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CONECTA DIGITAL 2024: NEW TECHNOLOGIES AND CONTENT

THROUGH MASTERCLASSES, PANELS, INTERACTIVE SESSIONS, WORKSHOPS AND COMPETITIONS, PARTICIPANTS WILL IMMERSE THEMSELVES IN THE WORLD OF NEW TECHNOLOGIES TO ENHANCE THEIR AUDIOVISUAL PROJECTS. THE EVENT IS SUPPORTED BY THE MINISTRY OF CULTURE AND FUNDED BY THE EUROPEAN UNION – NEXT GENERATION EU.

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Conecta Digital , an extension of Conecta Fiction & Entertainment that acts as a bridge between emerging technologies and the audiovisual entertainment industry, has begun at the Espacio Cultural Serrería Belga in Madrid. The event, which ends on November 6, complements the activities previously initiated at Conecta Fiction & Entertainment in June 2024 in Toledo.

Through masterclasses, panels, interactive sessions, workshops and competitions, participants will immerse themselves in the world of new technologies to enhance their audiovisual projects. The event is supported by the Ministry of Culture and funded by the European Union – Next Generation EU . Below, we will briefly review some of the highlights of the first day.

The opening was led by the Director, Géraldine Gonard, who stressed that this is not just an event but an open door to the future of the audiovisual industry. She mentioned that the objective is for professionals to find tools for innovation and creation around emerging technologies. In addition, she highlighted that, over the course of two days, there will be more than thirty speakers with multiple spaces for the exchange of experiences.

Next up was Héctor Calvo, Deputy Director of the Cultural Industries Coordination Centre of the Spanish Ministry of Culture . He considered Conecta to be a benchmark for the scene and welcomed the creation of "a spin-off of its own event." He also stressed that the Ministry considers it vital to adapt to new audiences and consumption habits, as well as to support new ways of creating. He also highlighted that they are closely following the challenges presented by AI in terms of employment and IP. Finally, he stressed that the Ministry is interested in the development of new technologies and in supporting the changes that these produce within the cultural industries.

Luego habló Raúl Torquemada, Director de Madrid Film Office. El ejecutivo indicó que el organismo mantiene un firme firm commitment to supporting audiovisual projects, while positioning Madrid as the audiovisual Centre of Europe and an essential networking centre for the sector. He praised Conecta as he considers it a fantastic space that, among other aspects, allows innovative and daring projects to be presented. Finally, he stressed that the constant growth of the audiovisual sector in Madrid must continue, in a sustainable manner, with a view to innovation.

For his part, content creator Rodrigo Taramona started with an anecdote. He heard Guillermo del Toro say that "artificial intelligence gave us beautiful screensavers." He used this statement to remind us that geniuses also make mistakes and proposed a triad against chaos: curiosity, humility and gratitude. He also established some metaphors to understand the impact of technology. The first, more moderate one, maintains that we are in the moment equivalent to the birth of electronic music. However, the radical version proposes thinking of the changes in the industry as if they were equivalent to the revolution that meant the transition from silent film to sound film.

The first panel was "Technological radar: Innovation at the service of audiovisual" . The latter was moderated by Luis Cueto, Member Counselor, Secretary of State for Telecommunications of the Ministry of Digital Transformation and Civil Service of Spain and was attended by Manuel Meijide, General Director of Mundos Digitales, Alberto Arenas, CEO of Bounding Box, Víctor M. Feliz, Founder of Motiva CG and Adrián Pueyo, Head VFX & Virtual Production of Orca Studios. Cueto briefly described the professional possibilities enabled by the Spain Audiovisual Hub, as it constitutes a database that centralizes the activity of the sector.

He also highlighted the first edition of the Technological Radar, a study on emerging technologies in the digital content creation industries for entertainment, which aims to publish two editions per year. For his part, Manuel Meijide gave details about the Radar and described it as a tool to combat misinformation.

He also indicated the ambition to establish himself as a rigorous and reference voice in the sector. Alberto Arenas, for his part, raised some concerns about the communication of technology: how to communicate technology to generate change, how to communicate it succinctly, how to do it to facilitate and encourage action and how to transmit the sense of urgency. The Radar covers techniques, tools, infrastructures, languages and libraries and attempts to cover the technological aspect insofar as technologies can be adopted, tested, evaluated or resisted. Finally, Víctor Feliz explained what Gaussian splatting is, an analysis of platforms. The four main technological platforms are evaluated and compared, highlighting areas of strengths and weaknesses.

