

# *Preservation Aesthetics*

Shannon Mattern

The New School, New York

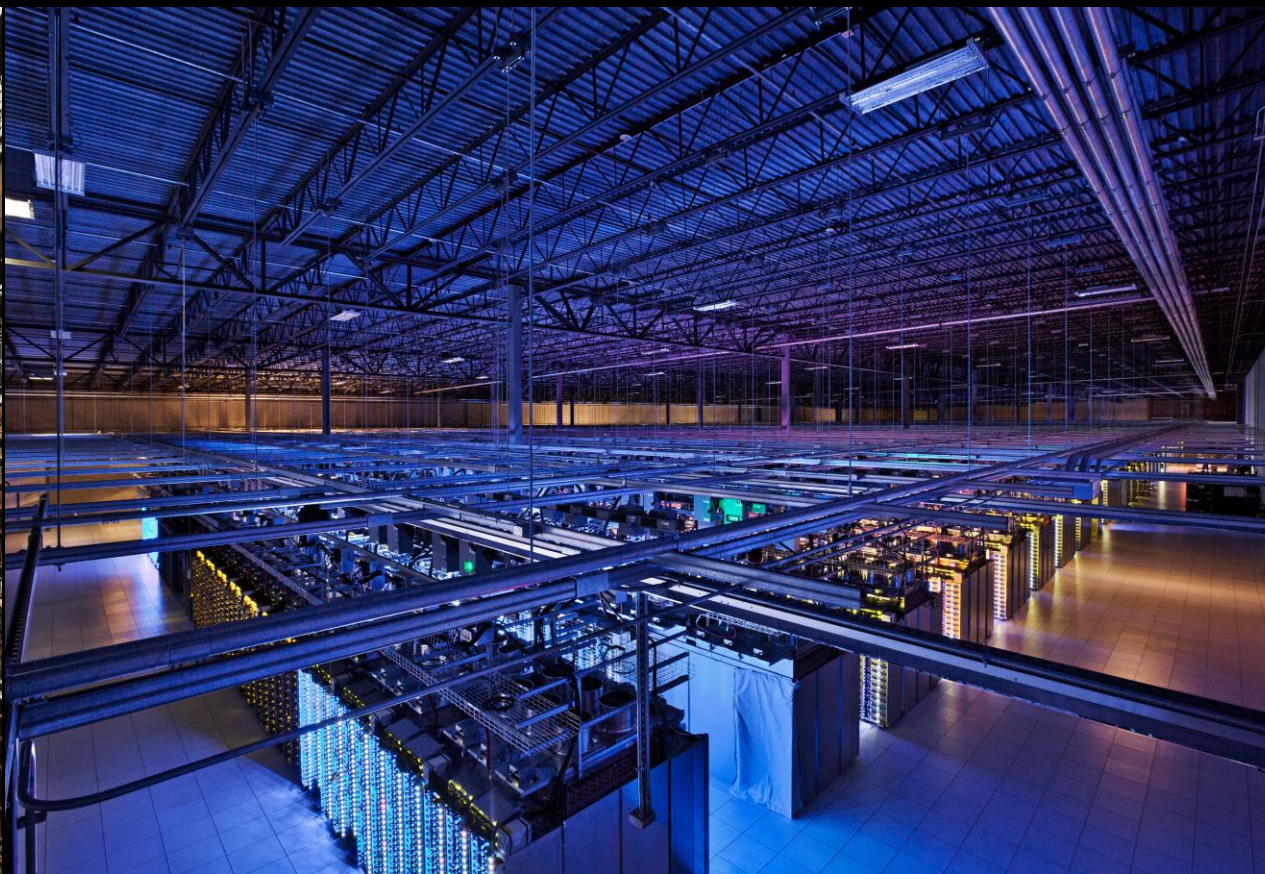
Wordsinspace.net | @shannonmattern





Queens College Library, Oxford





Candida Hofer, Rijkmuseum Library, Amsterdam;  
Google Server Room, Council Bluffs IA; Photo: Connie Zhou



## TREASURE TROVE

At the most mundane level, the National Archives is just that—a storage facility where a small percentage of federal documents and other materials are sent, for legal or other reasons, to be kept for posterity. But scratch the surface and it's a trove of amazing treasures that has captured even Hollywood's imagination, as in the hit film *National Treasure*.

Visitors from all over the world flock to the Archives' main building to see the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution, and the Bill of Rights. Also under lock and key, and not for public view, are items that were used in the Warren Commission investigation into **John F. Kennedy's** assassination, including the clothing the President and his wife wore that day.

Behind the scenes in a special lab, experts restore precious documents and objects to secure their longevity for generations.

In this photograph, conservators examine 18th- and 19th-century illustrated family records known as "frakturs." In the foreground are conservation technician **Daniel Daniels** and senior conservator **Morgan Zinsmeister**, and behind them is senior conservator **Annie Wilker**.

On the table to the right of Daniels and Zinsmeister is the Treaty of Ghent, which ended the War of 1812; behind that is the Jay Treaty of 1794, a contract for peace between the US and Great Britain, also called the Treaty of London.

Begging to us, but just another day at the office for the protectors of the nation's treasures. —CAROL ROSS JOYNT



## Graduate Seminar @ The New School with Shannon Mattern

### FINAL PRESENTATIONS

November 19, 2013 · *by*  
shannon · *in* Class  
Announcements



We'll all be sharing our final projects on December 3 and 10. The schedule of presenters is listed here. We can dedicate 15 minutes to each presenter — including set-up time and Q&A. So, you should probably plan to talk...

### PROCESSING POST ON DATABASE AESTHETICS

December 15, 2013 · *by* Ryan Blum-Kryzstal · *in* Processing Posts

Its no mystery that there is such a profound environmental impact on our planet when it comes to having 24/7 access to our stuff. Glanz's sobering article paints a bleak picture of the "dirty secret" that the information age is costing...

### SYLLABUS

[PDF \(8/26/13\)](#)

### SHANNON'S OFFICE HOURS

Make an appointment via [Google Calendar](#). If you stand me up, I'll deaccession you.

