

Curation as the Cure for the Archive

Groupe Intervention Video's Vidéos des Femmes dans le Parc

ABSTRACT Groupe Intervention Vidéo (GIV) is an independent artist run center in Montreal “dedicated to the promotion of videos created by women (in its most inclusive definition) by distributing and presenting them” (GIV website) At the crossroads of longevity, consistency, commitment, and the precarity that accompanies most forms of feminist labor, GIV is one of the most important “accidental” archives of feminist organizing and expression in Quebec. Their curatorial practices resist any archiving separated from the practice of everyday life. This article focuses on the thirty-year history of Vidéo des Femmes dans le Parc (VFP), GIV’s annual public and outdoor screening of new works from an open call. We trace how this event serves to “call in” artists to build feminist community and continually change GIV’s definition of who their community is. **KEYWORDS** activist media, curation, feminist archives, feminist video, Groupe Intervention Vidéo, Montreal, outdoor screening

This essay is dedicated to the life and work of artist Manon Labrecque (1965–2023).²

Groupe Intervention Vidéo (GIV) is one of the few artist-run centers in the world dedicated to promoting independent video work by women (in the most inclusive sense of the term).³ Our approach is intersectional. As such, the center works to support artists from different backgrounds, generations, and communities, whose work bears witness to the many artistic, social, and technological changes in our society, and to the constant redefinition of our identities.⁴

Groupe Intervention Vidéo (GIV) is a feminist/queer artist-run center, headquartered in a lively area of Montreal, characterized by an effervescent art and bar scene. GIV’s “open-space” office includes a long room that, when the folding chairs are pulled out, also hosts screenings. This area is usually empty during the day, except for lockers along one wall. Habituees of GIV

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might overlook these lockers while gossiping with friends or watching videos, but they attract our attention as feminist researcher-creators and media archaeologists curious about GIV's history. Inside are ephemera—flyers, posters, catalogs, festival programs, newspaper clippings, correspondence, and administrative files—that narrate GIV's historical mandate as an activist media center in Quebec and its international exchanges and collaborations (see fig. 1). GIV headquarters are a treasure trove of media technology: tape



FIGURE 1. Collage of archival images from GIV's collection, including (from *top to bottom*): programs from multiple editions of Vidéo des Femmes dans le Parc; the 1993 call for videos featuring an illustration by Diane Obomsawin; an image from the 2016 edition of VFP in Parc Lafontaine. Courtesy of GIV.

players, old monitors, videocassettes in every format alongside computers, hard drives, and instruments to digitize analog videos. These constitute archival primary sources mapping feminist tactics of video production and dissemination and GIV's collection of documentary and experimental works. You'll also find an office with desks, and a hospitable lounge area with refreshments for friendly artists, researchers, and the public.

After years of COVID restrictions that constrained archival field research, we were finally able to dig into GIV's archives in the spring of 2023. On arrival, Petunia Alves, GIV's current director, had set up our desk with devices representing thirty years of media technology and both paper and digital archives. As we worked together on the history of GIV's iconoclastic program *Vidéos de Femmes dans le Parc* (VFP), an annual free screening of independent short videos held outdoors in the waning heat of a Montreal summer, Alves continually interrupted her own work to supplement these archives with her embodied memory, her husky and delighted laughter erupting as our finds sparked memories and she filled in the blanks. Alves and Liliana Nunez, distribution administrator at GIV, were also simultaneously working on their own tasks, including the planning of VFP's thirty-second edition. Of course, GIV is not officially an "archive" but an independent media distributor. None of the material listed above is organized in any kind of official database for consultation in-person or online. For precisely that reason, we argue that GIV is indeed one of the most important "accidental" archives of feminist organizing and expression in Canada, situated at the crossroads of longevity, consistency, and commitment, and the precarity that accompanies most forms of feminist labor. GIV is uniquely capable of responding to the shifting and lively terrain of feminist media production in Quebec that serves overlapping communities.

