

Potential of Adapting Smart Cultural Model related to Contemporary Art: The Case of Jeddah Open-Air Sculpture Museum

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Abstract Jeddah city has a great relationship with art and sculptures since 1973 after the economy booming as an outcome from the oil industry. Since then, Jeddah has been branded as a “City of Art” where famous international artists display their sculptures around the squares and streets. Municipalities and private authorities manage the maintenance of these artifacts due to the environmental and weather conditions. After four years of implementing a massive project and creating an open space, the cultural park museum now displays 20 sculptures. The objective of this paper was to find and investigate a smart global practice in museum, parks and find potentials of adapting smart cultural vision towards Jeddah open park Sculpture Museum as an intelligent platform. Searching for the optimum solution will add value to the social and public communities by communicating and sharing a smart social platform, especially in the open sculptural museum in Jeddah and uplifting the social and cultural impacts.

Keywords Smart Vision, Smart Trend, Smart Cultural Platform, Open Museum

1. Introduction

Although Mediterranean immigrants flooded into European cities due to high quality of life and many other

reasons, Jeddah still maintains an artistic history [1]. The history of art in Jeddah city has a great relationship with art and sculptures since 1973 when decided to blend art within the development process by ordering and selecting sculptures for famous international artists and distribute around 600 artistic pieces around the squares, streets, and boulevards to enhance the urban space of Jeddah city [2-4]. Branding Jeddah city as “City of Art” was a reflection of the art and artist booming in Saudi Arabia after graduating the first batch from the Institute of Art in Riyadh that enhanced the appearance of artist communities in the same period as the Saudi Community for Culture & Art at the 70s and the Saudi center for fine art in the 80s. In the last ten years, many other art associations and art galleries in Jeddah appears like Ather and Hafiz gallery and Art Jameel [5].

At present, the Jeddah sculptures need maintenance through the last 40 years due to the environmental and weather conditions. Accordingly, the decision by the Jeddah municipality along with the volunteering of Art Jameel was taken to restore the sculptures and rearrange 20 restored artworks in a new settlement by creating an open-air museum in a seven-square kilometer park along the Jeddah Corniche, known locally as ‘Al Hamraa’. The project was launched in September 2013 to community recognition [5, 6].

Lately, the “21,39” Jeddah Arts initiative was organized by the Saudi Art Council by a group of local artist that

contribute to the local community to promote art and culture in Jeddah. Indeed, the Saudi artist has an impressive impact which encourages a new trend and vision by exhibiting in European and American galleries beside inside the Kingdom as Jeddah city, which is tackling the unique culture and many social issues in the Saudi living style which include paradox of the local situation with the global influence [7].

The international art community is showing significant interest in the current unique Saudi art movement in this global era, particularly the broad subjects. The progress of art in the kingdom is notable and is still going on hence the contiguous of art and culture happening in Dubai by opening the Abu Dhabi Louvre will directly affect the Saudi art position.

2. Methodology

This study aims to investigate the global practice of wisdom in museum, parks and discover the potential of applying the vision of smart culture to the Jeddah Open Park Sculpture Museum as a smart platform. Therefore, the information used in this study is secondary data obtained from library resources and online articles to assess the current social awareness about the open museum, and investigating about different smart trends through the history used in cultural contexts, analyzing the benefit from the trends and what are the impacts on society.

3. History of Art for Social Spaces

Since ancient times, monuments have appeared in public spaces, emphasizing the central position of important religious and secular places [8]. Nevertheless, public sculpture, mainly serves the purpose of performance and propagating goals [8]. The term "public art" actually refers to any work of art in any medium, designed and performed specifically for selected locations or stages in the physical public domain, usually outdoors and accessible to everyone [8].

Back in the post-war years, specifically in the 1948 the first open air sculpture exhibition in Battersea Park organized by the London county council provided a model that flourished throughout Europe and beyond. The initiative was accompanied with a rare fashion event at that time to encourage the visual arts and focus on the work of artists that is part of the national heritage and to give the citizens a vast chance to enjoy art. The demonstration of the exhibition inside the fashion Vogue and Harper's Bazaar magazines tackled the middle and upper middle class for promoting high culture and contemporary art. There were several analyses and studies about the open-air sculpture exhibition and event ideology that display the

changed style in country living, which represent a deeper appreciation for the land in the post-war time. Robert Burstow discussed about the criteria of choosing Battersea Park for its location: being accessible to different classes and the aim of having social diversity [9].

