the "metamuseum"; they are practices that justify the museum itself as much as they aim to sustain and advance vocational goals. In other words, *mal d'archive* also concerns the preservation of the institution itself. Bal highlights the AMNH's museum guide, for example, which is less of a "guide," and more of a "self-congratulatory manifesto" that emphasizes its institutional accomplishments and contemporary relevance. This "guide," Bal argues, is a product of colonial anxiety; its aim is to justify the relevance of a colonial museum in the postcolonial era.[275]

The AMNH's museum guide highlights the fact that museums are colonial products, and there is historical precedent for critiquing them as such. In "Mining the Museum: Artists Look at Museums, Museums Look At Themselves," Lisa Corrin argues that the inherent colonial hierarchies that underlay museum practices—"art"/"artifact," "high"/"low," "dominant"/"marginal," "subject"/"other," "culture"/"nature"—are means of codifying human experience. Calling into question these inherent hierarchies, Corrin observes that the very notion of the "museum" is challenged: its purpose, how it serves the public it claims to serve, and the processes by which it makes decisions (acquisition, conservation, interpretation, presentation, etc.). Postcolonial, deconstructive, and feminist and queer theories have charged this questioning, forcing museums to consider the relationship between their museographical practices and museological ideologies, and the historical, political, and social context(s) in which they

[275] Bal, "Showing Telling Showing Off," 557-558.

operate.[276] Like Bal, Corrin is clear in stating that we cannot separate an exhibition from the museum in which it is presented, nor can we separate the method of exhibiting from the institution's agenda. Institutional critique plays a key role in this, because it seeks to make known the politically rooted institutional technologies utilized by a museum to enforce its authority as a cultural institution.[277]

In his introduction to *Institutional critique: an anthology of artist's writings*, Alexander Alberro explains that the term "institutional critique" is used to describe the politicized art practices that call attention to the pernicious values of art galleries as cultural institutions.[278] Since the late 1960s and 1970s, he explains, artists have taken up institutional critique "to expose the institution of art as a deeply problematical field, making apparent the intersections where political, economic, and ideological interests directly intervened and interfered in the production of public culture."[279] In other words, artists have "raided the icebox" of museums since the 1960s—a phrase named after Andy Warhol's *Raid the Icebox* exhibition at Rhode Island School of Design Museum (April 23 to June 30, 1970), which he curated from the museum's permanent

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[276] Lisa G. Corrin, "Minning the Museum: Artists Look at Museums, Museums Look at Themselves." In *Museum Studies: An Anthology of Contexts,* ed. by Bettina Messias Carbonell (Hoboken: Blackwell Publishing, 2004), 229-330.

[277] Gillian Rose provides a productive summary of these technologies in *Visual Methodologies: an Introduction to Researching with Visual Materials*: (1), technologies of exhibition and display (i.e., display cases, reconstructions, installations, etc.); (2), textual and visual technologies of interpretation (i.e., labels and captions, panels, catalogues, guides, etc.); (3), technologies of layout and architecture (i.e., facades, entrance halls, cafés, washrooms, shops, etc.); (4), spaces behind the displays typically not open to the general public (i.e., archives, laboratories, libraries, offices, workshop rooms, storage, etc.); and (5), transmedia text (i.e., interactive multimedia tablets, etc.). Rose, *Visual Methodologies: an Introduction to Researching with Visual Materials* (London: SAGE Publishing, 2016), 233-244.

[278] Alexander Alberro, "Institutions, critique, and institutional critique," in *Institutional critique: an anthology of artist's writings*, edited by Alexander Alberro and Blake Stimson, 3-19. Cambridge: MIT Press, 2009), 8. According to Alberro, the term "institutional critique" was first used by Mel Ramsden in his text "On Practice" (1975).

[279] Alberro, 7.

collection; Corrin explains that "Warhol chose merely what he liked, his actions mimicking the subjective criteria of the curatorial staff."[280] Works by Michael Asher, Louise Lawler, Judith Barry, Andrea Fraser, and Hans Haacke, among others, have critically engaged with the power structures and governing practices of museums to confront the ways in which museums write and rewrite history. With reference to O'Doherty's "white cube," Corrin states that these artists have "illustrated how context is inseparable from the meaning of an art work and the meaning of the museum experience itself."[281] Fraser's docent alias Jane Castleton, for example, offered guided tours of the Philadelphia Museum in 1989, through which she highlighted institutional features that are integral to museums, but often left out of public tours—features like the museum's café, washrooms, storage rooms, water fountains, and security systems. Her verbose and melodramatic performance parodied common museal descriptions of artworks. For instance, she described a water fountain as "a work of astonishing economy and monumentality…."And the museum's café as a room that represents "the heyday of colonial art in Philadelphia on the eve of the Revolution, and must be regarded as one of the very finest of all American rooms."[282]

Andrea Fraser as Jane Castleton, *Museum Highlights: A Gallery Talk* 1989, performance, Philadelphia Museum.

[280] Corrin, 333.
[281] Corrin, 331.
[282] Andrea Fraser," *UbuWeb,* accessed June 2020, http://ubu.com/film/fraser.html

Fraser's 2003 performance *Official Welcome*, in which she gave the welcoming address at a private reception in Kunstverein, Hamburg, is a more recent example of her critical and parodic performance practice. Her address was a mash up of previous speeches given by art critics, collectors, curators, politicians, and artists at various openings, awards ceremonies, and other art related events. Over the course of her 30-minute address, she stripped down to a black Gucci thong and bra set. Like Ross and De Winter's "Artybollock Generator," Fraser highlighted the "banal comments and effusive words of praise uttered by presenters and recipients during art-awards ceremonies."[283] About halfway through her performance, she claimed, "I'm not a person today. I am an object in an art work!" She then stepped away from the podium, affording a full-frontal view of her Gucci lingerie for approximately 10 seconds, after which she stated, "That's great! Isn't she great! Exciting work!" as she walked back to the podium.[284] Through loquacious and pretentious language often used in the art world, both of Fraser's performances, as institutional critiques, highlight the power structures at play in museums because they point to the performative function of museum discourse. *Official Welcome,* in particular, points to the

Andrea Fraser, *Official Welcome,* 2003, performance, Kunstverein, Hamburg.

[283] Ibid.
[284] Ibid.

curation—and, at its extreme, exploitation—of the artist herself, which, as I will later explain, is a common effect of what Balzer terms "star curators."

This said, it is important to note that institutional critique is often absorbed into museum discourse. Corrin addresses this, stating that institutional critique now comfortability coexists in and is politically neutralized by the very "white cube" that it intended to critique.[285] Similarly, Alberro quotes performance artist Adrian Piper's "aesthetic acculturation," which is "'the process by which individuals are recruited into the ranks of art practitioners as artists (and also, secondarily, as critics, dealers, etc.) within existing art institutions…."[286] In other words, "aesthetic acculturation" is the process in which art institutions performatively justify their authority. Fraser too acknowledges this in "From the Critique of Institutions to an Institution of Critique." She states that the contributions of institutional critique have led to the appropriation of it because "The underlying relations of power remain the same." This has led her to conclude that "even artists whose work is informed by institutional critique should acknowledge that they are 'trapped' in the field of art...." [287] By this she means to say that institutional critique no longer takes place from an exterior position, but is constitutive of the museum institution itself. Or, to use Piper's terminology, institutional critique is a part of the process of "aesthetic acculturation."

This is not surprizing, considering that museum absorption and political neutralization of institutional critique can be traced back to the *Académic royale de peinture et de sculpture* (The Royal Academy of Painting and Sculpture), and the development of the avant-garde. From its establishment in 1648 through the following two centuries, the French Academy was an

[285] Corrin, 334.
[286] Alberro quoting Piper, 10.
[287] Alberro quoting Fraser, 16.

influential site of curatorial practice that shaped the production, distribution, and exhibition of artworks. It marks an early example of selection-based exhibitions that is now a standard contemporary practice. "Artists" founded the Academy in an attempt to mark their distinction from "artisans." "Non-academic art" (art created by artists/artisans not associated with the Academy) was considered a lesser form of creative production in relation to "academic art" (art created by Academy associated artists), which was exhibited in the Academy Salons. Art historian, Bruce Altshuler notes that in addition to distinguishing (high art creating) "artists" from (low art creating) "artisans," the Academy was an instrument of the state, and a facilitator of aristocratic patronage.[288]

It is important to note that, like the curatorial and archival decisions made in contemporary galleries, museums, and archives, the Academy ideals were political. The Academy often privileged representational art in the Neoclassical style. Neoclassicalism was a reaction against the frivolity of Rococo. According to Laurie Schneider Adams in *A History of Western Art*, "the Neoclassical style derived from its associations with heroic subject matter, its formal clarity, and its impression of stability and solidity. It also contained implicit references to Athenian democracy and the Roman Republic."[289] Its political influence characterized the concerns of Eighteenth Century Enlightenment thought; significantly, "the increasingly popular resentment of the abuses of the monarchy…which championed the rights of the individual." Neoclassicism is closely associated with the French Revolution because many of its leaders adopted the Neoclassical aesthetic to enhance their political image, including Napoleon

[288] Bruce Altshuler. *Salon to Biennial*: *Exhibitions that Made Art History*, vol. 1: 1863-1959 (New York: Phaidon Press, 2008), 12.
[289] Laurie Schneider Adams. *A History of Western Art*, (New York: John Jay College and the Graduate Center City University of New York, 2008), 382.

Bonaparte.[290] With political influence, accredited curators organized the Salon wall to exhibit the most "valuable" artworks at eye-level, while the less "valuable" artworks hung close to the floor and ceiling. The curator curated in the image of the Academy's (political) ideals, and can thus be considered more in service to the Academy than to the exhibited artworks and their artists. This is to say that the curator's role was to select and organize artworks in a way that emphasized the value of an artwork (its position on the Salon wall), and, in doing so, emphasized the Academy's position as an arbiter of value.

The Academy's authority and its curatorial practices did not go unchallenged. From the mid Nineteenth Century to the early Twentieth Century, avant-garde artists and artworks challenged the notion of "art," further, who held the authority to constitute the "artwork" as such. The Italian Futurists, for example. In *"*The Futurist Manifesto" (first published in *Le Figaro,* 1909), F.T. Marinetti called for a controversial (for its time) art practice that challenged both "artworks," and the institutions that exhibited them, including the Academy. In addition to comparing museums to cemeteries, Marinetti proclaimed that "all subjects previously used must be swept aside in order to express our whirling life of steel, of pride, of fever and of speed." He, speaking for all Futurists, later "demand[ed], for ten years, the total suppression of the nude in painting," which was a common occurrence in the Academy Salon; the goal of which was to distance the Futurist movement from the formal art institution.[291] Significantly, the distinction between the museum institution and the avant-garde, however, was short lived. In 1936, Alfred H. Barr Jr. (the first director-curator at the MoMA, New York) positioned a plaster replica of

[290] Ibid.
[291] F. T. Marinetti and Umerto Boccioni, "Futurist Manifesto & Futurist Painting," in *University of Chicago Readings in Western Civilization, Volume 9: Twentieth-Century Europe,* ed. by John Boyer and Jan Goldstein (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987), 15.

Winged Victory of Samothrace (circa 200-190 BCE) beside Futurist artist Umberto Boccioni's 1913 sculpture *Unique Forms of Continuity in Space*. Barr Jr.'s curatorial move signifies the institutional absorption of the avant-garde, which was, up to this point, considered separate from the institutional museum. This is perhaps not surprizing as Kimberly Jannarone notes in "The Political Fallacy of Vanguard Performance." Many of the avant-garde movements, including the aforementioned Futurism, "often relied on sexist, racist, primitivist, and imperialist notions" like the colonial museum itself. [292] Taking this into account, it seems that the institutional absorption of avant-garde artists and artworks was inevitable because the underlying power structures remained the same.

Cubism and Abstract Art, 1936, curated by Alferd H. Barr Jr., MoMA, New York.

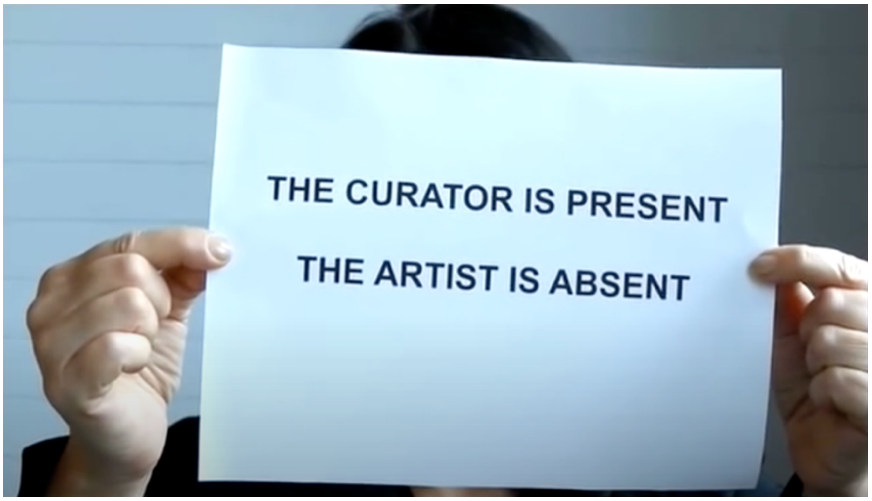
A contemporary example of this absorption and political neutralization is what Balzer terms the "star curator." Swiss curator Hans Ulrich Obrist, or HUO, is perhaps the most notable contemporary "star curator," whose name alone grants an exhibition prestige in a way that a mere curator's name does not. (He has also been called a "super curator"). With the "star curator," artists themselves are instigated in the organizing and generating of value; they are curatable in other words. The "star curator" takes the role of connoisseur who does not merely care for artworks, but secures and organizes in such a way that more directly and intentionally

[292] Kimberly Jannarone, "The Political Fallacy of Vanguard Performance," in *Vanguard Performance Beyond Left and Right,* ed. by Kimberly Jannarone (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1997), 6.

creates curatable artists and artworks as defined by their personal brand of curatorial authenticity. A significant aim and function of the "star curator" is thus to curate her authenticity as "curator" via curatable artists and artworks. This is emphasized by Renfri R. Hail's performance practice RR.H—specifically named as a critical response to HUO's curatorial practice.[293] Similar to early examples of institutional critique, RR.H works with permanent collections to curate exhibitions that chronicle the gallery's acquisition history and artwork provenance. Significantly, RR.H takes on the roles of archivist and docent to offer RR.H tours of the exhibition. These "official" RR.H tours showcase the gallery's acquisition history and artwork provenance in relation to their strategic plan, which not only stresses the production of value and authenticity for the art gallery—opposed to the artworks and artists themselves—but also for herself as "star curator"; this is solidified by the title of each exhibition which features her signature "star curator" brand: RR.H.

Similarly, in 2010, the MoMA's Public School One (MoMA PS1) director Klaus Biesenbach produced and directed a video performance, featuring Abramović titled *Video Portrait of Hans Ulrich Obrist.*[294] It was exhibited at the release of HUO's second volume of interviews at PS1 on October 23. *Video Portrait* begins with Ambramović, wearing HUO's iconic clear-plastic frames, holding up a sign stating the following:

[293] Renfri R. Hail, *RR.H* (Toronto: Lithograph Publishing Co. 2017), 17.
[294] "Portrait of Hans Ulrich Obrist by Marina Abramović," *YouTube,* October 27, 2010, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GD1DkLrJutI



Marina Abramović, *Video Portrait of Hans Ulrich Obrist,* 2010, video performance directed by Klaus Biesenbach.

After putting the sign down, she beings dictating a list of descriptors: "Hans Ulrich is…fast…sleepless…restless…curious…encyclopedic…monotone…runner…volcanic… hurricanic…mindblowing…surprising…limitless…" She increases the speed of her dictation until she becomes inarticulate. The physicality of rapidly dictating a list of descriptors may be a testament to HUO's countless accomplishments, or it could be a critique of "star curators:" the artist is rendered absent if the curator is present. RR.H, Biesenbach, and Abramović emphasize the production/exhibition inherent in star-curatorial projects, and, to a degree, all curatorial projects: the productive function of exhibition is exploited by the "star curator" at the artist's expense.

Although Fraser and, more recently, R.R.H. and Abramović critically engage with the institutional practices of museums, their work arguably reaffirms the validity and authority of the museum institution, like Boccioni's *Unique Forms of Continuity in Space* did for the MoMA in 1936. "As a result of being called art, acquired for the collection," Corrin concludes, "artwork that laid political and ethical landmines to explode the ideological apparatus of museums is often

defused."[295] It seems like the very status of "art" exhibited in a museum politically neutralizes institutional critique, rendering void the possibility of institutional reform. Fraser's *Official Welcome,* for example, was performed at her mid-career retrospective, and the video documentation for it has been acquired by the Tate Modern for its permanent collection.

However, for Corrin, not all institutional critiques are rendered void. She argues that Fred Wilson's *Mining the Museum* represents a meaningful and critical engagement with a museum institution, because it cannot be separated from the museum institution in which it was exhibited: The Maryland Historical Society. [296] I refer to Wilson's *Mining the Museum* here as an introduction to race-based archival violence perpetuated by the museum institution.

In 1992, Wilson was invited by the Contemporary Museum of Baltimore to curate an exhibition at the Historical Society from their permanent collection. Beginning his "mining" with no established script and taking on any and all museum staff roles in the process, Wilson uncovered and exhibited the systemic racism that served as the foundation of the Historical Society since its incorporation in 1844. One such installation, for example, paired three white pedestals, supporting white marble busts of Napoleon Bonaparte, Henry Clay, and Andrew Jackson, with three vacant black pedestals labeled Harriet Tubman, Benjamin Banneker, and Frederick Douglass. The men memorialized in marble, Corrin explains, did not significantly contribute to Maryland history, which is not the case for the three absent African Americans.[297] With their absence, Wilson shows that the Historical Society did not serve the Baltimore public equally, regardless of its mission to do so.

[295] Corrin, 334.
[296] Corrin, 335.
[297] Corrin, 338.

Wilson's *Mining the Museum* pointed to the performative function of both preservation and exhibition, which has significant cultural and political implications. More specifically, he highlighted systemic racism, and, in doing so, the need for institutional reform. As I previously mentioned in this chapter's introduction, contemporary archivists Drake and Wright and librarian Deodato advocate for site-specific archival responsibility and accountability. Recall that Drake claims that "archival repositories and archivists must come to terms with the ways in which we incorporate the privilege, power, and patriarchy of provenance into our everyday practices."[298] Similarly, Wright advocates for archival transparency by "exposing more of the context of what archivists do," which includes how archival documents are acquired and organized.[299] And Deodato claims that "the focus of archival work must shift from revealing the content of records to revealing their contexts."[300] In short, Drake, Wright, and Deodato stress the need to contextualize how documents are constituted and maintained; in particular, they point to the importance of identifying a document's social and cultural context, which includes its archival history. This is because—as I explained in my previous chapter—a document does not merely describe (as a constative utterance), but performatively produces the very thing it documents in the logic of its archiving institution. Many artists and theorists like Wilson, and, as I will soon address, Syrus Marcus Ware, Kosisochukwu Nnebe, !Kona, and Kayleigh Bryant-Greenwell productively address the power structures and political implications of archival institutions because they acknowledge not only the performative function of various institutional practices, but also the importance of institutional responsibility and accountability.

[298] Drake, original emphasis.
[299] Wright, 345.
[300] Deodato, 54.

