MEMories and EXperiences for inclusive digital storytelling (2019-2022)

MEMEX connecting stories, experiences with Cultural Heritage and Augmented Reality

The final MEMEX app prototype, which integrates Augmented Reality (AR) exploration of stories and cultural heritage information, has reached the hands of community participants in Lisbon, Paris, and Barcelona. The app acts as a binding point for the stories, Cultural Heritage (CH), technology and innovation. It allows for stories to be created, shared and connected to the rich fabric of the cities they are based, and surrounding Cultural Heritage, both tangible and intangible, as well as vast information accessible/connected by the Knowledge Graph (KG). The concept of connectedness is a base concept for MEMEX's goal of connecting the stories and experiences of the participants to the CH surrounding them. MEMEX app accomplishes this in three ways: (1) using advanced KG interaction to write, view and connect stories; (2) allowing users to manually link stories by curating them into journeys, and (3) allowing stories and information to be connected to the tangible sites through AR interactions, enabling real-world exploration of heritage. AR displays the connections to relevant cultural heritage and stories using a marker on objects within the scene.

At this stage, communities at risk of exclusion, using smartphones can enjoy cutting-edge technology, and explore Augmented Reality, while sharing and viewing their unique stories as they walk around their cities. This immersive experience overlays the physical environment with virtual elements contextualizing the intertwined narrative of Cultural Heritage and memories.
The development of the MEMEX app prototype brought together local stakeholders and communities at risk of social exclusion thanks to inclusive digital storytelling, encounters, discussions, and interactions. It empowered those communities to weld together their fragmented experiences and memories into compelling and geolocalised storylines using new personalised digital content linked to the pre-existent European Cultural Heritage.

This last version of the MEMEX tool is highly appreciated by the participants who already had a chance to experience it:

"This is the first time I have used AR; in this context it allows the discovery of places/histories in the neighborhood based on heritage elements. AR allows the territory to be highlighted" *(Paris pilot participants).*

By creating connections between physical and virtual elements on a city scale, MEMEX reimagines the way that one can experience Cultural Heritage.
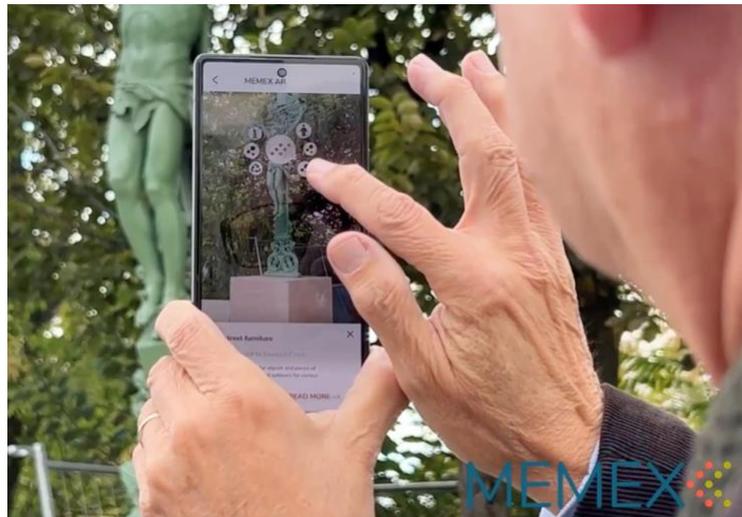
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MEMEX project is coordinated by the Italian Institute of Technology (Italy). The consortium is composed by: Ca' Foscari University of Venice (Italy), EY (Italy), ECCOM (Italy), CNRS – Centre National de Recherche Scientifique (France), Interactive Technologies Institute - LARSyS (Portugal), Michael Culture Association (Belgium), Dédale (France), Interarts (Spain), Noho (Ireland), Mapa das Ideias (Portugal).

Useful links:

- Video about the project
- Video playlist about MEMEX Pilots
- Video playlist about the first stories created in MEMEX app:
- MEMEX Policy Briefs
- Website

 MEMEX on social media:

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