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DARA MEYERS-KINGSLEY: We're going to continue, because we have a very full day. Again, I'm Dara Meyers-Kingsley, executive director of IMAP, and I welcome you to the "Conserving New Media, Part One" at 11:00, from 11:00 to 12:00. Two quick announcements, for those of you who are just joining us. For tonight's screening—that's at 8:00 at the George Eastman House in the Curtis Theater—you need a ticket in order to have access or admission. And our AMIA George Eastman House fellow, Jennifer in the red sweater, has tickets. If you need a ticket to tonight's screening, free and available, please let Jennifer know, because we have limited seating. Additionally, for those of you interested in participating in the obsolete-video playback equipment survey, which I'm not sure that we announced would be an online survey with only, like, ten questions, really fast and easy to participate in—and we're offering one-year membership in IMAP for participating—there are sign-up sheets up at the front and also with our volunteers. So if you would like to join in our survey program, please sign up. Without further ado, I'm going to introduce and call to the podium Glenn Wharton, who is a member of the IMAP advisory council and has other distinguished titles, which he'll share. And he will lead us into the next panel. Thank you.

GLENN WHARTON: Thank you, Dara, and welcome, everybody. And I'm not going to share my distinguished titles, other than to say that I'm a conservator at MoMA and I'm on faculty at N.Y.U. I actually want to make this quick because I'm very thrilled to say that we have two very, very interesting artists who are going to present this morning. First let me describe the structure of the session for you, so you'll know what to expect. For the next hour, our two artists, Jennifer McCoy and Francis Hwang, will talk about their art in a way that will invite some discussion this afternoon. When we come back, between 2:00 and 3:15, we'll have an artist interview—an opportunity to talk with them

about their works and the conservation challenges that their work and the genre of their work bring up. So please do come back at 2:00 for that session.

Jennifer McCoy is part of a team with her husband Kevin McCoy, who unfortunately can't be here this morning. For some reason, he was elected to stay home and baby-sit. I'm not sure how that process happened, but...so we have Jennifer. The two of them are New York-based artists. They work as a team, and they create a range of works, which she'll tell you about, that investigate how our thoughts, experiences, and memories are structured, through genre and repetition. And in order to focus on these kinds of structures, they often re-examine classic works in science-fiction television narrative. They create sculptural projects, video projects, Internet projects, even live events in their work. They're all the buzz right now in New York because one of their works, that Jennifer will be speaking about today, was just exhibited at MoMA. And I have to say that everyone was talking about this and there were always crowds around it. So I look forward to hearing what she has to say. It is called *Our Second Date*. They've exhibited all over New York—at MoMA, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, P.S.1, Postmasters Gallery, the New Museum, the Swiss Institute, and various places around the world—in Chicago, Santa Fe, and Europe. The British Film Institute actually put together a solo exhibition of their work recently. And there's articles that have appeared about their work in practically every journal and magazine that addresses contemporary art, like *ArtNews*, *Art in America*, *ArtForum*, *Flash Art*, *Wired*, *New York Times*, so on. So I'll keep this short. I'd also like to...well, I'm going to hold off on introducing Francis, because that way we'll have a couple of minutes to do some technology changes, if we need it, while I blabber on. So without any further ado, Jen, would you like to start?

JENNIFER MCCOY: Sure. So thanks for inviting me here. It's been really interesting to listen to the panel this morning, think about—you know, there's that sort of old chestnut about not knowing how the sausage is made; now it's about not knowing how the sausage is preserved. So, yeah, I think that the work that I'll show brings up a lot of things, because as Glenn was saying, we're kind of all over

the place. The British Film Institute did something with us because they see our work as very involved with filmmaking. But yet, you know, it's between video, film, sculpture performance, new media—all of these things have had influence and have left their mark on the work that we make, both with the way it looks visually and the technology that it uses, but also in the kind of structure of how the work is made. So I'll just show, you know, four or five projects from a bunch of different periods and show you what I'm talking about.

