CHArt

COMPUTERS AND THE HISTORY OF ART

Technology and the 'Death of Art History'

- ABSTRACTS -

Brett Aggersberg
Virtual Touch- Virtual Reality As Fine Art Space

As part of my thesis on Electronic Art in the UK, I have identified value systems as a problematic area. In order to afford this relatively new fine art medium; which includes net art, digital art, and new media art; greater acceptance in the UK, I will discuss the challenges that face artists and curators.

Gene Youngblood believed that in the near future the complex processes performed by the most expensive and sophisticated computer of his time would be at the disposal of the average person. His prediction has now come true with digital cameras and home computers allowing everyone to be a self-titled artist. This level and form of ubiquity may be one of the reasons for Electronic Art being of a lesser status than more traditional works. The title of exhibitions, such as Beryl Graham's Serious Games, may have confused the audience further as to its purpose. Cultural and historical differences internationally may also affect the way it is dealt with as an art form.

For many, the idea of seeing a work of art based on computers is off-putting. People associate computers with office work or computer games. These preconceptions block the un-informed audience from accessing the work directly. Film did not suffer this problem of confusion as it was used very much as a documenting and entertaining device when it was first exhibited. It was always a medium that represented and reflected society in a creative, but informative manner, where conventions were quickly established.

Recent developments in artificial intelligence, links to bio-science and negative representations in the media, may have given a negative perspective on this as an emerging area of creative expression. As a result, there may still be a sense of distrust over the purposes of computers within art.

Virtual reality has long been promised as the next future for interaction and immersion into computerised worlds. Actual results have been disappointing to date, but now the virtual appears to be changing its direction of immersion. The imagery of the computer is now coming out to meet us rather than us going in to meet it. Touch screen devices and holographic projectors indicate that the virtual world is heading towards us.

The materialisation of virtual artefacts may shift the perception of viewers and galleries to towards a more pro-active stance. A developed mode of appreciation and valuation may result from a more direct form of interaction with a medium that now appears to be tangible.

How does the virtual touch affect the modes of creating, experiencing, valuing Electronic Art?

Almila Akdag Salah
Performing Curatorial Practices in a Social Network Site: The Curators of DeviantArt

This research focuses on a Social Network Site called DeviantArt, a site that is created for sharing user generated artworks. Launched in 2000, today this initiative has about 12 million members coming from over 190 countries. The website offers various web-based services to its members enabling and enforcing a strong social interaction. With its collection of around 100 millions works, DeviantArt (dA) is the biggest art market of the world, presenting a new mode of displaying, evaluating and consuming arts. In that sense, dA generated a platform free of institutional and

governmental politics, democratizing the way arts are generated, shared and enjoyed. However, some aspects of dA is astonishingly reminiscent of the existing art market, and in this paper, I'd like to scrutinize one of these aspects, namely the birth of curatorial practices.

Various structures in dA create a new value-system. The dA community itself uses page statistics as a means to judge the 'quality' of a work. These statistics cover numbers of comments a work receives as well as how many times it is 'visited' or 'favoured'. However, with a fast growing archive of 100 million works, to rely only on these statistics are not enough. dA introduced a method to render some works more 'visible' then others. In order to promote a members work (which in dA terminology is tagged as 'deviation'), every day, a chosen collection of deviations are published as the daily deviations (DD) on the homepage of the community. In this work, I'd like to name this activity as the 'official curatorial' practice of the website and analyze its effects by comparing it to the curatorial practices in the art market as well as to the other promoting methods inside dA that depend solely on members initiatives. Among these, the most prominent one is the publication of 'feature' articles as journals on members' homepages, as well as of news articles, which are accessible through the main navigation toolbar of dA).

This paper will investigate these three different curatorial approaches in virtual/real art market through the application of a mixture of traditional and technological methodologies: to analyze the power structure of dA, social network analysis will be deployed. In the second phase, the results of this analysis will be used for a close reading of members in dA who act as curators. The last stage of the methodology will be a comparative analysis of curatorship in the important institutions of the art market such as museums and biennials in contrast to the official curators in dA and the members of dA, who perform curatorship in self-assigned capacities.

