Lost Formats Preservation Society

Monday 12 October 2015

Formats
by Jeff Rian

From the Latin *formatus*, meaning a book designed in some particular way, those in the book trade now call the person who does a book's page make-up a "formatter." Usually the formatter is given a set of written instructions, called "specs," that enumerate the number of pages, the typefaces and line-spacing (measured in picas), the size of the gutter (the inner margins between facing pages) and trim (the outer edges), the hierarchy of headings (generally called A-, B-, C-, D-heads), the captions and illustrations (halftones or prepared artwork), if any, and the front matter (half-title and title pages, copyright, Dedication, Table of Contents, Foreword, Preface, Introduction, etc.) and backwater (Appendix, Notes, Glossary, Bibliography, Index, Colophon, etc.).

Very often women run the editorial end of book publishing, taking manuscripts through the process of editing, copyediting, proofreading, and formatting. Men generally run the acquisitions, marketing, and sales departments, and wear suits instead of casual outfits, have business lunches, go home earlier, and make a lot more money. Formatters often work free-lance at home and use electronic page-making programs like Pagemaker or QuarkXPress, and often make a better hourly wage than the editors who dole out the work. Many editorial jobs are now free-lance, so that publishing houses don't have to be responsible for health insurance and social security benefits. A freelance project editor is someone who guides a text from manuscript to printed book.

About ten years ago, formatters began to use computers instead of laying pages out directly on boards, where text, pictures, running heads and running feet (the top and bottom matter that appears on each page), were pasted onto actualsize cardboard flats to be photographed for printing plates. With computers, designers were taught to dress pages electronically. Those who could do it kept their jobs; those who couldn't had to find work elsewhere. Let's not kid ourselves; all formatting is now computer generated.

Technology is the primary formatter of life. Primitive man domesticated cattle, bred horses that could be ridden, learned to grow crops, found ways to bash and kill using stone and later metal, discovered ways to technologize language in symbolic writing, and eventually learned how to put literally everything they had named and classified into the pages of books, which they could eventually market and sell. That's when formatting became a profession instead of an amateur passion. During the television age, women started becoming professional editors. Someday books themselves may go the way of those nice old flats that designers took painful care in measuring and laying out.

Amateurs will again take over the trade, and maybe all those men in suits will start dressing casually again. Maybe the business lunch will fall by the wayside -which is a bit sad. Maybe, too, no one will care about grammatical errors and the rules of formatting, which is already losing its professional status. Maybe the latter is a good thing. As for proper grammar, well, that was an invention of writing in the first place. It will likely change. Rules will loosen up. Editors will bear their anger to the grave. Women will weep over typos (errors that copyeditors and proofreaders missed). Books will start looking like Nintendo games.

(To be continued, tomorrow)

A project by Experimental Jetset
for Fotomuseum Winterthur

From issue 57 of *Emigre* (2000)
lostformats.tumblr.com

Lost Formats Preservation Society

Tuesday 13 October 2015

Formats
by Jeff Rian

(continued from monday October 12)

There are two kinds of bookmakers, one actually makes books while the other keeps financial tabs on betting and bettors. The latter type is almost universally male.

A format, of course, refers to any kind of arrangement of data, information, or plans, including databases, radio and television programming, such as the “talk-show format.” A format is anything devised to contain such data, which might include calendars of days, careers, the numbers of jurors or team members, the hours when we eat, exercise, sleep, and have sex - even our lives. Too many rules spoil the fun. But without rules most people become lost, which might be the fate of the book, but maybe not the formatter, and certainly not that other kind of bookmaker.

Program
by Jeff Rian

The Greek word *programma* is a public notice. Our programs are plans, lists, coordinated events or schedules, and sets of instructions. To be programmed is to be inculcated (whose origin means to be trampled or stuffed) with attitudes, behaviors, virtues, lists of things to do, and ways to do them. Like culture, programming involves conditioning, whether to be French or Japanese, to go on a weight-lifting program or a diet, to wear a uniform and look like the rest of the group, or to simply be a member of society. But let’s not forget TV programs and how zapping is the way we program an evening on the couch. Television programs are finely tuned, minutely scheduled, elaborately categorized and coordinated events. They are designed to convey set impressions, and specially scheduled to fit particular watchers. Prime time programming, for example, runs from seven to eleven in the evening -when most TV watching occurs. Some people clock in five or more hours of TV’s soft massage. Soap operas were named after the sponsors who paid for shows that targeted housewives at home doing the afternoon cleaning. The shows were designed to get home viewers to stop dusting and to sit down, and the ads were to get them to think about going shopping.

Most of us start out life being funneled from one programmed environment to another, from preschool to post-diploma. Parents begin the programming, then schools and friends take over. (Television programming gets complicated here, because parents and teachers say not to watch TV, while advertisers and friends tell us to watch it. What seems clear is that TVs are integral to our landscape. Denying them only delays the issue.) One can’t pick parents, but it’s possible to change schools and to choose friends. But even that requires self-programming, often called discipline. Changing friends can result in lifelong decisions about which morning coffee to drink, to have or not to have that five-o’clock martini, or whether to nestle in bed with a book, in front of the TV, or with a lover or wife. A chance meeting in a sea of random selection can suddenly give direction to our lives. Then we are free to dream the dreams that Freud said were the programs of our very own stories.

A project by Experimental Jetset
for Fotomuseum Winterthur

From issue 57 of *Emigre* (2000)
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Wednesday

14 October 2015



A project by Experimental Jetset
for Fotomuseum Winterthur

Kodak’s first digital camera (1973)
lostformats.tumblr.com

15 October 2015

Google's Vice President fears Digital Dark Age

Lost Formats Preservation Society

Thursday 15 October 2015

Google’s Vint Cerf warns of ‘digital Dark Age’
By Pallab Ghosh, BBC News, San Jose

Vint Cerf, a “father of the internet”, says he is worried that all the images and documents we have been saving on computers will eventually be lost.

Currently a Google vice-president, he believes this could occur as hardware and software become obsolete.
He fears that future generations will have little or no record of the 21st Century as we enter what he describes as a “digital Dark Age”.
Mr Cerf made his comments at a large science conference in San Jose.

His focus now is to resolve a new problem that threatens to eradicate our history.
Our life, our memories, our most cherished family photographs increasingly exist as bits of information - on our hard drives or in “the cloud”.
But as technology moves on, they risk being lost in the wake of an accelerating digital revolution.
“I worry a great deal about that,” Mr Cerf told me. “You and I are experiencing things like this.
Old formats of documents that we’ve created or presentations may not be readable by the latest version of the software because backwards compatibility is not always guaranteed.
“And so what can happen over time is that even if we accumulate vast archives of digital content, we may not actually know what it is.”

‘Digital vellum’
Vint Cerf is promoting an idea to preserve every piece of software and hardware so that it never becomes obsolete - just like what happens in a museum - but in digital form, in servers in the cloud.
If his idea works, the memories we hold so dear could be accessible for generations to come.
“The solution is to take an X-ray snapshot of the content and the application and the operating system together, with a description of the machine that it runs on, and preserve that for long periods of time. And that digital snapshot will recreate the past in the future.”

Computers
A company would have to provide the service, and I suggested to Mr Cerf that few companies have lasted for hundreds of years.
So how could we guarantee that both our personal memories and all human history would be safeguarded in the long run?
Even Google might not be around in the next millennium, I said.
“Plainly not,” Vint Cerf laughed. “But I think it is amusing to imagine that it is the year 3000 and you’ve done a Google search. The X-ray snapshot we are trying to capture should be transportable from one place to another. So, I should be able to move it from the Google cloud to some other cloud, or move it into a machine I have.

“The key here is when you move those bits from one place to another, that you still know how to unpack them to correctly interpret the different parts. That is all achievable if we standardise the descriptions.
“And that’s the key issue here - how do I ensure in the distant future that the standards are still known, and I can still interpret this carefully constructed X-ray snapshot?”

The concept of what Mr Cerf refers to as “digital vellum” has been demonstrated by Mahadev Satyanarayanan at Carnegie Mellon University.
“It’s not without its rough edges but the major concept has been shown to work,” Mr Cerf said.

A project by Experimental Jetset
for Fotomuseum Winterthur

from www.bbc.com, 13 February, 2015
lostformats.tumblr.com

Friday

16 October 2015

Q: “Did you read those comments from the Google executive who said we’re headed toward a “forgotten century” as our technology becomes obsolete?”

A: “I’ve been saying that. You know, I think that guy read some interview with me, because I’ve been saying that for quite a while, that exact thing. At this point, think of how many computers you already have that are full of things – photographs, writing, music, whatever. And it’s inaccessible. Because even if you had the plug, you have to plug it in, none of the operating systems are up-to-date and they won’t reveal what you’ve stored on there. **It’s kind of like every computer is a house burning down**. … So I definitely think that people are gonna look back on this era and see it as a void in culture”.

Ian Svenonius in an interview by Ally Schweitzer

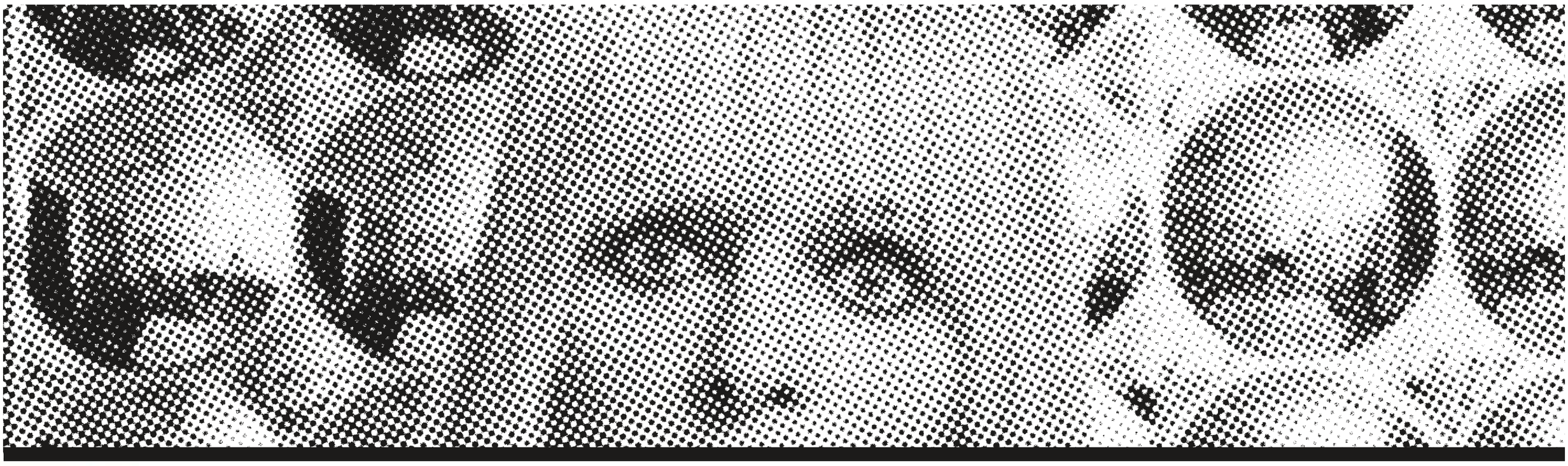
A project by Experimental Jetset for Fotomuseum Winterthur

from www.bandwidth.wamu.org/ian-svenonius-xyz-interview/

Lost Formats Preservation Society

Saturday

17 October 2015



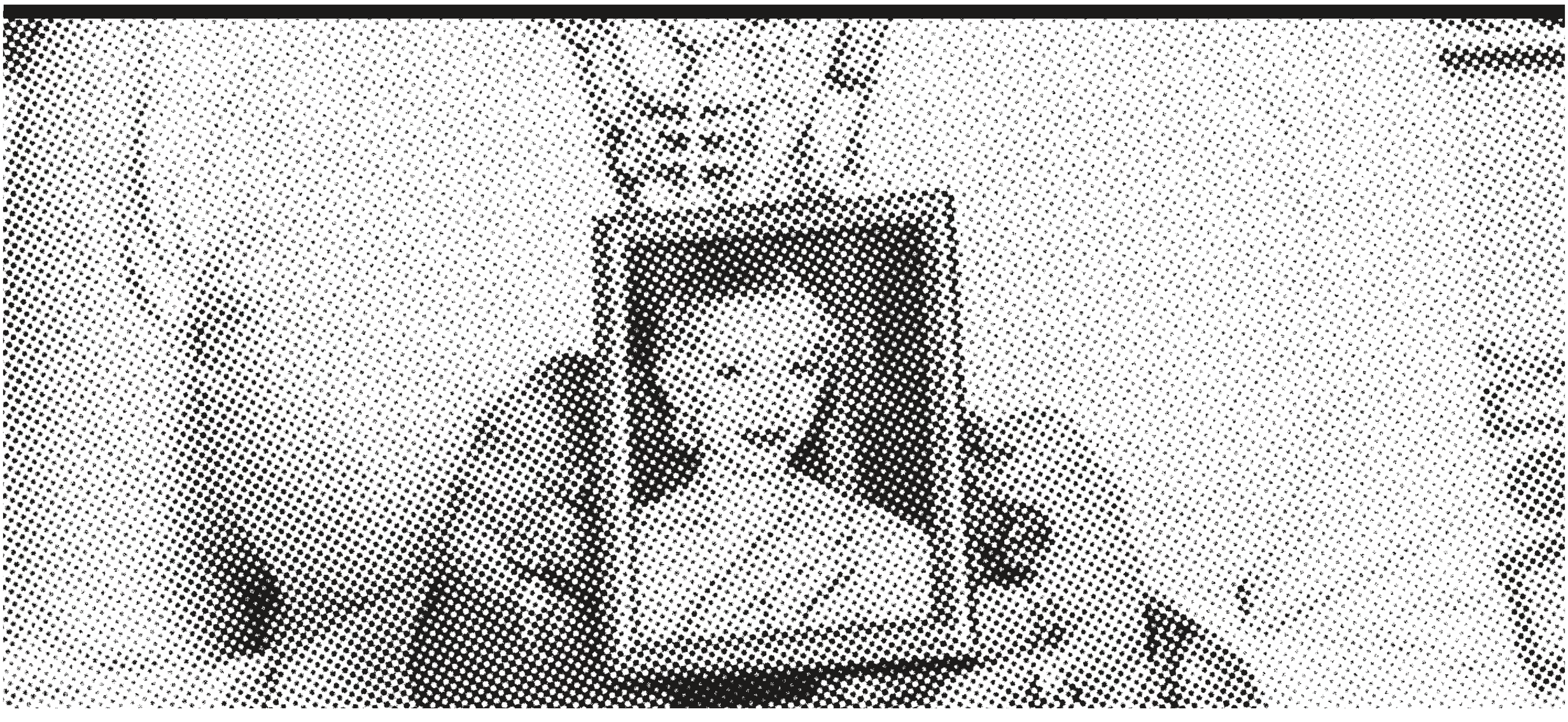


Genesis BREYER P-ORRIDGE

June 10 ·

A PRINT of a photo can be held,gifted,filed,etc not lossed by glitches only bitches

Unlike · Comment · Share



A project by Experimental Jetset
for Fotomuseum Winterthur

Genesis BREYER P-ORRIDGE, June 10, 2015
lostformats.tumblr.com

Lost Formats Preservation Society

Sunday 18 October 2015

Why the Gospel Yeh-Yeh?
Downsizing in Rock ’n’ Roll
and the Gospel Dialectic
by Ian Svenonius

Since the breaking dawn of the industrial age, the dialectic march toward total alienation of producer /worker from product /work has never ceased, with its attendant “downsizing” of skilled labour, and the advances in industrial machinery that leave roles only for interchangeable drones. These industrial trends typically manifest themselves in squawking class disparity and powerlessness for the workers.

As an industry, the musical one is similar to the others, inventing new forms to encourage endless consumption and “downsizing” the labour force; as in paying fewer workers, to minimize cost and maximize gain, for the work previously performed by many. The music industry uses its monopoly of the airwaves to control people’s taste, as well as their access to music/other expressive forms. This “radio” medium is tightly controlled by business and its employee/ lapdog, the federal government. The music industry determines which music shall prevail on the airwaves and thus, in popularity, typically choosing the form that is cheapest to produce. Downsizing is one way to cut costs, and its history shall be delineated.

One hundred years ago, the official organ of musical expression was classical / ballet /opera as performed by a symphony orchestra. One of these “music factories” typically employed some forty skilled workers (musicians), each one an essential part of the whole. This was downsized in the 1920’s to the jazz or swing band, which was just half the size of the former, bloated institution, and thus economically more viable. Within 20 years, this band had pared itself down to less than half it’s original size with the “bop” band, and its “cool” and “hardbop” progeny. Jazz’s time as the popular paradigm was cut short however, by innovations in electricity, which allowed fewer workers to make more music. Buddy Holly’s stated intent with the Crickets was to make “three people sound like an orchestra.” This new music, “rock ’n’ roll”, was clean to produce but unpopular, as it was considered novelty music for teenyboppers. “Rock ’n’ roll” was thus mercilessly pushed on radio and in film, and to ensure record company control over artists (workers), an “age” mythology was introduced, which contrived that players of this music could not be authentic unless “new” and “young.” This capitalist paradigm had been tried and tested in the arenas of dish soap, appliances, and high art, particularly with the concept of the “avant garde,” but was honed to perfection with rock ’n’ roll. The industry propagated standards of romantic destitution and drug addiction to discourage demands from the workers (band members, etc.) in this industry (rock ’n’ roll) for better conditions.

(To be continued, tomorrow)

A project by Experimental Jetset
for Fotomuseum Winterthur

From issue 57 of *Emigre* (2000)
lostformats.tumblr.com

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Monday

19 October 2015

In the 1990s, this rock ’n’ roll era was eclipsed by the techno/electronic forms, which reduced the producing work force to just one or two individuals, the apparent apex of the industry’s trend toward lower production costs and greater profit margins. In all of the cases heretofore examined, the forms that prevailed were the ones induced in the public through mass hypnosis, and total control of the outlets of expression radio, TV). The writers and critics would typically comply with the new standards, with a flourish of adjectives about the zeitgeist, as they are industry employees. Meanwhile, the various forces of conspiracy cannot mention the unholy words that they know spell their demise: Gospel Yeh-Yeh. Because this new music utilizes the congregation as a fifth voice, it has inverted capitalism’s downsizing paradigm, and threatened the accepted order of things in an absolute way. It has demolished the sacred barrier between producer and consumer, and even that one which separates singers from songs.

The industry will try to crush this form, either via some CIA concocted doppleganger, which will attempt to subvert /pervert /harass its practitioners (the group, The Make-Up), or through an exposure blackout. They will not succeed, as the group, The Make-Up, and the phenomena, Gospel Yeh-Yeh, are upon us as surely as Armageddon. Make sure you’re on the right side of the rhythm hive.

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for Fotomuseum Winterthur

From issue 57 of *Emigre* (2000)
lostformats.tumblr.com

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Tuesday

20 October 2015

Microscopic Sound

Phonograph discs from the earliest talking dolls (1890) have become so fragile that they can never again be played.

Scientists have now found a way to reconstruct the sound waves using microscopic photographs of the grooves. They call this technique IRENE (Image, Reconstruct, Erase Noise, Etc.)



SCIENTIFIC AMERICAN

[Entered at the Post Office of New York, N. Y., as Second Class Matter. Copyrighted, 1890, by Munn & Co.]

