

Expanding Documentation, and Making the Most of ‘the Cracks in the Wall’¹

Annet Dekker, Gabriella Giannachi and
Vivian van Saaze

With the arrival of ephemeral, conceptual, performative, processual, networked and ‘mixed reality’ works of art, the document, by which we mean the physical or digital remaining trace of a work, has become a focal point of conservation and preservation strategies. The growing popularity of the document resulted in a proliferation, as well as in a dispersion, of documents. Questions, however, need to be raised as to how to value this growing body of work within the museological context. Here, we reflect on three artworks that have, for different reasons, challenged museological documentation and preservation practices regarding documentation, and suggest that a revision of museological processes of documentation, including novel strategies for the creation and management of documents, are necessary to take on board the growing complexity of what in fact may be considered a ‘document’.

Problematizing the document

Documentation plays a significant role within the museological context. From the first discussions about the acquisition of an artwork, and throughout its entire existence in a museum, the artwork is

ject to various processes of documentation. In most museum practices, the core of documentation strategies is focused on the conservation of the artwork. Other documents, for example, flyers or videos that are produced for publicity and presentation, or ephemera that artists may generate alongside an artwork, are also kept, but they are often regarded as being of secondary importance and stored in 'documentation or 'acquisition files' rather than in the collection archive'. Building on past research (Dekker 2013; Giannachi 2017; Giannachi et al. 2012a), we show here that secondary and auxiliary documents, as well as artists' own approaches to documentation, should be considered when thinking through the documentation of performance artworks. Reflecting on the value of documents, including 'unauthorized documents', and expanding on the concept of audience documentation, this chapter also explores the potentiality, as well as challenges, that the proliferation and a dispersion of documentation cause to the museum. Standardized definitions of the 'document' are also questioned, to show that documents may include physical and digital attributes, as well as visual and performative qualities. Finally, the chapter shows that documents, through their materiality and circulation, become artworks themselves.

Our first case study, Lynn Hershman Leeson's *Roberta Breitmore*, consists of the manufacture of a fictional persona, interpreted by different people, technologies and platforms through an expanding number of documents which are usually identified as artworks. The second case study consists of a number of artworks by Tino Sehgal labelled by the artist as 'constructed situations', that attempt to escape documentation through their performative nature, yet generate what has been regarded as unauthorized or 'illicit documents'. Finally, JODI's *THE MACHINE CONTAINS...*, elucidates the challenges posed by a performance that requires the creation of documents in both its physical and digital components. What these artworks have in common is that they generate a large body of documents whose status is unstable and, museologically speaking, still to be determined.

Traditionally, documentation is produced by museum professionals, such as curators, conservators, registrars, sometimes in collaboration with the artists. In the case of Hershman Leeson, the documents were generated by the artist over a prolonged period of time; in the case of Sehgal, they were generated by museum curators and interpreters; and in the case of O DI, they were created by a group of documentalists, consisting of art students, artists and researchers.

In this chapter, we explore how these (artistic) practices reconfigure the relationship between the artwork and the document and thereby challenge museological documentation. In the process, we question to what extent Suzanne Briet's well-known work on documentation (2006 [1951]), in particular her distinction between primary, secondary and auxiliary documents, can shed light on expanding these hierarchies of documentation, and whether her classification still holds today. Elaborating on Briet's analysis, we discuss how these documents should be seen as inter-documents, environments that comprise primary, secondary, auxiliary documents, showing also how they can become, as in Hershman Leeson's case, artworks in their own right. Finally, we show how the valuation and subsequent hierarchy of museum documentation needs to change to reflect the growing complexity of artistic and visitor or audience generated documents. This includes new ways of thinking about what the document and documentation mean, which may also require a reconsideration of its structure and role in the museum.

When the artwork is the document: Lynn Hershman Leeson

The first case study is *Roberta Breitmore* (1972-8).² In this artwork, the artist Lynn Hershman Leeson traced the role of the fictitious persona of Roberta Breitmore for an initial period of six years.

