



Rock Art Database

WIKIMEDIA RESEARCH

Rock Art Database Website

SAE WEB

Nina Tanneberger
Bachelor Of Web Design

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Research Credits

Adobe Creative Suite: Photoshop, Illustrator, Indesign

Microsoft Office: Word, Excel, Powerpoint

Windows 10: Photos, Explorer

Google Chrome

Introduction

The purpose of this document is to research the significance of numerous websites both global and within Australia pertaining to cultural heritage and history. The research gathered will be to construct a similar project – Rock Art Database; which gathers rock art assets from around the world to present online.

The main websites researched will be analysed via the following attributes:

- what is the theme of the project
- what information does the project collect and how do they collect this information
- how is the information managed
- how is the information presented
- what makes the site engaging (design elements, presentation, interaction, narrative etc)

Once analysed they will be compared to one another to determine their qualities, shortcomings and importance. Other websites will be mentioned within the analysis to further illustrate examples of themes and patterns.

<i>Project theme</i>	Building towards global peace and communication through culture and education. Focus on developing nations, heritage, youth, gender equality, sustainability, climate change, indigenous peoples, social and human sciences, natural sciences, biodiversity etc
<i>What information does it collect</i>	Journal articles, research projects, cultural landmarks/sites, natural forests/reservations/sites
<i>Information collection procedure</i>	Heritage lists produced by global studies carried out by ICOMOS (Secretariat, 2018) ¹ , IUCN (IUCN Home, 2018) ² , and other members. Periodic reporting cycles in place worldwide.
<i>Information management</i>	“Global Strategy” – launched by the World Heritage Committee to reflect world’s cultural and natural diversity
<i>Information presentation</i>	Interactive Google map displaying different coloured icons for sites i.e. cultural, natural, mixed sites, sites in danger etc
<i>Website engaging features</i>	Interactive map with locations easy to find either by clicking on icons or using search function (Figure 1)
<i>Notes</i>	Many broken links; location information was difficult at times

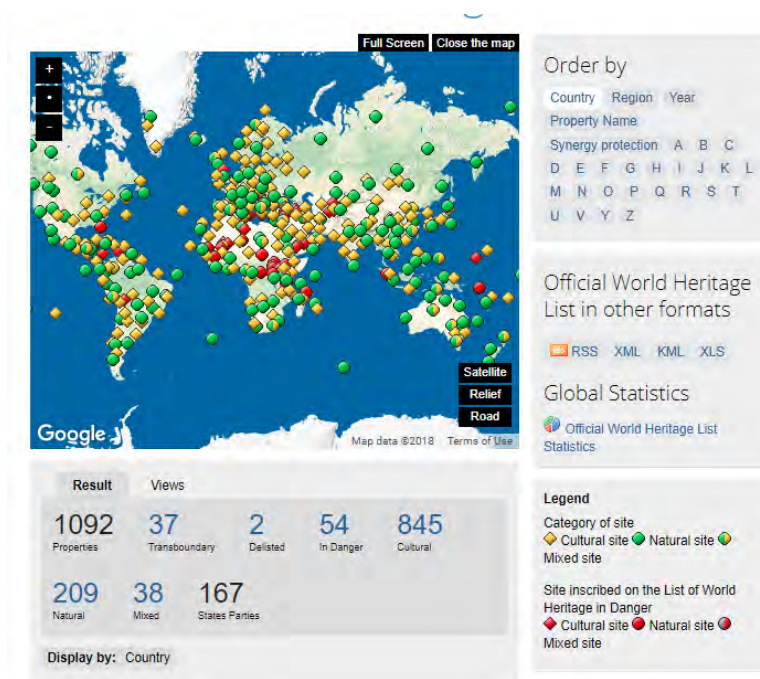


Figure 1

¹ ICOMOS is a world heritage organisation located internationally

² IUCN is an international union for natural conservation practices

Google Arts & Culture

(Google Arts & Culture, 2018)

<i>Project theme</i>	Art, discovery, exploration, education, news, history
<i>What information does it collect</i>	A collection of art, history, culture, museums, sites, landmarks
<i>Information collection procedure</i>	Google Cultural Institute (Cultural Institute, 2018) collects art pieces, museums, institutes, galleries etc. Information curated by partners of the project (Collections, 2018)
<i>Information management</i>	Managed by Google in affiliation with the Cultural Institute partners
<i>Information presentation</i>	Uses Google "Street View" (Street View, 2018) technology to create virtual tour/walk through featured sites and landmarks
<i>Website engaging features</i>	Many great features. Virtual tour, collections, themes, places, events, news, countries, art styles. Primarily being able to view, tour and inspect items at the click of a button is amazing. Users can also save items to their profiles to view later and create their own collections
<i>Notes</i>	(Figure 2)

