# WEEK 1

# Bibliography


1. Pater, R. (2021) CAPS LOCK: How Capitalism Took Hold of Graphic Design, and How to Escape from It. Amsterdam: Valiz.

2. Groys, B. (2016) In the Flow. London: Verso.

3. Vierkant, A. (2010) The Image Object Post-Internet. Available at: https://jstchillin.org/artie/pdf/The_Image_Object_Post-Internet_us.pdf (Accessed: 13 May 2026).

4. Nelson, T.H. (1981) Literary Machines. Sausalito, CA: Mindful Press.

# Bibliography

## Pater, R. (2021) CAPS LOCK: How Capitalism Took Hold of Graphic Design, and How to Escape from It. Amsterdam: Valiz.

Pater's account of how graphic design tools, formats and workflows are inseparable from capitalist logics gave me a vocabulary for something I had only been sensing in my own iterations. When I processed the same photograph through eight file formats, I was effectively staging a class system — RAW for the professional, JPEG for the public, WebP for the platform — but I lacked a framework to name the political work those encodings perform. Pater insists that no format, tool or interface is neutral; each one quietly redistributes access, ownership and labour. This pushes my enquiry beyond a formal comparison of compressions and toward asking who is served by each translation in the chain. It also sharpens my interest in "ownability": if the conditions of digital circulation are structured by capital, then watermarks, NFC tags and clay-held URLs are not eccentric gestures but small attempts to reintroduce friction, possession and slowness into a system designed to dissolve them.

# Bibliography

Vierkant, A. (2010) The Image Object Post-Internet. Available at: https://jstchillin.org/artie/pdf/The_Image_Object_Post-Internet_us.pdf (Accessed: 13 May 2026).

Vierkant's essay is the reference I have argued with most productively. His two conditions — that nothing is in a fixed state, and that art now lacks fixity in representational strategy — describe exactly the situation my format-translation iterations expose, and gave me language for why the "original" of a digital image can no longer claim priority over its copies. However, I find his conclusion unsatisfying in the same way Jennifer Chan does: the literal hopping between digital and physical instantiations risks becoming a formal demonstration rather than a critical position, with the artist's "hand" and relationship to the technology obscured. This tension is now driving my project. I want to take seriously Vierkant's diagnosis of the post-internet condition while refusing the smoothness of his solution — hence the deliberately laborious, hand-formed clay objects that hold links to code. The friction of recovery, the requirement to possess every piece, is my disagreement with him made into form.

# Bibliography

## Nelson, T.H. (1981) Literary Machines. Sausalito, CA: Mindful Press.

Nelson's Xanadu proposal arrived in my research as an unexpectedly tender document. Its insistence on bi-directional links, transclusion rather than copying, and the traceability of every fragment back to its source reads now as a counter-history of the web — a version of digital culture in which authorship, provenance and ownership were not casualties of the medium but its organising principles. For my enquiry into whether the digital image can be "owned" or grounded, Xanadu functions as a productive ghost: it shows that the conditions Groys and Vierkant describe were not inevitable but designed in, by the triumph of one-way hyperlinks over Nelson's model. This reframes my clay-NFC objects. They are not nostalgic gestures toward physicality but small, hand-made implementations of a Xanadu-like logic — each piece a node that must be physically held to participate in the image's reconstruction. Nelson lets me argue that bi-directionality is not anti-digital; it is a different digital that never happened, and that my project briefly reinstates.

# Bibliography

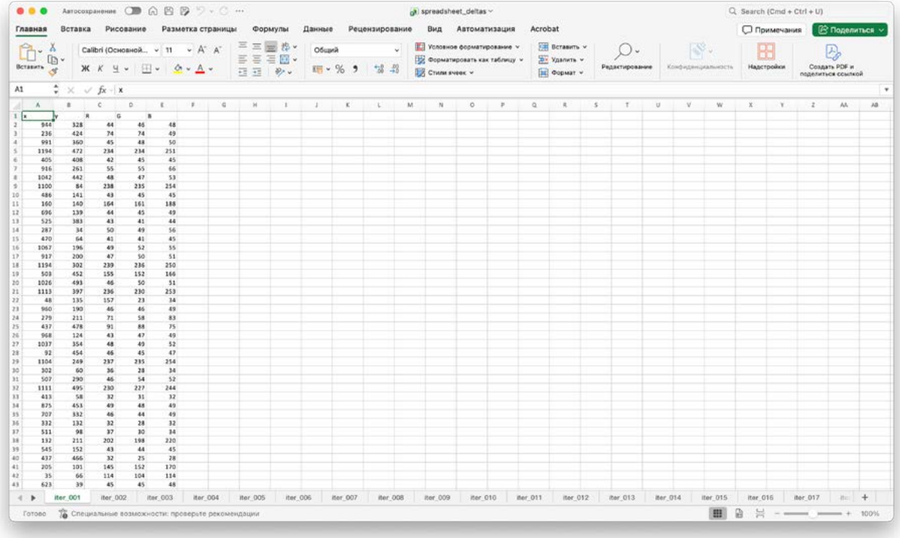
## Groys, B. (2016) In the Flow. London: Verso.

Groys reframed the question I had been circling without being able to articulate. I had assumed the digital image was a degraded version of a physical original, but his claim that contemplation online leaves traces — that every view, click and pause is archived and constitutive of the subject — inverted that assumption. The image is not weakened by digital mediation; rather, it absorbs the viewer into its data. This shifted my iteration significantly. The eight-format study stopped being about loss of quality and became about the impossibility of a neutral encounter: each format performs the viewer back to themselves and to the network. Groys's reading of post-internet conditions as quasi-religious, with the user replacing the spectator, also helped me understand why "ownership" of an image has become such an emotionally charged question in my work. The clay-and-NFC pieces are partly an attempt to restore the offline mode of contemplation Groys describes — a mode in which the act of looking does not automatically become data.

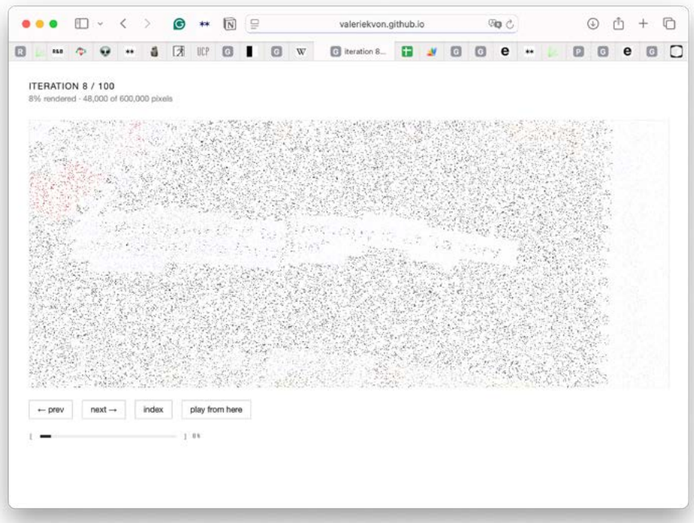
# Last week iteration:

So, going to my previous iteration, where I recontextualised and translated the same system of evoking the digital image, which is inherent to computer actions, thus **breaking up the conventional chain of image display.**

This mediation of the dataset to the display **brought out interesting features of the image data**, revealing economic inequalities embedded in the concepts of resolution and distribution.



