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JOHN THOMSON: Welcome back. I'm John Thomson from Electronic Arts Intermix in New York. I want to thank Dara and all the IMAP members who've organized this day today, which has been really a great opportunity for all of us, I think. And also AMIA for their support.

I'm glad to introduce representatives from three legendary New York State organizations: Sherry Miller-Hocking, the assistant director of the Experimental TV Center; Debora Ryan, the senior curator at the Everson Museum; and Carolyn Tennant, the media arts director for Hallwalls Contemporary Arts Center in Buffalo. They will discuss the history and the preservation of their media arts collections. The Experimental Television Center not only supports production by artists, but they also research the history of media arts and help other organizations through administrating grants. The Everson Museum in Syracuse, which had one of the first video departments in the world, have been leaders in media-arts exhibition for many years. And Hallwalls in Buffalo are famous for their dynamic multidisciplinary programming—that was originally artist led—from the 1970s onwards. I will then discuss the history and preservation program at Electronic Arts Intermix, the thirty-six-year-old video-artist distributor based in New York City.

First of all, I'd like to introduce Sherry Miller-Hocking, the assistant director at the Experimental TV Center. Sherry is the E.T.C.'s administrator and works on special projects relating to video art history and preservation.

SHERRY MILLER-HOCKING: First of all, I would like to join with all those who've thanked IMAP and AMIA for hosting this symposium, and especially for inviting me to be a part of it. I truly value this opportunity. As I talk today, I'm going to be running a slide show in the background. And I'd like you to think of it as a scrapbook, suggesting to you the types of artifacts that we have in our collections. In many cases, what you'll be seeing are only parts—the cover or first few pages of a document—but we do have complete electronic files for the materials. Also, I just want you to keep in mind that the resolution of what you'll be seeing is not necessarily the resolution of the scanned original files. And for those of you who are going to find this distracting, I will quote Nam June Paik and say, "Please, three-quarter close your eyes."

First of all, I'd like to give you a quick overview of our activities in the areas of history and preservation. We've been working at and interested in these issues for many years. And some of the projects that I'm going to be describing to you today are ongoing, or at least they really feel like they are ongoing. I think that there are a couple of words that best describe our approach to these specific projects. The first one is collaboration. In most of our history and preservation projects, we really attempt to reach out to partners who can both contribute to and benefit from our projects. And we work with a lot of talented and committed individuals on these projects. I won't even attempt to name them all, but some of them are here in the room today, and I owe them, truly, a debt of gratitude. The second word that I use to describe our activities is synergism. What we try to do is use opportunities to leverage support and move other projects forward. The third and last word that I use to describe our work is fun. It's got to be a fun project, as my friends Mona Jimenez, Kathy High, and Carolyn Tennant say, which engages creative abilities as well as administrative skills. There are two important characteristics for us regarding our preservation and history projects. The first is research and the second is access.

Before I give you a quick overview of what it is that we're doing, I'd like to take a minute to describe to you what we have to work with. The Center was begun on the campus of Binghamton University by Ralph Hocking in 1968. By 1971, we'd formed a separate nonprofit corporation and moved into the downtown Binghamton area. Among the programs that we began with was a residency program for media artists from around the world. Since that time, we've had over 1,500 individual artists who've created original works using a hybrid analog-digital processing system. The system is a hybrid tool set and facilitates interactive relationships among older, historically important analog tools and new digital technologies. And many of the tools, both the analog and digital tools, were actually designed through our research program, begun in the early seventies and focused on the construction of unique electronic instruments. An early example of this is the construction of the Paik-Abe Video Synthesizer. The first one constructed at E.T.C. was actually placed at the Artists TV Lab at WNET in New York City, and the second was placed in our residency program. Today, the center houses a collection of over two thousand videotapes, from 1968 to the present, in two major categories: those works made by artists participating in the residency program; and those made by artists who have either been supported through sponsored projects or who have received grants through the Center over the years. We probably hold some of the earliest image-process work in the U.S., in all formats, and many of them are obsolete. Because only a very small portion of this type of work is in distribution, there are very few opportunities for screening, and there's little historical context provided for the works, which we believe strongly helped to form the foundation for much contemporary new-media arts practice. In addition to that, the Center is steward for a collection of ephemera related to these tapes and their creators, and importantly, includes some of the unique, handcrafted video instruments used to make the works, as well as other ephemera such as posters, program notes, text, photographs, equipment manuals, operators manuals, and on and on it goes. And while not moving-image works, we feel strongly that the associated ephemera help to establish a cultural context for the works themselves, and as such, are essential to preserve and—hopefully—electronically reprint, which is what we're interested in doing.

We've been involved in early efforts with media preservation in the state for quite a long time. And I'd like to really salute NYSCA at this point. The staff was visionary in recognizing very early on the importance of cataloguing and preserving moving-image work, in addition to all their wonderful efforts, which support the creation of new-media art. Some of our earliest efforts at preservation date to about 1991, where we attended a symposium on video preservation, which was hosted by MoMA and organized by Media Alliance. In that same year Ralph Hocking proposed, in the journal *The Independent*, the "Resurrection Bus", which involved loading our reel-to-reel equipment into a bus and traveling to you to restore tapes. Luckily, that proposal wasn't funded. We're thankful for that. Thank you, NYSCA!

Beginning in '94, Media Alliance, under the direction of Mona Jimenez, engaged in a partnership with NAMID to work on compatible cataloguing among media organizations. By August of that year, we'd all formed the Upstate Cataloguing Project, which met in Rochester and included representatives of Hallwalls, Syracuse University Visual Studies Workshop, and the E.T.C. By 1975, Jim Hubbard had led an Upstate Cataloguing Project training session. This work really resulted in the creation and modification of a unique cataloguing template, which was compatible, first of all, with that which NAMID was using at the time, and actually helped to shape today's IMAP cataloguing template, which is so important to maintaining some sort of compatibility among cataloguing efforts across the board.

I'd like to turn now to what it is that we do with what we have. We try, in all these activities, to maintain a common set of goals. One is to provide a dynamic way that people can contribute to the knowledge base for the inclusive media history. We're interested in helping to establish bridges for intellectual access to this information and to position independent media arts within a broader cultural context, through various methods of research and public programming. And lastly, we're interested in

encouraging and participating in alliances among collecting institutions, educational, and curatorial programs, to help move forward preservation activity.

Our research activity has been supported by the New York State Council on the Arts for a number of years. Through this support, we began and continue to maintain the Video History Web site [<http://www.experimentalvcenter.org/history/>] as a vehicle for both collecting information and also disseminating that information. The Web site project was begun in 1996 and launched in 2000, which makes it a real dinosaur in terms of Web sites, which is beginning to pose a problem for us in terms of maintaining the data and being able to serve the data in easy and appropriate ways. With the assistance of the Daniel Langlois Foundation, beginning in 2005, we've focused on the early video and media instruments, particularly those tools which were designed by individuals, or by individuals and technologists who were working collaboratively. That's our focus and our mission, and has been, really, since the beginning. With this award, we have been able to digitize a significant number of documents and are slowly able to place these documents on the Video History Web site. We're also interested in the preservation of tools through research into the emulation of early analog systems using contemporary digital technologies and have been involved in conversations with a number of people around the world who are looking to mimic these early analog systems through software such as Jitter and Max/MSP.

