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1 The tension between static documentation and dynamic digital art

Annet Dekker

It is clear that documentation is created and used in different ways and for numerous reasons.¹ Similarly, documentation exists and functions differently within the various departments in an arts organisation. To briefly summarise, conservators create documentation to explore and digest what the art project consists of and use it for its preservation, restoration, or presentation in the future. They try to optimise their documentation workflows by creating detailed descriptions, visualisations, or mappings of all the elements, carefully detailing all the links, dependencies, processes, and performances. Curators tend to approach documentation as a tool to present and explain the context or parts of an art project, often based on traditional models of institutional cultural authority and disciplinary expertise. Marketing makes and uses documentation to sell or explain the art events. Educators use documentation to illustrate and deepen the meaning of art. Artists not only create but also document their work, sometimes incorporating it into another presentation or turning it into an entirely new art project. Visitors to the museum document their experience and make it part of the online circulation of images by sharing it online. Here, documentation becomes part of identity construction: it enters an intricate ecosystem of likes, reposts, algorithms, bots, and other humans, that all validate and (e)valuate the documentation. Finally, researchers try to make sense of documentation. They dig deeper into the mechanics of the image to find clues in the EXIF data. Or, alternatively, or in parallel, they attempt to analyse the circulation of documentation within and beyond the institutions to understand its meaning and value to make sense of historical processes or for future purposes. Acknowledging the different functions of documentation, this chapter discusses alternative ways to understand the value of documentation by examining how artists use it as an artistic medium to encourage thinking about what documentation means. In the process, it touches upon the question of how to document art that is itself a form of expanded documentary practice. It also demonstrates how the valuation and subsequent predominance of museum documentation over other types of documentation should change to reflect the growing complexity of documentation by artists.

Challenging the staticness of documentation

Digital art is characterised as being performative, processual, and/or participatory. In other words, digital art is to be experienced and it changes over time. Paradoxically, its documentation in the form of a photograph, video, or descriptive text, is usually
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static. As mentioned by José Ramón López, documentation captures a specific moment in time and freezes a particular perspective, point of view, or experience:

Photography, like museums, freezes things in time, stores them. Objects, like people, can reach eternity through it. Somehow, it reinforces, as it expands it, the idea of conservation, of museum. Little by little, photography has become the modern temple of memory.²

Indeed, since its inception, photography has been used to document landscapes, historical buildings, important events, societies, or objects. As a tool for exploration and science, photography served ‘to satisfy antiquarian curiosity, to provide information for restoration, to supply artists with material on which to base paintings, or to effect preservation efforts’.³ Around the 1850s, museums started employing photographers to document the art in their collections and their activities, and by the 1920s in-house photo studios were more widespread.⁴ The growing influence of photography, followed by video, led to a standardisation of documentation practice in museums, despite the unresolved debate around documentation that oscillates between a recording in a static and ‘objective’ single take or using a more subjective approach to enhance the experiential character of an art project or exhibition.⁵ The rise of mobile cameras and hence the proliferation of guides and best practices for documenting art in which it seems that everyone documents art has not affected this either. So, while documentation is at the core of museum practices, over the years methods to create it have evolved relatively little. Photographic images, to some extent moving, and short-text descriptions have had a privileged place in the dissemination of the art project and have become the dominant way to reproduce art.

At the same time, artists’ attitudes to documenting their work have evolved more idiosyncratically: from elaborate notebooks, to various video forms, and to seeing documentation as an art practice.⁶ The methods explored by conceptual artists who developed instructions or guidelines to execute or redo their work are noteworthy. Exemplary is conceptual artist Sol LeWitt, who has become known for his detailed instruction relating to the reproduction of his large wall drawings: ‘When an artist uses a conceptual form of art, it means that all of the planning and decisions are made beforehand and the execution is a perfunctory affair. The idea becomes a machine that makes the art’.⁷ While LeWitt’s notes on paper are still static, what would happen when taking the notion of machine documentation more literally? What if a machine makes the art based on its documentation?⁸ More relevant for this chapter, what kind of data would a machine need, and would the result be closer to the dynamics of the art it tries to document? In what follows, by exploring the performativity of documentation, I address the paradox of documenting digital art and show how even fixed documentation can reflect the inherently changing character of digital art.

