

# Video gamers with violent moods to be matched like-for-like

Developer lodges patent in the UK to monitor body language for any aggressive behaviour

By Steve Bird

VIOLENT video gamers will be matched with other aggressive contestants and suitably gory games after Sony PlayStation developers unveiled plans to monitor the psychological state of players.

In a move that critics warn could create a "rage station", Sony Interactive Entertainment has lodged a patent in the UK outlining proposals to analyse a player's heart rate, facial expressions, body language and any violent behaviour or language.

The application, filed with the Intellectual Property Office, explains how an "emotion processor" will scrutinise pupil dilation and skin response to stress. Developers are even exploring creating a "psychometric or behavioural test embedded within a game or app" to better offer players a game or opponent based on their mood.

The biometric data proposals have raised the prospect such a console could encourage unhealthy behaviour in children and teenagers.

The patent, which is still pending, has also led to fears the multibillion-pound gaming industry could obtain access to highly personal and sensitive information. Sony Interactive Entertainment, based in Tokyo, failed to respond to repeated requests for

'Any tech that relies on recommender systems can drive users to more extreme content'

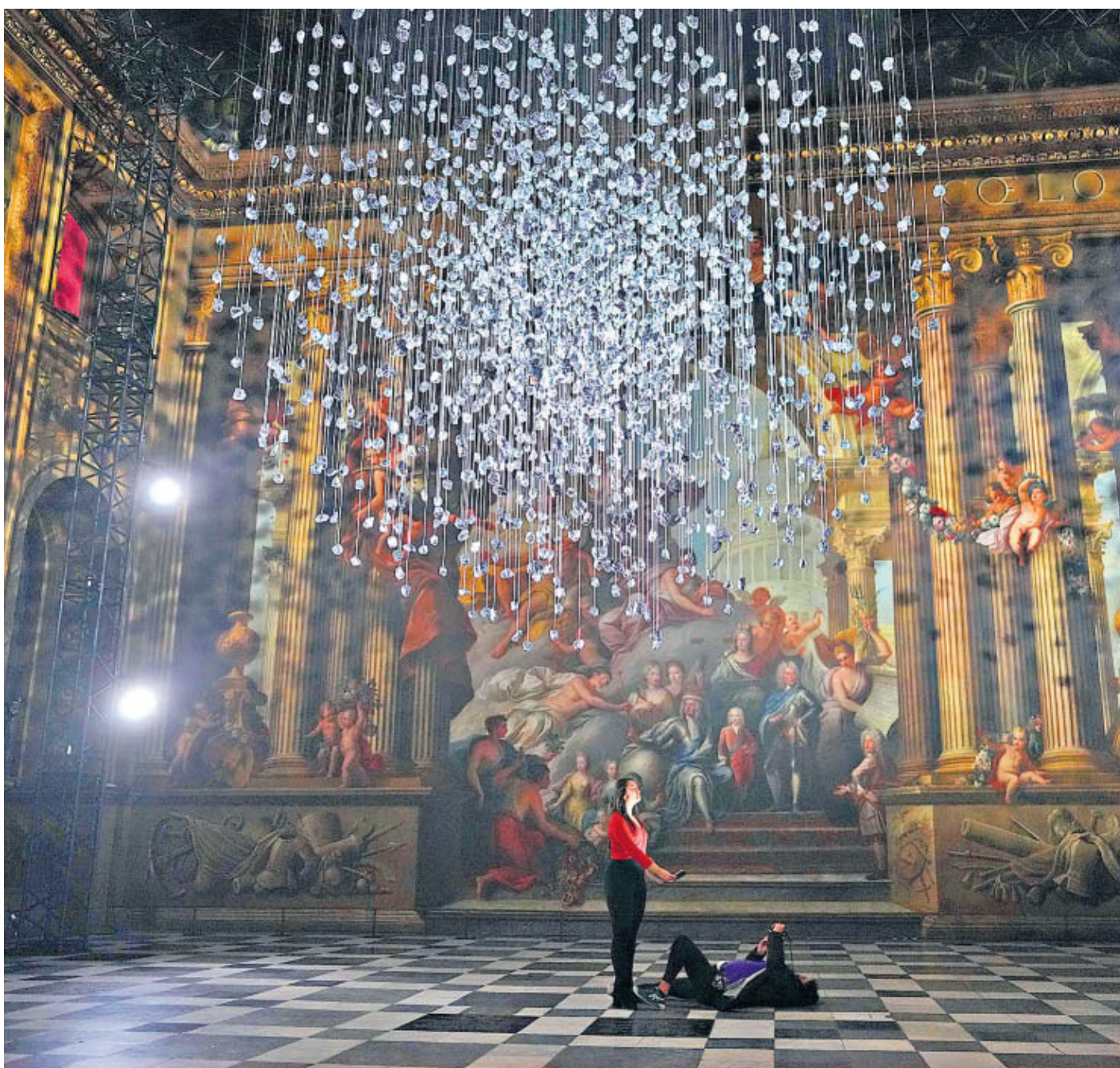
a comment. The invention, called "game player selection based on players emotional states", explains how the console's controller, microphone and webcam could be used to monitor a player.

