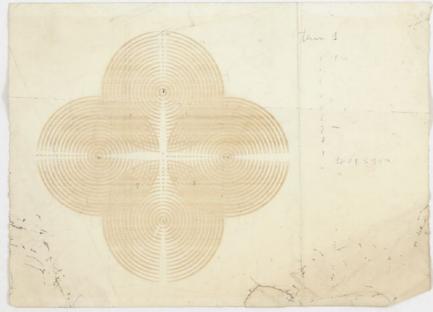This paper describes the discovery and significance of *Etude* (1967), a previously unknown work by media artist Nam June Paik identified by the author in the Smithsonian American Art Museum's recently-acquired Paik archive. Composed at Bell Labs, in collaboration with engineers, and written in an early version of FORTRAN, *Etude* stands as one of the earliest works of digital art—although it is not entirely clear whether *Etude* was, in fact, the "computer opera" that Paik mentions elsewhere in his writings, or another artwork altogether. By exploring *Etude's* uncertain status, as well as the piece's more conceptual indeterminacies— between image and code, opera and intermedia, analog and digital, and archive and meaning— this paper demonstrates how such indefinite artifacts allow for a rethinking of media art's digital past, film's place in computational media, and the nature of the archive.

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MEDIA RECURSIONS:
NAM JUNE PAIK'S DIGITAL ART

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