How to hang paintings on digital walls: processes and challenges of translating a physical art exhibition into a virtual showcase on the Kunstmatrix platform

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2019: Invitation to conceptualise and curate exhibition:

Conceptual basis/framework for exhibition:


- INITIALLY for the gallery of the NRF South African Research Chair in South African Art and Visual Culture, Faculty of Art, Design and Architecture, University of Johannesburg.

- planned of exhibition: Thursday, 23 April, 18:00
2020/2021: conferences go virtual

INVITATION

You are invited to

Disturbing Views: Visual Culture and Nationalisms in the 20th and 21st Centuries

an online conference hosted by the South African Research Chair in South African Art and Visual Culture, University of Johannesburg.

15–18 November 2021

To learn more about the conference and to request to attend it, please visit www.southafricanartandvisualculture.com
FAMILY DISSEMBLANCE: a coda to gendering in Afrikaner nationalist discourse
Kunstmatrix Technologies is a provider of digital tools and software solutions and products to present, organise, and sell art online, addressing needs and demands of a transforming, globalised arts industry.

- Used by artists, galleries, collectors, museums, curators, auction houses, art fairs.

- Founded 2007 by Christoph Lauterbach and Hartwig Bentele, joined in 2008 by Dr Kristian Hildebrand

- First to offer self-curated exhibitions (2009), a ‘trial hanging’/exhibition preview augmented reality app (2012), a ‘virtual art fair’ (2014).
Initially, digitisation takes off slowly, growing towards 2017.

Since early 2020, outbreak of Covid-19 pandemic and international lockdowns, temporary closure of museums and galleries, large scale migration to digital platforms to provide virtual exhibitions

- curators and artists explore alternative ways to showcase artworks through the digitisation of exhibitions and collections
FAMILY DISSEMBLANCE: A CODA TO GENDERING IN AFRIKANER NATIONALIST DISCOURSE
Going digital
Setting up:

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>IMAGE</th>
<th>ARTWORK</th>
<th>ACTION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><img src="image1.png" alt="Image" /></td>
<td>Octavia Roodt, In die hemel (In heaven). Frame 2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="image2.png" alt="Image" /></td>
<td>Octavia Roodt, In die hemel (In heaven). Frame 1</td>
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<tr>
<td><img src="image3.png" alt="Image" /></td>
<td>Richardt Strydom, Wound Vessel 6</td>
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2022/11/24
Exhibition design
The exhibition

FAMILY DISSEMBLANCE: A CODA TO GENDERING IN AFRIKANER NATIONALIST DISCOURSE
Thematic layout
Access to artist’s statements, bios, contact details, information about the work and pricing
Pierre Fouché

76 x 44 cm (h x w)
Acrylic cord, Binding Wire

for sale

Artist's website

Pierre Fouché’s work focusses on portraiture and the gaze, photography and representation, appropriation and web-media cultures, as well as some forays into overt queer politics. Often informed by world art history, his desire to understand the machinery of contemporary visual cultures tends toward the Romantic. His consistent marriage of iconography with craftsmanship also contributes to this reading.
Challenges and solutions: sculptural works
Challenges and solutions: sculptural works
Challenges and solutions: sculptural works
Advantages and disadvantages

• Expense: basic, 50 artworks = $12USD per month, $30 for 250 artworks, $60 for 600 artworks.
• Limited options of exhibition spaces
• Ease/difficulty of software
• Artworks are not done justice, even with 3D modelling of sculptures: the viewer experience and quality of work are diminished.
• Spaces may dwarf works
• Balance between quality of artwork and processing speed
• Dependence on artists to provide high quality images of work
• Time-consuming to enter data
• Viewer experience may be too impersonal, mechanical, disembodied
• Virtual reality fatigue of viewers / visitors
• Over-saturation of market and offering
• When subscription ends, access to exhibition expires.
Advantages and Disadvantages:

• Ease/difficulty level of software, numerous tutorials available
• Saves costs (transport, insurance, framing, hardware, labour cost, space overheads, opening event, etc).
• Freedom to determine size of space, number and position of artworks, wall colours, frames.
• Creates PDF catalogue
• Allows for experimentation with spaces, layout, scale, and artifacts
• Viewers can access ample information about individual works
• Viewers can view and revisit exhibition at any time, from anywhere
• Viewers can attend virtual ‘walkabouts’ with curators and artists
• International exposure for artists
Advantages

Bordini & Santos (2021):

- Virtual exhibitions and the digitization process of collections and spaces facilitates access through cyberspace and tend to be effective alternatives especially in the face of factors that may limit access to such locations, such as geographical conditions, accessibility and health crises that require social restrictions.

- Access to various exhibitions, collections, archives and content has been widely democratised and facilitated.

- Independent curators and artists can find in this model greater freedom to exhibit their work due to the various possibilities that the digital domain can provide.

In addition:

- As with Instagram, professional websites, Facebook, virtual exhibitions provide alternatives to artists who have been dependent on the ‘middlemen’ such commercial galleries, curators and dealers to show their work to the public and make sales. Therefore empowers artists and independent curators who can afford subscription fees, access highspeed internet and devices needed to create exhibitions.

Educational potential: ease of access, relatively cost effective, allows for creative experimentation, suitable for distance learning

Student virtual exhibition projects:
NWU Honours History of Art Curatorial Practice, 2022