A WEEKLY JOURNAL OF PRACTICAL INFORMATION, ART, SCIENCE, MECHANICS, CHEMISTRY, AND MANUFACTURES.

Vol. LXII.—No. 17. [ESTABLISHED 1845.] NEW YORK, APRIL 26, 1890. [$3.00 A YEAR. WEEKLY.

THE MANUFACTURE OF EDISON'S TALKING DOLL.—[See page 265.]



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for Fotomuseum Winterthur

From: *Ghostly Voices from Edison's Dolls*,
NYT, May 4, 2015 / lostformats.tumblr.com

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Wednesday 21 October 2015

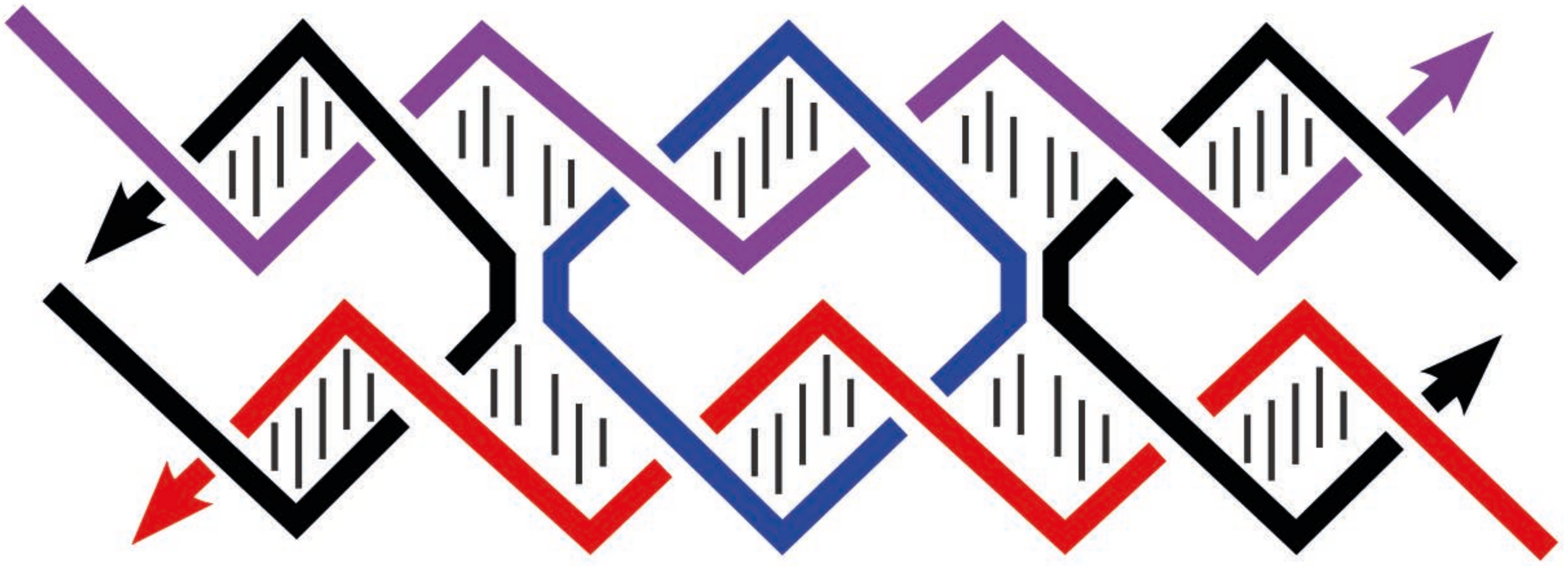
Writing the Book in DNA

In 2012, a book was published in the format of strings of DNA, with an edition of 70 billion copies.

Source: Harvard Medical School

Supposedly, data stored this way will last a long time: “You can drop it wherever you want, in the desert or your backyard, and it will be there 400,000 years later.”

harvard.edu/news/writing-book-dna-8-16-12



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lostformats.tumblr.com

Lost Formats Preservation Society

Thursday 22 October 2015

Tapes of Terror

Osama Bin Laden's cassette collection (spoiler: no Fleetwoord Mac, no Phil Collins).

Source: BBC News, August 17, 2015
www.bbc.com/news/magazine-33931657

"Audio cassettes were the perfect tool for proselytising and propaganda – it's no wonder Bin Laden was a fan.

They could be shared easily – dubbed, or passed from hand to hand – and censors paid little or no attention to them."



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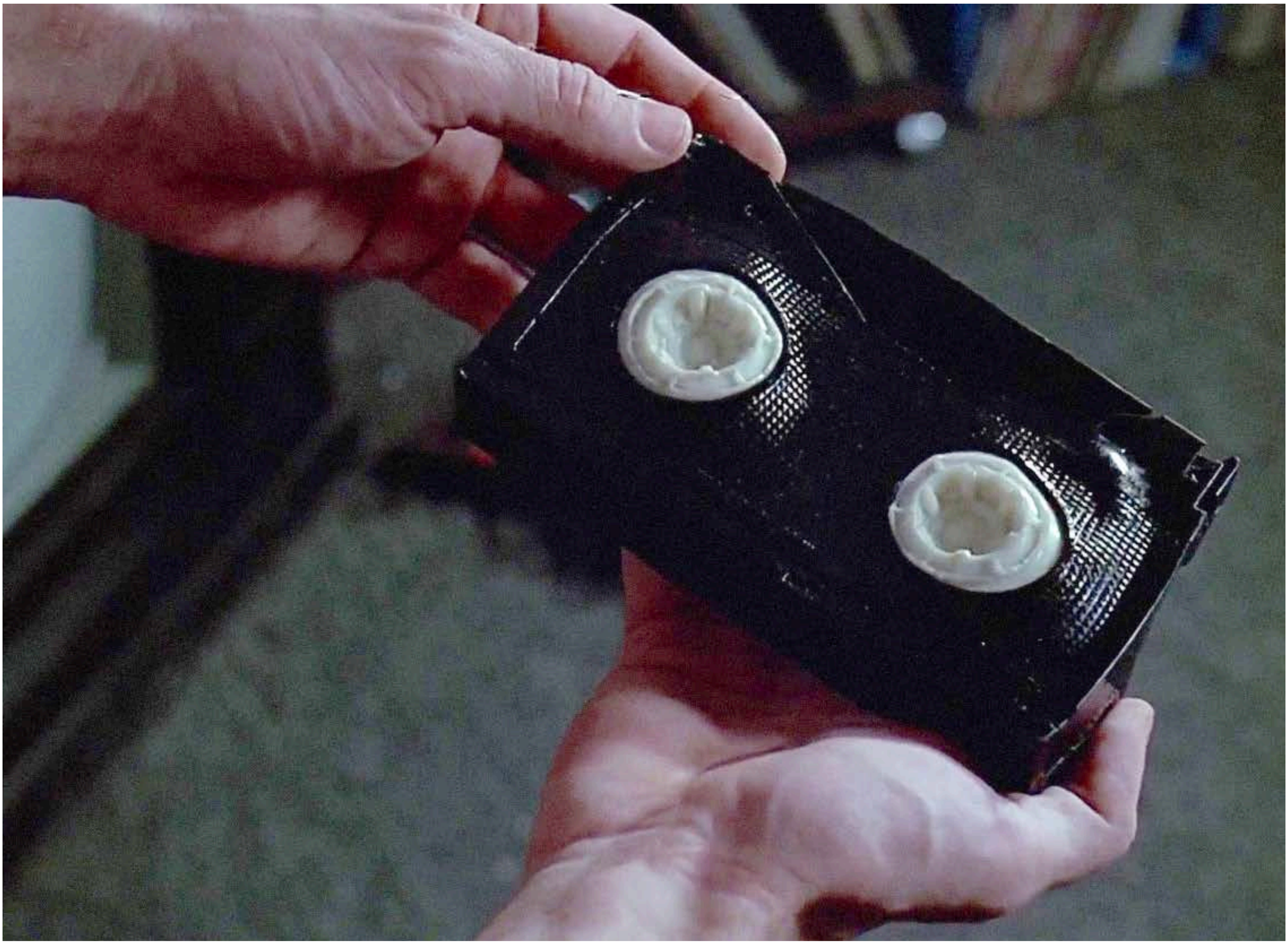
Lost Formats Preservation Society

Friday

23 October 2015

Long Live the New Flesh

Throbbing Betamax cassette, from David Cronenberg's *Videodrome* (1983).



A project by Experimental Jetset for Fotomuseum Winterthur

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Lost Formats Preservation Society

Saturday

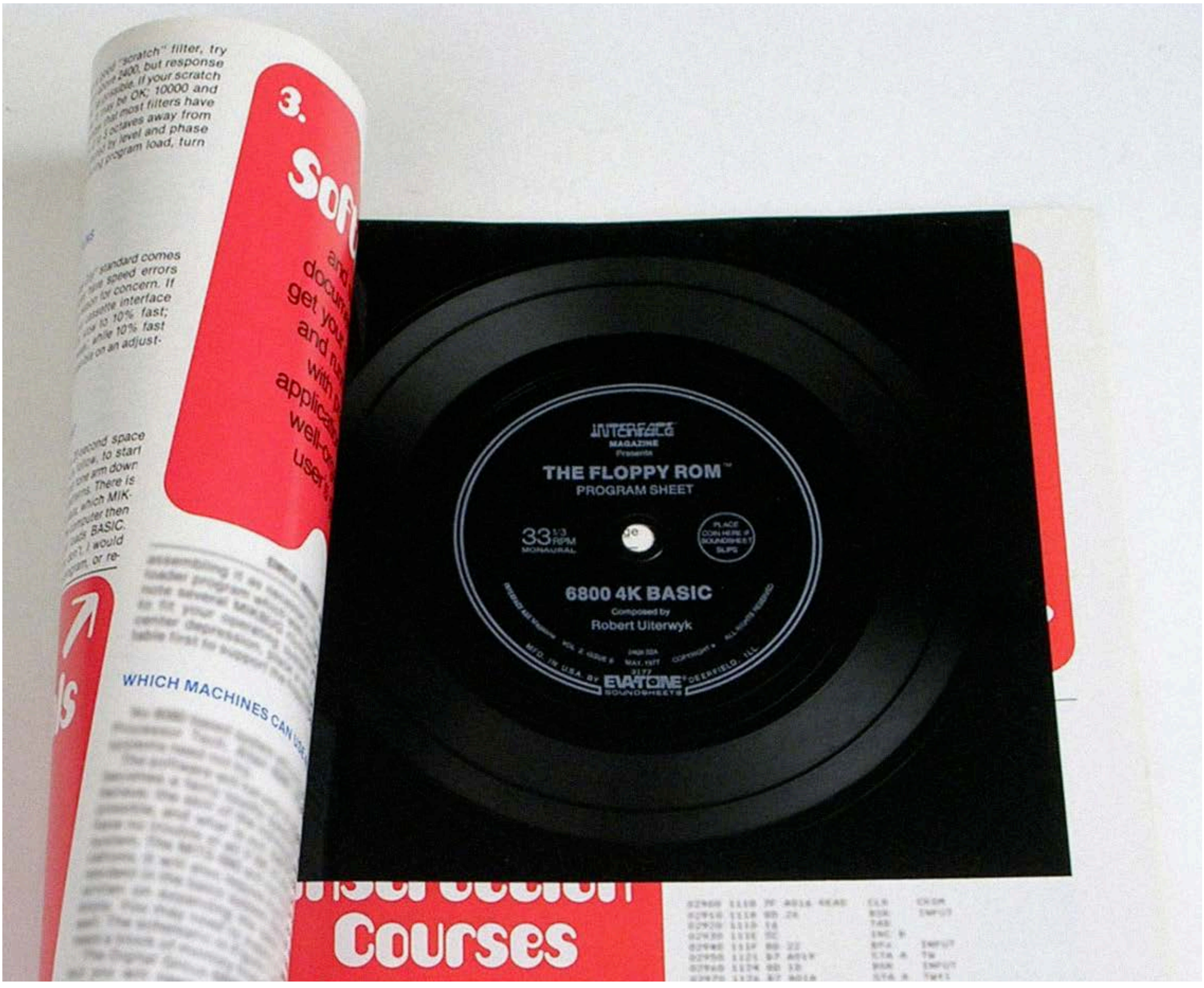
24 October 2015

Oh no, it’s the Floppy Rom!

“A Floppy-ROM vinyl record in the May 1977 issue of *Interface Age* magazine. The 6 minutes of audio held Robert Uiterwyk’s 4K BASIC in the Kansas City Standard format.

The record is an *Evatone* sound sheet, invented by Richard Evans in 1962. They were produced until 2000. The sound sheets were often delivered in magazines.”

commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/Flexi_disc



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lostformats.tumblr.com

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Sunday 25 October 2015

“Floppy disk that was once given to us by an actual reverend of the Church of the SubGenius, while hanging out at De Melkweg in Amsterdam (back in 1994 or so).

We could tell you what’s on the disk – but then we would have to kill you.”

Source: Experimental Jetset Facebook



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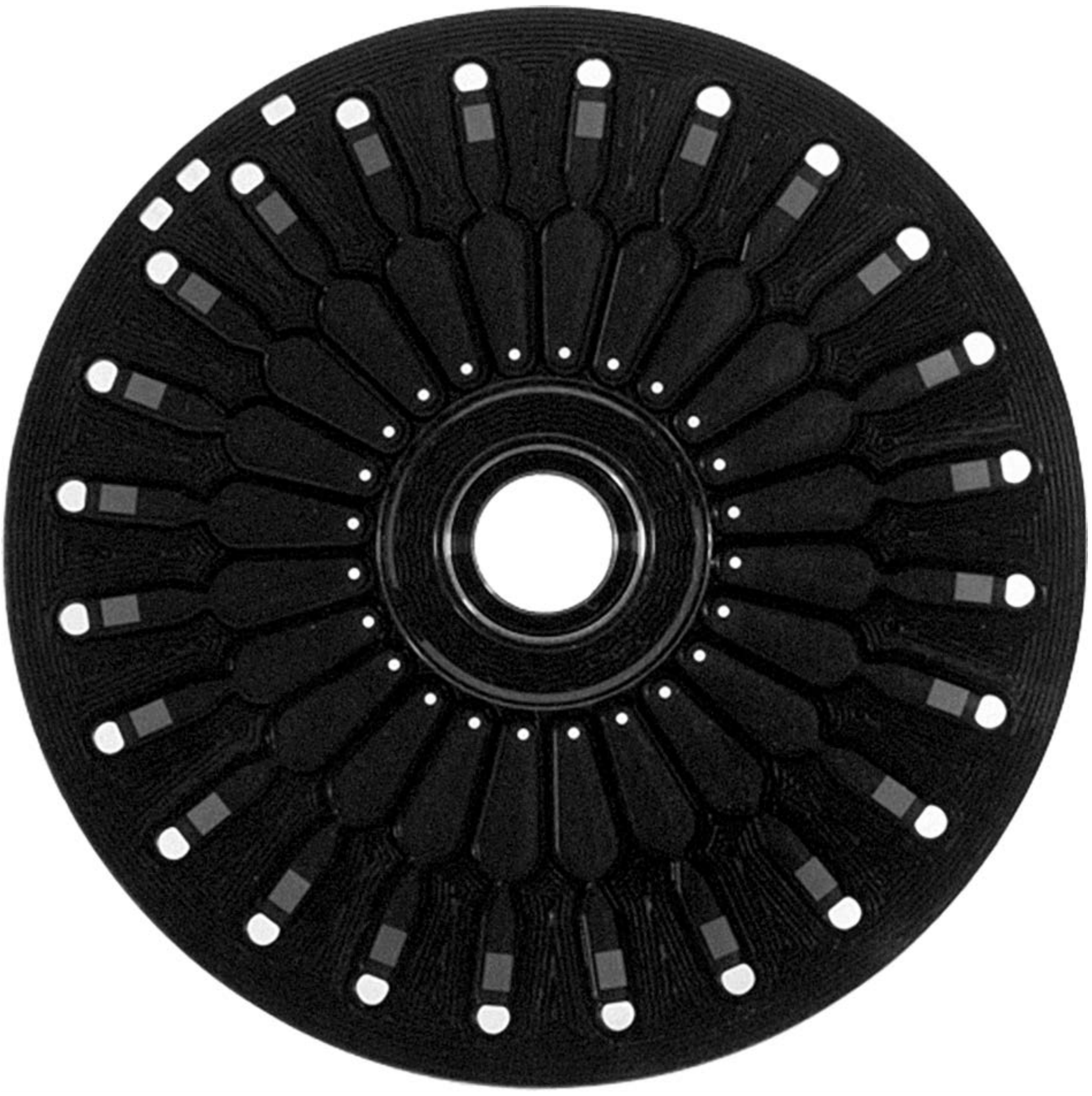
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Monday 26 October 2015

Lab-on-a-disc

Sony DADC BioSciences developed this disc, which slots into a Quanterix Simoa HD-1 Analyzer.

It's used for "isolation and detection of single molecules on paramagnetic beads using sequential fluid flows in microfabricated polymer array assemblies"…



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Tuesday 27 October 2015

Spectral Samizdat

“Contrary to popular belief, it wasn’t absolutely impossible to listen to the Beatles in the USSR. By the 1980s, even the state music company, Melodia, was producing recordings by the group.

But in the heyday of *Beatlemania*, real vinyl discs were only available on the black market and, even then, they changed hands for very large sums of money.

Vinyl was scarce and expensive, so enterprising retailers sought alternatives. What they discovered was that music could be etched onto x-rays. Discarded x-ray films were collected (or bought under-the-counter) from Soviet hospitals, and the music was pressed onto them using a modified record player.

The results looked like the flexi-discs you used to get on the cover of Western pop magazines, only with ghostly images of rib cages and broken legs imprinted on the plastic. Fans called these albums *music on the bones*.”

