

**Introduction to MIAP: Howard Besser | Final: Dylan Lorenz (dylan.lorenz@gmail.com) 12/10/13**

**Dylan Lorenz Intro to MIAP Final Project:**

**Create, Present and Store:**

**A[n Initial] Survey of Moving Image Artists from The School of the Art Institute of Chicago  
Class of 1999**

**Abstract:**

I'm interested in how technological changes in moving image media inform how moving image artists create, show and archive their work. Specifically, I'm interested in what creative process or techniques may be lost or are discovered as moving image artists create work with new technological developments. Changes with digital content acquisition, digital post-production and digital high-definition presentation over the past 15 to 20 years are the three developments I want to focus on.

Graduates of film schools and media based art programs and the late 1990s were some of the last moving image creators who were taught to create work with entirely film based workflow. While analog video, digital video and analog to digital workflows were available at that time, access to software, digital hardware and the cost of output to film or resultant digital video images made the 16mm workflow preferable to many artists. Syncing sound, matching back to camera originals and projecting a film print was a standard easily accessible for new artists even with its higher costs.

Many technological developments providing more accessible digital video production and presentation emerged in the 1990s into the 2000s. When interviewing moving image creators, I focused on three developments. The first is digital video post-production such as Final Cut Pro (first released by Apple in Firewire / DV format support in 1999). This made non-linear editing with a standard definition broadcast quality output feasible with a personal Macintosh computer. The second innovation was the development of hi-quality broadband without the needing to pay for bandwidth (first made widely available in 2005 via sites like YouTube). The third innovation is the capability of high-definition and digital video projection (standardized by the DCP format in 2009).

The moving image artists I will focus on were all graduates of the MFA program of The School of the Art Institute of Chicago (SAIC) in 1999. They all created their first work in the mid to late 1990s

either on video or film. But did create their thesis films on 16mm with an entirely film based workflow, from shooting, to development, to editing the soundtrack, conforming the negative and creating a print for exhibition. They all have continuously created moving image work since that time and I wanted to see how technological developments inform how they create, present and store their work.

For the purposes of this paper, I focus on two moving image artists mainly due to their accessibility. Each of them works and lives in or near New York City. I wanted to view where they create and store their work, document it to some extent and to interview them there. I would be interested in including other artist from this graduating class. This is not intended to be a comprehensive study of each artist's work. I sought to focus on three of their works: one completed before 2000 or when digital post-production was a widely accessible option; one completed after 2000, but before 2006 when online distribution was widely adopted; and one work after online video was prominent and when digital cinema became a viable option for presentation.

## **The Artists**

Jenny Perlin, (b. 1970) is a Brooklyn based filmmaker and visual artist who creates moving image based work mainly exhibited in gallery spaces and museums. Her work has shown at the Guggenheim Museum, MoMA, Mass MoCA, the Simon Preston Gallery, the Museum of Fine Arts (Houston), and The Kitchen in New York City. She teaches in the Media and Culture department at the New School, has previously taught at Sarah Lawrence, Cooper Union, Hampshire College and worked as a Graduate Advisor at the San Francisco Art Institute, University of Pennsylvania and the TransArt program in New York and Berlin. Perlin has created over 30 moving images works since 1994 and primarily works 16mm and standard definition video.

Amie Siegel, (b. 1974) is a visual artist and filmmaker who teaches at Harvard University and has a studio in Cambridge as well as one currently in New York City. Siegel's moving image work has shown as single or multiple channel installations in gallery environments, have had theatrical runs in independent movie theaters and has shown within internationally renowned film festivals. Her work has been shown at the Whitney Museum, MoMa/PS1, The British Film Institute, The National Gallery

of Art, Anthology Film Archives and as part of the Cannes Film Festival, The Berlin International Film Festival and The New York Film Festival. She has been part of the Harvard faculty since 2008, has been a has been a fellow of the DAAD Berliner-Künstlerprogramm, Guggenheim Foundation and has been awarded a grant from the Princess Grace Foundation the Foster Prize in 2010 and a 2012 Sundance Film Institute Film Fund.

