Collecting and Preserving Time-Based Media Art in Georgia's Museums

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Museums Studies Digital Curation Certificate Program

August 20, 2019

Summer 2019

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Abstract

Time-based media art (TBMA), art that utilizes technology and has a distinct beginning and end (video, film, slides, audio, or computer-based) is a popular medium among artists. The preservation of TBMA presents a unique set of challenges for museums, because TBMA relies on ever-changing technological components that can become obsolete if not properly cared for. For this paper, staff members from art museums in Georgia were interviewed to determine the current state of the collection of TBMA across Georgia's museums, including reasons given for not collecting TBMA and relevant preservation methods. The research focuses on a specific state, Georgia, so that relationships between art museums in a common geographical region can be studied, focusing on common goals and initiatives concerning TBMA. The paper concludes with a section offering recommendations for resources that could be beneficial to museums that have not started acquiring TBMA, and also discusses ways that museums in Georgia can work together in finding solutions to issues regarding the collection and preservation of TBMA.

Introduction and Problem Statement

In the 1960's, artists began working in a new medium that was reliant on technology as a means of creation. Artworks in this new medium included Nam June Paik's *Magnet TV* (1965), an installation in which Paik invited viewers to alter the static on television sets through the use of magnets, and Bill Viola's *Live-Taped Video Corridor,* a looped video that depicts the artist walking back and forth in a dimly lit corridor (Collection Online, n.d.). In the following years, other artists followed suit and chose to work in this new, technology-centric medium that came to be known as "time-based media art." Time-based media art (TBMA) refers to artwork that is dependent on technology, including videos, computer-based art, and art involving audio, and is revealed to the viewer over a set period of time (Tate, n.d.).

Since the introduction of TBMA, museums have been struggling with the best ways in which to manage and preserve their TBMA collections. TBMA is inherently complex to preserve, because "change is an intrinsic part of its nature" (Marchese, 2001, p. 303). TBMA is based in technology, which is constantly developing and changing, and is comprised of several electronic components, such as hardware and software, that can become obsolete over time.

Large museums with abundant resources have begun implementing strategic initiatives to address the preservation issues surrounding TBMA. Examples include the Guggenheim's Media Conservation Lab (Time-Based Media, 2005)**,** the Time-Based Media Working Group at the Met (Time-Based Media Working Group, n.d.), and the Matters in Media Art initiative (Matters in Media Art, n.d.).

Although larger museums are actively collecting and preserving TBMA, small and medium-sized museums have been much slower to acquire it due to a lack of resources and knowledge of preservation methods for TBMA. TBMA is an important part of the canon of art

history, and it is imperative that art museums begin to consider ways in which they can acquire

and effectively preserve TBMA. Without the collection and proper preservation of TBMA at

smaller institutions, significant works of art at local museums will, unfortunately, be lost.

This paper examines the current state of the collection and preservation of TBMA in

Georgia's art museums. By focusing on this particular geographic region, it is possible to explore

relevant connections between museums, such as common initiatives or potential collaborations

that could bring awareness to preservation strategies for TBMA. Additionally, focusing on the

state of Georgia allows for the study of small, medium, and large art museums.

The research presented in this paper aims to to answer the following questions:

1. Are art museums in Georgia collecting TBMA and, if so, are they preserving it?

    A. If museums are preserving TBMA, what are their digital preservation methods?

    B. If museums are not collecting TBMA, what factors are preventing them from
        doing so?

    C. What resources and initiatives would be beneficial in helping museums begin the
        acquisition and preservation of TBMA?

Specialized Terms

Time-based media art (TBMA) – Refers to artwork that depends on technology, including video,

film, computer-based artwork, and audio (Tate, n.d.). Time-based media is meant to be viewed

over a period of time, therefore it has a beginning and end

Small museums – Museums with an annual budget up to $1 million

Medium-sized museums - Museums that have an annual budget between $1 million and $15

million

Large museums – Museums that have an annual budget of more than $15 million

Research Design

To answer the proposed research question and sub questions, three methodologies were used to collect data on the topic of the collection and preservation of TBMA: open-ended interviews, historical research, and the examination of case studies. In order to gather information from Georgia's art museums on the state of the collection and digital preservation of TBMA, staff members were contacted from the following institutions:

- Georgia Museum of Art

- High Museum of Art

- Museum of Contemporary Art of Georgia (MOCA GA)

- Morris Museum of Art

- The Columbus Museum

- Museum 1 (museum wanted to remain anonymous)

These open-ended interviews are key in contributing to the research, as they reveal any barriers that are preventing the museums from collecting or preserving TBMA. All of the museums contacted range in size from small (budget under $1 million), medium-sized (budget between $1-15 million), and large (budget over $15 million), providing a varied data set. Interviews were conducted with staff members from curatorial, registrar, or collections departments either over the phone or via email correspondence. Interviewees were asked to respond openly to the topic of TBMA within their museums. Interviews were conducted June through August 2019.

