

New Media Fellowships
2004 Project Cover Form

TONI DOVE

Title: Spectropia

Genre: Interactive Cinema

**Applicant's Role in
Production:** Writer, Interactive Designer, Director

Production Format: Digital Video and Audio with Software Design/Interactive Interface

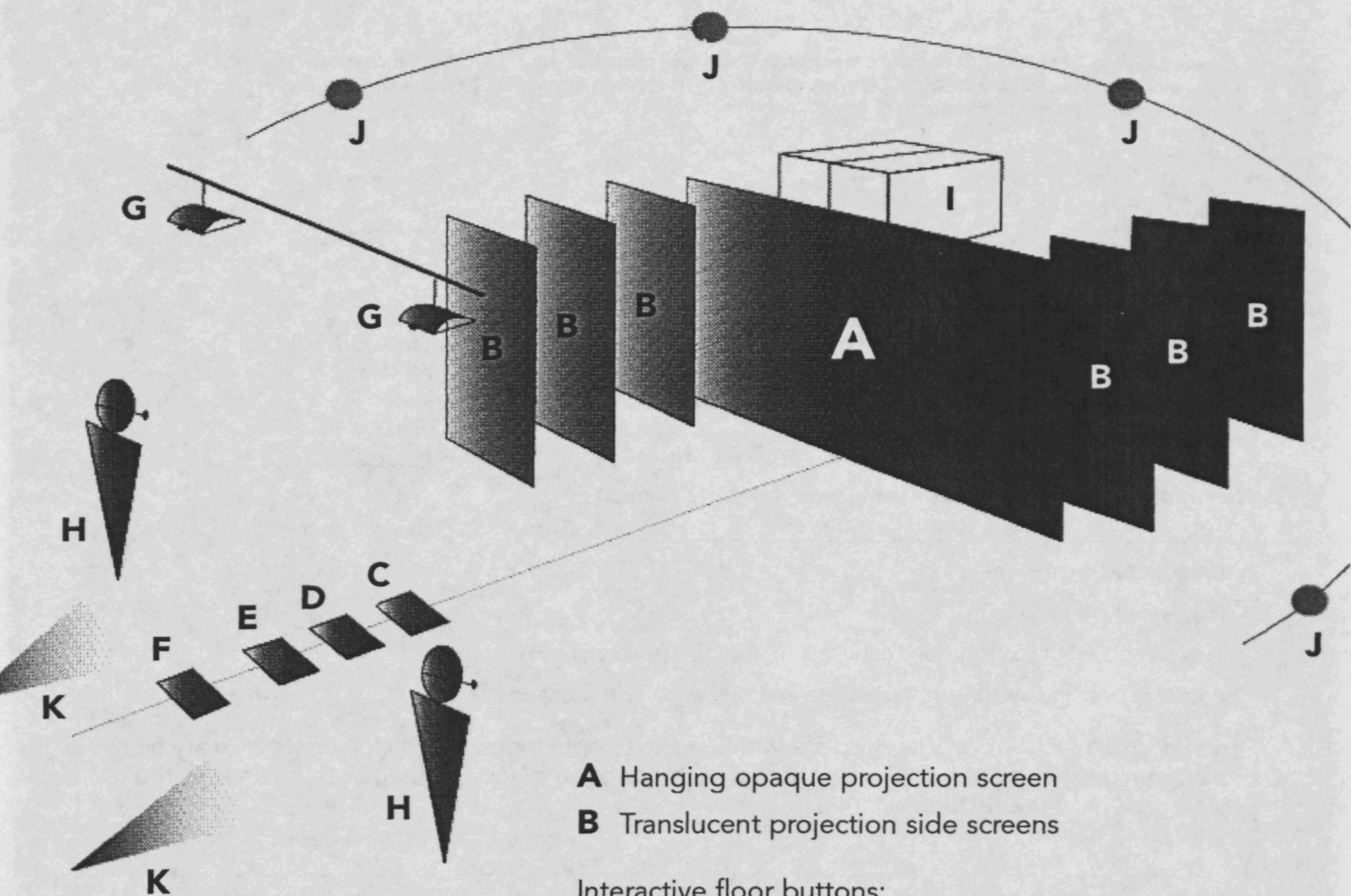
Brief Project (do not exceed space given below)

Spectropia is an evening-length interactive media event. Projected on multiple screens, it is performed by two players with the participation of audience members at museums, festivals and public spaces. (A feature film and a home interaction version – combining DVD and Internet delivery – will also be created.)

Spectropia is a time travel drama set in the future and in NYC, 1931, after the stock market crash. It uses the metaphor of supernatural possession to explore new constructions of subjectivity and the anxieties brought on by consumer culture and emerging technologies. Unlike traditional movies, *Spectropia* is “performed” interactively using a unique mix of motion sensors, speech recognition and synthesis, and vocal triggers. Audience members, assisted by trained performer/tutors, can use physical cooperation to spontaneously unfold dialogue between onscreen characters; speak to the characters and have them respond; navigate through cinematic spaces; move a character’s body; and alter and create the soundtrack.

Spectropia has been supported by the Greenwall Foundation, Rockefeller Foundation MAP Fund, Langlois Foundation, LEF Foundation, NYSCA, NYFA, NEA, the ISA at Arizona State University, and The Banff Centre for the Arts.

SPECTROPIA PERFORMANCE DIAGRAM



A Hanging opaque projection screen

B Translucent projection side screens

Interactive floor buttons:

Players step on buttons triggering different video zones

C Close zone

D Mid zone

E Wide zone

F Flashback engine

G Overhead lights create dim pool of light in dark room to illuminate player for video cameras (attached to lights) for motion sensing

H Players wearing wireless microphones

I Equipment cases

J Speakers (for surround sound)

K Video projectors: one for main screen, one for characters that move across side screens

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If you are sending more than one sample, please copy this page. Sample(s) must be cued: indicate how long each sample should be viewed for a COMBINED viewing time of no more than 15 minutes. If slides are included in this application, please list the title and year of the work on this form.

Title Spectropia

Year Work-in-Progress

Technical

Original Format

☐ Software
☐ Web
☒ Installation
☒ Other ☐ Performance

Format Submitted for Viewing

☐ Software
☐ Web
☐ VHS
☒ Other ☐ DVD

Preferred OS

☐ Windows
☐ Mac
☐ Unix
Other _____

Web Information (answer only if sample work is in Web format)

☐ URL _____ (if more than one please list them below)

☐ Browser requirement(s)

☐ Plug-in requirement(s)

☐ This sample requires broadband connection (fast Internet connection)

☐ A local copy of the sample work has been included with the application

Special Information For Viewing: View this work sample first; please view in its entirety from the beginning. If possible adjust brightness of monitor so blacks in image are as dark as the black borders of the letterbox.

Description of Work (use an additional sheet if necessary)

Spectropia, 10 mins. Documentation of work-in-progress, an evening-length interactive media event. Please view from start. If possible adjust brightness of monitor so blacks in image are as dark as the black borders of the letterbox.

