SHERRY MILLER HOCKING: My academic background was all about teaching, and once I got all of the proper credentials, I decided I hated teaching. So that didn't work out. I had known Ralph from my undergraduate days when he taught at a school I was attending. He had moved to Binghamton to start what was first known as the Student Experiments in Television on the Binghamton University campus, and which eventually migrated off campus and mutated into the Community Center for Television Production, then ultimately the Experimental TV Center. I was looking for a job and it came down to me serendipitously falling into it, which I think is not unusual especially in the early video. … People came to if from all kinds of fields and areas of concern. Aside from the administrative responsibilities that I had, my initial involvement at the Center was about workshops and teaching various aspects of video. In the early days of the Center we, like a lot of other media centers around, did a lot of instructional work both at the Center and at schools. We offered a whole program of workshops, ranging from how to run your Portapak to editing, when the equipment eventually permitted. So that's really what my interests initially was. Along side that we had what I guess today you'd call media literacy.

Ralph had initiated an artist in residence program, which was a component of the Center right from the beginning. It was always part of the thinking. Originally the idea was to bring artists, who at that point (this was 1971-2) were mostly coming to video from another field, because essentially video didn't exist. There were some who came to video art or independent media art from a television production community, but I think people mostly came to it from other forms, like Ralph who was a potter, sculptor, and photographer. So we invited artists to come work and the equipment set, as with everything else about the TV Center, evolved. … We began with a simple SEG Keyer, and bought things that were commercially available. There was very little available in terms of what you could call image processing, or anything that would allow you to combine imagery or manipulate the images. Another aspect of the equipment set was that most of the equipment was extremely expensive. Its interesting, to take a look at the cost of a CV Portapak in 2005 dollars it is extremely expensive and equipment today is cheap compared to what it was then. Even the tool sets we could get our hands on were

economically expensive. The tool set for the TV production end of things was completely beyond any independent media workers means. I think a lot of the collectives and groups formed as an economic strategy to be able to procure equipment, there was this shared concept. I was really interested in the artists who were coming in. I was always interested in the arts. My parents brought us up that way. There was always art in our house; we were always going to see things. In high school, I fancied myself a hippie bohemian. This was '65. I was in Buffalo, which had an active arts community and a fantastic independent screening program. The Creative Associates was wonderful and there was a lot of music going on. So I had that background and I was interested in contemporary art. I didn't have any academic training; I took a lot of art courses but never majored in it. My father wanted me to get a job and didn't figure art was going to be job potential. I was really interested in what Ralph was trying to put together with the artists and the systems. As far as designing systems, I don't think that I had much of a role to play in that—aside from possible discussions about what kinds of things artists might be interested in doing. Part of the design philosophy of the Center was that we always felt that we were in partnership with the artists working here. We always encouraged people to give us ideas about what it was they would like to do. That was particularly crucial in the early days because the tool set was so limited. People had such amazing ideas about what they wanted to do, and almost none of the commercial tools could get you to those places. That was the impulse, and why Ralph was so interested in putting this toolset together. I think the role that I played in that whole design issue was … like shepherding the process, keeping people within the guidelines of the grant proposal that we had written, and making sure that we could come up with something that would satisfy the funding people. And with the documentation of the equipment. Its interesting now to get involved with scanning some of the original documents of some of the earliest tools because, even though its so spotty and uneven, there is stuff there. I don't know why but that was something that was almost intuitive with me. I knew that was something we would need to do. Some of it is practical, like repair and maintenance issues. But there were other issues that I was more interested in, which have to do with thought process and how people think about tools, approach tools. So I think that is really more the role. I'm not a tool designer, and I'm not an artist either—I have another role to

play. I'm not saying that out of false modesty. I don't think that the Center would be here if someone didn't play that role, so I'm not belittling the administrative role that I play at all. But I honestly don't look at myself as an artist. I really don't, and I never have. But I look at myself as an appreciator of the arts and a recognizer. I know its art when I see it, you know what I mean, but I can't make it.

TENNANT: Would you consider yourself a teacher?

MILLER HOCKING: I think in some respects yes. One of the things I really like to do, as far as the administrative stuff is concerned, is work with the various grants that we are giving now, the sponsorship program where we try to raise funds for specific artist projects. That is interesting to me because I like to work with the artists, to figure out ways of getting those projects into a language and a form that can stand in front of foundation panels and granting panels, and that has some chance of succeeding.

MONA JIMENEZ: What about your work, like shooting for certain artists' works and putting together exhibitions, and those? I just want to remind you of a couple things. And also the texts that you wrote about signal, switching, sequencing, scan? All of that stuff is incredible—that you had that clarity to observe what was happening and you put it down in a way for others to understand what that whole concept was, of the signal as medium. What was happening when one took the signal and thought about it broadly, in terms of manipulation of the signal and of the image, and the relationship between the signal and the image. … I use the signals piece in my video preservation lab, because it helps them understand how images are produced—it breaks it down. It is really excellent. So I would love to hear you talk about those things, for which you didn't give yourself credit.

MILLER HOCKING: I think with the documents we wrote, part of that comes from the teaching impulse. We all do this to some extent. The way I approach something to understand it is that I have to start at the beginning, otherwise I don't get it. In video during the 70s, the only way I could understand what the heck was going on was to start on that level and explain it to myself. I think that was what I was trying to do, explain it

to myself. It was then obvious that it would be useful for people coming into the Center, as a resource or reference manual. There were no books to speak of. "Spaghetti City Video Manual", and Ken Marsh's book—some things, but not a whole lot. So you had to invent those reference materials along with everything else you were inventing. You had to because there wasn't anything you could rely on. There was no history or material that was backing you up. Part of it too was that whole notion, which is dated now, but the formalist notion of arts. One of the things that the artists who worked early on at the Center were really all about was exploring the inherent properties of the medium, which is a very formalist idea from an aesthetic, art theory point of view. So all of the texts we put together fed into that approach to the work and to the art form. It was useful for me as an exercise. I know that without it I would never understand a tenth of what I finally fought my way through with it. But you'd talk to people like Woody or Steina Vasulka, and I didn't understand half of what they were saying because this was their language, and they were approaching it from that point of view too. I felt like there was an area that artists were working in, and I didn't get it. And this was my way of getting it. The by-product of these texts, I'm glad that other people found them useful.

PAMELA SUSAN HAWKINS: So can you address that work that you did with Nam June if it's not inappropriate to say his name? (laugh)

MILLER HOCKING It was shooting raw footage. It's nothing more than that. It's a contribution to some art, but I think that the real art is in the conception. As far as Nam June's work is concerned, it is the conception and the placement of it, and how it fits into this architectural space. Its not just about the tape. …. It was fun. I had a great time doing it. These were Buddha based pieces. He would ship Buddhas up to Owego, and the idea was for me to put them outside so they could live in our space outside for a period of time, and I would document them as they went through. I did a lot of winter work. We would put them on the porch and then just tape them in all kinds of ice and snowstorms. Then there was the summer version, and I would put them in the creek or we would take them out in the rowboat—things of that nature. All I was supplying, in addition to returning the Buddha, was this raw material. He would edit and to some extent process,

and then construct these sculptures basically. The video would just be a portion of that. It was really fun though.

HAWKINS: Was that a paying gig?

MILLER HOCKING: Yes it was. I think it was the only time I ever got paid to do anything like that. Then Nam June called us and told us that the market was saturated with Buddhas and he had to move on to something else. And that was the end of my job! [laughs]

JIMENEZ: There's still a lot of Buddahs at your house.