ing surveillance technology (photography and moving image) and developing a graphic novel in collaboration with Hershman Leeson in San Francisco. In Spain Rodriguez, Hershman Leeson captured various moments in Robertas life, creating a set of documents that were then re-formed, often through collage, including text and painting, into individual artworks. Here we see how these documents, both primary and secondary, which were originally conceived of as a testimony to the occurrence of the performance of *Roberta Breitmore*, together with a new set of documents produced at different times, became both part of, and the totality of, the still evolving artwork known as *Roberta Breitmore*. The chronology of the documents that form *Roberta Breitmore* reflects their creation, rather than the occurrence of particular events in her 'life. From these, a number of biographical factors can be deduced that may be interesting so as to interpret the construction of Robertas persona or role. For example, from *Roberta Breitmore* titled from *Robertas External Transformation from Roberta (Robertas Construction Chart)* (1975), we know that Roberta was born on 19 August 1945; she was educated at Kent State University where she studied in Art and Drama; she married Arnold Marx in 1969 and was divorced after three years; and she travelled on a Greyhound bus to San Francisco and checked into room forty-seven at the Hotel Dante on Columbus Avenue. At that time, Roberta was carrying \$ 1,800, which corresponded to her entire life savings. The hotel was also the site of Hershman Leasons artwork *The Dante Hotel* (1973), an early site-specific performance in which Hershman Leeson rented a room in a run-down hotel on Columbus Avenue in San Francisco where visitors would encounter evidence of its inhabitation by a fictitious character. Hershman Leasons live performance started with Robertas arrival in San Francisco. Here, she underwent a series of external and internal transformations that can be traced through a number of documents. *Roberta Construction Chart #1* (1973) shows how Roberta was painted by 'Dior eyestick lighf, blus through " 'Peach Blush" Cheekcolor by

ylon, and how her lips were shaped though ‘ “Date Mate” scarlet’. *Untitled from Robertas External Transformations (From Robertas Body Language Chart)* (1978) shows that she also had a vocabulary of gestures so that, for example, she would have tried to ‘avert attention by ‘avoiding your eyes’ and that in a stiff and tense way

One such transformation was filmed by Hershman Leeson's friend Eleanor Coppola in 1974, with whom she was working on *The Dante Hotel* and is now often exhibited as a still document dated 1975. After moving into the Hotel Dante, Roberta tried to find a roommate by placing an advert in some local paper including the *S.F. Progress* (1974) and, later, on *The San Diego Union and Evening Tribune* (1974). Roberta's meetings with potential roommates were documented, for example, in *Roberta and Irwin Meeting for the First Time in Union Square Park* (1975). *Roberta Breitmore Blank Check* (1974) shows that she was struggling with a financial existence, while *Untitled from Robertas Internal Transformations, Language from Roberta's Body Language (excerpt from Robertas psychiatric evaluation)* (1978) shows that she suffered from severe alienation and experienced difficulties in distinguishing dreams from reality. Finally, *Untitled from Adventure Series: My First Time in America (Roberta contemplating suicide on Golden Gate Bridge)* (1978) shows that, unable to integrate herself into contemporary society, she contemplated suicide.

Looking at the individual documents, some of them could be described as primary, such as, among others, Roberta's check, her driving licence, a button from her coat, her dress. Others could be described as secondary documents, such as the construction charts and the diary, for example. Finally, there is a growing number of auxiliary documents such as, to some extent, this case study. Brought together, and seen as an inter-document, these documents do not so much construct a persona as an environment. Being part of this environment of performance, both primary and secondary documents moved beyond being mere representations of a form of life to become part of it. Throughout this process, they also became autonomous artworks.

In line with John Seeley Brown and Paul Duguid (2000), who argue that information is meaningful because it is so within a network, we regard documents as signifying forms that acquire meaning in relation to other documents. Moreover, we agree with Ronald Days comment '[documents] are meaningful signification to other signs [...] within whose difference from one another and in relation to things and events they gain their identity and their referentiality' (2014: 5). We suggest here that documents are not in opposition to performance, but rather they emerge from and are part of the environment generated by performance. Not only do they acquire meaning in relation to it, they become a sign for it. This phenomenon explains the potential performativity of performance documentation and a current obsession with replaying and restaging documents. The document is implicated in its past, present and potential future performance.

During her lifetime, *Roberta Breitmore* became a multiple as Hershman Leeson engaged three women, including the art historian Kristine Stiles, to 'be Roberta. Hershman Leeson recalls that Stiles went out as Roberta, and Hershman Leeson as herself because 'there was a rumour about Roberta' and she was unable to 'think that she existed' (2015). *So Untitled (Robertas Signature in Guest Book)* (1975) is Stiles's, and not Hershman Leeson's, signature. All performers wore wigs and costumes identical to those worn by Hershman Leeson when performing Roberta, and all underwent a series of transformations. Each had two home addresses and two jobs - one for Roberta and one for herself - and each corresponded to respondents to the advertisement and went on dates that were obsessively recorded in photographs and videotapes' (in Tromble and Hershman Leeson 2005: xiii). Finally, Hershman Leeson ceased performing as Roberta, leaving the three hired performers on their own. In 1978, an exhibition of Roberta's artefacts titled *Lynn Hershman Is Not Roberta Breitmore/Roberta Breitmore Is Not Lynn Hershman* was presented at the M.H. de Young Memorial Museum in

San Francisco during which a Roberta look-alike contest was run that led to an additional multiplication of her artworks accompanied by a further expansion of documents. Noticeably, most studies of this artwork only mention Hershman Leeson's performance of Roberta and rarely discuss the artwork as a multiple or a remediated artwork.

