

“Bei Liebermanns” VR experience

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ABSTRACT: Berlin, Pariser Platz 7, right next to the Brandenburg Gate, at the lower end of the boulevard Unter den Linden. Here, Max Liebermann painted the most important personalities of the Weimar period in his famous studio on the top floor, which he had fought for against the objection of Emperor Wilhelm II. The house became the international centre of current artistic positions.

The most representative living spaces of the Liebermann family can now be experienced again in Virtual Reality. In a digital journey through time you are a guest of the Liebermanns and have the unique opportunity to visit the music room, dining room, study and of course Max Liebermann's famous studio. Learn more about life at Pariser Platz and marvel at Max Liebermann's impressive art collection, which is now scattered all over the world. Enter the Palais Liebermann and immerse yourself in Berlin's 1920s.

1. INTRODUCTION

The VR project “Bei Liebermanns” is published in the context of the exhibition Liebermanns Welt, Stiftung Brandenburger Tor, being held from November 7th 2019 to March 15th 2020 at the Max Liebermann Haus, Berlin.

The 7min experience transports visitors back in Berlin 1920's into the apartments and atelier of the famous german impressionist artist.

For the first time, it is possible to discover not only more than 20 of his artworks brought together but also part of his collection including works from Manet, Renoir, Monet, Degas and Cezanne to name a few.

The teams of Stiftung Brandenburger Tor and Ikonospace had to research and recreate more than 100 furniture in 3D, using state of the art technologies in 3D graphics ranging from 3D sculpting to photogrammetry.

2. BRINGING ARCHIVES AND LOST ARTEFACTS BACK TO LIFE THROUGH VIRTUAL REALITY

The “Bei Liebermanns” VR experience is a very ambitious project that showcases how VR can be a formidable ally for cultural institutions to bring artefacts back into context.

In order to recreate a close to exact representation of the Liebermann Haus as it was prior to its

destruction during World War 2, an extensive work of research had to be done to collect photographs, floor plans, literature and even paintings.

Thanks to Liebermann's notoriety, the team managed to collect photographs of almost every angle of his apartments and atelier. By chance, the artist even painted his atelier, giving the chance for the team to obtain the proper colors and lighting of the space.

It took overall a handful of 3D artists over 6 months to reproduce more than 100 artefacts ranging from tableware to highly detailed japanese collection items such as the japanese lacquer cabinet shown in Figure 2.



Figure 1: Max Liebermann, surrounded by his collection, 1931 Foto: Fritz Eschen: SLUB Dresden / Abt. Deutsche Fotothek, Fritz Eschen



Figure 2: 3D reproduction of Japanese lacquer cabinet (as seen behind Max Liebermann in Fig. 1)



Figure 3: Music room reproduction in “Bei Liebermanns” VR experience, 2019

Special care was also given to the artworks frames. Using photogrammetry, the team collected original frames of the period and made sometimes up to 100 photographs of the pieces to translate them into detailed 3D pieces.



Figure 4: 3D frame created using photogrammetry and 3D sculpting

3. CONCLUSION

The “Bei Liebermanns” VR experience is a great example of the use of virtual reality in an educational and historical context. It proves that the medium offers a completely new way for the cultural sector to create interactive and immersive experiences that no other medium can offer. Visitors have the chance to get an intimate feel of the life of the artist, creating a tangible connection with the time and space he lived in.

4. ACKNOWLEDGMENT

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The project can be experienced from November 7th 2019 to March 15th 2020 at the Max Liebermann Haus on Pariser Platz, Berlin.