The performativity of documentation

In 2011, Olia Lialina and Dragan Espenschied started their project *One Terabyte of Kilobyte Age*. As discussed in more detail in Chapter 10 of this volume, their aim was to revisit and recirculate the aesthetic and design choices of the free

web-hosting service GeoCities, which began in 1995, GeoCities was part of the vernacular web where everyone was encouraged to build their own website, but after user interest declined, resulting in lost revenue for its owner Yahoo, the latter decided to discontinue its support for GeoCities in 2009. While the GeoCities archive consists of approximately 1.2 million accounts, Lialina and Espenschied decided to circulate GeoCities websites as screenshots of the homepages.⁹ Besides the technical difficulty of showing the original websites, Espenschied explains that the method of sharing screenshots also reflected the popular way of sharing information:

‘Content’ that is isolated, de-contextualised, and shuffled around in databases of social networking sites is the main form of communication; to be useful an artefact has to work as a ‘post’, it has to become impartible and be brought into a format that is accepted everywhere. And that is a screenshot.¹⁰

After downloading the content of the torrent that was released by Archive IT, each screenshot was automatically released every 20 minutes on a dedicated Tumblr page. While this page is used as a repository for their ‘raw’ research data from which they analyse the vernacular styles of GeoCities, the Tumblr also received many likes and reposts. The artists also distribute some of their research analysis via Twitter, as a series of screenshots on specific topics, such as ‘under construction’. *One Terabyte of Kilobyte Age* rapidly became a performative spiral in which Lialina and Espenschied reflect on the Tumblr archive of the torrent archive of the GeoCities archive, and users reblog, retweet, like, and save the posts, and it just keeps going on. While the project is interesting from the perspective of online archiving,¹¹ or to comprehend vernacular web cultures, it also reflects how static documentation – in the form of screenshots – can turn into a dynamic performance that is instigated by the artists but propelled by users and bots.¹² By considering performativity as an aspect of circulation, anthropologists Benjamin Lee and Edward LiPuma move beyond seeing performativity as a representational or descriptive act; instead, they stress the dynamics of circulation as a force for change:

Performativity has been considered a quintessentially cultural phenomenon that is tied to the creation of meaning, whereas circulation and exchange have been seen as processes that transmit meanings, rather than as constitutive acts in themselves. . . . Cultures of circulation are created and animated by the cultural forms that circulate through them, including – critically – the abstract nature of the forms that underwrite and propel the process of circulation itself.¹³

Indeed, as can be concluded from the function of documentation in *One Terabyte of Kilobyte Age*, the screenshots become meaningful when they are used, and once part of other screenshots and users, the performance forms a socio-technical network that can point to signs in and outside of its sociocultural context. In a sense, the performance resembles the socio-technical structure of GeoCities, an intricate network of different topics and multiple visions developed and distributed, or

discontinued, by its users. In other words, *One Terabyte of Kilobyte Age* addresses the question of how to document art that is itself a form of expanded documentary practice, in which the ‘doing documentation’ blurs the practices involved in art making, documenting, archiving, distributing, sharing, and using, thereby encouraging the thinking about the changing value of documentation. Moreover, when considering performativity as an aspect of circulation, instead of seeing performativity as a representational or descriptive act, the dynamics of circulation sheds new light on the question of documentation, redefining its key terms by prioritising the different uses and strategies of presentation over preservation.

