

21.10.02



ACMI Screen Lounges: Progress report on design

From Crowd Productions: A report on progress and outline of research, design and construction work to 21.10.2002

01.] Report on research into the evolution of media lounges and interactive environment design internationally.

30.10.02. On Monday 30 September Michael Trudgeon went to Switzerland to study interactive environment design at Expo 02, an exposition of contemporary Swiss design and architecture focusing on the use of multi media technology augmented environments. Much of the environmental design had been executed in collaboration with the worlds current most innovative architectural practices such as Jean Nouvel, Diller and Scofidio and Coop Himmelblau. A number of the environments are illustrated below to indicate the range of approach taken in the environment and installation design. A number of the pavilions and installations referenced the panorama as the original public media spectacle format, particularly Jean Nouvel's floating Monolith which housed the recently restored first Swiss panoramic painting [1893] to commemorate the battle of Morat [and as explored in Luc Courchesne's work *Living by number 2001* in the inaugural ACMI exhibition *Deep Space: Sensation & Immersion*].

Michael Trudgeon then travelled to Japan to study the newly completed Sendai Mediatheque designed by the acclaimed Japanese architect Toyo Ito and to see the electronic and multimedia installations in Tokyo, undertaken as part of Tokyo Designers Block and Tokyo Designers Week, two annual forums for international industrial design, communication design and art installation. The intention of this research was to see if there were any lessons or approaches that should be considered as part of the final design refinements being undertaken on the ACMI Screen Lounge and Memory Grid Lounge project. While all these events and institutions are manifestly concerned with pushing the boundaries of practice in the areas of multi media and mixed reality environments none of the work we saw had begun to tackle the complexity of the Screen Lounge brief. However innovative many of the setups were, most multi user and single user environments still relied on headphones where sound quality or multiple source sound was required.

Crowd Productions, in undertaking this research, is mindful of the vision shared by ACMI, its CEO, board and stakeholders to produce in ACMI an international template for a Museum of the Moving Image as part of an international foundation network to promote such activity. Crowd is also, therefore, keen to appraise itself of the most up to date innovation in this area. We feel confident that the current Screen Lounge design, with technical support from PiVoD and additional specialist contributions, will provide the most effective small scale multi users environments available at an affordable cost.



Images of interactive environments at Expo 02, Switzerland. From left: Cyberhelvetica, a virtually extended reality swimming pool environment at Artepilage Biel-Bienne, Biopolis; Balance, a multi-player interactive graphic game at Artepilage Neuchâtel, Aua Extrema, an immersive dynamic environment at Artepilage Neuchâtel, Wer bin ich?, a lie-down multimedia lounge at Artepilage Yverdon-les-Bains, Signalpain, a multimedia installation at Artepilage Yverdon-les-Bains and Nouvelle DestiNation, personalised audio environments providing a commentary on an imaginary surrounding sporting event at Artepilage Biel-Bienne.



Images of Sendai Mediatheque, Sendai, Japan. From top left: Two person semiprivate multi media viewing environments in the Studio on Level 7 relying on headphone use and limited source technology. The resulting atmosphere is very much like a traditional library where interpersonal communication is discouraged, Level 7 general views showing other seating arrangements for computer and internet use, Level 2 information zone with internet and catalogue computer stations.



Images of Tokyo Designers Block and Tokyo Designers Week events, Japan. From left: Flyer from *Sonarsound Tokyo*, an interactive multi media installation environment at THINK ZONE, Roppongi Hills Information Centre, Roppongi, Tokyo exhibiting sound and video installation work, Flyer from *Modern Design Museum TV*, a virtual design museum of Twentieth Century design classics installed at Idée, Aoyama, Tokyo, Image from installation exhibited by Dumb Type, the art and design collective formed at Kyoto City University of Arts, as part of *Voyages*, exhibited at NTT InterCommunication Centre, Tokyo

02.] Reconfiguring the Three seater Screen Lounge Pod into a Six seater.

07. 10 02. On Monday 07 October Crowd reconfigured the Three seater Screen Lounge Pod into a Six seater Screen Lounge Pod and set it up in the Memory Grid Zone. There was some concern as to the size of the Six seater Screen Lounge Pod in the Memory Grid Zone and John Smithies suggested that we test the Six seater in the screen Lounge area. On Wednesday 16 October Crowd set up the Six seater Screen Lounge Pod in the screen Lounge for appraisal by John Smithies. It was then dismantled and rotated through 90 degrees and re assembled for further positioning appraisal and then dismantled for storage in the cafe area of the ACMI building at Federation Square. Discussion between David Poulton, Nolan Zale and John Smithies centred on issues of seating comfort and viewing angles and the need for testing and refining of technical solutions for audio delivery.

As a result of a meeting at Federation Square on Friday 19th October with John Smithies, Lake Technology, PiVoD and Max Goode from ACMI, Graeme McGeorge from PiVoD and Chris Gilbey from Lake Technology will meet next week for technical discussions to include issues related to the Screen Lounge Pod audio delivery. Crowd Productions will further modify the seating base angle and the *Soona* design to effect a more comfortable solution. We will be in contact with Graeme McGeorge to continue consultation on refining the audio and acoustic design aspects.



