

Simulated Experience

Nostalgia (for an impossible future)

1

Creating a mythology of the computer desktop.

A continuation of my Reality Threshold project, the Simulated Experience work will expand the universe I started building by bringing in more elements from adjacent worlds: nature, mythology, computer iconography and digital memorabilia. It will be a nostalgic fiction of sorts.

2

What worked? What didn't?

- + low-fi aspects of the experience; obviously a simulation;
- + bringing in 3D models of old computer parts
- + narration (subtitles) and sound giving a sense of direction;
- + good, slow pace when navigating the space;
- + mixing elements of nature, ritual and computer iconography (graveyard, labyrinth ceiling)
- + linear story

- the ending is not as strong as the beginning; the final shrine could (and should) be more grandiose; text unfinished;
- no interaction with the environment;
- the story stays within the world of the desktop; it could go deeper into the computer infrastructure (or not, but as a conscious decision)
- the piece feels broad, should be more specific;
- the visual vocabulary is not rich enough;

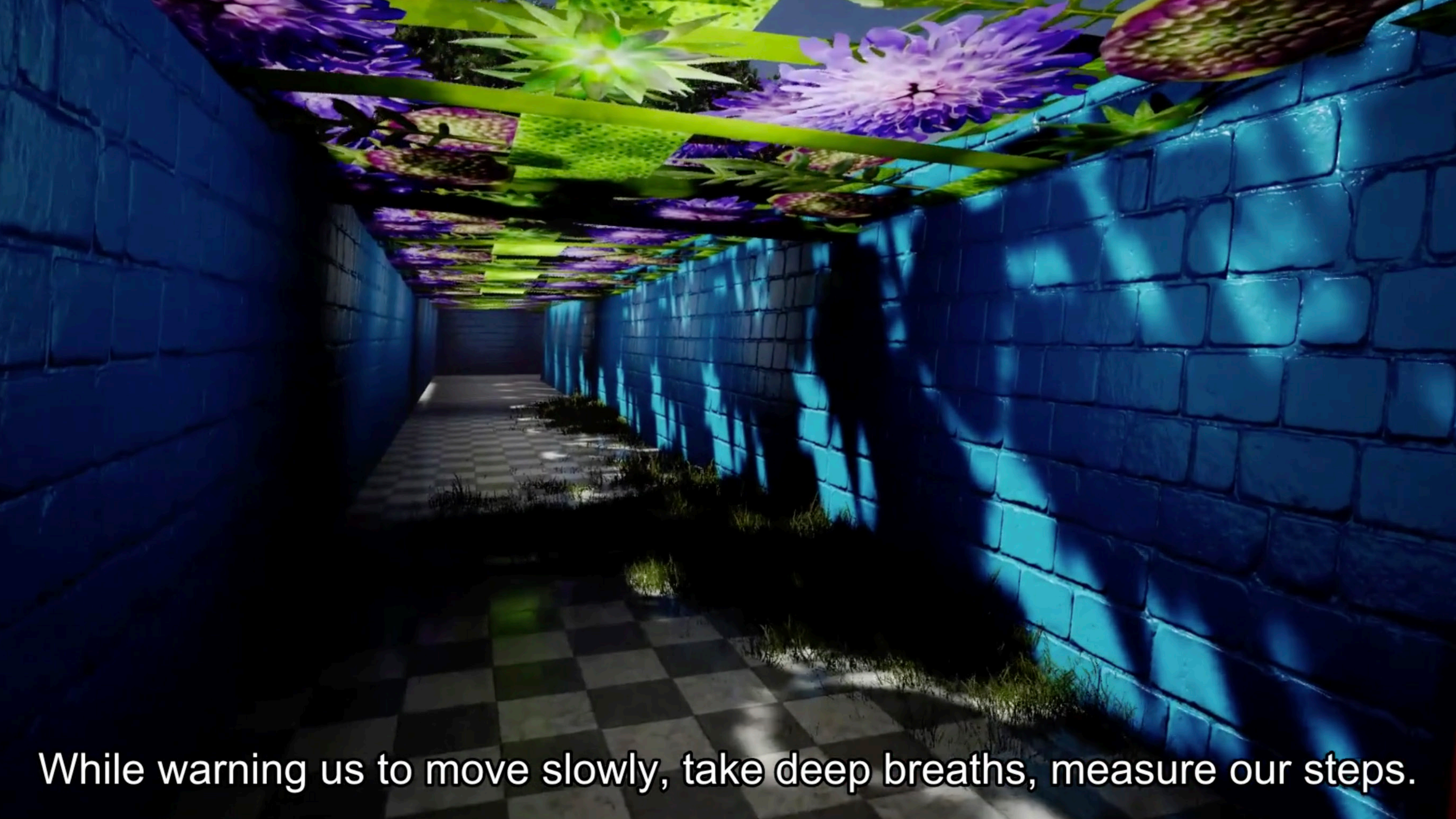
3

Areas of expansion

- + finish writing the script; reference structure of myths / Hero's Journey
- + improve the ending (the area past the cemetery;)
- + add interactive elements as part of the environment;
- + introduce a character—either a guide, or a companion for the viewer through the journey
- + re-record with smoother lateral (head) movements;
- + collage with 2D video?

4

How does it look, feel and sound?



While warning us to move slowly, take deep breaths, measure our steps.



