

## El repositorio digital como posibilidad de preservación de la cultura artística

*The digital repository as a possibility of preserving artistic culture*

*O repositório digital como possibilidade de preservação da cultura artística*

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### Resumen

El objetivo de este trabajo fue describir los principales pasos seguidos en la creación del Repositorio Digital de la Cultura Artística (ReDCA), el cual ha sido diseñado con el propósito de salvaguardar y divulgar la cultura artística de estudiantes, profesores y egresados de la licenciatura en Artes Visuales de la Facultad de Bellas Artes de la Universidad Autónoma de Querétaro. Para este fin, se han implementado tanto metodologías de las ciencias humanas como herramientas informáticas y de edición digital. En concreto, para la gestión de arquitecturas de redes y comunicación se eligieron los siguientes recursos: un servidor Linux Ubuntu 16.04, el lenguaje de programación Php 5.6, la licencia Apache 2.0, el sistema de gestión de bases de datos Mysql y la plataforma Omeka en su versión 2.5.2, la cual ofrece un manejo sencillo y amable tanto para administradores como para usuarios. Hasta el momento se considera que la meta principal de este trabajo ha sido alcanzada, pues el repositorio ya se encuentra en línea y sus colecciones están creciendo, lo cual ofrecerá beneficios sociales, ya que con esta iniciativa se podrán proteger, divulgar e incluso estudiar las obras digitalizadas.

**Palabras clave:** cultura artística, humanidades digitales, repositorio digital.

## **Abstract**

The objective of this work was to describe the main steps followed in the creation of the Digital Repository of Artistic Culture (ReDCA), which has been designed with the purpose of safeguarding and disseminating the artistic culture of students, professors and graduates of the degree in Visual Arts of the Facultad de Bellas Artes of the Universidad Autónoma de Querétaro. For this purpose, human sciences methodologies as well as computer tools and digital edition have been implemented. Specifically, for the management of network and communication architectures the following resources were chosen: a Linux server Ubuntu 16.04, the programming language Php 5.6, the Apache 2.0 license, the Mysql database management system and the Omeka platform in its version 2.5.2, which offers a simple and friendly handling for both administrators and users. So far it is considered that the main goal of this work has been achieved, as the repository is already online and its collections are growing, which will offer social benefits, since with this initiative they will be able to protect, spread and even study the works digitized.

**Keywords:** Artistic Culture, Digital Humanities, Digital Repositories.

## **Resumo**

O objetivo deste estudo foi descrever os principais passos seguidos na criação do Repositório Digital de Cultura Artística (REDCA), que foi concebido com o propósito de salvaguardar e divulgar a cultura artística dos alunos, professores e formandos do Bacharelado Artes Visuais da Faculdade de Belas Artes da Universidade Autônoma de Querétaro. Para tanto, foram implementadas metodologias de ciências humanas, bem como ferramentas de informática e edição digital. Especificamente, para o gerenciamento de arquiteturas de rede e comunicação foram escolhidos os seguintes recursos: um servidor Linux Ubuntu 16.04, a linguagem de programação PHP 5.6, a Apache License 2.0, o banco de dados MySQL sistema de gestão e plataforma Omeka sua versão 2.5.2, que oferece um tratamento simples e amigável para administradores e usuários. Até agora considera-se que o principal objetivo deste trabalho foi alcançado desde o repositório você já está on-line e coleções estão crescendo, que oferecem benefícios sociais, e quecon esta iniciativa irá proteger, divulgar e até mesmo estudar as obras digitalizado

**Palabras-chave:** cultura artística, humanidades digitales, repositorio digital.

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## **Introduction**

This article describes the process followed in the creation of the Digital Repository of Artistic Culture (ReDCA) of the Faculty of Fine Arts (FBA) of the Autonomous University of Querétaro (UAQ), which has been designed with the purpose of preserve and disseminate the different creations of students, professors and graduates of said institution. For this, the different services and policies that govern the implementation of this type of technological libraries have been taken into account. Below, each of these aspects is explained, as well as the methodology and results achieved so far.

## **Theoretical perspective of the ReDCA**

The theoretical perspective includes the background and the theoretical framework that supported the planning and execution of the ReDCA.

