

THE AVASTAR

Your World. Your Voice.

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GERMANY ON MARCH TO CUP VICTORY

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See inside for the winner!

AVASTAR OF 2007

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BANK BAN FIASCO

GIVE US BACK OUR MONEY!

Residents demand return of L\$
Many banks refuse to pay out

By **COYNE NAGY**
 ANXIOUS residents face a nerve-racking wait over the fate of their SL savings.

FULL STORY: SEE PAGE 3

INSIDE OPINION

"While it is great that all Miss SLs seem intent on raising awareness and cash for their favourite causes, you know it is going to be so competitive!"

YOUR MAIL
p.9

"It was obvious from the start unregulated banking would end in such a fiasco. But nothing was done to inform residents about the perils of investing in SL 'banks'. No hint was given they might be banned at any time."



REGIS BRAATHENS
p.10

NUMBERS OF THE WEEK

20.27

... per cent of log-ins during December ended in crashes, the lowest figure in 2007, according to metrics released this week.

172

... metres is the height of the Music Academy Tower on the Nowee sim. The academy has started a sponsorship drive in SL.

61,445

... were in-world at the same time on January 13 to set a new concurrency record, beating the mark set a week before.

THE MYSTERY GIRL REVEALED



DIEGER APFELBAUM came forward to reveal that she was the mystery girl photographed in a saucy clinch at our first year anniversary party. Well in, Dieger!

THE AVASTAR

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BANKS ARE TAKING THE MICKEY!

FURIOUS: Gerret Boucher

By COYNE NAGY

FUTURE UNCERTAIN FOR INVESTORS AS BANKS REMAIN CLOSED AFTER LINDEN LAB BAN

ANXIOUS residents face a nerve-racking wait over the fate of their savings in the wake of Linden Lab's ban on banking.

With many banks temporarily closing and ATMs on the grid no longer functional, many do not believe they will see their money again. Gerret Boucher, whose money is tied up in the German-based 'Thomas Bank', has established the group 'Geprellte Kunden Der Thomas Bank' - or 'Conned Customers of the Thomas Bank'

- to pressurise banks into paying out. **HITTING BACK** A furious Boucher said: "It is not only about me, it is about everyone in SL who has invested money and got none, or only some, of it back."

But Thomas Bank CEO Thomas Rosmer claimed that without a loan of US\$160,000 he would need up to six months to repay everyone. Boucher, who deposited L\$90,000 in the bank, hit back: "I think he is taking the mickey out of us. He has a second

avatar and has just opened a new office. He says he is American but we have his RL data and know he is a German from Bavaria. We don't trust him."

RETURN Some banks have managed to find solutions, however. The Royal Bank, which presently allows withdrawals of L\$1,000 a day, intends to convert accounts into shares in the company and will offer a

return in the form of dividends. JT Financial will also re-brand and relaunch as a RL merchant offering currency transactions.

PROBLEM But the moves are not enough to reassure everyone. JT customer Gin Nagy said she was angry ATMs were still in-world: "Trying to withdraw from machines doesn't work but you can still pay in. That is a big problem. At every ATM deposits can be made and that is not right for newbies who don't know the situation."

THE RUNNERS-UP

THE AvaStar of 2007 competition saw nearly a thousand people rush to vote for their favourite avs.

Every one of the ten contestants made a huge contribution to virtual life in 2007, and the following just failed to pip winner CodeBastard Redgrave:



2nd Place:
ANA LUTETIA
Online vote: 21.1%
Rez date: 11/11/2006

Profession: Fashion blogger, model

She said: "Thank you all! I am truly honoured to have been chosen from all the great people who joined SL over the last year or so."



3rd Place:
RIGHTASRAIN RIMBAUD
Online vote: 16.1%
Rez date: 10/12/2006

Profession: CEO of Rezzable

4th Place: **LUKECONNELL VANDEVERRE**
Online vote: 9.6%



Rez date: 11/29/2006
Profession: Owner of the World Stock Exchange and CEO of Hope Capital Ltd.



WINNER: CodeBastard Redgrave lifts her trophy

By **CARRIE SODWIND**

MACHINIMA EXPERT EDGES OUT TALENTED FIELD TO CLAIM PRIZE

A RED hot CodeBastard Redgrave scooped the AvaStar of 2007 award at a glitzy bash this week.

The machinima and photography expert was voted by residents as having made the best contribution to SL over the past year in The AvaStar's competition. She emerged the winner of a closely fought battle with nine other residents, who all either joined up in 2007 or were newbies going into last January. After the results were

announced at a party at AvaStar Island on Wednesday, CodeBastard thanked everyone who had voted for her as well as expressing her admiration for the runners-up.

HONOUR Accepting the award from AvaStar assistant editor LeiderStepanov, she said: "I would like to thank all of you, first to have had the honour to sit beside such great names. I'm also extremely honoured to have been chosen by the public, for me that's an even greater honour and I feel I

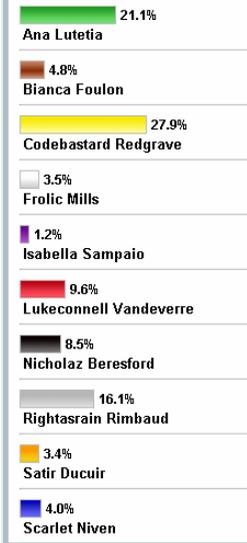
achieved something great gaining that favour."

FRANTIC CodeBastard, who signed up to SL on January 8 last year, joined other nervous contestants as well as star-spotting residents for the bash, following the vote which



CEREMONY: The AvaStar's LeiderStepanov presents Ana Lutetia with her runners-up award

RESULTS OF THE ONLINE VOTE:



GET DOWN: Jonny Tobias struts his stuff on the dancefloor with HarMonica Aabye



PARTY TIME: From right - Jonny Tobias, Carter Gaicobini, Frolic Mills, Isabel Brocco, Regis Braathens and Ana Lutetia

took place in-world at AvaStar Island and online at www.the-avastar.com. Some frantic last-minute voting saw her hold off the challenge of fashion blogger and model Ana Lutetia.

TRENDY Nicknamed 'Codie', CodeBastard has used her knowledge of programming to be successful in a multitude of fields in SL. She has a wonderful reputation

as a great machinima-tographer, photographer, blogger and designer, and she owns the trendy club Code Red Lounge. Rezzed-Net also recognised her achievement after naming her 'Most Popular Av' last year.

GENEROUS Despite her talent, she revealed the work ethic which helped her triumph in the contest: "Success in SL takes patience,

perseverance, polyvalency [having multiple skills]... and being nice and generous to people."

FIERY She has taken inspiration from her SL role models, who include controversial artist Arahan Claveau, machinima queen Moo Money and programmer Nicholaz Beresford, who took fifth place in the contest. Her avatar is instantly recognisable, with fiery her red hair and signature glasses. Sexy and brash, her art is well respected and has even earned a spot on the wall of Linden Lab's office in San Francisco.



