

Bridging

DIGITAL

Case studies portfolio

bridging digital

Exploring the use of digital tools
in the cultural and educational sectors

Co-funded by the
Erasmus+ Programme
of the European Union



bridging digital

Exploring the use of digital tools
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bridging digital

Case studies portfolio

How can digital technologies support artists to create new audience experiences?

How can we share cultural and art works with a larger audience without the necessity of physical presence?

How can digital technology support communities to tell their stories?

How can we share life stories and transform them in digital artworks to be used in education?

These and many more questions were the focus of Bridging Digital project. In this e-publication we are sharing our journey and lessons learned from four different countries, where different digital tools have been used, with a variety of formats, groups and audiences.

In this journey we have made remarkable discoveries and a number of lessons learned and we hope that you will be inspired to experiment with digital tools and learn as well.

Xenia Koutentaki
Adult Educator
Hellenic Adult Education Association

We explore how artists and communities
can use digital technology



bridging digital



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bridging digital

Project summary and partners

Bridging Digital is a cooperative European Erasmus+ project focusing on innovative practices and enhancing the digital skills in the cultural and educational sectors. The partnership consists of four organisations from Sweden, Poland, Scotland and Greece.

The overall aim was to create a cross-learning between the creative, the educational and the technical sectors. The project was a combination of learning digital techniques as well as examining and creating new artistic formats where digital techniques are an integrated part of the artwork. Cultural projects have key roles in delivering informal learning: particularly at a time when artists and cultural workers must adjust to new demands of producing performances, stage events, etc. in a different format, which are not learned at art schools neither used in the daily work before the entrance of the pandemics into the professional creative life.

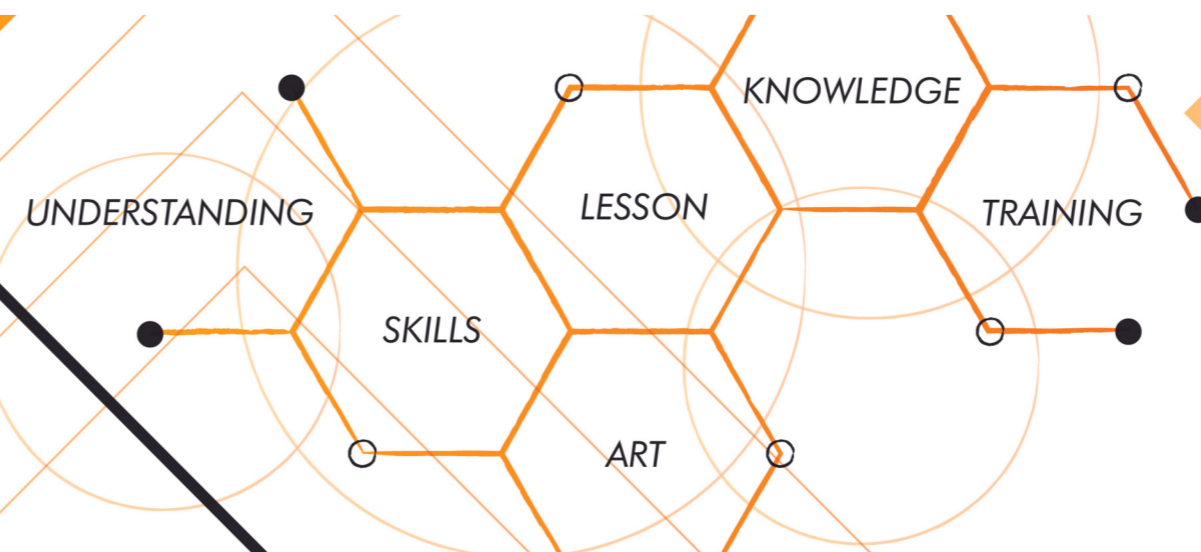


needs analysis

The COVID-19 pandemic has affected almost every aspect of daily life, including the direct communication link between artists and citizens as well as the live performances. The postponement or cancellation of artistic events has induced a major crisis to the cultural sector and subsequently to the precarious livelihoods of artists and cultural workers.

At the same time the creative sector as well as many of the people lack knowledge on how to use digital tools in more creative ways, both for teaching and for creating digital art forms that are more interactive and engaging for the audience.

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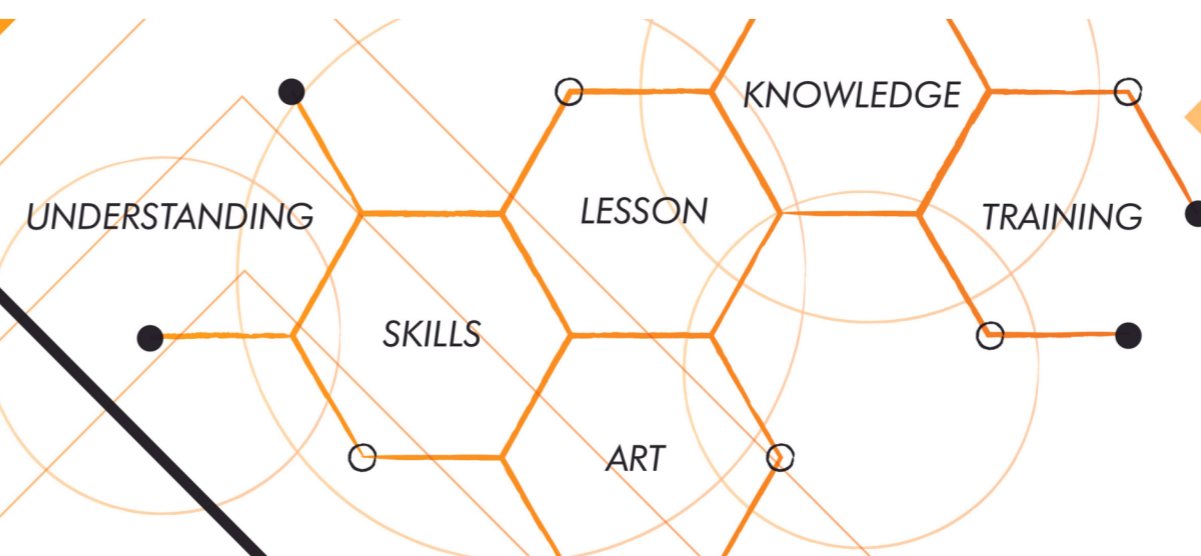


