

A ROOM OF ONE'S OWN

(Echo Narcissus)

by Lynn Hershman

This interactive videodisk/computer installation will consist of a stainless steel box placed at eye level with a movable periscopic viewing section. Looking inside allows a voyeuristic view to a tiny bedroom scene. As the viewer/voyeur focuses on the varying objects in the room, rear projected images will appear on a one way mirror/wall. As the viewer/voyeur operates this piece, sensors activate sound responses. The piece be activated via the viewer/participant's eye movement (tracked by a small sensitized camera placed behind the one way mirror). Depending upon where they look, images will appear (rear projected via videodisk and triggered by computer based signals) on the one way mirror. These videodisk sequences take place in a life sized replica of the tiny bedroom set. The video images and the tiny set will overlap in some instances. The only place that will not activate a video sequence will be when the viewer looks directly at their own eyes (Narcissus). Implanted erotic scenes will only be able to be viewed when the participant's eyes are not directly looked at.

Sound will instruct viewers, giving specific words to repeat. When the viewer/participant speaks, elements of his/her words will be repeated back, slightly changed (Echo). These sounds will be strategically amplified from different areas of the tiny room, causing the viewer/participant to respond by looking at the place the sound is coming from.

There will be five short sequences acted by 3 actresses. Each will depict segments showing how women are imprisoned by mediated sexual stereotypes,--from being undressed with eyes or escaping virtual advances and expectations. They include a reverse strip tease, a woman imprisoned by the bars of a bed, a telephone conversation and a collage of mediated images.

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Operating Sequences-

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- 1) The viewer steps on sensors approaching the box which triggers sound instructions.
- 2) They look into the periscopic device. Pressurized mounts trigger the camera and lights to switch on,
- 3) As the viewer looks into the periscope/joystick, their eyes appear opposite them, looking back from a tiny monitor.
- 4) Sound cues come from three separate areas within the box. As the viewer turns the periscopic joy stick to look at these areas, video images are rear projected on the back screen. (there are 3 sequences, about 5 minutes each).
- 5) Viewer can re-see any of the segments at will,

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