

NARRATIVE ZTRAEI2 Perspectives and Future



FUTURE PERSPECTIVES ON TECHNIQUES FOR
THE DESIGN OF NARRATIVE EXPERIENCES

- TIMETABLE -

Tuesday 04-12-2012

09:45 Pick up - Four Views Baya
11:00 - 12:00 Intro Time 's Up
12:00 - 13:00 Valentina Nisi/MITI
13:00 - 14:15 lunch
14:15 - 15:15 Mads Haahr
15:15 - 15:30 tea/coffee break
15:30 - 16:30 FoAM
16:30 - 17:00 Wrap up

-----> shortly after - pick up to Funchal

20:00 Dinner - Venda da Donna Maria, Rua de Santa Maria, 51, Funchal

Wednesday 05-12-2012

09:45 Pickup - Four Views Baya
11:00 - 12:00 Andreas Zingerle
12:00 - 13:00 Pedro Branco
13:00 - 14:15 lunch
14:15 - 15:15 Nelson Zagalo
15:15 - 15:30 tea/coffee break
15:30 - 16:30 Future Perspectives

-----> shortly after - pick up to Funchal

19:30 Dinner - Doca do Cavacas (Estrada Monumental, Ponta de Cruz, Funchal)

INTRODUCTION

Future Perspectives on techniques for the design of narrative experiences

Over the last decades, Narrative, with a capital N, has engaged in the challenge of new technology and media. As a result, Narrative has proposed all new kinds of perspectives on what we can call a narrative or a story, and its elements (Story world, plot, dramatic structure, audience participation, etc.).

Today Narrative engages its authors as well as its audience through a multitude of forms. Story driven pervasive games that merge action and interaction on the screen with that in the wider world. Alternate Reality Games (ARGs), which involve interactive stories in which the audience plays the part of a crucial character. Physical Narratives that augment spaces and real objects with information and media delivery capability. Locative Narratives which use the real settings of a city as their story canvas.

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In such narrative experimentations the Authors as well as their Audiences discover and push new creative boundaries. Authors need to push dramatic elements of the story to embrace new media and technologies, challenge their Audiences with new interactive interfaces and push new modes of delivery. Single users as well as collective audience decisions and actions drive the narrative, resolve puzzles, progress the story and ultimately achieve resolutions, catharsis and conclusions. Authors need to develop not only narrative arcs, but whole narrative strategies. Audiences can rarely simply sit back and enjoy the ride.

The goal of this Symposium is to open up the discussion between academics, artists, designers, writers, makers as well as industry and government parties such as entertainment and production companies, museums and the tourism sector, regarding the content, design principles and aesthetics of these exciting new narrative and entertainment genres.

The aim of the symposium is to bring together several creators of Locative and Physical Narratives, practitioners from mixed and augmented reality design, in order to discuss, share and develop their techniques for the design of narrative experiences. These areas of design are young, but are developing a body of approaches for design. Some of the design principles are very audience oriented, some are technological, some visual, others procedural. Such design challenges are not restricted to technical implementation and data flows but also include aspects of visual design and experience design, allowing for the unexpected and encouraging explorative co-creation.

The main focus for this edition of Narrative Strategies are physical environments, the ways that physicality enhances and limits certain narrative strategies, techniques and methods.

The symposium aims to bring together a group of interested theoreticians and practitioners to share their experiences and to indicate where they are working towards. We aim to leave this meeting with some ideas about what it is that people are looking for, what they are trying to make, what techniques they are intending to use in order to take their work forward. What are our, as a group's, future perspectives?

Physical Narration
- TIME'S UP -

We are interested in an active public exploring a space, a space with a story, a space that represents, conveys and allows the discovery of a story, a narrative, a small part of a complex world.

Some of the problems that we are dealing with include the following:

Narrative Meaning. This is our core issue – we are interested in the ways that networks of objects (including media, architecture, etc) form a semantic network and communicate a story. What does an object mean in some particular context – how can we build meaning into objects? Text, semiotics, historical context... What cultural baggage do we drag in, what stereotypes can we use and break?

Narrative Time. How do we define the time of the story as an experience? Perhaps the oldest term in narratology is the “narrative arc” being that strangely drawn curve that starts with normality, works its way into the sky as the story become complex, tense and compelling before resolution brings us to a finish that is satisfying. When we invite the public to freely explore, how can we offer them a narrative arc? Can we create tension and release?