## **The Questions**

I asked the following questions of each artist while interviewing them about three of their works:

1. How has your work changed (if at all) as digital technologies have made shooting, post and exhibition more accessible?
2. Has video post-production altered creative decisions in your work? If so, how?
3. How do you feel about putting your older work online, when it wasn't intended as an online video?
4. Have you sought to have your film work shown on film as much as possible? Have your thoughts changed about showing on film since you first started making work?
5. How do you go about storing the moving image elements in your work? How do you go about storing non-moving images which make up the work (animation elements, drawings, research documents)?
6. What do you consider the "master" of your works?
7. Does an institution have elements or masters of your work into their collection? If so, could you share your experience about this?
8. Do you consider any of your work archived and preserved?
9. What are some advantages to having worked produced, distributed and archived on film?
10. What are some advantages to having worked produced, distributed and archived on video?

## **Studios and Storage**

Jenny Perlin works out of a studio on the third floor of a large, four-floor building in Gowanus, Brooklyn. The building has studio space for dozens of other artist and is about a thousand feet from the Gowanus canal. Perlin had temporarily moved from Brooklyn to live in Berlin in 2012 and sub-let her apartment. In the process of preparing to move she brought all of her 16mm negatives, prints and

elements to her studio and boxed them up in plastic containers with lids. Original drawings were also kept in the studio either rolled up on the storage shelf or flat in large portable portfolios. Her video masters and source tapes remained in storage area of a basement of the apartment she was sub-letting. The process of moving and repackaging her work gave her the opportunity to follow some suggestions she had heard for storing her film (for few semesters, she commuted with Bill Brand to Hampshire College once a week and knows Lynn Sachs and Matthew Buckingham and told me she felt they all may have been people who told her proper ways to store film). She knew to take all the film out of plastic bags, place them in plastic cans and to ensure there was good air flow where the film was stored.

Overall, this was the case when I looked in the containers she housed her films in. Some of the larger plastic containers with lids might be creating a micro-environment, but the seals on the lids were not air tight. The one concern I found when seeing where her work was stored was that there was a wall-mounted heater that pushed air up to the storage shelf where all her film was. This not only could create a fluctuating temperature in her space, but also made the shelf storage area several degrees warmer than her studio. On the studio floor, Perlin was wearing a coat, but up on the shelf I was sweating. She also shares her studio with a painter. The fact that her studio is in Gowanus near the canal is a little disconcerting, but she is on the third floor and during Super-storm Sandy there was no flooding in Gowanus.

Nearly all of Amie Siegel's work is stored at a Harvard faculty provided studio in Cambridge and I was not able to see it for this paper. But Siegel describes the studio as being designed for painters and with a constant temperature setting and air-flow. Some of Amie's A/B roll negatives are at Deluxe and she has a very close business connection with a film lab veteran who lives there. This technician printed all of Amie's films and has brought the negatives with him at wherever lab he is working - first Lab-Link, then DuArt and now Deluxe. All of the films she made a work print for are stored there including *The Sleepers* and *Empathy* which I write about discuss in the following section.

While in working in New York on leave from teaching at Harvard, Amie was working at a studio in South Williamsburg, Brooklyn. It is a large studio on the sixth floor of a walk-up building which has

many mixed use tenants, but the sixth floor had many other artists. Amie had plenty of space for her two-dimensional work and drawings and also had a Mac workstation with two monitors, over a dozen hard drives, a projector and an HD video bridge. The space had not been renovated in a while and had steam heating underneath a window. The biggest concern about the space was that was on the top floor of the building and there were signs of leaking in the ceiling. Siegel said that whenever she leaves the space for an extended period of time, she covers all the tables with plastic. She has a back-up of her digital originals stored at either her apartment or back in her studio in Cambridge. She told me as we were leaving that all the artists would have to be moving as the building owner is seeking to renovate all the spaces and create condominiums of all the spaces.

### **The Work - Using the Film Workflow**

For the work produced prior to 2000 and the availability of mini-DV cameras and affordable non-linear editing solutions like Apple's release of Final Cut Pro, I chose to speak with Jenny Perlin about her work *Lost Treasures* 1999 and to Amie Siegel about her work *The Sleepers*, 1999.