After being exorcized at the Palazzo dei Diamanti in Ferrara (1978), Roberta was re-mediated as a robotic doll *CyberRoberta* (1995- 8), who was dressed identically to Roberta, and had a fictional personality. It was, as in Hershman Leeson's words, 'designed as an updated Roberta' who not only navigated the internet, but was in herself a creature of the internet, a cyberbeing' (1996: 336). Roberta was also brought back in *Reconstructing Roberta* (2005) which shows an image of Hershman Leeson taken in recent years alongside the text 'botox injections three to six months - Cut and Lift, pin back xxx Liposuction Electro-stimulation Rejuvenation / / / /'. Additionally, Roberta appeared as a bot in the Second Life remake of *Roberta Hotel*, called *Life^An* (*Life to the Power of n* or *Life Squared* (2007-), which turned a number of documents in the Hershman Leeson archive about the homonymous artwork now hosted at Stanford University into a mixed reality experience where visitors could explore digital reproductions of fragments of the original archive under Roberta's guidance in Second Life (Giannachi and Kaye 2011).³ When asked why Roberta keeps on reappearing in her artwork, Hershman Leeson commented: Roberta 'just comes back in different forms every now and then. For *CyberRoberta*, it was twenty years later as a surveillance system which she originally was, but used the technology of that time; for *Life Squared* as an effort for immortality in digital space. She also came back thirty years later and appeared in a plastic surgeon's office'.⁴ These variations, produced through the reworking of other documents, testify to the fact that different technologies have re-formed both the body of the artwork and the environment that is *Roberta Breitmore*.

While the M.H. de Young Memorial Museum in San Francisco did not retain any documentation of the 1978 exhibition, *Roberta Breitmore* is now part of a number of collections, including those at the Museum of Modern Art, New York (MoMA), the Walker Art Center, the Whitworth Art Gallery, and the Donald Berman Collection. It also featured in a major retrospective about Hershman Leeson's artwork that started at ZKM Karlsruhe and toured Germany and the United Kingdom in 2015. The artworks that form *Roberta Breitmore* are usually shown individually. However, at the ZKM retrospective, a number of them, including dresses, photographs, and stages of transformations, were exhibited alongside each other, making it possible for visitors to begin to read them as inter-documents. MoMA displayed a number of artworks that are not ordinarily on display on their website,⁵ including *Robertas Room, Baker Acres* (1976), showing Robertas barren room at Baker Acres between Baker and Jackson, and *Kristine Stiles as Roberta Breitmore at Gallery Opening* (1976), an artwork that documents the gallery visit cited above, *Untitled (Robertas Signature in Guest Book)* (1975), which is dated one year earlier. The same is true for the Walker Arts Center, which has a wide collection of artworks that are grouped together online, including *Untitled from Robertas External Transformation to Roberta (Robertas Construction Chart)* (1975), subtitled an Alchemical Portrait Begun in 1975 by Leeson, suggesting how *Roberta Breitmore* is related to processes of trans-formation, in the sense that the artwork literally migrates between forms and documents created through them. This online document offers a 'meta-narrative'⁵, including the brief synopsis of Robertas life that we discussed above. Most museums do not make public their own interpretation or documentation of the artworks in exhibition. However, reading their documentation offers an interesting insight into the challenges artworks often present for museum curators. For example, former Tate curator Kelli Dipple noted in her justification for acquiring the artwork, how each of the 'three complete editions'⁵ of the *Roberta*

Breitmore inventory,⁶ in addition to one artists proof set, contained items from her personal rendition of the project, consisting of around 300 individual photographs, documents and artefacts'.⁷ By documents, Di... probably meant what, in line with Briets suggestion, we call secondary documents and by artefacts she proba... what we call primary documents. In a further e-mail to Frances Morris, she also noted: 'due to... ure of the project I was unable to settle on the best way to annotate the individual vs. collective artwo... started with the Roberta Construction Chart # 1 vintage print, but found that most explanation of... work was indeed an explanation of the entire project of Roberta Breitmore'.⁸

