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“The Four Arts”
- A prototype interactive game for
engaging and interacting with Chinese
culture using touch screen interfaces

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Abstract

The main objective of this project is to explore the possibilities of digital media, to help users understand traditional Chinese culture through an immersive virtual experience. Through playing an interactive game one experiences and explores Chinese culture. Chinese culture is rooted in an ancient history, which might be difficult for other cultures to understand clearly and fully (Moore, 1967). Chinese language is poetic but it can even be obscure to even native Chinese speakers. Full understanding of traditional Chinese philosophy can take many years of learning, reflection and instruction.

“The Four Arts” aims to introduce Chinese culture through music (“Qin”), the Chinese traditional board game (“Qi”), Chinese traditional calligraphy (“Shu”), and Chinese traditional brush painting (“Hua”). The single-player game is based on the “Four Arts” and has been designed in Adobe Flash for a touch screen display. Users can experience traditional Chinese culture through play, which will help them to learn about key features of traditional Chinese culture and related philosophical concepts. To evaluate the effectiveness of the design, a qualitative methodology was applied for user testing. The results suggest that interactive computer game can help users appreciate and understand aspects of Chinese culture. The open-ended conversations with the participants have provided useful feedback on future design improvements for “The Four Arts”.

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