

Metadata Ecologies

Translational Struggles in “Intelligent” Archives

Day 1: The Shape of the Box

What is the shape of the blackbox of our practices? What “tacit knowledge” of the digital have we developed to deal with the material we compile, link, and render performative? Day 1 of the workshop will consist of informal sessions where we invite participants to present on aspects of their research and practice related to the workshop themes. Speakers are organized into three key archival practices: 1) Compiling (storing, collecting, acquiring, curating, preserving), 2) Linking (databasing, searching, sharing, tagging, making-accessible), 3) Bit-Rotting (decay, disposal, enclosure, deletion, erasure).

09:00 Meet at Grüne Grotte at the Faculty for Coffee/Breakfast Snacks

09:30 Intro welcome and setting terms from the organizers, then from Anna Maria Meister and Doris Halama

Sharing Session 1: Compiling [Virginia Marano Chair]

10:00 – 11:30 15 Minute papers plus clarification questions

Rafael Uriarte (KHI)

Wim Lowet (VAi)

Felix Mittelberger (ZKM)

11:30 – 11:45 Coffee Break 15 Minutes

11:45 – 12:30 Panel Discussion

12:30 – 13:30 Lunch at Faculty

Sharing Session 2: Linking [Maryia Rusak Chair]

13:30 – 15:00 15 Minute papers plus clarification questions

Jonas Zilius (KIT)

Iris Ranzinger (AzW)

Tomás Rodríguez Rivero (UPM)

15:00 – 15:15 Coffee Break

15:15 – 16:00 Panel Discussion

16:00 – 16:30 Coffee Break

Sharing session 3: (Bit) Rotting [Anna Maria Meister Chair]

16:30 – 18:00 15 Minute papers plus clarification questions

Damjan Kokalevski (AM, TUM)

Melissa Vincent (LSE)

Maddy Young (UoM)

18:00 – 18:15 Coffee Break

18:15 – 19:00 Panel Discussion

19:30 – Workshop Dinner

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Day 1: Opening The Blackbox

Description: Archival material, whether a novel digital storage medium or conventional paper drawings do not exist without the supporting practices and technologies for rendering them as stable entities while guaranteeing their status as evidence. They are not, we contend, simply objects. They are whole systems or networks. A series of three sessions will scaffold us toward a new, shared ontology of architectural artefacts. First, we will subject an existing archival ontology to a test, transforming it in the process. Then, we will work through the result of that test to describe or “de-script” our objects. Finally, these descriptions will provide an input for our summative collective diagram of a relational ontology for architectural artefacts.

09:30 Meet at SAAI Kaiserstr. 8,
Coffee//Snacks

10:00 Intro to Workshop Day from the organizers

10:30 - 12:30 Morning Workshop Session: Uncrackable Artefacts

To ease everyone into the day, this session will focus more on “storytelling” through a series of demos. Participants are invited to share their “uncrackable

artefact” to the group by way of a short two minute demo.

12:30 - 14:00 Lunch at Kulturküche

14:00 - 16:00 Afternoon Workshop Session: De-scripting Inscrutable Metadata

Current archival organizational models are unsatisfactory for the wider array of artefacts which constitute research data for architectural historians, social scientists and theorists. The “uncrackable artefacts” of the archive and beyond do not rectify well to these received ways of thinking, describing, and categorizing entities. Participants, then, will be tasked with subjecting an existing archival metadata scheme (the “Art and Architecture Thesaurus” [AAT]) to a trial of strength. Participants will swap artefacts, then try to fit this artefact into the existing scheme. Participants are encouraged to rework the AAT scheme on the fly, adding new categories or reworking categories to include descriptive elements they deem interesting and necessary. In short, we will be pushing an existing system past its limit, to the point of failure.

Each participant’s reworked metadata scheme will be used as an input for the following activity. Through the modified metadata scheme, and your own research

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methods/interests, describe or de-script the artefact you brought. You will be tasked with writing this description on a single sided index card. Participants are encouraged to take description in its widest possible definition. One, for example, could write a Haiku, C++ Object class, first-person narrative, technical description, etc.

16:00 - 18:00 Sum Up Session: Towards a Relational Ontology of Architectural Artefacts

The output of the previous session (each participant’s description) will be the input for this final session. In this final session, we will sum up by way of a collective diagramming exercise (a couple examples below). Participants will be asked to take their descriptions and derive possible archival metadata fields and their relations from them. These fields and relations will be diagrammed dynamically on a pin up board before a final discussion of the outcome.

The final outcome will be documented and shared with participants.

Day 3: Optional

09:30 – Archive tour of ZKM & SAAI, meet at ZKM