New Approaches to Documenting Performance in the Museum: Value, History, and Strategy

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Abstract   This chapter shows how over the past two decades the relationship between the museum and performance has undergone a radical shift with the acquisition of performance-based artworks into the collection, shifting the role of the museum from that of a repository to that of a vital participant in the activation of the work. This chapter reflects on the new value this turn affords to documentation, and on how it is being used to support the effective activation of performance-based artworks in the museum. It reflects particularly on Tate's development of documentation practices that address these new institutional needs and on how these navigate both immediate and potential future value.

Keywords   Value. Performance. Museum. Documentation. Conservation. Activation.

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1   Introduction

The relationship between performance and documentation, particularly in the context of the museum, is complex, full of shifting practices and re-evaluations of the documents collected, archived, and displayed. Recently, there has been a pronounced move towards considering performance documentation in the museum in relation to the acquisition of performance-based artworks[1] into the permanent

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[1]   This chapter focuses particularly on practices around performance documentation which have been developed at Tate over the past five years. As such, I will be using terms such as 'performance-based' and 'activation' which are in keeping with the glossary developed at Tate around these practices (Lawson et al. 2021).

collection. There has also been a collective sense of the need for reflection, analysis, and expansion of the institutional practices of documenting performance as the role of the museum in relation to performance alters from repository to producer. Here, through a consideration of the wider history of museum-based approaches to documentation and a close analysis of my own contribution to the development of a museum-based documenting practice at Tate, I reflect on some of the ways institutions have responded to this and have asserted the place of performance in the museum.

A recurring lens applied throughout this analysis will be that of *value*: what (type of) value does performance documentation have within the museum? This approach, which is informed by John Dewey's *Theory of Valuation* (1939), suggests that by considering actions – what we *do* with performance documentation – we can understand what individuals, departments, and institutions value. Dewey suggests that we can understand what an individual values by observing their patterns of behaviour (51), and the value someone attributes to something. Dewey states, "is not in what they say about it but the care he devotes to obtaining and using the *means* without which it cannot be attained" (27; emphasis in the original). This chapter also draws on Elizabeth Anderson's assertion that "our evaluative experiences, and the judgements based on them, are deeply pluralistic" (1993, 1) and that drivers behind valuation are complex, and, therefore, the value attributed to objects can be changeable and variable. It is this variation in value that this chapter explores. Analysing value is not about judgement of quality, but rather about reflecting on how the thing the museum values – in this case, performance documentation – meets its needs. Through reflection, it may be possible – as the case study here demonstrates – to adapt and adjust museum practices to ensure both an immediate and a future value for performance documentation.

2 The Re-valuation of Performance Documentation: From the Ontological to the Practical

A reassessment of the value of performance documentation has taken place in many fields beyond the museum; it is worth briefly touching here on how this reconsideration has led to a move away from an acceptance of performance documentation's subjugation to the performance moment, towards an assertion of its own sense and type of value. This allows a consideration of whether performance documentation can have a practical value, rather than being subject to the ontological value of performance.

Peggy Phelan, perhaps the most cited critic of performance documentation, asserts that "performance cannot be saved, recorded, documented [...] once it does so, it becomes something other than performance" (1993, 146). For Phelan, documenting is a process of "inescapable transformation" (148), and through that transforming of the live moment, documentation is seen to be of less significant value to those addressing the performance moment. Others question the effectiveness of performance documentation in (re)presenting performance beyond the performance moment. Erika Fischer-Lichte claims that documentation is "bound to fail" due to the lack of material remains in performance (2008, 75), while Adrian Heathfield suggests that documentation has a difficult task as performance "disappears fast and leaves the scarcest trace for historical record" (2001, 105). Rose-eLee Goldberg has cited the "anti-materialist points of view" (2005, 110) of

artists in the 1960s and 1970s as a reason for resistance to commodifying a work through documenting it, while Matthew Reason suggests that performance's transience could be considered an "aesthetic value in its own right" (2006, 11) which could be undermined by documentation. Artist Mary Oliver has gone even further to condemn the act of documentation as a way to "mummify [performance] and plasticize it" (2014, 15). These criticisms of performance documentation privilege the performance-moment; documentation becomes mere representation of something "whose 'real' existence lies elsewhere" (Copeland 1990, 35).

