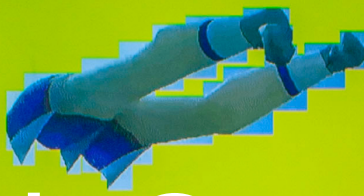
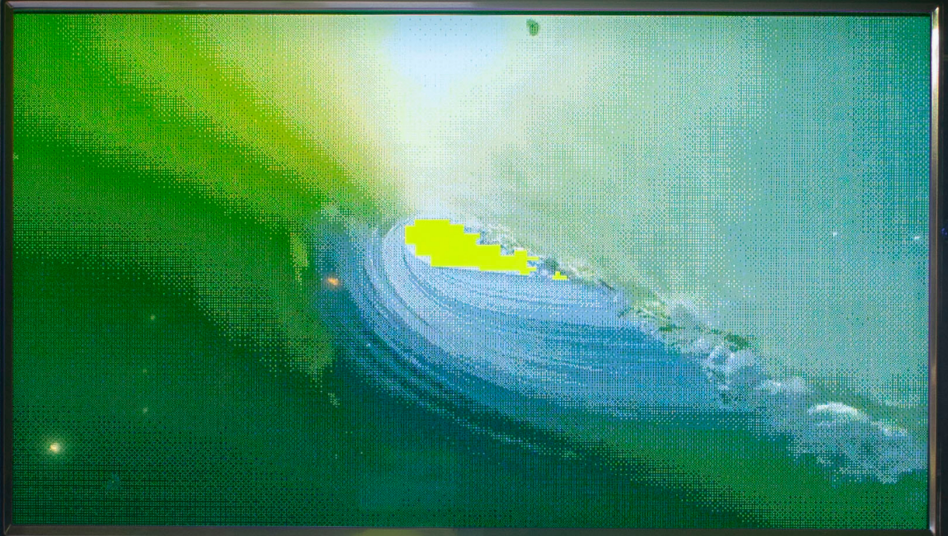
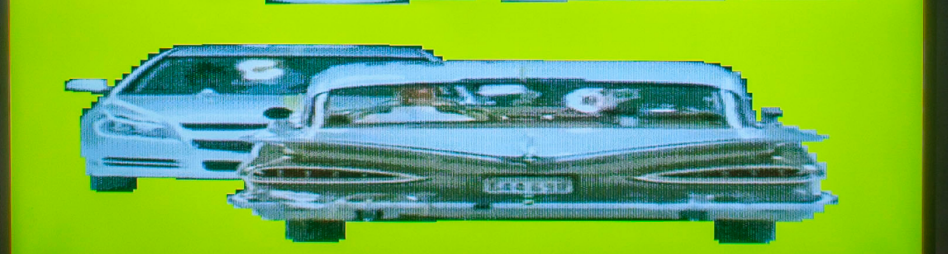


Powered On

2026 Annual Report



TRANSFER

Powered On

Letter from the Director	2
Year One at a Glance	6
Membership	9
Governance	10
Additional Business	11
Publications	12
Artist Member Reports	13
Infrastructure Report	25
Financial Report	30
Looking Ahead	33

TRANSFER Data Trust is an artist-owned archive and not-for-profit cooperative. It grew out of a decade of programming at TRANSFER, an alternative exhibition space for experimental media art. In 2023 with fiscal sponsorship and support from Gray Area, TRANSFER began field work to build an artist-owned infrastructure to safeguard data in the wake of AI acceleration. The mission is to cooperatively maintain artworks in perpetuity, and to hold the data, context, and conservation record of those works under artist control rather than platforms, institutions or 'frontier' AI models.

The cooperative operates a network of independently maintained storage nodes running the Archive Engine, an open software package for trust-based decentralized archiving. Members commit inventory annually, commit data monthly, and vote on governance and spending. TRANSFER Data Trust was officially incorporated in September 2025 as a Colorado Cooperative.

Founding Members

Artists: Carla Gannis, Huntrezz Janos, Rosa Menkman, Lorna Mills, and Eva Papamaragariti. **Caretakers:** Kelani Nichole, Regina Harsanyi, and Wade Wallerstein. Our stack is built by Ryan Betts @depatchedmode.

TRANSFER Data Trust is supported by Filecoin Foundation for the Decentralized Web, Filecoin Foundation, GSR Foundation, and Gray Area.

Letter from the Director

In our inaugural year operating as a cooperative, the founding members exercised our governance model and worked through the trust and commitment structures we wrote into our bylaws. I'm delighted to share the outcomes in this report, and want to highlight two culminating moments that demonstrate the ideas we have been fostering through our ongoing field work.

The first is the exhibition we produced in partnership with Nguyen Wahed Gallery. *TRANSFER Download: AliveNET* opened at the ten-year anniversary of the immersive exhibition format. The Download has been commissioned in 5 countries across institutions, art fairs and events. Many of the founding members have been exhibiting in the Download since it's first manifestation in 2016, and we



Image: Installation view of 'Model of Me' (2026) by Carla Gannis in *TRANSFER Download: AliveNET* at Nguyen Wahed Gallery

decided as a cooperative to produce an exhibition together. We invited a few new artists into the fold, all of them people we had relationships with or interest in as a group. Celebrating the format after a decade of evolution was deeply rewarding. It was also uplifting to work collectively through the constraints that inevitably show up in any media art exhibition.

As a group we had a broader perspective on the hard calls. When it became clear that the architectural framing of the Download would not work at the scale of the space, we pivoted away from LED walls and found massive flatscreen displays to present the work. The constraint became an opportunity, with the gallery space's unique storefront visibility we decided to run the show 24/7 and experimented with extending the exhibition onto the street. The packed opening, and neighborhood footprint activated the format in new and unexpected ways, for example seeing school children pass each day, and seeing neighbors who had never been into the gallery watching the works from the street.

Another boost was having a conservator's perspective on the process from start to finish. Luckily Eddy Colloton was in NYC for the opening coinciding with a VoCA

workshop, and was able to see the install and meet the artists. His collaboration gave us a perspective and grounding for conversation work, as we go deep into documenting the 10 years of exhibitions that preceded.

