

Virtual Worlds offer artists, arts managers and promoters both new ways of creating artistic experiences, and new means of reaching audiences across the globe. There is also significant potential for so-called mixed-reality events, where the real and the virtual collide in a multitude of ways.

The Virtual Gallery

One of the simplest ways for artists to get involved in virtual worlds is through a virtual gallery. Many artists are already setting up their own galleries in virtual worlds such as Second Life to create not only a place where they can sell their work (both in real and virtual forms), but also as a place where they can build relationships with their audience through virtual cheese & wine parties (we're not joking), and other networking events. Such virtual galleries are not limited to individuals, real-world organisations such as ?? and ?? have used virtual worlds to showcase their collections – or visualise historic spaces lost to the real world.

Real-World Streaming

Many large (including the BBC, Liverpool Philharmonic and Channel 4) and small organisations, and individuals have made use of the ability to stream real-world performances into a virtual world (and to a virtual audience), either as audio or audio and video. The technology to do this can be delivered over the web, and paid for on a monthly or per event basis, putting it within reach of any artist. The benefit over simple streaming to the web is that the artist gets to see their audience, and the audience gets to see and talk to each other. It becomes an event,

Virtual World Art

One of the advantages of virtual worlds is that they let you create art which would not be possible of practical in the real world. For instance in Second Life you will find gigantic sculptures, complete ethereal environments and performances which mix sound, light and objects in ways that only CGI can achieve in the “real world”. Such art is ideally enjoyed as an avatar in the virtual world, and preferably as part of a social event, but it can also be streamed out into the real world through video and audio,



Mixed Reality

To us one of the most interesting uses of virtual worlds is when they are blended with reality. Arts events like Ars Electronica have already showed how the real and virtual can be brought together in new and interesting ways. For instance virtual world imagery can replace views through windows and mirrors, real world movements can change virtual world objects, and virtual world actions can be used to create immersive soundscapes in the real world. Once you add in the location-specific and public-access potential of WiFi, GPS and Bluetooth you have the makings of a whole new set of art forms.

Daden Solutions

At Daden we have a number of solutions that artists and arts organisations can use to take advantage of virtual worlds. At its simplest this is just the expertise to help you stream your event into Second Life, or visualise your collection in a virtual space. More interestingly though we have tools sets which let you control virtual world activity from real-world switches and sensors, others which put real world lights and devices under virtual world control, virtual puppets which can be controlled from the real world, and interfaces for standards such as MIDI (for music) and DMX (for lighting) which let you join the real and virtual in either direction.

Next Steps

If you think that virtual worlds could help you deliver a new and imaginative artistic experience then we'd be more than happy to come and present to you to give you a better understanding of what this technology can offer now, and where it might be going in the future. Please give us a call.

Virtual Arts & Culture

Daden Limited

103 Oxford Rd
Moseley
Birmingham
B13 9SG
UK

www.daden.co.uk
info@daden.co.uk
+44 (0)121 698 8520