### CATEGORIES

- Application Presentation "Teaser"
- Application Presentations
- Class Announcements
- Events + Exhibitions
- In the News
- Opportunities
- Processing Posts
- Uncategorized

### RECENT ARCHIVE-RELATED NEWS

- [How to Read a Finding Aid - Primary Sources in Archives & Special Collections - LibGuides at Purdue](#)





Thomas Demand,  
*Archive*, 1995



Cory Arcangel



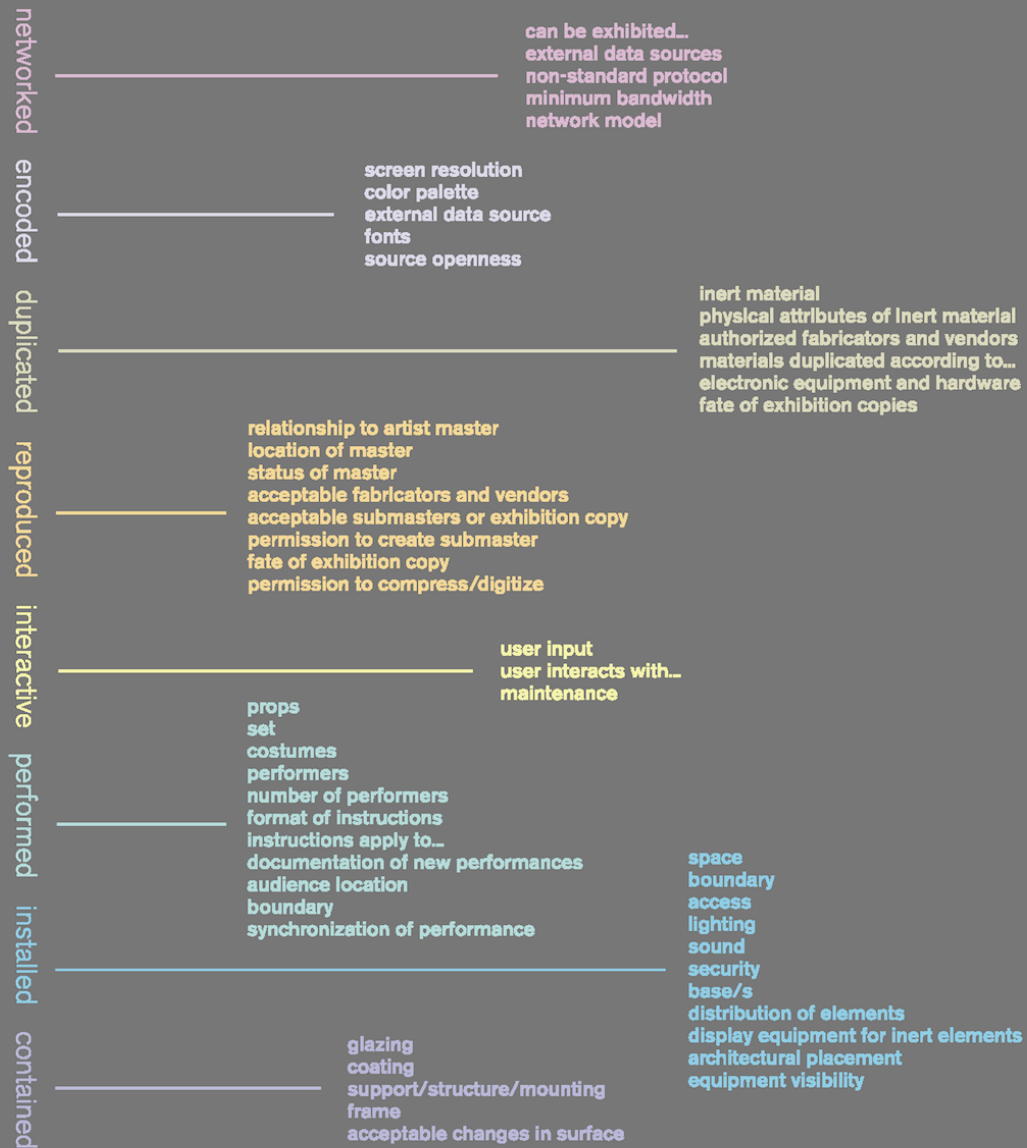
*Preservation of the Aesthetic*

*The Aesthetics of Preservation*





## Variable Media Questionnaire (ideal state)



Answers to the Variable Media Questionnaire embody one of four strategies for preserving an artifact.



