



Digital Culture without Barriers

Jodi Awards

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Plan

1. The power of culture
2. The bumpy road to cultural accessibility
3. Jewels of website accessibility
4. The way forward

1. The power of culture

“Illuminate me with immensity.”

“Illuminatemi d’immenso.”

Giuseppe Ungaretti

“Full participation in society is dependent on full participation in cultural life.”

Council of Europe Action Plan (2006-2015) on "Full Participation of People with Disabilities in Society"

Culture opens up infinite ways of experiencing oneself, other and the world.

2. The bumpy road to inclusive culture ...

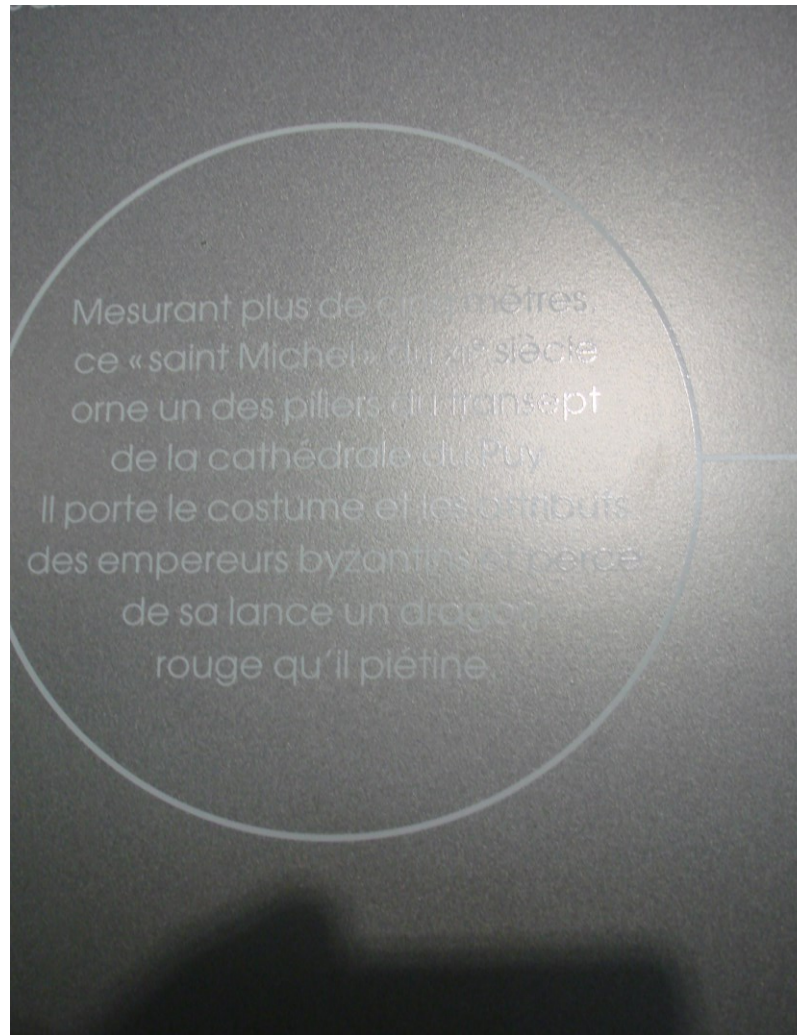


... is strewn with obstacles ...

in this picture the visitor does not enjoy good viewing



.... is full of avoidable barriers
here the viewer is blinded by design!



Mesurant plus de cinq mètres,
ce « saint Michel » du XII^e siècle
orne un des piliers du transept
de la cathédrale du Puy.
Il porte le costume et les attributs
des empereurs byzantins et, perché
de sa lance, un dragon
rouge qu'il piétine.

Barriers exist in digital culture too ...

- only 2% museum, library and archive websites meet WCAG AA guidelines
- a web page presents disabled users with an average of 216 potential stumbling blocks

Source: *Accessibility of museum, library and archive websites, MLA audit (available online)*

- only a small % cultural websites provide information on the accessible culture offer. This is often difficult to find and is not not always reliable.
- few online cultural resources and collections are accessible to people with a visual impairment, a hearing impairment or a learning disability.

3. Jewels in accessible digital culture

www.tate.org.uk/imap *exact link*

Jodi Award for accessible digital culture 2006

This web resource of works by Picasso and Matisse for visually impaired people:

- de- and reconstructs complex compositions in slow motion
- uses highly contrasted and visible representations
- helps all viewers understand the art better



Navigation buttons: D, F, G, H, J, K

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Henri Matisse The Moroccans 1916

Oil on Canvas 181.3cm x 279.4cm

© Succession H. Matisse/DACS 2002
photo credit © The Museum of Modern Art,
New York

Orientation: This is a very large painting, almost two metres high and nearly three metres wide. It represents an imagined scene in Morocco. The composition has often been read in three sections. The area in the top left of the painting contains some whitewashed buildings. Below it is a simplified arrangement of yellow fruit and leaves. The right-hand side of the painting is a vertical rose-pink strip whose width is about a quarter of the whole composition. Painted on top of the pink are a number of forms that are not easy to decipher. However, we can tell that in the bottom right of the painting a figure wearing a blue garment is sitting on the ground with his back to us.



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Henri Matisse The Moroccans 1916

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© Succession H. Matisse/DACS 2002
photo credit © The Museum of Modern Art,
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Although a simple arrangement, the architecture contains enough information for us to imagine both the physical spaces within the scene and our own place in relation to it.