100 CSV Sheets




100 HTML Pages

# Analysing the feedback:

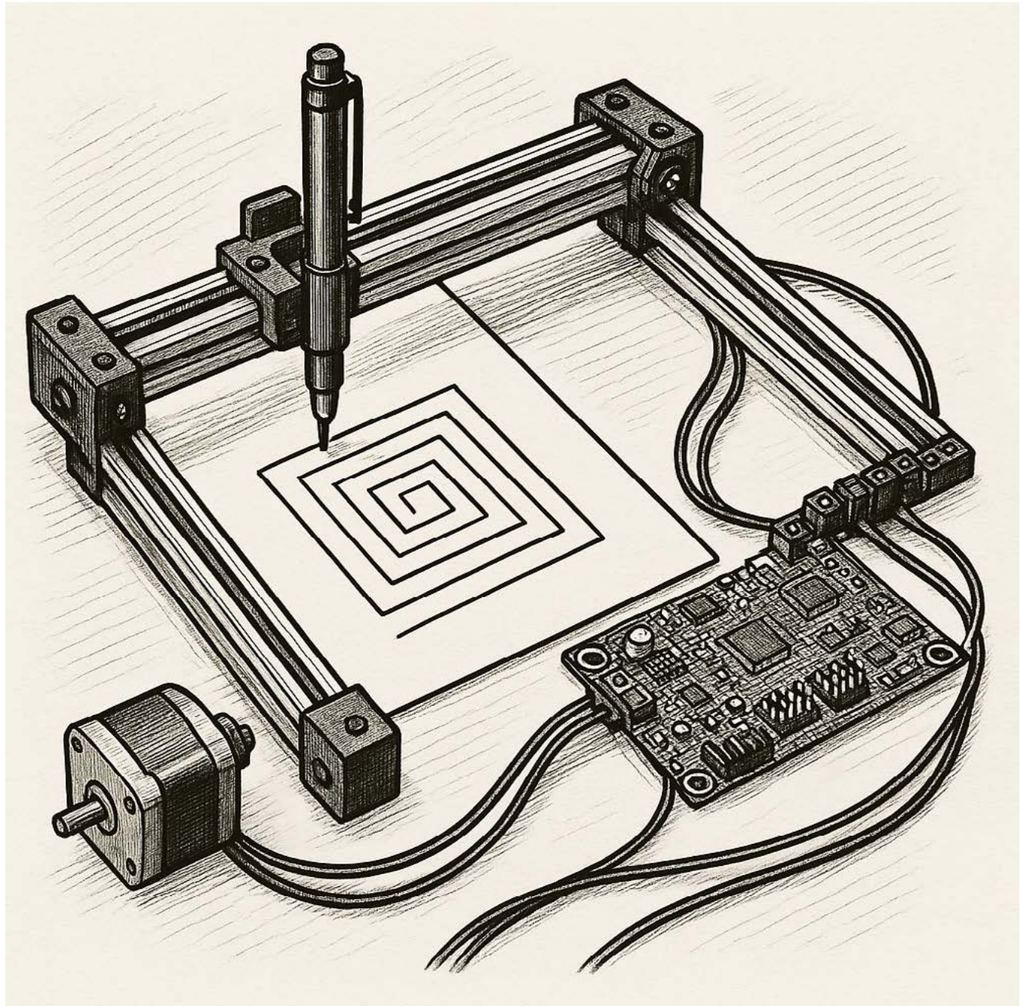
By analysing the feedback, I became increasingly interested in 2 things:

1) **How mediation through different formats (PNGs, JPEGS and others) changes the original image?**

> As previously mentioned in my Week 2 research, the digital image is fundamentally different to the physical, as it loses its ‘aura’ described by Boris Groys and gains ‘performative’ character, meaning that it can be conjured by the user’s click. I’m curious to see how **this translation would uncover the bias of the source differently.**

2) **What would physicality mean to the digital image, and how can it be manifested?**

> I felt that plotter was an interesting suggestion as a midpoint translator between digital and physical.



## Reformulating enquiry:

So, as a starting point, I walked out with a question —

What makes the difference between the original image and how the mediation through different formats can stretch its essence, preserving its initial ‘originality’,’ if not losing the essence altogether.

# What happened to the digital image?

Key reference I responded to The Image Object Post-Internet
by Artie Vierkant

To formulate my response, the key text I was relying upon to interrogate the topic was The Image Object Post-Internet by Artie Vierkant, where he tries to interpret the role of digital image in the Post-Internet condition to understand art.

**He stated that the ubiquity of devices brought about 2 conditions:**
1 - nothing is in a fixed state, meaning that digitality created flux across multiple installations;
2 - now art experiences the lack of fixity in representational strategy.

**These ideas suggest the loss of the connection between "original" and "copy"**, where copies now could acquire greater significance than the source object.

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**These ideas suggest the loss of the connection between "original" and "copy"**, where copies now could acquire greater significance than the source object.

what's causing the loss of connection?

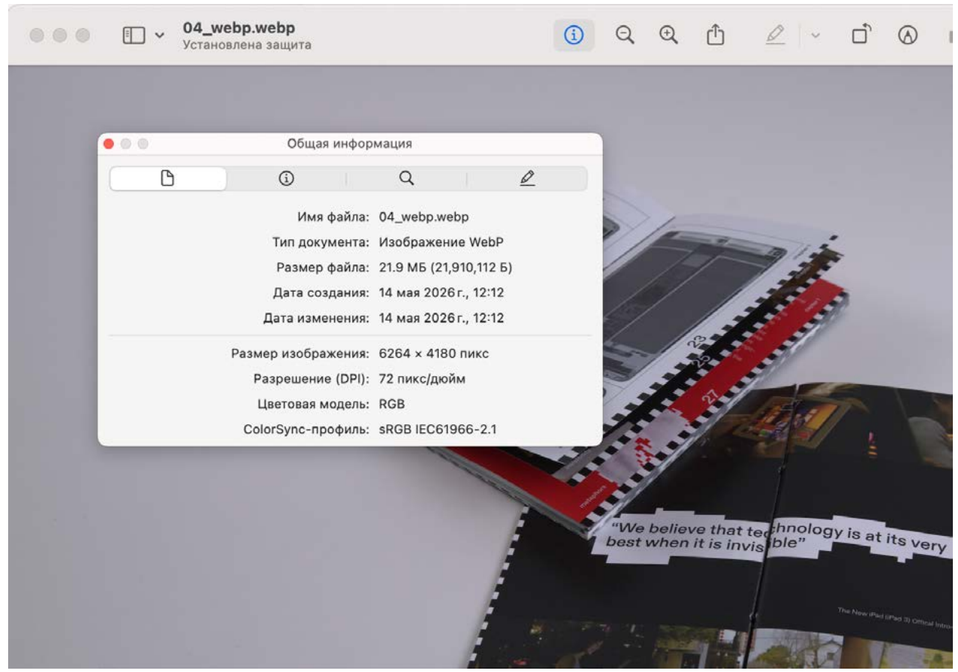
In relation to my research, **I want to understand what type of transmission the digital image undergoes to beat it's predessor and what new data could be gained and lost throughout this journey?**

I was interested in how images that are distributed equally through distribution all experience the flattening of their contexts, meaning and significance, yet some travel thousands of kilometres to reach their viewers and gain greater dissemination power.

