Virtual Wonderlands

Insights from NRW-Forum Düsseldorf's WWWFORUM Project:

An Interview

ALINA FUCHTE/ISABELLE HAMM

As one of the first institutions in the art and museum scene, the NRW-Forum Düsseldorf[1] opened its Metaverse exhibition space called WWWFORUM as a multiplayer web application in March 2023. Since then, the WWWFORUM has featured digital art by four artists in residency. The project was developed in collaboration with the cross-institutional platform nextmuseum.io, the artist studio Christian Mio Loclair, and the company JourneeX.

The development process and the platform's first year of exhibitions provide an opportunity to ask questions about possible museum approaches to the Metaverse as well as to shed light on the aim and feasibility of a dedicated exhibition venue in digital space. What exhibition practices are suitable for museums in the Metaverse? How can a concept that still seems unfamiliar be made accessible? How can the digital space, which holds so many possibilities and uncertainties, be approached? Which challenges can arise in the areas of mediation and communication? What can be gained by museums being present in the Metaverse?

Isabelle Hamm (University of Cologne) interviewed Alina Fuchte (NRW-Forum Düsseldorf, project manager of nextmuseum.io) about the creation and first year of WWWFORUM, the insights gained, digital curating, and museums in the Metaverse.

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1   The 'NRW-Forum Düsseldorf' is an exhibition venue and cultural center located in Düsseldorf, the capital of the federal state of North Rhine-Westphalia (NRW). North Rhine-Westphalia is situated in western Germany.

Background and Inspiration

How long have you been working on the topic of the Metaverse at the NRW-Forum?

I would say since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic at the latest. The NRW-Forum is a house for digital culture, pop culture, photography, and design and, therefore, for the contemporary. As such, it always tries to capture the spirit of the times, which is why we, of course, also deal with the latest trends in the digital sector. The Metaverse was a much-discussed topic during the pandemic when people were spending a lot of time online. However, we also noticed that everyone seemed to have a different definition of the Metaverse. In the field of cultural education, we believe it is our task to create media literacy. Therefore, we don't want to hype or demonize something like the Metaverse but rather create a space for exchange, to discuss and define the terms. That way, everyone can eventually form their own opinion.

In keeping with this, in 2022, you organized the event series "MetaWhat? Hitchhiking through the Metaverse."[2] What insights did you gain from this?

"MetaWhat?!" was an online series on the Metaverse with which we wanted to create space for different aspects, perspectives, and people with different areas of expertise. Together, we asked ourselves what the Metaverse actually is, what it means for our world, what potential it has, what the challenges are, and where we are right now. We already had a similar series on the topic of AI. This was even more associated with half-knowledge and fears—will AI overwhelm us at some point, like in 1990s sci-fi films? The idea of the Metaverse also comes from the 1990s and already has a certain history.

Regarding the insights, on the one hand, I believe that the concepts of the Metaverse are very different and may not even need to be brought together. Depending on the intended purpose, there may be different orientations. On the other hand, I think that the Metaverse hasn't quite arrived in the reality of our lives yet; in the media it often seemed much bigger than it was at the time. There is still a

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2   Translation by the authors. The event series was held in German and took place between May and September 2022. Recordings can be viewed on YouTube: "Per Anhalter*in durchs Metaversum." *NRW-Forum Düsseldorf*. May 12, 2022, YouTube playlist, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Qj2kSQXEdE&list=PLBO5u-d3idCeViXZ9N6TbWHL43sjXR-A0

lot to do, and there is not one single platform that offers an all-in-one solution. After all, the idea is that users can hop from platform to platform and that the whole thing is decentralized. To some extent, this topic is also about short-term trends. This raises the question of what will remain afterward, what will become permanent, what will prevail? Will we really be sitting at home in the future and meeting our friends with VR glasses in the Metaverse instead of going to the movies together? What do we want to experience digitally, and what can't be replaced? The pandemic was an interesting time to put this to the test.