Since 1975, GIV has accumulated a vast collection of analog and digital videos, which today constitutes an informal repository that preserves and reconstructs the history of feminist movements and video art. By recognizing the archival potential of its own collection and reactivating it through curation, GIV exemplifies the effort "to counter the hegemony of traditional archival institutions that have normally neglected or marginalized women, Indigenous, Inuit and Métis Peoples, the LGBT2Q+ community, and immigrant communities" whose work the research team *Archive/Counter-Archive: Activating Canada's Audiovisual Heritage* identifies as characteristic of minoritarian cultural organizations.⁵ "Counter-archives," they argue, are "political, ingenious, resistant, and community-based. They are embodied

differently and have explicit intention to historicize differently, to disrupt conventional national narratives, and to write difference into public accounts.”⁶ In discussions with GIV’s members, their curatorial practices have emerged as a critical site of accidental archiving informed by feminist methods, one that resists separation from the practice of everyday life. The qualification “accidental” does not signify a lack of professionalism—rather, it indicates how the careful and responsive curatorial practices GIV has cultivated over almost fifty remarkable years of existence represent an opportunistic and nimble registration of contemporary feminist politics, aesthetics, and practices. Here, we consider VFP to be a key example of GIV’s practices, one that is representative of their approach and also an outlier in their curation, in that it is centered on the broader act of calling in a feminist community, rather than organizing works around a particular theme.⁷

Since 1991, GIV has used VFP each year to engage the wider public through the soft format of outdoor screenings, something often reserved for popular and mainstream films, and through a widely circulated call for recent short works by female artists based in Canada. In this short portrait of VFP, we trace how this event serves to call in artists to GIV’s community; build feminist collectivity; occupy public space with feminist aesthetics, desires, complaints, and art; and continually change and recharge GIV’s definition of who its community is. By “call in,” we highlight how GIV continually expands the community it represents, specifically through curatorial practices, and critically calls out normative procedures of valuing and supporting art practices. In our reconstruction of the history of VFP within GIV’s larger mandate, we embrace archival absences and, in place of filling in, seek techniques for holding open the place for feminist labor. In this respect, instead of chasing after the definitive historical record of GIV and VFP, we prioritize accounting for GIV’s labor of curating and disseminating its own history, acknowledging our “situated knowledge” and “partial perspectives.”⁸ What is “accidentally” archived is as much a set of professional practices as a collection of materials.

CULTIVATING ACTIVIST PRACTICES: A BRIEF HISTORY OF GIV

Founded in 1975 by activist artists who saw the new technology of portable video as a means to analyze and disseminate information about social struggles, GIV reoriented its mandate in the late 1970s to explicitly embrace feminist politics.⁹ In tune with the era, GIV firmly believed in the democratic

potential of participatory media and provided support and training to women who wanted to make videos.¹⁰ Working collaboratively with the broader network of feminist organizations in Montreal and other parts of Quebec, GIV set up a distribution infrastructure to foster participatory modes of exhibition in local-scale spaces to catalyze community involvement. The 1970s marked a period of political upheavals that fostered activist video practices in Quebec, but GIV's mandate to promote feminist activism across both francophone and anglophone circuits made it distinct.¹¹ GIV was closely aligned to the rise of feminist collectives in Quebec during the 1960s and the 1970s that were committed to sociopolitical action and the creation of spaces for cultural and artistic expression.¹² Within this grassroots network of feminist organizations, GIV was one of the first to integrate transnational perspectives and politics in its practices by including in its collection videos on women's movements from different generations and cultures and forging connections with artists and video centers, especially in Europe and in Latin America. Today, while GIV is geographically located within a historically francophone neighborhood in Montreal, it nonetheless reaches the vast international and immigrant population of the city, fostering bilingualism across its events, newsletters, flyers, and other promotional materials. Moreover, GIV also promotes multilingualism, seen in the constituency of its current staff, including first-generation immigrants from Latin America (Brazil, Cuba, and Chile), and through the many languages found in the works in its catalogs.

Throughout the 1980s, GIV maintained an activist approach to video making and distribution but gradually shifted its focus to distribution. As of 2023, its collection has accumulated around 1,880 titles by 430 artists. During the 1990s, the shift to distribution was rooted in the work of curation and exhibition to a larger public, which prompted the first edition of VFP in 1991. While much curation across artist-run centers in Canada and other art institutions internationally in the 1970s and 1980s was organized around "issues" and representation, VFP reflected the emergent intuition that such an approach was not wholly adequate to the wider complexities of feminist lives because they could not be so easily reduced to single-issue labels. Indeed, VFP tackles feminist video practices that expand beyond realist concerns and documentary strategies, including experimental, self-reflexive approaches to video-making. In bringing together documentaries and video art, VFP intertwines feminist formal concerns with political purpose.