HOT STUFF: CodeBastard enjoys her win

DEEDEE'S BATTLE

By **KITTY OTOOLE**
THE Crown and Pearl bar is holding a week-long charity fundraiser in recognition of the RL cancer battle faced by one of its regulars, Deedee Fadoodle.

Deedee, who was diagnosed with breast cancer in 2005 and has been fighting it ever since, has undergone major surgery as well as months of chemotherapy.

OVERWHELMED Inspired by her courage, the managers of the bar at the Oropesa sim, Brad Pravithi, Bailey Longcloth and Kendra Fallon, have organised a week of events to raise money for Cancer Research UK featuring DJs and live acts such as Thumper Boucher. On Tuesday, Deedee managed to attend her rez day party despite suffering from liver failure. She revealed she was overwhelmed by the occasion: "There's tears all over my laptop now." The week ends on January 19 with an auction at 12pm SLT to win a date with one of the bar regulars.



COURAGE: Deedee Fadoodle at her rez day party

METANETWORK MEDIA LAUNCH PARTY JANUARY 19TH 2008

MetaNetwork Media will officially launch its news division with its premier news broadcast on Saturday, Jan. 19. In addition to the first news broadcast, the day-long, multi-sim event will begin at 9 a.m. SLT and feature a special presentation by MNM CEO, Cadence Juran, as well as five of Second Life's hottest DJs. All news media representative are invited to attend the event at the MetaNetwork Media location on Synergy Island (115, 154, 22)

AGENDA

9 a.m. CEO Cadence Juran address followed by premier broadcast of MetaNetwork News
9:30 a.m. Broadcast loops during social and networking opportunity
10:45 a.m. Broadcast loops ends to prepare for DJs
11 a.m. to 1 p.m. DJ Justice Rolls of WJAM Radio
1 p.m. to 3 p.m. DJ StarChild Sinclair of WJAM Radio
3 p.m. to 5 p.m. DJ Tyago Kidd
5 p.m. to 7 p.m. DJ Brian Nicholas - DoggLounge
7 p.m. to 9 p.m. DJ Chilly Cummins



METANETWORK MEDIA
Television For Generation M

Synergy Island, MetaNetwork Media (115, 154, 22) Cadence Juran host
JT World, Fungo/Zyngo (140, 193, 26) Morphine Whiteberry host
Eyeles Island, eyeles (135, 184, 33) Raven Page host
Druid's Post, Druid's Post (150,150,30) Lukeone Groggan host
Ginny (202, 64, 23) Carly Meads host
Second Oasis, The Seventh Sun (240, 156, 22) Pollywog Gardenvale host
Dublin, Dublin (149, 104, 26) Ham Rambler host
Costa Rica, Laguna Dela Arenal (133, 172, 22) Giancarlo Takacs host
JT World (139, 138, 64) Kadena Whitfield host
Atlantic Beach (178, 130, 22) Cruz Control host
Cartier (128, 233,45) Clist Broome host
Glam World 2 (206, 151, 26) Minnu Palen host
Glam World (36, 178, 24)
Miles Island (95, 101, 22) Balder Miles host
Island Depot (99, 131, 23) Travis Ristow host
Gnome (137, 49, 29) Gypsy Paz host
Oasis Island, Backyard Court (161, 99, 29) Derrick Steward host

LOCATIONS

For more information or to arrange an interview, contact:
WordWright Singh
Communications Director
MetaNetwork Media
wsingh@metanetworkmedia.com

NEWS BITES

INSULTING ATTACK

MEMBERS of SL's Muslim community were outraged by sick anti-Islam 'jokes' at the Little Red Mosque sim. It features a 'Virgin Avatar Recruitment' poster, and a man ripping open the throat of a young lamb in a caricature of supposed Islamic practise.

RESEARCH CLAIM

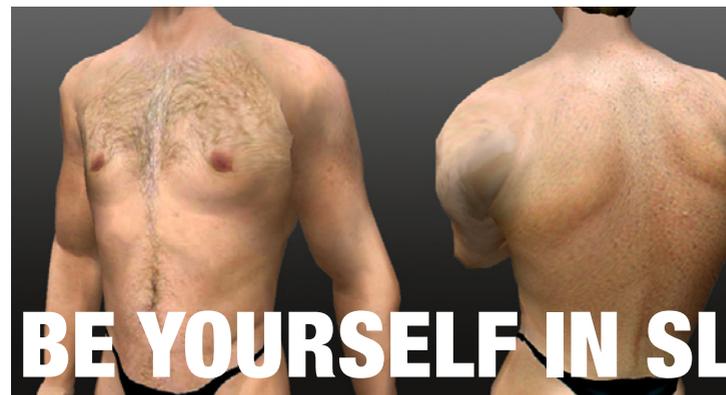
RESEARCHERS in Texas believe SL can be used to help treat Asperger's syndrome. The Dallas Center for Brain Health says communication between sufferers and physicians through avatar conversations builds confidence for similar RL situations.

TELLING LL TALES

THE Lab has launched a search for the best avatar stories, according to a recent blog post by Catherine Linden. She has called for SL stars and professionals to send in their stories to the Lab by filling out a form on the blog.

FUTURE SCIENCE

THE Sbarro Health Research Organisation has established a functional virtual lab in-world to help train young scientists in the fields of genetics, molecular biology and medicine.



BE YOURSELF IN SL

'PHOTOSKINS' ARE BECOMING INCREASINGLY POPULAR *By GINGER CAZALET*

THERE are dozens of ways to jazz up your avatar in SL, but only one to make it that bit more individual – photorealistic skin.

The so-called 'photoskins' are proving more popular than ever with residents, leading to a growing industry dedicated to their tricky and complicated creation. Photorealistic av creators take RL photos of people and transform them into 3D skin textures, including blemishes like facial hair, pores and moles. The process of making them differs greatly from that of creating the usual, painted SL skins.

Chip Midnight, creator and owner of CMFF PhotorealisticSkins and Clothing, was the first to coin the term 'photoskins'. He said: "You need photos that show

all parts of the body in fairly high resolution with nice even lighting and minimal shadows.

QUALITY

"The photos are carefully fitted to the avatar templates using one or more of several viable techniques, like using morphing software or smart objects in Photoshop. Once fitted to the templates they're all blended together using over-painting and cloning to create a finished skin."

Photoskins are usually of high quality, but the laborious creation process means they carry a high price tag.

Wilster Winkler, creator and owner of Hyper-realistic Skins, said: "The process of aligning and tweaking all different layers of pictures and making them look uniform and seamless is very time consuming, even for a 512x512

file. The hard work process of making a well done job translates immediately into a quality product."

But the cost of immortalising your RL self in SL remain very high, with photoskins costing between L\$6000 and L\$16000, depending on the size, details, and complexity of the skin you want made.



