

REALTIME FILE

ASSOCIATION OF MIDWEST MUSEUMS
TECHNICAL WORKSHOP 2: WEB-BASED CURATORIAL APPROACHES
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>> JUSTIN JAKOVAC: Welcome to this week's Museum Learning Hub Webinar, Virtual Exhibitions, Technical Workshop 2, Web-Based Curatorial Approaches, brought to you by the Digital Empowerment Project, a nationwide initiative organized by the six US regional museum associations and dedicated to providing free self-paced training resources for small museums.

Our inaugural series of online training focuses on digital media and technology topics and is made possible by funding from the Institute for Museum and Library Services.

My name is Justin Jakovac. I'm the Executive Director of the Mountain-Plains Museum Association, and I'm your host for today's program.

I'm a white middle-aged male. My hair is brown and styled with a side-part comb-over. I have a mustache and goatee. I'm wearing a white button-down shirt. In the background there is a gray wall with a teal poster from a 1982 Smithsonian exhibition opening and an abstract painting that I picked up in the (indistinguishable).

In this era of virtual meetings when digital spaces may substitute for our physical sense of place, it is important to reflect on the land that we each occupy and honor the Indigenous People who have called it home. I am speaking to you from my office in Colorado Springs, Colorado, which includes the historic homelands of Arapahoe, Cheyenne, and Ute people.

Wherever we are each located, we like to acknowledge Indigenous nations as living communities. We at the Digital Empowerment Project recognize that our organizations and those of our members were founded within a colonizing society which perpetuated the exclusions and erasure of many Native people throughout the United States and beyond. We ask you to consider that which forms the richness of our world and our profession. Thank you.

And now for a few program notes before we introduce our expert. I'd like to acknowledge today's ASL interpreters and let you know that captioning for this program is embedded in a box just below our YouTube player on our website with controls to adjust for your experience.

The best way to continuously refine our craft is to listen to our attendees. So we ask that you share your candid feedback with us. Following today's program, you'll be sent a link to a satisfaction survey. Sharing your experience in this survey will only take a few minutes and will greatly improve your work. We will address as many questions as time allows.

However, sometimes we are unable to answer all of the questions, and frequently questions arise after reflecting on a program. So we have set up an online community forum for raising those questions, posting answers, and connecting with

your fellow museum practitioners on the website. If you're looking for help between programs, please visit the forum, create a login and post your questions. A member of the community or one of our student technology fellows will get back to you.

Lastly, please follow us on social media to be aware of future programs. Links will be posted in the chat.

It is now my privilege to introduce today's presenter.

Adriel Luis is a community organizer, writer, and curator who believes that collective liberation can happen in poetic ways. His work is focused on the mutual thriving of artistic integrity and social vigilance. He is part of the iLL-Literacy arts collective which creates music and media to strengthen Black and Asian coalitions and is creative director of Bombshelltoe, a collaborative of artists and leaders from frontline communities responding to nuclear histories.

Adriel is the Curator of Digital and Emerging Practice at the Smithsonian Asian Pacific American Center, where he advocates for equitable practices in museums and institutions.

His ancestors are rooted in (indistinguishable) China and migrated through Hong Kong, Mexico, and the United States. Adriel was born on Olum land. Please give Adriel a hearty welcome, and let's begin. Adriel, take it away.

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>> ADRIEL LUIS: Hey, hello, everybody. Hello. How are you? So good to see you. Let's give some folks in the chat just to say what's up or some quick responses or just like pop in some ones if you can hear me or if you agree, things like that, just like to see some activity happening. I guess if that's possible on this platform.

I am tuning in to you today from Tongvar, which is Tongva land. I'm typing this into the chat right here and specifically in Saangna, also known as Venice, California, and Los Angeles. Here over 7,000 years the foundation of where I am has been laid and stewarded by the Tongva people, as well as Chumash as well as Kizh people.

As we begin this conversation, I want to ensure that we are thinking about deep history, even though we're talking about emergent practice and things like digital technology that in order for these technologies to exist, in order for us to tune in right now, it's through continuous, complex relationships with Indigenous history, with natural resources, with forced and uncompensated labor, even with the very devices that we're tuning into each other from. So being mindful of that, I don't take this hour for granted. I appreciate you all for tuning in with me and I set forth with intention for us to be able to

leave this session more empowered and with more tools to do the great work that we do, which is to share knowledge, share culture, and to bring people together.