Since 1991 GIV has considered curation central to its feminist mandate and describes feminism as the motor of its interventions. Its curatorial practices are designed to promote and support the artists and works it distributes, and to cultivate a public presence for feminist experimental video work both contemporary and historical.¹³ Within GIV, curation is an act of care: not only does it involve the intellectual labor of putting together and contextualizing video programs, it also fosters community, creating a space of interrelation and exchange between feminist and queer curators, artists, and audiences. According to a statement by GIV: “the importance of our work [at GIV] is in the connections we create with the community and the artists as well as in the gatherings, exchanges, and the accessibility that we facilitate.”¹⁴ By placing community-building through curatorial work at the core of its activities, GIV centers social reproduction, intended as the labor of creating relational bonds and of ensuring the survival of feminist and queer communities, in its art practices. Annaëlle Winand, GIV’s former artistic codirector, notes: “the words ‘women’ and ‘intervention’ remain key to our mandate, which throughout the years, has adapted to include overarching sociocultural realities.”¹⁵ Over time, GIV has expanded its mandate to take an intersectional, trans-inclusive, decolonial, and disability justice approach. GIV’s inclusive sense of the term “women” means that its community of artists is made up not only of cis women, but also nonbinary and trans people, prioritizing self-identification on the part of artists over the course of their lives and careers.¹⁶

CARE FOR THE ACCIDENTAL ARCHIVE

The longevity of GIV as an institution is astounding and rare. In her history of Canadian feminist video art collectives, Marusya Bociurkiw claims that “archiving and restoration have been haphazard at best. . . . Thus far, this has been an archive without archivists, an era without a publicist, a history without a memory.”¹⁷ We argue, however, that, far from an “archive without archivists,” GIV, as an accidental archive, has preserved not only materials but the skills of survival and resilience. “Accidental archive” better describes the relation between GIV’s historical, intergenerational, and intersectional practices and offers a more robust analysis of their success, survival, and challenges. While the term has recently gained currency in global cinema and media studies, Alves first offered us this offhand characterization of GIV during a site visit in 2019.¹⁸ Alves and others at GIV stress that they function

as a “non-professional” archive, without technical infrastructure such as climate-controlled storage, archival expertise, dedicated staff, material support, or funding that would allow them to function as a professional and accredited archive. As Joanna Plant has shown in her 2015 dissertation on Canadian artist-run center archives, “‘non-professionalism’ is typical of this type of institution.”¹⁹ While GIV was not one of Plant’s case studies, its ability to adapt its practices to serve the needs of its community, rather than respond to the dictates of funding agencies, is characteristic of the artist-run center model that she describes. Plant underscores that artist-run centers’ practices of collecting, informal archiving, and managing their own history remains relatively understudied, and her work serves as an important counter-epistemology to more mainstream definitions of the archives, reflecting different needs and desires.²⁰

Despite its longevity, GIV is shadowed by precarity, a point to which we will return at the end of this essay. However, our encounters with GIV lead us to reframe their nonprofessionalism more accurately as an “alter-professionalism” that prioritizes different aspects of sustaining legacies and histories than those demanded by funders, government agencies, or the problematic legacy of so many forms of state archives. As GIV describes: “[VFP] is an eloquent example of GIV’s representative and regular activities, which invite us to reflect on questions relating to the place we occupy in today’s cultural landscape, between tradition and longevity.”²¹

If one origin of curation is “to take care of,” we would suggest that for GIV, curation has emerged as the cure for the archive, in particular, the demands to serve as an archive under conditions that they neither chose nor intended. On the one hand, the “accidental” nature of their archive testifies to the ways that they have responded in an ongoing fashion and with all means at their disposal to the failure of establishment archives to preserve and care for the works and communities GIV represents, as well as the piecemeal nature of arts funding in Canada. If we frame the archive as sick, it is for the state’s ongoing failure to adequately care for art and makers across the lifespan of both artwork and artist. GIV has nonetheless taken on this job that they didn’t know they had and have continued to practice curation as curative, both in hindsight and in a speculative forecasting, as an active annotative process that accounts for and reimagines their history, present, and futurity. In this sense, preservation (of work preselected “to be lost”) and curation are means to the same end: the effectuation of a change of state, via what GIV artistic director Anne Golden terms “the alchemical potential of the

curatorial act.”²² The “accident” articulates an intersectional feminist obliqueness to archival impulses, rerouted through curatorial practice into a lively, embodied, and crucially intergenerational practice of exchange and sustainability. The demands of preservation are always up against a material precarity that GIV counters through the living archive of community. We do not accuse GIV of “failing” as a traditional archive because it was never intended to be an archive. But its expansive labor means that it finds itself—like many nonprofit arts organizations—looking back on its own history, to the inevitable amassing of digital and physical materials that have accumulated after years of programming, events, and activities. This accidental status tells us something important about how a queer, feminist, intersectional archive might act, adapt, and survive.