On the engineering side, Ziyi Zhang started standardizing the technology scaffolding for the Download in 2024, and that momentum meant the installation booted up quickly and easily. In addition to these interdisciplinary perspectives, our artist and caretaker members contributed to exhibition planning in monthly meetings. I am extremely grateful to the cooperative artists for their time, love and attention, so generously given to a group effort. The show was extended well beyond its close date and reached thousands of people through its run in the Lower East Side.

The second big moment this year was the FORA software release. Sharing our vision in a generative way with a broader community resulted in something new.

"Data is more valuable when held in context, our small-scale experiment demonstrates that."

As we gathered feedback, we found many eager node operators and reconfigured our orientation to the effort. Our trust model shifted from one group of individuals toward something that federates into a broader cultural memory consortium. It became clear, the more data we steward, the more redundancy we have, the more valuable our collective effort becomes.

Artists are regular contributors to the software roadmap, their feedback and thoughts are gathered in the monthly member meetings. Product updates are shared, and we talk through the iterations, look at demos, artists ask great questions.

That cooperative labor has culminated in something special we call the FORA release. Inspired by a gathering held in May during Frieze Week NYC, we are thinking of this both as a consortium and as a release, and it is a delicate dance: developing infrastructure alongside and for a broader community, rather than onboarding people into a pre-defined worldview. Designing organically from the needs of individuals, and thinking expansively about what it means for infrastructure to work sustainably for a community. As much as this year reoriented my relationship to curatorial practice, this methodology

also has me rethinking what it means to design, build, deploy and circulate software.

We ended the year with an open question, posed by Regina Harsanyi one of the caretaker members at a member meeting:

"As frontier models make personalized interfaces easy to build, paying for software becomes less compelling. The cooperative's stated position is that we are not monetizing this software."

Each entity that joins FORA Consortium brings its own budget for conservation and for customizing its own interface, and what gets built on the shared stack comes back into the ecosystem. The value is in the data, in cooperative care, and in holding ownership and context as AI accelerates."

So what does it mean to be building software, building an interface, and interfacing with data in this way? To be offering a methodology, a practice, a set of tools and code, in this moment of accelerated transition?"

This is a question we are still working through, and the co-op may not have just one answer. There are many similar initiatives emerging concurrently, and we believe a plurality of efforts are required to fight the undertow of big tech in this wave.

What we are specifically interested in is local-first, open, sovereign infrastructure that is widely interoperable, additive and sustainable. How can we individually maintain our data, and share it in circles of trust? This is not closing off access. It is reframing openness as layers of trust, and exploring consent-based access to a larger data set and AI models.

We being the second year with a special announcement. I am thrilled to welcome Daniel Temkin and Leo Castañeda as new members, and to see where their work and their ideas take us.

Temkin has a code-based practice and an engineering background, and already the questions he is asking about recoverability and redundancy have pushed us to start demonstrating those aspects of our stack reliably.

Castañeda's video game work has been in iteration for nearly a decade,

and the game engine he works within called UNREAL changed constantly as the game developed. We'll be going deeper into how those iterations are preserved, what it means to manage code repos alongside collectors and stewards into the future.

Our aim in the coming year is to push on the promotional aspects of the cooperative model. We want to continue to produce exhibitions, gatherings, and code. We hope to take the scope of a decentralized artist-owned archival network to the next level with our new members, the FORA release, and the growing community of artists, data stewards and orgs interested in deploying our package and owning their infrastructure.

Thank you to all of our partners: Gray Area, for fiscal sponsorship and continued mentorship; FFDW, for multi-year support as we evolve this vision; the GSR Foundation, for their backing; and everyone who has shared ideas and offered feedback in demos and pitches.

Join us: document everything, run local open AI, hold your data close and take care of each other.

Kelani Nichole

Director, TRANSFER Data Trust



Year One



\$958K

CUMULATIVE VALUE OF
COMMITTED INVENTORY



50

EDITIONS COMMITTED
TO THE TRUST



10

ARTIST-OPERATED NODES DEPLOYED
ACROSS THE NETWORK AND PARTNERS



5

ARTIST MEMBERS
COMMITTING INVENTORY



3

CARETAKER MEMBERS



2

ARCHIVES LIVE ON THE NETWORK
TRANSFER DATA TRUST, GRAY AREA



\$41K

SALES FACILITATED



7

SOFTWARE BUILDS SHIPPED



1

EXHIBITIONS PRODUCED
TRANSFER DOWNLOAD: ALIVENET



2

PUBLICATIONS RELEASED



41

MEMBER EXHIBITIONS AND
FEATURES DOCUMENTED



2

NEW MEMBER CANDIDATES
ADVANCED TO A VOTE

Year One

At-a-Glance

Fifty editions are held under artist control, with a total value of \$958,500. Artist Proofs are staked to the cooperative in perpetuity. Each artwork had extensive conservation documentation produced this year, which is held in the decentralized archives.

\$41,250 of work sold through the cooperative's efforts, returning 10% to the member disbursement pool. It is a small number, but it demonstrates that the structure moves money to artists on the terms the bylaws describe.

The year was funded by a multi-year renewal from Filecoin Foundation for the Decentralized Web, which paid the development team, the conservator, and the artist members for the labor of building and testing the system. Each artist member received a fee for their ongoing labor to help design and maintain this infrastructure.

One exhibition, two publications, 40+ member shows across 15 countries. TRANSFER Download: AliveNET ran two months at Nguyen Wahed in NYC. Upstream of Obsolescence and the Linked Art metadata report were published for Transformation Digital Art in Amsterdam. Members showed in forty-one documented exhibitions, screenings, talks and performances.

Ten nodes are running in member studios and partner institutions across four countries, and 25+ are committed to coming online with the FORA release. The software shipped seven builds and changed its name. The FORA release opens up our decentralized infrastructure to more participants: a node can be installed and hosted on any Mac, PC or Linux machine with available storage, without investing in dedicated NAS hardware.

Two new artist members were voted into the cooperative. We are delighted to welcome Daniel Temkin and Leo Castañeda into the TRANSFER data trust.

