All the World's a Screen, featuring: The seven stages of man

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Abstract

Charlotte Gould and Paul Sermon developed and presented this collaborative new artwork entitled *All the World's a Screen*, a live interactive telecommunications performance, to link public audiences in Manchester and Barcelona. On the evening of Saturday 28 May 2011 participants at MadLab in Manchester's Northern Quarter and Hangar Artist Studios in Poblenou, Barcelona were joined together on-screen for the first time to create their very own interactive generative cinema experience, complete with sets, costumes and props. The artists created a miniature film set in which the remote audiences acted and directed their own movie, transporting participants into animated environments and sets where they created personalized unique narratives. *All the World's a Screen* was a site-specific work allowing the public audiences to engage and interact directly within the installation, merging urban environments with networked audiences, and creating an otherworldly space on-screen where people could interact with others across the two cities, allowing the participants to explore alternative networked spaces. For Charlotte Gould and Paul Sermon this immersive interactive installation represented an exciting new departure from their existing practice. Pushing the boundaries of telematic art and generative cinema, *All the World's a Screen* combined the possibilities

of telepresent performance with miniature scale-models and animated scenes; through audience participation it explored the way narratives may be revealed through the interplay between artist, audience and environment. With key features of the telematic stage, user generated performances and the dramaturgy of networked communication this project referenced Shakespeare's infamous line 'All the world's a stage' with seven rooms of a model film set (relating to the seven ages of man in Shakespeare's *As You Like It*), thus providing a metaphysical backdrop to steer the unfolding plot. This project was co-hosted by the Museu d'Art Contemporani de Barcelona MACBA Study Centre and on-going research and community building took place throughout the project to generate growing public attention around the research and the final development of the installation.

Keywords

Ludics

community

embodiment

telematics

open-systems

telepresence

intervention

INSERT FIGURE 1

Figure 1: *All the World's a Screen* at Hangar Studios, May 2011.

Introduction

Between 4 p.m. and 6 p.m. on the 28 May 2011, the MadLab audience in Manchester joined participants at Hangar in Poblenou, bringing a mix of eccentric players, creative interventions and surreal improvised performances in spontaneous interactive moments of hilarity, emotional exchanges and thought provoking dialogues. Whilst audience members in Barcelona had the opportunity to construct sets and edit scenes, participants at MadLab in Manchester replied with improvised props and costumes to provoke a juxtaposed montage of impromptu performances and dialogues.

All the World's a Screen was configured and connected as follows: both Manchester and Barcelona venues had a chroma-key blue back drop screen and floor installed in their respective exhibition spaces together with two video monitors, one facing the blue screen from the front and another from the side (stage-left in Barcelona and stage-right in Manchester). Above the monitor facing the screen was a camera, approximately 2.5 metres from the ground. The two geographically remote installations looked identical, however, much of the technical system was located in Barcelona, where the camera image of a participant standing in front of the blue backdrop was fed to a video chroma-key mixer, which replaced the blue area with an image from a MacBook Pro that contained a choice of seven video backgrounds. This part of the installation was referred to as 'The seven stages of man' and will be explained in further detail later. The output from the mixer was then passed to a second video chroma-key mixer together with the

live incoming videoconference image of a participant in front of the other blue screen in Manchester. The final combined image of the participants in Manchester and Barcelona, positioned on the background scene from the MacBook Pro was then sent directly to the two video monitors around the blue screen in Barcelona and back via the HD videoconference system to the monitors in Manchester.

INSERT FIGURE 2

Figure 2: *All the World's a Screen* – Telematic Flow Diagram, May 2011.

The seven stages of man

Members of the audience in Barcelona were able to decide on the context of this interactive telematic performance by using an iPhone app to select between seven different background sets, which consisted of live webcams scenes and animated environments. The participants in Barcelona could then stand in front of the chroma-key blue screen and position themselves within these stage sets to join the 'players' in Manchester within the dramaturgy of the model set as they journeyed through 'The seven stages of man'.