methodology

In Bridging Digital, organisations from the cultural sector cooperated with artists, multimedia experts and trainers in adult education to develop a new methodology for using multimedia and digital techniques in order to create new art forms and to enhance the digital competence in the creative sector.

This methodology was applied in adult education aiming at developing basic knowledge on how to use digital tools in creative art making and teaching. An added value for the creative sector was learning and practicing to create, stream and broadcast the designer's performance and thereby find new audiences, independent of the physical theatre stage.

Bridging digital



Sweden

Digital Tools in the Performing Arts

In Sweden the case study involved artists, directors and producers, working in the theatre sector, as well as light and sound designers, cultural promoters and also teachers in the theatre field for a series of workshops during a six-month period. The purpose of these workshops was to inspire new areas of use for Virtual Reality (VR) in the performing arts and to contribute to the exchange of experience between different actors in the performing arts.

The participants explored the challenges of immersive media, the available technologies for facilitating the experience and how to adapt a classical stage performance for VR. The workshop was both practical and participatory, meaning that the participants were expected to actively experiment with the provided equipment.

The main focus for the process was to inspire and teach professionals within the performing arts sector to use VR in their artistic work.



Main topic of workshops:

360 degree film-making and immersive VR.
First person perspective-taking, embodied distance perception (proximity),
360 degree camera position and directing viewer's attention and editing.

Project managers: Helen Riise and Josefin Holmström



Sweden

Workshops



'The term "Free theatre" refers to those active within the performing arts outside of the institutional format.'



The aim was to give an overview of existing Digital tools, with a focus on VR, that can be used for production and broadcasting in Performing arts while creating interaction with and within the audience in Digital performances. The workshops included both theoretical and practical parts. In the second workshop participants from a small theater group experimented with filming a scene from their play with the Insta360 ONE X2 camera and managed to go through a first edit from a phone app and a computer programme. The workshop was fundamentally driven by the principles of practical, experiential learning.

Artistic leader and informal educator during workshop: Jonas Myrstrand, Film Director and Immersive producer

Sweden

Interview with Jonas Myrstrand
Film Director and Immersive producer

VR meets
the performing arts



"Transforming a play in Virtual Reality comes with its challenges - how to present it in a new way, in a new perspective, how to create using some inspiring examples. A thing about Virtual Reality is that you are transformed in another place and in that place you are HERE and you are NOW."

Jonas Myrstrand, Film Director and Immersive producer



bridging digital

Sweden



Virtual Reality was used as the tool to experiment with and learn how to use elements to project on stage, as well as parts of the scenography in the theatre, for production of virtual settings.

We also wanted to inspire the use VR for interaction with the audience in different ways.



The participants explored the challenges of immersive media, the technologies available to facilitate the experience and how to adapt a classical stage performance for VR. They realised that VR is and can be used as an artistic tool to create immersive environments and narratives, and moreover, it is a viable and accessible tool for those with limited technical background knowledge and on a low budget.



Learner engagement and active participation was key to reaching outcomes - Trying the headset inspired a free flowing dialogue about form and film in which each person contributed with their own ideas and experiences.

Independent participant preparation was key to meeting learning objectives in a compressed workshop format.

Strive for a low barrier to entry in order to motivate participants - If you focus on the fundamentals only, the technology becomes accessible. A guiding principle useful to remember when hosting a similar workshop is that the participants don't need to learn everything about the piece of equipment in order to use it.

bridging digital

Sweden

LESSONS LEARNED

To read more about this study case, visit www.intercult.se



Scotland

Digital Techniques for the Stage & Audience Development

The experiences in Scotland were the result of longterm research projects, aiming to valorise local heritage and give the opportunity to communities to shape their future with the use of digital technologies.

They have involved a variety of actors such as universities, researchers, associations working with longterm unemployed and other challenged groups, theatre groups and local politicians. They managed to connect the aim of Bridging Digital project to larger social and political aims, such as reviving the local economy and sharing significant historical moments, inviting tourists and visitors to an immersive experience through Augmented Reality (AR) applications and film projections on historic buildings.

www.fablevision.uk



Longitudinal research and learning project



Scotland

Case 1: Dunure Digital Arts Festival

In the Dunure example, StudioFV filmed the work of UWS - University of the West of Scotland students in re-purposing the romantic and somewhat desolate coastal ruin of Dunure castle as a canvas on which to project the village's long and varied history.