**Storage**



**Migration**



**Emulation**



**Reinterpretation**







# RE-COLLECTION

**Art, New Media, and Social Memory**

Richard Rinehart

Jon Ippolito



NEW MUSEUM ARCHIVES

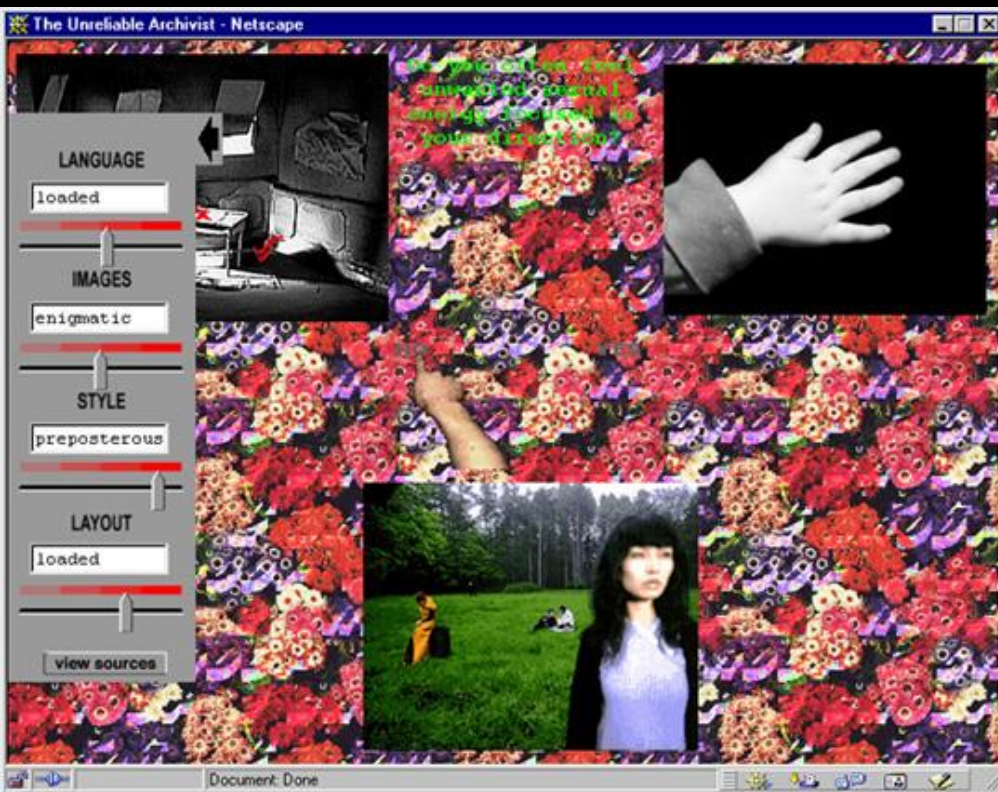
New Museum, XFR STN







William Gibson &  
Dennis Ashbaugh,  
*Agrippa*



WELCOME TO

## *ANNA KARENIN GOES TO PARADISE*

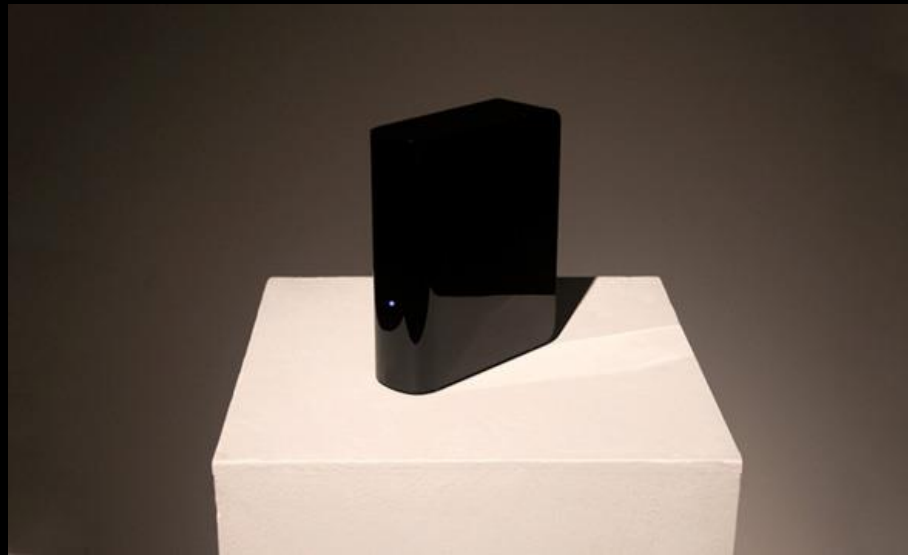
Comedy in three acts and epilogue  
by *olia lialina*  
starring *inna kolosova*



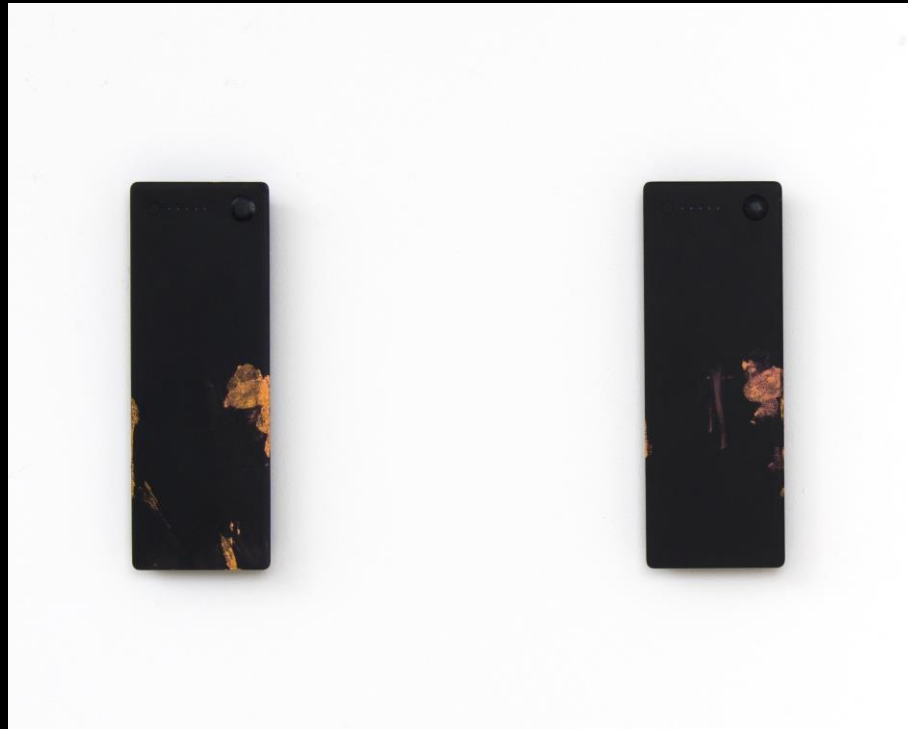
ACT 1 - ANNA LOOKING FOR LOVE  
ACT 2 - ANNA LOOKING FOR TRAIN  
ACT 3 - ANNA LOOKING FOR PARADISE  
EPILOGUE

Three.org, *The Unreliable Archivist*,  
Olia Lialina, “Anna Karenin Goes to Paradise”





Manual Palou, *5 Million Dollars 1 Terabyte* [sculpture consisting of 1 TB external hard drive containing \$5,000,000 worth of illegally downloaded files]



Jason Loeb, *Atrrhpomemoria* [MacBook batteries marked w/ fingerprints in anti-counterfeit ink]



Bookmarks Location: http://1x-upon.com/

Olia Lialina & Dragan  
Espenschied, *Once Upon*

# Three important contemporary web sites, recreated with technology and spirit of late 1997, according to our memories.

Best viewed with [Netscape Navigator 4.03](#) and a screen resolution of 1024x768 pixels, running under Windows 95. We recommend using a Virtual Machine or appropriate hardware, connected to a CRT monitor. If such an environment unachievable, it should be possible to experience the piece with any browser that still supports HTML Frames. The transfer speed of our server is limited to 8 kB/s («dial-up» speed).