The "Innovation: new frontiers in audiovisual creation" showcase consisted of the presentation of innovative technological solutions. Edgar Sanjuan, Founder & CEO of Emogg showed a solution to measure the audience experience of a live event. Through a novel demonstration, he described how the tool identifies nine emotional indicators before, during and after the event. It provides a report to the client with three main aspects: objective data to measure the audience experience, access to all intelligence without the need for specific hardware, access to the results from anywhere and receive them live, as well as being able to integrate new indicators.

Then, Diego Rodríguez and Miguel Luengo from Digital Welcome Pack showed their solution that answers the question: How to digitalize a welcome pack? DWP allows you to have the content of the project, open documents, give access credentials, etc. It is a mobile application to simplify access to information for an audiovisual technician. It is updated in real time and personalized for each technician. It reduces the carbon footprint and digital pollution. It is safe, easy, intuitive and adaptable to each project.

Next up was Raúl Maqueda, Director of Photogrammetry at Peris Digital, part of Peris Costumes, the world's largest costume rental company. Peris Digital was created to give a second digital life to physical clothing (14 million garments distributed in industrial warehouses). Peris Digital's Photogrammetry allows physical clothing to be converted into digital clothing, that is, it is the digital version not only of the clothing but also of the actors who wear it. In addition, hyper-realistic busts or metahumans can be created.

The section closed with the presentation of Ángel Urbina - Director and co-founder of IRALTA. This is a studio with more than two decades of experience in the creation of immersive experiences and virtual production, generation of virtual content in real time and development of XR, VR and AR immersive experiences. The executive explained how virtual production does away with time and location limitations, reduces stress, relieves budget pressure and minimizes the unforeseen events of a conventional recording. Among other things, it allows you to transform physical sets into virtual ones, generate 3-layer scenarios, work with virtual, augmented or extended reality and integrate holograms and animations.

Another of the main points was the Panel "Responsibility in audiovisual production: from creation to final content with cutting-edge technology". It was moderated by Kike Lozano, General Manager of GECA and had as speakers Felipe Jiménez, Director of Digital Strategy at Banijay, Ogmacop Fernández Vega, CEO of Tech Brand Stories, part of Telefonica and Chalo Bonifacino, CEO of LALIGA Studios.

Felipe Jiménez indicated that his organization conducts collective intelligence circles in order to learn among colleagues. He considers this type of learning to be fundamental for saving time. He also indicates that many processes are made more efficient through the use of AI and it is becoming more and more widespread, at many scales. He also indicated that professional talent with AI is freed from processes and puts all its creativity to work.
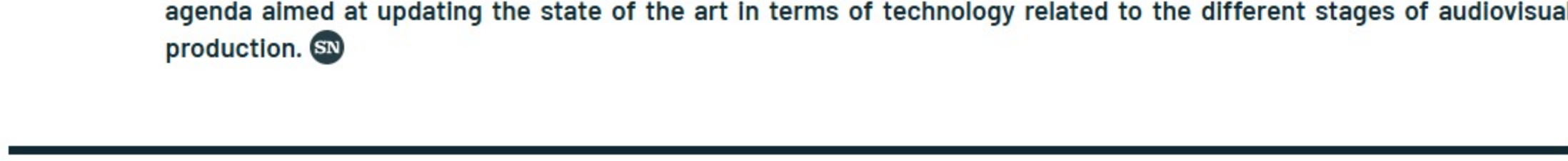
Ignacio Fernández Vega indicates that this technology is applied at all times in the company, including management. Exemplifying searches for the development of a script, he indicates that it achieves more conclusive results, saves time and provides more and better filtered information, in addition to facilitating the automation of text to image and audio post-production. He understands the use of AI as a mix between efficiency and creativity. It makes the change in very routine areas and generates new jobs that cannot yet be glimpsed.

Chalo Bonifacino points out that AI is widely used in pitching, creating something that doesn't exist. It simplifies the presentation of a project: with very little text you can sell an idea. In terms of the volume of work, processes and transcriptions are improved.

The moderator then introduced the question about the copyright that a work generated 100% with AI would have Jiménez said that his organization strives for the ethical use of technology and stated: "We have to protect creators but the lines are blurred. Where is the limit? When do we mark that something should be protected or not?"

Finally, Vega said that AI is born from data that someone has incorporated. The European and Anglo-Saxon approaches are different, as are the regulations. He recalled that: "In Europe we are obliged to indicate that some content is made with AI. Artists who use AI are not less creative, it is absurd to think so. Every time a human being intervenes there are rights."

Amongst other activities, presentations and networking spaces, the event continues on November 6 with a packed agenda aimed at updating the state of the art in terms of technology related to the different stages of audiovisual production. ◉

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