

+ - now

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Sunday, 30 March 2008
Last Updated Thursday, 05 June 2008

Artist and Technologist:

Jennifer Seevinck

Exhibition Dates:

16 April - 7 June 2008

10am-5pm Daily

Exhibition Costs:

Free with entry to the Powerhouse Museum

Background

Artist Jennifer Seevinck takes her aesthetic and design approach from the words of philosopher Martin Heidegger. He describes two ways of 'being' in the world: 1) of 'being in a room' or 'being in a car'; and 2) of 'being in love'. It is this latter notion that is of interest here. +-now asks the audience to consider the different ways users can 'be'. It focuses on the deep involvement one can experience in certain types of interaction, such as being engrossed in a conversation or lost in an activity.

Description

+now is an interactive art system in two parts. The first is the interface comprised of fine white, beach sand, also acting as the projection surface for imagery. Hand gestures in the sand are rendered on the sand's surface. As gestures accumulate over periods of time, producing visual echoes, the image behaves like a liquid, affording an immediate sense of play. The second part of the system consists of a separate projection on a large screen, thus offering the user a more reflective experience. Though the sand remains the input point to the aesthetic outcome, here the visual echoes can lead to new shapes at varying shades of opacity.

A related element to the overall experience of +now is to improvise in time, or with the history of one's gestures. The created objects now become perceived objects that exist, though not directly a product of the computer. An everyday comparison might be cloud gazing, and the interpretation of shapes and figures one might attach. As one starts to interpret form and infer meaning, are they not losing themselves in their surroundings? The focus of +now will be the effectiveness of the interactive experience resulting in the sense of immersivity, or "getting lost" in the activity.

Research Queries

+now is an interactive art system using a tangible interface and a simulation agent being developed through iterative methods.

The first iteration, Glass Pond was evaluated in a pilot study at the Creativity and Cognition Studios in 2005. Installation of +now at Beta_space will enable the artist to conduct a second, more extensive evaluation using members of the general public. It will permit testing to see if the first round of issues regarding user experience, design, and performance have been resolved.

Artist's Biography

Jennifer Seevinck is an electronic artist and researcher. She is currently pursuing an art practice-based PhD in interactive art at the Creativity and Cognition Studios at the University of Technology, Sydney; and in receipt of an Australian Postgraduate Award (APA) scholarship. Her areas of immediate interest are interactive art, emergence, perception and the Gestalt, tangible computing, virtual reality and medical simulation.

From 2001-2007 she was a researcher at the Virginia Modeling Analysis and Simulation Center (VMASC) in the U.S.A. Here she collaborated with architects, engineers, scientists and medical professionals on a range of projects from interactive virtual reality environments to video and web. She concluded her time there with 2 patents pending.

Prior to 2001, Seevinck established and lectured computer animation and multimedia courses at Deakin University. She held a similar faculty position at the Australian National University and has worked as a freelance designer on interactive museum exhibits, web, architecture, theatre and film since 1993. Seevinck holds a Bachelor of Design Studies (Architecture) from the University of Queensland and a Master of Philosophy (Electronic Arts) from the Australia National University. She has exhibited at conferences and contemporary art galleries in Beijing, Tokyo, Australia and U.S.A. She participated in an I-Park artist in residency program in 2003 & 2007 in the USA and was Video co-chair for IEEE-VR 2005 and Panels co-chair for IEEE-VR 2006.

Acknowledgements

This work has been supported by the Creativity and Cognition Studios; the Faculty of Information-Technology at UTS; an Australian Postgraduate Award; and the I-Park artist in residency programs.