I'm also really thankful for Alexa, our ASL interpreter, as well as Madison that you saw earlier and who will be joining us. My name sign is Adrzsl. So if you speak with ASL, feel free to refer to me as that.

So anyway, we're going to begin and I guess -- okay. Where do I get to see people tuning in? So I don't feel like I'm just talking to myself? That may not be a thing. Anyway, I'm just going to have faith that y'all are enjoying this and, you know, DM me on this if you have any questions, I guess.

So -- oh, okay. I see. I see. You know what, I'm going to -- so Nancy is letting me know I can actually watch myself, but that's going to be a little bit distracting. So I'll tune in in other ways.

My name is Adriel Luis and I'm a curator at the Smithsonian Asian Pacific American Center. Prior to that I was a full-time artist and web designer and graphic designer and just kind of ways of doing the hustle based on different skills that I picked up, so that included performing music, performing and sharing poetry, and doing workshops across the country around bringing different communities of color together.

And one of the things that really ties together all the different things that I brought to the table when I joined the Smithsonian is that so much of my work and so much of what I know has been cultivated in community. Whether that was growing up in the Bay Area in activism and art circles or by learning how to code and do graphic design through the internet. So just kind of grabbing source code from websites that I liked and piecemealing things together so I could learn how to do some web design.

So today, I mainly wanted to talk to you about -- a little bit about that journey and also about ways that I've kind of sorted out what my role could be as a curator and as a web designer.

So you know, if you give me a second, actually, what I would like to do is not make Nancy relay comments all the time. If I just give myself a second to recalibrate my cybersituation, I think we'll all enjoy the next while a lot more. Because I would love to just see your comments live as they come.

As I figure that out, I'll give you my visual description. I am an Asian man in his 30s. I am situated right now in what I lovingly call my Zoom throne. Behind me, I have Mo Mo, which is a clay ram that I picked up in the Nebikiah (phonetic) and Navajo land in the Southwest and also have various plants that have been pretty much my posse throughout the last year.

All right. Cool, cool, and I think I see you all. Okay. Great. I see your comments. Hello, hello. Hello from Nashville. I am wearing a black T-shirt and some shorts that you can't -- that nobody can really see right now.

So yeah. Let's begin. What I would like to do is actually begin sharing my screen and do it for a quick second and then I want to hop into a little bit of discussion. But I wanted to give you a sense of what this hour is going to look like. You've probably seen the description, and actually, what I can also do is pop this link into the chat. Or actually -- yeah, Nancy, if you wouldn't mind doing that. It's going to be like me typing anonymously, I guess. Okay.

I'm going to figure out this Streamyard chat eventually. I love you all. Thank you so much for bearing with me. So we're going to go through a couple of different things. And I have things out in basically four sections. So first, we'll just talk a little bit about curation and being curators and we'll talk about that a little bit more. And then we'll talk about online decisions. What are some of the decisions that I make when I'm curating an online exhibition, both as a technological -- technologist and a curator, and then no matter where you're coming from with technology or coding, how we can parse through what our roles are, and then I'll offer some examples of the projects I worked on. You have full access to this. I'm not going to do slides today so feel free to use this outline as you would like, if you want to jump ahead or think through things or whatever. But -- yeah. We'll just go ahead and begin. So I'm going to -- great, thanks, Heather. I appreciate that.

So I am the curator of Digital and Emerging Practice at the Smithsonian Asian Pacific American Center, which means my business card has a lot of words on it. So I'll explain a little bit about what that means. So as a curator, as my first curatorial role that I've been sitting in since 2013, so much of my job has been about bringing people together. I think if there is a single liner of who I am as a curator, it's that my job is to find different ways for people to encounter art in community.

The center where I work, the Asian Pacific American Center, focuses largely on people of Asian descent as well as people from the Pacific Islands, and we think about Asian Pacific America not from only domestic Asian American and Pacific Islander American standpoint, but also from a global standpoint. So we think about the experiences of those living in the United States and its territories, but we also think about people throughout the world who have been impacted by globalization, by militarization, by colonization.

