

LIMA

Programme

March 22+23

**Transformation
Digital Art 2018**

**Symposium at
LIMA Amsterdam**

**creative
industries
fund NL**

ArtHost



Timetable Day 1

Transformation Digital Art 2018 |
Acting on Change

International symposium on the
preservation of software-based art.
LIMA, Amsterdam. March 22 & 23.

Thursday, March 22, 2018

10:00 Registration & Coffee at LIMA, Amsterdam

10:30 Welcome and introduction by **Gaby Wijers** (Director, LIMA)

- **10:40 PART I: Artists in Need of Documentation, Scores, Support and Services**
Moderated by Gaby Wijers (LIMA)
Geert Mul (Artist), *Future Proof*
Rachel Somers Miles (LIMA), *Empowering Artists to Be in Control: The Artwork Documentation Tool*
Julie Boschath Thorez (LIMA), *The Future is Now!: Then What?*
Q&A

12:30 LUNCH

- **14:00 PART II: Artistic and Institutional Approaches**
Moderated by Paulien 't Hoen (SBMK)
Conversation on Conservation: Karen Archey (Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam) in conversation with **Martine Neddham** (Artist) on sustaining the artwork *'Mouchette.org'*
Constant Dullaart (Artist), *Commodifying Ephemeral Context*
Louise Cone (Statens Museum for Kunst), *Museums and Art in the Information Age: How Can the Present Be Preserved and (Re)presented in the Future?*
Q&A

16:00 BREAK

- **16:30 PART III: Alternative Strategies**
Moderated by Annet Dekker (University of Amsterdam)
Joost Rekveld (Artist), *Interpreting 'Reminiscence'*
Josephine Bosma (Critic & Theorist), *'The World in 24 Hours' Revisited*
Serena Cangiano (SUPSI), *Re-programmed Art: An Open Platform*
Fabian van Sluijs (Creative Coding Utrecht & FIBER), *ReCoding as an Educational Tool and Preservation Strategy*
Q&A

18:30 End of Day

Timetable Day 2

Friday, March 23, 2018

10:00 Registration & Coffee at LIMA, Amsterdam

10:30 Welcome and Introduction by **Gaby Wijers** (LIMA),
Acting on Change | Taking Control

- **10:35 PART I: Sustainable Storage of Digital Art**
Moderated by Marcel Ras (NDE)
Patricia Falcão (Tate), *Digital Archival Storage: The View from the Conservation Studio*
Yves Bernard (iMAL), *The ResurrectionLab Project*
Morgane Stricot (ZKM), *ZKM – Strength in Numbers*
Wiel Seuskens (LIMA), *Support and Services for Preserving Online Artworks*
Jim Wraith (LIMA), *What's After WatsNext?*
Panel discussion

12:30 LUNCH

- **13:30 PART II: How to Take Control – Best Practices**
Please go to the session you selected while registering for the symposium.

Option A) How to Take Control – Best Practices

Moderated by Geert Lovink (Institute of Network Cultures - INC, Amsterdam University of Applied Sciences)

Christine Sauter (PERICLES),

Out of the Woods: Model-Driven Preservation

Aymeric Mansoux (Artist), *Ya blew it... How Creative Commons and Free Culture Have Tamed Art and Cultural Production Engaged with the Critique of Intellectual Property*

Harm van den Dorpel (Artist), *Tokenisation*

Constant Dullaart (Artist), *Developing Tools to Enable the Hand Over*
Session discussion with open audience conversation

Option B) How to Take Control in Institutional Collections - Best Practices

Moderated by Paulien 't Hoen (SBMK)

Sylvia van Schaik (Cultural Heritage Agency of the Netherlands),
Installation Art on the Map!

Aurora Loerakker (Van Abbemuseum),

'Ser Humano': The Challenge of Preserving a Multimedia Artwork

Arthur van Mourik (Centraal Museum Utrecht), *Collecting and Preserving Digital Artworks in the Centraal Museum*

Mila van der Weide (LIMA), *Preservation and Management of Born-Digital Art: A Collaborative Concern*

Session discussion with open audience conversation

16:00 ROUNDING UP

Summary of best practices and reflection on the symposium
Drinks

Programme

The constant development and flux of technologies creates a unique opportunity for artists to experiment, play and create, but also presents a challenge for those charged with the responsibility of ensuring future presentations of these works. The preservation of and future access to born-digital art is as challenging as it is important. How to act on change? How to take control of future presentations?