*Lost Treasures* is a 16mm, sound color film made up of footage shot with on a Bolex with black and white 'hi-con' print stock which was then hand processed, developed and then printed on color film stock. Using extension tubes places between the prime lens and the camera, producing an extremely narrow depth of field of focus, she photographed text and texture from a book. She then hand-processed the footage, which sometimes produced clean and clear development of the hi-con and sometimes created development errors which produced scratches and effects like color tints and images from undeveloped stock. These results were then tape-spliced together and synched to with a single mag track of music on a flatbed. An optical track was made and they were married together in a color print. She describes it as "an elegy to three teachers, each of whom recently passed away."<sup>1</sup> The title and source book photographed 1945 book of buildings and monuments destroyed in World War II entitled *Lost Treasures of Europe*<sup>2</sup>.

Perlin described the original of Lost Treasure as "a fixed stained, highly unstable" in our

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<sup>1</sup> *Lost Treasures* summary, on Jenny Perlin's website: <http://www.nilrep.net/lost-treasures/>

<sup>2</sup> PS1.org webpage *Animations*, which accompanied an exhibition of work in 2001, 2002 which showed in Queens, New York and Berlin - <http://web.archive.org/web/20020203225537/http://www.ps1.org/cut/animations/install/perlin.html>

interview in her studio. She recalls there being three or four prints were made by ColorLab and she remembers her main instructions to them being "don't wash the film or clean the film" when submitting the original for printing During my short time in her studio. I was able to turn up one print. In a 2003 essay on the website of PS1, entitled *Animations*. Perlin stated that "Hand processing allows me to get down and dirty with the celluloid" and recalls that "the chemicals continued to do their work long after I called it a day."<sup>3</sup> The creation of the print itself affixed the process of the filmmaking in her tribute to the loss of her three mentors.

Amie Siegel's *The Sleepers* was her 1999 MFA thesis film and the last work she made with the entire film workflow from shooting film, to editing picture and sound on a flatbed, to mixing multiple soundtracks on mag track, to having negatives matched for a final 16mm print. *The Sleepers* plays with the idea of the audience and filmmaker being a voyeur into other people's lives as Siegel's camera photographs through apartment windows with long lenses throughout the film. It also plays on the voyeurism in the history of cinema asks the viewer to question whether what they are seeing is a truly a candid act of filming unwitting participants or whether the scenes unfolding in front of them have been constructed in some way. It was filmed using Kodak's Vision II 500 ASA color negative film which enabled her to shoot at night and telephoto lens at its most extreme focal length giving a flattened depth of field.

In our interview in her studio, Siegel explained that *The Sleepers* being shot and shown on film is critical to the work because in her words "if the Sleepers was shot on video, it would be about surveillance. But it is not it is about voyeurism and cinema." When the film is transferred to video much of the darkened images which are dim, but viewable on film become complete darkness in video. The intricate soundtrack of the film consists of orchestral music, canned or foley sound effects, police scanner recordings as well as recordings from the subject's environment. In a talk which is transcribed for the book *Soundscape : the School of Sound lectures, 1998-2001*, Siegel stated in one scene of *The Sleepers* that she "wanted the sound to get in the way because I saw the 'getting in the way' as a

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3 *PS1.org webpage Animations, which accompanied an exhibition of work in 2001, 2002 which showed in Queens, New York and Berlin - <http://web.archive.org/web/20020203225537/http://www.ps1.org/cut/animations/install/perlin.html>*

kind of aural voyeurism, where you're only going to be brought to a realization of your desire to see that which is unfolding before you<sup>4</sup>." The experience and evocation of cinematic voyeurism of *The Sleepers* can become lost when the visual and aural experience of it is taken out of the context of a projected image of cinema.

