

## One Moment (Nothing Lives Forever)

*No matter how intelligent archiving agents are in the future, they will be poor substitutes if they can't represent an individual, idiosyncratic, and imaginative point of view.* Steve Deitz

The contemporary public art institution is a storehouse of knowledge and artwork of the present day and recent past, an immeasurable aggregate of the multiple experiences and stories of artists and their works, respective audiences, as well as all people involved. Differentiated from a 'collection' by virtue of being the documentation and support materials of an exhibition, performance or event rather than the artwork itself, a gallery archive comprises of a record of past proceedings - a veritable repository of the life of a contemporary art institution. Consisting of related items such as artist names, dates, photos, pictures, descriptions, essays, didactic materials, posters, displays and invitations, an archive of these items is often mapped along chronological frameworks, representing a sum total story of history that far exceeds more than any one person might have been able to experience. As a rational system, mainstream notions of a successful archive posit it as only as good as its ability to reliably represent data, privileging logic and accessibility over the flow of personal memory, emotion and imagination. When structured objectively and confined to these strict classification schemas, the organisation of past events and stories as once dynamic events are reduced to notational moments along a linear trajectory.

In what way can this past be relativised with the present, released from its confines along a lineal-temporal axis? Freed from a purely informational thesis, in what way can it be returned to those who produced it? As narrators of artistic production, it has always been the responsibility of the art institution to shape and interpret this story. But artists have not always had the opportunity to directly sculpt, manipulate or contest this story telling, and artistic production has frequently been separated from its supposedly distanced and objective documentation as cultural production.

Skeptical of a static and objectifying view of the past, this exhibition entitled *One Moment (Nothing Lives Forever)* invites artists to review the Apexart archive to interpret, speculate, add to and organise their own understanding of the documentary materials, rereading the past via what historian Ernst Troeltsch describes as "always-new and always-peculiar individualizations". Six artists will be invited; three will have had previously exhibited at Apexart and will already be represented in the archive, and three others who will have had no association with Apexart whatsoever. Each artist will spend time working with the archive prior to the exhibition and then create a project in which to represent the research or process.

Rather than proposing a circumscribed and singular definition of an archive, *One Moment (Nothing Lives Forever)* aims to return that infrastructure back to artists, creating ways in which they have agency over its shape and conception. In exploring how the many ways a history of a specific place, and in particular the personal experience of previous events, can be understood as fragmentary and contingent moments, this exhibition hopes to exchange an understanding of past events viewed through the objective lens of chronology with a subjective and personal account from artists with a previous involvement, or conversely, only a fleeting relationship. By privileging an expanded field of narratives, *One Moment* reexamines the institution's traditionally asymmetrical relationship to authority and knowledge, opening up the consideration that readings based on rumour, conjecture or ephemeral experience form as important an aspect of an institutions' history as close relationships.

### Artists:

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| Allen Ruppberg     | Exhibited at Apexart in <i>SLAD</i> , February 13 - March 15, 1997 curated by Mary Jones and Janice Krasnow. Ruppberg is one of the first generation of Conceptual artists. Working in diverse ways from installation to newmedia, he often uses books and posters in his installations, exploring their potential as objects as well as for ideas.  |
| Maria Eichhorn     | Exhibited at Apexart in <i>Lost and Found</i> , May 23 - June 23, 2001 curated by René Block. Eichhorn's 'recent work has addressed the economics of art. Often presenting only small amounts of information, Eichhorn aims to provoke a thinking process in the observer, to awaken curiosity and stimulate a search for further knowledge.' <a href="http://www.biennial.com">www.biennial.com</a>   |
| Matthew Buckingham | Exhibited at Apexart in <i>sans an exhibition</i> , November 13 - December 21, 2002. 'Buckingham is very interested in the land that is America... He examines its natural and social legacies... often inviting his viewers to look at its history through the everyday.' <a href="http://www.murrayguy.com">www.murrayguy.com</a>  |
| Simon Starling     | 'Starling creates complex narrative situations that suggest previously unacknowledged connections. With transformation, displacement and re-crafting of seemingly common objects, Starling presents links between cultures and histories that have been observed, collected and unpacked... The layers of subsequent information point to an optimistic (yet failed) modernist past and its significance for the future.' <a href="http://www.caseykaplangallery.com">www.caseykaplangallery.com</a> |
| Emma Kay           | 'British artist Emma Kay is known for a variety of witty and innovative works that consider the subjective nature of knowledge... extend(ing) her interest in the systems by which we collectively perceive, store and access bodies of knowledge, whilst raising specific questions about the institution's status as a source of knowledge.' <a href="http://www.tate.org.uk">www.tate.org.uk</a>  |
| Rod Dickinson      | Recreating complex reenactments of past events such as Dr Stanley Milgram's infamous 1961 social psychology experiment 'Obedience to Authority' and the horrifying 1978 Jonestown massacre in Guyana, British artist Dickinson "explores... the structure and mechanisms that underpin systems of belief and social control." <a href="http://www.sparwasserhq.de">www.sparwasserhq.de</a>   |