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Mapping Participation

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Title: Mapping Participation
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Mapping/Tracking is a participatory, collaborative project, exploring GPS tracking via mobile devices as a performative drawing material, blending technology and creativity. Using the Forth Valley Royal Hospital and the surrounding forest as a canvas, the project is a collaboration between artist, lecturer and researcher Beverley Hood, visual artist Sharon Quigley, audio-visual artist Emma Bowen and participants of the Abrupt Encounters program.

"Abrupt Encounters is a new live arts program developed by a collective of creatively engaged participants with learning disabilities predominantly from Central Scotland." (Abrupt Encounters, 2012, http://www.abruptencounters.com)

The Mapping/Tracking project evolved over a two week research and development period, employing existing app technology (Fieldtrip GB, developed by Edina, the JISC designated national data centre at the University of Edinburgh) and an app developed specifically for the project (by Edinburgh based app development agency, Bluemungus). The project attempted to establish an open, collective and participatory dynamic within the group, where all participants were engaged as active performers and contributors. The hospital landscape was approached in a variety of methods, structured around daily walks, undertaken to generate digital drawings. The approaches varied from passive engagement with the technology, during exploratory walks within the landscape and gamification of the experience by adopting classic game premises such as 'follow my leader', to active identification with the technology, creating intentional shapes and other gaming premises as the basis for performative drawing techniques, such as dot-to-dot and tig.

The result is a series of digital drawings selected by the group, to be distributed in print, digital and possibly as signage within the forest, encouraging the public to retrace the idiosyncratic steps of these performative lines.

Biographical notes

Beverley Hood studied Sculpture and Electronic Imaging at Duncan of Jordanstone College of Art and Nova Scotia College of Art & Design. Since the mid 1990's she has been creating media art works, that interrogate the impact of technology on the body, relationships and human experience, which have been exhibited internationally. This has resulted in a diverse body of work, with a range of forms and media including: performance, websites, real-time 3D, animation, interactive installation, digital prints, mobile short films and game art. Throughout this time, she has undertaken numerous collaborations with a wide array of practitioners from within the fields of art, science, and technology, including dancers, writers, programmers and medical researchers, in an effort to explore human interactions and interfaces with technology. She lives in Edinburgh and is Lecturer in the School of Design at Edinburgh College of Art, University of Edinburgh.