

# Records Management and the Preservation of Digital Art

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# Introduction

- ◆ Recordkeeping in Galleries
- ◆ InterPARES 3 Case Study: Morris and Helen Belkin Art Gallery
- ◆ InterPARES 3 Recommendations

# Importance of Recordkeeping in Galleries

- ◆ Documentation is vital in verifying the provenance of artworks
- ◆ For conceptual or complicated works, documentation can be used to determine exactly what constitutes the work
- ◆ Documentation has been identified as a tool for the preservation of digital art

# Examples of Document Types

From DOCAM (Documentation and Conservation of the Media Arts Heritage), “Typology of Documents”

<http://www.docam.ca/en/typology-of-documents.html>

3D Animation File, 3D Simulation (CAD, virtual reality, Second Life, etc.), Acquisition proposal, Acquisition file, **Acquisition report**, Assignment, Article in periodical (printed, online), Audio capture, **Audiovisual documentation** (Video, photo, sound capture, drawing, etc.), Bibliography (artist), Bibliography (theme), Bibliography (work), Blog (URL, screen shot, web capture), Blog posting (URL, screen shot, web capture), Book, Book section (chapter, essay in an anthology, in a catalog, etc.), Budget, Cables scheme, Cataloguing record, **Checklist** (physical space, technical needs, human resources, etc.), Collection catalog (printed, online), Computer code (source code, software, patch, plugin, etc.), Conservation history, **Condition Report**, Contract/Legal document (Litigation document, etc.), Control system description (scheme, diagrams or plan), Copyright agreement, Digital simulation, Documentation of the public experience, Draft drawings, E-mail, Essay (Historical, Critical, etc.), Exhibition catalog (printed, online, digital document), **Exhibition history**, Exhibition web site, Exhibition leaflet, Exhibition audioguide (podcast, mp3, onsite devices, etc), Fellowship Application, Finding Aids, Funding Application, Gallery Guide, Graphic (creation, Installation, Production), Graphic (plans, elevations, perspectives, etc...), Guideline (maintenance, budget, installation, etc.), Insurance List, **Installation Documentation** (plan, elevation, perspective, etc.), Interview (artists, collaborators

# About the Test-bed

Morris and Helen Belkin Art  
Gallery

- ◆ On campus of the University of British Columbia
- ◆ Mandate to research, exhibit, collect, publish, educate and develop programs in the field of contemporary art
- ◆ Collection of over 3,500 artworks. 18 works with digital components

# Current State of Recordkeeping at the Belkin Gallery

- ◆ The creation and acquisition of records relating to the Gallery's business functions is generally done in a very systematic fashion
- ◆ The creation and acquisition of records relating to works of art and the exhibition of works of art is done in a very ad hoc manner

# Recommendations of IP3

- ◆ Case Study Objective: Establish policies and procedures for preservation of digital art
- ◆ Tools developed:
  - ◆ Artist Questionnaire
  - ◆ Documentation Framework

# Artist Questionnaire

Three parts:

1. Artist Information Form
2. Artwork Information Form
3. Media Specific Form

- ◆ Captures the intellectual and creative intent behind the work
- ◆ Identifies essential components of the work that must be preserved to uphold the intellectual and artistic intent
- ◆ Records any known preservation issues that may arise
- ◆ Create a history of the artwork that captures technological and intellectual contexts



# Documentation Framework

- ◆ Maintain intellectual links between files relating to an individual artwork
- ◆ Reduces redundancy across files
- ◆ Identifies documentation that will be useful in future presentations of the work and in planning conservation treatments for the work
- ◆ Serves a tool that allows the Gallery to uphold the artist's moral rights during future exhibition and preservation

# Documentation Framework

**Artist Series**

*Artwork Series*

File Name	Documentation Examples
Artist Questionnaire	Artist Information Form; Artist's CV
Activities	Postcards and invitations for openings, exhibitions and lectures
Publications	Books, brochures, etc., that mention the artist in general or works not held in the Gallery's collections

# Documentation Framework: Artwork Series

*Artist Series*

**Artwork Series**

File Name	Documentation Examples
Acquisition	Deed of Gift/Purchase Receipt; Correspondence with donor/artist; Condition report
Artist Questionnaire/Installation History	Artwork Information Form; Media-Specific Form
Exhibition	Technical diagrams; Photography
Conservation	Conservator's contact information; Conservator's notes; Condition report
Reproduction	Copyright forms, Contracts

# Contributions of IP3

- ◆ Most major research projects have large museums and galleries as partners—IP3's case study uses a small gallery
- ◆ Documentation framework is tailored to the Belkin Gallery's workflow
- ◆ Provides solutions for a paper-reliant environment
- ◆ Revised artist questionnaire is simpler than previous version

Mahalo!