Purple Rose
JEWELRY & FASHION

2008

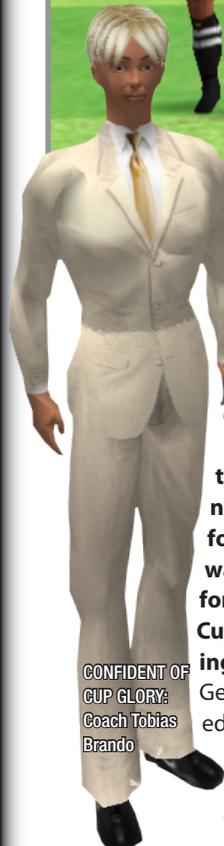
Mr. January
Eche Riverview

Purple Rose
Model of the Month Competition
For Info Contact: Aliyeh Yifu
or Visit Purple Rose Jewelry

EVEN IN SL GERMANY WIN!

DOING THEIR RL TEAM PROUD:
The SL Germany players warm up

By KONSTANTIN WAECHTER



GERMANY NOW HOT FAVOURITES FOR THE WORLD CUP

T H E R E were goals galore at newBERLIN on Wednesday as the German national SL football team warmed up for the World Cup by thrashing rivals Italy. Germany ended up winning the friendly match ten goals to three

after completely dominating the game, as the avs look to replicate the success of their better-known RL equivalents. Their opponents, who were late replacements for France, were left shell-shocked by the result, and will have to improve if they are to mirror the RL Italian team in becoming world champions. Germany coach Tobias Brando, whose team trains at their own stadium in newBERLIN by the television tower, said he was pleased with the result: "We are well

prepared for the World Cup in February." So far, ten teams have confirmed they will take part in the competition, the first ever in SL, which begins on February 20.



CONFIDENT OF CUP GLORY: Coach Tobias Brando

ITALY DESTROYER: MikeDavid15 Chevalier

GERMAN MAESTRO: Gerry Seisenbacher

AVS DISCOVER RL!

AUGMENTED REALITY: Merging the virtual world with the real

AVATARS could soon be stepping into the real world thanks to new ground-breaking research.

By COYNE NAGY

Avatar Tobey McElroy, a graduate student working under the supervision of Blair Potluck at the Georgia Institute of Technology in Atlanta, USA, has been working on a project known as 'Augmented Reality'. AR enables the merging of virtual and real world video using patterned paper which can match the SL graphics to the real background, such as a virtual car driving across a real table.

a life size avatar into the vision of the headset wearer. McElroy was enthusiastic about practical uses for the technology: "What about having avatars sit around a real coffee table, while we talk and interact with them? Machinima producers can use our client to incorporate real actors and locations." For more info, visit arsecondlife.gvu.gatech.edu.



GRADUATE GENIUS: Tobey McElroy presents his AR project

GINNY SALE SPARKS FRENZY

SHOPPERS QUEUE FOR HOURS TO BE FIRST TO SNAP UP THE BARGAINS By KITTY OTOOLE

HANDBAGS at dawn greeted SL's 'Sale of the Century' at Last Call on Friday, as dozens of avatars queued for hours to snap up fashion bargains.

The sale, which kicked off at 9am SLT, had been hugely anticipated by fashionistas, as it was the last chance to buy designs by Ginny Talamasca before she left SL for good – and the majority of her creations were available for just L\$100.

avatars struggled to access the shop once the sale started, and the inevitable lag kicked in. Fashion fan Dieudonnee Beaumont said: "It was worse than the RL sales. We couldn't move,

it was bad – it took me three days to enter the shop, but I got what I wanted and more."



FASHION MOB: Bargain hunters on the move

LAST CALL: Fashionistas flock to the store to snap up bargains

FRUSTRATION

Some anxious avatars waited on the sim borders hours before the sale started, and beautiful bride Starla Jewell refused to let her marriage later that day get in the way of shopping. There was also frustration as

your mail @

YOURMAIL@THE-AVASTAR.COM

MISS UNIVERSE HEATING UP

NOOB LOVES SL

Hey Regis, **FORGET all the nonsense about banks and bans, there's only one talking point in-world for me at the moment - the Miss SL Universe contest!** This is what SL is really all about - some hot avs fighting it out to be named the best-looking in the whole virtual world. Of course, it will all be very diplomatic, I'm sure,

with all the girls wanting to do their countries proud. But deep down, I reckon they are going to be fighting tooth and nail (probably literally!) to be named Miss SL Universe.

While it is great that they all seem intent on raising awareness and cash for

their favourite causes, you know it is so competitive with each one wanting to get one over in the celebrity stakes, and get in your newspaper! And who to choose as a favourite? Hmm... for me it's Isabel Brocco and Pup Witherspoon. But I wouldn't say no to any of them!

Bring on the final - come on girls!

By C.B.

Dear Regis,

I joined SL this week and was very anxious because I have heard bad things about it in the newspapers. But my friends said I should join and so far I love it. On my first day I was met with nothing but kindness. The store owner at Sn@tch was really nice. I went to ETD and though I had no money the lady there gave me L\$5 to buy some discount hair. Everyone has been so kind to me!

By Pussy Setsuko

L\$500 E-MAILS
WRITE TO:
YOURMAIL@THE-AVASTAR.COM

ADVERT

Visit our Second Apartment Tower

Reasonable Rental Apartments

Living with Style and Service

Friendly Neighbourship Community

Regular Tenant's Meetings

Shopping and Leisure Center around the corner

LIONHEART TOWER 2
YOUR HOME IN SECOND LIFE
ALOHI COVE, 226, 115, 22





REGIS BRAATHENS

LATEX FETISHISTS

AS the US Presidential race hots up, one bizarre support group in SL is already claiming credit for Mitt Romney's win in the Michigan primary. The tongue-in-cheek 'Republican Latex Fetishists of SL' claim their rallying in SL "helped rocket the candidate to victory".

SLER OVERBOARD

THE Lab kept a low profile this week after its ban on banking. But while they tried to steady the ship, many have been jumping overboard with the uncertainty surrounding savings and the future of stock exchanges proving unbearable.

HERE'S YET ANOTHER FINE MESS YOU'VE GOT US INTO

THE DECISION WAS RIGHT – THE EXECUTION WAS POOR

I DON'T believe in unregulated banking, I don't believe the majority of SL banks were fair and I do think the Lab were right to ban them – but they have made a mess of it again.

You'd think lessons would have been learned after the overnight ban on gambling and the sudden introduction of VAT showed such abrupt actions often devastate people financially and cause a loss of faith in SL. A

few weeks time is not enough for banks to restructure and pay out to customers.

