AUGMENTED REALITY APPLIED TO EDITORIAL PROJECT

PICADA magazine is a case study carried out as part of the Project of the master’s degree in Graphic Design and Editorial Projects inserted in the Faculty of Fine Arts, University of Porto.

INTRODUCTION

This project aims to demonstrate the usefulness that Augmented Reality (AR) can have in a physical format. The chosen format is an independent publication to share Portuguese projects in different artistic areas. It is intended to have a reflection on the area of activity of each interviewee. The name chosen was “PICADA” which works as a metaphor for the constant search to know more and motivates persistence in questioning.

The magazine will be released biannually, meaning that there will be two issues per year, one in the spring and one in the fall. The theme for issue 0 is “Aesthetic versus Function”, and its goal is to show the diverse opinions of each interviewee about these two concepts and what they represent in their respective fields.

This project delimits its use to mobile devices, such as smartphones and tablets, and the physical artifact, in this case, a magazine with several editions. This project has the following objectives: (a) stimulate reading by providing technological means (AR) to captivate the reader; (b) solve economic and sustainable problems that a magazine project presents in its conception; and (c) raise/identify needs with its production. We intend to explore new reading experiences in print and digital, which take advantage of the potential of AR, increasing interactivity and interest between the artifact and the reader. It was necessary to conduct research focused on two aspects, the analog and the digital (The Magazine and the Extended Reality: VR, AR, MR), to establish the thematic framework and its theoretical foundation.

METHODOLOGY

In the current development phase of the project, some aspects were identified, such as the format and the process of using the technological tool. In terms of the physical artifact, initially, a format more similar to that of a traditional magazine was thought of. But it was decided to launch issue 0, a smaller issue, to make the readers and the artistic community aware of what this project will be. This edition also serves as a pilot edition that serves as a test to determine and refine some approaches.

One aspect that hindered the development of this journal was the current pandemic situation. The organization of the interviews was changed so that they were divided into two parts. Preference was given to conducting the interviews by Zoom videoconference, and later, when restrictions were less stringent, the photographic part of the interviews was conducted.

Since the beginning of this project, there has been awareness about the obstacles of using AR in the design field. There is a constant concern about how this technology is used. It not only serves to aesthetically enrich the design but also to establish the fact that it serves as an essential technology for the method of how the reader/consumer grasps information. Thus, the physical artifact functions as a catalog of the interviewees’ works, exposing them in 3D through Instagram filters. These AR filters also contain essential information about the objects displayed.

A typeface was created for the identity of the magazine and to embody the concept of PICADA (in Portuguese means sting). It is constructed in a manner reminiscent of spikes and thus drawn with acute angles.

A simple wooden stool is the symbol of the magazine. The purpose is to create a photo essay capturing the personality of each person and their interaction with the bench. As the cover photo of issue 0, it was thought of shooting this same stool with nails, showing the character and essence of the magazine.

PICADA was printed digitally and then screen-printed in two colors, blue and orange. Each page corresponds to an interviewee, including a picture with the stool and an excerpt from the interview. There is also an AR filter on Instagram (@revista-picada) associated with each interviewee and where you can access extra information and see their work in 3D.

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The website, which is still under development, contains all the interviews as well as their photos. It is also possible to buy issue 0 and find out more about this project.