In terms of access methods, we've tried to use a variety of approaches. One is exhibitions, and I'm just going to name a couple of things that we've participated in. One early project was the Video Pioneers exhibition created by Steina and Woody Vasulka for Ars Electronica in 1992. A number of works produced at the Center over the years are included in *Surveying the First Decade: Video Art and Alternative Media in the United States*, a compilation set distributed by Video Data Bank. A number of works are in distribution or in the collection of Electronic Arts Intermix. I'm particularly interested in an exhibition model which ties the exhibition of an older work to its preservation. A

recent exhibition that I found strong was *The Early Show: Video from 1969 to 1979*, which was curated by Constance DeJong for Hunter College in 2006. In that show, the Center was represented not only by single-channel moving-image work, but also ephemera, which was in the gallery, and CD Portapak, which was also in the gallery. The Portapak was a real eye-opener for many of the students in terms of the tool sets that early video makers used.

A second access method is participation in conferences and convenings. We've been involved in organizing two. Again, the partnerships involved with these conferences are extensive, and while I don't have time to name them all, that information is also available on our Web site. By not naming these people, I certainly don't mean to not honor them, because without all of those partners, we could never have done either conference. The first was in 1998 and called *Video History: Making Connections*, hosted at Syracuse University, bringing together about 250 individuals representing not only the pioneering practitioners but also contemporary artists. We're very interested—in all of our activities—in establishing and maintaining that inter-generational dialogue, because we think it's really critically important.

In 2002 with—again—my friend Mona Jimenez, we organized *Looking Back, Looking Forward*, which was held at the DCTV. This was a working symposium for about sixty people, including artists, conservators, and technical experts. That symposium focused on physical preservation of not only the works themselves, but also addressed the issues of related ephemera and tool sets.

You can see that one of the important access methods for us, then, is the Video History Web site. Today we have about six thousand records that are maintained in twelve different databases. The site offers research possibilities to media educators, historians, artist-programmers, as well as the general public. We probably have around 4,500 unique visitors in the average week. Each year over the last four years, the access for the Web site has doubled. The site has also been cited in numerous books,

catalogues, and monographs as an area where people can find information that otherwise is extremely difficult to locate. The content that we provide is often out of print and difficult to access. And, again, it includes all kinds of documents—catalogues and manuscripts, posters, program notes, artist notes—all kinds of things. A couple of examples that I'd like to cite on the Web that we've digitized include the book *At Arms Length: (Taking a Good Hard Look at) Artists' Video*, which was edited by Barbara Osborn in 1990 and includes a number of very interesting articles, among them an article by Jon Burris exploring the impact of public funding on the development of the art form. Another article by Jon Burris looks at issues surrounding the Portapak: *Did the Portapak Cause Video Art? Notes on the Formation of a New Medium*. Another publication that we have digitized is *The Film*, which was published by the New York State Council on the Arts. And, while it's undated, it was noted in an annual report for 1969–1970. This booklet gives you a really wonderful view into what NYSCA's film program was supporting at that very early moment. Another example is the conference transcript from the New York State Council on the Art's Video Conference, which was held at the Whitney Museum in 1975. All of these publications are extremely difficult to access in New York City, and almost impossible Upstate.

The only other thing that I would like to say about Web-based projects is I'm really happy to hear about the IMAP registry survey. We probably receive an average of five inquiries every week asking specifically for schematics for all kinds of tools. We have—in our bibliography on the Web site—over three thousand entries, and many of them refer to instruction manuals, operators manuals, and other technical documentation. We get a huge number of requests for them: "Please send me the manual. I can't find it anywhere else. I don't know where else to go."

Another access method that we're pursuing is print publication. At the moment, we're collaborating with Kathy High of RPI and Mona Jimenez of N.Y.U. on a book that's tentatively titled *Analogs and Intersections: Video Tools in Media Arts History*. The book is an attempt to document and make

accessible the history of the set of electronic art-making tools developed in the U.S. from the 1960s to the 1980s, as well as to explore, again, this relationship between old and new-media arts practice. Some of the writers that we will be working with include Jean Gagnon, John Minkowski, Tim Murray, Marisa Olson, Christiane Paul, Yvonne Spielmann, and Woody Vasulka. For a number of years, Carolyn Tennant has provided invaluable assistance in the area of research, for both this book project and also on our Web site. On our Web site, there are also a number of other publication projects that we've been involved in that I won't go into at this point, but the most recent of which was an article called "Radical Learning/Radical Perception: The History of the Experimental Television Center," which was authored by Ralph Hocking, with Kathy High and myself, and published in *Hidden Histories*, which was edited by Helen De Michiel and published by NAMAC in 2006.

Another access method is DVD publishing, and we're nearing completion on a set of eight DVDs called *Early Media Instruments*. These DVDs document the operation of significant early analog video synthesizers designed and built in the U.S. in the early to mid-seventies. These include the Paik-Abe Video Synthesizer, the Dan Sandin Image Processor, and the Rutt/Etra Video Synthesizer. So if any of you have any of these machines lying around and you need to know how to work them, we're about to publish the information that you're looking for.

Another access method is videotape digitization. We began in 2004 with assistance from the National Television and Video Preservation Foundation, which helped us to re-master about ten hours of open-reel video—again, related to these early synthesis instruments. We now have video related to this, which includes interviews and documentation with Nam June Paik, Bill Hearn, David Jones, Steve Rutt, Bill Etra, Don McArthur, the Vasulkas, and Dan Sandin. Beginning in 2006–2007, through a special project of the New York State Council on the Arts, we're working on the digitizing of over twenty hours of video from the Center's collection, produced through the residency program since 1970. We have at this point, over 130 individual works, which represent the work of ninety different

artists, including works by people such as Gary Hill, Aldo Tambellini, Lynne Sachs, Nicholas Ray, Alan Berliner, David Blair, and Barbara Buckner. We're fortunate to be working with Bill Seery of MercerMedia on the digitization of these early-format works.

The project also includes digitizing of ephemera, which, as I mentioned before, we consider to be crucial to this whole attempt to make this history live. The early works, again, I believe, form a strong historical foundation for much of the new performative and cross-disciplinary works being done today. And I think there are a lot of really interesting possibilities and conversations that can be had about that issue. The Cornell University's Rose Goldsen Archive, under the direction of Tim Murray and the sponsorship of the Division of Rare Manuscripts Collection of the Cornell University Library, will hold the drives and the digital masters for the works and the ephemera. This material will be available through the Special Collections division of the library. Tim is now working on revisions to the Rose Goldsen Archive Web site, and the Center's collection will be included on that site. We're in discussion with Tim, and obviously with the artists involved, about forms of online access to the works themselves. With additional support from mediaThe Foundation, we're going to take some of this work and create a set of DVDs, which we're tentatively calling *E.T.C. Works: 1970 to 2007*, as well as a catalogue, which will be published in conjunction with the DVD set. We're very appreciative of all of the funders who've helped us over the years to access this kind of material and to help save it. I won't be showing today any moving-image work, because Jim Hubbard has included a number of pieces in the screening this evening. So you'll be able to see some of what we've been able to accomplish—again, thanks to Bill Seery.

