IMMERSIVE STORYTELLING SYMPOSIUM

PROGRAMME

Tuesday 2 November	
12:30-13:00	<u>Welcome</u> Sarah Martindale, University of Nottingham
13:00-14:00	<u>Performance</u> *Katipuneros Role Playing Game* Facilitated live from the Philippines by Gian Carlo de Jesus and team
14:00-15:00	<u>Discussion Panel</u> *Where's the script?* Roy Hanney, Solent University and Alison Norrington, Story Central *Amplified Publishing* Amy Spencer, Bath Spa University, Agnieszka Przybyszewska, University of Łódź, Michael Armstrong, BBC and Jasmine Richards, author and founder of StoryMix
15:30-17:00	<u>Presentation Panel</u> *Immersing into spaces of comfort in a clinical environment* Leanne Twidale and Ellen Wilson, Royal Central School of Speech and Drama *From theatre venues to theatre worlds* António Baía Reis, University of Passau and Agencia_VR *Virtual [UN]Reality: the role of magic in immersive storytelling* Dylan Yamada-Rice, Manchester Metropolitan University and Eleanor Dare, Cambridge University Faculty of Education *Mrs Nemo XR* Mary Stewart- David, Daniel Lock and Cristobal Catalan, University of York *The 'Truth of Sound': Exploring Immersive Location Sound Recording in Realist Filmmaking* Steve Whitford, University of Portsmouth
17:30-19:30	<u>Evening Showcase</u> Installations, demos and performances at Lakeside in Nottingham *Inflatable VR dome showing 360° films Nazaré Imersiva by Célia Quico and Climate Crimes by Michaela French* *Cognitive Dissidents: reactive narrative experience demo by Luke Skarth Hayley* *A New Dawn, an experimental Cinematic VR project (with ambisonic audio) by Max Schleser*

	Demonstrations from The Institute of Creative Technologies, led by Sophy Smith Experiential online content for the remote digital audience *CLEVER AT SEEING WITHOUT BEING SEEN, live stream performance by Lee Campbell* *PNOC.io, an online interactive digital theatre experience by Chronic Insanity* Short films available to view in the venue and online *Live Cinema Associate Artists* *Makers of Imaginary Worlds: Undiscovered Island* *Facades by Ben Neal and Kerryn Wise*
Wednesday 3 November	
09:00-10:00	<u>Discussion Panel</u> *R&D prototype "New World"* Debbie Bandara, Forest Tribe *The empathic potential of immersive storytelling* Danai Mikelli, Oxford Brookes University *Bahay-bahayan: reframing theater as children's pretend play* Ana Katrina de Jesus, University of the Philippines Los Baños *Metaverse* Julián de la Fuente, University of Alcalá *Conditions for post-spectatorship* Tobías G. Palma, University of York
10:00-11:00	<u>Blended Panel</u> *Real-time VR: live Q&A for pre-recorded discussion panel* James Berrett and Max Schleser, Swinburne University of Technology, Deepak John Mathew and Delwyn Remedios, Indian Institute of Technology Hyderabad *Planet Xerilia: a case study of audio-driven immersive storytelling in VR* Constantin Popp and Damian Murphy, University of York *Sleep: an immersive theatrical experience* Benjamin McDonald, University of York
11:30-13:00	<u>Presentation Panel</u> *Immersive promotion: marketing VR & AR experiences to new audiences* Matthew Freeman, Bath Spa University *The role of the audience in immersive storytelling* Michael Armstrong, BBC and Maxine Glancy, BBC and University of Nottingham *The city as Escape Room: place, participation, meaning, affect* Roy Hanney, Solent University and Alison Norrington, Story Central *Between Air Clay and Woods of Certain Flutes: immersive audio/visual installation* Richard Kearns, University of York

CONTRIBUTORS

Michael Armstrong

Amplified Publishing

This panel brings together researchers and practitioners involved in Amplified Publishing, part of the Bristol & Bath Creative R&D programme, which explores future models of content creation, discovery and distribution and asks how emerging technologies enable new content genres and forms and how they are changing the way content is made, where it is published, how it is discovered, and what this means for audiences.

In this panel, we will explore the impact of innovation on immersive storytelling and discuss new ways to tell stories. We will debate how new immersive stories are told, the environments they are told in and ask ourselves whose story is being amplified and why.

The Role of the Audience in Immersive Storytelling

In immersive storytelling, as with any other form of media, the relationship between the creator and the audience has to be established to ensure the audience can understand how they navigate and decode the narrative. Failure to introduce the audience to their role through mechanisms such as instructions or frame stories will result in audience frustration, disengagement and bad reviews. This problem may often be one of remediation. As stories are adapted from one form of media to another the wrong framing is applied to the new medium.

In The Writer's Audience Is Always a Fiction, Walter J. Ong examines the evolution of the roles that readers were called on to play from the frame stories of the Canterbury Tales through to the innovative works of Jane Austen and the writing of letters and diaries. This presentation will introduce our forthcoming White Paper which extends Ong's perspective across a wide range of media, from the changing role of the theatre audience over time, to the challenges faced in the early days of radio and innovation in mainstream TV and film. It will then look at the evolution of role from the first text adventure to modern video game and examine the ongoing challenge of the audience's role in an interactive narrative, drawing on Henry Jenkin's classification of storytelling in games and Hannah Wood's design methods for playable stories.

The presentation will then use this perspective to re-contextualise the audience's role in experimental content produced or commissioned by the BBC, from early attempts at "interactive" radio, through to large scale experiences from existing television brands and new commissions using Object-Based Media, 360 video and VR experiences.

Michael Armstrong is an engineer working on the interaction between people, stories, media and technology. Their work spans topics from access services, speech audibility, video quality to human perception and the originator of Object-Based Media, an idea formed whilst pioneering computer-based playout in the 1990s at BBC Radio Bristol. Michael's current research is examining the way media experiences can respond to the user in a natural manner. This work combines the issues of storytelling and narrative structures, natural forms of agency for the user, the problems of personalisation and the roles that the user can play in an experience.

Debbie Bandara

R&D prototype "New World"

To discuss the Digital Forest Tribe Method in creating immersive storytelling that offers a more inclusive approach to increase audience reach. The CEO will discuss the recent R&D prototype

"New World " that was crafted and delivered to audiences with severe autism and complex learning needs. She will highlight key findings and discuss the areas to be addressed within the industry. Forest Tribe is a carbon-negative company and the CEO will be discussing the importance of immersive storytelling with a focus on the narratives that encourages a sustainable approach.

Debbie Bandara is the founder of Forest Tribe. Her desire is to make risk -taking and innovative work that reaches new audiences who rarely experience arts and creativity. She has developed her repertoire and explores the power of language through movement. Her work delves into digital technology with her background in Artificial Intelligence.

Her directing, choreography, writing and producing skills for shows demonstrates her passion for crafting highly-artistic immersive work for her audiences.

She is the former Associate Director for The Oily Cart and where she was the lead choreographer and co-director for their shows for children with complex needs, deaf blind, global developmental delay, autism and profound multiple learning needs. She also supports practitioners who make work for audiences with complex needs.

She regularly mentors emerging diverse and inclusive artists. She is also the Champion for England's International Inclusive Arts Network (ASSITEJ).