In addition to open-ended interviews, past research on the topic of TBMA is examined, including previously published case studies from larger institutions. Through observing these

existing case studies, it is possible to gain insight on the resources that larger institutions are utilizing in the preservation of TBMA, providing a needed addition to the open interviews that were conducted with staff members from smaller museums. Overall, the historical research method brings to light the trends and challenges present in the collection of TBMA that have influenced current preservation methods, and also points to resources and initiatives that could be beneficial for museums that are considering acquisition.

Literature Review

The published literature on the collection and preservation of TBMA fits into three categories: case studies, proposed solutions for the management, and articles focusing on a combination of the history of TBMA, the complexities of preservation, and developments in the field. The majority of the following sources feature large museums that have a known history of collecting TBMA; there are very few published sources that mention small museums. The following interviews conducted on the collection of TBMA in Georgia's art museums help to fill in this gap, as small and medium-sized museums are included in the research. There is also a significant lapse in literature from the 1970's through the 1980's, which several authors attribute to a loss of interest in TBMA by collecting institutions (Dorin, 2009).

The earliest known publication that refers to the challenges associated with TBMA is Metzger's *Notes on the Crisis in Technological Art* (1969). During a time when TBMA was still a very new medium, Metzger was able to predict the difficulties that artists, museums, and galleries would encounter in the future when dealing with TBMA (Metzger, 1969). In his publication, Metzger says that museums and galleries will not be able to accommodate the amount of TBMA being produced, and that they need to "begin developing new structures that

will enable these works to be produced and exhibited" (p. 1). Metzger also goes on to predict a potential issue – the fact that advanced technologies are expensive, and that these technologies are complicated to install in exhibition spaces (Metzger, 1969).

In *Preventing Digital Casualties: An Interdisciplinary Research for Preserving Digital Art,* Perla Innocenti, an art historian from the University of Glasgow, discusses the challenges inherent with TBMA, and briefly presents her initial findings in investigating preservation issues at several large museums that are known collectors of TBMA. At the beginning of her article, Innocenti points out that TBMA is still underrepresented in museums, even in the collections of large, established museums (Innocenti, 2012). According to Innocenti, this is partly due to the fact that TBMA requires museums staff members to have technical expertise, and also goes against the idea that "art museums are custodians of work that have stood the test of time" (Innocenti, 2012, p. 1). Innocenti lists several initiatives that been established to investigate new ways in which to preserve TBMA, but believes that the problem with these initiatives is that they conduct "survey-like" research and they need to focus more on the theoretical problems associated with TBMA (Innocenti, 2012, p.1). Innocenti took this issue into her own hands, and set out to interview artists, curators, and museum collection staff members in order to form a theoretical foundation for the preservation of TBMA (Innocenti, 2012). From her interviews so far, Innocenti has discovered that preservation is too "ad hoc," meaning that curators are determining how they should preserve TBMA on a case by case basis and are not relying on standardized practices (Innocenti, 2012, p. 2).

Ben Fino-Radin, a conservator of TBMA and founder of Small Data Industries, recently published *Keeping Time* (2018). In his article, Fino-Radin stresses the fact that even though TBMA is difficult to maintain, it is essential that museums begin to act now to prevent digital

loss. Findo-Radin highlights several initiatives and organizations that were founded to find solutions to common TBMA issues, such as the Electronic Media Group established in 1996. An interesting assertion that Fino-Radin has is that although larger museums have traditionally been thought of as keepers of TBMA, small museums are becoming more aware of the issues presented by TBMA (2018). Small museums are starting to retrain their staff to manage TBMA, or they are creating entirely new positions for media conservation (Fino-Radin, 2018). Although Fino-Radin's article was published in 2018, the issues he brings up and the overall tone of the article is very similar to the articles that proceeded Fino-Radin's. This signifies that the management of TBMA is still a relevant, ongoing issue that needs to be addressed.