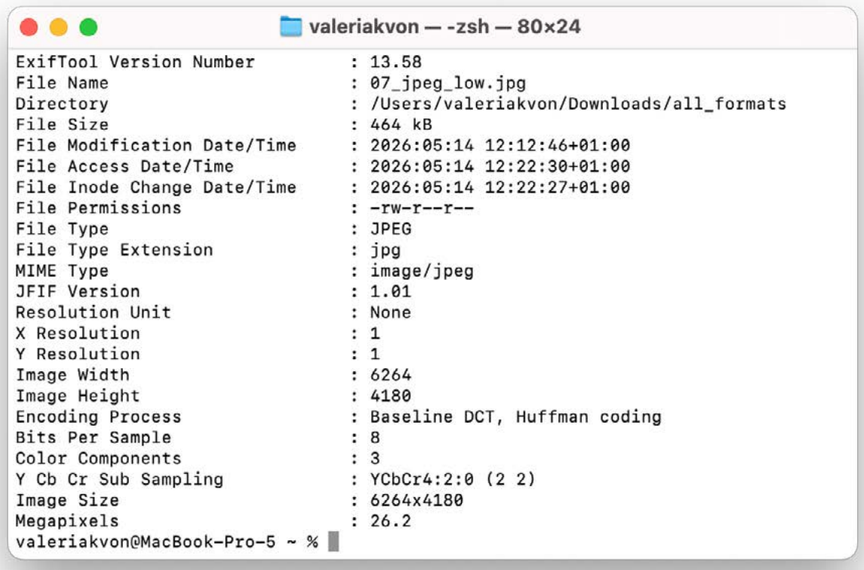
# Experimentation: Exploring the premises of the image

This iteration treats file formats as a class system. The same photograph is processed through eight encodings, **each of which preserves and discards different aspects of the original.** The comparison surfaces the politics of who gets which version.

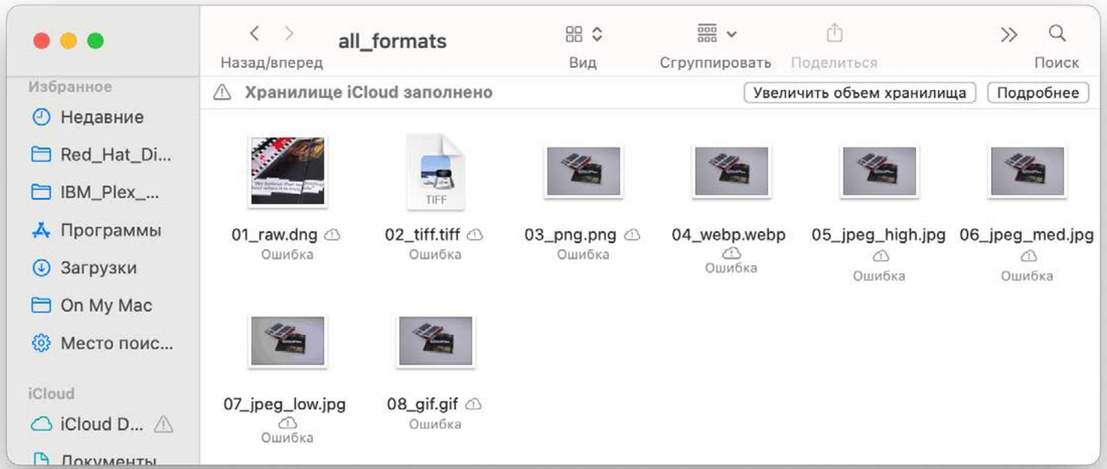
The class system of formats is rarely visible to the user. We see only the rendered image, flat and obedient, behaving as if it were the original




