manchester
features

□Uncle Roy All Around You - interview
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□ Who is Uncle Roy?

So who is Uncle Roy?

I'd played the game, but wanted to know more. Intrigued, I asked to meet him. "Ring this number," said a voice, before hanging up.
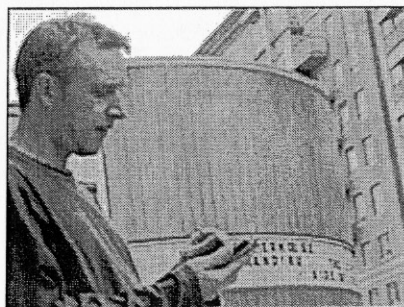
Uncle Roy: Review

Hello.. who's that?
I'm Matt Adams, one of the creative members of Blast Theory.

Oh right. Perhaps you better explain a bit more about Uncle Roy All Around You?
It's a game played online and on the streets of Manchester in which your goal is to find Uncle Roy and players online can send messages to players on the street, and players on the street can record audio messages to players online. and together they can help each other or hinder each other.

Read our review of Uncle Roy All Around You

So who is Uncle Roy?
He's the creator of the game and he's set up the entire experience so that people can explore and try to track him down through the streets.

Well, if you created it... does that mean you are Uncle Roy?
As someone who's played the game, Richard, you'll know the answer to that!

I will? OK...

Having played Uncle Roy...it's a bit weird isn't it?
The game really takes over the centre of Manchester and that becomes the game space and the messages that you get and the various clues you get are based on the streets of central Manchester.

What's the thinking behind the game?
Our aim, first and foremost has been to create an exciting game. What we're trying to do is to create something that is fun to play, engageing that is easy for people to come and get the hang of.. Beyond that we're trying to create a complex space, wherby social interaction governs how the game unfolds. Put another way, it's about who you talk to and who you trust.

It's a lot about trust..
Yes, but you also have to be discriminating about who you trust because you have no guarantee whether these strangers are going to tell you something useful or not.. so you have to make your own mind up about who's worth trusting.

It made me feel a bit paranoid.. is that normal?
It should do.. you'll know having played on the street that you hand over all your possessions before you start, including your phone, your watch, your wallet. So you go out onto the streets with nothing but this handheld computer. Even that's quite a challenging thing, to be out on the streets with no money in your pocket and trusting to this one device to guide you around. It asks quite a lot of you as a street player - you have to take a big risk to play but we hope that you get quite an exciting game in return for that!

I've not come across anything like this before...
We're relatively unique in the world in these projects. There's tremendous amount of interest in how you might use mobile devices to create games and how those games might interact with the internet. But as yet it's still very embryonic and Blast Theory in collaboration with the Mixed Reality Lab in Nottingham, we've really managed to build up a large stock of knowledge in how to do this.

So are you Uncle Roy.. or aren't you?
.... (the phone went dead.)

In a nutshell:

Uncle Roy All Around You by Blast Theory - A new media and mixed reality game in Manchester.

Play online for free at www.uncleroyallaroundyou.co.uk

To be a street player, take ID to the Cornerhouse on Oxford St. Tickets £3. (concs £2). Book in advance. Games last 45 mins. Slots between 3 - 9pm

The game runs from 28 April - 2 May. And 5 - 8 May

What do you want to do now?

- Read our review of Uncle Roy
- Play Uncle Roy All Around You
- Find out more on the Cornerhouse website
- Return to the Features Index

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