

REBECCA ALLEN

## WORK HIGHLIGHTS

### SELECTED ARTWORKS

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**1999-2019** ***The Observer** Projected Video Loop*

*The Observer* is a moving painting that takes us through rich and vibrant digital landscapes, observing strange new lifeforms as we go. Created using *Emergence*: an AI computer system that Allen developed in the late 1990s as an art tool to build virtual worlds alive with artificial life - abstract forms with life-like behaviors that are brought to life through programs that define their behaviors, their personalities. *The Observer* provides a contemplative environment that feels both natural and synthetic, familiar and strange. It draws the audience into a world of moving abstract forms with their own rules of behavior - and we as observers can see new ways of being. Co-commissioned by FACT, Liverpool. Additional support by Intel Research.

**2018** ***Life Without Matter** Interactive Virtual Reality Art Installation*

*Life Without Matter* considers a future life in virtual reality where material things - physical matter - have mostly disappeared and our identity must be redefined. Within the virtual world we find ourselves in a mythic place. A mirror appears and the viewer confronts their digital reflection. And since a virtual world is immaterial, a virtual mirror need not reflect one's physical appearance, but rather the female, male and animal in all of us. Commissioned in part by QUAD, Derby, UK.

**2017** ***The Tangle of Mind and Matter** Interactive Virtual Reality Art Installation*

In this virtual reality work, inspired by the mysterious relationship between the mind and the brain, we search the brain to reveal the mind. The mind takes on a human form and activates the conscious brain, encouraging the viewer to participate in the process. While our body stays grounded to the earth, the mind continues to explore beyond our horizon, leaving us to believe that there are other realities somewhere out there. Though virtual, the experience is visceral, as it engages our sensory perception and questions our understanding of reality.

**2016** ***INSIDE** Interactive Virtual Reality Art Installation*

In this work the artist explores the inner world of the brain, the connection between virtual and real humans, and the sensation when immersed in artificial nature. Following the artistic practice of utilizing "found objects", many elements that make up the virtual worlds were found by scavenging through online thrift stores, while the model of the brain was derived from MRI brain scans. *INSIDE* considers provocative questions around the uncanny ability of VR to confound our sensory perception while contemplating what happens inside of us when inside virtual worlds.

**2013** ***Figures in Motion** 3 Screen-Video Loop*

A series of 3 video works inspired by a lifelong study of the human body in motion. Human forms appear as otherworldly fluid abstractions; their intricate, undulating movements are realistic and unaltered. The compelling and at times disturbing movements draw from our deep familiarity and visceral response to human motion. The abstracted forms emphasize this response and together they create mesmerizing perceptual effects in the mind of the viewer.

- 2005**      ***Liminal Identities***  
An interactive installation that occurs in two physical spaces within an exhibition space. This work is about physicality and virtuality, nature and illusion, the body and the mind and how our changing perception of reality affects our understanding of human identity. In collaboration with Liminal Devices group MIT Media Lab Europe. Commissioned in part by Art Futura, Barcelona, Spain.
- 2002**      ***The Brain Stripped Bare***  
This installation/performance considers a future where we live simultaneously in multiple realities and thoughts are expressed telepathically. Surrounded by a circle of screens - a 360-degree panorama - the audience is free to shift their point of view. Live performers merge with shadows, projected images and sounds as they surround and infiltrate the audience. An Audio Spotlight is utilized to project a narrow beam of sound to individuals in the audience, giving the sense of remote presence and telepathic communication.  
In collaboration with osseus labyrinth. Winner of the rhein.tanzmedia.net-Prize. Commissioned by rhein.tanzmedia.web. Partially funded by Intel Research Council.
- 2001**      ***COEXISTENCE***  
An interactive art installation that blurs the boundaries between virtual reality and physical reality, between artificial life and human life. Wearing a see-through head mounted display, virtual and physical objects appear to be in the same physical space. Breath and tactile feedback, the ultimate expression of our physicality, are used as the interface. Commissioned by Interaction Design Institute Ivrea, Italy. Partially funded by Intel Research Council.
- 1999**      ***The Bush Soul (#3)***  
Third in a series of interactive art installations that explore the role of human presence in a world of artificial life. A force-feedback joystick provides both navigation and tactile sensations, connecting one's physical body and virtual soul. Partially funded by Intel Research Council.
- 1998**      ***The Bush Soul (#2)***  
Second work in a series of three interactive art installations that explore the role of human presence in a world of artificial life. Presented as a three screen panoramic immersive environment. Partially funded by Intel Research Council.
- 1997**      ***The Bush Soul (#1)***  
First work in a series of three interactive art installations that explore the role of human presence in a world of artificial life. Partially funded by Intel Research Council.
- 1993**      ***Twisted Turtle***  
Interpretation of the Korean "Turtle Ship". Commissioned by artist Nam June Paik for a 300 monitor video installation at the **Taejon World Expo**.
- 1992**      ***Office Workers***  
Computer generated humans go about their mundane lives. Created as part of a collaboration with Nam June Paik for a permanent 429 monitor video installation commissioned for the lobby of the new Chase Manhattan Bank headquarters in NYC.
- 1992**      ***Point of Departure***  
Vast familiar landscapes, simulated on the computer, span over three large screens, creating a panoramic projection that surrounds an audience. The animation was

filmed with a state-of-the-art E&S flight simulation system. Commissioned by the Spanish Pavilion for the **Seville World Expo** in Spain, this work is part of a multimedia performance titled "**Memory Palace**". Music by: John Paul Jones and Peter Gabriel. Produced at: Rediffusion Simulation Ltd. Crawley, England.