Among GIV’s several dissemination activities aimed at promoting its collection through curated programs, VFP stands out both as emblematic and exceptional. Video programs at GIV often draw from their own catalog or present the work of an artist. Other times, external curators are invited to put together a video program. For VFP, GIV curates an overview of independent short videos produced in the last two years by women, following an open call to Canadian-based artists, with no entry fee. Each year GIV receives between 120 to 170 submissions, for a final program of around one hour (typically ten to fourteen videos) that is presented to the Montreal public in an open-air, end-of-summer screening in a major park. The approach to selecting works affirms GIV’s collective-based ethos, as staff members collaboratively watch and select the videos, and through their conversations, let emergent concerns across the works guide the curatorial process. For instance, the fifteenth edition curatorial statement from 2006 notes that “these videos are nets cast widely, yielding visions of social justice, political messages, ecological manifestos, spiritual wonders, physical contortions, and technological trickery.”²³

VFP’s program is indissociable from the unconventional mode of its exhibition: an outdoor screening, held since its founding (except during a period of infrastructural renovations 2015–20 and during COVID) at the Théâtre de Verdure, an open-air amphitheatre in Parc La Fontaine, in the heart of the city. For the first years of VFP, GIV had to work with DIY technological infrastructure: the organizers schlepped a bulky U-matic video player, and video tapes were played manually one after the other. While the first program, from 1991, is missing from the archive, Anne Golden reconstructed from memory some critical details to convey what this was like:

We had to bring everything. We had to bring the projector, we had to bring the three quarter inch tape deck . . . we rented the projector, which at the time was exorbitant for us, 1000 bucks or something . . . this was a lot of setup and a lot of technology and a lot of us toting these enormous pieces of equipment . . . about 250 to 300 people showed up and that was when we first realized that: oh, people just walk into the park. They don't know what they're gonna get. They don't expect it. And we've got them. Well, maybe we've got them for one video, but we've got an audience here. I just remember how heavy everything was, and how Petunia and I were just really good about picking things up, which I can't do anymore. And the wiring and the putting things together, and yeah, this sort of DIY version of VFP, really. You know, we just bring a file now, and it just seems futuristic, right?²⁴

That first year, GIV went into its own archive for the “works we thought were important to show.”²⁵ But very quickly this approach changed, taking on a more aleatory response to the question of importance. In the mid-1990s VFP switched to an open-call format that invited women to speak back through their submissions to determine what should count and what needed to be heard. Says Golden, “I think that in the 90s, we were just trying different things. And we were also trying to stay open to what was out there.”²⁶ Throughout the years, GIV has experimented with various formats: in 1995, VFP was presented as Vidéo Pique-Nique (picnic) alongside Videographe's Vidéo des gars dans le parc (“Guys' videos in the park”). In the twenty-first century, digital screening infrastructure has greatly eased the presentational burden, even as it has also increased the number of submissions. When the venue was closed for renovations between 2015 and 2019, GIV adopted an inventive solution, setting up an inflatable screen on the grass just outside of the closed outdoor theater (see figure 1). Inscribed in the name of the event itself, the outdoor screening in the festive setting of the park is what defines VFP. Many of the annual programs stress the alternative and almost otherworldly dimension that a public park constitutes for video art: “A stroll in the park on a hot summer night can lead to many things: romance, ice-cream, and video-art.”²⁷ VFP conforms to the tradition of free and public outdoor screenings that have come to occupy a growing place in Montreal's summer programming, which tends to showcase work outside of current feature films (for instance, film noir from *Film Noir au Canal*, documentary from *Cinéma sous les étoiles* by Funambules Media, Indigenous productions from *Wapikoni Mobile*, etc.).²⁸ This setting also showcases how

GIV distinguishes itself from many other artist-run centers in Montreal through its format, aimed at a wide public and scheduled during the “off season” (summer). In their 2011 study of Montreal’s artist-run centers, Giorgio Tavano Blessi, Pier Luigi Sacco, and Thomas Pilatti note that generally “independent art centres seem to focus on their role of platforms for ‘inner circle’ audiences, which are already familiar with, and very knowledgeable about, the latest trends in experimental contemporary visual art. They have no particular incentive to reach vast audiences, or to meet any specific criteria of economic efficiency or even effectiveness.”²⁹ In contrast, GIV’s commitment to VFP’s open and accessible format underscores the importance of “calling in” as a feminist methodology, to break open the “inner circles” that have excluded many from exposure to experimental film.