FIASCO

It was obvious from the start unregulated banking that would end in a fiasco. But nothing was done to inform residents about the possible perils of investing in SL 'banks'. No hint was given that they might be banned at any time. And in the aftermath, nothing has yet been done to help the victims, or those banks

struggling to refocus their business in such a short space of time. It would be wrong to ask LL to pay compensation, but some disreputable bank's funds could and should have been seized and redistributed.

A good move badly executed, once again. LL desperately needs better advisors and better leadership or this fiasco will be repeated over and over again.

regis@the-avastar.com

THE BODY LANGUAGE SAYS IT ALL!



IT'S amazing what vibes you can get from your virtual body language.

At The AvaStar of 2007 party I found myself sitting with Portuguese beauty Ana Luteitia. But as she stares disinterested into space, and I into my glass, it's clear I wasn't making a good impression! But when gorgeous Miss Norway, HarMonica Aabye sat down, the body language looks very different... or at least I like to think so!

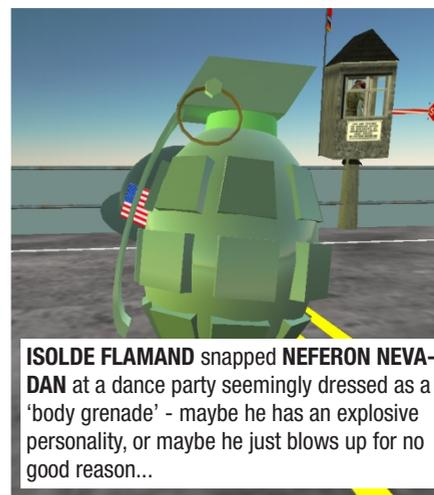
L\$500 PICS OF THE WEEK



Hats off to ANESSA STINE (on the right) who took this pic of some fantastic period costumes. Model DAHNI ELLA is also pictured.



What an old dragon – quite literally! Pic by C.S.



ISOLDE FLAMAND snapped NEFERON NEVDAN at a dance party seemingly dressed as a 'body grenade' - maybe he has an explosive personality, or maybe he just blows up for no good reason...



Be careful of the evil cat! SUNSHINE KUKULCAN, who took the pic, said it is one of the best avs in SL.

Lab-solutely awful!

Phil-ing blue!

Lagging behind!

IMproving

Sim-ply the best!



META-NEWS!

THE AVASTAR KEEPS YOU UP-TO-DATE WITH THE LATEST NEWS FROM THE METAVERSE

A EUROPEAN LEAD

AN EU commissioner believes Europe is surging ahead of the United States in embracing virtual worlds. Viviane Redding was speaking after the Computer and Electronics Show last week.

THE LAW'S AN ASS

LAWYERS should stay out of virtual worlds, according to a paper from American university UCLA. Law student Kevin Deenihan hit out at the use of RL courts, and called for disputes and punishments to be decided in-world.

FACEBOOK GOES ALL GAIA

By COYNE NAGY

GAIA Online is the latest virtual world to link up with popular social network site Facebook.

The Facebook application for Gaia is called OMG and allows avatars to play games, add friends and earn points which can be used in-world.

INTERACTION

Gaia had previously launched OMG for Bebo last December, and will now enable

users of both websites to interact with each other.

CEO Craig Sherman promised there would be more to come: "Gaia and social networks are similar in that they are

places that empower users to self expression and connect with friends, so bridging the two is a logical next step in the evolution of the internet. We're

not stopping here, there are several other popular social networks out there and we're building new features that will enable Gaia to be everywhere teens are online."



ADVERT

Bouncy Castles

by Good2 Go

Original Castle - L\$ 2500

85 prims

Min Size 2m x 2m
Max Size: 20m x 20m

Purple Castle - L\$ 2500

71 prims

Min Size 2m x 2m
Max Size: 20m x 20m

Also available
Purple Castle Tiny Version L\$ 2500
Only 43 prims Max Size 10m x 10m

LOW LAG

Unique Bounce Logic System
Handles Lots of Bouncers
Newbie and Tiny Friendly
Works at Different Sizes

Can Be Fully Retextured
Adjustable Bounce Force
Easy Operation and Setup
MOD No Copy No Trans

SLX Buyer Review:
★★★★★ This is a lot of fun, buy it!
Atsuko Otsuka on 2007-10-18

"I have a lot of fun creating immersive interactive experiences for avatars. Some have been based on real world fun, and others I could never do in the real world. This is one from the real world."
Good2 Go

Ponderama 25,145,38 (PG)

SL CLIENT TO RUN ON PS3?



By GWYNETH LLEWELYN

LLEWELYN PREDICTS A YEAR OF GROWTH, SUCCESS AND SURPRISES

AVASTAR analyst Gwyneth Llewelyn reveals her predictions for 2008 after giving her thoughts on 2007 last week:

SO what does this year hold for SL? In 2008, SL will still be growing and vibrant. In spite of all the doomsday predictions, tens of thousands of companies will set up in-world, as well as more universities.

IMPROVEMENTS

The world will grow to about 20 million users, pretty close to Facebook. Linden Lab, even without Cory Ondrejka as CTO, will expand its grid to other countries and establish good relationships with the European and, more importantly, the Far East markets.

There will also be a lot of technological improvements, as Havok 4 is released on the main grid, WindLight's new rendering engine becomes the standard client, the

Mono infrastructure will be running all existing scripts (and thus increase the running speed of scripts by a hundredfold), and the in-world Web browser will, at long last, make an appearance.

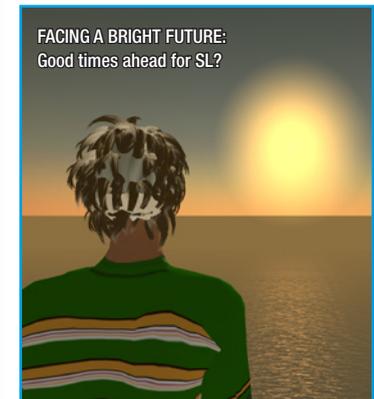
ULTIMATE GOAL

A lot of better APIs will increase integration between SL's grid and external servers - things like placing images directly onto prim faces will likely soon be experimented with, and although 'HTML-on-a-prim' is the ultimate goal, residents will be able to call external applications from within SL with more ease than they can today. It is very likely the reverse will be also true. Imagine an application that embeds SL on your Facebook profile!

The SL client will be run on the weirdest hardware, from the Wii to the Xbox or PS3, and possibly on a mobile phone as well.

In the mean time, a handful of new 'social virtual worlds' will pop up, gain a lot of media attention using hype like "SL done right", but after a few months they will either collapse under an unrealistic business model, or will have too much control in the hands of the parent company, causing people to return to SL.

As Accenture has predicted, virtual worlds of the future will run on open protocols - something which Linden Lab has been telling us since 2005.



FACING A BRIGHT FUTURE:
Good times ahead for SL?

BIZ BITES:

JTF LIQUIDATION

JT Financial has liquidated a further L\$3m of short term investments in an attempt to pay back customers following the ban on banking. The money was distributed through their PayPal account on Friday.