With WWWFORUM, you were one of the first art institutions to publish an in-house Metaverse platform. How did the idea of creating a Metaverse for the NRW-Forum come to life?

The idea was inspired by our nextmuseum.io project, a platform for swarm curation and co-creation. We launched this platform in 2020 together with the Museum Ulm, supported by the German Federal Cultural Foundation's Digital Fund. The idea behind the platform was to appeal to target groups that normally do not visit museums. To break down barriers and threshold fears, we wanted to tie in with people's digital user behavior. The world of our target group is shaped by social media and they are used to being able to comment on things, as well as to share and to create online. Museums appear increasingly elitist and out of touch if they don't reflect these habits and lifestyles. This does not necessarily mean that everything should only be 'instagrammable,' but it is important to keep up with this. We tried to do this in the form of open calls: this meant that artists could submit works to become part of exhibitions. We also enabled people to take part in discussions on our museum's exhibition projects while they were still in development. After all, it is the norm for museum visitors to be shown finished exhibitions. They can then take part in a guided tour or even engage in participatory formats, but at that point, all the decisions have already been made. We wanted to break this up and encourage people to have a say. After all, museums are places of society and for society.

In doing so, we transitioned from the digital to the analog, with the aim of influencing and designing exhibitions on-site, starting with an online platform. But we were also fascinated by the question: What would it be like to curate digitally? What possibilities are there, what kind of spaces? This is how WWWFORUM came to be, partially because many people thought that nextmuseum.io was already a digital museum. We thought it was really exciting to see what the differences were.

This raises the question of what a museum on the Internet can actually look like. There are various ideas, ranging from extended websites to digital 3D environments, for example ...

Exactly, there are already different approaches. We've previously talked about the "MetaWhat?!" series—that was actually an online format, but we also had an on-site event at the end. So here, too, we went from digital to analog, or hybrid, because the event was also streamed and it was an interaction between digital and analog. With the artist SOFF from the Düsseldorf Art Academy, we put on a live performance and created a dream journey into the digital museum of the future, a metamuseum (Fig. 1a/1b). In collaboration with the visitors, we explored various questions: What could it be like, what could the spaces be like, how is art exhibited, who curates, who decides?[3] Potentials became apparent in the process. This was also a preliminary stage in the realization of WWWFORUM.

It's a wonderful thought to be able to imagine a dream museum and to have all the creative freedom you want!

Yes, definitely! However, it is also difficult because, in the digital world, everything is seemingly possible. So, with regard to the WWWFORUM, we asked ourselves the following questions: Does the museum actually need walls in the digital world, and why? Perhaps to hang the pictures, but perhaps art is not limited to a few squares. Somehow, however, limitations are also good. If everything was completely open and constantly changing, would it still be a special place that belongs to us? Or is everything arbitrary if it changes every time?

What other projects have inspired you to develop WWWFORUM?

Not only were these our own events, as already described, but also projects by Manuel Rossner. In 2020, he modeled a digital space called "Surprisingly This Rather Works" on Galerie König's exhibition venue, St. Agnes. Furthermore, Manuel Rossner developed a virtual reality museum for the New National Gallery, Berlin, in 2022 with the AR application "New Float." In 2017, we had the exhibition "Unreal," for which he also designed a virtual extension of the NRW-Forum. However, this was limited in time, and access was via VR. We were also inspired

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3   A sound version of the performance can be found on YouTube: https://www.youtube.
     com/watch?v=krR5CviYa2Q&list=PLBO5u-d3idCeViXZ9N6TbWHL43sjXR-A0&in
     dex=13

by Travis Scott's concert, which he performed in FORTNITE in 2020. It was exciting to see that—also to see him as a character, as a figure in this game with so many spectators. Finally, I would like to highlight the "ZECHE" project, with which Christian Mio Loclair developed a virtual platform for the New Now Festival at Zeche Zollverein in 2021. We found it particularly interesting that it was a completely unique place that users could immerse themselves in. It wasn't a digital twin, but it had something to do with the physical location and its surroundings. That's why we came together with him for our WWWFORUM.

