This Exquisite Forest

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Conceived by Chris Milk and Aaron Koblin and produced by Tate Modern and Google, This Exquisite Forest was inspired by the surrealist game "exquisite corpse" and its idea of collaborative creation. The project lets users create short animations that build off one another as they explore specific themes. The result is a collection of branching narratives resembling trees to which anyone may contribute. The project lives online and as a physical installation at the Tate Modern (through June 2013). At the museum, visitors can explore the project as a life-sized projection and contribute animations using high-end digital drawing tablets.

Our work is about exploring the line between a pre-determined experience and an open one. We're interested in thinking about how much freedom the viewer should have within the artwork. For example, in This Exquisite Forest, we give artists an open canvas to create any animation they like, but also the power to moderate and set rules for how that animation may evolve. Likewise, with The Johnny Cash Project, participants are given a single frame as a template, but then they are free to interpret that frame in any way they choose.
We have tried a similar approach with interactive film. In *The Wilderness Downtown*, we let viewers change the experience by focusing it around their childhood homes using Google Maps and Street View. And with our fourth project, *Three Dreams of Black*, viewers can control the camera and create 3D sculptures that persist in the film for everyone to see.

New advances in web-browser technology have been at the core of each project. The web is intrinsically a great example of the SIGGRAPH 2013 Art Gallery theme. *This Exquisite Forest* is built around scale; it requires the participation of thousands of people to fulfill its goal of creating an evolving forest of animations.