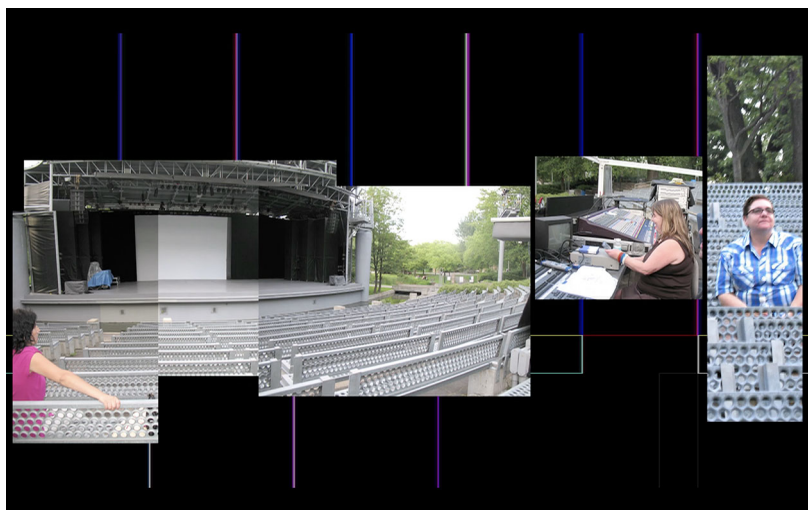
This setting is so important that even during the COVID-19 pandemic, GIV tried to reproduce VFP’s “visual architecture,” a term coined by Antoine Damien to name the visual branding of festivals, in the trailer for the online program for the 2020 edition.³⁰ Likewise, the two trailers produced for anniversary editions in 2001 and 2021 condense, in about two minutes, three key qualities of VFP: the curation of video art, outdoor convivial exhibition space, and the labor of care involved in organizing the event. As such, these trailers serve as a testimony to and archive of GIV’s practices. In particular, the VHS trailer from 2001 is a precious document, a highlight reel of the type of video work of VFP’s first ten years, the most difficult period to reconstruct (see video 1). The trailer, video art in its own right, starts with an animation homage recalling the analog “noise” of glitchy VHS. A montage of excerpts follows, showcasing the variety of VFP’s programming: from documentaries on women’s work (most likely from the very first edition of VFP) to fierce footage of feminist rallies to animation to some of the classics of video art in the Canadian and international context, such as *Seeing is believing* (Shauna Beharry, 1991), a video about the limits of the photographic medium and the activation of memory through touch, and *Mr. B* (Cathy Sisler, 1994), an ironic video about gender performativity. Techno music in the 1990s-style, characterized by syncopation and repetitions, accompanies images of the audience at the Théâtre de Verdure, and we see Anne Golden carrying a video player and Petunia talking on the phone (see video 1). The video ends with another image of video static and an intertitle acknowledging artists, workers, founders, and audience.

Likewise, the trailer for VFP’s thirtieth anniversary in 2021, directed by Montreal-based artist and GIV close collaborator Manon Labrecque



VIDEO 1. 2001 trailer for VFP. Courtesy of GIV. <https://vimeo.com/manage/videos/853768317>.

(1965–2023), proposes a metareflection on the signal and noise of video technology. The animated video starts with an intermittent beep as GIV’s logo emerges from a black background in jump cuts. SMPTE color bars—vertical colored bars used as a test pattern to adjust picture quality in analog video monitors—briefly appear on the screen and then form the background to a sequence of photos. On the soundtrack, a heartbeat speeds up, skips, flatlines, and pulses. The first photos are of Théâtre de Verdure—at sunset when the seats start to fill in and at night full of spectators—and of GIV staff members working the event. The second series of photos shows off VFP archival ephemera: posters, flyers, and booklets. An animation of the colored booklets aligned together enters the frame as a series of strips from right to left, while leaving behind another series of colored bars: the ones of the rainbow flag. Once the LGBTQ flag entirely occupies the screen, the arrow of the inclusive “Progress Pride” flag, representing trans and queer people of color, enters the frame from left to right, leaving behind itself a photo of GIV core staff introducing a screening (see video 2). Finally, the third photo series attests to VFP’s history of resilience and adaptability as they show the audience sitting on the grass and looking at the inflatable screen and GIV staff introducing the online edition of VFP, held in 2020. Labrecque’s trailer creatively curates GIV’s archival material from VFP, reflecting the evolving intersectional politics of feminism within GIV. The trailer concludes with



VIDEO 2. 2021 trailer for VFP, produced by Manon Labrecque. Courtesy of GIV. <https://vimeo.com/manage/videos/589113051>.