The DVD begins with footage shot for a non-interactive sequence set in the future that introduces the main character, leading up to the first interactive scene, in which *Spectropia* scans an old rag on her machine and conjures a simulation of Sally Rand, the 1930's bubble dancer. This is followed by footage that documents some of *Spectropia's* interactivity including speech recognition and synthesis. (Please note that this footage, shot in a testing situation at ISA at Arizona University, does not include the multiple screens of the final work; nor are the players shown performers demonstrating the full interactive capability of the interface.)

The final part of the work sample shows rough cuts of several sequences set in New York City in 1931, when *Spectropia* is suddenly transported into the body of another woman - Verna de Mott - an amateur sleuth.

TONI DOVE

If you are sending more than one sample, please copy this page. Sample(s) must be cued: indicate how long each sample should be viewed for a COMBINED viewing time of no more than 15 minutes. If slides are included in this application, please list the title and year of the work on this form.

Title Artificial Changelings

Year 1998

Technical

Original Format

☐ Software
☐ Web
☒ Installation
☒ Other__Performnce

Format Submitted for Viewing

☐ Software
☐ Web
☐ VHS
☒ Other__DVD

Prefered OS

☐ Windows
☐ Mac
☐ Unix
Other_____

Web Information (answer only if sample work is in Web format)

☐ URL_____ (if more than one please list them below)

☐ Browser requirement(s)

☐ Plug-in requirement(s)

☐ This sample requires broadband connection (fast Internet connection)

☐ A local copy of the sample work has been included with the application

Special Information For Viewing: View this work sample second; please view as much as possible from the beginning. Sound levels lower than Spectropia sample. Please adjust.

Description of Work (use an additional sheet if necessary)

Artificial Changelings, (12 minutes) Documentation of interactive installation. Please view from start. Sound levels lower than Spectropia sample. Please adjust.

Artificial Changelings is an interactive narrative installation that uses motion sensing to track the location and movements of a viewer standing in front of a dimensional rear projection screen. A romance thriller about shopping, this interactive movie follows the life of Arathusa, a kleptomaniac in 19th century Paris during the rise of the department store, who is dreaming about Zilith, an encryption hacker in the future with a mission. *Artificial Changelings* is programmed in 30 minute shows that have certain similarities and many differences: the same clips may not repeat, and viewer navigation will vary the character's behavior, the viewpoint of each scene and the century of the story.

This DVD begins with *Artificial Changelings'* opening credit sequence (a non-interactive introduction for the viewer). The tape continues with a simulation of the installation, showing a viewer navigating the piece. This is followed by several scenes from *Artificial Changelings* shown from an interactive viewer's point of view, demonstrating results of their physical motion, the use of three floorpads that designate the zones of any given scene, or their triggering of the "time tunnel" pad that moves the story between centuries. The final 3 minutes show footage from the installation at the Wexner Center for the Arts exhibition 'Body Mecanique'.

ARTIST STATEMENT

I have been working with immersive narrative for about 15 years. As an artist who makes interactive movies, I am working in a Bermuda triangle between film, theater and video games. It's an exciting territory: it includes research and the development of theory, as well as artistic production. During this time I have created installations and performances that combine computer-driven slides, sound and video shows, virtual reality, and more recently, motion sensing and speech recognition and synthesis. I have collaborated with writers, actors, composers, programmers, videographers, designers and animators to create custom software programs, interfaces and interactive or responsive narrative structures. In recent years I have also collaborated with research scientists to develop newer technologies. For example, with a computational linguist I created a system for interactive dialogue using speech recognition and synthesis, and through dialogue with researchers in the visual representation of speech, I have created an approach to the visual representation of "responsive" characters.

In my recent work, I have been engaged in disrupting the familiar syntax of film using responsive techniques through a close examination of the structures of attention, interface design, and the formation of temporal shape in narrative form. I use concepts of embodied interface (such as motion sensing or speech recognition) that engage with narrative structure, re-seeing film structure through contemporary analysis of perception as an embodied experience. In other words, we perceive our environment and each other based on an assembly of physical sensations cued by environmental triggers. How can this be articulated in interesting ways to create virtual space?

The interface that I am creating is an aspect of an authoring system for responsive narrative: a combination of video motion sensing and vocal triggers that allow for a balance between agency and transparency. Agency is the way a viewer feels their presence in the virtual space through the interface; transparency is the degree to which the interface disappears or falls to the background while the viewer is immersed. The viewer feels the subtle tugs of connection to the movie through its response to their actions. I call this being "stuck" to the character. It's both the magic of this medium and what seems to be disturbing, especially when it is placed in contrast to the familiar ground of film.

In a traditional film the position of viewer (voyeur) is physically passive - the process of spectatorship is physically still. The film becomes the eyes, the point of view of the spectator and the body is forgotten - we enter the screen. Even in action movies, which use the eyes as a visual trigger into the internet of the sensorium to produce physical thrills, the body is largely left behind. Inactive - on the shelf so to speak. In a responsive interface, the body is active and the experience becomes embodied. A viewer is simultaneously aware of their body, "in" their body, and "in" the screen. The space between body and screen is activated. This charged space is a key characteristic of telepresence. It is the space through which the body extends itself into the movie or virtual space.

I use the technology of interactivity to take stories apart, allowing the player to re-enter the narrative in associative layers through physical experience. The combination of voice and movement as interface acts as a prosthesis - the body seems to extend into the screen. There is an uncanny sensation of the familiar behavior of a movie gone strange. Linear plot is intermittently displaced by physical engagement as the sensual experience of immersive space pulls against time. There is a sensory control over the movie's pacing and dramatic tension that is both intuitive and personal. The viewer/player becomes a performer as his or her body operates with the interface to create the experience. This fusing of the body with the story structure functions both as embodiment and its absence. It is as if the player haunts the movie - a telepathic trace left behind in the story and in the characters on the screen.

A word on the concept of genre fiction. On the pleasure of recognizable forms and the way they seduce an audience to come along with you on a strange journey. I am increasingly interested in the idea of allegory in genre, in using the familiar recipes of genre fiction to express complex and sometimes difficult concepts in an accessible way. To slip things into a story using a coded acceptable form. To slip things by, that presented straight on might be unacceptable. In an entertaining way. I should mention the importance of pleasure here. The gift of pleasure, of fun. I think of *Alice in Wonderland*, a story that has captured the imaginations of generations - it was a critique of the monarchy. *Wind in the Willows* was an essay on class, *The War of the Worlds*, a close look at colonialism. Stories help to form the values of a culture. They help acclimate people to change, allow the absorption of new ideas, and enrich the imaginary of culture, that mysterious generative pool has such a profound effect on the esthetic and intellectual atmosphere around us, and on the quality of our lives.

PROJECT NARRATIVE

Description

Spectropia is an evening-length interactive media event. Projected on multiple screens, it is performed by two players with the participation of audience members at museums, festivals and public spaces. (A feature film and a home interaction version – combining DVD and Internet delivery – will also be created.) *Spectropia* is a time travel drama that uses the metaphor of supernatural possession to explore new constructions of subjectivity and the anxieties brought on by consumer culture and emerging technologies. *Spectropia*, a young woman, lives in the salvage district of an urban center of the future. Using a machine of her own invention to search the past for her father (lost in time looking for family money), *Spectropia* is accidentally transported to NYC in 1931 when her machine short circuits. There she finds herself in the body of another woman - Verna de Mott - an amateur sleuth.

