

# From the Collection of Personal Memories to Collective Memory. Notes on the Archiving Trend in New Media Art

**Ryszard W. Kluszczyński**

The Institute of Contemporary Culture at the Philology Faculty  
of the University of Łódź

## **Introduction**

In the last two decades of the 20th century, the topic of memory became one of the most important areas of cultural studies. The development of research on memory has opened up incredibly vast perspectives for thinking about this subject. The following areas of reflection have dominated humanistic and social thought of the late 20th century: individual and collective memory; private and

social; institutional, cultural, and communication memory; ties between memory and history; the role of technology and media in exteriorizing, archiving and distributing memory as well as numerous others. These new perspectives have enriched cultural studies with new concepts and cognitive aspirations. Consequently, the research experienced a paradigm shift, which led to the memory turn [Kitzmann et al.]. The topic with all its complexities has continued to maintain its significance. Today, further advancement in the area of digital and network technologies has introduced new subjects to the circle of reflections. What is particularly relevant from the perspective of the ideas presented here is the notion of virtual environments, digital and network archives, whose development was correlated with the participatory methods of their formation and application as well as new forms of work with memory.

Further development, transformations, and reorganization of research on memory, and, in particular, the inevitability of focusing on archives, their forms, methods of creation, and application, have triggered another complex of cultural research that supplements reflections on memory. Its range, dynamics, and most of all, significance, have soon contributed to the proclamation of yet another cultural turn: the archival turn [Rosengarten].<sup>1</sup>

---

1 Rosengarten emphasizes that the archival turn is closely linked to other previously proclaimed transformations: the ethnographic or curatorial turns. This points to a very intimate connection between all four turns, which indeed work in a comprehensive fashion; in various ways, each of them is interested in the product of the other ones. However, in the world of new media, this rule will be undermined.

### **Archival art and new media art**

The topic of memory and archive is not only germane to the institutional fields of humanistic and social research. Artistic creativity, which is the focal point of this essay, has also developed a considerable interest in this subject. A direct combination of the topic of memory and the strategy to give an artwork the form of a collection or a type of database gave birth to the trend of archival art. The aforementioned Ruth Rosengarten, who referenced the concepts by Hal Foster [Foster 4-5], concludes that this approach is typically manifested in the form of installation art, when “the artists present found material (image, object, text), with sources at times familiar and drawn from mass culture, and at other times arcane, works” [Rosentgarten].<sup>2</sup> The most well-known and influential artists who were then included in this context were Christian Boltanski, Ilya Kabakov, and Annette Messager, among others.

The concept of archival art was bound to find a significant, valuable extension in the area of new media art, particularly digital art. The peculiar features of computer technology (which serves as a meta-medium to all forms of digital art) inevitably steer it towards the concept of the archive. Lev Manovich, one of the first theoreticians of artistic new media creativity, who recognized the database as its fundamental structure, played a key role here. Manovich did not derive this thesis from the experiences of interactive art but straight from the overall nature of

---

<sup>2</sup> Naturally, it does not mean that this topic is not present in other art forms. See, for instance, numerous found footage films, such as the *Private Hungary* video series by Péter Forgács.

new media. All of the properties that he has distinguished together form a network of relations, from which a database emerges as their logical extension [Manovich].

I will not, however, treat each work of digital art as a form of archival art, only based on its media characteristics. This type of approach would strip this category of any cognitive value in relation to new media art. The reason for this qualification may only be the structure of a work that uses a medium in a specific manner, its concept, content, and a reference to it as well as its means of organizing the behaviors of its audience. There is no shortage of such works/archives in the field of new media art. In such pieces, the audience explores the prepared collection, discovering or creating the sense and value of this experience as well as its individual and social references.

A key form of the archival trend in the field of new media art is the tendency toward – what I previously termed in a different text as – the interactive archive strategy [Sz-tuka 236-240]. Its first important examples include the works by George Legrady, *An Anecdotic Archive from the Cold War* (1993) and Ágnes Hegedüs, *Things Spoken* (1999).

In his piece, Legrady adapted into the space of hypermedia art a working method characteristic of the aforementioned Boltanski and Kabakov. He simultaneously plays the role of organizer and protagonist of the interactive discourse, where he shares with his audience a collection of objects, which he found both in the public space and numerous private sources. We might say that this discourse

is verging towards the objectivization of the collection, giving it the status of an intersubjective representation of the raised topic. To ensure objectivity, in *An Anecdotic Archive from the Cold War*, Legrady collected digitalized objects representing the Stalinist era in the countries of Eastern Europe, particularly Hungary, such as photographs, posters, money, and recordings. At the same time, the artist inscribed his own narration into this objective, representative material: a story about leaving Hungary in 1956 along with his family, about his return, and confronting memories with the present. This individual narrative does not diminish the objectivity of the presented material, nor does it strip it of its fundamental historical reference. However, it still renders it as a personal statement of the artist: it represents him and reveals his story.

