The Wolfe Institute

The Ethyle R. Wolfe Institute for the Humanities,
in cooperation with the Department of Television and Radio, the Department of Film, the Department of Theater, and the Program in Performance and Interactive Media Arts, presents

The School of Visual, Media & Performing Arts Lecture Series

“Remove the Records from Texas” Parsing Online Archives

David Grubbs is Associate Professor in the Conservatory of Music of Brooklyn College and director of the graduate program in Performance and Interactive Media Arts (PIMA). He has released eleven solo albums, and is completing a book manuscript for Duke University Press entitled Records Ruin the Landscape: John Cage, The Sixties, and Sound Recording.

In his “Lecture on Nothing,” John Cage lamented, “The reason they’ve no / music in Texas / is because / they have recordings / in Texas. / Remove the records from Texas / and someone / will learn to sing.”

In 2011, the flood of records into and out of Texas has abated to a trickle. Increasingly, the primary means by which people in Texas—and everywhere else—encounter recordings of experimental and avant-garde music is through online archives such as UbuWeb and WFMU’s Free Music Archive. How is a site such as UbuWeb able to have posted copyrighted material online for the past fifteen years? What are the legal hurdles that it has either cleared or sidestepped?

“Remove the Records from Texas”, Parsing Online Archives” offers a taxonomy of online archives of experimental music, and considers issues of documentation, canon formation, and the rewriting of history in ways that could not have been foreseen by the musicians and artists whose recordings are being made accessible as never before.

Monday, March 28, 2011
2:15 p.m. to 3:30 p.m.
Woody Tanger Auditorium
Brooklyn College Library

For Information: (718) 951-5847 wolfeinstitute@brooklyn.cuny.edu