~ [olia](#) & [dragan](#), December 2011

**Google+**

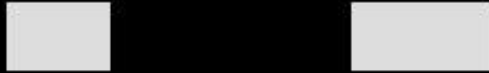
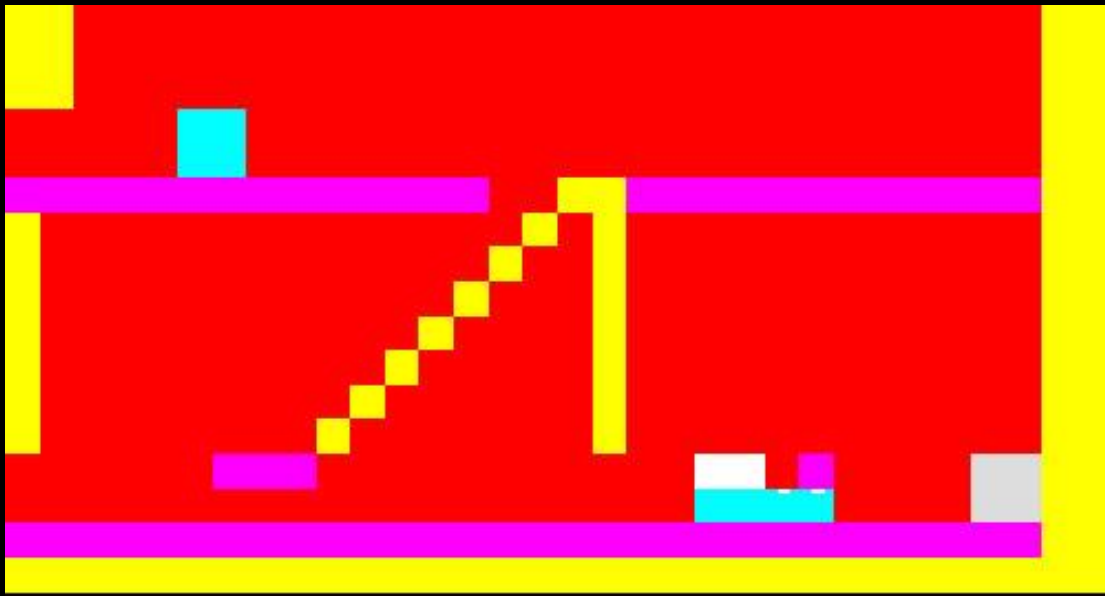
**YouTube**

**Facebook**

Enter as guest!

Watch video in your browser!

Enter as guest!



JODI, *Jet Set  
Wilky Variations*

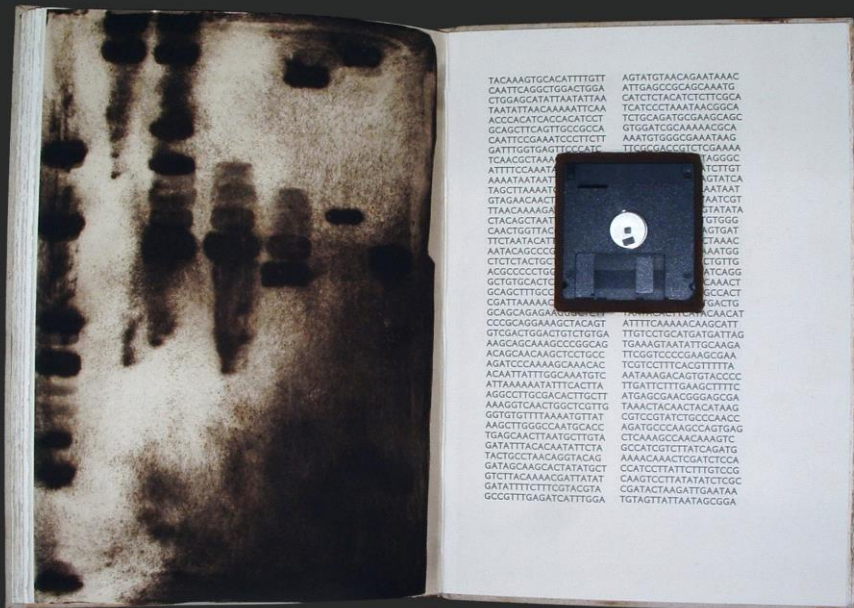


New Museum,  
*XFR STN*

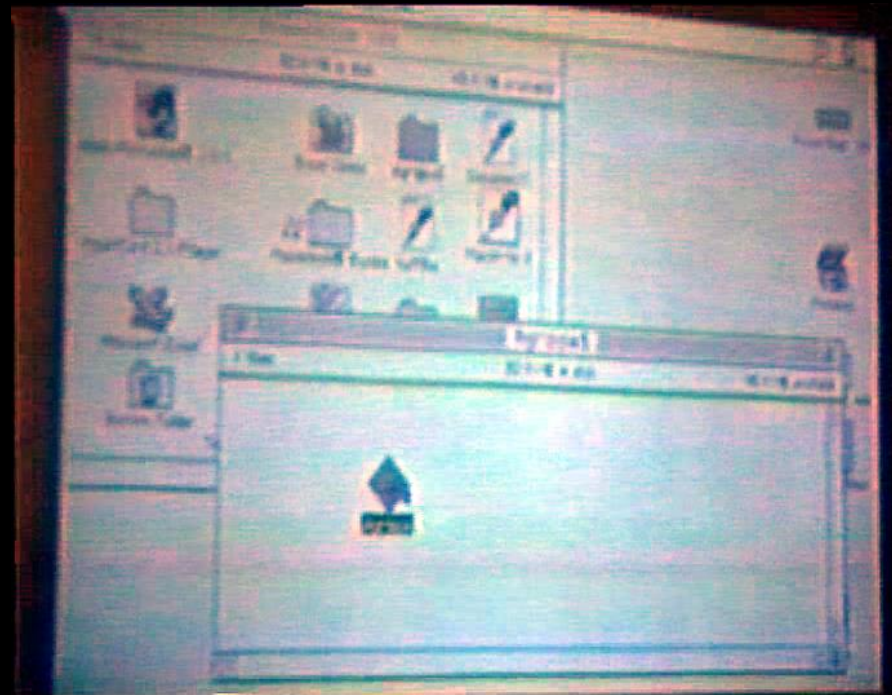


*The Aesthetics of  
Creative*

*Destruction*



Photograph (c) Kevin Begos Jr.