Home to Scotland's oldest lighthouse, with a once thriving fishing industry; a place of sea-inspired folkloric tales; the blood feuds of the Kennedy clan; connections with Mary Queen of Scots and Charles Rennie Mackintosh and Margaret Macdonald. The context is an exploration of how digital arts can support the community aiming to regenerate their beautiful historic town, castle, harbour and scenery post fishing industry. The village is now looking at ways in which it can incorporate all this into a new and sustainable future centred on the tourist potential of the area.

Community members, politicians, activists and local Council leaders are already talking about the development of an annual digital arts festival.

tourist potential of the area -
digital arts festival



What can digital technology offer to the aims of the community of Dunure in terms of their regeneration post fishing industry?

Dunure Fleet



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Scotland

Work of UWS students in re-purposing the romantic and somewhat desolate coastal ruin of Dunure castle as a canvas on which to project the village's long and varied history.

At Sea





Moving the heritage project into
the 21st Century

Scotland

Case 2: Renfrewshire Witch Hunt 1697 Digital App

Renfrewshire Witch Hunt 1697 is a Scottish Charitable Incorporated organisation established to research and share the context and experiences of events in 1697 in Paisley when a 13 year old girl, Christian Shaw became 'possessed' by witches.

She accused almost 30 people, 7 of whom were put to death, burned and their ashes buried under a horseshoe at the cross roads outside of the town in accordance with superstition. A whole legend has grown up around the story and it's believed Paisley's fortunes depend on the horseshoe remaining in place as Christian Shaw and her mother founded the Thread industry on which Paisley's industrial fortunes were built. When the horseshoe went missing in the 1960s, the decline of the thread industry and the hollowing out of the town of Paisley was blamed on the missing horseshoe.

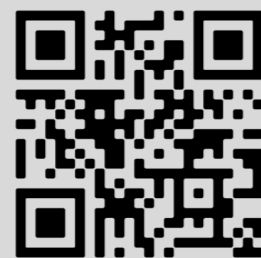
RWH1697 is linked to the national Witches of Scotland campaign that is working to achieve an official pardon from the Scottish Government for all those wrongfully murdered.

Bridging Digital, working with UWS and StudioFV, plans to bring digital technology into the frame and move the heritage project into the 21st Century with some innovative new ideas and approaches.



Scotland

Case 2: Renfrewshire Witch Hunt 1697 Digital App



Local heritage activists are learning how to work with artists to employ digital technology in support of the aims of RWH1697. In this case, with the creation of a pilot for a walk in the town that visits key sites of interest to the Witch Hunt story.



Bargarran



Trial and Jail



Executions

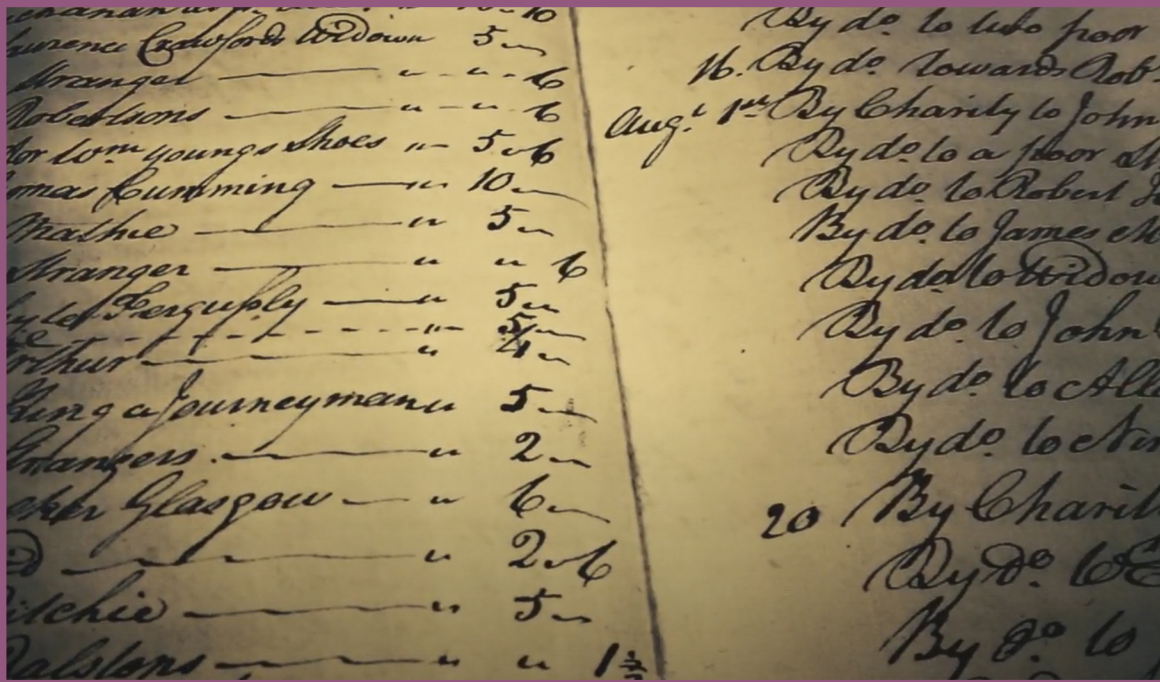
What can digital technology offer to the aims of RWH1697 in spreading learning about the Paisley Witch Trials?

