Covers of Art Spiegelman's *Maus II* and *MetaMaus: A Look Inside a Modern Classic, Maus*

Comics as Archives: Meta*MetaMaus*

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Abstract: In the view of some critics, the form of comics is a locus of the archival, a place where we can identify an archival turn. Art Spiegelman's *Maus* first and perhaps most forcefully established the connection between archives and comics. His groundbreaking work documenting his father's experience in WWII Poland, where he survived internment in Auschwitz, is a visual narrative based on oral testimony that consistently heightens our awareness of visual, written, and oral archives, and where they interact, overlap, or get transposed one into the other. Hillary Chute recounts and interprets her collaboration with Spiegelman in the process of assembling *MetaMaus*, a book compiling interviews and archival materials on the making of *Maus*. *MetaMaus,* argues Chute, reflects the tension between different kinds of extant archives—oral, written, photographic—and the cross-discursive work of (re)building new archives that motivates *Maus*. Its defining feature is that it shows the materiality of Spiegelman's archive; it is about the *embodiment* of archives.

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strength to the work—putting the dead into little boxes. – Art Spiegelman (*MetaMaus* 73)

Maus: A Survivor's Tale is a book about archives. And the book about making *Maus*, *MetaMaus*, is both a process of taking stock of the *Maus* archive and an active process of creating a new archive.[1] *Maus* is about the Holocaust, featuring two intertwined stories: that of Auschwitz survivor Vladek Spiegelman's struggle in the 1930s and 40s in Poland during WWII, and that of his son Art Spiegelman's struggle in the 1970s and 80s in New York to record and draw his father's testimony in comics form. *Maus* is a graphic narrative that is, to invoke the language of this special issue, on every level about "the politics of what is saved (remembered), and what is discarded (forgotten)." We recognize this dynamic both *in* and *on* its pages. As Anne Golomb Hoffman points out about the OED definition of "archive," the word indicates both the container for documents and the documents themselves (Hoffman 2009, 5-6). The form of comics makes this transfiguration legible. Graphic narratives not only thematize archives—for instance, the cartoonist's work of finding and collecting is an actual plotline of *Maus*—but further, because of the pictorial, word and image format of their pages, they are able to actually *incorporate* or physically represent concrete archives (thus the famous three photographs, two from the war era, that Spiegelman actually places within *Maus*).[2] *Maus* is about archives, and it also itself *does the work of archiving*, for instance in how it inscribes Vladek Spiegelman's private Holocaust testimony elicited by Art Spiegelman, and places it in print and into the public record.[3]

The selecting, ordering, and preserving work of archiving in *Maus* is, in a sense, collaborative—Vladek locates his photograph, Art inserts it in his book; Vladek bears witness to Auschwitz through his oral testimony; Art edits and shapes his story to put it on the page.[4] *Maus* and *MetaMaus* share this feature. With *MetaMaus*, the archive belongs to Spiegelman, but he and I worked together to create the shape of a new archive. Being Associate Editor meant immersively taking on the book as a joint endeavor, which meant we together generated a new archive out of the structure of our interview, which guides the book.[5]

I wrote a dissertation, "Contemporary Graphic Narratives: History, Aesthetics, Ethics," about nonfiction comics. Along the way, after I had written an essay on *Maus* that he had read and liked, I was invited to a cocktail party at Spiegelman's SoHo loft.[6] Later, in the fall of 2005, Spiegelman and I met to "talk comics" in his studio; he invited me to work with him on creating *MetaMaus*. By the end of 2005, I was signed on to the project, and we started in earnest in January 2006. In 2010, reading Spiegelman's "Dancin' in the Dark!" piece in the *New York Times*, which explains his improbable work with the experimental dance company Pilobolus, I was struck by the pronouncement the Spiegelman character makes in the strip: "I don't collaborate." He and I had been collaborating at that point for over four years. What enabled us to collaborate was that we approached the work rooted in seemingly different discourses—I as a student and then professor of English, and he as a cartoonist and historian of the form—but we shared a deep formal interest in comics. And we

were agreeably open to disagreeing with each other; this created an intellectual generosity that became part of our intersubjective ethic.

In the view of some critics, the form of comics is a locus of the archival, a place where we can identify an archival turn. Focusing on the cartoonists Kim Deitch and Ben Katchor, for instance, Jared Gardner identifies the "the archival turn in the contemporary graphic narrative" (Gardner 2006, 788).[7] Scholarship on Alison Bechdel's memoir *Fun Home: A Family Tragicomic* has also spawned attention to comics and archives, as in Ann Cvetkovich's "Drawing the Archive in Alison Bechdel's *Fun Home*"; Valerie Rohy's "In the Queer Archive: *Fun Home*"; and my own book chapter "Animating an Archive: Repetition and Regeneration in Alison Bechdel's *Fun Home*." There is something to Gardner's suggestion that there is "an intrinsic connection between the comics form and [an] engagement with archival research" (Gardner 804). I argue this is because of comics's profound engagement with the representation of (historical) time and space, and the complex *display* that the comics page enables. (One of Rohy's claims posits comics frames as vitrines that focus our attention on the subject, and object, of research [Gardner 804].)

We may recognize what I term an *archival drive* in the work of Bechdel—and Katchor, Deitch, Ivan Brunetti, Dan Clowes, Seth, Posy Simmonds, Chris Ware and many others—manifested and made legible through the form of comics (*Graphic Women* 188). However, Spiegelman's *Maus*, which began in 1980 as a chapter-by-chapter serial in *RAW* magazine (after a three-page stand-alone prototype of the same name appeared in an underground comic in 1972), first and perhaps most forcefully established the connection between archives and comics. Even the visual metaphor that shapes the book, in which humans appear as various species of animals, namely Jews as mice, Poles as pigs, and Nazis as cats, is motivated by a rich archive of Nazi propaganda. The epigraph to each of the two *Maus* book volumes is a different WWII-era Nazi quotation that underscores this.

