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Artist Talk - Sounds from Level Four

Introduction

Sounds From Level Four is a new media work developed by the Adelaide visual arts collective Shoot, where I collaborated as a sound artist. It is a work sponsored primarily by the Adelaide City Council and VAF Sound Research, which was first exhibited in the Adelaide Museum exhibition space from February 24th to March 17th as part of the 2006 Adelaide Fringe Festival. In this presentation, I will elaborate upon the collaborative creative process between myself and the Shoot Collective which led to the finished product.

Overall Concept

The work explores concepts relating to consciousness and confined space. The visual component (courtesy of Shoot) is a short film of static and moving images of passengers traveling in an elevator. The film is strictly non-narrative, presenting a series of inter-connected events that are brought into transition with the sliding doors of the elevator. The visuals are treated in various ways, obscuring the identity of passengers, objects and locations in given instances. In the exhibition, the film is projected onto the patented VAF Research Soundwall; a large wall mounted frame containing a set of speakers covered with a white projection screen.

The Sound Component

The sound component is written with consideration of the Soundwall, utilizing the placement of speakers on the Soundwall to achieve an optimum spatial sonic experience. The nature of sounds contrast between reverberant and dry textures, such as the traveling elevator, looped and distorted voices, mechanical drones, white noise and low and high frequency tones. These sounds are written to fit specific points and transitions of the film, assorted sound textures are interpolated with each other in an attempt to create levels of instability and disorientation.

The Exhibition Space

In the exhibition space, 'sound-spots' are established, with sets of speakers producing degrees of comforting and abrasive sound as the audience moves from the entrance of the exhibition to the Soundwall. In these

'sound-spots', flickering fluorescent beams are attached to the walls causing momentary bursts of artificial light.

The exhibition presents a saturated visual and sonic environment that is both a reflective and confronting experience for the audience.

Conclusion

Sounds From Level Four provided me with a unique opportunity to work on large scale with a group of artists proficient within the visual medium, whilst allowing me to contribute and incorporate my own artistic aesthetic into the creative process and finished product. Throughout this presentation I will provide examples of the sounds that were used in the work, how they fit the visual material and how they correspond to the overall concept of the work.

Structure

The presentation will be divided into the following sections:

1. Early stages
2. Conceptions
3. Developing Sound
4. Combining Mediums
5. The Fringe Exhibition & Reception/Feedback
6. Reflections

As the Shoot Collective are submitting a DVD of *Sounds From Level Four* as an artist submission for ACMC, the artist talk will be presented to tie in with the exhibition of *Sounds From Level Four* during the conference.