Sources:
www.bbc.com/news/entertainment-arts-19827438
www.theguardian.com/music/2015/jan/29/bone-music-soviet-bootleg-records-pressed-on-xrays



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Wednesday

28 October 2015

An Alphabet of File Formats

AVI Audio Video Interleave
BBS Bulletin Board System
CSS Cascading Style Sheet
DIF Data Interchange Format
EPS Encapsulated PostScript
FMV Full Motion Video
GIF Graphics Interchange Format
HTT Hypertext Template File
IFF Interchange File Format
JPG Joint Photographic experts Group
KDC Kodak Digital Camera
LEF Library Exchange Format
MPG Moving Picture experts Group
NLM Netware Loadable Module
OTF Open Type Font
PDF Portable Document Format
QIF Quicken Interchange Format
RTF Rich Text Format
SIF Standard Interchange Format
TIF Tagged Image Format
UPF Universal Picture Format
VDF Virus Definition File
WLF Wave Log Format
XML eXtensible Markup Language
YML Yet another Markup Language
ZIF Zooming Image Format

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Thursday

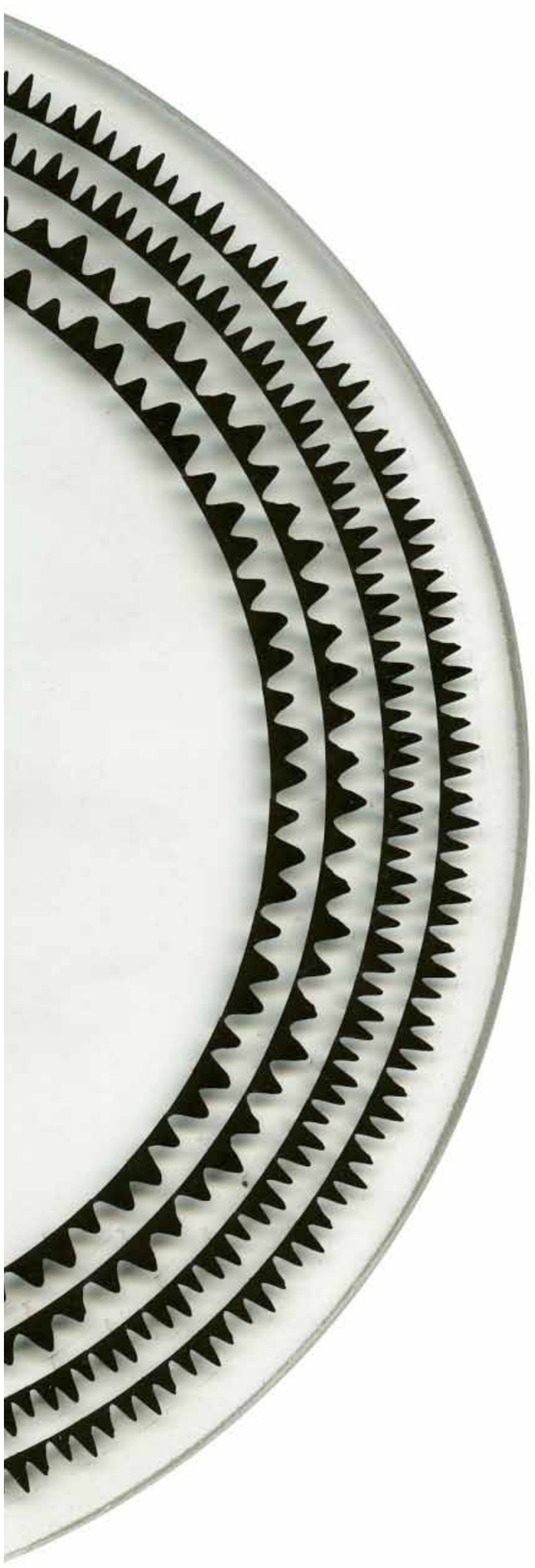
29 October 2015

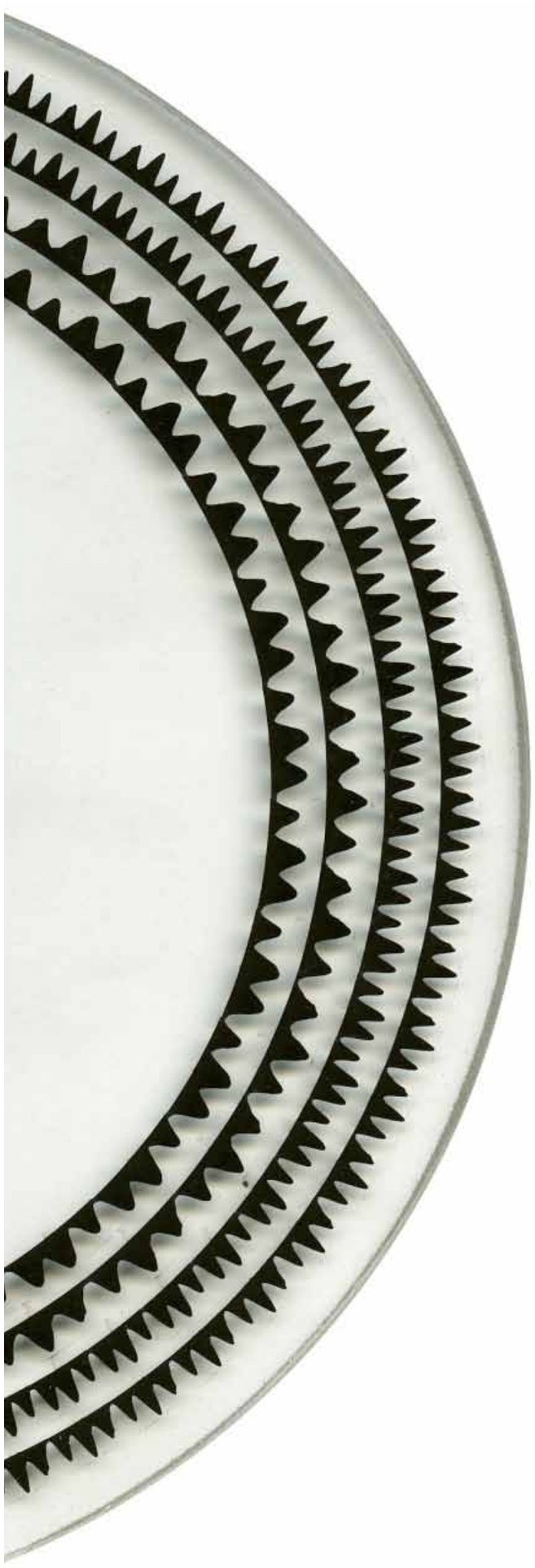
Sound from Vision

Fragment of a glass disc used in the *Welte Lichttonorgel* (light-tone organ) from 1936.

Source: 120 Years of Electronic Music
www.120years.net/the-welte-licht-ton-orgele-weltegermany1936

“The instrument’s sound generation unit consisted of 12 glass disks which were printed with 18 different looped waveforms in concentric rings. The glass ‘tone wheel’ disks were rotated over a series of photo-electric cells, filtering a light beam that controlled the sound timbre and pitch. The resulting combinations of tones gave 3 different timbres for all the octave registers of each note on the keyboard.”





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Lost
Formats
Preservation
Society

Friday

30 October
2015

Cloud Crash

www.businessinsider.com/
amazon-lost-data-2011-4

www.infoworld.com/article/2608200/cloud-
computing/adobe-creative-cloud-crash-
shows-that-no-cloud-is-too-big-to-fail.html

Remember Amazon’s cloud crash? Adobe’s ‘Creative Cloud’ crash? Or Microsoft’s?

www.itpro.co.uk/634417/
microsoft-bpos-crashes

Google permanently lost data after a lightning strike. There has to be a pun in there, somewhere...

www.time.com/4004192/
google-data-lightning-belgium/

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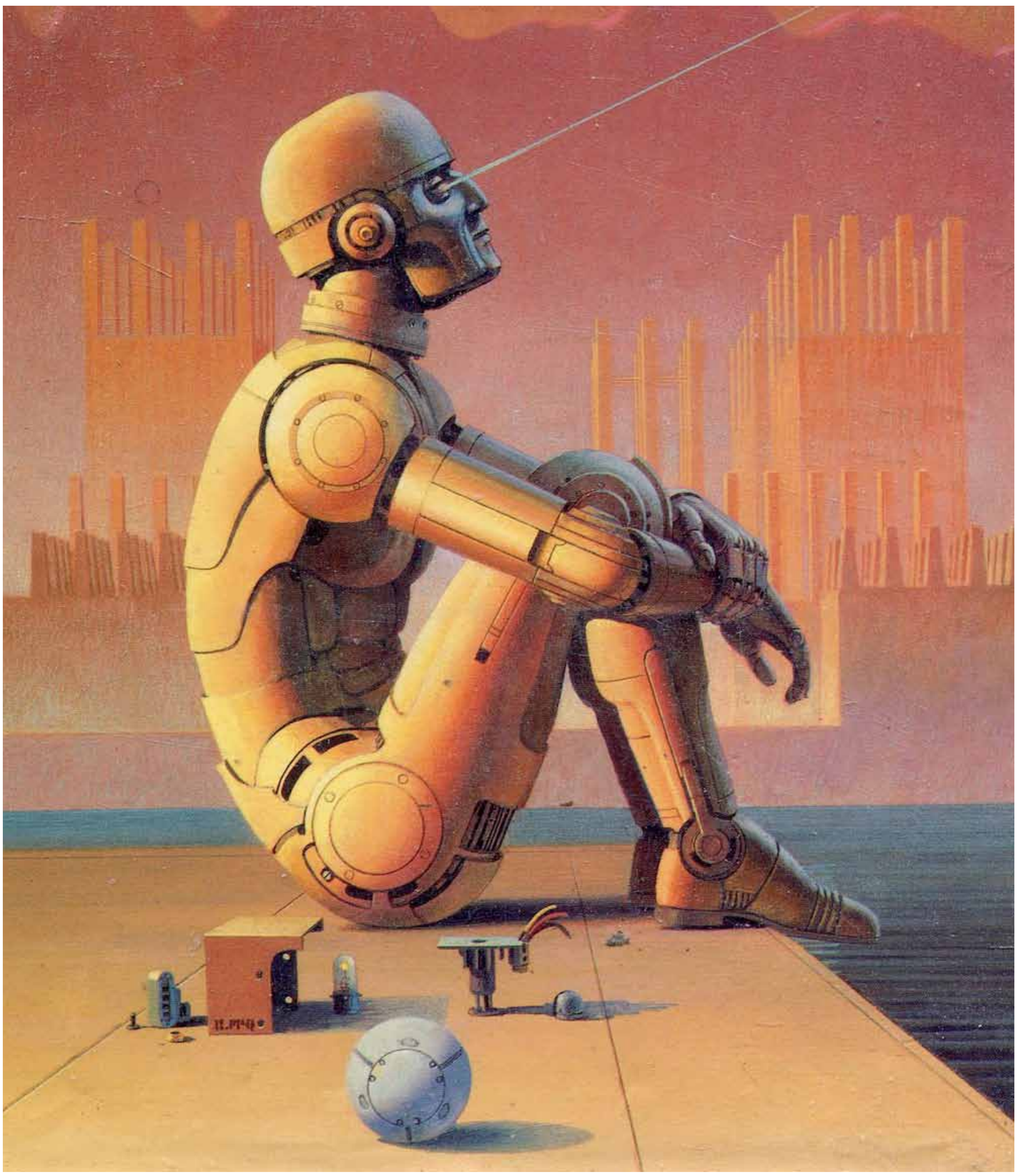
Saturday 31 October 2015

Mind Transfer

Your brain is a memory storage format, so in theory it can be uploaded...

www.carboncopies.org

“Carboncopies.org is a nonprofit organisation with a goal of advancing the reverse engineering of neural tissue and complete brains, Whole Brain Emulation and development of neuroprostheses that reproduce functions of mind, creating what we call Substrate-Independent Minds (SIM).”



A project by Experimental Jetset
for Fotomuseum Winterthur

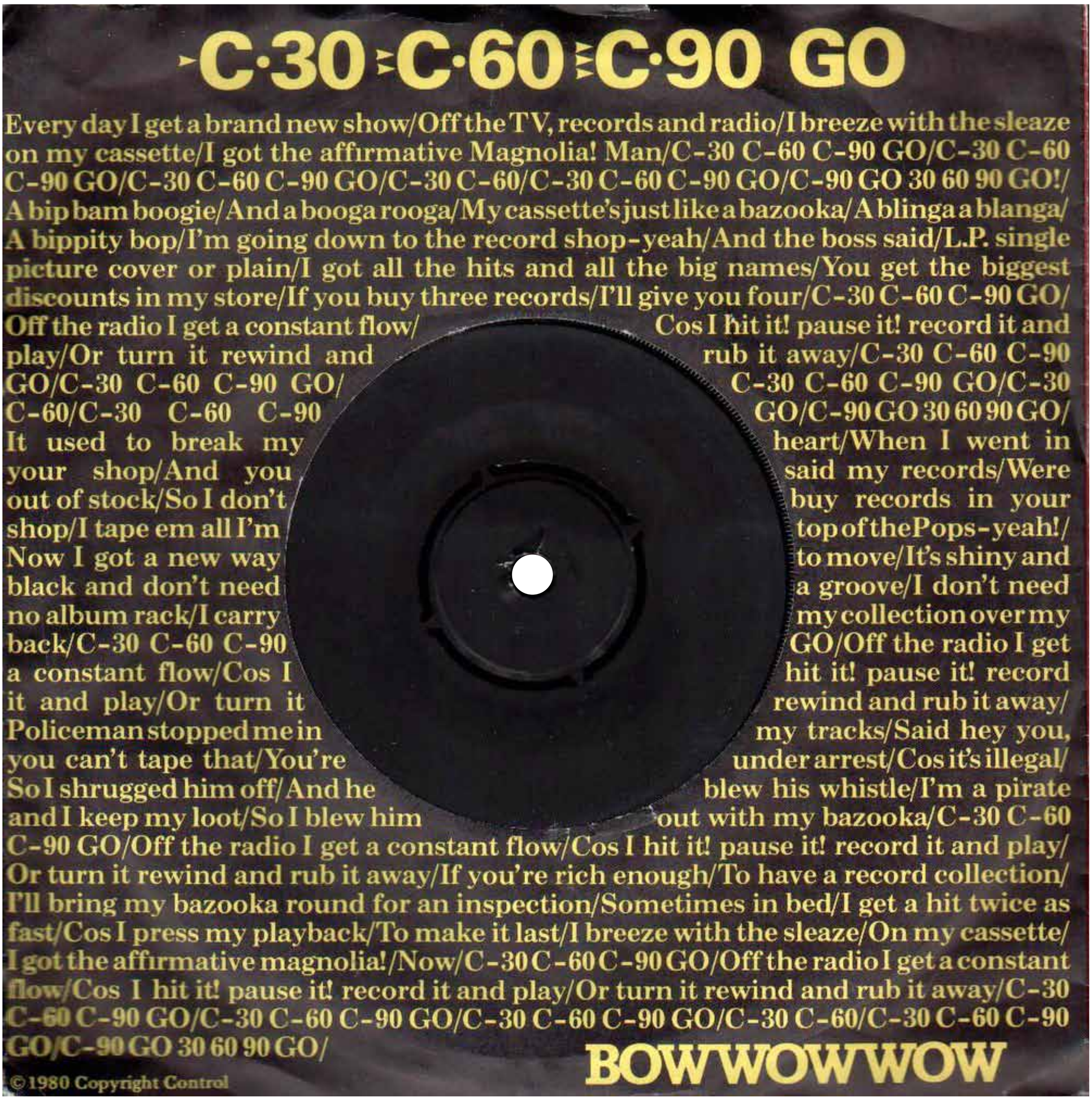
Illustration: Ralph McQuarrie
from ‘Robot Visions’ (Isaac Asimov, 1990)

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Sunday 1 November 2015

Bow Wow Wow

C-30, C-60, C-90, Go! (1980)
Sleeve: Jamie Reid



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for Fotomuseum Winterthur

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lostformats.tumblr.com

Monday

2 November 2015

Remember: you’re being recorded Photo: Sophie Mauch



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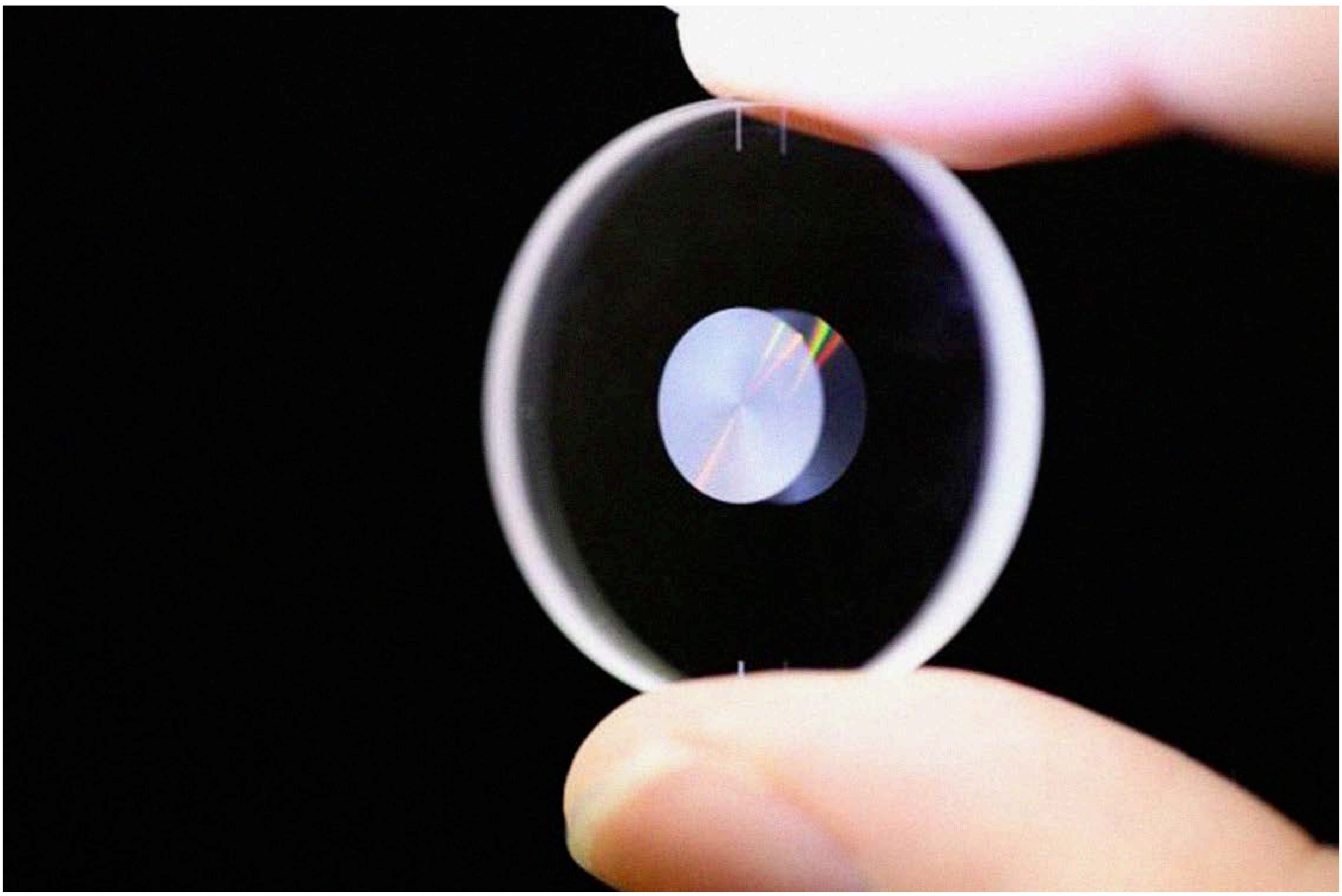
Tuesday 3 November 2015

Fifth Dimension

Forget 3D holographic data storage, this piece of silica glass uses 5 dimensions to store 360 TB for an unlimited period of time. It's been called the 'Superman Crystal'.

via physicsworld.com

"The researchers claim that their memory crystals open the era of 'unlimited lifetime data storage.' As well as providing unprecedented capacity and high-speed reading, fused quartz is exceptionally stable and can withstand temperatures up to 1000 °C. 'We think it should potentially last a million years,' enthuses Zhang, meaning the stored data will likely outlast the human race."