And particularly, from the United States, the Smithsonian, as you can imagine, has some colonial baggage. In the mid-1800s, the Wilkes Expedition scoured the Pacific region, Southeast Asia, the Pacific Islands, the Western Coast of the Americas and just took stuff, killed animals, all for the curiosity and discovery and knowledge of people in the West.

There's been a lot of growth. There's a lot of reasons why I'm very proud to be at the Smithsonian, but at the same time, I think it's important, working at a large institution, or any institution, to acknowledge that history. It's that history that makes it possible for me to be here and do the work that I hope is productive for the world.

That said, the center where I work is not a museum. So I guess if you think about, for example, in 2015-2016, we saw the opening of the National Museum of African American History and Culture, we're currently awaiting the opening of the National Museum of the American Latino and also the National Women's History Museum. And sort of a prequel to a museum is the existence of a center. For us, we don't necessarily see a museum in any kind of tangible future. Sort of in the Smithsonian I feel like the Little Leagues, but since I've always worked in underground culture, emergent culture -- I loved when the internet was, you know, newly available to the public and just kind of seeing it grow. And so I've really embraced the fact that we don't have a museum. I feel like it gives us a lot of opportunity to be imaginative, not only with the ways that we present exhibitions and not only with the ways that we use technology, but also how we think about communication in general.

I think one of the big gifts of the internet is that we have a forum for peer-to-peer exchange, whether that's file sharing or knowledge sharing. And that really runs counter to how we see traditional museums. Within my own center, we have a staff of about a dozen. We have four curators and staff that are doing operations of administration. We don't even have social media personnel on our staff. We don't have a webmaster. So even though my job as a curator isn't to build the Smithsonian APA website, I did. And even though my job isn't necessarily to build out the frameworks or the templates for our only exhibitions, I do. And though that's my own particular experience that I know is a little bit unique compared to other curators. But I'm sure all of you have various experiences.

So now that I kind of feel like I have a handle on looking at this chat, I'm curious, do you mind popping in, y'all, like, you know, the size of your organization or institution? Do you identify as a curator? If you don't identify as a curator, what do you identify as?

And I'm also curious, this is something that curators like to ask each other. What do you do on a day-to-day basis? Which I know can sometimes be a very loaded question and very difficult to answer.

I think one of the things that really ties a lot of us together is that we spend a lot of our time doing what we wouldn't necessarily describe as curating. You know, it's the close of the fiscal year right now, so I'm like writing out a lot of purchase orders and doing a whole lot of paperwork. So cool. Heather has a team of eight people. Heather is a curator. All hands on deck, right? We don't have a PR team on our side either, and not everything floats to the top at the castle. We don't get a press release for every single project that we do. Yeah. Yeah. Okay. 100 staff, head of production, library, we have a librarian archivist in the house, curator, staff of four. Beautiful. Cool. Cool.

Exhibition developer, working on a syllabus. Director with a staff of two. Godspeed! The APA Center was one of those up until, I would say, 2010-2011. Two staff, Franklin Odo, our Founder, and Gina Inocencio, who was program manager and education specialist at the same time. Curator of a 55-year-old community-born nonprofit museum, three full-time staff. And cool, cool. We have a lot in common.

I guess our staff is considered quite small at the Smithsonian, but, you know, I've found that when I'm in circles with nonprofit organizations or grassroots, they're like, wow, 12 whole people? So yeah, I mean, so again, I think one of the things that ties us all together is, you know, we consider it a luxury to have someone full time on tap to design our exhibitions and things like that.

So the main thing I wanted to ask and talk about in this part of this consideration is like, when am I a curator and when am I a webmaster or a web designer? And how do you sort of set my guardrails, especially in an organization where we have to be all-hands-on-deck? And I would say this question relates not only to what goes on in only exhibitions, but in general.

When I first came on to the center, I was curator, but also webmaster and then also social media person. And so I was like writing the Twitter, writing the Facebook, launching the Instagram. This was back in 2013. And it was a lot. And I had my push notifications on, you know, getting interrupted at dinner, getting pinged late at night, all of that. So part of it was really difficult, was that, you know, working at the Smithsonian, people just assume that if you've got that Smithsonian handle, then you must be behind a major team that is not even a human being with feelings that needs to eat dinner and go to bed on time behind the boards. So I think setting

those guardrails has been important, not only the work that I do with the public but also how I engage my staff.