In "Give Us Permanence: Ending Anti-black Racism in Canada's Art Institutions," artist and activist Marcus Ware highlights instances of systemic racism in Canada's art institutions, including the Art Gallery of Ontario (AGO). With reference to Susan Cahan's *Mounting Frustration: The Art Museum in the Age of Black Power*, Marcus Ware points out that museums have historically ignored BIPOC—except during times of civil unrest and uprising, "showing interest when fashion dictates, or when they are required to seem 'woke.'" Significantly, when museums do exhibit BIPOC, "it's often in kitchen galleries or as temporary shows, and never as part of the permanent collection of the gallery."[301] With my previous discussion of institutional critique, this may suggest that BIPOC artworks avoid political neutralization because they are not viewed as "art" to collect. This is, however, not the case. BIPOC artworks may not be collected for permanent collections—hence the title of Marcus Ware's text—but they are exhibited; and systemic anti-BIPOC policies govern the conditions in which BIPOC artworks are exhibited because, as we know from Bal's scholarship, exhibitions are performative utterances of the museum discourse. As such, filling in the gaps of permanent collections, without critically addressing institutional policies and practices, risks perpetuating the very power structures that created the gaps in the first place—including *mal d'archive.* As I addressed in both my exergue and first chapter, the increase in archival material does not mean an increase in archival reliability. This is, however, a common assumption for many archival efforts. In Canada, for example, the Total Archives Documentation (developed in the 1970s) and, more recently, the Archival System Documentation (developed in the 1990s) strategies aimed to document the

[301] Syrus Marcus Ware, "Give Use Permanence: Ending Anti-Black Racism in Canada's Art Institutions," *Canadian Art,* June 24, 2020, https://canadianart.ca/features/give-us-permanence-ending-anti-black-racism-in-canadas-art-institutions/

social and political lives in historically marginalized communities. However, these strategies, Huang points out, are based on the assumption "that more documentation is necessarily better and that memory can be conveyed through documentation." We know from the performance artists and theorists who responded to Phelan's ontology of disappearance that this is not the case. With specific reference to Derrida's *mal d'archive*, Huang notes that this assumption maintains "a sense of absolute, irrefutable justice associated with more active documentation, without a realization that documentation emerges at the breakdown of memory and that destructive forces exist within future affirmations."[302] Thus, an increase in documentation cannot serve as insurance to guarantee a foreseeable future because it also means more instances of archival loss; as I explained in my exergue, the archive "anarchives itself."[303]

The inclusion of documents from historically marginalized communities, further, does not translate to diversity and equity because these documents are often consigned to a colonial substrate that serves those who benefit from colonization—not those who are marginalized by it—including the museum institution itself. Carter directly addresses this in "Of Things Said and Unsaid: Power, Archival Silences, and Power in Silence" where he cautions archivists against the attempt to "complete" an archive by filling in its gaps: "While archivists may have the best intentions in attempting to fill in the gaps they may be doing these groups a great disservice" because they risk further marginalizing the marginalized—recall, for example, the effects of archival descriptions based on the concept of provenance.[304] Marcus Ware's experience at the AGO shows this. While working at the AGO, he witnessed the installation of metal detectors for the art of hip-hop showcase *H.Y.P.E: Helping Young People Excel*. "To Keep out guns" was the

[302] Huang.
[303] Derrida, *Archive Fever,* 91.
[304] Carter, 226.

head of security's reasoning, which, as Marcus Ware notes, isn't a concern for non BIPOC events.[305] Marcus Ware, further, quotes Nigerian-Canadian curator and artist Nnebe who explains how systemic anti-black practices manifest for Black artists and curators in Canada during Black History Month:

> there was this feeling of being very tokenized and being invited into spaces only when it was a particular month, February. Sometimes the people who were inviting me to show work were Black folks who were only able to access resources for exhibitions at this time. That's when TD is all up and open to funding these Black History Month projects and spaces are okay with handing over their space to exhibit Black artists. It also has material impacts on when/under what conditions curators and Black cultural workers are afforded resources.[306]

With reference to recent lived experience, both Marcus Ware and Nnebe highlight contemporary instances of systemic racism in museums. They show that the inclusion of BIPOC artists without site-specific institutional critique performed by the institution itself—as we have learned by previous examples of institutional critique—often results in subordination and tokenization even if they are curated with diversity and equity in mind. Race-based archival violence thus has less to do with the fact of a permanent collection—as I previously mentioned, many contemporary museums and galleries do not have permanent collections—and more to do with the policies and practices that inform institutional conduct. With Marcus Ware and Nnebe's experiences in mind, O'Doherty's "white cube" more adequately refers to white hegemony and anti-BIPOC policies and practices at play in museums.

It is important to note that museums condition their audiences through various institutional practices—Rose's aforementioned institutional technologies, for example. In

[305] Marcus Ware.
[306] Marcus Ware quoting Nnebe.

"Memory, Distortion, and History in the Museum," Susan Crane uses the term "museumification" to refer to the process in which the awareness of the museum's ideologies and functions are internalized.[307] And while she doesn't use the Althusserian term "interpellate," Crane's "museumification" refers to the interpellative powers that museums have in creating museal subjects: they instruct us in social codes, and condition a sense of cultural literacy.[308] In other words, museums teach us how to behave, how to learn, what to expect, what to value, what to buy, and what to eat within the museal space. As I previously mentioned, exhibitions are performative utterances of museum discourse, and unless we demand that museum institutions critically engage with their underlying ideological structures that are validated and preserved by their exhibitions, then we will continue to be conditioned by the colonial museal model regardless of the institutional critiques offered by exhibited artworks—recall Nnebe's experience of tokenization as a black cultural worker during Black History Month. It is for this reason that co-founder and co-host of BlackChat Vancouver !Kona explains that institutional reform will likely come not from exhibitions, but from public pressure—more specifically, from the communities represented in and by museum institutions. "In the arts as this unlearning racism moment happens for so many white people," and in light of recent BLM protests, she explains, "I'm also seeing in many places that people are really digging into white supremacy and tearing down images of colonialism," she states.

> And once the statues start going, the arts institutions can't be far behind. As those things come down, I think the bricks-and-mortar institutions are going to have no choice but to

[307] Susan A. Crane, "Memory, Distortion, and History in the Museum." In *Museum Studies: An Anthology of Contexts,* ed. by Bettina Messias Carbonell (Hoboken: Blackwell Publishing, 2004), 311.
[308] Louis Althusser, "Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses," *Lenin and Philosophy and Other Essays* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1971): 85-126.

> address what's in their archives, what's actually hanging on their walls, whom they're actually collecting.

Marcus Ware also holds this view. "Art museums and galleries have a long legacy of white supremacy. They showcase the spoils of war. They showcase the spoils of colonialism," Marcus Ware states in an interview with Tom Power on the CBC's *Q* (the Canadian Broadcasting Company's *q: The Music*).

> I think what we need right now is dramatic change in the leadership, dramatic change in the programing, and dramatic change in the structure of the organization. Black people are literally dying the street and artists are documenting this moment. Artists are giving us hope for what our future could look like. If you are not supporting Black artists in this moment, I actually don't know how you are in any way relevant. We have to remember that activists are literally climbing up on to these buildings and to the statues outside of these institutions, pulling them down and throwing them in the river, and I think the institution needs to remember that, as a lot of the people I spoke to in my article ["Give Us Permanence"] are feeling, they are next. The institution can also be thrown in the river.[309]

The colonial "metamuseum" is at stake here. And both Marcus Ware and !Kona point to the role that the public plays in sparking institutional reform. The defacing of public statues that honour colonial heroes is also a call for institutions to not justify their existence in a postcolonial world, but to critically examine their past and current colonial practices, and take responsibility for them.

This said, the increasing ubiquity of digital technologies affords the museum a greater range of institutional influence, and thus "museumification." Ernst stresses this point in "Archi(ve)textures of Museology." "Museal spaces," he explains, "have never been more present

[309] Marcus Ware.

than in the age of digital *artes memoriae*…."[310] By this he means that institutional influence extends to various digital sites. If we are to critically engage with museum institutions—further, if museums are to critically engage with their own museal discourse—we thus need to consider multiple sites of institutional influence because the ubiquity of digital technologies has redefined the museum "site," linking it to multiple dynamic and interconnected digital archives with an emphasis on exhibition and participatory access. Social media sites, for example. Since the death of George Floyd on May 25, 2020, there has been many solidarity statements made by museums—among other cultural institutions like Skate Canada and various NHL (National Hockey League) teams. These statements, often uttered virtually, emphasize a commitment to diversity and equality with specific reference to BLM and BIPOC. The AGO, for example, posted the following message on Instagram:

> We hear you. We know we haven't done enough and we will do more. We've been silent as we reflect. But that silence speaks volumes. We were devastated by the most recent anti-Black racism. We believe strongly that Black lives matter. We acknowledge that words alone cannot address the many injustices and discrimination that Black, Indigenous and other marginalized communities continue to face.
>
> We are engaged in conversations with our peers and the community and internally, from each department to our Leadership Team and the Board. We have not done enough either inside or outside our walls. We are committed to change—learning, listening and growing with our communities, and are committed to better reflecting the diversity of the community we belong to. We know that words are not enough and we are committed to action.
>
> We will:
>
> — Use our communication channels to support the voices of change in our culture
>
> — Use our mission to ensure that the Collections, exhibitions and programs

[310] Ernst, "Archi(ve)textures of Museology," in *Museums and Memory*, ed. by Susan A. Crane (Sanford: Stanford University Press, 2000), 31.

> reflect our diverse communities.
> — Develop a specific plan to ensure that our Leadership, staff, volunteers and audience become more inclusive and diverse
> — Hold ourselves publicly accountable to these goals
> We are committed to sharing our progress with you moving forward and promise to be open and transparent. This is only the beginning.[311]

While this statement does indicate an action plan, it does not acknowledge, nor take responsibility for the AGO's history of systemic racism, which arguably lead to the following comment by Nigerian Canadian artist and scholar Ojo Agi—among other comments:

> I was refused the opportunity to interview for the role I was working in while on contract at AGO in November. The People Team went in circles trying to give excuses for why I couldn't interview (seniority, union issues, internal candidates only), only to ultimately hire a white man with less work experience outside of the AGO in my role. Just add this to the collection of stories of racism at AGO....[312]

Bryant-Greenwell, the Head of Public Programs at the Smithsonian American Art Museum and Renwick Gallery, stresses that statements made without action are insincere. In other words, statements that describe future action, but do not led to action—a perlocutionary performative utterance in Austinian terms—are insincere because, as I explained in my note on titles, intentionality is a requirement for a felicitous performative utterance, even if, as Derrida reminds us, intentionality can only ever be partial.

In a Cuseum hosted webinar titled "Cultural Organizations as Incubators for Social Impact," Bryant-Greenwell questions the museum's capacity to facilitate social change that

[311] @AGO, *Instagram,* June 5, 2020, https://www.instagram.com/p/CBEHE0BgwX1/
[312] Ibid.

many of these statements imply if not directly reference.[313] It's often the case, in Bryant-Greenwell's experience, that statements on diversity and inclusion are made by the people in power who want to stay in power. Thus, these statements do more harm than good if they don't address the history of systemic racism in museums, which, as Marcus Ware explains, many do not: "We have a white supremacy problem that is perhaps the art world's best (worst?)—kept secret—this secret is something these solidarity statements do not address. Without addressing the larger system issues that plague the arts, what is the purpose of these statements?"[314] AGO's solitary statement is arguably one such statement; it (1), does not acknowledge nor take responsibility for its own history of systemic racism—only that they "have not done enough"—and (2), it now exists in the archive of their Instagram page between regularly scheduled social media programming, proving Marcus Ware and Cahan's point that museums only engage with BIPOC when it is fashionable to do so—significantly, and similar to the museum absorption of institutional critique, the underlying power structures remain the same. If museums continue to make statements without acknowledging their own history, Bryant-Greenwell concludes, then they are not ready to become spaces of cultural change or "incubators for social impact." It seems like these statements do, however, serve an illocutionary function; they performatively situate the institution as already doing the work regardless of the work (or lack of work) that they have done. With this in mind, Noever's "present crisis," like Doherty's "white cube," takes on a

[313] Kayleigh Bryant-Greenwell, OnRae Watkins, David Delmar Sentíes, and Jon Feinman, "Cultural Organizations as Incubators for Social Impact," facilitated by Brendan Ciecko, *Cuseum,* June 16, 2020. This panel was facilitated by Brendan Ciecko, the CEO and Founder of Cuseum. The other panelists were OnRae Watkins, Senior Manager at ARTLAB, Hirshhorn Museum and Gardens, David Delmar Sentíes, the Executive Director and Founder of Resilient Coders, and Jon Feinman, the Executive Director and Founder of InnerCity Weightlifting.
[314] Marcus Ware.

new meaning: it is not contemporary art objects at stake, but the cultures and communities that museums claim to represent and serve.

Solutions for this "present crisis" have been addressed by many theorists who offer a new model for a decolonized museum. Bal offers what she terms the "post-museum" or "new museology," which would implement the following practices: (1), the analysis of the narrative-rhetorical structure, both visual and verbal, of specific museums; (2), the identification of the link between museal discourse and the institution's foundation and history; and (3), museal self-critical analysis, which acknowledges that the order of things in museums matter.[315] Similarly, Eilean Hooper-Greenhill uses the former term to describe the culmination of constructivist learning, post-colonial theory, and cultural studies. The "post-museum" considers the visitor/learner as an active participant in their learning experience, and politicized in the construction of their own relevant viewpoints. In order to remain a viable institution in a post-colonial era, the "post-museum," for Hooper-Greenhill, needs to actively and continuously fulfill the roles of colleague, learner, and service provider.[316] In "Museum Matters," Gyan Prakash offers a decolonized mode of representation that seeks to represent, not appropriate, alterity. Significantly for Prakash, museums must take responsibility for their role in the "history of conflict, interaction, domination, displacement, and resistance within which non-western objects have come to represent human diversity," and, significantly, it must "scrutinize the history of aesthetics and notions of cultural and human diversity that have framed the representation of difference."[317] This means, practically speaking, that museums need to use non-western objects

[315] Bal, "The Discourse of the Museum." 214.
[316] Eilean Hooper-Greenhill, *Museums and the Interpretation of Visual Culture* (New York: Routledge, 2000), xi.
[317] Gyan Prakash, "Museum Matters," in *Museum Studies: An Anthology of Contexts,* ed. by Bettina Messias Carbonell, 208-115. Hoboken: Blackwell Publishing, 2004), 215.

in their exhibitions to emphasizes how they have been historically represented by conquest, domination, and appropriation. Key to this is a critical examination of the museum's infrastructures, including its physical site, its museological ideology, and its museographical practices, which Corrin similarly stresses in what she terms a "critical museum history."[318]

Like Drake's, Wright's, and Deodato's call for contemporary archives, the common characteristic of each of Bal's, Hooper-Greenhill's, Prakash's, and Corrin's approaches is a self-reflective museum that takes responsibly for its institutional policies and practices as performatively enacting its museological ideology. There are contemporary examples of such museums, and we can turn to them to see what an accountable and responsible archival institution looks like in practice. The Eastern State Penitentiary Museum, for example. The Penitentiary Museum was the first American "penitentiary," meaning the first "prison designed to inspire penitence, or true regret, in the hearts of prisoners." As a historical site, it aims to "deepen the national conversation about criminal justice"[319] through education; its exhibitions address mass incarceration in the States, and the social and racial injustices that continue to define the criminal justice system. In recent years, the Penitentiary Museum has changed its hiring policy, to prioritize previously incarcerated individuals, many of whom are BIPOC. This means that their museographical practices align with their governing museological ideology to serve those affected by mass incarceration.

In addition to museographical practices—and the underlying museological ideology that they enact—we can also look at the museum's development of virtual content to address the

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[318] Corrin, 331.

[319] "About Eastern State," Eastern State Penitentiary, accessed July 2020, https://www.easternstate.org/about-eastern-state

political stakes of digital archives—specifically the assumed neutral participatory access afforded by digital archives. Recent COVID-19 closures have emphasized the democratized participatory access to virtual content. For example, museums hosted virtual "viewing room presentations" for Art Basel Hong Kong from March 20 to 25, 2020. And many museums offered and continue to offer virtual tours of their exhibitions: the British Museum (London), the Guggenheim Museum (New York), the National Gallery of Art (Washington D.C.), Musée d'Orsay (Paris), the National Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art (Seoul), Pergamon Museum (Berlin), Rijksmuseum (Amsterdam), Van Gogh Museum (Amsterdam), Uffizi Gallery (Florence), National Museum of Anthropology (Mexico City), among others. It is important to note, however, that engagement with online programing saw considerable increases before COVID-19. According to the Government of Canada's Department of Canadian Heritage 2019 survey of heritage institutions, online visits were approximately 254 million in 2017, which is a 29% increase from 2015.[320] This is not to say that COVID-19 hasn't substantially impacted what the Canadian Museum Association (CMA) terms GLAMs—galleries, libraries, archives, and museums. In "Museums and Lockdowns: A few observations based on topical studies," Anik Meunier highlights the fact that many organizations conducted studies in 2020 to assess the impact of COVID-19 on GLAMs. The 2020 study by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and the International Council of Museums (ICOM) involving 1,600 museums and museum professionals from 107 countries showed that 90% of

[320] Vonda Vitali "Museum Matters: Why is a national museum policy and why this moment to address it?" *Muse,* Canadian Museums Association, winter (2021): 11.

museums worldwide faced temporary closures, and for one in eight museums, this closure has either been permanent, or they have had to radically rethink their strategic plans.[321]

While the global lockdowns demanded and continue to demand news ways of engaging with GLAMs on site—i.e., COVID-19 health and safety protocols including social distancing—it has also stressed the need to look at audience engagement off (the traditional) site. "[E]ven among museums already offering online content," Meunier explains, "more than half had ramped up their digital communication efforts (Facebook, newsletter, etc.)."[322] And it is clear from France's Public Policy Department of Cultural Heritage survey that this ramping up had led to an increase in online engagement. Their survey found a surge in online traffic between 150% to 200%. Significantly,

> 60% of respondents affirm that visiting a cultural venue and using digital resources are complementary approaches and that one is not a substitute for the other. Moreover, 87% say they will continue to use online activities and consult digital content once the lockdown is lifted.[323]

As an aside, this presents an interesting challenge for statistics tracking. Canadian Arts Data/Données sur les arts au Canada (CADAC), for example, currently does not have a category for online events, suggesting that governing institutions like the Canada Arts Council (CAC, of which the CADAC is a part of) needs to rethink the ways in which people are engaging with GLAM content.

These statistics suggest that the virtual display of content afford by digital technologies, often participatory, has altered the role of museums. This is a point that Ernst addresses: "the

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[321] Anik Meuiner, "Museums and Lockdowns: A few observations based on topical studies," *Muse,* Canadian Museums Association, Winter (2021): 30-31.
[322] Anik, 31.
[323] Anik, 32-33.

idea of providing the final preservation of artifacts, the traditional goal of the museum," he explains, "is displaced by a practice of intermediary storage, minimizing temporal duration."[324] In other words, the digitization of collections transforms museum collections into omnipresent data accessible via adequate Internet connection. In its adoption of digital technology, the museum has become what Ernst describes as a "a flow-through and transformer station." Its demand now is mobilizing, unfreezing the accumulation of objects and images in its repositories…."[325] Google's *Arts and Culture Collections* is perhaps the ultimate "transformer-station." Many, if not all, of the previously mentioned museums are available on *Arts and Culture Collections,* which is not only responsible (self-proclaimed) for cataloguing over 1,200 of the world's museums, but also provides viewers with a multimedia interactive platform featuring zoom views, virtual tours, augmented reality, trivia, and games.[326]

For museums, the development of virtual content to support their public education and engagement mission is not a new phenomenon; showing that museums have always been some form of a "transformer station." From the digitization of their collections to virtual tours and exhibitions, museums have been developing interactive virtual content since the early 1990s as a means advancing their vocational goals—including their relevancy in our increasingly digital era. David Silver describes various forms of virtual exhibitions as what he calls "virtual versions," "hyperreal-sites," and "missing wings" in "Interfacing American Culture: The Perils and Potentials of Virtual Exhibitions." These virtual forms assume a particular relationship between the physical and virtual exhibition; they describe the virtual exhibition as an extension, replication—what Silver terms "mirroring"—or as a standalone platform that "mirrors nothing

[324] Ernst, "Archi(ve)textures of Museology," 25.
[325] Ernst, "Archi(ve)textures of Museology," 25-26.
[326] *Google Arts and Culture,* accessed September, 2020, https://artsandculture.google.com

but itself."[327] The "virtual version" of an exhibit, Silver explains, presents, simulates, and/or mirrors a physical collection. The Smithsonian American Art Museum (SAAM), for example; SAAM collections can be viewed at their physical site in Washington D.C. and on their digital site.[328] And before the ubiquity of the Internet, many museums digitized their exhibitions on CD-ROMS. The previously mentioned 1993 *Microsoft Art Gallery,* for example. "By contextualizing key artifacts with background materials, virtual versions provide many of the same resources afforded by traditional museums" Silver concludes. The "hyperreal-site" is a virtual exhibit that has no corresponding physical exhibit; or as Silver puts it, "hyperreal-sites are neither limited nor confined by the need to replicate an already existing exhibit…."[329] Hauser & Wirth, for example, have recently hosted a digital-only exhibition: *Louise Bourgeois Drawings 1947-2007.*[330] And Voma, launched in September, 2020, is the first exclusively virtual museum.[331] Lastly, the "missing wing" makes available additional materials and resources not featured in a physical exhibit. "Usually accompanied by background material," Silver explains, "missing wing virtual exhibitions explore topics that for reasons of space, time, and/or money were not treated by the original." In other words, the missing wing extends its corresponding physical exhibition. The Salvador Dali Museum, for example, offers a personal assistant device (PAD) for viewers to use during their visit. The PAD offers additional information about select paintings and sculptures on exhibit. PADs can thus be described as augmented reality. Other museums offer downloadable

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[327] David Silver, "Interfacing American Culture: The Perils and Potentials of Virtual Exhibitions," *American Quarterly* 49, no. 4 (1997): 830.
[328] "Experience American Art From Home," *Smithsonian American Art Museum*, accessed June 2020, https://americanart.si.edu.
[329] Silver. 830.
[330] "Louise Bourgeois Drawings 1947-2007," *Hauser & Wirth*, accessed June 2020, https://www.vip-hauserwirth.com/louise-bourgeois-works-on-paper/
[331] *Voma,* accessed September, 2020, https://voma.space

applications that viewers can access on their smart phones opposed to providing PADs. The Guggenheim museum and the Louvre museum, for example. In addition to downloadable content, some museums, like the Cooper Hewitt Smithsonian Design Museum, have on-site interactive digital tables accessed through a personal stylus. These digital tables are not so much a "missing wing," but integral to the exhibition itself. Visitors are able to curate their own museum experience through these digital tables and personal stylus, which also archives their experience for museum records.

