

# Activity 24 Creative Encounter - Report

## Introduction

### European Digital Treasures (EDT) Project

Over recent decades, national or central archives which hold historical items and manuscripts spanning many centuries, have invested significant resources to offer public access to their records and contents in a digital or online format. The value of these “digital treasures” and the historical items and manuscript which they relate to is often not widely appreciated, however, and has not had a transformational effect on the sector, nor has this it generated a significant economic return.

In this context a new Europe-wide research project “**European Digital Treasures**” has been developed. The project aims at giving shared European heritage and digital archival collections greater visibility, appreciation and use.

The European Digital Treasures project is funded by the **European Union** through its **Creative Europe programme**, a funded initiative of the of the EU for research and development in the cultural and audiovisual sectors. A consortium of 7 partners from 7 countries unites a multi-stakeholder team comprised of national/state archives, a university, a research institution and an international network of cultural heritage institutions.

Project website: <https://www.digitaltreasures.eu/>

### Treasures in Archives

The European Digital Treasures project launched a call for short documentaries and short animated documentaries on the theme the “Construction of Europe”.

The call was addressed to professional digital media creators based in Hungary, Malta, Norway, Portugal and Spain and its objective was the production of several short documentaries or short animated documentaries based on archival documents from the Middle Ages onwards, which will help foster better understanding, knowledge and investment in our common European history.

The chosen documentary film-makers attended a Creative Encounter event in Cork, Ireland, from April 20<sup>th</sup> to 22<sup>nd</sup> aimed at helping to develop their initial documentary proposals.

The documentary films that are eventually produced will be presented in the last quarter of 2022 at the annual convention of the International Centre for Archival Research (ICARUS).

## **EDT Creative Encounter**

This intensive 3-day event was aimed at assisting these documentary film creators/directors in developing their initial ideas and proposals. The encounter provided attendees with an opportunity to hear about the study and practice of building and curating archives and approaches to creative digital media design, story-telling and documentary film making while also giving them the time and space to discuss and develop their ideas together

## **Venue**

The Creative Encounter was hosted by the Technology Enhanced Learning (TEL) Department at Munster Technological University at the Melbourn Building on the University's Bishopstown Campus. The TEL Department is one of the EDT partners providing design, multimedia and e-learning expertise for a number of the project's activities.

## Programme and Participants

The following was the event programme which was enjoyed by the participants:

Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> April 2022

**10h – 10:30h**

Welcome and presentation of the programme.

**10:30h – 12:30h**

**Presentation of the directors' proposals for Treasures in Archives project.**

**13:30h – 15h**

**Archives as tools for inspiration.**

Presentation/talk by Annamaria Szakacs from National Archives of Hungary.

**15h - 18h**

**Visit to Cork City and County Archives**

Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> April 2022

**9.30h - 13h**

**Design Thinking Workshop- How archival documents can be of inspiration for documentary filmmakers.**

**14h – 15h**

**Design Thinking Workshop- How archival documents can be of inspiration for documentary filmmakers (continued).**

**15h - 18 h**

**Visit to The Queenstown Story museum and exhibition**  
(<https://www.cobheritage.com/>)

Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> April 2022

**9.30h – 13h**

**Presentation and Discussion on Storytelling and Documentary film making**

Led by Will Sliney (Marvel Comics Graphic Artist) and Catherine Harte (Documentary Film Director)

**14h – 15h**

**Conclusions and feedback**

The participants consisted of film directors, EDT project co-ordinators and speakers as follows:

## Seminar Participants Film directors

### Portugal

Francisco Costa  
Carlos Isaac

### Malta

John Mallia

### Norway

Silvia Venegas.  
Fredrik Slabinski

### Hungary

Szonja Szabó

### Spain

Stefania Pero  
Guillermo Logar

## EDT Project Co-ordinators

Carmen Mateos

Coordinator of the European Digital Treasures Project, Ministerio de Cultura y Deporte, Spain

Tatjana Hölzl

Communication Management / Financial Administration, ICARUS

## Seminar Speakers

**Annamaria Szakacs, Archivist** – Annamaria is an archivist from the National Archives of Hungary which is an EDT partner. Currently she is writing her PhD dissertation in the field of cultural history. Besides her commitments as a head of department, the focus of her attention is to discover and identify the archive users' needs, in order to make the most of the cultural field's supply and demand, putting the emphasis on the online word.

**Will Sliney, Comic Book Artist** - Will is well-known for his work on comic books such as the Marvel's Fearless Defenders series, the monthly series Spider-Man 2099 and his own graphic novel *Celtic Warrior: The Legend of Cú Chulainn*. He is also the co-creator of the Star Wars character Ren. On foot of a successful lockdown project he organised on social media last year, he has also recently become the host of a new children's drawing programme on Sky TV. Will's presentation will touch on such topics as story-telling and narrative structure and the way in which he uses illustration to depict action, communicate information, give characters personality and set the stage for a story or scene.

