

Connected Archives

Expert meeting (morning) and public presentations (afternoon)
Organised by de Balie and Portsmouth University, ISEA and V2_
In collaboration with Virtual Platform, Daniel Langlois Foundation and
DOCAM

Thursday 12 April

Expert meeting: 10.00 – 13.00

Public presentations: 15.00 – 18.00

As technology-inspired art is gaining more widespread acceptance, documentation of the rich and diverse media art histories is becoming increasingly important. Worldwide, many groups and organizations are developing online databases and archival portals about media art and culture.

This expert meeting wants to bring together an international group of archivists and developers in the field of electronic art and media culture, in order to facilitate exchange of expertise about current work-in-progress.

In the morning, a roundtable discussion (on invitation or application only) offers the opportunity for in-depth discussion about shared problems and questions. In smaller groups, participants are invited to inform each other about current developments about the following areas:

- *Tools and models.* Which types of software (content management systems, archival software) are in use or being developed by archival initiatives? Is it possible to formulate shared requirements for such tools? Where do features of the various software systems overlap? What are the main pitfalls in the development and usability of such systems?
Which metadata models or information architectures are currently under development? How are they similar and different?
- *Terms and connections.* What is the state of the art in current development of thesauri, keyword lists, glossaries? Who is working on scope notes and definitions? Is collaboration in this area possible, taking the difficult problem of multilinguality into account?

In the afternoon, a public presentation will summarize the findings of the morning sessions and will offer a series of presentations that showcase several examples of good practice in the field of media culture archives.



Moderator:

Eric Kluitenberg (NL), theorist, writer and organizer, De Balie
<http://www.debalie.nl>

Presentations:

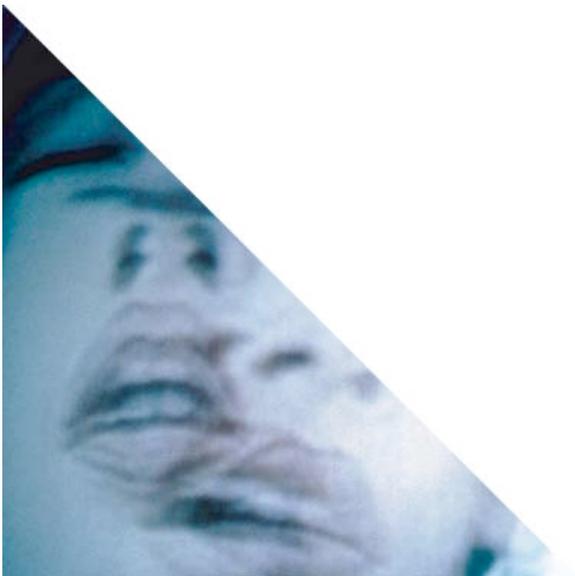
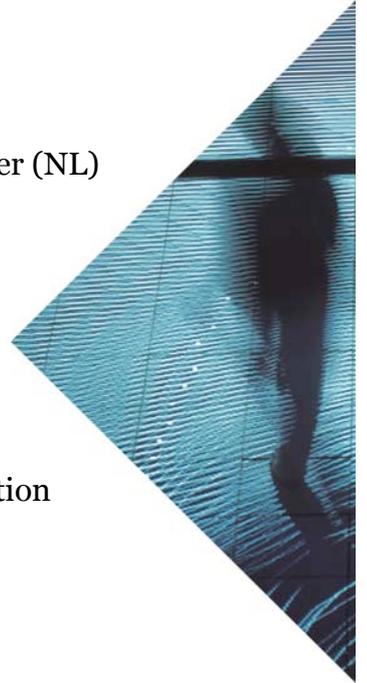
The Tactical Media Files, CultureBase, ISEA Online Archive
David Garcia (NL), Michiel van der Haagen (NL) and Nadia Palliser (NL)
<http://www.next5minutes.org>
<http://www.debalie.nl/culturebase>
<http://www.isea-web.org>

V2_'s archive and terminology resources for media art
Sandra Fauconnier (B/NL)
<http://archive.v2.nl>

Daniel Langlois Foundation: Centre for Research and Documentation
Alain Depocas (CDN)
<http://www.fondation-langlois.org>

