

Translation, from Social Media Watch- <http://www.socialmediawatch.net/>

Two Americans create a digital drug for Second Life

The clinical test of the "psychoactive" is carried out in a gallery of Los Angeles and by Internet - people ramble without objective by the world 3D

R. BOSCO / S. CALDANA 16/10/2008

Are they artists or disciples of doctor Mabuse from the 21st Century? Is their creation a work of art or a new class of a digital hallucinating drug? It is certain that John Craig Freeman, a teacher of new media at the Emerson College of Boston and Will Pappenheimer, a teacher of digital art in the Pace university in New York, have converted the Fringe gallery in Los Angeles into a science fiction clinic. There they have carried out tests on Virta- Flaneurazine (VF), following statements that "a powerful drug has been designed especially for Second Life and that causes the user wander 3D worlds." Naturally, it's not a chemical drug, more a drug for the computer, which materialises into a program that permits the modification of graphic experiences and visuals of the users during the navigation of 3D worlds of Second Life. The parody is that it's a new level of perfection that the user can meet, not only with the physical installation but also with the web; it would be difficult to decipher the truth from simulation.

For those who cannot come to the gallery situated in the Chinese suburb in Los Angeles, can collect one of the pills on the USB key and can download a desktop pill from the web, a program from Apple Script. "At the moment it is available on Mac but the PC version is still to be released."

Already Virta Flaneurazine has been used for Second Life; in order for it to be used it is necessary to register and to have a character in the 3D world. After you have selected your character you will have to go to the virtual headquarters, where you will be able to participate in tests with doctors' characters, and then you will have to collect your free prescription that in reality serves as the program in a desktop pill. Moreover, the modification of the visual perception during the navigation, will automatically update some functions such as the teletransportation which moves the users around in Second Life.

Analysis of behaviour

The objective of the project, is to launch a net.art Rhizome project and to find a remedy for Wanderlust Deficit Disorder (WDD), "that is to say, problems caused by lack of desire to travel the network without clear and prefixed objectives". In reality the main interest of the makers is the analysis of the user's behaviour (habits of users and their usual behaviour on second life) and their emotions of this simulation experience.

The collateral effects can include hallucinations, euphoria, paranoia, shock and overheating of the computer. Moreover the users can participate presently or virtually on the project, they note that after use you may need treatment to eliminate the addiction to Virta Flaneurazine and add that in your experience you may need the antidote, although it is quicker and more effective to leave the program and restart it.

"To study the relation between the real world and the virtual world is really important because the two are linked. We are not interested in mirrors or the simulations. The experiences that the users have in second life are under the influence of VF are real because not only do they produce visual effects but also emotions."

As the sponsors of the Project are from two artistic institutions, Rhizome.org and the Fringe gallery, the makers have signed all the pills and converted them into works of art. The project will continue to develop at shows and initiatives on the internet.

Source: http://www.elpais.com/articulo/ocio/estadounidenses/crean/droga/digital/Second/Life/elpeputecib/20081016elpciboci_1/Tes

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