The narrative structure of the piece echoes the economic and emotional structures it depicts. The infinite deferrals of desire present in consumer culture and advertising are viewed through economic events that emerged in the 1920's - the installment plan and buying on margin. The narrative (an uncanny ghost story) is haunted by the phantom of credit, the thing that isn't there, and by the desire created by commodity culture that is never satiated. This is paired with a voyage into the mysteries of adolescent sex - of approach and retreat, desire and repression, as each step towards physical intimacy pulls our heroine back to the future.

When *Spectropia* time travels and finds herself in the body of Verna, the dislocations she feels in another time and in another person and the questions both she and Verna have about this circumstance are underlined and supported by the players' relationship to the interface. Is this possession and time travel or a sophisticated simulation - a form of role playing? Where does she go when I am in her body? Can two people occupy the same body at the same time? Do we ever really know the people we love?

Relationship to Previous Work

Spectropia is the second part in a trilogy of interactive fictions on the unconscious of consumer economies. The first, *Artificial Changelings*, has been internationally recognized as innovative in interactive storytelling and immersive interface design. *Spectropia* is of longer duration than my previous work and has a story with a narrative arc, with vocal elements added to the interface to move

forward story elements. For instance, the players can speak to characters who reply with historical information necessary to the story. Also, a player can navigate the video space using verbal commands, and suspense becomes spatialized - a place to hang out where time is like rubber. In *Spectropia*, I want to re-design cinematic vocabulary to make a movie that will take itself apart as you are watching it and reassemble, wrapping itself around you.

Presentation

Unlike traditional movies, *Spectropia* is "performed" interactively using a unique mix of motion sensors, speech recognition and synthesis, and vocal triggers. Audience members, assisted by trained performer/tutors, can use physical cooperation to spontaneously unfold dialogue between onscreen characters; speak to the characters and have them respond; navigate through cinematic spaces; move a character's body; and alter and create the soundtrack. The cinematic action is projected on a central, wide movie screen, flanked by several smaller screens (allowing cinematic characters to break from the one screen and wander to others). Projected screen characters are "inhabited" by two players who use movement, vocal sound and speech to manipulate them like virtual marionettes. The players can make their onscreen character counterparts move, speak and navigate through space. Two players, inhabiting their onscreen characters, can engage in a telepresent dialogue - Karaoke flirting. Visual and audio cues tip off the audience as to how each player is shaping the onscreen action. In this sense *Spectropia* might be considered an advanced technology variation of Japanese Bunraku puppet theater, in which shadowy black-clad puppet masters perform on stage, articulating nearly life-sized puppets.

Installation and Interactivity

Spectropia will be presented in front of an audience in darkened spaces such as black box theaters, galleries, etc. A seated audience faces a large central screen, flanked by several smaller screens. In front of the main screen are two players, dimly illuminated by two overhead lights and video cameras, each equipped with a wireless microphone, used for speech recognition and pitch and amplitude tracking. Through movement and speech the players navigate through the movie almost as if it were a three-dimensional architectural space, triggering digital video segments that are delivered dynamically from G4 computers via Firewire to a projector. A series of four buttons on the floor are also accessible to each of two players, allowing them to select changes in three different video "zones" (a fourth - a

memory button — flashbacks to previously seen footage.) Each button lights up and remains lit for the duration of the time that segment is active. Within each of these zones, players explore “scene behaviors” including intimate physical interaction, action sequences, and dialogue between characters. For example, in the close zone (the button closest to the screen), the players experience the greatest intimacy with a character — seeing from their point-of-view, interior monologues, close-ups; while the mid zone presents action objectively and the wide zone allows players to step out of the action to view the scene in different ways, such as panoramically or as a voyeur.

After demonstrating *Spectropia*, the players will guide audience members as they “play” the movie (the average performance will last approximately 90 minutes.) In this way, *Spectropia* is an experiment in breaking down the barrier between audience and performer, between film and theatrical event. It exists somewhere between film, theater and video game.

Feasibility, Use of Work, and Budget Narrative

Spectropia is in post-production, and scheduled for completion in 2004, with a total budget of \$350,000. Rockefeller funds will be used for editing, animation, final programming, and assembly of the interactive interface. *Spectropia* has received grants from the Greenwall Foundation, the Rockefeller Foundation MAP Fund, the New York State Council on the Arts, Langlois Foundation, LEF Foundation, New York Foundation for the Arts, and the National Endowment for the Arts. It was supported by a research fellowship from the Institute for Studies in the Arts at Arizona State University (ISA) which provided creative, programming and engineering support, and The Banff Centre for the Arts, which is providing post-production support. *Spectropia* is a co-production of ISA, the Banff Center for the Arts, and Thundergulch, the new media initiative of Lower Manhattan Cultural Council.

The Rotterdam International Film Festival has expressed interest in premiering *Spectropia*. Other likely venues include theaters, museums, festivals or commercial spaces interested in interactive cinema. The Brooklyn Academy of Music, ISA, the Walker Art Center, and the Wexner Center for the Arts have expressed interest. European venues (including new media venues such as ZKM as well as performance spaces) will also be sought.

PROJECT BUDGET**EXPENSES****Postproduction and Equipment Costs**

Presentation Screens and System	13,000
Software Design	5,000
Editing and Sound Recording	15,000
Video Tape	2,000
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$35,000

ARTIST BACKGROUND

Toni Dove works with electronic media, creating interactive narrative projects with digital video and sound presented as performance, installation, and more recently on DVD. She has created projects in virtual reality, for interactive laser disk, radio, linear video and artist's books.

Mesmer: Secrets of the Human Frame is a computer-driven slide installation with a soundtrack, projects images onto a wall and onto net hung in a ladder creating hologram-like three-dimensional effects. Computerized dissolve equipment produces sequences of images which are animated somewhat like a film. A piece about shifting concepts of identity mirrored in cultural representations of automatons, robots, androids and cyborgs, **Mesmer: Secrets of the Human Frame** was part of the 1990 Art in the Anchorage exhibition sponsored by Creative Time. A radio version of the piece was aired by New American Radio, a book based on this exhibition was published by Granary Books in the spring of '93 and an essay by the artist on the piece appeared in the Summer 1992 edition of the N.Y.U. Drama Journal TDR.

The performance/installation **The Blessed Abyss - A Tale of Unmanageable Ecstasies**, debuted at the Whitney Museum of American Art at Philip Morris as part of the performance series **Performing Bodies and Smart Machines**, which Dove co-curated with Helen Thorington of New Radio and Performing Arts and Jeanette Vuocolo of the Whitney Museum. The series dealt with issues of the body and technology across a number of disciplines. **The Blessed Abyss** is about excesses - about private voices and public ecstasy and the transgressive power of eroticism. It combined multiple computer-programmed slide projectors and video on three dimensional screens with a soundtrack commissioned by New American Radio for its 1991/92 series. The piece was presented as an installation in October 1992 at the Thread Waxing Space in Soho, and at the New School in 1993 '93 as part of the Franklin Furnace performance series.