Similarly, the performance *-ou4x* (2016–2022) by Slovenian net artist Igor Štromajer shows how the distinction between the live performance (presentation) and its static documentation (preservation) increasingly blurs in the context of networked culture.¹⁴ In 2016, Štromajer sent me a very brief e-mail: ‘Dear Annet, I’m sending you five files. Please put them somewhere safe. Thank you very much, Igor’. I opened the files, and saw two abstract cropped images, two gifs, one of someone sitting on a toilet and one of a roll of toilet paper, and a sound file of less than a second. Two years later I received a similar e-mail asking me to store the (now-encrypted) files in a safe place. When I contacted him about his practice, Igor explained that *-ou4x* was a ‘performative act’, in which from 2016 to 2022, he asked a decreasing group of friends and acquaintances to keep several files safe. The files are from *Expunction*, an earlier project announced on Facebook in 2011 in a post in which Štromajer declared that he was going to delete some of his historical net art projects: ‘If one can create art, one can also delete it. Memory is there to deceive’. According to the artist, his projects didn’t look the same anymore because settings had changed and the web had been updated.¹⁵ Burdened by the continuous technical maintenance, updates, migrations, and the fear of obsolescence, Štromajer chose deletion over aesthetic loss and technical malfunction. *Expunction* raised questions about temporality, duration, access, and availability on the web and how these processes impact cultural memory. While his action caused some consternation on Facebook, for example, ‘Igor!!!!!!! Can’t you do something else to go through your mid-life crisis????!!!!!!’,¹⁶ Štromajer continued to delete his older projects. Yet he also documented the whole process, and what remained were screenshots, video captures, descriptive texts about and reviews of the projects, and the conversations that happened on Facebook around *Expunction*. All of these are saved on his website and hard drive. Looking at those files that I could open, the small. jpgs and. gifs seemed insignificant, I couldn’t trace them to any of his earlier works, yet seeing them together with the cryptic message and the e-mails exchanged in subsequent years they became meaningful. The interaction, intention, and performativity were lost in the freeze of a single, tiny file, but in their multiplicity they gained value. Similar to *One Terabyte of Kilobyte Age*, the power and value lie in its multiplicity, sharing, and circulation. In this sense, *-ou4x* reflects the complex temporality of many net art projects: the performance was instigated by the first e-mail, but the development is ambiguous, prone to rupture or loss, and the result is open-ended, depending on the actions of actors who don’t know each other (yet).

The project is oriented towards *becoming* rather than *being*¹⁷ and proposes new modes of active engagement and creative use, by demonstrating an engaged way of dealing with circulation and relations. The extended period of waiting for something to happen affirms the reality of the events that unfold, even if the outcome is unclear: the potentiality of the event can disappoint but this is also the beauty of the project. As mentioned, the single files are hardly interesting by themselves, but together and as part of a larger whole, they are compelling because they retain a suggestion of potentiality. As Štromajer explains:

It's a kind of a cycle, a durational, perhaps never-ending online performance with its natural rhythm: being constructed, deconstructed, then reconstructed anew, but this time differently. Who knows exactly what comes afterwards, but there is certainly no end to this cycle, because every trace, every move you make has its consequences.¹⁸

There is no logic or predictability, and while the individual files remain autonomous, all together and with the sparse e-mails they form a networked performance that symbolises a promise, a proximity which one day may be fulfilled. In effect, the project feeds a continuous desire that keeps returning with each engagement. Next to the technical files and encryption which harbour their own technical specificity and agency, the social aspect of the act is important here.

In his essay 'Art in the Age of Biopolitics. From Artwork to Art Documentation', Boris Groys maintains that:

In the case of art documentation as an art form . . . it is not 'the making of' any finished artwork that is documented. Rather, documentation becomes the sole result of art, which is understood as a form of life, a duration, a production of history.¹⁹

He continues that art documentation shows 'how the living can be replaced by the artificial, and how the artificial can be made living by means of a narrative'.²⁰ With *-ou4x* Štromajer shows how his 'living dead', consisting of loose, fragmented, and static files, are perhaps inactive, but can be re-activated with a performative gesture. Similarly, his performance echoes Philip Auslander's assertion that documentation can function as an interpretation of a past event, as a reference to a past event in a new event, or a prompt for reactivation.²¹ In the case of *-ou4x*, it is all-in-one, and as such it could be argued that documentation holds a potentiality and can be regarded as a form of imaginative activation.²² Moreover, as also mentioned by Gabriella Giannachi,²³ rather than merely a way to guide conservation, doing documentation is future oriented: a practice that is less focused on the original art project and its re-activation, and more on the notion that art projects evolve, change, modify, or mutate such that they can have different manifestations over time. *-ou4x* also emphasises how doing documentation isn't only connected to work, in the sense that it requires labour to create documentation, and questions how it is done, but that it can trigger the imaginary and in that way

encourage thinking beyond the ‘original’ art project towards the future that is yet to be defined.

