NM2 Newsletter July 2007

## Content

Last three NM2 productions in final phase

The first five of the eight NM2 productions have been finalised.

- *Cambridge City Symphony*
- *Gods in the Sky Choice*
- *Accidental Lovers*
- *Interactive Village*
- *Gormenghast Explore*

Cambridge City Symphony is an experimental interactive production that updates the montage-based genre of the 1920s. The production allows visitors to explore the city of Cambridge, through their own choice of topic, length and time of the day. (Photo by CUMIS)
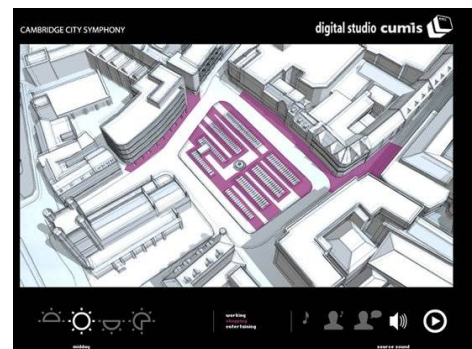
Gods in the Sky Choice is an experimental interactive documentary about the science and mythology of ancient cultures. Using a remote control, viewers select 'Sit-back Entertainment', 'Education' or 'Information' mode, choosing topic, depth and length. (Photo by CUMIS)

Information Society
Technologies

Accidental Lovers is a participatory black comedy about love, for television, mobile phone and Internet. The engager can affect in real-time the unfolding drama of the unlikely romantic couple, Juulia in her sixties and Roope in his thirties. (Photo by Heli Sorjonen)

Interactive Village presents a reconfigurable portrait of life in the Czech village of Dolri Roven. Movies are compiled dynamically to reflect engagers' choices of place and topic, made via a picture-based interface. (Photo by University of Ulster)

Gormenghast Explore is an experimental, spatially-organised, interactive dramatisation of BBC TV's adaptation of Mervyn Peake's Gormenghast novel. Visitors explore the 2D environment of the castle to gain access to the stories of different characters, each freshly reconfigured at every visit. (Photo by CUMIS)

Brief introductory media clips on those productions are available on the NM2 productions' Website http://www.ist-nm2.org/media_productions.html

The last three NM2 productions are still under work and will be finalised end of August 2007.

- *MyNews&SportsMyWay*
- *A Golden Age*
- *RuneCast*

MyNews&SportsMyWay is a digital interactive archive that allows engagers to discover, select and recombine news and sports items into stories which meet their individual tastes. (Photo by Malmö University)

A Golden Age is a configurable documentary for television, exploring the arts of the Renaissance in England. The engager determines the aspects of this subject which are of most interest.
(Photo by Illuminations Television Limited)

RuneCast fortune-telling offers visitors their own personal access to the authentic myth world of the Vikings. Real-time layering, oral storytelling and musical structure and techniques, combined with chance operations, make every visit unique. (Photo by CUMIS)

RuneCast Production runs on mobile devices

The NM2 production *RuneCast* runs now also on Windows Mobile devices such as a PocketPCs and Smartphones. The Flash player embedded in a web browser can play the *RuneCast* file, which is hosted on a website and allows for user interaction and streaming from the NM2 server system.

The photo shows scenes from RuneCast on the Smartphone "HTC Vox" and the PocketPC "T-Mobile Ameo".
(Photo by Eurescom)

The final release of the NM2 Tools

Recent work on the NM2 Tools has focused on improving the usability and stability of the tools. The final release of the NM2 Tools will reflect this focus and should be our most stable release to date.

The NM2 Tools and the NM2 middleware are the cornerstones of the project's outputs and a common component in the workflow of all the active productions. They are being developed through close collaboration with the NM2 producers and continue to be refined in order to support the innovative narrative forms the productions want to represent.

The tools should be the project's key legacy, and NM2 is making a substantial effort to ensure that these tools are available to people beyond the scope of the current project through a community website. www.shapeshift.tv is scheduled for a September 2007 launch, and will act as a focal point for creative professionals and practitioners who are interested in ShapeShifted TV. The final release of the NM2 Tools will be available for download by registered users of the site. Registration will be free, and will also provide access to discussion fora, training materials and demonstrations of existing ShapeShifted productions.