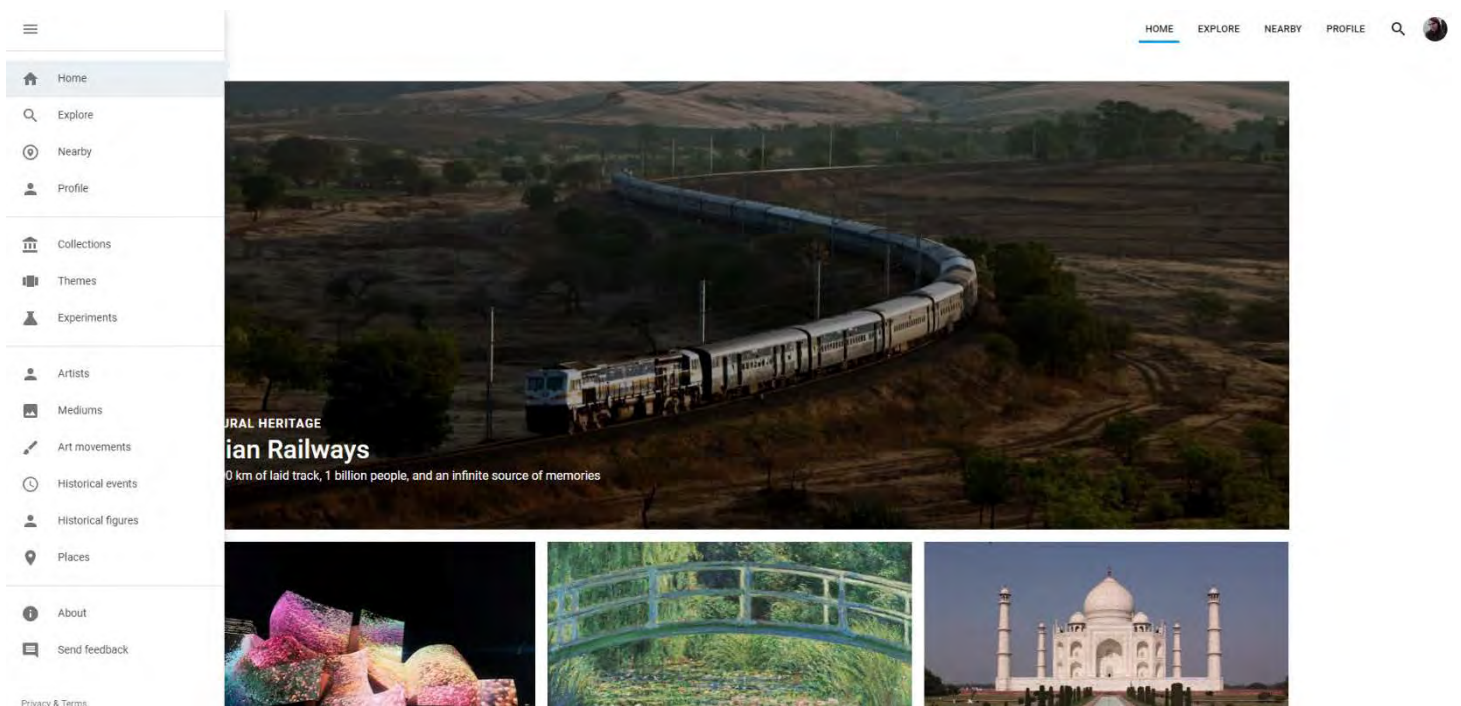


Figure 2

<i>Project theme</i>	Non profit, 3D laser technology, 3D artefact viewing, history, cultural heritage
<i>What information does it collect</i>	Cultural landmarks, sites, art, artefacts
<i>Information collection procedure</i>	CYARK uses lasers to scan sites and create digital representations
<i>Information management</i>	Information about sites/artefacts are displayed online (figure 3) with hard data available upon donation and inquiry through the website
<i>Information presentation</i>	Displayed online with images, timeline, 3D renders (figure 4, 5) of artefacts. Not all items have 3D viewing – the ones that do have an incredible amount of information including site schematics (figure 6)
<i>Website engaging features</i>	3D viewing, high quality imaging, maps, schematics
<i>Notes</i>	On a slow internet connection it can be difficult to load due to the amount of information present

