Can the ‘Curatorial’ extend to the Digital Space?
Dominic Oldman & Diana Tanase
SFMOMA
October 5th, 2018
A Keeper’s Perspective

What processes were involved in its creation?

What was its original function?

What does it tell us about the past, present, and future?

What is its significance today?
“These ritual performances gave them an understanding of themselves in the interplay of social, geographical and environmental forces.”
The Sphere: Knowledge System Evolution and the Shared Scientific Identity in Europe

DEPARTMENT I

V. COSMOLOGICAL KNOWLEDGE FROM THE MIDDLE AGES TO THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY
Art History in ResearchSpace

LATE HOKUSAI: THOUGHT, TECHNIQUE, SOCIETY

The British Museum
SOAS University of London

ENGLISH JAPANESE 日本語
Demonstration of Japanese woodblock print production at the British Museum

Photo © Benedict Johnson Photography (2 June 2017)
The Four Estates of Moral Purity (1823)
From a Curatorial Perspective

We have a number of spaces for contemporary art. The thing that I think is missing, and this might be a funny thing for a contemporary curator to say, is that I think we have a shallow understanding of history, and I always worry that there is always a tendency to concentrate on the contemporary, abandoning the historical. If you don't look to the past then your contemporary work will look vapid.

Juliana Engberg, Curator and Maverick
It will contribute to theory and practice in collection care, curation and museum management, and will focus on recent and contemporary artworks which challenge the structures of the museum with a particular focus on time-based media, performative, live and digital art.
Reality within the Museum Walls
Expressing the Curatorial as a Knowledge Map

Biting the Hand that Fed Him: Hans Haacke’s Method of Institutional Critique
The Promise of the Digital

Edward Fry, Andrew W. Mellon Distinguished Professor of Art History

A vision for computer systems in Cultural Heritage (Museum and Computers, 1968)
- Flexible representations
- Unify knowledge across disciplines
- Enable discoveries
- Integrate biographical materials (biographies of places, people, objects, etc.)
“Architects who have aimed at acquiring manual skill without scholarship have never been able to reach a position of authority to correspond to their pains, while those who relied only upon theories and scholarship were obviously hunting the shadow, not the substance.

But those who have a thorough knowledge of both, like men armed at all points, have the sooner attained their object and carried authority with them.”

Marcus Vitruvius Pollio
Digital Representations with Context

**NOT ON DISPLAY**

**ARTIST**  
Joseph Beuys 1921–1986

**ORIGINAL TITLE**  
Fettstuhl

**MEDIUM**  
Wood, glass, metal, fabric, paint, fat and thermometer

**DIMENSIONS**  
Displayed: 1830 x 1550 x 640 mm

**COLLECTION**  
Tate / National Galleries of Scotland

**ACQUISITION**  
ARTIST ROOMS Acquired jointly with the National Galleries of Scotland through The d'Offay Donation with assistance from the National Heritage Memorial Fund and the Art Fund 2008

**REFERENCE**  
AR00088
Against Mindsets of Technologists

The whole notion and system of "archive" should be reconsidered beyond cultures and countries, and there will be no one, universal state of "archive", but there will be more de-centralized, multi-perspective approaches to the archive.

The digitally networked archive with social tagging by people's participation would be one of the actual, significant forms of archives.

Yukiko Shikata
A Web of History

I take culture to be those webs and the analysis of it to be ... not an experimental science in search of law but an interpretive one in search of meaning.

Carlo Ginsberg
Nothing that has ever happened should be regarded as lost for history.

Walter Benjamin
Arguments
Closing Messages

A Box of Useful Knowledge
[Caricature of Brougham] 1832
Questions?

Get in touch: researchspace@britishmuseum.org