Others have reframed the actions of representing, transforming, extending and considered how they might be of value; these approaches consider what it is that documents can do, rather than what they are. Art critic Boris Groys states that "it has become increasingly evident that the art world has shifted its interest away from the artwork and toward art documentation" (2012, 209), and he considers the potential within documentation to provide access for viewers to ephemeral works. In contrast to her views on documentation as commodification, Goldberg acknowledges that documenting different aspects of a performance may "provide a fuller explanation of a performance than was evident during the actual presentation" (1998, 34). Amelia Jones also asserts that

> while the experience of viewing a photograph and reading a text is clearly different from that of sitting in a small room watching an artist perform, neither has a privileged relationship to the historical 'truth' of the performance. (2012, 203)

Performance artist Kira O'Reilly also considers how documentation might give a performance "another life" (2001, 117). Mike Pearson and Michael Shanks similarly suggest that the value of documentation might lie in how it engages the viewer with the performance in the present (2001). Many of these thoughts are crystallised in the work of Rebecca Schneider, who considers the ways in which our encounters with performance documents – often photographs – might constitute a form of imaginative re-enactment. Schneider suggests documents do not just point to a past moment but demonstrate a potential future for the performance as they are used, in "collaborative exchange with viewers, reviewers, reenactors, re-performers, or re-photographers" (2007, 34). Christopher Bedford's intriguing notion of the "Viral Ontology of Performance" (2012) resonates with this in that he considers how reproduction, analysis, and discussion activate performance documents, creating a similar sense of encounter and experience beyond the performance moment. Both Bedford and Schneider consider the potential value within documentation to expand performance beyond the singular moment, through our creative and imaginative interactions with it.

Where we consider what it is that documentation might 'do' to enable activity around performance, we begin to understand how active practices of documentation within the museum may come to have value. For those working within the museum, whether they be curators, conservators, archivists, or artists, documenting performance has become a practical answer to the problem of how to enable performance-based artworks to enter the spaces of the institution. For museums, the discussions around the practices of documenting are less to do with 'if' they should document performance, and more to do with 'how' they should.

3 A Brief History of the Value of Performance Documentation in the Museum: Archives, Programmes, Exhibitions, and Beyond

The museum has engaged with performance documentation across many decades, and museums and galleries are increasingly interested in reflecting on this institutional history. Much of this engagement and the value institutions place on documentation, it has become clear, is predicated on the space(s) in which this documentation is collected, stored, and used. One such space is that of the archive. Perhaps one of the most significant early archives of performance documentation is the Dance Archive at the Museum of Modern Art (MoMA) in New York, an archive established in 1939 after a donation from Lincoln Kirstein, which contained "books, pictures, sculpture, costumes, drawings, documents of all kinds" (MoMA 1941, 3). Those collecting archives of performance frame the practice as an active one; the 1941 *Bulletin of the Museum of Modern Art* states that the objects collected are "intended to serve as source material for contemporary and future inspiration rather than as a musty record of the past" (MoMA 1941, 3). Michelle Elligott and Claire Bishop both note the progression from the archive being housed in the library to its promotion to the Department of Dance and Theatre Design from 1944-48 (Bishop 2014; Elligott 2015). The framing of the intention for the archive and its promotion to its own department suggest that documentation had a value in the museum in making historical performances accessible to contemporary audiences.

Documentation has also long featured in exhibitions at museums and galleries internationally. Associate Curator for Performance and Film Frank Smigiel identifies the history of performance at San Francisco Museum of Modern Art (SFMoMA) as having started "with the exhibition *Sawdust and Spangles* (1942)" which involved "circus props, posters, and clown costumes" (in Giannachi, Westerman 2017, 35). At Tate, some thirty years later, in 1974, the exhibition *Two European Artists* also included documentation of performance-based works by Yves Klein and Piero Manzoni – including a copy of the infamous *Leap into the Void* (1960) printed in Klein's faux newspaper. More recently, there has been a varied programme of exhibitions within museums internationally which have included performance documentation in various forms. RoseLee Goldberg explicitly stated that her exhibition *One Hundred Years of Performance Art* at MoMA in 2009 became "a fascinating history of documentation" (in Giannachi, Westerman 2017, 63) and that the history of performance and documentation are intrinsically tied together (64). While these documents are not afforded artistic value, they have a clear value as displayable historic remains, giving audiences access to a history of art which includes performance-based artworks.

