



Reiherit a Museum: Immersive Performance at the Bank of Cyprus Cultural Foundation

Author(s)
CYENS

Publication date
2024-02-05T14:59:43.344Z

Terms of reuse
CC BY 2.0

Type of best practice
VR/AR & Technologies, inc. Gamification & Immersive performances

Keywords
Immersive performance, Museum Experiences, Human-Centered computing,
Mixed/Augmented Reality,

This practice explores how an immersive performance enhances museum experiences and broadens audience participation. It integrates interactive sound, live music, augmented reality, real-time visuals, and projection mapping, creating a multisensory environment. By breaking traditional spectatorship, it fosters active engagement, blurring the line between observer and participant. The conceptual framework and audience interaction guide the analysis. All performance materials and documentation are openly accessible, promoting transparency and knowledge sharing.

Organisation in charge of best practice

Bank of Cyprus Cultural Foundation, CYENS Centre of Excellence, Nicosia, Cyprus

Location

Bank of Cyprus Cultural Foundation, Nicosia, Cyprus

Dates

November 2022 to May 2023

Description

The immersive performance titled "ReInHerit a Museum," which took place on International Museum Day at the Bank of Cyprus Cultural Foundation, marks a pioneering initiative in reshaping audience engagement within heritage sites. This avant-garde experience seamlessly weaves together artistic expressions, integrating contemporary music and cutting-edge technologies. Delving into the conceptual framework and the dynamic interaction between the audience and the application reveals a deliberate effort to enhance visitors' experiences and attract a more diverse audience.





At its core, the performance is a fusion of various elements, incorporating interactive sound installations, live music performances, augmented reality, real-time generated visuals, and projection mapping. This amalgamation creates a distinctive multisensory environment, aiming not only to educate but also to forge a profound emotional connection between the audience and cultural heritage.

Breaking away from traditional spectatorship, the performance strives to promote active participation and interaction among the audience.

The roots of this innovative concept can be traced back to historical immersive experiences, finding inspiration in ancient Greek theatrical performances held in amphitheaters. The circular arrangement of the audience in ancient Greece fostered shared experiences, reminiscent of the immersive intent behind the "ReInHerit a Museum" performance. This contemporary endeavor draws parallels with the success of media art projects and immersive exhibitions in museums, creating a new era of engaging and captivating audiences.

The visual aspect of the performance merges historical artifacts with generative art and video art, resulting in a hybrid artwork that gives impetus to diverse interpretations and dialogues about the past, present, and future. Real-time visual elements include three-dimensional museum exhibit models, AI-generated images, archival photographic material, architectural museum photographs, and earthy textures.

The augmented reality component introduces an AR application that adds an interactive dimension to the performance. Users are encouraged to explore virtual artifacts through AR, creating a treasure-hunt-like experience within the physical venue. This combination of virtual and physical elements adds interactivity, enabling users to influence the soundscape through their interactions.

The design framework of the immersive performance is detailed, emphasizing the interdisciplinary collaboration of professionals from various fields. The incorporation of live music, sound installations, generative visuals, video art, and augmented reality through a smartphone application contributes to a participatory immersive performance where the audience and performers co-create a unique soundscape.

A crucial aspect of the performance is the soundscape, where the integration of sound installations and live music performers enhances the immersive and interactive experience. The visual component combines historical artifacts with generative art and video art, creating a hybrid artwork that stimulates interpretations and dialogues about cultural heritage.

The augmented reality application adds a layer of interactivity, allowing users to explore virtual artifacts, personalize their museum experience, and influence the soundscape through their interactions. The integration of virtual artifacts within the physical venue creates a treasure-hunt-like experience, encouraging visitors to actively engage with the exhibits.





In conclusion, the "ReInHerit a Museum" project stands as an initiative example in the realm of immersive experiences within heritage sites. By seamlessly integrating artistic expressions, cutting-edge technologies, and open-access principles, the project not only redefines audience engagement but also contributes to the ongoing evolution of immersive practices in museums and cultural heritage sites.

Links

<https://reinherit-hub.eu/>, <https://www.boccf.org/research-programmes/ReInHerit/>,
<https://reinherit-hub.eu/firstperfdoc/overview/>

Resources needed

ReInHerit a Museum" utilized 14 speakers for a spatial soundscape, 14 mobile phones for interactive engagement, two massive projectors, two powerful PCs for real-time visuals, and ambient lights.

