

COLLABORATIONS IN CONSERVING TIME-BASED ART

Presented by

The Lunder Conservation Center of the Smithsonian American Art Museum and the
National Portrait Gallery
and by the Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden,
March 17-19, 2010

Wednesday, March 17

6:00 PM Opening reception

Location: Hirshhorn Museum lobby
7th St. and Independence Ave. SW

7:00 PM Opening lecture

Location: Ring Auditorium, Hirshhorn Museum
7th St. and Independence Ave. SW
Introductory remarks by Richard Koshalek, Director, Hirshhorn Museum.

Re:Presenting the Moving Image: Time-Based Art in the Museum and Other Spaces

John Hanhardt, Senior Media Arts Curator, Smithsonian American Art Museum

Film, video, and digital media have played a central role in the art of the Twentieth Century. It is important that we see that history as a large and integral part of a dynamic and interconnected art world. As we begin this Conference on Conserving Time-Based Art it is important to both look back to where and how artists originally presented their work and to creatively address the work of new and emerging artists. The challenge to curators and conservators is to establish a practice that responds to representing, in museum gallery spaces and collections, the full range of historical and contemporary art works.

Thursday, March 18

9:00-9:30 AM Coffee

Location: McEvoy Auditorium lobby, Smithsonian American Art Museum and National Portrait Gallery
8th and F Streets, NW

9:30-10:15 AM Introductory session

Location: McEvoy Auditorium

Opening Remarks

Jeff Martin, Contract Conservator for Time-Based Art, Hirshhorn Museum

Dr. Eleanor J. Harvey, Chief Curator, Smithsonian American Art Museum

Dr. Brandon Fortune, Acting Director, National Portrait Gallery

The Eventful Artwork

Jill Sterrett, Director of Collections and Conservation, SFMoMA

With a time-based installation, parts do more than come together to form a whole. When the whole emerges as art, it has a behavior that brings it to life. It is in mapping behavior to parts--parts to behavior--that a refresh of traditional museum methods is required. There is a wide interpretive zone between the factual accounting of an

artwork and its realization in an exhibition, and within this zone the art is best served by broad-based, expert collaborations. What kind of collaborations are we actually creating? Are we being sufficiently open-minded and self-critical as we form new partnerships? Are our efforts serving the unique challenges of each artwork?

10:30 – Noon Session I

Location: McEvoy Auditorium

Collaborative Work in Conserving Time-Based Works at MoMA

Glenn Wharton, MoMA

There are approximately two thousand video, performance, and computer-based works at MoMA. Conserving this time-based collection requires broad technical knowledge, a range of specialized skills, and a core understanding of conservation principles as they apply to new artforms. This presentation will provide an overview of the policies and procedures in place to help insure the future of these works, with a focus on the collaborative nature of their implementation.

Strategies and Challenges in Caring for Digital Moving Images and Sound

Chris Lacinak, Founder and President, Audiovisual Preservation Solutions

Digital file-based audiovisual content is pervasive. The decisive shift from analog physical media to file has created new challenges for accessioning and managing time-based content for preservation and access. Chris will discuss these overarching strategies and challenges, and provide examples of how these challenges have been navigated in his collaborations with MoMA, NYU and other organizations.

12:00-1:30 PM Lunch break

Location: Kogod Courtyard at the Smithsonian American Art Museum and National Portrait Gallery

Note: Participants can buy from the café or bring their own food; there are a number of restaurants in the vicinity. A section of the courtyard will be reserved for colloquium participants—we hope you will take this opportunity to continue discussion and debate.

1:30 - 3:00 PM Session II

Location: McEvoy Auditorium

Modeling the Team Approach while Caring for Time-Based Media at the IMA

Richard McCoy, Associate Conservator of Objects & Variable Art, Indianapolis Museum of Art

Richard McCoy is Assistant Conservator of Objects at the Indianapolis Museum of Art, where he conserves artworks across all areas of the collection. McCoy's research extends beyond the technology and structure of artworks to include artistic intent and execution as it relates to the preservation of contemporary art. He will be discussing the IMA's team-based work in conserving time-based art works in the museum's collection.

Conservation of Video Art in The Netherlands

Ivo van Stiphout, artist/audiovisual specialist

Ivo van Stiphout is an artist and audiovisual specialist who has worked in the preservation of video art since the early 1990s. He will talk about the ongoing projects in the Netherlands to conserve this type of art.

3:00 - 3:15 Break

3:15 – 4:45 Session III

Location: McEvoy Auditorium

Case Study: Paul Sharits' SHUTTER INTERFACE

Andrew Lampert, archivist, Anthology Film Archives

John Passmore, archivist, Anthology Film Archives

SHUTTER INTERFACE (1975) by Paul Sharits is a 4-projector "locational" installation work that was restored by Anthology Film Archives in 2009. After re-premiering at Greene Naftali Gallery in New York City the piece has received numerous accolades and much renewed interest. Anthology and Greene Naftali have collaboratively created an edition of this work so that it can be exhibited and acquired by other institutions; it was acquired by the Hirshhorn Museum in 2010 and will be on view during the colloquium. In this presentation, archivists Andrew

Lampert and John Passmore will discuss the complex technical and theoretical challenges of preserving time-based media installations whose conceptual meaning hinges on near- obsolete exhibition formats, and the sometimes tenuous relationship between archival preservation and museum acquisition policies.

4:45: Closing Remarks: Anne Collins Goodyear, Associate Curator of Prints and Drawings, National Portrait Gallery

Location: McEvoy Auditorium

7:00 Meet the Artist: John Gerrard

Location: Ring Auditorium, Hirshhorn Museum

Gerrard will discuss the complex process behind his stark, realistic works, which re-imagine landscape art and offer meditations on the impact of our habits of consumption. Three of his works will be on view at the Hirshhorn during the colloquium. This event is presented in conjunction with the 2010 Environmental Film Festival.

Friday, March 19

10:30 – 11:30 Tour/Q&A of time-based works

Location: Meet in the lobby of the Hirshhorn Museum

During the colloquium, a number of major time-based works will be on view at the Hirshhorn Museum, including three works by John Gerrard; Douglas Gordon's *Play Dead (Real Time)* (2003); Miguel Angel Rios' *A Morir ('Til Death)* (2003); and Paul Sharits' *Shutter Interface* (1975). This informal Q&A will allow participants to discuss the works with staff from the Hirshhorn's curatorial, exhibits, audiovisual, and conservation departments.

12:00-1:30 Lunch break

Location: Kogod Courtyard at the Smithsonian American Art Museum and National Portrait Gallery.
Participants can bring their own food or buy from the café.

1:30 – 5:00 Discussion/working groups (invitation-only)

Location: Kogod Courtyard at the Smithsonian American Art Museum and National Portrait Gallery