It is important to note, however, that even seemingly self-curated experiences are influenced by the museum institution. Significantly, this institutional influence has become more complicated because the development of virtual content requires substantial technological and financial means. [332] Google, for example, has the technological and financial capabilities that many museums arguably do not, which suggests that Big Tech companies have more influence on the development and exhibition of virtual content than museums do—I will later address the political consequences of this.

With specific attention to the increase in archival materials afford by and accessed through Big Tech developed digital technologies, Ernst describes archives as "dynamic curiosity cabinets." In the age digital media, he argues, archives are "stuffed with texts, images, icons, programs, and miracles of the world…waiting to be explored (but not necessarily explained)" via

[332] Antonella Fresa, Börje Justrell, and Claudio Prandoni highlight this financial barrier in "Digital curation and quality standards for memory institutions: PREFORMA research project." They use the digitization of Europe's museum, archive, and library collections as an example, which, in 2015, had a total estimated cost of €100 billion euros or $158 billion Canadian dollars. Providing continuous access to these documents, further, comes with a cost: €10 to €25 billion eros ($16 to $40 billion Canadian dollars) over a 10-year period after digitization (Antonella Fresa, Börje Justrell, and Claudio Prandoni, "Digital curation and quality standards for memory institutions: PERFORMA research project," *Archival Science* 15 [2015]: 193.

participatory access.[333] By this he refers to the sheer amount of digital content, which has led to seemingly uncurated or self-curated experiences, similar to the displays of historic curiosity cabinets—Sixteenth Century curiosity cabinets, commonly *Wunderkammer* or *Kunstkammer* in German, often came across as a random or uncurated collection of stuff because their contents were subject to the personal tastes of their aristocratic owners. However, as I previously mentioned, institutionally curated choices have been made, even for ostensibly uncurated and self-curated experiences—the collection and curation of objects in historic curiosity cabinets often served to authenticate the cabinet's credibility as a cultural authority. Thus, Ernst's comparison is productive because, like their historical counterparts, "digital curiosity cabinets" are informed by an institutional agenda—and likely more than one in our contemporary digital moment. As I mentioned in my exergue, the participatory access to archival material afforded by the Internet Archive is dependent upon various institutional agendas: US Library of Congress, the Smithsonian, the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, the Knight Foundation, among others. This is to say that the Internet Archive's aim to "preserve a record for generations to come" is subjected to and dependent upon multiple institutional agendas because their funding is.[334]

Partnerships between archival institutions and tech companies are becoming more common, which means that digital archives are increasingly influenced by Big Tech agendas. Cuseum—a company that aims to develop digital platforms to enhance museum engagement—for example, has recently partnered with Apple to design and produce their app ARKit. Available on the App Store, the ARKit allows museum goers to augment the physical site with a virtual one (AR stands for augmented reality). ARKit grants users access to multiple digital archives,

[333] Ernst, "Archi(ve)textures of Museology," 30.
[334] Chun quoting Archive.org, 171.

including AR Quick Look's 3D Models, to curate their own museum experiences. However, like Cooper Hewitt's digital tables and stylus, this self-curated museum experience is not solely curated by the visitor, but framed by multiple institutional agendas, including Big Tech agendas. Briefly put, you may be able to more easily and readily access archival content on your iPhone, for example; however, this access is mediated by Apple's terms and conditions of use.

It is also important to address application programming interfaces (APIs) as literal frames that, according to Amelia Acker and Adam Kresiberg, are gateways to participatory access—often for social media platforms. However, APIs are also used for other types of platforms like membership management software (PerfectMind and Sumac for example).[335] In "Social media data archives in an API-driven world," Acker and Kresiberg define APIs as "technologies of custody that enable the extraction and access to data." Significantly, "APIs specify the rules by which software talks to each other, articulating which elements can be queried, how frequently, and how the results appear."[336] There are different types of APIs, which govern access to data. For example, social network APIs allow dating apps to match user profiles; content pushing APIs allow digital newspapers to publish breaking news articles; and advertising APIs allow social media sites to personalize advertisements for their users. Significantly, this means that participatory access is dependent upon the rigid permissions of the specific API, which is informed by the specific platform that implements it.[337] Thus, digital technologies may have democratized archives, however, APIs mark a new access regime because they not only have

[335] See https://www.perfectmind.com
[336] Amelia Acker and Adam Kreisberg, "Social media data archives in an API-driven world," *Archival Science* 20 (2020): 106-107.
[337] Acker, 107.

control over user created and uploaded documents, but they also dictate access to said documents.[338]

We can see from these examples that the democratization of archival materials via digital platforms does not mean the lack of institutional influence. Significantly, not only is participatory access to archival materials supported and influenced by an institutional substrate, partnerships between various software types and developers have complicated this substrate.

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In 2012, Carolyn Christov-Bakargiev, artistic director for dOCUMENTA (13)—a contemporary art exhibition that takes place every five years—refused to call her team of curators "curators," advocating for "agents" instead. As the artistic director, Christov-Bakargiev personally selected her "agents" for the 13th edition of dOCUMENTA (changed from "Documenta" for her edition), which physically and conceptually took place in Kassel, Kabul, Alexandria/Cairo, and Banff. In an interview with Frieze Magazine's Noemi Smolik, Christov-Bakargiev explains that she chose the term "agent" because, for her, it is ambiguous. "There are different ways of being an agent," she elaborates, "acting on a stage, being on retreat, being under siege and being in a state of hope, to cite a few examples." Similarly, she states that Chus Martinez is the "Head of Department," "but nobody says what the department is. She could be the head of the department of gardening."[339] From this interview, it seems that Christov-Bakargiev understands the precariousness of titles—titles take on their own meaning(s) once given, which I explained in my note on this dissertation's title. However, it is important to note

[338] Noemi Smolik, "Agents Who Came in From the Cold," *Frieze Magazine,* April 27, 2011, https://frieze.com/article/agents-who-came-cold
[339] Ibid.

that she still benefits from the institutional authority that has and continues to select, organize and exhibit things of value—Documenta has a long history of exhibition (since 1955), and is an institution in its own right.[340] As Derrida reminds us in *Paper Machine,* what is important is not the title itself, but the act of titling because it is an act of consignment—like "*Untitled* (dissertation 4.2)'s" academic substrate.[341] In other words, Christov-Bakargiev may take "curator" out of dOCUMENTA (13), however, "agent" has been consigned with the authority that "curator" carries; her "agents" remain arbiters and exhibitors of value.

"Curator," "agent," or otherwise, digital technologies have not only facilitated an increase in curatorial and archival acts, they have also emphasized them as inseparable practices. It is for this reason that we can turn to the long history of institutional critique to account for the performative production of value and authority that various cultural institutions engage in. Recent critiques offered by BLM artists and archivists, in particular, stress the need for site-specific institutional critique performed by the institution itself, which includes a critical look at its history, and its supporting museographical practices enacted in all of its museal spaces; recall that the development of virtual content affords wider audiences, which also means that institutions can performatively establish their authority to wider audiences, assuming they have the technological and financial means to do so—and if they don't, Google's *Arts and Culture* can help, which has arguably validated the relevancy and cultural authority of over 1,200 cultural institutions. Formal cultural institutions may continue to play a significant role in the arbitration and exhibition of value, however, it is important to note that the democratized participatory access afforded by digital archives has encouraged amateur preservation and curation—or, to use

[340] "documenta gGmbH," *documenta,* accessed September 2020, https://www.documenta.de/en/about#16_documenta_ggmbh
[341] Derrida, *Paper Machine*, 7.

Balzer's and Foster's terms, participatory access has intensified the "curatorial" and "archival impulses." Online platforms—particularly social media and website creation platforms—afford personal exhibition spaces where individuals can develop their credibility, and prove their relevancy as value arbiters.

I began this chapter with Drake's, Wright's, and Deodato's call for archival accountability and responsibility. In other words, archival institutions in our contemporary digital movement need to be, like the "post-museum" or "new museology," self-reflective. This is also important for amateur archivists and curators. Any exhibition wall (gallery, museum, Google, Facebook, YouTube, Instagram, TikTok, etc.) is not a neutral site, but actively contributes to our digitally exacerbated state of *mal d'archive*—perhaps the "anarchival impulse." Like Christov-Bakargiev's "agents," we now have a greater sense of authority to act (warranted or not). Significantly, we need to acknowledge the responsibility that this authority comes with; preserving and exhibiting without reference to our consigning authority is, as Bal puts it, "showing off."[342]

[342] Bal, "Showing, Telling, Showing Off," 594.

Interlude: TD2020.002.001a-w

As I briefly mentioned in my exergue, Interlude: TD2020.002.001a-w is an artistic engagement with the productive function of the archive. The documents in this interlude serve as the site of performative action; they produce the solo exhibition at the Art Gallery of Peterborough (AGP0 that concluded my 2020 artist residency, which did not occur as, say, *217* (Sasha Opeiko) or *Duet* (Jack Bush and Francisco-Fernando Granandos)[343] because *TD2020.002.001a-w* solely exists in the form of its consigned documentation. *TD2020.002.001a-w* is an event constituted by the force of its documentation as a series of performative utterances, authenticated and legitimized by various archival institutions—notably, as indicated by the exhibition catalogue, the AGP, the Ontario Arts Council, the Canada Council for the Arts, and the City of Peterborough.

I take a similar approach to this interlude as Derrida does in *Limited Inc.* In response to Austin's speech act theory, he outlines three predicates of writing. Significantly, these three predicates can be applied to language in general: (1), a written sign is not exhausted in the moment of its inscription because it "can give rise to an iteration in the absence and beyond the presence of the empirically determined subject, who, in a given context, has emitted or produced it." (2), A "written sign carries with it a force that breaks with its context, that is, with the collectivity of presences organizing the moment of its inscription." The inaugural context of a written inscription includes "a certain 'present' of the inscription…" that is, the presence of the writer, her experience, and her intention, which, for Derrida, animates the inscription in the moment it is inscribed. And (3), spacing constitutes the written sign, which is tied to the breaking force described in (2): "spacing which separates it from other elements of the internal contextual chain (the always open possibility of its disengagement and graft)," and, significantly, from all forms of present reference in the referent's absence.[344] These predicates of writing, Derrida

[343] "2020 Exhibitions," *Art Gallery of Peterborough,* accessed December 2020, https://agp.on.ca/current-exhibitions/2020-exhibitions/
[344] Derrida, "Signature Event Context," 8-10.

argues, serve as a model for all language. In short, all language, written or spoken, is necessary but not sufficient in and of itself to convey meaning because it is iterative and nonlocal, which is to say it is not limited to a single context.

Similarly, I offer documentation as a model for performance in this interlude, and, in doing so, I hope to show that any inaugural event—a live artistic performance or an exhibition as a performative utterance of museological discourse, for example—is dependent upon and subjected to *mal d'archive*. This model is beneficial because it emphasizes the productive—that is, performative and constitutive—function of the archive, and, significantly, its inherent political consequences. As I explained in my first chapter and elaborated upon in my second, a performative perspective views documentation as, at least in part, performatively constitutive of the event it has been consigned to represent, and, further, authenticated by the archival institution as culturally valuable "documentation." *TD2020.002.001a-w* is an extreme example of this perspective. In short, and to use the inverse of Phalen's claim, a performance's only life is in its documentation.

What follows is an iteration of the exhibition catalogue and the installation documentation available on AGP's website: https://agp.on.ca/exhibitions/dorothea-hines-td2020-002-001-a-w/ (password: dorotheabestartistever). The full exhibition catalogue, virtual and interactive, is available here: https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1VD-sNAwESv_7XAHad4cAfw4NM8DbGONk

TD2020.002.001a-w
Dorothea Hines
August 20, 2020 to November 9, 2020

Curated by Fynn Leitch
Art Gallery of Peterborough

> V. The archive is a collection of unique records that share a location and a provenance—it is controlled by means of a finding aid.
>
> VI. The archive is an ordered process that consists of rules for administration, accession, appraisal, arrangement, description, access, and retention.
>
> XII. When [V] and [VI] are consolidated, the archive may be understood as both a controlled collection of unique and hence valuable records that share a location and a provenance, and an ordered process that consists of rules for administration, accession, appraisal, arrangement, description, access, and retention…
>
> XIII. [XII] may be restated: the instrumental archive is a restricted collection of unique and hence valuable records that share a location and a provenance, which are subject to administrative, regulatory, legal, and juridical oversight.
>
> XIV. The present archival order may thus be understood as a consequence of the assignment of value to the unique records and the imposition of property rights upon its provenance.
>
> — Adam Siegel, "Twenty Theses on the Anarchive"[345]

There is a large filing cabinet in the Art Gallery of Peterborough's upstairs copy room. It houses approximately 1,500 file folders with documents that support the provenance of many artworks in our Permanent Collection. Provenance is a governing concept, which, as biographer and translator Adam Siegel explains in "Twenty Theses on the Anarchive," establishes and maintains cultural value via administrative and legal processes. With their direct connection to an artwork's provenance, these files play an important cultural and legal function—they establish the cultural value of an artwork, and are legal documents confirming the AGP's ownership and

[345] Adam Siegel. "Twenty These on the Anarchive." *Public: Archive/Counter-Archives,* no. 57 (2018): 12-13.

custodianship of an artwork. These documents thus support the integrality of our Permanent Collection, and it is for this reason that they are treated with similar care and attention given to artworks. This filing cabinet was the starting point of Dorothea Hines's 2020 artist residency, which resulted in the exhibition *TD2020.002.001a-w.*

The title of this exhibition is a temporary deposit number (TD), which is a unique archival number used to indicate the temporary custodial care of an artwork by a gallery institution. Temporary deposit numbers are akin to accession numbers, which are finding aids assigned to artworks upon acquisition to capture the following information: (1) the year of acquisition, (2) the batch number (or completed transaction), (3) the order number (in the batch), and (4) the number of components (if applicable): 86.020.001a-d for example. This accession number is the finding aid for Robin MacKenzie's *A Print in Four Parts* (1973). As the accession number indicates, it was acquired by the AGP in 1986 (86), it was the 20th batch of the year (020), it was the first artwork in the 20th batch (001), and it contains four components (a-d). Whereas temporary deposit numbers mark temporary custodianship, accession numbers mark both ownership and custodianship. This is to say that Hines's *TD2020.002.001a-w* (a temporary deposit.acquired in 2020.the second batch of the year.the first artwork in its respective batch.with 23 components), was under the custodial care of the AGP for the duration of her residency.

The cultural and legal documents in the filing cabinet exist solely as hard copies, meaning, they have not yet been digitized; and in our increasingly digital world, they seem to represent precarity. Hence the vigilant care we give them to ensure their safe keeping. However, as Hines shows, the digitization of cultural and legal documents does not negate precarity—by design obsolesce and limited storage, not to mention decades of austerity cuts to Canada's Culture and Heritage funding program and its portfolio organizations, threaten the long-term reliability of both digitized and born-digital documents. With this in mind, *TD2020.002.001a-w* is a timely iterative practice that highlights the precarity of various digital archival processes.

From the filing cabinet, Hines randomly chose Robin MacKenzie's file, which contains 23 provenance documents for *A Print in Four Parts.* She digitized the 23 documents as .pdfs, and individually uploaded them into Audacity—a free, cross-platform software for recording and

editing sound. This move turned the digitized documents into sounds, which Hines then exported as four different RAW, header-less, uncompressed, that is, minimally processed files (8-bit, 16-bit, 24-bit, and 32-bit). When files are saved as header-less, the computer cannot discern critical information needed to construct a visual image. Each of these RAW files were opened in Photoshop to create a visual image of the generated sound file. The resulting visual images are distorted because they were saved as header-less files. Mimicking the composition of 86.020.001a-d, Hines presents the 23 provenance documents as four digitally distorted images accompanied by their generated sounds, respectively…It is through this iterative practice that Hines shows the precarity of digital archival processes that at best challenge, and at worst undermine claims of provenance.

> XVII. Rather than 'provenance,' which assumes a point of origin which may assert a right of property upon the record, let us speak of 'milieu,' where property rights are void.
>
> XVIII. Rather than uniqueness, which assumes value and hence ownership, let us speak of records as simulacra that are distinguishable neither as original nor copy.[346]

In the same text, Seigel offers the term "milieu" in place of "provenance." As mentioned, provenance assumes an origin from which we may assert the right of property, pending we have the applicable cultural and legal documents. In contrast, "milieu," for Seigel, renders void rights of property by replacing ownership with simulacra. Here, simulacra mean the antiquation of originals and copies, which consequently challenge claims of uniqueness and origin. An archival system based on milieu emphasizes the multiple institutional authorities that mediate cultural value and authenticity—which the general public is often not privy to—because they show that an artwork's cultural value, further, authenticity does not result from a single unique origin. 86.020.001a-d's archival documents, for example, show the influence of the Canadian Cultural Property Export Review Board, the Canada Revenue Agency, Cnoc Eilidh Registered Highland Cattle, Helene Arthur Galleries LTD., the Mazelow Gallery, Galerie Dresdnere, the Art Gallery of Ontario, and the AGP. Siegel's understanding of milieu is a means of reading Hines's *TD2020.002.001a-w*, which reveals the institutional subjectivities that are integral to the cultural

[346] Ibid.

value and authenticity of 86.020.001a-d. It seems that cultural value and authenticity are just as precarious as analogue and digital archival practices.

Canadian Cultural Property Export Review Board | Commission canadienne d'examen des exportations de biens culturels

300 Slater Street
Room 353
Ottawa, Ontario
K1A 0C8
Tel: (613) 990-4161

January 2nd, 1987

Ms. Illi-Maria Tamplin
Director
The Art Gallery of Peterborough
2 Crescent Street
PETERBOROUGH, Ontario
K9J 2G1

Dear Ms. Tamplin:

We acknowledge receipt of the application for certification of cultural property for income tax purposes described below.

It will be dealt with by the Review Board on February 2nd, 1987.

If you have any inquiries about this application please mention the reference number cited below.

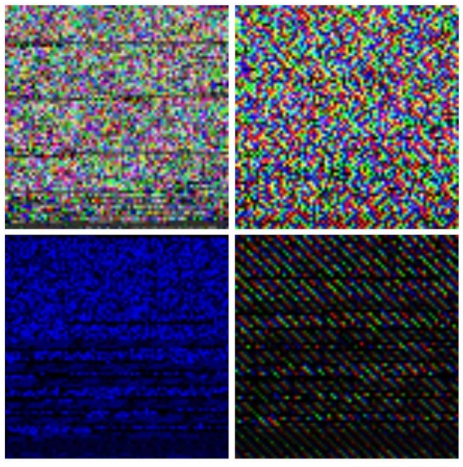
Yours sincerely,

Suzanne Dalpé
for David A. Walden
Assistant Secretary
Canadian Cultural Property
Export Review Board

DW/sd

Reference: Number 86-743 - A Print in Four Parts by Robin MacKenzie, 1973-1974, 4 hand printed lithographs.

