

The Myth of Immateriality: Presenting and Preserving New Media

Christiane Paul

Presented by Lindsay Grace

The Gallery Dilemma

- The process orientation of digital medium present non-traditional challenges:
 - Presentation of technical works
 - Collection of technology based works
 - The preservation of technology itself
- Fundamental shift from object to process

Presented by Lindsay Grace

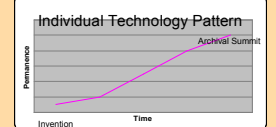
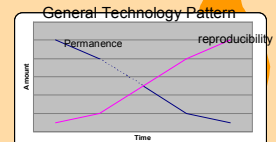
The Forces

- Technology is a throw away item, rarely archived
- Software, the sculpture of 0's and 1's, is disposable.
- Obsolescence, not deterioration
 - Digital works are more often prey to revisions in technology that make them obsolete
 - Traditional arts are more effected as deterioration of materials is a stronger force than the obsolescence of their technology

Presented by Lindsay Grace

The Continuum of Technology

- Interesting long term movement toward less permanent design, greater reproduction
 - Paint, Print, Lithography, Photography, digital image
- Each technology works to make itself more permanent
 - once it is proven it seeks resilience
 - Archival papers to reliable media storage



Presented by Lindsay Grace

The Curator's Dilemma

- Institutions need to develop alternative approaches to presentation, collection, documentation and preservation for the "immaterial" arts
- Problem arises from its materials or materiality:
 - Ugly computers
 - Required maintenance

Presented by Lindsay Grace

Defining the Art

- Elusive taxonomies
 - For Christiane Paul it is **computability**
- New Media Art is :**

**Process oriented, time based ,
dynamic, real-time, participatory ,
collaborative, performative ,
modular, variable , generative,
customizable**

Presented by Lindsay Grace

Defining the Art:

- New Media Arts may also tend to:

- Require an extending viewing period

- Be collaborative

- artist, programmer, researcher, designer, scientist

- Also interactive: participant

- Be more context dependent

- Require information about:

- What set of data is being shown

- Where it is coming from

- What logic it executes

Presented by Lindsay Grace

Key Characteristics of New Media Art

Presented by Christiane Paul

- Collaborative

- Hybrid practice

Implied

- Diverse - in medium and presentation

- Distinct - unlike most other art

Presented by Lindsay Grace

New Media Art: Collaboration

- Artist groups and collectives are more common in new media than traditional art.

- Necessitates new strategies for documentation

- Requires visible process

- Example:

- Radical Software Group

Presented by Lindsay Grace

R-S-G: Prepared Playstation



Presented by Lindsay Grace

Collaboration New Media Art

- Collaboration Boards –

- works that are nothing without the audience:

- A form of public art

- Mark Napier

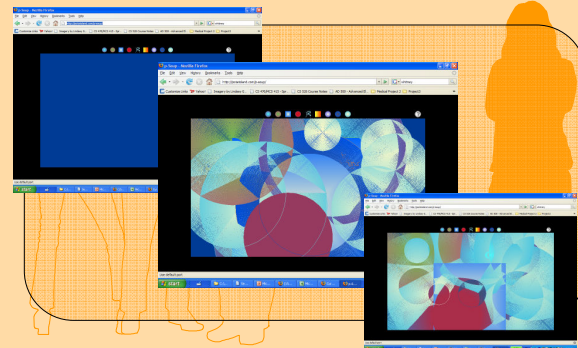
- P-Soup (<http://potatoland.com/p-soup/>)

- Ben Truymen (my student):

- Pixel Bored: <http://www.pixelbored.com/>

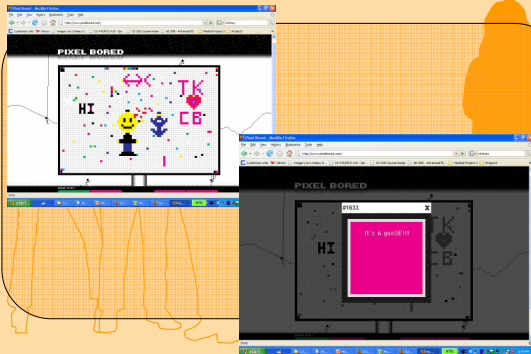
Presented by Lindsay Grace

Collaboration: p-Soup



Presented by Lindsay Grace

Collaboration: PixelBored.com



Presented by Lindsay Grace

Collaboration

- Audience as collaborator
 - The audience as curator ,public curation
 - “Your Show Here”, MASS Moca 2001
 - Connections, Whitney Museum and ITP NYU
- Involuntary collaboration –
 - The rework
 - The modular
 - DIY, YouTube “Archives”
 - Image affinity and message