James Berrett

Real-time VR

This panel will explore the challenges and opportunities in imaginative storytelling, immersive experiences and motion graphics for real-time VR. The panellists will discuss their Creative Practice Research projects to explore innovative production processes and emerging visual languages. James Berrett will demonstrate how novel temporalities for motion graphics can be applied in the context of real-time VR environments. Delwyn Remedios and Deepak John Mathew will showcase the design process of Parallel Interactive Narratives in VR and the pre-production process of "Table of Two". And Max Schleser will examine "A New Dawn" as a memoryscape in the tradition of experimental film.

James Berrett is a lecturer in the School of Design at Swinburne University of Technology and is the Discipline Coordinator of Motion Design in the Department of Communication Design. He is also the Theme Leader of Public Media Spaces in the Swinburne Smart Cities Research Institute. James has over a decade of experience in creative industries spanning design, digital art, film, television and games. His research interests explore the intersections between design, art & technology.

Lee Campbell

CLEVER AT SEEING WITHOUT BEING SEEN

Innovating the possibilities of media re-use, feeding-back and looping round of text, and the layering of the voices, this performance is a colourful, immersive, textured, organic and disorienting montage of young queer experience told through my own personal autobiography. THIS is what it was like for me to grow up gay in 1990s working class homophobic Britain. There are so many different references to decades of British history though different registers of image-making, language and bodies through a complex repetitive system of layering making the viewer continually question how many layers there are. With a parallel to our unconscious, with its many layers, many of which we do not have full access to.

This performance work is a form of expanded live cinema really pushes Zoom's visual aesthetics to frame, act as a visual container and play with different levels of order and chaos through the visual confinement achieved. Turning my back to the audience/camera, my back operates like a screen/projection surface. Green screen effect employed with a constant repetitive video being played 'projected' onto my back gives the impression of text and imagery superimposed over my body - that I am wearing text/imagery like a garment, that of a body that has been layered with fragments of text/images/history. My back turned to the camera/to the audience constantly comes in and out of the green screen; my body that keeps getting subsumed and emerging again. Whilst the green screen background acts a base, each live iteration containing so many levels of improvisation means that a performance/film screening can never be repeated twice. Emerging as a positive of using Zoom under Covid-19 lockdown restrictions, me using my films as performative backdrops opened a wealth of possibilities to now explore how I can use Zoom to enhance my creativity and further remediate that remediation (my fine artwork into film) through the medium of live performance/live cinema via Zoom.

Dr Lee Campbell trained in Fine Art at the Slade School of Fine Art, University College London in 2005, received his doctorate in 2016 and currently lectures at Wimbledon College of Arts, UAL. His recent experimental poetry performance 'CLEVER AT SEEING WITHOUT BEING SEEN creates a live immersive experience for the viewer using Zoom and has been part of many international online festivals throughout 2021 including SPHERE FESTIVAL, Festival ECRÃ Edition 5, Rio de Janeiro Brazil, DISTURBANCE #2, Ugly Duck, London and TRANSISTATION 2021.

Chronic Insanity

PNOC.io

PNOC.io is an interactive digital theatre experience, adapting the story of Pinocchio for the internet age and using it to reflect on the power and influence that tech companies have in our lives.

The audience finds themselves at their new job, a User Experience Tester for Stromboli, the world's most exciting internet company. After initiation, you are shown a top-secret research project and asked to deliver a series of tests. However, things are not as they seem. As the tests progress you begin to uncover more about what the company is really testing for, having to decide whether you want to help them achieve their goals or whether you want to sabotage them while you have the chance.

Utilising choose-your-own-adventure and free motion video formats, PNOC.io is an experience that examines misinformation, the ethics of tech companies, the rights of artificial intelligences, and the ability for an individual to make meaningful change in the world.

The experience last about 50 minutes and contains strong language. It can be experienced on any modern computer or laptop, with Google Chrome being the preferred browser of choice.

Chronic Insanity is a Nottingham based theatre company that creates and facilitates live events in a variety of traditional, found, and digital spaces. They seek to change the definition of what theatre can be by playing with form, genre, medium, and technology and they make theatre with a focus on accessibility, affordability, sustainability, and inclusivity. They are just about to finish their second year of staging 12 shows in 12 months, to both commercial and critical success, and have been commissioned to make digital theatre for Nottingham Playhouse, the BBC, and the Edinburgh Fringe Society.

Eleanor Dare

<u>Virtual [UN]Reality: the role of magic in immersive storytelling</u>

The role of techniques from illusion and magic in creating effective content for a range of media is increasingly recognised by cognitive neuroscientists and behavioural psychologists (Quian Quiroga, 2016). It is no surprise, therefore, that the same techniques are also effective for optimising Virtual Reality experiences. We will provide a whistle stop tour of three interlinked projects that illustrate the role of immersive storytelling for understanding the importance of magic, the unreal and more-than-human worlds to VR experiences, from both the point of view of research, co-design and production. The first is an AHRC-funded UK-Japan network on location-based VR experiences, where we discovered the strong connection between virtual reality and historic practices of magic. Secondly, a co-designed location-based VR experience, that was showcased at the V&A Museum of Childhood, called 'The Village'. We use this to illustrate the importance of physical materials to the processes of onboarding and offboarding from VR experiences. Lastly, we describe how the co-production of a round-robin artists Zine allowed for deeper analysis of our data, while also acting as an immersive storytelling practice in its own right.

Eleanor Dare is an academic and critical technologist with a PhD and MSc in Arts and Computational Technologies from the department of Computing, Goldsmiths. Eleanor was formerly Reader in Digital Media and Head of Programme for MA Digital Direction, at the Royal College of Art. Eleanor is now working with Cambridge University, Faculty of Education, as well as supervising PhD students at the RCA and UCL. A full list of publications, exhibitions etc can be found here:

https://www.notion.so/Publications-etc-d7b4e2ec1edf43ab8b095e476e90b54d

Matthew Freeman

<u>Immersive Promotion: Marketing VR & AR Experiences to New Audiences</u>

There's no doubt that the time for immersive technologies have come, but their magical qualities of liminality, presence and embodiment make VR and AR difficult to communicate to new audiences. This talk showcases ongoing R&D from Immersive Promotion Design, a new breed of marketing consultancy designed for this challenge that is leading the way in the creation of a reimagined promotional language for the immersive sector, one that goes beyond gaming audiences and science-fiction imagery. Unlike other digital marketing agencies out there, we specialise in immersive, and bring together the very best of academia and industry. With audience insight and university-led R&D into immersive promotion shaping all our campaigns, we stay at the cutting-edge of today's immersive media developments. We support VR, AR and MR creatives from across the immersive sector to market their work, helping them to evoke what their audiences will see, do and feel.

Thanks to grants from Bristol+Bath Creative R+D, StoryFutures Academy and the South West Creative Technology Network, we have formed innovative promotional strategies, bibles, toolkits and teaching materials for how immersive experiences can be better marketed to audiences, as well as how to bring cultural experiences to life with immersive campaigns.

