

Virtual Idol Fan Culture: The "Third Space" of The Digital Age

Yiwei Chen ^{1, a}, Dong Wang ^{1, b *}

¹School of Design and Architecture, Zhejiang University of Technology, China;

^a 317487337@qq.com, ^b leocyw@qq.com

Abstract. Virtual idol fan groups have gradually integrated with mainstream culture from the initial subcultural tribes, and formed a mature virtual idol fan group regional chain. The fan group space it creates not only carries specific commercial purposes, but also is a social collective memory and imagination community. The fan group regards virtual idols as totems for gathering, and individuals with values and resonance play their respective roles in the fan group. The various spatial members in the group are worth exploring. This article analyzes the most popular virtual idols and discusses the universality of attraction aggregation maintenance in the fan group space. It also studies the dissemination logic of the spatial form of virtual idol fan groups in the internet era.

Keywords: virtual idols; fan culture; third space; imaged community.

1. The Third Space of Virtual Idols

1.1 Interpretation of Virtual Idols

One kind of virtual idol relies on the computer CG technology to present, the multi-media fusion, has the unique individuality characteristic and the performance entertainment ability, carries on the interaction exchange through the digital technology space with the audience, and provides the openness visual text for the audience to create again, is different from the real idol's virtual image. The purpose of this paper is to probe into the phenomenon that the maze space of virtual idol is rising with the popularity of virtual idol in recent years. The symbolic meaning of the text is characterized by polysemy, which reveals the diversity of emotion, meaning and value. At the same time, this interpretation may lead to the strengthening of certain meanings, while others are diluted, hidden or replaced[1].

1.2 What is "third space"

The rapid development of digital media has provided a new space for the fans to release the emotional projection and productivity supply of the "obsessed" virtual idols. Is an infinite open, constantly flowing space, all kinds of views of the deconstruction and reconstruction at any time, in an open attitude to accommodate and accept a variety of possibilities, space will be equal dialogue[2]. The "third space" mentioned by Homi Bhabha refers to the space of knowledge and resistance beyond binary opposition. There is a third space between the two cultures, which has the characteristics of both cultures and becomes a compound cultural space [3]. The space of virtual idol maze is a complex and versatile space structure. The mental imagination space of space activities and the fluid physical space cross each other.

2. Imaginary Community: Construction of Virtual Idol Maze Space

2.1 Instinctive Dimension: Building Identity in Groups

Benedict Anderson studied the concept of the nation in depth and defined it as an "imaginary community". He believed that the main reason why people were considered to be imaginary communities was that even the smallest members of a nation could not fully understand their fellow citizens, but that the desire to connect with one another was deeply rooted in each individual and constituted an important basis for national identity [4]. Virtual idol fan group is also imaginary community to some extent. In the fan group, Virtual idol is a symbol that people are attached to

each other. Group is a dynamic entity, which is formed by continuous communication and interaction. Maze also involves social-relationship-human. Virtual idol audience share emotion and creation with other audience. Self-expression in the puzzle is the basis of social interaction.

2.2 Action Dimension: Continuous Stability Maze

In *The Basic Forms of Religious Life*, Durkheim uses totem as a symbol, which is of great symbolic significance. Using this special procedure of totem system, people can find their clan and tribe better[5]. Emile Durkheim's totem plays an important role in clan differentiation and cohesion, which is also useful in virtual idols. But with the development of time and culture, the meaning of totem includes virtual idols.

In the virtual idol maze, in order to make it easier for people with the same interests to find each other, they usually create labels and titles based on virtual idol images and people. Compared with "tag". Through multiple searches of TAG on various social media, people will form corresponding topics, and mature social networking platforms will divide the groups of different virtual idols. Through a process of labyrinth differentiation and cohesion, the totem incarnate as image label and special nickname is of great significance to both virtual idol and the labyrinth. This is also the process of classifying the labyrinth quickly through modern totem — data and label — in the rapid development of the Internet. Compared with the time cost of paper distribution in the age of paper media, the rapid development of digital media is a powerful impetus to the rapid establishment of the labyrinth space.