Figures 1a/1b: Artist SOFF's guided meditation reading performance at NRW-Forum Düsseldorf on September 25, 2022

Sources: NRW-Forum Düsseldorf, 2022

Figure 2: The design of the NRW-Forum building for WWWFORUM

Source: WWWFORUM © NRW-Forum Düsseldorf, Studio Christian Mio Loclair

There are various ways of presenting digital and analog art online. In your opinion, what makes a show in the Metaverse appealing compared to other formats, such as interactive website presentations or 360° tours? Is it that immersiveness you just described?

I would say that immersion is one of the biggest factors. There are also great 2D exhibitions and solutions that are interesting for certain art forms. But for our purposes, immersion was important. That's also the beauty of exhibitions in general that visitors can go and fully engage with the topics that are presented. Aesthetics also played an important role. Christian Mio Loclair and his team create worlds that are simply beautiful so that people enjoy spending time there. Not because there is no other way but because it can be a real alternative.

What fascinates you most about the idea of exhibiting in digital space?

That it's something new, and that there are so many possibilities, although they are limited in certain places. First of all, it is important to find out what user behavior is like and how people can be surprised. How much time do they spend with digital offerings, how do they move around? This is more predetermined in the physical world, just like the role visitors take on. At WWWFORUM, it was also fun to playfully see what the user can do. Are they also curators, are they also artists?

DEVELOPMENT AND DESIGN PROCESSES

Could you describe the development and design process of WWWFORUM? What obstacles had to be overcome? Especially in terms of the fact that, in principle, everything seems to be possible in the digital world ...

The actual implementation took place within a sporty three-and-a-half months. Of course, this was preceded by a conceptualization phase. As with the aforementioned "ZECHE" project by Christian Mio Loclair, our idea was to create a place of its own that had formal and content-related references to the NRW-Forum. It should be an extension that could be used on a permanent basis. We sat down with Christian Mio Loclair and his team and, first of all, roughly sketched out the concept. Our first challenge was to familiarize the team with the NRW-Forum and its surroundings. During the time we were working on the project, our partners were unable to be on-site with us—it was impossible to schedule the project any other way. We made lots of videos and tried to document everything. For us, this also

meant looking at what actually defines this place, starting with the word "Forum," which is part of our institution's name and stands for a place of exchange. This is also reflected in the architecture when visitors enter our circular foyer. They should feel invited to join the discussions at eye level. In other words, this is not supposed to be a temple of art.

Our Fortuna Büdchen[4] was also given its place in the WWWFORUM. After all, we're located next to the Rhine, and this iconic kiosk is just as much a part of it as the collared parakeets[5] that fly around our Ehrenhof and in Düsseldorf. They are almost like little mascots. These are references that we wanted to take up with a wink (Fig. 3b).[6] It was important to us that it would be a place, a digital, virtual one, but with characteristics, not just anywhere.

... so that there is recognition value and visitors of this digital place can build a connection to your institution.

Exactly, regardless of where the audience is. The process was then rather iterative. In addition to Christian Mio Loclair, there were several other artists and some programmers who built the place. There were various designs, for example, for the architecture and the building, ranging from something pop and candy-colored to gloomy sceneries. That was all quite interesting to see—and then we had to make a decision (Fig. 2). Of course, the sound, which was developed by a sound designer, and the avatar that visitors choose when they enter the application are also important elements. It's ultimately about the whole environment; all of that is part of the curation.

Not really a problem, but an important aspect was: If a user is in a digital world with architecture in front of them, how can the sizes and distances be scaled in a good proportion? The exhibition building should be completely visible from a distance (Fig. 3a). At the same time, users shouldn't have to walk towards it for too long due to being as far away as they might be in a physical space. We wanted to make it dynamic, so the building stretches out a little as users approach it, making the entrance grow as well (Fig. 3b).

