SARA CALLAHAN

ART +
ARCHIVE

UNDERSTANDING THE ARCHIVAL
TURN IN CONTEMPORARY ART

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Art + Archive

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Acknowledgements

This book tackles a subject that is seemingly inexhaustible, a moving target that developed, changed and adapted over the course of the project. During the years spent researching this material I frequently had the sense that the archive was everywhere, that just about every exhibition and every artwork was somehow connected to it, that everything could be read as an indication of an archival interest. If I have managed to avoid getting totally lost in the archives it is because I have been fortunate enough to have had a number of intelligent and engaged readers, conversation partners and guides throughout the process. My most enduring companions have been my colleagues and students at the Department of Culture and Aesthetics at Stockholm University and at Södertörn University. The trajectory and provenance of this book comes out of many stimulating conversations, challenging questions and the generous encouragement of many people. I have filed these in different sub-folders, some of which are bursting with energy and engagement, some thinner and more distilled, but all have helped make the writing of this book not just possible but also, for the most part, enjoyable.

Some individually filed contributions must be singled out: first and foremost, Anna Dahlgren and Dan Karlholm, my most long-standing interlocutors, who have provided invaluable support along the way. Magdalena Holdar, Bosse Holmqvist, Nina Lager Vestberg and Anna Orrghen have all commented on the text, each sharing their expertise and providing sharp insights at different stages of the process. I am also indebted to the anonymous reviewers who generously contributed their attention, knowledge and careful readings of the book manuscript. Thank you for making the peer-review process feel less like an execution and more like a productive and encouraging conversation! And, as always, special thanks to Staffan, my muse and most consistent, considerate and critical reader.

Finally, I am constantly reminded of what a privilege it is to think and write about art for a living. My heartfelt thanks go to all those artists who continue making interesting, thought-provoking work that makes the world come into

sharper focus and reveals it to be even more complex and wondrous than first meets the eye.

The archive: a must-have accessory of the moment?

Archives, it seems, are everywhere, both in popular culture and academic discourse.[1]

What isn't an archive these days? Where did it all begin, when will it end? In these memory-obsessed times – haunted by the demands of history, overwhelmed by the dizzying possibilities of new technologies – the archive presents itself as the ultimate horizon of experience. Ethically charged, politically saturated, such a horizon would seem to be all the more inescapable for remaining undefined. Where to draw the limits of the archive? How to define its basic terms? The collection? The library? The museum? The list? The inventory? The document? Classification? System? Storage? Retrieval? Memory? Mnemotechnics? Retention? Preservation?[2]

During the last decade, 'archive' has become an increasingly important concept in social studies as well as in the humanities; it has for some years been a *buzz word*, one of those terms that function as markers of new trends, indicating an adherence to a particular school or field of interest, apparently heralding new and important insights. The success of the concept has not been limited to academia and scholars; there has been, and still is, a considerable interest in archives and archive technologies in the arts, and a number of prestigious galleries and museums have opened up their spaces for exhibitions exploring the nature of archives and their relations to art, life and politics.[3]

When art critics, curators and art historians in the years around the turn of the twenty-first century observed a shift in artistic practices towards the archive, it was explored in part by bringing theories from other disciplines to bear on an art context. In literature, philosophy, history and cultural studies the concept of the archive had become increasingly interesting: following poststructuralism, it was no longer possible to understand an archive merely as a site housing historical documents; it was now also a structure worth investigating in its own right. The so-called 'archival turn' thus involved a shift from the *archive-as-source* towards the *archive-as-subject*.[4] Scholars as well as artists increasingly viewed the archive with both suspicion and fascination:

as a system of knowledge it was routinely criticised for being oppressive, supporting existing power structures and cementing exclusionary patterns. At the same time, spending time in actual archives was romanticised, and the archive was seen to provide a direct material connection to history and memory. This tension between the archive as a dusty treasure trove filled with the remnants of history and the archive as concept or metaphor is key to the present-day understanding of, and interest in, archives.

Within the field of art, references to archives have been deemed so significant and prevalent that a new sub-category of contemporary art has been proposed. The terminology is not consistent: it is not quite an –*ism* (*archivism*?, *archivalism*?), but a loose grouping of artworks and artistic practices are variously referred to as *archive art*, *archival art*, *art of the archive* or some variation thereof. One of the most frequently referenced texts proclaiming an archival trend among artists was critic and scholar Hal Foster's 2004 essay 'An Archival Impulse', which characterised this kind of artistic practice as 'an idiosyncratic probing into particular figures, objects, and events in modern art, philosophy, and history'.[5] Four years later, star curator Okwui Enwezor gathered a number of predominantly photographic artworks into a thematic exhibition around the notion of *archive fever*, a phrase borrowed from a text by philosopher Jacques Derrida.[6] Foster and Enwezor were the best-known champions of the archive as a contemporary tendency in the art field, but they were far from alone. Prior to, and certainly following, their archival deliberations many others weighed in, and in the first two decades of the twenty-first century artworks and artistic practices were frequently framed in archival terms. The terminology of the archive signalled, among other things, that these artworks dealt with issues that were complex, interesting and of particular urgency for the current moment.

At first sight the artworks and artistic practices that are characterised as *archival* seem remarkably heterogeneous: different writers, curators, critics and art historians bring up different methods, media, expressions and artists to support the claim for a new – or at least intensifying – interest in archives in the years surrounding the turn of the twenty-first century. The big tent of archive art includes artists such as Thomas Hirschhorn, known for deliberately junky and chaotic installations replete with references to leftist thinkers, but it also accommodates poetic collections and arrangements of found photographic material where the personal rather than the political is of interest. The tent is spacious enough to fit a video work in which Anri Sala confronts his mother's radical political past in Albania in order to point to the discrepancy between personal memory and historical documents, but there is also ample space to include Marcel Duchamp's early twentieth-century portable suitcase-as-retrospective with its mini-replicas of the artist's early artworks. At times archival artworks operate with a predominantly metaphorical notion

of archive, at other times they include overt allusions to archival practice and materials, such as when white-gloved performers go through photographs and text documents demonstrating the fickleness of memory and truth in Stefanos Tsivopoulos's months-long performance at the mega-exhibition *Documenta* in Kassel. The category of archive art easily incorporates a project by Jacqueline Hoàng Nguyễn in which the artist sets up a mobile scanning service to give immigrant communities the tools to digitise photographs and documents that would otherwise be lost. This pragmatic and hands-on archival service, which literally drives around the city streets, can be considered alongside artworks that aestheticise archives and archival documents inside the institutional white cube. The broad grouping of archive art is capacious enough to house intricate and painstakingly constructed archives dedicated to fictional characters, but also artworks made up of repurposed material from museums of history, ethnography and art where the artist has added little or no new material. Albeit perhaps a temporary abode, the category of archive or archival art seems inclusive also in terms of its geographical focus. One sub-section houses artists focused on Middle Eastern history, another South African artists who process their country's racist history via archival interventions. Queer archives that are set up as art projects in their own right are considered alongside artworks that use photographs and documents from historical archives in order to show the racist, misogynist or homophobic structures that underpin them. This geographical and thematic spread is paired with a diachronic inclusivity. Some versions of archive art include artistic projects of decades past, challenging the view that the archive really was a new theme in artistic practice in the late 1990s and early 2000s.

This book is the result of an open inquiry into the connection between *archive* and *art* at the turn of the twenty-first century. The initial research was guided by a broad set of questions: What is archive art, and what or who determines what should be included in this presumed category of art? Is archive art always concerned with actual archival material, and if so, does this material have to be historical? What, if any, is the connection between photography and the archive as it is conceptualised in an art context? Are archival art practices necessarily research-based? If so, what does that actually mean? And, why is 'archive' the term of choice: what makes that term more useful and interesting than related notions such as collection, library or structure? Is the archive a theme, concept, attitude, practice, form or process for the artworks gathered under the label of archive or archival art?

This book is an attempt to provide a nuanced understanding of what at first glance seems to be a sprawling and ubiquitous category of recent art. Unlike clearly defined movements in the early part of the twentieth century, launched by manifestos and held in check by self-proclaimed gatekeepers, archive art is neither clearly defined nor a self-identifiable grouping. Hardly

any artist would declare themselves to be a card-carrying archival artist, yet the terminology of the archive is ever present in the field of contemporary art in the first decades of the twenty-first century. Intriguingly, archive art is thus simultaneously a pervasive and an elusive object of study.

Unsurprisingly, given the term's ubiquity, many critics and art historians have cautioned against what they consider the overuse and vagueness of the notion of the archive to categorise artworks and artistic practices. Art historian Kate Palmer Albers justified why she minimised references to the archive in her 2015 book *Uncertain Histories: Accumulation, Inaccessibility, and Doubt in Contemporary Photography* by stating that '[t]he category "archive" has by now been employed with such abandon that it seems to encompass anything that has to do with either historical references or a collection in general'.[7] Similarly, photography theorist John Tagg began his 2012 essay 'The Archiving Machine; or, The Camera and the Filing Cabinet' with the following reflection:

> Ancient as the Greeks, it seems that *archive* […] is having its turn as one of those terms, like *the body*, *visuality*, *hybridity*, *the aesthetic*, and so on, that surge suddenly and sometimes surprisingly into fashion as the must-have accessory of the moment. For a time, they then become like brand names, the focus of intense loyalties and the object of impassioned exchanges understandable only to those who belong to the code.[8]

Archive is here compared to other popular terms and is presented as something contingent and trend-sensitive. Tagg's claim that the archive surges into fashion and functions as an accessory implies that it is superficially attached to something more significant. The suggestion is that this term, like other comparable terms, may indeed appear to be of the utmost importance at some point, but will likely seem irrelevant and dated just a few years later, like a garish scarf that no longer really goes with anything. By likening these terms to brand names, Tagg also implies that their function is to bestow value on a product – in this case an artistic product – by affixing it to a somewhat arbitrary sign.

If Tagg and Albers are critical of the current use of the terminology of the archive, others continue to find it useful and keep adding to its theoretical edifice. In addition to numerous books and articles on the topic published in the second decade of the twenty-first century, archival terminology is still used with such frequency in wall texts, artist statements and curatorial essays that it is barely noticeable any more – it has, at least for now, become part of the vocabulary of contemporary art.

This book is not a critique of the use, or overuse, of archival terminology in recent art discourse, nor does it attempt to predict whether the archive art phenomenon is here to stay or if it is a passing trend. The phrase 'archive art phenomenon' – or 'phenomenon of archive art' – is used throughout this book

to refer to the inclination to connect artworks and artistic practices to the notion and terminology of archives, and the prevalence and staying power of these archival references among artists, writers and other actors in the art-world. In contrast, but not necessarily in opposition, to previous studies, my focus is on why the archive becomes a buzzword at a particular point in time and by what means. More precisely, this is a book about the way the archive art phenomenon can be understood as indicative of a number of interlocking issues, meaningful well beyond the analysis of particular artworks or exhibitions. If the terminology of the archive is indeed an accessory, I believe that it is important to examine what larger structures, themes and phenomena it is an accessory to. What, in other words, is the meaning and function of the archive in art writing and practice at the turn of the twenty-first century? This book is my attempt to answer that question.

A promiscuous and peripatetic notion

In her book *Travelling Concepts in the Humanities*, cultural theorist Mieke Bal discussed the way concepts change meaning over time and according to the different disciplines in which they occur. Concepts, she suggested, 'travel – between disciplines, between individual scholars, between historical periods, and between geographically dispersed academic communities. Between disciplines, their meaning, reach, and operational value differ.'[9] Bal's discussion of peripatetic concepts such as *image*, *framing*, *tradition* and *performance* has been useful for my project because of how it pointed out the value of analysing such interdisciplinary and intercontextual movement, and because of Bal's insistence that concepts change as a result of such travel. This book is concerned with the meaning and consequences of attaching and associating the terminology of the archive to artworks and artistic practices; had the archive been treated as a fixed concept, moving unchanged from history, literature and philosophy over to an art context, or, for that matter, retaining exactly the same meaning and function in all texts on archive art, several of this book's most important results would have been left undiscovered. In fact, it is precisely because the archive can be said to be 'tenuously established, suspended between questioning and certainty, hovering between ordinary word and theoretical tool' that it is rewarding to pay it close attention.[10] I am interested in how the archive hovers between various colloquial everyday and theory-laden meanings, but also how associating the terminology with specific art practices and artworks has specific effects; and I subscribe to the view that the use of concepts is not simply descriptive but also to some extent programmatic and normative.[11] It is important to clarify that although Bal's argument hinges on her own practice of interdisciplinary cultural analysis, this book is firmly anchored in the discipline of art history. I do not presume

to offer a comprehensive or systematic study of all the ways the archive has travelled between different academic disciplines; I strive to stay focused on how this notion functions and generates meaning specifically within contemporary art writing and artistic practice.

A note on terminology: I have opted to refer mostly to the 'notion of the archive' rather than describing it as a 'concept'. Although both terms can refer to abstract ideas, the term concept points to a stricter, philosophically aligned and more clearly delineated set of ideas, whereas notion is more expansive and includes 'opinion' and 'vague view or understanding', as well as 'inclination, impulse, or intention'.[12] This broader, looser and at times vaguer set of ideas corresponds well to the way the archive is mobilised in the art field in a general sense. It is also the case that in specific texts and discussions, the archive is in fact approached as a concept or used not as a theoretical tool at all but as an ordinary word.

A key concern of this book is to understand why references to the archive became so prevalent in contemporary art in the years around the turn of the twenty-first century, and how this archival turn can be interpreted. In order to do so, it was necessary to consider the wider historical context – or frame – into which the phenomenon of archive art fitted, what grounded it, what it developed in response to, and what it in turn shaped and affected.[13] The book thus juxtaposes many different types of material: it includes references to the archive that appear in critical and curatorial texts, in artworks and artistic practices, but also material that points to broader issues related to technology, epistemology, materiality, postcolonial and feminist critique of institutions, as well as turn-of-the-century views on presentist temporality, memory and history. By describing the archive as a promiscuous and peripatetic notion, I want to point out that it has been associated with, absorbed and incorporated different theoretical clusters. A method of analytical cross-reading reveals the complexity of the phenomenon of archive art where notions circulate and reverberate between artworks, theoretical frameworks, texts and contexts. It is worth stressing that although this book includes numerous discussions of specific artworks and exhibitions, these are treated as exemplary particulars, studied in detail but of interest primarily for their ability to clarify the general meaning and function of the notion of the archive in contemporary art. For each artwork discussed, a number of others could have been selected instead.

This book's layered methodology has some specific consequences. First of all, I am deliberately not providing my reader with a concise and neatly delineated definition of the term archive. Since I want to analyse the phenomenon of archive art as it emerged and the way references to the archive became more prevalent in art writing and artistic practices at a particular time, having a fixed and preconceived definition of the term would be counterproductive: the archive is defined and used in many different ways, and fulfils many different

functions in the art field at this time. At times the contrast between archive and collection is important, but at times they are treated as synonymous. At times the archive is closely identified with how Michel Foucault defines it in his book *The Archaeology of Knowledge*, at other times it is more aligned with structures of provenance and traditional ideas of history writing. At times it is a fully metaphorical concept, at other times it refers to tactile materials or the physical space where these materials are housed. At times the archive is seen as active and radical, but it is also associated with dead matter and oppressive and exclusionary procedures. And, to further complicate matters, several different understandings of the archive frequently coexist in the same artwork or text. The reader may well find that the archive feels like an exceedingly slippery object of study at times, but this frustration is part of the deal, I'm afraid.

My method consists of accounting for different positions in the field and providing the reader with a broad set of materials relating to the theorisation of archives in relation to art at the turn of the twenty-first century, and the resulting book can therefore be described as a multilayered overview that can serve as a starting point for further critical examination. My ambition is to better understand the archive art phenomenon, not to assess or criticise it, and therefore I deliberately avoid going into overt polemics regarding specific positions or understandings. I view my role as one of connecting the dots between the different elements that make up the phenomenon of archive art, and these elements include well-known texts, writings and practices, as well as those that position themselves against these, but also a number of other broader (technological, social and historical) concerns, debates and conditions. If my book proves to be useful to students and researchers in different disciplines over time, it will be because it analyses the archive art phenomenon without overtly positioning itself within it.

The structure of this book

This book is divided into two parts. The first three chapters that make up Part I outline key texts in the discourse of archive art, the writings they build on, and clarify how theories that originated outside of the artworld come to have specific meaning when they are brought into an art context. The first part lays the groundwork for the more prismatic structure of Part II where five broad themes – materiality, research, critique, curating and temporality – structure the examination of the archive not as a distinct and separate concept, but as a broad notion that is aligned with, contaminated by and connected to various other phenomena, tendencies and ideas. If the first part of the book is primarily text- and theory-based and draws a map of the field of archive art and its historical and conceptual grounding, the second part zooms in on different aspects of this field and considers how archival artworks and practices

intersect with central issues both within and beyond contemporary art. The metaphor of the prism, albeit admittedly worn out, gets at the way each of the five chapters in Part II looks at the same object – the archive art phenomenon – through a specific lens that allows for a different set of interlocking themes to come into view.

Chapter 1, 'Archive art discourse', considers the launch of archive art as a genre or category of art by curators, critics and other art writers, and outlines how, when and where the archive became a buzzword in the international artworld. The chapter begins with a chronological outline of texts from the mid-1990s until around 2015 that define and promote archive art as a category of contemporary art. This outline shows how the idea of an increased interest in archives among artists took off and spread once it was launched by well-known critics and curators. Furthermore, it describes how many texts bring up a similar list of artists and cull from more or less the same theoretical writings, often citing exactly the same passages. Despite this, there is no agreed-upon definition of what archive art is, when the archival interest began, or exactly which artists should be included in this category.

The outline of the different texts on archive art is followed by a discussion of ten themes that are points of commonality between the different texts. These ten themes reappear throughout the book's different chapters; in fact, much of the subsequent analysis in Part II is an elaboration of issues identified and briefly outlined in this first chapter. Chapter 1 is intended to be a foundation for the rest of the book, and the reader can thus choose to read it from beginning to end like any other chapter, but it can also be approached at a set of references to be consulted when and if needed while reading other parts of the book.

Chapter 2, 'Archive theory', clarifies why the archive elicited so much theoretical reflection within the humanities from the second half of the twentieth century onwards. It outlines various contradictory ideas around archives during the modern era: on the one hand, the archival document is viewed as a historical source, approached and questioned according to evidentiary principles. On the other hand, there is the, often simultaneous, view that these documents provide a kind of mystical link to the past. By the middle of the twentieth century there is also an increasing interest in the archive as a structure that points to power relations and oppressive social conditions. The title of the chapter indicates a heterogeneous cluster of theories that deal with archives in different ways, and although there is no such thing as a coherent 'archive theory', there are some key texts and notions that are frequently enlisted in discussions of archives at the turn of the twenty-first century – by Jacques Derrida, Michel Foucault, Pierre Nora, Walter Benjamin, Jorge Luis Borges, and others. The fact that these staple references tend not to include any practising archivists has been pointed out by scholars from the field of

archival science, highlighting a palpable tension between the archival turn in the humanities and art on the one hand, and the practical and theoretical concerns of archivists on the other.

Chapter 2 presents several reasons why the archive became so important during the last decades of the twentieth century. It argues that theoretical writing about archives helped frame recent historical events and questions raised by these events. The fall of the Berlin Wall and the subsequent opening up of the old Stasi archives, the end of the apartheid era in South Africa and the establishment of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission as well as war and violence in different parts of the Middle East made various issues related to the function of archives come to the fore, such as the validity of historical truth-claims, as well as the oppressive and therapeutic potential of archives and archival practices. Within the academy, postcolonial and feminist scholars interested in various forms of archival exclusion also contributed to making the archive a point of interest at this time. Yet another factor was the emergence of digital technologies that helped bring attention to the technological basis of history writing in general, and of archives in particular. The convergence of these historical events and conditions and the increasing philosophical theorisation of archives contributed to the visibility and interest in both physical archives and the archive as an idea.

Following the discussion of the frequently referenced texts that make up a kind of archive theory, Chapter 3, 'The artworld as an archival structure', analyses what happens when this archival cluster of theories and associations migrates to an art context, and the specific conditions there that make the archival terminology stick. The chapter shows how the notion of the archive in the art field functions as a productive short cut to theorise a new understanding of art in the post-war era, in large part because it makes visible the function of institutions, documents and discursive systems. The archive as a notion getting at structural determination is shown to overlap with the institutional theory of art, outlined by Arthur Danto in the mid-1960s and later developed by others. The increasingly complex understanding of the archive at the turn of the twenty-first century – the archive as both material and structure, both concrete abode and abstract law – is thus shown to share a great deal with the change in the notion of art that occurred in the so-called 'long 1960s'. Chapter 3 makes clear that these different theoretical clusters intersect in numerous ways and that elements of archive theory reinforce elements of the institutional theory of art and vice versa.

The mythology around the 1960s and the group of artists who launched conceptual art in the United States has been of interest not only to scholars but also to a younger generation of artists working in the 1990s and early 2000s. By examining one recent reference to Ed Ruscha's work – Michael Maranda's 2009 remake of *Twentysix Gasoline Stations* – the chapter ends by

analysing the archival function of such references to canonised conceptual artworks, positing that the 1960s can be seen to function as an archive to contemporary artistic practices, both in the sense of a determining structure and as historical material.

Chapters 1–3 show how the archive received a dramatic new meaning in the second half of the twentieth century when the colloquial sense of archive as a collection or a site storing documents was supplemented by a more abstract and immaterial understanding of archive as a law or structure constructing knowledge. The first chapter in Part II, 'Materiality', is focused on the tension between materiality and immateriality that characterises the contemporary understanding of the archive. The timing of the so-called archival turn in art coincided with the shift from analogue to digital media. In archival science, library studies, history, art history and other disciplines, the effect of the digitisation of archives on a large scale was greatly debated in the first decade of the twenty-first century. If the effect of digitisation on archives was a concern for specialist scholars, the gradual shift from analogue to digital photography was of more general interest and raised issues of how the truth-claims of the new forms of photographic documents were to be evaluated. Chapter 4 argues that the increasing interest in archives is related to the sense that the indexicality – material trace – of analogue media in general, and analogue photography specifically, was perceived to be under threat because of the advent of digital media. The phenomenon of archive art is thus shown to be tied to another pervasive trend among artists in the same time period: artistic engagement with obsolete or soon-to-be obsolete technology. Artworks such as Tacita Dean's *Floh* (2001), Zoe Leonard's *Analogue* (1998–2009)*, Joachim Koester's *Message from Andrée* (2005), Akram Zaatari's *Damaged Negatives: Scratched Portrait of Mrs Baqari* (2012), and other works are used to anchor the discussion in specific artistic practices where these material associations between the archive and analogue media are processed.

Conceptual art practices from the 1960s and 1970s have been theorised in terms of a dematerialisation of the art object, as they represented a significant shift away from the subjective, auratic and material towards the ephemeral event or artwork-as-document. Chapter 4 points out that many artists associated with archive art engage specifically with the material connotations of the archive, while simultaneously examining the archive's more structural and immaterial aspects. Photographic and film practices of the 1960s and 1970s, when approached from a twenty-first-century perspective, become carriers of a complex set of connotations relating to materiality and immateriality. Michael Maranda's remake of Ed Ruscha's photobook, first discussed in Chapter 3, is further analysed here, alongside another work that returns to artworks by well-known artists from the 1960s and 1970s: Joachim Koester's *Histories* (2003–05). These works are considered in light of notions of canon

and archive, and in terms of how they process and question art history and linear temporality. They are also shown to enact a rereading of conceptual artworks via the digital image culture of the second decade of the twenty-first century, further complicating a clear-cut contrast between materiality and immateriality.

Chapter 5, 'Research', delineates the increasing 'academicisation' of art and argues that art and research can be seen to be connected in three distinct ways in the years surrounding the turn of the twenty-first century: first, artists are compared to researchers in terms of the methodology they use and the themes they investigate; second, artworks incorporate overt references to research in terms of their form or aesthetics, i.e. artworks visually resemble research activities or research results; and finally, there is a significant increase in studio-based PhD programmes at this time, which means that artists literally become academic researchers, incorporating their practices within the broader university system. By bringing together different elements of the discussion of art and research with texts from the corpus of theories outlined in Chapter 2, this chapter shows that references to research frequently operate with an implied set of contrasts: research as art, or by artists, is said to differ in significant ways from other types of research and is thus able to produce freer, more subjective forms of knowledge. At the same time, however, research references in art tap into the objectivity and systematicity of established forms of academic research. Chapter 5 clarifies the overt and implied assumptions involved in comparing the artist to a researcher, and it points out similarities between descriptions of the historical researcher in texts on archive theory and in descriptions of artistic practice by artists themselves or by critics, curators or scholars.

Artists' use of text and their interest in marginal and mystical figures are analysed via specific examples from Tacita Dean and Joachim Koester. These are shown to mobilise a notion of historical research in part driven by chance, serendipity and a kind of mystical connection to historical figures or events, while also continuously pointing out that they are themselves unreliable narrators or that the facts they deal with are uncertain. A self-reflexive questioning of the reliability of a particular historical narrative also characterises Stefanos Tsivopolous's installation *Precarious Archive* (2016), which performs that unreliability: white-gloved archivists present archival documents and facts, and then show the viewer that these are not to be trusted.

The debate around the academicisation of artistic practice in the form of studio-based research is also shown to intersect at many points with the archive art phenomenon. The penchant for theorising, the use of difficult or 'academic' language, and self-reflexive criticality are valued in both academia and post-war art, pointing to an increasing overlap between these fields. The chapter ends with a discussion of artistic uses of the formal elements of written

academic research: footnotes and indexes. Works by Alejandro Cesarco and Roni Horn among others exemplify the way academic referentiality is used as process, form and material in specific artworks, and how this referentiality can be understood in light of contemporary theorisations of the archive.

Building on the discussion in Chapters 4 and 5, Chapter 6, 'Critique', shows that ideas about critical practice develop and become ubiquitous both in academic discourse and in post-war artistic practices around the same time, and that recent discussions of critique within the academy can be seen in light of specific artistic practices from the mid-1990s onwards. The chapter attempts to nuance the understanding of critique from a generally accepted quality of post-war art in general, and contemporary art in particular, towards a more careful consideration of what critique is taken to mean in an art context.

By way of Fred Wilson's *Mining the Museum* (1992) and George Adéagbo's *La Colonisation Belge en Afrique Noire* (2000), the notion of the archive is shown to get at the idea that a structure or an institution is defined as much by what is excluded as what is included. The main argument of this chapter is that not only does the institutional definition of art make critique of the institution an urgent and complex focus for artists, but also that the notion of the archive effectively ties the art genre of institutional critique to broader, often academic, practices of questioning historical, gendered and ethnic exclusions. The chapter describes how the archive is a frame placed around some works, such as Wilson's, retrospectively. In the early 1990s, when Wilson's work was first exhibited, the terminology of archive art was not as ubiquitous as it was later to become. However, later practices critiquing broad knowledge structures such as colonialism are often tied to the notion of the archive from the start, both by the artists themselves and by critics, curators and art historians.

The last part of the chapter picks up the discussion from Chapter 2, by showing how historical and political events at the turn of the twenty-first century added further urgency to the connection between critique and the archive; South African artist Santu Mofokeng's *Black Photo Album / Look at Me* (1997), Palestinian artist Emily Jacir's *ex libris* (2010–12) and other works are considered exemplary of how broad archival notions are used to make sense of the specific historical situation in these and other places.

Several of the chapters preceding Chapter 6 brought up ambivalent references to the archive, in which artists and writers play with ideas of uncertainty and even fiction. This theme is brought up again here by way of Carrie Lambert-Beatty's notion of *parafiction*. The chapter suggests that many instances of archive art practices at the turn of the twenty-first century tend to avoid direct head-on attack on the structures they critique, and that they instead engage in destabilising and undermining activities where the sense of uncertainty is an integral part of the critical endeavour.

Chapter 7, 'Curating', connects the archive art phenomenon to the increasing visibility and importance of the curator, ideas around curatorial practice, and the notion of 'the curatorial' as it was theorised and debated around the turn of the twenty-first century. The archive is frequently described as a collection of documents or objects that constitute a unity by virtue of being placed together. The archival thus shares a conceptual grounding with the curatorial: both deal with parts and fragments that are framed as belonging together as a whole – be it in an archive or an exhibition. The surge in archival references at the turn of the twenty-first century coincides in large part with the escalation of thematic exhibitions created by well-known curators, and, as outlined in Chapter 1, several of the texts that launched and developed the idea of a particular archival moment in art practice were in fact written by curators.

The book's seventh chapter picks up several themes from the other chapters in Part II. It examines how criticality is tied to the exhibition and the notion of the curatorial, both in terms of activist archival practices that are exhibited as curatorial projects, but also in terms of curatorial questioning of the institutions where a particular project or exhibition takes place. The chapter examines how the roles of the artist and curator become increasingly fluid: on the one hand, artists bring together existing objects or process works by other artists; on the other hand, curators increasingly claim creative authority over projects. This discussion also adds to the theme of Chapter 5 by showing that research and the aesthetics of research is not just an interest among artists, but is, to a large extent, constitutive of much curatorial discourse and practice as well. By showing the shift in the art museum away from the collection and display of the art historical canon towards a more experiential, present-oriented museum or art institution, Chapter 7 also points ahead to the discussion of temporality in the book's final chapter.

Chapter 8, 'Temporality', unravels different elements of what is frequently referred to as an archival temporality and shows how it is related to terminology and concepts used in relation to 'the contemporary'. One of the underlying arguments of the book as a whole is that the Foucauldian notion of the archive as the law of what can be said becomes conceptually attached to the institutional understanding of art at the turn of the twenty-first century. The institutional theory of art grounds the artworks not in a stable teleological historical lineage but within a network of evaluative and discursive references (the artworld), and this structural institutional ontology can easily be mapped on to the concept of the archive that emerged in the second half of the twentieth century. In Chapter 8, this institutional definition of art is shown also to fit within the broader discussion of regimes of discontinuity or presentism, carried out both within and outside the art context. Hans Belting, building on Arthur Danto's ideas of post-history, posits that contemporary artists exhibit

a historical interest that is in large part compensating for a loss of historical grounding of the notion of art itself. This chapter ties the art historical discussion of post-history to other considerations of presentism or a-historicity in the current era. The terminology of the 'contemporary' and 'contemporaneity' as well as the terminology of 'turns' are also shown to be enmeshed with the notion of the archive in significant ways. Although presentism would at first glance seem contrary to the archive art phenomenon, with its interest in, even obsession with, history, the book's final chapter shows how notions such as presentism can be productively used in analysing the kind of interest in history that is associated with the use and emulation of archival documents in art. The chapter analyses artworks that deal directly with temporal connotations of the archive in different ways: The Atlas Group project by Walid Raad and the interest in the seed vault as an instance of biological archiving and future address. The chapter also comes back, yet again, to the various returns to works from the 1960s and 1970s by artists in the 1990s and early 2000s, and considers the specifically temporal implications of such artworks.

Notes

1 S. Breakell, 'Perspectives: Negotiating the Archive', *Tate Papers*, 9, 2008, www. tate.org.uk/research/publications/tate-papers/issue-09 [accessed 30 January 2014].

2 R. Comay, 'Introduction', in R. Comay (ed.), *Lost in the Archives* (Toronto: Alphabet City Media, 2002), p. 12.

3 K. O. Eliassen, 'The Archives of Michel Foucault', in E. Røssaak (ed.), *The Archive in Motion: New Conceptions of the Archive in Contemporary Thought and New Media Practices* (Oslo: Novus Press, 2010), p. 29. Italics in the original.

4 That this 'turn' consisted of a shift in focus from the use of archive in research, to researching archives in their own right, is phrased differently in different texts. The terminology of a shift from archive-as-source to archive-as-subject is found in A. L. Stoler, *Along the Archival Grain: Epistemic Anxieties and Colonial Common Sense* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2009), p. 44. This formulation was also cited in the introduction to the 2011 special issue of the journal *Comparative Critical Studies* dedicated to the archive. B. Hutchinson and S. Weller, 'Guest Editor's Introduction: Archive Time', *Comparative Critical Studies*, 8:2–3 (2011), p. 133.

5 H. Foster, 'An Archival Impulse', *October*, 110 (2004), p. 3.

6 O. Enwezor, *Archive Fever: Uses of the Document in Contemporary Art* (New York/ Göttingen: International Center of Photography/Steidl, 2008); J. Derrida, 'Archive Fever: A Freudian Impression', trans. E. Prenowitz, *Diacritics*, 25:2 (1995), pp. 9–63.

7 K. P. Albers, *Uncertain Histories: Accumulation, Inaccessibility, and Doubt in Contemporary Photography* (Oakland, CA: University of California Press, 2015), p. 13.

8 This is a brief foray into contemporary art in a text otherwise dedicated to the sociopolitical effects of the nineteenth- and early twentieth-century camera and filing systems. Although he is clearly annoyed with the way the terminology of archives is used in current art discourse, Tagg's text was also an attempt to rehabilitate the term's critical potential. J. Tagg, 'The Archiving Machine; or, The Camera and the Filing Cabinet', *Grey Room*, 47 (2012), p. 25. Italics in the original.

9 M. Bal, *Travelling Concepts in the Humanities: A Rough Guide* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2002), p. 24.

10 Bal, *Travelling Concepts in the Humanities*, p. 11.

11 Bal, *Travelling Concepts in the Humanities*, p. 28.

12 The cited words are taken from the entry for the term 'notion' in *The Concise Oxford Dictionary of Current English*, ed. R. E. Allen, H. W. Fowler and F. G. Fowler (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990).

13 Scholar of literature Jonathan Culler cautioned against the use of the term *context*, arguing that the term tends to hide the fact that context is not given but produced. Culler's proposed alternative *framing* has the advantage of reminding the reader that the researcher is engaged in an active procedure with actual consequences for the studied material. Framing, of course, also has specific significance for art historians, particularly those dealing with post-war art where the semiotic function of the frame has become increasingly visible. Culler's reminder of the active effect of analysis is therefore not only relevant for understanding the methodology of the current study, but it also clarifies how texts and exhibitions that classify and group particular artworks together under the moniker of archive art actively frame and affect the interpretation of these objects and practices. J. Culler, 'Preface', in *Framing the Sign: Criticism and Its Institutions* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1988), p. ix. See also Chapter 4 in Bal, *Travelling Concepts in the Humanities*.

The notion of the archive in art writing and theory

Archive art discourse   **1**

A keyword search on the term *archive* and *archival* on the online sites of two prominent art magazines (*Artforum* and *Art Journal*) reveals relatively few references to these terms in the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s, growing slightly in the 1990s, only to rise sharply from around 2005 onwards with hundreds of hits each year. The increased frequency of references to the archive in these publications is an indication of a wider use of archival terminology in the art field in the early years of the twenty-first century – not only in art magazines but in exhibitions, artists' texts, academic symposia, special issues of journals and periodicals, as well as numerous articles and books.

Already in 1986 Allan Sekula discussed the nineteenth-century archive as part of an epistemological structure deeply connected to photography's ability to establish and delimit the deviance and social pathology of the *other* in his essay 'The Body and the Archive'.[1] Although not overtly about art at all, it was written by an artist and photography theorist, and has been frequently referenced in subsequent texts on archive art. John Tagg, another photography theorist, suggested in 2012 that he himself, Sekula and other writers with an interest in the archive as a political apparatus were part of a different 'archival mode' than those who took on the topic in the 1990s and 2000s.[2] The terminology was similar, but, as noted, Tagg claimed that by the later date the archive had become little more than a 'must-have accessory of the moment'.[3] What the surge of references to the archive consists of, should include, and whether it is welcome and significant or too ubiquitous to be useful is the subject of some debate. What is clear is that critics, art historians and curators use archival terminology to describe a perceived trend in artworks and practices in the decades following the mid-1990s. To be precise, two separate archive-related tendencies emerge in the art context at the turn of the twenty-first century: the term archive – and variations thereof – is more frequently used, but it also comes to have a more diverse set of meanings and associations than in previous decades.

Although archival terminology is in frequent use at this time, it is not possible to fully grasp the phenomenon of archive art by keyword searches alone.

Artworks and artistic practices included in the category are not considered archival merely because they overtly use the terminology of archives, but because they are somehow seen to evoke archival concepts or themes.

The aim of this book is not to add to the growing list of publications that propose their own definition of archive art. In fact, this book operates with the assumption that the category 'archive art' does not exist separately from the texts, artworks, exhibitions and practices that identify it as such.[4] It is far from clear whether it should be considered a category of art at all, or whether it is more accurately described as a shared set of interests. The focus of this first chapter is therefore to examine how such a 'turn' or grouping was formed, and to lay the groundwork for a careful examination of how the notion of the archive functions in a contemporary art context. This chapter is divided into two distinct parts: first an outline of the corpus of texts and some related exhibitions that contribute to the identification, definition and cementation of a set of artworks and practices that can be termed archive art. By zooming in on a number of texts written over the course of approximately two decades (mid-1990s to mid-2010s), the first part can be likened to a set of index cards where pertinent quotes and brief summaries of the texts are laid out, like a literature review of archive art discourse. Or, to use a more archival image, the first part functions a bit like the archive's finding aid, a tool to help the reader navigate the material and get a bird's-eye view of a sprawling set of documents. Following the first part is an outline of ten broad themes identified in the text corpus. I introduce these thematic clusters here, but they will reappear in Part II of the book where they will be further unpacked and analysed. The reader can therefore approach this chapter in two ways: since it is intended as a foundation for what is to come it can be read thoroughly before moving on to subsequent chapters, but it can also be productively referenced while reading the book's later parts, if and when needed.

The text corpus of archive art

It is difficult to pinpoint the exact beginning of the archive art phenomenon; however, it is fair to say that one of the very first to identify an archival trend was curator and writer Ingrid Schaffner, whose essay **'Deep Storage: On the Art of Archiving'** was published in the summer issue of the British art magazine *Frieze* in 1995.[5] The themes of storage and archiving identified in the article were later developed into an exhibition co-curated by Schaffner.[6] On the occasion of the exhibition's move to the US a large catalogue was produced that contained a slightly reworked version of Schaffner's essay, as well as a one-page meta-reflection on the project.[7] The catalogue also included texts by prominent writers in the field of photography theory, art history, critique and media theory such as Geoffrey Batchen, Benjamin Buchloh, Sheryl Conkelton,

Geert Lovink, Stefan Iglhaut and Susan Buck-Morss. In Schaffner's essay, storage was the main focus, and the archive was directly tied to the physical space of the museum.[8] She argued that '[a]nxiety and dust provoke the archiving impulse. In the museum – the mausoleum most artists still aim to enter through their work – the recesses of the storeroom simultaneously beckon and bar access to history.'[9] In addition to this focus on concrete and physical archives, the archive was also considered a paradigm or structure ordering the museum. Artists' ambivalence towards the museum is influenced by both of these senses of the archive: artworks come to die in the museum, pacified into a state of storage, but the archival structure of the exhibition – any exhibition – means that there are various 'predilections and biases' that determine what is shown and what is not, according to Schaffner.[10] This metaphorical or immaterial archive is mostly hinted at in Schaffner's *Frieze* essay but becomes prevalent in later texts about archive art.[11]

The exhibition **Archives & the Everyday** also took place in 1997 and was, like Schaffner's *Deep Storage*, accompanied by a catalogue, but it has not been greatly discussed in the broader corpus of texts on archive art. Curated by Trevor Smith and organised by Canberra Contemporary Art Space in collaboration with multiple archival institutions in the city, the exhibition stressed the colonial repercussions of the creation of national collections and archives.[12]

In 1998 the Dutch series *Lier & Boog Series of Philosophy of Art and Art Theory* published an issue with the theme **'The Archive of Development'** edited by Annette W. Balkema and Henk Slager.[13] The volume included contributions by a number of philosophers and curators, and was a response to questions raised by three concurrent exhibitions taking place in Europe in 1997: *Documenta 10* in Kassel, *Sculpture Projects* in Münster and the Venice Biennale on the theme of *Future, Present, Past*.[14] The volume explicitly considered the archive in a Foucauldian sense, and the editors stated that they wished to consider some of the most complex notions of art history 'such as progress, avant-garde, young art and innovation'.[15]

In 2001 a panel with the title **'Following the Archival Turn: Photography, the Museum and the Archive'** convened at the College Art Association conference in Chicago. The following year, a special issue of the journal *Visual Resources* presented essays based on some of the papers in the panel, along with a seven-page introduction by artist, curator and researcher Cheryl Simon. In her introductory essay, Simon outlined what she considered to be the 'archival turn', its theoretical grounding, its changes over time, and its current form within contemporary art and exhibition practices.[16] The archival turn was defined as a 'phenomenon that encompassed both art production as well as curatorial activity' and included 'the increased appearance of historical and archival photographs and artefacts, and the approximation of archival forms, in the art and photographic practices of the 1990s'.[17] Walter Benjamin and

Michel Foucault were said to correspond to different strands of what Simon called the postmodernist critique of institutions, and although these thinkers had different conceptions of the archive, they shared the view of the archive as a site of abstract cultural power and social transformation.[18] According to Simon this abstract or discursive element of the archive characterised the linguistic orientation of the postmodernist archival turn of the 1970s and 1980s, but the more recent archival turn added more of a focus on the archive's material aspects.[19]

Just as Ingrid Schaffner focused on the institution of the museum, Cheryl Simon also tied the archival turn to museum critique, specifically critique carried out in photographic practices in the 1970s. The 'after' in the title of the CAA panel and the special issue of *Visual Resources* indicated that it was now possible to look back to this archival turn as a finished chapter of curatorial and artistic practice. The suggestion was that a new, modified archival turn could be identified. The articles in the special issue, however, pointed to a temporal trajectory spanning most of the twentieth century: it included texts on MoMA's first photography exhibition in 1937; August Sander's *People of the Twentieth Century*; the relationship between Aby Warburg's *Mnemosyne Atlas* and Robert Smithson's notion of *Nonsite*, a curator's account of an exhibition that made use of the museum's own archive; as well as an account of Aboriginal interventions into ethnographic photographic archives in the 1980s and 1990s.

The same year as the publication of the *Visual Resources* special issue, 2002, also saw the publication of two large volumes that seemed to deliberately mimic archival overload in their format and scope. ***Lost in the Archives***, published by Alphabet City, was an 800-page collection of texts under the headings *bookkeeping*, *collections*, *mnemotechnics*, *testaments*, *itineraries* and *erasures*.[20] It included essays by a large number of authors, interviews, as well as numerous descriptions and discussions of artworks. The range of writers was vast: the publication included texts by Jacques Derrida and Bernard Stiegler, George Didi-Huberman, Gustave Flaubert, Vera Frenkel, Boris Groys, Candida Höfer, Friedrich Kittler, Sol LeWitt, Fernando Pessoa, Irit Rogoff, Jeff Wall and many, many more. The following description of the book's focus was included as an epigraph:

> There is a crisis in the archives. The contemporary world requires that increasingly vast amounts of material be archived and accessed, and this presents unprecedented possibilities and problems for the production, storage, and use of knowledge. With this context in view, *Lost in the Archives* explores the productive potential of memory's failures – its technical dropouts, omissions, burials, eclipses, and denials. Investigations on the limits of memory are presented by over seventy artists and writers.[21]

The other large-scale archival publication to come out that year was ***Interarchive***, a bilingual (English–German) 639-page book organised under the

three thematic headings *Approaches*, *Perspectives* and *Interlinking*.[22] Self-described as reflecting 'process-orientation, flexibility and openness', the publication was the final stage of a project that had started several years previously with the relocation of over 1,000 boxes of material from curator Hans Ulrich Obrist's personal archive to the University of Lüneburg.[23] The preface to the publication described how the arrival of this archive started a process 'whereby the archive was … to be treated less as a source of research and more as an exemplary research object'.[24] The project had resulted in an exhibition at Kunstraum of Leuphana University Lüneburg already in 1999, and the first part of the publication dealt with the approaches and methods of that exhibition. The second part was concerned with different disciplinary perspectives on archival participation, and the third part outlined over sixty 'positions of contemporary archiving practices in the field of art'.[25] The focus of this last part was on the archive as a network, whereby materials always connect to other materials, and one archive connects to a number of others. The introduction to the *Interlinking* section explained:

> We based our work on a wide definition of the archive and applied the term 'archivist' not only to those who own an archive, but also to those who deal with archives, whose practices are 'archival'. Some only became archivists following our invitation to consider themselves as such.[26]

The article **'An Archival Impulse'** by art critic Hal Foster was published in the fall 2004 issue of *October*, an American journal dedicated to art criticism and theory. Foster was an editor of the journal, as were many of the most recognisable names within 'a critical vanguard' in the US at the time.[27] Foster already had a well-documented knack for identifying trends and producing theory-laden texts that used a type of artistic practice to characterise the current moment, and his 2004 *October* article appeared to be a deliberate attempt to launch a new such catchphrase – *archival impulse* – thus encapsulating the current moment under a moniker with a significant theoretical pedigree.[28] A decade later, Foster published a reworked version of the text in a collection of essays, but with some significant changes.[29] The original essay presented artists Thomas Hirschhorn, Tacita Dean and Sam Durant as representative of a shared 'notion of artistic practice as an idiosyncratic probing into particular figures, objects, and events in modern art, philosophy, and history'.[30] That this archival impulse was not new was indicated already in the title of the article: this was *an* archival impulse rather than the definitive singular *the*. Foster identified two earlier periods when the impulse was 'at work': it was active in the pre-war period, but it 'was even more variously active' in the post-war period with its use of appropriated images and serial formats.[31] Having established that this impulse had been around before, Foster clarified the novelty of the current iteration: 'an archival impulse with *a distinctive character of its own* is again pervasive – enough so to be considered *a tendency*

in its own right, and that much alone is welcome'.[32] What Foster terms 'archival art' was defined according to a number of characteristic methodological approaches enumerated at the beginning of his article. Artists in this category were said to make historical information, often lost or displaced, physically present, and to work with obscure, alternative knowledge or counter-memory rather than drawing on the archives of mass culture or the internet. Another key aspect of archival art, according to Foster, was that it was both preproduction – concerned with unfulfilled beginnings and incomplete projects – and postproduction – because of its interest in secondary manipulations.[33] Although the 'artist-as-archivist' followed the 'artist-as-curator', archival art was clearly distinct from art focused on the museum, according to Foster, mainly because artists now assumed that 'the museum has been ruined as a coherent system'.[34] The final feature of archival art presented in the article was that it 'underscores the nature of all archival materials as found yet constructed, factual yet fictive, public yet private'.[35] Hirschhorn, Dean and Durant were Foster's main examples of this way of working, but he listed several other artists as well.[36] Thomas Hirschhorn was implicitly presented as a model for the archival artist: he was the first artist mentioned, the discussion of his work was allocated the most space, and quotes from Hirschhorn were on several occasions used to describe the entire field of archival art.[37]

Foster's *October* essay appeared in the midst of a number of exhibitions and artworks that processed topics relating to archival material and practices. The 2002 *Documenta 11*, curated by Okwui Enwezor and his team of co-curators, was not overtly concerned with the archive but dealt with art and complex global knowledge systems and included a number of artworks described as 'documentary'.[38] One of the co-curators was **Ute Meta Bauer** who had written and lectured extensively on her interest in archives long before this, and had curated several exhibitions with overtly archival themes. Already in 1992 Bauer had been one of the initiators of *Information Service*, an archive of documentation of contemporary international artworks by women, first exhibited at Kassel to protest the under-representation of women at *Documenta 9*. The archive went on tour for around two years and was shown in over a dozen different venues.[39] Bauer had also organised an exhibition titled *Atlases and Archives* at the Künstlerhaus Stuttgart in 1994, along with a special issue of the art magazine *META* on the same topic. A decade later, in 2005, she curated *Mobile_Transborder Archive* for the art festival *InSite05*. The project mapped archives related to immigration, the environment, human rights, gender and labour, making the archives available in a mobile unit that moved between different sites in Tijuana and San Diego.[40] More recently, in 2012, Bauer curated *The Future Archive* at the Neuer Berliner Kunstverein, which picked up on artistic research projects from the 1970s and 1980s carried out at the the Center for Advanced Visual Studies at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

In the first decade of the twenty-first century curators such as Ute Meta Bauer and **Maria Lind** were arguing for the critical potential in curatorial practice and promoted artworks that dealt with issues relating to the archive as a transformational tool. They suggested that the archive, like the exhibition, had the potential to elicit political change. The exhibition *Telling Histories: An Archive and Three Case Studies with Contributions by Mabe Bethônico and Liam Gillick*, shown at the Kunstverein München in 2003, is a case in point. Co-curated by Maria Lind, Ana Paula Cohen and Søren Grammel, the exhibition consisted of the Kunstverein München's archive, a symposium, so-called 'talk shows' as well as documentation of these events.[41] The project was concerned with the way exhibitions and institutions functioned as mediators of contemporary art, and claimed to be a response to the perception that the history of curatorial practice tended to suffer from serious amnesia. The project thus centred on making the institution's own historical material into an archive.[42] Just as Bauer's interest in archives persisted over the following decades, so did Lind's. During Lind's tenure as director of Tensta Konsthall in Stockholm, the gallery presented a series of lectures under the title 'What Does an Archive Do?' (*Vad gör ett arkiv*?) during 2016 and 2017, with Bauer as one of the invited speakers.[43] Many different curatorial projects engaged the archive during this time and it is not possible to go through all, or even most of these, here; but Bauer and Lind exemplify an early and active interest in the archive among curators during the early 2000s.

In November 2004 the conference 'Unleashing the Archive' took place in London. The conference was organised by the University of London's School of Advanced Study and the National Archives, and aimed at promoting 'new cross-disciplinary thinking about the cultural and historical significance of archives'.[44] On the occasion of the conference a book made up of uncaptioned photographs and a long conversation between artists Uriel Orlow and Ruth Maclennan was published with the title *Re: the archive, the image, and the very dead sheep*.[45] The book included a bibliography in which many of the texts that were frequently cited and referenced in subsequent writing on archive art were listed.

A clear sign that the archive was a concept to be counted on in mainstream contemporary art discourse came in 2006 with the arrival of the *Archive* instalment of the series *Documents of Contemporary Art* published by Whitechapel Gallery and MIT Press. The aim and focus of the series was described at the beginning of each publication: 'Each volume focuses on a specific subject or body of writing that has been of key influence in contemporary art internationally', and the book was said to function as a 'source book' providing access to 'a plurality of voices and perspectives defining a *significant theme or tendency*'.[46] This publication indicated that by 2006 the archive was deemed to be such a significant theme or tendency, alongside other terms such

as *appropriation*, *beauty*, *chance*, *colour* and *participation*. In the introduction, the book's editor, art historian Charles Merewether, stated that the increased significance given to the archive was 'one of the defining characteristics of the modern era', and that it was 'in the spheres of art and cultural production that some of the most searching questions have been asked concerning what constitutes an archive and what authority it holds in relation to its subject'.[47] Merewether defined the archive by distinguishing it from a collection or a library through its direct connection to history writing: the archive 'constitutes a repository or ordered system of documents and records, both verbal and visual, that is the foundation from which history is written'.[48] The book, like other books in the series, was an anthology of brief and often severely abbreviated source texts. Included in the anthology were texts by Giorgio Agamben, Walter Benjamin, Benjamin Buchloh, Jacques Derrida, Michel Foucault, Sigmund Freud, Dragan Kujundzic, Paul Ricoeur, Allan Sekula, Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak and Margarita Tupitsyn, among others. It also included an extract from Hal Foster's 'An Archival Impulse'. Numerous artists' texts and interviews were also included by The Atlas Group (Walid Raad), Christian Boltanski, Marcel Broodthaers, Neil Cummings and Marysia Lewandowska, Eugenio Dittborn, Renée Green, Susan Hiller, Thomas Hirschhorn, Ilya Kabakov, Raqs Media Collective, Jayce Salloum, Andy Warhol and Akram Zaatari, and a few others. The anthology illustrates how a canon of archive art was forming by this time, including not only artists and artworks, but also art writing and other types of texts.

In addition to the more general accounts of archive art are a number of books and texts that focus on a perceived increased interest in archives within a particular subset of contemporary art, such as the 2006 publication ***Ghosting: The Role of the Archive within Contemporary Artists' Film and Video*** by Jane Connarty and Josephine Lanyon.[49] The book accounted for a programme by the UK commissioning body *Picture This* that ran from 2003 to 2006 with the aim of collaborating with archivists and curators to broaden access and creative uses of archive collections, as well as 'working with artists to commission, curate and present film and video projects' developed through this increased access.[50] The book was said to 'harness the growth of interest in archives' and case studies included works dating from the 1990s to 2006 encompassing 'a range of approaches including those who work directly with found or archival footage, those who construct imaginary or fictional archives, and those who address the subject of the archive itself'.[51]

The years surrounding the turn from the first to the second decade of the twenty-first century saw an increasing number of art historians, critics and curators taking on the archival theme. Sue Breakell, archivist at the Tate, gave a talk at a symposium called 'The Archival Impulse: Artists and Archives' held at Tate Britain in November 2007.[52] Her talk was published the following year

in *Tate Papers* with the title **'Perspectives: Negotiating the Archive'**: here Breakell connected writing on the archive from the field of archival studies to specific interest in the archive among contemporary artists.[53] Breakell published another article on the same topic in 2015, **'Archival Practices and the Practice of Archives in the Visual Arts'**, this time in the journal *Archives and Records*.[54]

The first lengthy academic study on archive art was ***The Big Archive: Art from Bureaucracy*** by Professor of Germanic and Slavic Studies Sven Spieker, published in 2008.[55] The book opened with the observation that although the archive had become a 'trope' in late twentieth-century art, there was a lack of understanding of what an archive is and how it can be understood in relation to earlier twentieth-century art.[56] As a remedy to this, Spieker set out to investigate 'the archive – as both bureaucratic institution and index of evolving attitudes toward contingent time in science and art – and [found] it to be a crucible of twentieth-century modernism'.[57] Spieker took a diachronic perspective on what he termed 'archivally driven art' and argued that the nineteenth-century archive had a lasting impact on early twentieth-century art. Artists challenged faith in the archival order in different ways according to Spieker: by introducing contingency and chance into the archival system (Marcel Duchamp), by compiling moments of rupture that elude the archive (Surrealism), and by challenging the archive's topography and optical correlatives by way of film (El Lissitzky, Sergei Eisenstein).[58] Artists working in the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries also challenged the nineteenth-century archive, but now by exploring the archive's tendency towards entropy by working with photographic archives that disavow narrative and origin (Susan Hiller, Gerhard Richter, Walid Raad, Boris Mikhailov), and by introducing error into the archive and thereby highlighting the impossibility of distinguishing history from fiction (Michael Fehr, Andrea Fraser, Susan Hiller, Sophie Calle).[59]

The same year that Spieker's book was published, two large-scale exhibitions on the theme of archive and art were shown in New York and Barcelona. The better-known and more frequently referenced of the two is ***Archive Fever: Uses of the Document in Contemporary Art*** at the International Center of Photography in New York. The catalogue included a 41-page essay by the exhibition's curator, Okwui Enwezor. The essay offered a thematic and theoretical outline of various themes and practices: the relationship between photography and the archive; the archive's historical and contemporary links to the establishment and critique of empires; artistic references to archival forms; archive as repository of trauma; and archival material used by artists as ethnographic material. Enwezor contrasted his exhibition's focus with the standard view of the archive as a 'dim, musty place', and argued instead that it is in its other sense, as an 'active, regulatory discursive system', that the archive has

engaged the attention of so many contemporary artists.[60] *Archive Fever*, Enwezor explained, 'explores the ways in which artists have appropriated, interpreted, reconfigured, and interrogated archival structures and archival materials'.[61] The exhibition included a number of artists, most working with photography, several of whom are recognisable from previous texts on archive art: Christian Boltanski, Tacita Dean, Stan Douglas, Harun Farocki & Andrei Ujica, Hans-Peter Feldmann, Jef Geys, Felix Gonzalez-Torres, Craigie Horsfield, Lamia Joreige, Zoe Leonard (with Cheryl Dunye), Sherrie Levine, Ilán Lieberman, Glenn Ligon, Robert Morris, Walid Raad, Thomas Ruff, Anri Sala, Fazal Sheikh, Lorna Simpson, Eyal Sivan, Vivan Sundaram, Nomeda & Gediminas Urbonas and Andy Warhol.

The other exhibition, ***Universal Archive: The Condition of the Document and the Modern Photographic Utopia***, was organised by curator Jorge Ribalta and shown at Museu d'Art Contemporani de Barcelona (MACBA) at the end of 2008.[62] The exhibition consisted of around 2,000 'documents', including nearly 1,000 vintage photographs and copies, from 1851 to the present.[63] These works, by a large number of artists and photographers, were arranged around two main parts: the first representing key debates about the condition of the photographic document in the modern period: 'Policies of the Victim' (1907–43), 'Public Photographic Spaces' (1928–55), 'Compared Photography' (1923–65) and 'Topographies. The Culture of Landscape and Urban Change' (1851–1988). The second part focused on photographic representations of Barcelona from the late nineteenth century until 2007.

Whereas Spieker focused a great deal on Russian artists, and Enwezor and Ribalta on photographic practices, other more specialised studies with a particular thematic or geographical focus began to emerge at this time. In the following year, 2009, artist and scholar Simone Osthoff published ***Performing the Archive: The Transformation of the Archive in Contemporary Art from Repository of Documents to Art Medium***, which focused on four Brazilian artists working from the 1960s until today.[64] Osthoff argued that Lygia Clark, Hélio Oiticica, Paulo Bruscky and Eduardo Kac, in different ways, 'perform' archives, either by creating archival documentation of interactive works, or by exhibiting artists' own archives or theorising new forms of artistic practice such as telepresence and bio art.

By the middle of the second decade of the twenty-first century, the flood of articles and publications on the topic of art and archives was continuing to grow, and it becomes increasingly difficult to survey. In 2010, curator **Nataša Petrešin-Bachelez** published a two-part article about 'Innovative Forms of Archives' in the electronic journal *e-flux*.[65] Both articles focused on artists from Eastern Europe (Lia Perjovschi, IRWIN and Tamás St Aubry) who engage in self-historicisation in response to inadequate official institutional structures. Petrešin-Bachelez attempted to broaden the geographical focus on

archive art, showing that other artists working within different types of institutional setting could also be discussed in terms of archival notions. In 2011 the online and print-on-demand publication ***Collect the WWWorld: The Artist as Archivist in the Internet Age*** was published by the curatorial platform LINK Center for the Arts of the Information Age.[66] The publication considered the 'fact that the internet was now the place where images and other cultural artefacts are stored, classified, voted on, collected and trashed', and discussed the impact of this process on artists and on art making. It included works by Alterazioni Video, Kari Altmann, Cory Arcangel, Gazira Babeli, Kevin Bewersdorf, Luca Bolognesi, Natalie Bookchin, Petra Cortright, Aleksandra Domanovic, Harm van den Dorpel, Constant Dullaart, Hans-Peter Feldmann, Elisa Giardina Papa, Travis Hallenbeck, Jodi, Oliver Laric, Olia Lialina & Dragan Espenschied, Guthrie Lonergan, Eva and Franco Mattes, Seth Price, Jon Rafman, Claudia Rossini, Evan Roth, Travess Smalley and Ryan Trecartin.

The same year, the research and curatorial project ***Living Archive: Archive Work as a Contemporary Artistic and Curatorial Practice*** was initiated at the Arsenal-Institute for Film and Video in Berlin. Two years later, in 2013, the project was presented in an exhibition and publication that included thirty-eight participating curators, artists, filmmakers and academics, as well as four grant-holders from India, South Africa, Jordan and Brazil that in different ways worked with the more than 8,000 films in the Arsenal collection spanning over fifty years. The project was described as a discursive combination of 'research, preservation, and the publication of film history with an artistic and curatorial practice of the present'.[67]

Distance and Desire: Encounters with the African Archive was a three-part exhibition series shown over 2012–15 at the Walther Collection venues in New York, Neu-Ulm and Berlin.[68] According to the exhibition curator Tamar Garb, *Distance and Desire* aimed to show the 'ongoing re-making of history through a lively engagement with a contested and controversial "archive"', and it was set to reimagine the archive's 'poetic and political dimensions, its diverse histories, and its changing meanings'.[69] In Part I, Santu Mofokeng's *The Black Photo Album/Look at Me* (1997) was shown together with A. M. Duggan-Cronin's *The Bantu Tribes of South Africa*, published between 1928 and 1954; Part II showed contemporary African and African American artists 'who engage critically with the archive': Philip Kwame Apagya, Sammy Baloji, Jodi Bieber, Candice Breitz, Kudzanai Chiurai, Samuel Fosso, Attilio Gatti, David Goldblatt, Pieter Hugo, Sabelo Mlangeni, Zwelethu Mthethwa, Zanele Muholi, Andrew Putter, Jo Ratliffe, Berni Searle, Guy Tillim, Carrie Mae Weems and Sue Williamson.[70] The final part consisted of books, albums, postcards and *cartes de visite* from the late nineteenth century, showing how Africans were depicted, by whom, and how these images circulated. The exhibition was

accompanied by an extensive catalogue with texts by the exhibition curator, as well as Awam Amkpa, Elizabeth Edwards, Michael Godby, Erin Haney, Gabi Ngcobo, Chika Okeke-Agulu, Deborah Willis and others.[71]

In 2013 the exhibition *Between Memory and Archive* was shown at the Museu Coleção Berardo in Lisbon. It was accompanied by a catalogue with the title *Between Memory and Document: The Archival Turn in Contemporary Art* that included a lengthy text by curator Ruth Rosengarten.[72] The exhibition included works from the Berardo collection by Helena Almeida, Augusto Alves da Silva, Bernd and Hilla Becher, Daniel Blaufuks, Christian Boltanski, Marcel Duchamp, Chantal Joffe, Allan McCollum, Tracy Moffatt, José Luís Neto, Gabriel Orozco, Pedro Quintas, Umrao Singh Sher-Gil, Hiroshi Sugimoto, Vivan Sundaram, Jemima Stehli, Wolf Vostell, Robert Wilson and Francesca Woodman. The curator's text referenced a number of writers and theorists, among them Walter Benjamin, Jacques Derrida, Mary Ann Doane, Hal Foster, Pierre Nora, Georges Perec, W. G. Sebald, Dubravka Ugrešić and Aby Warburg. Apart from the artists included in the exhibition, a number of others were mentioned as relevant to the archival theme: Georges Adéagbo, Marcel Broodthaers, Hanne Darboven, Susan Hiller, Ilya Kabakov, Gerhard Richter and others.

That year also saw the publication of several books that dealt with specific elements of the relationship between art and archive. The two edited volumes *All this Stuff: Archiving the Artist* and *Performing Archives/Archives of Performance* focused on the documentation of creative processes and ephemeral and live events.[73] Jaimie Baron's *The Archive Effect: Found Footage and the Audiovisual Experience of History* specifically considered the use of archival footage in feature films and documentaries such as *JFK, Forrest Gump* and *Grizzly Man*, but also in works by experimental filmmakers and in video games.[74]

Another catalogue from the same year, *Itinerant Languages of Photography*, from an exhibition at Princeton University Art Museum, included several essays on the relationship between contemporary photography and the archive, notably **'The Archival Paradox'** by Gabriela Nouzeilles and **'I decided to take a look, again'** by Thomas Keenan.[75] Nouzeilles' text exemplifies a type of writing about archives and art that is filled to the brim with references – Roland Barthes, Jorge Luis Borges, Italo Calvino, Jacques Derrida, Georges Didi-Huberman, Wolfgang Ernst, Vilém Flusser, Hal Foster, Michel Foucault, Siegfried Kracauer, Pierre Nora and Susan Sontag are all referred to in varying degrees of detail. Nouzeilles tied the theme of the itinerancy of photographic practice to photographic archival material on the move and considered a 'paradoxical condition' or 'double bind' of both archives and photography: simultaneously inert, stable and concerned with inscription, but also active, porous and engaged in itinerancy.[76] Nouzeilles focused on Latin America in

her text, specifically considering a late nineteenth-century archive and the work of contemporary artist Rosângela Rennó, but she also mentioned Marcel Duchamp's *Boîte-en-valise* and works by Bruno Dubner, Graciela Iturbide, Zoe Leonard, Enrique Metinides and Garbriel de la Mora. Thomas Keenan's text in the same catalogue focused mainly on Walid Raad's Atlas Group project as an example of the 'archivality of the photographic image'.[77]

Also in 2013, the *Journal of Visual Culture* published a special issue, 'Archives', which included numerous articles focused on the art field; and the Swedish periodical *Lychnos* published a special issue on archives that similarly covered different disciplines and approaches.[78]

In 2014 literary scholar Ernst van Alphen published *Staging the Archive: Art and Photography in the Age of New Media*, which focused on the archive's sinister, oppressive and deadly connotations by discussing a wide range of artworks from the 1930s until the present day, as well as numerous films and literary works.[79] By tying the archive to a process of 'depletion of identity', van Alphen connected it to dehumanising tendencies of the twentieth century, specifically highlighting the link between the archive and the Holocaust in a number of artworks. Van Alphen's view of the archive was predominantly bleak, asking whether there was indeed a future for the archive, or whether it was 'rotten through and through' because of its imposition of categories and pure order on to a hybrid reality.[80] In the book's epilogue, van Alphen concluded on a slightly more positive note that if approached 'critically' and 'self-reflexively' with 'productive' memory practices, then the archive, photography and film need not be implicated in but could counter the current 'memory crisis.'[81]

Dissonant Archives: Contemporary Visual Culture and Contested Narratives in the Middle East was a 2015 anthology featuring more than thirty texts, sixteen of which were artists' projects.[82] Editor Anthony Downey opened his introduction with the question: 'How do we define the ongoing relationship between contemporary art and the archive?'; Downey, a scholar of visual culture in the Middle East and North Africa, then narrowed this to a number of more focused questions, including: 'why [has] a commitment to working with archives … become an apparently dominant aesthetic strategy for contemporary artists engaged with the heterogeneity of cultural production across the Middle East?'[83] *Dissonant Archives* included texts on a wide range of topics, from Joshua Craze's consideration of the redacted CIA report on the capture and waterboarding of a Saudi man, to Mariam Ghani's study of the Afghan Films archive; from big-data analysis of Twitter hashtags relating to the Arab Spring in Laila Shereen Sakr's essay, to Timothy P. A. Cooper's discussion of black market piracy as a potential film archive in Pakistan; from Lebanese art history via artist Walid Raad, or the activities of the Gulf Labor Coalition protesting the working conditions for migrant workers building the

new Guggenheim Museum at Saadiyat Island in Abu Dhabi, to a case study of Israel's National Photography Archives by Rona Sela. In this anthology the subset of archival interest is focused not on a particular medium such as photography or film, but rather on a particular geographical region.

Another example of a specific geographical focus was the 2015 special issue on the topic of **'African Art from the Archive'** in the journal *African Art.* In the introduction, guest editors anthropologist Ferdinand de Jong and art historian Elizabeth Harney argued that Foucault's *Archaeology of Knowledge* was 'critical in establishing the current interest in the archive', and that it was unsurprising that many African artists shared this archival interest, considering the subjection to 'the epistemic violence of anthropology, apartheid, and colonial rule' on the continent.[84] Contributions to the special issue discussed the notion of the archive 'in the postcolonial and poststructural era', as well as specific examinations of Georges Adéagbo, Santu Mofokeng, Bryan Heseltine and his photographic collection, and four Algerian artists (Rachida Azdaou, Dalila Dalléas Bouzar, Amina Menia and Zineb Sedira).

In his academic study, ***Installation Art and the Practices of Archivalism*** from 2016, scholar of French and visual culture David Houston Jones used the term 'archivalism' to encompass different activities by artists, including the 'instrumentalization of archival media' as well as the 'appropriation of techniques derived from archival activity'.[85] The book claimed to identify and analyse 'five types of archivalist practice' which the author argued had been 'deployed to significant effect in recent installation art: *intermedial*, *testimonial*, *relational*, *personal* and *monumentalist*'.[86] Jones discussed a number of different artists such as Eija-Liisa Ahtila, Mirosław Bałka, Christian Boltanski, Arnold Dreyblatt, Atom Egoyan, Silvia Kolbowski and Walid Raad among others. Jones explicitly positioned himself against Okwui Enwezor's 2008 text by stressing that he, contrary to Enwezor, was interested in the physical site of the archive.[87]

Having gone through some of the key entries in the text corpus on archive art, in the next part of this chapter I will outline some regularities and differences within it. What are the key characteristics of the archive identified by these texts? Which theorists and texts are alluded to? What, specifically, is the term *archive* taken to mean in this particular context, at this particular time?

Ten themes in the text corpus

Terminology and diversity of artists

What is common to all the texts on archive art surveyed is that they purport to identify a tendency, trend or interest among artists relating to archives. Some texts focus on the genre or category of art, whereas others attempt to

name or identify an urge among artists to work archivally. The terminology also differs: Ingrid Schaffner wrote of the 'art of archiving', Cheryl Simon of 'an archival turn', Sven Spieker investigated 'archivally driven art', Hal Foster identified 'an archival impulse' and 'archival art'. Okwui Enwezor used many different terms; he described the interest as a 'fever' and 'impulse', and wrote of the archive 'as both form and medium' and a 'relationship'.[88] David Houston Jones consistently used the term 'archivalism', defined as a tendency among artists to let 'archival practices guide their enquiry' in different ways, and Ernst van Alphen was concerned with art practices that 'mobilize the models of the archive'.[89] Jaimie Baron coined the phrase 'the archive effect' to indicate a perceived need to reformulate the archival document from an officially sanctioned storage location towards a focus on its reception and how it generates an 'experience of pastness'.[90]

Although several artists recur in different texts, none are present in all. Archive or archival art can therefore not be said to have a fixed set of artists, but instead operates with a varied roster where names appear with more or less frequency. In part, personal preferences among the writers appear to affect who is included in the category. Okwui Enwezor brought up several of the artists he had already written about in previous texts or included in earlier exhibitions. For instance, *Documenta 11* included Walid Raad, Stan Douglas, Jef Geys, Craigie Horsfield, Glenn Ligon, Lorna Simpson, Eyal Sivan, Nomeda & Gediminas Urbonas, all of whom were also part of the *Archive Fever* exhibition. Similarly, Charles Merewether had previously written about Eugenio Dittborn, Rosângela Rennó and Milagros de la Torre in a text that made its way into the *Archive* anthology. Different books and texts also tie the interest in archives to specific media or artistic interests, thereby narrowing the range of artists under discussion: Ernst van Alphen focused on issues of the Holocaust and other forms of state violence; David Houston Jones discussed 'installation art'; Jaimie Baron and Jane Connarty's books were specifically concerned with video practices; and Simone Osthoff discussed performative issues of the archive among Brazilian artists.

Certain artists also seem to recur as a result of later texts having been influenced by earlier ones. For instance, Merewether's introduction discussed Hal Foster's *October* essay and included it in the collection of 'documents'. Okwui Enwezor included Tacita Dean and Stan Douglas in the *Archive Fever* exhibition, both of whom were mentioned in Foster's text. Foster also made adjustments to his list of included artists – presumably in response to subsequent writing – when his 2004 article was republished in a collection of essays titled *Bad New Days: Art, Criticism, Emergency* in 2015. The book's second chapter, 'Archival', was a near verbatim reprint of the *October* article, except in two important respects.[91] A discussion of Joachim Koester's work was added to the previous tripartite discussion of artworks by Thomas Hirschhorn, Tacita Dean

and Sam Durant.[92] The second change was that the additional list of artists considered to be part of the archival 'notion' or 'model' of artistic practice expanded significantly in the later version, from eight to twenty-two. In 'An Archival Impulse' the list was made up by Gerard Byrne, Mark Dion, Stan Douglas, Liam Gillick, Douglas Gordon, Renée Green, Pierre Huyghe and Philippe Parreno. The 2015 text kept these but added Yael Bartana, Matthew Buckingham, Tom Burr, Moyra Davey, Jeremy Deller, Omer Fast, Joan Fontcuberta, Zoe Leonard, Josiah McElheny, Christian Philipp Müller, Walid Raad, Danh Vō, the Otholith Group and Raqs Media Collective.

Although it is not unusual for writers to recycle, update and merge earlier texts in order to repackage these in new formats, Foster's changes point to a number of significant features of the discourse around archive art.[93] The addition of names such as Matthew Buckingham, Zoe Leonard, Walid Raad, Raqs Media Collective and Danh Vō was not just an indication that the category of archive art had expanded, it also exemplifies how the discourse was continuously adjusting in response to other texts and neighbouring discourses. Many artists not mentioned in Foster's 2004 article had since become standard names in a wider discussion about archive art. Several writers had also explicitly suggested that the list of artists included in Foster's article was too limited and needed to be supplemented. Ruth Rosengarten in her text in the exhibition catalogue *Between Memory and Document: The Archival Turn in Contemporary Art* wrote: '[o]thers that he [Foster] does not mention but might as well have, include Glenn Ligon, Lorna Simpson, Roni Horn, João Penalva, Francis Alÿs, Vivan Sundaram, Zoe Leonard and Raryn Simon, to name but a handful'.[94] In fact, four of these suggested additions had been included in Okwui Enwezor's exhibition *Archive Fever* a few years before, which Rosengarten seems to have been deeply influenced by.[95] Art historian and critic Claire Bishop, in a text on analogue technology that briefly considered archival art, similarly suggested that Kader Attia, Zoe Leonard and Akram Zaatari be added to Foster's list of artists.[96] Writer Guy Mannes-Abbott, in a text presenting Emily Jacir's work as 'assembling radically generative archives', criticised what he perceived as Foster's narrow focus on two fronts: first, that Foster's decision to exemplify the archival impulse by three bodies of work (Hirschhorn, Dean and Durant) appeared strikingly insufficient from the perspective of 2014, not least because the qualities Foster ascribed to the three were by that time ubiquitous.[97] And, secondly, already in 2004 artists connected to the MENASA (the Middle East, North Africa and South Asia) region and Beirut in particular were working with these issues, and thus Foster's references could, and should, have been bolder in this regard.[98]

That different writers suggested names that should be added to Foster's list points to the article's status within the discourse, but also that it had come to seem somewhat out of date a decade after its publication. Both Raqs Media Collective and Walid Raad/The Atlas Group are discussed in many texts on

archive art – and both were included in Merewether's collection. Much has also been made of the fact that there seems to be a particular focus on archival themes among artists from the MENASA region, and thus by rectifying Raad's and other artists' absence from his earlier text – notably adding several artists born outside North America or Europe – Foster showed that he saw the need to update his article to better align with how the discussion had evolved since 2004, thereby making clear that he was still, in 2015, invested in the category of archival art. The addition of Matthew Buckingham to the list had a different effect, namely expanding the archival art category to include nearby sub-categories of contemporary art, since Buckingham was the main example used by Mark Godfrey in 'The Artist as Historian' (2007).[99] In this article Godfrey, Foster's colleague at *October*, had launched another term to capture the current moment, and the artists listed as part of this trend largely overlap with those on Foster's original list; Joachim Koester was included as well.[100] Thus when Foster added Buckingham and Koester he was implicitly answering an argument put forth by his colleague, but he also showed that his own category of archival art was, potentially at least, capable of absorbing other competing classifications.

Foster may have been one of the driving forces identifying and theorising archive art in the early 2000s, but the updates and adjustments to his initial text to fit the discussion that had taken place since its publication seem to have been done in order to maintain the relevance of the article in the expanded textual discourse. This example shows that the category of archive art is both elastic and porous, used to bestow value on specific artistic practices, but that it also gains and maintains credibility and relevance by the inclusion of the *right* artists and types of practices. Which artists deserved to be included was both subject to personal preferences and changes in the broader discourse over time.

Interestingly, there is a fairly narrow roster of artists who circulate again and again in different texts, a group that can be said to effectively make up a kind of 'canon' of archive art that remains fairly stable, but with some adjustments and expansion as time goes on. However, there are also a number of artists who are only included in one or two exhibitions or texts on archive art, and there are many other artists who work with what could be considered archival themes or methods, but who are not referred to in those terms at all. There are also geographical differences. Just as the Modernist canon differs depending on one's location, so does the core group of archive art vary according to region: a text or exhibition focusing on central European archive art would be very different from one focused on Scandinavia, for instance.[101]

Critical and political implications of archive art

That archive or archival art is critical in some way is stated explicitly in most texts in the corpus. The critical implications are of different kinds, at times

undefined and merely stated as such, but frequently the proposed archival interest is tied to a critique of various forms of oppression. *Archives & the Everyday* explicitly focused on the normative ambitions of archival practices, and the artworks and essays included in the exhibition and catalogue brought up postcolonial and feminist critiques of these practices, as well as the political implications of focusing on seemingly insignificant documents and memories. Ernst van Alphen was, as noted, interested in the connection between archival notions and the Holocaust, and discussed various instances of state oppression. Okwui Enwezor tied the mobilisation of the notion of the archive among artists to imperialism, totalitarianism and other abuses of archival power. Sven Spieker similarly brought up the relationship between archives and state-sponsored repression, surveillance and control.[102] David Houston Jones mentioned political implications of what he called 'archivalist practice' in his discussion of Silvia Kolbowski's and Renée Green's work, which he described as responses to Chantal Mouffe and Jacques Rancière's discussion of critical art that has the power to challenge hegemonic relations and effect a redistribution of the sensible.[103] Similarly, in her introduction to *Ghosting*, Jane Connarty brought up how artists interrupt and dismantle conventional narrative and thereby examine 'the potential for found footage work to set up a critical position between viewer and image'.[104] Artistic critique of the lack of archival inclusion and preservation on the basis of race, gender and sexual orientation are brought up in several texts on archive art; at times this is tied to a very artworld-specific critique of museums, but at times it is anchored in the archives of former communist Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union, or documents relating to the war in Lebanon, apartheid or the Holocaust.

Simone Osthoff discussed the political dimension of the archive in terms of a concrete historical situation when she argued that the 'performative' archiving processes of Paulo Bruscky were tied to the actual disappearance of mail art during the dictatorship years in Brazil when artworks were destroyed and oppression was rampant.[105] Hal Foster explicitly welcomed the pervasive tendency to explore the archive because it could counter the current 'disconnection from the present', evidenced by a perceived absence of political issues in contemporary art exhibitions.[106] In this case archive art was deemed to be a positive trend because of how it re-politicised contemporary art. The critical/political dimension was highlighted throughout Foster's text in the way Hirschhorn's work was said to fashion 'distracted viewers into engaged discussants' and create 'a counter-hegemonic archive' where the monument is no longer a 'univocal structure that obscures antagonisms'.[107] What many writers highlight is thus that the archival interest among artists is tied to a critical engagement with the world at large, and that this critical stance has – more or less concrete – political implications.

The archival will to connect: archive art and curatorial practice

If political engagement is presented as an archival kind of connectivity in some texts, connectivity is also brought up in terms of curatorial practice. Several authors state that the archival trend is both a curatorial and an artistic one, that it emerges simultaneously among artists and those organising art exhibitions. In fact, many of those who identify and discuss archive art are themselves practising curators, and many texts are presented as mixed curatorial/artistic/research projects. *Interarchive* was instigated as an exploration of the archive of curator Hans Ulrich Obrist, but the publication also included presentations of the archives of several other curators and exhibition projects (Kasper König, *Documenta* and Harald Szeemann).

The very notion of the archive itself is considered to be in part analogous to the curatorial process or mode of thinking. Foster, using a phrase by Thomas Hirschhorn, described the archival impulse as a 'will to connect', and he implied that his own writing process shared a sense of the archival with the curator and the artist gathering together material.[108] Several other texts made similar connections between the archive and curatorial practice, pointing out that both function by way of connection – creating meaning out of juxtaposing and bringing together different elements. Ruth Rosengarten suggested that it was more accurate to plot various turns on a continuum rather than as paradigmatic breaks, and she nominated the curatorial as the connective term between the ethnographic and archival turns.[109] Enwezor's essay was a curatorial text, but he also indirectly stressed the curatorial inherent in the archival when he brought up Derrida's description of '*con*signing through *gathering together signs*', which pointed out how a single corpus is coordinated into a 'system or a synchrony in which all elements articulate the unity of an ideal configuration'.[110]

In addition to curators writing about archive art, or critics and art historians reflecting on the links between curatorial practice and the notion of the archive, several of the artists presented as key examples of archive art also curate exhibitions themselves, and many of the artworks and practices are described as archival in part because they gather together different materials. Thus, when Enwezor lists 'curatorial' as one principle – alongside the 'conceptual' and 'temporal' – that points to the resilience of the archive in contemporary art, the suggestion seems to be that the curatorial is a key component of the meaning and function of the archive in the art field in the early decades of the twentieth century.[111]

Returns to the 1960s: the historical lineage of archive art

The interest in the archive among artists is presented in the studied texts as new and urgent, but most point out that this interest also has tentacles back in

time. The link between the contemporary archival interest and the art practices of the 1960s and 1970s is a feature of several texts, and many overtly identify archive art as rooted in a critique of the art museum as a discursive space that controls and affects what is exhibited. Frequently the critique of these institutional principles is linked to the work of Marcel Duchamp. For instance, Ingrid Schaffner stressed right at the beginning of her text that Duchamp is not just the precedent for this art, but for so much else, thus implying that 'art of the archive' shares its origin-story with contemporary art more broadly.[112] Spieker dedicates an entire chapter to Duchamp, but instead of focusing on what he considers to be the common and obvious connection between Duchamp and the archive centred on critique of the institution, he focused on Duchamp in terms of how contingency and chance enter the archive.[113]

Although the art historical genealogy differs somewhat, most writers stress some connection to conceptual art practices of the 1960s. For most of the texts on archive art, the line from Duchamp is, in a common art historical trajectory, seen to be continued in the 1960s, and it is the later period that is the focus. Both Schaffner and Enwezor discuss Duchamp's *Bôite-en-valise* (1935–41) and Marcel Broodthaers's *Musée d'Art Moderne, Départemement des Aigles* (1968) in some detail, highlighting the way these works deal with the institution of the art museum as an archive. Charles Merewether included a text by Broodthaers in the anthology; Ernst van Alphen also discussed Broodthaers's work, positing that although references to archives in art go back to the 1930s, it was since the 1960s that archival principles had increasingly been used by artists. Simone Osthoff similarly focused on artistic practices from the 1960s onwards. David Houston Jones explicitly discussed the interest in conceptual art mainly in terms of the artist Silvia Kolbowski, who in her work *an inadequate history of conceptual art* (1998–99) created an alternative oral history of artworks from the 1960s and 1970s.[114]

The practice of returning to and referencing works from the 1960s is not the core concern of any of the texts that establish and outline archive art, but it is mentioned in several. In 'An Archival Impulse' Foster brought up Renée Green, Tacita Dean and Sam Durant's interest in Robert Smithson, describing the 1960s as a threshold that attracted these artists.[115] Enwezor also mentioned Smithson, not in terms of a younger generation of artists' interest in him, but rather in terms of his documentation of events and the status of these documents.[116] Enwezor highlighted Smithson's work as 'emblematic' because even when photographs were of performance works or actions, the relationship between this action and its archival photographic trace 'is not simply the act of citing a preexisting object or event' but, according to Enwezor, 'the photographic document is a replacement of the object or event, not merely a record of it.'[117] Cheryl Simon introduced an article in the special issue of *Visual Resources* that juxtaposed Aby Warburg's *Mnemosyne Atlas* and Smithson's

Nonsites; both Sven Spieker and Simone Osthoff discussed Smithson in their books; and in the *Lychnos* special issue on the archive, Adam Wickberg Månsson's contribution focused on the relationship between archives, technology and aesthetics through a discussion of Smithson's work.[118] In subsequent chapters of this book, I will argue that artistic returns to specific artworks and practices of the 1960s play a significant role in understanding the archive art phenomenon at the turn of the twenty-first century.

Theoretical foundations of archive art

Pretty much all texts on archive art reference theories from outside the art field. Many authors use Michel Foucault's writing on archives as the model for analysing specific key artworks. Enwezor, for instance, began his text with a lengthy quote by Foucault, and then stated that no other definition can equally convey the complexities of the concept of the archive: Marcel Duchamp, Marcel Broodthaers and Gerhard Richter's works 'correspond precisely to both Foucault's and Derrida's different takes on the archive'.[119] Furthermore, Enwezor specified that appropriation is relevant for archive art because it calls into question the modernist category of the author.[120] *The Archaeology of Knowledge* was brought up by Enwezor at several points in his text: in order to describe the change that happened in the 1960s and 1970s when the document was no longer separate from that which it documents, and when describing Duchamp's *Boîte-en-valise* as a critique of the museum as institution and the artwork as artefact, because of the way it reveals '*the general system of the formation and transformation of statements*'.[121] As noted, the editors of the special issue of *African Art* dedicated to African art from the archive stated that it was specifically the Foucauldian archive that was of interest to many artists on the African continent.

Cheryl Simon built a portion of her argument around the contrast between Michel Foucault and Walter Benjamin and their respective influence on postmodern artistic practice. Simon argued that Benjamin's writing was characterised by negation, whereas Foucault was concerned with a more positive discursive production, corresponding to the differences between Sherrie Levine and Cindy Sherman's photographic work, respectively.[122] Hal Foster mentioned Foucault several times in 'An Archival Impulse': Sam Durant's work was described as 'framing a historical period as a discursive episteme almost in the sense of Michel Foucault', and in terms of the artists' interest in 'discourses that have just ceased to be ours'.[123] Although not explicitly mentioned, the Foucauldian archive was alluded to in Ingrid Schaffner's text as well; for instance when she described how both the archive and the museum control the 'interpretive destinies' of the artwork.[124] The relative lack of overt references to theorists in Schaffner's *Frieze* essay was remedied

in the catalogue published a few years later; several of the essays included in the catalogue run through a broad range of theoretical writing on archives. Merewether's volume of extracts included writing on archives by numerous theorists and thinkers: Freud's 'A Note upon the Mystic Writing-Pad', Foucault's *The Archaeology of Knowledge*, Giorgio Agamben's 'The Archive and Testimony', Walter Benjamin's 'A Short History of Photography', Sekula's 'The Body and the Archive', Derrida's 'Archive Fever' and Spivak's 'The Rani of Sirmur: An Essay in Reading the Archives'. The included text by Renée Green, 'Survival: Ruminations on Archival Lacunae', was described by Merewether as a dialogue between Agamben's text and Green's own artistic practice.[125]

Just as references to Foucault tend to cite the same lines from *The Archaeology of Knowledge*, the references to Jacques Derrida tend to centre on a few select passages from his 'Archive Fever: A Freudian Impression'. Those that recur in most texts are Derrida's analysis of the etymology of the term *archive*, and the core notion of the *mal d'archive* whereby the archive represents both a creative and destructive impulse (both Thanatos and Eros, in Derrida's formulation). Another frequently cited passage is Derrida's claim that '[t]he archivization produces as much as it records the event'.[126] For instance, David Houston Jones and Jaimie Baron both cite exactly this passage.[127] Derrida is key in Rosengarten's essay as well, and Simone Osthoff mentions in her introduction that 'Derrida's deconstruction of the archive in *Archive Fever* […] clearly inspired this book'.[128]

In most texts on archive or archival art there is an intimation that the archive is defined in part by what is not included therein, which leads to an institutional critique concerned with the lack of representation in the institutions of art or in historical narratives more generally. By destabilising faith in the transparency of the institution and highlighting marginal and radical narratives, archive art is seen to represent a welcome change, not least because of its critical approach to historical truth-claims.