EURO HITS A HIGH

THE continuing weakness of the US\$ is having a big affect on European use of SL. The euroSLEX saw the value of one Euro break through the L\$400 mark for the first time as it reached L\$403.40, a record high for the exchange.

DIVIDENDS LATE

INVESTORS are being hit by the temporary closure of the WSE as companies struggle to pay dividends. MH Motors was unable to make its payments this week although CEO Fraguers Hock said they would be allocated soon.

ISE STILL GOING

THE International Stock Exchange will continue business as usual despite the ban on banking. Cocky Dagger, CEO of the ISE, is hopeful that the new rules will not affect the stock exchange too heavily.

a-stars



A-STARS gossip with Isabel Brocco, Babu Writer and Kitty Otoole

SL GUYS HAVE GOT GAME!



PUTTING NEIL STRAUSS TO SHAME: Guys show how it's done in SL

By CARRIE SODWIND. Pics by MISACHA VAUGHAN

NEIL Strauss, the self-proclaimed "world's greatest pick-up artist", was on the grid last Friday to share tips and tricks from his new book with residents.

The author of the famous book 'The Game' was reading from his follow-up, 'Rules of the Game', to a crowd of eager guys looking to learn a thing

or two about attracting the opposite sex. And SL guys proved they have game, as lots of hot female avs turned up to the after party - and not many went home alone!

Strauss' avatar NeilStrauss Nitely, who resembles his RL self, was presented to the audience by Doctor Hickman from NBH, who co-hosted the event with SL media producer Phoenix.

The pearl of SL jewellers



DANCING IN THE MOONLIGHT: Random Calliope with Hitomi Mokusel

By BABU WRITER

THE unique jewellery of designer Random Calliope was on display at a special exhibition on Sunday.

Visitors to the event at the Crescent Moon Museum in FairChang Village were treated to a free copy of a new necklace by Calliope called 'The Pearl'. The exhibition, which showcased past creations by Calliope all made purely of prims, was followed by a formal ball.

THE NEXT MISS UNIVERSE...?



ONE EYE ON THE CROWN: Stunning Miss Norway, HarMonica Aabye

OOH LA LA: Sultry Miss Canada, Cherie Parker

By GAETANA FAUST

EXCITEMENT is growing among the gorgeous contestants of the Miss SL Universe pageant ahead of the grand finale on Saturday January 19.

The 12 finalists, representing different countries around the globe, have been in the spotlight for the last couple of weeks and are gearing up for their big night.

Miss Norway HarMonica Aabye said: "I was excited just to make the top 12. That was a big accomplishment, in my eyes. The girls are all so beautiful and talented!" A-Stars girl Isabel Brocco also said she was "so excited" about the finale.

Miss Canada Cherie Parker said there was no clear favourite, but hopes good causes in SL and RL will benefit from the competition.

Glam it up!

By ISABEL BROCCO

ONE of SL's most famous fashionistas opened a new art exhibition to a full house in Glam World on Sunday.

Torrid Midnight has included romantic portraits and moving photography at the Expressions gallery, and among the crowd at the opening were plenty of fashion fans, including Avastar columnist Callie Cline.

GLAMOROUS: Aradia Dielli takes a moment out from socialising to pose for a-stars!

Keepin' it street



HOT STUFF: Clyde Saunders and Eche Rivierow (not seen Zanes Bikin) show off the new collection

By GAETANA FAUST

BAGGY jeans and striped polo shirts dominated the runway at the Mark Ecko fashion show at Club Mannequin on January 12.

Ecko, who designs edgy men's casual wear, wowed the enthusiastic crowd with his take on SL street fashion. Models showed off the rich details on the jeans, like contrasting stitching, large back pockets and bright, strategically-placed prints.

Signature Red Heels L \$350 by Mary Jane Chalandes (22, 95, 661)

Sophie "Romance" Hair L\$175 by Diversity Addictive (84, 202, 28)

Susie Q in Red Dress L\$100 by Simone! Simone (30, 60, 30)

The Rockabilly look returns with a vengeance. Look out for the 50's pin up look, fishnet stockings, "Brothel Sweeper" shoes, drain pipe pants and loud shirts. And don't forget the ducktail hair!

Black Rebel Sneakers L\$200 by PB - Earp (239, 240, 500)

Ducktail Hair in Black L\$200 by *Jetdoll* - Bangu (154, 5, 21)

CasinoShirt L\$175 by Simone! Simone (203, 238, 28)

by Solange Kerobase

Feat. Burk Bode

ROCKABILLY!

callie cline's

STYLE HOTLINE

LESS CAN BE MORE!



FASHION CAN BE CONFUSING, BUT TRY NOT TO OVERDO YOUR OUTFIT

UNDERSTANDING fashion on the grid can at times be like trying to work out what traders on the floor at the New York Stock Exchange are saying.

There are so many voices saying what's in, what's out, what's up and coming, what's over, and more.

LESS IS MORE

But as I like to say, "this is SL, it's YOUR life, YOUR style, and YOU get to decide what's in, for you, now, tomorrow". If that means finding your favourite fashionista to tell you what's in, great, and if it means disa-

greeing with them, GREAT! You can't really go wrong. Today, I want to share a little concept I often use - when less is more.

MESS

We can often go overboard with hair, make-up, jewellery, skins, shoes, layers, more layers and attachments, so that often our poor av is lost in a mess. And so in these pho-

tos I'm wearing a pair of classic slacks, a nice red shirt, some pretty shoes, a red manicure, a simple but stylish hair style and there you go, an eye-catching and classy look in hardly any time! The absence of rings, necklaces and gloves actually makes this outfit better than if it was 'cluttered up'. So this week, try taking some things OFF, and see what you can achieve using the 'less is more' idea.



WHAT'S HOT!

RAVING MAD

By CARRIE SODWIND

RAVERS are some of the worst dressed SLers!

Cluttered dance costumes, tattoos, cheap silver jewellery, psychedelic bikinis and triangle skirts do NOT score on the dance floor. Quadrapop Lane was spotted this week primmed-up in bad rave gear. The glo-skin is cool, but she needs to take advice from Klaatu Congrejo. Klaatu's skin-tight dark outfit emphasises her nimble dance moves, and her flexi-hair shakes to the music!



JUST BLACK AND WHITE

By CARRIE SODWIND

STYLISH TOZH REVEALED AS THE MYSTERY WOMAN AFTER AVASTAR APPEAL

A MYSTERY black and white harlequin featured in The AvaStar has been identified after an appeal to our readers. We promised L\$1,000 to find the owner of the stylish outfit - and discovered that person to be alternative

trend-setter **Tozh Taurog!** She told The AvaStar the secret behind her unique style. She said: "The outfit I put together around this fabulous freebie skin from **Free For Fae**. The hair is from **Deviant Kitties**, the shoes from **LicoLico**. The eyes and shape were a **Linden** original outfit and I just tweaked the colour. "I like to dress to reflect my mood more than anything. There are lots of

prettier avatars than me, lots of perfect barbies - why try and compete with them? "I experiment a lot. My favourite store is **Bare Rose**. Hands down. I love the diversity of the styles, the detail and the pure whimsy of it."



