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Golan Levin Ups The Ante For Reddit's IAmA

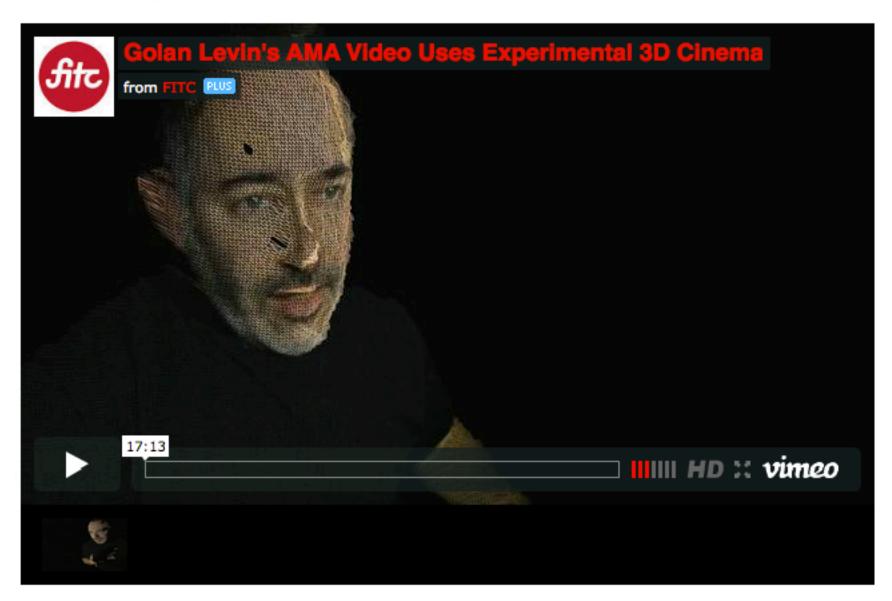
Kevin Holmes February 01, 2012











Reddit's IAmA thread is an interesting corner of the internet where the hive mind can interview whoever's brave enough to put themselves out there, fielding questions from strangers tapping on remote keyboards. It's seen Louis CK meet a former PA of his to discuss whether he got it on with an eager fan, actress Ali Larter discuss SOPA and new media professor and artist Golan Levin partake in a video version of the format. Levin's IAmA was part of an event put on by FITC, and people were asked to submit questions, the top ten of which would be answered via the video (it's nice to see "Where can I meet hot single robots who aren't just creepy people pretending to be robots on the internet?" made the cut).

But it wasn't just any video, it was an experimental video created by two artists-in-residence at Golan's lab, James George and Jonathan Minard. The pair are exploring experimental 3D cinema and for the IAmA they shot the interview in a style they're calling "re-photography." This technique uses a stationary depth sensor, like a Kinect, paired with a digital SLR so that "otherwise frozen moments in time may be visualized from new points of view." So even though the camera was only filming from one place, they were able to "imagine" Levin from various angles by integrating colour video with depth data using software created in openFrameworks, resulting in a "dynamic sculptural relief."

From the Vimeo page:

In a process of "virtual cinematography," James and Jonathan rephotographed Golan's 3D likeness—selecting new angles, dollying, and zooming—to compose new perspectives on the data as if playing a video game. Fixed camerawork is thus transformed into a malleable and negotiable post-process, in which shots can be carefully recomposed to highlight and inflect different latent meanings.

Is it the beginning of the end for shooting videos with multiple cameras? No, but it may be the beginning of a new postproduction technique that lets you compose a scene from different angles even though you only filmed it from a stationary camera.