In addition to the aforementioned literature, several case studies have been published that examine the collection and preservation of TBMA within specific institutions. These include *Adaptive Institutional Change: Managing Digital Works at the Museum of Modern Art* (Saaze et al, 2018) and *From Analogue to Digital: Preserving Early Computer-Generated Art in the Victoria & Albert Museum (*Dodds, 2010). Another case study, *New Media Art in Museum Collections: A Report from the DOCAM Cataloguing and Conservation Committees* (Gagnier et al, 2008), presents findings from two case studies conducted at the Musée d'art Contemporain de Montréal (MACM) and Montreal Museum of Fine Arts (MMFA). During the case studies, museum staff reported that a lack of standardization across museums initially hindered them in creating a collection policy for TBMA, but both museums ultimately were successful through sharing ideas with other museums in their network and implementing artist questionnaires as a means of collecting information on TBMA (Gagnier et al, 2008).

The idea of the artist questionnaire was mentioned in Jon Ippolito's essay *Accommodating the Unpredictable: The Variable Media Questionnaire* (2003). In his essay,

Ippolito proposes that artists need to be consulted when preserving TBMA, because it's crucial that TBMA is recreated in a way that most closely aligns with the artist's intent. The variable media approach asks creators to play the central role in "deciding how their work should evolve over time, with archivists and technicians offering choices rather than prescribing them" (Ippolito, 2003, p.47). For works that involve installation, information is gathered on the preferred location, lighting, and the placement of elements within the installation (Ippolito, 2003). There are further questions for TBMA that are performance-based, interactive, encoded, or networked (Ippolito, 2003). Artists are also asked how they would like their work to be stored, and what should be done in case some of the technological components used become obsolete; this includes a choice between emulation (recreating the original artwork through the use of a new medium) or migration (updating the original medium to more contemporary technology) (Ippolito, 2013).

In addressing the lack of standardization for practices across institutions, Richard Rinehart came up with the *Media Art Notation System* (2007). In his article, Rinehart, like Ippolito, emphasizes the variability of TBMA. Rinehart compares TBMA to musical scores, and says that "a formal notation system must also accommodate media art works that are not necessarily digital, and it should be legible well into the future independent of the media it is intended to preserve" (Rinehart, 2007, p.182). Rinehart proposes a conceptual model for metadata framework that can be used to notate TBMA so that it can be successfully created, documented, preserved, and recreated well into the future without relying on outdated technological components.

History of the Collection and Preservation of TBMA

In order to fully understand the current state of TBMA in Georgia's art museums, it's important to know the history of TBMA at museums that have been actively collecting and preserving it. Many large art museums have established themselves as stewards of TBMA and have been collecting TBMA for decades. These museums have been able to draw upon their resources to create successful methods of preservation, and have formed several collaborative initiatives to aid in the management of their collections.

Museums began collecting TBMA in the 1960's, when visual artists were creating the first TBMA artworks (Dorin, 2009). The Art Institute of Chicago was one of the first art museums to collect TBMA; the museum acquired its first piece of TBMA in 1966, a sculptural installation with video components tiled *The Truck* by artist Georgia Segal (Dorin, 2009). The Art Institute of Chicago served as a beacon to artists working in TBMA art in the 1960's and 1970's, and the school responded by creating the first Art and Technology department, a dedicated Film Center, and a Video Data Bank, all established in 1972 (Dorin, 2009). In her article, Dorin states that the collection of TBMA slacked off in 1980's, as it did for most museums, but due to the availability of new editing equipment and video technologies, the collection of TBMA picked back up again in the 1990's. Presently, the TBMA collection at the Art Institute of Chicago includes over eighty pieces of TBMA, and although Dorin emphasizes that the preservation is complex, the museum is working to preserve their TBMA for the long term.