Interestingly, there have been occasions where performance documents *have* been attributed artistic value, and this has often been linked to their inclusion in museum collections. At Tate, *Four Blackboards* (1972) by Joseph Beuys, used in the 1972 work *Information Action* (Westerman 2016a; Finbow 2017), were acquired by the museum following the performance. However, they were only moved into the collection in 1983 (Finbow 2017, 21-2), suggesting a reconsideration of their artistic value. Performance documents, specifically those made by artists themselves, have increasingly been acquired as collection artworks by museums. Photographic documentation works by Lynn Hershman Leeson of her *Roberta Breitmore* performance (1973-78), for example, are included in the collections of Tate and MoMA,

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and according to records at Tate, the Whitworth Art Gallery in Manchester, UK, acquired an entire *Roberta Breitmore* archive.

Finally, performance documentation created within museums is often dispersed widely across the departmental spaces of the museum. Projects such as the AHRC-funded *Performance at Tate: Collecting, Archiving and Sharing Performance* (2014-16) have relied on the identification of performance documents from across diverse departments – marketing, education, curatorial, conservation, institutional record depositories – to trace institutional histories of performance. At Tate, Catherine Wood, Senior Curator for International Art (Performance), states, "I take photos of what we do for educational reasons, for publicity reasons, and because artists want it" (in Giannachi, Westerman 2017, 31). There are also examples of tailored documentation practices around programmes of performance works: in parallel with Boris Charmatz's major dance programme *If Tate Modern was Musée de la Danse?* held across Tate Modern in May 2015, a tailored documentation practice was designed and implemented by the *Performance at Tate* team. Each aspect of this documentation presented a new layer of understanding and information about the relationship between the works, the museum, and the visitors/audience (Tolmie and Benford in Giannachi, Westerman 2017, 173-6; Giannachi, Tolmie, Finbow 2018). There is a strong sense here of the information value that exists within this wide, dispersed body of documentation created by the museum.

Though this is far from a full survey of the relationship between the museum and performance documentation, in these brief observations we can begin to draw parallels in the museum between the space in which the performance-based artwork resides, and the space and value that is assigned to the performance document. The entry of performance-based artworks into the space of the collection has caused a similar shift in the valuation of performance documentation: documentation becomes vital not only to the existence of these works within the collection, but also to their installation and activation in the exhibition spaces of the museum.

4 Developing New Processes of Documenting Collection-Based Performance Artworks

The collection of performance artworks which can be activated within the space of the museum without the direct input of the artist is still a relatively new practice. Catherine Wood states that Tate first began collecting live works with Roman Ondak's *Good Feelings in Good Times* (2003), and notes that MoMA also began collecting around the same period (Wood 2014, 128 fnn. 2 and 3). It is against this backdrop that numerous research projects, networks, and conferences have sought to address the challenges of collecting and conserving performance-based artworks. These have included the research network *Collecting the Performative* (2012-14), involving museum-based professionals and artistic practitioners from the UK and the Netherlands; the cross-institutional conference *Media in Transition* (2015) hosted by The Getty Research Institute, The Getty Centre and Tate; *Documentation and Conservation of Performance* (2016-21), a project at Tate in which I was directly involved, and most recently *Reshaping the Collectible: When Artworks Live in the Museum* (2018-21), a major research project at Tate into the impacts of new and complex media artworks on the museum.

