



Shang-pool Arcadia is a collaborative project established between Liverpool John Moores University, and the University of Shanghai. Drawing on expertise and research from both science and art faculties within these universities, this active, rolling project takes aspects of parks and urban spaces in Shanghai and Merseyside and creates virtual and augmented Arcadia's which explore the park as an idealised landscape in both cultures

<http://www.shang-pool.com/index.html>

This ambitious project, devised by Peter Appleton from the Liverpool School of Art and Design, LJMU, has been divided into four sub-headings.

Picnic in Arcadia, Voyages in Arcadia, Blossom Time in Arcadia and Gazing in to Arcadia. The technical research centres around the convergence of virtual, augmented, Interactive, telematic and telepresence technologies in the creation of mixed reality experiences. In discussion with Liverpool Biennial the research will also seek to align itself with the Biennial's ongoing projects centred around areas of urban regeneration within Merseyside as well as considering similar projects in Shanghai.



It was intended from the beginning that these mixed reality worlds should become places of meeting, exploration and imagining. But, uniquely, they would also be projected within real places at a series of events within parks and spaces -perfect places to begin to discuss and reform notions of Arcadia informed by contemporary realities in the cities of Shanghai and Liverpool.

In the first phase of this collaboration, an elaborate model of Stanley Park in North Liverpool was painstakingly constructed in Second Life by Andy Laws from the Department of Mathematics at the LJMU and included many authentic details such as the pagoda, the lake and the bridges over the lake. Andy worked with a range of geographical data and with photographs of the park provided by Colin Dilnot, who also project managed the event. This model was first showcased in the *Picnic in the Park* adventure at the Bluecoat Chambers, Liverpool, on 23rd October, 2010 Members of the public, young and old, as well as



students and pupils from around Merseyside, were able to participate in this unique event in linked them directly and via a variety of virtual encounters with people in Shanghai.

Wang Zheng and Jiang Fei travelled to Liverpool from Shanghai University in order to complete and finesse their work for the second phase of the project , ***Voyages in the Park*** and to take part in the event which was held at the Liverpool Academy of Art and Design on 26th November, 2010.



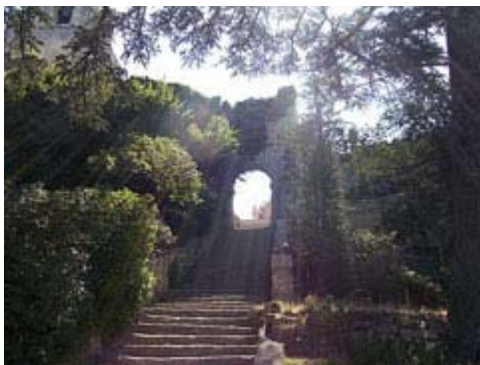
At this event a real, full-scale Canadian Canoe was mounted on a trellis in front of a huge screen displaying the model of the park in Second Life. Participants were able to climb into the canoe and, using paddles containing wireless technology, row the virtual version of the canoe through the lake.



Navigation depended on the co-ordinated efforts of the two canoeists and passing through the arches of the bridges was extremely tricky and became one of the most engaging parts of the whole surreal experience.

Peter Appleton added a further twist to the Arcadian story with the inclusion of a real model boat which was launched on the real lake in Stanley Park. Powered by an onboard motor and a wireless operated rudder, the boat used the same paddles that enabled the navigation of the virtual canoe in order to sail across the lake.

The development team in Liverpool also includes Peter Kelly from the Liverpool Screen School. As well as providing some of the technical support for the project, Peter helped coordinate workshops for local pupils in some of the technologies used to create the convergence between the real and the virtual worlds. Three students from Peter's iMedia course had their work featured in the **Create10** Conference in Edinburgh.



Plans are now underway for the third phase of the project, ***Blossom Time in Arcadia***.

Contact:

p.kelly@ljmu.ac.uk

0151 231 5127