The Museum of Modern Art (MoMA) is one of the most well-known modern and contemporary art museums in the United States, but surprisingly, the museum did not begin collecting TBMA until 1991 with the acquisition of Felix Gonzalez Torres' *Untitled (Death by*

Gun) (Saaze et al, 2018). *Adaptive Institutional Change: Managing Digital Works at the Museum of Modern Art*, published by Saaze, Wharton, and Reisman, provides a case study of the Museum of Modern Art (MoMA) in which the authors examine the history of the collection of TBMA at the museum and discusse the effect that the acquisition of TBMA had at MoMA (Saaze et al, 2018). The authors state that by the early 2000's, MoMA's TBMA collection grew to nearly 100 works, and in the present day, there are more than 1,000. Steps towards preservation began in 2005, when a grant-funded position was established to survey MoMA's TBMA collection (Saaze et al, 2018). The authors argue that creating digital preservation strategies at MoMA was a relatively seamless process, primarily because subunits were gradually added to existing organizational structures, "leaving core roles and responsibilities undisturbed "(Saaze et al, 2018, p. 233). Saaze et al points out the success of integrating TBMA across departments at MoMA is due in part to the museum's commitment to innovation as well as its access to financial aid and additional resources (2018). In 2003, MoMA, in collaboration with the Tate and SFMOMA under the New Art Trust, launched the initiative Matters in Media Art (MoMA, n.d.). Matters in Media was originally conceived as a way participating museums could come together to provide a standardized set of guidelines for TBMA (MoMA, n.d.). Most recently, MoMA established the Media Conservation Initiative, a five-year grant-funded program that is still ongoing (MoMA, n.d.). The goal of the Media Conservation Initiative is to make advancements in the preservation of TBMA through several fellowship positions, workshops, and a compilation of accessible resources (MoMA, n.d.).

The Guggenheim has been at the forefront of creating new practices and procedures to manage their TBMA collection, and was one of the first museums in the world to dedicate conservation staff to the preservation of TBMA (Time Based Media, n.d.). In 1999, the

Guggenheim was instrumental in establishing the Variable Media Network (VMN). The goal of

the VMN is to "define acceptable levels of change within any given art object and documents

ways in which a sculpture, installation, or conceptual work may be altered (or not) for the sake of

preservation without losing that work's essential meaning" (Variable Media Initiative, n.d.).

Through this methodology, the Guggenheim has been able to study behaviors of TBMA and

various strategies for preservation ("storage, emulation, migration, interpretation)" to make

advancements in the field (Variable Media Initiative, n.d.). In 2004, the Guggenheim held an

exhibition titled *Permanence Through Change: The Variable Media Approach,* which presented

pieces of TBMA that had been the subjects of case studies funded by the VMN (Variable Media

Initiative, n.d.). Presently, the Guggenheim's Media Conservation Lab is continuing the study of

best practices for TBMA. The department has implemented a series of procedures for the

acquisition and preservation of TBMA. When a piece of TBMA is acquired, the Media

Conservation Lab corresponds with the artist to gain insight about the meaning of the work and

the steps that were taken in the process of production (Time Based Media, n.d.). After

information is contributed by the artist, the conservation lab documents the artwork through an

"Iteration Report," which outlines technical specifications for installation (Time Based Media,

n.d.). Lastly, the Guggenheim has developed "Media Reports" to record details of visual and

technical characteristic for video artwork (Time Based Media, n.d.).

Like the Guggenheim, the Metropolitan Museum of Art (Met) has established initiatives

that have led to advancements in the preservation of TBMA. In 2001, the Met acquired its first

works of TBMA, Ann Hamilton's *abc,* a small video work, and Bill Viola's *The Quintet of*

Remembrance, a large-scale video installation (Time-Based Media Working Group, n.d.). When

these artworks were acquired, a small group consisting of curators, conservators, and IT staff

members met to form a "working group" to discuss how the Met's TBMA collection should be handled (Time-Based Media Working Group, n.d.). In 2010, this group was officially established as the Met's Time-Based Media Working Group, with a mission to "develop and maintain museum-wide standards for collecting, preserving, and exhibiting time-based media art" (Time-Based Media Working Group, n.d.).

Two Canadian museums: Musée d'art Contemporain de Montréal (MACM) and Montreal Museum of Fine Arts (MMFA), have successfully managed their TBMA collections after putting new policies and procedures into practice. The MACM in particular developed a cataloguing method specifically for TBMA that involves the addition of new cataloguing fields to address archival, technical, and ethical issues (Gagnier et al, 2008). Additionally, an artist questionnaire was created to obtain details about the artwork directly from the artist concerning intention, technology used, installation procedures, and copyright issues. To address technical concerns, the MACM migrated TBMA to newer formats, and also utilized emulation when necessary. Before embarking on the preservation of their TBMA collection, the MMFA devised a strategy of collaboration, where they reached out to other museums for ideas and solutions. As a result of their communication with other museums, the MMFA examined their collection of TBMA in order to restructure their cataloging system to incorporate new fields for TBMA, and they also implemented an artist questionnaire (Gagnier et al, 2008).

