InterPARES 2 Project
International Research on Permanent Authentic Records in Electronic Systems

Characterization of Case Study
Validated

Case Study 10:
The Danube Exodus

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Relevance of the Case Study to InterPARES 2

      The purpose of this case study is to examine *The Danube Exodus: The Rippling Currents of the River*, an interactive installation that was publicly displayed at the Getty Research Institute. The installation consisted of three connected areas. Firstly, visitors passed through a gallery containing physical exhibits and contextual text, which included 18th century maps and drawings of the Danube region. Next, visitors proceeded to the main interactive multimedia installation presenting three Danube narratives (broken into various "orchestrations" totaling four hours of footage in total). Visitors used a touch-screen to navigate through and construct their own Danube narratives. Finally, a lecture hall presented a sixty minute video, created as a standalone work before the installation was conceived, called The Danube Exodus. Two terminals, one on either side of the main video screen, presented an interactive database listing the materials used in the installation and the film. Visitors could also record their reactions to the installation within the database.

      The relevance of this case study is to enable InterPARES to reach its goals with respect to the study of artistic activities that are conducted using experiential, interactive and dynamic computer technology.

Information about the Creator

      The Creators of the installation include Péter Forgács, The Hungarian Center for Culture and Communication (C^3), The Getty Research Institute and the Labyrinth Project. Forgács is an artist and filmmaker from Budapest and is the central creative figure for the installation. C^3 is the Hungarian institution responsible for the creation of the documentary database and the Web site presentation of the installation. The Getty Research Institute, located in Los Angeles provided text and materials as well as the most of the physical and technical equipment to display the installation at the Getty. The Labyrinth Project, established as a project of the University of Southern California Annenberg Center for Communication, was responsible for the programming and conceptualization, working with Forgács, of the interactive multimedia installation.

Forgács, an independent artist, is interested in film and photographs and his mission is to reclaim Hungary's lost or disappearing history. C^3 is a public, non-profit organization with a mission to support the development and international exposure of contemporary art in Eastern and Central Europe. The Getty Institute, an operating program of a private foundation, is devoted to advancing understanding of the visual arts and the mission of the Labyrinth Project, an art collective and research initiative, is to create non-linear narratives consisting of elements that may be combined in a variety of ways to generate different narrative outcomes.

Information about the Administrative/Management Function

The creators (with Forgács s the primary and central creative figure) collaborated to produce a complex multimedia installation. This involved a number of activities that can be categorized as administration and preparation, video-editing, multimedia authoring and Web-enabled database construction. Each creator works in a different technological environment. Forgács works using a PC, but edits his films using a Mac computer and Final Cut Pro. C^3 operates in a mixed environment, using PC, Macintosh and Silicon Graphic workstations. The Getty Research Institute operates in a PC environment and the Labyrinth Project uses Macintosh computers and a variety of image processing software such as MacroMedia Flash, Final Cut Pro and DVD Studio Pro.

Information about the Digital Entity Being Studied

The digital entity being studied is *The Danube Exodus: The Rippling Currents of the River*. This multimedia installation displayed at the Getty consisted of a previously created sixty minute video projected onto a large screen, an interactive database listing the materials used in the installation and the film that allowed visitors to record their reactions to the installation (http://www.danube-exodus.hu/en/), and an interactive multimedia piece consisting of video segments and sound recordings. A variety of technical equipment is required to present the installation including DVD players, a DVD synchronizer, a sound system, projectors and speakers. The installation as a whole comprises text, image and sound, and includes digital files such as MPEG-2 video files (transferred from original 8mm film footage), and JPEG image files.

None of the creators have a formal or automated record keeping system in order to keep track of files related to the Danube project. However, each creator has indicated that they have taken steps to keep files they deem relevant or important. On the whole individuals responsible for a specific part of the project determined what files to keep for themselves. With respect to preservation, Forgács has indicated he keeps extensive notes on all of his video works, and because there are usually multiples copies of each he hopes that at least one copy will survive in the future, which may at least apply to the stand alone video featured in the installation. The Labyrinth Project usually publishes and archives DVDs of its work. However, in the case of the Danube Exodus there was no DVD created because of a prohibitively high license fee required by the owner of some of the archival footage used, and few copies of the installation files exist. The Labyrinth Project uses migration as a preservation strategy, but it is not clear that the files of the Danube Exodus will be migrated, as does C^3 when required. However, C^3 plans to adopt the strategy of documenting multimedia works so that they can be re-created in the future using whatever technology is currently available. Again, it is not clear that the Danube Exodus files will be chosen for this approach. The Exhibitions Department of Getty Research Institute stores

records on a central drive with tape backup and periodic back-up to CD.

While the creators shared files during the creation process, none of the collaborators have access to files related to the installation stored at partner institutions. The database featured in the installation remains publicly available on the Internet, and viewers can still fill in the interactive questionnaire, but it is divorced from the context of the installation.