It becomes clear that several of the ten themes outlined here overlap and concern similar characteristics of the archive, but approached in somewhat different ways. The issues relating to criticality discussed above can of course easily be mapped on to the refences to Foucauldian theory, and similarly, the next theme – the archive's unreliability – is deeply intertwined with much of what has been outlined already.

Postmodernism, photography and the idea of the unreliable archive

Many of the texts on archive art discuss a somewhat porous border between truth and fiction. Some, most notably Cheryl Simon's, overtly connect the archival interest among artists to postmodernist theory, whereas others allude to postmodernism's key features – appropriation, the move away from

meta-narratives, the embracing of critical forms of analysis, and so on – but without necessarily describing these in terms of postmodernism.[129]

Okwui Enwezor's text focused on issues relating to untruth, lies and misuse of the archive by those in power, and he wrote that the US government's search of Iraqi archives for documents that could justify and support the 2003 invasion of the country resulted in the disturbance of the integrity of, and confidence in, the archive as a site of historical recall. Enwezor's exhibition thus included recent photographic practices that work in the 'gap between authorship and authority, original and copy'.[130] Simone Osthoff similarly stressed her interest in the 'increased fluidity between fact and fiction'.[131] Hal Foster brought up the tension between the factual and the fictive as a key aspect of the archival impulse, particularly as it related to Tacita Dean's work. In the revised version of his article several of the artists added to the list of those who represent an archival impulse do in fact exemplify a strand of artistic practice that centres around competing layers of knowledge and the unreliability of archival documents. Foster overtly connected the added artist Joachim Koester to Tacita Dean by noting that both artists were concerned with 'the hazy line that separates fact from fiction', but that Koester's works, although focused on historical figures, never reach a point of resolution.[132] Hirschhorn's and Durant's artistic practices are not concerned with uncertainty in the face of historical narrative to such a large extent, and Foster's 2015 text thus arguably also involves a shift towards practices that engage in meta-fictionality, games, intricate self-reflexivity – indicated by the inclusion of the artistic practices of Joachim Koester, Zoe Leonard, Walid Raad, Raqs Media Collective and Danh Võ.[133]

Much of the discussion of archival unreliability within the corpus of texts on archive art is tied specifically to photographic documents. The connection between the photographic medium and the category of archive art is one that is present in some, but by no means all texts about the archival turn in art. Unsurprisingly perhaps, considering the venue of his exhibition, photography is discussed at length by Enwezor in his catalogue essay.[134] Enwezor argued that for nearly a century artists had used photographic archives to think through historical events, but in recent years artists have been 'interrogating the status of the photographic archive as a historical site that exists between evidence and document, public memory and private history'.[135] The firm trust in the photograph as proof, 'a substantiated real or putative fact presented in nature', no longer holds, according to Enwezor.[136] Postmodern photographic practices are also key to the way Simon understood the archival turn: she argued that it had to do with the 'changing status of photography in the museum and the archive', and four of the five articles included in the special issue of *Visual Resources* focused on photography.[137] Charles Merewether's selection of texts and artists also reflect a focus on photography, as around a third of the texts deal with photographic practices.

A distrust of the historical document – photographic or otherwise – and more general challenges to the notion of a stable and reliable truth is stressed in a number of texts within the corpus, and many connect this to a similar shift in the notion of the archive.[138] In the foreword to *Ghosting*, Josephine Lanyon wrote that recognition of the problems with 'relying upon or understanding an archive collection as a reliable or complete source of historical or contemporary "evidence" was a recurring theme' within the initiative of the Ghosting programme.[139] Simon asked whether historical forms can offer a portal to other times and places, or whether they themselves represent historical attitudes towards representation – that they are 'artefacts in their own right'.[140] Here Simon pointed to a critique of the notion of trace as a more or less stable link to the past, and instead presented a shifting, historically contingent notion of both photographic and other types of documents. Merewether also argued that art has the potential to 'open up a world beyond an empirical or manifest order of knowledge' and he identified this as a feature of many of archival artworks.[141] Several artists brought up in Merewether's introduction are said to engage with fictive archival production: notably Broodthaers, Walid Raad/The Atlas Group and subREAL.[142] Merewether ended his introductory text by suggesting that works such as those by The Atlas Group 'open up possibilities for new ways of writing histories', and that they 'also intimate that sense of the absurd, the futile, or the impossible, which ultimately haunts the logic of the archive'.[143] A kind of failure of knowing, failure of completion, or failure of confidence is thus stressed in many of the texts. Some bring up a sense of epistemological uncertainty in terms of specific sociopolitical situations, whereas others argue that it is a constituent condition of the archive itself. *Lost in the Archives* focused on the productive potential of failures of memory, including technical failure, omissions and deliberate denials. Sven Spieker too focused on archival error, its more playful manifestations such as artistic interest in chance and serendipity, but also the difficulty of distinguishing historical truth from fiction.

Archive as material and metaphor

In the corpus of texts on archive art and the archival turn, the archive is in part defined by the materiality of its objects and documents. Hal Foster wrote how artists were concerned with archives that are 'recalcitrantly material' and Cheryl Simon noted that contemporary art practice has a particular 'material resonance' that sets it apart from the linguistic focus of postmodernism that precedes it.[144] Ingrid Schaffner, as noted, suggested that '[a]nxiety and dust provoke the archiving impulse'.[145] The dust mentioned here indicates physical archival materials, and the anxiety is a doubled one – the fear of being forgotten as well as the fear that artworks will be turned into dead objects by entering the museum.[146] The archiving impulse in Schaffner's formulation was thus tied

both to the materiality of the object and to the art institution as structure. David Houston Jones suggested that many archival practices were in part a reaction against or unease with the marginalisation of the physical object at the heart of conceptual art.[147] Okwui Enwezor did not delve into the materiality aspects in any great detail but did mention the 'materialist photographic medium', by which he meant analogue photography and film in contrast with digital media.[148] This contrast between digital, or electronic, and material media or archives is mentioned in many texts on archive art.

As noted in previous sections, the focus on the Foucauldian archive as a law or structure is present in most if not all texts in the corpus, even when Foucault is not explicitly mentioned. This structural archive was described in terms of 'rules and protocols' by Sven Spieker.[149] Jane Connarty similarly described the archive as 'a system of order or knowledge'.[150] In his essay 'Latent Archives, Roving Lens', included in *Ghosting*, Uriel Orlow presented the idea of contemporary artists not only as concrete 'archive users' or 'archive makers', but also as 'archive thinkers'.[151] These artists are, according to Orlow, 'above all engaged in deconstructing the notion of the archival itself. They reflect on the archive as something which is never fixed in meaning or material, but is nevertheless here, largely invisible yet at the same time monumental … the archive at the intersection of concept and matter'.[152] The archive referenced in the text corpus is thus a combination of archives as actual documents, and the archive as structure or system – a doubled understanding of the archive as both metaphor and something concrete; as immaterial power structure and physical material housed in filing cabinets.

The archive as a combination of, or an oscillation between, materiality and immateriality can be seen as an instance of a broad feature of the archive, namely its conceptual *in-between-ness*. This can also refer to an understanding of the archive as both part and whole – the individual documents and the archive in its entirety. But there are several other instances where the archival notion is tied to a state of being in-between. Enwezor, for instance, described the archive as the place 'where a suture between the past and present is performed, in the indeterminate zone between event and image, document and monument'.[153] Many texts include different versions of such dichotomous set-ups: Foster wrote of the archive as being between public–private, found–constructed, factual–fictive, and Spieker similarly pointed to the archive's 'precarious position between order and chaos, between organization and disorder, between the presence of the voice and the muteness of objects'.[154]

Archival temporality and notions of history

All texts on archive art allude to temporality and that artworks that mobilise archival themes are concerned with history in some form. Most texts also

stress that the archive involves a particular temporal structure. Hal Foster tied archival temporality to the political potential of archival art, and to the notion of a failed utopia. Foster discussed Tacita Dean's works as 'arks of lost moments in which the here-and-now of the work functions as a possible portal between an unfinished past and a reopened future'.[155] Ingrid Schaffner alluded to the common notion that the archive is somehow directed both to the past and the future, arguing that artists tapping into the theme of storage and archive create work that both 'anticipates its own future condition and reflects upon past, often accumulative, aspects of artists' visual practice'.[156] Duchamp's *Boîte-en-valise* was described by Schaffner as a summation of his life-oeuvre, but it is also presented as 'anticipatory'.[157] Okwui Enwezor dedicated one of his eight sections to what he called 'Documents into Monuments: Archives as Meditations on Time', where he discussed the relationship between photography and temporality, contrasting 'linear time' with the more fluid 'archival time'.[158] Enwezor noted a 'temporal delay' that characterises the archive, which he tied to the delay in the processing of analogue photographic prints.[159] In the section following this, Enwezor brought up several commemorative works that seem to operate with a reversed temporality: for example, Ilán Lieberman's *Niño Perdido*, which he described as a 'pre-obituary'.[160] Simone Osthoff's study was overtly concerned with artistic practices that she believed challenge a 'notion of history based primarily upon chronology and documentation', and she justified her use of the writing of philosopher Vilém Flusser by pointing to its 'post-historical perspective'.[161] Osthoff also used terms such as the 'ghostly dimensions of the archive' and the 'haunted and uncertain' dimensions of memory and documentation.[162] Spectrality and ghosts as metaphors of archival temporality are at times references to Derrida's 'Archive Fever', but these occur in different ways in many texts on archive art.[163]

Intertextual references

It is not only theorists such as Foucault, Derrida and others who circulate and reverberate in the texts on archive art; there is also a fair amount of referentiality *within* the text corpus itself. First of all, the texts often cite and reference each other. Foster's 'An Archival Impulse' is referenced in pretty much every text on the topic published after 2004: for instance, van Alphen, Breakell, Downey, Enwezor, Jones, Nouzeilles, Osthoff and Rosengarten all refer to it in varying detail.[164] Schaffner's essay or subsequent catalogue is mentioned in a number of later texts: Enwezor's, Simon's, van Alphen's and Jones's to name a few. Sven Spieker opened the seventh chapter of his book with a lengthy reference to an article by Benjamin Buchloh published in the *Deep Storage* catalogue.[165] Notably, a different version of Buchloh's text was published the following year in *October* with the title 'Gerhard Richter's "Atlas": The Anomic

Archive', a text that is frequently cited in texts on the archival turn in art.[166] Another essay by Buchloh published in the same journal about a decade before, 'Conceptual Art 1962–1969: From the Aesthetic of Administration to the Critique of Institutions', does not use the terminology of archives, but brings up features of conceptual art that clearly point towards an archival analysis of these practices.[167]

Other examples of intertextual references abound: Enwezor's text is mentioned in Jones's, Nouzeilles' and Rosengarten's texts. Beatrice von Bismarck, who edited the *Artist as*, a book that reprinted Hal Foster's essay in German, was also involved in the *Interarchive* publication and exhibition.[168] Another example is Merewether's anthology, which includes an interview with Thomas Hirschhorn by Okwui Enwezor.

There are also several overlaps in artists and texts included in the various anthologies on archive art. For instance, Charles Merewether's text 'A Language to Come: Japanese Photography after the Event' was published both in *Interarchive* and in the *Archive* instalment of *Documents of Contemporary Art*. 'An-Archy: Scattered Records, Evacuated Sites, Dispersed Loathings' by Irit Rogoff appeared in both *Lost in the Archives* and *Interarchive*. Texts by Uriel Orlow were included in *Ghosting: The Role of the Archive within Contemporary Artists' Film and Video*, *Lost in the Archives* as well as in *All This Stuff: Archiving the Artist*.

These different kinds of intertextuality presuppose a savvy and knowledgeable reader, someone who can not only navigate references to philosophical writings by Foucault, Derrida and others, but who is also caught up with advanced theoretical arguments in recent art discourse.

Archive art and self-reflexivity

The final common theme in this presentation of the textual discourse of archive art is the notion of self-reflexivity, visible in the text corpus in a number of different ways. First, there is an implied or explicit self-reflexivity in many of the artworks categorised as archive art. Uncertainty about historical truth-claims and the veracity of documents in general is, as noted, tied to a poststructuralist injunction that all knowledge is context-dependent. In line with this, archival art practices are often overtly concerned with their own art historical contexts, and acknowledge their own place within these. Several texts implicitly or explicitly argue that the archive as a notion in its late twentieth- and early twenty-first-century iteration is a self-reflexive notion; an example of this is Sven Spieker's formulation that to see the archive is really to 'observe ourselves seeing'.[169] David Houston Jones explicitly used the term self-reflexivity when introducing the kinds of archivalist practices he was concerned with in his book.[170]

Similarly, many of those identifying and discussing archive art acknowledged the part their own texts played, or would come to play, in a discourse on archives, and that they were themselves 'guilty' of archival methods. Several authors drew parallels between their own work of analysing archive art and the artworks and artistic practices that purportedly make up that category of art. Ingrid Schaffner, in the meta-text 'Digging Back into "Deep Storage"', described how the exhibition (and the catalogue) 'falls subject to itself: a package overwhelmed by its own contents, which strains against the very process of containment it seeks to represent'.[171] Just as the package is overwhelmed by its content, so the exhibition with its idea of storage cannot be easily contained, and the exhibition 'reads like an assemblage', with many references outside of itself.[172] Here Schaffner suggests that the form of both the exhibition and its catalogue mirror the theme of the artworks and the curatorial idea of bringing them together. Many of the curators, critics or art historians writing about archival artworks similarly acknowledge that the archival is difficult to contain and draw attention to their own meta-awareness of archival aspects of their own practice.

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The first part of this chapter provided a roughly chronological run-through of some – albeit not all – texts and exhibitions that purported to identify and define the category of archive or archival art during the period from the mid-1990s until around 2015. The second part outlined ten themes extracted from these texts; these broad themes clarify points of agreement and overlap, but also where different elements within the textual discourse pull in opposite directions. In the chapters that follow, these themes will be fleshed out, tested and considered jointly with other themes, phenomena, discourses, discussions and numerous artworks in order to better understand the meaning and function of the archive in artworks and artistic practices in the years leading up to and following the millennium.

Notes

1 A. Sekula, 'The Body and the Archive', *October*, 39 (1986), pp. 3–64.
2 Tagg, 'The Archiving Machine', pp. 26, 34.
3 Tagg, 'The Archiving Machine', p. 25.
4 I will mostly use the term 'archive art' when referring to this perceived category of artworks or grouping of artists; however, other terms such as 'archival art' or 'art of the archive' occasionally appear as well.
5 I. Schaffner, 'Deep Storage: On the Art of Archiving', *Frieze*, 23 (1995), pp. 58–61.
6 The exhibition was shown in different venues in Germany and the US between 1997 and 1998: Haus der Kunst in Munich, Kunstmuseum Düsseldorf, Nationalgalerie SMPK Berlin, MoMA PS1, and Henry Art Gallery, Seattle.

7   I. Schaffner et al. (eds), *Deep Storage: Collecting, Storing, and Archiving in Art* (Munich: Prestel, 1998). In the *Deep Storage* catalogue Schaffner also contributed with a text on *Documenta 5* and a documented discussion between herself and Elizabeth Lunning.

8   That archiving is treated as a sub-set of storage is suggested in the essay's title but also in its structure, where storage is discussed first, followed by an outline of archiving as a particular kind of storage.

9   Schaffner, 'Deep Storage', p. 61.

10 This phrase occurs in Schaffner's discussion of Douglas Blau's work, but a similar idea is raised when she brings up Sarah Seager's *Excuse My Dust*, a work that Schaffner claims 'implicitly challenged the archival system of inclusion'. Schaffner, 'Deep Storage', pp. 60, 61.

11 In the slightly later text 'Digging back into "Deep Storage"', Schaffner described the topic of the exhibition as 'storage and archiving as imagery, metaphor or process in contemporary art'. Despite this, the text is still mostly concerned with the literal space of the archive and the act of storage. I. Schaffner, 'Digging back into "Deep Storage"', in Schaffner et al. (eds), *Deep Storage*, p. 10.

12 The artists included were all Australian: Anne Brennan, Barbara Campbell, John Citizen/Gordon Bennett, Fiona Hall, Martyn Jolly, Robert McPherson, Susan Norrie and David Watt. See *Archives & the Everyday*, exhibition catalogue (Braddon, A.C.T: Canberra Contemporary Art Space, 1997).

13 A. W. Balkema and H. Slager (eds), *The Archive of Development* (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 1998).

14 The contributors were Hans Belting, Jan Bor, Peter Bürger, Bart Cassiman, Leontine Coelewij, Hubert Damisch, Arthur C. Danto, Bart De Baere, Okwui Enwezor, Kasper König, Sven Lütticken, The Manifesta 1998 curators (Barbara Vanderlinden, Robert Fleck and Maria Lind), Hans Ulrich Obrist, Donald Preziosi, Ernst van Alphen, Kirk Varnedoe, Gianni Vattimo and Kees Vuyk.

15 Balkema and Slager (eds), *The Archive of Development*, p. 9.

16 C. Simon, 'Introduction: Following the Archival Turn', *Visual Resources*, 18 (2002), pp. 101–7.

17 Simon, 'Introduction: Following the Archival Turn', p. 101.

18 Simon, 'Introduction: Following the Archival Turn', p. 104.

19 Simon argued that the material resonance of contemporary practice seemed at odds with the linguistic orientation of the archival turn in its earlier stage – emphasis was now placed on the forms of institutional discourse and the objects they frame rather than discursive practices on their own terms. Simon, 'Introduction: Following the Archival Turn', p. 104.

20 R. Comay (ed.), *Lost in the Archives* (Toronto: Alphabet City Media, 2002).

21 Comay (ed.), *Lost in the Archives*. From the book's inside cover. Italics in the original.

22 B. von Bismarck, H.-P. Feldmann and H. U. Obrist (eds), *Interarchive: Archivarische Praktiken und Handlungsräume im zeitgenössischen Kunstfeld = Archival Practices and Sites in the Contemporary Art Field* (Cologne: König, 2002).

23 von Bismarck, Feldmann and Obrist (eds), *Interarchive*, p. 417.

24 von Bismarck, Feldmann and Obrist (eds), *Interarchive*, p. 417.

25 von Bismarck, Feldmann and Obrist (eds), *Interarchive*, p. 418.

26 Anika Heusermann, Gesine Märkel and Karin Prätorius in von Bismarck, Feldmann and Obrist (eds), *Interarchive*, p. 553.

27 The phrase 'critical vanguard' is taken from the description of the journal on the MIT Press website. 'List of Issues | October | MIT Press Journals', www.mitpressjournals.org/loi/octo [accessed 26 October 2017].

28 Other examples of such catchy descriptions are the term 'artist as ethnographer' and the notion of a 'return of the real' to describe art of the post-war era. See H. Foster, *The Return of the Real: The Avant-Garde at the End of the Century* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1996). Several years prior to publishing 'An Archival Impulse', Foster had published two other essays in which he discussed the archive in both a metaphorical and literal sense: H. Foster, 'The Archive without Museums', *October*, 77 (1996), pp. 97–119; H. Foster, 'Archives of Modern Art', *October*, 99 (2002), pp. 81–95.

29 H. Foster, 'Archival', in *Bad New Days: Art, Criticism, Emergency* (London: Verso, 2015), pp. 30–60. I discuss these changes in the second part of this chapter.

30 Foster, 'An Archival Impulse', p. 3.

31 The photofiles of Alexander Rodchenko and photomontages of John Heartfield were brought up as examples of the impulse at work in the pre-war period. Artists and art movements said to be part of the post-war iteration are Independent Group, Robert Rauschenberg, Richard Prince, conceptual art, institutional critique and feminist art.

32 Foster, 'An Archival Impulse', p. 3. Italics added.

33 Foster, 'An Archival Impulse', pp. 4–5.

34 Foster, 'An Archival Impulse', p. 5. The terminology of a ruined museum seems to point to a text by Douglas Crimp: D. Crimp, 'On the Museum's Ruins', *October*, 13 (1980), pp. 41–57.

35 Foster, 'An Archival Impulse', p. 5.

36 Douglas Gordon, Liam Gillick, Gerard Byrne, Stan Douglas, Pierre Huyghe, Philippe Parreno, Mark Dion and Renée Green.

37 In the last sentence before delving into the specific artistic practices, Hirschhorn's description of his own work is extrapolated to stand for all of them: '[s]uch is artistic practice in an archival field' (Foster, 'An Archival Impulse', p. 6). The concluding part of the article also begins with a reference to Hirschhorn and again takes this to be a description of the archival as a whole, suggesting that this is 'enough alone to distinguish it from the allegorical impulse' (coined by Craig Owens, which Foster had mentioned in footnote 1) (Foster, 'An Archival Impulse', p. 21).

38 For a discussion of the 'documentary' aspects of these works, see O. Enwezor, 'Documenta 11, Documentary, and "The Reality Effect"', in *Experiments with Truth* (Philadelphia, PA: FWM, The Fabric Workshop and Museum, 2004), pp. 97–103. In addition to Kassel, *Documenta 11* took place in Vienna, New Delhi, Berlin, St Lucia and Lagos. Enwezor's six co-curators were Carlos

Basualdo, Ute Meta Bauer, Susanne Ghez, Sarat Maharai, Mark Nash and Octavio Zaya.

39 'Information Service', *October*, 71 (1995), pp. 109–19.

40 InSite, 'Public Interventions and Collaborative Artworks Explore Complexities of San Diego/Tijuana Border Region – News Release' (inSite_05, 2005), https://library.ucsd.edu/dc/object/bb1095161f/_1.pdf [accessed 5 June 2016]; 'InSite', http://insite.org.mx/wp/en/ [accessed 8 August 2019].

41 M. Lind, 'Telling Histories: Archive / Spatial Situation / Case Studies / Talk Shows / Symposium (2004)', in B. K. Wood (ed.), *Selected Maria Lind Writing* (Berlin: Sternberg, 2010), pp. 301–24. For a discussion of this project, see also J. T. Voorhies, *Beyond Objecthood: The Exhibition as a Critical Form Since 1968* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2017), pp. 130ff.

42 Lind, 'Telling Histories', pp. 309–10.

43 'What does an archive do? Tensta konsthall', 2016, www.tenstakonsthall.se/?what-does-an-archive-do [accessed 8 August 2019]. It is notable too that a few years prior to this, in 2014, Bauer's journal *META* had been exhibited 'as an archive' at the gallery in the exhibition *META and regina*: *Two (Magazine) Sisters in Crime*. '*META* and *regina*: Two (Magazine) Sisters in Crime' (Tensta Konsthall, 2014), www.tenstakonsthall.se/uploads/123-META_regina_en.pdf [accessed 16 September 2016].

44 U. Orlow and R. Maclennan, *Re: the archive, the image, and the very dead sheep* (London: School of Advanced Study/National Archive/Double agents, 2004).

45 Orlow and Maclennan, *Re: the archive*.

46 C. Merewether (ed.), *The Archive* (London/Cambridge, MA: Whitechapel/MIT Press, 2006), p. 5. Italics added.

47 C. Merewether, 'Introduction: Art and the Archive', in Merewether (ed.), *The Archive*, p. 10.

48 Merewether, 'Introduction: Art and the Archive', p. 10.

49 J. Connarty and J. Lanyon (eds), *Ghosting: The Role of the Archive within Contemporary Artists' Film and Video* (Bristol: Picture This Moving Image, 2006).

50 J. Lanyon, 'Foreword', in Connarty and Lanyon (eds), *Ghosting*, p. 4.

51 J. Connarty, 'Introduction', in Connarty and Lanyon (eds), *Ghosting*, pp. 6, 9.

52 The Tate conference was followed up in 2009 with 'Archiving the Artist', focusing specifically on artists' own archives. J. Vaknin, K. Stuckey and V. Lane (eds), *All This Stuff: Archiving the Artist* (London: Libri, 2013), pp. 1–2.

53 Breakell, 'Perspectives'.

54 S. Breakell, 'Archival Practices and the Practice of Archives in the Visual Arts', *Archives and Records. The Journal of the Archives and Records Association*, 36:1 (2015), pp. 1–5.

55 S. Spieker, *The Big Archive: Art from Bureaucracy* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2008).

56 Spieker, *The Big Archive*, pp. 4–5.

57 Spieker, *The Big Archive*. From the book's dust jacket.

58 Spieker, *The Big Archive*, pp. 6–7.

59 Spieker, *The Big Archive*, pp. 171, 174.

60 Enwezor, *Archive Fever*, p. 11.

61 Enwezor, *Archive Fever*, p. 11.

62 C. Plasencia (ed.), *Universal Archive: The Condition of the Document and the Modern Photographic Utopia* (Barcelona: MACBA, Museu d'Art Contemporani de Barcelona, 2008). The exhibition was co-produced by Museu Coleção Berardo in Lisbon, where it was shown in early 2009.

63 'Universal Archive', 2008, www.e-flux.com/announcements/38811/universal-archive/ [accessed 17 December 2020].

64 S. Osthoff, *Performing the Archive: The Transformation of the Archive in Contemporary Art from Repository of Documents to Art Medium* (New York: Atropos Press, 2009).

65 N. Petrešin-Bachelez, 'Innovative Forms of Archives, Part One: Exhibitions, Events, Books, Museums and Lia Perjovschi's Contemporary Art Archive', *e-flux journal*, 13 (2010), www.e-flux.com/journal/13/61328/innovative-forms-of-archives-part-one-exhibitions-events-books-museums-and-lia-perjovschi-s-contemporary-art-archive/; N. Petrešin-Bachelez, 'Innovative Forms of Archives, Part Two: IRWIN's East Art Map and Tamás St. Auby's Portable Intelligence Increase Museum', *e-flux journal*, 16 (2010), www.e-flux.com/journal/16/61282/innovative-forms-of-archives-part-two-irwin-s-east-art-map-and-tams-st-auby-s-portable-intelligence-increase-museum/.

66 'Link Editions', http://editions.linkartcenter.eu/ [accessed 17 December 2020]; D. Quaranta (ed.), *Collect the WWWorld: The Artist as Archivist in the Internet Age* (Brescia: Lulu.com, 2011), www.linkartcenter.eu/public/editions/AAVV_Collect_the_WWWorld_Link_Editions_2011.pdf. The Link Art Center was founded by Lucio Chiappa, Fabio Paris and Domenico Quaranta in 2011.

67 S. Schulte Strathaus and U. Ziemons (eds), *Living Archive: Archive Work as a Contemporary Artistic and Curatorial Practice / Arsenal – Institut für Film und Videokunst* (Berlin: b_books, 2013).

68 From September 2012 to May 2013, the three parts were successively shown in New York, after which it was shown in Neu-Ulm in 2013–14, and in Berlin in 2015. See 'Exhibition History – Walther Collection', www.walthercollection.com/en/collection/exhibitions [accessed 29 January 2021].

69 '2013_06_Distance and Desire Exhibition Guide.pdf', *Dropbox*, www.dropbox.com/s/3u7zeba5cuuviao/2013_06_Distance%20and%20Desire%20Exhibition%20Guide.pdf?dl=0 [accessed 6 January 2021].

70 '2013_06_Distance and Desire Exhibition Guide.pdf'.

71 T. Garb (ed.), *Distance and Desire: Encounters with the African Archive. African Photography from the Walther Collection* (Göttingen: Steidl, 2013).

72 R. Rosengarten, *Between Memory and Document: The Archival Turn in Contemporary Art* (Lisbon: Museu Coleção Berardo, 2012).

73 Vaknin, Stuckey and Lane (eds), *All This Stuff*; G. Borggreen and R. Gade (eds), *Performing Archives/Archives of Performance* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2013).

74 J. Baron, *The Archive Effect: Found Footage and the Audiovisual Experience of History* (London: Routledge, 2013).

75 E. Cadava and G. Nouzeilles (eds), *The Itinerant Languages of Photography* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Art Museum, 2013).

76 G. Nouzeilles, 'The Archival Paradox', in Cadava and Nouzeilles (eds), *The Itinerant Languages of Photography*, p. 41.

77 T. Keenan, 'I decided to take a look, again', in Cadava and Nouzeilles (eds), *The Itinerant Languages of Photography*, p. 78.

78 'The Archives Issue', *Journal of Visual Culture*, 12:3 (2013); B. Holmqvist, O. Fischer and T. Götselius (eds), *Lychnos Tema: Arkiv*, Årsbok 2013 (Uppsala: Lärdomshistoriska Samfundet, 2013).

79 E. van Alphen, *Staging the Archive: Art and Photography in the Age of New Media* (London: Reaktion, 2014).

80 van Alphen, *Staging the Archive*, p. 241.

81 van Alphen, *Staging the Archive*, pp. 265–6.

82 A. Downey (ed.), *Dissonant Archives: Contemporary Visual Culture and Contested Narratives in the Middle East* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2015).

83 A. Downey, 'Contingency, Dissonance and Performativity: Critical Archives and Knowledge Production in Contemporary Art', in Downey (ed.), *Dissonant Archives*, pp. 13–14.

84 F. de Jong and E. Harney, 'First Word: Art from the Archive', *African Arts*, 48:2 (2015), p. 1.

85 D. H. Jones, *Installation Art and the Practices of Archivalism* (New York: Routledge, 2016), p. 3.

86 Jones, *Installation Art and the Practices of Archivalism*, p. 3. Italics added.

87 Jones, *Installation Art and the Practices of Archivalism*, p. 2.

88 In terms of 'relationship', Enwezor listed a number of different ones that were 'confronted' in the artworks: 'relationships between archive and memory, archive and public information, archive and trauma, archive and ethnography, archive and identity, archive and time' (Enwezor, *Archive Fever*, p. 22).

89 Jones, *Installation Art and the Practices of Archivalism*, p. 3; van Alphen, *Staging the Archive*, p. 7.

90 Baron, *The Archive Effect*, p. 1.

91 Apart from archival, the chapters were dedicated to the terms abject, mimetic, precarious and post-critical.

92 The section about Koester was mostly taken from Foster's essay on Koester published in *Artforum* in 2006. H. Foster, 'Blind Spots', *Artforum*, 44:8 (2006), pp. 213–17.

93 In the footnote explaining the provenance of the material in *Bad New Days* Foster stated that many texts had been published previously and they had been reworked and related to one another in the book; he had nevertheless 'resisted the temptation to update them substantially' (Foster, *Bad New Days*, p. 144).

94 Rosengarten, *Between Memory and Document*, pp. 11–12.

95 These four are Leonard, Ligon, Simpson and Sundaram.

96 C. Bishop, 'Digital Divide: Contemporary Art and New Media', *Artforum*, 51:1 (2012), p. 438.

97 G. Mannes-Abbott, 'This is Tomorrow: On Emily Jacir's Art of Assembling Radically Generative Archives', in Downey (ed.), *Dissonant Archives*, p. 111.

98 Mannes-Abbott, 'This is Tomorrow', p. 111.

99 M. Godfrey, 'The Artist as Historian', *October*, 120 (2007), pp. 140–72.

100 Godfrey, 'The Artist as Historian', p. 144.

101 For more on regional differences in the canon of Modernism, see C. Dossin, *The Rise and Fall of American Art, 1940s–1980s: A Geopolitics of Western Art Worlds* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2015). An example of a different roster of core archival artists is found in the folder published by *Camera Austria* about their project *Un-Curating the Archive*, where they list Özlem Altin, Sven Augustijnen, Eric Baudelaire, Martin Beck, Peggy Buth, Peter Friedl, Maryam Jafri, Stephanie Kiwitt, Tatiana Lecomte, Uriel Orlow, Ines Schaber, Shirana Shahbazi and Ala Younis as 'artists that construct their artworks like a kind of archive'. R. Braun, 'Exhibition Folder: Un-Curating the Archive, Camera Austria', 2017, https://camera-austria.at/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/ca-ausstellung-uncuratingthearchive-folder-1.pdf.

102 Spieker, *The Big Archive*, p. 160.

103 Jones, *Installation Art and the Practices of Archivalism*, p. 107.

104 Connarty, 'Introduction', p. 7. Note that Connarty was writing this specifically about the text by Lucy Reynolds included in the anthology.

105 Osthoff, *Performing the Archive*, pp. 25ff.

106 Foster, 'An Archival Impulse', p. 4.

107 Foster, 'An Archival Impulse', p. 6. In the section on Sam Durant, Foster's tone is more speculative and uncertain in terms of the artist's political engagement, and the section on Tacita Dean does not include overt references to the artist as politically engaged or the art as having political effects, except indirectly in the reference to utopia (Foster, 'An Archival Impulse', pp. 20, 15). Foster's text includes several references to the Situationists and critical theory: détournement, spectacle, aesthetics of resistance, amnesiac societies, culture industries (Foster, 'An Archival Impulse', pp. 7, 10).

108 Foster cites Hirschhorn: 'To connect what cannot be connected, this is exactly what my work as an artist is' (Foster, 'An Archival Impulse', p. 10). The phrase is taken directly from Hirschhorn's own writing, but is expanded by Foster, who argued that it is what distinguishes the archival impulse from the allegorical one (Owen) and sets it against the anomic (Buchloh) (Foster, 'An Archival Impulse', p. 21).

109 Rosengarten, *Between Memory and Document*, p. 11. The artist as curator is highlighted as significant for the idea of the artist as archivist by Ingrid Schaffner as well (Schaffner, 'Deep Storage', p. 60).

110 Enwezor, *Archive Fever*, p. 18. Italics are in Derrida's original text; see Derrida, 'Archive Fever', p. 10.

111 Enwezor, *Archive Fever*, p. 22.

112 Schaffner, 'Deep Storage', p. 58.

113 Spieker, *The Big Archive*, p. 83.

114 Jones, *Installation Art and the Practices of Archivalism*, pp. 98–100.
115 The term 'threshold' is used by Foster, and he refers it to Foucault's *The Archaeology of Knowledge*. See Foster, 'An Archival Impulse', p. 17, n. 44.
116 Enwezor, *Archive Fever*, p. 23.
117 Enwezor, *Archive Fever*, p. 23.
118 Spieker, *The Big Archive*, p. 178; Osthoff, *Performing the Archive*, pp. 22, 28; A. Wickberg Månsson, 'Arkiv, teknologi och estetik', in Holmqvist, Fischer and Götselius (eds), *Lychnos Tema: Arkiv*, pp. 213–27.
119 Enwezor, *Archive Fever*, pp. 11, 18.
120 Enwezor, *Archive Fever*, p. 43.
121 Enwezor, *Archive Fever*, pp. 23, 14. Enwezor is citing Foucault and the italics are in the original: M. Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge: And the Discourse on Language*, trans. A. Sheridan (New York: Pantheon, 2010), p. 130.
122 Sherrie Levine's 'elegiac archival productions' were tied to Benjaminian thought, whereas Cindy Sherman's 'imaginary genealogies' were suggested to be more in line with Foucault (Simon, 'Introduction: Following the Archival Turn', pp. 103–4).
123 Foster, 'An Archival Impulse', p. 17; Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge*, p. 130.
124 Schaffner, 'Deep Storage', p. 60.
125 Merewether, 'Introduction: Art and the Archive', p. 12.
126 Derrida, 'Archive Fever', p. 17.
127 Jones, *Installation Art and the Practices of Archivalism*, p. 11; Baron, *The Archive Effect*, p. 3.
128 Osthoff, *Performing the Archive*, pp. 12–13.
129 It 'carries forward the concerns of postmodernism', but it is 'postmodernism with a twist' (Simon, 'Introduction: Following the Archival Turn', p. 104).
130 Enwezor, *Archive Fever*, pp. 42–3.
131 Osthoff, *Performing the Archive*, p. 44.
132 Foster, 'Archival', p. 48.
133 Hirschhorn is rather concerned with engaging the audience and investigating radical political transformation, and Sam Durant was discussed in terms of his sampling of popular culture, in particular the artistic practices of Robert Smithson.
134 Enwezor identifies the camera as 'literally an archiving machine, every photograph, every film is *a priori* an archival object' (Enwezor, *Archive Fever*, p. 12). Italics in the original.
135 Enwezor, *Archive Fever*, p. 26.
136 Enwezor, *Archive Fever*, p. 11.
137 Simon, 'Introduction: Following the Archival Turn', p. 101.
138 David Houston Jones brought up destabilised truth-claims in the wake of postmodernist theory. Several of the texts included in Anthony Downey's anthology were similarly concerned with these issues. Downey wrote in his introduction: 'In exploring and producing archives, be they alternative, interrogative or fictional, these artists are not simply questioning veracity, authenticity or authority, or, indeed, authorship; rather, they interpose forms

of contingency and radical possibility into the archive that sees it projected onto future rather than historical probabilities.' See Jones, *Installation Art and the Practices of Archivalism*, pp. 13–14; Downey, 'Contingency, Dissonance and Performativity', p. 15. For a different discussion of these issues, without focusing on the terminology of the archive, see Albers, *Uncertain Histories*.

139   Lanyon, 'Foreword', p. 4.

140   Simon, 'Introduction: Following the Archival Turn', p. 106.

141   Merewether, 'Introduction: Art and the Archive', p. 14.

142   Merewether, 'Introduction: Art and the Archive', pp. 14, 17.

143   Merewether, 'Introduction: Art and the Archive', p. 17.

144   Foster, 'An Archival Impulse', p. 5; Simon, 'Introduction: Following the Archival Turn', p. 104. Foster also argued that the medium of archival art is not, as one would expect, 'the mega-archive of the Internet', but that it was more 'tactile and face-to-face' (Foster, 'An Archival Impulse', p. 4).

145   Note that here Schaffner connects archive to an 'impulse', long before Hal Foster's *October* article that is most often associated with the term (Schaffner, 'Deep Storage', p. 61).

146   This also is reminiscent of the Thanatos and Eros discussion in Derrida's 'Archive Fever', as well as the discussion of dust and archives by Carolyn Steedman. Derrida, 'Archive Fever'; C. Steedman, *Dust* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2001).

147   Jones, *Installation Art and the Practices of Archivalism*, p. 104.

148   Enwezor, *Archive Fever*, p. 24.

149   Spieker, *The Big Archive*, p. 12.

150   Connarty, 'Introduction', p. 9.

151   U. Orlow, 'Latent Archives, Roving Lens', in Connarty and Lanyon (eds), *Ghosting*, pp. 34–47.

152   Orlow, 'Latent Archives, Roving Lens', p. 35.

153   Enwezor, *Archive Fever*, p. 47. The full title of the essay is another example that includes such a formulation: 'Archive Fever: Photography Between History and the Monument'.

154   Enwezor, *Archive Fever*, pp. 25, 28, 31, 47; Foster, 'An Archival Impulse', p. 5; Spieker, *The Big Archive*, p. xiii.

155   Foster, 'An Archival Impulse', p. 15. Note here the way Foster used the term 'portal' as a potential for political awareness, whereas Simon considered it as a no longer tenable view of the archive.

156   Schaffner, 'Deep Storage', p. 58.

157   Schaffner, 'Deep Storage', p. 58.

158   Enwezor, *Archive Fever*, p. 23.

159   Enwezor, *Archive Fever*, p. 24.

160   Enwezor, *Archive Fever*, p. 28.

161   Osthoff, *Performing the Archive*, pp. 12, 178.

162   Osthoff, *Performing the Archive*, pp. 44, 182.

163   Merewether brings up the notion of 'spectrality' when summarising Dragan Kujundzic's text in the anthology (Merewether, 'Introduction: Art and the Archive', p. 15). Hal Foster quotes Koester's own description of his work as a

form of 'ghost-hunting' (Foster, 'Blind Spots', p. 213). See also Connarty and Lanyon (eds), *Ghosting*.

164   Another indication of Foster's strong position in this field is that the inaugural issue of the online *Mnemoscape Magazine* was dedicated to 'The Anarchival Impulse' to commemorate the tenth anniversary of the publication of Foster's article. The journal does not appear to have published any subsequent issues (see https://mnemoscape.wordpress.com/). Cheryl Simon, whose text was published several years prior to Foster's 'An Archival Impulse', cited his 'Return of the Real' and 'The Archive Without Museums', the latter in support of her claim that the archival turn is connected to the expansion of visual culture (Simon, 'Introduction: Following the Archival Turn', p. 106, nn. 2, 3).

165   Spieker, *The Big Archive*, p. 131. B. H. D. Buchloh, 'Warburg's Paragon? The End of Collage and Photomontage in Postwar Europe', in Schaffner et al. (eds), *Deep Storage*, pp. 51–60.

166   B. H. D. Buchloh, 'Gerhard Richter's "Atlas": The Anomic Archive', *October*, 88 (1999), 117–45.

167   First published in 1990, the text was republished in B. H. D. Buchloh, 'Conceptual Art 1962–1969: From the Aesthetic of Administration to the Critique of Institutions', in A. Alberro and B. Stimson (eds), *Conceptual Art: A Critical Anthology* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1999), pp. 514–37.

168   M. Michalka and B. von Bismarck (eds), *The artist as* (Nuremberg: Verlag für Moderne Kunst, 2006); von Bismarck, Feldmann and Obrist (eds), *Interarchive*.

169   Spieker, *The Big Archive*, p. 180.

170   Jones, *Installation Art and the Practices of Archivalism*, p. 3.

171   Schaffner, 'Digging back into "Deep Storage"'.

172   Schaffner, 'Digging back into "Deep Storage"'.

2   Archive theory

In 2004 librarian and scholar Marlene Manoff attempted to survey the then current discussions about archives in an article titled 'Theories of the Archive from Across the Disciplines'.[1] In the opening passage of her essay, the author noted:

> In the past decade historians, literary critics, philosophers, sociologists, anthropologists, geographers, political scientists, and others have wrestled with the meaning of the word 'archive.' A compelling body of literature has accumulated around this term that demonstrates a convergence of interests among scholars, archivists, and librarians. This archival discourse provides a window onto current debates and common concerns in many academic fields.[2]

Manoff was far from alone in pointing to an upsurge in the theorisation of archives: many cultural critics and scholars have used terms such as 'archive theory', 'archival theory' and 'theories of the archive' to refer to a range of different writing about archives.[3] The stated assumption of these texts is that there has been an intensifying interest in the archive in the humanities, and that this interest is grounded in, and develops, the writing on archives by different philosophers, historians and cultural theorists.

By anchoring the archive art phenomenon in this broader cultural interest in archives, the current chapter will clarify which specific elements of archive theory have come to have particular influence on the art field. It is worth stressing on the outset, however, that this 'archive theory' does not in fact exist as a clearly delineated theoretical field. In this book I use the term to refer not to a coherent thought system but to a combination of many different discussions of archives culled from a number of disciplines. The rationale for referring to archive theory in the title of this chapter and throughout this book is precisely that much writing on archives and archive art references many of the same texts and concepts and implicitly treats what is in fact a heterogeneous cluster of writing as a somewhat unified system of thought. Although the exact texts, theorists and concepts referenced do indeed vary, as does the precise weighting of each, archive theory as a loose grouping of texts

is recognisable in much writing on archives in the humanities as well as in the art field.

The emergence of the modern archive

Before getting into more recent theorisations of the archive, it is worth taking a somewhat longer historical view and considering the development of the modern archive, particularly its ties to the nation-state and shifting understandings of history. During the Middle Ages, the ruler's authority rested in part on not being separated from the legal documents establishing their power, and this meant that archives were frequently on the move, at times literally carried on the body of the regent.[4] These meandering archives began to settle down, and their use expanded in the late sixteenth century when they were needed to bring order to the increasing administrative functions of the early modern states around Europe.[5] Known as the 'paper king', Philip II of Spain is said to have used the phrase *quod non est in actis, non est in mundo* – what is not in the documents, does not exist – as his motto, highlighting the crucial function of archives for knowledge production.[6] State formation in Europe and the growth of populations in the eighteenth century further changed the function and identity of earlier archives. The population increase was accompanied by a growth of disciplinary power that necessitated new kinds of systematic documentation and archiving. New disciplines (statistics, demography, criminology) also enabled the state to record characteristics of the population, and these were accompanied by new sites and institutional complexes where this knowledge was applied (prisons, schools, hospitals, asylums, etc.).[7] Archives at this time began to fill a more complex set of functions: in addition to controlling populations, they became necessary tools for legitimising the newly formed nation-states. Each state required its own national archive that could connect it to a unique and glorious past and make the present accessible to the nation's future citizens. In France, the Archives Nationales was established in 1790, followed by the Public Record Office in England in 1838.[8]

It is common to differentiate between administrative and historical functions of modern archives: the former are associated with active archives maintained and used for administrative purposes at present, whereas the latter consist of records saved for the use of current or future historians.[9] The modern view of history can in fact be mapped on to shifting uses and understandings of archives. Cultural memory scholar Aleida Assmann has argued that historical scholarship evolved alongside the modern notion of progress and a break between the past and the present, which grounded the idea that it is possible to subject the past to historical scrutiny by studying archives.[10] The view that the historian could get to some essential truth through the

material traces of history gives the archive a key role in historical writing. If history had previously been seen as a 'multitude of individual histories of the entire past', around 1800 it gradually shifted towards the notion of 'history in general' (*Geschichte* or History with capital 'H').[11] History and the modern archive thus emerge simultaneously and mutually determine one another – it is when the modern public archives were opened around 1800 that history as a modern notion emerged as well.[12]

Historian Carolyn Steedman has described the desire to go into the archive as 'emblematic of a modern way of being in the world', embedded in a certain romantic strand of European history writing concerned with a 'general fever to know and to have the past'.[13] Steedman used nineteenth-century French historian Jules Michelet to exemplify the view of the archive as a place where the dead can come alive, and where the gap between the past and the present can be bridged.[14] However, archives are also, paradoxically, places where the gap between the past and the present is experienced most acutely, and therefore, Steedman argues, the archive give us access to a particular form of loneliness, tied both to nineteenth-century history writing and a modern sense of alienation.[15] The fever to know and to have the past is also tied to psychoanalysis. The psychoanalytic desire to go back to childhood origins, and the Freudian notion of the memory trace that is never erased, have clear associations to working with archival documents, and history has been described as an attempt to capture the soul of an age (exemplified, for instance, by the nineteenth-century historian Leopold von Ranke).[16] In 'A Note Upon the "Mystic Writing-Pad"' Sigmund Freud likened the human psyche to a kind of wax slab, a *Wunderblock*, with an unlimited capacity for new perceptions. As this writing pad was filled with permanent but alterable memory traces, much became covered up, hidden and inaccessible but never fully erased.[17] This brief text is often included in discussions about the connection between archives and memory, since Freud described a material structure for the storage and recording of memories, thus linking the human psyche's day-to-day operations to a set of archival procedures.

The analogy with psychoanalysis hinges on the notion that the mind is an archive where traces (memories) may be temporarily unavailable, but that these can be made to re-emerge. Although the psychoanalyst and the historian can both be said to piece together a whole from fragments, an important difference between the psychoanalytic analogy of the archive and actual historical archives is, of course, that in the latter much is literally lost. Many discussions of archives stress their inevitable lack of material, and argue that the archive must be, in part, defined by what it does not include. The lack of inclusion can have different causes; much is absent by virtue of simply not having been deemed worthy of safekeeping; other material has disappeared over the years; yet other material is misfiled or remains hidden amid vast

amounts of surrounding documents, as yet undiscovered but potentially available. Highlighting this archival absence, Steedman has described the historian's task as a difficult one:

> You know perfectly well that the infinite heaps of *things* they recorded, the notes and traces that these people left behind, constitute practically nothing at all. There is the great, brown, slow-moving strandless river of Everything, and then there is its tiny flotsam that has ended up in the record office you are at work in. Your craft is to conjure a social system from a nutmeg grater…[18]

Many scholars have described the passion driving archival research, a passion largely tied to the recognition that the minute fragment, come across by chance, can prove to be a crucial piece in a larger puzzle painstakingly put together.[19] The historian's work is thus likened to a detective looking for clues, but their task is also like that of a mystic, tapping into the traces of the past and being susceptible to their power. This combination of two seemingly incompatible roles – the deductive, painstaking researcher versus the intuitive, passionate seeker – is rooted in archive theory, and this duality recurs, as we will see, in artworks and writing about archive art in the first decades of the twenty-first century.

Steedman and the nineteenth-century historian Michelet start off in the fragment, but both strive to produce a coherent historical narrative. Cultural theorist Walter Benjamin, on the other hand, deemed fragmentation not something to be overcome, but a key tool for historicising modernity. Benjamin is one of the most frequently referenced theorists in the cultural humanities field in general, as well as in curatorial, critical and scholarly texts on archive art.[20] Broadly speaking, Benjamin's writing feeds into the broader theorisation of archives in two different ways. First, his writing about the loss of aura in the age of mechanical reproduction has influenced media scholars and art historians' understanding of photography, and although Benjamin discussed photography in the 1930s, his writing has proved useful for understanding the function of subsequent media forms, including the shift from analogue to digital media at the turn of the twenty-first century.[21] Secondly, Benjamin's writing has been influential because of how he suggests that meaning can be generated through a combination of fragments. Here Benjamin's unfinished *Arcades* project, written in the form of quotations, text fragments mediated and displaced from their context, is a key work.[22] The detritus and minutiae of everyday life that Benjamin collected and filed according to an elaborate system were to be used as citations, speaking for themselves without resorting to extraneous theory.[23] The 'kaleidoscopic fortuitous juxtaposition of shop signs and window displays' visible in the early arcades was, according to philosopher and intellectual historian Susan Buck-Morss, raised by technology to a 'conscious principle of construction' in Benjamin's thought.[24]

The arcade was in a sense the architectural version of the principle of montage both as a constructive principle and as a critical method.[25] In other words, the modern urban experience itself is seen as archival structure, but it is an archive that resists a linear and coherent reading. Buck-Morss's description of Benjamin's method as a textual version of the film montage where the juxtaposition of fragments creates a particular understanding of modernity and where the explicatory theoretical framework is to be found in the juxtaposition itself is echoed in more recent writing on archives.

Determining the 'authenticity' of the archival document is an important aspect of how to evaluate it as a source, and a frequent view is that the historian should seek out documents that have inadvertently ended up in the archive rather than those that have been placed there on purpose. Historian Yosef Hayim Yerushalmi has argued that the archive should ideally have been created for a purpose other than what the historian uses it for. This, incidentally, is the very same Yerushalmi who is the subject and addressee of Derrida's 'Archive Fever': Yerushalmi was supposed to deliver a lecture at the same conference where Derrida gave his talk, but he fell ill and someone else delivered his talk. In the subsequently published text Yerushalmi identified four 'basic observations' that are recognisable in much writing about archives at the turn of the twenty-first century, and the preferably naïve nature of the archive is Yerushalmi's first point.[26] The other three archival observations he offers are, in brief: dust – ideally the documents should have been handled by as few people as possible; no archive is ever complete – in order to be understood the document must be contextualised by information from outside the archive; and the archive is not a repository of the past but only of certain artefacts that have survived from the past, which are encountered in the present. Yerushalmi also described the nineteenth century's 'cult of the archive' that resulted in *la fureur de l'inédit* – the fever to publish the unpublished document.[27]

Historian Arlette Farge tied her own fascination for the archive to the fact that its documents are not published. Farge's archive is alluring, but also unsettling and colossal, and it grabs hold of the historian: 'The archival document is a tear in the fabric of time, an unplanned glimpse into an unexpected event.'[28] The eighteenth-century judicial archives that Farge studied were 'not compiled with an eye toward history', and because of this they could 'produce the sensation of having finally caught hold of the real, instead of looking through a "narrative of" or "discourse on" the real'.[29]

Aleida Assmann brought up nineteenth-century art historian Jakob Burckhardt's differentiation between 'messages' and 'traces': the former being texts and monuments addressed to posterity, whereas the latter are unintentional and deemed more trustworthy by virtue of being unmediated testimonies that could tell a 'counter-history' to the one propagated by the rulers.[30] Assmann connects Burckhardt's distinction to her own differentiation between 'canon'

and 'archive', where the passive cultural memory of the archive – a memory that preserves the past as past – is contrasted with the more active canon – preserving the past as present.[31] The canon, according to this scheme, is concerned with working memory whereas the archive concerns itself with reference memory.[32] Assmann argues that although cultural memory contains many messages that end up in the canon more or less intentionally, the archive should store unmediated traces that are 'de-contextualized and disconnected from their former frames which had authorized them or determined their meaning. As part of the archive, they are thus open to new contexts and lend themselves to new interpretations.'[33]

Similar formulations can be found in writing within the field of archival science as well. Theo Thomassen, addressing students of archival science, distinguished between the primary and secondary function of records in an archive.[34] For Thomassen the kind of archival records that tell us about historical events or people are imbued with a sense of romance because of the potential for discovering something that we did not know we were looking for. What Thomassen terms the archive's secondary or cultural-historical function refers to the use of archival documents for purposes other than what they were initially created for. This is different from the archive's primary function, which Thomassen describes as an evidentiary active function of documenting and regulating social relations.[35]

The notion of the unmediated trace as well as the idea of a chance encounter both contribute to the archive's general appeal – the sense that the archive is a place where unexpected encounters with history in a material sense can happen. These ideas are further complicated, however, by poststructuralist writing on archives in the second half of the twentieth century.

Michel Foucault and the archive as the law of what can be said

Poststructuralist critique of history, particularly that delivered by French philosopher Michel Foucault, greatly contributed to a changed notion of the archive in the second half of the twentieth century. Foucault's importance for the increased interest in theorising archives stems in part from the way that the vocabulary and focus on archives was one of the key aspects of his early epistemology. Critical of the notion that the past is somehow out there waiting to be discovered, Foucault instead argued that everything is in fact already a secondary source, in the sense that the historical records on which we base our knowledge have been selected and arranged through specific practices of conservation and organisation.[36] Foucault's *The Archaeology of Knowledge* (1969) can be said to have significantly deepened the so-called 'archival divide', whereby the archive is understood both as a place that the historian visits to find information and an intellectual problem worthy of study in and of itself.[37]

The idea that everything changed overnight with Foucault is a common but simplified view of this development. The strong focus on Foucault himself is misleading in the sense that he was far from alone in problematising history writing; Hayden White and others were considering similar issues around the same time.[38] The awareness that archival sources are always already processed, and thus far from raw, had been part of the theoretical and methodological concerns of the discipline of history long before this period. However, the idea that something radically new happens to the notion of the archive with the spread of Foucault's writing beginning in the late 1960s is a common narrative of archive theory, to such an extent that it is possible to consider Foucault's writing as a stand-in for a shift in historical theory that in fact emerged more gradually.

One of the most frequently cited passages from Foucault in texts on the notion of the archive, and indeed in the corpus of texts on archive art, is taken from chapter 5 of the third part of *The Archaeology of Knowledge* where Foucault states:

> The archive is first the law of what can be said, the system that governs the appearance of statements as unique events. But the archive is also that which determines that all these things said do not accumulate endlessly in an amorphous mass, nor are they inscribed in an unbroken linearity, nor do they disappear at the mercy of chance external accidents […][39]

The Archaeology of Knowledge is not a historical study itself but a meta-text in which Foucault attempted to explain what he had done in his earlier studies on the history of medicine and madness. These, as well as his later works, were archival in the most concrete sense: they were culled from vast materials found in the Archives Nationales and Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris. What Foucault was primarily concerned with in *The Archaeology of Knowledge* was the way knowledge was formed, and he made a grammatical distinction between two different meanings of the term archive: when referring to the archive as a depository of documents he used the plural form *archives*, whereas when he referred to the archive as a margin, border or system of knowledge he used the singular form *archive*.[40] This singular form is not used in colloquial French, and the dropped 's' signals a difference that to the astute reader is subtle yet immediately noticeable. Although Foucault used actual archives to write his historical studies, he used them in novel ways – what has been described as reading 'against the grain' or 'on the diagonal', a reading that enabled new lines of thought and the possibility of radically rethinking and reclassifying received wisdom.[41] Foucault's history writing thus involved a process of defining the borders of thought through the very documents that expressed and established that knowledge. The important point here is that the literal, material archive was no longer understood or used in the same ways as in previous

forms of history writing where traces of the past were puzzled together into a coherent story.[42] From this point on it became increasingly difficult to consider the mass of documents in the archive without also considering the structure of which they were part; what they say between the lines, what they shut out and exclude, was now crucial to what they meant.

The archive in singular, *archive*, is thus an epistemological structure, but as with much of Foucault's thinking, it is difficult to clearly delineate its exact meaning. Not only does it overlap with other concepts, its meaning also shifts over time. Attempting to clarify these shifts, Knut Ove Eliassen has specified the *epistemological*, *institutional* and *heterotopic* as the three main uses of the term 'archive' in Foucault's writing. The first is found in Foucault's early texts and is closely tied to the archaeological method of analysing knowledge; the archive here is a 'systematic category' that can be understood as the 'history of what makes a certain form of thought necessary'.[43] Within Foucault's epistemology the archive was developed to supplement the three other terms *statement*, *discourse* and *episteme*, yet it is at times unclear exactly how the archive relates to these and other concepts in his writing.[44] The second of Eliassen's three senses is the archive understood both as a collection of documents and an instrument of power, and here the meaning of the term is tied to its function as a historically embedded institution.[45] The third is the heterotopic, which refers to the archive as a place of experience, a place where time and space are organised differently.[46] The notion of heterotopia was formulated by Foucault in his 1967 essay 'Different Spaces', where he defined it as real places that represent, contest and reverse other emplacements, outside all places yet also localisable.[47] One of the principles of the heterotopia has to do with temporal discontinuity – it only functions fully when people are in a kind of absolute break with their traditional time.[48] Examples of heterotopic spaces include the museum, the library and the archive, spaces that endeavour 'to contain all times, all ages, all forms, all tastes in one place'.[49]

An important aspect of the Foucauldian archive crucial to the archive art phenomenon is connected to the second point above, namely that the archive is always tied to institutional praxis. Both the archive in the sense of actual archives (*les archives*) and the order of the archive (*l'archive*) are always the result of a pursuit and of a praxis.[50] The archive does not exist independently of the objects it serves or the rationalities that unfold in and through them.[51]

As noted, Foucault is frequently cited in texts that theorise and discuss archives in the humanities in general, as well as in art writing, and the fact that his terminology and concepts relating to archive formation are difficult to pin down has arguably contributed to a certain elasticity in the notion of the archive at the turn of the twenty-first century. Art historian Anna Brzyski points out that Foucault's notion of archive seems very similar to the way recent scholarship understands canon: both produce and maintain hierarchies

and preserve what is already deemed valuable and worthy of preservation and study.[52] The discussion about canon that has developed in the last part of the twentieth century does not view artworks that become part of the canon as an indication of absolute and fixed quality, but as a way of organising and structuring works into categories and taxonomies which themselves determine their continued evaluation and visibility, an understanding that does indeed share a great deal with the Foucauldian notion of archive.[53]

Another key take-away for artists and scholars is the implications of Foucault's writing for notions of a creative authorial subject. For Foucault, the individual was no longer understood as the driving force of history; instead there were structures that enabled and limited what could be said and thought at different times. Intellectual historian Martin Jay has formulated the implications of this in terms of vision: with Foucault comes the assumption that there is 'no view from nowhere' for even the seemingly most detached observer.[54] This idea has been highly influential in the second half of the twentieth century and can be seen in the art field in terms of the art historian's or critic's self-reflexivity vis-à-vis their own positions, but also in the development of a notion of art where institutional structures are increasingly seen as more important than the figure of the autonomous creative genius.

The common idea that the archive is most authentic when consisting of involuntary source material is also modified by Foucault in the sense that *any* document has an involuntary meaning, a kind of subconscious that the historian can try to draw out by reading it in a particular way. This is part of what literary scholar Rita Felski describes as 'suspicious reading': forms of critique that have come to have deep influence in the academy over the course of the twentieth century.[55] This critical turn in academia and its connection to the critical practices in post-war art will be discussed later (in); suffice to say here, however, that Foucault is a convenient trope for such critique, as his way of reading historical materials is aimed precisely at uncovering and unveiling that which is not stated overtly in the text.[56]

Jacques Derrida and the deconstructed archive

Along with Foucault, Jacques Derrida's writing on the archive, particularly his 'Archive Fever', is another frequent reference in texts on the notion of the archive in different disciplines.[57] Initially delivered as a three-and-a-half-hour lecture at the conference 'Memory: The Question of Archives' at the Freud Museum on 5 June 1994, the text was published in revised French and English versions the following year.[58] It connected themes such as Jewish law, etymology, the temporality of messianicity and the spectral, the inscription in the Bible given to Freud by his father on the occasion of the former's circumcision, truth in history writing and much more. 'Archive Fever' was also a complex

homage-polemic to Jewish historian and scholar Yosef Hayim Yerushalmi, in which Derrida focused on the archives left by Freud and psychoanalysis, Yerushalmi's place therein, as well as Derrida's own text in relation to these. Derrida's lecture-essay functions as a kind of performative deconstruction of the notion of the archive, whereby the fever or drive to archive is tied to both Thanatos and Eros, and is thus concerned with protecting what is archived while simultaneously contributing to its destruction. The destructive element inherent in the archive is a key theme of the text: '[t]he archive always works, and *a priori*, against itself'.[59] One of the most frequently cited passages, in addition to the one just quoted, is Derrida's account of the etymology of the term archive. At the beginning of the text, Derrida describes how the term 'archive' is derived from two Greek terms, *arkhē* meaning both origin and law or commandment, and *arkheion* referring to a house or domicile, specifically the home of the guardians of official documents.[60] This double element of the archive as place and commandment anchors much of Derrida's subsequent discussion, and the distinction between the two can in part be mapped on to Foucault's differentiation between the archive in the singular and plural. The very phrase 'archive fever' has also become somewhat commonplace; it is frequently used in writings on archives, and the term appears in several exhibition titles and texts on archive art as well.[61]

The temporality of the archive and the archiving process is discussed at length in Derrida's text. The archive is said to embody a 'messianic' temporality, by which he means that it entails a kind of anticipatory movement: 'The archive: if we want to know what this will have meant, we will only know it in the times to come. Perhaps.'[62] Here Derrida references the grammatical form *future perfect*, and suggests that the archive is not really about the past but is rather concerned with the future-as-past.[63] Derrida writes, in another frequently cited passage, that 'the technical structure of the *archiving* archive also determines the structure of the *archivable* content even in its very coming into existence and in its relationship to the future. The archivization produces as much as it records the event.'[64] Derrida's language is dense and at times difficult to penetrate, but what he is getting at here is an idea that is much in circulation in other writing about archives: that the recording of something for the future is part of what creates and structures that future, and that the technological means by which this archiving is done affects, and is inseparable from, the content of what is recorded. Derrida does not linger on this technical aspect of archiving; however, many of these issues come to the fore in disciplines such as media studies and its sub-discipline, media archaeology. When Derrida argues that the archive is located in the future, he suggests that the meaning of the present is only knowable from a future perspective when that present will have become the past. This temporal displacement is also fraught with an element of uncertainty, evidenced by the word 'perhaps' in the passage

cited above. The archive must be understood as a hermeneutic structure that involves rereading and reinterpreting over time, and it therefore changes the way the past is and can be interpreted. Following this line of thought, Derrida suggests that both his own and Yerushalmi's texts become part of the archives of Freud and psychoanalysis, thereby irrevocably changing them by adding to their interpretative frames of possibility.[65]

Despite their differences, both Foucault and Derrida emphasised that the archive alters, affects and controls what it archives. The idea of a neutral holding place is thus discarded on several grounds by the second half of the twentieth century: not only are the archive's own technical-material conditions affecting its content, but the very act of archiving is itself an active process that has effects on what is archived. The archivist, historian or researcher must take these aspects into considerations when reflecting on the archive – the self-reflexivity so evident in the writing on archive art discussed in the previous chapter can thus be seen to build on broader philosophical approaches that come to the fore from the late 1960s onwards.

The exclusionary and oppressive archive

Considerations of archival control and the development of new methods for reading the archive critically against the grain meant that archives in the second half of the twentieth century were increasingly considered useful for uncovering various types of oppression. Questions about *whose* history was contained in the official archives and what was left untold were raised by many, particularly those who brought postcolonial and feminist perspectives to the writing of history. Here the focus on the archive frequently entailed an analysis of its function as a highly charged site of exclusion. If the archivist was a 'keeper of context', he or she was also a kind of gatekeeper, allowing some material to enter while denying entry to others.[66] This control function was not necessarily exerted in a conscious way but is nevertheless built into the very structure of the archive.[67] Foucault alluded to this in *The Archaeology of Knowledge* but developed these ideas further in later works, where his focus was more squarely on issues of power. A frequently referenced text in this discussion is literary theorist Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak's essay 'The Rani of Sirmur' from 1985. In this text Spivak examined the inherent difficulty of writing about a nineteenth-century Indian woman who had been doubly excluded from the archives of the British Empire by virtue of being both female and Indian, two categories that for different reasons had been largely deemed unarchivable.[68] Spivak's aim was not to rectify the omission, but to point out the inherent structural biases of these – and implicitly all – archives. Although postcolonial, feminist, queer and more recently disability scholars often attempt to add what is missing from existing archives and thereby make

them more inclusive, others follow Spivak's lead in pointing out the gaps and biases as an aim in its own right.[69]

The problem of structural exclusion in colonial or misogynist archives was added to other, connected problems: the way archival practices had contributed to the controlling and defining of different segments of the population in the nineteenth century according to racial and criminal typologies.[70] The history of archival practice was also tied directly to colonial history and practices because of the sheer amount of information needed to control and map the colonised territories. Information gathering on the part of the British Empire was so extensive that it made up an epistemological complex in its own right, with information ranging from statistical data to local languages and knowledge of the empire's rivals and enemies.[71] Writing specifically about the development of German archives, media theorist Wolfgang Ernst has argued that the Nazi regime depended on archives to carry out extensive genealogical research to determine who had Jewish blood. Ernst cites the head of the Bavarian archival administration, Josef Franz Knöpfler, who in 1936 stated that '[t]here is no racial politics without archives, without archivists'.[72] It seems clear that without the modern efficiency of archival processes, the Holocaust would not have been possible – both the bureaucratic archive and the industrial-scale killing stem from a classificatory system that can be traced back to a modernist logic.[73]

The dissolution of the Soviet Union and the subsequent opening up of state archives in Eastern Europe in the 1990s added further urgency to the discussions of the connection between archives, manipulation, technology and state oppression. As noted in the survey of writing about archive art in Chapter 1, there is a fair amount of focus on state oppression when the archive is discussed and processed in an art context as well; many writers and artists connect the archive to the Holocaust, to Eastern European surveillance or self-regulation, but also to colonial archival practices in Asia and Africa. The link between archives and colonial, totalitarian and oppressive regimes thus seems to be highly relevant for interest in the notion of the archive in the humanities in general, but also among artists and those theorising artistic practices. Investigating archives was, by the last quarter of the twentieth century, increasingly seen to be inherently connected to the attempt to understand power, oppression and exclusionary structures.[74] It is problematic to be included in the archive, but in many cases it is equally problematic to be excluded from it.

A number of different factors thus made the archive a topic of interest and urgency in the years around the turn of the twenty-first century. Archives in post-apartheid South Africa, post-Cold War Eastern Europe and in former colonies were ripe for investigation by cultural critics, historians and artists. In addition, the perceived power of the archive was used for commemoration

and to help process and heal those affected by these systems after they fell. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission in South Africa is perhaps the best-known such effort, but many different activist groups set up alternative queer, feminist, Jewish and other archives to counteract dominant narratives, to ensure that specific aspects of the past would not be forgotten, or to perform therapeutic functions in their own right. Archives and their effects were scrutinised and vigorously debated in the early 1990s, in part because of the particular historical events of that era, but also because of the way scholars and others processed the relatively recent past. What seems to be at work here is a convergence of historical events and a surge in theoretical discussions about archives that helped frame and make these historical events more legible. The focus on archives had become tied to philosophical questions dealing with power, time and oppression in general and fairly abstract ways. But at the same time, in various places around the world, people were confronted with very concrete effects of the use of archives for state oppression.

A range of historical truth-claims

Much of what is included in what I refer to as 'archive theory' centres around discussions of the archive's truth-claims. Can the contemporary historical researcher access the past via archives, or is the point of archival research rather to show what notion of truth was available at a particular time? Foucault's writing would clearly fall into the second category; for him, the documents in a given archive should be read not as sources of immutable truth, but as traces of, often unspoken, power structures at work when the documents were gathered and deemed worthy of safekeeping. Frequently, a contrast is set up between a broadly Foucauldian poststructuralist reading and writing history, and what is somewhat sweepingly termed positivist history. The latter seeks to find out what really happened in the past, and thus this type of history is seen to operate with a less contingent understanding of historical truth.

Another contrast is also at work within the different strands of archive theory: that between positivist research and another, more mystical kind. One of the focal points of Derrida's 'Archive Fever' was the last chapter of a book by Yerushalmi titled *Freud's Moses: Judaism Terminable and Interminable*.[75] There Yerushalmi retreated from the objective, scholarly tone of the earlier chapters, and engaged the object of his study directly in a 'monologue with Freud' – a kind of fiction where the scholar addressed the dead man as spectre.[76] In many ways this last section threw the other parts of the book into question; up until this point Yerushalmi had been an exemplary objective historian, carefully weighing his sources, analysing texts, presenting archival material and paying meticulous attention to detail and historical facts. His role as a serious historian should, in theory, be incompatible with the emotional, pleading tone of

the monologue where Freud is enticed, and even expected, to answer back. This last chapter, however, represents 'truth in delusion', according to Derrida, who argued that the monologue – albeit clearly the most fictional part of Yerushalmi's book – was not therefore necessarily the least true.[77]

That the archive has something to do with research, and particularly historical research, is clear in most, if not all, texts that theorise archives. What types of truth-claims this research can have is more of an open question. Within the heterogeneous cluster of writing grouped together as archive theory – as well as in the discourse and practices of archive art – it is common to present different kinds of research attitudes side by side. The clearly delineated contrast between seemingly incompatible notions of research and truth – positivist, poststructuralist, mystical – are in fact frequently shown to overlap and intersect with one another precisely through the mobilisation of the terminology of the archive. The archive is, in other words, often simultaneously seen to be a source of factual events and conditions, a source to uncover hidden power structures, as well as providing a direct link to the past, and the romantic and mystical connotations this entails.

Materiality, memory and the advent of digital media

In the decades following the 1980s new perspectives were added to the discussion of archives from emerging academic disciplines focused on technology and memory production. Cultural memory studies and media archaeology contributed in different ways to the increased scholarly attention given to archives at this time, by stressing that the archive needed to be approached both as a concept or notion and as a concrete material manifestation of storage of data or memory.[78]

Inherently interdisciplinary, cultural memory studies spans history, sociology, art, literary and media studies, philosophy, theology, psychology and the neurosciences.[79] One of the names most associated with the early phase of memory studies is historian Pierre Nora, who coined the phrase *lieux de mémoire* (sites of memory).[80] Nora contrasted 'real memory' with 'history' and claimed that, contrary to what one might think, they are in fundamental opposition to one another. For Nora, memory was an actual phenomenon, 'a bond tying us to the eternal present', whereas history was 'a representation of the past'.[81] Memory attaches itself to sites, whereas history attaches itself to events; archives are identified as such sites of memory alongside museums, cemeteries, festivals, anniversaries, treaties, depositions, monuments, sanctuaries and fraternal orders.[82] The archive, according to Nora, is a kind of secondary or 'prosthesis' memory, and a 'secretion of lost memory'.[83] It is precisely because we no longer experience memory from the inside that we need these 'exterior scaffolding and outward signs' of memory, and therefore the obsession

with the archive that Nora considered a characteristic of our age was in fact an attempt at a conservation of the present as well as a total preservation of the past.[84] Nora thus stressed a tension in our era's view of archives: what he saw as an intuitive faith in the ability of the archive to preserve the past was paired with a simultaneous rational understanding of the impossibility of such archival completion.

This tension is present in literary fiction as well. It is found in several short stories by Jorge Luis Borges, a frequent reference in writing about archives.[85] 'The Library of Babel' is a story about an absurdly complete, and thus unusable, library.[86] When all books are preserved in all of their different editions, the library is so vast that it is not only impossible to search, but it is also impossible to differentiate between all the different versions of each text. 'The Library of Babel' has some similarities with Borges's perhaps most famous short story, 'On Exactitude in Science', which describes an ancient map so exact that it covered the entire territory it was supposed to depict, thereby dismantling its very functionality as a map.[87] In yet another story, 'Funes, His Memory', Borges describes a person whose memory and perception is perfect, but instead of being an asset, this perfect memory totally incapacitates poor Funes, who is overwhelmed by his own memories and is unable to sort them.[88] Borges's writing illustrates various contradictions and metaphors of our perception of and relation to memory and its materialisations.

Another author who is frequently referenced in writing about archives is W. G. Sebald, who in different texts has examined memory and documents, most notably perhaps in *Austerlitz*.[89] A much older work of fiction that deals with archival themes is Gustave Flaubert's satirical novel *Bouvard and Pécuchet*, which describes two Parisian copy-clerks' attempt to master every field of knowledge.[90] In contrast to these more philosophical literary works dealing with memory and archives is the genre of literature referred to as 'romances of the archive' – novels that create fictive accounts of archival research framed in decidedly romantic terms, such as A. S. Byatt's novel *Possession*.[91]

If scholars such as Pierre Nora and authors of fiction were concerned with the cultural values and contradictions inherent in archival practices, media scholars focused largely on the implications of different archival technologies. Wolfgang Ernst, cited above in the discussion of the use of archives in Nazi Germany, has written extensively about the technical aspects of the archive.[92] Building on but also critiquing aspects of Foucault's writing, Ernst, who is specifically associated with the field of media archaeology, has argued that the archive's epistemological implications must always be analysed through its specific materiality, and that this had been a blind spot for Foucault.[93] The archive is never just a historical horizon through which knowledge emerges, but is itself historically situated – different technologies have enabled different forms of knowledge.[94]

Although media studies has focused specifically on the implications of specific medialities and thus has analysed the shift from analogue to digital in detail, this shift has been a key concern for many other disciplines as well. The emergence of digital technology meant that older archives were digitised and that new digital archives were established, but it also prompted ways of theorising the archive as notion and its functions in more fundamental ways. Because digital archives have a transmissive function, there is a certain amount of instability to them that seems to be in contrast to earlier stable analogue archives.[95] Within the context of archival science, Terry Cook discusses how software and digital archives created random forms of storage where records could be recombined in different ways for different purposes, in contrast to the traditional way of archiving by maintaining the initial physical placement of recorded products in a classification system.[96] Similarly, art historian Nina Lager Vestberg has considered what is lost when the researcher is dependent on keyword searches in digital archives.[97] In the analogue archive one is able to discover what one may not even know one is looking for; one can stumble upon unintentional historical documents and these can then be read in different ways and in relation to contexts other than those intended by the archivist, a process that is made more difficult in a digital archive where the researcher depends on various layers of metadata in order to access the material.[98]

The different overlapping dichotomies outlined above are picked up in artistic practices relating to archives and in different texts about archive art. The contrast between analogue and digital technologies and the implications of the shift to digital media intersect with the other dichotomies of positivist and poststructuralist histories, as well as romantic material notions of archival research. The tension between the different parts of these pairings is often treated as productive and interesting when the notion of the archive moves from different humanities disciplines into an art context.

Archival science versus the archival turn in the humanities

Scholars from within the field of archival science have pointedly noted the omission of references to writing from their own discipline in the flood of publications that theorise the archive as part of the 'archival turn' in the humanities. One such scholar, Michelle Caswell, has suggested that this omission is not coincidental, but that 'the refusal of humanities scholars to engage with scholarship in archival studies is a gendered and classed failure' since the field of archival studies is, according to Caswell, construed as predominantly female, service-oriented, professional and thus non-academic.[99] Caswell points out the irony that the same humanities scholarship that purports to address issues of gender and class is itself so dismissive of those who are placed lower in the academic hierarchy. Caswell's article '"The Archive" is not an

Archives: Acknowledging the Intellectual Contributions of Archival Studies'
goes through some of the field's key contributions to theoretical thinking
about archives, and urges humanities scholars to embrace a greater interdis-
ciplinarity when it comes to archives.[100] Caswell is not alone in noting this
lack of interest; Sue Breakell pointed out that many publications on art and
archives focused on artists and critical theorists without including writing by
archivists.[101] Archive scholar Jeanette Bastian has outlined what she perceives
to be a sense of resentment among many professional archivists and research-
ers in archival studies who feel that humanities scholars are misguided, lack
understanding and overly theorise 'their' archives.[102] Both Caswell and Bastian
use the distinction between 'the archive' in quotation marks and the archives,
where the former is a Foucauldian hypothetical and metaphorical construct
that preoccupies humanities scholars whereas the latter is '*actually existing
archives*', collections of records that archival studies scholars and practising
archivists work with and theorise.[103] It is worth noting the way disciplinary
boundaries are fiercely protected by both archivists and humanities scholars.
Interestingly, Bastian makes a different claim than Caswell, suggesting that
many within the archival profession overemphasise the differences between
'the archive' as conceptualised by non-archivists, and what they consider to
be 'real' archival practice, and consequently she sets out to show different ways
that they intersect.[104]

It is clearly the case that archivists are mostly absent from the texts that
make up the archive theory that I have outlined in this chapter (archive theory,
of course, means something quite different in the field of archival studies). If
archivists do appear, it is either as metaphorical figures – such as the artist-
as-archivist – or as unthinking implementers of contemporary power struc-
tures. The view that the archival profession was reluctantly awakened by the
wider interest in, and critique of, archives and that they were the very last ones
to understand their own role is also widespread, but needs to be nuanced.
Terry Cook, one of the few archivists who is occasionally cited in writing by
non-archivists, has suggested that the flow of influence went both ways in the
1990s. Archivists at that time became aware of postmodernist discussions
about truth and framing, and many were indeed reluctant and slow in imple-
menting these theories into their actual work. At the same time, archivists
have also, contrary to the one-sided view, been aware of the archive as a
powerful frame affecting what is stored therein, and have thus not treated it
as a transparent repository. In fact, Cook suggested that 'archivists may have
unknowingly been the first postmodernists' long before the term got its
current meaning, since 'the long-held archival concern for textuality, for
mapping the provenance interrelationship between creator and record, for
determining context by reading through and behind text' reflects postmod-
ernism's concern with semiotically constructed contexts.[105]

This chapter has outlined some of the different strands of the heterogeneous cluster of writing that I refer to as 'archive theory'. Although the texts on archive art discussed in Chapter 1 do not all reference this theoretical ground in detail, nor in its entirety, it is nevertheless clear that this wider discourse on archives underpins the understanding of, and interest in, the archive as a notion within an art context. The next chapter will return to this specific context – the field of post-war and contemporary art – and consider the specific implications that the various elements of this archive theory have there.

Before moving on to Chapter 3 which will conclude the first part of this book, I want to briefly pause and point out the way the discussions in this chapter feed into what follows in the second part of the book. In the current chapter, the emergence of new ways of thinking about the archive has been discussed in relation to new notions of history, as well as political and technical developments. I have argued that a number of different factors converged, and together contributed to making the archive a seemingly urgent concern in the second half of the twentieth century, ramping up to even more ferocious interest in the decade leading up to the turn of the twenty-first. In Part II, I will examine the archive art phenomenon through five thematic points of convergence by bringing together broad historical, political and technological considerations with issues of specific concern for contemporary art and art practice. Chapter 4 deals with materiality and will get back to notions of the historical trace as somehow providing a link to the past, and it will examine how the materiality of the archive and its documents seem to be strengthened by the advent of digital technology. The current chapter has also touched upon the way the notion of the archive connects to different methods of historical research, and this will be further unpacked in Chapter 5. Issues relating to institutional structures have been discussed via Michel Foucault above, and these will be returned to again in Chapter 6 where oppression and archival absence will be analysed in light of numerous artistic projects dealing with these themes. Chapter 7 picks up the notion of fragmentation and the possibility or impossibility of joining such fragments into a whole by considering the connection between the archive and the notion of curating. The book's final chapter brings up different issues of temporality and the archive; here the notion of the archive addressing the future-as-past is considered in light of specific artworks, but the chapter also examines the notion of the archive in relation to the particular temporality of 'presentism' and 'the contemporary'. In other words, much of what I will, in later chapters, claim as characteristic of the artworld's particular interest in the archive will be recognisable from what has been outlined on the preceding pages as a broader interdisciplinary interest in and theorisation of the archive. However, there are also specific

– structural – aspects of the art context that contribute to the archive becoming something more fundamental as it enters into this particular field. Let me therefore turn now to the commingling of art and archive by clarifying the overlaps between the notion of the archive and the new notion of art that emerges in the second half of the twentieth century.

Notes

1   M. Manoff, 'Theories of the Archive from Across the Disciplines', *Libraries and the Academy*, 4:1 (2004), pp. 9–25.
2   Manoff, 'Theories of the Archive from Across the Disciplines', p. 9.
3   Other examples include Terry Cook who noted how Derrida's 'Archive Fever: A Freudian Impression' led to a surge in interest in writing about the archive in a number of disciplines. T. Cook, 'Archival Science and Postmodernism: New Formulations for Old Concepts', *Archival Science*, 1 (2001), pp. 3–24. Two texts by Mike Featherstone from 2000 and 2006, although not overtly surveying the field, do provide an overview of theoretical writing on archives; see M. Featherstone, 'Archiving Cultures', *British Journal of Sociology*, 51:1 (2000), pp. 161–84; M. Featherstone, 'Archive', *Theory, Culture & Society*, 23:591 (2006), pp. 591–6. In the introduction to the 2011 special issue on archives in the journal *Comparative Critical Studies*, Ben Hutchinson and Shane Weller explore the increased interest in archives since the early 1990s (Hutchinson and Weller, 'Guest Editor's Introduction', pp. 133–53). See also I. Velody, 'The Archive and the Human Sciences: Notes Towards a Theory of the Archive', *History of the Human Sciences*, 11:4 (1998), pp. 1–16; A. M. Burton, 'Introduction: Archive Fever, Archive Stories', in A. M. Burton (ed.), *Archive Stories: Facts, Fictions, and the Writing of History* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2005), pp. 1–24.
4   O. Fischer and T. Götselius, 'Arkivens Ordning. Introduktion till ett temanummer', in B. Holmqvist, O. Fischer and T. Götselius (eds), *Lychnos Tema: Arkiv*, Årsbok 2013 (Uppsala: Lärdomshistoriska Samfundet, 2013), p. 77. For a different account of the history of the archive, see ch. 1, 'A Brief History of the Archive', in G. Giannachi, *Archive Everything: Mapping the Everyday* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2016).
5   Fischer and Götselius, 'Arkivens Ordning', p. 77.
6   Fischer and Götselius, 'Arkivens Ordning', p. 77.
7   Featherstone, 'Archive', p. 591. See also K. O. Eliassen, *Foucaults begreper* (Oslo: Spartacus, 2016), p. 84.
8   Carolyn Steedman points out several earlier archival endeavours: the House of Savoy's Turin-based archive in the early seventeenth century, Peter the Great's archive in St Petersburg in 1720, Maria Theresa's in Vienna in 1749. See C. Steedman, 'The Space of Memory: In an Archive', *History of the Human Sciences*, 11:4 (1998), p. 67. Mike Featherstone notes that even though the Public Records Office was founded in England in 1838 as a 'treasure house of the nation's memory', it was not until 1850 and the Library Act that entry

was opened to everyone (Featherstone, 'Archiving Cultures', p. 168). Götselius similarly notes in his outline of the historical development of the archive that the key date for the modern historical archive is not 1790, but 25 July 1794 when the French Archives Nationales were opened to the general public. T. Götselius, 'Förord: Åter till arkivet', in W. Ernst, *Sorlet från arkiven: Ordning ur oordning* (Munkedal: Glänta Produktion, 2008), p. 12.

9   When in 1819 work began on editing all the relevant sources from German medieval history for the *Monumenta Germaniae historica*, the Prussian Minister of Culture von Altenstein proposed to separate records that were still useful for state business from those that were simply historical. Wolfgang Ernst exemplifies this separation between state and academic knowledge by the use of a computer analogy: what in computer-speak is called 'Programmable Read Only Memory' (ROM) is applied to the historical archives, whereas the legal non-discursive archive can be seen as closer to 'Random Access Memory' (RAM), memory that can be accessed and processed immediately. W. Ernst, 'Archival Action: The Archive as ROM and its Political Instrumentalization under National Socialism', *History of the Human Sciences*, 12:2 (1999), p. 15.

10   Assmann uses the terminology of 'political' and 'historical' archives to distinguish between archives that are used as tools for power and those that store information that is no longer of immediate use. A. Assmann, 'Canon and Archive', in A. Erll and A. Nünning (eds), *A Companion to Cultural Memory Studies* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2010), p. 103.

11   R. Koselleck, 'History, Histories, and Formal Time Structures', in *Futures Past: On the Semantics of Historical Time* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2004), pp. 103, 93.

12   Götselius, 'Förord: Åter till arkivet', p. 12.

13   Steedman, 'The Space of Memory', p. 72.

14   Michelet is a recurring presence in the essays that make up Steedman's book *Dust*.

15   Steedman, 'The Space of Memory', p. 70.

16   Steedman, 'The Space of Memory', pp. 72–3. Known as the 'father of objectivity' because of his focus on empiricist methods within the historical discipline, Leopold von Ranke distinguished between the careful focus on primary sources needed to represent past events and the intuitive method needed to establish their 'interconnectedness' and penetrate the 'essence' of an epoch. See C. Falzon, 'Making History', in C. Falzon, T. O'Leary and J. Sawicki (eds), *A Companion to Foucault* (Chichester: Blackwell, 2013), p. 287. Jeanette Bastian argues that the current 'archival turn' is in fact not the first but that '[t]he first archival turn occurred in early 19th century European history studies when historians, led by Leopold von Ranke, turned towards archival documentation as the essential evidence needed for historical truth'. J. A. Bastian, 'Moving the Margins to the Middle: Reconciling "the Archive" with the Archives', in F. Foscarini et al. (eds), *Engaging with Records and Archives: Histories and Theories* (London: Facet, 2016), p. 7.

