

# 2020 DRHA

Digital Research in the Humanities and Arts

## Book Of Abstracts

Situating Digital Curation



**DCL**  
DIGITAL CURATION LAB

# DRHA 2020

## 7 - 9 September 2020

### About DRHA

For over 25 years DRHA: Digital Research in the Humanities and Arts (Previously named: Digital Resources in Humanities and the Arts) continues to be a key gathering for all those are influenced by the digitization of cultural activity, recourses and heritage in the UK and beyond.

A series of annual conferences whose goal is to bring together the creators, users, distributors, and custodians of digital research and resources in the arts, design and humanities to explore the capture, archiving and communication of complex and creative research processes. This includes: Scholars, teachers, artists, publishers, librarians, curators or archivists who all wish to extend and develop access and preservation regarding digitized information rendered from contemporary culture and scholarship; the information scientist seeking to apply new scientific and technical developments to the creation, exploitation and management of digital resources.

DRHA provides intellectual and physical space for cross-disciplinary discussion and the generation of new ideas, resulting in many new networks and productive research relationships. The DRHA conference started at Dartington, and it was a development from the DRH conference series which began at Oxford in 1997.

### DRHA 2020 Conference Organising Committee

Maria Dickinson (University of Salford),  
Dr Joseph Dunne-Howrie (CityLIS – DocPerform coordinator),  
Sam Ingleson (University of Salford – School of Arts, Media, and Creative Technology),  
Dr Lyn Robinson (CityLIS – DocPerform coordinator),  
Rachael Salt (University of Salford – School of Arts, Media, and Creative Technology),  
Dr Toni Sant (DCL- conference convener).

## **Situating Digital Curation:** Locating Creative Practice and Research between Digital Humanities and the Arts.

### Convener's Note

Digital Curation has become ubiquitous on a scale ranging from large digital preservation programmes to individual citizen curation projects that often involve collaborations between professionals and enthusiasts. Extending Joseph Beuys' controversial assertion that everyone is an artist, now everyone is a (digital) curator. Curation in the context of Contemporary Art is closely aligned with Digital Curation skills; while a grounding in contemporary art marking is essential, of course, the ability to understand the contemporary media ecology within which the works are created, exhibited, documented, and preserved is equally relevant for contemporary art curators. Similarly, in Performance there's an interest in curation of emerging formats, or immersive documents including social media and augmented/virtual reality, as well as perspectives relating to the motivations, needs and aspirations of readers or audience members who might engage with such document. More broadly, Digital Curation aligns with interest in Digital Heritage, Digital Forensics, Digital Preservation, and Digital Archives.

In focusing on this evolving area, DHRA 2020 mirrors the purpose of the Digital Curation Lab at the University of Salford in its theme of '**Situating Digital Curation: Locating Creative Practice and Research between Digital Humanities and the Arts.**' The Digital Curation Lab was established at MediaCityUK in 2019 to facilitate research on the collection, preservation, analysis, interpretation, and dissemination of digital assets and technologies of memory at The University of Salford.

Dr Toni Sant

DRHA 2020 conference convener

## Death as a Moment of Radical Continuity

Zainab Aliyu (School for Poetic Computation, Black Girl Magik)

The eight-shelled Opele (Yorùbá — Nigeria) is an apparatus for divination through collective memory. It has a binary implementation not unlike the computer byte: a single unit of machine memory that contains 8-bits and can store 256 different values (0-255). Computer memory, with its limited storage and manufactured scarcity, was designed to be overwritten to make way for new information. The divination chain, however, has boundless potential. It extends itself from a physical mechanism into a field of ritualized practice that has the ability to be recast to unearth an unlimited number of interpretations depending on the context.

The conceptual and aesthetic symmetry of two seemingly unrelated objects — core rope memory from early software computing and the opele divination chain from my Nigerian lineage — surfaces the question: if cultural value systems are encoded into the objects that we build, then what type of ideals are deeply embedded in the pervasively ubiquitous technologies of today? During the pioneering of the Apollo spacecraft mission, women workers (the first being an African American lab technician named Hilda G. Carpenter) manually wove memory into computer systems, based on translating software programmed by MIT engineers. The contributions of these women in computing, like those of my ancestors, have been relegated and untold. As an installation and paper, “Death as a Moment of Radical Continuity” surfaces this erasure, refiguring the opele divination chain and early forms of computer memory as mnemonic devices.

In Wendy Hui Kyong Chun’s *Programmed Visions: On Software and Memory*, Chun meditates on software as an analogy for ideology capable of “reconceptualiz[ing] bodies, society and memory.” Embodied interactions between the human and the machine are often reduced to a universal system of binary digits, failing to account for their nuanced and veritably uncomputable aspects. The ephemerality of memory dictates that ideas are never remembered in the exact same manner twice, however, hardening the bioprocesses of human memory into simplified computer storage dismisses the convoluted dichotomy of things digital versus things analog.

Our bodies are archives and sites of memory that cannot and will not be overwritten, despite technological attempts to render them as such.

**Volume: Social Media Metrics in Digital Curation**

Elliott Burns (Central Saint Martins) and Adriana Guadalupe Arreola Barroso (Off Site Project)

Considering a number of online curatorial platforms, projects and galleries, this paper will examine the effects of social media and its metricised version of society has had on the shape, focus and cultural of digital exhibition practices.

The authors will argue that an immediate relationship has been established between the online exhibition space and its promotional capacities (where in some cases a complete overlap is present), which has led to a persuasiveness of large group shows with particular visual attributes, unintentionally or intentionally aimed to capitalise on network distribution, to increase likes, visibility and shares. Exemplified by The Wrong Biennale, whose meteoritic scaling has garnered numerically focused headlines, digital curatorial practices have increasingly tied themselves to the logic of Metcalfe's law, that it not the nodes but that connections between which are valued.

Themselves founders of an online arts platform, Off Site Project, the authors will utilise their position in the community to carry out interviews with relevant artists and curators to examine the characteristics of today's digital curators and the repercussions of social media. The paper will question whether Web 2.0 art practices have become part of a trickle-up economy and whether the role of the curator has been fundamentally changed.

## Interactive Digital Curation Reframing Television Documentary Practice

Insook Choi (University of Salford)

Historically, TV production forecasts the mode of linear media consumption in a passive role. While TV serves globally as a source of information and inspiration, its engagement model remains practically unchanged since its invention. It is reasonably curious why the relationship between TV and its audience for nearly two decades has not evolved alongside emerging platforms. The determinants of such non-evolving relationship are both technological and habitual: the former, the long tail of legacy systems; the latter, the long tail of mutually dictated producing and viewing behaviors. The legacy systems and workflows are optimized for linear presentation of the TV medium, which entails a passive mode of consumption. While this framework still meets the expectations of an aging population, issues surface with the rise of new modes of consumption enabled by a new media industry.