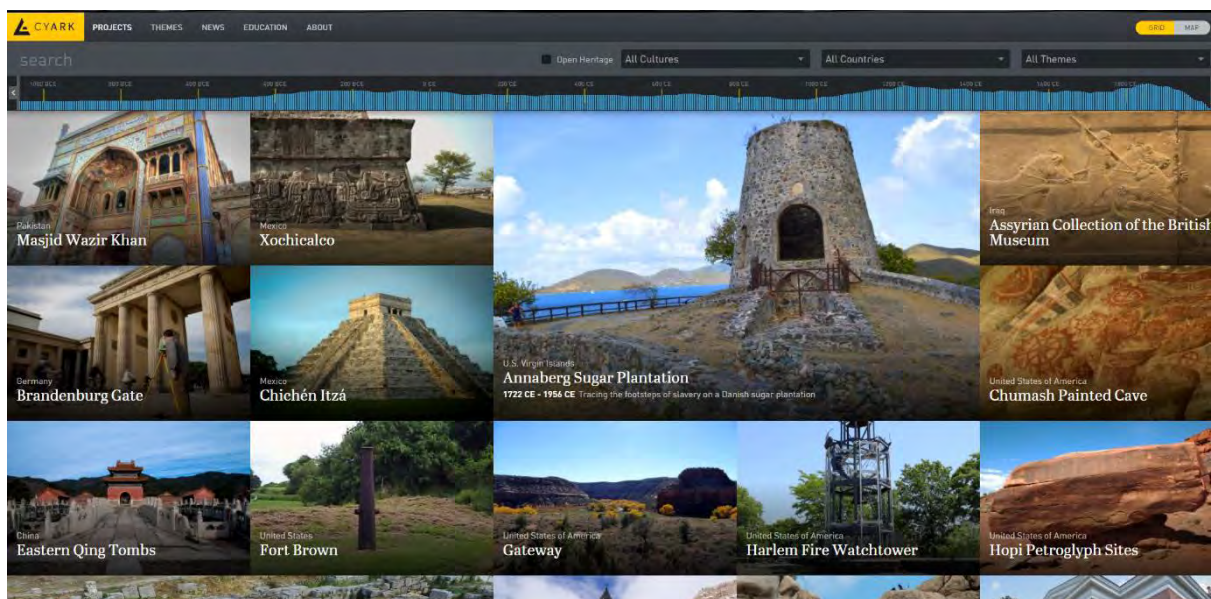


Figure 3

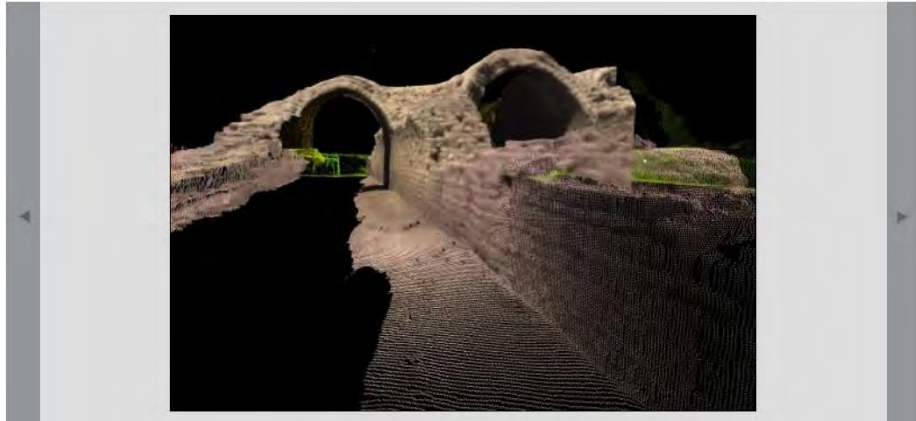


Figure 4

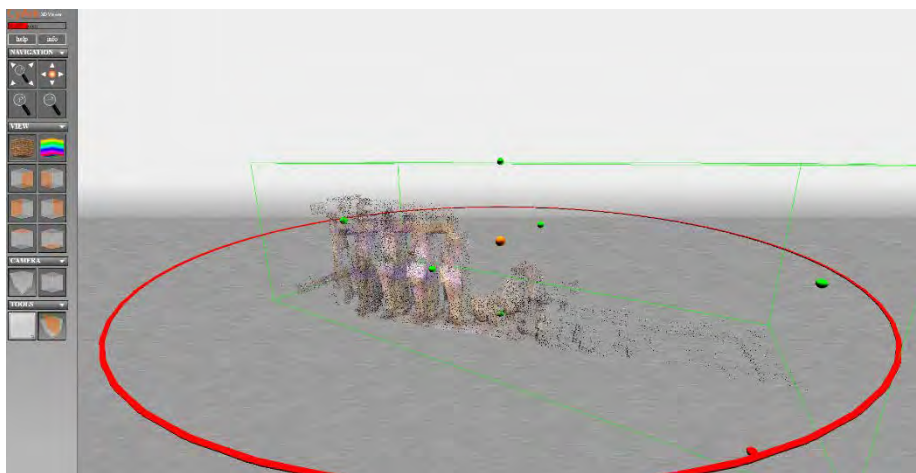


Figure 5



Figure 6

Queensland Heritage Register

(Queensland Heritage Register, 1995-2018)

<i>Project theme</i>	Heritage protection and historical preservation
<i>What information does it collect</i>	Heritage listed buildings, parks, gardens, commercial and residential sites, roads, railways, work sites, industrial sites etc Heritage listed means it is protected under laws barring certain changes to the location
<i>Information collection procedure</i>	Information is collected via applications for sites which upon approval enter the database. To become heritage listed the site must conform to particular criteria including its' significance, potential, importance, rarity, period of establishment etc
<i>Information management</i>	The information is gathered by the Queensland Government and placed into a register. The entire database is accessible via one xml on the site but is difficult to read.
<i>Information presentation</i>	Due to the register being so large it has been consolidated into a more user friendly approach using an interactive map similar to the other examples in this report (Figure 7)
<i>Website engaging features</i>	The site's map works similar to "Real Estate.com.au" (Map, 20018) which uses a map with popup fields for sites. The user can either search or explore the map (Figure 8)
<i>Notes</i>	Does not include Indigenous Heritage