2.3 Value Dimension: Operation Mechanism of Repetitive Maze

Some lucky and mature virtual idols can absorb a lot of fans once they come out, but the initial gathering of fans is still in a green state, which needs long-term practice and accumulation to form our familiar appearance. Of course, there is another kind of maze from the beginning of the formation of the basic situation, from the previous maze of virtual idol members themselves with the organization and creation skills accumulated in the maze, once such members join, the maze of virtual idol will accelerate to form, we can find these rules through the formation of hot maze of virtual idol.

Sawyer quotes Borges's *Aleph* as visualizing the "third space": "Seeing that secret, hypothetical thing that reveals the unimaginable universe. This space is the deconstruction and reconstruction of the real space and the imaginary space, and embodies the thinking of deep exploration and innovation [6]. With the rapid development of ACG culture for more than ten years, it has become a more advanced congregation form with mature organization mechanism, mature interchange mechanism and mature activity mechanism.

3. Cofrequency and interference of virtual idol acting on magnetic field in labyrinth space

Never collapsing is a good wish of the virtual idol. The original intention of creating virtual idol is to hope that the idol in the virtual space can only retain the charming part of the real idol and get rid of the defect that leads to the dispersion of the maze, thus achieving a perfect state, but in reality, "perfect idol" is a false proposition. The birth and operation of virtual idol is inseparable from human beings. The improper operation of the entertainment companies and technology behind virtual idol and the "people in it" operating virtual idol may burst the illusion of the crowd.

3.1 Idol and "Enigmatic" Magnetic Field Coincidence

In May 2022, Vox, a member of the Rainbow Club's Super Popular Virtual Men, first aired live on Bilibili, a domestic video platform, harvested millions of fans within hours. Maze is active in the social platform to upload their second creation, new members access to Vox, in addition to the virtual idol itself, but also through the maze space of the virtual idol Vox multiple interpretations,

access to their interests, and thus join the maze queue. Virtual idol Vox also gives positive emotional value feedback to fans, forming a good idol -fan emotional energy cycle, enhancing the cohesion and sense of achievement of the maze. This cultural fusion leads to a cultural identity that, while maintaining indigenous values, also incorporates the narrative features of foreign cultures [7]. Color Rainbow Entertainment Co., Ltd. provides an initial Vox look and set range of people. Through cyclic communication and creation expansion, the two parties jointly create a virtual idol with a substantial core, and create a space of creative power, emotional satisfaction and excellent content, laying a solid foundation for entering the domestic market.

3.2 Virtual idol interference space magnetic field

However, this space is not indestructible. Compared to the mysterious whereabouts of real idol, virtual idol is more close to fans, to provide fans with a full sense of company. Virtual idol Vox needs to be active on social platforms every day, broadcast live on designated platforms, reach out to the maze, get too close too often, and expose its flaws more quickly. In October of the same year, Vox's response to "Neither you nor Vox is a relationship" fueled a surge of public opinion after a maze of complaints about Vox's inclusion of female friends on a live broadcast and questioning on social networking platforms. The phenomenon that the idol love leads to "collapse of the house" stems from the destruction of the mystification of the performance and the fall of the idol from the sacred position. When fans realize that idols are equally capable of falling in love, the boundaries between idols and ordinary people disappear. From the point of view of part of the maze, this is a failure of image management. Vox's behavior and response can't maintain the maze's usual illusion about Vox. It pulls the maze back to the awakening reality, and makes some fans feel betrayed.

4. Conclusion

The business model of virtual idol and the way that fans get information and emotional feedback depend to a large extent on the highly developed social digital media of the Internet in recent years. Digital media has provided rich media and platforms for space communication and communication. Affected by this, the members of fans have shown a trend of youth. In the younger space, the high-intensity activities of virtual idol day and night catalyze the highly active maze. Both of them show abundant energy. Through the progressive emotional and cultural exchanges, they form a deep binding relationship. The existence of maze space also symbiosis with the screen life of virtual idol.

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