Moving Images - Static Spaces. Architectures, Media, Film, Communication, Digital Art and Design

• Paper / Proposal Title:
Melancholic Architectures: The Case of Video Games

• Format(s):
Pre-recorded Film / Written paper

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• Abstract (300 words):
The study offers insights into the architecture of tailor-made melancholic atmospheres and experiences found in video games. Stemming from the observation that nowadays melancholic features appear to be prevalent in video game environments, the study explores the use of affective artefacts in representations and therefore the ways in which the design of digital interactive spaces are capable of communicating an emotionally-driven condition.

Melancholy is a phenomenon with philosophical, scientific as well as artistic implications, which raises issues of spatiality, perception and awareness. In this context, the idea of melancholy does not relate to the depressive, clinically defined psychological states of a human subject, but rather to a state of mind or a deeply intimate way of understanding and experiencing the world. Thus, the melancholic literature is collocated to video game experience in order to bring to light multiple spatial, temporal or narrative characteristics that are capable of instructing the user's experience.
Video game environments are observed through an architectural point of view - representations, concept design, audiovisual language, interactivity processes are taken into consideration - highlighting in this way multiple issues of spatiality as potential factors of an experiential design. The notion of ‘space’ forms the guide through which the ‘art of melancholy’ is observed, revealing multiple metaphoric elements that the melancholic phenomenon introduces such as ‘shapes’, ‘materials’, ‘structures’, ‘relations’, ‘transpositions’. A series of spatial melancholic features are collected and afterwards, applied to video games, in search for common ground with existing virtual environments or digital experiences, which players seek and finally consume in games with an inherent promise of a melancholic vision.

• Author(s) Biography (200 words each):

Dr. Angeliki Malakasioti is an architect, academic and post-doctorate researcher of the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki. She has completed a postgraduate course of MArch Architectural Design in Bartlett School of Architecture UCL with distinction, and a Doctoral Thesis on the theme “Anatomy of the Digital Body - Spatial Aspects of the Self and the Immaterial on the Web”, in the Department of Architecture, University of Thessaly. Her PhD research deals with the spatiality of the digital experience and the transformations of the notion of the self in the contemporary cyber-context. She is currently running a post-doctorate research under the title: “From the Architecture of Melancholy to Video Game Design: the Question of Space”. Her academic activity includes occasional teaching in the Department of Architecture, University of Thessaly and research on digital experience, new technologies, immaterial architecture, audiovisual representations, architectural design and video games. She has also participated in multiple international conferences, art and film festivals and exhibitions and she has received prizes of experimental film making, photography and “art as research” contributions.