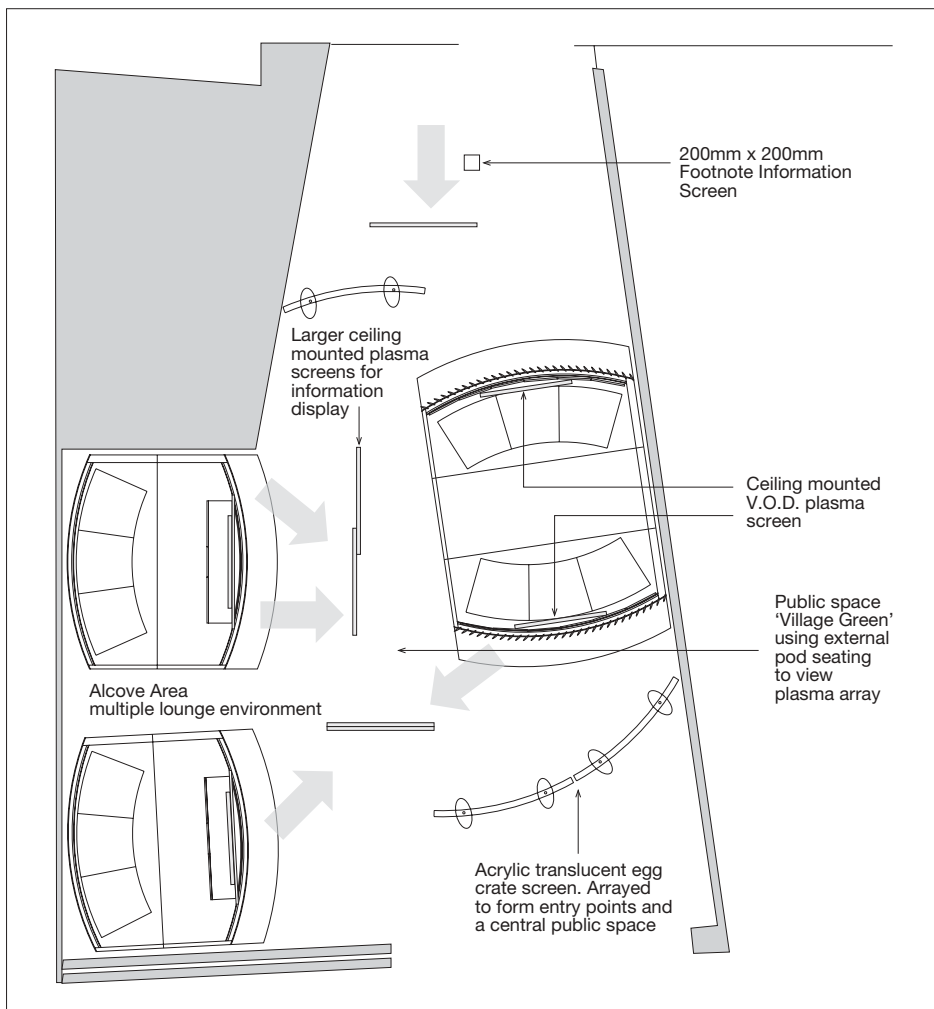
03.] **Revision of Scope of work and final agreement on Screen Lounge Pod numbers.**

07. 10 02. On Monday 07 October Crowd met with John Smithies, Victoria Lynn, Gael McIndoe, Michael Parry from PivoD and Ross Freiberg from CMR to discuss the Six seater Screen Lounge design. As a result of this meeting and the testing of the Six seater Screen lounge pod in the Screen Lounge area John Smithies has requested the Crowd produce six Screen Lounge Pods initially. In the Screen Lounge areas will go one Six seater and two three seaters configured in the cut down convertible games style mode. The six seater will be further designed to have extended walls that reach the Federation Square building ceiling. The two Plasma screens required for this lounge will be suspended from the building's ceiling and as a result the Six seater will have no ceiling of its own. The six seater will not be expected to move very often if at all.