This first piece was interesting. I met Francis when he was working with Rhizome. And Kevin and I were involved, you know, more as Net artists, doing work that was specifically made to be viewed on the Internet and made for the Internet. And this first project I want to show is the first one that kind of came out of the computer onto the wall, and was really involved with asking the question, "If you're working with a database as a sort of organizing structure inside a work, what does it look like in real life?" You know, kind of like asking the question, "If you're looking at an interface with a bunch of images, the hard drive and the system makes it impossible to know how big it is"—you know, how to give something scale. So we decided to try to do something that had scale. And I'll just show you this process.

So this is a database of every shot from twenty episodes of the television show *Starsky and Hutch*. We took these clips and organized them according to narrative elements, visual elements, and just basically any kind of category.

So that was just shot in our studio, but I think you can see the piece. There's 278—at that point we were working with video CD, making video discs of this. And this was a project that had been brewing in our heads for, I don't know, five or six years. But there just...this was made in 200—what did it say?—1. They're just wasn't inexpensive storage media that you could use until then. And so as soon as there was, we made the work. So that's why it's not DVD, for example; it's video CD, which was one before. Because at that point, we couldn't afford 300 DVDs. And also, the media storage, in

terms of your hard drive. You know, the ability to kind of compare different video clips really wasn't happening until that time. I mean, it was probably happening at Carnegie Mellon or at M.I.T., but it wasn't happening in our studio. So the whole project is really a kind of a project about archiving, about taking, you know, something very subjective, like how you feel when you watch media, and making a sort of—you know, a database about it. And looking at various means. And the joke of the project, or the kernel of the project is really that it relies on our subjectivity as a way to interpret media, as a way to interpret this television show that had been important to us as children. And so all the questions about, you know, how you put things into a database, that a lot of you do for a living, were coming up for us. For example, in a category called "Every Animal," does that include taxidermy? And we really sort of thought about that for a long time. Well, does it include taxidermy? Well, there's a stuffed parrot in the shot but...you know. And so we sort of said yes. You know, "Every Blue." Well, you know, how blue does the blue have to be to be in that category? You know, car chases. We got through the database, we had a million car chases, and then there was an episode with all these motorcycle chases. So we're like, "Ugh! Let's create another category. Let's go back through the twelve episodes we already did and figure out if there's any motorcycle shots that really need to be in their own category, 'Every Motorcycle.'" So all of these things were inherent in making that work.

So then we started to think about, well...and this was a question. This work showed a lot of different places, and we were always asked, "Well, what have you learned from this work?" Which is always a really sort of awful thing to ask an artist, you know? You just don't even...I don't know, we just made it and there it is. But then we really realized we had wanted to find, you know, something essential about what is in the category. You know, if a woman is dressed a little interestingly, is she a stripper or a prostitute? How do you tell, if you take that out of the narrative, for example? So we started to think about boiling down this idea, you know, really coming to an essential idea about genre. And we made two cinema projects. And I'll show you one here. And we did one about horror and one about romance.

And this one is called *Horror Chase*. And the software...it's sort of a performative object. It's a software-based cinema machine. And the software sits in this suitcase. Again, we kind of used this suitcase as a kind of a frame. And it's sort of also a Duchamp thing with, you know, closing in all of the different fragments, which can [include] data or images or...some sort of frame that things go in. So this is a computer inside a suitcase. And all it does is do one thing, which is play this movie. And the movie, we shot on Super 16. And the accompanying project was shot on 35mm. And then the software essentially plays back not a movie file but more like a flipbook and makes decisions on the fly about what speed and what direction the image can go in. And let me show you what the images look like.