Limited program choices no longer hold the attention of youth, who will not plan their time or location to serve a TV schedule. Though recently more TV programs are available on demand through platforms such as Disney Plus and BBC iPlayer, somewhat diversifying the mode of dissemination, this new model is mostly used for catch-up TV services. As the same programs are consumed, the downstream mode of consumption remains the same in terms of content and audience relationship, therefore, no conditions are upheld to transform the production practice. Emerging scenarios for TV audience interaction imply a different lifecycle of media assets with adaptable reusability that is not supported by current TV practice. The aired documentary is a final cut after which vast amounts of source materials are discarded. To make an interactive version, one can curate far more re-usable source materials and make them available on-demand. This would bring improved economic viability to the production cost with value extended, and may contribute to a solution to the challenges currently facing the TV industry, such as the growing market demand for personalized repackaging with on-demand delivery. Current TV production is inefficient in terms of 1) asset share for on-demand program versions, 2) multiple formats support, and 3) interactive content. This research argues that a different mode of production is required. A new methodology will need to account for agility in the creation of assets, in anticipation of alternative lifecycles of produced assets. A new methodology will also need to account for multiple distribution channels and dynamic storage with a proper archival system to link common assets across the versions. Future digital archiving systems for this kind of production will need to support an interoperability as well as fluid interactivity with on-demand media systems, to generate bespoke program content. The future program content such as documentary and factual programs, may present UX design as part of the program to support viewers' real-time queries as an aesthetic experience.

Under a proper UX framework, documentary practice can be reframed by coupling traditional and interactive media delivery. This study demonstrates real-time software architecture with end-to-end workflow and UX based on complex query to support interaction fluidity and reusability of documentary assets. A method of curatorial activity was employed to model Interactive Digital Curation workflow both for professional production and audience experience. Findings include 1) production ontology provides means to account for metadata consistency throughout the curatorial lifecycle; 2) User Generated Time Series Data (UGTD) emerged as the most important aspect of workflow, both for media production and audience interaction; 3) real-time interaction with media adds value to digital curation life cycle management.

The aim of this research aspires to offer part of a solution to the larger picture that TV industry faces today by designing and prototyping the cases to support 1) diversified modes of consumption, 2) economical multi-use of secondary TV program source materials, and 3) integration of TV production practice with interactive platforms to support an extended interactivity. The challenge remains in the gap between TV and disruptive technology practices: newer technologies may host interactive and immersive contents with on demand delivery, mostly coded in niche formats that are incompatible to the broad-spectrum TV programming. Targeting an interactive documentary experience, this research tested back-end crossover of linear media production pipelines with interactive media programming. The platform used in this project enables users to apply semi-structured semantic metadata to media assets, then the metadata is used to organize assets for real-time interactive retrieval. By connecting this platform to a highly responsive user interface (UI) and a media display system, users generate live media streams presented as program content without further asset modification or editing.

The contributions of this research are as follows: 1) a production methodology anticipating downstream audience experience from the pre-production phase, 2) a workflow streamlining iterative curatorial cycles from production to consumption, 3) an architecture to support established media production workflows with dynamic storage and retrieval using complex query schema, and 4) an introduction of User Generated Time Series Data for processing the complex query schema.

**Performing Classroom Curation: Digital Media, Pedagogy, and Identity**

Alicia Corts (Saint Leo University)

Students perform daily acts of curation through social media accounts, and while some curriculum works to gather and process this performance, rarely does a classroom experience guide students through the complicated process of performing identity through this curation. Digital natives recognize the performance inherent in the digital space, and connecting their intuitive knowledge of how virtual performance works to the more complex issue of identity creation. In the Saint Leo University theatre program, students use digital curation of their work through their four years as a means of crafting a performance identity. Rather than a simple website or social media presence, each class emphasizes cultural influences inherent in digital curation, giving students the opportunity to more carefully build, curate, and perform identity. The session will include examples of student work, from devised media performances to interactive media installations.

**Digitised heritage: is it an alternative or just a complement to the real thing?**

Martin Debattista (Institute of Tourism Studies) and Tara Sam Darmanin (Institute of Tourism Studies)

Virtual Reality (VR), Augmented Reality (AR) and Mixed Reality (MR) technologies have become more affordable and, as a consequence, have been increasingly adopted in the interpretation and curation of cultural heritage. This has been particularly successful in the digitisation of original artefacts and the interpretation of heritage sites and artefacts that are in danger of being lost or not easily accessible. This is raising the question whether digital technology has developed to such a degree that it is capable of providing an immersive interpretative experience that can replace the experience of being physically on site or looking at the original artefact with your very own eyes without any technological intermediation. This question has inspired an attempt to answer this question with an experiment and a qualitative study about the use of digital multimedia technology to create a 360-degree immersive experience of a Second World War air raid shelter in Malta. The production was developed by the Institute of Tourism Studies (ITS) with limited but easily accessible digital technologies. ITS students participated in the research by visiting the shelter or experiencing the immersive multimedia production on their smartphone in Google cardboard mode or doing both. Their experience was then recorded in a questionnaire and the data analysed. The results will be presented and discussed at DRHA2020, potentially providing a definitive answer to the research question: can the creation of an immersive digital experience of original heritage replace the experience and resulting interpretation of the real thing? The digital immersive production can be made available for viewing as an installation at DRHA2020. The full details of the study will be submitted for publication as a paper after the conference.

**The search for archives and collections as a way to digital curation and not forget historical artworks.**

Beatriz Escribano Belmar (University of Castilla-La Mancha, Spain) and Raquel Caerols Mateo (Complutense University of Madrid, Spain)

Digital curation does not only mean to have online exhibitions on digital nature works or projects but also being able to recirculate all those historical Media Art works that have been scattered in different places or just forgotten and unknown. For that purpose, many researchers, professors, artists and other specialists seek to lighten the lack of information and documentation around Media Art in Spain, usually through different R&D projects. Thanks to the possibility offered by these projects, it is enabled to research on the historical Media Art archives and collections, the preservation and, especially, the dissemination by means of digital supports. In Spain, this is the relevant case of the work made on L'angelot and MECAD in Barcelona and Medialab Madrid in the capital, as some examples by the Spanish Archive of Media Art (SAOMA) project. Actions such as the identification, cataloging and labelling of the artistic works that belong to public and private collections, both historical and contemporary had taken place. The main result of this project is the online Spanish Network of Archives and Collections of Media Art, as a convergence space for the cooperation on its management, preservation and dissemination through the support of technical instruments in the way to internationalization.

Culturing data: mapping regionalism, and disrupting the centre, in theatre touring

Rachel Fensham (University of Melbourne)

Mapping touring schedules has become a significant facet of digital and data analysis of performance and can spatialise events, produce historical itineraries, and show the scale of touring within a repertoire. CIRCUIT is an interactive tool designed by the Creative Convergence team at the Digital Studio (University of Melbourne) to map theatre touring in relation to 'impact', particularly for young people, from productions that traverse regional Australia. To build this map we scraped from the AusStage database and added data points from large and small companies, as well as articulated that data against key demographic variables (population, income, age, ethnicity and education). CIRCUIT was intended to enable theatre companies and venues to think critically about regional differences, government policies, and local factors that influence the distribution of cultural production.

This paper will examine some of the surprising findings released by CIRCUIT about centre and periphery, about repertoire and programming decisions that vary over time with significant consequences for participation in theatre. Mapping can reveal patterns in data, however specific mappings will be selective and contingent representations dependent upon use. This paper will also consider the critical and cultural constraints upon interpretation of CIRCUIT as its users consider the question of meaningful impact for the delivery of theatre over distance.

### The Imaginations of Daily Life in VR: Rebuilding Lost Homes through Digital Memories

Chunning Guo (Art School, Renmin University of China), Xiaoxing Fu (School of Sociology and Population Studies, Renmin University of China) and Baishen Yan (Memory Jungle Studio)

Although Virtual Reality (VR) is often used as an independent technology-oriented medium, this paper hopes to strip its high-tech dimensions and regard it as a new form of digital memory and cultural imagination, especially to regard it as a new archiving of daily life in the perspective of digital humanity. This new audio-visual landscape is also a new chronotope (reference to M.M. Bakhtin) based on memory, which renews the traditional methods of interviewing and documenting.

