

New Media Art:

Curating Social Justice in Contemporary Art Museums and Arts Organizations

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Rhode Island School of Design, 2020

New Media Art: Curating Social Justice in Contemporary Art Museums and Arts Organizations

A thesis presented in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree Master of Liberal Arts in Global Arts and Cultures in the Division of Liberal Arts of the Rhode Island School of Design, Providence Rhode Island

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Due to the COVID-19 crisis, the theses were approved by Program Directors and are often unsigned.

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Date of Award: Fall 12-15-2020

Document Type: Thesis

Degree Name: Master of Arts (MA)

Program: Global Arts and Cultures

Advisor: Andrew Robarts

Reader: Sarah Ganz Blythe

Abstract:

My research project includes case studies in which I interviewed nine new media art curators and directors whose curatorial practices offer historical analyses and theoretical perspectives that address the dynamics of social justice by using new media art. I investigate the ways in which social justice is presented in museums and arts organizations.

Central to this project is an examination of museum practices where the use of new media art becomes a central platform to showcase issues of social justice.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	1
LITERATURE REVIEW	7
METHODOLOGY	21
BODY	28
RESULTS	
1. Social Justice Discourse and Action in Larger Arts Organizations - Focused on the Cases of Images Festival, ZKM Center for Art and Media, and the Minneapolis Institute of Art.....	28
2. Interaction, Participation, and Collaboration Using New Media Art.....	45
3. From Engagement to Social Justice and Activism Against Inequity.....	59
4. Effectiveness of New Media Art to Focus on Social Justice and Activism Against Inequity	67
5. Obstacles and Opportunities for Future Developments ..	77
6. Future	87
7. The New Ways of Curating, Contemporary Curating.....	95
THE ROLE OF CURATORS AND DIRECTORS IN SOCIAL JUSTICE AND ACTIVISM AGAINST INEQUITY IN MUSEUMS	100
CASE STUDIES	107
1. New Media Art Convey A Message Regarding Human Rights–Dominique Moulon Interview	107
2. The Alternative Visual Culture Factory and the Seoul International New Media Festival - Jen Yeunho Kimjang Interview	110
3. Media Anatomy and the Dream Blossom Project - Nathalie Boseul Shin Interview	118
4. Serious Game — Beryl Graham Interview	125

LIST OF FIGURES

37- A poster image of Global Art and the Museum.

39- A view from the 2016 MASS Action Convening held at the Minneapolis Institute of Art.

40- A view from the 2016 MASS Action Convening held at the Minneapolis Institute of Art (Mia) in Minneapolis, Minnesota.

47- An audience with a VR headset and a poster of the exhibition, *Open Codes*.

50- Bernd Lintermann, YOU:R:CODE.

51- A view of the exhibition, *Open Codes*.

62- Participatory video installation, "Welcome," as part of the *Identity: Yours, Mine, Ours*, image exhibition at the Immigration Museum in Melbourne, Australia

63- Guests engaging with the large touch table with four audio-visual touchscreens at the exhibition launch

79- The Open the Source project, which is part of the digital playground 2009 exhibition.

80- The Open the Source project, which is part of the digital playground 2009 exhibit.

92- An example of the Machine to Be Another.

108-Stephanie Dikins, Conversations with Bina48, 2014, *Dominique Moulon (Art Critic and Independent Curator): "The Art of Acting Somewhere Else."*

114- A poster of the 19th Seoul International NewMedia Festival: *Gender X Nation*, 2019.

119- A view of the exhibition, Media Anatomy Seoul, details each work of art

Acknowledgments

I would like to express my deep and sincere gratitude to my thesis advisor, Prof. Andrew Robarts. My completion of this project could not have been accomplished without his support and encouragement.

I cannot express enough thanks to the directors and curators who I interviewed. This project would not be as complete without their support.

My sincere thanks also go to my reader Sarah Ganz Blythe, Deputy Director, Exhibitions, Education & Programs of the RISD Museum. I am extending my thanks to all the staff, tutors, and thesis faculty mentors at the Center for Arts & Language (A&L) and Research & Strategic Partnerships.

I would like to say thanks to my lovely cohorts, Liliane Lai, Holly Gaboriault, Elena Kalkova, and Tiange Li.

I am extremely grateful to my family for their sacrifices, love, and prayers and for educating and supporting me for my future.

Lastly, I would like to say thanks to all the people who have supported me in completing my research.

Introduction

In my thesis, I investigate the ways in which social justice is presented in museums and arts organizations. Central to this project is an examination of museum practices where the use of new media art becomes a central platform to showcase issues of social justice. In museums, social justice applies to “access, equity, diversity, inclusion, and the call for action on systemic change and transformation.”¹ Institutional support of this work within exhibition programming allows not only public exposure to pressing issues; it also opens a space for possible alliances to grow.

In my thesis, through in-depth case studies, I use the term “new media art”² to describe curatorial practices, educational and public programming, and museums' themes that explore new media art created by artists and are concerned with ongoing social issues that face concerns of both today and tomorrow. The use of new media art

1. Robert R. Janes and Coleman S. Laura-Edythe, “From the Ground up - Grassroots Social Justice Activism in American Museums,” in *Museum Activism* (Lieu de publication non identifié: Routledge, 2019), pp. 91-91.

2. Video art, film, digital art, digital media, interactive multimedia installations, intermedia, multimedia, interactive art, variable art, upstart media, emerging art, internet art, art and science, art and technology, webcams, computer graphics, computer games, video games, computer animation, art as biotechnology, cyberspace, electronic art, virtual art, computer robotics, 3D printing, photography, lens-based media, digital technology, hypertext, audio technology, CD-ROMs, surveillance technology, GPS systems, wireless telephones, sound art, etc.

layers the audiences' experience and opens up opportunities to make museums that are inclusive, diversifying, and decolonizing institutions. I investigate curators and directors' works through new media art, about sharing, highlighting, and uncovering suppressed voices.

New media has increasingly impacted our everyday lives, and art institutions have greatly explored new media through their projects, events, programs, and exhibitions. New media is greatly connected with the activist movements. It consists of not only new technologies but also further social actions for engaging in activism, new cultural forms, and providing new twists on familiar political issues. It is hard to describe new media art because of the term "new." The word "new" indicates that there is something new. As a curator, Jon Ippolito states, it is in the essence of new media art to change in terms of "naming, labeling and documenting,"³ and curators and critics must acknowledge and keep up with change, and even the historical structures of recognizing what is "new" will change.⁴ This means, with the rapid pace of technological growth, new media art is an ever-changing genre.

My thesis project begins with the assumption that new media art has the potential to engage people and invite collaborative and participatory ways of working. This builds relationships and strengthens networks, thus fostering broader opportunities for social justice and activism against inequity and reframing the

3. IMMA. "New Media Art." Accessed April 15, 2020

4. Ibid.

historical canons, including questioning masculinity or Euro-U.S.-centrism and engaging in contemporary discourses about gender and LGBTQ+ issues, racism, and sexuality, and the rights of marginalized groups. Specific to this research is an investigation of how curators and directors create diverse and grounded exhibitions regarding social justice using new media art as a direct response to a rapidly changing art world and as a way to navigate, foster, and cultivate conversations with the public. Through in-depth case studies, I research the great power of curatorial practices to amplify the voices of the marginalized, the call for equal rights, and access for all people.

Furthermore, I also explore the interactive nature of new media interfaces to invite participation and possible collaboration through interpretive programming, whether art educational or public programs (participatory educational activities, presentations, talks, lectures, or workshops, etc.) and exhibitions are necessary to activate that potential to encourage human dignity and global equality.

My intention is that this research supports awareness of contemporary practices and fosters a movement among museum curators and arts organizations professionals to take up the charge of addressing these issues through dynamic programming using new media art. My research project includes case studies in which I interview nine new media art curators and thinkers whose curatorial practices offer historical analyses and theoretical perspectives that address the dynamics of social justice by using new media art. I conducted interviews with curators and directors who have expertise in new media art. (I will provide the interviewee's information in the section, Biography).

Throughout the interviews, I explored each interviewee's perspectives, opinions, beliefs, and experiences of specific exhibitions or organizations to which they belong. I also was able to understand their processes behind specific new media art exhibitions, as well as their obstacles in this field and topics they find important. Alongside appreciation of their curatorial strategies, I also acquired a deeper understanding of the concept of social justice, as well as the nature of social justice in arts organizations and exhibitions. In addition, I asked interviewees how they employ new media art as a means for supporting global equality and the correlation between this art and social justice action. This included discovering whether or not new media art is more effective than other art mediums in encouraging human dignity and global equality. I explored how new media art can engage and interact with people to create more participatory and collaborative experiences and how this may impact the understanding of the social justice landscape.

Museums are celebrated for providing artistic and cultural heritage and collecting artifacts and yet are held accountable for many factors of their operations and their actions as needed. Over time, art museums and arts organizations have developed into inspiring and also controversial institutions that hold significant collections, valuable programs, and innovative events. Twenty-first-century museums not only serve as places for conserving and compiling works and specific collections but also as places that critically act to make their museums reflect the diversity and voices of the people within their exhibitions, events, programs, and collections. As the role of museums has developed to express and reflect its current challenges and complexities,

the responsibilities of curators have expanded as well. Today, the curator's role has expanded in line with the current responsibilities of the twenty-first century requiring constant reflection and questioning about current and future generational social challenges.

Since the 1960s and 1970s, museum curators have explored ways of rethinking and reframing curatorial practices through "curatorial activism."⁵ As "curatorial activists,"⁶ curators make efforts and plans to represent different voices and multiple perspectives within the museum. The process of decolonizing the museum conveys recognition, reconfiguration, and exposure of the Eurocentric ideology and biases built within the museum's concepts and practices. Curators can curate exhibitions that address discrimination, gender, and LGBTQ+ issues, racism and sexuality, and the rights of marginalized groups of people, including women, sexual minorities, children, and disabled people. Their projects sometimes reframe the historical canon or the contemporary art discourse, including questioning masculinity or Euro-U.S.-centrism

Through "curatorial activism," curators and directors critically act to make their museums and arts organizations inclusive, decolonized, and polyphonic spaces, and the variety of voices of the people within their exhibitions and programs. "Curatorial activists" have actively reframed, rewritten, promoted, and established since the 1960s. Museum directors and curators play a conspicuous role in imagining a future with a

5. Lucy Lippard and Maura Reilly, *Curatorial Activism. Towards an Ethic of Curation* (New York: Thames & Hudson, 2018)).

6. Reilly and Lippard, 22.

more prominent public and promoting different and various ways of thinking about the world.

The scholarly books and articles that I reference support their arguments with numerous examples of contemporary exhibitions and theories that embody the various curatorial strategies, contents, or movements. However, even though the texts and research provide outstanding art programming, curatorial practices have evolved since the 1960s and 1970s. Still, there is insufficient research collected around the views of curators and directors who have led such art museums and created new media art exhibitions regarding these topics. Therefore, I interviewed directors and curators' perspectives on social justice in museums and arts organizations. Also, I asked how curators and directors reshape their work to address the concerns of future generations and whether museums in the twenty-first century should engage in social justice and activism against inequity.

In my thesis, I view museums and arts organizations as places of engaging in social justice. I explore curatorial practices and directors' works, educational and public planning initiatives, including sharing, highlighting, and uncovering suppressed voices. My focus is on global human rights and social and political struggles, and on works that are about social responsibility. Furthermore, curators and museums employ new media art as a significant method to interact with the public to enlighten them and highlight omitted and silenced voices. Through their practice, they work to design innovative ways to achieve progress and change and foster conversations about ongoing issues.

Literature Review

Abstract

I delved into the specific topic of new media art and social justice in arts organizations and museums. I also explored some of the works of literature that analyze the definition and role of art museums, the meaning of curating, people in the museums, new ways of curating and programming, interaction, participation, and collaboration in museums. Throughout many years, scholars have changed their perspectives and definitions, and they have reframed, redefined, and rewrote.

While I was perusing scholarly arguments, I realized what I should investigate further for my research. The purpose of this thesis is to examine how curators and directors build a bridge between the public and art through new media art exhibitions, programs, and festivals, and how those shed light on unrecognized values and marginalized perspectives by raising awareness of human rights and social justice. New media art is also used as a platform that serves as a center of communication and changes through art while also exploring methods for effective messaging. After I finished the literature review, I questioned how the curators and directors create diverse and grounded new media art programs and exhibitions to build a bridge between the museums and audiences. I wanted to know how they deal with the rapidly

changing art world with innovative, contemporary new media programs and exhibitions.

As a result of reading many scholars' studies, I found many studies, researches, and reports detailing new media art exhibitions, art museums, or institutions. However, books and papers that studied the curators and directors' thoughts who led such art museums and created and led new media art exhibitions regarding my topics were not readily available. Therefore, in my thesis, I will explore their specific experiences, thoughts, and concerns about new media art exhibitions through interviews with directors and curators.

The Definition of Art Museums

Over time, the typical museum has developed into an inspiring institution holding significant collections, valuable programs, and inspiring events. The book *Museums: A History*, written by Simmons, discusses the history of the museum with detailed etymology data. The basics of the museum originate from twin concepts of preservation and interpretation. In 1730, *the Dictionarium Britannicum* defined a museum as "Study of Library; also, a College or Public Place for the resort of learned Men."¹ Also, museums' two significant roles in the 18th century were the physical structure housing the collection and collections housed in the physical structure. Both meanings are related to learning and study.

1. John E. Simmons, *Museums: A History* (Lanham, Md: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, 2016)), 2-3.

In the nineteenth century, *The Universal Dictionary of the English Language* by Robert Hunter and Charles Morris, published in 1898, provided a definition of the museum as a “room or building used as a repository for works of art or science; a collection of objects illustrating the arts, sciences, manufactures, or natural history of the world, or some particular part.”² The museums in the nineteenth century still serve as a place for conserving and compiling works and their specific collections.

In 1946, the International Council of Museums (ICOM) defined a museum as an institution of “all collections open to the public, of artistic, technical, scientific, historical, or archaeological material.”³ In 1996, the Institute of Museum Services (IMLS) defined museums as a private non-profit or a public institution, organization, or agency on a permanent collection for astatic purposes or centrally located educational exhibits for the public.

In 2007, the International Council of Museums (ICOM) provided a new definition: “A museum is a non-profit, permanent institution in the service of society and its development, open to the public, which acquires, conserves, researches, communicates and exhibits the tangible and intangible heritage of humanity and its environment for the purposes of education, study and enjoyment.”⁴

2. Robert Hunter and Charles Morris, *Universal Dictionary of the English Language: a New and Original Work Presenting ... Every Word in the English Language ... and an Exhaustive Encyclopedia of All the Arts and Sciences* (New York: P.F. Collier, 1898).

3. *Ibid.*, 8.

4. “Museum Definition.” ICOM, <https://icom.museum/en/resources/standards-guidelines/museum-definition/>

The ICOM definition of the museum has played a central role for museums and museum experts since the founding of ICOM in 1946. It has become a guide in the international museum community. In 2019, ICOM announced that the definition does not seem enough to indicate the current responsibilities of twenty-first century museums, and it does not reflect visions, questions, and challenges for future generations.⁵ Therefore, ICOM invited committees, members, partners, and other interested parties to participate in developing potential alternatives for the definition of a museum. The International Council of Museums (ICOM) has proposed a new alternative museum definition:

“Museums are democratizing, inclusive and polyphonic spaces for critical dialogue about the pasts and the futures. Acknowledging and addressing the conflicts and challenges of the present, they hold artefacts and specimens in trust for society, safeguard diverse memories for future generations and guarantee equal rights and equal access to heritage for all people. Museums are not for profit. They are participatory and transparent, and work in active partnership with and for diverse communities to collect, preserve, research, interpret, exhibit, and enhance understandings of the world, aiming to contribute to human dignity and social justice, global equality and planetary wellbeing.”⁶

The Extraordinary General Assembly (EGA) of ICOM, which was held in Kyoto, Japan, on September 7, 2019, postponed the vote on the new definition of the museum. 70.41 percent of votes in support of the decision to delay the vote were received.⁷ There

5. “Creating the New Museum Definition: over 250 Proposals to Check out!,” ICOM, accessed October 13, 2020, <https://icom.museum/en/news/the-museum-definition-the-backbone-of-icom/>.

6. Ibid., 9.

7. Ibid., 9.

8. Morgan Everhart et al., “The Link Between Museums and Activism,” A WOMEN'S

were several opinions and feedback from participants who approved and disagreed with the definition during the work on the committee to amend the definition of "museum." From the outset, several representatives made it clear that they opposed the current concept, condemning it as a reaction to trendy ideologies and saying "no" to words like "democratizing" and "polyphonic."⁸ As a result, the new definition remains as follows, according to the ICOM enacted by the 22nd General Assembly in Vienna, Austria on 24 August 2007:

*"A museum is a non-profit, permanent institution in the service of society and its development, open to the public, which acquires, conserves, researches, communicates and exhibits the tangible and intangible heritage of humanity and its environment for the purposes of education, study and enjoyment."*⁹

The Roles of Art Museums

In the book *Museum Basics*, Ambrose explores three primary roles of museums: social and cultural benefits, economic benefits, and political benefits.¹⁰ Ambrose highlights that museums contribute to their community and society via social and cultural benefits. Museums play a role in preserving and conserving the cultural heritage and encourage community involvement by offering social-cultural-educational activities and events. Those benefits perform significant roles in museums and to the

THING, December 8, 2019, <https://awomensthing.org/blog/icom-museum-definition-art-activism/>.

9. Ibid., 9.

10. Timothy Ambrose and Crispin Paine, *Museum Basics* (London: Routledge, 1997))

museum's visitors. Through my thesis project, I explore how curators contribute to social, cultural, and political benefits.

Based on Ambrose, the museum also plays a crucial role in economic development, supporting local economies, improving levels of employment, and providing more jobs.¹¹ Besides, a museum can foster local community pride and an opportunity to explore cultural values at the same time. Therefore, the museum can foster public relations and community links.

In the contemporary curating process, a new responsibility and role are to ensure that projects are actually open to audiences' participation and are responsive to their needs, especially when the emphasis is on the process, not the end product. In the introduction in *curating the future* by Jennifer Newell, Libby Robin, and Kirsten Wehner, Newell insists that museums also function as a significant institution that enables us to "come together"¹² beyond time and distance with a variety of perspectives, stories, and ideas. Furthermore, museums provide a "contact zone"¹³ within the public as a zone of intimate, supportive engagement and collaboration.

Curatorial Activism

11. Ibid., 11.

12. Jennifer Newell, Libby Robin, and Kirsten Wehner, *Curating the Future: Museums, Communities and Climate Change* (Milton Park, Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge, 2017)), 38.

13. Tara Reddy. Young, *So You Want to Work in a Museum?* (Lanham: Rowman Littlefield, 2019)), 46-48.

Since the 1960s and 1970s, museum curators have explored ways of rethinking and reframing curating practices by curatorial activism. The active movement abolishes historical canons, including masculinity or Euro-US centrism.

In the book titled *Curatorial Activism: Towards an Ethic of Curation*, Reilly insists that curators have the most effective way to expand the historical canons and contemporary discourses. Curators throughout the world address injustices in the art world, and they encourage visitors to think about gender, sexuality, and race to understand that these concerns need our action.

“Curatorial Activism” is an active practice in which the curators work tirelessly to develop and design strategies for exhibitions regarding challenges of racism, sexism, homophobia, xenophobia, or western centrism.¹⁴ The curators also argue that the art world and museum system are still defined and dominated by a hegemony of white male privilege to the exclusion of all other artists. The excluded artists are no longer ghettoized from the master narratives of art. Curatorial activism should foster the ongoing discussion in relation to contemporary cultural, historical, political, and social issues as well as current and future community concerns, including environmental issues, and immigration.

It is also a term that commits itself to counter-hegemonic advantages that give voice to artists who have been historically omitted or silenced. As a result, women,

14. Lucy Lippard and Maura Reilly, *Curatorial Activism. Towards an Ethic of Curation* (New York: Thames & Hudson, 2018)).

LGBTQ+ artists, artists of color, or non-Euro-Americans have a space to work with the curators.

After reading *Curatorial Activism*, I expand on those assertions through my thesis project and find the most effective way to explore more examples about how the curator can encourage visitors using new media art to examine social justice.

New Media Art

In the book *Rethinking Curating*, Graham and Cook highlight “new media art,” including computer art, interactive art, digital art, time-based art, art and technology, art and science, electronic art, video art, 3D art, virtual art, and computer animation.¹⁵ These involve participation and interaction between artists and viewers or between viewers and the artwork. Graham and Cook argue that contemporary ways of curating museums, working with new media art, affect the role of curator, exhibition, audience, and institutions. They explain how collections of modern media art in museums might help future generations stay in touch with their culture. Those who interact and participate in museums will encourage future generations to change their culture and face social, political issues. With my research, I investigate how museums use new media art to affect a wide arrange of people worldwide. The term “new” means that it has something new when it is first created, discovered, or used, and “new” is a relative term that decreases over time and is replaced by a new one. “Media” is usually a plurality of media and refers to public communication forms, such as newspapers,

15. Graham and Cook, 4.

magazines, television, radio, and the internet. In the art world, media and medium mean a material, methodology, technique, mechanism, or device in which a work is realized, as well as the substance through which its effects are transmitted. In traditional art, traditional and old media include paintings, drawings, ceramics, and sculptures. Certain materials used, such as paint, pencil, clay, charcoal, or marble, are also called media.

In contemporary art, new media refers to a variety of materials and technologies that have been developed relatively recently and are used in the production, presentation, and dissemination of new media art. The new media comes from various sources in the arts and uses a wide range of entertainment, communications, and information technology. New media art is an ever-changing category given the rapid rate of technological development.¹⁶ Through my thesis project, readers will have a better understanding of how the museums design curatorial practices through new media art created by artists to address social justice and to achieve real change and what acts they should take in the future.