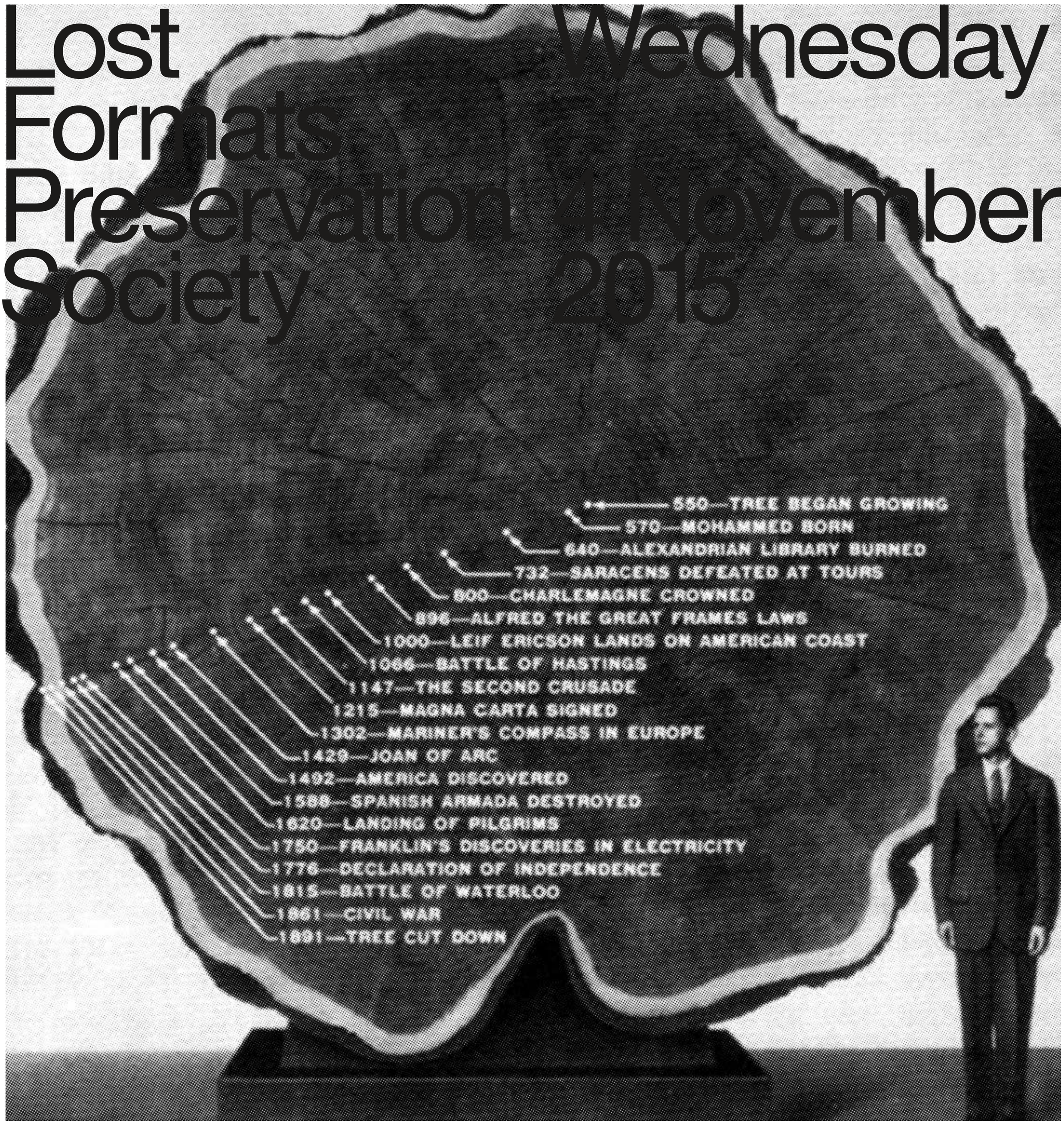


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Wednesday 4 November 2015



Tree Disks

According to fileformats.archiveteam.org, tree rings can be considered a file format.

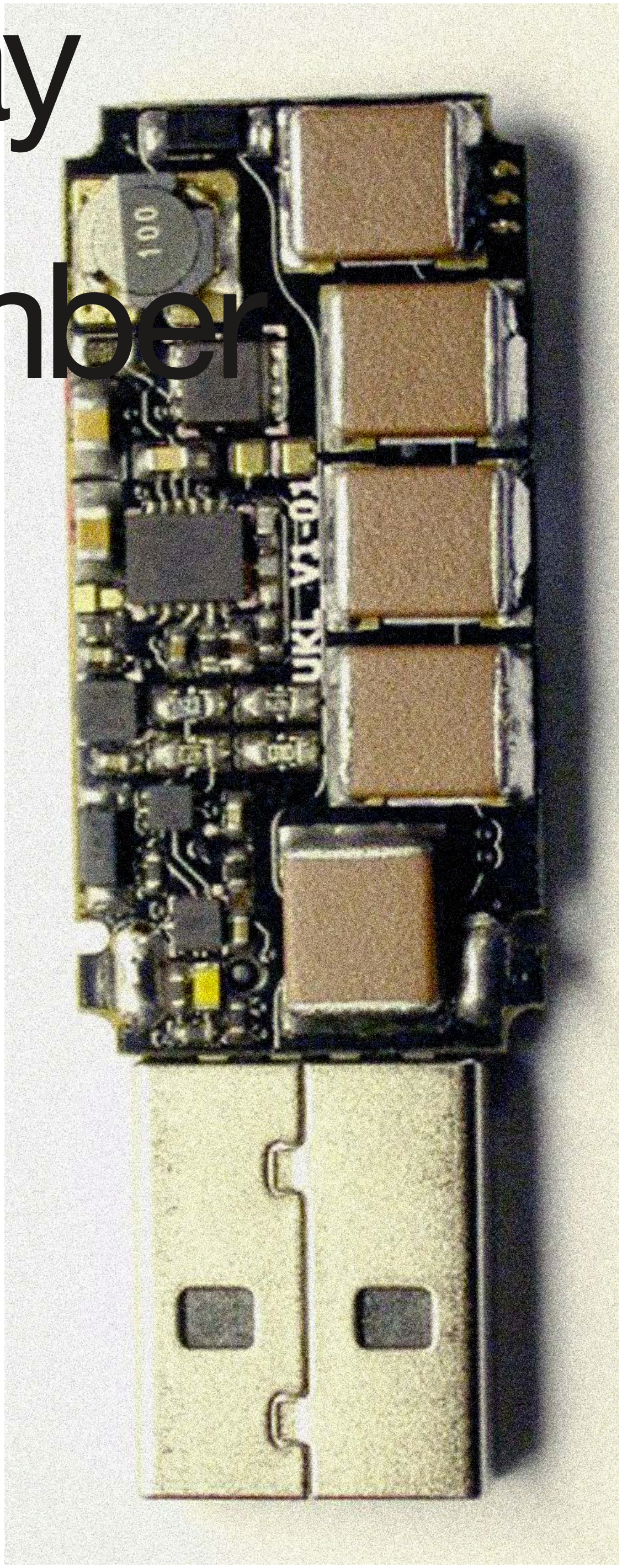
And indeed, there are several software programs that analyze/read tree-ring data: Tellervo, Dendrobox, TriCycle, Corem, Corina, Dendroclim 2002, LignoStation, etc.

A project by Experimental Jetset
for Fotomuseum Winterthur

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Thursday

5 November 2015



USB Killer

A USB Killer is a USB stick designed to destroy your computer by running a high voltage current through the motherboard.

See it in action here:

www.youtube.com/watch?v=_TidRpVWXBE

Now, go make your own:

www.kukuruku.co/hub/diy/usb-killer

A project by Experimental Jetset for Fotomuseum Winterthur

Lost Formats Preservation Society
lostformats.tumblr.com

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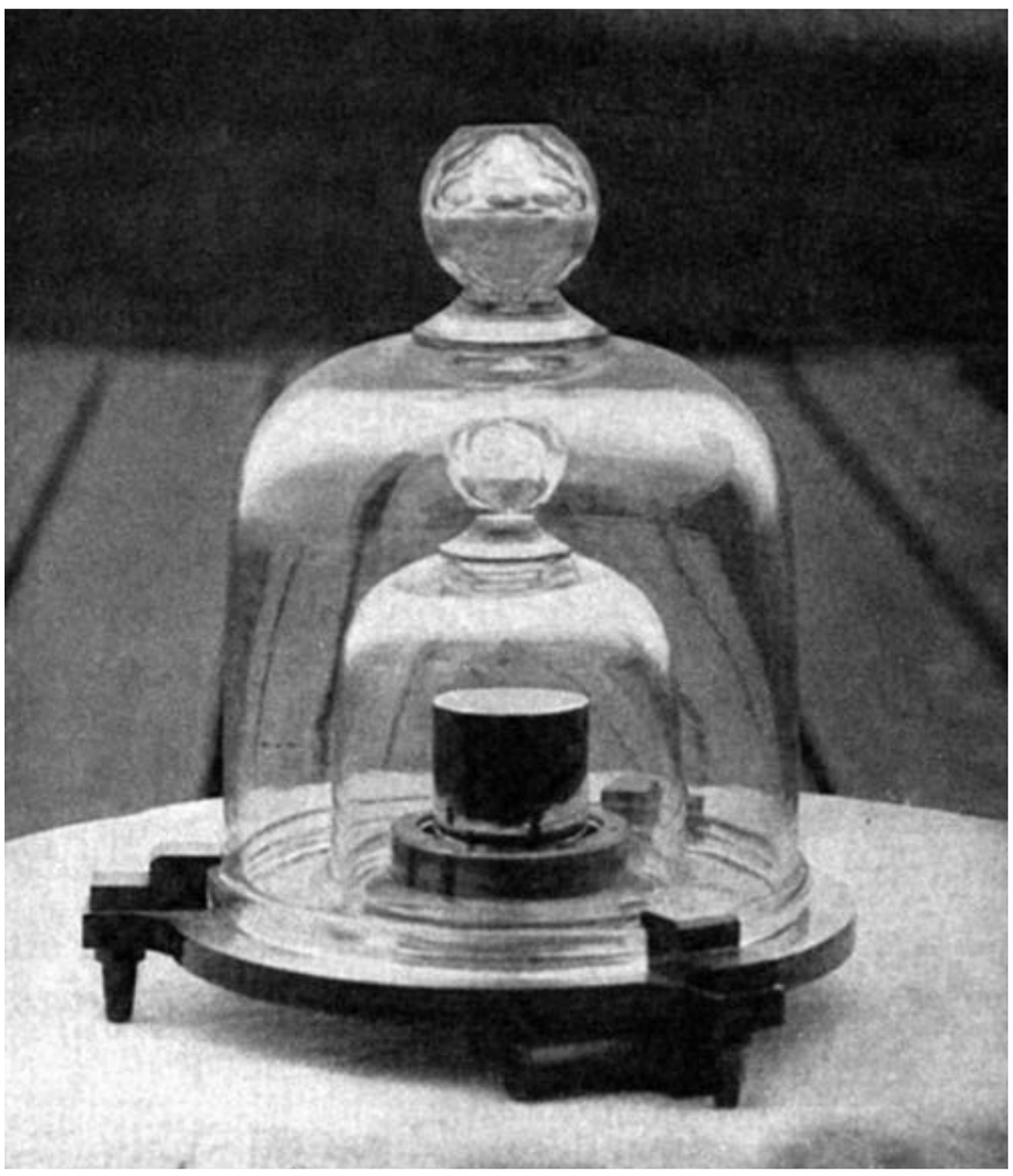
Friday 6 November 2015

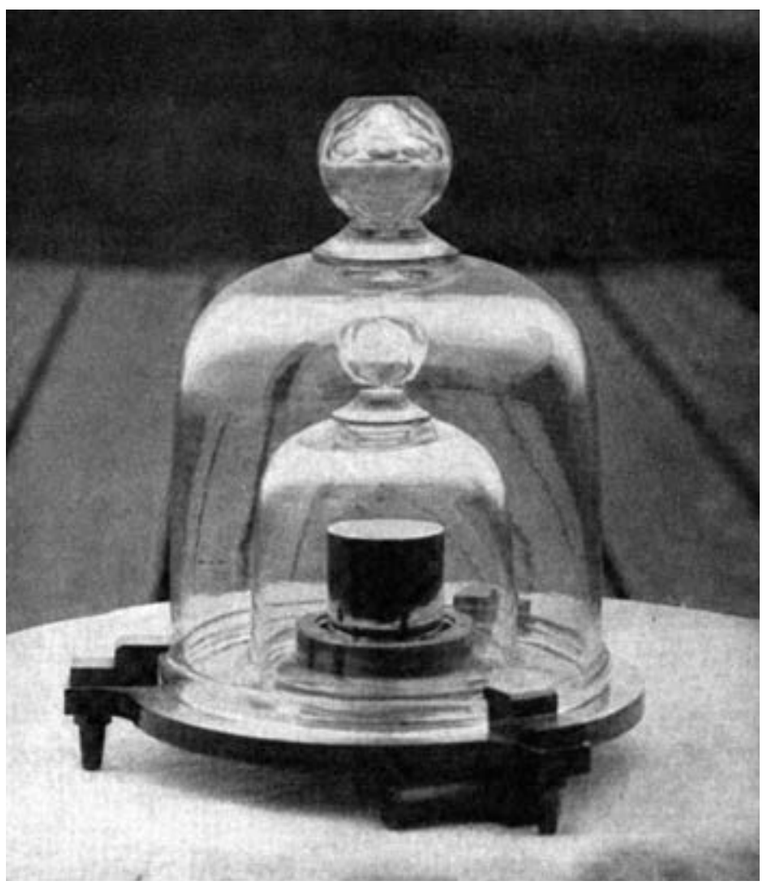
Base Units

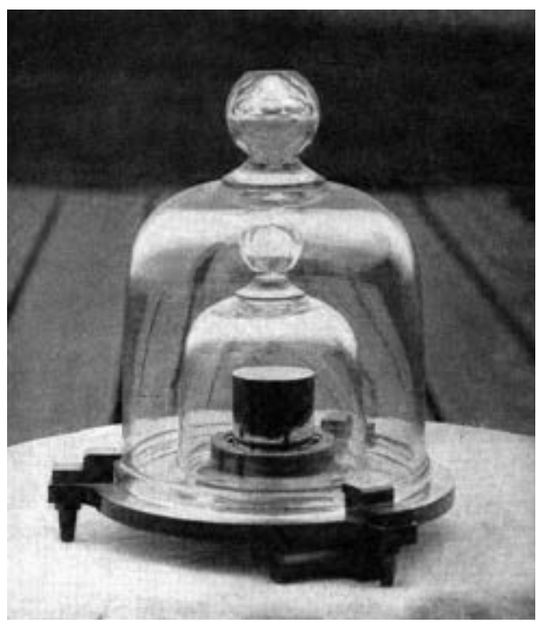
As it turns out, there is an International System of Units!

See:
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/International_System_of_Units

Still, nobody knows how much a kilogram weighs, exactly. It is the last standard unit that is defined by a physical object. In 2013, the standard was found to have gained weight. A new definition for the kilogram is underway. In fact, the International Committee for Weights and Measures (CIPM) has proposed to redefine the entire System of Units.







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Saturday 7 November 2015

Paper Discs, part 1

Tachograph disc, used to record a vehicle's speed, distance and its driver's activity.

Made of wax coated paper, it measures 123 mm. Although the majority of tachographs use a digital flash memory card (the data is stored as a .ddd file), analogue versions are still in wide use.

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Sunday 8 November 2015

Emigre 57
Winter 2000/2001

Audio Cassette

Lost
Formats
Preservation
Society

Lost
Emigre57
Preservation
Society

Lost
Formats
Preservation
Society

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Society

Monday

9 November
2015

Emigre 57
Winter 2000/2001

Video Cassette



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Tuesday
10
November
2015

Vibrations to Word

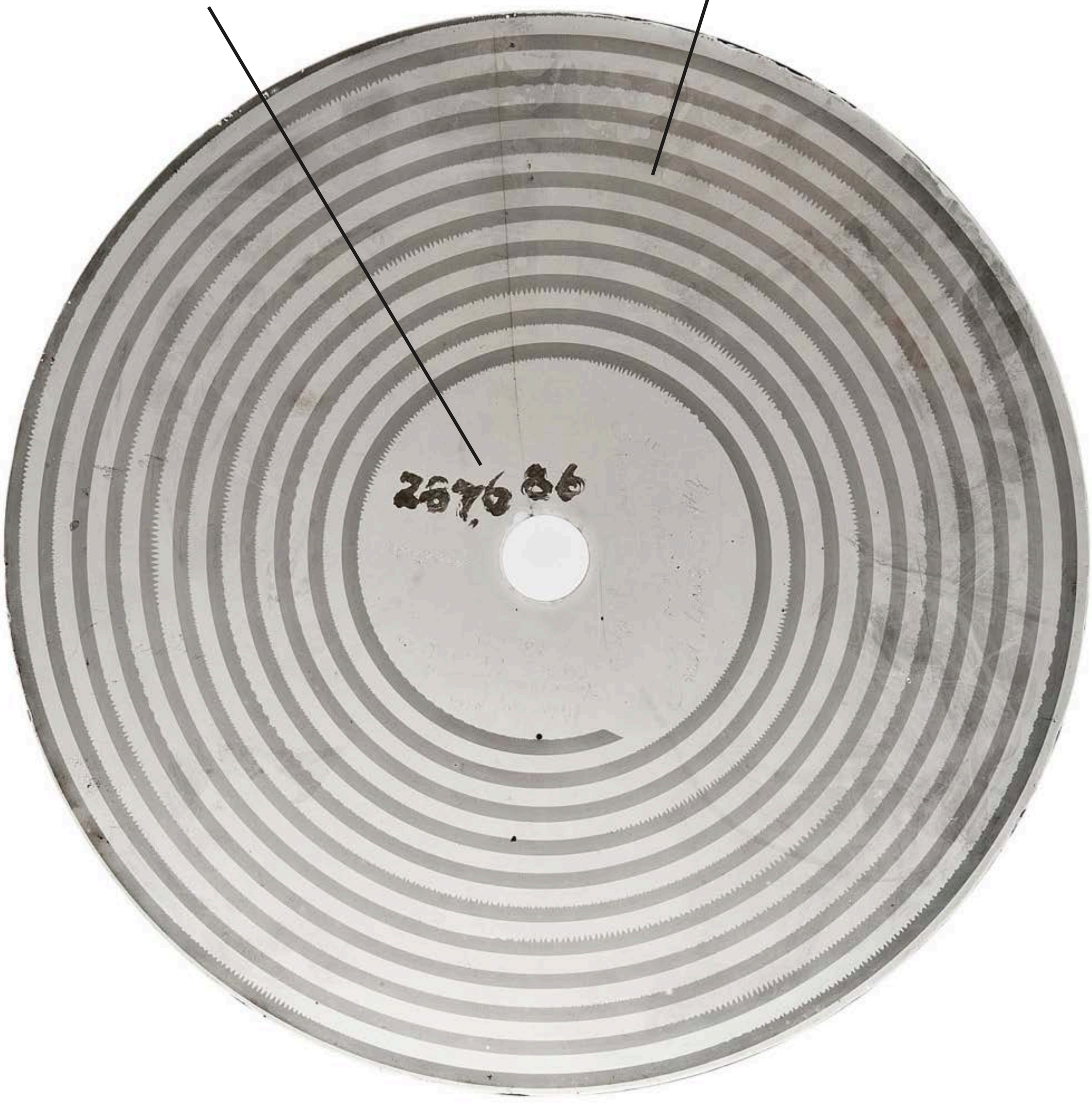
Volta Record no. 2. Glass disc recording, produced photographically on November 17, 1884.

Inscription: “Exp. III Nov. 17, 1884 / Style Vibrations to Word / Barometer / H.G. Rogers”.

Content: male voice saying “ba–ro–me–ter”, each syllable distinct and repeated.