Jamie Allen
Real Time Realtime - Time as a Technological Material in Art

Art-historical chronicles of new media art often invoke a set of conceptual underpinnings instigated in art movements that are themselves defined by lukewarm or combative relationships with art history, its cannon and establishment. Connections are most often made to Alan Kaprow, his Activities, Environments and Happenings of the 1960s, as well as to Fluxus practitioners such as Nam June Paik. At their most extreme, a number of these artists' undertakings were clearly and actively hostile toward the serious-minded approach of art-historians, curators and institutional cultures of their time. New media, now a quite defined and delineated mainstream Western art form, does not betray its lineage in maintaining a difficult relationship to art history and scholarship.

Handling a modern touchscreen mobile phone gives us immediate an immediate feeling for the "real time" of our real world technologies. Gone are the days of hierarchical, navigable descriptions - "push 'menu', then 'settings', then 'network'". Instead we struggle to conjure up a descriptive language that appropriately outlines to the new user the set of swipes, squiggles and pantomimed gestures required to access function on the device. These interactions clearly value individual temporal experience over transferability - and increasingly create the opportunity for time-based communion rituals linking person to technology, and technology to person.

Through a set of discussions around time, technology and time-based arts and the systems, process and performance art-historical ancestry of new media, we affirm a deep valuing of "real-time" at play in contemporary technology-art practice. Standard chronologies of art-history lose their importance as models for technology and art move from art-as-progress to art-as-experience. In this, we perform at least a partial autopsy on art-history, celebrating its time-of-death as marking the birth of a resurgent appreciation of the authentic experience of artists and non-artists, as people-in-the-world.

Tamara Ashley and Carla Cesare
Digital Shift: Developing *Portfolio: an online journal of emerging research in visual culture* in the digital age

The staff of *Portfolio: emerging research in visual culture* propose a panel session that discusses the development and approach of the journal within the context of the shifting paradigms of digital media and art history. *Portfolio* is an online journal based at Northumbria University and is run by a consortium of post-graduate research students in visual culture from across the UK.

We propose to explore how society's sensibility and assumption of time informs definitions of art history and how the digital paradigm is disrupting and reconfiguring relationships between practice, preservation, dissemination and accessibility. In our development of *Portfolio*, we were interested in how digital documentation and preservation processes impacts upon contemporary ecologies of practice: artwork, expectations, and presentation. In light of the

current trend in historicizing the present with unprecedented rapidity, this panel will ask how digital media can redefine and change relationships with dissemination, archiving and practice. We will address our specific curatorial and editorial approaches to *Portfolio* and the ways in which these have developed within the shifting paradigms of art practice and digital media.

As a new on-line journal funded by the AHRC Beyond Text scheme, if appropriate, *Portfolio* would further propose to publish selected papers from the CHart conference in an upcoming issue of its journal.

Stephen Boyd Davis
Time machines

The proposed paper is concerned with the use of computers to represent historical time visually (here called 'chronographics'), typically as 'timelines'. A contrast is made between the sophisticated practice and theory of early modern paper timelines in the eighteenth century and the naïve, simplistic offerings generally available digitally, especially on the Web. This is treated as a case of more general issues arising from the mechanisation of knowledge. It is argued that while digital technology threatens to fatally oversimplify historiography, this is because the potential of such technologies to be subtle, sophisticated, reflexive and interrogative has hardly been explored.

A vision of mechanising knowledge lies behind key eighteenth century timelines by early pioneers of visualisation. This includes Priestley's use of explicitly mechanical procedures to lay out the four gospels in a synchronous pattern; Barbeu-Dubourg's notion of effortless machine-like mental access to knowledge; the growth in the placing of unadorned, 'neutral' historical event-objects into a uniform graphical time-space; and Barbeu-Dubourg's literal construction of an actual machine to represent history. At that time, mechanisation proved a productive metaphor, but in our own time the mechanistic properties of computers have tended to encourage an approach to visualising history that excludes all but the crudest aspects of historiography. Timelines are hardly considered suitable for adults, let alone historians. (In case the whole idea of dates as a significant part of history appears questionable, it should be borne in mind that we benefit from the extraordinary achievements of Renaissance and other chronologers who provided the essential scaffolding of historical time which is taken for granted and thus almost invisible).

The paper argues that the sensitive application of digital technologies to chronographics can and should support a sophisticated representation of history, suitable for use not only by public audiences but even as valuable tools for researchers. Solutions are needed which use computing in ways that do justice to doubt, ambiguity and conflict as essential components of any serious historiography.