Challenges encountered

"The immersive performance, while well-received, had challenges that need addressing for future improvements. One significant limitation was the lack of comprehensive qualitative data, primarily due to the absence of questionnaires. This absence hindered a thorough assessment of the performance outcomes and a nuanced understanding of the audience's experience. Qualitative data gathered through well-structured questionnaires, is essential for capturing nuanced insights into audience perceptions, emotions, and overall experience. The absence of such data limits the depth of analysis and interrupts a holistic evaluation of the performance's impact. In addressing this challenge, future iterations of immersive performances should prioritize the implementation of robust qualitative data collection methods. Well-designed questionnaires can provide a deeper understanding of audience engagement, emotional responses, and specific aspects of the performance that resonated or presented opportunities for improvement. Despite the positive reception, acknowledging and addressing limitations, such as the absence of comprehensive qualitative data, reflects a commitment to refining and optimizing future immersive art experiences. This dedication to ongoing research and improvement aligns with the broader goal of creating performances that are not only captivating and influential but also thoroughly understood in terms of audience experience and impact. The intersection of art, technology, and audience engagement in immersive performances remains a dynamic space, ripe for exploration and continuous innovation. "

Evidence of success

"The evaluation of ""ReInHerit a Museum: Immersive Performance"" offers compelling evidence of its success, with unexpected and promising outcomes. The event exceeded attendance expectations, indicating heightened public engagement. The Bank of Cyprus Cultural Foundation (BoCCF), as the host organization, expressed overall satisfaction, emphasizing the achievement of project objectives, particularly in engaging a younger demographic and enhancing the visitor experience. The seamless integration of music and technology played a pivotal role in creating a captivating and immersive space, effectively delivering on the project's goals. Attendees actively followed musicians, showcasing their dynamic engagement with the live music element. The positive feedback and interest from visitors highlighted the value of incorporating augmented reality (AR) elements,





demonstrating a commitment to innovative technologies for engaging museum visitors. Exploring enhanced collaborations between artists, musicians, and technologists can lead to better results, enriching the field of immersive art practices. The interdisciplinary approach pushes the boundaries of immersive experiences, fostering innovation in the intersection of art and technology. The reported results of the event indicate its broad appeal, attracting diverse age groups, ethnicities, and people with disabilities. Approximately 250 visitors actively engaged in discussions about cultural heritage, highlighting the success of this new artistic form. Technical issues with the AR application, observed due to the large crowd, emphasize the need for continued research to ensure seamless functionality in future immersive performances. The positive feedback, active audience participation, and challenges encountered collectively contribute to valuable insights for advancing the field of immersive cultural experiences.

Potential for transfer

"Crucially, the commitment to open access is evident, as all materials and documentation for the performance are made available on GitHub. This transparent approach aligns with the project's mission to disrupt communication within museums and cultural heritage sites, fostering inclusivity and encouraging the broader adoption of their innovative concept. All necessary resources for replicating the performance are now accessible to the public through a dedicated GitHub repository (<https://github.com/CYENS/ReinheritArApp>). This repository offers an extensive manual and open access to the AR application's source code, encouraging and streamlining the broader adoption of our innovative approach. By making these materials readily available, we aim to empower institutions, professionals, and communities to explore, adapt, and integrate our immersive performance concept into their own cultural initiatives, contributing to the evolution of engaging and inclusive experiences within diverse cultural settings. This commitment to knowledge sharing and accessibility reflects our dedication to catalyzing positive transformations in the realm of museum experiences and cultural heritage engagement. "

Further Information

"The evaluation of ""ReInHerit a Museum"" provides valuable insights for future research in the realm of immersive museum performances. It emphasizes the crucial need to address technical challenges, enhance interactive elements, and delve into the emotional and cognitive impact of such experiences on visitors. The assessment identifies a key takeaway: overcoming technical hurdles to ensure seamless and effective interactive elements. This involves refining the technology used, improving the performance of augmented reality applications, and resolving issues related to compatibility with various devices and operating systems. ""ReInHerit a Museum"" is positioned as a catalyst for reshaping museum experiences. It advocates for continuous collaboration, innovation, and knowledge transfer within cultural institutions. This means encouraging ongoing partnerships between artists, technologists, and museums to drive positive transformations. The project's mission goes beyond its success, aiming to inspire a broader cultural shift toward more engaging and meaningful museum experiences. "