At first, we also considered starting the visitors' route from the Tonhalle Düsseldorf, the concert hall that is right next door to us. But as another building, it

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4   The Fortuna Büdchen is an iconic kiosk in Düsseldorf.

5   Exotic parrots have settled in several German cities.

6   Further illustrations of the WWWFORUM can be found in Isabelle Hamm's contribution "From Pixels to Emotions" in this anthology, pp. 238-241.

would have opened up new themes, so we adapted the starting point and the surroundings. In the end, we chose the starting point in our so-called digital "sculpture garden" (Fig. 3a).

Figures 3a/3b: Views of the exhibition building from the sculpture garden
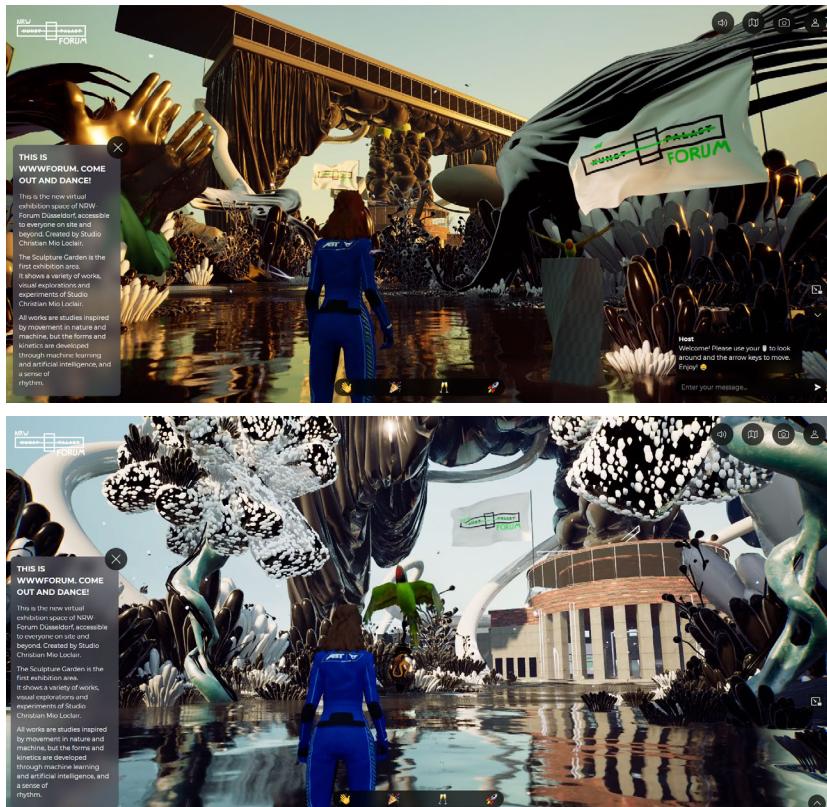
Sources: WWWFORUM, Christian Mio Loclair, nextmuseum.io, 2023, screenshots by I. Hamm

When I was on my way to the NRW-Forum today, I took a little walk through the park next to your museum, and it felt a bit like visiting the WWWFORUM. Walking through it, you can see a rabbit or a squirrel and get a glimpse of the museum building. The sculpture garden in the WWWFORUM also seems very lively, with figures wandering through it, even if you can't actually reach them. Everything moves organically, and you get the feeling that you are in a

living place. On my physical way to the museum today, I remembered these digital experiences in WWWFORUM.

It's wonderful that it can work the other way around, from digital to analog! These associations also tie in well with our AR Biennale, which we have already hosted twice to show Augmented Reality artworks in our courtyard.

The WWWFORUM is not permanently accessible but has so far been open daily between 3 pm and 8 pm during the exhibition periods. This is unusual for an online platform, as these are often advertised as being accessible anytime from anywhere. Why did you decide to have opening hours?