Membership

Artist Members

- Attend monthly member meetings.
- Maintain a node, online and connected.
- Commit data monthly. This can be active conservation work or studio updates: conversations, shows, work in progress.
- Commit inventory annually. Active editions available for sale are committed to the Trust, and for that year the artist agrees not to sell that edition through another agent. Editions cannot be withdrawn mid-year but can be withdrawn at the next annual cycle.
- Stake the Artist Proof for each committed edition. The AP is held in perpetuity as an asset the cooperative preserves. It returns to the artist only if the artist leaves, if the cooperative dissolves, or as assets are redistributed if the cooperative evolves into a trust.
- Participate in the annual virtual summit and in quarterly governance votes.
- Receive annual disbursements from cooperative proceeds.



From top left: Carla Gannis, Eva Papamargariti, Huntrezz Janos, Kelani Nichole, Lorna Mills, Rosa Menkman, Regina Harsanyi, Wade Wallerstein.

Caretaker Members

- The same meeting, node, data, summit, and voting obligations as artist members.
- Engage each artist member bi-monthly, and record outcomes and needs in the system as data contributions.
- Produce annual report, share outcomes.
- Disbursement eligibility begins after two years of membership.

Governance Model

The cooperative operates under adopted bylaws with an annual asset commitment cycle, defined caretaker roles, and a point count that determines profit distribution for artist members. Hardware infrastructure maintenance and governance proposals are reviewed by members at the monthly meeting.

The bylaws as written are operational, built around active member contributions, mutual stewardship and reciprocal support. Seeking to move away from centralized control, there are provisions for the cooperative to continue or to dissolve if the Executive Director is no longer able to serve, governance transition milestones built-in and re-evaluation of trust-based models on a regular basis. The membership is working incrementally toward legacy planning, and shaping what a perpetual purpose trust entity looks like for the co-op, with amendments to bylaws expected at the two year and five year marks.

Here are some examples of our governance decisions.

Vote: Production of TRANSFER Download at Nguyen Wahed Gallery

Proposal: The cooperative produced a new iteration of TRANSFER Download in collaboration with Nguyen Wahed Gallery, New York, presenting committed and new works by members alongside invited artists in the three-channel interactive format.

Vote date: December 2025

Outcome: Approved

Tally: 7 of 8 in favor (1 offline vote)

Vote: Admission of new members Candidates. Leo Castañeda and Daniel Temkin.

Proposal: The bylaws require a nomination from an existing member and at least two years of collaboration with one or more members. Both candidates qualify.

Vote date: September 9, 2026

Attendance required

Outcome: Approved

Tally: 8 of 8 voted in favor

Additional Business

Exhibition: TRANSFER Download:
AliveNET at Nguyen Wahed Gallery,
504 E 12th Street, New York.
January 16 to March 19, 2026

TRANSFER and Nguyen Wahed presented a new iteration of TRANSFER Download that explores the fragile space of perception between human and machine vision. Working across game engines, film rendering software, pixel editors, generative systems, and subversive forms of AI, the artists interrogate screen-mediation and algorithmic embodiment.

Participating Artists:
Chia Amisola, Leo Castañeda, Carla Gannis, Huntrezz Janos and Antigoni Tsagkaropoulou, Fabiola Larios, Rosa Menkman, Lorna Mills, Eva Papamargariti, Yoshi Sodeoka.

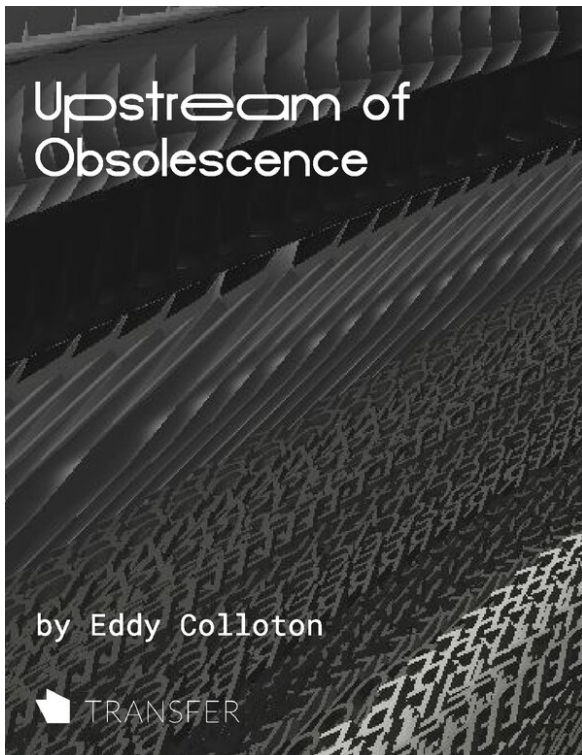
The exhibition ran in TRANSFER's three-channel interactive format. The Download has presented over 30 artists with critical technology practices from San Francisco to Shanghai since 2016. The catalog traces the evolution of simulation, networked culture, and technologies of power across a decade.

Mozilla Data Collective participation: Strongly aligned with our mission, but postponed. Labeling the data for training sets would require resources the cooperative needs to assemble. The current stack captures metadata that describes the data for access by the local open-source bot 'Forager', but does not currently mark up artwork files to be used as training data. The cooperative agreed to staying focused on descriptive metadata and conservation in the short term in our trust-based ecosystem, with an eye to secure resources to pursue sharing our data sets more broadly in the future.

Legacy and estate planning: Raised by Lorna Mills. Theme of Year 2 will be to research and outline a legacy planning and gift model for artists to manage their estate.

FORA Transition: The membership re-committed to our mission, and agreed that the Co-op structure stays intact and continues as constituted, year after year, until the members decide otherwise. FORA is the larger consortium developing around us, not a shift in the scope of the cooperative.