Canada



TD2020.002.001a

ROBIN MacKENZIE - NEW WORK

November 28 - December 19

A founding member of the Robert McLaughlin Gallery, and born in Pickering Township, Robin MacKenzie has become a major force nationally, and everywhere his work has been shown internationally it has attracted much attention from both artists and art critics. He has exhibited since 1969 in the most capitals of Canada and in the United States, Scotland and Europe.

The artist employs a wide variety of media including natural material, electronics, photography and sound.

One large work consisting of plants and electronics has been commissioned for the National Science Library in Ottawa, another is in progress for a three-story space in a Government of Canada building in Toronto. He was one of ten artists chosen in a national competition to design a poster for the 1976 Olympics. This exhibition at the Robert McLaughlin Gallery consists of a number of large works composed of photographs.

TD2020.002.001b

74

TD2020.002.001c

"Artists with their Work"

Robin MacKenzie

Photo: Jacquie Boughner,
courtesy Carmen Lamanna Gallery

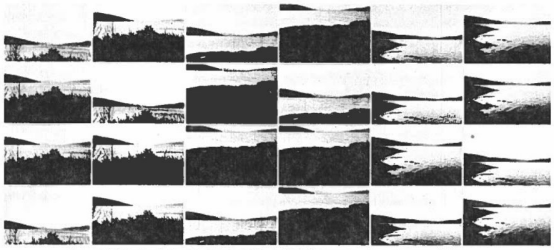
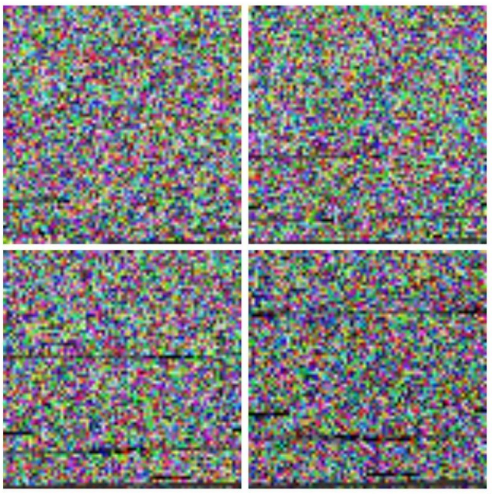


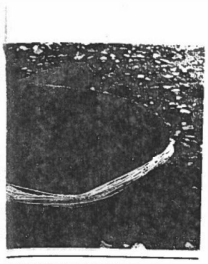
Photo: Robin MacKenzie from *Three Spaces, Section 3 – Shore Lines*, courtesy Carmen Lamanna Gallery

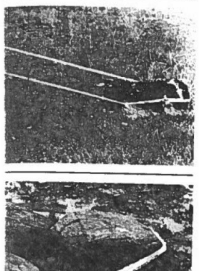
Robin MacKenzie prefers not to make a personal statement

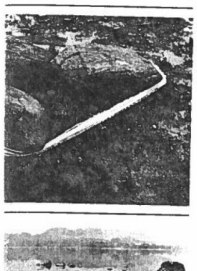
Art Gallery of Ontario



TD2020.002.001d







ROBIN MACKENZIE
Four Temporary Conditions – Connectings with the same length of line, Loch Awe, Scotland, 1973
One 200 foot length of twine, found stone
Photos: Robin Mackenzie

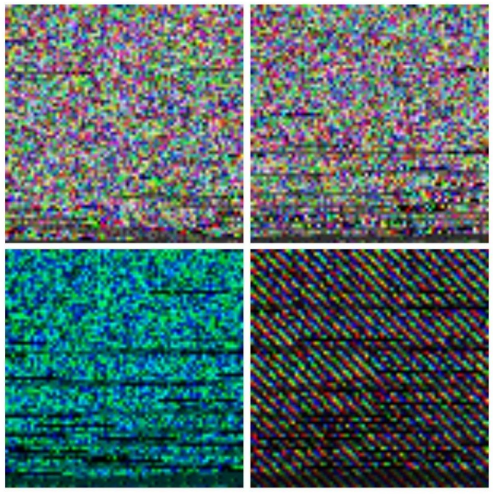
Like Greg Curnoe, **Robin Mackenzie** also at one time worked on a surveying crew. And both artists have remarked to me on the unusual nature of measuring something so changeable and changing as the earth.

Mackenzie was in Scotland in 1973 and executed a number of works there which deal with qualities of location, distance, and boundary.

In one of these works, Mackenzie used a length of binding twine to enclose first one, then two, three, and finally four rocks together. The rocks were found on the site and not moved. The 37 foot length of rope was used as an arbitrary standard of scale. Each grouping of stones has qualities unique to the particular number of elements in association. In the ring-binder notebook where he carries slides of this work, Mackenzie has written words on small cards which indicate some of what these properties may be. For example, two associated elements seem to have something to do with "agreement" while three suggest "Confirmation."

Another work executed near the same site seems to involve interesting visual and positional concepts of distance. Near and in the water of Loch Awe in the rugged Scottish countryside Mackenzie placed a number of the hard dark rocks common to the area in a straight line beginning at a point several metres out into the water. This line of rocks went toward the rocky shoreline and then turned 90 degrees and continued back out into the water for a much longer distance. Each rock in the line was placed at a distance greater than that between the previous two. In other words, they got progressively further apart.

Each line of rocks would obviously look different from each point on the line. But the expansion and contraction of distance perceived



TD2020.002.001e

CP 8858

T871
Rev. 85

Revenue Canada Taxation | Revenu Canada Impôt

3 FILE COPY FOR THE RECIPIENT INSTITUTION OR PUBLIC AUTHORITY
COPIE DE DOSSIER POUR L'ÉTABLISSEMENT OU L'ADMINISTRATION BÉNÉFICIAIRE

CULTURAL PROPERTY INCOME TAX CERTIFICATE

- For use by an authorized officer of the Canadian Cultural Property Export Review Board to certify that a particular cultural object(s) meets specified criteria namely:
  - (A) that it is of outstanding significance for one or more of the reasons set out in paragraph 8(3)(a) of the Cultural Property Export and Import Act, and
  - (B) that it meets the degree of national importance referred to in paragraph 8(3)(b) of the Cultural Property Export and Import Act.
- This Certificate when signed by an authorized officer is evidence that the property herein described is such that its disposal to an institution designated by the Minister of Communications will qualify for the following treatment under the Income Tax Act:
  - (A) where the property is donated, the donor may deduct an amount up to the value of the donation in computing taxable income if the claim is supported by a receipt (paragraph 110(1)(b.1) of the Income Tax Act);
  - (B) a gain, which would otherwise be a capital gain, arising from the disposition of the property is not subject to tax (subparagraph 39(1)(a)(i.1) of the Income Tax Act).
- The Certificate is valid for income tax purposes only in circumstances where:
  - (A) disposition is of the object as herein described,
  - (B) the condition, composition, texture, etc. of the object(s) has not been altered since an application for certification was sent to the Review Board, except any measures for repair and/or conservation authorized by the Review Board, and
  - (C) disposition is made to the designated institution indicated below.
- Further particulars may be obtained from your District Taxation Office.

CERTIFICAT FISCAL VISANT DES BIENS CULTURELS

- À l'usage d'un agent autorisé de la Commission canadienne d'examen des exportations de biens culturels pour certifier qu'un ou plusieurs objets culturels particuliers sont conformes aux critères établis, à savoir:
  - (A) qu'ils présentent un intérêt exceptionnel pour l'une ou plusieurs des raisons énoncées à l'alinéa 8(3)a) de la Loi sur l'exportation et l'importation de biens culturels, et
  - (B) qu'ils revêtent l'importance nationale dont fait mention l'alinéa 8(3)b) de la Loi sur l'exportation et l'importation de biens culturels.
- Le présent certificat une fois signé par un agent autorisé, établit que les biens décrits ici répondent aux conditions requises, de sorte que leur disposition au profit d'un établissement désigné par le ministère de la Communication ouvre droit au traitement suivant en vertu de la Loi de l'impôt sur le revenu:
  - (A) si les biens sont donnés, le donateur peut déduire dans le calcul de son revenu imposable un montant n'excédant pas la valeur du don, pourvu qu'il présente un reçu à l'appui (alinéa 110(1)b.1) de la Loi de l'impôt sur le revenu);
  - (B) un gain, qui serait par ailleurs un gain en capital, résultant de la disposition des biens n'est pas assujetti à l'impôt (sous-alinéa 39(1)a) (i.1) de la Loi de l'impôt sur le revenu).
- Ce certificat est valable aux fins de l'impôt sur le revenu dans les seuls cas où:
  - (A) il y a disposition de tout objet décrit dans le présent certificat;
  - (B) il n'y a eu aucune modification de l'état, de la composition, de la texture, etc. desdits objets depuis qu'une demande d'attestation a été envoyée à la Commission d'examen, à l'exception de toutes mesures autorisées par la Commission d'examen en vue de la réparation et (ou) de l'entretien desdits objets; et
  - (C) la disposition est faite au profit de l'établissement désigné dont il est fait mention ci-après.
- Pour obtenir plus de détails, veuillez consulter votre bureau de district d'impôt.

NAME OF DESIGNATED INSTITUTION (to which disposal of the property has been or will be made)
NOM DE L'ÉTABLISSEMENT DÉSIGNÉ (au profit duquel la disposition des biens a été ou sera faite)

The Art Gallery of Peterborough

ADDRESS—*ADRESSE*

2 Crescent Street PETERBOROUGH, Ontario K9J 2G1

Pursuant to section 26 of the Cultural Property Export and Import Act a determination has been made by the Canadian Cultural Property Export Review Board with respect to the object(s) described as follows: (If space below is insufficient, attach a statement.)

Conformément à l'article 26 de la Loi sur l'exportation et l'importation de biens culturels, la Commission canadienne d'examen des exportations de biens culturels a rendu une décision concernant l'objet ou les objets décrits ci-après: (Si l'espace ci-dessous est insuffisant, annexer une feuille.)

Four hand-printed lithographs by Robin Mackenzie, "A Print in Four Parts", 1973-1974, 45/59.

Estimated Fair Market Value
Estimation de la juste valeur marchande
▶ $ **9,000.00**

NOTE: The description of object(s) should commence with some general terms followed by such specific terms as dimensions, colour, date and any other particular marks such as creator's signature, hallmarks, serial numbers, etc.

Subject to verification by Revenue Canada

NOTE: Il faut d'abord donner une description générale de l'objet ou des objets, puis des précisions comme les dimensions, la couleur, la date et autres caractéristiques comme la signature de l'auteur, la cachet de contrôle, les numéros de série, etc.

CERTIFICATION

IT IS HEREBY CERTIFIED that the above-described object(s) meets the criteria provided in paragraphs 23(3)(b) and (c) of the Cultural Property Export and Import Act.

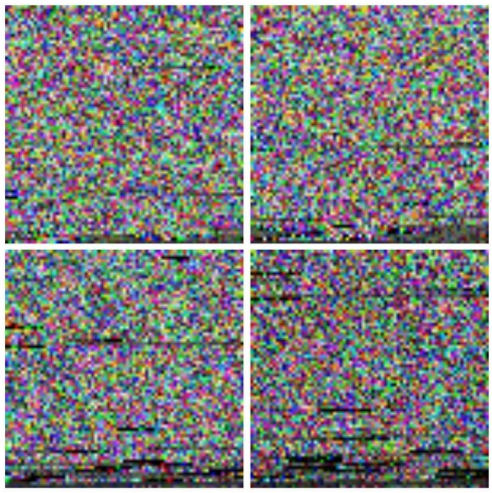
ATTESTATION

IL EST CERTIFIÉ PAR LES PRÉSENTES QUE l'objet ou les objets décrits ci-dessus sont conformes aux critères énoncés aux alinéas 23(3)b) et c) de la Loi sur l'exportation et l'importation de biens culturels.

Signature of Authorized Officer—*Signature de l'agent autorisé*

Date

Form prescribed by order of the Minister of National Revenue—*Formule prescrite sur l'ordre du ministère du Revenu national*



TD2020.002.001f

THE ART GALLERY OF PETERBOROUGH

PERMANENT COLLECTION

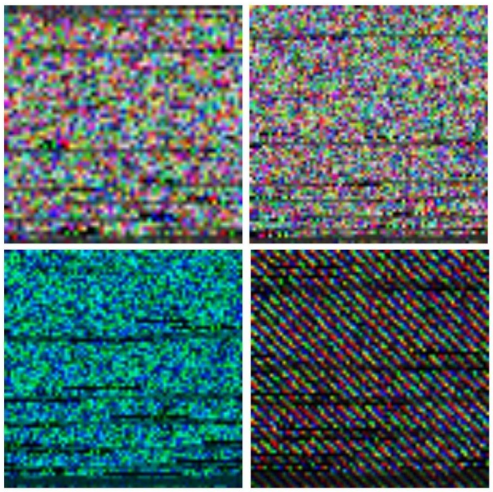
Catalogue Number 86020001
Date Purchased
Date Presented
Card Date
Date Received

Name of Artist Robin Mackenzie
School Canadian Born 1938
Title of Work A Print in Four Parts 45/59
Medium lithograph
Size 5⅛ ft. x 6½ ft.
Date 1973-1974
Signed

Presented By
Purchased By
Lent By

Received From Mr. and Mrs. Louis Badone
Photographed 8 x 10 Black & white
Credit Line for Label Collection: The Art Gallery of Peterborough,
Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Louis Badone.

(Value 9000.00 1987)
Subject to verification by
Revenue Canada



TD2020.002.001g

Catalogue Number 86020001

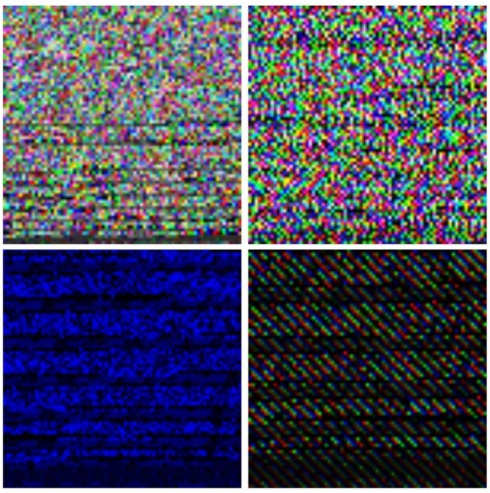
Condition and Conservation

Provenance

Exhibitions

References Also in the collections of: National Gallery
Hamilton Art Gallery
Art Gallery of Ontario
Norman Mackenzie Art Gallery

Notes



TD2020.002.001h

THE ART GALLERY OF PETERBOROUGH

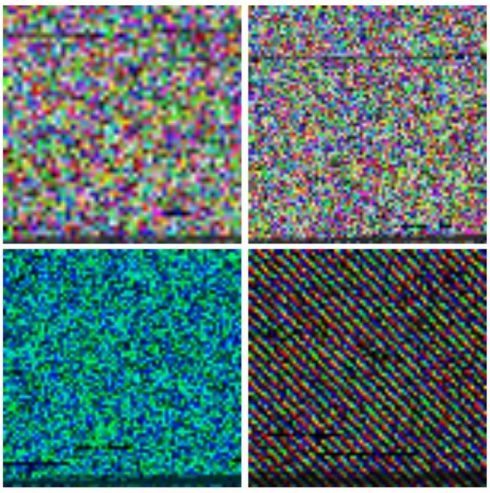
PERMANENT COLLECTION

Catalogue Number 86020001 Date Purchased
Date Presented
Card Date Date Received

Name of Artist Robin Mackenzie
School Canadian Born 1938
Title of Work A Print in Four Parts 45/59
Medium lithograph
Size 5½ ft. x 6½ ft.
Date 1973-1974
Signed

Presented By
Purchased By
Lent By
Received From Mr. and Mrs. Louis Badone
Photographed 8 x 10 Black & white
Credit Line for Label Collection: The Art Gallery of Peterborough.
Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Louis Badone.

(Value 9000.00 1987)
Subject to verification by Revenue Canada



TD2020.002.001i

Catalogue Number 86020001

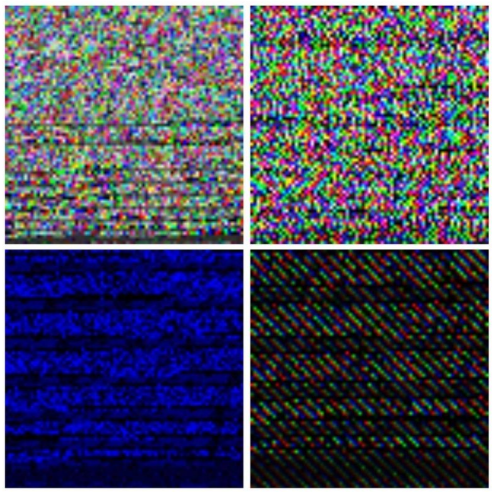
Condition and Conservation

Provenance

Exhibitions

References Also in the collections of: National Gallery
Hamilton Art Gallery
Art Gallery of Ontario
Norman Mackenzie Art Gallery

Notes



TD2020.002.001j

APPLICATION FOR CERTIFICATION OF CULTURAL PROPERTY FOR INCOME TAX PURPOSES

DEMANDE D'ATTESTATION RELATIVE A UN BIEN CULTUREL AUX FINS DE L'IMPÔT

Jan.9, 1987

1. DONOR - VENDEUR

Mr. & Mrs. Louis Bodone

(416) 222-1725

34 Avondale Avenue , Willowdale, Ontario M2N 2T9

2. RECIPIENT INSTITUTION OR PUBLIC AUTHORITY/ETABLISSEMENT OU ADMINISTRATION BENEFICIAIRE

The Art Gallery of Peterborough

(705) 743-9179

2 Crescent Street, Peterborough Ontario K9J 2G1

Illi-Maria Tamplin Director

3. [X] DONATION

4. DESCRIPTION OF CULTURAL PROPERTY/DESCRIPTION DU BIEN CULTUREL

(If above space is insufficient, continue on a separate sheet) / (Au besoin, annexer une feuille)

5. State briefly why cultural property described above is of outstanding significance and of national importance.

Indiquer brièvement pourquoi le bien culturel décrit ci-dessus présente un intérêt exceptionnel et revêt une importance nationale.

This is the first work by Robin MacKenzie to be taken into our Permanent Collection. It will make a significant contribution to our growing collection.

6. Galerie Dresdnere & Helen Arthur Galleries Ltd. Mazelow Gallery

Professor Art Dealers

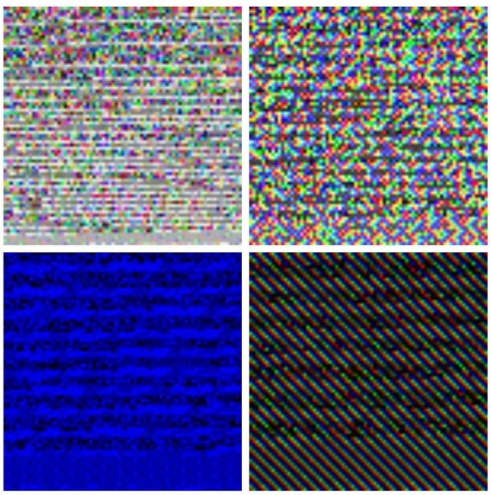
7. $9,025.

We the undersigned hereby certify that the information given in this application and any accompanying documentation is true and correct.

Nous soussignés certifions que les renseignements ci-dessus et les documents ci-joints sont véridiques et exacts.

I-M Tamplin

FOR INTERNAL USE ONLY/RESERVE A L'ADMINISTRATION



TD2020.002.001k

GENERAL

The application form should be completed by a person, institution or public authority wishing to request the Canadian Cultural Property Export Review Board to determine whether cultural property being disposed of by an institution or public authority designated for which is applying for designation for the purposes under Section 29(7) of the Cultural Property Export and Import Act qualifies for certificate because it meets the criteria of outstanding significance and national importance set out in paragraph 7(3)(b) and (c) of the Act.

The Review Board will render its decision within four months of the date of the application for certification for tax purposes unless the circumstances of the particular case require otherwise.

