Proposed project: UKI, cinema interrupted

We want to produce a digital cinema with interruptive game element using mobile media. We propose to develop UKI, a (science) fiction film set in a post-net-crash electronic trash-scape and an imaginary BioNet inside human bodies. While we work with a linear storyline, we envision a collapsing narrative that permits pauses, glitches and intervention.

SYNOPSIS

Set your electric sheep free range.
It is 2060, what do you do with expired humanoids?

UKI is conceived as a sequel to my scifi cyberpunk film I.K.U. , which was premiered at Sundance Film Festival in 2000 and distributed at MK2 cinema France in 2003. I.K.U. tells the story of IKU (orgasm in Japanese) coders, dispatched by the internet porn enterprise GENOM Corp., are made into sex machines to collect human orgasm data. These programmed humanoids' accumulated hard drive data are ultimately downloaded by IKU runners (a la Blade Runner) and made into color-coded orgasm chips for mobile phone plug in and consumption. In post-netcrash UKI, the data deprived IKU coders are dumped as pieces of e-trash amidst the discarded electronic parts and bits while GENOM Corp. takes human body hostage to initiate BioNet, a network made up of micro-computing red blood cells (erythrocytes). Inhabiting on the electronic trash-scape with the last remaining coders, hackers, and netters who work to patch self-sustainable networks, IKU coders unpack their body parts, rewrite the codes to reboot themselves. Trading sex for codes, code sexes code, the defunct IKU coders infected with body/software virus emerge amidst noise blast to declare themselves UKI the virus. Meanwhile, GENOM Corp.'s BioNet aims to re-program human orgasm into "self-sustained pleasure", a profitable bio-scheme conspired without any precaution for damaging the biosphere. UKI the virus, propagated, transmit, infect and mobilize the citizens to enter the occupied human body - to infiltrate BioNet, to sabotage the ORGANISMO production and finally to reclaim lost orgasm data.

CREATIVE ELEMENTS

UKI is a (science) fiction film that takes into account the current advancement in biotechnology and mobile digital living. The insertion of microchip implant beneath the skin for body-data-tracking purposes has opened up our bodies for occupation. The integrated circuit transmits personal bio-info to the BIG DATA which we have no access to. Welcome to the era of BioNet, a corporate scheme to own your data, to own you. To certify our very existence these days, we are willingly uploading our personal data to all sorts of social network platforms. The sensors embedded in the smartphones identify our geo-location, track our body movement, guide us to navigate across borders. Drifting spaces, we have been integrated as part of a mobile device.

UKI proposes a cinema format in large screen projection while permits the small screen of our mobile devices to 'CUT' into the narrative. The mobile media applications including location based mobile apps, smartphone game platforms and wearable sensor technologies are permitted to 'enter' the cinema. Taking the concept of a 'collapsing' narrative, UKI as a digital cinema allows pauses, glitches and intervention. We invite the audience to 'activate' their smartphones, to collectively play a hacking game, to write their parts into the story which promises non-conclusive ending.

For the development of UKI, we want to investigate the followings-

(1) a screen-based digital film shot in HD.
We will have a cast to interpret the script. For the E-trashscape locations and BioNet blood cells sequences, we consider set construction and SfM (structure from motion) software.

(2) a geo-location based mobile app to mobilize the public for participation.
A viral app for the audience to sign on and identify themselves as UKI virus before entering the cinema.

(3) a smartphone game platform
The film's narrative pauses at ¾ into the story. The audience as UKI virus 'armed' with their smartphones enter the film, infiltrate GENOM Corp.'s BioNet, sabotage the red blood cells' organismo production. This will be a time-based game, i.e. within 10 minute duration. Either loss or win, end of game leads the audience to two different film endings.

(4) personal wearable sensor devices (a la fitbit)
There are now many activity/sporty tracker body sensor devices. We would like to explore or hack into these devices to 'enhance' the viewing experience.

PROJECT BACKGROUND

The concept for UKI as I.K.U. sequel was first conceived in 2009 during my residency at Hangar medialab in Barcelona. I moved into a 2000 square feet artist studio and from Barcelona's electronic recycling plant, I received 4 tons of E-trash collected from one day field trip in Barcelona city alone. This massive E-trashscape - rubbles of wires, cables, pcb boards, keyboards and computers, set the stage for UKI story development. At the time, I was determined to move away from screen-based work and explore the genres of live performance, live cinema and interactive game. A story structure for the UKI was laid out.
UKI [PART1] – viral performance live code live spam.
UKI [PART 2]– viral game in two levels –
level 1 [Infect the city] , level 2 [Enter the BioNet]
In Barcelona, I collaborated with a troupe of local performers (18 of them in total) who contributed to the story and character development for UKI viral

performance. Throughout 2009-2011, UKI continued its game development at medialab Prado (Madrid) and Plataforma Cero at LABoral (Gijon, Spain). In 2014, the project was joined by game curator/producer Isabelle Arvers with an "interactive experiences" grant from Pictanovo of Lille Region Image Community. A residency/preview presentation of UKI - Enter the BioNet was held at L'imaginarium in Tourcoing.

Between 2010 to 2014, I presented UKI viral performance in 10 cities/festivals including Live performers meeting (Rome), Reina Sofia Museum (Madrid), Electropixel (Nantes), Eye for an Ear (NK Berlin), Sight&Sound festival (Montreal). The second part, UKI-Enter the BioNet, was premiered at Piksel festival (Norway) in 2014.

The presentation of UKI as a viral performance and game has arrived at a stage for me to want to 'rework' the concept of UKI into an innovative cinema format, to bring back my filmmaker self, to further explore the digital medium in its fusion of multi-platforms. As a filmmaker, I do not want to make streaming media nor serialize UKI as episodes. I want to make cinema interrupted, to investigate the possibility for 'confrontation' between personal digital devices and the larger than life cinema projected on the big screens. As an artist/media activist, I continue my research in public interface. Departing from 'interactive' media, I propose 'active' media that 'activate' an audience to perform "viral hack" during cinema séances.

DEVELOPMENT PLAN

We want to take a six-month development period to focus on-

(1)Writing a film script of UKI – developing a storyline that involve a few defunct IKU coders, hackers, coders, networkers and corporate schemes.

(2) Construct a BioNet made up of red blood cells – further research into the current bio-technology development including data visualization, microchip captures inside human bodies, cell and developmental biology. Arrangement is made to conduct these researches at Barcelona Biomedical Research Park (PRBB) http://www.prbb.org

(3) Experiment on current imaging softwares for digital media, including SfM (structure from motion) software and other applications.

(4) Develop a geo-location based viral app for smartphones.

(5) Develop a mobile game platform a la Rez game mode – a classic rail shooter/hacker game released by Sega in Japan in 2001 for the Dreamcast and PlayStation 2.

(6) Investigate and modify current bio-sensor devices, including commercial ventures like fitbit and the embedded smartphone motion sensors.

PROJECT REFERENCE LINKS

Ruby Rich on I.K.U. included in New Queer cinema and I.K.U. sample clips
http://rhizome.org/editorial/2015/may/26/iku-experience-shu-lea-cheang-phenomenon/

UKI project website
http://u-k-i.co

Illetronics – documentation of Lago's E-trash workshop space
https://vimeo.com/122328767

UKI's viral performance documentation sample
https://vimeo.com/37978993

UKI-enter the bionet distribution
http://u-k-i.co/distribution/uki_enterthebionet_fr.pdf

UKI-Enter the BioNet, test run at imaginarium , tourcoing 2014
https://vimeo.com/102143712

UKI - Enter the BioNet, Piksel, Norway, 2014
https://vimeo.com/112516427

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