Oct 2006 with the urging of Sue Maberry, I set up an account in Second Life to explore the pedagogical possibilities. Since that time I have created and run a successful series of student projects that were showcased at the New Media Consortium conferences for three years in a row. The documentation of my journey into Second Life and the first student project can be viewed at…

http://otis.edu/life_otis/faculty_life/faculty_development/grantee_reports/michaelwright_virtual_worlds.html

https://picasaweb.google.com/mrwstudios/OtisSlvwp07Slides#

I continued my virtual world exploration with the assistance of a faculty development grant in 2007 to purchase and have the tier fee paid for one year on a full sim to use as a virtual studio. The sim, 16 virtual square miles, is called I BE AM. The second student project was completed at the Otis sim, which the Library supported for two years and I presented it at several conferences, which are documented at…

http://www.otis.edu/life_otis/faculty_life/faculty_development/grantee_reports/wright_07_08.html

https://picasaweb.google.com/mrwstudios/OtisVwp08#

Bye the fall of 2009 my studio business, M Ragsdale Wright Studios, was in total support of the I BE AM sim at the educator’s price and the Library had chosen to drop the
College sim. I BE AM had several years worth of work, that was in process, that I didn’t want to loose and my syllabus included a third years student project. So I choose to purchase a homestead sim next to I BE AM. This amounted to 16 acres of virtual land and limited building blocks for the student project. The following is a description of the project…

Virtual World Project 09: Anarchy City

This is the third year I have ran this project in my “Concept and Issues in New Media” class, a Liberal Studies class required of Digital Media students in first semester of their sophomore year at Otis College of Art and Design in Los Angeles. The goal of the project was to go into second life and create content in the form of an environment. Three classes consisting of 66 digital media sophomore students participated in this project choosing an apocalyptic city as theme. The project required team building, out of the box creative thinking, introducing students to working with 3d & 2d virtual tools in real time, working with a budget, working with a deadline and working with a limited amount of building blocks (primitives). Three hours of in-class time and 10 hours of outside of class time were devoted to this build.

This year’s build differed from the last two years by being run on a homestead sim that had the same amount of virtual land but with only 3750 prims. So all three classes had to share the 3750 prims where as the previous two years each class had 3500 prims each. The project also differed in that the three classes had to work on the same concept throughout the sim, as opposed to the previous two years where each class worked on a different theme on a designated part of the sim set aside for them. This year I also asked each student to keep a journal documenting each time they went in-world.

https://picasaweb.google.com/mrwstudios/OtisSI09#
Beyond the 2009 student project, I presented the virtual world projects representing the College at the following venues,


2009 “Otis Virtual World Project 08” Interactive Sessions The New Media Consortium Summer Conference hosted California State University Monterey, Monterey Calif. Judges Choice Award “Otis Virtual World Project 08”

2009 ART MENTOR PROGRAM AT SANTA MONICA COLLEGE, Santa Monica Calif. Presentation of my work in virtual worlds.

2010 Otis Virtual World Project, Anarchy City” Interactive Sessions The New Media Consortium Summer Conference hosted by University of Southern California, Disneyland conference center Anaheim California.
I have five galleries in different locations throughout second life, Second Life has over 900 galleries from all over the world. My galleries house personal work and public projects. On the I BE AM sim, my design team has created two of the five galleries that house my Otis projects. The team has also created a science fiction environment, gardens, jungles, a maze, a racing environment, a Goth area based on Poe’s “Masque of the Red Death” and common areas for meetings, enjoyment and the like. I’m a member of a number of groups to include SLED (second life educators), Art & Artist Network, Art Gallery Owners, Virtual Artist Alliance, Artists of Second Life, Second Life Artists, SoHo, Learning Times, and the Arts Council of Second Life. ASCI (Art & Science Collaborations, Inc), a 23 year old real life organization out of NYC that I’ve been a member for years also has meeting once a month in SL that I attend. I have participated in a number of SL art events and have also made in-world presentations regarding the student projects. This past year my chair asked me to branch out to cover social networks and media beyond my SL projects. So with that in mind I introduced an avatar project that could explore and be created in any virtual world of the students choice to focus on their avatar in terms of personal identity The project can be viewed at ------ as well as any digital media sophomore’s learning portfolio.

https://picasaweb.google.com/mrwstudios/OtisCIAvatars2010#

I’m currently exploring the use of alternative virtual world viewers that allow the user to enter different worlds without logging off. I’m also looking at other virtual world choices that might be more supportive of educational possibilities. In the meantime the environments created at I BE AM continue to evolve as does my expression of those changes expressed as artifacts.
Above: I AM AM sim.
Below: Sky Gallery above the sim
Galleries: focus on personal 2d images and 3d virtual sculpture
Avatars by Mrags