Roberta Breitmore can be described as a body of work, formed by an environment comprising a serie... s, people, documents and objects, which, over the course of Hershman Leeson's live performance, multip... onentially, leading to an expansion of documents across a variety of forms and media. These are ra... bited together and so audiences usually perceive them as instances of a dispersed artwork rather than... body of work. Exhibited or interpreted together, as was the case at ZKM, they show a more complex... nomic aesthetic vision about the relationship between performance and documentation that allows us... pass existing debates in the field which identify the two as dichotomous (Phelan 1993a) and rather... n as inter-related (Jones 1997; Clausen 2005; Auslander 2006). However, reading them as inter-rela... hlights the presence of substantial cracks in the wall', as ultimately, despite this expansion... umentation, it is impossible to comprehend, or even grasp, the entirety of *Roberta Breitmore*.

Unauthorized documents: Tino Sehgal

contrast to such a richly documented artistic practice, is a growing body of artists who challenge exist... tionships between the

work and the document by rejecting any form of documentation of their artworks. Our second case studies on one of the most rigorous and consistent examples, Tino Sehgal's attempts to avoid any visual documents and material traces resulting from his constructed situations'. His pieces are live encounters, often enacted by hired (amateur) actors or dancers, carrying out instructions conceived by the artist and learned through rehearsals. As many of his artworks are now entering museum collections, his particular practice challenges standardized documentation processes which museums rely upon (Laurenson and Van Saanen 2014:35). As Justin Graham and Jill Sterrett (1997) write: 'to the extent they exist, documentary traces from the past shape the institutional memory of what the work can be'. In the case of Sehgal's artworks, however, instead of relying on materialized memory, such as a score or photographs, knowledge of how to perform his pieces is intended to be transferred from person to person, from body to body. The restriction on the production of all kinds of documents goes as far as to avoid any written set of instructions, written receipts, labels and announcements (Richards 2012). With only a few interviews available, several critics have attempted to identify the motivations behind this restriction. According to Arthur Lubow, for example, Sehgal 'makes art that does not require the transformation of any materials. He refuses to add objects to a social space because he says is overly encumbered with them' (2010). Another explanation is provided by Dorothea von Steinhilber who argues that for Sehgal the reason for prohibiting any form of documenting lies in preventing the translation of situations into a two-dimensional medium, thus preventing documentation from functioning as a kind of surrogate for the artwork. It is of crucial significance whether a situational artwork enters history as a memory or as a document' (2010: 134).

The ban on visual or written documents prevents the existence of a score or inter-document, yet emphasizes the pervasiveness

ceived dichotomy between performance and document as mentioned earlier. This is addressed in one of his essays, *This is critique* (2008). In this artwork, the museum visitor is spoken to by, what appears to be a museum guard stating three critiques of the artists work and initiating a discussion about his approach. The criticisms addressed by the interpreter is the artists refusal to allow photographic and video documentation of the artwork.

With respect to the artworks ephemeral character and the ban on document creation, it is not always clear which forms of material traces are considered to be problematic and which are not (Van Saaze 2015). Some artists even display a certain hesitation to write about his artworks, while others indicate that their writing is inconsistent to Sehgal's practice. Art critic Stephanie Moisdon notes: 'One cannot write about Tino Sehgal's artworks without committing a first anomaly, by attempting to give them a title, to describe or to list them. It is, to enter into rivalry with the form of the artwork itself, which is the affirmation of what it is' (2003). In a similar vein, one of Sehgal's interpreters, Nico Colon, asks whether he is allowed to reveal his own memories: 'I guess as long as I'm not actively working for him, at this moment, I can be free to express myself. So I am morally off the hook. It's *my* experience, after all. The artwork is Sehgal's, but I own my own experience. If *he* owned *my* experience, that would actually bother me' (in Jensen 2013, original emphasis). While visitors, interpreters and museum staff are asked not to take pictures of the artworks, interestingly Sehgal's practice evokes an ever-growing body of visual and written documents outside the confines of the museum. Echoing what Michel Foucault has called 'the incitement to discourse' (1978: 17) - the prohibition of a certain word or practice leading to a proliferation of that same word or practice - his artworks generate a remarkable amount of images. These 'illicit' or unauthorized pictures and videos taken during exhibitions appear online and are shared through social media networking sites.