One of the central dramas of *Maus* is the cartoonist's desire to search down any archival material relating to his parents' lives before his own unlikely birth—both of his parents survived Auschwitz, and their first son, Richieu, died in the war at age six. Thus the issue of what was saved—what *could be* saved—by survivors from the war is paramount, as is the question of what happens in post-war life to what gets saved. In the case of the Spiegelman family, the issue of saving, or not saving, is heightened: Vladek Spiegelman destroyed his wife Anja Spiegelman's notebooks after her suicide in 1968. (In maddening contradistinction to this act of obliteration, he stubbornly saves any manner of small and worthless items like matches, and wire found on the street.) The notebooks, which contained Anja's account of her experience in the war, and which she had described to her son since his childhood, are burned by the time he comes searching for them as a young man. Vladek reveals only over time that he destroyed Anja's notebooks, during a period when he "was so *depressed*

… I didn't know if I'm coming or going" (*Complete Maus* 161). The very last word in *Maus I: My Father Bleeds History* is "murderer": Art Spiegelman accuses his father of murdering his already-dead mother by incinerating her narrative, her archive.[8]

The absence of archives, the presence of archives: the disappearance and appearance of any kind of evidence, record, trace of his parents' pre-war and wartime lives constitutes a major narrative thread of *Maus*, as we also see, for example, in an episode toward the end of the book featuring a momentous box of photographs unearthed by Vladek—of Anja's family, primarily. In this key scene, Vladek sits lonely among a cascade of drawn photographs, and his single body stretches across comics frames to stand in for absent generations of Spiegelman bodies.[9]

What kinds of archives remain from which parents? How can the son identify and weigh the traces that remain to stitch together the fullest understanding possible from the collection of voices and documents and photographs to which he has access? *Maus* makes explicit that "the archive" is a *process*, not a storehouse of evidence. This process, in fact, is exactly what the book is about. In the shadow of his mother's painful *wordlessness*, her ghostly burnt words, but also her withheld words—she didn't leave a note when she chose to end her life—*Maus* is about Spiegelman's father's archive, and testimony, and Spiegelman's own creation of an archive. We can note *Maus*'s investment in the archive as process rather than as repository of evidence in the episode in which Art, through a conversation with his father, becomes aware of the existence of a photograph of Vladek, after he was liberated, posing in a clean concentration camp uniform for a souvenir photo to send to his wife. This photograph is the only one of Vladek in *Maus*. Tilted out of the rows of drawn boxes, the defining feature of its presence is the ambiguity and awkwardness it inspires; the questions it sets in motion. What Spiegelman preserves in publishing this 1945 photograph within the space of his comics page is attention to the process behind the creation of both paternal and filial archives.

The Procedure of Selection

The idea of selection—what is re-archived, what is discarded?—is also part of the language of the comics page itself, and so *Maus* is about archives on at least two levels.[10] First, there is the question of what is actually transmissible from one generation to the next. Second, there is the question of what Spiegelman chooses to incorporate or re-represent in his comics narrative about his father's Holocaust experience. Comics makes the process of selecting, ordering, and preserving intelligible in a way few forms can: its very narrative syntax is an interplay of presence and absence, in which moments of time are selected and boxed (separated conventionally by bands of white space called "the gutter"). The actual juxtaposition of frames on the page calls overt attention to the basic grammar of comics as selection—to the rhythm of the displayed and the evacuated, and how they constitute each other. While all media select and frame, comics make this

process material on the page—not as merely evocative, but rather as literal. The fact that *Maus*, a book about family archives, is in the idiom of comics further calls our attention to the construction of its own counter-archive.

"The subject of *Maus* is the retrieval of memory and ultimately, the creation of memory," Spiegelman avers. "It's about a cartoonist trying to envision what his father went through. It's about choices being made, of finding what one can tell, and what one can reveal, and *what one can reveal beyond what one knows one is revealing*" (*MetaMaus* 73, italics mine). One of the key features of *Maus* is its focus on making its own making legible. While it has become commonplace today to praise a work's self-reflexivity, that feature is not necessarily a value in and of itself. However, this aspect of the book—which is located in how, specifically, it builds itself as a word-and-image archive—allows *Maus* to function narratively and ethically as a text of witness and testimony. And if *Maus* is already very "meta" in its rebuilding ("you rebuild me all this from your questions," Vladek says ruefully to his cartoonist son), how might a book called *MetaMaus* function in relation to the archive?[11]

Archival Practice

Starting the project first meant deciding its basic shape. Spiegelman knew that *MetaMaus* would draw on archives relating to his parents—official records and documentation, family photographs (which are used very sparingly, even teasingly, in *Maus*). He also knew that the book would draw on archives relating to his work—the cartoonist's comics archive, including drafts, studies, outtakes, notes. (In 1994 the Voyager Company issued a then state-of-the-art CD-ROM, called *The Complete Maus*, that made use of photographs and notes and sketches, as well as audio recording, to good effect; an updated version of this CD was from the beginning slated to be a bonus feature of *MetaMaus*, included with the purchase, but would function separately—our focus was on creating a stand-alone book with its own complete integrity.) At our first meetings, we brainstormed about the possible structure of *MetaMaus*, and our desire to shape and select the material while yet maintaining the non-linear temporality of *Maus*, its weaving and layering of the past and present, its often deliberately circuitous and recursive movement. Eventually, by talking through *Maus* in a semi-formal way (I taped some of our early conversations, even those that were only ever for the two of us), we hit on an interview structure to anchor the book. Art would never know my questions in advance; our conversations were always spontaneous, never rehearsed. We were able to converse with each other for hours at a time (a regular meeting time was three or four hours), and through simply sitting and talking we came to the tropes that Art most often deals with in his own public talking about *Maus*—Why comics? Why mice? Why the Holocaust? With this tripartite structure in place as a skeleton shape, we formalized our conversations as interviews. Although we never spoke about this explicitly, at some point it dawned on me, years into the project, that our interview structure mirrored Art and Vladek's.

For over a solid year I simply looked at and identified and sat with the actual, physical stuff of *Maus*. Art gave me full access—my own set of keys—to his studio. Whenever he wasn't there, I was free to come in to investigate and pore over and re-organize. This often meant stretches of time on the weekends. (When I couldn't poke around his main cartooning studio, I would spend time in the RAW publishing office a few blocks away, run by Art and his wife Françoise Mouly, which was a similar packed space and housed an ancillary but relevant archive relating to their avant-garde comics magazine.) Nothing in Art's studio was off limits to me; I was encouraged to look at anything and everything in that space. Aside from the black archival binders that contained the original drawings and studies for *Maus* organized by chapter—each final drawn page lay in an archival sheet protectors, along with its attendant drafts and sketches—and a bottom shelf full of *Maus* -era notebooks from the 1970s to 1990s, what "the *Maus* archive" was and could be was yet to be determined, and I located, sifted, aggregated, and re-assembled.

