

Edward Burtynsky Photos**Edward Burtynsky & Louis Helbig**

Visualizing Ideologies is a project where I want to explore ecology and the anthropocene within photography. My photography historically has been largely landscape and travel photography. I have a huge passion for conservation as well as expressing how beautiful the world can be. However this project would be a different turn, I have a variety of ideas that I will discuss on the following page.

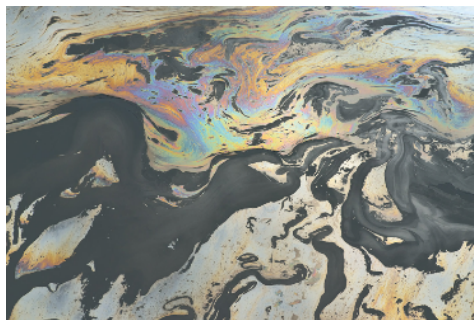
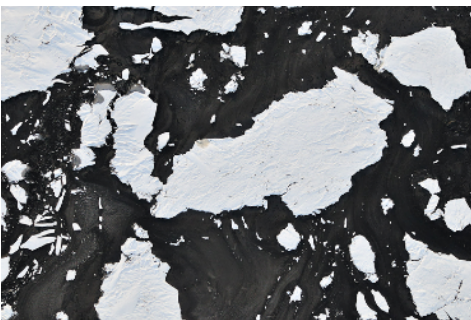
Edward Burtynsky and Louis Helbig are the first photographers that have drastically caught me eye.

Their work of photographing the devastating impact humans have on the planet is both sublime yet guilt tripping. I say this because the aerial view makes the earth look aesthetically pleasing in a photograph.

However I feel it guilt trips the viewer because by thinking they are beautiful photographs, automatically assumes that the subject is something beautiful. However the context and the subjects are not beautiful.

They are devastating.

I feel that the aerial view brings a new perspective on how we view earth. By showing so much information and large scale land in single photographs, it makes me realize how devastating the impact humans have on earth.

Louis Helbig Photos**Referencing**

<https://www.edwardburtynsky.com/projects/the-anthropocene-project>

<https://www.theguardian.com/environment/gallery/2018/oct/18/the-human-signature-edward-burtynskys-anthropocene-in-pictures>

<https://www.bjp-online.com/2018/10/edward-burtynsky-the-anthropocene-project>

<http://mythologicalquarter.net/2012/05/04/interview-louis-helbig/>

<https://mitpress.mit.edu/books/global-warming-and-sweetness-life>

<http://www.louishelbig.com>

Lucas Folgia Photos**Lucas Folgia & Richard Masrich**

Helbig's photographs were primarily aerial shots, contextually showing the results of human activity. Folgia & Masrich take a different approach. Their photographs are to the ground and at human level. I feel this technical approach makes them feel more relatable. As this is the typical view that humans would see, it's familiar. Folgia's Photograph & Masrich's Photograph, both photograph how humans not only treat nature, but also their own homes.

Firstly Folgia documents The American West. The life of living in a poorly economic area, where only jobs in Coal, Oil, Natural Gas, Farming, and Gold are booming. I feel that unintentionally, he has documented also how humans treat nature and their home. It feels like each photograph is a piece of evidence of the Anthropocene. The photograph of the cow sums up how we view other species, we exploit them for our gain. Farming the land as the old man is doing, is a small scale of what happens on a much larger scale; farming on a mass production scale with extremely harmful techniques to the environment. The last photo to the right, as well as Masrich's clearly shows our carelessness as a society about how we treat our home. Although this is literally someone's home, conceptually the home to me represents earth as our home.

Richard Masrich**Referencing**

<http://lucasfolgia.com/frontcountry/>

<https://www.wallpaper.com/art/frontcountry-photographer-lucas-foglia-captures-the-american-heartlands>

<https://www.moma.org/collection/works/185926>

George Marasakis Photos



George Marasakis

Unlike previous photographers, these photographs feel dark and moody. They make me feel depressed or moody to an extent. This is due to the muted tones suggesting the dull future we have if we do not change our activity on this planet as human beings. Even at the smallest traces of human activity such as dirt tracks, still give quiet suggestions of the trails we're leaving behind on this planet.



