

SOURCE ACQUISITION

Archive Pressure begins with the harvesting of eBay listings. Listing photographs are made for a specific and temporary purpose: to describe objects and facilitate their sale. Alongside the object being sold, they inadvertently record domestic interiors, floors, tables, hands, packaging, gardens, workshops and other incidental surroundings.

The project treats these photographs not as isolated images but as components of a larger informational object: the listing. Where available, photographs, moving image, listing titles and associated metadata are retained. Their relationship is preserved as the material moves from the online marketplace into a locally stored archive.

The act of harvesting changes the status of the material. Information created for temporary commercial circulation becomes persistent source material. At this stage the archive remains dependent upon the outside world: its growth requires new material to be found and brought into it.



Harvesting in progress / source listings entering the working archive.

02 / CURATION – CONSTRUCTING THE WORKING ARCHIVE

SELECTION BOUNDARY

Harvesting produces considerably more material than will enter the active archive. A separate process of curation determines which listings are retained for further processing. Material is reviewed through dedicated browsing interfaces before computational generation begins.

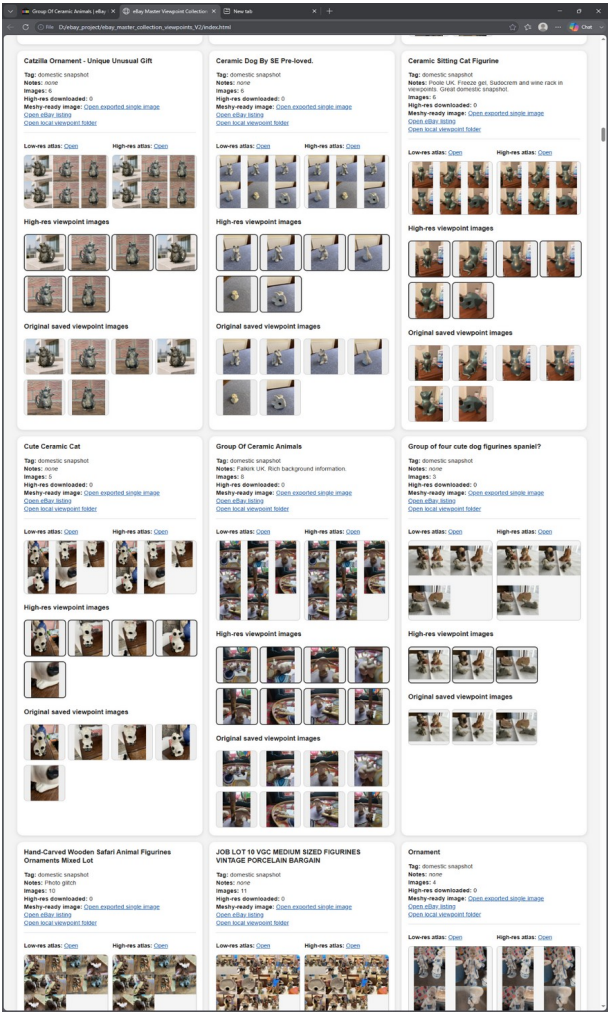
The archive is therefore not neutral or comprehensive. It is constructed through acts of selection.

HARVESTED MATERIAL → CURATED SOURCE ARCHIVE

Selection occurs again after generation:

GENERATED POPULATION → SELECTED OUTPUT

The first boundary determines what is permitted to enter the system. The second determines which of the system’s outcomes are materialised as works. Authorship therefore operates partly through the construction of these boundaries rather than through direct composition of every resulting image.



Master Viewpoint Collection / listings encountered as sets of viewpoints.

03 / PREPARATION – MAKING THE ARCHIVE COMPUTABLE

SEMANTIC REGIONS

Once a listing enters the working archive, its photographs become viewpoints associated with their original listing. Each viewpoint is divided into three semantic regions:

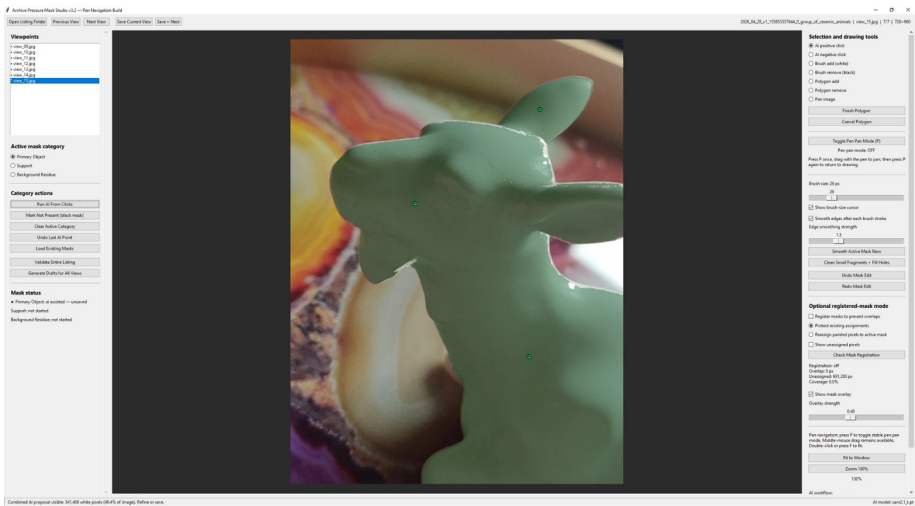
PRIMARY – the principal object or subject of the listing.