Presented by Lindsay Grace

Collaborating Relationships

- Besides the technical requirements, collaboration is inherent to new media because of its medium (e.g. net art), its customization (VJ works), and its interactivity (toys)

Presented by Lindsay Grace

Hybrid Practice

- Variable and modular – making it easier to integrate, reintegrated, or configure
- Susceptible to experience in more than one way effectively
- New Media art is often multisensory:
 - It is a viewing experience, it is touching experience

Presented by Lindsay Grace

Gallery Models

- Traditional gallery models do not receive the collaborative and hybrid characteristics well
 - White box
 - Traditional gallery space
 - Black box
 - Lounge environment conducive to some media projects
- Some works do not need gallery dimensions (web art)
- Galleries are sometimes cumbersome to navigate for locative media art (e.g. wearable)
 - Scheduling performances

Presented by Lindsay Grace

Gallery Models: White Box

- Discourages audience interaction
- Has inherent structural design that counters new media art goals
- Lacks the art technical staff to maintain work
- Encourages the office experience for user-computer interaction (e.g. computer kiosks)

Presented by Lindsay Grace

Gallery Models: Black Box

- Not necessarily required for all new media arts
- Same effect – a forced decontextualization for a very contextual art

Presented by Lindsay Grace

Gallery models: Advantages of New Media

- Modularity allows for re-presentation via site specific design or redesign
- Single user displays encourage engagement
- Multi-user designs may create engaging environments
- Visitors teach and encourage others, by initiating the interaction with the art (collaboration)

Presented by Lindsay Grace

Gallery Models: New Media Art

Net Art

Advantages

- Independent of the normal systems of validation
- Ability to challenge the art standards
- No limiting hours of operation
- Geographic accessibility
- Networked contextualization

Disadvantages

- Brand recognition may still guide successes
- Limited control over how a work is experienced

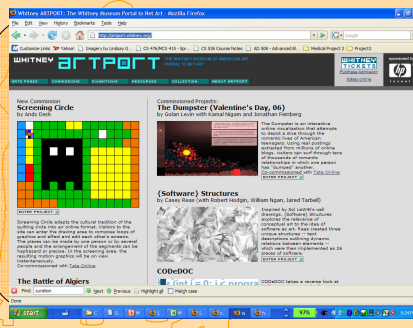
Presented by Lindsay Grace

Gallery Model: Net Art

- From single curator to public curation
 - Software:
 - C@C: computer aided curating (1993)
 - Runme: automated curation