MILLER HOCKING: Yes. I still have the tapes too.

TENNANT: That actually brings me to the question of gift economy, and how that has maintained itself at the Center throughout the years.

MILLER HOCKING: One of the Squeaky Wheel [Squealer] issues … was an issue that reprinted a letter Ralph sent out, I believe in 1988, when we lost our NEA funding for the TV Center. Ralph was going to close the place down. Squeaky Wheel was gracious and wonderful, helping us get the word out to the community about the struggles we were having to keep this place open. John Giancola, who at one point worked at NYSCA as the director of their Media program, was really eloquent about the Gift economy and how the role of funding sources and foundations in an enlightened culture. … Another interesting article that was written by Jon Burris that also talks about the roles of funding in a society and a culture. Ralph started this place … because he wanted to do something for artists; he wanted to offer artists have a place to make work. It's a simple idea and in 2005, its still the idea. We're kind of like the dinosaur in the video community because we haven't really changed that much. The tool set and some things are different, but there is an awful lot that has stayed the same. Ralph has said, right from the beginning, that if it cant be supported by this gift economy, he will shut it down. It will cease to exist.

Because it crosses purposes, from his point of view, to have to go out and sell a product or come up with some other scheme that earns you enough income to survive. That said, the TV Center as a model is completely ridiculous, I think is a good word. (laugh) It's not a model for anything. You couldn't duplicate it—it's not sustainable in the contemporary world at all. One of the ways we managed to do this is because we are all amateurs in the sense that we love what we do. … You see something that needs to be done and you do it. You don't get paid 99 percent of the time … But it's how we all do things. Its how we engage with the world, and I think that the TV Center is another aspect of that. But Ralph is very serious. If we can't keep it going based on the moneys that are graciously extended by our funders, then it wont exist anymore. And it is probably better if it doesn't. I agree with him to a large extent. There are too many compromises that you have to make.

It's interesting, from a historical point of view, to look back at the funding cycles: when there's lots of more out in the community and then there's no money, it all dries up and organizations die. One of the things that happened in New York state in the early 80s, when one of the many funding crises appeared, was that there was a lot of pressure put on media organizations to boost their earned income. Portable Channel in Rochester is a classic example. It ran a wonderful media program: lively, active, lots of people, user based. But because of this pressure to earn money, they devised a rather complicated model for themselves as an organization that depended on their ability to earn income by basically shooting contract production work. For a variety of reasons it failed and the organization folded. I think a lot of it came about because of the pressure. Organizations like ours, which is an artist run and artist instituted organization, we're not business people. We don't have an interest in business. The only other option then is to hire a business manager or a development person. This is a fine model and works for some institutions or organizations, but it wouldn't work for this one. I think artist run organizations have a life span, and that's not a bad thing either. Fields move on, people move on, things change. When it's no longer useful, I think it's time to fold it and go on with something else. That's something we're always thinking about with the Center. Is it over? Is it still useful? Is it still interesting to people? Are people still wanting it? Do they

still use it? When those answers become more no than yes, then that will be the end of it. And that's fine.

HAWKINS: There's another idea that seems to be present which is, and this might sound negative, to become obsolete. To move towards enough training of people to carry systemic ideas of tool structures into their own communities and build places where that can blossom. Maybe obsolescence is the wrong term, maybe it is seeding.

MILLER HOCKING: I think that's a good point. I don't think we necessarily set out to do that but that's an outgrowth, a natural evolution of what has happened here. I think there are places and people who have used some of the ideas from here and transported them, changed them to fit with their own needs and interests in their own communities. I think it also works the other way too. I feel, Pam, that you and the Center have that kind of relationship. Perhaps the Center has influenced you and your work and how you engage institutions. But you have also had an influence and an effect on the Center and what it offers. The International Summer Workshop is yours. We wouldn't have done that if it hadn't been for you. To me that's one of the interesting things about an organization, whether it's the TV Center or the Institute for Electronic Art or the Evolutionary Girls Club. I think, to be vital and interesting, that kind of exchange has to occur—it has to be a two way street. … I think the Center, in some odd way, has informally had an affect on a lot of places. I don't think its anything you could ever document or put your finger on. We've also been influenced by a huge number of people. … I would like to get a list of everybody that has worked here. I think that would be pretty interesting because everybody who has been here has had an effect on this place. What we do, how we think about things, and how those tools were thought about, designed, and built. That's what is interesting to me, conceptually, about doing something like this, it's working with people. ... To me, that's the reason that I'm still interested in this at all.

TENNANT: Can we talk about the efforts to document for the Video History Project and also the collective work that's happening right now the demonstrate tools at the Center?

How does one go about preserving a machine? Or how does one document that machine culture?

JIMENEZ: This conversation reminds me of how Sherry and I started to work on the website and Video History Project. All I can remember was camping out in a cabin at Treman [State Park, Ithaca] and coming over here. We'd have these brainstorming sessions and I'd go back to my cabin, and somehow out of that came the seeds for the Video History Project. The whole issue of documenting machines goes back to this desire to collect and make available documentation of the larger community, which includes machines, people in groups, texts and photographs. One of the themes, building on what Pam was talking about, was trying to engage makers who are working now with the "pioneers" from the past, to see a little bit of that continuum between the older tools and the newer tools. I think that for me, it was tied up with all of the hype that was happening about the information super highway. How suddenly long distance communication was a new thing that artists had never done before, and we'd never connected with each other over distances, never used cable. It's this whole mythology about the information super highway and hype around the web, who was going to be connected, and what it was going to mean for our lives. At the same time particularly in the artistic community we saw a lot of concepts being extended that if not connected, were at least similar to earlier experiments. These aren't really as new as you might think at this time, and in fact some of the ways of working are more primitive. For instance, animated GIFs on the web—we were doing much more complex animations with Delux Paint and the Amega. So that was a little annoying, and it drove me a little. But I also love machines. I love the Center and I love Sherry and Ralph. But I think the issue of how we document and preserve the entire context of our history was what was driving us to do things like the IMAP [Independent Media Arts Preservation] cataloging template. Or trying to endure MARC cataloging in order to establish credibility with funders, that we knew something about cataloging and we knew we had to have a list before we could get funding. It was this whole effort to try to develop and disseminate ways of capturing history, saving tapes and saving works. Sherry had been collecting all of this documentation so that wasn't hard because she has a personality that organizes and keeps things in good shape. She has a

library part of her, which makes it easy for us. The documentation is very well organized, not like going into a box and not knowing what is in it. … So there was already this basis with Sherry's organization and the Center's resources, as well as Sherry and Ralph's personal collection.