17 S. Freud, 'A Note Upon the Mystic Writing-Pad', in C. Merewether (ed.), *The Archive* (London/Cambridge, MA: Whitechapel/MIT Press, 2006), pp. 20–4; S. Freud, 'A Note Upon the "Mystic Writing-Pad"', in *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*, ed. J. Strachey (London: Hogarth Press, 1999), IX, pp. 227–32.

18 Steedman, *Dust*, p. 18. Italics in the original. In writing about archives there is a wealth of similar descriptions. French scholar and historian Alice Yaeger Kaplan for instance theorised her own practical experience of archival research and argued that 'for the archive to be, there should be too much of it, too many papers to sift through. And there must also be pieces missing, something left to find.' A. Y. Kaplan, 'Working in the Archives', *Yale French Studies*, 77, special issue: 'Reading the Archive: On Texts and Institutions' (1990), p. 103.

19 For the archivists' perspective, see, for example, Nils Nilsson's essay 'The Memory of a Person' where the author passionately argues for the importance – and precariousness – of archives in ensuring that the individual is not totally forgotten at death. N. Nilsson, 'The Memory of a Person', trans. A. Crozier, *Comma*, 1 (2004), pp. 179–82.

20 Walter Benjamin is mentioned in, to name only a few, Schaffner, 'Deep Storage'; Simon, 'Introduction: Following the Archival Turn'; Foster, 'An Archival Impulse'; Merewether (ed.), *The Archive*; Spieker, *The Big Archive*; O. Enwezor, 'Archive Fever: Photography between History and the Monument', in *Archive Fever: Uses of the Document in Contemporary Art* (New York/Göttingen: International Center of Photography/Steidl, 2008), pp. 11–51; Osthoff, *Performing the Archive*; Rosengarten, *Between Memory and Document*; Downey (ed.), *Dissonant Archives*; Jones, *Installation Art and the Practices of Archivalism*. Benjamin's writing has also been used as a basis for 'archiveology', described as a critical method that provides tools 'for grasping the implications of the practice of remixing, recycling, and reconfiguring the image bank'. The term was originally coined by Joel Katz in 1991, but has been developed by Catherine Russel. See C. Russell, *Archiveology: Walter Benjamin and Archival Film Practices* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2018), pp. 11ff.

21 W. Benjamin, 'The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction', in *Illuminations: Walter Benjamin, Essays and Reflections*, ed. H. Arendt (New York: Schocken Books, 1988), pp. 217–51.

22 Benjamin's arcades project was never finished, but his notes and reflections have been posthumously edited, published and translated into different languages. See, for example, W. Benjamin, *The Arcades Project* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2002).

23 Featherstone, 'Archiving Cultures', p. 171.

24 S. Buck-Morss, *The Dialectics of Seeing: Walter Benjamin and the Arcades Project* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1999), p. 74.

25 Buck-Morss, *The Dialectics of Seeing*, pp. 74, 77.

26 Y. H. Yerushalmi, 'Series Z: An Archival Fantasy', *Psychomedia – Journal of European Psychoanalysis*, 3–4 (1996), www.psychomedia.it/jep/number3–4/yerushalmi.htm [accessed 20 March 2015].

27 Yerushalmi, 'Series Z: An Archival Fantasy'.
28 A. Farge, *The Allure of the Archives*, trans. T. Scott-Railton (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2013), p. 6. The book was originally published in French in 1989.
29 Farge, *The Allure of the Archives*, pp. 7–8.
30 Assmann, 'Canon and Archive', pp. 98–9.
31 Assmann, 'Canon and Archive', pp. 98–9.
32 Assmann, 'Canon and Archive', p. 106.
33 Assmann, 'Canon and Archive', p. 99.
34 T. Thomassen, 'A First Introduction to Archival Science', *Archival Science*, 1 (2001), p. 376.
35 Thomassen, 'A First Introduction to Archival Science', p. 376.
36 Falzon, 'Making History', p. 288.
37 The term 'archival divide' is taken from F. X. Blouin, Jr, 'History and Memory: The Problem of the Archive', *PMLA*, 119:2 (2004), p. 298.
38 Michel Foucault's writing sprang out of wider cultural and intellectual contexts where structuralism as well as Thomas Kuhn's notion of *paradigms* are important. In fact, the very idea of the lone genius launching an original set of ideas goes against the core of Foucault's own understanding of history. Having said that, within the cluster of writing on archives in the humanities, Foucault is, undeniably, a key figure.
39 Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge*, p. 129.
40 W. Ernst, *Stirrings in the Archives: Order from Disorder*, trans. A. Siegel (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 2015), p. 63. See also Götselius, 'Förord: Åter till arkivet', p. 9. For more on Foucault's different uses of the word 'archive', see Eliassen, 'The Archives of Michel Foucault', pp. 34, 39; and Eliassen, *Foucaults begreper*, p. 92. In the latter Eliassen formulated the difference in terms of the archive (*les archives*) and the archival order (*l'archive*).
41 The terminology of reading against (or along) the grain is a common one found in many different texts that deal with archives; see, for example, M. Godfrey, 'Photography Found and Lost: On Tacita Dean's *Floh*', *October*, 114 (2005), p. 104; Featherstone, 'Archive', p. 594; Enwezor, 'Archive Fever', p. 18; Stoler, *Along the Archival Grain*; Bastian, 'Moving the Margins to the Middle', p. 7.
42 See Foucault's distinction between 'total' and 'general' history: 'A total description draws all phenomena around a single centre – a principle, a meaning, a spirit, a world-view, an overall shape; a general history, on the contrary, would deploy the space of a dispersion' (Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge*, pp. 9, 10).
43 The shift in Foucault's use of the term archive also reflects the shift from the archaeology of knowledges towards genealogies of power, and thereby indicates the study of different materials: in the former the focus had been on scientific texts, in the latter on other 'genres' of archival material such as rules, directories, protocols, acts, documents (Eliassen, *Foucaults begreper*, p. 84). According to Eliassen the archive in the first 'restricted sense' was used by Foucault between 1966 and 1970, and he then abruptly stopped using it

(Eliassen, 'The Archives of Michel Foucault', p. 32). Note that Eliassen discussed this tripartite understanding in two texts that are largely similar – the earlier English version was expanded and altered for inclusion in Eliassen's book on Foucault's concepts a few years later.

44 For instance, archive and episteme are at times differentiated and at times appear to be overlapping concepts. Eliassen noted that episteme is the wider concept; it emphasises historical continuities and symmetries between fields of knowledge, disciplines or discourses; whereas archive designates processes of difference and incongruence (Eliassen, 'The Archives of Michel Foucault', p. 37; see also Eliassen, *Foucaults begreper*, p. 77). Another neighbouring concept to the archive is the *dispositif*, or apparatus, used by Foucault in his later writings. Since archives are in part also 'biopolitical' instruments in the way that they include devices and measures, Eliassen has argued that the archive is a *dispositive:* '[a]s dispositifs, archives play an important part in the politics of life' (Eliassen, 'The Archives of Michel Foucault', p. 40).

45 Eliassen, 'The Archives of Michel Foucault', pp. 32–3.

46 Eliassen's scheme corresponds neatly to the tripartite division of Foucault's research into *knowledge, power* and *subjectivity* (Eliassen, 'The Archives of Michel Foucault', p. 33).

47 M. Foucault, 'Different Spaces', in *Essential Works of Foucault 1954–1984,* 2: *Aesthetics, Method, and Epistemology*, ed. J. D. Faubion (New York: New Press, 1998), p. 178. The text was delivered as a lecture by Foucault on 14 March 1967; it was originally published in the French journal *Architecture-Mouvement-Continuité* in October 1984. In English, the text is variously translated as 'Different Spaces' and 'Of Other Spaces'. For the latter, see M. Foucault, 'Of Other Spaces', trans. J. Miskowiec, *Diacritics*, 16:1 (1986), pp. 22–7.

48 Foucault, 'Different Spaces', p. 182.

49 Foucault, 'Different Spaces', p. 182.

50 Eliassen, *Foucaults begreper*, pp. 87–92.

51 I am paraphrasing from Eliassen's text in Norwegian. Eliassen, *Foucaults begreper*, p. 92.

52 A. Brzyski, 'Introduction: Canons and Art History', in A. Brzyski (ed.), *Partisan Canons* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2007), pp. 10ff.

53 For a number of discussions of such views of canon, see the anthology edited by Brzyski, *Partisan Canons*.

54 Martin Jay uses the phrase in a discussion of mapmaking and visual metaphors in making the point that mapmakers have a literally slanted perspective, as well as a metaphorical one of cultural prejudice. M. Jay, 'Introduction', in *Downcast Eyes: The Denigration of Vision in Twentieth-Century French Thought* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1994), p. 18.

55 R. Felski, *The Limits of Critique* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2015), p. 30. See also E. K. Sedgwick, 'Paranoid Reading and Reparative Reading or, You're so Paranoid, You Probably Think This Essay is About You', in *Touching Feeling: Affect, Pedagogy, Performativity* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2003), pp. 123–51; A. Scott-Baumann, *Ricœur and the Hermeneutics of Suspicion* (London: Continuum, 2009).

56   The use of Foucault as such a trope can involve what Helen Sword calls the 'F-word in its adjectival form', i.e. attaching the term *Foucauldian* to a given mode of analysis, or just using the terminology of *discourse*, *episteme*, *apparatus* or other similar terms. H. Sword, *Stylish Academic Writing* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2012), p. 118.

57   Derrida, 'Archive Fever'. Marlene Manoff has pointed to the influence of Derrida's text on subsequent scholarly interest in the archive, noting that ten out of fifteen articles in the special issues published by the journal *History of the Human Sciences* 1998–99 included direct references to Derrida. Although not everyone agrees with him, 'Derrida provides a way of thinking about the work of librarians and archivists quite unlike anything we have previously seen in the professional literature' (Manoff, 'Theories of the Archive from Across the Disciplines', p. 11). Thomas Götselius in the foreword to the Swedish edition of Wolfgang Ernst's *Stirrings in the Archives* stated that Derrida's *Mal d'archive* is the most quoted text by far in most 'archival' works ('den i särklass mest citerade skriften i de flesta "arkiviska" arbeten') (Götselius, 'Förord: Åter till arkivet', p. 11). Historian Ann Laura Stoler has argued that Derrida did not kick off the 'archival turn' but rather tapped into it: 'Among historians, literary critics and anthropologists, archives have been elevated to new analytic status with distinct billing, worthy of scrutiny on their own. One might be tempted to see this as a Derridean effect of the last decade that followed on the publication of *Archive Fever*. But the archival turn has a wider arc and a longer durée. *Archive Fever* compellingly captured that impulse by giving it theoretical stature, but Jacques Derrida's intervention came only after the "archival turn" was already being made' (Stoler, *Along the Archival Grain*, p. 44). As noted in Chapter 1, *Archive Fever* was the title of Okwui Enwezor's exhibition, and the phrase occurred in several texts on archive art. David Houston Jones calls it 'one of the best-known theoretical accounts of the archive' (Jones, *Installation Art and the Practices of Archivalism*, p. 11). See also J. Garde-Hansen, 'MyMemories? Personal Digital Archive Fever and Facebook', in J. Garde-Hansen, A. Hoskins and A. Reading (eds), *Save As … Digital Memories* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), pp. 135–50.

58   The lecture was called 'The Concept of the Archive: A Freudian Impression', but was changed to 'Archive Fever: A Freudian Impression' when published. See Steedman, *Dust*, p. 1, and n. 1. A testament to its influence is that the Freud Museum in 2014 organised a conference to commemorate the twentieth anniversary of Derrida's paper. See 'The Freud Museum ~ Events and Conferences ~ 20 YEARS OF ARCHIVE FEVER', *Freud Museum*, www.freud.org.uk/events/75625/20-years-of-archive-fever/ [accessed 25 February 2017].

59   Derrida, 'Archive Fever', p. 14 (italics in the original). Bringing up another aspect of this archival destruction and danger, Carolyn Steedman has considered the notion of archive fever as a literal disease; actual illnesses caused by inhaling particles that come from old books and other archival materials. C. Steedman, 'Something She Called a Fever: Michelet, Derrida, and Dust', *The American Historical Review*, 106:4 (2001), pp. 1159–80.

60 Derrida, 'Archive Fever', p. 9. In many other texts on the archive, Derrida's etymological explanation is lifted almost verbatim, at times with a reference to him, but often not. See, for instance, Spieker, *The Big Archive*, p. 195, n. 2; Jones, *Installation Art and the Practices of Archivalism*, p. 11; Tagg, 'The Archiving Machine', p. 25; van Alphen, *Staging the Archive*, p. 53; and Comay (ed.), *Lost in the Archives*, p. 14. For a different discussion of the etymology of the archive, see A. H. Leavitt, 'What are Archives?', *The American Archivist*, 24:2 (1961), pp. 175–8.

61 For instance: Burton, 'Introduction: Archive Fever, Archive Stories'; Enwezor, 'Archive Fever'.

62 Derrida, 'Archive Fever', p. 27.

63 Derrida references this grammatical form directly a few pages earlier when he writes of 'the retrospective logic of a future perfect' (Derrida, 'Archive Fever', p. 13). *Le futur antérieur* in French corresponds to the English future perfect tense; both terms appear in discussions of the archive's temporality.

64 Derrida, 'Archive Fever', p. 17. Italics in the original.

65 'Yerushalmi's book, including its fictive monologue, henceforth belongs to the corpus of Freud (and of Moses, etc.), whose name it also *carries*. The fact that this corpus and this name also remain spectral is perhaps a general structure of every archive. By incorporating knowledge which is deployed in reference to it, the archive augments itself, engrosses itself, it gains in *auctoritas*. But in the same stroke it loses the absolute and meta-textual authority it might claim to have. One will never be able to objectivize it while leaving no remainder. The archivist produces more archive, and that is why the archive is never closed' (Derrida, 'Archive Fever', p. 45. Italics in the original.)

66 The description of the archivist as a 'keeper of context' is taken from J. M. Schwartz and T. Cook, 'Archives, Records, and Power: The Making of Modern Memory', *Archival Science*, 2 (2002), p. 10.

67 Carolyn Steedman has argued that we cannot be shocked at the archive's exclusions, but that its very condition 'deflects outrage': it is precisely in what is missing as well as what is included in 'its quiet folders and bundles' that we see the 'neatest demonstration of how state power has operated' (Steedman, *Dust*, p. 68).

68 G. C. Spivak, 'The Rani of Sirmur: An Essay in Reading the Archives', *History and Theory*, 24:3 (1985), pp. 247–72.

69 See for instance A. Kafer, *Feminist, Queer, Crip* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2013); R. McRuer, *Crip Theory: Cultural Signs of Queerness and Disability* (New York: New York University Press, 2006).

70 Sekula, 'The Body and the Archive'; J. Ellenbogen, *Reasoned and Unreasoned Images: The Photography of Bertillon, Galton, and Marey* (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2012).

71 Featherstone, 'Archive', p. 591. Both Ann Laura Stoler and Thomas Richards have written extensively about colonial archives and their epistemological function. See Stoler, *Along the Archival Grain*; T. Richards, *The Imperial Archive: Knowledge and the Fantasy of Empire* (London: Verso, 1993).

72 Ernst, 'Archival Action', p. 26.

73 The Nazis were master archivists, and the archive seems plagued by a sense of eeriness because of this, which has led some writers to suggest that the archival logic itself is sinister as a result. For more on this, see van Alphen, *Staging the Archive*.

74 The creation of new archives can also be used by various groups to rectify historical archival exclusions. Mike Featherstone writes: 'the "diasporic archive" or the "migrant archive" can be seen as an attempt by migrant groups to engage in imaginative and creative work to form new collective memories, which are distinct from the official memories of the host and former home societies. Such an archive is seen as an active aspiration, a tool for reworking desires and memories, part of a project for sustaining cultural identities' (Featherstone, 'Archiving Cultures', p. 594; see also Downey [ed.], *Dissonant Archives*). For more on these kinds of community archives and their relationship to the notion of curating and the archival turn, see Chapter 7.

75 Y. H. Yerushalmi, *Freud's Moses: Judaism Terminable and Interminable* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1991).

76 Derrida refers to Yerushalmi as a new 'scholar' (with scare quotes), signalling that he is indeed engaged in a different kind of scholarly research (Derrida, 'Archive Fever', pp. 20, 26ff., 41).

77 Derrida, 'Archive Fever', pp. 55, 40. For more on this discussion in Derrida and its implications for the notion of 'research' in contemporary art, see Chapter 5. For a critique of Derrida's history writing, see Todd Dufresne: 'Whatever the value of this Derridean autoeconomy, which I often admire as intellectual *haute couture*, it is a scandal from the perspective of historical research. It is not just that autoeconomy tends to be as interesting as someone else's dream – namely, not interesting at all – but that this dream, even when it speaks of and for the Other, for example, for Freud and Yerushalmi, *is not history*.' T. Dufresne, 'Jacques What's-His-Name: Death, Memory and Archival Sickness', in *Killing Freud: Twentieth-Century Culture and the Death of Psychoanalysis* (London: Continuum, 2003), p. 81. Italics in original.

78 A. Erll and A. Nünning (eds), *Cultural Memory Studies: An International and Interdisciplinary Handbook* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2008); A. Erll and A. Nünning (eds), *A Companion to Cultural Memory Studies* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2010); J. Parikka, *What Is Media Archaeology?* (Cambridge: Polity, 2012).

79 At times this field is also referred to as simply 'memory studies'. For a brief discussion of the reason for including the word 'cultural', see A. Erll, 'Cultural Memory Studies: An Introduction', in Erll and Nünning (eds), *Cultural Memory Studies*, pp. 1–15.

80 P. Nora, 'Between Memory and History: Les Lieux de Mémoire', *Representations*, 26, special issue: 'Memory and Counter-Memory' (1989), pp. 7–24. Nora's project is a multi-volume publication published in French in the decade following 1984. Here I refer to the brief article that summarises the idea of spaces of memory.

81 Nora, 'Between Memory and History', p. 8.

82 Nora, 'Between Memory and History', pp. 22, 12.

83 Nora, 'Between Memory and History', p. 14.

84 Nora, 'Between Memory and History', p. 13. A younger generation of memory studies scholars suggest doing away entirely with the distinction between memory and history, and instead using the notion of different *modes of remembering* in culture, where history is considered one of many modes of cultural memory. Erll, 'Cultural Memory Studies: An Introduction', p. 7.

85 To name a few such references from within the field of art writing: Featherstone, 'Archive'; Jones, *Installation Art and the Practices of Archivalism*; Merewether (ed.), *The Archive*; Osthoff, *Performing the Archive*; Spieker, *The Big Archive*; van Alphen, *Staging the Archive*. Part of Borges's popularity in academic writing may also be that Michel Foucault referenced a passage from him as preface to *The Order of Things*, published shortly before *The Archaeology of Knowledge*. M. Foucault, *The Order of Things: An Archaeology of the Human Sciences* (New York: Vintage, 1994), p. xv. Jean Baudrillard notably used Borges's story 'On Exactitude in Science' in the opening of his 1981 book *Simulacra and Simulation*. J. Baudrillard, *Simulacra and Simulation*, trans. S. F. Glaser (Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, 2017), p. 1.

86 J. L. Borges, 'The Library of Babel', in *Collected Fictions* (New York: Penguin, 1998), pp. 112–18. First published in 1941.

87 J. L. Borges, 'On Exactitude in Science', in *Collected Fictions* (New York: Penguin, 1998), p. 325. This story, first published in 1946, bears a great deal of resemblance to an episode described in Lewis Carroll's 1893 *Sylvie and Bruno Concluded*; see L. Carroll, *Sylvie and Bruno / Sylvie and Bruno Concluded: (Complete: Vol. 1 & 2 – Illustrated & Annotated)* (n.p., 2020), pp. 337–8.

88 J. L. Borges, 'Funes, His Memory', in *Collected Fictions* (New York: Penguin, 1998), pp. 131–7. First published in 1944.

89 W. G. Sebald, *Austerlitz*, trans. A. Bell (New York: Modern Library, 2011).

90 G. Flaubert, *Bouvard and Pécuchet*, trans. M. Polizzotti (Normal, IL: Dalkey Archive Press, 2005). First published in 1881. For an analysis of Flaubert's book, see E. Donato, 'The Museum's Furnace: Notes toward a Contextual Reading of Bouvard and Pécuchet', in J. V. Harari (ed.), *Textual Strategies: Perspectives in Post-Structuralist Criticism* (London: Methuen, 1980), pp. 213–38. Michel Foucault discussed this work in M. Foucault, 'Fantasia of the Library', in *Language, Counter-Memory, Practice: Selected Essays and Interviews*, ed. D. F. Bouchard (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1977), pp. 87–109; and Douglas Crimp in his influential essay 'On the Museum's Ruins' discussed Foucault and *Bouvard and Pécuchet* in relation to the shift from modernist to postmodernist art and its consequences for the view of the museum.

91 S. Keen, *Romances of the Archive in Contemporary British Fiction* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2001).

92 Perhaps best-known is his 2002 *Das Rumoren der Archive. Ordnung aus Unordnung*, but to this can be added numerous articles and later books. It was published in English in 2015 under the title *Stirrings in the Archives: Order from Disorder*.

93 Ernst, *Stirrings in the Archives*, p. 11.

94 Götselius, 'Förord: Åter till arkivet', p. 8. Jussi Parikka, another key theorist in this field, described the archive as 'one key institutional "site" of memory with an intertwined history with modernity and the birth of the state apparatus, but which now is increasingly being rearticulated less as a *place* of history, memory and power, and more as a dynamic and temporal network, a software environment, and a social platform for memory.' J. Parikka, 'Introduction: Cartographies of the Old and the New', in *What Is Media Archaeology?* (Cambridge: Polity, 2012), p. 15. Here the 'sites of memory' in Nora's sense is widened to include a consideration of technologies.

95 Many have argued, convincingly, that the binary material–immaterial in analogue–digital media is a false one and that digital media are also tied to specific materialities. For a brief outline of this discussion, and references to further reading, see M. Manoff, 'The Materiality of Digital Collections: Theoretical and Historical Perspectives', *Libraries and the Academy*, 6:3 (2006), pp. 311–25. The archive as unstable and somehow in motion is evoked in the very title of an anthology and a three-year research project on the proliferation of the concept of the archive in recent writing in different disciplines; see E. Røssaak (ed.), *The Archive in Motion: New Conceptions of the Archive in Contemporary Thought and New Media Practices* (Oslo: Novus Press, 2010), and 'Archive in Motion (AiM) (completed) – Department of Philosophy, Classics, History of Art and Ideas', www.hf.uio.no/ifikk/english/research/projects/archive-in-motion/ [accessed 2 November 2017].

96 Cook, 'Archival Science and Postmodernism', p. 21.

97 N. Lager Vestberg, 'Ordering, Searching, Finding', *Journal of Visual Culture*, 12 (2013), pp. 474ff.

98 The network *archivefutures* is an initiative by scholars and archivists that is 'specifically concerned with exploring the status of the material in the era of digitization'. See 'Archivefutures: About', *Archivefutures*, 2012, https://archivefutures.com/about/ [accessed 27 May 2020]. See also 'Politics of Metadata' run by Anna Dahlgren and Karin Hansson, an interdisciplinary research project at Stockholm University that offers critical perspectives on metadata in relation to online photographic collections. For more on this, see 'Metadata culture – Stockholm University', www.su.se/english/research/research-projects/metadata-culture [accessed 8 June 2021].

99 M. Caswell, '"The Archive" is not an Archives: Acknowledging the Intellectual Contributions of Archival Studies', *Reconstruction: Studies in Contemporary Culture*, 16:1 (2016), unpaginated. Caswell points out that the field goes by different names: archival studies, archival science, or archivistics.

100 Caswell, '"The Archive" is not an Archives'.

101 S. Breakell, 'Encounters with the Self: Archives and Research', in J. Hill (ed.), *The Future of Archives and Recordkeeping: A Reader* [ebook] (London: Facet, 2011), pp. 23–36, https://doi.org/10.29085/9781856048675 [accessed 24 August 2020]. Cited in S. Vaughan, 'Reflecting on Practice: Artists' Experiences in the Archives', in F. Foscarini et al. (eds), *Engaging with Records and Archives: Histories and Theories* (London: Facet, 2016), p. 211.

102 Bastian, 'Moving the Margins to the Middle', p. 3.

103 Caswell, '"The Archive" is not an Archives'. The phrasing '*actually existing archives*' (with italics added by Caswell) is credited to A. Cvetkovich, *An Archive of Feelings: Trauma, Sexuality, and Lesbian Public Cultures* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2003), p. 268.

104 Bastian, 'Moving the Margins to the Middle', p. 3.

105 Cook, 'Archival Science and Postmodernism', p. 17. The formulation 'semiotically constructed contexts' is cited by Cook with reference to L. Hutcheon, *A Poetics of Postmodernism: History, Theory, Fiction* (New York: Routledge, 1988), p. 122.

The artworld as an archival structure   **3**

Since technological, philosophical and historical developments contributed to an increased reflection and attention to the archive as place and as notion in the second part of the twentieth century, it would be easy to conclude that contemporary art was just one among a number of different fields affected by this general surge of archival interest. However, the connections between post-war art and archive are so significant that the archive art phenomenon can be approached as a useful raster through which to understand not just specific examples of archive or archival art, but also important aspects of post-war art in general. In this chapter I argue that the notion of the archive as it is theorised in a number of academic disciplines became attached to – and reinforced – the institutional understanding of art that developed around the mid-1960s, and, furthermore, that this connection between the archive as a notion and the institutional theory of art is an important reason why the archive became such a ubiquitous reference among artists and art writers at the turn of the twenty-first century.

Conflation and inflation: art history, the archive and the museum

In the article 'Theories of the Archive from Across the Disciplines', cited at the opening of Chapter 2, Marlene Manoff identified 'conflation' and 'inflation' as two forces at work in archival discourse.[1] Inflation refers to the increased use of the term 'archive' for different purposes in different disciplines – what is variously termed an archival boom, trend or turn.[2] Conflation, on the other hand, indicates how libraries, museums and archives come to be considered, if not interchangeable, then at least somewhat analogous in the archival discourse.[3] Manoff was not concerned with the field of art at all; she did not include artistic practice, art history or art criticism in her overview.[4] However, I want to posit that the notion of conflation she proposed is of particular significance to the post-war art context. In a well-rehearsed narrative of post-war art, Marcel Duchamp plays an important, albeit belated role in the development of the understanding of the artwork as discursively

and institutionally conditioned: Duchamp's work from the 1910s and 1920s came to have a profound effect on a younger generation of conceptual artists from the late 1950s onwards.[5] When art is seen as a discursive system, the definition of art becomes dependent on the museum as institutional structure evaluating art as art. Therefore, within an art context, the kind of conflation that Manoff mentioned is, I think, not necessarily a lazy or arbitrary misuse of the term archive. Instead, this conflation is crucial to the way the archive comes to generate meaning in this particular context. The conflation of the institution of the archive with the institution of the art museum and the institution of the library – and, through them, art history – can in fact be used to clarify the shift in the understanding of art that effectively takes place in the post-war period.

In his relatively brief text 'Fantasia of the Library' Michel Foucault focused on modernist self-reflexivity in art and literature, and suggested that 'Flaubert is to the library what Manet is to the museum. They both produced works in a self-conscious relationship to earlier paintings or texts […] They erect their art within the archive.'[6] Foucault's argument was that from this point on, art was no longer premised on the idea of the individual subject, or artistic genius, but on what the archive had collected and would collect in the future.[7] When the *October*-affiliated art critic Douglas Crimp in 1980 theorised postmodernist art and its relationship to the art museum in the essay 'On the Museum's Ruins', he argued that Foucault's discussion needed to be updated in light of art practices that radically challenged the previous understanding of the museum and its function.[8] To clarify what he meant, Crimp differentiated between the way Édouard Manet – representing modernism – and Robert Rauschenberg – representing postmodernism – used art historical precedents. In contrast to Manet's painted transformation of earlier versions of the nude, Rauschenberg's flatbed paintings instead included silkscreened photographic reproductions of the original, alongside a number of other images, texts and textures.[9] According to Crimp, Rauschenberg's works represented a radical, cataclysmic rupture in the epistemological field of art: these works were not even legible as pictures within a modernist pictorial logic.[10]

For Crimp, photography was crucial both for the modernist art museum and the postmodernist rupture with it. He argued that the modernist art museum as a principle could be understood via André Malraux's *Museum Without Walls*, which reduced the vast heterogeneity of art objects to a single perfect similitude by virtue of photographic reproductions.[11] This pretension to knowledge was doomed once photography itself entered the museum as an art object among others; instead of simply reproducing the artworks photographically and thereby making them available for circulation, artworks that incorporated photography destabilised the previously clear hierarchical relationship between original and reproduction.[12] The reproductive technology

was inherently threatening to the museum's foundational principle of the unique and auratic object created by the individual subject. Crimp briefly mentioned the notion of the archive when discussing this shift, but without elaborating on it.[13] In Foucault's formulation that artists after Manet 'erect their art within the archive', the term archive is used in a way that makes it seem synonymous with the term canon. What Manet and Flaubert were positioning themselves in relation to was the mass of art or literature that has come to be considered historically significant, worthy of inclusion in the categories of art history and literature respectively. With postmodernist art this 'mass' of objects no longer offered the same coherence, in large part because of photography. Artists after modernism did not 'erect their art' into what we can term 'the archive-as-canon': a historical trajectory into which artists add their own work. From this point onwards, artists produce artworks that fit into the non-teleological 'archive-as-discursive-system' which establishes the work of art as art in terms of a network of evaluation. This is a key point, and one that I will come back to throughout this book, as it has specific consequences for the association between art and archive. One important aspect of this change is its implications for temporality. Rather than a historical linearity of modernist art, post-war (or postmodernist) art is anchored in a discursive system constructed and negotiated in the present.

The terminology of self-reflexivity means different things in these different contexts. In Foucault's formulation the modern artist's (or author's) self-reflexivity boiled down to placing every work of art in the context of other works of art, and being aware of the artwork's position within this larger structure. On the other hand, the self-reflexivity at work in later practices – including archive art – is not reliant on the coherence of the art historical narrative, but is rather a self-reflexivity where the very notion of canon and the teleological trajectory which it presumes is criticised and destabilised. Explaining this difference, art historian Hans Belting described how before the 1960s, a 'safe notion for history was needed for establishing consent on the notion of art', and that an artwork needed to deliver proof of belonging to the category 'art' by somehow showing that it marked a new stage in art's history.[14] After this point, Belting argued, art is only accepted as 'a successful fiction, backed by art institutions rather than by virtue of a particular history or individual success'.[15] It seems far from true that individual success is less important post-1960s than before, especially when considering the record-breaking art market in the early decades of the twenty-first century. The point here, however, is not that artists' names or individual success are irrelevant – they clearly are not – but rather that it is no longer necessary to be original in the sense of driving history forward. With the advent of photography as an artistic medium, 'notions of originality, authenticity, and presence, essential to the ordered discourse of the museum, are undermined', according to Crimp,

and artworks embody this change by explicitly dealing with quotation, repetition and the reproduction of existing images.[16]

The institutional theory of art

What Hans Belting described as the post-1960s condition for art is anchored in the so-called 'institutional theory of art'. This was an attempt to provide a theoretical and philosophical framework to explain what made an object 'art' when readymades, industrially produced objects and events were exhibited in art galleries and museums. In 1964 philosopher Arthur Danto published an essay prompted by an exhibition by Andy Warhol at the Stable Gallery in New York the same year. It was Warhol's Brillo boxes, near identical with the real consumer-bound soap pad boxes for sale in supermarkets all over the country, that impelled Danto to note that '[t]o see something as art requires something the eye cannot decry – an atmosphere of artistic theory, a knowledge of the history of art: an artworld'.[17]

Although the institutional theory of art can be said to stem from Danto's argument in this essay, Danto himself claimed to retain mixed feelings about it, in part because of what he called a 'creative misunderstanding' of his work by fellow philosopher George Dickie.[18] Dickie's version of the theory stated that something is art when declared to be so by the artworld, a view that Danto criticised for being non-cognitive.[19] The problem for Danto was that Dickie's version of the institutional theory of art seemed incapable of accounting for dissenting voices that speak at the same time; it could not answer who, in fact, was in a position to definitively declare something to be art.[20] Danto argued that mere things can indeed attain the status of art, but what confers this status is a 'discourse of reasons', which he describes as 'the art world construed institutionally'.[21] The term 'transfiguration of the commonplace', the title of one of Danto's later books in which he fleshed out the arguments presented in his 1964 article, captures the shift in an object from the status of normal – commonplace – object to that of an art object.[22] What confers the status of 'art' upon an object is the institution of art; but it does not just declare something to be art randomly or monolithically, but on the basis of a complex set of reasons. It is important to understand that the institution always consists of different voices that pull in different directions, yet taken as a whole it has the power to enact this transfiguration of the commonplace. In this sense the institution of the artworld is rule-based – its rules do not merely constitute the theory of art, but they also constitute, bring into existence and govern the institution itself.[23]

Not only is the term artworld written differently in different texts by Danto himself and by those commenting on and theorising the institutional understanding of art (*artworld*, *art world*, *Artworld*, *Art World*), a more significant
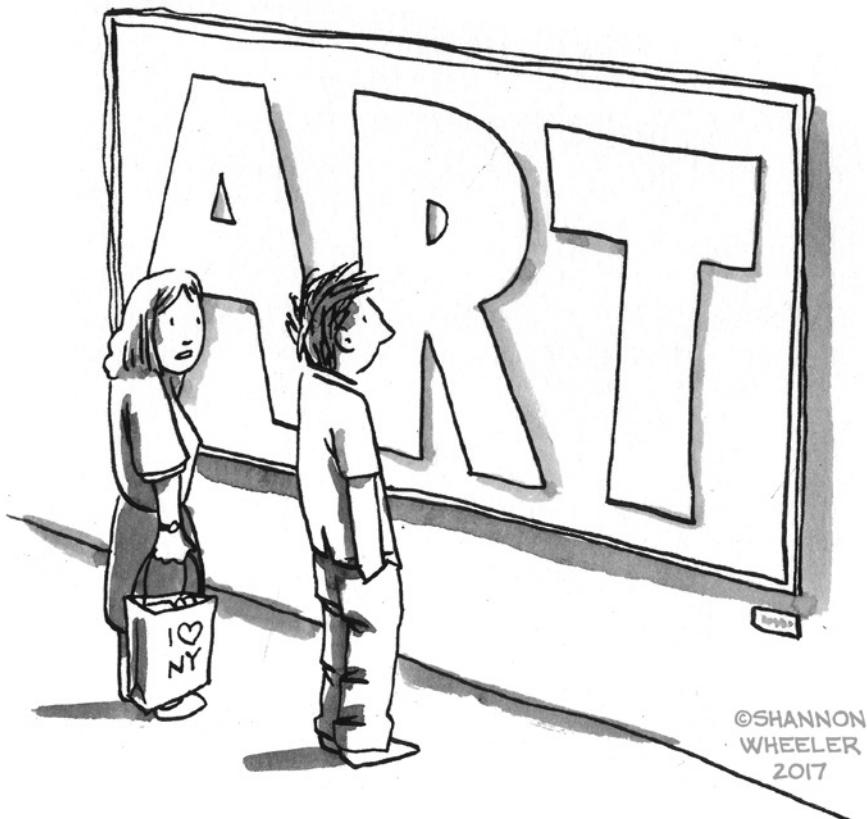
"But is it art?"

Shannon Wheeler, *But is it art?*, cartoon, 2017   **3.1**

issue is whether it is to be understood as singular or plural. Howard S. Becker's book *Art Worlds*, published in 1982, argued that the institutional theory of art suffered from being too hypothetical and lacking empirical data, and that neither Danto's nor Dickie's notion of the artworld had 'much meat on its bones'.[24] Becker, himself a sociologist, was interested in artistic work as *work*, and considered the different patterns of cooperation that make that work possible and that affect it in different ways.[25] The point of multiple artworlds is picked up in subsequent writing that emphasises regional differences in how art is institutionalised and evaluated.[26] In this book I use the term in its singular form (artworld) since I am deliberately referring to an aesthetic and abstract system. This is not to deny the important scholarly work on centres

and peripheries in the art context and the obvious multiplicity of artworlds in the sense of clusters of influence, conflict and collaboration.[27] However, when I refer to the artworld, I point to a singular abstract entity operating behind and within all of these different specific empirical situations. This artworld may be far from the same in each case, but such a singular institutional abstract entity does operate in many different local situations over time. In that sense the singular artworld that is key to the institutional theory of art describes the Foucauldian view of power as a set of relations where it is no longer possible to identify the person or entity who conceived it.[28] Specific instances can be described and studied, but the general theory of power in the artworld – which is essentially what the institutional theory of art is – is reliant on a less specific set of individuals, institutions and situations.

This is not the place to untangle philosophical debates around the institutional theory of art.[29] However, I want to mention one further distinction between different iterations of this broad theory that is of particular relevance for the archive art phenomenon: the issue of *classification*, *interpretation* and *evaluation* and how these relate to one another. Although George Dickie insisted on maintaining a distinction between these, arguing that 'a theory of art should not have the result of making the expression "good art" redundant or the expression "bad art" self-contradictory', others have argued that it is difficult, if not impossible, to fully differentiate between them in the present-day field of art.[30] David Graves, a scholar focused on the philosophy of art, argued that 'both classification and interpretation of an object as a work of art hinge upon the object's ability or inability to meet rule-stipulated require-ments of relevant Artworld systems', and he added that a work of art has 'value in virtue of just that fact' even if this does not exhaust the work's artistic value.[31] Graves's point seems to be that the institutional conception of art leads to a *conflation* of the three activities of classifying, interpreting and evaluating. This conflation is in part what ties the institutional theory of art to the notion of archive as structure. It is important to clarify, however, that although in the present-day notion of art – contemporary art specifically – acts of classifica-tion, interpretation and evaluation are deeply intertwined, this does not mean that the work of art can be reduced merely to its classification and evaluation as part of the broad grouping 'contemporary art'.

Let me turn now to a few of the texts on archive art outlined in Chapter 1 in order to consider how this institutional theory of art relates to the notion of the archive in different ways. Sven Spieker's *The Big Archive: Art from Bureaucracy* begins with a description of Ilya Kabakov's work *Sixteen Ropes* (1984).[32] The installation consists of garbage hung on a grid of string, which Spieker describes as transforming the room into a kind of three-dimensional archive. Spieker then asks rhetorically whether the grid precedes the trash caught in it, or vice versa, only to settle for a third possibility, that 'the grid

and its trash, the archive and what it stores, emerge at the same time so that one cannot easily be subtracted from the other'.[33] The archive, in other words, is always both part and whole; it consists of files or documents as well as the structuring principle that sorts and organises these according to a specific system. Rebecca Comay in the introduction to *Lost in the Archives* was also concerned with this turning point:

> how many repetitions does it take to turn an assemblage into a collection? At what point does an aggregate become a series? At what point does an item become a document, a collection a system, a list a catalogue? Can one determine the essential limits of the archive according to the logic of the archive itself? Is there an archive of the archives?[34]

Bringing up the philosophical aporia of the exact point when grains of sand turn into a heap, Comay likened the temporality of the archive to coagulating mayonnaise: the heap, mayonnaise and archive all embody a state in which something will have already happened.[35] This terminology seems to build on Foucault's definition of the archive as '*the general system of the formation and transformation of statements*', whereby statements can only occur and become statements in the archive, and they are thus transformed by the archive at the same time that they also contribute to the transformation of the archive itself.[36] In his outline of the 'historical a priori' – closely related to the archive in his writing – Foucault specified that its rules are 'not imposed from the outside on the elements that they relate together; they are caught up in the very things that they connect'.[37] That is to say, there is nothing outside that determines the structure of the whole. Instead, the coercive tension at work in the archive is simultaneously imposed on, and originates in, the parts that make up that same archival whole. This co-dependent structuring is precisely what connects the archive as a concept to the broad understanding of the artwork in the field of post-war art.

Comay's mayonnaise metaphor may seem light-hearted and even irrelevant in this context, as it hinges on the moment when the different ingredients – oil, egg yolks, vinegar – tip over from being separate entities into a creamy mixture, whereas the artwork and the artworld as institution arguably retain their separation while affecting each other. However, as artist and theorist Andrea Fraser has argued, the institution of art should not be seen as something external to the work of art, since it is in fact the irreducible condition of its existence as art.[38] Fraser, who is associated with the art practice known as institutional critique, goes on to point to the conflation of evaluation and classification discussed above: 'what is announced and perceived as art is always already institutionalized, simply because it exists within the perception of participants in the field of art as art, a perception not necessarily aesthetic but fundamentally social in its determination'.[39] The always-already tipping

point brought up by Comay is thus similar to the artwork as always-already institutionally defined, and the institution, broadly understood, is therefore key to the very understanding of the artwork as art.

Archive or archival art as outlined in Chapter 1 is largely a late twentieth- and early twenty-first-century phenomenon, whereas the institutional theory of art emerged in the 1960s. Why, then, would the latter be a relevant frame-work for understanding a set of artistic practices and texts about these that emerged about half a century later? The question will be answered by recourse to two related and seemingly incompatible points. First, that the 1960s acts as a foundational moment for the kind of artistic practices that fit into the cat-egory of archive art: practices that self-reflexively deal with their own position vis-à-vis the material they study, and that frequently operate with what one could describe as a documentary aesthetic. Conceptual art practices of the 1960s thus function as an archive (in the sense of a foundational moment, grounding or *arkhē* in the etymology proposed by Derrida) of archive art at the turn of the twenty-first century. I want to suggest that the 1960s is para-digmatic in both form and method for artists working with archival themes at the turn of the twenty-first century. The artistic practices that gave rise to the institutional theory of art are thus *historical* in the sense of being founda-tional, but – and here is the second point I want to make – they are also still present and active and thus in a sense *contemporary with* the archive art practices carried out some fifty years later.

Conceptual artistic practices of the 1960s and 1970s elaborate on aspects of archival self-referentiality in different ways that bring to mind the kind of ontological oscillation discussed by Spieker, Comay and Fraser. The 'indis-cernibles' that Danto identified as key to an artwork's identity as art were not just invisible but, of course, also absolutely necessary to differentiate between art and non-art. It was these indiscernibles that turned everyday industrially produced objects into artworks. This new understanding of art required pre-cisely the kind of ontological oscillation that many authors describe in archival terms. In an art context, objects could alter how art was understood and defined, but the same objects also depended on this wider system for their own identity as works of art. This structure can be exemplified by a passage from Sol LeWitt's 1969 'Sentences on Conceptual Art' that stated that '[t]he conventions of art are altered by works of art' and that '[s]uccessful art changes our understanding of the conventions by altering our perceptions.'[40] What LeWitt is getting at here is that artworks, or 'successful art', are dependent on the larger archive or structuring principle, 'the conventions of art', but that these artworks are also what can change the structuring principle itself.

My point here is simply that the post-1960s artwork is tied to a particular type of archival structure, and that the theorisation of such a structural notion of the archive was taking place in various other contexts around the same time.

The logic of a particular structure (be it archive/artworld/historical a priori) grants validity to the parts that make up that structure (documents/artworks/enunciations). However, part and structure are materially and conceptually inseparable, and neither can be said to be temporally or causally prior to the other. They exist in a logical co-presence, defining and structuring one another.[41]

Knut Ove Eliassen has described the Foucauldian archive as that which provides the premises for what counts as knowledge.[42] If one replaces the term 'knowledge' with 'art' in that phrase, then it describes the general idea of the institutional theory of art, an illustration of the way the art institution can be defined specifically as an *archival* structure. Danto described how the artworld is made up of art writing, museums, objects, artists, critics, art historians and so on – in other words, that it is something very similar to the Foucauldian archive understood as an institutional praxis.[43] In fact, Danto's critique of Dickie can also be said to – indirectly – highlight the connection between Danto's own version of the institutional theory of art and part of archive theory. Danto's critique, as noted, was that the structure of evaluation does not emerge randomly, but has reasons; that conventions contribute to determining what is considered art, and that the artworld is therefore determined by a set of regularities or structured rules in a similar way that the Foucauldian archive is the 'law of what can be said'.[44] The institutional theory of art is an evaluative system in Danto's formulation: calling a mere object an artwork means bestowing upon it an 'honorific predicate', and such an honour is not random but earned.[45] This honorific predicate is bestowed within an immediate networked structure that in other contexts goes by the term archive. In fact, the artworld is frequently described precisely as a 'network': in 1972 art critic and curator Lawrence Alloway published an essay titled 'Network: The Art World Described as a System', in which he argued that that the artworld was not a hierarchical structure, like an organisation, but a complex network deeply tied to the artwork's 'distribution'.[46] Similarly, the archive understood in roughly Foucauldian terms can be described as establishing connections not by cause and effect but by a network, and as such it is not anchored in teleology, but represents a discontinuous and presentist form of knowledge.[47]

The partial conflation between interpretation, evaluation and classification mentioned above is thus crucial to the new understanding of art that emerged during the so-called 'long 1960s': a period stretching from the late 1950s to the mid-1970s.[48] A pre-1960s grounding of art in teleological art history does not in the same way hinge on the institutional *classification* of art as art. However, when artworks can be made in reproducible media such as photography, or consist of a readymade, an event, document or even language – in other words, without its institutional frame, indistinguishable from other objects – then the

interpretation of its meaning, its *classification* as art, and its *evaluation* as significant come to be, to a certain extent, inseparable.

The document in post-war art

In the 1960s it was not uncommon to reference new artistic practices as anti-art or non-art, in order to position these against the then conventional understanding of art.[49] One example of this tendency is the title and content of Mel Bochner's exhibition *Working Drawings and Other Visible Things on Paper Not Necessarily Meant to be Viewed as Art*, shown at the School of Visual Arts in New York in 1966.[50] The exhibition was made up of four identical ring binders placed on pedestals. Each binder contained 100 xeroxed drawings, sketches, documents, tabulations – various objects that would traditionally be viewed as preparatory work for the actual artwork.[51] The exhibition's title states somewhat non-committally that these documents are not necessarily to be viewed as art, but as one art historian pointed out, they are 'not necessarily not-art' either.[52] The binders were displayed like sculptures on white gallery pedestals after the initial plan to frame them had been abandoned because of the cost involved.[53]

Several aspects of Bochner's process are interesting for the current discussion; first of all, it was because Bochner was a member of the art history faculty rather than the studio faculty of the school that he had unlimited access to the Xerox machine, 'this latest technological wonder'.[54] In other words, the xerox was firmly located outside expected artistic media, and it was Bochner's dual role that enabled this non-art technology to be used in an art context. For the exhibition Bochner collected material from the participating artists, and to these he added anonymous materials and projects by mathematicians, biologists, musicians, engineers and choreographers; documents of different sizes and colours that were homogenised by virtue of the reproduction technology and presented without commentary in alphabetical order in the binders.[55] This unifying effect is similar to the way Douglas Crimp discussed photographic reproductions. The fact that the reproduced document itself could be art was a clear sign that the notion of art had changed – or was in the process of changing – and with it, the artwork's relationship to art history and the museum. Exhibiting the working drawings in this office-like display also points to the document as aesthetic: what Benjamin Buchloh has termed 'the aesthetic of administration'.[56] Bochner's exhibition is an early example of what came to be a feature of art exhibitions from the 1960s onwards, and, by the second decade of the twenty-first century, has become commonplace: the use of binders, folders, documentary material and archival cabinets in exhibitions. I will get back to this kind of dry document aesthetic shortly; however, I want to stress the perhaps obvious point that it only makes sense to declare

Mel Bochner, *Working Drawings and Other Visible Things on Paper Not Necessarily Meant to be Viewed as Art*, the School of Visual Arts, NYC, 1966   **3.2**
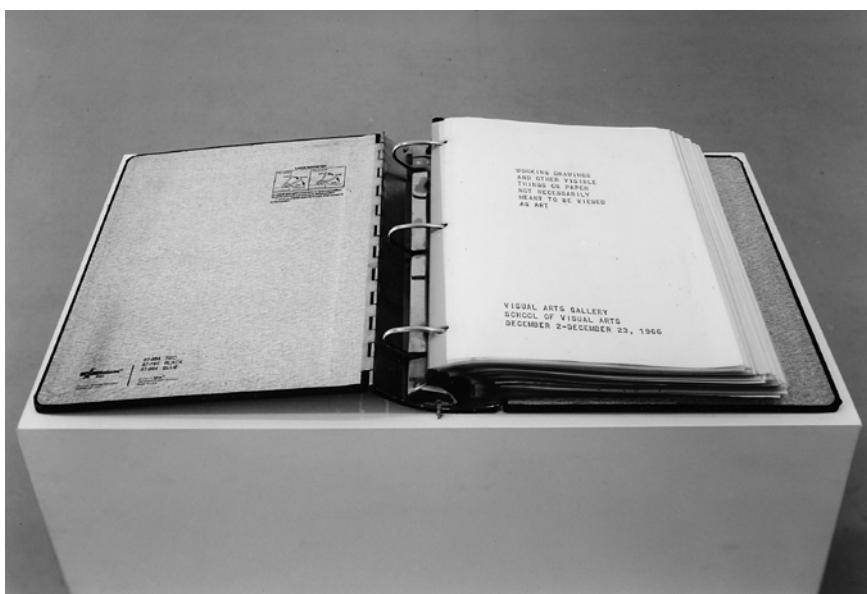
Mel Bochner, *Working Drawings and Other Visible Things on Paper Not Necessarily Meant to be Viewed as Art*, the School of Visual Arts, NYC, 1966   **3.3**

these documents to be anti-art, or not-necessarily-art, if they run a real risk of being defined as artworks.[57] The objects included in Bochner's exhibition are unambiguously art from today's vantage point. At the time, however, there was still a certain amount of instability in terms of how objects such as photocopied documents, technical drawings or, as we will see, unskilled documentary photographs should be classified: were they art or were they something else? Some of the conceptual artworks of the 1960s can be understood as experiments around precisely this instability, an instability that was later firmed up as the objects became cemented as artworks. These kinds of works are now part of a canon of conceptual artworks and their supposed anti-form is incorporated into the aesthetic repertoire of mainstream art production, as seen in many of the works and practices included in the archive art category of contemporary art.

The interest in the 1960s and 1970s has been noted by many critics and art historians. In 'An Archival Impulse' Hal Foster mentioned that several archival artists have a special interest in Robert Smithson's work, and Foster characterised this as a particularly *archival* interest.[58] Art historian Mark Godfrey noted the same trend in an article from 2007, describing 'research into and explicit referencing of works of art made roughly between 1965 and 1975' as one prevalent aspect of historical representation in contemporary art.[59] A few years later, curator Dieter Roelstraete, in an essay on what he termed a 'historiographic turn' in art, similarly observed that '[o]ne particularly potent genre in contemporary art – not an ism just yet – deals exclusively with the overlooked nooks and crannies of recent art history in particular: re-enactment, or historicism to the nth degree'.[60] The writer who has engaged in the most elaborate discussion of the resurfacing of the 1960s in recent artistic practices is art historian James Meyer, who in several articles and a monograph on the subject has outlined what he described as an 'indubitably, excessively pervasive' trend.[61]

Let me now zoom in on a specific instance of this general trend of returning to artworks from the long 1960s: the remakes of and references to Ed Ruscha's photobooks. Bear in mind here the two seemingly incompatible points of the interest in the 1960s mentioned above – that the 1960s conceptual art practices are approached both as a historical era *and* as a structural foundation of contemporary artistic practices in the present. I argue that both of these relationships are anchored in notions of the archive, and that the specific returns to the 1960s by artists working at the turn of the twenty-first century are highly instructive for understanding the meaning and function of the notion of the archive in contemporary art.

Nearly 300 pages long, cloth-bound with a bright red cover, *Various Small Books: Referencing Various Small Books by Ed Ruscha* was published by MIT Press in 2013.[62] In addition to descriptions of a large number of artistic projects inspired by Ruscha's photobooks, the publication also included colour

reproductions, explanatory texts, a lengthy essay and the 'Ruscha Redux Catalogue', a kind of index tracing the iterations of this genre of artworks year by year.[63] This listing shows a dramatic spike in the years after 2000: between 1954 and 1999 a total of 17 references are listed (eight of which are from the 1990s), whereas between 2000 and 2009 the number was 74, only to continue to rise with an additional 34 projects in the three-year period 2010–12.[64]

One of the featured projects is a work by Michael Maranda, who in 2009 published *Twentysix Gasoline Stations, 2.0* – a book that reconstructed Ruscha's 1962 photobook using images taken entirely from internet sources.[65] The reproduced images in Maranda's book were of different kinds, ranging from full-page views and table-top shots to thumbnail icons and blown-up pixelated images – at times shown as single images, but often multiplied or juxtaposed. Although Maranda's book contains all the images from Ruscha's original, it appropriates these in ways that anchor the work firmly in the twenty-first century, where images circulate online, and when the status of Ruscha as a prototypical 1960s artist has been firmly established. Maranda's particular referentiality both mimics and challenges Ruscha's original gesture by highlighting the 1960s as a trope, and Ruscha as part of an intertextual art historical narrative. A few different archives are at work here: the cloth-bound MIT publication is an archive of Ruscha remakes, with Maranda's project as one among many archived therein. Maranda's book is itself an archive of the circulation of Ruscha's works online, and Ruscha's photobooks can be considered archives of typologies of images: gasoline stations, swimming pools, palm trees, small fires or buildings on a given street.[66] In these cases the archive is taken to mean something like a structured collection. More metaphorically, Ruscha's work forms the archive into which a younger generation of artists such as Maranda place their work – and here Ruscha's deadpan artistic production, the notion of art-as-document, practices of appropriation, conceptual uses of photography, and an artistic attitude of irony and detachment are built into the referencing of *Twentysix Gasoline Stations*. The reactivation of this specific work points to the archival temporality of future perfect, highlighted in much theoretical writing on archives. According to this, the archive is legible as such only when considered from a future perspective as already historical, at which point various previous contexts and interpretations inevitably contribute to its meaning.

Like many of the works outlined in *Various Small Books: Referencing Various Small Books by Ed Ruscha*, Maranda's *Twentysix Gasoline Stations, 2.0* self-reflexively deals with Ruscha's books not just as source material for appropriation and revisiting, but as a circulation of references where the very status and ubiquity of Ruscha's work in art history and criticism is of key importance. When grouped together, the artworks included in the book become a kind of meta-reflection on the function of documents as art. Maranda's book was published by his own Parasitic Ventures Press, in its 'Saprophagous series',

BOB'S SERVICE, LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA
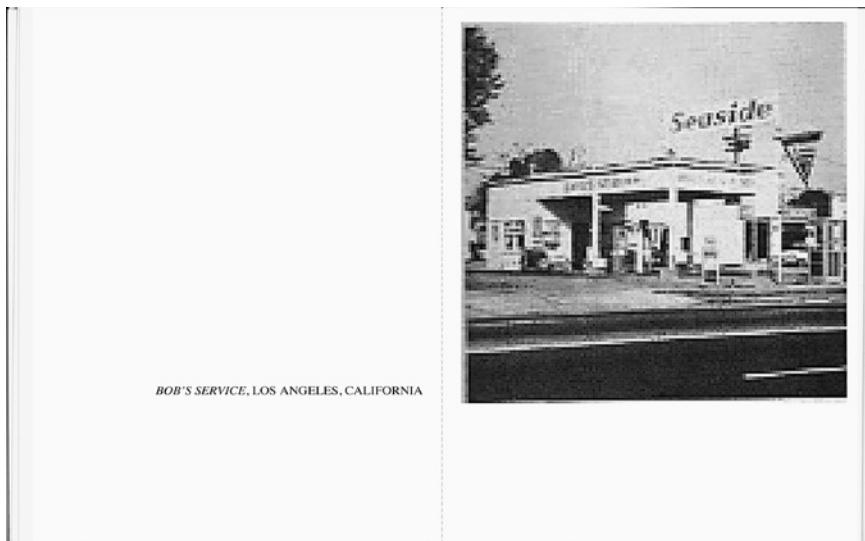
4   Michael Maranda, *Twentysix Gasoline Stations, 2.0*, 2009

which claimed to focus on books that 'feed off the decaying detritus of textual history'.[67] The parasitic nature of the relationship between original and copy is highlighted not just in the name of the press, but also in the statement at the end of Miranda's publication that reads: 'Absolutely no effort has been made to secure permission for use of any images reproduced within this book.'[68] This statement clarifies that the images from Ruscha's photobook are considered as a kind of open source, or readymades, ripe for reuse and appropriation.

There are other projects in the MIT publication that instead approach Ruscha's photobooks as material and auratic objects. Doro Boehme and Eric Baskauskas's 2009 *Various Blank Pages* is a printed book made up of double spreads showing blank pages devoid of any image or text elements. The reproduced unprinted spreads are photographs of Ruscha's books that the artists borrowed from the Joan Flasch Artists' Book Collection, where Boehme and Baskauskas worked at the time.[69] *Various Blank Pages* is focused on Ruscha's books as rare and collectible physical objects, in sharp contrast with Maranda's work which focuses on their presence on the internet as a multitude of digital images.

Baskauskas and Boehme's work also brings attention to the way Ruscha's original books are taken up in the collection, classified as 'artist's books'. The potentially unstable classification at work here is significant. In a simplified scheme, documentary photographs would traditionally belong in archives, artworks in the museum collection, and books in the library. However, conceptual artistic practices significantly blur these categories. To return to

Marlene Manoff's discussion of the conflation of the archive, museum and library cited at the beginning of this chapter, we may consider the conflation of these three structuring institutions as indicative of a shift in the relationship to art history occurring in the middle of the twentieth century. Ruscha's photobooks, precisely because they effectively represent this conflation between archive–library–museum, bring to light a number of issues of key concern within the archive art phenomenon. [70]

Published in 1963, *Twentysix Gasoline Stations* was the first of Ruscha's photobooks, followed over the next few years by fifteen others covering subjects ranging from swimming pools to real estate opportunities, small fires, and every building along Los Angeles' Sunset Strip.[71] In an interview in *Artforum* in 1965, Ruscha described the photographs as 'nothing more than snapshots', 'a collection of "facts"', 'not that interesting' and like 'a collection of "readymades"'.[72] In a slightly later interview published in 1972 under the telling title 'I'm Not Really a Photographer', Ruscha told A. D. Coleman that he used the camera as a practical tool and likened it to the way one would use an axe when one needed to chop down a tree. He went on to specify that it was photography's evidential qualities that he was after rather than any specific aesthetic look.[73] The conventional interpretation of conceptual photography owes much to these and similar statements.[74] Photography was considered a useful medium for artists in the mid-1960s precisely because of its reproducibility; it was perceived as non-auratic and capable of conveying factual, or fact-like, information. The artists working in this vein were not interested in creating technically proficient and aesthetically pleasing images but often deliberately produced what looked like haphazard amateurish snapshots.[75]

The decision to zoom in on Ed Ruscha's photobooks in this chapter may require an explanation. The point I want to make is less about Ruscha's work itself and more about what these works have come to represent half a century after they were made. The MIT book that documents a multitude of remakes of Ruscha's photobooks points to his place as a prototypical 1960s artist, but he is one among several others who have been subjected to a great deal of contemporary interest (Robert Smithson and Marcel Broodthaers, for example). Ruscha can be seen to exemplify the way artworks from the long 1960s highlighted notions of art-as-document, and of particular importance for the archive art phenomenon is that both 'art' and 'document' can be understood through the broad theorisation of archives among philosophers, historians and other humanities scholars.

The 'document' is a key term within archival studies.[76] Librarian Suzanne Briet's 1951 text *Qu'est-ce que la documentation* argued for an understanding of the document as 'proof in support of a fact'.[77] Attempting to clarify what makes something a document, Briet rhetorically wondered whether a star or a pebble or a living animal is a document. Her answer, was, as we might expect,

TEXACO, JACKRABBIT, ARIZONA
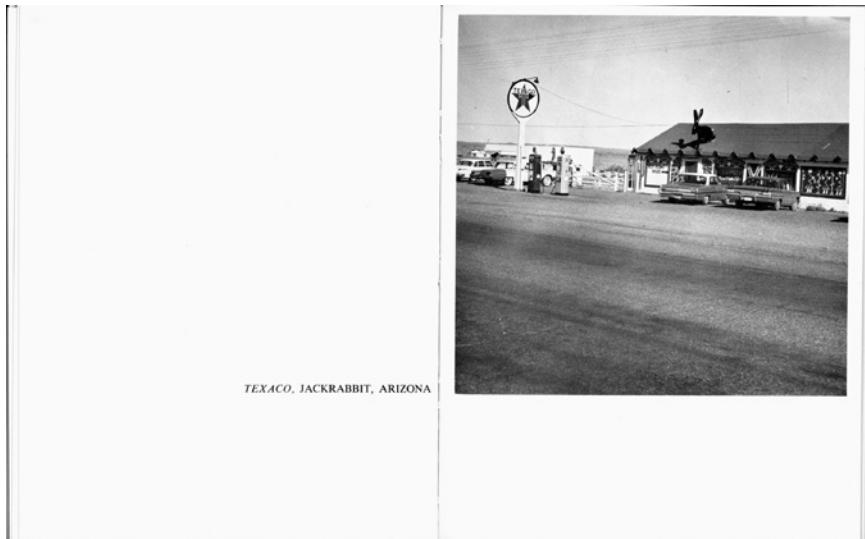
.5   Ed Ruscha, *Twentysix Gasoline Stations*, 1962. Black offset printing on white paper. Closed: 7 1/16 × 5 1/2 × 3/16 inches. Edition of 400. © Ed Ruscha. Courtesy of Gagosian

no. But then Briet noted that photographs and catalogues of stars are documents, and so are the stones in a museum of mineralogy and the animals that are catalogued and shown in a zoo.[78] Bringing up the specific case of an antelope, Briet argued that although it was clearly not a document when running wild, it is transformed into a potential document when taken into captivity because it is then made available as an object of study. One commentator on Briet's writing tried to clarify this point in a way that is of particular interest for the current discussion:

> Did Briet mean that just as 'art' is made art by 'framing' (i.e., treating) it as art, so an object becomes a 'document' when it is treated as a document, i.e., as a physical or symbolic sign, preserved or recorded, intended to represent, to reconstruct, or to demonstrate a physical or conceptual phenomenon?[79]

The move from object to document is here suggested to be analogous to the way an object is transformed into an artwork by means of institutional designation. That Michael K. Buckland, a historian and librarian, invoked the institutional theory of art to clarify Briet's notion of the document is perhaps even more apt than he himself intended, since the notion of document itself is a key component in understanding the shift in the art object taking place in the 1960s – the very shift that the institutional theory of art attempted to explain.

Briet's definition of a document – a proof in support of a fact – is interesting when read alongside Ruscha's own statement about his photographs being like 'readymades' or 'facts'. Another term that is relevant here is mediation:

what the zoo adds to the wild antelope is a kind of frame that – physically and epistemologically – mediates the animal. Writing about mediation from the perspective of 1960s art production, art dealer Seth Siegelaub famously argued in favour of the kind of art that can be communicated with books and catalogues; in these cases '[t]he catalogue can … act as primary information for the exhibition, as opposed to secondary information *about* art'.[80] Art as information, or document, is not burdened by the same issues as more traditional art objects and practices that are tied to, and dependent on, notions of aura and originality. With a painting or a sculpture, 'the photograph or verbalization of that work is a bastardization of art', in a way that was not the case when the art was already a piece of documentary information, according to Siegelaub.[81] In other words, conceptual art as primary information did not lose anything in reproduction, and it was thought to be able to communicate to a broader audience via a range of different media. The captured antelope as primary document is thus similar to the artwork as photobook, instruction, readymade; in one case the zoo has the transformative function that the artworld – art institution – has in the other. Following this logic, Ruscha's photobooks are not secondary documents that reproduce photographic artworks; they are more accurately understood as photographic documents that are framed as artworks.

Douglas Crimp, in an article published the year after 'On the Museum's Ruins', exemplified the post-war shift in the understanding of art with a misclassification of Ruscha's *Twentysix Gasoline Stations*.[82] Crimp's argument was prompted by a change in the way New York Public Library classified photographic books. What had previously been organised according to subject matter (Jerusalem, Egypt, WWII, Dior etc.) was now classified according to author (Robert Capa, Irving Penn, etc.). This implied a new understanding of photography as a modernist medium, but it also meant that these photographs would 'no longer serve the purposes of information, documentation, evidence, illustration, reportage'.[83] In that sense it was a reclassification after the fact – a re-archiving – of photographs from an earlier era, from *documentary* images to *artworks*. Crimp ended his article by describing an encounter with Ed Ruscha's *Twentysix Gasoline Stations* at the same library, where, to his surprise, he found Ruscha's book filed not as an art book but alongside books about transportation. Crimp asked himself how this mistake could be understood, but then changed the premise of his own question by admitting that the classification in fact followed its own logic:

> I now know that Ed Ruscha's books make no sense in relation to the categories of art according to which art books are catalogued in the library […] The fact that there is nowhere for *Twentysix Gasoline Stations* within the present system of classification is an index of the book's radicalism with respect to established modes of thought.[84]

What is interesting here is that while photographic documents by well-known photographers such as Capa and Penn were reclassified, and thus no longer considered to be photographic documents in support of facts about the world but artworks to be analysed according to form and technical skills, artists such as Ruscha used photography to challenge modernism's focus on originality, form and technical skill. *Twentysix Gasoline Stations* was not an art book in the same way as other photographic books in the New York Public Library precisely because it tapped into an altogether different understanding of art.[85] Or, put in archival terms, Ruscha's photobooks placed themselves into an altogether different archival structure.

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Having identified references to various theories and texts in Chapter 1, Chapter 2 outlined the heterogeneous cluster of theories on the archive that I refer to as 'archive theory'. The current chapter has analysed what happens when that theory-cluster migrates to an art context. I have attempted to identify what it is about the archive that is deemed useful; why it has become, in Mieke Bal's terminology, a 'travelling concept', moving along and between archival science, philosophy, history, media studies, literature, to finally arrive in the art context in the 1990s, and what happens to it when it arrives at this particular destination. I have argued that the turn towards the archive in the art field has functioned as a productive short cut to theorise fundamental issues relating to the shifting notion of art, and the function of art institutions, documents and discursive systems in the era post-1960. This chapter has carried out a cross-reading where numerous overlaps between archive theory and the institutional theory of art have been identified and analysed. By considering these jointly, comparing vocabulary and the notions that underpin each theory, it has become clear that archive theory and the institutional theory of art lock into one another in numerous ways and that elements of archive theory reinforce elements of the institutional theory of art and vice versa.

   With the conclusion of this chapter, the first part of the book comes to an end. What awaits in Part II are five chapters that deal thematically with materiality, research, critique, curating and temporality in artworks, archive theory and in broader technical, social and historical contexts.

Notes

1 Manoff, 'Theories of the Archive from Across the Disciplines', p. 10.
2 Note also that Wolfgang Ernst calls the first chapter of his book 'On the Inflation of the Archive'; see Ernst, *Stirrings in the Archives*, pp. 1–2.
3 Manoff, 'Theories of the Archive from Across the Disciplines', p. 10.

4 'Art history' is in fact mentioned once in Manoff's text, when listing disciplines considered by Thomas Osborne to be most closely connected to 'archival reason' (Manoff, 'Theories of the Archive from Across the Disciplines', p. 19).

5 See, for instance, Buchloh et al., 'Conceptual Art and the Reception of Duchamp'. Lucy Lippard, writing about the 1960s, noted that although 'Duchamp was the obvious art-historical source … most of the artists did not find his work all that interesting.' L. R. Lippard, 'Escape Attempts', in *Six Years: The Dematerialization of the Art Object from 1966 to 1972* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1997), p. ix. For more on the relationship between Duchamp and conceptual art, see M. Berger, *Labyrinths: Robert Morris, Minimalism, and the 1960s* (New York: Harper and Row, 1989), ch. 1; P. Osborne, 'Conceptual Art and/as Philosophy', in M. Newman and J. Bird (eds), *Rewriting Conceptual Art* (London: Reaktion, 1999), pp. 48–65; A. Rorimer, *New Art in the 60s and 70s: Redefining Reality* (New York: Thames and Hudson, 2001).

6 Foucault, 'Fantasia of the Library', p. 92.

7 Eliassen, *Foucaults begreper*, p. 87.

8 Crimp suggested that Robert Rauschenberg represents 'one of those cataclysmic ruptures in the epistemological field that Foucault describes', since institutions as well as discourses were 'unrecognizably transformed' as a result of his work (Crimp, 'On the Museum's Ruins', pp. 44–5).

9 Crimp, 'On the Museum's Ruins', p. 45.

10 Crimp, 'On the Museum's Ruins', pp. 44–5.

11 Crimp, 'On the Museum's Ruins', p. 50.

12 Crimp, 'On the Museum's Ruins', pp. 50, 53.

13 It is in relation to Leo Steinberg's 'Other Criteria' and Robert Rauschenberg's flatbed paintings that the term is used. Crimp writes: 'Presumably unconsciously, Steinberg's essay suggests important parallels with the "archaeological" enterprise of Michel Foucault. Not only does the very term *Postmodernism* imply foreclosure of what Foucault would call the *episteme*, or archive, of Modernism, but even more specifically by insisting upon the radically different kinds of picture surfaces upon which different kinds of data can be accumulated and organized, Steinberg selects the very figure that Foucault uses to represent the incompatibility of historical periods: the tables upon which their knowledge is tabulated' (Crimp, 'On the Museum's Ruins', p. 44. Italics in the original.)

14 H. Belting, *Art History after Modernism* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003), p. 174.

15 Belting, *Art History after Modernism*, p. 174.

16 Crimp, 'On the Museum's Ruins', p. 56.

17 A. C. Danto, 'The Artworld', *The Journal of Philosophy*, 61:19 (1964), p. 580. Warhol's Brillo boxes are not strictly speaking readymades as they were made of plywood and not cardboard, and therefore it would indeed be fairly easy to discern a difference between these boxes and those found in the store. However, as Danto points out, this difference is not sufficient to explain why one is art and the other not. In a later article, Danto describes his philosophy of art 'in a nutshell' as follows: 'finding the deep differences between art and

craft, artworks and mere things, when members from either class look exactly similar'. A. C. Danto, 'The Art World Revisited: Comedies of Similarities', in *Beyond the Brillo Box: The Visual Arts in Post-Historical Perspective* (New York: Noonday Press, 1993), p. 53.

18 A. C. Danto, 'Introduction', in *Beyond the Brillo Box*, p. 6; Danto, 'The Art World Revisited', p. 38.

19 Danto, 'The Art World Revisited', p. 38.

20 Danto, 'The Art World Revisited', pp. 38ff.

21 Danto, 'The Art World Revisited', p. 40.

22 A. C. Danto, *The Transfiguration of the Commonplace: A Philosophy of Art* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1981), p. 6.

23 See David Graves's description of Asa Kasher's development of Dickie's theory of the Art Circle. D. Graves, 'The Institutional Theory of Art: A Survey', *Philosophia*, 25:1–4 (1997), pp. 58, 59. Danto himself brought up the comparison to games, describing the artworld as an institutionalised discourse of reasons, comparable to a language game 'governed by rules of play, and for reasons parallel to those that hold that only where there are games are there wins and losses and players, so only where there is an art world is there art' (Danto, 'The Art World Revisited', p. 46). On this and the following page Danto argues for making the institutional theory of art more sensitive to history by describing how the same gesture means different things in different times.

24 H. S. Becker, *Art Worlds*, 25th anniversary edn [ebook] (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2011), pp. 145ff.

25 For a discussion of the difference between Becker's 'art worlds' and Bourdieu's 'fields', see H. S. Becker and A. Pessin, 'Epilogue to the 25th Anniversary Edition: A Dialogue on the Ideas of "World" and "Field"', in Becker, *Art Worlds*, pp. 372–86.

26 Dossin, *The Rise and Fall of American Art*.

27 See, for instance, work by Enrico Castelnuevo and Carlo Ginzburg and Piotr Piotrowski.

28 M. Foucault, 'The Confession of the Flesh', in *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings, 1972–1977*, ed. C. Gordon (New York: Pantheon, 1980), pp. 198, 203, cited by Catherine Dossin, who describes this as 'strategy without a subject' (Dossin, *The Rise and Fall of American Art*, p. 10).

29 For an overview of the development of the various strands of the theory, and particularly the different stages and refinements of Dickie's version, see Graves, 'The Institutional Theory of Art'. For a pointed critique of the institutional theory of art as a sign of the corruption of 'art in the proper sense', see E. Skidelsky, 'But is It Art? A New Look at the Institutional Theory of Art', *Philosophy*, 82:320 (2007), pp. 259–73.

30 G. Dickie, *The Art Circle: A Theory of Art* (New York: Haven, 1984), p. 13.

31 Graves, 'The Institutional Theory of Art', p. 63. Again, in part via Asa Kasher (see n. 23 above).

32 Sven Spieker's discussion of Ilya Kabakov's work is a kind of preamble to the introduction. Spieker, *The Big Archive*, pp. ix–xiii.

33 Spieker, *The Big Archive*, p. xi.

34 Comay, 'Introduction', pp. 13–14.
35 Comay, 'Introduction', p. 14.
36 Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge*, p. 130. Italics in the original.
37 Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge*, p. 127.
38 A. Fraser, 'From the Critique of Institutions to an Institution of Critique', *Artforum*, 44:1 (2005), p. 103.
39 Fraser, 'From the Critique of Institutions to an Institution of Critique', p. 103.
40 Sentence #19 and 20, respectively. S. LeWitt, 'Sentences on Conceptual Art (1969)', in A. Alberro and B. Stimson (eds), *Conceptual Art: A Critical Anthology* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1969), p. 107.
41 This part–whole coexistence is related to the so-called 'hermeneutic circle' which describes how a detail of a text is understood via the whole and the whole from the detail, and that while engaged in the interpretative act it is impossible to step outside of this circular process. D. Macey, *The Penguin Dictionary of Critical Theory* (London: Penguin, 2001), p. 181. In 'Archive Fever' Derrida wrote of this in terms of the structure of his own text, describing the exergue as a key to the rest of the text, 'capitalizing on an ellipsis' (Derrida, 'Archive Fever', p. 12).
42 In Norwegian the original phrase reads 'arkivene legger premisserne for hva som gjelder som viten' (Eliassen, *Foucaults begreper*, p. 87).
43 Danto, 'The Artworld'; Eliassen, *Foucaults begreper*.
44 Danto writes: 'whatever convention allows to be an artwork is an artwork' (Danto, *The Transfiguration of the Commonplace*, p. 31).
45 Danto, *The Transfiguration of the Commonplace*, p. 31.
46 L. Alloway, 'Network: The Art World Described as a System', *Artforum*, 11:1 (1972), p. 29. For more on the terminology of systems and networks in art writing at the time, see P. M. Lee, *Chronophobia: On Time in the Art of the 1960s* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2006).
47 Wolfgang Ernst described how Foucault's *Archaeology of Knowledge* 'actually refers to a different knowledge, a *presentistic* knowledge', rather than the memory institution that is indicated by the French plural *archives* (Ernst, *Stirrings in the Archives*, p. 63. Italics in the original.) In the preface to the Swedish edition of Ernst's book, Thomas Götselius described how the archive establishes connections not by cause and effect but through networks (Götselius, 'Förord: Åter till arkivet', p. 13).
48 The phrase 'the long 1960s' is an allusion to 'the long nineteenth century' which in turn is an allusion to 'the long sixteenth century'. D. Karlholm, *Kontemporalism: om samtidskonstens historia och framtid* (Stockholm: Axl Books, 2014), p. 36. James Meyer uses the term 'the long Sixties' in several of his texts; in his book dealing with 'returns' to the era, Meyer writes of a 'long "Sixties" [that] dips deep into the Fifties and extends into the Seventies; its contours are broad, its duration imprecise'. J. Meyer, *The Art of Return: The Sixties and Contemporary Culture* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2019), p. 36. Meyer contrasts the 'decadal' Sixties (1960–69) with the 'long Sixties' (late 1950s–mid-1970s), and adds yet another 'topography' of the Sixties: reducing the era to the pivotal and symbolic year 1968 as a synecdoche of the whole

(Meyer, *The Art of Return*, pp. 7, 10). See also note 55 on p. 301 in Meyer's book for a useful run-through of different understandings of this long 1960s.

49 Lucy Lippard writes of 'not art', 'non-art' and 'anti-art' (Lippard, 'Escape Attempts', pp. xix–xx).

50 Buchloh, 'Conceptual Art 1962–1969', p. 109. See also the catalogue published for a 1997 exhibition in Geneva and the accompanying four volumes that reprinted the photocopied sheets from the binders: C. Cherix, L. Jenny and J. Meyer (eds), *Working Drawings and Other Visible Things on Paper Not Necessarily Meant to be Viewed as Art: Mel Bochner, New York 1966* (Geneva: Cabinet des Estampes du Musée d'Art et d'Histoire, 1997).

51 Benjamin Buchloh has referred to it as 'probably the first truly conceptual exhibition' (Buchloh, 'Conceptual Art 1962–1969', p. 109). The term 'upstream' of the artwork was used by Samantha Ismail-Epps to describe the material included in Bochner's exhibition. See S. Ismail-Epps, 'Artists' Pages: A Site for the Repetition and Extension of Conceptual Art', *Visual Resources*, 32:3–4 (2016), p. 248. Another example of the interest in these 'upstreams' of artworks is a 2010 book based on the Smithsonian's Archives of American Art. See L. Kirwin, *Lists: To-Dos, Illustrated Inventories, Collected Thoughts, and Other Artists' Enumerations from the Smithsonian's Archives of American Art* (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 2010).

52 J. Meyer, 'The Second Degree: Working Drawings and Other Visible Things on Paper Not Necessarily Meant to be Viewed as Art', in Cherix, Jenny and Meyer (eds), *Working Drawings and Other Visible Things on Paper*, p. 5.

53 According to Meyer, the xerox solution, too, was a pragmatic way to cut costs, settled upon when it turned out that photographing the drawings would be too expensive (Meyer, 'The Second Degree', pp. 5–6).

54 Meyer, 'The Second Degree', p. 6.

55 Meyer, 'The Second Degree', p. 6; Ismail-Epps, 'Artists' Pages', p. 248. For more on this work, see also J. Meyer, 'Mel Bochner, Working Drawings and Other Visible Things on Paper Not Necessarily Meant to be Viewed as Art, 1966', in E. Filipovic (ed.), *The Artist as Curator: An Anthology* (London: Koenig Books, 2017), pp. 35–50.

56 Buchloh, 'Conceptual Art 1962–1969'.

57 Another key work in this vein is Robert Morris's *Document (Statement of Aesthetic Withdrawal)* from 1963 (Berger, *Labyrinths*, pp. 19ff.; Buchloh, 'Conceptual Art 1962–1969', pp. 117ff.). For an in-depth discussion of this work, see the introduction to M. Buskirk, *The Contingent Object of Contemporary Art* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2005).

58 Foster wrote about the 1960s and 1970s as 'an archival moment' for Durant, and contended that Smithson represents the notion of 'artist-as-archivist' and is a 'key term in this particular archive', i.e. the archive of the 1960s (Foster, 'An Archival Impulse', p. 19). In a 1994 October round-table, Foster also referenced what he called 'a new access to the disturbances we associate with the 1960s'. R. Krauss et al., 'The Reception of the Sixties', *October*, 69 (1994), p. 21.

59 Godfrey, 'The Artist as Historian', p. 148.

60 D. Roelstraete, 'After the Historiographic Turn: Current Findings', *e-flux journal*, 6 (2009), unpaginated, 7/10, www.e-flux.com/journal/06/61402/after-the-historiographic-turn-current-findings/ [accessed 9 May 2015].

61 J. Meyer, 'The Return to the Sixties in Contemporary Art and Criticism', in T. Smith, O. Enwezor and N. Condee (eds), *Antinomies of Art and Culture: Modernity, Postmodernity, Contemporaneity* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2008), pp. 325–6. See also J. Meyer, 'Nostalgia and Memory: Legacies of the 1960s in Recent Work', in S. Burton (ed.), *Painting, Object, Film, Concept: Works from the Herbig Collection* (New York: Christie's, 1998), pp. 26–35. In Meyer's book on the topic he dedicates a significant part to returns to Robert Smithson specifically, and he lists a number of exhibitions and artworks that are explicitly taking on Smithson's 'contemporaneity' (Meyer, 'The Return to the Sixties in Contemporary Art and Criticism', pp. 158, 325). Many others have noted and discussed the interest in this particular era. Critic Jerry Saltz described remakes or references to artworks and artistic practices of the 1960s and 1970s as 'a trope that has become depressingly familiar in today's art world'. J. Saltz, 'Gavin Brown's Closing Show: 12 Horses in Gallery', *Vulture. Com*, 2015, www.vulture.com/2015/06/gavin-browns-closing-show-12-horses-in-chains.html [accessed 29 June 2015]. For a different discussion of contemporary artists' interest in the art of the 1960s and 1970s, see L. R. Rinder, 'Looking Back, Looking Ahead: The Resonance of the 1960s and 1970s in Contemporary Art', in M. Kalinovska (ed.), *Beyond Preconceptions: The Sixties Experiment* (New York: Independent Curators International, 2000), pp. 96–105.

62 J. T. Brouws, P. Taylor and M. Rawlinson (eds), *Various Small Books: Referencing Various Small Books by Ed Ruscha* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2013).

63 Ruscha's photobooks and 'books and works of art by more than 100 contemporary artists that respond directly and diversely to Ruscha's original project' were shown in the exhibition *Ed Ruscha Books & Co.* at Gagosian Gallery in 2013. This exhibition was planned to coincide with the publication of the MIT book, according to Gagosian's website. 'Ed Ruscha Books & Co. – March 5 – April 27, 2013 – Gagosian', www.gagosian.com/exhibitions/ed-ruscha–march-05–2013 [accessed 9 June 2017]. Michalis Pichler went so far as to argue that the fact that there is a whole book and an exhibition with artworks referencing or paraphrasing Ruscha's works is an indication that the practice is now so common that it can be considered a 'genre of its own'. M. Pichler, 'Six Hands and a Cheese Sandwich', www.buypichler.com/six-hands-and-cheese-sandwich [accessed 10 July 2017].

64 The work from 1954 included in the redux catalogue was produced almost a decade before Ruscha's first photobook, and is thus more of a prequel, or possibly a source of inspiration. This work consists of the two-volume 'Ginza Kaiwai and Ginza Haccho' by Shohachi Kimura and Yoshikazu Suzuki (Brouws, Taylor and Rawlinson [eds], *Various Small Books*, pp. 30ff.).

65 The title of the book from Parasitic Ventures Press is written with all lowercase letters on the cover page. I have, however, opted to spell it with standard title-case here.

66 For a description of Ruscha's book *Records* as a 'parody of the archival impulse', see K. Hatch, '"Something Else": Ed Ruscha's Photographic Books', *October*, 111 (2005), p. 125.

67 'Parasitic Ventures Press: The Books', http://parasiticventurespress.com/books/?page_id=80 [accessed 9 June 2017].

68 Since the publication of the book, the website of Parasitic Ventures Press has entered a self-induced 'state of suspended animation', which means that the site is not updated and that it is no longer possible to order a printed version of the book. It is, however, available in full as a pdf.

69 Brouws, Taylor and Rawlinson (eds), *Various Small Books*, p. 210. The information specifying that this is the source of the images and that the artists worked at the Flasch is provided in the text accompanying the images in *Various Small Books* and on Baskauskas' website. E. Baskauskas, 'Editions by Eric Baskauskas — VARIOUS BLANK PAGES', http://ericbaskauskas.bigcartel.com/product/various-blank-pages [accessed 6 July 2017].

70 Arguably, an important reason why Ruscha's works are so frequently referenced is that they are considered prototypical of a conceptual use of photography, and as such they are models of a new direction in art. Benjamin Buchloh called Ruscha a 'proto-Conceptual artist' (Buchloh, 'Conceptual Art 1962–1969', p. 119). Lucy Lippard pointed to both Duchamp and Ruscha as precedents of conceptual art (Lippard, 'Escape Attempts', p. ix). When bringing up Lippard's mention of Ruscha in *Six Years*, Ian Walker pointed out the shifting status of these works over time: '[w]hereas Twentysix Gasoline Stations had been made on the obscure periphery of advanced art … later books were seen to be central to the shifting zeitgeist'. I. Walker, 'A Kind of a "Huh?": The Siting of Twentysix Gasoline Stations (1962)', in P. Di Bello, C. E. Wilson and S. Zamir (eds), *The Photobook: From Talbot to Ruscha and Beyond* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2012), p. 114. Ruscha has also been directly described as working in a Duchampian mode: the artist himself has referred to his photobooks as the most 'Duchampian' of his works: 'I feel that the spirit of his work is stronger in my books than in anything else. But I don't use him as a reference; he is just so much a part of my history and my art – as he is for so many artists.' E. Armstrong, 'Interviews with Ed Ruscha and Bruce Conner', *October*, 70 (1994), p. 55. Mark Rawlinson similarly wrote of *Twentysix Gasoline Stations* that 'this deceptively simple book, much like Marcel Duchamp's *Fountain* (1917) irrevocably altered our understanding of art' (Brouws, Taylor and Rawlinson [eds], *Various Small Books*, p. 8). It is worth stressing that Ruscha's books were, at the time of publication, mostly described and analysed in terms of pop art rather than conceptual art: Philip Leider in his 1963 review refers to Ruscha as 'a young pop artist' and to *Twentysix Gasoline Stations* as a 'pop-art book'. P. Leider, 'Book Review: *Twenty-six Gasoline Stations*', *Artforum*, 2:3 (1963), p. 57.