On the other hand, in *Things Spoken*, Ágnes Hegedüs forms a collection comprised of objects belonging to her personal world and invites the audience for a journey to her multi-thread identity established in her individual memory. The digitalized objects represent various periods of her life, relations to people, and events. Aside from the possibility to browse through the collection of objects, an interactive viewer may also listen to select stories, both by the artist and other people related to her. These stories are directly linked to the collection and its individual objects, but simultaneously, through these objects, they lead us to the artist as they form her interactive, virtual portrait.

In *Things Spoken*, Ágnes Hegedüs makes a reference to the radically subjective approach represented in archival art



In 1992, I located the site on the bridge where my parents had kissed forty years earlier.



Propaganda Archive

Hungarian Posters 1944-48



Return

My brother Miklos' version



An event at the train station in Hegyeshalom, (the border town)

George Legrady, *An Anecdotic Archive from Cold War*, 1993. Photo from the artist's archive

through such works as *Post-Partum Document* (1973–1979) by Mary Kelly, *Everyone I Have Ever Slept With* (1963–1995) by Tracey Emin or (somewhat later and in a different way) *Take Care of Yourself* (2007) by Sophie Calle.<sup>3</sup> They all display works focused on individual narratives and only through them do they steer the audience toward more intersubjective matters.

The above-mentioned works/installations and others like it, representative or interactive, illustrate a perspective

<sup>3</sup> Calle's work is a collection of various people's reactions to the personal experience of the artist.

where their integral archives, whether their origin is private or public, are created by artists, and consequently, they can only represent them, in one dimension or another (personal, political, ecological).<sup>4</sup> Other works in this area, which opt out of the subjective base and make a reference to objective or intersubjective topics, include, e.g. various installations/databases by Geert Mul, and represent artists in an aesthetic dimension. Moreover, I would finally like to stress that all these works are comprised of collections that have been created or composed entirely by individual artists.

Nevertheless, this is not the only possible form that works/archives may take, especially in new media art. The previously mentioned Legrady opens up his subsequent installations to the audience, whom he encourages to participate in their creation, transforming the viewer into the co-creator of his works. In *Pockets Full of Memories* (2001) or *Cell Tango* (2006–2008), it is the interactive participants that make virtual archives, which represent their engagement and existence [Gagnon]. Therefore, by exploring the memory–archive relationship in the context of hypermedia art [163–169], he steered his work towards the topic of collective memory.

### **Memory – archive – monument**

The work of Masaki Fujihata has developed similarly. In the portfolio of this Japanese artist, the topic of interac-

---

4 As I observed in reference to Legrady, contrary to the aforementioned artists, the works of Boltanski, Kabakov, and Legrady are often comprised of public documents and not private sources alone, hence, they make a specifically objective reference to the tackled issue. Nevertheless, they also refer to their own personal views, memories, and interests, and are, therefore, secondarily individualized.

tivity and digital database gave rise to works as collections of individual behaviors, which simultaneously become the source and the foundation of both social archive and the new vision of empowered history. I am particularly interested here in his installation *Voice of Aliveness* (2012).

In reference to *Voice of Aliveness*, Masaki Fujihata used the phrase “a meta-monument made of collective memory” [Ars Electronica]. In its basic dimension, this meta-monument is a collection of cries, an archive of voices, and a unique vocal database – a meta-monument and archive in one. When presenting his work, Fujihata described it as a symbolic image, which functions both as a site and as a means of generating memory. However, as he emphasizes, it is not a conventional memorial storing collective memory. This project is designed to generate memory and transform it into a new type of monument – memory-as-monument.

This project involves a multilayered identification of an archive, memory, and monument. Viewing memory itself as a monument turns the latter into a psychological object, an intentional subject of consciousness. It has further consequences. The submergence of Fujihata’s work/monument into a mental space transforms it into a live monument. The Croatian artist Sanja Iveković proposed this category earlier in relation to the monument when referencing her projects *Rohrbach Living Memorial* (2005) and *On the Barricades* (2010). She did so convinced that in today’s crisis of a monument, which is perceived more

as an ideological tool of exercising power than a form of commemoration, only positioning it within the sphere of human consciousness will revert its commemorative function and social value. Hence, Iveković's monuments have taken the form of collective performances involving the audience, who is thusly transformed into the participants of the event.<sup>5</sup> The participation in the performance is supposed to lead to a transformation of the mental representation of the commemorated event (knowledge) into its permanent presence in the personality of each of the performers (the worldview component). The monument was designed to become an aspect of the participants' identities, and having been personalized and interiorized, would continue to live their life.