Publications

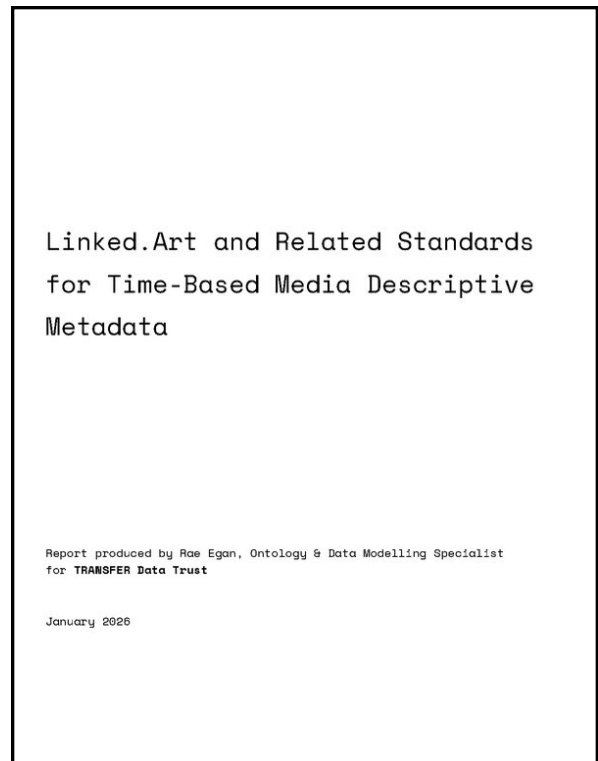


Upstream of Obsolescence

Author: Eddy Colloton

An essay on the urgent work of preserving time-based media art, structured around five artists and five conservators.

Colloton warns that without intervention many works face either insurmountable obsolescence, or boundaries so loosely defined, that the work's identity slips away.



Metadata Report

Author: Rae Egan

A report mapping the gaps in metadata models for time-based media. Our data model is based in Linked.art and proposes nine core classes: Series, Work, Edition, Variant, Version, Iteration, Component, Activity, and Agent.

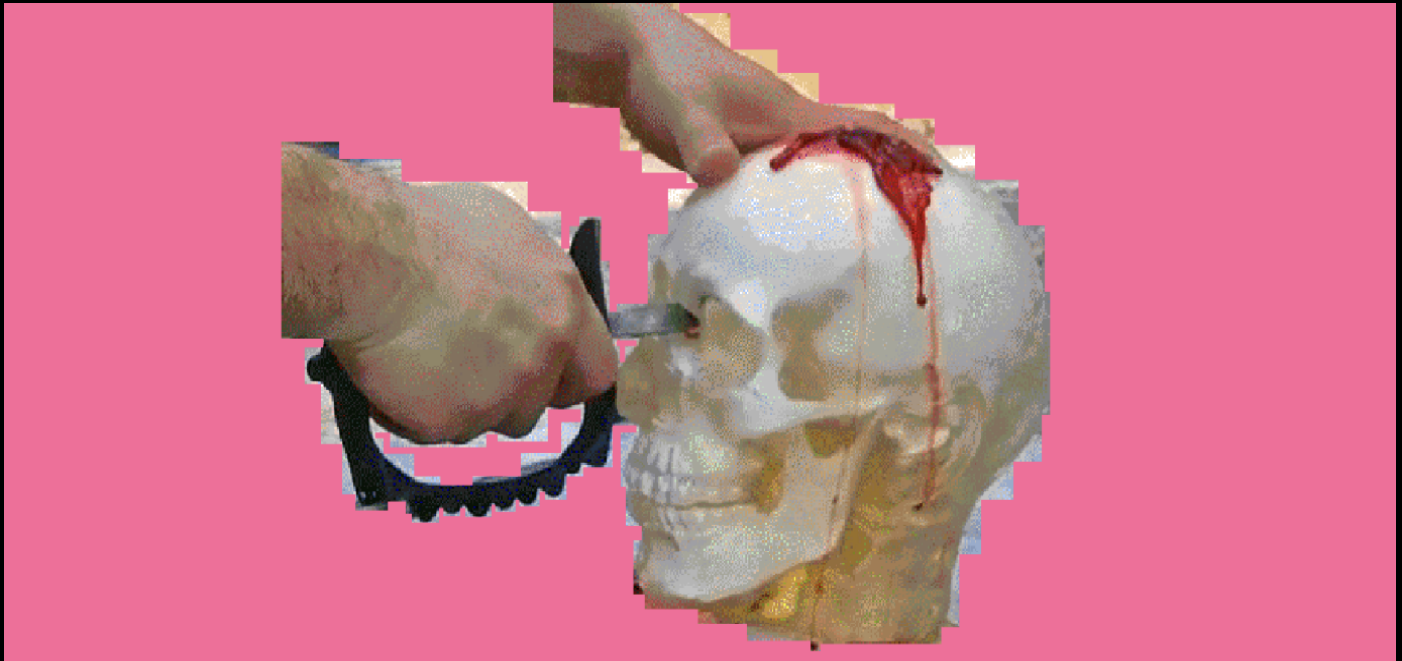
This model maps Linked Art onto decentralized infrastructure. The result is a route to artist-held semantic archives that interoperate with major cultural heritage systems without depending on any single platform or institution.



Artist Member Reports

Lorna Mills

The year in brief. Mills exhibited her work in four countries across festivals, galleries and institutions, released new NFT work through two online platforms, and curated a selection of artists for a Montreal festival.



FEATURES

Net Evil — Feral File, online
Opened August 26, 2025

Esmorga Fest — Sarria, Galicia,
Spain — *October 17 to 18, 2025*

Lorna Mills: A Serious Artist
by Anna Leven — *October 28, 2025*

TRANSFER Download: AliveNET
Nguyen Wahed, New York —
January 16 to March 19, 2026

Old Master — Wouters Gallery with
Rectangle, Brussels, Belgium
June 27 to July 25, 2026

RGBMTL 2026 — 1481 rue Ottawa,
Montreal, Canada — *August 28 to
29, 2026*

Reskinned — Resonant Gallery,
Artprise Grand Rapids, MI —
September 18 to October 3, 2026

WEBSITES WEBSITES WEBSITES!
— ARTXCODE and Rhizome, New
York — *September 21 to 27, 2026*

On a collector base that keeps widening. Mills sells steadily rather than episodically, and the year's releases came out across several platforms. Diatriber, her contribution to Net Evil on Feral File, was issued as seven GIFs in editions of ten at 0.15 ETH each, alongside a full-exhibition set offered at 0.66 ETH. SHAGBAT, Touch me not. followed as an objkt drop in late October, a week after the work showed physically at Esmorga Fest in Galicia. objkt then published a full critical profile of her by Anna Leven. This was followed by the drop with ArtxCode for Rhizome, a website installation. Across the year that's three distinct sales structures — editioned GIFs, a single drop, and a whole installation sold intact — and a collector base that is accumulating across platforms.