Cecile B. Evans, *What the Heart Wants*



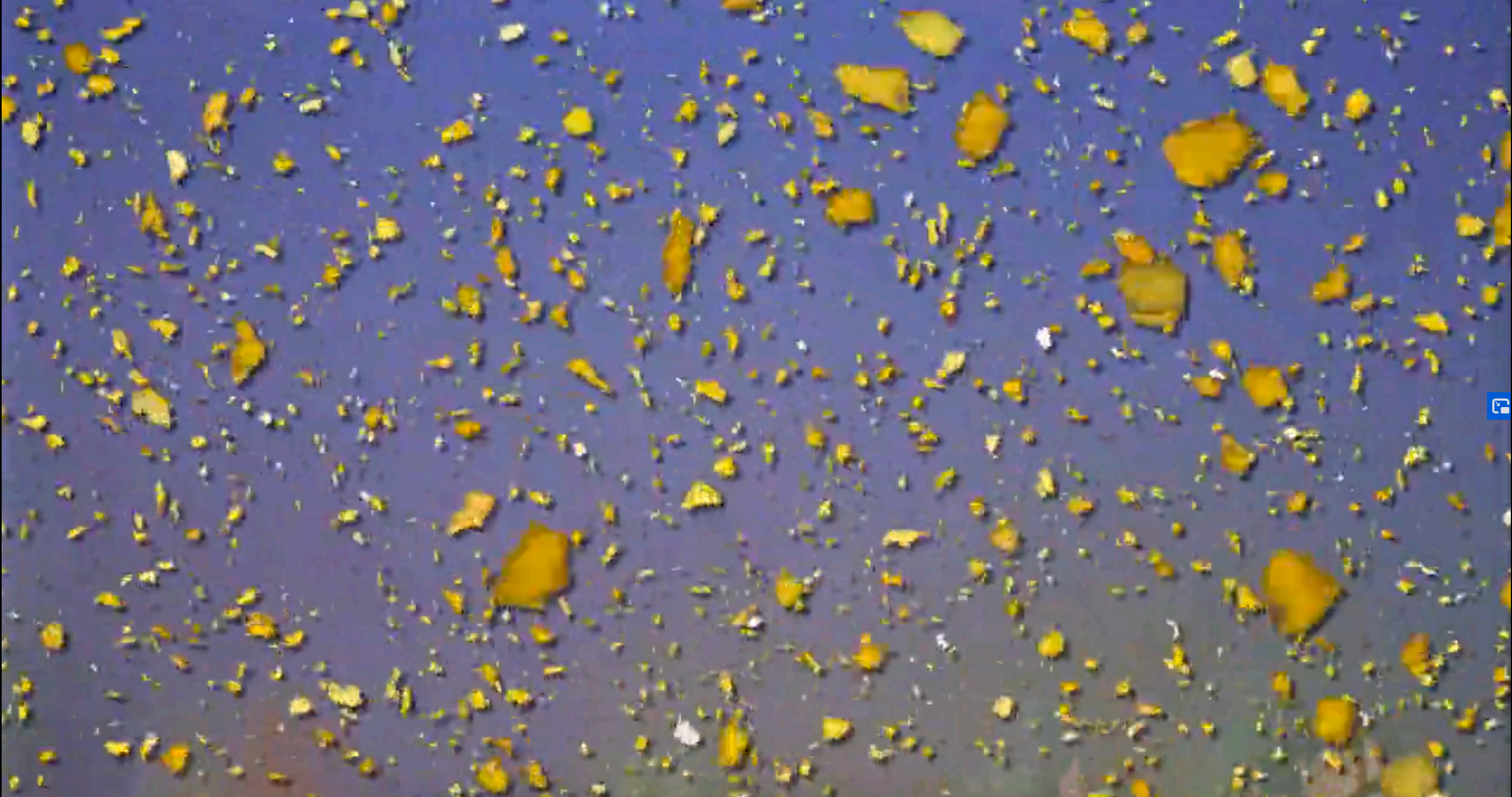
Cecile B. Evans, *What the Heart Wants*



Cecile B. Evans, *AGNES*

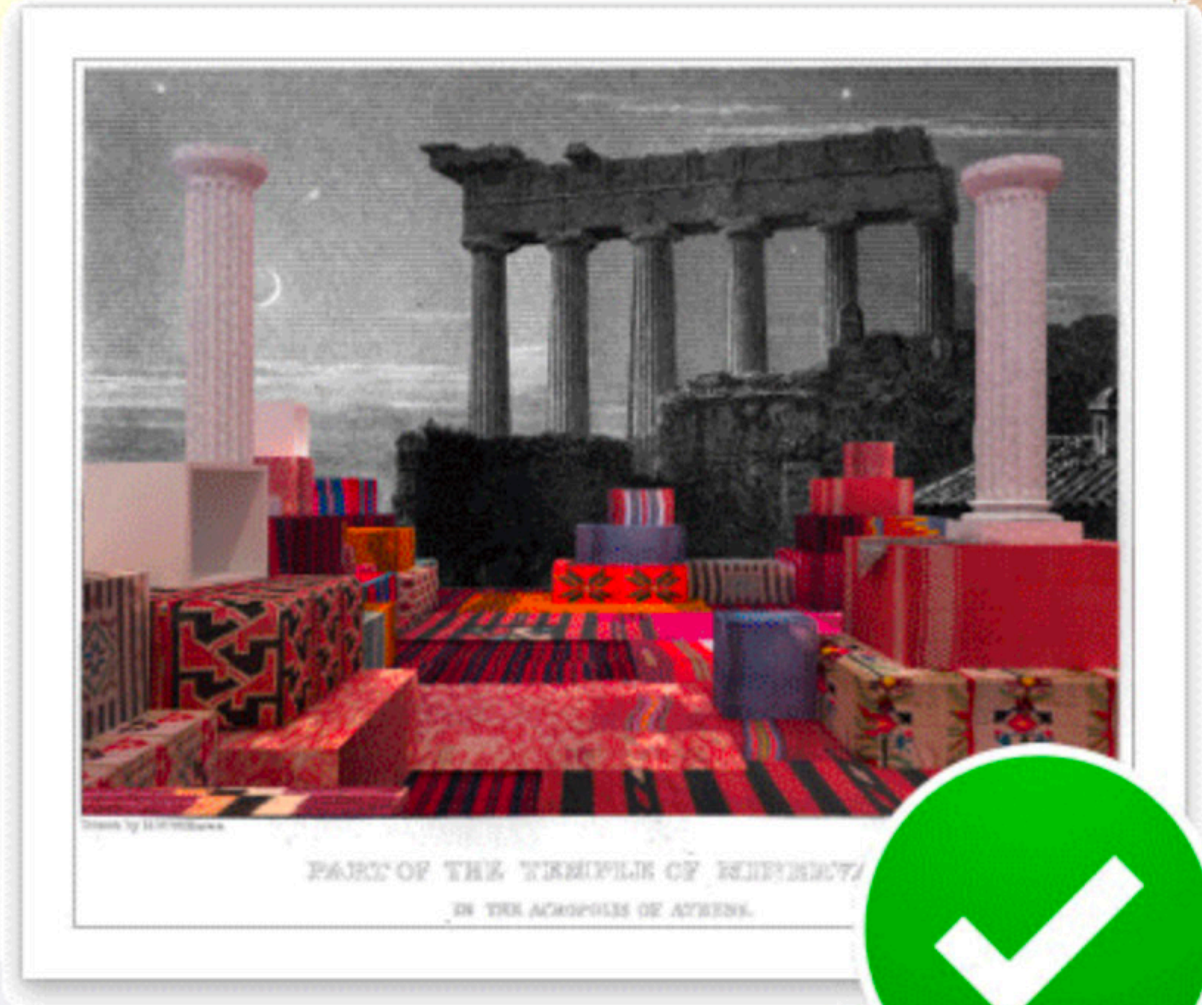


Sara Ludy, *Time We Have*



Andrew Norman Wilson, *Ode to Seekers*

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bb8_angelidakis_installation view II_foto uwe walter_300dpi.jpg





Andreas Angelidakis, *Domesticated Mountain*



Rick Silva, *Water Sign*

5

How does a user experience and interact with it?

- + I would like the presentation to still be a video;
- + The video could be accompanied by a short VR experience – sitting around the fire at the end and throwing desktop objects into the fire;
- + Potentially multi-player; create a sense of community sitting around the digital fire;

6

What are the key elements that will make people feel immersed in the simulation?

- + total immersion is not necessarily the goal; awareness of the absurdity is necessary;
- + narrative and sound;
