Cataloging Time Based Media Artworks at the Detroit Institute of Arts

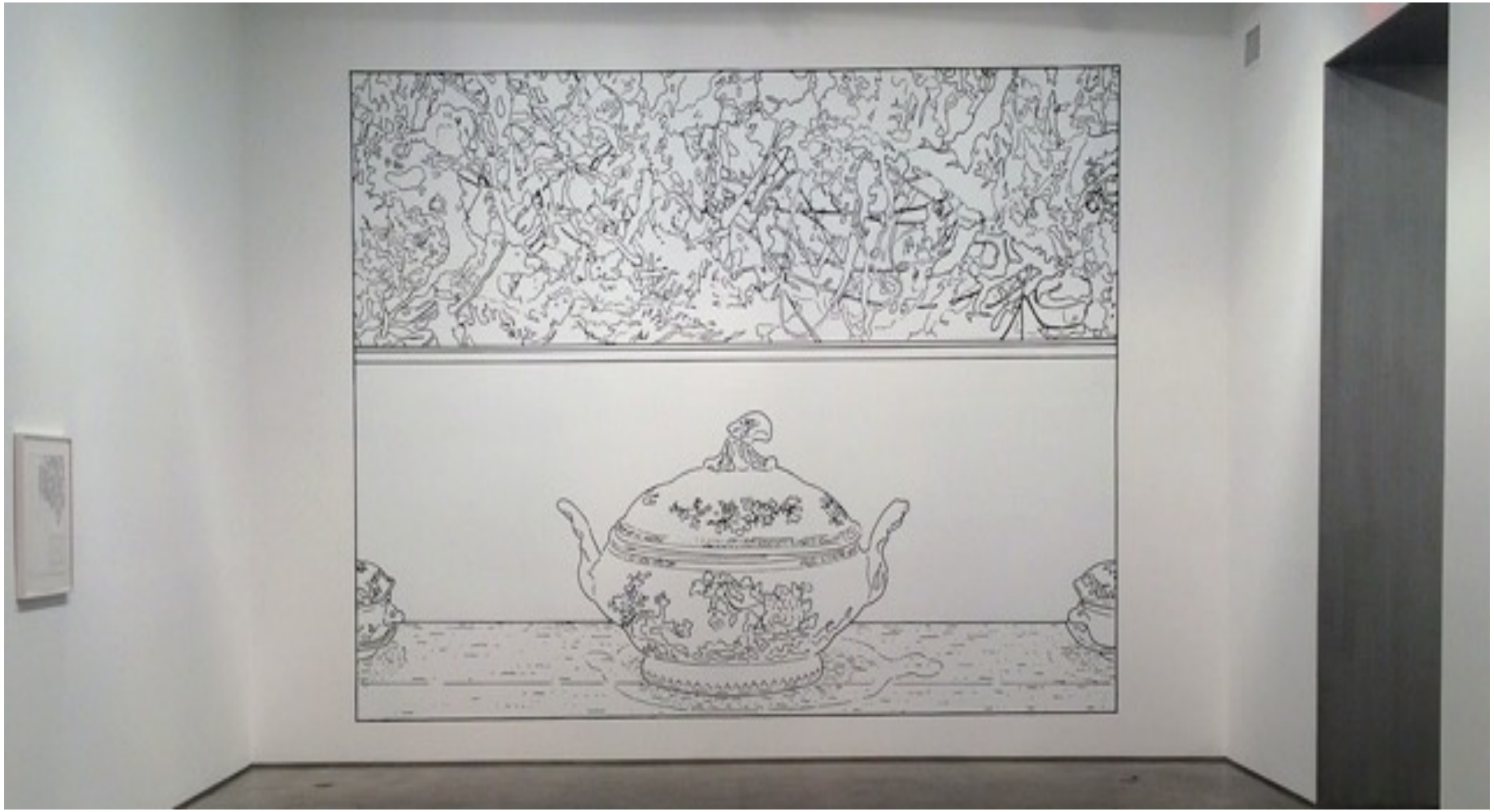
Marisa Szpytman, Assistant Registrar

Mszpytman@dia.org

5200 Woodward Ave, Detroit, MI 48202

A Little Background Information

- DIA's collection contains approximately 66,000 objects
- First object accessioned into the collection was in 1883.
- Our first Time Based Media work was acquired in 1986. Since then we have acquired 19 more artworks of this nature in our Contemporary Art department.
- We currently have two classifications for TBM art, Film and Video Art, and Digital Art.
- These 20 objects, while a fraction of the collection, have presented interesting issues and challenges for the collections staff.