On reviving a work: For the ArtxCode and Rhizome show, part of the organization's 30th anniversary season curated by Vienna Kim and Benoit Palop of LAN Party, Mills reconfigured her work into a standalone full website working with Motzko, and commissioned a deployment so she can build and host it herself.

This is an artist setting the terms of her own market and infrastructure rather than accepting the format a platform hands her.

Conservation work completed in year one: Documentation of multi-channel animated GIF installations, including the four-channel *Yellowwhirlaway*, six-channel *Etherial Imperial*, five-channel *Petting Zoo: Demons Begone*, and the *Ways of Something* series based on John Berger's 4-part series 'Ways of Seeing'. The 113-contributor structure of *Ways of Something* included documentation on the unique rights and attribution framework the artist designed into the artwork.

Committed inventory:

9 Editions

\$246,200 Declared Value

8 Dividend Points

Carla Gannis

The year in brief. Gannis was awarded a grant to preserve and migrate her long-running *wwwunderkammer* virtual world, and selected for a marble carving residency in Tuscany over the summer, while maintaining a dense exhibition schedule across the United States and Europe.

FEATURES

Embodied Algorithms — CIFRA, online retrospective of films from Carla Gannis— *2025, ongoing*

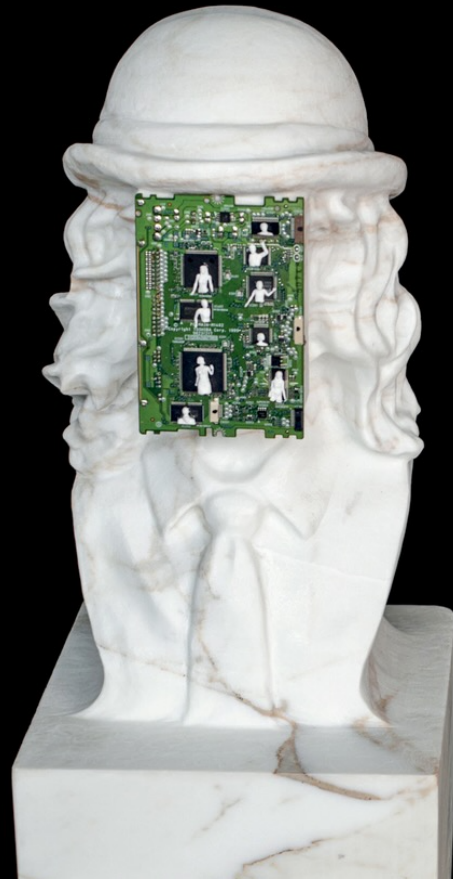
wwwunderkammer: The Prequel and Sequel — NYSCA Funded Restoration exhibited at NYU IDM Gallery, Brooklyn, NY — *September, 2025*

The Mirror Effect — Château de Montsoreau, Musée d'Art Contemporain, France — *through November 3, 2025*

TRANSFER Download: AliveNET Nguyen Wahed, New York — January 16 to March 19, 2026

Every Woman Biennial: SPECTALiA — Pen + Brush, New York — *March 8 to April 11, 2026*

Model of Me — Solo Exhibition at Ro2 Art, Dallas, TX — *opened April 20, 2026*



What's in a Story? CYFEST 17 curatd by Barbara London — Ca' Foscari, Venice — *May 8 to August 31, 2026*

Per Forza di Levare — Fortezza di Mont'Alfonso, Castelnuovo di Garfagnana, Italy — *June 26 to August 30, 2026*

On *wwwunderkammer*. Gannis began the project in 2018 as a set of thematic virtual cabinets of curiosity, running from obsolete technology through feminist digital culture to decolonial knowledge. It lived on Mozilla Hubs.

When Hubs was discontinued the work had nowhere to run, which is the ordinary death of a virtual world and the reason most of them are gone. The grant covered research and restoration: the work migrated to Unity 6, and from SteamVR to OpenXR so it runs across multiple headsets rather than one vendor's.

The migration was carried out through the Tandon Undergraduate Summer Research Program, with students Sohini Paul, Caroline Guo and Pua Farm. The exhibition presented that work as a hybrid of virtual worlds and physical artifacts, including speculative VR headsets built as sculptural prototypes.

The prequel is *C.A.S.S.A.N.D.R.A.*, a speculative-fiction language model imagining an AI in digital exile who built the original *wwwunderkammer* as a sanctuary.

On stone: the the Digital Stone Project awarded residency, marked a significant material shift in Gannis' work. The program combined robotic CNC milling with hand-carving in Italian marble, and was the artist's first time working in the material.

The resulting exhibition, *Per Forza di Levare*, was curated by India Price, with an internationally distributed catalogue forthcoming.

Conservation work completed in year one: Documentation of committed editions of *The Garden of Emoji Delights* across print, animation, and lightbox formats, and the four *Season* works. Documentation on *A Subject Self-defined* and the augmented reality artist book *The Selfie Drawings*. A migration plan was started for this AR series of drawings from 2016; additional resources are required to prepare and complete migration.

Committed inventory:

10 Editions

\$246,000 Declared Value

8.5 Dividend Points

Rosa Menkman

The year in brief. Menkman showed across 13 countries while completing her theory based PhD, with her research on resolutions forming the basis of a museum exhibition in Amsterdam.



