



CEH Productions

Creative projects in virtual worlds and beyond
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ARRIVALS & DEPARTURES: A TALE OF TWO JOURNEYS

ARRIVALS & DEPARTURES, released on 22 July 2018, is a machinima from CEH Productions – Judith Cullen, aka Caledonia Skytower of the Seanchai Library, Richard Elen aka Eirik Merlin of Radio Riel and the web TV show *Designing Worlds*, and Honey Heart of Elite Equestrian. The 15-minute film, shot entirely in the virtual world of Second Life®, is based on a short story written by Cullen and originally recorded for Fantasy Faire Radio as part of the 10th Fantasy Faire, an annual SL-based fund-raiser for the American Cancer Society.

The story was inspired by, and performed in, a superbly-imagined Steampunk-inspired spaceport created by leading virtual world creators The Looking Glass – Sharni Azalee and Marcus Inkpen – for Fantasy Faire 2018, and loaned for the shoot.

ARRIVALS & DEPARTURES presents a glimpse into two individual journeys that are brought together and shared for the last time. It is about the one who leaves, the one left behind, and the essential role of each. Though the word is never uttered in the film, it essentially addresses aspects of our attitude to death.

“He has accepted the journey on which he must now embark,” says real-life professional storyteller and theatrical designer Cullen. “His last act is to pass along that which has been most important in his life to someone who is remaining behind – requesting their commitment to carry on the work.”

“She is dropped without warning into loss, grief, and accepting his legacy with no warning or time to become accustomed to its inevitability,” Cullen goes on. “She must choose to be present for him in this moment, accept the commitment with which he tasks her, and be prepared to continue on – while at the same time dealing with the shock and weight of it.”

ARRIVALS & DEPARTURES also highlights the vital importance of storytelling, harking back to an earlier time when tales were woven into a verbal tradition that was handed down by word of mouth from one generation to the next.

Technical Director Heart re-erected the spaceport as a virtual film set, and used a range of in-world animations and path-scripting techniques including Metaharper Show Tools to realise the action, which was shot by Cullen and Elen, who also performed the two lead roles. The footage was then edited conventionally by Elen.

The project was a transatlantic collaboration, with Cullen in Washington State, Heart in Michigan and Elen in Scotland. The soundtrack recording and production co-ordination was carried out in Skype, sharing screens while shooting, and ‘dailies’ were shared via the cloud.

ARRIVALS & DEPARTURES was released on 22 July, 2018 and is available on YouTube, Vimeo, SLArtist.com and AView.TV.