analysing image through the inspector in the preview



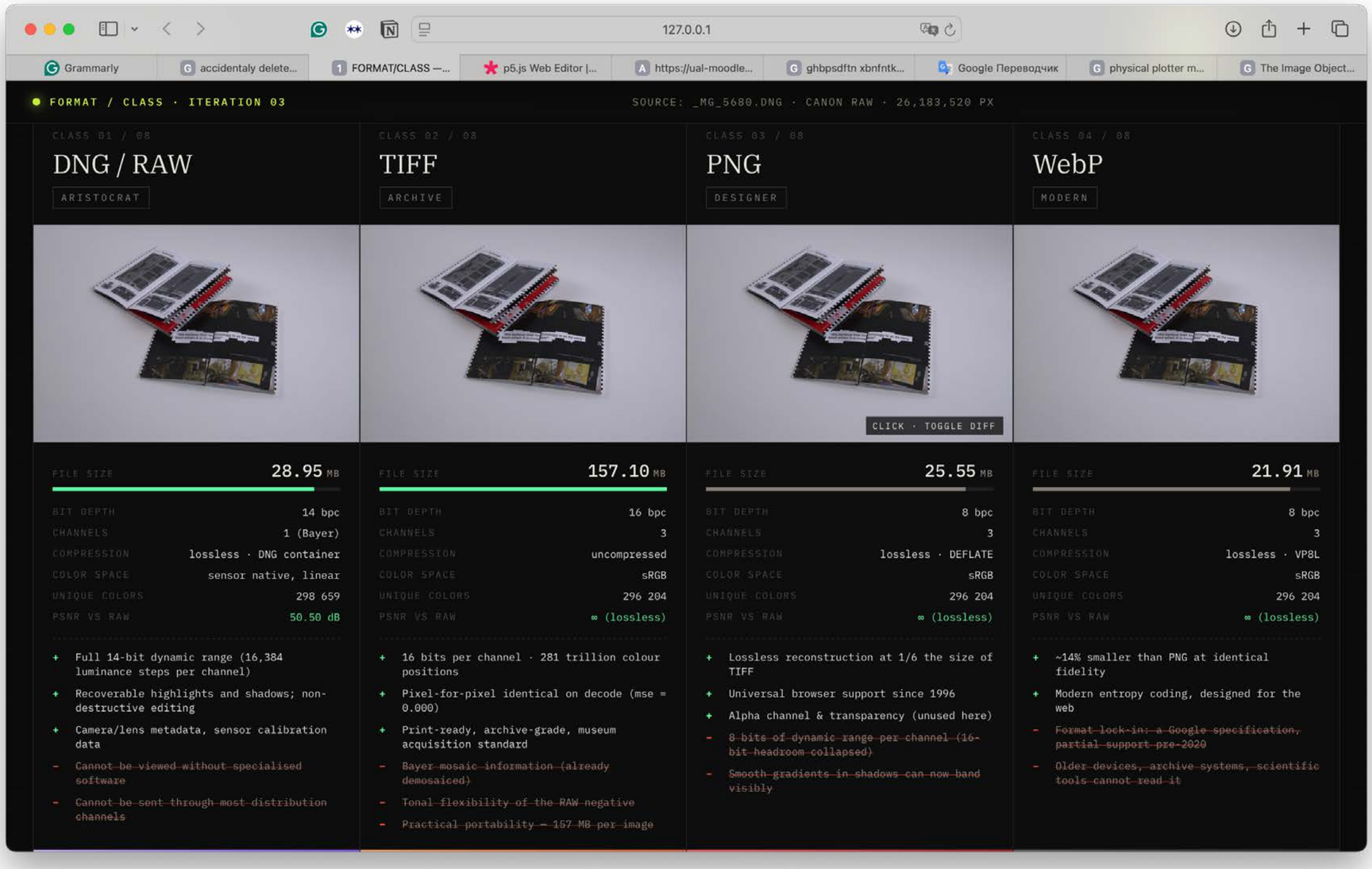

used an open source tool that allows to see even more info




Splitting into multiple formats the same image

# Collecting and organising data

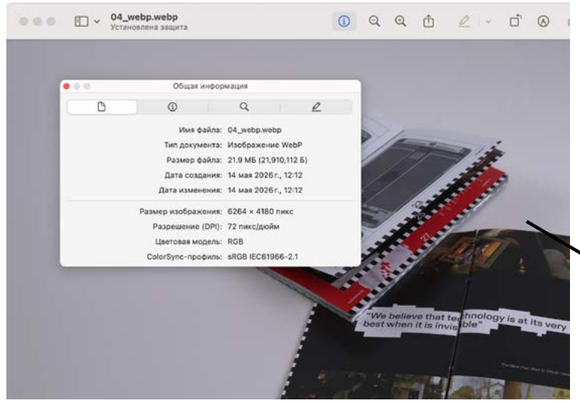
Understanding the format's context, juxtaposing and revealing the meaning behind each file type.

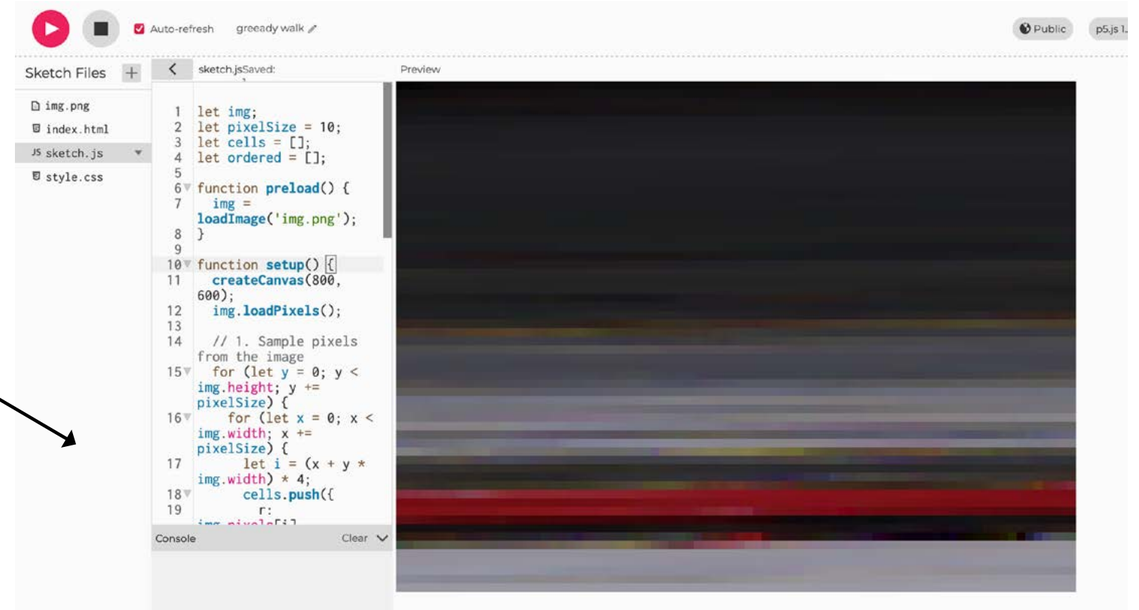



https://valeriekvon.github.io/format_class/

# Thinking about pixels...

If images shift formats and get altered, it means that some pixels are reduced, repositioned and reassembled again...