Knowledge sharing and collaborative, inter-institutional, practical research has been a common thread across this shift in museum practice. The Whitney (Wahbeh 2016), Guggenheim, New York (2012), and The Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York (Time-Based Media Working Group 2017) have all publicly shared examples of the documents and processes that they use around collecting time-based media artworks. Others have presented a closer consideration of individual instances of collecting and documenting performance-based artworks. Philip Bither, of the Walker Art Centre, Minneapolis, has described the "experimental acquisition" of Ralph Lemon's *Scaffold Room* (2014) into their collection, in which memories and experiences of "curators, performers, the audience, the guards" were documented through interviews which "will end up functioning as a score" (in Giannachi, Westerman 2017, 55) for its future activations. At MoMA, Nancy Lim has both explored the process of collecting Simone Forti's *Dance Constructions* (1960-61) and noted the constellation of documentary materials this has generated (Lim 2016).

It is against this backdrop of changing practice and collective reflection that Tate, through the *Documentation and Conservation of Performance* project, has developed its *Strategy for the Documentation and Conservation of Performance (Strategy)*. What I offer here is a reflection on my experience, as an embedded museum-based researcher of performance documentation at Tate from 2014 to 2018 who has been involved directly in the above projects from 2016 to 2019, in supporting a practical response to this moment of change and reflection. I became involved in this period of redevelopment in 2016 during my role as a pre-doctoral research assistant on the *Performance at Tate* team, in which I closely analysed – through the lens of value – Tate's historic and current practices of and around documentation. This included tracing the institution's activities around creating, collecting, archiving, and using performance documents. This point in time also marked the beginning of a period of reflection on practices of documentation in the institution, which had manifested in the *Live List* documentation practice developed during the *Collecting the Performative* project (Berndes et al. 2014). The *Live List* consisted of a series of interrogative questions, designed to capture information about a performance-based work as it enters a collection. I began, in collaboration with Louise Lawson (Conservation Manager, Time-based Media, Tate) and after consultation with Pip Laurenson (Head of Collection Care Research, Tate), Catherine Wood and Isabella Maidment (then Assistant Curator, Performance, Tate), to repurpose the framework of the *Live List* to create the first iteration of a new documentation process. The resulting documentation practice, known as the *Performance Specification*, kept a similar format, using headings linked to facets of the artwork under which a series of interrogative questions captured information about the work in more depth.

This also offered an opportunity to reflect on the intersection of different existing documentation practices within Tate as an institution. I began to test the *Performance Specification* in two ways: analysing existing documentation and observing performance-based artworks being activated at Tate. The staging of five performance-based works from the permanent collection at Tate in 2016 – Roman Ondak's *Good Feelings in Good Times* (2004), Amalia Pica's *Strangers* (2008), Tino Sehgal's *This is Propaganda* (2002), David Lamelas' *Time* (1970) and Tania Bruguera's *Tatlin's Whisper #5* (2008) – allowed me to spend several days observing the works in their activated form

in the museum, making notes on space, time, audience and so forth. I was also given access to documents produced by the curatorial team around the production of the work.[2] In tandem with this, I also accessed existing documentation of the works from previous activations – photography, film, reviews, programme materials – and from the acquisition process – interviews with the artist, conservation reports, acquisition reports.

A further stage in the development of Tate's new documentation practice began with a reflection on progress so far which led to the development of the *Strategy* (Lawson et al. 2021). This period of development followed the conclusion of my own doctoral research, and I participated in the project periodically as a specialist in performance documentation, working primarily on the continued testing of our new templates on the five key works performed in 2016 and considering, with others in the team, issues around loaning performance-based works. By the end of my involvement with the project, the documentation practice had expanded to incorporate three separate documentation practices – the aforementioned *Performance Specification*, the *Activation Report*, and the *Map of Interactions* – and an institutionally applicable glossary of terms (Lawson et al. 2021). There was continued testing and adjustment of these documentation practices as questions arose in preparing works for loan, as newer activations provided additional information, and as existing documentation was considered.