George Marasakis Photos



Quote

“If we assume that humans, and by extension, human civilization, is a product of nature, an external observer could describe it as an autoimmune disease attacking its own body.”

- George Marasakis



Referencing

<https://www.ignant.com/2018/07/24/george-marazakis-photographs-the-anthropocene/>

<https://www.ignant.com/2014/09/16/surreal-photography-by-brian-oldham/>

Project Ideas // What is the Ideology of a National Park?

Photo Ideas

1. Everyday Human Intervention
 - The South Downs Deforestation
 - Impact of Light Pollution
2. National Parks: Before, Now, After (Book or Magazine, discussing impact of our economic and social ideology on Earth).
3. Monuments of Nature: Abstract Natural Forms
4. Surrealism & Photoshop.
 1. Photo of Family watching TV while sitting on the sofa, but environment is barren & Burn't
 2. Snake on Railway replacing Train (Aerial View)
 3. Juxtaposition Photo: Car in Field vs Deer in City
 4. Photos of Mother Nature observing Human Activity.

Before

1. 1951 National Parks were established (Peak & Lake Districts, Snowdonia, & Dartmoor), by Clement Attlee (Taken from USA idea)

WHY?

1. Conserve & Enhance the Natural Beauty, wildlife, and cultural heritage.
2. Promote Opportunities for the understanding and enjoyment of special qualities that parks bring.
2. Public Access Conflicted with visions for the Conservation movement.
3. Process of Establishing Parks was slow, 1949 the national park bill was passed in parliament, it took two years to establish the first parks. It was difficult for landowners to agree on how the land should be accessed and protected.
4. Private land Owners own 75%

Now

Local Preservation has been successful for the National Parks. - No radical change for improvements since 1949.

However international environmental issues such as climate change, are still a threat to every corner of the planet as well as national parks.

1995 Environmental Act was Introduced - Still hasn't prevented Climate Change. It established: The Environment Agency, The Scottish Environment Protection Agency, and The National Park Authorities.

56% of British Wildlife is in Decline (State of Nature 2016)

South Downs National Park was introduced in 2010 - Created for Protection due to - Urbanization on the South Coast (South Downs National Park Authority.

Imbalance of Species - Decline in woodland bird populations (50%) where deer are present, extreme increase of Deer. Ecosystem needs a balance of wildlife, too many or little deer will affect the population of other wildlife. 2 million deer exist in

After

The Future of National Parks ultimately depends on how governments change there environmental policies to reduce or reverse the increasing global average temperature.

The Condition of National Parks are inevitably dire as long as long as humanity continues with polluting the earth. Inevitably the conservation work from volunteers and scientists of national parks will all be for nothing, unless the we can reduce our human activity on the planet, by perhaps radically changing our economic structure and social culture...

"I believe the biggest challenge facing National Parks in the next two decades is proactively engaging young people and new volunteers, because volunteers are a major part of the national parks – without new volunteers coming in operations might not run normally."
- Adam Philip Phillips

What is the Ideology of a National Park?

"this increase in designated conservation has been accompanied by a strong ideology that people are bad for natural resources. Policies and practice have, therefore, both encouraged exclusion and discouraged local participation. As a result, social conflicts have grown in and around protected areas, and conservation goals themselves have been threatened."

- Jules N Pretty, Michel P Pimbert (Beyond Conservation Ideology and Wilderness, 1995)

National Parks are socially constructed by governments of nations. They are the nations parks. Each nation will choose it's national park based on there own gaze.

The American National Parks typically are designated in areas that are largely untouched and where very few privileged individuals can live. Mexican National Parks on the other hand, choose theres based on cultural value and where conservation is most needed to draw attention to those areas.

The United Kingdoms body of the National Park was largely influenced by the United States of America. In 1951 the first National Parks of the UK were established: Peak District, Lake District, Snowdonia, and Dartmoor. You can see that these areas are largely also untouched by humans, and where very few have the privilege to live financially and socially.