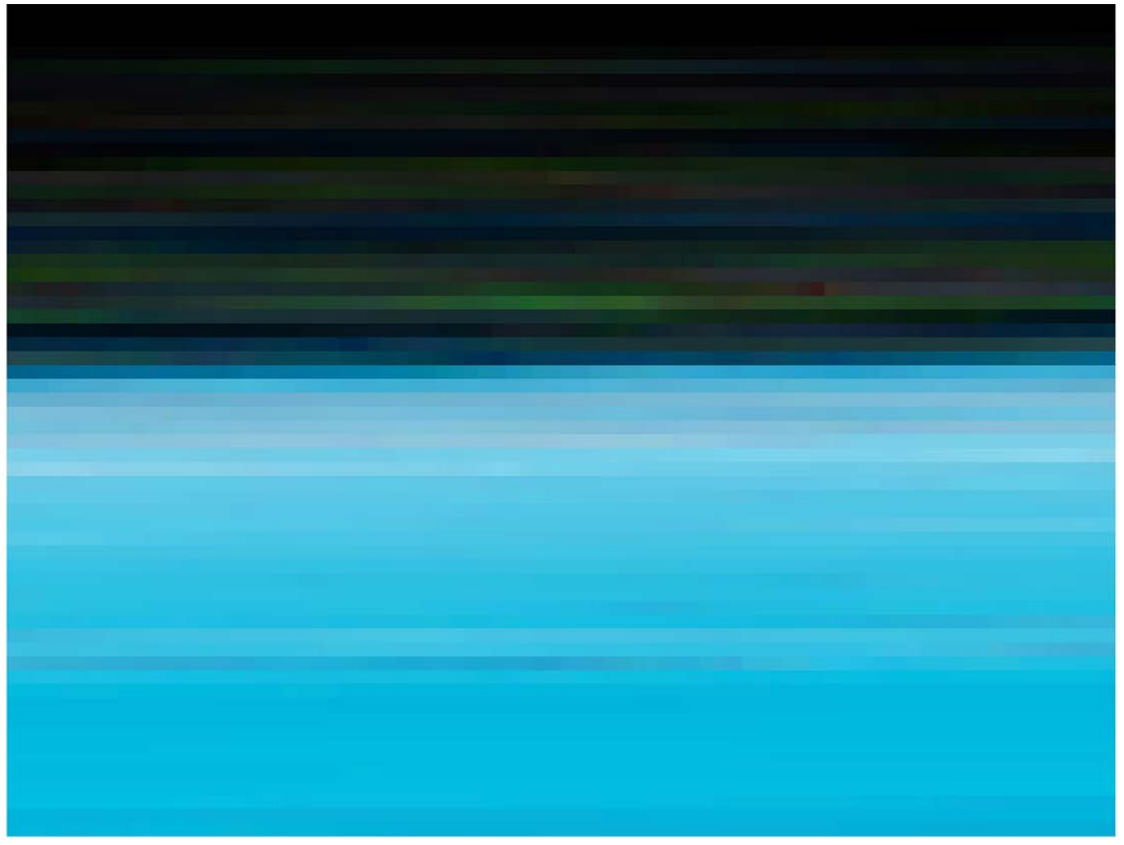




https://editor.p5js.org/valerie.kvon/sketches/4eDn_l0Bs

# Thinking about pixels...

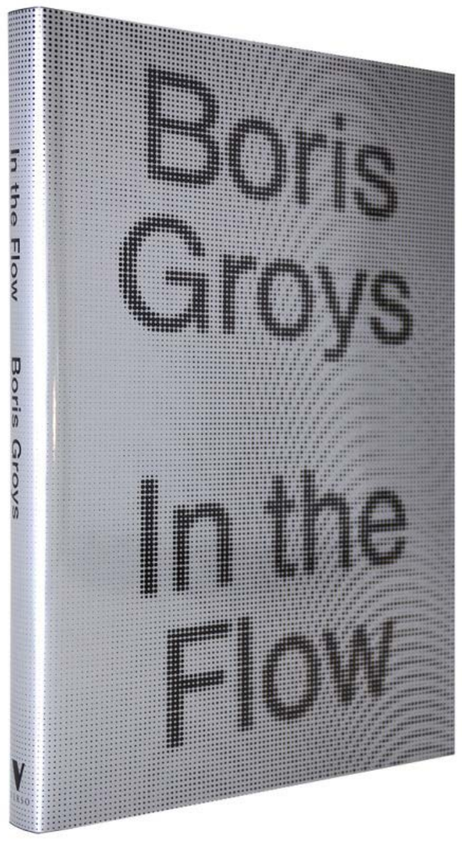



## Reflelection on image flattening:

This process made me realise a few things.

### Originally, I thought that the image wouldn’t get distorted but no action can go unnoticed. Every digital interaction leaves a trace, tarnishes the original copy with the metadata and alters its initial look.

This observation was inspired by Boris Groys, who wrote that the act of contemplation offline keeps the observer and the subject as separate, while online mode human interaction changes the initial subject. Hoping from different formats shows that digital representation is multifaceted and depends on various contextual factors.




Groys, Boris. In the Flow,

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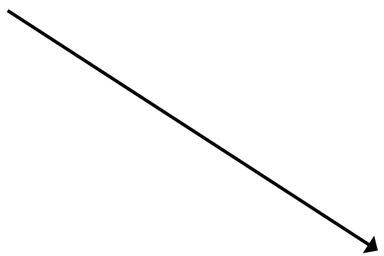


## Shifting enquiry:

Do people somehow recognise the lost significance through visual flattening of the digital image and try to fight it, or do they completely surrender to these conditions?

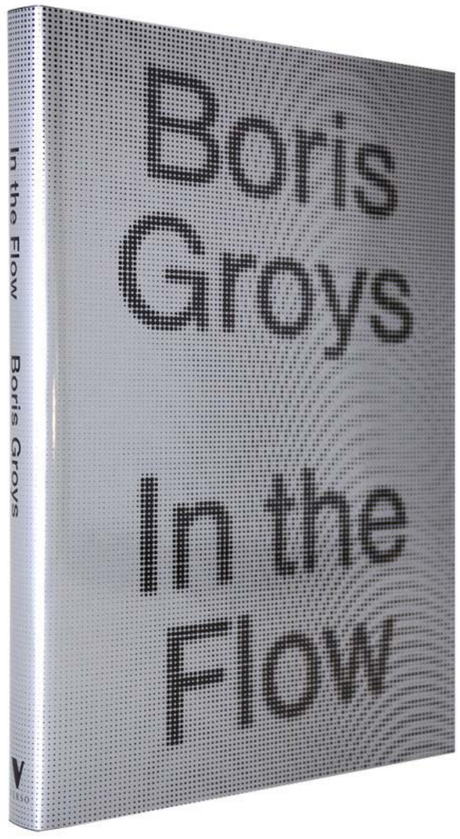
And is it possible to preserve the “originality” of the image in the digital space?

# Image possesion as fighting against digital limitations

It made me think of the passage of text of, again, Boris Groys, where he described **the internet as a space with total transparency, where users need to undertake certain actions to protect their data.**

That's where the idea of ownership comes in. People, as much as they want, freely share their data, but they still seek privacy and protection from people's gaze, try to leverage the significance of the image through the attempt of owning it. Such actions as placing watermarks, installing passwords, and selling images as objects say a lot about how ideas of the author and ownership come in to create the boundary between public and private, and how every inhabitant of the digital world **wants to stay in possession of the acquired digital items, almost trying to equip them with physical attributes.**

observation



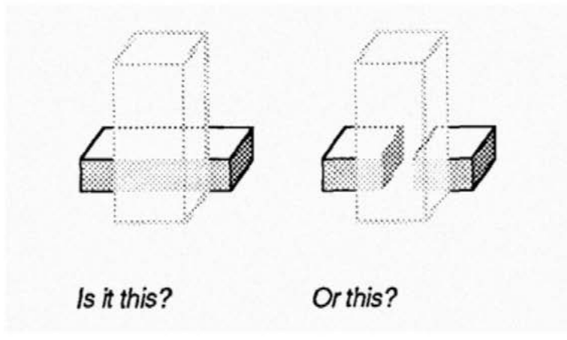

Groys, Boris. In the Flow,

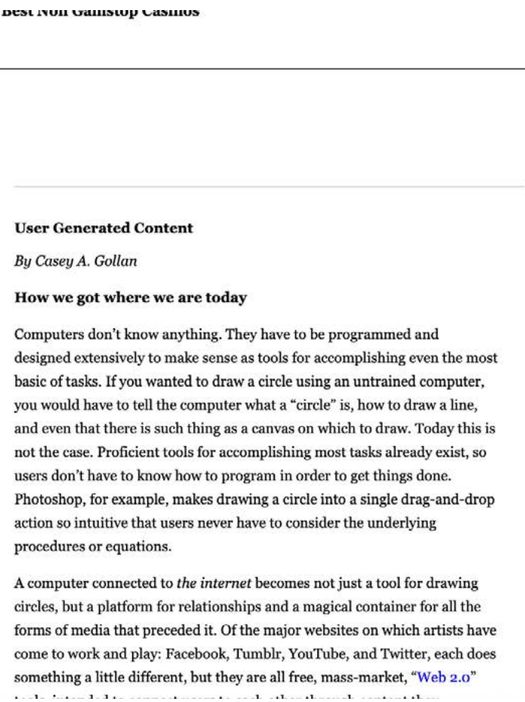
Can a human own the image? What sort of conditions can make it possible? Is there such a way/format/method that would make it ownable?

# Finding physical properties of the digital image

This brought me back to the earlier question of how to bring the digital image into physical reality, but from a new angle.

I came across an article arguing that we need to understand and deconstruct digital tools in order to retain authorship of our actions online, avoid 'living in the shadow of technology', and recognise the systemic biases embedded in computer systems. It echoes Aral Balkan's position that inequalities can be challenged when **technology is developed with respect for humans, 'not arrogant or demanding', and graspable to an everyday user.**



**User Generated Content**

*By Casey A. Gollan*

**How we got where we are today**

Computers don't know anything. They have to be programmed and designed extensively to make sense as tools for accomplishing even the most basic of tasks. If you wanted to draw a circle using an untrained computer, you would have to tell the computer what a "circle" is, how to draw a line, and even that there is such thing as a canvas on which to draw. Today this is not the case. Proficient tools for accomplishing most tasks already exist, so users don't have to know how to program in order to get things done. Photoshop, for example, makes drawing a circle into a single drag-and-drop action so intuitive that users never have to consider the underlying procedures or equations.