Database of Virtual Art / Media Art History.org
Oliver Grau (A) and Wendy Jo Coones (A)
<http://www.virtualart.at>
<http://www.mediaarthistory.org>

Semantic Connections
Gabriele Blome (D) and Wolfgang Strauss (D)
<http://www.netzspannung.org>



Schedule of afternoon program

- 15.00 Welcome and introduction
- 15.10 The Tactical Media Files, CultureBase, ISEA Online Archive
- 15.40 V2_'s archive and terminology resources for media art
- 15.55 Daniel Langlois Foundation: Centre for Research and Documentation
- 16.10 Database of Virtual Art / Media Art History.org
- 16.25 Semantic Connections

- 16.40 Break

- 17.00 Reports of morning sessions; plenary discussion



The Tactical Media Files: A Living Archive for Tactical Media

Presented by David Garcia

The Tactical Media Files is an on-line resource and living archive for tactical media to be launched in the Fall of 2007. It is built around the various outcomes of the groundbreaking Next 5 Minutes series of conferences held in Amsterdam between 1993 and 2003. Over this period an extraordinary range of 'tactical media' outputs have accumulated in an equally wide range of media. Currently this material is scattered in different databases and archives.

The Tactical Media Files / Living Archive project will aim to bring together many of the most significant tactical media and outputs into a single on-line environment accessible to researchers worldwide. But in keeping with the experimental culture of tactical media our archive will have three conditions in mind.

Firstly we should use open source software so that others may participate fully in the continued development of the system.

Secondly we want to take full advantage of the evolving technological possibilities to create a dynamic cross-media system that can be connected dynamically to upcoming live events.

Thirdly we want to be able to draw upon the expertise and knowledge of researchers and tactical media practitioners that use the Archive by giving them tools to collaboratively create metadata: point out relationships between data, evaluating data, recombining information.

To ensure tangible and practical outcomes and feasibility of this project, it has been conceived of as a three-year research trajectory, carried between Portsmouth University and De Balie - Centre for Culture and Politics in Amsterdam. This trajectory is built around a practice-based PHD research conducted by the principal developer of the Living Archive database-system, under supervision of both organisations and involving a host of national and international collaborating institutions and individuals.

People involved:

David Garcia (Visual Artist and Researcher at Portsmouth University)

Michiel van der Haagen (Developer of the CultureBase CMS)

Eric Kluitenberg (Head of the De Balie Media Department)

CultureBase: An open source web publishing toolbox for the cultural sector

Presented by Michiel van der Haagen

CultureBase has been under the development since late 2003 as a web publishing system, specifically tailored to the needs of cultural institutions who require advanced audio-visual dynamic archiving and web publishing tools. CultureBase is built on top of the MMBase open source content management system (CMS), which was originally developed by the digital department of the VPRO public Broadcasting organisation in The Netherlands. The project is now independent and one of the largest open source platforms in The Netherlands, the MMBase website resides at: <http://www.mmbase.org>



De Balie started an independent research and development trajectory that aimed at adapting the MMBase system to the specific needs of cultural organisations who have a rapidly changing dynamic live programming, such as De balie itself and many others. This research was later supported by the Dutch Government. It has focused since the Fall of 2004 on the question how live-interaction with

audiences following live programming in a cultural space via the web can be facilitated and enhanced. Audience feedback, cross-media live broadcast, new types of interfaces, as well as the connection between on-line discussions and off-line real-life events are all central issues of concern in this research, indicated by its title: The Living Archive.

A web dossier contains information on progress and sub-projects connected to the CultureBase / Living Archive trajectory:
<http://www.debalie.nl/culturebase>

This research has been supported by the Netherlands government National Action Program on Electronic Highways (NAP). The result is a dynamic open source publishing and archiving application called CultureBase which is currently applied for De Balie itself and the Melkweg cultural centre, who both have extensive web publishing needs. Discussions are underway with the MMBase organisation to facilitate the open source realise of the applications and individual components in the Fall of 2007 within the MMBase environment and community.

