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Multimodal Media Art

While generic user interfaces are ubiquitous and customarily bland, the idiosyncratic multimodal interfaces developed in interactive art practice over the last decades are especially significant because of their ability to embody and impart/amplify a complex range of experiences. The trajectories of new media exemplify an intricate set of negotiations between body and space, negotiations between the actual domain of the real body of the viewer and the real space we inhabit, and the virtual domain of the represented body and represented spaces. So from inception an interactive artwork incorporates the need for a singular user interface whose imperative is that it can embody explicit meaning in relation to a conceptual and functional identity. Over the years the interactive projects I have worked on offer a casebook of effectual multimodal solutions to specific and sophisticated needs, needs that are defined by precise intentions with respect to both the narrative content of the artwork and the aesthetic experience with which I want to engage the users interest and trans-action. They also incorporate research benchmarks in virtual/mixed/augmented reality, immersive environments and autonomous agency. My presentation will elucidate such strategies as they have been formulated in a number of recent installations, including configuring the CAVE, the Web of Life, Place-Hampi, T_Visionarium and Chamber Play. Paradoxically we are moving towards a circumstance where the multimodal interface embodies what is left of art's corporeal traditions, as everything else is gradually subsumed in the immersive immateriality of software codes, visualization artifices and consumable ephemera.