The open-air sculpture exhibition displayed in Battersea Park in London is considered as pioneer creative concept of taking the sculptures to the public and give the chance to normal citizens to experience contemporary sculptures, and it was associated with the Battersea show that showed elaborated events, workshops and lectures every three years which ran from 1948 to 1966 [10]. However, Henny Moor works were exhibited in Battersea park with other artist as well as in Jeddah Open Air Museum and before on Jeddah streets.

In the 20th century, when mass architecture and cultural models were unified, art in the public domain played a very responsible role in creating important spatial labels and architectural features [8]. However, on the urban scale, the sculptural form of architecture occupies a well-deserved lead position in creating major landmarks in the urban landscape, sometimes without even considering the urban environment [8]. There are many spectacular architectural landmarks in the 20th and 21st centuries. They have not only become reference points for cultural tourism, but also object of cultural tourism [8].

4. Smart City as a Trend

The concept of smart city elaborated through the last two decades, and the idea of smart city has a holistic vision of city performance and management. The components of smartness include industry, education, participation and technical infrastructure. These components increased in projects managed by Centre of Regional Science at the Vienna University of Technology and became six components which are smart economy, smart mobility, a smart environment, smart people, smart living, and smart governance [11].

In the early 21st century, IT experts and artists have noticed the great creative potential of digital technology, which has become a new public space for artwork creation, display and discussion [8]. Also, the 3-D consequences of the creative process and its results are breaking the domination of museums and art galleries as exclusive venues for interacting with art. In addition, new artistic trends combine computer graphics with animation, interactive technology, computer robotics and biotechnology to obtain new artistic qualities [8].

This paper concerns about life quality of people and communities and how to bring Information Communication Technology (ICT) and people together to enhance innovation, learning, and knowledge especially in museums, art and cultural context.

5. History of Smart Trends in Museums

Smart trends and new technologies in museums changed the visitor's experience, behavior, and perception. The early phase of using the Interactive Multimedia Technology at Museums was as a tool of reusing museums and increased the number of visitors. The first appearance of multimedia displays within the museum's spaces as audiovisual was in the early 70s. Followed by the hypertext technology, that was the beginning idea of the World Wide Web that appeared in the late 80s. Later in the 90's, it was something expected and familiar to find computers in exhibitions with latest technologies of visual information. During the late 90s, galleries and exhibitions offer visitors while viewing permanent collections, pathways, images, text, animation, and sounds and maps with practical information in computer spots in the exhibition. Indeed, some of the information was available on the online web for people who cannot physically visit, and time online website museums elaborated with colossal database information [12].

In the early 20th century, the aesthetic museum vigorously advocated by the American cultural elite replaced the idea of an educational museum [13]. Once a work of art is exhibited in a museum, it should be regarded as something of aesthetic value [13]. The space of the museum must enhance the audience's sense of immersion, allowing visitors to be immersed in the private dimension of each artwork. This requires that the architectural canvas on which artworks are displayed remain blank and increase the distance between different artworks [13]. However, some ornament artworks are being decorated to attract the public and enhance social interaction. Besides technology, maintenance and hazard research are also the main criteria for sustainable open museums, such as the Avenue of the Sphinx and The Luxor Project [14].

6. Smart Tools or Models in Enhancing Cultural Spaces

This section outlines the overview of smart technology in art and cultural enhancement tools including ICT Social Cultural Platform, Tweeting Artwork, Participatory IT in

semi-public spaces, as well as CoCA Pop-Up (AR)t.

6.1. ICT Social Cultural Platform

In the late 90s, a new trend popped up, which is Information and Communication Technology (ICT), which matches with the smart city vision in general. Accordingly, the role of visitors in museums has changed. People are performing and acting by interacting with exhibitions and consequently the amount of participation and satisfaction increase [12].