This specific section in the *All the World's a Screen* offered audiences the opportunity to create the narrative and plot of the complete installation and comprised of a one-metre square table top 1:25 scale model of a house that included seven ground floor rooms connected by doorways and corridors. The audience were invited to place a hand directly

into any of the rooms in the model to arrange the sets and interact with participants, appearing on-screen as if the 'Hand of God' had intervened in the interaction (Huhtamo and Parikka 2011). Four of the rooms contained webcams that were connected to a MacBook Pro via a USB hub. Using custom made software built with Quartz Composer the MacBook Pro could display a full-screen output from up to seven different video sources, which included the four webcams as well as three QuickTime movie animation files. When a participant pressed a key (1–7) on an iPhone keyboard app the video output displayed the selected video stream until another key was pressed. This was an offline video display and therefore the video from all sources was uncompressed at full HD resolution. The selected video scene then provided the backdrop to the *All the World's a Screen* telematic performance.

INSERT FIGURE 3

Figure 3: The seven stages of man – Video Flow Diagram, May 2011.

Techniques of telematic dramaturgy

Throughout the research process we looked at early forms of technology and moving image techniques to inform the set design and concept of this telematic installation, thereby identifying innovative modes of engagement and new forms of interaction between Manchester and Barcelona. Such techniques have been employed since the renaissance to deceive the eye with the use of optics and mirrors (Virilio 1994: 15). Panoramas (360º paintings) were popular since the late 1780s, and in 1787 Robert Baker

took out a patent for 'nature at a glance'. Dioramas using early photographic techniques[1] were introduced from July 1822 when Daguerre turned his Diorama in Rue Samson into a 'Sight Travel Machine' in which a turning platform moved the viewer through various landscapes. These techniques reached their height of popularity in 1900 at the Universal Exposition in Paris when the first experiment with the 'Cineorama' by Raoul Grimoin-Sanson was also presented using the newly invented film to create a simulation of a hot air balloon ride, comprising of ten projectors in a cabin. Unfortunately it did not work due to the extreme temperatures created by the projectors, but its technological ambition was exemplary of its time. Peppers Ghost was invented by Professor John Henry Pepper and engineer Henry Dicks and introduced into theatres in the 1860s: a sheet of glass is placed at a 45-degree angle between the audience and a room, a figure is situated in another hidden and dark but duplicate space and when lit the reflection appears on the glass as if it were a vertical holographic vision. In *All the World's a Screen* we used a range of equally illusionary techniques in the seven rooms of the model house, which all made symbolic references to convey 'The seven stages of man'.

Methods of visual trickery were used with the introduction of film and early matte techniques (two shots filmed separately and put together in post production) used by the Lumière Brothers. The medium of film left early audiences in awe and on the Lumière Brothers first showing of their *L'arrivée d'un train en gare de La Ciotat* (Lumière 1895) the audience screamed and ducked as the train appeared to be breaking outside of the frame, towards them. Georges Méliès was one of the first film-makers to use special effects such as multiple exposures and time-lapse photography. His *A Trip to the Moon*

(Méliès 1902) and *The Impossible Voyage* (Méliès 1904) which involved surreal journeys into other worlds are seen as some of the first science fiction films. Similar techniques were employed in *All the World's a Screen*, particularly by the participants at MadLab in Manchester who contributed live visual trickery effects, using pieces of blue fabric to blot out parts of the body and create collaged figures and faces made up of multiple participants from both locations.

MadLab's creative director, Dave Mee recounted some of these highlights that included: in her marathon performance, Manchester based poet Carol Batton shared local social histories with attendees in Barcelona as well as reading performance poetry; the performance ran for several hours, responding to the shifting audiences and scenery in Spain, and the venue itself was a contextual platform to relate Marx and Engels' relationship to Manchester, stories that were well received by her local audience. Local performer Adrian Slatcher drove a car through Barcelona with passengers from Spain, and the technology enabled a seamless means of communicating and interacting with a remote audience without resorting to the use of language. Dave Mee from MadLab ran a telematic health and safety seminar with the aid of a flip chart, as well as playing remote noughts-and-crosses with a losing team from Spain. Concerned about the potential danger of objects falling and causing telematic injuries, he took the initiative of bringing in some props from Manchester to illustrate scenarios and ensure compliance with local legislation. The flip chart made it possible to create imagery accessible to both locations, but introduced an element of frustration for Barcelona, who could only watch and request without being able to affect the outcome – the antithesis of a shared space, which