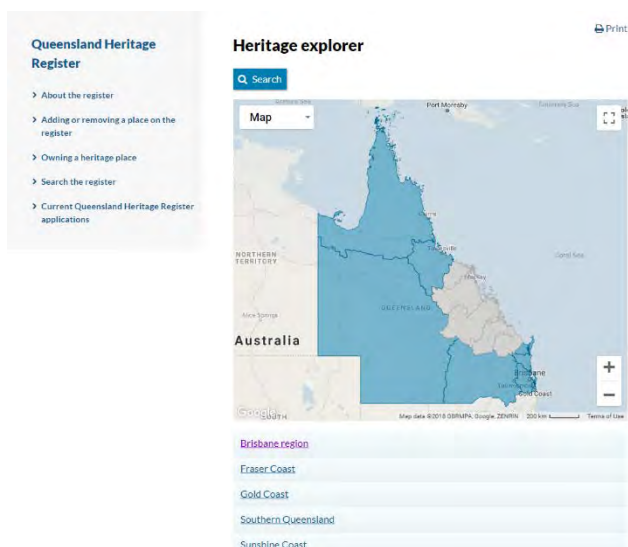


Figure 7

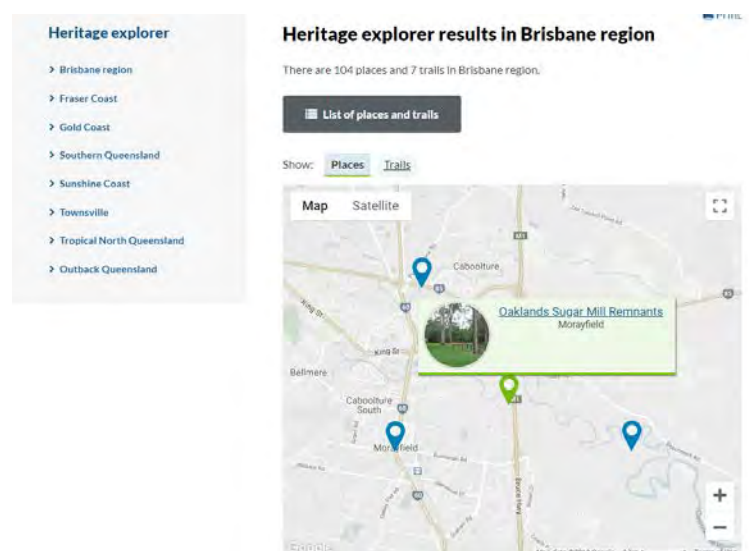


Figure 8

<i>Project theme</i>	Heritage, cultural significance, history
<i>What information does it collect</i>	Similar to the other heritage sites – lists areas of significance within the indigenous culture of Australia
<i>Information collection procedure</i>	Collected through studies and research, historical documents, cultural knowledge, registered landmarks – similar process to Queensland Heritage Register
<i>Information management</i>	Resides in a government register and database Register; Public Access – information on studies, management plans, registers cultural heritage bodies, landscape area recorded under legislation, details about statutory indigenous parties for an area Database; Private - application for access must be submitted to government, contains information about cultural heritage sites collected over a period exceeding 40 years. Includes location details, reports, site cards, images etc
<i>Information presentation</i>	Users can search the register for sites and information via an interactive map or simply explore (figure 9)
<i>Website engaging features</i>	The map is similar to other heritage sites discussed in report – however far less user friendly. The other government websites for heritage listings use Google Maps (Maps, n.d.), however this one uses a different interface
<i>Notes</i>	Branching off the Queensland Heritage Register; similar functions Map interface is difficult to use and slow. Would be best used with Google Maps. The map does not offer much information about locations – merely if they are registered or not

Important:

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture is protected under numerous laws and acts under both federal and state governments. Only parties with approved access to information are privy to it hence the lack of information on significant sites and locations on these registries (Indigenous Heritage, n.d.), (Sacred and Heritage Sites, n.d.).

Queensland Government Department of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships Cont.

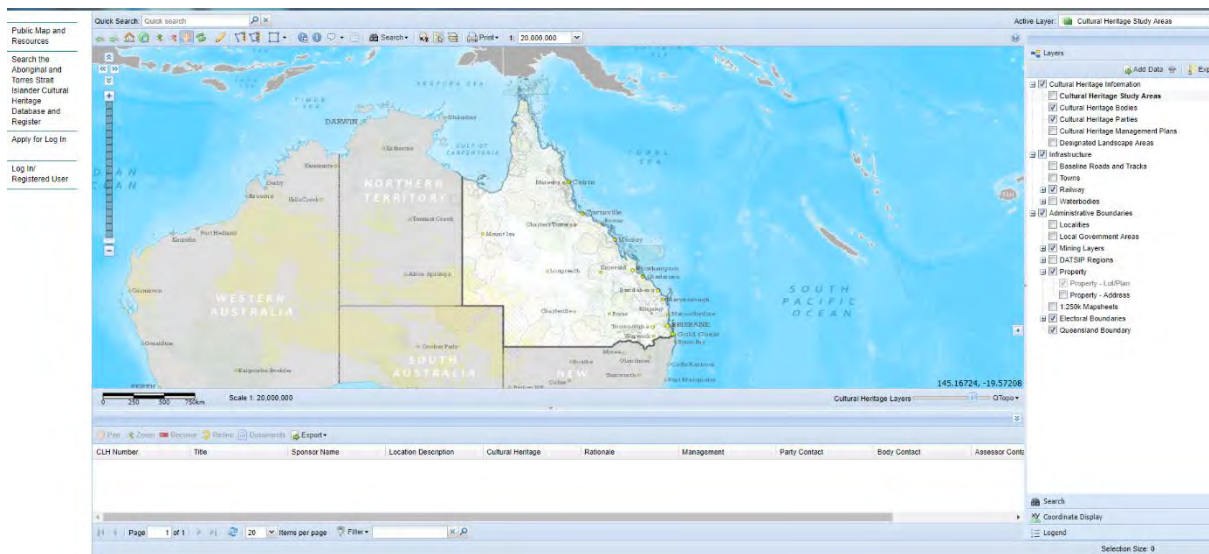


Figure 9

A similar map system is used for the Western Australia Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Inquiry System (Aboriginal Heritage Inquiry System, n.d.) (figure 10).

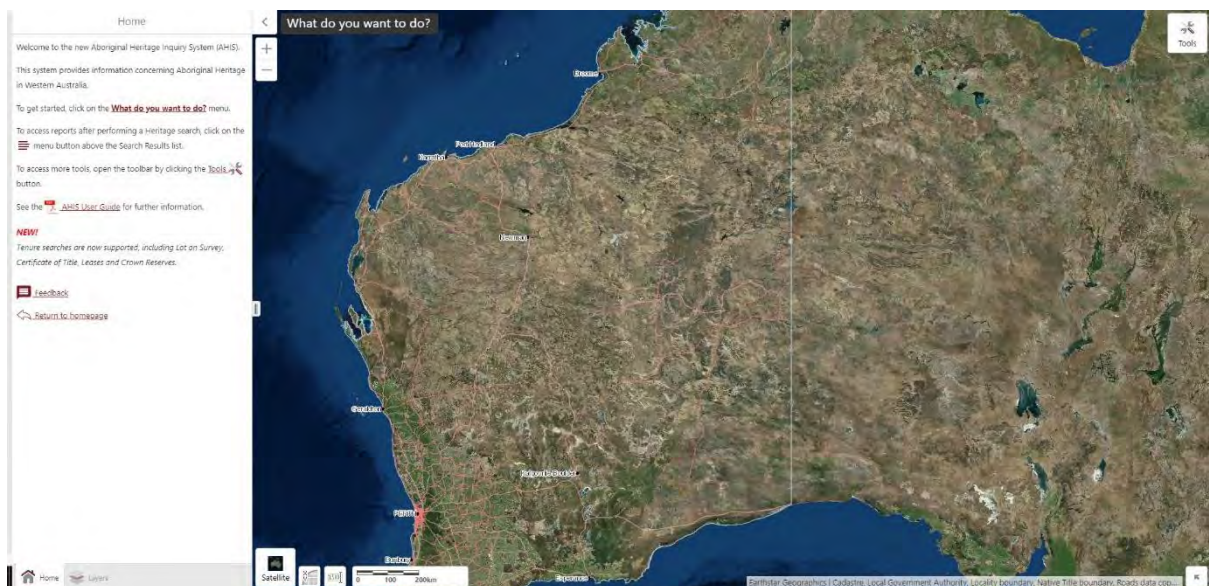


Figure 10

Neither of these maps are user friendly – they are slow and difficult to navigate. It is unclear why they have not used Google Maps; possibly it was set up long before Google Maps was common – with no publication date on the website it is uncertain.