FEATURES

Still Processing — NXT Museum, Amsterdam, NL — *February 7, 2025 to June 31, 2026*

IMAGE REMAINS — Solo Exhibition at Drugo More, Galerija Filodrammatica, Rijeka, Croatia *January 15 to February 3, 2026*

TRANSFER Download: AliveNET
Nguyen Wahed, New York
January 16 to March 19, 2026

Video Games & Music
Philharmonie de Paris, France
April 3, 2026 to January 10, 2027

Unfinished Reality — United Art Museum, Wuhan, China
April 10 to August 30, 2026

Memory Bearers — ACC, Gwangju, South Korea — *May 19 to July 19, 2026*

Leaving Behind / Remaining / Receiving — NTT ICC, Tokyo, Japan
June 20 to November 8, 2026

Vis-à-Vis / Twice Told — Locarno Film Festival, Locarno, Switzerland
August 12, 2026

Reskinned — Resonant Gallery, Artprise Grand Rapids, MI
September 18 to October 3, 2026

V2_ 45 years: Still Unstable — V2_, Rotterdam, NL — *September 24 to October 28, 2026*

On Still Processing. Curated by Bogomir Doring and inspired by Menkman's research on resolutions, the exhibition presented seven of her works across four rooms, each introducing a phase of contemporary image processing: the transition from analog to digital, digital compression, the platformed image, and the synthetic image. She also performed *Destitute Vision* at the museum as part of the show.

On IMAGE REMAINS. Her solo exhibition at Drugo More, presenting new installation work *Angel's Remains*, alongside *Horology* and *Refractions*, with an artist talk on opening night.

Drawing on Paul Klee's iconic 1920 painting *Angelus Novus* and Walter Benjamin's philosophical interpretation of the work as the "Angel of History," Menkman's exhibition explored what happens to images in today's digital environment as they are continuously copied, processed, fragmented, and circulated across platforms and algorithms.

Talks, lectures and performances. Seventeen across the year, including a keynote at the University

of the Arts Linz, talks at HSBI Bielefeld and EXIT FEST in Amsterdam, a conference contribution with Jens Schröter at KHI Florence, lecture performances at the Locarno Film Festival and the Solar Eclipse Artist Residency, workshops at the University of Siegen and IMPAKT, and a jury seat at New Media Week in Katowice.

Conservation work completed in year one: Menkman completed an additional round of conservation work with Eddy Colloton late in the year, beyond the baseline for her commitments. Her committed inventory includes *Xilitla*, an algorithmic video game installation with a custom 3D printed controller, and *DCT:SYPHONING*, a VR application for Oculus Rift, both of which carry significant hardware and runtime dependencies.

Committed inventory:

11 Editions

\$135,000 Declared Value

8.5 Dividend Points

Huntrezz Janos

The year in brief. Huntrezz developed a new body of work with residency and grant support, and continued her practice building games, poetry, performance, 3D-printed wearables and perceptual technology.

FEATURES

Santa Monica Recognizes Latinx, Afro, Asian, White, and Indigenous Queer Heritage — 18th Street Arts Center, Santa Monica, CA; curated by Steve Galindo with co-curator Francisco Flamenco — *November 26 to December 19, 2025*

Analogue World, presented by The End of the World — Human Resources, Los Angeles, CA
January 29, 2026

Illuminations Grant finalist — Queer|Art, New York — 2025

TRANSFER Download: AliveNET
Nguyen Wahed, New York
January 16 to March 19, 2026

LACE Lightning Fund award — Los Angeles Contemporary Exhibitions
Announced January 2026

Code Name: Doll House — Turbo Cheap, in association with FWB, Los Angeles, CA — *opened February 28, 2026; reopened March 7, 2026*



Dream Models — Gray Area Grand Theater, San Francisco, CA — *May 9, 2026*

AfroHungaria — SIGGRAPH 2026
Los Angeles Convention Center
July 21 to 23, 2026

What Remains — Onassis ONX, New York — *September 25 to October 4, 2026*

On perceptual tech. Huntrezz's Difocal Lens is a wearable device that lets two people share live audiovisual perception, making each wearer see through the other's eyes in real-time. Huntrezz presented the first working lenses at RIP Space's Synthesis Assembly live coding jam, running social experiments with visitors passing their sight back and forth, and published an accompanying paper, *Difocal Lens: A Transhumanist Apparatus for Recombinant Vision, Social Reflection and Afrofuturist Signal Transmission*.

On Dis-ARMOUR-Machine. A wearable XR artwork centered on solar-fabricated biomechanical armour which uses 3D-printed sculpture, poetry, AR, game-space, posters and digital archives to transform ideas of protection from militarised defense into an interface for survival, abolitionist imagination, ecological technology, public resistance and speculation. The work debuted after months of technical work and fabrication at Onassis ONX at their inaugural fall 2026 exhibition, and was developed through her ongoing ONX membership and grant support.

Grants and awards. LACE Lightning Fund, regranted on behalf of the Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts. Queer|Art Illuminations Grant, 2025 cycle, finalist award. Chamber Arts Spring 2026 Production Support Grant.

Conservation work completed in year one: Documentation of nine augmented reality face filter installations, a format with acute obsolescence exposure given platform dependency. The face filters need a hardware home. They were authored against commercial social platforms, which means their runtime is owned by companies that can revise or discontinue it without notice, and have. Emulating that experience is complex, but more possible with the artist's experiments with AI coding.

The proposal to continue this work is to stabilize the series in a dedicated hardware environment: a fixed device, a pinned operating system and a pinned application version, held as a known-good configuration that the work can be exhibited from and compared against as it is migrated.



This is a standard approach for software art whose dependencies cannot be migrated, and it converts an open-ended platform risk into a maintenance task the cooperative can carry. It requires a hardware environment and a conservator's specification, both of which are being developed collaboratively with the artist.

The new work is built the other way. *Dis-ARMOUR-Machine* runs on an open framework that the artist maintains in full, with no platform dependencies. Nothing in it can be withdrawn by a third party.

Set against the platform dependencies of the earlier face filters, this is an example of what artist-controlled infrastructure means in practice.

Committed inventory:

9 Editions

\$92,000 Declared Value

9 Disbursement Points

Eva Papamargariti

The year in brief. Papamargariti showed across US and Europe in museums, galleries and biennials, and produced a new sculptural commission for a museum exhibition.



