



# **The Decision-Making Model for Contemporary Art Conservation and Presentation**

Version: 1.1

Date: Mai 2019

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## 1. Introduction

In answer to emerging contemporary art forms and their resulting conservation<sup>1</sup> and presentation<sup>2</sup> challenges, the aim of this research initiative was to revisit the *Decision-Making Model for the Conservation and Restoration of Modern and Contemporary Art* from 1999.<sup>3</sup> Since its publication by the *Dutch Foundation for the Conservation of Contemporary Art* (SBMK, Stichting Behoud Moderne Kunst) the model has served as a valuable tool when navigating through complex problems in the conservation of modern and contemporary art, as well as for discussing and documenting decision-making processes and training young professionals. Nevertheless, new contemporary art forms as well as recent research results have revealed a need for its revision.

To meet this need, the *Cologne Institute for Conservation Science* (CICS) organized two workshops in conjunction with the *Cultural Heritage Agency of the Netherlands* (RCE, Rijksdienst voor het Cultureel Erfgoed) and *Maastricht University* (MU). Workshop participants were professionals from the fields of conservation, cultural heritage preservation, art history, philosophy, and decision theory as well as researchers from the training programme *New Approaches in the Conservation of Contemporary Art* (NACCA)<sup>4</sup>.

This paper summarizes the results and proposes an extended decision-making model that will be further tested in the near future.

## 2. The Decision-Making Model (SBMK 1999)

The initial model, proposed in 1999, consists of a flowchart with seven subordinated steps that comprise of instructions and a checklist for each (see Figure 1).

The first three steps provide support when generating and registering information about an artwork (Step 1), on the artwork's condition (Step 2) and on its meaning (Step 3).

Step 4 contrasts a work's condition and meaning and asks for detailing any discrepancy that would indicate a need for taking conservation measures.

In Step 5 conservation options are elaborated. The implications of the options are anticipated and weighed against each other in Step 6, before eventually a decision is reached and documented in Step 7.

When revisiting the model during the workshops the model's key qualities were considered as:

- being simple, open, and flexible,
- raising questions instead of providing prefixed answers,
- the juxtaposition of condition and meaning at the core of the model to reveal conservation problems.

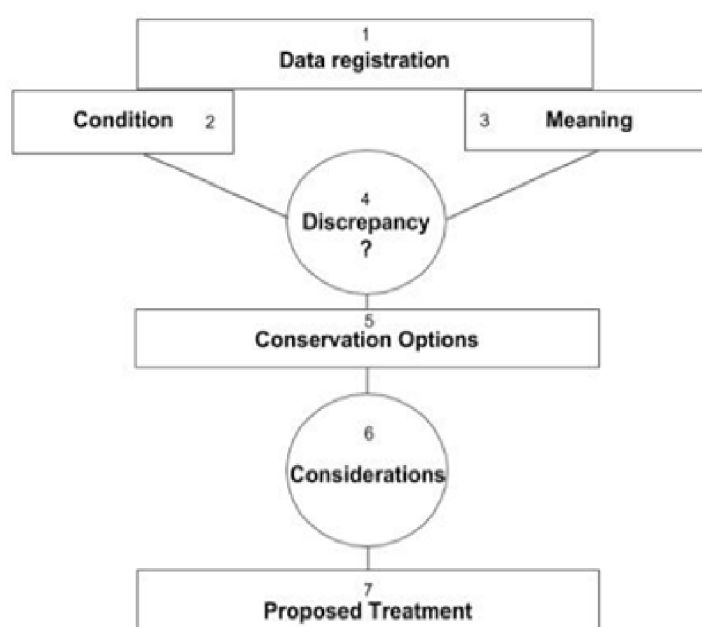


Fig. 1: The Decision-making Model for the Conservation and Restoration of Modern and Contemporary Art, SBMK 1999

<sup>1</sup> Cf. 6.2 Glossary. Conservation.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. 6.2 Glossary. Presentation.

<sup>3</sup> <https://sbmk.nl/source/documents/decision-making-model.pdf> (28 March 2019).

<sup>4</sup> <http://nacca.eu/about/> (28 March 2019).

### 3. Reasons for a Revision

Traditional art conservation usually considers some “original” or ideal state of an artwork, whereas contemporary works of art often challenge this perspective. Some artworks, such as concept-based or kinetic art, require a rethinking of the approach that considers authenticity<sup>5</sup> as bound to a work’s original materials. Other forms, such as installation, media or performance art, develop in different conditions more or less in accordance with the artwork’s meaning/-s and identity/identities<sup>6</sup> and often the continuation of these artworks depends on their reinstallation<sup>7</sup>, restaging<sup>8</sup> and display. As such, decisions on their presentation may have a strong impact on the conservation of these artworks.

Making complex conservation and/or presentation decisions therefore can require the consideration of both an artwork’s material aspects, including its scientific investigation, as well as the artwork’s intangible properties, including reflection on different aspects such as the artist’s intent<sup>9</sup>, artist’s sanctions<sup>10</sup>, installation instructions<sup>11</sup> and the artwork’s trajectory<sup>12</sup>. The understanding of these aspects may vary from one interpreter to the next and moreover, their comprehension is subject to change over time. The shifting values and changing interpretations as well as the often non-linear process of decision-making itself require room for reflexivity and entail dynamic decision-making<sup>13 14</sup>.

Finally, the continuously evolving terminology in contemporary art conservation and presentation makes it necessary to revise and define the terms used in the initial as well as in the new model.

In summary, aspects that required revisiting the model were:

- the acknowledgement of the complex trajectory and evolving character of many contemporary works of art
- the recognition of presentation decisions that may have a strong impact on the conservation of artworks
- the need to widen the scope of consideration to the intangible significant properties<sup>15</sup> of an artwork
- dynamics and subjectiveness in decision-making, and
- the continuous development of terminology in contemporary art conservation.

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<sup>5</sup> Cf. 6.2 Glossary. Authenticity.

<sup>6</sup> Cf. 6.2 Glossary. Identity.

<sup>7</sup> Cf. 6.2 Glossary. Reenactment, Reinstallation, Restaging.

<sup>8</sup> Cf. 6.2 Glossary. Reenactment, Reinstallation, Restaging.

<sup>9</sup> Cf. 6.2 Glossary. Artist’s Intent/ Intention.

<sup>10</sup> Cf. 6.2 Glossary. Artist’s Sanction.

<sup>11</sup> Cf. 6.2 Glossary. Instructions, Notation, Score.

<sup>12</sup> Cf. 6.2 Glossary. Biography, Trajectory, Career.

<sup>13</sup> *Dynamic decision-making*: The defining features of dynamic decision-making are: (1) Decisions are made at multiple points in time, and (2) between decisions the environment may change as a result of previous decisions, or (3) the environment may change spontaneously as a result of autonomous processes. Cf. Fischer, A. et al. (2015) pp. 1-3.

<sup>14</sup> Cf. Fischer, A. et al. (2012) Article 3.

<sup>15</sup> Cf. 6.2 Glossary. Significant Properties.

#### 4. The Revised Model

The revised model consists of a flowchart with nine steps. For each step an explanatory, short guide is given and comprises of (a) the aim of the specific step, (b) a set of instructions how to proceed, (c) an example and - if applicable - (d) a checklist. In addition, terms pivotal to (decision-making in) conservation and presentation of contemporary art are defined in the annexed glossary<sup>16</sup>.

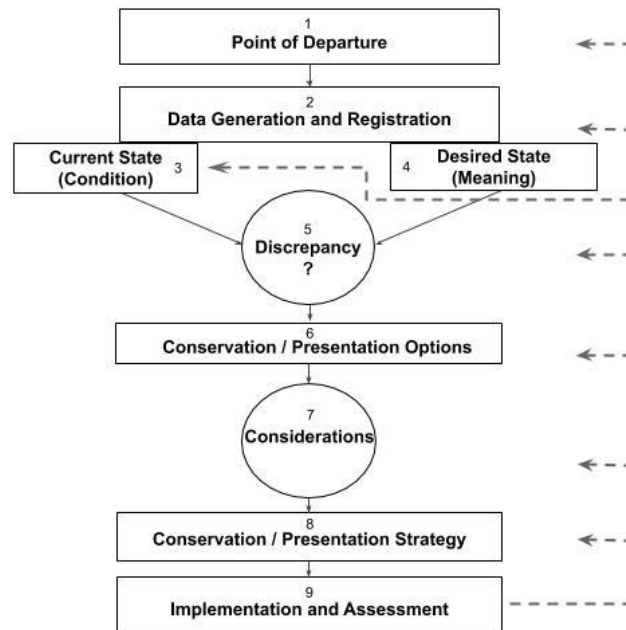


Fig. 2: The Decision-Making Model for Contemporary Art Conservation and Presentation, 2019

Step 1 is dedicated to the starting point in the specific case at hand where the initial aim of the decision-makers, the relevant circumstances as well the stakeholders are all described. In the subsequent three steps a deeper understanding of the artwork is developed: data on the artwork is generated and registered in Step 2, and the current as well as the desired state of the work are described in the Steps 3 and 4 respectively. In Step 5, it is determined if there is a discrepancy between the current and desired state of the work in order to specify any problems relevant to the works' conservation and/or presentation. If so in Step 6, strategies for the works' conservation/presentation are developed and then weighed and evaluated against each other in Step 7. In Step 8, the decision for one of these options is agreed upon and documented. Step 9 addresses the implementation of the selected strategy, including the monitoring and control of the effect of its execution and assessing the final results after completion.