Okay, so the idea was a little bit of a leap for us. In *Every Shot/Every Episode*, we were, you know, really stealing the *Starsky and Hutch* files and digitizing things from television and using them. In this one, we wanted to make the actor a kind of digital puppet that could be reversed on himself and slowed down and sped up. And although the footage is based on a short clip from Sam Raimi's *Evil Dead II*, we felt it necessary to build the set ourselves and to shoot the actor in it, because we really wanted to tune the actor's performance to what we knew that the software was going to do with him. And it was really interesting, because, you know, you could really try things out. And the software kind of had to be tuned, then, to match the final result of what the footage looked like. So there was a constant kind of balancing act between, you know, creating the storyboard, building the set, shooting the film, and then in the end, rewriting the software that played it because the performance was a specific thing that we had to tweak a little bit. And it was also this idea, you know, of using...and I really like the idea that culture is there to be kind of digested and responded to. And I feel that direct access to some of that is necessary, in terms of, you know, using found footage. And then other times, I feel that it actually needs to be really digested, and to be re-created in some ways—which sort of came up in the previous panel, about Marina Abramovic's restaging of earlier performance works. So that impulse to kind of make something your own by re-creating it, I think, is part of the

work that I just showed.

More current projects. I'll show that one that Glenn mentioned now. In making *Horror Chase*, one of the bittersweet things is that we had to take down the set before we got the footage back from the lab, because we only had six days to build that set on the soundstage. And so this idea of, you know, "Well, how does the mise-en-scène, how does the sculptural element...how could we show that or bring it into the work?" Or sort of this idea of a live movie being taken one more step—not live playback, but actually being created live in front of a viewer. And we looked at, you know, the sort of live special effects, and we built a project that was a live elevator that opened up, where the special effect that you would normally see on a screen would become something that could happen in real space. And so we decided that miniaturization was the way to go. So we built a cycle of works—you know, it's been years now—making these dioramas that just do one thing. And in this case, they recreate our second date, Kevin and my second date. And it was really important, also, in this project, to bring in ourselves. The sort of autobiographical conceit is at the forefront, where it's Kevin and I watching a movie as our second date. So it's this idea that we wanted to compare the time that you spend watching cinema to the real time of living in life, and collage those two kind of timeframes on top of one another. And also, from all the *Starsky and Hutch* work, one of the best categories is "Every Reaction Shot," where you just see people reacting to one another over and over again. And so we built ourselves in as a way to make a reaction shot. So I'll play that.

It's what the sculpture looks like, and here's the linefeed. This is what's on the projector. So it's a short scene from Godard's *Weekend*. And in the original film, there's this huge tracking shot of all those cars that are stalled out, and the characters are kind of driving, like illegally, kind of past these stalled cars. There's all of these things from life happening. And then at the end, there's a car accident. And so we built it in the round so that on the screen, there's one reality of this, you know, what could be a tracking shot over many miles, but then the sculpture is quite obviously a circle. And the idea is to really show the process and the film at the same time. But the idea that the art doesn't

happen until the thing is plugged in, that there's really, except for the sound, the beeping horns, nothing pre-recorded, was really important to us. And, you know, the cameras are all live. And there's a computer switcher. Actually, there's no computer images, but there's just a computer-controlled switcher switching from the camera views and editing it together in a...it's a kind of a fixed sequence, but there's some random ideas or, you know, weighted randomness, where a certain number of times, it'll cut to the models of Kevin and I watching it. So it's very variable and loose, but it's essentially—it's editing and editing and editing. Yeah. And then, let's see...and then things have really branched out, kind of with the form of it. You know, these big tabletop platforms. We made three or four different sort of odes to the road movie. *Traffic* was one of them. We made another one based on *Bonnie and Clyde* and one of the cruising scenes from *American Graffiti*, and a fourth from this wonderful film, one of Spielberg's first, called *Sugarland Express*, where we just did this parade scene. And those can show together as a suite of works, or alone, as the Modern did.

And then we sort of started to think, "Well, if we're really interested in genre, we're interested in film, why are we interested in it? And what does that say, if you put your own biography next to a film genre?" And we realized that, you know, with these reduced means that we're giving ourselves—because, you know, with art, it's all about a project with constraints, rules that you're making and setting up and then moving beyond. The rule was to respond to cinema, and now the rule was to make your own life into cinema. So we started to think about, especially with these reduced means of these little models and these cameras, what could we tell about ourselves, our own stories, that would be, kind of, genre pieces? So we made this series of work called *Double Fantasy*. And the first one was about childhood, and the second one was about sex, and then there was one about career. And this fourth one, which we felt was our magnum opus, in a way, with this series, was about religion. And so what it shows is it's a double platform that sort of stands in space. And on one side is Kevin's biography about his relationship to spirituality and religion, and on the other side is mine. So I'll show you the linefeed first, and then I'll show you what the sculpture looks like. Yeah. This is my side.