SUPPORT – the surface, object or structure supporting or containing the primary object.

BACKGROUND – the remaining surrounding field or environment.

This process is more than the extraction of an object from its background. It translates a photograph into a set of relationships. A table, carpet, box or hand is no longer defined only by what it depicts. Within the system it can acquire a functional role: Primary, Support or Background.

These relationships can persist even as the visual integrity of the original photograph begins to fragment.



Mask Studio / semantic territories inspected and refined.



SOURCE



PRIMARY



SUPPORT



BACKGROUND

04 / SYSTEMS – CONSTRUCTING CONDITIONS RATHER THAN COMPOSITIONS

RULE STRUCTURE

Prepared archive material is passed into a family of computational systems. The systems can share source material while establishing different relationships between its components. They are not filters or visual styles; each is a different set of conditions under which archived elements are allowed to interact.

HIERARCHY

Hierarchy describes the relative authority of roles within a system. In System A, for example, Primary remains dominant. That hierarchy belongs to the underlying structure of the system.

PERMUTATION

Permutation describes processing order: Primary, Support and Background can enter as PSB, PBS, SPB, SBP, BPS or BSP. Changing the order can substantially alter an image without redefining the hierarchy of the system itself.

PRESSURE

Pressure describes the extent or intensity with which the system's relationships are tested. Within the A/B/C family this is expressed through LOW, MEDIUM and HIGH states; Archive Field instead uses percentage-based pressure.

Random seed introduces reproducible variation. The resulting image is not directly specified in advance.

ARTIST → RULES / CONDITIONS → SYSTEM → POSSIBLE COMPOSITIONS



ABC generation / a reproducible state produced by system, permutation, pressure and seed.

05 / GENERATION + SELECTION – ENCOUNTERING A POPULATION

GENERATED POPULATION

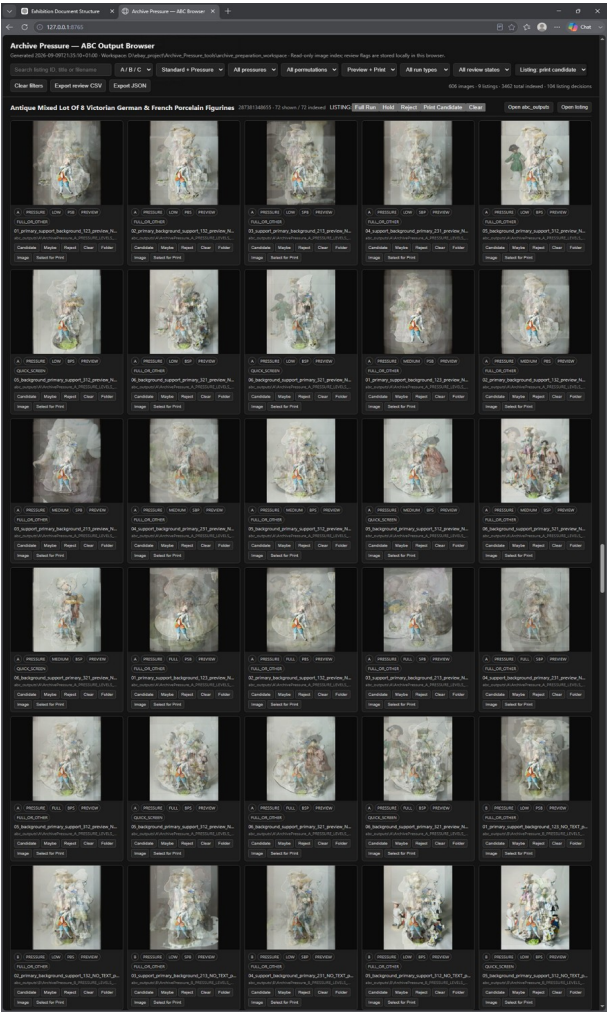
A prepared listing does not produce a single image. Changes in system, permutation, pressure and random seed allow the same source material to produce multiple outcomes. Batch processing extends this across many listings, creating populations too large to direct individually.

