Art video game recreates pandemic experience

‘Art game’ looks at the pandemic through an artist’s eye” interview and video of DXARTS Ph.D. candidate Chanee Choi at UW News

Artists have always looked for ways to represent human experience. As COVID-19’s impact ripples through science, politics, and society, reflections of the pandemic show up in art, and even in video games.

Chanhee Choi is a multidisciplinary interactive artist and Ph.D. candidate in the UW Digital Arts and Experimental Media department. She's creating a digital art game called “Pandemic,” a vehicle for her thoughts and experiences since the beginning of the coronavirus crisis.

Choi has created a virtual environment that players move through as a coronavirus cell, guided by the arrows on their keyboard. They see glimpses of the real-world pandemic with its quarantines, protests, economic crises, and loneliness.

Players proceed through different scenes that Choi has built — a quiet room lit by a computer screen, fiery, violent streets, huddled crowds lorded over by giant politicians. She says the imagery is culled from experiencing life through the media on our screens, something a lot of us are doing as we spend time at home.

“As this pandemic goes on, it seems we are just watching a surreal parallel universe,” Choi said. “This is why I decided to make a video game. I needed to describe the surrealistic struggle of this particular moment and engage with the people going through it with me.”


People Involved: Chanhee Choi

News Category: In the Press  Research  Student Success

'Art video game recreates pandemic experience'