# AUTO-DESTRUCTIVE ART

Demonstration by G. Metzger

SOUTH BANK LONDON 3 JULY 1961 11.45 a.m.—12.15 p.m.

**Art's action painting.** Height 7 ft. Length 17½ ft. Depth 4 ft. Materials: nylon, hydrochloric acid, metal. Technique: 3 nylon canvases coloured white black and an arranged behind each other, in this order: Acid is poured, hung and sprayed on to the nylon which erodes at point of contact within 15 seconds.

**Connection with glass.** Height 13 ft. Width 9½ ft. Materials: Glass, metal, adhesive tape. Technique: The glass sheets suspended by adhesive tape fall on to the canvas ground in a pre-arranged sequence.

## AUTO-DESTRUCTIVE ART

Auto-destructive art is primarily a form of public art for industrial societies.

Self-destructive painting, sculpture and construction is a total unity of idea, site, time, colour, method and timing of the destructive process.

Auto-destructive art can be created with natural forces, traditional art techniques and technological techniques.

The amplified sound of the auto-destructive process can be an element of the total composition.

The artist may collaborate with scientists, engineers.

Self-destructive art can be machine produced and factory assembled.

Auto-destructive paintings, sculptures and constructions have a life time varying from a few moments to twenty years. When the destructive process is complete the work is to be removed from the site and scrapped.

London, 4th November, 1959 G. METZGER

## MANIFESTO AUTO-DESTRUCTIVE ART

Man in Regent Street is auto-destructive.

Rockers, nuclear weapons, are auto-destructive.

Auto-destructive art.

The drop drop dropping of HHI bombs.

Not intended to ruin, (the psychosquad)

Auto-destructive art re-enacts the obsession with destruction, the yearning to which individuals and masses are subjected.

Auto-destructive art demonstrates man's power to accelerate destructive processes of nature and to order them.

Auto-destructive art mirrors the compulsive perfectionism of some manufacture—pulsating to destructive point.

Auto-destructive art is the transformation of technology

into public art. The immense productive capacity, the chaos of capitalism and of Soviet communism, the co-existence of surplus and starvation, the increasing stock-piling of nuclear weapons—more than enough to destroy technological societies; the destructive effect of machinery and of life in vast built-up areas in the process...

Auto-destructive art is art which contains within itself an agent which automatically leads to its destruction within a period of time not to exceed twenty years.

Clear forms of auto-destructive art involve manual manipulation. There are forms of auto-destructive art where the artist has a tight control over the nature and timing of the destructive process, and there are other forms where the artist's control is slight.

Materials and techniques used in creating auto-destructive art include: Acid, Adhesives, Ballistics, Casts, Clay, Combustion, Compression, Corrosion, Corrosion, Cybernetics, Dyes, Elastics, Electricity, Electrolysis, Electronics, Explosives, Feed-back, Glass, Heat, Human Energy, Ice, Ice, Light, Lead, Mass-production, Metal, Motion Pictures, Natural Forces, Nuclear energy, Paint, Pans, Photographs, Plaster, Plastics, Pressure, Radiation, Sand, Solist energy, Sound, Stone, Tapes, Terra-cotta, Yehaton, Water, Waxing, Wire, Wood.

London, 10 March, 1960

G. METZGER

## AUTO-DESTRUCTIVE ART MACHINE ART AUTO CREATIVE ART

Each visible fact absolutely expresses its reality.

Certain machine produced forms are the most perfect forms of our period.

In the evenings some of the finest works of art produced now are dumped on the streets of Soho.

Auto creative art is art of change, growth movement.

Auto-destructive art and auto creative art aim at the integration of art with the advances of science and technology. The immediate objective is the creation, with the aid of computers, of works of art whose movements are programmed and include "self regulation". The operation, by means of electronic devices can have a direct bearing on the action of these works.

Auto-destructive art is an attack on capitalist values and the drive to nuclear annihilation.

23 June 1961

G. METZGER

B.C.M. 2220 London W.C.3.

Printed by W. Hester, Printer (DU) 64, Little Road, London, E.W.3.