New media art is “born digital”¹⁷: film, video, digital art, digital media, interactive multimedia installations, intermedia, multimedia, interactive art, variable art, upstart media, emerging art, internet art, art and science, art and technology, webcams, computer graphics, computer games, video games, computer animation, art

16. IMMA. “New Media Art.” Accessed April 15, 2020

17. Beryl Graham, *New Collecting: Exhibiting and Audiences after New Media Art*. London: Routledge, 2017, introduction.

as biotechnology, cyberspace, electronic art, virtual art, computer robotics, 3D printing, photography, lens-based media, digital technology, hypertext, audio technology, CD-ROMs, surveillance technology, GPS systems, wireless telephones, etc.

Based on Graham and Cook, new media art can be described in these terms: interactivity, connectivity, and computability. The three vocabularies are presented by Steve Dietz to explain what new media art does.¹⁸

Audiences and Curators in New Media Art

Audiences redefine themselves as “users, participants, producers, and even curators.”¹⁹ Therefore, new media artists establish spaces for audiences to easily interact and participate “as curators, documenters, taggers, and collectors.”²⁰ Also, the curators of media art exhibitions also need to rethink their role to work collaboratively over all the boundaries of disciplines.

Curatorial Practice Through New Media Art

According to Graham and Cook, between new media art and other contemporary arts, the most radical differences are not in the art itself or the critical terminology, but in the curatorial practice process.²¹ After all, the curatorial practices of networks, how audiences interact and participate, and how collaboration takes place to

18. Graham and Cook, 289

19. Graham and Cook, 301.

20. Graham and Cook, 302.

21. Graham and Cook, 299.

come from politics and the philosophy of work as from art, and as much from perception as from curating.

Activism at Museums in a Post-Digital World

Based on the book, “Art and Activism at Museums in a Post- Digital World,” in *Museums and Digital Culture New Perspectives and Research* ²² by Giannini, Tula, and Jonathan P. Bowen, Giannini talks about digital activism, digital art, digital culture, digital heritage in exhibitions and museums, as well as the post-digital world. The introduction to the essay is really relevant to my thesis research topic. I want to extend the essay’s arguments more widely by providing additional support with new evidence, cases, and examples. Through my research project, I explore how new media art in museums impact future generations to engage in real change in terms of activism. I also want to deliver my message and insist that museums should voice their opinions and concerns to a public audience and be participatory and interactive in terms of activism.

According to “New Media Activism Reflections Seen in the Light of Communication for Development,” we can argue that since the last decade of the twentieth century onwards, new media have been used primarily for the efforts of people and activists to improve social justice in the world, in a style of resistance, generation of discourse and reinforcement of group identities, among other goals.²³

22. Tula Giannini and Jonathan P. . Bowen, “Art and Activism at Museums in a Post-Digital World,” in *Museums and Digital Culture New Perspectives and Research* (Cham: Springer International Publishing, 2019).

23. “New Media Activism Reflections Seen in the Light of Communication for

They also argue that the employment of both online and offline media is often important when it comes to activism. As both methods together will increase, public interaction and engagement with social causes since individuals are everywhere and choose various means of communication according to their social context, interests, preferences, and desires. Therefore, the pursuit of social justice includes both online and offline tactics since activism should not be limited to the media domain.²⁴

Interaction, Participation, Collaboration in Museums

In the book *Rethinking Curating: Art after New Media*, Graham and Cook carefully clarify three engagement words: interaction, participation, and collaboration.

Interaction's definition is "acting upon each other."²⁵ Communication in the museum takes place amongst people, between people and artworks, people, and space.

Participation is "to have a share in or take part in."²⁶ Involvement in the museum often occurs, changing the art piece's content. In chapter 5, "Participative Systems" in *Rethinking Curating: Art after New Media*, Graham and Cook posit that the museum curators who present participative curating systems need to recognize whether the

Development," New Media Activism RSS, accessed October 13, 2020, <https://wpmu.mah.se/nmict122group5/understanding-new-media-presentation/understanding-new-media-activism/>.

24. Ibid., 17.

25. Graham and Cook, 112.

26. Graham and Cook, 113.

works of art is “reactive, interactive, a host for human interaction, participative, or collaborative.”²⁷

Collaboration is “working jointly with.”²⁸ Collaboration entails production from the participants. In chapter 10, “Collaboration in Curating,” Graham and Cook investigate several collaborations in art museum curating: artist-led modes of curating, audience-led modes of curating, self-institutionalization, and artists as curators.

Art Museum Programming

In Chapter 4, “Education” of *So You Want to Work in a Museum?*, Young explains that non-profit institutions' status is based on the fact that the museums are an educational organization.²⁹ The museums provide valuable information to visitors through meaningful exhibitions, programs, or community events. The museum has evolved from a model of delivering lessons with the shows, programs, or events to a model of creating remarkable connections and meaning to visitors.

The word “program” refers to a pre-scheduled event organized by department directors and staff. The directors and staff promote some educational content. The term “event” usually conveys a “gathering that is primarily social and only secondarily educational the membership of development department typically organized these”.³⁰

27. Graham and Cook, 139.

28. Graham and Cook, 114.

29. Ibid., 12.

30. Ibid., 12.

The programs also consist of museum tours for kids, tours for members, group visits, school visits, and college visits.

The book *Opening Museums - New Interaction Methods for Future Museum Experiences* demonstrates some new methods to improve participation and interaction between visitors and the museums. Zingerle presents several examples of creative exhibitions and systems, including social media, mobile media, museum shops, visualization, playful audio, online games, comments on open platforms, and participatory exhibition design.³¹

The platforms that Zingerle examines in the book are inventive methods to encourage visitors to become interactive participants, showing how attitudes of museums have changed. With those systems and methods, the museums' content becomes more accessible for visitors, and engagement can enhance participation with the museum's material.

Nonetheless, there are other ways to encourage participants to take part in the process of "making of meaning".³² Can the visitors truly create their own interpretative material inspired and shared by apps on phones, digital systems, and websites? I examine contemporary museum programming methods through new media art, and I investigate how visitors absorb the museum programming regarding contemporary issues.

31. Andreas Zingerle, *Opening Museums - New Interaction Methods for Future Museum Experiences* (Lulu Com, 2012)), 17.

32. Ibid.

Methodology

While I was investigating my topic, which is the exploration of social justice in museums/arts organizations and curatorial practices through new media art by reading various books, dissertations, or scholars' research, I found many research analyses of new media art organizations; new media art exhibitions; and exhibitions talking about social justice or human rights. However, I realized there is a lack of research on the directors or curators who artistically controlled exhibitions, events, and museum programs regarding my topic. Therefore, I explored the researches on my topic to fill in the gaps of insufficient data through my thesis by conducting interviews with the directors and curators and probed into their works, views, processes, and opinions while planning and directing exhibitions through new media art. I also sought to understand their perspectives on social justice discourse and action and how social justice intersect with artists, exhibitions, and larger arts organizations.

I utilized a mix of qualitative research methods, including analysis of literature and interview, to better understand and begin to answer the questions that arose in this investigation. An interview is the most suitable methodology for my research to explore each interviewee's opinions, beliefs, experiences, views, and motivations of specific exhibitions, programs, or organizations to which they belong. Throughout the

interviews, I underwent a deeper understanding of social justice in the new media arts organizations and museums. I also was able to understand their thought process behind new media art exhibitions, as well as their concerns in this field and topics they find important. First, I researched curators or directors, and I investigated their works with new media art. Also, I explored many new media art exhibitions, festivals, events, programs, and art museums all over the world. I reached out to curators who work in the new media art museums and directors who lead those exhibitions, festivals, events, and programs. Also, I reached out to curators and professors who wrote the book that I read. The directors led significant new media art exhibitions, and some of them led exhibitions regarding gender, LGBTQ+ issues, racism and sexuality, and the rights of women/sexual minorities/children/disabled people.

I conducted structured face-to-face and open-ended interviews with Nathalie Boseul Shin and Jen Yeunho Kimjang in South Korea.

- Jen Yeunho Kimjang, the director of the Seoul International NewMedia Festival, and head of iGong, Alternative Visual Culture Factory. Personal interview in Seoul, South Korea, August 7, 2020.
- Nathalie Boseul Shin, the curator in chief of the Total Museum of Contemporary Art. Personal interview in Seoul, South Korea, August 17, 2020.

I also conducted interviews through the video call application, Zoom, with curators, professors, and directors in the United States and foreign countries, including Canada, France, Germany, and England, because we cannot meet in person. I reached out to them through email to make the appointments for these Zoom meetings.

- Sarah Cook, a curator in new media art, writer of the book *Rethinking Curating – Art After New Media* (2010), and professor of Museum Studies in Information Studies at the University of Glasgow. Zoom interview, August 11, 2020.
- Beryl Graham, a curator, professor, and writer of the book *Rethinking Curating – Art After New Media* (2010). Together with Sarah Cook, Graham co-founded CRUMB, the online network and resource for new media art curators, presenting global seminars and programs. Zoom Interview, September 3, 2020.
- Philipp Ziegler, the head of the curatorial department at ZKM | Center for Art and Media Karlsruhe. Zoom Interview, September 3, 2020.
- Anna Frants, a new media artist and curator, co-founded both CYLAND Media Art Lab and the St. Petersburg Art Project. Zoom Interview, September 4, 2020.
- Dominique Moulon, an independent curator, art critic, and professor. Zoom Interview, September 7, 2020.
- Samuel La France, an executive director of the Images Festival. Zoom Interview, September 21, 2020.
- John Durant, a director of the MIT Museum. Zoom interview, October 5, 2020.

When I prepared the individual interview, I gathered specific directors and curators' works as well as the topic to be discussed. At the same time, I conducted in-depth background research. Then, I applied the depth of this background information to the interview. Based on in-depth background research about the interviewees, I set some questions regarding their specific experiences, perspectives, views, or concerns about new media art exhibitions. For each interview, I created several open-ended

questions based on specific research topics and also modified some questions to suit the interviewee's particular experiences. At the end of this chapter, I have summarized the questions for each section. According to Dilley, the six fundamental questions of who, what, when, where, why, and how will form the core of the interviews.¹ My background research guided me on how to deeply investigate the answers to those six main points, given the amount of time available.

Social Justice Discourse and Action in Larger Arts Organizations

I focused on the cases of few art museums and arts organizations, including Images Festival and ZKM | Center for Art and Media Karlsruhe. During the interview, Samuel La France, executive director of Images Festival, shared Images Festival's mission. Philipp Ziegler shared the ZKM | Center for Art and Media's project, *Global Art Museum (GAM)* project. I also delved into the Minneapolis Institute of Art created a three-year strategic project called, *Museum as Site for Social Action (MASS)*.

Interaction, Participation, And Collaboration Using New Media Art

I also wanted to know their perspectives about curatorial practice through interactions, participation, and collaboration with the audience in the new media art exhibitions, and how these elements can be captured to add a more significant amount of fidelity to the curatorial practice. Also, I asked how they employ new media art to improve interactions, participation, and collaboration with museum audiences; how those elements can expand the theme of the exhibition.

1. Patrick Dilley, "Conducting Successful Interviews: Tips for Intrepid Research," *Theory Into Practice* 39, no. 3 (Summer 2000), 131–37.

From Engagement to Social Justice and Activism Against Inequity

I explored the exhibition, *Identity: yours, mine, ours*, held at the Immigration Museum in Victoria, Australia, as an example of curatorial practices through new media that establish genuine community engagement and more meaningful audience interaction with what is produced. I also investigated the exhibition's report, the Australian Research Council study, to reveal the evaluation of the exhibition's effectiveness in reducing racism and increasing acceptance of ethnic, cultural, and racial diversity.

Effectiveness of New Media Art to Focus on Social Justice and Activism Against Inequity

I explored the effectiveness of new media art. This included discovering whether or not new media art is unique from other mediums to focus on social justice; how curators can use curatorial practices through new media art to bring people in the art world to think about gender, race, and sexuality, to understand that these are persistent concerns that require action; how new media art exhibitions can contribute to making the art world more inclusive.

Obstacles and Opportunities for Future Developments

I created questions to ask the curators and directors' role in this field and contemporary curating, their views and concerns while planning the show via the new media art, the exhibition's process that deals with social issues, and their experiences that led to positive social activism through the exhibition. I set those questions to learn

more about how the curator or director works with new media art; and how the curators employ new media art as a means for supporting activism inequity.

Future

I also asked how the new media art exhibition will look like in the future, including what kind of exhibition they would like to curate, and the future role of immersive technology and new media art in art museums.

Contemporary Curating

I delved into new media art in the interviewees' own words in this section. In the interviews, I asked interviewees' perspectives on contemporary art exhibitions and new media art exhibitions. Also, I inquired about the book *Rethinking Curating: Art After New Media* to Sarah Cook and Beryl Graham. It has been ten years since the book was released, so I asked what changes new media exhibitions have made since then.

Case studies

I chose works of Jen Yeunho Kimjang, Dominique Moulon, Nathalie Boseul Shin, Beryl Graham, the ZKM | Center for Art and Media Karlsruhe for the case studies. I chose their curatorial practices and works because they have specific examples of exhibitions or programs discussing gender, LGBTQ+, racism, or sexuality issues through new media art. Therefore, I researched more about their works and investigated their arguments from each interview in the case studies sections. I asked questions about the process of specific exhibitions and programs dealing with gender and LGBTQ+ issues, racism, and sexuality, along with the rights of women/sexual minorities/children/disabled people. I explored when they put together or displayed

new media art with those issues in the exhibitions, whether or not they can find a correlation between the new media art and social justice.

Social Justice Discourse and Action in Museums and Larger Arts Organizations

- Focused on the Cases of the Images
Festival, ZKM | Center for Art and Media,
and Minneapolis Institute of Art

Introduction

Today, many museums and arts organizations encourage their audiences to take action to become more engaged and increase interest in their societies. Museums and arts organizations create programs and exhibitions for audiences to be more involved in their issues at the local, regional, and national levels. Such programs educate participants about how their acts can impact positive progress and inspire social justice.

In this section, I examine the Images Festival through interviews with Samuel La France, executive director of the Images Festival and exhibitions at the ZKM | Center for Art and Media, along with Philipp Ziegler, head of the curatorial department, ZKM. These interviews reveal how large arts organizations and art museums create their mission and develop their exhibitions and programs to become better guides for our society. This section also delves into how the art organizations reflect and foster the formation and reinforcement of diverse communities with the Minneapolis Institute of Art's three-year strategic project, *Museum as Site for Social Action (MASS)*. The three cases present how curators and directors critically act to make their museums and arts

organizations inclusive, decolonized, and polyphonic spaces, and the variety of voices of the people within their exhibitions and programs.

The Role of the Museums in the Twenty-First Century

In today's society, art museums provide exhibitions and programs that are challenging and topical, with opportunities to extend their scope beyond materials and objects in their own collections. Based on *Defining the Museum of the 21st Century: Evolving Multiculturalism in Museums in the United States*, future museums should be dedicated to the execution of their authority and clearly outline their vision and mission to guide them in all that they do.¹ For museums to retain their relevance and become positive partners in the development of our societies, they should use their potential and their unique resources to become more responsive to the dynamics of urban change and modern society.

Museum activism:

Sandell and Janes said: "We submit that museum activism not only requires a willingness on the part of museum workers to exercise moral leadership in support of ethical issues, but also an openness to collaborative and participatory ways of working, that build relationships and strengthen networks well beyond the museum, thereby supporting broader efforts to bring about change."² Being willing to listen and truly

1. Yun Shun Susie Chung, Bruno Brulon Soares, and Anna Leshchenko, *Defining the Museum of the 21st Century: Evolving Multiculturalism in Museums in the United States* (Pairs: President of ICOFOM, 2018).

2. Robert R. Janes and Richard Sandell, "Posterity Has Arrived," in, "*Museum Activism* (Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge, an imprint of the Taylor & Francis Group, 2019)," pp. 1-21.

work with one another and the assertion and defense of a moral, knowledgeable, and systemic role lie at the core of the activism of museums.³ The engaging system in museums' space is key to expanding network moments with people and enabling activism for real change.

Jennie Carvill Schellenbacher asserts that the opportunity for activist museums resides in the awareness and misuse by museums of their role in affecting society. When museums can encourage their audiences to take steps to become more engaged participants, to be more involved in their community, to be more active in democracy at local, regional, and national levels, to be more educated about how their daily acts might positively impact others, and to be inspired to bring about change, the more important museums can be.⁴

Museums can encourage individuals, asking their audiences to experience more than awareness and empathy. Ideally, it would require a variety of activities at various stages of involvement to achieve such depth of engagement. Audiences should be given multiple opportunities to participate, at varying stages of engagement, whether it be engaging in community development, craftivism, or changes that they can make to their daily lives. However, some new media art museums and arts organizations do not respond to social and political issues, such as environmental issues, climate change, extinction of ecosystems, or problems of social justice, such as inequality and human

3. Ibid., 29.

4. Jennie Carvill Schellenbacher, "Empowering Change: Towards a Definition of the Activist Museum - Museum-ID," April 11, 2018, <https://museum-id.com/empowering-change-towards-a-definition-of-the-activist-museum/>.

dignity. Instead, they are more fascinated with digital technology and attracting a broader audience.

Decolonizing Museums

In order to envision a decolonial curatorial practice, the context, and criteria of where decoloniality emerges bear further analysis. There are few hard and fast rules for defining decolonizing museums and organizations. Large numbers of people were smuggled, slaughtered, and abused for labor, land, and profit. Museums have inherited this colonial system, and some of these themes are still embodied in contemporary collection policies and procedures. This framework claims that when an institution has a particular heritage or holds certain types of pieces in their collections, they possess the culture itself and have a right to define or delineate it.

A lot of museums are undertaking essential work to attempt to make their institutions represent the diversity and voices of the people in and around their collections. In the art museums' preservation of heritage, museums are not neutral. Many museums in the world have legacies embedded in colonialism; their acquisitions come from affluent collectors who profit from empires. Besides, the manner in which exhibits are organized typically implies a white viewer and privileges a white male gaze. Based on Shoenberger, the Washington Post describes the meaning of decolonizing as "a process that institutions undergo to expand the perspectives they portray beyond those of the dominant cultural group, particularly white colonizers."⁵

5. Elisa Shoenberger, "What Does It Mean to Decolonize a Museum?," October 1, 2020, <https://www.museumnext.com/article/what-does-it-mean-to-decolonize-a-museum/>.

“Decolonizing is deeper than just being represented.”⁶ If organizations and institutions assert a commitment to 'diversity,' 'inclusion,' or 'decoloniality,' a critical look at these statements is in order. Decoloniality is a complex collection of ideas, with complicated effects upon mechanisms, spaces, resources, and time, to avoid merely becoming another buzzword.⁷ The system used by Wajid and Minott in their attempt at decolonizing museums included:

“Trying to democratize the decision-making process; abdicating institutional control over the tone of voice we used in the interpretations; and acknowledging that museums are not neutral and have played a large part in the misrepresentation of cultures around the world for hundreds of years.”⁸

* * *

Images Festival

According to Samuel La France’s interview, we are increasingly seeing that the language and thinking around social justice are being integrated into arts organizations specifically. He stated, “It has been part of the artistic discourse for a very long time since there have been a number of organizations that have been pushing for broader representation, be that on conditions of artist’s identity, the style of their, or the media

6. AuthorMedia Diversified, “The Museum Will Not Be Decolonised,” Media Diversified, February 26, 2018, <https://mediadiversified.org/2017/11/15/the-museum-will-not-be-decolonised/>.

7. Ibid.

8. Sara Wajid and Rachael Minott, “Detoxing and Decolonising Museums,” in, “*Museum Activism* (Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge, an imprint of the Taylor & Francis Group, 2019),” pp. 25-35.

that they work in.”⁹ La France believes that the discourse has always been present, and it is specific to the region. For example, in Toronto, the connection between social justice and transformative justice discourse and the arts have been rooted in queer identities and, more predominantly, racial identities.

The Mission of the Images Festival

The broad mission of the Images Festival is to initiate dialogue between artists and audience members both in and outside of Toronto about new media work, film, video practice, and critical discourse around the arts. Also, they hope that discussion about new media works as part of their mission is as broad as it can be in terms of how they define it so that they are not speaking about specific forms, styles, genres, or aesthetics in terms of the work that they are discussing. The Images Festival wants to showcase critically and aesthetically interesting works to produce responses from their audiences. The key is to ensure that conversations occur between the audiences and artists, as well as any researchers, scholars, and critics who might be attending and participating in the festival.¹⁰

The Images Festival fosters discussions between artists, scholars, and the community about moving image politics. The Images Festival is an artist-driven festival that enhances understandings of media art by engaging with a multiplicity of artworks. Overall, the aim of the festival is to generate conversations that broaden mindsets and

9. La France, Samuel. Zoom Interview with the author, September 21, 2020.

10. Ibid.

inspire. In terms of land acknowledgment, which has been identified before, it remains open for discussion to examine and critique Canada's colonial legacy.¹¹ The conversations between festival programmers, their audiences, and artists are intended to inform. Therefore, they want to make sure that people understand that they are ultimately pushing for a decolonization of the Canadian experience in the Canadian context. It is not necessarily formally mandated within the organization, but it is something that they push for as individuals and as a group of people working within an organization. Hence, when they say they will keep an open spirit of sustained inquiry, it is an acknowledgment of the complexity of this particular subject and the need to encourage learning around it.¹²

* * *

ZKM | Center for Art and Media

Based in Karlsruhe, Germany, ZKM was founded 31 years ago. Now, it is commonly acknowledged that new media is a major driving force in all parts of our lives. However, in 1989, the meaning of a new media art center was not clear at that time. When ZKM opened, communication technology was completely different than what we use today. Back then, people did not use smartphones. By working in this field, as an arts institution, ZKM always asks how technology is shaping our life in

11. Ibid., 33.

12. Ibid., 33.

today's society.¹³ Through the development over the last years, it has become more and more clear that media technologies are a crucial and central part of our lives. Therefore, media art has a remarkable capability to reflect on how societies will develop and how technology will shape our future. After working in this media art field for so long, ZKM is now regarded as a very unique center for arts worldwide.