The paper connects historical research in chronographics to an assessment of current practice, and makes recommendations for development and additional research in this area. The analysis of early chronographics builds on the work of Twyman (1986, 1987, 1990), Grafton (1975, 1983, 1993, 2010), Rosenberg (2004, 2007, 2010), Feeney (2007) and others. Examples of contemporary practice include MIT's Simile timeline, Continuum at Southampton University, and a prototype timeline of museum objects developed under the author's direction at Middlesex University.

Stewart Dickson

Reports on the Death of Art History are premature and greatly exaggerated. Postmodernism counters the kind of Futurism which led to Fascism in the 1930's-1940's. But, Postmodernism is anti-humanist and extremely pessimistic. I suggest that a tempered Neo-Futurism is a viable alternative.

The Digital Computer is the tool of abstract facility that the Modernists never had. The Digital Computer flattens the discursive arena.

The power of the Digital Computer doubles every eighteen months and its cost is halved every eighteen months. This is a cause for great optimism. The Marxist Means of Production are in the hands of the People. The cure to Nazionalism and Fascism is inclusiveness and Diversity. Is true economic Democracy the first step toward inclusiveness and Diversity?

Academic and Institutional Art, Art History and Art Criticism are most rightly and properly dead. But nothing prevents egalitarian Art production, Criticism and Historical analysis from continuing. In fact, the Convergence of Media: The

evolutionary combination of Telephone, Television and Digital Computing -- brings with it the return of non-volatile Media.

The Previous model was a top-down pyramid of expensive, broadcast-only production and distribution. It was produced and distributed only by those with the means to do so. And, as soon as the content was sent over the airwaves, it evaporated, as if it had never existed.   There was no way to analyze the content for accuracy.

The Internet is the Democratic, discursive haven. The Wikipedia is disparaged by Academia as "not written by Experts" -- but the credentials of the Wikipedia's authors can be checked. Analytical search engines, such as Google Trends and Wolfram | Alpha have the potential to check the Noosphere for consistency, if not accuracy.

The Internet began with a set of RFC's (Requests for Comment), written by ad-hoc experts. I suggest that the Internet still has its set of built-in checks, balances and self-regulating systems. This is the right and proper arena for Art History and Art Criticism now and into the future.

Rod Dioso
Digital Art in the 'Third World' Context of the Philippines

The emergence of new digital technologies alongside the growing number of global
diaspora communities is reinventing national identity as well as the artistic modes for expressing this identity. This paper proposes connections between digital and diaspora art as well as a re-examination of a history of digital art that emphasizes a linear Euro/American origin based on science and technology.

A historiographical analysis of the emergence of digital art in the context of developing nations will be used to discuss transnational narratives and their influence on new media.
Diaspora art of the 1990s gained mainstream recognition alongside computer generated art. Institutional acceptance of work such as Douglas Davis' *The World's First Collaborative Sentence* (1994) by the Whitney Museum of American Art occurred at the same time as the validation of identity art. Like Davis' pioneering 'Net art', post-colonial themes in the work of Guillermo Gómez-Peña challenged the boundaries of the art establishment.

This paper will pay special attention to digital art in the context of the Philippines. The ways in which Philippine artists gained mainstream acceptance in previous decades will be presented as a precursor to the diffusion of digital art from the Philippines. Most notable of these earlier artists is David Medalla (b.1942). Medalla co-founded London's Signal Gallery, the centre for art/science experimentation and kinetics in the mid 1960s. He is responsible for creating international lines of exchange that have since opened up the British art scene. In the 1990s, Manuel Ocampo brought the Philippine narrative to the American forefront with his transgressive paintings of 'savage' colonial scenes. Along with Gómez-Peña, Ocampo and to some degree even Medalla presented the post-colonial/colonized artist as a disturbance to the institution.

ASEUM 2009, an international symposium of new media artists and researchers initiated in the Philippines and Slovenia, is a contemporary example of transnational discourse through digital art. This collaboration circumvents the hegemonic art establishment. Online communities around open source projects like Pure Data, as well as more academic digital communities such as rhizome.com, represent a new wave of organized collaboration that circumvents traditional methods of recognition by curators and galleries of the analogue art world.

