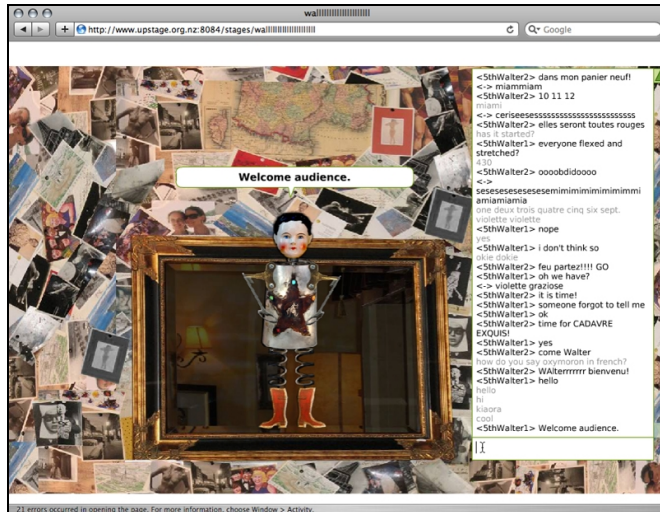


Background to UpStage

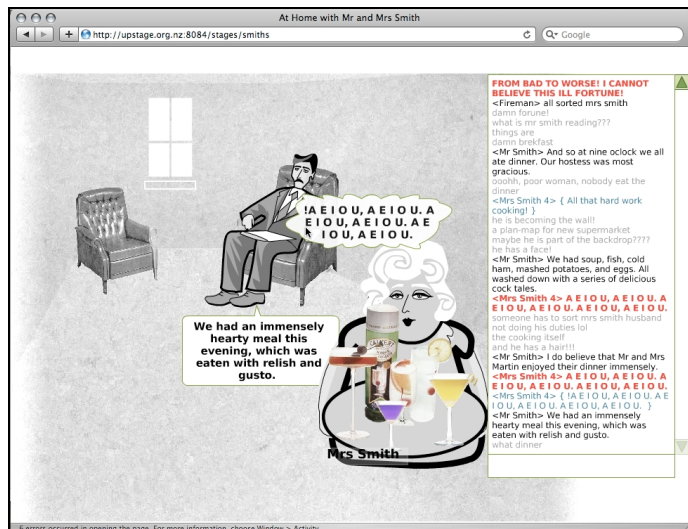
[UpStage](#) is a web-based platform for live online collaborative performance. First launched in January 2004, it is now used by artists and students around the world to create and experiment with the use of internet technologies in live theatrical performances.



UpStage provides a set of tools for logged in players to work with a variety of media in real time; graphics (still images and animations), video (live web cam feeds or prerecorded video), audio (text2speech or prerecorded audio), text and illustration are collaboratively manipulated to create an improvised or rehearsed performance. Audiences do not need to log in, they simply click on a link in an email or web page, and everything unfolds in their browser window.

The original idea came from the globally dispersed cyberperformance troupe [Avatar Body Collision](#) who were using various free chat applications to collaborate and perform online from their different geographical locations. Frustrated by the limitations of software that was designed for other purposes, they began to imagine a purpose-built application, made by and for artists, that would combine the best features from different chat applications into a single, accessible platform. The result is UpStage: browser-based, open source, cross-platform, accessible for audiences and easy to use.

UpStage primarily survives on voluntary labour and donations. In the past, the project has received funding from the New Zealand government (via the Smash Palace Collaboration Fund, the Digital Strategy, and Creative New Zealand). Creative New Zealand is supporting the 11:11:11 UpStage Festival, and previously supported the 101010 and 090909 festivals. Server hosting is donated by [CityLink](#) and an ongoing relationship with [Auckland University of Technology](#) has seen ongoing teams of computing students contribute to the software's maintenance and development since 2006.



Screengrabs on this page: 4th Wall by Suzon Fuks, Tara Rebele and Miljana Peric; and At Home with Mr and Mrs Smith by the Catastrophic Primadonnas. Both from the 090909 UpStage Festival

Showreels

Showreels featuring excerpts from the previous four UpStage festivals are available online:

- [101010 UpStage Festival](#)
- [090909 UpStage Festival](#)
- [080808 UpStage Festival](#)
- [070707 UpStage Festival](#)

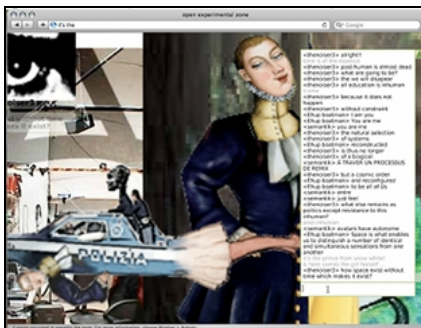
Images



*Durito's Dancing Box Manifesto: the @heoretical
Cyberperformance for/of Zapatismo* by Miljana Peric, Julijana
Protic & Teodora Peric (Serbia), & Suzon Fuks & James
Cunningham (Australia), 090909 UpStage Festival.

A live web cam feed was used in conjunction with animated backdrops and avatars, live text2speech and prerecorded audio.

[Click here to download full-size image.](#)



Open Experimental Zone by AP033 (France), 090909
UpStage Festival.

This performance sampled media from all of the other performances during the festival, then re-presented everything in a live mash-up.

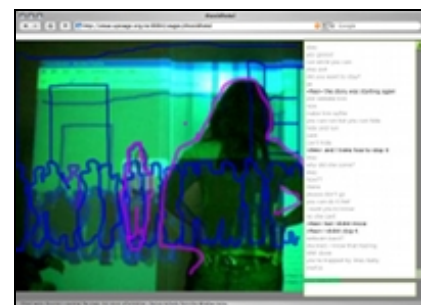
[Click here to download full-size image.](#)



Belonging by Avatar Body Collision, 2007.

In this performance, the audience and player chat text was projected onto a performer's body then represented in UpStage via a live web cam feed; audience members commented that the liveness was reinforced when they saw their own text appear in the web cam image.

[Click here to download full-size image.](#)



The Old Hotel by Cherry Truluck, Suzon Fuks, James Cunningham, Liz Bryce, Carolyn Goodyear and Jonathan Cliffe and performed simultaneously at the 070707 UpStage Festival and in a former hotel in London.

Live web cam feeds were mixed with prerecorded video panoramas of the site, integrating the London audience into the online performance.

[Click here to download full-size image.](#)

These images are screengrabs with a resolution of 72ppi. This is low but good enough to print. More images from these and other shows are available on request from info@upstage.org.nz.