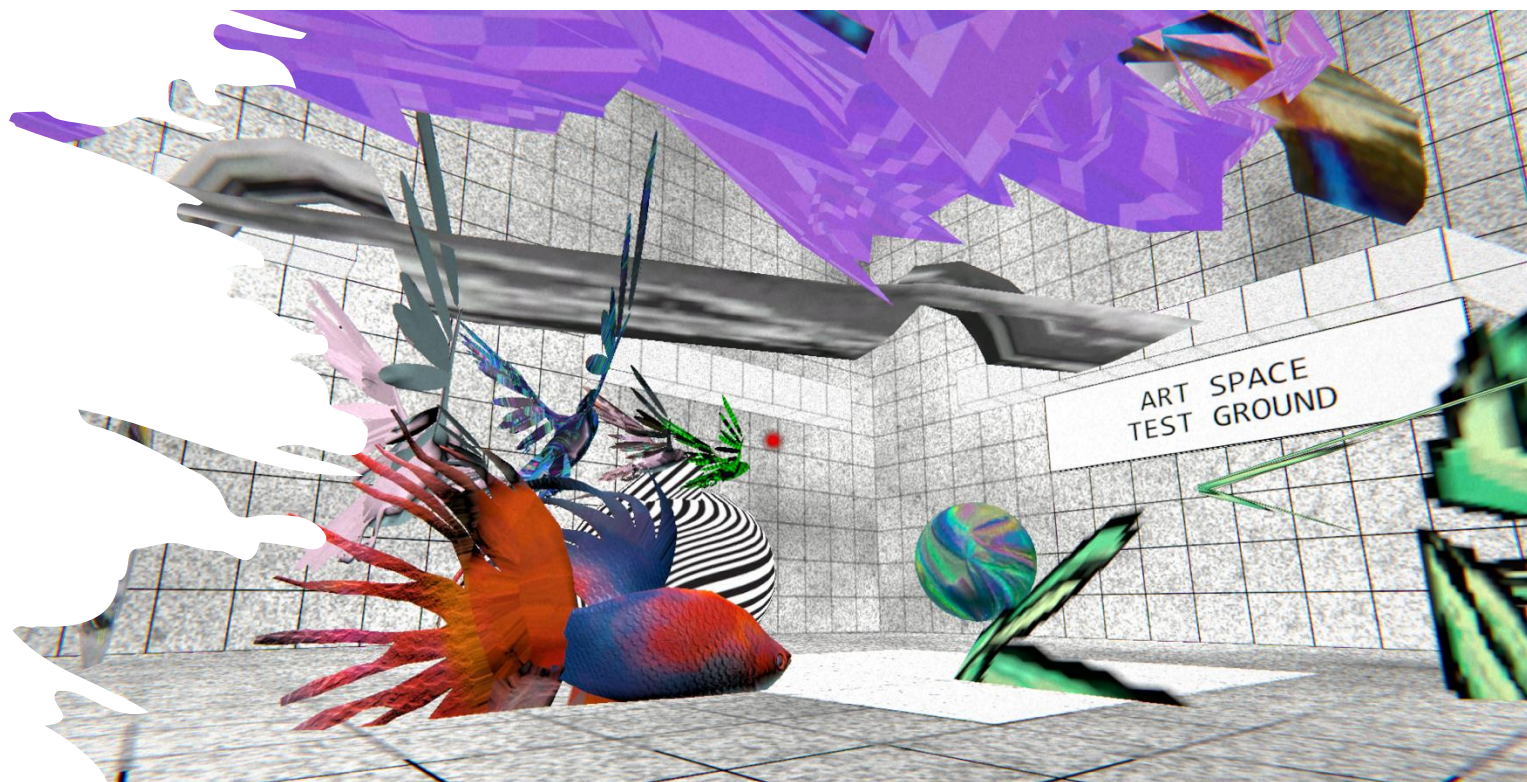# ImGame: An Immersive Educational Environment to Teach Contemporary Art

Ieva Gintere, PhD

16th International Conference on Computer Supported Education

3rd May, 2024

VIDZEME UNIVERSITY
OF APPLIED SCIENCES

Latvia, Baltic States

Low-budget experimental project

Serious art gaming

New media art

Authors: researchers & university/college professors

Research-based VR environment

Support of education about the conceptual issues in contemporary culture

Empirical research: qualitative interviews with students to measure the impact

Art Academy of Latvia

Latvian Academy of Music

Funded by the European Union

Ministry of Culture Republic of Latvia

ImGame

VR environment with gaming elements

a WebXR game, built using A-Frame

Devoted to immersiveness *(in the psychological meaning)*

Goals
- To demonstrate the historical backgrounds of modern ideas
- To promote art of the 21st century
- To involve students of new media art in the game's creation
- To stimulate creative thought
  to develop intellectual abilities, to deal with problems such as intercultural differences, etc.