… Sherry and I were interested in the whole environment, the context and the various things that came out of it, which includes machines. One day I think we were wondering what would be the most fun? (laugh) How can we get money to do things that are fun, as opposed to tedious? We said the most fun would be to do oral histories with toolmakers, and to work with the tools. That was a personal thing … I said why don't I try to get a residency at the Daniel Langlois Foundation for Art, Science and Technology, and I can come up with a cataloging template for machines that we can then use at the Center? Sherry had already been making these databases and documenting the tools in that way as well, so by the time I got the residency and went, Sherry had half of her machines already cataloged. A template wasn't really needed, but as a result of that opportunity I had learned more about certain machines that could compliment what Sherry was doing. … We can make a lot of lists, and we can have catalogs, and we can collect a lot of documentation, but the most important part of the tools is the work that artists made. It's the most accessible way that we can engage people with the tools, unless they just love machines and I don't think a great majority of the country does to the extent that we do. We really need to engage people through the images of the work, and then we can engage them in the tools. We also have to maintain the operation of the tool in order to see the interaction between the artist and the tool. These are a couple of ways that we have and continue to document the tools. One of the interesting questions about documenting these tools is: what is actually going to keep them alive, in terms of peoples experience of them, if we cant keep the machines alive? Of course we try to keep as much alive as we can. Often you can't tell which machine an artist used. You can't really say this is an example of the Sandin Image Processor, because it's an example of the Sandin image Processor with the Jones Buffer, the Jones Colorizer, this oscillator and that oscillator. This to me is a really interesting question around documentation of tools. The other things we can solve. I can tell you how many inputs or outputs it has, how many cables

you need, how many boxes there are. That stuff is all very easy, and what the cataloging template is all about. We can photograph them and imagine what people would like to see. But we need to have a way of keeping them alive in terms of the use, and the way that we do that is both through the operational tapes and through the artist work. It is going to be interesting when we go to the next phase with the Felix … is how we engage people with the tools before they start glazing over. You can have all of the documentation you want, but if no one is interested in it then you are in trouble. We are makers of history as we collect all of this documentation, and if it gets into an archive there is no question we are makers of history. But there has to be ways for people to engage with it and understand it. So it doesn't become, or remain, esoteric. (laughs)

HAWKINS: Your comment has to do with why I wanted to do the residency with students and young people. I have had so much experience with people in the field who come here for periods of time, and I value them as individuals, their work, how they communicated and what they saw as collaboration. The kinds of endeavors they engaged in are part of the grammar of these tools. If I was to say in a sentence what a Colorizer does, could I put it in the grammatical form that would clarify for you the flavor of what might that tool exude? That's a tough one. It's interesting, doing this reporting project too, seeking people in the field and hearing them say, "No it wasn't that Colorizer, it was this Colorizer." How subtlety different [the tools] are. What still comes back to me is this systemic elegance, this open ended architecture that has a fluidity. If I think of video and strip it down to the basic guts of the system and the signal flow, there is something so powerful about signal flow that has everything to do with who you guys are as people. It has to do with the people that I know who use the system elegantly. It has to do with why in the hell do I feel at home when I work in this building. Tools don't all carry that flavor. I mean there are machines that I sit in front of and battle with because I have to, and then there are machines that I want to touch. … They become part of me, an extension. I'm wondering if you could say something about this fluidity, or architecture, that seems pervasive in all the things you do.

MILLER HOCKING: That's an interesting concept and I think it goes back to the people that work here, and I don't mean just the employees. We are all largely interested in experimentation, in more possibilities rather than fewer possibilities. Being able to put point A into multiple places instead of just point B: slot A and tab B don't necessarily have to go together. That's part of the thinking about design that took place, and continues to take place with this system. It started out as an antithesis to a broadcast studio, and in the beginning, Ralph often talked about it from that point of view. In a broadcast situation, you've got a switcher and a set up specifically designed to go between two cameras—something along those lines. This system is set up so that you can do that if you want to, but you could also do ten thousand other things and nine thousand could potentially be a lot more interesting. That was always the idea, to give people as many toys and ways of patching machines to create new machines. There are other systems that approach this concept in different ways. The Sandin is an example that is very open-ended; it doesn't just invite, it insists that you participate in this construction level of equipment building.

About the documentation of the tools I also want to say that your role in this Pam, and yours too Carolyn, has been invaluable in terms of putting together the documents of these older tools functioning. I think that eventually these documents are going to be one of the only ways people will understand what those tools were—that, and the artists' works which were produced with them. Mona, when you were talking about the difficulty of looking at a work in order to specify which tool sets were used, Pam ran into it trying to get still images for the covers of the DVDs. In some ways its just not possible, because there were too many machines that were used all together and you cant pull it apart any more. It's an integral thing, and maybe that's good. Maybe that's the way it should be.

JIMENEZ: One question that we realized we wanted to ask or have someone, or numerous people, dialog about was the question of attributing their work to a certain tool (this is the work I made on the Paik Abe Synthesizer) versus attributing their work to the system or not even remembering what tools they used. How important was it to a certain artist to be able to associate their work with a particular instrument, as opposed to the

other way of working? Maybe artists work in both ways, and certain pieces are more important at points of their development with a particular tool.

One of the things about this period is computer automation; the computer is so available now and there are all of these presets, ways for us to enter into production with computers. Even with video, in terms of most people don't hook up microphones or white balance, whatever. It is very easy to produce images with the tools, but there's not the same sense that you actually need to spend time with them, as there has in the past. Because there are so many presets already, you open up a toolset like Photoshop or Aftereffects and there are so many presets that you don't actually have to figure out how this tool, in this case software, works. You have so many options available to you. The whole idea was building a relationship with the tool. Now there's not an expectation that you're going to enter into this dialog with the tool, you're going to build a fluidity with it over time, or that you're going to grow into the use of the tool through a greater understanding of its possibilities and limitations. A really strong impulse in the early days of video was how far is this machine supposed to go? What can it do that I cant find in a manual? What cant I do? How can I push up against that point where I cant get it to do what I want? I think that's a really valuable working strategy as an artist—to try to find out where the edges are of the tool, and what the tool can do. I don't know all the reasons but it just seems like now there's a sense that you can take a tool and just whip something out and that's fine and there's not this deeper exploration of [how its done]. I'm not saying that you always get bad work that way, but it's a real relationship over time that people who used these early tools, and the people that still come to the Center, can find which is very different.

MILLER HOCKING: One of the things that is happening now at the Center, which is interesting to me and I think Hank could speak about it, the younger people who are coming in now welcome the idea that even though there are digital tools and all of those kinds of software possibilities here, that can be interfered with by these older analog tools. In some ways, what brings people here is that you can bust out of this digital jail (laugh) and make it do different things again. There's an interplay that occurs between older analog devices and the new digital tools. That's what's really interesting, and I

think it's one of the reasons why there is still an interest. Some people come here because the analog tool base is not available anyplace else. You can't get your hands on a Dan Sandin machine easily. But I think another reason, and possibly a larger reason especially for younger people in new media, is that there are ways out of that digital circle, that it can be impinged on and broken into in a way that is interesting.

HAWKINS: Don't you think that comes back to real time? One of the reasons I feel at home here has to do with the intimacy I experience with these toolsets. It has to do with not using a slider bar to find one of a million colors, but dialing up a full range of tones to build that color. This system, the Center and how it works—even in its presentation funding and other funding that you are engaged in—feels very much about being present. You don't just let it happen, you have to be present. I mean you can dial up Aftereffects and walk away and not know what the hell you're going to get after its done rendering because you don't see it in time. It's just not the same thing. There is that intimacy in having an active engagement. Like tasting soup—you get to the place where you know its right because you can feel it. It's this sense that you're activating all of these places. It's not like a lot of the learning that generations in college now understand, or know how to play with. It has to do with matrix systems where you move and turn the right corner, and you get your pedestal—you get your special power. You don't do a lot of work; you just memorized the pattern. Here you may have some memorization of patching, but the pattern still reveals itself by your engagement and presence in the work. This is also about who you are and how this place works.