Dove next developed a virtual reality world, **Archeology of a Mother Tongue**, at the Banff Centre for the Arts in Canada with Michael Mackenzie. The installation/performance was sponsored by the Banff Center for the Arts; Art Matters, Inc., NYC; and a Canada Council Media Grant and combines interactive computer graphics, laser disk video and slides with interactive sound. **Archeology of a Mother Tongue**

is Dove's first use of interactivity and marks the beginning of work that becomes responsive as well as immersive. In *Archeology of a Mother Tongue* a player navigates with a small plastic camera to "look" around and a glove to start and stop and to touch objects in the virtual space. We are in the point of view of the Coroner, one of the two main characters. It is her dream - a memory (forgotten in waking life) of being adopted as a child from the city to which she is returning to investigate the murder of a child. There are three environments, the architecture of her dream, a ribcage transport plane that inverts to become an airline terminal and a hand and skull that are the pathologist's laboratory (the second main character). The environments together create a virtual body that a player navigates, often as the "driver" for an audience, triggering narrative sequences, sound events and memories in a forensic voyage through the body and the city.

Dove then completed a video installation, *Casual Workers, Hallucinations and Appropriate Ghosts*, in Times Square sponsored by Creative Time and the 42nd Street Development Corp. for the *42nd Street Art Project* Exhibition. The piece tracks the metamorphosis from a choreography based on the gestures of Charcot's "theater" of hysteria to the choreography of female heroines of martial arts. It is accompanied by a narrative of disturbances in the fabric of human intimacy followed by a three minute symphony constructed entirely of screams. The piece was sited at the end of a series of adult video stores and presented an alternative view of the subject matter on 42nd street. Sound and video were seen and heard from the street.

The next project, *Artificial Changelings*, is an interactive narrative installation that uses video motion sensing to track the location and movement of a viewer standing in front of a dimensional rear projection screen. A romance thriller about shopping, this interactive movie follows the life of Arathusa, a kleptomaniac in 19th century Paris during the rise of the department store, who is dreaming about Zilith, an encryption hacker in the future with a mission. Viewers standing in front of a large screen interact with characters using floor triggers and video motion sensing. A viewer's body moves the character's body, generating speech, music, and changes in the video image. A viewer can move back and forth between the centuries of the piece navigating through time and space. The piece was supported by grants from the National Endowment for the Arts, The New York State Council on the Arts, The New York Foundation for the Arts, Art Matters, Inc., Harvestworks, Inc. and the Eugene

McDermott Award in the Arts from M.I.T.

Artificial Changelings, debuted at the Rotterdam Film Festival in 1998, and was part of the exhibition ***Body Mécanique***, at the Wexner Center for the Arts, Ohio, from September 18, 1998 through January 3, 1999. ***Artificial Changelings*** was shown at the Institute for Studies in the Arts at Arizona State University in March, 2000 as part of the International Performance Studies Conference and as part of the exhibition "Wired" at the Art Center for the Capital Region in Troy NY, 2000, a part of the conference "Book-Ends" organized by SUNY Albany and RPI. It has been shown in numerous other venues and will be released on DVD ROM.

Sally or the Bubble Burst is an interactive scene from the ***Spectropia*** project translated to desktop for single players, and is distributed on the Cycling '74 label. ***Sally*** has been shown at the American Museum of the Moving Image in New York in '<ALT> DigitalMedia,' in the 'Future Cinema' exhibition at ZKM and at The Museum of Contemporary Art, Kiasma, Helsinki, in the exhibition 'Engaging Characters' at Art Interactive, Camb., Ma., and at the Montreal International Festival of New Cinema and New Media. It has also been presented as a screening/demo at 'Electromediascope' at the Nelson-Atkins Museum at the Jubilee Film Festival in Kansas City Mo. and as a keynote address at 'Interactive Futures' at the Victoria Independent Film and Video Festival, Victoria B.C..

Dove has received numerous grants and awards including support from the Rockefeller Foundation, the Greenwall Foundation, the Langlois Foundation, New York State Council on the Arts, National Endowment for the Arts, New York Foundation for the Arts, The LEF Foundation, and the Eugene McDermott Award in the Arts from M.I.T. Her web site is <http://www.tonidove.com>.

TONI DOVE

Education

Rhode Island School of Design B.F.A.

Visiting Critic and Lecturer

Massachusetts College of Art, Boston, MA 1982, 1985
School of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, MA 1980-1982
New York University, Tisch School of Performing Arts, New York City, 1991-94
Trinity College, Hartford, Conn. 1993-4
School of Visual Arts, N.Y.C., 1994
Brown University, Providence, R.I., 1994
Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Media Lab, 1995, 1997, 1998
School of Visual Arts, New York, 1994, 1995, 1997, 1998, 2003
Columbia University School of Architecture, 1995-1998
Princeton University (Architecture) 1998
Brown University, 2003
Rhode Island School of Design, 2003

Teaching Experience

Boston College, Newton, MA 1979-198
Thesis students, School of Visual Arts, MIT Media Lab, 1995, 1996, 1998
Residency, Interactive Cinema, The MIT Media Lab, 1998
Residency and Performance, Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, Troy, NY, 2001

Performances, Installations, Screenings

- 1989 "Fugitive Concepts", slide and sound piece, Corcoran Armand Hammer Gallery, Washington, D.C.
- 1989 "Fugitive Concepts", slide and sound piece, Granary Books, New York City, N.Y.
- 1990 "Mesmer - Secrets of the Human Frame", installation, Art in the Anchorage, Brooklyn, N.Y.
- 1991 "Mesmer - Secrets of the Human Frame", audio piece, New American Radio, various N.P.R. stations
- 1991 "The Blessed Abyss - A Tale of Unmanageable Ecstasies", audio piece, New American Radio, various N.P.R. stations
- 1992 "The Blessed Abyss - A Tale of Unmanageable Ecstasies", slide, film and sound piece, "Performing Bodies and Smart Machines" (Performance Series), Whitney Museum at Phillip N.Y.C. (Co-curator)
- 1992 "Mesmer - Secrets of The Human Frame", Trinity College, Hartford Conn.
- 1992 "The Blessed Abyss", "Techstasy" (Performance Series), The Thread Waxing Space, N.Y.C.
- 1993 "The Blessed Abyss", Franklin Furnace performance series, The New School, N.Y.C.
- 1993 "Mesmer - Secrets of the Human Frame", Installation and publication of a limited edition book, Granary Books, N.Y.C.
- 1993 "Archeology of a Mother Tongue", Virtual Reality installation - collaboration with Michael Mackenzie, The Banff Centre for the Arts, Banff, Canada.
- 1994 "Archeology of a Mother Tongue", Virtual Reality Installation, CyberConf, Banff Centre for the Arts, Banff, Canada
- 1994 "Casual Workers, Hallucinations and Appropriate Ghosts", Video installation, 42nd Street Art Project, Times Square, presented by Creative Time, Inc. and 42nd Street Development Project, Inc.
- 1995 Electromediascope, (Experimental Works in Independent Film, Video and Media Arts) The Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art, Kansas City, Mo.
- 1996 Tone series, showing of selected works, The Kitchen, New York
- 1996 Language and Disorder - video series, New Langton Center for the Arts, San Francisco, Cable Television, Philadelphia.
- 1996 CD anthology - "Voice Tears" TDR and MIT Press, Cambridge, Ma.