## **Digital humanities**

The digital humanities (HD) - formerly known as humanities computing - are a concept coined at the beginning of the 21st century by John Unsworth, and range from the design and maintenance of digital collections (digital artifacts) to the analysis of cultural data (heritage and on a large scale. This is an area that combines the use of research methodologies of the human sciences (history, philosophy, philology, linguistics, arts, etc.) with computer tools (databases, data visualization, statistics, etc.) with the purpose of facilitating creation, teaching and research processes in the humanities (Galina Russel, 2012, Rodríguez-Yunta, 2012, Vinck, 2013).

The origin of the HD is in the early works of the Italian Jesuit Roberto Busa, who in the 1940s used the computer of the time to lematise the work of Saint Thomas Aquinas. Then, in 1987, the Text Encoding Initiative was highlighted, a strategy based on the use of computer tools for the coding of electronic texts. Similarly, in the 1990s digital projects arose in the

United States and England (eg, Women Writers Project, Rossetti Archive), as well as in the Hispanic sphere (eg, Admyte, Bidiso, PhiloBiblon).

The main association of HD in the world is the Alliance of Digital Humanities Organizations (ADHO), which is constituted by three institutions: The Association for Literary and Linguistic Computing (ALLC), the Association for Computers and the Humanities (ACH) and the Society for Digital Humanities (Société pour l'étude des médias interactifs) (SDH / SEMI). In the Latin American area, different organizations that have emerged in recent years stand out, such as the Spanish association Humanidades Digitales Hispánicas (founded in November 2011) (López Pozas, 2014), the Humanidades Digitales Argentina (created in February 2013) or the Observatory of the Digital Humanities (inaugurated in 2015 in the Dominican Republic). In this context, the RedHD group from Mexico, created in June 2011 and constituted in February 2014 as an association, also stands out.

Due to this boom and regional variety of HD, these have been used to study not only the most representative works of medieval or Renaissance art, but also the regional artistic production, as in the case of the iArtHisLab Research Group, which has been proposed become a research, innovation and training laboratory to evaluate the history of digital art, specifically in Spain. Also, during the III Workshop on Digital Art History-initiative of the Vice-Rector for Research of the University of Malaga, the Department of Art History (through its iArtHisLab Research Group) and the Athena R & D project (HAR2009- 07068) - the intention to analyze, from HD, the artistic culture of Spain and America. The result was the creation of the International Network of Digital Studies on Art Culture.

In the Mexican context, the National Institute of Fine Arts (INBA) announced in August 2014 the foundation of a digital artistic research and education repository in order to become the most important electronic container of information about the arts of the country. To date it contains papers, conferences, articles, publications and various audiovisual and learning materials, which are archived with the consent of their respective authors, who sign a letter of authorization for their production to be disclosed without profit. This repository is part of the recent reforms to the legislation on education, science and technology, which seek

to offer a national storage space that can be consulted by students, professors, researchers and the general public.

### **Digital repositories**

Digital repositories are technological spaces that serve to preserve, manage and disseminate the information they hold, and can be thematic or disciplinary, data or orphans. These are based on an open access principle, that is, a philosophy that allows users to "read, download, copy, distribute, print, search, or link the complete texts of scientific articles, and use them with any other legitimate purpose, without other financial, legal or technical barriers more than the Internet itself" (Doria, Inchaurredo y Montejano, 2013, p. 41).

These technological stores can include a variety of works (theses, papers, posters, etc.) in different formats (textual, audio, video) (D'Alós-Moner, 2010), which must be correctly identified through a series of descriptions or metadata (eg, title, summary, keywords, date, etc.) that are useful for anyone to locate and retrieve easily. Some of the most outstanding characteristics of these spaces are the following: 1) the documents published in them do not have the same format, 2) they verify the belonging of the metadata of each work, not the quality of the content of these, 3) despite the fact that the information they contain is open access, does not infringe intellectual property laws, and 4) can be administered by universities or research groups (Doria et al., 2013; Guédon, 2009; Polanco-Cortés, Garro and Córdoba, 2014). The purpose of these spaces, in short, is to conserve different types of intellectual productions so that they last and can be used by other generations (D'Alós-Moner, 2010).