During Transformation Digital Art 2018, international participants from an array of professional backgrounds ask what strategies can be developed in order to take artworks of an inherently digital, performative and processual nature into the future. Speakers will share best practices, research and cases studies concerning both artist-led and institutional strategies geared towards the future presentation of born-digital and software-based art.

Moderated by Gaby Wijers (Director, LIMA)

Geert Mul (Artist), *Future Proof*
If Geert Mul had to make any sensible distinction between creative media, it would not be old versus new, but “conservative” media versus “performative”. Oil painting and marble sculpture are archetypal examples of conservative media: the act of creating and conserving the artwork is one and the same. Interactive or generative computer artworks or performance are at the other side of the spectrum; the act of creating and the question of why and how to conserve such an artwork are separated by the moment in time, knowhow, and intent. During the construction and exhibition of Mul’s retrospective exhibition in Stedelijk Museum Schiedam (2016) and the Dortmund-U (2017) he collaborated with LIMA to develop practical protocols for sustainable storage, documentation and scripts for future presentations for seven artworks ranging from vintage computer-based works to present-day interactive installations based on image analysis software. This presentation elaborates on the collaboration, Mul’s experience, and the results.

Rachel Somers Miles (Researcher, LIMA), *Empowering Artists to Be in Control: The Artwork Documentation Tool*
Due to the obsolescence of software, hardware and network infrastructures, born-digital artworks are the subject of constant technological change and rapid obsolescence. As such, museums, galleries and collectors are often more reticent to take works of this nature into collections. In this context it’s key that artists understand the importance of documenting and preserving their own works. For these reasons and more LIMA created the Artwork Documentation Tool

to empower artists to feel in control of their own artworks to be able to present them now and in the future. This presentation shares the tool’s background, its development, challenges faced, how it works, and next steps.

Julie Boschat Thorez (Researcher, LIMA) *The Future is Now!: Then What?*
Last year LIMA invited Julie to research the preservation, distribution and re-exhibition of the work *Chinese Gold* by UBERMORGEN. In this presentation, Julie delivers an overview of the material characteristics of the artwork and discusses the different tools she experimented with to sketch a preservation strategy that addresses the work’s ever changing character, and takes advantage of collaboration and digital networks.

Q&A

12:30 LUNCH

- **14:00 PART II: Artistic and Institutional Approaches**
Ephemeral and time-based media are an important and ever-growing element of art to which institutions and collectors must relate. However, the handling of art of this kind continues to be a major challenge. During this session our keynote presentations offer perspectives from both sides of this spectrum: the national, institutional approach and the artist approach, presented to overcome the challenges inherent in the conflict between conventional, object-based preservation practices and the caretaking of time-based, online, immaterial digital art forms.
Moderated by Paulien ‘t Hoen (Coordinator, SBMK)

Conversation on Conservation: Karen Archey (Curator of Contemporary Art, Time-based Media, Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam) in conversation with **Martine Neddham** (Artist) on sustaining the artwork *Mouchette.org*
In 2017 Martine Neddham introduced Conversation on Conservation as a concept for the collaborative caretaking of digital art presented as an informal public dialogue between the caretaker of these works and the artist who created them. In the 2018 edition, curator Karen Archey of the Stedelijk speaks with artist Martine Neddham on the acquisition and preservation of the work *Mouchette.org*, purchased by the Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam and Museum of the Image Breda, now Stedelijk Museum Breda.

Constant Dullaart (Artist), *Commodifying Ephemeral Context*
Engaging an artwork in a rapidly changing media landscape, the original contextual framework of the artwork can often be essential for understanding the work as it was positioned in time. This is even more the case if the work exists as an intervention within this media context, responding to a certain political tendency on social media, or on networked media in general. With works ranging from armies made of thousands of fake Facebook accounts, to websites and a start-up, the methods Dullaart has used and proposed to document context will be discussed: from screen recordings and contracts to a brand new hosting company and archived tweets.

Louise Cone (Conservator of Contemporary Art and Sculpture, Statens Museum for Kunst, Copenhagen), *Museums and Art in the Information Age: How Can the Present Be Preserved and (Re)presented in the Future?*
Ephemeral, immaterial and media art primarily from the 60s to today exist in many museum collections. Often stored in archives as written documentation, photos, props, or relics, these art forms are not readily accessible to museumgoers. To resolve this challenge, Statens Museum for Kunst (SMK) has joined forces with the Museum of Contemporary Art in Roskilde, as well as two Danish Universities, to realise a new research project. This work aims to develop interdisciplinary strategies to ensure the preservation of ephemeral and immaterial art, changing its status from being a dead chapter to becoming a new reservoir of insight and knowledge for users.

