

Dear Panel

In the last couple of years we have been approached by several video collecting and distributing organizations, notably the Museum of Modern Art in New York and Video Data Bank in Chicago, indicating their willingness to raise funds for "packaging" the Vasulka Archive.\*

Meanwhile the technology has moved to the point of making a personalized desktop transfer and post production of analog video to DVD format possible and we therefore see no need to deal with a middleman approach to our Archive preservation.

On the archival front, since we started in early 1998, we have entered all our original and master tapes into Filemaker-pro database.

Tape originals:

Our original tapes, starting from 1969 are on 7 formats, from reel to reel CV to digital cassettes. We have problems in playback of the early tapes. but remain optimistic that we have the knowledge and technology to rescue them. They have by now all been entered into database, but with very marginal or no descriptions. These will be updated as restoration and transfer to DVD proceeds.

Tape masters:

We view our Master tape collection (tapes in distribution), as having three areas of significance, Tapes in distribution, tapes documenting the process of art making and tool building, and documentary work (interviews, exhibitions, and art events). All basic groups have been entered into a database format (Filemaker Pro4), and are available as listings. We have also started to take pictures of the master tapes, which is to appear on the Net this fall.

Other artists' tapes:'

In the early seventies, we collected by tape exchange a significant amount of other artists' works, some by now quite valuable. We also have the Buffalo archives, a collection of tapes from the three centers and individuals....Also in that collection is a collection of interviews with film makers (see list).

To restore and transfer our tape library to digital format and to enter our entire archive into database.

accessibility over the internet, however their process does not include access to visual information, texts, or other formats, which we intend to expand on.

The second phase of the project is a world wide website and internet link, in which we hope to reach an international audience, free of charge, and serve as a model for institutions and organizations like ourselves worldwide.

The total project budget is \$196,125.00. We are requesting \$XXXXX to begin this archival process in phase one (focusing on 1,000 hours from the first decade). We hope that this information will soon be accessible to educational institutions as well as individuals interested in the history of electronic image processing.

Budget

<b>Phase One</b>	
BetaSP record/playback deck (lease for 6 months)	\$5,000.00
BetacamSP video tapes \$25 per hour tape x 1000 hrs.	\$25,000.00
Playback decks, 3 formats	
CV reel to reel, AV reel to reel, and 3/4 tape \$1000 each x 3	\$3,000.00*
Time Base Correctors, 3 formats (CV, AV, 3/4) \$2000 each x 3	\$6,000.00*
Honorarium for participants in tape selection, and cleaning	\$30,000.00
Honorarium for preliminary organization and documentation	\$10,000.00
Claris File Maker Pro 3.0	\$125.00*
subtotal	\$76,125.00
<b>Phase Two</b>	
Digital Storage & Database entry	\$60,000.00
<b>Phase Three</b>	
World Wide Website design and presentation	\$60,000.00
Total	\$196,125.00
In kind funding to date	\$9,125.00*
Funding requested	\$67,000.00

\* in kind, the Vasulkas Inc.

We thank you for your consideration of this project, please feel free to contact us at 505 474 8786 or woodyv@santafe.edu if you have questions regarding this information.

Sincerely,

# THE VASULKA ARCHIVES

The time frame for completing the project will be driven by how “bleeding” an edge of technology the project embraces in its respective elements.

This initial proposal briefly outlines steps for accomplishing the following:

- I) DESIGN**
- II) COMMUNICATION AND INTERACTIVITY**
- III) TECHNICAL SPECIFICATIONS**
- IV) COSTS**
- V) IMPLEMENTATION IN PHASES**
- VI) FINANCIAL POSSIBILITIES**
- VII) PROJECT MANAGEMENT**

## **I) DESIGN**

Before properly initiating the design of the Vasulka Archives, a series of practical issues must be addressed to utilize the most recent advances in technology and to allow for the fluid incorporation of more advanced technologies in the future. These and other more practical matters follow:

- A) Organization of material produced by the Vasulkas
- B) Establish parameters for cataloging material
- C) Determine technical specifications for archival media
- D) Design of database
- E) Determination of delivery system
- F) Phased in transfer and storage of materials
- G) Data entry into database
- H) Testing of database
- I) Testing of online interface
- J) Testing of organizational management

A series of principles should inform the design of the archive from the beginning. Its developers as having to accomplish the following should perceive the archive:

Embraces the creative intent inherent in work the Vasulkas have produced and establish an historical and contemporary context for the work.

Facilitates communication and interactivity between visitors and the site.

Directories should include, but not be limited to the following:

- a) Introduction to Vasulkas, their work, their role with others in the digital/electronic arts.
- b) Provide access to an electronic catalogue of the Vasulka's work.
- c) Facilitate the ordering of specific materials by public either free of charge or on a per-fee basis.

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## I) DESIGN (CONTINUED)

- d) Embrace the ultimate aim of facilitating the downloading of certain files of text, still or moving images by visitors themselves.
- e) Present an online exhibition space of retrospective shows or current work.
- f) Facilitate communication between visitors and individuals managing the project.

The complete archive should be envisioned as being two simultaneous elements:

- An electronic library consisting of two branches: a traditional library and a living, creative display of information designed to create specific responses in visitors to the site (an ongoing "installation" in its own right).
- A storage place of artwork & media both the digital record and the actual work itself - perhaps envisioned as online access and offline access.

## II) COMMUNICATION AND INTERACTIVITY

The objectives of the display must balance possibly conflicting aims: to introduce the Vasulka's work to those unfamiliar with it, and to serve as a principle resource for those engaged in digital/electronic media or associated disciplines. However that is sorted out, the site should possess the same qualities of creative investigation and invention inherent in the work residing in the archive.

