

another language

performing arts company

Season XXII

Volume 4 Issue 2

April-June 2007

Gallery



Pictured: Jenni Lou Oakes performing in *InterPlay: Nel Tempo di Sogno*



Pictured: William Ferrer performing in *InterPlay: Nel Tempo di Sogno*



Pictured: Travis Eberhard performing in *InterPlay: Nel Tempo di Sogno*

Spotlight



Pictured: Junko Simons and Beth Miklavcic performing in *InterPlay: Nel Tempo di Sogno*

Another Language Performing Arts Company presented its fifth *InterPlay* on March 30-April 1, 2007 at the University of Utah Intermountain Network and Scientific Computation Center. *Nel Tempo di Sogno* involved more local artists/performers than ever before and garnered the most enthusiastic audience response. Articles about the *InterPlay* performance and the cutting edge technology used were written by Salt Lake City Magazine, City Weekly, In Utah this Week, and write-ups were in the Deseret Morning News and the Salt Lake Tribune.

ART AS EXPLORATION - As work continues and ideas develop in this medium the process is becoming more intense, but from the experiences learned through each performance, the requirements are clarifying. It is by no means an easy process.

Technologists needed for this performance were; Sam Liston – Access Grid™ Node Operator, Dean Brederson – Audio Engineer, Colin McDermott – Performance Manager, and Jimmy Miklavcic – Digital Mix. Director of Photography – Natalie Murdock organized six Camera Operators and Assistants for every performance, with four cameras running each night. There was a live QuickTime™ video stream of the digital mix sent out during every performance from our web site. The link (that is no longer active) was <http://www.anotherlanguage.org/interplay/ntds/video.html> received a lot of accesses during the performance and seems to be the most readily available broadcast format for the remote viewers.

Those who attended the live performance

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For Information Call: (801) 531-9419
e-mail: bam@anotherlanguage.org
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Utah Performance Screen Display – Pictured: Paul Heath, Eliza Wren, Chun-Chen Chang, Graphics: Miho Aoki

in Utah were generally blown away by what they saw. This was the most structurally integrated *InterPlay* to date. The challenge this year was to achieve structural integration of performances from the artists, who were performing in very different places in the United States. This meant finding ways to perform together, not just simultaneously as in past *InterPlays*, but working within a cohesive structure framed by Beth Miklavcic with text contributions from almost all of the actors. This involved rewriting a script that took six drafts to develop, with a seventh and final draft still to be written.

The performance structure demanded specific timing. How does one coordinate six sites operating in different time zones? The solution involved intensive cuing from Colin McDermott the Performance Manager. During the performance he was typing cues into the Jabber Client (a communications tool available in the Access Grid), as well as, intensive cuing to performing artists in the Utah auditorium.

The research challenges addressed in this project were simultaneous vocalizations between performers and simultaneous music and vocal performances. This was quite the challenge with the echo cancellation inherent in the Access Grid tool. When a sound is sent through the

Access Grid and a microphone at the receiving site picks up that sound, it will cancel the sound to avoid echo. This echo cancellation is very necessary, but how does one work with it in a performance situation? If it is turned off, the other sites hear an echo and it destroys the performance on the receiving end.

For instance, the Iris Merryweather's scene was a duet between cello and spoken word, but, if the microphones in Utah picked up too much of Junko Simons' cello the text would be cancelled and not sent out. This happened during the rehearsals and performances even though speakers were moved efforts were made to configure the tools and performance space. The audio in the Utah auditorium generally worked, the remote sites, at times, heard something akin to bad cell phone reception with pieces of text cut out.

This is not a problem when all the other participating sites do not have an audience. The easiest solution would be to prioritize the audio heard at the host site, but that is not what we want to do. We want audiences at all sites and we want great audio at all sites. So, how does one send and receive great multi-site audio during a performance, especially when the artistic structure is moving towards more integration? That was a significant challenge this year, and it will take several

years to hammer out a solution, involving changes in local configurations in hardware and software applications. These changes take time to develop and to fund.

But this is the nature of working in a new medium. We find ways to work within it, stretching the boundaries of the tools. We develop structures that embrace the tools, while punching and pulling and screaming, "WE NEED MORE!!"

In science a negative result is just as important as a positive result. For every *InterPlay* project undertaken we experience both results, providing little triumphs, as well as, a lot of information for improvement. *Another Language Performing Arts Company* is already in pre-production for the next *InterPlay* to be held March 28-30, 2008. We hope to see you there on-line or even better – in person.

Thanks to all of the incredibly talented artists and technologists who gave so much to *InterPlay: Nel Tempo di Sogno*. You are courageous pioneers! We are lucky to know you and incredibly honored to work with you.

– by Beth Miklavcic

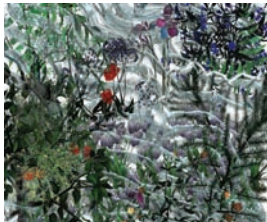
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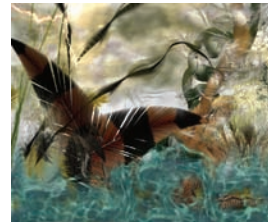
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