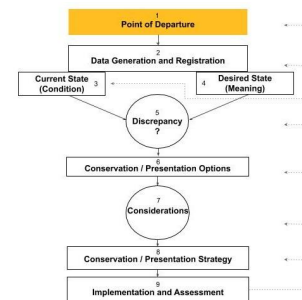
This revised model thus follows the structure of the initial model with two additional steps, Step 1: the Point of Departure and Step 9: Implementation and Assessment. The explanation of the steps includes the checklists from the original model although - where necessary - the questions revised in order to address current challenges in contemporary art conservation and to incorporate the continuously evolving terms and terminology in the field. As such the new model is intended to follow a more dynamic process, allowing for finer-graded reflection and decision-making at all stages in the process.

<sup>16</sup> Definitions for a selection of terms and terminology in contemporary art conservation and presentation were elaborated by the Early Stage Researchers of the NACCA training programme (<http://nacca.eu/>).

## Step 1: Point of Departure

*Aim and instructions:* In the first step of the model the starting point of the specific decision-making process is described.

Step 1 is broken down into three substeps in which the users of the model are requested to describe (a) the circumstances, (b) the initial aim, and (c) the stakeholders involved, along with their overarching goals. The mode of decision-making applied (e.g. decision made by an individual, by consensus, by a majority, etc.) is also noted.



*Remarks:* This step builds on the idea that a decision-making process begins due to a particular question, an interest or a specific situation.<sup>17</sup>

Describing the starting point in the case at hand is meant to enable decision-makers to better understand and navigate through the actual process. This information can also help future custodians to retrace previous decisions and grasp what influence the stakeholders and contextual aspects had on those decisions and consequently, on the artworks' biography<sup>18</sup>. Thus, it is in Step 1 that the context in which the micro- and macro-decisions will be made and the motivation that drives the overall process is made explicit.

### a) Circumstances

*Aim and instructions:* The objective of the substep "circumstances" is to analyse the context and institutional framework/infrastructure, in which the decision-making process is taking place.

The initial situation, reasons, and questions are considered and described where they are the determining factors as to why the artwork has become subject of investigation.

*Examples:* A loan request, the new presentation of a work, damage to or the obsolescence of technology-based components.

Nb. Nam June Paik's *Fish Flies on Sky* (1985 & 1995) will be used as an example to illustrate the model.

### b) Initial aim

*Aim and instructions:* The next substep serves to record the initial aim, which opens the decision-making process. In contrast to the circumstances, the initial aim is something the decision-maker(s) actively commit(s) to adopt (although it can be brought up by any stakeholder).

*Example:* To keep a video installation functioning that involves defective, obsolete devices, such as CRT-monitors.

### c) Stakeholders, their intentions and their overarching goal

*Aim and instructions:* The last substep is meant to shed light on potential decision-makers and interested parties whose perspective should be considered in the process of decision-making.

As such, users of the model are asked to provide information on:

- the stakeholders who are or should be involved,
- the stakeholders' professional background, affiliation, legitimation and professional mission,
- the stakeholders' motivation and personal interests in the case at hand,
- the stakeholders' common overarching common goal,
- the mode of decision-making taken

*Remarks:* Recording the stakeholders raises awareness of who is or who should be in charge of decision-making it makes explicit who influences the process and to which degree. Information on the individual preferences of all parties involved enables peers to contextualize how the process of decision-making unfolds and furthermore, identifying the overarching goal allows for assimilating the professional and ethical common ground between the decision-makers. Users of the model can thus refer to ethical guidelines, charters and codes - i.e. documents that

<sup>17</sup> Cf. Fischer, A. et al. (2016) pp. 217-229.

<sup>18</sup> Cf. 6.2 Glossary. Biography, Trajectory, Career.

comprise a set of peer-imposed regulations that professionals can build on and that all stakeholders agree upon.<sup>19</sup> While it is not meant that the overarching goal is to be discussed in detail each time a decision is pending, an explicit specification might be required when applied to contemporary art as most extant charters or codes have been developed for more traditional artworks.

Specifying the mode of decision-making further acknowledges that, depending on their position and authority, a decision-maker can affect the team decision-making process.

*Example: Using the example of an inoperable, obsolete video installation, stakeholders could include conservators, curators, the artist, artist assistants, TV-technicians, security administrators, the fire prevention officer, insurers, etc. A particular intent of the conservator and curator might be to preserve the audiovisual experience and material integrity of the work and a common overarching goal could be following ICOM Code of Ethics (2017). Finally, the decision on the conservation strategy might be made by consensus.*

#### **Checklist:**

##### *Central Question:*

How did you get involved, who else is involved, what are you aiming at and how are you going to make the decision?

##### *Circumstances:*

- What circumstances and questions are worth noting for explaining how you became involved in the decision-making process?
- What are the events that triggered the decision-making process at hand?
- How urgent is the need for a decision?

##### *Initial aim:*

- What is the initial aim that kick-started the decision-making process?
- Who initiated it?

##### *Stakeholders, intention and overarching goal:*

- Who is currently involved in the decision-making process?
- What is the professional background and affiliation of the decision-makers and other parties involved?
- What is the decision-makers' professional mission or personal interest in the case at hand?
- What is the overarching goal the decision-makers subscribe to?
- Does the overarching goal need any further specifications for the case at hand?
- Who else should or should not be involved? Why?
- Who takes the decision? What is the mode of decision-making? What is the share of power? Will it be a decision made by an individual, by consensus, by a majority, etc.? How will the process be organized, recorded, and documented (meetings, interviews, reports, etc.)?

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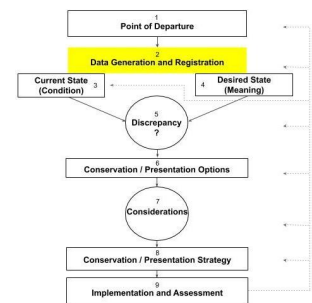
<sup>19</sup> Venice Charter (1964), Nara Document of Authenticity (1994), E.C.C.O. Professional Guidelines (2003), ICOM Code of Ethics (2017) et al.

## Step 2: Data Generation and Registration

**Aim and instructions:** The objective of this step is to register relevant data on the artwork. The information gathered forms the basis for a comprehensive understanding of the artwork in question and paves the way for a well-argued decision-making process.

Users of the model are requested to collect, generate and register a variety of different data, including:

- the artwork's identification,
- description,
- information on the production and creative process, materials, techniques and technologies used or associated with the work,
- location of the artwork and associated materials/equipment/components and environmental conditions,
- overall condition of the artwork - this may include condition reports and results from scientific examination, including material analysis, imaging techniques, etc., as well as information on when and by whom the reports/scientific analysis were submitted,
- requirements for handling, transport and storage,
- installation instructions and information on the variability (including scores<sup>20</sup>, notations<sup>21</sup>, floor plans, architectural and exhibition models, etc.),
- past iterations<sup>22</sup>,
- the acquisition history,
- bibliography, publications, correspondence, archival documents on the artwork,
- information on the artist, assistants, technicians, performers (relevant literature, contact details),
- oral and written information from the artist, his/her assistants, confidants or contemporaries, such as artist interviews etc.,
- related artworks<sup>23</sup>



If needed, support can be drawn from the many existing models for data registration, condition reporting and documentation.<sup>24</sup> In general, the process of data generation and registration may not be restricted to one particular case of decision-making as the pool of information can be accumulative and does not have to be re-generated every time. Data that has once been gathered can also inform future decisions.

**Remarks:** Collecting, generating and registering data is not a neutral process. Different users of the model will consider different data as crucial information. Amongst other things, the choice of data depends on the circumstances, the initial aim for the case at hand as well as on the stakeholders involved and their particular pattern of intentions (cf. Step 1, Point of Departure). As documentation decisions have an impact on conservation decisions<sup>25</sup>, the information gathered in the Step 2 influences the further process of decision-making.

<sup>20</sup> Cf. 6.2 Glossary. Instruction, Notation, Score.

<sup>21</sup> Cf. 6.2 Glossary. Instruction, Notation, Score.

<sup>22</sup> Cf. 6.2 Glossary. Iteration.