Okay, and here's what the sculpture looks like.

It's a very epic soundtrack. So, yeah, I mean, we're continuing to work with models. I'll just show you just little images with silence. This is the project for the British Film Institute, which was a chandelier on the top with, again, these miniature cameras. And there's text embedded into some of the scenes, and the whole thing displayed to a flat-screen monitor in the project and hangs overhead. So it was the idea of sort of taking away the access to the models from the viewer, and having that happen kind of in the sky. And it also becomes kind of an advertisement for itself. Some of the cameras point at text, which edit together to say things like, "You want leisure," or, you know, "Adventure is yours," that kind of thing. Or "Adventure equals time"—these sort of cryptic statements. And the whole project is in black and white. The cameras are actually color, but the sets are painted black and white. So this is what was shown, I guess the newest work that was shown most recently. I think I'll end there. Thank you very much.

WHARTON: I think you can see why we chose the McCoys to speak today, because their work is so engaging and so smart and interesting, and brings up lots of questions about technology and documentation and conservation. You may have noticed how articulate she is; she, a professor at Brooklyn College, and Kevin is an assistant professor at N.Y.U., as well. So they're used to engaging in these kinds of discussions.

Our next artist, Francis Hwang, is equally interesting and articulate. He modestly says that he's a writer and artist and a software engineer. That's just the beginning. He's played a role not only in creating Internet art, but also in archiving and conserving it. So he wears many hats. He served as director of technology at Rhizome.org, where he worked on a number of projects at the Guggenheim and elsewhere, to think through conservation strategies for new-media works. But today he's got his artist hat on and he'll talk about a few of his works.

As an artist, Francis is somewhat subversive. I'm glad that he hasn't been thrown in jail yet for some of his works, like the *Bikes Against Bush* artists that we heard about this morning. At least I don't think so? Okay, not yet. His work—in particular, I'm thinking about *The Unauthorized iPod U2 vs. Negativland Special Edition* that he created, he'll tell you about—received a lot of press internationally on *Wired.com*, *Liberation*, *Globe and Mail*, *ArtForum*, *Art in America*, and so on, and got a lot of blogging attention, as well. He's currently working as a developer at an online company called Diversion Media. And he lives in Brooklyn with his overweight cat. Francis?

FRANCIS HWANG: Okay, so I'm going to talk about three different works. They're kind of all over the place. Glenn kind of went into that. Hopefully that will be more interesting than confusing. When I was pulling together this talk, I sort of realized that if there's any kind of unifying theme to my online art, it's not so much about topic or even really so much about media as much as it is sort of about dynamic processes, not static texts. So although some of these works have software in them, some of them don't; some of them are much more design-y, and some of them are not. A lot of it is fundamentally interested in the Web as a place where perfectionism of single monolithic text doesn't work very well. Or instead, what people respond to are things that have immediacy, things that have kind of movement, in a way that is not perfunctory, and things that actually invite conversation—which kind of, you know, answers some questions; it brings up a lot of others. It's a very difficult aesthetic territory to be in. You don't have control over context. A lot of people link to your stuff who have no interest in or grounding in art history or criticism, so they come at it, you know, from a sort of a set of aesthetic standards that have nothing to do with what you may be familiar with. But that's—you know, I find that a very interesting place to work.

