

24th SYMPOSIUM ON SPACE ACTIVITY AND SOCIETY (E5)
Space as an Artistic Medium (4)

Author: Mr. Frank Pietronigro
Zero Gravity Arts Consortium, United States, zerogartist@mac.com

Ms. Khaki Rodway
XCOR Aerospace, United States, krodway@xcor.com

SPACE WISHES: A NEW MEDIA INTERDISCIPLINARY PERFORMANCE COLLABORATION TO
BE CREATED DURING A SUB-ORBITAL FLIGHT

Abstract

Access to space is quickly becoming a reality for all. This paper will discuss plans to take an artist on a suborbital spaceflight with a reusable launch vehicle provider such as XCOR Aerospace. XCOR intends to fly paying customers in 2014 on its Lynx Mark I vehicle.

One artistic outcome, Space Wishes, is a new media performance that will unfold between the audience and the 21st Century Artronaut experiencing flight. The author has long advocated for and has engaged in space-based artistic endeavors in support of the expansion of the arts, humanities and culture in space exploration. This work will synthesize content that is created both in flight via video, audio, flight and biometric data and content created by an audience that will have opportunities to contribute digital audio, text, and video files before, during and after the spaceflight. The audience will be asked to express their individual space wishes as to how human life and cultural expression might be lived and experienced off our gravity-bound home planet, Earth.

To inspire audience imagination, collaboration and contemplation, the artronaut will function during flight as a point of emotional human connection. The artronaut will float in microgravity and do nothing but function as a feeling, sensing human conduit between the heavens and the Earth. Part of the Earth will be carried with the artronaut into space in the form of quartz, diamond dust and lapis lazuli. These materials will serve as tangible terrestrial anchors for the artronaut.

During the flight, the artronaut will sense the myriad of feelings and sensations that one experiences during any space flight: joy, fear, excitement, transcendence, pressure, and curiosity. These emotions will be monitored by an in-flight EEG system worn by the artronaut. All of this content, including flight documentation, will be integrated into a social media web-based collaborative space with the derivative biometric data contributing to the artwork.

This project will support the Zero Gravity Arts Consortium's (ZGAC) Artist Into Space Program and XCOR's mission to make space accessible to everyone, to help show people that space exploration is culturally and artistically important, and to showcase how artistic action and social media can be utilized.

Details discussed in the paper include the conception and design of an historic sub-orbital space project whose multicultural, interactive and intergenerational aspects will enroll the talents of an international team of artists, designers, professors, historians, curators, space scientists and engineers.