A digital archive about dance: the Siobhan Davies RePlay



Driven by Professor and researcher **Sarah Whatley at Coventry University,** the digital dance archive of Siobhan Davies was initially funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council resource enhancement programme and launched in 2009; but the initial idea and project began earlier in 2007, with the aim of bringing together all of the materials and documentation associated with Davies' choreographies into a single collection.



Siobhan Davies is considered one of the leading choreographers in UK for contemporary dance and this is the first online dance archive in the UK. It contains thousands of fully searchable digital records including moving image, still image, audio and text.

Dance represents an important sector of intangible cultural heritage as there is a a close connection between dance and history; for this reason in the digital era it is possible to preserve and make accessible this content and materials via internet for any purpose: research, study, experimentation etc. The first requirement for usability is for the material to be gathered into one place, so that people looking for it can find it easily from anywhere in the world: and a online portal is of course the solution. Issues related to metadata requirements, services, a user-friendly interface were therefore investigated and addressed.

The archive is available at: http://www.siobhandaviesreplay.com/

Many of the objects within the archive collection have been sourced directly from Davies and her collaborators' personal collections, whilst other items have been kindly lent by institutions and private contributors. Almost all of these objects that would otherwise remain inaccessible and unavailable appear online for the first time, and in many cases represent the first time objects have been viewed by anyone since their original date of creation.

Coventry University is also project coordinator of 2 new projects related to digital cultural heritage: **Europeana Space,** again with Professor Sarah Whatley, focused on the creative reuse of digital cultural content and including an experimental pilot exactly dedicated to Dance; and **RICHES** with Professor Neil Forbes, a research project with the aim to investigate on the impact that the digital era has on our culture and evolving society.

Further info:

article about Siobhan Davies' archive appeared on The Guardian

Europeana Space website: http://www.europeana-space.eu/

RICHES website: http://www.riches-project.eu/