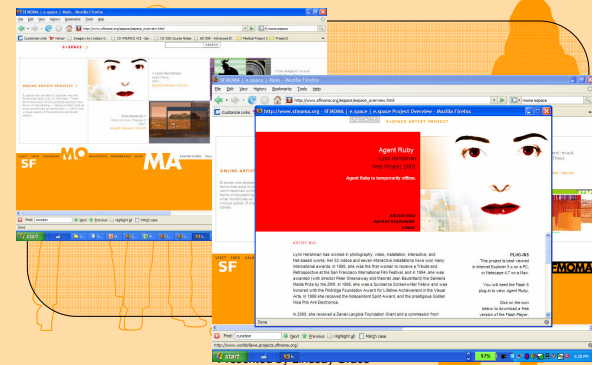
Presented by Lindsay Grace

Online Presentation: Whitney Artport

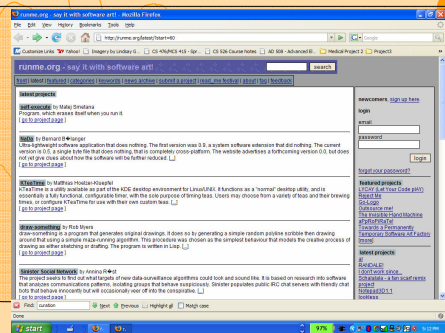


Presented by Lindsay Grace

SF Moma e-Space



Runme



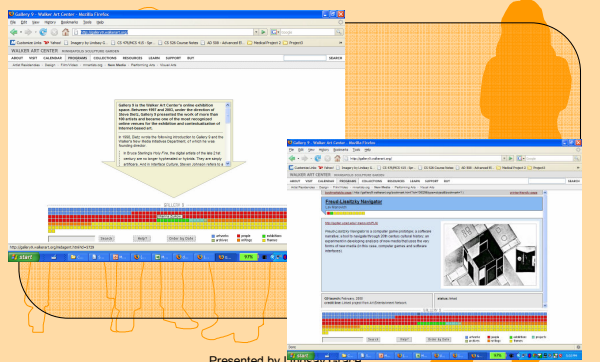
Presented by Lindsay Grace

Preservation Strategies: New Media Art

- Software as art repository – interesting – store in itself
- Gallery9 (<http://gallery9.walkerart.org/>)
- Rhizome.org (<http://www.rhizome.org/>)
- Digital Asset Management Database (<http://www.bampfa.berkeley.edu/maac/>)
- INCCA (<http://www.incca.org/>)

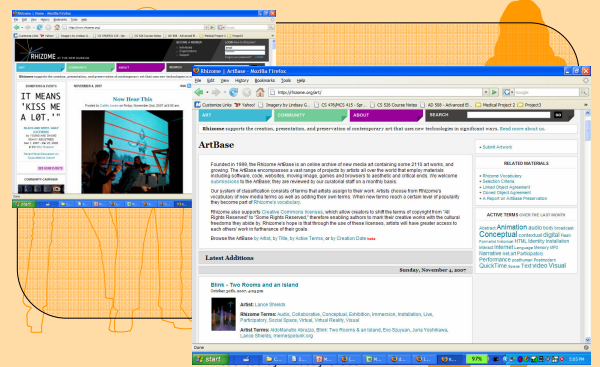
Presented by Lindsay Grace

Gallery 9

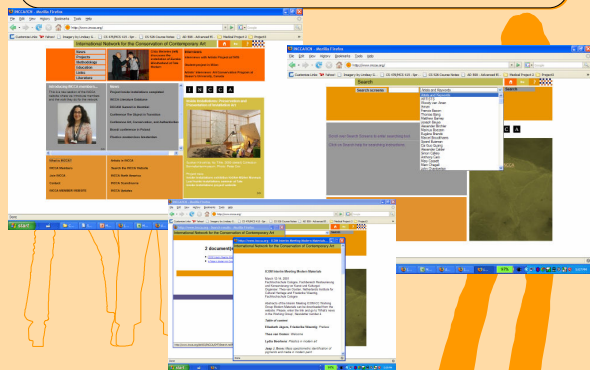


Presented by Lindsay Grace

Rhizome.org



INCCA



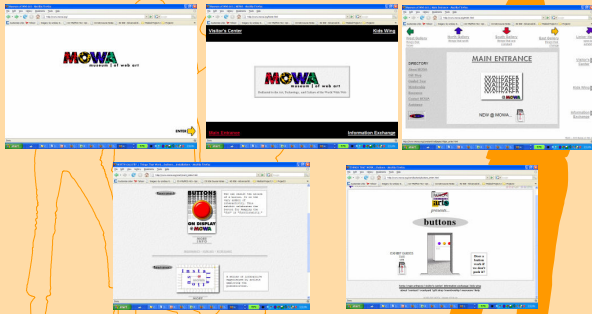
Presented by Lindsay Grace

Read Me Software Art Festival



Presented by Lindsay Grace

MOWA



Presented by Lindsay Grace

Additional Reading

- ***New Climates for Curatorial Practice: Exhibiting Art Across Distributed Networks***
- **Curating Immateriality**
 - The Work of the Curator in the Age of Network Systems
 - Joasia Krysa, editor
 - 570271739

Presented by Lindsay Grace

Questions

- Does creating your own curation and galleries prevent the art from being “legitimized?”
- Does public curation follow rigor?
- Does the low cost of gallery space in virtual environments diminish the value of that space?

Presented by Lindsay Grace

Questions

- Does archiving a work in the same medium make sense (e.g. web art archived on the web)? What about preservation?

Presented by Lindsay Grace

References and Resources

- Art Mobs,
http://mod.blogs.com/art_mobs/
- Radical Software Group
<http://r-s-g.org/>
- P-Soup, Mark Napier
<http://potatoland.com/p-soup/>

Presented by Lindsay Grace