My work in the studio in the first two years was two-fold: first, it was navigating the packed space of the studio to find the dispersed chunks and bits and pieces of the *Maus* archive, which lurked on shelves and in drawers, and sometimes in very inconspicuous places. One treasure trove I located was an old, unmarked, inauspicious-looking Garbage Pail Kids folder full of *Maus* notes and reflections on yellowing index cards; another was an aging manila envelope marked, simply, "Maus Grains," which contained grains of ideas—stimulating and motivating— like quotes attributed to Ronald Reagan ("we shouldn't talk about the Holocaust") on 30-year old napkins.[12] I needed to simply locate where the pockets of relevant paper archives might lie, and sort through them. Since I was so familiar with the story and details of *Maus*, it felt like a backwards board game or detective quest, to find the shards of reference that accumulated into the whole final product (and sometimes ambiguously didn't). I remember one summer evening sprawling on the floor and finding, under a pile of dusty manila file folders and binders, the photograph of Art's dead brother Richieu that opens *Maus II* and which Vladek and Anja Spiegelman always kept with them. It felt shocking to have the surprise of seeing this photograph de-contextualized from the narrative I knew so well, and, for all its importance in the book, grouped with the un-important on the shelf. Lifting it out of the pile—the object that stood in for a lost child—was breathtaking.[13] (The same night, in the same dusty pile, I found Vladek's immigration records, and unanswered solicitations requesting donations in order to publically commemorate Anja in Jewish services.) Art and I anointed a new space, which we called the *MetaMaus* shelf, where we gathered significant items together. Physically aggregating artifacts and documents—re-centralizing what had been dispersed after the 13 years of making *Maus*—was an intellectual and manual task of (re)archiving.

There was also, broadly speaking, the question of selection. After all, one of the most striking things Art has said to me was an aside on the telephone in the fall of 2010, when we were discussing the full components of *MetaMaus*, and were debating

whether or not to have a timeline of his life and career (I typically lobbied for these more "academic" features, including the bibliography). Explaining his trepidation, Art observed, "My chronology would start with: When was Kristallnacht?" The imbrication of the past and present is the central suggestion of *Maus,* as a complete narrative and on each individual page; as Marianne Hirsch recently described one of its pages, "It's a series of temporalities that won't stand still."[14]

Art's comment about the incontrovertible imprint and shaping of history on the existence and consciousness of his person, the deep mingling of the personal and the historical, is in line with *Maus*, but to hear him say it out loud so directly about himself felt like a fresh reminder. *Maus* is meticulously architected but is about unruly temporalities. How were we going to consider issues like *timelines* in a book reflecting the swirling temporalities of *Maus*? Art and Vladek had struggled over the issue of timelines in *Maus II*. Creating an archival book about a book about archives produced these mirrored moments; Art now got to be the person resisting the timeline and claiming unruly temporalities (in *Maus II* he presses forward and Vladek snaps, "In Auschwitz we didn't wear watches") (*Complete Maus*, 228).

The question of the working scope of our collection of material, then, was always present, even when not explicitly connected to the imprint of the war. Many early notebooks, such as in the 1960s, from years before the 1972 "Maus" was formed, contain apposite information about comics and creativity, about filial dynamics with Vladek and Anja, about the connection of culture and style. Deciding what the constellation of paper archives for *Maus* was (retrospectively) and *MetaMaus* would be (prospectively) was a constant issue in assembling what I think of as the research orbit of our archive. Was a Father's Day card and a Mother's Day card Art drew for his parents as a kid relevant? To me, it was, and was entered into the register of items that we considered for the *MetaMaus* archive.

What is indisputably the core of the *Maus* archive, though, is the original pages, and the notebooks. (The form of the *notebook*, given Anja Spiegelman's immolated notebook, the loss of which constitutes a major thread in the book and also propels the reconstituting project of *Maus* itself, took on a special weight to me.) The tightly organized black binders of drawn original pages and page-connected sketches had already been cataloged and scanned by assistants and interns by the time I arrived in the studio. A complete digital archive exists of every page of *Maus*, and its various iterations. (File names look like this: MausI.I.p22a.jpg; MausI.I.p22b.jpg, and so on—some pages run through the whole alphabet and then the twenty-seventh file is marked by a "za," and so forth back into the alphabet.)

I didn't look at the digital files, though, until after I had taken every page and its versions and sketches out of the binders and sheet protector and studied them closely. This took me about a year. I didn't want to experience the pages and panels on the computer; I wanted to take stock of the materiality of the artifact, to touch and lift the paper and to scrutinize the gummed labels

and correction fluid and the physical texture, the bumpiness, of the line.

The range of papers I attended to by studying the actual drawings was striking; there were sketches on pink "While You Were Out" correspondence sheets, on receipts, on typing paper, on tracing paper, on graph paper, on lined paper. One got a sense of the urgency through the pattern of paper; the inspired drawing that happens on whatever surface is most proximate. I was also able to juxtapose spatially in front of me Art's color sketches, assembling a sequence for his meticulous process of sketching in successively darker colors (starting in yellow, say, and ending in purple) to discern visual volume and weight in a panel, even though the final line in *Maus* is always in black. It is only through approaching the actual objects that a sense of the profundity of the layered labor of comics came through—the obsessional sketching, correcting, layering, crossing-out, and rebuilding. Much in the way that comics forces a kind of physical intimacy, as Michael Silverblatt has pointed out, I needed to interact with the archive haptically as though I were assembling it to be comics: spreading it out in front of me, creating sequences with the sketches, holding a drawing up to squint at the spaces, placing studies next to a finished page to discern the narrative movement from draft to final product. (Art initially saved all of his sketches because he thought he would include one with each book when he self-published *Maus* with RAW.)

Drawing the Holocaust

Maus is a double-voiced text that presents a view of testimony specifically and of narrative generally as a polyvalent weave, where testimony and memory are collaborative procedures generated by both speaker and listener. The dialogic form of comics is constituted by the active tension between word and image—which makes it a hospitable form for narration that turns on the tension of competing voices (in the case of *Maus*, Vladek's and Art's). Even further, what *Maus* so brilliantly stages, as I have argued, is that the comics medium is not only *dialogic*—able to be both a biography and an autobiography in one layered work—but also what we might think of as cross-discursive.[15] We see an example of this when Spiegelman *draws against* his father's verbal narration in an episode in which the two of them discuss the existence of orchestras at Auschwitz. Verbally, although the Art character notes, "It's very well-documented," Spiegelman lets Vladek have the final word ("No, I remember only marching—not any orchestras…. How could it be there an orchestra?")—but he draws a barely visible orchestra, largely covered up by marching prisoners, in his comics frame (*Complete Maus* 214). *Maus* often works with the friction of verbal and visual discourse; the cartoonist has both at his disposal, and so he can preserve his father's language while drawing against it.

