InterPlay: Performing on a High-Tech Wire
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For the Digital Resources for the Humanities & Arts 2007 Conference, Beth Miklavcic, Artistic Director and Jimmy Miklavcic, Executive Director of Another Language Performing Arts Company propose to present an academic paper, InterPlay: Performing on a High-Tech Wire.

The authors will describe and discuss the network performance form called InterPlay. Mr. Miklavcic will describe the structure of the InterPlay form while Ms. Miklavcic will discuss her perspective as an artist, creating works within the InterPlay form.

InterPlay – What is it?

InterPlay is a telematic collaborative performance form that focuses on live real-time distributed cinema in the Surrealist or Abstract styles. This form is built on the technology of the Access Grid™, a video conference technology that we adapted for creative performance purposes. The infrastructure, consisting of Internet2, campus & department LANs, computer, video and audio systems, gives us the ability to collaborate with other artists around the world.

On the aesthetic side of this form, electro/acoustic musicians, dancers, actors, digital graphic artists, virtual reality designers, video artists, and motion control engineers come together bringing their individual ideas and integrate them into a large scale distributed performance. Each site generates two or more video/audio streams and transmits them on the internet. At the host site, these video streams are collected, processed, mixed into the master mix and then is transmitted back onto the internet for the other sites. This multimedia content is then integrated with each site’s local live performers, creating a live distributed cinematic event.

The InterPlay also includes the opportunity to choreograph the kinetic design of the display system. This provides another dimension to the cinematic experience. Video and computer animation windows are moved and arranged in a design structure that enhances each scene in the performance structure.

Five Years of Exploration and Creativity

The authors will present technical and artistic analysis of five InterPlay performances beginning in 2003 with the prototype performance, InterPlay: Intransitive Senses that featured local performances placed in different areas of the Intermountain Network and Scientific Computation Center building. Additional performances include InterPlay: Hallucinations (2004), Another Language’s first Internet collaboration with University of Alaska, Fairbanks and University of Maryland.
*Interplay: Loose Minds in a Box* (2005) included the above institutions as well as Purdue University, University of Montana, and University of Illinois, Chicago. This performance was honored as a national semi-finalist for the 2006 Peoria Prize for Creativity.

*InterPlay: Dancing on the Banks of Packet Creek* (2006) included all the sites in the previous project except for University of Illinois and University of Montana. Instead, Boston University joined the team. The most recent and most successful performance, *Interplay: Nel Tempo di Sogno* (2007) included six institutions, Another Language/University of Utah, University Alaska, Fairbanks, University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign, University of Maryland, Purdue University and Boston University.

The Miklavcics will provide insight into the development of the *InterPlay* performance process, giving a thorough view of the considerations and decisions that are necessary in creating a large-scale, interactive distributive cinematic performance that spans the globe. A description of the form’s impact on artist interaction, authorship, sustainability and creative responsibility will be included in this presentation.

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