<sup>23</sup> Marçal, H., 'Decision-making in the conservation of performance art', presentation at the SBMK Symposium Acting in Contemporary Art Conservation, Amersfoort, Amsterdam, 15 November 2018.

<sup>24</sup> Models that have been developed for contemporary art documentation, registration and condition reporting purposes include:

- Matters in Media Art Initiative, 2005 (<http://mattersinmediaart.org/assessing-time-based-media-art.html>), <http://mattersinmediaart.org/assessing-time-based-media-art.html>

- DOCAM, 2005 (<http://www.docam.ca/en/documentation-model.html>),

- the Inside Installations Documentation Model 2IDM 2007 (<https://sbmk.nl/source/documents/inside-installations-theory-and-practice-in-the-care-of-complex-artworks.pdf>),

- Tate's The Live List, 2012/ 2013 (<https://www.tate.org.uk/about-us/projects/collecting-performative/live-list-what-consider-when-collecting-live-works>),

- Joanna Phillips' Iteration Report, 2015 ([http://revistaharte.fcsh.unl.pt/rhaw4/rhaw4\\_print/JoannaPhillips.pdf](http://revistaharte.fcsh.unl.pt/rhaw4/rhaw4_print/JoannaPhillips.pdf)),

- E.C.C.O.s Competences for access to the Conservation-Restoration profession, 2011 ([http://www.ecco-eu.org/fileadmin/assets/documents/publications/ECCO\\_Competences\\_EN.pdf](http://www.ecco-eu.org/fileadmin/assets/documents/publications/ECCO_Competences_EN.pdf)) et al.

<sup>25</sup> Hummelen, I., Scholte, T. (2006) pp. 5-11.

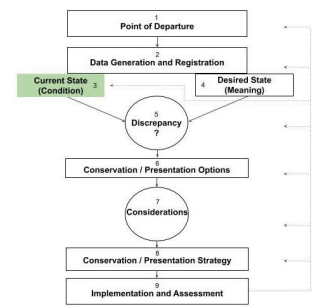
### Step 3: Current State (Condition)

**Aim and instructions:** The objective of this step is to develop a profound understanding of the artwork's current state by interpreting the results gained in the Step 2: Data Generation and Registration.

Following a holistic approach, the decision-makers are requested to evaluate the current state or condition of the artwork by considering changes, the artwork's biography, environmental conditions, and other relevant information concerning properties of the artwork that may be considered significant with regard to Step 4. If needed, further investigations including scientific analysis, material research, etc. might need to be carried out. Questions about the future of the work can also be raised, including the ageing properties of specific materials, the potential obsolescence of equipment and the feasibility of future manifestation<sup>26</sup>.

**Remarks:** The interpretation of the artwork's current state or condition is likely to vary between stakeholders and other parties involved, and liable to change over time.

**Example:** Nam June Paik's *Fish Flies on Sky* (1985 & 1995) is a multi-monitor-installation consisting of 88 CRT- TVs suspended from a ceiling.<sup>27</sup> Having been in operation for more than 20 years, the 1995 re-installation, while exceeding its predicted lifespan, has manifested an increase in the failure rates of its technology with defective TVs being de-installed over the years.



#### Checklist:

**Central Question:** How do you and potential other decision-makers evaluate the artwork's current state on the basis of the information gathered in Step 2? What are the reasons for the current state and possible changes of the artwork and how do you assess their causes?

#### Tangible and intangible aspects:

- How do you describe and evaluate the current state of the works' material components, functionality and immaterial aspects (e.g. light specifications of a light installation, political and social aspects for works linked to a particular political and social situation; performative aspects etc.)? How do you evaluate its condition based on the results of visual examination, tests or scientific analysis? In the case of changes regarding the artworks condition, how were they caused (root cause analysis)? Were they triggered by e.g. environmental conditions? Did changes occur due to involvement by the artist or due to other past events in the artworks biography (e.g. former conservation or presentation decisions)?
- Are there any uncertainties about the work? Is further research needed to understand and evaluate the artwork's current state or potential changes in its condition and their causes or to elaborate presentation/installation/performance specifications (e.g. information on production techniques, the political and social context at the time of creation or manifestation, etc.)

#### Biography:

- How do you evaluate the work's condition in the context of the artwork's biography? Which events in the artworks trajectory do you consider as important in order to evaluate the artwork's current state? (e.g. previous iterations, changes of ownership and the acquisition history, previous conservation campaigns, political and social context, different installation spaces etc.)

#### Artist's instructions and sanctions:

- How do you evaluate the artwork's current state in the context of the artist's statements, instructions and sanctions? Are there e.g. any instructions or sanctions given by the artist that, for example, specify the significant properties (both tangible and intangible) of the artwork?

<sup>26</sup> Cf. 6.2 Glossary. Manifestation.

<sup>27</sup> *Fish Flies on Sky* (1995 & 1995) by Nam June Paik is used as a case study to exemplify the individual steps in this model. Thereby, it is referred to the master thesis by Christian Imhoff (CICS 2014) and Imhoff, C. et al. (2016).

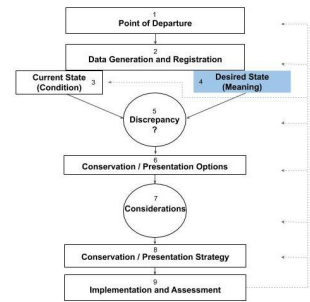


#### Step 4: Desired State (Meaning)

*Aim and instructions:* The objective of this step is to develop a profound understanding of the artwork in order to reach a consensus about its identity(ies) and the state(s), in which the artwork is considered as authentic (desired state).

This step is used to determine which properties of the artwork are deemed constitutive to its identity by considering:

- the artist's intent and/or concept,
- the attributed meaning derived from its materials, production process, appearance and any changes,
- the anticipated or intended reception of the artwork,
- the artwork's biography.



Users of the model thus attempt to find out how they believe how the artwork is meant to appear and function. Among other things, the step allows users to appreciate how different values might have been attributed to the work in the past that have changed over the years and which affect the current interpretation and understanding of the artwork. It also might be that there is more than one desirable state (for example different iterations of an installation artwork) that corresponds to the meaning attributed to the artwork and that transmits its significant properties.<sup>28</sup>

For this step it is therefore crucial to understand how the artwork appeared and functioned in the past, what stages it went through and what further developments are to be expected in the future - cf. Step 3.

*Remarks:* Although assessing the artwork's identity, meaning, and desired state is a precondition for decision-making, this is not unambiguous. The judgment on which properties of the artwork are constitutive and significant is constructed and subject to change as related values may shift over time. Moreover, different decision-makers will inevitably interpret the desired state of an artwork in different ways, not least because of their professional background, a varying access to knowledge, individual decisions about what information is important, personal interest and temperament, as well as the context and current *zeitgeist* around conservation and art.

*Example:* According to statements by Paik, experiencing the video sequences had the priority. In the case of *Fish Flies on Sky*, as Paik had changed the work several times in the past and he was favourable to the idea of migrating technology, the decision-makers thus regarded the functionality of the work as having the greatest significance. They also appreciated that the CRT-TV's have a specific dimension, shape, and look that was also important to consider for maintaining the sculptural aesthetic of the installation.<sup>29</sup>

<sup>28</sup> In case of more than one desired state, the Initial aim - phrased in Step 1: Point of Departure - may have an impact on which of the desired states is addressed in the decision-making process.

<sup>29</sup> Cf. Imhoff, C. et al. (2016).

### **Checklist:**

#### *Central Questions:*

What are the distinguishing significant properties that make the artwork uniquely what it is and according to whom?  
And according to whom what does the expressiveness of the work depend upon and based on what kind of evidence?

#### *Tangible and intangible aspects:*

- What significance do the concept, materials, artistic techniques and/or processing methods - as well as other immaterial or functional aspects - have for the identity of the artwork? What importance do the concept and/or materials used and their expression have for the identity and meaning of the work?
- What importance do the various material, immaterial and functional aspects have in relation to the artwork's specific cultural-historical context? What materials has the artist used in other works? Are potential future changes regarding the materials and technologies used in any presentation anticipated?

#### *Biography:*

- Which occurrences in the artworks' trajectory need consideration in order to grasp the artwork's identity (e.g. past presentations, acquisition history and change of ownership, conservation treatments, etc.)?

#### *Artist's instructions and sanctions:*

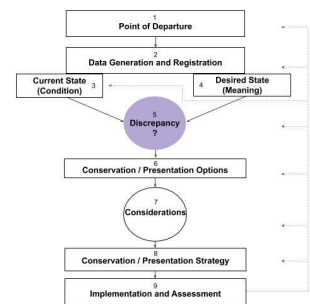
- Is there information on the artist's intention or concept? How is this information contextualized (who is authoring/interpreting this information, when is the interpretation from, what is the context and source of information what are the relevant artist statements and/or interviews)?
- Are there artist's sanctions that further specify the significant properties of the artwork, both tangible and intangible such as later additions to the existing installation instructions given by the artist?
- Are there any authorized instructions as to how the artwork is to be assembled and presented? Are there any requirements that future iterations of the artwork should meet (e.g. room size, site-specificity)? Are there any legal aspects, including copyrights and delegated rights to assistants that have an impact on the desired state of the artwork?
- Are changes regarding the context, setting and components and/or their configuration intended?
- Do the instructions, if any, include information on the scope of interpretation that the artwork allows for, for example, with regard to the replacement of conceptual-based industrially manufactured or obsolete technology-based components, or regarding the artwork's adaptation to different architectural settings?