Today, we are in a post-media society and era, and everything we do is mediated through media. Ziegler adds that media technology has been involved in our daily lives, and we cannot separate it from our lives anymore. Artists are dealing with this aspect, which has become more and more central, by experimenting with possible future uses of all sorts of technology more independently.¹⁴ ZKM plays a crucial role in developing more independent and free media using technology and also to widen our imagination of how arts institutions are essential to citizens' lives. *Global Art Museum (GAM)* by ZKM is one example of organizing a project towards institutional decolonization and reframing the art historical canon's Euro/ US-centrism.

Global Art and the Museum

From 2006-2016, Peter Weibel and Hans Belting at ZKM | Center for Arts and Media Karlsruhe in Germany launched the *Global Art Museum (GAM)* project. GAM is centered and focused on contemporary museum practices rather than museum theory, which analyzes all sorts of museums in a western context and view. The word

13. Ziegler, Philipp. Zoom Interview with the author, September 3, 2020.

14. Ibid.

globalization has become a buzz word worldwide. However, the issue of globalization's influence on modern art and institutions remains unaccounted for.¹⁵ Therefore, ZKM created the GAM program with the goal of launching an analysis of the transformation of art production, expanded to the global level, and also the development of art museums. The goal of this program was to raise awareness about such transformation and what globalization meant for the establishment of innovative art worlds.

In January 2006, the first project meeting launched the standard musicological conversation into a broader research context by defining museums as disputed places, where the portrayal of a particular culture became a political matter. In June 2006, the second conference in Karlsruhe affirmed the high importance of the initiative,¹⁶ stating various current issues, including contemporary art's new aims and directions, museums have to rethink their collections and exhibition strategy in reference to non-western art. Group members from all over the world called for an effort to create an open conversation and ongoing discussions between institutions.

The workshop of the GAM project was arranged into categories representing sub-sections of the overall topics, such as Eastern Europe, Anthropologists, the Islamic world, and East Asia. Eastern European members started the dialogue on the first day, with comments on the current predicament in their nations, including an effort to

15. "About the Project," accessed October 11, 2020, <https://zkm.de/en/about-the-project>.

16. Peter Weibel, Andrea Buddensieg, and Rasheed Araeen, "*Contemporary Art and the Museum: A Global Perspective* (Ostfildern: Hatje Cantz, 2007)," 240.

resolve obstacles between the core and the periphery and an effort to meet the double necessities of regional autonomy and involvement.¹⁷

The ZKM | Center for Art and Media, in Karlsruhe, Germany, published a book, *Contemporary Art and the Museum: A Global Perspective*. This ground-breaking volume was the first effort to record the effect of globalization on contemporary art, as reflected by various analysis essays. Special emphasis was given to nations "beyond Euramerica."¹⁸ In the book, John Clark presents a new landscape of art production, distinguished by its worldwide extension, and the inclusion of non-Western artists in museum collections in the West, which remains an underrepresented segment.¹⁹



Figure 1. A poster image of *Global Art and the Museum*. (Photograph by ZKM | Center for Arts and Media Karlsruhe, <https://zkm.de/en/about-the-project>).

17. Ibid., 36.

18. Weibel and Buddensieg, 6.

19. Ibid., 36.

* * *

Museum as Site for Social Action (MASS Action)

The Minneapolis Institute of Art created a three-year strategic project called, *Museum as Site for Social Action (MASS)*. The project is a collaborative work aiming to associate museums with policies that are more equal and inclusive. While institutions continue to develop their identity in the twenty-first century, the Minneapolis Institute of Art movement asks professionals to consider the following questions:

*“What is the role and responsibility of the museum in responding to issues affecting our communities locally and globally? How do the museum’s internal practices need to change in order to align with, and better inform, their public practice? How can the museum be used as a site for social action?”*²⁰

In the first year of the project, in October of 2016, *MASS Action* was initiated with a meeting of fifty museum professionals for an action-oriented dialogue regarding inclusivity and equity within the museum, related programming, and audience engagement. Group members engaged collaboratively to define the most important problems in the area and are now creating a resource toolkit. In the second year, on October 11-13, 2017, a wider conference was held to involve staff members from each institution who plan to use the toolkit and are committed to integrating inclusive techniques into their museums.

The conference included discussions about how to bring theory into practice, case studies, and platforms for peer-to-peer research. Institutions that participated will

20. “MASS Action,” accessed October 29, 2020, <https://www.museumaction.org/>.

continue to draw on the commitments decided at the 2017 Conference, seeking to: facilitate social justice and social change, establish more inclusive practices in their museums, and improve such practices in the sector as a whole. Between October 10-12, 2018, the MASS Action Convention of 2018 took place,²¹ continuing to build upon the framework established in previous conferences.



Figure 1. A view from the 2016 MASS Action Convening held at the Minneapolis Institute of Art (Mia) in Minneapolis, Minnesota. (Photograph by the Minneapolis Institute of Art, accessed October 31, 2020, <https://www.museumaction.org/2017-convening-images-1>).

21. "About," accessed October 29, 2020, <https://www.museumaction.org/about>.



Figure 2. A view from the 2016 MASS Action Convening held at the Minneapolis Institute of Art (Mia) in Minneapolis, Minnesota. (Photograph by the Minneapolis Institute of Art, accessed October 31, 2020, <https://www.museumaction.org/2017-convening-images-1>).

The Role of the Minneapolis Institute of Art for the MASS Action

The *MASS Action* resulting from the initiative belongs to the group of museum professionals and stakeholders engaged in helping to build and represent it. For this initiative, the Minneapolis Institute of Art was the organizer and forum, providing a platform for the project, which is already being conducted around the world, and engaging the field abroad. The Minneapolis Institute of Art recognizes that their institution may not be the best indicator of inclusion and equity but instead provides an example of how museums, in general, might be dedicated to becoming more equal and inclusive museums.²²

22. Ibid., 38.

Toolkit

The Minneapolis Institute of Art offers the resources from *MASS Action* on their website, including the theories and tools needed to build social equality within the museum sector. Based on the toolkit,²³ individuals who work in the museum sector, those working from the inside as well as those working on the margins of the field, may begin to implement changes within institutions, even if the institutions themselves have not embraced widespread change. *MASS Action* is no longer a project, but rather a network of individuals dedicated to seeing a shift in the museum sector by connecting in unity and realizing that there is strength in numbers. The museums will continue to see progress on a wide scale, like, “fractals,”²⁴ if all museums agree to do their part on a smaller, more individual scale.

MASS Action defines a museum as a place that establishes, explains, and gathers cultural knowledge.²⁵ They assert:

*“When we speak of the museum structure, we are not merely speaking metaphorically; the physical space and siting of the museum matters, in terms of what it communicates to visitors. There is no such thing as a neutral space. All spaces function as a social construction, and all spaces have an intended audience, an ideal subject.”*²⁶

23. The Minneapolis Institute of Art, “Resources-MASS Action,” Resources-MASS Action, 2017, https://static1.squarespace.com/static/58fa685dff7c50f78be5f2b2/t/59dcdd27e5dd5b5a1b51d9d8/1507646780650/TOOLKIT_10_2017.pdf.

24. The Minneapolis Institute of Art, 7.

25. The Minneapolis Institute of Art, 12.

26. The Minneapolis Institute of Art, 13.

Museums are changing to discursive places and spaces where audiences can explore and discuss the concepts presented in exhibits and collections. Across the financial, technical, and cultural fields, audiences are seeking dialogue with museums. In institutions, which are, in fact, increasingly networked and interactive communities, audiences expect space for their voices and perspectives to be shared and felt.²⁷ In the museum space, artists produce works that question the traditional relationship between artwork and the public, aiming for participatory, open-ended, research-based works over static object exhibits.

Museums have long faced a crisis of significance, as the donor class that produced and sustained them through the ages are constantly under pressure to share influence with their audiences in new and different ways. By using the toolkit provided by *MASS Action*, museum professionals can present ways of thinking and operate, which enable their institution to become a place of social action. In addition, by using the eight practices of the MASS Action toolkit, universities are teaching students who will be professionals working in museums how to incorporate these principles and tools: before they even step foot inside their first job.

From participation to shared authority and social justice

The following statement is from the MASS Action toolkit:

“We seek to decolonize and reframe our institutions’ authority from one of ownership and objectivity to one of collaboration and transparency. We want to make our museums less about things and more about people, love, trust, and shared authority. We believe this is work that challenges us to rethink many of the things people value in our institutions. We understand the huge implications that

27. The Minneapolis Institute of Art, 14-15.

raising these issues can have. But it's critical work that is necessary to transform our institutions into places that serve and represent the broader public.”²⁸

The statement above indicates that achieving decolonization in museums and sharing authority means that institutions may need to reframe their sites as an inclusive place to reflect a wider group of people. They can foster inclusion by appealing to audiences of all backgrounds and identities. Inclusive museums can break down barriers and produce more participation from audiences, and participatory institutions can share authority with their audiences by interacting with them in-depth.

According to the book, *Letting go*, museum workers pave the way for active audience participation and shared authority in the arts by defining different routes through the content and creating bridges so that audiences can easily communicate their own experiences.²⁹ Gonzales explains that a variety of degrees of engagement are possible in the context of the museum and encourages museum workers to think of participation and inclusion as precursors to shared authority. Audience involvement does not automatically result in audiences sharing the power of the museum; participation starts with an individual feeling supported and involved in the museum process.³⁰

28. The Minneapolis Institute of Art, “Resources-MASS Action,” Resources-MASS Action, 2018, https://static1.squarespace.com/static/58fa685dff7c50f78be5f2b2/t/59dcdd27e5dd5b5a1b51d9d8/1507646780650/TOOLKIT_10_2017.pdf.

29. Bill Adair, Benjamin Filene, and Laura Koloski, in. “*Letting Go?: Sharing Historical Authority in a User-Generated World.*” (Philadelphia: The Pew Center for Arts & Heritage, 2011), p. 13.

30. Elena Gonzales, “Welcome, Inclusion, and Sharing Authority,” in, “*Exhibitions for Social Justice,*” (London; New York: Routledge, Taylor et Francis Group, 2020), pp. 147-149.

The following chapters will explore how new media art can act as a tool to create a bridge between the public and museums/art organizations through curatorial practices that encourage audiences' engagement and shared authority. The thesis also explores how curators and directors developed their institutions for inclusion and equity and broadened the space for the wider public.

Interaction, Participation, and Collaboration Using New Media Art

Introduction

Many new media art museums and organizations want a much more dynamic and active relationship with their audiences, so they are attempting to provide a more impressive and meaningful experience for visitors. Curators and directors organize their exhibitions, events, or programs by creating interactive, participative, and collaborative systems through new media art. New media art is a significant platform to interact with and forge deep connections with audiences. In arts organizations and institutions, new media art has become an integral way to boost engagement and communication within the public and share a wide array of perspectives. New media art can create an intimate relationship between works of art and audiences or even among artworks themselves.

In the interview, John Durant, MIT Museum director, mentioned a quote by Confucius: “I hear and I forget. I see and I remember. I do and I understand.”¹ That means true learning is only noticeable when an action is created by the experience.

1. Durant, John. Zoom interview with the author, October 5, 2020.

Therefore, Durant said that by getting the visitor to become an active participant in the experience, that cultivates a much greater understanding with the visitor in museums. He added that even art museums have been affected by this. "It's now more common in an art museum to find the exhibits that require the visitors to do something and make the visitor an active participant."²

As Graham and Cook said, new media art regards "process and systems"³ rather than objects. When curators and directors create communication systems such as exhibitions, events, or programs, the audience connects to other audiences and are provided interactive, participative, and collaborative moments while sharing information and responding to issues. Not every new media artwork, new media exhibitions, and programs include interaction, participation, or collaboration. However, those can act as key features of activism, representing the practice of struggling for social and political discussions.

An Active, Engaged, and Interactive Audience

In the development of art since the twentieth century, the audience of the exhibitions have become more and more important.⁴ The head of the curatorial department at ZKM | Center for Art and Media, Philipp Ziegler said, "This is not a recent process. The process began at least in the 1960s. More and more, art has become

2. Ibid., 45.

3. Beryl Graham and Sarah Cook, *Rethinking Curating: Art after New Media* (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 2015), 111.

4. Ziegler, Philipp. Zoom Interview with the author, September 3, 2020.

interdisciplinary; the audience has become more relevant in those interactions.”⁵ He added that audiences have become a crucial part of the production of the work and are no longer separate from it. According to Ziegler, new media art continues to shift from serving a passive audience to an active, engaged, interactive audience. Also, computers, video, and digital production are increasingly prevalent in the arts. This contributes to increasing potential and possibilities for the audience to interact with art. He said, “We at ZKM | Center for Art and Media Karlsruhe define ourselves as a performative museum of participation and interaction, and a major part of our collection is interactive work. This makes it now with COVID19 very difficult for us to open because we engage the audience to be part of the works: touch the works, press buttons, or you have to wear interfaces, but this is, of course, also mirroring a situation, how new media has become much more accessible for everybody.”⁶

An Open Learning System

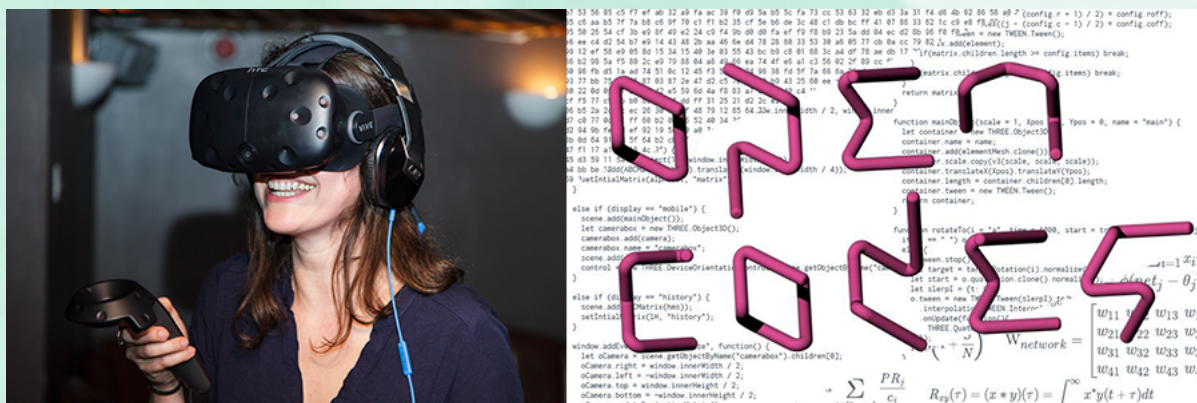


Figure 1. An audience with a VR headset and a poster of the exhibition, *Open Codes*. (Photograph by The Babraham Institute, October 19, 2017,

5. Ibid., 46.

6. Ibid., 46.

<https://www.babraham.ac.uk/news/2019/11/chromos-at-zkm-open-codes-exhibition>).

Ziegler believes that new media can empower audiences to share and become part of a democratic society. For example, at the ZKM, the exhibition *Open Codes* ran from 2017- 2019. In *Open Codes*, the observers' participation and interaction with the works is a crucial part. Sometimes, however, new media can only be utilized by those who can purchase, understand, and use the equipment. *Open Codes* reached out to audiences of all ages and backgrounds through easy interaction, participation, and collaboration. The exhibition was full of community education and active participants, and ZKM became an open-source community in which people can easily collaborate and become more creative, competent, and knowledgeable.⁷

Also, the architecture of the exhibition was designed to evoke the atmosphere of space for doing, making, and co-working together.⁸ It diverged from the typical exhibitions in the White Cube setting, and everything was free of charge. ZKM developed an innovative learning concept with the goal of opening up art for people of all ages and walks of life, from toddlers and small children to older people, from hackers to artists, computer scientists, and coding learners. ZKM included a variety of communication programs: talks, workshops, parties, algoraves (events where people dance to music generated from algorithms), science slams, experimental tours, and

7. "Open Codes Brochure," *Open Codes Brochure* (Karlsruhe, Germany, 2017), <https://zkm.de/en/publication/open-codes-leben-in-digitalen-welten-englisch>.

8. Ibid.

programming courses with free drinks and snacks.⁹ In the exhibition, audiences share their perspectives with each other, gain broader perspectives, and experience a wide array of voices. They produce their own content and dive into diverse topics with others through deep interaction, participation, and collaboration.

Curators of the ZKM also created “work-stations”¹⁰ to give people space to exchange their perspectives and participate in the discourse. The “work-stations” were implemented to create a co-working space, a learning space, and the curators wanted to create more interaction. They hope the audience can explore the works in-depth as they unfold over a long time. The main focus was to give the audience the possibility to feel at home, provide them with the chance for breaks, and do other activities in the museum: working, learning, networking, doing their homework, and doing sports. When the new media art exhibit *Open Codes* was on view, the ZKM provided free drinks and snacks to help the audience enjoy the exhibition.

9. Ibid., 48.

10. Ibid., 48.



Figure 2. Bernd Lintermann, YOU:R:CODE. (Photograph by ZKM | Center for Art and Media, 2017, 2017, <https://zkm.de/en/exhibition/2017/10/open-codes>).

Ziegler said, “Open Codes was about our digital worlds, how we are influenced, and [how] all parts of our lives are influenced by the digital. But by doing this, we didn't want to try to justify one selection of artwork nor the audience consuming it. It's more an open learning system, as a freehub, a free platform for learning, shared with activists, hackers, artists, universities, and companies engaged in this field.”¹¹ It rendered the museum as “a university”¹² and open learning space for the audience to discuss all those crucial questions to the community participants.

11. Ibid., 46.

12. Ibid., 46.



Figure 3. A view of the exhibition, *Open Codes*. (Photograph by ZKM | Center for Art and Media, 2017, 2017, <https://zkm.de/en/exhibition/2017/10/open-codes>).

Ziegler realized how important it is to establish open learning situations to engage in discussing and learning knowledge. When ZKM reaches this moment of exchange and sharing together, they become more and more knowledgeable about the issues, what technology can do, what it does, and how we as humans can productively utilize technology. They have explored data and how it exists in our lives. Ziegler said, “It’s not only the consumer anymore. I am also aware of the value of my data and how it is used but know that I cannot control it. I can’t control it in a better way. And just to teach this or give the possibilities to learn to experience across disciplines, we realize

how important cultural institutions are in this field at this moment to create another imagination of our technological future.”¹³

Interactive New Media Work

Interactive new media work goes together with social action. For example, Beryl Graham is an artist, curator in new media art, writer, and educator, and she has a particular interest in interactive work. Graham said, “Once you start to have a real interest in the audience, and not just as people who pay to buy exhibition tickets, you can imagine how deeply they might interact with the artworks. This goes together with the idea of activism and wanting to make a social change.”¹⁴ In the interview, Graham mentioned Rafael Lozano-Hemmer,¹⁵ who does a lot of activist work in public spaces and is very into interaction with groups of people. He builds forums for public engagement using technologies such as “robotic lights, digital fountains, computerized

13. Ibid., 46.

14. Graham, Beryl. Zoom Interview with the author, September 3, 2020.

15. Rafael Lozano-Hemmer sometimes created some interactive new media artworks that include important messages. For example, his work, "Encode/Decode," the 90-meter projection work, displays hundreds of thousands of letters written by Stuart Hall. Hall was a prominent Black activist and post-colonial theorist, a Jamaican-British philosopher who in the 1970s brought us good concepts and development tools against misleading information. Hall's widow allows access to all of his letters written and let them donate some of the funds raised of this work to Black Lives Matter. ¹⁶

16. Artful Jaunts, “Rafael Lozano-Hemmer on Making Big Installations Safe for Social Distancing,” Artful Jaunts, accessed December 1, 2020, <https://www.artfuljaunts.com/magazine/rafael-lozanolhemmer-on-making-big-installations-safe-for-social-distancing>.

surveillance, media walls and telematic networks.”¹⁷ Graham describes Lozano-Hemmer's approach to this type of work as “Interaction for groups is sort of out of control. It's out of control of the curator, and the artists, so that you have to trust your audiences that they are not going to do anything too bad.”¹⁸

Graham contends that it makes for more of a collaborative relationship with the audience; they are not just passive observers. They have to get involved, and you have to try and make them comfortable enough to participate. That type of chain applies to new media as well as to public spaces. Graham believes that some artists like Rafael Lozano-Hemmer have a very good understanding of that. Therefore, the curator has to trust the artists. Then the artist and the curator have to trust the audience, which is quite a departure from how some curators have traditionally worked. Graham said, “You have to be able to trust and collaborate. It is greater fidelity to the curatorial practice, and I think that is a good phrase because it also has more fidelity to the nature of the art. If it is interactive or participatory or activist, then you have to have that fidelity in the intent of the artwork.”¹⁹

As an art critic and independent curator specializing in new media and digital art, Dominique Moulon has always appreciated interactive artworks because they involve the public, and institutions appreciate that the public is engaged and immersed

17. “Artist Biography,” accessed December 1, 2020, <https://www.lozano-hemmer.com/bio.php>.

18. *Ibid.*, 52.