To sum up, there are a couple of keywords that I think underlie our activities. The first word that came to my mind in thinking about this presentation was "pragmatism". We're all really looking for the most cost-effective solutions that maintain the integrity of the work. And by work, I mean not only the moving-image work, but the instruments and the associated ephemera. We're prepared to do a lot of

the work ourselves to make the project successful. We feel strongly, as I mentioned, that collaboration is the only way for us to go. We're interested in helping to invent and participate in new strategies to help preserve the work. We're interested in interweaving funding streams to help reach that goal. In our case, the Langlois support for our research really made a huge difference to us, in terms of our ability to enrich the content on the Web site, and also has made a huge difference in terms of our preparation for this book.

I think the second keyword that's important for me is "access". And as you can see, we've tried to develop a strategy which uses multiple ways of providing access to this cultural material. We're interested in this history because we were there. We have a vested interest in wanting to make sure that it remains alive and continues to be enriched by documents that we're not even aware of at this point. It's one of the wonders that we find with the Web site. I've recently been in touch with Don Hallock, who constructed an early instrument, in the early 1970s, on the West Coast. We had almost no information in our archives about him or his work. We got in touch with him, and he with us, and we now have a really wonderful collection of materials—digitized magazine articles and photographs, things like that, which reflect on his construction of the Videola. I didn't know that some of that material existed. So now we have that, and we're working with Don to see, again, about ways that we can ensure that it's accessible to the general public and to interested scholars and researchers.

The last keyword is "context". And again, I know that I'm becoming repetitive about this, but I feel very strongly that the preservation, conservation, and digitization of moving-image work needs to be done hand-in-hand with the conservation and preservation of the tool sets, particularly these instruments that are unique or are very difficult to locate now. A lot of the images that you're seeing up here today, in terms of technical information and schematics, are related to tools that we actually have. For instance, we have the Akai machine that you saw pictured earlier today. A lot of this stuff is getting extremely difficult to find. Occasionally people contact us and say, "We're going to throw this out. Can

you pay us to ship it to you?" If the device is in fairly good shape, the answer is, "Yes, we will." And we just recently acquired an AV-5000A—for those of you that are old enough to even understand that format, which is pre-EIAJ color—that is in pristine condition. The UPS guy that delivered it wasn't happy because they weigh about sixty pounds, but we were delighted.

So that's what we do. I'd just like to conclude with this short quote from Nathan Lyons. We recently digitized a set of video documentation from a conference that was held at Visual Studies Workshop in Rochester in 1989—a panel conversation about Upstate New York media history. On the panel were: Nathan Lyons; John Giancola; Margot Lewitin, from Women's Interart Center; Ira Schneider; and Ralph and myself. Nathan—in introducing the panel and this whole concept of talking about the history of Upstate media from the vantage point of 1989—introduced it by saying, "If you were there, it's memory. If you weren't there, it's history. And both of them are problematic." Thank you.

THOMSON: I'd like to introduce now Debora Ryan, who is the senior curator at the Everson Museum, where she is in charge of exhibitions, collections, and the museum's archive.

DEBORA RYAN: Thank you. Thank you, John. I'm really pleased to be here today representing the Everson Museum. And Sherry just made a very important comment: the difference between those who were participants in the early days of video, and those, like me, who were born about the same time that video was born. And that is the case. And being the curator and overseeing a collection that I cannot view has been a very difficult task. So what I'd like to do today is set up for you a little bit of background about the Everson Museum, and what made it possible for video to actually flourish there. And I'll go very quickly through some of this very early history, but I think it's important just to put it into context.

A couple of things—John mentioned that I'm the senior curator at the Everson, but I am the *only* curator at the Everson, and we have a staff of about fourteen people. In the early 1970s, when video was a big part of it, the staff was probably about eight more than what we have now, and there were three or four curators all the time. So it's a huge job to oversee the collection, including the video collection, and put on exhibitions, which we do about nine to twelve every year. And in addition to that, we do not have a librarian or archive on staff; we have volunteers who come and help out. So I'm also charged with overseeing the archive. And that includes the video archive that was begun back in the early 1970s.

Part of what I'm going to go over today is the history of our collection and our exhibitions. And I'm going to show you, as Sherry did, some of the important printed materials that go along with the collection that we've found in our archives, because it really does put the early videos into context. If you don't know how they were shown, or how they were installed, or how they were exhibited, you really miss a huge part of what the videos are all about. And the second part is I'm going to talk a little bit about what our plans are for our video archive. I'm going to go through this really quickly, so don't get nervous.

1896: The Everson Museum was founded by George Fiske Comfort, who was one of the founders of The Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York. And the museum did not have a building and it found itself in the basement of the Syracuse Savings Bank and later moved to the third floor of the public library, when it was evicted, and then went to another library, where they leased a space. And by the early 1930s, they had moved to a nineteenth-century mansion. And that was really not the setting where video was going to happen. But in 19— or let me backtrack for just a moment. I have to mention something about the history of ceramics at the Everson. In 1932, the first Ceramic National exhibition took place at the Everson, and it was entitled The Robineau Memorial, in memory of Adelaide Robineau, who was a pioneer potter who lived in Syracuse and died in 1928. The Ceramic

National was the first-annual—and later biennial—ceramic exhibition established in this country. The Everson became the first American art museum to collect and exhibit ceramics and is credited with helping to establish ceramics as a fine-art form rather than as craft. And this is important to note, because fifty years later, video is going to be ousted by ceramics once again.

1937 was when they moved into the mansion. And in the 1940s, Helen Everson passed away. And in her will, she left a million dollars to the City of Syracuse to build a building for the museum of art, which was then called the Syracuse Museum of Arts. It took twenty-five years for the city to figure out where it was going to go—a lot of debate, a lot of politics. The Syracuse University, of course, wanted the museum to be on campus, and the city wanted it in the city; the county wanted it in the county, and so on. But they finally settled on a location, and the architect I. M. Pei. This was I. M. Pei's first museum that he built, and he has gone on to do wonderful things with the National Gallery of Art, the Louvre, the Johnson Museum in Ithaca, and so on. I wanted to show you these images of the museum because these huge . . . for those of you who have not visited it, these huge cantilevered spaces that come out are the galleries that the video took place in. And these galleries have twenty-foot ceilings. They're huge, wide-open, empty rooms. And this was the platform for video art to be exhibited.

In 1971, Jim Harithas was appointed the director of the Everson Museum. He was the former director of the Corcoran Gallery in Washington, D.C., and at the time, he came from Hunter College as a teacher of the history of art. He built strong connections with Syracuse University and was appointed an adjunct in the museum studies program there. His impact on the museum was immediate. He brought high energy to the museum. He was very interested in contemporary art and had strong connections to New York City. In 1971, he hosted a landmark exhibition of Yoko Ono's work, which brought thousands of people to the museum. And so it really put the Everson on the map. And John Lennon being there didn't hurt any. But it was a very important exhibition, and it sort of put Jim

Harithas in the spotlight. And shortly thereafter, being the new museum director, a young Syracuse University journalism student named David Ross was sent down to take a photograph of him for the university paper. And there's—Sherry probably knows this story. I hear very different versions of what happened, but ultimately, David ended up telling Jim that the museum stinks, and that he would never come there and neither would his students, and they needed to do something to change it. So David ultimately was appointed video curator. And in 1972, Richard Simmons joined the staff as an assistant curator. And when David left in 1974, he took over as video curator.