## Step 5: Discrepancy?

**Aim and instructions:** In this step it is determined whether there is a discrepancy between the artwork's current and desired state, which provokes the conservation and/or presentation question. A precondition for this step is the comprehensive understanding of the artworks current state on the one hand (Step 3) and its desired state and attributed meaning on the other hand (Step 4). Before evaluating any potential discrepancy, it needs to be understood if a certain form of change or decay is intended by the artist or not.

Decision-makers are thus asked to evaluate if the current state of the artwork corresponds to the desired state by taking different values into account, such as:

- authenticity,
- aesthetic and artistic values,
- historicity,
- functionality,
- artist's intent and anticipation of potential future development/changes



**Remarks:** Any conclusions about a discrepancy is reached after taking different values into account. The outcome is often a compromise resulting from a deliberation between values that weigh differently from one case or decision-maker to the next. The weight each value carries depends on the prevailing *zeitgeist* as well as on Step 1's point of departure for the case at hand: the initial aim, the stakeholders involved, their professional mission, personal interest, the overarching goal, the mode of decision-making. Furthermore, all the information and interpretations executed in Steps 2 to 4 have an impact on how the different values are rated.<sup>30</sup> In the case of a detected discrepancy, a conservation and/or presentation question arises and, if appropriate, the initial aim can be adjusted accordingly.

**Example:** According to both Paik's various statements and the past modifications made to *Fish Flies on Sky* by the artist himself, the decision-makers interpreted the functionality of the artwork as being the priority. Thus, in the opinion of the decision-makers, there was a discrepancy between the desired state of *Fish Flies on Sky* and the work's current condition. This discrepancy will increase over time due to the limited lifespan of the CRTs in his work.<sup>31</sup>

### Checklist:

#### Central Questions

- Is there, from your point of view, a relevant discrepancy between the artwork's current state and the desired state, considering your understanding of the artwork's authenticity, historicity, functionality, aesthetic/artistic factors or the artist's intent?
- What kind of conservation or presentation question result from the detected discrepancy? What is the aim of a conservation and/or presentation strategy (this might differ from the initial aim given in the Step 1: Point of Departure)?

#### Authenticity

<sup>30</sup> There are a number of ways to visualize differing opinions and the impact that different stakeholders may have: for example, one way could be to have each specific aspect represented as a separate dimension such as arrows pointing in different directions from the middle of a circle, and each person's estimate of a value could be represented as e.g. a coloured dot on each arrow, with entries near the center of the circle representing small values. Information of this kind can also be visualized as barplots, radar charts or in more creative ways such as in flower charts similar to OECD Better Life Index (<http://www.oecdbetterlifeindex.org/de/>). Different weightings of dimensions could be represented by changing the scales of dimensions (e.g. if authenticity is considered twice as important as functionality, the arrow could be twice as long, or the arrow's maximum value could be described accordingly).

<sup>31</sup> Cf. Imhoff, C. et al. (2016).

As a value, authenticity is particularly important when determining if there is a discrepancy between the artworks current and desired state. Values related to aesthetics and artistics, historicity, functionality, the artist's intent and potential future development/changes thereby enhance the understanding of the artwork's specific authenticity.

- What importance does the appearance have for the identity/desired state/meaning of the work? In a case where the work's current state differs from its initial appearance (generated by damage, ageing, decay or conservation) what impact does it have on the identity/meaning of the work?
- Is the production process important to consider in relation to the desired appearance/state/meaning? Can one speak of a single materialization or of an edition/version/iteration? To what extent is the concept and/or 'hand of the artist' in the production process important for the meaning? Are changes in the manifestation consistent with intentional consequences of change affected by the production process (e.g. wear and tear through movement, organic decay, grow, maintenance, protocols, re-enactments)?
- Does the work have parts that were made, whether commissioned or not, by third parties? What is the meaning/function of these parts for the work as a whole?
- What relation does the ageing, damage or decay have to the initial materialization /meaning of the artwork? Does the work have parts that can be regularly changed without affecting the identity/meaning of the artwork? Are there arguments in favour of or against a possible re-making or re-staging of the work or parts thereof?

#### *Aesthetic and artistic factors*

The overall subject or theme of the artwork is addressed as well as its intended appearance. When determining if there is a discrepancy between current and desired state can it be assessed whether the intended associations with or reactions to the artwork can still be experienced at the time of investigation? As such any meaning in the materials used and underlying artistic concept need to be considered.

- What subjects or themes does the work explicitly refer? Does the current state influence the subject or theme of the artwork (as a result of ageing, damage, decay, staging/display, presentation)? If so, is this intended or unintended?  
Does the work evoke associations or reactions that are important for its identity/meaning? Would these associations or reactions vary from one interpreter or socio-cultural display context to another?
- What changes in the appearance of the artwork are perceived as a result of ageing, damage or decay and how do these affect the meaning of the work?
- Does the meaning of the materials used change as a result of the ageing, damage or decay?
- Is the expressiveness of the work affected as a result of ageing, damage or decay of the materials or media?

#### *Historicity*

Existing traces, alterations or signs of ageing or decay are considered in relation to successive manifestations of the artwork. Evaluation takes place as to whether these changes were intended and to what extent they correspond with the artwork's desired state or meaning. As such, the current condition and potential impact of the changes on the artwork's desired state/meaning are contextualized.

- Are there traces of ageing or of important events in the artwork's trajectory that contribute to the identity/meaning of the work? To what extent is the established ageing, decay and change part of the work?

#### *Functionality*

Both the context and the "performance" of the artwork are evaluated with regard to artworks identity and future function. Technology-based artworks (but not exclusively) are especially sensitive to defects and obsolescence and often their preservation "as a functioning system" complicate the conservation of original material and any values related to originality/authenticity. Decision-makers can thus face potential ethical conflicts:

- Does ageing, damage or decay have an impact on the functionality in a way that the identity/ desired state of the work is affected?
- Does the current context (exhibition space/ surrounding/ socio-political framework etc.) fit the meaning/identity of the work? Does the current context influence the intended expression of the work?

- Regarding time-based artworks, in what way does the performance of the work contribute to the meaning of the work? Can the work be faithfully displayed/continued/perpetuated also when any of its technology-based components are no longer functional?

#### *Artist's Intent*

When considering the artist's intent, their instructions and sanctions are taken into account:

- Does the current state of the artwork correspond to the artist's intent?
- If applicable or available, what is the artist's opinion on the current state of the work?
- Are there any legal issues to consider?

#### *Potential future development/changes*

A conservation question may also arise from a potential future discrepancy resulting from unintended changes or developments in the work due to, for example, ageing, decay, damage, obsolescence or misinterpretation (e.g. when one iteration is mistakenly prioritized over another).

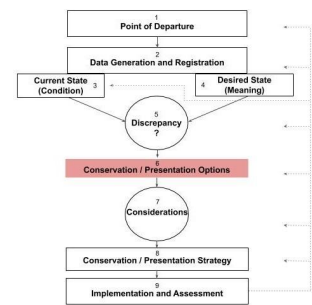
- Are any changes in the condition or presentation of the work to be expected in the future?
- Are any such changes intended?

## Step 6: Conservation/ Presentation Options

**Aim and instructions:** In this step options for conservation and/or presentation are elaborated in order to either reduce the discrepancy between the current and the desired state of the work, or to prevent unintended future changes such as those resulting e.g. from damage, deterioration/ decay or contested interpretations. The elaboration of options may involve further research, evaluation or testing, and also in regard to potential methods and techniques.

Previous, comparable cases may be consulted to explore possibilities and assimilate relevant assumptions and expectations from them.

The option of taking “no action” is included as the decision-making process can also result in refrain from taking any action.<sup>32</sup>



**Remarks:** When developing an option for conservation and/or presentation, decision-makers play a decisive role. Their professional background and personal and professional motivation (described in Step 1: Point of Departure) as well as their skills, creativity and personal temperament will have an impact on the selection of options and how they are elaborated.