Maus is about the tension between the visual, the written, and the oral in its representation of trauma, and in how it expresses the memory of the eyewitness and the secondary witness. There had not been a visual, narrative text of the

Holocaust published widely before *Maus*—what I think of as a *visual materialization*, for instance, of Auschwitz: something that is not a still photograph that captures a single moment, or a moving series of film frames that whisks a viewer along, but is rather a visual materialization that is a sequence that creates a world that can be studied and engaged at one's own pace.[16] Discussing the question of representation and verisimilitude, Spiegelman chafes at filmmakers' quests to re-build the camps, as opposed to *Maus*'s approach to representing the camps by "creating it as a mental zone" (*MetaMaus* 166). *Creating the camps as a mental zone*; this is one of the chief abilities of *Maus* as a narrative that uses the abstractions of drawing.

Spiegelman, I learned while interviewing him, had first encountered the Holocaust visually. Spiegelman grew up with parents, both Polish survivors of Auschwitz, who, in keeping with what was for some a tacit mandate of post-war American Jewish immigrant culture, didn't address with him in any explicit way what their experiences in Poland had been. As a child, he knew there was something called "the war," but his encounters with its traces were a series of jarringly disconnected moments, mostly verbal, like in the emblematic episode from his memoir *Portrait of the Artist as a Young %@&*!* when in a car ride back from a party his parents speak about a former sonderkommando present at the event for whom "it's rumors he put his father *and* his sons to the ovens, so nobody sits with him," and then suggest to their son, "Take a nap again, Cookie!" (*MetaMaus* 15).

However, although his oblique knowledge that his parents had been through something terrible was mostly verbal—and aural generally, as he describes hearing them scream in their sleep—during the widely televised Adolf Eichmann trial in 1961, when he was 13, Spiegelman went searching through his parents' private bookshelf, and had his Susan Sontag moment of encountering images of atrocity for the first time. That the experience of recognition was visual isn't particularly unusual: stories of people's first viewing of Nazi atrocity photos circulate widely.[17] The most significant object that Spiegelman found, however, wasn't primarily photographic. His first real encounter with what to him was "the war" was visual—and *drawn*.

In the process of assembling *MetaMaus* I learned how formative drawn visual archives are in Spiegelman's intellectual and artistic imaginary.[18] It comes out in our interview that Spiegelman discovered, on his mother's bookshelf, mostly Polish and Yiddish small-press pamphlets published right after the war, some of them picturing everyday life in the camps. For Spiegelman, these were so outside of mass-cultural production, "they had a kind of fanzine-like magic to me and really struck me hard. I couldn't understand those words in those pamphlets but pored over the two that had pictures. Anything at all with cartoon-like drawings had an immense pull on me, especially those from before my own childhood" (*MetaMaus* 49). The archive I discovered researching *MetaMaus* opens up traditions of visual witness related to WWII that helped to inspire and innovate, even indirectly, the

comics cultures and scenes that sprouted in the late 1960s and early 70s. A plausible arc for the comics field might actually begin with Paladij Osynka's 1946 *Auschwitz* (owned by Anja Spiegelman), move on to Spiegelman's 1972 "Maus," and continue on to *Maus* and the legions of work it has inspired. "Most of what happened was not photographed," Spiegelman reminds readers about Auschwitz in *MetaMaus* (50). Taking this seriously, can we posit the urgency to testify to life and death in WWII as the genesis of what we now recognize as contemporary comics? Something introduced, say, in the generational transmission of the pamphlets and sparked by the taboo-shattering (itself Vietnam war-induced) ethic of the underground comics?

Although Spiegelman couldn't read the text because he didn't know the languages, *the images*—and the amateur graphic design, and humble printing—constituted his first understanding of life during the war; his parents' circumstance. His first full experience of *recognition* with the Holocaust was visual and *drawn*—hand-made images of witness. Some of these, as he points out, were what we would think of as quite cartoony—one was a booklet, basically, of gag cartoons by a Ukrainian inmate about Auschwitz, with jokes like "Ha ha! You didn't get any soup!" (49).[19] One pamphlet that had small, poorly printed watercolor drawings of Ravensbrück struck Spiegelman deeply. (*MetaMaus* features several images from two of these pamphlets, *Ravensbrück* and *Auschwitz*, both from 1946, and which both happen to be in Ukrainian, and the accompanying DVD has the entire contents of several of the pamphlets under the heading "Anja's Bookshelf.")[20] Spiegelman's experience with these unpretentious, cartoon-like drawings of what he calls "the oxymoron of life in a death camp" was formative for *Maus*, which first appeared in similarly designed and printed serial booklets in the 1980s.

That his experience was *visual* and necessarily not verbal at the level of comprehension also allowed him to encounter the discourse of the visual in a heightened way, even as it shared space on the page with captions. Spiegelman says, about survivor drawings and surviving art from the war:

Those drawings were a return to drawing *not for its possibilities of imposing the self*, of finding a new role for art and drawing after the camera, but rather a return to the earlier function that drawing served before the camera—a kind of commemorating, witnessing, and recording of information—what Goya referred to when he says, "This I saw." (italics mine)

He continues, "The artists… are giving urgent information in the pictures, information that could be transmitted no other way" (49-50). Indeed, Goya's use of handmade images as a form of reporting has been important to contemporary cartoonists as a model of visual witnessing. Nonfiction comics emerged forcefully in the postwar period, and the *genre* of nonfiction comics developed in its contemporary specificity, I argue, out of WWII, where we can locate powerful aesthetic and political antecedents in the realm of urgent handmade works of visual witness. Spiegelman's *Maus* archive—which is now part of

the public *MetaMaus* archive—makes this legible. I am fascinated by how, broadly speaking, the discourse of the visual—and the notion of *visual archives*—emerges out of a tension with other media discourses. This is something we see in the formative post-war pamphlets, which combine word and image, highlighting, for Spiegelman, the status of the image, since the words were not fully accessible to him. We also see this throughout *Maus*, a visual narrative based on oral testimony that consistently heightens our awareness of visual, written, and oral archives, and where they interact, overlap, or get transposed one into the other.

As a newly constituted (shadow) collection of sources and archives, *MetaMaus* preserves, and draws attention to, the tension between the oral, written, and visual—and within the realm of the visual, the difference between the drawn and the photographic—that characterizes *Maus*. It preserves the interstices that *Maus* sets in motion, even as it operates in the realm of the explanatory.