- 1998 "Artificial Changelings", interactive installation, The International Film Festival, Rotterdam, NL.
- 1998 New Technology lecture series, Museum of Modern Art, N.Y.C.
- 1998/99 "Artificial Changelings", interactive installation, Body Mécanique Exhibition, The Wexner Center for the Arts, Columbus, Ohio.
- 1999 "Artificial Changelings", 40 minute short version - Digital New Wave, The International Film Festival, Rotterdam, NL.
- 2000 "Artificial Changelings" interactive installation, ISA Computing Commons Gallery, Arizona State University, AZ with The International Performance Studies Conference.
- 2000 "Wired", ("Artificial Changelings"), Arts Center for the Capital Region, Troy, NY.
- 2001 Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, Residency and Performance, Troy, NY.
- 2001 CD Anthology "State of the Union", Electronic Music Foundation, Ltd., NY
- 2002 Electromediascope, Lecture/demo, (Experimental Works in Independent Film, Video and Media Arts) The Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art, Kansas City, Mo.
- 2002 "Future Cinema", ZKM, Karlsruhe, Germany.
- 2003 "Interactive Futures", Victoria Independent Film and Video Festival, Victoria Canada
- 2003 "<ALT> Digital Media", American Museum of the Moving Image, NYC, NY
- 2003 "Future Cinema", Kiasma Museum of Modern Art, Helsinki, Finland
- 2003 "Engaging Characters", Art Interactive, Cambridge, Ma.
- 2003 "Pong Festival", Brown University, R.I.S.D., Providence, R.I.
- 2003 "Sally or the Bubble Burst" Release Event, Eyebeam Museum, NYC.
- 2003 "Sally or the Bubble Burst", Installation/screening/workshop, Montreal International Festival of New Cinema and New Media

Conferences (selected)

- 1994 4th Cyberconf - speaker, installation - Archeology of a Mother Tongue, Banff
- 1995 I.S.E.A. - International Symposium on Electronic Arts, speaker, Montreal
- 1995 Performance Studies Conference - speaker, NYU, New York
- 1995 Pong Festival, speaker, Brown University/RISD, Providence, RI
- 1996 W.R.I.T.E, speaker, Vancouver
- 1996 5th Cyberconf, Madrid
- 1996 2 Etats Generaux de l'Ecriture Interactive Art 3000, speaker, exhibition, Videotheque, Paris
- 1996 New York Film and Video Expo, juror, New York City
- 1997 The Summit at the Summit, co-sponsored by the Banff Centre for the Arts and Real World Media - speaker, Banff, Canada
- 1997 Consciousness Reframed - speaker, CAiiA, Wales, UK.
- 1997 I.S.E.A. - speaker, Chicago, U.S.A.
- 1998 Avignon Film Festival, speaker, NYC.
- 1998 New Technology lecture series, Museum of Modern Art, NYC.
- 1998 Symposium - Post Positions, speaker, Center for Cultural Studies, University of California at Santa Cruz, CA.
- 1998 New Media, Narratives, speaker, The American Center for Design, Park City, Utah.
- 1998 Out of the Box, speaker, The Banff Centre for the Arts, Banff, Canada.
- 1998 Symposium: Crossing the Virtual Divide: Bodies in Cyberspace, speaker and panel, The Wexner Center for the Arts, Columbus, Ohio.
- 1999 Lecture, Institute for Studies in the Arts, Arizona State University, Tempe, Arizona.
- 1999 Multimedia Lab, Performing Arts Laboratories and Artec, Kent, England.
- 1999 Independent Feature Project, speaker, NYC.
- 2000 Becoming Woman, speaker, SUNY Albany, NY.
- 2000 International Performance Studies Conference, speaker, exhibition, Arizona State University, Az.
- 2000 Book - Ends Conference, speaker, SUNY Albany, RPI, Albany/Troy, NY.
- 2002 Weblab Crossover Workshop, White Oaks, Jacksonville, Fla.
- 2002 International Performance Studies Conference, Presenter, NYU, NY.
- 2003 New York Digital Salon Symposia, Gramercy Theater, NYC, NY.

2000/2003 **Government Advisory Committee** on Information Technology and Creativity, Computer Science and Telecommunications Board, National Research Council .

Group Exhibitions (Objects and Books)

- 1980 "Almost Abstract", Boston College Art Gallery, Boston, MA
- 1981 "Drawings, Watercolors & Prints", Leah Levy Gallery, San Francisco, CA
- 1981 "Recent Aquisitions", Achenbach Foundation for Graphic Arts, The Fine Arts Museum of San Francisco, San Francisco, CA
- 1981 "Major Works", Leah Levy Gallery, San Francisco, CA
- 1982 "A Private Vision: Contemporary Art from the Graham Gund Collection", Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, MA, (catalog)
- 1983 "Highlights 1980-1982", Bank America Corp. Art Collection, San Francisco, CA
- 1983 "The American Artist as Printmaker", The Brooklyn Museum, Brooklyn, N.Y.
- 1985 "Chicago Arts Fair", Van Sraaten Gallery, Chicago, IL
- 1985 "Full-time Drawing", Boston College Gallery, Boston, MA
- 1986 "Chicago Arts Fair", Van Straaten Gallery, Chicago, IL
- 1986 "American Tradition in Watercolor", The Worcester Art Museum Collection, Worcester Art Museum, Worcester, MA, (catalog)
- 1988 Summer Show, Van Straaten Gallery, Chicago, IL
- 1989 "Pyramid Atlantic and Brandywine Workshop Print Show", Maryland Art Place, Baltimore, MD
- 1989 Pyramid Atlantic Benefit Exhibition, Washington, D.C.
- 1990 Contemporary Book Art, The Print Club, Philadelphia, PA
- 1991 Pyramid Atlantic Exhibition, Washington, D.C.
- 1994 "Keepers of Secrets and Truths Otherwise Unknown", Berman Museum of Art, PA.
- 1995 "Mesmer" - The Book and Beyond, The Forum Center for the Arts, St Louis, Mo.