The role of smart technologies is integrated into the knowledge approach. The interaction of performers shows how people communicate and share ideas about the museum through social network [15]. Sharing ideas and experience by participating through sites, blogs, and social networks pages will generate social cultural platforms.

The context of analysis is the sculpture exhibition “Il bello o il vero” (“The beauty or the true”), a project planned and implemented by the DATABENC District - High Technology District. The exhibition demonstrates an impressive technological story by having sculptures able to take and tell their stories, sending multimedia content that give visitors an opportunity to live a unique new experience of enjoyment and live in smart environments. The smartness in the exhibition was a development of a research laboratory project of the district DATABENC at the University of Naples the elaboration of art historians, humanists and computer science engineers come together and give birth to a mix of science and culture in October 2014. The project is still investigating about the performers, involvement as visitors and as co-producer by collecting data from Twitter and Instagram about visitors before, while visiting the exhibition and following ideas with several scholars [16].

The smart Mobile applications app detects sensors near sculptures, gives information, and allows interacting through touch and non-contact technologies. Besides, social networks that support visitors and other performer involvement as direct experience of the exhibition. The relation between users and organizations is going both ways in giving and receiving and acting together in improving services and management in the cultural context [17], hence the experience in “Il Bello o il Vero” is a useful example to show the contribution of visitors during the co-creation. Figure 1 demonstrates the framework of innovation processes in cultural experience [16].

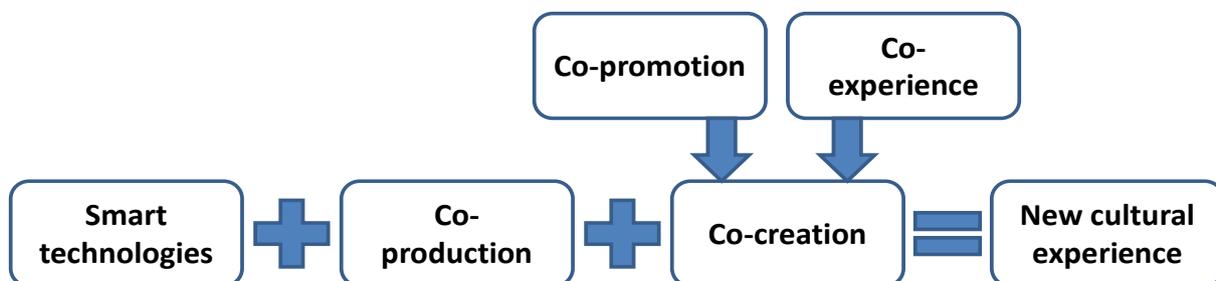


Figure 1. Innovation processes in cultural experience [16]

