

## **Unknown Exhibit Notes**

This PDF includes a sketch for the Unknown exhibit. The Unknown exhibit requires roughly 12 feet of wall space. At the center of that should be the parabolic speaker. Directly in front of the area where the listener will stand under the parabolic speaker will be the display case with the call bell (probably about 3 square feet of floor space is required for this). The Unknown audio tracks should play on shuffle mode while the exhibit is open, at a level audible to the listener standing under the speaker. There are 6 10\*8 and 4 8\*10 photos that should be mounted on the wall at eye level. The corresponding 3.5\*3.5 title cards should appear beneath them. Please mount the photos and title cards as you see fit. The print-ready title cards are included in this pdf. The photo it should appear with follows each card. The printed glossy photos will be arriving in a shipment from Nick Montfort within the next week, but you should use this file to print the title cards. The MP3 player (plus sound out cord and AC charger/cord), loaded with the Unknown sound files, will also arrive in the shipment from Montfort, as will the call bell. The Unknown hypertext, which has already been sent via email, should be installed on a computer, either right next to the photo/audio display, or wherever you are putting the other computer stations.

So here's the rough breakdown:

Already sent: Unknown files for computer.

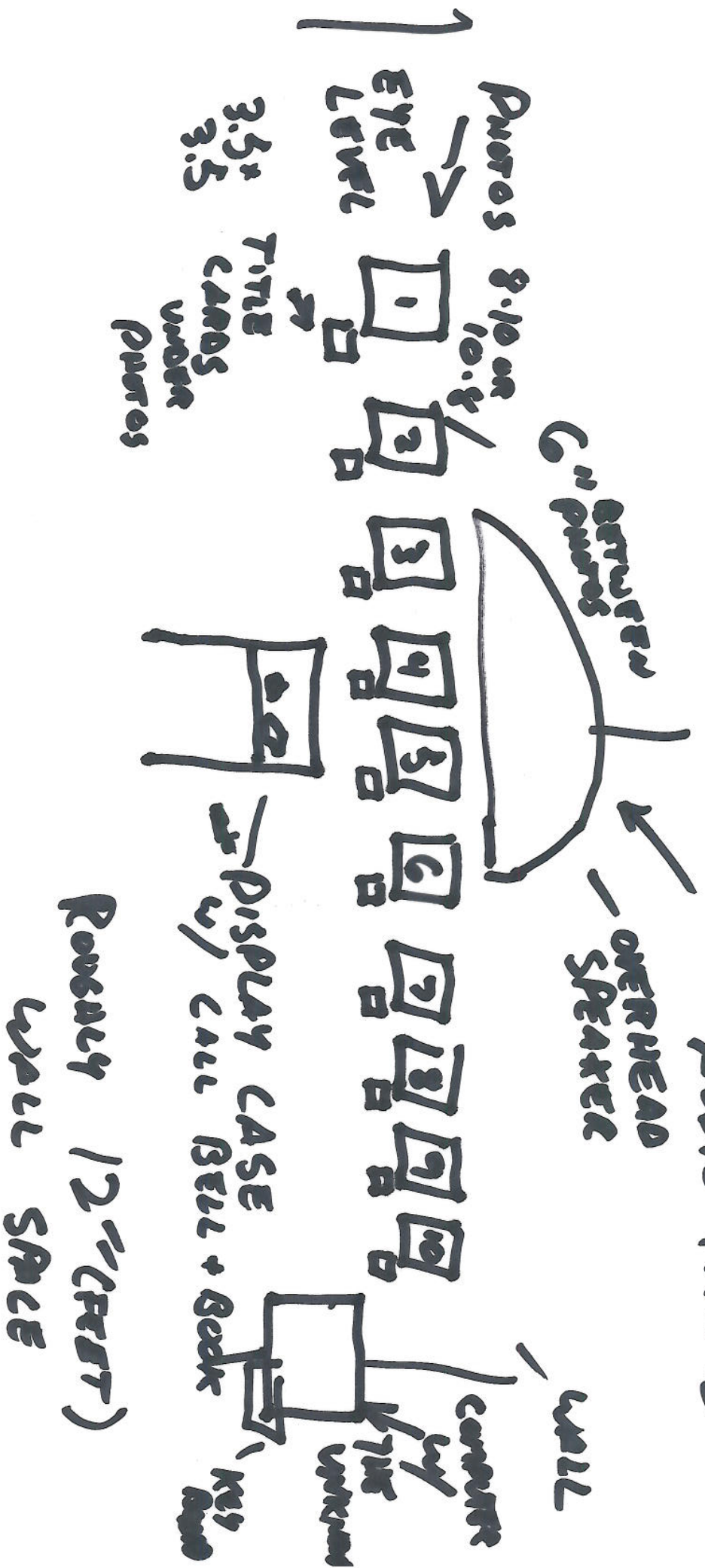
In this PDF: Print-ready title cards and layout sketch.