Charlotte Frost
Art History *is* Technology

This paper demonstrates the way in which digital technologies destabilise the authority of art historical knowledge systems. It does this by using the combined archival theories of Michel Foucault, Jacques Derrida and Friedrich A Kittler to establish a clear connection between the meaning held in bodies of art information and the prevailing modes in which said information can be stored and transferred. It indicates how the discipline of art history developed by using photography as an analytical tool, yet in doing such, created ideas about art that were not just represented by photographic examples of artworks, but qualified by a set of photographic standards. It claims therefore that the experience of the artwork was in dialogue with the technicity of the photograph. What the paper moves on to show are some of the meanings conferred on art discourse by internet archival technicity. It relates themes and ideas in contemporary art and theory to internet archival technicity. The manner in which it achieves this is by applying the theory of the technical archival imperative to online Net art-related contextual platforms, or

'artwares' (such as the Visitors Studio, by Furtherfield.org), while indicating their thematic associations with art discourse more widely. In doing this it indicates the notion of the 'performative' embedded in contemporary art engagements. The central assertion of this paper is that technology literally and metaphorically impacts the art experience as a whole and always has done. It shows how art history is based in technological development, and it concludes that that accepting this offers to truly reinvigorate art historical/critical discourse – not to mention provide better scope for addressing the histories of digital arts. It closes by returning to Visitors Studio in a discussion of where systems for generating engagements with art might take art historical knowledge in the future.

Gramstadt, Marie-Therese
Changing light: a plethora of digital tools as slides gasp their last?

With digital tools, such as PowerPoint, slideshow software, and Web 2.0 resources, never before have there been so many ways to present and teach about images. During this University for the Creative Arts Learning and Teaching Research project, looking at the pedagogy behind the use of presentation software in the visual arts, it is clear that there are so many resources available that it is no longer a question of one size fits all, but rather what is the most appropriate tool for the specific pedagogic need.

It is well documented that the teaching methods in Art History are suited to a two slide projector set-up, and whilst PowerPoint has in general become the slideshow software of choice, it is by no means the only option. There are a plethora of digital tools available, including slideshow software, non-linear tools such as mind mapping, and visualisation techniques such as 3-D and 4-D images. This paper seeks to summarise research gathered from a study of existing presentation tools, both digital and non-digital; as well as to draw conclusions based on an analysis of data from four interviews and an online questionnaire. The aim of the research was to look afresh at available technology from the point of view of a lecturer in the visual arts, and to use the information gathered to look more critically at the available technology.

The interview participants included a Course Leader for Fashion Promotion and Illustration and a Senior Lecturer in Digital Screen Arts from the University for the Creative Arts, a Curator from the National Gallery, and a Senior Lecturer from the Centre for Learning and Teaching at the University of Brighton. They were surveyed about their use of existing technology as well as their background and a discussion of wider issues such as the availability and quality of digital images.
This qualitative analysis is supplemented by an online questionnaire which was sent to targeted individuals in the Higher Education sector. Some of the information that has been gathered through the questionnaire so far includes: participants' usage of particular tools to suit specific purposes; information on a range of tools in use; as well as candid comments about the pros and cons of existing presentation software.

Further information is available here: http://teachingwithimages.wordpress.com/

Katharina Lorenz and Brett Bligh
Vorsprung durch Technik: Multi-Display Learning Spaces and Art-Historical Method

The trajectory and heuristic success of Art History as a discipline has always been inseparably linked to the technical means of visualizing the material that is at its core. When in the late 19th century first analogous, then double-slide projection was introduced, associated methodological opportunities were identified and formalised through debate within the discipline. This led to a profound change in the discipline's analytical rhetoric, installing vis-à-vis or comparative viewing as the primary mode of art-historical inquiry throughout the 20th century. In contrast, the more recent move to PowerPoint or equivalent linear digital presentation has not received the same form of attention within Art History. Whilst the impact on disciplinary rhetoric is undeniable, the affordances these technologies offer to the analytical frameworks of Art History are not well understood, nor have they been used to develop the discipline's methodology further.