appealed to his sense of the obtuse. Through the use of blue fabric participants made a framed hole in other participant's stomachs – popping out of other people's bodies was a particular motif of the day. With MadLab having control over the final layer of the composite image, they could ultimately determine what images were manifested for the shared audience; harking back to Victorian seaside stand-ins, the fluidity and flexibility of the digital medium allowed for greater play in exploring and creating new compositional and performance opportunities. Props, such as picture frames, were used to start with, but later chroma-key reveals such as alien birth scenes from Ridley Scott's Alien were recreated, to degrees of success.

INSERT FIGURE 4

Figure 4: Audience participants at MadLab Manchester, May 2011.

This sense of illusion was further explored in early cinema through the 'Rube' genre where live action takes place in front of a projection. Edwin S. Porter's *Uncle Josh at the Moving Picture Show* (Porter 1902) shows a character watching the Edison movie, *Parisian Dance* (White 1897), jump on the stage to flirt with her, running off the stage at the sight of the *Black Diamond Express* (White 1896), jumping back onstage for the final scene. In *The Country Couple* (1902), when the father mistakes one of the parties as his daughter he tears down the screen falling into the arms of the projectionist. The Rube concept was referenced in *The Seven Stages of Man*, which included a mini desktop video projector in a room at the centre of the model representing a miniature cinema, as a film within a film. Symbolizing the 'lovers' room, the cinema screened the same animation

that appeared as the 'lovers' backdrop, offering further clues to the rooms theme and possible plot.

Urban interventions

In this project we address how an artwork can function as a catalyst for urban intervention, which offers a creative platform for public audience interaction. We looked at other forms of public arts practice to explore how we can learn from this interventionist arts tradition. Working from Scott McQuire's premise, the divide between leisure and work is converging, with the increasing pervasiveness of mobile devices, social networks and e-mail, our media has become ubiquitous and intelligent. With the potential for data collection and tracking the digital infrastructure is integrated into the very architecture around us. McQuire (2008: 131) argues that while old media encouraged sub-urbanism and individualism, drawing us into the private sphere, digital developments offer opportunity for media to facilitate public engagement. *All the World's a Screen* was developed as a practice-based research project to pose some of the following questions; Can telematic environments using ludic interfaces offer opportunities to create new social models of public engagement between geographically distant audiences? and to what extent can the creator or author provide an open-system of interaction whilst retaining control over the context and meaning of the artwork? Edward Shankin and Kristine Stiles (2011: 32) argue that interactivity per se does not automatically produce works that offer a creative voice, a dynamic role or 'agency' and that this can be limited when the underlying motivation of the artwork is technically or

commercially driven and the artworks do not offer real choice or opportunity for creativity. Our research strove to address these questions whilst remaining mindful of the position posed by Shankin and Stiles and this open-system approach to interactivity was a fundamental to the concept and development of *All the World's a Screen*.

The locations and associated communities within which the installation took place were also a key focus of the research, and we were able to investigate how the communities responded and interacted with each other. *All the World's a Screen* took place in two similar environments, with a comparable history: Hangar is a converted textile mill in Barcelona and MadLab, is housed in a building that was previously a retail space in Manchester. This change of use from industrial to creative spaces is a common feature of both Manchester and Pobleneu and the textiles heritage of Pobleneu is also why it is referred to locally as Barcelona's Manchester. The project linked two unique environments with similar attributes; both were media lab spaces that attract a local artistic community and maintain open access to the public, and it was interesting to observe how these artistic and technical communities as well as their associated audiences engaged with each other, and the manner in which external influences affected the dynamic of the group. The live telematic performance was presented at Hangar as part of their open studio season, inviting in local residents to explore and experience artworks and installations from both local and visiting artists. The event also involved live music and, coincidentally, a screening of the European Championship football final between Barcelona FC and Manchester United, which attracted a unexpected audience

and provided further interesting material both for us as artists to present as part of the set and for the audience as a subject for engagement.