### **The Work - Digital Post-Production**

Both Perlin and Siegel did begin to do post-production of their work with non-linear editing after 2000. For much of Jenny Perlin's work, she produced the work with trying to create as much in production as possible, thus avoiding having mix multiple sound mag tracks or doing sync sound with 16mm film. This meant Perlin would pre-visualize her work and create films using stop animation (*From To Subject Date Reply* 2000, *Perseverance* 2001, *Washing*, 2002) and create silent films or marry the soundtrack asynchronously like when printing *Lost Treasures*. Often she would make a few splices on the work print from the laboratory and project that edited work in a gallery setting. At the same time, Perlin did create video work on DV (*Eichsfeld*, 2000) and 16mm and video hybrid work (*Capsules*, 2001, *View from Elsewhere*, 2002).

In 2003, Perlin completed a 16mm sound film with subtitles entitled *Perseverance & How to Develop It*, 2003. The film is made up of sync sound and silent 16mm footage, stop-motion animation as well as archival footage and has superimposed subtitles throughout. It is inspired by the 1915 self-help book, *Perseverance & How to Develop It* written by an H. Besser about ways an individual can improve their skills and concentration through repetition of tasks such as untangling yarn, moving water from one bowl to another with a spoon and sorting rice grains individually. Full screen handwritten text from the book is intercut with footage from Ford motor company factory, strikes at the Ford factory in 1945 and Perlin's own original footage. This original footage illustrates exercises described in the book, shows an opera singer performing warm-up exercises and also uses actors who display with compulsive personal habits like nail-biting and pulling out strands of hair. Subtitle overlays act as a form of commentary about Besser's 1915 book and Freud's *Mourning and*

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4 *Soundscape: The School of Sound Lectures, 1998-2001*, edited by Larry Sider, Jerry Sider, Diane Freeman, Wallflower Press, 2003, p. 143

*Melancholia* which was published two years later.

Perlin began editing the film footage in 1998, but ultimately edited it all together on video using a non-linear editor (NLE) where she also timed out the subtitles. She recalls having major problems with the exported Edit Decision List (EDL) from the NLE. Ultimately the video edit was used as a guide when piecing all the elements from the original negative with her very accommodating negative cutter, Noelle Penraat, in her office at the DuArt building. Using the timing of the subtitles from the video edit, a hi-con film subtitle track was created and the A/B (for black and white negative) C/D (for color negative) and E track of the subtitle were printed together in a 16mm film print. It was a long process, but what an excellent film print was created from video sub-master, digital non-linear editing and matching back to the original negative with key codes.

Amie Siegel first used Final Cut Pro to edit with in 2003 for *Empathy* and three channel installation work *Establishing Shots*. In our interview she explains that she embraced non-linear editing as she found editing with film difficult because she felt precious about the work print itself and in a digital environment she could make easy duplicates of her edits before trying out new ideas. *Empathy* is combines DV footage of interviews and actor's screen tests with scripted scenes shot on super 16mm film. Each format helps to emphasize the film's genre bending nature as she shoots DV when interviewing psychoanalysts and screen tests trying out for the lead in the scripted film, while the main actress of the film performs in scripted scenes, the screen tests and voices narration for a mini-documentary section of the film about modern architecture and psychoanalysis. Siegel transferred all this footage to digital betacam, captured it in Final Cut Pro, then exported an Edit Decision List (EDL) file which then was used to conform all the digibeta sources at a post-production facility. The digibeta edit was then output to D2 tape and brought to a film lab which scanned the D2 source onto 35mm film negatives. Prints were struck for theatrical distribution. It was the only film of Siegel's which was handled by a distributor. Siegel ultimately said that she preferred the look of the D2 master as the 16mm scenes looked like they were video when the film was output to 35mm. She is interested in going back to the originals and having them output to high-definition video.



## The Work - Online Viewing

Both Perlin and Siegel have the majority of their work online. Jenny Perlin was reluctant to put her work online, but now feels committed to having it available to be seen as many people as possible. She had concerns about security of her work being available online and fearing of losing the value of the unique experience of seeing it in a gallery setting. A curator who she respects visited her studio and expressed frustration as to having to show up in person to view her work. He convinced that the value of more people seeing her work was more important than her concerns. Jenny said this coupled with her husband, Trebor Scholz, being an advocate for open resources online convinced her to do it. Now she sees putting the work online as being part of the process of creating work. She pointed however in our conversation, that the online videos are "like looking at a thumbnail. It is a pointer to the work rather than the work itself." Even though, she feels that because "my work is really so subtle, there is some work that looks so amazing that really flop online," she still feels that "I'd rather have some kid in Butte, Montana looking at some representation of my film than not."