So the first work I'm going to talk about is this work which has an unwieldy name, *The Unauthorized iPod U2 vs. Negativland Special Edition*. It's named this for two reasons. First of all is that the Apple product that it is sort of a parody of is technically called the iPod U2 Special Edition. And then the

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Negativland thing. And I put in the unauthorized thing sort on advice of counsel. But it has a lot of history to it. And it starts in 1991, where a sound collage band called Negativland put out an album called *U2*. This was, I think, maybe a year after *The Joshua Tree* by the band U2 had come out. So U2 was a worldwide sensation. They were very popular, they were very successful financially. And Negativland put out this album. And it had all this sound collage stuff in it. They're pranksters, really; that's kind of their temperament. And it sampled U2 songs, sort of—they did direct recordings off of *The Joshua Tree*, and they sampled them in. They also did these very, sort of, obnoxious synthesized, sort of, versions of *I Still Haven't Found What I'm Looking For*. And they also included unauthorized tapes of Casey Kasem, who was a very popular Top 40 DJ at the time. Because Negativland—this is in pre-Internet era—Negativland was this funny underground conduit for little chunks of media that were really funny, but didn't have any sort of mainstream place for them to go. So I'm actually going to play just one little clip, which is part of the reason, we think, that they got sued. Sorry.

CASEY KASEM (RECORDED): That's the letter U and the numeral 2. The four-man band features Adam Clayton on bass, Larry Mullen on drums, Dave Evans, nicknamed The Edge, on—this is bullshit. Nobody cares. These guys are from England and who gives a shit?

HWANG: Okay, so that album came out, and then for some reason Island Records, which owns the legal copyright to *The Joshua Tree* and all the songs on it—U2's record label—sued Negativland. Nobody exactly knows what the decision-making process there is. There's a lot of rumors that Casey Kasem leaned on Island really hard. You know, Negativland is not a band with a lot of money. Their record label is SST Records—also didn't have a lot of money. They were buried in depositions for four years, or I think three years. And eventually, the resolution was that they gave in, because they had no option. And now today, Island Records owns this album, in every legal sense. And it's pretty much not released. I mean, you can buy it, because you can get around such things. But you can't get it in a mainstream record store. So that was '91, so a long time ago.

And then in 2004, U2 worked with Apple to put out the iPod U2, right? And Apple was starting this sort of co-branding thing, where they were taking the iPod—which of course, everybody loves the iPod—and trying to see if they can connect it to bands. I have a theory that Apple really wanted to try this out and see—if this was successful, in two years, you'd have, like, ten different kinds of band-branded iPods, like a Matchbox 20 iPod, and a Cristina Aguilera iPod. That never happened. Who knows? But I thought this was a really funny thing, given U2's own history with intellectual property, given the fact that iPods and MP3 players kind of introduced a whole generation of kids who were coming of age in the Internet era to issues of intellectual property. And these bands who you like may not actually be your friends, right? Like Metallica's fortunes changed drastically because of the Napster case. And a bunch of eighteen-year-old kids, who were not politicized at all, all of a sudden were like, "Why is Lars Ulrich such an asshole?"

So what I did, sort of to bring history up, is created this piece, *The Unauthorized iPod U2 vs. Negativland Special Edition*. And what I did physically is I actually went to the Apple Store and said—oh, I bought the U2 iPod retail, and then I went online and I bought every CD in Negativland's back catalogue. You can get it off of their own Web site. And then I just preloaded the Negativland songs onto the U2 iPod, which is very easy to do. I did a little modification of the box art. The nice thing about this stuff now is you can go on these designer sites and find out what the corporate fonts are that Apple uses, and then you can put them in Freehand or whatever, and print it out. You know, getting, like, really solid color printing on a really nice glossy stock is very easy now. So I made a modified thing and I sold it. Or I tried to sell it. Here's what happened. So I put this on eBay. Incidentally, if you've ever been to the Apple Web site, you'll recognize the look is very similar. I went to the Apple Web site and I stole a lot of their styling—the fonts, the margins, the colors, the way they do lists, the way they lay out the sort of images. These images here, I took myself. But like this, for example, is very much like the way Apple would do such a thing.

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So this was on eBay for five days. And a standard auction on eBay lasts for seven days. And it was on eBay for five days, got blogged everywhere, Boing Boing picked it up. All these people emailed me and said it was really funny. And then what happened—but you'll notice this is not on eBay.com, because at the end of it, after five days, eBay took it down. And I had happened to—I was in the process of just, like, saving an archive of this Web page every day, just to be certain. So after five days, they sent me this email here saying, "We would like to let you know that we removed your listing because an intellectual property right owner notified us, under penalty of perjury, that your listing infringes the rights owner's copyright, trademark, or other rights." So of course, that's Apple. And you know, I think it's a fairly spurious claim, but eBay doesn't care. They're not a court of law; they don't want the trouble. So the auction went down. This is down here, like a gajillion blogs that linked to me because of it.

