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Friday, June 1 • 10:30am - 11:00am

(Electronic Media) Introducing 'Code Resituation': Applying the Concept of Minimal Intervention to the Conservation Treatment of Software-based Art

This joint paper proposes a new treatment method for the conservation of software-based art that was developed as part of the ongoing research collaboration between the Guggenheim Conservation Department and the Department of Computer Science at New York University. The new treatment technique, termed "code resituation" by the authors, is tailored to serve artworks where code intervention is necessary to restore the artwork's functionality. Traditional code migration, as practiced by computer programmers, includes the deletion and replacement of non-functional, original code. Intended behaviors and discernable output of an artwork would be recreated by means of contemporary programming languages, aiming for the most elegant and efficient programming solutions currently available. This traditional migration approach, the authors argue, has the potential to strip an artwork of some or all traces of the artist's hand. His or her choice of programming language, artistic expression as seen through nuances in the source

code and algorithmic detail, code annotations and unrealized drafts can all be lost in code migration. Code resituation, instead, aims to preserve the original artist's code while adding conservation code to reanimate the original to full functionality. With the development of this new treatment approach, the authors apply the conservation principle of minimal intervention to the conservation of software-based art. The new method of code resituation was successfully tested on three artworks from the Guggenheim collection, which were treated in the course of the Guggenheim's initiative "Conserving Computer-based Art".

Speakers

DE

Deena Engel

Clinical Professor and Director, Program in Digital Humanities and Social Science, Department of Computer Science, New York University, Courant Institute of Mathematical Sciences

Deena Engel is a Clinical Professor in the Department of Computer Science at the Courant

Institute of Mathematical Sciences of New York University as well as the Director of the Program in Digital Humanities and Social Science. She teaches undergraduate computer science courses o...

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Joanna Phillips

Senior Conservator of Time-based Media, Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum

Joanna Phillips is the Senior Conservator of Time-based Media at the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum in New York, where she founded the media art

conservation lab in 2008. At the Guggenheim, Phillips has developed and implemented new strategies for the preservation, reinstallation...

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