MILLER HOCKING: I think that's a good point. I think that Ralph, as a potter, has something to do with how it's about physicality and tactility. With the tool design it's about craft. I'm thinking about the LSI project again, and how that evolved. We started out in '74/'75 with a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts to take an LSI-11 computer system and interface it with video. It sounds silly from the perspective now in 2005, but in 1974 it didn't exist. Personal computers did not exist. But we started out with the idea that this computer based video system would be a part of the residency program. The reason that we did this was to put digital tools into the hands of artists in

the same way that we wanted to put the analog toolsets. It was the same impulse. We were working with the Vasulkas on the project, and at one point, the projects diverged. The Vasulkas took one path and the TV Center took another. Because we have recently been scanning these documents, it has been on my mind—I've been thinking a lot about why the project took two different tracts at that point. I think a lot of it has to do with what we're talking about. For the Center, the impulse was to give the tool to the artists because in 1974, most artists had never used a computer before. To use a system like that at the time required you to do computer programming. There was no other alternative to it. It became obvious to us that this was not going to work within this structure. That you couldn't teach an artist fast enough a fairly complicated programming language in that time. We had to come up with a different strategy. Woody on the other hand was very interested in that pure approach to the programming. I can't tell you how many years he admits to, but it was at least two or three years of his personal life, learning how to program that system for himself. I have nothing but respect and admiration for him, and they did some beautiful work. Some amazing imagery came out of that system. But that model was not going to work here. So what we did actually was bring out those controls to knobs and switches, basically so that you could make the computer draw a circle and color. Its the simplest example, but this was the test case for us and again it sounds ludicrous now, but it was hard. In some ways it became sort of like the Etch-a-Sketch principle, where you would move knobs and put switches down and you were actually controlling how the computer was drawing on the screen. That was a way that artists could identify with and could use. They could engage the machine at that point and then what was behind the scenes was the programming that David Jones, Walter Wright, Don MacArthur and Paul Davis wrote. That programming underlay the system that gave the knobs and switches their definition, but then allowed the artists to make work. But it's all about the artist physically engaging with the tool. I think that's what its about for Ralph, and it's one of the big conceptual alignments with the toolset.

But you're right. It's all about craft for Ralph, taking care and working on things and understanding flow charts. He makes a lot of analogies to plumbing when he explains how the systems work. It's not a bad way to think about it: if it comes in here and you

want it to go to in and out of all of these places, then it comes out of the monitor. I'm oversimplifying, but it's a way that even people who aren't involved, they get it on that level. It's something they have some sort of experience with. If you turn on the faucet and water doesn't come out, you have some sort of problem with the pipe, or pathway.

JIMENEZ: I also think that there were the whole concepts of recording and playback being available, or how the live experience of television was such a thrill when Portapaks were available. Different people found places in that tool to explore. Some people were primarily interested in recording; they were interested in this ability to record sequentially and do edits in any way possible that one could do it. But being able to actually lay something down and show somebody—that was where it was at! Where as I think for other people, the concept was to have tool for things that happened live and were never recorded, for being able to do loops between decks, to video tape people coming into a space and being in that space but not necessarily recording anything. Dan Sandin talks about that issue of the physicality and how frustrating it was for him once things moved on to other forms of image making when computers were available—that he was never able to get back to that turning of the knob in order to make a change. The concept of sliders and selecting a certain CMY RGB number was really not something he could relate to. He was not very interested in recording; in fact he really did see the IP as an instrument. … He was very anti labeling. He said you wouldn't label the keys on a saxophone you wouldn't label the strings on a violin. You learn through the pattern making and repetitions. You might actually create a patch that you could recreate, but you would learn to physically deal with the tool. I don't think a lot of people did that, because people felt they had to approach it in different ways, but that was his impulse. One thing that interests me is considering how expensive the tools were, the impulse to modify and to take things apart was still so strong too. I love that they were both happening simultaneously.

MILLER HOCKING: I think its an issue that's been overlooked in image processing. We all talk about the Sandin or the Rutt Etra or the Paik Abe, but one of the things that first started happening that we did it at the Center was people would modify commercial, off-

the-shelf machines. It was obvious right from the beginning: a lot of artists would be upset because [machines] would do this, but wouldn't do all of these other things they wanted to do. So the modification of existing equipment was one of the first things that happened. There was a group of people linked by telephone in the 70s, it was actually supported by the State Arts Council at the time, and it connected various technicians at centers around the state. The Center was involved, some people from Portable Channel, the Videofreex, we were all involved. It was on a fairly regular basis. They took notes on each of the phone conversations that occurred. One of the regular topics during these conversations was modification of equipment. Some of the first things we did with the Portapak cameras was reversing Raster right to left so you would swap the image side to side or up and down. Bringing out the gain and pedestal controls so you could over-blow images and get these polarization effects. They were sometimes crude but somewhat interesting effects, basically. …. One of the other things that David did with the SEG was to put a keyer in it, which would allow you to combine multiple images in a very different way.

There's a similar impulse in works like Mary Lucier's *Dawn Burn*, for example, where she's exploiting the technical limitations of a system in an aesthetic fashion. That's a similar impulse, to make the machine do what its not supposed to. You are doing something that's harming the machine, and its not intended to be able to handle that kind of thing.

TENNANT: David talks about this influencing his designs when he would show the machine to artists in the studio. They would move towards the glitch, as if this was something that they were after. He'd take this into account by considering these processes seriously, and not discrediting them.

MILLER HOCKING: One thing Peer used beautifully in some of his works, and the Vasulkas as well, was this concept of drift. You saw it first when the sync wasn't proper on the system and nothing was locking up so it was constantly rolling or going this way or that. Joan Jonas did a piece that uses this.

TENNANT: Which if people weren't educated to the intention, and I guesse gets back to the importance of understanding what an artists intent is with the machines they use, they might think it's a problem with the tape.

JIMENEZ: It's interesting teaching now that students have no idea of what the vertical hold is. You move the knob and it rolled, which of course it doesn't now. A lot of TVs don't have that option; there are no problems with displays. They don't know what that is which is actually the big issue with preservation: to understand, first of all, whether what your looking at is an artifact of the recording, or an artifact of the preservation process; and in terms of the artifacts of recording, whether or not they were intentional. It's really not an easy thing to teach, on the most basic level. I'm seeing something but did they forget to adjust the white balance or what does it mean? Or it it a color issue or is my monitor screwed up? We don't really have the body of tapes or a library of examples that enables this to be taught effectively right now. Not enough time has passed to accumulate—in a program like ours—enough examples to be able to teach that.

MILLER HOCKING: We were talking about, when Pam, Hank and David documented the Wobulator raster machine that we have here and we were talking about it afterwards, one of the difficulties of keeping this running is to find a CRT display. As we progress father towards flat panels, this will be impossible to keep running. This will be a true dinosaur. You will not be able to purchase a CRT, and so you can't operate on these deflection circuits because the display systems won't work that way. What's an interesting issues in terms of preservation is the physical preservation of these machines, because its hard to get replacement parts. The Rutt Etra is another interesting example because that also depends on a particular CRT, and those are very difficult to get.

JIMENEZ: I think that there has been some work done on the preservation of installation art—not much, but some—which is applicable to the preservation of machines. Or the preservation of machines can help to inform the preservation of installation work.