One of the early shows—and I'm going to go through these very quickly because, just for time, I can't go through everything. Some of the early shows that the Everson did . . . one of the first ones was called *Projected Art: Artists at Work*. And this was a unique exhibition of slides and films that revealed the intimate experiences of many artists in their studios, including Mark Rothko, Matisse, Jackson Pollock, Dan Flavin, Donald Judd, and Michael Hazer. This was also sponsored by the New York Council on the Arts. As Sherry mentioned, they've been supportive of film and video since the very beginning. Other important shows were Juan Downey. And this is an interesting blurb in our bulletin. How they described this exhibition was, "Juan Downey: an exhibition of technological electronic works of art." And that's all that it said. There was no other description for it, or images. Other important shows that took place: in January 1972, Nam June Paik performed with cellist Charlotte Mormon. And this is an exhibition that Sherry also participated in—yes—and this took place in the museum's sculpture court, and it was . . . Paik, along with Shuya Abe operated the color video synthesizer, which projected images and synthesized sounds into images. Charlotte Mormon played a video cello to the accompaniment of recorded music of Janis Joplin. In March of that year, the museum began playing—continuously—half-inch video tapes, in a video gallery that was established. And I believe the video gallery was located in various places throughout the museum, including the coatroom and people's offices, but video was being shown all the time. By the summer—spring-summer—of 1972,

West Coast artists were invited to exhibit at the Everson, including Terry Fox, Paul Kos, Howard Fried, George Bolling, Joel Glassman, and William Wegman.

And when David Ross came, he was also charged with starting the video archive and an educational program. And I'm mentioning this two-week course that he taught for grades nine through twelve at the museum because it's something that we still do. We partner with local high schools and they use our video collection—the ones that we can view—and they develop their own videos based on our collection. And it's something that we still do, funded by the New York Council on the Arts.

This was one of the early shows, the Experimental Television Center—and this was also in Sherry's slide show, but I wanted to mention it. It was a two-week exhibition of videotapes and video projects from the Experimental Television Center. And this particular document is so important as part of the history of video because it mentions a statement by James Harithas that says, "The establishment here"—I don't know that you can actually see it on the screen—"The establishment here of what I believe is the first video department and continuous video program at any public museum in the United States, in March 1972, came as a result of my early conversations with Nam June Paik, with Frank Gillette, and later, with the museum's curator of video arts, David Ross. Ross began planning the department roughly six months before it was actually established. Its basic idea was that of providing artist with access to the form. He went on to develop an exhibition format for video art, a small video archive"—which we still have intact—"a community-oriented education program, and an initial plan for promoting the museum's participation in the cable TV system to be established in Syracuse during the next few years." These documents are also extremely important because they coincide exactly with the tapes that we have in our collection. For example, on the inside daily performance schedule, we have *TV Bed Performance*, by Charlotte Mormon, and we'll have a tape of that performance, and so on. And it also lists tapes showing on different systems throughout the museum and at different times. And we have the tapes that will have six or seven videos on each

tape. And again, they coincide with the actual exhibition. The documents are so important because the tapes themselves don't tell you that "here's an image of Charlotte Mormon playing her video cello in the sculpture court" and "here's another, not so great image, but it's an important document."

This—I wanted to mention the St. Jude exhibition, because this is one of the things that I'm trying to figure out as curator of the collection. This was an exhibition that took place and it's noted somewhere that there's a catalogue for the show, but I can't find it anywhere; only to find this little card that tells me it's a videotape catalogue and that's why I can't find it. So that happens in a couple of instances. And of course, people who were there at the time would know that, but it's going to take me years to figure this all out. So I'm glad you're still here, Sherry. And this does happen again in a couple of other instances. Another important show that happened early on was *Douglas Davis: Events, Drawings, Objects and Videotapes*. And this was an exhibition inside and outside the museum, with WCNY TV live telecast "Talk Out!" It was an exhibition of videotape, objects, drawings, scores, posters, and documentation covering the work of the New York-based artist from his time in Washington, D.C., between 1967 and 1972. And in this exhibition, it included *Studies in Black and White*, tapes one through four. And this is an image, a still image from the catalogue, showing tape three. And here are some stills from tapes three and four.

1973—we also showed a number of solo shows. I'm only going to mention a couple: *Linda Benglis: Videotapes* and *William Wegman: Videotapes and Photographs* in the spring of 1973. *Circuit*, a video invitational, was a major show. It was one of the earliest, if not the first, invitational of this scale. It featured over fifty artists and it traveled all over the country to four venues and also to West Germany. This, again, was a tape catalogue, so there's no printed material for it. And I'm happy to find that out now. It was available for fifty dollars at the time, in three-quarter-inch cassette, half-inch reel-to-reel, and one-inch IVC standard.

This is another important show: *Frank Gillette: Video Process and Metaprocess*. And as I'm trying to sort through this history of the collection, this catalogue, I discovered, was done after the show. So when you're looking at dates, you'll find that the catalogues don't always coincide with the actual exhibition, or neither do the titles. And this was an important catalogue. This was videotapes and installations organized by Jim Harithas, coordinated by Sandra Trop, who is now the Everson's current director, and David Ross. And the catalogue editor was Judson Rosebush, who played a very important role in the catalogues produced at the Everson at this time. It was funded by the New York State Council for the Arts. Here are some of the stills. And this is what—I was just mentioning to Sherry that the . . . we have the tapes in the collection, but knowing how they were originally exhibited is so important. And the catalogue documents the installation in one of our galleries. And this is an installation of *Track and Trace*, 1973. It consisted of three CCTV cameras, four videotape recorders, one continuous tape loop, one automatic switcher, and fifteen TV monitors. And it's probably something we'll never be able to recreate.

This is *Tetragrammation*, 1973. Six videotape playback decks and thirty TVs. And this was six different pre-recorded channels of video information simultaneously displayed on the monitors, with two different channels displayed on each stack of ten. Frank Gillette's show also had hatched chickens in the gallery, which is something we'll never be able to do again either.

This is a major, important catalogue, and probably the most requested document that we have from our video archive, and this was from Nam June Paik's retrospective in 1974. The catalogue was entitled *Videa 'n' Videology*, but the exhibition was not titled that. This catalogue was also written by—a foreword was written by Jim Harithas and it reprinted important letters by Nam June Paik—notes, essays, photos, exhibition announcement, correspondence between the artist and various museums. And this was produced by Judson Rosebush. The original catalogue—this has been reprinted at least three times. And the original catalogue shows us what the tape schedule was for that exhibition, and

the other copies do not. The original is so rare we don't have any more copies of it. I believe the museum only has two. So again, we see listed on the tape schedule all the tapes by Nam June Paik, and we would have all of these in our collection. This is a poster for the actual exhibition itself, exhibition of videotapes, Nam June Paik. So you have to make the connection between the two.

