



Abstracts 2022



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Abstracts 2022 is published in conjunction with the 110th CAA Annual Conference and is the document of record for content presented. With a wide range of topics, *Abstracts 2022* highlights recent scholarship of leading art historians, artists, curators, designers, and other professionals in the visual arts at all career stages. The publication features summaries of all sessions and presentations, as submitted by chairs and speakers, as well as abstracts of exhibitor sessions. Affiliated Society and CAA Professional Committee sessions include their respective names under the session title. All content reflects the program as of December 20, 2021. As a scholarly organization devoted to the pursuit of independent scholarship, CAA does not condone theft or plagiarism of anyone's scholarship, whether presented orally or in writing. Participants at the conference are not allowed to make personal audio or video recordings of any session at the Annual Conference without the express permission of all presenters. If you believe your work has been stolen or plagiarized by some other person, we encourage you to contact the publisher so that an investigation might be conducted, if appropriate.

CAA acknowledges this conference was produced during ongoing the Covid-19 pandemic of 2021, through many challenges for individuals and institutions within our membership.

Cover image: *Riding coat*, Anonymous, British, ca. 1760, The Met, Purchase, Mr. and Mrs. Alan S. Davis Gift, 1976

Cover design: Allison Walters

Conserving Performance, Performing Conservation

Chairs: Hanna Barbara Holling, University College London; Jules Pelta Feldman, Bern University of the Arts

How can a work of performance – ephemeral, site- and time-sensitive, possibly tied to the body of the artist – be conserved? This question has long been answered by recourse to documentation and performance “relics,” the tangible, exhibitable and, above all, collectible remains of performances. Yet in the past decade, museums have begun to acquire live artworks and restage historical ones, lending urgency to the practical as well as theoretical problems of conserving works of art long considered too ephemeral to be conservable. As contemporary art has grown more demanding, conservation has also grown as a discipline, developing new discourses and practices that both revise and expand the conservator’s role. No longer confined behind the scenes, conservators are now routinely asked to consult on acquisitions, direct complex installations, or even creatively partake in the reinstantiation of conceptual and performance works. Conservators accordingly have a new consciousness of their influence on the work of art and thus the course of art history. This panel, which has been organized within a collaborative research initiative “Performance: Conservation, Materiality, Knowledge,” examines performance as the object of conservation, seeking contributions from scholars, conservators, archivists, and others who address theoretical and practical questions related to the ongoing life of performance works in institutions and beyond, as well as explorations of the conservator’s role in bringing liveness into the museum.

Conservation as transcorporeal labour and play: An ethnographic study on calibrating classical musical works in bodies

Denise Petzold

In the last decades, contemporary art has become increasingly diverse and thus challenging to conservators. In performance art, bodies – human as well as nonhuman ones – have come to play a key role in processes of conservation, for example through practicing, rehearsing, and re-performing artworks. One place in which bodies have been trained for centuries and still are trained to conserve artworks is the music conservatoire. By understanding the conservatoire as a place where musicians become expert maintainers of musical heritage, this paper turns to classical music to explore what insights contemporary art conservators might gain from how musicians learn to perform works. I show how students and teachers – rather than being mere ‘transmitters’ of artworks – actively engage in a conservation practice in which human bodies and nonhuman instruments intertwine in processes of transcorporeal labour and play. Drawing on a year of ethnographic research (observations and qualitative interviews) of three violoncello classes at the Conservatorium Maastricht, I examine how in bodies and cellos together the ambivalences and boundaries of the works’ identities are negotiated. Thereby, musical works become engrained into bodies as sets of individually choreographed, fine-calibrated

motions, turning the musicians’ bodies and instruments into material archives through which musical memory and history are actualised. From this, I draw conclusions for contemporary art conservation about the role of human and nonhuman bodies in processes of conservation, conservation as a transcorporeal effort, and the idea of who or what a conservator can be.

The Future is Now: Digital Archives as Performance Conservation at The Metropolitan Museum of Art
Megan Metcalf, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, **Lauren Rosati**, The Metropolitan Museum of Art and **Limor Tomer**, Metropolitan Museum of Art

Last year, when the majority of live events around the world were put on hold due to the coronavirus, producers adapted quickly to organize performances for virtual spaces. What will be their legacy once this time of crisis is over? This presentation uses examples from the Metropolitan Museum of Art to explore the role of digital documentation in producing performances for virtual audiences and to speculate on what the future holds for preserving these experiences. It argues that, as these performances incorporate distribution and documentation into their conception, they disrupt conventional thinking about conservation that characterizes it as something after or outside the artwork—and places it at the heart of a work’s creation. As such, these projects extend ideas about documentation as critical to a performance’s ontology, introduced in the performance art of the 1960s and 70s, and give them new expression today in the digital sphere. The demand for virtual events at the Met prompted its curators, artists, and digital producers to experiment with new ways of thinking about “liveness,” which has implications for the collection and preservation of time-based media at the Met. This not only pressures the distinction between an artwork and its documentation, the museum and the archive, but also distinctions between curatorial departments, museum protocols, and professional competencies. Finally, lost performances from the Met’s history—both recent and in the distant past—provide insights into the stakes of conserving the productions of this unusual time.

