

THE TABLE OF THE SPIRITS GIDEON MAY



In the quest for artificial life, Gideon May chose to visualize a fantasy, rather than imitate reality. He created "The Table of the Spirits", an interactive video-installation that displays a combination of reality and virtual reality.

The installation consists of a table on which a set of basic shapes are fitted. Each shape has a specific colour and a fixed position on the table which measures 5 feet by 5 feet.

Spotlights are mounted on the corners of the table. Behind the table is a video screen that shows the observations of the video camera.

When the camera is moved around the table, it appears that the world on the video screen isn't the same as the one that can be seen with the naked eye.

Not visible for the human eye are the ghosts that crawl and float over the table, they can only be sensed with the camera.

The manifestations of each ghost is derived from the basic shapes on the table and although they have an immediate appearance, they do have a set of physical qualities, such as a specific form, colour and distinctive dynamics.

Every ghost is programmed to have his own behaviour, but they seem more driven by instincts than by a set of programmer's codes. Some of the ghosts, for instance, like to be around the camera, others are shy and try to hide behind the shapes on the table. What all the ghosts have in common is that they interact with the objects in their environment, whether it's a static shape, another ghost or a viewer with the camera.

"The Table of the Spirits" exposes the twilight zone of reality and unveils the world of the unseen.

Bert Haensel