Interactive Ceramics and Glaze Learning Programme: the CD-ROM
An ADC-LTSN Learning and Teaching Project Fund
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Funded in 2001/2002

Project Overview

This project, carried out at the University of Ulster, involved the research, development and evaluation of a CD-ROM, the core tool of the Interactive Ceramics and Glaze Learning Programme. This is a non-profit educational project, the software primarily intended for dissemination in the Art & Design departments of Higher Education institutions. The CD-ROM itself requires little or no previous computer experience, and consists of four cross-referenced databases:

- **Glaze Lab:** Provides chemical analyses of glazes; searches for database matches.
- **Materials:** List of glaze and colour materials (alphabetically-organised), with descriptions and source information.
- **Glaze Tests:** Results of glaze tests carried out under four different temperatures (1000, 1100, 1200 and 1300°C), with recipes, descriptions and uncoloured images of each test.
- **Information:** Two cross-referenced lists (by Artist; by Materials/techniques used) using approximately 500 photographic images of both historical and contemporary work.

The project paid particular attention to the resolution of copyright issues for the digital images used in the software. Thorough research was conducted into two distinctive types of copyright issue:

1. Gaining permission for the use of images from **institutions and collections** held in the United Kingdom. A further distinction is also made between historical pieces (where the artist is no longer alive), and contemporary work.
2. Gaining permission from **individual artists** for the use of images of their work.

Key Activities and Findings

The CD-ROM

The interactive Glaze Learning Programme allows students to work through a multitude of glaze effects in an on screen environment, enabling students to select and experiment with different glaze finishes prior to kiln firing. The programme is structured in different levels of expertise to allow for a wide variety of experience. Furthermore the programme is mouse operated and requires no keyboard skills to operate. The Glaze Programme is unique because it provides all this information, together with the images of the final glaze effect. One of the great strengths of this programme is that students are enabled to undertake self directed learning in an objective manner, without the need for teaching staff to be constantly on hand. Furthermore the reduced need for test firings means greater efficiency for the ceramic studio coupled with a saving on kilns and material finances.

The CD-ROM was field-tested initially at the University of Ulster. As a result several modifications were made:

1. Redesign of screens and functions;
2. The incorporation of large numbers of glaze test images into the glaze test database;
3. An extended ‘Further Reading’ section at the end of each topic;
4. The provision of front-end descriptions and instructions for the use of each database.

Further secondary field-testing will take place in the academic year 2003/2004 and will involve three U.K. Art and Design Institutions.

Copyright Issues

**The British Museum** represents one of the largest collections of historical ceramic in the UK. The copyright of historical pieces is, in most cases, the property of the Museum itself. In the Museum’s ‘Photography and
Imaging’ database can be found a large selection of images from its collection, but particular pieces or artefacts not already included can be photographed by arrangement, although at a further cost. The British Museum offers a range of copyright fees on images of pieces held by the Museum, and vary according to the form of reproduction – television, film, advertisements, books, or CD.

Although the Museum took into account the educational purposes of the CD-ROM, the use of images from this source was nevertheless expensive. Within the constraints of the project’s budget, permission was gained for the use of thirty images of historical pieces on the CD-ROM. These images were subsequently downloaded from Compass, the British Museum’s web-based image databank (see link below), and are protected by an invisible digital watermark which helps trace the source of illegally used images. This was the most financially viable method of obtaining the images for the CD-ROM.

Further permission was gained from the Museum for the use of the same images in different areas of the CD-ROM, thereby facilitating the cross-referencing of information. For example, an image of an 11th–12th century celadon glazed clay box may be cross-referenced under ‘Chinese’, ‘Song dynasty’, ‘celadon’ (the glaze type), or under ‘iron in glazes’, but the same image may be legally used in each case. Copyright permission was granted for use in the UK only, and did not apply to any other form of electronic publication or distribution.

Credit line: ‘Copyright the British Museum’

Contact: The British Museum
Great Russell Street
London
WC1B 3DG
Tel: 020 7323 8231
Fax: 020 7323 8630
http://www.thebritishmuseum.ac.uk/compass/

The Victoria and Albert Museum house a large collection of both historical and contemporary ceramics and, as with the British Museum, ownership of copyright to images from either type of collection belongs with the Victoria and Albert Museum. The Images Picture Agency at the V&A deals with all requests for copyright clearance and a comprehensive fee structure exists for this service.