Q&A

16:00 BREAK

- **16:30 PART III: Alternative Strategies**
In addition to storage, migration, and emulation, other strategies such as reinterpretation are researched and executed to enable presentations of digital artworks over time. Disciplines such as performance, theatre, dance and music naturally use reinterpretation as one of their main transmission strategies for bringing these works into the future. In fact, documentation and reinterpretation may be the only way to recreate performed, installed or networked artworks. In the context of digital artworks, in some cases reinterpretation could mean rewriting code for different platforms. In others, artists could recreate, reuse or reinterpret digital works. In this session presenters explore reinterpretation for the preservation and future presentation of digital artworks.
Moderated by Annet Dekker (Assistant Professor, University of Amsterdam)
- **Joost Rekveld** (Artist), *Interpreting ‘Reminiscence’*
As part of LIMA’s Unfold project (2015-16), Joost Rekveld was invited to revisit the work of Steina and Woody Vasulka, which led to the video work *#67*. In this presentation, Joost will give some background to his reading of *Reminiscence* and *Telc* by The Vasulka’s and explain his approach to reperforming these works in the form of a tribute.

Josephine Bosma (Critic & Theorist), *‘The World in 24 Hours’ Revisited*
The preservation of a work of art can be seen as a form of keeping it alive. The notion of aliveness has been played with quite literally by trying to re-enact, or interpret, a complex work from 1982: *The World in 24 Hours* by Robert Adrian. The work was an online and offline event that happened over 13 cities across the world during 24 hours involving live performance, fax art, radio, Slow Scan TV, telex, and a global computer network. This presentation discusses the issues and surprises that came to light while researching the original work and looking for possible strategies for re-enactment.

Serena Cangiano (Researcher & Interaction Designer, University of Applied Sciences and Arts of Italian Switzerland - SUPSI), *Re-programmed Art: An Open Platform*
The 1961 exhibition *Programmed Art* featured, amongst others, the Italian collective Gruppo T who pioneered the introduction of technology and an algorithmic approach to the process of artistic production. In 2014-15 the project Re-programmed Art: An Open Manifesto aimed at involving a group of digital artists in the process of reprogramming the works presented 50 years earlier. During a one-week hacking session, artists

were asked to expand the works through the implementation of interactive behaviours designed through open source hardware and software technologies. In addition, Re-Programmed is also a platform/project that involves artists, designers, curators, art historians, and cultural institutions in the discourse around the re-enactment of pioneering experiences in interactive art history through contemporary open practices and approaches.

Fabian van Sluijs (Creative Coding Utrecht - CCU & FIBER), *ReCoding as an Educational Tool and Preservation Strategy*
The ReCode Project is an active (online) archive of computer art initiated by Matthew Epler. It’s a community-driven effort to preserve computer art by translating it into a modern programming language. In 2018 CCU aims to contribute to the archive by adding the work of Dutch media artists as a source for new translations. This talk reflects on the importance and limits of the goals of The ReCode project: to bring media art back into circulation, and to offer a learning resource for contemporary practitioners.

Q&A

18:30 End of Day

Day 2, Friday, March 23

10:00: Registration & Coffee at LIMA, Amsterdam

10:30: Welcome and Introduction by **Gaby Wijers** (Director, LIMA), *Acting on Change | Taking Control*

- **10:35 PART I: Sustainable Storage of Digital Art**
The constant development and flux of technologies presents a challenge for those charged with the responsibility of ensuring future presentations of digital artworks. Currently we are at a turning point where case study-based research is moving towards the implementation of workflows for maintenance procedures and storage for computer-based artworks. In this session institutional best practices and strategies are presented to give insight into the state of the art of developing and updating digital repositories, collection information systems, and capturing the mutability inherent to the life cycle of such works. How to act on change? How to take control of future presentations of these artworks?
Moderated by Marcel Ras (Program Manager, Digital Preservation, Dutch Digital Heritage Network - NDE)

Patricia Falcão (Time-based Media Conservator, Tate), *Digital Archival Storage: The View from the Conservation Studio* Time-based media conservation is one fairly small, busy department in a large organisation with hundreds of staff, dozens of burning priorities, and many limited budgets. This presentation will share the Tate's experience of starting from a small, cheap test project to help them understand the processes involved in the preservation of their files. This case was an excellent base from which to help the Tate build the internal and external networks needed to support their work and help them decide on the storage system and tools they wanted as part of their infrastructure. The experience gleaned here has been invaluable for defining priorities and advocating for better funding, resources, and staff training.