In the case of Fujihata's installation, this aliveness develops on several different levels a bit differently from the works of the Croatian artist. Iveković's pieces, despite their communal, social and political reference, expect individual, meditative behaviors of every recipient-participant (here, the nature of memory-as-monument is individual, and not collective; it is a loose collection of individual experiences). Fujihata's work, on the other hand, provides a more complex, diverse, and multidimensional structure of experiences.

---

5 In the case of *Rohrbach Living Memorial*, the participants of the performance recreated a photograph of Roma people murdered in a concentration camp during World War II. In *On the Barricades*, they identified imaginatively and symbolically with students who had been killed during a peaceful march. More on both works of Iveković ["Monument"].

On the first level, the monument emerges from individual performances made by the participants as part of the event script. In this case, a live monument is a unique mental trace linked to this event: an individual memory of each performer's own participation. On the second level, the monument takes its shape in the communal relations, within the co-creation of the event seen as a whole; the live monument is the memory of the event as a joint action, memory grounded in the social experience. On the third level, it develops in the virtual environment accessible via different interfaces as a depicted memory – a virtual monument. On this final plane, the work/memory is released from its direct dependence on the participant's subjectivity, exceeds the boundaries of the mental space, and becomes its collective augmentation – a virtual archive.

The visual form of Fujihata's virtual monument contains references to the other two indicated dimensions. A network visualizing the geolocation data generated over the course of the event and organizing the space and aesthetics of the access to the videos is typically the first to be experienced in contact with the piece. Next, it refers us to its collective dimension, rendering it as a fundamental and encapsulating structure. It introduces individual audio-visual sequences, autonomic video recordings representing individual performances. Both, steeped in virtuality, erect an artwork as a collective memory of the event, its virtual commemoration. In the context of the virtual environment, the opposition between individualism and

community is nullified. Instead, we witness an emergence of a perspective for a communitarized individuality, for a collective memory respecting individual memories and combining them all in a non-antagonistic, coherent assemblage that cares about maintaining otherness.

Therefore, Fujihata's work/monument is augmented memory, which similarly to the work itself, develops in a hybrid environment, and as such, offers various access pathways and establishes various modes of commemoration. Augmented memory is a space, where individual memories unite with a virtual archive. This takes us back to the earlier reflections on the subject of an archive. Memory augmentation is none other than a virtual archive combining video's audiovisual data with geolocation data. In his work, Fujihata draws from the processes that transform contemporary reality and undermine the separation of the real reality from the virtual one. The development of the concept and practices of augmented reality create a hybrid world, a real-virtual space of experiences, in which the Japanese artist inscribes the augmented memory of *Voices of Aliveness*.