VFP's logo preceded by a gigantic "30" (to mark VFP's thirtieth anniversary) over images of colorful fireworks; a celebration, but also an allusion to Montreal's Fireworks Festival, one of the main events organized over the summer by the city (see video 2). By superimposing VFP's logo over fireworks, Labrecque implies that VFP is, after thirty years, an established, awaited, and popular event of Montreal's summer cultural scene.

For VFP's thirtieth anniversary, with COVID restrictions still in place, GIV decided to hold VFP online for the second consecutive year. For this edition, curators Golden, Winand, and Verónica Sedano Alvarez chose videos that reflected pandemic feelings: temporal stasis, adaptations to remote working, and inventive artistic strategies for distanced lives. The program opened with Karen Trask's *20-20*, five short videos of 20 seconds each drawn from Montreal-based pandemic exquisite corpse video project *2gatherapart*.³¹ Moving from immobility to various forms of travels (exilic, diasporic, metaphoric) and from oblique "personal" observations to overt intersectional feminist statements, the program of VFP@30 alternated performance art, essays, videos, desktop documentaries, and animation. Videos spoke to the gendered dimension of the social inequalities, mental health issues, and precarious labor conditions exacerbated by the pandemic. In *Edge of Doom* (2020), artist Michaela Grill edits in a split-screen found footage clips from silent films of the 1920s, showing women in a state of madness and despair

through their excessive gestures that suggest the emotions and the affect that arose during confinement.³² In *How to perform teaching during a pandemic, spring session* (2021), Dayna McLeod reproduces the tics and glitches, not to mention the affective labor, of online teaching. The desktop documentary *Inuit Languages in the 21st Century* (Ulivia Uvilik, 2020) tackles the precarious conditions of Inuit languages, and in the poetic essay *Houbout/Landing* (Chantal Partamian, 2020), a disembodied voice-over in Arabic hints at the challenges of long-distance relationships. Laura Kamugisha's *Mitochondrial* (2019), through an experimental and at first abstract form, addresses Black women's political energy and political cohesion against mainstream representation.

EPILOGUE: FROM CALLING IN TO KICKED OUT

As we wrote this article, the 2023 call was circulating. After several years of pandemic adaptations and a return to the newly reopened Théâtre de Verdure in the summer of 2022, GIV might well have expected a breather from the relentless crises of the decade so far. The companionable pleasure of screening submissions should not have required much more than “walking up with a USB stick in hand” after decades of contributing to Montreal's summer arts scene.

But in a surprise decision, the programmers at the Théâtre de Verdure announced in 2023 that after thirty years in the park, GIV would no longer be part of the program “due to high demand.” The consequences of this are significant. Pandemic restrictions have survived the lifting of health controls, lingering in the form of a more tightly controlled and bureaucratized management of public space. It is less easy to simply pivot toward more DIY methods for public presentation in the kinds of popular and accessible spaces that VFP demands. And exhaustion lingers among workers in the arts, in particular those at the edge of the mainstream. For the programmers, the show will go on even if it's simply a screening in GIV's intimate office space—indeed, acceptance notifications for the 2023 event included a TBA for the event location and date—but the questionable decision to abandon the legacy of this project showcases the “value” of women's work under current conditions. Women left the workforce en masse during the pandemic in part due to inadequate supports for the second shift of care labor. Women left the arts as they often lacked the financial and cultural capital to continue under conditions of unpredictable precarity. If VFP programs often form

portraits of feminist concerns on the part of their makers, what traces of curatorial concerns might we expect this year? What kind of desires might be found in the gaps between videos? As Golden says about the decision: “I do think that people still think of this as a marginal event. . . . We call it videos by women in the park, blatantly . . . to really put that forward and because it’s still important, right? But I think that GIV/VFP still suffers from the fact that people cannot wrap their brains around the fact that it’s an organization that’s a feminist organization. It’s like feminism first and art second, right?”³³ Rather than a simple inversion of a hierarchy, these priorities reveal how feminist concerns in content and practice are too often understood as “optional” in how the arts are supported and valued. Golden’s comments reflect how inextricably entangled art and feminism are in GIV’s programming and point out how certain publics and city programmers see hierarchies between the two, revealing their dismissal of feminism (and by extension, feminists and our labor). Golden’s reordering is an attempt to rescript the relation, a tactical reframing that foregrounds feminism as a necessity to challenge and expand what counts as art.

