

What We Will

broadband interactive drama

London: 1 March 2004

BENCHMARK INTERACTIVE DRAMA

Z360 announces a major revision of 'What We Will', a fully-realised drama created specifically for broadband internet publication.

Produced as a collaboration between writers, musicians and performers, 'What We Will' breaks new artistic and technical ground in its combination of narrative, sound, text and image.

"Z360 has been working with interactive panoramic photographs since the technology became available in 1995," said Douglas Cape, Director of Photography. "What We Will began as an exploration of other ways of using these techniques besides the usual run of commercial applications."

"It quickly became apparent that we were opening up a completely new way of combining character-based story telling with user-controlled interactive capabilities", added Cape. "With the finished result we believe we are finally using internet and computer technology to create a new form of drama which is neither video, radio, text nor a game, but uses the best elements of each to create a new synthesis: broadband interactive drama."

The piece consists of linked dramatic scenes in which three characters, Richard, Chris and Helen, find themselves during the 24-hour cycle of their day in the city of London. But as we experience this day with them, we are always uncertain as to whether any particular moment follows or, rather, precedes what we have seen before. The viewer can either follow the day sequentially or explore the events of each hour at random.

The drama is based on a series of loops. Panoramas, soundscapes and the story itself are looping events which allow for non time-based exploration. Some events will autoplay to aid or direct your journey, but the viewer can still pause and retain control if desired. To view each panorama and associated whispers will take at least an hour, so with your headphones on, sit back, relax and discover.

'What We Will' utilises the potential of QuickTime interactive movie formats, particularly its photographic panoramas. This is combined with binaural recording in the field and composed soundscapes which are embedded in the navigable movies. There is also a more familiar exploration of dramatic potential through human characters, fragmentary personal histories, memories and secrets, all helping to construct a non-linear narrative and emotional structure.

For further information contact Douglas Cape
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<http://www.z360.com/what>

Production Notes

All photographs were taken digitally using a Nikon D1 for panoramas and a Lightphase Phase One for studio shots. Panoramas were assembled using Quicktime VR Authoring Studio, Helmut Dersch's Panorama Tools and Adobe Photoshop 6.01.

Video sequences were made on a Sony PDC100 and edited in imovie 2.0

Sound was recorded on a portable DAT recorder using custom built binaural microphones and in a digital sound studio. Sound was processed using Digital Performer 2.7, Soundjam and Quicktime Pro.

The panoramas were programmed using Livestage Pro 3, SoundsaVR by Squamish Media, ConVRter and Quicktime Pro 5.

HTML was written with the help of Adobe GoLive and BBEdit

What We Will was made on Apple Macintosh G4 computers.

Short Biographies

John Cayley - cayley@shadoof.net

Poet, known internationally for his writing in networked and programmable media. Recent winner of the Electronic Literature Organization's 2001 Award for Poetry.

<http://www.shadoof.net>

James Waite - james@jwaite.com

Web Consultant and Conceptual Designer. Founded or Co-founded: The Digital Partners, Adgistics Ltd, Z360 Ltd.

Giles Perring - giles@echocity.co.uk

Composer and Musician. Member of Echo City and Unmen.

<http://www.echocity.co.uk>

Douglas Cape - douglas@z360.com

Interactive Photographer. Director of Photography at Z360, involved with QuicktimeVR since its inception in 1995.

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Wills Morgan (Richard)

Singer and member of The Shout Choir. Currently appearing in Jerry Springer: The Opera

Alex Warwick (Helen)

Senior Lecturer in English and Cultural Studies at the University of Westminster.

Caroline Bergvall (Voice of Helen)

Poet and Performance Writer, former Director of the Performance Writing Degree at Dartington College of Arts.

Production Credits

Conception

Giles Perring • James Waite • John Cayley • Douglas Cape

Performers

Richard: Wills Morgan • Helen: Alex Warwick • Chris: John Cayley
Voice of Helen: Caroline Bergvall • Singing: Wills Morgan

Credits

Text: John Cayley • Photography: Douglas Cape • Sound: Giles Perring • HTML: Douglas Cape
Production assistance: James Waite • Directorial assistance: Peter Kavanagh

Thanks

Rosalie Deighton, Caroline Bergvall, Alexie Sommer, Radha Case
Doug DeRusha of Squamish Media for SoundsaVR and RevolVR
The Dome Café, 4 St Paul's Churchyard, London • Tate Modern, London
Sheila Lawson and Platform 3 Gallery, London, for hosting our launch

All contributors to What We Will worked for free.

Expenses were managed by Z360

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