

2011

### 3 History in 3-D: Digitally Archived Works of Art

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#### Recommended Citation

. "3 History in 3-D: Digitally Archived Works of Art." *Peregrinations: Journal of Medieval Art and Architecture* 3, 1 (2010): 3-3. <https://digital.kenyon.edu/perejournal/vol3/iss1/7>

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## History in 3-D: Digitally Archived Works of Art

Scientists are developing the European joint project called 3D-COFORM. The project aims to digitize the heritage in museums and to provide a virtual archive for works of art from all over the world. Vases, ancient spears, and even complete temples will be reproduced three-dimensionally. Soon viewers will be able to revolve around a sculpture or virtually sight-see a church. The digital archive will be intelligent, searching for and linking objects stored in its database. For instance, a search for Greek vases from the sixth century BC with at least two handles will retrieve corresponding objects from collections all over the world. Researchers are developing calculation specifications to derive the actual object from the measured data. The software must be able to identify specific structures, such as the arms on a statue or columns on a building, as well as to recognize recurring patterns on vases. A virtual presentation also needs to include a true visual image -- a picture of a temple would not be realistic if the shadows cast by its columns were not properly depicted. The research group in Darmstadt is therefore combining various techniques to simulate light effects, as well.

Re-written from *ScienceDaily*

<http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2009/11/091104101537.htm>