Virtual Amazon Rainforest Installation

A collaboration between games developer Dr Umran Ali, creative producer Sigrid Shreeve, and nature sound recordist Marc Anderson, the Virtual Amazon Rainforest installation explores the interdisciplinary intersection between participative theatre, video games, and nature. As part of Planet Parliament Now!; a day of participative theatre for students, in collaboration with green arts organisation *Voices for Nature*.

This PaR project part was underpinned by Edward Relph’s (1976) notion of *Existential Insideness* andRuskin’s*(1843)*  “*Go To Nature”* dictum, and explores the following questions:

1. How can one elicit a sense of place, specifically a sense of *Existential Insideness* within an immersive spaceusing video games technologies?
2. How can immersive participative theatre be developed using video game engines?
3. How may disparate disciplines of landscape architecture & games design, come together to create powerful and engaging environmental stories for environmentalism & climate change?
4. How can one create immersive interactive experiences that have pedagogic value beyond entertainment?

The aim of this installation was exploring notions of ‘placeness’ & ‘environmental storytelling*’.* Visitors are able to touch the interactive walls, revealing information the various flora & fauna. To ensure rigour, and authenticity, I conducted primary fieldwork including consultation with ecologists & visual research.

As part of a larger research investigation, the project built on past conferences; CIEEM Autumn Conference (2018), Frames of Representation symposium (2019) , and CPD, Landscape Institute Digital Skills (2018). The initial finding revealed CryTek’s CryEngine & Immersive Interactives simulation tools can be used to rapidly prototypes immersive/interactive scenario’s which can be used to elicit strong notions of environmental storytelling creating powerful pedagogic focused interactive spaces where visitors felt engaged & inspired.

The findings will be disseminated through a series of workshops/ conferences, laying foundation for Virtual Landscapes conference (2020) & the Virtual Landscapes/Biora design workshop (2019)