Title: How to Fill a Room with a Light: Brief Probe into Collecting New Media Art
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"We don't like to be called new media art, so our department uses the name 'Media Arts'," said Rudolf Frieling, the Curator of the Department of Media Arts at San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, in a Curatorial Practice class at California College of the Arts. Frieling's words reveal an institutional stubbornness, as well as a scholar's rigorousness. When accessing the archives of media arts in SFMOMA's library, we saw multiple keywords, such as *VHS tape* and *television*, which are no longer current media formats. Therefore, the term *new media* in some ways reflects the issue of categorization in contemporary arts.

New media theorist Lev Manovich mentions in his book, *The Language of New Media*, that words such as *new*, *digital*, and *interactivity* are each "too broad a term to be truly useful." But the flip side is, such words are attempts to define new media as a set of unique properties. Perhaps media do not have other values when separated from their physical properties. It is an endless discussion in academic art circles: whether new media arts should be seen as a distinct field. However, what a curatorial department is named or how it is structured does not matter for the purpose of collecting. It is important to consider how to integrate new media art into a museum's collection practices, as well as how a medium's distinctive features raise certain conceptual discussions and pragmatic concerns.

When talking about new media art, temporality and materiality are two topics that cannot be circumvented. When a collector decides to buy new media art, what is the substance he / she should collect? Does this work have time limitations? Especially for virtualized art, how can we eternally preserve its original state, which explains the artist's aims? Digital artist Maciej Wisniewski created the work *Jackpot* in 1997. He built a web page on the internet that simulates a slot machine, displaying three randomly downloaded home pages of websites and their respective domain names. In 1998, the Walker Art Center bought the piece. However, since the archived pages of the links were not stored together with the URL addresses in the *Jackpot* database, now when viewers click on the work, it displays mostly "Not Found" error messages.

The changes in the work certainly demonstrate changes in the world wide web, but this was not the artist's original interpretation. If we were able to travel back in time, the museum could download all affiliated pages, but a problem would still exist: when the future users would click on pages that link to nonexistent addresses, they would still receive error messages. Perhaps the museum could write a code to keep the addresses in the database updated regularly or let the system automatically filter valid sites. Either way, the key is that collectors need to make decisions for the future at the time of purchase, rather than thinking about restoring or reproducing the work after a change takes place. Also, the best collection practice is to think from the artist's perspective and to keep aligning the work with the artist's ideas.