Contact:

Eric Kluitenberg (Head of De Balie Media department)

ISEA Online Archive

Presented by Nadia Palliser

For the ISEA ONLINE ARCHIVE project we are digitizing, structuring, cataloguing and indexing all the material generated by the twelve ISEA symposia. This material dates back to 1988 and includes papers, images, video and other documents that include some cyber space euphoria, more computer music sobriety and a lot of computer graphic pioneering. By presenting this material online, ISEA would like to develop a guide to its past. Through this, we hope the archive project will bring the ISEA network to the surface: an interconnected web of mutual interest and collaboration that has managed to survive electronically. The thirteenth symposium - ISEA2006 at San Jose California this August will be well documented and included in the archive. Streamed and synchronized, we are curious to find out what seven days of art and connectivity will bring and how the event might relate to former symposia and its participants.

ISEA is collaborating with organisations in the field of electronic art to develop an archiving structure. Together with the Balie, who organized the festival Next5Minutes, we are building a simple ontology to structure the archiving of both ISEA and Next5Minutes as an event. Next 5 Minutes - the International Festival for Tactical Media took place four times in Amsterdam between 1993 and 2003. As a media event Next5Minutes brings a very interesting aspect of media activism to the fore that is very different than ISEA's more academic and interdisciplinary take on digital media. We would like to ensure the specificity of both events while at the same time enabling interoperability to become a possibility. For this we are also working with other organizations such as V2_, Montevideo and the Daniel Langlois Foundation, who already have extensive experience in archiving media art. Through collaborating in this way, we hope to stimulate more dialogue between organizations to take concepts of electronic art, media events and media theory further by connecting and comparing different projects.

Concerning the material, Sue Gollifer (who will be director of ISEA Headquarters from September 2007 onwards at the University of Brighton) made a great effort to trace and digitize a good deal of the proceedings of ISEA, initially as part of the Critical and Archival Histories of the Electronic Arts. Without this digitized material, we would not have reached this point. We continue to digitize material, also for example now in collaboration with Shawn Decker (FISEA'93) in Chicago! As the gathering of material continues, the data flow progresses: we are well on our way now with the database filled with proceedings up to ISEA95. The opensource database built in collaboration with Michiel van der Haagen, the programmer of de Balie en Reinaart Roelofsen (intern at ISEA) is working well though we continue to fine-tune its relations and edit wizards. The documents in the database include the digitized proceedings of FISEA for example - gratefully received from Leonardo and the Jstor Archives this year. These documents have been interconnected within the ISEA ontology with their respective events, dates, locations and creators. From February onwards we will be working on the interface of the ISEA Online Archive. With students from the department of

Human Computer Interaction at the Polytechnic in Utrecht (NL), we have set up a project to develop the interface, together with Marnix Brockmeier, a student from the Archive School of Amsterdam and the animator/designer Peter Sweenen and Jim Wiggers. We have planned an informal workshop on the 22nd of March in collaboration with the Virtual Platform to bring experts, users and designers together to discuss the entry points and possible user profiles of the archive. We hope that the archive will function as an interesting back-drop to ISEA's community and its outreach.

We have received digitized documents from the Daniel Langlois Foundation who are supporting the project (while storing a good part of the physical ISEA Archive in Montreal). As we continue to add the material, we have also started to address keywords, in collaboration with Sandra Fauconnier who has made a thesaurus for the V2_archive. We hope to bring more exposure to online archives and their ongoing research in the material and the way this material is put together and put online. Through thesaurus building, we hope archives will connect more to adjust and define, discuss and elaborate the material and most importantly to bring differences to the surface. Through difference dialogue is triggered, making a lively archive and its interconnections an interesting online location for the future.

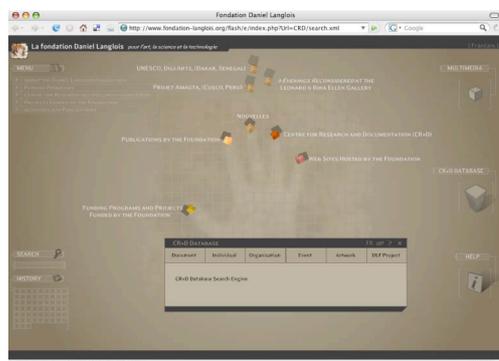
The Daniel Langlois Foundation's Centre for Research and Documentation (CR+D)

Presented by Alain Depocas

Since its opening in October 2000, the Centre for Research and Documentation (CR+D) has worked to establish a major collection of documents covering the past fifty years of electronic and digital art. This unique resource for the history of new media arts is fully accessible to the public at the CR+D in Montreal. Many resources and tools, such as an extensive database, archives documents and audio and video excerpts are also available online.