Website Analysis

Whilst there were many interesting and compelling websites found amongst research, the primary functions of the ones listed above will be the topic of discussion. Additionally this will discuss how Google has been enhancing these sites for unique user experiences and functions.

Virtual Touring and Interactivity

Google have come up with some astonishing functions on their partnership websites. The first to be mentioned is the British Museum (Museum of the World, n.d.) which has partnered with Google to display an interactive timeline of countries and artefacts dating back as far as 5000BC (figure 11). Upon clicking the artefact users can click on to find out more with a popup displaying item description, map where the artefact was found and an audio clip describing it (figure 12).

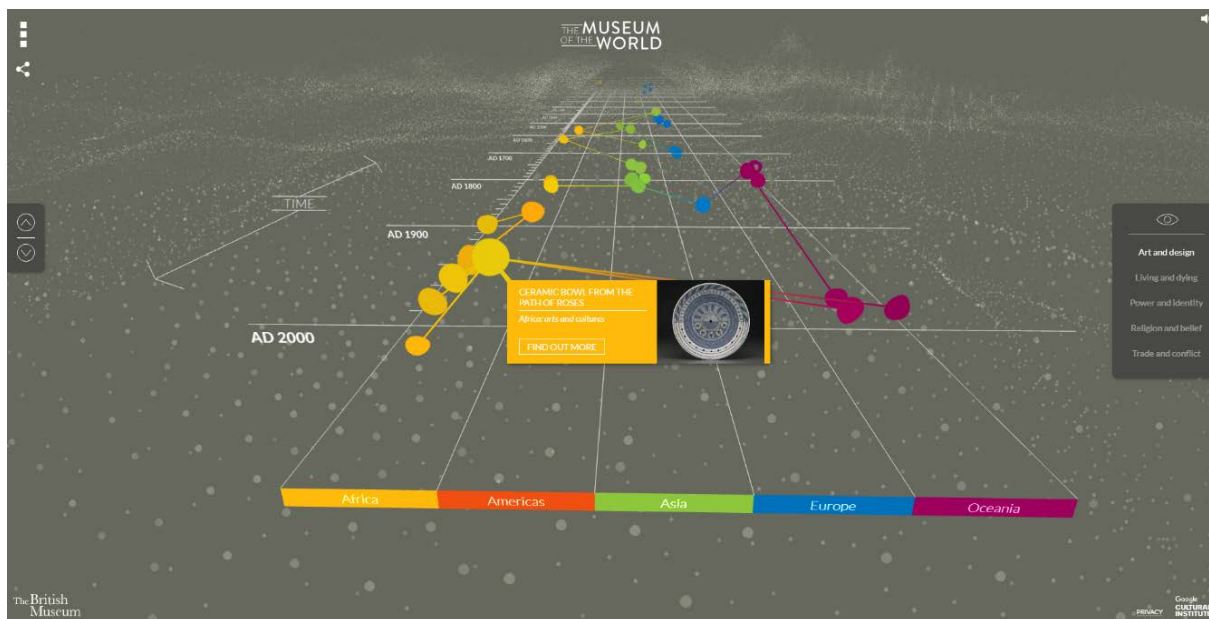


Figure 11

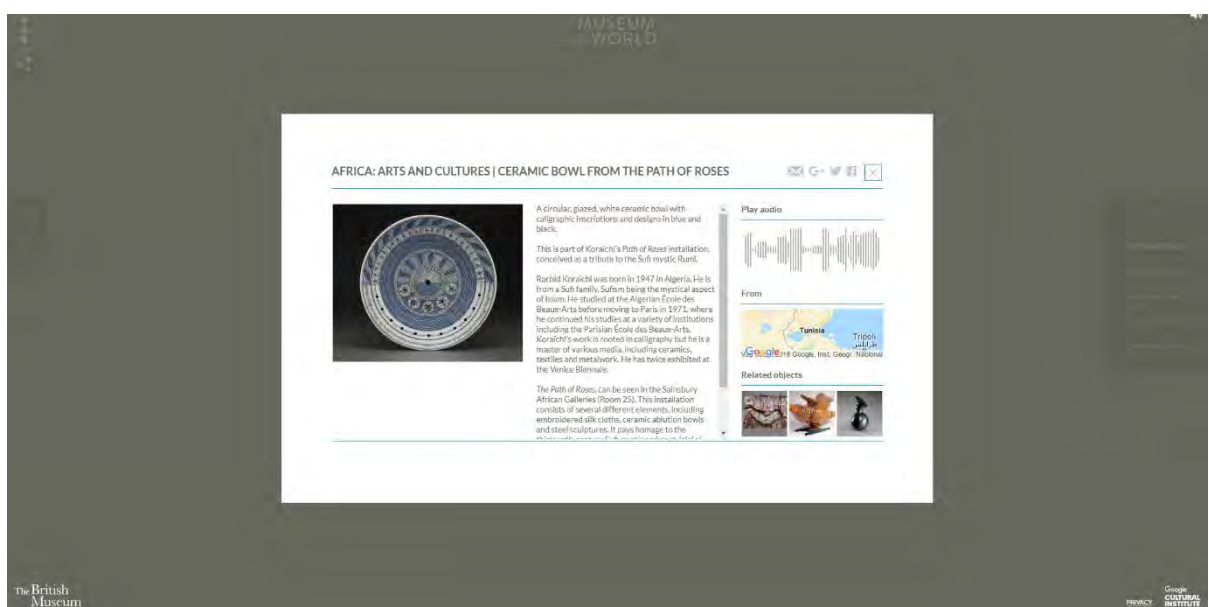


Figure 12

However this partnership is not displayed on the British Museum's website; it is only through searching for it that you can find it. The British Museum's website itself is in fact simply designed with no links to their Google affiliated features (figure 13).