Limitations also exist in the digital space. In this case, it was the server site rendering. We had to ensure a good quality and connection, and that meant there was a cost per user per time spent. So, we had to decide if we would open the project indefinitely but only for a few days or limit it to certain times and a certain number of people. After our opening event, we experimented and worked out when most visitors came. We then restricted the opening hours accordingly. These limitations and cost issues also go hand in hand with the fact that we didn't charge an entrance fee for WWWFORUM. We saw this as an experimental field, and we didn't know whether visitors would be willing to pay anything.

There has been a lot of discussion about paid content for online cultural offerings during the pandemic, such as live streams in theaters or guided tours in museums.

Our feeling was that most people weren't ready for it yet. Of course, we were in the fortunate position of having the funding from nextmuseum.io, so we were still able to afford the WWWFORUM.

Regulating access meant a careful allocation of capacity, a bit like using credits, so to speak. There was our opening event. Then, the artists of residencies had unlimited access. We allocated the remaining contingent to the periods relevant to visitors, and that's how it worked out. I thought it was a bit of a shame because not being able to grant access at all times in the digital space seemed so paradoxical. But, on the flip side, as Christian Mio Loclair pointed out, it's also a good thing considering that visitors sometimes had to queue due to the limited number of seats—this gives the online visit a certain value. People have to plan their visits, which leads to more mindfulness.

ARTISTS IN RESIDENCY AND EXHIBITIONS TO DATE

Artists exhibit at WWWFORUM in the form of a virtual residency program. Applications can be submitted via nextmuseum.io. Can you elaborate on the process of finding artistic positions for the WWWFORUM?

Christian Mio Loclair himself exhibited first. He was a wonderful choice as an artist, both for his work in general and because he knew what scope there was and how he could utilize it to set a good example. We then made an open call on next-museum.io. Based on our concept for the WWWFORUM, we tried to communicate what we were looking for and what kind of place this is. We wanted the artists to be able to freely express their creativity during the one-month residencies. It was important to us that not just a few 3D sculptures were placed. The idea was to go beyond that so that the space would always look different. The artists then sub-mitted pictures, videos, or texts to describe their ideas. We received many great submissions, which we found exciting.

The decision-making processes at nextmuseum.io are carried out in different ways. For example, there are online votes with the community, online meet-ups with the public, or discussions about submissions via the comment function. In this specific case, we made our selection through a combination of these methods and in collaboration with Christian Mio Loclair. We decided on three very differ-ent positions: Daniel Nehring from Düsseldorf, Franziska Ostermann from Berlin, and Dorijan Šiško from Slovenia. The results of the exhibition are documented, so it is still possible to see what everything looked like in the end.[7]

How does the work process with the artists selected for the residencies look like?

The team from MIREVI (Mixed Reality and Visualization, HSD Düsseldorf) played an important role here, supporting us as a digital partner with their exper-tise. They acted as technical specialists, as well as mediators and translators be-cause they work a lot with cultural institutions and know their needs well. They also provided support for the artists.

The first step was a technical onboarding with Midjourney, MIREVI, and us to discuss what we wanted and what was technically possible. Some of the artists

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7   There are videos of each map on YouTube, cf.: "wwwforum." *NRW-Forum Düsseldorf*. May 12, 2022, YouTube playlist, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GMVeBcwP 4yA&list=PLBO5u-d3idCfdc5eWrmGLDJUdJCVwbCIv&idex=1

didn't have that much experience but instead had already worked with Unity, which is similar. The idea after the onboarding was for the artists to take a desktop selfie so that we could get an insight into how they work. For us, it wasn't just the finished exhibition that was interesting, but also seeing the process and hearing the artists explain what they create and why (Fig. 4a/4b). We then had a vernissage for each of them, which we promoted together. The whole process lasted a month with each artist, including the finished exhibition (Fig. 5).