Yves Bernard (Interactive Media Art Laboratory - iMAL),

The ResurrectionLab Project In 2014, iMAL started to think about how it could preserve its artistic CD-ROM collections composed of software artworks from the 90s. In 2015, as a first public activity to raise the awareness of born-digital cultural heritage preservation, iMAL organised the exhibition *Welcome to the Future!* presenting close to one hundred historical CD-ROMs and floppies. In 2017, iMAL saw the initiation of its ResurrectionLab R&D project in collaboration with Packed.be, University of Freiburg (bwFLA), and Rhizome, to develop a prototype of a collection management system for software artworks with emulation built-in as part of its core design. This presentation maps this trajectory and shares insights into sustainable storage for digital art gleaned from the ResurrectionLab project.

Morgane Stricot (Senior Media and Digital Art Conservator, ZKM | Center for Art and Media), *ZKM – Strength in Numbers* Currently, the biggest challenge of preserving digital art remains dependency on third-party software and software-hardware interdependencies. The planned obsolescence of the 90s is nothing compared to what we will face in the near future with recent products like smartphones creating an even higher hardware-software dependency by preventing backward compatibility or downgrading. What can we do in the face of such technological control? The answer: crowdsourcing, which can take many forms from buying an Amiga on eBay for spares and asking the internet community for a cracked version of MAX MSP 3.5 to seeking public assistance for API hacking or calling pirates into the team. ZKM uses crowdsourcing as a tactic, aligning with its techniques and methods for digital art preservation that

focus on experimentation, research, hands-on procedures and tinkering to keep its collection alive.

Wiel Seuskens (Technical Manager, LIMA), *Support and Services for Preserving Online Artworks*

LIMA is currently expanding its digital repository with services to host and preserve online artworks. Museums, distributors and collectors are increasingly purchasing these artworks but don't necessarily have the knowledge to maintain them. Artists alike don't necessarily know how to care for these works, or want to be tasked with looking after them for years and years. On the basis of case studies and technical research, LIMA has implemented website hosting and storage on virtual servers, with ingest, emulation and documentation protocols that are currently under construction. This presentation will elaborate on this research and the new services LIMA has developed to support artists, museums, distributors and collectors.

Jim Wraith (Researcher, LIMA),

What's After WatsNext?

Seven months ago LIMA started an ongoing research project into the present state of the art in collection information systems. Using a questionnaire and follow-up conversations, LIMA has engaged in focused discussion with institutions working with digital preservation to gain insight into present approaches to the storage and management of digital art collections, with specific emphasis on net art and complex digital artworks. It is hoped that by investigating the ways in which institutions handle the inherent mutability of such works, that a truly dynamic archive can be constructed to best provide for their storage and preservation. This presentation shares the approach, results and ongoing conversation of this work.

Panel discussion

12:30 LUNCH

• 13:30 PART II: How to Take Control – Best Practices

Please go to the session you selected while registering for the symposium.

Option A) How to Take Control – Best Practices

Today artists, museums and collectors can easily share their digital artworks, but maintaining their stability, securing transfer, or getting fairly compensated is not easily done. How to own, archive and take control of digital artworks and their future presentations? In this panel a diversity of artists and researchers will share their experiences trying to answer such complex questions. From bitcoin blockchain and registering

original works, to ontologies for securing future presentations, and free and open licenses to control intellectual property, a variety of options and perspectives will be presented. Each contributor offers a 15-minute talk, followed by a session discussion open to audience participation.

Moderated by Geert Lovink (Founding Director, Institute of Network Cultures - INC, Amsterdam University of Applied Sciences)

Christine Sauter (PERICLES), *Out of the Woods: Model-Driven Preservation*

The PERICLES model-driven preservation approach provides a set of notions that are not easily reconciled with current archival practices and reflections, in particular with respect to the conservation of intellectual property rights-sensitive digital objects such as artworks. To understand the opportunities this approach offers with respect to meeting the obvious challenges of long-term digital preservation in the next 50 years, one needs to perhaps step out of the woods and look at the bigger picture. Does dealing with the urgent threats to our collections keep us tied to established approaches and mindsets that might prove inapt for what the future holds?

