

Kam's Romeo & Juliet: Co-creating Interactive Drama Across Cultures

*Dr. Nick Bryan-Kinns, Dr. Ben Bengler,
Dr. Wei Wang (Hunan University)*



Students from QMUL and Hunan University collaborated with the Kam ethnic minority group in rural China to co-create an interactive drama and art exhibition based on traditional Kam stories using Physical Computing and Interaction Design techniques.

The co-creation process took place within a Kam village and linked ICT with their traditional skills and culture to raise awareness of its benefits and help to explore how traditional culture could be reimaged in new ways.

Key Findings:

Working with radically different cultures provoked questions of what “interactivity” means to different groups and how these differences can inspire future research.

The project has encouraged consideration of how traditional craft skills can be utilised in digital making, and how new forms of digital musical instruments could be co-designed with musicians from different cultures.

“ There is very little other research out there in which minority culture groups are actively engaged in a process of co-creation where all parties equally contribute to the creative activity. ”

Results: “Playing Us for Us”

Over 300 local villagers attended the final dramatic performance and interactive art exhibition (the first time this had been attempted in rural China), most of whom had never used a computer or seen interactive art before.

The performance was well received by the local population, with many audience members commenting on the interactive elements, and even being moved to tears in some parts.