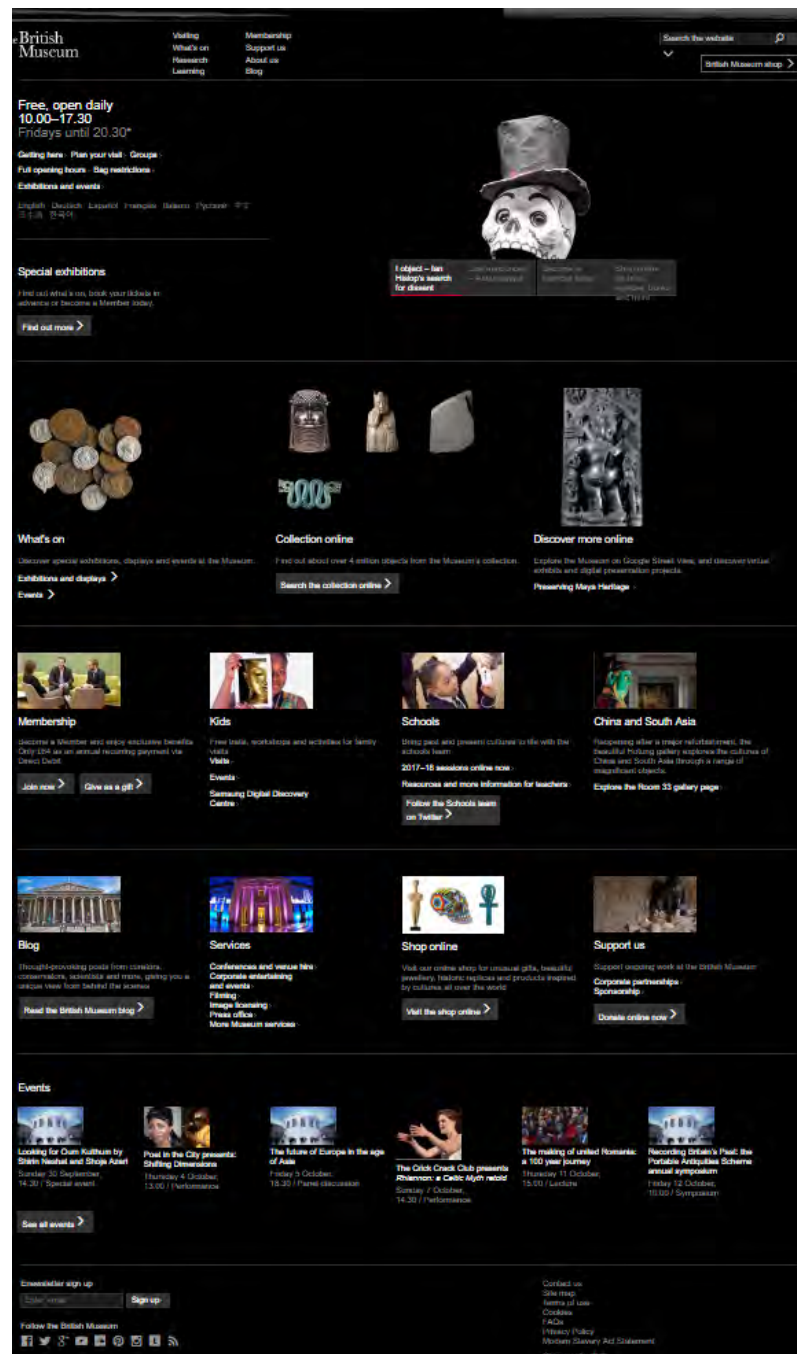


Figure 13

In order to find them, a Google search was conducted to find the virtual tour, Museum of the World and Google Cultural Institute sections (figure 14). Clearly this portion of the site was designed by Google so it is possible that the British Museum website simply hasn't been ready to update their information at this point in time. The virtual tour is simply a Google Maps integration where you can view sections of the museum.