### **Artistic culture**

Although there is no unambiguous definition for the concept of artistic culture, it can be said, broadly speaking, that it is linked to the set of knowledge and distinctive features, spiritual, material, intellectual and affective of the community of artists and spectators, hence that can be considered from a subjective or objective perspective. Indeed, in the subjective vision the arts are cultivated by means of artists (whether teachers or apprentices), who through the production and reproduction of their works become receptacles, supports artistic

knowledge and, at the same time, symbols of said culture. On the other hand, from the objective perception the arts are cultivated by the spectators or receivers (contemplation), who multiply their aesthetic experiences in and with the arts. The artistic culture, therefore, is the product of the experiences cultivated both by artists and by spectators, each in its own way (Granados, 2018; Rodríguez Ortega, 2013).

## **Methodology**

### **Context of study: Faculty of Fine Arts of the Autonomous University of Querétaro**

The Autonomous University of Querétaro was founded on February 24, 1951 with the establishment of three schools: Preparatory, Law and Engineering. Then, in 1952, the schools of Chemistry and Nursing were created; later, in 1953 the Institute of Fine Arts was founded (in 2000 it became the FBA), while in 1954 the School of Commerce and later the School of Accounting was created.

In the specific case of the FBA, currently holds the following degrees: Visual Arts CU, Visual Design and Communication, CU, Music, CU, Contemporary Popular Music, CU, Performing Arts, CU, Danzario Art, CU, Acting, CU, Folkloric Dance, CU, Art Teaching, CU, Restoration of Movable Property (Center), Visual Arts (San Juan del Río), Visual Design and Communication (San Juan del Río), Music (San Juan del Río) and Teaching of Art (San Juan del Río). He also has a specialization in Web Design and three master's degrees: Contemporary Art and Visual Culture, Management and Management of Artistic and Cultural Projects, and Hypermedia Design and Communication. Regarding the number of students, in total 1214 students studied, of which 515 are from the Bachelor of Visual Arts (LAV). Likewise, of the 159 teachers that the FBA has, the majority collaborates with the aforementioned specialty.

### **Problem and objective**

In the FBA of the UAQ, both professors and students produce materials and expressions of artistic knowledge that have been acquired through the professional study of the arts, hence it can be said that this process also generates an artistic culture. However, most of the time

this is only presented in galleries or museums, so it can be lost or go unnoticed by a wider audience.

For this reason, the objective of this paper is to describe the main steps followed in the creation of a digital repository (ReDCA), which attempts to safeguard and disseminate the artistic culture of the UAQ FBA. For this purpose, human sciences methodologies as well as computer tools and digital edition have been implemented. In this regard, it is worth noting that while it is true that a repository usually contains written documents, the one presented in this document also contains visual and audiovisual material of the visual artists, specifically students, graduates and professors of the Visual Arts degree of the mentioned faculty. So far it has not been possible to work with works of other educational programs due to the multiple curricular offer offered by the FBA. However, it is expected that this initiative can progressively be implemented in the other careers of this institution.

### **Hypothesis**

La hipótesis planteada es la siguiente: la creación de un repositorio digital —en este caso, el ReDCA— puede contribuir a preservar y divulgar la cultura artística de la FBA de la UAQ.

### **Procedure**

For this project, the following procedure was proposed:

1. Planning of the digital repository of the artistic culture of the FBA.
  - a. Definition of the type of repository.
  - b. Definition of objectives and target audience (where are we going?).
  - c. Definition of policies.
    - i. Intellectual property.
    - ii. Deposit.
    - iii. Institutional
2. Design of the digital repository of the artistic culture of the FBA.
  - a. Defining the structure of the repository.

3. Collection of digitized preliminary material for the Digital Repository of Artistic Culture of the FBA in its functional model phase.
  - a. Study of documentation techniques.
  - b. Collection of images, and letters of agreement and satisfaction of exhibition.
4. Tests for the modeling of the digital repository of the artistic culture of the FBA.
  - a. Software study.
  - b. Software installation.
  - c. Graphic interface.
  - d. Usability and evaluation tests.
  - e. Digitization tests.
  - f. Semantic search tests.
  - g. Digital data analysis tests.