Although the Victoria & Albert Museum (V&A) has exhibited TBMA since the 1960's, it wasn't until recently that that it began collecting born-digital artwork for its permanent collection (Dodds, 2010). Douglas Dodds, Senior Curator at the V&A, published an article discussing the trajectory that TBMA has taken at the museum over the years, and what present solutions have been effective for its management (Dodds, 2010). Agreeing with Dorin's statement on the lull in

the collection of TBMA in the 1980's, Dodds said that "at this time, computer art was seen to be deeply unfashionable among many art historians and commentators, at the V&A's curators were probably influenced by this attitude (Dodds, 2010, p. 2). In the mid 2000's, the museum was once again interested in the collection of TBMA and began acquiring the Patric Prince collection, a donated collection containing a an extensive amount of computer-based art (Dodds, 2010). The V&A realized that its staff was not equipped to manage such a large collection of TBMA, so the museum teamed up with Birbeck College, an institution that had a history of being involved in TBMA projects, to form the Art and Technocultures Project (Dodds, 2010). Through this collaboration, the V&A was able to document and digitize its TBMA collection and was also able to find effective ways of preserving it, although the preservation methods are not mentioned in the article (Dodds, 2010).

Museum Interviews

Staff members from six museums in Georgia were contacted and participated in open-interviews. From the interviews, it was determined that four of the museums have TBMA in their collections: The Columbus Museum, The Museum of Contemporary Art of Georgia (MOCA GA) and the High Museum, and Museum 1 (a museum that wanted to remain anonymous). Only one museum, MOCA GA, is taking steps towards the digital preservation of their acquired TBMA pieces.

The Columbus Museum has four TBMA works in their permanent collection. Works include Bill Viola's *Poem A* (2005), a color triptych video on LCD screens; *Video No. 29* (2015) by Jarrett Key, an mp4 video file of a performance art piece; *Slow Cadence* (2012), a projected

video installation by artists Stefani Byrd and Wes Eastin; and *Chasing Rainbow* (2004)*,* an LED

sculpture by Leo Villareal (Columbus Museum, n.d.). The Columbus Museum does not actively

collect this work (the museum does not have TBMA factored into their acquisition budget); the

TBMA pieces that the museum has were donated, either by museum patrons or the artists

themselves (J. Walz, personal communication, 2019). The TBMA is stored on memory sticks at

the museum, but no preservation methods specific to TBMA are in place (J. Walz, personal

communication, 2019).

The Museum of Contemporary Art of Georgia (MOCA GA) is a very young museum (the

museum was established in 2009) with a small staff of 10 employees, but their focus on

exhibiting contemporary art of all media has led them to acquire ten works of TBMA, all in

video format. Stacey Savatsky, the Collection and Exhibition Manager at MOCA GA, said that

the museum relies on grants and donations to acquire artwork for their permanent collection, and

most of the videos in their collection have been donated by the artists themselves after their work

was exhibited at MOCA GA (S. Savatsky, personal communication, 2019). The videos are stored

on flash drives that are backed up regularly, and are also stored on the museum's servers that are

backed up daily to ensure that the files do not become corrupt over time. The videos are not

documented in the museum's collection management system, due to the fact that the museum's

collection management system (Past Perfect) would not provide an adequate representation of

the videos. Savatsky said that she would like the museum to implement a digital asset

management system if they were to acquire more TBMA, as a DAMS would be a better long-

term storage solution (S. Savatsky, personal communication, 2019). Of course, at such a small

museum, resources are limited, but Savatsky was knowledgeable about preservation issues

related to TBMA and understood the importance of long-term preservation.

