

Virtual Reality Takes Experiencing Art to Another Level



At an exclusive event at Sotheby's New York for select guests from the art world and technology industry, the [Kremer Collection](#) announced the launch of the Kremer Museum, an innovative new concept that combines cutting-edge technology with world-class masterpieces. Designed by architect Johan van Lierop, founder of Architaes and principal at Studio Libeskind, the museum will feature over 70 17th-century Dutch and Flemish Old Master paintings from the collection and will be accessible exclusively through virtual reality (VR) technology.

For the creation of the museum, each painting has been photographed between 2,500 and 3,500 times using the photogrammetry technique to build one ultra-high-resolution visual model for each painting, allowing the museum's visitors to enjoy a deeply immersive experience with the paintings. Using VR technology, visitors will be able to examine the artworks' surface and colours up close, as well as view the reverse of the paintings to explore each work's unique stamps of provenance.

Discussing the establishment of the Kremer Museum, George Kremer, founder of the Kremer Collection, said their journey as collectors has always been about finding the highest-quality artworks and simultaneously finding ways to share them with as many people as possible. He and his wife Ilone believe they can make a greater contribution to the art world by investing in technology rather than in bricks and mortar for the collection.

Architecture as a spatial experience

On designing the museum, architect Johan van Lierop noted that it is a dream to every architect to design a museum without gravity, plumbing or code regulations. He thinks VR is to the 21st century what Dutch Realism was for the Golden Age, allowing the observer to escape into an alternative reality or mindset. Architecture often uses VR to enhance a project's representation before it is built, often for real estate sales purposes, but using VR to embrace architecture as a spatial experience in itself was very unique to Van Lierop. VR opens up a whole new realm for the architectural practice, where ideas and concepts are no longer bound to the limits of passive visuals but can be a fully immersive experience, he added.

This virtual museum, which features meticulously recreated paintings and an exceptional space whose design alludes to the scientific and artistic vigour of the Golden Age, will be a leap forward in making it truly possible for the public to experience masterworks in a museum setting, regardless of background and location.

Resolutions

George Kremer said the Kremer Museum is a combined result of what they appreciate as collectors and art lovers, such as perfect lighting, the possibility to look at the back of the paintings, and a perfectly designed space by a world-class architect, and the hard work and vision of an incredibly committed team of highly talented and innovative producers and developers to make this come to life. The final product that Joël Kremer, the current director of the Kremer Collection and co-founder of the Kremer Museum, and his team have innovated pushes all boundaries – the resolution of the visuals is of a higher quality than the human eye can process, the museum is ready to scale to the improvements made to the resolution of the hardware in the near future, and therefore the experience will only get better and better.

In the coming months, the Collection will host a number of exclusive pop-up events with a full VR set-up. Dates will be announced on the Kremer Collection's website in due course. In early 2018, the museum will release a mobile application on Google Play Store for Daydream that will allow people to visit the museum with any Google Daydream-ready smartphone and VR mask.

Mighty Masters

In conjunction with the opening of the museum, the Kremer Collection is also launching the TKC Mighty Masters programme, which will provide VR tools to select schools around the world to fully access the museum. To select its first schools, the programme will partner with India's [Delivering Change Foundation](#) to host a drawing contest among over one million children in India. The museum and the Mighty Masters programme together demonstrate George and Ilone Kremer's strong commitment to education and the accessibility of art and their strong belief in art's unique capacity to make people, and children in particular, feel free and empowered.

Ahead of the roll-out of the TKC Mighty Masters programme in 2018, a first set-up of the Kremer Museum was realised at Cornerstone Academy for Social Action in the Bronx, New York, where a group of 20 children were invited to be the very first visitors of the museum in the presence of Joël Kremer.

Commenting on this experience, Joël Kremer said, this was a truly eye-opening experience for him; the children's uncensored and overwhelmingly positive response to the museum blew me away. The fact that they referred to it as a game and their eagerness to learn more about what they were looking at illustrated how exciting and interactive the museum is, not just to the builders and founders, but more importantly to the visitors and to the future beneficiaries of the Mighty Masters programme.

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