1974—David Ross left the museum to go run the video department at the Long Beach Museum of Art. And Jim Harithas also left to go to the Houston Museum of Fine Arts. Richard Simmons became the video curator and continued the program until 1981. He did numerous exhibitions, and I'm going to only mention a couple here, just for time's sake. This *Everson Video, 1975*, is an important catalogue because it documents all the videos that were shown that year. It was done at the end of the year. And some of the images shown—this includes Electron Movers' *Exhibition Video Maze*. And this is an installation shot of *Top Half/Bottom Half* from 1975. And it's shown again in a gallery space at the Everson that is now the Children's Interactive space. So these places don't exist any longer in the format that we see them here.

Here's a shot of Bill Viola's *Rain* installation from 1975, again, in the same space that no longer exists for exhibition.

This is the coatroom. This was just cleared up for me because I could not figure out what this room was, and it no longer exists. It's part of the ceramic installation of the permanent collection. This is an installation by David Cort: *Time Mirroring Systems*, from 1975.

One of the last shows that Richard did was the *Everson Video Review, 1979*. And it was shown on two separate occasions and the catalogue lists forty different artists, in a traveling show that went to the Museum of Contemporary Art in Chicago, the University Art Gallery in Berkeley, and the Museum of Contemporary Art in La Jolla, California.

When Richard Simmons resigned, the video department became inactive because his position was not replaced. The collection had always stayed in the curator's office. Unlike other museum objects that are kept in storage, the collection, the archives, all of the artist files were kept in the curator's office. So they stayed there. And when Richard left, he apparently took some of the tapes with him, he just told me. The ones I can't find, of course! But in 1982, the registrar of the museum started to catalogue those tapes and get a complete inventory, because up until then, it did not exist.

The collection was always made accessible to the public. There were viewing rooms. People could come and make appointments with Richard to view the tapes, and so it was always a very . . . an education tool. People could watch them whenever they wanted. But that ended when he left. Video continued to show in various places throughout the museum, and we still do show contemporary video, but not on the scale that it happened in the 1970s and early 1980s.

In 1990, the collection was renumbered and given accession numbers for the collection, which made it very confusing, because it now replaced the 1982 inventory numbers. And I still can't figure out why this was done, other than they were preparing for a major conservation survey, which I believe was done by the Media Alliance. I have a document for a survey that was done—but it doesn't have a name on it—from 1991. And this was a survey of 202 three-quarter-inch tapes in our collection. Overall, we have 474 tapes and well over 500 titles that we're still trying to sort through, because there are numerous videos on each tape, and in some cases, we have multiple copies of the same tape. The 1991 survey was kind of scary, when you see the list. Fifty-eight of the tapes were listed still in good condition, but as we go down the list, we see twenty-one of them were not playable. And on future surveys, we discovered that some of those actually were playable, and whoever did the survey, for whatever reasons—equipment or whatnot—they didn't play at that time.

In 1994, the Media Alliance Preservation Survey by Paul Messier, conservator at Boston Art Conservation, proposed a major project. Under the direction of Sherry's friend Mona Jimenez, they proposed to the National Endowment for the Humanities a model partnership with a NA-MID program to achieve compatible cataloguing among media organizations across a broad geographic area. The project was never funded, but the proposal provided a foundation for collection cataloguing.

Organizations included were the Everson Museum of Art, the Anthology of Film Archives, Art Media Studies Department at Syracuse University, the Experimental Television Center, Hallwalls, Media Bus, Paper Tiger Television, Port Washington Public Library, and others. Visual Studies Workshop here in Rochester, as well.

Subsequent conservation: In 1995, Sandra Trop—again, who had been part of the museum staff in various capacities in the early 1970s—was appointed director of the museum. And she was very much keen on seeing that collection taken care of and conserved and made accessible to the public again. And she started to contact various video departments, including the Museum of Modern Art and the Whitney, as a starting point on what we needed to do to get this moving. And ultimately, the collection was put on long-term loan at Syracuse University's Art Media Studies, where professor John Orentlicher was going to be in charge of the collection and conduct another conservation survey. The agreement that they had was that the tapes would be transferred to Syracuse University; all of the archives and exhibition materials would also go, and they would be made available to the staff for class use. They were to initiate a new database project using all the relevant materials from the Everson and the National Moving Image database, the NA-MID. They were going to evaluate the condition of each tape as part of the database work. Where tapes were in danger of being lost due to oxide degradation, efforts were going to be made to transfer them to new stock for preservation. The collection was not to be loaned or used by anyone outside of the staff. Art Video and Art Media Studies were going to use the collection for classroom use only when there's no danger of degrading

the tape. So at this late date, the tapes were still being used, rather than the focus on preserving the tapes.

The collection stayed there until about 2000. In the meantime, in 1998, the Everson applied for New York State Council on the Arts funding to have one hundred of the tapes cleaned, conserved, and reformatted to Beta and VHS, which was the recommended format at the time. They received five thousand dollars to do the project, which only funded twenty of the tapes to be conserved and reformatted. VidiPax did the conservation for us, but it took almost a year for them to decide which tapes. When you have five hundred, how do you decide which twenty you're going to fund? And from our files, I can see Sherry was consulted, and others were consulted, on which were the most important, the most rare, which ones weren't already out there in distribution. So they made a list. And some of the tapes that were conserved and transferred were Nam June Paik's *Circuit* tape, others by Nam June Paik; Ruth Volmer's *Soap Bubble Form*. She was a West German artist and that's how I believe that got onto the touring schedule of the *Circuit* show. Doug Davis's *Studies in Color II*, Andy Mann, Juan Downey—a number of artists were conserved.

1998—there was also the video conference that Sherry mentioned, so I won't go into detail about that.

I joined the Everson Museum in 2000. And part of what my job was supposed to be was to do something about the video collection. Because it had been on loan at the university for so long, it had sort of been out-of-sight-out-of-mind thing, so nothing really happened. And so we returned the tapes to the museum and we've begun a major project to try to sort through and get a computerized database of what we actually had. 2000 and 2003, we made this a collections priority. And again, we're competing with a world-renowned ceramic collection. But we made the video collection a priority in conservation. We do not have huge conservation funding, so it's a difficult project. And in

order to apply for grant money for such things, you really have to have those condition surveys already completed. We established a computerized database of the collection, which did not exist before. We had numerous copies—yes, thank you. I'm almost done.

I'll move to the present. We were funded by the Experimental Television Center to begin a video assessment project and we met with David Ross in New York and we started this ball rolling, back in 2004. I left the museum in 2005, and only returned this past February and picked up where I left off with the project. And not long after I came back the museum discovered, through an archive project that they were working on, that we have a lot of video archive material we didn't know about, in addition to the archives that were started long— way back in the 1970s. So is something that we're going to be working on. And our long-term goal, of course, is to make the collection and the archives accessible, whether it's through in-house, and ultimately Web-based, digital reproduction. So I'll end my talk there. Thank you.

THOMSON: Now I'll introduce Carolyn Tennant, who is the media arts director at Hallwalls Contemporary Arts Center, where she programs film and video and oversees a variety of projects, including their video library and digital archives.