An anonymous art museum in Georgia, referred to in this paper as Museum 1, has three pieces of TBMA in their collection. The artwork was donated to the museum (the museum does not maintain an acquisition budget), but the TBMA recently came into the collection and has not been cataloged and documented yet (Museum 1, personal communication, 2019). The museum is still trying to figure out the best ways to manage their TBMA, but the collections manager believes that they have the resources to properly care for it. The museum is unique in that a donor gifted funds specifically for collection care, which would include any necessary purchases towards equipment or software needed to manage and preserve TBMA (Museum 1, personal communication, 2019).

The High Museum of Art, located in Atlanta, GA, is the largest art museum in the state. The High Museum of Art has eighteen pieces of TBMA in their collection that they began collecting in the 1970's (P. Haymon, personal communication, 2019). TBMA is factored in the museum's budget for acquisitions, which includes the purchase of any additional equipment needed to exhibit the artwork. Paula Haymon, Associate Collections Manager at the High Museum, stated that the museum has not undertaken the preservation of their TBMA yet, but their most recent digital preservation policy was revised to prioritize the assessment and digitization of their TBMA collection. Currently, the museum does not have enough staff hours to complete this project in-house, so the collection team is looking into grants to secure additional funding. The High Museum of Art does have the technical infrastructure in place to begin preservation (the museum currently uses a digital asset management system), but they have not yet uploaded any TBMA to their servers (P. Haymon, personal communication, 2019).

For the art museums that have not acquired any TBMA, staff members stated several reasons why they had not begun adding TBMA to their collection. Tricia Miller, Registrar at the

Georgia Museum of Art, stated that the museum has not collected any TBMA because they would not be able to properly preserve it due to the absence of an in-house conservation and IT staff (T. Miller, personal communication, 2019). Miller said that the first steps she would take before acquiring TBMA would be to consult other professionals in the field who were familiar with its preservation and to enact a long-term strategic plan focused on IT development (T. Miller, personal communication, 2019). Miller made an excellent point in stating that "the longevity of museums into the 21st century will be dependent on developing full and robust IT departments. Every aspect of museum management - from collections & preservation to exhibitions and displays to PR, membership, & development to museum shops all rely on some type of technology to operate and grow. We need museum professionals who are also technology professionals" (T. Miller, personal communication, 2019).

The Morris Museum of Art also does not have any TBMA in their collection, and they do not have plans to begin acquisition. The museum's registrar, Stacey Thompson, believes that the museum is not collecting TBMA because it is not a focus of their collection and not included in the museum's collection development plan (S. Thompson, personal communication, 2019). Thompson also brought about the point that, although the museum does collect some contemporary art, the museum's mission is to collection regional, Southern art, and she hasn't seen a lot of TBMA being created near the museum's location of Augusta, GA. Like the Georgia Museum of Art, the Morris Museum also lacks the resources to manage a collection of TBMA, such as a strong IT department and standard procedures for the acquisition and preservation TBMA.

Analysis

Based on the data collected through these open-ended interviews, it's apparent that museums of all sizes across Georgia are collecting TBMA. Although many museums are collecting TBMA, all of the museums that took part in the interviews are in the beginning stages of managing their collections. The majority of the art museums that are colleting TBMA have recently acquired their first pieces, with the exception of the High Museum of Art, which has been acquiring TBMA since the 1970's. The two museums that do not have any TBMA in their collections, the Georgia Museum of Art and the Morris Museum of Art gave several reasons for not yet acquiring it. Reasons given included the need for a more robust IT and conservation departments, and Stacey Thompson from the Morris Museum of Art stated that TBMA is not included in the museum's collection plan because it does not fall in line with the museum's mission to collect southern art.

Although the majority of the museums are collecting TBMA, only one museum, MOCA GA, has any preservation methods in place. MOCA GA has all of the videos in its collection uploaded and stored on its servers that are routinely backed up to prevent file corruption and data loss. In contrast, The Columbus Museum, the High Museum of Art, and Museum 1 have their TBMA collections in physical storage, but have not yet migrated the technological components from the original media to to digital storage that is sustainable for long-term preservation.

Recommended Resources

From the examination of historical research concerning TBMA, it's evident that museums have experienced success in managing their TBMA through collaboration with other museums,

the formation of initiatives, and the sharing of ideas. Many of the initiatives that have been

formed have published their resulting findings online, including templates and spreadsheets that

can be accessed and downloaded to assist with TBMA collection management. In forming an

initial collection plan for TBMA, it would be incredibly helpful for museums use these resources

to establish new policies and procedures.

