

AthenaPlus MOVIO workshop in Lithuania, instructed by PACKED (Belgium)
Vilnius, May 22, 2014 |
Lithuanian Art Museum (LAM)

MOVIO, an open-licensed tool to create complex digital exhibitions online, presents a new form of providing virtual visitors with diverse digital information material bound together by a conceptual framework. Through its help, the classical museum visit can be further enhanced and enriched, or even be turned into a novel experience of exploring GLAM content solely online at home or elsewhere.

Digital media not only continuously change the way people perceive and interact with cultural heritage objects, but also how they communicate and process the experience. Although certainly browsing a digital exhibition cannot substitute for a physical museum visit, digital exhibitions nonetheless have many obvious advantages. Online digital exhibitions can be visited by people from all over the world at any time. Well curated, these exhibitions are excellent learning tools that can make accessible to the public even the most valuable and fragile artworks and documents, without putting the national and international cultural heritage at risk. Moreover, parts and details of artworks can be made visible that could not be seen otherwise, not even through the direct observation of the original. Digital exhibitions can feature not only an amount of items much greater than any physical exhibition; they are in general also less expensive than their analogue counterparts. The participation of the audience can enrich these digital presentations even further.

In the course of the AthenaPlus project, the MOVIO tool is being refined and developed further by adding multilingual interfaces, and features for education and tourism. Several of the AthenaPlus consortium partners volunteered in creating digital sample exhibitions using MOVIO and in this way also testing its new features, such as storyteller, thematic route, timeline, ontology builder, photo gallery, image hotspot, etc. In order to train project partners in the usage of MOVIO, hands-on workshops in all partner countries are being organized by Work Package 5 delegates. In May 2014, one of the first such full-day training events took place in Vilnius in the Lithuanian Art Museum. Staff members of the Lithuanian Art Museum as well as of the Šiauliai “Aušros” Museum received an introduction of the role of creative tools within the AthenaPlus project and their importance for the cultural heritage sector. Furthermore, they were familiarized with the concept of digital and virtual exhibitions and being presented with practical guidelines such as those published by the INDICATE project (<http://www.indicate-project.eu/>).

In order to make working with the MOVIO tool more convenient, a dedicated training materials wiki has been set up informing users in step-by-step manuals and video tutorials how to work with the different MOVIO components when setting up their exhibitions. The training materials are composed of the following five sections:

- MOVIO getting started: a simple overview of things to keep in mind before creating a virtual exhibition using MOVIO.
- MOVIO manual pages: text and screenshots on how to work with the various MOVIO components.



- MOVIO FAQ videos: short tutorial videos that answer MOVIO-related Frequently Asked Questions.
- MOVIO example exhibition: digital exhibition created to illustrate the different MOVIO components.
- MOVIO installation instructions: fill in the form to receive the installation code.

Following the theoretical part of the training workshop, participants gathered in groups to discuss and mindmap their ideas for their institutions' first digital online exhibition. Both the Lithuanian Art Museum and the Šiauliai „Aušros” Museum were planning to create digital exhibitions with the MOVIO tool as part of the AthenaPlus pilot trajectory subsequent to the training event. After having adapted their initial ideas to the possibilities of MOVIO, the workshop participants could already get started in their own MOVIO installation. They could upload images and texts and experiment with the different functionalities. The two digital pilot exhibitions that result from this training workshop demonstrate how easy and self-explanatory working with MOVIO is. Both museums made intensive use of the diverse MOVIO modules unfolding intricate and interesting stories about their national cultural heritage.

In its digital exhibition, the Lithuanian Art Museum presents the history of the Old University of Vilnius and its cultural and scientific influence on the development of architecture and visual arts in Lithuania and its neighbouring countries. The timeline and storyteller functions were applied to visualize historical facts and key information. Artists who studied and worked at the Old University

of Vilnius since its foundation in 1579 are presented with the help of the ontology builder. Their rich artworks (at present 212 objects) are featured instrumentalizing galleries, hotspots, and storyteller.

The Šiauliai „Aušros” Museum introduced in its exhibition the 1930s modernist architectural heritage of Šiauliai, the fourth largest city in Lithuania. The different MOVIO modules such as photo gallery, timeline, image hotspot, google maps, storyteller, ontology builder, and slideshow help visitors to learn more about the rather unknown architectural history of Šiauliai.

Once curation work with both exhibitions, “Architecture and Visual Arts at the Old University of Vilnius” and “The Modernism Architecture of Šiauliai in the 1930s”, is completed, the exhibitions will be made available online. By the end of the AthenaPlus project in autumn 2015, the MOVIO software will be given its finishing touches. Interested cultural public and private institutions will then be provided with a kit of technical resources that will support them in the realization of digital exhibitions and thematic routes using multimedia content suitable to provide different levels of knowledge to different categories of users. In that way, memory institutions will also be given the opportunity to increase the visibility of cultural masterpieces held in their collections.

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(based on an AthenaPlus blog post authored
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