This disc came from Alexander Graham Bell’s Volta Laboratory.

Source: Newsdesk of the Smithsonian



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Wednesday 11 November 2015



Prototype of the Swipe Card, 1969

Swipe Card

The maximum storage capacity of a magnetic stripe card is 1607 bits. Theoretically, it could store an image of 50x32 pixels: 

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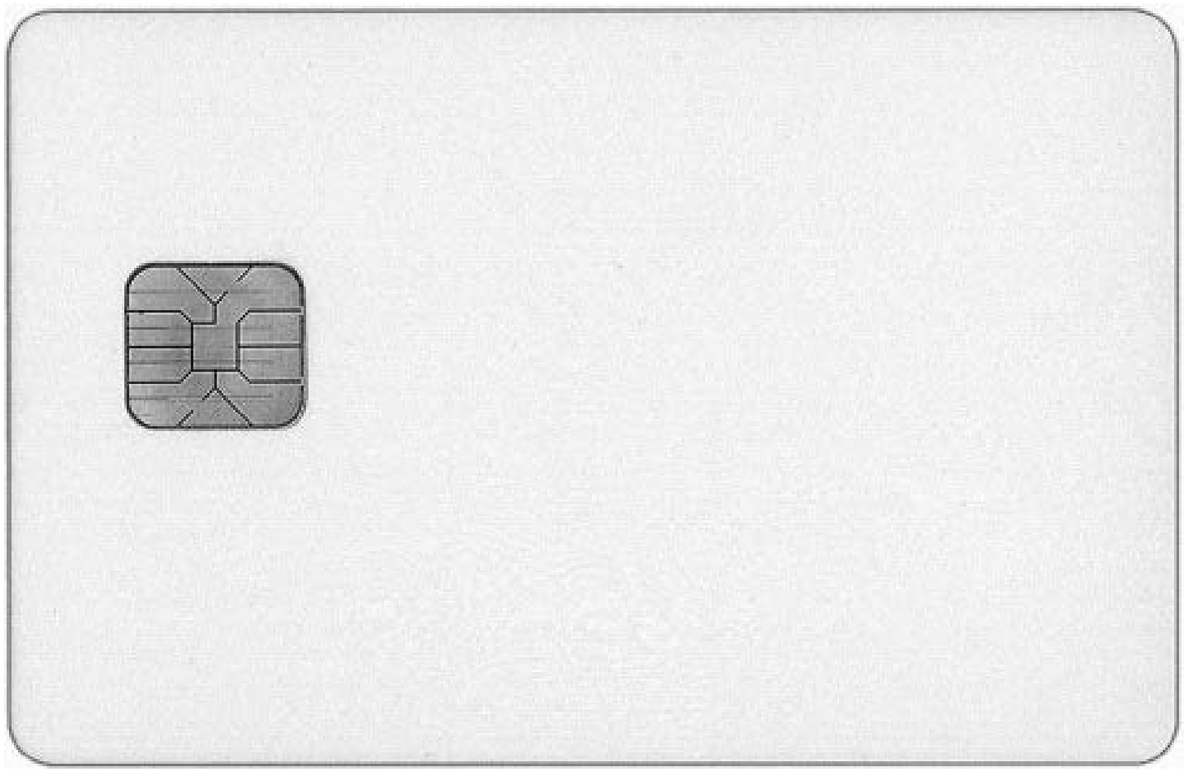
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Thursday 12 November 2015

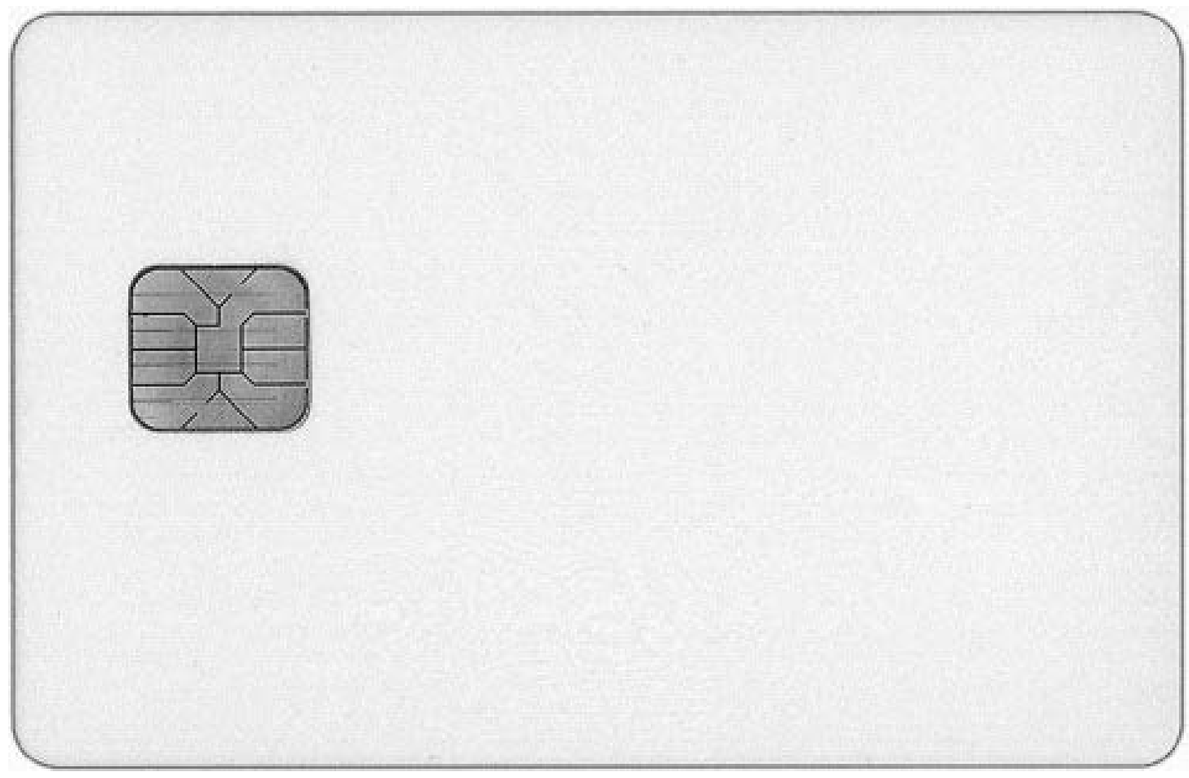
ISO 7810

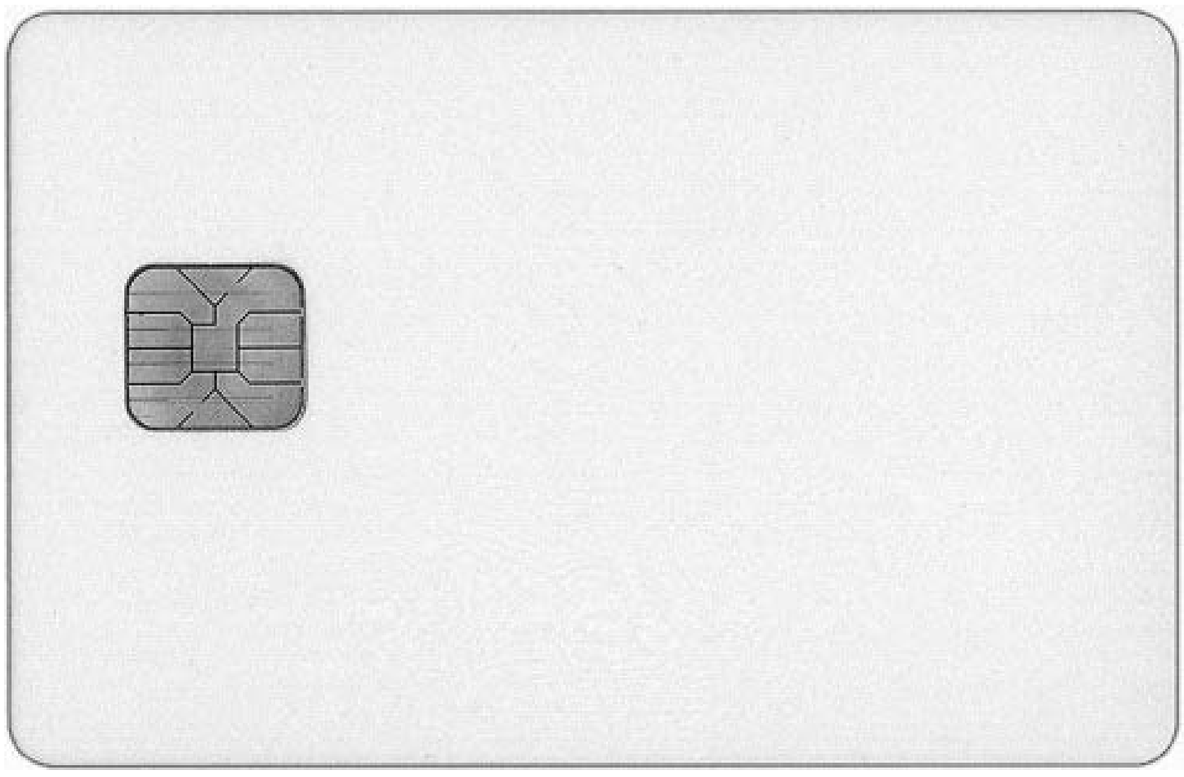
Smart (chip) cards can hold up to 1Mbit of data.
The equivalent of an image of 500x324 pixels:

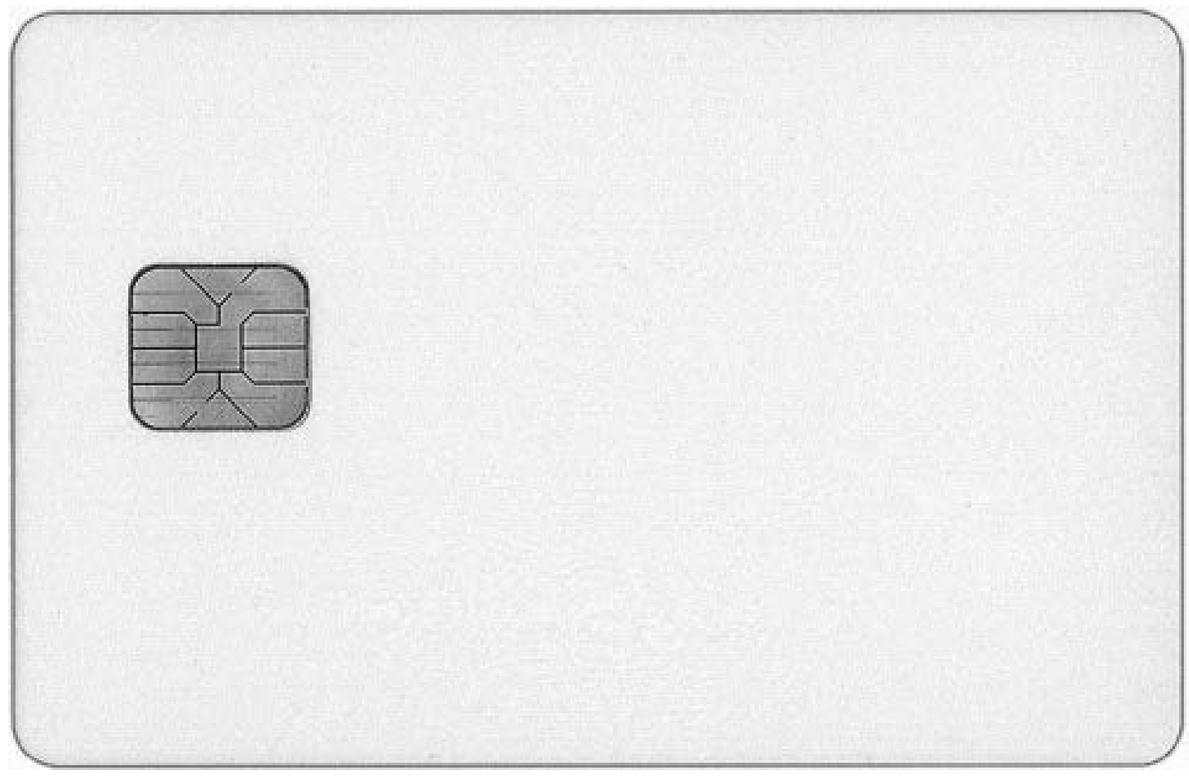


There's an international standard dealing with the dimensions of these cards:

en.wikipedia.org/wiki/ISO/IEC_7810







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Friday

13 November 2015







Vinyl Solution

‘Scrap Tiny’ (2014). Melted vinyl sculptures by Delaware (Japan): www.delaware.gr.jp/SCRAP/TGV

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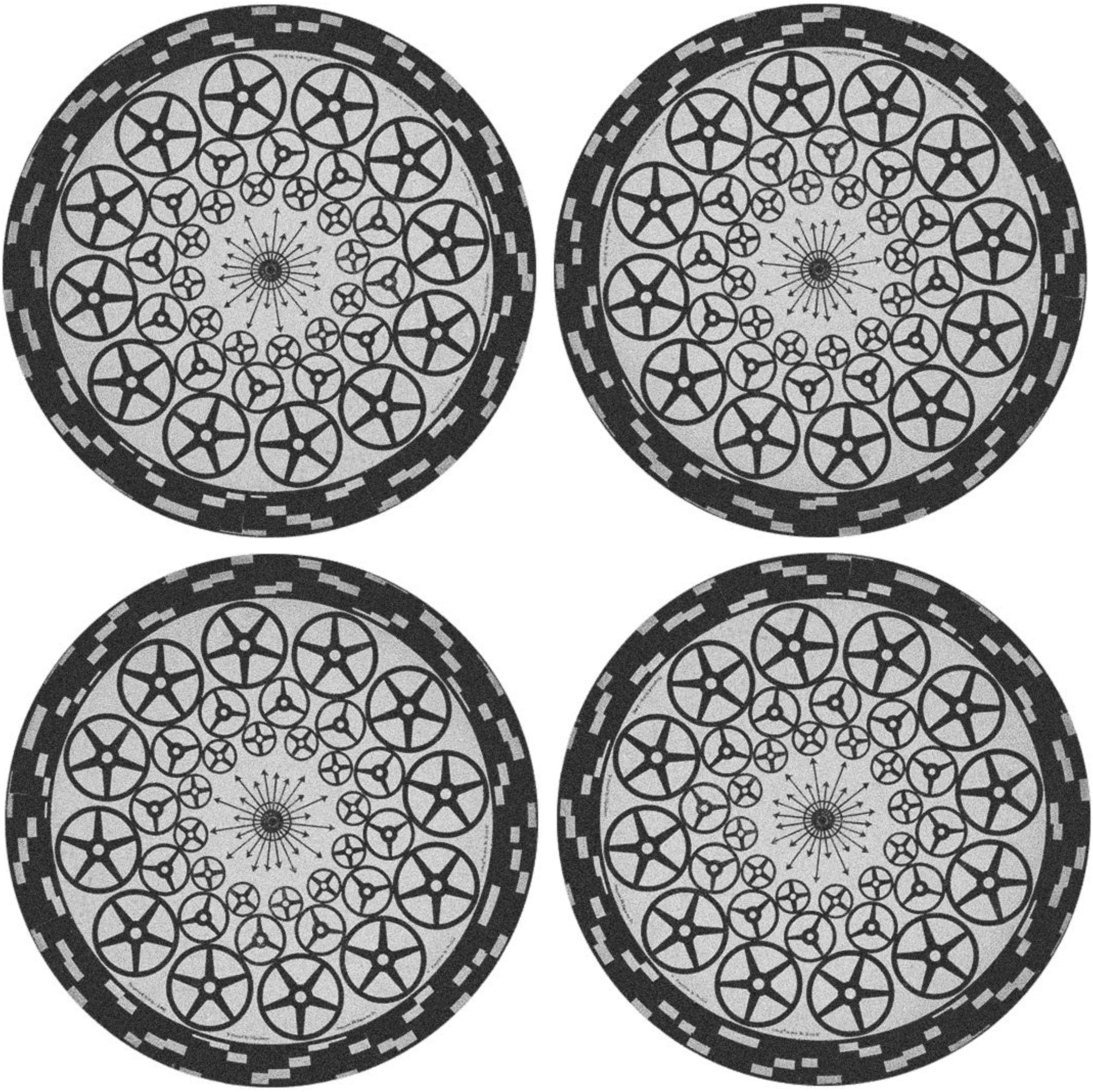
Saturday 14 November 2015

Paper Discs, part 2

Phenakistiscope disc, invented by Joseph Plateau in 1832.

This particular disc was made by Scottish mathematician Edward Sang.

Image via www.thisiscolossal.com

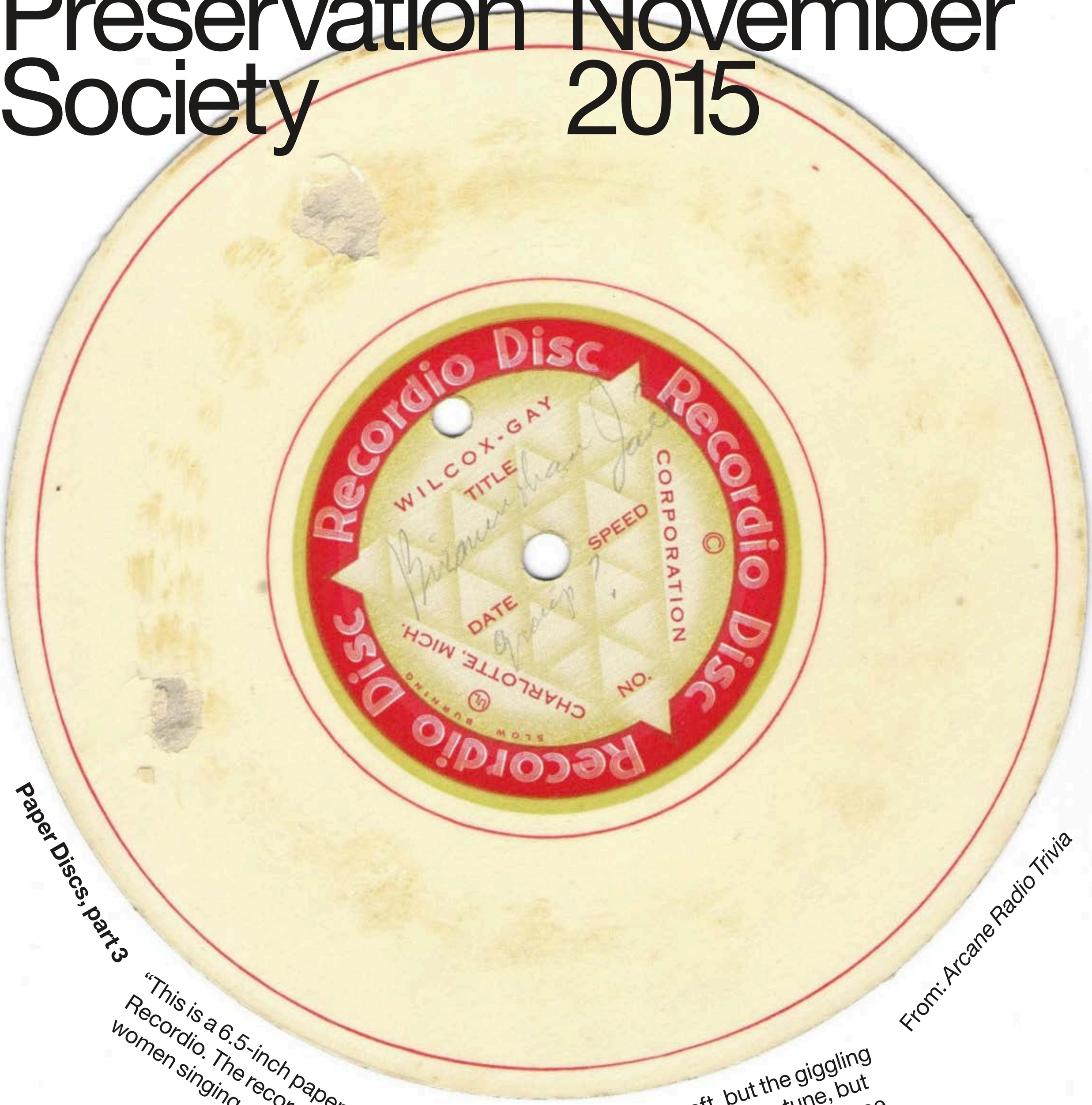


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Sunday 15 November 2015



Paper Discs, part 3

"This is a 6.5-inch paper-core Wilcox-Gay Recordio. The recording is of at least 3 women singing a hymn in good harmony. The vocal part is soft, but the giggling is not. I don't recognize the tune, but I and Phonozoic both date these type of Recordio blanks to after 1947."