But again, we haven't gone far enough to have shared knowledge about these issues. The fact that were describing the machines is one step in that process, because you find out what machines are at risk. I did some research on the conservation of machines when I was doing the residency at the Langlois Foundation, and the only article I could find was on the conservation of a particular mainframe computer. And they were talking about the patina on the exterior, how to maintain that certain kind of grey. If you look into computer museums, and even places like the American Museum of the Moving Image or the Smithsonian, one of the first things they do is take the batteries out. Of course you need to because you don't want them to leak inside your instrument. But once you start taking things out, its not likely that they're going to be put back in; it becomes more about how to conserve the structure of the piece. There is an assumption that it is not going to be possible to preserve the operation. Sometimes it really is, it's just not within the understanding of a traditionally trained archivist, librarian, or conservator. That's a huge issue with video anyway, and then we get to the machines its even more intense. Although when I was looking into the development of this template, I went to the Canadian museum of science and technology in Ottawa. They had some pretty interesting ways to categorize the manuals and schematics using terminology from the library world because they had a lot of manuals but they also had everything from spaceships to tractors to Xerox machines or whatever. There is a sense of not being afraid of machines, but also actually having people because it's a specialized knowledge. I think that the area of installation art preservation might be an area where things will move along, because there is a more immediate need for machines to be maintained. Traditional conservation practice would have you look at that machine and set of machines and say, "Ok the problem is going to be with the tube, the display, the batteries, the electrical circuit and capacitors." Or its really doing an analysis and figuring out where the weak points are. In installation art, maybe they would collect five of those projectors or they would collect ten of those bulbs. it depends on one's view of what the art work is, variability, and all of those issues. We really haven't done risk assessment of all of these machines that we are trying to document. We know which ones can be operated easily, and which ones are in use.

HAWKINS: Sherry maybe you could address what has to do with not working in a corporate model. You've already said a few about not working in mass production TV models. But one of the things that the Center and your own personal history seem invested in is working outside of capitalism. And by that I mean I see this as a highly interactive idea, which has to do with individuals, the potential of individuals. It comes to fruition in a number of ways: by supporting independent media and its preservation; by supporting the history of these tools that do not have corporate sales. These are potentially autonomous and unique tools; some people have taken on additions with more variables. We're looking at a thirty year period of time—maybe a little more than that. It feels like we're at a very powerful moment in history where, at least in the United States, capitalism has become peoples God. You're looking at all of these systems that try to hold on to these pieces of uniqueness, keep them going to allow for the potential of individuals. Could you say something about that?

MILLER HOCKING: I wish that Kathy High were here because she and Ralph have been having this interesting email dialog. One thing that she wrote just recently, is how she's been struggling with where we came from in Media, in relationship to where she comes from and how she views it. Ralph comes to it as a visual art form and Kathy's work and understandings are much more informed by a documentary tradition, a concern with social issues and things of that type. So these two guys have been having a very intense conversation, and one of the things that Kathy said recently was, "The impulse you had and have to keep this going is extremely radical." And it is this that she is talking about: that the Center is so far outside of the culture in the largest sense of the word—certainly corporate and global culture—becomes a very radical stance. It's sort of true. I hadn't really thought about it that way either, but it is an interesting way to look at it.

On the other hand, I also think that it's true that the reason we can afford to take a radical stance has to do with being supported by the culture. We couldn't do what we did and what we do first of all without the gifts we receive from foundations, from taxpayers, from all of us who contribute to this. Because of Ralph's position at the University, and

the fact that it gave me the luxury of not being very well paid here but it didn't matter. We could live without my ability to earn money, and we pretty much have. Some of it's a personal choice. How you position yourself in the world and what you value, what you think is important and how you want to engage. For us I think it is pretty clear that we're more interested in ideas and work than getting rich and taking cruises. Again, the word *amateurism* is my mantra at this point, because that's what it's about. We do it because we love it. And because it is really satisfying and interesting to engage with you guys. That's why we do it really—some of it is selfish in some ways! (laugh) It really is, because it feeds us, it's not just a one-way street. But I think that we couldn't choose what we've chosen without being extremely fortunate in many ways, and the fact that in the culture, as problematic as I find it today, there are still spots of generosity and concern. I am very thankful for that; we couldn't do what we do, and I couldn't make the choices that I make, certainly, without it. I try to keep that in mind because it is easy for me to become critical and jaded about the whole thing, and I don't think that it's productive, that it's healthy or useful.

TENNANT: One of the radical notions of the Experimental Television Center, which I feel more and more now, is how it is experimental on so many levels. How it works outside of certain economies or capitalist systems like we've talked about, how it provides a space for research and development, and for artists to work in ways that they may not be used to outside of the Center: working with methodology, process. It's experimental in that it allows students to still come and use the tools in the experimental teaching project of the International Summer Workshops. I think that's clearly a gift that still gives.

MILLER HOCKING: One thing Kathy mentioned again goes back to the toolset. A broader issue engaging the Vasulkas and others making tools is one of the impulses was dissatisfaction with commercially available tools. Artists were not going to be put in position of control by the corporate culture. That's one of the things that I wonder about today. I mean we've talked about how kids today sit down at a game, and there are constraints on the possibilities. The impulse with these tools is to bust out of that. To give

more, not fewer possibilities—to widen, not narrow the choices. The idea of working in opposition … doing a run around of the corporate tools that were being provided at the time by ignoring as many of those as we could and saying, "We're just going to go off and make what we find useful ourselves." I think all of this stuff is what artists ultimately do: they figure out what tools they want; they make tools if they need them; they're not satisfied with whatever they buy at the local art supply store. The impulses are those shared by people who have been making art for thousands and thousands of years. In some ways I don't think it's that much different; I mean maybe the objects and the material that we deal with are different, but I think the impulses are the same.

Joanna Rcynszka: You're more radical in a way too though, because you're working with media arts in the culture. There is so much controlling media outlets and the actual way that communication—which really is a misnomer at this point—happens. I found it interesting when you talked about planned obsolescence and the Center. That means the Center might die a natural death as soon as artists have the tools that they really need, and they don't need the Center because things are much more democratic. In terms of consumerism, there's planned obsolescence in the construction of this camera because eventually a better model will come along and parts will no longer be available. It's about making money, not democratizing practice. It is about mining someone's pockets—the same term, but a totally different spirit.

MILLER HOCKING: That's a really interesting point. I mean Ralph has always said right from the very beginning that as soon as the toolset becomes widely available he'll end the Center. When it becomes possible for people to put their hands on this stuff, then this place has no further function. But I think places do have other roles to play, and I think all of the organizations that we represent are ones that play these kinds of multiple roles. It's not just a question of making a tool set available to someone. That's not all of what we do any more than all of what you do, Joanna, is show cinema at Hallwalls. It's more than that. That's where it becomes tricky in terms of when have you reached the end of you mission. It sounds like Buck Rogers…(laugh)

JIMENEZ: Truthfully there's not going to be an analog toolset available like the one at the Center. There's no planned obsolescence of an analog tool set because it's already obsolete. But the planned obsolescence of a space, and the planned obsolescence of a form of inquiry, or I should say no longer a need for this form of inquiry—that may be something. I don't think there's another place where you have access to working analog tools like in this space. It will be interesting to see what happens. So far it seems like there's enough people interested in that byway between analog and digital that come here for that purpose.

MILLER HOCKING: I think it's bigger than just video; you see it in people who are working in audio. One of the reasons people are interested in turntables and audiotape machines is that same desire.

JIMENEZ: A wider range of tools, a wider form of work and physicality.

Racyscka: It's more fun.

MILLER HOCKING: Yeah!

JIMENEZ: And you can hear and see different things. Before I came up … I was listening to the radio, to whom I believe was Martin Luther King. He was talking about the three evils of poverty, racism, and militarism. There were all of these echoes of where we're at, and how extreme the political situation is now. How extreme, for me personally, the way I live is in comparison to the destruction our government is perpetrating around the globe. To me it's not about there being—we should have the full range of modes of expression. We should be able to make the most modernist formalist work; we should be able to make the most intensely personal, or political work. The reasons those tensions exist is because there's so much in a daily world to struggle with, what to do with ones life, how to live. …We should all have the full range of tools to make the work we want to, but we feel that we should not be doing certain kinds of work because of other pressures. The Center is still here, and says that people can come and do whatever they

want to. It can be purely about the image. It can be purely about the sound. It can be intensely political. It can be intensely personal. That all of those things can happen is the radical part. There is no reason for us to be talking about tools or creative impulses in competition with each other. There would be no need did we not have to live in a world that's really crazy.