An important part of the development process of the piece was our response to the environment in Barcelona in order to inspire the development of the set. In this way we provided a framework from which an audience could engage and develop a narrative, offering a platform from which the two communities could develop a dialogue. Advocate of this model, Grant H. Kester (2004) questioned the value of the artist as 'expert' imposing their views on communities as patronizing arguing that communities should be involved in the artworks themselves in a proactive way. *All the World's a Screen* offered a framework from which the audience could literally use their voice, role-play, and proactively create this narrative. Lucy Lippard (1997: 19) distinguishes the importance of the role of the artist to raise awareness around issues, to draw attention to dissipate preconceptions, question conventions and open dialogue around issues. She draws attention to the diversity of contemporary urban communities and argues that 'preserved' or catalogued representations can be oversimplified and in this way become stereotyped. However, within a multicultural society it is important to take risks, to speak to specific groups within the whole, to question and probe, to explore ideas and conventions as well as push boundaries, rather than avoiding issues and thereby not entering into a discourse within communities (Lippard 1997: 24). The Manchester and Barcelona audiences were representative of a broad cross-section of the local community and they responded not only to the environment but each other and were encouraged to improvise with props and costumes that were brought and provided. There were numerous visitors who simply

stumbled upon the event while passing through the area and consequently had no preconceived knowledge of the installation or the gallery, which added to the mix of participants and to the richness of the response. Lippard advocates the idea of artworks that engage with everyday life and our public spaces, in order to improve our sense of ourselves and quality of life, stating that 'as such, it can raise the special qualities of everyday life embedded in place' (1997: 37). The location and time as well as other events going on around the installation also had an impact on how people responded to the work. One example of this was the inclusion in the set of a goal post and miniature football at Hangar for the audience who had come to watch a live screening of the European Championship football final. The audiences in Hangar and Madlab played a virtual game of football, joking and jeering with each other about the state of play. At one point an improvised score board appeared on a flipchart, which showed Manchester United winning by an impossible margin. So while this could have been a point of contention the audience engaged in playful antagonism in order to interact with each other, a point which Lippard reaffirms when talking about the importance of undertaking artworks with diverse communities and taking risk in order to resolve problems as well as build connections.

> A healthy community, in a mixed society can take these risks because it is permeable; it includes all ages, races, preferences, like and unlike, and derives its richness from explicit disagreement as much as from implicit agreement. (Lippard 1997: 24)

INSERT FIGURE 5

Figure 5: Audience participants at Hangar Studios, May 2011.

Ludics: The importance play

Conventions of play were being reassessed from the eighteenth century and in 1793, Friedrich Schiller, in a letter to his sponsor defined a new meaning for 'play'. He said that it could express the simplest to most complicated of ideas from '… the aesthetic state', 'a state of the highest reality so far as the absence of all limits is concerned' where we can experience a 'unity of human nature' (Schiller [1962] 1793).

Claus Pias (2011) describes this as '… not about games (Spiele) but rather about play (Spiele), about a playful attitude'. Jean Jacques Rousseau referred to play as an essential learning tool in *Émile, or On Education* ([1979] 1762) and Richards Sennett (1986) reaffirms the importance of play for all ages for the maintenance of a functional and healthy society. It is notable that the German word for 'play' and 'game' is the same, 'spiele', which leads Hans Scheuerl (1965) to define games as having five attributes: (1) 'freedom', no goal outside its self, (2) 'infinitude' with no preconceived ending, (3) 'closeness of the game' the rules or defined area of play, (4) 'ambivalence', movement between rule and chance, serious and fun, impulse and cognition, immersion and reflection and (5) 'virtuality', separate from 'real life' and the self.