GIV’s call for submissions for women and nonbinary artists to show video art at VFP serves not just to call out for works, but to call in artists, audiences, and communities—practices of care that serve artists and audiences by facilitating the production and distribution of activist and experimental video works that showcase necessary voices and visions. This call-in serves multiple ends. It signals to artists (*Dayna McLeod*: like myself) that our work is appreciated and valued despite its status in mainstream contemporary art markets or normative distribution and reception systems and venues because these works challenge and expand what “counts” as art. It summons audiences keen to engage with activist and experimental video that work under an umbrella of intersectional feminist ideals and include accessible practices of viewing that are free, subtitled, and presented in wheelchair-accessible venues. It interpellates potential future artists in the audience (yes, GIV converts) who may not yet have recognized themselves as future members. We underscore here the need to call out those who would see GIV and VFP disappear, who refuse to acknowledge the integral value GIV has as an arts center that serves an intersectional feminist community and agenda, as demonstrated by the city of Montreal not making (literal) space for VFP at the Théâtre de Verdures in 2023, after thirty years of showings. What this omission makes clear is the precarity of a feminist place and space, and how easily it can be eliminated and replaced regardless of its longevity. By continuing to call out

for works for the 2023 edition despite not having a venue for the screening at the time of this writing, GIV re-marks the city's removal of VFP while calling in and caring for artists and audiences. This call-in of care calls out the need for commitment to feminist activist and experimental art practices as essential to the presentation of a multiplicity of perspectives, talent, and visions. ■

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NOTES

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2. To learn more about Manon Labrecque's iconoclastic, essential work, please visit <https://manonlabrecque.com/>.

3. "Since their inception in the late 1960s, artist-run centres (ARCs) have played a defining role in the development of contemporary art practices in Canada. ARCs are non-profit organizations governed by a majority of artists, dedicated to the support of living artistic culture." Anne Bertrand, "About ARCA," [arca.art](https://directory.arca.art/about), accessed July 27, 2023, <https://directory.arca.art/about>. ARCs are usually supported by operational funding from both the federal and provincial governments in Canada. In 2023, the Artist-Run Centres and Collectives Conference (ARCA), the national service organization for ARCs, represented 190 active ARCs in Canada.

4. Groupe Intervention Vidéo, "La vidéo comme médium féministe et social: Partage d'expérience du Groupe Intervention Vidéo (GIV)," in *Pour Des Histoires Audiovisuelles Des Femmes Au Québec: Confluences Et Divergences*, ed. Julie Ravary-Pilon and Ersy Contogouris (Montreal: Les Presses de l'Université de Montréal, 2022), 311–26, at 311.

5. "About," Archive/Counter-Archive, <https://counterarchive.ca/index.php/about>.

6. "About," Archive/Counter-Archive.

7. Ylenia Olibet and Alanna Thain, "Vidéo de Femmes Dans le Parc: Feminist Rhythms and Festival Times under Covid," in *Rethinking Film Festivals in the*

Pandemic Era and After, ed. Marijke de Valck and Antoine Damiens (Cham, Switzerland: Springer, 2023), 155–75, at 158.

8. Donna Haraway, “Situated Knowledges: The Science Question in Feminism and the Privilege of Partial Perspective,” *Philosophical Literary Journal Logos* 32, no. 1 (2022): 237–71.

9. See Annaëlle Winand, “La vidéo comme médium féministe et sociale: Partage d’expérience du Groupe Intervention Vidéo (GIV),” in *Pour des histoires audiovisuelles des femmes au Québec: Diversité, divergence et confluence*, ed. Julie Ravary-Pilon and Ery Contogouris (Montreal: PUM, 2022); Olibet and Thain, “Vidéo de Femmes Dans le Parc”; and Olibet, “Emergent Distribution Strategies and Feminist Media Practices: The Case of Groupe Intervention Vidéo (GIV),” *Feminist Media Studies* (2022): 1–18.