I'm watching the "Shocking and Awful" series, which is a Deep Dish program about the Iraq War, and watched the one on Fallujah. For me to sit here and see the suffering that is happening and then to play with a tool is, you know, hard. But I have to do both or I'll go crazy. I have to do the work that makes me feel like I am engaged in a global way, and I have to do the work that makes me feel like I'm engaged in the most free way as an artists—to have some sense of a personal point of view, and to be able to indulge my own sense of inquiry. But it's not an easy time to be living now, in terms of making those creative choices.

HAWKINS: I'm glad the word obsolescence provoked your comments about media tools and that pervasive power. It seems, for that reason, even more important to be sitting here with the tape rolling and talking. I think it has to do with this movement from the '60s on. The extreme right seems to have invested a lot of money and time educating conservative powers, institutions, and individuals. That's why this facility still stands, so powerfully, as a radical concept of the individual on an interactive level. We talk about "interactivity", but for me a lot of interactivity is one of the multiple-choice set of answers. This is not that place, nor is your way of thinking as far as I understand it from the history of our dialogs. There is this wonderful sensibility that you framed at the beginning. You said, "I'm interested to know what artists want and how to make that happen." You've ridden that edge of interactivity in the most powerful and artistic ways I can imagine. I'm wondering if you could say something about term that sometimes gets used and abused, "interactivity".

MILLER HOCKING: I like what you said about it. I never thought about it from the point of view of systems structures, living your life that way. That's an interesting way of

thinking about interactivity. To me, the interesting things about the way the Center runs are all about interactivity. Giving things to people and taking things from people; having people give me things, and how that changes me as a human being and maybe how they are changed. I've known all of you. I value you and I carry in myself a part of each of you. We've talked and shared things. You've given me things, and that's in me and will be there until I die. I think of interactivity from the point of view of early, historical work. Interactivity is such a hot term now and work has to be interactive, which neglects to understand that a lot of early work came from that same impulse. I think that Mona had an interesting response earlier that was very well taken: it certainly wasn't as easy to pull off technically, and it was cruder because you were constrained by the abilities of the machinery at the time, but the concepts were very similar. I would totally second what Mona said about the impulse of the Video History Project was, in part, to point to those ideas and to encourage conversations across generations. It is one thing the history project, the website, and the conferences we put together is really about, and I think that's the strength of it. There's a shared history that we all participate in. We can all not only nurture and protect it, but also grow and take from it—it can sustain us. It's part of why I get upset with us as a field, when we start carving our territories. For example new media is a territory that's as if it existed all by itself, without any kind of genesis in anything. When I had the opportunity to teach at Visual Studies Workshop about video history, I always started in the 18th and 19th century, looking at the movements and issues of not just the arts, but also the sciences, and how that potentially influenced the video pioneers who first picked up those tools. I think artists live in the world, and things influence them, whether they study art history in school or whether they pick up a book in a library. Whatever influences you have, not just visual arts but audio and all kinds of things. I think that's part of my interest in all of the stuff that we've been doing with the Video History Project.

JIMENEZ: One thing happened at the Video History conference that was most meaningful for me. We asked him Perry Teasdale to come and be on a panel with some of the pirate radio folks because he'd been involved with the low power TV station, Lanesville TV. … He had also written material for the FCC describing the whole

concept of low power television. Perry said, "I don't know. I'll come, but do you think people are really interested in hearing about this? It was a long time ago." He came and there was this tremendous interaction, and he left the workshop thinking there really is a dialog here. "I have something to contribute, and I have something to learn from the folks doing the pirate radio work, which is a very similar impulse to low power television."

We really tried to put people together at that conference. I don't want it to sound like we connected people on some sort of historical continuum that goes from point A to point Z, or that's the way we think it is and everyone should follow along that path. That's not what it is about, but recognizing or being interested in the commonalities. Also, wanting to hear how the impulses differ, and what makes what we're doing now different from what was happening in the past. We're planning to continue this with the Felix issue, and through the DVDs. To do a lot more historical information through the print publication and through the festival, and to create those dialogs that say what the differences are between code as a medium and signal as a medium. Do they have any relationship? Are we talking about similar impulses, or not? How was the development of software tools different or the same from the development of hardware tools that work in real time? What is the relationship between triggering impulses, applying control voltages to video, and using remote physical computing to build tools that remotely effect other computers, devices, and images? There is a desire, that probably is a function of getting older, to get the stuff out there. I want to empty the house and make sure somebody at least knows the stuff is here. I also really want that dialog, because we're all still practitioners regardless of what tools we're using. So it's not about the old days and the new days. There is a lot of hype, as Pam said, about the issue of interactivity that has to do with the hype of multimedia. We buy and buy and buy, upgrade and upgrade and upgrade. That wasn't happening before—there wasn't this possibility in the 70s because the options weren't there.

MILLER HOCKING: That's where I think the trap of consumerism becomes something that is scary. We're all in it to some degree, and I don't know, it's hard to get out of …
What do you do with the artwork that depend on those different versions of programs and

players when they no longer function? I think the underpinning of this is dollars. It puts the artists whose work depends on this kind of technology at risk. It's really difficult, especially now, because were all so tied into this system. It's a little frightening.

HAWKINS: Sometimes I catch myself using terms that I know, in the larger culture, are framed with different meanings. like the words obsolescence and interactivity. I can still come back here and use that Colorizer that I used 13 years ago and feel damn good about my interaction. I think that's much more interactive than any feeling I have working on the web. Its why libraries are important to me, why I feel like I need those things in my hands, why I feel like I want to pop that tape in and watch it for the long haul. I need those research systems, but I don't need the plug-in art making. Answer A, B or C—that's not anything we're doing here, though sometimes you fall back to that because you have to, systemically, to survive. But generally, when I feel that loss of hope, I have this place, these ideas, and people like you to help me regenerate myself. Through this type of intimate interaction, which is what I find the primary quality interactivity. It is this directness that you can't have all the time. It's not something that's like this (snaps). It's like that trigger when you saw Perry and he said, "Wow, there is something here." He wouldn't have had that if he hadn't have experienced the conference you guys put together. He wouldn't walk away with that sense of hope. I can crash dive into the woes of technology and capitalism, or I can keep surfacing in the places I need with people like you. Because I have to. I want to thank you Carolyn, for encouraging this dialog with Sherry because it took your investment and interest to do that—to sit down.

MILLER HOCKING: I would totally second, third, and fourth that statement. You've been an inspiration, and I've told you this many times and I'll tell you this on tape. It's all about giving and getting and that's what you do. I'm so happy you came along and are engaged in this whole process, because I think it would be a different thing without your involvement.

TENNANT: I have to mention though two things. I learned about interactivity, how to participate and examine the signal flows outside of the machine, and appreciate the

machine culture when I first came to the Center. I didn't know what it was then, but it was during an International Summer Workshop. There was all sorts of activity happening—art making, chaos. I remember this amazing smell and seeing people walking around with organic food, baked bread and whatnot, buckets of dishes. Sweeping up the space. Reading by the window. It all reminded me so much of what I called home during my own alternative educational experience, which had a lot to do with cooperative living. So learning to trace the signal and to appreciate the process of image processing is a fascination for me. It happens each summer through you Pamela as a teacher and I think that is an incredible art and gift.

