

Vector eival

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No Fo nd

Alicia Guo Daze Jefferies Alex Raja Ven

Ruby J Thelot Nara Wrigglesworth

Curated by [Dallas Fellini](#)

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the files on your computer are already beginning to disappear

We might imagine a dusty archive filled with papers so fragile they begin to disintegrate when touched by human hands. The ragged edge of a manuscript eventually disappears itself, a consequence of years of touch and subtle shifts in light, temperature, and humidity. Paper is conceptualized as the image of the *ephemeral*, a descriptive version of the noun encapsulating pamphlets, postcards, newspapers, correspondence, and other paper-based printed matter. The etymology of *ephemeral* casts the paper archive as so fragile it must be understood as always already decaying.

The computer, however, is sleek and hard. It is an object for the future. We might imagine its cold surface and the files it preserves stagnantly outliving us, carrying its contents into eternity. Our imaginations deceive us here: I can book a research appointment at the City of Toronto Archives tomorrow and run my hands over printed ephemera from 50, 100, or even 200 years ago. But there are files on my work computer from 2008 that I am no longer able to open—they are lost to me even within my own lifetime.

Are we currently living in a digital dark age? As more documents of everyday life find their primary repositories within the digital, the impermanent nature of digital artifacts becomes clear. A website is not an archive, and illustratively the online realm we inhabit is

populated with broken hyperlinks, dead websites, and bit-rot, this impermanence exacerbated by hardware with finite memory, privately-owned social media platforms, and technology ceaselessly hurtling towards obsolescence. These circumstances bring into focus a digitally decayed future with potential to induce anxiety: even the files saved on your computer have already begun to microscopically degrade. In the face of this, what would it mean to begin to come to terms with the broken archival promises of digital media, rather than chase an imagined space of digital immortality? How might we become reverent to the ecstatic euphoria of forgetting, in celebration of the deleted, the unarchived, and the unfound?

in defense of a world that doesn't remember

For a brief moment in time in July and August of 2025, the exhibition space at InterAccess is animated by five artists who consider ephemerality as an inherent characteristic of the digital. *404_not_found*, Vector Festival's 2025 flagship exhibition, considers notions of permanence associated with the web, featuring works from Alicia Guo, Daze Jefferies, Alex Raja Ven, Ruby J Thelot, and Nara Wrigglesworth. These artists reposition the anti-archival qualities of digital memory as generative, reframing decay as a distinct but equal counterpart to growth.

A stack of papers sits quietly in the centre of the gallery, printed with decontextualized excerpts from

strangers' lives. In his video installation *Untitled (Mnemophagy)* (2023), Ruby J Thelot reproduces a nearly-lost comment section from a now-deleted YouTube video by Taia777. The video became the touchstone of a digital community who used it as a repository for personal life updates, commented in the form of a "checkpoint." In 2021, the video was abruptly removed from the platform as a result of a digital copyright claim, and 25,000 "checkpoint" comments vanished with it. However the video—and its comment section—remains accessible today because of Rebane2001, an archivist who maintains a digital archive from her home, preserving over one million YouTube videos.

Untitled (Mnemophagy) reinterprets Taia777's original video, conjuring an alternative future where it was not saved from web rot. In this future/present, the video's animated vines overlapping blue and white sky slowly deteriorate into an unrecognizable ultramarine blur, bit-lost through repeated re-encodings between multiple file types. Decay becomes a generative force here. Thelot's voice overlaps these lost visuals, reciting Percy Shelly's *Ozymandias* and decaying alongside the video's graphics, an ode to the inevitability of loss and the tenuous quality of memory within both material and digital realms. Just as the video degrades as it progresses, Thelot's stack of papers depletes over the course of the exhibition, offered up to visitors as a takeaway.

Daze Jefferies similarly renders a digital world at the edge of disappearance. Her video work *dream*

zones hormones undertones fish bones (2023) recalls the early trans internet in Atlantic Canada, brought to life through a pulsating soundscape and speculative digital conversation between two trans women in Newfoundland and Nova Scotia. Dreamlike messages are typed into floating digital text boxes, bringing to life an intergenerational conversation inspired by several long-defunct trans websites, now only accessible through the Internet Archive. This work is invested in revisiting digital spaces of the late 1990s that forged life-affirming connections for trans women in isolated rural geographies, however, the essence of Jefferies' video is located precisely at the moments where this history becomes irretrievable. Dead websites and instances of digital decay allow for a poetic and speculative relationship with trans digital histories to emerge, gesturing towards the more-than-archival and an inherent connection between approaching marginalized histoires and coming to terms with loss. Jefferies asks: what openings might be created through digital decay?