ANOTHER FAB OUTFIT: Decadence Maia from Bare Rose, boots from Maitreya, Necklace from PixelDolls.



HARLEQUIN: Tozh Taurog in her black and white outfit



cc
caLLie cLine

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INVENTORY SNEAK PEEK

By ISOLDE FLAMAND

I'M SO EXCITED ABOUT...

"...my compact and lipstick with built-in animations made by Vi-jay Ugglá of OmniPotent. They are made from sculpties and are a great prop for pictures. This was a great gift from my fashionisto friend Catero Revolution."

ROSLIN PETION OF TÊTE A PIÉD



I JUST ADORE...

"...my red hair called Torch Song created by Betty Doyle of Ingenue. It's very close to my own RL colour.

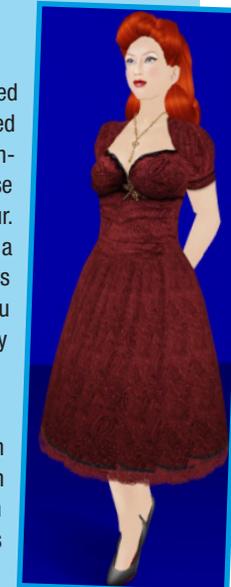
Whenever I want a pin-up look I go to this

retro hair which shows you what can be done when you think outside the box. This hair really complements my signature blue eyes by Miriel Enfield."



I AM MADLY IN LOVE WITH...

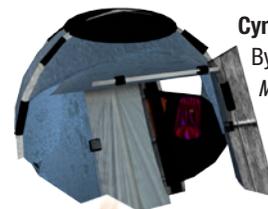
"...my red dress, called Lana, which was a freebie from Tuli Asturias to celebrate her new sim, Le Zoo. Her prim work is breathtaking, her textures are gorgeous, and I'm so impressed with the sculptie puff sleeves. It amazes me that she got it so crisp and clean!"



UNDER THE STARS



By TINA (PETGIRL) BERGMAN



Cyn-h tent

By Cynthia Wilder
Moothumb (22, 44, 314)

L\$370



L\$25

Campfire

By Garth FairChang
FairChang Calypso SW (65, 78, 30)



J's Backpack/

Treasure Hunter

By Jenne Dibou
Erehwon (91, 29, 39)

L\$370

Gray Squirrel
By Cloud Insoo
Second Wildlife (75, 96, 23)

L\$360



Camping Lantern With AO

By Jacqueline Trudeau
Trudeau Cay (188, 6, 21)

L\$200





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NEW SIMS

THIS WEEK: A MUSEUM, A SCI-FI SPACE SIM, A FLOWER EXHIBITION AND OIL PAINTING

PLAY THAT OLD SIX STRING: Guitar display at the Tech Museum

HIT THE RIGHT NOTES



CHECK OUT THE NEW TECH MUSEUM FOR ALL THINGS WEIRD AND WONDERFUL

By KONSTANTIN WAECHTER

EDUCATE yourself at the virtual replica of the Tech Museum of Innovation, The Tech (190, 158, 38), or even better become a curator of your own projects.

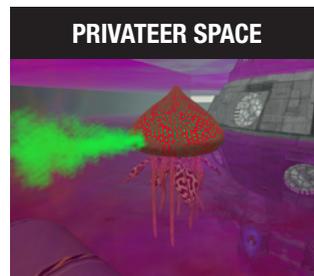
The Tech has organised a competition for talented engineers and artists of all kind who are looking for a new challenge. To watch a RL report on SL, head

ous fields, like engineering and the history of photography. Afterwards, hang out and recover on the roof deck. Guided tours are held Tuesdays at 11am SLT. Enter Aley Arai's Sci-Fi world at the **Privateer Space** sim (123, 133, 638). After arriving at the space truckstop, you can pick up your own spaceman outfit

lyfish-like creatures, colourful fogs and asteroid belts in this uniquely creative sim.

The **DynaFleur Art Installation** in Princetown South (217, 210, 66) combines the interactive virtual art experience with nature. Wander through the

PRIVATEER SPACE



to the Tech Theater, and in the Sample Exhibits section, you can find different displays from vari-

DYNAFLEUR



and spaceship to discover the outer reaches of the universe at the sim, which was the subject of a story by Gwyneth Llewelyn this week. Find weird jel-

INCANDESCENT



inner life of a flower, from the stem to its head, and experience a change in perspective. Get an oil painting made by an artist using a digital photo of your avatar at **Incandescent Gallery** in Yellow (232, 72, 64).



For advice write to
Randi Barracuda at:
dearrandi@the-avastar.com

DEAR

I JOIN IN THE GIRL TALK BUT I'M REALLY A MAN!



EVERYONE THINKS I'M ACTUALLY A WOMAN AND I DON'T WANT TO RUIN MY SL

Dear Randi: I'VE been in SL for a year, and my problems started when I picked my gender. I selected 'male' and became 'Shaggy Doo', stuck with a goatee I couldn't remove. So I switched to female and became 'Ruth'. I worked hard on my make-up, clothes and figure. I became immersed in building and making friends and began to sell my creations. I soon realised that, in SL, I really was a woman! I continued, figuring it was advantageous to be a blonde in retail, and business boomed. I always presented myself as a

lady, learned how to fend off advances, and began to understand more about the female side of life. I started working with a male av about a year ago, and soon realised he had a crush on me. I don't want to hurt him, and don't want to lose our friendship. Today, a female friend was talking to me in IM. I made her a gift, and a real girl talk conversation ensued. I know she might be devastated if she knew she was talking girl talk to a RL man. But we're good friends, and I want to keep it that way. What should I do? — S.R.

Randi says: You have three options. Sell the business to a male alt and say your lady is leaving for personal reasons, come clean about your RL gender, or leave things alone. You're now a successful woman professionally and socially, and the world needs more ladies (and gentlemen). Since no one is being hurt, enjoy your Second Life! There are a few hundred thousand men in your power, and no one can 'out' you but you.

WIFE WANTS MORE OF THREE-IN-A-BED ROMP

Dear Randi: WHEN my birthday was coming up, my wife asked if there was a fantasy I'd like to fulfil. I jokingly said a threesome with another lady, and she seemed to laugh it off. But on my birthday, she led me to a hotel with all manner of sex beds. Suddenly there appeared a gorgeous blonde escort, and the three-way was incredible for me, but my wife enjoyed it more. Two days later, I found them making love in our shower. My wife said she couldn't help asking her back for another go. Should I be worried? — G.B.