The Materiality of the Archive

"Mom and Me in the Park, 1951 (Maus Revenge)" from *Metamaus* (40-41).
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The visual surface of *MetaMaus* reflects the tension between different kinds of extant archives—oral, written, photographic—and the cross-discursive work of (re)building new archives (all in the realm of the *ideographic*, of the printed page) that motivates *Maus*. *MetaMaus*'s defining feature is that it shows the materiality of Spiegelman's archive; it is about the *embodiment* of archives—archives as bodies, bodies as archives. The archived body is key in *MetaMaus*. In the image of the 1979 lithograph "Mom and Me in the Park, 1951 (Maus Revenge)," the very first and one of only

very few full-page images in the 300-page book, the "revenge" seems to be the mere existence of the son's postwar body next to his mother's that is being presented—archived—by the illustration (41).[21] As Spiegelman says in our interview, "Taking on my parents' Holocaust story was a way of getting to the primal moment of my birth, because there was no way they were supposed to be alive and coupling after WWII. It is a specific journey that has nothing to do with history and everything to do with history: one or both of these people is supposed to be dead, which means I'm not supposed to be here" (*MetaMaus,* 199). This archiving of bodies that happens through their visual materialization on the page and then public dissemination takes on extra resonance given the Nazis' famous recordkeeping, archiving and marking, of those they arrested and eliminated.[22]

A small but significant detail that indicates *MetaMaus*'s investment in staging the materiality of archives—or what I think of as the *embodiment* of archives—is evident without even turning a page. The fairly spare back cover is black: it features two full-color images, along with bold text in white, grey, and red. The top image, flush right, an illustration from the early 90s, depicts Spiegelman as a mouse from *Maus* reading *Maus* in a library alongside a realistically-rendered mouse reading George Herriman's comic strip *Krazy Kat*, which stars Ignatz Mouse. The text that begins directly below the image in fact overlays it; the bold red vertical bar of the sans serif uppercase letter "I" ("In the pages of *MetaMaus*…") covers the "a" that begins Spiegelman's lowercase, bottom left corner signature. The "I," glossy, stands out against the matte finish of the hardback cover. A smaller image, a study for the back cover of *Maus II*, hovers in the bottom left of the back cover, leaning outwards at a slight angle. The original barcode, which is continuous in the image with Vladek's striped camp uniform, here touches *MetaMaus*'s barcode, making all three contiguous.

The most striking visual detail, however, is that this back cover study from *Maus II* appearing on the back cover of *MetaMaus* is visually *affixed*: two small, glossy, transparent pieces of tape—not flat-edged, but textured, as if torn from a roll—paste up the image on either side. (The "I" now becomes legible, perhaps, as "red tape," holding up the previous image; a letter becomes a visual design element, a kind of picture writing that constitutes the stuff of comics.) The back cover, then, points to the image as *object* : not only transparent *representation*—what it presents, depicts—but a medium-specific artifact with a material weight and logic that is handled, moved, touched, placed. This approach, highlighting the artifact as an object in space, is in keeping with both my research in the *Maus* archive, in which I studied the physical paper object over available bitmaps or pixmaps—and with comics as a practice in general, which is a way, as Spiegelman puts it, of "turning narrative into geography" (*MetaMaus*, 185).

MetaMaus showcases the materiality of its archive throughout. A draft of a tier of panels, in which Vladek confronts Art about finding an early autobiographical comic

strip, "Prisoner on the Hell Planet," sits at the top of a *MetaMaus* page, anchored by black electrical tape on either side (many of Spiegelman's drafts and sketches were taped into notebooks or folded in to other studies and notes) (35); full draft pages show excision marks and yellowing from glue stains, as in the page about a ghetto cake baked with detergent (74); some of these draft pages, whose coloration and textures display their layers of composition, are shown full-size to highlight their physical features, as in the final art for the significant "Time Flies…" page, which makes us take stock of the material weight of the words placed into the hanging balloons (163). A reproduction of a lithograph introducing the "Why Mice?" chapter has an evident blind stamp in the corner (110); a page of a notebook containing a sketch for one of the very earliest iterations of *Maus* is a scan not just of the panels but of the entire piece of paper, a crinkled, yellowed sheet with three holes, one ripped, on its left-hand side (121). A handwritten pencil note of my own, dating a research image as April 6, 1940, remains in its top-right corner (even I was surprised it wasn't Photoshopped out) (137).

"Maus studies in style," 1979, from *Metamaus* (141).
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The image that is the exemplar of Spiegelman's focus on the materiality of the apparatus of the comics page—an image I fell in love with in 2006, as soon as I saw it in a 1979 notebook—comes to readers under the rubric of "Maus studies in style," as Spiegelman's caption puts it (141). Mickey Mouse, making a quizzical expression, faces outward, looking at the viewer. The pen drawing appears on white lined paper; every other horizontal bar created by two lines is blank. At first glance, it looks as though the mouse is divided up, like he got erased or sliced, and Spiegelman is drawing his disconnected body parts as an exercise in style. But if one takes the visual logic of the paper's format into consideration—taking the drawn image on as inextricably located *in* and not just *on* the material space of the page—we

see that the mouse is behind the bars of the actual page *and interacting with it*. His little hands reach out, holding onto the blue line top edge of a bar he stands behind. Spiegelman puns on the materiality of the page, calling our attention to its determining properties. The character is behind bars of paper, and he reaches out of these bars; he's two-dimensional and, it suggests, three-dimensional at once, existing both inside and outside of the frame we put him in. This image asks us to take stock of the materiality of its composition, just as the weightier "Time Flies" drafts do—versions of the famous final page, which Spiegelman has called his "avant-garde Times Flies pages" because they show the represented object; in this case, flies—both inside and outside of the material frames of the page (see pages 160-161).

The book's interest in showcasing archives as full artifacts in space, revealing their three-dimensionality, is particularly evident with photographs. Not all photographs in *MetaMaus* are treated this way. In some cases, they provide a visual referent for an illustration, as in the small photographic image presented overleaf from the full-page "Mom and Me in the Park, 1951 (Maus Revenge)," which functions, in spite of the pressure Spiegelman places on this notion, as a kind of "objective correlative" for the lithograph (220). (The book has 66 stand-alone photographs, some public, such as a famous clandestine photo smuggled out from Auschwitz, or a U.S. military aerial shot of Auschwitz, but most private family photos, in addition to a collage page of maternal Zylberberg family photos [19 in all], and a collage page of paternal Spiegelman family photos [14 in all].)[23]

Top: From *Maus* (294); Bottom: From *MetaMaus* (224).
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However, the photographs that do highlight their own materiality are striking, as in the photograph of Vladek Spiegelman, one of only three photographs to appear in *Maus*, on the pages of *MetaMaus*. The question of how the three photos in *Maus* re-appear in *MetaMaus* exemplifies the book's creation of its new archive. In an unnamed but

dedicated eight-page section on photography in the chapter "Why Comics?," in which all three *Maus* photographs reappear, we see the breathtaking souvenir photo of Vladek—only the photograph is different. *Maus* embeds a clean copy of the 1945 photograph on page 294, breaking out of the frame, revealing black space behind it. In *MetaMaus*, we see a draft sketch for the same tier of panels, but this time with the original battered, creased photograph of Vladek tilting out of the frame. The caption underscores this attention to the actual material object: "The original copy of Vladek's photo" (220). The photo here highlights its own romantic, and filial, generational, transatlantic *transmission*: it looks like a photograph from 1945 that was carried with an itinerant person and mailed from Germany to a wife in Poland and brought to Sweden and the U.S. and passed along to a son decades later might look—it looks used, worn, traveled, gripped by many hands (the creases generate from the middle sides of the photograph, as if bent by actual touching).

