USC STUDENTS GAME THE GETTY

Students from USC Games take over the Getty Museum in an overnight Game Jam

LOS ANGELES – Students from USC’s Game Program will converge overnight at the Getty Center February 21-22 to create games to help enhance the museum experience. More than 30 students, working in teams, will spend the night at the Getty to design games that deepen visitors’ experiences of works of art in the Getty Museum.

At the end of the weekend, the students’ games will be judged by prominent figures in the tech world, including Todd Martens, who reports on interactive entertainment for the Los Angeles Times; Sara Thacher, a transmedia producer and experience designer; and Peter Marx, the City of Los Angeles’ first Chief Innovation Technology Officer.

“We want to explore ways we can use games to create transformative experiences of art in the galleries,” said Elizabeth Escamilla, acting director of education at the J. Paul Getty Museum. “We’re challenging these students to activate the gallery as a game space, immersing players in the art.”

The students will be asked to create games that encourage players to engage more deeply with works of art in the galleries. “We want to make sure that players aren’t solely focused on
the device in their hands while they play. We want players to look at the art, and take advantage of the unique experience that a gallery offers,” said Escamilla.

The Game Jam is the first of its kind at the Getty, but is part of a longtime effort to use digital games as a way to explore art. The Getty Museum has developed a variety of online and gallery-based digital games, including Switch, which sends players on a hunt through the galleries, using their smart phones to break a magic spell that is switching details in the paintings. In addition, Getty Games online allows players to use works of art from the Museum’s collection to test their memory or solve a puzzle at home.

“This jam is a wonderful chance for our students to take on an exciting challenge – vitalizing and deepening the experience of visiting an art museum,” said Tracy Fullerton, Director of the USC Games Program. “Games and play are deeply related to artist practice and creativity so it is a natural fit to design games for art lovers who are visiting the museum.”

The challenge begins at 9:30am on Saturday, February 21, and ends at 5:00 p.m. the next day. In between, students will roam the galleries and hunker down in a conference room with laptops, pizza and plenty of coffee in order to bring their ideas to life.

“USC Games is well-known for innovation, and we’re excited to see what new ideas these students bring to the experience of looking at art in a museum,” said Escamilla. “We hope they will expand our thinking about activating our galleries, and we plan to share the results of this challenge with our museum colleagues across the country.

About USC Games:

USC Games is the flagship collaboration offered jointly by the School of Cinematic Arts Division of Interactive Media & Games and the USC Viterbi School of Engineering Computer Science Department. This unified brand allows press, industry, students and faculty to discuss the overall efforts at USC in games and simultaneously clarify the important distinctions between the offerings of the various programs.

The program at the School Cinematic Arts focuses on both the design and production of interactive media and games. Students emerge as creative media leaders, fluent in many forms of visual expression and storytelling, with the sophistication to design and develop innovative interactive experiences that expand the state of interactive art and play across the domains such as entertainment, education, health care and social action.

The Computer Science Games program at the USC Viterbi School of Engineering provides students with a grounding in the fundamentals of computer science and a cross-disciplinary background in game development. Students emerge with an engineering-oriented game-programming skill set, with an understanding of key technologies and the ability to lead complex technical teams in the development of games.

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The J. Paul Getty Trust is an international cultural and philanthropic institution devoted to the visual arts that includes the J. Paul Getty Museum, the Getty Research Institute, the Getty Conservation Institute, and the Getty Foundation. The J. Paul Getty Trust and Getty programs serve a varied audience from two locations: the Getty Center in Los Angeles and the Getty Villa in Malibu.

The J. Paul Getty Museum collects in seven distinct areas, including Greek and Roman antiquities, European paintings, drawings, manuscripts, sculpture and decorative arts, and photographs gathered internationally. The Museum’s mission is to make the collection meaningful and attractive to a broad audience by presenting and interpreting the works of art through educational programs, special exhibitions, publications, conservation, and research.

Visiting the Getty Center
The Getty Center is open Tuesday through Friday and Sunday from 10 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., and Saturday from 10 a.m. to 9 p.m. It is closed Monday and most major holidays. Admission to the Getty Center is always free. Parking is $15 per car, but reduced to $10 after 5 p.m. on Saturdays and for evening events throughout the week. No reservation is required for parking or general admission. Reservations are required for event seating and groups of 15 or more. Please call (310) 440-7300 (English or Spanish) for reservations and information. The TTY line for callers who are deaf or hearing impaired is (310) 440-7305. The Getty Center is at 1200 Getty Center Drive, Los Angeles, California.

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