



Saturday, September 29, 2007

IMAP Electronic Media Preservation Symposium

Association of Moving Image Archivists (AMIA) annual conference

Theater on the Ridge, KODAK

Rochester, New York

Organized by Independent Media Arts Preservation (IMAP), Electronic Arts Intermix (EAI), and the AMIA Independent Media Interest Group, the **IMAP Electronic Media Preservation Symposium** was a day-long event comprised of an introductory lecture, three panel discussions, and an evening screening of preserved single-channel videotapes. Panels drew on the expertise of a network of professionals involved in the electronic media field and focused on the collection, documentation, preservation, and exhibition of single-channel, installation, and computer-based art. Throughout the Symposium, the documentation and research tools that have been developed by IMAP in the past few years were shared, including the newly launched *EAI Online Resource Guide for Exhibiting, Collecting & Preserving Media Art* (<http://resourceguide.eai.org>) and the IMAP Cataloging Template.

The **IMAP Electronic Media Preservation Symposium** has been made possible by support from the New York State Council on the Arts, the Gladys Krieble Delmas Foundation and the Experimental Television Center.

PROGRAM

Electronic Media Preservation: An Introduction

Chair:

Dara Meyers-Kingsley - Independent Media Arts Preservation, Inc. (IMAP)

Speaker:

Sarah Ziebell - New York University Libraries

Electronic media has been recognized as the new art form of our time, and the past decade has witnessed dramatic growth in educational, cultural, and private collections acquiring and exhibiting works of this type. With this development

comes the imperative to manage and preserve media that is mutable at its very essence. From single-channel video to computer-based art composed of digital source code, time-based electronic media demands new vocabularies and practices for its collection, preservation, and exhibition. In this welcome address, Sarah Ziebell set the stage for the Symposium, highlighting the overarching concepts that the panels will explore in detail regarding challenges and trends in the management and persistence of electronic media works.

The Documentation of Electronic Media Arts: Addressing Preservation Challenges

Chair:

Ann Butler - Fales Library and Special Collections, New York University

Speakers:

Jeff Martin - Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Smithsonian Institution

Carol Stringari – Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum

Michael Katchen - Franklin Furnace Archive, Inc.

Documentation is critical to making any preservation decisions. Documentation, created as part of the production, exhibition, and reception of a media-based art work provides essential information not only for the historical interpretation of the work, but also for long-term collection management practices. This panel addressed how caretakers are tackling collection management issues for electronic media and the supporting materials that often accompany media collections. Ann Butler discussed documentation strategies employed by archives for contemporary art mixed format collections. Jeff Martin explored issues of documentation as they relate to technological obsolescence and will highlight the specific documentation tools that IMAP has developed. Carol Stringari discussed documentation strategies from the perspective of a contemporary arts conservator and provide case study analysis of her work at the Guggenheim Museum. Michael Katchen highlighted some particular challenges in documenting and preserving new media works for the Franklin Furnace Archive.

Conserving New Media

Chair:

Glenn Wharton - Museum of Modern Art and NYU

Speakers:

Francis Hwang - Online Artist and Conservator

Jennifer McCoy - Media Artist

Ann Butler - Fales Library and Special Collections, New York University

This panel –presented in two parts -- addressed the challenges facing caretakers and creators of new media art. During the first panel media artists Jennifer McCoy and Francis Hwang presented their video and Internet projects. During the second part of the session, Glenn Wharton (conservator) and Ann Butler (archivist) interviewed the artists about their work to provide case study analysis of conservation issues. The panelists discussed recent currents in the field, including technical challenges and cross professional collaborations involved in conserving new media art.

History of Video Art: New York Pioneers

Chair:

John Thomson - Electronic Arts Intermix

Speakers:

Sherry Miller-Hocking - Experimental Television Center

Debora Ryan - Everson Museum of Art

Carolyn Tennant – Hallwalls

Pioneering New York State non-profit media centers, museums, and distributors explored their roles in video history, their collection and preservation programs, and their attempts to make video art accessible. Sherry Miller-Hocking discussed the efforts of Experimental Television Center to give artists access to specialized media instruments and to preserve related ephemera, documentation, and video works. Debora Ryan of the Everson Museum of Art provided an overview of the history of video art at the Museum, beginning in the early 1970s, and of their historical video art collection dating from 1970-1985. Carolyn Tennant discussed Hallwalls' video archive and their collaboration with the University at Buffalo's Poetry and Rare Books Collection, where their archive now lives, and the challenges of preserving this material. John Thomson outlined Electronic Arts Intermix's leading international role in the preservation and distribution of video art.

IMAP Screening: History of Video Art: New York Pioneers

Curator:

Jim Hubbard – Filmmaker and Independent Curator

New York State hosted some of the earliest media activity in the nation. The State's arts and cultural organizations house some of the most extensive collections of early video art and community television in the US. With the introduction of portable media technology in the late 1960s, creative and community-minded people worked alone and collectively to train and equip ordinary citizens with the means of creating and distributing independent programming. They explored video as an art medium and as a tool for social and cultural change, producing documentaries, narratives, conceptual, and image-

processed work presented on cable and television, in galleries and community venues. This screening highlights some of that diverse early work, including pieces by Steina and Woody Vasulka, Bill Viola, Gary Hill, Videofreex, Philip Mallory Jones, and Portable Channel.