This talk will present the key lessons from a large-scale R&D project funded by StoryFutures Academy in 2021, which partnered with the BBC VR Lab, Limina Immersive, Bath Spa University and StoryCentral. Specifically, I will showcase examples of our R&D-led and audience-tested promotional campaigns created for The National Gallery, Anagram and Studio McGuire, highlighting what worked and what didn't when it came to marketing to those who were completely new to immersive technologies. These insights into new approaches to marketing VR/AR experiences can be applied to a range of VR/AR projects.

Dr Matthew Freeman is a Reader in Multiplatform Media at Bath Spa University, where is the Research Lead for Film & Media and co-directs The Centre for Media Research. He is the author of seven books on topics as diverse as transmedia storytelling, media convergence, promotional and brand media, and methodological approaches to media industry studies. Outside of academia, he is the Founder & Director of Immersive Promotion Design Ltd., a new marketing consultancy for the immersive world that supports Virtual, Augmented and Mixed Reality creatives and businesses to better communicate with their audiences about the magic of immersive content.

Michaela French

Climate Crimes

The complex interrelation between climate change, human migration, political crises and global air pollution are the starting point for the Climate Crimes story. Climate Crimes investigates how anthropogenic aerosols and other atmospheric particles originating in the wealthy nations of the global North impact global climate systems and contribute to the desertification in the Sahel region of north Africa.

This 360° fulldome documentary uses the spherical space of the dome to immerse the viewer in a cyclical story of cause and effect. The imagery weaves together microscopic detail, complex global data visualisations and human stories to create a powerful narrative that reflects the social, political and environmental challenges currently facing humanity.

Climate Crimes draws on events that took place during the United Nation's COP15 Climate Change Conference in Copenhagen, 2009. As we draw nearer to the launch of COP26 in Glasgow in November 2021, Climate Crimes serves as a timely and urgent reminder of the work still to be done to reframe our relationship with the planet across global, political and individual scales.

Michaela French is an artist, lecturer and researcher working with light and time-based media across a broad range of artistic contexts. Light serves as subject, medium and experience in her artistic practice which is grounded in an ecological systems-based approach. Michaela designs and produces innovative artworks and award-winning moving image experiences for 360° immersive media spaces, contemporary performance, museums and gallery exhibition.

Michaela's artistic research investigates the systemic interrelation between light, body, perceptual experience and environment through practice-based and theoretical enquiry. Michaela uses attentive observation and subjective immersive experience as her primary methods of investigation. The ecological principles of reciprocal mutuality and co-perception are central to her practice-based enquiry which aims to inspire debate about the ecological imperatives which increasingly influence contemporary artistic and cultural practice.

Michaela is a co-founder and chair of the Fulldome Creative Network and a Senior Lecturer at Leeds Arts University, UK. A portfolio of her work is available at michaelafrench.com.

Julián de la Fuente

Metaverse

Metaverse concept is far from new. It was coined in the novel Snow Crash (Stephenson, 1992) within the cyberpunk stream early nineties. Within academia it has also been referred to such environments through concepts such as simulation (Baudrillard, 1978) or the holodeck (Murray, 1999). A metaverse could be conceptualized as a new media (Manovich, 2005) whose language and format are not based on the temporal linearity of traditional narrative, but rather in a space metaleptic interface (Ryan, 2006). The aim is to explore these new mixed reality environments and

discover how they combine to generate narrative spaces. The data collection for this research is based on the one hand on virtual ethnography (Boellstorff, 2012) and on the other on the emergent design experience (Kickmeier-Rust & Albert, 2009). The results will allow us to analyze the use of these metaverses and describe their narrative interfaces.

Julián de la Fuente is Assistant Professor of Audiovisual Communication the University of Alcalá, Spain. His research is multidisciplinary, sharing perspectives and approaches from psychology, anthropology, history and sociology. Often collaborating with architects, engineers and artists, he uses qualitative and ethnographic methodologies and the analysis of multimodal discourse. He has authored and co-authored numerous publications examining social media, technology and young people's digital engagement. He has also conducted several outreach projects for film heritage.

Maxine Glancy

The Role of the Audience in Immersive Storytelling

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After a career as an Interactive Media Designer (BBC Red Button services, FreeView, iPlayer), Maxine Glancy moved into BBC R&D, where she now explores the impact of new and emerging technologies on BBC services, audiences and production, by researching and developing innovative user experiences.

Her work crosses many themes, and currently includes object-based media and new formats, immersive media experiences, interactive storytelling, and mixed reality experiences. Her previous work has explored multi-screen experiences, new editorial & broadcasting formats, UGC frameworks, virtual & augmented realities, ubiquitous computing, media behaviour modelling. Maxine is currently undertaking a PhD at the University of Nottingham.

Roy Hanney

Where's the script?

Screenwriting has evolved a highly refined communication protocol that serves as a blueprint for production – the script. Hand a script to any department member and they know what do with it,

how to extract information and turn this into a plan. Immersive production draws on a broad range of tools, techniques, and approaches to blueprint a proposed experience. But if you hand this document to someone in the art department, or any other department member – how will they understand it? Will they know what they need to do in the same way as they would when working with a screenplay?

The City as Escape Room: place, participation, meaning, affect

One of the challenges of describing to laypeople quite what 'transmedia' is, comes down to the complexity of the concept and the range of different ways in which it manifests. Everyone understands the concept of an escape room so transferring this to an expanded geographical location aids the communication process. It also situates the city as a play space in which community participation, meaning-making and co-creation are interwoven as meaningful story experiences for those taking part. This presentation draws on two key case studies of community-driven transmedia experiences to identify the ways in which immersive experience design can take hold of a city as a play space and translate it into a story experience. The first case study, Cursed City Dark Tide ran in Portsmouth in 2019, while the second case study, horror anthology Dark Detour ran for two years in the USA and Sweden. Through the case studies, we will explore the ways in which a connection to place can first defamiliarise and then refamiliarise the familiar and generate affective story experiences.

Roy has published widely on the use of live projects to bridge the divide between higher education and the world of work. More recently, Roy has turned towards creative talent development and community engagement as an important strand of his work. Alongside this, he continues to grow as a creative practice researcher, the development of community driven, immersive, audio-visual arts projects. He has delivered a number of Arts Council immersive experiences in his hometown of Portsmouth and is currently developing Octopuses & Other Sea Creatures, a large-scale immersive theatre experience for 2022.

Luke Skarth Hayley

Cognitive Dissidents

You have been called to serve as a juror in the case against David Auster. Auster stands accused of several crimes, but the court requires clarity on what exactly he has done. You will take part in a new form of trial, where you will be inserted into a virtual collection of Auster's memories via a kind of quantum entanglement. Please note that Oneirica Systems, creators of the system, have assured the court that the system is flawless and any rumours that juror's presence distorts the outcomes is shameless slander propagated by competitors and overzealous human rights groups who would prioritise personal freedoms over the safety of society. The court has seen the comprehensive studies carried out by Oneirica and the data clearly backs up their claims.

Cognitive Dissidents is a reactive narrative experience in which the viewer/player is drafted into a future "virtual jury duty" in which they explore the memories of a character who may or may not have committed a crime. The experience is built in the Unity game engine and relies on the Reactive Mise-en-scène System, an original research system which uses attention to customise the experience.