Arriving in shipment from Nick Montfort: 10 glossy photos, MP3 player with audio tracks, audio out cord, AC charger/wall plug, and call bell.

Arriving with artist: The Unknown, an anthology.



# MP3 Player Loans Audio Tracks



LAYOUT OF UNKNOWN EXHIBIT

## metaphors for writers:

a writer is an antibody for **society's** diseases

a writer is a superego for **society's** id

a writer is an alternator on **society's internal combustion engine**

a writer is a plumber, planning the course of used and unwanted language

{{what's missing here is the idea of a writer as a “wronger”—or the idea of a “righter” on **the left**}}—a writer writes things other than things about what a writer is.

**writer.htm**





The Unknown looms in the doorway of serious literature, grunting and drooling and fondling itself. The writers, smoking cigars around the card table, pretend to ignore it. It is their prodigal son and they will under no circumstances invite it in.

**`hard_code8.htm`**





We were all a little apprehensive about moving from a psychic atmosphere described by [one critic](#) as “Midwestern Literary Evangelism” and another as “Techno-Pastoral,” to one that could only be described as “Bedding Down with Satan.” The devil wears a thousand guises in Hollywood, but such are the costs of seeing a dream to its full fruition.

Film was a medium that none of us could even begin to understand, but we knew that it had been the art form of the 20th Century. While we have our understanding of collaboration, in Tinsel Town, collaboration takes on an altogether different pallor; it is the stuff of bitter feuds and power struggles, of profit margins and compromises; it is a messy, twisted business that can drain the soul of a writer.





... because it turns out, we discovered, that a lot of people who read our hypertext novel tend to believe that everything we write about all the highly regarded literary figures who we mention in the hypertext is true. Which, as I've explained again and again, it's not. It's mostly bullshit, as they say in the vernacular. Still nobody believes me. Like this is some kind of fucking **biography**. But anyway, I'm not gonna have anybody believing that Coover, who is an American literary **icon**, a true great man in the "great man" theory of history sense of the word, was actually **sitting there getting stoned with us**. Regardless.



The Unknown=any two words that haven't been put together yet.

**unknown2.htm**





## Review from *The New Yorker* by Arthur C. Danto

Every so longer three writers come along who, it is obvious from the very beginning, are destined for greatness. They are great before anybody knows them, possibly the instant they are born. Read this book: *The Unknown*. It is the newest, latest, hippest, youngest, freshest, most happening, best, most outrageous, most intense and in a certain [sense](#) the most significant young prose in America, witheringly funny, grotesquely comprehensive, grimly smart, and so wrenching as to be moving, infinitely readable, a grand monstrous powerful thing, shadowy yet redemptive, unreflectively entangled in crimes of demarcation, original and audacious, a vast comic [epic](#) and a [study](#) of the [postmodern](#) condition, hilarious, appalling, moving, subtle, wise, gritty, precisionist, enigmatic, and in this book lifelong themes of [love](#) and anger, family politics, sexuality, and the body of the city can be seen gathering in power and clarity, and it develops a freedom and psychic energy born triumphantly of well-wrought pain and determination, all in a new architecture, a wholly new voice, and even a new chemistry of words and [images](#). Two [thumbs up](#).



We tried to get the MacArthur people to give us grants. But it didn't work.

**chicago.htm**



"TO FOLLOW THOSE WATERS ♦ ♦ ♦ WHICH WILL  
HENCEFORTH LEAD VS INTO STRANGE LANDS"


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We buried him in a casket when the time came. This pleased his religious relatives. The casket, obviously, was closed, but I still think the whole head freezing and incineration option would have been more troubling for us all, in particular his mother. She had to deal with his eccentricities in life, I thought, which must have been troubling enough. To extend his [bizarre and troubling rituals](#) beyond his death, I thought, would have simply been too much.

**[dirkswish.htm](#)**





Unknown

**S:** Actually, what I would envision would be a public transportation system that is also actually a public health system. You'd have trains running anywhere, you know, within ten blocks of walking distance anywhere in the country, and on those trains there would be hospitals, where anyone could get on, take a ride, say, from here to Gary, get an appendectomy, and be back within ten blocks of their dwelling within, say, three hours.

**W:** Reliable, safe, clean and free.

**S:** On the trains.

**W:** Public Health Transportation.





There's going to be those tracks through the snow. When we begin to write, we are making **memories**, which will be recreated differently when they are read.

A **writer** loves a reader, because that is where fulfillment lives. In fiction especially. When you write poetry, sometimes you are intimate with yourself, sometimes you are meant to be speaking out loud. In drama you could not do without others there speaking. You are **constantly public**. But fiction is you alone and the reader alone. That is what defines it. And makes it so particularly lonely and intimate at the same time. There is both the story and the story after the story. That mystery of who will interpret. Who will know you, and what will your scribblings become? That is the substance of the **unknown**.

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