Figures 4a/4b: Insights into the progress of Dorijan Šiško's work while setting up his exhibition
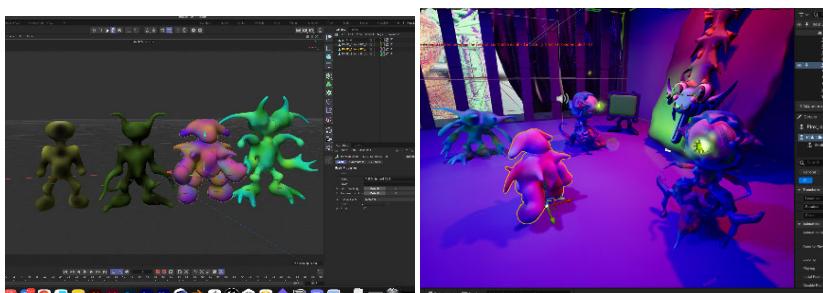
Figure 5: View of a finished room of Dorijan Šiško's exhibition

Sources: WWWFORUM © NRW-Forum Düsseldorf, Dorijan Šiško

In the future, you won't be transferring analog art to WWWFORUM, will you?

No, I don't think so. One use case before the WWWFORUM was the Musee Dezentral, where we did an open call. NFTs are exhibited there, which can also take different forms. This digital exhibition space is built like a physical museum, with frames on the walls that are constantly being refilled. That is interesting to us, but we already have a place for pictures on the wall. So, we wanted to create a dedicated space for digital art and have a field for experimentation.

How might the collaboration with the artists in the digital and analog space be compared? Are there any significant differences or parallels in the way you work?

The process is actually quite similar. At the NRW-Forum, we work a lot with everything digital anyway. From 2021 to 2022, for example, we displayed the exhibition "Welcome to Paradise," which was designed as a media art parkour. There was a lot of VR art, but also analog immersive works. Ultimately, the difference was that it was physically set up on-site, and the artists were present.

Time and time again, there are interesting overlaps between the digital and the analog. In his exhibition at WWWFORUM, for example, Daniel Nehring explored analog aspects that he wanted to translate: Drawings, graphic works, and paper. The building or elements in the room looked as if they had been painted with a paper texture (Fig. 7). He adopted this but thought differently, that was exciting. Franziska Ostermann created something like a snowy landscape, removing some of the colors and changing the texture once more (Fig. 8). Her work is a lot about writing and signs, which she also did there, but in a different way from her previous works. Her theme was communication in digital space. Dorijan Šiško is involved in the field of gaming, so visitors walked through the landscape as players (Fig. 9). They were able to interact with objects; some even came directly towards them and could be nudged away. All of this is part of his style.

When you think of the similarities and differences between the four past exhibitions, were there any aspects that you found surprising?

It was amazing that things could be so different (Fig. 6-9). The worst-case scenario for us would have been for something to simply be placed in the open spaces. But each of the artists made the space their own, and four completely different worlds were created. That is the biggest difference to the physical space.

Figures 6 and 7: Impressions of the exhibitions by Christian Mio Loclair (left) and Daniel Nehring (right)
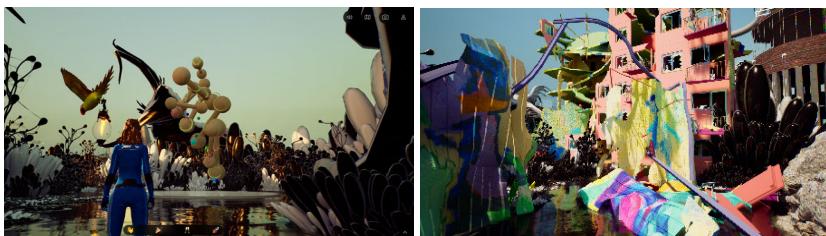
Sources: WWWFORUM, Christian Mio Loclair, nextmuseum.io, 2023, screenshot by I. Hamm/WWWFORUM © NRW-Forum Düsseldorf, Daniel Nehring

