

David Cotterrell: TDS

Date: 1st July 2001

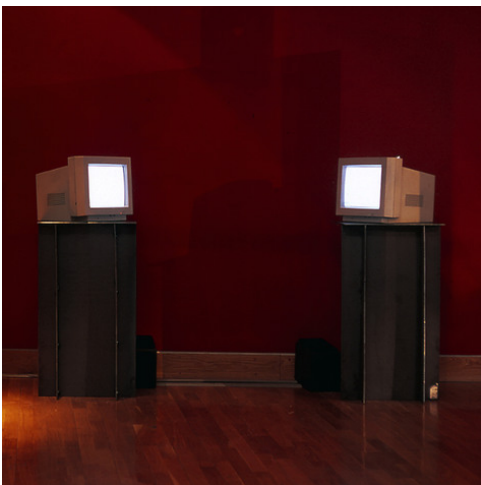
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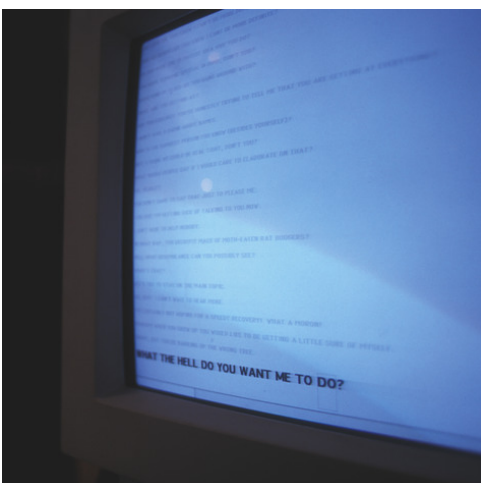
Apple Computer, Monitors and Custom Applescript Software

Installation of two computers attempting to have a mutual Rogerian conversation using a customized script of ELIZA

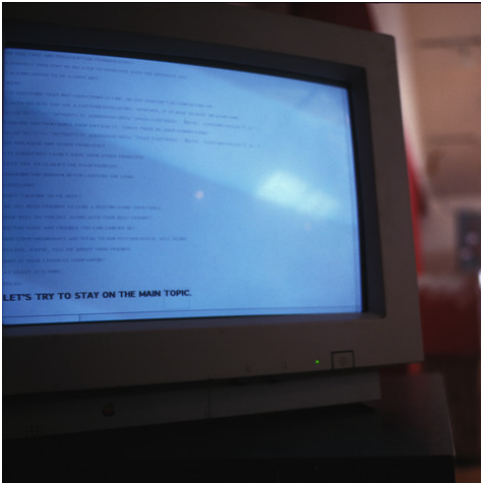
TDS is a computer installation using software which was developed for ELIZA, a self generating speech programme that responds to the users input. ELIZA is programmed according to a rhetorical logic tree that responds to a users keywords in order to generate an appropriate response. The programme has its limitations: it is purely responsive and cannot develop an inner logic of its own. Instead of creating a user/computer set up, Cotterrell chose to generate a Rogerian conversation between two computers. The work was made and exhibited in 2001, with Cotterrell reworking the original ELIZA code to create a more subversive use of the programme. TDS reflects on ELIZAs artifice: able to dispense the belief that one is in conversation with an intelligent being, the illusion is quickly broken down to reveal the flaws in its script. By replacing the human user with a computer, a double rhetoric was created in which both machines attempted to analyse and question each other, which resulted in the complete breakdown of conversation in favour of mutual verbal abuse. The work is a precursor to The Debating Society



Installation at the Lighthouse Gallery Credit: David Cotterrell (2001)



Monitor 2 Credit: David Cotterrell (2001)



Monitor 1 Credit: David Cotterrell (2001)