

New (+ Old) Media: Restoration, Preservation, Archiving & Access

@ CURRENTS: Santa Fe International New Media Festival - 2015

Report

New (+ Old) Media: Restoration, Preservation, Archiving & Access, was held on June 25-27, in Santa Fe New Mexico. The program consisted of a two day invitational Working Meeting, a Public Symposium and a Screening of selected early video/media art works, as a special program of the June 12-28, 2015 CURRENTS: Santa Fe International New Media Festival.

New (+ Old) Media: Restoration, Preservation, Archiving & Access, organized and hosted by 1st-Mile Institute's SARC (Scientists/Artists Research Collaborations) Program, brought together a diverse group of media curators, archivists, educators, conservators, technical experts, collectors, funders, artists and scientists at the forefront of efforts to address critical and timely issues regarding the ongoing life, technical processes, value and access to media art works, code, unique systems, metadata, creative intentions and our ever-emergent cultural heritage.



Program page on the CURRENTS web site:

<http://currentsnewmedia.org/events/new-old-media-restoration-preservation-archiving-access/>

The two day invitational Working Meeting, originally planned for 12-15 participants, ultimately including 35, was held at Santa Fe Art Institute, on Thursday and Friday, June 25 and 26. The meeting was facilitated by Richard Lowenberg, 1st-Mile Institute Director and early media artist.

While there was an Agenda, the meeting took a more dynamic, all-inclusive course through the topics, based upon the specific questions, needs, experiences and knowledge of the participants.

To start the meeting off, Gene Youngblood offered a brief media-society provocation, and an account of current writings. After a rapid round of introductions, program topic exchanges included the restoration and digitization of old video tapes, maintaining the integrity of analog media, preservation and upgrades of born-digital media, cross-disciplinary issues and understandings of emerging technologies and processes, evolving ethno-cultural creative works, networked relationships, open access, legal and financial matters and the convergence of the arts, sciences, tools, methods and world-views.

The Vasulka Archives served, in part, as a potential best-practices case study initiative, as a number of participants had active involvement or interest in this extensive body of works.



A Reception in the Santa Fe Art Institute outdoor courtyard, on Thursday from 4:30 - 6:00, allowed participants to meet and interact with program sponsors, some of Santa Fe's cultural community, some of the artists presenting at CURRENTS and with Mayor Javier Gonzales, who came by to welcome the visiting participants to this culturally rich, future-focused community. A group Dinner followed at Santa Fe's nearby popular East African restaurant, Jambo.

Friday's schedule was similar to the previous day, ending at 4:30, allowing participants free time to experience the CURRENTS festival or to explore Santa Fe. Dinner followed at La Choza.

A free public Symposium was held at CURRENTS, in the El Museo Cultural theater, on Saturday, June 27th, from 10:00 am. - 1:00 pm, with an audience growing to over 50 people.

Following introductory remarks, program Thank You's, Working Meeting synopsis and a listing of participants by Richard Lowenberg, a Panel of six participants took the stage for presentations and discussion of key issues, best-practices and examples. Led by Mona Jimenez, the panel also included Martina Haidvogel, Eddy Colloton, Emily Nabsny, Joey Heinen, Mark Hellar and Mira Burack, all with projected computer slides to illustrate their discussion points. The well informed audience's questions made for lively interactive discussions.

After a short break, during which the audience was urged to see the adjacent media installation, “Emblems of Ascension”, by David Stout and Cory Metcalf (Noisefold), David Stout joined Richard Rinehart on stage for a 45 minute interview/discussion, focusing on program issues, as specific to this selected media artwork.

A Lunch Reception was hosted by CURRENTS Advisor, Sandy Zane and held at Zane Bennett Contemporary Art Gallery, which showcased “Kids Team-Lab”, a Japanese educational interactive media environment, from 1:00 – 3:00.

A Screening of selected, rare early video/media works, was held in the El Museo Cultural theater, on Saturday evening, at 7:30. The 12 short clips included Gene Youngblood proposing a “National Information Utility” in 1974, the opening section of Howard Weinberg’s new production on “Nam June Paik and the TV Lab”, just digitized super-eight film by Nancy Holt of Robert Smithson and Richard Serra staking Spiral Jetty in 1970, works by the Video Freex, Hermine Freed, Peer Bode, Woody Vasulka, Paul and Marlene Kos, and Richard Lowenberg.

At 9:00 Steina presented a beautifully composed, entrancing, nearly two hour, four projector, wide-screen compilation of video-audio elements from the 1980s to the present, specially created for CURRENTS 2015, to a concluding standing ovation.

While these were a jam-packed three days, the Santa Fe setting and weather, the creative new media context of CURRENTS, group meals and evening socializing, diversity of participants, programmatic richness and informality, made this a most uniquely productive experience for all.



Mira Burack, Mona Jimenez, Martina Haidvogel, Mark Hellar, Eddy Colloton, Joey Heinen, Emily Nabsny