



Dr Megan Kasten

@3Dgroovanstones



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The next [#immaterial](#) event is about to begin! I'll be live-tweeting the event in this thread, and a recording of the event will be made available after the event on our website



mentions asks each of the speakers what VR games they are particularly proud of or admire - Jon King is proud of Virtual Worlds, the first thing they demoed for PSVR, started with a simple concept - what if the thing you were in became the thing that imprisoned you? ↻

mentions 's Being in the Gallery - a mixed reality experience where you put on the headset, enter a virtual gallery and touch sculpture - when taking off the headset, you could experience the actual sculpture too ↻

mentions the game Garden that they're developing, enjoyed being able to break the tech down to what works and focusing on the user experience as they build it up again ↻

mentions Tiny Escape - a two player game where one is a small alien, and one is a huge robot - able to get fear of falling as a small alien from a large table, exciting to give people that experience ↻

mentions next question - how you tell stories in VR experiences, is it different than non VR games? ↻

mentions not a game designer - looking at other mediums, not necessarily traditional games, for new approaches to storytelling, like theatre ↻

Jon says environmental storytelling and the importance of audio within it - 45 drama scenes in [#bloodandtruth](#) -

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in development [↗](#)

Get the player attached to the cast - the reactions to you (the player) and building up an emotional relationship with NPCs [↗](#)

mentions a character in front of you in VR is a weird thing, players do stuff that they wouldn't do in real life - want the characters to react to the weird things players do (putting hands through faces, etc) to avoid breaking immersion [↗](#)

mentions Garden is a narrative game on a certain level with an environmental narrative - have to get the timing right or players miss the hook - looking to theatre and set design - garden is an audio game, played down the visuals - quite abstract, then focus on narrative [↗](#)

mentions There's a threshold in VR, once you get over it, you're immersed, didn't matter if you see the smoke and the mirrors; in theatre you suspend your disbelief, this is much the same [↗](#)

mentions Are there unique storytelling opportunities that VR offers? [↗](#)

mentions more emotional response to VR once the player has bought in; Jon says because you're in the story in VR - it's easier to buy into the story than in traditional narratives [↗](#)

mentions in the early days of VR was the dream you can leave bodies behind, now the focus is on incorporating bodies and touch - [@fishtopher](#) the characters are directly talking to you, it is the player's story now, what you do become your achievements and memories [↗](#)

mentions agrees, but the use of first person is where VR is now - bringing in others is the next step - thinking about social VR in the same physical and virtual worlds, that's where it could be going [↗](#)

mentions how is being immersed in a book different from the VR experience? [@fishtopher](#) more difficult to 'escape' from the narrative, if you stop playing the game, you don't immediately remove the headset because you forget you're in the experience [↗](#)

mentions a well written book can provide a particular level of depth with a linear story - in a VR experience, you have a bit more depth because you can pause in a moment and let it wash over you - a bit more freedom and more atmospheric - sometimes books don't work for people [↗](#)

Jon says that a book, for him, the sounds you hear/create are unique to you - VR you're creating stories within stories, so there are more layers; for London Heist, getting distracted, a person can create their own small story, even if it's just playing in a glove box [↗](#)

mentions different media aren't better than one or the other, they're just different - VR - this is my experience, not an authored experience, exactly [↗](#)

mentions creating your own story in VR becomes really fun - a bucket in Garden became the most fun thing [↗](#)

Jon says in [#BloodAndTruth](#) just having a waste basket with a basketball hoop and paper - becomes a lot of fun [↗](#)

mentions How accessible is VR, especially as it becomes used in education? [↗](#)

mentions accessibility is particularly dear to her heart - big question: can everyone use this - VR for wheelchair users sculpture park, artworks that relate to climate change - have to account for less strength in someone's neck, limited movement, number of buttons [↗](#)

mentions need to think about this more - can VR make our world more accessible to people - dementia patients being able to cook their own digital breakfast; a real wealth of opportunity that we can help people [↗](#)

mentions depth of story - can create a level of empathy on VR - tell stories from different perspectives and enable people to experience different things - biggest issue is that it still is too expensive, even as a consumer product [↗](#)

mentions looking to the future, what is next for VR as the technology improves? [↗](#)

Jon says People telling stories from multiple perspectives - Trevor Saves the Universe - acknowledged as a character, but controlling a character from a third person perspective - could have done this before, but VR helps

mentions would like to see multiple people in the same experience

mentions wants to see VR and AR blended together - to get to be really creative; a VR experienced by a stadium of people at the same time, shared experiences would really open up to more people

mentions also wants to see shared experiences in VR - feels like there should be hundreds of them, but it isn't a common thing. Also looking forward to characters reacting to your character's actions would help with layers of immersion