All the World's a Screen mirrors Scheuerl's attributes in that it offers freedom, with no goal outside itself, it is an open system with no defined end point, there are rules in so far as a defined camera area, and the narrative can move between different states, often relying on body language when language is not shared. The way that the audience participate with interactive installations can be dependant on numerous factors and this is reaffirmed by various studies that found that audience interactivity depends on the emotional state of the user (McCarthy and Wright 2004) and that levels of interaction are dependant on their personality (Brave and Nass 2008)

During the initial concept development we decided that it was very important that although the installation took place outside a traditional gallery setting, the signifiers were clear that this was not a public space, but a fictitious performance environment where it was 'permitted' and safe to play. We wanted therefore to use references to the theatre stage or film set in the same way Allan Kaprow aimed for 'the line between art and life as fluid and perhaps as indistinct as possible' through 'Happening' events as fictitious spaces. Shankin and Stiles (2011) warn of the risks that this can trigger, citing an event where one of the performers, when injured was ignored by the audience who thought the accident part of the act. They argue that Kaprow himself rejected the 'Happenings' movement after ten years as he said that audiences were not ready for the creative act of co-creating artworks. The suggestion might be that it is important for audiences to distinguish between art and life in order to give them license to play, not as themselves but in a role. In this way the set or the stage reference in *All the World's a Screen* worked as a trigger for the audience in that they could engage in improvised

dialogues from the bizarre to the insightful and be uninhibited in the knowledge that they were on-screen in role rather than as themselves. This reference to the theatrical set as a potential performance environment can also encourage an audience to play simply by inviting them in. Many of the early modernist art movements were interested in the connection with art and the theatre and opportunities this provided to engage with a proactive audience. Filippo Tommaso Marinetti in the manifesto Variety Theatre commented:

> The Variety Theatre is alone in seeking audience's collaboration. It doesn't remain static like a stupid voyeur, but joins noisily in the action, in the singing, accompanying the orchestra, communicating with the actors in bizarre dialogues. ([1995] 1913).

Fluxus events often took place onstage-like venues and 'Happenings' took art events onto the streets, with a sense of theatre and interplay between audience and performer. Many of the Fluxus Happenings prepared their audiences with scripts or instructions and in this way they asserted the artists authority over the piece. Sonka Dinkla argues that, participation is located along a fragile border between emancipatory art and manipulation and suggests there is a fine line in the relationship of control and freedom between user and artist. The decisive act in judging the situation is how active the unprepared viewer becomes within a certain framework of action and without specific instructions (Dinkla 1996: 283).

The title *All the World's a Screen* is a direct reference to Shakespeare's *As You Like It* [2], which suggests we are all merely actors playing roles as if on a stage and the 'seven ages of man' refer to different life stages, which we all recognize and will experience throughout our lives. In *The Seven Stages of Man* each room represents a different stage of life being; 'infancy', 'schoolboy/childhood', 'lover', 'soldier/worker', 'justice', 'pantaloon' and 'second childishness'. Our environments were inspired by representing each life stage as a symbolic metaphor of a specific room within the house, and drawing on the metaphysical and psychological work of artists such as Louise Bourgeoise as well as Ilya and Emilia Kapakov we developed concepts that represented each of the life stages through the environment and theme of the room sets. The child's room was an animation and moved from classroom to playground and from beach to space, but was represented in the physical space as a child's room with a selection of model toys, figurines and clockwork characters. The Justice room was presented as a garage, complete with a car in front of a miniature video screen backdrop, ready for a drive in the country. It was however an important part of the concept that the audience could manipulate the environment, moving objects around the space. At one point an audience participant lifted a dinosaur figurine out of the child's set and placed in the Justice room as part of an improvised car chase, another participant then moved the dinosaur up to the camera lens, changing its scale, becoming huge in comparison to the participants. This is an example of how we as artists created a framework for the audience to respond and play, whilst still allowing for unexpected outcomes and in this way instructions become unnecessary, relying on ludic consensus. Erikki Huhtamo (Huhtamo and Parikka 2011) identifies this consensus use of recognizable archetypes and narratives as 'topoi' and this