Today the most recent National Park to be introduced was The South Downs National Park, which happens to be the hometown of my youth. Since 1951, I don't feel a lot has changed regarding the selection process of what we see as a National Park. The British/American gaze of what a national park should be is based on identifying what landscape has largely been untouched by humans, and to preserve it at all cost in the new epoch called The Anthropocene.

In my view this approach is extremely direct and helps stop largely private companies from industrializing these beautiful and sublime landscapes.

However this approach also raises social concerns.

Historically white and nuclear (families) societies have dominated the world through colonialism, and this has lead to devastating impacts on other cultures. The areas selected for National Parks in the UK also happen to be rural societies where largely white and middle/upper class people live, and where 75% of the land is privately owned. The accessibility to work or visit here is limited as poorer families living in urban environments would find it a struggle to break from living in the box of a city.

Are National Parks elitist?

I feel that National Parks have two conflicting ideologies, they preserve the Earth and show us what the world could be like if Human activity was so minute, but the model of a National Park also brings social concerns.

"As increasing numbers of people lived and worked in cities, many experience a sense of longing, for their rural heritage" (Blurden and Carry, 1990, p.23)

This quote makes me question that because we are in the Anthropocene, that perhaps means access to nature has become privileged. No longer is nature truly accessible to humans due to these social issues, are we no longer apart of the Natural World as animals? But now as dominators?

Referencing

<https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1111/j.1477-8947.1995.tb00588.x>

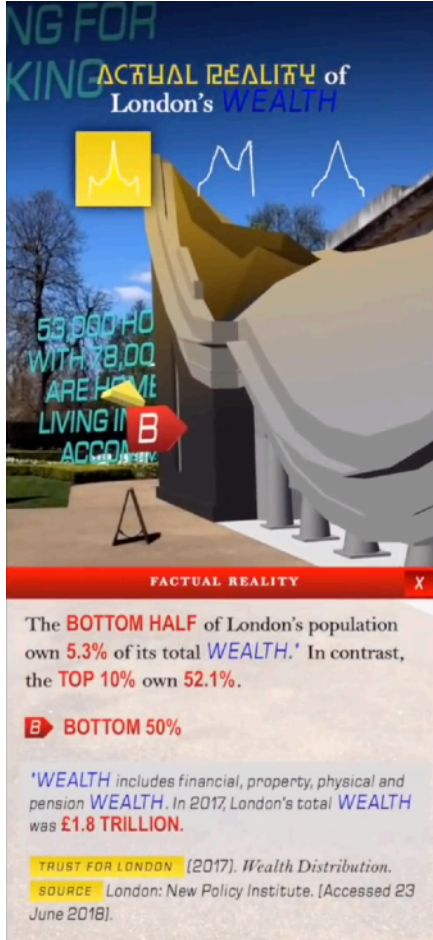
https://www.jstor.org/stable/41057184?seq=1#page_scan_tab_contents

<http://knowledgeandexperience.blogspot.com/2009/10/conservation-ideology-and-national.html>



Hito Steyerl

"Power Plants" is an exhibition by Hito Steyerl at the Serpentine Gallery in London. The exhibition looks at the social inequality of the borough through an Augmented Reality App.



Hito Steyerl

Her app allows you to look at a certain area, monument, or object, and to see details about the inequality of race, class, gender, in a capitalist society. I found this particularly unique as the interactivity she is using is new technology. Using new technology such as Augmented reality, is something that greatly appeals to me, because I know that using new technology is something you don't see often with artists.



Referencing

Gucci AR App: <https://vrscout.com/news/gucci-ar-shoe-experience/>
Hito Steyerl Screenshots: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WY5gnHV5dBE>