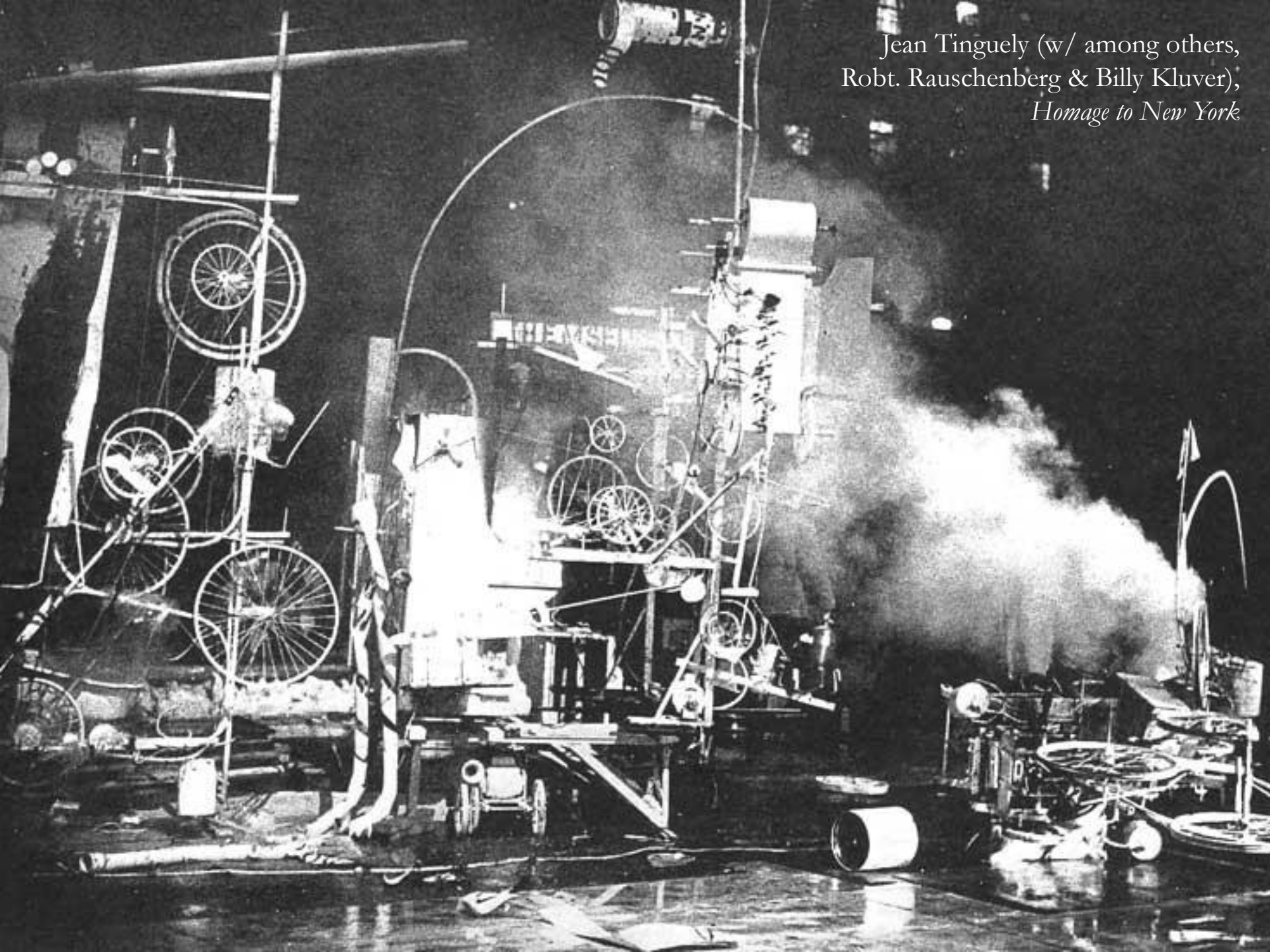
Robert  
Rauschenberg,  
*Erased de  
Kooning Drawing*



Gutai:  
Saburo  
Murakami



Jean Tinguely (w/ among others,  
Robt. Rauschenberg & Billy Kluver),  
*Homage to New York*



Search Filter Open ▾

Works: All

Dept: All

Decade: All

Search by Artist, Work, or Keyword



ADVANCED SEARCH

THUMBNAILS

SLIDESHOW

LIST

SINGLE OBJECT



## SEARCH RESULTS

SHOWING 1 OF 1

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IMAGE PERMISSIONS

Related Links

Jean Tinguely (Swiss, 1925–1991)

SAVE

***Fragment from Homage to New York***

Date: 1960

Medium: Painted metal, fabric, tape, wood, and rubber tires

Dimensions: 6' 8 1/4" x 29 5/8" x 7' 3 7/8" (203.7 x 75.1 x 223.2 cm)

Credit Line: Gift of the artist

MoMA Number: 227.1968

Copyright: © 2014 Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York / ADAGP, Paris

## GALLERY LABEL TEXT

2011

This is one piece of what the artist called a "self-constructing and self-destructing work of art," composed of bicycle wheels, motors, a piano, an addressograph, a go-cart, a bathtub, and other cast-off objects. Twenty-three feet long, twenty-seven feet high, and painted white, the machine was set in motion on March 18, 1960, before an audience in the Museum's sculpture garden.



Yoko  
Ono,  
*Cut Piece*;  
via  
onoverse



# DIAS

## Destruction In Art Symposium

9, 10, 11 September  
1966  
London

**DIAS** extends an invitation to all artists who have employed the element of **DESTRUCTION** to attend the first **DESTRUCTION IN ART** Symposium. If unable to attend, artists are invited to send documentation and photographs for the exhibition.

**DIAS** also invites writers, psychologists, sociologists and others interested, to attend and present papers that explore the relations existing between aggression and destruction in society and **DESTRUCTION IN ART**.

**DIAS** will sponsor a series of events, happenings, expendable environments, films, music and exhibitions that will take place in London throughout September.

**DIAS** Honorary Committee: Mario Amaya; Roy Ascott; Enrico Baj (Milan); Bob Cobbing; Ivor Davies; Jim Haynes; Dom Sylvester Houédard; Miles; Frank Popper (Paris); John Sharkey; Wolf Vostell (Cologne). Honorary Secretary: Gustav Metzger.

I wish to participate in the 3-day Symposium. (fee £20.0.)

I wish to attend the last (public) day of the Symposium, Sunday, 11th September.

I wish to present an Event, etc., as part of the **DIAS** programme.

Please send me the full programme.

Symposium Fee: £2. Symposium, public day, admission 10s.

PAPERS: Maximum length 20 minutes. Please send a summary.

PLEASE WRITE TO: BM/DIAS,  
LONDON, WC1.

