

LORENA MONSALVE

MULTIMEDIA ARTIST

This document contains descriptions of recent projects.

BOGOTÁ 2002

Shybot

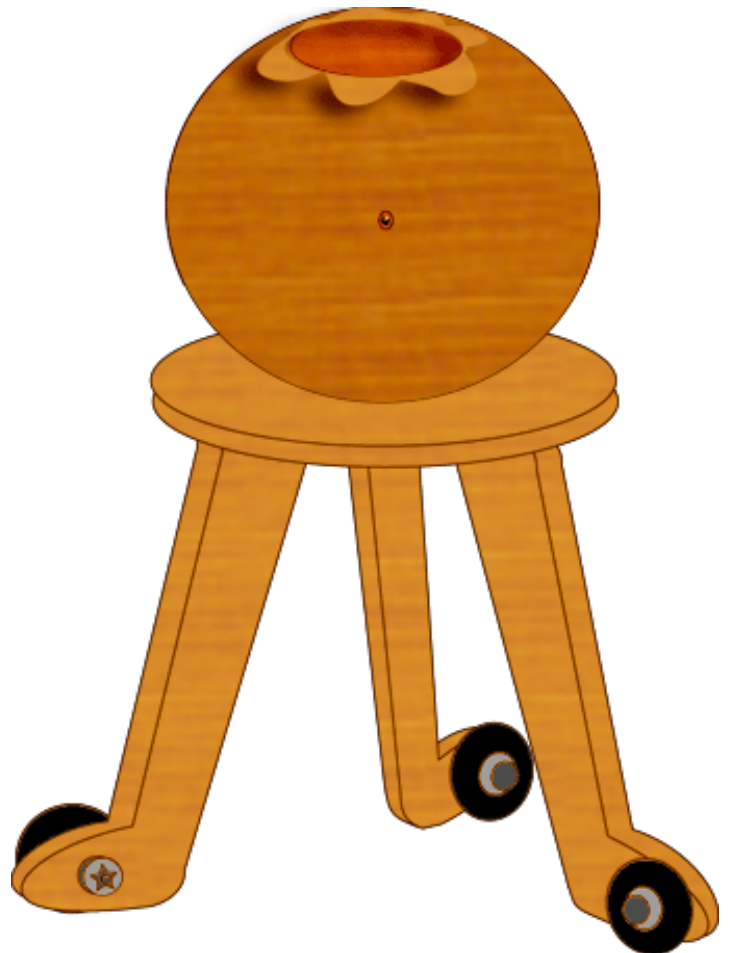
Vertical Workshop III

Shybot is a small robot made out of wood and vegetable fiber, thus integrating “natural” elements with robotic functions that liken it to a moving plant. It is equipped with three short distance motion sensors and three independently motorized legs distributed in a triangular manner. This allows the machine to “run away” in the direction where it “feels” no presences.

Shybot allows the participant to become aware of his or her movements and their effect on the robot. Their position and proximity determine Shybot’s movements, which are always away from that which approaches it. If Shybot is cornered and thus cannot move any further, it will become “distressed” and explain that it is shy and prefers to be observed from a distance. If it continues to feel cornered after while, it will shout for help and light up inside until it “feels” that it has enough room around itself.

Shybot is a non-living creature that requests respect of its physical space and is programed to express its “emotions” about it.

Shybot’s purpose is to allow the participants to think about the possibility of interacting with “emotional” machines and the resulting ethical issues in the treatment of all creatures, human engineered or not.



New Anatomy Lesson

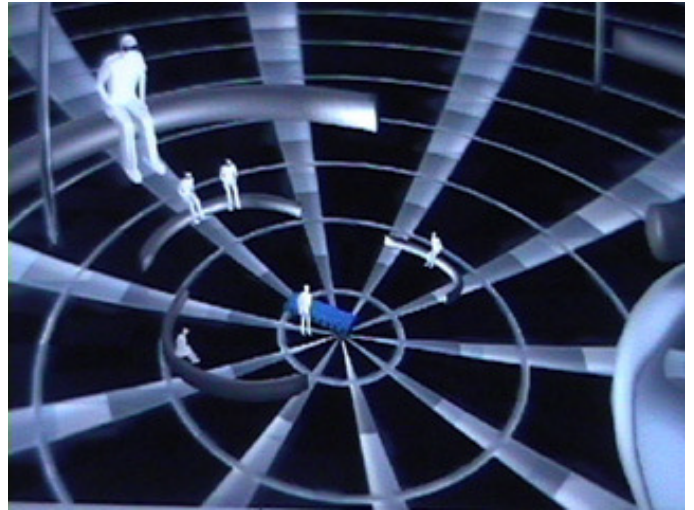
External Organs Group Show

This installation belongs to the series called “Famous Works of Art Revisited”. The purpose of this series is to stimulate thought and feelings about the importance of the observer as an active participant in the interpretation of reality. This is accomplished through diverse manipulations of famous paintings.

This particular project encourages the viewer to experience a different point of view, one in which the importance of the observer becomes evident through the use of a stereoscopic illusion.