Randi says: These things backfire sometimes. Three-way bedroom activities are almost always bad for committed relationships. You may find out your wife is actually bisexual or lesbian, but at least for now you have pushed a button she didn't know she had. The two of you need to talk without your new friend present to find out where your relationship is. Good luck to you both.

ADVERT

**SEX LIFE ON THE ROCKS?
IS YOUR PARTNER CHEATING?
DO YOU HAVE A LOVE
DILEMMA?**

Randi is here to help. SL's best Agony Aunt will give the answers to all your personal problems.

Get in touch with Randi at:
dearrandi@the-avastar.com



RANDI

The Virtual World's
No 1 Agony Aunt

LESBIAN, BI OR JUST CURIOUS?

Dear Randi: I WORK at a club with my best girlfriend. We love to shop, talk about guys we meet, and have shared some of our deepest secrets from RL. Late one night recently we were talking when she suddenly blurted out, "I love you!" and revealed she wants a different kind of relation-

ship. After taking a few deep breaths, I said, "I love you, too!" I'm not sure if it was just the emotion of the moment. I've never been with a woman and am a little scared. Could I be a closet lesbian? — M.E.
Randi says: You could be. Or you could be bisexual. Or you could have been a curi-

ous girl in the middle of the night. Follow your heart, but by all means take it slowly. You should discuss with her whether or not she is really lesbian or bisexual. If you're both in the same place, then a fling could be harmless. But don't be pressured into doing anything you don't want to do.

RANDI'S PHOTO CASEBOOK FOR BETTER OR FOR WORSE, WEEK TWO:



to be continued...



How to...

Everything a newbie needs to know!

... MAKE THE MOST OF WINDLIGHT

THERE are plenty of ways to tweak the WindLight version of the SL viewer to make the graphics software work better.

First off, you need a decent graphics card for it to even run

at all. If you do have one, follow the options for WindLight by selecting Edit, Preferences and then Graphics. In the window is a Quality and Performance setting, which offers options of Low, Mid, High or Ultra. Simply select the quality you want, and everything is automatically adjusted.

There are also more complex options to help you create an optimal

experience. They can be found under World, Environment Settings and then Environment Editor. Here you can set your time, including to that of whichever sim you are in, and choose the amount of cloud cover and water appearance.

BEAUTIFUL

If you feel even more daring, click on the Advanced Sky or Advanced Water buttons and you can make your own preset keys for your favourite environments. So now you can fully enjoy WindLight and the way the water sparkles and comes alive. It's a beautiful world!



ALL AT SEA: WindLight options

ADVERT

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or teleport to English Village



Freebies

SL's best FREE stuff!

THIS WEEK: STARFRUIT SMS MESSAGES

By PETRONILLA PAPERDOLL

GOOD freebies often involve a certain degree of advertising.

That's not a bad thing, if it enables residents to enjoy a useful service for free - and as long as RL companies releasing freebies understand and respect SL and its peculiar tools and communication style.

FASCINATING

If you see a blue phone booth with a star on your travels around the grid, you have found a freebie like this, with the main one at Starfruit (200, 133, 23). Usually, there is also a long queue of avatars waiting to enter. Why? They are waiting to send SMS text messages to mobile phones of RL friends for free, thanks to Swiss companies Starfruit

and Swisscom.

The offer is a limited but fascinating one - you simply have to type a command before the number and the message arrives at once in RL. It is also possible to grab a phone booth for free and rez it in your own place, offering this service yourself at no cost. People can jump from one phone booth to another, discovering new places and meeting new people.



FREE SMS: A Starfruit phone booth

DOS AND DON'TS OF GIVING GIFTS

By GAETANA FAUST

DO

+

DON'T

- + Use your building skills to make something unique and special.
- + Frame a favourite snapshot of you and a friend. It's a gift that's sure to please.
- + Think about RL things of meaning or value to your friends.
- + Include a card, notecard, or other greeting with your gift.
- + Above all, demonstrate that you've thought about what the other person would enjoy.
- Feel you have to spend a lot of money for gifts.
- Just dump a folder on someone. You can use a free gift box to package your presents.
- Assume that everyone you know celebrates the same national or religious holidays.
- Give a gift without saying who gave it and why.
- Forget to say thank you to friends for their gifts to you.

My First Day in Second Life

SWAPPING INFO

By KONSTANTIN WAECHTER

SWAPSS Swenson founded the German SL community, SLinko.

THE AVASTAR: What problems did you face in SL at the beginning?

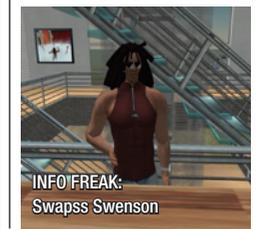
SWAPSS SWENSON: A lack of information. I tried out everything, scripting, animations, building etc. When playing around with the technical aspects of SL, I had to learn quite a lot. For example when building I often encountered problems with the textures.

TA: How did you solve these problems?

SS: First I searched for solutions in the English blogs but I didn't find satisfying solutions there. That is why I founded the first German forum in SL, SLinko.

TA: What are your tips for newbies about finding info?

SS: To get information in the existing blogs and forums. Newbies don't have to make the same mistakes again as they can learn from older residents.

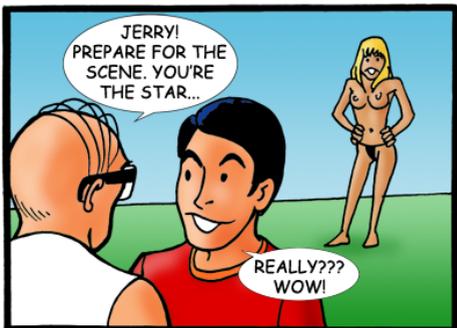
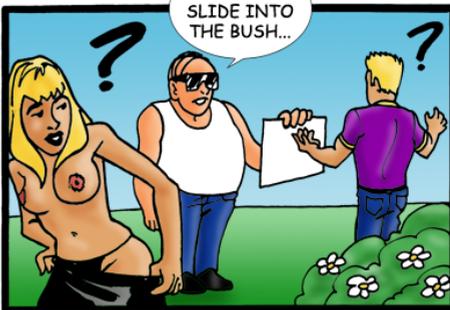


INFO FREAK: Swapss Swenson

HOT Slaggin'

"TROUBLING SET"
part 2 of 2

ARTWORK:
Ermanno Spitteler
Cecil Hirvi



© Andrea Manfredini 2008

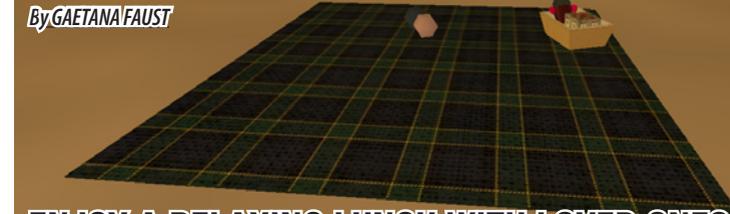
THE GUIDE TOP EVENTS AND ENTERTAINMENT

THIS WEEK: PICNIC SPOTS

LIFE'S A PICNIC

PARADISE:
Elim Island

By GAETANA FAUST



ENJOY A RELAXING LUNCH WITH LOVED ONES

A QUIET picnic in a beautiful park is the perfect way to relax in SL.