Re-figuring and automated machine-documentation

The value of using imagination and memory as inherently part of a documentation process is extensively explored in several projects by Morehshin Allahyari. Allahyari is particularly interested in the potential of cultural heritage to affect current debates. To address contemporary social issues, she focused on the recent attacks on ancient buildings and statues in countries like Syria and Iraq, and the subsequent use of 3D visualisation and printing developed by Western corporations and organisations to reproduce the cultural heritage, as well as on emphasising the relevance of forgotten myths and figures such as the Jinn that warn of disaster or bear good tidings. In the project *Material Speculations: ISIS 2015–2016*, she used 3D modelling and printing to reconstruct relics that ISIS destroyed in Iraq. As a way to counter both the Western reconstruction approach (which she refers to as digital colonialism)²⁴ and the destruction, Allahyari wanted to provide ‘a practical and political possibility for artifact archival, while also proposing 3D-printing technology as a tool both for resistance and documentation’.²⁵ Since much information was lost, she based her project on discussions with archaeologists, historians, employees from Mosul Museum, and the sparse information in books and exhibition catalogues, in addition to analysing auxiliary documentation such as tourists’ snapshots. By inserting a flash drive into the final objects, all her research, which in addition to general information about the object, included ISIS’ self-published videos of their demolition, the e-mail exchanges, the images and text documents she had found, literally became part of the printed resin statues, effectively creating a 3D time capsule. Allowing people to print their own copy enables them to construct their own version of the past. As new ‘reconstructions’ of history are made, Allahyari also emphasises that there is no ‘honest way that one can replace these artifacts’.²⁶

Rather than preservation she regards her projects as a form of transformation, or an act of ‘re-figuring’, suggesting a continuation of the destroyed objects: ‘[re-figuring is both] activation and preservation. It’s an act of going back and retrieving the forgotten or destroyed histories’.²⁷ The act of re-figuring can also be seen as a form of alternative documentation as multi-layered storytelling, in which power structures are not rejected but function as counter-narratives of the past to re-imagine a different kind of future. The project *She Who Sees the Unknown* (2016) further explores the method of ‘re-figuring’, emphasising it as a feminist-activist process that takes place in different ways, which Allahyari describes as a process of archiving, creation, storytelling, performance-lectures, and fabulation. By using ambiguous, often forgotten figures or myths and by appropriating their stories to decolonise contemporary acts, in this project Allahyari juxtaposes her personal experience, examples of contemporary subjugation of minority groups, or other enduring patterns of colonialism with stories, images, or figures from the past. Similar to *Material Speculations*, Allahyari explains how

the oral history and image-data that are compiled and refigured here makes visible the complicated transformation that ancient myths and objects undergo through time, and how precarious this transition has become through digital appropriation.²⁸

Rather than merely focusing on primary information and documentation, Allahyari embraced the fact that she couldn't access this information. Instead, she organised several workshops that explored the potential of storytelling and fabulation (i.e., re-figuring) to create alternative histories or, as I propose, documentation.²⁹ Yet, what happens when we consider the work of non-humans in the process of doing documentation? How does this affect the value of documentation?

In 2015, I organised the exhibition *Algorithmic Rubbish: Daring to Defy Misfortune*, an automatically generated title,³⁰ about the artists' creative response to the influence of computer algorithms, or what some may now call software or machine curation (Krysa 2008). Reminiscent of the conceptual art practices of, for example, Hans Haacke or Marinus Boezem, the art projects exposed something that tends to be invisible or secret for most people. Similar to conceptual art, many of these art projects were presented as documentation. Moreover, they resembled 'art documentation': art projects that occur in daily life as strategies are part of particular structures and processes, which according to Groys is different from technical documentation as it

is neither the making present of a past event nor the promise of a coming art project, but rather [art documentation] is the only possible form of reference to an artistic activity that cannot be represented in any other way.³¹