19. *Ibid.*, 52.

in an exhibition. Moulon said, “There are some artworks that you can look at. Then you experience them. It helps you to understand these artworks differently.”²⁰ According to an interview with Moulon, some very serious interesting artworks are immersive, virtual, and interactive that has to be experienced by the public. Moulon said, “I would say that usually the public appreciates interacting, participating, and collaborating. As a curator, I appreciate that. It's not only about participation, but it triggers some ideas.”²¹ Moulon also has exhibited sculptures, photography, video, and 3D sequences. These may be pictures taken with a camera, but audiences have to consider their relationship with these features, and the technologies. Moulon appreciates the effort to assemble artwork – not only because of these categories of interactivity, impressiveness, virtual, sculpture photography, etc., but also about an idea, a title, a theory, a feeling, or a theme. “I would say that there are many artworks that I consider more or less consequential in the use of technologies, and when I curate an exhibition, I empower them. You can have a picture that was made with a digital tool, but that is not digital anymore when exhibited.”²²

Anna Frants, new media art curator and interactive installations artist, said of her work: “In my works, the viewer is part of the installation. The material is different. It can be smelled; it can be heard. The viewers become part of the installation, so he or she

20. Moulon, Dominique. Zoom Interview with the author, September 7, 2020.

21. Ibid.

22. Ibid.

reflects on herself or himself whatever they see.”²³ She has also been curated interactive new media exhibitions, and she includes works of art that explore immersive, participatory, performative, and kinetic. Frants’ works put together a series of concepts and projects based on experience, based on engagement between the audience and artwork.

Work Closely and Collaboratively with Audiences / More Accessible to Audiences

Beryl Graham, a curator in new media art, believes that it is very important to work with all areas of museums, as educational workers in museums have valuable knowledge about their particular audience, allowing curators to work closely and collaboratively with them.²⁴ Artists, by their turn, are uniquely adept at engaging audiences on specific issues. YoHa, an artists’ partnership group, is a good example, particularly an open data project they presented called *Invisible Airs*.

Invisible Airs was designed by using the open data in a database of a city council, Bristol, England, in this case, to regulate the operation of complicated, pneumatic machines that represented council spending, financial outlays, etc. For example, one machine allowed audiences to understand expenditure by riding atop a bicycle seat, which would go up or down, based on government expenditures at the time. Each of the machines was tied to actual, open data that was publicly available and engineered to be responsive to that data in a way that made it more accessible to audiences. By

23. Frants, Anna. Zoom Interview with the author, September 4, 2020.

24. Ibid, 52.

making political expenditure visible and more easily quantifiable, YoHa was able to engage the public on this real-life issue through their art.²⁵

Collaboration Between Artist and Curator

In new media exhibitions, there is also a closer relationship between artist and curator. For example, as a researcher and curator in the field of new media art, Sarah Cook collaborates with other artists in the exhibitions by working from an initial idea that the artist is working on new media art. In the interview, she explained how she collaborates with artists for the new media exhibitions. “They might develop a proposal, and it might go back and forth where you decide about the requirements of the work in terms of space or time and technology and how the audience interacts with the work becomes a question of negotiation in terms of what's possible. And the best thing is to keep an open dialogue.”²⁶

Sarah Cook works with new media art in her curatorial practice to provide rich content to audiences of the galleries to improve interactions, participation, and collaborations. The exhibition *24/7*, curated by Sarah Cook, offered easy access to a multi-sensory experience through five themed zones from the freezing light of the moon to the disappearing sunlight of sunset, which features over 50 multi-disciplinary pieces.²⁷ Also, *24/7* collected visitor feedback interviews online. It was trying to bring people into the exhibition physically. And then some of the artworks themselves were

25. Ibid., 52.

26. Cook, Sarah. Zoom Interview with the author, August 11, 2020.

about participating as a community. That included Daily tous les jours' work, "I Heard There Was a Secret Chord," which is very much a collective experience. There were a number of pieces in the exhibition emphasizing shared physical experience. They portrayed activism through a lot of feedback from people who saw the show. They made viewers reassess their relationship to technology – where and how much time they were online, or how much time they spent on their phones, or whether they knew if the software on their phones was tracking them. And so that was awareness-raising.

Cook said, "I think it is quite important to pay attention to the cultural and political content of the works. Those concerns they expressed to us in the feedback forms or exit interviews or in a survey where we asked visitors to fill in some very basic questions about the exhibition: Tell us what you thought about whether it changed the way you thought about technology."²⁸

Social Programs Address A Wide Range of Political Topics

Images Festival also created a link and offered people opportunities to interact and participate. The executive director of Images Festival, Samuel La France said, "We continue to see more arts organizations inviting grassroots or community-oriented organizations to participate in audience development and engagement."²⁹ Image festival put together programs that support members of their community, inviting them

27. Ibid., 56.

28. Ibid., 56.

29. La France, Samuel. Zoom Interview with the author, September 21, 2020.

into art space presentations to discuss the actual issues at play that outlined, suggested, or hinted at in the works that they are showing.

From Engagement to Social Justice and Activism Against Inequity

Museum advocacy is a distinctive development beyond participatory experience and practice. The aim of participatory art in museums is to recreate and realize a common, public space of socially shared engagement, achieved through constructivist actions of social impact. These actions, by offering an alternative, contradict the injustice of society. Participation is itself a core characteristic of activism that reflects the practice of fighting for change; “struggling,” for example, requires participation. At the same time, even though activism always indicates participation, participation does not always indicate activism.”¹

When participation takes on a concerted, essential mass of resources designed to make substantial changes, it rises to the level of activism. Community participation and socially engaged practices in museums denote change and are at the core of discussing who and what is being changed and how that change is achieved. Activism requires the museum to be opened to acting as both a “change agent” and a “change recipient.”

1. Bart Cammaerts and Nico Carpenter, *Reclaiming the Media: Communication Rights and Democratic Media Roles* (Bristol: Intellect, 2007).

In order to effect community and societal change, a museum must also be opened to change within the institution.²

This chapter shows the example of curatorial practices that establish genuine community engagement and more meaningful audience interaction with what is produced. The exhibition's study revealed that the evaluation of the exhibition's "the appropriateness, feasibility, acceptability, and effectiveness of in reducing racism and increasing acceptance of racial, ethnic, and cultural diversity."³ Research is presented showing the impact of the exhibitions, done by collecting student and teacher narratives, surveys, video diaries, and focus group interview results. Seven schools completed the full research process, and five of the seven schools finished baseline surveys regarding survey participation. Eighty students completed the qualitative evaluation elements, and forty-six students answered the survey itself. Individual interviews with seven school employees were also conducted, and six museum workers completed a focus group and interview data collection exercise.

Identity: yours, mine, ours

The exhibition, *Identity: yours, mine, ours*, was held at the Immigration Museum in Victoria, Australia. The exhibition's theme is "Identity; who we are, who others think

2. Moya McFadzean et al., "Inside out/Outside In," in *Museum Activism* (Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge, an imprint of the Taylor & Francis Group, 2019), pp. 256-267.

3. Jessica Walton and Yin Paradies, "Identity: Yours, Mine, Ours Exhibition Evaluation Report" (Museum Victoria, April 2106), <https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5835166203596ef406c87231/t/59a7544b6f4ca36321b263b0/1504138338606/Identity-Exhibition-ARC-Evaluation-Report-Museum-Victoria-2016.pdf>

we are, and what it means to belong and not belong in Australia.”⁴ In the exhibition, the engagement of personal stories, fascinating and convincing photographs, and interactive multi-media interactions helps audiences find connections with each other on regularly and question the assumptions individuals create for others. Audiences engage with others by sharing their own experiences, establishing their own identities, and celebrating diversity in society.

According to McFadzean, audiences opened themselves to “attitudinal and behavioral change,”⁵ in a positive movement that the museum aims to bring into being through visitor-exhibition activities aimed at impacting on the community. The pedagogy of effect or sentiment is essential to communicating with viewers in, *Identity: yours, mine, ours*. By experiencing and feeling, in addition to reading, listening, and observing, audiences are encouraged to consider questions of inclusion, racism, diversity, and distinction.

4. “About the Exhibition,” Museums Victoria, accessed November 1, 2020, <https://museums victoria.com.au/immigrationmuseum/resources/identity/about-the-exhibition/>.

5. *Ibid.*, 60.



Figure 1. Participatory video installation, “Welcome,” as part of the, *Identity: Yours, Mine, Ours*, image exhibition, at the Immigration Museum in Melbourne, Australia (Photograph from Museum Victoria, accessed November 3, 2020, https://www.researchgate.net/figure/Walking-toward-the-Welcome-video-installation-Image-Still-shot-from-Lynette-Wallworths_fig1_306003452.)

Identity: yours, mine, ours started with the life-size scale participatory video installation art, “Welcome” by Lynette Wallworth.⁶ It seems like the people in “Welcome” reach out beyond the screen, encouraging the audience to shift from being a passive observer to an active participant. The people in the artwork, “Welcome,” included various people from different cultural and religious backgrounds, classes, genders, ethnicities, racial backgrounds, and ages. The interactive displays provided a

6. Ibid., 61.

place for audiences to draw on their own perceptions about the people they listen to and hear about, as well as their own sense of identity and connection.



Figure 2. Guests engaging with the large touch table with four audio-visual touchscreens at the exhibition launch, (Photograph by Benjamin Healley from Museum Victoria, accessed November 3, 2020, [https://recollections.nma.gov.au/issues/vol_6_no_2/exhibition_reviews/identity.](https://recollections.nma.gov.au/issues/vol_6_no_2/exhibition_reviews/identity))

After audiences engaged with “Welcome,” they interacted with a large touch table with four audio-visual touchscreens. The large touch table showed the rotating images in the “Welcome” installation appeared to evoke more acute observations and feelings in visitors, versus introspective thinking regarding their stories. The visitors were invited to think about their own assumptions about the person being portrayed’s

background and identity, as the touch screen asked questions like: 'Where do you think I'm from?' or 'How many languages do you think I speak?'⁷ The visitors then answered the questions, shared their thinking, and listened to the person tell them the truth about their story, identity, and background. When using the audio-visual touchscreen table with the rotating images in the "Welcome" installation, audiences appeared to think more deeply about their assumptions.⁸

Based on the Australian Research Council study, *Identity: yours, mine, ours*, created a more reflective and broader awareness of issues by offering an effective, immersive approach to interacting with prejudice, racism, and experiences of identity.⁹ While the acquisition of awareness is important, it is not enough to merely learn about racial, ethnic, and cultural diversity. A deeper level of awareness and change is required for people to feel sufficiently moved to change their attitudes and behaviors. The report showed that providing opportunities for learners to create personal relationships helped to understand narratives of multi-culturalism by encouraging audiences to think more profoundly about what experiences belonged to them.¹⁰

Andrea Witcomb notes in her study of the *Identity: yours, mine, ours*, exhibition that the role of, 'affect,' that such deep participant interaction possibilities result in, is "a

7. "Identity," accessed November 4, 2020, https://recollections.nma.gov.au/issues/vol_6_no_2/exhibition_reviews/identity.

8. Ibid., 61.

9. Ibid., 61.

10. Ibid., 61.

profoundly effective, sensory mode of experience, that is tangible, while still belonging to the poetic, rather than the practical, positivist domain."¹¹ This more reflexive and empathic perception of racism and diversity encouraged the multi-model interactions used in the exhibition, and such perceptions could not be evoked by merely reading about these contemporary problems. By recognizing the importance of incarnated experience in museums and the essential role of relational learning, museums will inspire visitors' ethical and political imaginations and bring tangible changes to their attitudes and behaviors.¹² One of the students who visited the exhibition said:

"You know about racism and stuff before you went to the exhibitions but then...especially with the ..I watched all of them, and I am like, okay, you could see...everyone's opinion and what they were thinking or how they were feeling. So it was...like you go deeper into the situation. So instead of just seeing..."¹³

Based on the report,¹⁴ exhibition opportunities that give integrated and interactive experiences will allow audiences to self-reflection, create expertise, question perceptions, and increase personal awareness. The report also explored the 'feeling' that persists, predominantly with students and teachers, allowing a degree of reflexivity and/or moments of intense awareness. In addition, students who visited the exhibitions with few to no meaningful connections with various cultural and social

11. Ibid., 61.

12. Ibid., 61.

13. Ibid., 61.

14. Ibid., 61.

groups or experiences of discrimination can have a higher learning rate, significantly raising the effect of transparent and interactive exhibits.

The report of the exhibition showed that the exhibition, *Identity: yours, mine, ours*, built a more diverse and deeper perception of social issues, with an immersive, collaborative, and effective approach. The exhibition also reflects on inequality and the experiences of belonging and identity and is vital to creating a more inclusive understanding of social issues. The report reveals that the exhibition enabled individuals to learn deeply about racism and also about strategies to counter inequity in daily life. Also, students who participated in the research often reported subtle, but important, improvements and changes in their attitudes and perceptions towards others who could be considered to be different from themselves.

Identity: yours, mine, ours, is a full and well-promoted interactive, multi-media experience, which has deftly considered exhibition layout, design, and the indescribable effect that a successful immersive exhibition has on the unsuspecting audience. As a result, this exhibition is an example that offers social and ethical engagement, which can enhance the moral and political creativity of audiences and make exhibition spaces double as social justice spaces.

Effectiveness of New Media Art to Focus on Social Justice and Activism Against Inequity

Introduction

New media art pieces in the exhibitions and programs have the potential to allow the audience to think about gender, race, and sexuality and to recognize that these are ongoing issues that demand action. This type of work can lead to the world of art being a more inclusive sphere, where curators and directors harness the power of new media work to spur innovative and ongoing dialogue. If new media art curators and directors can use their positions to act as advocates for the medium, then artists, organizations, exhibitions, and educational programs employing or highlighting new media work will benefit, giving marginalized voices greater enfranchisement in museum settings. Contemporary art exhibitions using mediums such as new media are able to push societal and cultural boundaries by reacting empathically and critically to the world around them and challenging the rest of us to consider important questions.

Re-shaping New Media Norms

Kimjang's approach to social activism prioritizes shifting the male gaze to bring more voices into the new media world. Kimjang said, "It is possible more and more. In the past, the film medium itself was manipulated by the adult, white male. I think that the expansion into new media of the visual gaze by adult white men was a product of

the film and art industries. Photos of women being objectified by the “male gaze” was not much different from traditional paintings and other depictions of women in the fine arts. Women’s bodies are commercialized and objectified by male artists. However, there has been a slight change since 16mm and 8mm cameras have been released leading to artworks in the United States containing more women’s perspectives and gazes through video art.”¹

In new media digital culture, the audience should consider their own presentation and voice in a society that isolates and excludes through the gaze of the adult non-disabled heterosexual male. This norm is continually being called into question through the various experiments tried out in new media art. This means that the main subject of this artform has changed, and the art world has changed such that anyone can participate in and create new media art. It is now possible for anyone, even children, to be a new media artist. iGong also asks how we can demonstrate how new media can capture the expansion of different gazes as well as the senses and sensations of other kinds of work than those emanating from the male gaze, as has happened for more than 100 years.

The Potential of New Media Art

New media art can act as a tool of social justice and activism more easily than exhibitions, programs, or events using other media. In my interview with the curator Nathalie Boseul Shin, she explained that new media art has the potential to be used for

1. Kimjang, Jen Yeunho. Personal Interview with the author, Seoul, South Korea, August 7, 2020.

social activism and justice through curators' workshops and educational programs. Hence, as a new media art curator, shin focuses on education programs and workshops in order to expand the social role of the medium by introducing and talking about equipment, processes, and stories contained in media artworks, as they facilitate a moment of interaction with the audience.² (I will explore Shin's works in the case studies section.)

As stated by the article, "Awakening the Criticism of the Audience, a Curator Specializing in Media Art," Shin said the attractiveness of media art is the fact that it keeps people awake. Shin thinks that media art includes not only works based on technology but also works criticizing society, as she explains here:

*"Media art is what brings to mind things that modern people, living surrounded by technology, have not seen and thought of through work. Through media art, people can stay awake, without being buried in their daily lives."*³

Shin also believes that the advantage of media art is that the format can be modified to suit any place, as is alluded to in the work of Kyungyoon Ho. "One can put a single DVD in their bag, and then play it on the monitors provided in any exhibit in the exhibition hall, or shoot the project onto a large screen,"⁴ Shin said. She further

2. Shin, Nathalie Boseul. Personal Interview with the author, Seoul, South Korea, August 17, 2020.

3. Bokyung Park, "Awakening the Criticism of the Audience, a Curator Specializing in Media Art," September 19, 2015, <http://inews.ewha.ac.kr/news/articleView.html?idxno=19460>.

4. Kyungyoon Ho, "[Site+People] Shin Boseul Total Museum of Art Curator," Daljin Kim Art Institute [Site+People] Shin Boseul Total Museum of Art Curator, accessed July 20, 2020, <http://www.daljin.com/column/6090>.

elaborated that some new media art exhibitions struggle with the budget needed to provide media art equipment on the large scale needed, but that since most of her work is focused on social issues, it is less dependent on equipment in order for audiences to interact with it.

New media art exhibitions offer many new interaction possibilities, such as the opportunity to connect with different communities and varied audience groups. According to Philipp Ziegler, in the past, curators had to think about the audience that was likely to view a piece and focus the design and interface to be specific to that audience. Now, however, engagement with a wider variety of audience groups and communities is the primary focus of new media art exhibits, so tailored aspects of an exhibit designed for certain age groups or social classes are not necessary. Social justice and human rights are common themes in new media art exhibits, and these issues appeal to every generation.

Ziegler describes the versatility of new media art institutions in the following way: "Institutions are a platform which opens doors allowing all to communicate and participate, as they bring their own concerns and experiences with them."⁵ As a curator at the ZKM | Center for Art and Media Karlsruhe, Ziegler curated exhibitions to be capable of communicating with anyone, and strove for the work to be as straight forward and transparent as possible, in order to incorporate a variety of expectations. (I explored how the ZKM | Center for Art and Media Karlsruhe curates the new media

5. Ziegler, Philipp. Zoom Interview with the author, September 3, 2020.

art exhibition, *Open Codes* with an open learning system so that audiences can easily participate and integrate them into their institution in the chapter: Interaction, Participation, Collaboration Using New Media Art).

According to Sarah Cook, as a curator works through new media art, they can contribute to social, cultural, and political discussions as the same technology used in other aspects of daily life are incorporated in new media artwork. This commonality of technology and medium allows audiences to take an active part in social and cultural discussions, such as: censorship, issues of self-representation, online bullying, and various modes of activism.⁶

Directors Can Highlight the Persistent Nature of Social Concerns: Gender And LGBTQ+ Issues, Racism and Sexuality, And the Rights of Women, Sexual Minorities, Children, and Disabled People

Samuel La France is a director of Images Festival, where he brings issues to audiences that they can ponder and contemplate. For example, La France said that in Toronto, the concept of sexuality has had a multi-directional focus, through many different mediums and media arts organizations. The late '70's and early '80's were, according to La France, a time when sexuality became a critical point of discussion in art in Toronto, with such issues as what was presented, who was being marginalized, who needed to break out, and what kind of work showcased the subject being discussed.

6. Cook, Sarah. Zoom Interview with the author, August 11, 2020.

Although these issues are still a priority, the focus has evolved so that those conversations intersect with concerns about trans identity, racial identity, sexual identity, etc. The issue of sexuality is ongoing and persistent, and the marginalization of people continues to be relevant to exploration through art. La France believes that the arts have a responsibility to be part of that sustained engagement, by creatively addressing these and other issues.⁷

New Media Art's Role Not Only in Education but Also in Social Justice and Activism Against Inequity

According to Samuel La France, new media art provides people of all ages opportunities to engage with a topic through artistic practice and works, driving home the educational value of presenting either a work facilitated dialogue, or some other form of potential engagement. La France said:

"The educational part is one of the key things that new media allows us to do; to help educate people and inform the way that they think. That educational component can be linked to peoples' interests in social justice and activism."⁸

According to Ziegler, new media exhibition should take audiences to another, often profound level, where individuals confront questions about identity and position in society, racial and sexual issues, feminism and gender theories, hacking, etc. Many artists and curators are very aware of the conventional lines of thought on these issues and how deeply entrenched they can be.⁹

7. La France, Samuel. Zoom Interview with the author, September 21, 2020.

8. Ibid.

9. Ibid., 70.

The new media art exhibition can also be positive, as it encourages networks that provide artists and public opportunities to communicate and interact. With its exhibition *Global aCtIVISm* in 2013 ZKM was heavily involved in artistic performance tools for activists, which were often used by the activists for in-person artistic practice. Since the 1960's, curators have been more encouraging of these types of works; both in museums and on the street. These methods can also be used by curators to educate people in arts organizations or associations for social activism who use these techniques. Ziegler explained:

*" One of our values is welcoming audiences to the arts, and their contributing, or participating in, more social interaction. And then those audiences will think about continuing their participation or activism. It was very clear to us, early on, that technological advances would change society as well as art."*¹⁰

What Makes New Media Art Unique to Focus on Social Justice and Activism Against Inequity

Images Festival has done extensive work in short form presentations, coordinating a number of works being presented together. In these types of presentations, one can see the elusive specificity of how new media communicates when pieces are presented together. This communication style and function operates in a way that is unique to the media arts. The capacity to utilize the moving image, and particularly documentation of distinctive experiences, allows individuals to successfully connect and react to a lived moments and experiences. Successfully eliciting responses

10. Ibid., 70.

helps to galvanize audiences to action when they experience something that leaves them feeling conflicted or emotional, potentially acting as a call to social activism.¹¹

It is crucial for curators to carefully consider the ways in which the structures of their programs, the connections and intersections, produce ideas and thoughts that they want to carry to the audience. Curators and directors need to participate in subsequent discussions with members of the public, after experiencing new media pieces, and coordinate the feedback received with audiences and artistic communities. The in-depth study by the Australian Research Council report about the exhibition, *Identity: yours, mine, ours* is a good example to show an evaluation of the new media exhibition that museum professionals coordinated the audience's feedbacks, narratives, surveys, video diaries, and focus group interview results.

