Transcript of “The Virtual Peale Museum in Second Life” video by Novata
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QPxCircl6s

Novata (00:00):
Hey. Welcome back to our new video. Do you like the new graphics of Second Life? No, I’m just kidding. I just wanted to emphasize that our real world is facing a hard time with the ongoing crisis, so institutions like schools, universities, museums are finding new ways to continue their work joining different digital platforms.

Novata (00:55):
We don't need to stop our life, just finding a new way, thanks to the virtual worlds like the Peale Center for Baltimore History and Architecture. Yep, this is one of the most historic buildings in Baltimore. Check out all these. Behold, the Virtual Peale, a reproduction of the exact building here in Second Life. This is a collaborative project between the Peale Center, Linden Lab, and Virtual Ability. It was officially inaugurated today, August 15, as part of the commemoration for the 206th anniversary of the museum.

Novata (01:31):
It's open. You can go and check it out by yourself. I will leave the landmark of the museum in the description of the video. Make sure to walk all around because there are different parts for you to explore and take pictures, like this little buddy here. This is a great example of what a 3D world like Second Life can offer, how different virtual exhibitions working with real institutions ... This takes a lot of work.

Novata (01:56):
Let's have a look inside. Let's explore a little bit of the museum. I want you to all check out these. Remember that when you come here, there are some pictures, like for example, these. If you use your mouse, you will be able to get some piece of information. These are all pictures that tells you the history of the building in Baltimore.

Novata (02:17):
Of course, this part doesn't exist in the real museum, it was actually made here in order to use a more dynamic way to share a piece of history. You can actually appreciate the building, check out the one that is made here in Second Life. It looks exactly the same. Every photo has a tiny memory of what happened in the past.

Novata (02:41):
By the way, we have the storytelling studio. If you are from Baltimore or if you know something about the center, the city, you would like to share with someone, don't forget to write a note card. Drop it here on the post, and the members of the museum are going to be more than happy to share that with the rest.
Novata (02:58):
On the other hand, I know some of you are thinking, "Why should I care about the museum or Charles Willson Peale? I'm not American, so" ... Come on. That's one of the reasons of Second Life, to connect people all around the world and learn something about different cultures. Now we have the chance to learn more about Baltimore city and the life of the people during that time.

Nancy Proctor (03:19):
Of course I knew about the Peales and I knew about the Peale museum, but I didn't realize it was in Baltimore. The Peales typically are associated with Philadelphia, which is where the patriarch, Charles Willson Peale, was based, and where most of the family grew up. Unfortunately, that's what happens when an important building is more or less abandoned for 20 years, it fades from popular memory. That's one of the things that we're trying to do now, is really open the doors and get as many people in here as possible, and also work out in the community so people start to realize that the Peale is actually a really important part of the cultural fabric of Baltimore.

Novata (03:56):
That was the museum director, Nancy Proctor, and this is her avatar here in Second Life. I don't know. I thought it would be interesting for you to know that. Let's hear some of the stories that she shared with us.

Nancy Proctor (04:07):
One of the things that they had to do was actually design and build a very large pump to get the water out of the pit as they did the excavation. Charles Wilson Peale did this, undertook this, with three of his sons. In the painting, we also get to see two of his wives, one of whom was already deceased at the time of the making of this painting, but it's another sort of virtual world in the painting. One can recreate all sorts of communities and groups.

Novata (04:35):
Just to remind you, there are different interactive items here at the museum, so if you click on them you're going to receive information on the local chat. Let's continue with the museum's director.

Nancy Proctor (04:45):
In this period, the silhouette was today's equivalent of the snapshot or the quick photo. If you couldn't afford to have a large painting, a portrait, painted of you, you could usually afford for a few pennies to get a silhouette cut.

Nancy Proctor (05:06):
He was rather disappointed that the mastodon's slightly smaller than the mammoth, but, nonetheless, the Peales very proudly displayed their skeletons, one in their Philadelphia museum and the other in this Baltimore museum. It was a huge draw, a big way for the family to make money, because you paid extra to see the mastodon.
Nancy Proctor (05:26):
To the opposite side of the room, there's a black and white engraving on the wall, which is the demonstration of gaslighting, circa 1816, by Rembrandt Peale. As I mentioned, he had borrowed money to build this building. He needed to sell as many tickets as possible.

Nancy Proctor (05:47):
You'll see, below that engraving, a couple of school desks. This speaks to an exhibition and the research that we've conducted into the Peale's history as Male and Female Colored School No. 1. Unfortunately there really aren't any physical objects, much less photographs and tangible artifacts from that period that we can put on exhibition, but there are, again, lots of stories.

Nancy Proctor (06:16):
Working with a team of historians and researchers, we've been able to find out quite a bit about the first nine graduates who got their high-school degrees from the school that started here at the Peale. In the physical building, you could tour the whole building and take, essentially, an audio exhibition, hearing their voices telling the stories of the school throughout the building.

Novata (06:43):
Let me know if you knew all about that. Anyway, when you come to the museum, don't forget that there is a second floor. You only need to walk this way. Yeah. I know. Stairs, right? Turn to the left and we have to pass through this teleport. Here at the Virtual Peale, we are having our first exhibition, Redefine/ABLE: Challenging Accessibility.

Nancy Proctor (07:08):
In a way, I think this move in into a trans-digital space, if you will, from browser-based to this virtual world version, has presented no fewer opportunities to talk about how we can be more inclusive in our practices. Also, what are the affordances of the physical and the digital worlds that enable different kinds of access for people with differing needs, interests, and abilities? I'm really excited to have this opportunity to have this facet of the Redefine/Able exhibition here in Second Life. I think it's actually added a lot to the whole project.

Novata (07:47):
There is more than just history to learn here at the Virtual Peale. Don't forget to come and visit with your friends. The museum is already open, and you can come anytime. In case you want to know more about the Peale Center for Baltimore, I'm leaving some extra information on the description of this video. My dear friend, the mastodon. Don't forget that there are a lot of interactive items here, so just click on the item, you get information on the local chat.

Novata (08:13):
That was everything for today. Thank you so much for watching. Don't forget to come and visit this place. Please take care, and I'll see you on my next video. Bye.

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