Grants and Commissions

- 1989 Mid Atlantic Arts Foundation Residency Grant
- 1990 Artist in Resident Grant, Harvestworks Inc., New York, N.Y.
- 1990 Art Matters, Inc., Grant
- 1990 Creative Time, Inc., Commission - "Art in the Anchorage", Brooklyn, N.Y. 1991 New American Radio and Performing Arts, Commission
- 1992 Whitney Museum at Phillip Morris, Commission for a performance
- 1992 Virtual Worlds Residency, The Banff Centre for the Arts, Alberta Canada
- 1993 Canada Council Media Grant for *Archeology of a Mother Tongue*, Collaboration with Michael Mackenzie of Montreal.
- 1993 Art Matters, Inc., Grant
- 1993/4 Artist in Residence Grant, Harvestworks Inc., N.Y.C.
- 1994 Commission - Creative Time, Inc. for 42nd Street Art Project.
- 1994/5 NYSCA Media Project Grant, NYC
- 1995 NEA Grant - Other Genres
- 1996 Art Matters, Inc.
- 1997 New York Foundation for the Arts Fellowship
- 1997 Eugene McDermott Award, M.I.T.
- 2000 Rockefeller Foundation MAP Grant
- 2000 Greenwall Foundation Grant
- 2000 New York State Council on the Arts Media Grant
- 2000 National Endowment for the Arts Multidisciplinary Grant
- 2001 Langlois Foundation Grant
- 2001 New York Foundation for the Arts Fellowship
- 2001 Rockefeller Foundation MAP Grant
- 2002 LEF Foundation Grant
- 2003 NYSCA Distribution Grant

Public Collections

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Worcester Art Museum, Worcester, MA
Achenbach Foundation for the Graphic Arts, The Fine Arts Museum of San Francisco, CA
Santa Cruz County Museum, Santa Cruz, CA

Artists Book Collections

Museum of Modern Art, New York, N.Y.
R.I.S.D. Museum, Providence, Rhode Island
Fogg Museum, Harvard University, Cambridge, MA
Victoria and Albert Museum, London, England
The Getty Center, Santa Monica, CA.
The Green Library at Stanford University, Stanford, CA.
The Houghton Library at Harvard University, Cambridge, MA>
The Arts of the Book Collection at Yale University, New Haven, Conn.
The Spencer Collection, The New York Public Library, NYC, NY.
The Bareiss Collection, The Toledo Museum of Art, Toledo, Ohio.
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SPECTROPIA

A GHOST STORY ABOUT THE INFINITE DEFERRALS OF DESIRE

AN IMMERSIVE DATE MOVIE FOR TWO

TONI DOVE

"Give me deeper darkness. Money is not made in the light."

---GEORGE BERNARD SHAW

"I heard you lost alot in the crash.
"I did," and he added grimly,
"but I lost everything I wanted in the boom"
"Selling short."
"Something like that."

---F. SCOTT FITZGERALD, *Babylon Revisited*

ACT ONE

1 EXT. CREDITS -- AFTERNOON

Credit sequence - pans over a landscape in the future. Fragments of voices, conversations, and events - fleeting, dark - it is suggestive rather than explicit. 3D simulations mixed with footage of junk yards create a world populated by shadowy figures. England, 2099, a world of artificial surfaces where memory spans only a person's experience - there is no recorded history. This culture of consumption literally floats on islands of garbage, saving anything is punishable by law.

POV sequence: someone is navigating through the fringe of an urban center. This sector's function is to compact trash, lifting the island above sea level as ice melts and water rises on the planet. He is working his way through a blackmarket subculture of barter and salvage - there are mountains of refuse, highly organized districts of dealers based on geography and chronology. The Informal Sector. A humming, whining sound like a siren and its' effect on the inhabitants indicate the presence of a regulatory body.

This district is for dealers in objects from the early twentieth century. The someone in POV is searching for a particular dealer - a specialist in artifacts from the early part of the 20th century in New York City. Artifacts from what is now a dark continent.

POV

I'm looking for Zed.

DEALER 1

Haven't seen him.

POV

Have you seen Zed?

DEALER 2

He's moving around - they might be watching him.

POV

Is Zed around?

DEALER 3

You're not with the Reg?

POV

No.

DEALER 3

(Looks at him carefully)

Yeah, I guess not. Maybe over in the 3rd quad.

2 INT. SPECTROPIA'S STUDIO -- CONTINUOUS

CUT TO:

A dimly lit scene of some vast dark interior architecture in a place reminiscent of the late 18th century, but strange, as if seen through a looking glass. It's filled with faded, broken, objects and oddly re-purposed computer equipment. Flashing monitors are networked for some complex function and glowing transparent bubbles worn like hoop skirts by tiny figures float over the monitors. There is tickertape-like text around the bubbles' centers. Occasionally they burst and new ones rise from the monitors. They are IPO avatars that represent the birth and death of ventures. Mixed with the monitors are some strange objects that seem to have smoke masses that hover above them. Images alternate between the monitors and the smoke masses. Faces appear, morphing and unstable, before settling into a single recognizable face. The faces talk - sometimes a sales pitch, sometimes a warning. One screen offers access to stocks on new ventures - "bubble deals" - others speak about meeting consumer quotas. They are clearly customized to the owner of the system.

Spectropia, a self-taught "archeologist" in her early twenties, is bent over a cluttered work table. She is addicted to collecting and classifying discarded artifacts from the past - a dangerous activity. She seems to live in an environment devoid of human presence. A glass globe with a branch and a butterfly is the only living thing in the studio. There is a grubby abandoned feeling about her and the place she inhabits. An atmosphere of effort and loss. She is searching for something. She is obsessed.

FADE IN: Wide aerial shot pans over the studio. Spectropia looks tiny, surrounded by a vast array of carefully arranged objects - a sea of junk. She is dressed in hybrid clothing based on 18th century menswear and women's undergarments partially constructed of transparent bags, like pockets, filled with salvage junk.

CLOSE-UPS: of family related objects tell a story. Old photographs of a young man and woman and of the man with a child and then older, haggard or ill, with a teenage girl - Spectropia. The face of the man has appeared in an artificial or simulated form on the monitors in the studio. Objects and yellowed stock certificates from the XYZ Fund are neatly stacked.

She is bent over a table lost in the organization of what looks like meticulously labeled and rigorously laid out garbage - broken fragments, unrecognizable artifacts. This sea of obsessively organized objects stretches out before her - her project. She probably lines up her knife and fork at precise angles when she eats. Alongside the detritus are computer screens and family memorabilia. One of the monitors speaks a warning:

MONITOR

Spectropia! You have failed to meet this week's consumer quota. Are you saving?

She looks up, startled, looks at the screen and around the room at the oceans of saved items. Then shakes her head "no" as if to herself. She moves, impatiently as if interrupted, to one of the monitors that advertises venture stocks. She speaks to the screen and it changes, a swipe of her hand brings up an order to purchase. She taps a spot on her arm as if it is a faulty appliance. A small glowing spot appears and when she swipes her arm past the screen columns of numbers scroll downward. She speaks to the screen:

SPECTROPIA

System: Give me 200 shares of AmericanSwamp.com.

One of the bubbles hovering over the machine flashes and dances. She mutters to herself sotto voce:

SPECTROPIA (CONT'D)

Maybe now they'll leave me alone.

She passes the globe with the butterfly and bends to look in - she taps lightly on the glass. She turns back to what is clearly absorbing work for her: sorting and organizing a particular group of artifacts. She picks up one object and holds it to the light, examining it carefully.