And I think your art continues as well Sherry. Each time you say this is an artist run center reaffirms the fact that you are in your own way an artist. I think this collaborative tool that you have developed with Mona, which is the Video History Project, is the most important toolset that artists will use and continue to use, whether they are in this space, if this space continues to exists, or if they are outside of the space when it doesn't exist anymore. And that is really remarkable. These shared histories continue to be the most valuable tool that we have as artists. So I'd like to thank you both for designing this tool that we all value.

JIMENEZ: Well thank you but I have to say its 95% Sherry and then I just popped in a few times and worked with her.

MILLER HOCKING: At crucial times.

JIMENEZ: But she's the generator of the information and I'm just a mechanic sometimes. Last year I assigned Lev Manovich's book "Language of New Media" for my Handling New Media class. I believe it's he who talks about the engineer as artists. Who are the real artists? The artists are the creators of the tools. That whole thing is fascinating. … It follows what Carolyn is talking about, Sherry being an artist, the creation of and maintaining the space as a creative act. Just thought I' d through it out there.

MILLER HOCKING: Ralph talks about the Center as his sculpture. That's a statement he has made many times, and I think that is how he looks at it. In some senses this is an art medium in the same way that electronic pixels are, or something like that. He takes a great deal of personal satisfaction also out of our ability to provide ways for people to make their art. It's really thrilling to see. I had the experience recently again with this fabulous workshop that Pamela does every summer. I feel so fortunate that you've continued to do that. It's an enormous amount of work for you, and I see it. I know how much you work and your devotion is unbelievable—I have so much respect for that. What was really fun for me was when we finally got the website up and could see the work. There it is: little clips that you can click on and look. It was a real kick to see, really was fun. I can't explain that feeling every time that we get DVDs or tapes from people who have worked here or gotten funding. It is so much fun to see what people do, and it's always different. But it's really wonderful to see because its always very personal and idiosyncratic and individual—it's great.

HAWKINS: I have to reiterate feeling that you are an artist, and it comes from ideas of social sculpture. It's not just a sculptural space, or a space that is an evolving sculpture, but a social sculpture that brings us back together. I haven't seen Mona in years. It was great to see Joanna after briefly connecting at a Hallwalls screening of Barbara Hammer's "Resisting Paradise". I was thinking how it correlates with the idea of a generosity that this place has taught me. I have all of these ideas of what that residency is about, which have to do with things I came from as a farm girl and things like that, but without the facilities it wouldn't be as easy to do this. You know you could do this in certain places. But what are you sitting in front of, twenty computers? I think Mona's right, that there aren't other tool sets in combination like this, except potentially more in music than in media making. Certainly places like Hallwalls and Squeaky Wheel have systems in place to allow for productions, and that may have conceptual ideas of image processing. But the thing that really strikes me is what you have said: that you have never denied a tribe. I have never seen this facility turn people away because their work was different than theirs. There is just that sense of real democracy, like Joanna was saying.

It's very unusual to feel alive, and here nobody has to make the same work. We all have the same potential regardless of the work. You spoke at the beginning about your interest in the Center because of Portapaks, and teaching people how to make their own television. … It's so beautiful and elegant.

We walk around so much making these boundaries about what is acceptable in terms of art making practices and ideas. I never feel that way here. I'm always asked to be better than I am. It is something the website gives me, because it gives me a way to see before myself. How can I bring that with me, and how can I share that with other people? When you have success, I have success. Those are really radical ideas, and it's unfortunate that I have to think about them in that frame—as radical. You believe that people are genuinely invested in themselves and other people, and you start with that premise. You've done that with your gardening and how you share food. You've done that with how you seek advice, how you give support, how you try to pay people.

MILLER HOCKING: Well we haven't talked about my most important artwork which I will show you tomorrow.

HAWKINS: Can you talk about it?

MILLER HOCKING: We've talked about the idea of emulating Nam June Paik's sculptures in one-twelfth scale miniature, and I've worked on a TV set…

JIMENEZ: You did?!? (laughs)

MILLER HOCKING: I did, Mona! I found a ring you can buy at the drug store over here for $1.29 and it has one of those, I don't know what the hell it is, but you press on it and it makes these little colored lights go off. I've discovered that I can mount it in this little TV set, and if you turn it on, it looks just like one of Paik's. I love it! (laughs)

JIMENEZ: It looks like Duchamp's [Box in the Valise]—Sherry's "Valise a la Nam June Paik!"

MILLER HOCKING: We have the first piece in place! So now David is all excited and he wants to do the robots and stuff.

JIMENEZ: I want you to do the Wobulator!!

MILLER HOCKING: The Wobulator. I think we should do, like, Gary Hill's "Tall Ships" or something. Lets think big here! (Laugh) It's a very democratic way that anybody can see this work. Granted its not the work, its emulation. But you can pack it up in a suitcase and then Hallwalls could have this fabulous installation piece.

JR It wouldn't take up much gallery space at all. It could fit on my desk. (laughs)

MILLER HOCKING: Absolutely. I can deliver it in my Subaru in the back seat! (laughs)

JIMENEZ: This is really great. I think you should run a workshop on, how do you call it? Miniature emulations.

MILLER HOCKING: How to preserve video in 20th scale! (laughs)

JR Have you heard about the "The Nutshell [Studies Unexplained Death]"? … It's like reenactments in miniature; it's dollhouses of crime scenes, mostly homicides and suicides. This woman in the 30s[1] spent a lot of time making these tiny miniatures of crime scenes and they still use them in criminology classes to solve crimes. She builds in all of this evidence and all of these tips. I know this has nothing to do with media arts at all! (laughs)

MILLER HOCKING: I think it does actually (laughs).

HAWKINS: I think it does too. It's like when you said "No, no. My interest in poisonous plants has nothing to do with art", but I think it does. It has to do with that edge again, which Mona so beautifully articulated: finding the edge of things and seeing where they can go. Everything seems to be so much about substitutions, repackaging, reshufflings of transportations. Making the flow go here and come back here, knowing that when I do it again, its going to happen a different way. …

JIMENEZ: I love this place in that I can come in here and I just cannot understand how so many devices can be plugged into one place! (laugh) I always want to go back and learn about voltage and amperage. Sherry you have to teach me about that!

JOANNA RACYNSKA: How is it that I can use the AC adapter on this camera and it doesn't blow a fuse?

JIMENEZ: And it doesn't really matter, because we bring all kinds of things in and it's ok. Also that whole thing about the demystification of video and media, which Sherry now aptly calls our era of video and electronic media re-mystification. This place also embodies that its ok if I unplug this monitor, move it across the room and plug it back in. Nobody is going to come along and tell me that I've just ruined their set up. It's all about modularity. It's all about having the confidence, and being expected to have the confidence to reconfigure, as you were just saying, and repackage down to the smallest part of the system here. I mean, what would be the worst thing? I just disconnect something that I shouldn't and Hank comes back and fixes it. Maybe he's not so happy with me (laugh) but it's unlikely that I could do anything that bad. It's so different than having a box, and you cant get to anything in and you cant rearrange that box.

TENNANT: Or even worse, having the tools there but having to go through somebody else to get the image —

JIMENEZ: Yeah the gatekeeper
CT Yes. And having no ability to touch those tools.

JIMENEZ: We fight against the re-mystification, but it is powerful.