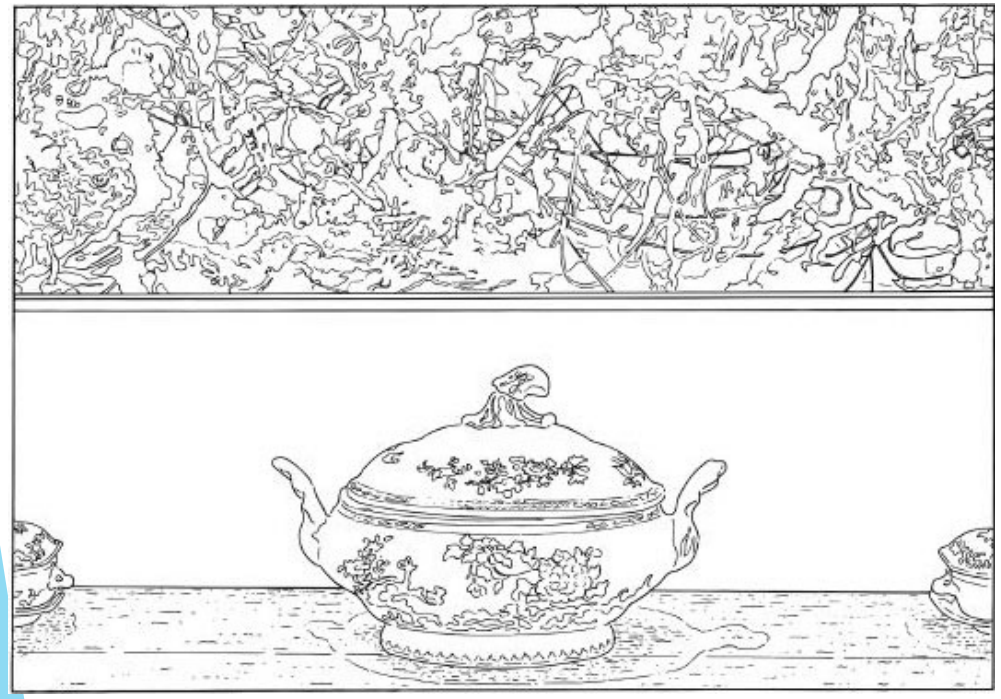
Case Study #1

Pollock and Tureen (traced), by Louise Lawler, 1984/2013

DIA Accession #: 2015.34

Image courtesy of https://hyperallergic.com/138486/louise-lawler-no-drones-metro-pictures/

First purchase of a digital born artwork that was not Film or Video Art



Pollock and Tureen (traced)
@courtesy of the artist and Metro Pictures

USB stick and case

Getting the Technical Information – the Artist Questionnaire

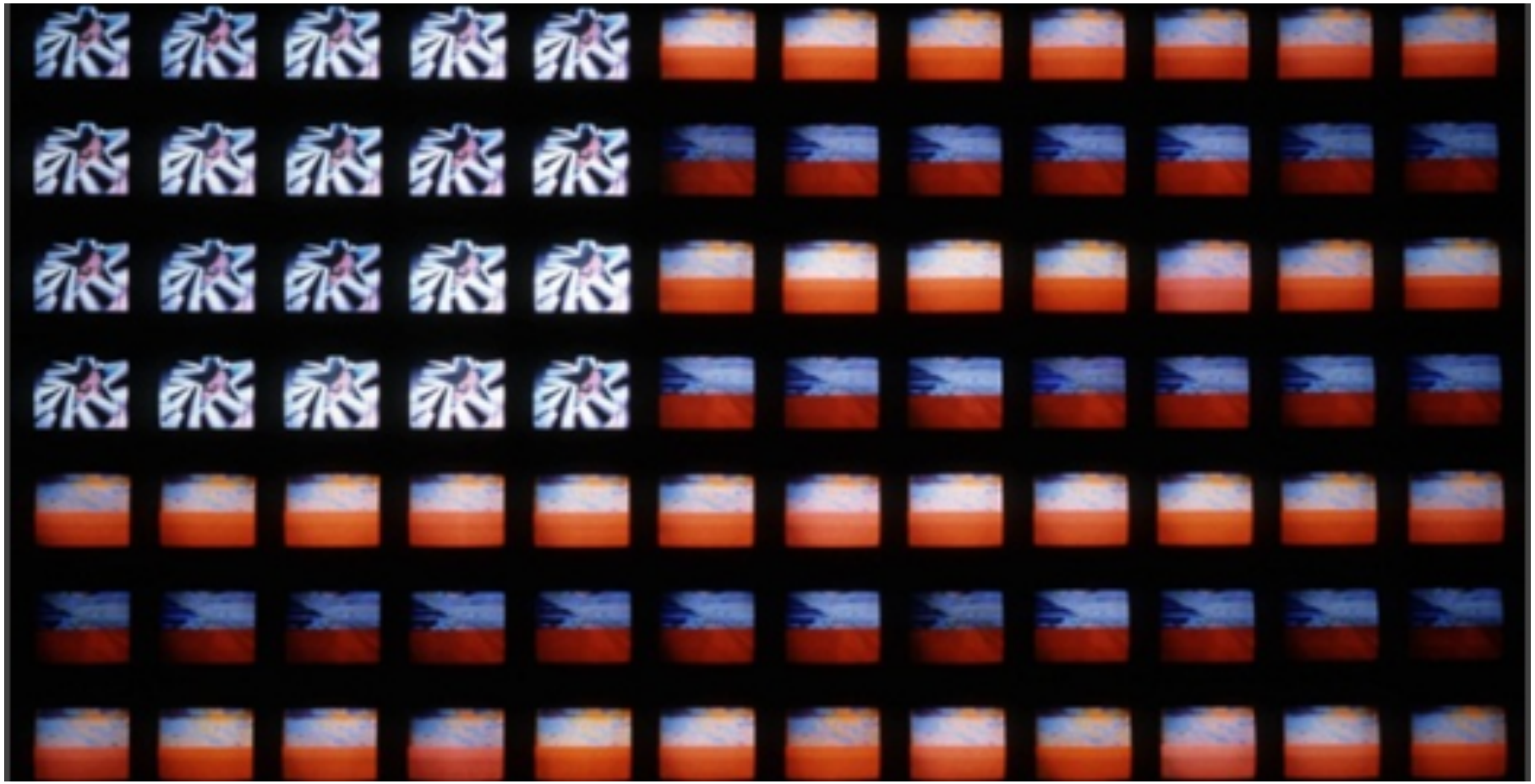
Examples of sections and questions:

- **Section 5: Technical History**

1. Archival file format(s) received by DIA:
2. Exhibition file format(s) received by DIA:
3. Original master format(s):
4. Video Output Signal:(if the master is on a hard-drive)
5. Projection Speed: (if the work is on film)
6. Validation Checksum Algorithm(s): (md5, SHA-1)
7. Validation Checksum(s):

- **Section 6: Technical Description**

1. Intended image type: (eg: flatscreen/ CRT/ monitor/ wall projection etc.)
2. Aspect Ratio: (4:3, 16:9, 1.85:1 etc.)
3. Is there any letterboxing or pillarboxing within the frame?
4. Native Resolution of Master in Pixels: (800x600, 1024x768, 1800x1200, 1920x1080 etc)
5. Color or Black and White:
6. Number of Video Channels:
7. If multi-channel, are they synchronized? How?



Case Study #2

Video Flag x, Nam June Paik, 1986

DIA Accession # F1986.40

@ Nam June Paik, Video Flag x, 1985, 84 10-inch television sets, videotapes, Plexiglas (TM) and 3 LaserDiscs. Detroit Institute of Arts.

Transfer master of stars

Artist supplied stars master

Laser disc - stripes

Laser disc - stars

Restored stars and stripes hard drive

Restored copies of original laser discs

Upper Left to Right: storage with boxes of televisions, television in individual storage box
Lower left to right: original plug panel, box fans used to cool down artwork

Final Thoughts

National Digital Stewardship Alliance Standards for Digital Preservation
http://ndsa.org/activities/levels-of-digital-preservation/

	Level 1 (Protect your data)	Level 2 (Know your data)	Level 3 (Monitor your data)	Level 4 (Repair your data)
Storage and Geographic Location	- Two complete copies that are not collocated - For data on heterogeneous media (optical discs, hard drives, etc.) get the content off the medium and into your storage system	- At least three complete copies - At least one copy in a different geographic location - Document your storage system(s) and storage media and what you need to use them	- At least one copy in a geographic location with a different disaster threat - Obsolescence monitoring process for your storage system(s) and media	- At least three copies in geographic locations with different disaster threats - Have a comprehensive plan in place that will keep files and metadata on currently accessible media or systems
File Fixity and Data Integrity	- Check file fixity on ingest if it has been provided with the content - Create fixity info if it wasn't provided with the content	- Check fixity on all ingests - Use write-blockers when working with original media - Virus-check high risk content	- Check fixity of content at fixed intervals - Maintain logs of fixity info; supply audit on demand - Ability to detect corrupt data - Virus-check all content	- Check fixity of all content in response to specific events or activities - Ability to replace/repair corrupted data - Ensure no one person has write access to all copies
Information Security	- Identify who has read, write, move and delete authorization to individual files - Restrict who has those authorizations to individual files	- Document access restrictions for content	- Maintain logs of who performed what actions on files, including deletions and preservation actions	- Perform audit of logs
Metadata	- Inventory of content and its storage location - Ensure backup and non-collocation of inventory	- Store administrative metadata - Store transformative metadata and log events	- Store standard technical and descriptive metadata	- Store standard preservation metadata
File Formats	- When you can give input into the creation of digital files encourage use of a limited set of known open formats and codecs	- Inventory of file formats in use	- Monitor file format obsolescence issues	- Perform format migrations, emulation and similar activities as needed