From: *Arcane Radio Trivia*

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for Fotomuseum Winterthur

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Monday

16 November 2015

Unbreakable

Perma.cc is an initiative that aims to cure the link-rot epidemic.

www.journalistsresource.org/studies/society/internet/website-linking-best-practices-media-online-publishers

“When websites disappear or change, any piece of work – be it a blog post, book, or scholarly dissertation – that linked to those resources no longer makes quite as much sense. And some of these now-moldering links are structurally important to the fragile, enduring edifice of human knowledge: in fact, according to one recent study, half of the links in Supreme Court decisions either lead to pages with substantially altered content or no longer go anywhere, at all.”

Death to Link Rot!

Death to Link Rot!

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Tuesday

17 November 2015

Paper Discs, part 4
Perhaps more computational device than storage format, here are some circular slide rulers from the ISRM (International Slide Rule Museum).

Altitude Correction Computer, 1943



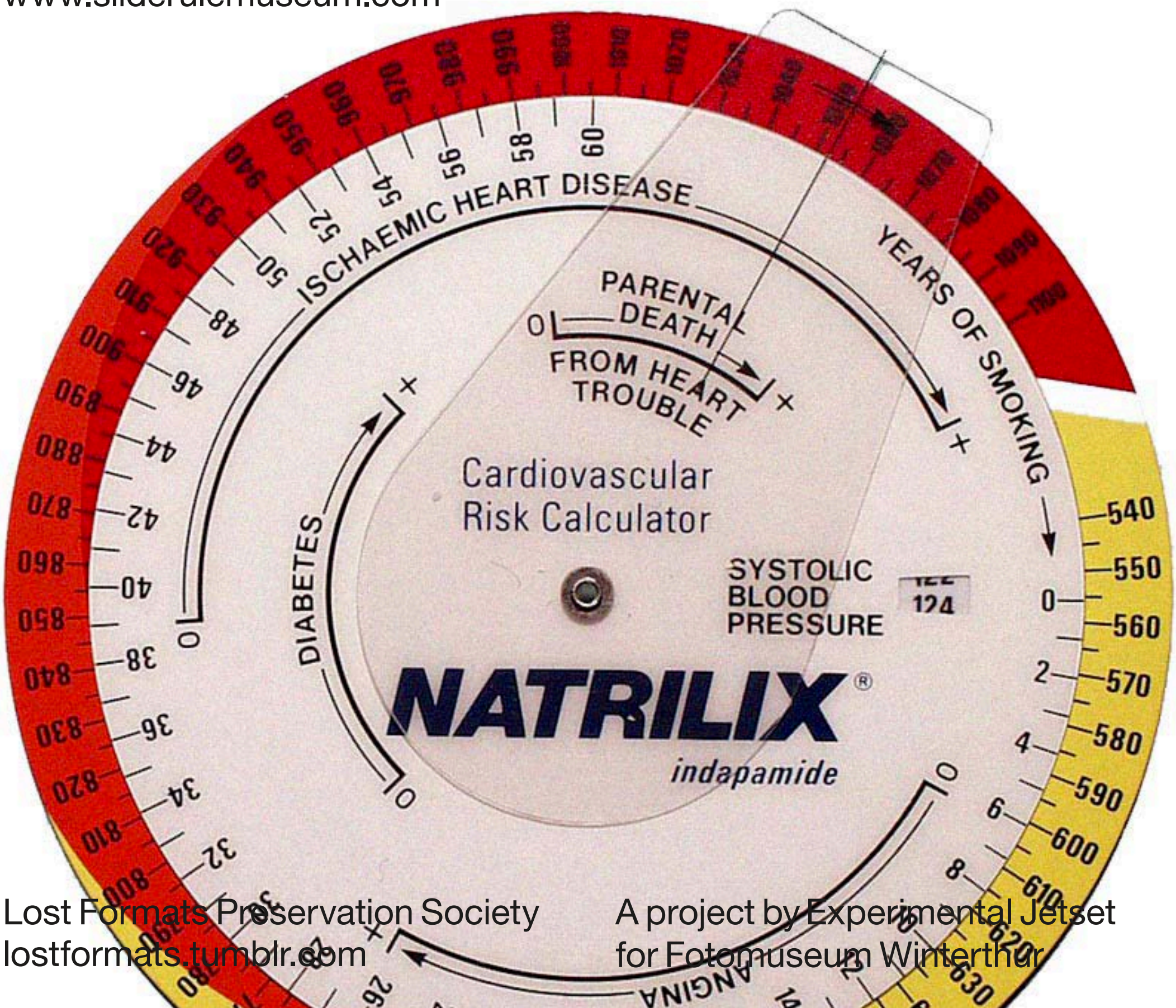
A project by Experimental Jetset
for Fotomuseum Winterthur

Wednesday

18 November 2015

Paper Discs, part 5
From the ISRM
(International Slide Rule Museum)
www.sliderulemuseum.com

Cardiovascular Risc
Calculator, year unknown

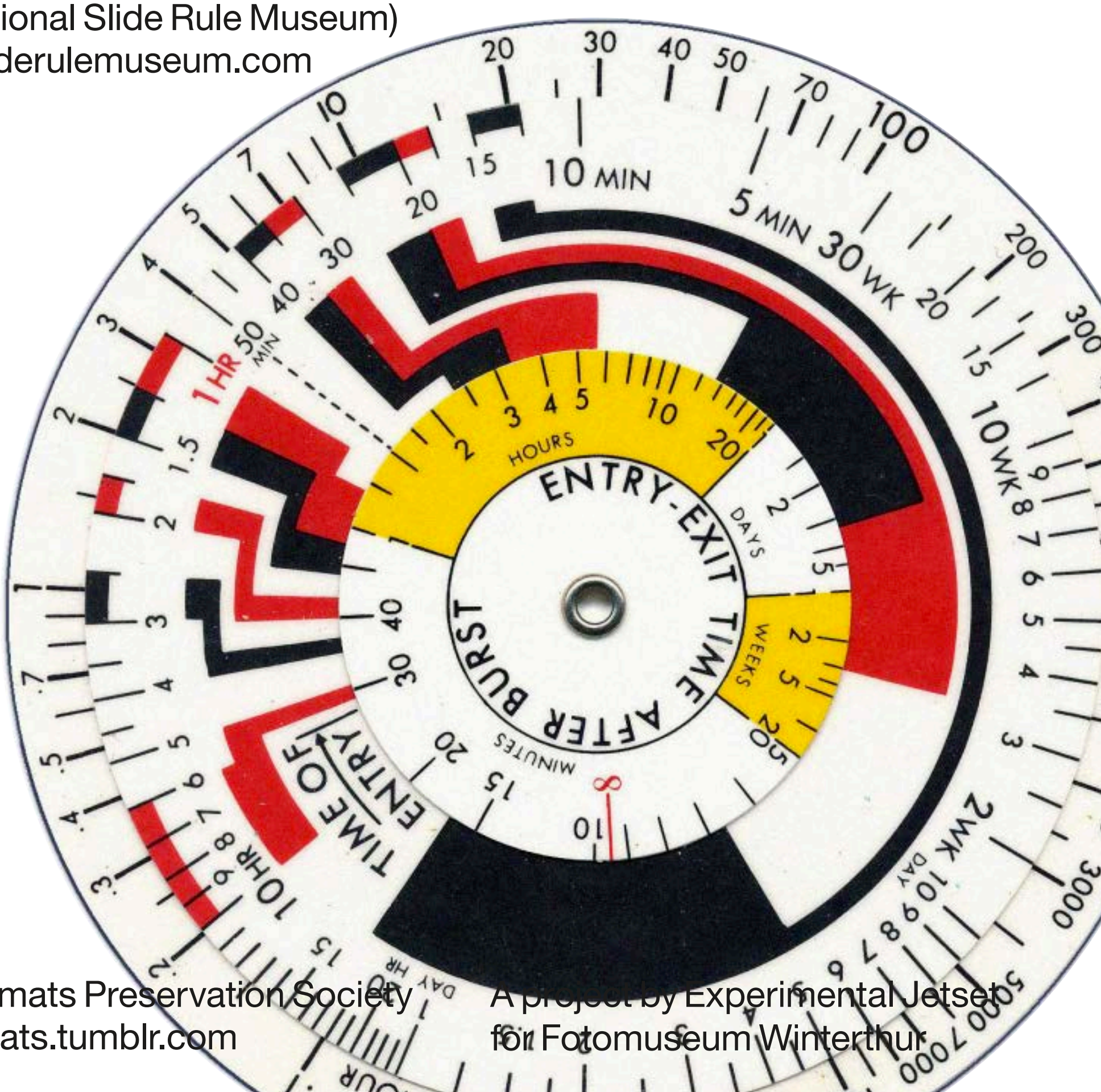


Thursday

19 November 2015

Paper Discs, part 6
From the ISRM
(International Slide Rule Museum)
www.sliderulemuseum.com

Radiac Nuclear Yield
Calculator, 1968



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Thursday 19 November 2015

Standardized
The story of Lena, the woman whose photograph became the standard test image of research on digital image processing.

“The image is often used to test techniques thanks to its mix of textures, shading and detail.” (BBC)

The fact that she was naked had nothing to do with it, we’re sure.

www.ee.cityu.edu.hk/~lmpo/lenna/Lenna97.html
www.bbc.co.uk/news/technology-19260550



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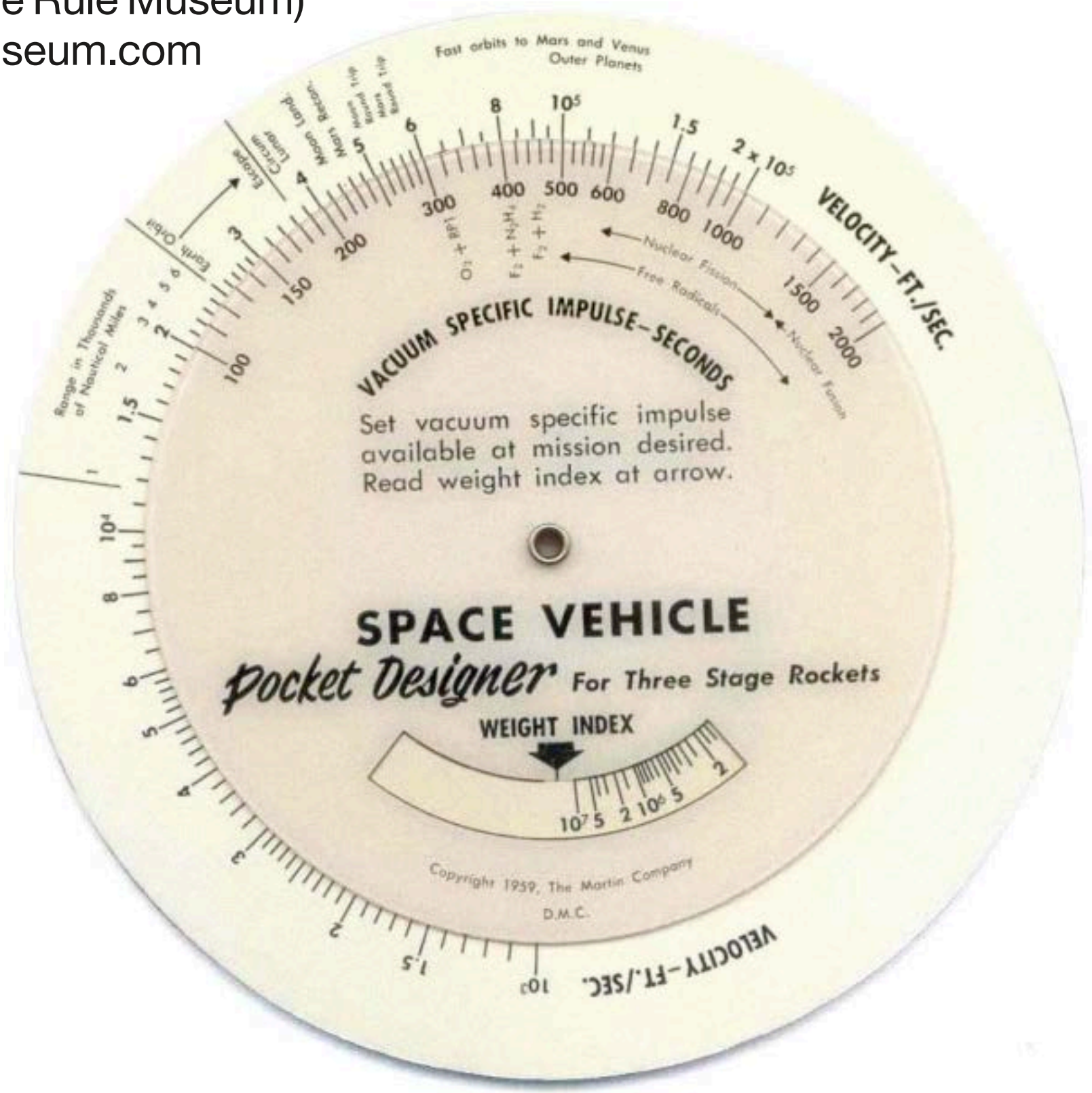
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Friday

20 November 2015

Paper Discs, part 7
From the ISRM
(International Slide Rule Museum)
www.sliderulemuseum.com

Space Vehicle
Pocket Designer, 1959



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Friday 20 November 2015

Selected Definitions of Digitization and Preservation Terms

Born analog
Content that was originally created using non-digital means, (such as books, reports, correspondence, maps, film photographs, or analog (tape) audio or video recordings); often used when referring to content that has since been digitized.

Born digital
Content originally created using digital means, such as a text document or a digital photograph.

Dark repository
Digital repository that has no public user access. A dark repository can be used solely for preservation purposes and be permanently dark, or it can be temporarily designated as dark while its contents are being added and verified prior to being made ready for public access.

Dim repository
Digital repository that has limited public user access. Repositories may customize different aspects of user access; e.g. one repository may allow users to add, access,

LOCKSS
(*Lots of Copies Keep Stuff Safe*)
International community initiative that provides digital preservation tools and support to libraries and archives. The term is often referenced in the museum community as a reminder of the importance of redundancy. See also: Redundancy.

Migration
Process of converting files into new file formats or transferring onto new types of storage media in order to guard against data loss caused by technological obsolescence, or failure/degradation of media.

Obsolescence
The state, process, or condition of becoming obsolete (i.e. out-of-date). Elec- tronic data created or stored on obsolete soft- ware or hardware can be difficult to preserve and/or migrate.

Reformatting
Copying informational con- tent to a new medium or a new file format to improve access and/or protect the original from unnecessary touching/handling.

TRAC
(*Trustworthy Repositories Audit and Certification*)
Checklist and set of criteria that has become the de facto standard for assessing the reliability, commitment, and readiness of institutions to assume long-term preservation responsibilities for a repository or archive.

From: Conserve-O-Gram nr. 22/6

www.nps.gov/museum/publications/conserveogram/22-06.pdf

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Saturday 21 November 2015

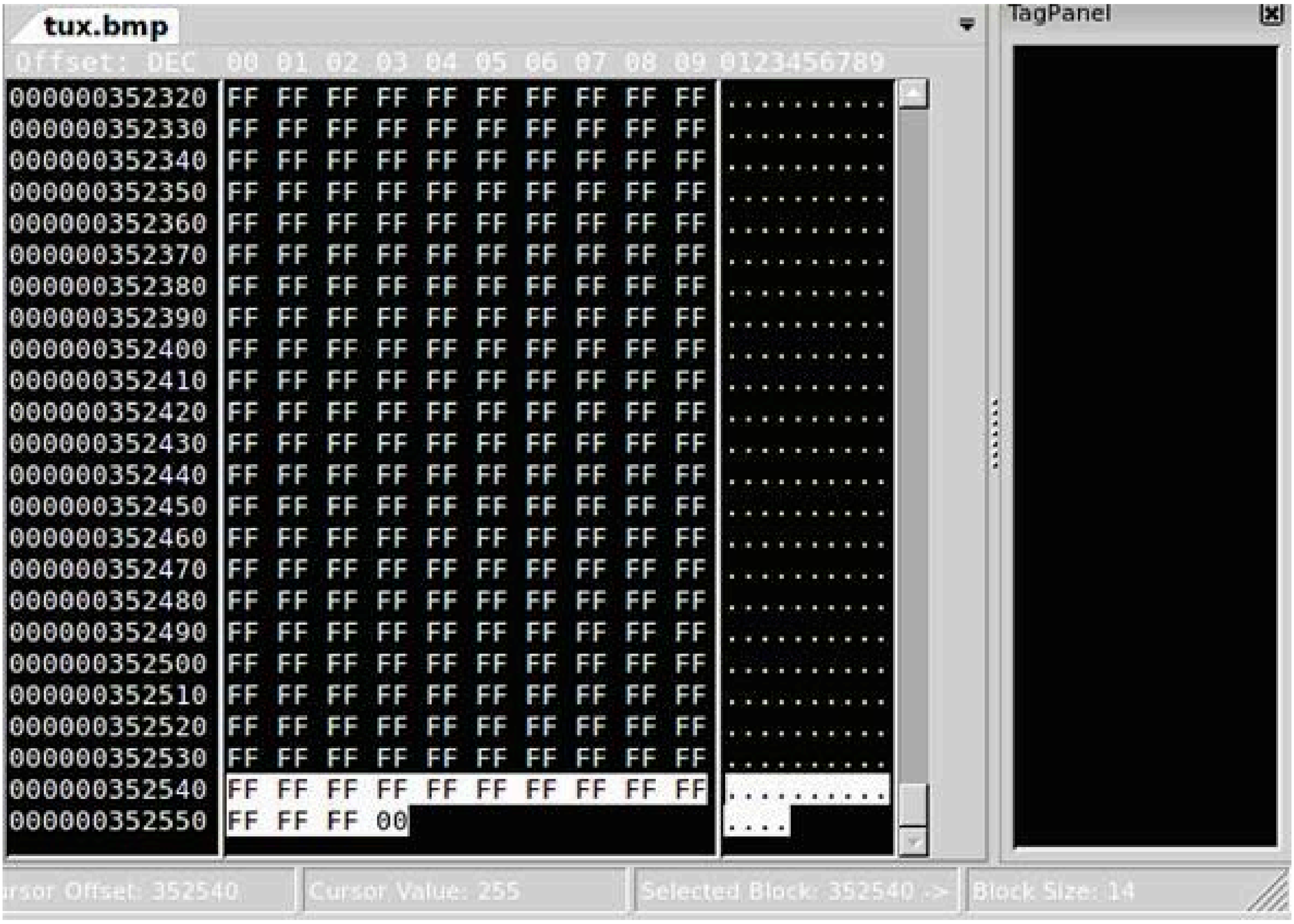
Hidden in plain sight
Steganography is the practice of concealing a file, message, image, or video within another file, message, image, or video. The word steganography combines the Greek words *steganos*, meaning “covered, concealed, or protected”, and *graphein* meaning “writing”.