Luke Skarth-Hayley is a Postgraduate Researcher at the University of Nottingham's Horizon Centre for Doctoral Training and the Mixed Reality Laboratory. He is partnered with BBC R&D and is exploring how to make reactive narrative experiences in game engines that sit at a point of implicit interactivity between video games and television. Specifically, Luke has built a plugin for Unity that enables "Reactive Mise-en-scène". The environment, composition of objects, camera effects, and

events in a given locale/scene are dynamically adapted based on player attention. He is creating Cognitive Dissidents using the plugin to explore these attention-driven narrative design possibilities.

Ana Katrina de Jesus

Bahay-bahayan: reframing theater as children's pretend play

We propose "Bahay-bahayan," children's pretend play or playing house as a system and model of immersive storytelling. Reframing theater as children's pretend play led us to discover that immersive theater can be minimalist, making use of found objects; inclusive, leveling off people's relationships regardless of status; intuitive, activating a sense of flow; and empathetic, generating positive and creative states. The model works through the interrelationships of the actors turned play activators, audiences turned players, and stages turned spaces of possibilities, activated by stories and what ifs. Bahay-bahayan emerged from turning constraints in a developing country into rich immersive storytelling opportunities.

Dr. Ana Katrina de Jesus has been teaching for 17 years, and reflective practice led her to reframe the relationships among teachers, students, and space, through a play-based philosophy. She currently leads the Communication Division of the Department of Humanities, University of the Philippines Los Baños. In 2020, she became a Research Residency Fellow of the Cognitive Innovation for Sustainable Development program by the COGNOVO Foundation, UP Open University, and University of Plymouth. A Doctor of Communication degree holder from the UP Open University, she is keen on exploring notions of liminality, ritual, and play in creating transformative learning experiences.

Gian Carlo de Jesus

Katipuneros RPG: Eve of Revolt

Manila, August 1896

Final preparations for the upcoming revolt was underway when the secret organization "Katipunan" was discovered by the Spanish authorities who responded with massive arrests and placed the entire city under Martial Rule. You just received information that the cathedral will be sieged by the Katipunan at exactly midnight and signal the start of revolution all over the country.

Therefore, you need to become a Katipunan member before this happens and you need to undergo the sacred initiation process. But before reaching the secret temple for these sacred initiations, you would have to prove your worthiness first while avoiding capture by the Spanish.

It's half past 8pm.

You have 60 minutes to do so. May the spirit of Ancient Freedom be with you in your journey…

- Supremo

Katipuneros RPG: Eve of Revolt is an Immersive Theatre piece which can be played both In Person and as Interactive Livestream. This has been toured as an educational piece for schools, and as cultural tourism activity before the pandemic. This is currently in competition in IndieCade, a juried international competition for Independent Gaming.

Professor Gian Carlo de Jesus is considered as one of the first "Theatre Arts Innovators and Disruptors" in the Philippines via his original theatre theory called "Bahay-Bahayan System and Philosophy."

Gian obtained an MA scholarship to study at the University of the Arts London, finishing with Distinction in 2019.

Currently, he leads a studio called Balaiwari Immersive and Gamified Experiences, where they apply Immersive Storytelling in tourism, education, organizational communication, and technology transfer projects, using both digital and physical platforms.

Among his current and past clients and partners are UNESCO, University of Plymouth, Aston University COGNOVO Foundation, SEAMEO-SEARCA, among others.

Richard Kearns

Between Air Clay and Woods of Certain Flutes: immersive audio/visual installation

I investigate human interaction and user experience, which I do by creating interactive environments using audio visual technologies. I then explore how visitor generated narratives emerge through their embodied interaction (physically or virtually moving through a space). Interactors responding to re-organised or displaced elements of the natural world, which create a sense of the uncanny, requires the generation of new relationships to make those experiences meaningful. Through my research, I have found that within audio visual installations, new narrative connections often emerge through forms of interactor play and I am particularly interested in how information that is generated through encounters crystalises into shared meaning amongst interactors.

My current research involves a collaboration with several international artists and musicians and explores states spanning pre- to post-production of the musical instrument, the recorder through embodied interaction of visitors. The project is titled Between Air Clay and Woods of Certain Flutes. The first physical outcome was an immersive audio/visual installation that incorporated four intertwined video projections, and five music/audio compositions. While this event was initiated nobody could visit the environment due to restrictions on public movement that were initiated after the COVID-19 pandemic. In response to this the leading collaborators of the project began to look at the accessibility and distribution of the core ideas that were under investigation.

The current phase of the project reinterprets the original installation through the virtual environment of a three-dimensional video game. At the time of writing this is nearing completion, and will soon be released. During the allotted presentation time I would like to discuss the findings from the development process of the project, what immersive story telling looked like in an open-ended installation environment and how much was transferable to the virtual video game platform.

Richard Kearns is currently a Humanities Research Centre Postdoctoral Researcher at the University of York. He is currently investigating audience engagement within interactive audio-visual environments. The outputs from the project are physical and virtual immersive spaces in which interactors are invited to interpret representations of musical instruments. These are represented through images and sound and are always a recorder or flute, and presented in response to the spatial acoustics and physical constraints of the particular environment the phase of the project is situated. The project is an ongoing collaboration between musicians, visual artists and makers.

Benjamin McDonald

Sleep: an immersive theatrical experience

Sleep is an immersive theatrical experience exploring sleep paralysis, parasomnia and the medico-legal repercussions of sleep related activity. The piece investigates the tragic case of Esther Griggs, the fascinating story of Lilith, the first woman, and The Shadowman, a reoccurring phenomenon existing in the sleep of people across historical and cultural boundaries.

The audience are given a pillow upon arrival and are invited to lay down on the huge mattress in the middle of the performing space. The action takes place around them with the actors performing on

the mattress. The piece incorporates physical theatre, expressionistic soundscaping and projection with a verbatim-style narrative.

The main objective of the piece is to instil within the audience the sensation of experiencing a sleep disorder. Health and safety is fully considered with a briefing given before entering the space.

I have almost completed my PhD through Creative Practice in Playwriting at the University of York (viva in August). I am a freelance theatre director with many years of experience producing my own work. My creative practice methodology incorporates immersive techniques with ethnodrama. My most recent play is due to be shown at Hull Truck in Jan 2022 pending a successful ACE R&D bid - the producer Adam Pownall has offered me the studio performance space without charge as in-kind support. As a second line of freelance work, I also have several years' experience producing immersive murder mystery events.

Deepak John Mathew

Real-time VR

This panel will explore the challenges and opportunities in imaginative storytelling, immersive experiences and motion graphics for real-time VR. The panellists will discuss their Creative Practice Research projects to explore innovative production processes and emerging visual languages. James Berrett will demonstrate how novel temporalities for motion graphics can be applied in the context of real-time VR environments. Delwyn Remedios and Deepak John Mathew will showcase the design process of Parallel Interactive Narratives in VR and the pre-production process of "Table of Two". And Max Schleser will examine "A New Dawn" as a memoryscape in the tradition of experimental film.