Question from the audience - a linguist from UofG - would be interested in how VR can navigate the linguistic landscape - is there experimental thinking in VR

mentions knows of poetry in VR, a PhD student in Aberdeen focusing on AR and sound; there are people experimenting in art world at least; sound is the next frontier

mentions more experimenting going on in the art world; video games focus on English, then certain markets, very commercial; after it's established, there are opportunities for experimentation

Jon says #BloodAndTruth uses subtitles - want localisations to be bang on timing-wise; personally struggles watching foreign films with bad dubbing, VR has work to do in this area too

Next question - there are some who argue that VR experiences aren't a game - @maltron3D if you're challenging the medium, you're doing the right thing; most of VR is experiential and redefines what a game is

mentions VR is relatively young, so there's a bit of flexibility; light on gameplay, but focus on multiplicity and freedom of experience, it's different, but good

mentions games have often been made by one type of person for one type of audience, so as different types of people come in, what is a 'game' will change as this continues to develop

Jon says when developing VR worlds, they would always hear 'gameplay is king', but really it's 'experience is king', even in traditional games

Is there space for plot/narrative driven experiences in VR?

Jon says absolutely - in #BloodAndTruth worked with actors and very plot driven

Discussion of thresholds and immersion - what are your thoughts on people losing themselves in video games - will VR get to that point? @RhodaEllis that is the person's reality in VR, they are experiencing it in a headset

mentions it is something we're going to have to think about; we're going to empower people to do whatever they want in a virtual world - so we are going to face some interesting challenges. The best way forward is to have a holistic approach to the making process

mentions doesn't all have to be Black Mirror - it can be positive

Can VR be used to create an impactful documentary - but can also lie within that medium, there isn't a regulatory body, like offcom?

mentions there's not always a way to deal with this on Facebook or YouTube either, there are a lot of problems surrounding this with real world implications; need mandatory ethics classes for students going into this. No central body governing the internet.

mentions without a governing body, there's then an individual responsibility to speak up when we see these issues, need to fight back

What opportunities are there to being these technologies into counseling and other spheres outside of entertainment?

mentions how it will work will depend on where it's being used; it's not being used in certain areas because it all comes down to money, unfortunately

Jon makes games because he loves entertaining people - take people through emotional journey, it's not all about

mentions Some of these things we want to do, coming from universities because they get the funding to research these things

mentions creating games has now become so accessible using Unity, so hopefully more and more people will pick up the tools and be able to make a game to address these issues

mentions commissioned to address mental health through VR for youth- two girls who played the game became more engaged; but budgets restrict what can be implemented. Not enough people taking risks on VR - the industry is very siloed, not enough people asking us questions

Games historically haven't treated women very well - because VR is immersive, once you get more people in the world, there can be more problems with people continuing the negative treatment of women that you see on the internet

mentions unfortunately there are areas that are toxic - VR chat says 'please be respectful' - Alt space doesnt have that because they don't have the same issues with their user base - need to build places we want to inhabit

Level of detail required in environment needed in VR games because people engage with it differently, has that changed design?

Jon says VR requires more collaboration, have to put yourself in the role of the player more to understand their expectations; tricky balance is how far do you go? Games test you - the more you do, the more they expect, which can damage immersion

mentions finding that balance is really important; if there's a coffee cup, can you pick it up, can you fill with coffee? What is integral to story and what breaks immersion?

One of the differences with VR is mixing making games and making worlds - if you think VR necessitates building a world?

mentions all games need world building, but VR needs to go a lot deeper especially in terms of collaboration, talk to the sound designers, the artists throughout the process. Go to a particular depth, match the threshold with the aesthetic

mentions Cohesive world building is so important

mentions VR as a sculptural medium because three-dimensional, need to keep the the focus on the figure more than the world

Because VR is about building worlds, whether it's a shifting expansive medium: can be a game or it can be a gallery?

mentions it's just a tool, we use it to meet our purpose; @fishtopher tend to think about VR as a game because it's what I do, but we all need to broaden our horizons because it is a tool

mentions making comics has specific rules and boundaries, and film; what's really interesting and alluring about VR is that there are no rules, can really use imagination from scratch.

Idea that we can do anything with VR - if we think about VR as an empathy machine, if you took that idea, can we make VR go in a positive way?

mentions would be wary with saying that we can recreate someone else's experience based on their experience; they can reproduce it better because it's there personal experience

Jon says being able to step into someone's shoes is an interesting concept to build empathy towards another person

And that's the end of the event! Thanks to those who participated, the next #immaterial event will be announced soon!

mentions

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