71 There is some confusion as to the actual date of Ruscha's work. Benjamin Buchloh dates it to January 1963, whereas Peter Osborne dates it 1962, as does Mark Rawlinson. Rawlinson references Kevin Hatch's 'Something Else: Ed Ruscha's Photographic Books', where Hatch claimed that the first edition of

Twentysix Gasoline Stations was copyrighted and published in 1962. Matthew Witkovsky on the other hand writes that *Twentysix Gasoline Stations* was prepared in 1962 but published in April 1963. See Buchloh, 'Conceptual Art 1962–1969', p. 120; P. Osborne (ed.), *Conceptual Art* (London: Phaidon, 2002), p. 91; Brouws, Taylor and Rawlinson (eds), *Various Small Books*, p. 109; M. S. Witkovsky (ed.), *Light Years: Conceptual Art and the Photograph, 1964–1977* (Chicago/New Haven, CT: Art Institute of Chicago/Yale University Press, 2011), p. 17.

72 J. Coplans and E. Ruscha, 'Concerning "Various Small Fires": An Interview with Ed Ruscha', *Artforum*, 3:5 (1965), p. 25.

73 The second statement is from a different text in the same newspaper a few days earlier. 'I'm Not Really a Photographer' was published in the *New York Times* on 10 September 1972; 'My Books End Up in the Trash' on 27 August in the same year; both were reprinted in Coleman's collection *Light Readings: A Photography Critic's Writings, 1968–1972*. In the earlier of the two articles Coleman asked Ruscha whether the photographs in his books could be considered 'equivalent to drawings', which elicited the following reply: 'No, no, because the drawing gives a touch of the hand to it that I didn't want at all. The camera is used simply as a documentary device, the closest documentary device; that's what it's all about … Drawings would never express the idea – I like facts, facts, facts are in these books.' A. D. Coleman, *Light Readings: A Photography Critic's Writings, 1968–1978*, 2nd rev. edn (Albuquerque, NM: University of New Mexico Press, 1998), pp. 118, 115.

74 The Coplans interview has been frequently referenced and cited in discussions about Ruscha's photobooks ever since. Rawlinson, Osborne and Witkovsky all quote from it. See Rawlinson, '"Like Trading Dust for Oranges": Ed Ruscha and Things of Interest', in Brouws, Taylor and Rawlinson (eds), *Various Small Books*, pp. 12, 15; Osborne (ed.), *Conceptual Art*, p. 91; Witkovsky, *Light Years*, p. 18. Similar discussions of the photographic document is present in the writing of, and about, other conceptual uses of photography; see, for instance, C. Berger, 'Douglas Huebler and the Photographic Document', *Visual Resources*, 32:3–4 (2016), pp. 210–29.

75 The documentary *as* aesthetic is connected to what Jeff Wall has theorised as a 'de-skilling' whereby artists such as Ruscha deliberately made their photographs look amateurish by using the wrong lenses, uneven cropping and other similar methods. Wall discussed Ruscha's *Some Los Angeles Apartments* and *Twentysix Gasoline Stations* as examples of 'the amateurization of photography' that he considered characteristic of 1960s photoconceptualism. J. Wall, '"Marks of Indifference": Aspects of Photography in, or as Conceptual Art', in D. Fogle (ed.), *The Last Picture Show: Artists Using Photography, 1960–1982* (Minneapolis, MN: Walker Art Center, 2003), p. 43.

76 For a concise overview of how archival studies has conceptualised key archival terms such as record, provenance, value and representation, see Caswell, '"The Archive" is not an Archives'. In this article (points 9 and 10), Caswell writes that 'The "record" is *the* foundational concept in archival studies', but that pluralist and deconstructionist archival theorists offer a broad view that

allows the record to be a document, an individual's memory, an image, or a recording, but also an actual person or a community or the land itself. Caswell refers here specifically to an article by Shannon Faulkhead ('"The Archive" is not an Archives', n. xviii).

77 S. Briet, *What Is Documentation?*, trans. R. E. Day, L. Martinet and H. G. B. Anghelescu (Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 2006), p. 9.

78 Briet, *What Is Documentation?*, p. 10.

79 M. K. Buckland, 'What Is a "Document?"', *Journal of the American Society for Information Science*, 49:9 (1997), p. 806.

80 C. Harrison and S. Siegelaub, 'On Exhibitions and the World at Large: Seth Siegelaub in Conversation with Charles Harrison', *Studio International*, 178:917 (1969), p. 202. Italics in the original. Siegelaub's gallery was referred to as an 'anti-gallery', a result of the 'advent of anti-art' in a turn of phrase that tried to encapsulate this new type of non-art-as-art. E. H. Varian, 'New Dealing', *Art in America*, 58:1 (1970), p. 72.

81 Harrison and Siegelaub, 'On Exhibitions and the World at Large', p. 202. See also Lippard's account of brainstorming with friends at the time about a 'para-site magazine' that would 'give readers first-hand rather than second-hand information about art' (Lippard, 'Escape Attempts', p. xviii).

82 D. Crimp, 'The Museum's Old, the Library's New Subject', in D. Crimp, *On the Museum's Ruins*, 5th edn (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2008), pp. 65–81. The essay was originally published in *Parachute* in 1981.

83 Crimp, 'The Museum's Old, the Library's New Subject', p. 75.

84 Crimp, 'The Museum's Old, the Library's New Subject', p. 78.

85 Interestingly, Philip Leider's review of Ruscha's first photobook was featured in the book section of *Artforum*, a further indication that no one quite knew how to classify the work at the time.

Part II

Five themes in contemporary
archive art

Materiality 4

Joachim Koester's *Message from Andrée* consists of a display table, two large posters and a 16mm film projection. The work was shown for the first time in the Danish pavilion at the 2005 Venice Biennale, and is based on archival material from the late nineteenth-century Andrée expedition.[1] This historical event has all the ingredients of a good story: against-the-odds adventure, a remote and inhospitable location, nationalist hubris, romance and mystery. Numerous books, articles, films and exhibitions have told the story of how, on the early afternoon of 11 July 1897, Salomon August Andrée, Knut Frænkel and Nils Strindberg took off from Danes Island in a hydrogen balloon in an attempt to circumnavigate the North Pole.[2] The expedition was doomed from the start since air leaked from the stitch-holes in the balloon's nylon fabric, and the vessel crashed after only two days.[3] The fate of the three explorers captured the public imagination at the time, but it was not until thirty-three years later that the remains of their last camp was found frozen into the ice on an uninhabited island in the Arctic Ocean.[4] Scattered around the camp were material remains of the expedition: three skeletons, a torn tent, diaries, notebooks, calendars. To this day theories abound as to what killed the men, but the mystery has yet to be definitively solved.

Photography plays a key part in the continuing allure of this story. A camera with an exposed roll of film still inside as well as several cans of undeveloped negatives were among the objects found on the camp site in 1930. Despite being frozen for over three decades, the negatives contained several remarkably clear images of the explorers' time in the Arctic: the men next to the partially deflated balloon, posing in front of a shot polar bear, depictions of the snowy landscape.[5] Most of the found negatives were illegible, however, showing blots and scratches but no discernible motif, and it is these images that Koester animated into a looped film that makes up the main part of *Message from Andrée*. The story of the Andrée expedition, its rediscovered remains and Koester's artwork about it highlight one of the key themes of this chapter: how photography at the turn of the twenty-first century mobilises notions of archival and photographic materiality.
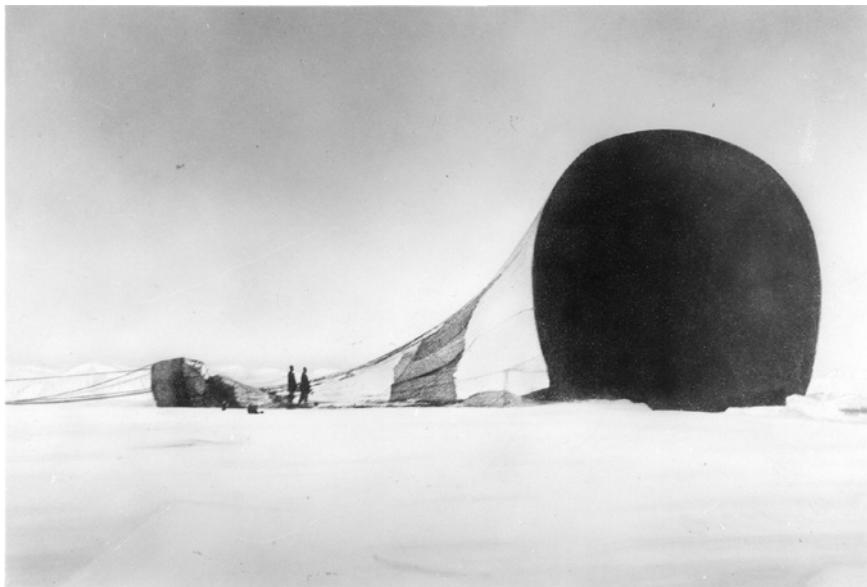
As noted, the archive was increasingly divided in the second half of the twentieth century: it was understood as a place housing historical or administrative documents, and as a structure or law constructing and controlling knowledge. Although the archive is used in a more metaphorical sense during this time, the notion of the archive as an entity affecting and structuring knowledge is understood to be carried out and maintained in the materially concrete archive, and is thus never fully separated from it. A complex set of associations are attached to the archive at this time: tropes relating to dusty archives filled with material remains from the past persist at the same time that there is an increasing conceptualisation of the archive in immaterial terms.

The overall aim of this book is to understand the notion of the archive in art writing and artistic practice, what function it has, what it is taken to mean, and why and how it becomes such a pervasive reference around the year 2000. In the current chapter this question is approached through the notion of materiality in a broad sense; more specifically, how the tension between materiality and its perceived opposite – immateriality – is navigated and theorised in three different contexts. The chapter is built around a series of overlaps where what might seem like rather different conditions, debates and developments are shown to intersect and reinforce one another. I will outline how the tension between materiality and immateriality is theorised within the broad set of texts that I refer to as archive theory in ways that partially overlap with the way a similar dichotomy is navigated in conceptualisations of the shift from analogue to digital media at the turn of the twenty-first century. These

two are shown also to intersect with a third thematic context, namely the perceived contrast between materiality and immateriality in the understanding of conceptual art practices of the 1960s and 1970s – particularly as these are considered from the perspective of the turn of the twenty-first century. In all three of these layers, the medium of photography, how it is used and what it is taken to mean, is a key concern.

A number of different artworks are brought up in this chapter, and although they can be grouped into three broad categories, these do not correspond neatly to the three thematic layers I just outlined. Instead, each artwork brings to light several different intersecting elements of archive theory, the thematisation of analogue technology, and the material implications of conceptual art practices. The first group of artworks exemplifies the interest among artists in the 1990s and 2000s in collecting and exhibiting found photographs; the second broad grouping exemplifies artistic references to analogue technology occurring at the same time; and the third exemplifies the practice among artists during the last decades of returning to and remaking specific artworks of the 1960s and 1970s. The reader will recognise the last category from the previous chapter; when these practices are discussed again here it is through the raster of the dichotomy between materiality and immateriality. Frequently the same artists who are concerned with analogue technologies and found archival and photographic materials also return to works from the 1960s and 1970s. On the face of it a nostalgia for the humming slide projector or analogue photographic prints, and the idea that history is somehow materialised in various documents, seem contrary to the approach of conceptual art practices, with their deadpan tone and concern with challenging aura and the romantic attachment to the materiality of the art object and its maker. I argue that these different practices can in fact be seen as deeply connected, as they all mobilise late twentieth-century notions of the tension between the dusty (material) archive and the structural (immaterial) archive. Continuing the argument that began in Chapter 3, I argue that the long 1960s operates both as a material and as a structural-immaterial archive in artworks in the 1990s and early 2000s, and this double function helps explain the usefulness and persistence of the concept of the archive in art writing and practice at this time.

Digital anxieties

The phenomenon of archive art emerged roughly at the same time that the shift from analogue to digital media was experienced by a wide segment of the population in the global north. The digitisation of existing archives in the 1990s led to discussions within many academic fields about its possible consequences for research practices.[6] Several positive effects were identified. Archives would now become easier to access; digitisation meant that it was no longer necessary to travel long distances to view documents housed in

particular archives. Another benefit was that fragile materials could be studied without having to physically handle them, and thus material deterioration, and even theft, could be avoided. However, a number of concerns were also raised. First, although digital archival materials are not subject to physical deterioration in the same way as paper, it became clear that digital technology comes with its own set of vulnerabilities that render its stored files inaccessible. The technical infrastructure – both hardware and software – also ages, and at fast rates.[7] What had been stored on floppy discs or CD-ROMs was difficult to access after only a few years as standards changed and the computers used to read the files were no longer in wide use. In addition to technological inaccessibility, another perceived problem was the issue of limiting search-paths according to pre-determined keywords, which in effect controlled how a researcher accessed documents stored in digital archives.[8] A third set of concerns and debates related to the sheer scale of digital communication and the difficulties involved in saving for posterity – archiving – digital documents and networks connected by a dynamic flow of information.[9] The new conditions of digital archives and the challenges and opportunities stemming from these new practices generated questions about information overload, how an archive can be theorised and understood, how technology might affect the content and understanding of that which is archived, as well as what type(s) of historical knowledge could be generated from these archives.

The debate around digital or digitised archives was probably of interest mostly to archivists, librarians and scholars of media and historical disciplines; the shift from analogue to digital photography was, however, of more general popular concern. Here too, the benefits of the new technology were mixed with worries about perceived negative effects. Issues were raised as to the difficulty of trusting a digital image: what kind of proof could a digital photograph really provide if anyone could alter it with a few clicks of a mouse? The issues cut to the core of what photography as a medium represented, and the threat was often framed in existential terms: photography was dead or dying. In 1994, art historian Geoffrey Batchen identified 'two related anxieties' that he thought contributed to the sense of the imminent death of photography at that time. The first anxiety was precisely the perceived difficulty in separating fake photographs from real ones, when more advanced computer technology resulted in a loss of faith in photography's ability to deliver 'objective truth'.[10] The second stemmed from a suspicion that reality and its simulations were becoming indistinguishable in a more general way, which meant that the differences between sign and referent, nature and culture, human and machine would potentially collapse.[11]

I suggest that there is a strong connection between the archive art phenomenon and the broader debate regarding digital and analogue media at the turn of the twenty-first century. Within an art context, the shift in the photographic

medium from analogue to digital resulted in a heightened artistic attention to qualities perceived to belong specifically to the medium that was about to be superseded. In addition to this, the theorisation of analogue and digital media also led to a radical re-evaluation of previous artistic uses of photography, specifically those of post-war conceptual photography.

Having been established as an artistic medium in its own right in the 1960s, photography had cemented its role in the 1970s and 1980s. By the late 1990s the advent of digital photography highlighted the need to adjust the photographic medium's theoretical framework and in part reverse its previous conceptual connotations.[12] The use of photography by conceptual artists and in subsequent works of appropriation in the late 1970s and 1980s had deliberately centred around the medium's associations with reproduction and objectivity. These qualities now had to be re-evaluated in light of the new technology. Digital photography was *even more* reproducible than its analogue predecessor; with digital files there was no longer any material difference between original and copy.[13] The medium of photography can thus be said, on the one hand, to have caught up with what had been intended by conceptual and postmodern photographic practices – being infinitely reproducible, non-auratic – but, on the other hand, these older practices could now be reconsidered as possessing a material authenticity that they had, at the time, been an overt reaction against. The arrival of digital photography made it possible, perhaps even necessary, to reframe conceptual artworks from the 1960s and 1970s in decidedly material terms. The result was a gradual rematerialisation of the long 1960s propelled by conceptual reconsiderations and technological developments, but also by specific curatorial and market forces.

This re-evaluation of analogue media – or perhaps more accurately, the *idea* of the analogue – in light of digital technology has been noted by many. Art historian Margaret Iversen opened her 2012 essay about Zoe Leonard and Tacita Dean's work with the following statement: 'It is only now, with the rise of digitalization and the near-obsolescence of traditional technology, that we are becoming fully aware of the distinctive character of analogue photography', and she argued that this prompted artists to 'mine the medium for its specificity'.[14] In her essay 'Digital Divide: Contemporary Art and New Media' from the same year, art historian and critic Claire Bishop noted that most prevalent trends in contemporary art since the late 1990s eschewed the digital and the virtual.[15] Despite this, the 'operational logic' of these practices – and Bishop includes archive art among them – was nevertheless tied to digital technology as a 'subterranean presence', 'the shaping condition' and 'structuring paradox' that determined artistic decisions to work with certain formats and media.[16] Even practices that seem uninterested in, or downright hostile to, digital and virtual media were thus seen to be somehow framed by them. Similarly, Mark Godfrey in his 2007 article 'The Artist as Historian' proposed that digital

media might impact the themes taken on by contemporary photographers, and that 'the approaching digitalization of all photographic media' would have the effect of sensitising artists to the way such media *used to* serve as records of the past, thus provoking artists to make work *about* the past.[17] In a related analysis, scholars of art history and photography David Green and Joanna Lowry argued in 2003 that the implications of electronic and digital technologies seemed to be a 'fascination amongst a younger generation of photographers with precisely those qualities and values associated with the medium that have been deemed most at risk', and that artists attempted to recuperate the particular engagement with reality that photography seemed to offer.[18] Curator and critic Lyle Rexer noted an increased use in the mid-1990s of older photographic technologies such as large-format negative cameras, DIY box cameras and cameras obscura.[19] Although this interest in old technology was also prevalent in the 1970s and 1980s, digital technology made these artists, who Rexer labelled 'photography's antiquarian avant-garde', engage in a full-blown rebellion against the advent of digital technology by 'deliberately re-engaging the *physical facts* of photography'.[20]

Iversen, Bishop, Godfrey, Green and Lowry, and Rexer all note a tendency among artists to react to the increasing dominance of digital technology by seemingly moving in the opposite direction: delving into what are considered the specific qualities and associations of the old analogue technology. This is neither a denial of the fact that many artworks in the 1990s and early 2000s were produced using digital technology, nor that many artists at this time thematised the digital in complex ways.[21] However, Bishop's observation that 'no exhibition is complete without some form of bulky, obsolete technology – the gently clunking carousel of a slide projector or the whirring of an 8-mm or 16-mm film reel' rings true even as we move into the third decade of the twenty-first century.[22] Many artists continue to mobilise qualities associated with analogue technology, and these practices are, to a large extent, based on a perceived difference between the old technique and the new one about to replace it.

What specifically, are the conceptual implications of working with older, at times fully obsolete, photographic technologies?[23] Visual culture scholar Martin Lister's glossary of the different technical conditions of analogue and digital media points out that whereas digital media are characterised by the conversion of physical properties into an arbitrary numerical code, analogue media instead transfer one set of physical properties into another, analogous set.[24] Analogue media thus represent via continuous variations of tone instead of dividing the image into measurable and exactly reproducible elements.[25] This view of analogue media as connected to nuance and continuity is translated into experiential perceptual qualities by many artists and art writers. Joachim Koester for one has described a kind of experience of presence

connected specifically to watching analogue film in a particular space.[26] Claire Bishop described something similar when she argued that film seems intimate compared to the excess of visual information in the digital image, which, she suggests, is 'inherently alien to human perception'.[27] While acknowledging the convenience of digital media, Tacita Dean has argued that it does not allow for the creation of poetry: 'it neither breathes nor wobbles, but tidies up our society, correcting it and then leaves no trace'; where digital breaks up and breaks down, analogue, Dean says, is 'a description of everything I hold dear'.[28] In sum, many writers and artists suggest that analogue media are somehow more attuned to the human scale and experience than the hi-resolution and binary numeric foundation of the digital.

A key aspect of this difference between analogue and digital media is a perception of a lack of materiality in digital documents: whereas the analogue object is something you can touch and feel, the digital is perceived as somehow immaterial, a free-floating numerical code.[29] It is precisely at the moment when analogue media are seen to be under threat from digital technology that the focus is placed on the document's ability, or lack thereof, to attach the present viewer to the past via a material trace – in archive theory, in photography theory, as well as within art writing and practice. In many of the texts that make up the broad archive theory cluster there is a prevailing sense that an archival document is significant not only for what it actually states in terms of historical facts, but also because it has a material connection to the past. Many historians describe a kind of mystical – and physical – excitement in handling historical documents; the very act of opening a box that might not have been opened for centuries, handling a letter or a diary written by a historical figure, seeing the inky fingerprints and creases in the paper help bring that era and that person to life. This authentic and animated trace is not perceived to be present in the digital archival file to the same extent, since it is frequently tied to the very materiality of the analogue archival document.[30]

Artistic uses of found photographs

The use of existing photographs is a common artistic practice that can easily be mapped on to the archive art phenomenon. A kind of precursor to many of these works is Gerhard Richter's *Atlas* project (1962–2013), made up of a mixture of private and found photographs.[31] This work has been discussed in archival terms in different contexts, most notably perhaps in relation to Aby Warburg in a text by Benjamin Buchloh that was first published in English in the *Deep Storage* catalogue.[32] In *The Big Archive* Sven Spieker brought up several examples of artists working with found photographs, among them Hans-Peter Feldmann's *Portrait* (1994), made up of hundreds of family-album-like snapshots complete with an index.[33] Ernst van Alphen discussed Fiona

Tan's use of found photographs, and Ydessa Hendeles's *Partners: the Teddy Bear Project* (2002), made up of thousands of photographs arranged according to different typologies, adorns the cover of van Alphen's book.[34] Walid Raad's Atlas Group archive is presented by the artist as donated or found material; the series examines truth-claims and temporality in traumatic circumstances, but it also destabilises the very idea of the found archival document by both stressing and undermining trust in its provenance. Raad's Atlas Group project has become somewhat of a paradigmatic example of archive art; I will discuss it further in Chapter 8, but it is worth pointing out that it also fits within the grouping of artworks that are, or claim to be, made up of found historical and photographic material.

Another artist who frequently appears in writing about archive or archival art is Tacita Dean. Dean's *Floh* (2001) is an artist book consisting of 163 photographs collected over a number of years at different flea markets in Europe and the United States.[35] In a 2005 article in the journal *October* Mark Godfrey provided a lengthy analysis of the work in which he focused specifically on its analogue qualities.[36] Godfrey opened his article with a statement by Dean in which she remarked upon the precarious existence of analogue photography at the time: 'Photography is somehow an anachronism now. It's disappearing as we talk. We are going to lose it soon and we are going to replace it with something that is still images but something very, very different.'[37] Godfrey went on to argue that existing models of found photography were not applicable to *Floh*: Dean's work was not concerned with deskilling in the vein of

4.2   Tacita Dean, *Water Spurt*, from *Floh*, 2001

artists such as Ed Ruscha; nor was she reflecting on the difference between family and mass-media images in the vein of Richter's *Atlas*; nor was she using the method of appropriation to change the meaning of existing images in the vein of Sherrie Levine and others. Two other types of artistic uses of found photography were brought up by Godfrey in order to clarify what Dean was *not* doing with *Floh*: Fiona Tan's quasi-anthropological projects and the type of works that used found images to question the evidentiary truth value of photographic documents and archives in general, such as Zoe Leonard's *The Fae Richards Photo Archive*.[38] Godfrey's point was that it was a specifically analogue type of *amateur* use of photography that was key to understanding *Floh*. These photographs were serendipitously gathered: according to Godfrey, Dean did not find the photographs, as much as the photographs found her. These photographs are unintentional also in the sense that they are full of mistakes, accidents and technical mishaps: a bride is caught yawning as she cuts her wedding cake, a man holds up a newspaper as if to show something significant but the paper is totally illegible, heads are cropped off, and the camera focuses on the wrong thing.[39] *Floh* is thus made up of the types of photographs that would not have been printed or saved if they had been taken with a digital camera. Dean herself explicitly addressed this very point: 'To be actually able to delete an image in the moment of its inception is quite an enormous thing', to which Godfrey added: 'for Dean, facing digitalization, analog photography offers a messy and necessary kind of memory'.[40] This combination of the chaotic and unpredictable element of memory with a necessary and essential connection to the past through the analogue photographic document is a common theme in much writing about archive art and artistic practice.[41]

As noted, Godfrey sets out to distinguish between different forms of artistic use of found photographs and contrasts *Floh* to these. Although I agree that these types of practices differ in significant respects, my purpose here leads me to stress the similarities rather than the differences between them. That is to say, all of these different practices – deskilling, the exploration of the relation between private and public images, practices of appropriation, anthropology-like structured collections and the use of real or fictive collections of photographs to point to the unreliability of documents – have been theorised by way of the notion of the archive. Different elements of such theorisation will be brought up in different chapters of this book; here my focus is on the material connotations of these collection practices. With that in mind, let me turn now to the notion of the index, one of the most persistent tropes for understanding photography and other documents.

The semiotic term index has been tied to photography ever since the philosopher C. S. Peirce used the photograph as an example of the indexical sign. Peirce is remembered, among other things, for the tripartite division icon–index–symbol, whereby an icon is defined as a sign that visually resembles

its referent, the index as a sign that has a direct, physical connection to the referent, and the symbol as having an arbitrary and convention-based connection. In an often cited passage, Peirce described indexes as signs 'produced under such circumstances that they were physically forced to correspond point by point to nature'.[42] This formulation has had widespread influence on the understanding of how the photograph is connected to its referent, and variations of this idea occur in many of the texts that have become part of the canon of photographic theory. The claim that the photograph is an indexical sign – in addition to its function as an icon – has not been uncontested, however – many have criticised it for being a misleading way of theorising the medium – but it is nevertheless fair to say that the persistence of this notion has affected the meanings associated with photography for artists as well as within the broader public imagination.[43] This idea that the photograph is a direct link or trace to what it depicts is evident in Roland Barthes's claim in *Camera Lucida* that '[e]very photograph is a *certificate of presence*', and in Susan Sontag's suggestion that the photograph is not just 'an interpretation of the real; it is also a *trace*, something directly *stencilled* off the real, like a *footprint* or a *death mask*'.[44] Phrases that liken the photograph to the 'delayed rays of a star' or an 'umbilical cord' that somehow connects the photographed thing to the viewer's gaze clearly evoke an indexical relationship.[45]

In texts on archive art, as well as within archive theory more broadly, terms that evoke indexicality are frequently used to describe the way the archival document functions as a kind of material connection between the past and the present.[46] The story of the negatives from the Andrée expedition frozen into the ice only to be thawed and resuscitated several decades later taps into a metaphorical understanding not only of the photographic process but also the historical archival document in general. In the case of the buried negatives, the umbilical cord or rays reach us across the decades, and the related notion of photography – or archive – as frozen time is evoked both literally and metaphorically.

The allure of the archive – the tendency to fetishise and romanticise archives in popular culture, literature and contemporary art – builds on a pervasive view of the work of the historian in which the archival document's ability to reach across time is a key component.[47] It is precisely the material authenticity of the archival document or object that is stressed in a way that is reminiscent of how analogue photography is theorised. An example of this understanding of the archival document is the already mentioned nineteenth-century historian Jules Michelet, who described his first days in the National Archives in Paris in exuberantly romantic terms:

> When I first entered these catacombs of manuscripts […] I was not slow to
> discern in the midst of the apparent silence of the galleries, a movement and

murmur which were not those of death. These papers and parchments, so long deserted, desired no better than to be restored to the light of day.[48]

Michelet's commitment to writing history as a scientific endeavour was coupled with a romantic obsession with the material traces of the past, described in terms of 'exhuming' the dead for a second life, and creating 'a family, a city community of the living and the dead'.[49] Notably, Michelet describes the historical documents as having a will and desire of their own, and the documents are said to long for a return to a 'living' state. More than an evidential index like a footprint indicating a step, or smoke indicating fire, Michelet describes a living presence. This notion that archival documents or photographs are somehow alive, or that they at least contain traces of life, is brought up by much subsequent writing on the archive as well as in writing on archive art.

Akram Zaatari is a founding member of the Arab Image Foundation, an organisation devoted to storing and safeguarding photographic objects from parts of the Middle East, and he is thus in a sense an archivist as well as an artist. Several of Zaatari's projects centre around the photography studio of Hashem el Madani, and the works are made up of objects, cameras, notebooks, negatives and films. One set of images depicts a young woman with her face violently scratched out, and this image, along with the text element that accompanies it, evokes the kind of associations to indexicality and traces of life described in writing about archives and photography. According to the artist text, el Madani told Zaatari that the woman's husband was extremely jealous and was furious to learn that she had had her portrait taken without his knowledge. He insisted on taking possession of the negatives, but since they were on a 35mm roll that contained other images, el Madani refused. The photographer offered to scratch the woman's face out instead, which seemed to appease the husband. When the woman committed suicide a few years later, her jealous husband came back and asked for prints of the damaged negatives.[50]

The damaged print is a recurrent theme among artists working with found photographic objects. One of the photographs included in *Floh* is a group portrait in which two of the women's faces are scratched out; another has fingerprints smudging the face of a young boy. Mark Godfrey points out that the latter is a clear indexical mark, 'the indexical sign of the index finger that once touched the image of the child', but the former too is an indexical mark, evidence of the sharp point of the pen leaving marks on the photographic paper.[51] The scratched-out faces of the women in Zaatari's and Dean's images both tap into photography's connection to death and danger, and the idea that the materiality of the photograph is somehow connected to the physical body of the person depicted.

4.3   Akram Zaatari, *Damaged Negatives: Scratched Portrait of Mrs. Baqari*, 2012. Photograph
by Hashem el Madani, Saida, 1950s

Dust, truth-claims and material trace

Anyone familiar with the process of developing and enlarging photographic negatives knows that one has to be continuously mindful of dust. The smallest speck becomes a large visible mark on the printed photograph. Similarly, dust becomes a visible presence in projected analogue film and slide projections: in a darkened room the projected light becomes a corridor of matter leading from the projector to the screen. A number of artists have explored the materiality of dust: Cornelia Parker's *Exhaled Blanket* (1996) is made up of dust and fibres from Freud's couch, trapped in a glass slide and projected (Plate 1). A similar work is Parker's *Bated Breath: Fluff and Dust from the Whispering Gallery, St. Paul's Cathedral* (1997), but instead of projecting the material, the artist used it to make a photogram. Hannah Bertram has made several works about dust, and the exhibition *Dust Memories*, curated by Emmanuel Latreile, showed work by seventeen artists that all worked with this 'residue of reality' in different ways.[52]

Dust is, of course, the most persistent trope associated with the archive.[53] In her book *Dust*, Carolyn Steedman considers the actual physical particles emitted from archival documents and the health hazards these constitute, at times making the historian suffer a literal archive fever. Steedman argues that history as a form of narrative and discipline coincided with developments in the life-sciences that considered the past in terms of the imperishability of matter.[54] Dust, according to Steedman, represented 'a grand circularity, of nothing ever, ever going away', a physical manifestation of the onslaught of discordant, non-sequential, meaningless events that historians were tasked with arranging into a narrative whole.[55] Dust could, in other words, get at the material remains of the past, but could also be viewed in terms of the metaphorical specks of mundane events, fragmented memories and forgotten trauma that make up the historical narrative.

In the twenty-first century, associations with dust are very different. Since the digital archive is not dusty, the materiality of dust has largely become tied to old (analogue) photographs and documents; when dust is highlighted it is precisely because of its connection to a mode of thinking far from the (digital) present. In the three-and-a-half-minute long animation that makes up the main part of *Message from Andrée* Joachim Koester focused entirely on those photographs from the expedition that showed no recognisable imagery; the sequence of scratches and blots look like dust on a projector, or a snowstorm caught on film. If one were not told that the specks had a direct indexical connection to the 1897 Andrée expedition, one would miss a crucial aspect of Koester's work. In his own text about *Message from Andrée*, Koester explained why he chose to focus on the damaged photographs:

4   Joachim Koester, *Message from Andrée,* 2005
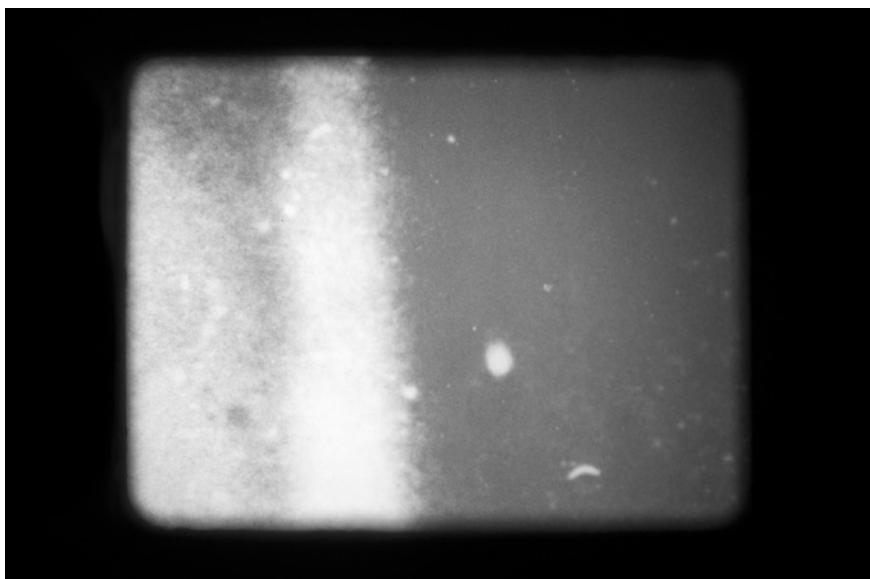
4.5   Joachim Koester, *Message from Andrée*, 2005 (detail)

> Most historians studying the expedition have ignored this layer of 'visual noise.' I, on the other hand, have made it my focus. If language defines our world, the black dots and light streaks on the photographs can be seen as bordering on the visible, or marking the edge of the unknown. Pointing to the twilight zone of what can be told and what cannot be told, document and mistake.[56]

The phrasing, deliberate or not, closely mimics that of Barthes's discussion of the photographic components *studium* and *punctum* that differentiate between what the image shows and what it evokes beyond the visible.[57] As noted, Koester described the experience of watching film as a heightened sense of presence, something he tied directly to dust and scratches on the film: 'When you are in a space where there is a 16mm film projection, you are seeing that exact copy. If it has a scratch or dust, or it jumps in a specific way, these events are happening in that physical space, at that moment.'[58] Koester described these events as 'dust narratives' tied to both uneven communication and subtle bodily sensations.[59]

Dust is obviously not a big problem in the frozen landscape of the Arctic, but what *Message from Andrée* seems to get at is dust as an indication of material decay and historical trace. Although the images used can be said to have failed to depict the world in front of the camera, what the looped animation shows is in fact not simply a *lack* of imagery, but images of the physical decay of the photographic negative: what is on view is the passage of time filtered through a particular material. The blots and scratches on the negatives are mistakes, in that these were not the images the photographer set out to capture, and by focusing on these, Koester – like Dean in *Floh* – examines what the photographic document cannot help but show.[60] As noted, a focus on the unintentional document is a frequent theme in archive theory, where documents that serendipitously end up in the archive are often considered more authentic than those that directly and deliberately address the future.[61] When a photograph shows something other than what the photographer intended, it is seen to evoke a similar authenticity as the unintentional archival document.

Philosopher and art historian Georges Didi-Huberman has discussed four 'failed' photographs taken in Auschwitz, and although they are far from unintentional, they tap into a similar set of associations: the clandestine images bear witness by being materialisations of the impossibility of catching images of the concentration camp on film. Shot in August 1944 by an unknown member of the *Sonderkommando*, the special squad of Jews put to work killing their fellow Jews in the concentration camps, the photographs were smuggled out of Auschwitz in a tube of toothpaste in order to provide evidence of the atrocities in the camp to the Polish resistance.[62] The note accompanying the film specified that the photographs showed prisoners being sent to gas chambers, and people undressing in the forest before being taken to the 'showers'.

Anonymous, *Women driven to gas chambers*, 1944

These four images were captured at great risk; the very act of photographing was a form of resistance and a gesture of humanity according to Didi-Huberman. The photographs show some recognisable imagery such as trees, a window frame, groups of people, but their significance lies rather in what they show only implicitly: the risk taken when attempting to document the concentration camp that was not to be documented, by witnesses who were themselves destined to be obliterated. The photographs' skewed frames, bad lighting, blurry imagery and other photographic 'mistakes' show a desire to document for posterity the impossible situation in which they were taken. Although highly deliberate, this type of photographic document is arguably not to be looked at primarily in terms of what it depicts; its real motif and meaning can be said to be precisely its failure of depiction.

Digital photographs can, of course, also contain unintentional images or technical mistakes. However, in addition to Godfrey's and Dean's point that the practices associated with digital photography make it unlikely that these mistaken images would be saved, there are also specific connotations tied to unintentional analogue photographs that have to do precisely with the material substrate of the chemical photographic medium. The idea of the indexical trace hinges on a material connection between what was at one point in front

of the camera and the resulting image, and it is this notion of the photograph as a 'certificate of presence' that contributes to the view that the photograph can be seen as a witness to an event, even if that event is barely visible on the resulting photograph. Robert Capa's blurry photographs from the Normandy landings offer a well-known example of how perceived photographic authenticity and its function as a reliable eyewitness can be strengthened by technical mistakes. The point is the sense that the negatives that were developed into prints and reproduced in different newspapers *were actually there*, alongside the troops on that specific June day in 1944. Furthermore, the perceived materiality of the analogue photograph is important because of how it enables artists to make an analogy between the vulnerability of the material negative or print and the human body: this is an important aspect of the damaged prints and negatives by Koester, Dean and Zaatari.

Setting up a contrast between old and new forms of history is a rhetorical strategy that occurs in much writing on the archive. As noted in Chapter 2, Michel Foucault is the figure most frequently taken to represent a shift in how history is understood in the second half of the twentieth century: old history was naïve, and gives way to an account concerned with the way history is constructed and always rooted in its own conventions and present era. Anthropologist Arjun Appadurai formulated this view as a loss of archival innocence, caused by Foucault forcing us 'to ask about the designs through which all traces are produced.'[63] Foucauldian history asks not what archival documents definitively say about the past, but rather how they have come to have the status that they have. The notion of trace as a direct link to the past is thereby challenged; instead the archival documents are seen to contain evidence of power structures and epistemological conditions. Rather than focusing on the link between the present and the past, archaeological history focuses on the epistemological frame – the conditions of possibility – around the documents housed in a particular archive. However, it is far from a clean break, as sociologist Harriet Bradley observed in a special issue of the journal *History of the Human Sciences* dedicated to the archive: 'even in an age of postmodern scepticism the archive continues to hold its alluring seductions and intoxications. There is the promise (or illusion?) that all time lost can become time regained. In the archive, there lingers an assurance of concreteness, objectivity, recovery and wholeness.'[64] There is, in other words, a perplexing staying power in the notion of the archive as a link or trace granting access to the past, long after a poststructuralist critique of origins and fixed meaning.[65]

Archive artists also approach photography as a strangely paradoxical document: simultaneously stressing the material indexical link to the past while also breaking apart the belief in the evidentiary potential of photography in general. Similarly, in writing about archives, the faith in the wholeness and concreteness of the archive and the seduction and intoxication that this notion

generates is associated with the material – analogue – archive, and thus stands in contrast both to the digital archive and the epistemological instability that develops out of postmodernist and poststructuralist thought.[66] I want to drive home the point that the tension inherent in the simultaneous courting of romantic and material notions of the archive and the critique of the same is crucial for understanding the phenomenon of archive art. This is made clear by the fact that a similar tension is at work in the way photography is used and theorised by artists and in art writing at the turn of the twenty-first century.

Analogue: documenting a moribund medium

As discussed above, the qualities associated with what had previously been considered 'photography', in a general sense, needed to be modified and nuanced after the advent of digital media, when photography was suddenly split into digital and analogue, each tied to specific – and contrasting – qualities and associations. Interestingly, what had been a stark contrast between old media such as drawing and painting and the new medium of photography was largely transferred to a new contrast between analogue and digital photography at the turn of the twenty-first century. Analogue photography thus took over some of the qualities previously associated with painting and drawing; when compared with digital photography, analogue photography came to be associated with a materiality that paradoxically signals uniqueness and authenticity. Let me turn now to a set of practices that are related to, but also different from, the broad grouping of artists that use found photographs or other historical documents. The focus in this section is on practices where artists overtly concern themselves with the analogue technology itself, in highly self-reflexive ways.

Zoe Leonard's series *Analogue*, shot between 1998 and 2009, depicts storefronts in various cities around the world (Plate 2).[67] Each photograph measures 11 inches × 11 inches and the work is always exhibited in its entirety, as a grid, each image placed under glass with no frame or mat.[68] *Analogue* can be seen to oscillate between the documentary aspect of conceptual photography with its seriality and taxonomic intention and the evocation of analogue photography as an auratic, affective and material medium. One image in the series shows a photographic studio with the text 'Century photo centre' hand-painted across the ochre-coloured façade (Plate 3). The Kodak logo is reproduced, again hand-painted, as is the text, 'for all your photographic materials'. One imagines that the term 'century' in the store's name is meant to signal that it is at the forefront, pointing ahead to the future, but seeing it alongside other similar storefronts shot in the same head-on format, the term rather indicates the, by now historical, twentieth century. The store is closed, perhaps temporarily for the evening or the weekend, but it is not difficult to see that its days

are numbered and that it will soon have to close for good. The stores that are documented in Leonard's series all share this sense of suspended existence. They are small, hole-in-the-wall shops selling clothes in bulk, plastic shoes or brooms. Some offer to repair boxy televisions, others are simple shacks serving Coca-Cola or snacks. These kinds of businesses are, or are soon to be, a thing of the past. *Analogue* functions as a kind of memorial for what will soon disappear for a variety of different reasons: technological development, shifting economic systems, as well as changes in marketing practices contribute to making these businesses unsustainable. What is soon to be lost is a type of urban place, connected to types of human and economic interactions that have little place in cities of the twenty-first century.

The accumulation of images in *Analogue* creates a visual connection between the kind of small-scale economy that these various storefronts represent and the medium by which they are depicted.[69] The 'analogue' in Leonard's title refers directly to the medium she uses; shot on a vintage Rolleiflex camera, the images are always shown with the frame of the negative clearly visible, indicating that the photographs have not been cropped or manipulated. Leonard's series was produced right at the time when digital photography was becoming more readily available, and it can be seen to exemplify Mark Godfrey's argument that the advent of digital photography made artists acutely aware that photographs *used to* serve as records of the past, or Geoffrey Batchen's suggestion that the perceived imminent death of photography in the mid-1990s provoked an anxiety about a loss of faith in the photograph's ability to be a truthful document of the world it depicts.[70] Leonard's work can be seen as tapping into a longing for a time when the photographic document still was such a record.[71] But the series also reinforces the sense of the imminent demise of this photographic technology as well as these types of stores, precisely by linking them. The storefronts depicted by Leonard are *as analogue* as the photographic technique she has used to capture them. By highlighting her work as specifically analogue, Leonard points to the way the depicted stores are specific, rooted in their local urban context, in contrast with the infinitely reproducible chain stores and multinational corporations that will replace them. There is thus an analogous relationship between the medium and the subject matter in that both are visible in a particular way precisely at the point of their near disappearance. Not long ago it seemed that these kinds of stores would always be around; there was nothing remarkable about them; in a similar way photography was thought to be inseparable from its chemical base.[72]

When artists at the turn of the twenty-first century return to analogue technology, many do so by combining a concern with technological specificities and a self-reflexive approach to the technology's conceptual connotations. Leonard's *Analogue* is one of many examples of this type of practice. Another

artist who similarly conceptualises old technology, albeit in a wholly different way, is Samson Kambalu, whose short films evoke early uses of the film medium in their sepia tones and jerky motion. Kambalu ties these works to a particular relationship to play and temporality in African culture by describing them as *Nyau cinema*, a practice that stipulates that films should be no longer than a minute, that there should 'be a conversation between performance and the medium of film', and that the editing should be done according to 'the aestheitcs of primitive film and silent cinema'.[73] In a different work, the *Sanguinetti Theses*, Kambalu worked with the archive of the Italian situationist Gianfranco Sanguinetti housed in Yale University's Beinecke Library. Kambalu photographed the documents in the archive and reproduced these in a massive book that he displayed in the installation *Sanguinetti Breakout Area* at the 2015 Venice Biennale (Plate 4), a work that Kambalu has described as a 'detournement of Sanguinetti's archive'.[74] Kambalu's oeuvre thus combines an interest in a form of cinema where sharp edits and fragmented narratives are carried out through a playful, DIY relationship to technology with an interest in topics relating to archival originality, reproduction and the politics of public space. In contrast to Leonard, however, Kambalu shoots his films with a digital video camera, making the work look analogue by way of specific filters, editing and other digital tools.

Even more self-contained systems of representation are set up by artists who work with specific evocations of analogue film technology where the

4.7   Simon Starling, *Wilhelm Noack oHG*, 2006

medium reflects and depicts itself in different ways. This practice seemed to reach its peak in the first decade of the twenty-first century with works such as Tacita Dean's *Kodak* (2006), which documents on celluloid film the final days of a Kodak factory that produced such film; and Simon Starling's *Wilhelm Noack oHG* (2006), which shows the production of a metal loop-machine that is used in the installation to display the film itself. Other artists working in this vein are Rosa Barba, Matthew Buckingham, Rodney Graham, Vera Lutter, Lisa Oppenheim and Ola Pehrson, to name a few. These and many other artists exemplify what Lyle Rexer described as facing 'the future by looking backward'; that is to say, they mobilise old photographic technologies in ways that are of the current moment.[75] One aspect of these works that is clearly 'of the current moment' is the type of medium self-reflexivity that comes out of the notion that there is no view from nowhere, no innocent archive, and that a medium therefore always affects what it records.

Returning to the long 1960s

As noted at the beginning of this chapter, many of the same artists who deal with the indexical connotations of photographic documents and archives are also interested in the 1960s and make works that reference and process this era in different ways. Joachim Koester is one such artist; his series *Histories* (2003–05) consists of six pairings of what the artist describes as 'seminal' works of conceptual photography from the 1960s and 1970s with images of the same sites taken by Koester himself some thirty years later.[76] According to the standard narrative of conceptual photography, the original photographs by Ed Ruscha, Robert Adams, Robert Smithson, Bernd and Hilla Becher, Hans Haacke and Gordon Matta-Clark depict sites selected at least partly for their lack of visual interest. The parking lots, suburban streets and old factories offer vernacular views of the modern world, far from the spectacular or sublime motif. These photographs have been re-photographed by Koester in such a way that the edges and spines of the books from which they were taken are clearly visible, as is part of the table top on which they were placed. In that way the photographs are firmly established as already processed images.

   Histories is always exhibited in pairs, with the re-photographed 'original' and the return shown side by side, prompting the viewer to compare and identify differences between them. Rather than questioning authorship or originality as such, the series focuses on how the original photographs and the re-photographed sites are implicated by one another and how the earlier works are situated in a discursive context which it is impossible to edit out or ignore. The imperfection of the re-photographed image with its slightly curved edges, the wood grained surface and so on not only breaks the illusion of seamless copying, but also evokes the deliberate 'amateurisation' of photographic

4.8   Joachim Koester, *Histories*, 2003–05 (detail)

practices, discussed in relation to the conceptual photographers of the era.[77] In his own statement about *Histories*, Koester explained: 'I have decided to title this work *Histories*. There are at least two. That of conceptual photography, and that of the places and events depicted.'[78] Koester's text is almost entirely focused on the latter, describing each image with phrases that evoke the actual sites and the changes (or lack thereof) that they have gone through. The motel from Ed Ruscha's *Some Los Angeles Apartments* with its seemingly eternal lack of occupants is described as 'haunted by vacancy', and Robert Smithson's own descriptions 'no center' and 'abyss or an ordinary void' are cited in relation to the photographs of Passaic Center.[79] Between Robert Adams's 1969 photograph from Darwin Place in Colorado and Koester's return to the site not much is recognisable, except for a mountain viewed at a distance, prompting Koester to suggest that the image 'points to time and history as material'.[80] Much of Koester's terminology centres around loss and emptiness and the series can be seen as an attempt to reconnect to the art historical moment in which the original images were shot. *Histories* seems to be decidedly tongue-in-cheek, however, and the gesture of acting as an amateur historian, or a fan, returning to a culturally significant site involves a deliberate misreading; sites that were selected and documented because of their lack of interest are now treated as historically significant, worth travelling to and re-documenting. The wider context of the artists' oeuvre is relevant here as well. A recurring theme in Koester's work is the return to historical figures and sites – from Aleister Crowley's house in Cefalú to Immanuel Kant's Königsberg or Charles Manson's desert ranch. Knowing the artist's broader oeuvre helps frame *Histories* in relation to other highly charged historical sites, important because of their inclusion in the canon of conceptual photography rather than their association with well-known criminals, mystics or philosophers.[81]

In Chapter 3 I brought up some recent projects that reference Ed Ruscha's photobooks; these works and Koester's *Histories* bring to light the inherent contradictions of the conceptual art practices of the 1960s and 1970s as these became cemented into a post-war art canon. By the turn of the twenty-first century these works – evoking photographic documents – had become auratic and aesthetic art objects, which meant that the vernacular mundane locations depicted by artists such as Ruscha, Smithson, Matta-Clark and Bernd and Hilla Becher and others could be treated as meaningful sites fit for reverential pilgrimage. How then can we understand the returns to these earlier works: are they a form of homage, appropriation or perhaps critique of their predecessors? Let me return here to Aleida Assmann's distinction between archive and canon mentioned in Chapter 2. Recall how Assmann defined the archive as passive cultural memory that preserves the past as past, whereas she considered the more active canon to be engaged in preserving the past as present.[82] Assmann's distinction is helpful in understanding the interest

in the long 1960s among artists at the turn of the twenty-first century, pre-cisely because the clear distinction between canon and archive falls apart in these works. For Assmann, the archive as passive cultural memory points to what is fixed and preserved (like the conceptual art photographs repro-duced in the various books that are re-photographed by Koester in *Histories*), whereas her understanding of canon is something that is in use and therefore very much still active in a given cultural context (the use and circulation of those images, either online in the case of Michael Marandas's *Twentysix Gasoline Stations, 2.0*, or through the shifting meaning of place and image evoked by *Histories*).

However, when considering the artistic returns to the 1960s, what is refer-enced is neither passive/old, nor active/current as in Assmann's distinction, but in fact operates along both of these poles. The broader notion of the archive at work in the archive art phenomenon is capacious enough to house both the preserving, passive and fixed and the more active, living and chang-ing as archival qualities and relationships. When an artist such as Joachim Koester goes back to specific places documented by conceptual artists in the 1960s and 1970s, he points to what happens to conceptual photography when it is inscribed in art history – the earlier gestures are transformed into auratic, unique and hallowed objects (fixed and preserved as past) – but he also shows how they are open to active and creative reuse in the present. *Histories* and *Twentysix Gasoline Stations, 2.0* both approach the 1960s simultaneously as working memory (canon) and as reference memory (archive) in Assmann's formulation, simultaneously part of and set apart from the current moment. This, I think, is what James Meyer gets at in his discussion of similar returns, when he asks: '[c]ould it be that "the sixties," in becoming history, returns to us as a trope of contemporaneity – as an object of present-day use?'[83] Where Maranda's and Koester's works differ, however, is in the way *Histories* evokes the idea of the material trace by going back to the specific places where the original photographs were taken, thereby attaching an indexical umbilical cord between his photograph and the original. In Maranda's work there is no such original to attach to, only different layers of digital reproductions.

What is key for the purposes of understanding the notion of the archive in contemporary art is that conceptual or appropriational practices have dif-ferent connotations when considered from the other side of the 'digital turn'. Art historian Peter Kalb, for instance, has argued that Sherrie Levine's appro-priations of Walker Evans appear to be material when considered today; but that placing Levine next to Warhol makes Warhol appear 'comparatively artful and expressive', and 'full of the signs of artistic transformation that some critics back in the 1960s had argued were missing'.[84] Kalb further claimed that by the 1990s, practices of appropriation could reintroduce notions such as authentic-ity and faith, as by this time it could be assumed that these would inevitably

be read with 'critical awareness'.[85] Although not connecting this to the notion of the archive, Kalb's next observation neatly sums up one of the characteristics of many of the works and practices frequently described as representing an archival turn in art: 'It is a measure of the changing perceptions of art between 1979 and 1999 that appropriation could come to be viewed by the second of these dates as a means of creating art that was both evocative *and* analytical, emotional *and* intellectual.'[86] Many of the artistic practices that are considered archival do indeed reuse or reference existing material, and frequently this existing material is conceptual artworks that are considered interesting because they allow for an affective connection to that time and place. But these works are also approached with a critical distance that considers their systematic structural consequences for the subsequent understanding of art.

The temporality at work here is arguably that of the archival future-as-history. When viewed from the perspective of today, the practices of the 1960s point ahead to the current era in a way that simultaneously makes these works seem foundational and historically significant – they are, in that sense, contemporary art's own *arkhons* – but also very much of the current moment. Thus Koester's *Histories* as well as Maranda's and other artists' returns to Ed Ruscha's photobooks exemplify an archival 'return with a difference.'[87] Although Ruscha's photobooks were made long before digital photography, the theorisation of digital media through notions of the poor image, issues of original and copy, endless circulation and networked referentiality can nevertheless be considered part of the logic of his works *after-the-fact*. His photobooks are in that sense addressing a time and technical and episte-mological structures that had not yet emerged when they were made in the 1960s and 1970s. However, these structures and conditions have become part of what Ruscha's works mean and how they function when considered from the vantage point of the early years of the twenty-first century.

Rematerialising conceptual art and performance

Following the artistic practices of the 1960s, documents of various kinds including legal tenders come to have a new function. Artworks that are imma-terial, industrially produced, readymades or reproducible could no longer rely on a material indexical connection to the artist's hand, and thus needed other documents to establish this connection and place them within the discursive structure of *art*.[88] The legal document, often in the form of a certificate of authenticity, functions as a kind of signature, determining an object's direct link to the author, and as such is tied to notions of indexicality, authenticity and originality. The function of the certificate of authenticity is to establish and maintain a link between the artist and the art object, and in that sense its func-tion is, in fact, to place the artwork into several interconnected archives: that

of the artist's oeuvre, and the larger archive of art as institutionally theorised. The certificate of authenticity makes explicit that any artwork is always by definition a networked series of linked documents (material and immaterial).

These legal documents were first and foremost an attempted solution to the problem of how to make money out of new types of artistic practices; could one really own the rights to a work that was totally reproducible, and how could one avoid it actually being endlessly reproduced instead of just courting reproducibility as an idea? This seemingly unsolvable issue led to what became an acceptable paradox of conceptual art. Immaterial, appropriative or reproducible artworks were made sellable in large part by, so to speak, reattaching aura to them.[89] Collectors and museums were thereby provided with official certificates that ensured that a particular object was indeed unique, even though it might well have been potentially reproducible; the certificate conferred a kind of stability otherwise lacking in the artwork. By the turn of the twenty-first century similar certificates were attached to digital artworks, ensuring that the potentially infinitely reproducible DVD or other digital file was in fact a limited edition object.[90] Interestingly, there is thus a parallel rematerialisation at work in the digital art object at the turn of the twenty-first century and the conceptual art practices of the 1960s.

In the period that followed the turn of the twenty-first century, museums as well as commercial galleries were involved in a reclassification of objects from archival material to artworks.[91] For instance, photographic documentations of performances are now commonly sold at auctions and included in exhibitions.[92] The objects used in these performances and the photographs documenting them shifted at some point from being props that lost their meaning as soon as they were divorced from the actual performance, or as documentation clearly separated from what they documented, into something standing in a much more ambiguous relation to the original event. At times certificates of authenticity and performance documentation are treated as artworks in their own right, and both artists and art writers have become increasingly interested in actively considering the status of such documents.[93] The incentive for these various reclassifications was both commercial – to make money for the gallery and the artist – and curatorial – to include these objects in exhibitions in order to give a new audience the opportunity to experience these works in some way.[94] I will come back to these reclassification issues in Chapter 7, in terms of how they intersect with notions of curating and the archive. What I want to stress here is the way they highlight a further instance of the rematerialisation – or re-auraisation – of objects.

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Following the prismatic approach of Part II, this chapter has brought up various issues relating to materiality and immateriality. Photography has been

of particular interest, specifically the conceptual associations tied to photography for artists in the 1960s and 1970s and for artists working at the turn of the twenty-first century during the full-scale transition to digital technology. The method of juxtaposing artworks, theory and various writings, debates and contemporaneous phenomena and developments has made visible various analogical relationships between notions of materiality and immateriality in conceptual art practices as well as within popular notions of analogue and digital archives, photography and film. My argument is that the end of the twentieth century saw a number of different issues brought to the fore relating to technological shifts and the understanding of what different media represent, and that it is no coincidence that the phenomenon of archive art emerged in the midst of these discussions and reformulations. Photography at the turn of the twenty-first century is thus fraught with different and contradictory sets of associations. On the one hand, photography is considered exemplary of the indexical sign and thus capable of delivering objectivity and truth, but there are also persistent ideas relating to mystical connections to past events and characters. Notions of materiality are central to both of those sets of connotations, and the complexity of these contradictions and tensions is made particularly visible in the way archive artists return to and re-examine works from the so-called 'long 1960s'. Conceptual artists used one set of connotations and associations related to photography in the 1960s and 1970s, but archive artists engage with other tropes and associations, in large part because the understanding of what (analogue) photography signifies had changed in the interceding decades. The artistic strategy of deliberately bringing such tropes to the fore is arguably only possible when those associations are being challenged and the medium is no longer taken for granted and viewed as transparent. The resulting use of photographic technology can be described as artists using 'photography' in scare quotes to provide a view of 'reality', also placed in permanent, self-conscious scare quotes, to borrow a formulation from Lyle Rexer.[95] This bracketing of photography and of the reality it presumably depicts is, I suggest, a key element of archive art.

This chapter has also highlighted how conceptual artistic practices can be considered both as an earlier form of archive art that is directly or indirectly referenced by artists working at the turn of twenty-first century, and as the 'law of what can be said', enabling this art in the first place. In that sense, art of the 1990s and 2000s stands in a seemingly paradoxical relationship to these earlier art practices – they examine the recent archive of art as a structure in its own right, while being placed at least partly within it. They approach these earlier artworks as fixed and preserved and as highly mediated, recycled and impossible to approach in themselves. The tension within the notion of the archive at this time – the archive as material and immaterial, fixed and in circulation – can be brought to bear on different kinds of artistic practices. This helps explain the usefulness of the notion of the archive in contemporary art discourse.

Notes

1   The installation in Venice contained both the animated film and two framed
    posters. When I refer to *Message from Andrée* in this chapter, I refer specifically
    to the film unless otherwise specified.

2   Already in 1930, a popular book was published by the Swedish Society for
    Anthropology and Geography containing the newly discovered letters, diary
    entries and photographs. The same year also saw a quickly assembled exhibi-
    tion at Liljevalchs Konsthall in Stockholm. Over fifty books have since been
    published on the topic, as well as a feature film and even an opera.

3   The balloon, which the explorers named *the Eagle* (*Örnen*), was actually only
    in the air for about 10 hours and 29 minutes. After this, it bumped along for
    another 41 hours, constantly touching the ground before it landed for good.
    R. Kjellström, 'Andrée-expeditionen och dess undergång – tolkning nu och då',
    in U. Wråkberg (ed.), *The Centennial of S. A. Andrée's North Pole Expedition:
    Proceedings of a Conference on S. A. Andrée and the Agenda for Social Science
    Research of the Polar Regions* (Stockholm: Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences,
    1999), p. 45.

4   White Island or Kvitøya, part of the Svalbard archipelago.

5   Seven copper cylinders containing film were found at the camp, four of which
    had been exposed. An additional roll of film was still in Strindberg's camera.
    Out of 240 possible exposures, John Hertzberg at the Royal Technical Univer-
    sity (KTH) in Stockholm managed to save 93, but of these the vast majority
    showed no recognisable imagery at all. T. Martinsson, 'Recovering the Visual
    History of the Andrée Expedition: A Case Study in Photographic Research',
    Research Issues in Art Design and Media, 6 (2004), unpaginated. The book
    published on the occasion of the exhibition of Koester's work at the Venice
    Biennale included a number of the photographs from Strindberg's camera, as
    well as archival material from the expedition. A. Kreuger, *Joachim Koester:
    Message from Andrée* (Copenhagen/New York: Danish Arts Agency/Lukas &
    Sternberg, 2005).

6   Marlene Manoff has discussed the effects of digital technology on various
    aspects of archive theory and practice in several texts: M. Manoff, 'The Sym-
    bolic Meaning of Libraries in a Digital Age', *Libraries and the Academy*, 1:4
    (2001), pp. 371–81; M. Manoff, 'Archive and Database as Metaphor: Theorizing
    the Historical Record', *Libraries and the Academy*, 10:4 (2010), pp. 385–98; M.
    Manoff, 'Unintended Consequences: New Materialist Perspectives on Library
    Technologies and the Digital Record', *Libraries and the Academy*, 13:3 (2013),
    pp. 273–82. For a discussion of the 'oxymoron-like nature of the digital archive',
    namely the tension between the archive's history in writing and print culture
    and that of digital formats, see R. Laermans and P. Gielen, 'The Archive of the
    Digital An-archive', *Image & Narrative: Online Magazine of the Visual Narra-
    tive*, 17, special issue: 'The Digital Archive' (2007), www.imageandnarrative.be/
    inarchive/digital_archive/laermans_gielen.htm [accessed 15 September 2017].
    The article explicitly builds on Wolfgang Ernst's notion of 'the digital an-
    archive' in Ernst, *Stirrings in the Archives*. See also Velody, 'The Archive and

the Human Sciences'. For a different discussion about the archiving of digital art and the challenges this entails for the notion of the archive, see J. C. Ryan, 'The Transformation of Archival Philosophy and Practice Through Digital Art', *Philosophy Study*, 4:5 (2014), pp. 373–90.

7 Thomas Götselius has pointed out that the first known Western centralised archive, burned by the Persians in 480/479 BCE, could be dug out from the ashes by archaeologists, but that a similar reconstruction will not be possible for disappeared websites (Götselius, 'Förord: Åter till arkivet', p. 14).

8 See Nina Lager Vestberg, 'Ordering, Searching, Finding' and 'Metadata culture – Stockholm University'.

9 P. Conway, 'Preservation in the Age of Google: Digitization, Digital Preservation, and Dilemmas', *Library Quarterly*, 80:1 (2010), pp. 61–79.

10 G. Batchen, 'Phantasm: Digital Imaging and the Death of Photography', *Aperture*, 136 (1994), p. 47.

11 Batchen, 'Phantasm', p. 47. For another take on digital anxieties and how these relate to contemporary art practices, see J. Zylinska, 'On Bad Archives, Unruly Snappers and Liquid Photographs', *Photographies*, 3:2 (2010), pp. 139–53. If the anxieties Batchen describes are paired with Allan Sekula's argument in his 1986 article 'The Body and the Archive', we get a complex and long-lasting view of photography in terms of truth and evidence. Sekula argued that the late nineteenth-century 'truth-apparatus' could be understood as a 'bureaucratic-clerical-statistical system of "intelligence"' that functioned like 'a sophisticated form of the archive'. This system was reliant on the camera, but was not reducible to its optical mode; it was more accurately understood through the system of taxonomic ordering represented by the filing cabinet. Sekula, 'The Body and the Archive', p. 16.

12 Although the first commercial digital cameras were available in the 1980s, more viable models did not emerge until the late 1990s. The exact date when digital photography surpassed analogue is difficult to pinpoint, but in 2005 the sale of digital cameras overtook those of conventional cameras. See K. Levis, 'Introduction', in *Winners & Losers: Creators and Casualties of the Age of the Internet* (London: Atlantic Books, 2009).

13 It is interesting to note here that the earliest forms of photographic technology such as the daguerreotype were not reproducible either, and according to Mary Warner Marien, it was not until the early twentieth century that photography was understood in terms of a dual replication: the copy of nature and the ability to make many copies. M. W. Marien, *Photography and Its Critics: A Cultural History, 1839–1900* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), pp. 42ff.

14 Iversen continued: 'Indeed, one could argue that analogue photography has only recently become a medium in the fullest sense of the term.' M. Iversen, 'Analogue: On Zoe Leonard and Tacita Dean', *Critical Inquiry*, 38:4 (2012), p. 796.

15 Bishop, 'Digital Divide', p. 436.

16 Bishop, 'Digital Divide', p. 436.

17 Godfrey, 'The Artist as Historian', p. 146. Italics in the original.

18   D. Green and J. Lowry, 'From Presence to the Performative: Rethinking Photo-
      graphic Indexicality', in D. Green (ed.), *Where Is the Photograph?* (Maidstone/
      Brighton: Photoworks/Photoforum, 2003), p. 47.

19   L. Rexer, *Photography's Antiquarian Avant-Garde: The New Wave in Old Pro-
      cesses* (New York: Abrams, 2002).

20   Rexer, *Photography's Antiquarian Avant-Garde*, p. 9. Italics added. Douglas
      Nickel noted an earlier version of such interest in the photographic techniques
      of the past: as photography was becoming more industrialised in the first
      decades of the twentieth century, photographers took great pains to make their
      images appear to be handmade, unique objects, expressing the sensibility of
      the artist. D. R. Nickel, 'History of Photography: The State of Research', *The
      Art Bulletin*, 83:3 (2001), pp. 548–58.

21   Bishop's point was not that the digital is fully absent in contemporary artists'
      practices but that far fewer than one might expect actually *thematise* the
      digital, as in 'what it means to think, see, and filter affect through the digital',
      or 'reflect deeply on how we experience, and are altered by, the digitization of
      our existence' (Bishop, 'Digital Divide', p. 436). This was more true in the early
      2000s when Bishop wrote her text than it is in the early 2020s.

22   Bishop, 'Digital Divide', p. 436. For more on slide technology specifically, see
      M. D. Alexander, C. Harrison and R. Storr (eds), *Slideshow: Projected Images in
      Contemporary Art* ([Baltimore, MD]/University Park, PA: Baltimore Museum
      of Art/Pennsylvania State University Press, 2005); O. Gat, 'Projected Projects:
      Slides, PowerPoints, Nostalgia, and a Sense of Belonging', *Rhizome*, 2011, http://
      rhizome.org/editorial/2011/nov/28/projected-projects-slides-powerpoints-
      nostalgia-an/ [accessed 30 September 2018]. For different perspectives on the
      projected image, see T. J. Trodd (ed.), *Screen/Space: The Projected Image in
      Contemporary Art* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2011).

23   I discuss these issues in S. Callahan, '"The Analogue": Conceptual Connota-
      tions of a Historical Medium', in S. Petersson et al. (eds), *The Power of the In-
      Between: Intermediality as a Tool for Aesthetic Analysis and Critical Reflection*
      (Stockholm: Stockholm University Press, 2018), pp. 287–320.

24   M. Lister, 'Glossary: Analogue and Digital', in L. Wells (ed.), *Photography: A
      Critical Introduction*, 5th edn (London: Routledge, 2015), pp. 367–8.

25   Lister, 'Glossary: Analogue and Digital'. See also M. Lister (ed.), *The Photo-
      graphic Image in Digital Culture* (London: Routledge, 1995). For more on the
      technical differences between analogue and digital photography, see L. Wells
      and D. Price, 'Thinking about Photography: Debates Historically and Now', in
      Wells (ed.), *Photography: A Critical Introduction*, pp. 25–8.

26   J. Koester, 'Inhaling the Show: An Interview with Joachim Koester, by Thomas
      Caron', in T. Caron (ed.), *Joachim Koester: Of Spirits and Empty Spaces* (Vil-
      leurbanne: Institut d'art contemporain, Villeurbanne/Rhône-Alpes, 2014),
      p. 215.

27   Bishop, 'Digital Divide', p. 441.

28   This is from a brief essay by Dean in T. Vischer (ed.), *Analogue: Drawings
      1991–2006* (Göttingen: Steidl, 2006), p. 8. This text is also cited by Iversen,
      'Analogue: On Zoe Leonard and Tacita Dean', p. 812.

29 The point here is the *perceived* immateriality of digital media, not whether they actually are immaterial in any absolute sense. Digital media are, as many have pointed out, not really immaterial at all, but very much based in physical servers and circuit boards. See, for instance, Matthew Kirchenbaum's discussion of the 'tactile fallacy', the assumption that electronic objects are immaterial because we 'cannot reach out and touch them'. M. G. Kirschenbaum, 'Editing the Interface: Textual Studies and First Generation Electronic Objects', *Text*, 14 (2002), p. 43. See also Manoff, 'The Materiality of Digital Collections'.

30 Authenticity is a term fraught with different associations, but I use it here in a colloquial and general sense where the authentic represents a form of intuitive truth, a sense of intimacy and uniqueness. The definitions of 'authentic' in the *Oxford English Dictionary* include the following: 'Genuine; not feigned or false'; 'Esp. of a statement, text, etc.: in accordance with fact or stating the truth, and thus worthy of acceptance or belief; of established credit; able to be relied on; truthful, accurate'; and 'Of a document, artefact, artwork, etc.: having the stated or reputed origin, provenance, or creator; not a fake or forgery'. 'Authentic, adj. and n.', *OED Online* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2020).

31 The dating of this project differs. The date span 1962–2013 is taken from Richter's official website (www.gerhard-richter.com), but Sven Spieker dates the same work to 1964–95, and Benjamin Buchloh labelled it 'ongoing' since 1969 in an essay published in 1998 (Spieker, *The Big Archive*, p. 145; Buchloh, 'Warburg's Paragon?', p. 53).

32 Buchloh, 'Warburg's Paragon?'. This text was reworked and published in the journal *October* a few years later: Buchloh, 'Gerhard Richter's "Atlas"'. An extract from it was also included in the *Archive* instalment of the MIT/Whitechapel series *Documents of Contemporary Art.* Buchloh's text was originally published in a German exhibition catalogue in 1993.

33 Spieker, *The Big Archive*, pp. 136–8.

34 van Alphen, *Staging the Archive*.

35 Godfrey, 'Photography Found and Lost', p. 90. *Floh* was part of Enwezor's *Archive Fever: Uses of the Document in Contemporary Art*, and an image from the series was featured on the ICP press release for the exhibition. A pdf of the press release is available on www.icp.org.

36 Godfrey, 'Photography Found and Lost'. For a somewhat different approach to Dean's work, see Iversen, 'Analogue: On Zoe Leonard and Tacita Dean'. Iversen's essay centres around the notion of 'the time exposure of analogue photography' which is exemplified by both Tacita Dean's and Zoe Leonard's work. Her account does not bring up the notion of the archive, but her argument largely overlaps with mine.

37 Godfrey, 'Photography Found and Lost', p. 90. Godfrey refers to an interview he conducted with Tacita Dean on 16 December 2003.

38 Godfrey, 'Photography Found and Lost', pp. 96–100.

39 Godfrey, 'Photography Found and Lost', p. 107.

40 Godfrey, 'Photography Found and Lost', p. 114.

41 For a discussion of several of these themes, see Susan Fahy's practice-based PhD thesis: S. Fahy, 'Fugitive Testimonies', University of Westminster, 2017.

42 C. S. Peirce, *The Collected Papers of Charles Sanders Peirce*, ed. C. Hartshorne and P. Weiss (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1932), vol. II [2.281], p. 159. Quoted in D. Chandler, *Semiotics: The Basics* (London: Routledge, 2003), p. 43.

43 In terms of the persistence of the notion of index, Nina Lager Vestberg has argued that archive and index are 'the most recurrent tropes in photo-theoretical writing'. N. Lager Vestberg, 'Archival Value: On Photography, Materiality and Indexicality', *Photographies*, 1:1 (2008), p. 49. See also J. Baetens et al., 'The Art Seminar', in J. Elkins (ed.), *Photography Theory* (London: Routledge, 2007), pp. 129–201.

44 R. Barthes, *Camera Lucida: Reflections on Photography* (London: Vintage, 2000), p. 87; S. Sontag, *On Photography* (New York: Dell Publishing, 1977), p. 154. Italics added. Mirjam Wittmann has argued that Barthes in *Camera Lucida* does not just highlight the indexicality of the picture's physical-chemical genesis, but also the index as an 'existential-anthropological phenomenon'. M. Wittmann, 'Tracing the Path of the Index: Images of Theory in Art History', *Texte zur Kunst*, 22:85 (2012), p. 64.

45 Barthes, *Camera Lucida*, pp. 80–1.

46 Jaimie Baron in her 2014 book on the use of found footage in film uses the term 'indexical archival document' (Baron, *The Archive Effect*, p. 7), and Ernst van Alphen titled a section on Christian Boltanski 'Archiving the Index' (van Alphen, *Staging the Archive*, pp. 69–77).

47 The phrase 'allure of the archive' was used in a 2003 article by Helen Freshwater. H. Freshwater, 'The Allure of the Archive', *Poetics Today*, 24:4 (2003), pp. 729–58. Note also that when Arlette Farge's *Le goût de l'archive* (1989) was translated into English in 2013, it was given the title *The Allure of the Archives*. Antoinette Burton listed the *CSI* television shows, BBC's *Waking the Dead*, Patricia Cornwell's Kay Scarpetta novels and Michael Ondaatje's *Anil's Ghost* as examples of the faith in science to read material and what she called 'embodied' archives (Burton, 'Introduction: Archive Fever, Archive Stories', p. 5). For an account of the literary interest in archives, see Keen, *Romances of the Archive*. For a discussion of the BBC series *Shooting the Past* about a photographic archive, see Lager Vestberg, 'Archival Value'.

48 J. Michelet, *Œuvres complètes, IV: 1872–1874: histoire du dix-neuvième siècle*, ed. B. Leuilliot (Paris: Flammarion, 1982), p. 613; cited in English in Steedman, 'The Space of Memory', p. 68. The term 'murmur' is frequently evoked in writing about the archive; see Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge*, p. 129; Eliassen, 'The Archives of Michel Foucault', p. 42. Foucault also uses the term in his text 'Fantasia of the Library' where he writes, in relation to Flaubert's *Bouvard et Pécuchet*, of the activity of copying as 'discourse folded upon itself', transforming 'fleeting words into an enduring and distant murmur' (Foucault, 'Fantasia of the Library', p. 109). The term can be translated as 'stirring' in English, and is a reference also in Wolfgang Ernst's book about the digital archive, *Stirrings in the Archives*.

49 Michelet, *Œuvres complètes, IV*, p. 268; cited in English and French in Steedman, 'The Space of Memory', p. 70.

50 Moderna Museet, *Akram Zaatari Unfolding* (Moderna Museet Exhibition Folder, 2015). I discuss this work in more detail in Callahan, '"The Analogue"'.

51 Godfrey, 'Photography Found and Lost', p. 110. Although Godfrey makes a distinction between indexicality and the amateur notions he highlights in his article, it seems clear to me that the amateur treatment of photography is directly tied to indexicality in a broad sense, particularly in the idea that the image *cannot help* but show more than the photographer intended. Godfrey explicitly references the types of digital anxieties outlined by Batchen as a way of clarifying what he considers particular about Dean's work: 'For many digitalization's disturbance is that it alters the indexical character of photography; others are concerned with the spectacular forms of photographic manipulation that digital programs afford. But what is crucial here is the impact of digitalization on the amateur treatment of photography both at the moment of exposure and at the moment of storage' (Godfrey, 'Photography Found and Lost', p. 113).

52 'Dust Memories', 3 June–2 August 2003, Swiss Institute, New York. 'Dust Memories at Swiss Institute', www.swissinstitute.net/2001–2006/Exhibitions/2003_Dust/Dust_Memories.htm [accessed 2 July 2020].

53 An indication of the persistence of this trope is the relief that one reviewer expressed when he discovered that it was *not* evoked in the 2008 publication *Lost in the Archives*: 'it manages to cover nearly eight hundred pages without using the tired old cliché "dusty archives"'. B. Horton, 'Review: *Lost in the Archives* by Rebecca Comay', *The American Archivist*, 67:2 (2004), p. 296.

54 Steedman, *Dust*, p. 163. Dust is also mentioned by Alice Yaeger Kaplan, who ends her 1990 article with the phrase 'the gold is all in the dust' (Kaplan, 'Working in the Archives', p. 116).

55 Steedman, *Dust*, p. 166. This idea of nothing going away is, Steedman notes, also deeply connected to psychoanalysis. However, there is a considerable tension between this notion of nothing ever going away and the notion, also stressed by Steedman, that the archive is always characterised in part by its absences.

56 T. Caron (ed.), *Joachim Koester: Of Spirits and Empty Spaces* (Villeurbanne: Institut d'art contemporain, Villeurbanne/Rhône-Alpes, 2014), p. 178. The notion of 'visual noise' also recalls unwanted noise in sound recordings often caused by dust on analogue recording instruments.

57 Barthes, *Camera Lucida*.

58 Koester, 'Inhaling the Show', p. 215.

59 Koester, 'Inhaling the Show', p. 215.

60 For more on the notion of chance and Dean's work, see Iversen, 'Analogue: On Zoe Leonard and Tacita Dean', pp. 813ff.

61 See also Jaimie Baron's discussion of the attachment of truth-value in found documents in the never before seen, or rare film material (Baron, *The Archive Effect*, p. 5).

62 G. Didi-Huberman, *Images in Spite of All: Four Photographs from Auschwitz* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008), pp. 16–17.

63 A. Appadurai, 'Archive and Aspiration', in J. Brouwer, A. Mulder and S. Charlton (eds), *Information is Alive: Art and Theory on Archiving and Retrieving Data* (Rotterdam: NAi Publishers, 2003), p. 16.

64 H. Bradley, 'The Seductions of the Archive: Voices Lost and Found', *History of the Human Sciences*, 12:2 (1999), p. 119. Gary Wilder discussed something similar when he noted that a 'return to descriptive realism and archival objectivism' actually '*followed* what were supposed to be the epistemological breaks initiated by the so-called linguistic and cultural turns in historiography'. G. Wilder, 'From Optic to Topic: The Foreclosure Effect of Historiographic Turns', *American Historical Review*, AHR Forum: 'Historiographic "Turns" in Critical Perspective' (2012), p. 723. Italics in the original.

65 A different expression of this persistent interest in material trace is the interest in forensics and DNA. Historian Antoinette Burton, introducing the 2005 anthology *Archive Stories: Facts, Fictions, and the Writing of History*, argued that contemporary archive fever is bound up with convictions about the power of science to get at truth, seen in the pop-cultural interest in forensics, and the deep-seated faith in the capacity of science to read different 'types of archives' such as 'corpses, crime scenes, DNA samples' (Burton, 'Introduction: Archive Fever, Archive Stories', p. 5).

66 Godfrey seems to argue for something similar at the end of his article about *Floh* when he writes: 'At the moment of its obsolescence, analog photography presents itself to Dean […] like a structure that initially held utopian promise, but despite nineteenth-century hopes for the medium, it became – in the hands of its amateur users – a chaotic floe, as often treated rationally as it was superstitiously, as often prone to mistakes as it was able to capture an intended image for posterity' (Godfrey, 'Photography Found and Lost', p. 117).

67 The series consists of some four hundred photographs that were taken between 1998 and 2009 in New York's Lower East Side, Brooklyn, Mexico City, Warsaw, East Jerusalem and Kampala. Z. Leonard and A. Bremner, *Analogue* (Columbus, OH/Cambridge, MA: Wexner Center for the Arts, The Ohio State University/MIT Press, 2007), p. 1.

68 Iversen, 'Analogue: On Zoe Leonard and Tacita Dean', p. 26.

69 As noted, when Claire Bishop argued that Hal Foster's list of artists working within an archival impulse should be supplemented, Zoe Leonard was one of the suggested additions, and Foster did indeed add her when the text was republished in 2015. Zoe Leonard was also part of Okwui Enwezor's *Archive Fever* (text and exhibition), albeit not with *Analogue* but with *The Fae Richards Photo Archive*.

70 Godfrey, 'The Artist as Historian', p. 146; Batchen, 'Phantasm'.

71 Leonard's *Analogue* is interesting also because the series was produced over a number of years, stretching out on either side of the new millennium. When the series began in 1998 analogue photography was not yet entirely overshadowed by digital photography, although the indications that it would become so were clear. By 2009 when the series concluded, analogue technology was widely considered moribund. Leonard's use of a Rolleiflex, a medium-format analogue camera, fits with this broader interest among artists, but it is also

indicative of the generational aspect of artistic media use: Leonard learned the craft of photography before digital photography was widely available, and in that sense, she and her generation simply continued using the methods they had always used.

72 Chemically based photography is not necessarily considered to be *a single* medium. In its early history the photographic image was indeed produced using different technical solutions. See, for instance, G. Batchen, *Burning with Desire: The Conception of Photography* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1999). In terms of the indexical material trace, however, the chemical basis of all of these could be theorised in similar ways. For a discussion of pre-twentieth-century photographic technology and the subsequent demise of photo-diversity, see Rexer, *Photography's Antiquarian Avant-Garde*, pp. 16–17.

73 The artist published these rules in 2013. 'Samson Kambalu's *Nyau* Cinema Rules | Frieze', 2016, www.frieze.com/video/nyau-cinema-rules [accessed 1 September 2020].

74 S. Kambalu, 'Why Situationism? Why Sanguinetti Breakout Area? *Nyau*', 2015, https://samsonkambalu.files.wordpress.com/2015/11/why-situationism-kambalu.pdf.

75 Rexer, *Photography's Antiquarian Avant-Garde*, p. 13. Melissa Gronlund brought up Tacita Dean's installation *FILM* at Tate Modern's Turbine Hall in 2011 to discuss what she considered to be a conservative impulse at the heart of art making – 'analogue film is dead – long live analogue film!' For Gronlund, Dean's work exemplified a tendency among artists to look at technology that had been left behind, and she compared it to the way artists in the 1960s became interested in the index cards, typewriters and other physical effects of administration at a time when networks and computers were entering office spaces. M. Gronlund, *Contemporary Art and Digital Culture* [ebook] (London: Routledge, 2017), p. 3.

76 'Seminal' is the term Koester himself used in his description of the work (Caron [ed.], *Joachim Koester: Of Spirits and Empty Spaces*, p. 88). Koester has made a somewhat similar work, *Occupied Plots, Abandoned Futures* (2007), where he returned to the exact sites where twelve of the photographs from Ruscha's *Real Estate Opportunities* were shot in 1970. This series was listed in Brouws, Taylor and Rawlinson (eds), *Various Small Books*.

77 Artist and theorist Jeff Wall described a 'mimesis of amateurism' that began in the mid-1960s. Wall points out that the *look* of the amateurish photograph becomes an aesthetic style precisely when new technology – the accessibility of high-performing and easy-to-use cameras – makes these kinds of unskilled photographs easier to avoid. Here, then, is an interesting analogy between the technological shift taking place in the 1960s/1970s and the one occurring in the 1990s/2000s. Conceptual artists' use of amateur photography was, in Wall's formulation, a 'mobile social category' rather than a straightforward technical category, similar to the use of analogue photography by many artists at the turn of the twenty-first century. Wall, '"Marks of Indifference"', pp. 42–3.

78 Caron (ed.), *Joachim Koester: Of Spirits and Empty Spaces*, p. 88.

79 Caron (ed.), *Joachim Koester: Of Spirits and Empty Spaces*, p. 88.

80 Caron (ed.), *Joachim Koester: Of Spirits and Empty Spaces*, p. 88.
81 This site-specific indexicality can be tied to what some scholars and critics have discussed in terms of a performative indexicality, enacting historical knowledge by way of returning to specific sites. David Green and Joanna Lowry, cited above in terms of the shift from analogue to digital, wrote in the same text about what they called a performative notion of indexicality. See also Kate Palmer Albers's discussion of returns to the crime scenes of gruesome events in American history by Ken Gonzales-Day and Joel Sternfeld (Albers, *Uncertain Histories*). Another more vernacular practice that taps into this are the memes 'looking into the past' – a type of image in which a historical photograph is literally held up in front of the same place today, and then documented in way that makes the two temporalities converge.
82 Assmann, 'Canon and Archive', pp. 98–9.
83 Meyer, 'The Return to the Sixties in Contemporary Art and Criticism', p. 328. Meyer's 2019 book was dedicated to what he called 'the Art of Return', and there he made a distinction between 'return of' and 'return to' the Sixties. The former is connected to the 1960s as an 'effect', a propulsion of history 'whereby a previous era becomes resonant in a later time'; the latter on the other hand, 'is something *we do*', and when we carry out such acts of return we 'locate ourselves in relation to a past that feels urgently present' (Meyer, *The Art of Return*, p. 30). When artists such as Koester and Maranda (and Tacita Dean and Renée Green and others) return to the 1960s, it is a question of a 'return to' an act of recall, of bringing back, but they do so because of the 'return of', the resonance, reverberation and relevance of the 1960s for their own art practice.
84 P. R. Kalb, *Charting the Contemporary: Art Since 1980* (London: King, 2013), p. 47.
85 Kalb, *Charting the Contemporary*, p. 62.
86 Kalb, *Charting the Contemporary*, p. 62. Italics in the original.
87 English scholar Marco Pustianaz has described contemporary archival theory as being concerned with a 'return with a difference'; see M. Pustianaz, 'Un/archive', in Borggreen and Gade (eds), *Performing Archives*, p. 468.
88 Art historian Martha Buskirk has pointed out that the removal of the artist's hand, 'rather than lessening the importance of artistic authorship, makes the sure connection between work and artist that much more significant' (Buskirk, *The Contingent Object of Contemporary Art*, p. 3).
89 Boris Groys uses the term 'reauratization' in his discussion of contemporary art. B. Groys, 'The Topology of Contemporary Art', in T. Smith, O. Enwezor and N. Condee (eds), *Antinomies of Art and Culture: Modernity, Postmodernity, Contemporaneity* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2008), p. 74.
90 Claire Bishop argued that the reluctance among artists to embrace digital media wholeheartedly (in contrast to the use of photography and film in the 1920s, or video in the 1960s and 1970s) could in fact be understood by considering the analogue object's commercial viability vis-à-vis the digital. Bishop suggested that the fact that analogue media are perceived as 'scarce, rare and precious' is one aspect that helps explain its appeal. Contemporary art is therefore forced into a 'paradoxical compromise' when confronted with

new media – the potentially endless variability and modulation of the digital image is controlled by the imposition of limited editions and an aesthetics of the precious one-off. Bishop, 'Digital Divide', pp. 437, 440.

91 An interesting aside here is that Mel Bochner is said to have offered to donate the binders from his exhibition *Working Drawings and Other Visible Things on Paper Not Necessarily Meant to be Viewed as Art* (discussed in Chapter 3) to MoMA's collection of artworks. When the museum only wished to accept them as a potential donation to its library, Bochner reportedly refused. Elena Filipovic, who recounts this story, admits that it may well be apocryphal, but the fact that it continues to circulate nevertheless tells us something of the perceived rigid classification of museums and their defence of the idea of the singular work of art. E. Filipovic, 'Introduction (When Exhibitions Become Form: On the History of the Artist as Curator)', in Filipovic (ed.), *The Artist as Curator*, p. 11.