5 **Narrative Focus.** How do we encourage, allow or even force the audience to pay attention to certain objects or processes in the room? Lighting, size, reference, isolation all make this possible. Does every detail need to be completely correct? When is a book just a book, thematically important or to be opened and investigated?

Language. As humans, our prime narrative experiences are principally linguistic. We are building worlds in which the story is physically explored. To what extent is language necessary? Could there be a Physical Narrative equivalent of the Voynich Manuscript or the nonsense language of Themroc? Can we reduce translation load to a minimum? Can we make pieces that work in two languages at once? Or with no language at all?

Narrative Planning. How do we go about planning, discussing and analysing the pieces without having the pieces completely there? A cook can taste a recipe, a musician can hear the sheet music, a computer scientist can run a flowchart in her head. What are our notational short-hands that allow us as practitioners of interactive, physical narratives to experience the piece without having finished it in advance?

ABOUT

Founded in 1996, Time's Up has its principal locus in the Linz harbour of Austria. Its mission is to investigate the ways in which people interact with and explore their physical surroundings as a complete context, discovering, learning and communicating as they do.

Conceiving, Designing & Prototyping Context Sensitive Narrative Experiences
- MITI -

In this talk we will present and discuss a series of Context Aware Narrative Experiences, designed and produced to involve a wide variety of audiences with local culture, specific contexts, and site specific landscapes and architectural landmarks. We will describe the concept, the development process and the outcomes of such experiences. Some reflections and themes emerged from using novel ways of prototyping such experiences, in particular we made use of experience prototypes, and how they are contributing to our understanding of the relationship between spatial narrative and place, and in particular how they may be used as an interaction resource towards discovery and sharing of “place”. In doing so, we offer a basis for discussion on how to co-design technologically mediated experiences together with users of such spaces.

ABOUT

Valentina Nisi is an Assistant Professor at the University of Madeira and researcher at the Madera Interactive Technologies Institute (MITI), working in the area of Digital Interactive Art and Media. She had been hired as part of the CMU|Portugal Program to teach and research Digital Art, Interaction Design and Service and Experience design related subjects. Her research focuses on designing and producing digitally mediated experiences in real spaces, merging architecture, context and landscape. Previously to MITI, she worked for 4 years at MediaLabEurope, MIT MediaLab research partner and conceiving, designing and producing interactive mobile stories for her own Media and Culture foundation FattoriaMediale in Amsterdam, co founded in 2006 with Ian Oakley and Martine PostHuma de Boer. She holds a first degree in Fine arts from Turin Albertine Academy, an MSc in Multimedia and a PhD in Location aware Narrative forms from Trinity College Dublin, Ireland. Her work has been shown publicly and internationally, most recently at venues such as Designing Interactive Systems, (DIS) 2012, NordiCHI 2012, Advances in Computing Entertainment (ACE) 2012.

Reinventing Gothic Storytelling as a Location-Based Augmented-Reality Game - MADS HAAHR -

Gothic fiction has been reinvented several times, most recently in the 20th century for cinema and video games. This presentation offers a snapshot of our ongoing attempts to reinvent Gothic fiction once again, using the distinctively 21st century medium of the Location-Based Augmented-Reality Game. Our games cast players as paranormal investigators who equipped with paranormal detection devices explore the real world in search for paranormal activity. By collecting and analyzing an increasing body of paranormal evidence, players gradually construct the story in their minds. This presentation examines the way in which characters and techniques from Stoker's novel were adapted for our recent game Bram Stoker's Vampires and reviews the specific challenges associated with this adaptation. We discuss how the novel's form as a deliberately fragmented collection of 'evidence' with pretension to veracity was reinvented for the purpose of immersing the players into the game world, and also review how we adapted Stoker's use of transgression and transformation from the novel.

