

Biennale for online video

You Tube, Guggenheim and Hewlett Packard

Background

The video sharing website [YouTube](#) has partnered with internationally renowned [Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation](#) to initiate the first biennial of creative video art. Teaming up with [Hewlett-Packard](#) and [Intel](#), Google's YouTube has created a dedicated section to their site called [Play](#), in an effort to find and showcase the most exceptional talents working in the realm of online video. The partners aim to increase participation in the new media artform, exploiting the opportunity to remove barriers to participation and access to new media art and enhance the artistic and creative reputation of video art online.

The [YouTube Play](#) project illustrates the paradigm shift that has occurred in visual culture over the past two decades, whereby the moving image is increasingly being recognised as part of contemporary-art practices. The YouTube Play and Guggenheim collaboration exemplifies the power of the Internet to catalyse and disseminate new forms of digital media, including online video.

Aims & Objectives

Open to the global online community, YouTube provides a perfect platform from which to reach the widest possible audience in order to discover and showcase the most exceptional talent working in the ever-expanding realm of online video. The Guggenheim's involvement derives from their motive to incorporate more new media and contemporary artforms into their portfolio.

Speaking to the New York Times, Nancy Spector, the Guggenheim's Deputy Director and Chief Curator stated: *"People who may not have access to the art world will have a chance to have their work recognised. We're looking for things we haven't seen before."*

Crucially though, both partners want to raise the reputation and standing of video art online so that it is not perceived to be about skateboarding cats but videos of artistic and creative merit and ambition

1 C. Vogel, 'Guggenheim and You Tube Seek Budding Video Artists', The New York Times, 13 June 2010
www.nytimes.com

are uploaded. YouTube Play now forms a subsidiary branch of YouTube's business, the partnership means both are at the forefront of the sector for online video by facilitating and curating use-generated content video art.

Partnership

YouTube have built a custom designed player and platform for the biennial, Guggenheim are endorsing and curating the project to add to the artistic credibility of the programme, while Hewlett-Packard and Intel are providing their software expertise to the video artists. These technology partners have supported the provision for on-site video stations promoting the partnership at all of the Guggenheim museums as well as online tutorials to support production. Although Andy Brendt, Vice President of the Creative Laboratory at Google and YouTube concedes the this may seem like an unlikely partnership he is keen to stress that "they're really about a lot of the same things".²

Impact and Outcome

It is reported that YouTube has 24 hours worth of video uploaded every minute and a massive two billion videos are being played each day.³ The potential for the scope and scale of the project to grow is thus likely to achieve the aims and objectives of both parties. It is hoped that the project will culminate in a YouTube playlist comprising of the most unique, innovative, groundbreaking video work being created and distributed online. The competition for the first year of the biennial is 31 July 2010 so it is too early to define the impact of the partnership so far.

Future

In recognising social media as an important channel of communication for the arts, the YouTube Play project is the first big step taken by an internationally acclaimed museum body to incorporate online video into an established collection and concomitantly the art historical canon.

Nancy Spector reinforces the crux of this project by about how "*artists should always be challenging the status quo, and that includes the museum*".⁴

2 A. Berndt, speaking in a promotional video for the project, www.guggenheim.org

3 D. Allen, "YouTube videos at the Guggenheim", *Tech Watch*, 15 June 2010, www.techwatch.co.uk

4 N. Spector, speaking in a promotional video for the project, www.guggenheim.org