In this paper we examine the intricate relationship between analytical method and mode of visualisation. We begin by examining two types of inquiry prevalent in contemporary art-historical scholarship — semiotics-based visual culture studies and critical iconology — and focus on their specific affordances with regard to subject matter and mode of inquiry. Next, drawing upon our experiences of using Multi-Display Learning Spaces (MD-LS) within postgraduate visual arts education, we consider two types of current digital presentation tools: PowerPoint, which is commonly associated with the linear presentation of sequences of single slides, and Multi-Slides, a multi-display system designed to allow the shared viewing of multiple visual materials simultaneously. We propose that MD-LS,

which encourage critical reflection upon displayed material by generating spatial configurations which afford orchestrated interaction between audience and materials, are better suited to facilitate contemporary modes of art-historical inquiry than linear presentation systems, which foster excluding forms of analytical rhetoric.

We conclude by proposing the informed use of digital presentation tools to engage actively in the deliberated authoring of perception. We wish to stitch what we term 'multiple perspective inquiry', in which the presentation of multiple pieces of visual evidence creates the conditions for complex argumentation within learning and research, into the discipline's use of visual presentation technology. Finally we explore the implications of this technological shift for thinking about and practicing some of Art History's most fundamental methods.

Hubertus Kohle
Fluid data. Cooperation on the Internet?

In my talk I would like to discuss two projects developed at the institute for art history/ Munich which both insist on an aspect to my mind central for the future development of our subject. This aspect can broadly be defined as the *cooperative dimension*, to date still underdeveloped in all the humanities which traditionally rely on solitary work in the ivory tower.
"Artigo" (http://artigo.gwi.uni-muenchen.de/) is an online annotation game trying to invite the "crowds" to tag images. Drawing on Luis von Ahn's idea of "games with a purpose" two players unknown to each other but interconnected in the WWW describe art images, and their tags are only matched in case that the other player enters the same word. The basic concept is that only huge numbers of players are able to annotate vast and ever growing image databases already existant but not yet sufficiently made accessible. But the properties of the tags/matches can also be analyzed in different and fascinating ways. What do they implicitly say about the quality of the images? Will they be able to define qualities of style, when giant masses of them are clustered? Will a woman tag differently from a male? An Asian from a European? A well educated from a less well?
"Kunstgeschichte. Open peer reviewed journal" (http://www.kunstgeschichte-ejournal.net/) introduces a much embattled system of publication synthetically described as "publish first, filter later". The publication process is traditionally based on a peer reviewing process which in the internet might not be adequate anymore. Articles published in our new journal are discussed and evaluated only post festum, and we believe that such evaluation processes after publication can also show us ways to handle the otherwise unmanageable masses of data in the internet
Art history and the other humanities will always have a tendency to solitary work in the ivory tower. With the internet, though, we will have to add other dimensions in some way essential to their survival.

Catherine Larkin
Current research methodologies of scholars in the visual arts: "This is what I do."

Overall, this research was directed at achieving an understanding of the complex processes involved in the information-seeking behaviors of visual arts humanities scholars and developing an information-seeking model in image and text retrieval for the domain. It was proposed that along with our limited understanding regarding how members of the visual arts community seek and use both imagery and textual information vital for scholarly investigations, the proliferation of electronic images and texts has become a source of encouragement as well as unease for these scholars. In contrast to most other disciplines, visual arts scholars who are increasingly reliant upon electronic sources (especially images), remain intimidated by technology and question the prospect of accessing electronically many of the documents necessary to accomplish their unique research agendas.

The techniques used to gather data from visual arts scholars at three American Universities, namely Long Island University, the City University of New York, and Princeton University, included a Phase I self-administered questionnaire to query participants on demographic information, their use of information resources and their approaches to locating information. In Phase II, an interactive survey instrument was employed to examine users' satisfaction and frustration with both Web-based and academic image and text retrieval systems. This process was audio-recorded to gather experiential data and was followed by the completion of an Information Horizon graphical representation technique (Sonnenwald, 2005), which enabled participants to report on their individual information sources, thus capturing data that could be lost by conventional methods such as a questionnaire or survey.

The collective findings of this study identified a domain in flux, with traditional methodologies still intact, a considerable change in the volume of use of electronic resources, and evidence of a more social working environment. For example, there were significant correlations found in regard to senior participants and a number of traditional resources such as an art slide collection and traveling to see original works, yet there were no obvious

differences found related to age or experience with computer use for research or Internet use in general. For the most part, reactions to electronic academic resources were negative due to a lack of familiarity with these more complicated systems. Finally, an Ecological Information-Seeking Model was devised to present a conceptual visual aid and an alternative framework that can accommodate future dynamic shifts in information-seeking in the visual arts.

