Title: *Future Proofing Your Art: Digital Preservation for Emerging Artists*

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Credits: Credits and citations embedded throughout the slides of the module.

Running Time: 61 mins

Technical Information: Recording and documentation stored in UCLA Box folder (.mp4 & PDF format). Link available upon request.

Intended Audience: Early-career artists; art students in undergraduate BFA programs

Course Level: Beginners, no knowledge of digital preservation strategies assumed.

Course Description: Your ability to organize and preserve your artwork directly impacts your ability to sustain and grow your practice. Regardless of your medium, your art has a digital footprint and maintaining a structured digital archive ensures your work remains accessible into the future. This workshop equips emerging artists with essential strategies for naming, storing, backing up, and documenting their files using digital preservation best practices. By the end, you'll have the tools to protect your work, stay organized, and confidently manage your digital portfolio.

Learning Objectives:

By the end of this instructional module, students will be able to:

1. Recognize and mitigate risks to digital files by identifying common threats like file obsolescence, hardware failure, and poor documentation, and implementing proactive preservation strategies.
2. Organize their digital portfolio by using consistent file naming, sustainable formats, and structured metadata to ensure easy retrieval and long-term accessibility.
3. Apply effective backup strategies by evaluating current storage habits and implementing the 3-2-1 backup rule to safeguard artwork for the future.

Additional Information: Tables and templates from the slides are included in this document.

Digital Art CSV:

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Title,Date Created,Medium(s),Dimensions (HxWxD),Edition (if applicable),Location (Where work was created),"Artwork Description (Concept, theme, medium)","Classification (e.g., Digital Art, Sculpture, Video, etc.)",Installation Notes (any specific installation requirements),"Software Used (for digital works, e.g., Photoshop, Blender, etc.)","Hardware Required (e.g., monitors, projectors, etc.)","File Format(s) (e.g., .jpg, .mp4, .obj)",Resolution/Aspect Ratio,"Audio/Visual Specifications (if applicable: sound, video channels, resolution, etc.)","Collaborators/Assistants (Names, Roles)",Exhibition Title/Venue/Location,Dates of Display,Additional Notes,"Components Included (e.g., software, hardware, sculptures)","Acquisition Requirements (specifications for display, additional components required)",Preservation Instructions (Any preservation steps or risks),"Copyright Status (Original work, under license, etc.)","Display Setup (e.g., wall color, lighting, display equipment)",Installation Notes (step-by-step instructions for setup),"Environment Preferences (e.g., light levels, acoustic preferences)",File Size,"Source Code/Source Material (e.g., all relevant project files, software dependencies)","README/Documentation"
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Traditional Art CSV:

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Title,Artist Name,Date Created,Medium/Materials,Dimensions (HxWxD),"Classification (e.g., Painting, Sculpture, Photography)","Description (Concept, Theme, Style)",Subject Matter,Location (Current/Studio/Exhibition),Provenance (Ownership History),Exhibition History (Title/Venue/Dates),Condition & Conservation Notes,Copyright & Usage Rights,Display & Installation
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Notes,Preservation Instructions,Production Narrative,Project
Narrative,Additional Notes
```

Instructions for creating spreadsheets from the template CSVs Above:

1. Copy the text above and paste it into a plain text editor (TextEditor or Notepad)
2. Go to "Format" in the menu bar and select "Make Plain Text" (if it's not already plain text).

Save the file as .csv:

- Click File > Save As
- In the "Save As" field, name your file with .csv at the end (e.g., artwork_metadata.csv).
- Uncheck "If no extension is provided, use .txt".
- Click Save.

Now, upload this CSV file into Google Sheets or Excel and track your metadata!

Comparative Longevity of File Formats Table:

FUTURE PROOFING YOUR ART: DIGITAL PRESERVATION FOR EMERGING ARTISTS

COMPARATIVE LONGEVITY OF FORMATS AS OF 2025

FORMAT	SHORT-TERM	MEDIUM-TERM	LONG-TERM	INDEFINITE FUTURE
TEXT FILE	Proprietary formats with DRM	PDF, DOCX with complex features	Plain text (TXT), Markdown, HTML, JSON, XML	Nothing
WEB APPLICATION	Flash (now obsolete), Silverlight	Single-page apps with complex dependencies	Progressive Web Apps, JAMstack sites with static generation	Nothing
DATABASE	Proprietary formats, Access	MongoDB, SQLite	PostgreSQL, MySQL, JSON/ BSON	Nothing
SERVER SCRIPT	Older .NET Framework, deprecated languages	Ruby, PHP	JavaScript (Node.js), Python, Go, Rust	Nothing
SPREADSHEET	XLS (legacy Excel)	XLSX (with macros)	CSV, TSV, XLSX (without macros)	Nothing
VECTOR IMAGE	AI (Illustrator), closed-source formats	PDF with embedded fonts	SVG, EPS	Nothing
RASTER IMAGE	PSD (Photoshop), WebP (with lossy compression)	JPEG, PNG	TIFF, PNG (lossless), JPEG 2000, AVIF	Nothing
AUDIO FILE	Copy-protected formats, lossy, low bitrate formats	MP3, AAC	FLAC, WAV (PCM), Opus	Nothing
VIDEO FILE	Copy-protected streaming formats	H.264/AVC, VP9	AV1, H.265/HEVC, ProRes, Motion JPEG 2000	Nothing
3D/VR CONTENT	Proprietary game engine assets	glTF with custom extensions	glTF (basic version), USDZ, X3D	Nothing

Adapted from Table 13.1, "Comparative Longevity of Various Formats as of 2013" from *Re-collection: Art, New Media, and Social Memory* by Richard Rinehart & Jon Ippolito, 2014.