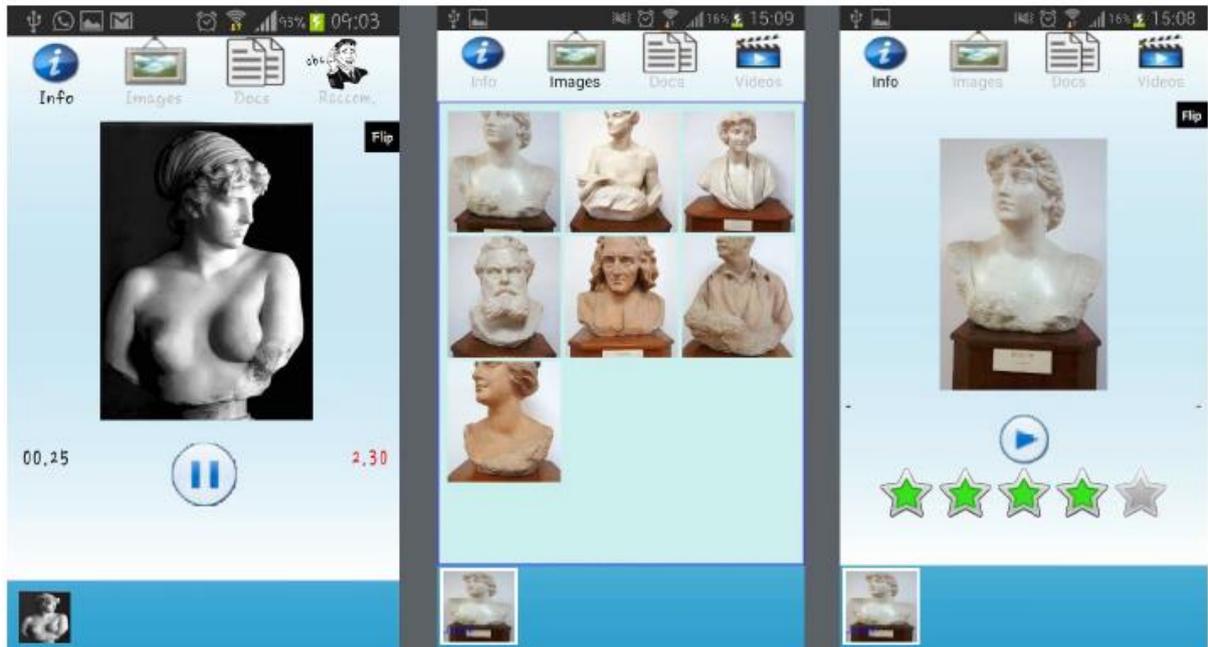


Figure 2. From left to right: regional sculptures, related picture lists, multimedia content ratings [18]

6.2. Tweeting Artwork

“SmARTweet”, a location based application developed by DATABENC, the case study shows an example of tweeting and talking artworks, sculptures inside the Maschio Angioino castle, in Naples – Italy [18]. The project develops several locations that detect the closest artifact to the visitor and enable them to talk and tell their stories by using multimedia features. Figure 2 illustrates the application display features.

The public and stakeholder users interact and gather to share, analyze local knowledge that fit with smart city requirements and people play effective role by using appropriate devices (GPS, smart-phone, video cameras, sensors, RFID and QR Code tags, etc.), having a smart system need a particular ICT infrastructure and services that transmute a physical space into a smart environment. The location based will integrate visitors, citizens inside the exhibition by using Wi-Fi and allow the mobile application users to detect and navigate the artwork. However, the main purpose of using the technology is to see and learn more, as well as to search for activities in the physical space. It is all about making the user experience more interesting and enjoyable. Keeping in mind, the costs and benefits are associated with maintenance [18].

6.3. Participatory IT in Semi-Public Spaces

The study by Bødker, Kløkmose, Korn, and Polli [19] reported of experiment the engagement of participant in semipublic spaces of a temporary art exhibition “Kunsthall Aarhus”, a venue for contemporary art in Denmark, that interviewed 19 visitors during a period of one month and analyses the participant shared opinion about the artwork

in the physical space through their displayed text. Visitors are using their mobile phones and interact with a digital display in the gallery; showing their text and others.

In order to support and promote local participation, the experimental study proposed three concepts leads to understanding technologies which are: hyper locality, local area networking and global read/local write.



Figure 3. Visitors interact with digital panels through their personal devices/smartphones [19]

The Web 2.0 and social technology online currently expanded the user participation, engagement and can be restructured as a way of sharing with everybody in their daily biases. Wikipedia is a great example of how knowledge production can be participatory, and it challenged the traditional relation between sender and receiver in the creation of knowledge. They investigate in similar approach for technology-supported open participation that enhances development debate, intentional decision making and collecting knowledge. All of these privileges to be linked in particular spaces that are sharing a physical public space art exhibition, a public library, or a community center (Figure 3) [19].

The study explores the visitors participating with information technology in a specific space in a shared public space compared with the global accessible service without a physical attachment. The physically present audience will have the privilege of participating and sharing ideas and opinion by sending and receiving; on the other hand, accessing globally will not allow participating by sending just collecting and reading. Using this technology in the exhibition is in the beginning of having a shape, especially for having a new social connection that

negotiates with each other's by technology in specific place consider a first of its kind and in the process of making [20]. Stakeholders can have participant prospects in semi-public spaces which may profit in other domains rather than a new technology for museums and exhibition.