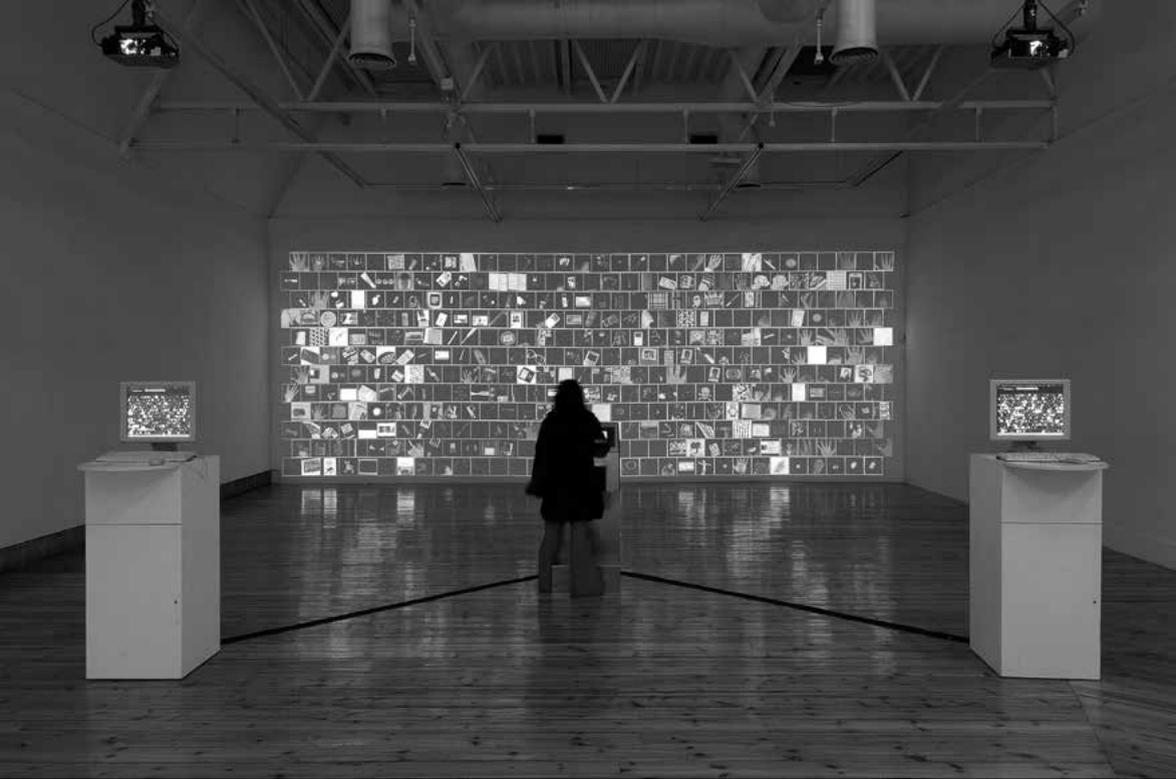
As I have previously observed, considering artwork as a memory structure that combines the form of a monument with the structure of an archive was not invented by Masaki Fujihata. Sanja Iveković, whom I have already mentioned, and Luz María Sánchez, whose works are discussed later in the essay, have explored it. In a different way, this concept is also present in Krzysztof Wodiczko's

work. Not only did he prelude his projects with research on investigated issues, which involved creating data archives, but also, or primarily, he appointed temporary, live archives comprised of people for the purpose of a public anti-monument presentation of his projects. The participants spoke, sometimes live, to an audience, sharing their experiences and opening up the spaces of their memories.

Live archives, as viewed by Wodiczko, are close to the concept of a live library that has been practiced in activist milieus for nearly 20 years.

*“Live Library is an international movement for human rights and a diverse society, which employs a simple method of a meeting and a conversation to defy biases and discrimination. Live Library uses the language and mechanisms of a library to enable respectful conversation, which may have a positive impact on the attitudes and behaviors of people towards those individuals in our societies who are at risk of exclusion and marginalization due to their origin, skin color, beliefs, sexual orientation, profession or religion”* [*“Innowacyjny sposób”*].

An approximation (verging on identification) of a live archive with a live library include, e.g. the descendants of the victims of the atomic bomb lending their voices in screenings in Hiroshima, or women who had been the victims of abuse and violence, being immersed in a crowd and simultaneously present on the screen during



George Legrady, *Pockets full of Memories*, 2001. Photo from the artist's archive

a viewing in Tijuana. There is no such approximation in Fujihata's work, because his archive, immersed in a virtual world, adopts the form of an augmented archive.

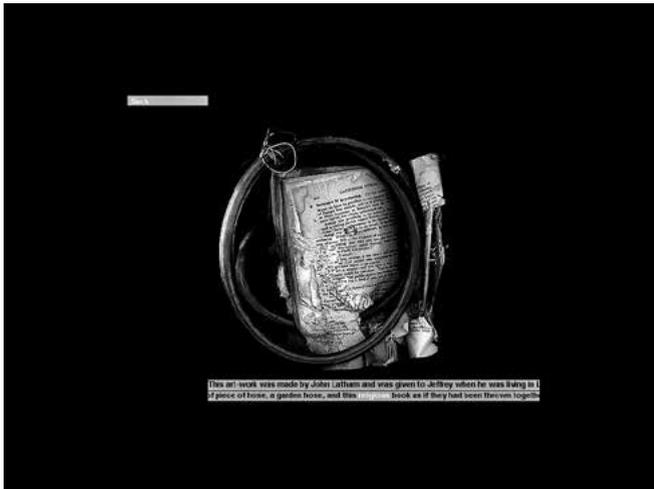
The idea to consider *Voices of Aliveness* as a meta-monument and a form of commemoration also opens a new perspective for viewing Fujihata's earlier works, especially the entire *Field Works* series, developed since the early 1990s.

