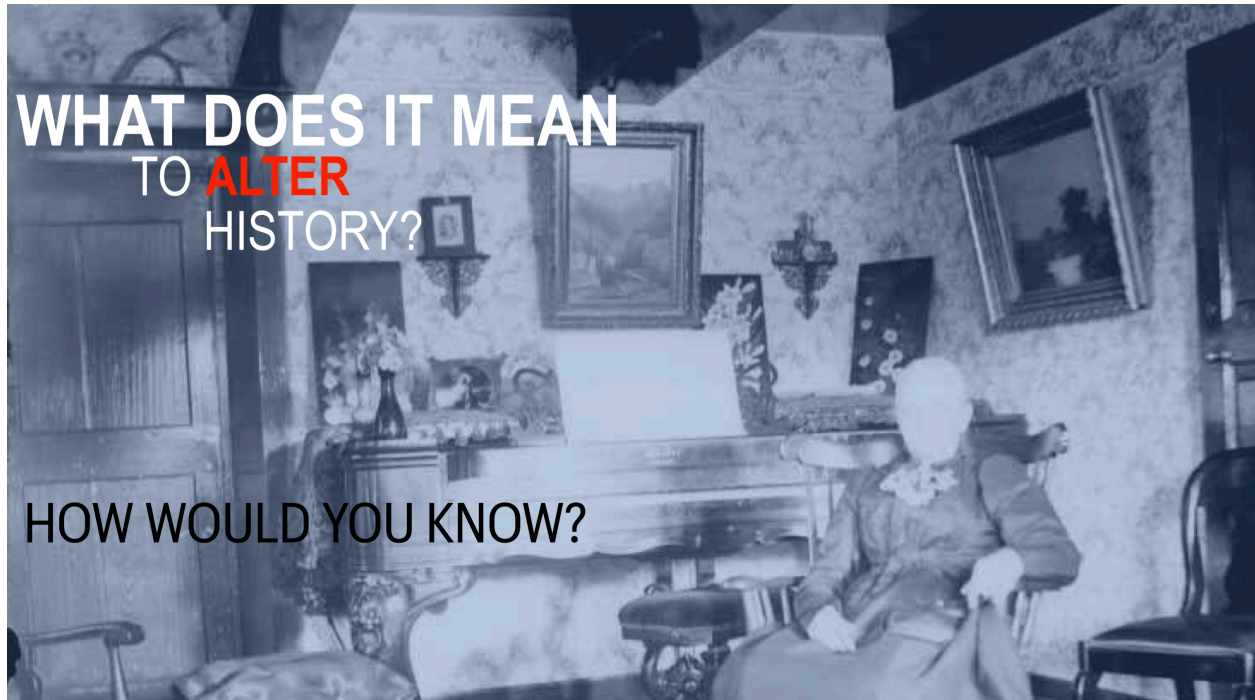


MODEL HISTORIES

Building a Living Archive of the Future

by Victor Morales & Ben Williams



What It Is

Model Histories is an evolving platform that takes an audience on an interactive journey through a set of archives.

The first iteration was a multimedia installation at the Red Hook Public Library in Dutchess County, NY in October 2025. Set up as a game in which you had to guess which photographs were real and which were made by AI, the platform created a poetic interface, inviting the audience into a collage of letters, images, and voices, while generating awareness about AI.

At its core is a modular app that merges local history with generative AI, creating an experience that is part exhibition, part media literacy tool, part performance – creating a gentle confrontation between truth, memory, and machine synthesis

We use open-source native software to generate AI images. That means we use the same energy as our small computer normally would for relative functions, and it allows us to train the model using data we control. *No corporate data centers, no burning down the rainforest.*

Why It Matters

Cultural institutions worldwide are wrestling with questions of authenticity, trust, and the future of archives. *Model Histories* invites the public into that conversation—not through lectures, but through interaction and wonder.

- **Reanimating archives:** Breathing new life into dormant collections.
- **Building AI literacy:** Making machine learning tangible, emotional, and discussable. If the AI is trying to arrive at a consensus on reality, what does that reality look like? What is required to imagine a different reality?
- **Community engagement:** Allowing local participants to see their histories reinterpreted, challenged, and celebrated.

How It Works

Our software engine accepts any visual archive and automatically generates a “*Find the Fake*”-style experience—mixing genuine materials with AI-produced reconstructions. Institutions can customize:

- Themes (local histories, migration, urban memory, family archives)
- Visual and narrative tone
- Levels of AI involvement – fully animated and speaking images, to none at all. Our primary interest is creating an interface for the archives.

The result is a portable, self-contained installation or web experience that can live in a gallery, library, classroom, or museum.

Future Partnerships

We’re seeking collaborators who share our belief that archives are not static—they are living documents.

- **Museums & Libraries:** Pilot site-specific versions using their own collections.
- **Universities & Media Labs:** Co-develop educational modules around AI ethics and visual literacy.
- **Cultural Networks & Festivals:** Host immersive versions of the game as participatory public art.

Next Phase

1. Develop an online edition where institutions can upload, train, and deploy their own interactive archive.
2. Build partnerships with regional history centers and digital-humanities labs.
3. Create a distributed exhibition model—a “living network” of archives that learn from each other.

Contact

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