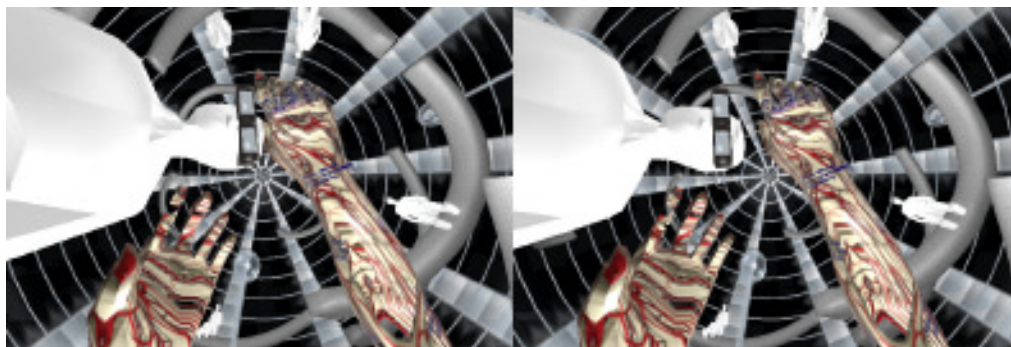
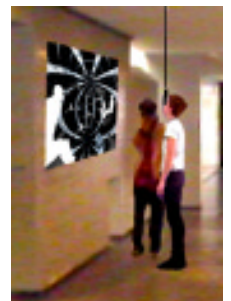
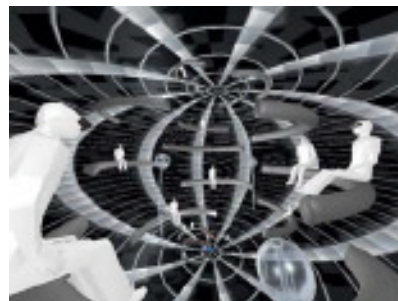
The installation consists of a large scale computer printout and a pair of stereoscopic goggles. The print is a contemporary version of “The Anatomy Lesson” by Rembrandt, in which a group of observers watch the dissection of a human body. The onlookers in the printout are wearing goggles similar to the ones attached to the ceiling in front of the actual print.

When the participant looks into the goggles, their gaze is directed upwards into a virtual three dimensional space which becomes “more real” than the 2 dimen-



sional print, due to the stereoscopic effect and the filled field of vision. The viewer finds him or herself looking at the same space as the one in the two dimensional print, but now they are looking at it from the dissected body's point of view, beneath the others' gazes, contemplating his or her own translucent “dissected” hands in front of them.

With the use of this resource, the work of art bounces the observers' gaze back onto themselves, allowing him or her the possibility of reflecting on the effect the onlooker has on what is watched.



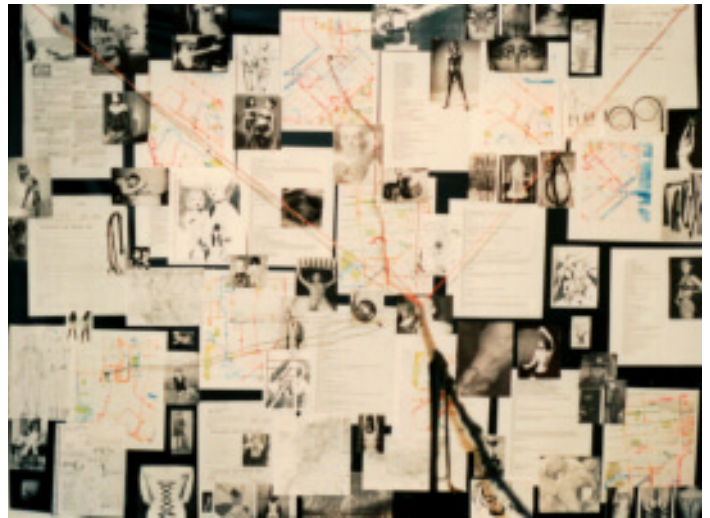
The Leather Room

Virtual Drawings Workshop

This installation is a physical representation of the interactions between myself and various internet personas from a theme oriented chat group.

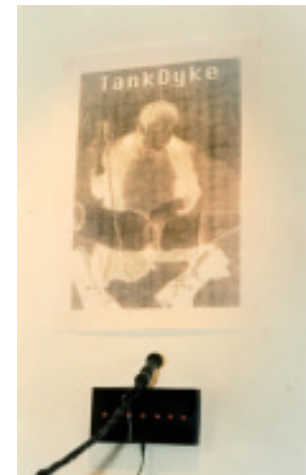
Two opposing walls are connected by an electronic whip. The side that holds the whip has “remote” control of the materials activated on the other wall. Pressing the buttons on the controlling wall allows other spectators to listen to sound files and watch indication lights signaling maps or text references on the other wall.

The “reference” wall has pictures of the different characters in their internet identities plus images they have recommended for the installation, text transcripts of



actual chats and sound fragments from spoken conversations between chat room members.

The controlling participant assumes my (unknown) identity and activates the content on the other side of the wall. The rest of the participants can examine the materials and “listen in” to the kind of interaction that happens in the chat room.



The Kite

Vertical Workshop II

This video documents an encounter between an internet acquaintance and myself as it happens in the physical “real” world. The video is a reflection on the memory process. It tries to capture the fleeting moment of the encounter as it happens during a prearranged meeting to fly a kite.

The videotape is made by holding the camera at arms length, setting it on rocks and taking turns as we record each other and the objects we find in this “neutral” space, away from both of our cities.

A few weeks later, back in my hometown, during the editing process, I can see aspects of our encounter that I had not noticed at the time and realize that I have



already forgotten important events of that day. I also become conscious of the importance that the camera acquires as shaping element of our encounter.

The voice-over and sound track from my “present” point of view (during the editing process), interact with the images from the past to articulate my reflections on the fragile quality of our memories and perceptions.