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Scotland

AUGMENTED REALITY QR CODES

Telling the story of Christian Shaw

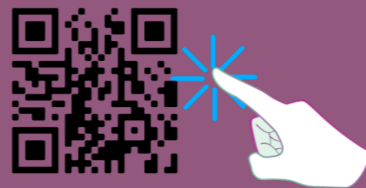


The Legacy



The Sermon

Technical Guidelines
on how to use AR content



bridging digital

Scotland

AUGMENTED REALITY QR CODES

Telling the story
of Christian Shaw

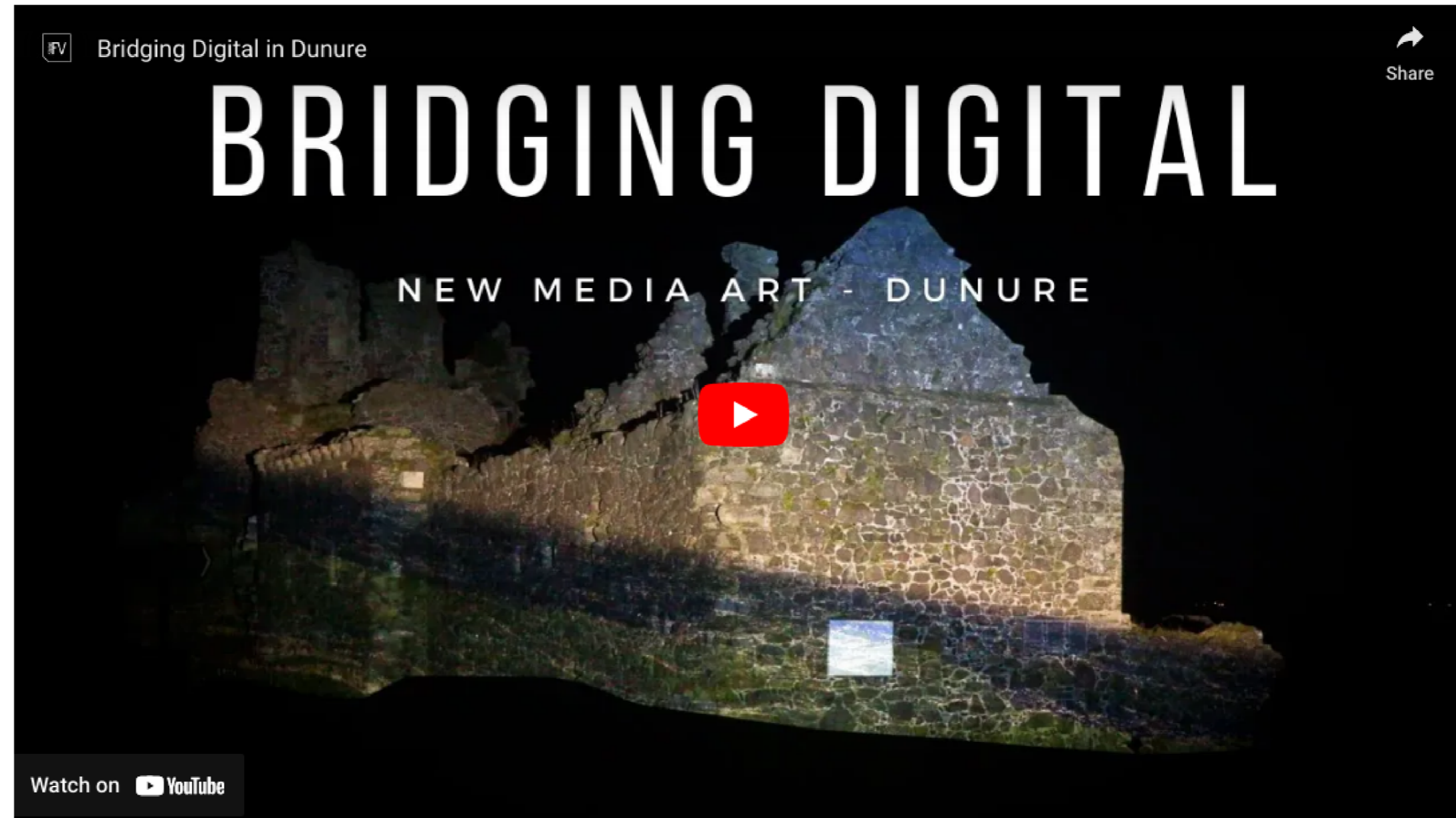


Scotland

interview with Trent Kim

director, New Media Arts, University of the West of Scotland

using art projections as
a creative stimulus



The interview was a follow up to the art installation at Dunure Castle in Ayrshire