Tranquillity Garden in Achemon (70, 122, 109) is lush and green, the perfect locale for a hushed afternoon of laziness under a tree. Read a book, watch a stream roll by or munch sandwiches at a picnic table, while the birds chirp and the fish swim beneath the surface of a quiet pond. Beauty abounds at **Joy Isle** (135, 205, 23) where the lake is filled with swans and your picnic blanket under a fine old tree is shaded by a big umbrella. Take a walk and enjoy the trees, the water, the flowers and all of the hidden romantic places in the rolling hills.

Add some variety to your picnic

by trying out the 'paradise blanket' at **Elim Island** in Pearl dAlliez (94, 206, 22). You can be magically transplanted to a castle, a cafe or an Arabian palace, according to your desire - or just lie on the beach with a loved one and a picnic basket.

REFRESHING

Enjoy some quiet time on a bright red picnic blanket at **Country Gardens** in Lunar1s (36, 232, 47). There are no crowds to bother you as you wile away an afternoon amid trees and flowers. Head up the hill from the **Brightfield Beach Club** and you'll find quite a spread laid out under a tree. Wasting the day was never so refreshing, as you nibble and nap the afternoon away.

COSY COPSES CENTRAL PARK



Stroll through the formal gardens and shady trees and have a rest on one of the many picnic benches. Where: Central Park (128, 128, 0)

PEACE AND QUIET SERENITY PARK



Enjoy strawberries and cream on a comfy quilt in the peaceful and enchanting garden. Where: Skiddaw (110, 19, 28)

LIGHTING THE WAY ANGEL BEACH NORTHFACE

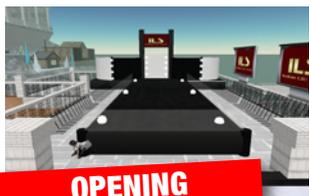


The inside of the lighthouse is a unique place for a picnic. Where: Fernweh (25, 184, 22)

1.18. - 1.24.

DON'T MISS! —

All times are given in SL Time



OPENING

ILS STYLE

Enjoy some elegant Italian style at a fashion show for the opening of the Italian Life Style sim. Designers on show include Callie Cline and Shai Delacroix.

When: Jan. 20, 13:00

Where: Bilogorac (142, 152, 84)



ENTERTAINMENT

THE DA VINCI CODE

If you managed to miss the cinema release of the hit film The Da Vinci Code or if you just want to see it again, come along to this free showing.

When: Jan. 19, 13:00

Where: Driscoll (190, 190, 86)



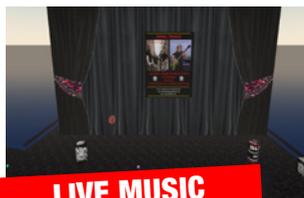
NIGHTLIFE

GRAND BALL

The spooky but stunning Belmont Abbey hosts a Victorian ball featuring a costume contest.

When: Jan. 24, 17:00

Where: ACTIV8 III (205, 82, 21)



LIVE MUSIC

SPIRAL TRANCE

The award-winning hard rockers will make their second appearance in SL at the Back Porch.

When: Jan. 23, 19:00

Where: OD Designs (24, 44, 21)



FASHION

VICTORIAN STYLE

Check out designs from Timeless Elegance, Historical Heroines and all the period favourites.

When: Jan. 20, 12:00

Where: Dublin 3 (241, 158, 25)



EVENT OF THE WEEK!

REUTERS AT THE WEF

Adam Reuters will talk to some of the biggest names in business at the World Economic Forum, including Martin Sorrell, Tim O'Reilly and our own Philip Rosedale. See secondlife.reuters.com for more details.

When: From Jan. 23

Where: Reuters (78, 114, 21)

EVENTS OF THE WEEK

All times are given in SL Time



OPENING

THE WHARF MALL

The mall celebrates its grand opening with an afternoon of fun and entertainment, with Brixton Canning performing live.

When: Jan. 20, 12:00

Where: Fairchang Wharf (165, 210, 25)



LIVE MUSIC

ALDOMANUTIO ABRUZZO

The performer kick starts The Lunacy Full Moon Concert series with a 90 minute set of improvised music to meditate on the wonders of the heavens.

When: Jan. 23, 15:00

Where: Yongnam (240, 27, 687)



LIVE MUSIC

SUZY WISE

Fans of R&B and soul music are in for a treat at this concert by Suzy Wise, who will present work from her first solo album, 'Visions'.

When: Jan. 23, 14:00

Where: SlangLife (161, 34, 26)



EVENT OF THE WEEK!

DEEDEE FUNDRAISER

Head to the Crown and Pearl bar for a charity date auction, the climax to a week of fundraising by the venue for cancer research in honour of DeeDee Fadoodle.

When: Jan. 19, 12:00

Where: Oropesa (189, 134, 23)



NIGHTLIFE

FASHION PARTY

Ambergris will host a fashion party with prizes on offer for the best 'Deadly Fashions' - so come along if you dare.

When: Jan. 22, 17:00

Where: Knot (227, 139, 67)

WANT TO SEE YOUR EVENT HERE?

DO you have an event which you would like to see published in The AvaStar's Events section? If so, email us details at news-desk@the-avastar.com.

INTERVIEW

The AvaStar: What is your best feature?

Camilla Straaf: I'm often told I have a good eye, and see what others miss. Also my willingness to help whenever possible.

TA: How do you spend your time in SL?

CR: I'm always busy creating new body shapes, as I get many custom orders. I also spend time exploring, taking pictures, shopping and just chillin' with friends.

TA: What would you change in SL?

CS: I would put an end to lag and make everything rez immediately, and create a HUD that edits attachments like hair instantly, having every item in the exact place. If I only could...

TA: What is the most precious item in your inventory?

CS: My body shapes. Each shape I've made is unique and has its own story since I provide one-to-one services. I put a lot of passion into my work.

TA: If SL had a president, who would you vote for?

CS: SL has a fluid and self-adapting social structure, so I really don't see the need for a president.



CAMILLA HAS A SHARP EYE FOR SL BEAUTY, AND HIDES A NAUGHTY SENSE OF HUMOUR UNDER HER HEAVENLY SET OF CURVES

AVA - ID CARD

NAME: CAMILLA STRAAF PROFESSION: Body shape and make-over designer
BIRTH DATE: 3/7/2007 ATTITUDE: Passionate about beauty