Indeed, the exhibited projects incorporated, for instance, devices and software such as a smart phone app in the case of *Karen* (2015) by Blast Theory; or the *DullMedia box* (2015) by DullTech (Constant Dullaart), a device that plays all kinds of media formats; or consisted of a marketing campaign, like *Pretty Old Pictures* (2015) by Template, which sold images from Flickr as postcards; or were research-driven like Suzanne Treister's *HFT, The Gardener* (2014–2015), based on a fictional character Hillel Fischer Traumberg, a high-frequency algorithmic trader who experiments with psychoactive drugs and becomes an 'outsider' artist. Documentation was the primary object that could be presented to convey a sense of the functioning of the project in a gallery setting. One of the questions that emerged was: what is the value of this type of documentation and does it replace or become the art object, since there is no longer an 'original' object to present? While this type of documentation is usually created or at least approved by the artist or curator, what happens when documentation is created by a machine? How could that affect the value of the documentation and/or the resulting art project? In other words, what does it mean to re-imagine documentation as a (technical) entity capable of determining its own future form?

To explore this question, the project *Novice Art Blogger* (2015) by Matthew Plummer-Fernandez is particularly relevant since it shows how documentation

circulates through machine algorithms into new documented art projects. *Novice Art Blogger* was an automated bot that generated captions for the abstract paintings from the digitised collection of the Stedelijk Museum in Amsterdam. The image of the painting and its new caption were shared on Tumblr and redistributed on other social media platforms. Importantly, as mentioned by Plummer-Fernandez, '*Novice Art Blogger* is not commenting on the original art projects, but on digital-photographic reproductions'. Moreover, as he explains, the software doesn't comprehend the values of author, period, style, history, or other contextual information. Thus, the interpretation, which is already removed from the original by the digitisation process, is further abstracted:

The art bot does not see the original materiality of the artwork – neither paint nor brushstrokes. Instead, it has a grid of pixels to process, a substrate for visual art that would be alien to some of the original authors of these artworks.³²

So, the documentation of the original moves through algorithms into a new translation. In other words, with the help of the algorithm, *Novice Art Blogger* documents the documentation of art and thereby expands documentary practice. When considering the implications of using the artbots for documentation, something else that Plummer-Fernandez remarks is relevant:

Artbots often eschew the humanlike and robotlike figurations that have become normalised, and expand into alternative figurations that include animals, natural phenomena, and abstract storytelling entities. If it matters what stories make worlds, artbots are a valuable contribution to storytelling and the realisation of those stories through diegetic yet working prototypes, deployed in the public sphere for others to encounter.³³

Indeed, these reframings could potentially lead to new insights into past interpretations, or as Groys mentioned earlier: here the artbots show 'how the living can be replaced by the artificial, and how the artificial can be made living by means of a narrative'. Although I doubt whether Groys was thinking of algorithms telling stories for documentation purposes, the power of the narrative, or as formulated by Plummer-Fernandez, the power of storytelling, can be another lens through which to view the value of documentation. While the *Novice Art Blogger* artbots create their own challenges, they are transparent enough to expose their own mechanical nature, by showing both their narrative virtues and failures. While not intentional, it leaves the users free 'to swivel between the story and the construction of the story, dipping in and out of suspended disbelief, balancing enjoyment with intelligibility and imagination'.³⁴

Using automated bots or the imaginary is a method to create alternative stories by giving a voice to objects or people who are usually silenced, and it also provides ways to look differently at the past. Creating alternative documentation, whether by humans or non-humans, questions present methods by actively reflecting on and reclaiming the past. Documentation adds to, or builds towards, a more

inclusive practice. Seeing these acts of re-figuring and automated documentation as inherently part of documentation emphasises the necessity of rethinking, repositioning, and questioning to understand who is responsible (as in body-political), where it is done (as in geo-political), and thus, what doing documentation means both ontologically and epistemologically.