- + moving through a few different spaces – “reality” in the beginning, hill, labyrinth, cemetery and final shrine;
- + elements of ritual;

7

What do you want the user to walk away with?

- + a sense of nostalgia for the slow, clumsy way technology could have been;
- + attachment towards (or even a sense of intimacy with) the entities inside the desktop ecosystem; digital animism;
- + the (collective) wonder / awe you feel when reading myths and fairy tales, or when being part of rituals;

8

What techniques are you missing? What do you need to learn to accomplish the goals?

- + having moving creatures inside of this world – a walking companion and 1-2 types of priests / wizards which tend to the rituals;
- + camera paths in Unreal and better recording;
- + continue learning modelling in Maya;

9

Timeline

by Mar. 30

- + research – visual and text; (are.na board)
- + Maya experiments for creatures;
- + updated treatment and schedule;

by Apr. 6

- + more Maya experiments for creatures; lock in a travel companion
- + expand intro scene, more focus on “outside” world and the labor;
- + work on text; create a word map and word tree of this piece;

by Apr. 13

- + re-build surroundings of cemetery, more dreamy ambiance;
- + wrap up intro scene;
- + labyrinth polish (fix wall textures; populate with more objects);

9

Timeline (continued)

by Apr. 20

- + re-build final shrine;
- + creature behaviors;
- + work on text;

by Apr. 27

- + camera paths & smooth camera movement;
- + sound;
- + finalize text;
- + recording;

10

Open questions

- + Whose perspective is this from? What is their motivation? What are they looking for? Do they achieve it?
- + Who takes care of the fire? Why is the fire there?
- + Who are these rituals performed for?
- + How does the character interact with the environment?
- + How can I introduce more of a human presence behind the camera movement?

<https://www.are.na/cezar-mocan/desktop-mythology>

Thank you.