92 For more on the history of performance documentation, see G. Giannachi and J. Westerman (eds), *Histories of Performance Documentation: Museum, Artistic, and Scholarly Practices* (London: Routledge, 2018).

93 For more on certificates as artworks, see S. Hapgood and C. Lauf (eds), *In Deed: Certificates of Authenticity in Art* (Amsterdam: Roma, 2011); D. McClean, 'The Artist's Contract / from the Contract of Aesthetics to the Aesthetics of the Contract', *Mousse*, 25 (2010), http://moussemagazine.it/daniel-mcclean-the-artists-contract-2010/. For a discussion of preserving performance, see Diana Taylor's distinction between *archive* and *repertoire*: the former includes supposedly enduring materials such as texts, documents, and other objects, whereas the latter refers to embodied practices and knowledges such as spoken language, dance, sports, ritual. D. Taylor, *The Archive and the Repertoire: Performing Cultural Memory in the Americas* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2003), p. 20. Taylor acknowledged the similarity between her system and Pierre Nora's notions of *lieux* vs. *milieux de memoire*, but rather than Nora's sequential understanding or the view that one is true and the other is false, Taylor stresses the two as intersecting and existing in parallel (Taylor, *The Archive and the Repertoire*, p. 22). Amelia Jones discussed the study of performance works through their photographic textual, oral, video or film traces in A. Jones, '"Presence" in Absentia: Experiencing Performance as Documentation', *Art Journal*, 56:4 (1997), pp. 11–18, https://doi.org/10.1080/00043249.1997.10791844. The reification of performance has been considered and resisted by artists in different ways. A well-known example is Tino Sehgal who does not allow photographic documentation of his work and only uses oral contracts when selling his work to collectors and museums.

94 For a discussion of issues of collecting performance and other live art, see T. Calonje (ed.), *Live Forever: Collecting Live Art* (London: Koenig Books, 2014). The more recent practice of re-performance could also be considered part of this broader development.

95 Rexer, *Photography's Antiquarian Avant-Garde*, p. 6. Rexer is here writing specifically of Cindy Sherman and the MoMA acquisition of her film stills in 1995; this series is part of what Rexer calls 'antiphotogaphy'.

5   Research

Art and research. These two terms have become ever more entangled since the late 1990s: artists and curators now routinely describe their work as research or research-based. The resulting objects, whether material or immaterial, are examinations, case studies, explorations, surveys, investigations, enquiries or interrogations into particular phenomena or sets of questions – preferably with 'critical' added as a prefix. Aesthetic references to research are also common. Artworks and exhibitions often include objects that look like research materials, and these are in turn placed in folders, vitrine tables, cabinets and binders reminiscent of those used in actual archives, historical museums or research libraries. Art institutions – from public and private galleries to artist-run spaces, as well as residency programmes and artist studios – describe themselves as laboratories or educational spaces. In addition to the production of art objects and exhibitions, they organise lectures, seminars, workshops and open-ended social experiments. As a result of a dramatic increase in practice-based PhD programmes at universities around the world, artists are also increasingly taking on the role of academic researchers in a literal sense. How the connection between art and research is understood varies within and between these different examples. At times the terms have a loose associative connection to each other, at other times art and research are seen to be fundamentally linked in their shared quest for knowledge. Art and research are sometimes used as near synonymous terms, but it is also common to use one to modify and specify the other. The term connecting art with research is significant in this respect: are we to understand the relationship in terms of art *as* research (or research *as* art?), or perhaps that art is somehow generated *through* research? Does describing an artistic practice as research-based indicate that the artist mimics the work of the researcher or is it taken to mean that the artist is really – literally – conducting research?

Of course, artists were processing history, seeking knowledge and engaging in research-like activities long before the turn of the twenty-first century. There was no shortage of research metaphors swirling around the Russian

avant-garde in the decades after the Revolution. Similarly, the various occult and theosophical investigations into colour and form in the early twentieth century have frequently been described using research terminology. Many artworks produced in the 1960s and 1970s involved philosophical investigations and systematic examinations of perception, as well as ontological, social, technological and economic conditions, which are similar to research practices. In the first part of the nineteenth century, photography was developed by inventors who carried out advanced chemical experiments, several of whom had artistic ambitions. During the Renaissance the separation between art and research seemed largely irrelevant, with Leonardo da Vinci as a paradigmatic example of someone seamlessly combining artistic work with hands-on anatomical research and experiments in mechanical engineering.

To claim that art and research have a certain amount of overlap is therefore not a particularly daring statement. Art has for centuries been seen to generate knowledge, and artists have worked to understand the world around them, be it the meaning of ancient mythology, spatial topography, religious truths or social hierarchies. Art can also, as Svetlana Alpers famously argued, reflect a culture's interest in optics and scientific observation in such a way that the art of a particular era (Dutch seventeenth-century painting) can be used to understand that era's general scientific outlook.[1] It is clear, however, that art and research are currently intertwined in ways that make the connections between them increasingly difficult to untangle. This chapter considers this entanglement as it relates to the archive art phenomenon. I argue that the association between art and research not only profoundly affects what both research and art come to mean in the early decades of the twenty-first century, but also that this association is informed by, and makes sense of, the theorisation of the archive in contemporary art and in other disciplines at that time.

The artist as…

The general 'the artist as…' construction has become popular in texts about contemporary art. Countless examples can be found where the artist is compared to, for example, the historian, archivist, librarian, ethnographer, sociologist and researcher, but there are also suggestions that the artist is like the mystic, shaman, engineer, philosopher, activist, bricoleur, celebrity, hero, curator or DJ. The very construction 'the artist as…' is indicative of a post-war understanding of art in the way it highlights the artistic process and method rather than the finished object. The period that I refer to as 'the long 1960s' brought about a kind of 'process-ification' of art, obvious in the emergence of happenings, events, actions and performances, but also in the way that artworks are increasingly viewed less as fixed and stable objects, and more as the remains or traces of a particular event or situation.

A 2006 book of essays in German had the title *The artist as* (in English), evidence as good as any that this verbal construction was by then in standard use in the international artworld.[2] The book included a translation of Hal Foster's 'An Archival Impulse', in which Foster used the phrase 'artist-as-archivist' several times.[3] Foster had also used this pattern in the title of an earlier well-known essay, 'The Artist as Ethnographer?', published for the first time in 1995.[4] In this text Foster argued that elements from anthropology and ethnography were used in ways that represented a 'paradigm' or 'turn' in the current 'advanced art on the left'.[5] The idea of an archival impulse seems to build on some ideas from the earlier text, such as the claims that artists were becoming interested in lost and forgotten historical narratives, that they were searching for 'the other', and the view of the artistic process as a kind of self-reflexive contextualisation. The artist as ethnographer was linked to what Foster called 'ethnographer envy' among artists and critics, rooted in an aspiration to engage in fieldwork where theory and practice could be reconciled.[6] This idea of a combination of different forms of knowledge (theory v. practice, structured v. intuitive, objective v. subjective) is one that, as will become clear, is raised and elaborated in different texts that make up archive theory, but it also occurs in many discussions of art as research.

Another well-known 'artist as' construction is 'the artist as historian', the title of a 2007 article by Mark Godfrey. Early in this text Godfrey positioned his newly minted category of art as related to, but distinct from, the archival impulse that Foster had proposed in the same journal a few years earlier.[7] Godfrey nevertheless included many of the artists associated with archival art as examples of the artist as historian: he mentioned Tacita Dean, Sam Durant and Thomas Hirschhorn, the three core examples in Foster's article, as well as Francis Alÿs, Jeremy Deller, Mark Dion, Omer Fast, Renée Green, Pierre Huyghe, Steve McQueen, Santu Mofokeng, Walid Raad, Anri Sala, Simon Starling, Fiona Tan and Fred Wilson, among others.[8] Godfrey also brought up Joachim Koester's *Message from Andrée* in a footnote.[9] Conversely, Matthew Buckingham, Godfrey's main example of the artist as historian, was added to the list of archival artists when Foster's article was republished in 2015. This circulation and regrouping of artists exemplifies how contemporary art categories change over time and how they intersect with, cannibalise, and are potentially taken over by other neighbouring categories and genres. The overlaps between the artist as historian and artists' interest in archives seem so significant that it is not immediately obvious what exactly separates the two. No doubt aware of this potential confusion, Godfrey specified what he considered to be two important differences: first, that the artist as historian is restricted to historical representation (whereas archival art is not), and, second, that the artist as historian operates in a 'more directed manner'.[10] Godfrey's lengthy essay used Buckingham's oeuvre to extract three defining traits of the

artist as historian, but each of these – medium-reflexivity, a free and creative methodology, and a re-representation of already represented narratives – not only applies to much contemporary art but certainly to nearly all of the practices grouped together as archive or archival art. The two strains of artistic practice – artist as historian and artist as archivist – thus resemble and overlap in significant ways, and it is difficult to clearly separate them, despite Godfrey's attempt at differentiation.

The artist as historian is only one of several terms used to describe a similar grouping of artists to those highlighted as archival in the broader corpus of texts on archive art.[11] Many of the same artists are enlisted for other categories that similarly focus on artistic practices that reference the methods, language, and tropes of research. Visual art scholar and curator Marquard Smith, for example, has described contemporary artistic practices in which the artwork is said to both embody and evidence its own research.[12] In the introduction to the 2008 volume *What is Research in the Visual Arts? Obsession, Archive, Encounter?* Smith exemplified this kind of work with Simon Starling's *Shedboatshed*, but a footnote added other artists and collectives that could have served as examples: Christian Boltanski, Sophie Calle, Jeremy Deller, Mark Dion, Jimmy Durham, Susan Hiller, Thomas Hirschhorn, Multiplicity, Uriel Orlow, the Otolith Group, Olivia Plender, susan pui san lok, Walid Raad, Raqs Media Collective, Gerhard Richter, Jamie Shovlin and Fred Wilson.[13] The alert reader will no doubt notice that Smith's list of artists includes many of the artists frequently said to be part of an archival 'turn' in contemporary art.

Yet another categorisation focusing on the artist's working method as a form of research was proposed by curator and writer Dieter Roelstraete, who in 2009 directly positioned his focus on historiography against Godfrey's artist as historian, by claiming that his own proposed 'job description' was more accurate because of its stress on writing and narration that encapsulated a meta-historical mode presumably absent, or at least not as prominent, in the categorisation of artist as historian.[14] Roelstraete claimed to have identified a trend in recent art where artists 'engage not only in storytelling, but more specifically in history-telling', and in this retrospective, historiographic mode Roelstraete included the historical account, the archive, the document, the act of excavating and unearthing, the memorial, the art of reconstruction and re-enactment and the testimony.[15] Roelstraete went on to curate an exhibition titled *The Way of the Shovel: Art as Archaeology* at the Museum of Contemporary Art in Chicago in 2013.[16] A familiar line-up of 'archival' artists – Tacita Dean, Mark Dion, Stan Douglas, Joachim Koester, Anri Sala and Simon Starling – were among those included in the exhibition.[17]

Why, then, are so many writers culling from a similar list of artists, grouping them together into categories under somewhat different – but undeniably related and often overlapping – labels? Creating one's own moniker for a group

of critically acclaimed contemporary artists is perhaps an efficient way of establishing oneself as a relevant critic, curator or theorist. Although this might explain why so many categories emerged, it does little to help us understand why these particular labels were chosen: why focus on research and historical or historiographical analogies? Curators and writers may simply have raised their moistened fingers to gauge what artists were concerned with at a given moment, a view that implies that curators and writers are always one step behind the artist, and simply report on whatever topics artists are interested in. Another view would instead claim that artists and the curators and critics who write about their work are all influenced by certain timely topics and themes, and that the relationship between those writing and curating contemporary art and the artists who make artworks is more of a synchronic and symbiotic one.[18] The argument in this book is that although the archive art phenomenon is in many respects specific to the contemporary art context in which it appears, it feeds off and also feeds into other discourses, debates and phenomena far beyond the field of art. Accordingly, artists as well as critics, curators and philosophers, scholars in literature, gender studies and postcolonial studies can all be seen to tap into the same broad (archival) interest, though they develop different strands of it according to the specific concerns of their respective disciplines, fields and professions.

In the current chapter, the notion of the archive is shown to reinforce and support ideas of research and historical knowledge that generated debates and discussions in different contexts in the period c. 1995–c. 2015. The terminology of the archive is in frequent use, but the same general ideas and concerns also occur even when other vocabulary is used. Throughout this book I argue that the archive frequently functions as a convenient short cut to get at broader clusters of ideas. In line with this, the current chapter is concerned with the function of the notion of the archive for understanding the entanglement between art and research at the turn of the twenty-first century, and what sets of associations and connotations the concept of the archive contributes to this broader discussion. What is actually alluded to when an artist is described as a historian, archivist, historiographer or researcher? What type of connection between art and research is evoked, and what understanding of archive, research and history are implicitly and explicitly presented by artists themselves, and by those writing about their work?

Uncharted and self-reflexive research

In 1968 the British amateur sailor and businessman Donald Crowhurst entered the Golden Globe race, hoping to become the first person to singlehandedly complete a non-stop voyage around the world. Crowhurst soon realised that his boat, the *Teignmouth Electron*, was inadequate to the task, and instead of

circumnavigating the earth he stayed in the Atlantic and began to issue false reports about his progress and position. Crowhurst kept two logbooks: one charting his true course, the other his fictive one. At one point he was even thought to be leading the race, but two weeks before he was due home to a hero's welcome his boat was found adrift and empty.[19] It is generally assumed that Crowhurst died by jumping overboard in a confused state, possibly due to 'time-madness' after developing an obsession with his chronometer.
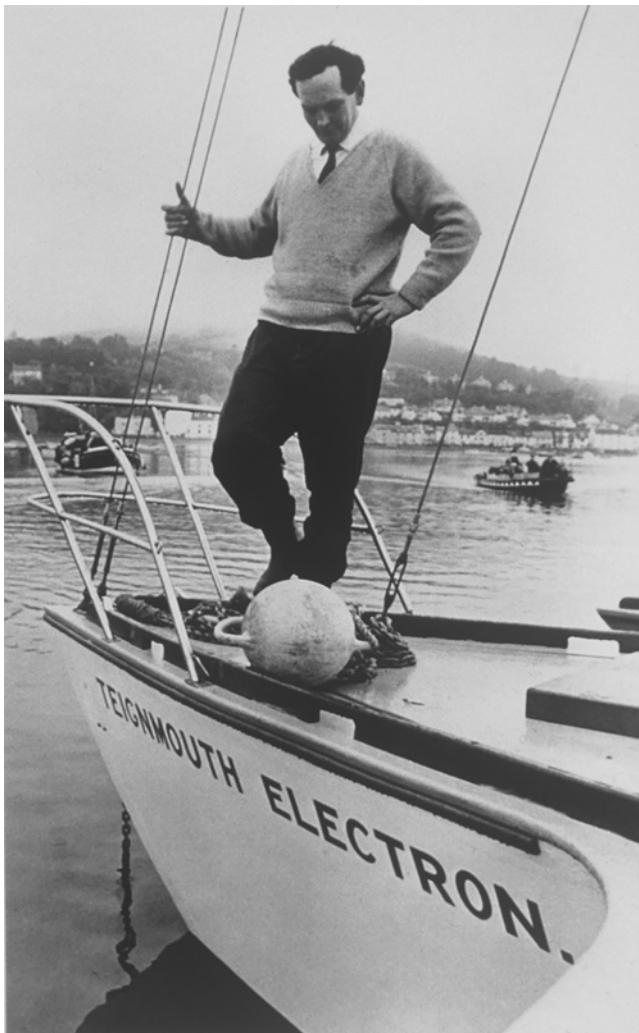
Tacita Dean, *Greetings from Teignmouth the Devon resort chosen by Donald Crowhurst as the Home Port for his Triumphant around the World Yacht Race*, 1996   **5.1**

Tacita Dean has carried out what she terms 'personal research and involvement' in the Crowhurst story, which has resulted in several films: *Disappearance at Sea* (1996), *Disappearance at Sea II* (1997), *Teignmouth Electron* (2000) as well as chalkboards, photographs and the book *Teignmouth Electron* (1999), which includes a lengthy essay by the artist.[20] In this essay Dean described in some detail how she first visited the town of Teignmouth, how she spoke to Crowhurst's family and local people, how she read council documents from the time of the race. She recounts her meeting with the town's 'Honorary Archivist', and how she travelled to the Caribbean to document Crowhurst's trimaran in Cayman Brac where it lies beached (Plate 5). Dean has referred to her working process as 'uncharted research', and this phrase was quoted by Hal Foster when he discussed Dean's work as a key example of an archival impulse.[21] Uncharted research suggests being open to different methodologies that will generate different types of knowledge than research carried out by the traditional academic scholar, and it gets at the way Dean, in different works, has been engaged in a systematic investigation into historical figures and events while simultaneously using elements of intuition, chance, rumours, dreams and coincidences as important parts of her method.

Dean's interest in the Crowhurst story centres largely on the particular existential situation of the solo sailor, and she cites passages from Crowhurst's logbooks where he mused on the workings of his chronometer, and elaborated on elusive ideas about divine time and his thoughts on Einstein's theory of relativity. She speculates that Crowhurst's obsession with his chronometer and his anxieties about its inaccuracy led him to an unbearable existential dislocation from both time and space.

Both the story of the Andrée expedition and that of Crowhurst's voyage around the world are concerned with adventure and striving for a spectacular grand achievement. In both cases the planned adventures go terribly wrong, and despite their differences, both involve a frenzy of recording of facts on charts and in notebooks. After the three men in the Andrée expedition had crashed their balloon they wandered across the frozen, uninhabited landscape for months, no doubt realising that a happy ending to the adventure was increasingly unlikely. Yet they continued to write down careful meteorological and geographical observations in their notebooks, possibly as 'a strategy for maintaining mental hygiene' and as a way to 'hold on to measurable time', according to a catalogue essay published on the occasion of showing *Message from Andrée* at the Venice Biennale.[22] For Crowhurst as well as for Andrée and his two travel companions, the activity of logging, charting, mapping – activities that have the appearance of conducting or preparing for research – are desperate, and ultimately futile, attempts to ward off mental breakdown, chaos and even death. The artists approach the adventurer as an exquisitely tragic and romantic figure, a mystical hero of fiction as well as a man of science

engaged in mathematical calculations with a deep trust in reason, technology and navigation. Dean's and Koester's treatment of Crowhurst and Andrée are exemplary of the way artists at the turn of the twenty-first century approach historical figures. The tension between the systematic researcher and the romantic hero, the tame and the wild, the structured and the chaotic are at work in the figures whom the artists examine, but this tension is also operating in the figure of the artist as a researcher him- or herself, implied, for example, in a phrase such as 'uncharted research'.

As noted above, Marquard Smith exemplified his view of artistic research with the artist Simon Starling, specifically with his work *Shedboatshed (Mobile Architecture No. 2)*, which Smith argued spoke of 'the time of research, the time of making, the time of contemplation – and of the power of chance, accidents, and luck'.[23] Dieter Roelstraete included a different work by Starling in the above-mentioned exhibition at the Museum of Contemporary Art in Chicago: a series of lithographic prints that exemplify another aspect of how research and art are connected at the turn of the twenty-first century: the notion of (archival) self-reflexivity. *Archaeopteryx Lithographica* (2008) was described in the following way on the museum's wall label: 'In the mid-nineteenth century, a fossilized feather was found in a rock quarry in the German town of Solnhofen, supporting new theories of evolution. The limestone from this quarry was used for lithography – the printing technology that these scientists used to publish their discovery.'[24] Starling's images thus set out to depict an important moment both for the natural sciences – the discovery of a feathered species in the evolutionary space between dinosaur and bird – and an important moment in the history of image-making – the ability to create and reproduce images and texts. The moment in the German quarry in Solnhofen is where these two histories happen to converge. In the catalogue to the exhibition, the artist was described in terms that point to the idea of an open or 'uncharted' form of research: on the one hand, Starling is said to exemplify 'a growing field of artists who base their work on historical research'; on the other hand, the text posits that in order to define this work as research-driven, one needs to have 'a fluid conception of what research entails and how the findings are conveyed'.[25] *Archaeopteryx Lithographica* is a historical portrait of the very technique used to create it; it is a lithograph of a historical lithograph of a feather that was only found because of the drive to produce such lithographs.

As I mentioned in the introduction to this book, the thematic chapters that make up Part II overlap in numerous ways. They are deliberately layered in such a way that, as the book unfolds, different perspectives, angles, views of the same object – the archive art phenomenon – contribute to making it come into sharper focus as further perspectives are layered on to previous ones. In Chapter 4, I mentioned a number of artworks that self-reflexively dealt with analogue technology, but Tacita Dean's *Kodak*, Simon Starling's *Wilhelm Noack*

Simon Starling, *Archaeopteryx Lithographica*, 2008 (detail)

oHG and similar works by Rosa Barba and others can also be incorporated into the current discussion of self-reflexivity and academic practice. When artists use the material and conceptual connotations of specific technologies to carry out investigations of those same technologies, they tap, whether consciously or not, into various theorisations of the archive. Jacques Derrida in 'Archive Fever' argued that the technology used for archiving affects what is stored in a particular archive, in a passage worth citing again: 'the technical structure of the *archiving* archive also determines the structure of the *archivable* content even in its very coming into existence and in its relationship to the future. The archivization produces as much as it records the event.'[26] When artists mobilise the particularities of a specific medium such as analogue film or photography, and make artworks that are specifically about these media by using these same media, they are engaged in a process that in large part mirrors the self-reflexivity of the researcher who is continually positing awareness of their own place within their chosen field of study. Just as the researcher shows their own position and its effect on the knowledge produced, the artist exposes the different ways in which the technology used to create the artwork is inescapably part of what that work means and how it functions. Derrida and Foucault, the two patron saints of the archive art phenomenon, both

concern themselves with self-reflexivity in ways that have been filtered into the discourse of archive art. Artists who explore specific media in ways that highlight their awareness of the effect of their chosen medium is one aspect of this; another, related one is the artists' overt awareness that their own position affects the historical figures, phenomena and events they depict. Both types of self-reflexivity point to the intricate connection between art and research at the beginning of the 2000s.

Artists' texts and paratext

The use of text is an important element of artworks that reference research. The research process behind what is shown in an exhibition is largely understood as such through the help of different kinds of artists' or curatorial texts or, in the case of more narrative film works, in voice-over narratives. These can be strictly informative, they can be theory-heavy, or they can incorporate associative and poetic language, but without them the viewer would not readily understand the layers of research referenced in the artwork.

Although some artists list their texts as part of the material of a given artwork, others consider their films, photographs or installations as primary material and the texts as secondary or supplemental 'asides'.[27] This distinction does not matter all that much for the viewer, however. Even if the text is approached as supplemental, a kind of *paratext* in literary critic Gérard Genette's sense, it is nevertheless a 'threshold' or an 'undecided zone' between inside and outside, and therefore controls and affects the reading of the text, or artwork, itself.[28] Genette's term relates to literary texts, but the idea that textual elements that are, strictly speaking, outside the text itself – such as the title, chapter headings, the blurb on the back cover, interviews with the author and even the author's other works – deeply affect how a work of literature is understood and interpreted is equally true for an artwork. What one is told about a work affects how one understands it in a general sense, but when artworks engage references to research practices and historical events, the details of these methods, references and the artists' position vis-à-vis the broader field of historical research – frequently outlined in extensive text documents – become integral to the interpretation of the work.

I will, in what follows, use two specific texts, one by Joachim Koester and one by Tacita Dean, to exemplify the function of contemporary artists' texts in a more general sense. As will become clear, these texts present the artist as a kind of researcher, but they also operate with a number of different notions of truth and research: grounding the research process in facts while also inserting doubts into that very same process.

In *Morning of the Magicians* (2005) Koester documented the house in Cefalú, Sicily, where occultist and magician Aleister Crowley moved with his

followers in 1920.[29] Notably, in the work description the artist's text is listed alongside the photographic prints, making clear that the written document is as integral to the work as the photographic images.[30] The text outlines that Crowley and his group of followers were notorious for their sex- and drug-infused rituals. Newcomers to the commune had to spend the night in what was referred to as the 'Room of Nightmares', under the influence of powerful drugs that made murals representing earth, heaven and hell, demons, goblins and graphic sex scenes come alive (Plate 6). The text also recounts how the commune was closed down by Mussolini in 1923 after headlines following the death of one member, and how the Italian authorities subsequently covered the frescoes with a coat of whitewash. Many years later in the 1950s, Crowley devotee and filmmaker Kenneth Anger removed the whitewash, again exposing the murals. By the time of Koester's visit the house was overgrown and very difficult to find, and the murals were again mostly covered, this time with graffiti.

The artist's text thus provides many supposed historical facts, but intermingled with these are rumours, personal musings, as well as a meta-reflections on the difficulty of knowing anything when it comes to occultist history:

> The history of the occult is also a history of the obscure. A history of ideas shrouded in secrecy seeping through the darkness of centuries, before suddenly resurfacing in the 'mystic' 1960s, and settling as a minor but constant presence within mainstream consumer culture. The 'occult' hasn't left many monuments, mostly dusty manuscripts found or 'rediscovered' in forgotten boxes in libraries or bookstores.[31]

This passage opens the text about *Morning of the Magicians* and it brings up a number of familiar tropes of the archive: the imagery of the dusty manuscript containing traces of the past, its serendipitous discovery, and the inscriptions that are overlaid, partly but not entirely obscuring what lies beneath. Koester's text contains many formulations that reference sleep: the house was 'forgotten – sleeping' for thirty years until Anger rediscovered it, Koester was 'overwhelmed by the scene's dormant qualities', and the vegetation covering the building created 'a kind of sleeping presence'. In addition to these images of the dormant material trace waiting to be reawakened by the artist or historian, there are also various references to historical research. Sources are weighed, much is presented as factual, but the text is also sprinkled with references to the hidden, the doubtful and the uncertain elements of historical research. In addition to describing the house itself as overgrown and difficult to find, the text's narrator argues that the historical figures involved in the occult are notoriously difficult to 'trace'; their real identities are 'veiled by disguises and pseudonyms', which makes the author 'doubt whether these people ever existed' at all. Several of the photographs in the series show the

walls of the house with layers of paint and graffiti, or covered in vegetation. At the end of the text the narrator – Koester – switches to the first person: 'It seemed to me as if sediments, pieces of leftover narratives and ideas from the individuals that once passed through this place had formed knots, as tangled as the bushes and trees that were now taking over, creating a kind of sleeping presence.'[32] The story of Aleister Crowley and his followers is filled with layers of misinformation, exacerbated by the addition of the character of Kenneth Anger whose planned photoshoot in 1955 may or may not have happened, and whose documentary about the commune was mysteriously lost by the television company – again, all according to Koester's artist text.[33] Koester, as the text's narrator, both adds and recounts layers of obfuscation throughout the text by expressing doubt in his own sources. The photographs carry associations to documentary realism, but when viewed in light of the text's references to the dormant and overgrown qualities of the narrative, it becomes clear that the images also focus on what is hidden in this innocuous overgrown lot on the hills outside a small Sicilian town.

The layers of imagery and writing on the walls of the house are mentioned several times in the text, and seem to be symbolic materialisations of the text's

Joachim Koester, *Morning of the Magicians*, 2005 (detail)

5.3

own layers of fact–fiction, subjective–objective, past–present. The literal layer-ing of paint and writing also conjures notions of the palimpsest. Palimpsest, a term originally used for documents where text has been covered with other text, making the lower, older, layers partially illegible, is one of those terms that surges in writings about contemporary art around the turn of the twenty-first century.[34] Palimpsest lends itself as a symbol of the archive since it refers to documents that have been passed on from past to present, with intervening interpretative layers, and it evokes the visual allure and materiality of overwrit-ing. The palimpsest draws attention to that which is simultaneously seen and not quite seen, and can be used to get at the idea of a particular archival temporality. In the palimpsest, history is revealed and simultaneously hidden behind what has come after.

In *Morning of the Magicians* and many of Koester's other artist texts, the artist accounts for a kind of research methodology. Koester has clearly read up on the facts, and he weighs the reliability of different primary and second-ary sources; he frequently provides specific names and dates of historical events and figures; he references other writings on the subject; and he carries out a version of fieldwork by travelling to key historical sites. However, the same artist texts also invoke less rational – even magical – ways of getting in touch with historical figures, via relics and pilgrimage sites.[35] Similarly, Tacita Dean's account of her research into Crowhurst's story involves talking to people, going through personal and official archives and weighing different sources against one another. Here too, traditional historical research is com-bined with sources and methods that would not as readily fit into an academic research account. For instance, Dean recounts in some detail two dreams she had about Crowhurst, she describes how the trimaran is haunted by Crow-hurst's ghost, and she makes various loose associative connections between the Crowhurst story and other seemingly unrelated images and events.

The element of chance in historical research is brought up in much writing on archive art and in archive theory. The artist's text on *Morning of the Magi-cians* references such chance in different ways: the artist describes leftover, ambiguous space, how he came across the house 'almost by chance', catching 'a glimpse' 'out of the corner of my eye'.[36] The chance element – 'the power of chance, accidents and luck' – was mentioned by Smith in relation to Starling's *Shedboatshed* and it has similarly been stressed by Dean in various interviews and texts about her work. Dean describes chance as 'a facility to notice – being in a state of grace … so that you are open to it. When you are actually immersed in something you do notice … connections'.[37] A clear example of the significance of chance is found at the very end of Dean's essay about Crow-hurst. Dean has at this point already made a thematic association between the Dutch conceptual artist Bas Jan Ader and Crowhurst, and she describes how she serendipitously came across an article that described how a book about

Crowhurst had been found in Ader's locker when it was opened after the latter disappeared at sea in 1975.[38] By recounting the episode in this way, Dean implies that the hunch she had pursued as part of her associative, even mystical mode of inquiry was later proved correct by verifiable facts.

I suggest throughout this book that the long 1960s is of particular significance to archive art. My contention is that the era is important for a number of different reasons, most obviously evidenced in the way that many 'archival artists' reference specific artists and practices from that era. The Crowhurst voyage took place in the 1960s and Dean explicitly argues that this decade is an important key to the story. In her essay about the work, she writes: 'The Sixties were a time of exploration, of moon travel and experimentation, of pushing the limits of human experience', implying that different aspects of this decade intersect with and make sense of the voyage and its tragic end.[39] The 1960s also bookends the text about *Morning of the Magicians*. As seen in the passage quoted above, the text opens with the claim that the occult suddenly resurfaced in the 'mystic' 1960s, and at the end of the text Koester writes that his exploration of the Cefalú house makes him think of Robert Smithson's *Partially Buried Woodshed*.[40] Smithson is brought up in Koester's text to point out how meaning changes over time: Smithson's woodshed became a commemorative monument after students at Kent State University were killed during an anti-war protest a few months after the artwork was installed. The university, according to Koester, wished to 'obscure this particular history' and eventually planted a circle of trees around the site, effectively hiding it from view.[41] Koester's *Histories* included a pair of images that referenced Smithson's photograph from Passaic, New Jersey, and therefore by mentioning Smithson in the artist's text for *Morning of the Magicians*, Koester effectively ties together different parts of his own oeuvre. Tacita Dean made a work specifically about *Partially Buried Woodshed* in which she documented a road trip to Kent State University, and here again the artist's text includes references to the unreliability of official narratives and history writing. Dean's account is in part documentary and in part a re-enactment of the road trip to the site. In different texts and interviews she has explained that she is far from convinced that the real site of Smithson's sculpture is where the university's maps indicate, and she speculates that it is instead located underneath a large car park.[42]

Robert Smithson is himself part of a group of artists engaged in research-like activities: his works frequently include long texts that are clearly based on scientific and academic (geological, historical, philosophical) sources. The recurrence of this particular artist in artworks made by artists at the turn of the twenty-first century thus places the more recent practices in direct connection with similar practices of the artist as researcher in the 1960s and 1970s. Dean makes this artistic affinity explicit when she writes:

> Robert Smithson has become an important figure in my working life … because
> his work allows me a conceptual space where I can often reside. Artists don't
> talk about this very much, because it is extremely difficult to describe. It's like
> an incredible excitement and attraction across time; a personal repartee with
> another's thinking and energy communicated through their work.[43]

Koester's statement about the obfuscations and attempts by the university
authorities to hide the troublesome facts about the student shootings at Kent
State highlights another key element of the notion of the archive as it is ref-
erenced at the turn of the twenty-first century. The archive is at this time
increasingly understood as institutionally framed and intimately concerned
with power. Not only do various injustices relating to gender, religion and race
determine what is and what is not included in an archive, but the interpretative
possibilities of these inclusions and exclusions also change as a result of sub-
sequent historical events and ideas. The way *Partially Buried Woodshed* comes
to have a different meaning because of political and activist interventions is
therefore an example of how the archive changes each time it is activated, and
that each use of a record affects its previous meanings. This is what archivist
Eric Ketelaar calls the archive's 'semantic genealogy', a term that can be related
to the palimpsest; but rather than being materially altered, this semantic gene-
alogy refers to changes caused by previous hermeneutic interventions, not
physical overwriting.[44]

Renée Green is another artist who can be considered in this context.
Green's work *Partially Buried in Three Parts* (1996–97) is an overt reference to
Smithson and the events that happened at Kent State, filtered through the
artist's own personal history.[45] Just like Dean, Green travelled to Kent State,
which is located a short drive from Cleveland, Ohio, where she grew up.
Green's mother was in fact working as a music teacher at the university at the
time of the shootings.[46] Green's installation ties the historical events to her
personal memories, her family history, issues of activism and race relations,
media, fiction and the materiality of memory. The first version of the work
was shown in 1996 at Pat Hearn Gallery in New York (subsequent versions
were shown at the 1997 Kwangju Biennial and Vienna Secession in 1999), and
it incorporated associations between political movements such as the Weath-
ermen, protests against the Vietnam war, student protests in Korea in 1980,
and various mediated accounts of historical processes.[47] Green's practice is
relevant for different elements of the connection between art and archive in
the 1990s and early 2000s: she has written extensively about her work and
exemplifies aspects of the artist-researcher discussed in this chapter, as well
as the curatorial associative processes discussed in the next.[48] The artist herself
and those commenting on her work have addressed the terminology and
theme of the archive directly: Green was mentioned in Foster's 'An Archival

Impulse', and an abbreviated version of her text 'Survival: Ruminations of Archival Lacunae' was included in the MIT/Whitechapel anthology on *The Archive*.[49] Green's essay was made up of quotations and juxtaposed parts of text that engaged with the notion of the archive via theorists such as Foucault, Derrida and Giorgio Agamben, considering the inevitable holes, aporias and absences in a given archive, the etymology of the term, as well as its ordering principles and its relation to subjectivity.[50]

The archive art phenomenon is, I suggest, best understood as accretive rather than discrete in the sense that different artistic practices overlap to some extent and points of similarity can be identified, even if these do not exhaust the works' meaning. In Dean, Koester and Green's work similar elements of archive theory are picked up and processed, despite the artists' different foci and interests.

Research metaphors: ghost hunting and detective work

In 'Archive Fever' and in a subsequent lecture, Jacques Derrida described the act of archiving as storing elsewhere, in an 'exteriority', that transforms the document and separates it from its lived history. The duality of safekeeping and forgetting is key for Derrida:

> the archive […] produces memory, but produces forgetting at the same time. And when we write, when we archive, when we trace, when we leave a trace behind us … the trace is at the same time the memory, the archive, and the erasure, the repression, the forgetting of what it is supposed to keep safe.[51]

Rebecca Comay, in a similar doubling, suggested that 'oblivion itself may prove to be the ultimate form of safe-keeping'.[52] At the heart of the archive, according to this view, is the paradoxical idea of remembering as a form of forgetting, seen to be operating on several different levels. First is the idea that the archive itself affects what is stored therein, and that when placing an event, story or figure into a historical narrative the historian also alters, and thereby destroys it in some sense. Second is the idea that history writing and research involves a kind of distancing, a storing elsewhere, divorced from the experienced and subjective elements of human knowledge. If the archive is a place of loss in this sense, one way to counter that loss is by engaging material and methods that do not readily fit into the traditional archive. That strategy is seen both in writings on archive theory and in the work of numerous artists.

As mentioned, Derrida's 'Archive Fever' is in part concerned with Jewish scholar and historian Yosef Hayim Yerushalmi, specifically a perceived tension in the historical method used in Yerushalmi's study of Freud. According to Derrida's account, Yerushalmi works with the methodological stringency one might expect from the objective historian: he carefully weighs facts, analyses

historical context, and makes ample use of archival documents. However, in the book's very last chapter Yerushalmi switches gear and engages Freud in an enticing, subjective, even pleading manner.[53] Although Freud is long dead, the historian addresses him, or rather his ghost, directly. What is at work here is thus a kind of research practice that implies a seemingly irreconcilable tension. Yerushalmi relies on archival documents, primary and secondary sources, *as well as* the most unreliable of sources such as ghosts and fantasies.[54] Each method invalidates the other if strictly considered part of one and the same system of knowledge, but what Derrida and artists such as Koester, Dean and others seem to suggest is that the two methods – or modes – of historical inquiry can operate parallel to one another, as separate systems that nevertheless both contribute to the understanding of a particular subject. In light of this, it is interesting to note that Koester has described his practice as 'ghost hunting' and that Dean's account of the Crowhurst story includes various superstitious speculations: several eyewitnesses recount how they heard Crowhurst's footsteps pacing the trimaran long after his death, and a local man claimed that the Crowhurst tragedy had somehow 'jinxed' the town of Teignmouth, which had been in steady decline ever since.[55]

Recall here the discussion in Chapter 4 about old and new forms of history and the different truth-claims relating to these. What was brought up there in terms of different relations to the material trace can also be considered by way of different views of research, and how these relate to notions of the archive. Artists such as Dean and Koester are similar to Yerushalmi in Derrida's account, in that they enlist different and incompatible notions of research. On the one hand, there is what can be called a traditional positivist view, where the artist or historian objectively weighs sources, accounts for methodological choices, and references archival documents. On the other hand, they also engage in a kind of alternative research that appeals to a subjective, associative and creative mode of working whereby the artist or historian pursues irrational and subjective sources such as their own dreams, rumours and coincidental occurrences. To this neat dichotomy between objective positivist research and mystical subjective modes of history, we can add a third view of history anchored in a postmodern or poststructuralist view. According to this, the past is only accessible indirectly, through the gaps and omissions in the remaining documents and memories. All three of these modes are referenced within texts and artistic practices that make up the archive art phenomenon.

Two figures connected to nineteenth-century systems of thought, the *flâneur* and the detective, can be used to clarify the kind of research that archival artists carry out. The detective and the *flâneur* each represent a method of generating knowledge and point to ways of understanding the modes of knowledge production evoked by the artist as researcher. The detective,

personified by Sherlock Holmes as the profession's most iconic practitioner, symbolises the methodology of deductive reasoning, searching for clues and piecing these together into a coherent explanation. Historian Carlo Ginzburg has made the case that a new 'epistemological model' emerged towards the end of the nineteenth century, a model based on the notion that truths can be revealed by observing seemingly insignificant clues.[56] One of Ginzburg's examples is the art connoisseur who, because of their focus on details such as how a particular artist depicts an earlobe or a fingertip, is able to identify the artist behind a given painting. For the detective, the perpetrator of a crime could be revealed by a similar focus on evidence that would be imperceptible or simply ignored by most people.[57] This epistemological model is also shared by modern medicine in which symptoms are deciphered, and by psychoanalysis, which concerns itself with unconsidered or unnoticed details that are interpreted as revelatory. In each discipline, infinitesimal traces, whether understood as symptoms, clues or pictorial marks, reveal an otherwise unattainable reality.[58] Rita Felski dedicated an entire chapter of her book *The Limits of Critique* to the figure of the detective and its links to suspicious reading in academia: both the detective and the humanities scholar are engaged in deciphering clues with the aim of finding out what a crime scene or text means beyond what they appear to mean.[59] However, both Ginzburg and Felski stress that, just like any systematic thinker, the detective also makes use of intuition and inspiration.

Many scholars in academic disciplines such as art history also understand research as a combination of different methods. In a volume published in 1998, editors Mark Cheetham, Michael Ann Holly and Keith Moxey noted a historical shift towards what they called a 'post-epistemological age' in art history.[60] They suggested that art historians were becoming more self-reflexive about their own practices, and no longer just acknowledged subjectivity as to a certain extent inescapable, but increasingly approached it as a welcome element in any historical and critical narrative.[61] In a discussion between the three editors published in the *Journal of Visual Culture* in 2005, Holly cautioned that academic art historical research frequently stripped the artwork of the very awe 'that makes art still matter'.[62] Holly readily admitted that she was troubled by the 'loss of wonder in the writing about the visual', and that she often yearned 'for something that is in excess of *research*'.[63] In another text, 'Mourning and Method', Holly similarly brought up different art historical modes of working, specifically contrasting two views of the art historian's work: one concerned with deciphering clues akin to the method of a detective, the other taking into consideration less verifiable evidence such as free association, intuitions and philosophical meandering.[64]

This free associative philosophical meandering brings to mind the topographical wanderings of the *flâneur*, the other nineteenth-century figure that

can be seen to symbolise a different aspect of academic and artistic approaches to archival research.[65] The *flâneur* is a person walking slowly and attentively without a map in the chaotic and fragmented modern city; he – traditionally the *flâneur* was male – is characterised by a kind of openness to chance that both Dean and Koester describe in their artists' texts. Interestingly, the post-structuralist historian has been described as a kind of *flâneur* who 'wanders the archival textual city in a half-dreamlike state in order to be open to the half-formed possibilities of the material and sensitive to unusual juxtapositions and novel perceptions'.[66] The postmodern or poststructuralist historian approaches the archival material by reading between the lines, evoking marginal figures and engaging in fragmentary narratives – a method and attitude that is clearly recognisable in many of the artworks and artists' texts that are grouped under monikers such as artists-as-historian/researcher/archivist.

The *flâneur* courts the unmapped territory, revels in getting lost and stumbles upon things by chance. As such this figure can be mapped on to both a subjective mysterious form of inquiry, and a poststructuralist reading against the grain. The detective-like critical researcher, on the other hand, works under the assumption that there are no coincidences, and would at first glance seem to represent a radically different view of research methodology.[67] But in fact, Dean, Starling, Koester and other artists suggest that being open to chance, seemingly random serendipitous associations can reveal real connections between things. Michael Ann Holly, Carlo Ginzburg and Jacques Derrida all argue that rather than relegating the intuitive and practice-based methods to some alternative knowledge structure outside the academy, these elements are *already part of* academic research, albeit perhaps largely hidden. They point to a kind of false separation between the theory and practice of research, and note that scholarly research as it is actually practised includes intuition, association and perhaps even irrational and mystical elements. These scholars thus share with the artists an openness to different systems of knowledge.

Such issues of research in theory and practice were brought to the fore in the early years of the twenty-first century when research and art came to be literally intertwined because of increasing numbers of Fine Arts PhD programmes.

Artistic research in the academy

Academic research programmes for artists – known variously as artistic research, studio-based research, creative-art PhDs or practice-based PhDs – have been around since the 1970s, but there was a drastic expansion in the number of such programmes in the late 1990s and the first decade of the 2000s. The increased presence and visibility of practice-based PhD programmes has led to heated discussions about the meaning and implications

of artistic practices as academic research, and what should count as truth and knowledge in this context.[68]

The perceived issues at stake in studio-based PhD intersect at several points with the phenomenon of archive art. In many cases, archive theory, archive art discourse and art practice enlist similar notions of what research is, can, or should be as those put forth by proponents of studio-based research. Those promoting studio-based PhD programmes frequently claim that 'artistic research can reveal new insights through creative and critical practice', and that part of the point of this kind of research is that the researchers do not know from the start where they are headed.[69] According to this view, research has no set goal or expected result, and this openness is viewed as a necessary and defining condition for research in art and design.[70] Janneke Wesseling, in the introduction to an anthology on the topic of research and art, discusses another frequent argument: that the value of studio-based research is that it is somehow capable of generating a different kind of truth or knowledge. Wesseling, who holds the title of Professor of Practice and Theory of Research in the Visual Arts, suggests that the kind of research carried out by an artist presupposes '*truth*, in the sense of correctness' and that it thereby generates a kind of knowledge that is free from the requirements of certainty and proof.[71] Interestingly, studio-based research seems to be to the humanities what humanities is to the natural sciences in some comparisons; freer and less tied to the strictures of absolute objectivity and certifiable truth.[72] Getting at the difference between artistic and other forms of research, artist and writer Timothy Emlyn Jones stresses the practical in contrast to the theoretical kinds of knowledge by distinguishing between 'knowing how' and 'knowing that', and noting that studio-based research is expected to produce knowledge of the first kind.[73] The discussion around studio-based research frequently enlists such clear distinctions between intuitive and more analytical forms of knowledge. Artists are seen to be tapping into the first kind, because of the common view that the artist is 'an intuitive and affective being, at odds with logic or systems'.[74] Artist Barbara Visser identifies what she considers the great potential of art as research: 'New combinations of knowledge, interaction, material and processes, an unorthodox collaboration between parties with their own specialisms, might lead to radically new insights. Besides making *things*, the artist can also accomplish something else: bring together different forms of knowledge and insights like an orchestrator.'[75] The comparison to an orchestrator brings to mind the curator – or artist as curator – engaged in processes of arranging, joining, gathering and framing various elements into a thematic whole.

This freedom and interdisciplinarity is an issue frequently brought up in discussions about studio-based research – either as a positive quality of this kind of research, or as its potential pitfall. Just as the curator is a free agent,

pulling together this and that, so the artist is seen to be sampling snippets of knowledge into a new creative knowledge system, free from, but also incorporated into, the strict framework of academic practice. Art historian James Elkins has been outspokenly critical of the terminology used to describe practice-based research as producing 'new knowledge' by way of its association with qualities such as 'mobile', 'dialogic', 'between zones' and 'nomadic'.[76] Regardless of whether or not Elkins is correct in criticising the validity of these descriptions, they are undeniably established tropes that continue to infuse much of the discussion of studio-based research practices. If practice-based research is understood to be free and mobile in this sense, it follows that it will be difficult to incorporate into established academic structures. Either artistic practice must conform to the rules of the academic system and thus become less free and 'artistic', or else the university needs to expand its definition of research and knowledge to be able to house the specific qualities of artistic research. When Marquard Smith enlisted Simon Starling as an example of an artist doing research, he did so as part of a general argument in favour of welcoming practice-led PhDs (his preferred term) into the university system. Instead of focusing on the problem of how faculty were supposed to formally evaluate and grade these practices and ensure that they conformed to the regulations and guidelines already in place at the university, Smith argued that a more relevant question would be 'how can we [the faculty] change to meet this?'[77] The university can, according to this view, use the practice-based PhD as an opportunity to open up its stale and rigid practices and adjust its views of both research and knowledge.

Describing artistic research as somehow beyond positivistic standards and objective criteria of evidence is reminiscent of Tacita Dean's description of her working method as 'uncharted research', or what Mark Godfrey termed a rigorous yet free research methodology at work in those contemporary artistic practices he grouped under the label 'artist as historian'.[78] Although the terminology is the same or similar when artworks are seen to resemble or reference research practices and when artists carry out research in the academy, the two types of artistic research should not be confused. When Koester, Dean, Starling and other artists make use of the tools, terms and paraphernalia of historical research – annexing research methods associated with historical research – they are not engaged in academic research themselves, and the result of their work is not, strictly speaking, history, but art. However, as art historian Carrie Lambert-Beatty noted in her essay about parafictional strategies among artists, strong reactions and condemnation can erupt when it turns out that the 'facts' presented in artworks are partly or fully fabricated. Lambert-Beatty raises a relevant question: why would so many assume that these works can be trusted to present facts in the first place, when they are clearly framed as art?[79] Why should anyone be surprised that artists make things up, that they create new,

fake or imagined worlds? It seems that part of the answer must be that during the first decades of the twenty-first century artists have increasingly incorporated references to academic research in ways that make it difficult to be sure what type of research and claims to knowledge are invoked by a given artwork. Artists frequently present real historical facts and documents, but they mix these with various other things, and they retain the freedom to manipulate and fabricate these as they see fit.

How the terms 'art', 'knowledge' and 'research' are defined and understood is key to understanding the interconnectedness between art and research and how these in turn relate to concepts of the archive. Artist and writer Victor Burgin, in his polemic against the current system of visual art PhDs, brought up the fact that '[t]he word "art" does not appear in dictionary definitions of the word "research".'[80] What the dictionary definition of research does highlight is scientific or scholarly investigation aimed at discovery, interpretation or application of facts, theories or laws, and Burgin notes that the images conjured by the common-sense notion of research are either 'white-coated scientists' or the 'tweed-clad historian', the latter situated 'among piles of documents in a dusty archive'.[81] Burgin's descriptions are interesting for different reasons: although he is no doubt correct in pointing out that the term 'art' is not part of the dictionary definition of 'research', one can certainly argue that one 'common-sense' understanding of art in the first decades of the twenty-first century does indeed involve the idea of the artistic process as a form of research. Furthermore, the dusty archives and the tropes of the historian mentioned by Burgin are – as seen throughout this book – precisely the kinds of references that many artists deliberately evoke in their work.

When Burgin noted that neither dictionaries nor common sense associate the term research with artists, he used Picasso's phrase 'I do not seek, I find' as an example of the understanding that scientists and scholars *research*, whereas artists *create*.[82] Picasso is enlisted in Burgin's texts to pedagogically contrast with the view of the artist as a researcher, and this is similar to the Picasso we find in 'The Museum's Old, the Library's New Subject' by Douglas Crimp.[83] In this text Crimp uses Picasso as a symbolic proxy for the pre-conceptual artist. In Crimp's dichotomy, Picasso represented creativity, originality and subjectivity, in contrast with Duchamp, who represented the shift from modernist to postmodernist artistic practices, or a shift from *making* to *taking*.[84] Picasso is frequently offered as a kind of straw man symbolising a particular kind of artist, and both Burgin and Crimp use him as a symbol of an artist who is not concerned with framing his art in terms of discursive and self-reflexive practice. The point that I want to make here is that the modernist view of the artist as a heroic creative genius is not generally tied to the idea of the artist as a systematic researcher; here the trope is the artist as an inspired, wild adventurer, a figure who cannot be constrained by academic structures and expectations.

However, contemporary artists considered part of the archival turn frequently deal with a doubled notion of knowledge and research whereby the intuitive, inspired, wild and unstructured coexist with the systematic, detailed weighing of sources. Additionally, the romantic figure is frequently used as subject matter by many of these artists, paired with a method of problematising their heroic status and the very possibility of gaining reliable knowledge about them. This is similar to what Rita Felski describes as the 'metasuspicious' practice of present-day academics in the humanities, where, in addition to deciphering and unveiling the meaning behind a given text, the critical gaze is expected to be turned towards the critical practice itself.[85]

This self-reflexivity among artists results in a kind of knowing subject who is negotiating their own artworks, positioning themselves in relation to theory and technology, and increasingly acting as interpreters of their own work. This attitude and approach can be clarified by considering the increasing interconnectedness of academia and artistic practice towards the end of the twentieth century. In his discussion of studio-based research programmes, Elkins points out that the critique of the 'academization' of art levelled against PhD programmes is largely misdirected, as it hinges on a frequent misunderstanding of what 'academization' is and how it relates to post-war artistic practices:

> If it means inexpressive intellectualization, then it needs also to be said that a retreat from overt affect and a focus on conceptualization are part of what interesting art has done since the 1960s: in other words, what is demonized might be just a name for the preponderant post-war avant-garde.[86]

This is a key point, and one that is highly relevant for understanding the archive art phenomenon. In the quoted text Elkins makes a connection between intellectualisation and the notion of 'interesting' art; that is, what is considered relevant and of high quality has been, since the 1960s, precisely this kind of conceptually complex art that could be accused of being 'academic'. Post-war or contemporary art in general, and archive art in particular, is in that sense by definition academic, regardless of whether or not artists get academic degrees. Part of that academicisation is the increasing importance of texts and the use of theory-infused terminology and particular forms of difficult art writing. As art becomes increasingly academicised in the general sense outlined by Elkins, the critical self-reflexive mode of working becomes a sign of quality for artworks, and tied to this is the use of language, evidenced by the way that art as well as humanities research is accused of using opaque, vague and unnecessarily difficult language.[87]

Research paraphernalia as artistic form: white gloves, footnotes and indexes

In addition to the tendency to refer to artistic work as research and the increase in artists receiving research degrees from universities, the connection

between art and research can also be understood in terms of formal, aesthetic and thematic elements. Just as contemporary art exhibitions often include old technology such as slide projectors, boxy television monitors or 16mm film projections, it seems that no current art exhibition is complete without filing cabinets, vitrines, ring binders or archive boxes. References to archives and research are now so ubiquitous in art exhibitions that it seems a standard, unremarkable way of exhibiting art.

Aesthetic representations of the work of the historian or archivist occur frequently in films, photographs and installations, as well as in performances that process the theme of the archive in different ways. For example, Stefanos Tsivopolous's *Precarious Archive* (2016), shown at *Documenta 14* in Kassel in 2017, consisted of a large installation of archive boxes, overhead projectors and white-gloved performers who enacted the work of the archivist/historian (Plate 7). The performer interacted with the audience and presented the archival photographic material as a series of questions that seemed designed to make the viewer increasingly sceptical of the documents on view, or, to use Anthony Downey's phrase, created a 'cognitive dissonance' in the viewer's relation to the archive.[88]

Although overt references to research might be most readily considered in terms of white coats and filing cabinets, there are a number of other ways in which contemporary artists make works that look like or evoke research practices in aesthetic or formal terms. Different strands of research references are

Stefanos Tsivopoulos, *The Precarious Archive*, 2016   **5.4**

artworks that incorporate what might be called the referential structure of academic writing (such as footnotes or indexes), or research-related illustrations (such as graphs or tables), or printed material (such as reports or academic articles). The index and the footnote are of particular interest in the current discussion because of their referential function, which ties them to the notion of the archive in different ways. I will therefore spend the remainder of this chapter on artworks that make use of these formal elements of scholarly work.

Index

5.5   Alejandro Cesarco, *Index (a Reading)*, 2007–08 (detail)

Index

Alejandro Cesarco, *Index (a Reading)*, 2007–08 (detail) **5.6**

Alejandro Cesarco's *Index (a Reading)* (2007–08) consists of ten page-like C-prints that represent the alphabetised index of a book. Listed under 'b' are names such as *Baldessari, Barthes, Benjamin, Blanchot, Buchloh, Borges, Buck-Morss, Buckingham* (as in the artist Matthew Buckingham). Terms such as *cataloguing*, the term *index* itself and the term *archive* all have entries. Each indexed term has page numbers indicating where in the book these references are found. Cesarco's index is a reference both to the actual tools of research

– the index found at the back of every academic publication – and to the archive as structure. On the one hand, the artists, terms, authors and theories listed are direct references to the kind of larger archive in which Cesarco's work can be placed, and without which, arguably, it is impossible to understand this and other artworks like it. On the other hand, the work is also a signifier without a signified, a reference without a text, since this is an index that has no book to which it refers.

Sherwin Rivera Tibayan's *Index* (2015) is formally very similar to Cesarco's work, but instead of indexing a non-existent book, Tibayan has created a reference to Susan Sontag's well-known collection of essays, *On Photography*. Tibayan typed up Sontag's book and taught himself how to create an index, using *The Chicago Manual of Style*. The artist described the impetus for the project in terms that focused on the formal elements of the book index, and he also tied it to the photographic notion of index: 'I wanted to consider both the elicitations and limitations generated by this type of structured, cross-referential knowledge, and find a way to see a particular picture of the medium's history and indexical theorization.'[89]

Both Cesarco's and Tibayan's index works evoke the archive in different ways. First, they point to the function of the archive's own index – without some kind of external structure or order an archive will be impossible to navigate, and this external organisational structure is necessary for something to be an archive according to some definitions. But these artwork-indexes are also visual references to the notion of the archive as a structure, a network or system of influences, relationships and forces that make up the very structure of the artwork itself.

Writer and curator Sasha Archibald, in an essay about indexes, described how the book index is characterised by its function of pointing elsewhere: it is constantly deflecting attention towards the subject covered in the main text, but at the same time it is also a map or portrait of the indexed book.[90] 'An index can withhold information', Archibald argued, but it 'is equally capable of spilling secrets, making plain what a book might only suggest. If a man's mistress was more important than his wife, the index will show it.'[91] The index can be seen as a kind of copy of the text, made up of the same information but rendered as diagram rather than running text. The index changes the text from a narrative flow to logistical coordinates, and this is, to quote Archibald again, 'a dramatic conversion; an indexed book is no longer a temporal entity to be read over time, but a spatial entity'.[92] This spatial – simultaneous – aspect of the index is of particular importance for the analysis of the archive art phenomenon, as it points ahead to the discussion of presentist temporality that will be considered in more detail in Chapter 8.

Both indexes and footnotes are paratexts in Genette's terminology. Both can be used to discern or mark a self-reflexive distance from the main text,

and therefore they are suitable for analysis in terms of the archive art phenomenon, which is characterised by such self-reflexive meta-reflection. In an article about the history of the modern use of footnotes in historical research, historian Anthony Grafton examined the practice of the 'double narrative' of the modern historian created by way of footnotes.[93] Grafton describes a process whereby facts are established and certainties undermined at one and the same time: 'the historian sets the table and the annotator whips off the tablecloth sometimes overturning the dishes'.[94] The doubled aspect of constructing and undermining an argument is, as noted, an important element of artistic references to research as method. In Tsivopoulos's *Precarious Archive*, it is the white-gloved archivists who provide such a parallel narrative, asking if the viewers are sure of what they see, urging them to question their own eyes, the archivists as well as the documents they present. Tacita Dean and Joachim Koester produce a similar construction-and-undermining in their works, frequently through the interplay between textual and visual elements.

Roni Horn's footnoted water photographs exemplify a similar multifaceted relationship to research. Horn has made a number of works that specifically reference the Thames in London, both the actual physical place as well as its various cultural and historical associations. *Still Water (The River Thames, for Example)* (1999) is a series of lithographs depicting photographic images of water scattered with tiny numbers that correspond to footnotes running along the lower edge of the prints (Plate 8).[95] The footnotes include personal reflections about water, but also accounts of the numerous suicides carried out by deliberate drowning in this particular river. At times the footnotes themselves have footnotes, asking questions, referring back or forward to other notes (Plate 9). Horn's footnoted photographs exemplify the different kinds of research I have discussed in this chapter.

This series can also be brought into the discussion in Chapter 3 about the document and Suzanne Briet's notion that nature becomes a document as soon as it is framed as an object of study – recall here the stones that become documents when placed in a museum of mineralogy or the antelope that becomes a document when placed in a zoo. Horn similarly points to water as something that is culturally and historically framed when she literally annotates nature and thereby places it in the intersection of various references and networks of knowledge and feelings. What I want to stress in this chapter's final section is that artworks such as Horn's footnoted images or Cesarco's and Tibayan's indexes can be used as a prism through which to view the broader relationship between art and research, precisely because they make use of the tools of academic research communication in ways that make visible research as a form, while also using these tools to structure, reference and mobilise historical and anecdotal information in ways that are emblematic of a particular kind of artistic practice at the turn of the twenty-first century.[96]

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In this chapter I have discussed the way artistic practice is increasingly framed in terms of research in the second half of the twentieth century. I have shown that the notion of the archive enables a general academicisation of art to be understood in terms of its ties to several broader issues of knowledge and research. The way the archive is mobilised – in both writing and artworks – points to a juxtaposition between a loose and subjective kind of research practice and research based on more rigorous methods of objective processing of archival documents, weighing sources and accounting for methodology. In a similar way that the advent of digital technology was shown to make the particularities of analogue media appear, the current chapter has brought into view how the increasing prevalence of, and debate around, artistic research in the academy made the often unpronounced features and assumptions of established research disciplines more clearly visible.

The connections between contemporary art and research are numerous, and these connections are both complex and instructive. On the one hand, artists mimic academic research, while on the other, traditional academic disciplines stress a more intuitive set of practices and court the creative connotations of their own research practices. Artists have no problem combining different types of research paradigms in the same work: ideas of authenticity and positivist forms of historical research are combined with postmodern views of knowledge and self-reflexivity, as well as ideas of the heroic, wild and romantic figure. The attraction to the marginal and the overlooked often seems to be a romantic quest, yet one combined with a strong self-reflexive attitude, whereby the critic, the art historian as well as the artist, is necessarily implicated in the very material that they process. This self-reflexivity is in turn deeply connected to the 'trope of criticality' that infuses not only contemporary art but also contemporary academia.[97] This critical paradigm is the focus of the next chapter.

Notes

1 S. Alpers, *The Art of Describing: Dutch Art in the Seventeenth Century* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984).
2 Michalka and von Bismarck (eds), *The artist as*. The construction can also be traced to Walter Benjamin's 'The Author as Producer' (1934). See also A. Burns, J. Lundh and T. McDowell (eds), *The Artist As: Producer, Quarry, Thread, Director, Writer, Orchestrator, Ethnographer, Choreographer, Poet, Archivist, Forger, Curator, and Many Other Things First* (Berlin: Sternberg, 2018).
3 Foster, 'An Archival Impulse'.
4 H. Foster, 'The Artist As Ethnographer?', in G. E. Marcus and F. R. Myers (eds), *The Traffic in Culture: Refiguring Art and Anthropology* (Los Angeles:

University of California Press, 1995), pp. 302–9. A different version of this text was published in Foster's collection of essays *Return of the Real* the following year, then without the question mark in the title. H. Foster, 'The Artist as Ethnographer', in *The Return of the Real: The Avant-Garde at the End of the Century* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1996), pp. 171–203.

5   Foster, 'The Artist as Ethnographer', pp. 172, 175. The structure of the argument in this essay closely resembles that of 'An Archival Impulse' in that Foster posits a new paradigm which is said to have some art historical precedents, but consists of several new elements.

6   Foster, 'The Artist As Ethnographer', p. 181.

7   Godfrey, 'The Artist as Historian', pp. 142–3.

8   Other artists mentioned in this listing are Carol Bove, Tom Burr, Ian Kiaer, Zarina Bhimji, Laura Horelli (Godfrey, 'The Artist as Historian', pp. 143–5). Note also that Godfrey discussed the same and similar artists in 'Photography Found and Lost', discussed in Chapter 4.

9   Godfrey, 'The Artist as Historian', p. 144, n. 8.

10 Godfrey, 'The Artist as Historian', p. 143, n. 5.

11 Another example is Peter J. Schneemann, who discussed both 'the artist as historian' and 'the artist as historiographer'. P. J. Schneemann, 'Contemporary Art and the Concept of Art History: Influence, Dependency and Challenge', in M. Rampley (ed.), *Art History and Visual Studies in Europe: Transnational Discourses and National Frameworks* (Leiden: Brill, 2012), pp. 59–73. Frank van der Stok proposed three different strategies or models used by artists in their engagement with historical images: *parallel* history, *alternative* history, *deconstructing* history. Again, several artists frequently included in archive art groupings are mentioned. F. van der Stok, 'Mental Images', in F. Gierstberg, F. Bool and F. van der Stok (eds), *Questioning History: Imagining the Past in Contemporary Art* (Rotterdam: NAi Publishers, 2008), pp. 104–18. For a direct use of the phrase 'artist-researcher' as one of several characteristics of institutional critique, see J. Meyer, 'What Happened to the Institutional Critique?', 1993, http://bortolamigallery.com/site/wpcontent/uploads/2015/04/JamesMeyer_WhatHappenedtotheInstitutionalCritique.pdf?fb07eb [accessed 29 June 2016].

12 M. Smith, 'Introduction', in M. A. Holly and M. Smith (eds), *What Is Research in the Visual Arts? Obsession, Archive, Encounter* (Williamstown, MA: Sterling and Francine Clark Art Institute, 2008), pp. x–xxvi.

13 Smith, 'Introduction', pp. xxiv–xxv, n. 21.

14 Dieter Roelstraete distinguished between 'artworks that want to remember' (in a sense approaching history) and 'artworks about remembering' (approaching historiography). D. Roelstraete, 'The Way of the Shovel: On the Archeological Imaginary in Art', *e-flux journal*, 4 (2009), unpaginated, 1/7 and n. 2, www.e-flux.com/journal/the-way-of-the-shovel-on-the-archeological-imaginary-in-art/ [accessed 9 May 2015].

15 Roelstraete, 'The Way of the Shovel', 1/7.

16 The exhibition got its theme from two different texts, both from 2009: 'The Way of the Shovel: On the Archeological Imaginary in Art' and 'After the

Historiographic Turn: Current Findings'. The exhibition was described in the following terms on the MCA website: '*The Way of the Shovel: Art as Archaeology* traces the interest in history, archaeology, and archival research that defines some of the most highly regarded art of the last decade'. 'MCA – Exhibitions: The Way of the Shovel: Art as Archaeology', https://mcachicago.org/Exhibitions/2013/The-Way-Of-The-Shovel-Art-As-Archaeology [accessed 2 April 2017].

17 The full list of artists included in the exhibition is Pamela Bannos, Lene Berg, Derek Brunen, Mariana Castillo Deball, Phil Collins, Moyra Davey, Tacita Dean, Mark Dion, Stan Douglas, LaToya Ruby Frazier, Cyprien Gaillard, Raphaël Grisey, Scott Hocking, Rebecca Keller, Daniel Knorr, Joachim Koester, Aleksander Komarov, Susanne Kriemann, Jason Lazarus, Jean-Luc Moulène, Deimantas Narkevičius, Sophie Nys, Gabriel Orozco, Michael Rakowitz, Steve Rowell, Anri Sala, David Schutter, Simon Starling, Hito Steyerl, Tony Tasset, Zin Taylor, Shellburne Thurber, Ana Torfs and Siebren Versteeg. Zoe Leonard, another frequent entry in the archive art category and neighbouring ones, was not included in the MCA exhibition, but an image from her series *Analogue* illustrated Roelstratete's essay 'After the Historiographic Turn'.

18 To coin my own monikers here, the first view can be summarised as a 'bellwether' explanation, the second an explanation based on a general 'Zeitgeist'.

19 'Tacita Dean: Disappearance at Sea: New Visions 1999–2009: Art: Explore online: RMG', www.rmg.co.uk/explore/art/new-visions/tacita-dean-disappearance-at-sea [accessed 10 June 2014].

20 A second edition of the book was published in 2009. In what follows, all quotations from Dean's text are taken from this edition. T. Dean, *Teignmouth Electron*, 2nd edn (Göttingen: Steidl, 2009).

21 Tacita Dean used this phrase not to describe the Crowhurst-related works but in relation to another work, *Girl Stowaway* (1994). M. Dàvila (ed.), *Tacita Dean* (Barcelona: Museu d'Art Contemporani de Barcelona, 2000), p. 12; Foster, 'An Archival Impulse', pp. 12, 13.

22 Kreuger, *Joachim Koester: Message from Andrée*, p. 33.

23 Smith, 'Introduction', p. xvi.

24 Wall labels from the exhibition can be seen on the MCA website: 'MCA – Exhibitions: The Way of the Shovel: Art as Archaeology'.

25 D. Roelstraete, *The Way of the Shovel: On the Archaeological Imaginary in Art* (Chicago: Museum of Contemporary Art in association with the University of Chicago Press, 2013), p. 212. The text about Starling's work in the catalogue is credited to 'KL' which according to the list of contributors is Karsten Lund, Curatorial Assistant at the Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago.

26 Derrida, 'Archive Fever', p. 17.

27 Mark Godfrey wrote that one critic called Dean's 'expansive and allusive texts' *asides*, but he did not name the critic (Godfrey, 'Photography Found and Lost', p. 92). In a lengthy survey of her work, Jean-Christophe Royoux used the heading 'asides' to discuss notions of supplement, allegory and frame in relation to Dean's historical narratives. J.-C. Royoux, 'Cosmograms of the Present Tense', in *Tacita Dean* (London: Phaidon, 2006), p. 86.

28 G. Genette, 'Introduction to the Paratext', trans. M. Maclean, *New Literary History*, 22:2 (1991), p. 261.

29 Note that Koester has also made another work, a 16mm film installation with the same title. *Morning of the Magicians* mimics the title of a French book about the occult and the paranormal. L. Pauwels and J. Bergier, *Le Matin Des Magiciens* (Paris: Éditions Gallimard, 1960).

30 The work description reads: '*Morning of the Magicians*, 2005, 10 part photographic series, 6 selenium toned silver gelatin prints and 4 C-prints, 47.5 cm × 60.3 cm each, artist text' (Caron [ed.], *Joachim Koester: Of Spirits and Empty Spaces*, p. 272).

31 Caron (ed.), *Joachim Koester: Of Spirits and Empty Spaces*, p. 272.

32 Caron (ed.), *Joachim Koester: Of Spirits and Empty Spaces*, p. 281.

33 Caron (ed.), *Joachim Koester: Of Spirits and Empty Spaces*, p. 280.

34 The term is mentioned explicitly in another of Koester's artist texts connected to his work *Nanking Restaurant. Tracing Opium in Calcutta* (2006). In this text Koester described how he 'began to see the city [Calcutta] as a palimpsest' (Caron [ed.], *Joachim Koester: Of Spirits and Empty Spaces*, p. 235).

35 An example of this is the way Koester quotes Thomas de Quincey when describing the life of Immanuel Kant in the text accompanying his *The Kant Walks* (2003–04) (Caron [ed.], *Joachim Koester: Of Spirits and Empty Spaces*, pp. 82–6).

36 Caron (ed.), *Joachim Koester: Of Spirits and Empty Spaces*, pp. 280–1.

37 Smith, 'Introduction', p. xvi. The quote by Dean is taken from a conversation between Tacita Dean and Marina Warner in J.-C. Royoux et al., *Tacita Dean* (London: Phaidon, 2006).

38 Dean, *Teignmouth Electron*, unpaginated, section 'Postscript March 3 1999'.

39 Dean, *Teignmouth Electron*, unpaginated, section 'The Postcard'.

40 *Partially Buried Woodshed* was strictly speaking not produced in the 1960s but in the early 1970s; however, it is definitively part of the long 1960s.

41 Caron (ed.), *Joachim Koester: Of Spirits and Empty Spaces*, p. 281.

42 Tacita Dean in a conversation with Marina Warner in M. Dàvila (ed.), *Tacita Dean* (Barcelona: Museu d'Art Contemporani de Barcelona, 2000), pp. 60–1.

43 Dàvila (ed.), *Tacita Dean*, p. 61. In a different text, Dean points out how Donald Crowhurst's son Simon has become an expert in geological time at Cambridge University, in essence processing his father's crisis by studying the scale of time and looking at fossils and drilling the seabed. The affinity to Robert Smithson's 'conceptual space' seems implicitly connected to this, since many of Smithson's projects dealt with long expanses and layers of what can be called geological time. Royoux et al., *Tacita Dean*, p. 18.

44 E. Ketelaar, 'Tacit Narratives: The Meaning of Archives', *Archiva*, 1 (2001), p. 138.

45 Green's return to Kent State and Smithson's *Partially Buried Woodshed* are discussed at length in Meyer, *The Art of Return*, pp. 177–88.

46 Meyer, *The Art of Return*, pp. 177, 186.

47 *Partially Buried in Three Parts* consists of *Partially Buried*, *Übertragen/Transfer* and *Partially Buried Continued*, each of which is also a video. The first is

focused on Kent State and events in the United States, the second on how the US was imagined from afar, and the third brings in the historical context of Korea, both the Korean War and more recent student unrest. The three parts, Green explained, 'grew out of a consideration of the year 1970 and the associations became more dense in the process of working'. R. Green, 'Survival: Ruminations on Archival Lacunae (2001)', in R. Green, *Other Planes of There: Selected Writings* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2014), pp. 253ff. See also E. Zabunyan, 'We Are Here', in N. Schweizer (ed), *Renée Green Ongoing Becomings: Retrospective 1989–2009 [Exhibition Musée Catonal Des Beaux-Arts, Lausanne]* (Zurich: JRP Ringier, 2009), pp. 10–11.

48 Green has also been also compared to Aby Warburg, another common reference in discussions of archive art, because of the accumulative layered associations she engages in, and the same author pointed out her early interest in Foucault (Zabunyan, 'We Are Here', pp. 7, 11). In the same catalogue, Kobena Mercer described Green's work in terms of 'circulatory returns': journeying that 'involves travelling toward the site-specific characteristics of an archive through a circulatory pattern of directed mobility that results in a condition of critical *dépaysement*'. K. Mercer, 'Archive and Dépaysement in the Art of Renée Green', in N. Schweizer (ed), *Renée Green Ongoing Becomings*, p. 21. Italics in the original. Barbara Sutton in the introduction to a collection of Green's writing brings up 'artist-as-curator' and 'artist-as-researcher' specifically, but argues that Green's work in a more sustained way than these terms 'complicates the tendency to read art as distinct from the broader media ecology it circulates within'. G. Sutton, 'Remarks on the Writings of Renée Green', in Green, *Other Planes of There*, p. 23.

49 Foster, 'An Archival Impulse', p. 15. For Green's discussion and critique of Hal Foster's designation of the artist as ethnographer, see R. Green, 'Slippages (1997)', in Green, *Other Planes of There*, pp. 230–55. The abbreviated version of Green's essay 'Survival: Ruminations on Archival Lacunae' appears in Merewether (ed.), *The Archive*, pp. 49–55.

50 Green, 'Survival: Ruminations on Archival Lacunae'. For a different consideration of the notion of the archive and the process of archiving, see R. Green, 'Archives, Documents? Forms of Creation, Activation, and Use (2008)', in Green, *Other Planes of There*, pp. 176–90.

51 C. Hamilton (ed.), 'Archive Fever (A seminar by Jacques Derrida, University of the Witwatersrand, August 1998, transcribed by Verne Harris)', in C. Hamilton (ed.), *Refiguring the Archive* (Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic, 2002), p. 54.

52 Comay, 'Introduction', p. 15.

53 Y. H. Yerushalmi, 'Monologue with Freud', in *Freud's Moses*, pp. 81–100.

54 This combination would be considered invalid according to traditional views of historical research, whereby archival verifiability is a crucial element. Gary Wilder described the unpronounced ground of historical research before the linguistic turn: 'If the assumption is that historians by definition analyse archival documents, then historians must be able to answer their questions with archival evidence […] Conversely, it means that questions that cannot be answered archivally are not worth asking, or that historians who operate in

different registers are not doing legitimate history' (Wilder, 'From Optic to Topic', pp. 729–30).

55   Koester's description of his work as 'ghost-hunting' is taken from 'Lazy Clair-voyants and Future Audiences: Joachim Koester in Conversation with Anders Kreuger', *Newspaper Jan Mot 43,44*, 48:9 (2005), p. 3. This phrase is also cited in Foster, 'Blind Spots', p. 213. See also Catherine Wood's essay about Koester's work, 'The Ghost Grid', in Caron (ed.), *Joachim Koester: Of Spirits and Empty Spaces*, pp. 32–40. The quoted text by Tacita Dean comes from Dean, *Teignmouth Electron*, unpaginated, section 'Post Card'.

56   C. Ginzburg, 'Clues: Roots of an Evidential Paradigm', in *Clues, Myths, and the Historical Method* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1989), pp. 96–125.

57   Ginzburg, 'Clues: Roots of an Evidential Paradigm', pp. 97–8.

58   Ginzburg, 'Clues: Roots of an Evidential Paradigm', p. 101.

59   See Chapter 3, 'An Inspector Calls', in Felski, *The Limits of Critique*, pp. 85–116.

60   M. A. Cheetham, M. A. Holly and K. Moxey, 'Introduction', in M. A. Cheetham, M. A. Holly and K. Moxey (eds), *The Subjects of Art History: Historical Objects in Contemporary Perspectives* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), p. 2. Cited in Smith, 'Introduction', pp. xi–xii.

61   Cheetham, Holly and Moxey, 'Introduction'. Paraphrased in Smith, 'Introduction', p. xii.

62   M. A. Cheetham, M. A. Holly and K. Moxey, 'Visual Studies, Historiography and Aesthetics', *Journal of Visual Culture*, 4:1 (2005), p. 88. Cited in Smith, 'Introduction', p. xiii.

63   Cheetham, Holly and Moxey, 'Visual Studies, Historiography and Aesthetics', p. 88. Italics in the original. Cited in Smith, 'Introduction', pp. xi–xii.

64   M. A. Holly, 'Mourning and Method', in Claire Farago and Robert Zwijnenberg (eds), *Compelling Visuality: The Work of Art in and out of History* (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 2003), pp. 156–78.

65   The figure of the *flâneur* has been described as 'one of the emblems of modernity', and is associated with Charles Baudelaire, Edgar Allan Poe, the Impressionists and Walter Benjamin. See entry '*flâneur*' in Macey, *The Penguin Dictionary of Critical Theory*, p. 131.

66   Featherstone, 'Archive', p. 594.

67   According to Felski, the suspicious-minded critic is convinced that 'what seems arbitrary or unconnected is being steered by a covert logic of causality' (Felski, *The Limits of Critique*, p. 88).

68   For an overview of the range of issues and debates about practice-based PhDs, see J. Elkins, 'Introduction', in J. Elkins (ed.), *Artists with PhDs: On the New Doctoral Degree in Studio Art*, 2nd edn (Washington, DC: New Academia, 2014), pp. xi–xxi. Elkins and others covered issues of art and research at the conference 'Black Mountain – Educational Turn and the Avantgarde' at Hamburger Bahnhof, Museum für Gegenwart, in Berlin, 25–26 September 2015. These lectures are available online: 'Educational Turn and the Avantgarde. Conference Videos', *Black Mountain Research*, 2015, https://black-mountain-research.com/2015/11/05/black-mountain-educational-turn-and-the-avantgarde-conference-videos/

[accessed 2 April 2017]. See also Balkema and Slager (eds), *Artistic Research*; M. Hannula, J. Suoranta and T. Vadén (eds), *Artistic Research: Theories, Methods and Practices* (Helsinki/Gothenburg: Academy of Fine Arts/University of Gothenburg/Art Monitor, 2005); K. Busch, 'Artistic Research and the Poetics of Knowledge', *Art & Research: Journal of Ideas, Contexts and Methods*, 2:2 (2009), pp. 1–7, www.artandresearch.org.uk/v2n2/busch.html [accessed 3 June 2021]. Busch's essay was part of a special issue of *Art & Research* with the title 'A Gathering of Artistic Research: From *New Science* to *Nameless Science*', but the journal itself, which published its first issue in 2006, is overtly dedicated to the topic of art and research in a broad sense. The anthology *Intellectual Birdhouse* considers artistic practice and research both within and outside the academy. See F. Dombois et al. (eds), *Intellectual Birdhouse: Artistic Practice as Research* (London: Koenig Books, 2012). *Texte zur Kunst* published a special issue on the topic in 2011 which dealt with artistic research as a nascent academic discipline in countries such as the UK and the Scandinavian countries, but also with artistic working methods that overlap with those of the researcher. '"Artistic Research" Special Issue', *Texte zur Kunst*, 82 (2011).

69 G. Sullivan, 'The Artist as Researcher: New Roles for New Realities', in J. Wesseling (ed.), *See It Again, Say It Again: The Artist as Researcher* (Amsterdam: Valiz, 2011), pp. 80–101. Graeme Sullivan is not claiming this point of view for himself but is rather referring to a generally held position within academic artistic research.

70 J. Elkins, 'Fourteen Reasons to Mistrust the PhD', in Elkins (ed.), *Artists with PhDs*, pp. 257, 258.

71 J. Wesseling, 'Introduction', in Wesseling (ed.), *See It Again, Say It Again*, p. 9. Italics in the original. Wesseling bases her argument on Hannah Arendt's *Thinking*, the first volume of *The Life of the Mind* (1978).

72 The classic discussion regarding the 'two cultures' highlights the persistent view of the fundamental differences between the natural sciences and the humanities, which become somewhat destabilised when artistic research enters the mix. See C. P. Snow, *The Two Cultures* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993). This text was first delivered as a series of lectures in 1959.

73 T. E. Jones, 'The PhD in Studio Art Revisited', in Elkins (ed.), *Artists with PhDs*, pp. 97–127.

74 Elkins, 'Fourteen Reasons to Mistrust the PhD', p. 228. Elkins is very critical of this idea.

75 B. Visser, 'A Blind Man Sometimes Hits the Crow', in Wesseling (ed.), *See It Again, Say It Again*, p. 266. Italics in the original.

76 'I think a great deal of theorizing about the PhD – and especially the key terms "art research" and the production of "new knowledge" in visual art – is nonsense. I just don't think it makes enough sense to say that art research is "mobile", "dialogic", "contextual", "topical", "unquantitative", "between zones", "nomadic", or "implicated in poststructural paradigms"' (Elkins, 'Introduction', p. xix). For an example of the use of such language – with terms like 'hybridization of art and research' and 'poetics of knowledge' – see Busch, 'Artistic Research and the Poetics of Knowledge'.

77 Smith, 'Introduction', p. xv.

78 Godfrey described the artist as historian as someone who is 'able to work with a methodological freedom and creativity without sacrificing rigor' (Godfrey, 'The Artist as Historian', pp. 169–70).

79 C. Lambert-Beatty, 'Make-Believe: Parafiction and Plausibility', *October*, 129 (2009), pp. 79–80. Lambert-Beatty's article discussed Michael Blum's work *A Tribute to Safiye Behar*, shown as part of the 2005 Istanbul Biennale, as a case in point. The work prompted her to ask: 'why would anyone believe it in the first place? After all, it wasn't in a history museum, archive, university, or any other site even putatively dedicated to the pursuit of facts and truthfulness. It was in an art show. By all reports most viewers started from the assumption that the subject was factual, which has to do with Blum's skill of course – but also with the major movement of art and art history against the notion of art's autonomy […] Artists in the last century have ceaselessly demonstrated the co-extensiveness of art and the real, sloughing off again and again the eighteenth-century distinction between utility and the aesthetic.'

80 V. Burgin, 'Thoughts on "Research" Degrees in Visual Arts Departments', in Elkins (ed.), *Artists with PhDs*, p. 85.

81 Burgin, 'Thoughts on "Research" Degrees in Visual Arts Departments', pp. 85, 86.

82 Burgin, 'Thoughts on "Research" Degrees in Visual Arts Departments', p. 86. Italics added. Timothy Emlyn Jones in the same volume quotes Picasso somewhat differently as having said: 'I do not research, I discover' (Jones, 'The PhD in Studio Art Revisited', p. 101).

83 The essay was discussed in Chapter 3.

84 Crimp wrote: 'The readymades propose that the artist cannot *make*, but only *take* what is already there' (Crimp, 'The Museum's Old, the Library's New Subject', p. 71. Italics in the original.)

85 'Deconstructive and Foucauldian critics have been especially drawn to such metacritical strategies. Stories about the depredations of reading have proliferated over recent decades, as critique turns a gimlet gaze on its own history, scrutinizing its own motives in a self-reflexive loop of spiraling distrust' (Felski, *The Limits of Critique*, p. 106).

86 Elkins, 'Fourteen Reasons to Mistrust the PhD', p. 231.

87 The notion of 'International Art English' and the parallel argument about jargon-filled and 'difficult' language in the academy can be seen as part of this debate spanning both the art and the humanities fields. See A. Rule and D. Levine, 'International Art English', *Triple Canopy*, www.canopycanopycanopy.com/issues/16/contents/international_art_english [accessed 12 November 2017]; M. Ghani, 'The Islands of Evasion: Notes on International Art English by Mariam Ghani', *Triple Canopy*, 2013, www.canopycanopycanopy.com/contents/the-islands-of-evasion-notes-on-international-art-english [accessed 5 October 2017]; M. Rosler, 'English and All That', *e-flux journal*, 45 (2013), unpaginated, www.e-flux.com/journal/45/60103/english-and-all-that/ [accessed 25 May 2021]; H. Steyerl, 'International Disco Latin', *e-flux journal*, 45 (2013), unpaginated, www.e-flux.com/journal/45/60100/international-disco-latin/ [accessed

5 October 2017]; J. Culler and K. Lamb (eds), *Just Being Difficult? Academic Writing in the Public Arena* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2003).

88 Downey describes 'cognitive dissonance' as a situation where the archive is 'both a limitless and ordered field of research and, contiguously, an epistemically unstable source that is liable to imminent collapse if not total disappearance' (Downey, 'Contingency, Dissonance and Performativity', p. 23). Although I am positing that this kind of production of doubt and uncertainty is part of the archive art phenomenon, it is not an entirely new strategy. A work that can be seen as a precursor to works such as Tsivololous's is James Coleman's *Slide Piece* (1972), which subjected the same image of a car park to various interpretations delivered through a succession of voice-overs, where no one description is presented as more authoritative than another. D. Alexander, 'Slideshow', in Alexander, Harrison and Storr (eds), *Slideshow*, p. 18.

89 S. R. Tibayan, 'Index', *Practice! Practice. Practice?*, www.sherwinriveratibayan.com/index [accessed 1 September 2020].

90 S. Archibald, 'Indexes, in Praise of', *Cabinet*, 52 (2013), p. 57.

91 Archibald, 'Indexes, in Praise of', p. 57.

92 Archibald, 'Indexes, in Praise of', pp. 58–9.

93 A. Grafton, 'The Footnote from De Thou to Ranke', *History and Theory*, 33:4, special issue: 'Proof and Persuasion in History' (1994), pp. 53–76. Grafton also published a book on this topic: A. Grafton, *The Footnote: A Curious History* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1997).

94 Grafton, 'The Footnote from De Thou to Ranke', p. 54.

95 A related series, *Another Water (The River Thames for Example)*, was published as an artist's book the following year and consists of full-bleed water images with the footnotes running along the bottom of the page. R. Horn, *Another Water: The River Thames, for Example* (Zurich: Scalo, 2000).