<http://www.fondation-langlois.org>

The collection extensively covers the artists and projects funded by the Langlois Foundation and the context in which they evolves. Acquisition of older documents and archives collections provides an even larger historical contextualization. Amongst these are the *Steina and Woody Vasulka archives*; the *Collection of Documents Published by Experiments in Art and Technology*; the *9 Evenings: Theatre and Engineering archives* and the *Sonia Landy Sheridan archives*. The CR+D's collection contains a large variety of documents such as books, catalogues, CD-Roms, video and audio documents, slides and digital files.



At the centre of the CR+D's resources is the CR+D's Database which link many levels of information through indexation. Far from being only a library catalogue, the database is composed of specialized modules design to manage information about seven main types of information: documents (books, catalogues, CD-ROM, articles in periodicals, texts in anthologies, digital files, Web sites, etc.); individuals (artists, critics, curators, etc.); organizations (museums, galleries, research centres, etc.); events (exhibitions, festivals, performances, conferences); artworks; instruments (machines and softwares use by artists); and terminology.

Using this database, the researchers are able to perform queries in all of these modules from the Web site. It is possible to obtain many types of result through cross indexation like a list of events in which an artist has participated or in which an artwork has been showed, a list of documents about an event or about an individual, a list of documents about a topic, etc. To achieve this, we have to index and describe documents at a very high or precise level. Even archives material is often processed at the item level, instead of only the file level.

<http://www.fondation-langlois.org/flash/e/index.php?URL=crd/search.xml>

Digital dissemination of archival documents on the Web is also part of the goal of the CR+D. On the CR+D's Web site, all texts, images and audio-visual

documents are presented with their relevant metadata and many search options are offered at the presentation layer. Through the Langlois Foundation's Researcher in Residence program, we also publish research output that are also an occasion to disseminate and contextualize documents from our collections. Recent publications includes Clarisse Bardiot's study on *9 Evenings: Theater and Engineering* and Yvonne Spielmann's *Video and Computer: The Aesthetics of Steina and Woody Vasulka*.
<http://www.fondation-langlois.org/flash/e/index.php?NumPage=571>
<http://www.fondation-langlois.org/flash/e/index.php?NumPage=460>



The CR+D is also engaged in important research projects such as the Variable Media Network and DOCAM, a large research alliance on documentation and conservation of the media arts heritage. Initiated by the Langlois Foundation, DOCAM includes Canadian and international partners.
<http://www.variablemedia.net>
<http://www.docam.ca>

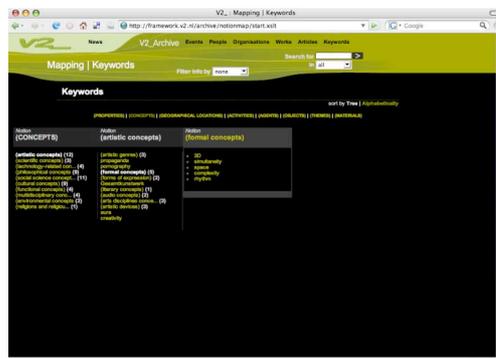
V2_'s archive and its terminology resources

Presented by Sandra Fauconnier

V2_, Institute for the Unstable Media is a center for art and media technology in Rotterdam, the Netherlands. Since the late 1990s, V2_ has developed an online archive with documentation about the people and organizations, artworks and activities that have played a role in the history of the organization. This archive offers a good overview of developments in electronic art since the 1980s. It contains, among others, a collection of more than 18,000 digitalized photographs and a growing number of digitalized video fragments.

The archive's website, available since 2003, aims to serve a broad and interested audience of students, researchers, professionals, artists and developers. The development of V2_'s archive portal – based on the Dutch open source content management system MMBase and on open XML formats – has gone hand in hand with the creation of a specialized thesaurus and with research trajectories about copyright and documentation strategies for electronic and media art.