Generation and selection are deliberately separated. The system is allowed to produce according to its rules; curatorial judgement returns after generation.

CONSTRUCT SYSTEM → GENERATE → ENCOUNTER → SELECT

I am not choosing the exact position, distortion or interaction of every element while the image is being made. Instead, I encounter the resulting population after the system has operated.

Some outcomes expose possibilities that were not anticipated when the rules were written. The seed and associated parameters of significant generations can be retained, giving selected states a reproducible computational identity.



ABC Output Browser / generated states reviewed as a population.

06 / PARALLEL SYSTEMS – D1, 3D, MOVING IMAGE AND ARCHIVE FIELD

COMMON ARCHIVE / DIFFERENT OPERATIONS

Archive Pressure develops through parallel computational branches rather than a single image generator. The same expanding source archive is distributed across each branch, but a different aspect of the archive becomes active material: image, space, time or metadata.

D1 STILL IMAGE



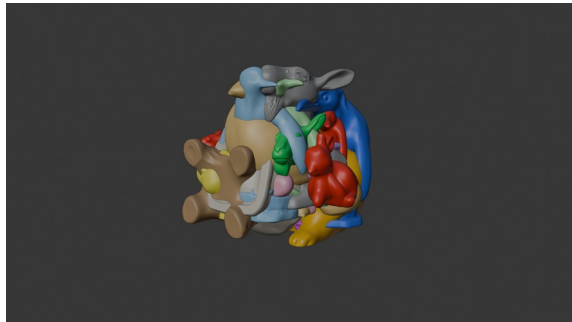
Fragmentation and recombination transform still images into composite states. Multiple listings and semantic territories can be brought into a single field.

MOVING-IMAGE MASK



Semantic territories become active through time. Collision, overlap and recursive fragments allow moving material to generate further states. The finished video plays alongside the vitrines.

3D BRANCH



Archive-derived forms are reconstructed from multiple viewpoints as an impossible sculptural aggregate. The archive becomes spatial rather than only pictorial.

ARCHIVE FIELD



Metadata becomes generative structure rather than supplementary description. Listing information organises the field alongside visual material.

07 / OUTPUT + GENEALOGY – FROM SELECTED STATE TO DESCENDANT

PRODUCTION RECORD

Once an image has been selected, its recorded parameters can be used to reconstruct that state at the resolution required for physical production. The selected work is therefore not simply enlarged from a preview: its computational conditions allow it to be regenerated.

A production record can include:

SYSTEM	RECORDED
PERMUTATION	RECORDED
PRESSURE	RECORDED
SEED	RECORDED
SOURCE LISTING	RECORDED
PRODUCTION RESOLUTION	RECORDED

This creates a form of computational provenance for the resulting work.
OBJECT → LISTING → ARCHIVE → SYSTEM → GENERATED STATE → PHYSICAL OBJECT

GENEALOGY

The original harvested archive can be understood as Generation 0. When a generated state is retained together with its source and parameters, it can return to the archive as a descendant and become source material for another generation.

GENEALOGICAL SEQUENCE
GENERATION 0 SOURCE LISTING / HARVESTED ARCHIVE
GENERATION 1 SYSTEM / CONDITIONS → SELECTED DESCENDANT → ARCHIVE
GENERATION 2 + DESCENDANT → SYSTEM / CONDITIONS → FURTHER DESCENDANT

Provenance records where a state came from; genealogy allows that history to continue forward. A descendant can be processed again, acquire further relationships, or become the ancestor of another generation.

FUTURE DEVELOPMENT

Ancestry could become operational rather than merely descriptive: the history of an entity could determine or constrain what it is permitted to do in subsequent generations.

FUTURE CONDITION

At present, Archive Pressure remains capable of accepting new material from outside itself. New listings, photographs and video can continue to enter through harvesting.

A future stage proposes a different condition:

Under this proposal, the existing archive would become the complete ancestral population at the moment of closure. No new listing, photograph or video would be permitted to enter.

Generation could continue, but only through material already inside the system and through descendants produced from it.

Each generation would add material while remaining genealogically connected to the finite population that existed at the moment of closure. The archive would turn back upon itself and begin to produce an internal history of its own.

Under this proposal, what began as an archive of temporary commercial records would become a recursive system capable of producing an internal history of its own.

PROPOSED ARCHIVE STATUS

PROPOSED CONDITION

THE ARCHIVE WOULD BE CLOSED TO NEW EXTERNAL MATERIAL.

RECURSIVE SEQUENCE / IF IMPLEMENTED

ARCHIVE → GENERATION → DESCENDANT → ARCHIVE → ...

EXPANSION UNDER THE PROPOSAL

The archive would no longer expand by collecting the outside world.
It would expand by processing its own history.