Since I finished working on the project in 2019, the team at Tate has also continued to expand its work on documentation practices, with Hélia Marçal developing the additional *Material Histories* document which captures the changes and evolution of the work across its life in the institution. Work on Tony Conrad's *Ten Years Alive on the Infinite Plane* (1972) as part of the *Reshaping the Collectible* project (2018-21), for example, included testing the effectiveness of documents created in activating a complex work. The *Strategy* continues to be tested, expanded and developed. More about the specificities of the *Strategy* and the three documentation practices implemented in 2018 can be found in the paper "Developing a Strategy for the Conservation of Performance-Based Artworks at Tate" (Lawson, Finbow, Marçal 2019). Explanations of the four documentation tools, along with downloadable templates of the *Performance Specification* and the *Activation Report*, an outline of the *Strategy* and the *Glossary* were made publicly available in May 2021 (Lawson et al. 2021). There are also many papers available which explore the continued expansion and development of many of these processes after my involvement with the project ended (Lawson, Marçal forthcoming; Marçal, Lawson, Ribeiro, forthcoming; Lawson et al forthcoming).

Having reflected here on my involvement in the development of the *Strategy* in its initial stages, what follows is not a close analysis of individual documentation practices. Rather, it is a short exploration of three key features of the larger *Strategy* which I contributed to developing, drawing on aspects of my own findings on Tate's historical documentation and practices, which demonstrate an effective reflection on the needs and valuations

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2 It is particularly interesting to note the involvement at Tate of a Production Manager in activating the works. The production manager, among other roles, works particularly on the physical realisation of the performance-based works shown across Tate's varied programme. For example, during the 2016 activations of some of the performance-based works from the collection I liaised with the Production Manager about performance schedules, artist visits, and the potential performance sites.

of the museum. Rather than analysing a completed institutional documentation practice, it reflects instead on how an institution might effectively respond to new institutional needs around performance and documentation.

5 Interconnected Documents

A key observation I arrived at during the *Performance at Tate* project – as noted above – and in my own analysis of Tate's historic relationship to documentation (Finbow 2018a) was that documents relating to performances tended to be widely dispersed across the institution, often making it complex to locate them without, knowing that they exist. Therefore, the centralisation of a documentation process became a key driver for me in the development initially of the *Performance Specification* and then of the wider *Strategy*. This did not mean that a single department would become responsible for documenting, resulting in a narrow focus, but instead we intended to find a way to effectively integrate multiple existing institutional perspectives on the artwork in a way that made the information easily accessible and communicable. This would, it was hoped, mean that the documents produced would have value not just for those in the Time-based Media Conservation team, but also more broadly for those engaging with the work in different ways such as in curating, archiving, lending, or researching the work. It was also intended that in bringing together many different perspectives, through different layers and forms of knowledge about the work, the information value contained within it could again be realised in the future, by those without first-hand knowledge of how to activate the work; for this a balance of richness and accessibility was key. A particularly interesting aspect of the *Strategy* for me was to consider this in relation to my research into the way in which Rebecca Horn and curators at Tate had negotiated the display of her *Body Sculptures* through the presentation of different types of documents – drawing, film, photography, objects – in order to create an experience of the work for the viewer (Finbow 2018b).

The intersecting of documents was framed, in the early stages of development, through the initial discussion with members of the Curatorial and Time-Based Media Conservation teams, and later in the holding of workshops involving individuals from both these departments, along with other researchers based at Tate working on documenting artworks and members of other intersecting Conservation teams. This allowed for the feeding in of multiple perspectives on what performance documentation needed to do for those involved in the activation of the work. It highlighted the different use values that would underpin these documents: whether it would be for internal installation and activation, for loaning the work, or for researching its art historical significance. It became clear that potential information and use value would be best supported and realised by a documentation process which was accessible and usable, with searchable information, but also captured information which was thorough and integrated multiple institutional perspectives; it was particularly where with works which involved the use of props or objects. An example for this is Amalia Pica's *Strangers* (2008), which involved input from those specialising in paper conservation at Tate to help us document the bunting used in the installation and activation of the performance. The Met and the Whitney have both also shared their documentation processes, which integrate multiple documents focus-

ing on different aspects of the work (Time-Based Media Working Group 2017; Wahbeh 2016).