FEATURES

Hypercreatures: Mythologien der Zukunft — Max Ernst Museum Brühl des LVR, Brühl, Germany — *March 22 to October 5, 2025*

Fire Spirits - Haus N, Athens
September 11 to October 18, 2025

Solo Screening and Artist Talk
Museum of the Moving Image,
Astoria, NY — *November 16, 2025*

TRANSFER Download: AliveNET
Nguyen Wahed, New York
January 16 to March 19, 2026

LIVING ERRORS — MARTINETZ,
Cologne, Germany — *March 20 to April 30, 2026*

AUDRA Showcase - Audra Festival
CCA Vilnius, March 27, 2026

What's in a Story?, CYFEST 17
Curated by Barbara London,
Ca' Foscari, Venice — *May 8 to August 31, 2026*

9th Thessaloniki Biennale of Contemporary Art: everything must change. Radical Intelligence.
Thessaloniki, Greece
May 23 to July 5, 2026

Basel Social Club: The Office
Basel, Switzerland
June 14 to 20, 2026

Looking Away — Gallery of Contemporary Art, Celje, Slovenia
September 11, 2026 to January 3, 2027

On the Museum of the Moving Image programme. A screening of six single-channel works spanning a decade, from *Always a Body*, *Always a Thing* (2016) through *Precarious Inhabitants* (2017), *But for now all I can promise is that things will become weirder* (2018), *As they were drifting away, their bodies turned into waves* (2021) and *Strong, Feeble, Unfixed* (2022), closing with *Disappear Here* (2026), a trailer for a new project.

The screening was followed by a conversation with Gary Carrion-Murayari, Kraus Family Senior Curator at the New Museum, and formed part of the museum's Open Worlds 2025 programme.

On performance. Papamargariti continued focused work on her new live audiovisual piece *Disappear Here* with support from Onassis ONX and Onassis AiR, Athens and debuting at the Aurora Dallas Biennial in November 2026.

"The work is an audiovisual installation with performative elements exploring emerging forms of storytelling, myth-making, and digital lore within the landscape of the attention economy and

doomscrolling. Through avatars, memes, short videos, AI prompts, images, and online communities, the work examines how contemporary narratives are created, disseminated, and consumed. *Disappear Here* asks what these new stories reveal about the world we inhabit, and who becomes their author and protagonist."

Conservation work completed in year one. Documentation of multi-channel video installations including *Precarious Inhabitants*, *Liminal Beings*, and *Among us*, Among others. Iteration reporting is key to the studio's practice, as multichannel installations evolve in response to the space they are exhibited. The studio was one of the first with a QNAP node but it required replacement, and has just returned from Germany to be brought back online.

Committed inventory:

11 Editions

\$239,300 Declared Value

8 Disbursement Points

Infrastructure Report



Iterating on trust.

Our infrastructure went from one cooperative's archive tool to a release more studios and archives can install. The software went through seven builds, a rename, a reckoning with its hardware, and a rethink of who the network can reach. The aim was to slowly grow the network to twenty-five nodes. In the process of expanding the network, we arrived at FORA, a consortium for decentralized preservation of experimental media.

As we started to experiment with open source AI running on nodes, and demonstrated the archive to more people, it became clear that this idea was meeting a need for a much larger community. For the technology stack, this meant evolving into a federated structure with sovereign tailnet administration, and developing an access model that does not have a central point of trust. The year was spent leading with intent, and moving at the speed of trust.

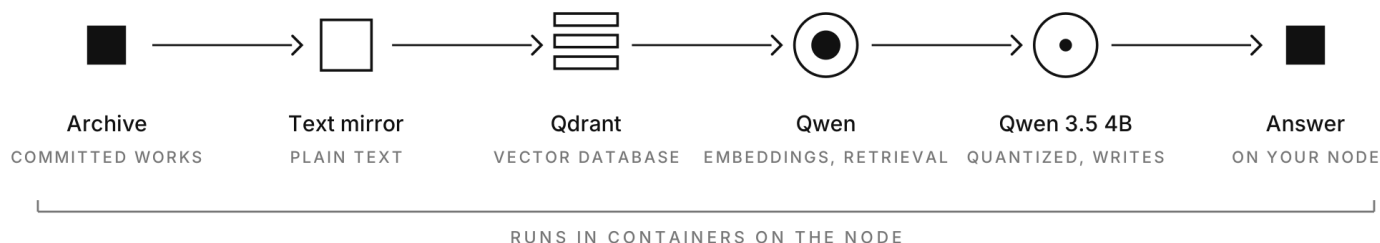
Where we started

In late 2025 the Data Trust ran on six nodes: QNAP NAS units joined by a

Ryan Betts led engineering and Kelani Nichole owned product behavior and deployed nodes. Member feedback drove the backlog.

An interdisciplinary team of developers, conservators and artists continued to work together with support from Filecoin Foundation for the Decentralized Web and GSR Foundation.

Tailscale mesh and replicating through a private IPFS cluster. Metadata lived as JSON on the Linked Art model, extended for time-based media with series, edition, variant, version, iteration and component. The first Archive Engine installer shipped in November. It worked for one trust. It was not yet built for many.



From one trust to a consortium

The initial call for FORA went out in January, inviting Gray Area, NYU IDM, Columbia DSL, EPOCH and others to run nodes of their own. The invitation was well received, and dug into the central design question of the year: how does a tool built for one cooperative serve many archives without anyone giving up control of their data?

With new momentum, we pushed rapid iterations: the client gained a landing view of trust circles, Inventory became Archive, Relationships became People, and People records became the connective tissue across organizations. How do we get encrypted data propagating to an artist's node when an organization creates records on their behalf?

Our package got more sophisticated with the addition of auto-updates. A JSON error blocking auto-updates went to the top of the backlog, and the v2 install package and builds 0.2.3 and 0.2.7 quickly followed.

The access model

Over the same weeks we wrote down the access model that still governs the system.

A node is private by default and is the foundation of security. Entering data through the client makes it visible to your archive.