In a similar vein, Beryl Graham insists that new media is inherently social, and inherently participatory, with the significant outcome that people will use new media in their daily lives. Early uses of the internet were focused on its function as a militaristic tool, to be used by government entities. Shortly after, though, the internet began to be used for socializing and social activism, as people increasingly used it to connect with each other, and share knowledge. The primary use of the internet today is as a means of distribution, accessible to many more people than its original form allowed for.¹²

To put this in the perspective of art history, an example from curator David Ross is useful. Ross gave the example of the early days of video, when it first became

11. Ibid., 72.

12. Graham, Beryl. Zoom Interview with the author, September 3, 2020.

available to ordinary people, via (relatively) small, domestic video cameras. This advent of video was simultaneously used for things like MTV (Music Video Television), a very commercial use of video to promote musical groups, people using video for personal or family reasons, and activists using video as a means of recording and sharing experiences, such as early recordings of police brutality. Most people in our society now have video capability available to them every day, by means of a cellphone, which allows the lives and experiences of an increasing number of people to be recorded, and then experienced by others at a later time. When video cameras were first available, they were cost prohibitive for most people, and the things recorded by them represented a much smaller group of people.¹³

The same piece of media, a video, for example, can be used for both positive and negative purposes, and to elicit both positive and negative feelings in the observer. Because of this flexibility, curators must take care how new media is presented, and what effect the presentation style might have on audiences. Not all pieces are intended to be strictly left or right of center politically, or to encourage social activism, but their presentation may result in such feelings, if curators are not diligent in their presentation designs. Conversely, the ever-present nature of media in modern life can dampen its effect on observers, even when a piece is designed to be a social justice statement. Curators and directors play a powerful role in how new media artwork is perceived,

13. Ibid., 74.

and what emotions and actions it might elicit, making it a very powerful tool for the social activism.

Obstacles and Opportunities for Future Developments

As the directors and curators of museums think about setting up exhibits of new media art, one approach has been to change the way in which the exhibits are presented. The museum settings have been shifted to give the audience a space to understand the themes of the exhibits in depth without becoming fatigued and consumed. Directors and curators have also tried to create a service system or cultural ecosystem to support new media artists and marginalized groups of people who want to be involved in new media art. The new media exhibitions are accessible and provide space for two-way interactions between people, and curators and directors may utilize new media art for supporting activism and social justice. At the same time, however, there are risks with them. Hence, curators and directors need to be aware of certain concerns while they are curating art exhibitions, directing museum functions, and designing programs. New media art can be used in many different ways, which can have negative effects but also very positive effects. Therefore, it is up to the curators, directors, and audiences to use new media art in progressive ways and right-wing social and political ways.

A Need for An Ongoing Mid- to Long-Term Project

Nathalie Boseul Shin, the curator of the Total Museum of Contemporary Art in Seoul, Korea, was interviewed on August 17, 2020. She argued that new media art exhibitions are problematic because they only show finished art without explaining in detail the equipment used to make it or its format. Shin has thought about the transformative influence of technology and how its use in the art can present a social message to an audience, so that the audience merely “consume” the art. “I have never doubted that art can change the world, but this takes a lot of time. In particular, technology is consumed, so you have to be very careful about it. When a new model comes out, there is a situation where you continue to consume and do not know the actual system being used. After all, the artwork is also consumed.”¹ It is not easy to build a platform that runs throughout an exhibition without spending a lot of money. Because the equipment for making art with new media is expensive (e.g., digital devices, electronic devices, and projectors), people consume not only those devices but also the works of art they produce. Shin argued that there is a need for an ongoing mid- to long-term project that presents social and activist issues rather than merely allows viewers to consume the works of art and the devices that make them. They are enormous subjects and require extensive, long-term projects. “How can one exhibition present these issues and solve them all at the same time?”² she asked. Shin felt that it was necessary to establish a system for offering new media art. because private art

1. Shin, Nathalie Boseul. Personal interview with the author, Seoul, South Korea, August 17, 2020.

2. Ibid.

museums have a problem in raising funds, especially if they repeat exhibits from year to year or present exhibits on similar topics over the years. Important issues may be consumed, as well. Many exhibits on gender issues or LGBTQ+ issues are being held in various places in South Korea, but many people did not even know that such an exhibition was being held. Also, it is not easy to change the general preconceptions of society.



Figure 1. The Open the Source project, which is part of the *digital playground 2009* exhibit. (Photograph courtesy of Total Museum of Contemporary Art, accessed September 28, 2020, https://issuu.com/totalmuseum/docs/2009_opentheshource)

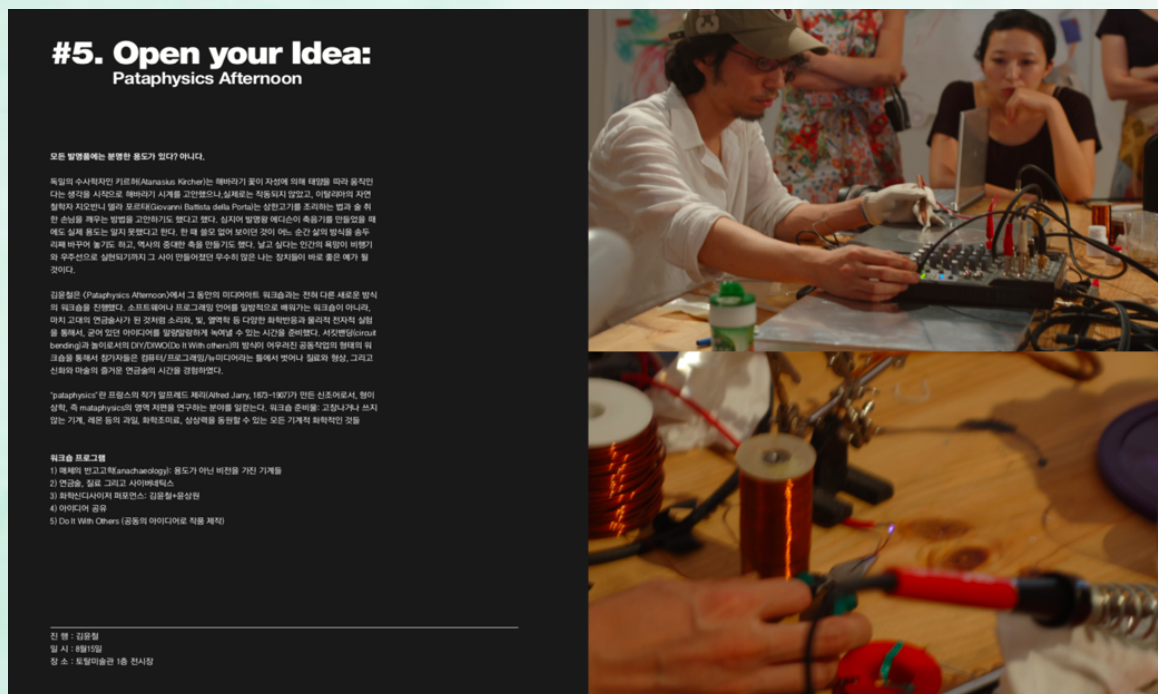


Figure 2. The Open the Source project, which is part of the *digital playground 2009* exhibit. (Photograph courtesy of Total Museum of Contemporary Art, accessed September 28, 2020, https://issuu.com/totalmuseum/docs/2009_openthesource).

A Lack of New Media Artists Who Focus on The Issues

The new media are very much present in our daily lives and can be effective in activism, but so far, not many artists focus on social justice and activism in this type of art. Many artists are dazzled by the technology, which seems to be why Korean media artworks are not diverse. In Korea, new media art is oriented toward commercial purposes, including the decoration of façades and projection mapping. There are plenty of possibilities for works and exhibitions to engage in issues such as human rights, social justice, and social activism, but not many of them do so. The *digital playground* is an international media art exhibition organized by the Total Museum of Contemporary Art in Seoul, South Korea. Artists who engage in activism through new media are invited to present works of various types. Artists from other countries are invited to

hold performances and workshops throughout the exhibition. The *digital playground* has been held every year since 2007 but putting the exhibition together has not been as easy as Shin hoped it would be because of a lack of artists. The topics change every year, and it has been difficult for the same artists to approach different topics every year.³

Using A Different Strategy to New Media Exhibitions

The works of art based on the new media have changed, but the way in which they are displayed, in a white cube or a black box, is the same. Using a different approach to the exhibition or changing the exhibition space altogether may be helpful. Shin feels that even one detailed work dealing with social criticism can be an influence; it does not seem to be a matter of having many such works. Even one work can be a starting point for thoroughly discussing issues and understanding social activism. Shin said, "It is tremendous violence to put 60 or 70 new media works in an exhibition and expect the audience to view them and appreciate all of the pieces in one day. Audiences will not even know how the exhibition works."⁴ Nathalie Boseul Shin has said, "Sometimes appreciating new media art exhibitions that require long interactions makes me feel tired."⁵ Hence, she focuses on only one artist or a single artwork in discussing issues and taking on social activism. Showing one detailed work can prevent such viewer fatigue. The issues can be fully addressed by showing all the equipment and processes used to make one single new media work by one artist. There are many

3. Ibid., 78.

4. Ibid., 78.

5. Ibid., 78.

people who are interested mainly in the implementation, programming, and technical aspects of art. Shin herself is more interested in the story than in the use of advanced technology in exhibitions. When an exhibit becomes a group exhibit, the story of one artist or issue cannot be discussed properly; therefore, social issues can be resolved through individual exhibitions rather than group exhibitions. (I will discuss her curatorial practice extensively in the chapter, Media Anatomy, and The Dream Blossom Project - Nathalie Boseul Shin interview.)

More Accessible to More People, but still Divisive

New media makes things more accessible to more people, but there is still a “digital divide,” as the most powerful and effective uses of new media are still quite often in the hands of powerful users, such as television studios or political parties. Beryl Graham put it this way:

“If you are in a very popular mass media, then you still control the kind of ideas that get distributed, so I think women ... sometimes struggle to control new media because it has been seen as being quite technical and hence more for men. It is still a fact that, if you're a boy, you're much more likely to be bought a computer than if you're a girl.”⁶

However, Graham believes that access to the knowledge and means of creating new media is improving: “Some people say that, ‘new media is like folk art, because it is fairly accessible and fairly popular, and people will do their own things with it.’”⁷

6. Graham, Beryl. Zoom Interview with the author, September 3, 2020.

7. Ibid.

Nathalie Boseul Shin works with people with disabilities and activists, but she is concerned about the fact that they are still hidden in our society. There are also a lot of people who are marginalized and cannot gain access to technology.⁸ Shin held a media art workshop in Malaysia for five years. The students had equipment such as DSLR digital cameras but did not know much about modern art or media art. Therefore, she taught them how to use technology in a transformative way rather than just consume it. The five-year process of engaging with the students was a form of social messaging about providing access to those who are marginalized and do not have much access to technology.

Building A Cultural Ecosystem

Jen Yeunho Kimjang is a director and activist who has been working for 20 years from the perspective of assisting a marginalized group of people. She is interested in creating a cultural ecosystem for those who have been marginalized in society to help them solve their concerns and solve her concerns as well. In the interview, Kimjang stated, "There is scarcely any marketplace that sells media artworks that tackle gender and LGBTQ+ issues, racism and sexuality, and the rights of women, sexual minorities, children, and disabled people through media art."⁹

As a director and an activist, Kimjang wants to sell artworks that do these things, and she hopes to help marginalized artists make a living from their projects. Artists

8. Ibid., 78.

9. Kimjang, Jen Yeunho. Personal Interview with the author, Seoul, South Korea, August 7, 2020.

who have been doing this work while using everything from moving images to digital photos to media sculptures for more than 20 years are still struggling, even in the year 2020. Immaterial works of art are not easy to sell. "It is not possible to ask artists to make only artworks related to social issues, and I think it is important to create a market for selling new media artworks by creating a service system or a cultural ecosystem. A structure in which the cultural ecosystem is circulated must be created,"¹⁰ she said. Kimjang argues that financial support and development of a national market is an urgently needed step. In the past, once the Seoul International New Media Festival process began, they received about 500-800 artworks. For the latest festival, they received about 1200-1300 works. As such, various materials and subjects are being produced since it is much easier to create new media art, though it is also essential to provide financial support and market access at the national level to support these artists.

The Relationship Between Art and Technology

In the interview, Moulon said that the rise of the relationship between art and technology began in the '50s or '60s. Now, there is a history of more than six decades of this relationship between art and technology. Most artists involved in the use of technologies are also interested in social issues.¹¹ Everybody is using the internet; people are not only using internet tools, but also the internet's ideas. In post-internet art,

10. Ibid., 83.

11. Moulon, Dominique. Zoom Interview with the author, September 7, 2020.

most of the artists are interested in our society that is faced with digital technology. We are also beginning a new intelligent objective, what we call artificial intelligence and machine learning. More and more artists will consider the creative power of these tools and ideas to encourage us to upgrade how we rethink and consider society and the world. If we look at the past, we could consider the automatons of the eighteenth century, specifically possibly one of the first-ever automatons created by the artist Leonardo da Vinci. Therefore, the relationship between art and technology is a subcategory of a long history. We have to look back in our history to really know the relationship between art and science.¹²

According to my interview with Philipp Ziegler,¹³ before the invention of the video camera, mainly state-controlled media companies have been able to produce films for broadcast. Video media systems have been the first major formats that could be used by consumers to make videos that can be shared widely. Now, anyone who owns a smartphone with a camera can produce a video and possibly broadcast it. Not only the recording but also the broadcasting is easy, which makes everybody a media producer in a way. This technology has made it possible for the audience to participate in creating artworks, at least since smartphones were introduced, and social networks became more and more important in our lives.

Technology has positive effects that interacting offers more possibilities for a democratic exchange. Technological platforms increase our possibilities of interacting

12. Ibid., 84.

13. Ziegler, Philipp. Zoom interview with the author, September 3, 2020.

with each other, and this is a democratic aspect. Enforcing and empowering people to raise their voices, and they can also express their opinions. It is not a one-way channel of communication but, rather, a two-way channel. "This is where curators, artists, and activists start to create an awareness of the possibilities and the dangers of new media."¹⁴ Their roles are important in communicating not only the possibilities of the new media and the media technologies available to society but also the dangers of media.

14. Ibid., 85.

Future

How will a new media art exhibition look in the future?

According to Ziegler, there will be many new possibilities for creating exhibitions. The role of museums will change in that they will become platforms for audiences. Museums will no longer move in one direction by setting a sculpture on a pedestal so the audience can admire it.¹ Museums will become spaces for learning and communication based on participation and interactions. In new media art museums, the audience will actively produce and create art. This will reinvent the field and turn it into a cultural entity in its own right.² The exhibition, *Open Codes* at the ZKM, is one example that museum curators created the space for the audience to learn, participate, and communicate with other audiences and create their own new media art projects. New media art professionals will continue to develop more platforms like *Open Codes* to engage with audiences of all ages and backgrounds.

According to Moulon, curators are becoming more fascinated by virtual art, interactive art, machines, and computers, and they involve digital art in their curatorial

1. Ziegler, Philipp. Zoom Interview with the author, September 3, 2020.

2. Ibid.

3. Moulon, Dominique. Zoom Interview with the author, September 7, 2020.

practices. Traditional exhibition space was more in “the black box of a video” than in “the white cube” than they are now.³ It is interesting to analyze two different trends and compare them over time. During the 1990s, artists discovered the power of the Internet and wanted to exhibit on the Internet. As they followed this interest, they generated an Internet trend. In 2020, younger artists are interested in new media art or digital art made of printed or assembled objects based on ideas taken from the Internet. More artwork is made of various materials than in the 1990s. Three-dimensional (3D) printers have also been used to give materiality form to ideas and 3D models. Curators tend to focus on virtual art and provide a material essence to ideas to be presented in galleries and museums.

We are aware that the world we live in now is not exactly the same as the world we lived in 10 years ago or the world we will be living in 10 years from now. Ten years ago, Facebook and Instagram were emerging, and they have now become very useful for artists. Therefore, Moulon is unable to define what new media art exhibitions will look like in the future. However, he is sure that all of us will have to be more concerned with equality, fair opportunities for all, and issues of gender, society, and ecology. Therefore, all of these topics will be rethought and will appear in exhibitions.⁴

* * *

4. Ibid., 87.

What kind of exhibition would you like to curate in the future?

Samuel La France has said that he would like to continue to engage people in political thought and cultural discourse. The exhibitions could be set up around social justice, transformative justice memorials, or any other modes of political thinking.⁵ A big priority for him for the future in terms of festival direction is the accessibility of spaces and artist's work so that more people can participate in a festival. He is also concerned with the accessibility in terms of the way that images are presented and the critical reception of the work. Critical discourse is typically accessible only to people with specialized training, which can create barriers. Images want to present work in a way that upholds a high degree of curatorial rigor and invites critical discourse, but in a way that makes ideas accessible to as many people as possible.⁶

Graham always tries to curate new media art alongside any other kind of contemporary art because it is, after all, just one of the contemporary arts. She says that it is a shame that other curators do not do this, as well; new media is always made to be a special case. This may result from a bit of an obsession with newness because new media art is no longer new.⁷ Graham believes that mixing up all kinds of contemporary art is the best way to go. Once you have a mix, you can concentrate on the subjects involved.

5. La France, Samuel. Zoom Interview with the author, September 21, 2020.

6. Ibid.

7. Graham, Beryl. Zoom Interview with the author, September 3, 2020.

Philipp Ziegler said that the ZKM museum has a couple of long-term research return projects underway and looks into museums' role in terms of digitization and digital technologies. Artificial intelligence changed our way of thinking about creativity and how to interact in museums; therefore, it is launching chatbot projects. Many artists are very much interested in using such interactions and collaboration. Therefore, Ziegler thinks this is all he is trying to do with big data, machine learning, and artificial intelligence. There is a plentitude of works now to choose from, and it is still surprising to see which questions artists have about current issues and how they are answered.⁸

Dominique Moulon appreciates the materiality of artworks, so he will rethink how they can be produced locally in the future.⁹ He will continue curating exhibitions even though the shipping of art and flying to see exhibits is difficult. Because of the COVID crisis, it is not easy to ship works of art, especially carbon prints, and it is also expensive to do so. Also, it is not easy for performance artists to travel and participate in the exhibitions right now with COVID19. Many curators, including Moulon, are thinking about the ecologic aspects of curatorial practices for the future. He is also interested in organizing openings remotely and/or virtually.¹⁰

According to Cook, in the context of COVID, we will need more spaces in which people can have social interactions, "After periods of social isolation, we are entering a

8. Ibid., 87.

9. Ibid., 87.

10. Ibid., 87.

world where shared museum experiences will be more important.”¹¹ Therefore, Cook wants to see exhibitions that allow people to share space. She would like to create exhibitions that take into account how people spend and allot their time.

According to John Durant of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, the new MIT museum could be a forum for discussion, and he wants to learn about visitors and their views. “One thing I’m hopeful for is that we don’t just talk to visitors; we also listen to them. You can use new media for that. So, to me, that’s quite important.”¹²

* * *

What is the future role of immersive technology and new media art in art museums?

Moulon mentioned “the machine to be another” as an example of the role of the future immersive new media art. He said that this is interesting neuroscientific research equipped with a VR headset. It is an Embodiment Virtual Reality System that allows participants to experience the world through someone else’s body and eyes. Since 2012, The Be Another Lab team has investigated how to promote empathy, which has been used to address gender identity, generational conflicts, physical disability bias, rehabilitation, immigration, generational bonding, cultural bias, conflict resolution, and body extension, amongst many others.¹³ During the experience, participants were

11. Cook, Sarah. Zoom Interview with the author, August 11, 2020.

12. Durant, John. Zoom interview with the author, October 5, 2020.

13. Be Another Lab, “The Machine to Be Another,” accessed October 6, 2020, <http://beanotherlab.org/home/work/tmtba/>.

asked: “Would you be an immigrant? Would you change your gender? Would you dare to see yourself with physical disabilities?” This long-term research has examined how people interact with the existence of another, what experiences can be shared, and how to generate them with visuals that are different in a social, cultural, or ideological way. The lab is planning to go much further with this long-term research that aims to raise awareness and question if “we are more than individuals; we are part of a large system. A big collective called humanity. Have you ever imagined what our world would be like if we could understand each other?”¹⁴



Figure 2. An example of the Machine to Be Another. (Photograph by Be Another Lab, <http://beanotherlab.org/home/work/tmtba/>).

Graham believes that much depends on curators and curatorial education. She keeps encountering young curators who are studying art.¹⁵ In a year or so, these people

14. IDFA, 2014.

15. Ibid., 89.

are going to be organizing their own exhibitions. Some of her Ph.D. students have been curating fabulous projects using available systems at a low cost. Marialaura Ghidini and Rebekah Modrak worked on an exhibition called *#exstrange*, which used the eBay selling platform internationally. It was an interesting and outstanding exhibition that had been cleverly thought through. Curators give Graham hope for the future and what's going to happen in the future. She continues to be excited about new exhibits of new media art. For about ten years, she has been interested in the curation of the new media. She feels the same way about the kinds of exhibitions that curators are putting together now and hope for the future.¹⁶

According to Frants, it is hard to tell how new media art exhibits will look in the future because we are just beginning to see immersive technologies. It is especially true for the situation we are in right now with COVID19. A physical presence will be important, just as it has always been.¹⁷ She feels that the future role of immersive technology has a lot of potentials, not only in the arts but also in the different ways that people will engage with each other.