Deepak is a Professor and Head of Department of Design at the Indian Institute of Technology Hyderabad (India). He holds a master's degree in Fine Arts (Graphic Arts) from the M.S. University, Vadodara and has a PhD in Design Education from the Centre for Advanced Studies in Education, M.S. University, and Vadodara. At the National Institute of Design (NID), Deepak was the Head of Photography. He has had five solo shows in the UK and India, exhibited his work and research at many international and national exhibitions. He is the author of a book, Principles of Design through Photography.

Danai Mikelli

The empathic potential of immersive storytelling

The empathic potential of immersive storytelling has been extensively debated by scholars and practitioners. Alternative views on the possibilities of immersive media to create new experiences range from fostering radical compassion (Bollmer 2017) to staging an encounter (Nash 2017, Scott-Stevenson 2019). I am interested in discussing this topic, drawing on my current practice-led research which critically explores the extent to which 360-degree documentaries could generate more empathy with documentary subjects. This research entails the production of a 360-degree documentary about two Greek drag artists, whose practice is seen as a form of resistance, and aims at collecting feedback from audiences.

Dr Danai Mikelli is a Senior Lecturer in Digital Media Production at Oxford Brookes University. Her research interests centre around the impact of immersive technologies on documentary practice and community engagement. Her current practice-led research explores the potential of 360-degree documentary to generate empathy. In 2020, she led the Coventry City of Culture funded project Journey>Arrival, focusing on the use of immersive audio to capture the stories of refugees. Danai's doctoral research proposed a Pedagogy of Difference 2.0 as a new approach for teaching and learning with interactive documentaries, based on a series of interventions with young people.

Damian Murphy

Planet Xerilia: A Case Study of Audio-driven Immersive Storytelling in VR

Recent advancement in 3D audio for headset-based immersive technologies provide new toolkits for sound designers to create narrative, audio-driven experiences for the audience to explore in VR. For the narrative content to be clearly audible and effective, however, it is important that the sound designer harnesses the opportunities of the devices and toolkits and manages their limitations. Based on practice-led research via the development of a new experience for the Oculus Quest 2, the presentation, therefore, discusses the issues and solutions arising from the application of Google Resonance Audio, FMOD and Unity for VR with respect to the audio-visual presentation of sounds and achieving overall acoustic clarity.

Several factors affected acoustic clarity, especially regarding the user's ability to localise sounds in the virtual environment and associate them to their visual representations. These factors stem from systemic, perceptual, and conceptual restrictions, such as the use of non-customised HRTFs, the reverb implementation, the spectral profile of sounds and their spatialisation, as well as the experience's aim to encourage the user to freely explore the virtual environment via sounds and narration. Among other strategies, employing occlusion, rigorous shaping of distance attenuation curves, appropriate placement of sounds and proximate detail helped to improve clarity and sound localisation.

Ultimately, Google Resonance Audio, FMOD and Unity form powerful tools to create immersive, narrative sound environments. They afford the sound designer the ability to shape sounds in virtual spaces to both obfuscate and aid acoustic clarity and sound localisation. Further research could reduce the limitations of Google Resonance Audio via, for example, improving its reverb implementation, to further extend the sound designer's toolkit.

Damian Murphy is Professor in Sound and Music Computing at AudioLab in the Department of Electronic Engineering, University of York, where his research focuses on the development and creative application of immersive audio and virtual acoustic modelling. He is an active sound artist, and the Director of the £15m XR Stories Arts and Humanities Research Council funded Creative Industries R&D Partnership exploring the next generation of interactive and immersive storytelling for the UK's creative screen industries.

Ben Neal

Facades

Created by East Midlands-based Digital Dance Artist Kerryn Wise and Creative Technologist Ben Neal, Facades is a surreal virtual reality (VR) dance experience that invites audiences to walk the line between reality and illusion. This beautiful yet unsettling narrative is told through movement to expose themes of vulnerability, trust, disembodiment and isolation.

Kerryn Wise, Facades choreographer and performer, says "Facades includes abstracted movement, themes and settings inspired by iconic film scene. The choreography explores domesticity through repeated gestures and emotive recurring motifs, as the isolated solo performer seeks to find a connection by reaching out to the visiting viewer.

The VR environment allows the viewer to see unusual perspectives of the dancing body, as it morphs between realistic and abstract imagery, an effect that is unique to the volumetric capturing process used."

Ben Neal explains how Facades uses cutting-edge technology called Volumetric Capture to

"capture real-life performers digitally and transform them into three dimensional, virtual versions of themselves. You can occupy the same space, walk around, and view them from any angle.

The dancers have one particular 'perfect' angle, but Facades allows audiences to step behind and around the edges of the illusion to explore how representation is created and exposed".

Volumetric Capture uses depth cameras to film performers and record them as a series of datapoints in space (a pointcloud), or as a moving mesh. By recording the distance data, alongside the visual and colour data, VolCap can recreate performers in the VR environment. Facades uses a single depth camera - a Microsoft Kinect Azure with editing software Depthkit, and the Unity games engine to build surreal domestic scenes in VR.

Facades has been part of Kerryn's PhD work at DMU and follows on from Dis_place - research from which was recently published in this article: https://www.creativemediaresearch.org/post/dis_place-reflections-on-creating-mixed-reality-performance-using-virtual-reality-technologies

Ben Neal | psiconlab.co.uk

Ben Neal is an Arts-focussed, freelance Creative Technologist, digital artist, programmer, games/gadget builder and educator. His work often uses audio-visual and digital technology to create interactive art, bespoke electronic devices, musical instruments and Immersive content such as Virtual / Augmented Reality. His work has been seen at the Victoria & Albert Museum, Somerset House, Open Data Institute, Warwick Arts Centre, Ikon Gallery, BOM, BMAG and at festivals such as Sonar (ES), Fierce, Supersonic, Flatpack, Random String, Coventry Biennial and London Design Festival. He is part of the Swoomptheeng art collective, digital producer at BOM, and works freelance as Psicon Lab.

Alison Norrington

Where's the script?

Screenwriting has evolved a highly refined communication protocol that serves as a blueprint for production – the script. Hand a script to any department member and they know what do with it, how to extract information and turn this into a plan. Immersive production draws on a broad range of tools, techniques, and approaches to blueprint a proposed experience. But if you hand this document to someone in the art department, or any other department member – how will they understand it? Will they know what they need to do in the same way as they would when working with a screenplay?

The City as Escape Room: place, participation, meaning, affect

One of the challenges of describing to laypeople quite what 'transmedia' is, comes down to the complexity of the concept and the range of different ways in which it manifests. Everyone understands the concept of an escape room so transferring this to an expanded geographical location aids the communication process. It also situates the city as a play space in which community participation, meaning-making and co-creation are interwoven as meaningful story experiences for those taking part. This presentation draws on two key case studies of community-driven transmedia experiences to identify the ways in which immersive experience design can take hold of a city as a play space and translate it into a story experience. The first case study, Cursed City Dark Tide ran in Portsmouth in 2019, while the second case study, horror anthology Dark Detour ran for two years in the USA and Sweden. Through the case studies, we will explore the ways in which a connection to place can first defamiliarise and then refamiliarise the familiar and generate affective story experiences.

