



Vicki Smith's Presentation was delivered at *Plaything*.

Vicky Smith(NZ), AvatarBodyCollision

Meatspace vs Meetplace: a theatrical journey into immersive technologies.

Meatspace vs Meetplace: a theatrical journey into immersive technologies Or chatrooms as proximal space, how we define inter active

Vicki Smith

Artist's Presentation

Sydney time

1.30-2.30 tech time 2.30-3.00pm artist's presentation

that translates as

london 4.30 - 5.30 [tech] 5.30 - 6.00am presentation

ljubljana 5.30 - 6.30 [tech] 6 - 6.30am presentation

helsinki 6.30 - 7.30 [tech] 7.30 - 8.00am presentation

munich 5.30 - 6.30 [tech] 6.30 - 7.00am presentation

Introduction

Thanks s for the opportunity to accept the invitation extended to *Avatar BodyCollision* to come to this conference. Because I am from a visual arts background not a theatre one that I am unused to being in the spotlight so I have prepared a small blipvert of 'avatar body collision' the early years'.

Movie

Short digital movie in which Vicki narrates the journey to where we are now.

Interactive bit

Screen shows the two chat clients we use for cyberformance, the ivisit windows are paused and all show the final image from the intor movie. I unpaue my ivisit window which is cue for others to unpaue.

I attempt give the colliders a 'script' for the next bit of the presentation there is an argument - the paper is passed back and forth a few times then Helen snatches it and swallows it. Karla starts to heave violently and regurgitates the a folded scroll of paper. While Karla is pulling out the paper – she shows it to cam – it has the words interact intertwine intersect interrupt... we improv on these words and we type them into bottom of ivisit window

Then in palace the avatars start discussing what is happening in ivisit window – looking out at audience. I turn the camera to the audience and ask them for questions for the remote performers.

Questions included

What was the weather like?

how did we think this was interactive?

did we use silence?

why did we use the horrible computer voice?

how scripted were our performances?
how did we make avatars?
a question about being killed on the palace server?
were there different rooms in the palace?

Text for movie

[me]

I guess my parents had almost run out of ideas by the time they had got to me so my name begins with where I come in the family vi

Roman numerals for 6

I used those numerals as the name for myself in the chat room and discovered that the computer reads the name not as vi but as six

[kathy voice in palace reading vi]

An avatar is born!

[intro titles here]

[abc title]

The [abc] experiment was performed at the 2002 fringe festival in wellington where Paolo led us and the audience into the palace and showed us around.

We met desktop theatre and explored the question of cyberformance.

[voice in palace reading]

Is it theatre, what is theatre, what is real?

[me]

The less tech savvy people struggled with what we were showing them.

Then came avatar body collision – we began to travel with the idea.

We met, discussed, devised and rehearsed, and played ‘in close relationship’ to each other.

We celebrated the opportunity to use the medium we were playing in to disperse our political ideals.

[voice in palace reading]

We frightened teenagers in the UK, USA and Canada with our **silent** women in black protests

[SSH titles here]

[me]

With SSH we explored the notion of the beauty myth and genetic engineering, we introduced the web camera and cellphone.

[voice in palace reading]

We played games – exploding the notion of enhanced beauty and told tales exploring the rise of organs as commodity and the madness of genetic engineering.

We alluded to what we were in reality [in meatspace] women in their domestic environments, we used utensils!

[me]

Part of this cyberformance took place in public palaces [responses from the unsuspecting audiences ranged from them engaging in the play to killing us].

[::SWIM:: titles here]

[voice in palace reading]

In retelling two classic tales we explore the possibilities and problems of intimacy without physical proximity, and perform magic with webcams.

[Lysistrata titles here]

[me]

In march this year we took part in the global performances of Lysistrata.

We invited the audience into our space, we performed a show for them then dressed them in women in black avatars and **[both voices]** lead them in forays into other palaces in a process we called interventions.

[voice in palace reading]

Our cyber version of street theatre]

We cross-platforms, cross-genres, cross-continent and time zones to play and experiment with the idea of body and machine.

[final title]

Next Level ... UpStage.