A computer connected to *the internet* becomes not just a tool for drawing circles, but a platform for relationships and a magical container for all the forms of media that preceded it. Of the major websites on which artists have come to work and play: Facebook, Tumblr, YouTube, and Twitter, each does something a little different, but they are all free, mass-market, "Web 2.0"

User-generated Content by Casey A. Gollan

How to make tech approachable again?
Set of values?

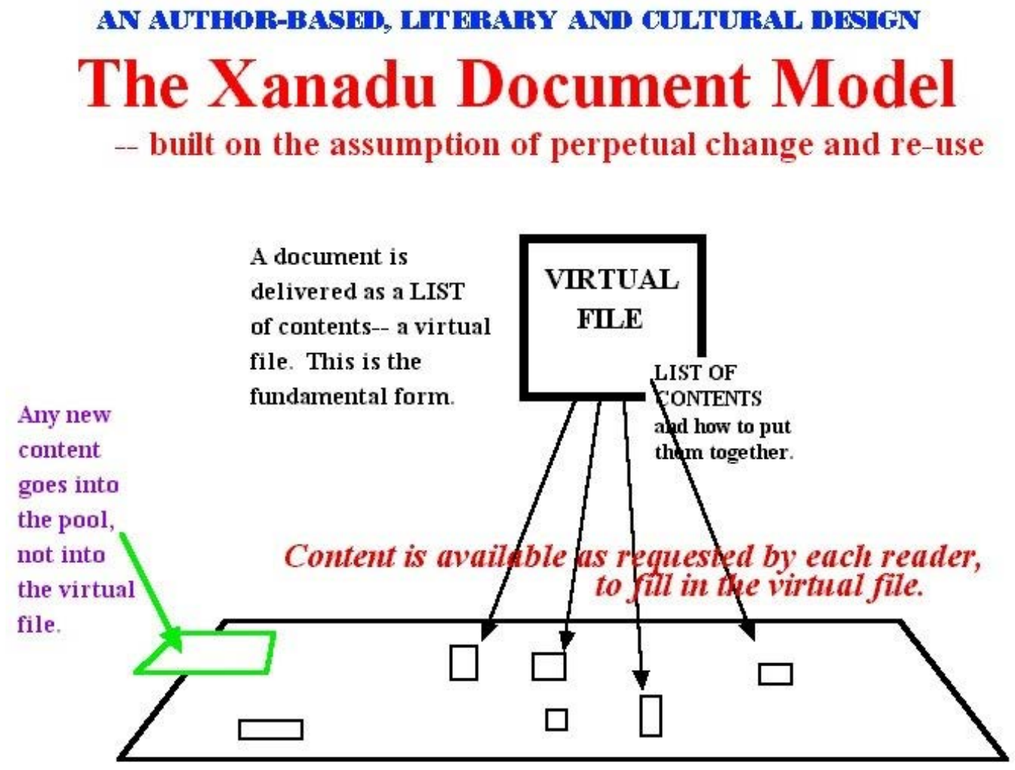
# How other people fight back against complexity of the tech?

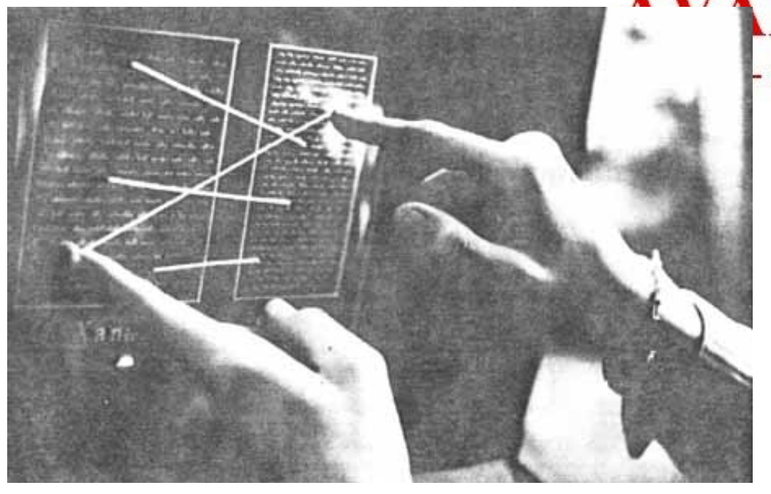
As one possible (and never fully realised) alternative, the article points to **Ted Nelson's Xanadu, which critiques the one-way hyperlink for severing content from its origins.**

Xanadu proposes bi-directional links and transclusion — embedding a traceable version of the original rather than copying it, so every fragment can be followed back to its source. **It shifts technology from acceleration toward a more grounded, local mode of perception**, which feels closer to how humans actually understand things, infinity and acceleration don't map onto human experience.

## Emerging Values?

1. With respect for humans
2. 'Not arrogant or demanding'
3. Graspable to an everyday user.
4. Bi-directional



The First Xanadu Proposal, 1966 : Ted Nelson

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=En_2T7KH6RA&t=229s

# Physicality of the digital image?

And I thought that this type of information transmission was so close the way we understand physical environment and objects within it.

**We need to trace back, see the origins of the object, and even if we can't do that we see the initial properties of it that can make us guess where it comes from, feel it, nurture the emotional attachment.** In my understanding , the 'bi-directionality' signals the physical even  mode of the subject, it transforms the original object without creating its' digital copies.

**How can i experiment with these findings and translate them to experimentations?**

This conditions probably can lead to ownability of the image and subsequently to it's grounding to the physical reality.

## Emerging Values?

1. With respect for humans
2. 'Not arrogant or demanding'
3. Graspable to an everyday user.
4. Bi-directional

# Bringing to reality:

I thought that that't something that can be explored through the physical medium. **I decided to explore this through the NFC tags**, which I felt was interesting as they almost serve as mediators between physical and digital reality, create this weird extension of our environment.

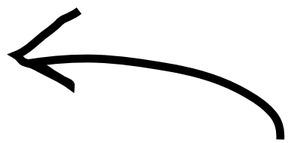

**BUT**

**But then what it means stopping the image in motion if it's always changing it's form?**

# Bringing to reality:

By looking up the original 17 rules of Xanadu, which seemed to me like a set of rules written for the object in possession of a person, I decided to apply some of these principles to store data independently. **I wanted to keep images based on my previous explorations as text data, not as an image file, because in this pristine version it can't be altered by the digital tool, and as a result it preserves it's initial aura and authenticity.**

So I decided to make these little clay sculptures that each contain links to the webpages with the code and through putting everything together it can recreate the image, which could happen only if you possess all pieces.