Some examples are: text in media files, pictures in other pictures, pictures in video files, files archived inside pictures.

Wikipedia:
en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Steganography

The threats of steganography:
www.gfi.com/blog/threats-steganography/

A guide to steganography:
www.null-byte.wonderhowto.com/how-to/guide-steganography-part-1-hide-secret-messages-images-0130797/



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Sunday 22 November 2015

Bend it

Databending (or data bending) is the process of manipulating information from within a media file of a certain format. Different techniques of the process can be grouped into three categories:

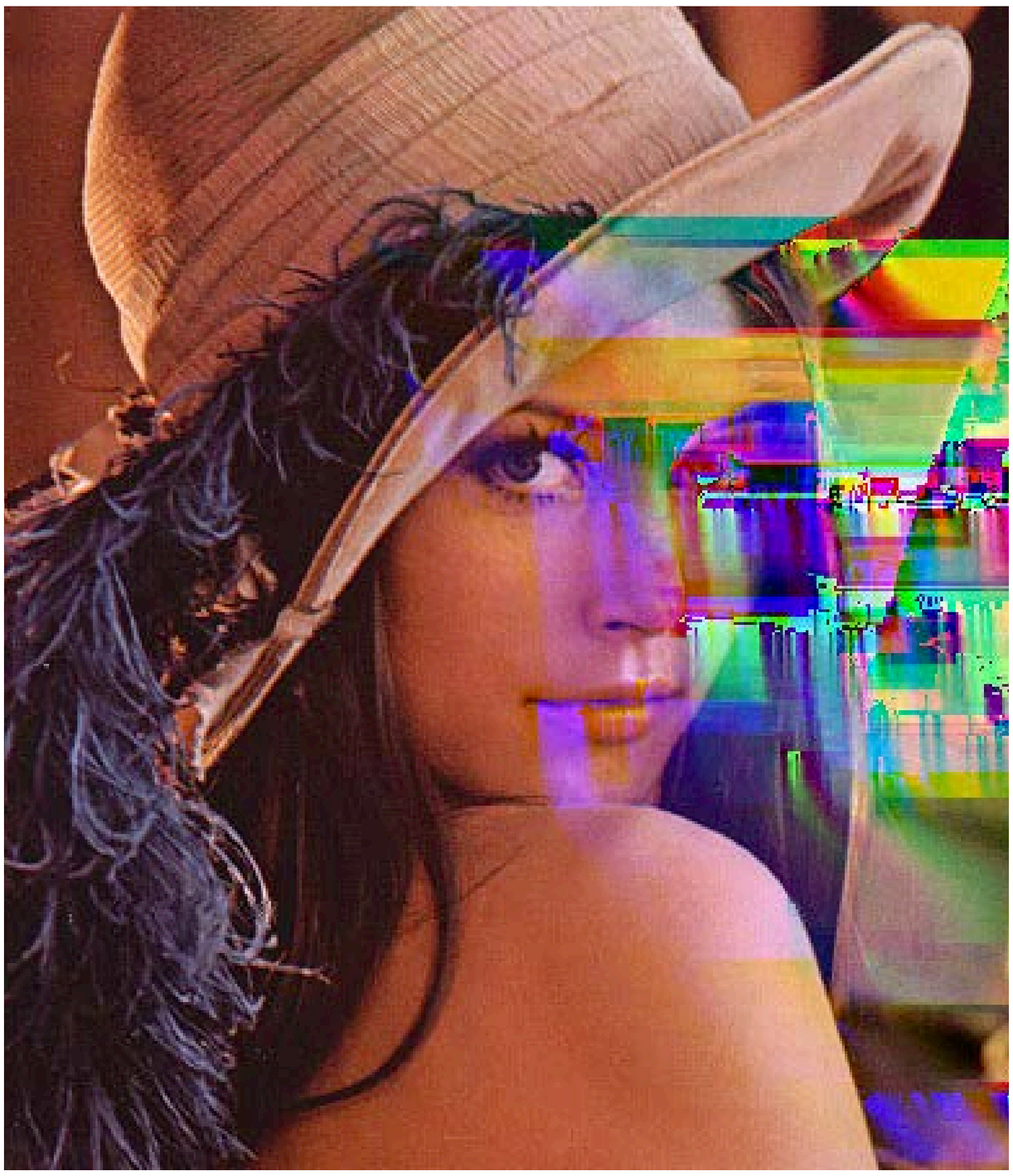
Incorrect editing: Files of a certain format are manipulated using software designed to edit files of a different format.

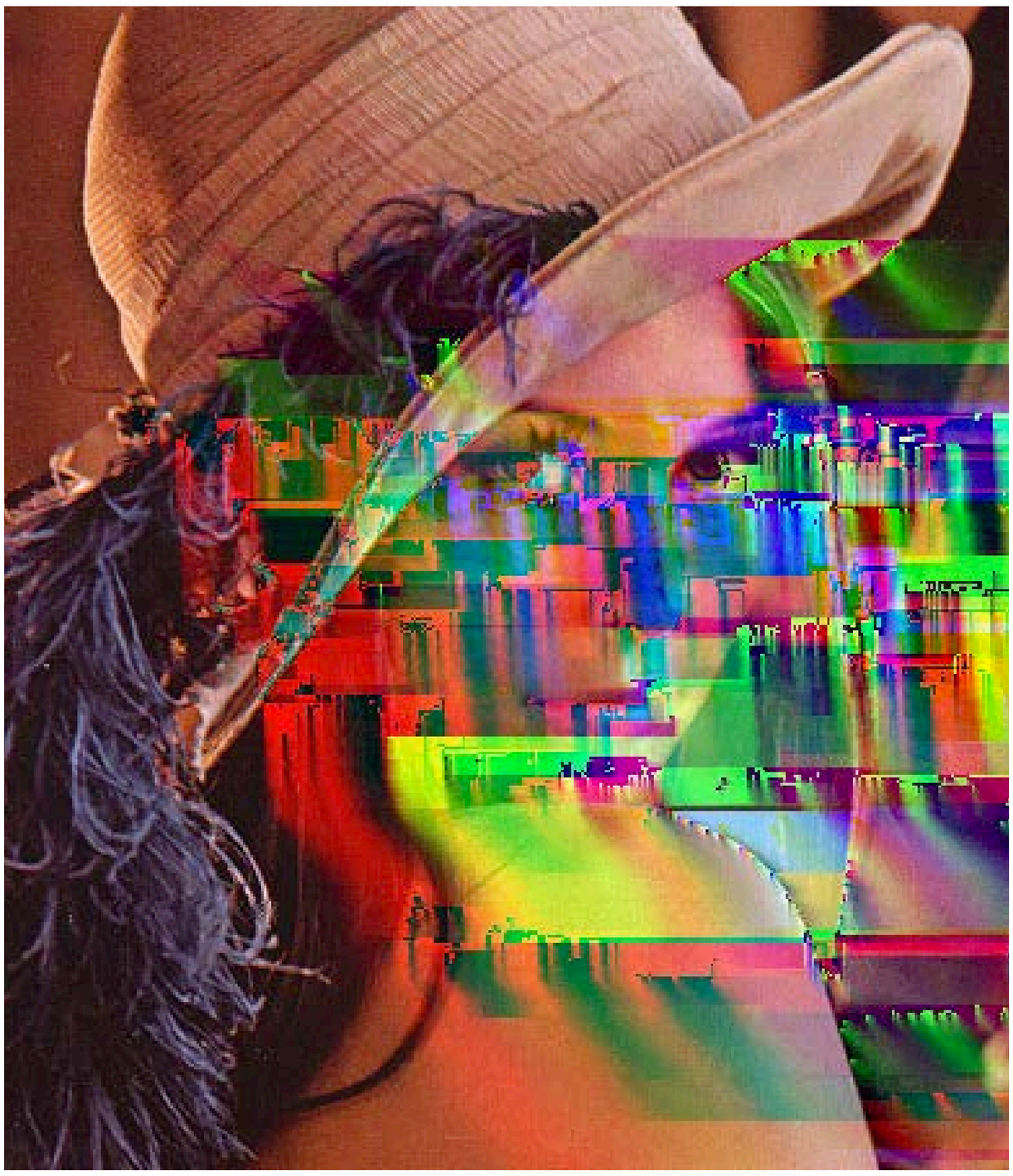
Reinterpretation: Files are simply converted from one medium to another.

Forced errors: Known software bugs are exploited to force the program to terminate, usually while writing a file.

Converting the raw data in a text editor would fall under incorrect editing, while reinterpretation contains a subcategory called sonification, in which data other than audio is introduced simultaneously with musical audio data. The last technique is the hardest of the three to accomplish, often yielding highly unpredictable results.

en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Databending





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Monday 23 November 2015

Dance Of Electricity
By Laurie Anderson

A while ago, I got a call from the Tesla Institute in Belgrade, long distance. The voice was very faint and it said, “Understand do we that much of your work has been dedicated to Nikola Tesla and do we know the blackout of information about this man in the U.S. of A. And so we would like to invite you to the Institute as a free citizen of the world... as a free speaker on American Imperialist Blackout of Information... Capitalist resistance to Technological Progress... the Western World’s obstruction of Innovation. So think about it.” He hung up. I thought: Gee, really a chance to speak my mind, and I started doing some research on Tesla, whose life story is actually really sad.

Basically, he was the inventor of AC current, lots of kinds of generators and the Tesla coil. His dream was wireless energy. And he was working on a system in which you could plug appliances directly into the ground. A system which he never really perfected. Tesla came over from Graz and went to work for Thomas Edison. Edison couldn’t stand Tesla for several reasons. One was that Tesla showed up for work every day in formal dress–morning coat, spats, top hat and gloves – and this just wasn’t the American Way at the time. Edison also hated Tesla because Tesla invented so many things while wearing these clothes.

Edison did his best to prevent conversion to AC and did everything he could to discredit it. In his later years, Edison was something of a showman and he went around on the Chautauqua circuit in upstate New York giving demonstrations of the evil effects of AC. He always brought a dog with him and he’d get up on stage and say: “Ladies and gentlemen! I will now demonstrate the effects of AC current on this dog!” And he took two bare wires and attached them to the dog’s head and the dog was dead in under thirty seconds.

At any rate, I decided to open the series of talks in Belgrade with a song called “The Dance of Electricity” and its beat is derived from an actual dance – an involuntary dance – and it’s the dance you do when one of your fingers gets wedged in a live socket and your arms start pumping up and down and your mouth is slowly opening and closing and you can feel the power but no words will come out.

From the album ‘United States Live’, 1984

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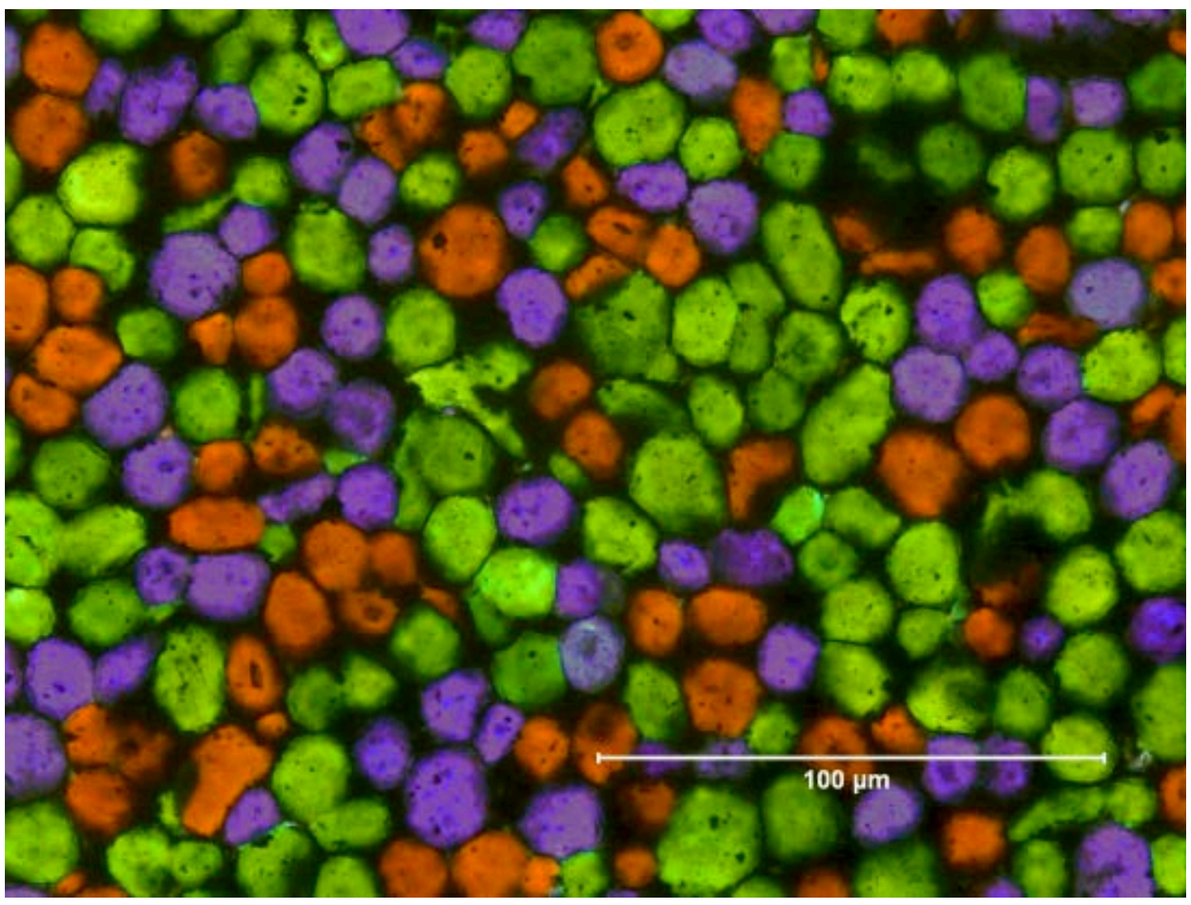
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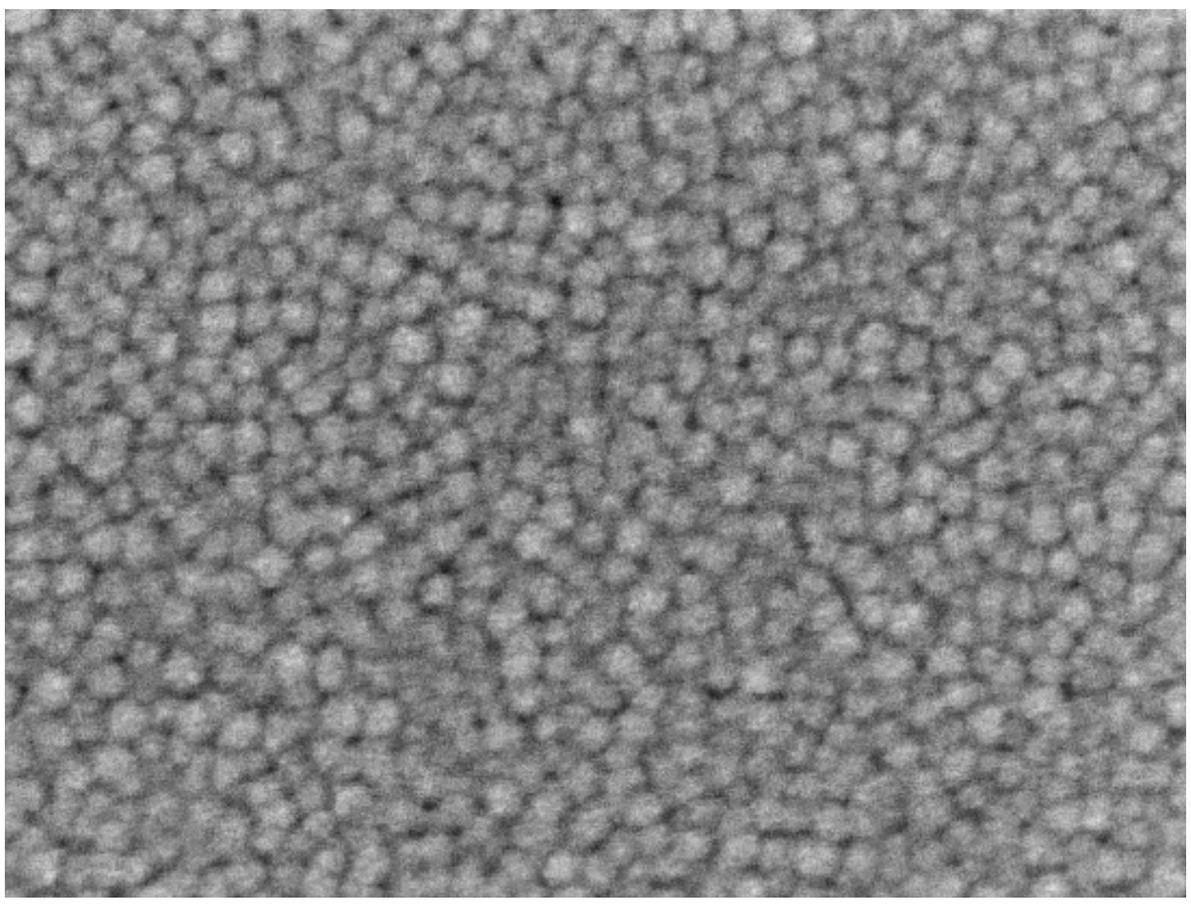
Tuesday 24 November 2015

Lithography (nano)
Emerging magnetic data storage technology: BPM (bit patterned media) is a potential future hard disk drive technology to record data in magnetic islands (one bit per island), as opposed to current hard disk drive technology where each bit is stored in 20-30 magnetic grains within a continuous magnetic film. The islands would be patterned from a precursor magnetic film using nano lithography.