Based on Durant's philosophy, museums are a creative and multimedia space. By comparison, the radio is a one-way medium, and TV encompasses two media as we hear and see-through TV.¹⁸ In the exhibition, people use various media, and museums bring people into the spaces. When audiences come into an exhibition's space, they

16. Ibid., 89.

17. Frants, Anna. Zoom Interview with the author, September 4, 2020.

18. Ibid., 91.

enjoy experimentation with new forms of communication. As Durant said, a museum should be experimental; it should try new things to learn whether it is working for the visitors and whether people are learning or enjoying these experiences. He said he hopes that not just art museums, but many different kinds of museums will continue to do this in the future. "I think it's how we should do this. And of course, it means that you face big social questions. Museums are thoughtful and critical and can use their ability to immerse people in experiences in ways that can help people to think in new ways, about questions like social justice."¹⁹

19. Ibid., 91.

The New Ways of Curating, Contemporary Curating

1. New modes?

In the introduction to *curating the future* by Jennifer Newell, Libby Robin, and Kirsten Wehner, Newell notes that museums are facing four fundamental movements to close the gap between colonized and colonizer, nature and culture, local and global, and authority and uncertainty.¹ Art institutions across the world are trying to tackle the challenge of decolonizing their museums. Furthermore, the curators' endeavor to achieve change will reconstruct and reshape their museums. Curators are developing new modes of thinking and practice. The curators reshape some of the "conceptual, material, and organizational structures that have historically underpinned their own institutions and, more broadly, modes of living in the world."²

1. Jennifer Newell, Libby Robin, and Kirsten Wehner, *Curating the Future: Museums, Communities and Climate Change* (Milton Park, Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge, 2017), 1

2. Beryl Graham and Sarah Cook, *Rethinking Curating: Art after New Media* (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 2015))

According to Samuel La France,³ the arts do not necessarily bring about actual change in the lived conditions of those that experience it. However, the arts do provide people with opportunities to learn and explore, think differently about certain issues, or introduce audiences to new perspectives, which might galvanize them to continue learning, become more involved, and maybe even pursue social action.

2. New Media

According to Manovich, new media is listed in the popular media: web sites, multimedia, the internet, DVDs, CDs, computer games, or virtual reality. New media commonly identifies itself by using computers for exhibitions and distribution rather than production.⁴ Therefore, photographs or texts that are put on paper are not considered to be new media. However, texts or photographs distributed on a CD, on web sites, or in electronic books are considered new media. New media requires a computer, technology, or the use of digital technology to be viewed.

2.1. Rethinking Curating New Media

It has been ten years since the book *Rethinking Curating: Art After New Media* was released, and the thinking in the industry at the time of publication was that there would likely be a smooth curve of development, wherein an increasing number of curators would include new media. In reality, the progression has been more akin to the constant up and down motion of a roller coaster,⁵ as an individual curator has done

3. La France, Samuel. Zoom Interview with the author, September 21, 2020.

4. Lev Manovich, 2001. *The language of new media*. Cambridge, (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2001), 18.

5. Graham, Beryl. Zoom Interview with the author, September 3, 2020.

really exciting work. Still, their organization abandoned the priority of such projects when that curator moved on. Graham explained:

“Therefore, it has been up and down, to a certain extent, the artists are moving much faster than the curators are because there are still a lot of curators who have never studied new media art. They are not really familiar with it. It still does not get shown in mainstream organizations very much. I would like to see more of that happening, that they set the example of people using online exhibiting as a very creative way of moving forward, and also changing the way in which they curate, and then maybe they will curate more collaboratively to try and share their skills.”⁶

Based on Ziegler, the role of media has both changed and increased in importance.⁷ Art museums are a fruitful and interesting type of institution, as they provide ongoing links to societal branches like politics, science, and engineering research.

2.2 New Media Art in The Curator’s Own Words

According to the interview on AliceOn, Nathalie Boseul Shin understands media art in a broader sense. When we understand media art broadly, it can cause a lot of terminological problems. Still, when we focus on art, that is, on art rather than on media, we can think of the broader possibilities of media art. Shin stated,

“New media art, in my opinion, means using media differently from its original purpose, expanding the audience's experience, twisting the angle of view in everyday life, and giving a new perspective to the world. It may sound a little abstract, but for example, we are not surfing the web for the weather, exchange rates, or directions but instead using the web in a newer dimension and the nature and functions of the internet web through it. It is web art that provides an opportunity to rethink the entire web culture. When you understand media art in this way, there is little difference between many existing media and the so-called digital media. If a newspaper is used for information acquisition, it is a newspaper, and various attempts to use newspapers differently can also be regarded as

6. Ibid., 96.

7. Ziegler, Philipp. Zoom Interview with the author, September 3, 2020.

media art. However, this point of understanding is essential. It can be the basis for at least not being immersed in entertainment or interest when setting the direction for how media art should proceed.”⁸

With her curatorial practice, Shin wants to share her exciting and enjoyable experiences with others. She hopes that more people can understand that media art is not a toy for some geeks who are fascinated by technology, but that technology, art, and even people play a role as a stimulant to make a better world together. In addition, to the question “What is media art?” Shin answers very simply, “Issue fighting.”⁹ It is explained that technology is just a tool and that media art actively reacts to social changes related to media and creates new logic.

Shin added that art conveys a different meaning with her curatorial practice and can also feel differently from a contemporary art exhibition, which is like a blockbuster type of exhibition that costs a lot of money and is stylish and colorful in composition. Shin said, “Recent contemporary art seems to focus on the brilliant form rather than the artist's idea. My exhibition is a simple exhibition consisting of only a few works, but in terms of content, it is as dense as an encyclopedia.”¹⁰

In Contemporary Curating, New Media Art

8. Cover story, AliceOn. “CoverStory_TAG 1. Interview with Nathalie Boseul Shin (Curator in Chief, Total Museum of Contemporary Art),” July 24, 2009, <https://aliceon.tistory.com/1026>.

9. Kyungyoon Ho, “[Site+People] Shin Boseul Total Museum of Art Curator,” Daljin Kim Art Institute [Site+People] Shin Boseul Total Museum of Art Curator, accessed July 20, 2020, <http://www.daljin.com/column/6090>.

10. Bokyoung Park, “Awakening the Criticism of the Audience, a Curator Specializing in Media Art,” September 19, 2015, <http://inews.ewha.ac.kr/news/articleView.html?idxno=19460>.

Sarah Cook does not distinguish between new media art exhibitions and other art/contemporary design exhibitions. She believes that new media art is actually very closely linked to other forms of contemporary art, meaning that new media exhibitions should not be in a separate category.¹¹ Cook asserts that art has the power to change peoples' minds about social issues in general and that contemporary art exhibitions can confront peoples' preconceptions about society. Cook also thinks that contemporary art exhibitions can create positive changes, as she says here:

*"Museums are a social space; exhibitions are social spaces to bring us together. So, I think we're at a moment where we have to highlight the importance of sharing that social space. Any exhibition that addresses people's social behaviors, I think is quite important."*¹²

Cook added that all exhibitions can, and should, work towards making the world more inclusive, particularly when there is a familiarity, as there will be a lower barrier to entry. People are more likely to participate in an interactive network because there is something familiar about the technology. She does not think that this phenomenon is necessarily particular to new media art but feels that all contemporary art exhibitions can change the way people think about gender diversity, equality, etc., as the art reflects audiences' lives.¹³

11. Cook, Sarah. Zoom Interview with the author, August 11, 2020.

12. Ibid.

13. Ibid.

The Role of Curators and Directors in Social Justice and Activism Against Inequity in Museums

Before exploring some examples of successful curatorial practice works from the curators in the case studies section, this chapter analyzes the definitions and statements of critical concepts for the case studies. Based on the chapter, “Curating Exhibitions and the Gesamtkunstwerk,” in the book titled *Ways of Curating*, by Hans Ulrich Obrist, the word ‘Curate,’ is rooted in the Latin etymology, ‘curare,’ which means to take care of¹. In ancient Rome, curators took care of overseeing the empire’s public works as civil servants, and this practice continued for museum collections through the late eighteenth century. Obrist also mentions four central responsibilities of the curator in the museum, which are: preservation, selection of new work, contributing to art history, and arranging and displaying artwork in the museum space. The curators continued to take care of this crucial task for the museum’s collection through the modern era. In the book titled, *So You Want to Work in a Museum*, Tara Reddy Young indicates that curators

1. Hans Ulrich Obrist and Asad Raza, “Curating Exhibitions and the Gesamtkunstwerk,” in *Ways of Curating* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2016).

select and display art pieces from collections or borrow pieces from other organizations to talk about stories evoked by the artists who created the objects, a place or time, or another theme that the curator has considered important to their audiences.²

In traditional museums, the curator's key roles are researching collections and shaping the process of the exhibition. As the responsibilities of museums have expanded to convey and represent contemporary human challenges and dynamics, the responsibilities of curators have also developed and grown.

The Role of Curators in The Twenty-First Century

Today, curators' responsibilities have expanded, as they reflect on visions, questions, and challenges faced today and, in the future. The twenty-first century curator will be expected:

“Not only to select and organize arts programs, but to diagnose needs in their communities, seek out new and unusual settings for their work, forge partnerships with a wide array of disparate stakeholders, and, in some cases, cede a certain amount of artistic control in order to gain broader impact.”³

Curating an exhibition involves determining a topic or theme, selecting objects that help illuminate that topic, and conducting the research and writing that will create the narrative for the exhibition. In the essay, “These Days, Everyone's a Curator,”

2. Tara Reddy. Young, *“So You Want to Work in a Museum?”* (Lanham: Rowman Littlefield, 2019)).”

3. Brown, Alan, and Steven Tepper, Ph.D. “Placing the Arts at the Heart of the Creative Campus.” White Paper commissioned by the Association of Performing Arts Presenters, December 2012.

Hans-Ulrich Obrist said, "I see a curator as a catalyst, generator, and motivator while they build a show, and a bridge-builder, creating a bridge to the public."⁴

1. Decolonial Curatorial Practice

One of the roles of curators and directors is decolonizing and reframing their institutions and incorporating non-Western models. Incorporating non-Western ways of making meaning is central to decolonial curatorial practice. According to Elena Gonzales, the responsibilities associated with this curatorial practice include:

- 1. Embracing decolonial aesthetics, supporting artists whose work does not hew to European standards for art and beauty.*
- 2. Choosing forms of memory-making in display and programming that involve stakeholding communities and that differ from European models.*
- 3. Revising the vocabulary used to refer to stakeholding communities away from anthropological terms such as "source communities" and "target communities."*
- 4. Evaluating who benefits when museums include the memories of marginalized groups.*
- 5. Producing nuanced representations of marginalized communities.*
- 6. Seeking institutional collaborators that are active in decolonizing museums and recognizing decolonial aesthetics.*
- 7. Repudiate [ing] the aim to serve a Western audience."⁵*

In order to carry out decolonizing curatorial practices, museum curators and directors must first recognize that their institutions are not neutral or separated from society, create impact, and recognize their part in the misappropriation of cultures throughout history over the world. Curators need to democratize the decision-making

4. Lou Stoppard, "Everyone's a Curator Now," *The New York Times* (*The New York Times*, March 3, 2020), <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/03/03/style/curate-buzzword.html>

5. Elena Gonzales, "Welcome, Inclusion, and Sharing Authority," in, *Exhibitions for Social Justice* (London; New York: Routledge, Taylor et Francis Group, 2020), pp. 144.

process and to eliminate systemic authority. According to Janes, complacency, the inability and unwillingness to consider a sense of neutrality and its consequences for museums and museum professionals' role in contemporary society, is a pervasive factor in the absence of constant learning weight of history in museum pieces.⁶

Decolonial curatorial practice and decolonizing museums are challenging and require time and museum workers improving their skills to establish relationships with others and explore issues that are also very challenging. Esme Ward, Director of the Manchester Museum, said, "It's hard work, and it takes a long time, and you have to develop the skills to build relationships with people in order to explore issues which are often quite tricky, you have to be ready to respond and maybe make some changes. It's scary: it requires a shift."⁷

2. Giving Voice to Marginalized Groups of People

Today, some curators also bring awareness to these isolated and silenced voices by addressing injustices and inequality. Curators have long been major figures of artistic development within the canon of art, having the ability to determine how and why they curate the history. While some curators also exclude brutality committed in modernity and further extend the silence of marginalized histories, others choose to reframe and recontextualize these histories to include more voices. According to

6. Robert R. Janes, "The End of Neutrality: A Modest Manifesto," 2015, <https://coalitionofmuseumsforclimatejustice.files.wordpress.com/2017/08/the-end-of-neutrality-illr-article-dec-2015.pdf>.

7. Sharon Heal, "Museums in the Age of Intolerance," in, *Museum Activism* (Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge, an imprint of the Taylor & Francis Group, 2019), pp. 208-219.

Muñiz-Reed, decolonial curatorial practices will encourage epistemological disobedience, reframing or replacing Euro-centric discourses and frameworks with alternative points of view.⁸

Jamillah James, a curator at the Institute of Contemporary Art Los Angeles, defines her role in an interview with ArtSlant:

*"My commitment is still very much for giving voice to artists of color, women, and queer-identified artists within institutions, and foregrounding their contributions in art historical discourse. Using a curatorial platform for advocacy and activism is a responsibility and an honor I don't take lightly."*⁹

Curators also take an activist position, more specifically as Jamillah James's works. Curators include marginalized voices of artists to support historically omitted communities.

3. Blurring of The Curator's Role

Contemporary art curators sometimes act as producers rather than curators because they have reached the point where they have participated in the production of exhibitions. As Nathalie Boseul Shin, new media art curator, stated, "if we talk about social connections through exhibitions, the planning of the exhibition should be a mid-to-long-term project."¹⁰ Therefore, she feels that she is more like a producer who plays a

8. Ivan Muñiz-Reed, "Issues," accessed October 30, 2020, <https://www.on-curating.org/issue-35-reader/thoughts-on-curatorial-practices-in-the-decolonial-turn.html>.

9 Henri Neuendorf, "Art Demystified: What Is the Role of the Curator?," November 10, 2016, <https://news.artnet.com/art-world/art-demystified-curators-741806>.

10. Shin, Nathalie Boseul. Personal Interview with the author, Seoul, South Korea, August 17, 2020.

role in changing the existing works of art for each exhibition, and influences when and how artists create new work. Therefore, she focuses on production rather than curative research.

In the twenty-first century, curators increasingly play in the exhibition as “filters and commissioners,”¹¹ searching for spaces for significant exchange between the artist and community collaborators, rather than serve as collectors, caretakers, and conservators. Between artists and museums, curators also mediate the creation and presentation of the artwork in a physical space which involves close collaboration between artists and curators. The model of collaboration is also central to the creative process itself.¹²

In the next chapter, the case studies section, I will explore curatorial practice and exhibitions through new media art that goes beyond the walls of museums and into society, as well as how museums build relationships with people to create positive change. Curators and directors across the world have been challenging and reframing their institutions through their curatorial practice so that they address contemporary challenges. Curators and directors, I interviewed have curated their work to bring equality and inclusion into their institutions and organizations' space. The professionals also include artists of marginalized groups to support their communities better.

11. Christiane Paul and Sarah Cook, “Immateriality and Its Discontents: An Overview of Main Models and Issues for Curating New Media,” in *New Media in the White Cube and Beyond: Curatorial Models for Digital Art* (CA: University of California Press, 2008), 32.

12. Paul and Cook, 65.

Curatorial practices and exhibitions through new media art can be designed to address the complexities of activism against inequity to facilitate reaching a wider variety of individuals. The next chapter also addresses how curators and directors employ new media art as a means for addressing issues of discrimination, gender, LGBTQ+ issues, racism, sexuality, and the rights of marginalized groups of people, including women, sexual minorities, children, and people with disabilities.

New Media Art Convey A Message Regarding Human Rights -Dominique Moulon Interview

As an independent curator specializing in new media and digital art, Dominique Moulon has been inspired by many people who make him rethink a lot of work in a different context. He encounters many different perspectives of artists and ideas.¹ As an art critic who might be considered as privileged in different ways, he raises the issue of human rights and brings gender and racism issues into his conferences and books, considering human dignity and global equality in the era of artificial intelligence robot machines. With his talks and books, he wants to transmit these ideas to the audiences and reinforce the power of social justice. "The art of acting somewhere else" is one example of raising these ongoing concerns with his works. It is one of the symposiums from *Adventures of Identity from the Double to the Avatar*, led by Andrea Pinotti,² where the colloquium is about the issue of "avatar." This is an old concept, coming from the

1. Moulon, Dominique. Zoom Interview with the author, September 7, 2020.

2. Dominique Moulon (Art Critic and Independent Curator): "The Art of Acting Somewhere Else", 2019, https://youtube/x83_wi2i5GU.

Hindu tradition. Its implementation in Western culture means double or alter ego, Doppelgänger, or hologram, and in the digital world is both interesting and controversial.



Figure1. Stephanie Dinkins, *Conversations with Bina48*, 2014, *Dominique Moulon* (*Art Critic and Independent Curator*): "*The Art of Acting Somewhere Else*", 2019, https://youtube/x83_wi2i5GU).

In his talk, he focused on a work of art, "Conversations with Bina48," by Stephanie Dinkins. The artwork contains a series of interactions around Dinkins and the first social, artificially intelligent humanoid robot, BINA48, which makes it look like a woman of color. The work involves gender, race, and many other contemporary topics. A real African American woman artist, Dinkins asked questions to the avatar: "Do you know racism?" The robot said, "I don't know what racism is." If it would have been a real person, possibly she would have experienced racism by being African American. Moulon believes that this seminar, his other talks, and books give his audience time to consider and become even more aware of social justice and human rights.

In the interview,³ Moulon mentioned an interview with Fany Corral about electronic music and queer cultures. Corral currently manages the programming of the Loud & Proud festival (at the Gaité Lyrique from July 4 to 7, 2019),⁴ a queer, a feminist and intersectional festival that she created in 2013. This event questions the representation and visibility of women and sexual minorities in our culture. Moulon appreciated the talk with Corral, who is an important leader of the queer community in France because the festival attracts many other communities.

3. Ibid., 107.

4. Mooc Digital Paris, “Fany Corralmusiques Et Cultures Queerjuin 2019,” moon digital Paris, 2019, <https://moocdigital.paris/cours/musiques-cultures-queer/musiques-electroniques-une-revolution>.

The Alternative Visual Culture Factory and the Seoul International New Media Festival

- Jen Yeunho Kimjang Interview

The Alternative Visual Culture Factory, Media Theater iGong: A Slogan and A Mission Statement

Alternative Visual Culture Factory is a non-profit organization that seeks to expand alternative video activities through research and practice that protects various media cultures and focuses on human rights through the medium of film and new media art. The alternative content incorporates the value of gender, human rights, and artistic sensitivities to produce a non-mainstream perspective. Their activities are based on activism to bring awareness about the disappearing history of women, minorities, and non-mainstream media to the next generation.

iGong was established from a feminist perspective. Therefore, a slogan was posted in front of the media theatre, "Let's create an alternative visual discourse by creating minority language with feminist philosophy!" According to the interview, the director of iGong, Jen Yeunho Kimjang, the central concerns of iGong's mission are to

question: Can new media art show the expansion of the senses through the eyes of someone who is outside the male gaze? And how can you show and speak your voice yourself in a society that has been isolated and excluded?¹ Alternative Visual Culture Factory, iGong, is a host of the Seoul International New Media Festival. The new media art festival is sponsored by Seoul Metropolitan City, Seoul Foundation for Arts, Mapo-gu, Seodaemun-gu, Film Promotion Committee, Czech Center in Korea, Korea Cinematech Council, and Seoul Art Cinema.

The Seoul International New Media Festival (NeMaf)

The Seoul International New Media Festival was launched in 2000. It is dedicated to introducing new media artworks that find new uses and imaginative ways to rethink art and media while exploring and supporting artists with the potential to believe that anyone can become a new media artist. Therefore, artworks created with the help of an iPhone or smartphone, not expensive equipment, are also exhibited. The types of works in the exhibit include single- and multi-channel video art, media art, documentaries, and experimental films. The festival encourages deeply interactive communication between the artists and the audience. NeMaf shows media-based art that has an innovative spirit in its themes and forms.

NeMaf has celebrated its 20th anniversary and has changed its name to the Seoul International Alternative Visual Arts Festival. “Alternative visual” is an ambiguous phrase, which can be interpreted as relating to both vision and video in Korean.

1. Kimjang, Jen Yeunho. Personal Interview with the author, Seoul, South Korea, August 7, 2020.

“Alternative visuals” can be translated as both “alternative video” and having an “alternative vision.” NeMaf defines “alternative video arts” as “artworks that contain various voices that the mainstream video industry cannot capture.”

The committee head and an artistic director of the Seoul International New Media Festival, Jen Yeunho Kimjang said, “In the system where the existing industrial system is capitalist, the patriarchal, male-centered power system cannot be ignored.”² In fact, the exhibition's only subject matter here is women, yet its leadership is still entirely men, and the narrative of the group or system is led by men. Kimjang said, “It is impossible to change and solve all systems within a year or two years, but it can become a genre if it is constantly accumulated with alternative perspectives. It is possible to become a genre only if it is continuously repeated and accumulated for a long time. I believe that creating a cultural foundation is an area where time and energy are absolutely necessary. So, I've been doing it consistently for 20 years.”³

The artworks show a fluid flow of Korean alternative images that change over time. Even if this often proves difficult, this is the reason Kimjang has to play not only the role of a committee head but also that of artistic director. “At one time, I was left out in the process of selecting works, but a work containing only male desire was selected, and what I felt at that time is that if I put my mind somewhere else, it is swept away

2. Ibid., 111.

3. Ibid., 111.

like a wave...It feels like a sandcastle that quickly disappears when the waves sweep away,"⁴ Kimjang said.

Artists and audiences are also heavily influenced by NeMaf. Male artists also said that they did a lot of new work with NeMaf. It means that they create a lot of new types of work, but also include a lot of work related to new content. "I think my activity is like the wing of a butterfly. Although it is not visible, I think there are many curators, directors, and activists who do activities as I do."⁵ She adds, "It is really difficult, but I have held steady every year for 20 years. It is not a dogmatic part. NeMaf is also a progressive exhibition beyond imagination, but it is not an exhibition that gives an answer. NeMaf asks questions of the audience."⁶

The Seoul International New Media Festival: Gender x Nation

The 19th Seoul International New Media Festival's theme is "Gender x Nation." If you imagine a nation from a minority gender perspective, you find out a lot of people have been isolated and excluded. Gender is a notion of sex that is socially produced, which is different from biologically-based sex. When prominent gender theorist Judith Butler writes, "perhaps it was always already gender," this means that what we think is biological about sex already reflects what we are socially constructed to think about it.