Initially, I experimented with linking to existing documents through the *Performance Specification* documentation process. However, the realisation that the documentation process would need to be accessible to those outside of the institution expanded the documentation process from the single *Performance Specification* to a series of intersecting documentation processes, which drew information directly from existing documents without requiring the user to access them directly. By the end of my involvement in 2019, the *Performance Specification* was used to document the full dimensions of the work, with space for a written description of the work and photographic documentation; the *Activation Report* was used to document the specific dimensions of historical, and potentially future, activations of the work; and the *Map of Interactions* was used to document the network of relationships which constitute and influence the work; the map records not only those human agents – curators, conservators, installation teams, the public – who interact with the work, but also technologies, such as AV equipment or mobile phones, which have an impact on how it is activated. By tying these together through the overarching *Strategy*, they become a larger multiplicity of documents whose value is greater than the sum of its parts. This development of a documentation process which did not seek to streamline a complex work into a single document, but instead integrated different perspectives and understandings of it, closely considered the value of a rich, accessible document of information about the work, both in the immediate moment and for those accessing it in the future.

6   Documenting Context

In both the initial *Performance Specification* and the *Strategy*, I was careful to acknowledge that these were institutional documentation processes and would differ in focus from the types of documents that others relating to the work, such as the artist, a photographer, or a viewer, might create. The importance of capturing the work not as fixed or finalised, but as influenced by and shaped by its context became increasingly clear during the development stages, particularly as I looked at different activations of the work. This highlighted the importance of a documentation approach which not only captured the dimensions of the work itself, in keeping with an understanding of the artist's intention, but also the context and fluidity of the work, focusing particularly on the influences of the museum as its site of activation and the roles those around it might have in that activation.

Creating a record of what in the work was in flux' and what was 'constant' (Lawson et al. 2021) became a significant part of developing the *Strategy*. There was a need to understand the complexity of these works by not just documenting the artwork, but by documenting the artwork 'in the museum', by capturing the activities and actions being carried out around it. This drew on the wealth of documents I had received from the Curatorial department during the 2016 testing period, which demonstrated the practical and logistical aspects of activating works: timetables of performances, adverts for performers, remuneration discussions. The response to this was the *Activation Report*, which built on an existing *Installation Report* used

by Tate's Time-Based Media Conservation team.[3] The *Activation Report* interrogates the work through questions which were designed to capture information about the choices and decisions made around an individual activation. The intention is, therefore, that an *Activation Report* can be created for each historical activation of the work, using existing documentation to capture the specificities of the work at that point in time and – where possible – reflect on how and why those choices were made.[4]

These documentation processes were developed deliberately to avoid fixing the work at a particular moment within its broader life. The documentation processes not only record the specific, individual dimensions of the work, they also record the decision-making processes around activations: space is provided for reflection from those involved in the activation of the work to capture this. Attention is paid to capturing perspectives on where an activation is seen to fundamentally push the perceived boundaries of the work, to try and understand the impact of this. Video documentation of an activation of an edition of David Lamelas' *Time* (1970) at MSU Broad in 2018, for example, allowed me to directly compare the space, duration, activity, audience participation and so on between this and other activations at Tate, giving extra dimensions to an understanding of the individual contexts and decision-making process; this fed information back into the *Performance Specification* through my use of the *Activation Report*. In paying close attention to these moments of change and constancy, the documentation process sites the artwork specifically within the space of the museum and considers what this does to the dimensions of the work. This aspect of the *Strategy* therefore not only considers the immediate information value that could be provided by documentation, which focused closely on realisations of the work, but also what use value this might have in the future for those activating the work and reasoning with the same set of decisions. Rather than seeking to record what the 'work' is, these documents explored what the 'museum' does to the work. These documents are intended to support the navigation of the work in context.

7 Continuous Documentation

The continued development of the *Strategy* demonstrates a final key element of the documentation process: it is never complete. With each version of the *Performance Specification*, and the addition of the *Activation Report* and *Map of Interactions*, the format responded to newly understood needs of the institution. Reflection particularly on works which had already had flux built into them – Tania Bruguera's *Tatlin's Whisper #5* (2008) is a key case (Westerman 2016b; Wood and Laurenson in Giannachi, Westerman

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[3] Other museums have similarly considered the need to document individual instances of a performance work. At the Guggenheim this resulted in the *Iteration Report*. At Tate, the term 'activation' was chosen over 'iteration' to adhere to an understanding of each performance not as a separate version of an 'original' artwork against which it could be measured, but as part of a continuous whole. This also avoided the use of 're-' terms that would similarly suggest an origin point or a 'correct' version.