ABOUT

Mads Haahr has been Lecturer in the School of Computer Science and Statistics at Trinity College Dublin since 2000. He is a true multidisciplinary with contributions in computer science as well as interactive digital media. Current active research areas are self-organisation in distributed and mobile systems and software support for location-based mobile games. He created the Internet's premier true random number service RANDOM.ORG (1998), co-founded the Crossings Electronic Journal of Art and Technology (2001) and is founder and CEO of the mobile game studio Haunted Planet Studios (2010). He holds a BSc in Computer Science and English (1996), an MSc in Computer Science (1999), both from the University of Copenhagen, and a PhD in Computer Science (2004) from Trinity College, Dublin. He is a member of the ACM and IEEE.

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In the Japanese text “Records of Garden Making” (作庭記, Sakuteiki) attributed to Tachibana Toshitsuna (橘俊綱, 1028-1094 CE) the concept of Borrowed Scenery (“shakkei” in Japanese, “jiejing” in Chinese) was first introduced as way of creating gardens. It is a way of including features from beyond the garden as elements in the garden design. Distant mountains or rivers, clouds, rocks or on occasions even stars can be incorporated. Even though the garden and the surrounding landscape may be topographically separate, ‘borrowing’ or ‘lending’ provides a way to experience them as a whole. Stories, myths and metaphors are the cornerstones of these gardens, which can be experienced as tangible phenomena whispering to imagination and memories.

Inspired by shakkei and jiejing gardens, FoAM developed a multi-sensory narrative “Borrowed Scenery” a story without a narrator or explicit narration which unfolded through hints and immersive ambiance. By ‘borrowing’ from sources as diverse as myths about plants, patabotany, plant sciences, historical mysteries and the setting of the everyday, Borrowed Scenery became a story about an alternate reality (past, future or parallel) where plants are a central aspect of human society. Weaving through the physical spaces of everyday life, the story could be tangibly experienced wherever plants and humans interact. Borrowed Scenery encourages us to see urban plant life with fresh eyes and re-imagine our cities as places of sinuous interaction between humans and plants: where plants provide us with more than just food and materials, they become neighbours, teachers, and gateways to the planetary ‘Other’.

<http://fo.am/borrowed-scenery>

Borrowed Scenery is a part of project PARN.

ABOUT

<http://fo.am/people/maja>

<http://fo.am/people/nik>

Narratives in Internet Scams
- ANDREAS ZINGERLE -

Internet spam seems to be the unavoidable mass advertisement of our times. Through spam thousands of people get lured into the storyworlds of scammers in hope of opportunities to get rich, find love or feeling good by helping the ones in need. The story worlds of scammers come in many forms; they can be entwined in our everyday needs like renting an apartment or getting a job, they can reflect on current issues like catastrophes and wars, or they can be creative sci-fi like plots that play on our fears of the unknown.

A first attempt to tell a cybercrime story over multiple platform channels is called “Re: Dakar Arts Festival”. The project documents an ongoing art scam form. The scammers approach artists and gallerists with open calls for a fake festival in Dakar, Senegal. To unveil their practice, three virtual characters including their online identities were created to scam the scammers. In the “Re: Dakar Arts Festival” artwork one can investigate their stories in an installation and find entrance points to continue following the story online.

For upcoming projects, I want to bring together new storytelling interfaces and creative activism techniques. I strive to activate the audience and enhance the experience of explorative co-creation.

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ABOUT

Andreas Zingerle works as a Teaching and Research Associate at the Department of ‘Timebased and Interactive Media’ in Linz, Austria. In the last years, he worked on several installations that explore a creative (mis)use of technology and alternative ways of Human-Computer Interaction. He holds a Master of Arts degree, studied in Linz (Austria) and Helsinki (Finland). Since 2004 he takes part in international conferences and exhibitions, among others Ars Electronica, Siggraph, Japan Media Arts Festival, File Electronic Language International.

Together with his partner Linda Kronman they founded ‘KairUs’, an artist collaboration platform that takes interest in Human-Computer and Human-Human Interaction. KairUs explores participatory and interactive art practices by combining various media expressions. We take part in and arrange numerous events like workshops, exhibitions, talks, presentations and guided tours where people are invited to participate and share opportune moments for art collaborations.

<http://www.time.ufg.ac.at> - <http://www.andreaszingerle.com> -<http://www.kairus.org>

We are creating exploratory interfaces that promote experimental, participatory and active involvement from an early age by bringing together the tradition of games and playful activities with the new interactive technological solutions. Our approach is to develop and evaluate a toolbox of Tangible Interfaces using low cost materials, such as paper and cardboard embedded with sensors and actuators. We present next some examples of that work.