HAWKINS: On the note of re-mystification, I wonder if you Sherry have any requests of the field since this is going to be encoded in another system, a written system. Right off you made me think that I need to put all of the tools I use on all of my tapes. Sometimes I do just use one—I use the frame buffer, or I just use the Colorizer. Sometimes I come here to purposefully do things; one year I came to do the Sandin because I was petrified of it. I was avoiding it like crazy, so I finally said, "I have to deal with this and use it." The tape you guys documented helped immensely in that process, and I'm so thankful for that.[2] Its part the impetus for my wanting to engage in this project, to help other people learn those things so that they could come load it up already. Nobody else can show me because they don't have the tools. And in this process of re-mystification, its part of why I personally am interested in showing lots of peoples work. ... Are there any requests from you to the field that you'd like to formally make in this capacity?

MILLER HOCKING: Put dates on your tapes. … It's amazing. As we're doing this scanning (we're scanning posters and program notes) it's unbelievable how many times there's not even a year on there. It's crazy. So write dates on everything! … Send us information. Send stuff to the history project. How the material gets up on the web is by the contributions of people like you, so keep those contributions coming! Also send images from tapes. That's our newest campaign. We're interested in still images from video tapes—the earlier the better.

HAWKINS: … You've all been engaged in writing the history. Sherry had a piece in the Evolutionary Girls Club catalog. I feel like I'm getting closer to being able to put things to pen. It feels like it's more important than ever to write the history and you are collecting the histories. You said sometimes its spotty; the information is missing. We have this dialog because we care intensely about it. Sometimes we think [the histories] are there, but often they're not or they could use another reiteration, firming up. I think that's one of the things that is inspiring that I'll come away from this dialog with is to

take better care of my own collection and how I house it. To try to build some kind of library system of my own work, as well as gathering other peoples work, and exchanging that work—putting those ideas and concepts into written form.

MILLER HOCKING: Well you have a wonderful opportunity with the Evolutionary Girls Club and the work you do, with the exhibitions that you organize and things like that. You have a lot of resources there that are historically interesting now, and I think will only become more so as time goes on. To treat those things as collections, even if you don't have the objects but you've assembled them in an exhibition. You do a fantastic job of documentation now, and applaud that and I'd only encourage you to continue. … I mean we all do it. You have stuff in a box and you have a life—you have stuff that you're trying to deal with now and you just put the box away. You look at it fifty years later and you can't make any sense of it. It's really hard. If we continue to keep doing this, putting things in boxes and shoving them off in corners, we're going to loose this history. It's going to go away.

JIMENEZ: Well its just not an option to put things in boxes any more. Did you just hear about DAT going out? And how long has DAT been around, ten years? And people really think Mini DV going to last as a format? They are out of their minds. I have two requests. One is that we actually engage in this idea of ephemerality, and I mean really engage with it. … We were talking about Sandin's relationship with his machine and what he has recorded and what he didn't record. We started talking about it as ephemerality: what makes sense to keep, who's work is about ephemerality and whose work isn't, and what they care about in within these terms. I guess I feel like what we're doing, in a sense, is going back to the early days of electronic tools, which is the stuff that's going to die and that's ok. Or the stuff is in the moment, and that's ok. But then that's coupled with this idealized view of the world that we're going to be able to open that closet in ten years, and we're going to be able to play back those tapes. One of the things I say to Sherry and my students, which may be bad form, but I feel like telling those archives, "Look. If you're not going to play these tapes, if you're not going to preserve these tapes, then why don't you just open the doors and every year you could play and give away 10 percent of

your collection? In ten years you can't play a 3/4 inch tape. Its not going to happen! So let's deal with the issue of ephemerality and lets deal with it in an active way. Lets talk about it because there are lots and lots of theories about how we can do preservation, but not very many people are doing it. So I'd like to engage in a dialog about that.

The other thing is that I still have this 1960s view, that everybody can work together and be a community. I don't understand why we don't pool resources regionally and re-master stuff. I'd like to see more of that, in addition to individual people dealing with their collections, which you can do. You can use the IMAP template and catalog it, and eventually that might be able to go into a Union catalog. Or it might be easier for an archive to deal with the material because it's already organized. That's one reason why things last. Truthfully, the more organized things are when they are given to an archive, the more likely they will be preserved. Archivists, librarians, conservators, they are not trained how to identify and separate the wheat from the shaft. Is this stock footage, is it camera original—a rough edit or a final piece, or is it part of an installation? That is one of the most difficult things for people to learn. I just don't think that the work is going to be preserved unless we come together and start to create regional centers where we can really share, and pool resources. So that five organizations and ten artists come together and buy a Digibeta or Beta-SP deck in some kind of collaborative way to get the material preserved. It is just not going to happen if we leave it to the government archives or the large public or corporate archives. It's such a mountain of material. …

The Center is a collaborative space, and we still have spaces that have survived like Hallwalls and Squeaky Wheel. But a lot of them have gone by the wayside. We need to act on that same impulse. When I go out to work with nonprofit archives, I'll say "Look: in this town you have a public library, a museum, a historical society, a university a high school. You have an artist space, all of these things. If you all actually contributed to a pool, it might be run by the community media center, or the artist space in town. Not like Hallwalls has to take on another job and provide access to preservation services, but if people really came together on an equal basis. You've got all of the stuff, lets see how we can pool our resources and make it happen." I'd love it if this would happened, because

it's just very, very slow. Kate Horsfield talks about this. If you looked at the number of tapes that have been preserved since we started talking about preservation—and I've personally been working on it since '89 and Sherry I'm sure for longer than that—but if you looked at the actual number of works that have been preserved and are in archives, its minute. I don't want to interfere with the current creative impulse of any of us, but I think that we have a responsibility as a community to pool resources and make some of this work last. We are trying to teach some of this in the MIAP program and we're making some of it up as we go along, It's really complicated now, but when you're doing nonlinear editing, and we're all in the nonlinear editing world, everything is on a computer. I know lots of artists who dump it to tape for a reason. Otherwise it is just data stuck on a hard drive somewhere and that's the end of that work. We're not going to be able to open a closet, plug in a hard drive and just plug it into a computer. We can either save stuff, or just except—and really enjoy—the work now. Maybe that means we just get it out there. I think a lot more dialog about this is needed, and I don't see the media and umbrella organizations talking about it. Very few people are engaged in the preservation community, in the Association of Moving Image Archivists and those kinds of organizations, where people are struggling with these issues. It is crazy times. 3/4 inch is a great format, very sturdy—not like High8 and not like MiniDV. [To Pamela Susan Hawkins] When you finish a project in Final Cut, what is it? An MPEG?

HAWKINS: What do I do? I dump to MPEG, and I dump to two master tapes. I also dump to DVD.

JIMENEZ: So you're still dumping to tape? Some people just go to DVD.

HAWKINS: I'm always dumping to tape. Here I'll go to DVD too so I have it on three different formats. Sometimes I dump to [S-VHS] as well. I love 3/4 inch—I have a deck and it r *still* uns. Peer spent his last sabbatical dumping everything he had over and he made a commitment that a period of time he would spend a portion of his sabbatical dumping his primary work to the next format. I had to really honor him for that because it

took a lot of effort for him to do that but it also rejuvenated a whole bunch of feelings he had about his work which is pretty exciting. …

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[1] Frances Glessner Lee, "The Nutshell Studies of Unexplained Death," Corinne May Botz
[2] Kathy High's and Mona Jimenez's documentation of the Sandin Image Processor at the Experimental Television Center with Hank Rudolph.