Conserving performance art: The materiality of the gesture
Paul Couillard, Toronto Performance Art Collective

Performing arts traditions tend to treat works as texts—scores, scripts, and choreographies—that endure by being reinterpreted by new performers. Visual art traditions seek to preserve objects crafted by their creators. Contemporary performance art practices, however, tend to view the unique temporal, spatial, material and relational conditions of a performance’s production as the very “flesh” of the work. Consequently, historical exhibitions of performance art tend to focus on material remains: objects, recordings and other documentation that both come out of and stand in for a body of work. While Jones (1997, 2011), Auslander (2006) and others have argued that such documents are a vital part of performance art practice, and, indeed, are likely to transmit an artist’s ideas to a much wider audience than any actual performance, it is little wonder that Phelan (1993) has argued that the ontology of a performance is to be found in its disappearance. Exhibitions of remains often have a feeling of

deadness or void despite the vitality of the performances they document. Yet performance art is rooted in action. I propose an alternate strategy for reanimating historical performance art works that focuses on their underlying gestures. This paper will focus on my current research project, *Manifest Gestures*—a retrospective of the work of Canadian performance art duo Randy and Berenicci, who created an internationally recognized body of time-based live and digital performative works between 1975 and 2005. This project offers both a theoretical and methodological framework for reanimating the "gestural" in performance art.

An Ecology of Worth: The "Rediscovery" of Charlotte Posenenske, 2007–2019

Ian Wallace, Graduate Center, City University of New York

The questions raised by the acquisition and conservation of Charlotte Posenenske's *Reliefs*, *Vierkantrohre* (Square Tubes), and *Drehflügel* (Revolving Vane)—all of which were conceived in the mid-1960s to be sold, in unlimited series, at the cost of their production—lie at the center of a greater shift in museum acquisition policies whereby diverse materials have displaced the concept of an auratic, original object. While many museums have acquired Posenenske's work in the past decade, there is wide variation in the material collected, from sketches and early studies (MoMA, New York) to aged particleboard prototypes (Tate Modern, London) and new re-fabrications (MMK, Frankfurt). This paper tracks recent curatorial approaches to Posenenske's work through three key exhibitions that established what I call an "ecology of worth" around her work. 2007's *Documenta 12* situated her among a coterie of roughly-contemporaneous, international practices and paving the way for its reintroduction to the market. A few years later, a 2010 exhibition at New York's Artists Space invited three contemporary artists to reconfigure Posenenske's sculptures, retooling her emphasis on cooperation for the production of social capital. Most recently, Dia Beacon's 2019 exhibition "Work in Progress" applied new standards of dating to demarcate new categorical hierarchizations within Posenenske's oeuvre and to emphasize her works' historical value. Through analyses of these exhibitions, I argue that the variable treatment of Posenenske's work indicates a conflict between the artist's intention of devaluation, the historical value of the performance "relic," and art's economic value as cultural property.

Creative Practice as Pedagogical Practice III

NATIONAL ART EDUCATION ASSOCIATION

Chair: Amy Pfeiler-Wunder, NAEA

How does creative practice using artistic inquiry, artist methodologies, and interdisciplinary collaborations inform pedagogical practices? We explore the essence of personal art practice as research—creative inquiry—and its link to pedagogical practices. How does theory, practice, research and artmaking blur boundaries with pedagogical practices? Drawing from narrative inquiry to deeply understand one's experience (Clandinin, 2013) our narrative stories interplay with art based practice using multiple forms of artistic inquiry. Collage pedagogy illuminates the range of disparate images individuals are bombarded with daily reinscribing images in artmaking to provided multiple perspectives necessary for critical engagement (Garofalo & Gaudelius, 2008). Our practice as artists blends our work as theorist and practitioner where we theorize about our subject while also exploring and experimenting with how to frame our work conceptually (Marshall, 2014; Sullivan, 2005). We provide tools to foster creative thinking and conceptual skills inherent in art-based inquiry. From school art as material, to A/r/tography and doing ordinary tasks, and the stitching, binding, sewing and layering of artist books and research journals, we explore the interplay between making, teaching and learning.

School as Material and Teacher as Conceptual Artist Part III

Jorge Rafael Lucero

The topics of this paper are "school as material" and "teacher as conceptual artist". If school—conceptualized beyond schooling—can be thought of as material, how do artists who work as teachers (or through teaching) make that material pliable? How do they then practice with that material as conceptual artists? First, a robust material literacy must emerge. Artists' working in this manner need to generatively grapple with the materiality of school intending to find its points of resistance, softness, and pliability. In a dialogical/horizontalized setting the artist may need to learn the mechanics and logistics of being within the learning community and engaging with its stakeholders. This material learning happens alongside the artist performing a deep textual-review of the various fields that are at play in that particular artist's inquiry (e.g. local school history, contemporary art theory and practice, philosophy of education, etc.). The artist and the communities they become a part of—as well intentioned as they may be—cannot afford to dabble in bad pedagogy or bad art! All the while expertise and concretization must be contested indefinitely as part of the inherent dynamism of both art and learning. School as material is a continuous project that requires the artist is dedicated to the process for the de-spectacularized long-term. As such, "school as material" and "teacher as conceptual artist" begin to fall out of the socially engaged art paradigm because over time these modes-of-operation decrease in visibility—and artworld cache—as the life/art lines truly become blurred.