Sometimes that means not jumping into things that might be opening a whole can of worms. It means not necessarily activating a social media account every time that platform becomes popular with the public. And I think one of the main things that is sort of my mantra as curator of digital is, you know, this is my opinion, y'all, but to never do a project just because I'm enamored by the technology. And I guess what I mean by that is, currently, there's a lot of fascination at the Smithsonian and also with a lot of other museums with NFTs, so a lot of the conversations has been like, we've got to do NFTs! We've got to do NFTs! And there hasn't been a lot of conversations about how or why or what's the point. NFTs are nonfungible tokens, they're a blockchain sort of data that galleries and artists have been using to sort of, you know, create new frameworks for ownership of art, particularly digital arts. I have two workshops so I'm not going to explain the whole thing. In general, I'm not going to use jargon. If I do, hold my accountable and let me know and I'll be happy to explain things.

Cool, cool. So when I'm thinking about online elements for a website or for an online exhibition, there's a number of different questions that I need to think about and that I want to share with you all. I guess the first question is like, well, what is an online exhibition? And what is the difference between an online exhibition and a website? Is an online exhibition a website in the first place? Yes, it is. An online exhibition is a website. Basically, anything that you can pretty much open up on your browser is a website. It's all pixels. And I know that sounds really basic, but it's something that I also keep in mind often.

Prior to working in museums, when I was touring with my band, the way that I taught myself how to build websites was actually I needed to promote the band and I couldn't afford a web designer, so I just like started learning HTML. I would right-click a website, click view, source code, and just sort of go in and figure out how to read it. And then sort of just build websites through that, right?

What really helped me, by even just seeing code, even before I learned how to read it, was that I could see it was all code. A good reminders that it's all pixels, it's all just domains, pixel, texts, and images. So when we hold currency on various websites, that's collective imagination. When you go to, you know, Scooby-Dologspot.com and open up an article and open up NewYorkTimes.com and open up an article and you place more value on one website versus another or you feel prouder when your

writing ends up on one website versus another, it's all based on this collective consensus that the pixels you see on the screen at NYtimes.com are more important than random blogspot.com. So with the Smithsonian, it's a similar situation. I recognize the power that you have in being a webmaster is that because we have this prime real estate, SI.edu or SmithsonianAPA.org real estate that people will place a certain value or weight on it. And that's value that we have to take seriously. But it's also an area of flexibility. It's an area where we can bring representation and communities to in the past have been sidelined by ivory towers that deem themselves more important than others, people that have deemed themselves more important than other people, and we can democratize conversations and share knowledge.

I want to share the stage with how I'm looking at line exhibitions. Oftentimes I encounter people who are interested in curating an online exhibition and they get out up on questions on web design that wouldn't have been asked if it was a physical exhibition.

So one way I might break it down is as a curator, our rules vary, from organization to organization. Typically, a Smithsonian curator at one of the museums, they're not drilling holes in the wall, hanging up the frames, putting things in display cases. There's entire departments and entire sets of staff that can do that, right? If you work at a small museum, your experience is going to be a bit different. I remember traveling around and meeting a curator of a gallery who helped one of our artists deliver her baby. Like curators do a whole bunch of different things, right? And oftentimes they're things that might not necessarily be found in your job description or in the description of the job that you applied for, but if your job is to bring people together to experience art or history or culture, sometimes it just comes down to, on a day-to-day basis, I do what it takes to get things done, right? And in some cases, it is about building a website.

And so how do we actually go about doing that? How do we make sure that we maintain the sanctity or the sanity of being a curator while at the same time opening the can of worms of what it means to build a website or things like that?

So a couple of things I like to consider. One is thinking about different elements of a website. Especially times when I'm thinking about, like, oh, this would be really cool if I could like create this animated element or if I could make this thing, you know, do something special when someone taps it or clicks on it. I'm constantly having to ask myself if that cool gadget that I want to incorporate into the online exhibition is actually conducive to the exhibition itself, the topic of the

exhibition itself, or am I feeling like I'm just trying to showcase something cool I saw in the website or I would like to try and create, right?

