MANCHESTER 1824

<u>Integrating ICT in exhibitions</u>

The event

A one-day workshop organised by the Centre for Museology at the University of Manchester and funded by the British Academy, aimed at debating current and emerging **ways to integrate Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) in museums and galleries**. The event will bring together academics, museum professionals and ICT specialists. The invited speakers will present how ICT were introduced in the exhibition design of specific case studies, the lessons learned from their daily use, and the challenges for the future, which in turn will feed the round table discussion.

The event is part of a postdoctoral research project that explores the specific usefulness of ICT for museums and galleries. The project includes a qualitative investigation of the incorporation of ICT in the exhibition design, with particular reference to museums and galleries in Manchester.

The venue

Conference Room, The Manchester Museum, Oxford Road, M13 9PL, Manchester.

The framework of the debate

The framework of the debate will be the paper "Space and the machine. Adaptive Museums, Pervasive Technology and the New Gallery", published by Ross Parry and Andrew Sawyer in Susan MacLeod's edited book "*Reshaping Museum Space. Architecture, Design, Exhibitions".* The paper suggests that museums are now adapting ICT to fit their context, just as they have always used available communication technologies. This is happening through a six-phase process, from the 1950s (when they were still "outside" the museum) to the present "integrated" stage (where high-tech displays are physically blended with the rest of the exhibition and allow a dialogue between the on-site and the on-line dimensions). The authors argue that an "innate" phase is emerging, in which instead of "placing digital media into a gallery environment", exhibitions are "shaped literally as a digital medium" and visitors are immersed in and interact with more transparent and intuitive mixed reality devices.

The emerging questions are the following: has the integration phase been realised? What are the factors influencing this process? How might it be done in the future? What are the major problems to overcome? Is the fast evolution of technology an advantage or an inconvenience for museums?

The discussion

Given this context, the discussion will aim to address five main questions:

Why… do we need ICT? What is the motivation (learning, communication, social and political pressures) behind their uses in museums and galleries?

What… does integration mean and which resources have been and should be involved?

When… have ICT been or should be integrated (in which stage of exhibition development)?

How… have ICT been or should be integrated? Is there any difference depending on the knowledge domain, the presence of objects, the target audience or the expected outcomes?

Who… should be involved in the process (museum staff, external companies)?

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The speakers

- **Ross Parry**, Programme Director, Department of Museum Studies, University of Leicester.

- **Laia Pujol**, British Academy Visiting Fellow, Centre for Museology, University of Manchester.

- **Lluís Campins**, Curator of the Museum-Monastery of Sant Cugat del Vallès (Spain).

- **Pauline Webb**, Collections Manager, Museum of Science and Industry (Manchester).

- **Mathias Fuchs**, Programme Leader, Salford University, School of Art & Design.

- **Julian Tomlin**, Consultant.

The schedule

10.00 Welcome and introduction: Helen Rees Leahy

10.20-11.50 Session 1. Chair: Kostas Arvanitis

- **10.20-10.40**: Ross Parry, "From 'interaction and engagement' to 'belief and delight': the rise (and disappearance) of in-gallery computing".
- **10.50-11.10**: Laia Pujol, "Evaluating ICT in exhibitions".
- **11.20-11.40**: Lluís Campins, "Interactive and audiovisual modules at the Museum of Sant Cugat".

11.50-12.00 Coffee break

12.00-13.00 Session 2. Chair: Laia Pujol

We will discuss about the **why, what and when** of the integration of ICT in exhibitions.

13.00-14.00 Lunch

14:00-15:30 Session 3. Chair: Areti Galani

- **14.00-14.20**: Pauline Webb, "Horses for Courses: Tailoring ICT to the Gallery Context".
- **14.30-14.50**: Mathias Fuchs, "Expositur - a Virtual Knowledge Space commissioned by 10 Viennese Museums".
- **15.00-15.20**: Julian Tomlin, "Piloting Mobile Phone Technologies in museums".

15.30-15.40 Coffee break

15.40-16.40 Session 4. Chair: Laia Pujol

We will discuss about the **how and who** of the integration of ICT in exhibitions.

16.40-17.00 Conclusions

Practical arrangements and contact information

Lunch and coffee or tea will be served during breaks.

Please confirm attendance to Laia Pujol Tost at:

Laia.Pujol@manchester.ac.uk

List of speakers and participants

Kostas Arvanitis, Lecturer in Museology, Centre for Museology, University of Manchester.

Pete Brown, Head of Learning & Interpretation, The Manchester Museum.

Lluís Campins, Curator, the Museum-Monastery of Sant Cugat del Vallès, Catalonia.

Stephen Devine, New Media Officer, The Manchester Museum.

Mathias Fuchs, Programme Leader MA Creative Technology and MSc Creative Games, School of Art & Design, University of Salford.

Areti Galani, Lecturer in Museum and Heritage Studies, International Centre for Cultural & Heritage Studies, University of Newcastle.

Julian Hartley, Centre for Museology, University of Manchester

Penelope Harvey, Professor of Social Anthropology, University of Manchester.

Hannah Knox, Centre for Research on Socio-Cultural Change (CRESC), University of Manchester.

Ross Parry, Department of Museum Studies, University of Leicester.

Laia Pujol, British Academy Visiting Fellow, Centre for Museology, University of Manchester.

Helen Rees Leahy, Centre for Museology, University of Manchester

Stuart Smith, Mimas, University of Manchester.

Sam Sportun, Head of Conservation, The Manchester Museum

Julian Tomlin, Consultant.

Pauline Webb, Collections Manager, Museum of Science and Industry.

Mark Westgarth, Lecturer in Museum and Heritage Studies, School of Art and Design, University of Salford.

Andrew Wilson, Director, Blink Media.