In Fujihata's breakthrough piece entitled *Impressing Velocity* (1992–1994), his various previously explored issues converge and develop, and their new offshoots emerge. This work was based on an event/action which involved

a group of people climbing Mount Fuji. For the first time in Fujihata's output, the hike was not only documented with videos, but also, more importantly, with a GPS that allowed for accumulating data about the duration and speed of the hike, distance covered, altitudes, and breaks. The work gained a multimedia character, and its most vital elements include: firstly, the event – the performance; secondly, two types of images – video and data visualization provided by the GPS; and thirdly, the installations presenting these images. All three components play equally important roles in the structure of the work while their mutual relationships determine its character, aesthetics, and experience offered to the audience.

In the subsequent works of the series, these relationships start shifting. Eventually, the installation will become the interface while the function of the work will be fulfilled exclusively by the visual environment – an archive of accumulated and organized images. From the perspective of the final work, the starting activity – a kind of performance each time initiating the work – will become a reference to the collective memory inscribed in it, a commemorated center of the work. The three-pronged structure will be maintained, but the relationships between the work's components will change.

*Impressing Velocity* was soon followed by a series of projects, which Fujihata entitled collectively as '*Field Works*.' In each of its pieces, the series adheres to an identical creative trajectory and final structure: an activity in actual space



Ágnes Hegedüs, *Things Spoken*, 1999. Photo from the artist's archive

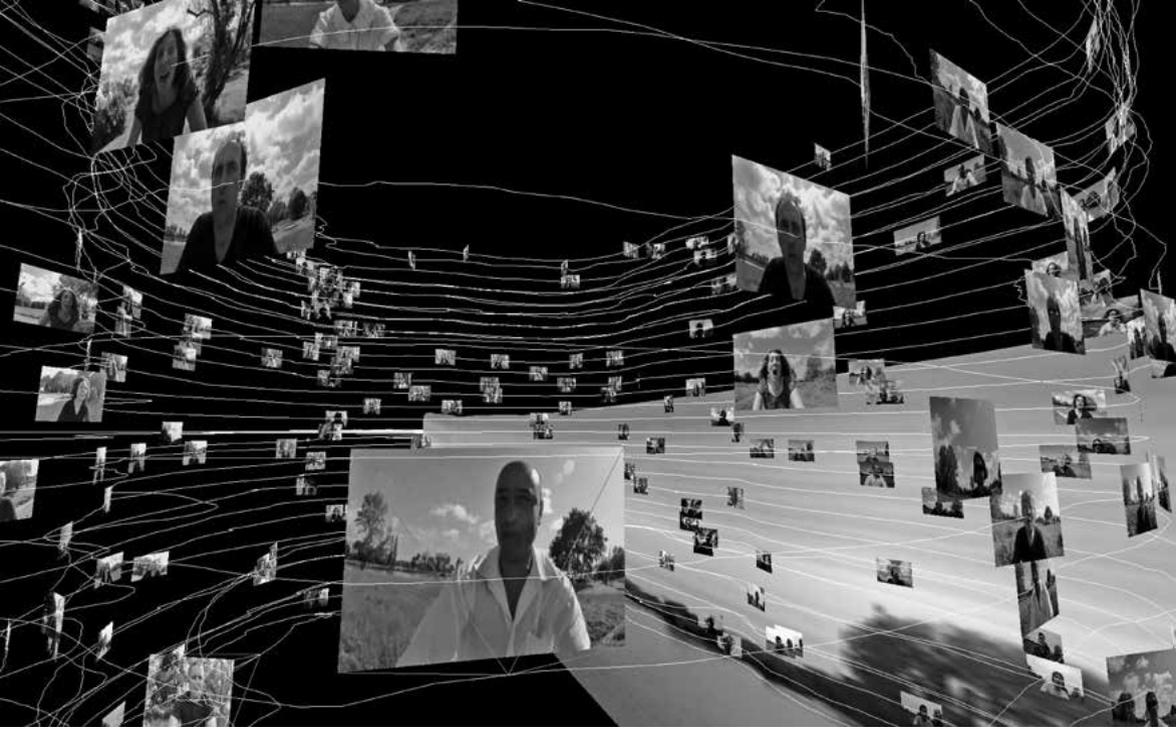
constructs a virtual memory of this action (a video archive) in collective cyberspace. It is indexed with GPS location data and presented in the form of an installation [Fujihata]. This also applied to *Impressing Velocity*. The same strategy can be found in all the subsequent projects: *Tsumari* (2000), *Hayama* (2001), *Alsace* (2002), *Lake\_Shinji* (2002), *Mersea Circle* (2003–2005), *Talking Tree* (2005), *Landing Home in Geneva* (2005), *Simultaneous Echoes* (2009), and finally, the aforementioned work *Voices of Aliveness*. These works are typically presented to the audience in an interactive form. Each time, they are effects of fieldwork, hence the name of the series. Each work/archive created as a result of the collective effort is a certain kind of representation of the communities that were involved in its making. At the same time, it is a meeting place for individuals comprising that

community. It is a space of both individual and collective creations. Each time, these creations are determined by the relationships between the participants, organized around the theme/problem specified by the artist. In *Alsace*, it is crossing the boundaries, in *Landing Home in Geneva*, the relationship between a language and a territory, and in *Talking Tree*, human relationships.