96 Although perhaps not numerous enough to count as a sub-genre in its own right, there are several examples of artworks that centre around reference systems. Robert Smithson appears here too, since he proposed a film based on the A section of the index of the *Film Culture Reader*. See R. Smithson, 'A Cinematic Atopia', *Artforum*, 10:1 (1971), pp. 53–5, referenced in Archibald, 'Indexes, in Praise of', p. 62. Alejandro Cesarco has made several index works and other works that relate to research in different ways: *Index* (2000), *Index (A Novel)* (2003), *Footnotes* (2006), *Index (An Orphan)* (2012), *Index (With Feeling)* (2015), *New York Public Library Picture Collection (Subject Headings)* (2018), *New York Public Library Picture Collection (Subject Headings – Cross References)* (2018) and *Errata* (2020). Other examples include Philippe Thomas's exhibition *Feux Pales* (1990), an elusive reference to Vladimir Nabokov's novel *Pale Fire* (1962) made up entirely of footnotes, or Robert Morris's *Card File* (1963).

97 The phrase 'trope of criticality' is taken from Johanna Burton's reply to the *October* questionnaire on 'The Contemporary' where she points out that ascribing 'criticality' to artistic practices may well be 'a strangely conservative act', presumably because it has become defanged and commonplace. 'Questionnaire on "The Contemporary"', *October*, 130 (2009), p. 24.

6   Critique

It is often pointed out that the archive is at least partly defined by what is not found in it: by what is forgotten, deemed unimportant or, for different reasons, considered unarchivable. A process of selection and exclusion is always at work within the archive – the term *archivalisation*, coined by Eric Ketelaar, signifies this '*conscious or unconscious choice (determined by social and cultural factors) to consider something worth archiving*'.[1] Since the archive from the middle of the twentieth century onwards is increasingly understood to hide, obscure and exclude as much as it preserves and remembers, scholars have developed strategies to identify these structural omissions in different ways. Beginning in the 1970s, poststructuralism as well as feminist, postcolonial, queer and African-American studies gradually gained prominence in the academy, and their critique of established historical narratives paid attention to voices that had previously not been heard by analysing the marginal and unofficial entries in existing archives, as well as pointing to what was missing altogether. Archival exclusions and omissions were deemed significant not only for what they could say about a particular archive, but also for what they can tell us about oppression and injustice at the time of the archive's construction, and how these omissions continue to affect present and future sociopolitical structures and historical narratives. Recognition that the archives that are available to us today are not only limited but also skewed in different ways means that this mode of academic work demands a seemingly paradoxical methodology: making use of archival materials in order to question the authority of the very same archives where this material is found.[2] The acknowledgement of this tension – a form of archival meta-reflexivity – characterises much present-day archival research in the humanities.

Since the late 1960s, artists have examined institutions via their omissions and unpronounced assumptions in ways that share a great deal with the notion of archival exclusion as it is theorised in the academy. The artistic practice known as institutional critique is often presented as a precursor to archive art; several of the artists identified as contemporary practitioners of institutional critique are also considered exemplary of archive art.[3] It might seem that

archive art is a new label for what has been around for several decades, a kind of 'institutional critique 2.0'.[4] Although it is clear that the two share a great deal, rather than considering archive art as derivative of institutional critique, I suggest that it is more relevant to consider what, exactly, the notion of the archive adds to the practice and understanding of artistic critique of institutions. Throughout this book I have argued that the meaning and function of the notion of the archive can partly be understood in terms of its *promiscuity*: that it can house and make sense of many seemingly unrelated themes and concerns at the turn of the twenty-first century. During the decades that followed the early instances of institutional critique, the archive was increasingly analysed, theorised and debated in a number of contexts, and these discussions evoked a set of theories about exclusions. In the current chapter I show that these theorisations helped frame the artistic practices of institutional critique in terms of the wider context of academic critique of institutional exclusion, but also that the increased attention to archives in the humanities in general, and in art writing in particular, contributed to making the archive more available as a notion for understanding and contextualising critique of institutions in art practice and writing.

A shared critical paradigm

As discussed in the previous chapter, there are increasing overlaps between art and research in the second half of the twentieth century. Whereas Chapter 5 focused on notions of research and different forms of knowledge, the current chapter examines what I consider to be a shared critical paradigm at work in both humanities research and art writing and practice. Understanding what this critique – as a notion and as a method – entails, and how it lines up with archive theory in different ways, will contribute to the overall understanding of how the archive comes to be such a pervasive reference in art and art writing at the turn of the twenty-first century. In what follows, I outline some key qualities of this critical paradigm by first considering how it has been theorised in recent scholarship, and then how it appears in artworks and artistic practices in the late twentieth and the early twenty-first centuries.

In her book *The Limits of Critique* Rita Felski argues that critique in the sense of a hermeneutics of suspicion has become the expected attitude and mode of working in many disciplines within the humanities. Felski is far from alone; Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, Bruno Latour, Michael Warner and others have similarly considered the pervasiveness of a particular mode of critical and suspicious reading that aims to expose the hidden truths of a given text.[5] The description of this mode of working echoes the way much writing in archive theory describes the approach to archives: in both, what is at work is a type of interpretation that attempts to draw out what a text (or institution) fails, or

wilfully refuses, to acknowledge about itself, often in terms of inherent prejudices and blind spots.[6] An important element of this is the expectation that the critique is carried out from below or from a position on the periphery, and that it is aimed towards an imagined hegemonic, dominant centre.[7] The will to understand a structure via its peripheral or marginal documents is seen in the academic pursuit of histories that have not been told, and in artists' critique of the museum as a hegemonic institution.[8] Margins versus main text, or periphery versus centre, are often considered in terms of geography: countries or nationalities are pointed out as inadequately represented in a given institution and attempts are made to rectify this misrepresentation in different ways. These notions are also considered in symbolic terms regarding marginalised ethnicities, sexual orientation and gender.

Introducing a 2009 anthology of texts about institutional critique, editor Alexander Alberro outlined the historical trajectory of the practice from its inception in the late 1960s to its most recent iterations.[9] Alberro identified two stages of institutional critique as it changed over time. The early practitioners were concerned with critiquing the institution – particularly the art museum – in order to make it adhere better to its stated ideals. The strategies of this group of artists (represented by Hans Haacke, Mierle Laderman Ukeles and the Guerilla Girls, among others) can be understood as the artworld equivalent of academic work by feminist and postcolonial scholars who identified the absence of various groups and attempted to insert those previously excluded into the dominant narrative.[10] These practices can, in a somewhat awkward neologism, be termed a 'this-too-strategy'.[11] The implied exclamation is that 'This too should be included in the (art) institution or (historical) archive!' This first generation of institutional critique wished to point out and rectify an absence in institutions such as the museum, canon or art history, while the new academic disciplines sought out similar absences in existing archives, historical narratives and so on. In both cases, the intention was essentially an ameliorative one; calling for specific changes in the institution while affirming its basic structure – aiming, ultimately, at improvement, not total destruction.[12]

It is important to recognise that critique of the institution, albeit similar in structure to the academic questioning of established historical narratives that exclude on the basis of gender, ethnicity and other factors, comes with a specific set of implications when carried out within an art context. On the one hand, critiquing the museum as an institution is a critique of its role as a canonising structure and the various exclusions that come with that role. In this sense it is similar to the work of the historian who uses archives to point to the archive's own exclusions and ways of establishing certain historical narratives at the expense of others. However, the understanding of what the 'institution of art' means becomes significantly more intricate in the second

half of the twentieth century. From this point on, the art institution can be considered in terms of the notion of the archive in the sense of a structure that determines, and is determined by, what is included therein, and consequently the self-reflexivity at work in artistic critique of this institution is a great deal more complex compared to similar forms of critique in the academy. As noted, Andrea Fraser has argued that it is indeed not possible to fully separate the artist from the art institution since the institution is internalised and performed by artists – it is therefore, according to Fraser, not a question of the artist being inside or outside the institution, or even of being against the institution, since they essentially *are* that institution.[13] Fraser is referring here precisely to the institutional theory of art whereby art is understood to be institutionalised by definition; the institution is nothing less than 'the irreducible condition of its [the artwork's] existence as art'.[14] The art institution is in that sense very different from other institutions, in part because art history, the canon of art, the art museum as well as various practitioners, viewers, critics, etc., together make up this broader art institution – artworld – which is inseparable from the works of art that purport to critique it for various shortcomings.[15] This means that in artistic forms of institutional critique, the institution is in some sense always complicit in the critique levelled against it. Or, formulated a little differently, artists who carry out institutional critique are engaged in a dialectic whereby the vehicle of the artist's voice is held on to and negated at the same time.[16] It has been pointed out that if modernism's dominant war metaphor was that of the avant-garde – the first troops sent into enemy territory – then postmodernism can be understood by metaphors of terror, hacking, parasitic or virus-like action – attacking the system from within by infiltrating it and manipulating its codes.[17] Critique of the institution in which one is already always located can be considered in light of the latter image, as a kind of internal self-critique.[18]

This relates to the issue of co-option: how can an artist effectively critique an institution that is inherently involved in self-criticism; does the museum not immediately neutralise any such critical practices as soon as they embrace them?[19] The issue of co-option has resonances with the Frankfurt School and Peter Bürger's discussion of the strategies of the historical and neo avant-gardes.[20] Bürger, a scholar of comparative literature, argued in his 1974 book *Theory of the Avant-Garde* for the critical potential of pre-war avant-garde artistic practices, but claimed that the post-war avant-garde cancelled these earlier critiques of the institution of art, in part because they were effectively co-opted and taken up as mainstream.[21] Hal Foster, in a text written almost a decade before 'An Archival Impulse', fervently defended the neo-avant-garde against Bürger's dismissal.[22] Foster claimed that instead of being a failed, ineffective mimicking of the historical avant-garde, the artistic practices of the neo-avant-garde could in fact be seen to fulfil and complete the earlier critical

practices, and that Bürger had missed the critical potential of the 'ambitious art of the present' era.[23] Foster's writing about the archival impulse can be seen to be connected to this argument; he specifies criticality as a key component also of the artists who he identifies as archival. Notably, however, it is a particular form of critique that Foster values. Those involved in the journal *October* have been accused of being too narrowly focused on forms of critique anchored in critical theory, thus excluding more activist and identity-based critical practices.[24]

The claim that archive art is 'critical' therefore needs to take into consideration additional questions: what kind of critique, by who, and of what? The terminology of critical art tends to obscure those differentiations, by taking a specific definition for granted. Most texts on archive art stress that this art is critical in some sense, although what that criticality consists of differs between them. It is, however, fair to say that Foster's/*October*'s version of critique has had a significant influence on how criticality in contemporary art has been defined and understood in the 1990s and the first decade of the twenty-first century.[25]

Whether or not the aim is an aesthetic-symbolic change or a sociopolitical activist one, critique of the institution can be carried out in more or less direct ways. Two broad strategies of critiquing the art institution can be identified: one pointing out and rectifying omissions in existing institutions, the other employing strategies of performative destabilisation. To differentiate from the 'this-too strategy', these latter strategies can be considered in terms of the phrase 'as-if'. This coinage is inspired by a passage in Christopher Hitchens' book *Letters to a Young Contrarian*, which describes how those living under oppression often act *as if* they were free to do what they wanted.[26] This as-if strategy was both a coping mechanism and a form of resistance; a performative act that endowed the given situation with a different political meaning, while retaining awareness that the restrictive frame remained firmly in place. The terminology of as-if is not intended to indicate a Pollyanna-like response to dire circumstances; instead, it indicates a performative possibility within a given structure.[27] In order for the this-too strategy to work, the institution needs to be fairly stable and easily discernible. However, when the institution is perceived as unstable and all-pervasive and therefore in part invisible to those within it, the critique needs to be equally unstable, agile and in flux.

The terminology of 'this-too' and 'as-if' largely lines up with established narratives of the different phases of institutional critique. In Alexander Alberro's overview the second phase, occurring from around 1990, is described as less optimistic about the possibility of reform and instead stressed the difficulty of carrying out critique from a position outside the institution, and thus either accepted that there was no real alternative to the dominant institutions (Fareed Armaly, Mark Dion, Maria Eichhorn, Andrea Fraser, Renée Green,

Christian Philipp Müller, Nils Norman, Fred Wilson) or else sought to get out of these institutions altogether (Electronic Disturbance Theatre, Raqs Media Collective, RepoHistory, ®™ark, subRosa, Yes Men).[28] Although this later generation of institutional critique artists often merge elements of the this-too and the as-if strategies, the latter become more pronounced as the twentieth century turns to the twenty-first. Despite this binary set-up, I do not wish to suggest that artworks should or could necessarily be classified as belonging to either one or the other camp. The terms are intended to clarify different strategies of engaging in critique of the institution in order to help understand the archive art phenomenon's connection to 'critical' artistic practices.

Colonial archives and archival hubris

Fred Wilson's *Mining the Museum* was shown at the Maryland Historical Society in 1992-93, exhibiting objects normally not on display side-by-side with more expected artefacts from the museum's collection.[29] One of the most frequently reproduced works from the installation, 'Metalwork 1793–1880', consisted of a pair of iron handcuffs placed in the middle of an arrangement of highly ornamented silver vessels (Plate 10). The juxtaposition of objects pointed out the connections between the practice of slavery and the accumulation of wealth by the white population. By placing these objects together, the artist created a narrative in which different kinds of metal objects were revealed to belong to the same economic structure.

   In art historical surveys, Wilson's installation is often presented as part of the category of institutional critique because of the way it highlights the absence of the African-American experience from the historical museum.[30] Wilson is also frequently included in various other sub-categories of contemporary art: he is listed as an example of the artist as researcher (Marquard Smith), artist as historian (Mark Godfrey) and artist as ethnographer (Hal Foster).[31] Since *Mining the Museum* mobilises several aspects frequently featured in archive theory, yet is not generally considered an instance of archive art, it can be seen to point ahead to the archive art phenomenon from a position outside the main trajectory of this category or 'turn', and as such it is worth analysing in some detail.[32]

   Mining the Museum appears to be a clear example of the this-too strategy, as it adds objects that had previously been excluded from the museum's display, thus enforcing a confrontation with the shortcomings of this institution. It pedagogically exposes how a historical museum that purports to present the history of the state of Maryland in fact understands this to mean white history. The Foucauldian archive in the singular (*archive*) becomes visible precisely through the juxtaposition of excluded objects with those objects that have – structurally – enacted their exclusion, thus pointing to the,

mostly unpronounced, laws at work in curatorial practice, and by extension, history production.

What Wilson's installation makes visible is the way a limited, distorted and prejudiced construction of history has been established as 'History': a supposedly singular, timelessly true and complete historical narrative. This mechanism is discussed by literature scholar Thomas Richards as the 'utopian' archive: an 'imagined junction of all that was known or knowable, a fantastic representation of an epistemological master pattern'.[33] Richards outlined the ties between this utopian archive and colonial practice and thought patterns: administrators all around the British Empire collected data in order to control their vast territories and the people within them, and Richards clarified how mapping and data collection were directly tied to power and control. Other terms that point to this idea of a complete or sufficient archive are David Greetham's 'archival hubris' and Irit Rogoff's 'fantasy of plenitude'.[34] Rogoff, a curator and writer, specifically alludes to systems of structuring the archive and its existence as solid sites of accumulated knowledge.[35] This aim of all-inclusiveness, a frenzy to safeguard, measure and record, served to create the colonial world, but it was based on a massive but unacknowledged omission. In fact, archival practices are in some sense what enabled the colonial world-view in both practical and epistemological terms. Literary theorist Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, in a well-known text on archival exclusion, argued that 'India' was not out there to be discovered or mapped by the British, but that its reality was in fact constructed by their archiving activities.[36] What was constructed was a 'collection of effects of the real' and the misreading of this fiction produced 'India' as an object and idea.[37] Spivak proposed a 'reading' of a handful of archival documents – the scare quotes around the term indicate an active form of reading that does not subscribe to the notion of the archive as a repository of facts, as proposed by hegemonic nineteenth-century European historiography. Spivak's text, 'The Rani of Sirmur: An Essay in Reading the Archives', centred around the Rani of Sirmur who is largely absent from existing archives because she was neither male nor British. This absence is also due in part to carelessness; her name is spelled wrongly, and documents relating to her are archived inconsistently. Carrying out a redemptive project of rediscovering previously forgotten archival material relating to the Rani was, however, not the aim of Spivak's article; instead she claimed that there was in fact no real Rani to be found.[38] There was no possible access to the Rani outside of these absences and fictions; to approach her, Spivak wrote, was to move in 'the shadow of shadows'.[39]

In addition to the archive's glaring omissions, an additional but related tension is also pointed out by Wilson's installation: that between the objects and the display mechanisms at work in the museum. The frame of the museum affects not just what is represented in that space, but the museum

as institution, and its history also determines what it is possible to include. Photography scholar Robin Kelsey, in his book *Archive Style: Photographs & Illustrations for U.S. Surveys, 1850–1890*, showed how the actual archives in which nineteenth-century land-survey photographs are stored affect the look and style of the photographs that were destined to end up there.[40] One of Kelsey's main points is that images that seem to be neutral or scientific are inherently ideological, and that the archival and documentary look is as much a 'style' as other kinds of representations, and that it deals in 'veiled rhetoric' even as it claims to convey objective truth.[41] Similarly, a museum such as the Maryland Historical Society, with its monitors, labels with informative listing of dates and material, seems neutral, transparent and factual. Wilson's installation can, in light of the discussion carried out in the broad cluster of archive theory, be seen to highlight that this museum style also depends on presumptions of exclusion. Here, then, the archive in question is less literal than in Kelsey's book. In *Mining the Museum* the archive should instead be considered in terms of an aesthetic law of how and what can be shown. Wilson's installation included a set of empty plastic mounts, described on the label next to the display as 'Plastic mounts, first made in the 1960s'.[42] Here the display itself is highlighted – these are literally displays on display – and as a result these plastic mounts become visible as historical objects rather than neutral, transparent containers for displaying other objects. Wilson here makes use of a common strategy in artistic practices of institutional critique: highlighting the institutional frame as such.

The suggestion in some texts on archive theory is that the indignity of archival omission is one of the very preconditions of archiving and that it is precisely by examining what is excluded that one can discover how power has operated.[43] Wilson taps into this view when he explained what led him to carry out his project at the Maryland Historical Society: 'what they put on view says a lot about the museum, but what they don't put on view says even more.'[44] The ability to add those missing objects is complicated, however, and Wilson's installation hints at this difficulty by allowing some exclusions to remain absent. In the same space as the exhibited plastic mounts, Wilson also placed three empty black pedestals facing three lower ones in lighter stone, each supporting sculptural portraits in a classical style (Plate 11). The portraits missing from the empty pedestals were identified by plaques as Harriet Tubman, Benjamin Banneker and Frederick Douglass – three prominent black historical figures from Maryland. In contrast, the three white men, Napoleon, Henry Clay and Andrew Jackson, had been deemed worthy of commemoration by the historical society although none of them actually came from Maryland.[45] Again, Wilson's installation pointed out the gap between what is claimed to be displayed at the museum and what is actually displayed: a historically accurate account of Maryland's history versus the history of white – and racist

– structures in the American historical narrative. In this sense, *Mining the Museum* is a textbook example of 'archivalisation' at work. Putting Tubman, Banneker and Douglass back into the museum's historical narrative which had excluded them would amount to the exclamation: 'This too should be shown!' Yet the fact that the figures are not shown in Wilson's installation highlights the difficulty of such a reinsertion, and that aesthetic forms of representation are also limited and restricted. The busts of the three white men are made in the classical manner, a style that comes with connotations of Antiquity as the origin of Western civilisation, canon and value. What is expected to be displayed in that style and in the space of this kind of historical museum is precisely white men – not black men, and certainly not black women. The fact that Wilson left three pedestals empty rather than adding new classical portraits of Tubman, Banneker and Douglass thus stressed that this is not just a coincidental lack in one particular museum, but a constitutive lack within a whole pictorial tradition that has consistently failed to include portraits and monuments of entire categories of people. Just as the Rani was unarchivable in the Indian colonial archive, these historical figures have been unarchivable within this particular system of representation.[46]

Two archives are at work here: first, the concrete particular one, from which Tubman and the others are missing – here archive means something close to storage, and it is particular: *this* particular storage room, in *this* particular museum. The other is the structural archive from which for centuries depictions in a particular aesthetic tradition have excluded certain groups, and where specific omissions are exemplary of much broader limitations that made it close to impossible to even consider including African-American history in the museum. In other words, the exclusionary structures are tied to the museum and display regimes, not only in terms of being the site where artefacts happen to be housed; the archive in the sense of the 'law of what can be said' is the wider structural racist and differentiating logic in which 'Western' and 'white' are evaluated over other cultures and ethnicities. It is from this that institutions have received their nourishment: history, the museum and art historical evaluation are thus shown to be deeply interconnected. The this-too strategy, although in part employed in *Mining the Museum*, is also shown to be inherently problematic, as it is not possible simply to add the missing elements to a system that was set up to exclude them. *Mining the Museum* is an intervention that builds on the assumption that the institution is in part open to reform and critique, but at the same time Wilson's installation challenges this very assumption.

When Wilson himself explained the title of his work, he specified three different meanings of the term 'mining' that further add to this sense of a multifaceted relationship to the institution: first, mining as in 'making mine'; second, mining as in 'digging'; and finally, mining as in 'landmines' blowing

up in the museum.[47] Mining in the sense of 'making mine' relates to the recreation of the material into a subjective history, challenging the claims of the positivist nineteenth century. Here Wilson's exclamation is 'mine too!', prescribing another way in which the museum could exhibit history. Making mine thus suggests how subjective history can be included in institutional history, an important facet of many artworks during the first decades of the twenty-first century where subjective histories come to play increasingly important roles. The digging reference points directly to Foucault's terminology of archaeology, in addition to pointing out how the exhibition was made up of material dug up from the museum's (metaphorical) basement. This artistic method is a transposition of Foucault's method of reading documents and texts to a reading of the historical museum via its objects. The third sense of mining, blowing up the museum, presupposes a positioning outside the institution, and brings to mind metaphors of the avant-garde violently attacking and shaking up the museum.

To Wilson's three senses a fourth can be added that goes against this sense of attack or critique from outside. This is mining in the sense of 'undermining', and implies a challenge to the authority of the museum and/or the institution of history in a broad sense, but without the connotations of a direct attack. Undermining comes with associations of digging underneath a seemingly solid structure, eroding its foundations and thereby causing it to fall in on itself.

It is tempting to view institutional critique, whether by the first- or second-generation practitioners, as a kind of trickling down into art practices of the type of academic suspicious reading described by Felski and others. In artworks such as *Mining the Museum*, objects, practices and institutional structures are read with the intention of unearthing what they do not state or own up to overtly.[48] The object is preserved, but it is also hollowed out from the inside 'so that the object *speaks with a voice that is not its own … The object betrays itself.*'[49] This description by Robert Koch, cited by Felski, refers to critical discourse in the academy but could easily be taken as a description of institutional critique in an art context. Additionally, artists, similar to critique carried out in the academy, also describe their critical practice in terms of paying attention to that which is marginal. In a statement reprinted in the catalogue to the exhibition *The Museum as Muse* (MoMA, 1999), Wilson discussed a work called *Art in Our Time* which was literally made up of photographs from MoMA's archives, describing his interest in 'the margins of things', and how the installation photographs made visible these margins of the museum: 'I felt there was a code in these mysterious bits of visual information which said something about the art and the Museum as a whole.'[50] Wilson ended his text with a sentence that reads like a statement by Foucault: 'We see, by looking back, how invisible the present can be.'[51]

The trickle-down proposition must be complicated, however. Changes to the understanding of art that occurred in the 1960s had been under way at least since the beginning of the twentieth century, and the self-reflexive examination of art's own institutions can thus not be described as simply a one-directional application of ideas from poststructuralist, feminist and postcolonial theory within the artworld. The influence rather appears to flow both ways. The critical paradigm does not necessarily travel from the academy to artistic practices, but can be seen to develop in parallel within the two contexts; at the same time as these paradigms were being absorbed into the academic system, artists were exploring exclusions within the art institution in increasingly complex and multifaceted ways.

Throughout this book I suggest that the increasing attention to the archive in the decade leading up to the turn of the twenty-first century makes the broad notion of the archive available as a frame or set of interpretative possibilities for artworks and practices that would otherwise have fitted into other categorisations; and it should be clear that institutional critique is one such alternative classification. When art historian Kerstin Schankweiler in 2015 wrote about the work of Georges Adéagbo, making use of the notion of the archive had become an established way of analysing artworks that dealt with museological practices, postcolonial theory, history writing and the material trace; and therefore a work that would previously have been considered in terms of institutional critique now seamlessly fitted into the category of archive art.[52] To say that the archive is available as a frame of reference or as an interpretative and theoretical scaffolding is not meant to imply that it is somehow an inaccurate way of analysing these artworks, nor does it suggest that the artists are not themselves deliberately mobilising notions of the archive. I mean simply that at a certain point, archival terminology and the broad cluster of theoretical writing that it points to came to the fore for both artists and those writing about their work.

Several aspects of Adéagbo's practice were discussed in Schankweiler's article 'The Relational Archive of Georges Adéagbo'.[53] Particularly apt as a comparison to *Mining the Museum* is the installation *La Colonisation Belge en Afrique Noire*, first made when Adéagbo was invited by curator Harald Szeemann to produce a work for an exhibition in Brussels in 2000. The exhibition dealt with Belgian colonialism and the role of Leopold II, and made a connection between this colonial history and Baron Léon Lambert, the founder of the bank that financed and housed the exhibition.[54] The installation's various iterations over the next few years incorporated intertextual references to previous versions of the exhibition, such as posters and catalogues, as well as references to the reception of the work, a move that is in line with the increasingly self-reflexive strategies of artistic practices at this time – the artist showing awareness of his own position in a set of interlocking discourses. The second

version of the installation, shown at the BOZAR in Brussels in 2005, included objects from the Royal Museum of Central Africa in Tervuren, photographs and various references to the hidden past of the bank, newspaper clippings, magazines and books, sculptural objects, wine bottles, as well as a portrait of Harald Szeemann, who was the curator of this exhibition as well (Plate 12). This was, in other words, an installation that, thematically, shared a great deal with Wilson's 1992 intervention at the Maryland Historical Society.[55]

Schankweiler's description of Adéagbo's work clearly recognised its links to institutional critique, although she did not labour the point, and nor did she use that terminology directly. She acknowledged the issue of co-option, however, by referring to the invitation to Adéagbo to do his work in the exhibition as a 'double-edged sword', because the installation could 'be seen as a calculated critique and "hired" subversion'.[56] Although the ties to institutional critique are clear, it is the archival terminology and references that dominate Schankweiler's analysis. The stated aim of her article was to 'interpret Adéagbo's artistic practice as work on a relational archive of the twenty-first century' and she compared it to Aby Warburg's *Mnemosyne Atlas*, as noted a frequent reference in archive theory.[57] Schankweiler suggested that Adéagbo's work could be conceived as 'an alternative to universalist, European master narratives, conceptions of history, and regimes of power'.[58] Formulations such as 'Adéagbo does not aim to "correct" history or accuse anyone via his installations; rather he lays bare the architecture of history', and the 'heterogeneity of the things integrated into the installation represent a simultaneous plurality of positions', 'plurality of *histories*' and the 'epistemic indeterminacy of these histories' bring to mind both postmodernism and institutional critique, but filtered through archive theory and its terminology.[59] The artist's self-reflexivity was also framed in archival terms: Adéabgo is said to 'investigate his own entanglements in the structure of meaning and reflect on his position within the field of knowledge production', which Schankweiler describes as an expandable archive and a process of self-archiving.[60]

My point here is that at some point a different terminology and theoretical framing is used for works that appear to be rather similar in strategy, process and theme. What had previously been framed within the category of institutional critique was now framed in terms of archive art or as part of an archival turn in contemporary art. One way of putting it is that the notion of the archive begins to overshadow, or absorb, institutional critique as an interpretative frame. To state it in those terms is, however, somewhat misleading. As argued throughout this book, the archival notion is not just an empty label tagged on to an existing artwork or category of artworks; rather, the terminology, concepts and broad notions used to analyse and categorise a work of art also shape it to some extent. In the shift from institutional critique to archive art, the very notions of *critique* and *institution* also change as a result of this

shift. It seems that, after a while, *archive* becomes a short cut for power and its relation to institutional issues, and at that point the terminology of institutional critique is conceived as somewhat outdated.[61] Institutional critique came to signal a more naïve sort of critique that did not fully acknowledge the way the understanding of institutional and critical strategies had changed over the previous few decades. The established strategies of institutional critique are thus largely replaced by an agile, destabilised form of artmaking where the faith in the veracity of documents is both stressed and deliberately challenged by works that merge fact with fiction, metafiction, parafiction and epistemological uncertainty.

Archival omission: South Africa and the MENASA region

The surge of interest in archives in art writing and elsewhere followed in the wake of a number of sociopolitical ruptures that symbolically and literally brought archival practices and their effects to the forefront of international debates. Archiving and surveillance practices carried out in Eastern Europe became visible after the fall of the Soviet Union, and following the first free elections in South Africa, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) was established in 1995. In South Africa archiving practices were of interest in two ways: they could be considered to have contributed to the implementation of apartheid in the first place, but the setting up of the TRC – an archive of the atrocities carried out under apartheid – was also a way of enlisting the archive to begin healing a fractured society. A third geographical region with its own historical and political conditions, the so-called MENASA region – the Middle East, North Africa and South Asia – also brought the archive to the fore; many artists with roots in India, Lebanon, Palestine and elsewhere created artworks that were taking on the archive not as a holder of truth or redemption, but as inherently dissonant and unstable; a view that grew out of the multiple versions of historical events that follow conflicts and national trauma.[62]

The strategy of adding missing elements to existing institutions or archives comes with several unstated assumptions: first, that there is the potential for completion (the notion of the utopian archive), and second, in order for the artist or historian to be able to reform the institutional narrative by reinserting the missing elements, it needs to be clear that something is indeed missing, and thus the exclusion cannot have been complete. The tension between remembering and forgetting was discussed by Derrida in 'Archive Fever' which showed numerous ways that forgetting and safekeeping were deeply and necessarily tied to one another. Derrida asked: how can one 'recall and archive the very thing one represses, archive it while repressing it (because repression is an archivization), that is to say, to archive *otherwise*, to repress

the archive while archiving the repression'.[63] In 1998, a few years after delivering his lecture in London, Derrida was invited to take part in a conference on the idea of the archive in post-apartheid South Africa.[64] There he specifically addressed the TRC:

> So, on the one hand the archivist looks for truth, and on the other hand the Commission in question, for understandable political reasons, looks for the truth considering that the truth is the condition for a reconciliation […] But the truth in that context is not objective truth. It's not scientific truth. It's the truth according to which St. Luke for instance would say, when I confess, I don't simply inform God, or the others, because God knows […] The truth has to do, in that case, with confession, with the transformation of the subject.[65]

The hearings of the TRC collected confessions by the perpetrators of politically motivated human rights abuses and witness accounts from their victims, but those guilty of carrying out state-sanctioned racial violence could also apply for amnesty. Derrida's point was that the 'truth' in the abbreviation TRC was therefore not truth in the sense of objective, universal truth, but a form of catharsis, thus enforcing a complex relationship between forgetting and memory inherent in all archiving practices. In an archive such as the TRC, the value and importance of the gesture was the transformation of subjects: the subjects doing the confessing, as well as those witnessing it. Derrida's talk in Johannesburg was in part a clarification of what he had attempted to convey in 'Archive Fever', specifically the theme of the doubled death drive – where the drive is not just to destroy but also to destroy the very trace and testimony of the destruction: 'The perpetrator tries not only to kill, but to erase the memory of the killing […] to act in such a way that no archive is left.'[66] The TRC was a way of ensuring that what occurred would never be forgotten, and to archive – in the sense of remember – what previous archival practices had attempted to suppress. The hearings were also presented as a way to psychologically process the traumatic past. However, the hearings and their subsequent filing in an archive were also enforcing another kind of forgetting; by accepting the TRC as this 'reconciliation', the trauma was disarmed and stored elsewhere, at a distance.

Several artists have worked with issues relating to the archives of the apartheid era as well as the TRC. *Ubu and the Truth Commisssion* (1997) was a collaboration between artist William Kentridge, playwright Jane Taylor and puppeteers Adrian Kohler and Basil Jones, in which puppets and actors shared the stage with documentary film footage, graphic media and animated drawings. The performance directly referenced the TRC, and incorporated several 'witness-puppets' that described various atrocities.[67] Other examples include Sue Williamson's *Truth Games* (1998) which pictured accusers, defenders and text taken from press reports of specific violent events, inviting the viewer to

6.1   William Kentridge, *Ubu and the Truth Commission*, The Market Theatre, Johannesburg, 1997

slide slats across the work in order to reveal different parts of the image.[68]
Hilton Judin's *Setting Apart*, shown at Cape Town Castle in 1995, did not deal
with the TRC specifically, but was made up of archival documents, maps, city
plans, official communications and oral testimonies that had to do with the
history of the city of Cape Town and the castle's use as a prison and army
headquarters.[69] That the TRC continued to generate interest, decades after it
was formed, is evidenced by Angus Gibson's *Telling the Truth?* (2015) a three-
channel documentary made up almost entirely of footage from the TRC,
which was shown in the South African pavilion at the 2015 Venice Biennale.
This work is also part of the permanent installation of the Apartheid Museum
in Johannesburg.

South African artists have also paid attention to the country's history by
going into existing photographic archives. One of the best-known examples
is Santu Mofokeng's *Black Photo Album/Look at Me* (1997), in which the artist
compiled and re-photographed studio portraits of middle-class black sitters
from the turn of the twentieth century. The sitters themselves had commis-
sioned or sanctioned the portraits, which showed them in studio settings clad
in European dress with accessories such as pocket watches, walking sticks,
tennis rackets, parasols and other carefully chosen props befitting the modern
self-aware citizen. Mofokeng tried to establish these images' provenance, and
attempted to 'return some of their purloined context', usually showing them
as projected slides, one after another, images alternating with text accounting
for whatever information he had been able to discover about them.[70]

Art historian John Peffer enlisted John Tagg's definition of 'colonial pho-
tography' as a photographic practice that views '"the natives" as passive
objects incapable of speech', in order to argue that Mofokeng's *Black Photo
Album* exemplified an 'anticolonial photography'.[71] Mofokeng's work, Peffer
suggested, 'gave back the context its photographs had *before* they were dis-
placed into the archive' – in other words, by re-exhibiting them Mofokeng
removed these photographs from one particular archive tied to racist policies,
and placed them into a different archival structure.[72] A similar narrative has
been presented by Alexandra Dodd, who described how Mofokeng's work
convened a 'counter-archive', because of its attempt to recover a different
image of the past than the view of black people as perpetually locked into old
rural and tribal cultures by showing 'the complex modernity of black family
life'.[73] When the series was shown in the first part of *Distance and Desire:
Encounters with the African Archive*, a three-part exhibition at the Walther
Collection Project Space in New York (2012–13), Mofokeng's work was shown
together with A. M. Duggan-Cronin's ethnographic study *The Bantu Tribes of
South Africa* (1928–54).[74] The exhibition's curator, Tamar Garb, explained this
choice: 'Mofokeng's project is about negotiating the archive and construct-
ing a counter-archive, reacting against the dominant view – exemplified by

Santu Mofokeng, *The Black Photo Album / Look at Me*, 1997

Installation view of works by Santu Mofokeng and Alfred Martin Duggan-Cronin at   **6.3**
Distance and Desire: Encounters with the African Archive, C/O Berlin, 2015

Duggan-Cronin – of Africans as part of nature, primitive, outside of time, and uncivilized'.[75]

Black Photo Album exemplifies many of the different elements of archive art discussed in this book: the interest in found, historical photographs 'curated' by the artist; an interest in and references to old technology (the slides in *Black Photo Album* are interspersed with text that, as Dodd points out, is reminiscent of the intertitles in early motion pictures); and an anchoring in the intersection between art and academic research, since Mofokeng worked as a photographic researcher for the Wits Institute for Advanced Social Research.[76]

A younger generation of South African artists have continued this interest in historical colonial archives by using them to highlight the racist structures that underpin the representation of their depicted subjects. In Nomusa Makhubu's series *Self-Portrait Project* (2007/2013), the artist projects slides of historical photographs, but by inserting herself between the projector and the screen she literally juxtaposes her present-day self on to those photographed by colonial-era anthropologists who sought to document the tribes of southern Africa. The artist has described how her method of appropriating such colonial photographs is intended to interrogate 'the dis-ease of racial and gendered power relations through which internalized conceptualizations of racial superiority and inferiority are questioned'.[77] Makhubu also describes apartheid as 'a ghost that haunts the present' and comments that the new,

post-apartheid South Africa constantly re-performed and re-presented the trauma of the torture of black bodies, for example through the TRC.[78] This description of a ghost-like presence of the past and the performative aspect of the archiving of the country's violent history echoes Derrida's writing and discussion of the archive as well as other archive theories.[79]

The issues brought up by Derrida regarding the TRC – how it becomes a way of ensuring a distancing, a death of sorts, of the memories it archives – are reminiscent of descriptions of the art museum as the place where artworks go to die. Artist and curator Mariam Ghani suggested in a 2015 anthology on archive art in the MENASA region that the 'need to archive is connected to the fear of loss; but to archive something, it must be fixed in time, like a butterfly pinned in a glass case, and thus to archive is also to kill the very things you feared to lose'.[80] Ghani points out that the tension in the act of archiving concerns the linguistic shift from present to past tense, and that it is a preservation in a different state, a kind of present-as-pastness. Similar sentiments can be found in other writing on archives and art, such as Ingrid Schaffner's description of the museum-as-archive.[81] In a discussion about the connection between archives and the Holocaust, Ernst van Alphen pointed out that the final eradication of the Jewish race included Hitler's plan to establish a Jewish museum.[82] This act of commemoration would be the final sign that the Jewish people had indeed passed into extinction – from this point on, they would exist only in the past tense of the museum. What Derrida, Ghani and van Alphen's discussions all suggest is that presence in the archives or in museums can point to an absence in real life. Being archived in this sense means being placed in a historical bracket, forced into a past tense, as it involves forms of forgetting or symbolic death. This is in part the opposite mode of critiquing the archive from that of the this-too strategy, as the latter is based on the assumption that *not* being acknowledged in the archive means being absent from history; this absence itself constitutes a form of oppression.[83] The shift in understanding that occurs at a certain point is arguably that artistic practices move from this-too towards as-if – whereby absences or exclusions are acknowledged, but the focus is rather on the complications involved in re-entering these exclusions into existing archives, and that those complications involve a consideration of the problematic associations with certain forms of archival inclusion as well.[84]

Emily Jacir's *ex libris* (2010–12) deals directly with archival exclusion, and exemplifies the destabilising strategies that many artists work with in the twenty-first century (Plate 13). Jacir has described the work as follows: *ex libris* 'commemorates the approximately thirty thousand books from Palestinian homes, libraries, and institutions that were looted by Israeli authorities in 1948. Six thousand of these books are kept and catalogued at the Jewish National and University Library in Jerusalem under the designation "A.P." (Abandoned

Property).'[85] Jacir visited the library and photographed the books with her mobile phone, but she soon became focused on the many books that had not been classified as A.P. and had thus been assimilated into the main library system. Discussing Jacir's work, Guy Mannes-Abbott added further figures: of 70,000–80,000 books, approximately 6,000 were preserved, at least 26,000 were pulped, and many of the remaining ones were placed into the library without their A.P. insignia, thereby being preserved while simultaneously having their origins erased.[86] What is brought to the fore here is that the inadequate labelling – or, in archival terminology, lack of provenance – makes these objects and the events they represent unarchivable. Although Jacir's work included the act of adding to existing archives, it did so while pointing out the impossibility of this gesture; the forgotten memory was only partly there to be recalled.[87]

Parafictional strategies

In the late 1980s literary theorist Linda Hutcheon coined the term 'historiographic metafiction' to denote fiction in which a historical narrative is shown to be unreliable and constructed.[88] Around two decades later art historian Carrie Lambert-Beatty used the term 'parafiction' to describe a similarly performative use of fiction within an art context. Lambert-Beatty's article, published in the journal *October* in 2009, suggested that fiction or fictiveness had emerged as an important category in recent art, and that unlike historical fiction which sets up fact-based but imagined worlds, the parafictional dealt with real and/or imaginary personages and stories that intersect with the world as it is being lived.[89] Lambert-Beatty connected the parafictional to several other 'overlapping or related categories', including Okwui Enwezor's notions of 'documentary' and '*verité*', Hal Foster's 'archival impulse', and Mark Godfrey's 'artist as historian', specifying that her own moniker could be considered a 'performative version of the "documentary turn"'.[90] Although the archive art phenomenon is not discussed further, many of the artists Lambert-Beatty mentions as parafictional work with fictive archival material, and Walid Raad's Atlas Group was enlisted as a key example in the article.[91] In the Atlas Group archive – and in other works that are frequently classified as archive art – the issue of truth is sidetracked in favour of a transformative productive uncertainty; or, to quote art historian Vered Maimon from the same *October* issue, they emphasise 'performative rather than factual aspects of [the] … archive'.[92] Lambert-Beatty similarly stressed the performative and reception-focused elements of parafiction by arguing that 'Parafictioneers produce and manage plausibility. Plausibility (as opposed to accuracy) is not an attribute of a story or an image, but of its encounter with viewers.'[93] She quoted an email from Walid Raad in which he wrote that 'an artwork can maintain and work

different kind of facts alive [*sic*] (historical facts; sociological facts, economic facts, emotional facts, aesthetic facts, etc. …)'.[94] Lambert-Beatty went on to comment that 'this destabilizing of "fact" shares a bit more ground than is comfortable with "truthiness"'.[95] The term 'truthiness' comes from comedian Stephen Colbert and refers to 'truth measured by conviction rather than accuracy'.[96] This idea of truthiness is similar to slightly more recent notions of post-truth that begin to circulate in the second decade of the twenty-first century. They also, superficially, resemble parts of the discussion about different standards of truth and research in academic or artistic contexts; however, the political connotations and the nuance of the underlying arguments differ significantly.

One key element of Lambert-Beatty's notion of parafiction is its function as a form of corrective whereby the fictional narrative adjusts the official narrative of a given individual or group.[97] This type of strategy is not new; in 1970 the Ad Hoc Women Artists Committee attacked the Whitney Annual Exhibition by forging a press release stating that there would be 50 per cent women (50 per cent of them non-white) in the show, something that was far from the case.[98] Hans Haacke's 1978 series *A Breed Apart* similarly showed what looked like advertisements for well-known corporations, but with new images showing political conflicts in which these corporations were involved. These are clear precursors to the practice of culture jamming (or 'brandalism') and what the activist group the Yes Men calls 'identity correction', described by Lambert-Beatty as 'correction in the sense of unveiling, making clear what the target is really like (according to the correctors)'.[99]

Parafiction can be considered a different term for what was previously referred to as institutional critique, albeit a type of critical practice in which the destabilising strategy has become key. A number of the artworks considered parafictional by Lambert-Beatty, such as Raad's Atlas Group and Michael Blum's *A Tribute to Safiye Behar* (2005), are overtly working with archives, and like Anri Sala's *Intervista* (1998) and Zoe Leonard's *The Fae Richards Photo Archive* (1993–96), they take on a broader structure of representation than merely the museum.[100] Both Blum's and Leonard's work presents elaborate archival materials dedicated to fictional female characters: a Turkish woman with significant behind-the-scenes influence on the development of modern Turkey, and an African-American actress. Fae Richards is a fictional character who appeared in numerous Hollywood movies in the 1930s and whose life and work is documented in photographs and notebook pages that function as props for the film *The Watermelon Woman* by Cheryl Dunye.[101]

Anri Sala's work also blurs the line between fact and fiction, but does so through a supposedly documentary approach: piecing together the official history of Albania with personal memories of his mother, missing documents and various layers of uncertain and conflicting accounts of events.

Zoe Leonard, *The Fae Richards Photo Archive*, 1993–96 (detail) **6.4**

Zoe Leonard, *The Fae Richards Photo Archive*, 1993–96 (detail) **6.5**

All challenge the stability of historical documents as remnants of the past, and present new and at least partly made-up historical narratives. Although this might seem like a new trend at the turn of the twenty-first century, and may in part be connected to the discussion of the digital circulation of images, image manipulation and uncertain truth-claims, there are precedents here too. Vera Frenkel's *The Secret Life of Cornelia Lumsden* (1979–86) is an interesting precursor, and can be seen as archive art or parafictional practice *avant-la-lettre*.[102]

Prior to curating the exhibition *Archive Fever*, Okwui Enwezor differentiated between *documentary* and *verité* when considering *Documenta 11*.[103] The documentary was defined as above all mnemonic, concerned with evidence, testimony and bearing witness. It was described as having a 'forensic inclination concerned essentially with the recording of dry facts', whereas *verité* was concerned with 'truth' (bracketed) in a conditional sense: 'a process of unravelling, exploring, questioning, probing, analysing, and diagnosing a search for truth'.[104] This contrast between forensic and conditional truth corresponds to other similar dichotomies, some of which were brought up in previous chapters. In Chapter 5, different types of research were shown to be contrasted with one another, a more systematic and positivist versus a more intuitive and subjective. Chapter 4 discussed the contrast between different associations relating to digital and analogue documents. Another distinction, that between the eyewitness and the archive, has been made by Jeffrey Wallen, who defined the former as a personal imperative account demanding that we remember, in contrast to archival memory, which is bureaucratic and represents that which has been institutionally preserved.[105] Wallen, a professor of comparative literature who has written about archive art, was specifically concerned with the way individuals surveilled by the Stasi, the East German secret police, came to accept descriptions made of them in the archives – in order to put an end to their interrogation the person often confessed to the crimes they were accused of having committed; but as a result of this, they also began to think antagonistically of the regime.[106] What had begun as a false and unfair account ended up corresponding to reality – a new truth was created, caused directly by the, previously false, accusation. The personal and the institutional, the eyewitness and the archive could not be fully separated in other words; rather, '[t]he eyewitness here is also a product, even a function of the archive', according to Wallen.[107]

What I want to stress here is how the critical strategies employed by artists at the turn of the twenty-first century are increasingly performative and slippery in ways that bear a great deal of resemblance to forms of critique carried out in the academy. Rita Felski, in her discussion of the limits of critique as it is currently practised in some academic research, brought up the use of slippery language: the critical reader is now increasingly seen to *problematise* and

trouble the expected reading, whereas critique was previously seen more in terms of an overt attack.[108] I suggest that this shift corresponds to a similar shift in the art field in the way the terminology of institutional critique comes to be overshadowed by archive art. But Felski also brought up another element of this critical reading, namely its instructive potential, noting how 'deceptive or self-deceiving narrators' in literary works, as well as '[n]arrative ellipses, ironic juxtapositions, and stylistic or tonal incongruities', serve to train readers in a hermeneutics of suspicion: 'a hermeneutics that can subsequently be put into play in order to query the sacrosanct authority of these same works'.[109] There is, in other words, a built-in self-reflexivity in these critical methods. Felski suggested that suspicious reading views 'irresolution, contradiction, and doubleness as the quintessential intellectual virtues', and that the critical observer is also a self-observer, drawn to the 'meta': metafiction, metahistory, metatheory.[110] My overall argument in Chapter 5 about the various connections between art and research ties in with this: once artists perceive their work as research and once they are literally incorporated into university structures, critique of those institutions and the knowledge economy seems the logical next step.[111] Cross-reading Felski, Hutcheon and Lambert-Beatty with archive theory makes clear the shared critical paradigm and the overlapping rhetoric and shared assumptions between archival art practices and critical practices in other cultural and academic contexts.

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This chapter has examined overlaps and similarities as well as differences and tensions between three poles: archive art, the genre of art known as institutional critique, and other (political and academic) forms of critique of institutions. My key concern has been to examine how notions of critique within the art context intersect with wider notions of critique of institutions at the turn of the twenty-first century; how these relationships change over time; and how they are affected by, and in turn affect, sociopolitical developments and how these are theorised. Archive theory has been used as a raster through which artworks and artistic strategies can be analysed in terms of various layers of institutionality and institutional exclusion. What this approach reveals is that, on the one hand, the emergence of the archive art phenomenon has resulted in the archive becoming available as a set of interpretative possibilities for works that previously would have been described as institutional critique. In this way, notions of the archive can be said to be mobilised in works such as Fred Wilson's *Mining the Museum*, although the terminology of the archive or archive art as a category was not in frequent use when the work was made.[112] On the other hand, archive theory, sociopolitical issues and various technological factors also mean that the notions of both 'critique' and 'institution'

have been adjusted since the early 1990s, and that the archive has become a useful way to signal a shift towards increasing self-reflexivity and epistemological uncertainty.

The monikers 'this-too' and 'as-if' were introduced at the beginning of the chapter to highlight different types of critical strategies. Institutional critique, in its mode of pointing out omissions and attempting to rectify them, is similar in many ways to the academic method of adding to, and completing, faulty and exclusionary archives. However, the other (and mostly chronologically later) strategy of destabilisation also mobilises archival notions, albeit different ones. Here archives are used, but their validity is continuously challenged. These forms of critique are not conducted from one fixed position but from many, acknowledging the impossibility of operating from outside the institution, while simultaneously acting as though this were indeed possible. Many artworks that are considered part of the archival turn seem to work with this kind of incongruous logic. Although the notion of the archive is not necessary to understand or theorise these critical paradigms – and it is notably absent from Felski's discussion – I nevertheless argue that archive theory encapsulates many of these issues and that the notion of the archive frequently functions as a short cut for getting at issues related to critical modes of working.

One of the overarching aims of this book as a whole is to understand why the archive becomes such a useful notion at a particular point in time, and why this particular discursive frame becomes so ubiquitous. In this chapter I have pointed to how theorising specific sociopolitical events and historical shifts – in the GDR, South Africa and the MENASA region – made the archive a source of interest in the mid-1990s. These debates and attention to archives meant that issues were sharpened, but also that it gradually became possible to understand and frame existing artworks and practices by using the notion of the archive instead of other established terms and notions, and that this shift has specific conceptual effects. A recurring point is that the archive is useful precisely because of its elasticity as a notion: that archival references enable both a romantic, materially based art practice as well as deeply sceptical, critical and reflexive practices. Both of these aspects, the collection, care for and exhibition of material objects as well as the critical and self-reflexive narrative structure around these objects, are integral also to the topic of the next chapter, which examines the way the notion of the archive intersects with curatorial theory and practice.

Notes

1 E. Ketelaar, 'Archivalization and Archiving', *Archives and Manuscripts*, 27 (1999), pp. 54–61, cited in Ketelaar, 'Tacit Narratives', p. 133. Italics in the latter.
2 Discussions of issues of minority representation in official archives and the diversity of archival representation are covered in the special issue of *Archive*

Journal on the topic of 'Radical Archives', published in November 2015. See L. Darms and K. Eichhorn (eds), *Archive Journal*, special issue: 'Radical Archives' (2015), www.archivejournal.net/essays/radical-archives/. For a discussion of the use of archival material for political activism, see K. Eichhorn, *The Archival Turn in Feminism: Outrage in Order* (Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press, 2013).

3 The exact starting point for institutional critique varies between different texts, but is generally set to the late 1960s. Andrea Fraser suggests 1969 and cites various works by Hans Haacke and Daniel Buren as examples (Fraser, 'From the Critique of Institutions to an Institution of Critique', p. 103). Blake Stimson instead homes in on the year before, and posits that institutional critique is a 'child of 1968'. B. Stimson, 'What Was Institutional Critique?', in A. Alberro and B. Stimson (eds), *Institutional Critique: An Anthology of Artists' Writings* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2011), p. 20. In terms of the overlaps of artists, artists such as Mark Dion, Renée Green and Zoe Leonard are frequently included in both; see, for instance, Meyer, 'What Happened to the Institutional Critique?'

4 Designating something as '2.0' was in the early twenty-first century meant to signal something brand new, but from the vantage point of the 2020s, the term instead points to what was once new but is now already dated.

5 Felski uses the terminology of 'suspicious reading' as a direct reference to Paul Ricoeur's notion of 'the hermeneutics of suspicion'; see Felski, *The Limits of Critique*; M. Warner, 'Uncritical Reading', in J. Gallop (ed.), *Polemic: Critical or Uncritical* (New York: Routledge, 2004), pp. 13–38; Sedgwick, 'Paranoid Reading and Reparative Reading'; B. Latour, 'Why Has Critique Run out of Steam? From Matters of Fact to Matters of Critique', *Critical Inquiry*, 30:2 (2004), pp. 225–48; B. Latour, 'An Attempt at a "Compositionist Manifesto"', *New Literary History*, 41:3 (2010), pp. 471–90. See also E. S. Anker and R. Felski (eds), *Critique and Postcritique* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2017).

6 Felski, *The Limits of Critique*, p. 1.

7 The idea of a critique aimed at an imagined centre from a position on the periphery is common but has also been criticised as too simplistic. For instance, the centre–periphery dichotomy at work in such a set-up is a mutually dependent one: Trinh T. Minh-ha and others have pointed out how centre creates and requires periphery – without periphery there is no centre. T. T. Minh-ha, *When the Moon Waxes Red: Representation, Gender and Cultural Politics* (New York: Routledge, 1991), pp. 16–17, cited in A. Alberro, 'Institutions, Critique, and Institutional Critique', in Alberro and Stimson (eds), *Institutional Critique*, p. 11.

8 This is in line with Foucault's writing and his argument that peripheral texts often give a better perspective on the norms for what counts as historic truth, as systematic overlooking shows what one does not, or cannot, understand in a given era. See Eliassen, *Foucaults begreper*, p. 89.

9 According to Alberro, the term 'institutional critique' first appeared in print in Mel Ramsden's 'On Practice' in 1975 (Alberro, 'Institutions, Critique, and

Institutional Critique', p. 8). Andrea Fraser, on the other hand, suggests that she might have been the first to use the term in print in an article from 1985. She also stated that what she and her fellow students in the Whitney Independent Study Program in the mid-1980s thought was an established category of art was only at that time being solidified (partly by them) into art historical canon. See Fraser also for a discussion of the two parts that make up the phrase: institution and critique. Fraser, 'From the Critique of Institutions to an Institution of Critique', pp. 101, 102.

10   In his introduction Alexander Alberro mentions Linda Nochlin's essay 'Why Have There Been No Great Women Artists?' from 1971 (a quote from it is one of the essay's epigraphs), and he justifies the linking of feminism and institutional critique by stating: 'I think that the dynamic is essentially the same' (Alberro, 'Institutions, Critique, and Institutional Critique', p. 12). For a study of issues relating to feminist theory, film history and archives, see also V. Callahan (ed.), *Reclaiming the Archive: Feminism and Film History* (Detroit, MI: Wayne State University Press, 2010). It has also been pointed out that institutional critique meant something rather different in Eastern Europe, where there was a lack of functioning art institutions during the communist era. Curator Zdenka Badovinac suggested that 'Eastern European avant-gardes were more concerned with attacking ideology than the art system, which […] has yet to develop in the East in any form comparable to the West.' Z. Badovinac, *Comradeship: Curating, Art, and Politics in Post-Socialist Europe* (New York: Independent Curators International, 2019), p. 125. This essay, 'Contemporaneity as Points of Connection' was first published in 2009. For a discussion of the specific conditions for institutional critique in Eastern Europe, see also Petrešin-Bachelez, 'Innovative Forms of Archives, Part One'.

11   This neologism is similar to that proposed by Malin Hedlin Hayden, when, in a conference paper, she used the phrase 'she too' as a way to highlight the practice of adding female artists to an existing canon. M. Hedlin Hayden, 'History in the Modality of Feminism', presented at 'Art, Media, and Intermediality: Current Research at the Department of Culture and Aesthetics', Stockholm University, 2016. See also S. Harding, 'Just Add Women and Stir? (1995)', in *Missing Links: Gender Equity in Science and Technology for Development* (Ottawa: International Development Research Centre in association with Intermediate Technology Publications and Unifem, 2008), pp. 295–305.

12   Alberro, 'Institutions, Critique, and Institutional Critique', p. 8.

13   Fraser, 'From the Critique of Institutions to an Institution of Critique', p. 105.

14   The text continues: 'art is always already institutionalized, simply because it exists within the perception of participants in the field of art as art, a perception not necessarily aesthetic but fundamentally social in its determination' (Fraser, 'From the Critique of Institutions to an Institution of Critique', p. 103).

15   Fraser writes: 'From 1969 on, a conception of the "institution of art" begins to emerge that includes not just the museum, nor even only the sites of production, distribution, and reception of art, but the entire field of art as a

social universe' (Fraser, 'From the Critique of Institutions to an Institution of Critique', p. 103).

16 This sentence paraphrases Alexander Alberro writing about Julio Le Parc and Enzo Mari's withdrawal from *Documenta 4*, but the description is applicable to a range of artistic practices where the museum or 'system' is attacked, yet the attack is enabled by the system itself, which has provided the artists the platform from which to launch it. Alberro, 'Institutions, Critique, and Institutional Critique', p. 4.

17 The parasite as a symbol for a particular kind of critique has been brought up in different ways by various authors. Arthur Danto described the parasitic as 'conceptually interlocked with the theory it rejects' (Danto, *The Transfiguration of the Commonplace*, p. 28). Recall here also that the press that published Maranda's *Twentysix Gasoline Stations, 2.0* is called Parasitic Ventures Press, and is run by Maranda himself (see Chapter 3 for more on this). For more on these postmodern metaphors, see K. Arvidsson, 'Den romantiska postmodernismen: konstkritiken och det romantiska i 1980- och 1990-talets svenska konst', dissertation, Göteborgs universitet, 2008, p. 73. See also A. Anagnost, 'Parasitism and Contemporary Art', in P. Fraser and R. Rothman (eds), *Beyond Critique: Contemporary Art in Theory, Practice, and Instruction* (New York: Bloomsbury Academic, 2017), pp. 79–96.

18 For a discussion of so-called 'New Institutionalism' and how curators attempt to reconfigure the art institution from within, see J. T. Voorhies (ed.), *What Ever Happened to New Institutionalism?* (Berlin: Sternberg, 2016); Voorhies, *Beyond Objecthood*, pp. 71–138.

19 Fraser, 'From the Critique of Institutions to an Institution of Critique'.

20 P. Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde* (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1984).

21 Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde*. See also Stimson, 'What Was Institutional Critique?', pp. 23ff.

22 H. Foster, 'Who's Afraid of the Neo-Avant Garde?', in *The Return of the Real: The Avant-Garde at the End of the Century* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1996), pp. 1–32.

23 The neo-avant-garde was exemplified in Foster's article by artists such as Michael Asher, Mel Bochner, Marcel Broodthaers, Daniel Buren, Dan Flavin, Dan Graham, Hans Haacke, Donald Judd, Robert Morris and Robert Smithson, among others, but he also proposed a 'second neo-avant-garde' that included Mark Dion, Andrea Fraser, Silvia Kolbowski, Louise Lawler, Christopher Williams and Fred Wilson. Foster, 'Who's Afraid of the Neo-Avant Garde?', pp. 11, 25.

24 For a summary of the debate that raged around the 1993 Biennial Exhibition at New York's Whitney Museum and the way critics on both the left and the right dismissed its focus on issues of identity and community, see C. Reed, *Art and Homosexuality: A History of Ideas* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), pp. 44–6. For an account of the unease at *October* about identity and activist issues, see M. Danbolt, 'Front Room – Back Room: An Interview with Douglas Crimp', *FRANK Conversations* (2015), pp. 1–11. The interview

was first published in *Trikster—Nordic Queer Journal* #2, in 2008 (http://trikster.net/2/crimp/singlepage.html, accessed 18 June 2021). In this interview Crimp argued that *October*'s deep roots in modernist views of art and its high art focus became increasingly evident, and contributed to his ousting, since his own interests veered more towards culture in a broader sense. It is interesting to note that archive art has frequently had a similar high art focus, although some categorisations of the phenomenon have challenged this. John Tagg, in the article I quoted in the introduction (Tagg, 'The Archiving Machine'), criticised the use of archive terminology and theory, precisely on the grounds that although at one point it proposed a radical challenge to the status quo, it has now become inert and 'drained of anything that might constitute a threat to the institution'. Tagg continued a little later: 'Something has clearly been lost, then, in the accommodation to the museum and the absorption of the impetus of theory into the steady institutionalization of a hardly varied canon.' What Tagg highlighted here was a perceived shift in the meaning of the term 'archive', suggesting that there was one turn to the archive initiated by Sekula and Tagg himself decades before that was radical and political, but that the current turn is watered down and toothless, as it is applied to a small and predictable canon of contemporary artistic practices.

25 Adding further complexity to the issue of how critique is understood, Claire Bishop has argued that the different intellectual and pedagogical formations in the 1980s in the US and European contexts contributed to different attitudes towards artistic 'criticality'. C. Bishop, *Artificial Hells: Participatory Art and the Politics of Spectatorship* (London: Verso, 2012), p. 200.

26 Hitchens exemplified this with Vaclav Havel, who acted *as if* he were living in a free society, Oscar Wilde deciding to live *as if* moral hypocrisy were not regnant, Rosa Parks acting *as if* a black woman could sit down on a bus at the end of the day's labour, and Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn resolving to write *as if* an individual scholar could investigate the history of his own country and publish his findings. C. Hitchens, *Letters to a Young Contrarian* (New York: Basic Books, 2001), pp. 36–8. For a different but somewhat related take on 'as if', see Barbara Johnson's discussion of the film *Clueless* and Hans Vaihinger's book *The Philosophy of 'As If'* (1911). Johnson's discussion centred on the way the term functions simultaneously 'to allow for a heuristic transference and for a transformative double consciousness at once, even though these two processes draw on the contradictory energies of belief, critique and defense'. B. Johnson, 'Bad Writing', in Culler and Lamb (eds), *Just Being Difficult?*, p. 166.

27 Afrofuturism could also be considered in light of such alternative and performative 'as-if' scenarios. Afrofuturism has been described by Mark Dery as '[s]peculative fiction that treats African-American themes and addresses African-American concerns in the context of twentieth-century technoculture – and … African-American signification that appropriates images of technology and a prosthetically enhanced future'. M. Dery, 'Black to the Future: Interviews with Samuel R. Delaney, Greg Tate, and Tricia Rose', in M. Dery (ed.), *Flame Wars: The Discourse of Cyberculture* (Durham, NC: Duke

University Press, 1994), p. 180. See also A. Nelson (ed.), *Social Text 71*, 20:2, special issue: 'Afrofuturism' (2002); Y. Womack, *Afrofuturism: The World of Black Sci-Fi and Fantasy Culture* (Chicago: Chicago Review Press, 2013); and R. Anderson and C. E. Jones (eds), *Afrofuturism 2.0: The Rise of Astro-Blackness* (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2016).

28   Alberro, 'Institutions, Critique, and Institutional Critique', pp. 14–16. These strategies can be contrasted with the more reform-oriented ones of the earlier phase of institutional critique. Reform is here another way of describing the intention to improve the archive by way of addition; Alberro used the term 'prescriptive critique' for the kind of critique carried out from a position outside of the objects criticised (Alberro, 'Institutions, Critique, and Institutional Critique', p. 5). Similarly, Andrea Fraser brought up Hans Haacke's work and suggested that 'anyone familiar with his work should recognize that, far from trying to tear down the museum, Haacke's project has been an attempt to *defend* the institution of art from instrumentalization by political and economic interests' (Fraser, 'From the Critique of Institutions to an Institution of Critique', p. 105. Italics in the original.) Rita Felski referenced Adorno's differentiation between *transcendent* and *immanent* critique: knowledge from the outside, at a distance, and knowledge boring from within, immersing itself in the thoughts and ideas it opposes (Felski, *The Limits of Critique*, p. 125). For a critique of the whole idea of a new kind of institutional critique, see James Meyer's argument that dialogues among artists are always inter- and intra-generational, and therefore it is inaccurate to speak of a 'new' institutional critique (Meyer, 'What Happened to the Institutional Critique?', pp. 6–7).

29   F. Wilson and L. G. Corrin, *Mining the Museum: An Installation by Fred Wilson* (Baltimore, MD/New York: Contemporary/New Press, 1994); F. Wilson and H. Halle, 'Mining the Museum', *Grand Street*, 44 (1993), pp. 151–72; L. G. Corrin, '*Mining the Museum*: An Installation Confronting History', *Curator: The Museum Journal*, 36:4 (1993), pp. 302–13; J. E. Stein, 'Sins of Omission', *Art in America*, 81/10 (1993), pp. 110–15. See also T. Smith, 'Artists as Curators/Curators as Artists', in *Thinking Contemporary Curating* (New York: Independent Curators International, 2012), pp. 121–4.

30   Alexander Alberro has described Fred Wilson as someone who 'developed earlier institutional critique practices that radicalized or re-radicalized questions of class and gender into critical historical analyses linking institutions of power such as the museum with questions of racial politics' (Alberro, 'Institutions, Critique, and Institutional Critique', p. 14). Peter Kalb, in his 2013 textbook survey of contemporary art, discussed Wilson in a section titled 'Institutional Critique', together with other artists who Kalb claims 'point to the complex ways in which cultural institutions participate in politics and how art can assume both complicit and resistant positions'. The other artists included in the section are Alexander Brener, Group Material, Santiago Sierra and Krzysztof Wodiczko. Kalb, *Charting the Contemporary*, p. 33.

31   Hal Foster wrote about *Mining the Museum* in several texts, for instance 'Who's Afraid of the Neo-Avant Garde?' and 'The Artist as Ethnographer'.

32 Wilson is in fact mentioned by Kate Palmer Albers as an example of an archival interest among artists, but this is an exception (Albers, *Uncertain Histories*, p. 88). It is important to stress here that Wilson was far from the first to do this kind of intervention; I bring his work up here because of its position as canonical in some sense. Celina Jeffery argues that the first exhibition in the United Kingdom where an artist was invited to collaborate with a museum to reconceptualise an ethnographic collection was Eduardo Paolozzi's *Lost Magic Kingdoms and Six Paper Moons of Nahuatl* at the British Museum in 1985–89. C. Jeffery, 'Introduction', in C. Jeffery (ed.), *The Artist as Curator* (Bristol: Intellect, 2015), p. 9.

33 T. Richards, 'Archive and Utopia', *Representations*, 37, special issue: 'Imperial Fantasies and Postcolonial Histories' (1992), p. 104. This article was reworked into a chapter in Richards's book *The Imperial Archive: Knowledge and the Fantasy of Empire* (London: Verso, 1993). Several other scholars have written about how the frantic collection of minute detail measuring, logging and archiving aspects of the colonial territory and its population was a way of possessing and reining in the perceived chaos of the colonies – a way of simultaneously creating and controlling the colonised. See, for example, Stoler, *Along the Archival Grain*.

34 I. Rogoff, 'An-Archy: Scattered Records, Evacuated Sites, Dispersed Loathings', in Comay (ed.), *Lost in the Archives*, p. 670. Greetham used the term 'archival hubris' when discussing the creators of universal systems such as the Library of Congress or Dewey Decimal or UDC. These are described as attempts to achieve an '*anatomy* of the archive' that 'will somehow derive from an empirical analysis of the full body of extant writings and yet try to stand outside the time and place of its making'. D. Greetham, '"Who's In, Who's Out": The Cultural Poetics of Archival Exclusion', *Studies in the Literary Imagination*, 32:1 (1999), p. 18. Italics in the original.

35 Rogoff, 'An-Archy', p. 671.

36 'The records I read show the soldiers and administrators of the East India Company constructing the object of representations that becomes the reality of India' (Spivak, 'The Rani of Sirmur', p. 249). An extract from Spivak's text is included in Merewether's anthology on the archive, and her writing has been very influential in writing on postcolonial archival research. For instance, the authors of the introduction to a book on African photographic archives ask 'where and what is "Africa" that is constituted in the archive?', and they go on to paraphrase Achille Mbembe and add, 'what is Africa the idea of?', which echoes what Spivak wrote in her essay some three decades before. C. Morton and D. Newbury, 'Introduction: Relocating the African Photographic Archive', in C. Morton and D. Newbury (eds), *The African Photographic Archive: Research and Curatorial Strategies* (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2016), p. 4.

37 Spivak, 'The Rani of Sirmur', p. 249. I am not doing Spivak's essay justice here, as her text presents a complex and multifaceted argument. For instance, she gives different examples of othering, whereby British officials are 'worlding' the native Indians' own world, by obliging them to domesticate the alien as

Master. This is a direct reference to Heidegger's discussion in 'Origin of the Work of Art', and also brings to mind Edward Said's *Orientalism*, written a few years prior to Spivak's article. The assumption of an uninscribed earth which is the condition of possibility of the worlding of a world generates the force to make the 'native' see himself as 'other', according to Spivak ('The Rani of Sirmur', p. 253).

38 Spivak, 'The Rani of Sirmur', p. 271. On p. 251 of the same text, Spivak also brings up Dominick LaCapra's notion that a text may 'answer back' in order to point out how the postcolonial critic undermines LaCapra's argument – in the case of the Rani of Sirmur there is no such text that can answer back.

39 Spivak, 'The Rani of Sirmur', p. 265.

40 Kelsey's book is also an example of the paradoxical methodology mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, since it draws on archival materials for its own authority at the same time that it overtly questions the authority of archives. For a discussion of this, see Introduction and Conclusion in R. E. Kelsey, *Archive Style: Photographs & Illustrations for U.S. Surveys, 1850–1890* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2007).

41 Kelsey, *Archive Style*, p. 5.

42 F. Wilson and I. Karp, 'Constructing the Spectacle of Culture in Museums', in Alberro and Stimson (eds), *Institutional Critique*, p. 335.

43 Carolyn Steedman: 'In the Archive, you cannot be shocked at its exclusions, its emptiness, at what *is not* catalogued. At what was "destroyed by enemy action during the Second World War", nor that it tells of the gentry and not of the poor stockinger. Its condition of being deflects outrage: in its quiet folders and bundles is the neatest demonstration of how state power has operated, through ledgers and lists and indictments, and through what is missing from them' (Steedman, 'The Space of Memory', p. 67. Italics in the original.) Thomas Götselius similarly suggests (referencing Wolfgang Ernst and Arlette Farge) that every archive is defined by what it does not hold (Götselius, 'Förord: Åter till arkivet', p. 13). For more on how relatively recent areas of knowledge such as postcolonialism and gender theory are motivated by an understanding that what has been institutionalised as the order of things is in fact reversible, and that archival work is key to this reversibility, see A. Azoulay, 'Archive', in Downey (ed.), *Dissonant Archives*, pp. 198–9.

44 Wilson and Karp, 'Constructing the Spectacle of Culture in Museums', p. 335.

45 Wilson and Karp, 'Constructing the Spectacle of Culture in Museums', p. 335.

46 For a different take on a similar double lack, see S. M. Hassan and O. Oguibe (eds), *Authentic / Ex-Centric: Conceptualism in Contemporary African Art* (Ithaca, NY: Forum for African Arts, 2001). The authors critique both the lack of African artists in the Venice Biennale in general, but also the lack of African artists in the category of conceptual art. Another text discussing African artists' presence at international biennales is K. Katchka, 'Creative Diffusion: African Intersections in the Biennale Network', in G. Salami and M. B. Visonà (eds), *A Companion to Modern African Art* (Hoboken, NJ: Wiley, 2013), pp. 489–506.

47 J. Putnam, *Art and Artifact: The Museum as Medium* (New York: Thames and Hudson, 2001), p. 158. Hal Foster also discusses the different meanings of 'mining' in the work's title (Foster, 'The Artist as Ethnographer', p. 191).

48 On the most basic level the archaeological method is a form of institutional critique; what Foucault had done in the three books preceding *The Archaeology of Knowledge* was to critique the institutionalisation of the clinic, madness and Western science.

49 R. Koch, 'The Critical Gesture in Philosophy', in B. Latour and P. Weibel (eds), *Iconoclash* (Karlsruhe/Cambridge, MA: ZKM, Centre for Art and Media/ MIT Press, 2002), p. 531. Italics in the original. Felski, *The Limits of Critique*, p. 122.

50 Fred Wilson in K. McShine, *The Museum as Muse: Artists Reflect* (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1999), p. 158.

51 Fred Wilson in McShine, *The Museum as Muse*, p. 158.

52 K. Schankweiler, 'The Relational Archive of Georges Adéagbo', *African Arts*, 48:2 (2015), pp. 40–51. The article was published in a special issue specifically dedicated to 'African Art and the Archive', edited by Ferdinand de Jong and Elizabeth Harney.

53 The article contains a detailed account of a visit by the author to the artist's studio in Cotonou, Benin, in 2003.

54 Schankweiler, 'The Relational Archive of Georges Adéagbo', p. 43.

55 One important difference between them is that Adéagbo also created new objects that he included in the installation.

56 Schankweiler, 'The Relational Archive of Georges Adéagbo', pp. 44–5.

57 Schankweiler, 'The Relational Archive of Georges Adéagbo', p. 42. In addition to Warburg, Schankweiler's article featured several other frequently cited authors who have written about archives: Aleida Assmann, Hal Foster and Georges Didi-Huberman, among others.

58 Schankweiler, 'The Relational Archive of Georges Adéagbo', p. 42.

59 Schankweiler, 'The Relational Archive of Georges Adéagbo', p. 48. Italics in the original.

60 Schankweiler, 'The Relational Archive of Georges Adéagbo', p. 50.

61 Blake Stimson writes about how 'the meaning and purpose of institutional critique' has been pushed 'out of the category of contemporary art and into the past where it sits for us only *in posse*' (Stimson, 'What Was Institutional Critique?', p. 31). The very title of Stimson's text also suggests that institutional critique is a thing of the past. An example of the notion of short cut is the exhibition *Show Me Your Archive and I Will Show You Who's in Power*, at the Kiosk Gallery in Ghent, Belgium, which clearly uses the term archive as a marker or stand-in for power. 'Show Me Your Archive…', www.kioskgallery.be/showmeyourarchive [accessed 12 November 2017].

62 The 'dissonant' terminology is taken from an anthology on archive art practices in the MENASA region; see Downey (ed.), *Dissonant Archives*.

63 Derrida, 'Archive Fever', p. 43. Italics in the original.

64 The aim of the conference was to 'bring to bear on "archive" an interrogation similar to that which concepts like "canon" or "orientalism" have undergone'.

C. Hamilton, V. Harris and G. Reid, 'Introduction', in C. Hamilton (ed.), *Refiguring the Archive* (Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic, 2002), p. 9. The project was hosted by the University of Witwatersrand's Graduate School for the Humanities and Social Sciences in conjunction with four archival institutions: the National Archives, the university's Historical Papers, the Gay and Lesbian Archives and the South African History Archive. The project launch also coincided with the opening of an exhibition called *Holdings: Refiguring the Archive* showing 'work by contemporary South African artists who explore the activities of documentation as processes of interpretation' (Hamilton, Harris and Reid, 'Introduction', pp. 7–8). For a more recent take on the particularities of archival practice and theorising in the South African context, see Morton and Newbury (eds), *The African Photographic Archive*.

65 'Archive Fever (A seminar by Jacques Derrida)', p. 52.

66 'Archive Fever (A seminar by Jacques Derrida)', pp. 66, 68.

67 The play referenced the late nineteenth-century French play *Ubu Roi* by Alfred Jarry. For a description of *Ubu and the Truth Commission*, see P. Ukpokodu, 'Puppets as Witnesses and Perpetrators in *Ubu and the Truth Commission*', in Salami and Visonà (eds), *A Companion to Modern African Art*, pp. 408–25.

68 'Sue Williamson | Truth Games', *Sue-Williamson*, www.sue-williamson.com/truth-games [accessed 4 September 2020]; E. Mosely, '"Visualizing" Apartheid: Contemporary Art and Collective Memory During South Africa's Transition to Democracy', *Antipoda*, 5 (2007), p. 111.

69 Mosely, '"Visualizing" Apartheid', p. 114. See also T. Morphet, 'Review: *Setting Apart. An Installation by Hilton Judin* in the Castle, Cape Town', *Social Dynamics*, 21:1 (1995), pp. 141–8.

70 J. Peffer, *Art and the End of Apartheid* (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 2009), p. 278. Mofokeng has described how the photographs are also partly fictional: if you look closely, he says, 'you notice that the face or faces of the subject were put there, airbrushed in afterward, after the event depicted. One could find similarly clothed subjects with different faces in another house: the clothes are the same, only the faces are different. It's the work of an enterprising photographer and artist. There's a lot of fiction.' C. Diserens and S. Mofokeng, 'Santu Mofokeng in Conversation with Corinne Diserens, Part 1 (May 2010)', in C. Diserens (ed.), *Chasing Shadows: Santu Mofokeng: Thirty Years of Photographic Essays* (Munich: Prestel, 2011), pp. 15–16.

71 J. Tagg, *The Burden of Representation: Essays on Photographies and Histories* (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1988), p. 11, cited in Peffer, *Art and the End of Apartheid*, p. 279.

72 Peffer, *Art and the End of Apartheid*, p. 279. Italics in the original.

73 A. Dodd, '"Live Transmission": Intimate Ancestors in Santu Mofokeng's Black Photo Album / Look at Me: 1890–1950', *African Arts*, 48:2, special issue: 'African Art and the Archive' (2015), p. 54.

74 See also T. Garb, 'Distance & Desire: Encounters with the African Archive | The New Yorker [interview by Jessie Wender]', 2013, www.newyorker.com/

culture/photo-booth/distance-desire-encounters-with-the-african-archive [accessed 10 September 2020].

75 Garb, 'Distance & Desire', quoted in Dodd, '"Live Transmission"', p. 55.

76 Dodd, '"Live Transmission"', pp. 55, 52. Mofokeng has described how he viewed the work as a 'social research project' more than an artwork (Diserens and Mofokeng, 'Santu Mofokeng in Conversation with Corinne Diserens', p. 15).

77 C. Counihan, 'Interview with Nomusa Makhubu', *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East*, 36:2 (2016), p. 308.

78 Counihan, 'Interview with Nomusa Makhubu', pp. 314, 315.

79 Drawing attention to the extended temporality of colonialism, Ann Laura Stoler has placed the 'post' in 'postcolonialism' in parentheses in order to point out what she considers to be a built-in problem with this terminology: the term seems to suggest a time period (a time that was once colonial but is no more) rather than a critical stance in the present. For this reason Stoler explains that she prefers to describe her work as '(post)colonial studies'. A. L. Stoler, *Duress: Imperial Durabilities in Our Times* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2016), p. ix.

80 M. Ghani, '"What We Left Unfinished": The Artist and the Archive', in Downey (ed.), *Dissonant Archives*, p. 54.

81 Schaffner, 'Deep Storage'.

82 van Alphen, *Staging the Archive*, pp. 209ff. There are, of course, also many examples of attempts to archive the stories of Holocaust survivors, both to avoid history repeating itself and to make sure that what took place is not forgotten. For a discussion of *Yale's Fortunoff Video Archive for Holocaust Testimonies*, see R. Comay and I. Balfour, 'The Ethics of Witness: An Interview with Geoffrey Hartman', in Comay (ed.), *Lost in the Archives*, pp. 490–510.

83 Addressing the Derridean doubled death-drive in the context of another historical situation, that of the Armenian genocide, Marc Nichanian argues that '[t]he essence of genocide is denial. Genocide is destined to erase itself as a fact.' Nichanian, however, adds another sense to this erasure: it is not the memory of the killing having occurred that is erased, but rather the interpretation of this event as a particular kind of killing. The harmful effect of the erasure is the closing down of interpretative possibilities, according to Nichanian. M. Nichanian, 'The Truth of the Facts: About the New Revisionism', in R. G. Hovannisian (ed.), *Remembrance and Denial: The Case of the Armenian Genocide* (Detroit, MI: Wayne State University Press, 1998), p. 257.

84 For a discussion of some of these issues through the lens of migration, see I. Chambers, G. Grechi and M. Nash, *The Ruined Archive* (Milan: Mela Books, 2014), www.mela-project.polimi.it/upl/cms/attach/20140722/102611541_7245.pdf [accessed 3 June 2021].

85 E. Jacir, *Emily Jacir: Ex Libris* (Cologne: König, 2012), p. 6. Books and issues of censorship, previous owners and the circulation of books are frequent topics in contemporary art, and *ex libris* can be placed in a long line of artworks that deal with books in different ways. Marta Minujín's *The Parthenon of Books* and Maria Eichhorn's *Rose Valland Institute* were both exhibited at

Documenta 14 in 2017. The latter is described on the project's website as 'an independent interdisciplinary artistic project. It researches and documents the expropriation of property formerly owned by Europe's Jewish population and the ongoing impact of those confiscations.' M. Eichhorn, 'Rose Valland Institute', http://rosevallandinstitut.org/about.html [accessed 14 November 2017]. Many other works deal with libraries specifically: Meriç Algün Ringborg's *Library of Unborrowed Books* (2012), Matias Faldbakken's *Untitled (Book Sculpture)* (2008) and Igor Isaksson and Måns Wrange's *Bibliotheca Non Grata* (2014–15) are three Scandinavian examples. For a discussion of the book-as-exhibition and the library as a curatorial space, see A.-S. Springer and E. Turpin (eds), *Fantasies of the Library*, 2nd rev. edn (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2016).

86 Mannes-Abbott, 'This is Tomorrow', p. 119.

87 For another discussion about the specific issues related to Palestinian archival processes, see B. Butler, '"Othering" the Archive – From Exile to Inclusion and Heritage Dignity: The Case of Palestinian Archival Memory', *Archival Science*, 9 (2009), pp. 57–69.

88 Hutcheon, *A Poetics of Postmodernism*; L. Hutcheon, *The Politics of Postmodernism* (London: Routledge, 1989).

89 Lambert-Beatty, 'Make-Believe', p. 54.

90 See Lambert-Beatty, 'Make-Believe', p. 56, n. 14. See also Susanne Sæther's discussion of 'the unreliable archive' in Slater Bradley's work. S. Ø. Sæther, 'Archival Art: Negotiating the Role of New Media', in E. Røssaak (ed.), *The Archive in Motion: New Conceptions of the Archive in Contemporary Thought and New Media Practices* (Oslo: Novus Press, 2010), pp. 77–108.

91 Tom Holert mentioned Lambert-Beatty's article in a discussion of archival practices in the Middle East. B. Abbas, R. Abou-Rahme and T. Holert, 'The Archival Multitude: Basel Abbas and Ruanne Abou-Rahme (in Conversation with Tom Holert)', *Journal of Visual Culture*, 12:3 (2013), p. 359. Another of Lambert-Beatty's key examples, the Yes Men, is often brought up as an example of a contemporary version of institutional critique. See, for example, Alberro, 'Institutions, Critique, and Institutional Critique', p. 17.

92 V. Maimon, 'The Third Citizen: On Models of Criticality in Contemporary Artistic Practices', *October*, 129 (2009), p. 100. Challenges to the notion of a stable and reliable truth, and the theorisation of a general shift in knowledge production via a similar shift in the notion of the archive, are stressed in a number of texts on archive art. David Houston Jones discussed destabilised truth-claims in the wake of postmodernist theory. Kate Palmer Albers's entire 2015 book centred on this idea, and although she largely avoids engaging with the notion of the archive, it ties in with many of the themes and practices of the archive art phenomenon. Also, several of the texts included in Anthony Downey's anthology were similarly concerned with these issues. Downey wrote in his introduction: 'In exploring and producing archives, be they alternative, interrogative or fictional, these artists are not simply questioning veracity, authenticity or authority, or, indeed, authorship; rather, they interpose forms of contingency and radical possibility into the archive that

sees it projected onto future rather than historical probabilities' (Downey, 'Contingency, Dissonance and Performativity', p. 15). See Jones, *Installation Art and the Practices of Archivalism*, pp. 13–14; Albers, *Uncertain Histories*.

93 Lambert-Beatty, 'Make-Believe', pp. 72–3.
94 Lambert-Beatty, 'Make-Believe', p. 81.
95 Lambert-Beatty, 'Make-Believe', p. 81.
96 Lambert-Beatty, 'Make-Believe', p. 57. In footnote 89 on p. 81 Lambert-Beatty also clarifies that, while noting the 'generic connection' between Raad's destabilisation of facts and the notion of truthiness, 'I do not mean to collapse terms. Raad is talking about the proliferation and protection of different kinds of fact, while "truthiness" describes the substitution of one kind of fact for another.'
97 Lambert-Beatty, 'Make-Believe', p. 62.
98 Lippard, 'Escape Attempts', pp. xi–xii.
99 Lambert-Beatty, 'Make-Believe', p. 62.
100 The dates for Raad's Atlas Group are deliberately difficult to pin down, but Raad began working on it in the late 1990s – I discuss this further in Chapter 8. Both Anri Sala's *Intervista* and Zoe Leonard's *The Fae Richards Photo Archive* were part of Enwezor's *Archive Fever* exhibition.
101 For more on *The Fae Richards Photo Archive*, see Z. Leonard and C. Dunye, *The Fae Richards Photo Archive* (San Francisco: Artspace Books, 1996); J. Bryan-Wilson and C. Dunye, 'Imaginary Archives: A Dialogue', *Art Journal*, 72:2 (2014), pp. 82–9.
102 *The Secret Life of Cornelia Lumsden* is the umbrella title for a series of works including videos, texts and installations. A. A. Bronson, P. Gale and Art Metropole (eds), 'R. Austen Marshall / As introduced by Vera Frenkel. The Cornelia Lumsden Archive: Can Truth Prevail?', in *Museums by Artists* (Toronto: Art Metropole, 1983), pp. 97–114; V. Frenkel, 'The Pleasures of Uncertainty…', *Vera Frenkel : Cartographie d'une Pratique / Mapping a Practice*, www.fondation-langlois.org/html/f/page.php?NumPage=2238 [accessed 10 September 2020]. Another archival work by Frenkel is the more recent film *ONCE NEAR WATER: Notes from the Scaffolding Archive* (2008–09).
103 Enwezor, '*Documenta 11*, Documentary, and "The Reality Effect"', pp. 98–9.
104 Enwezor, '*Documenta 11*, Documentary, and "The Reality Effect"', pp. 99, 101. Several of the artists included in *Documenta 11* have become part of the archive art canon; see Chapter 1.
105 J. Wallen, 'Narrative Tensions: The Archive and the Eyewitness', *Partial Answers: Journal of Literature and the History of Ideas*, 7:2 (2009), pp. 261–2.
106 Wallen, 'Narrative Tensions', p. 275. Jeffrey Wallen has also written about Walid Raad; see J. Wallen, 'The Lure of the Archive: The Atlas Project of Walid Raad', *Comparative Critical Studies*, 8.2–3 (2011), pp. 277–93.
107 Wallen, 'Narrative Tensions', p. 275.
108 Felski, *The Limits of Critique*, p. 130.
109 Works mentioned that do this are *Notes from the Underground*, *The Turn of the Screw*, *Pale Fire* and *The Remains of the Day* (Felski, *The Limits of Critique*, p. 43). For a discussion of scepticism and art more generally, see M.