At this moment, V2_'s archive is facing several new challenges. A first important question is related to archival interoperability – how to meaningfully connect similar archives and resources in the field of media art and electronic art. Other challenges include the implementation of appropriate documentation procedures, extending the archive with high-quality content, and the choice for future platforms and information models.
<http://archive.v2.nl>



A major part of V2_'s archive research and development deals with terminology resources. V2_ maintains an extensive thesaurus (hierarchical keyword list) on electronic art and has, since 2000, been working on an ontology for its documentation archive. What is the precise use and function of thesauri and ontologies, what are challenges and pitfalls in their development and how can

they improve the storage and findability of relevant information? Thesauri and ontologies can serve as connection mechanisms between different collections – but significant differences in meaning and linguistic diversity poses an important problem here. How can organizations work together on the development of shared terminology resources?

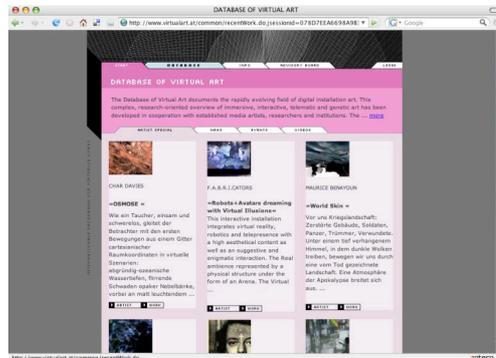
<http://framework.v2.nl/archive/index/keyword/start.xslt>

<http://framework.v2.nl/archive/notionmap/start.xslt>

Database of Virtual Art / MediaArtHistoriesArchive

Presented by Oliver Grau and Wendy Jo Coones

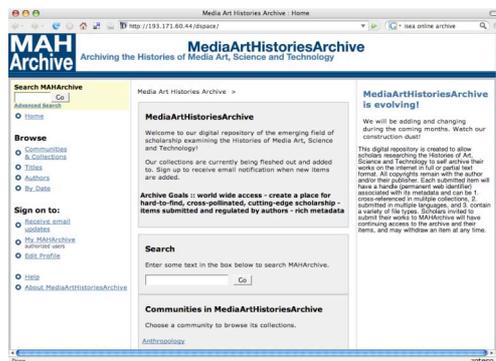
DATABASE OF VIRTUAL ART



As pioneer in the field the Database of Virtual Art has since 1999 been documenting the rapidly evolving field of digital installation art. The research-oriented, complex overview of immersive, interactive, telematic and genetic art has been developed in cooperation with world-wide media artists, researchers and institutions. The database is built with open-source technologies and allows

individuals to post materials themselves. It currently contains several thousand digital documents, videos, technical data, institutions and bio-bibliographical information. As one of the richest resources online the DVA offers a freshly implemented scientific thesaurus.
<http://www.virtualart.at>

MEDIA ART HISTORY.ORG - WEB PORTAL AND DIGITAL ARCHIVE



The online platform (MAH) evolves from the conference documentation on Refresh! Conference on the Histories of Media Art, Science and Technology to a scholarly archive for this multi-faceted field, ranging from art history, to media, film, cultural studies, computer science, psychology, etc., with the 19 fields represented at Refresh! serving as its base. Guided by an advisory board (Sean

Cubitt, Jorge de la Ferla, Douglas Kahn, Martin Kemp, Machiko Kusahara and Gunalan Nadarajan) MAHA is a self-archiving repository using open-source dspace technology. It allows scholars to place digital information online, from meta-data to full-text, all staying within the limits of self-archiving allowed to authors. The MAHArchive offers submitting authors permanent server space and a persistent identifier within a browser-friendly database. It is similar to a pre-print system (or e-prints used often in the natural sciences), but more appropriate for the humanities offering author control and multiple language capacity. Providing online access to hard-to-obtain works in the digital archives insures the internationalized development through cross-pollination and access for non-western and under-served audiences.
<http://www.mediaarthistory.org>

MediaArtHistory.org

Information for the emerging field

- + Specific to scholarship and theory
- + Definitive historical emphasis
- + Cross-pollination of other fields
- + Supporting young scholars and students
- + Basis for information coming from invited conference participants

Conferences, calls, and abstract access

- + Providing consistent presence
- + Easy to find and easy to publicize call for papers
- + Providing information on specificities of content for those planning to submit to the call for papers.