10. See Janine Marchessault, *Mirror Machine: Video and Identity* (Toronto: YYZ Books, 1995); Chris Robé, *Breaking the Spell: A History of Anarchist Filmmakers, Videotape Guerrillas, and Digital Ninjas* (Oakland, CA: PM Press, 2017); and Michael Goddard, *Guerrilla Networks: An Anarchaeology of 1970s Radical Media Ecologies* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2018).

11. See Janine Marchessault, “The Women’s Liberation Front of Quebec,” *Public* 16 (1996): 36–49; Scott MacKenzie, *Screening Québec: Québécois Moving Images, National Identity, and the Public Sphere* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2004); and Thomas Waugh, Michael Brendan Baker, and Ezra Winton, eds., *Challenge for Change: Activist Documentary at the National Film Board of Canada* (Montreal: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2010).

12. Marchessault, “Women’s Liberation Front.”

13. GIV organizes several screening events to disseminate its curatorial activity. For example, with *La Voûte/The Vault*, *Laissez Passer*, and *Topovideographies*, GIV invites internal or external curators to draw on its collection to put together video programs around a theme.

14. Groupe Intervention Vidéo, “La vidéo comme médium,” 323. Our translation.

15. Groupe Intervention Vidéo, “La vidéo comme médium,” 326. Our translation.

16. GIV, “Mandate,” *Groupe Intervention Vidéo*, accessed July 29, 2023, https://givideo.org/1/?page_id=9.

17. Marusya Bociurkiw, “Big Affect: The Ephemeral Archive of Second-Wave Feminist Video Collectives in Canada,” *Camera Obscura: Feminism, Culture, and Media Studies* 31, no. 3 (2016): 5–33, at 6–7.

18. See, for example, Vinzenz Hediger and Stefanie Schulte Strathaus, *Accidental Archivism Shaping Cinema’s Futures with Remnants of the Past* (Lüneburg: Meson Press, 2023).

19. Johanna Plant, “Constituting the Archives of Artist-Run Culture: A Self-Conscious Apparatus of History” (PhD thesis, Queen’s University, Kingston, Ontario, 2015).

20. Plant underscores “that there is relatively little written material that specifically addresses the archives of artist-run centres as a subject in and of themselves, rather than as a source of content,” and our approach echoes her exploration of the “subject” of the archives themselves. Plant, “Constituting the Archives,” 87.

21. Winand, "La vidéo comme médium," 326. Our translation.
22. Anne Golden, interview with the authors on Zoom, June 5, 2023.
23. VFP fifteenth edition program, Montreal, 2006.
24. Golden, interview.
25. Golden, interview.
26. Golden, interview.
27. VFP tenth edition program, Montreal, 2001.
28. For more discussion of the scene of outdoor cinemas in Montreal, see Olibet and Thain, "Vidéo de Femmes Dans le Parc"; Thain, "Reflektion: Ordinary Intimacies, Extraordinary Sites; Outdoor Cinema as Leaky Lab," in *Levande bilder—levande stad / Vibrant Images—Vibrant City*, ed. Geska Helena Brečević and Annika Wik (Stockholm: Film Capital Stockholm, 2020), 24–28; and Thain, "Mobile Media's New Multiplexes: Cinema Out of the Box," in *Immediations*, ed. Anna Munster, Erin Manning, and Bodil Marie Stavning, vol. 1 (Open Humanities Press, 2019), 240–51.
29. Giorgio Tavano Blessi, Pier Luigi Sacco, and Thomas Pilati, "Independent Artist-Run Centres: An Empirical Analysis of the Montreal Non-Profit Visual Arts Field," *Cultural Trends* 20, no. 2 (2011): 141–66, at 156–57.
30. Olibet and Thain, "Vidéo de Femmes Dans le Parc," 161. See Antoine Damiens, *LGBTQ Film Festivals: Curating Queerness* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2022).
31. We have previously written about *2gatherapart* in Dayna McLeod and Alanna Thain, "Cinema's Missing Bodies," *Framework: The Journal of Cinema and Media* 62, no. 2 (2021): 223–41.
32. *Edge of Doom* is available on Vimeo: <https://vimeo.com/434410587>. Some of the videos of the 2022 program of VFP are available online just because the artists themselves decided to showcase them online too. Each video in any of the VFP programs belongs to the artist in terms of copyright, so each artist is free to choose how they want to disseminate their own work. With VFP, GIV provides a further context for the circulation and exhibition of contemporary video art, but does not take on the role of distributor for each video included in the program.
33. Golden, interview.

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