



**Animating Archives: Making New Media Matter
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“The Future of Life on Mars: An Archival Project by Erkki Kurenniemi”

Since the early sixties, Erkki Kurenniemi, a relatively unknown Finnish electronic composer, music synthesizer designer and theoretical physicist, has been manically documenting his own life through a variety of media: employing audio cassettes to record his stream of consciousness thinking over hundreds of hours and recounting his dreams daily over periods of months; creating video diaries to comment on and record his encounters with friends and strangers; preserving the objects of his everyday life (receipts, grocery lists, newspapers, etc.); and shooting 20,000 photographs a year as well as shooting 8mm film and digital video. Kurenniemi is creating what he calls a planetary museum, a hardcore sustainability project. This talk seeks to understand this archival project both in terms of how it has come to resonate with the explosion of personal data banks enabled by digital media, and with some of the deeper meanings it might carry for our thinking about the future of human memory and the phenomenology of the archive.