Leja, *Looking Askance: Skepticism and American Art from Eakins to Duchamp* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2004).

110 Felski, *The Limits of Critique*, pp. 69, 135. In the first of these quotes Felski refers to Timothy Brennan, 'Running and Dodging: The Rhetoric of Doubleness in Contemporary Theory', *New Literary History*, 41:2 (2010), pp. 277–99. For a discussion of the use of the 'quasi transcendent power attributed to theory in contemporary art criticism', see G. Kester, 'The Device Laid Bare: On Some Limitations in Current Art Criticism', *e-flux journal*, 50 (2013), unpaginated, www.e-flux.com/journal/50/59990/the-device-laid-bare-on-some-limitations-in-current-art-criticism/ [accessed 17 June 2021].

111 See, for example, point IV in Busch, 'Artistic Research and the Poetics of Knowledge'.

112 In the texts from the time of the exhibition, archival terminology is mostly absent. The broad theoretical implications of the archive as a notion were not part of the discourse at the time, but feature at times in later discussions of the work. M. Buskirk, 'Interviews with Sherrie Levine, Louise Lawler, and Fred Wilson', *October*, 70, special issue: 'The Duchamp Effect' (1994), p. 109; Corrin, '*Mining the Museum*: An Installation Confronting History', pp. 302, 309; N. Frankel, '*Mining the Museum* by Fred Wilson [Review]', *The Public Historian*, 15:3 (1993), pp. 105–8; Wilson and Halle, 'Mining the Museum', p. 152; A. L. Jared, 'Partnerships: Hype and Reality', *The Journal of Museum Education*, 19:1 (1994), pp. 17–20; A. B. Knight Jr, 'How Democratic is this "Culture" Thing, Anyway?', *The Journal of Museum Education*, 20:3 (1995), pp. 20–2; Stein, 'Sins of Omission'; P. H. Welsh, 'Scrap Irony: An Exhibit Review Essay', *City & Society*, 10:1 (1998), pp. 355–68, doi: 10.1525/city.1998.10.1.355. A 1999 review discussing a different installation by Wilson at the British Museum in 1997 did bring up archival themes, since it reviewed two different exhibitions, one of which was specifically dealing with national archives in Australia, *Archives and the Everyday*. M. Gates, 'Is there an Artist in the Museum?', *Artlink*, 19:1 (1999), pp. 14–17.

7   Curating

The emergence, consolidation and cementation of the archive art phenomenon accompanied another development in the artworld: the increasing power and presence of the curator, and the theorisation of curating as a concept. Similar to the use of terms and concepts relating to the archive, there has been a substantial inflation in the use of the terminology of curating, as well as an expansion of the term's meaning. What once indicated a clearly delineated function – caring for art objects and artefacts – is now frequently used to refer to any deliberate selection and arrangement. Just about anything can be curated these days: wine cellars, salads, playlists, hotel interiors, stock portfolios.[1] In the artworld, the curator, either freelance or affiliated with major institutions, has become a highly visible and influential figure.

In Chapter 1 I noted that the discussion of a presumed 'archival turn' in art was driven in part by curators, but also that many of the definitions of archive art stressed a methodological and conceptual affinity between archival and curatorial practices and concepts. Archive artists often bring together different documents and objects into new narratives in ways that seem to tap into a curatorial mode of working; furthermore, the very notion of the archive could be understood to represent a curated selection and arrangement of history. In this chapter I analyse how the notions of archive and curating intersect historically, methodologically and conceptually in the years around the turn of the twenty-first century.[2]

I begin with a brief examination of the terminology and definitions of curating and the emergence of the star curator. This is followed by a discussion of how changes in the understanding of the artwork and exhibition contributed to the increasing importance of the curator in the period beginning around 1960. The trend of exhibiting the archives of art museums and of well-known curators is discussed as an indication of the increasing self-reflexivity of curatorial practice. Another aspect of this self-reflexivity is the practice of remaking exhibitions, and I discuss how this too can be understood in light of the notion of the archive. One of the critiques of the increasing power of the curator is that they act as a kind of meta-artist, but the opposite is also

true: artists at times take on the role of curators, actually or symbolically. This chapter outlines some of the different ways that artists can be said to work curatorially or evoke curatorial themes: from artists who intervene in existing collections or archives, to artists engaged in self-archiving practices. As seen in earlier parts of this book, the archive is frequently described as a kind of connective principle that holds different elements together. The chapter ends with a consideration of various overlaps between the notions of archival and curatorial connectivity, specifically in terms of practices that involve quotation and referentiality.

Curating: from conservation to critique

Although the curator in the present-day sense is a fairly recent figure, the terminology of curating has a longer history. The origin of the term is the Latin *curare*, meaning 'to take care of', and the term 'curator' was used to describe the person charged with caring for and preserving art objects or artefacts. The curator, in addition to their role as caretaker, was also a kind of connoisseur, knowledgeable about the artwork's history and material conditions. By the end of the 1960s the role of the curator had undergone significant changes, a process that museum studies scholar Bruce Altshuler has described as the 'rise of the curator as creator'.[3] From this point on the curator was a creative force in their own right: at times even described as a kind of artist who used the work of other artists as their chosen medium.[4] Gradually this new player on the art scene elicited heated discussion and debate, as seen in the growing number of publications, journals and curatorial projects that attempt to get at the meaning of curatorial practice and the role of the curator.[5]

One way of framing this new role of the curator is to view it in light of the shifting understanding of artworks and artists in the middle of the twentieth century, which resulted in a new focus on the exhibition. According to curator and art historian Florence Derieux, art history was no longer a history of artworks, but should instead be approached as 'a history of exhibitions'.[6] This statement is found in the introduction to a book edited by Derieux about curator Harald Szeemann, whose *Documenta 5* in 1972 is often seen to mark the beginning of the curator as a kind of meta-artist.

The growing power of the curator is at times perceived to be at the expense of the artist, and much of the critique of the curator has centred around this perceived shift in power dynamics. The 2004 anthology *The Next Documenta Should be Curated by an Artist* included contributions by different artists, curators and critics; among them was an essay by Daniel Buren.[7] Buren's contribution included a brief text written thirty years previously as a response to Szeemann's *Documenta 5*, in which Buren expressed disdain for the large-scale exhibition that acquires the status of a quasi-artwork; this text was followed

by a longer discussion in which Buren lamented the even stronger position that the 'exhibition organizer' had acquired since then.[8] In line with Buren's argument, artist, curator and critic Robert Storr has suggested that curators simultaneously over- and underestimate their own status in relation to artists, and that the combination of deference and envy vis-à-vis the artist was a problematic and unhealthy state of affairs.[9] Similarly, artist and founder of *e-flux* Anton Vidokle has criticised what he considers to be the overreach of curators, pointedly reminding them that '[w]hile artists may well produce art in the absence of curators, if no art is being produced, curators of contemporary art […] are out of a job'.[10] Instead of accepting the curator as a kind of super-artist, Vidokle suggested that the relationship between artist and curator is better viewed as structurally similar to that between workforce and management.[11]

By the turn of the twenty-first century a growing number of university programmes were training aspiring curators, and there are many people who call themselves curators and who carry out curatorial work; yet there is also, paradoxically, a fair amount of uncertainty as to how to understand their work and position in the artworld. This tension creates the conditions for intense curatorial self-theorisation. For some, the very openness and flexibility of curating is considered its strength, allowing the curator to occupy a productive and creative in-between space; for others, however, the precarious position of the curator as somewhere in the proximity of artistic practice but with managerial and budgetary responsibilities and institutional allegiances represents a difficult, if not impossible, balancing act.[12] What is clear is that with the increasing presence of the curator and the continuing discussion about how curating should be understood, the exhibition came into sharper focus. Curators and art historians pointed out that the practice of exhibition making and its history had been largely ignored by scholars as well as by the institutions in which they took place. Documentation and information relating to exhibitions and programming activities are largely absent from the archives of art institutions, prompting art historian Mary Anne Staniszewski to claim that the history of the exhibition is one of the most 'repressed' narratives in our culture.[13] That curators are interested in the definition and history of their practice is seen in the many publications on the topic, in the restaging of exhibitions by well-known curators, as well as in the practice of exhibiting the curator's own archival material. The interest in the archive – and what is absent in the literal archives of museum and other art institutions – appears to be deeply tied to the legitimisation and self-identity of the new profession. But the power of the star curator to define what counts as the important art of the era is also tied to the notion of the archive in its Foucauldian conceptual sense, where it is understood as that which determines what can be accepted as knowledge or truth in a given time period.

The notions of curating and the archive are thus connected in a number of different ways; both stress the critical re-evaluation of what is missing from dominant historical narratives in specific art institutions, but in much writing about curating by practising curators, the curator is also said to play a vital role in critique and research relating to the role of the art institution more broadly. In his 2017 book *Beyond Objecthood: The Exhibition as a Critical Form Since 1968*, curator James Voorhies argued that one of the main differences between critique of institutions in the 1970s and critique carried out in the 1990s was precisely the emergence of the curator as a figure who 'began to play a definitive role in questioning the aims, functions, and methods of the institution, intentionally exploring its impact on the shaping of knowledge and perspectives derived from art and exhibitions'.[14] Voorhies pays particular attention to one such curator, Maria Lind, who is said to represent New Institutionalism as a form of critical exhibition making in the period beginning in the 1990s.[15] Lind herself has written extensively about her practice and the theoretical foundations of curating, and in an influential text first published in *Artforum* in 2009 she developed a distinction between 'curating' and 'the curatorial'.[16] Inspired by political theorist Chantal Mouffe's discussion of politics and the political, Lind understands 'curating' as the technical modality of producing exhibitions, whereas 'the curatorial' refers to the underlying signification processes and relationship between objects, people, places and ideas. The curatorial is understood to be inherently critical in the sense of striving to create friction by thinking both with and away from the artwork.[17] In Lind's formulation the curatorial is also intrinsically self-reflexive as it pays attention to the institution's own history and current institutional contexts, in addition to considering the combination of artists and artworks and the spatial organisation of the exhibition itself.[18]

Authorship and collaboration

In Chapter 4, I discussed the changing understanding of the artwork in terms of issues of dematerialisation and rematerialisation. These changes also affected how museums approached conservation and classification in ways that directly impacted the understanding of the role and status of curatorial work. First of all, the clear delineation between the museum's art collection and its archive is difficult to uphold when artworks can be made up of documents, ephemeral material or even an idea or a live event.[19] Objects that would normally be part of the museum's archive (documentation, photocopies, photographic documentation of events, props) now belonged to the art collection, necessitating new ways of caring for and exhibiting the collection. Furthermore, following the increasing interest in archives at this time, archival materials were frequently activated in ways that are difficult to classify as either a

clear-cut artistic event or a curatorial project. The 'live-archiving event' *Devotion*, set up as part of an exhibition of Bob Mizer's work at the 80WSE Gallery in New York City in 2013, highlights some of these issues of curatorial/archival work and ambivalent classification. In addition to the exhibition of 45 photographs that showed the breadth of Mizer's photographic work, the exhibition also included what was described as a kind of 'excavation project' that reactivated material from Mizer's archive 'in a curatorial way'.[20] The galleries contained large worktables with light boxes and archiving equipment, where students from the NYU Steinhardt Department of Art and Art Professions worked on processing the Mizer archive, a large portion of which had been shipped to New York and installed at 80WSE.[21]

The press release stressed that much from the archive had never been seen before; it contained 'thousands of unopened envelopes', and the students carrying out this 'epic archival endeavour' were therefore often the first to see the images since Mizer himself had shot them.[22] The student archivists made printouts of the scanned images they found interesting and pinned them up on the gallery walls, producing a kind of rotating exhibition-within-the-exhibition. Events like these tap into common archival narratives of making
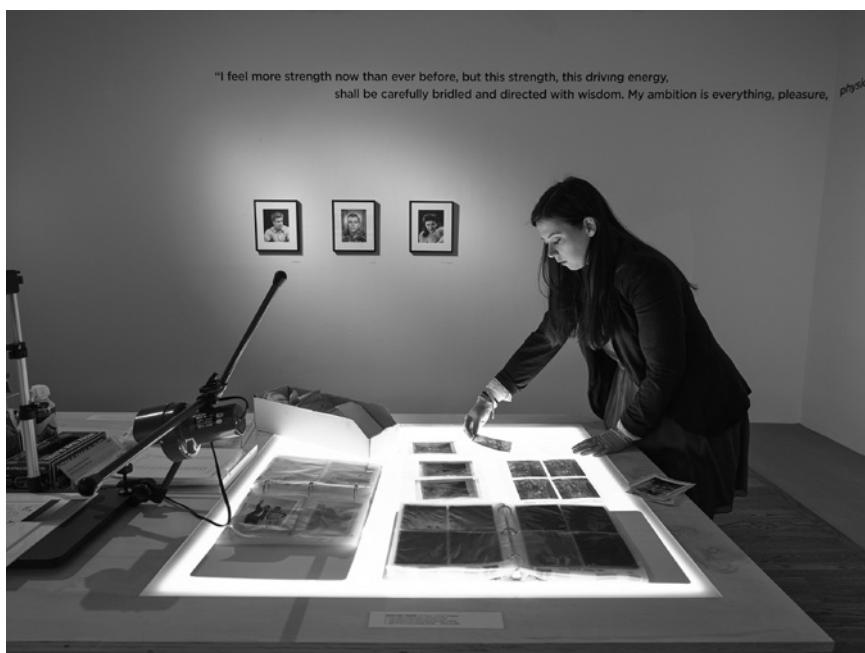
7.1   Performance at the exhibition *Devotion: Excavating Bob Mizer*, 80WSE Gallery, New York, 2013

a marginalised artistic practice visible – or in this case, unknown elements of a known artistic practice. It can also be seen as a form of 'creative archiving' whereby the archive is activated in different ways, and where the very activation becomes a performative event in its own right: not quite an artwork but nevertheless exhibited in an art gallery.[23]

Art historian Hanna Hölling has suggested that the notion of the archive can be used to give the artwork a more usable and flexible identity, in which artists, conservators, archivists and curators all are considered caretakers and decision makers who shape the work long after it enters the museum.[24] Since many artworks are not in fact static artefacts, the collecting institutions need to reconceptualise these artworks and their conservation in ways that enable new forms of collaboration and cooperation. 'The *archival turn*', Hölling writes, 'relativizes the weight of the intentionality of the artist, making space for the creative aspect of actualization and the involvement of the others … rendering the artwork and its archive realms of social investment.'[25] Hölling writes specifically about the conservation of changeable technological artworks, but similar issues have been brought up in terms of the preservation and exhibition of live events, particularly performance art and re-performance.[26]

What I want to stress here is that curatorial care and preservation comes to mean something rather different – and more fundamentally linked to the identity of the artwork and its continued exhibition – by the end of the twentieth century. Of particular relevance for the current book is the way curatorial theory and practice lines up at several points with notions of the archive both in practical and theoretical terms.

The critique of curatorial overreach whereby the curator becomes a kind of meta-artist can be considered in light of a substantial unease with the notion of authorship and creative genius during the second half of the twentieth century. The critique of the notion of the subject-author is exemplified by texts such as Roland Barthes' 'Death of the Author' (1967) and Michel Foucault's 'What is An Author?' (1969).[27] In line with these debates, there is a general move away from viewing the artwork as the result of an inspired lightning bolt in the creative individual towards a view that stressed the artwork's relation to other artworks, its exhibition context and its audience. The view of authorship as problematic after poststructuralist and postmodern critiques of the stable authorial position led to the development of new forms of artistic practices that centred around collaboration and social and communal approaches. This move away from the notion of a stable and fixed subject-author also fostered the development of the curator as a collaborative figure: the curator is the one who mediates between the institution, artist and the audience, and in that sense he or she is by definition a collaborator and networker. However, even if the increasing focus on the exhibition and the curator may seem to be a perfect solution to outdated notions of the creative

genius and the masterpiece artwork, the curator at times takes over these tropes and is hailed as a creative genius in their own right.[28] The shifts in the notion of the artist and the artwork in the second half of the twentieth century seem to contribute to the increasing importance of the curator precisely because curating is not a fixed and well-defined practice. I suggest that another contributing factor is that many of the ideas around curating line up with specific aspects of archive theory, thus yoking the two in ways that mutually strengthen the importance and presence of both.

Restaging exhibitions and exhibiting archives

In line with the view that exhibition history is understudied and thus largely absent from art history, there have been a number of attempts to restage or recreate exhibitions from the past. These take different forms, from the recreation of the notorious Nazi-curated 1937 *Entartete Kunst* at the Los Angeles County Museum in 1991 to the recreation of Harold Szeemann's 1969 exhibition *Live in Your Head: When Attitudes Become Form (Works – Concepts – Processes – Situations – Information)* in a Venetian palazzo in 2013.[29] Both of these treat the exhibition as a historical document, but whereas *'Degenerate Art': The Fate of the Avant-Garde in Nazi Germany* at LACMA was a pedagogical example of the use of exhibition making for sinister purposes and thus clearly positioned itself against the original hanging of the artworks and the slogans that surrounded them, the Venice installation treated Szeemann's exhibition as exemplary of a legendary curatorial method and tried to stay as faithful as possible to the form and intent of the original.[30] In Venice the square, white-walled rooms of the Bern Kunsthalle were recreated and inserted into the large halls of the eighteenth-century Palazzo Corner della Regina, in part covering doors, windows or cutting rooms in half, making the space an inexact replica of an entirely different space (Plate 14). The extensive exhibition catalogue included an article on Szeemann's archive, numerous photographs showing the original exhibition in Bern as well as the remade version in Venice, and a number of essays by well-known curators, artists, critics and art historians. In addition to Germano Celant, Thomas Demand and Rem Koolhaas who collaborated on realising the exhibition, there were texts by Claire Bishop, Benjamin Buchloh, Boris Groys, Jens Hoffmann, Dieter Roelstraete, Anne Rorimer, Terry Smith and Mary Anne Staniszewski, among others.[31] The project was described both as a 'tribute' to Szeemann's original exhibition and a 'meditation on the current trend for reenactments', thus exemplifying both curatorial and archival self-reflexivity.[32]

The recreation of exhibitions from the long 1960s specifically is so prevalent that it can be considered an important sub-category of the practice of restaging exhibitions, and this particular focus arguably relates to the interest

in the figure of the curator that was established at that time, as well as the broader implications of curatorial practice and theory on the present-day artworld.[33] Archival documents and photographs from the curator's own archives are frequently included in these exhibitions or in related publications. Figures such as Pontus Hultén and Harold Szeemann have spawned several such publication and exhibition projects that incorporate extensive archival material.[34] But it is not only dead curators who get this treatment; the 2002 publication *Interarchive* was inspired by Hans Ulrich Obrist's personal archive, and Obrist himself was very much an active part of the project, which ran over several years and consisted of an exhibition project as well as a massive publication with contributions from artists, critics and curators.[35] Obrist is perhaps the most recognisable of the early twenty-first-century practising curators, and he exemplifies the way self-reflexivity and self-historicisation have become part of the DNA of the profession.[36] Obrist's book *A Brief History of Curating* is made up of lengthy interviews with eleven prominent curators and is an attempt at creating a documented legacy and history of the profession.[37] According to Obrist himself, the book came about when he as a young curator wanted to read about the history of his profession and 'realized that there was no book, which was kind of a shock'.[38]

Obrist's book of interviews and the various other projects and publications that examine previous curatorial practices are attempts to theorise and historicise this young profession by looking back to the archives of previous practitioners and their work. Such historicisation helps establish the curatorial field and grants it authority and importance. Part of this perceived need to establish authority for the curator is related to the shift in focus towards the exhibition, thus highlighting previous exhibitions as important, worthy of serious study and even restaging. In a previous chapter I examined different ways that art and research intersect at the turn of the twenty-first century, and curatorial self-reflexivity is relevant for that discussion as well. Recreating historical exhibitions can be seen as a form of historical research, but curating is also seen to be connected to research in other ways. Curatorial writing often stresses that the practice of curating can be viewed as a particular way of thinking: Irit Rogoff has described curatorial thought as unbound critical thought that can point in unpredictable directions, and Maria Lind has characterised curating as 'a way of thinking about interconnections'.[39] Curating is thus seen to be a knowledge-generating practice, where the exhibition is the result or account of that research. Curatorial practice is thus another argument for expanding what can count as research – in some artistic forms of research the result will be an artwork, and in curatorial research the result can be presented in a spatial format such as an exhibition or through other types of curatorial projects or events. Introducing an anthology on the topic of curatorial research, Paul O'Neill and Mick Wilson noted a 'renewed recognition of the exhibition

itself as a potential mode of research action' and that the archive was key to many of the discussions of the increasing alignment between the curatorial and research, so much so that 'the archive-on-display might risk appearing as the new orthodoxy, seeking to displace the autonomous-artwork-on-display'.[40]

Art institutions large and small now regularly produce exhibitions of material culled from their own archives, and frequently frame these as research projects: Tate Britain has a permanent archive exhibition room, and in Stockholm various projects at Tensta Konsthall, Moderna Museet and Index self-reflexively re-examine the institutions' own history by paying close attention to their archives. One of the key arguments of this chapter is that the increasing prevalence of references to the archive in the artworld at the turn of the twenty-first century is deeply connected to the notion of curating and the figure of the curator in both practical and conceptual terms. The focus on art institutions' own archives and exhibition history makes this connection particularly clear. There are numerous examples of projects organised either by granting outside curators and artists access to the institution's archives, or by initiating in-house investigations by the institution's own curatorial staff. Two such examples are *Un-Curating the Archive*, which was initiated by Camera Austria and consisted of two exhibitions shown in 2017–18, and *Curating Degree Zero Archive* (2003–08), a travelling exhibition that documented work from over 100 contemporary art curators.[41]

Curating Degree Zero Archive began with a symposium in 1998 in Bremen organised by curators Dorothee Richter and Barnaby Drabble, who described the project as an example of 'critical curating', understood to be oriented 'around content that addresses political themes such as feminism, urbanism, postcolonialism, the critique of capitalism, and the mechanisms of social exclusion'.[42] The curators argued that their project worked with a notion of archive that did not aim to 'establish a self-contained narrative but rather to present a range of divergent positions in order to provide a framework for and shed light on the contexts of the work of individual curators who wish to be critical and political'.[43] Anton Vidokle specifically brought up *Curating Degree Zero Archive* to exemplify what he described as the 'ludicrous' self-aggrandising gestures of curators, and used it to specify his critique against this type of curatorial project:

> The issue is not whether curators should have archives or open them to others, or to what degree this is interesting or not; rather, the question concerns whether the people in charge of administering exhibitions of art should be using the spaces and funding available for art to exhibit their own reading lists, references, and sources as a kind of artwork.[44]

Here, then, the charge of curatorial overreach is tied to the exhibiting of curators' own archives: the very act of placing these on view is considered to be

Curating Degree Zero Archive, International Project Space, University of Central England, Bournville, Birmingham, March/April 2005   **7.2**

an indication of curatorial hubris and a sign that they consider themselves to be some kind of mega-artists.

Archival exhibitions that focus on a specific institution frequently attempt to establish new narratives relating to communities perceived to be under-represented, and are in that way similar to such remedial undertakings within the academic field. The two-year touring exhibition *Information Service*, organised by curator Ute Meta Bauer in 1992, is an example of using archival documentation to draw attention to the under-representation of women in the artworld, specifically targeting *Documenta 9*. Focusing on the LGBTQ community, ONE Gallery in Los Angeles regularly sets up exhibitions based on the material housed in the ONE National Gay & Lesbian Archives.[45] Their three-part exhibition project *Cruising the Archive: Queer Art and Culture in Los Angeles, 1945–1980*, shown in 2011–12, was described as an exploration of the relationship between artistic practices and LGBTQ histories through art-works, objects and archival documents.[46] Yet another example is *Brixton Calling!*, a project carried out in 2011 that aimed to archive and explore the history of Brixton Art Gallery and Artists' Collective in London in the 1980s.[47]

The ONE Gallery projects and *Brixton Calling!* are part of what is some-times called 'the community archives movement'.[48] In her study of *Brixton*

Cruising the Archive: Queer Art and Culture in Los Angeles, 1945–1980, installation view, One Gallery, Los Angeles, 2011–12

Calling!, art historian Sian Vaughan argued that artists' engagement with archives commonly consists of two distinct aspects: first, the emphasis on activating the archive through community engagement, with the aim of promoting social change and/or correcting absences; and second, a self-conscious mediation of legacy through archive creation.[49] Vaughan anchors her discussion in cultural theorist Stuart Hall's essay 'Constituting an Archive', in which Hall used the example of the African and Asian Visual Artists' Archive and how the process of systematic marginalisation and sustained lack of attention and dialogue with the dominant institutions in the artworld meant that 'practitioners themselves have been obliged to act first as curators and now as archivists'.[50] Many of these archival-curatorial activities are thus explicitly part of an activist agenda; but in many ways this curatorial work – regardless of whether it is carried out by artists, community leaders or professional curators – is similar to other forms of critique of racial, gendered and other normative structures: a lack of inclusion is identified and rectified through the merging of archival and curatorial work.

The artist as curator

As a correlative to the description – or accusation – of the curator as a meta-artist is the characterisation of the artist as a kind of curator.[51] To say that the

artist is a curator or working in a curatorial manner can be understood in different ways. First of all, there are many cases where artists temporarily take on the role of curator and clearly separate this from their artistic work. Some examples of community activist exhibitions would certainly fall into this category, as would many of the cases where artists are brought in to curate an exhibition from an existing collection in an art museum.[52]

Artists have, for different reasons, organised exhibitions of their peers without necessarily considering these to be curatorial artworks. In the mid-nineteenth century Gustave Courbet and the Impressionists challenged the system of the salons by setting up their own exhibitions, and during the twentieth century exhibitions organised by artists became a common feature of the artworld. Stuart Hall's point that systemic exclusion has at times forced artists to act as curators or archivists is not only true for artists from marginalised Asian or black communities in white-dominated artworlds, but also for artists excluded on ideological grounds in Eastern Europe during communist rule, or artists whose work was suppressed in South America during military dictatorships, to name two additional examples.[53] Exhibitions and other projects organised by artists in these cases had the pragmatic function of counteracting systematic exclusions by providing opportunities to show work that would not be shown in mainstream and official institutions. These artist-organised exhibitions, regardless of whether the organisers themselves considered them to be artworks in their own right, can therefore be characterised as forms of institutional critique.

It is often difficult to make a clear distinction between curating that happens to be done by artists and curating that is deliberately made to be art. Many examples balance precariously between these categories, since both artists and curators frequently challenge clear-cut separations between artwork and exhibition as well as between artist and curator. Various installations by Mark Dion since the late 1990s and Danh Võ's *I M U U R 2* (2013) exemplify artists who use curatorial methods and forms in systematic ways as part of their practice. In Dion's case it is scientific representational paradigms that are highlighted through the display of different objects in large installations. Võ's *I M U U R 2* was described in the following way in the *Art Journal*: 'From 2011–2012, Võ made several visits to 344 Ewing Terrace in San Francisco, the former residence of Florence Wong Fie, mother of the artist Martin Wong. Võ approached several museums about acquiring the collection of objects, folk art and ephemera, and brought curators to see the house and meet Florence.'[54] When no museum followed through, Võ himself bought the collection and made it into the work *I M U U R 2*, a display of the over 4,000 objects that had been part of Wong's collection. Here the artist took on the role of the curator and collector of another artist's collection in order to ensure that the objects in question were protected and available to viewers. By this gesture Võ

Danh Võ, *I M U U R 2*, 2013

thus transformed Wong's collection of disparate artefacts into an artwork in its own right, with Võ as the author.

So, the notion of the artist as curator can refer to anything from artists taking the initiative to organise exhibitions of works that no one else shows due to lack of interest or discrimination, to artists who gather together material where the very selection, association and structure of exhibiting this material is the driving idea of a new artwork, be it material created by the artist or found in museums, community archives or elsewhere. Of particular interest to me is how curating as an artistic activity can be seen to feed on and mobilise the way archives have been investigated and theorised in an art context since the late 1990s. As I argue throughout this book, there are a number of different interests and concerns that make for conducive conditions for what I call the 'archive art phenomenon', defined broadly as the prevalence of archival references and the staying power of such sustained concern with archives among artists, writers and other key players in the artworld, including curators. The discourse around the creative and critical potential of curatorial practice intersects at several points with the theorisation of archives and artistic engagement with archival material, and I suggest that the considerable slipperiness of both sets of terms – 'archive'/'archiving'/'archival' and 'curator'/'curating'/'curatorial' – as well as the increasing self-reflexivity and self-theorisation among both artists and curators contribute to this.

As noted in Chapter 1, Marcel Duchamp was brought up as a precursor for the interest in archives by many of the writers who identify and analyse archive art. Duchamp's practice is deemed archival because of its implication for a critical investigation of the museum as a system that structures and enables an artwork's identity as an artwork, and for how the artwork is evaluated and interpreted. But Duchamp is also considered a founder of what art historian and curator Dorothea von Hantelmann has called the 'curatorial paradigm'.[55] In an overview of the history of the artist as curator, art historian and curator Elena Filipovic brought up von Hantelmann's phrase but stressed that curating must be understood not merely as selection and designation, but that the curatorial paradigm should be traced to Duchamp's interest in the exhibition as a means of interrogation and critical questioning of both the art object and its institutions.[56] This view of curating as a way of investigating art, exhibitions and art institutions by way of these artworks, exhibitions and institutions themselves clearly echoes the investigation and critique of the structural archive by way of the actual material archive, discussed in previous chapters. Key here is that it is the exhibition as a whole and the very practice of exhibiting that makes an archival structure visible, rather than any single artwork.

As we have seen, Fred Wilson's *Mining the Museum* is a paradigmatic example of institutional critique that can be productively analysed through the notion of the archive, but Wilson is also an example of an artist working curatorially. This type of practice, where an artist uses a museum, collection or archive to document or gather material that is then exhibited, has become a recognisable feature of artistic practice at the beginning of the twenty-first century. Artist-in-residence programmes invite artists into museums and archives with the explicit aim of having them engage creatively and critically with the material.[57] These invitations can be viewed as a more or less calculated way of pre-emptively inoculating the institution from criticism, but can also be seen as a genuine desire to investigate and challenge the institution by making visible the blind spots at work in any institutional setting. In these types of artistic interventions, the archive in the sense of a law or structure of epistemological possibilities is investigated by means of curating objects or documents from the actual archive or collection.

The 2013 Venice Biennale had the title *The Encyclopedic Palace*, and this iteration of the recurring mega-exhibition points to the multiple intersections of the archive and curatorial concepts in a different way. Although the terminology of the archive was absent from curator Massimiliano Gioni's text in the exhibition catalogue, it was certainly implied in the description of the exhibition's concern with practices that dealt with 'approaches to visualizing knowledge', 'associative thinking', and various forms of collections and taxonomies.[58] The Biennale's director Paolo Baratta explicitly addressed the archive art phenomenon when he argued that curators were now inevitably concerned

with considering historical contexts and affinities between different practices to such an extent that it was possible to exclaim: 'no more exhibitions without archives'.[59] The exhibition as a whole was made up of different types of objects and images brought together under the curatorial theme of associative thinking, and many of the works shown also considered notions of curatorial and archival association. Linda Fregni Nagler's *The Hidden Mother* (2006–13) was culled from her collection of nineteenth-century photographs of young children held by an adult draped in dark fabric. The hidden mother was a practical and common solution to the problem of blurry images of children; however, when these images are viewed from the perspective of the twenty-first century the bulky dark shapes behind the children appear more than a little strange. In the text accompanying the exhibition the artist is explicitly likened to 'a collector or an archivist' because of her process of arranging her collection according to specific genres or themes.[60]

Nagler's collection of photographs was part of a section of the Biennale that had been curated by Cindy Sherman, described in the catalogue as 'an imaginary museum' that encouraged the viewer to 'contemplate the role of images in the representation and perception of the self'.[61] In this exhibition-within-an-exhibition Sherman also included parts of her own collection of found photographs and albums, including a selection of photographs showing transvestites

7.5   Linda Fregni Nagler, *The Hidden Mother*, 2006–13, installation view, *The Encyclopedic Palace*, 55th Venice Biennale, 2013

Linda Fregni Nagler, *The Hidden Mother*, 2006–13 (detail #0376) **7.6**

in domestic settings. Sherman's collection of such personal photographs aligns with the themes explored in her own photographic artworks; many of her works are implicitly anchored in large networks of popular culture images that create normative and idealised images of women. The found images exhibited at the Biennale make up an archive of self-fashioning of a group who were,

at the time these photographs were taken in the 1970s, mostly hidden from view. Sherman began her own *Film Still* series right around the time that the album photographs were taken, and both sets of photographs can be considered in archival terms. In different ways they make visible the conventions and structures at work in the depiction of women in mass media, and in that way Sherman's work as a collector and curator builds on and reinforce the themes processed in her artistic practice.

I bring up *The Encyclopedic Palace* here because it exemplifies the overlaps between the curatorial and the archival that were so prevalent at this time. The explicit theme – or curatorial principle – of the Biennale was the exploration of associative thinking and different systems of classification, arrangement and taxonomy that can be said to be manifestations of both archival and curatorial practice.

7.7   Found photograph from 'Casa Susanna', 1960s / 1970s [part of Cindy Sherman's collection of albums]

Cindy Sherman, *Untitled Film Still #2*, 1977   **7.8**

Let me pause for a moment on the act of arrangement, or more specifi-cally, the system for grouping objects thematically or visually that is implied in the notion of curating. In *Mining the Museum*, *The Hidden Mother*, Sher-man's photographic albums, Tacita Dean's *Floh* and in many other works that can be considered in terms of artistic curatorial practice, the associa-tion between different objects or images is a key element of what makes the

work meaningful. Wilson's placement of silver goblets alongside slave shackles creates a different narrative about racism and economy precisely through this juxtaposition. Similarly, it is the arrangement of photographs next to one another in a particular way that can be said to be meaningful in the works that use found photographs. It would indeed seem that this type of highly deliberate, thematic, conceptual or aesthetic arrangement of parts into a whole is key to how curating was understood at the turn of the twenty-first century. However, this notion of curating as arrangement (selection and designation) is precisely what was criticised by Elena Filipovic for being too narrow when she picked up on von Hantelmann's argument that Duchamp was an early instance of the curatorial paradigm. Filipovic pointed to the more random and seemingly meaningless arrangement at work in Duchamp's curatorial system as another important aspect of this paradigm.[62] When Duchamp took on the role of curator – 'president of the hanging committee' – at the notorious inaugural exhibition of the Society of Independent Artists in New York in 1917, he opted to hang the artworks not according to style or theme but in alphabetical order, starting with a letter picked out of a hat.[63] In fact, this alphabetical arrangement, which seems to deliberately challenge notions of the discerning curatorial gaze, was also the structuring principle of the different works/documents included in Mel Bochner's *Working Drawings and Other Visible Things on Paper Not Necessarily Meant to be Viewed as Art* in 1966.[64] Bochner's exhibition-as-artwork challenged the era's exhibitionary conventions – archival 'laws' – in a number of ways. First, it contained no original artworks but instead a mixture of xeroxed documents that were duplicated in four binders; and secondly, the exhibition followed the logic of a totally flat hierarchy, since all the documents were the same size and were arranged alphabetically, mixing documents produced by artists and others.

It seems clear that there is a considerable tension between the view of curating as a materialisation of a form of associative thinking that links different objects in ways that create profound and meaningful new understandings, and a suspicion of this kind of connective imposition. This tension is at work in the notion of the archive as well. The archive, as seen in previous chapters, is frequently elicited to point to both structured and intuitive associative modes of thinking. Inserting a predetermined structure such as the alphabetical arrangement or relying on elements of chance are clearly strategies to deal with this tension.

In the final part of this discussion of the artist as curator I want briefly to connect it to the practice of self-archiving, and consider how this practice can be understood in light of the shifting understanding of authorship mentioned earlier. In the most basic way, self-archiving includes artists who save and gather archival material about their own artistic process or life – Warhol's time capsules would be an example of a kind of self-archiving, so too Dieter Roth's

folders of archived cigarette butts, receipts and other debris (Plate 15).[65] The indiscriminate collection of different things into archival boxes or ring binders seems to undermine the meaning of the associations between the parts, since these works imply that everything, or at least anything, can be included. At the same time the very act of collecting and saving these specific objects makes them appear meaningful and important. Another type of self-archiving is art-works that are made up of a selection and arrangement of the artist's own work into a kind of meta-artwork – Marcel Duchamp's *Boîte-en-valise* (1935–41) and Douglas Gordon's *Pretty much every film and video work from about 1992 until now. To be seen on monitors, some with headphones, others run silently and all simultaneously* (1999–ongoing) would be two examples of this (Plate 16).

Both of these types of practices of self-archiving – collecting and saving mundane things from the artist's life and surroundings, and creating artworks made up of objects from their own oeuvre – highlight the tension between the individual artist as author and a more collective, structural view of art practice. This tension permeates the archive art phenomenon in a number of ways. The principle of provenance is key to the traditional archive, and in that sense authorship and the notion of a stable subject is the implicit ground for archival unity. At the same time that principle is challenged by the theories of the archive of Derrida and Foucault and others. Artists who create absurdly large or useless archives of objects that they come across in their daily lives evoke an archival tradition of classifying and saving for posterity anything that might be of interest in the future. These practices also point to the futility and incompleteness of any archival activity in getting at a coherent subject: not even when seemingly everything is saved in the archive can it be said to be complete, and more importantly, what is found in this archival abundance tell us remarkably little about lived life. Similarly, artworks made up entirely of a selection of the artist's own artworks simultaneously highlight the importance of the persona of the artist as creator, while also pointing to how works are read in light of other works and how any exhibition involves a recontextualisa-tion that substantially affects the interpretative possibilities of the artwork that is exhibited.

The will to connect: interpretation and referentiality

Despite Seth Siegelaub's contention that conceptual artworks as primary docu-ments do not require secondary documents, there is no lack of lengthy exhibi-tion texts and other forms of textual and multimedia mediation of artworks and exhibitions in art institutions today. As art historian Dan Karlholm has noted, when the question of whether or not something is art can no longer be settled by visual criteria, this information must be communicated by other means; not only that something *is* art, but also *what* one is supposed to see,

or understand, requires information.[66] That a particular object is an artwork can be deduced by the fact that it is shown in a museum and has a museum label with pertinent information such as the artist's name, title and date; however, interpretation and contextualisation often require a fair amount of additional reading (curatorial texts, exhibition folders, catalogues) or listening (to an audioguide, a guided tour, a video interview with the curator or artist). When Lawrence Alloway made a distinction between artistic and curatorial practice in the early 1970s by stating that '[t]he production of art is one kind of activity, its interpretation is another', he implied that the curator is charged with adding layers of interpretation to whatever artwork the artist has produced.[67] Such a distinction is difficult to maintain in many contemporary artworks where the interpretation is to a large extent determined by the artist him or herself. Even if the curatorial or exhibition text is not written by the artist, they usually have a hand in providing the broad set of interpretations and final approval of texts accompanying the exhibition: a fairly common type of catalogue text is a transcribed conversation or email exchange between the curator and the artist. I am not suggesting that artists dictate or fully decide the interpretation of their work; what I am saying is that with the increasing academicisation of artists, the act of providing frames of references and layers of possible interpretations of the work is not a process that can be fully separated from the making of the artwork. When an artwork is research-based, the account of the research process – which often includes making connections between different ideas, images and concepts – is a large part of what the work means. Here again, changes in the view of the artwork and artistic process arguably contribute to the increasing visibility and importance of the curator, as they work closely with the artists to draw out narrative threads and make the artworks intelligible to a wider audience. In that sense the curator is not necessarily an interpreter who comes in after the work is completed, but one who mediates and affects the work in its early stages. When Robert Storr described the curator as a kind of 'editor' it was precisely the editor's role as the first and most critical reader that he emphasised; the curator was compared to an active reader who affects the final form of the text.[68]

Within archive theory and texts on archive art, the archive is often described as a connector between different elements, enabling or enforcing a particular kind of cross-reading – for example when Hal Foster referred to the archival impulse as 'a will to connect'.[69] Curating is similarly described in terms of connectivity. The curator, according to Maria Lind, is an active catalyst, and could be understood in terms of 'interconnections: linking objects, images, processes, people, locations, histories, and discourses'.[70] Both curating and archiving also have a built-in historical tension between the traditional role of protection and safeguarding and this associative logic: in the case of the archive it can be formulated as a tension between its protective/mnemonic

function and the notion of expanding the document's interpretative possibilities. For the curator, the tension hinges on the historical shift in meaning of the act of curating from *curare* to engaging in thematic, and critical, questions through the exhibition of artworks. This shared tension can be considered by way of Foucault's discussion of the archive and his challenge to the archive as a great unifying principle by emphasising discontinuity, transformation and change.[71] This archive of difference and incongruousness is juxtaposed with a nineteenth-century notion of completeness and unity in much artistic and curatorial practice. The prominence of figures such as Aby Warburg and Walter Benjamin in writing about both archives and curating can, I think, be seen as evidence of this doubled interest in the fragmentary and disconnected on the one hand, and the associative and connective on the other.[72]

When I discussed Zoe Leonard's *Analogue* in Chapter 4, I showed how the notion of the archive could be used to frame an understanding of the analogue photographic process and various aspects of materiality. I now want to return to this series – or, rather, a text relating to it – as a way of discussing how notions of referentiality line up with both curating and the archive. When *Analogue* was shown at the Wexner Center for the Arts in 2007 the exhibition catalogue included an 'essay' by Zoe Leonard entirely made up of quotes from artists, photography theorists, novelists and others.[73] The quotes covered musings on photography in general; thoughts on the shift from analogue to digital; the role of photography in the implementation of colonialism; urban change in nineteenth-century Paris, and similarly drastic changes in New York City at the end of the twentieth century; and much more. The format of the essay – text fragments loosely associated into a whole, with no commentary or meta-text – functioned as a textual archive of photographic history and theory and as an indirect reference to Walter Benjamin's *Arcades* project. It can also be considered a reference to Susan Sontag – or perhaps, Benjamin *via* Sontag – who ended her collection *On Photography* with what she called 'A Brief Anthology of Quotations [Homage to W.B]'.[74] What I want to suggest here is that Leonard's essay exemplifies a particular way of working that is connected to how both the archive and curating are understood and theorised at the turn of the twenty-first century. Leonard sets up a kind of networked referentiality, whereby the particular connections between parts – in this case parts of texts, but it could be photographs or other artworks or documents – become meaningful exactly because of the multilayered connections between them. Susan Sontag made the connection between quotations and photography overtly in an essay in *On Photography* when she wrote that a photograph could be seen as a quotation, which 'makes a book of photographs like a book of quotations'.[75]

In the *Analogue* exhibition catalogue the text fragments support the theme of the photographs. Several of the quotations were written at a time when

(analogue) photography was new and perceived as threatening to the established medium of painting. Many of the quotations described how photography would contribute to the death of traditional art media; however, Leonard's photographs and some of the later quotations point to a similar imminent death of analogue photography in the face of digital technology. What is key here is that these connections become visible when placed together, allowing the reader to discover the mirrored arguments for and against a particular technology or the consequences of change in the urban space. Another key point is that the quotation is a fragment of, and stand-in for, a larger text; it is by definition lifted out of its context and placed into another. Such a list of quotations is therefore a fitting image of both an exhibition and an archive: the archivist or the curator selects and connects parts with one another, and thereby alters what is on view, in part by anchoring it in a new spatial and temporal context.

The quotational text is also a reminder of the intertextual aspect of the archive, what archival scholar David Bearman has described as the shifting potential in how the archive generates meaning: 'When we accession, transfer, arrange, weed, document and inventory archival materials, we change their character as well as enhance their evidential and informational value', Bearman argued.[76] Therefore, he continued, 'processing, exhibiting, citing, publishing and otherwise managing records becomes significant for their meaning as records'.[77] Every use of an archival document adds to and alters its meaning in some way, and similarly, every exhibition of an artwork adds a different art historical or thematic context for that artwork. Therefore, if the archivist can be defined as 'a keeper of context', the curator too could be described in those terms: gathering different artworks together under a common theme, identifying or creating new contexts of interpretation for these objects.[78]

It is tempting to speculate that new terminology will take over from that of the archive over time; with increasing awareness of an impending climate crisis, terms relating to ecology have already become prominent metaphors for connected systems of dependence. Artist Franck Leibovici for instance writes of 'an ecology of artistic practices', and argues that the notion of an artwork's ecosystem contributes to a new understanding of what an artwork is.[79] Both the archive and the ecosystem point to the artwork's broad environment without which it cannot exist. Arthur Danto's essay 'The Art World Revisited' is used by Leibovici to exemplify the importance of considering the artwork's ecology. In this text Danto brought up a number of different monochrome paintings that, although they look very similar, must nevertheless be understood in entirely different ways, because they were done with different intentions, with different precursors, and in different contexts. Danto's point is that the art notion changed drastically between the fifteenth-century painter Castagno and the minimalist painter Robert Mangold, which is crucial to bear in mind even

if there are some formal similarities between the two painters' work.[80] The process of 'claiming an affinity' whereby the erudite art historian, in the vein of the connoisseur, 'is positioned to survey the landscape of forms and "to be reminded" of distant affinities' is what Danto was arguing against in his text, and he brought up the art historical side-by-side slide lecture as a form that underscores such affinities.[81] Although Danto does not connect this to curating nor to the archive, the idea of claiming affinity is broadly similar to the archival 'will to connect' that, as noted, also underscores some understandings of curatorial practice.[82] Considering an artwork as part of an ecology stresses a context-dependent understanding of the artwork as intrinsically and intricately connected to various other contexts. The catalogue text to Dieter Roelstraete's exhibition *The Way of the Shovel* described Simon Starling's practice by recourse to a notion of ecology: 'the stories and structures behind much of his work are informed by ideas of ecology', the catalogue entry stated, and the artist is cited as describing his work as 'a realm of connectivity' where historical, cultural and political aspects converge.[83] Whether ecology will stick as the new term of connectivity and context remains to be seen. The archive does have one clear advantage over the natural system of ecology as a metaphor for the artworld: it is directly tied to history and complex theorisations of temporality. And those aspects of the notion of the archive are the subject of the next and final chapter.

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In this chapter I outlined and analysed some of the overlaps and connections between curating and the archive, two notions that become increasingly referenced and entangled in the years around the turn of the twenty-first century. At the same time as the broader surge of interest in archives among theorists and cultural critics – the so-called 'archival turn' – brought issues of fragmentation and interpretative unity to the fore, the terminology of 'curating' and the 'curatorial' also began to circulate in earnest in art writing, with publications, exhibitions and projects seeking to theorise the practice of curating itself. As a way to anchor the profession in legitimate historical precedent, curators themselves also contributed to an increasing interest in exhibition history, early curatorial practices, and the processing and display of institutional archives. The shift in the identity of the artwork from a clearly delineated material object to something that could be an immaterial idea, an event, document or a mass-produced object, understood to be tied not only to the individual genius of the artist-creator but also to the context and environment in which it is shown, further contributed to increased focus on the exhibition, its audience, and the structures and networks that support and enable the artwork. Activist and community organisations also paid attention to archives at this time, in order to create or display what was perceived as marginalised

artists or activities. In this chapter I have argued that all of these factors contribute to the strengthening of the role of the curator and the notion of curatorial practice, but also that these factors align curating and the curator with the understanding of the notion of the archive and the theorisation of archival practice. Clarifying how curating and the archive intersect at this time is thus yet another way of 'connecting the dots' that contribute to the overall understanding of the meaning and function of the archive in contemporary art practice and discourse.

Notes

1 For a critique of this indiscriminate use of the term, see D. Balzer, 'Reading lists, outfits, even salads are curated – it's absurd', *The Guardian*, 18 April 2015, www.theguardian.com/books/2015/apr/18/david-balzer-curation-social-media-kanye-west [accessed 1 February 2019]. See also L. Stoppard, 'Everyone's a Curator Now', *The New York Times*, 3 March 2020, section Style, www.nytimes.com/2020/03/03/style/curate-buzzword.html [accessed 24 September 2020].

2 Two practice-based PhDs that deal with the connection between the archive and curating in different ways are N. Yiakoumaki, 'Curating Archives, Archiving Curating', PhD dissertation, Goldsmiths, University of London, 2009; and E. A. Bruchet, 'Curation and the Archive: Entanglements of Discourse and Practice', PhD dissertation, University of Brighton, 2019.

3 Altshuler describes this new development in the following terms: 'Like the work displayed, their exhibitions sought to undercut the standard way of framing art for the public, the manner and mode of presentation becoming part of the content presented. In this they [exhibition organisers] were engaged in the same sort of critical enterprise as the artists, and their exhibitions became works on a par with their components.' B. Altshuler, *The Avant-Garde in Exhibition: New Art in the 20th Century* (New York: Abrams, 1994), pp. 236–8. Another sign of the expanded notion of the curator is the move away from talking about 'exhibitions' towards more open terms such as 'curatorial projects' or 'curatorial explorations', which can be exhibitions of artworks but can also be online sites, a temporary event, a research publication or a series of lectures, workshops or experiments.

4 Peter Plagens, when commenting on Lucy Lippard's 1969 exhibition *557,087* in Seattle, wrote: 'There is a total style to the show, a style so pervasive as to suggest that Lucy Lippard is in fact the artist and that her medium is other artists.' Peter Plagens' review was published in the November 1969 issue of *Artforum*; this quote was reprinted in Lippard, *Six Years*, p. 111. It was also cited in Altshuler, *The Avant-Garde in Exhibition*, p. 272, n. 1.

5 The literature is vast; a small selection includes J. Rugg and M. Sedgwick (eds), *Issues in Curating Contemporary Art and Performance* (Bristol: Intellect, 2007); H. U. Obrist, *A Brief History of Curating* (Zurich: JRP Ringier, 2011); P. O'Neill, *The Culture of Curating and the Curating of Culture(s)* (Cambridge, MA: MIT

Press, 2012); T. Smith, *Thinking Contemporary Curating* (New York: Independent Curators International, 2012); H. U. Obrist, *Ways of Curating* (New York: Faber and Faber, 2014); D. Balzer, *Curationism: How Curating Took over the Art World and Everything Else* (London: Pluto Press, 2015); Balzer, 'Reading lists, outfits, even salads are curated'; P. O'Neill and M. Wilson (eds), *Curating Research* (London/Amsterdam: Open Editions/de Appel, 2015); P. O'Neill, L. Steeds and M. Wilson (eds), *How Institutions Think: Between Contemporary Art and Curatorial Discourse* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2017). There are also several academic journals dedicated to curating such as *Curator: The Museum Journal*, *Journal of Curatorial Studies* and *On Curating*.

6   F. Derieux, 'Introduction', in F. Derieux (ed.), *Harald Szeemann: Individual Methodology* (Zurich: JRP Ringier, 2007), p. 8. For a run-through of what are considered the most important exhibitions of the twentieth century, see B. Altshuler (ed.), *Salon to Biennial: Exhibitions That Made Art History*, 1863–1959 (London: Phaidon, 2008); B. Altshuler (ed.), *Biennials and Beyond: Exhibitions That Made Art History, 1962–2002* (London: Phaidon, 2013).

7   J. Hoffmann (ed.), *The Next Documenta Should Be Curated by an Artist* (Frankfurt am Main: Revolver, 2004).

8   D. Buren, 'Where are the Artists?', in Hoffmann (ed.), *The Next Documenta Should Be Curated by an Artist*, pp. 26–31. For this debate, and interpretations of it, see P. O'Neill, 'The Curatorial Turn: From Practice to Discourse', in Rugg and Sedgwick (eds), *Issues in Curating Contemporary Art*, p. 23; C. Jeffery (ed.), *The Artist as Curator* (Bristol: Intellect, 2015), p. 8; and the introductory chapter in A. Green, *When Artists Curate: Contemporary Art and the Exhibition as Medium* (London: Reaktion, 2018).

9   R. Storr, 'Show and Tell', in P. Marincola (ed.), *What Makes a Great Exhibition?* (Philadelphia, PA: Philadelphia Exhibitions Initiative, Philadelphia Center for Arts and Heritage, 2006), p. 17. See also, R. Storr, 'Reading Circle', *Frieze*, 93 (2005), p. 27. In the latter Storr pointedly wrote: 'No, I do not think curators are artists. And if they insist, then they will ultimately be judged bad curators as well as bad artists.' Some, however, do make the case that curators should be considered to be artists, or artist-like; for two very different arguments to that effect, one from a curatorial perspective, the other from a philosophical one, see E. S. Pilhofer, 'The Curator is Present – [Ex]changing Roles of Curator and Artist: Hans Ulrich Obrist and Marina Abramović', *International Journal of Cultural and Creative Industries*, 1:3 (2014), pp. 28–41; R. Ventzislavov, 'Idle Arts: Reconsidering the Curator', *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*, 72:1 (2014), pp. 83–93.

10 A. Vidokle, 'Art Without Artists?', *e-flux journal*, 16 (2010), unpaginated, www.e-flux.com/journal/16/61285/art-without-artists/ [accessed 6 April 2015].

11 Boris Groys argued something similar when he described artists' working conditions as similar to those of the precariat workforce so characteristic of early twenty-first-century working life: 'contemporary art institutions no longer need an artist as a traditional producer. Rather, today the artist is more often hired for a certain period of time as a worker to realize this or that institutional project.' B. Groys, 'Marx after Duchamp, or the Artist's Two Bodies', in

J. Aranda, B. K. Wood and A. Vidokle (eds), *Boris Groys: Going Public* (Berlin: Sternberg, 2010), p. 127, cited in Voorhies, *Beyond Objecthood*, p. 74.

12 Irit Rogoff argued that the uncertainty in the curator's work was something positive that should be embraced, in I. Rogoff, 'Smuggling: An Embodied Criticality', 2006, https://xenopraxis.net/readings/rogoff_smuggling.pdf [accessed 27 July 2020]. See also Green, *When Artists Curate*, p. 16.

13 Mary Anne Staniszewski commented on the repression of exhibition history in M. A. Staniszewski, *The Power of Display: A History of Exhibition Installations at the Museum of Modern Art* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1998), p. xxi, cited in O'Neill, 'The Curatorial Turn', p. 25. Curator Elena Filipovic gives some reasons why the exhibition has been considered an ambiguous object of study: it is not a 'stable, immutable or collectible thing (the usual stuff of art history), nor a clear product of any single hand … [it is] decidedly not autonomous; often deemed "merely" a frame; and irrevocably tied to the mundane pragmatics of administration' (Filipovic, 'Introduction (When Exhibitions Become Form)', p. 7).

14 Voorhies, *Beyond Objecthood*, p. 72.

15 Voorhies, *Beyond Objecthood*, pp. 71ff.

16 The text was commissioned by *Artforum* as the inaugural column in a series on curating, published in the October 2009 issue. It was reprinted in M. Lind, 'The Curatorial (2009)', in B. K. Wood (ed.), *Selected Maria Lind Writing* (Berlin: Sternberg, 2010), pp. 57–66. Note that the distinction between curating and the curatorial was fairly established by this time; in a text from 2006, Irit Rogoff wrote: 'For some time now we have been differentiating between "curating", the practice of putting on exhibitions and the various professional expertises it involves and "the curatorial", the possibility of framing those activities through series of principles and possibilities' (Rogoff, 'Smuggling'). For a different distinction, this time tripartite between curatorship, curating and the curatorial, see Bruchet, 'Curation and the Archive'.

17 Lind, 'The Curatorial', pp. 64, 63.

18 Lind, 'The Curatorial', p. 65.

19 For a discussion of the 'Artist Materials Archive' at the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, a category of objects that sit somewhere between artwork and supplemental archival documents, see Jill Sterrett in Giannachi and Westerman (eds), *Histories of Performance Documentation*, p. 39.

20 'Beyond Beefcake: Bob Mizer Excavation at 80WSE Gallery', www.nyu.edu/content/nyu/en/about/news-publications/news/2013/october/unknown-works-of-beefcake-photo-icon-excavated-at-80wse [accessed 24 September 2020].

21 The archival event was organised by Dennis Bell and others at the Bob Mizer Foundation, as well as Jonathan Berger at the gallery. Bell described how the aim was to show the amount of work produced by Mizer in his lifetime, and what it would take to archive it. Email from Dennis Bell to the author, 20 August 2020.

22 '"DEVOTION: Excavating Bob Mizer" Exhibition- NYAB Event', 2013, www.nyartbeat.com/event/2013/691D [accessed 19 January 2021].

23 Catherine Zuromskis brought up a similar case when she suggested that artist Cosmos Andres Sarchiapone could be understood via the archive he left behind. C. Zuromskis, 'The Social Lives of Archival Photographs', *Archives of American Art Journal*, 57:1 (2018), pp. 76–84. For a discussion of 'creative archiving' in relation to John Latham's archive, see A. Velios, 'Creative Archiving: A Case Study from the John Latham Archive', *Journal of the Society of Archivists*, 32:2 (2011), pp. 255–71.

24 H. B. Hölling, 'The Archival Turn: Toward New Ways of Conceptualising Changeable Artworks', *Acoustic Space*, 14, special issue: 'Data Drift: Archiving Media and Data Art in the 21st Century', ed. R. Šmite and L. Manovich (2015), pp. 73–89.

25 Hölling, 'The Archival Turn', pp. 87–8. Italics in the original.

26 For a discussion of these issues see Giannachi and Westerman (eds), *Histories of Performance Documentation*; Taylor, *The Archive and the Repertoire*.

27 R. Barthes, 'The Death of the Author', in *Image, Music, Text* (London: Fontana, 1987), pp. 142–8; M. Foucault, 'What is an Author?', in *Essential Works of Foucault 1954–1984*, 2: *Aesthetics, Method, and Epistemology*, ed. J. D. Faubion (New York: The New Press, 1998), pp. 205–22. Robert Storr points out that Oscar Wilde's essay 'The Critic as Artist' from the late nineteenth century was arguing something very similar (Storr, 'Reading Circle').

28 Alison Green gets at precisely this paradox when she argues that curatorial practice often negates the myth of the artist, but that it also unwittingly reinforces it by replacing it with the myth of the curator. Green dedicates an entire chapter of her book to the issue of authorship (Green, *When Artists Curate*, pp. 121ff.). The irony of this mirrors the fact that both Foucault and Barthes are very much considered to be original 'authors', despite their writing about subjectivity and authorship.

29 The exhibition at LACMA was curated by Stephanie Barron and was later shown at the Art Institute of Chicago. The recreation of Szeemann's exhibition in Venice was curated by Germano Celant; the layout of the original exhibition was translated to the floor plan of the palazzo by Rem Koolhaas and Thomas Demand.

30 Frank O. Gehry, the exhibition designer of *Degenerate Art* at LACMA, clarified in the exhibition folder his intent to exhibit the artworks in a more dignified manner than had been the case in the 1937 exhibition, which meant that they were placed in the same gallery groupings but not hung in the same way. The folder also specified that archival material and photographs from the original exhibition were displayed 'in heavy wooden cases specially designed by Gehry to evoke a gloomy, institutional look'. '"Degenerate Art": The Fate of the Avant-Garde in Nazi Germany, Exhibition Guide' (LACMA & Art Institute of Chicago, 1991), p. 4, www.lacma.org/sites/default/files/reading_room/New%20PDF%20from%20Images%20Output-10compressed5.pdf [accessed 5 June 2019]. For more on this exhibition, see the catalogue, S. Barron (ed.), *'Degenerate Art': The Fate of the Avant-Garde in Nazi Germany* (Los Angeles/New York: Los Angeles County Museum of Art/Abrams, 1991). For more on the Venice installation of Szeemann's exhibition, see G. Celant and C. Costa

(eds), *When Attitudes Become Form: Bern 1969/Venice 2013* (Milan: Fondazione Prada, 2013).

31   The other contributors were Gwen L. Allen, Pierre Bal-Blanc, Patrizio Bertelli, Charles Esche, Chus Martinez, Glenn Philips, Miuccia Prada, Christian Rattemeyer, Francesco Stocchi and Jan Verwoert.

32   Celant and Costa (eds), *When Attitudes Become Form*, p. 395.

33   For more on such recreated exhibitions, see E. Dulguerova, 'Re-exhibition Stories', trans. S. Pleasance, *Critique d'art*, 42 (2014), pp. 1–5; C. Spencer, 'Making it New: The Trend for Recreating Exhibitions', *Apollo: The International Art Magazine*, 2015, www.apollo-magazine.com/making-it-new-the-trend-for-recreating-exhibitions/ [accessed 10 September 2018]. It is worth pointing out too that the model for the modern curator is not really an invention of the 1960s but goes at least as far back as the 1920s and figures such as Alexander Dorner and Alfred H. Barr. See Filipovic, 'Introduction (When Exhibitions Become Form)', p. 14, n. 10. However, it was in the 1960s that the figure got a more widespread presence in the artworld.

34   The exhibition in Venice was not the first time Szeemann's exhibition was referenced: Jens Hoffmann curated *When Attitudes Became Form Become Attitudes*, which was shown at the CCA Wattis Institute for Contemporary Art, San Francisco, in 2012. This exhibition, however, did not attempt to recreate the 1969 Bern installation, but rather used it as a starting point and included a number of contemporary artists who were said to 'continue to work with a similarly experimental and expansive approach'. 'When Attitudes Became Form Become Attitudes', *CCA Wattis Institute for Contemporary Art*, http://archive.wattis.org/exhibitions/when-attitudes-became-form-become-attitudes [accessed 3 August 2020]. The veneration of Szeemann as a star curator is not only indicated by several different exhibitions that directly reference his work, but also by the fact that his archive has been the subject of a monographic book that includes numerous reproductions of archival documents as well as photographs documenting the rooms where they are housed. F. Derieux (ed.), *Harald Szeemann: Individual Methodology* (Zurich: JRP Ringier, 2007). Since 2015 Moderna Museet has been engaged in a research project about Pontus Hultén, who was the director of the museum from 1958 to 1973. This project has resulted in an exhibition in the museum's study gallery, a symposium and the publication A. Tellgren (ed.), *Pontus Hultén and Moderna Museet: The Formative Years* (Stockholm: Moderna Museet, 2017).

35   von Bismarck, Feldmann and Obrist (eds), *Interarchive*.

36   An illustration of this is David Balzer's use of Obrist in the opening pages of his book *Curationism*.

37   Obrist, *A Brief History of Curating*. The book was first published in 2009.

38   L. Neyfakh, 'The Man Who Made Curating an Art', *The New York Observer*, 2009, https://observer.com/2009/12/the-man-who-made-curating-an-art/ [accessed 28 July 2020]. Obrist's statement comes from a telephone interview with Neyfakh.

39   Rogoff, 'Smuggling'; Lind, 'The Curatorial', p. 63.

40 P. O'Neill and M. Wilson, 'An Opening to Curatorial Enquiry: Introduction to Curating and Research', in O'Neill and Wilson (eds), *Curating Research*, pp. 17, 18.

41 For more on *Un-Curating the Archive*, see Braun, 'Exhibition Folder'. The project *Curating Degree Zero Archive* was the subject of a special issue of *On Curating* in 2015: D. Richter and B. Drabble (eds), *On Curating*, 26, special issue: 'Curating Degree Zero Archive, Curatorial Research' (2015). See also 'Curating Degree Zero Archive | ZHdK.ch', *ZHdK*, www.zhdk.ch/miz/miz-curating [accessed 30 July 2020].

42 B. Drabble and D. Richter, 'Curating Degree Zero Archive: Background to the Archive' (Medienarchiv, Züricher Hochschule der Künste), https://medienarchiv.zhdk.ch/media/3a11e3c3-e2b4–4da3–9500–0e72226b777e [accessed 28 January 2021].

43 Drabble and Richter, 'Curating Degree Zero Archive: Background to the Archive'.

44 Vidokle, 'Art Without Artists?'

45 See www.onearchives.org.

46 The exhibition was co-curated by David Frantz and Mia Locks, who also edited the extensive catalogue. D. Frantz and M. Locks (eds), *Cruising the Archive: Queer Art and Culture in Los Angeles, 1945–1980* (Los Angeles: ONE National Gay & Lesbian Archives, 2011). The project was also documented on the specially designated website: 'Cruising the Archive: Queer Art and Culture in Los Angeles, 1945–1980 | ONE National Gay & Lesbian Archives', https://cruisingthearchive.org/ [accessed 28 July 2020].

47 For more on this case and its relevance for archival practice and theory, see Vaughan, 'Reflecting on Practice'.

48 J. A. Bastian and A. Flinn, *Community Archives, Community Spaces: Heritage, Memory and Identity* [ebook] (London: Facet, 2018), doi: 10.29085/9781783303526.

49 Vaughan, 'Reflecting on Practice', pp. 221–2.

50 S. Hall, 'Constituting an Archive', *Third Text*, 15:54 (2001), p. 91, cited in Vaughan, 'Reflecting on Practice', p. 222. On p. 89 of the same essay Hall writes: 'Constituting an archive represents a significant moment … It occurs at the moment when a relatively random collection of works … is at the point of becoming something more ordered and considered: an object of reflection and debate. The moment of the archive represents the end of a certain creative innocence, and the beginning of a new stage of self-consciousness, of self-reflexivity in an artistic movement. Here the whole apparatus of "a history" … slips silently into place.' Hall's essay was initially a paper delivered at 'The Living Archive' conference at Tate Britain in March 1997.

51 A number of publications and texts have tackled this issue in recent years; see, for example, Smith, 'Artists as Curators/Curators as Artists'; J. Doubtfire and G. Ranchetti, 'Curator as Artist as Curator', *CuratingTheContemporary (CtC)*, 2015, https://curatingthecontemporary.org/2015/04/30/curator-as-artist-as-curator/ [accessed 17 January 2020]; Jeffery, *The Artist as Curator*; Filipovic (ed.), *The Artist as Curator*; Green, *When Artists Curate*.

52 *Artists' Choice*, initiated by MoMA in-house curator Kirk Varnedoe in the late 1980s, is a well-known example of such an initiative; there was also a series of exhibitions based on artistic curating at the National Gallery in London in the 1970s. By the first decade of the twenty-first century, this practice had become commonplace. L. Kachur, 'Re-Mastering MoMA: Kirk Varnedoe's "Artists' Choice" Series', in Jeffery (ed.), *The Artist as Curator*, p. 47. See also Smith, 'Artists as Curators/Curators as Artists', p. 120.

53 For a discussion of Eastern Europe, see Petrešin-Bachelez, 'Innovative Forms of Archives, Part One'; Petrešin-Bachelez, 'Innovative Forms of Archives, Part Two'. For a discussion of the situation for some Brazilian artists, see Osthoff, *Performing the Archive*.

54 D. Võ, 'IMUUR2', *Art Journal*, 76:1 (2017), p. 81.

55 D. von Hantelmann, 'The Curatorial Paradigm', *The Exhibitionist*, 4 (2011), pp. 6–12. Von Hantelmann pointed to Duchamp as the one who anticipated, articulated and performed the transition from artist to curator, where the latter manifests the act of selection as a productive and generative force. This is evidenced by Duchamp's description of his 1917 urinal: 'Whether Mr. Mutt made the fountain with his own hands or not has no importance. He chose it.' For the original article, see 'The Richard Mutt Case', *Blindman*, 2 (1917), pp. 5–6, cited in von Hantelmann, 'The Curatorial Paradigm', p. 11.

56 Filipovic, 'Introduction (When Exhibitions Become Form)', p. 9.

57 Vaughan, 'Reflecting on Practice', pp. 213ff. Vaughan gives several examples of these invitations for artists to work in archival institutions, for instance at the Epstein Archive in the UK or the Portland Archives and Records Center in the USA.

58 *The Encyclopedic Palace: Short Guide* (Venice Biennale, 2013), pp. 18–21.

59 Notable too is that the phrase 'research-exhibition' is the heading of Baratta's statement in the printed guide to the exhibition, *The Encyclopedic Palace: Short Guide*, p. 17. The statement about the archive is not included in the printed version of Baratta's introduction but is found on the Biennale's website: www.labiennale.org/en/art/2013/introduction-paolo-baratta [accessed 27 May 2021].

60 *The Encyclopedic Palace: Short Guide*, p. 82.

61 *The Encyclopedic Palace: Short Guide*, p. 20.

62 Filipovic, 'Introduction (When Exhibitions Become Form)', p. 9.

63 Filipovic, 'Introduction (When Exhibitions Become Form)', p. 10.

64 Cherix, Jenny and Meyer (eds), *Working Drawings and Other Visible Things on Paper*; Meyer, 'Mel Bochner'. For more on this work, see Chapter 3.

65 Self-archiving practices among artists is a big topic that I only briefly touch upon here. A different set of practices that could be discussed in these terms are those of artists who activate their own personal archives in performative ways, such as Barbara Steveni's performances 'I AM AN ARCHIVE'. See Vaknin, Stuckey and Lane (eds), *All This Stuff*, pp. 4, 63ff.

66 Karlholm, *Kontemporalism*, p. 200.

67 L. Alloway, 'Institution: Whitney Annual', *Artforum*, 11:7 (1973), pp. 32–5. Daniel Buren makes a similar charge, writing about a reversal of roles whereby the organiser has become the author and the artist has become

interpreter, arguing that we should return to the clear-cut role of the curator as 'organizer-interpreter' (Buren, 'Where are the Artists?', p. 28). Interesting in light of Buren's argument is *A Fresco*, an exhibition curated by Buren, shown at the BOZAR: Centre for Fine Arts Brussels in 2016. J. Benzakin (ed.), *Libretto. Daniel Buren. A Fresco*, exhibition publication, BOZAR Centre for Fine Arts Brussels (Ghent: Borgerhoff & Lamberigts, Bozar Books, 2016).

68 Storr, 'Show and Tell', p. 21. Maria Lind, too, has compared the curator to an editor: '"the curatorial" resembles what an editor should do, only with a broader set of materials and relationships' (Lind, 'The Curatorial', p. 63).

69 Foster, 'An Archival Impulse', p. 21.

70 Lind, 'The Curatorial', p. 63.

71 Eliassen, 'The Archives of Michel Foucault', p. 37.

72 For an explicit link between the archive and Benjamin's thought, see, for example, Featherstone, 'Archiving Cultures', pp. 171–3; Featherstone, 'Archive', pp. 594–5; Russell, *Archiveology*. Several exhibitions have taken off from Warburg's methodology and tried to apply or connect it to contemporary artistic practices in ways that highlight how curatorial and archival concepts intersect; see, for example, *Atlas: How to Carry the World on One's Back* at Museo Reina Sofía (2011) and *New Ghost Stories* at the Palais de Tokyo (2014), both curated by Georges Didi-Hubermann. Another example is *Dear Aby Warburg: What can be done with images?*, shown at Museum für Gegenwartskunst Siegen (2 December 2012–3 March 2013). E. Schmidt and I. Rüttinger (eds), *Lieber Aby Warburg, Was tun mit Bildern? Vom Umgang mit fotografischem Material/Dear Aby Warburg, What Can Be Done with Images? Dealing with Photographic Material* (Heidelberg: Kehrer, 2012). For more on the latter from the perspective of one of the participating artists, see also P. Roush, 'Chaos of Memories: Surviving Archives and the Ruins of History According to the Found Photo Foundation', in G. Knape et al. (eds), *Order and Collapse: The Lives of Archives* (Göteborg: Akademin Valand, Göteborgs universitet, 2016), pp. 77–97.

73 Z. Leonard, 'A Continuous Signal: An Essay of Excerpts and Quotations', in *Analogue* (Columbus, OH/Cambridge, MA: Wexner Center for the Arts, The Ohio State University/MIT Press, 2007), pp. 169–81. The phrase 'continuous signal' is a reference to a common definition of analogue media, and the term is also used by Tacita Dean in her essay 'Analogue', in Vischer (ed.), *Analogue: Drawings 1991–2006*, p. 8.

74 Sontag, *On Photography*, pp. 181–207.

75 S. Sontag, 'Melancholy Objects', in *On Photography*, p. 71.

76 D. Bearman, 'Documenting Documentation', *Archivaria*, 34 (1992), p. 41.

77 Bearman specifies that this is in part what differentiates archival material from library materials (Bearman, 'Documenting Documentation', p. 41).

78 The description of the archivist as a 'keeper of context' comes from Schwartz and Cook, 'Archives, Records, and Power', p. 10.

79 Leibovici specifies the artwork's ecosystem as 'the complete set of practices that an artist must develop to do what they do – like the biotope of a living organism. we humans require air, water and a certain temperature to exist, but what would an artwork's biotope be? it would comprise practices, daily exercises,

asceses, gestures, statements, writings and position-taking (ethical and political), which all determine the way in which artists work, their orientation, their choice of material, etc. it also entails a particular type of maintenance.' F. Leibovici, 'An Ecology of Artistic Practices', in Calonje (ed.), *Live Forever*, p. 59.

80 The example is taken from a 1974 *Artforum* interview with Mangold where Rosalind Krauss makes these connections, something that Danto criticises (Danto, 'The Art World Revisited', p. 49).

81 Danto, 'The Art World Revisited', p. 50.

82 The slide lecture is a curated presentation of art history, with carefully selected combinations of artworks. For an explicit reference to a curated version of art history, see Griselda Pollock's book *Encounters in the Virtual Feminist Museum: Time, Space and the Archive* where she makes an art historical argument by way of 'curating' imaginary exhibitions. G. Pollock, *Encounters in the Virtual Feminist Museum: Time, Space and the Archive* (London: Routledge, 2007).

83 D. Roelstraete, F. Manacorda and J. Harbord, 'Interview: Francesco Manacorda in Conversation with Simon Starling', in *Simon Starling* (London: Phaidon, 2012), p. 32, cited in Roelstraete, *The Way of the Shovel*, p. 212. The text about Starling in the catalogue was written by Karsten Lund.

The archive has been described as concerned with addressing, processing or storing time in different ways, but precisely how the relationship between time, temporality and the archive is understood differs a great deal among those who think and write about archives at the turn of the twenty-first century.[1] What is the archive's relationship to history and memory, and how can one understand the temporality of the archive itself? Some see the archive as engaged in a future-oriented address, while others describe it as primarily concerned with history and memory. The archive is also enlisted to support the claim that the current era is characterised by an increasing focus on the present. In this chapter, I analyse how the notion of the archive in the context of artistic practices, artworks and discourses mobilises, evokes and addresses issues of temporality, and how these relate to a broader discussion about the current era's notion of time.

This is the book's eighth and final chapter. A useful way to approach it is to consider it in light of the chapters that precede it, and to connect the specific issue of archival temporality to the different thematic clusters discussed previously. In Chapter 3 I proposed that the notion of the archive could be connected to the institutional theory of art, a connection that has particular consequences for temporality. If the structural archive as a set of laws or rules is conceptually similar to the notion of the institutional artworld determining an artwork's status as art, it is so in part because both elevate the focus on structures in the present over historical trajectories. In Chapter 4 I addressed the shift from analogue to digital photography and connected the issue of archival materiality and immateriality to the perception of the medium of photography. The thrust of that chapter can also be seen to hinge on issues of temporality. Analogue photographic practices, both recent ones and those carried out by conceptual artists in the 1960s and 1970s, can be considered in light of digital technology. Artists in the 1990s and 2000s who return to works from the long 1960s operate with a dynamic temporality where the present alters and affects the meaning of the past. An example of this is how conceptual photographic practices emerge as part of a type of referential

circulation that – with hindsight – is seen to be characteristic of more recent digital image-culture. The shift from object to process, and the view of art making as a research process discussed in Chapter 5 evokes a particular kind of open-ended enduring temporality. When the artwork is no longer a clearly delineated object but a thought process, a gathering of data or a set of questions, the work (both verb and noun) is presumably in progress, ongoing, or possible to reactivate in ways not restricted by a particular time and place. The issue of critique that was addressed in Chapter 6 similarly comes with specific temporal connotations. When collections and archives are submitted to critical scrutiny it is, among other things, a way of placing artefacts and documents from the past into a set of norms and values that belong to the current era. As discussed, these critical practices also evoke the potential for rewriting history by adding to or changing the interpretation of established narratives. Chapter 7 was concerned with the relationship between curating and the archive in both practice and theory. With the increasing importance and visibility of curators comes an increasing focus on the exhibition as form and the experience of artworks in a specific time and place. As discussed, however, the curator and the notion of curating is tied to the increasing interest in conversations, events and pedagogical projects in the here-and-now, as well as the processing of historical practices and references. The argument at the end of Chapter 7 concerned the way notions of the archive and the curatorial in similar ways point to issues of association, referentiality, and the grouping of disparate object and ideas together. This associative aspect of the curatorial/archival brings the parts (artworks, documents) into a simultaneity of the whole (exhibition, archive); a simultaneity that echoes the temporality of the referential structure of the institutional artworld itself. In sum, as the notion of the archive is filtered through art writing and art practice it becomes embedded in various aspects of, and associations with, temporality – and these temporal concerns and understandings are therefore largely inseparable from other issues that have been discussed in this book so far.

Throughout this book I argue that the archive becomes a frequent reference because it can be used to point to, theorise and make sense of a number of different conditions and concerns deemed to be urgent and important at the turn of the twenty-first century. These conditions and concerns include the far-reaching implications of technological changes; the prevalence of different forms of critique of normative structures; changes to the view of the art object; as well as increasing academicisation of artistic practices. This usefulness is possible in part because the notion of the archive is open and fluid – promiscuous, even – while also loaded with a great deal of theoretical baggage. Yet another such broad area of concern that can be considered in light of the archive is that of *presentism*, or the charge that the current era is characterised by an excessive concern with the present. This chapter begins

with an outline of the notion of presentism within and outside the art field. This is followed by a consideration of the archive art phenomenon as indicative of a compensatory interest in history: i.e. that it is precisely the loss of historical grounding that makes the intense focus on history, constructed and material, of particular interest to artists at the end of the twentieth century. I then discuss the notion of 'contemporary' in contemporary art, and the related terminology of 'turns' in twenty-first-century art writing. I argue that this very vocabulary – 'contemporary' art and archival 'turn' – in fact indicates a particular temporality tied to specific understandings of the notion of the archive. After this meta-discussion of concepts and terminology, I zoom in on a few different artistic practices and consider how they make visible different aspects of archival temporality. Walid Raad's Atlas Group archive is a project that can be considered quintessentially 'archival' as it is brought up in much literature on archive art. I consider its status in the corpus of literature, and discuss how it evokes a temporal belatedness tied to national and personal trauma. I also bring up artworks that deal with an entirely different form of archival temporality connected to global environmental destruction: artworks that depict seed vaults as instances of attempts to archive biodiversity. The chapter ends with a return to the practice among artists at the turn of the twenty-first century of remaking or referencing works from the 1960s. Such practices have been discussed in several previous chapters; when they are brought up again here it is in order to consider them specifically in terms of archival temporality.

The omnipresent and omnipotent present

In his book *Regimes of Historicity: Presentism and Experiences of Time*, François Hartog used terms such as 'tyranny of the immediate', 'short-termism' and 'presentism' to describe the sense of 'a present characterized at once by the tyranny of the instant and by the treadmill of an unending now'.[2] According to Hartog, this 'omnipresent and omnipotent present' so profoundly structures our experience of time that it can be considered the current era's 'regime of historicity'.[3] Hartog is a historian and did not specifically consider art and artistic practices as instances of this. Many others, however, have. Art historian Hans Belting, echoing Arthur Danto's writing, argued that before 1960 every work that claimed to be art was expected to mark a new stage in art's history, and art was therefore inevitably linked to art history.[4] Since 1960, however, art has become post-historical, 'a successful fiction, backed by art institutions rather than by virtue of a particular history'.[5] Dan Karlholm similarly described how the shift occurring with the 'Duchamp position' in the post-war period meant that the historicist myth of origin had effectively been made parenthetical, and that this shifted the balance 'from the work to the creative beholder

– whether artist, public or curator – from object to subject, from work to text and context in the here and now'.[6] Richard Meyer coined the phrase 'now-ism' to describe how '[t]he spectacular immediacy of the contemporary art world threatens to overwhelm our ability to think critically about the relation of the current moment to the past'.[7] Terry Smith has argued that the current art historical period could be understood as a 'mobile, in-between formation', and that the contemporary is 'suspended in a state after or beyond history, a condition of being always and only in the present'.[8] Yet another example of similar terminology is found in the last chapter of Christopher S. Wood's book *A History of Art History*, where he argues that art has broken with history and is now 'self-referential and citational', unapologetically preferring the here and now.[9] Wood directly referenced the notion of presentism – which he defined as 'the imposition of a pattern found in actuality onto the past' – and argued that it characterises not only the art of the current era but also art historical practice: what used to be the cardinal sin of the art historian has now become an 'unnameable norm'.[10] In her book *The Past is the Present: It's the Future Too* Christine Ross described Hartog's notion of presentism as 'symptomatic of our times and extremely useful as a prism through which to understand our era', but she also found it to be too exclusively focused on a sense of the present absorbing the past and the future.[11] Ross therefore introduced her own notion of 'a *presentifying* regime' to describe the way contemporary artistic practices activate the present 'as an organizing principle of the past and the future' in a more dynamic way.[12]

These and other examples illustrate the prevalence of presentist terminology in writing by art historians; however, it is also clear that the terminology differs somewhat and that what is implied by descriptions of a dominating focus on the present similarly differ.[13] What seems to be shared, however, is a general sense that the conditions for art change during the course of the second half of the twentieth century and that these changes are connected to a lack of grounding in history.

It is important to clarify a few things about the proposed overlaps between the archive art phenomenon, the institutional theory of art and the theorisation of presentist temporality. The specific condition of art after c. 1960 is, as seen above, at times tied to descriptions of post-history or even the end of art. This does not, however, entail an actual end of art making or of history. Arthur Danto explains:

> What the end of art means is not, of course, that there will be no more works of art […] What has come to an end, rather, is a certain narrative, under the terms of which making art was understood to be carrying forward the history of discovery and making new breakthroughs.[14]

What these terms entail, in other words, is not a lack of history or art in a literal sense, but a break with a certain form of teleological narrative of art

and art history. Belting argues against the terminology of 'the end of art' altogether by pointing out that this very notion is itself deeply tied to modernism; what has ended is in fact precisely the kind of linear history of art that would enable such an end to happen in the first place.[15]

I have argued that the notion of the archive becomes attached to the new set of conditions emerging in the period around 1960 – the institutional theory of art – after the fact, and that the structural understanding of the archive can be seen as a useful image or metaphor for the functioning of the artworld as a structure and vice versa. The crucial point here is that this structural archive/artworld is by necessity anchored in a presentist temporality, since it is evaluating and defining art as art in the here-and-now rather than by recourse to a linear trajectory of art history. It is important to stress, however, that this is not to say that the art understood to be institutionally defined is a-historical in an absolute sense. On the contrary, the institutional theory of art is itself deeply tied to a particular point in history – the period that began in the middle of the twentieth century; furthermore, it cannot function without recourse to art history. In his essay 'The Art World Revisited', Danto defined the artworld as the 'historically ordered world of artworks, enfranchised by theories which themselves are historically ordered'.[16] He further specified that what makes the artworld able to confer status upon an ordinary object, and thereby transfigure it, is 'first, that to be a member of the art world is to participate in what we might term the discourse of reasons; and secondly, art is historical because the reasons relate to one another historically'.[17] The notion of an 'artworld' that Danto proposed was thus a 'loose affiliation of individuals who know enough by way of theory and history that they are able to practice a historical explanation of works of art'.[18] That is to say, the institutional theory of art does not suggest a wholly random or subjective granting of art status to just any object – it is not an instance of 'anything goes' – instead it operates with reasons anchored in a historical understanding of art. This process is very similar to the way the archive is said to function as an ordering principle in much writing about archive theory in the second half of the twentieth century. There are rules that govern how art can be conceptualised, in a similar way that the Foucauldian archive operates as the law of what can be said at a given moment; those rules or regularities are historically anchored and conditioned, but they are so in a way that is very much tied to and filtered through the present.

'History' as a compensatory interest in the past

When considering the interest in historical documents, artefacts and narratives by artists at the turn of the twenty-first century, to claim more or less exclusive focus on the present may seem paradoxical: rather than a lack of history, there appears to be quite an abundance of it. However, the increasing

preoccupation with historical archives and the theorising of the archive among critics, curators and artists can also be interpreted as symptomatic of a lack of connection to history in general, and art history in particular. Part of Hans Belting's argument about a lack of historical grounding in art after 1960 is that it has resulted in an engagement with 'history' in scare quotes among artists: a 'history' that compensates for the loss of history in the old sense.[19]

The idea that the current era's concern with the outward signs of history and memory is a form of diversion from, or compensation for, a radical lack of connection to the past has been brought up by writers in different disciplines. Marlene Manoff described what she considered to be the present moment's nostalgia for the past, and argued that although we have tremendous access to historical artefacts and digital surrogates, we also experience a sense of being cut off from a historical context.[20] Taking a longer view, cultural theorist Susannah Radstone similarly outlined an explosion of interest in memory since the early 1970s, which she tied to the earlier disruption of memory in the nineteenth century, suggesting that once it was disrupted, memory was 'both lost and over-present'.[21] Pierre Nora was also concerned with this compensatory element, suggesting that sites of memory (*lieux de mémoire*) such as archives and museums function as 'exterior scaffolding', needed precisely because we no longer experience memory from the inside.[22] Nora's point was that it is precisely when memory is no longer lived and spontaneous that we delegate to the archive the responsibility of remembering; de-ritualisation means that our age 'calls out for memory precisely because it has abandoned it'.[23] Once the relationship between real memory and history is broken we find ourselves subjected to a 'regime of discontinuity' – a sense of a past that is invisible, fractured and discontinuous.[24] Our relationship to the past, Nora argued, 'is now formed in a subtle play between its intractability and its disappearance'; it has become 'a question of representation – in the original sense of re-presentation – radically different from the old ideal of resurrecting the past'.[25]

What all these arguments point to is that instead of a shift from history to the end of history, there has been a shift from a notion of a stable view of history to one of 'history' in scare quotes. This 'history' – including 'art history' – is, like other similar constructions, open to both questioning and appropriation, which makes it both infinitely accessible and present as well as distant and elusive. I suggest that this sense of 'history' is also useful for understanding the archive art phenomenon.

