

Opponent's Report on Doctoral Thesis

Doctoral student's name(s) and surname	Ngoc Quynh Giao, Pham		
Degree programme	P 8206 Visual Arts		
Degree course	8206V102 Multimedia and Design		
Mode of study	Full-time	Acad. Year	2021/2022
Thesis Title	Exhibition of Dong Ho paintings in a virtual reality environment at a Fine Art Museum, Vietnam		
Supervisor	Prof. MgA. Petr Stanický, M.F.A.		
Opponent report written by	prof. Mgr. Peter Štarchoň, Ph.D.		

The topic of the doctoral thesis is up to date and significant, and I appreciate Ngoc Quynh Giao, Pham's ambitious mission and personal commitment to finding a solution that fits the trend of preserving world art and applying it to the preservation of Vietnamese folk paintings. It is obvious that this topic has a significant importance for the practice and the great emphasis is placed on the implementation potential of the work.

The doctoral student clearly named the problems and particular research goals that were transformed into four relevant research questions (RQ1 What factors are causing difficulties in preserving Dong Ho folk painting in Vietnam? RQ2 What is the new method of exhibiting traditional folk art in Vietnam from now and shortly? RQ3 How to apply virtual reality exhibitions to traditional ways of collecting art in museums in Vietnam? RQ4 Does the exhibition by the traditional method attract viewers, especially young people? How do they feel that the presentation of folk paintings in virtual reality is different from the conventional exhibition-style?), but the main objective of the doctoral thesis was “to study the method of restoring and transforming the famous Dong Ho paintings from a 2D version on drawing paper into a 3D version operating in a virtual reality environment“. The given objective was achieved and it is possible to state that the author in an appropriate way solves the topic of the work.

Given the scope of the topic and the problems identified and the specific research goals, as well as the various options for examining the topic itself, the relevant methodology was given and specific scientific methods were chosen. The visualisation of the different methods and stages of the research (see Figure 1 Summary of design method of this study and Figure 2 The diagram of the five design stages in this study) was really useful in this regard. Particular research methods are well described.

In terms of the structure, the doctoral thesis is divided into seven parts in accordance with the required standards. The formal requirements of the work meet the required standards, the whole work is written in an understandable and logical way with an appropriate academic

style. The structure of the thesis is well presented, Figure 3 Organization of thesis is more than helpful in this regard (p. 23). The logical structure is visible, but small changes concerning the structure would be welcomed as the overview of the research, research goals and questions, research objective and structure are presented in Chapter 1 before the current state of knowledge (Chapters 2, 3 and 4).

The author proved a wide range of theoretical knowledge, skills and abilities to incorporate her own experience into the scientific work. At the beginning of the current state of knowledge, views on the approach to changing the role of information professionals in museums and the development stages of art exhibitions at the museums are identified. An interesting case study on Fine Art Museum in Ho Chi Minh City highlighting the historical background and certain issues but focusing also on selected difficulties of visibility, accessibility, and finances followed (Chapter 2). History and development of Dong Ho folk paintings is consistently described in Chapter 3. The doctoral student identified the danger of losing a line of Dong Ho folk painting in Vietnam and importance of national identity preservation. Chapter 4 offers an overview of opinions and theoretical approaches to describing the Virtual reality (VR) and applying possibilities of VR to art and exhibitions.

This theoretical introduction and current state of knowledge provide a good overview of the breadth of the issues examined. There are just minor comments concerning the lack of accurate and up to date sources concerning VR in general and the lack of sources visible in subchapters 4.3.1.2 – 4.3.3. It is not recommended to transliterate particular definitions or terminology unless it is own but of course it can refer to literature. In contrary to this, I appreciate Figure 28 that illustrates how the various components are integrated in a typical VR system and suggestion for VR application of an art exhibition in the art museum in Vietnam (see subchapter 4.5).

The most important parts of the doctoral thesis are focusing on VR design process supported by the quantitative survey results (Chapter 5). The structure of obtaining information from respondents is clearly described, but some limitations concerning the sample size and the respondents' structure are noticeable. This might be the reason why the results of the primary quantitative research were presented in a descriptive manner. The qualitative research (in the form of the interviews for instance) was not explicitly defined but used. As it is stated: "Designing and restoring Dong Ho folk paintings to include in a virtual reality video is not an effortless process. The author collaborated with a professional studio to discuss, edit and give the final result of a VR video called Walk into Dong Ho Painting. The two-minute video was made over five months (not including prep and concept), and the making of the film is described in the process summarized below.". The workflow for the development of the VR video is applicable not only within the frame of solved topic (see Figure 32).

The research questions are consistently answered and the contributions of the doctoral thesis are presented in Chapter 6. The results have both theoretical and practical consequences. The primary research results supported by synthesis and reflecting current state of knowledge might be interesting for the future scientific and pedagogical use and could be considered as an interesting and relevant source of information, not omitting application potential of the dissertation thesis itself (not only for the Fine Art Museum in Ho Chi Minh City). I have to

say that the content and selected results of the work fulfil the author’s ambitions. As it is stated by the author, “This thesis is a significant contributor to cultural and artistic heritage preservation and management as it collaborates with studies related to past heritage conservation issues. At the same time, this study gives specialist bodies the ability to make decisions related to practical topics and has a practical basis for comparison.”.

Questions for Discussion

I would like Ngoc Quynh Giao, Pham to answer the following questions as a starting point for the discussion:

- 1. Could you, please, briefly describe how the digital age has changed behaviour of museum visitors?
- 2. Consider the positive and negative impacts of VR on museum visitors' experiences.
- 3. Identify the strengths and weaknesses of VR within the frame of solved topic.
- 4. What are the possibilities for future collaboration with the Fine Art Museum in Ho Chi Minh city?

Conclusion

The work, in general, fulfils demanded standards, it can be considered as a starting point for future research and the practice as well. Ngoc Quynh Giao, Pham proved a wide range of theoretical knowledge and practical skills and presented her competence and ability of scientific work. I recommend Ngoc Quynh Giao, Pham to defend the doctoral thesis and – in the case of successful defence – to be awarded the academic degree “Philosophiae doctor” – PhD. in the degree programme Visual Arts, degree course Multimedia and Design.



In Zlín, June 1, 2022

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