The Majlis of the Future: A proposal for a dynamically generated network of meeting rooms in the Metaverse

Over the past years the majlis expanded from a social practice into a space of cultural and intellectual exchange. The project »Majlis of the Future« asks the question of how general principles of this tradition can support the development of ideas in the digital world and draw on the global community without losing its distinctive physical aspects. Following the question of how the Majlis of the Future can become a tool of engagement supporting important future priorities?, the project team developed a demonstrator on basis of Mozilla Hubs.

The Majlis of the Future is the result of the collaboration with Prof. Adina Hempel (Zayed University, UAE) and Prof. Zlatan Filipovic (American University of Sharjah, UAE) together with the students Jannik Mannefeld (Münster School of Design) and Luis Kirchlechner. The team was invited to the Smithsonian Folklife Festival 2022 (Washington D.C., USA) in June 2022 to present the project.

For this project, the principles behind historic majalis as places to foster exchange and discussion, and as a predecessor for decision making, are translated into the Metaverse. The resulting concept of a virtual majlis, explores such exchanges in the digital world, and is searching for connection and growth of ideas through the following steps:

1. A majlis-module is being generated into the Metaverse representing a main-topic of a certain public or private interest. It is anticipated that those main-topics will be generated through AI systems, and that community members that interested in entering certain topic areas, will be enabled to get access.
2. A centric platform becomes the entry point to three surrounding areas – three „houses“, called Majlis. Every Majlis houses corresponding subtopics. Animated text stripes integrated into the floor – keywords that are generated live through speech to text analysis in each Majlis section – give an orientation of the contents currently being discussed in each room. The moving textual information give orientation and lead the visitor inside.
3. Visitors can either actively participate into discussions or be silent observers. They can freely move between the three areas.
4. Once leaving a house through the opposite sided exit door, a new module (see 1) is adhoc being generated from the topics being discussed. Once generated, each module remains as a network node in the Metaverse and becomes part of an ever growing and interrelated network.

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