Interviews can provide materials and methods to create a feeling of intimacy and empathy. As a new immersive experience of VR, an 'interview' becomes 'interviewing', transitioning from a noun to a verb through digital animation in progress, which offers participants a way to return to the site of the interviews in a hyper-realistic way (reference to Jean Baudrillard) and the immersive experiences are the process of the exposure to memories, demonstrating the potential of VR as a new digital curation engaging in daily lives and public issues.

The interview often directly provides time, place, characters and discourse. It is important to realize that in VR, interviewees and speakers as well as time and space have the prospect of being visually re-established. The 360 degrees of the interview thus becomes a container of the narration of touching the past and the future, as well as a composition of empathy. The intimate nature of interviewing using VR offers users the chance to feel a stronger connection to the interviewees. The participants of VR are not only physically closer to the interviewees, but also mentally transformed into a third-party member of the conversations.

The VR Film "Grenfell: Our Home," commissioned by Channel 4, is one such new VR production representing memory and imagination, which visualizes the daily lives of Grenfell Tower residents before the terrible fire in virtual reality. More meaningfully, this VR work revealed the building as a cultural community through several interviews, and demonstrated the hope of rebuilding a lost home.

This paper analyzes how VR can be a new chronotope of imagination and digital memories through three aspects as below:

- 1: Animated Memories as a new chronotope of storytelling, archiving and curation;
- 2: VR Interviews offering closer experience to the interviewees both physically and mentally;
- 3: VR as a public engagement and collaborative art anthropology.

"Grenfell: Our Home" reveals that the potential of VR can not only be a channel to connect cross-disciplinary research, but can also expand the boundaries of studies on the five senses while refreshing existing concepts of cultural cognition.

It is noticeable that especially since 2016, the main mass media( such as The Guardian, PBS, BBC and Channel 4) has adjusted their news report form according to the popularity of VR technology and artistic potential. Among the transformation of new media productions, Channel 4 is a trend setter. Though it is not the first one to develop VR creations, it has the advantage of experimenting with a new form of interview by exploring animated memories.

Since collaborating with Aardman in the 1970s, Channel 4 has produced a series of successful interviews via clay stop-motion animation. Now this new project supported by Channel 4 has enhanced the scope of interviews about a lost home through memory-telling into VR.

Among the thousands of residents in this tower, the VR production team selected five groups of interviewees to speak as representatives of the survivors and to recall their home at Grenfell. There are four pairs and one individual lady, made up of different ages, races, nationality, professional, religion, and cultural backgrounds. These interviewees offered a dynamic process of remembrance, revisiting, reimagining, and rebuilding their homes. And this paper will reconstruct this VR film in three parts to demonstrate the new digital curation and archiving of memory, imagination and daily lives:

1. REMEMBRANCE: THE FIRST IMPRESSION OF OUR HOME
2. REVISITING AND REIMAGINING: A DIALOGUE BETWEEN “ME” AND LONDON
3. REBUILDING LOST HOME: REMEMBERING THE FUTURE

From this VR exploration, the audience can share the feeling of the manner in which having a home in this high building provides a geographic sense of citizen identity with the city: it is a new curation about daily life dialogue between “me” and London.

The fire of Grenfell Tower was a national tragedy, this VR work focuses on the past memory as a new force to rebuild a lost home and re-examines the tragic event through multiple perspectives. Though the fire destroyed the home of the interviewees, they still have a chance to revisit their lost home. VR interviews and digital memory in the new chronotope demonstrates VR as the power of new creation, calling on the courage and desire of rebuilding a home and life in the future.

## Rapid Prototyping of Soundscapes for Heritage Spaces using Ambisonic Audio and 360 Video Technology

Luke Harrison (University of Salford)

The creation of soundscapes to enhance immersivity in heritage spaces presents numerous questions around the use and physical logistics of implementing audio hardware. Using 360 video, ambisonic audio and head mounted displays, a 'rapid prototyping' workflow for sound design in these spaces and places has been considered, explored and developed. The use of these tools has improved the ability to creatively design immersive soundscapes in advance of having full access to the exhibit in question. This allows curators and stakeholders to have input into the soundscape before investing in the full commission and the infrastructure required for playback. Feedback and creative play can now be injected in the design phase without having to affect the space physically. Using theory and practice from both virtual/augmented reality and sound design for stage, and the associated techniques in transforming a space to a place, this presentation will address the technological impact of implementing this for the museum sector. This work is based on a practical experience at the Science and Industry Museum Manchester, and is now being developed to be applicable to other heritage sites.

## Cultural Heritage on Social Media: Identity and Discourse of Nüshu Transmitters in Chinese Folk Society

Xihuan Hu (University of Leicester)

Nüshu is a script created by and used among females in ancient China. In a broad sense, Nüshu includes Nüshu literature, Nuge (female songs), and Nüshu customs. Nüshu was originally cultivated around the area of Jiangyong, Hunan Province, China. It has now become a national-level intangible cultural heritage, one that still lives in Chinese folk society. This paper examines the development of heritage democratization in the Nüshu community through digital platforms, especially social media, from a critical discursive perspective. There have been many studies focusing on the impact of digital technology and social media on cultural heritage, but few focus on how heritage participants achieve interactions and identity-making through Chinese social media. This study will provide a case study of Nüshu culture. Through analysing interviews and digital ethnographic data, this study investigates how folk Nüshu cultural participants transmit and protect Nüshu via social media, how they build and operate an online folk/democratic heritage discourse space to achieve their identity construction, and the contradictions and challenges they are facing. This chapter aims to visualize a heritage group and their identity and negotiation through an elaborate analysis of folk heritage discourse, in which social media plays a critical role. Based on the “Authorized Heritage Discourse (AHD)” theories proposed in “Uses of Heritage” (Smith, 2006), this paper presents the concepts of national/authoritarian heritage discourse (N/AHD) and folk/democratic heritage discourse (F/DHD). This research aims at revealing that the interaction, negotiation, and even conflicts of these two discourse spaces have become critical forces in the transformation of cultural heritage in the contemporary digital age in China.

## Style Classification of Art Paintings by Deep Feature Maps

Tian Li (Xiamen University) and Xupu Geng (Xiamen University)

With the spreading of the digitalization of fine art collections, more and more pictures of art paintings are becoming available to the public, and the research on artistic style classification has become very active now. Since 2000s, many fundamental features, such as light, line and color, along with some advance features such as edge map, histogram and statistical features have been incorporated with different classification methods, such as the k-nearest neighbor, wavelet transform and self-organizing map, to predict art paintings' styles, genres or artists. Gatys et al. proposed the seminal work of neural style transfer (NST), in which the image content and style can be separated and recombined by the higher layers and lower layers of a CNN. Inspired by the fantastic idea and its latest developments, a new method of artistic style classification based on channel-wise statistical characteristics of VGG-19 feature maps has been proposed in this study. Experimental results show that even on a very large-scale dataset of 89,570 Paintings with 33 different styles, a top accuracy of 67.00% could be achieved. The proposed method is effective while maintaining a small feature vector size.

What role should digital museums play: a discussion on the functions in the period of emergency of public health events

Jie Liu (National Library of China -National Museum of Classic Books)

Virtual reality technology and hyperlink radically change the meanings and impacts of cultural objects, especially in the museum digital curation. The possibility of reproducing identical virtual copies of antiques and cultural relics of an artefact transforms the contexts in which the artefact is encountered and alters the kinds of significance it produces. This paper presents a perspective on the development of virtual reality and digital exhibitions practice in Chinese museums through: an overview of the development of virtual reality and digital museum curation; a case study of the functions of 3D and online exhibitions in the period of emergency of public health threatens people's lives; and a discussion of trends in digital exhibition in museums that could help the public reach and engage more online service.