Further, the last conventionally narrative page of the book, before the Chronology and Index, ends with a photograph of Anja Spiegelman—and gives us, literally, a three-dimensional presentation: it shows us the front of the photograph, and then the back, delivering the complete object to readers. Spiegelman's caption, unusually, appears at the top, so that the page's ensuing narrative is given over to the logic of the full artifact, and the book ends with Vladek Spiegelman's handwriting in pen on the picture's back: "Last cruise together with my beloved wife March, 1968. Died May 21st 1968." (There is no page number for this page; just Vladek's conclusive period.) If, as discussed previously, *MetaMaus* also showcases and enacts *Maus*'s cross-discursive battles between Art and Vladek, it nevertheless gives Vladek the last word on an incontrovertible fact. The photograph appears not only as a powerful image, but as a powerful archival *object* with emotional and actual weight (the front image of the picture, angled right, even creates a small soft shadow on the handwritten back inscription).

Word and Image

Along with the amplification of embodiment and materiality of the archive seen in *Maus*, *MetaMaus*'s visual surface is also characterized by the cross-discursive dynamics *Maus* enacts. Although Art and I did not deliberately plan this aspect of the book—as we did not consciously plan the unrehearsed but recorded interlocutionary structure of *MetaMaus* as a mirroring of *Maus*—*MetaMaus* presents a tension on the page between the prose interview and the graphics.[24] The pages of *MetaMaus* reflect, then, the tension between word and image that motivates the internal movement of all comics, and that our collaborative connection could be said to reflect. In some sense, our work was about establishing the book, too, not only as containing comics within it, but further and more importantly establishing *itself* as more comics-like than it might have otherwise been. The seemingly endless process of sifting and condensing and distilling and locating our words in meaningful relation to highly curated images in space was, in essence,

the practice of comics. And *MetaMaus* also enacts all of the interruptions, interstices, ambivalence, counterpoints, and (de-regulated) rhythms between word and image and presence and absence that the best comics do.

As a graduate student at the University of Chicago pointed out to me, for instance, on the first narrative page of the book—the opening of our interview—it looks, visually, like our interview is being pushed down by the two-page comic strip "Mein Kampf," an earlier (1995) and much briefer meditation on memory, archives, and *Maus* (12-13).[25] Although the "Hillary font," as we called it, a grey-green bold sans serif, opens the first chapter with a question in enormous letters on the title page, when one turns the page, one does not first encounter the continuation of the interview implied by the question, but rather, immediately, the comic strip, which spans over four-fifths of each of the opening pages. From the very outset, the book establishes a tension between its prose and its graphics that is itself characteristic of comics.

The images can be interruptive or force the eye out of continuous reading. Sometimes the interview jumps across pages, which are built on a vertical two column grid, and when one turns the page, one is met immediately with an image opening the subsequent column, over which one's eye must skip in order to continue the interview, or on which one will pause before re-orienting with the interview.[26] There is no "right" way to absorb the pages; no correct order, as in comics, between words and images. Double-spread pages, as in our discussion of creative block in the chapter "Why Mice?," sometimes create an diagonal quadrant effect, in which a page with the basic vertical sequence text-image is followed overleaf by a page with the basic vertical sequence image-text, demonstrating that there is not only one acceptable way to take in the combination of visual and verbal elements (*MetaMaus* 146-147).[27] I often felt that I had to optically *climb over* the visual/archival elements to keep the thread of the text going (incidentally, in the previously unpublished comic strip that accompanies the discussion of creative block, Spiegelman draws an interviewer climbing over elements of the past—bodies—in order to ask him questions about *Maus*). *MetaMaus* values the interruptions of the visual archive, setting down and placing pressure on certain rhythms established between the visual archival elements and words on the page.

The ethic of interruptiveness the pages set in motion is writ large in instances where the conversation is temporarily broken off by entire separate sequences, such as the appearance of the "Family Tree" section, which arrives not as an appendix, but rather in the middle of one of Spiegelman's responses; it bisects page 223 vertically and continues for seven pages, after which we are returned to Art's analysis of a specific page of *Maus*. The breaks are thematic, but they're not clean. On one hand, this rhythm is about a dynamic in which we have a conversation about artifacts, and then let the artifacts "speak" for themselves, as in the "Family Tree" section's

aggregation of family photographs. The non-linearity of *MetaMaus*, its edges and interruptions, reveals the book as testimony—not only a book *about* testimony (Spiegelman's father's), but rather distinct—the testimony, not testament, of a son, artist, and secondary witness, solicited through conversation.

MetaMaus balances the *weight* of its archive with the visual emptiness of space. It shows the counterpoint of presence (the materiality of paper, ink, photographs) and absence—the unfilled speech balloons that suggest, at least graphically, the absences that remain despite all the work of rebuilding. The appearance of empty balloons—something we don't get much of in *Maus*, despite Spiegelman's nod to Beckett's statement on silence—in *MetaMaus* makes legible and material the question: How do you fill in the gaps?[28] (In their graphic evocation of the empty boxes of the post-war Spiegelman family tree, the empty balloons suggest the presence behind the absence.) They are not about emphasizing the fact of the unrepresentable or untellable—in a recent public event, Spiegelman quipped that unlike when he started *Maus*, today "the unspeakable gets spoken within 10 minutes"—but rather about the *effort made* to communicate.[29] In my examination of Spiegelman's drafts and studies, I was always surprised at how resonant the visual of the empty balloon felt, especially in dialogues, with physical gestures and the indication of articulation in place and the words themselves evaporated: it looked like the representation of people *trying* to talk to each other, and it suggested, in a way, at least graphically, that the site of interlocution was enough, no matter what the precise shapes of sound were.