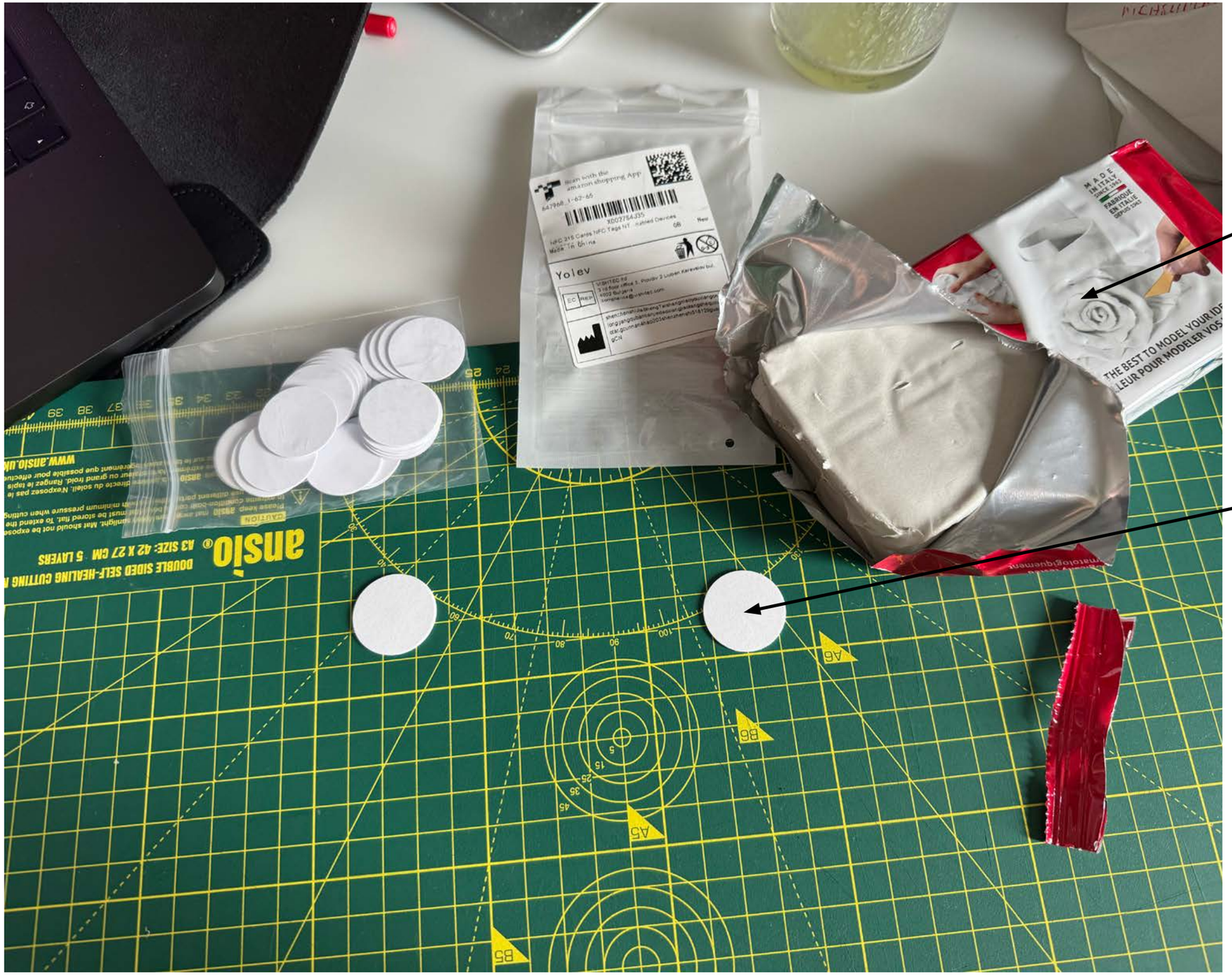


## Original 17 rules [edit]

1. Every Xanadu server is uniquely and securely identified.
2. Every Xanadu server can be operated independently or in a network.
3. Every user is uniquely and securely identified.
4. Every user can search, retrieve, create, and store documents.
5. Every document can consist of any number of parts each of which may be of any data type.
6. Every document can contain links of any type including virtual copies ("transclusions") to any other document in the system accessible to its owner.
7. Links are visible and can be followed from all endpoints.
8. Permission to link to a document is explicitly granted by the act of publication.
9. Every document can contain a royalty mechanism at any desired degree of granularity to ensure payment on any portion accessed, including virtual copies ("transclusions") of all or part of the document.
10. Every document is uniquely and securely identified.
11. Every document can have secure access controls.
12. Every document can be rapidly searched, stored and retrieved without user knowledge of where it is physically stored.
13. Every document is automatically moved to physical storage appropriate to its frequency of access from any given location.
14. Every document is automatically stored redundantly to maintain availability even in case of a disaster.
15. Every Xanadu service provider can charge their users at any rate they choose for the storage, retrieval, and publishing of documents.
16. Every transaction is secure and auditable only by the parties to that transaction.
17. The Xanadu client–server communication protocol is an openly published standard. Third-party software development and integration is encouraged.[13]