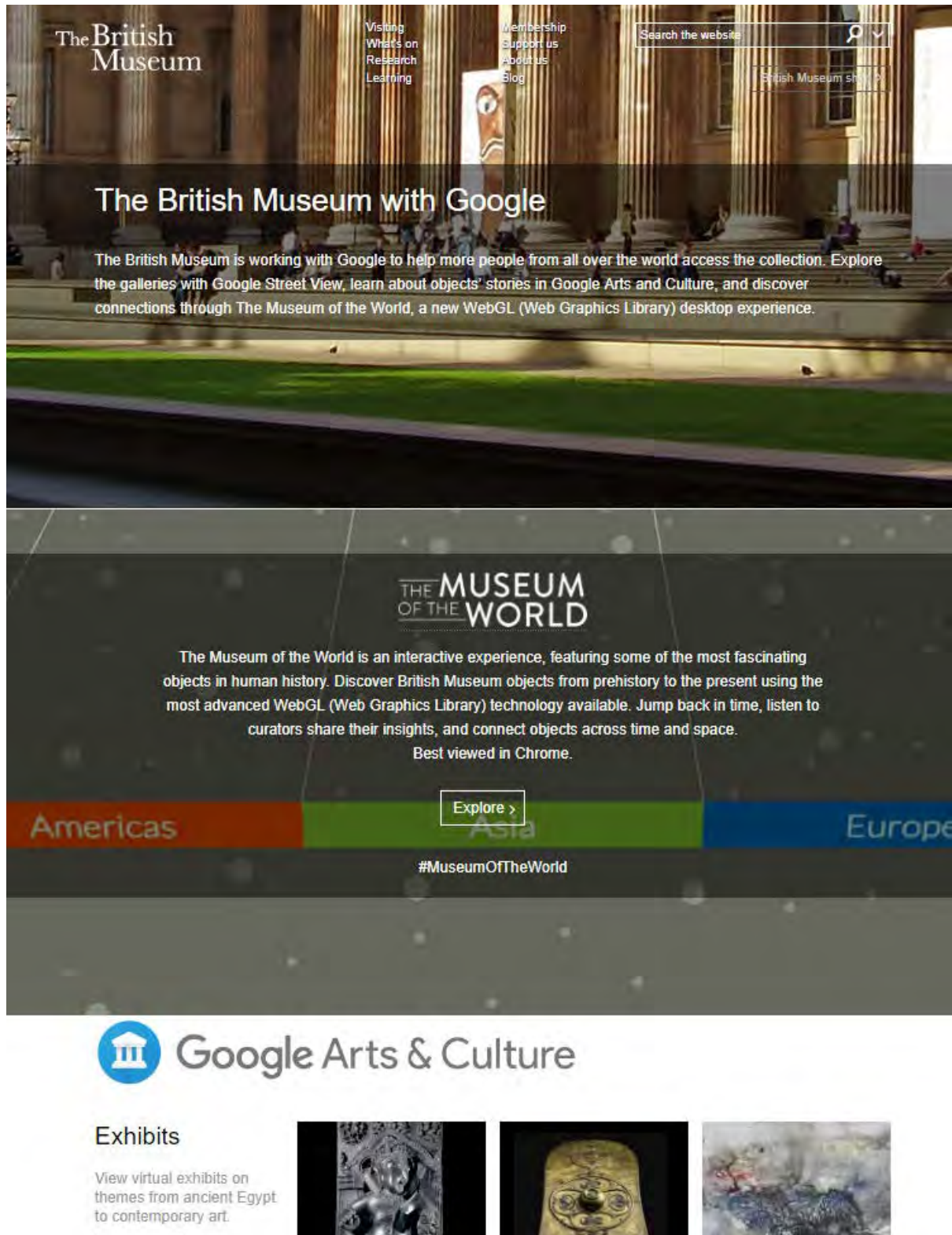


Figure 14

Another brilliant Google partnership is with Cyark. Cyark along with Google Arts & Culture has added 3D models of historic locations and artefacts. By combining these giants, a friendlier user interface is now available for viewing these historical items (figure 15). Whilst the Cyark website has more technical data and information available, the Google version is more interactive and enjoyable to use. Their flow of information is determined by the audience it requires; Cyark is more academic and informative whereas Google is simpler and more entertaining.



Figure 15

In keeping with the 3D theme, another website to mention is Project Mosel (Rekrei, n.d.) which hosts Rekrei; a crowdfunding project using images gathered from museums, monuments, artefacts and locations damaged by time, weather or human intervention. Using the images gathered, 3D models are created and rendered for the user to observe and interact with (figure 16). This project has a great interface for viewing the data as it isn't laden with information the way Cyark is. The images are astounding in detail, however there is far less information about the items uploaded so it may not be the best platform for a researcher.

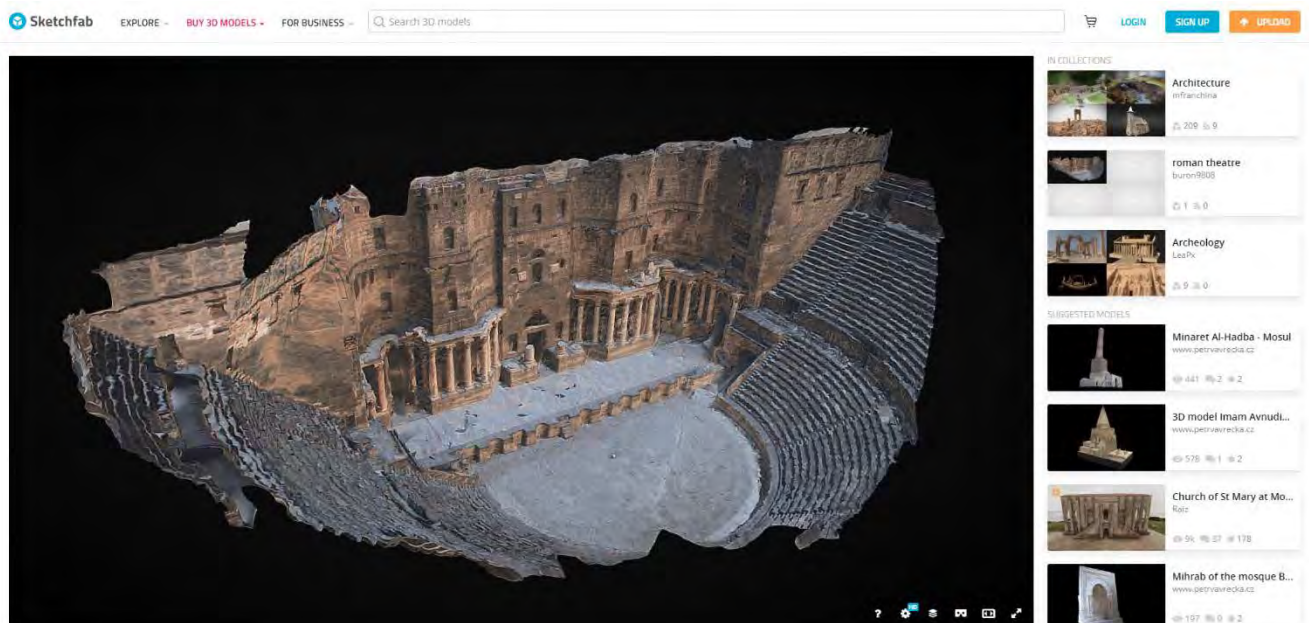


Figure 16

Another website for viewing artworks, galleries, libraries, fashion, music, photography, literature and audiovisual assets - Europeana (Europeana Blog, 2018). It has various sections including Collections – similar to Google Art & Culture, Exhibitions and Blog. Not as impressive as the previously discussed sites but has its own merit in the field. What makes it great is its use of tagging for articles in the blogging section (figure 17). Having the ability to follow tags whilst researching is a large advantage as you can follow what links your research to other genres of importance.