Boxes as Coffins

The last page of our interview features one drawing, and one photograph. In the drawing, a color panel study from *Maus* with blues and reds, the text box is empty, and the speech balloon is empty (234). Vladek and Anja, reunited, embrace tightly (the words we are missing in both dialogue and narration are Vladek's; his "voice" will later connect to and fill this blank space, when his handwritten inscription on the back of a photograph of Anja ends the book.) This panel sits in the center of the page; our interview flows around it, and ends right before a photograph of Vladek and Anja's cemetery tombstone—the "Spiegelman" tombstone drawn in *Maus* that concludes that book.

Our last page enacts a reversal. While the final page of *Maus* ("it's enough stories for now," Vladek says) offers an ink headstone, under which Spiegelman's signature sits, as if buried (or engendering his parents' story backwards), *MetaMaus*'s conclusion to talking offers a photographic headstone, above which sits Spiegelman's typographic "signature," in a way retracting the primacy of self that *Maus*'s last marks could be seen to indicate. *Maus*'s signature reads, by hand, "art spiegelman 1978-1991," the span of time he worked on *Maus*; *MetaMaus*'s reads "Art Spiegelman, with Hillary Chute, NYC, 2006-2010," the span of time during which we

put together *MetaMaus*.

Last pages of *Metamaus* Interview from *METAMAUS* (pages 234-235).
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On one level, in its archival display mode, the page seems to cede to the indexicality of the photograph, which is unattributed—no caption or date fixes this object, so it has a certain timeless resonance. Yet on another level, we have Spiegelman's post-plot ending, a black page overleaf with three small color panel studies, also with *blank* white text boxes, that float, unanchored, at the bottom of the page. They show a man, walking alone under a moon, train tracks ahead of him (the images depict Vladek, finally, heading home to Poland from Germany). We end, on one hand, with the graphic emptiness of words, but also the fullness of richly colored visual images. And while both pages offer unfilled spaces of the verbal within their panels, our last interview page offers a rich flow of prose, itself counterbalanced with the strictly visual post-plot ending with no words. Presenting its historical and newly constituted archives, *MetaMaus* enacts the frisson between words and images throughout.

The boxes of comics are *archival boxes*—boxes of space to put things in, to frame things with, to enclose and preserve with (even if the elements inside will not stay still, spilling out into the gutter, or literally breaking the frame). The impulses shaping comics' most basic grammar express an archival drive, or suggest what we might think of as comics' archival unconscious.[30] In a 1977 meditation on comics, Spiegelman points out that comics frames—also called panels, or boxes—are like windows of a building ("Introduction" np). They may be this, but they are also *containers*, literal boxes that are the building blocks of a psychic and material edifice, offering the look and view implied by windows, but also the power to hold, include, delimit.

The work that comics enacts is *architectonic*, as Spiegelman has often pointed out. *Maus*, he says, for instance, could not be accomplished without the "architectonic rigor" of cartoonist Winsor McCay; his own attempts to define comics as a medium are to "get at what the architectonics" of comics might be.[31] The OED defines architectonic as of or pertaining to architecture, suited or serviceable for the construction of buildings; of or pertaining to construction. Two further definitions there pertain: one, noted to be used by Aristotle, is having

the function of superintendence and control, i.e. having the relation that an architect bears to the artificers employed on the building; directive; controlling. The next is, simply, pertaining to the systematization of knowledge. All of these apply to comics, which is a system of knowledge, in addition to a form of expression, that has everything to do with being an "artificer" in the Greek sense and one who controls the shape of time, space, and material on the page.[32] The architectonics of comics *is* the process of archiving. It makes a location for ordering information to express history and memory.[33]

Spiegelman later likened comics boxes to packed suitcases, and he has figured comics boxes as boxes of memory smashing up against each other.[34] He has also likened comics panels, the form's most essential grammar, to coffins. He told me, to cite again an earlier quotation, that *Maus* is about "choices being made, of finding what one can tell, and what one can reveal, and what one can reveal beyond what one knows one is revealing. Those are the things that give real tensile strength to the work—putting the dead into little boxes" (*MetaMaus*, 73). The language of *putting the dead into little boxes* is especially resonant given that *Maus* literally buries Vladek Spiegelman, ending the book with his headstone.

To "archive" something can mean to materialize something in order to place and bury it, as when I asked Spiegelman about a notebook entry, on what seemed to me the key issue of his identification with Vladek, and his response—printed in *MetaMaus*, was, "Well, tell me more. You know, I put in a notebook so I'd never have to think about it again" (32).[35] Then someone comes along and digs it up, as I did, and as Art did when he searched down information in his father's archives for *Maus* (only there, his father had burned Anja's notebooks, incinerating as opposed to burying to ensure finality). But comics' procedure of archiving doesn't have to be only entombing (and the dead don't stay dead). Comics inscribes its information in boxes on the page in order to preserve and commemorate, but also to disseminate, to circulate, to produce an interaction.

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Notes

[1] *MetaMaus* is about the cultural, stylistic, historical, and personal frames that inspired the two-volume *Maus* (1986; 1991), Spiegelman's harrowing and terrain-shifting nonfiction word and image work about the Holocaust that won a Pulitzer Prize in 1992. An anniversary edition collecting the two volumes as one hardcover book was released in 2011; page references to the *Maus* volumes are to this edition. Now translated in more

than 30 languages, *Maus* is arguably the most globally famous graphic narrative (and it essentially defined the field of the "graphic novel," a term Spiegelman has come to dislike, in the 1980s and 1990s). It is also one of the most globally celebrated works of Holocaust cultural production—another category Spiegelman dislikes—because of its profound self-awareness as a made object, what we might think of as its narrative self-reflexivity, often accomplished through the interplay of words and images, and its careful but un-sentimental willingness to delve into the reality of what "survival" looks like (see *MetaMaus* 75 on terminology). But *Maus*, crucially, hasn't only had an impact among comics readers and in WWII-focused circles; it has changed both these fields and others. It reverberates in contemporary literature, history, art history and elsewhere—and Spiegelman, arguably, is the most acclaimed author of the American baby-boomer generation.

[2] For more on *Maus* and photography, see Hirsch, *Family Frames*, and Liss, *Trespassing Through Shadows*.

[3] Vladek Spiegelman, posthumously, became a historical public figure. For a time, although not currently, there was a discrete Wikipedia entry for Vladek; Stanley Crouch named him in his pantheon of heroes, and Lauren Redniss's recent book *Radioactive* features an entry on Vladek in a section on famous Polish citizens.

[4] See Iadonisi for a take on the collaborative narrative fabric of *Maus*.

[5] The main body of the book is an interview I conducted with Spiegelman for a period of two-plus years, which we had transcribed along the way and which I then edited from hundreds upon hundreds of pages down to workable drafts that we condensed into the roughly 234 pages that appear in the printed book.