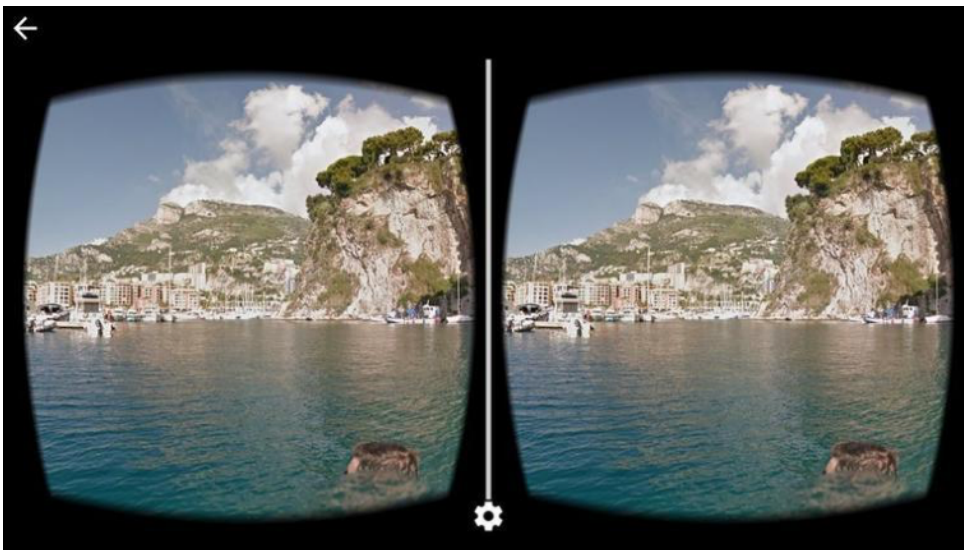
Virtual Reality

After looking at how Hito Steyerl used augmented reality to create her exhibition artwork. It reminded me of a sister technology that's been equally in the spotlight globally, this is called Virtual Reality. This technology has only had attention drawn to it in the last 10 years, although it realistically began to become popular in the 1980s as NASA started using it to for there projects.



Virtual Reality

The popularity and hype died out in the 1990s due to the economic chaos in the USA as well as the dot-com crash. The improvements and democratisation of the technology has been slow, but today I have the opportunity to use this technology for a university project.



Virtual Reality

The premise of this technology basically allows you to create a 3D virtual environment, where you can put on a headset to look around this environment. It's been incredibly popular for gaming because developers can now give people a more realistic experience. You straight up feel like your in the world itself, although it's virtual. Have a look at my reference photograph as an example.

Image Referencing

[https://cdn.vox-cdn.com/thumbor/i9R4TUIA3ayxcbH-yJ98CPWj86M=/0x0:2500x1667/1200x800/filters:focal\(1050x634:1450x1034\)/cdn.vox-cdn.com/uploads/chorus_image/image/53467551/stock-google-cardboard-vr-0182.0.0.jpg](https://cdn.vox-cdn.com/thumbor/i9R4TUIA3ayxcbH-yJ98CPWj86M=/0x0:2500x1667/1200x800/filters:focal(1050x634:1450x1034)/cdn.vox-cdn.com/uploads/chorus_image/image/53467551/stock-google-cardboard-vr-0182.0.0.jpg)

<https://i0.wp.com/geoawesomeness.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/Google-Cardboard-Geoawesomeness.jpg?ssl=1>

Why Virtual Reality

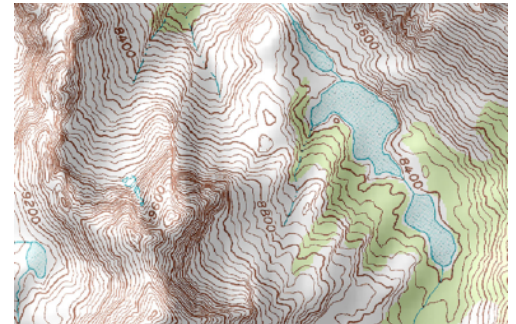
The Virtual Reality experience is unique and powerful, because not many people have experienced it before, but also because I am able to create an environment and experience to send a message about the current state of our Human Activity and how it is impacting our planet.

Virtual Reality

However the environment will almost like Armageddon. I will create fog to indicate the dangerous pollution levels in China, the water will be red, full of plastic, and dead fish to show you the brutal textile chemicals that are leaked into the rivers in Bangladesh, you will see a row of dead bats on the grass that indicate how Australian bats are beginning to die out due to the extreme heat caused by the change of Climate. However if I have time with the design, Londoners and people will just be going about there everyday life, you will see people going for a jog in the park, completely unaware of these devastating surroundings. This will show how oblivious we are in our everyday lives to what damage Human Activity has caused to the environment, why we are in the Anthropocene. If you are to go up to for example a burning tree and look at it, as you get closer a pop up box will appear of perhaps an image of the Amazon rainforest, and short text explaining where this burning trees is happening (The Amazon Rainforest) These are just a few examples and to give you an idea what I wish to create for this project.