Scotland

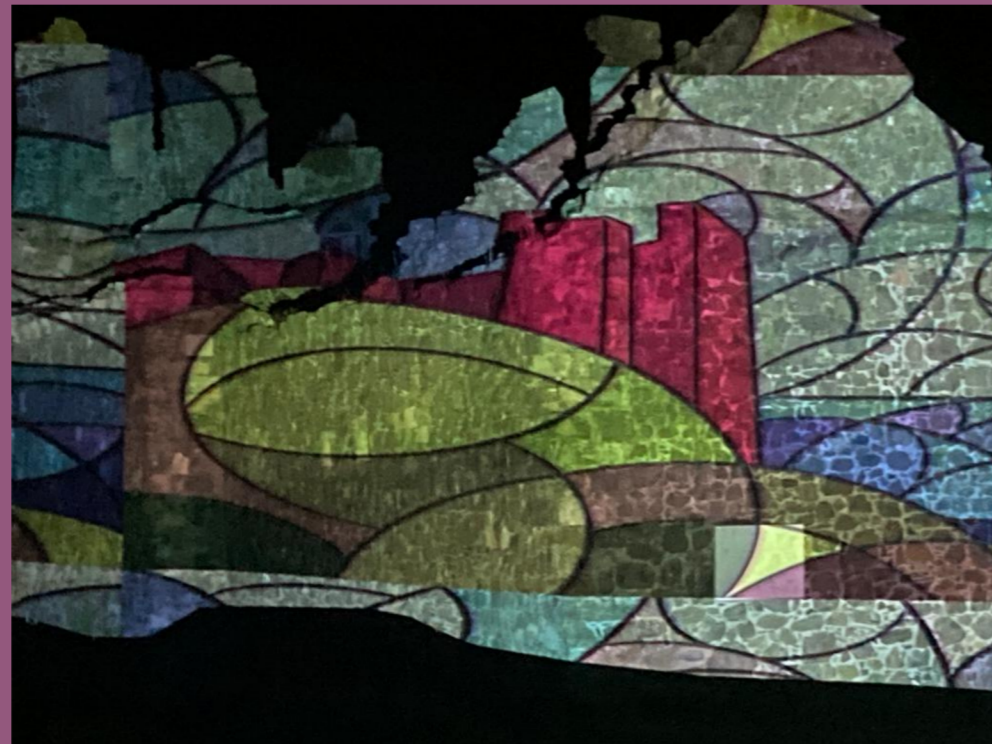
Webinar by Liz Gardiner, Fablevision

using digital arts for
empowering local communities



Contributing to the building of social capital in communities through bridging digital

The results were above and beyond expectations. As is often the case with this kind of co-learning, collaborative, cultural planning approach where everyone's contribution is valued and the project grows arms and legs: gathering momentum and participants as it develops, the outcomes and impacts far exceed expectations and next stage proposals for the development of the prototypes into fully functioning digital applications are eagerly awaited.



In both cases, artists, community members, politicians, community leaders and activists are all learning together. This kind of journey of learning is the underpinning of the work of Fablevision: there is no didactic pedagog demonstrating step by step process. Rather, there is a research question in both cases and we are all exploring those questions together to find innovative, creative solutions and to look for experts to help us with the technical aspects.

Art-centred activities and inputs can be used as a medium for change. The role of art in this context is threefold: it is an instrument, metaphoric and a harbinger. The past, the “known known”, comes together with the “known unknown” to create an as yet “unknown unknown” – the future.

Digital technology can support communities to tell their stories.

Artist learners in New Media Arts, Film and multi media working within a post fishing village community that has lost its industry but is wealthy in terms of history, heritage, natural and built environment resources working together with community members and learning the value of digital technology in empowering communities.

bridging digital

Scotland

LESSONS LEARNED

To read more about this study case, visit www.fablevision.uk

Greece

Art and Digital technology in Adult Education

HAEA collaborated with “Angels of Joy”, a team of inspirational artists and educators holding performance events in children’s hospitals, nursing homes for the elderly and similar institutions in order to entertain, support and motivate these special audiences.

Given that the Covid-19 pandemic prohibited live events since 2020, the only way to continue this activity was through the digital medium. In the context of the “Bridging Digital” project, we held a series of workshops and hands-on instructional production sessions exploring the creative tools and methods implemented in the transformation of a theatrical performance into an audiovisual work.

This practice was applied to “The Song of my Life”, a theatrical act designed by the “Angels of Joy” by stitching together autobiographical accounts of elderly people to form a single narrative thread, which was digitally rendered utilising cinematic techniques.

There followed a pilot screening of this work to the elderly audience of a nursing home, with the aid of an animator, adding a crucial feed-back experience. The entire process of designing, filming, editing and projecting of “The Song of my Life” was recorded in a 33-minute documentary film entitled “At the Angels’ Worksite”, to be used as a methodological and creative source by artists as well as educators.



Greece

Workshop

Angels of Joy



The main subject of the workshop was the transformation of theatrical praxis into a digital output and the way it could be used in the educational process. The participants discussed the creative dialogue between Art and Digital technology in Adult Education.

Vangelis Kalambakas, film director, film teacher & adult educator
Xenia Koutentaki, adult educator



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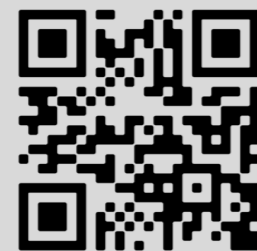
Greece



Greece

"The Song of My Life"

It is an issue of interest not only to the artists themselves but also to the general public, as it redefines the way a work is produced, distributed and perceived.



We explored both the aesthetic and the practical tools involved in the “audiovisualisation” of the performing arts, by using the digital medium to redesign, reconstruct and distribute a work which would traditionally be presented to a live audience, while accentuating its principal qualities.

The value of digital technology in making a work of art accessible to remote and/or out-of-bounds audiences.

The value of applying cinematic techniques in converting a theatrical performance into an digital audiovisual work.

The ways in which new ideas and practices can enhance creativity and cooperation in an artistic team.

The impact of a specially designed audiovisual work on people who live in a confined institutional place, such as a nursing home, with the intervention of a trained animator.

