

Conversations

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Conversations is a multi-format art piece centered on an abstraction of fiction and non-fiction. It uses stories collected from a variety of social-networking resources, including Facebook and YouTube. It places this collection in a constantly shifting game-like environment, obscuring both context and presence. The goal is to provide the participant an opportunity to explore a world that is an ambiguous cacophony of truth and lies, not unlike the web from which they were cultivated.

The narratives transpiring in this simplified landscape range from the emotional to the mundane. They discuss politics, personal intimacies, relationships, and others. The voices range from dynamic to inert, from convincing to suspicious.

Designed around an evolving virtual environment that is both expansive and painterly, the player moves in first person perspective. In the Installation version, players may pursue abstract polygons (spheres and cubes) that move at varied rates like non-player characters in an MMORPG. Each polygon tells a story, or at least a part of a story as the player pursues it. In the non-interactive version, *Conversations Lite*, viewers watch as the polygons glide toward and convey their stories to a passive audience.

In its current iteration, *Conversations* is about listening to stories and the distraction of simulation. The work is contained in a looping digital frame where bits of stories float past the viewing window. Some are fully perceptible; others require a concentrated listening effort. In this situation, do you construct a narrative from the pieces you have heard, composing a cohesive story where there may have been none? Do you question one stories relationship to the next, or understand them as individual entities? Does the visualization distract from the content you seek?