Aymeric Mansoux (Artist), *Ya blew it...*

How Creative Commons and Free Culture Have Tamed Art and Cultural Production Engaged with the Critique of Intellectual Property

The road to hell is paved with good intentions. In this short presentation, Aymeric Mansoux discusses how Creative Commons and free culture have undone, tamed, and in some cases, accidentally ruined the engagement of artists and institutions in the debates surrounding intellectual property laws, and more specifically copyright reform, by moving from a model where licensing was essentially a speech act and often a critique of copyright, to a model where licensing has become a protocol for a friction-free interfacing with existing intellectual property laws.

Harm van den Dorpel (Artist), *Tokenisation*

When the supposed contingent “essence” of a (digital) work of art can be located somewhere in between a stored catalogued file, exhibition of the file, and documentation of the exhibited file, it becomes tempting to use blockchain technology to fingerprint the work to define its territory. In this presentation Harm will discuss ideas about digital ontology in relation to his online gallery left gallery, and his recent non-fungible token sale.

Constant Dullaart (Artist), *Developing Tools to Enable the Hand Over*

Which systems and methods help an artist safekeep the contextual integrity of their artworks? Why do we need a non-commercial web host? Why does art need to be on the blockchain, or documented in a systematic fashion? Does it mediate artistic intention to regard legacy, and how can these tools and methods become part of the authorship or artwork? A contract only helps if there is a consequence for disregarding it, and how does one track provenance of a work if it is accessible to everyone?

Session discussion with open audience conversation

Option B) How to Take Control in Institutional Collections - Best Practices

Digital artworks form a separate group in museum collections. Most museums and other institutions do not yet have much experience in dealing with these kinds of artworks. What are the guidelines and best practices developed for acquiring, managing, documenting and preserving this vulnerable digital part of contemporary heritage? How can we keep digital-born artworks accessible in the future? How can we act on such change? In this session a diversity of institutions share their experiences of trying to answer these complex questions. From acquisition and ingest protocols to museum practice, preservation protocol and their connections, a variety of perspectives will be presented. Each contributor offers a 20-minute talk, followed by a session discussion open to audience participation.

Moderated by Paulien 't Hoen (Coordinator, SBMK)

Sylvia van Schaik (Curator Art Collections, Cultural Heritage Agency of the Netherlands, Ministry of OCW), *Installation Art on the Map!*

The project *Installation Art on the Map!* explores the questions: how can we improve the registration of installation artworks in our collection with the dual purpose of management preservation and accessibility; and, if you don't know what you have and what state it is in, how can it be lent out? On the basis of concrete workplace situations, an intake form for installation art, and additional guidelines with tips for reinstallation, registration, and depot management and maintenance was developed. This presentation takes the artwork *Panta Rhei* by Ricardo Flugistahler as a case study to share knowledge about the intake form and other guidelines used by the Agency.

Aurora Loerakker (Collection Manager, Van Abbemuseum), *'Ser Humano': The Challenge of Preserving a Multimedia Artwork*

Ser Humano is an installation artwork by artist Nástio Mosquito from 2015. Nástio Mosquito (born 1981, Angola, lives in Ghent) is a multimedia and performance artist who explores global and African politics. As a multimedia work made of a variety of diverse components including video projection, text and sculptural installation elements, as well as various equipment requirements, *Ser Humano* offers multiple challenges to its preservation. This presentation explores the challenges and best practices of preserving such a work.

Arthur van Mourik (Collection Manager Modern and Contemporary Art, Centraal Museum Utrecht), *Collecting and Preserving Digital Artworks in the Centraal Museum*

Collecting and preserving digital artworks requires a specific approach in registration, documentation and conservation. When a digital artwork is purchased, contracts and installation instructions are the primary tools used to install and preserve the work. Knowledge, time management, working methods and guidelines are essential, just as clear communication with participants, employees, artists, and gallery owners. Procedures can be variable and digital art requires reconsideration of values, authenticity of files, and re-installment. This presentation focuses on these aspects through exploring the working methods applied in the Centraal Museum.

Mila van der Weide (Assistant Documentation and Conservation, LIMA), *Preservation and Management of Born-Digital Art: A Collaborative Concern*

LIMA is the centre of knowledge for the preservation of media art in the Netherlands. The media artworks preserved vary from video works on magnetic tape to more contemporary works that function in virtual environments. LIMA supports artists and collections in the care of their work and preserves the artworks of a wide range of collections (such as museums, private collectors, artists, and other institutions). Museums and other collections in the Netherlands follow a cooperative approach in the long-term preservation of media artworks. Based on case studies, delivery specifications, intake guidelines, and quality control procedures for the (pre-)ingest process, archival storage, data management and other details of LIMA's preservation workflow will be discussed.