Only an explicit commit makes a work visible across the FORA network, at the tombstone level, and readable by FORAGER, the network model.

Nothing reaches the network passively.

Identity

The first nodes in our network all authenticated with one 'secrets.env' admin key, so every node appeared to belong to the same entity. The

identity spec set out three phases: per-member Tailscale keys for the demo phase, then passkeys bound to a DID:PLC, then a fully decoupled identity that can attribute work to collaborators, conservators and AI agents. One rule held throughout: every step ships toward the DID, and nothing is throwaway.

The Archive Engine answers

By April the Archive Engine's AI layer was specified. A plain text mirror of the archive feeds a Qdrant vector database. A small Qwen embeddings model handles retrieval and a quantized Qwen 3.5 4B model writes answers, all in containers on the node. Four client modes were defined, from fully embedded on the NAS to a cooperative timeshare where a consortium member hosts a stronger model and artists queue jobs. Speed was ranked last on purpose: stable, then good, then fast.

Builds got more buttoned up as bots came online. UI normalization to Shoelace components began, the bot was renamed FORAGER, and a passphrase re-prompt bug and dropped reconnection state were queued for fixes.

In late April, version 0.3.7 shipped as fora-client, the first build under the

FORA name. By then a community-based archive had adopted the Archive Engine, unmodified, for its own datasets: our clearest evidence that this is infrastructure, not a gallery tool.

The hardware reckoning

By May the limits were plain. Indexing two artworks on a QNAP took about 30 minutes, an 8GB box could not hold the model sidecar, and the 4TB storage units had risen from about \$300 to about \$1,000 each. We chose to make the engine device-agnostic rather than buy our way out. That meant verifying installs on ordinary OS alongside QNAP, and working through read-only filesystem errors, failed updates and Windows firewall issues on live nodes.

The latency finding

A bot query that spans the network is assembled from plain text mirrors held on peer nodes, so it can take 24 hours to resolve, filling in as nodes come online. We find it somewhat charming, reflective of what is held, by whom, and under what permission, which no centralized system offers at any speed.

Query latency is bound by node availability, and node availability is bound by what hardware

a participant can afford to keep powered on. Solving that is an architecture problem, not an optimization problem.

Revise and return

Development slowed for the summer, startups (and a wedding) then resumed in August against a cleared backlog. The push from there was toward a stable release that could go to a much larger group of new people.

The stable release

The August member meeting demoed what we call the stable public FORA release, and build 0.3.9 followed in September for Mac, Windows and Linux.

The change that matters most is what types of devices can join. Anyone can install FORA on their own MAC, PC or Linux environment with about a terabyte of available space. This removes hardware investment as the entry constraint and is a significant expansion on who can participate.

Once inside FORA, archives are listed by membership. Each archive has a visual view of committed works, an activity feed and the FORA media bot. The conservation interface carries iterations, interviews,

treatments, AIPs and metadata, with a drag-and-drop manual builder that generates a current manual at any moment. The premise is that a manual is not static documentation; it changes as the artwork evolves. Open questions surface per artwork, and answering them is how members meet their monthly commitment. At the FORA level the bot can query across every archive, and profile editing is live. The function of relationships in this system is core to value exchange, and that is a focus for the next phase.

On AI

Nothing is trained on members' work. The network runs an open source model, currently Qwen, downloaded and running locally on each node. The local model is used as a query service across archives to support treatments and storytelling, not as training. The model is swappable as new open source options mature.

Patent and external adoption

We have a patent pending on the local-first Conservation and Trust Client.

An external pilot of the Archive Engine is running with SHIFT Collective, who modified the client interfaces and is running the engine on community-owned datasets.



Financial Report

This section is a summary for members and the public. Full ledgers are held by the treasurer. Grant funding is managed transparently on Open Collective.

Artist Inventory Commitments

ARTIST MEMBER	EDITIONS COMMITTED	CUMULATIVE VALUE	DISBURSEMENT POINTS
Lorna Mills	9	\$246,200	8.0
Carla Gannis	10	\$246,000	8.5
Eva Papamargariti	11	\$239,300	8.0
Rosa Menkman	11	\$135,000	8.5
Huntrezz Janos	9	\$92,000	9.0
Total	50	\$958,500	42.0

Cumulative value represents the total list price for all editions at the time of commitment.

Point structure. Each artwork committed annually earns one point. Each additional edition of the same artwork earns half a point. An artwork in an edition of 3 plus 2AP, committed at editions 2 and 3, counts for 1.5 points, with one AP held by the cooperative.

Revenue split under the bylaws. Artists facilitate their own sales, with support from Caretaker members. 50% retained by the artist member, 10% offered to the cooperative, remaining disbursed to supporting parties, chosen at the artist's discretion.

Artist-facilitated Sales

MEASURE	YEAR ONE
Acquisitions facilitated, total value	\$41,250
Member disbursement pool (10%)	\$4,125

Grant income and artist labor.

Filecoin Foundation for the Decentralized Web offered the co-op multi-year support. The renewal funded continued engagement of the distributed team through the year: software development, conservation expertise, and the artist members' labor testing the system and implementing the network. Two disbursements

reached artist members in year one. The sales disbursement distributes a share of proceeds by point count, so it varies by member. The labor disbursement is flat and identical for every artist member, because it pays for work done rather than inventory held. The cooperative's position is that building and testing this infrastructure is treated as labor, not membership overhead, and that is paid as labor.

Artist Disbursements

LINE	AMOUNT
Artist labor disbursement	\$12,500
Sales disbursement pool	\$4,125
Total reaching artist members in year one	\$16,625

Partnerships and Support

- Gray Area, fiscal sponsor and incubator
- NYU Tandon School of Engineering, Integrated Design and Media, research partners
- Filecoin Foundation and Filecoin Foundation for the Decentralized Web, multi-year commitment to develop and scale the node network
- GSR Foundation, development support

Looking Ahead



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Learn more at TRANSFER.art/trust

*Cover image: installation view of Lorna Mills
'yellowwhirlaway' (2017) in 'Re-figure-groud' at arebyte*