The First Xanadu Proposal, 1966 : Ted Nelson

# Makkkiiing!



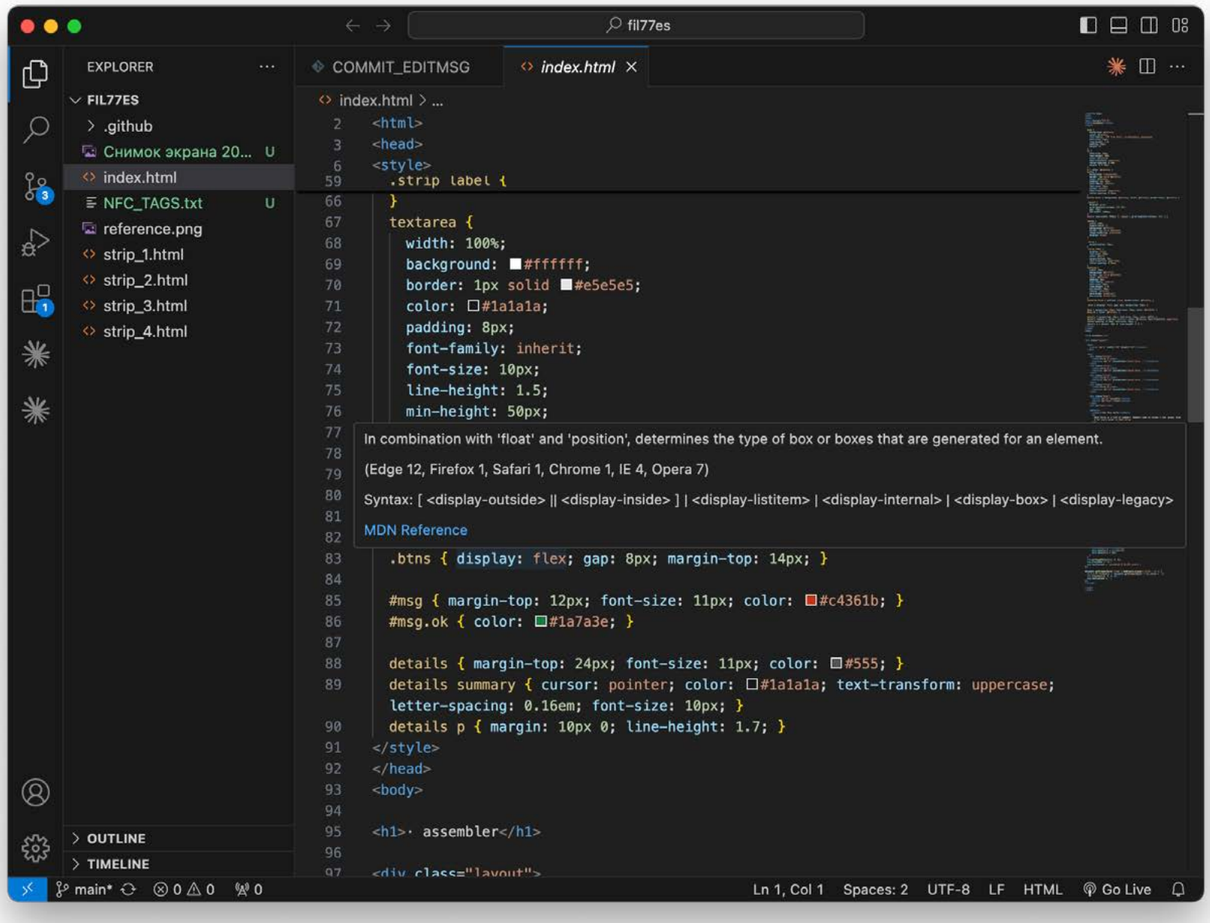

Air Dry Clay

NFC tags that I wrote information too

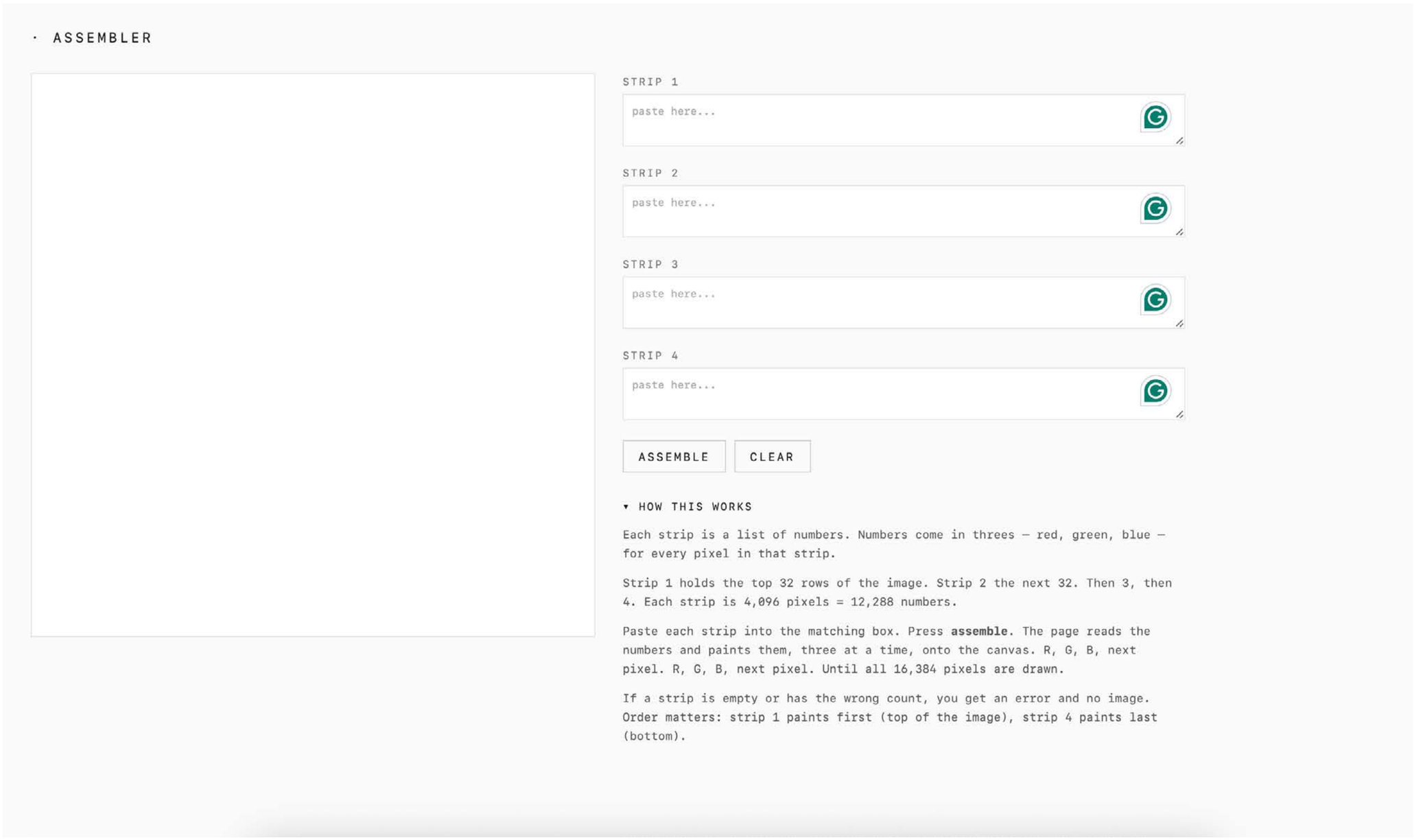
# Makkkiiing!


PIXEL 3
PIXEL 1
PIXEL 2
PIXEL 4


PIXEL 2
PIXEL 4
PIXEL 3
PIXEL1


fil77es
EXPLORER
FIL77ES
.github
Снимок экрана 20... U
index.html
NFC_TAGS.txt U
reference.png
strip_1.html
strip_2.html
strip_3.html
strip_4.html
COMMIT_EDITMSG
index.html
index.html > ...
<html>
<head>
<style>
.strip label {
}
textarea {
width: 100%;
background: #ffffff;
border: 1px solid #e5e5e5;
color: #1a1a1a;
padding: 8px;
font-family: inherit;
font-size: 10px;
line-height: 1.5;
min-height: 50px;
In combination with 'float' and 'position', determines the type of box or boxes that are generated for an element.
(Edge 12, Firefox 1, Safari 1, Chrome 1, IE 4, Opera 7)
Syntax: [ <display-outside> || <display-inside> ] | <display-listitem> | <display-internal> | <display-box> | <display-legacy>
MDN Reference
.btns { display: flex; gap: 8px; margin-top: 14px; }
#msg { margin-top: 12px; font-size: 11px; color: #c4361b; }
#msg.ok { color: #1a7a3e; }
details { margin-top: 24px; font-size: 11px; color: #555; }
details summary { cursor: pointer; color: #1a1a1a; text-transform: uppercase;
letter-spacing: 0.16em; font-size: 10px; }
details p { margin: 10px 0; line-height: 1.7; }
</style>
</head>
<body>
<h1>· assembler</h1>
OUTLINE
TIMELINE
main*
0 0
0
Ln 1, Col 1
Spaces: 2
UTF-8
LF
HTML
Go Live

# Makkkiiing!




https://valeriekvon.github.io/fil77es/