Amie Siegel is not interested in having her work shown to a wide audience. In our conversation she stated "I don't think wider is better. I think specific is good." All of her work except *The Sleepers* and *Empathy* are available as previews on a password protected Vimeo page - this is meant for curators who want online access to her work. She stated that "I don't believe in trailers" and feels that excerpts are not very representational of her work. Recently she was asked for an online sample of her 2013 film *Provenance*, and she decided to provide a short work, *Circuit 2013*, a panning shot of an exhibit in the Chandigarh's Natural History Museum which was shown in conjunction with *Provenance*. This was submitted to the online magazine *Bomb* as was an embedded Vimeo streaming video restricted to only that pages website - it is not discoverable on Vimeo directly. But she did provide an excerpt of *Provenance* to *The New York Times Magazine* blog when an article<sup>5</sup> was written about the work at the Simon Preston Gallery.

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5 <http://tmagazine.blogs.nytimes.com/2013/10/02/on-view-a-curious-path-to-auction-for-indias-modernist-furniture/>

## The Work - High-Definition Source

Perlin's first work shot, edited and exhibited with high-definition video was a work entitled *The Object of Society Is*, 2010. Perlin told me she made the film in parallel with Nora Beltway, then a graduate student of Curatorial Studies at Bard, who used the film as part of her thesis. The film combines some of Perlin's familiar stop-motion animation of drawings, hand written text and other footage shot on 16mm in combination with HD footage of New York City, upstate New York and a boat ride on the Hudson. The source text is comprised of Eleanor Roosevelt's own notes during the drafting of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, her "My Day" newspaper columns and John Milton's poem "On His Blindness" and a 1908 play "Blue Bird" which were works that inspired Roosevelt through her life.

The video was shot with a Panasonic HPX170 camera which uses the file-based P2 card format and edited together with the 16mm transferred footage in Final Cut Pro where the sound was mixed. Jenny told me she liked the workflow of the file-based P2 camera and chose it over the more complicated HDV tape-based HD format. But she ultimately would have chosen an DSLR camera with video capabilities as the camera is smaller and more flexible for shooting. The work showed on as a QuickTime file off a mac-mini at the Bard Center for Curatorial Studies on an HD projector in a large gallery space as well as the International Short Film Festival in Winterthur Switzerland. When submitting the film to the short film festival, she described just uploading a file to their server as "very unromantic."

Amie Siegel had begun shooting high-definition video in 2007 with *Deutsche Menschen / German People* and *DDR/DDR* in 2008, but began shooting in super-16mm and transferring to video for editing in 2010 with *Black Moon* in 2010. In 2012, she began shooting her first file-based HD work, *Provenance* which was shot using the Red camera with cinema lens. *Provenance* is a 40 minute looping work which traces the history of the 1950s modernist furniture of Le Corbusier and Pierre Jeanneret from the wealthy home of its owners, to auction houses and restorers, to the container ships that bring them around the world to their source at a modernist building in Chandigarh, India. Siegel's camera just observes the furniture and its 'interaction' with people through slow tracking shots without

narration, music or dialogue. The actual work itself was auctioned at Christie's in London with a lucite print describing the work and Siegel a recording of the actual auction encompasses the entire work of *Provenance* itself.

When shooting with the Red camera, Siegel told me she would ensure that a copy of the camera files would be shipped to another location while she retained a copy of the files "on my person, if possible," to ensure the original files would not be lost. To edit the files, she transcoded them to ProRes 4:2:2 (the original files have 4:4:4 color sampling). While she ensured to keep the original files in a separate location from where she was editing, she did not make a duplication of the ProRes transcoded files while editing. She used 15 hard drives in the process of creating *Provenance*. The first showing of the work was shown at the Simon Preston Gallery in New York as a ProRes HQ 4:2:2 file off of a mac-mini on an HD projector. The document of the auction was also shot on a Red camera and edited the same way as the forty minute version of *Provenance*.