Session discussion with open audience conversation

16:00 ROUNDING UP

Summary of best practices and reflection on symposium. Drinks

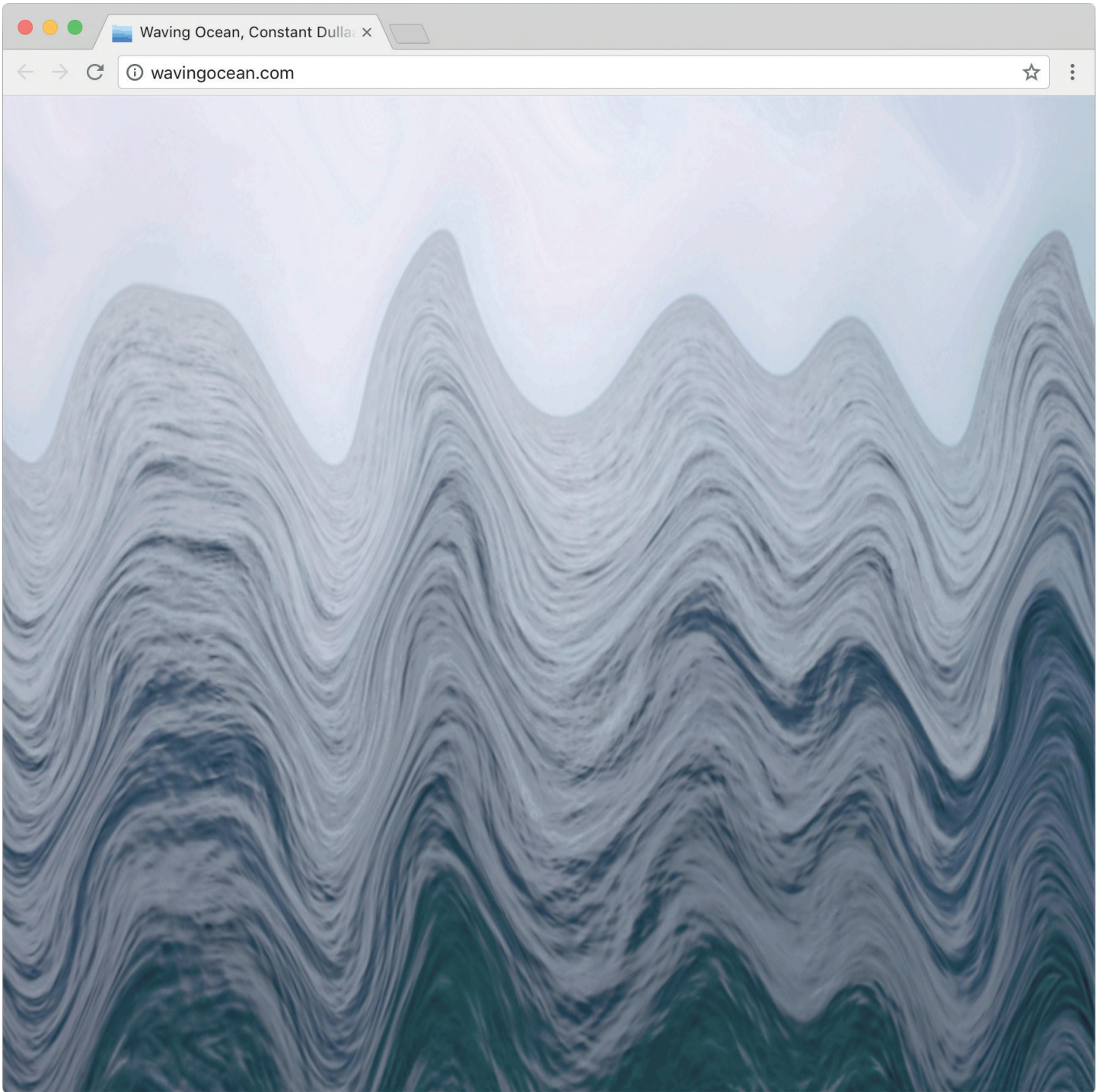
Transformation Digital Art 2018 | Acting on Change International symposium on the preservation of software-based art. March 22 & 23, 2018

The symposium is held at LIMA, Arie Biemondstraat 111, 1054 PD, Amsterdam, The Netherlands. www.li-ma.nl, info@li-ma.nl +31 (0)20 389 20 30

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Constant Dullaart, *Waving Ocean*, 2010