By learning more about other approaches taken in comparable cases, casuistry may be applied to obtain a better understanding for ethical guidance for the case in hand, for example when attributing values to an artwork and prioritizing them. The aim of confronting one’s own valuation with other opinions is to obtain a *value distribution*<sup>33</sup>. Further, casuist reasoning helps to exclude poor choices at an early stage which has the advantage of narrowing down the number of options, thus easing the valuation process.<sup>34</sup>

To include the option of “no action” in this step makes explicit that the decision-making process might result in doing nothing, regardless whether this is because of an inability, financial limitation, or because - in search for alternative options - the decision needs to be postponed. It also might transpire that, in contrast to any initial expectations, an elaboration of the options results in refraining from any interventive or non-interventive action being taken.

**Example:** With regard to Nam June Paik’s *Fish Flies on Sky* the following options were developed<sup>35</sup>:

1. Emulation
2. Migration
3. Replacement
4. Repair
5. No action

### Checklist:

Central Question:

What are options for conservation and/or presentation that could contribute to the termination or reduction of the existing or expected discrepancy?

Is it appropriate to include an option of "no action" in your considerations?

<sup>32</sup> Cf. Fischer, A. et al. (2016) pp. 217-229.

<sup>33</sup> Cf. Marçal, H. et al. (2013).

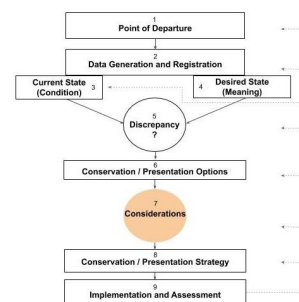
<sup>34</sup> Ibid.

<sup>35</sup> Cf. Imhoff et al. (2016).

## Step 7: Considerations

*Aim and instructions:* In this step the previously elaborated options are discussed and weighed against each other in order to develop a conservation/presentation strategy.<sup>36</sup> Decision-makers are asked to anticipate any possible implications and risks that the options might entail for the artwork by taking into account different assessment criteria including:

- aesthetic and artistic values,
- authenticity,
- historicity,
- functionality,
- artist's opinion,
- relative importance of the artwork,
- financial limitations,
- legal aspects,
- technical limitations,
- restoration/conservation ethics.



*Remarks:* The assessment criteria and the priorities attributed to them can change from case to case, according to the specific Point of Departure for the case at hand. Conditioning factors on the criteria and priorities can thus include the triggering events, the context and time it is embedded in, the initial aims of the decision-makers, their influence, professional mission, personal interests and the overarching goal of the project.

Therefore, decision-makers are requested to discuss the developed conservation/ presentation strategy within a framework of possibilities, risks, and limitations. The disclosure of the valuation process aims to help decision-makers and peers as well as future custodians to understand its outcomes, especially as these often turn out to be some form of compromise.

In the process of comparing different options a need for further elaboration of certain aspects of the options may arise. In this case a step back to Step 6 may be warranted.

In Step 7, the factor "authenticity" is conceived as one value amongst a number of different assessment criteria and is neither superordinate nor necessarily the most decisive criterion applied. Other factors can arise to such a point where they are as influential on the valuation process as authenticity is. For example, if the budget is tight and certain options expensive, the financial factor can be more influential than in the case where a generous budget is available or the best options are cheap.

The option for "no action" is valued like any other option and where "no action" is decided the decision-making process may come to an end here at Step 7.

*Example:* With Paik's *Fish Flies on Sky* the potential options were valued as follows<sup>37</sup>:

1. Emulation significantly affects the work's material integrity and may entail significant costs
2. Regarding migration, the use of newer but obsolescence-prone technologies may threaten the artwork's material integrity due to an ever-increasing distance from the works' initial state.
3. Replacement is unlikely due to a shrinking market of original devices.
4. CRT tube rebuilding can prolong a monitors' lifetime significantly (up to 35 years) and preserves the viewer experience of the video content as well as the artwork's material integrity.
5. The option of "no action" was disregarded because with an increasing degree of equipment failure the discrepancy was set to increase in the future.

<sup>36</sup> Cf. footnote 31.

<sup>37</sup> Cf. Imhoff, C. et al. (2016).

### **Checklist:**

#### *Central Question:*

In what sense will the identity/meaning of the work be altered as a result of the proposed conservation/presentation strategy with regard to authenticity, aesthetic and artistic factors, historicity and functionality as well as relative importance of the artwork? Does the proposed strategy affect the desired state of the work?

#### *Authenticity*

This step evaluates the potential impact that the elaborated options potentially may have on the identity of the work. It also takes into consideration if the artwork includes parts/components whose originality is not important for the work's identity/desired state and that can or are meant to be exchanged.

- *Following the proposed conservation/presentation strategy, what is its impact on the artwork's identity/meaning/desired state?*
- *Will traces of the production process be influenced by the proposed strategy to such an extent that the identity of the work changes (e.g. traces of the production process that disappear by black boxing in case of migration and emulation)?*
- *Will the proposed strategy affect the original concept/material/desired state to such an extent that the identity/meaning of the work changes?*
- *Does the work have parts that can be (regularly) changed without affecting the identity/meaning/desired state of the work??*  
*Can arguments be forwarded in favour of or against a possible re-making of the work or parts thereof?*

#### *Aesthetic and artistic factors*

The intended associations with or reactions to the artwork are evaluated, taking into consideration the effect of the strategy on the tangible and intangible properties of the artwork:

- *Will the concept, theme or subject of the work be influenced by the proposed strategy?*
- *What importance do the results of the proposed strategy have for the identity/desired state/meaning of the work (e.g. changes in its appearance)?*
- *Will the meaning of the concept or the materials used be altered as a result of the proposed strategy?*
- *In what sense is the expressiveness of the work affected by the proposed strategy?*

#### *Historicity*

The potential impact of the elaborated options is evaluated in regard to historic traces, alterations, signs of ageing, decay and other changes that the artwork might have undergone during its various manifestations.

- *Will the proposed strategy affect any historic traces and does this influence the identity/meaning/desired state of the work?*
- *Will the proposed strategy affect any historic traces, which should otherwise be preserved for artistic or historical reasons?*

#### *Functionality*

Each option is evaluated to measure its effect on the functionality of the work, thereby taking into account e.g. the context in which the work is displayed:

- *Does the proposed strategy affect the functionality of the work in any way that is important to the identity/meaning/desired state of the work?*

#### *Relative importance of the artwork*

How does the artwork under consideration relate to the artist's oeuvre, context and relevant artistic movement as well as to the collection from which it originates?

- *What role does the work play within the oeuvre of the artist, associated artistic movement and collection? What importance does it have in wider cultural heritage/world heritage, as heritage from a political majority/minority, etc.? What is the potential impact of the evaluation of significance on the conservation/presentation strategy?*
- *Is the work part of an edition or a single work of art? In case of the latter, is it part of a series or is it an*



*individual work of art?*

- *How does the relative importance of the work influence the conservation/presentation decision?*  
*Is the significance/identity/meaning of the artwork interpreted differently by the various stakeholders? Are there disagreements or uncertainties?*
- *Should the decision-making process be suspended until more information is gathered and/or until a consensus has been reached?*<sup>38</sup>

#### *Financial limitations and possibilities*

What are the costs involved in the implementation of the proposed strategy:

- *What are the financial limitations and possibilities?*  
*What is the maximum available budget for the conservation or presentation of the work? Does the financial value of the work justify the costs of the proposed strategy or are there other arguments justifying the expense?*

#### *Legal aspects*

Anticipating legal consequences arising from implementation of the strategy:

- *What legal consequences can be anticipated as a result of the proposed strategy?*

#### *Artist's opinion on the intervention*

The artist's intent, installation instructions and artist's sanctions are all considered as informing the strategy. In some cases, it might be possible or favourable to contact the artist in order to ask for their view on the proposed strategy:

- *What is the opinion of the artist regarding the proposed strategy and how does this fit in with earlier statements by the artist concerning the work?*

#### *Technical limitations and possibilities*

The efficacy of the elaborated strategy is anticipated by taking into account any technical limitations and possibilities into considerations:

- *What are the technical limitations and possibilities of the proposed strategy?*

#### *Conservation ethics*

The decision-making process is evaluated in regard of the implementation of the proposed conservation/presentation strategy:

- *Is the integrity of the work sufficiently guaranteed after the strategy has been implemented?*
- *Are the answers to the previous questions sufficient to warrant implementation of the strategy?*
- *In case of hands-on treatments, can the proposed methods be reversed? If not, are there decisive reasons for using them nonetheless?*
- *Is a professional standard of implementation guaranteed?*
- *Will the implementation of the strategy be documented?*

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<sup>38</sup> Cf. Dolff-Bonekämper, G. (2010) pp. 33-34. Gabriele Dolff-Bonekämper added a new value, the 'Streitwert' or dispute value, to the catalogue of monumental values defined in 1903 by Alois Riegl (Der moderne Denkmalkultus). The 'Streitwert' or dispute-value of a work may be considered as it acknowledges *dispute* and *controversies* as a positive and active virtues. In decision-making processes, the often differing and sometimes opposing opinions held by different stakeholders may shift the attention from the physical artwork to its function and potential as a signifier, i.e. its potential as a bearer and creator of the artwork's significance and its identity/meaning. Thus the more serious the dispute is, the more significance/meaningfulness the artwork in question has for the stakeholders involved - a serious dispute can be one of the indicators for a general appreciation of the significance of a work. Dolff-Bonekämper (2010) pp. 27-40.

