Data Salon #12 Briefing:

NOVEMBER 26, 2021

Topic: Understanding Blockchain and NFTs
Host/Location: Online

Sydney Culture Network

Speakers:

Pat Younis

Pat Younis is a Sydney-based Media Artist developing real-time, interactive installation art. Using 3D environments, sensors and video game technology, Younis explores the concept of immersion in Mixed Reality spaces; conjuring new ways of generating presence between people in the spaces where physical meets virtual. With the ever-changing digital sphere becoming a companion to our daily lives, Younis' practice tries to highlight the ways in which virtual space can support a notion of mindfulness and encourage healthier behaviours toward technology.

About Mint NFT

Mint NFT is Australia's first online gallery and art advisory service that helps established and emerging artists to translate their art into NFTs on the blockchain. The initiative launched with support from the Mark Carnegie Fine Art NFT Fellowship Award, a pioneering philanthropic project that explores the possibilities, limitations, requirements and processes involved in creating fine art NFTs.

Mehnaz Mia

Mez Mia is an art advisor at Justin Miller Art and project manager for Mint NFT gallery. Having worked across auctions houses museums and art galleries she has provided creative consultation and logistic support to the eight artists that took part in the inaugural M H Carnegie & Co Fine Art NFT Fellowship Award.

About Artefy

Artefy is an innovative digital platform where you can discover environmentally friendly NFTs from the world's greatest creators. We connect fans to the brands and artists they love in ways never experienced. The first brand launched out of Artefy is EverScapes: home to the world's greatest Fantasy, Sci-Fi and Horror artists. The goal is to expand to brands across music, sports, contemporary art and more in the future.

Nicholas Smith

Nicholas has been in Marketing Communications for over 15 years, specialising in brand development and storytelling, His career has seen him launch some of the world's largest digital entertainment services. His interest in blockchain has been the evolution of the technology and how it is changing the world.

Presentation:

In this Data Salon we looked at the evolving space of authentic data ownership via distributed data networks known as Blockchain, and how artists are using smart contracts known as NFT to buy, sell and trade digital works with embedded conditions, and more importantly track provenance - enabling digitised works to be traceable.

During the Salon we heard from digital media artist Patrick Younis and Mehnaz Mia from the recently launched MintNFT project that is representing a collective of Australian artists, as well as Nicholas Smith from Artefy, who have successfully carved out a niche in the NFT marketplace and represent a worldwide network of artists.

Introducing the topic was the Sydney Culture Networks Chair Dr Ross Harley, who will gave an overview of what Non-Fungible Tokens (NFTs) represent to the cultural space, and then introduce Mez Mia from Australia's first fine art NFT project - Mint NFT.

Mez shared inisghts into the establishment of this artist -led collective, which was recently launched and exhibited within the Sydney Contemporary online art fair.

She also introduced digital media artist Pat Younis, whose work features as part of the Mark Carnegie Fine Art NFT Fellowship Award, and who gave us the artist perspective into the challenges of selling digital media artworks and the opportunity that NFT smart contracts presents.

Finally, Nicolas Smith from Artefy joined the Salon and discussed his business Artefy that has carved out a niche in the NFT space and represent artists world-wide, with collectables being sold, traded and exhibited on their platform in persistent exhibition galleries.

Discussion Topics:

Salon participants discussed sustainability issues of cryptocurrency, the process of minting, what goes into a smart contract, and ask if Australian Cultural Institutions are ready, willing or able to dive into this whole new realm of authentic ownership of data.

Millions of trees are required to offset bitcoin – so how do you offset the environmental costs of persistent digital works? And taking the technology side of things > a massive amount of computer power behind these transactions so Carbon credit offsets are required, and is probably where the market is (ether).

What sort of conditions go into smart contract ? How do you make it legal and binding? What do artists need, what do galleries need?

About Minting > it costs money as a transaction fee to verify the work
* Opency > lazy minting until it is sold > costs purchaser
* Costs to Mint on Polygon is minimal
* By Minting digital assest – it Makes digital assetfy-it! And therefore can be traded as assets.

Persistent artworks and decentralised transparency of the ledger on offer with NFT. The transparent ledger offers shared transparency of provenance.

Finally it was questionable how good NFT code is, and that major institutions are not looking to invest in these as collectable items.

About the Data Salon:
The Salon series provides a unique forum to share experiences, strategies, and tools for leveraging data across the Sydney Culture Network (SCN). With invited talks, discussion and show-and-share opportunities the salons explore how data-led research and innovation informs a holistic view of audience experience and institutional practices to influence daily decision making, strategic planning and sectoral collaboration.

The data salon is co-convened by Rory McKay and Megan Lawrence, with input from the SCN Data Working Group. The salon is held bi-monthly on the last Friday of the month.

Future salon locations and topics for 2022:
If you have topics or speakers you'd like to suggest, or your institution would like to host future salons, please contact Rory rorym@slm.com.au or Megan megan.lawrence@australian.museum

Future salon dates for your diary:
Data Salon #13 Searching the Search
Location: Online (TBC)
Time: 12.30pm - 2.00pm, 27 May 2022
More details TBC