## Live The Past: Dramaturgy And Live Performance As a Design Perspective For Smart Glass AR Experiences In Heritage Sites

Holly Maples and Mariza Dima (Brunel University London)

In a typical visit of a heritage site, such as a castle or a house, walking through the place, looking at and sensing the surroundings immerses the visitor in the place's experience of the place. Audio guides, information labels, leaflets, and tour guides provide additional information that connects the visitor to the place's history. Yet, the supporting educational material offered to the visitors is dissociated from the experiential way they interact with the space. In order to lessen the dissociation, increase experiential and situated knowledge building, and invite younger audiences to museums and heritage sites, several digital tools have been introduced over the last few years, such as mobile Augmented Reality applications, tangible interactions, and audio walkthroughs (Poole, Kidd, Marshall, Museum of London). These tools allow visitors to have a physical and social interaction with a localized past. What is common in these experiences is the use of storytelling to guide the visitor, a powerful tool museums and heritage sites have to surface nuanced historical details and to create frames of experience that encourage internal dialogue, connection with the past, and deep and satisfying engagement for visitors (Wong, Bedford). However, in digital heritage, storytelling is often framed in a linear, didactic way striped off its ability to evoke emotional and affective responses and lead to a compelling experience (Vagnone, Perry). In sharp contrast, affective storytelling has the power to immerse and educate, and build a strong image for the heritage site (Savenije). The purpose of our workshop is to develop interdisciplinary storytelling techniques interweaving Augmented Reality with Live Performance in order to create a new methodology of interactive storytelling for the heritage industry. The goal of the workshop is to create a new transdisciplinary approach in technology mediated situated learning in heritage sites by intersecting smart glass AR, interactive narrative design, dramaturgy, and affect.

Documenting performance in the museum: processes of documentation at Tate

Helia Marcal and Louise Lawson (Tate)

Documenting performance art seems to be a conundrum that is particularly hard to resolve. Tate started to collect this form of artistic practice in 2005, and has since acquired over 25 performance artworks that range from simple instruction-based works to performances that depend on bodily and material engagements that are hard to understand and even harder to capture. The practice of documenting performance art at Tate is, in itself, contingent on the site where these processes of knowledge production take place: the museum. With the aim of safeguarding a whole collection to generations to come, it comes as no surprise that the museum's structure naturally is naturally keen to create categories and other processes of standardisation. What we have seen in the last years, however, is that performance art relentlessly, vigorously, and without any refrain, indeed challenges those standards and categories. But in which ways can we capture and document performance artworks in the collection while balancing the need for keeping them what they are and, yet, allowing them to change to break free? What are the affordances of the museum to the documentation of performance art? And how can we re-situate museum practices to accommodate non-conforming bodies of practice?

This workshop will draw on the practice of conservation in the museum to explore the material possibilities afforded by the care of performance art. We will focus on our current documentation processes to reflect on how the situatedness of the museum frames the documentation that is produced and the purposes of said documents. While developing this argument, we will be providing access to the tools we have been developing in the last three years. Participants will participate in exercises of re-situating practices, where forms of data collection and analysis will be framed through case-studies and discussion.

**The Ballad of Isosceles : Expanding Small-Audience Performance Through Scenography and VR/360 Film Design**

Alison Matthews (University of Salford)

In this 20-minute paper, I discuss the process of creating *The Ballad of Isosceles* in VR, a 360/VR immersive film document that expands on an earlier live performance piece's design principles, themes and spectatorial structures. In *Documenting Performance: The Context and Processes of Digital Curation and Archiving* (edited by Toni Sant), Ben Spatz proposes a "dense video documents" as a new term, which "[function] in parallel to live performances in that they too offer composed surfaces through to glimpse the depth and complexity of ongoing practices" (2017, p. 250). New technologies and tools permit new types of transmission, according to Spatz (240-241). Following this logic, I considered how 360-video technology, ambisonic microphones/editing and HMDs might be used to create a "dense video document" of a live performance that already plays with voyeurism and the act of looking. I will tie this into larger questions of how small-audience performances (like my original live piece) might be documented and disseminated more widely using new digital technologies. Through the project, I have discovered the significance of applying heightened scenographic attention to the normally humble one-to-one performance encounter, and the radical potential of using VR/360 technologies when documenting small-scale performance from a single audience member's perspective. I will finish by discussing how the finished film was reanimated through its live staging in bespoke pods created by set & costume design students here at Salford. Thinking about how best to stage the 'dense video document' as a live encounter has led me to realise that digital documentation can have a much more symbiotic relationship with live performance forms.

## Exploring Animation and Virtual-Reality to Represent the Perceptual-Experiences of Artists with Blindness and Sight-Loss

Andrea McSwan (University of Dundee)

How do art practitioners with blindness and sight-loss imagine and dream? How do they comprehend transparency, reflectivity or color? How does their visual impairment inform their artwork and methods of practice?

Whilst the sighted generally imagine people with blindness as inhabiting a black world, only a small percentage of people have total vision loss and many persons, with visual impairment, have some perception of light, shadow, movement and shape. As mental images can be generated without sight, the ability to see is not necessary for the creation of visual art.

This practice-based PhD project explores animation and virtual-reality (VR) to represent the creative practice and perceptual-experiences of artists with sight-loss. Using animated virtual-worlds and environments to enable sighted users to embody and understand another person's perceptual experiences, this inductive research adopts an interpretive approach and incorporates the strength of case-study to compare abstract concepts of blindness to actual lived experiences.

Qualitative semi-structured interviews were conducted in the creative environments of three visually impaired professional artists, to capture, through their descriptive storytelling, a holistic understanding of their perceptions and methods of practice. The collective prize-winning visual art of these three case-studies, covers an international field of practice including exhibitions at the Tate Modern, 3D live drawing installations at London's South Bank, panoramic ink drawings of zen gardens in Japan, bronze pouring and casting of singing bowls in Burma, transparent voile drawings of city-scapes, jewel-like studies of light and super-scale sculptures of braille.

Tentative findings at this early stage indicate commonalities between the artists in their experience of sight-loss, with colour palette changes of violet hues fading first and the actual process of losing sight involving vivid photo realistic hallucinations, kaleidoscope technicolour patterning and glittering patches of light resembling static white noise. Through recall of memories and previous experiences, both imagination and dreams are in full colour and pictures.

The comprehension of spatial environments, both in terms of scale and nature may be informed through the focus of listening to external and internal activity including cars, trains, building works, people, rain and wind. When transitioning through environments, a new space may also be identified by temperature. Almost meditative in approach, the art of listening, as a focused activity is also used to identify the species of trees by the sound of the leaves when agitated by breeze. To determine recognition of others, both familiar and unknown, gait and movement were acknowledged as primary indicators to gauge mood, personality and demeanour.

Themes and responses will be evaluated by analysing the data gathered to inform and create an immersive animation, viewed and experienced in virtual reality. The final film output will incorporate documentary sound-tracks underpinned and informed by case-study and narrative enquiry and will be showcased and evaluated at participatory public engagement events.