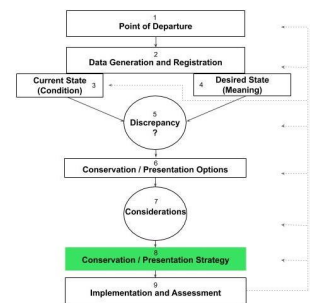
### Step 8: Conservation/ Presentation Strategy

*Aim and instructions:* In this step the arguments for the conservation and/or presentation strategy are documented.

Decision-makers are asked to formulate the conservation/presentation strategy decided for and detail the underlying reasoning - this includes the formulation of one or more specific goals, the actions to be taken and the methods to be employed.

If further information on particular aspects of the conservation/presentation strategy is required, a step back to Step 6 further research, testing or evaluation regarding things such as the specifications of the materials to be used may be warranted

*Example:* With *Fish Flies on Sky*, while the decision-making process from 2016 proposed the option of repairing the CRT tubes, nevertheless, further testing was necessary to prove the applicability of the method.<sup>39</sup>



<sup>39</sup> Cf. Imhoff, C. et al. (2016).

## Step 9: Implementation and Assessment

**Aim:** The objective of the model's final step is broken into two substeps: (a) to carefully monitor the immediate effects of the selected strategy's implementation, and (b) to reflect on whether the final result of the measures taken has been successful in solving the discrepancy/identified problem.

### a) Implementation of the strategy:

**Aim and instructions:** In Step 9's first substep measures are taken to document and monitor the strategy's implementation such that any immediate effects can be controlled. The objective is to detect any wrongly-made assumptions early on so that actions can be adjusted in time. During implementation, decision-makers are also asked to evaluate whether the measures taken are successful in regard of reducing or eliminating the signalled discrepancy or to help prevent any anticipated discrepancies.

**Remarks:** The addition of this substep acknowledges that often valuable information on the artwork is gathered during a strategy's implementation. It also recognizes that the chosen strategy might need to be adapted or even changed, because of unexpected turns, difficulties or uncertainties of the implementation process. As such, the strategy is constantly reviewed by the decision-makers during implementation and adapted to the dominant circumstances, if required.

**Example:** In the case of *Fish Flies on Sky* several CRT-TVs were rebuilt and assessed in the context of the installation. It appeared that the renewed tubes met with the expectations of the decision-maker's.

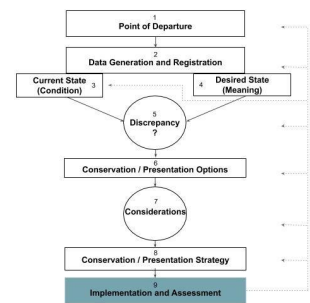
### b) Assessment:

**Aim and instructions:** The aim of Step 9's second substep is to evaluate the final result of the implemented strategy and to analyze how the overall process of decision-making unfolded (including difficulties and uncertainties along the way).

**Remarks:** The addition of a final assessment can contribute to the continuing discourse and critical reception of the artists' oeuvre. It recognizes the value of knowledge gained after the decision has been made, and how this, in turn, can inform future decisions. This feedback-process becomes part of the decision-makers' collective memory for the particular work and which can be consulted when dealing with a comparable case in the future.

Additionally, a final assessment gives the opportunity to evaluate the information of previous steps so that decision-makers can critically self-reflect on their role and impact on the decision-making process and make adjustments even at the very end.

**Example:** For Paik's *Fish Flies on Sky* the implementation of the conservation strategy lead to the desired result of prolonging the artwork's life expectancy, assumed to be a further 35 years. One advantage of renewing the tubes was that only a small intervention into its material/technical equipment was involved. After the implementation of the strategy, all 88 CRT-TVs were fully functional and the artwork could be experienced once again in the desired way. However, only continued monitoring helps to understand how long their actual lifespan will be.<sup>40</sup>



<sup>40</sup> The tube rebuilding was proposed by Christian Imhoff and executed by experts for CRT-monitors in collaboration with Nam June Paik's long-time assistant Jochen Saueracker. Cf. <https://www.kunst-auf-lager.de/stiftungen-foerdermoeglichkeiten/wuestenrot-stiftung/fish-flies-on-sky-von-nam-june-paik/> (28 March 2019).

**Checklist:****Central Question:**

Did the implementation of the strategy lead to the desired result?

**Implementation and effect control:**

- Does the implementation of the decision meet all the decision-makers' expectations? Were the assumptions behind its activation well understood and anticipated?

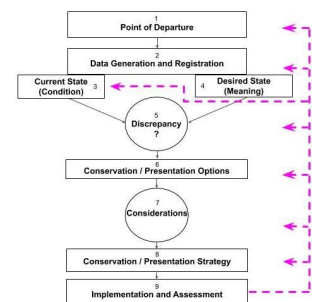
**Assessment:**

- Has the discrepancy between the current and desired state of the artwork been reduced as a result of the implementation?
- How did the overall process of decision-making unfold? At what points was it necessary to step back to refine the results of steps already completed?
- Did you or other decision-makers encounter problems or uncertainties throughout the process? Did these encounters have an impact on how the decision-making process developed?
- Did any unforeseen circumstances lead to a revision of the initial aims for the case at hand? Or did uncertainties arise, requiring the involvement of more stakeholders/additional experts than expected beforehand?

**Dynamic processes**

Because of the shifting values, changing interpretations, and the often nonlinear process of decision-making itself<sup>41</sup>, for each step of the model there is the understanding that each step is subject to change and taking a step back for clarification may be warranted.

Thus the revised 9-step model provides room for reflexivity: additional indicator arrows acknowledge the intrinsic dynamics whereby one can return to earlier stages of the process from any steps of the flowchart in order to revise or enrich previously gathered data. After returning to a previous step, it is highly recommended to check for implications on the steps already taken before progressing to new steps.



For example, if further elaboration on an option (Step 6) proves necessary during the documentation of the decision on a strategy option (step 8), it is generally recommended to consider any implications on the process of consideration of all strategy options (Step 7) before commencing Step 8.

<sup>41</sup> Cf. Fischer, A. et al. (2012) Article 3.

## 5. Conclusions/ Outlook/ Remarks

Decision-making does not take place as an isolated process, and is always connected with the past and future of the artwork. It is likely that during the lifetime of an artwork there are several moments when difficult, complex decisions need to be reached - such decision-making events are interrelated and become part of the trajectory and identity of the artwork.

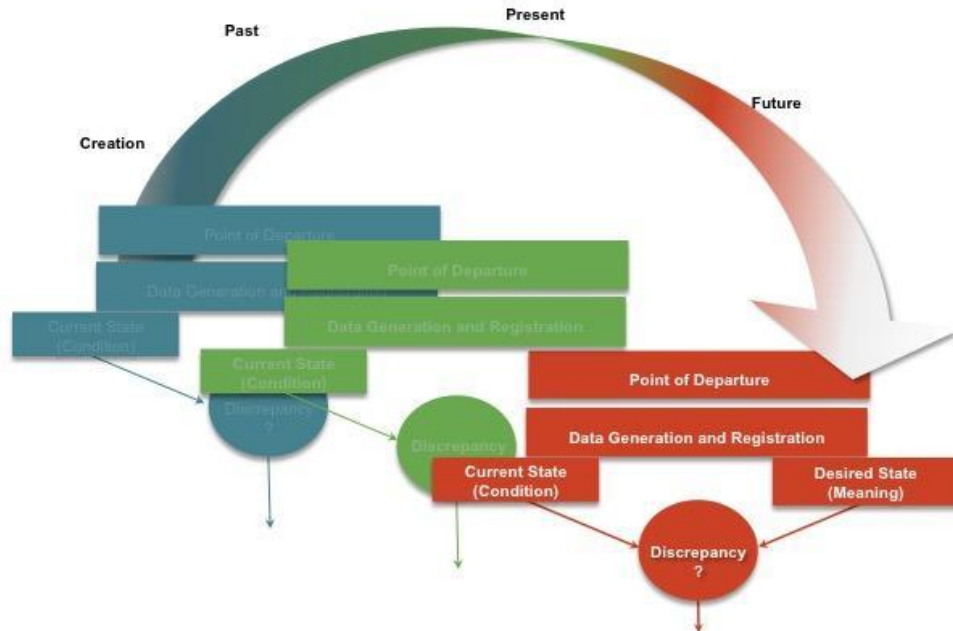


Fig. 13: Decision-making processes in an artwork's life.