Creative projects

**ArtSpace** 2018-2021, funded by ERDF

To teach trends of contemporary aesthetics: glitch, noise-related music, kitsch, camp, etc.
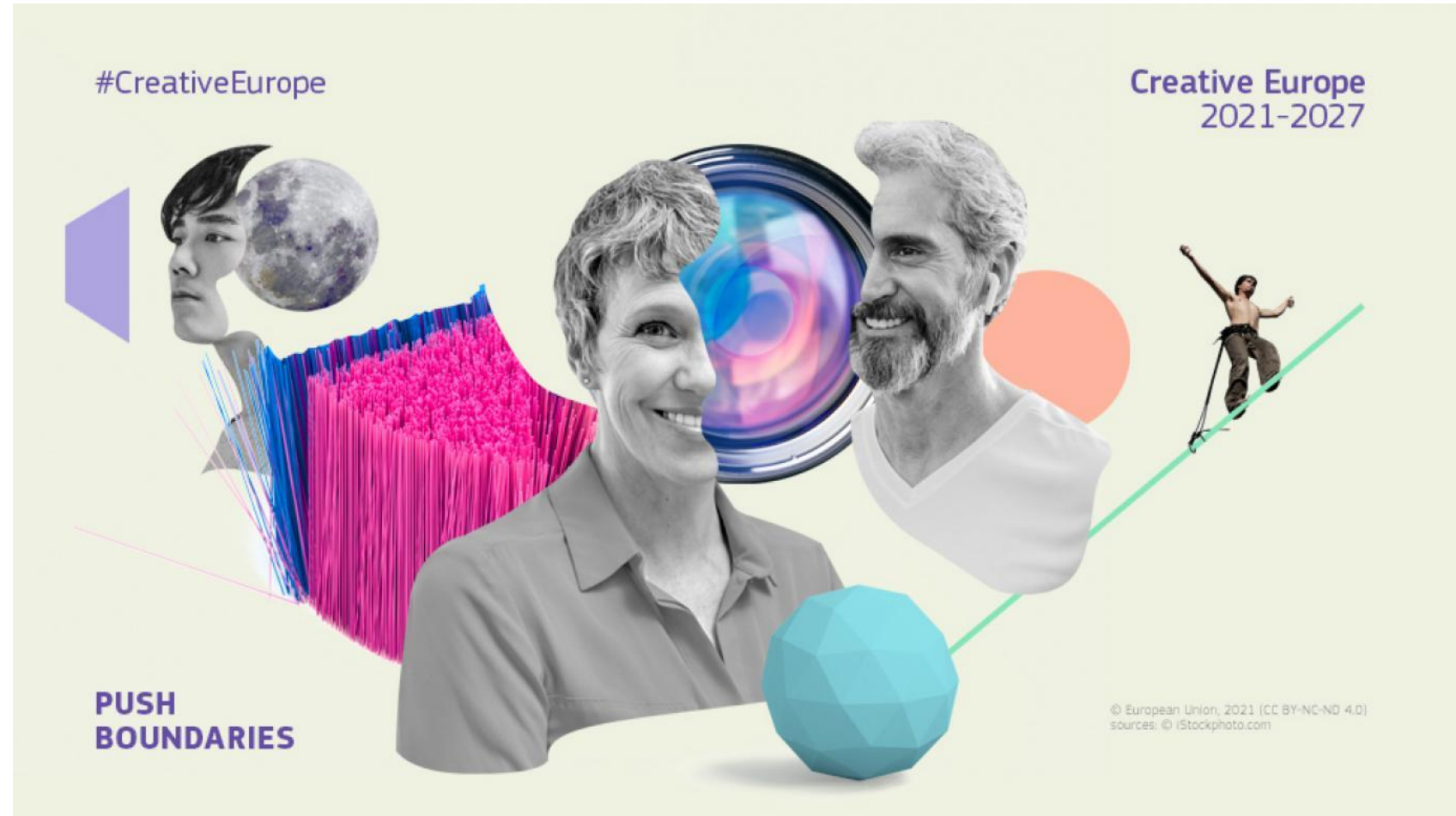
Marie Curie for Ukraine 2023-2025, **CineGame** (about contemporary Ukrainian cinema)

