

Bridging Digital
Another dialogue - 3rd December 2021

Trent Kim and Liz Gardiner

LG Many congratulations on the results for the students and the learning process. The projections on Dunure Castle were absolutely stunning. They deserved a wider audience... particularly local people .. It really honoured them and their wonderful history from the now vanished fishing industry to the 18th Century shipwreck and heroism of the fishermen to the incredible history of the castle itself.

TK: Yes it was meant to be a private viewing but I think the information leaked l.o.l. :-)
The Council and I wanted to use it as a 'trial' and I think it worked!
They want an annual digital art and music festival!!

L.G. Ana annual digital art and music festival is exactly what's needed!!! I heard that from EVERYONE we interviewed all day! I may have planted some seeds with folks who didn't mention it voluntarily too L.O.L.
It was absolutely wonderful Trent

T.K. Thank you so much Liz and it was a shame we didn't get to spend much time together as I was running about like a headless chicken. It was amazing to have the StudioFV film crew to document the project too. I will send the team the sound tracks in order as well so they can add them to the video.

Also I can introduce them to South Ayrshire Council officers for interviews.

L.G. The StudioFV team will interview the students to explain their work... probably have to be after Christmas now. I'll talk to them on Monday about interviews and yes, Council officers are a must.
We also need an interview with you to explain the context

TK I'm confident there will be loads to evaluate from this project for Bridging Digital...Hopefully there will be many critical dimensions to be seen from our projects.

L.G. Yes indeed.
I'm still not entirely sure what is the context for all the Bridging Digital partners.
I suspect that once again we will want to tease out the difference between arts development and cultural planning.
We are cultural planners
I think that what some of the other BD team members are talking about is Arts Development.

Helen is very clear, for example, that the job of the project is to spread learning about how to use digital tools... which is definitely arts development... it's digital arts development but it's still arts development: learning 'how to' whether its painting, tap dancing, playing a musical instrument or using digital technology... it all lies inside of arts development.

What we are talking about is cultural planning..... Cultural Planning is generative... We are coming from a hypotheses that when we have that kind of cultural planning practice/process/method at the heart of everything from social work and education to regeneration,

planning, tourism and policy making then we have the makings of a world that works.

For example, you know that teaching the students about how to operate the technology and make beautiful art with it is just the start.

I know that teaching the young folks in StudioFV with barriers to working how to use cameras and make good films is just the start.

Projects like Dunure and WitchHunt are taking that learning and facility to a whole new level. What's important for the communities of Dunure and Paisley in terms of learning is not so much that they will learn 'how to' use the technology... some of them will... most of them won't.... What's important is that they get a glimpse of what's possible out of working with people like you who DO.... What's important is that they learn what that technology can bring and (as you said) it's not the technology that is the key... it's the way the artist (in this case you) does/enables/empowers/facilitates through that technology.

For example..

Interviewing community members today

Many of them said they didn't know what New Media Arts is... they didn't have a clue what digital technology would have to offer for the community of Dunure or for Dunure's future regeneration through tourism etc.

It would be very interesting to go back to them now and ask them the same questions again... what do they think you/UWS/the students/digital technology/New Media Arts have to offer Dunure.

I bet there will be different answers now they have had a glimpse of what's possible.

For me, THAT'S the key learning for communities engaging with digital technology.

We're not going to turn them all into digital artists but we will open their eyes/hearts and minds to completely new realms of possibility out of engaging with digital artists....

Also, in terms of your students and the StudioFV team with multiple barriers to employment...

They haven't just learned 'how to' make digital art or 'how to' make a film.

What they have learned is what's possible for a downtrodden community that has lost its key industry, lively hood and history (Fishing Was the Heartbeat of Dunure was one of the phrases projected onto the castle) out of engaging with this kind of new media arts practice.

I think this is a key dialogue that needs to be conducted within the Bridging Digital team... are we talking about arts development or cultural planning? That's going to be crucial and will underpin everything else.. especially the ingredients book that is our responsibility.

TK Absolutely!! This conversation will be key to moving the project forward