The overall structure of the model was still useful but in order to improve its applicability to a larger group of emerging contemporary artforms, it was decided to modify several of its aspects:

- The Point of Departure was added as an initial step that sets out the circumstances and motivations to contextualize the process and to trace the subjectivities involved.
- The centerpiece of the initial model – the three steps detailing condition, meaning and discrepancy - have been revised by broadening the scope of its application by drawing attention to a work's significant properties, both tangible and intangible. Furthermore, by contrasting the artwork's current state with its desired state, the new model broadens its applicability to include options around preventive conservation and presentation where the discrepancy is not overly determinant.
- At the end of the model, a new step is added which allows for the implementation and monitoring of the proposed strategy, and evaluation of its result. Moreover, this step is self-reflexive and leaves room for an evaluation of the overall process of decision-making in retrospect.
- Finally dynamic processes were integrated into the model to allow for reflexivity and flexibility.

## 6. Annex

### 6.1 The Decision-Making Model for Contemporary Art Conservation and Presentation, 2019

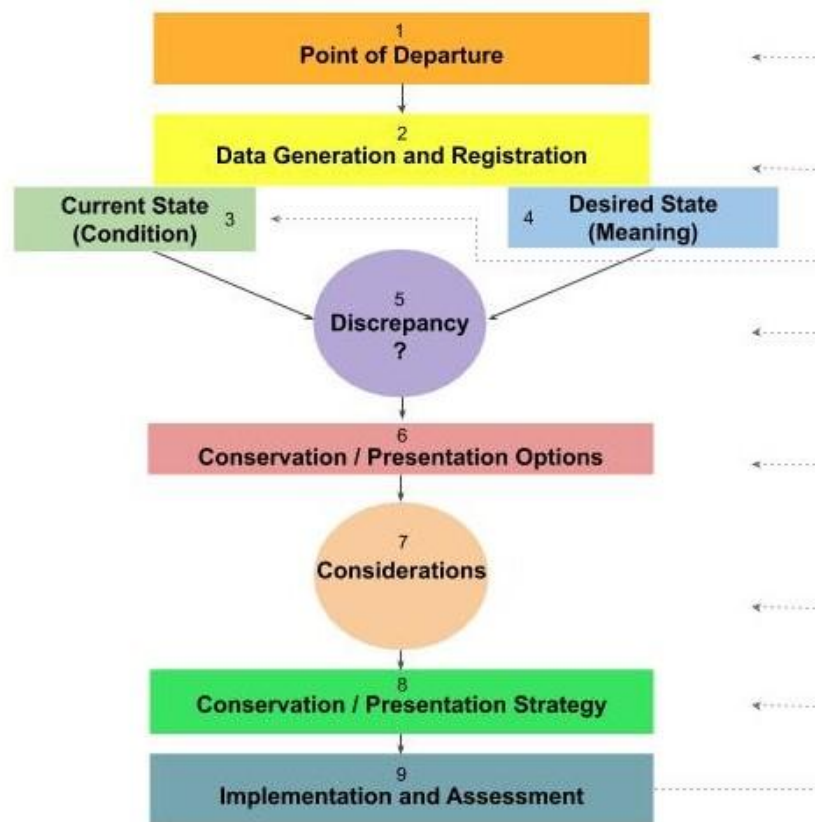


Fig. 14: The revised model

## 6.2 Glossary

Artist's intent/ intention	<p>Artist's intent or intention, two terms which appear to be used interchangeably, are used to describe the process of coding the work and choosing the form. In a conservation context, the terms center on understanding the identity of an artwork. The notion of the 'original intent' of an artist was traditionally closely connected with the idea of the 'original state' of an artwork; a concept which is limiting, if not fraught with errors, when considering that many contemporary artworks are inherently in flux. The use of the terms was critically reviewed in recent conservation literature (i.e. Gordon and Hermens 2013, Wharton 2015). For the conservation of contemporary art, the 'artist's intent' is reframed as a collaborative process that evolves over time, as guidelines which are negotiated by the artist together with other stakeholders to determine what elements of a work of art signify and how we are to work towards their continuation. In this understanding of intent, a given statement is not so much a closed declaration but a point of departure.</p> <p><i>Joanna Kiliszek, Nina Quabeck</i></p>
Artist's Sanction	<p>The term "sanction" coined by Sherri Irvin (2005) should not be considered synonymous with intent. According to Irvin, the artist's sanction is his or her own fixing of an artwork's rules of display and perpetuation (consciously or unconsciously) through their consent and approval of certain presentations. The sanctions protect the integrity of the work against inappropriate treatments, be it display or conservation of the work.</p> <p><i>Joanna Kiliszek, Nina Quabeck</i></p>
Authenticity	<p>Authenticity is the degree to which an individual or group regards a physical assemblage, event, or experience as a manifestation of the work of art it purports to be at a particular point in time. The recognition that a physical object, event, or experience is an instance of a particular work is not a Booleen, true/false quality; rather, authenticity may "admit of degrees" (Laurenson 2006). Judgements of authenticity are made by an evaluator on the basis of evidence (OAIS 2012). However, these judgements may be modulated by other intersubjective factors including the evaluator's knowledge, memories, beliefs, and cultural values. Judgements of authenticity may vary not only between individuals, but also over time.</p> <p><i>Brian Castriota, Marta García Celma</i></p>
Biography, Trajectory, Career	<p>The use of these terms in conservation literature takes a non-linear, processual view on artworks, recognizing that they evolve over time and go through differently characterized life stages, as do people, with significant turning points and changes in status and meaning.</p> <p>These terms also highlight the effects of influences other than the artist on the identity of artworks, such as production, collection, ownership, display, storage, and conservation.</p> <p>Adopted from anthropological theories that look at the 'cultural biographies' of things (Appadurai, 1986; Kopytoff, 1986), the relevance for conservation lies in critically analyzing how artworks move into and out of certain categories.</p> <p>To contend with how artworks evolve, many conservators have for decades used a metaphor of 'life stages,' using words like gestation, infancy, adolescence, ageing, death, afterlife, etc. The use of the term 'biography' was brought in to conservation to account for artworks' parallel and multiple lifelines.</p> <p>This was adopted into conservation literature from the early 2000s (i.e. Wharton 2006) to</p>

reconstruct shifts in an object's material and symbolic value. It was further developed in the 2011 article by Van de Vall et al., who cautioned against taking a contemporary artwork's identity for granted and instead tracked practices that contribute to the multi-faceted ways artworks are understood and manifested. To avoid a reductive understanding of identity as singular, the authors adopted Latour and Lowe's (2011) metaphor of a river's complex catchment area, or 'trajectory,' meaning that artworks have not only one original entity, but their trajectory includes copies and other manifestations. The word 'career' (Appadurai, 1986) has been used interchangeably with 'trajectory'.

While trajectory and career are similarly meant to denote the journey taken by an artwork (in all its multiple parts), the idea of biography must be thought of as the active and subjective construction of these journeys by those who write it.

*Artemis Rüstau, Caitlin Spangler-Bickell*

Career Cf. Biography, Trajectory, Career

Conservation All activities that stem from the methodological recognition of an artwork's identity, that aim to safeguard an artwork's continuation in an informed, structured and documented way.

This expanded notion of conservation is framed for the purpose of institutionally collected contemporary art. It is understood as a set of scientific, technical and social activities that are performed by various individuals and groups including conservation professionals.

*Thomas Markevicius, Aga Wielocha*

Identity The identity of a work of art is a term employed in the conservation of contemporary art to refer to a work's unique character and self-sameness. It is closely connected to the notion of significant properties, understood as the features or properties regarded as constitutive of that identity.

The notion of an artwork's identity has antecedents that go back to discourses in aesthetics (for example Joseph Margolis' 1959 essay "The Identity of a Work of Art"; see also Thomasson 2005). At *Modern Art: Who Cares?* Tineke Reijnders described the replacement of foam in a Tony Cragg sculpture as "possible without disrupting the identity of the work" (1999, 151) but asked rhetorically "will it still be a Cragg once more than fifty percent of the work is replaced?" Tina Fiske (2009) has observed how, "the conservator's ethical remit becomes focused on minimizing the erosion of identity between instances of a work" (234). Building on Laurenson's (2006) theoretical frameworks, Joanna Phillips' (2015) developed a "Documentation Model for Time-Based Media Artworks," whereby information about a work's exhibition history and the anatomy between its various dependencies is captured in "Identity Reports". The term is frequently invoked to refer to an innate and authoritative, singular essence or core despite the growing recognition that works of art do not necessarily possess a singular identity (van de Vall et al. 2011, 3; Spangler-Bickell 2018).

The concept of identity as it is understood in aesthetics and contemporary art conservation has a history that extends back to Saussure's (1916) concept of "linguistic identity," whereby the identity and meaning of a particular word may be liable to change due to changes in the surrounding system. Identity was reframed in post-structuralist discourses as an illusion perpetuated through citational repetition (Derrida 1967; Deleuze 1968), particularly around



notions of gender and sexual identity (Butler 1990) and cultural identity (Hall 1990). Within these discourses, identity is understood as a construction, re-affirmed through performativity. Accordingly, identity is constructed in an interplay between affirmation (of some characteristics that are elevated to essential properties) and negation (differentiation from others).

