

Good virtual reality environments can embed meaning primarily or partially in their immersive and interactive qualities. These interactive works engage the viewer in experiences that break the traditional boundaries of art by actively involving participants in rich, compelling environments. Virtual reality can extend the traditional arts by encouraging this active participation in the creative process.

In *Neither Here Nor There*, VR becomes accessible to digital artists through the ImmersaDesk, a projection-based, drafting-table-sized virtual reality system. The size and position of the screen provide a sufficiently wide field of view that the viewer feels fully immersed in the visual scene. Head tracking allows the participant to experience a first-person view as opposed to the third-person view experienced with other visual media. The user's hand position is tracked by the "Wand," the main control device with which participants manipulate the scene. Additionally, the desk is surrounded by a directional sound system.

The ImmersaDesk system creates an evocative setting for viewers to experience and participate in the worlds that unfold before them. It merges aesthetic and conceptual concerns with high-resolution display technology, network connectivity, and advanced visualization techniques. Moreover, participants at remote sites have the opportunity to explore the same worlds and interact with each other.

Neither Here Nor There is a series of collaborative events utilizing advanced networking software and hardware to interconnect the Immersadesk environments in The Bridge: SIGGRAPH

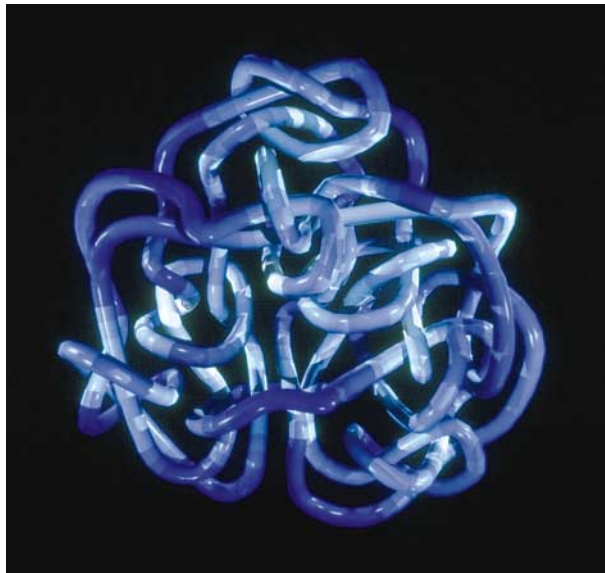
96 Art Show, an Immersadesk installed in the Digital Bayou, and a CAVE at the Ars Electronica Center in Linz, Austria. The title of this collaboration reflects the ethereal status of cybercommunication in current society. It also characterizes the notion that while on a bridge you are between locations. It is a state of being that is time-based, where geographic location (space) is irrelevant.

These virtual reality environments create a new form of communication that offers a presence not ever experienced in traditional forms of communication. By digitally connecting to other VR platforms, users experience the potential of networked interactivity. The use of interactive applications opens a window into the probable future of high-end telecommunications.

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