CUT TO:

3 EXT. CREDITS - POV

POV of the character in the credit sequence. An exchange with a dealer.

POV

Do you have anything for me?

ZED

There's some stuff in the back.

POV

Well?

ZED

NYC circa 1920's. It won't be cheap.

POV

We'll see.

ZED

It's from over there - it's been coming in on airbus - the freight is high.

POV

Let's have a look.

He shows him piles of stuff - the camera scans the goods - most of it looks like real garbage - battered, broken. We pause on a basket of faded objects - photographs, clothing. There is a photograph of a young man who bears a resemblance to the man in the photos in Spectropia's studio, and to the more artificial face on the screens, but from a different era. The salvage bill is attached to the basket with the owner's name from the property deed - Eks. The voice barterers with the salvage dealer for the purchase of the basket.

ZED

There won't be much more coming in.

POV

They'll be digging stuff up for centuries.

ZED

Salvage is expensive. The freight is high. I'll take 100 -

POV

You'll get 50.

ZED

Why don't you just steal it.

POV

You did?

ZED

Everybody's a comedian.

Some kind of metal robotic device gathers up the basket and it disappears from view.

CUT TO:

4 INT. SPECTROPIA'S STUDIO - 2ND ROOM -- CONT - THE MACHINE

A smaller room is almost filled by a baroque machine - it looks like an early steam engine, a magic lantern and a brass bed rolled into one. Flashing l.e.d.'s illuminate the dark room and give the strange object an almost animate presence.

CUT TO:

5 EXT. CREDITS POV IN SALVAGE SECTOR

POV of the credit sequence moving through the streets, moving towards some destination.

CUT TO:

6 INT. SPECTROPIA'S STUDIO - 2ND ROOM -- CONT - S ENTERS TO SCAN

She enters the room bringing a broken unrecognizable fragment to her machine.

CUT TO:

7 EXT. CREDITS - SHAPE MOVES TOWARDS US

An oddly shaped silhouette is framed against the bright light of a doorway - moving down a long hall - heading towards the girl, muttering - it's the voice previously in POV, but the words are unclear. The silhouette comes closer - his image almost blocks out the light.

CUT TO:

8 INT. SPECTROPIA'S STUDIO - 2ND ROOM -- CONT - SHE SCANS

She scans the unrecognizable fragment on the large bed of the machine. First she dates it - a column of light with an image appears in the air, then an l.e.d. in red of the date on the bottom of the machine - she flips a lever...

<i>Interactivity begins here. Previous is linear intro.</i>

#1 Sim: First Interactive simulation

There are three zones - wide to look around the space, mid to zoom in and to trigger statements by objects and people, close-up to converse with characters using speech recognition and synthesis. Two people at a time can interact in the simulation talking to characters and objects.

9 INT. #1 SIMULATION -- CONTINUOUS - SALLY RAND

An image appears of Sally Rand the Fan Dancer from the 1930's - we see a performance of Sally dancing with enormous bubbles in the wide zone - in mid zone we see her in her dressing room with some objects that talk - there is a song playing - *Life is Just a Bowl of Cherries?* We speak with Sally in close-up. Sally has things to say about the depression period and the boom before the crash and about the house of cards scenario. She uses the bubble metaphor. She talks about dresses made of thousand dollar bills and how not having a costume saved her money in tough times.

Sally speaks in a voice that has an awkward simulated quality. Spectropia is doing some kind of historical research - and she seems to be looking for something.

Close Zone: Sally dialogue for speech recognition and synthesis. Each viewer can speak with Sally through a head mounted microphone. See Dialogue flow chart on following page.

Mid Zone: Sally's dressing room. Five different objects can be named by a viewer using speech recognition. The objects become large and have moving mouths that have things to say. Each viewer can name objects. A symphony of talking things.

RADIO #1-5

BALLOON A #1-5

BALLOON B #1-5

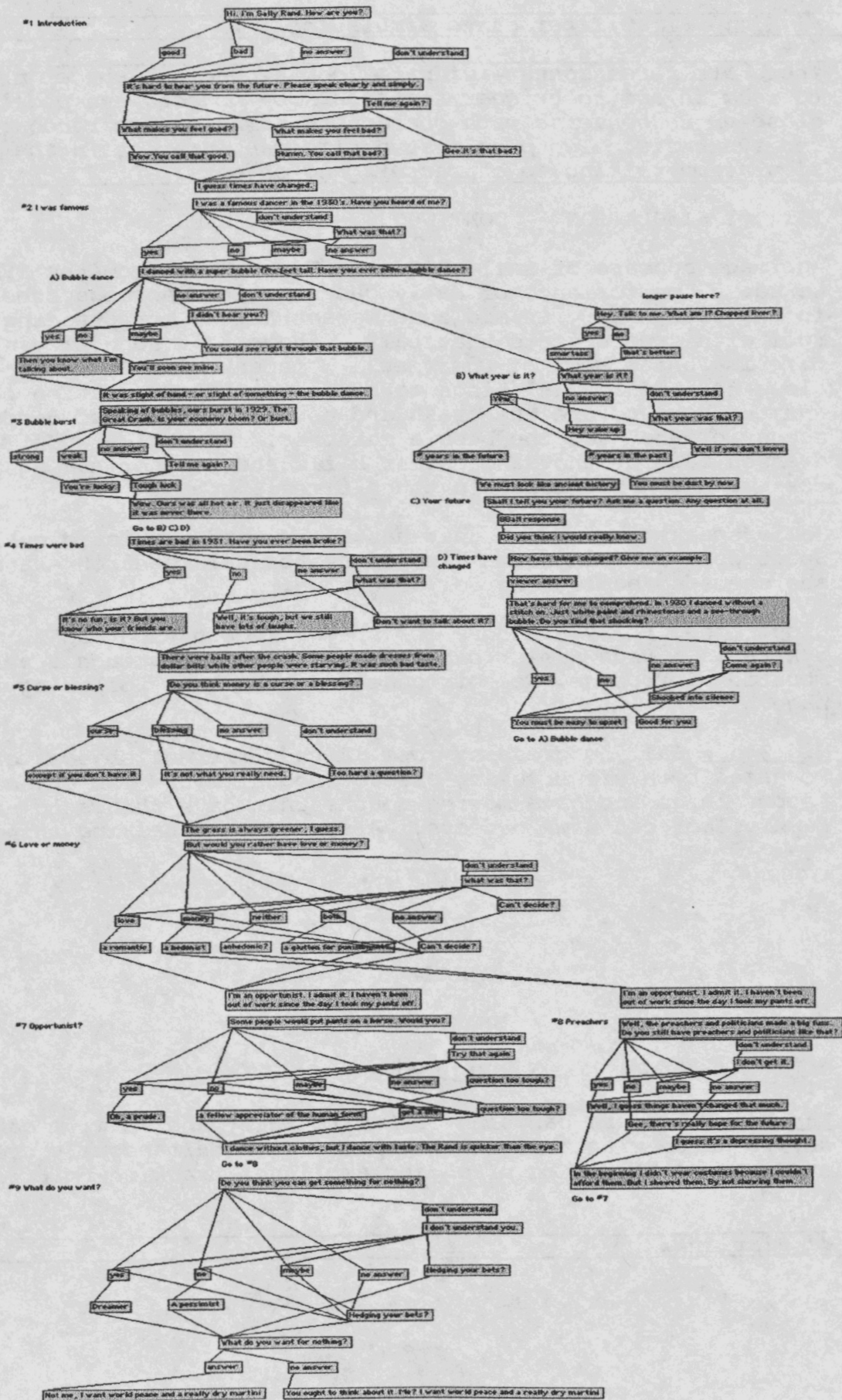
SHAWL #1-5

CHAIR #1-5

Far Zone: Viewers can sing or hum to Sally and it will cause her to dance with her giant bubble. It simultaneously creates a soundtrack based on pitch and amplitude tracking to trigger sound.

