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## Over one hundred years of telepresence

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This paper will compare and discuss visual records of three specific cultural events involving interacting public audiences captured and presented in live telepresent film and video performances since 1900. Using my own artistic practice that focuses on telematic encounters and shared visual dialogues between public audiences linked via internet videoconferencing and converged through chroma-keying techniques as my first example, specifically “Picnic on the Screen” for the Glastonbury music festival in 2009. The seminal east coast – west coast live satellite public performance event “Hole-in-Space” by Kit Galloway and Sherie Rabinowitz in 1980 as the second example; providing the passing pedestrian public in New York and Los Angeles with opportunity to converse, co-create and play in the first live public networked connection of its kind. And the third example drawn from the historic films of Lumière contemporaries “Mitchell and Kenyon”, whose films of Edwardian public crowds in the 1900’s provided audiences the opportunity to play and perform in front of the film camera in the knowledge they could share in the experience of watching their spectacle in the film’s screening hours later at the local traveling fairground. In all these cultural events the audiences become both performers and viewers by creating an improvised response to the camera and screen. The striking similarity with the way audiences react and respond is very clear from these early self-view film screenings to telematic live interaction; all the traits of telepresent interaction are present, whereby the audience responds to a stimulus and thereby directs the outcome.

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