

Online and on the streets – the chase begins

An unusual production in Brighton will see a chase game played online and on the streets.

From Monday, September 27-Friday, October 1, Blast Theory will offer Can You See Me Now? (12pm-2pm and 4pm-6pm). The idea is that players from anywhere in the world can play online against members of Blast Theory.

For five days, the Gardner Arts Centre becomes the control room for a specially-created game that takes place around the Gardner and the other distinctive 1960s brick buildings on the University of Sussex campus.

Can You See Me Now? is a collaboration between Blast Theory and the Mixed Reality Lab, University of Nottingham. It won the Golden Nica for Interactive Art at the 2003 Prix Ars Electronica and was nominated for an Interactive Arts BAFTA in 2002. Originally commissioned by Shooting Live Artists in 2001, it has been presented in Sheffield, Rotterdam, Oldenburg and Cologne.

Players are dropped at random locations into a virtual map of the University of Sussex campus.

Tracked by satellites, Blast Theory's runners appear online next to your player. Situated in the real campus, handheld computers showing the position of online players guide the runners in tracking you down.

With up to 20 people playing online at a time, online players can exchange tactics and send messages to Blast Theory. An audio stream from Blast Theory's walkie talkies allow you to eavesdrop on your pursuers as they getting lost and out of breath around the buildings and parkland of the University of Sussex campus.

If a runner gets within five metres of your location, you are caught and a photo of where you were 'seen' is taken.

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