Environment

I would like to create a virtual environment of a London park. I typically wanted to choose St. James' originally due to how familiar it is to a wide audience of Londoners, but also because it's not too big for me to stress about designing. However I wished to use topography maps (*reference 1*) to create the layout and terrain out St James' park. But I cannot seem to find an easy data file online that has a terrain map of st James' park. Therefore my environment will be of a park inspired by London Parks, based in London, and you will be able to walk about and observe the environment. Also the fact that I am using a mobile phone as a screen, is supposed to be a hint that people should actually look at something useful on there phone and wake up.



Reference 1

Software Needed

Blender - create 3D models

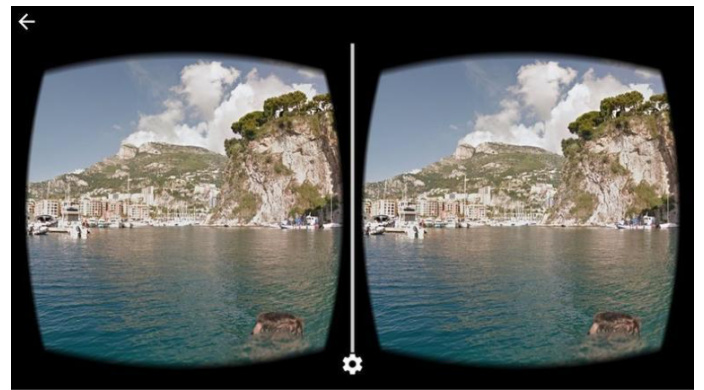
Unity - to create the game and environment

Xcode - to finalize the project, to be able to be previewed on a iPhone.

3D Models & Google Cardboard

Now how will you experience this 3D virtual space, I will use google cardboard as this is the most cost effective option for a headset. You can put your phone inside the cardboard, and put it onto your head to experience the world.

I will attempt to create an many 3D models as I can for the park that are my own. This meaning I will use photogrammetry to create 3D objects from London parks such as benches, small cafe huts, fences and gates etc. However large objects such as trees will most likely have to be sourced from a third party 3D model creator. I will create my own textures as far as I can, such as grass and concrete.



Challenges

- 1 My first challenge is learning Unity, Blender, Xcode, and C# coding language. I am already learning all four through LinkedIn Learning through as much free time I find myself have. I have also spoken to Alejandro in the creative tech lab, and he seems very helpful if I have any questions or concerns about learning the software and code language.
- 2 My second concern is how I am going to submit this through a studio submission. I was originally thinking of publishing this as an app, in the App Store. But this process is too expensive and I won't have enough time to publish it. My second option is to take a laptop with Xcode on, and submit this with the google cardboard, to allow the tutors/markers to experience the body of work. I would also have a set of instructions specifically showing them how to view and experience this body of work, to mark. However my problem here is that I don't own a laptop, and nor do I know anyone well enough to ask to borrow one to leave with tutors for weeks or so to mark.

If all else fails

- 1 Experiment more with Photogrammetry related to the Anthropocene
- 2 Use Google Earth to create images of the geological damage to environments comparing today, to 100 years ago. (Inspired by Mishka Henner) I would perhaps like to experiment with augmented reality and artivive to be used for this.

Photogrammetry

Photogrammetry

Photogrammetry is a technique where you take a series of photographs of one object from, a variety of angles. From here I can create a 3D Mesh (shape) of the object. I can then Import that object to Unity to be used as an object.

Photogrammetry's invention was by Aimé Laussedat, but at the time it had no practical uses. It wasn't until 95-100 years later where it became widely used as aerial photography during the end of the second world war, and during the Cold War.



Lucas Gabellini-Fava



Lucas

Photogrammetry can be used to create a variety of meshes. Here Lucas Gabellini-Fava has used it to show you all angles of his and his father's bodies for his works called "Programmed by my Father".