## Production of Architectural Assets for Representation in Museums: Theme Development of Museum-Based Digital Twin

Hossein Parsinejad (University of Salford)

Museums provide a thought-provoking field for whom interested in visiting Art pieces from Objects to Architectural Assets and from historical heritage assets to modern art pieces. Although virtual representation of the assets can be challenging in many ways, the new techniques will provide more opportunities. Using Mixed Reality methods enable the museums to represent the built cultural heritage values perceptibly and understandably. It becomes paramount that curators use more high-tech techniques for representation of the most precious assets beside one another comprehensively. This paper is to develop the theme for “Museum-Based Digital Twin” that would help curators and art historians use it to represent the updated digital version of the assets depending on curatorial needs. It is constructive to raise one main question: is the production of Digital Twin, necessarily, comprised of data acquired by scanning the physical asset? To respond to this open question, it is essential to disambiguate four main technical phrases: “Representation” and its inherent differences with Digital Twin; characteristics of “Digital Asset” versus “Physical Asset”; and the differentiation between “Data Capturing” and “Scanning”. I will discuss how can state-of-the-art Digital Twin concept be defined with curatorial priorities; furthermore, the capabilities of this revolutionary concept would be discernible from an artistic perspective by the illustration of a comparable example of using Mixed Reality method in museums that can be developed to a Museum-Based Digital Twin case study with higher capabilities such as real-time interoperability with the physical model; higher abilities for time manipulation, etc.

## Collecting and Curating Emerging Formats

Giulia Carla Rossi (The British Library)

Since Non-Print Legal Deposit Regulations came into force in 2013, UK Legal Deposit Libraries have been collecting a variety of born-digital materials, mainly comprising eBooks, eJournals and the UK web. In 2017, the British Library and the other UK Legal Deposit Libraries set up the Emerging Formats Project, to explore new types of digital publications and address the collection management requirements of more complex digital formats. Emerging formats are defined as born-digital publications often made up of multiple file types and non-standardised formats; they also present specific tech dependencies, as they rely heavily on the hardware and software they were originally designed for in order to deliver access. The project focused on three types of complex digital objects: eBooks published in the form of mobile apps, web-based interactive narratives, and digital content based on structured data.

From a curatorial perspective, emerging formats present some striking similarities to performance: for both it is hard to separate the content from the audience/readers' experience, and neither can fully be replicated in print without affecting said experience (and thus the meaning of the work itself). The need for somewhat preserving the user experience in order to maintain the integrity and authenticity of the original work, fits within the idea of 'enhanced curation' – expanding the remit for collection and curation beyond just the publication files, to include the contextual information surrounding these works as well. Contextual information can give a sense of the original 'look and feel' of a publication; it clarifies authorial intention and context; and it can provide instructions on use once a format has become obsolete. This kind of descriptive material can also work as an alternative to collecting the original artefact, when the object itself could not be collected or there are no access options available.

Contextual information can include a variety of material, from a publisher's official press kit and promotional content, to blog posts, reviews, interviews with the authors and even video capture of use. The British Library has taken a user-centric approach to collecting this type of material – we conducted a series of user experience testing sessions to better understand users' needs and expectations when accessing emerging formats, and what descriptive material would be of value for research purposes.

This presentation aims to give an overview of the Emerging Formats Project and the challenges that new media present to libraries and other collecting institutions, with a focus on description as a method to enhance the user experience. Case studies around ebook mobile apps and web-based interactive narratives will also be presented.

**Ownership of Performance: Reshaping museum's collections**

Riad Salameh (Media Arts Cultures Consortium)

Performance in its own definition is ephemeral and constrained within a time and a space, in which an experience is created for a specific audience that are also contained within that same time and space. Regardless, it can still be documented with photography, videos, choreographic notes and other datasets. Its structural component and records have questioned the difference between experimental theater and visual arts, as the medium has been playing a huge part within visual contemporary culture. (Wood, 2018) Its ephemeral nature and history has blurred lines in the meaning of ownership and collections within an institutional museum structure. As much as it is important to “collect” those different datasets that form the documentation of a performance, it is vital to be wary over the terminologies that museums use when it comes to the ownership of a performance.

Which begs to question the infrastructure of museums collections and their notions of ownership. This examination arises frequently when there is discussion over bodily practice and ephemerality. In this paper, a critical view is considered between the definition of ownership and its position to collection, acquisition and legal rights. The conversation leads to the appeal of whom is the ownership going to be beneficial? The artist or the institution? And how are collections between theaters and museums fundamentally different?

Looking at the terms and conditions of those different cases has a significant meaning in what ought to be documented and owned for performance – obviously that holds a monetary value or if it beyond those values. Performance calls into question the idea of ownership and this research is merely a small contribution towards recognizing the importance of documentation and ownership while still questioning the contemporary perception of museums infrastructures and object-based values.

**Stirring the 'agential soup': Live performance and the critical digital humanities**

Joanne Scott (University of Salford)

In his outline of 'critical digital humanities', David Berry (2019) asserts that 'future directions for the digital humanities must be more critically oriented and more reflexive of the way in which computation is no longer merely a tool for thought, but an infrastructure or milieu', adding that 'a way of critiquing the, sometimes, instrumental tendencies within the digital humanities could be a greater focus on the socio-technical aspects of the technologies'. In response to Berry's call, this presentation makes a case for the capacities of live performance with digital technologies to challenge and critique the 'milieu' of the digital as it happens between people and devices – the contemporary 'network' we have created that James Bridle (2018) describes as including 'human and nonhuman agency and understanding, knowing and unknowing, within the same agential soup' (p.5). I argue that the live activation of technologies in performance works offers an energised and powerful context for such critiques to be engaged and for the intersection of agencies, feelings and processes within this 'soup' to be examined.

In making this argument, I reflect particularly on my sited creative practices, which mix the digital processes of a smartphone with organic growth in urban green spaces through a methodology grounded in their common wildness. I also refer to the performance-making of Javaad Alipoor/ Kirsty Housley and in particular two recent pieces – *The Believers are But Brothers* (2017) and *Rich Kids: A history of Shopping Malls in Tehran* (2019) – that prompt the audience to engage with some of the content of the performance through Whatsapp and Instagram respectively.

In both cases, I am interested in how everyday 'socio-technical' engagements with our devices can be unseated, re-viewed and interrogated through the prompts such live activations offer; how these engagements might draw particular attention to the ways the platforms and applications involved 'produce' and 'programme' contemporary 'social life' (Seymour 2019, p.23). I also address what live performance as an art form can offer as a critical mode of creative practice that is distinct from some of the more familiar forms of post-digital practice in visual and internet arts. The presentation concludes that the live encounter is particularly potent in refracting and engaging ideas and questions related to the streams of information in play in the network and the hidden processes of a digital mobile device, prompting a productive affective uneasiness between a participant and their personal technologies.

## Digitising Charles Relly Beard's Historical Dictionary of Arms, Armour and Fashion

Maggie Scott (University of Salford) and Joshua Pendragon (Independent Scholar)

The Library of the Society of Antiquaries of London holds copies of this unpublished manuscript, compiled by Charles Relly Beard (1891-1958). For a time, work on this material continued under arms and armour expert Claude Blair (1922-2010). Blair and his assistant Christopher King sought to prepare the arms and armour component of these materials for publication, but although they made considerable progress, various setbacks prevented them from bringing the project to fruition.

Much of Blair's correspondence is now held by the Wallace Collection and the Society of Antiquaries, and affords valuable insights into his role as a dictionary consultant for the Oxford English Dictionary and the Dictionary of the Older Scottish Tongue. In this role, he made extensive use of the information made available to him through Beard's manuscript dictionary, and part of the work of our current project involves assessing its academic value to the study of arms and armour, and to historical lexicography. The project also engages students through their opportunity to contribute analysis to the blog post element of the project web site, and the application of this is also significant.