A work's perceived identity is liable to difference and multiplication over time as its materiality and contexts undergo change, and/or the work recurs in time and space in new contexts and with new materials. An artwork's identity is constructed, performed, and affirmed both in discourse surrounding a work, and in the work's manifestation(s), which may either perpetuate the illusion of a fixed and stable identity, or fracture that illusion through deviation or alteration. Like authenticity, judgements of a work's identity are intersubjective characterizations.

*Brian Castriota, Marta García Celma*

Instructions, Notation, Score	<p>The existence of instructions, notations, and scores, for a work of art, whether a visual or musical work, means that it can be recreated or reinterpreted any number of times, either by the artist him or herself, or by another. What all three terms, instruction, notation and score, have in common is that within the art world they have increasingly assumed the status of commodity, as a means by which inherently variable artworks can enter the museum. The term instruction instead is more commonly associated with conceptual art, the most obvious example being the instructions for Sol LeWitt's Wall Drawings, whereby third parties follow detailed guidance or specifications from the artist in order to realise their concept.</p>
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In conservation literature, the notions of instructions, notations, and scores are firstly developed by Laurenson (2006), proposing an allographic reading of installations. Indeed, for her, the traditional conceptual framework of conservation corresponds to autographic works, but is not adapted to those that are not, such as installations, which are "temporary and ephemeral" works (Ibid., 4). Laurenson (2006) refers to Goodman (1968) for whom, the relevance for certain works of the notion of authenticity introduces a categorical division within the different artistic practices: autographic works, such as paintings, can be counterfeited, on the contrary, allographic works, such as musical compositions, can be redone without one instance being more authentic than another, because the presence of a "notational system" (Goodman, 1968, 122, 130) makes it possible to reproduce them in an unlimited number of copies, each equally valid. Indeed, the notational system provides a "test of correctness" (Ibid., 119) – for scores, scripts and texts – and a "test of compliance" (Ibid., 122, 144) – for performances, establishing that an object has the "constitutive properties" of the work, that is, the required features, and describing the "contingent properties" of the work, that is, the limits of permissible variation in each, without specifying by whom the work was produced.

In this spectrum, installations are allographic because (1) they are realized "in-two-steps" (Ibid., 4), like musical compositions, where the score is the first step determining the second final stage of the performance, namely its execution, (2) they can be performed several times, remaining authentic, because, like musical compositions, they are based on the interpretation of the artist's instructions, (3) their authenticity doesn't reside in their materiality, but in their identity, which must be preserved being sure not to lose any essential elements from one installation to another. The identity is defined by the "work-defining properties": negotiated decisions (Ibid., 9), often revisited by the artist (Ibid., 8), that can be captured through his instructions, the previous installations that he approved

(Ibid., 7), and the understanding of the context in which the work was firstly installed (Ibid., 11).

Even if the artist's instructions are not standardized like scores, Laurenson (2006) assumes, referring to Davies (2001) for whom, scores have an ontological significance, that the constitutive properties of the work can be thinly described, that is, not very detailed, or thickly specified, that is, dense and precise. However, in both case, it is essential for the artist to succeed in leaving a "gap" (Laurenson, 2006, 5) between his specifications and how the work must be performed, that is, a margin of manoeuvre for the interpretation of what is generally referred to as his "intention" (Ibid., 6).

Referring to Derrida (1972), Tina Fiske (2009) questions this goodmanian allographic reading for installations. For her, Laurenson (2006) operates another attempt to fix the identity of these works, and their limits of variation, whereas installations are - by nature - designed to change, and the global transformations they undergo in the different contexts, make it necessary to distinguish the work, from its various instances, and from its instructions. Indeed, they are not made to be shown permanently, on the contrary, they are thought to disappear materially between each exhibition (Fiske, 2009, 233). Thus, being able to connect them in time and space remain a crucial issue, and Fiske (2009) evokes the derridian's notion of "tethering", in order to "secures the work-in-absentia, disarming absence as a condition that could threaten the viability of the work, and rendering it essentially benign" (Fiske, 2009, 233). In this theoretical framework, an installation is not embodied, but iterated, and the set of practices such as documentations, installations and uninstallations allow a movement of "différance" rather than the pursuit of an actualization.

*Iona Goldie-Scot, Sophie Lei*

**Iteration** While *iteration* is often used synonymously with instance, manifestation, and version, Castriota (2018) proposes that iteration should refer to the overall process of repetition, one that entails alteration and difference, rather than a single instance, manifestation or instantiation of a work. Drawing on Derrida and Deleuze, iteration in this sense is a faculty of identity, predicated on deferral and difference. It permits repetition, and enables multiple and variable manifestations

*Zoë Miller, Claudia Röck*

**Manifestation** *Manifestation* refers to a discrete occurrence or instance of a work in time and space (Castriota 2018); a physical embodiment of expression (DOCAM); an action or object that gives form to an abstract entity. This term also implies an element of variability — a manifestation is a discrete occurrence, one of multiple possible spatial and temporal instances of a work.

*Zoë Miller, Claudia Röck*

**Notation** Cf. Instruction, Notation, Score, Script

**Presentation** The term *presentation* denotes a manifestation or instance of a work that is both perceptible to the mind and senses (the work therefore has to be installed in order to be presented), and being received and perceived by someone (an audience, spectators).

*Zoë Miller, Claudia Röck*

**Significant Properties** Significant properties may be understood as the tangible and intangible characteristics of a work of art that an individual or group considers constitutive of its identity and important for the work to be maintained or recur. Those properties deemed significant, critical, essential, or work-defining may change over time and may vary among stakeholders. The identification of significant properties is therefore a collaborative and discursive process.

The term has antecedents in aesthetics (see “constitutive properties” in Goodman 1968, 116) and semiotics (see “pertinent features” in Eco 1976), however it first emerged in discourses around digital preservation in the early 2000s (see “significant properties” in Holdsworth & Sergeant 2000 and “essential properties” or “essence” in Heslop et al. 2002). The term was popularized in contemporary art conservation by Pip Laurenson (2006), reformulated as “work-defining properties,” based on the writing of Nelson Goodman and Stephen Davies (2001). A similar notion was introduced by Rebecca Gordon in her description of an artwork’s “critical mass,” defined as “the optimum choice and grouping of factors or attributes that demonstrate the core identity of the work of art” (Gordon 2014, 97). The term generally refers to the characteristics, features, or qualities regarded as constitutive of a work’s identity and therefore important or necessary for a physical assemblage, event, or experience to maintain in order to be regarded as an instance of the work in question (cf. “authenticity”).

Certain properties may be characterized as significant by the artist through declarative statements. However, more often than not, museum staff or collection caretakers may argue that certain properties are significant on the basis of a work’s exhibition history and various statements made by the artist. Cultural values also play a critical role in the evaluator’s assessment of a work’s significant properties – for example, the historical value attached to original materials, materials manipulated by the artist, or historic technologies or processes employed in the work’s initial manifestation(s).

Certain properties may come to be viewed as more or less significant depending on who is doing the judging and his or her values, the different courses the artwork’s trajectory takes as it is manifested in new ways over time, and the ever-changing cultural context or technological landscape surrounding the work.

*Brian Castriota, Marta García Celma*

**Reenactment, Reinstallation, Restaging** The terms Reenactment, Restaging, and Reinstallation refer to the process of presenting, and/or the actual presentation of, a work of art – particularly an installation or a performance known to have been presented in the past. The presentation, to varying degrees, relies on the artwork’s available material: for instance, documentation of the artist’s intent, testimonies and exhibition documentation. The terms do not indicate the level of direct involvement of the artwork’s author. The terms are in times presented with a dash following “re”, such as in “re-enactment”, however, the use without it prevails in art conservation literature. The terms are used variably by different scholars, largely referring to a reconfiguration of an artwork in relation to new spatial and/or contextual parameters.

*Dušan Barok, Panda de Haan, Maria Theodoraki*

**Score** Cf. Instructions, Notation, Score, Script

**Trajectory** Cf. Biography, Trajectory, Career

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## Acknowledgments

This model was jointly developed by the participants of the workshops held at Cologne Institute of Conservation Sciences / TH Köln on March 8 - 9, 2018 and June 29, 2018. We are grateful to the Dutch Foundation for the Conservation of Contemporary Art (SBMK) for the permission to create this document on the basis of the Decision-Making Model for Conservation and Restoration of Modern and Contemporary Art (1999).

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Published by Cologne Institute of Conservation Sciences, TH Köln (University of Technology, Arts and Sciences)

With generous support from the Wüstenrot Stiftung

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Cologne Institute of  
Conservation Sciences

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