

ARLIS/NA + VRA 3rd Joint Conference 2016 | Seattle
Poster Session

Understanding the Self-Archiving Practices of Comics Artists — *Stephanie Grimm*, Research and Instruction Librarian, Savannah College of Art and Design

With the boom of webcomics and newer, more creator-friendly self-publishing mechanisms, the comics landscape little resembles that of fifty (or even fifteen) years ago. The creative practices of artists have likewise shifted, as digital tools and media have allowed for greater experimentation, flexibility, and efficiency in production methods. While traditional comics might start and end their lives as print-based media, more artists are working with blended or fully-digital media and methods, and pushing their works to readers through online platforms. What does this mean for the comic artist's personal and working archives, though, and where might the librarian or archivist provide expertise? Beginning with a survey of local students and professionals, this project will address the self-archiving behaviors of freelance and studio-employed comic artists, and related issues of preservation of digital comics art in the United States and Canada. This reveals the initial findings of the survey and interviews, addressing common questions and concerns from comic artists with regards to their personal archives. The poster focuses specifically on comics artists, the issues of ephemerality, digital preservation, and archiving of works made-for-hire are relevant to other artistic practices, and to librarians serving students, faculty, or practitioners of other communication arts.