PERSONAL ARCHIVING WORKSHOP SERIES

WORKSHOP 5: INTRODUCTION TO CATALOGING RESOURCES AND SELECTING A PLATFORM FOR MANAGING YOUR PERSONAL IMAGE ARCHIVE

LIVE WORKSHOP
Recorded on
APRIL 02, 2021
11am CST

VRC
Agenda

1. Optional: Archiving Workflows
   a. Inventory
   b. Filenaming Conventions

2. Metadata Overview and Resources

3. Selecting a Platform
   a. Google Sheets
   b. AirTable
   c. Tropy
Archiving Workflows
Inventory

And also:

- email
- external drives
- desktop, downloads folder, etc
Decide What You’re Keeping

- Delete dupes
- Delete out of focus or unusable images, unless it’s your only copy
- Keep “note” photos until you’ve turned it into metadata, then delete
- What images need to be edited in Photoshop re: Workshops 1-3?

Question: Where is the best place to keep notes about our conventions/decisions?

A: Anywhere you prefer. Could be Microsoft Word, Google Docs, the Notes app on your phone. A doc uploaded through UChicago Box. Think about your preferences and whether you’ll need to share this with an RA or other collaborator.
Filenaming Conventions

- Must be unique
- Balance legibility & amount of info
- Consistency

Richard Serra’s *Reading Cones* (1988)
Grant Park
May 23, 2020
Filename Examples

IMG_6497.jpg

20200523_0001.jpg

20200523_Chicago_GrantPark_0001.jpg

20200523_Serra_ReadingCones_0001.jpg

20200523_Chicago_GrantPark_Serra_ReadingCones_1988_installed1990_NE_0001.jpg

More advice & examples on filenaming at this UMich LibGuide
Document Your Decisions

- Filenaming Conventions
- Abbreviations
- Primary storage & backup storage locations
Metadata Overview and Resources
Schemas

How the data is structured

Defines the set of field names you’ll use to catalog your images

OR

- Elements
- Categories
- Containers
- Buckets
What’s the minimum schema?
Here lies Buried the Body of
Mr. Obed Abbott,
who departed this Life
May the 11, 1773, in y 7th Year of His Age.

Also in Memory of Mr. John Abbott,
who died in y Army at Lake George
Nov'y 2, 1776. Age'd 37 Years.
Tombstone

Artist (culture, life dates)

Title, date

Materials

Collection/Repository, Accession Number
It’s Alive!
Where does metadata come from?

- People
  - Artists, Art historians, catalogers, curators, registrars, you
- Books & other published sources
  - Exhibition Catalogs, Cat Ras, Artist Monographs, Gallery publications
- Museum and Digital Collections Databases
- Museum wall labels or other exhibition didactics
- Controlled vocabularies
- Your devices

Be critical of your metadata sources

- Expertise
- Bias
Your Devices & EXIF Data

- Automatic, technical metadata at the point of capture
- Ethics & Privacy considerations
  - For you, personally
  - For your collaborators, sites, people, etc.
- Opportunities for easy mapping
- Read EXIF data in programs like Adobe Bridge, phone apps, etc.
  - Mac Finder and Tropy both read some of the technical metadata
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<td>Brightness</td>
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<td>iPhone 11 Pro back triple camera 4.25mm f/1.8</td>
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<td>RGB</td>
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<td>Compression Bits Per Pixel</td>
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Review Existing Schemas & Your Project Needs

- What is the internal logic of your project?
- Modify & adapt existing schemas to meet your needs

Some Schemas to Consider
- VRA Core 4
- CDWA
- ArchaeoCore
- Dublin Core
- So many more!
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Smart Museum of Art Exhibition Archive Schema

Filename
Related Filename
ExhibitionID
Exhibition Title
Item
Category
Physical Format
Item Creator
Item Description
Exhibition Begin Date
Exhibition End Date
Exhibition Description
Types of Metadata to Include in Your Archive

Descriptive:

● At least tombstone
● Any other fields that suit your project’s current and future needs

Administrative:

● Filename, and potentially even the filepath of where the image is saved if you have a sub-folder system.
● Rights information
● Photographer, image date (if separate from work creator & work creation date)

Technical, if applicable:

● Image specs (can be useful for future publishing projects)
● GPS if your project is spatial
Vocabularies & Further Resources

Getty Vocabularies

- Art & Architecture Thesaurus
- Union List of Artist Names
- Thesaurus of Geographic Names
- Cultural Objects Name Authority
  - Iconography Authority

VRC’s Guide to Cataloging Your Images
Selecting a Platform
Things to Consider

- Image sharing to or from VRC
- Collaboration with colleagues, RAs, etc
- Export/Create slide decks for teaching
- File Types: image, audio, video, 3D?
- Maintenance and updating workflows
- What do you enjoy, and what will you stick with?
- Cost
- Storage & Access: Cloud-based, local, back-up

Priorities from the group:
- Particular interest in exporting images and easily creating slide decks
- Difference between storing metadata for archive/publication and using it for courses
VRC Support for Personal Image Archives

- **VRC Personal Archiving Collaboration Policy**
  - How we can support your personal archiving efforts and how we can collaborate if you want to contribute selections from your personal archive to LUNA
There is no perfect platform
**VRC Recommendations**

**Google Sheets**
Flexible metadata, not great for including images. Great for collaboration and for tracking copyright/permissions metadata. Easy to collaborate with VRC collections.