device he argues is used regularly in film, art and advertising and are legible to the audience, facilitating the communication of ideas, such as those created between Hangar and MadLab. *All the World's a Screen* is an open system that allows the audience to take the narrative in any direction they choose, but as artists we offer this framework as a vacant space of potential. This creates an opportunity for reflection on the themes and stages of life, but also provides a narrative for different ages to interact. At one point a couple in Manchester hold up their new born baby to take part and a participant in Barcelona responds by immediately selecting the infancy room to place the performers in context. Each individual brought their own ideas and experience to the project and were encouraged to improvise with their own props. One participant wearing a hat in the shape of a cat's head used this as part of his interaction making it into a mask so that he became half cat half human. In this way the narrative is created through shared stories.

INSERT FIGURE 6

Figure 6: *All the World's a Screen* at Hangar Studios, May 2011.

Sennett (1986: 27) advocates the importance of role-play in society and he argues that the modern being's search for 'true' or 'authentic' character as a result of capitalism and secularization has lead to a 'crisis of public life' in the quest for the authentic self and the rise of the charismatic leader and performer, and thus the twentieth-century citizen has become polarized and isolated. From this perspective the constant search for self, results in a narcissistic view of the world. Our search for the authentic self, alongside social mores of silence in public, has resulted in a fear of revealing this private self in public.

While social mores around silence with strangers in the urban environment remain, in the twenty-first century we have seen the emergence of digital personas in culture through pervasive media. McQuire (2008: 131) argues that contrary to the Orwellian fear of a surveillance society, the global success of reality television show *Big Brother* (De Mol 1999) evidences that we have embraced the webcam, projecting a public persona through social networking and online presence. The focus of *Big Brother* was on the personal interactions and personality traits of the participants and the dynamics that resulted under stressful conditions, demonstrating the continued focus in post-industrial society of the 'authentic character' and charismatic leader. In contrast Walter Benjamin writes of the shock of the industrial city of the nineteenth century, where strangers expect to pass and look into the faces of hundreds of people each day without speaking a word to each other. Installations such as *All the World's a Screen* offer a platform for social interaction referencing the idea of a stage or television set, to encourage role-play and to give license to adults to play. Sennett again refers to the changes that took place in the nineteenth century around expectations of play for adults and children and a division that started to emerge between acceptable adult and child play with delineated social space and the expectation that adults would not play with toys. *All the world's a Screen* offered the opportunity to break this convention quite literally, with children's toys making up part of the set.

Using social networking protocols and technologies such as webcams and video conferencing *All the World's a Screen* provides a platform for role-play, offering the opportunity to embody and explore an alternative digital personhood. The focus here is

on play, rather than on projecting a personality profile, signalling an advanced model of social networking. Sennett argues that in pre-industrial society this opportunity was offered by the theatre, where interaction between audience and players was encouraged they would intermingle, literally, as seats could be bought onstage. The audience responded emotionally in a way that would be considered embarrassing to a modern audience with emotional outbursts and raconteur.

> … in a period like the 18th Century, actor and stranger would be judged on the same terms, and what one could learn from the one in the domain of art, one could learn or apply to the other in the special domain of impersonal life. And therefore in a very real sense, art could be a teacher about life; the imaginative limits of a person's consciousness were expanded, just as in an age in which putting other on, posing, and the like seem morally inauthentic, these limits are contracted. (Sennett 1986: 41)

The origins of telepresence

The new electrical technologies and inventions of the early twentieth century were regularly shown at travelling fairs (Toulmin 2006). Technology became a large part of the fairground experience with elaborate lighting displays and early-automated rides, as well as being used by fortune-tellers and magicians alike. The largely working-class audience of the time were astounded by the spectacle. Early film-makers, Michel and Kenyon from the north west of England presented their films at the travelling fairs – that

were filmed earlier, sometimes the same day outside local factory gates and on promenades, whilst simultaneously advertising their screening later at the travelling fair. It is very clear from these films that people understood what this unusual 'black box camera' apparatus was capable of, as the public played to the camera, sometimes joining in a formation dance, play fighting, striking a pose and generally performing to the camera; only to watch themselves in the screening at the fair later that day. In this way the audience are both performers and viewers, by creating an improvised response to the camera. The striking similarity with the way audiences reacted and responded in *All the World's a Screen* is very clear and these early self-view film screenings possess all the traits of telepresent interaction, whereby the audience responds to a stimulus and thereby direct and change the outcome.