In this paper, we outline the challenges of setting up the project and the approach we are taking which is intended to make the work available with the minimum of editorial intervention, so as to avoid the problems of volume and time encountered by Blair. The journey of the dictionary from manuscript to online edition underlines the advantages now afforded by modern technology to a project of this scale, and how these may be used in order to make the dictionary accessible to a wide-ranging community of interest that includes academics and current practitioners of historical martial arts.

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**Wed 4:00 pm – 5:30 pm**

## Remediation of Music Collections through Digital Curation

Onur Sesigür (Istanbul Bilgi University)

Digital curation has become an inclusive umbrella concept (Yakel, 2007) for collecting, curating, managing and preserving digital assets for personal or institutional use. Following the emergence and expansion of digital music aggregators such as Spotify, personal music streaming playlists constitute a platform of curatorial performance as a remediation (Bolter & Grusin, 1998) of physical music collections. The declining popularity of tangible music containers and the at first unlicensed, then legal growth of the digital audio followed by the contemporary dominance of streaming, manifests an environment where ownership as a key prerequisites of personal collections and curatorial practices is replaced with the concept of access (Mulligan, 2011) or transformed in a way that what is owned is now not the physical or digital object, but the experience of interaction (Burkart, 2008) (Hagen, 2015) (Sinclair & Tinson, 2017). This is mainly due to music “reverting to its age-old transience” (Pareles, 1998) after a century or so of celebrated physicality. The remediation of the practice is inevitably influenced by the remediation of the object from mechanically, magnetically or digitally stored data in a physical container that can be collected and interacted within the affordances of the container, to address information for the object that is stored digitally elsewhere, collected as bookmarks (Sesigür, 2019) and interacted with within the affordances of the aggregator platform. Thus, a streaming collection is defined not directly by the objects that are collected and curated, but by the act of collecting and curating. Furthermore, alongside the ownership aspect of this shift, remediation of music collections as streaming playlists relies heavily on the environment of these practices, digital services providers (DSPs), where vast catalogues are readily available. On one hand, this eliminates the physical acquisition process to create a personal information collection (Bruce et al., 2011) amongst which a curation can be made and maintained. On the other hand, in the era of infoglut (Andrejevic, 2013) the sheer amount of information provided is difficult to manage. To deal with this problem, curation can be utilised as a “constructive model and metaphor offering a solution to the issue of information overload online” (Liu, 2010, p.3). Following Liu’s proposition, personal playlists on streaming platforms can be understood as digital curation tools, highlighting the concept of *capta*, as the selection amongst a mass (Checkland & Holwell, 1999) to “transform data to information, [by] addition of context, and hence meaning” (Bawden, 2001, p. 95). Through this framework, this paper suggests digital curation as a key concept for a remediated understanding of collecting music in the streaming age. Transformed nature of the object, the collection and the collector in a data and information environment will be made sense of by utilising approaches of personal information management (PIM) as well as traditional collection studies, placing digital curation at their intersection to conceptualize the remediation of the music collection to the playlist in the streaming music era.

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Experimental and creative approaches to collecting and distributing new media art within regional arts organisations

Georgia Smithson (The University of Sunderland)

This paper is an overview of preliminary research undertaken for the creation of a framework for collecting and distributing new media art within regional art galleries in the U.K. From the 1960's practitioners have experimented using computers, and the art-form has evolved into multiple strands of production, presentation and distribution. But are we, as collectors, researchers, artists and enthusiasts facing an uncertain future concerning the integration of new media art into institutional cultural organisations? Recently, concerns have been raised by curators regarding the importance of learning how to collect new media art if there is to be any hope of preserving its past. A fear of the unknown of experimental models of curatorial activities such as collecting, preservation and documentation appear to be a barrier to some mainstream, university and municipal galleries when acquisitioning or commissioning new artworks into their collections, while methods of distribution using new media platforms are still at a very experimental stage. This paper explores that by collaboration, experimentation and the sharing of knowledge and resources, these concerns may be conquered to preserve and make new media art accessible for future generations to enjoy and not to lament over the obsolescence of what it once was.

**Art Beyond Walls: Digital ontology in the curation of virtual galleries**

Stella Sofokleous (National and Kapodistrian University of Athens)

As cultural institutions enter the rather new, fast-paced and data-intensive environment, they face the challenge of how to convert their heritage and collections into a virtual format that is both compatible with the Web, and demonstrative of their modus operandi in the physical context. Ideas that emerge for a Web-specific artwork become more complicated when they concern digital reproductions of physical objects. Is the digitization of an artwork a metaphor of its physical double in a virtual environment? Or is it 'replica' in the strict art historical tradition? I would argue that the answer lies far beyond these two somewhat restrictive approaches. It can be traced in a deeper and more ontological understanding of digital substances. By exploring the ontological characteristics of digital-beings, this paper attempts to discuss how digitally reproduced artworks cannot be understood as merely representation of the physical objects owing to their peculiar 'quasi-material presence'. In the second part this proposal examines whether the auratic quality, firstly suggested by Walter Benjamin, encompasses an important dimension in comprehending the digital ontology of art. Is there an analogous virtual aura when the materiality of an artwork vanishes? In the final part, the discussion moves to the curation of the immaterial art of the virtual gallery. Understanding the ontology of intangible art within a virtual gallery is considered by the author as a prerequisite for its proper management by the curator and for the meaningful transition between its different states: from atoms to bits, objects to processes, the tangible modification of art to the immaterial world of the digital era.

**Attention – Tension: the non-visible line connecting the physical and digital improvising bodies**

Lucie Sykes (University of Salford)

Performative or choreographic installation using digital technologies such as digital animation and motion capture (Mocap) systems, has risen into daily performance practice in recent years. One of the pioneers is a choreographer Merce Cunningham who has used motion capture animation in his works *Biped* (1999), *Loops* (2000) and *Fluid Canvas* (2002).

My practice-led research is exploring how we can access and activate the sculptural quality of an improvising body within digital environments. Mocap translates the physical properties of an improvising body into a three dimensional digital model, with the captured data affecting interactive visuals in real time.

This presentation focuses on the ‘awareness’ of spatial tension between the physical body and digital/virtual body, in an attempt to identify how it can activate the sculptural quality of improvising body. Merleau-Ponty once said: “To see is a matter of principle to see further than one sees, to reach a being in latency” (1968, p.151). Therefore spatial tension prompts us to question the visible and non-visible ‘line or curve’ connections between mind-body and the external ‘space/world’; and the positioning of an active and passive observer.

Motion capture practices and its discourse is important for understanding of human movement and its representation. Rudolf Laban’s observations of movement in motion lead him to understand of movement in space through application of solids three-dimensional geometric objects. He suggested that through the body capacity to ‘touch’ and ‘move’ intentionally to specific points on the surface of the 3D grid, the body gains embodied experience and confirms our ‘awareness’. These visible and non-visible lines/curves with expressive qualities are communicating the dynamic presence and freedom of the improvising body; and develops ‘tacit knowledge’ between mind-body.

The fundamentals of spatial tension and ongoing tensions and systems of lines/curves of force, offer new approaches to explore the embodied experiences of the improvising body and enables the ‘lived experiences’ to be visible in digital environments.