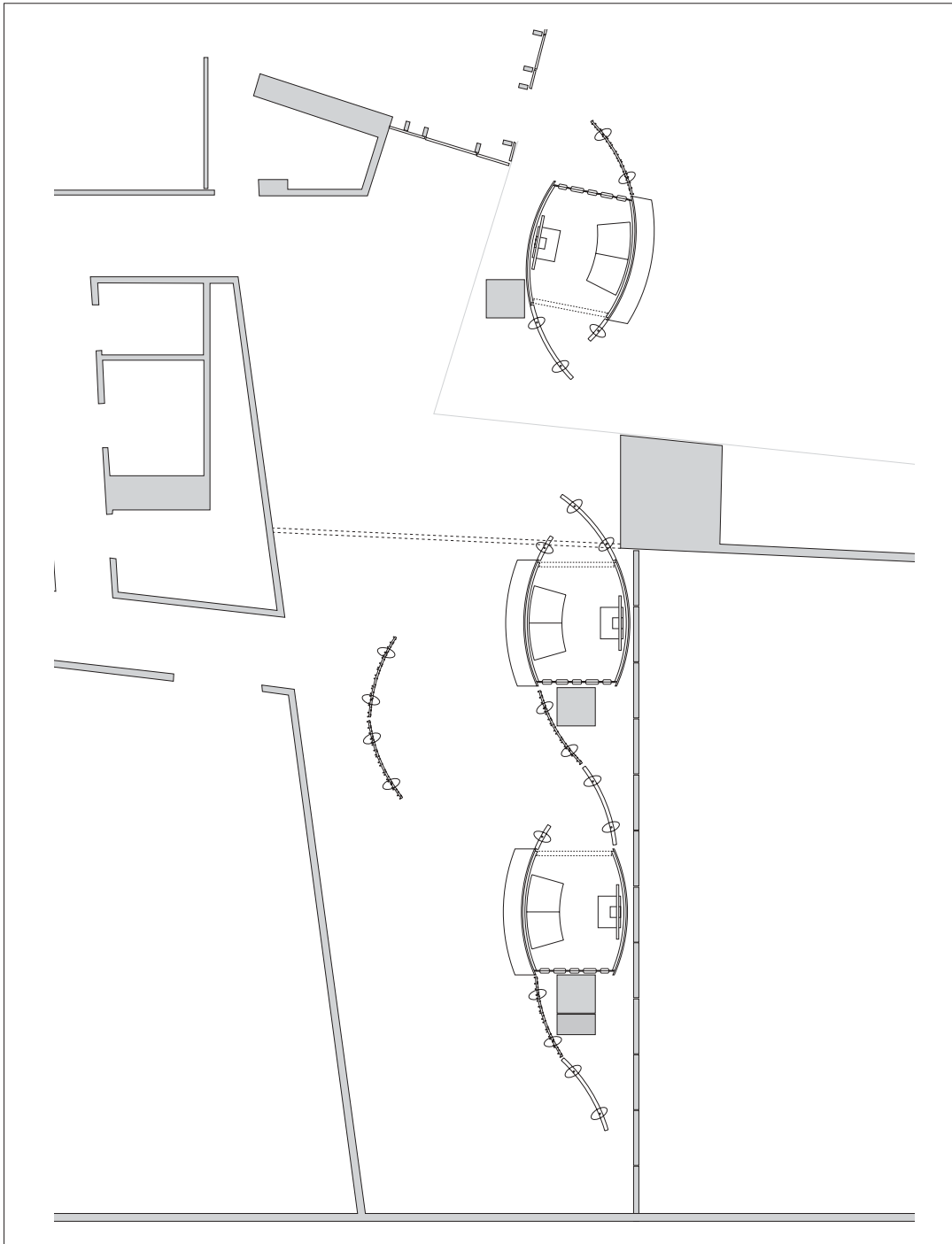
In the Memory Grid Lounge there will be three three seaters. Two of these will be configured as Memory Grid production lounges with cameras and blue screens along with extended electronic facilities. These two Memory Grid Lounge Pods will conform to the requirements of the Memory Grid Lounge brief and come from the Memory Grid Lounge Pod budget. Crowd will prepare room plans and renders for these two locations for checking dimensions, consideration of final partition screen numbers and details and for final approval.

04.] **Report on Design Progress: Developing new room plans for the Memory Grid and Screen Lounges.**

As outlined above we are now developing new plans for situating the Screen Lounge Pods in the Memory Grid and Screen Lounges. In the Screen Lounge the 2 convertible three seater Screen Lounge/Games Pods are located as previously. A six seater Screen Lounge pod has been introduced where previously we had a three seater Screen Lounge pod. The large Plasma information screens suspended from the ceiling have been repositioned to take maximum advantage of the seating provided by the external bench seating on the Screen lounge pods and to accommodate for the required flow of pedestrian traffic through the space.



Plan of Screen Lounge showing two three seater Screen Lounge/Games Lounge Pods and one six seater Screen Lounge pods with partition screens and overhead information plasma screens as previously discussed and included.



Plan of Memory Grid Lounge showing two three seater Memory Grid Lounge Pods and one three seater Screen Lounge pod with partition screens included. This plan is preliminary and we have attempted to take into account of the requirements for ongoing access to much of the wall space for exhibition purposes.

05.] Discussions with consultants, suppliers and fabricators.

22. 10 02. On Tuesday 22 October we will met with Carmelo Arena from Sound and Image to see the initial speaker proposal for the localised and personal sound field speaker system for the Screen Lounge Pods. These speakers have been sourced by Graeme McGeorge from PiVoD. We will look at size and how to integrate these speakers into the overall design. Further discussions with PiVoD will be scheduled to discuss all relevant details.

06.] Preparing a forth revised Timeline for prototyping and fabricating the Screen Lounges.

At the meeting on 21.10.02 Crowd hopes to get a sign off on production of the shells for the Screen Lounge Pods for the Screen Lounge. We are very mindful of the requirement to have functioning Lounge Pods for the opening in March 2003, particularly in the Memory Grid area. Only with a sign off to commit to construction of the first Lounge Pods immediately can we foresee possible delivery by the desired date. Based on the outcome of this meeting we will prepare a forth revised timeline.