## Results

Next, the procedure followed in the creation of the ReDCA is described. First of all, on the management of network and communication architectures, a Ubuntu Ubuntu 16.04 server, the Php 5.6 programming language, the Apache 2.0 license, the Mysql database management system and the Omeka platform in its version were chosen. 2.5.2, which offers a simple and friendly management for both administrators and users. Also, it was determined to use a Creative Commons 2.5 license for everything related to the intellectual property of the authors.

For this work, the collaboration of professors (José Olvera, Mauricio González, José Alfredo Cañas), administrative staff (Karlo Gutiérrez, Claudia Osorio, Verónica Rubí) and one student (Esmeralda Espinosa), all from the FBA, was requested. Likewise, the director of the FBA, Dr. Eduardo Núñez Rojas, was asked to recognize these people for the collaboration offered.

As for the archives stored in the ReDCA, procedural manuals were designed for the digitalization of both plastic works and cataloging, although until now only static images or audiovisual files of the plastic work have been published. Also, it is worth noting that it has been decided to accept only the works carried out by the FBA community of the UAQ



(students, professors and graduates), since the purpose is to stimulate the realization of future investigations that focus on the study of continuities and ruptures detected in the themes and techniques implemented in the workshops, for example, artistic production of the FBA. Even so, when an interested party wants to disclose the digital copy of his work, it must have the approval of a professor specialized in the subject or artistic technique, and be accompanied by a publication authorization for an indefinite period in which the licenses are specified. upon which the storage of said work is based. On this matter, it should be clear that an image stored on this platform remains the property of its author, and that the ReDCA and the FBA only help the artist's impulse. In this sense, Facebook has been used to achieve greater scope of the repository, always taking care of the copyright of the images. In fact, as of Tuesday, February 6, 2018, the ReDCA began to be fed with the items or digital objects of the collections that were already available..

In this regard, it is worth noting that the ReDCA is based on Dublin Core's policies and metadata, and that the items must go through an arbitration filter made by experts in the field. The metadata of the item is inserted with programs external to the Omeka technology in jpg images with an average quality of 2 MB to avoid its reproduction. Each file contains its technical file and its metadata file for publication and internal control, following the open access regulations. In addition, and foreseeing a problem in any of our storage bases, all the data generated for each digital object is preserved in the server, in different clouds of the internet and in external hard drives.

On the other hand, the user management that Omeka technology allows is the following: superuser, administrator, collaborator and researcher, who, according to each role, have the ability to manage digital objects or supervise the work of storing the items, although people can also consult the ReDCA without the need of a user, password or permission to access.

The ReDCA manages the content by managing a list of collections that includes each of the careers or research centers in force in the FBA, especially the Bachelor of Visual Arts. The artistic diversity has forced to make divisions and subdivisions to order the storage of the production and the artistic culture of this degree. For the level of services and resources in the ReDCA search options have been developed by keywords, booleans, exact match or

type of record. The access is simple and the preview is adequate. Also, there is a section of download formats for the image.

In addition to this process, it should be noted that a research stay was also made at the National Autonomous University of Mexico (UNAM) with the following specialists: Isabel Galina (Institute of Bibliographic Research), Ricardo Alvarado (Institute of Aesthetic Research), Pablo Mirado (Faculty of Philosophy and Letters, and creator of the first UNAM repository), and Ernesto Priani (founder of the Digital Humanities Network in Mexico). This experience served to define with precision the type, objectives, policies and structure of the repository, as well as to fix the digitalization and cataloging techniques.

Given the above, the following is the definition, mission and vision of the ReDCA:

### *Definition*

The ReDCA is a platform that shows the artistic production made by students, graduates and professors of the Faculty of Fine Arts of the UAQ. With this the Faculty of Fine Arts seeks to innovate in the fields of new technologies and with it, through a digital space for the deposit and dissemination of artistic production, consolidate the work done by students, graduates and teachers. The digital repositories, in fact, are a platform for storage and functional dissemination to publicize the work of Queretaro artists or Queretaro residents with impact and national and international reach.

### *Mission*

The ReDCA has as Mission to create a sense of identity and unity, rescuing the untold history of the arts in the FBA, through digitalization and conservation in images, audios and digital videos, because recognition is achieved in conservation that makes tradition, and the FBA as such, already has a broad educational and formative trajectory of artists, which can be digitally protected for patrimonial purposes.