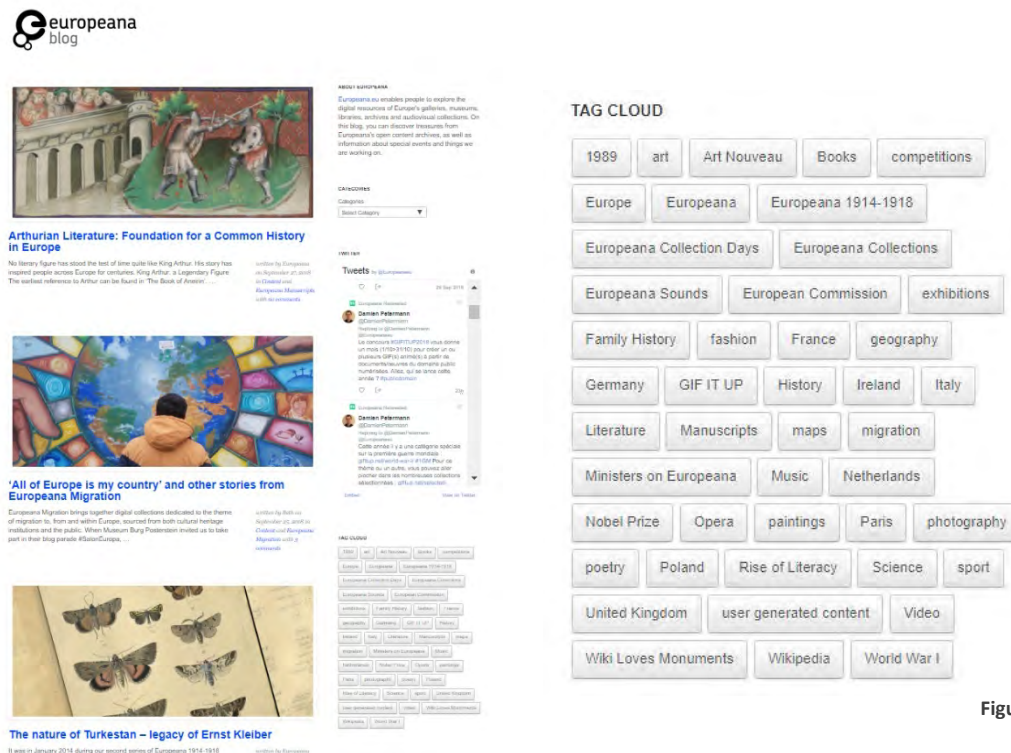


Figure 17

Virtual Touring and Interactivity Summary

What ties all of these sites together is their collection of artefacts and the use of timelines and viewing of artefacts/sites. They are image heavy using 3D often and has high focus on interactivity. The second portion of this analysis will discuss heritage locations across the globe and how they are displayed through mapping technology.

Cultural Heritage In Australia

There are two segments when it comes to discussing Australian History – The indigenous communities of the Aborigine and Torres Strait Island peoples and the settling of English occupants in the late 1788 (Australia's Migration History, 2010).

As mentioned earlier, it is difficult to share Aborigine sites and culturally significant locations due to their sacred protection under numerous federal and state laws (Sacred and Heritage Sites, n.d.). Whilst they are accessible through applications for relevant individuals and researchers, the public is blocked from accessing this information. Henceforth there is little information to display on mapping technology in this field; the websites listed in this report do have mapping but it is generally showing regions of importance to the indigenous people and not specific details.

Thus far, Rock Art Database (Haupt, 2014) is seemingly the only website of its kind which displays regions of cultural significance to the indigenous peoples of Australia. Locating information about culturally significant sites in Australia are usually listed on websites for national parks e.g. the Kimberly Foundation Australia (Kimberly Foundation, 2016) which contains details about culture, history and art within the region. No interactive global heritage sites contain information like this.

There are numerous government websites for indigenous cultural heritage: there is a federal site and sites for each state and territory within the country. This is due to the different laws under each state which all falls under various biodiversity, conservations, heritage and commonwealth laws (Indigenous Heritage Laws, 2018).

The second portion of this analysis is the heritage listing process of the Anglo-Australian culture. This is more publicly accessible online as there are no protection laws in place. Heritage listed locations and buildings are registered through the government and published on each state's website as well as the federal Australian Heritage Database (Australian Heritage Database , 2018). Whilst the state mandated sites are slightly more interactive with mapping and site viewing icons, the federal website is simple data listed as a search result and wiki-style layout (figure 18).



Figure 18

Conclusion

There are many different access points for cultural heritage worldwide. The United Nations (United Nations, n.d.) and European Union (Official Website of the European Union, 2018) are both large contributors to such repositories of information and support many global websites pertaining to cultural heritage. Each country, state, province and otherwise region has their own method of representing information that is important to their culture and most methods are relatively simple. Companies such as Google and Cyark are leading the way in technologies to rethink how we view information and it is important that we support such methods to preserve our history.

Moving forward from this research, the next step in building a repository of resources for the mentioned project will be finding what methods are obtainable and within scope. The research conducted within this document has greatly expanded possibilities for what is achievable through this project as it progresses.

A recurring theme within these websites is the use of map technology and 3D interactivity. These methods will be the top priority in the project and must be researched to understand their functionality.

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