Conclusion

Documentation practices by artists demonstrate how static documentation – even in the form of simple screenshots – becomes performative and follow the logic or characteristics of the documented art. In many cases, such documentation may become part of an existing art project, a new art project or suggest art projects that are yet to be defined. This means that the value and influence of documentation happen through diversity, sharing, and circulation. While individual documentations may not necessarily be interesting, together with others and as part of a larger socio-technical network they create added value both for the original that no longer exists and for future iterations or re-interpretations of the past. Undeniably, documentation can be damaging: as a homogenous image or a video file, it does not do justice to the changing nature of the digital art it tries to represent. However, the dynamics of circulation cast the question of documentation in a new light, redefining its key terms, as it prioritises the different methods and uses of presentation over preservation, thereby showing how the distinction between the live performance (presentation) and its static documentation (preservation) increasingly blurs in the context of networked culture. Rather than claiming the undocumentability of digital art, I propose understanding documentation as functioning through multiplicity, valuing the creative agency of human users and computer bots, or technical means more generally. Similarly, instead of replicating an object in its ‘pristine’ shape and thereby creating an abstract and ‘neutral’ space, critical fabulation and re-figuration or (automated) storytelling are methods to stimulate the imaginary when doing documentation. This adds new dimensions to existing narratives, but more importantly it emphasises the value of the personal and it encourages reflection and the circulation of alternative documentation. Acknowledging and taking advantage of documentation as a process that is characteristic of incompleteness and ambiguity create an opening to a reconciliation with uncertain pasts and futures.

Notes

- 1 Annet Dekker, Gabriella Giannachi, Vivian van Saaze, “Expanding Documentation, and Making the Most of ‘The Cracks in the Wall’,” in *Performing Documentation*, ed. Toni Sant (London: Bloomsbury Publishers, 2017), 61–78.
- 2 José Ramón López, “Filing Procedures,” *Photo Vision* (1994), 24. <https://thephotographersgallery.org.uk/whats-on/camera-observed-photographic-documentation-and-public-museum>.
- 3 <https://www.britannica.com/technology/photography/Documentary-photography>.

- 4 For more information, see <https://thephotographersgallery.org.uk/whats-on/exhibition/camera-observed-photographic-documentation-and-public-museum> and <https://blog.britishmuseum.org/photography-at-the-museum-a-developing-story/>.
- 5 The debates reflect an older discussion in performance documentation, see among many others, Toni Sant, ed. *Documenting Performance. The Context & Processes of Digital Curation and Archiving* (London and New York: Bloomsbury Publishing Plc., 2017), and Becky Edmunds, "A Work of Art from a Work of Art" (2006), <http://beckyedmunds.com/#/on-documentation/4531976852>.
- 6 For a more elaborative account, see Dekker et al., "Expanding Documentation".
- 7 Sol Lewitt, "Paragraphs on Conceptual Art," *Artforum*, 5 (1967): 79–83.
- 8 This notion is explored by, among others, the collaborative research project, *The Next Biennial Should Be Curated by a Machine* (2021), <https://ai.biennial.com/>.
- 9 For more information about their research and findings, see Olia Lialina, "Still There. Ruins and Templates of GeoCities," in *Lost and Living (in) Archives. Collectively Shaping New Memories*, ed. Annet Dekker (Amsterdam: Valiz, 2017): 193–210.
- 10 Trevor Owens, "Digital Culture Is Mass Culture: An Interview With Digital Conservator Dragan Espenschied," *The Signal* (24 March 2014), <https://blogs.loc.gov/thesignal/2014/03/digital-culture-is-mass-culture-an-interview-with-digital-conservator-dragan-espenschied/>.
- 11 I describe this project in relation to online archiving in Annet Dekker, "Between Light and Dark Archiving," in *Digital Art Through the Looking Glass. New Strategies for Archiving, Collecting and Preserving in Digital Humanities*, eds. Oliver Grau, Janina Hoth, and Eveline Wandl-Vogt (Krems: Edition Donau-Universität, 2019), 133–44.
- 12 The traffic and circulation of Twitter is partly due to its millions of bot accounts, which at certain moments was said to comprise at least 15% of all its accounts, for more information, see Onur Varol, Emilio Ferrara, Clayton A. Davis, Filippo Menczer and Alessandro Flammini, "Online Human-Bot Interactions: Detections, Estimation, and Characterization," *Proceedings of the Eleventh International AAAI Conference on Web and Social Media* (3 May 2017): 280–9.
- 13 Benjamin Lee and Edward LiPuma, "Cultures of Circulation: The Imaginations of Modernity," *Public Culture*, 14, no. 1 (2002): 191–213, 192–3.
- 14 I analyse the value of this project in relation to an alternative preservation method, exploring the emergence of a network of care that may potentially form around Štromajer's work and arguing that similar to minute and multiple archival notes, instructions and documentations, a network is part of an invitation, a gesture to the future, to continue a project that was never finished in the first place. Annet Dekker, "Networks of Care," in *The Networked Image in Post-Digital Culture*, eds. Andrew Dewdney and Katrina Sluis (London: Routledge, 2022) 189–207.
- 15 Robert Sakrowski, "EXPUNCTION. Deleting www.intima.org Net Art Works. A Conversation," in *Lost and Living (in) Archives. Collectively Shaping New Memories*, ed. Annet Dekker (Amsterdam: Valiz, 2017), 159–72.
- 16 Annick Bureaud, <http://www.facebook.com/intima/posts/144916102244400>.
- 17 Rodney Harrison, "Beyond 'Natural' and 'Cultural' Heritage: Towards an Ontological Politics of Heritage in the Age of the Anthropocene," *Heritage and Society*, 81, no. 1 (2015): 24–42, 27.
- 18 Sakrowski, "EXPUNCTION," 166.
- 19 Boris Groys, "Art in the Age of Biopolitics. From Artwork to Art Documentation," in *Biomediale. Contemporary Society and Genomic Culture*, ed. Dmitry Bulatov (Kalinigrad: National Center for Contemporary Arts, Yantarny Skaz, 2004), n.p. Online: <https://transmediji.files.wordpress.com/boris-groys-art-in-age-of-biopolitics.docx>.
- 20 Ibid.
- 21 Philip Auslander, *Reactivations: Essays on Performance and Its Documentation* (Ann Harbor: University of Michigan Press, 2018).

