στατυσ θυο

the oudeis news

The January 1997 First Edition

January 1997

January did not bring any money...

MOOudeis may not be a Greek word but it is a good name for the first cybermeeting of the worldwide oudeis crew (MOOing And MEEting, page 2).

One morning, Gregor Samsa awoke from uneasy slumber and found himself transformed into a giant bug in the net (The Meta-MOOphosis, page 4).

Gernot saw the Amazonas, Felippe and Santiago... in real life (Main article)!

Thoughtful Santiago lyrically forms oudeis (On Sounds, page 3).

It´s Rainer´s domain (on page 4).

Meetings in Real Life: Gernot Goes South America

On December 19 I took a plane from Vienna to Rio de Janeiro, where I arrived on the 20th right on time to take breakfast on the 23rd floor of a hotel at the Copacabana / by Gernot Lechner

There, I met again with Felippe Rosenburg, who had picked us (me and my ex-flatmate) up at the airport. He talked about Rio and tried to explain it to us using old and new maps. The city is so complicated, though, that I needed more than a week to be able to find my way on my own. Even when we left the hotel we started talking about the oudeis project before deciding to take a few hour´s rest after taking a shower (after all, the flight lasted for more than twelve hours and it´s 38 degrees Celsius). During the next few days (until the 24th) we planned our actions and Felippe gave me detailed information on possible dates for meetings which he had set. It was obvious that the local Museum of Modern Art was a very interesting place for a performance. Additionally, it would be a great place for setting up the original concept of the Enviroment. The everpresent time pressure hovered above us and the official dates and meetings, caused by the Christmas holidays, the date for the flight back which was set at the 12th of January in order to make it back in time for the European Union deadline, and the date for the flight to Buenos Ayres, where I was going to meet Santiago Pereson. On December 24th, I bid farewell and headed towards northern Brazil to see the Amazonas.

After returning to Rio at the 31st, we celebrated the turn of the year on the beach of the Copacabana, along with hundreds of thousands happy people, until, warm and beautiful, the sun rose out of the sea and I finally understood where the East was in this damnedly complicated city.

The next days were spent on official meetings. Amongst other places I visited the Museum of Modern Art and again thought it to be a perfect place for the oudeis project. It would be wonderful to build the whole Enviroment here, if the fund raising problem were solved. For the weekend I again turned my back on Rio and headed for the south of Brazil for a short holiday. And then - to Sao Paulo and Buenos Ayres!

Felippe came along to Buenos Ayres and I got excited about meeting someone in real life for the first time who up until now was only present in cyberspace. After the plane had landed and I walked through the open custom gates, I saw a young man holding up a sign with GERNOT LECHNER printed on it. I was feeling a bit self conscious because of seeing my name so largely printed, but behind the sign I could make out the smiling face of Santiago. Here we are! After the introductions, Santiago´s sister drove us to his flat. We put our first thoughts into words later: Santiago would not have imagined me to be that old and I wouldn´t have thought he is that young.From then on it was all exciting, funny meetings with ever changing people, new coffee shops, restaurants and so on. In Santiago´s flat we discussed the oudeis project, art itself, the relationship between "first" and "third" world, Mate tea, and every two hours we had a meeting. We never returned to Santiago´s flat earlier than 4 a.m. just to rise again at 10 a.m.. The team consisting of Santiago the musician, Felippe the manager and myself responsible for the theatrical aspects was a perfect representation of the project when meeting people and an exciting trio when discussing.

Time was fleeting. We all wished for a meeting where the main participants (Technicians, Managment and Arts) of every stage (or country) would have the possibility to communicate and meet in real life.

It was a shame that time passed so quickly. It was wonderful to be able to meet someone whom I had known only via the Internet in real life and especially to be able to discuss the project in all its forms and facets. I hope that the sponsoring of some airline might enable us to meet each other, get the project together and discuss it in every detail.

MOOing And MEEting

On Tuesday January, 28 1997 the worldwide oudeis - team finally met. Finally? Well, we got a glance of our virtual bodies. The place we chose for this event was ATHEMOO / by Monika Wunderer

„(ATHE =Association of Theatre in Higher Education, MOO=Multi-user dimension Object Oriented) is a virtual, text-based building where people from all over the world can meet, move around and chat in real time." It was created by Juli Burk, a professor of theatre at the University of Hawaii. That was the first time that we could all come together and talk in real time. It just goes to show that synchronous communication is very helpful to discuss some points and maybe to clear up some misunderstandings. Some of us who came to the meeting are already used to the environment of ATHEMOO, we meet there for now and then. For some this environment was very new. The thing is that for communication in these rooms one has to learn how to communicate first.There are commands for moving and communicating. A few useful basic commands are:

look (object)- and you get the description of the room or the object you look at,

@join - to join other users,

@who - to see who is connected,

to move north type go north.