It becomes really tricky, because when you're kind of just putting together different kinds of content, you're thinking about different kinds of framework. You're thinking about how you want to frame the text, how you want to format things. It's similar to a physical space. But regardless of how deep you are into curating how small your place is, there's a difference between installing the exhibition and building the gallery. Bringing in the bulldozer, framing the walls, building the building itself. I think of the same thing with building an online exhibition. It's my job to curate. Does it involve installing and when am I starting to go into the territory of like building an entire website and focusing all of my time and energy and focus on figuring out how to build the website, figuring out how to fix the curve, figuring out how to deal with bugs, as opposed to focusing on whatever the focus of my exhibition is supposed to be. I hope that makes sense.

And so the questions I ask, does this element enhance or distract from the curatorial focus? Is this element conducive to my institution's goals?

Let me speak a little bit less abstractly about this. For example, let's go super basic, like a slideshow, an automatic slide show on the website or an online exhibition. If I'm thinking I want to build an online exhibition and oh, my God, I want to do a slideshow, but I don't know the first thing about doing a slideshow, that's the point where I'm asking this question. Is this slideshow something that I think would just look really cool? Would it actually enhance the experience of the viewer? And if not, then it might be something I can just let go. If it is something, if this slideshow is something that will really add value to the experience of the viewer to this online exhibition, then I think that's when it's worth it to go through the various questions of what it would mean to actually build that out.

And then some of the questions that would go into that is, what's the learning curve for implementing this element? When I began building websites, you know, I would go on various forums and sometimes doing something cool on a website is just some code that you can copy from a forum, paste into your code, and then sort of like switch out the different variables and it goes live. And sometimes it requires, you've got to go into, you know, databases, you've got to figure out snippets of other kinds of code. It becomes a whole thing, and then I have to sort out whether or not the hour spent learning how to do it,

implementing it, and troubleshooting it is actually going to pay out in the experience of this website.

If I can't be the one to do it, then -- or no one else on my staff can do it, then I need to go into the realm of hiring someone else out to do it. And then the question becomes, what's the time and resource cost for this element? How much would I be willing to pay for it, and that goes into questions of affordability and also equity, right?

So, for example, if I'm building an online exhibition that's about, you know, the history of labor rights, and then I want to build up this cool website node and I'm like, I can go on O desk and hire someone in India for \$3 an hour to build it out. Easy, right? Sure. You can get that done. It's very tangibly and affordably possible. But does that speak to the soul of what your exhibition is about? Are you still going about building this exhibition in a way that is conducive to what you're trying to convey to the rest of the people, right? If you're building a website that's about the environment and about environmental sustainability, but you've got a bunch of different flashing colors and you've got, you know, a ton of images that are taking up lots and lots of gigabytes of loading time -- maybe not gigabytes, megabytes of loading time and things like that, your website is asking for a bigger toll from the environment. And then the question is, are you just doing something that just looks cool or is it speaking to the soul of what your exhibition is about?

I guess like -- one more example is with accessibility. If you're building an online exhibition around equity and accessibility, but you really want to have these moving, you know, like these moving images that would be really difficult to add accurate descriptions to or requires a lot of sound but can't be interpreted, is that really following the soul of your museum. If you're doing an exhibition about Indigenous communities in rural areas, but the website isn't one that can load quickly in those areas -- I think these questions are much more important than spending a lot of time figuring out, how do I get this really cool thing that I saw on this one website on to my website?

So that goes into the last question that I have on this outline, how sustainable and accessible is it? So I know that I'm rambling a little bit, and I kind of want to hear from folks in the chat while we give an opportunity for the -- the interpreters already switched out. Great. I hope that I gave you -- gave you enough of a -- of a break, Alexa. Sorry about that. Cool, cool.

Let me pause it here and ask if folks have any questions while I catch up with things that folks are saying in the chat.