Where the Review Board determines that a cultural property subject of an application for certification meets the criteria set out in paragraph 7(3)(b) and (c) of the Act, the cultural property is, effect for certification for tax purposes. The Review Board will issue a Cultural Property Income Tax Certificate to the institution or public authority making the application on receipt of written confirmation from the Minister that the institution or public authority concerned has been designated for the purposes of the disposition.

The Review Board, when determining whether the cultural property subject of an application qualifies for certification, may request the Applicant to provide additional information in respect of the application before rendering its decision. Having made its determination, the Review Board will inform the Applicant.

Certified cultural property subject of a Cultural Property Income Tax Certificate is exempt from capital gains tax and, in the case of donation, also qualifies for the 100% deductibility provision under the Income Tax Act.

DESIGNATION OF INSTITUTION OR PUBLIC AUTHORITY

An institution or public authority granted category A status has been designated indefinitely and for general purposes relative to its mandate to collect and preserve, or collect and cause to be preserved, movable cultural property.

An institution or public authority granted category B status is designated indefinitely with regard to a specific cultural property qualifying for certification which a person proposes to dispose of to it.

DESCRIPTION OF CULTURAL PROPERTY

In the interest of speed in the processing of applications for certification of cultural property for tax purposes, persons completing this form may wish to consult the "Cultural Property Export Guide" for the preferred method of identifying cultural property subject of the application. Photographs, and where the application concerns archival material, copies, if not supplied may be requested by the Review Board in order for it to make a determination. In certain cases, members of the Review Board may wish to examine the cultural property subject of the application.

Where an application concerns a collection, a descriptive list itemizing each object in the collection should normally be attached to the application unless the nature of the material in the collection calls for listing by the number of objects in a set, class, or of a given type.

DETERMINATION BY THE REVIEW BOARD

In reviewing an application, the Review Board shall determine whether the cultural property subject of the application is of outstanding significance by reason of its close association with Canadian history or national life, its aesthetic qualities, or its value in the study of the arts and sciences, and whether the cultural property is of such a degree of national importance that its loss to Canada would significantly diminish the national heritage.

DECLARATION OF AUTHENTICITY:

It is most important that the authenticity of the cultural property subject of the application be attested to by a person qualified to do so. A signed statement by the attestor, in whatever form or detail deemed appropriate to the particular case, should be attached to the application.

ESTIMATED FAIR MARKET VALUE

Where cultural property is a single object, enter estimated fair market value. Where cultural property is a collection of objects, estimated fair market values should be entered beside each object, or in the number of objects in a set, class, or of a given type, on the descriptive list to be attached to the application and the total estimated fair market value entered under paragraph 7. Attach appraisals as required for donations. For sales give purchase price.

SIGNATURE

The application must be signed by an officer of the recipient institution or public authority. The donor or vendor's signature is optional.

Note: Once an application has been submitted to the Review Board, any subsequent change in the condition of the cultural property subject of the application (prior to the issue of a Cultural Property Income Tax Certificate should be brought to the attention of the Board. Any alteration required during this period (including restoration, repair or conservation of the cultural property) must be authorized by the Board.

The onus of establishing a fair market value for cultural property with Revenue Canada (Taxation) for the purposes of the Income Tax Act (Canada) rests with the owner, and the issue or otherwise of a tax certificate by the Review Board should not be interpreted as a comment by the Board on the estimated fair market values entered under paragraph 7 of this application. In addition, Revenue Canada (Taxation) reserves the right to request Applicants to submit an independent third party appraisal of cultural property subject of a tax certificate issued by the Review Board as a result of an application for certification of cultural property for income tax purposes.

DISPOSITIONS GÉNÉRALES

La présente formule doit être remplie par la personne, l'établissement ou l'administration qui désire demander à la Commission canadienne d'examen des exportations de biens culturels de déterminer si le bien culturel aliéné au profit d'un établissement ou d'une administration désignés(ée) pour demander à cette fin(s) conformément à l'article 29(7) de la Loi sur l'exportation et l'importation de biens culturels, répond aux critères d'intérêt exceptionnel et d'importance nationale énoncés aux alinéas 7(3)(b) et (c) de la Loi et peut, de ce fait, faire l'objet d'un certificat fiscal.

Sauf circonstances spéciales, la Commission d'examen statue dans les quatre mois qui suivent la date de réception de la demande.

Le conseil par la Commission d'examen de la conformité du bien culturel visé dans la demande aux critères énoncés aux alinéas 7(3)(b) et (c) de la Loi rend le bien digne de faire l'objet d'un certificat fiscal. La Commission d'examen délivre un "certificat fiscal visant des biens culturels" à l'auteur de la demande (établissement ou administration) dès qu'elle reçoit du Ministre confirmation écrite que l'établissement ou administration en cause a été désigné(e) pour cette transaction.

La Commission d'examen peut, afin de déterminer si le bien culturel en question est digne de faire l'objet d'un certificat fiscal, demander au requérant de lui fournir des renseignements supplémentaires. La Commission d'examen informe le requérant de sa décision.

Le bien culturel qui fait l'objet d'un certificat fiscal est exempté de l'impôt sur les gains de capitaux et, dans le cas d'une donation, peut faire l'objet d'une déduction de 100 pour cent aux termes de la Loi de l'impôt sur le revenu.

DÉSIGNATION DE L'ÉTABLISSEMENT OU ADMINISTRATION

L'établissement ou administration désignés(ées) dans la catégorie A est désignés(ée) pour une durée illimitée et à des fins générales en raison de sa mission qui est de recueillir et de conserver, ou de recueillir et de faire conserver des biens culturels mobiliers.

L'établissement ou administration désignés(ée) dans la catégorie B est désignés(ée) pour une durée illimitée, pour un objet culturel précis digne de faire l'objet d'un certificat fiscal, et qu'une personne se propose d'aliéner au profit de cet établissement ou administration.

DESCRIPTION DU BIEN CULTUREL

En vue d'accélérer le traitement de sa demande d'attestation, la personne qui remplit la présente formule aura avantage à consulter le guide afin de trouver la meilleure façon de décrire le bien culturel visé. Afin de statuer, la Commission d'examen peut demander, si elles ne sont pas déjà fournies, des photographies et, dans le cas de pièces d'archives, des reproductions. Il est possible que, dans certains cas, les membres de la Commission d'examen souhaitent examiner le bien culturel qui fait l'objet de la demande.

Dans le cas d'une collection, la demande doit nécessairement être accompagnée d'un inventaire spécifiant chaque objet, à moins que la nature de la collection n'autorise l'énumération du nombre d'objets appartenant à un ensemble, une catégorie ou un type donné.

DÉCISION DE LA COMISSION D'EXAMEN

En étudiant la demande, la Commission d'examen détermine si le bien culturel visé présente un intérêt exceptionnel en raison de son rapport étroit avec l'histoire du Canada ou la société canadienne, de son esthétique ou de son utilité pour l'étude des arts ou des sciences, et s'il revêt une importance nationale telle que sa perte appauvrirait gravement le patrimoine national.

DÉCLARATION D'AUTHENTICITÉ

Il est capital que l'authenticité du bien culturel visé dans la demande soit attestée par une personne compétente. L'attestation d'authenticité, signée par celui qui l'a établie on la forme qui convient le mieux au cas particulier, doit accompagner la demande.

JUSTE VALEUR MARCHANDE ESTIMÉE

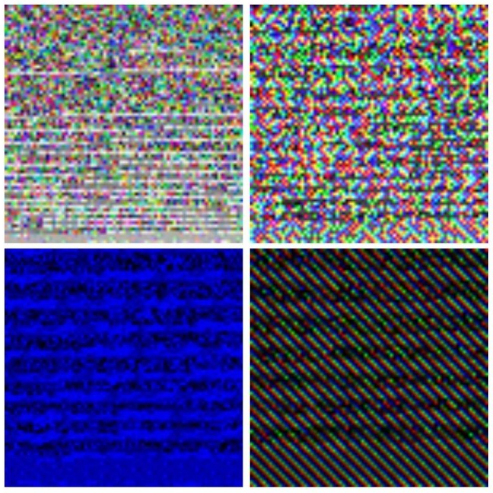
S'il s'agit d'un seul objet, inscrire la juste valeur marchande estimée. S'il s'agit d'une collection d'objets, indiquer la juste valeur marchande estimée de chaque objet, ou de chaque lot d'objets formant un ensemble, une catégorie ou un type donné, sur l'inventaire qui doit accompagner la demande, et inscrire la juste valeur marchande estimée de l'ensemble au paragraphe 7 de la demande. Dans le cas des dons, joindre les évaluations nécessaires. S'il s'agit d'un objet vendu, inscrire le prix d'achat.

SIGNATURE

La demande doit être signée par un agent de l'établissement ou de l'administration bénéficiaire. La signature du donateur ou du vendeur est facultative.

Remarque: Tout changement survenant dans l'état d'un bien culturel entre le moment ou la demande d'attestation relative à ce bien est envoyée à la Commission d'examen et celui ou le "certificat fiscal visant des biens culturels" est délivré, doit être porté à la connaissance de la Commission. Toute modification requise pendant cette période, (y compris la restauration, la réparation ou la conservation du bien culturel) doit être autorisée par la Commission.

C'est au propriétaire qu'il incombe de faire admettre la juste valeur marchande du bien culturel par Revenu Canada (Impôt), pour l'application de la Loi de l'impôt sur le revenu (Canada), en délivrant un certificat fiscal, la Commission d'examen ne se prononce nullement sur la juste valeur marchande estimée inscrite au paragraphe 7 de la demande. En outre, Revenu Canada (Impôt) se réserve le droit de demander au requérant de lui soumettre le jugement d'un tiers indépendant sur la valeur du bien culturel pour lequel la Commission d'examen, saisie d'une demande d'attestation, a délivré un certificat fiscal.



TD2020.002.001l

The Art Gallery of Peterborough
2 Crescent Street, Peterborough, Ontario K9J 2G1 • Telephone (705) 743-9179

May 28, 1987

Mr. & Mrs. L. Badone,
34 Avondale Avenue
Willowdale, Ontario
M2N 2T9

Dear Mr. and Mrs. Badone,

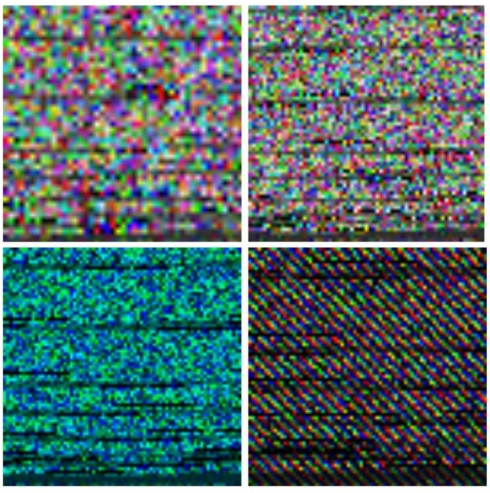
Thank you for donating Robin MacKenzie's lithograph "A Print in Four Parts", edition 45/59 to The Art Gallery of Peterborough collection.

This print is a significant contribution to the growth of our collection.

Yours sincerely,

/sew

Dr. Peter Milder
Chairman, Acquisitions Committee
Art Gallery of Peterborough



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Canadian Cultural Property Export Review Board | Commission canadienne d'examen des exportations de biens culturels

300 Slater Street
Room 366
Ottawa, Ontario
K1A 0C8
Tel: (613) 990-4161

February 5, 1987

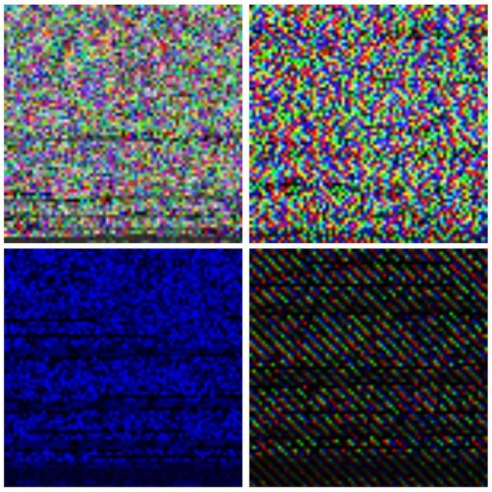
Ms. Illi-Maria Tamplin
Director
Art Gallery of Peterborough
2 Crescent Street
Peterborough, Ontario
K9J 2G1

Dear Ms. Tamplin:

Further to our telephone conversation, I am writing to inform you that the Board has, for the time being, withheld its decision on your application for certification #86-743. While the significance of the Robin Mackenzie print was not questioned, the Board was not convinced that the estimated fair market value was accurate. The easiest way to resolve this problem would be for the donor to inform the Board of when he purchased the print and for what price. If he does not wish to to this, we will issue the certificate showing the estimated fair market value "to be confirmed by Revenue Canada". I will await word from you on the matter.

Yours sincerely,

Marg Preston
Secretary
Cultural Property Export
Review Board



TD2020.002.001n

February 24, 1987

Mr. Louis Badone,
R.R. #4
Lakefield, Ontario
Canada K0L 2H0

Dear Mr. Badone,

I have received the enclosed letter from the Cultural Property Review Board requesting further information. Could you please attend to this matter.

Yours sincerely,

/sew

Illi-Maria Tamplin
Director

TD2020.002.001o

Cnoc Filidh

REGISTERED HIGHLAND CATTLE

Office: ✓
34 Avondale Avenue,
Willowdale, Ontario
M2N 2T9
Tel: 416-222-1725

Farm:
R.R. #4,
Lakefield, Ontario
K0L 2H0
Tel: 705-652-8879

October 20, 1986

Mrs I.M. Tamplin, Curator,
Art Gallery of Peterborough,
2 Crescent St,
Peterborough, Ont.

Dear Mrs Tamplin,

This will confirm the gift of a work of art entitled:-

"A Print in Four Parts" by Robin MacKenzie

#45.59, 1974.

This work is being presented in the names of my wife & I (Drusilla Badyne and Louis Badyne). Official receipts should however list my name as the single donor.

The print is being delivered along with this letter to-day. Mr MacKenzie will be in touch with you regarding the detailed framing instructions shortly. He will also be forwarding to you the valuation required.

We are very happy to be able to assist the Gallery in its work and hope that visitors will enjoy Robin's work as much as we do.

Yours very truly

Louis Badyne.

TD2020.002.001p

Robin MacKenzie
RR #1
Brock Road North
Pickering, Ont
L1V 2P8

416-683-1597

Work is a lithograph in 4 parts
shown in Artscanada Spring 74
pg. 76
is about 5 1/2' X 6 1/2'
in Collection of National Gal of C.
Hamilton Art Gal.
AGO
Norman MacKenzie
art Gallery

TD2020.002.001q

CP 8858

T871
Rev. 85

Revenue Canada Taxation | Revenu Canada Impôt

FILE COPY FOR THE RECIPIENT INSTITUTION
3 OR PUBLIC AUTHORITY
COPIE DU DOSSIER POUR L'ÉTABLISSEMENT OU L'ADMINISTRATION BÉNÉFICIAIRE

CULTURAL PROPERTY INCOME TAX CERTIFICATE

- For use by an authorized officer of the Canadian Cultural Property Export Review Board to certify that a particular cultural object(s) meets specified criteria namely:
  - (A) that it is of outstanding significance for one or more of the reasons set out in paragraph 8(3)(a) of the Cultural Property Export and Import Act, and
  - (B) that it meets the degree of national importance referred to in paragraph 8(3)(b) of the Cultural Property Export and Import Act.
- This Certificate when signed by an authorized officer is evidence that the property herein described is such that its disposal to an institution designated by the Minister of Communications will qualify for the following treatment under the Income Tax Act:
  - (A) where the property is donated, the donor may deduct an amount up to the value of the donation in computing taxable income if the claim is supported by a receipt (paragraph 110(1)(b.1) of the Income Tax Act);
  - (B) a gain, which would otherwise be a capital gain, arising from the disposition of the property is not subject to tax (subparagraph 39(1)(a)(i.1) of the Income Tax Act).
- The Certificate is valid for income tax purposes only in circumstances where:
  - (A) disposition is of the object as herein described,
  - (B) the condition, composition, texture, etc. of the object(s) has not been altered since an application for certification was sent to the Review Board, except any measures for repair and/or conservation authorized by the Review Board, and
  - (C) disposition is made to the designated institution indicated below.
- Further particulars may be obtained from your District Taxation Office.

CERTIFICAT FISCAL VISANT DES BIENS CULTURELS

- À l'usage d'un agent autorisé de la Commission canadienne d'examen des exportations de biens culturels pour certifier qu'un ou plusieurs objets culturels particuliers sont conformes aux critères établis, à savoir:
  - (A) qu'ils présentant un intérêt exceptionnel pour l'une ou plusieurs des raisons énoncées à l'alinéa 8(3)a) de la Loi sur l'exportation et l'importation de biens culturels, et
  - (B) qu'ils revêtent l'importance nationale dont fait mention l'alinéa 8(3)b) de la Loi sur l'exportation et l'importation de biens culturels.
- Le présent certificat une fois signé par un agent autorisé, établit que les biens décrits ici répondent aux conditions requises, de sorte que leur disposition au profit d'un établissement désigné par le ministère de la Communication ouvre droit au traitement suivant en vertu de la Loi de l'impôt sur la revenu:
  - (A) si les biens sont donnés, le donateur peut déduire dans le calcul de son revenu imposable un montant n'excédant pas la valeur du don, pourvu qu'il présente un reçu à l'appui (alinéa 110(1)b.1) de la Loi de l'impôt sur le revenu);
  - (B) un gain, qui serait par ailleurs un gain en capital, résultant de la disposition des biens n'est pas assujetti à l'impôt (sous-alinéa 39(1)a) (i.1) de la Loi de l'impôt sur le revenu).
- Ce certificat est valable aux fins de l'impôt sur le revenu dans les seuls cas où:
  - (A) il y a disposition de tout objet décrit dans le présent certificat;
  - (B) il n'y a eu aucune modification de l'état, de la composition, de la texture, etc. desdits objets depuis qu'une demande d'attestation a été envoyée à la Commission d'examen, à l'exception de toutes mesures autorisées par la Commission d'examen en vue de la réparation et (ou) de l'entretien desdits objets; et
  - (C) la disposition est faite au profit de l'établissement désigné dont il est fait mention ci-après.
- Pour obtenir plus de détails, veuillez consulter votre bureau de district d'impôt.

NAME OF DESIGNATED INSTITUTION (to which disposal of the property has been or will be made)
NOM DE L'ÉTABLISSEMENT DÉSIGNÉ (au profit duquel la disposition des biens a été ou sera faite)
The Art Gallery of Peterborough
ADDRESS—*ADRESSE*
2 Crescent Street PETERBOROUGH, Ontario K9J 2G1

Pursuant to section 26 of the Cultural Property Export and Import Act a determination has been made by the Canadian Cultural Property Export Review Board with respect to the object(s) described as follows: (If space below is insufficient, attach a statement.)

Conformément à l'article 26 de la Loi sur l'exportation et l'importation de biens culturels, la Commission canadienne d'examen des exportations de biens culturels a rendu une décision concernant l'objet ou les objets décrits ci-après: (Si l'espace ci-dessous est insuffisant, annexer une feuille.)

Four hand-printed lithographs by Robin Mackenzie, "A Print in Four Parts", 1973-1974, 45/59.

Estimated Fair Market Value
Estimation de la juste valeur marchande ▶ $ **9,000.00**

NOTE: The description of object(s) should commence with some general terms followed by such specific terms as dimensions, colour, date and any other particular marks such as creator's signature, hallmarks, serial numbers, etc.

Subject to verification by Revenue Canada

NOTE: Il faut d'abord donner une description générale de l'objet ou des objets, puis des précisions comme les dimensions, la couleur, la date et autres caractéristiques comme la signature de l'auteur, le cachet de contrôle, les numéros de série, etc.

CERTIFICATION

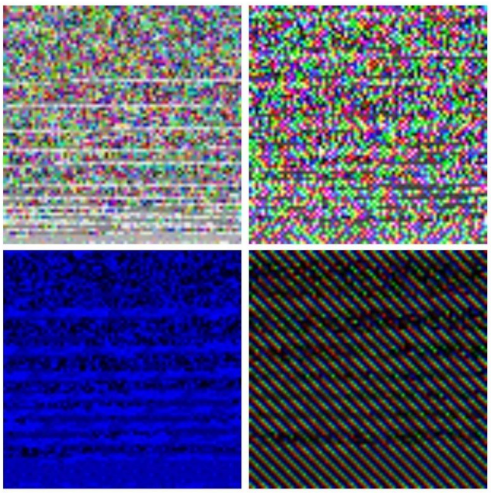
IT IS HEREBY CERTIFIED that the above-described object(s) meets the criteria provided in paragraphs 23(3)(b) and (c) of the Cultural Property Export and Import Act.