4. Ibid., 111.

5. Ibid., 111.

6. Ibid., 111.

Butler thus indicates that “the boundaries of the body’s surface are related to the power system inside and out.”⁷



Figure 1. A poster of the 19th Seoul International NewMedia Festival: *Gender X Nation*, 2019.

Based on the catalog, Nema takes aim at Korea’s judicial system and hopes to bring about a better perspective to nations and to ask the audience to consider whether or not Korea’s judicial system has been just in equally sharing “human rights” and “the right to pursue happiness” among everyone and whether we should think more about

7. Jen Yeunho Kimjang, *The 19th Seoul International NewMedia Festival: Gender X Nation* (Seoul, South Korea: iGong: Alternative Visual Culture Factory, 2019).

those people who are alienated from the right to pursue happiness.⁸ Thus far, different countries have turned bodies that look clumsy and uneven from the state's point of view into ghosts who are invisible to the majority. Nations have not viewed gender in terms of the various spectra beyond the gender dichotomy of male and female. Instead, they have been occupied in keeping those they identify as women biologically in the position of being only women. Under the patriarchal system, the terms "femininity" and "masculinity" have been used to restrain and censor the body in diverse ways.

Moreover, NeMaf hopes to expand the dialogue about "what a nation is" from a gender perspective to include discussions about politics, race and ethnicity, and the body. The "X" between gender and nation represents a "contact zone" that enhances the combinations of a variety of different encounters. In addition, the "X" marks the coordinates for new and imaginative ways to free this encounter from an exception.⁹

Kimjang has been making plans to bring all of these issues into the exhibitions. However, while planning the 19th NeMaf, Kimjang said she thought, "It would be nice to bring feminism as a main theme of the 19th Seoul International New Media Festival: Gender x Nation. Of course, cultural movements and flow are important, but I think it is the most important to look at gender at the national level. I think it is important to show the perspective which is 'Can we really imagine the nation from a post-gender (non-gender) perspective?'"¹⁰

8. Ibid., 114.

9. Ibid., 114.

10. Ibid., 111.

When Kimjang came up with the idea to curate the 19th NeMaf: Gender x Nation, quite a lot of works were being produced about gender issues. Therefore, she said she thought, "Now I think audiences are ready to speak more about this topic. If it were ten years ago, social acceptance would not be possible, and only my curatorial proposal would remain. However, right now, social movements and global trends are raising gender issues about policies and countries that exclude social minorities."¹¹ While the exhibition is held under the title "Gender x Nation," acceptance is very much made a part of the audience's encounter. Kimjang said, "It was a topic that I really wanted to do from 20 years ago. I could not put it on the front of the exhibitions 20 years ago, but I planned the Gender x Nation to put it on the front of the 19th Seoul International New Media Festival as the main theme."¹²

The Feminism Video Activist Biennale and A feminist media artist workshop

The biennale introduces remarkable feminist artists and is positioned as a venue that shares stories about the feminist movement and its history. Through the biennale, iGong seeks to highlight the importance of the feminist perspective and alternative views in a rapidly changing modern society. It tries to listen to various voices that are excluded and oppressed by society. In particular, today, when feminist visual art is simply regarded as passé, iGong provides a place to check in on present-day feminism. It seeks an alternative feminist perspective through exchanges and mutual solidarity

11. Ibid., 111.

12. Ibid., 111.

with feminist activists in South Korea and abroad. Kimjang said she aims to bring in female artists so that they are not left out of the conversations in new media.

In 2006, iGong held a feminist media art workshop with the support of the Korean Women's Foundation. The workshops included the Feminism Technology Research Workshop and Girlfriends Media Power (Feminist Media Workshop), 2016, and the workshops were free for audiences, with ten lessons in video, internet, radio, or sound art. Many people applied to take part in the workshop, so iGong conducted interviews to select the people needed most in the workshops. Most of the participants were female activists in the field, including workers in women's organizations, such as the Korean Sexual Violence Counseling Center and the Support Center for Women. After participating in the workshop, the participants held an alternative video workshop in their workplaces or organizations by using new media. They recorded their own stories through the use of contemporary media art. Kimjang said, "These activities are perhaps like the wings of a butterfly, but I think these activities can have a significant impact."¹³ Her significant activities approach of starting small to make a bigger impact.

13. Ibid., 111.

Media Anatomy and the Dream Blossom Project

- Nathalie Boseul Shin Interview

Media Anatomy

The *Media Anatomy* exhibition was exhibited at the Total Museum of Contemporary Art, and it provides audiences with a place to unfold the process and action and to organize the meaning. *Media Anatomy* was exhibited as an attempt to broaden the range of perspectives in which media art can be experienced and explored and as a platform through which such attempts can be expanded and sustained. As Nathalie Boseul Shin, the curator at the Total Museum of Contemporary Art, argued in the interview, the exhibition offered details of each work of art, so the audience observed and approached the entire process of each artist's work based on the direct and intimate influence and form of technical media. It is also a platform to explore meaning, context, and energy and share it.¹ Through *Media Anatomy*, audiences entered the artist's world and work that is more open to them and broadened their understanding and experience through the exhibition. The result of the analysis,

1. Shin, Nathalie Boseul. Personal Interview with the author, Seoul, South Korea, August 17, 2020.

recording, tracking, visualization of media artworks that embody artists' and researchers' diverse ideas, perspectives, and views about media and technology or how technology media influence us, and future predictions are gathered in one place.²



Figure 1. A view of the exhibition, *Media Anatomy Seoul*, details each work of art (Photograph by Total Museum of Contemporary Art, accessed September 30, 2020, <http://totalmuseum.org/exhibition/current-exhibition/media-anatomy/>).

2. Total Museum of Contemporary Art, "Total Museum of Contemporary Art," accessed September 28, 2020, <http://blog.naver.com/PostView.nhn?blogId=totalmuseum>.



Figure 2. A view of the exhibition, *Media Anatomy Seoul*, (Photograph by Total Museum of Contemporary Art, accessed September 30, 2020, <http://totalmuseum.org/exhibition/current-exhibition/media-anatomy/>).

The Dream Blossom Academy

The *Dream Blossom Academy* was curated by Nathalie Boseul Shin at the Total Museum of Contemporary Art, was implemented since September 2017 with the Asan Social Welfare Foundation's support. Adults with developmental disabilities with few opportunities to learn art could become independent artists through professional education. The project was planned to expand the Total Museum of Contemporary Art's capacities by operating and creating various platforms through social activities with various artists. When the project first started, participants with autism or developmental disabilities did not create their own original work but simply imitated the original creator's work. However, during the last three years, the program has

changed, and the participants who initially only imitated others' work have participated in this exhibition project with their own original and creative works.³

The Postcard Collection

The collection included the works from the exhibition *Museum of Knowledge, Questions, and Comments* with works of art by Dan Perjovschi and Lia Perjovschi, two Romanian artists. The Postcard Collection is a collection of postcards that Dan has sent to the Total Museum of Contemporary Art since January. This work symbolizes that the exhibition is not only a collection of postcards but also the interaction between the artist, the art museum, and the curator. "For works with such strong symbolism, it is important to try to listen to the artist's story while viewing the exhibition."⁴

Exhibition Catalog

While planning and progressing the project, Nathalie Boseul Shin, the curator at the Total Museum of Contemporary Art, kept a journal of the project process, and she believes that it is the point of interaction with the audience. In the exhibition's catalog, Shin recorded the detailed schedule, performance photos, interviews, equipment, and wiring diagrams of each exhibition. Audiences could deeply learn more about not only the concept behind each piece but also new media equipment, detailed drawings, where the audience sits, what the hardware is used for artwork, the artwork's description, wiring the diagram, etc.⁵ As a result, the exhibitions, new media works, the technology,

3. Ibid., 118.

4. Ibid., 118.

5. Ibid., 118.

and the device were not consumed, and the audience had a chance to understand the works and exhibits deeply.

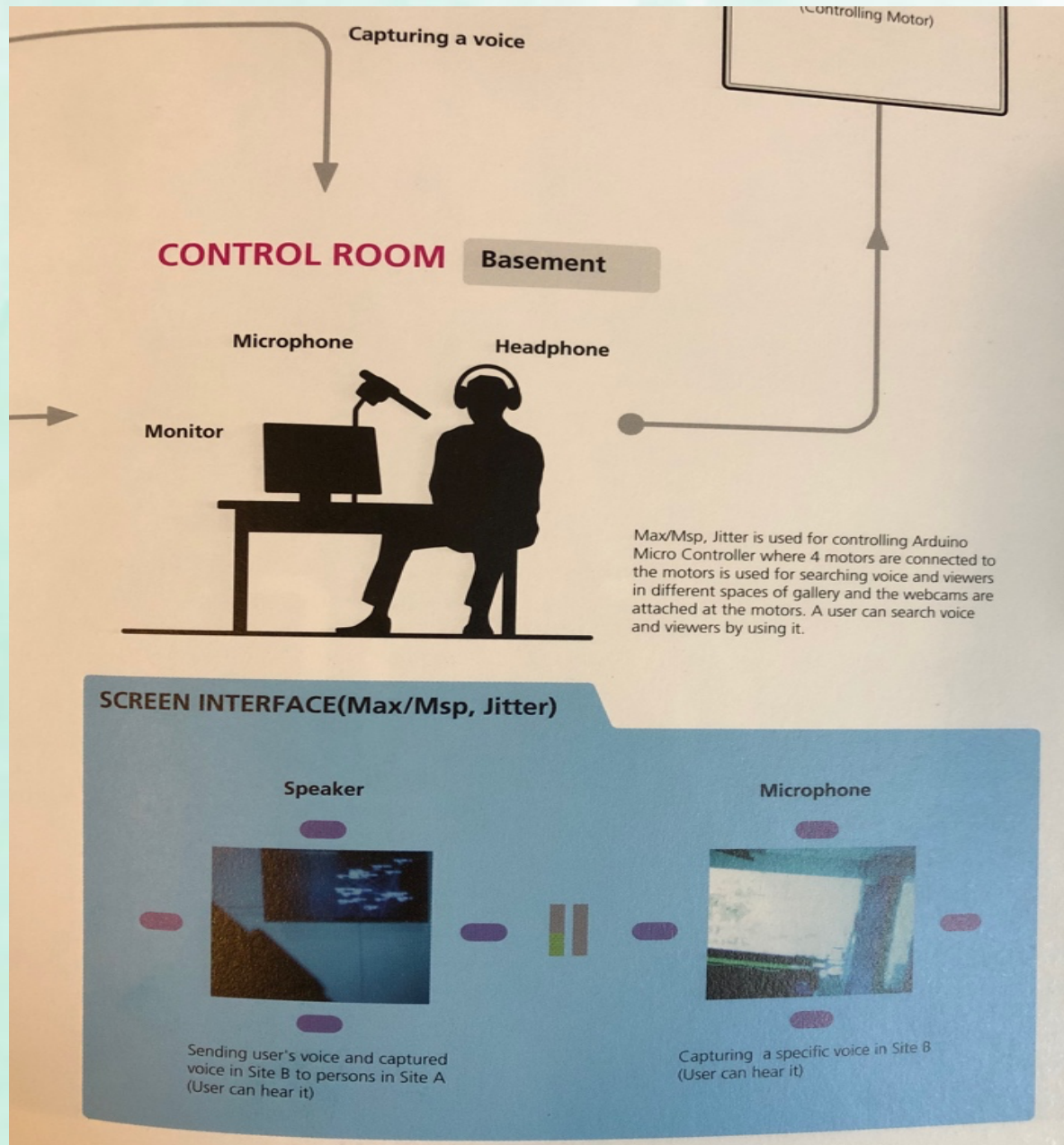


Figure 3. An exhibition catalog: *Digital Playground 2008: Hack the City!!* by Noh Joon Eui, Total Museum of Contemporary Art, Seoul, South Korea, 2008, showing the detailed technical requirement of artist talks.

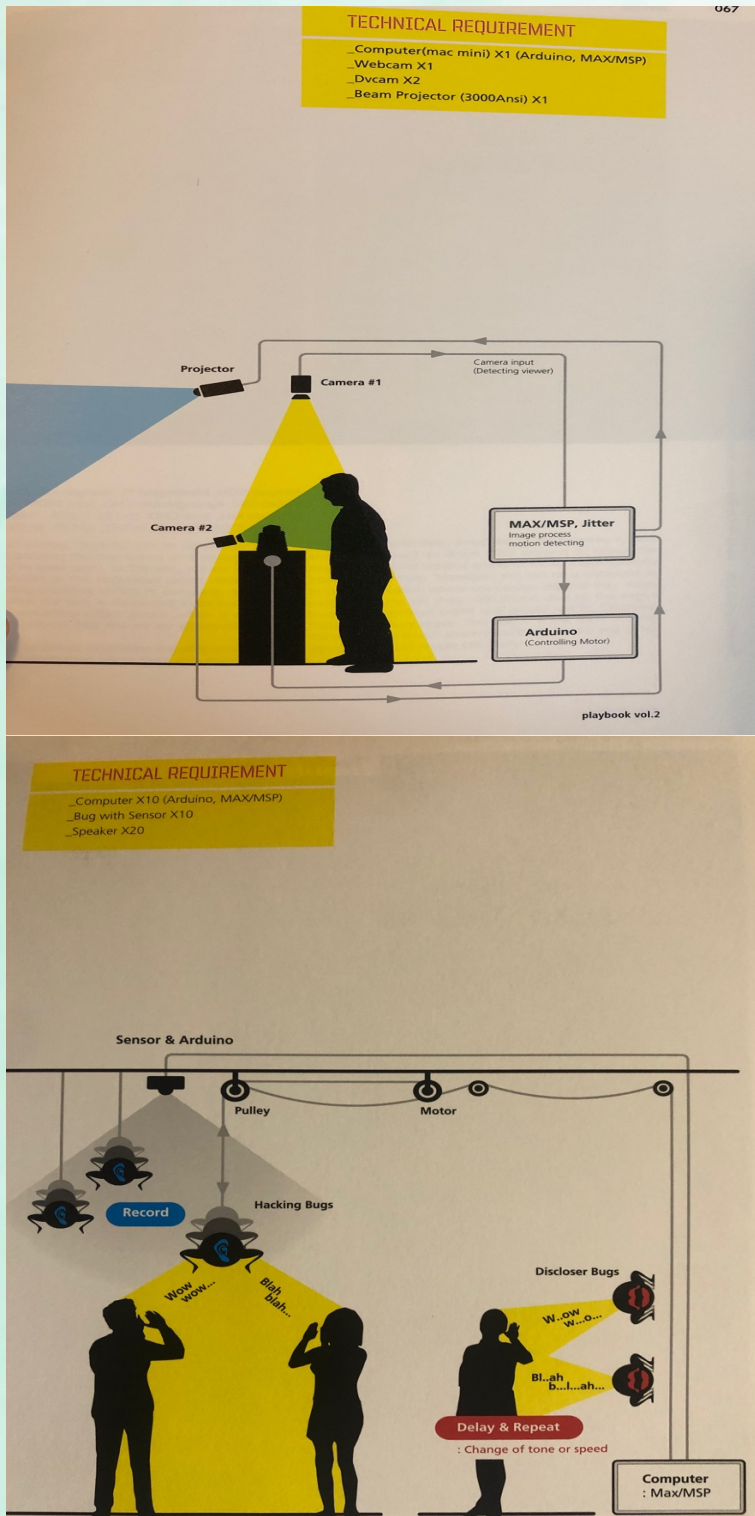


Figure 4. The exhibition catalog: *Digital Playground 2008: Hack the City!!* by Noh Joon Eui, Total Museum of Contemporary Art, Seoul, South Korea, 2008, showing the detailed equipment of the artworks.

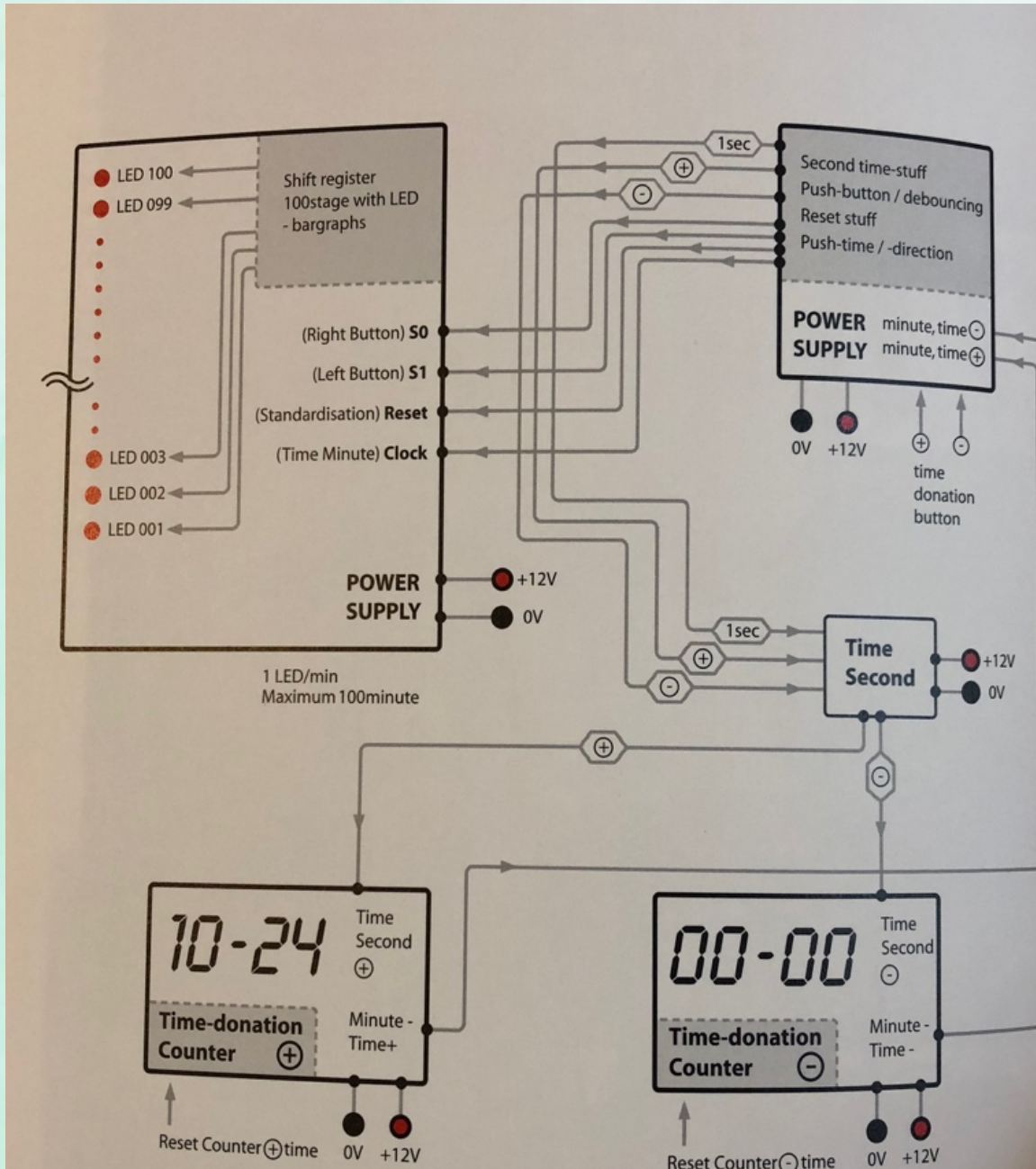


Figure 6. The exhibition catalog: *Digital Playground 2008: Hack the City!!* by Noh Joon Eui, Total Museum of Contemporary Art, Seoul, South Korea, 2008, showing the detailed device of the artworks.

Serious Game

- Beryl Graham Interview

People with disabilities were some of the earliest users of new media, as it was vital to their ability to communicate with others, especially outside their home or workplace. Artist Ann Whitehurst, for example, began using early versions of e-mail as a communication device as a disabled person and then went on to create art through a similar medium. Whitehurst's work was included in an exhibit that Beryl Graham curated, titled *Serious Games*. Speaking of Ann Whitehurst's use of new media, Graham said: "It's not necessarily always in the hands of the people that you might think. And that's one of the exciting things that I really enjoy about new media; it's pretty common, and it's fairly accessible with those provisos. Sometimes the most powerful means are still in the hands of the usual suspects."¹

1. Graham, Beryl. Zoom Interview with the author, September 3, 2020.



Figure 1. Ann Whitehurst, installation shot at Laing Art Gallery, <http://www.berylgraham.com/serious/>).



Figure 2. Ritsuko Taho, Laing Art Gallery installation, <http://www.berylgraham.com/serious/>).

The exhibition *Serious Games* included both new media art and other forms of art. Beryl Graham also chose to feature the work of the Japanese artist Ritsuko Taho, who created an interactive piece, which allowed audiences to create grass balls grown from composted paper money and seeds and then writes their ideas of the term “value” on a separate, interactive wall in the exhibit. Graham explained the piece this way, “That was very participatory in an exciting way. It had parallels with new media and how it works, but it wasn't necessarily new media. In itself, grass seed can be new media if you understand well enough how the systems work.”²

2. Ibid., 125.

FEMINIST AVANT-GARDE of the 1970s

- Philipp Ziegler Interview

The exhibition was held from November 2017 to April 2018 at ZKM. The goals of the *FEMINIST AVANT-GARDE of the 1970s* were to include the 'Feminist Avant-Garde' in the canon of art history and highlight the innovative work of all the female artists. The exhibition presented female artists' works from the 1960s and 1970s, who collectively recreated their own "Image of Woman,"³ using new media art to emphasize measures that are not male dominated. These works raised fundamental new questions towards society, the art world itself, and the roles in their works. The exhibition also showed that numerous female artists used new media art during the '60s and '70s, such as photography, film, and video as a creative medium of expression. The conventional iconography of the feminine form was reshaped by the female artists of the Feminist Avant-Garde.

