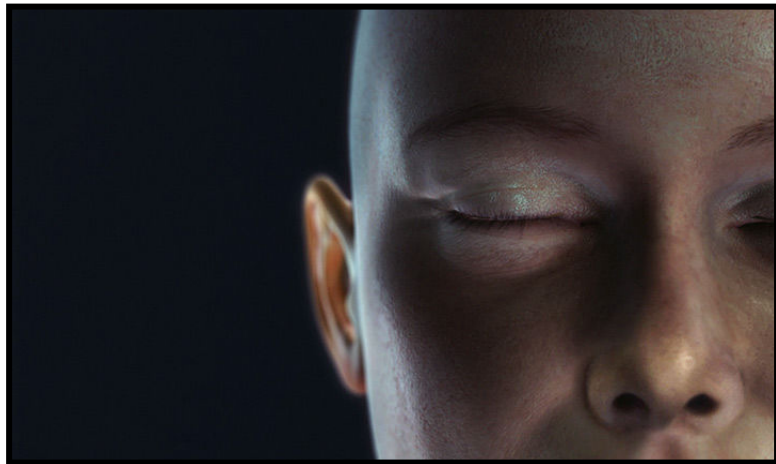


Art in the Virtual Age...The Valley

(Vancouver, BC) The eerie...a valley of virtual art, created by award winning artist Paulo Majano, will be on display this spring. To the naked eye 'The Valley' appears to be an exhibition about a man, woman, and their realm of energy. However, as with many artistic creations, it is more than it seems, and challenges the viewer to see beyond the literal.

'The Valley' is an immersive video projection of two virtual computer generated characters that have been attributed with human-like traits. It takes viewers to a distant, yet familiar place, and encourages them to reflect upon their own reactions and shifting notions of what constitutes as an 'authentic' human interaction in the age of avatars (computer generated characters) and remote experience.



With the borderless, online world creating an environment that enables and encourages social interaction, the idea of avatars adds another dimension to the matrix. Viewers not only fantasize at new heights, but struggle with blurred boundaries and unsettling, juxtaposed images.

In recent history, the idea of convincing, human-like entities has captured mankind's collective imagination time and time again. This is unmistakably evident with our fascination with characters such as Frankenstein's monster and Star Trek's machine-human Cyborg. In the contemporary world, virtual characters capture our attention in the very same way by pursuing realism and lending human-like traits and qualities that are accepted by mainstream society.



The paradox is that these creations walk a fine line between being accepted and plunging into a valley of eeriness, or, what has been nicknamed the "Uncanny Valley."

"Some have called the [V]alley a place where monsters dwell...[where] the line between seductive illusion and grotesque imitation is easily blurred. Few forms of depiction elicit stronger positive and negative reactions than recreations of human appearance," says Paulo Majano.

“Virtual in this form represents a new kind of relationship to [the] representations of ourselves, and it’s poised to inhabit a space quite different from other forms of depiction. [We must ask] what does our own perception of entities that mimic us reveal about our notions of “real” and “image”, and in turn, about our own self-definition?”, questions Majano.

Alluring and brilliant, “The Valley” will be displayed online and as a gallery exhibition. Starting June 11th, 2009, the interactive virtual exhibition will be available at www.filmnoise.org/valley. A preview will be available at the same URL commencing in May 2009.

The tangible exhibition, which illustrates how avatars exist in the real world as life size projections where the virtual exists alongside the physical, will run from June 11-20, 2009 at architect’s Michael Bjornson’s Projects at 1725 West 3rd, Vancouver, BC. The Opening reception will be held on June 11th from 6:00 to 9:00 pm. Admission is free and open to the public.

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Interview and photo opportunities available.