CAROLYN TENNANT: I'd like to thank John, especially, for letting me use his computer, and also thank AMIA and IMAP for inviting me to speak with you a little bit on what we've been doing at Hallwalls for the past few years. This talk's title, "Preservation as Access, or the Hallwalls (Re)Accession Project," is a wisecrack, for those people in the Western New York area who've been privy to the deaccession debacle at the Albright-Knox; it's me being a little bit of a wise guy. And I'll be speaking also about, sort of, the history of Hallwalls, and kind of catch you up to speed with what we've been doing. And then most recently, our digitization project.

Since its founding in 1974, Hallwalls Contemporary Art Center has provided dynamic opportunities for audiences to experience work. Today, our offices, gallery, and multipurpose cinema are housed downtown at Bayville, a former church restored, in part, by Ani DiFranco, which also serves as the headquarters of her label, Righteous Babe Records. So our offices, as well as our gallery, multipurpose venue—we house a lot of different activities there. In addition to gallery exhibitions of visual art, including site-specific installation, as seen here, we host literary, music, and media-arts events, in the form of performances, in-person presentations, and screenings of original work.

A truncated history of Hallwalls usually reads as follows: in 1974, a group of young visual artists, some students at the University of Buffalo, or U.B., and Buffalo State College, Buff State—including Diane Bertolo, Charles Clough, Nancy Dwyer, Robert Longo, Cindy Sherman, and Michael Zwak—created an interdisciplinary art space out of the halls between their studios in a turn-of-the-century brick icehouse on Buffalo's West Side. The impetus was not just to provide the community with an alternative to the high Modernism of Buffalo's other art venues, but to act as a platform for the artists themselves to network with other cultural institutions, and most importantly, with established working artists from in and beyond Western New York. While the space was developed for pragmatic reasons, in its first year of programming alone, Hallwalls saw visits by artists and critics such as Michael Snow, Bruce Nauman, Vito Acconci, Chris Burden, Robert Creeley, Barbara Rose, and Lucy Lippard. And it's important also to mention that some of the founders were also working at Artpark, a local arts initiative where a lot of contemporary artists were coming through and, thus, facilitating access and inviting these big-name artists to come visit. Hallwalls was not unlike many alternative artist-run venues founded during this time across the state. And I'm thinking of The Kitchen, for example—the Vasulkas' initiative in New York City—among many others. Such organizations were sustained, in large part, by the support of the National Endowment for the Arts—foundations—but especially in New York State, the New York State Council on the Arts. In Buffalo, the Center for Exploratory and

Conceptual Art, or CEPA, was also founded in 1974 and still functions as an access facility and gallery.

An organization that I'm also inclined to mention here today, especially in regards to our archive, is Media Study Buffalo, a community access center founded two years earlier by Gerald O'Grady, who was then chair of the U.B. Center for Media Study. By bringing instructors and visiting artists to both the university and the community, O'Grady created a scene on and off campus. And Hallwalls emerged out of that sense of possibility. No doubt, our earliest videos in the collection were made possible by the equipment access at Media Study Buffalo. But I'm also mentioning this because the sort of zeitgeist of this particular moment and era was recently documented in the exhibition and group show *MindFrames: Media Study at Buffalo, 1973–1990*, that featured O'Grady, Peter Weibel, Steina, Tony Conrad, Woody Vasulka, and the late media-artists Paul Sharits, James Blue, and Hollis Frampton. And as these types of events so often do, the mounting of the exhibition at the Z.K.M. [Center for Art and Media, Karlsruhe] and the preparation of materials for a forthcoming publication by M.I.T. has enabled the preservation of moving-image materials, as well as text, directly and indirectly related to this project. And I hope that we might be able to take advantage of Steina's presence here today with us to engage maybe in a dialogue about that event.

As early as 1977, Hallwalls applied for funds from NYSCA, not only for the exhibition of video, but also for video documentation of art events—visits by artists, performances, screenings, readings, and panel discussions. Together, these records create a unique point of entry into the history of video and contemporary arts. In addition to live-event documentation, we also have several special collections in our archive, including a number of video art titles donated to Hallwalls by the Chautauqua Cattaraugus Public Library. We also have many regionally produced tapes. In the days before Squeaky Wheel had editing facilities, for example, Hallwalls owned one of the few editing systems, which it made available to organizations and independent media makers. So works produced for

screenings and cable access by local artists and collectives—I'm thinking the Media Coalition for Reproductive Rights and 8mm News Collective, among many others—make up a large percentage of our collection.

Finally, our video library includes dozens of tapes by national and international artists who've participated in our N.E.A.-sponsored residency program Hallwalls Artist in Residence Project, or HARP.

Hallwalls began to catalogue and assess its rich video collection under the leadership of then-media arts director Joanna Raczynska in 2003. And despite the fact that Joanna is an amazing media artist, curator, programmer of film and video, then and now, and did amazing things at Hallwalls, I have to thank her and acknowledge that without her initiative, we wouldn't be where we are today with the video preservation project. And I'd like to thank her publicly for paving the way and establishing a model with which I can continue to work.

In January 2003 I began work at Hallwalls. I was going to school at the University of Buffalo and sort of found my way to Hallwalls and developed an interest in this issue around video preservation, in part through my work with Sherry Miller-Hocking. When I began working to help assess the collection, it existed in a poorly ventilated—what might be a coatroom, could've been a utility closet. It was . . . the tapes were all upright and out of boxes. But the facility itself was a very poor condition for the collection. There had also been many attempts to catalogue the archive, and it's important to acknowledge those former media-arts curators, technical directors, and interns who've worked to not only build but also organize the collection. But a project of this scope requires concentrated effort over a long period of time, which had impeded its successful completion and still poses a problem to the completion of the project today—a problem that's not uncommon to any understaffed arts organization. And similar to the Everson, we at one time also had a very large staff that, through the

years, has gone from anywhere between fifteen to twenty people to a full-time staff of four and two part-time employees.

So in addition to the shortage of personnel, the project needed an electronic program that would provide a consistent form and searchable database. And this is definitely where the IMAP template has been so critical; it simplified this task in countless ways. It will be really a joyful experience when all these organizations can come together and compare collections, which has already been happening.

Both my temporary position as librarian as well as the purchase of this IMAP template were made possible by a technical assistance grant from the Experimental Television Center. And I'd also like to mention how instrumental Sherry Miller-Hocking has been throughout this process as an advocate, as a counselor. It's she who facilitated many of the institutional relationships and who continues to connect a lot of us in this field and has provided a lot of guidance.

Another technical assistance grant from the E.T.C. allowed Joanna to hire The Kitchen's archivist, Stephen Vitiello, as a consultant. While Vitiello was in Buffalo on a HARP residency, he and Joanna went through the catalogue. And he was in a unique position, because of his experience with The Kitchen's holdings, to cross-reference our holdings and share preservation strategies. Once they determined a number of key titles that required immediate attention, these rare master recordings on open reel, Beta, and three-quarter-inch were flagged "S.O.S." and relocated to the Poetry Rare Books Collection of the University of Buffalo Library, where our paper archives have actually lived since the mid-eighties.