Two beds of digital detritus flank the gallery space, bringing together cables, e-waste, and screens hosting digital collages and animated GIFs by Nara Wrigglesworth. Wrigglesworth's found object assemblage *Post-gif* (2024) takes up the GIF as a celebration of the poor moving image, and positions the mood board as a monument to an online era characterized by digital excess and the anti-archival. Here, online artifacts oscillate between appearance

and disappearance; a Google Maps Street View image fades in and out of transparency. Mood boards preserve images harvested from the web, but detach them from their original context, embodying a tension between the archive and the anti-archive. The GIF casts itself in an infinite loop, meant to last forever. Ironically, it is now designated an outdated format, phased out of public and corporate online realms and primarily surfacing in alternative online spaces. Its obsolescence is repurposed and honored here, surfacing in a graveyard of other obsolete materials to confront the perceived immortality of the internet.

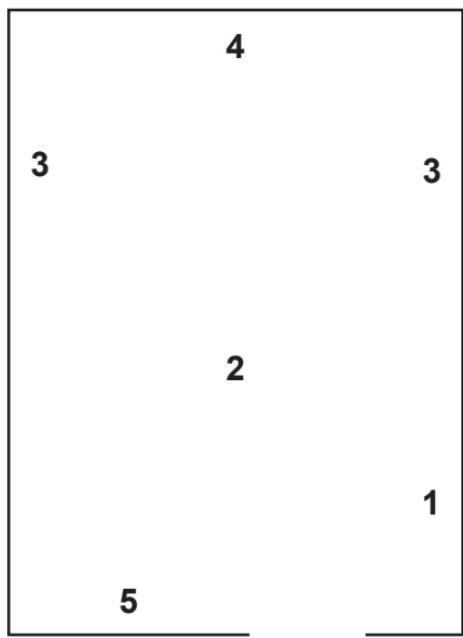
A garden of gradually transforming poems manifests in Alicia Guo's interactive web installation *living &growing &decaying* (2025), each poem seeded by a user and governed by a grammar predetermined by Guo. The website imbues online text with the capacity to independently grow as time passes, and eventually decay and die. Over the course of a few days, a poem expands and mutates, sprouting new verses until digital foliage creeps over the body of the transformed text, warping and excising individual words. Visitors are able to interact with past poems, and witness their transformation and decomposition over time, or make use of the seeds of past entries to plant a new poem. The resulting index positions itself against stagnancy, cataloguing poems that are never the same at any two given points in time. A receipt printer allows visitors to print out a poem and take it home with them, offering a materiality and apparent permanence that is directly

countered in the digital: whenever a poem is printed and brought into the physical world, it subsequently disappears from the digital world of its nascence.

These works are encompassed by Alex Raja Ven's generative sound installation *dorothy.mp3* (2025), wherein a ghostly and time-stretched rendering of *The Wizard of Oz*'s "Over the Rainbow" slowly deteriorates each day over the course of seven hours. Raja Ven repositions a song associated with queer longing and intra-community knowledge to locate agency in the decayed. Built using SuperCollider, the sound work incrementally transforms Judy Garland's voice into an atonal siren, culminating in the complete overwriting of the song at the end of each day's gallery hours. Responding to a moment of censorship and digital erasure of trans people, *dorothy.mp3* embraces a poetics of queer imagining, framing refusal and impermanence as strategies of survival.

Under the haunting broadcast of a self-erasing song, the fantasy of digital permanence is punctured and overtaken by a reorientation towards the ephemeral and the transformed. Here, lost or decayed digital artifacts are recast as opportunities for poetic intervention against an archival impulse to recall and restore. The resulting space holds close the grammars of the ephemeral, the anti-archival, and the unfound, giving rise to an encounter already beginning to disappear.

– Dallas Fellini



About InterAccess

Founded in 1983, InterAccess is a non-profit gallery, educational facility, production studio, festival, and registered charity dedicated to emerging practices in art and technology. Our programs support art forms that integrate technology, fostering and supporting the full cycle of art and artistic practice through education, production, and exhibition. InterAccess is regarded as a preeminent Canadian arts and technology centre.



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About Vector Festival

Vector Festival is an experimental media arts festival dedicated to showcasing digital games and creative media practices. Presenting works across a dynamic range of exhibitions, screenings, performances, lectures, and workshops, Vector acts as a critical bridge between emergent digital platforms and new media art practice. The festival is proud to be a participatory and community-oriented initiative organized by InterAccess in Toronto, Ontario.