## **Exhibition**

During our interview Jenny Perlin stated that she tries to show her film based work on film as much as possible. She feels that this has gotten easier in the past five to ten years of working. It is a mixture of feeling less of a need to compromise to show her work on video as her career has developed and exhibition spaces and institutions and gallery spaces are much more "understanding" about to showing work on 16mm, "they know it is part of the art scene and that they have to do it." Perlin said in our interview that "a good situation an exhibitor for a show will pay for the production of prints," sometimes three to five as they often "get trashed" during an exhibition. Both Perlin and Siegel mentioned Tacita Dean and Matthew Buckingham as artists who have helped make insisting on 16mm exhibition more acceptable.

While Perlin continues to show her work in festivals and theaters, most of her work has shown in a gallery environment. She said that "it has felt less necessary for me in recent years to engage so much with avant-garde festivals" and feels that her work doesn't necessary fit well in the 'experimental' film category. Exhibiting in a gallery space brings certain three-dimensional elements of the projector,

pedestal and 'screen' issues which interest her as a moving image artist. The devices used to show the work become "sculptures" and the gallery space is "not neutral. It's not the background space of a theater. Theater is just a common place."

When her work is an installation, such as *The Perlin Papers*, 2010 or *Funes*, 2012 she does create diagrams of how the work will be shown. These include diagrams of where the projectors will be located, size of the projected image and other details of the project, all of which "can be quite simple or complex, flexible or rigid, depending on the piece or pieces and the space". For *The Object of Society Is*, when it was shown at Bard, custom benches were made and placed in a semi-circle in the space. Carpet was placed on the floor to help dampen the echo and headphones were provided for those who needed them - though no one did. The gallery space had a less than ideal sound situation (a vaulted ceiling and some audio bleeding in from other galleries), but utilized a large wall for projection and length which gave distance for the audience to view the image.

Aside from her 1999 film, *The Sleepers*, which she rarely allows to be shown on video, Amie Siegel's main problem with exhibition is ensuring that galleries and theaters show high-quality high definition video. Often she finds that exhibition spaces are not able to show 1920x1080 HD, her chosen HD format, or that their equipment is unable to show her HD without converting it to Blu-ray or a proprietary file format of the device it is showing on. She does not feel there is enough standardization among Blu-ray players or hard drive based 'media players' for HD. When she showed *Provenance* at the Simon Preston Gallery, she encouraged them to purchase a Mac-mini so she could show the ProRes HQ 4:2:2 file she exported from her own Final Cut Pro workstation. In 2010, she did convert her HD short, *Black Moon*, to a Digital Cinema Package (DCP) and was horrified to discover all the grain of the original super-16 footage was removed. As she recounts in her 2011 essay for Tacita Dean's *Film*, that upon hearing from Belgian lab that did the conversion told her "that this removal of grain is 'what people want' now for projects originating on film, I insisted the print be redone."<sup>6</sup>

The exhibition set-up of *Provenance* at the Simon Preston Gallery in October, 2013 consisted

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6 *Tacita Dean: Film*, Siegel's essay "À Rebours/ Against The Grain", edited by Ed Cullinan, Tate Publishing, 2011

of a large wall built separating the gallery lobby from the darkened space where the large nearly six foot images of *Provenance* were projected. Gallery attendees could easily enter and exit on either side of this wall after entering the gallery lobby from Broome street . This set-up provided ease for coming into and going of the exhibition space, but there was a slight light leak in the space. Siegel was able to have her colorist view the work in the gallery space and make corrections to the darker scenes in the work itself for a not completely "black box" situation. So she has a version of the piece to show in a less than ideal lighting situation as well as the one corrected in a color correction suite.