In addition to this emerging body of visual material, his practice has sparked an immense number of written reports from members of the audience, as well as from interpreters - all expressing a desire to share something of their experiences and memories. These tertiary documents, however, are not archived by museums as they are largely considered to be materials produced against the artists wishes or regarded as 'merely interpretative' (van Saaze 2015). Yet, instead of rejecting them altogether, an emerging challenge would be to consider the potential of such 'unauthorized' documents and the role of members of the audience and interpreters as distributed memory holders enabling future enactments of Sehgal's artworks. Especially considering the fragility of institutional memory in the absence of material traces, the visitors and interpreters accounts may be of value with regard to the artworks' perpetuation in the longer term. This in turn speaks to larger issues of shifting notions of experts and expertise in a museological context as well as to questions as to what the relationship is between documents produced by artists or professionals and those generated by audience members in the general public.

Expanding documentation: JODI

The final case study of this chapter consists of a performance by JODI, *THIS PAGE CONTAINS...*, which was performed on 1 October 2015 at the Stedelijk Museum in Amsterdam. The Dutch/Belgium duo, Joke van den Berg and Dirk Paesmans (JODI), are renowned for their subversive acts. Advertised as a performance in which 'the physical and digital worlds are both united and destabilized', JODI lived up to this reputation. With their artworks, JODI invert the visible and invisible in an attempt to come to grips with the digital computer environment. Their projects vary from net artworks, to

the modifications, videos to performances, and the individual artworks are exhibited and performed in various ways over the years. An interesting question emerges, how to document such variable artworks and what are their reference?

In an attempt to explore different forms and ways of documenting, we asked several 'documentalists' to create a document of JODI's performance at the Stedelijk Museum.⁹ The intention was to emphasize flexibility in JODI's practice, while at the same time moving beyond traditional documenting practices. This was to expand on existing documenting practices, derived from a three-year long experiment in creating various types of documents that was initiated by Dekker at the Piet Zwart Institute in Rotterdam.¹⁰ This experiment was developed as part of a course on how to document complex artworks. In the course, the meaning and value of documentation is analyzed by comparing different types of documents; paying particular attention to how different goals affect documentation and how this in turn influences the documents that are created. Attention is also paid to how documents are used by different kinds of institutes, organizations and individuals to produce, collect and manage cultural material. Moreover, the students are asked to create their own documents: the first year MA students need to document the final work of their second year colleagues. When pursuing a specific goal - from documents that are used for publicity and presentation, for funding, to those used for re-enactment/preservation - the motivation is to capture the significant properties of the artwork and to document it in whatever form they think is suitable.

The three-year experiment resulted in many different forms and methods, ranging from traditional art interviews, photography and video of an installation or performance, to elaborate concise code analysis, an interactive web interface showing screenshots from the artists' online research process via social media platforms, a KEA-like manual, and a process-based flipbook. Although most students

struggled at first to get to the core of their colleagues artworks, through several talks and assessing the research and its outcomes the students managed to capture what they thought was the essence of the artwork and the intention of its creator. At the same time, while the documents showed what the actual artworks and performances were about, it was often argued - in a positive sense - that some of the results became new artworks.

One of the reasons for seeing these documents as new artworks was perhaps related to the amount of time spent on them, a month during one year, which was spent thinking, talking and reflecting on the assignment and its outcome. Another reason perhaps was that being artists themselves, the documentalists, found it difficult to distance themselves from their own practice as artists. However, instead of pondering over reasons, we asked ourselves whether these documents, rather than being secondary documents, perhaps showed signs of what we might term auxiliary documents? Briet mentions that documents are contextual, and rather than delivering information about an isolated event, they are reflective of the networks in which that object appears. This, according to Briet, can in certain cases end in a genuine *creation*, through the juxtaposition, selection, and the comparison of documents, and the production of auxiliary documents' (2006: 16, original emphasis). To overcome the 'official' situation of the classroom assignment in which documents were created, and to further explore the distinction between secondary and auxiliary documents we used the performance by JODI as a case to study multiple ways of creating documents, and in the process, address the meaning and potential (re)use of documents.

As mentioned earlier, a group of seven people was asked to document JODI's performance, which lasted twenty-eight minutes. Beforehand, there was a short brief about the content and set-up of the performance and the various possibilities of documenting the event. The use of the PA system was discussed, along with additional

ts, placement of cameras and the possibility of screen-casting the performance from JODI's laptop. In discussion, we talked about different forms of documenting and decided that each person, or duo, based on their interests, would focus on one particular form.