Somebody is asking about an internship structure to help produce new products. I'll answer that the best I can with the Asian Pacific American Center. So with the projects we do at the Smithsonian, internships in general, it's not free or cheap, right? It's always about learning. And I think in my situation, because my focus is on the internet, it's about mutual learning. And so when I'm selecting interns that I want to work with -- I'm thinking about what can they learn from me, but also what can I learn from them. I love working with young people because they keep me -- they keep me alert to sort of the ways that people are interacting with the internet, and I don't just mean like, oh, everybody is using TikTok now instead of Snapchat, but, for example, the ways that younger folks are more naturally introducing themselves with gender pronouns. To me, that's a part of the Digital and Emerging Practice. The proliferation of gender pronouns of ASL interpreters, of live captioning -- these are due to disability justice demands that have been made for decades, but I think really picked up some steam, especially over the last few years, largely because of our ability to communicate with each other on the internet in response to companies, like Instagram, add -- need to start adding captioning as like widgets in their stories and things like that in response to the demands of the public. So that's something that I really enjoy learning from young folks.

I think -- I don't really spend a whole lot of time like teaching people HTML or CSS or like the very basic coding that I know. I'm more interested in helping folks get from point A to B, from a least-resistant standpoint. For example, with this conversation here what I'm essentially getting us to is regardless of how much code you know, how do we go from having no online exhibitions to having online exhibitions that are dynamic, that engage the public, but that also stay focused on the topics of exhibition themselves?

Cool, cool. So now I've got a couple of questions that are great. Yeah, yeah, yeah. Okay. I'll talk a little bit about the differences between curating web exhibitions versus institute -- I assume that's like a tangible, tactile exhibitions. Speak a bit about inclusive design while making online designs -- sort of exclusionary, and tested the usability of virtual exhibitions in different ways or is there a way to design an exhibition to people who don't have good WiFi or data. Yeah, yeah, those are all great questions, and I'll address them in -- in the examples of the websites that I'll share with you. And I'll also speak a bit about the inclusive aspect of things.

To be completely transparent, my journey into disability justice is relatively new compared to my, you know, like I was an ethnic studies major. I studied gender and sexuality

studies. But when it comes to disability justice, I really owe a lot of my introduction to that to the artist, Christine Sun Kim who I've been collaborating with. It was Christine who helped me understand the value of learning basic American Sign Language and also understanding accessibility, which is something that I really didn't think about too much when I was a freelance web designer. You know, with client work, it was always just about, you know, they wanted to get something done as quickly and cheaply as possible. And unfortunately, the conversation of accessibility just wasn't as prevalent as it is these days. And so I'll be forced to admit that some of the projects that I'll show you, there's some accessibility functions that I worked into it, but one of the reasons that I haven't really curated a whole lot of online exhibitions the last a couple of years, I'm just doing some learning around disability justice and figuring out, how can I still -- how can I produce improved and top-line quality exhibitions in ways that the accessibility functions are really enhancing the experience of the website for everybody.

I've seen some websites where you have like -- accessibility widget sort of built in, but then when you click on it, it's obvious it was never meant to be clicked at by anybody because it goes wonky or not mobile accessible or things like that. I'll try to leave some room towards the end of this hour to unpack that a little more.

So I'll start sharing some of my examples as we actually talk through sections 3 and 4. I think that might make it a little easier to visualize what I'm talking about. But let me read through a couple of more of these questions.

So cool, cool. Yeah, a lot of -- okay. So this is a good question. Like how do we measure success? That's a whole can of worms. I wrote a whole paper about it. I'll share that later. What are my favorite platforms for building online exhibitions these days? I build almost all of them on WordPress CMS. So CMS is Content Management System. There are other platforms out there. When I first started I was using blogger/blogspot a lot. Even prior to that, I was -- if y'all remember MySpace, when I started doing some freelance, I was helping people build the headers of their MySpace pages. Back in the day when you had more freedom with social media, you had HTML boxes. So you could build an entire website above the fold of your MySpace page and that was a great way to link out to the other work or hack the platform, because it only allowed you to share five songs or things like that.

Thanks for the link, Quincey. It's WordPress.org, and I'll explain the difference between the two. WordPress.com is a free service. If you see website.WordPress.com, that's the WordPress

platform, the WordPress.com platform. WordPress.org, when you doing into it, it's the same thing you would say with WordPress.com, but it's an open source software. What that means is you actually install WordPress as a platform on to your own website, and from there, if you want to, you can start digging and hacking at all the different files. Typically within a WordPress.org environment, you really wouldn't touch most of the files, but where you have a bit more flexibility than a WordPress.com document, you can access the marketplace of plug-ins and templates to build things out.

