

**MARKDAVID HOSALE****An Uncommon Affair At Tooting Bec Common**

**Topic:**  
**Paper/presentation  
 and Installation**

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**Abstract:**

*An Uncommon Affair At Tooting Bec Common* is an immersive cinematic work presented in the context of an interactive installation environment. The structure of the work is inspired by the combinatorial operations found in experimental literature, such as in Raymond Queneau's *Cent Mille Milliards de poèmes* (Queneau 1961), and the exploratory game play practised by members the Surrealist movement, as described in Alastair Brotchie's *A book of Surrealist Games* (Brotchie, Gooding, and Lamantia 1995). The story space of the interactive film is composed of four independent, tightly wound storylines, which were strategically written so that the plot points of the stories can be interleaved, and presented backwards or forwards in time. Through an interactive interface the viewer can control the trajectory of the stories on four screens simultaneously. The interface is designed to engage the user through a sense of play and exploration as they discover an ever-mutating adaptive storyline, which is revealed as they guide the screens through the story space of the film.

Developed using OpenFrameworks and C++, the software environment is developed as a distributed system using a software architecture called *Universe*, designed for the development of interactive artworks. As described in the author's Ph.D. dissertation, *Nonlinear Media As Interactive Narrative* (Hosale 2008), use of the *Universe* architecture enabled the organization of the work into a system of world logic, adaptable views, and dynamic transformations. These components support the rhizomatic structure of the work, which exhibits the emergent quality of the operations, structures, and characteristics found in a nonlinear narrative.

The story terrain and presentation of *An Uncommon Affair At Tooting Bec Common* is a stratified and bifurcated non-linear terrain of data knowledge. As described above, the presentation of the four storylines unfolding on the screens is simultaneous. The cumulative effect of this simultaneity results in an indeterminacy that forces the viewer to parse, interpret, and perceptually navigate the mass of rhizome-structured information encountered in the installation. While a state of indeterminacy between the screens exists, the connection between the screens is not random. As the viewer directs the four storylines, the storylines interact with each other. Synchronous, asynchronous, convergent and divergent patterns occurring between the screens are highlighted as events that effect the presentation of the content across all of the screens as a whole, resulting in an ever changing information texture, which shifts as the combined story space unfolds.

**Keywords:**

Nonlinear narrative, interactive cinema, story space, art installation, rhizomatic.