BIRMINGHAM City Museum and Art Gallery  
*Paintings from Permanent Collection*  
BIRMINGHAM Icon Gallery, St Martin's House, Bull Ring  
*R. Hewish Aug 2-20*  
BIRMINGHAM Royal Society of Artists, Solihull  
*Gallery 335 Aug 15-20*  
BLANDFORD FORUM Hambledon Gallery  
*Richard Batterham Bowden Aug 13-27*  
BOURTON-ON-THE-WATER Halford House Art Galleries  
*Second Annual Exhibition 30 Oct*  
BRADFORD Lane Gallery, 40 North Parade  
*Prints Aug 10-30*  
BRIGHTON Gallery Vincitore, 1a Bartholomews  
*International Artists to Aug 26*  
BRIGHTON Art Gallery  
*John Bratby July 23-Sept 4*  
BRISTOL Arnolfini Gallery, 42 Triangle West  
*'The Golden Mile' kinetic and concrete poetry Aug 13-Sept 28*  
BRISTOL City Art Gallery, Queens Rd, Clifton  
*The Art of Lace: V. & A. exh. 10 Aug 20*  
*Reeves Bi-centenary Exh. from Aug 27*  
CAMBRIDGE Arts Council Gallery, 2 All Saints' Passage  
*Young Contemporaries 1966 Aug 6-27*  
CAMBRIDGE Magdalene St Gallery  
*19th and 20th c paintings and drawings - Aug*  
CARDIFF Howard Roberts Gallery, 69/74 St Mary St  
*Undefined Situation 10 Aug 13*  
COLCHESTER The Minorities, 74 High St  
*Contemporary Hangings from Aug 13*  
CROYDON Fairfield Halls, Park Lane  
*Riesco Collection of Chinese Ceramics*  
CROYDON Nicholas Treadwell Gallery, 18 St Georges Walk  
*Group Exhibition - Aug*  
DORKING Westcott Art Centre, 5 Main Rd  
*Doris Seidler, Bernard Kay to Oct*  
DULVERTON Dulverton Gallery  
*6th Group Summer Exh. 10 Aug 20*  
EASTBOURNE Towner Art Gallery, Old Town  
*Invasion Artistique: Normandy artists to Sept 11*  
EDINBURGH The National Gallery of Scotland  
*Albrecht Durer: woodcuts to Sept 30*  
ETON Thames Gallery, 27 High St  
*Serge de Tureville 10 Aug 12*  
*Sheila Chesser Aug 22-Sept 9*  
FIFE Kirkcaldy Art Gallery & Museum  
*Chinese Pottery and Porcelain: V. & A. exh*  
GLASGOW Art Gallery & Museum  
*Victorian Art to Aug 31*

HASSOCKS Döschling Gallery  
*Clarke-Smith, Bachelor to Aug 20*  
*Danièle Baron Aug 23 to Sept*  
HURSTBOURNE TARRANT Bladen Gallery, Nr Andover  
*International Crafts, Jean Bratby to Sept 23*  
KENDAL Abbot Hall Art Gallery  
*Peter Brook Aug 5-Sept 8*  
KING'S LYNN Fennyng Art Gallery, Guildhall of St George  
*John Ashby Aug 9-19*  
KINGSTON UPON HULL Perens Art Gallery  
*Oriental Puppets to Oct 9*  
LETCHWORTH Leitchworth Gallery  
*Gilman, Haskins Aug 13-Sept 3*  
LINCOLN Bailgate Galleries  
*Primitives Aug 22-Sept*  
LLANDRINDOD WELLS Temple Gallery  
*Bernard Ellis to Aug 20*  
MANCHESTER Colin Jellicoe Gallery, 552 Claremont Rd  
*Summer Exhibition to Oct*  
NEWCASTLE UPON TYNE Westgate Art Gallery, 7 The Side  
*Jack Richards to Sept 7*  
NEWCASTLE UPON TYNE The Stone Gallery, 10 St Mary's Pl  
*XXth c British and Continental Paintings - Aug*  
NORWICH Assembly House  
*Banbury, Small, Whitmore, Scott etc*  
OXFORD Bear Lane Gallery, 6 Bear Lane  
*Summer Exhibition Aug 3-11*  
READING Century Galleries  
*Bicat, Thompson etc - Aug*  
RUGBY Galleries 39  
*Continental artists - Aug*  
RYE Rye Art Gallery, Ypres Studio, East St  
*17th-20th c paintings - Aug*  
ST IVES Penwith Gallery, Back Road West  
*Summer Exhibition to Aug 30*  
SOUTHAMPTON Hamwic Gallery, 21 Northam Rd  
*David Saunders Aug 8-31*  
SOUTHAMPTON Southampton Art Gallery  
*'Creamsires' V. & A. exh. 10 Oct*  
SOUTHEND-ON-SEA Beecroft Art Gallery  
*Icon Hitchens Aug 20-Sept 18*  
SUDBURY Gainsborough's House  
*Christopher Perkins Aug 6-29*  
WINCHESTER The Talbot Hotel, 83 High St  
*Barbara Williams Aug 9-21*  
WOODBRIIDGE The Stable Gallery  
*Tony Krikhaar Aug 1-21*  
WOODBRIIDGE Art Gallery, 26 Market Hill  
*W. J. Holdsworth Aug 1-13*  
*Monica Barry Aug 14-27*





Weiner Gruppe, 2<sup>nd</sup> Literary Cabaret, 1959, Vienna



Gustav Metzger



[Search Filter Open](#)Works: **All**Dept: **All**Decade: **All**

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MoMA Number:	227.1968
Copyright:	© 2014 Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York / ADAGP, Paris

## GALLERY LABEL TEXT

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This is one piece of what the artist called a "self-constructing and self-destructing work of art," composed of bicycle wheels, motors, a piano, an addressograph, a go-cart, a bathtub, and other cast-off objects. Twenty-three feet long, twenty-seven feet high, and painted white, the machine was set in motion on March 18, 1960, before an audience in the Museum's sculpture garden.





## Breaking It Up at the Museum

1960



Personal DVD 14.95 ↕

Add to Cart

Summary

Credits

In the Spring of 1960, my friend, the sculptor, Jean Tinguely set up a huge "self-constructing/self-destructing machine" in the garden of The Museum of Modern Art, also known as the Sculpture Court. He called it his Homage to New York.

When it was turned on it whirled, burned, whistled and clanked, to the delight of the reserved museum audience and ground out poems, music and art before beating itself into a fiery frenzy and leaving its wreckage strewn about the museum courtyard. Clouds of smoke were everywhere. Then out of the audience stepped a man in uniform who presented Jean with a document he took to be an expression of artistic enthusiasm, but which turned out to be a citation for disturbing the peace and violating the City fire code. I'm not sure if anyone ever paid it.