So I thought about it for a while and I kind of consulted with the Electronic Frontier Foundation, which is this legal nonprofit dealing with technology issues. And then I decided just to do it on my own site. So this is pretty much the same thing. You know, I have a kind of a legal disclaimer here at the top, and then it's pretty much the same. And then I ran the auction on my own site, using a somewhat cumbersome process where people would send in emails and I'd have to verify and blah-blah-blah. And after a little while, this guy Francis Schmidt, who lives, apparently, in Belgium, won the auction, \$667, and I put it in a box and I sent it to him. I don't know what he did with it. And I haven't really asked. He could've put it on a vitrine, he could've donated it to a local museum, he could use it everyday on the subway. I really don't know. And I don't think—like, to me personally, it doesn't seem that important. It feels like once I put it out there, I'm mostly done with it.

The interesting thing about this is that I realized just this morning that there's little details of how the box was designed that are not documented anywhere. And I thought I had taken photos of them, but then I was looking on my laptop—I don't think I have them. For example, when you open—because emulating Apple's, kind of, product design strategy was really important to me. I'm actually, in a very

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complicated way, a big fan of Apple. I think they do things very well. This is a laptop. I have their PowerBook and I like it. When you open Apple iPod, this box—it says in this really beautiful kind of gray, subtle font—it says, “Designed by Apple in California.” So of course, then I had to make a “Designed by Francis Hwang in Brooklyn.” You know, little things like that, which I don’t think there are any records of, actually. As a kind of a non-artistic documentation process, I realized that it’s fairly unusual to try to auction a thing on your own Web site without going through an actual company like eBay. So I sort of just put up a write-up of my process and my thinking. This isn’t really aesthetic, it’s more just a question of—well, if you don’t know these people and they’re making bids, and they can’t be trusted to, like, not make a bid that’s actually messing with your process, how do you sort of ensure against that? I don’t know if anyone else will ever find it useful, but it seemed like the sort of thing that you might as well write down. So that was in 2005.

What happened, actually, is then later in that year—and I actually didn’t know this at all, but Negativland was working with a gallery called Gigantic ArtSpace in Manhattan. They were doing their own show with their own sort of—because they’d been doing sound collage, but also a lot of video installations or bizarre sculptural things or whatever. So they just hunted me down and they found me, and they asked me if I wanted to be involved in this as well. So this is a second version of it, on a gallery way. It’s actually—the iPod that it’s based on is physically different, and the box art is a little different, because in between the time of doing the two, Apple had actually changed their packaging. So the first version was a straight cube—it’s like the exact same dimensions on each side. And the second version is actually square when you look at it face on, like, you know, directly, but when you turn it to the side, it’s a little narrower. But this is it, sort of just mounted on a thing. You can listen to it. You know, it’s Negativland music. And I decided I wanted to do that as an auction as well. So this clipboard is actually sort of a really silly in-gallery auction. Incidentally, both of these pieces—I kind of decided to donate profits to this online nonprofit organization that was devoted to fighting abuse of intellectual property by the music industry, because that just seemed like a good way to keep it all full circle.

