

Hardly Working

2022

20 min., 37 sec.

Hardly Working gives priority to characters that normally fade into the background of video games: NPCs. NPCs are non-playable characters that populate hyper real worlds to create the appearance of normality. Usually, these digital extras play no major role in the story of the game. Here a laundress, a stableman, a street sweeper, and a handyman are the four main characters of this film. With ethnographic precision, the film observes their daily work: a rhythm composed of loops that makes them work daily and tirelessly. Their work neither results in a product, nor does it change anything about their status quo. In light of Hannah Arendt description of 'animal laborans,' – in contrast to the acting subject – the NPCs as individuum are an exaggeration as their work performance actually manifests their status.

Here, work becomes a pure performance, carried out for its own sake. NPCs perform so-called surrogate actions that generate no social benefit. These actions are performed and enforced for the sake of appearances to ensure a social order.

NPCs are digital Sisyphus machines that have no perspective of breaking out of their activity loops. In the moments when the algorithm of their existence shows inconsistencies, the NPCs break out of the logic of total normality, display their own faultiness, and appear touchingly human.

Credits:

Text, direction and concept: Susanna Flock, Robin Klengel, Leonhard Müllner, Michael Stumpf / Music: Adrian Haim / Narration: Jacob Banigan and Lorenz Kabas / Lead Editing: Robin Klengel, additional editing: Susanna Flock, Leonhard Müllner / Camera: Robin Klengel, Leonhard Müllner / Modding: RCPisAwesome / Cast: A_F_M_Asbtownfolk_02 as "The Street Sweeper", A_F_M_SDSlums_02 as "The Laundress", A_M_M_NBXDockworkers_01 as "The Carpenter", A_M_M_VALLaborer_01 as "The Stable Hand" / Coproduced by: Kunsthaus Graz / Co-funded by: Land Steiermark, Kunstraum Steiermark Stipend / The Work was realised within the framework of the European Media Art Platforms residency program at Werkleitz with support of the Creative Europe Culture Programme of the European Union

Operation Jane Walk

2018

16 min., 14 sec.

A city tour through the architecture of an Online-Shooter Operation Jane Walk is based on the dystopian multiplayer shooter Tom Clancy's: The Division. The game's digital war zone is appropriated with the help of an artistic operation: Within the rules of the game's software, the militaristic environment is being re used for a pacifistic city tour. The urban strollers avoid the combats whenever possible and become peaceful tourists of a digital world, which is a detailed replica of Midtown Manhattan. While walking through the post-apocalyptic city, issues such as architecture history, urbanism and the game developer's interventions into the urban fabric are being discussed.

Credits:

Directors, Screenplay, Producers, Editors: Robin Klengel, Leonhard Müllner / Director of Photography: Leonhard Müllner / Sound & Sound Design: Robin Klengel / Narrator: Jacob Banigan / Concept and realization: Robin Klengel, Leonhard Müllner / Camera and editing: Leonhard Müllner / Narrator: Jacob Banigan / Cast: Moke Rudolf-Klengel, Franz-Josef Windisch-Graetz / Filmed in Tom Clancy's: The Division

Superwonder

2021

4 min., 33 sec.

Superwonder is about the representation and perception of the world, mediated by the experience of contemporary video games. The starting point is the observation of digital worlds in current open-world engines that construct their cosmoses as pre-Aristotelian discs. A flat map is the centre of the circling universe, which can have the form of a box (skybox), sphere (skydome) or be a dynamic, multi-layered animation (skysphere). The sprawl of information within the age of digitality also yields the dissemination of the flat earth movement.

In Superwonder, avatars set out for penetrating the supposed infinity of the universe surrounding them. So the constructedness of the digital firmament becomes visible and points of contact between late capitalist, conspiracy theorist and romanticist world experience open up.

Credits:

Realized by: Adrian Jonas Haim, Jona Kleinlein, Robin Klengel, Leonhard Müllner / Soundtrack: Adina Camhy / Cast: Christian Kleinwächter, Franz-Josef Windisch-Graetz, Maximilian Haim, Michael Stumpf, Susanna Flock / Sound Mixing: Stefan Ehgartner / Modding: RCPisAwesome / Produced by Akademie Graz, Steiermark Schau, & Land Steiermark / Thanks to Astrid Kury, Austria in Motion, Karl Marx, Rockstar Games.