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Press review

Rider Spoke
A combination of to-fi and wi-fi

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musing on the lives of strangers in the city.

As I was cycling south through the City of London, a seductive female voice said in my ear: "Find a suitable vehicle and proceed to the city."

Naturally, I obeyed, cursed the Scout, and discovered a suitablyistine-stained doorway next to an office service entrance, where fans were waiting to be collected. I told her all about it.

This was part of Rider Spoke, a project by the group Blast Theory. It builds on their previous ventures Can You See Me Now? and Uncle Roy (All Around The Icon 04:11), which established the company on the cutting edge of a new kind of interactive arts event — performance, part experiment, part large scale public art. Arriving at the Barbican in groups of five at 15-minute intervals, participants are equipped with a bicycle, a bicycle and a high-tech Nokia phone to fit in the handlebars.

They are then told to get lost. The purpose of the game is to cycle silently and promptly to the console screen or earpiece. You can do it at any direction you like, as far as you like, as long as you are able to make it back to the Barbican before your time is up. The console sends your progress via wi-fi to GPS devices, recording your location. The wireless network can be accessed at any time and the location can be viewed on a map.

This is actually Blast Theory's third project, and when you come within range of one, "You can hide, you flash up on your screen. Once you have received your thoughts, you're given a choice — explore again, waiting for another question and another hiding place, or time to the answer left by the others.

Selecting the second option brings up a choice of three players' names, and the location of their answers stored in virtual hiding places. It is a fascinating experience that encourages collaboration and exploration within the city. Rider Spoke was a truly unique and innovative project that used technology to create a new form of interactive urban art.