**Catherine Harte, Documentary Film Maker** - Catherine is a documentary film maker based in London. Some of her recent credits include directing BBC Education's *Bilingual Babies* series and DV directing on a Channel 4 Dispatches documentary *Safe at Last: Inside the*

*Refuge*. Her own feature documentary *Faith and Branko* won Best Documentary at SEE Fest LA and was nominated for awards at Dok Leipzig, Al Jazeera Balkans Docs and Millenium Docs Against Gravity. She also shot/directed the short documentary *Accents Speak Louder than Words* for BBC4/the BFI . Catherine will talk to attendees about the kind of research and pre-production work that provides the context and lays the groundwork for documentary film-making. She will discuss her own production and post-production processes more broadly as well as the lessons she has learned from working in the industry and how these might inform the work of attendees.



EDT Creative Encounter participants at MTU

## MTU Staff

Gearoid O'Suilleabhain, Head of TEL Department, MTU

Darragh Coakley, Lecturer, Researcher and Designer, TEL, MTU

Christina Pinkow, Researcher and Designer, TEL, MTU

Brendan Flaherty, Researcher and Designer, TEL, MTU

Tadhg Leane, Senior Lecturer and Researcher, TEL, MTU

## Creative Encounter Activities

### Director Presentations

The Creative Encounter began with a presentation from each of the film creators/directors which outlined their proposed documentary. This allowed the participants to share their ideas and discuss ideas and challenges with the other creators/directors.



Film director John Mallia presenting his documentary idea to the group

### Archives as tools for Inspiration - a presentation by Annamaria Szakacs, Archivist

This presentation addressed the world of archives in the context of the EDT project and the proposed documentary films. The presentation focused on three main themes:

- What kind of documents archives keep and how these materials can serve as inspiration for audiovisual creation, in particular for the documentary film genre?
- National Archives within the EDT project, what kind of archives exists in the partner organisations (within the frame of this project).
  - what are the key roles of these institutions
  - a quick overview of the partner archives
- Detailed view of the collections in the National Archives of Hungary.



## Design thinking workshop

This was an intensive and interactive workshop, delivered by the Technology Enhanced Learning (TEL) Department at MTU. A number of design exercises were carried out with an overall goal of allowing the participants to deeply consider their film idea and address important related to the development of the film. The workshop exercises consisted of:

- User Persona Activity
- Empathy Map Activity
- Walt Disney Creative Strategy
- Retrospective. Wrap-up/ Final Thoughts/ Next steps



Participants engaged in the design thinking workshop

## Presentation and Discussion on Storytelling and Documentary film making

This section of the visit consisted of presentations and discussion with two professionals (i.e. Will Sliney -Marvel Comics Graphic Artist and Catherine Harte - Documentary Film Director) with extensive experience in developing creative content for publication, film and broadcast TV.



Participants engaging in discussion with Will Sliney

During the activity the following topics were covered:

- Documentary narratives and storytelling. Documentary Storytelling Techniques
- Narrative development of the proposed ideas: selection of contents, structure and prose of the script.
- Transmedia storytelling: a way to reach new audiences





Catherine Hart addressing the EDT Creative Encounter

## Extra-curricular Activities

As well as the core activities outlined above, the participants also participated in two extra-curricular activities in the Cork area which were related to the theme of archives and presenting archival/historic material in the form of compelling narratives.

### Visit to Cork City and County Archives

The participants visited the Cork City and County Archives where they had an opportunity to view some items from the collection as well as discussing matters of interest with the Senior Archivist Mr Brian McGee.

Among the items in the collection were documents relating to the Irish Famine, the visit of the Titanic to Cork as it's final port of call and documents relating to the Irish War of Independence.

No.	NAME OF DECEASED PERSON.		Address or Place of Residence.	Date of Death.	Sex.	Age.	Religion.
	Surname.	Christian Name.					
25	Hughes	Patrick	Kildare	28/8/41	M	29	R.C.
26	Barr	Thomas	10 St. Mary's St. Cobh	2/9/41	M	72	R.C.
27	Curtis	Daniel	Gardiner's Hill, Cork	6/7/41	M	67	R.C.
28	McElligott	Richard	3 R. 100, 3, 100	21/9/41	M	64	R.C.
29	McElligott	John	10 St. Mary's St. Cobh	2/9/41	M	61	R.C.
30	Doyle	John	323 Mayfield	2/10/41	F	8	R.C.
31	Doyle	Daniel	9 Backwater Lane	10/10/41	M	2 yr	R.C.

Rathcooney Cemetery Burial Register 1941 from Cork City and County Archives

### Visit to Cobh (Queenstown) Heritage Centre

The participants visited the "Queenstown Experience" at the Cobh Heritage Centre. Cobh (formerly known as Queenstown) is a port town adjacent to Cork City which has a long maritime history and is strongly associated with emigration of thousands of Irish people (primarily to the USA) for over two centuries. It was also the last port of call of the Titanic during its ill-fated maiden voyage.



**The participants on the Quay-side in Cobh**

At the Cobh Heritage Centre the participants learned about the Irish emigrant experience via the centre's award-winning story-led exhibition.



**The titanic exhibition at Cobh Heritage Centre**

## Concluding Remarks

All of the participants described the event and their visit to Cork as enjoyable and fruitful. The event was truly a Creative Encounter and the generous engagement from all of the participants in the various activities was the main contributor to the success of the event. The TEL Dept would like to sincerely thank all the participants and the partner organisations for making this such a rewarding and successful event.