Figures 8 and 9: Impressions of the exhibitions by Franziska Ostermann (left) and Dorijan Šiško (right)
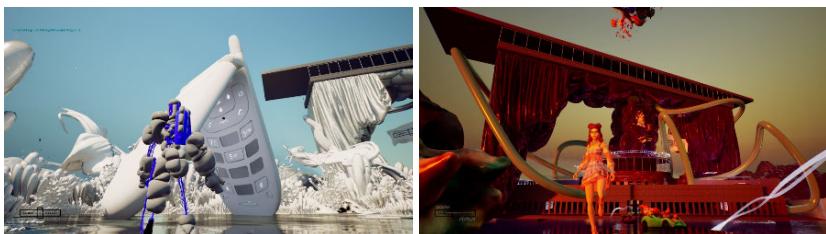
Sources: WWWFORUM © NRW-Forum Düsseldorf, Franziska Ostermann/WWWFORUM © NRW-Forum Düsseldorf, Dorijan Šiško

The exhibition Come Out and Dance by Studio Christian Mio Loclair posed the questions, "Is there an aura of the digital? What is a digital twin? And when does an extension become independent?"[8] How do you currently feel about these questions when you look back on the past year and the exhibitions that have been shown in the meantime?

I believe that we have already found answers, but not "the one answer," which doesn't even exist in that sense. Instead, there are many different directions and ideas. Our Space is not a digital twin where everything is copied 1:1.

I would answer the question about the aura with a yes—it does exist in the digital world. Aura always has something to do with authenticity and originality.

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8 NRW-Forum: "wwwforum," NRW-Forum Düsseldorf, https://www.nrw-forum.de/presse/wwwforum (06.04.2024).

We currently have a project for the new presentation of the permanent collection that has involved developing an AR app as an extension of the works on site. The AR app can now be used to reveal the signature, the reverse side, or the original condition of the work and communicate this to visitors in a playful way. In a way, the digital sometimes brings us closer to the original than the physical encounter and protection of the works allow. At WWWFORUM, the movement through the space also plays a role in how visitors can hear their own footsteps and how music and light are used, all of which create a unique aura.

And the question of expansion—it can definitely be said that the WWWFORUM is independent. It follows its own logic and is not dependent on the physical space.

AUDIENCE AND FEEDBACK

What has the feedback from the audience been like so far?

Well, I think it's interesting that we don't meet the audience directly most of the time. One way or another, there are NPCs running around the WWWFORUM. This makes visitors feel less lonely, even if they walk through alone. Actual visitors can be recognized by their names displayed above them.

Back at the opening of WWWFORUM, it was possible to chat with many people. It was also fun because there were lots of colleagues and friends who were immediately recognizable by their avatars and the features they had given themselves. Whether it was the fishing hat or the special glasses, these kinds of interactions worked very well.

Due to the limited capacity described above, there were times when visitors had to queue and wait before they could enter the WWWFORUM. Sometimes, people didn't really understand why they couldn't get in, or they just thought it was a pity. There were also misunderstandings with school classes who wanted to visit the WWWFORUM and thought they could do so physically on-site. We then had to explain that this is a purely digital space.

I believe that the WWWFORUM could be anchored even more firmly in our institution so that we can get additional feedback. In our building, we have an installation about it showing the project trailer, for example. There was also the idea of providing access to the WWWFORUM from here. This raises the question: is the WWWFORUM so independent that it doesn't need to appear here? Or do we set up a dedicated station to bring it closer to people? This can certainly be helpful for a certain audience. Our classic analog audience is usually not the same target group that uses this kind of online content, which is great! But it would also be nice if

the target group that visits the NRW Forum got to know this digital exhibition space. And there is still potential to convey to the people visiting us physically what is so exciting about the WWWFORUM.

Were certain aspects particularly well received?

