

## DVD Dead Drop

Museum of the Moving Image, New York (Astoria), NY

August 16, 2012 — November 26, 2013

Another unique experience Walker designed was DVD Dead Drop—a conceptual work with challenging physical requirements to fulfill the artist's concept. When the Museum's Curator of Digital Media approached Walker about this installation, it started a whole process of discussion and debate regarding the best way to approach what seemed an impossible request to fulfill: create a way people can walk up any time, 24 hours a day, and get a DVD burned from a place nobody knows about.

*When I was approached about doing DVD Dead Drop, it took me a bit of time to get the whole idea behind it. My usual approach to any project starts with access and how to guide an individual to the art. This was about the art being as invisible as possible. No signage or label. No guidance at all. Visitors had to know where to find it and what to do.*

*I was immediately intrigued by this. Of course, several concerns emerged immediately. The first was management of any 24-hour operation, no matter how simple. It means if the system goes out in the middle of the night, the overnight guard would need to restart it. This immediately suggested where it should ideally go, but also involved the security department in a unique way. I did some review of old plans in the Museum's archive and confirmed what was original cement wall versus what was a more recent addition. This was to confirm which area was least likely to have metal rebar support in the cement. I confirmed an area inside the Director of Security's office, adjacent to the 24-hour guard post. This location meant the equipment was not intruding on security operations, but was easily accessible by the overnight guard if required. It was also not at the entrance of the Museum, as the artist preferred, but it was under security surveillance, with a security guard nearby. I always worry about the operational aspect of any project like this before I even start to thinking about the physical setup and design.*

*Then there was the search for a DVD burner that had a very thin lip, and very simple functions. I worked closely with the Museum's curator to make sure the equipment I was considering was compatible with the artist's needs, and I worked with the Museum's preparator to create a structure to hold the burner in a very specific location, with the face flat against the wall and aligned with the slot in the wall—and made easy to remove if necessary. I then re-plastered the exterior of the building leaving a very thin slot in the wall that was perfectly aligned with the DVD burner. I sculpted the cement surface to match—or blend in with—the surrounding area. I then painted it followed by getting it "dirty" to blend in with the rest of the exterior wall. (WW)*

[WIRED.com: Opening and Inaugural Exhibition](#)

[Vice.com: Opens Tonight](#)

[Fluate.net](#)

[Aram Bartholl](#)

[Trendhunter.com](#)

## DVD DEAD DROP

ONGOING INSTALLATION BY ARAM BARTHOLL

Artist Aram Bartholl (Berlin, b. 1972) has embedded an inconspicuous, slot-loading DVD burner into the side of the Museum, available to the public 24 hours a day. Visitors who find the *Dead Drop* and insert a blank DVD-R will receive a digital art exhibition, a collection of media, or other featured content curated on a monthly cycle by Bartholl or selected artists. *DVD Dead Drop* imbues the act of data transfer with a tangibility left behind in a world of cloud computing and app stores, using a medium—the digital versatile disc—that is quickly becoming another artifact of the past.

*DVD Dead Drop*, launched August 16, 2012, is a continuation of Bartholl's series of offline file-sharing networks in public spaces. The original dead drops were unauthorized USB thumb drives cemented into walls, buildings, and curbs, encouraging a "read-write" information ecosystem. Here the "read-only" *DVD Dead Drop* serves as an automated platform for dispensing digital culture to the public at any time, day or night.

Made possible by the Harpo Foundation, with support from the Consulate General of the Federal Republic of Germany, New York.

### MUSEUM OF THE MOVING IMAGE

36-01 35 Avenue, Astoria, NY 11106  
718 777 6888 [movingimage.us](http://movingimage.us)



DVD DEAD DROP

ONGOING INSTALLATION BY ARAM BARTHOLL