In each of the *Field Works*, the virtual, collective memory has clearly identified subjects. It is the memory of a community, whose action produced the artwork – a community that formed itself around it.

### **Participatory commemoration**

However, prior to *Voices of Aliveness*, none of the pieces in the *Field Works* series, which took the form of a database and stemmed from the action of an engaged community, had been approached by the artist or by his interpreters as monuments. They were called collective memories and video archives. Perhaps enough time had to elapse before the earlier projects' commemorative character could be revealed, alongside their archival status; the character of a place where memories are stored to commemorate work, engagement, invention, and creation. Alternatively, this one piece – *Voices of Aliveness* – may have a feature that did not surface in the earlier *Field Works*, and which gave it the character of a monument, previously absent from the series. If so, this characteristic can only be attributed to the other projects retrospectively.



Masaki Fujihata, *Voices of Aliveness*, The Art College of Nantes-Metropole, Nantes. ©Masaki Fujihata, 2012

As I mentioned before, *Voices of Aliveness* is a collection of cries. In his comments on the artwork, Fujihata has observed that people produce their first cry at the moment of birth. Consequently, the project offers its participants an opportunity for a second birth, except this time, they are their own causal force, their own source. Where does this force come from? It comes from the fact that this birth is a spiritual, psychological, mental, and also symbolic event. Participation in the project becomes a kind of passage ritual, and the rebirth an empowering gesture, as a result of which, each individual may try to re-establish or confirm their status: their world of accepted values, ways of life, and pursued goals. Perhaps this is the reason



Luz María Sánchez, 2487, 8-channel sound piece, Fort Winfield Scott, Langdon Court, San Francisco 2016. Photo from the artist's archive

why *Voices of Aliveness* is called a monument; a monument commemorating a radical turn in the life of the event's participants; a monument of being reborn into this world.

It also means that it is a memory-as-monument only to the participants of the event, erected through individual and

collective actions in the form participation where none of the participants melts into the collective, and the community does not suffer from individuals' egoism.

*Voices of Aliveness* is not only a gesture commemorating the event from which it emerges (as a monument). It is also a reflection on the meaning and form of the commemoration processes undertaken in the public space. This is why Fujihata described his work as a meta-monument. It is a discourse on monuments and monumentalism, which deconstructs the causes, goals, functions, and consequences of their presence in our lives and our world. Today, when states and communities fight and wage wars against each other, also through monuments, such a discourse assumes political significance.

As a monument, *Voices of Aliveness* has a peculiar nature. If indeed it is a monument to the rebirth of the individual, perhaps also the community, then it has been erected by those whom it commemorates, or at least, with their major contribution. It is a grassroots monument that does not represent power nor does it propagate any dominant ideology. It does not glorify violence nor marginalize anybody. As a monument, it is an eruption of joy. It is a monument that is a non-monument.

### **Sound spaces of violence**

A slightly different approach to the idea of an artwork as a memory archive and participatory engagement is ex-

hibited in Luz María Sánchez's work. Her multichannel installations use the artist's sound archives related to violence and death. Sometimes, the archive's components are made by the artist. This applies, for instance, to the 8-channel sound installation *2487* (2006). The title of the work is a reference to the individuals who lost their lives between 1993–2006 when attempting to cross the Mexican-American border. The artist read out and recorded the first and last names of the 2,487 victims of political violence – are state borders not political violence in today's world, where identification with a place is systematically and profoundly undermined?– which she learned in her research (the complete estimated number is much higher). Each name is saved in a separate file (which lasts 3 seconds) and is randomly generated by the installation. The result is a sound structure whose dynamic aesthetics reflects the haphazard processes of social migration, and which consequently becomes an original form of migration aesthetics. The artist's work, expressed in the vocalization of the name lists, is both discreet and moving, minimalistic and expressive, eliciting strong emotional reactions from the audience. The installation includes a book, which enumerates all the names, addresses, ages as well as the date and cause of death (if they are known). An important visual context of the installation is also a musical score which illustrates the operation of the system that generates the voices.

