

CAMD Case Studies: Emerging Technologies

China Heart

Powerhouse Museum



Digital Heritage Game

China Heart is an interactive 'story driven' heritage game for smartphones and the web developed by the Powerhouse Museum and launched as part of Sydney's 2011 Chinese New Year celebrations.

It combines video, real-world art installations and performance with GPS gaming, and guides players on a walking tour of Sydney's Chinatown. It was developed to

engage people with the Powerhouse Museum's extensive Chinese social history collection. The museum wanted to underpin this with a powerful fictional story that placed objects in a 'real world' context and made them more meaningful to users.

Players solve puzzles, learn about the history of Chinese Australians and explore Sydney's Chinatown, visiting heritage features that relate to objects in the museum's collection. The game can be played on multiple platforms, including a website, a mobile optimised website and a smartphone app.

China Heart is presented by d/Lux/MediaArts in association with 4A Centre for Contemporary Asian Art, the Powerhouse Museum and the Project Factory. China Heart is supported by Screen NSW, Screen Australia, the Sydney Harbour Foreshore Authority and City of Sydney.

Mobile locative stories can create new audiences for institutions and make their digitally-archived collections available to the wider public. This platform allows the public access to a diverse range of material from objects within a museum or gallery collection to social history within the urban or natural environment. Combining GPS navigation with a historic map interface, archival photos and web links, video re-enactments, ambient sound and voiceovers triggered by player's location creates an extraordinary mobile learning environment for all. This type of augmented reality based walking tour may also encourage users to create metadata for objects.

China Heart was recently featured in a UK Heritage Lottery Fund report providing case studies showing British cultural institutions how to use digital media to engage people with culture and heritage.

www.chinaheart.org.au; <http://www.powerhousemuseum.com/chinaheart/>

<http://www.hlf.org.uk/aboutus/howwework/Pages/Digitalparticipationandlearning.aspx>