

Accessing Media Art via the GAMA Portal

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1 Introduction

This paper presents work on how *media art* has found its way into digital libraries in order to be accessible for a broad community. Digital libraries provide comfortable means for collecting, managing, preserving, and distributing digital content. In the case of media art this is of interest for curators, artists, academics, researchers, mediators, and for the interested public.

A number of challenges arise when making available media art in digital libraries. These challenges include in particular the question how to search within content of media art that consists of a large number of art videos – the analysis of the latter being reviewed in [5]. In [6] it is shown how metadata about video content is employed. On the one hand, metadata is directly imported from the databases of content providers who annotate their videos and images with information; it is then the challenge to integrate data from different sources with heterogeneous data models and to ensure interoperability. On the other hand, content-based metadata is extracted from the raw media content, such as descriptions of audiovisual characteristics of media content; this is typically not available from the content providers and extracted by a content-based indexing service automatically. Both kinds of metadata can then be used in order to search in media art content.

A web portal has been developed for accessing several European media art collections that deploys the aforementioned search capabilities [4]. While [6] provides the technical background in order to deal with the underlying metadata search-engine, here we focus on the ideas behind this portal, how it presents itself to the user, outline which content is provided and what the users of this portal can expect from its use, i.e. its purpose and functionality.

1.1 Structure

The final paper will be structured in the following way. After a general introduction, a motivation part presents the philosophy behind this media art portal. The next section describes the portal itself and a list of requirements from the point of view of the users. Then, those requirements are picked up to show how the web portal supports the users according to their requirements. An outlook in the end points out a couple of future challenges. In the following, we summarise these issues.



Fig. 1. A screenshot of the GAMA web portal at <http://gamaweb.hku.nl/>.

2 Libraries of Media Art

The number of libraries who are actively involved in building digital repositories is growing. A large body of content deals with books, journals, papers, and other works. Another more specific but also growing segment of libraries deals with media art. In fact, media art is currently becoming one of the most popular contemporary art genres. Bringing together culture and technology it is natural to employ the world wide web in order to present and access media art. Related work can be found in [7, 8, 1, 2].

2.1 The GAMA Portal

Fig. 1 shows the GAMA portal. It is the aim of the portal to establish a central platform to enable the access to media art archives, that is their digitised contents. The archives which are involved so far comprise a majority of the most important digital content holders for media art in Europe. It is the idea to ensure a significant increase in use, re-use and cross-border visibility of the digital content when aggregating such a large amount of media art content, and also, to be

able to access this spatially distributed content through one common interface. The integration of GAMA into the broader community of the cultural heritage is planned for the future via the Europeana portal [3].

3 Objectives and expected Outcomes

The addressed objectives of the GAMA portal are as follows:

- Enable enhanced access to European media art archives.
- Significantly increase awareness and mediation of media art.
- Be Europe’s key online portal to its media art archives.
- Facilitate to users the discovery, use and re-use of European digital cultural and artistic contents in Europe.
- Combine and adapt existing standard and state-of-the art solutions to meet the needs for interoperability between the individual archives and their heterogeneity.

The expected outcomes of the GAMA system include:

- A sound framework and quality procedures for media annotation in order to be able to expand the GAMA gateway content and activities also to other content types.
- Internet and systems compatibility of content by using existing standards and respective logistics for server operations.
- Integration of state-of-the-art automatic metadata indexing and video segmentation tools in order to provide fast access and content browsing capabilities.
- Online availability of the GAMA gateway with an operable and advanced user interface with web accessibility standards.
- Advanced search facilities (like image query by example and visual similarity search) combined with keywords to ease the finding of media art items.

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