ATTESTATION

IL EST CERTIFIÉ PAR LES PRÉSENTES QUE l'objet ou les objets décrits ci-dessus sont conformes aux critères énoncés aux alinéas 23(3)b) et c) de la Loi sur l'exportation et l'importation de biens culturels.

Signature of Authorized Officer—*Signature de l'agent autorisé* | Date

Form prescribed by order of the Minister of National Revenue—*Formule prescrite sur l'ordre du ministre du Revenu national*



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Canadian Cultural Property Export Review Board | Commission canadienne d'examen des exportations de biens culturels

300 Slater Street
Room 348
Ottawa, Ontario
K1A 0C8
Tel: (613) 990-4161

April 29, 1987

Ms. Illi-Maria Tamplin
Director
Art Gallery of Peterborough
2 Crescent Street
Peterborough, Ontario
K9J 2G1

Dear Ms. Tamplin:

I have received a phone call from Mr. Louis Bedone who has declined to provide any additional information about the Robin Mackenzie print which he donated to your institution. He has asked that the certificate be issued showing the estimated fair market value "subject to verification by Revenue Canada".

I have complied with his request and the certificate is enclosed.

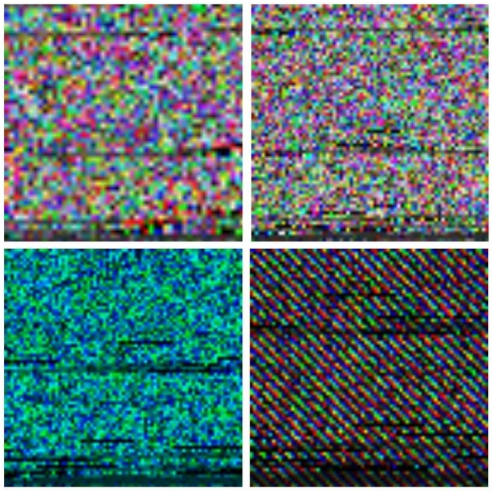
Yours sincerely,

Marg Preston
Secretary
Cultural Property Export
Review Board

Encl.

MP/sd

Canada



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HELENE ARTHUR GALLERIES LTD.
Operating as MAZELOW GALLERY
3463 Yonge Street
Toronto, Ontario, Canada.
416-481-7711 M4N 2N3

October 30, 1986

To Whom It May Concern:

We have been asked to give the current market value of the art work listed below. Our findings are, after reviewing available documentation on publication price and recent sales of similar work.

"A PRINT IN FOUR PARTS" 1973/74
By Robin Mackenzie

Four handprinted lithographs
Black and white with unique colour inset. Ed: 59
Each 28-1/2" x 36"
Overall size of 4 prints when mounted: 5'2" x 6'3" approx.

CURRENT MARKET VALUE $ 9000.00 to $9500.00

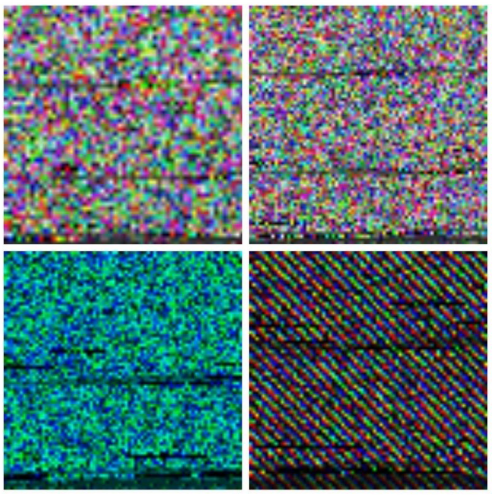
We confirm that this is an authentic work done by the hand of the artist and signed by hand by him.

Trusting this is what you require, we are,

Yours very truly,

HELENE ARTHUR GALLERIES LTD.

Per: Helene N. Mazelow



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- 1 -

GALERIE DRESDNERE 12 HAZELTON AVE. · TORONTO M5R 2E2 (416) 923-4662

November 27th, 1986

To Whom It May Concern:

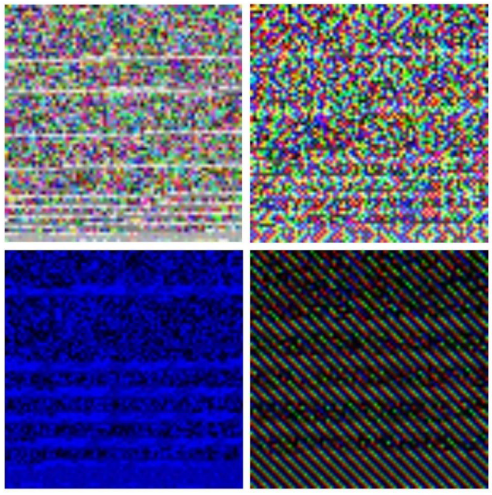
Having examined the art work listed below I hereby confirm its authenticity and re-assess its current market value as follows:

ROBIN MACKENZIE -- "A Print in Four Parts"

Executed 1973-74
Four black-and-white lithographs
with unique colour insets
Each - 28½ x 36 inches
Overall size mounted - 5'2" x 6'3"
Edition of 59
Signed by the artist

Value: $8,800.00

GALERIE DRESDNERE (TORONTO) LTD.
Judith Scolnik



TD2020.002.001u

The Art Gallery of Peterborough
2 Crescent Street, Peterborough, Ontario K9J 2G1 • Telephone (705) 743-9179

May 28, 1987

Mr. & Mrs. L. Badone,
34 Avondale Avenue
Willowdale, Ontario
M2N 2T9

Dear Mr. and Mrs. Badone,

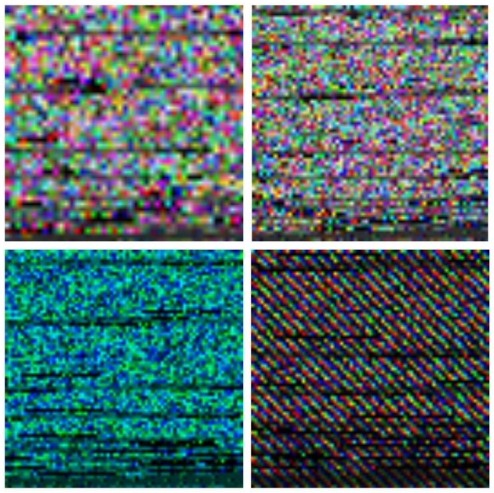
Thank you for donating Robin MacKenzie's lithograph "A Print in Four Parts", edition 45/59 to The Art Gallery of Peterborough collection.

This print is a significant contribution to the growth of our collection.

Yours sincerely,

/sew

Dr. Peter Milder
Chairman, Acquisitions Committee
Art Gallery of Peterborough



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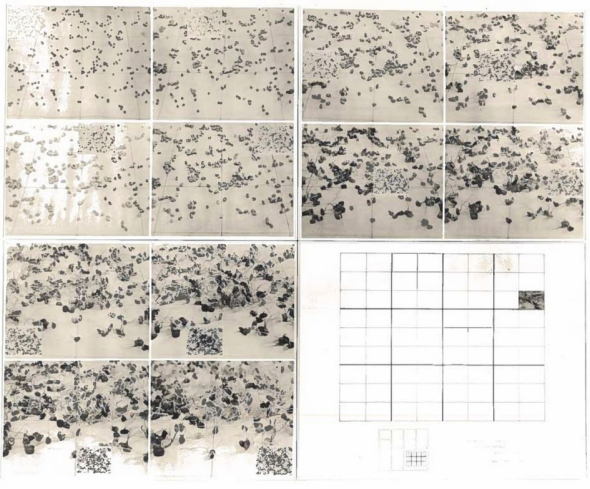

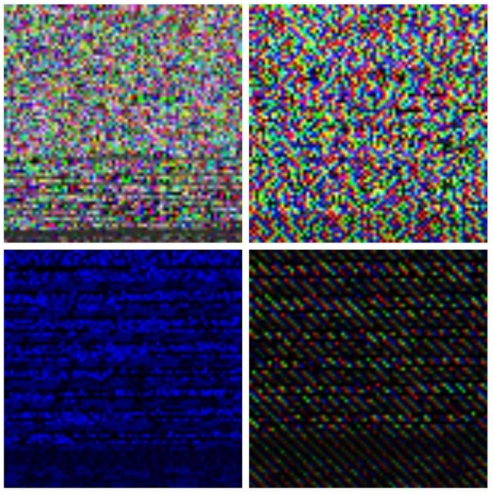

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Eco-coda: the ecological consequences of digital archives

> Archive Fever, Indeed? I can tell you *all about* Archive Fever!
>
> — Steedman, *Dust*[347]

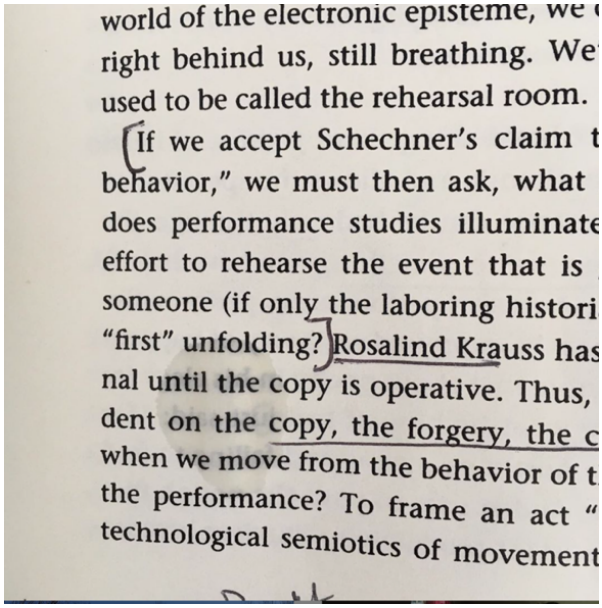
> The obsessive accumulation of everything that characterizes our era has limits.
>
> — Sean Cubitt, *Finite Media: Environmental Implications of Digital Technologies*[348]

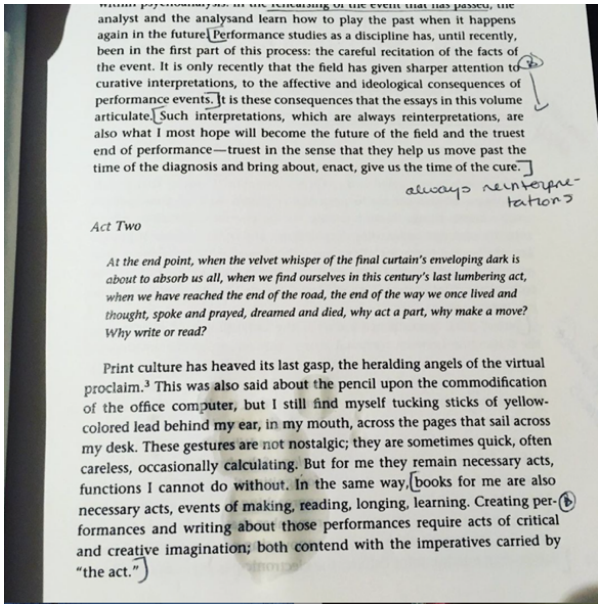
In *Dust,* Steedman addresses the literal fever, or, with reference to Derrida's *Archive Fever,* what she calls "archive fever proper."[349] By this she means not the Derridean understanding of a passion to archive, which is subject to inevitable loss, but the physical symptoms and occupational diseases caused by working in and with archives. In 1833, Forbes et al published an entry in *Cyclopeadia of Practical Medicine* titled "The Diseases of Artisans," also known as "brain fever" and the "fever of scholarship," which developed from the following scholastic activities: "'want of exercise, very frequently from breathing the same atmosphere too long, from the curved position of the body, [and] from too ardent expression of the brain."[350] "Brain fever" was thus not a figure of speech Steedman observes; it described two forms of pathologized meningitis: (1), "inflammation of the membranes of the brain (meningitis proper)," and (2), "of the substance of the brain (cerebritis)." In short, the physical and psychological causes of "brain fever" were lack of exercise, poor air quality, and "passions" (excitement and ambition).[351]

---

[347] Steedman, 17, original emphasis.
[348] Sean Cubitt, *Finite Media: Environmental Implications of Digital Technologies* (London: Duke University Press, 2017), 7.
[349] Steedman, 9.
[350] Steedman quoting Forbes et al, 21.
[351] Steedman, 22.

Although many physical causes of "brain fever" are no longer hazards—the Nineteenth Century book and its components: leather binding, adhesives, parchments and vellums, for example—contemporary digital archives continue to facilitate a type of "brain fever." "Archive Fever, Indeed? I can tell you *all about* Archive Fever!" [352] This dissertation has taught me a lot about archive fever! My personal symptoms include, lack of exercise followed by over exercise, lack of sleep or no sleep at all, lack of balanced diet, overt excitement at inappropriate times, worsening eye sight, crying fits, bouts of nausea, decreased hand-mouth coordination, and drooling while writing and reading—the latter two are archived here:


world of the electronic episteme, we
right behind us, still breathing. We
used to be called the rehearsal room.
If we accept Schechner's claim t
behavior," we must then ask, what
does performance studies illuminate
effort to rehearse the event that is
someone (if only the laboring histori
"first" unfolding? Rosalind Krauss has
nal until the copy is operative. Thus,
dent on the copy, the forgery, the c
when we move from the behavior of t
the performance? To frame an act "
technological semiotics of movement


analyst and the analysand learn how to play the past when it happens again in the future. Performance studies as a discipline has, until recently, been in the first part of this process: the careful recitation of the facts of the event. It is only recently that the field has given sharper attention to curative interpretations, to the affective and ideological consequences of performance events. It is these consequences that the essays in this volume articulate. Such interpretations, which are always reinterpretations, are also what I most hope will become the future of the field and the truest end of performance—truest in the sense that they help us move past the time of the diagnosis and bring about, enact, give us the time of the cure.

always reinterpretations?

Act Two

At the end point, when the velvet whisper of the final curtain's enveloping dark is about to absorb us all, when we find ourselves in this century's last lumbering act, when we have reached the end of the road, the end of the way we once lived and thought, spoke and prayed, dreamed and died, why act a part, why make a move? Why write or read?

Print culture has heaved its last gasp, the heralding angels of the virtual proclaim.[3] This was also said about the pencil upon the commodification of the office computer, but I still find myself tucking sticks of yellow-colored lead behind my ear, in my mouth, across the pages that sail across my desk. These gestures are not nostalgic; they are sometimes quick, often careless, occasionally calculating. But for me they remain necessary acts, functions I cannot do without. In the same way, books for me are also necessary acts, events of making, reading, longing, learning. Creating performances and writing about those performances require acts of critical and creative imagination; both contend with the imperatives carried by "the act."

This my copy of *The Ends of Performance*. One of these images features spilt whiskey, and the other drool.

I can attest to the fact that digital archives have physical and psychological effects for those who use them. But more important than my personal symptoms, is the fact that digital archives are finite, and our use of them has tangible ecological implications. This is to say that

[352] Steedman, 17, original emphasis.

the increasing ubiquity of digital archives—and, consequently, the exacerbated state of *mal d'archive*—has resulted in a sort of "ecological fever." Significantly, digital technologies are both contributing to and compromised by global warming. Google's infrastructure alone generates 0.2 grams of C02 per search (regardless of whether or not someone searches), and accounts for 40% of the Internet's carbon footprint. The Internet emits 2% of the world's greenhouse gasses, which is the same as the global air travel industry.[353] Increasing global temperatures will continue to stress the already-running-hot data infrastructures, which will not only increase the possibility of malfunction, but also cooling costs.[354] This means that the more we use digital technologies, the less reliable they become because to use them is to contribute to global warming, which then compromises their reliability. The worsting ecological effects of global warming are, further, often experienced by those who are least responsible for it; the receding Pacific Island shorelines and the melting ice caps in the Arctic, for example, threaten vital aspects of Indigenous cultures. Regardless, the demand for digital storage has doubled the amount of energy used by data centres every four years in the last decade. This number is projected to triple in the next ten years.[355] We cannot afford to separate these projections from global warming, and the increasing vulnerability of digital infrastructures.

It is not my aim to offer a solution for this "ecological fever," nor address its full impact—this is a separate project as theorists like Sean Cubitt, Bridle, and Hogan, among others,

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[353] Urs Hölzle, "Powering a Google Search," *Google Official Blog,* January 2009, https://googleblog.blogspot.com/2009/01/powering-google-search.html, Anne Quito, Anne, "Every Google search results in C02 emissions. This real-time data viz shows how much," *Quartz,* May 7, 2018, https://qz.com/1267709/every-google-search-results-in-co2-emissions-this-real-time-dataviz-shows-how-much/, and Bridle, 63.
[354] Bridle, 61. Since 2018, Apple iPhones have the following user message when temperatures reach over 40 degrees Celsius, which is a common occurrence in the Middle East: *iPhone needs to cool down before you use it*.
[355] Bridle, 63.

have shown. I want to conclude this dissertation with a brief look at the ecological impact of digital archives because, given their increasing ubiquity, I feel it irresponsible not to.

I previously mentioned that digital archives mark a tension: the digitization of archives has led to democratization in the form of greater participation and access; at the same time, however, it has facilitated a rapid increase in both the formal and informal production of preservable content, which is consequently subjected to not only loss, but also various political agendas because the archive—democratized or otherwise—is inherently political. I have argued that this tension was anticipated by performance artists and theorists decades earlier because they shift the focus from what is preserved to how it has become and continues to be preservable through multiple archival acts. In other words, they offer a performative perspective that is informed by *mal d'archive* and its political symptoms, which, as a result, critically and effectively accounts for the tension of digital archives. In addressing the ecological consequences of digital archives, however, this eco-coda highlights another tension that arguably marks a limit of this performative perspective, further, poststructuralist thought: the tension between the dematerialization of the performative and the materiality of digital substrates.

Performativity is often understood in terms of the discursive, linguistic, or cultural turn—Austin's speech act theory, significantly his notion of performativity, is a linguistic theory even though, as I explained in my note on titles, it marks a shift from language as representation to language as action. This understanding, Barad explains, risks privileging language at the expense of every other thing; put differently, performativity often privileges matters of signification, not matter itself. Barad advocates for a performative understanding that challenges the representationalist belief in the validity of words to represent things in the world. Performativity, she explains,

> is not an invitation to turn everything (including material bodies) into words; on the contrary, performativity is precisely a contestation of the excessive power granted to language to determine what is real…performativity is actually a contestation of the unexamined habits of mind that grant language and other forms of representation more power in determining our ontologies than they deserve.[356]

This is a materialist or non-human elaboration of performativity, which grants matter agency—what Barad terms "agential realism."[357] In her insistence on the performativity of matter, Barad emphasizes performative alternatives to representationalism, which ontologically separates the world into domains of words and things. She shifts the focus from "questions of correspondence between descriptions and reality (e.g., do they mirror nature or culture?) to matters of practices/doings/actions."[358] It is thus not a question of whether or not a representation accurately represents that which it was consigned to represent, but how it continuously represents through various practices informed by the interconnectivity of things, or a relational ontology, which is the foundation of Barad's "agential realism"—including the very material substrates that digital archives depend on.