NM2 in the public eye

NM2 has participated in various events to present its results. Below is a short summary of selected presentations:

- NM2 partner Aristotle University of Thessaloniki presented a paper at ISSPA 2007 (International Symposium on Signal Processing and its Applications, in conjunction with the International Conference on Information Sciences, Signal Processing and its Applications), 12 - 15 February 2007, Sharjah, United Arab Emirates (U.A.E.), http://www.isspa07.org/

- Maureen Thomas from NM2 partner CUMIS presented a paper on the NM2 production *RuneCast*: 'Taking a Chance on Losing yourself in the Game', at the 'Women in Games' international conference 2007 in Newport, Wales, 18-21 April 2007: http://www.womeningames.com/

- The NM2 team had a significant presence at EuroITV in Amsterdam, 23-25 May 2007:
  - Goldsmiths, University of London, presented the paper entitled "Conceiving ShapeShifting TV: A Computational Language for Truly-Interactive TV"; the paper was nominated for the best paper award; http://www.cwi.nl/events/2007/euroitv2007
  - The NM2 team held a one day tutorial on ShapeShifting TV, the descriptor used for the new type of media developed in NM2; http://www.cwi.nl/events/2007/euroitv2007/euroitv-2007_tutorials.html
  - CUMIS demonstrated the NM2 production *Gormenghast Explore*

- NM2 partner Goldsmiths, University of London, presented the paper "ShapeShifting Screen Media: A Declarative Computational Model for Interactive Reconfigurable Moving Image Narratives" and also gave a demonstration of the NM2 software at the AAAI conference AIIDE07, Stanford, USA, 7 June 2007 https://www.aaai.org/Library/AIIDE/aiide07contents.php

- NM2 partner Joanneum Research provided an article "Interactivity = Reflective Expressiveness" in IEEE MultiMedia 2007, 14(2):1–7, http://www.computer.org/portal/site/multimedia

- NM2 partner Goldsmiths, University of London demonstrated of the NM2 software at the 4th International Joint Workshop on Computational Creativity, London, 17-19 June 2007 http://www.doc.gold.ac.uk/isms/CC07/

- Four NM2 pilot productions (*Gods in the Sky Choice, Cambridge City Symphony, Gormenghast Explore,* and *RuneCast*), plus the NM2 toolkit, were demonstrated at the 27th Cambridge International Film Festival on 7-10 July 2007. About 1,500 visitors passed the demos. Spectators of the demos responded enthusiastically; Cambridge Film Trust Director Isabelle O'Neill commented: "The spatial organisation of the narrative is a leap forward from interactive projects on the Web and television, which use page-based metaphors."

- Michael Hausenblas from NM2 partner Joanneum Research got accepted a paper on "Applying Media Semantics Mapping in a Non-linear, Interactive Movie Production Environment" at the 1st International Conference on New Media Technology (iMedia 07) in Graz on 5-7 September 2007, http://i-media.tugraz.at/

- NM2 partner Goldsmiths, University of London got the paper "A genre independent approach to authoring interactive screen media narratives" accepted at the AAAI 2007 Fall Symposium on Intelligent Narrative Technologies, 9-11 November 2007 http://www.aaai.org/Symposia/Fall/fss07symposia.php.

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NM2 will stay available to interested users

The EU Framework Programme 6 project NM2 will officially close on 31 August 2007. However as the project closes officially, interested users will get the opportunity to see NM2 productions, play with the NM2 production tools, and discuss ShapeShifted media in user fora.

The NM2 project team is currently setting up a community portal for interested users and potential customers of NM2 Tools. From end of September you will be able to access example productions, download the NM2 Tools and the user manuals, use discussion lists and for a related to ShapeShifting media, get in touch with the developers of the NM2 software or the producers who worked on the NM2 interactive productions, and other features on the specially designed website:

www.shapeshift.tv

Please visit this website – it will be released in September.

Jon Cook

The NM2 team are very sad to report the unexpected death of their friend and colleague Jon Cook, who died in June. Jon, who worked at Goldsmiths College in London, was central to the development of the tools, and his contribution to the project has been immense. We will miss him both professionally and socially. Our thoughts go, in particular, to members of his family.

May he rest in peace.

About NM2

NM2 is an Integrated Project of the European Union's 6th Framework Programme Thematic Priority 2 (Information Society Technologies). It was submitted to the second call of the programme and addresses the strategic objective "Cross-media content for leisure and entertainment". The project is co-funded by the European Union through the IST programme under FP6.

NM2 is running from September 2004 to August 2007 and has an overall budget of about 7.5 million euro. 13 partners from 8 European countries are involved in the project.

NM2 unites leading creative and technology experts from across Europe to address a great opportunity for businesses and consumers in the near future: how to develop compelling new media genres, which take advantage of the unique characteristics of broadband networks. The project will create new production tools for the media industry that will allow the easy production of non-linear broadband media genres which can be personalised to suit the preferences of the individual user. Viewers will be able to interact directly with the medium and influence what they see and hear according to their personal tastes and wishes.

Further information is available at: http://www.ist-nm2.org/

This is the final NM2 Newsletter; the project will officially close on 31 August 2007.