

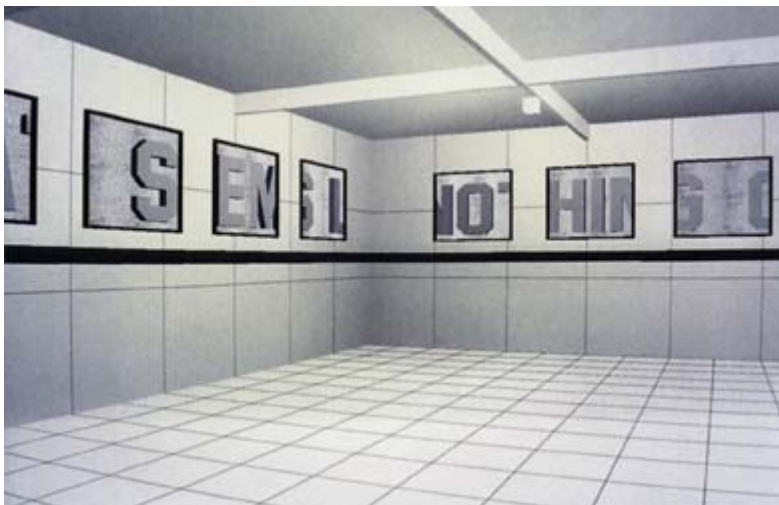
The Virtual Museum Jeffrey Shaw



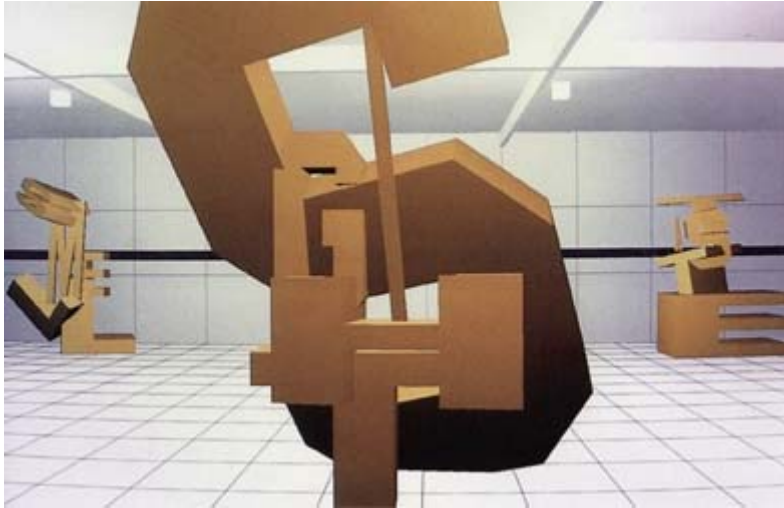
Jeffrey Shaw: The Virtual Museum — Installation at Art Frankfurt 1991



Jeffrey Shaw: The Virtual Museum — Room 1



Jeffrey Shaw: The Virtual Museum — Room 2



Jeffrey Shaw: The Virtual Museum — Room 3



Jeffrey Shaw: The Virtual Museum — Room 4



Jeffrey Shaw: The Virtual Museum — Room 5

"The Virtual Museum" is a three-dimensional computer generated museum constituted by an immaterial constellation of rooms and exhibits. Its apparatuses are a round rotating platform on which is located a large video projection monitor, a computer, and a chair on which the viewer can sit. From this chair the viewer interactively controls his / her movement through "The Virtual Museum".

Forwards and backwards movement of the chair causes forwards and backwards movement of the viewer in the museum space represented on the screen. Turning the chair causes a rotation of this virtual image space, and also a synchronous physical rotation of the platform. Thus the viewer moves (and is moved) simultaneously in both the virtual and real environments.

The architecture of "The Virtual Museum" is constituted by five rooms all of which reproduce the architecture of the real room in which the installation is located (in this case the Landesmuseum Linz), so making a conjunction of the real and virtual spaces.

The first room shows a representation of the installation itself with its platform, computer, video monitor and chair. Moving through "The Virtual Museum" the viewer in effect takes leave of the chair and transports his disembodied viewpoint freely through the exhibition spaces. The other four rooms are consecutively entered by passing through their immaterial walls. Using alphabetic and textual forms, each room has its own specific virtual contents. The arrangements in the first three rooms are referential to existing genres — painting, sculpture and cinema. The fourth room shows the particularity of a wholly computer generated environment- three moving signs ('A', '2', 'Z') are primary tri-colour light sources that give the room its physical identity.

We see around us a world that is becoming increasingly museified This tendency towards premature conservation may be relieved by a virtual museum architecture that is as provisional as the culture that it embodies. "The Virtual Museum" delineates certain modalities of an interactive and virtual space. It locates the virtual space in a contiguous relationship with the real space, and establishes a discourse in that fine zone that exists between the real and the virtual — l'infra-mince.

Application software: Gideon May
Platform engineering: Huib Nelissen
Computer system: Silicon Graphics 4D / 310 VGX

Produced for the Ars Electronica with the cooperation of the Zentrum für Kunst und Medientechnologie, Karlsruhe