D A Pennebaker

"It is senseless to ask whether or not Tinguely's machines are art. What they show in a very significant way is man's struggle for survival in a scientific world."

— Richard Huelsenbeck



*Vitrines,  
Vision Machines  
& Other Aestheticized  
Technologies of Preservation*



*Theaster Gates, Dorchester Projects*







Mark Dion, *Tate Thames Dig*





Mark Dion,  
*The Cabinet of the Machines of Capital*



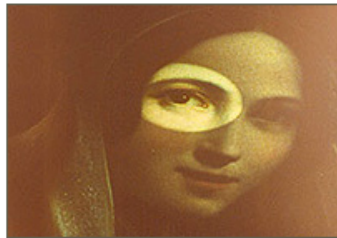
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## Artful History: A Restoration Comedy

A Film by Jason Simon and Mark Dion



Works of art can offer the illusion of timeless and permanent beauty. But that illusion is often purchased at the cost of hours of work by restorers who can either save them from decay, or damage them irreparably.

A work of art may be viewed as a masterpiece, a document of the past, or a commercially valuable item. The job of the restorers - whose efforts color our perceptions of artworks - lies at the very heart of these competing views.

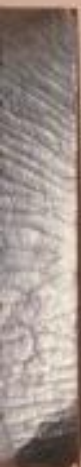
Through interviews with a former restorer willing to spill the secrets of the trade, ARTFUL HISTORY offers up a rogues' gallery of dubious restoration efforts. The film includes shocking horror stories of works altered to increase their commercial value: a painting cut into three to create a triptych, a 19th-century forgery disguised so that it can be passed off as an original, antiquarian pieces of African art with limbs sawed off or limbs from other sources glued on.

But this documentary goes beyond shock value. ARTFUL HISTORY offers a thoughtful look at the world of art restoration and raises crucial questions about art, authenticity, and the tension between historical and commercial value.



*"A trenchant critique, it dissects the profitable discourse that envelops fine art."* - **Village Voice**





Small white label with illegible text.

Small white label with illegible text.



Mark Dion,  
*Library for the Birds  
of Massachusetts*



Size of this preview: 900 x 500 pixels. Other resolutions: 300 x 167 pixels.  
Full resolution (SVG file, nominally 940 x 415 pixels, file size: 1.45 MB)

Camille Henrot, *Grosse Fatigue*

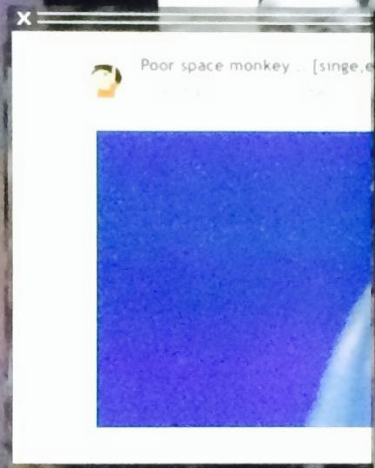






1D the man you wanted x 10  
vs, overall consistency of matter changed with  
20 or 30 years  
50 - or many  
for 60 or 70  
at matter changed with

arts lib



2\_NUCLEAR



ABILITY: Action and satisfaction.

bilateral symmetry

One Cell



Ann Hamilton, *Accountings*





Ann Hamilton, *corpus*





Ann Hamilton,  
*the event of a thread*





Radio-in-  
a-bag



Ann Hamilton, *indigo blue*





*tropos*















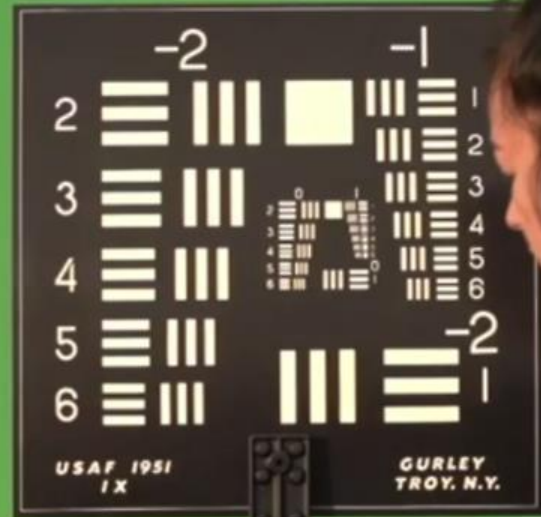


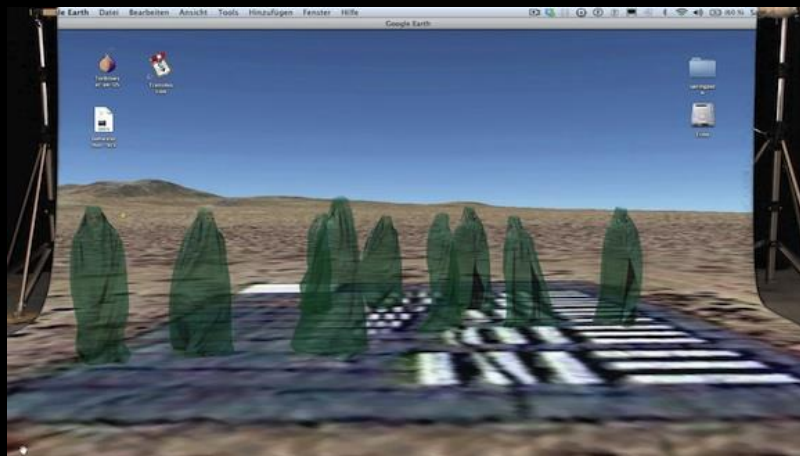
**I AM COMPLETELY INVISIBLE.**





Pattern based on original de







UNCHARTED  
TERRITORY



THE CLOUD

THE NEW TERRITORY

SOFTWARE  
AS A SERVICE

SAAS

ACTUALISE

CLOUD



**On exposed hills, the  
Weather Underground  
will bust corporate  
clouds using orgone  
cannons.**

**STRIKE**





Mark Dion,  
*Landfill*



Camille Henrot,  
*Grosse Fatigue*





*Thank you.*

wordsinspace.net | @shannonmattern