[4] It was noted by the project team that the practicality of carrying out the *Activation Report* for all future activations of the work may be bound to the resources available and might not always be possible. However, the value of documenting activations remained central to my own approach to applying the *Strategy*.

2017) – allowed consideration of what might therefore need to be built into the documentation process to address this. The layering of information-rich documents and the focus in the documentation process on capturing context began to address some of these issues, but it was only in the practical application of these processes that the value of continuation became apparent.

I had noted in my own research the unfixed nature of value in the museum, and this resonated with me throughout the development process; new needs in the museum shifted approaches to creating, collecting, archiving, and using performance documentation. Testing the *Activation Report*, and noting those points of confluence and diversion, allowed me not only to understand better what the documentation processes needed to capture in terms of the boundaries and dimension of the work, but also how the process of documenting might, itself, be part of understanding the work. I used findings from the *Activation Report* to reflect on the *Performance Specification* where I found my original narrative on the work to now have altered slightly, providing a fuller understanding of how the work might be activated in the future. These shifts in the input into the work and the forces which both alter it and respond to those alterations can also be traced within the *Strategy* in the work of the *Map of Interactions*. Narratives of change, new points of understanding, or notes about contextual shifts in the work are intended to be captured and communicated through the intersection of documents; no information is overwritten, as such, but instead should become entangled within our new understandings of the work as its life in the museum progresses.

As such, when collaborating on developing the *Strategy*, I never felt we were seeking to create a canonical group of documents which might come to represent the work in full. Nor was it intended to capture a single instance of the work in history. Instead, through this continual process of creating new documents – the multiple *Activation Report* and the display history of the work – and integrating new findings with the *Performance Specification*, the process is better able to help those in the museum understand and approach the work in providing access to information through the documents and enabling them to carry out the process of documenting the work. The value of documentation, in this case, is found not only in the document that is produced, but also in the way that the practice is applied; the work is now so intertwined with the practices of the museum that a continual documentation process which records this complexity becomes an institutional necessity.

8 Conclusion – The Future of Performance Documentation in the Museum

What has been explored here, briefly, is how the practice of documenting performance has institutionally become an increasingly integral one. In particular, the museum has embraced documenting performance as an active way to respond to the role that it is taking, in essence, as a long-term producer of the performance-based artwork. The *Strategy* at Tate, and the other institutional documenting processes which have been explored here, have demonstrated the way in which those working within the museum are increasingly considering the importance of 'doing things' with documents, whether this be integrating them into displays and exhibitions, or using them to support the activation of works. Through exploring perceptions of value and value judgements as tied into these actions around documentation, it has been possible to demonstrate that documentation as a process is not just rooted in an immediate reaction to the performance-based artwork entering the collection, it also always needs to be considered who might be using these documents and documenting processes in the future. In doing so, it has been possible at Tate to design, test, and refine a documentation process which creates documents which are both of value in the immediate moment and have an imbedded potential value for those using them to understand and activate the works in the future.

It is impossible to anticipate all the ways in which the relationship between performance and the museum might continue to shift and change in the future. However, by reflecting on what has been done with documentation, how it has mediated the relationship between the museum and performance historically, and what, in the present moment, institutions need documentation to do, we can grapple with the importance of continuous reflection on and development of institutional performance documentation processes. The analysis here should not be considered as a comprehensive reflection on the *Strategy* at Tate – as this continues still to develop – but instead as a moment of reflection on what has shaped that documentation process during my own period of interaction with it; what I believe to have been innovative and effective within it; and how its value in the future has been a central concern. Rather than claiming the *Strategy* as an example of best practice to be widely adopted, I have suggested how institutions might use reflections on value to approach developing and applying effective and useful documentation processes that speak to and anticipate individual institutional needs around performance-based artworks in their collection, both now and in the future.

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