en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Patterned_media



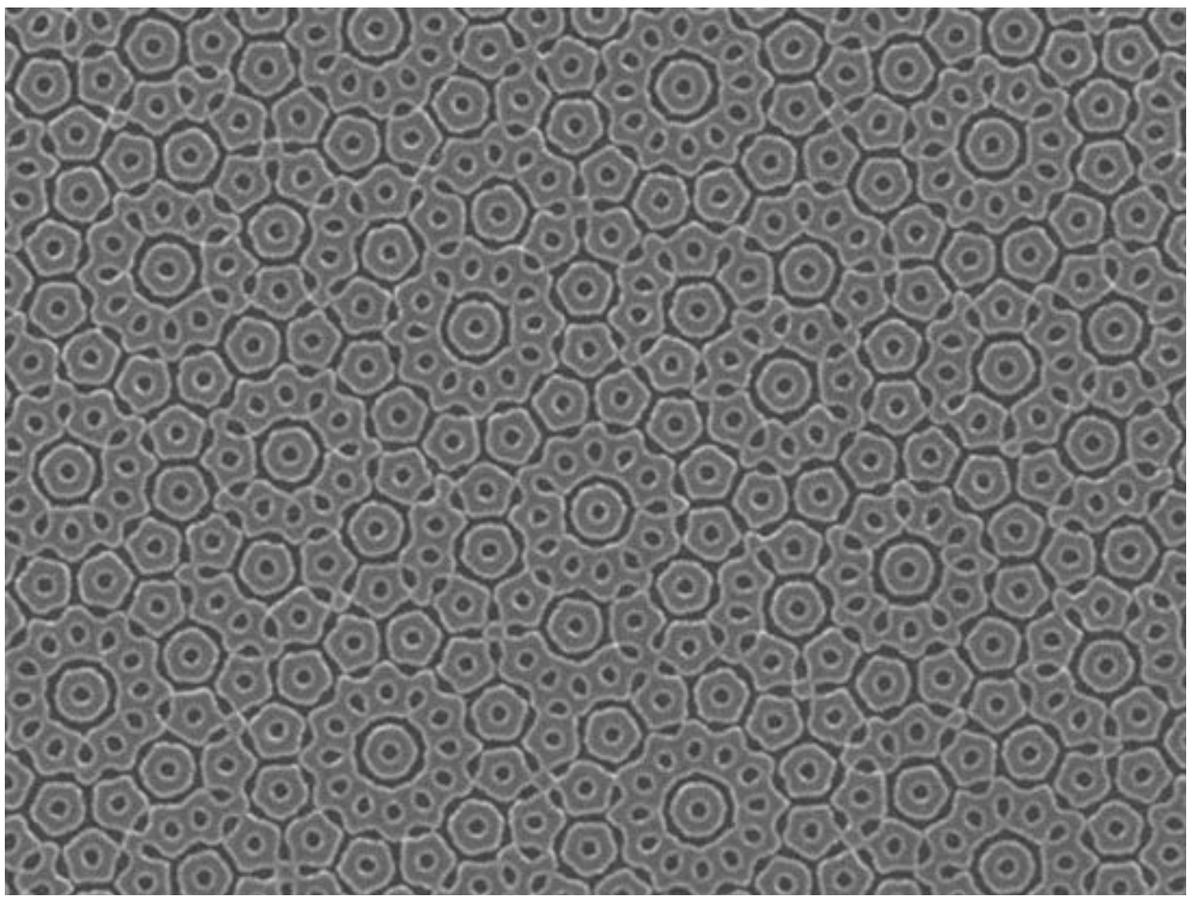
Starch grains on a photographic (autochrome) plate



Magnetic grains on hard disk



Offset lithography: overlapping halftone printing plates forming a rosette pattern



Nano-lithography: twelve-fold rotational symmetrical moiré pattern

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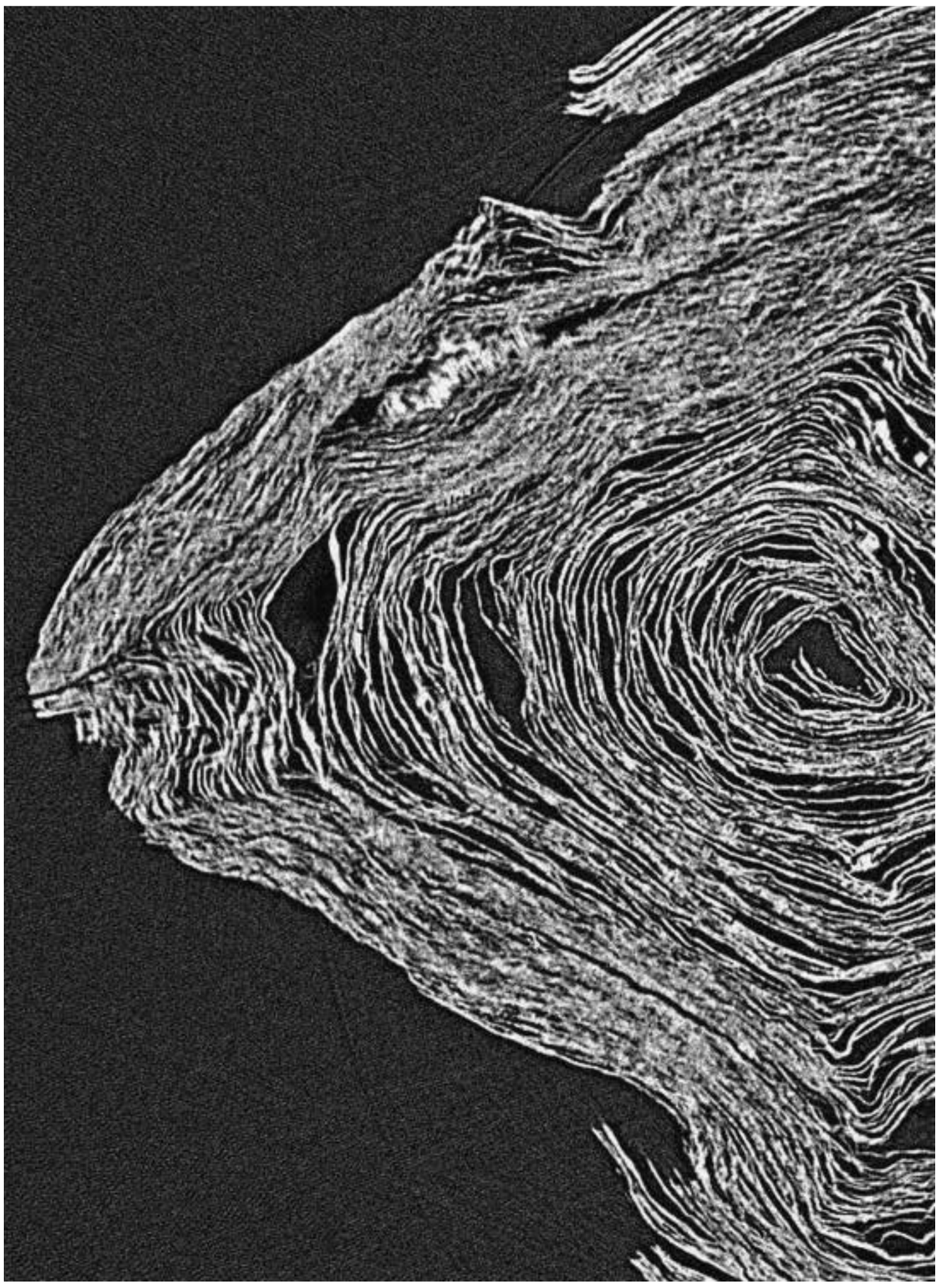
Wednesday 25 November 2015

Epicurus says we are in an atomistic system
“By some estimates, ninety-nine per cent
of ancient Greek literature has been lost,
and Latin has not fared much better.”

Using a synchrotron particle accelerator, it may
have become possible to read papyrus scrolls
that were charred by the disruption of mount
Vesuvius in Herculaneum, 2000 years ago.
These scrolls were salvaged from a library
in the villa of Calpurnius Piso Caesoninus
(Julius Caesar’s father-in-law) in the 1700s.

Among the first titles rediscovered are:
“On Music, Book 4”, “On the Stoics”,
“On the Good King According to Homer”,
“On Flattery”, “On Wealth”, and
“On Anger”, all by Philodemus, a member of
the Athens school of Epicurean thought.

www.newyorker.com/magazine/2015/11/16/
the-invisible-library





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Thursday

26 November 2015

Burn the Book
Here's a list of libraries that were deliberately set on fire:

Xianyang State Archives, 206 BC
Library of Antioch, 364 AD
Library of the Serapeum, 392
Library of Ctesiphon, 651
Library of Rayy, 1029
Library of Ghazna, 1151
Library of Nishapur, 1154
Library of Constantinople, 1204
Baghdad House of Wisdom, 1258
Madrassah Library, 1499
Bibliotheca Corviniana, 1526
Glasney College, 1548
Yucatán Maya codices, 1562
Raglan Library, 1646
University of Alabama, 1865
Library of Burma, 1885
Hanlin Academy Library, 1900
University Library of Leuven, 1940
National Library of Serbia, 1941
Bulgaria National Library, 1943
Warsaw Załuski Library, 1944
Lebanese National Library, 1975
National Library of Cambodia, 1976
Jaffna Public Library, 1981
Sikh Reference Library, 1984
University Library of Bucharest, 1989
Oriental Institute in Sarajevo, 1992
Library of Bosnia Herzegovina, 1992
Pol-i-Khomri Public Library, 1998
Iraq National Library, 2003
Egyptian Scientific Institute, 2011
Timbuktu Library, 2103
Tripoli Saeh Library, 2014

Yet, arguably, the ancient library of Alexandria was not. This article makes a case for the library to have been destroyed by budget cuts:

http://aetherforce.com/who-really-burned-the-library-of-alexandria-by-preston-chesser/

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Friday

27 November 2015

Setting Standards
By 1975, it had become almost impossible for computer fanatics to exchange their work since there were just too many ways to format information stored on audio cassettes. Byte Magazine decided to settle this once and for all: they set up a meeting of 18 manufacturers, where a new standard would be set.

“The ‘Kansas City Standard’ recorded data as “marks” (one) and “spaces” (zero). A mark bit consisted of eight cycles at a frequency of 2400 Hz, while a space bit consisted of four cycles at a frequency of 1200 Hz. A word, usually one byte (8 bits) long, was recorded in little endian order, i.e. least significant bit first.”

From: en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kansas_City_standard



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for Fotomuseum Winterthur

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Saturday 28 November 2015

A system for all people for all time

“On 4 August 1789, three weeks after the storming of the Bastille, the nobility surrendered their privileges, including the right to control local weights and measures.”

It’s been 250 years since the concoction of the metric system. Other numeral systems (such as the duo-decimal system) were considered before settling on the decimal system.

×	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	↊	↋	10
0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
1	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	↊	↋	10
2	0	2	4	6	8	↊	10	12	14	16	18	1↊	20
3	0	3	6	9	10	13	16	19	20	23	26	29	30
4	0	4	8	10	14	18	20	24	28	30	34	38	40
5	0	5	↊	13	18	21	26	2↋	34	39	42	47	50
6	0	6	10	16	20	26	30	36	40	46	50	56	60
7	0	7	12	19	24	2↋	36	41	48	53	5↊	65	70
8	0	8	14	20	28	34	40	48	54	60	68	74	80
9	0	9	16	23	30	39	46	53	60	69	76	83	90
↊	0	↊	18	26	34	42	50	5↊	68	76	84	92	↉0
↋	0	↋	1↊	29	38	47	56	65	74	83	92	1↉	↋0
10	0	10	20	30	40	50	60	70	80	90	↉0	↋0	100

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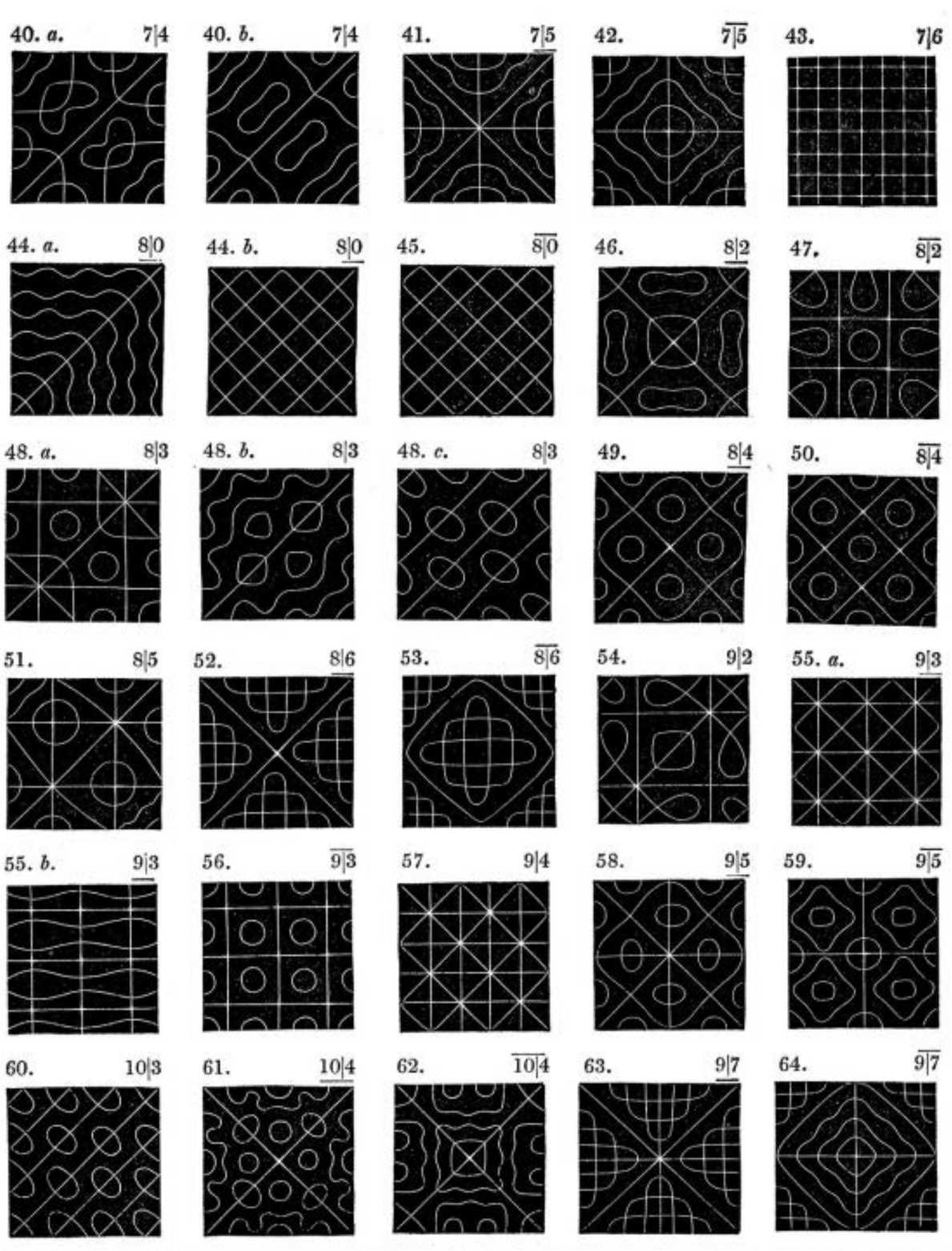
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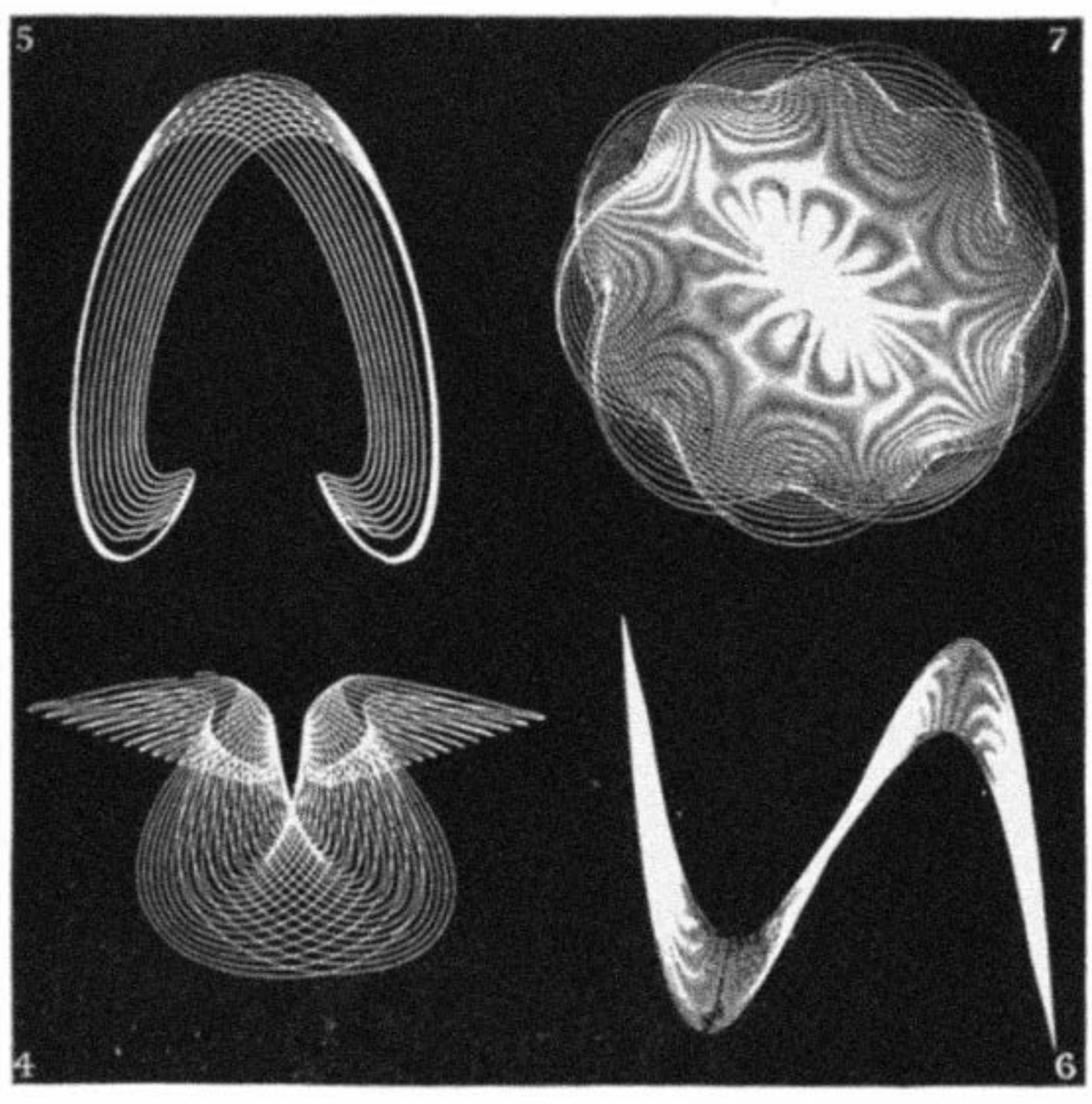
Sunday 29 November 2015

Thought to Shape

“For the lay reader the following brief description may be useful. A Chladni’s sound plate is made of brass or plate-glass. Grains of fine sand or spores are scattered over the surface, and the edge of the plate is bowed. The sand is thrown up into the air by the vibration of the plate, and re-falling on the plate is arranged in regular lines (fig. 1). By touching the edge of the plate at different points when it is bowed, different notes, and hence varying forms, are obtained. If the figures here given are compared with those obtained from the human voice, many likenesses will be observed. […]

But few perhaps have realised that the shapes pictured are due to the interplay of the vibrations that create them, and that a machine exists by means of which two or more simultaneous motions can be imparted to a pendulum, and that by attaching a fine drawing-pen to a lever connected with the pendulum its action may be exactly traced (fig. 2).
Substitute for the swing of the pendulum the vibrations set up in the mental or astral body, and we have clearly before us the modus operandi of the building of forms by vibrations.”





From: www.anandgholap.net/Thought_Forms-AB_CWL.htm

A project by Experimental Jetset for Fotomuseum Winterthur

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