The first phase of preservation, which began in spring 2004, was supported by a grant from the National Television and Video Preservation Foundation. This in-kind award allowed us to restore

nearly twenty key titles. Original Beta and three-quarter-inch tapes were cleaned, stabilized, and transferred to archival Beta SP, with DVD screeners for viewing purposes. This was work sponsored by Ascent Media and Specs Brothers. This first series of preserved videos include documentation of performances by Spaulding Gray, John Cage, Kathy Acker, Laurie Anderson, and an early performance by Karen Finley that you'll be viewing this evening.

Around this time, Hallwalls relocated from its home for more than a decade at the Tri-Main Center in North Buffalo. In anticipation of not only the lack of space at our new facility, but more importantly, understanding the need for a stable environment that no church basement can provide, Joanna oversaw the transfer of Hallwalls' video archive to the University of Buffalo. This was facilitated by curator emeritus Robert Bertholf and the collection's current curator, Michael Basinski.

A few notes about the archive. Many recognize the Poetry Rare Books Collection as the largest holding of James Joyce manuscripts. But it's also home to many unique collections by artists such as William Carlos Williams, Dylan Thomas, among others. During his tenure as curator, Dr. Basinski has also built one of the most important mail-art and zine collections in the country. Finally, the collection houses hundreds of hours of interview recordings, with many important poets, composers, and cultural producers who came through Buffalo.

Why did it take so long to transfer our collection to the library? Many within the organization felt that this would somehow preclude access to the works by Hallwalls staff, scholars, and artists. Although this was never the case with their paper collection, and regardless of Poetry Rare Books' open-door policy and cooperation, it may have been the sheer distance between Hallwalls and the U.B. North campus, which is actually outside of Buffalo, in Amherst, that somehow made this idea unthinkable. Moving our materials to this facility, with over three hundred linear feet of shelf space for our collection and a temperature-humidity controlled environment, has proved a crucial step in the

preservation project. It is in this setting that many of our videos remain stable, awaiting process. In addition, the second round of preservation was also made possible once Hallwalls and the Poetry Rare Books Collection collaboratively applied for a consortium grant from the N.E.A. This major award we received has assisted with the ongoing cleaning and restoration of materials at the Standby Program in New York City. The second round of preservation at Standby has saved videos of artists such as Tony Conrad, Constance DeJong, and Tony Oursler, Pat Oleszko, Michael Smith, as parts of the Infermental series, an international video program co-curated by then-media-arts director Chris Hill and Tony Conrad, with still many more in the works. And I look forward to working with Bill Seery and Maria Venuto, two dedicated arts advocates, in this exciting yet demanding field of moving-image preservation.

Our continued relationship with U.B. and the Poetry Rare Books Collection has actually provided a greater visibility for the archive. In 2006, to coincide with the opening of our new facility, we made our collection public, via the university library Web site. Karen Yacobucci, who was then a graduate student in library science, compiled and posted online a preliminary list of our titles. This is nowhere complete, so please, if you happen upon this link and see kind of a short list, we have many more that need to be catalogued. In addition, librarian Karen Morse is creating artist files for use by scholars, which include everything from press clippings to C.V.s. Cataloguing the remaining materials with the IMAP template and organizing our paper archives are works in progress. With the continued institutional support and dedication of graduate students in the library science department, ultimately these master records will become available via the Online Computer Library Center, or O.C.L.C.

Throughout this project, access—as Sherry has said, again reiterating—access has been tantamount to preservation. The E.T.C.'s Video History Project has published, as Sherry mentioned, many transcripts and articles about video preservation that have informed the philosophy of this endeavor. Just as our institutional mission is to provide access to contemporary arts, our goal remains to

provide access to these preserved works, as well. To date, public screenings have taken place at Hallwalls, the Center for Contemporary Art in Warsaw, Poland, and at Zeitgeist Multimedia Art Center in New Orleans, which featured restored performances by the late artists Ethel Eichelberger and David Wojnarowicz. We are working with U.B.'s newly created arts management program, which also has a strong relationship to the U.B. law school, to devise agreements that maintain the rights of the artists, first and foremost, as well their estates, if the case may be, but also allows us to make these works available to larger audiences, and hopefully, at some point, streaming on the Web.

In October 2006, I took the position as Hallwalls media-arts director, after Joanna and her partner moved back to the D.C. area. Before she left, Hallwalls applied for a NYSCA digitization grant, which we eventually received. And this year, in order to complement the work done throughout the video preservation project, and to facilitate the work of scholars, we've taken laborious steps to update our institutional history. When we began this project, we had no electronic timeline. Certainly, there had been spreadsheets created for granting purposes and that sort of thing, but an actual timeline or record of events from '74 to the present did not exist in one file. This is one major goal, and definitely could not have been achieved—and it's still in process, so I shouldn't be using the past tense—without the assistance of fifteen interns, who have done everything from organizing vast amounts of material to data entry and scanning. I'm currently also working with a U.B. media studies student and our tech director to create some sort of interactive timeline that will allow users to view not only our history, but also link up to posters, broadsides, high-resolution scans, and calendars, that sort of thing—because of course, before the Internet allowed us to post, most of our material in regards to programming was actually in our calendar. So although this may seem like a bit of a digression, I think that it is definitely . . . like, we've kind of proved the point that our paper archive as well as our preservation has to happen in tandem. And things like this [poster], where there's no year, it's kind of tough. Fortunately, we have these calendars to find information. But you can imagine any type of disaster—that would've made creating an institutional history impossible.

And I'll finally leave you with this image of Christian Markley. And currently, my holy grail is to figure out where the archival footage of this guy performing at Hallwalls in '84 is. Thank you.

THOMSON: My name's John Thomson. I've been the director of distribution at Electronic Arts Intermix since 2000. I'm going to talk briefly about the history of E.A.I. and its original philosophy and its preservation project and program. And then I'm going to show you a little slide show after that. So at the moment, there's no slides, so we don't need any technical help.

Electronic Arts Intermix was established in New York City in 1971 by Howard Wise. His idea was to promote video and electronic art through a nonprofit organization. Wise had run a gallery in New York through the 1960s that featured kinetic art, and then, later, electronic art. He exhibited the work of experimental filmmaker Len Lye, the conceptual artist Hans Haacke, and video artist Nam June Paik, among many others. In 1969, he organized the landmark *TV as a Creative Medium* exhibition, which was one of the first exhibitions dedicated to video in the United States. *TV as a Creative Medium* included artists such as Nam June Paik, Charlotte Mormon, Frank Gillette, and Aldo Tambellini, among others. Following the exhibition, Wise closed his gallery and planned E.A.I. He believed a new model of distribution—one outside the commercial gallery system—was needed to allow artists to survive financially and to produce more work. He saw from his own experience that the gallery model would not provide this. He also wanted to build awareness of electronic art, to have it accepted as an art form, to be valued in the way that the more traditional forms such as painting and sculpture were. He wanted students to learn about electronic art, for it to be shown in the museum, and for it be written about seriously. At this time, an audience for electronic art had not been established. A few Kunsthallen in Europe—and the Whitney and MoMA in the States—were occasionally showing some. Wise thought he could promote electronic art on a practical level by supporting production,

sponsoring video and computer festivals and exhibitions, by sponsoring other organizations—as he did with the establishment of The Kitchen—and through conferences and debates.