### **Acquisitions and Archiving**

Both Perlin and Siegel retain the master tapes or negatives for their work (some A/B roll negatives are stored at film labs). The agreement they have with anyone who acquires their work in a private collection or institution is that they will provide another copy of the work in case something happens to the version the collection or institution has acquired. Siegel said in our interview that when she sells an artwork "the real thing that is of value is the certificate of authenticity. And without it, you can't resell it." She sees herself as "the studio" who will provide replacement copies if necessary.

Jenny Perlin's work has been acquired by The US Holocaust Museum, The Flaxman Library (The School of the Art Institute of Chicago), Five Colleges Inc. in Amherst, (including *Perseverance and How to Develop It*), The Dommering Collection in Amsterdam, DeBruin Collection in Amsterdam and the BFAS in Geneva. Many of her drawings have been bought by private collections and a few galleries have drawings of hers with the intention of selling them. She described the process of the 5 Colleges acquisition as being very respectful and that they "they understood the importance of why it was prints they should acquire." When a moving image work is acquired, they will receive a copy of a print they paid for and screening copy on DVD. She told me doesn't seek out acquisitions of her moving image work.

She told me she has thought a lot about what to do with her work and materials and hasn't made any determinations as of yet. Having her own children now and not wanting them to "burden" them with having to "go through all her stuff" and dealing with an "'estate' of some kind," does weigh

on her mind. In an email to me she wrote that she has no "pretensions of being famous," but looks at Doon Arbus or Sara and Johannes Vanderbeek and "sees how burdensome or strange it can be for a kid of an artist to deal with an estate." She looked at the Getty and sees how they have all of Alan Krapow's work and materials, but also feels the material "should all also be digitized and available for people to look at, learn from, and work with".

Some of Amie Siegel's work has been acquired by private collections and at the time of our interview, Siegel was going through the acquisition of *Provenance* with two museums<sup>7</sup>. Normally a version of the work on HD tape as well as a DVD or Blu-ray copy is given when the work is acquired. For *Provenance*, the original is 4:4:4 high-definition video which can currently only be shown via a DCP using costly projectors available almost exclusively to cinemas. Siegel has made a version of *Provenance* at the 4:4:4 color sampling as 4K DPX files and also has the 4:2:2 QuickTime ProRes HQ 2K file which has been used for exhibition. When talking to the museums acquiring her work, she has offered one of these options as the 'archival' version of the work, her acquisition agreement with requires. In both cases they asked if they can have both high-resolution files, even though they would be 750 gigabytes to 1.5 terabytes in size. Because she knows that the museums have the staff, resources and commitment to migration and preserving work, she is considering giving them both file formats. These recent dealings with museums caused her to think a lot her work outliving her and she liked the idea of the museum being an initial form of archiving *Provenance*.

Siegel felt she was "one work from" away spending time researching where her work would reside outside her own control. Recently receiving negatives shipped from New Zealand, previously having negatives shipped from France and Germany have made her realize she can't just have them spread throughout the world (also now when she develops film rolls at laboratories and transferred to video, they want to ship the negatives back to her. They will not retain them like how Deluxe does with *Empathy* and *The Sleepers*). Her recent acquisition dealings with museums who are plan to retain work decades into the future also made her consider how to place her work in a situation that would

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<sup>7</sup> Amie Siegel asked me not to mention the museums by name because she felt it was the museums to announce new acquisitions and she was still editing the documentary of *Provenance* being auctioned which was part of the acquisition.

outlive her. Now she is thinking of ensuring that her work is archived on two separate continents in case of a major catastrophe - her time spent in New Zealand made her consider this notion.

## **Conclusion**

My stated interest was how technological changes in moving image media inform how moving image artists create, show and archive their work. And to discover if anything might be lost or discovered in the process of technological changes. With both Jenny Perlin and Amie Siegel, I think as moving image technology has changed, they have each discovered new techniques and nothing is lost over the past 15 years of their creating work - provided that their 16mm work can still be exhibited on 16mm. This pre-supposes that their negatives are kept in good condition, stored appropriately and the capability of making prints continues to be possible going forward.