[6] See Chute 2005. *Indy* magazine is no longer operative.

[7] It seems there might be an "archival turn" everywhere. In a highly specific way, however, it is clear to me that my field of study, contemporary nonfiction comics, is deeply steeped in the desires and problems that the work of archiving asks us to consider.

[8] Spiegelman accuses *both* parents of being a murderer in *Maus*. In the comic strip "Prisoner on the Hell Planet," a work from 1972 that is embedded within the book, Spiegelman ends the strip with the Art character addressing his mother right after her suicide: "You murdered me, mommy, and you left me here to take the rap!"

[9] Hoffman points out how the body has been seen as an archive in at least two senses: "as a storehouse for data and as itself a source of information" (6).

[10] The notion of selection also has parallels, although inversely—selection for preservation versus selection for destruction—to the *selektions* that were such a defining feature of the Nazi program of elimination and such a large part of Vladek's testimony in *Maus*.

[11] *Complete Maus,* 258.

[12] See Marks, "Maus and Bitburg."

[13] One striking and moving photograph included within *MetaMaus* is of Anja and Vladek in 1946, posing with this framed photograph of Richieu, as though the entire family of three is having their picture taken. Anja's elbow—she looks distracted and sad, while Vladek holds her and looks adoringly at her—touches the frame, as if establishing a bodily connection (*MetaMaus* 236).

[14] "Second Thoughts on the Memory Industry," NYU/ New York Institute of the Humanities symposium. May 7, 2011.

[15] See Chute, "'The Shadow of a Past Time.'"

[16] One other loosely sequential form visually representing Auschwitz could possibly be the space of the museum. See Landsberg.

[17] See Hirsch 2004 for an analysis of visual encounters of recognition.

[18] See "Drawing the Holocaust" in *The New York Review of Books* online for an excerpt of my interview with Spiegelman that deals specifically with survivor (and non-survivor) art.

[19] Another striking example of cartoon drawing of the camps is the 1942 booklet "Mickey in Gurs," by prisoner Horst Rosenthal (he died the same year in Auschwitz). See *MetaMaus* 138.

[20] *Ravensbruck*, Ukrainian, artist unknown, 1946. *Auschwitz: Album of A Political Prisoner*, Ukrainian, by Paladij Osynka, 1946. Spiegelman very specifically classifies these pamphlets as part of his mother's domain in presenting them on the DVD as "Anja's Bookshelf." Anja Spiegelman was formative for his artistry in many ways, including in her role as the owner and saver of the small-press pamphlets she transported from Europe, and in her role drawing collaboratively with her young son through the "Scribble game" (see *Portrait*). Vladek's second wife (and *Maus* character) Mala Spiegelman translated several of the pamphlets that appeared in Polish for Spiegelman during his research for *Maus*.

[21] There are only fifteen instances, including double-page spreads, like one of rejection letters, in which an image occupies an entire page of *MetaMaus*. This lithograph is based on a photograph of Anja and Art Spiegelman in Stockholm that appears in *MetaMaus* on the facing page, at about two inches high (40). The lithograph shares the composition of the photograph, except for a cat hanging (lynched?) from a tree branch behind Anja and Art. The lithograph image does not seem to imply the adult mother in the foreground has directly physically murdered the Nazi cat; rather, the mere existence of her three-year-old son holding her hand in a snowsuit is tantamount to murdering—enacting revenge

on—the cat standing in for Nazism.

²² For a recent essay on the nature of archives and Nazi official and private recordkeeping, see Farmer; for a take on the effect of Nazi documentation as seen in Berlin's new "Topography of Terror" Center, see Malamud.

²³ By stand-alone I mean not embedded in another previously circulating work, as in the two photographs that are part of the reprinted story "Mein Kampf" that opens an early section of the book. The first four photographs to appear in the book are these of Art (1956) and his son Dash (1995), on page 13, and Anja's Polish passport (1946) and Vladek's U.S. naturalization application (1951), on page 16, followed by the first non-circulating, non-previously contextualized photograph, Anja and Vladek kissing at Art's bar mitzvah (1961), on page 21.

²⁴ Art and I sometimes disagreed on the weight that should be given to the different elements; I was much more comfortable with swaths of text whereas Art pushed me to see the importance of visual anchors. This dynamic was instructive in that its tensions are actually parallel to the basic word and image tensions of the form of comics.

²⁵ Thank you to Carmen Merport for her insights about this tension. Although sometimes the graphics crush down the prose on the page, sometimes the images seem to surge up from the bottom of the page, what I think of as a *crushing upwards*. This is evident in a sequence in which Spiegelman and I discuss Nazi propaganda—a rich archive, for sure, that has a forceful visual presence in the book—and a poster for an anti-Semitic film featuring the leering face of a swarthy, pointy-eared, kippa-wearing Jew seems to push up on a tiny top-edge illustration by Spiegelman of cockroach Gregor Samsa, squeezing out prose and allowing for only a few lines of type in between iterations of dehumanization (114).

²⁶ Page 22, in which a draft from *Maus* opens the page in the top left while a sentence jumps from page 21 to 22 below it, is one example among many.

²⁷ Another example, involving family photographs, is 32-33.

²⁸ The Spiegelman character says to his therapist Paul Pavel: "Like Samuel Beckett once said, 'Every word is like an unnecessary stain on silence and nothingness'" (*Complete Maus* 205).

²⁹ Spiegelman expands on this in conversation with me in a YouTube clip posted by the 92nd St. Y (October 6, 2011).

³⁰ In "Archival Bodies," Hoffman suggests of the notion of an *archival unconscious*: "the archival unconscious is not so much a place, or a preexisting set of meanings, but rather the function of an interactive process, in which something comes into being" (27). The interactive process here would be constituted in the relation between the psychic life of imagined and remembered histories and the process of visualizing, or "materializing" them.

31 Silverblatt 33; *MetaMaus* 166.

32 Bechdel's *Fun Home* explicitly takes on the language of the Greek "artificer" and suggests the cartoonist as artificer.

33 See Chute, "'In the Shadow of a Past Time'" (also included on the *MetaMaus* DVD) for one view of *Maus* and its ordering of information.

34 See 2008's *Portrait of the Artist as a Young…* and *MetaMaus* 38 for comics panels and suitcases, and *Portrait* as an example of panels as boxes of memory. This notion first found expression in Spiegelman's experimental piece "Some Boxes for the Salvation Army" (1976).

35 This exchange reminds me of Vladek's comment to Art: "All such things from the war, I tried to put out from my mind once for all… until you rebuild me all this from your questions" (*Complete Maus* 258).

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