The sound and the aesthetics. If visitors are interested in the Metaverse, they might have already been familiar with applications such as Mozilla Hubs or Gather Town. But because the WWWFORUM was something else, I had the feeling that it was well received. The creative adoption and implementation of elements such as our Fortuna Büdchen or the Rhine were also well received—as was the opportunity to fly over the river in WWWFORUM.

Did something not work out as you had imagined?

I think it would be nice if WWWFORUM could be a little more present and become more established in people's minds. Physical events have so far been perceived more strongly by the public than digital projects. Plus, the funding has now come to an end. We had four years of funding at nextmuseum.io and were able to try things out, but the question remaining is always: what happens next? The costs have to be covered.

Were you able to pinpoint what the audience would like to see in the digital space or specifically in WWWFORUM in the future?

Perhaps even more interaction options would be well received, even if it is technically not always that easy. In this context, an extension of the chat functions, including voice chat, would be an option so that users can talk to each other, which seemed to be a wish. Moreover, as already described, it would be useful if we were able to offer access at any time.

How did other museums react to your project?

With curiosity and interest. We were invited to a talk by the ZKM and had the opportunity to exchange ideas about other projects. Since then, we have often received requests from other institutions on the topic of the Metaverse. We've also been asked whether other institutions could exhibit at our WWWFORUM.

How do you feel about the current mood in the museum landscape regarding ideas relating to the Metaverse?

The hype surrounding the Metaverse and digital formats in general during the pandemic has calmed down. But this is, in fact, the key point at which we need to consider how we can move forward, what is exciting about going digital, when physical museum visits can be replaced and when they cannot, and which digital formats should be established. Some people might argue that the Metaverse was a trend and that we should now dismiss attempts to create something out of it. But I believe that there is still more potential. Interesting questions are being raised here. For example, regarding digital curating in WWWFORUM: Who was actually curating? In a more detailed sense, it was the artists; we were rather creating the framework. The audience also had its part to play, from having a say in the development process to their individual exploration of the space. This could also be a model for the analog world, as we would like to strengthen the principle of co-creation there, too.

FUTURE PLANS AND NETWORKING OPPORTUNITIES

What will happen to the WWWFORUM in the future? Are further exhibitions or interactive formats conceivable in your Metaverse despite the current expiry of funding?

Due to the expired funding, the plans are currently on hold. There is acute administrative work to be done. However, we are thinking about how we can make the platform permanent. So far, we have fortunately been able to dedicate 1.5 positions to our nextmuseum.io project—knowing very well that this will not always be the case. At the end of the runtime, we relaunched the website to make it more independent. It has always been a cross-institutional platform that we would like to remain a part of. The idea we now have is to found a DAO, a decentralized autonomous organization, in order to maintain and strengthen the communal aspect aside from us as institutions. Museums could then, for example, make contributions or offer their spaces for a certain number of projects that are swarm-curated. Artists could continue to apply for projects. The WWWFORUM could remain active within such a framework, and the community could be involved in deciding what is shown and how.

The place is built and available. With MIREVI, we would also like to take another look at how other interactive and participative formats could be made possible.

What advice would you give to museums that would also like to set up a Metaverse exhibition area?

Turning to other museums that have already carried out such projects—including us, we would be happy to help! When dealing with new topics, it is helpful to first look at what others have already done. There is a tendency for every museum to do its own thing, but there is also a countermovement, especially in the context of open-source culture, to create things and share them with others. Ultimately, we all have the same goal. Working together to achieve this is simply great, and I've already noticed this happening at many museums. Also, look at projects outside the immediate museum area and ask yourself: What works there, what can be transferred, and what works differently? What do we want to achieve with our project? What questions do we have concerning our online exhibition venue?

Thank you very much for the interview!

LITERATURE

NRW-Forum: "wwwforum," NRW-Forum Düsseldorf, https://www.nrw-forum.de/presse/wwwforum (06.04.2024).

MEDIA INDEX

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