Alison is a best-selling novelist and playwright, the writer and co-Founder of Halloween anthology series Dark Detour. She works as a Talent Development Exec with emerging film-makers, storytellers and designers at CBS Interactive, Sundance TV, London Film School, New York Film Academy, Swedish talent incubator Boost HbG and Akademie Fur Kindermedien.

Tobías G. Palma

Tobías discusses how consumption of immersive and interactive media generates the conditions for post-spectatorship. This is based on the post-humanistic premise that the human condition is being reshaped by digitalisation. The presentation is based on two arguments. First, the reliance of immersive media on prosthetic devices to allow users' agency in digital environments. Secondly, the abandonment of a contemplative position facilitated by a separation (a fourth wall), enabling – and forcing – direct interaction with the storyworlds. These conditions would be facilitating a shift from McLuhan's leaned-back homo-electronicus to a leaned-forward homo-digitalis, from a culture of readers to one of participants.

Tobías G. Palma is a Chilean-Italian scholar, filmmaker, writer, and storyteller. He is currently in the last stage of his PhD by creative practice in the University of York, in which he worked on a hands-off, instinct-based interactive model for cinematic virtual reality. His research interests include participatory practices in audio-visual media, participatory storytelling, post-human condition in the arts, interactive storytelling, post-colonial narratives, among others, and he is interested in continuing doing research by creative practice and with an interdisciplinary approach. The title of his presentation is "The post-spectator and the instability of the body-device."

Constantin Popp

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Constantin Popp is a sound artist and researcher, having studied electroacoustic composition with Robin Minard. He obtained a PhD in the design of spatial experiences for loudspeaker orchestras at

the University of Manchester under the supervision of David Berezan, funded by the AHRC, DAAD and Victor Sayer. He is currently undertaking a postdoctoral fellowship in audio-driven, immersive storytelling at the University of York under the supervision of Damian Murphy, funded by XR Stories, ERDF and Northern Powerhouse. Constantin worked as a sound artist and lecturer across Europe, most recently at Germany's Southwest Radio's Experimentalstudio Freiburg and Liverpool Hope University.

Agnieszka Przybyszewska

Amplified Publishing

This panel brings together researchers and practitioners involved in Amplified Publishing, part of the Bristol & Bath Creative R&D programme, which explores future models of content creation, discovery and distribution and asks how emerging technologies enable new content genres and forms and how they are changing the way content is made, where it is published, how it is discovered, and what this means for audiences.

In this panel, we will explore the impact of innovation on immersive storytelling and discuss new ways to tell stories. We will debate how new immersive stories are told, the environments they are told in and ask ourselves whose story is being amplified and why.

Agnieszka Przybyszewska is an assistant professor at the University of Łódź (Poland), visiting fellow at Bath Spa University (UK) researching on electronic literature as part of the NAWA Bekker Programme. Her research is focused on evolution in the concept of book, literature and act of reading, especially in relation to immersive technologies. Recently she focuses on haptic and corporeal aspects of reading (including VR literature). She published several dozens articles on emerging forms of storytelling and literary publications, e.g. texts using dynamic typography, playable literature, AR books or locative narratives, and an extend monograph on liberature and liberacy.

Célia Quico

Nazaré Imersiva

The development and evaluation of immersive media experiences inspired by Nazaré, Portugal, are the central axis of the transdisciplinary exploratory project "Nazaré Imersiva", funded and supported by Lusófona University. To revisit and recreate representations of the past to think critically about the present and, also, to speculate about the future were the main objectives of this project.

"Nazaré Imersiva" aimed to build bridges between the tradition of stereoscopic photography and the innovation of 360° videos, having been implemented from June 2020 to June 2021. Based on the remediation of stereoscopic photographs of Nazaré from the beginning of the 20th century, the project team produced and demonstrated a range of analogue and digital materials: such as a 360° video in virtual reality (VR), a geodesic dome for shared immersive experiences, a smartphone app and a responsive website – here available http://nazareimersiva.ulusofona.pt .

The main content of the project consisted in the production of a 5-minute 360° video, which can be described as a journey through time that takes place in Nazaré, covering 200 years. The 360° video begins in 1920, by presenting a poetic recreation of Nazaré based on stereoscopic photos taken from 1913 to 1930. Then, the 360° VR video jumps to 2020, showing the main beach of Nazaré and Praia do Norte as they are nowadays. The video ends in 2120 with the presentation of a dystopian future, in which Nazaré is polluted to the extreme, urbanized to the extreme and touristified to the extreme. However, the last few seconds of the video present an alternative future to this dystopia.

In addition to contribute towards the promotion of Nazaré's cultural and natural heritage in an innovative way, the "Nazaré Imersiva" project addressed current issues such as pollution and overtourism, challenging its participants to speculate on possible scenarios for Nazaré – a challenge which can also be extended to other coastal locations in Portugal.

Célia Quico (PhD Communication Sciences, Universidade Nova de Lisboa, Portigal) is a full-time auxiliary professor and researcher at Lusófona University since 2009. Currently, Celia Quico works in following research projects: "MuSEAum: Branding de 'Museus de Mar' de Portugal" (PTDC/EGE-OGE/29755/2017), "Paisagens Marítimas de Portugal e Media Imersivos: Nazaré Imersiva" (UIDB/05260/2020), "Smart-EU: Social Media Resilience Toolkit" (LC-01563446) and LusofonAtiva (ULHT, 2021-2022). Currently, main areas of interest are immersive media, interactive media, media literacy, audience development for museums, digital heritage, sustainable and creative tourism. More here: https://www.cienciavitae.pt/portal/4C17-143A-08E9

António Baía Reis

From theatre venues to theatre worlds: an arts-based study on live acting and performance in virtual reality

While most technologies improve one or two aspects of the theatrical experience, some technologies are disruptive enough to encompass a new paradigm both in terms of making and experiencing theatre and performance. Such disruption is happening today with the emergence of live theatre and performance in virtual reality (VR). With the resurgence of VR technologies and experiments in the 2010s, theatre companies and other artistic projects have been experimenting with VR technologies. Theatrical performances have always transported the audience into a new created reality, but combined with VR, it is now enabling the audience to fully immerse themselves in a truly theatrical experience. Triggered not only by both the need to experiment artistically with this new format and obtain conceptual and theoretical insight about this new artform, but also to respond to the sudden boom of VR theatre experiments that came with the ongoing global pandemic, the authors sought to outline the arts-based research project "La Cuarta Pared VR". Born out of a collaboration between Medialab Prado and Agencia_RV, La Cuarta Pared VR is the first Spanish immersive and interactive theatre project dedicated to creating live theatre experiences in the VR platform VRChat. Thus, and drawing on the combination of the empirical work (e.g., netnography and surveys) conducted throughout this arts-based project with key studies on theatre, performance, immersive media and other related fields, the goal of this paper is to unveil and present the fundamental innovative artistic and conceptual dimensions surrounding live acting and performance in VR platforms. Ultimately, through our innovative approach, we provide an overview of key concepts and practical guidelines that can be used as the basis for future VR theatre research and creative endeavours.

