



# DIGITAL LAB FOR ISLAMIC VISUAL CULTURE & COLLECTIONS

The Digital Lab is exploring video games and mixed reality to create new immersive experiences of Islamic spaces, objects, and histories for all.

Based at the University of Edinburgh, the Digital Lab brings researchers and students together to work on creative, interdisciplinary projects in collaboration with partners in the games and GLAM (Galleries, Libraries, Archives, Museums) sectors.

Our mission is to make Islamic art and history accessible to all, using video games and mixed reality technologies.

## Our Values

*Inclusion*  
*Collaboration*  
*Respect*

These are the values on which the Lab was founded, and which we strive to uphold through our work. What does this mean in practice?

- We strive to make academic knowledge about Islamic art and history accessible outside the academy.
- We value diverse teams and working collaboratively to create inclusive experiences and resources.
- We believe in equitable pay for all and we do not request or provide unpaid labour.

## Gaming

Projects combine the Lab's focus on immersive technologies with entertainment. Games have the potential not only to entertain, but to make substantive historical knowledge accessible to audiences beyond the academy.

## Cultural Heritage & GLAM

Projects focus on creating immersive digital experiences of Islamic architecture and objects.

## Ethics

Recognising that digitisation and heritage come with significant ethical implications, our work is committed to the thoughtful application of new technologies. We are guided by the [Creative Informatics Ethics Statement](#), which encourages best practices and thoughtful reflection on work with data and new technologies in the creative industries.



Dallin Evans, 3D Model Rummaniyya Volute Digital Munya 2.0

**We welcome partnerships and collaborations with collections and institutions in the UK and around the globe.**

**We help developers create authentic, visually stunning games inspired by the medieval Islamic past.**

- We offer 'Critical Friend' insights, feedback, and recommendations on visuals, content and messaging for projects at any stage.
- We provide accurate, authentic information on architecture, art, archaeology, material culture, and history of Islamic societies (including geography, politics, culture, science, literature, etc.), with a focus on the medieval period (with special expertise in the caliphal period and early Islamic Spain).
- We locate high-quality images of sites, monuments, and artefacts and prepare presentations and mood boards to support development.
- We offer guidance on specialist museum and archival collections, including risk assessment.

## Outputs and Media Reflections

### GAMES

Assassin's Creed Mirage (Ubisoft, 2023)  
<https://www.ubisoft.com/en-gb/game/assassins-creed/mirage>

Digital Munya 2:  
<https://digitallabivcc.com/projects/games/digital-munya-2-0/>

The Córdoba Journey:  
<https://digitallabivcc.com/projects/games/the-cordoba-journey/>

### ARTICLES/MEDIA

Press featuring Dr Glaire Anderson and her work on Assassin's Creed Mirage, as featured in publications with more than 50, 000 readers. Total: 155 articles, reaching a combined readership of 711,661, 500 people.

Anderson, Glaire. "From Abbas Ibn Firnas to Assassin's Creed: The Legacy of Medieval Intellectualism." *OUPblog* (blog), January 10, 2024. <https://blog-oup-com.libproxy.ucl.ac.uk/2024/01/from-abbas-ibn-firnas-to-assassins-creed-the-legacy-of-medieval-intellectualism/>.

Anderson, Glaire. "What the New Assassin's Creed Game Tells Us about Ninth-Century Baghdad – from the Art Historian Who Worked on the Game." *The Conversation*, October 3, 2023. <http://theconversation.com/what-the-new-assassins-creed-game-tells-us-about-ninth-century-baghdad-from-the-art-historian-who-worked-on-the-game-209755>.

*Assassin's Creed Mirage Codex and the History of Baghdad with Dr. Glaire Anderson,* *History Respawned*, November 20 2023.

Walton, Millie. "Rebuilding Baghdad – in the New Assassin's Creed." *Apollo Magazine*, October 11, 2023.

Morgan, John. "Interview with Glaire Anderson." *Times Higher Education (THE)*, October 12, 2023.

'Interview with Glaire Anderson, on Working on the New Assassin's Creed Mirage'. *The Nine*. Glasgow, Scotland: BBC Scotland, 11 July 2023.

"Video Games and the Work of Islamic Art History," Research Seminar in Islamic Art (ReSIA), School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS), University of London – School of Arts, May 2023

Edinburgh College of Art, CAHSS, University of Edinburgh. "Research, Knowledge Exchange and Innovation: Dr Glaire Anderson on Vimeo." Accessed February 1, 2024. <https://vimeo.com/887609838>.

"Edinburgh Innovations: Dr. Glaire Anderson and Ubisoft Partnership Official Announcement." Accessed February 1, 2024. <https://www.linkedin.com/feed/update/urn:li:activity:7115651970912116736/>.

*Assassin's Creed Mirage: Recreating A Lost City*, Ubisoft, 2023. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nruL1RS4gKs>.

*"Video games can successfully communicate history and education. They provide a way for us to immerse ourselves in history in much the same way that we can lose ourselves in a great historical film or a book. But video games can provide an incredible level of immersion and engagement in history. A video game puts you in the role of active participant, rather than a passive observer, and that provides an opportunity for education that goes beyond film, and even in some ways beyond what a great book can do. And while not everyone might want to read a serious history book, no matter how well-written, lots of people of all ages enjoy playing games and enjoy learning about history. This means that games – digital or analog – have the potential to bring history to much wider audiences. Video games with historical themes are very popular ... Because video games have such potential to educate, I would argue that specialists in Islamic history and civilisation should be involved in game creation..."* – Glaire Anderson, PhD (Founding Leader of DLIVCC)

Mariam Neza, "Ask The Expert – Glaire Anderson," Asia House, May 1, 2021, <https://asiahousearts.org/ask-the-expert-glaire-anderson/>.

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