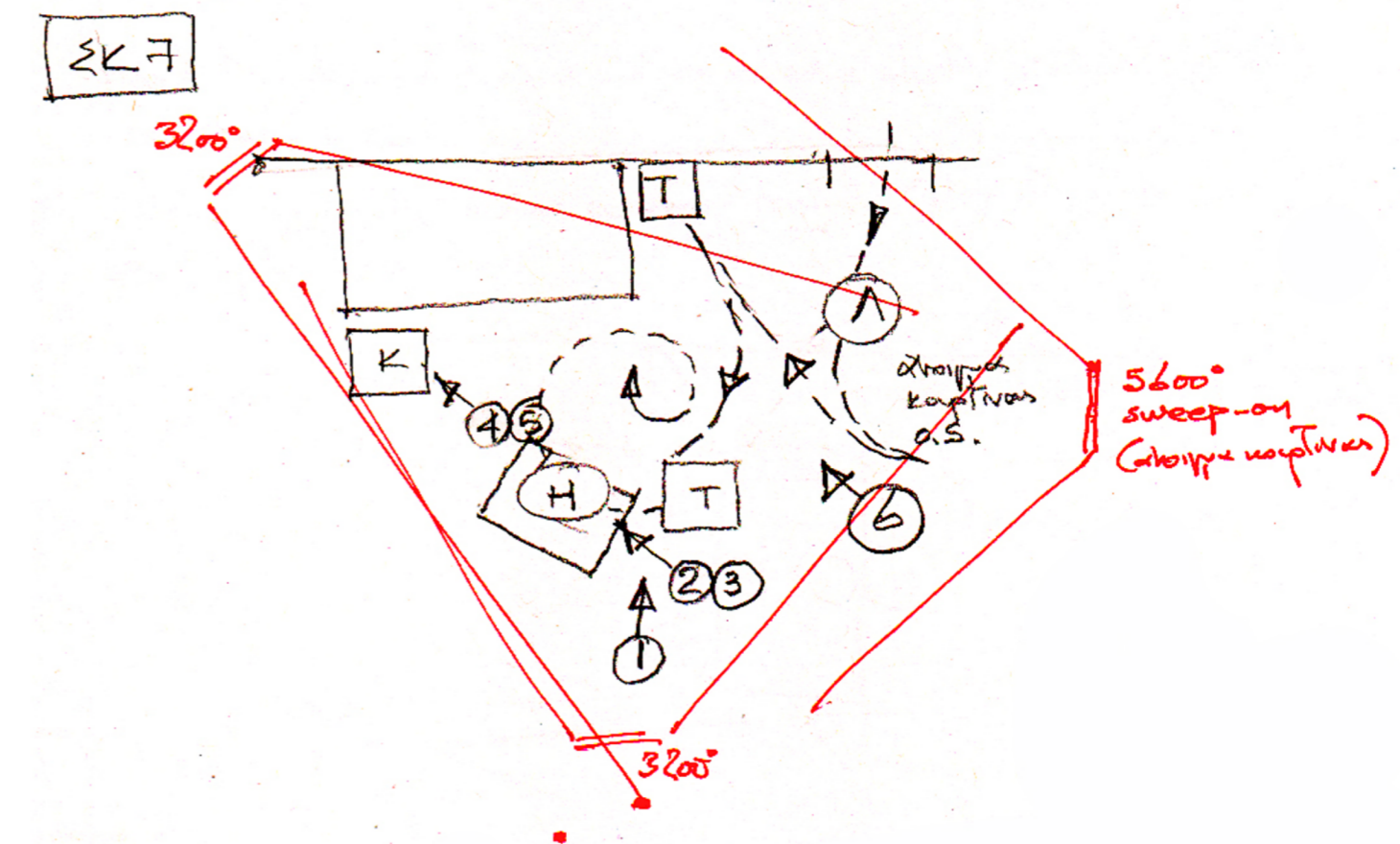
The potential of an audiovisual work based on a theatrical act in adult education applications.

bridging digital

Greece

LESSONS LEARNED

To read more about this study case, visit www.adulteduc.gr



Poland

Potential of Reusing Digital Cultural Collections

City Culture Institute in Gdansk worked on projects within Medialab Gdansk activities. There were two projects aimed at showing the potential of digital culture for reusing cultural content and broadening audiences. The first project “Animaton” involved creators: graphic designers, animators, designers in a series of activities such as workshops, hackathons, marathons of creation, lectures and meetings. It aimed to show, above all, the potential of reusing digital cultural collections, in particular those from the public domain.

The second project was a podcast workshop. It was targeted at museologists, librarians, archivists, collectors. It was a quite simple and popular way to involve digital technologies in everyday activities in cultural institutions or for storytellers, enthusiasts, experts.

The main aim of these activities was to show to the people in culture the possibility of expanding the audience thanks to new media and technologies and that it can be at their fingertips.

Workshops and 24-hours animation creation marathon

Poland

Animaton - animation creation marathon

Combining the art of
animation and music



city
culture
institute



The task of the participants was to prepare animations, visualizations, mapping, gifs for a specific piece of music. Animations should be prepared with the use of modern technologies and media, and in cooperation with the authors of the music.

Poland

Effects of the marathon:
works by participants

city
culture
institute





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Poland



On September in 2021 we invited librarians to a workshop about podcast. Participants learned:

1. Reasons for making a podcast and how to go about it
2. What tools are needed to get started
3. Where are sounds and music available from and how to incorporate them in the background
4. How to create the first episode
5. How to host podcasts and attract listeners
6. Points to pay attention to when developing a workshop



It is a fact that podcasts are ever more popular.