Because this CD-ROM project was a non-profitable educational venture, the V&A were willing to consider alternative ways in which images from their collection could be used without incurring heavy copyright fees, and agreed to give permission to scan images from one of their own publications. The costs involved by taking this approach to the copyright issue were significantly less than the standard fees. In the proper circumstances, other V&A publications could be used in a similar manner.

Credit line: ‘Victoria and Albert Museum. Copyright V&A Images’.

Contact: The Victoria and Albert Museum
South Kensington
London
SW7 2RL
Tel: 020 7942 2479
Fax: 020 7942 2482
http://www.vam.ac.uk

The Crafts Council have a database of contemporary crafts (including ceramics) spanning the last thirty years, with images of the work of over 700 artists. However, unlike the British Museum and the V&A, the Crafts Council merely store the images on their database but do not own the pieces photographed. Therefore, permission must be sought from both the individual artist and from the Crafts Council.

The Council were sympathetic to the educational nature of the CD-ROM project and gave copyright permission – for a fee – to include 39 images from their database.

Credit line: ‘[Artist’s name]/Crafts Council Photostore’
In some instances, the Crafts Council did not own copyright of the photograph, in which case the photographer also received a credit.

Contact: The Crafts Council
44a Pentonville Road
Islington
London
N1 9BY
Tel: 020 7278 7700
Fax: 020 7837 6891
http://www.craftscouncil.org.uk

Individual artists were also approached with requests for permission to use images of their work. In consultation with the JISC Legal Information Service, a copyright permission document was drawn up, appraised initially by a sample group of artists, and adjusted according to feedback. The revised document, also cleared by the University of Ulster Governance Service, was subsequently dispatched to all individual artists represented on the CD-ROM.

Credit line: ‘[Artist’s name]’

Contact: JISC Legal Information Service
Learning Services
Alexander Turnbull Building
155 George Street
Glasgow
G1 1RD
Tel: 0141 548 4939
Fax: 0141 548 4216
http://www.jisc.ac.uk/legal

Copyright fees vary considerably depending on the nature of the project. Furthermore, direct contact with the individual artist not only proved to be the most cost-effective means of obtaining copyright permission, but also had the added advantage of enabling a more personal response from the artist themselves, providing them with an opportunity to make comments and give technical advice.

Learning and teaching implications

The Ceramics and Glaze CD-ROM project is an investigation into the potential of new technologies to enhance and deliver undergraduate and postgraduate courses in ceramics, especially when student numbers are outstripping the resources available to cater for their needs. The CD-ROM has been designed for unsupervised use in the studio/working environment, its key features including:

- the layering of information to allow a self-directed learning experience
- the combination of historical and contemporary images, cross-referenced to practical and technical aspects, thus enabling a more flexible and dynamic learning experience
- the Glaze Tests database is structured in order to promote a systematic approach to the more technical aspects without being prescriptive. In addition, the images supplied in this database encourage a greater appreciation of the qualities of fired ceramics
- the Materials database provides simple and clear information which is quickly and easily accessed by students

Project Outcomes

- The three main directions of copyright inquiry were successful in procuring copyright agreement. More than 500 images have been incorporated into the programme.
- The information gained from this research into copyright issues can be used to approach other Institutions/collections in the UK in order to further expand and develop the number of images in the CD-ROM’s Databases.
- Initial field testing is completed and modified version of the CD-ROM is to be tested by three other institutions during the 2003/4 academic year.
Dissemination

A presentation on the Ceramics and Glaze Learning Programme will be made at the ADC-LTSN Conference 2004. The Ceramics and Glaze CD-ROM is aimed at third-level Art and Design students, and will be distributed by the University of Ulster for the cost of postage and packaging only. Further public output will be researched during the year 2003/2004.

For further details about the Ceramics and Glaze Learning Programme and/or the CD-ROM, please contact:

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Other useful contacts

Arts and Humanities Data Service (AHDS)
http://www.ahds.ac.uk

AHDS Visual Arts (formerly VADS)
http://www.vads.ahds.ac.uk

Design and Artists Copyright Society
http://www.dacs.org.uk

JISC Legal Information Service
http://www.jisc.ac.uk/legal