The results ranged from a video reinterpretation (Michaela Lakova), a short text description (Hilary Battersby), a written account of the event that combined personal impressions with objective script logs (Loren Doren), an interview with JODI as part of the creation of a conservation record (Molly Bower and Loren Doren), and a double screen video capturing the audience perception (Thomas Walskaar), to finding ways to distribute the documents that were created (Julie Boschat Thorez). Except for the latter, all the documents were individual interpretations of the performance, in which some focused on the presentation itself, others on the audience experiencing the performance, or attempting to capture the intentions of the artists. Some of the outcomes could be seen as stand-alone new artworks: for example, Lakova's video was a remix of some of the sounds and the content that were used in the performance, overlaid with a design that is reminiscent of the title sequences. This translation was not a 'faithful' recording of the event and more of a subjective interpretation of what was shown, indeed, in some ways, a new artwork. At the same time, the aesthetic of the original performance were still clearly visible. Likewise, Battich's designed paper publication read like a short novel, alternating between personal observations and exact timings. The precise notation of the timing and technical environment of how the performance was created and what was shown could be seen as a written record of the performance, potentially to be used to re-perform the performance. Moreover, his personal observations and specific design of the text emphasised exclusivity and uniqueness, which was closer to a new artwork than a document of an existing artwork. Even the more traditional approach taken by Bower and Doren, following a museum's method of documenting an artwork, in its final design

tempts to show the multiple layers of understanding a mediated performance. Working with transparent layers of information, each layer presenting a specific aspect of the performance, they tried to create a non-hierarchical document in which technical and subjective approaches existed simultaneously.

Moving beyond traditional methods of documenting, these documents had in common the quality of possibly being seen as extensions of the original artwork, the performance - which, also, in part, consisted of documents generated through code that were performed to the audience. Suggestive of both secondary and auxiliary documents, and still implicating some primary documents formed by the original code, it is in the multiplicity of documents and their shared environment that, like *Roberta Breitmore*, they become interdocuments.

The idea of the inter-documentary is further emphasized by the document that Boschat Thorez created based on the idea that digital artworks are vulnerable over time and that their strength resides in the replicability of their dissemination over the internet, Boschat Thorez explained that collaboration and the multiplication of documents over a wide range of hardware and operating systems, belonging to different people, should also be regarded as a strategy for sustaining memory over time'.¹¹ For her documentation of the artwork, Boschat Thorez created a digital folder that contained all the (digitized) documents that were made during JODI's performance, including screen captures from the laptop that were sent by JODI after the performance, which she then distributed via various online networks - to be (re)used by anyone. It was an attempt to focus on the sharing of information far and wide as an alternative preservation method. It could be argued that this is merely a distribution method, and not a document. However, the way the information was selected, packaged, repurposed and contextualized reflect the characteristics of Briets notion of an auxiliary document. At the same time, shifting

thinking of documentation as a single interpretation, a set of instructions or guidelines, to a concept or method from which new interpretations can be made, provides new ways to understand the meaning and value of documentation.

Conclusion

In this chapter we have shown that artists creating what could be described as ephemeral, conceptual, performative, processual, networked and mixed reality' artworks have expanded our understanding of what a document could be, and so challenged our evaluation of its relationship to an artwork and, in turn, to the documentation processes museums undertake. We have described the practice of Lynn Hershman Leeson, whose artwork *Roberta Breitmore* is usually exhibited as a series of artefacts, and claimed that to understand all the intricacies of the artwork it should perhaps be exhibited as an inter-document or environment. In describing how Lynn Hershman Leeson's documents evolved over time, we have seen how they became artworks and challenged the distinction between primary, secondary and even tertiary documents. We have reflected on the artist's refusal to enter practices of material documents, which has inspired questions as to what may or may not be a legitimate relationship between the artist's game plan and documents produced by others. We have also shown, in the case of JODI's artwork *THIS PAGE CONTAINS ...*, that artworks can inspire creative practices of making documents and documentation. Our case studies have shown that Briets classifications and hierarchies, which were developed for a library context, fall short in an aesthetic and museological context. Through the lens of particular artistic practices, we have demonstrated that documents form part of a complex, dynamic and, above all, expanding environment. This finding challenges museums to revisit

ir documentation practices and reassess the value of documents and documentation for exhibition preservation.

Acknowledgements

gracefully acknowledge the AHRC grant 'Performance at Tate' (AH/M004228/1) which funded research into Lynn Shman Leesons *Roberta Breitmore*. We are very grateful to all artists presented in the case studies.