SMOOCH: Augmented Reality Theater in a Dashboard Drama

Kunal Shitut, Computer Science, RIT; Joe Geigel, Computer Science, RIT; Marla Schweppe, 3D Digital Design, RIT

Abstract—This demo will allow participants to experience a sampling of the performance of SMOOCH, a part of the Dashboard Dramas VI, at the 2019 Rochester Fringe Festival.

Keywords—augmented reality, theater, dashboard drama, dating, performance, magic leap, headsets, AR

This demo will allow participants to experience elements of the live performance of SMOOCH, a part of Dashboard Drama VI, that featured augmented reality elements and was performed at the 2019 Rochester Fringe Festival.

The actors and audience members in this performance wore augmented reality headsets. We originally had hoped to do a performance with 50-100 people in the audience, but having only 3 Magic Leap headsets, we approached the authors of the Dashboard Dramas at the Rochester Fringe Festival about the idea of incorporating augmented reality into one of their performances. They enthusiastically agreed. They wrote one of the scripts specifically for AR.

Fig. 1. The SMOOCH logo

The performances took place in the Ford Focus belonging to one of the actors. The actors were in the front seat and the audience members in the rear seat. The audience members were presumed to be on a blind date having only met virtually before. This proved to be amusing when they were not a couple, but instead friends, an aunt and nephew, or a parent and child.

The SMOOCH dating service offers a variety of dating packages. They include visits to outer space, a virtual safari, and a movie with popcorn. Some of the options include snakes and spiders. The couple has supposedly chosen a date in the fires of hell, thus causing the car to be ‘engulfed in flames’.

Fig. 2. A still from the outer space option. See the actors hand and the rear view mirror in the background?

I. THE EXPERIENCE

Participants will slip on the Magic Leap headsets as we take them through the different ‘dating’ options. We are not able to recreate the whole performance, but each visitor will have the opportunity to experience some of the visuals that were part of the experience and we will happily explain the processes used to develop the AR for the performance.

II. ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The authors wish to thank Magic Leap, RIT Computer Science, and RIT Liberal Arts for making the Magic Leap headsets available for the performance. We also wish to thank scriptwriters Kerry Young and Abby DeVuyst, director Fred Nuernberg, actors Eric Lefler and Skyler Shaw, and stage manager Cassie Newkirk for their contributions.