António Baía Reis, Ph.D - Researcher, educator, and artist, António Baía Reis has a BA in International Relations (University of Minho) with a focus on diplomatic practices, an MA in Communication Sciences with a focus on theatre criticism (University of Porto), and a Ph.D. in Digital Media with a focus on immersive media, social change, and creativity (University of Porto and Stanford University). His work is largely interdisciplinary, combining areas such as digital media and communication studies, immersive media, theatre studies, creativity, social change, and participatory practices. He has taught and developed scientific and creative activities in countries such as Spain, UK, Germany, Norway, Albania, China, and the USA. He is currently a researcher and assistant professor at the Centre for Media and Communication of the University of Passau in Germany, developing interdisciplinary research that combines digital media, journalism, new technologies, education, and the arts. As a professor in Passau, he focuses on teaching in areas such as immersive media, audiovisual communication, digital media, journalism studies, media economy, and creative thinking. He is also an invited researcher and media artist at the Experimental

Laboratory of Intermedia Art of the University of Madeira (Portugal) and researcher and immersive media artist at the Agencia_RV - Research Group on Virtual Reality Narratives at Medialab Prado. Moreover, he is Director and Editor-In-Chief of the scientific journal Cinema & Territory.

Delwyn Remedios

Real-time VR

This panel will explore the challenges and opportunities in imaginative storytelling, immersive experiences and motion graphics for real-time VR. The panellists will discuss their Creative Practice Research projects to explore innovative production processes and emerging visual languages. James Berrett will demonstrate how novel temporalities for motion graphics can be applied in the context of real-time VR environments. Delwyn Remedios and Deepak John Mathew will showcase the design process of Parallel Interactive Narratives in VR and the pre-production process of "Table of Two". And Max Schleser will examine "A New Dawn" as a memoryscape in the tradition of experimental film.

Delwyn is an Assistant Professor at Department of Design, Indian Institute of Technology Hyderabad (India). He is an animator and illustrator, with a Masters in Animation Film Design from the National Institute of Design (NID) Ahmedabad. His student films at NID have received National and International recognition (https://vimeo.com/user35411152). Post NID, he has worked in Mumbai as a Visual Designer in the eLearning industry. He teaches Animation, Illustration and Filmmaking at the Department of Design, Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Hyderabad. Currently, he is pursuing his PhD in VR filmmaking.

Jasmine Richards

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Jasmine Richards has worked in children's publishing for 15 years and written a dozen books for children, ranging from picture books to YA. Her most recent book is *Aziza's Secret Fairy Door* written under the pen-name Lola Morayo. Jasmine is a writer in the *Happy Here* anthology and her new novel, *The Unmorrow Curse*, publishes in May 2022. Jasmine is also the founder of Storymix, an inclusive children's fiction production company.

Max Schleser

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of Two". And Max Schleser will examine "A New Dawn" as a memoryscape in the tradition of experimental film.

Max Schleser (B.A. Hons, M.A., Ph.D.) is Senior Lecturer in Film and Television and Researcher in the Centre for Transformative Media Technologies (CTMT) at Swinburne University of Technology (Melbourne, Australia), Adobe Education Leader, Founder of the Mobile Innovation Network & Association (www.mina.pro) and Screening Director of the International Mobile Innovation Screening & Festival. Max's research expertise are Immersive Media and Creative Arts 4.0 with a focus on Cinematic VR and interactive filmmaking. His research explores Screen Production, Emerging Media and Smartphone Filmmaking for community engagement, creative transformation and transmedia storytelling.

Sophy Smith

The Institute of Creative Technologies Demos

The Institute of Creative Technologies at De Montfort University is a home for new ideas, risky play and rapid prototyping. By bringing together technologists, creative practitioners and researchers across discipline areas the IOCT develops truly innovative transdisciplinary creative technologies practice and research. The IOCT makes and shares new knowledge and expertise, synthesising practice based research with pioneering advances in digital computing, information technologies, creative practice, science and engineering.

Over the last 5 years, the IOCT have received funding to collaborate with a number of cultural partners to develop a range of immersive audio experiences for VR and mobile for both live and recorded music. These include; Nobody (Volumetric VR experience in partnership with Motionhouse Dance Theatre), Bluebeard's Castle (Interactive VR audio experience in partnership with London Philharmonia and part of the Audience of the Future/Performance project), Midsummer Night's Dream Audio App (part of the Audience of the Future/Performance project) and Shadow Play (a VR dance piece with binaural audio, in partnership with Cats Are Not Peas/Assault Events)

We will showcase these prototypes, drawing out not only how immersive technologies can change the way that audiences experience music performance, but also how they can change the way that we compose and perform music as well. The new digital environments offered by immersive technologies have the potential to change not only how we experience music, but the nature of music itself.

Sophy Smith is Professor of Creative Technologies Practice at the Institute of Creative Technologies at De Montfort University. The Institute of Creative Technologies is a home for new ideas, risky play and rapid prototyping. By bringing together technologists, creative practitioners and researchers across discipline areas the IOCT develops truly innovative transdisciplinary creative technologies practice and research. The IOCT makes and shares new knowledge and expertise, synthesising practice based research with pioneering advances in digital computing, information technologies, creative practice, science and engineering. Sophy is a practice-based researcher, focussing on inter/multi/transdisciplinary collaboration, primarily, but not restricted to professional arts practice. She also work extensively as a composer and performer on professional collaborative arts projects both nationally and internationally.

Amy Spencer

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Amy Spencer is a post-doctoral researcher on the Amplified Publishing pathfinder, part of the Bristol & Bath Creative R&D programme. She is based in the Centre for Cultural and Creative Industries at Bath Spa University. Previously, she worked at UWE Bristol as a Postdoctoral Research Fellow on the Ambient Literature project. Amy is a writer of both fiction and non-fiction and is the author of DIY: The Rise of Lo-Fi Culture. Her forthcoming edited collection of essays, Ambient Stories in Practice and Research, will be published by Bloomsbury in 2022.

Mary Stewart-David

<u>Mrs Nemo XR</u>

With Cristobal Catalan and Daniel Lock, Mary is jointly working on a 10 minute musical called Mrs Nemo XR, which is performed live in VR on Mozilla Hubs. They have performances planned from now through to the beginning of November when we show at the FIVARS online festival as part of a larger work with fellow VR practitioners in UK and USA.

Mary Stewart-David is currently undertaking a PhD by practice in the Department of Theatre, Film, TV and Interactive Media, looking at new methods of narrative design for the virtual musical theatre production. She is member of Digital Creative Labs at York, and also works with Virtual Theatre Makers in London, New York and LA. As a dramatist and lyricist in musical theatre her work has been produced and performed in the West End, off Broadway and in many regional theatres in the UK With composer Denis King, she has written and recorded over two hundred songs, and several cast albums including Stepping Out and The Challenge.

Leanne Twidale

<u>Immersing into spaces of comfort in a clinical environment: a consideration of place, process and product when creating a virtual reality 360 film alongside people living with dementia in hospital settings.</u>

Hospitals can be challenging places for patients, isolated from the comforts and familiarity of everyday life, and particularly so for people living with dementia. 'Wonder VR' is a project that aims to address this by improving patient experience in innovative ways, where students and staff work individually with people with dementia in hospital to explore personalised, reminiscent and imaginative spaces that can be turned into a virtual reality (VR) 360 experience (Abraham, 2020, p.474). This is part of a wider Innovating Knowledge Exchange* project between the Royal Central School of Speech and Drama and Imperial College Healthcare NHS Trust, London, UK.