## Curating Embodied experiences: Percipients as conscious prosumers in the 21st Century

Olu Taiwo (University of Winchester)

The ubiquitous nature of Digital Curation, is fast becoming the expected way for managers, overseers and keepers of cultural heritage to remember the work of the ancestors and the living. Now that everyone can be and be seen as a digital curator, some crucial questions have to be asked. What are we remembering? Whose ancestral discourses are being remembered? With what frameworks are our multiple heritages being remembered through? Museums, libraries and archives involved in presenting tangible objects from cultures from around the world, have had questionable motives when the objects are being paraded to the public through exhibitions and publications. These cultural artefacts were owned via questionable methods of acquisition; during the colonisation period, which has been continuing, more recently through, the illegal trade in ancient artefacts. Now a new breed of curator has emerged; which are curators of digitalised artefacts that increase the distance percipients have from the situated origins of ancient artefacts. They are being objectified further, reducing them to mere historical muses inspiring un-contextualised appropriation that informs the neo-colonialist's discourse. Curation in the context of Contemporary Art is also problematic, as the word 'Contemporary' has been requisitioned by the western Avant Garde's hegemonic cannon; leaving no place for any other concept of what is happening 'now' to be accepted as contemporary, unless it is associated with a Westernised Avant Garde!

This performative paper will examine the Africa proverb 'When an Elder dies, it is a library burning'. This proverb assumes the Elder as embodied archive, suggesting that the responsibility of individuals, when they get older, is to curate, organise and share their experiences and memories for future generations. I will be exploring this concept of embodied archive through a curatorial piece of theatre that I am involved in as a wordsmith on called 'Congress: A citizens' assembly' created by All The Queens Men, where untold voices from the contemporary world are curated. It will take place in Salisbury Cathedral. This is the first time that have performed their piece outside Australia. On the website of 'All The Queens Men', (<https://allthequeensmen.net/projects/congress/>) they state that their piece 'Congress' is,

"A series of first speeches from those often unheard. Personal visions for our collective future. In Australia, fuelled by conservative politicians and media commentators, the darkest side of nationalism has led to the public vilification of immigrants, refugees, asylum seekers, Muslims, First Nations People, and – by extension – anyone considered 'foreign' or 'other'. Congress, intentionally works against stereotypical representations of the 'other' by providing a platform for direct address to the public... This citizens' assembly connects the personal with the political. Community citizen Speakers are matched with professional Wordsmiths. Together, they collaborate to write and deliver 'first political speeches'; personal visions for our collective future. Taking the form of a ritualised performance, intersected with community and cultural dance, this project unashamedly encourages citizens to agitate for change and transformation."

I will explore this event using two key terms, important to understanding how we can perceive and redefine our 'contemporary' world, reflecting on what we produce and consume. The two words are 'percipient' and 'prosumer'. A percipient is a person who perceives acutely, with the ability to perceive holistically and quickly. They perceive and absorb events phenomenologically like a very young child, in the moment, without deliberation. A prosumer is a person who consumes and produces a product. This term was coined in 1980 by futurist Alvin Toffler who imagined it as a disrupter; however, with the increased participation of Web 2.0 technologies, such as Instagram, Facebook, Twitter and Flickr, the capitalist's fleet of foot has monetised the user's participation, to curate and distort the line between the means of production and the means of consumption, with the concept of a prosumer just replacing the concept of the consumer.

**Geographies of information: Oral Histories and the Digital Interface**

Alda Terracciano (UCL)

2020 marks the centenary of UCL Department of Information Studies. The paper will focus on the participatory process applied in the curation of the exhibition Geographies of Information: 100 years of Information Studies at UCL, aimed at offering researchers, students and visitors an opportunity to learn about the history of the department and the role that teaching has played in the creation of an international, professional workforce over the past decades. Starting as the first British School of Librarianship in 1919, the department paved the way for other Higher Education institutions in Britain, leading training programmes for information professionals in an expanding job market. The success helped establishing its worldwide reputation, promoting professional standards that influenced information management practices worldwide through an international cohort of students.

The paper will explore how this digital exhibition benefited from a process of active engagement of current students and alumni in an oral history programme with the aim of facilitating the exploration of key issues faced by information professionals in their jobs, including ethical issues, engagement of different communities of practice, development of digital humanities and uses of artificial intelligence to mention just a few. It will analyse the design of a series of interactive exhibition panels covering the history of the department and its impact on the sector, including: extracts of interviews produced through the oral history programme accessed through mobile interfaces that allow visitors to move from the written to oral text; objects sourced from UCL Special Collections immersed in original sound compositions mixing newly recorded material and sounds from the British Library sound archive; and a digital map highlighting the provenance and place of work of the alumni linking past and present and opening up a dialogue with future potential developments in the field.

## Accessibility and Digital Practices

Hannah Wallis (Freelance)

This presentation is informed by my upcoming role as curator-in-residence at Wysing Arts Centre 2020-2021; a role supported by disability arts organisation DASH.

In the face of the contemporary media ecology and its impact on the dissemination of artistic practices across curatorial platforms, my research will contribute to Wysing Arts Centre's 2020 theme of broadcasting. I will be addressing our production of imagery and the combining of performance and documentation with particular reference to Isobel Harbison's 'Performing Image'. This research will examine the interrelation of image-based and live practices "across formats [that] have the capacity to produce a range of emotions, a sense of proximity, of perpetuity, a heightened or intensified sense of presence, or, conversely (and sometimes coexistent with this heightening), a sense of total isolation or alienation" (Harbison, 2019), and the need for innovative documentation designs to expand access within ever more digitised arenas of creative practice.

Digital practices of artistic sharing both online and on-air, generate means to interact with wider and more remote audiences, creating opportunities for unprecedented connections and networks. However, as we have not yet fully addressed accessibility in live contexts – and as we enter an increasingly digital culture – I will be addressing strategies that can be employed to understand accessibility within digital curation from the outset, as opposed to the integration of access-led approaches as an afterthought.

In relation to this, my research is concerned with the development and documentation of performative and sound-based practices. In a world characterised by the binary of sound and silence, I am interested in locating sonic research against the personal and social realities of sound and identity formation; looking at what tools can be adopted from our experiences of listening and being heard, in order to consider individual and collective "sonic agency" (Brandon LaBelle). Driven by personal experience of hearing loss and combined with my interests in the artforms that I find most inaccessible, I will be exploring the relationship between live/performative practices and the dissemination of outcomes via ever-changing digital as well as live means. Fundamental to the development of this research is to ask two key questions:

- How do we meaningfully employ digital tools to develop and disseminate accessibly informed presentations of live, performative and sound-based works?
- How does remote and digitised experience change our relationship with imagery and liveness?

As we aim to disseminate more and more widely, there is a fundamental danger in leaving sections of society behind, creating a tension around social progress in the face of digital progress. Exploring the Her Noise Archive – connected to Creative Research into Sound Arts Practice, co-led by Cathy Lane – as a case study within this research I will be addressing intersections of sonic identity formation from multiple perspectives. What is important for me within this area, is to explore the very dissemination of the archive, asking; how do we access this

**Digital Curation in a small art gallery: the CFCCA experience**

Katie Waring (Centre for Chinese Contemporary Art)

The Centre for Chinese Contemporary Art (CFCCA) is an independent gallery in Manchester which has promoted the work of contemporary artists from China and artist of Chinese heritage since the late 1980s. Since 2018, initially supported by the National Lottery Heritage Fund, the Centre has provided meaningful access to its historical records on site and via a dedicated online catalogue (<http://archive.cfcca.org.uk/>).