MediaArtHistoriesArchive

- + Discipline repository allowing authors to „Self-Archive“ their works in full-text or in selections
- + Starting with Refresh! participants' works
- + Adding contributors through Advisory Board and Berlin 2007 conference participants
- + Digitalization of important works from print
- + Archiving of various media encouraged, specific to scholarly endeavors. (not an archive for artworks)
- + Copyrights stay with the author

MediaArtHistoriesArchive MAHArchive

Digital archive for the emerging field of the Histories of Media Art

Technology-

- + Dspace technology developed by MIT and Hewlett Packard
- + All entries receive a handle with metadata
- + Dspace written for browsers to find data
- + Appropriate alternative to eprints for a field in the humanities
- + Dspace being implemented by numerous major universities as „institutional repository“
- + Disciplinary repositories benefit from interest of scholars communicating in their field
- + Support for programming provided by worldwide dspace community

Communities and Collections-

- + Refresh community and collection is the beginning of MediaArtHistoriesArchive
- + Refresh community can add refresh papers to other collections and additionally submitted papers to other communities and collections (i.e. art history)
- + Berlin 2007 will become next community
- + Contention over terminology for communities and collections will be resolved by the Advisory Board

Efficacy-

- + Review process for individual submissions possible
- + Items can reference the same work in different languages
- + Access to the Full Text document as allowed by the author is enabled via the World Wide Web
- + Copyright retained by Author, submission to MAHArchive is considered „self-archiving“
- + Multiple stages of a papers can be added over time
- + Supports documentation of scholarship in many forms (video, power point, html, all Dublin Core Registry)
- + Items as metadata and their documents submitted in any language

Structure-

1. Refresh papers submitted by administrator
2. Refresh participants added as submitters
3. Refresh participants submit their other works to be added as submitters.
4. Advisory Board chooses additional scholars
5. Scholars submit their works
6. Berlin 2007 conference participants chosen
7. Berlin papers submitted to Archive
8. Additional submissions by Berlin participants
9. All submitters encouraged to submit papers in their native language and English.
10. MAHArchive interface in other languages
11. Advisory Board decides how to proceed after Berlin 2007

Advisory Board Decisions

MediaArtHistory.org platform

- + Suggesting resources
- + Voicing additional needs of the field and/or forwarding needs from colleagues
- + Advising administrator on complaints

MediaArtHistoriesArchive

- + Terminology for communities and collections
- + New submitters individually suggested
- + List of new submitters voted on by full board
- + Advising administrator on complaints

provides an audience for the work of students and their lecturers in the media environment and makes it available to interested parties from the fields of culture, education, business and science for purposes of viewing and searching.

<http://netzspannung.org/digital-sparks>

An open area of the platform, the “netzkollektor”, is directed to the community and provides the opportunity for artists, curators and IT experts to participate. Registered users can publish media-artistic projects, technological developments, texts and events, positioning them in a professional and transdisciplinary context.

<http://netzspannung.org/netzkollektor>



The section „eCulture“ stands for digital products, productions and services in the field of the so-called creative industries. eCulture depends on interdisciplinary expertise in design, computer science and content production as well as dramaturgy and forms of narration on the basis of digital technologies.

<http://netzspannung.org/eculture>

<http://eculturefactory.de>

Archives are conventionally organized on the basis of subject-specific systems. However, because no cross-subject system exists yet for the interdisciplinary field of media art, a new method of contextualizing and visualizing content was developed for netzspannung.org, namely the Semantic Map. It is an interface that structures and visualizes all the content of netzspannung.org according to semantic criteria. It provides the user with different possibilities for "rummaging through" the platform's databases to discover content and connections. The Semantic Map was specially developed so that the platform's heterogeneous content could be presented in a common frame of reference.

<http://netzspannung.org/about/tools/semantic-map>