Kasia Molga and Sander Veenhof
Investigating the notion of the Art 2.0

The two practitioners Kasia Molga and Sander Veenhof attempt to define the concept of Art 2.0 – exploring the influence of ubiquitous new media and communication technologies, web 2.0 and social media on the gaze of spectator and changing paradigm of art, artist and audience. In the era of users/viewers responsible for their own experience by contributing and customising the content, the distinction between artist and audience seems to disappear. The audience has changed from consumers to co-producers or become a conscious or accidental element of the artwork.

Kasia Molga's pieces "Mirror of Infinity" and "Floresta" are visual interactive installation and are about giving a viewer a power of co-creation, making him responsible for his own experience while contributing to the content of the artwork and distributing that content among other viewers. These pieces deal with the act of communication as the reason for the artwork to exist on the meta-level, although on the surface the subjects of these pieces might communicate entirely something different.

In the interactive installations created by Sander Veenhof, an alternative way of involving an audience is often the key element of the work. His projects reflect on the changing dynamics between (interactive) artwork and audience. With spectators/users becoming more difficult to reach and engage because of the increase of individual creative activities, Veenhof realised projects in which the required effort to interact was reduced to an absolute minimum. His Publicity Plant grew on blog-postings, Tweets and Google searches' results, and in the Worldwide Greenhouse viewers were left without the choice – participation was instant and unavoidable. His projects showcase innovative ways to react on trends and changes in the field of interactive media.

Both artists create using and/or appropriating new media digital web based platforms and technologies adding and altering to methods of expression and engagement. They investigate the concept of art 2.0 through their practice, reflections and critical dialogue raising a number of questions: Is there an emerging art 2.0 paradigm at all and, how that affects the artistic practice? What are the artistic qualities and aesthetics of an artwork 2.0? How our perception as "end users" is affected by ubiquitous possibilities and opportunities of being independent and individual in crafting our own art experience? How the emergence of social network platforms, over-flown with visual information from marketers and consumed by short attention span users influence the act of artistic creation and communication? If and how can a visual piece of art 2.0 become a commodity?

Gill Perry and Linda Wilks
Open Access to Art? The Open Arts Archive: Dissemination and Collaboration

This paper addresses the 'Access and participation' conference theme, and also has relevance for themes of collaboration, communication and dissemination, and pedagogy and teaching.

This paper will be structured around a case study of The Open Arts Archive (http://openartsarchive.org). It will set this case study within the wider context of a critical examination of the role of digital technology in the expansion and evolution of the discipline of Art History, and its potential for collaboration.
The Open Arts Archive is a major website and archive, which went live in March 2010, and is funded by the Open University (OU) and the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council (MLA). The Archive is hosted by the Art History Department at the OU and provides open access to a wide range of artistic and cultural resources. As well as aiming to benefit practitioners and students of art and art history, the facility also aims to transfer knowledge to a much broader public audience, thus widening access to art and education.

The Art History Department at the OU supports and co-organises gallery based events across the UK, filming on site at the galleries, and archiving the outputs for online access. The archived resources, which include seminars, study days, artist interviews, curatorial debates and research projects, are supported or produced by the OU in collaboration with a national network of museums and galleries. At present over fifteen galleries and art institutions across the UK are involved as collaborators including the Tate (since 2002), the Barbican, the V&A, the Baltic, the

Walker Art Gallery, Kettle's Yard, Milton Keynes Gallery, the Bowes Museum, the National Portrait Gallery, and the National Gallery.

The paper will be divided into two parts. The first part will describe the setting up and delivery of the website, and explore the possibilities and limitations of digital representations of 'unique' objects. Issues of sustained and open access, collaboration, dissemination, pedagogy and cross-fertilisation, which have underpinned the project, will also be examined. The second part of the paper will report on a critical review of the project, carried out by the OU's Digital Humanities team. The review will look at how well the project is meeting its goals and focus particularly on the ways in which digital technologies have helped or hindered this process. It is hoped that others will find these insights useful for their own projects.

Tracy Piper-Wright
Life after Death – the relevance of digital technologies for entry into the 'canon' of temporary, ephemeral and non-gallery sited art works

In this paper I propose to explore the propensity for digital technologies to become a valuable method by which a precarious and difficult to retain art form can have a continuing existence. The importance of documentation for the archival preservation of temporary, ephemeral and non-gallery sited works of art is one that is recognised as being tantamount to maintaining the presence of these works within the critical canon. The inability of these works to be represented fully means that they consequently cease to exist in terms of creating histories of practice. Furthermore, this paper will argue that the quality of efforts to record and preserve such works often falls far short of an ideal or true representation.