The second work I wanted to talk about is *Ten-Sided*, which is pretty much an entirely online work, but it's—because it's—it's very time based, which maybe brings up curious issues. It was a work that ran in 2006. It was commissioned by an organization called Turbulence.org. And I basically wanted to explore blogging as a form of—I think, you know, there were a number of online artists who were trying to work with blogging as a tool because it was such a digital social phenomenon. And to my mind, what was primarily important is not that blogging is time based, but much more is that it's conversational, right? You're sort of loosely—you have loose association with other blogs that you read. You comment on their stuff, they comment on your stuff, and vice versa. So what I decided to do is use blogging as a tool for collaborative fiction writing among ten different people. So I put out a call to nine other authors who would participate in a three-month thing online. And the rules were basically that every single author involved in the piece had to set up their own blog somewhere. And pretty much people can do with almost no technical knowledge, right? You can do it on Blogspot, and there's all these hosts that make it really easy. Most bloggers don't know anything, you know, about programming. So there would be ten people who would set up blogs as fictional characters. And then the storyline would run for three months, with the rough premise that you're all somehow connected. But there couldn't be any coordination beforehand. You couldn't send an email to somebody and say, "Okay, now let's, like, run into each other at this pub, where it turns out that we're friends of friends." Right? All you could do is write, and then read other people's stuff, and then write again. So you know, an analogy might be a jazz performance or something. It was meant to be a public improvisational work that happened over the course of three months. And this central piece here, this is the core Web site. But it actually uses a piece of software to pull together ten blogs and put them all in one place. But if you'll notice, like on Wednesday, this is from "The Softest Person", which is one of the blog names; this is from "Smooth Blue", for example. But they come from different sources. And here on the right-hand side is actually all ten of the individual sources. So if you were to actually go to the individual ones, you notice they'll all look different. They're designed individually. This one has images in it. I think this guy was actually drawing some of his own pictures, which was pretty great. Or

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grabbing weird things, clip art he could find online. Ezra Kire was this guy Tao Lin, actually, who's a writer of some renown. But actually, Ezra Kire is apparently a real person. Like, he's known in sort of the hard-core scene and he has history with, like, the Lower East Side squatter scene. So he basically, like, hijacked somebody else's real identity in order to have a character for this thing. And then this is another piece, another voice in it. This one, "Between Moments", actually, though—preservation questions, you can't really see it. I think—I don't know what this person is doing with this site now. I don't think it's usable for the same thing.

So it used a piece of software at the center to kind of pull together the ten different things and put it all on one page. But I wanted to make it also pretty much just like a blog, in the sense that—and this is always one of the questions when you're bringing aesthetic perfectionism into an online realm, in the sense that there are multiple ways to represent a lot of things. That's kind of an underlying principle of the Internet. So you can see a post here, and it's formatted this way with this font, with this color background. You see it here, it's the same text, but it looks different. And in fact, there's a thing called an RSS reader, which is sort the backbone of the blogging world, where you can actually also read things in these weird optimized little reader applications, which don't have any design at all. And actually, you can...let's see...most readers actually give you, as the individual, the option of changing how these things look, right? So if I go to style sheet, all of a sudden that's what the entry looks like. So a member of the audience could read this entirely without even going to the Web site, right? And they could read it in this way that it looked totally different. But I wanted to try to embrace that experience, or that aspect of being the audience, in this sort of a work.

And then the third thing I wanted to talk about is *firmament.to*, which is a piece I did in 2000, so seven years ago. And it's actually not up. But I wanted to kind of use Google as a sort of—to turn the entire Web into a free associative text. It was a very software-driven piece of work. So what it was was basically this. If you would go to any...this is some particular exhibition on the Metropolitan Museum of Art's Web site in 2005. You could go to *firmament.to*, which was the piece I did, and enter in that

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URL. And what it would do is the server would grab that page and process it, using the software I'd written, and turn every word into a link. So that's what that looks like. And you'll see that the text is the same, but all of a sudden "revered" is a link, and "impact" is a link, and "articulated" is a link, "exhibition"—these are all links now, right? Because it's just text, and computers are very good at processing text. So then the idea is that these are all things you can click on. So if you were to click on the word "impact" what the Web site does then is it goes to Google and it asks, "What's the top search result for this word 'impact'?" And it turns out at the time, it was this. It's a trade union in Ireland. Who knows, right? And of course, you go to this page and it's got all the words turned into links as well. So the whole idea is you're sort of turning the Web inside out. Every single page becomes a free associative text to possibly another page on the entire Internet.