To communicate with people in the same room you're in, you can use the commands say, emote, whisper or think. To leave the MOO at any time, log out by typing: @quit

After having taken this hurdle and getting familiar with the place, a MOO can be a very playful locality. Projects like Steve Schrum's NetSeduction and Rick Sacks´ MetaMOOphosis have shown how to create a stage out of this environment. Acting and being in MOO can be theatrical itself. Sure there are not many more places that are better fit to act out and experiment with this theatricality as ATHEMOO which is designed especially for theater people. That implies that appropriate adaptations of and reflections about any given theatrical event can be made in the seminar rooms of this MOO. The environment is playful but that does not mean that it does not bring up serious work. Rather I think that in such a relaxed atmosphere the progress of creative work is promoted.

A time for our own

Synchronous communication helps to discuss things more quickly, gives a chance to react spontanously to ideas of other people, ... But it IS hard to find an appropriate time for everybody. This difficulty and the humorous aspects of MOOing are best illustrated by a logfile of our first meeting. (Logfile of Boris Karnikowski, slightly edited by BorisK and MonikaW). You can find it at iguwnext.tuwien.ac.at/~oudeis/english/status/moojan.html

To connect to ATHEMOO telnet to moo.hawaii.edu 9999.

This means: Host name is moo.hawaii.edu, Port number is 9999

status quo
the oudeis news

A Monthly Internet Publication providing background information, news and links concerning the progress of

oudeis.

A World Wide Odyssey.

Responsible for the contents: Monika Wunderer and Georg Leyrer

kis.productions

1150 Vienna, Austria, EUROPE-Holochergasse 34-34a tel. (++43) 1/982 95 25 fax. (++43) 1/983 49 35

mailto:kispro@ping.at

On Sounds, Greek Chorus And Fashion Design

Music is dressed silence / by Santiago Pereson

In tragedy, actors sang and spoke at the same time: melopea.

In tragedy, chorus' costumes were lighter, so they could dance.

In oudeis, sounds may be produced in any stereo position, this way the cyberchor will dance around the stage.

In tragedy, only the chorus would sing.

If music is dressed silence, any sound will be music, and silence (which is not possible) will be nakedness.

In tragedy, the chorus couldn't modify the action, but would comment to it, adding meaning.

In oudeis, any spectator may send a sound to the stages, colaborating in this way with the actors, adding meaning.

In virtuality, everything has a cause, an origin.

In Homer's text, Odysseus is left alone, having lost all his companions.

In oudeis, sounds produced by the cyberchor may be recorded human voices singing in greek, producing a world chorus.

In tragedy, the chorus was homogeneous.

In oudeis, the virtual location of a spectator may determine which voice will be heard, giving it an origin, a cause.

In tragedy, there was a structure to be followed, a frame.

In oudeis, the structure may determine which kind of voice will be heard, thus providing homogeneity.

In oudeis, the structure may impose a limit on the amount of sounds to be produced, leaving Odysseus alone, sensually undressing silence.

Domain Names

Cyclops, do you ask me my famous name ? Well, I will tell you. Then give me the guest gift you promised. www.oudeis.org is my own name. / by Rainer Fuegenstein

The whole oudeis project requires at least 3 computers per location, giving a total of more than 15 computers all around the world, each one connected to the Internet. For easy operation and the conveniance of the websurfers (Cyber-audience) it is necessary to assign each computer a hostname within the Internet name space.

All computers are located within the domain *oudeis.org*, the country or city of the stage's location is a subdomain within this domain:

vienna.oudeis.org or *austria.oudeis.org*

rome.oudeis.org or *italy.oudeis.org*...

Each computer has to fullfill a specific function, the hostname results from this function:

www.vienna.oudeis.org for vienna's web server

stage.vienna.oudeis.org for vienna's stage controller...

At the moment, the following functions / hostnames are defined:

- www
- stage
- display
- and maybe chief for a supervisor station

More names may be defined as more functions/computers may become necessary.