For cinematography students in Kharkiv State Academy of Culture

Created in a team with young new media artists

Lead artist of ImGame Alvis Misjuns
Latvian Academy of Art
Janis Rozentāls' Art school
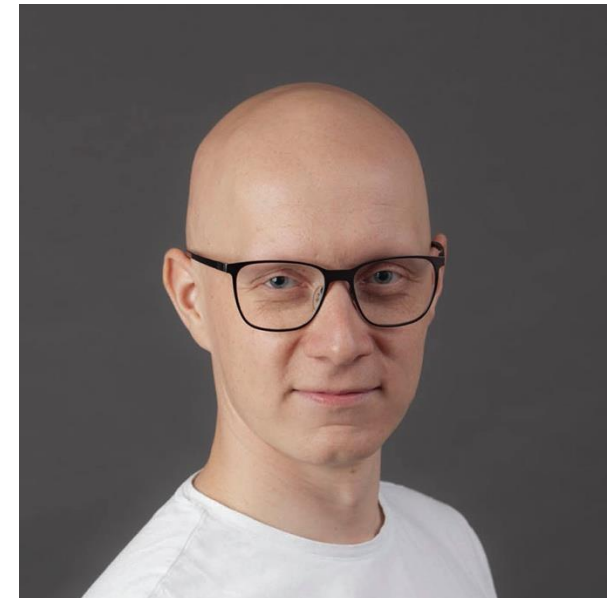
ImGame
2022-2025
Lead partner: Vidzeme University of Applied Sciences (Latvia)
With: Ionian University (Greece) and Moholy-Nagy University of Art and Design (Hungary)
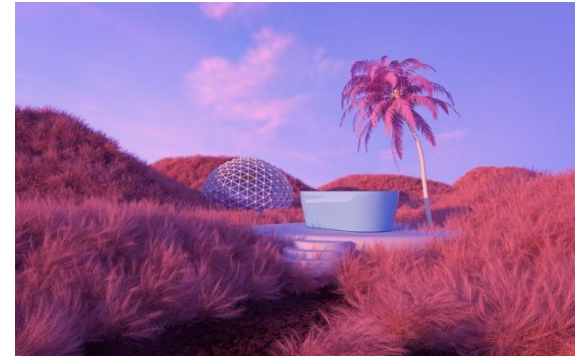
Serious art gaming

History of ideas

Cultural background

Semiotics of culture

Educative, informative

Communication of concepts

Not any more *Art for art's sake / L'art pour l'art*

Historical and intertextual links
Three rooms: introductory space, exhibition hall, a studio

In order to enter the exhibition room, the player has to choose the right keyword
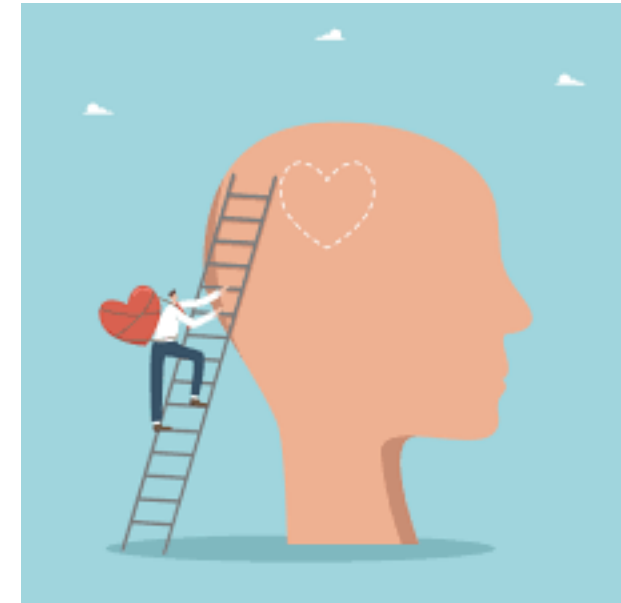Greek myth of Narcissus / Medusa / Kantian sublime

Kantian sublime: a subjective <u>conflict</u>
Experience of sublimity caused by a scene of nature, for instance

Inability for formulate it (God, metaphysics, etc.)
Description is insufficient, clumsy

One feels and understands the sublime

Kant, I. Critique of Judgment (1790)

Examples: edgy rocks, sea in a storm

The physical reality (scenery) is a <u>media</u>
Platform for the mind to take off

Leads to great ideas, high feelings

Another angle
"Gaze": Jacques LACAN
without a reflective mind
Staring

Lacan, J. (2014). Le Séminaire, tome 11: Les quatre concepts fondamentaux de la psychanalyse, 1964. Paris: Editions du Seuil (originally published 1973).