**1992**

***Laberint***

Based on the Platonic myth that woman and man were once one androgynous form, live-action and computer generated characters weave between real and virtual worlds. Commissioned by Catalunya Television (TVC), the City of Barcelona and computer animation company, Animatica, as part of a series of works that refer to the city of Barcelona.

Music by: John Paul Jones (Opal Records).

Produced at: Animatica S.A. and Filmtel Barcelona, Spain.

**1991**

***Fire and Air / Water and Earth***

Opening Animation for the **Spanish Pavilion/ World Expo 92**. Commissioned by the Spanish government for the World Expo '92 in Seville, these two animated works were designed to present a new image of Spain to the rest of the world; one that blends their rich cultural traditions with the latest advanced technology.

Music by: Juan Arteche.

Produced at: Telson / Madrid and Animatica S.A./ Barcelona.

**1991**

***Fleeting Words***

A light installation involving a unique system of LED light displays, based on the theme of "Cybermedia". Commissioned by Barcelona City Hall in conjunction with the event *Art Futura 91*.

**1990**

***MUGRA***

A collaboration with the Spanish performance group *La Fura dels Baus* resulted in a multimedia performance based on the theme of "feminine energy". Included 12 performers and 70 video monitors. Commissioned by Barcelona City Hall in conjunction with the event *Art Futura 90*.

**1989**

***Steady State***

Commissioned by TVE (Television of Spain) for a 14 part television series titled "El Arte del Video" (The Art of Video). This piece and other work by Allen were featured in the program, "Computers in Video Art".

Music by: Clodagh Simonds.

**1987**

***BEHAVE***

This work examines the ways we communicate through our behavior. Deaf actors express their feelings through gestures while computer generated artificial life forms merge with New York City streets. Commissioned by Rebo High Definition Studios, New York, it is the first example of computer animation recorded directly to the HDTV (High Definition Television) format. The animation utilizes Craig Reynold's BOIDS software system that simulates flocking behavior. Additional support provided by Symbolics Graphics Division and Bellcore Laboratories.

Music by: Peter Gabriel.

**1986**

***Musique Non Stop***

Created all visual material for the 1986 album, "Electric Cafe", by the German group **Kraftwerk**, including the classic, award-winning music video, "Musique Non Stop". This project involved the development of state-of-the-art facial animation software.

- 1985**      ***Creation Myth***  
 Multi-channel video commissioned by Ian Schrager and Steve Rubell for the opening of the Palladium, a large-scale New York nightclub. The piece, which describes the birth of a new environment, was designed for Palladium's 50-monitor video display system and utilizes unique fractal and particle system software. Other commissioned artists included: Francesco Clemente, Jean-Michel Basquiat, Keith Haring, Kenny Scharf and Arata Isozaki. Music by: Carter Burwell.
- 1985**      ***RAB***  
 Collaboration with choreographer Patrice Regnier of RUSH Dance Co, and music composer Carter Burwell. Four dancers interact with Allen's computer generated performer projected onstage. This multimedia performance premiered at the Joyce Theater in New York and performed throughout Europe and North America. A short video adaptation was produced with cinematography by Ed Lachman.
- 1983**      ***Adventures in Success***  
 Designer / Director of this popular award-winning music video which describes modern symbols of success using a combination of unique two and three-dimensional computer animation and live-action.  
 Music by Lynn Goldsmith/Will Powers and Sting (Island Records).
- 1983**      ***SMILE***  
 Designer / Director of this popular music video that draws from break dancing and Bauhaus Theater using sophisticated computer animation techniques. Music by Will Powers (Island Records).
- 1982**      ***The Catherine Wheel***  
 Created a dancing computer generated character who plays the role of St. Catherine in Twyla Tharp's 90 minute performance film, "The Catherine Wheel", with music by David Byrne. This is one of the first and most intricate examples of 3D computer generated human motion and the first to be aired on television.  
**Dan Rather** from **CBS** News featured this work as the theme for a news special on "Man and Machine".
- 1982**      ***STEPS***  
 This work of computer generated performance, drawing inspiration from Bauhaus Theater, was created as part of a research project with the Joffrey Ballet Company, MIT Architecture Machine Group and MIT Bioengineering Lab. Music by: Carter Burwell.
- 1981**      ***Swimmer***  
 One of the first examples of computer generated human motion.