



Alternate Realities: Exhibition explores themes of Second Life

Opening April 4, 2009 / 20/21 Gallery Conversation Wall and Process Space

MEDIA CONTACT

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PROMOTIONAL IMAGES AVAILABLE

Lawrence, KS— An upcoming exhibition at the Spencer Museum of Art invites viewers to consider how art and virtual worlds overlap and enhance one another. *Alternate Realities*, opening April 4 on the 20/21 Gallery Conversation Wall, will present images that address avatars, social networking and constructed realities. Visitors can also access the [Spencer's Second Life® Island](#) at a computer station in the gallery's Process Space.

"We're exploring the ways that we can combine different learning styles and new technology like Second Life® to create an engaging museum experience," Jessica Johnson, IMLS Grant Project Coordinator says.

Second Life® is an online virtual world where participants create avatars to interact with others. On the Spencer's Second Life® Island, visitors can learn more about current exhibitions [Climate Change at the Poles](#) and [Trees & Other Ramifications: Branches in Nature and Culture](#) at the real life Spencer by watching videos exploring climate change, listening to a traditional Inuit story, and viewing replicas of [Patrick Dougherty's](#) tree-branch sculptures. Johnson says incorporating Second Life directly into the gallery space provides viewers with another perspective on the issues ***Climate Change at the Poles*** and ***Trees & Other Ramifications: Branches in Nature and Culture*** present.

Alternate Realities incorporates works primarily from the Spencer's collection to explore ideas from Second Life®, such as avatars and social networking. Johnson says the concept of an avatar as an alternate persona relates to the way artists choose to present themselves and others in portraits.

Alternate Realities will also compare and contrast the ways people interact in real life and in the virtual world.

“I hope it helps people learn something new about art and about themselves in a way they might not have contemplated or expected,” Johnson says.

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Spencer Museum of Art

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Also find the Spencer...

• On the Web: www.spencerart.ku.edu

• E-mail: spencerart@ku.edu

Gallery hours

Tues., Wed., Fri., & Saturday 10 AM—4 PM

Thurs. 10 AM—8 PM

Sun. Noon—4 PM

Closed Monday

Museum Shop closes 30 minutes before the galleries close.

- Free parking in Lot 91 after 5 PM on weekdays and all day weekends, excepting home football games.
- Parking garage adjacent to Kansas Union is \$1 per hour weekdays, free on Saturdays and Sundays (but unavailable on home football games).