⋮
↓
Medusa

Medusa

Turns one into stone
<u>Hypnotising / paralysing effect: cancels reflective thought</u>
An astonishing feeling (at least for a moment)

Baumbach, S. (2010). Medusa's gaze and the aesthetics of fascination. *Anglia – Zeitschrift für Englische Philologie, 128*(2), 225-245. https://doi.org/10.1515/angl.2010.029

Latvia

Meditation and ecosystems: intertwined trends

Artists deal with ecosystemic problems speaking about nature

Also topical: pureness of mind, peace, slowing down, escapism, psychological ecology

Paula Ostupe. Solution (2018)

Futuristic solution of the problem of air pollution

Rasa Šmite, Raitis Šmits. Atmospheric forest (2020)

Trees breathe, produce **emissions** that we experience as a scent of forest

Can negatively affect the atmosphere?

Rute Marta Jansone. Insight, 2020

Psychoanalystic approach

Created as a board game Circus

Interpretation of situations

Read in depth – find a true / subjective meaning

Jurģis Peters. Images of Divine, 2024

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1rpLrOstoz81LI53r3qCw0gJAkTOuRAo9/view

Gods created by the Artificial Intelligence

Revisits the interpretation of spirituality

Ecology of sacred symbolism

Alvis Misjuns. Peace on Web, 2022

A place to rest in peace and skip influencers, adverts and all the other "noise" caracteristic to modern web
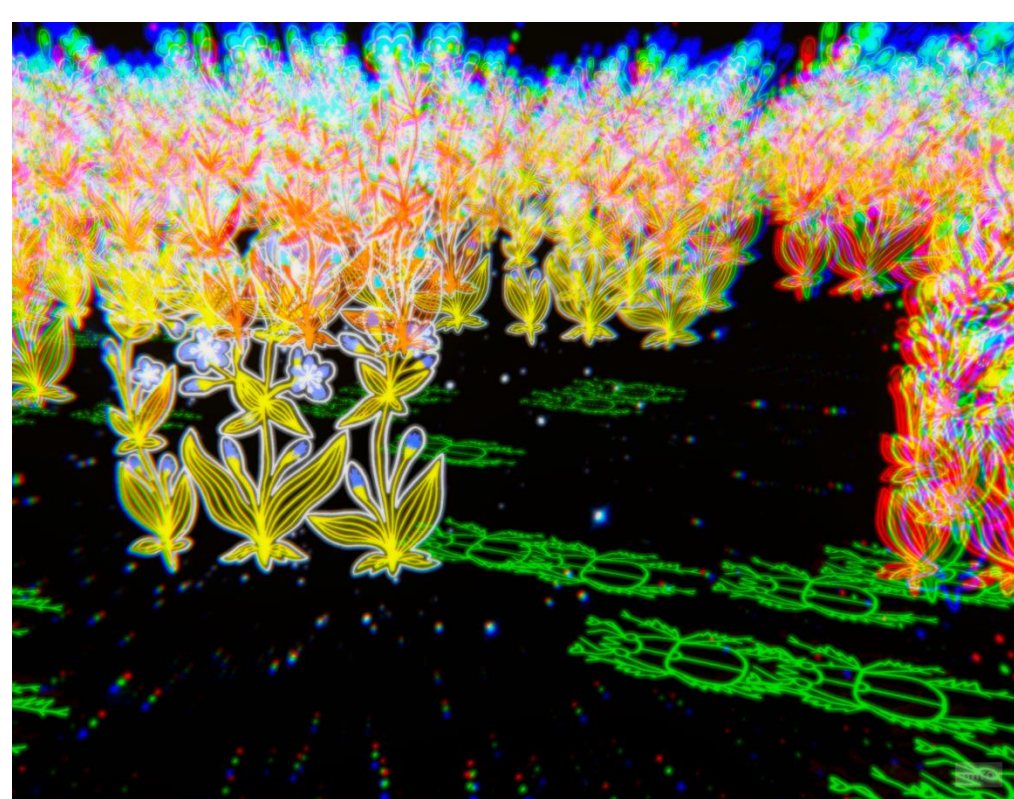
Paula Ostupe-Dejus. Imagination, 2022

Cascades of images created by the artist herself

Escapism – a peaceful and pleasant atmosphere in contrast to the harsh reality

Zane Zelmene. A Guide to Invisible Landscapes, 2022

Magic orbs: various worlds of dreams
Made on the basis of the artist's own lucid **dreams**

The orbs are parallel realities
Each with its own, calm character

Meditation – psychological refinement

Studio (creative space)
Possibility to glitch the objects related to the artworks used in the game

Thank you for your attention!

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