The archival as a 'turn' within 'the contemporary'

Christopher Wood is not the only one to note a sense of presentism in the academic discipline of art history itself; in fact many have pointed out that

there are an increasing number of research positions and academic courses dedicated to art from the second part of the twentieth century.[26] This can be seen as an indication of a general presentism: art historians may quite simply be less interested in the art of previous centuries, they may consider it to be too difficult or may lack the proper tools (language skills, training in how to handle historical materials, etc.). Wood, himself an art historian specialising in the Renaissance, acknowledged that a general cultural amnesia might be part of the problem, but argued that the more significant explanation was that art historians are modernists at heart and therefore sympathise with modernism's 'refusal of the authority of the past'.[27] Whether or not one agrees with Wood that modernism is to blame, it seems clear that the authority of the past has indeed been undermined, in different ways and on different fronts. Ironically, it is precisely at the time that interest in late twentieth-century and twenty-first-century art increases in the academy, and with it a decreased need for archival research, that artists, critics and art historians take on the archive's theoretical implications with increasing fervour. The larger point to make here, however, is that once the structural, institutional understanding of art (and history) is established, the objects and narratives of the past are frequently subjected to the current era's ethical concerns, and, as Rita Felski has suggested, the scholar engaged in knee-jerk forms of critique translates hindsight into insight by holding a text to account for the structures of domination that define the moment in which it was created. The critic, Felski argued, wields 'the scalpel of "context" to reprimand "text"'.[28] With this comes a critique of the previous versions of the discipline of art history itself and its focus on masterpieces by white, male, heterosexual artists, a critique that makes it increasingly difficult to seriously consider a teleological forward motion of history, with one school or '-ism' building on and replacing another.[29] Furthermore, art historians as well as the artists they study are expected to exhibit self-reflexivity and consider their own place within a given discourse. This too indicates a presentist temporality: the most important structures and networks of signification are those that circulate in the present.

The phrase 'archival turn' has been frequently used within both the humanities and the art field since the 1990s.[30] Within art writing the reference to various 'turns' – and 'artist as' constructions – can on the most basic level be interpreted as a desire to classify, differentiate and perhaps attach one's own name to a particular sub-genre of contemporary art. The terminology of 'turns' is also interesting in its own right. The steady passing from one '-ism' to the next – Impressionism gives way to Cubism which gives way to Abstractionism, etc. – was characteristic of the teleological modernist grand narrative, and it pointed to a fixed and relatively stable *category* of art, anchored in a specific period, following and presumably followed by other '-isms'. The 'turn' instead highlights movement and circulation, and rather than denoting a

category of art, it describes a set of *interests* or *perspectives*.[31] Irit Rogoff has described the notion of 'turns' as a movement towards or around something: '[in a "turn"] it is *we* who are in movement, rather than *it*', according to Rogoff.[32] I would argue, however, that there are in fact two moving parts to this metaphor: we turn, but so does the object of interest that we turn towards. The 'turn' is also semantically tied to the return and can indicate a recycling, or a turning back and forth between different poles of interest; and this sense is of particular relevance for the archive art phenomenon, and the return to works from the 1960s that is intricately connected to it.[33]

The terminology of the 'turn' is closely connected to the terminology and theorisation of 'contemporary art' or 'the contemporary', which has been a point of debate and discussion among art theorists and art historians. Dan Karlholm has in different texts analysed the use of the term contemporary, pointing out the way it simultaneously denotes a period, a qualitative judgement about an artwork, as well as a relational position in time.[34] Karlholm has described the contemporary period as 'stamped by a hegemonic snychronicity', partly literal and partly a sign, and he has argued that the use of the term comes with specific consequences: 'what is left behind', Karlholm suggests, is 'the diachronic framework of analysis itself'.[35] In his discussion of contemporaneity and art history, Terry Smith asked whether what he describes as 'the coexistence of multiple, incommensurable temporalities' can perhaps be seen as a sign that 'we have passed beyond the cusp of the last historical period that could plausibly be identified as such'.[36] What has happened, according to Smith, is that 'contemporary' has come to mean 'a state of periodlessness, of being perpetually out of time'.[37] In a 2009 questionnaire published in *October* on the meaning of 'The Contemporary', a number of replies centred precisely on this sense of anachronism among contemporary artists, critics and art historians; described as 'present but out of date', 'premature', 'not at home in their own time', manifesting 'a fraught a-temporary sensibility, a discomfort with the present', and other similar formulations.[38] Art historian David Joselit has also discussed the shift in the use of contemporary from an adjective to a noun, with the effect that *the contemporary* becomes a period, paradoxically reinscribed in a model of temporal progression that belongs to a modernist logic.[39] There are, in other words, a number of different views of what this term 'contemporary' implies and whether it is best understood as a period or as a non-period.

The fact that the term is both loose and ill-defined does not prevent it from being used: it is ubiquitous in art magazines, books and articles, it is used by museums and Kunsthalles, and I have used it generously throughout this study (and in the book's title!) to loosely denote 'recent art', that is, art of the last thirty years or so. The term contemporary is thus in frequent use and many of us think that we know more or less what it means; but when asked to come

up with a precise definition, the term reveals itself to be both unclear and paradoxical. In addition to the issue of *when* exactly the contemporary period can be said to have begun, and how and when it could possibly end, the issue is also whether describing something as contemporary connotes something *about* the artworks, or whether it simply indicates that they were created during roughly the same time period.[40]

Joselit has attempted to answer the last of these questions by describing contemporary art as 'an international style' that, in contrast with 'period', does not suggest a string of new paradigms, but rather the 'adoption and adaptation of an existing idiom by a culturally and geographically diverse … array of producers'.[41] The contemporary, in Joselit's formulation, thus describes a recycling of specific references or idioms. Joselit's description gets at the doubled element of the term: the fact that it sounds like a temporal marker, yet does not include all art that is made in the current moment, and that although it is not one coherent style like an '-ism', it still has some broadly shared general traits.[42] Arthur Danto described the contemporary in somewhat similar terms: 'In my view … ["contemporary"] designates less a period than what happens after there are no more periods in some master narrative of art, and less a style of making art than a style of using styles'.[43] Further specifying what he meant by contemporary art as the current era's 'international style', Joselit suggested that it draws its building blocks from conceptual art, most notably the *proposition*, the *document* and the *readymade*.[44] Joselit's point is that contemporary art takes up conceptual art as a style by adapting and expanding the syntactic capacity of these forms as they attain saturation as a *lingua franca*, their very identity as a style an indication that they are now ossified references, simultaneously current and historical.[45] Here, then, the periodisation at work in 'the contemporary' is shown to be of a different kind than that of previous -isms, and the variations within the style are considered variations on the same already accepted (and often watered-down) elements of conceptual art. Archive art can be seen as such a variation within the contemporary, but I want to go further and suggest that it can be said to be *particularly* contemporary, precisely because, as discussed in previous chapters, the notion of the archive can and has been used to theorise the document, the proposition and the readymade.

The presentist museum

The 'turn' and the 'contemporary' as indicative of a temporal condition of instability, impermanence and repetition can also be considered in relation to the museum and the kinds of artworks shown there. Hans Belting has argued that the Enlightenment ideal of art's timeless and universal significance was tenable only when phrased in a general art history, and that the art museum

had traditionally been the 'spatial equivalent of the time scheme of art history'.[46] Many have pointed out that today's museums are not as focused on their collections as they once were, and that they increasingly focus on temporary exhibitions that provide entertainment and spectacular experiences for their visitors.[47] Although it is far from true that art museums no longer collect art or exhibit their collections, it is the case that many museums, for a variety of reasons, seem to be less focused on collections and more on temporary exhibitions. A widespread variation of this is the practice of rearranging museum collections into temporary exhibitions, mixing contemporary artworks with long-established canonical works. Critic and philosopher Boris Groys has argued that the very basis for a permanent art collection, with its ties to the archive, the library and the museum, functioned in secular societies as a substitute for the religious promise of resurrection and eternal life.[48] Today, however, this promise has lost its plausibility, according to Groys, and museums have therefore become sites of temporary exhibitions that materialise the view of a future characterised by 'the permanent change of cultural trends and fashions'.[49] Belting similarly ventured to speculate that people now visit museums to 'experience the present tense, much as other generations wanted to view a coherent art history'.[50] This present tense can be experienced in different ways in museums: in long-durational works, performances, and looped video works for instance.

The record attendance figures in 2010 at MoMA in New York for the retrospective exhibition of Marina Abramović and her performance *The Artist is Present* can be seen as indicative of this tendency.[51] What presumably attracted the crowds was the prospect of experiencing a concentrated focus on the present moment by simply sitting quietly facing the artist. Abramović's popularity can be interpreted as a result of her effectively tapping into a whole set of timely interests, such as new age, extreme endurance exercise, the cult of celebrity, mindfulness and meditation. In fact, increasing interest in mindfulness in the West can be seen as yet another manifestation of this lack of historical situatedness – the aim of experiencing the now would then be symptomatic of presentism, but also a reaction to the effects of digital tools and social media that marks the current era. In light of this, it is worth noting that the authentic, genuine experience of taking in the artist's presence in Abramović's exhibition itself became a much-mediated event with a massive presence in social media.

Many museums with historical art – such as the Louvre or the Vatican Museums – still draw enormous crowds, and in that sense the art historical arrangement of museal collections does not appear to have lost its allure. However, the crowds visiting these permanent collections record and upload their experiences in real time, and thus the stability and unchanging collection is framed within the wider structure of instability and impermanence of

The last day of The Artist is Present, MoMA, New York, 2010   **8.1**

presentism. The coexistence of seemingly contradictory tendencies can in that sense be understood as part of the same general condition: the constant flow of people visiting the must-see museums as tourist destinations, the practice of remaking existing artworks, the lure of the live event and the curatorial trope of mixing contemporary art with 'permanent' historical collections can all be framed as participating in such presentist endeavours. The latter exemplifies what Groys has described as a constant rewriting of the past: '[t]he present has ceased to be a point of transition from the past to the future, becoming instead a site of the permanent rewriting of both past and future.'[52] This is yet another paradox of the contemporary: on the one hand it is seen to be engaged in a continuous chasing of the new (and in that sense is similar to modernism); on the other hand, the contemporary is anchored in a recognition that all is return, recycling and appropriation.

The contemporary museum is thus in many cases moving in a direction that seems to be in line with, and reinforcing, presentist tendencies at large. But the museum as a site that still houses a collection with ties back in time is also considered an important potential antidote to the broader presentism precisely because it contains multiple temporalities. Hal Foster has argued that the current era's 'consumerist presentism' can be counteracted by the museum, where various 'thens' and 'nows' meet and are crystallised.[53] Claire Bishop similarly argued that the permanent collection can be considered 'the

museum's greatest weapon in breaking the stasis of presentism'.[54] In terminology that echoes descriptions of the archive, Bishop clarified that this was the case precisely because the permanent collection

> requires us to think in several tenses simultaneously: the *past perfect* and the *future anterior*. It is a time capsule of what was once considered culturally significant at previous historical periods, while more recent acquisitions anticipate the judgment of history to come (in the future, this *will have been* deemed important).[55]

This future anterior temporal address is, of course, what Jacques Derrida highlighted as the specific temporality of the archive.

Let me turn now from this broader discussion of the temporality of the current moment and how it relates to the archive art phenomenon to a consideration of specific artworks where archival temporality is mobilised in different ways.

The Atlas Group project and traumatic history

I have argued throughout this book that archive art is far from a stable category, and in line with the notion of a 'turn' to the archive it denotes a loose and shifting grouping of artists, without a fixed core canon agreed upon by all. Having said that, one project that comes close to being part of a canon of archive art is Walid Raad's Atlas Group project. It is mentioned in many texts on archive art: Charles Merewether's anthology dedicated to *The Archive* includes no fewer than three (short) texts by The Atlas Group; the work *We can make rain, but no one came to ask* (2008) was included in Okwui Enwezor's exhibition *Archive Fever: Uses of the Document in Contemporary Art*; Sven Spieker, Ernst van Alphen and David Houston Jones all discuss The Atlas Group in their respective books on archive art.[56] A text about The Atlas Group and performativity by Solveig Gade was published in the anthology *Performing Archives/Archives of Performance* from 2013.[57] An interview with Walid Raad was included as an appendix to Anthony Downey's anthology about archive art in the MENASA region, and Raad's work was discussed in several of the contributions.[58] In *Ghosting: The Role of the Archive within Contemporary Artists' Film and Video*, Raad is featured as one of the 'case studies'; his work is also featured in the publication *Interarchive* with the project *Sweet Talk: A Photographic Document of Beirut*.[59] In 2011, the journal *Comparative Critical Studies* dedicated a special double issue to the theme 'Archive Time', in which one of the contributions was 'The Lure of the Archive: The Atlas Project of Walid Raad' by Jeffrey Wallen.

In addition to being an example of archive art, Raad's work is also frequently used as a paradigmatic example of a particular kind of theory-based,

discursively oriented and critical contemporary art. Peter Osborne's 2013 book *Anywhere or Not at All: Philosophy of Contemporary Art* is described as 'a major philosophical intervention in art theory', concerned with answering the question of what kind of discourse can help us give contemporary art 'a *critical* sense', and it featured an image from Raad's Atlas Group project on the front cover.[60] Carrie Lambert-Beatty used Walid Raad as a key example of her notion of parafiction, Mark Godfrey included him as an instance of the artist as historian, Marquard Smith mentioned him in his discussion on art and research, and Peter Kalb featured Raad in his survey of contemporary art.[61] These examples could be multiplied: Raad's work has been shown in numerous exhibitions around the world and has been covered in articles, essays and books on contemporary art. In Raad's Atlas Group project, many of the core issues of the archive art phenomenon seem to converge: overt self-reflexivity; the documentary aesthetic; notions of the artist as researcher/archivist/historian; a fluid border between fact and fiction, and between subjective and objective knowledge. In that sense Raad is a perfect example of an archival artist. In line with my suggestion that archive art was, in the years around the turn of the twenty-first century, particularly aligned with issues relating to 'contemporary' art in general, the qualities and themes brought up in Raad's Atlas Group project are also characteristic of what is perceived as the most advanced and interesting contemporary art more broadly.

The background of Raad's project is described in similar terms in many texts: 'Founded in Beirut in 1999, The Atlas Group is devoted to researching and documenting Lebanese contemporary history, more precisely the history of the 15 years of the Lebanese Civil War (1975–1990/91). The Group retrieves, preserves, analyses, and produces audiovisual, photographic, literary, and other documents.'[62] These informative facts come with several qualifications: it has been pointed out that the founding date has been altered a number of times by Raad himself, and that the documents included in the archive are found, or perhaps created, by Raad.[63]

Missing Lebanese Wars is a series of works that centre around documents supposedly left to The Atlas Group by Dr Fadl Fakhouri when he died in 1991.[64] As Peter Osborne pointed out, it is a little strange that Dr Fakhouri bequeathed these documents to The Atlas Group for preservation since he died several years before its foundation, but such '[s]ystematically aberrant chronologies are a distinctive feature of all of the narratives presented in The Atlas Group's work, and the main sign of their fictional status'.[65] In The Atlas Group documents Dr Fakhouri is described as a famous historian of the Lebanese civil war, and the so-called 'Fakhouri file' is said to contain 226 notebooks, two 8mm short films, videotapes and photographs.[66] Part of this larger archive is *Notebook #72*, which contains the meticulous documentation of regular gatherings of a group of eminent historians at the Sunday horse races in 1970s

Beirut. Yellow-lined pages from the notebook include a brief poetic descrip-
tion of the winning historian, handwritten notes in both Arabic and English,
a picture of the winning horse cut out from a newspaper, and what appear to
be mathematical calculations. Supporting texts explain that the calculations
were done by the historians to determine the time-difference between the
finishing line and the horse in the official image taken by the race-track pho-
tographer.[67] Crucial here is that the photographer always pulls the trigger
either a little early or a little late, thus capturing the horse just before or just
after crossing the finishing line. The winning historian is the one who best
guesses the time gap between the two sets of documents: the photographic
one and the clocked record of the same event. When exhibited, the actual sheet
from Dr Fakhouri's notebook is reproduced against a larger white background,
to which arrows and what appear to be an archivist's typed transcription of
the scribbled notations have been added (Plate 17).

The archival principle of provenance which establishes the validity of a
document's place in an archive is based on an unbroken physical link between
a document's origin and its current archival location.[68] The Atlas Group
archive with its overt claim of having received the notebooks directly from
Dr Fakhouri – via his widow – stresses the authenticity of the material pre-
cisely because it has been passed on in this way.[69] The scribbled notes, the
taped-on newspaper clipping, the ragged edge of the notebook sheet all signify
that this is an authentic historical document. On the one hand, Dr Fakhouri's
notebooks and the specific details of the archive's provenance stress authentic-
ity as a kind of aesthetic. On the other hand, however, the same authenticity
is undermined in various ways by the different textual sources that accom-
pany the work, which point out the unreliability of its claims: the date of the
founding of The Atlas Group archive and the shifting claims of other factual
information make it clear that the entire archive was created by Raad himself,
and that it is therefore unreliable according to conventional notions of fixed
historical truth.[70]

What type of archival documents would future historians need in order to
understand the Lebanese civil war, not in terms of its historical facts, but in
terms of the experience of the war as a day-to-day threat of violence and
destruction? The Atlas Group archive can be seen as a response to that ques-
tion. If Raad discovered that such documents did not already exist, he took
upon himself to create them. The whole project is tied to the specific tempo-
rality of trauma: the sense of being out of sync with time, and the belatedness
of the appearance of traumatic symptoms. This is captured in *Missing Lebanese
Wars* by the juxtaposition of different documents showing, measuring and
interpreting such a temporal disjuncture.[71] This sense of belatedness can be
linked to Freudian ideas of trauma and deflection whereby a traumatic event
can result in physical symptoms that on the surface have nothing to do with

the trauma that caused them. The traumatic is in a sense that which cannot be archived systematically and therefore emerges in a different form at a different time, and The Atlas Group has been described by Raad himself as 'an archive of symptoms'.[72]

It is significant that the description of *Missing Lebanese Wars* specifies that the notations in the notebook came from a group of historians – Dr Fakhouri is even described as 'the foremost historian of the Lebanese civil wars until his death in 1993'.[73] Historians who are expected to provide accurate accounts of the past are thus shown to spend their spare time literally focusing on the margin of error of various documents that purport to record reality. The Atlas Group project has been described as an instance of 'counter-archival work' and an example of 'playing against our archival expectations'.[74] A statement by Raad himself makes clear that the structural archive is at work here, since this archive, rather than documenting what 'really' happened, is concerned with 'what can be imagined, what can be said … what [is] sayable and thinkable about the war'; a formulation that is remarkably similar to Foucault's definition of the archive as 'the law of what can be said'.[75] The interest in history, often presented as a defining feature of archive art, is here too seen as a concern with a bracketed 'history' – a recognition that straightforward access to the past is not possible.

In Raad's work, there is a distinction made between different kinds of facts: historical, political, economic, ideological, emotional and fictive facts. Each is verifiable and makes sense within a given context or frame, but notions of true and false are avoided. Curator Fredrik Liew has described how 'alternative logics' operate in Raad's work, not as metaphors but as different kinds of facts in the world.[76] Similar ideas of a porous border between fact and fiction are, as we have seen, frequently raised and processed in archive theory and in different artworks described as archival art. Carrie Lambert-Beatty brought up the issue of 'truthiness' when discussing Raad's work in her article 'Make-Believe: Parafiction and Plausibility'.[77] Lambert-Beatty's article was published in 2009, and since then issues of post-truth and alternative facts have been circulating in ways that carry political connotations far removed from the explorations carried out by artists such as Walid Raad. What seem similar on the surface are in fact ideas that pull in opposite directions – one away from nuance and complexity, the other towards it. What this potential confusion makes visible is that core concerns of archive art may for various reasons become more complicated, fraught with problems of interpretation, because circumstances can distort or obscure particular gestures. I have argued throughout this book that broader debates and developments contribute to making the archive a useful cluster of themes and ideas, but the opposite can also occur, whereby such debates and developments make some ideas or forms of address less effective. A potential 'turn' away from the thematic cluster of

the archive may thus result from circumstances that have little to do with art practices or art writing.

Seed vaults and ecological temporality

As the ecological crisis received increased attention in the 2010s, the notion of the archive has been enlisted to point to types of temporality that directly evoke the natural cycle and its interruption by human intervention. The prospect of the extinction of plants because of exploitation, environmental destruction and climate change has prompted the establishment of so-called 'seed vaults' around the world: facilities where genetic diversity can be safeguarded. In the event of extinction due to wars, terrorism or environmental destruction, the stored seeds would enable new plants to be cultivated. These facilities have attracted the attention of artists, writers and scholars interested in issues relating to ecology, temporality and the notion of the archive. The project 'Archiving Eden: The Vaults' by Dornith Doherty consists of photographs of a number of such seed vaults around the world (Plate 18). Doherty explained her interest in these 'global back-up systems' by pointing out that they simultaneously embody immense pessimism and optimism about the future, and that the seeds can be seen to mirror the medium of photography, since they too embody ideas of stopping time, reproduction and trace.[78] The Millennium Seed Bank at Kew Gardens in London stores over two billion seeds from around the world, and when Doherty described her photographs of the seed bank in a public presentation, she recalled a story told about their collection: a sea captain had collected a number of seeds as natural history specimens, but it was not until around 200 years later that his descendants found a leather pouch containing the seeds in the attic of their house. When the Millennium Seed Bank greenhouse managed to sprout the seeds they discovered that they were from an unknown plant species thought to have been long extinct.[79] This story evokes a number of familiar narratives of the archive: the idea of frozen time, the serendipitously discovered document, and a connection to the past via the living material trace.

One of the best-known of these seed-storage facilities is the Global Seed Vault on the Norwegian island of Svalbard. Since it is focused on seeds from plants that are related to food production and agriculture, it was set up as a kind of insurance against a worst case scenario, enabling humans to feed themselves even if plants become extinct. Sometimes referred to as 'the doomsday vault', it is located in a remote region where the permafrost ensures that the storage will be safe even without electricity. Dornith Doherty has documented the vault, as have several other artists. The exhibition *The Cold Coast Archive: Future Artifacts from the Svalbard Global Seed Vault*, shown in 2012 at the Center for PostNatural History in Pittsburgh, was a collaboration

Steve Rowell, *Svalbard Global Seed Vault at Noon*, 2011   **8.2**

between Signe Lidén, Annesofie Norn and Steve Rowell, and it included sound works, videos and photographs as well as an experimental garden, and a field guide/map whose contents form an imagined survival kit designed to help future generations find the vault.[80]

The seed vault itself evokes both the literal and metaphorical archive. The frozen landscape of Svalbard is close to where the remains of the Andrée expedition were found, and the seed vault as a place and act of preservation lends itself to archival metaphors: the seeds, like historical documents, are suspended in time, frozen or dormant, waiting to be resuscitated.[81] The temporality here is directed towards the future, evoking the idea of the archive which on the most basic level consists of documents that have been saved with the hope that they might be deemed important and interesting in the future. This future-oriented temporality is described by Derrida in 'Archive Fever': 'the question of the archive is not … a question of the past […]', he argued, '[i]t is a question of the future, the question of the future itself, the question of a response, of a promise and of a responsibility for tomorrow. The archive: if we want to know what this will have meant, we will only know in the times to come.'[82] In South Africa a few years later, Derrida again brought up this future orientation of the archive, suggesting that the archive is 'shaped by the future, by the future anterior', and that 'the archive doesn't simply record the past. It also … constitutes the past, and in view of a future which retrospectively, or retroactively, gives it its so-called final truth.'[83] This delay or future

address becomes particularly resonant when considered against the backdrop of human extinction and the potential destruction of the planet.[84] Derrida was not really concerned with this in his theorisation of the archive, nor were environmental or ecological concerns particularly present in the early texts about archive art. As these concerns have become more common and appear more urgent, the notion of the archive has been used to get at issues of ecological time and preservation as well – exemplifying the adaptability and elasticity of the understanding of the archive.

Return to returns to the 1960s

Let me now turn – or rather, return – to the referencing of specific artworks from the long 1960s. I will anchor this discussion in two such works that have already been examined in some detail in previous chapters: Joachim Koester's *Histories* and Michael Maranda's *Twentysix Gasoline Stations, 2.0*. In previous chapters I argued that these kinds of remakes are particularly instructive for understanding the archive art phenomenon, not only because many of the artists who are included in the category of archive art engage in these types of practices, but more importantly because the relationship between the 1960s and archive art clarifies how the notion of the archive functions and how it can be understood at the turn of the twenty-first century. The relationship between art of the 1960s/70s and archive art made in the period beginning with the mid-1990s has been considered in previous chapters in terms of issues relating to technology and photographic materiality; the notion of art as research; the issue of the critique of institutions; and various issues relating to citation, referentiality and the notion of curating. Here I want to focus on how these returns mobilise and process issues relating to temporality. In order to structure this discussion, I have grouped these issues into three broad, and somewhat overlapping, themes: first, the temporality of appropriation; second, the relationship between technology and temporality; and finally, the temporal aspects of influence and interpretation.

Artworks such as *Histories* and *Twentysix Gasoline Stations, 2.0* deal with art history in ways that can be considered forms of appropriation. *Histories*, as noted, is made up of six pairs of photographs in which a key work from the history of conceptual photography is reproduced alongside an image taken by Koester of the same site around three decades later. Rather than presenting the historical image as a 'transparent' image, Koester shows it to be already mediated and historicised: the reproduced image is shown to be exactly this – *re-produced*. In each case it is clear that Koester has photographed the image from a book: the image of the photograph is slightly skewed, and the surface on which the book is placed, the book page and its binding are all clearly visible. Maranda's publication deals even more overtly with already mediated material since it is entirely made up of images from Ed Ruscha's book of

gasoline stations that Maranda has lifted from the internet: the images are pixelated, skewed and mis-coloured, presumably as a result of going through various different forms of compression and reproduction (Plates 19 and 20).

Hans Belting's idea of 'history' in scare quotes and Pierre Nora's distinction between the re-presentation and resurrection of the past can be considered in light of these two works. Belting has pointed out that artists have always 'appropriated' earlier artists' work; however, because contemporary artists cannot hope to place their own artistic practice within an art historical lineage, their particular forms of what Belting calls 'quotation-art' should be understood as symptomatic of the break with a continuous art history rather than an active engagement with it.[85] In that sense, stating that the archive art phenomenon can be considered an instance of this wider compensatory historical interest is another way of saying that on the surface these works are characterised by an obsession with art history and historicity, but in fact they are dealing with these in the form of appropriation. The practice of appropriation has been a key feature of art since at least the mid-1970s, and has arguably become a defining characteristic of digital image culture more broadly. This type of appropriation also has particular effects on temporality. Film scholar Jaimie Baron argued that we – twenty-first-century consumers of images – have been trained in appropriation to such an extent that we readily accept that the contexts in which we live are subject to change and are neither permanent nor universal.[86] Baron's point is that appropriation as a method of image making affects our perception of history and time in a direct way. Both Koester and Maranda's artworks deal with 1960s art as a re-presentation – appropriation – of the past *in the present*, but with the crucial awareness that each such re-presentation does something to what is presented anew (this, presumably is the difference between re-presentation and resurrection that Nora described).

Art historian Pamela M. Lee's 2004 book *Chronophobia: On Time and Art of the 1960s* argues that the art and art criticism of that era was characterised by a 'pervasive anxiety' about time and its measurement, a sense that, having 'been abandoned by the safe haven that history once represented', time and art were affected by technological changes taking place in this period.[87] One of the key debates of the 1960s was initiated by critic and art historian Michael Fried regarding what he considered to be the 'theatricality' of minimalist art, and Lee characterised Fried's argument as indicative of a deep-seated chronophobia that stemmed in part from a recognition that the 'purely present' work of art (the transcendent modernist artwork, suspended in a sort of timelessness) had a weakening status in the 1960s.[88] Lee's argument was that

> the time Fried condemned in literalist art can tell us something about the question of endlessness encountered in the natural and social sciences of the day […] It is the time of the work of art now understood as a *system*, recursive

and shuddering like an echo, the time of an expanding new media and the articulation of its logic within and by art.[89]

This system, Lee explained, can be discussed in terms of notions such as *recursion*, *cybernetics* and *feedback* – terms that in different ways point to the process whereby messages or variables that are introduced into a system constitutionally alter it and yet become part of new circulations of interference.[90]

Lee's discussion is relevant for the archive art phenomenon in that the discourse around reverberation and feedback in the 1960s can be seen to foreshadow that of the digital turn, and how artists at the turn of the twenty-first century similarly tap into, resist or reinforce broader debates about temporality and technology in their own era. The pixelated, distorted, cropped and oddly coloured images that make up Maranda's remake of Ruscha's book of gasoline stations can be seen to exemplify what Hito Steyerl called 'the poor image'. Steyerl opened her 2009 article 'In Defense of the Poor Image' with the following definition: 'The poor image is a copy in motion'; and she went on to specify that the poor image 'is no longer about the real thing – the originary original. Instead, it is about its own real conditions of existence: about swarm circulation, digital dispersion, fractured and flexible temporalities.'[91] Viewing Ruscha's photographs through the raster of digital media means that they can be seen to enact the spectral or messianic temporality of the archive discussed by Derrida in 'Archive Fever' where, as I just mentioned, he stressed that the question of the archive was not a question of the past, but rather of the future. My point here is that temporality – the understanding of the notion of time – is deeply embedded in issues of technology, and that these issues become increasingly complex when the 1960s is overlaid with specific image-practices of the twenty-first century.

This element of technology and temporality can be tied directly to the temporality of influence and interpretation. Artworks such as *Histories* and *Twentysix Gasoline Stations, 2.0* highlight that conceptual art is the foundational period for the more recent artistic practices that reference it; that it is both historical and contemporary with them. In that sense, although James Meyer posited that it was a sign of 'blinkered presentism' to turn one's back on 'the Sixties', I suggest that it is also possible to consider the interest in that era as part of – or evidence of – a general presentism.[92] And Meyer does indeed refer to the 1960s as '*the beginning of the time we are in*', that is, suggesting that 'the present' can be said to have begun in the long 1960s.[93] Artworks such as Koester's and Maranda's can only be understood as art because of practices such as those of Smithson and Ruscha in the 1960s and 1970s. In that way, conceptual art practices are *archival* in the Foucauldian sense of determining that a given set of texts (in this case, practices) were indeed 'talking about "the same thing"', 'deploying the "same conceptual field", by opposing one another on "the same

field of battle"'; what Foucault called 'the positivity of a discourse' that 'defines a limited space of communication'.[94] This image of a shared field of battle is an expression of presentism since it points to a simultaneity of signification.

The issue of influence can also be formulated in a different way, which connects to another aspect of archival temporality. Art historian Michael Baxandall famously brought up the question of influence in his 1985 book *Patterns of Intention: On the Historical Explanation of Pictures*, arguing that the term is no less than a 'curse of art criticism', in large part because it reverses the active/passive relation between the influencer and the influenced. Baxandall pointed out that '[i]f one says that X influenced Y it does seem that one is saying that X did something to Y rather than that Y did something to X. But in the consideration of good pictures and painters the second is always the more lively reality'.[95] Pamela M. Lee discussed something similar, but through the lens of technology, when she described the notion of a 'circular causality' whereby A cannot do things to B without being affected itself, and this, when applied to history, means that things should not be understood according to chronological development but belatedness.[96] As an illustration of this Lee referred to George Kubler's discussion of the temporal switchback recursions whereby our historical knowledge of Rodin forever changes our reading of Michelangelo, a process that Lee likened to technological notions of feedback loops and recursive, multidirectional and nonlinear causality.[97]

James Meyer has argued that the terminology of influence is 'notoriously imprecise' because it implies a unidirectional effect, which he considers to be problematic even when the direction is reversed, as in Baxandall's formulation.[98] Interesting in the context of this chapter is also how Meyer brings up historian Reinhart Koselleck's notion of 'future past' in order to explain the temporality of recent interest in the 1960s. Meyer describes Koselleck's notion of future past as 'the mnemonic reverberation of one period in another', and the idea that '[e]ach era has a temporal rhythm, a velocity, and thus a "horizon of expectation" – the anticipation of its return at a future date'.[99] Meyer applies these concepts to the 'returns' to the long 1960s, and describes these as 'a stepchild of postmodernism's appropriation … an operation that locates agency in the artist who pilfers the source'.[100]

In her book *Quoting Caravaggio: Contemporary Art, Preposterous History*, Mieke Bal considered Caravaggio in light of contemporary art practices, and argued that 'the work performed by later images obliterates the older images as they were before that intervention and creates new versions of old images instead'.[101] What Bal called 'preposterous art history' is thus a kind of reversal 'which puts what came chronologically first ("pre-") as an aftereffect behind ("post") its later recycling'.[102]

Similar issues have also been brought up from within the field of archival science. Eric Ketelaar used the phrase 'semantic genealogy' to describe how

every activation changes the significance of earlier activations of a record in the archive.[103] Ketelaar's notion of the semantic genealogy of the archive is an overt application of Freud's 'retrospective causality', which is also brought up in a number of texts about archive art and related categories.[104] Ketelaar connects his notion of semantic genealogy to a particular view of the archive as 'membranic', which he contrasts with another, more traditional archive: '[t]he semantic genealogy of the membranic archive will be seen by some as a threat to traditional values [such] as authenticity, originality, and uniqueness'.[105] In other words, a contrast is set up here between a referential, structural archive – what Ketelaar terms 'membranic' – and notions of authenticity and originality. In the context of archival art, this contrast is analogous to the contrast between traditional artistic practices (authentic, original) and those emerging in the 1960s (appropriation, recycling of references). Once appropriation and influence are seen as active processes of signification, temporality must be considered in new terms as well.

Analysing the three aspects – appropriation, technology, influence/ interpretation – of these artistic returns reveals a number of specific elements that contribute to the meaning and function of the archive in the art context at the end of the 1990s and the early decades of the 2000s. On the one hand, the shift occurring in the 1960s can be considered contemporary art's structural archive (i.e. the ground on which it is built, the structure into which it fits), but the earlier practices are also treated as historical source material, and they are thus both fetishised and considered to be open to reinterpretation. It is only with hindsight that Ruscha's photobooks and other works from that era can be analysed in such archival terms, since it was well after the 1960s that the archive became generally available as a frame of reference. However, what I have tried to show in this book is that the archive is also already there as the origin or ground – or, to use archival terminology, as *arkhē* (origin/law) or *arkheion* (place/guardian) – of that shift in understanding of the art object that Ruscha's photobooks represent. The terminology of the archive and the theoretical framework it is associated with thus enables and grounds artworks made in the period starting in the mid-1990s, but can also be brought to bear on artworks from the 1960s and 1970s. The practice of returning to works from that era is therefore a reference both to the concrete material archive and the metaphoric notion of the archive as immaterial structure – the 1960s as an 'international style'. Related to this is the idea that a return to the 1960s by various artists need not be understood primarily as a reference to an art historical *past*; instead, I posit that *this particular* past (the symbolic moment of the long 1960s) is highlighted as an archival structure rooted in a referential and extended present.

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Archive art is for the most part overtly referring to history, historical figures, the past or memory in some form; in that sense it is clearly 'about' history and temporality. This chapter has examined *in what ways* these artworks can be said to be about history, what temporal structures are evoked in these historical investigations and in what ways these are connected to surrounding discourses, phenomena and tendencies. Archive art has been shown to be about history in the sense of a roundabout or turn away from history, precisely because it is operating with a sense of history that is by necessity bypassed. The archive art phenomenon has been shown to hide, or smooth over, a lack of engagement with history in a fundamental sense, and the focus on critical and theoretical engagement with history via the notion of the archive is firmly lodged in contemporary 'presentism', as well as what I, in a previous chapter, discussed as a critical paradigm. History is, in these artworks, engaged with and fetishised, at the same time that it is presented as ripe for unmasking and deconstructing.

Notes

1   In her book about the 'temporal turn' in contemporary art Christine Ross makes a distinction between 'time' and 'temporality', where the former denotes historical, measurable time, and the latter phenomenal, lived time. C. Ross, *The Past is the Present: It's the Future Too. The Temporal Turn in Contemporary Art* (New York: Continuum, 2014), p. 21. Similarly, in this chapter I use 'time' to refer to measurable time and 'temporality' to mean ideas and perceptions of time.

2   F. Hartog, *Regimes of Historicity: Presentism and Experiences of Time*, trans. S. Brown (New York: Columbia University Press, 2015), pp. xiv–xv. The book was published in French in 2003.

3   Hartog, *Regimes of Historicity*, pp. xviii, xv, 8. See also p. 208, n. 28 for a list of other publications where this phenomenon is outlined; and pp. 15ff. for an explanation of what he means by 'regime of historicity'.

4   Belting, *Art History after Modernism*, p. 174.

5   Belting, *Art History after Modernism*, pp. 174, 182.

6   D. Karlholm, 'On the Historical Representation of Contemporary Art', in H. Ruin and A. Ers (eds), *Rethinking Time: Essays on History, Memory, and Representation* (Huddinge: Södertörns högskola, 2011), p. 24.

7   R. Meyer, *What Was Contemporary Art?* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2013), p. 281. Meyer's phrase is cited in D. Joselit, 'On Aggregators', *October*, 146 (2013), p. 4.

8   T. Smith, 'The State of Art History: Contemporary Art', *The Art Bulletin*, 92:4 (2010), pp. 379, 374.

9   C. S. Wood, *A History of Art History* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2019), pp. 389, 388.

10 Wood, *A History of Art History*, p. 404. Writing from a different perspective, Barrett Watten defines 'presentism' as 'an interpretive practice in which object and interpreter are not historically framed', whereas 'periodization', in contrast, 'provides historical framing for an interpretive practice'. B. Watten, 'Presentism and Periodization in Language Writing, Conceptual Art, and Conceptual Writing', *Journal of Narrative Theory*, 41:1 (2011), p. 125.

11 Ross, *The Past is the Present: It's the Future Too*, p. 14.

12 Ross, *The Past is the Present: It's the Future Too*, p. 13. Italics in the original.

13 Here it is also relevant to mention film and media scholar Mary Ann Doane's *The Emergence of Cinematic Time: Modernity, Contingency, the Archive*, in which she proposes that modernism's fascination with the present can be understood by way of its paradoxical view of time. In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries time was becoming externalised, measurable, calculable and rationalised in industrialised capitalist societies, but at the same time, Doane argues, time was increasingly seen in terms of atomisation, rupture and discontinuity. Doane's study shows how different discourses – cinema, but also photography, thermodynamics, physiology, statistics, psychoanalysis and different philosophies of time – manifest a desire for instantaneity paired with 'archival' aspirations. Although she is focused on the turn of the twentieth century and cinema, she suggests that digital and televisual imaging are similarly characterised by this doubled temporal interest. M. A. Doane, *The Emergence of Cinematic Time: Modernity, Contingency, the Archive* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2002).

14 Danto, 'Introduction', p. 10.

15 Belting, *Art History after Modernism*, p. 174. Kirk Varnedoe has rightly pointed out that not all paradigms of history (prior to 1960) involved progress, and that the particular paradigm of innovation and novelty is in fact a 'particular aspect of a particular view of the course of modern art'. K. Varnedoe, 'Speeding up Cultural Circulation', in A. W. Balkema and H. Slager (eds), *The Archive of Development* (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 1998), p. 149.

16 Danto, 'The Art World Revisited', p. 38.

17 Danto, 'The Art World Revisited', p. 40.

18 Danto, 'The Art World Revisited', p. 42.

19 Belting, *Art History after Modernism*, p. 183.

20 Manoff, 'Archive and Database as Metaphor', p. 389.

21 S. Radstone, 'Working with Memory: an Introduction', in S. Radstone (ed.), *Memory and Methodology* (Oxford: Berg, 2000), p. 5.

22 Nora, 'Between Memory and History', p. 13.

23 Nora, 'Between Memory and History', p. 12.

24 Nora, 'Between Memory and History', pp. 16–17.

25 Nora, 'Between Memory and History', p. 17.

26 Wood claimed that '[t]oday more and more students of art history, at every level, beginning and advanced, focus on modern and contemporary art … Students are often unwilling to peer back in time any farther than 1960 or 1970 or 2000' (Wood, *A History of Art History*, p. 378). See also Schneemann, 'Contemporary Art and the Concept of Art History', pp. 60–1. Terry Smith

similarly wrote that '[a] clear majority of applicants to graduate schools of art history intend to make contemporary art their major research field and their teaching or professional specialization' (Smith, 'The State of Art History', p. 366). Michael Ann Holly and Keith Moxey discussed these issues in a conversation at the University of Sydney, 20 March 2012, 'Old Art New Ideas: A Conversation with Keith Moxey and Michael Holly', http://sydney.edu.au/ podcasts/2012/Old_Art_New_Ideas_A_conversation_with_Keith_Moxey_ and_Michael_Holly.mp3 [accessed 28 December 2017]. Around 13 minutes into the recording Keith Moxey suggests that the discipline of art history is now broken in two – there is contemporary art, and there is everything else, and this everything else is becoming smaller and smaller. In his book about time and visual art, Moxey brought up this issue again: '[t]he number of doctoral dissertations being written on contemporary art in the United States currently exceeds the number of those being undertaken in all other fields combined', and he went on to ask: 'Does our awareness of the presentism of historical writing undermine our commitment to understanding the deep past?' K. Moxey, *Visual Time: The Image in History* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2013), pp. 37, 38.

27 Wood, *A History of Art History*, p. 378.

28 Felski, *The Limits of Critique*, p. 123. This is what Wood was alluding to when he accused some historians and critics of having concluded that 'art in the past was mostly apologizing for repressive authority' (Wood, *A History of Art History*, p. 406).

29 Although the critique of meta-narratives is an integral part of the humanities in general, and art history and art writing specifically, some also point out what is lost with the more fragmented perspective that is seen to have taken their place. In 2009 Dieter Roelstraete claimed that the last five years 'has given us both an awful lot of nostalgia-bound "historicist art" … as well as a complete loss of perspective from which to view the artworld as a historical whole that actively invites and *needs* our thinking the bigger picture'. What Roelstraete is lamenting here is precisely the loss of meta-narratives. Roelstraete, 'After the Historiographic Turn'. Italics in the original.

30 'Since the early 1990s, it has become common practice in the humanities to refer to the "archival turn" […] this expression is generally taken to indicate a shift in focus from "archive-as-source" to "archive-as-subject"' (Hutchinson and Weller, 'Guest Editor's Introduction: Archive Time', p. 133). Hutchinson and Weller are referencing Stoler, *Along the Archival Grain*, p. 44. See also Simon, 'Introduction: Following the Archival Turn'; E. Røssaak, 'The Archive in Motion: An Introduction', in Røssaak (ed.), *The Archive in Motion*, p. 14; Tagg, 'The Archiving Machine', p. 34; Rosengarten, *Between Memory and Document*; Fischer and Götselius, 'Arkivens Ordning', p. 78; S. Babaie, 'The Global in the Local: Implicating Iran in Art and History', in Downey (ed.), *Dissonant Archive*, pp. 251–60; Hölling, 'The Archival Turn'. In close proximity to the archival turn is 'the documentary turn'; see M. Nash, 'Experiments with Truth: The Documentary Turn', in *Experiments with Truth* (Philadelphia, PA: FWM, The Fabric Workshop and Museum, 2004), pp. 15–21. Looking

outside the field of art writing, there are a whole range of different 'turns', such as *The Linguistic Turn* associated with Richard Rorty (1967); 'the pictorial turn' launched by W. J. T. Mitchell (1995)*;* 'the cultural turn' by Fredric Jameson (1998); *The Complexity Turn* by John Urry (2005); *The Affective Turn* discussed by many, for instance in a book edited by P. T. Clough and Jean Halley (2007). Patrick Joyce and Tony Bennett note that after the major turn of the cultural, there has been a series of what might be called secondary turns. They list 'empirical', 'affective', 'descriptive' and implicitly the 'material' turn, which is the focus of their own book. If viewed in that way, the archival turn could also be considered such a secondary turn. P. Joyce and T. Bennett, 'Material Powers: Introduction', in T. Bennett and P. Joyce (eds), *Material Powers: Cultural Studies, History and the Material Turn* (London: Routledge, 2010), p. 4.

31 In this study I have frequently described archive art as a 'category' of contemporary art because even though the vocabulary of 'turns' points to an instability and movement of interests, when art writers describe these tendencies among artists the looseness of the notion of the turn is frequently solidified into something more like a category.

32 I. Rogoff, 'Turning', *e-flux journal*, 00 (2008), unpaginated, www.e-flux.com/journal/00/68470/turning/ [accessed 7 December 2018]. Italics in the original.

33 This is connected to what James Meyer brings up in his discussion of 'the art of return', the grammatical distinction between the *return of* and *return to* the Sixties. The former, Meyer argues, is part of a 'Sixties effect' and indicates how one era becomes resonant in another, whereas the latter instead puts the focus on the one doing the returning, such as artists, writers etc. who examine the era or bring it to life in different ways. Meyer, *The Art of Return*, pp. 30–1.

34 D. Karlholm, 'Surveying Contemporary Art: Post-War, Postmodern, and Then What?', *Art History*, 32:4 (2009), pp. 713–33; Karlholm, 'On the Historical Representation of Contemporary Art'; Karlholm, *Kontemporalism*; D. Karlholm, 'After Contemporary Art: Actualization and Anachrony', *The Nordic Journal of Aesthetics*, 51 (2016), pp. 35–54.

35 Karlholm, 'On the Historical Representation of Contemporary Art', p. 23.

36 Smith, 'The State of Art History', p. 379.

37 Smith, 'The State of Art History', p. 374.

38 Miwon Kwon: 'To be of the present but out of date is the strange temporality of contemporary art history.' Pamela M. Lee: contemporary art history 'is premature on methodological grounds'. Mark Godfrey: the ambivalence many artists feel to the contemporary 'derives from artists' feeling that they are not at home in their own time'. Godfrey also suggested that recent tendencies in contemporary art 'manifest a fraught a-temporary sensibility, a discomfort with the present'. 'Questionnaire on "The Contemporary"', *October*, 130 (2009), pp. 14, 25, 31, 32.

39 Joselit, 'On Aggregators', p. 3.

40 For more on the different possible starting points of contemporary art, see Karlholm, 'Surveying Contemporary Art'.

41 Joselit, 'On Aggregators', p. 5.

42 The notion of the contemporary as art made now or recently is challenged by the inclusion of older artworks or objects in what can only be described as contemporary art exhibitions. Dan Karlholm introduced the notion of 'actualized art' as a way of accounting for contemporary art that is not in fact restricted to art made at a particular time. Karlholm, 'After Contemporary Art'.

43 A. C. Danto, *After the End of Art: Contemporary Art and the Pale of History* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2014), p. 10.

44 Joselit, 'On Aggregators', p. 6.

45 Joselit, 'On Aggregators', p. 9.

46 Belting, *Art History after Modernism*, p. 105.

47 B. Groys, 'Comrades of Time', *e-flux journal*, 11 (2009), unpaginated, www.e-flux.com/journal/11/61345/comrades-of-time/ [accessed 23 February 2017]; C. Bishop, *Radical Museology or, What's 'Contemporary' in Museums of Contemporary Art?*, 2nd rev. edn (London: Koenig Books, 2014); Voorhies, *Beyond Objecthood*.

48 Groys connects this to Foucault's notion of 'heterotopias', modern sites where time functions differently (Groys, 'Comrades of Time'; Foucault, 'Of Other Spaces').

49 Groys, 'Comrades of Time'.

50 Belting, *Art History after Modernism*, p. 110. See also pp. 99, 107.

51 Hal Foster described *The Artist is Present* performance as a 'ten week spectacle' and, inverting Rem Koolhaas's remark that there was not enough past to go around and therefore the museums would only increase in value, Foster suggested that '[t]oday, it seems, there's not enough present to go around: for reasons that are obvious enough in a hyper-mediated age, it is in great demand too, as is anything that feels like presence'. H. Foster, 'After the White Cube', *London Review of Books*, 37:6 (2015), www.lrb.co.uk/the-paper/v37/n06/hal-foster/after-the-white-cube [accessed 27 May 2021]

52 Groys, 'Comrades of Time'.

53 Foster, 'After the White Cube'.

54 Bishop, *Radical Museology*, p. 24.

55 Bishop, *Radical Museology*, p. 24.

56 Note that the work included in Enwezor's exhibition was not an Atlas Group work. Also, as noted, in Chapter 1, Walid Raad was one of the artists added by Foster when his essay 'An Archival Impulse' was republished in 2015. Spieker, *The Big Archive*, pp. 152–61; van Alphen, *Staging the Archive*, pp. 232ff.; Jones, *Installation Art and the Practices of Archivalism*, p. 138.

57 S. Gade, 'Performing Histories: Archiving Practices of Rimini Protokoll and The Atlas Group', in Borggreen and Gade (eds), *Performing Archives/Archives of Performance*, pp. 386–402.

58 See, particularly, texts by Chad Elias and Susan Babaie in Downey (ed.), *Dissonant Archives*.

59 Connarty and Lanyon (eds), *Ghosting*, pp. 82–3; von Bismarck, Feldmann and Obrist, *Interarchive*, pp. 380–3.

60 The description of the book comes from its back cover. The image on the front cover was *Notebook volume 38: Already Been in a Lake of Fire, plate 58* (2003). P. Osborne, *Anywhere or Not at All: Philosophy of Contemporary Art* (London: Verso, 2013). Italics in the original.

61 Lambert-Beatty, 'Make-Believe'; Godfrey, 'The Artist as Historian'; Smith, 'Introduction'; Kalb, *Charting the Contemporary*.

62 B. Schmitz, 'Not a Search for Truth', in K. Nakas and B. Schmitz (eds), *The Atlas Group (1989–2004): A Project by Walid Raad* (Cologne: Buchhandlung Walther König, 2006), p. 41. The phrasing is similar in most texts about the project, and closely mimics that on The Atlas Group website. See 'The Atlas Group', http://theatlasgroup.org/ [accessed 13 November 2017]. See also W. Raad and A. Borchardt-Hume, *Miraculous Beginnings: Walid Raad* (London: Whitechapel Gallery, 2010), p. 23.

63 According to Lambert-Beatty, Raad started working with The Atlas Group in 1999, but depending on the context of exhibiting various parts of the project, this supposed inception changes (Lambert-Beatty, 'Make-Believe, pp. 76–7). For more on this slippery date, see Kalb, *Charting the Contemporary*, pp. 164–5.

64 Schmitz, 'Not a Search for Truth', p. 42.

65 Osborne, *Anywhere or Not at All*, p. 31.

66 Schmitz, 'Not a Search for Truth', p. 42.

67 See the description of *Notebook Volume 72: Missing Lebanese wars* in Nakas and Schmitz (eds), *The Atlas Group (1989–2004)*, p. 68.

68 In archival science, 'the principle of provenance' means that the origin of an archival record is placed above all else. Established in the so-called 'Dutch Manual' of 1898 and accepted as the basic principle for the arrangement and description of archives at the international archives conference in Brussels in 1910, the principle of provenance (PP) is the de facto standard in most analogue archives, although the interpretation of what this entailed varies somewhat between different countries. For more on the principle of provenance, see K. Abukhanfusa and J. Sydbeck (eds), *The Principle of Provenance: Report from the First Stockholm Conference on Archival Theory and the Principle of Provenance 2–3 September 1993* ([Stockholm]: Swedish National Archives, 1994).

69 The Atlas Group project contains a number of documents, with different provenance; for an overview of these, see the fold-out chart in the beginning of Nakas and Schmitz (eds), *The Atlas Group (1989–2004)*.

70 Lambert-Beatty, 'Make-Believe', pp. 76–7; K. Nakas, 'Double Miss. On the Use of Photography in The Atlas Group Archive', in Nakas and Schmitz (eds), *The Atlas Group (1989–2004)*, p. 49. Although this is clear, the work is credited 'The Atlas group in collaboration with Walid Raad'.

71 A similar kind of disjointed temporality but in a very different context is discussed by Elizabeth Freeman in her book *Time Binds: Queer Temporalities, Queer Histories*. There she argues that queer identity can be understood in terms of asynchrony and that 'drag', rather than the usual interpretation as an

expression of an excess of gender signifiers ('man' or 'woman'), can be considered to be an excess of 'history'. E. Freeman, *Time Binds: Queer Temporalities, Queer Histories* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2010), pp. 19, 62.

72 'Introduction Walid Raad', *Moderna Museet i Stockholm*, www.moder namuseet.se/stockholm/en/exhibitions/walid-raad/introduction-walid-raad/ [accessed 11 September 2020].

73 W. Raad, *Scratching on Things I Could Disavow: Some Essays from The Atlas Group Project* (Cologne: Walther König, 2007), p. 86. Note here the different date given for Dr Fakhouri's death.

74 The phrase 'counter-archival work' is used in J. Roberts, 'Photography after the Photograph: Event, Archive, and the Non-Symbolic', *Oxford Art Journal*, 32:2 (2009), p. 298, n. 33. For another use of the same phrase, see P. Roush, 'Download Fever: Photography, Subcultures and Online-Offline Counter-Archival Strategies', *Photographies*, 2:2 (2009), pp. 143–67. The phrase 'playing against our archival expectations' is found in Wallen, 'The Lure of the Archive', p. 289.

75 Cited by Vered Maimon, 'The Third Citizen', p. 97, from S. Rogers, 'Forgetting History, Performing Memory: Walid Ra'ad's The Atlas Project', *Parachute*, 108 (October–December 2002), p. 77.

76 F. Liew, 'Essay: Let's be honest, the weather helped | Moderna Museet i Stockholm', *Moderna Museet i Stockholm*, 2020, www.modernamuseet. se/stockholm/en/exhibitions/walid-raad/essay-walid-raad-fredrik-liew/ [accessed 28 January 2021].

77 Lambert-Beatty, 'Make-Believe', p. 81.

78 'Archiving Eden: Dornith Doherty at TEDxMonterey', 2013, www.youtube.com/ watch?v=M79V10prO90 [accessed 15 January 2021].

79 'Archiving Eden: Dornith Doherty', around 8.30 into the recording.

80 'Artists Explore the Largest Global Seed Vault. Press Release – The DOX Centre for Contemporary Art, Prague', 2017; 'Archiving Eden: The Vaults', www.dornithdoherty.com/archiving-eden-the-vaults [accessed 19 August 2020]. 'The Cold Coast Archive: Future Artifacts from the Svalbard Global Seed Vault', *Center for PostNatural History*, https://postnatural.org [accessed 19 August 2020].

81 For more on the Arctic as an archive, see S. K. Frank and K. A. Jakobsen (eds), *Arctic Archives: Ice, Memory and Entropy* (Bielefeld: Transcript, 2019).

82 Derrida, 'Archive Fever', p. 27.

83 'Archive Fever (A seminar by Jacques Derrida)', pp. 40, 42.

84 For a project that directly references the archive as well as a time when humans have become extinct, see Hiroshi Sugimoto's *Aujourd'hui, le monde est mort [Lost Human Genetic Archive]*, shown at the Palais de Tokyo in Paris in 2014.

85 Belting, *Art History after Modernism*, p. 181.

86 Baron, *The Archive Effect*, p. 9.

87 Lee, *Chronophobia*, pp. xii, xi.

88 M. Fried, 'Art and Objecthood', *Artforum*, 5:10 (1967), pp. 12–23. Discussed in Lee, *Chronophobia*, p. 38. See also Voorhies, *Beyond Objecthood*, pp. 12–13.

89 Lee, *Chronophobia*, p. 39. Italics in the original.

90 Lee, *Chronophobia*, p. 67. For Lee's discussion of recursion, see p. 61.

91 H. Steyerl, 'In Defense of the Poor Image', *e-flux journal*, 10 (2009), unpaginated, www.e-flux.com/journal/10/61362/in-defense-of-the-poor-image/ [accessed 7 July 2017].

92 Meyer, *The Art of Return*, p. 7.

93 Meyer, *The Art of Return*, p. 53. Italics in the original.

94 Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge*, p. 126.

95 M. Baxandall, *Patterns of Intention: On the Historical Explanation of Pictures* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1986), pp. 58–9.

96 The notion of a 'circular causality' is taken from S. J. Himes, *Constructing a Social Science*, p. 23, cited in Lee, *Chronophobia*, p. 245.

97 Lee, *Chronophobia*, p. 245.

98 Meyer, *The Art of Return*, pp. 222, 223.

99 Meyer refers to the 'Author's preface' in Koselleck (Meyer, *The Art of Return*, pp. 31–2). In the Introduction to Koselleck's *Futures Past*, translator Keith Tribe describes the linkages Koselleck makes 'between a chronological past, a lived present that was once an anticipated future, and expectations of the future – such that any given present is at the same time a "former future"'; and Tribe points out the way this line of thought is indebted to Heidegger's discussion of the temporality of the hermeneutic circle. K. Tribe, 'Translator's Introduction', in Koselleck, *Futures Past*, pp. x–xi.

100 Meyer, *The Art of Return*, pp. 226–7.

101 M. Bal, *Quoting Caravaggio: Contemporary Art, Preposterous History* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999), p. 1.

102 Bal specified that preposterous history is neither engaged in collapsing the past and the present – this would be an instance of 'ill-conceived presentism' – nor is it about objectifying the past, which would be guilty of a 'problematic positivist historicism'. Instead it is a question of demonstrating a possible way of dealing with 'the past today'. Bal, *Quoting Caravaggio*, pp. 6–7.

103 Ketelaar, 'Tacit Narratives', p. 138.

104 Hal Foster brings up the notion of retrospective causality or deferred action (*Nachträglichkeit*) in his essay on the neo-avant-garde: '*historical and neo-avant-gardes are constituted* in a similar way, *as a continual process of protension and retension, a complex relay of anticipated futures and reconstructed pasts – in short, in a deferred action that throws over any simple scheme of before and after, cause and effect, origin and repetition.*' Foster, 'Who's Afraid of the Neo-Avant Garde?', p. 29. Italics in the original. See also the discussion about The Atlas Group above.

105 Ketelaar, 'Tacit Narratives', p. 139.

Postscript

I opened this book by noting that the archive has been called 'a must-have accessory of the moment' and the 'ultimate horizon of experience', and that the ubiquitous use of the term has been both hailed and critiqued.[1] Many consider the archive to be a productive and compelling notion for understanding the cultural conditions of the current moment, while many others view the constant use of archival terminology as an instance of 'reflex archivism'.[2] The archive clearly appears to be travelling – or 'ricocheting' – between different disciplines and within the art discourse itself.[3] However, acknowledging that the archive is a much-used, trendy and, at times, imprecisely referenced notion does not necessarily imply that it is not also indicative of a significant and complex set of issues. In this book I have tried to uncover some of these larger issues by considering the specific functions the notion of the archive has in the field of contemporary art. If the archive is indeed 'everywhere' in the first decades of the twenty-first century, it is important to acknowledge that it has not always been so; the 'important insights' that the notion is said to provide are in fact insights relevant to a particular set of questions and interests, posed in a particular context, and they are grounded in a particular set of theoretical concerns.[4]

Throughout this book I have argued that the archive became such a ubiquitous concept in the artworld because it functions as a marker of a theoretical complex of ideas tied to tropes of history, knowledge production, technology, aesthetics and methodological processes, and that it becomes enmeshed with several of the most fundamental structural and temporal aspects of contemporary art at the turn of the twenty-first century. The term 'archive' is filled with different content depending on who is writing and from what position. In that sense it is more accurate to speak of several different notions of the archive at work in this period. In her 2009 book on colonial archives and the epistemological issues these raise, Ann Laura Stoler suggested that it was possible to

> argue that 'the archive' for historians and 'the Archive' for cultural theorists have been wholly different analytic objects: for the former, a body of documents and the institutions that house them, for the latter, a metaphoric

invocation for any corpus of selective collections and the longings that the acquisitive quests of the primary, originary and untouched entail.[5]

To these two, we can add that 'the archive' for the artist, art historian and art critic represents yet other understandings, both different from and related to those of other disciplines. Therefore, although interest in the archive has been prevalent in different disciplines and in different fields, it is important to bear in mind that it is not necessarily exactly the same interest everywhere and at every instant.

In the course of this book, the notion of the archive has been shown to be remarkably pliable and adaptable as it moves across and between different academic and cultural contexts: it has been seen to be capable of absorbing other phenomena, categories and concepts, and expanding or contracting its meaning. Mieke Bal specifically highlighted the quality of 'elasticity' when she described her 'travelling concepts', and she defined how such concepts exhibit 'both an unbreakable stability and a near-unlimited extendibility'.[6] Although the archive is pliable and used in ways that at times might appear to be little more than a repackaging of already established concepts or genres, this book has shown that it signals – and is symptomatic of – conditions and elements of the cultural and temporal context in which it is found. In fact, the very notions of repackaging, recycling and return are themselves key components of what the archive comes to mean in the field of contemporary art at the turn of the twenty-first century. Like any travelling concept or notion, the archive has many elements that remain as it moves into and across different disciplines. However, although the proliferating references to archives within an art context are related to a wider cross-disciplinary theorising of archives, I have argued that the ubiquity of the archive in art discourse must be connected to conditions very specific to contemporary art. One of this book's key propositions is that the notion of the archive comes to be intertwined with the structural underpinning of the post-war artworld. The notion of the archive formulated by Michel Foucault as 'the law of what can be said' could be seamlessly attached to the institutional theory of art, which had replaced the previous grounding of artworks in a teleological historical lineage with a new grounding in a network of evaluative references within art institutions. This meshing between the (poststructuralist) notion of the archive and the understanding of how art is defined as art is an indication that although influenced by the broader archival turn in the humanities, the archive *means* and *does* something quite different in the field of art than it does when it circulates in, say, literature or philosophy. This also means that the broad focus of this book – the archive art phenomenon – is a useful raster through which to understand not just archive art, but post-war art in general, particularly its relationship to art history.

The first part of this book centred around texts: in Chapter 1, those texts were made up of art writing – curatorial, critical and art historical texts – that suggested an archival interest among artists; and in Chapter 2, writing by philosophers, authors of fiction, historians and others who discuss, analyse and theorise the archive more broadly. The final chapter in Part I considered writing and discussions about the changing understanding of art that occurred in the middle of the twenty-first century. In a sense, Part I set out to answer the *who*, *when*, *what* of the archive art phenomenon. The *why* was considered in terms of the fundamental ontology of the artwork: what is art, what is the notion of the archive, and how can they be understood in light of one another?

The second part of the book sought to pry open some of the broader themes and contexts of the archive art phenomenon that had been hinted at in the first part. These five thematic chapters dedicated to materiality, research, critique, curating and temporality took on a number of different historical, social, political, philosophical and technological conditions that feed into and nourish the archive art phenomenon. The prismatic approach of Part II stressed the accretive aspect of the meaning and function of the archive in the field of contemporary art writing and practice, and showed how similar elements were picked up in different artworks and by different writers. Chapter 4 considered ideas around the material trace and the specific indexical associations of analogue media. Chapter 5 unpacked the relationship between research and art and different views of knowledge that are implied in different references to such artistic forms of research. Chapter 6 analysed the broad interest in carrying out critique of different kinds of institutions for their role in creating a skewed, exclusionary or oppressive archival structures, both in the academy and in the field of art. In Chapter 7, the theory and practice of curating was discussed, highlighting that its associative and relational aspects can be considered in light of specific material archives as well as the archive as a concept. Finally, Chapter 8 discussed how the archive can be tied to specific temporal structures of the post-war artworld as well as the historical conditions at the turn of the millennium more broadly. Taken together, these points of intersection – between different works of art, different texts, different concerns and conditions – define the archive art phenomenon.

Let me end with a recent artwork that illustrates both the pliability and possible waning of the notion of the archive in the field of contemporary art. Katie Paterson's *Future Library* (2014–2114) is a public artwork in Oslo that deals directly with the materiality of documents and a future temporal address. Each year for a hundred years, an author will be commissioned to write a text that will remain unread until the project is completed in 2114.[7] At that point the one thousand trees that Paterson planted in the Nordmarka forest just outside Oslo will have grown big enough to be made into paper, and the commissioned texts will make up an anthology to be printed on that paper; a book

that will have taken a hundred years to complete (Plate 21). The project also includes a specially designed contemplation room in the top floor of the Deichman Library in Oslo, lined with wood panels from the trees that were previously standing at the Nordmarka forest. Each year, a new manuscript is placed in the contemplation room, visible – though neither readable nor touchable – through a glass panel (Plate 22).

Since the written manuscripts will be unread and unhandled until a century has passed, it is likely that none of the people who are currently working with the project – the artist, writers, officials working for the city of Oslo, staff at the library, people at the press that has agreed to print the work – will be around to see its completion. In that sense the project can be seen as a materialisation of the idea of the archive as a place – literally and metaphorically – that houses dormant or frozen traces that will be awakened or thawed out in the future. In another sense, the material of *Future Library* is, of course, not frozen at all; it is constantly changing in different ways; the trees that grow in the forest make up the conditions of possibility for the project; without trees there will be no readable anthology at the end. But the content of this archive, the texts, are only there as a potentiality or a promise, a contract of trust at the project launch, and in that sense the project challenges the idea of a stable and fixed artwork. With each new addition the meaning and identity of the work changes. The authors will have to assume that whatever they have to say

Katie Paterson, *Future Library*, 2014–2114   **9.1**

will be relevant and interesting to people a hundred years from now, but they also know that what they write will be read in a very different world, and that therefore the interpretations and associations that their work will evoke are out of their control. *Future Library* is anchored in the archival future address described by Derrida and others: it is only in the future that we will know what the work, and the texts that are part of it, will have meant.

For the project to work, a structure of guardianship is necessary, and a key part of the artwork is therefore the Future Library Trust, which not only selects the authors but is also tasked with protecting the artwork and ensuring its continued existence. This too is a structure that embodies an act of faith that what has been agreed upon will be honoured by those who come after. This type of trust in the future permeates the *Future Library*: information about the project on its website, interviews with the artist and the commissioned authors stress how participation necessitates a faith and a trust that the planet will indeed be habitable for humans in a hundred years, but also that the agreed-upon terms and conditions of the project will be honoured by all participants, now and for a century to come.

Future Library clearly evokes various archival themes and processes, and the terminology of the archive appears in some descriptions and essays about the work, but it is largely absent from the project website and interviews with the artist. This might be a sign of a waning of the usefulness of the term in the second decade of the twenty-first century, and that perhaps other terms and metaphors will come to take its place. The increasing urgency of ecological concerns about the future has come into full force since the initiation of the archive art phenomenon, and although the notion of the archive may be flexible enough to house these – as seen, for example, in the different works referencing seed vaults discussed in Chapter 8 – the terminology of the archive also comes pre-loaded with links to a period when ecological questions were not at the forefront in the same way. The archive art phenomenon as highly self-reflexive may also play a part in making it less useful to describe and analyse an artwork such as *Future Library*. Although this project is clearly concept-based, it evokes a candid and unabashed optimism that can be seen to be a turn away from the distanced sense of 'history' as appropriation that characterises much archive art. Since the archive is so closely tied to critique, and critique is anchored in what Rita Felski calls a 'professional pessimism', a work such as *Future Library* perhaps does not lend itself to archival terminology as seamlessly as one might think.[8] Instead *Future Library* functions as a direct invitation to think about the materiality of the future and the people who will live there, their environmental conditions and intellectual lives, and it is arguably an overt argument against both presentism and pessimism.

Whether the archive will persist as a popular term is of course anyone's guess at this point. It may prove to be pliable enough to bring to bear on

artworks that deal with the pressing concerns of the 2020s such as ecological systems and climate change, the use and misuse of online surveillance and big-data storage, evocations of post-truth and alternative facts, the persistence of racial inequality, and the damage caused by global pandemics. New metaphors that might spring up to take over from the archive are, if not endless, at this stage extremely difficult to guess. In the introduction I stated that this book intended neither to propose a clear definition of archive art, nor predict whether the terminology is here to stay. I do not want to renege on either of those promises here. The full extent of the archive art phenomenon will only be clear in times to come.

Notes

1 Tagg, 'The Archiving Machine', p. 25; Comay, 'Introduction', p. 12.
2 Mannes-Abbott, 'This is Tomorrow', p. 109.
3 Bal, *Travelling Concepts in the Humanities*; Mannes-Abbott, 'This is Tomorrow', p. 118. Mannes-Abbot writes that 'the archival impulse often seems to have spread like a virus of referential ricochets'.
4 Breakell, 'Perspectives'; Eliassen, 'The Archives of Michel Foucault', p. 29. See the epigraphs in the Introduction, where I quote these more extensively.
5 Stoler, *Along the Archival Grain*, p. 45.
6 A few pages earlier she writes that in her own thinking, concepts are understood 'not so much as firmly established equivocal terms but as dynamic in themselves' (Bal, *Travelling Concepts in the Humanities*, pp. 14, 11).
7 At the time of writing, the commissioned authors are Margaret Atwood (2014), David Mitchell (2015), Sjón (2016), Elif Shafak (2017), Han Kang (2018) and Karl Ove Knausgård (2019).
8 Felski, *The Limits of Critique*, p. 128.

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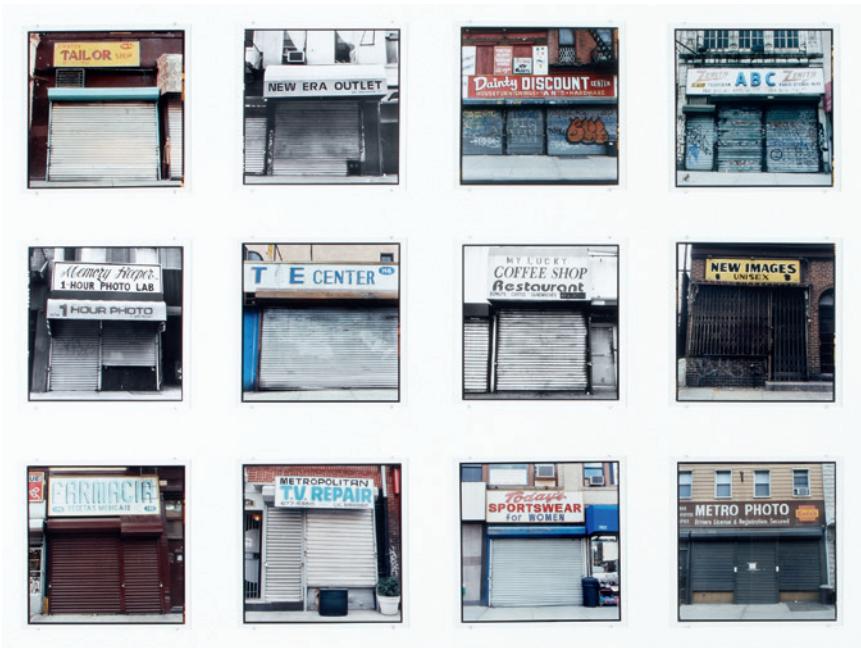
2   Zoe Leonard, *Analogue*, 1998–2009 (detail)

3   Zoe Leonard, *Analogue*, 1998–2009 (detail)

4   Samson Kambalu, *Sanguinetti Theses*, 2015 (detail)

5   Tacita Dean, *Teignmouth Electron, Cayman Brac (with track)*, 1999


6   Joachim Koester, *Morning of the Magicians*, 2005 (detail)

7   Stefanos Tsivopoulos, *The Precarious Archive*, 2016

8   Roni Horn, *Still Water (The River Thames, for Example)*, 1999 (detail)

the complexity, the threat, the attraction, part of its darkness.

water is tremulous and tender:

on the water. They cluster in by the river's movement, in for-

it isn't really visible. You feel it, breath out of you not being able just say it. But that's black.

11 Imagine combining black with water: two equals. One unchangeable, the other wholly corruptible.

12 Going into water is going into yourself. Water is a mirror. But even in black water there's a reflection, though a degraded one. You don't have to witness yourself in black water.

13 And what about juvenile water—immature water, young water? Water that's never seen the light of day. Juvenile water emerging from within the earth, arriving at the surface. All I can think to say is, "Hello."

14 Your reflection uncouples in this water. It drifts away from you. As you stand there on the bank or bridge, helpless, watching your reflection float downstream and disappear, you may wonder what forces black water gathers. But instinctively you already know they must be closer to witchcraft than geometry. [15]

15 "Best witchcraft is geometry." [16]

16 See poem No. 1158 by Emily Dickinson, 1870.

17 There was an article in the newspaper some time ago about a young man jumping off a bridge. He strapped his bicycle, a black Phantom, to his chest and jumped in. (It took six months to identify the body.) [18]

18 Isn't that what you'd expect? Isr to lose your identity? The Thames tity, doesn't it?

19 The river is a drain.

20 In winter the darkness in the w flow seems to accelerate.

21 In winter the Thames is so drab palpable. Close your eyes and you f from the river: dank, clammy, close.

9   Roni Horn, *Still Water (The River Thames, for Example)*, 1999 (detail)

Fred Wilson, *Mining the Museum: 'Metalwork 1793–1880'*, Maryland Historical Society, 1992

Fred Wilson, *Mining the Museum: 'Pedestals, globe, and busts'*, Maryland Historical Society, 1992
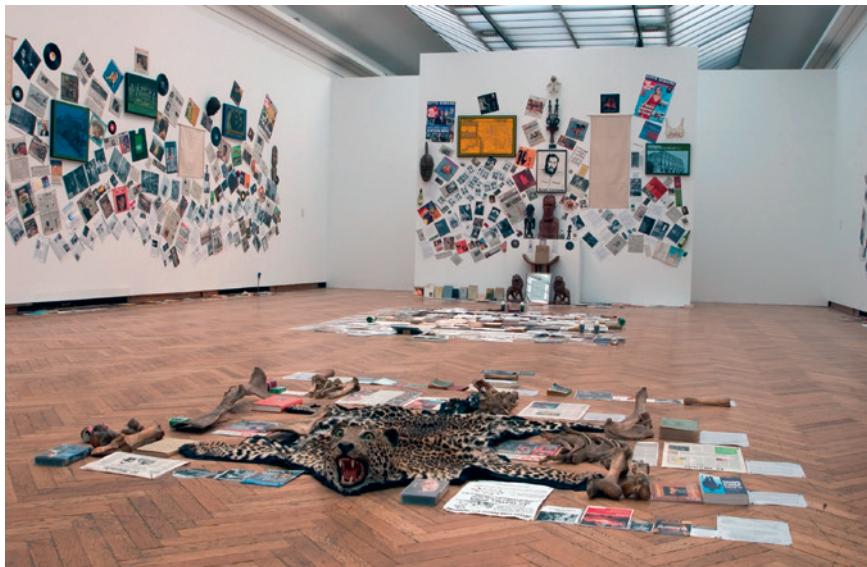
Georges Adéagbo, *La Colonisation Belge en Afrique Noire*, 2000/2005. Installation at the exhibition *La Belgique Visionnaire* at Palais de Beaux-Arts (BOZAR), Brussels, 2005. Photo: Vincent Everarts. © Georges Adéagbo / Bildupphovsrätt 2021

12
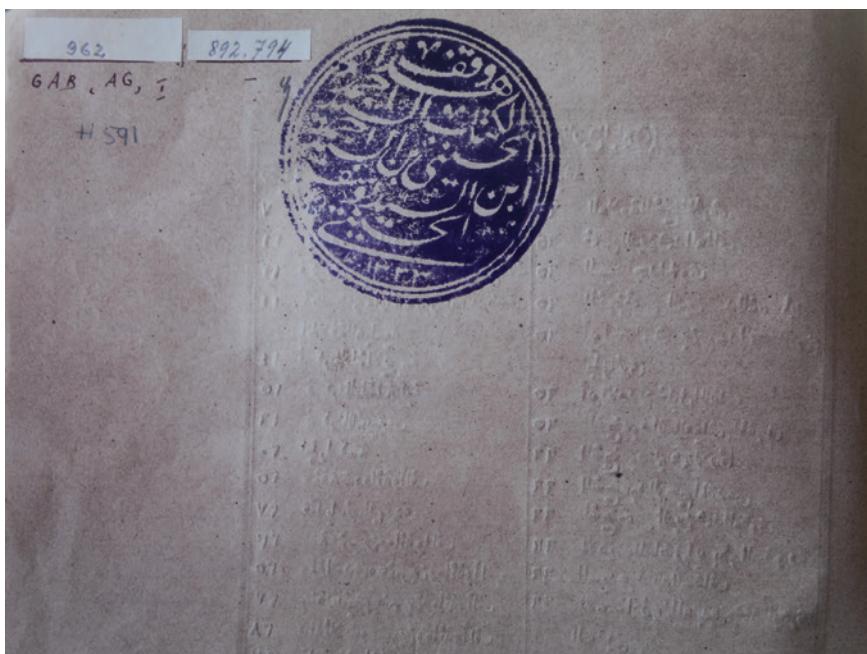
Emily Jacir, detail from *ex libris (H591)*, 2010–12. Installation, public project and book.

13
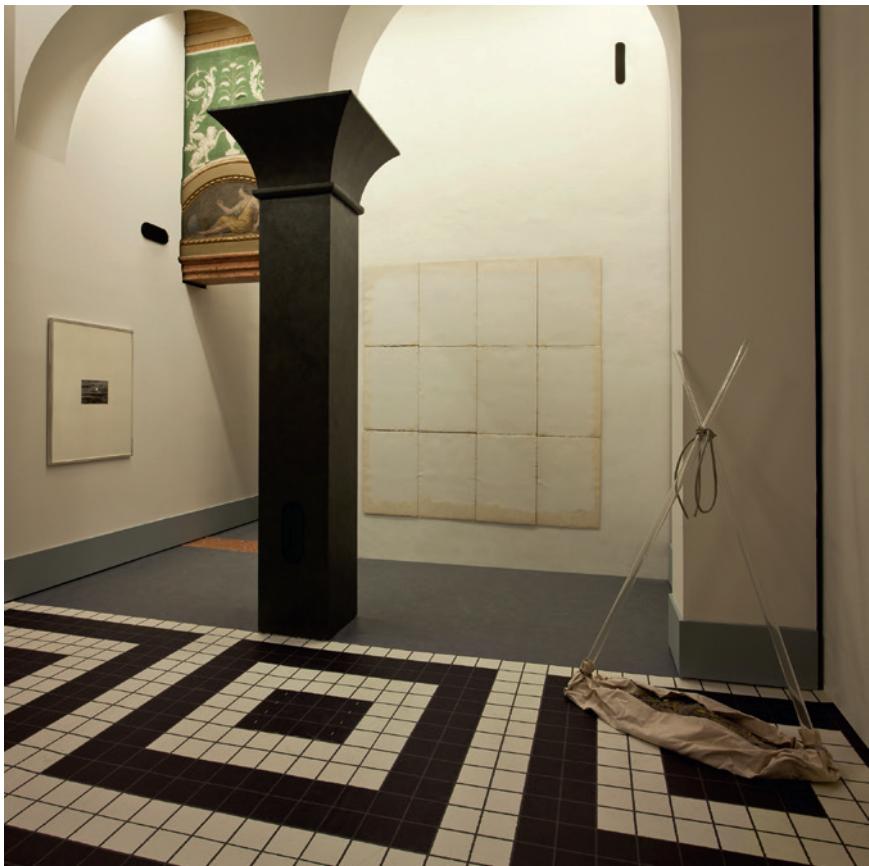
4   Installation view of *When Attitudes Become Form: Bern 1969/Venice 2013*. From left to right: Barry Flanagan, *A Hole in the Sea*, 1969 (exhibition copy 2013); Richard Artschwager, *Blp*, 1968; Robert Ryman, *Classico 3*, 1968; Gilberto Zorio, *Trasciniamo un po' di…*, 1969

15   Dieter Roth, *Flat Waste*, 1975–76/1992, installation view at Camden Art Centre, 2013
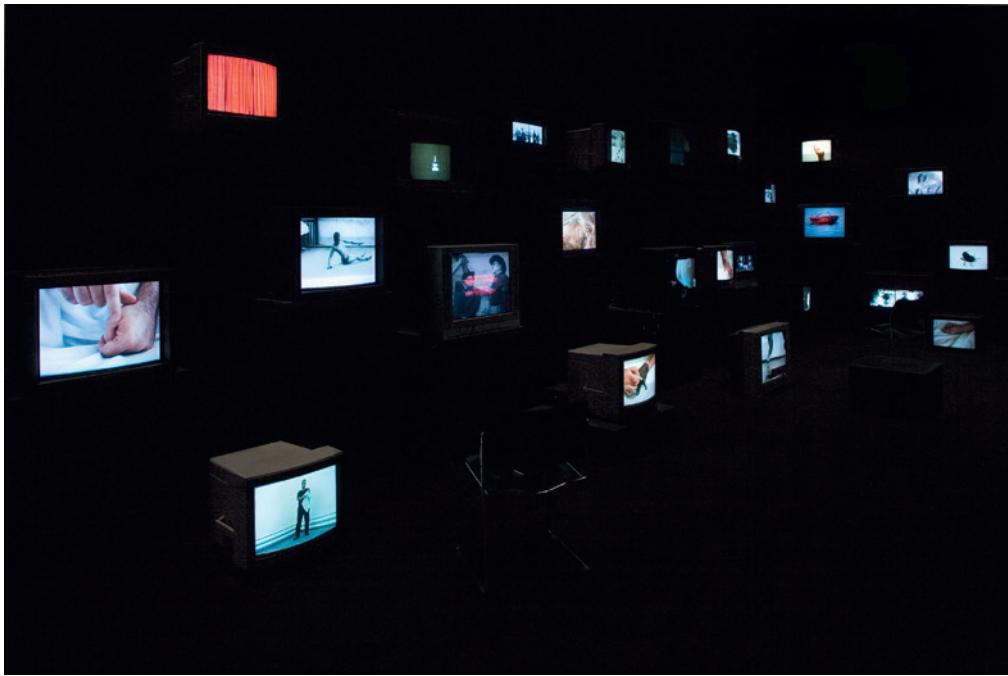
16 Douglas Gordon, *Pretty much every film and video work from about 1992 until now. To be seen on monitors, some with headphones, others run silently and all simultaneously*, 1999–ongoing. Multi-channel video installation, black and white and colour, on monitors; dimensions variable. San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, purchased through a gift of Roselyne Chroman Swig and the Accessions Committee Fund. © Douglas Gordon / Bildupphovsrätt 2021. Photo: Ian Reeves
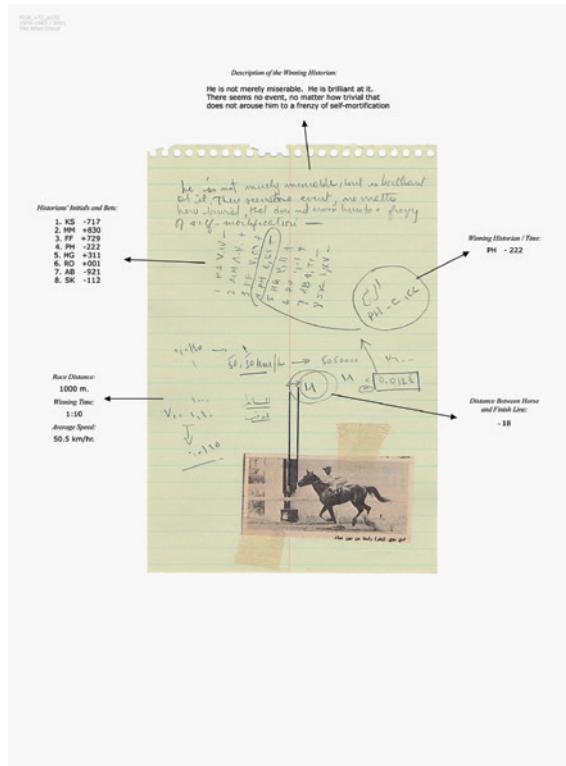
Walid Raad/The Atlas Group, *Notebook Volume 72: Missing Lebanese Wars (plate 132)*, 2006

17

Dornith Doherty, *Millennium Seed Bank Vault Interior, Millennium Seed Bank, Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, West Sussex, England*, 2009

18
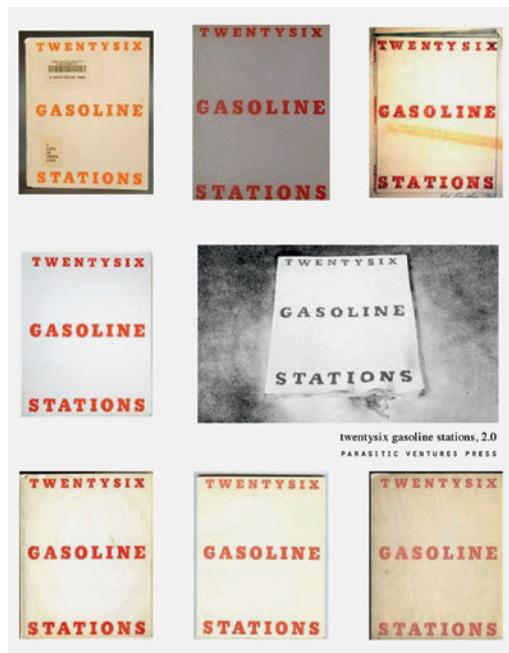
9   Michael Maranda, *Twentysix Gasoline Stations, 2.0* (front cover), 2009
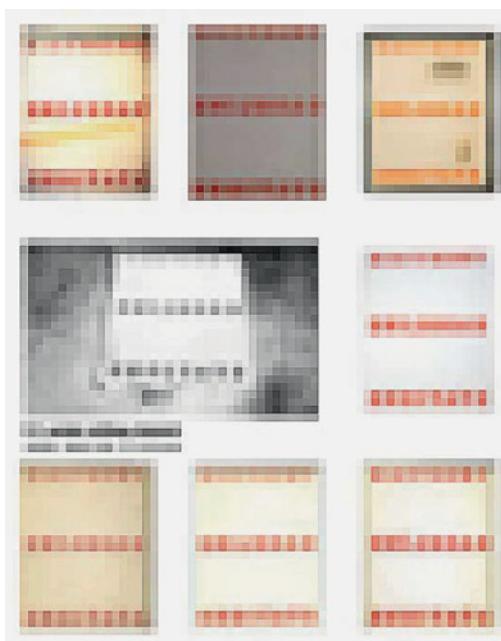
20   Michael Maranda, *Twentysix Gasoline Stations, 2.0* (back cover), 2009

Katie Paterson, *Future Library*, 2014–2114

22   Silent Room in the Deichman Library in Oslo, by Atelier Oslo, Lund Hagem and Katie Paterson