So going back to the idea of a slide show, if I want a slide show that's a lot fancier than a default WordPress.com would allow me to build, I could go into this open-source marketplace to install a plug-in for specifically the type of slide show I might be looking for or download a template and go into that template and change the code in that. So it allows a lot more flexibility. And one of the great things about WordPress.org is it's become a lot more accessible in terms of creating tools where people who are not as familiar with code can still go in and do a lot of nice, fancy things.

So I'll go in and kind of share that with you. You all are seeing my screen, right? I'm trying to look at various tabs of myself, including the chat and the Streamyard and my own browser. Cool, cool. I'll share the back end of it. I know folks are asking more questions, but I'll address the things I've already read first.

Looking at my screen, this is an online exhibition I curated last year with a gallery called IA&A At Hillyer. This is DC-based gallery exhibition. It's a very simple website. It's just a web exhibition. What I wanted to do with this exhibition is create a space where people could essentially not feel overwhelmed by an exhibition. A lot of times when I go on a website that I've never been in before, it's kind of like entering a mansion and I have no idea which rooms to go into. I'm just trying to get to the bathroom. How do I get there? I'm just trying to create an exhibition. I tend to do this with a lot of exhibitions. I do this a lot when I go on any website. Okay. How long is it going to take? With this, okay, there's going to be a curatorial statement and four artist works. Okay. I can get through that, right?

And then with each one, basically, it expands. Again, thinking about -- one of the things I've been thinking about during this pandemic era is how do I mine -- how can I be mindful about the additional time that I'm asking people to spend in front of a screen? And it's one of the reasons why I haven't been putting out a ton of online exhibitions or doing a whole ton of Zoom projects, because I know how worn out I get

about Zoom and things like that, so I'm trying to be very mindful of it. So keeping the texts brief.

And then with each of these projects, to explain the situation between an online experience and an in-person experience. One of my ground rules as a curator, if I'm doing an online exhibition, I'm only doing it because the experience of this exhibition is enhanced online. It doesn't feel like it's a substitute to being in person.

So with this exhibition, which was basically about -- the idea of this exhibition initially started when I was supposed to go to Seoul in South Korea to do an artist exchange and I put together in Washington DC with artist from South Korea and DC. Since that didn't work out with the pandemic, instead, I found two artists based in Seoul and two artists based in DC, each working in different mediums, to think about how we can create a sense of presence, even though currently we can't be so present together.

For example, with Nara Park, she is a DC artist and she's a sculptor, and this is JPG, but this is actually not a rendering. This is a photo of a 3d printed piece that she 3d rendered. So she took a picture of her foot, a 3d scan of her foot and also this rock and then she did what she did with it on her computer and then she printed it out and then she took a photo of it. And then this is the digital photo of that.

So with that, we felt it was most important for someone to see the detail. Now, in a gallery, you can only get so close before the guard wants to come and tackle you, right? So this might be an opportunity for people to zoom into something in a way they might not typically. So with this project, we decided to just -- oops, now I'm -- we decided to allow for people to access like super high res version of each of these images. Where you then zoom in.

As you can see, it still gets a little bit wonky sometimes. So all of this was just a little bit of an experimentation. And then we have the text.

With this piece, Lisa Park, who is based in Seoul, developed a series of videos where she was reading her biometric data as she was doing various things that she was doing during the pandemic, you know, like eating, working at home, things like that. I won't necessarily play these videos, but where I wanted to get at was like because -- because with Lisa, we were showing multiple videos and even though some of these videos are like eight minutes long, for example, they're not -- the point wasn't necessarily to expect people to watch each video all the way through, because at a certain point, you kind of get the point of what it is without having to watch every single video all the way through and we sort of expected that, envisioned this. If

you were seeing each of these as tablets hung up on a wall, you might not watch every single one in the gallery, you would walk by, get the point, and then that's sort of it. So we felt like just embedding it normally was a good way to go.

And I would say the same thing which Julia Kwon. We have these JPGs that look very normal, in a way, okay, I don't really understand what is the work that went into this. So we actually accompanied this with a process video where Julia could actually show how time-intensive it was to create each of these prints.

We also, when this exhibition opens, put on a fundraiser to various causes so people could actually receive physical prints if they contributed to the fundraiser.