By employing a performative perspective, the contemporary artists and theorists who critically respond to Phelan's ontology of disappearance and, further, the cultural workers who critically address galleries and museums as archival institutions shift the focus from what is preserved to how it has become and continues to be preservable through multiple archival acts,

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[356] Barad, 802.
[357] Barad, 810. "On an agential realist account," Barad further explains, "it is once again possible to acknowledge nature, the body, and materiality in the fullness of their becoming without resorting to the optics of transparency or opacity, the geometrics of absolute exteriority or interiority, and the theoretization of the human as either pure cause or pure effect while at the same time remaining resolutely accountable for the role 'we' play in the intertwined practices of knowing and becoming" (Barad, 812).
[358] Barad, 802.

or, as Barad terms it in the previous quote, "practices/doings/actions." However, this perspective, albeit useful for reasons I have already explained, risks privileging the archival institution at the expense of a relational ontology. Much of my dissertation works against the radical presence that early performance theorists, including Phelan, championed—notably my second interlude, which serves as an extreme example of the archive's productive function. This can be described as a sort of dematerializatist or poststructuralist idealism; it doesn't matter whether or not an event took place, what matters is how it comes to be consigned through archival logic, and thus authenticated and validated by the archival institution. This eco-code is arguably a return to radical presence. It is, further, a gesture of humility—my personal archive fever symptoms aside. This is a "time of sincerity," according to Timothy Morton in *Hyperobjects: Philosophy and Ecology After the End of the World.* In response to the environmental crisis, or what I previously termed "ecological fever," we find ourself in "an emergency room of the ecological coexistence," which forces us to acknowledge the agency of nonhuman entities "that are incomparably more vast and powerful than we are, and that our reality is caught in them."[359]

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"The obsessive accumulation of everything that characterizes our era has limits," Cubitt explains in *Finite Media: Environmental Implications of Digital Technologies.* By this he means

[359] Timothy Morton, *Hyperobjects: Philosophy and Ecology After the End of the World* (Minnesota, University of Minnesota Press, 2013), 126, 12. The "nonhuman entities" that Morton refers to in this quote are what he terms "hyperobjects," which "are massively distributed in time and space relative to humans…hyperobjects…are 'hyper' in relation to some other entity, whether they are directly manufactured by humans or not" (Morton, 12). Global warming, for example, is a hyperobject, comprising the sun, the biosphere, fossil fuel extraction and consumption, among many other things. This said, Morton is clear in stating that hyperobjects are not assemblages of other objects, but objects in their own right (Morton, 13).

to say that the increase in archival and curatorial activity identified by Featherstone, Prelinger, and Balzer have serious environmental consequences. "Media are finite," Cubitt elaborates,

> in the sense both that, as matter, they are inevitably tied to physics, especially the dimension of time; and that their constituent elements—matter and energy, information and entropy, time and space, but especially the first pair—are finite resources in the closed system of planet Earth. Because they are finite, media not only cannot persist forever; they cannot proliferate without bounds. [360]

In other words, we do not have enough natural resources to support our intensified "archival" and "curatorial impulses." Bridle also addresses this. The dispersed and fragmented activities of digital archives and computational capacity, he states, "consume vast resources, and are, by nature of contemporary networks, difficult to see and string together," meaning it is difficult for the average user to see the ecological consequences.[361] The "new dark age" is literal for Bridle.

Both Cubitt and Bridle advocate for the importance of contextualizing—curating—digital media in such a way that highlights its environmental and political consequences. Like Bridle's "new dark age" suggests, the average media user doesn't see the warehouses filled with servers, the hundreds of thousands of miles of fiber-optic cable, or the human toll of natural resource mining—especially for Indigenous populations, which I will later return to. Contributing to this, Hogan explains, are the metaphors used to represent Big Tech companies—Amazon, Google, Microsoft, and Facebook, for example—as leading environmental custodians regardless of the fact that their institutional practices actively contribute to global warming.[362]And, as Barad reminds us, we need to take these metaphors seriously because they serve as performative

[360] Cubitt, 7.
[361] Bridle, 63.
[362] Hogan, "Big data ecologies," 633.

representations, which is to say that they do not merely describe their consigned referents, but, at least in part, performatively and continuously constitute them as such.[363]

As I mentioned in my first interlude, Hogan uses the term "Big Data ecologies" to indicate the growth and influence of Big Tech. Digital infrastructure has become, Hogan explains, "the most important sociotechnical system of our time." Consequently, "the continuous expansion of server farms is encouraged, supported politically and financially, and celebrated as progress by the industry and most governments…."[364] For Hogan, "Big Data ecologies" conceptually repositions Big Tech in such a way that highlights its influence on not only the environment, but also on industrial development, which is critical because

> Big Tech upholds the idea of shifting its mode of energy production to alternative, sustainable, and renewable sources without implementing radical changes at the level of labour, resource ownership or conceptions of the environment, which have become more pressing matters at this time of global climatic transformations but remain at odds with capitalist endeavours.[365]

By this Hogan means to point out the fact that Big Tech companies curate their representation to support the image of environmental custodianship—which includes renewable and sustainable energy research—while, significantly, downplaying not only the materiality of their products and services—i.e., the Cloud—but also their environmental impact. For example, Facebook CEO Mark Zuckerberg's response to the US's withdrawal from the Paris Agreement on climate change on June 1, 2017: "Withdrawing from the Pairs climate agreement is bad for the environment…we've committed that every new data center we build will be powered by 100 percent renewable energy." Similarly, Google's Vice President of Data Centers Joe Kava stated

[363] Barad, 804-811.
[364] Hogan, "Big data ecologies," 633.
[365] Hogan, "Big data ecologies," 634.

that "huge cloud operators have a responsibility to use their buying power to drive changes in the US utility industry, which should boost its mix of renewables and make clean energy available to more customers."[366] And Apple's Vice President of Environment, Policy, and Social Initiatives Lisa Jackson opened Apple's 2018 Environmental Responsibility Report with the following statement: "Creating powerful solutions to push humanity forward takes relentless innovation, Resolving to do this without taking precious resources from the planet means holding ourselves and our suppliers to ever higher standards."[367]

It is clear from Zuckerberg's, Kava's, and Jackson's statements that fighting climate change by providing renewable and sustainable energy solutions motivates Big Tech. However, as Hogan points out, "this is premised on faulty logics that frames nature more as software than as an agentic organism."[368] By this Hogan means to say that Big Tech logics have underlying colonial values, specifically when it comes to notions of innovation, advancement, and achievement. As Hogan highlights in the previous quote, this has, more often than not, taken the form of conquering and controlling nature, which is perhaps exemplified by the fact that Big Tech emphasizes its mastery over the environment by creating data centers that can withstand environmental disasters like hurricanes, floods, and fires. Houston data centers, for example, are built to withstand hurricanes, tornados, and ice storms to, as The New York Times writer James Glanz reports, "keep the internet going." In 2017, Hurricane Harvey displaced thousands of Houstonians from their homes, but not their internet.[369]

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[366] Hogan quoting Zuckerberg and Kava in "Big data ecologies," 634.
[367] "Environmental Responsibility Report: 2019 Progress Report, covering fiscal year 2018," *Apple Inc.,* April 2019.
[368] Hogan, "Big data ecologies," 635.
[369] James Glanz, "How the internet kept humming during 2 hurricanes," *The New York Times,* September 18, 2017, https://www.nytimes.com/2017/09/18/us/harvey-irma-internet.html

"[D]ata centers," Hogan explains, have "become fodder for how Big Tech manages to simultaneously acknowledge their role in depleting natural resources while also situating themselves as *the* safeguard and solution to society's ills."[370] Google, for example, has proposed what they term a "smart water" solution; this involves a series of public water infrastructure partnerships that ensure a reliable cooling source for Google's data servers, which generate a significant amount of heat—Google uses water to cool their servers because it is cheaper than electricity. According to Hogan, a midsize data centre "uses between 80 million and 130 million gallons of water a year for cooling…roughly as much water in a year as 158,000 Olympic sized swimming pools...."[371] With the aim to reduce its carbon footprint, Google has been harvesting non-drinkable water sources, like rainwater, and has subsequently boasted about its efforts. In 2012, Google featured their Douglas County data center partnership with the Douglasville-Douglas Country Water and Sewer Authority (WSA) on their blog.[372] The WSA provides Google with non-drinkable water sources, and Google treats the water in its effluent treatment plant, which then circulates through its cooling towers. According to Hogan, 70% of the treated water is returned to the river, and the remaining 30% is diverted back to the data center.[373] In a Google Green information video hosted by YouTube, they explain that the Douglas County data centre's "smart water" system allows the WSA to increase their water reservoir capacity for times of drought.[374] However, as Hogan observes, "In times of severe droughts (or floods), it is

[370] Hogan, "Big data ecologies," 635-636, original emphasis.
[371] Hogan, "Big data ecologies.," 638.
[372] "Helping the Hooch with water conservation at our Douglas County data center," *Google Green Blog*, March 15, 2012, http://googlegreenblog.blogspot.com/2012/03/helping-hooch-with-water- conservation.html.
[373] Hogan, "Big data ecologies," 638.
[374] Google Green, "Smart water use in Google's Douglas County data center," *YouTube*, March 15, 2012, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lJnlgM1yEU0

unclear who will be given priority—communities or Big Tech—and we don't know how this priority will be measured. Or we do—in Houston, the data centers stayed on while tens of thousands of individuals went without power."[375] Hogan also notes California, which, regardless of recent droughts and forest fires, is home to the largest cloud computing facilities in the United States including 800 data centers—each requiring approximately 158,000 Olympic sized swimming pools worth of water for server cooling.[376]

With this in mind, Hogan concludes that "data centers play a hand at furthering settler futurity in at least two ways: they stake a claim to land and its proximity to water, and they further locate humanity outside of human bodies, and into machines.[377] "Settler futurity" is productive because it points to the colonial tactics employed by Big Tech companies to (1), procure the vast amount of natural resources needed to support digital products and services—Hogan goes as far to say that "Big Tech are the new farmers…companies toiling matter as memory, companies using large swaths of land and water, working towards future storage and the storage of the future"[378]—and to (2), ensure a future for humanity in the form of digitally archived data (albeit a specific version of "humanity," which I will later address). It is for this reason that Indigenous and queer-feminist theorist Juanita Sundberg proposes a critical engagement with what she terms "the coloniality of power" to address underlying colonial pursuits.[379] In the case of Big Tech, this means critically looking at the colonial values maintained and justified by Big Tech agendas. I have already pointed to Google's "smart water"

[375] Hogan, "Big data ecologies," 639. Also see Glanz.
[376] Hogan, "Big data ecologies," 631.
[377] Hogan, "Big data ecologies," 640.
[378] Hogan, "Big data ecologies," 633.
[379] Juanita Sundberg, "Decolonizing Posthumanist Geographies," *Cultural Geographies* 21, no.1 (2014): 35.

initiative, which shows the connection between sustainability endeavours, and Big Tech's control of the environment. It is also important to note that many natural resources and manufacturing plants are located on Indigenous land. And given Big Tech's underlying colonial values, government activities, in support of Big Tech infrastructure, risk resembling colonial tactics. In short, extraction and manufacturing processes often negatively impact Indigenous land and communities. Australia's uranium ore deposits, for example, which are located in its Northern Territories. In 2007, Australian premier John Howard ordered a military intervention into the traditional communities that inhabit the Northern Territories. Howard claimed that this order was motivated by reports of child abuse. However, his motivation was soon rendered void by the fact that child abuse in the Northern Territories was no more prevalent than in Suburban Sydney. "[T]he armed intervention and brutal policing that followed," Cubitt concludes, "gave a clear signal to [Australia's] international customer base that Australian uranium supplies would be secured at all costs…." including the government's withdrawal of constitutional rights for its Northern Territories Indigenous population.[380] In 2009, the UN Human Rights Commission determined that

> the Australian government, which had acted with bipartisan support, had breached the terms of the International Covenant on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination…'[The UN Human Rights Commission] is particularly concerned at the negative impact of the NTER [the Northern Territory Emergency Response] measures on the enjoyment of the rights of indigenous peoples and at the fact that [the measures] suspend the operation of the Racial Discrimination Act 1975 and were adopted without adequate consultation with the indigenous peoples.'[381]

[380] Cubitt, 51-52.
[381] Cubitt quoting the 2009 UN Human Rights Commission, 51.

This is not unique case; 70% of the world's uranium ore deposits, Cubitt explains, are located on Indigenous lands, and colonial tactics—like the ones that the Australian government implemented—have been and continue to be deployed to extract them in many countries including Greenland, Kenya, Tanzania, Mongolia, Canada, and the United States, among others.[382]

Similarly, Big Tech perpetuates a colonial mentality when it comes to archiving, that is, guaranteeing a future for humanity. I have already addressed the underlying colonial values that are enacted through various contemporary archival practices in my previous chapter. I would like to focus here on a specific archival technology, and the metaphors used to describe it that exemplify Hogan's notion of "settler futurity:" the Internet Archive's use of web crawlers, which are integral to their mission to not only archive "All Knowledge," but also to provide "Universal Access to All Knowledge."[383] In addition to participant contributions, the Internet Archive uses web crawlers to archive web pages for the Wayback Machine. In "The Wayback Machine: notes on a re-enchantment," Surya Bowyer explains that "A crawler begins with a webpage and then follows each hyperlink on that webpage to reach new webpages…Each webpage leads to multiple other webpages, in theory ad infinitum."[384] Thus, as a metaphor, "crawler" refers to movement through space. The "crawler" adds a URL to a list when it has archived all the hyperlinks on a given page, which it uses to keep track of the web pages it has already archived. According to Bowyer, "This list is referred to as the crawl frontier," which carries significant implications: "something as seemingly mundane as a list of URLs is, by the language we use to

[382] Cubitt, 52.
[383] "About the Internet Archive."
[384] Surya Bowyer. "The Wayback Machine: notes on a re-enchantment," *Archival Science* 20 (2020), 5.

refer to it, made terrestrial and territorial…the logic is that of the cartographer, or colonialist."[385] These metaphors, for Bowyer, not only reference colonial tactics, they also grant the "crawler" agency, which consequently displaces human, and, by extension, institutional agency. Thus, the Wayback Machine's mission to archive and provide "Universal Access to All Knowledge," paired with the metaphors used to describe its archiving/crawling process, "obfuscates the human agency at the heart of the crawl: the very agency which decides what is crawled, and what is allowed to be forgotten."[386] By this Bowyer means to say that the metaphors used by the Wayback Machine negate its institutional influence. In other words, they imply that the Wayback Machine archives "All Knowledge" and provides "Universal Access" to this knowledge neutrally and equally. However, we know from Noble that this is not the case—recall her work on Google's search engine, which shows that technological algorithms perpetuate pre-existing values, including racist ones.[387] We also know from BLM artists and theorists that colonial mentalities still exist in many contemporary archival institutions. And, further, that not everyone has equal access to the technological infrastructure required to benefit from the "Universal Access" that the Wayback Machine claims to provide—Northern Indigenous populations in Canada, for example.[388] In short, archival institutions, which promise a future for humanity, not only (1), archive a particular version of "humanity," but also (2), directly and indirectly mediate access to their version of "humanity."

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[385] Bowyer, 6.
[386] Bowyer, 8.
[387] Noble, 2.
[388] Brad Stollery, "Canada's Digital Divide: Preserving Indigenous Communities Means Bringing Them Online," *Friends of Canadian Broadcasting*, May 3, 2018, https://friends.ca/explore/article/canadas-digital-divide-preserving-indigenous-communities-means-bringing-them-online/

I hope it is clear by now that the metaphors commonly used to describe digital products and services are problematic because they actively negate the existence of physical infrastructure, institutional influence, and the environmental and human impact integral to digital technologies. Bridle highlights this point. He states that "technology is not mere tool making and tool use: it is the making of metaphors."[389] By this he means that the language we use is also productive in the sense of Barad's notion of performative representation. It is important to critically engage with the metaphors we use to describe Big Tech products and services because they performatively shape what they represent. For example, as I previously mentioned, the "Cloud" enforces the assumption of digital omnipresence and immateriality, or what Betancourt calls "aura of the digital"; [390] hence the critical function of glitch art in calling attention to digital materiality and computational processes.

Bridle proposes what he terms a "re-enchantment" to help rethink these metaphors. For Bridle, "re-enchantment" is "an attempt to rethink our tools—not a repurposing or a redefinition, necessarily, but a thoughtfulness of them." [391] More productive metaphors—which highlight underlying colonial mentalities that drive our contemporary digital moment—can help with this process. This is why Hogan's "settler futurity" is so effective because it (1), draws attention to the colonial mentality that drives archival projects, and the physical infrastructures that support them, and (2), it points to the colonial version of "humanity" that is archived. As I mentioned in my first chapter, Todd addresses the political stakes of the latter. In "An Indigenous Feminist's Take On The Ontological Turn: 'Ontology' Is Just Another Word For Colonialism," and with specific attention to climate change research—which, as I previously mentioned, Big Tech

[389] Bridle, 13.
[390] Betancourt, 7.
[391] Bridle, 13.

claims to champion—Todd explains that contemporary research is reminiscent of Indigenous knowledge without being directly cited. This lack of citation has significant consequences. "The relationship between public consciousness of climate change and the Arctic," Todd states, "has been shaped significantly by the work of Inuit activists like Shelia Watt-Cloutier and Rosemarie Kupatana, and others."[392] Todd calls attention to various public campaigns including Greenpeace's Save the Arctic to support this claim. However, "when climate change and the Arctic act as mega-categories," she states,

> they can quickly erase arctic Indigenous *peoples and their law and philosophies* from their discourses. It is easier for Euro-Western people to tangle with a symbolic polar bear on a Greenpeace website or in a tweet than it is to acknowledge arctic Indigenous peoples and their knowledge systems and legal-political realities.[393]

With this, Todd highlights the performative function of citation, and its political implications. As I explained in my introductory note on titles, to cite someone, a theorist or artist, for example, is to performatively produce them as "knowledgeable." Thus, like archival and curatorial practices, the act of citing is highly selective; it is a command to pay attention to selected content, and what is not selected becomes a performative representation of those without power. Todd specifically highlights the political consequences of not citing Indigenous artists, activists, and scholars: they are affirmed as "unknowledgeable," and unworthy of archiving for future generations.

Like Hogan's "settler futurity," Jussi Parikka offers another productive metaphor in "The Anthrobscene: Deep Time Designs." As his title suggests, the "anthrobscene" is a take on the "anthropocene," which is the term used to refer to the massive geological impact of human

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[392] Todd, "An indigenous Feminist's take on the ontological turn: 'Ontology' is just another word for colonialism," *Journal of Historical Society* 29, no.1 (2016): 6.
[393] Todd, "An indigenous Feminist's take on the ontological turn," 6, original emphasis.

science and technology, and the policies in place that support it. For Parikka, the "anthr*obscene*" describes "the various violations of environmental and human life in corporate practices and technological design culture that is ensuring that there might not be such **an** anthropocentric future." Significantly, "anthrobscene" encourages us to "consider the unsustainable, politically dubious and ethically suspicious practices, which maintain technological design culture and its corporate networks."[394] Similar to both Cubitt and Bridle, Parikka stresses the need to contextualize digital technology in such a way that emphasizes its ecological consequences. He suggests a shift in focus from the shiny end product to mining and refinement processes required to create said shiny product. One way of doing this is to start reading the history of technology before it became what we colloquially call "technology"—namely digital technology. "Deep time resources of the earth," he explains, "enable technology to be born."[395] By "deep time resources" Parikka refers to the materials that precede the manufacturing of digital technologies, which includes uranium, silicon, and indium. Paired with the "anthrobscene," "deep time resources" is effective because it directly indicates the following: (1), digital technology's material substrate, and (2), a shift in time scale that considers the lasting effects of digital manufacturing and waste. The latter is particularly important for Jennifer Gabrys. In *Digital Rubbish: A Natural History of Electronics*, she addresses digital waste including obsolete (by design) hardware and software and chemical pollution. Similar to glitch art, digital waste can be an important reminder of digital materiality for Gabrys.[396]

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[394] Jussi Parikka, "The Anthrobscene: Deep Time Designs," *Exhibist Magazine* 10 (2016): iii-vi.
[395] Parikka, iv.
[396] Jennifer Gabrys, *Digital Rubbish: A Natural History of Electronics* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2013), vi.