**AirTable**
Very similar to Google Sheets, flexible metadata, images and videos, probably best suited for smaller projects or archives where video is a requirement. Easy to collaborate with VRC collections.

**Tropy**
Robust research tool, specifically designed for History grad students. VRC made a custom art history metadata template! Not interoperable, does not work for videos or OCR content. Less easy to collaborate with the VRC.

**AiRES**
Basic metadata, focus on viewing images & visual thinking. Easy to collaborate with VRC collections.
Explore Live Demos After the Workshop

The VRC hosts demo archives and templates for:

- Google Sheets Permissions
- Airtable
- Tropy
- AIRES
Google Sheets

Demo Use Case: Tracking Rights Requests for a Publication

Template: [VRC Template for Permissions Metadata](#)

If you prefer Excel, O365 is similar!

How to include your images from the VRC: let us know what fields are in your schema and we can map our data export to match your fields! Or add us as a collaborator.

Want to contribute images from your archive to the VRC’s LUNA collections? Send us a google sheet or add us as a collaborator. Share images separately.
Google Sheets - Pros and Cons

- Can represent all of your file types in one system
  - Recommend storing your images elsewhere (Drive?)
- Easy to collaborate with VRC or others
- Can create forms to populate data
- Use Filter to conduct searches
  - Have to force tags/categories

- Not great for displaying/embedding image, video, or audio files
- Doesn’t allow for easy creation/export to slide deck for teaching
Airtable

Demo Use Case: Cataloging artworks in your personal archive

Template: All of our Google Sheets templates can work with Airtable. Need something else? We can help!

How to include your images from the VRC: let us know what fields are in your schema and we can map our data export to match your fields! Or add us as a collaborator.

Want to contribute images from your archive to the VRC’s LUNA collections? Send us a CSV export from Airtable or add us as a collaborator. Share image files separately.
Airtable - Pros and Cons

- Can represent all of your file types in one system
  - Upload images, video, audio
  - Avoid storing highest res files
- Metadata can be batch uploaded via CSV, Google Sheets, or entered by one by one
- Easy to collaborate with others
- REALLY nice category feature
- Can create forms to populate data

- Can export full-res of whatever you uploaded, but storage max
  - Probably need a workflow for creating lower-res versions
- Cost
  - Plus: $10-12/month for 5,000 records & 5GB
  - Pro: $20-24/month for 50,000 records & 20GB
- Does not generate slide decks or allow for bulk export of images, but possible to automate (tricky, recommend hiring an RA)
Tropy

Use case: Dissertation/book research archive containing images of artwork, architecture, and archival correspondence

Templates: Available to download and install via Box

How to include your images from the VRC: We can share with you, but you’ll have to copy/paste or re-catalog the images into Tropy yourself.

Want to contribute images from your archive to the VRC’s LUNA collections? Not easy to share your data with the VRC for inclusion in LUNA. Send image files separately & a copy of your Tropy DB
Tropy - Pro and Cons

- Robust features for describing items
  - Transcribing
  - Notes
- Can quickly create sub-groups of images related to chapters, lectures, and more
- Multiple metadata templates to handle multiple image types in one system
- Really good documentation & support on tropy.org

- Cannot represent all of your files in one system: Tropy does not accept audio or video files.
- Closed system: no way to export/easily create a slide deck
- No cloud access, needs to be run on a local or external drive
  - Workarounds to share with colleagues or collaborators & work one at a time
Tropy Resources

Tropy for Graduate Students (YouTube webinar, October 2020 recording)

Tropy 101 (YouTube webinar, recording June 2020)

Documentation

Support Forum

Blog
Questions from Attendees About Tropy

- What is Tropy’s likely lifespan?
  - There’s a long history of support for the programs created Roy Rozenzweig Center for History and New Media History, including Zotero and Omeka. Tropy has extensive web guides, forums documentation guides, and has already moved out of beta.
  - Will they possibly be more collaborative?
    - On the radar of the creators, looking into cloud component
    - Receptive to users’ needs, Zotero has grown into a more collaborative, cloud platform.

- If you store images on external hard drive, are images moved to documents folder on your desktop?
  - No, happily, Tropy points to your images but does not move them. But you’ll need to connect to external hard drive when using Tropy.
Question from Attendees About Changing Platforms

- Interested in exportable platforms, in case they become unsupported in the future
  - Airtable might be more exportable, but Tropy does not have a batch-import (or export) feature for metadata. It’s important to think about where you might want to migrate your archive to, not just from. Not all systems are interoperable.
What if …

You need a platform, but none of these meet your needs?

- Book an Appointment and let’s talk!

You need a platform for managing research PDFs?

- Workshop 6: Strategies for Managing Your Research PDFs, Friday 4/9, 11-12 CST

You need more than a platform?

- Workshop 7: Beyond the Personal Archive: Managing Research Corpora
  - DH, databases, maps, etc.