

## Let's visit museum collections: What can we gather about the data

Sara Akhlaq (Fachhochschule Potsdam), Sabine de Günther (Fachhochschule Potsdam), Sarah Kreiseler (Leuphana Universität Lüneburg), Marian Dörk (Fachhochschule Potsdam)

In this experimental online workshop format, participants are asked to go on virtual museum visits to engage with collection interfaces and reflect on the data that is being displayed, the kinds of interactions supported, and claims about culture. Regardless whether the interfaces are cutting-edge or conventional, the main point of this participatory event is to jointly visit the online collections of museums, experience digitized cultural collections with other participants, engage in conversations about appreciating art and culture in times of multiple crises, and explore gaps in their representation.

Drawing from related formats, such as real-time or recorded playthroughs of video games (Let's Play), video essays about film history (Keathley et al. 2019), and virtual visits of museum collections (Fuchsgruber 2020) the workshop will use and adapt digital methods to collaboratively and remotely perform data and interface criticism in the context of digital cultural heritage. While this event is not intended to contribute to the social program of the virtual conference, we are trying to open a collegial and comfortable space that is conducive to amicable exchanges about both the beauty and the beast in digital cultural heritage. This includes particularly the aesthetic possibilities (Drucker 2019, Junginger et al. 2020) as well as the ethical problematics (Zindel 2019, Loeser 2019, Edwards 2019) related to digitization in the context of cultural heritage and especially museums.

The past decade has seen an influx of museums making their digitized cultural collections available online. While this has furthered easy access to cultural collections, it has also drawn attention to gaps in decision-making that goes into the selection and interpretation of cultural data on online platforms. Ethical issues in interpretation of these digital collections are caused by lack of contextualized and multi-perspective cultural data (Manžuch 2017). This workshop aims to explore various online museum collections in order to jointly reflect about "(un-)critical" data in museum databases. Taking online guided tours of museum collections followed by discussions among participants would serve to highlight data biases and hegemony in these collections by drawing multiple perspectives to it.

While museums open their collections online visitors gain insights into them in very particular ways that are seldom encouraging the exploration and appreciation of their contents (Whitelaw 2015). The websites tend to be structured along three different types of web pages: a start page, intermediate pages such as result lists, and single object pages (Kreiseler et al. 2017). The interfaces guide the eyes of the visitors to specific aspects and display the collections according to particular logics. What do visitors see and how do they experience the objects? The interface structures both the appearance of – and the possible interactions with – the respective collections and the underlying data (Drucker 2011, Kreiseler 2018).

It is worth our critical attention to examine the ways in which images, text, videos, meta data, and GUI elements are mobilized to offer a certain way of accessing and appreciating culture. During this workshop participants are invited to engage with these and related questions about digital interfaces to cultural collections and the underlying data.

The participation is structured into four main parts:

10 mins: Welcome: Introduction to topic and format [Organizers]

10 mins: Guided tours and random walks: Live or pre-recorded [Contributors]

10 mins: Reports: Groups share discoveries and observations [Participants]

15 mins: Closing discussion of recurring topics and issues [All]

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