Lucas' Father

Referencing

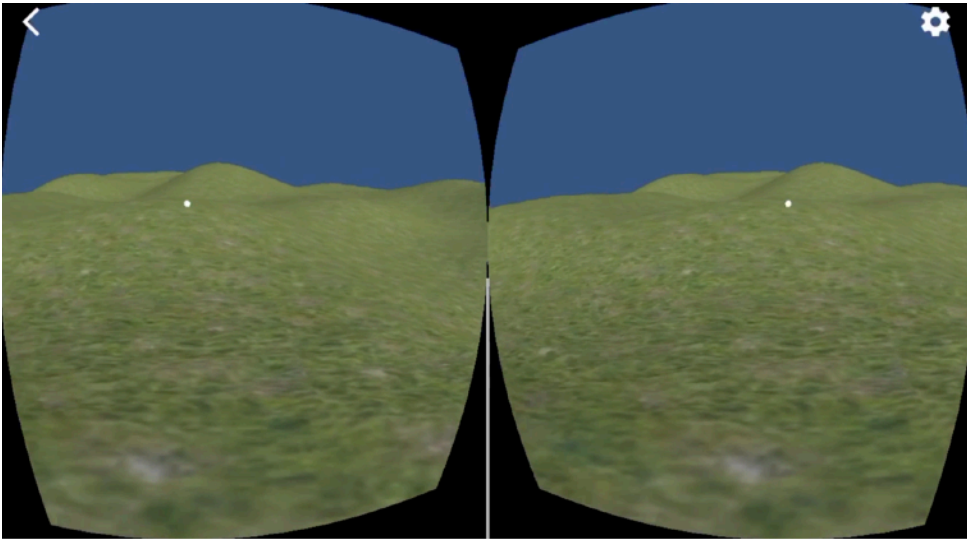
https://i1.wp.com/scanlab.ca/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/Conflicition_Scanlab_BTS_00.32.298.jpg?fit=1920%2C1080&ssl=1

http://media.virbcdn.com/cdn_images/resize_1600x1600/a2/6e254586fbb0eb00-ProjectA-PeltI.jpg

http://media.virbcdn.com/cdn_images/resize_1600x1600/6c/9183baef78fb24c3-ProjectA-PeltII.jpg

<http://www.photogrammetry.com>

Prototype One



Unity

Using Unity, I have created a temporary terrain so I am able to show the mechanics of navigation and how the Virtual Reality works. I am able to put a preview of the application onto my iPhone, and then place it inside the Google Cardboard VR headset to let you and the examiner to experience the work. As I have no second controller, my only choice of navigation for the user was the following...

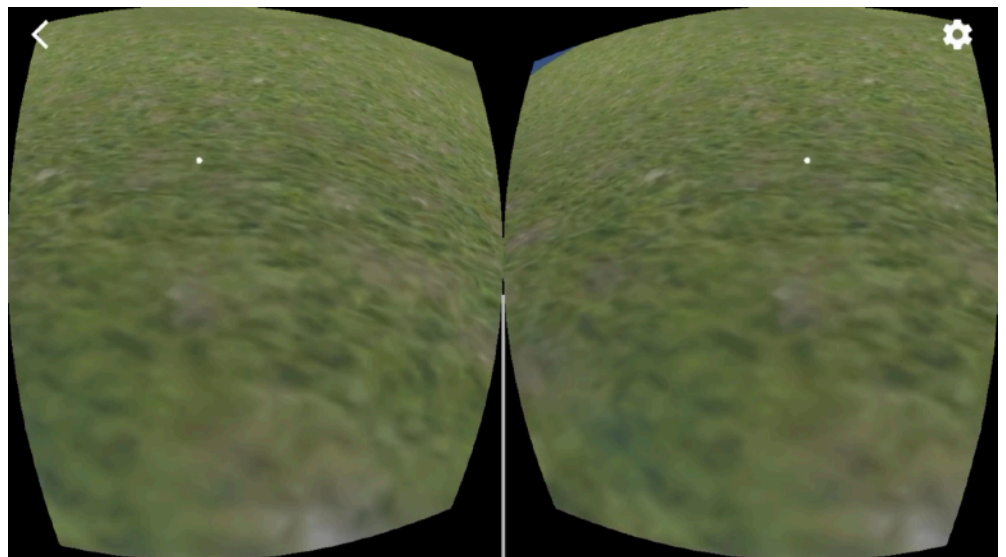
Unity

Place Squares in the environment to be used as navigation locations.

