

Craft – a Project about European Cultural Heritage

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There is a world of cultural heritage available to us; our common cultural heritage that is worth remembering, (re)discovering, and be aware of. In a world where the cultural diversity is increasing, shared cultural heritage is a tool to promote intercultural understanding and create relations between identities, representations and performances of history. For those reasons and many more, we created CRAFT, a project with interdisciplinary roots, working to connect higher educational institutions with cultural institutions and companies to collaborate in interdisciplinary, new and innovative ways. CRAFT is an Erasmus+ Strategic Partnership including six partners in total, representing five European Countries: Denmark, Spain, Portugal, Italy & Slovenia.

The goal of the CRAFT project is to teach new generations of young people about our common cultural heritage by implementing a new Joint Multidisciplinary Curriculum, providing the students with relevant and high-quality skills and competencies needed to meet the expectations of the changing labour market. It is therefore an important feature of CRAFT that the project involves both theory and practice, bringing together both educational and cultural institutions, as well as cultural actors from across Europe.

CRAFT was represented at the 58th International Art Biennale with a Session where we presented and performed our work during a 5-day long workshop. The 58th Art Biennale was titled 'May You Live in Interesting Times' and curated by Ralph Rugoff, and highlighted art that exists in between accepted categories and genres, art which questions the rationales behind our categorical thinking. Our workshop exemplified this approach,

testing aesthetic, behavioural and social conventions in a wide range of events.

Our focus was both on Rugoff's theme and on cultural heritage, with the awareness that the aim of the European Year of Cultural Heritage (2018) was to encourage more people to discover and engage with Europe's cultural heritage, and by doing this to reinforce a sense of belonging to a common European space.

During our workshop at the Art Biennale 2019 in Venice, we worked with a new interdisciplinary educational concept, focusing on the cross-examinations of the cultural heritage of the chair and the traditions of sitting; investigating the comparative historical, cultural and metaphorical differences, the chair embodies as a pleasurable, artistic-playful artefact and socio-functional crafted object. The chosen chair for this event, the Monobloc, was point of departure for the gathered 50 students and teachers in an exceptional teaching module. Through creative, interdisciplinary research exercises, the project discovered, analysed, developed, and transformed key areas of the Monobloc, by situating the chair into a series of particular careful chosen contexts within Venice. The students established their individual critical frameworks and contextualised designs in relation to the sub-themes put forth by the partners of CRAFT – the results were presented at the Biennale Session on Saturday 21. September 2019. A grand result made by many fantastic students, partners and guest teachers who all did a dedicated effort for the success of multiple projects within the frame Design as Cultural Heritage.

The publication of scientific articles, professional reflections and projects in this special issue of *Res Mobilis Journal*, will disseminate the achievements and ideas generated by the CRAFT project, not only by the members of the partnership but also by other colleagues from different disciplines such as Design, Architecture, Art History and Performance, Sociology, Civil Engineering, Anthropology and related theoretical professions.

It is therefore with great honour this special issue of *Res Mobilis Journal*, focusing on Design as Cultural Heritage is edited and launched by CRAFT partner professor Ana Maria Fernandez Garcia at *Historia del Arte y Musicología*, Universidad de Oviedo, Spain. An academic set-up that enables the distribution and transferal of knowledge from the CRAFT project.