This paper examines the CFCCA Archive & Library's work with born-digital records. Making them accessible for research and preserving the context in which the Centre has presented Chinese contemporary art over the last 30 years. It will examine the challenges we faced in making our collection accessible within a limited budget, and the procedures we established to curate born-digital content from its creation to its final distribution.

## Enhancing artistic practice through digital curation.

Julie Watkins (University of Greenwich)

This paper shares insights from digitally curating my own completed Practice as Research (Nelson, 2013) PhD, including ephemeral, affective art installations. The projected abstract animations were accompanied by wordlessly sung sounds in a darkened gallery space. On entering the gallery the audience stepped into the installation and became participants; the art installations were experiential, in the mode of a performance. The performance scholar Peggy Phelan stated: ‘Performance’s only life is in the present. Performance cannot be saved, recorded, documented’ (1993, p. 146). Fruitful tensions arising from digitally curating these experiences are discussed: scholarly research, artistic practice, preserving for re-performing (Boutard, 2015), materials and conservation (Laurenson, 2006) and active facilitation of the personal digital archives of others (Hobbs, 2001; Sabharwal, 2017; Rinehart and Ippolito, 2014). Digital curation is reflected on in the light of practices that were disruptive to the art world: Fluxus (Santone, 2016) and László Moholy-Nagy’s advocacy of using means of reproduction for producing new works (Moholy-Nagy and Passuth, 1987). Digital curation can facilitate artistic output being used by others (Cook, 2013), becoming a tool, even a framework (Watkins, 2018). Digital curation aids lensing artistic works through how they can be shared with an audience. Conceiving of and creating pieces that show how they are made, turning spectators into participants (Watkins, 2019), noting their feedback (Rosenberg, 2009), their social interactions and how they photograph and video their own experiences of the installation (Henkel, 2014). The appreciation of the audience as they create their own personal digital archives can be palpable and reinforces Edward Lordan’s exhortation to: ‘Integrate your activities so that members of your audience can take full advantage of everything and every way, you have to communicate’ (Lordan, 1999, p. 16). Digital curators, artistic practitioners and practice-based researchers may find the paper useful.

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## Creating, Curating and Collecting Interactive Fiction at the British Library

Stella Wisdom (British Library)

This paper discusses British Library research and engagement projects, which have used interactive fiction and digital game making tools as a method for reinterpreting digitised library collections to facilitate new understandings of historical events, or to create new media adaptations and interpretations of classic literary works.

There are a growing number of easy to use digital tools offering new ways to curate and tell stories beyond the printed book and the spoken word. This paper is an overview and evaluation of experiments and collaborations, which have used British Library digital collections in such creative projects.

The Off the Map game design competition set UK higher education students the task of creating video games, text adventures and virtual interactive environments using digitised maps, views, texts, illustrations and recorded sounds as creative inspiration. Competitions were themed to coincide with British Library exhibitions on gothic literature, William Shakespeare and Alice's Adventures in Wonderland.

Interactive fiction writing summer schools were held at the British Library in 2017 and 2018. Using Twine, an open-source programme for writing interactive narratives, over five intense days, adult participants learned how to build non-linear digital story games with expert tuition from specialists in interactive storytelling.

Twine was also used by many participants in online interactive fiction writing jams, ran in partnership with Surrey Libraries and Read Watch Play: a global online multimedia reading group that has monthly themes. Jam participants were encouraged to use the British Library's vast collection of public domain images available on Flickr Commons. The Bitsy game development community also engaged, using their software to create retro style 2D games.

In 2017 Odyssey Jam was held for the water theme and in 2018 a Gothic Novel Jam celebrated the 200th year anniversary of the publication of Mary Shelley's Frankenstein. Gothic Novel Jam received 46 entries from all around the world including the UK, Australia, America and France. Most entries were interactive fiction, 2D and 3D explorer games, but other types of submissions included a digital headstone generator, an atmospheric audio soundscape and a table-top role playing storytelling game based on a Victorian séance.

The Library's emerging formats programme has been researching how to collect and digitally preserve web-based interactive narratives, such as those created in the Library's summer schools and online jams. In 2019 Lynda Clark a postdoctoral researcher from Nottingham Trent University worked with the Digital Scholarship, Contemporary British and Web Archiving teams to build a UK interactive fiction collection in the UK Web Archive. Her research project examined web-archiving tools to determine options and possibilities available to curators collecting complex digital works.

## The Role of AI and Automation in the Digital Curation of Art and Cultural Heritage on Social Media

Benedict Wills-Eve (Lancaster University)

Digital curation and the sharing of art on social media is increasingly important for the discovery, preservation and reinterpretation of artworks by users. Most of this activity is currently performed manually and individually, with human users posting, sharing, liking, following and retweeting art that interests them. However, there is a growing amount of art and artefacts being shared by 'bots', or automated social media accounts, which have gained prominence in the public consciousness recently thanks to their use in political machinations. This paper examines the role of bots, and the algorithms behind them, in sharing art and cultural heritage across social media and how this differs from the approaches taken by human-run individual or institutional accounts.

The main case study for this work is a platform called 'Off The Easel' which acts as an art 'botnet' (network of bots) that algorithmically and automatically shares art across Twitter, Facebook and Tumblr to over 8M followers. Each bot in the network represents an artist or museum department, for example Van Gogh or Photos from The Met Museum, and shares their artworks sourced from WikiArt, a site dedicated to storing and listing Open Access artworks. There are more than 1,000 bots in the network, which achieves more than 150,000 shares per month, but its novelty lies in the algorithms behind the network, automatically determining which bots should follow, retweet or recommend each other based on artistic style.

This automated, algorithmic approach to sharing throws up important questions about curation and how it is achieved when the bot developer, in many ways the human curator, achieves their goals in a more indirect, digitally complex fashion. Similarly, this paper demonstrates that whilst the sharing power this approach creates is surely appealing to museum curators wanting to share their collections online, there is a need to reconsider what curation involves in an algorithmic context.

**Cultural presence in art reception: A case study of VR cultural heritage audiences**

Xinyang Zhao (Curtin University) and Yu Shan (Queensland University of Technology)

We are likely to acknowledge that technological advances have accelerated the advent of new aesthetics. Thanks to new technologies, individuals can expand the perceptual experiences of our existing senses and can even create novel perceptual dimensions—new presence. (Jeon, Fishwick, & Environments, 2017)

As an advanced digital technology, VR is likely to be a significant way to preserve cultural heritage and create new segments of cultural consumption. With the commercialisation of Head Mounted Displays (HMDs), like HTC Vive, Oculus Quest and PSVR, cultural heritage can be portably appreciated far away from the ruin sites and museums, in the meanwhile this attracts more younger audiences. From ecological perspective, technological mediation (the affordance in VEs) influences audience's cognition, emotional state and cultural understanding. The virtual environments (VEs) of VR cultural heritage not only evoke the physical feeling of presence but cultural presence.

This research takes the case of Shenyou Dunhuang (神游敦煌), presented by NTU imLab and Dunhuang Academy, a popular VR cultural heritage game in the HTC Viveport platform, employing the grounded theory of qualitative research with focus group. The researcher participates and observes the process of art reception of a group of young audiences playing Shenyou Dunhuang and organizes a focus group afterwards. This study aims to explore how the feeling of presence influences audience's art reception of VR cultural heritage from the ecological perspective of VEs. As an iconic cultural heritage in China, Dunhuang has appeared in many digitalization projects. Most of the audiences have had their understanding and cultural expectations of Dunhuang, from which the researcher can find out the connections between “cultural presence” and “cultural expectation”.

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