3. "FEMINIST AVANT-GARDE of the 1970s: 18.11.2017 (All Day) to 08.04.2018 (All Day): ZKM," accessed October 11, 2020, <https://zkm.de/en/exhibition/2017/11/feminist-avant-garde-of-the-1970s>.



Figure 1. The Exhibition, *FEMINIST AVANT-GARDE of the 1970s*. (Photograph by ZKM | Center for Arts and Media Karlsruhe <https://zkm.de/en/exhibition/2017/11/feminist-avant-garde-of-the-1970s>).

In the *FEMINIST AVANT-GARDE of the 1970s*, female artists pose the question of how the traditional "Image of Woman"⁴ defines the framework of female identities in our social structure. "The personal is political, also known as the private is political, is a political"⁵ statement used by the late 1960s as a rallying slogan of the student movement and second-wave feminism. For the first time, against the background of the civil rights and feminist movements, issues faced by women are debated openly; the private gets political sense. Women started to quickly make themselves heard in public by gathering for protests, staging marches, and organizing shows in which women could exhibit their artworks.

4. Ibid., 128.

5. The Personal is Political, accessed October 15, 2020, <http://faculty.uml.edu/sgallagher/Williams.htm>.

Conclusion

Today, many art organizations and museums are making an effort to decolonize and reframe their institutions' authority from ownership and objectivity to collaboration, transparency, and shared authority. With this positive movement to transform our cultural organizations and institutions into places that encourage awareness and engagement, networks can expand and influence a more diverse public. Inclusive museums can break down barriers and create more engagement with audiences by interacting with them in-depth. Participatory institutions can share authority with their audiences. The involvement of the audience does not immediately result in the sharing of the museum's power, but engagement encourages this more democratic museum process. In these museums and art organizations, degrees of involvement are possible and enables museum professionals to think of participation and inclusion as catalysts to shared authority.

In the twenty-first century, the role of curators and directors has expanded as well, as throughout the world, they foster conversations to help people better understand social justice and address injustices and inequality through their curatorial practices and works. Each of these changes to curatorial practice or public programming supports the initial assertion that curators' responsibilities have

expanded, as they reflect on visions, questions, and challenges faced today and, in the future, and also bring awareness to isolated and silenced voices.

As Sandell and Janes stated, “We submit that museum activism not only requires a willingness on the part of museum workers to exercise moral leadership in support of ethical issues, an openness to collaborative and participatory ways of working, that build relationships and strengthen networks well beyond the museum, thereby supporting broader efforts to bring about change.”¹ When curators and directors utilize new media art effectively as a platform for expanding engagement, the exhibits can cause audiences to reflect on their connectedness and responsibilities to one another within society. This type of engagement will serve as a foundational aspect of advocacy, reflecting the practice of sponsoring dialogue about social justice and contemporary discourses about gender and LGBTQ+ issues, racism, and sexuality, and the rights of marginalized groups.

To gather a perspective on this current transformation occurring within museum professionals’ curatorial practice and directors’ works in cultural institutions, I began my investigation with a literature review of the definition of the art museums, the roles of art museums, curatorial activism, new media art, and new media art exhibitions. Additionally, I conducted nine interviews with museum professionals and arts organization directors from various countries: Germany, England, Korea, the United States, Canada, and France. Throughout this study, I argue that new media art has the

1. Robert R. Janes and Richard Sandell, “Posterity Has Arrived,” in, “*Museum Activism* (Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge, an imprint of the Taylor & Francis Group, 2019),” pp. 1-21.

potential to engage people, invite interactive, collaborative, and participatory ways of working, build relationships and strengthen networks, and thus foster broader opportunities for social justice. Those elements were explored and analyzed by means of first-person interviews, literature reviews, and analysis of industry movements and evolving practices. The body was organized into two parts; the results revealed different concepts from interviews and the study of scholarly works of literature. The case studies uncovered curatorial practices and specific works of interviewees.

In the section, *Social Justice Discourse and Action in Larger Arts Organizations*, the study focused on how new media art organizations and institutions promote creating and strengthening a diverse community. Three case studies were considered in greater depth for this discussion: Images Festival's mission and vision, *Global Art and the Museum* at ZKM, and a three-year strategic project called, *Museum as Site for Social Action* at the Minneapolis Institute of Art. The case studies demonstrated how museums and art organizations evolve as inclusive, decolonized, and polyphonic environments and learn to incorporate the diversity of people's voices within their exhibits and programs.

In the section, *Interaction, Participation, and Collaboration Using New Media Art*, analysis of interviews with curators and directors revealed an increase in interactive, collaborative, and participatory ways of working through new media art exhibitions and programs to build relationships and strengthen networks. New media art encourages networks that provide audiences opportunities to communicate, interact, and react to a real, lived moment or series of moments. These types of exhibitions and

programs allow audiences to forge meaningful bonds with other audiences, as they are inherently social and participatory, providing an immersive, engaging approach to social and political discourse. I explored the creation of open learning spaces (the exhibition, *Open Codes*, at ZKM) as an example. Sometimes, curators, like Sarah Cook, work with new media in their curatorial practice to provide rich content to audiences of galleries and to improve interaction, participation, and collaboration. Curators like Anna Frants, Dominique Moulon, and Beryl Graham include interactive new media art in their exhibitions so that audiences are an integral part of the works, increasing a sense of connectedness and investment in the pieces. It should be noted that these types of non-traditional approaches to audiences have become increasingly important, as the global pandemic has challenged the ways in which people can view or engage with art and museums.

New media art accelerates the potential of curatorial practices to become an alternative source of knowledge development because social issues are discussed in a participatory manner that empowers many voices to be heard simultaneously, defining and providing responses to the challenges facing society. Community participation practices in exhibitions were also found to be a significant factor in enabling museums' burgeoning roles as facilitators of social justice, and new media art displays were seen as a key component to successfully achieving these goals.

The exhibition, *Identity: yours, mine, ours*, is an example of a social and ethical engagement exhibition that can expand audiences' political and social imagination and make exhibition spaces double as spaces for social justice. An in-depth study by the

Australian Research Council gathered student and instructor narratives, surveys, video journals, and focus group interview outcomes to document the exhibitions' impact. The exhibition's study showed an evaluation of the exhibition's "appropriateness, feasibility, acceptability, and effectiveness in reducing racism and increasing acceptance of racial, ethnic, and cultural diversity."² Based on the Australian Research Council report, *Identity: yours, mine, ours* was able to build a more reflective and broader awareness of important issues by providing an effective, interactive approach to interacting with prejudice, racism, and identity interactions.³ The research showed that offering audiences with chances to build intimate connections tended to understand multi-culturalism's narratives by enabling people to think more intensely about what perceptions they held.

New media art offers opportunities for individuals of all ages and backgrounds to connect with a subject through artistic practice and works, bringing home the educational importance of providing either a dialogue created by works or some other form of potential engagement. As Samuel La France stated, "The educational component can be linked to peoples' interests in social justice and activism,"⁴ when curators and directors utilize new media art in their educational programs and

2. Jessica Walton and Yin Paradies, "Identity: Yours, Mine, Ours Exhibition Evaluation Report" (Museum Victoria, April 2106), <https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5835166203596ef406c87231/t/59a7544b6f4ca36321b263b0/1504138338606/Identity-Exhibition-ARC-Evaluation-Report-Museum-Victoria-2016.pdf>, 7.

3. Moya McFadzean et al., "Inside out/Outside In," in *Museum Activism* (Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge, an imprint of the Taylor & Francis Group, 2019), pp. 256-267.

4. La France, Samuel. Zoom Interview with the author, September 21, 2020.

workshops. The educational component can be related to the aspirations of people in social justice and advocacy. Therefore, it is important for curators and directors to carefully examine the ways in which their programs' systems, connections, and intersections create ideas and thoughts that they want to present to the audience. The increased effectiveness of new media art in achieving these aims can be seen in the work of new media art workshops (Nathalie Boseul Shin case) and expand the possibility for audiences to learn new media art and awareness of social issues (Jen Yeunho Kimjang case). Nathalie Boseul Shin also claims that the strength of media art is that it is possible to modify the format to suit any location. She stated, "One can put a single DVD in their bag, and then play it on the monitors provided in any exhibit in the exhibition hall or shoot the project onto a large screen."⁵

In the case study sections, curators' and directors' work were examined through interviews with Beryl Graham, Dominique Moulon, Jen Yeunho Kimjang, Nathalie Boseul Shin, and Philipp Ziegler. Questions focused on how the interviewees helped bring about equality in their institutions and what they had found to be successful in making their organizations and institutions more inclusive spaces, including more welcoming approaches to differing physical abilities, ages, and genders.

One of the case studies, Jen Yeunho Kimjang, indicates that Kimjang's work, IGong demonstrates how new media can reflect art and expand beyond the male gaze

5. Kyungyoon Ho, "[Site+People] Shin Boseul Total Museum of Art Curator," Daljin Kim Art Institute [Site+People] Shin Boseul Total Museum of Art Curator, accessed July 20, 2020, <http://www.daljin.com/column/6090>.

to create new types of work and perspectives. It is difficult to change all systems and operations within a few years. Therefore, Kimjang continuously has been accumulated these alternative viewpoints for the last 20 years. My research investigated Kimjang's three works: the Seoul International New Media Festival: Gender x Nation, the Feminism Video Activist Biennale, and the Feminist Media Artist Workshop. The social justice approach of Kimjang prioritizes changing the male gaze to get more voices into the new media art world.

With the invention of 16mm and 8mm cameras, there has been an increase in artworks in the United States containing more women's perspectives and gazes through video art. This movement continues into new media art. It means that this art form's main subject has changed, and the art world has changed in such a way that everyone can engage in new media art and create it.⁶ Kimjang argues the audience should consider their own presentation and voice in a society that isolates and excludes through the gaze of the adult non-disabled heterosexual male in new media digital culture.

Kimjang's work is committed to introducing new media artworks that explore innovative applications and inventive ways of rethinking art and culture while discovering and encouraging artists with the desire to imagine that anybody can become a new media artist, even children. Hence, artwork produced using an iPhone or

6. Kimjang, Jen Yeunho. Personal Interview with the author, Seoul, South Korea, August 7, 2020.

tablet, not expensive tools, is also included in the Seoul International New Media Festival.

There are many examples of contemporary exhibitions and programs dealing with social issues of discrimination and the rights of marginalized groups of people. However, there are not yet many exhibitions and programs that employ new media art to share, highlight, and uncover suppressed voices in a given society. Like my case studies, some curators and directors expand the silence of marginalized groups of people. Professionals reframe or replace Euro-centric discourses and structures with alternative points of view. However, societal and funding barriers still provide challenges to realizing the potential of this medium, and further work is needed. Despite that, new media art offers an impressively effective possibility to take both audience engagement and social discourse to a new level in creative spaces, and its potential is just beginning to be uncovered.

As Nathalie Boseul Shin stated, the planning of the exhibition should be a mid-to-long-term project to speak about social connections through exhibitions.⁷ Therefore, she feels that she is more like a producer who plays a part in changing the existing works of art and shaping the directions of artists' new work. Directors of new media art organizations and new media art curators often act as producers because they have reached the stage that they have taken part in the exhibition's production. New media art curators and directors perform as collaborators of the community, rather than

7. Shin, Nathalie Boseul. Personal Interview with the author, Seoul, South Korea, August 17, 2020.

collectors, caretakers, and conservators.⁸ Curators also mediate the artwork's production and display in physical space between artists and museums, requiring deep collaboration between artists and curators.

Today, the role of directors and curators has expanded to focus on visions, questions, and challenges faced today and, in the future, bring awareness to marginalized and silenced voices by highlighting injustices and inequalities. For both positive and negative purposes, new media art may be used, and the audiences can evoke both positive and negative feelings. Therefore, curators and directors play crucial roles as producers, catalysts, bridge-builders, commissioners, filters, community communicators, collaborators, and activists in interpreting new media exhibitions and programs. The emotions and actions of their work can provoke a very effective tool for social justice.

* * *

Further Research

Research around social justice in museums and arts organizations through new media art exhibitions will continue developing and progressing. Scholarly research thus far offers an important starting point for further study, and the inquiries and

8. Christiane Paul and Sarah Cook, "Immateriality and Its Discontents: An Overview of Main Models and Issues for Curating New Media," in *New Media in the White Cube and Beyond: Curatorial Models for Digital Art* (CA: University of California Press, 2008), 32.

considerations presented in this study are a steppingstone along the path to realizing the full potential of new media art in institutions and society.

New media art exhibitions and programs encouraging social justice have both obstacles and opportunities before them in terms of future growth. As new media art curator Nathalie Boseul Shin argues, there is a need for ongoing initiatives that address social and activist issues, rather than just encouraging audiences to consume the works of art and the technologies that create them.⁹ In addition, Jen Yeunho Kimjang argues that ongoing financial support and the development of a national market are urgently needed steps.¹⁰ She argues that artists cannot exclusively produce social issue artwork, but a more balanced approach is needed in order to create a market and cultural ecosystem for the sale of new media artwork. Further research into how and where these types of changes might occur and what possible solutions can be proposed to address situations impeding their implementation would be very useful to the field.

In addition, as Beryl Graham stated, although new media makes things more accessible to more people, there is still a “digital divide”¹¹ for many people, which limits both organizations’ and individuals’ abilities to access and procure such exhibits. These types of challenges must be researched and better understood before any meaningful resolution to them can be achieved. Such research should also include a deeper analysis of the potentially negative effects of new media artworks and the risks

9. Ibid., 137.

10. Ibid., 136.

11. Graham, Beryl. Zoom Interview with the author, September 3, 2020.

associated with it being employed for extremist political or ethical ideologies. These types of issues might be better navigated by curators and directors after more careful studies of the medium have been conducted.

Lastly, in order to study in more detail whether an exhibition using new media art has the power to realize social justice activism against inequity, various reports such as the Australian Research Council report on *Identity: yours, mine, and ours* exhibitions are needed. Suggestions for future research are examining and evaluating the feasibility and effectiveness of increasing acceptance of racial, ethnic, and cultural diversity through new media art exhibitions that convey contemporary issues. Furthermore, in the future, there will be more evaluations of new media art exhibitions that question masculinity or Euro-U.S.-centrism and engage in contemporary discourses about gender and LGBTQ+ issues, racism, and sexuality, and the rights of marginalized groups. In this way, further researchers will lead and make concrete more opportunities to expand this research more deeply.

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APPENDIX

Interviewees' Biography

Sarah Cook

Sarah Cook is a curator in new media art, writer of the book, and professor of Museum Studies in Information Studies at the University of Glasgow. Cook has co-authored with Beryl Graham the book, *Rethinking Curating – Art After New Media* (2010), and also co-edited the books, including *A Brief History of Working with New Media Art - Conversations with Artists* (2010), and *A Brief History of Curating New Media Art - Conversations with Curators* (2010). I interviewed her through the Zoom meeting on August 11, 2020. I asked how she works with new media in her curatorial practice to improve interactions, participation, and collaboration with museum audiences. Also, she is a curator and editor of *24/7: A Wake-up Call for Our Non-stop World* (Somerset House, 2019), so I asked about the planning process of the exhibition, *24/7*. I also inquired about the future direction of her new media art exhibitions and the role of new media curators or new media exhibitions have in a crisis in terms of those ongoing dialogue.

John Durant

John Durant is a director of the MIT Museum. I met John Durant on October 5, 2020, and our interview took place over Zoom. MIT Museum engages a broader public audience with their science, technology, and other areas of study that will be presented

around the world in the twenty-first century. MIT is in the process of building a new MIT museum, so he shared the purpose and future direction of the new MIT museum. I also asked about the future role of immersive technology and new media art in art museums.

Anna Frants

Anna Frants is a new media artist and curator who co-founded both CYLAND Media Art Lab and the St. Petersburg Art Project. I interviewed her via Zoom on September 4, 2020. She has been curated interactive new media exhibitions, and she includes works of art that explore immersive, participatory, performative, and kinetic. In the interview, she discussed how the viewers become part of her installation piece. I asked about the future direction of her curatorial practice through new media art and the future role of immersive technology and new media art in art museums.

Beryl Graham

Beryl Graham is an artist, curator in new media art, writer, and educator. She is a professor of New Media Art at the University of Sunderland in England, and co-founder and editor of CRUMB (Curatorial Resource for Upstart Media Bliss), a resource for curators of new media art. Graham was a member of the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC)-funded Research Network on Collecting New Media at the Tate Gallery. She is the co-author, with Sarah Cook, of *Rethinking Curating: Art after New Media* (MIT Press, 2010).

I met Graham on September 3rd, 2020, and our interview took place over Zoom.

I inquired about: her books, her thoughts about new media, including views on new media art exhibitions that explored social issues or conveyed a message regarding human rights and activism, the future role of immersive technology and new media art, and what direction she thought new media art exhibition might take going into the future. We also discussed how Graham works with new media in her curatorial practice to improve interactions, participation, and collaboration with museum audiences and how those elements can be captured to add greater fidelity to the curatorial practice. This discussion segued into views on how curators can use curatorial practices to bring people in the art world to think about gender, race, and sexuality.

Jen Yeunho Kimjang

Jen Yeunho Kimjang is the committee head and artistic director of the Seoul International New Media Festival (NeMaf) and director of Alternative Visual Culture Factory, iGong. I interviewed Kimjang in Mapo-gu, Seoul, on August 7, 2020. I asked her about her opinions on social justice and activism in new media exhibitions, her thoughts while planning the show using new media, the missions of iGong and NeMaf, the exhibition's process for dealing with social issues, and her experiences that led to the exhibition's positive social activism.

I interviewed her to investigate the process while she plans the 19th Seoul International New Media Festival, *Gender X Nation*, her thoughts about curating the exhibition and programs dealing with gender and LGBTQ+ issues, racism and sexuality, and the rights of women/sexual minorities/children/disabled people. These issues will be highlighted in the *Feminism Video Activist Biennale* and a feminist media

artist workshop. I asked her how she works on her curatorial practice and art direction through new media to improve the interactions, participation, and collaboration with the audience, and how these elements can best be captured to add a more significant amount of fidelity to the curatorial practice.

I chose Kimjang as my subject because she has curated numerous new media exhibitions related to my thesis's topics and because her shows and experiences provide a space for supporting marginalized people. The exhibitions planned by Kimjang provide excellent research materials for me to investigate my topic more profoundly. Kimjang is the committee head and artistic director for NeMaf, which shows alternative and digital films, video art, and new media art with its focus on the cultural sensibilities of "others," "gender," and "art." Kimjang has been trying for 20 years to introduce penetrating insights to her audiences about different gender perspectives. She has planned projects by selecting artworks that do not contain distortion, hate, or exclusion of social minorities. At the same time, her curation protects these minorities from the gaze of the non-disabled, adult, white, male.

Samuel La France

Samuel La France is an executive director of the Images Festival. Also, Samuel La France is a film programmer, writer, and arts administrator based in Toronto. Before taking the position of Executive Director at the Images Festival, he organized programs for the Toronto International Film Festival. I met Samuel La France on September 21, 2020, and our interview took place over Zoom. I inquired about the Images Festival's mission and his perspectives on new media exhibitions and views on how social justice

discourse and action intersect with artists and larger arts organizations. I also asked about his experiences that he uses interaction and participation, and collaborations in his exhibitions. He discussed new media art as a role not only in education but also in social justice.

Dominique Moulon

Dominique Moulon is an art critic, independent curator, and professor at Parsons School of Design, SAIC (School of the Art Institute) of Chicago, EPSAA (Advanced Professional Graphic Design School), and the University of Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne. Additionally, Moulon is a member of IKT (International Association of Curators of Contemporary Art). I interviewed Moulon on September 7, 2020, via a Zoom meeting.

I inquired about his thoughts about new media, new media art exhibitions that conveyed a message regarding human rights and activism, the future role of immersive technology and new media art, and the future direction of the new media art exhibition. I also questioned how he works with new media art in his curatorial practice to improve interactions, participation, and collaboration with museum audiences and how curators can use curatorial practices to motivate people in the art world to have to think about sexuality, gender, and race. I chose him as my interviewee because while researching new media art curators, I became inspired by his exhibitions, *Variation*, articles, and audiovisual on YouTube, "Human Learning: What Machines Teach Us." Therefore, I interviewed him to discover more about his works and views on new media art exhibitions.

Nathalie Boseul Shin

Nathalie Boseul Shin worked as a founding member of Art Center Nabi in 2000–2002 and as an Exhibition Team Leader at Seoul International Media Art Biennale (Media City Seoul) in 2003–2005. Since 2007, she has been a curator at the Total Museum of Contemporary Art. While there are not many media art curators in Korea, Shin's work has steadily progressed with consistency and expandability in the media art area. When I researched her works, articles, and interviews, I wanted to learn more about her works, so I interviewed her to investigate her works. I interviewed Shin at the Total Museum of Contemporary Art in Seoul, South Korea, on August 17, 2020. In the interview, she shared her works, including *The Media Anatomy* exhibition, the *Dream Blossom* Project, the Postcard Collection, and exhibition catalogs. After the interview, I had a chance to participate in their educational program, *Monday Salon*, and appreciated how the Total Museum of Contemporary Art interacts with the audience.

Philipp Ziegler

Philipp Ziegler is the head of the curatorial department at ZKM | Center for Art and Media Karlsruhe. I interviewed Philipp Ziegler via Zoom on September 3, 2020. ZKM | Center for Art and Media, since 1989, has developed worldwide standards in the development of creative and educationally interactive, participatory, and performative new media exhibitions. Ziegler shared the exhibition, *Open Codes* as an example of interaction, participation, and collaboration project. He also discussed his perspectives on new media art's role in education and social justice and the potential of new media art to focus on social justice.