

1. MYTHOLOGY AND THE DIGITAL ERA

INTRODUCTION

GENERAL DESCRIPTION

Starting from the myth of Narcissus and Pandora, this workshop deals with the power of images. When we talk about a “myth,” we talk about a fascinating story that can be interpreted in various ways, in different contexts, always in a fresh way that seems to hold a secret regarding contemporary life. The participants will discuss the message of these two myths in a creative and critical way. Then they will get inspired to create their own artwork.

GOALS

- › To stimulate thinking about how social media has affected our everyday lives.
- › To raise awareness of the positive and negative influences of social media.

PREPARATION

Before the activity:

- › Collect portraits images related to Narcissus and Pandora, see link1. Please inform your participants in respect to images’ copyrights.
- › Prepare the links.
- › Art materials to develop the portrait (glue, magazines, colour pencils, painting ink, cardboard, brushes, or other).
- › Prepare a private social media platform to share the participants’ photographs (e-portfolio, padlet...).

Prepare the space/room:

- › Chairs and tables.
- › Internet access.
- › Video projector and a computer.
- › One smart phone per group of participants (minimum).

OPTIONAL: image edition apps.

DIGITAL SKILLS

LEVEL 1: basic use of digital tools.

STEP BY STEP

10’	The facilitator orients participants to engage in creative dialogue and critical thinking while getting inspired to create a new artwork. By discussing about the myths of Narcissus and Pandora, it opens the question: “Is there any advice or values coming from the myths for to us today?” In group, the facilitator addresses participants to think about this workshop: “What are we going to do? What is our goal?” The facilitator can select a picture of Narcissus and a picture of Pandora (1) and ask participants: “What do you see? What do you think or imagine? How would you describe Narcissus or Pandora as a person?”
10’ to 20’	The facilitator may narrate the myth of Narcissus by Ovid (2). The facilitator moderates a discussion among students regarding the myths and the issues it arises. The aim is to inspire creative and critical thinking, beginning with some topics (3) to suggest for discussion. The facilitator can select a couple of them or think of another topic that may interest the participants and can be connected to the myths. It is important to talk about the power of images today. For instance, are we absorbed in an image device (a screen/social media) as Narcissus was absorbed by the reflection of himself on the fountain?
10’ to 20’	The facilitator may narrate the myth of Pandora (2), and open the discussion with some topics (4). It is important to talk about the ambivalence of technology. “Fire” was a cutting edge technology that changed the lives of people in several ways. Every new technology can also involve risks. That is the message of Pandora. The internet and social media today has changed our lives in several ways. What is the positive and what is the negative aspect of the spread of digital technology and communication? For instance, the facilitator can ask participants if they heard of “privacy issues” regarding the use of the internet and social media, for example, about Facebook’s “social media experiment” (5).
15’ to 25’	The facilitator promotes a debate regarding the ambivalence of technology. Some suggestions on how to organize the debate: First, the participants have to split into two groups. One person will stay neutral out of the groups to conduct the debate as a “mediator”. One group will argue that social media has improved our everyday lives in a positive way (for example, they provide a public space for self-expression or discussion on social issues). The other group will argue against social media (for example, they will have privacy concerns). Attention: it does not matter what a person may believe personally. The participant will have to play a role according to the group he/she belongs. Even if the participants is against social media, he/she will have to find arguments to support that using social media is good; or vice versa. Each team will have to work for about 5-10 minutes separately and prepare arguments to represent their ideas. After that, the “mediator” will start a discussion for about 10 minutes and ask each team to present their arguments. The “mediator” can ask further questions. The debate will end by the teams voting who won the debate. Each of the participants will vote out loud if he/she is convinced or not by the arguments of the other team; the team with the most votes will win.
60’ to 90’	Creativity time! The facilitator encourages the participants to have fun and enjoy the creative activity. We will see various artworks depicting Narcissus and Pandora (1), from ancient to contemporary art. The facilitator invites participants to create an artwork as a memorabilia for their participation in the workshop. The facilitator asks participants to form groups and to think of a subject related to the myths that they would like to engage with. The result is a portrait connected to either Narcissus or Pandora, directly or indirectly. Participants can use any medium of expression they wish (painting, photography, video, live performing of a story or a visual poem). For example: take a photograph of tehmselves interpreting an image of Narcissus or Pandora as if they lived know. Participants can even make an artwork with a broader theme regarding contemporary life and social media. The facilitator can show inspiring work by Andreas Angelidakis’ “Vessel” (6).
60’ to 90’	The facilitator asks participants to share and comment on the results with the group. Each group will present their work on the topic they have selected (about 15’ each group), discussing it with the facilitator and the participants of the other groups.

Ethics

The participants works can be shared online with the consent of participants or it can be kept offline. For more on privacy and personal data protection, consult [Educator’s Guide Part 1, point 4, p. 5.](#)

Other options

This workshop can be carried out in two sessions, in which the facilitator carries out the first part and then introduces the hands-on activity, which can be done at home. Participants bring their works into the second session to present and discuss together.

Assessment

[Here](#) the facilitator can find resources to carry out the assessment of the workshop.

Description and reference links

- (1) Art images of Narcissus and Pandora
[Link to pdf](#)
- (2) Read / listen to the myth of Narcissus by Ovid and to the Myth of Pandora
[Link to pdf](#)
- (3) Topics for discussion on Narcissus myth:
[Link to pdf](#)
- (4) Topics for discussion on Pandora’s myth:
[Link to pdf](#)
- (5) A social media experiment
<https://abcnews.go.com/Health/consented-face-books-social-experiment/story?id=24368579>
- (6) Andreas Angelidakis’ “Vessel”
https://www.dropbox.com/s/ddh59t543ffxpa/VESSEL_AndreasAngelidakis.mov?dl=0#

DURATION

165’ to 255’