Wise, in 1973, wrote a manifesto called *E.A.I.: At the Leading Edge of Art*, in which he wrote about the relationship between art and technology. He believed that through the use of electronic media, the connection between art and everyday life could be re-established in the way they had been before the Enlightenment. He was clearly influenced by Marshall McLuhan's ideas of the global village and the medium being the message. The enigmatic term "intermix" in E.A.I.'s title may have something to do with his thinking . . . the idea of intermingling or synergy, that everything—art, life, politics—should connect through the means of communications technology. TV, then the dominant media, was the conduit through which he thought this could happen.

He also, on a practical level, established video-production facilities to allow artists to produce work. And as more and more tapes were being produced, the need to have the work distributed in an organized way became evident. Without distribution activity, E.A.I. became more connected with single-channel video, rather than the field of electronic media and computer art in general. Single-channel video, which is largely synonymous now with video art, is a lot easier to distribute than multi-channel works and computer-based works. E.A.I.'s videotape distribution service started in 1973. The first tape in distribution was Ant Farm's *Dirty Dishes*. In 1975, E.A.I. published its first video catalogue, which had more than one hundred tapes. Tapes were rented out on half-inch open reel, and often, the master and submaster were on the same format; although some works, such as those made in television studios where artists were commissioned by stations like WNET and WGBH, were on high-quality broadcast formats like one-inch or two-inch. As the number of distributed tapes increased, the E.A.I. catalogue evolved into a collection. Over the years, video distributors like E.A.I. and Video Data Bank in Chicago have become archives of national and international video art. There are very few institutions with the same range of artists and works that these organizations hold.

E.A.I. attempts to distribute all the single-channel works of an artist in distribution. We often go back to the sixties and seventies to fill in gaps in the collection, to ensure that it's as inclusive and representative as possible. We cover a lot of ground in terms of genre. We have performance documents, dance- and drama-based video, some experimental documentary, as well as a lot of works that are truly unclassifiable. We have artists that were well known in the seventies that are not known now; artists that are well known now that were not then. Many commercial galleries will drop artists that do not perform in the marketplace, whereas market performance is not important to us. What is important is to represent the history and present of video art as well as we can.

As well as being a distributor, we are also, in some ways, an artists' advocate. All our activities are art centered, and over the last thirty-six years, E.A.I. has prided itself on its independence and its ability to act on our artists' behalf. This role of agency is an important one for us. It is our responsibility to help ensure that our artists' work is exhibited in the best way, that the technical quality of screenings or installations is optimal, that artists receive a fee for the use of their work wherever possible, and that their copyright is respected. We've become an invaluable resource for practical knowledge about exhibition. We produce exhibition elements—DVDs and tapes—for exhibition and screenings around the world every week. We have a lot of practical knowledge that is of use to programmers, curators, and artists alike. Some of this expertise about how artists' work should be shown and technical information about exhibition is contained in our online resource guide that I'll refer to a little bit later.

E.A.I. initiated one of the first video art preservation programs in the world. In 1985, E.A.I. received one of the first preservation grants from NYSCA, the New York State Council on the Arts, for the conservation of our video collection. The grant facilitated research of preservation techniques and the restoration of half-inch open-reel tapes, which were cleaned and transferred to one-inch tape, a format that was then considered the archival standard. In the same year, E.A.I. received a grant to

participate in the National Alliance of Moving Image Database, a project to catalogue important collections of media art using a MARC-format database system. These two initiatives form the foundation of E.A.I.'s preservation efforts; that is, the preservation of tapes and the establishment of databases for preservation information.

Why did E.A.I. take on this role of video preservationist? Because there were few others doing it at the time. By the mid- to late 1980s, half-inch open reel was seriously obsolete. The early history of video art was in danger of being lost. At that time, we'd been given a number of tapes that were on half-inch open reel, that had been part of the Castelli-Sonnabend film and video catalogue. This collection included many vital works of early video and they needed to be restored and made available to the public. E.A.I.'s preservation strategy has always been underpinned by the need to provide access; we do preservation to make video available to people. We don't just put archival storage tapes, or archival tapes in climate-controlled storage, we allow students, museumgoers, researchers, and curators to watch them in our viewing room or see them at screenings, festivals, in the classroom, or at museums.

By the 1990s, other formats besides one-inch were being used as archival masters—Beta SP, D2, and then digital Betacam, which won out against the other D-series digital tapes and is still the recognized archival format. In the 1990s we also started transferring artist films by Bruce Nauman, Martha Rosler, and Vito Acconci, among others, from 16-mm and Super-8 to video masters, and then releasing them for distribution, using the services, largely, of Brodsky and Treadway. We are currently undertaking the preservation of a number of early films of Carolee Schneemann, transferring them to both film and video, and lodging the film prints with Anthology Film Archive.

Preservation is always an ongoing effort. We have over three thousand titles, and many more actual tapes. The great challenge for us is not so much experience or expertise, but having the resources to

apply these to the needs of the collection. Having the time and human resources to properly catalogue, migrate, and preserve all the tapes we have is an ongoing process that has no start or end date. The collection is continually growing, with new tapes being made by young and established artists alike coming in every week, and all the tapes filling in gaps in the collection. We are now in the process of digitizing our collection in an uncompressed form, with a grant from NYSCA. Digitizing a collection of over three thousand titles will take some time. We see the uncompressed files not as masters—we still consider our digital Betacam as archival masters—but as possible archival masters in the future, with the digital Betas as alternative master copies. After the digitization, there will be a variety of modes of access for the video files: uncompressed versions, which we're going to store eventually on computer tape; video on demand that will be available in our viewing room; preview excerpts that will be available to all on our Web site; and quarter-page full-length previews that will be available with log-in access for researchers and curators on our Web site. And then other versions will be outputted to objects like tape and DVD. In the future, this digitization will allow us to deliver works online in a high-quality format that will be able to be viewed on demand in classrooms and even, we plan, for public screenings.

E.A.I. preserves in other ways besides actual tape preservation. Our online catalogue has a wealth of information about the artists and the tapes we distribute—includes artist biographies, bibliographies, some excerpts, descriptions of works, and extensive artist-Web projects. We are in the process of putting a number of important documents in our archive online through the Kinetic History Project. This project will chart the history of E.A.I. from the late 1960s and it will present primary materials online, including documents, catalogues, video footage, and ephemera, as well as contextualizing essays. We have also published the Online Resource Guide for Exhibiting and Collecting Media Art, with funding support from the New Art Trust, which is a unique guide to exhibiting, collecting, and preserving media arts. It includes practical advice, as well as interviews with artists, gallerists,

curators, and a number of case studies. IMAP were our partners in this project, creating the preservation section.

I'm going to have to finish up, because we've run out of time. So do I have time to show a couple of slides, or should we . . . well, I won't be able to show any images here, but we do have a number of videotapes that are in the IMAP screening tonight at the Eastman House. Great. Thank you.

IMAP
c/o Electronic Arts Intermix
535 W. 22nd St., 5th floor
New York, NY 10011
tel: 212.560-7259
fax: 212.337-0679
imap@imappreserve.org

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