

The Visit

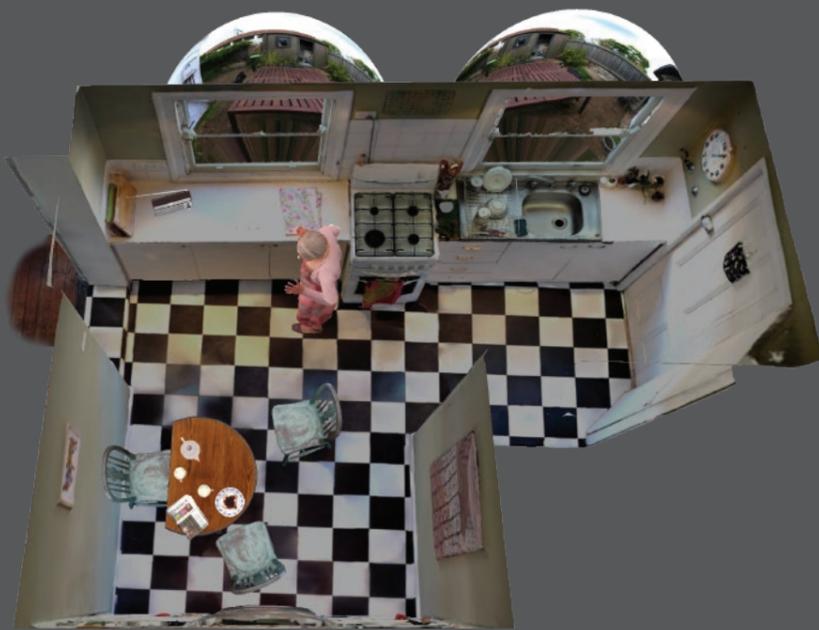


The Visit is an immersive interactive real-time film, developed from a ground-breaking research project conducted by artists and psychologists working with women living with dementia.

Visitors are invited to sit with Viv, a life-sized, photorealistic animated character, capable of directly engaging with a viewer. She is 'aware of' and responds to the viewers presence in her home. Her dialogue is created largely from verbatim interviews, drawing us into a world of perceptual uncertainty, while at the same time confounding stereotypes and confronting fears about dementia.

Like the women who co-created her, Viv experiences various dementia-related symptoms, including hallucinations and confabulation. She is also insightful and reflective. Viv is living a life and coming to terms with a neurological change.

The piece invites quiet attentiveness rather than the kind of interaction characteristic of gaming. Sit with and listen to Viv without judgement, irritation, pity or despair, finding a way into her world.



Director and Producer: Jill Bennett
Art Director and Production Design: Volker Kuchelmeister
Cast: Voice actress: Heather Mitchell
Motion Capture actress: Emma Kew
Script: Jill Bennett, Natasha Ginnivan
Script consultants: Melissa Neidorf, Gail Kenning, David Pledger
Interviewees/contributors: Prue Uther, Joan Eva, Jennifer Bute, Wendy Mitchell
Researchers: Natasha Ginnivan, Chris Papadopoulos, Melissa Neidorf, Gail Kenning.
Motion Capture: Joe Holloway
Voice recording: Tobias Gilbert
3D Artist: Chris Norris, Jason Dobra
3D scanning: Matt Cabanag (UNSW LITEROOM)
LIDAR: Bruce Harvey (UNSW Engineering)
Music: Peter Sculthorpe

Special thanks: Stephen Sewell, Luis Dominguez, Karen Kriss, Steve Weymouth, Eva Nolan, the A&D resource centre team, Ant Banister and the participants in the study.

Collaborators with lived experience are at the core of our work. Collaborators may choose to remain anonymous or to be credited using their real name or a pseudonym. In each case the decision rests with them (where appropriate in consultation with carers/family). We thank them all.

A production of FEEL – Felt Experience and Empathy Lab (UNSW) for The Big Anxiety Festival.

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The UNSW Felt Experience Empathy Lab (FEEL) brings together psychologists and arts researchers utilising immersive visualisation technology to advance the study of subjective experience. With the larger social goal of transforming our capacity to understand stigmatised and devalued populations, and of effectively remediating the effects of stigmatisation and prejudice, it generates insight into first-person perspectives and the dynamic connections that promote societal empathy.

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