The nature of the work allows for various forms of its presentation. The exhibit in Artpace San Antonio (2014–2015)

took place in a gallery. A white bench intended for the audience was surrounded by 16 low-mounted loudspeakers. The spatial layout was conducive to contemplating the artwork, augmenting its commemorative character (a border death memorial). In Fort Winfield Scott at Langdon Court in San Francisco (2016), the installation was located in a bunker. The loudspeakers were fixed along the hallway. The movement of the audience across the space of the installation thus became an important factor in experiencing the artwork, which gained the symbolic form of a journey towards a new life, a journey that ends in death.

There is also another version of this installation. It adopts a participatory form, in which the names are read by different voices: men, women and children's. This version achieves a different effect thanks to the variety of voices, which corresponds with the plurality and diversity of the victims. In the first version of the artwork, it is the artist who pays tribute to the victims; in the second, it is the community of the living. The second version strongly emphasizes the collective nature of the individual experience of death, making us realize that the death of an individual severs social ties, leaving behind a gaping hole, and generating a sense of loss for the others.

Similarly to Iveković and Wodiczko, though in an entirely different way, Luz María Sánchez gave her work the character and function of commemoration while lending her own voice to the dead or creating a community of voices that commemorates them.



Luz María Sánchez, Vis. [Un]necessary Force\_1.01, multichannel asynchronous sound installation, Center for Art and Media, Karlsruhe 2017. Photo by Ina Čiumakova

The *2487* installation is one of the two parts of *Diaspora I/II* (2006). Its second part, *riverbank*, was devoted to the survivors. It is comprised of an arrangement of objects (found clothing and personal effects sculpture) [Agresta], spotted by Sánchez during a series of hikes made in 2006 by the border on the American side, near Laredo. They had been left behind by immigrants who were lucky to have crossed the Rio Grande River on the border between Mexico and the USA. Some of these objects are fragments of clothes which the immigrants, having swum across the river, replaced with new ones to blend into a new place and start a new life.

Sánchez employs a different approach in her 100-channel installation *Vis. [Un]necessary Force\_1.01* (2017), where she places the source of the sound (speakers) inside sculptures that had been specially prepared with the additive method (additive sculpture) or a 3D printer, in the shape of guns (Caracal F 9x19 mm). The sounds employed in the installation are the sounds of shootings that took place in the vicinity of random civilians who had recorded the event and the gunshots using their smartphones, and later uploaded them on YouTube. The artist downloaded the recordings from there and made them into her artwork's database.

The installation has a participatory character in two crucial dimensions: in the production, because the audio data had been generated by numerous, specific persons, who thusly contributed to the creation of the work; and in the dimension of the audience's experience, because they determine how they want to use the installation – by pressing a button designed for that purpose, they may (or may not) play the sounds off of the gun-sculptures and listen to the shooting. The audience/users of the installation may also use a laser pointer fitted in each of these objects, turning the people around them into potential victims, and identifying with the attacker. Moreover, the installation provides information about the sources of the sounds played in the form of a map and detailed descriptions.

The artist allows the audience to make all the decisions regarding the processes activated in the installation, by

which she not only stresses its participatory character but also introduces an interactive aspect to it: the way the artwork is experienced depends on the interactive behaviors of each participant. Considering the numerous connections that form the basis of *Vis. [Un]necessary Force\_1.01*, although physicality is an important aspect of this experience, the work may also be recognized as a network piece, by which I understand a system of mutual connections linking various components of the installation, and activating the behaviors of the audience.<sup>6</sup>

In both evoked installations by Luz María Sánchez, the use of audio has an asynchronous character. However, while in the first one, asynchrony draws from the random nature of its production (the technical aspect), in the latter, it results from the haphazard, uninhibited behaviors of the audience (the human aspect).

Compared to Fujihata, Iveković, and Wodiczko, Sánchez's art displays different forms of participation and socialization, but also different forms and strategies of collective memory art. In her piece *2487*, she employed the effects of the work of nongovernmental organizations collecting information about the lives of the people trying to cross the Mexican-American border. In *Vis. [Un]necessary Force\_1.01*, she used the effects of the people practicing civil journalism, collecting and sharing information about acts of violence. In the context of Mexico, where the authorities are trying to hinder the circulation

---

<sup>6</sup> There is also an online version of Sánchez's work.

of information about the events and problems which Luz María Sánchez's work is trying to address, civil activity plays an immense role, and much like the artist's work, has a strong political stance. Her work offers an excellent example of the artist's individual perspective overlapping with the social perspective, a creative use of collectively obtained material. This overlap occurs both at the level of the structure of her work, and the method of obtaining, processing and using information.