Our showcase focuses on a case study of a Christmas-themed VR 360 video, created in December 2020 during the Covid-19 pandemic. To further the sense of bringing a 'homely' environment into the hospital, the delivery of the video also provided a sensorial immersion in the narrative, stimulating olfactory sense with the use of aromatic scents, engaging touch with the feel of wrapping a present, and the option to decorate a tree as a further multiple sensory component of the experience.

Our exploration is framed through a lens of subjective wellbeing, focussing on the component of comfort within Tom Kitwood's "flower" of psychological needs for people living with dementia

(Kitwood, 1997). We consider three integral elements of this project: place, an offer of temporary locations, as theorised by Dr Sally Mackey as a place offering 'belonging' and 'familiarity' (2013, p.47); the process of designing the VR 360 video through workshop sessions; and the product itself, the film that the participant receives. By considering these elements, we will advocate for the use of immersive storytelling as a means of improving subjective wellbeing by looking at the ways that VR can be centred around the individual, bringing benefits much wider than solely entertainment.

*Innovating Knowledge Exchange: Student Involvement in Delivering Better Patient Experience in the NHS, funded by Research England, the Office for Students, and My Improvement Network.

Leanne Twidale is an Applied Theatre in Dementia and Social Enterprise fellow, and a recent MA Applied Theatre graduate from the Royal Central School of Speech and Drama. She has recent experience of delivering various projects on the 'Student Knowledge Exchange' project, including 'Wonder VR'. Alongside Ellen, she is developing a social enterprise which will deliver bespoke arts-based activities, focusing on innovative technology, for adults living with dementia in both residential and acute hospital settings, across London.

Steve Whitford

The 'Truth of Sound': Exploring Immersive Location Sound Recording in Realist Filmmaking

'The potential of the ambisonics mic is limitless and we're only just starting to see what content producers can really achieve with it now.' – Rode, Australia, in an interview with the author, July 2019.

The art of location-based sound recording has been a neglected area of academic research. I seek to address this by drawing critical attention to the intricacies and skills involved in location sound recording within 'Realist' filmmaking – both scripted and unscripted. In this article, itself something of a short methodological reflection on the opportunities and challenges presented by the practice of immersive location sound recording, I show how this art continues to be central to the creative process of production, in driving the narrative and shaping the text's influence, within the profilmic space. I hypothesise that the Realist sound recordist's role has an authorial voice and a creative agency. I use this piece as the beginnings of a reimagined ontological re-definition for the practice of location sound recording by proposing that a reinvigoration of the Realist genre – unscripted, in particular – can be achieved by connecting the story-telling skills in recording for single camera with the new opportunities afforded by the emerging technologies of immersive field Sound Recording. I argue that deploying an ambisonic-centred location sound recording method, fused with the existing art of recording actuality sound, will offer new creative opportunities for realist makers and audiences, now presented with an exciting ability to experience a sense of the geographical place and physical event that immersive audio delivers.

…'the sound is true when it reflects the real experience of being in a location. …if the sound is not true, then the whole authenticity of the film is undermined' - Realist Film Director Ken Loach, in Author interview, 2020

Steve worked for over 25 years as a Sound Recordist in the Film/TV industry specialising in Observational Documentaries, for international broadcasters. He won a Royal Television Society Award: Sound - Entertainment Non-Drama Production – for "Fighting The War" (2004, BBC2), where he was embedded with the 7th Armoured during the invasion of Iraq. Film Credits here: www.whitford.net

Since 2010, he now teaches Film Production practice at the University of Portsmouth and has presented papers at MeCCSA Annual Conference; Festival de Cinema de Avanca, and Cremona, as well as being published in Cinema Journal. He has memberships of Institute of Professional Sound

(IPS); Association of Sound Designers (ASD), and Association of Motion Picture Sound (AMPS). He starts a PhD in 2021 around the concept of Direct Sound.

Ellen Wilson

<u>Immersing into spaces of comfort in a clinical environment: a consideration of place, process and product when creating a virtual reality 360 film alongside people living with dementia in hospital settings.</u>

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Ellen Wilson is a Fellow in Applied Theatre in Dementia and Social Enterprise at the Royal Central School of Speech and Drama. She has previously worked in the charity sector, providing arts opportunities for people living with dementia and training for arts facilitators. In her current role, Ellen delivers creative digital projects in hospital and residential settings with people living with dementia and students. Alongside Leanne, she is developing a social enterprise with the aim of delivering bespoke arts-based activities, focusing on innovative technology, for adults with dementia. She holds an MA (Hons) in English Literature from the University of Edinburgh.

Kerryn Wise

<u>Facades</u>

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Kerryn Wise | kerrynwise.co.uk

Kerryn Wise is a UK-based dance artist, performer, and researcher, exploring the intersection of dance, film, physical theatre, and digital technologies. Kerryn's current work explores live performance and VR using volumetric capture. Kerryn was a QuestLab Digital Dance Artist at Studio Wayne McGregor for 2018/19 and is a NearNow member at Broadway Media Centre's studio for arts and technology. Kerryn has been devising work for over 20 years and has shown her work at a range of festivals, theatres and venues nationally including the National Review of Live Art, Sensitive Skin Festival, NEAT, NottDance and Performing Futures.

Dylan Yamada-Rice

Virtual [UN]Reality: the role of magic in immersive storytelling

The role of techniques from illusion and magic in creating effective content for a range of media is increasingly recognised by cognitive neuroscientists and behavioural psychologists (Quian Quiroga, 2016). It is no surprise, therefore, that the same techniques are also effective for optimising Virtual Reality experiences. We will provide a whistle stop tour of three interlinked projects that illustrate the role of immersive storytelling for understanding the importance of magic, the unreal and more-than-human worlds to VR experiences, from both the point of view of research, co-design and production. The first is an AHRC-funded UK-Japan network on location-based VR experiences, where we discovered the strong connection between virtual reality and historic practices of magic. Secondly, a co-designed location-based VR experience, that was showcased at the V&A Museum of Childhood, called 'The Village'. We use this to illustrate the importance of physical materials to the processes of onboarding and offboarding from VR experiences. Lastly, we describe how the co-production of a round-robin artists Zine allowed for deeper analysis of our data, while also acting as an immersive storytelling practice in its own right.

Dylan Yamada-Rice is an artist and researcher specialising in storytelling and play. She works in a range of media including drawing, film photography and Virtual Reality. Dylan studied Japanese Art

History, semiotics and social science research methods before moving into experimental design. She obtained a BA in Art History and Archaeology from the School of Oriental and African studies, University of London before going on to do postgraduate research in Japanese Art History at the University of Kyoto. She then went on to complete two Masters degrees in Childhood Education and Research Methods, before undertaking a PhD looking at children's understanding of the visual mode within Japanese environments. This inter-disciplinary background has brought about a specialism in the role of culture in storytelling and use of emerging technologies, as well as how art and design practices can be combined with social science research methods to produce experimental means of collecting and analysing data. She has previously held academic posts at the University of Sheffield and in Information Experience Design at the Royal College of Art.