And then we have Young-Hae Chang Heavy Industries, they created one video work that is a piece that we wanted folks to watch all the way through and not kind of only watch a little bit and then scroll past. So the decision was to not embed the video, but instead to make it a light box, which is, you know, something that everybody has seen before if you've been on any kind of website where you can zoom into an image. So with this, once you play the image, you're locked in for four minutes and there's not really an opportunity to scroll away from it. That was to think about going into a dark room screening experience and how those are usually the kind of video works that you're staying until it loops back again or until it gets from the beginning to the end.

So yeah, even though we had three, three artists who had video in their exhibition, in this exhibition, we sort of framed the video in various ways. And I would say that each of these was done by way of plug-ins in things like that.

Let me check to see if there are any particular questions. Cool, cool. Great, great.

So I know that this hour has kind of flown by, and I apologize for that. I hope that I got some of the points across in terms of what I'm thinking about. What I can speak to tangibly, just because I know folks are coming from various experiences, is that if something like WordPress seems a bit too intense, I think Squarespace is actually a good way to go. Squarespace can cost anywhere from \$10 to \$15 a month. And so when you kind of think about, you know, like building a website, you're going to want to pay a web designer a minimum of \$2,000, right? But with Squarespace, you can at least sort of start playing around with things you don't necessarily need to know how to code, and you can do a lot of the -- basically you're not going to build this website, this exhibition on Squarespace. It has all the bells and whistles that one might want to try out. So if you're just jumping into things and trying to figure out, what can I do, how can I bootstrap it all in an exhibition, I

recommend Squarespace. I loved Tumblr, and it was already built in, it was a social media platform. Of course, folks have kind of abandoned Tumblr, so I quit using it as much.

Yeah, I know I'm running out of some time.

>> JUSTIN JAKOVAC: Thank you so much. You did a really comprehensive round about the subject here. I wanted to give you a chance before we jump off to throw links in for any exhibitions that you're curated online if you're in that chat space or what have you, and then kind of looking down the list of things to see if there were any final thoughts or questions that you wanted to answer before I do a quick wrap-up and a little plug for next week and that kind of thing. I do see one new question from Nancy. What do you recommend for long-term exhibit and content longevity or preservation?

>> ADRIEL LUIS: That's such a good question. Social media is the least stable place to go, right? Like I've lost so much data to platforms like Flickr or Live Journal because they change ownership or change the terms of use that I could no longer get with. What we do at Smithsonian Asian Pacific American Center, which I'm not especially advocating for, because it was just like a little bit of a punk thing to do, like we actually purchased an outside server from SI.edu, and that was because back in 2013-2014, if we wanted to build our own websites for our organizations, we had to use Drupal, which is a different MSC platform and I just don't like that platform at all and I didn't know how to use it. So in order to actually get a website up and running, we went on Blue Host, purchased SmithsonianAPA.org, and our whole website is kind of a pirate ship website, much to the annoyance of our tech team at the Smithsonian. But they're playing along nicely and they've been fine with it and it's become more of a regular protocol. Most Smithsonians have a priority ship web server for quick use.

>> JUSTIN JAKOVAC: Great point for everyone, because the small museums too, right, pretty level playing field if you're running it in-house, you're not doing something with the big Smithsonian that they can't replicate, and you saw a lot of our audience is not that size, right? They need to be able to replicate on their scale.

Again, thank you so much for being here today and sharing your expertise. I'll encourage you to -- as well, if you'll look at the forums for questions that our audience is going to continue to share and just looking for the type of feedback, really, that you've built today. So thank you again for engaging our audiences and sharing your expertise.

Just a couple of quick program notes for the end of the day. After next week's module, we'll have four -- after next week's session, we'll have our four modules for this session all

wrapped up, and those four, collectively, will be available on the website.

As I just mentioned, visit the forum on the website to ask questions, follow us on social media. Next week on August 26th, next Thursday, same time, 11:00 a.m. Pacific Time, 2:00 p.m. Eastern Time, we're going to be doing Technical Workshop 3, Exhibition, Design and Virtual Environments with Dr. (Indistinguishable), an academic, artist and digital critical from Boston, Massachusetts. You'll see a link to the survey in the chat. And thank you again for joining us today. I look forward to seeing you all next week. Take care.

(End of session at 3:00 p.m.)