I have the software for this still kind of in my backups. But at a certain point, you know, a lot of these works, you get a lot of attention for the first couple of years and then attention sort of wanes. And this thing, you've got to host it, and maybe your host, like, upgraded their version of Perl, so it doesn't even work. And you're busy. So it's taken down. I could probably resurrect it with some amount of work. But then, you know, there's another interesting dependency on this, which is this only works in a world where Google.com works, right? Well, Google.com works today, but in a hundred years, we have no guarantee of that at all. In a hundred years, there may be no such thing as search engines. I mean, the more likely scenario, really, is that there'll be much better, much more invasive search engines, is really...I mean, Google will own all of our brains. So that's probably not a concern. But yeah, that's the third work I wanted to show. And I'll just stop there.

WHARTON: We actually have a few minutes. I hope you all took notes. Because when we come back this afternoon, we can ask each of these artists questions about conserving their work and documenting their work. Since we have a few minutes now, maybe we could even get started. Does anybody have a question, off the bat, that they'd like to ask? Or do you have any questions for each other? Or are we all just stunned? Need to process it over lunch. We have someone who's...

NOAH RICHMAN: I'm Noah Richman. I just have a question for Jennifer. I was curious what kind of intellectual—or did you run into any intellectual property issues with, like, the *Starsky and Hutch* video clips?

MCCOY: Stunningly, we have not had any issues with it. I mean, it showed at the Metropolitan. It's in their collection. And right when that happened, Kevin and I opened an S-corp corporation—just figured corporations have more rights than normal people, so we should probably just shield it that way. And we did all these sort of paranoid moves. But nothing actually then happened, which is a little depressing, maybe, about the status of who sees art. But it's also maybe just a, you know, joyful thing; people were so enlightened and thrilled they just thought, "Ah, I'll sue someone else." So I don't know. We never had a problem, knock on something.

RICHMAN: Thanks.

WHARTON: And yet spray a little spray-paint on the sidewalk of New York during the Republican convention...

MCCOY: Is a big problem, yeah.

WHARTON: Yes.

QUESTION: I don't know if both of you were here for the first session, but there was the discussion of the Variable Media questionnaire. And I was curious, as artists, or maybe you could speak of your understanding of the artist community, how receptive you are to filling that out or being a part of that process closer to the point of creation, as opposed to later on in a work's lifespan. Does that make sense? Are you both familiar with...? Okay.

MCCOY: Mm-hm. You start.

HWANG: Okay. Well, yeah, my perspective on that is funny, because I have done sort of archival stuff as well. Very briefly, one particular case was Rhizome.org and the Guggenheim worked together to sort of resurrect a piece called *Brandon*, by Shu Lea Chang. It was an online work. It was about five or six years old at the time. And we were fairly lucky, in the sense that, you know, Shu Lea was around, she was totally involved with helping it out, was sort of answering all these questions. But I think I had only briefly seen the work when it had come out. I mean, I had almost no memory of it. So, you know, it's obviously quite valuable personally. I'm fairly conscious of the importance of it, I guess. I think it's a tricky thing, though, because sort of from a temperament point of view, if you were really interested in long-term stability, you probably just wouldn't be an artist. You know, I think that people who pick art as a career, you know, they're accepting that there's a tremendous amount of fragility to their position. And so in that context, it's actually fairly difficult to think about, "Well, what's going to happen in fifty years?" I mean, these people, some of them don't even have pensions, right? So they don't even know what kind of healthcare they're going to have in twenty years. What are they going to care about their own work being shown, you know? I've kind of always thought that it's really up to the organizations to sort of generally put pressure on that part of the process. I think it's entirely legitimate for a museum or a gallery, if they're commissioning your work, to make participation in that process part of, you know, quote-unquote, like the "deliverable." I think there will be some resistance to it. But I think, you know, it's the role of an institution to think in the long term, right? Institutions, in theory, are bigger and last longer than the individuals who work for them. So it's totally legitimate in that sense, I think.

WHARTON: Wow. That brings up a lot of questions about artists' rights and responsibilities, and relationships between artists and institutions. Hopefully, we'll get into that this afternoon. I think I'll leave it at that, just to whet your appetite for what's coming. I look forward to seeing you all back at

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2:00. Thank you.

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