The 20-page patent, seen by *The Sunday Telegraph*, says the "emotions processor" will monitor "gaming actions" such as "rage quitting", "slamming a controller", "button smashing" and "game taunts" where players goad or swear at one another online.

It says "physiological measurements" such as "heart rate, galvanic skin response, pupil dilation, and the like can be treated as indicators of calm or stress". Analysis of a player's "body language" will allow them to create a "skeletal model" so "known poses" can be "associated with relevant moods".

It adds that an "evaluation processor" will "compare the emotional state of the user with those of other players to identify players in a similar emotional state and/or with similar emotional historical data". Then, "close matches may then be paired", it said, adding: "This will tend, for example, to match aggressive players with each other rather than with less experienced players or those who do not show signs of aggression or frustration during play."

Dr Richard Graham, a consultant child and adolescent psychiatrist and online harms lead at Royal College of Psychiatrists, said: "Any technology that relies on recommender systems, which we know from social media can drive users to more extreme content over time, risks replacing the opportunities of a PlayStation with the heated echo chamber of a 'rage station'."



**Nova and above** Paul Cockshedge's *Coalescence* is displayed at the Old Royal Naval College in London. Inspired by the texture of a high-carbon coal, it is illuminated in a display that resembles a supernova.

# Lost portrait of Oscar Wilde's sister turns up after 128 years

By Dalya Alberge

THE lost portrait of Oscar Wilde's tragic younger sister, Isola, has been discovered after 128 years.

The Irish wit, poet and dramatist, whose masterpieces include *The Importance of Being Earnest*, never got over her sudden death, aged just nine, following a fever.

The physician who attended her remembered her 12-year-old brother's "inconsolable grief", and one of Wilde's friends later wrote that, on a late-night walk in Paris, he spoke of Isola "dancing like a golden sunbeam about the house". Wilde had treasured her portrait, describing it as "so simple, so powerful, so pretty. It is perfect."

He gave it pride of place above the fireplace in the drawing-room of his home in Tite Street, Chelsea, where it remained until his 1895 arrest for gross indecency.

At his death in Paris in 1900, aged just 46, one of his few possessions was a touchingly decorated envelope containing a lock of Isola's hair.

The whereabouts of the portrait, a bas-relief plaque, had long been a mystery. It was created by American sculptor John Donoghue, whom Wilde befriended during a year-long lecture tour of America in 1882, having announced on his arrival at customs in New York City that he had "nothing to declare but his genius".

Measuring 355mm by 279mm, it depicts a seated figure and is inscribed with the third stanza of Wilde's poem *Requiescat*, which has long been interpreted as having been written in memory of Isola: "Lily-like, white as snow, / She hardly knew / She was a woman, so / Sweetly she grew."

Author Rob Marland writes of the portrait's discovery in America in a forthcoming paper for *The Wildean*, the academic journal of the Oscar Wilde Society, published in January.

It came to light when he was researching Donoghue and began corresponding with Fr. William M. Quinlan, parish priest of St John in Darien, Connecticut, who has a longstanding interest in the artist's work.

After reading a Wilde biography, Fr. Quinlan was intrigued by its references

to Donoghue – as an "Irish-American guy, like myself".

An online search had led him to a portrait bearing Wilde's stanza, although there was no indication that it had actually belonged to him. It was being offered by a Florida antiques dealer, whose father had in turn purchased it. He bought it and subsequently realised its significance.

Looking up the artist's census record and his life history on a genealogy website led him to Fr Quinlan. He was taken aback when Fr Quinlan sent him a photograph of the portrait: "Even though it was only a small low-resolution image, I immediately recognised [that] this is the plaque. I asked him where did you get this [photograph]? He said, 'I don't just have the [photograph], I have the plaque,'" he said.

In his article, Mr Marland writes: "Wilde was hit hard by the sudden death of his sister, and would visit her grave for hours at a time... That he dis-

'Wilde was hard hit by the sudden death of his sister, and would visit her grave for hours at a time'

played Donoghue's plaque so prominently in his home suggests that he valued it not only as an artwork but also as a reminder of the sister he had lost."

He added that Donoghue was so touched by the poem that he made the plaque as a gift for Wilde, who once told a reporter that Donoghue's was "more beautiful than the work of any sculptor I have seen yet".

Acknowledging that the portrait seems to depict a young woman rather than a child, he believes that Donoghue had read Wilde's poem without knowing anything about his sister and that, in creating his gift, he was perhaps hoping to impress Wilde and benefit from the publicity that he was getting.

He suggests that Constance, Wilde's wife, may have taken it after her husband's arrest "with the intention, never realised, of returning [it] to him". She fled with their two sons to Europe, changing their surname to Holland, an ancestral family name.



American sculptor John Donoghue made the plaque for Oscar Wilde as a gift

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