Sánchez's work adopts the character of artistic research. Her projects stem from the analysis of the social situation, field research (which is dangerous for the artist, considering the issues she is tackling), and a broad range of studies conducted on a variety of materials. Databases appear in her work both as a result of social civic work, and as a product of her own queries, without the direct link to the activity of civil society organizations. For example, the installation *Detritus* (2011–2013) was based on the artist's research on the media's representation of violence and drug wars. The source of the research were two central Mexican newspapers (the issues from 2006–2012). The database is comprised of 15,585 logs. This type of work also illustrates a major connection between the artist's research perspective and the effects of work by a specific group; in the case of *Detritus*, it is the professional journalistic environment. This time, however, the subject of an artistic analysis is the journalists' work. Sánchez elicits and displays a shift in the media politics of

the Mexican authorities towards violence, especially referring to drugs and kidnapping.

### **The conclusion**

As I have stressed earlier, Masaki Fujihata's meta-monument is a manifest of joy; joy that is subversive. The living memorials of Sanja Iveković, the sound archives/monuments of Luz María Sánchez, and the anti-monuments of Krzysztof Wodiczko are far from joyous. Nevertheless, all four of these projects share a common political status and social reference, for they are a manifest of mutiny, and they are on the side of the citizens. Whether they point to historical politics and its social consequences, reminding us of what happened to their victims (as Iveković does), or if they point to violence and the forms of its institutionalization (Sánchez), or address the supervision of the public space as well as marginalization and rejection of the Other (Wodiczko), or perhaps, as in the case of Fujihata's works, explore cyberspace and engage in grassroots practices of commemoration – all of them unite in deconstructing the ideology of power and negating the practices that honor and commemorate it.

What also brings them together is their immersion in the practices of archive construction enabling a creation that eludes oppression and enslavement. Arjun Appadurai has observed that evolving archives which are available to activists contribute to shaping locality, not as a product of a local tradition but as a result of local effort. And such

a practice, aside from being grounded in social, bottom-up participation, and enjoying a community's support, also makes it possible to evade attempts at appropriation, both on the part of commodification processes and nationalizing narratives.

**Translated by Katarzyna Szuster-Tardi**

**Work cited**

Agresta, Michael. "Narco Violence, as Seen by a Journalist-Turned--Artist". *Texas Observer*, 5 Nov. 2015.

Ars Electronica. "Voices of Aliveness – Masaki Fujihata, Prix Ars Electronica Forum 2013, Total Recall – The Evolution of Memory EN". *YouTube*, 10 Oct. 2013, [www.youtube.com/watch?v=hXSEJ5USSlw](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hXSEJ5USSlw).

Foster, Hal. "An Archival Impulse". *October*, vol. 110, Autumn 2004, pp. 4-5.

Fujihata, Masaki. *Voices of Aliveness*. <http://voicesofaliveness.net/>.

Gagnon, Jean. "George Legrady – Cell Tango et Pockets Full of Memories: Structure de l'archive virtuelle". *Ciel variable*, no. 80, Autumn 2008, pp. 23-27, <https://id.erudit.org/iderudit/13205ac>.

"Innowacyjny sposób na zmierzenie się z uprzedzeniami". *Żywa Biblioteka Polska*, <http://zywabibliotekapolska.pl>.

Kitzmann, Andreas, et al. *Memory Work*. The Theory and Practice of Memory. Peter Lang, 2005.

Kluszczyński, Ryszard W. "Monument as Archive. Artistic Strategies from Anti- to Meta-Memorial". In *Augmenting the World. Masaki Fujihata and Hybrid Space-Time Art*, edited by Ryszard W. Kluszczyński, Center for Contemporary, Art Gdańsk 2017, pp. 155-162.

---. *Sztuka interaktywna: Od dzieła-instrumentu do interaktywnego spektaklu*. WAIp, 2010.

Legrady, George, and Timo Honkela. "Pockets Full of Memories: An interactive museum installation". *Visual Communication*, vol. 1, no. 2, June 2002, pp. 163-169, DOI: 10.1177/147035720200100202.

Manovich, Lev. *The Language of New Media*. The MIT Press 2001.

Rosengarten, Ruth. *Between Memory and Document: The Archival Turn in Contemporary Art*. Museu Coleção Berardo, Kindle ebook, 2013.

Sánchez, Luz María. "Vis. [Un]necessary Force\_1.01.". *Vis. [Un]necessary Force*, <http://vis1.vis-fuerzainnecesaria.org/>