Another balance must be struck between facilitating retrieval of materials, technical limitations, and creative display. How the material is made available – revealed – can have an impact on visitors very akin to the work itself and design of the catalogue, database, and directories for visitors can reflect that. However, this could come at the expense of tracking down material efficiently, so perhaps designing separate search engines within the database directors could remedy this. Perhaps directories to take viewers down varieties of searches ranging from exploration journeys where the artists randomly or specifically make directional suggestions and to provide visitors with a traditional "card catalogue-esque" type of search engine.

As such, levels of interactivity then will vary depending upon the nature of the inquiry. It is reasonable to presume the site will serve functions as varied as entertainment, scholarship, inspiration (including thievery) and problem solving. Directories should be structured to facilitate retrieval of materials when necessary and to interact with the viewer in a fashion consistent with the creative intent of Vasulka's work whenever possible.

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## QUESTIONS:

- 1) How does one introduce and reintroduce the artists to those who are familiar with their work and maintain interest?
- 2) Can displays of previous and ongoing work be routinely presented and if so in what form (abbreviated, etc.)?
- 3) Can directories be bypassed by those whose time and resources are limited?
- 4) Can public interaction with the organizational group be effective?
- 5) How will that organization structure interact between the Vasulkas and visitors?
- 6) Can the online site be used as a vehicle for the Vasulka's work – in effect become an ongoing installation – without their constant involvement?
- 7) Can inquiries, both free and per fee, be responded to efficiently and financially responsibly?
- 8) Does the project have an ending or is it conceptually online ever interactively?

## III) TECHNICAL SPECIFICATIONS

The most common types of storage are removable systems and permanent systems. There are a variety of removable systems: DVD, CD-ROM, laser disk, and digital videotape. Their specifications and efficiency vary and are improving continually. Permanent systems generally consist of arrays of hard drives that also vary in specifications and efficiency and are improving in cost and performance continually.

Consideration should be given to designing the archive to embrace a variety of storage modalities. This facilitates beginning the archival process by transferring materials on older formats to digital videotape for subsequent transfer to either disk or removable disk format to be incorporated in the final online archive.

Average costs for designing an archive specific database will run between \$4000 and \$8000. This will afford a database designed for an SQL server (a sequel server which is C2 certified secure - such as NT or Sun Solaris) which is ODBC compliant and will interface with higher level databases such as Paradox, FoxPro, Oracle, and Access.

The most efficient way to transfer data from offsite to the host server is via FTP. Costs for an internet dial-up account generally run \$20 per month with an FTP client software program that allows you to log on to the server to transfer files (with a \$25 initial setup fee) and \$40 per month for an FTP account.

Once archival formats are determined and the overall design of the archive is reached the server utilized for storing data can be determined. Once functional, that server will require connectivity with the Internet via a delivery system. Present costs for Internet connectivity are approximately the following:

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## III) TECHNICAL SPECIFICATIONS (CONTINUED)

- 56K frame relay at \$530 per month with the cost of a router and other setup fees running approximately \$2500.
- 128K services are available with some ISP's, but costs are unavailable at this time.
- T-1 bandwidth at \$1000 to \$1200 for direct connectivity to Internet + \$400 to \$600 Telco costs (depending upon distance from POP telephone company provider) on a per month basis. Fractional T-1s are available and can reduce the Internet fee by 50%, but Telco fees remain the same. The cost of the router and other setup fees will run approximately \$4000 to \$6000.
- T-3 bandwidth at \$8000 to \$10,000 per month for direct connectivity to Internet with Telco costs included. Shared T-3 access is available for \$250 per month with guaranteed bandwidth of 128K. Without knowing location of server, setup fees and router costs are unavailable.

## IV) COSTS

TBD – based on archival considerations, technical decisions regarding the data storage server and the Internet delivery system, and increasingly affordable computer and online capabilities.

## V) IMPLEMENTATION IN PHASES

**PHASE ONE** – Design - Philosophy

**PHASE TWO** – Organization - Initial Archiving

**PHASE THREE** – Testing - Initial Online Implementation

**PHASE FOUR** – Online Completion - Archive Management, Maintenance, & Online Exhibitions - Financial Direction

### **PHASE ONE – PHILOSOPHY - ORGANIZATION - DESIGN**

Determine archival materials/media

Establish location for storage of original materials

Establish location for online materials

Determine modes for archival process

Design database

Develop design of online interface

### **PHASE TWO – ORGANIZATION - INITIAL ARCHIVING**

Begin testing database

Begin testing online delivery system, e-mail, and overall site interactivity

Minimal version of site brought online

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## **V) IMPLEMENTATION IN PHASES (CONTINUED)**

### **PHASE THREE - TESTING - INITIAL ONLINE IMPLEMENTATION**

Principal site objectives brought online  
Continue ongoing archival process  
Implement full project management

### **PHASE FOUR – ONLINE COMPLETION - ARCHIVE MANAGEMENT, MAINTENANCE, & ONLINE EXHIBITIONS - FINANCIAL DIRECTION**

Site objectives completely online  
Conclusion of archival process  
Project management bringing exhibitions & retrospectives online  
Commercial/educational/artistic transactions fully implemented

## **VI) FINANCIAL POSSIBILITIES**

While the archive is a remarkable opportunity to provide visitors with open access to information, financial considerations will remain important. The more the archive can maintain financial self-support the more its staff can focus on its function and not on fundraising. To accomplish this, the archive should focus on maintaining certain built in processes for generating revenue, such as:

- Market particular work on a per fee basis
- Avail open access directories of work to public at cost plus administrative fees
- Develop schemes to support the site independently
- Pursue present and future grant possibilities

## **VII) PROJECT MANAGEMENT**

Vasulkas  
Staff director  
Maintenance/design tech(s)  
Financial officer  
Ancillary staff