- 22 Schneider also alludes to how documentation (as a photograph) is not only a record of a performance but can be seen as a performance itself. See Rebecca Schneider, *Performing Remains: Art and War in Times of Theatrical Reenactment* (London: Routledge, 2011), 154.
- 23 Gabriella Giannachi, “Conserving the Un-conservable: Documenting Environmental Performance for the 21st Century,” *Colloquium 2021, Performance: the Ethics and the Politics of Care*, 29 May 2021, <https://performanceconservationmaterialityknowledge.com/>.
- 24 For more information, see <http://www.morehshin.com/lectures-interviews/>.
- 25 <http://www.morehshin.com/material-speculation-isis>.
- 26 Filippo Lorenzin, “Spread What Has Been Destroyed: Interview With Morehshin Allahyari,” *Digicult* (September 2015), <http://www.digicult.it/news/spread-what-has-been-destroyed-interview-with-morehshin-allahyari/>.
- 27 Morehshin Allahyari and Christiane Paul, “Re-figuring Ourselves – A Conversation,” *Stages* (8 January 2019), <https://www.biennial.com/journal/issue-8/refiguring-ourselves-a-conversation>.
- 28 <http://shewhoseestheunknown.com/yajooj-majooj/#installations>.
- 29 I position this example in the more general framework of archival practice in Annet Dekker, “Making the Past Personal,” in *Alternative Economies of Heritage*, eds. Tracy Ireland, Denise Thwaites and Bethaney Turner. (London: Routledge, forthcoming).
- 30 *Random Exhibition Title Generator* was conceptualised by Rebecca Uchill and programmed by Ben Guaraldi. <https://www.mit.edu/~ruchill/lazycurator.html>.
- 31 Boris Groys, “Art in the Age of Biopolitics. From Artwork to Art Documentation,” in *Art Power*, ed. Boris Groys (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 2008), 54.
- 32 Matthew Plummer-Fernandez, *The Art of Bots. A Practice-based Study of the Multiplicity, Entanglements and Figuration of Sociocomputational Assemblages* (PhD diss., Goldsmiths College, University of London, 2019), 173.
- 33 *Ibid.*, 175.
- 34 *Ibid.*