TOK, is a platform for preschool children to create their own stories, it consists of a platform with slots for placing cards, and a set of picture cards. The platform can be connected with a computer through USB. When the picture cards are placed on the slots, they trigger animations on the computer screen.

t-books, based on TOK is a book with slots and a set of picture cards that children place on the book to interact and explore the narrative. t-words an interface for children to playful explore sounds, words and sentences while developing pre-literate skills. The interface consists of rectangular blocks in which children can record and then play the recorded audio. Additionally children can personalize the blocks by drawing on their surface. Children can engage in different literacy related activities such as building rhymes, playing with sounds and words as well as trying out different combinations of sentences while engaging in storytelling.

ABOUT

Pedro Branco is Assistant Professor at the Department of Information Systems, University of Minho where he is currently the director of the Master Program in Technology and Digital Art. He graduated in Computer Science from University of Porto in 1997. From 1998 to 1999 he participated in the first joint Fraunhofer Center for Research in Computer Graphics/ Rhode Island School of Design New Media program. In 2000, he joined Fraunhofer's U.S. operations as Researcher/3D Software Engineer in the development of virtual reality interaction techniques. Starting in 2003 he worked at IMEDIA in Providence, RI, studying user interface usability based on physiological monitoring.

In 2006 he received his doctorate degree in Information Systems from University of Minho with the topic: "Computer-based Facial Expression Analysis for Assessing User Experience". He is working on several funded research projects focusing on diverse aspects of human-computer interaction, ranging from new educational interfaces for pre-school, to systems that are aware of users' social signals.

Throughout the Technology and Digital Art master program he works closely with students from a wide range of backgrounds developing interactive systems that explore a synergy of technology and aesthetics, exploring future directions for our interaction with technology.

Storytelling Evolution, Body and Physicality
- NELSON ZAGALO -

The world is becoming more global because there is an electronic network that supports and maintains human communication in continuous mode. Hence we see ourselves confronted with this need to rethink the narrative models, not only the production models, but also creative models. The main problem is how our brains are now wired. In all these years, our brains co-evolved along with language and the process of storytelling, making of storytelling the more elaborated technology in transmission of information ever created by humans. It's a very simple structure, but a structure that fully activates our brain chemistry, activating the basic components necessary for the understanding and retention of information.

Particularly in recent decades we have sought to test this model, first by the minimalist aesthetic innovation models and anti-structure in various forms of artistic expression (literature, movies, etc.). Followed by creating new technologies that go beyond traditional means of expression as hypertext and video games. But reality is that the traditional model of storytelling that every human being still shares, and it was so well analyzed by Aristotle in the Poetics, remains the best way of understanding the world around us, because it is the model that best allows us to understand the Other, feel the Other, and feel for the Other, and thus enrich the power of the social web through a simple process of communication.

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Pushing physicality boundaries can be a powerful approach to push experimentalism in the storytelling process. Not counting only on the single power of brain and imagination, but pushing for the use of full body in accessing the effects of storytelling.

ABOUT - Nelson Zagalo is Assistant Professor at the University of Minho (UM) - Portugal. He got his PhD on Communication Technology from the University of Aveiro about new interaction paradigms in virtual environments. He is director of the Master on Interactive Media and part of the board direction of the Master on Technology and Digital Art. He co-chairs the research group engageLab at Computer Graphics Center and chairs the Portuguese Society of Videogame Sciences. He has more than forty peer-reviewed publications in the fields of videogames, film studies, interactive storytelling and emotion. He is author of the book "Interactive Emotions, from Film to Videogames" (2009) and editor of the book "Virtual Worlds and Metaverse Platforms: New Communication and Identity Paradigms" (2011).

University of Minho
Dept. Communication Sciences
4710-057 Braga – Portugal

mail.	nzagalo@ics.uminho.pt nzagalo@gmail.com
home.	nelsonzagalo.googlepages.com
blog.	virtual-illusion.blogspot.com
face.	facebook.com/nelsonzagalo
lab.	engagelab.org



TIME'S UP

Industriezeile 33b
4020 Linz / Austria

+43(0)732-787804
info@timesup.org
www.timesup.org



Culture Programme



bm:uk



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