

intermission museum of art

caretakers of the possible

curatorial essay
volume iv: triage – open source [art curation]
by john ros

triage as curatorial practice

curating, much like triage, involves balancing priorities – deciding what is preserved, amplified and left behind. in *volume iv: triage – open source [art curation]*, triage becomes the guiding framework for selecting, presenting and engaging with art. it's a process of care – sensitive to the urgency of voices and the spaces they inhabit. this exhibition and archive embraces curatorial triage as a tool for revealing and re-framing the overlooked, the invisible and the in-between.

this approach relies on deep engagement with space, memory and participation. through personal reflection, audience involvement and thoughtful artist selection, *volume iv: triage – open source [art curation]* explores how moments – grand or subtle – can be curated to evoke emotional, intellectual and sensory responses. here, space is not just a container for art – it is an active participant.

the personal and the spatial

at the heart of this exhibition lies a deep connection to place and memory. set on a veranda in jamaica, where the ritual of bringing chairs and floral cushions out at dawn and in at dusk reflects a profound engagement with space and time, the veranda becomes a stage for daily routine and life's transitions.

filled with sensory experiences – cool tiles, the smell of rain, the fleeting silence between conversations – the veranda serves as a metaphor for the interplay of place and memory. repetitive actions connect the physical and emotional, where each movement holds meaning. in this exhibition, personal memories transpose onto the curatorial approach, making space not just a backdrop but

a storyteller, inviting viewers to reflect on their own connections to place and memory.

space as a curatorial tool

in curatorial practice, space is never passive – it actively shapes how art is experienced. traditionally central to physical spaces like museums, the internet now offers a new dynamic space for curation. the internet is paradoxical – vast yet empty, offering both boundless opportunities and dislocation. it is fluid, defined by its interactivity but marked by its ephemerality.

like dia beacon's use of light to shape its architecture, the internet's space is shaped by its users – interactions, clicks and engagement create movement within the digital void. while this space can feel empty, curators act intentionally, bringing meaning and substance to the digital sphere, turning its vastness into a site for reflection.

the curatorial approach in *volume iv: triage – open source [art curation]* treats the internet as both an active and empty space – curated with intent to foster reflection and engagement.

curating the triage of moments

curating involves selecting moments to provoke thought. triage invites curators to decide which elements to amplify, which to soften and which to leave for reflection. this extends to the internet, where users engage passively – scrolling and clicking without leaving a trace – or actively, through deeper interactions. this passive engagement mirrors digital spaces' transient nature, but the archive offers an active form of participation, inviting exploration, commentary and reinterpretation.

in *volume iv: triage – open source [art curation]*, the archive is a living space, expanding ideas and re-contextualizing artworks. viewers may engage fleetingly with content, but the archive transforms these moments into a collaborative space where memory, reflection and action come together.

by curating moments that allow for both passive and active engagement, the exhibition encourages viewers to move from observation to participation, blending the impermanence of digital viewership with the archive's continuity and potential.

artists as collaborators in space

volume iv: triage – open source [art curation] artists are collaborators in shaping space, whether physical or digital. each artist brings a unique perspective on art, space and memory, contributing to the triage theme – where moments are selected, prioritized and framed within a larger narrative.

imi knoebel's bold, geometric compositions act as visual anchors, guiding viewers through color and form. his minimalist approach engages physical and digital spaces, urging viewers to pause in their passive online navigation and connect deeply with form and color. della gooden's installations reshape perceptions of space through found objects, creating intimate dialogues between personal and public spaces. gooden's work, much like repetitive actions on a veranda, evokes memories and the emotional resonance of everyday life.

uta barth focuses on the act of seeing. her blurred, ambiguous photographs emphasize the subtle, transitional moments often overlooked. her work blurs the line between passive and active participation, mirroring the fleeting nature of digital engagements. random international's rain room immerses viewers in controlled weather, allowing them to walk through falling water without getting wet. this interplay between shelter and exposure reflects the curatorial triage at play.

prajakta potnis' porous walls explores emptiness and boundaries. by focusing on the materiality of walls, potnis underscores the triage theme, asking when to amplify or mute and what boundaries to define or dissolve. yoko ono's wish tree offers hope and renewal. visitors are invited to hang wishes on a tree, transforming passive spectatorship into active participation, creating a space for emotional triage.

all the artists in *volume iv: triage – open source [art curation]* create a multi-layered exploration of space, encouraging viewers to actively and passively engage with the environments they inhabit. through their work, the exhibition challenges viewers to reconsider how art shapes – and is shaped by – space.

a space for vulnerability and reflection at the edge of possibility

volume iv: triage – open source [art curation] asks us to reflect on what to prioritize, care for and leave behind. by treating space as an active participant and inviting audience

collaboration, the exhibition creates a dynamic space where intensity, silence and vulnerability coexist.

at the core of this curatorial approach is the interplay between the possible and the impossible. triage demands choices – some elements are brought forward while others recede – but it also opens space for imagining what might be just beyond reach. in the in-between, where light, silence and memory intersect, new possibilities emerge, waiting to be activated by the viewer. space operates on this threshold of possibility and impossibility. physical spaces, limited by material conditions, hold the potential for transformation. digital spaces offer infinite openness but are often constrained by fleeting engagement. curators must balance the tangible and intangible, creating moments where the impossible feels within reach.

connections made in these in-between spaces – between viewers, artworks or environments – form the foundation for building something new. these fleeting connections allow the unseen to become visible, making triage not just a curatorial method but a practice of possibility.

the impossible becomes the terrain for curatorial experimentation. by framing art and space this way, *volume iv: triage – open source [art curation]* becomes both reflective and forward-looking – a place where past moments meet future potentials.

in the spirit of triage, this exhibition reminds us that curation is not only about care but about creating space for vulnerability and imagination. through thoughtful engagement with space, silence and the in-between, *volume iv: triage – open source [art curation]* re-imagines the boundaries of art and curatorial practice, opening new possibilities for dialogue and discovery.

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