6.4. CocA Pop-Up (AR)t

An inspiration from the traditional pop-up books, has appeared in Seattle's Centre by selecting 18 artists specialized in 3D to produce "Pop-up (AR)t" book that allows readers to view three-dimensional artwork in reality that pop up each page. Similar to a traditional pop-up book, when the audience turns each page, the three-dimensional version of the featured artist's work will come to life (Figure 4). However, unlike carefully crafted paper cutouts, Wikitude's augmented reality technology allows viewers to view artworks in three dimensions on their digital gadgets [21]. When the book released, they curate an exhibition to display the AR art to allow public to interview and interact with the 3D image art. With AR museums, it will be vibrant and will provide the visitors a dynamic movement and experience [21].

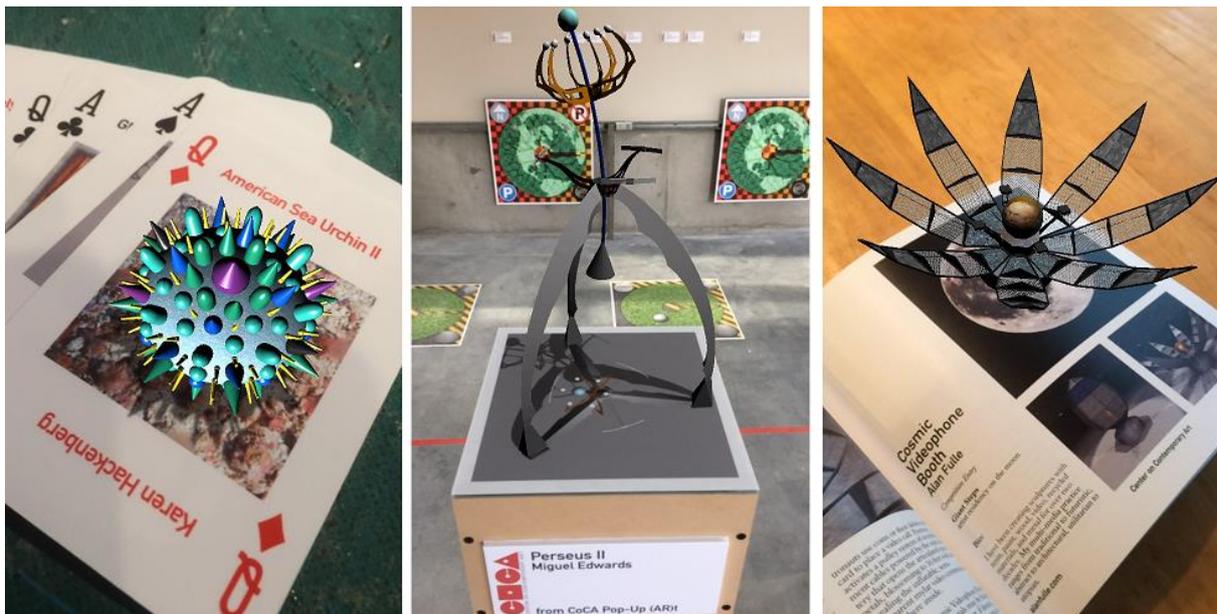


Figure 4. Examples of pop-up art that can be viewed in 3D on mobile devices [21]

7. Conclusion

After going through the smart tools used globally in museums, and specifically what happened in “Il Bello o il Vero,” in Naples Italy, it will be beneficial to adapt it in Jeddah sculpture open-air museum as a comprehensive approach that will enhance the community cultural consumer to use the ICT tool for enhancing communication and interaction. The challenge is to ensure the efficiency of the server connection to effectively transmit large amounts of information and the availability of user gadgets during operation. Besides that, the next challenge is to ensure that older generations have the ability to use ICT tools. Indeed, marketing by using ICT tools in developing the open-air sculptural museums will tackle the creative class in the museum space. Taking into consideration and learn from what happens through the history of first open-air sculpture exhibition in Battersea Park, which merge cultural event to enhance the participation and awareness.

There is an existence of barcode under the name of the sculpture that link it to the web to tell information about the artifact and artist, which shows that there is a beginning of smart vision in Jeddah open-air museum park. Nonetheless, there is a lack of marketing and linking to a social network in order to have a smart cultural platform. Marketing with ICT in developing cultural spaces will attract the community as a cultural consumer and enhance the creative class participation by creating cultural events like a Pop-up (AR) exhibitions that enhance and interact with the existing static art work.

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