We are directly opposite the buildings, seeing them face-on. We instinctively work out that a significant distance exists between the flowerpot and the buildings behind them because the flowers are painted as roughly the same size as the dome of the mosque. Logic tells us that the dome has to be much larger. So we automatically conclude that the mosque is further away and its small size reflects its great distance from us. **Press F to continue...**



D F G H J K
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The Moroccans 1916

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 photo credit © The Museum of Modern Art,
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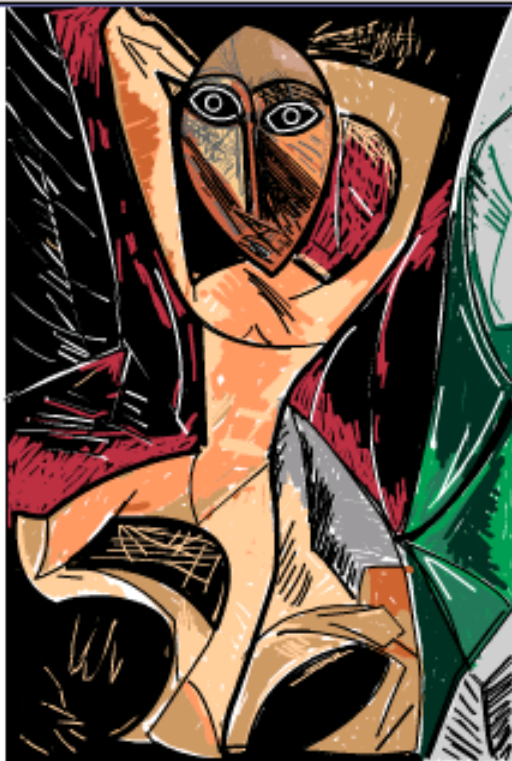
The final device Matisse uses to unite the three sections is the colour black. Black surrounds all the different elements and acts like cement, holding them together in a single image.

Black also has the effect of making everything else seem lighter. In countries near the equator such as Morocco, the sunlight is very strong and casts very dark shadows. So Matisse uses the black to convey a sense of incredibly bright light as well as a powerful sense of physical heat. **Press F to continue...**

Tate imap also:

- provides simplified black and white drawings
- these can be downloaded
- and copied on a “tactile photocopier” into a raised image to be read by fingers by blind people

During the first six weeks of www.tate.org.uk/imap going online, 2000 images were downloaded.



Pablo Picasso Nude with Raised Arms 1907

Oil on Canvas 150cm x 100cm
© Succession Picasso/DACS 2002
Private Collection

In this painting Picasso has taken art's most familiar, safe, traditional and formulaic subject matter and transformed it into something that would have been utterly incomprehensible and threatening. To the art-buying upper middle classes of Europe the explicit threat was two-fold. Firstly the woman embodied unfettered sexual desire and secondly, the painting style rejected every convention in art. For a cultured Frenchman in 1907 eagerly awaiting the next Puccini opera, the only thing recognisable in *Nude with Raised Arms* was the paint. **Press F to continue...**





Pablo Picasso
Nude with Raised Arms
1907

Oil on Canvas 150cm x 100cm
© Succession Picasso/DACS 2002
Private Collection

Each area of shadow is given a different texture, squiggles, flicking strokes or diagonal lines. As well as painting these lines, he has scored them into the wet paint like chisel marks into wood. The paint around the eyes is very thick and her eyeballs are scored into it, giving them a three dimensional appearance. **Press F to continue...**



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Pablo Picasso Nude with Raised Arms 1907

Oil on Canvas 150cm x 100cm
© Succession Picasso/DACS 2002
Private Collection

Picasso was creating his own totemic woodcarvings at this time in response to the African art he was studying and collecting. This painting reflects his interest and appears more like carving. Instead of using subtle changes in colour to model the planes of the face, Picasso has painted crude hatched lines on her left cheek, in the socket above her left eye and along her right jawbone.

Press either the SPACEBAR or the FLASHING BUTTON to create rough brushmarks on the face... then press F to continue...



3. Jewels of website accessibility

Whitney Museum of American Art

Jodi Awards for accessible digital culture 2012:

Commendation

Deaf people are deprived of cultural resources in Sign Language (ASL). The Whitney American Sign Language vlog is a growing resource.

Let's look at the vlog: "Off the wall" by performance artist Trisha Brown:

www.whitney.org/WatchandListen/Tag?context=Access&play_id=339

The Whitney Museum

- the vlogs have American Sign Language and sub-titles
- adds sub-titles to all their videos onsite, using free software. It is one of the few museums in the world to do so!

The judges of the Jodi Awards were impressed. They gave a Commendation, rather than an Award, because the vlogs do not have audio. During the assessment, several ASL users said they wanted audio too, so they can share the experience with hearing friends.

The way forward

Your technological, engineering, pedagogical and cultural skills can be combined and bring about a great deal of progress.

By meeting this challenge, the creativity of your organisation will be enhanced and the world will be more inclusive.

Let's make the UN Convention come true. Article 30 recognises the right of people with disabilities to take part in cultural life "*on an equal basis*".

Resources

www.jodiawards.org.uk : many case-studies, guidance, reports.

www.euroblind.org : “In Touch with Art 2010” report.

Jodi Mattes Trust
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