Through this practice-based research project we explored methods of drawing the visitor into the virtual telepresent environment, transporting them from their immediate physical setting in either Barcelona or Manchester into a third shared-space on-screen. The shared telepresent immersive environment we created employed an aesthetic that resembled an uncanny reality that simultaneously appeared fake and clichéd, rather like a film set utilizing stereotypical special effects, such as a driving scene filmed at the wheel of a car, in front of a back-projected highway. Back projection techniques, known as the Shuftan Process were used by Fritz Lang in *Metropolis* (1927) to project film of workers marching on to a miniature model of a building and by Alfred Hitchcock in *Blackmail* (1929) and *The 39 Steps* (1935) as well as in 2003 for *Lord of the Rings*. This clichéd technique proved very popular in *The Seven Stages of Man*. The webcam view of the car

positioned in front of a small LCD video screen showing a drive through the countryside was particularly convincing, which involved many scenes of car chases in pursuit of running pedestrians, made up of multiple participants from Barcelona and Manchester. Through a conscious suspension of disbelief from the participants' perspective, reminiscent scenes such as these evoked a cinematic memory and a sense of collective experience. The uncanny aesthetic familiarity of this telepresent shared-space invited the audience to play out such cinematic clichés and scenes, but moreover, to invent new ones. What happens in the space is intentionally imperfect; a space for imaginings and experiments rather than a faithful cinematic re-enactment. The origins of our work with these model room sets is found in the 'scenography' techniques developed by Alfred Hitchcock, who often used small-scale models of interlinked scenes and rooms to develop and compose the plots and dramaturgy of his films.

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Figure 7: 'The seven stages of man' at MACB Study Centre, May 2011.

Conclusion

The techniques of telematics dramaturgy employed in *All the World's a Screen*, and the application of the uncanny cinematic aesthetic was part of the playfulness of the piece, indicating to an audience that this was an experience separate from the 'everyday', this was an otherworldly space, where they could explore, experiment and play and at the same time symbolizing the 'topoi' of the movies. In this way the audience could invent,

make and edit their own movie. Stiles and Shankin (2011) stress the importance of making a distinction between art and life to enhance the audience's willingness to participate. The identifiable signifiers in *All the World's a Screen*, such as the use of a stylized and playful cinematic aesthetics; that of an obvious set, can indicate to the audience that this is a counter-reality and potentially liberate them to feel free to role-play. And by not playing their self-conscious selves their participation becomes uninhibited. Through this project we were able to research alternative ways of using social media and networked culture, which avoids focusing on the self and instead looks to role-play as a way of enhancing interaction between communities. Such interactive installations can offer opportunities for people to experience their environment in different ways; talking to strangers, allowing participants of all ages to play, create meaning and explore communication in order to cross the boundaries of culture and language. Through *All the World's a Screen* we explored the potential for triggering ideas for narrative through this open interactive system. We applied past modes of practice in order to inform an application of the latest digital technology to identify new ways of engaging and new forms of interaction within a globally networked society.

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Notes

[1] The Daguerreotype was developed through the partnership of Daguerre (a panoramic painter) and Joseph Niepce who had created the first permanent photograph, the Heliograph in 1822. The Daguerreotype was announced in 1839, using silver coated copper plates with a much quicker exposure time. Panoramas were created by placing a number of Daguerreotypes together.

[2] *As You Like It*, Act 2, Scene 7: 'All the world's a stage, And all the men and women are merely players; They have their exits and their entrances; And one man in his time plays many parts, His act being seven ages'.