It is important to note, however, that the virtuality of digital products and services, paired with the remoteness of both digital manufacture and disposal, actively conceals the ecological consequences of digital waste. It is also important to note that the governance of waste in our contemporary digital moment, Cubitt explains, is informed by colonial agendas. He identifies three forms of waste: (1), garbage or waste electrical and electronic equipment (WEEE), (2), the structural waste generated from the overproduction of energy industries, and (3), colonized populations—commonly BIPOC. The latter, deemed "superfluous," is exemplified by recycling villages in Africa, India, and China, which, Cubitt explains, "bear the brunt of waste inherent in resolving crises of overproduction," and increasing WEEE.[397] Significantly, for Cubitt, all three of these waste forms are not unfortunate by-products, but integral to the "core of the neoliberal mode of destruction and its redirection of wealth away from both populations and environments towards ever-smaller elites."[398] It is for this reason that waste is "a matter of waste people and waste places as well as waste materials."[399]

In addition to more accurate metaphors—"anthrobscene," "deep time resources," "settler futurity"—Parikka notes that various artistic practices can aid in the contextualization of digital technologies with their numerous environmental, human, and political consequences. In a historical sense, "Art," he explains," has turned chemicals, clays, pigments into expressions of not only any romantic artistic spirit but the existence of the earth: an understanding of the Earth's tendencies to create sound, light, and more."[400] Morton holds similar view. Object-oriented art—meaning art that emphasizes the materiality of our ecology—he explains, "sticks to us and flows

[397] Cubitt, 116-118.
[398] Cubitt, 119.
[399] Cubitt, 120.
[400] Parikka, iv.

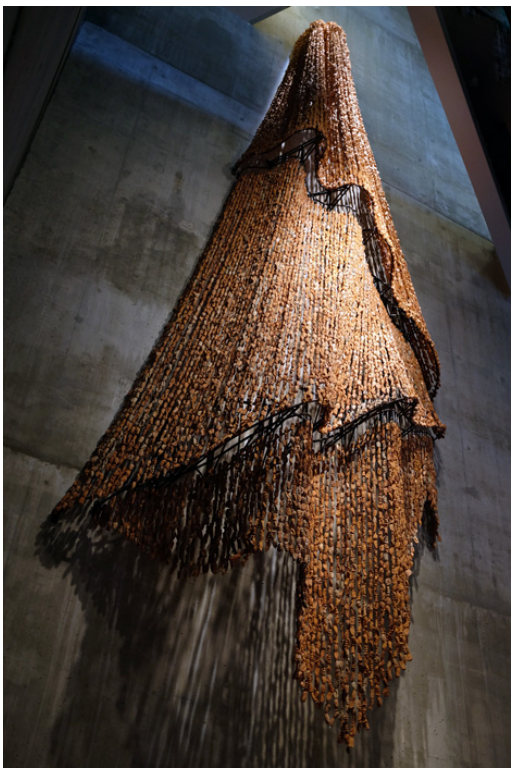
over us," increasing our ecological awareness of human and nonhuman interrelationships, our ecological coexistence.[401] I would like to conclude this eco-coda with a brief look at some contemporary artists who directly engage with technology's material substrate and, significantly, the politics of media: Rebecca Belmore, Jamie Allen and David Gauthier, and Joana Moll.

As a member of the of Lac Seul First Nations (Anishinaabe), Belmore directly engages with contemporary Indigeneity through her multidisciplinary practice. She often uses raw materials as a means of asking viewers to consider the ecological impact of colonial governance

Rebecca Belmore*, Artifact #671B,* 1988, performance, Thunder Bay Art Gallery, Thunder Bay.

[401] Morton, 184. Morton's sense of "object," captured in "object-oriented art," derives from object oriented ontology (OOO), which, briefly put, is a philosophical movement that rejects the anthropocentric assumption that human and nonhuman entities exist in a hierarchical relationship, privileging humans.

from an Indigenous perspective. In 1988, during the Calgary Winter Olympics, Belmore performed *Artifact #671B.* Tagging her body like a museum artifact with Shell's corporate logo, she drew attention to the oil company's incursion into Indigenous land. This tagging revealed the duplicity between the company's Olympic Indigenous Exhibition sponsorship *The Spirit Sings,*



Rebecca Belmore, *Trace,* 2014, clay, Canadian Museum for Human Rights, Winnipeg.

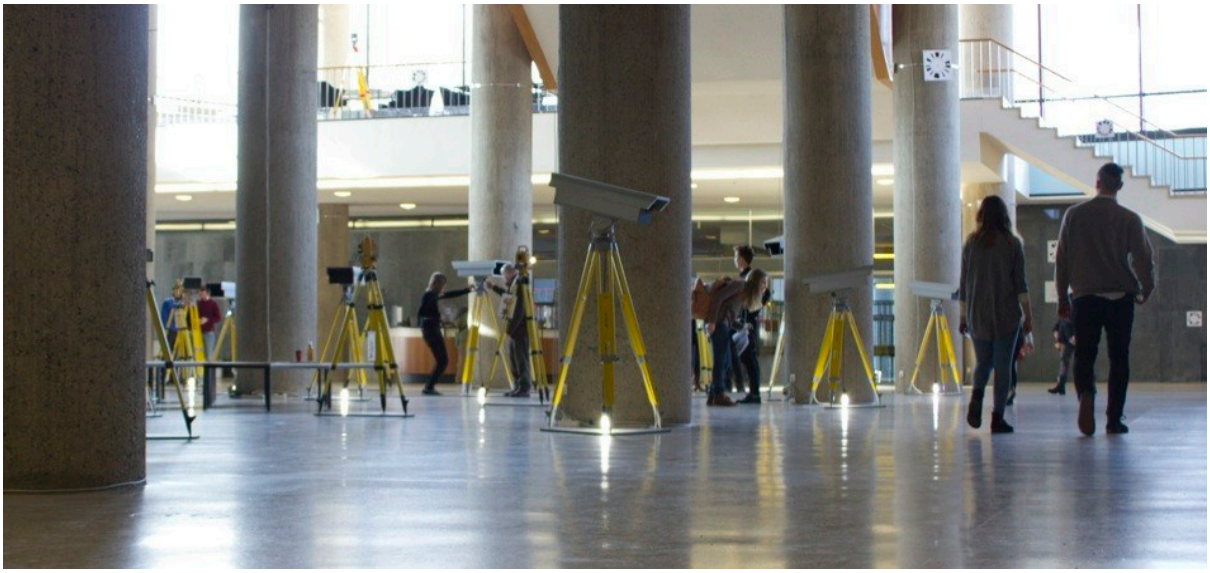
while securing the drilling rights that negated Lubicon Cree land claims.[402]

Trace (2014) is a more contemporary, community-based project. *Trace* is a large ceramic blanket installed on a 74 square meter wall in Winnipeg's Canadian Museum for Human Rights. It is comprised of handmade clay beads formed by the hands of the artist and the community members who participated in the project. It was created to "honour the original inhabitants of the land upon which the Canadian Museum for Human Rights is built. This land," Belmore explains, "bears evidence of over 6,000 years of Indigenous presence where 500,000 artifacts were

[402] Rebecca Belmore, "Artifact #671B," *Rebecca Belmore,* accessed September 2020, https://www.rebeccabelmore.com/artifact-671b/

excavated from the ground beneath the museum….”[403] *Trace* calls attention to Indigenous traditions and values that have been and continue to be excavated, so to speak, to make room for the colonization and cultivation of Canada.

Allen and Gauthier’s *Critical Infrastructure* is a media-landscape survey exhibited at the 2014 Transmediale Afterglow Festival, the Haus der Kulturen der Welt in Berlin. They used geotechnical instruments and landscape measurement technologies to present live metadata for



Jamie Allen and David Gauthier, *Critical Infrastructure,* 2014, installation, Transmediale Afterglow Festival, Haus der Kulturen der Welt, Berlin.

the festival, including budgets, temperatures, sound vibrations, Facebook likes, and YouTube views. By exhibiting the archiving process, Allen and Gauthier exhibit seemingly immaterial metadata with its material substrate.[404] It is also worth noting Allen’s *Archive Factory,* which he created during his 2014 Internet Archive.org Tumblr Residency. *Archive Factory* showcases a

[403] Belmore, “*Trace*,” *Rebecca Belmore,* accessed September 2020, https://www.rebeccabelmore.com/trace/
[404] Jamie Allen, “Critical Infrastructure,” *Jamie Allen,* accessed September 2020, http://www.jamieallen.com/criticalinfrastructure/

Jamie Allen, *Archive Factory,* 2014, Tumblr.

series of the Internet Archive's industrial footage. Significantly, this selection of archived content points to the very material industrial labour that supports the Internet as a net-of-work. In this sense, the *Archive Factory* presents the Internet as (1), an archive tasked with preservation, and (2), a factory tasked with production the archival content it aims to preserve.[405]

And Moll's *CO2GLE* is a real-time carbon emissions tracker that aims to visualize the often-unseen environmental impact of Google's infrastructure, and helps to bring users out of the "digital dark age"/"new dark age" so to speak. Users are greeted with a text-based web page that tracks the amount of Google's C02 emissions upon opening the page—and at an alarming rate, which is arguably not effectively captured in the following three screen shots:[406]

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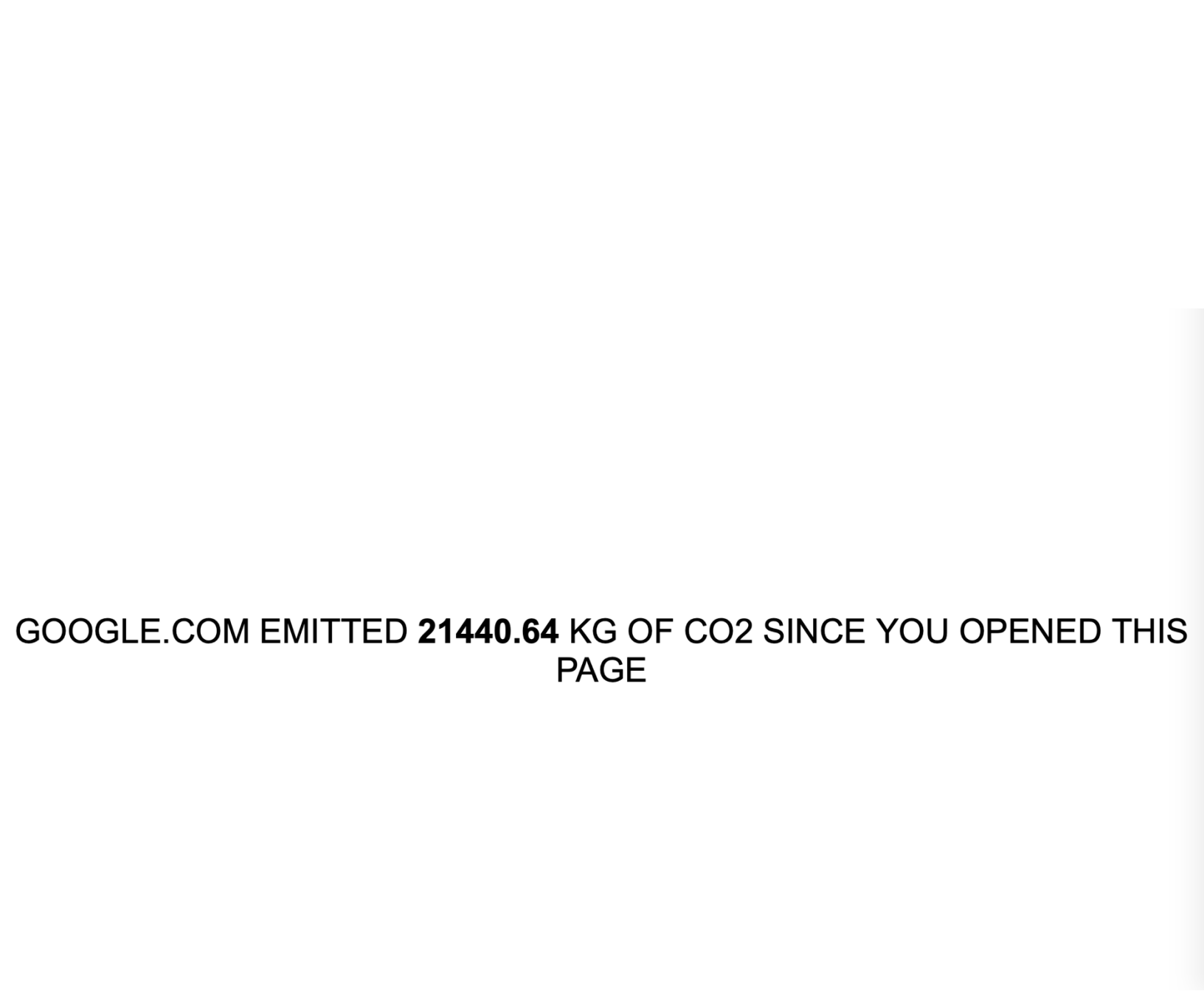
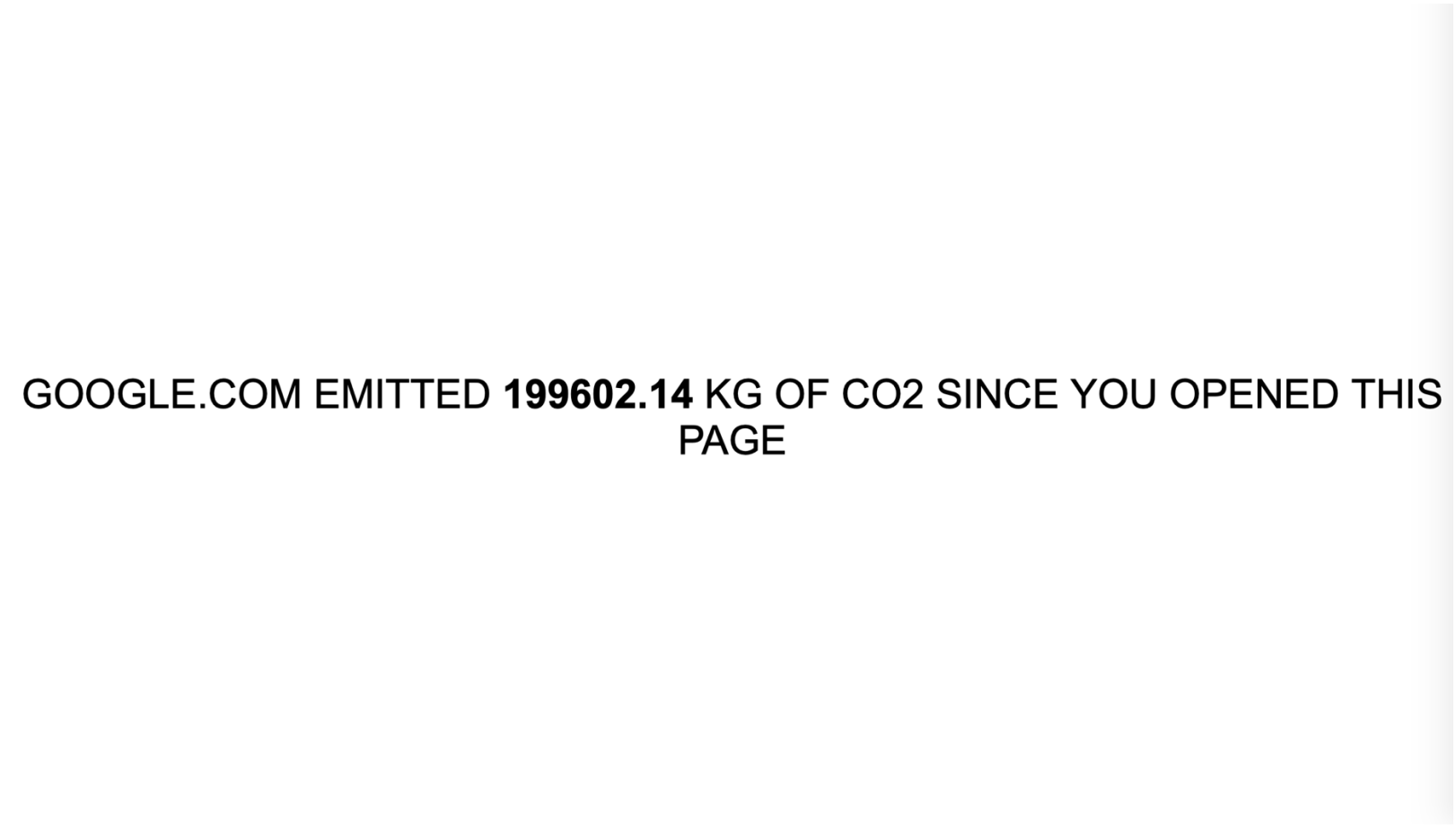
[405] Allen, "Archive Factory," *Jamie Allen,* accessed September 2020. http://www.jamieallen.com/archive-factory/ Also see https://internetarchive.tumblr.com/tagged/internet-archive-tumblr-residencies/ and https://archivefactory.tumblr.com

[406] Joana Moll, "CO2GLE," accessed April 2020: http://www.janavirgin.com



This screen shot was taken after approximately 30 seconds.



This screen shot was taken after approximately 40 minutes.

GOOGLE.COM EMITTED **1206291.18** KG OF CO_2 SINCE YOU OPENED THIS PAGE

This screen shot was taken after approximately 13 hours.

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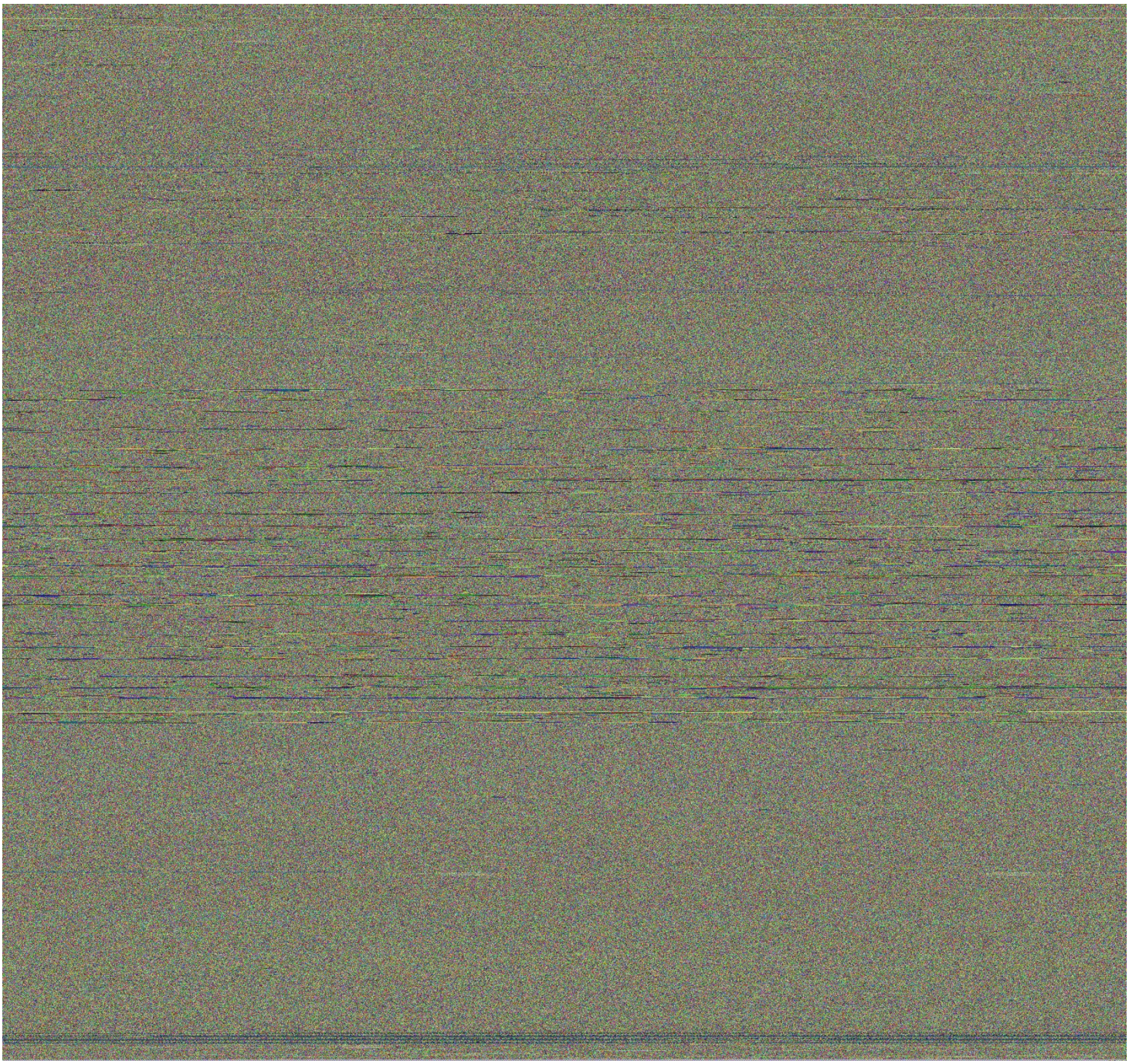

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