As moving image artists, their work has not been hurt, but only enhanced by the ability to show different formats together in one work or as separate formats in different channels in gallery environments. Being able to edit using a program like Final Cut makes mixing formats much easier. Neither artist uses online video as anything more than a preview version of their work and placing it online allows for more access to their work - in Perlin's case broadly and in Siegel's case selectively. As long as they maintain some control or have some say in how their work is exhibited digitally, developments in digital video exhibition have only allowed them to branch out with their aesthetic.

As for recommendations for the work we discussed, both Siegel and Perlin, if the resources allow, could take advantage of high-definition digital video formats for retransferring existing prints or video elements. This would allow them to use the greater latitude and color sampling of high-definition video. Perlin felt that her work earlier online could be re-compressed because the lower quality. For the purposes of online viewing, Perlin's *Lost Treasures* could use a re-transfer to video as the end titles of the piece, which I only saw when projected, were blown out to white so as to become unreadable. (If the film was transferred twice, with an exposure set once for the end titles and another time for a darker portion of the work, both transfers could be edited together for a video to be compress for online viewing purpose). Siegel expressed interest in having the sources of Empathy re-

transferred to a high-definition source. I also think that the film would greatly improve from such a retransfer and restoration. Currently all the 16mm, DV, computer generated design footage and still images have a flat DV video veneer quality to them. The genre bending nature of the film would be enhanced greatly by a high-quality reformatting of all the source footage.

Each artist was interested in having their work archived in a single location long-term. Their current storage situations is adequate in the short term, but having all their elements and masters kept in better storage conditions long term is necessary. Due to so much of their work having been exhibited in gallery settings an institution accustomed to dealing with installations and multiple channel works would be ideal. However, their work largely consists of exhibiting cinematic moving images in a gallery and does not contain overly complex displays or sculptural elements. Largely their work is moving image work shown at a high-quality, necessitating some site specific lighting and audio requirements. Some of their installations also have two-dimensional drawings and photographs accompanying them. An institution with preservation resources and a commitment to moving image archiving, cold storage for negatives, with the capability migration of digital assets and ability to curate work is the ideal situation. For this reason the Museum of Modern Art would be a great candidate or a model of an institution to look towards.



## Annotated Bibliography

### Books

Sider, Larry, Sider Jerry, Diane Freeman, *Soundscape: The School of Sound Lectures*, 1998-2001, edited Wallflower Press, 2003.

- This book has a lightly edited talk Siegel gave at the Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama in Glasgow, April 5, 2001 where she showed excerpts of *The Sleepers* and gave a Q&A

- Cullinan, Ed N., *Tacita Dean: Film*, Tate Publishing, 2011
- Siegel's 500 word essay "À Rebours / Against The Grain" succinctly expresses her experience with various formats and her experience having the film grains removed from *Black Moon*, 2010.

### Websites

PS1.org webpage *Animations* site -

<http://web.archive.org/web/20020203225537/http://www.ps1.org/cut/animations/install/perlin.html>

- This accompanied an exhibition of work in 2001, 2002 which showed in Queens, New York and Berlin

- I discovered this webpage from a source in a 2008 essay by Tess Takahashi *After the Death of Film: Writing The Natural World in the Digital Age* which the Internet Archive had captured. The description no longer exists on the PS1 website.

Jenny Perlin's website - <http://www.nilrep.net>

- Perlin's site contains embedded video of nearly all moving her image work or links to that work, except some early installations (*Burned Bridges*, 1997, *Crossing Borders*, 1999 and *Dear Jim and Dick*, 1999) and a work commissioned by the Queens Museum, *Capsules*, 2001. It has links to press, a list of acquisitions of her work and two-dimensional work.

Amie Siegel's website - <http://amiesiegel.net>

- Siegel's site is very comprehensive with descriptions and stills for all her moving image and two-dimensional work as well as contains links to essays, interviews, press and publications.

### Interviews

I performed an hour interview with Jenny Perlin at her Gowanus studio on November 14, 2013 and a nearly two-hour interview with Amie Siegel at her South Williamsburg studio on November, 22, 2013. I transcribed the recorded audio and also asked follow up questions via email to Perlin on 11/30, 12/5 and 12/8 and to Siegel on 12/8.

- All quotes from them in the paper come from answers to questions in these interviews or emails