

Expanded Libraries: Managing Experimental Media Collections by Creating New Workflows

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Challenges of this donation

- Size: 2000 hours of video art
- Breadth: Virtually every video format
- Playback:
 - Mostly dead formats
 - Leveraging format limitations for artistic purposes

Challenges of this donation 2

- It's complicated: Art machines
- Description / metadata creation
 - Requires playback ability
 - Requires artistic context
- Legal complications a la cinema verite

Dimensions of artistic complexity

- Need for art machines & playback equipment for dead formats
- There are relatively few finished works of art; everything else is a study or a sketch
- Juxtaposition of several videos to create resonance; improvisatory alteration of planned video playback
- Audience interaction with videos – e.g. noticing other people watching a video
- Making a recording of you, the audience, watching the videos, such that this audience experience becomes a future work of art

The nature of the art

- Performance art
- Installation
- Chance “composition”
 - Resonance between randomly (?) chosen videos
 - Resonance between audience & art
- Meta-art
 - Audience as art

Obvious: Cannot accept the donation without a shift in perspective

Not obvious: Can we shift? Should we shift?

Evolving assumptions

- Reorganization: Participation in ARL scenarios regarding possible future histories of academic libraries
 - Emerging (shared) assumption that we will increase our emphasis on access/curation of unique collections
- Competitive vs. cooperative perspective

New workflow(s)

- Preservation of tapes in controlled environment
- Workflow requires digitization as “first” step
- Digitization enables any/all subsequent steps:
 - Formal description / metadata creation
 - User contributed metadata (especially Vasulkas & enthusiasts)
 - Discovery (browsing, searching)
 - Preservation
 - User assumptions about collection breadth based on representative digitization output

Art machines strategies

- Donation includes art machines and playback equipment
- Vasulkas created schematics and documentation for their art machines
 - Preservation strategy may or may not involve keeping all art machines in good repair

Voting my hopes

- Pros & cons as hopes & fears



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