AHRC ICT Methods Network Student Bursary Awards

EVA (Electronic Visualisation and the arts) Conference 9 – 13 July 2007

CONFERENCE REPORT

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The EVA (Electronic Information, the Visual Arts and Beyond) London conference 2007 is a 'cross-sectoral, multi-disciplinary, global event for people interested in new technologies in the cultural sector (EVA LONDON about 2007).' One of the main themes of the conference was visualization in the museum and gallery context, and EVA provided an opportunity for the discussion of new media applications and information and communication technologies created for cultural heritage and memory institutions such as museums and libraries. In addition, the conference demonstrated applications of new digital media to museum artefacts and focused on the effectiveness of virtual reality environments in the museum or cultural heritage context in educational settings.

As part of my PhD research, I am investigating the potential of on-line 3D virtual environments to improve access to museums as both an information and educational resource. I presented a paper, 'Exhibit content and learning-related behaviours in 3D on-line museum environments', at the conference and took part in the Visualisation Session (the poster session). Overall, my attendance at EVA has had the following benefits for my research:

- *The integration of the academic community was helpful for discussing my research topic with community members*
  At the EVA conference, I met participants who were interested in the same research field as I am. The integration of the academic community allowed me to discuss theoretical ideas of museums in learning settings and the use of observational studies with community members.

- *Presenting my paper helped me to share my research findings with those who are knowledgeable about the museum field*
  I benefited greatly from presenting my paper at the conference. I shared my research findings with specialists in my field and received feedback that will be useful when I am begin to consider other methods for my research.

- *Reviews from the EVA committee were useful for revisions to my paper, including for validation on the findings of the research*
  The reviews from the EVA committee were given by Dr. Suzanne Keene who is a reader in Museum Studies at University College London. Her feedback was useful when I was making revisions to parts of my paper about evaluation and validation of improvements of learning efficiency as part of the research findings.

- *Meeting professionals and experts who will be useful new contacts and potential candidates for interviewing as part of my work*
  A number of the attendees at the EVA conference were museum curators, multimedia experts and developers who have experience of developing 3D environments at their institutions. I hope to involve specific participants in my work by interviewing them. For example, I have already contacts one of the multimedia experts, Mr. Jordan Klineman, who works at Virtual Gallerie, for an interview.

- *The publication of my paper as part of EVA may be helpful for my viva*
  As EVA is a well respected event, a paper published as part of the conference may be of benefit during in my viva. For example, if an external examiner is not satisfied with some of my research

findings, the external examiner may be more likely to respect the research findings because they were published as part of the conference.

Notes

1. EVA LONDON (2007) **About.** EVA CONFERENCES INTERNATIONAL. Accessed on 16th, July, 2007. Available: http://www.eva-conferences.com/eva_london/about