### *Vision*

Become a local, national and international reference of the artistic culture of the FBA and the UAQ in terms of the preservation, conservation and dissemination of this through the digitalization of the material work that in workshops and outside them occurs by students, graduates and teachers.

As can be seen, up to now it is possible to give an account of the development of the ReDCA, but the discussion about whether it is possible to safeguard the artistic culture of the FBA and the functions or uses it can fulfill in this regard is still pending.

## **Discussion**

While it is true that the technical reproducibility and overcrowding of art has been questioned (Benjamin, 2003), it should also be noted that the ReDCA seeks to promote the cultivation of the arts from a democratic format (the digital one) to bring them closer to another number. broad of people. This has two objectives: the first, to generate a greater production of artistic works of different nature (eg, figures, sounds, and not just text), since we are in a time in which the habit of reading Conservation is mainly that of entertaining works.

The second objective is to encourage teaching and research around the arts, which will serve to encourage a more profitable dialogue between artists and spectators. In this sense, the ReDCA also tries to provide material that can be implemented for didactic activities and for the analysis of data that will later have to be disclosed.

However, although all artistic creation should be able to be exhibited for the general public, it is worth mentioning that some people create their works and then hide them from others due to multiple reasons, among which we can mention having been influenced by others. On this aspect, it is worth emphasizing that the FBA teaches that a work can also be based on an existing creation, which is known by the term appropriation, which moves between two extremes: the citation (that is, a strategy through which recognizes the influence) and recycling. An example of the latter, in the words of Baudrillard (2007), is evident in postmodern art, which tends to recycle even shameless intervention, as happened with the prints of Goya (Danto, 1999, Groys, 2009). This way, we have reached a moment where art seems to break with its previous tendencies to find new forms of expression, such as installation and performance, which always materialize in a changing context.

On the other hand, modern and postmodern art, in some way, continue in a capitalist scheme, since works can accumulate (museums are accumulations of pieces, and the repository works like this). On this aspect, Crimp (2005) refers to the ruins of the museum,

because now you have the possibility of storing anything in a certain space, which happens with the ReDCA, a type of museum that admits as a display object a support: digital photography.

However, the problem in contemporary art, according to Groys (2009), is that it allows to store or accumulate the record of installations or performances, but never the installation or performance, since the context or the situation of These are unique. Even so, it is necessary to have that record because - in the case of the performing arts, for example - the performances tend to be seasonal and if they have some success, they are repeated. But it is very interesting the way in which artists adapt or evolve according to the interpretations and representations that are made of the same play, to such an extent that the actor already knows his character by heart and even when he must go on stage. In the case of the ReDCA, it offers the possibility that the stored record can not only be disclosed, but also used as a didactic resource or as research material.

Therefore, the ReDCA, in the same way as the digital repository of the INBA, adds to the goals of the proposed reforms in education, science and technology, since it seeks to create a storage space for information, although locally, with the preservation and dissemination of the artistic production of the FBA. This, logically, will result in social benefits, since with this initiative artists can be known by a wider audience. Even so, there is still a need to reflect on the functions, scope and avatars of the ReDCA.

## **Conclusion**

The digital humanities and the arts still have a long way to go together, since the two not only take advantage of digital technologies to develop platforms or repositories (like the ReDCA) in which materials or objects of study and items are digital objects they can be available to researchers and the general public, but also both seek to humanize both users and technologies.

Therefore, the repositories - as warehouses, warehouses or virtual enclosures - fulfill a first mission that over time should be extended to other areas to strengthen human culture and access to knowledge. In this sense, the ReDCA seeks to be not only a space for the protection of the cultural heritage of the UAQ FBA, but also an instrument of dissemination

and artistic and aesthetic training to bring together the most outstanding intellectual exchanges in the region, through of research and dissemination of knowledge generated around the arts of the FBA of the UAQ. In this regard, the ReDCA may well safeguard the artistic culture of this faculty, since the knowledge produced in it is reflected in the digital objects of the artistic production of students, graduates and teachers.

Finally, and to fulfill its mission, vision and functions, the ReDCA has gone through a process of planning and development that has included a series of decisions regarding the technical aspects, among which we can mention having chosen the technology Omeka, the contents, the storage policies and others.

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