Digital Ephemera: Web Archiving and Comic Collections

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Comic Book Collections at the Library of Congress
THE LIBRARY’S COMIC-BOOK COLLECTION, HOUSED IN THE SERIAL AND GOVERNMENT PUBLICATIONS DIVISION, IS THE LARGEST PUBLICLY HELD COLLECTION IN THE UNITED STATES.

CONTAINS MORE THAN 120,000 PIECES AND GROWS BY 200 ISSUES EVERY MONTH, IN LARGE PART DUE TO COPYRIGHT DEPOSIT.

MANY SMALL PRESSES AND SELF-PUBLISHED CREATORS, HOWEVER, DO NOT DEPOSIT THROUGH COPYRIGHT.

HTTP://WWW.LOC.GOV/RR/NEWS/COLL/049.HTML
The Comic Collections at LC

Includes historic and current titles acquired by US Copyright Deposit

Collection gaps are filled by purchase or donation

Complements the extensive holdings of comic art held in the Prints & Photographs Division

Clockwise from top left:

*Fantastic Four*, no. 52 (July 1966)

*Occupy Comics*, no. 1 (June 2013)

*Amazing Fantasy*, no. 15 (August 1962)

“Spider-man!” pg. 1
Steve Ditko & Stan Lee 1962
RECOGNIZING THAT MANY SMALL PRESS AND INDEPENDENT PUBLISHERS DO NOT DEPOSIT THROUGH COPYRIGHT IN EARLY 2011, A PROPOSAL WAS MADE BY WARREN BERNARD, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF SPX, TO ESTABLISH AN AGREEMENT WITH LC TO ESTABLISH THE SPX COLLECTION AT THE LIBRARY OF CONGRESS.

MATERIALS ARE JOINTLY COLLECTED BY THE SERIAL AND GOVERNMENT PUBLICATIONS DIVISION AND THE PRINTS AND PHOTOGRAPHS DIVISION

THE COLLECTION INCLUDES COMIC BOOKS, MINI COMICS, GRAPHIC NOVELS, PRINTS, POSTERS, ORIGINAL ART, EPHEMERAL MATERIALS, AND ONLINE CONTENT
Small Press Expo Collection

This material does not generally come to the Library via Copyright.

Mini-comics/comix, serials, and other comic book materials are housed in the with the Comic Book collection

Prints & Photographs holds original art, posters, drawings, and ephemera from this collection

Some material is transferred to the General Collections at LC

Includes web archive content

SPX 2015 Ignatz Display

Newspaper & Current Periodical Reading Room

Small Press Expo website, July 22, 2014
Web Archiving at the Library of Congress

The Library of Congress uses open source and custom-developed software to manage different stages of the web archiving overall workflow:

Selection/Permissions
Ingest/Acquisition
Storage
Access

http://www.loc.gov/webarchiving/
Web Archiving at LC

Established in 2000

Small Press Expo Collection began in 2011

In 2014 an additional collection of Web Comics was initiated

Proposal for collection related to comics literature and criticism

- **Selection and permissions:**
  - The Library of Congress has developed and implemented the DigiBoard, a tool that allows curatorial staff to select websites for archiving and facilitates management of legal permissions for website capture and/or offsite access as well as web archive quality review processes. Development of the platform is ongoing.

- **Acquisition:**
  - Web archives are created using the Heritrix archival web crawler.

- **Storage:**
  - Web archives are packaged in BagIt conformant packages using the BagIt Library.

- **Access:**
  - Web archive replay is enabled by a local installation of the Wayback Machine (Internet Archive).
Small Press Expo Web Archive Collection

Started in 2011

3 new additions for 2016/2017

27 total sites currently being crawled

Includes Ignatz Award nominated sites

American Elf, James Kochalka
2003 & 2004 Ignatz Award Winner for Outstanding Online Comic
americanelf.com as of February 1, 2017 redirects to the publisher website
Small Press Expo Web Archive Collection
Started in 2011
3 new additions for 2016/2017
27 total sites currently being crawled
Includes Ignatz Award nominated sites as well as the SPX site

Black is the Color, Julia Gforder
2012 Ignatz Award Nominee for Outstanding Online Comic
Webcomics Web Archive Collection

Established in 2014

36 sites currently being crawled

Complements the SPX Collection

Serves as a research resource for original art works held by the Prints & Photographs Division

Octopus Pie, Meredith Gran
2016 Ignatz Award Nominee for Outstanding Online Comic
MANY CONTEMPORARY ARTISTS, GALLERIES, AND MUSEUMS PRODUCE CONTENT THAT IS ONLY AVAILABLE ONLINE.

CONVERSATIONS BY AND ABOUT ART AND ARTISTS HAPPEN ON TWITTER, INSTAGRAM, FACEBOOK, AND BLOGS (AMONG OTHERS). WITHOUT THIS INFORMATION, FUTURE SCHOLARSHIP WILL BE IMPACTED.

THIS DIGITAL EPHEMERAL CONTENT DIRECTLY CORRESPONDS TO TRADITIONAL ARCHIVAL AND EPHEMERAL COLLECTIONS.
Web Archiving and Art Libraries

Web archives should be included in the collection development strategies of Art Libraries

Highly selective/curated – sites must be individually identified before they can be crawled

Individual libraries likely have limited resources for web archiving

Few collaborative web archiving collections

- Complements and enhances established library digitization efforts
- Artistic content available online is widely dispersed, highly specialized, and not well documented
- As with their print collections and archival collections, art libraries will need to select the focus of their collections, likely based on the strengths of extant collection materials or future needs
- The New York Art Resources Consortium (NYARC) is one such collaborative effort. Hopefully additional collectives will be established.
Thank you.