"In the last year, every third Polish man and woman started their adventure with podcasts. Every day there are new creators, and technological giants compete in inventing ways to incorporate audio content into their platforms. For social organisations and activists, audio programmes are a perfect space to talk about the complex problems and challenges of today's world without haste." Ewa (Dziardziel) Dunal, Sounds and Stories (blog Sektor 3.0)

bridging digital

Poland

WORKSHOP

PODCAST - A BRIDGE
BETWEEN US AND THE
READERS



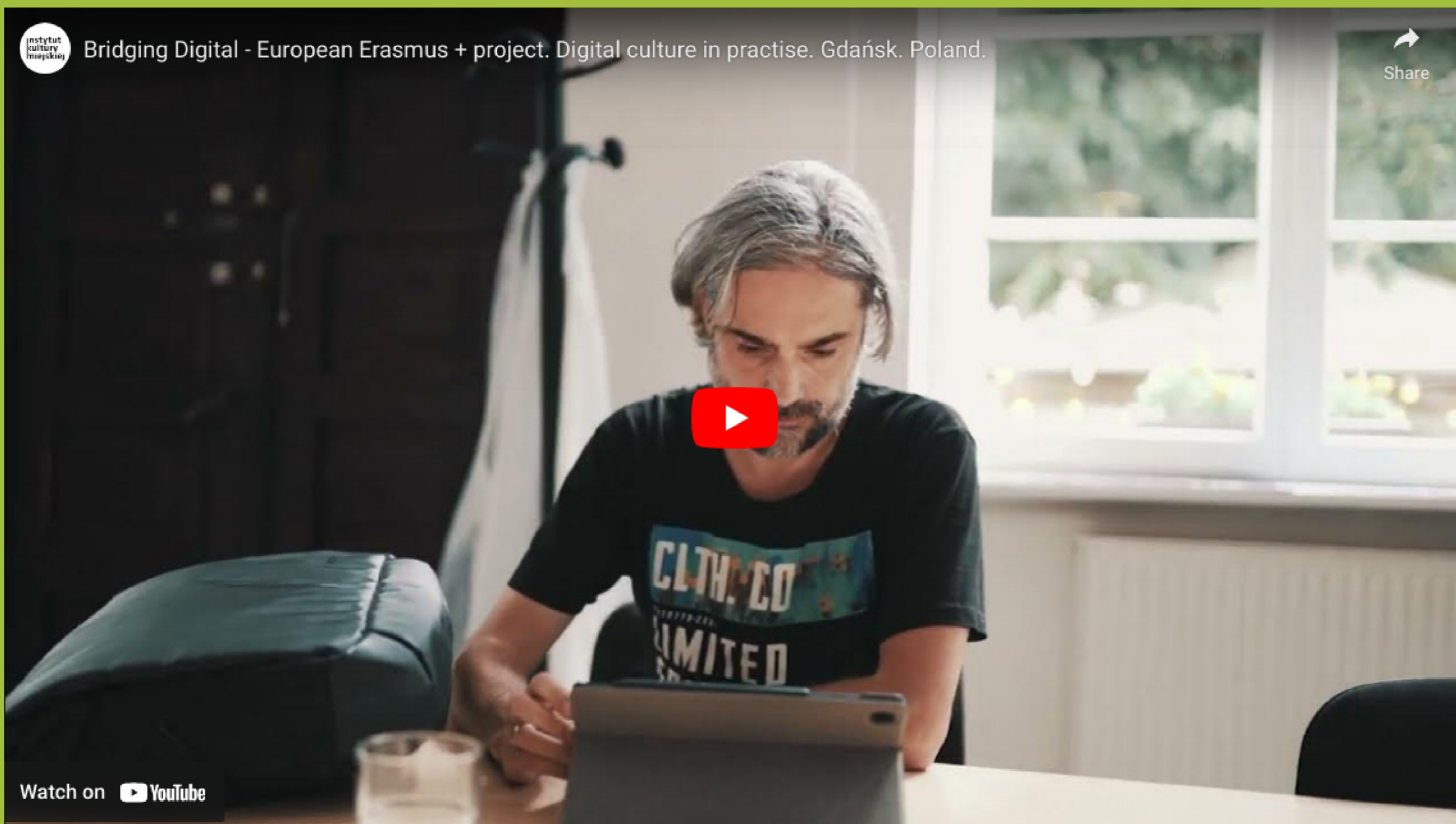


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Poland

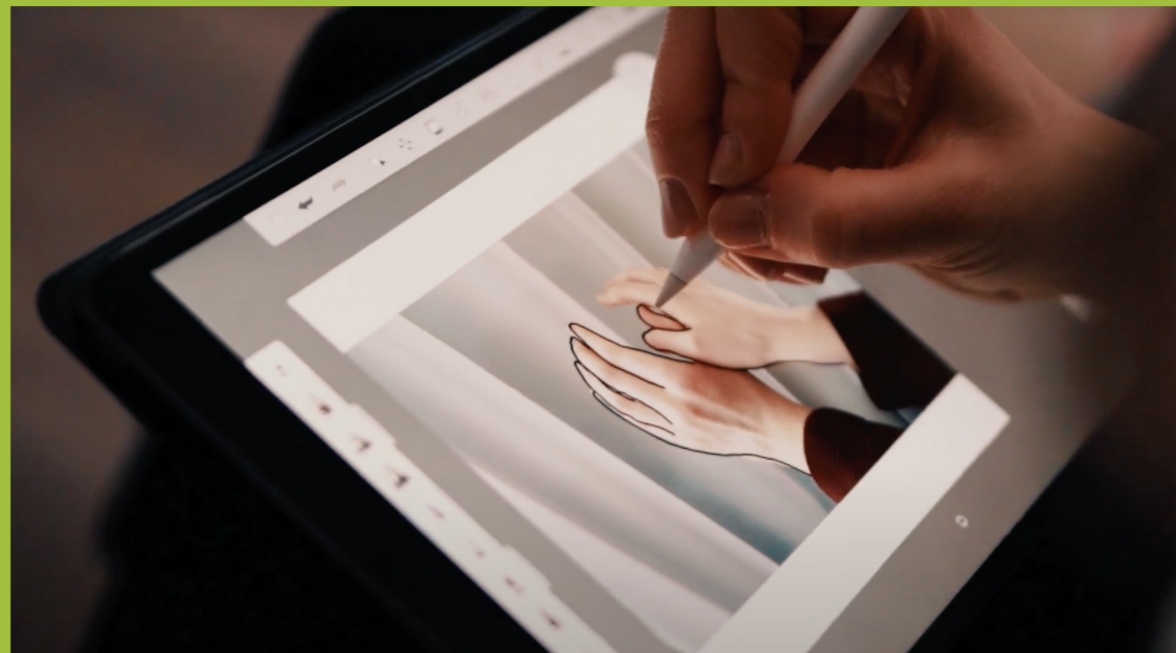
PODCAST

DIGITAL CULTURE
IN PRACTICE



We wanted to popularise the creative use of digital cultural collections, which is why we also invited librarians and archivists to support artists in finding interesting and inspiring graphic materials and thus show the potential of their own collections.

Gdansk libraries with valuable collections were our partners: the Library of the Polish Academy of Sciences (the second oldest in Poland) and the Library of the Gdansk University of Technology.



Podcasts are also a good solution for libraries. They provide a chance to deepen their contact with their audience, to increase their membership as well as popularise reading.

Podcast workshop allows participants to learn how to assemble an audio recording by themselves, using the available, open tools. Before that they will get accustomed to the use of the microphone by trying it out at a room specially prepared for recordings.

We wanted to show the enormous potential of digital collections to inspire artists as well as cultural educators and culture animators.

We started with workshops in the spirit of the masterclass, which were a perfect complement to school and academic art education.

Art is also a job and we wanted to show that an artist can always develop professionally, for example thanks to digital technologies.

Simulating a real relationship between the client and the contractor was very useful for a young artist. It shows that art is also work.