Recent research carried out by this researcher examines the occurrence of other mechanisms of documentation emerging in relation to ephemeral, non-gallery sited works. Examination of a selection of art works occurring in these environments shows a varying level of complexity in the residual documentation. What has been shown is that within the less restricted, open environments in which these works are situated the audience are increasingly engaged in the creation of high quality and aesthetically relevant documentation of the work, which is communicated through the use of digital cameras and photo-sharing sites. It is proposed that the combination of unrestricted access and the wide spread use of web 2.0 technologies creates the phenomenon of 'democratic documentation' occurring in response to these types of work.

This paper will seek to argue that it is the combination of a range of readily accessible digital technologies that permits the audience to create and disseminate a level of documentary response that is previously unprecedented, and which often surpasses that provided by the artists themselves. The value of the documentation produced by the audience will be discussed as one that presents a convincing and accurate picture of the aesthetic experience of the work – representing not simply the appearance of the work but capable of transporting latter, secondary audiences toward a richer and more fulfilling experience of the ephemeral art work.

The paper will conclude with some observations on how 'democratic documentation' might be both a response and a challenge to established methods of creating art histories and whether the opportunity to create such forms of documentation might present themselves within other forms of practice.

Fred Poyner IV
The Digital Image as Janus: Balancing Fair use and Image Licensing for Digitized Art in Museum Collections

In this paper, the author seeks to examine the subject of how institutions with collections of digitized and 'born digital' art engage in programs which offer images of artworks for both Fair use and commercial licensing by the public. There is a recursive duality where digital art collections are concerned, whether this involves rights managed and public domain artworks, how non-profit organizations compare to 'for-profit' image licensing companies, or in institutional determinations as to when an image is available for free verses when it involves licensing for revenue gain, and how artworks considered to be in the public domain fit into this digital paradigm.

Institutions today are faced with a host of challenges and choices, when it comes to offering digital art for public audiences. Factors such as the role of an institution, its mission, the types of art collections it may offer, and whether or not it offers images for only fair use, through a licensing program, or both, are covered in the course of discussion.

In particular, copyright law as it applies to digital images is key to understanding the relationship between collections offered for fair use without restrictions, and how these same collections may in turn be licensed for either editorial or commercial use by the institution charged with their ownership. Legislation such as the 1998 Digital Millennium

Copyright Act – and what this means for collections with rights restrictions – is one of several legal considerations reviewed as far as their present impact on institutions with digital art collections.

Finally, current examples of how art museums are seeking to make digital images of their collections available online are offered, in the interest of seeing how these institutions are addressing artist copyright concerns, how rights to original artworks are being secured for licensing purposes, and how digital technologies are being employed to protect or manage access to an institutions collections online.

Carl Schmitz
Art Information versus Art Research: Database as Nemesis

Database as Nemesis: Art Information versus Art Research
Carl Schmitz, The Richard Diebenkorn Catalogue Raisonné

Is the rise of collections management databases a technological development that is leaving art historians behind? From the perspective of an art information technologist and with supporting evidence from a range of scholar-users, I will examine the personally perceived disconnect between art historians and information systems. While the collections database in the museum context (perhaps most especially in America) might become the exclusive domain of the registration department, in the research setting it is necessarily shared by both technician and thinker. How do needs-based variations in collections management database use reflect the contrasting importance of data (an object itself or the collection as reality) versus metadata (the database as a layer of abstraction)? Given the ever-increasing pervasiveness of multimedia capture and electronic access, what kind of middle ground is needed for effective shared resource pooling between IT and Ph.D.? Does the break run deeper than the interface layer? Is it a matter of technophobia or generational culture?

Along with philosophical questions that may remain open-ended, I will examine a set of suggested possibilities to help balance the signal to noise ratio from survey interviews of art historians and museum curators with established and mid-career backgrounds. The discussion will also include specific cases from my own work that further demonstrate the gap between actuality and representation such as scientific color-controlled photography techniques and the need to correct for perception, and an examination of copycat bibliographic cataloguing as a strain of viral information