**Osage: From Analogue to Digital in the Pandemic**

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**ABSTRACT**

Hong Kong has had a difficult three years due to the unprecedented social unrest and COVID-19 pandemic. Every industry has not been able to escape the fate of being vastly affected by the inappropriate and pandemic. Every industry has not been able to escape the fate of being vastly affected by the inappropriate and

**INTRODUCTION**

Hong Kong has had a difficult three years due to the unprecedented social unrest and COVID-19 pandemic. Every industry has not been able to escape the fate of being vastly affected by the inappropriate and ineffective quarantine policies or isolation rules that erode industries’ faith towards the government, with night-time economy and fitness industry facing the most impact. In fact, creative industries have not been exempted from the crisis of the pandemic as all public art institutions have been ordered closed by the government where art fairs, exhibitions, and seminars have been placed on indefinite pause. Art institutions that managed to endure complications scathed by the fifth wave of the COVID-19 outbreak have recently begun to undergo digital transformation by substituting physical bodily engagement with digital interaction to stay persistent and to tackle the challenges and burden of the Coronavirus, or, to be precise, the sharp decline of visitor flow.

The emergence of pandemic had accelerated art institutions to transform human engagement from collection-centric to user-centric, where artworks that are digitally mediated are usually neglected (Giannini & Bowen, 2022). In this case, institutions must now to be digitally integrated and engaged with a diversity of communities in order to remain a presence. This paper explores these matter of contention through the comprehend of measures on digital activation hold by the Osage Art Foundation, where we could get a grasp on how it could sustain and survive the time of pandemic by integrating materials onsite and online to the art space, which consists of virtual space and physical place.

**BACKGROUND: OSAGE ART FOUNDATION**

The Osage Art Foundation (Osage) was founded in 2004 and has been actively involved in providing assistance and education for younger generation in terms of the synergy of creative and critical thinking, expanding cultural sensitivity and contributing to artistic endeavors that promotes cultural exchange with three major objectives in mind: Creative Communities, Cultural Cooperation, and Creative Capacity (Osage Art Foundation, n.d.). It is possible to say that, regarding the aesthetic appreciation of art, it is crucial for Osage to digitalize the art space to be accessible to all societies and communities.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, Osage had been successfully organizing experimental and hybridized exhibitions that are presented both on-site and online. Ars Electronica 2021 Garden Hong Kong is an instance of exhibition that supports online and offline channels across its programs, ranging from panel discussions to performances. The curatorial investigation at Ars Electronica Garden Hong Kong regarding “Artificial Intentionalities: Post-human humanities in the age of the art-subject” investigates several approaches to better comprehend the complexities that emerge from the interaction between diverse worlds, where computational intelligence challenges societal paradigms, thus, to enhance insights into human societies and environments (HK Garden, n.d.). It is quite obvious that themes are shifting from reality to virtuality in which to adapt digital aesthetics and culture that emphasizes the digital transformation.

**DIGITALIZATION: OSAGE GALLERY**

It now seems to me that art institutions are capable to be connected with a wider range of communities and viewers when information could be delivered remotely. Here, Osage has taken an “Art in the Cloud” approach to exhibit art across online art space where it has collaborated with media artists worldwide to contribute video documentation of their works. If this is the case, this remote hybrid experience in a way connects artists and participants across cultural boundaries for global collaboration. To take an example, Osage has been officially and formally screening and sharing artists’ works via the virtual zoom space. To take another example, artworks are made possible to be viewed with website browsers, to be explicit, artworks are exhibited by a 360º video that could be either streamed or pre-recorded which allows users to interact with it through the Internet and social media platforms, such as Vimeo, YouTube, and Facebook. Besides, to be affected by the epidemic situation in Hong Kong, Osage has also been supporting and collaborating with artists of their remote works that may not require a public space but rather a virtual exhibition. Nevertheless, with the rapid digital transformation, art institutions might encounter a fundamental question that how artworks could be more interesting, aesthetically appealing and to be intertwined digitally when visitors return during the post-pandemic period (Giannini & Bowen, 2022)?

**References**

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