A special case is *www.oudeis.org* which is the name for the web server containing all the general information about the oudeis project which is now located at http://iguwnext.tuwien.ac.at/~oudeis.

The MetaMOOphosis Brings Kafka Into The Net

Rick Sacks, musician and artist, almost singlehandedly created this MOO-based theater project which is inspired by Franz Kafka´s "Metamorphosis". Actors and audience move freely through the Samsa House, using selected lines from the original novella as a starting point for Kafkaesque improvisation.

Rick Sacks arranged two preview performances to fine tune the program and get rid of the last bugs (not Gregor, though). After we have had the possibility to speak to him in RL during his European tour with the Canadian group Arraymusic in late 1996, he agreed to this email interview.

It is heavily abridged here for space reasons. Please go to the web version of the status quo for the full text.

1. You transformed Kafka´s Metamorphosis to Rick Sacks´ MetaMOOphosis. Why did you take a work of Kafka?

Rick Sacks: I think I first thought about Kafka as net theatre because of the term 'bug in the machine' and because The Metamorphosis has always been a favourite of mine. I first read it in high school and was sent to the principal's office when, in an inspired moment where I wanted to show my appreciation for the work, I came scuttling out from behind the classroom door vocalizing, "screeee screee" startling and irritating my teacher.

The early discussions at collab-l resulted in a number of ideas including the Metamorphosis. I 'picked up the ball' and ran with it.

Also, the text based MOO environment is ideal for The

Metamorphosis in that Kafka insisted that his 'insect' never be portrayed graphically. He wanted to leave the 'vermin' to the imagination of the reader.

2.What is your personal perception of your position? What part would you lay the most emphasis on (stage design? Script writing? PR? ...)?

Rick Sacks: At first I saw myself as a facilitator, an organizer who would collaborate on the project and act as a coordinator. The role of 'creator / director' developed as I found that I was alone in the MOO most of the time. I began running into programming problems but was determined to implement certain features and to learn how to program them. After many hours I solved some problems. I posted inquiries to news groups and was given advice by wizard / professors from Michigan and Alberta, Canada. Miraculously, Michael Young, a programmer from Texas interested in how humans behave within virtual, seemingly free environments, offered his assistance. He supplied the technical know-how to complete the work. Working with Michael, I found a collaborator and now believe that my position has changed from sole creator / director to director of a work created in collaboration with Michael Young.

3. The Samsa's House you created exists permanently. Does this imply that the theatre performance never ends (and, thus, never starts)?

Rick Sacks: That the performance never starts or ends is certainly a possibility. The costumes are designed to return to the costume closet on the exit (from the house) of the player and anyone can grab the costume and resume. So if the house is occupied the performance continues. (if there's no one there who would know?)

Of course special event performances can be planned and have specific beginnings and endings. One of the features I will eventually implement is an apple, that embeds in Gregor's shell and eventually (over X time, which will be variable) kill him.

4. Is MetaMOOphosis theatre at all? Are there actors and audience as they are known in traditional theatre performances? Is the "location" in cyberspace an essential difference to conventional theatre?

Rick Sacks: The use of any space, be it a theatre, a barn or a virtual 'house' can have multiple purposes. I intended that the Samsa House be used primarily as a theatre space for performers and audience to share a common experience but others can use the site for different purposes. Educators can bring classrooms into the site as a supplement to the reading of The Metamorphosis. The site can also be used as a model for other, similar sites which incorporate role playing and aliased player names to explore other literary and theatre works, philosophical tracts, religious allegory, politics and social stereotyping

5. What is it that the actors know more than the audience? In what way are they provided with the information which enables them to take the more active part in the play?

Rick Sacks: This raises a good point that I have yet to address. I have been occupied with orientation of the performers and have done little to assure the audience members that they should relax and enjoy the action, page each other with comments and occasionally check the closet for returned costumes if they wish to 'act'. The fact that their presence will have a marked affect on the play is important to impart to them. In the matter of 'directing' the performers I have:

1. Added automatic announcements in the front yard. On a random timer between 2 and 10 minutes a 'loudspeaker blares, "Improvisiation is the focal point of today´s performance" or some such blatant text.

2.- The 'plaques' on the front lawn contain performance information.

3.- The closet contains help information.

4.- The costumes have extensive help texts.

5.- Upon entering the house an entrance message is generated. This message is in the form of an Usher who runs by and whispers, "Improvise" and hurries of to work.