bridging digital

Poland

LESSONS LEARNED

To read more about this study case, visit www.ikm.gda.pl

bridging digital

concluding remarks

AS IT WAS CLEAR FROM THE INITIAL RESEARCH FINDINGS,

THERE IS A GREAT POTENTIAL IN USING DIGITAL TECHNOLOGIES IN CULTURAL AND EDUCATIONAL SECTORS.

NEVERTHELESS, BOTH ARTISTS, COMMUNITIES AND ADULT EDUCATORS ARE UNAWARE OF SUCH POTENTIAL AND THEY HAVE STRONG RESISTANCE IN CAPTURING AND USING THEM IN THEIR PRACTICE.

THE ABOVEMENTIONED RESISTANCE CAN BE OVERCAME ONLY BY DIRECT PRACTICE AND INVOLVEMENT IN HANDS-ON EXPERIENCES.

ONCE THIS HAPPENS THE PERSPECTIVE IS IMMENSELY ENLARGED, AND CREATIVITY SOARS TO UNLIMITED LEVELS.

bridging digital

concluding remarks

WE NEED ALWAYS TO KEEP IN MIND THAT

DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY, AS ANY TECHNOLOGY, IS JUST A TOOL

AND TODAY SUCH TOOLS ARE RELATIVELY EASY TO ACCESS AND USE.

THE FOCUS SHOULD NOT BE PUT SO MUCH ON EDUCATING ARTISTS AND CULTURAL AGENTS IN BECOMING EXPERT USERS OF SUCH TECHNOLOGIES.

WE SHOULD MAINLY FOCUS IN CREATING SYNERGIES BETWEEN EXPERTS ON THE USE OF EACH DIGITAL TOOL AND ARTISTS/CULTURAL AGENTS, AS WELL AS ENABLING A FRUITFUL DIALOGUE AND COOPERATION BETWEEN THE TWO (OR MORE) GROUPS.

CREATING COMMUNITIES OF MUTUAL LEARNING INCREASES EXPONENTIALLY THE OUTCOMES AND HAS A LONG-LASTING IMPACT.

bridging digital

concluding remarks

THE END USERS/SPECTATORS OF SUCH ARTISTIC – CULTURAL PRODUCTS (PODCASTS, CINEMATOGRAPHIC VERSIONS OF THEATRICAL PERFORMANCES, VR AND AR EXPERIENCES), CAN BE IMMERSED IN A TOTALLY DIFFERENT EXPERIENCE, WITH LIMITS STILL UNDISCOVERED.

WHAT WE ARE NOW AWARE IS THAT THESE ENHANCED EXPERIENCES TRANSCEND TIME AND SPACE AND DEMOCRATISE CULTURE IN A WAY THAT WAS NOT IMAGINABLE JUST A FEW YEARS AGO.

Case studies portfolio



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bridging digital

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in the cultural and educational sectors

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