#1 Flatlink

SALLY RAND INTERACTIVE DIALOGUE



Flatlinks are short linear segments. Vocal triggers generated from a viewer's voice will change the sound environment, amplifying suspense or the emotional content of the scene. Singing, humming or vocalizing in any way alters the soundtrack.

- 10 INT. SPECTROPIA'S STUDIO - 2ND ROOM - CONTINUOUS - #1 FLATLINK -
SIM VANISHES, DUCK PISSED

The simulation vanishes in a flash. Something moves rapidly into the room and out - a flash of a robot-like character moving at an alarming speed. It speaks and we realize it is the character whose POV we have been following. The character who has been moving towards us.

DUCK

Ssspectropia! What is this?

The Duck character has a human voice: he is an adaptation of Vaucanson's famous 18th century duck automaton, but here he is part actual wireless robot and part animation composited onto the video footage. Fleeting glimpses give us the impression of something like a cross between an old fashioned child's windup toy and a high tech robot/cyborg. We never quite get a visual fix on the Duck - he is POV, shadows, something moving too fast to see, in shadow, in the distance. He seems to have some powerful and unusual capabilities. His voice is the voice of the POV we have been following in the credit sequence. The Duck's voice has a processed sound. It moves in and out of abstraction - as if he is dispersed and atmospheric by nature and has to make an effort to be a focused entity.

The Duck is pissed - he's pulled the plug on Spectropia's machine.

- 11 INT. SPECTROPIA'S STUDIO -- CONTINUOUS - #1 DIALOGUE -
SPECTROPIA AND DUCK

#1 Dialogue: First Interactive dialogue

*Three zones - **wide** to look around the space and eavesdrop on the conversation, **mid** for split screen dialogue with each viewer controlling a character, **close-up** for interior monologues - a conversation based on what people aren't saying-secrets. Two people cooperate using physical movement to allow dialogue to unfold between characters. Movement re-animates a characters body language and triggers speech. If one viewer refuses to move it forces the other viewer's character into a digression loop.*

The Duck and Spectropia argue about her illegal adventures in history. The Duck is obviously familiar to Spectropia, an intimate.

CLOSE ZONE: INTERIOR MONOLOGUES

MID ZONE: CONVERSATION

DUCK

(sound like processed
dry leaves, an echoing
that focuses into
speech)

Ssss zzzzz!! I can't believe you're
taking such crazy risks. We're
standing on the edge of a precipice.

SPECTROPIA

Don't go off on me! I'm getting
close - the XYZ company is the key.
Maybe I can find him.

DUCK

They'll pick up the frequency and
the regulatory board will show up
toot sweet. They'll shut me down.
We won't eat.

SPECTROPIA

New York City in the early 20th
century - the 20's or maybe the early
30's. It's what he was looking for
when he disappeared - I know it!

DUCK

Your father was chasing ssshadows.
It ruined his life and it destroyed
his health. Foolish lifeform! He
couldn't cope with the world and he
hid in history. He disssssappeared
in history.

SPECTROPIA

He cared about me - he wasn't
careless! He programmed you to take
care of me before he disappeared in
time. He was trying to correct an
injustice. He should have inherited
the money. I have the stock
certificates - they prove it really
happened.

DUCK

(sadly)

He's gone Spectropia. The ssstocks
are worthless. They've been worthless
for a century.

SPECTROPIA

He didn't just leave me. He wouldn't have left you here if he didn't care. It was losing the money - it wrecked his chances.

DUCK

He never had the money - it was the thing that was never there. If you're not careful it will burn a hole in your life too.

SPECTROPIA

He was cheated out of his inheritance. If I can find out why maybe I can find him. I have to find out
(sullen, stubborn -
to herself)
I have to finish his work.

DUCK

Work! You haven't been out of here in months! You don't talk to anyone.

SPECTROPIA

I don't know who I am! I have to find out. It feels like he vanished in the middle of a sentence and I'm...just... waiting...

DUCK

Spectropia - beware. It's a ssssnark hunt and it will not lead to good things. It's dangerousss. It will burst like a dead IPO bubble. Your invention is dangerous.

SPECTROPIA

How could history be dangerous. It's a lie. The Reg's big lie. They just want our memories.

DUCK

They will track your frequencies - there will be trouble for simulating history. It's the Reg that's dangerousss.

SPECTROPIA

I'm so careful - they won't find me.

DUCK

They will find you - and they will call it an act of saving. A threat to circulation. And you know what will happen...happen...happen...

FAR ZONE: EAVESDROPPING

Dialogue - close-up:interior monologue, mid:direct dialogue, plus digressions and invitations, far: conversation overheard and spatialized room sound.

- 12 INT. SPECTROPIA'S STUDIO - 2ND ROOM -- CONTINUOUS - #2
FLATLINK - THE DOORBELL RINGS

The doorbell rings. The Duck looks at Spectropia.

The Duck is a shadow on the wall - an angle shift from the dialogue shot..

SPECTROPIA

You go.

DUCK

You see?
(see? see? see?)

SPECTROPIA

It's probably one of your clients.

DUCK

But when is it ever someone for you?

The DUCK exits - a tiny figure moving through a vast space towards a door.

#1 Split: First choice between divergent actions - two characters in different spaces.

Two viewers negotiate to follow the Duck or stay with Spectropia. They may cut back and forth between the two scenes, remain in one of the scenes, or cooperate to create a split screen of both scenes.

- 13 INT. SPECTROPIA'S STUDIO -- #1A SPLIT - MOMENTS LATER - THE BASKET'S CONTENTS

The basket of garbage thrown on the floor by the Duck in the heat of anger reveals the torn and stained photograph of a young man. Spectropia sifts through the artifacts from the basket and keeps returning to the photo, staring at it, handling it.

- 14 INT. SPECTROPIA'S STUDIO -- #1B SPLIT - THE DUCK'S CLIENTS

The DUCK is talking with some street people dressed in elaborate costumes reminiscent of the 18th century mixed with modern leather and pierced skin (Macaroni hairdos, white face paint, pigment patches). They are purchasing rare memorabilia - the Duck runs a black market business in retro objects.