Matters in Media Art is an initiative that was created in 2005 by he New Art Trust (NAT)

and its partner museums – the Museum of Modern Art (MoMA), the San Francisco Museum of

Modern Art (SFMOMA) and Tate (Matters in Media Art, n.d.). The goal of the Matters in Media

Art project was for the three partner museums to create a set of standardized practices for the

care of TBMA. It was the hope of the founding members "that if the three museums could come

together to agree on emerging stewardship practices, then by sharing these practices online they

would be used, improved upon and refined by larger audiences of artists and collectors" (Matters

in Media Art, n.d.). After the initial creation of these guidelines, the Matters in Media Art

website was created, which contains an abundance of resources for museum professionals. The

website is divided into four pages: Acquisition, Documentation, Loan, and Digital Preservation.

The acquisition section contains guidelines for museums considering the collection of TBMA,

including spreadsheets to calculate costs of acquisition, templates for copyright agreements and

deeds of gift, and steps to follow post-acquisition (Matters in Media Art, n.d.). The

Documentation section breaks TBMA into twelve different categories and provides a collection

documentation template for each, along with information on how to assess the condition of

different types of digital media. The Loans section provides museum professionals with

templates for loans, and the Digital Preservation Section provides a template for a survey of

TBMA collections, followed by guidelines on how to take beginning steps in digital preservation

with limited resources.

Like Matters in Media Art, the Met's Time-Based Media Working Group has also made the its resources public. The Met provides detailed templates and documents on both the acquisition and the process for conducting artist interviews. Templates are divided into subcategories for different types of media, and the museum even provides templates for artwork identity reports and artwork iteration reports (Tim- Based Media Working Group (n.d.).

For museums that have a TBMA collection but are unsure of how to document it, they could take advantage of the free software offered by the Variable Media Network, the Variable Media Questionnaire (VMQ). The VMQ is available as a free software download on the VMQ website, and was "designed to help a work's creators and users write guidelines for translating their works into new media once the original medium has expired" (Variable Media Questionnaire, n.d.).

As we've discovered, collaboration is key, as "best practices can be established only by actively sharing innovations, exchanging ideas, and encouraging critical discussion among conservation professionals" (Time Based Media, n.d.). Although the previously mentioned collaborative models are found within large museums with a known history of collecting TBMA, similar models can be applied to benefit smaller and medium-sized museums that are in the beginning stages of the management of TBMA. In a *Summit on Digital Curation in Art Museums* organized by Johns Hopkins, Anne Goodyear, former curator at the Smithsonian National Portrait Gallery, proposed an innovative idea of how small museums could work together in a mutually beneficial way (Zorich, 2015). At the time of the summit, Goodyear was the Co-Director of the Bowdoin College Museum of Art. During her time at Bowdoin College, the museum collaborated with other small museums in the New England area to jointly purchase a

piece of TBMA (Zorich, 2015). Jointly purchasing a piece meant that each institution would have the artwork for a determined amount of time, then would pass it on to the next museum. Although this arrangement sounds complicated, it has actually worked out very well for all institutions involved. Goodyear stated that "none of the institutions could have made the purchase on their own," (p.20), and that all of the museums were able to come together to discuss issues and find solutions concerning the preservation of the artwork (Zorich, 2015). This model could certainly apply to museums in Georgia that are without resources to manage TBMA that could come together to purchase TBMA and subsequently exchange ideas to determine best practices for its cares.

Conclusion

This paper set out to determine the state of the collection and preservation of TBMA in Georgia's museums. The majority of Georiga's art museums have acquired TBMA for their permanent collections, but only one museum is preserving it. Museums that have not acquired TBMA cited lack of resources and not being in line with the museum's mission as possible barriers to collecting TBMA. None of the museums have policies or procedures in place to aid in the management of their collections, but they do have access to several resources to implement an effective collection strategy for TBMA.

Collaborations across large collecting institutions have led to the publication of free resources that are available to museums professionals. From this research, museum professionals will be able to learn what museums are doing to collect and preserve TBMA, and they can also discover resources that will be beneficial in helping them get started with the acquisition and management of a TBMA collection. It's important that museums begin to implement effective

strategies for TBMA so that it exists well into the future. "As long as artists are creating great works that rely on these technologies, it is the museum's responsibility to showcase and preserve them" (Dorin, 2009, p. 9).

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