When you would look at the square, you would be teleported to it.

However I feel this would require too much code, and I am currently still learning the fundamentals of C sharp in Xcode.

My second option was to simply write code that instructs the user to move forward once you look down by 33 degrees.



Unity

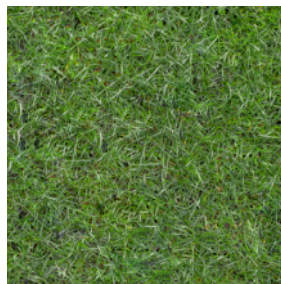
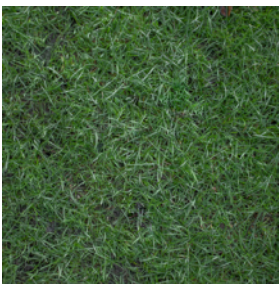
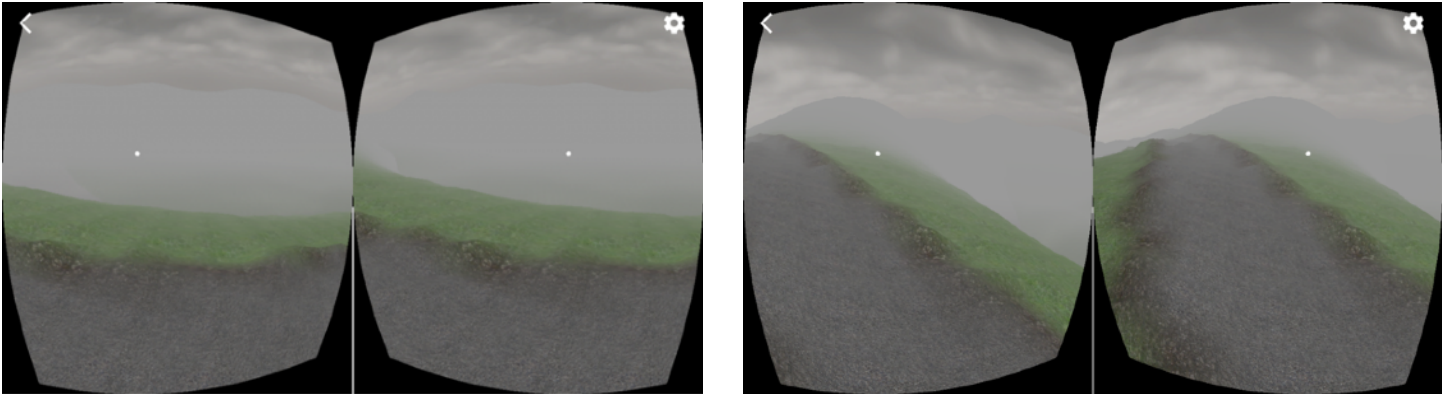
Eventually I decided to go with the second option. I feel it was far more easier in terms of navigation as it required no physical input from the user, except to simply look down. What you're seeing as reference photographs is simply how it looks on the screen of my iPhone. Once you put on the VR headset, you will see the world normally.

After Tutor consultation, I was advised and agree to approach this idea with a more focused topic within the anthropocene, such as communicating the idea of how water sea levels are slowly rising. This is just an example. I was also advised to perhaps have a narrative or story with the journey of going through this Virtual space, rather than just randomly wondering around an open environment. I strongly agree with this idea as it allows me to communicate ideas more precisely.

Prototype 2

My second prototype encapsulates the atmosphere and basic objects of my environment. I've created a path for the user to follow during their experience. Surrounding and within the path, is where I will place my research for communicating the immediate reality of rising sea levels. This will encapsulate references to stories of places that are currently suffering the impacts of rising sea levels.

As you can see in the photos, I have replaced the grass textures with my own. I photographed concrete, dirt and Grass in St James' Park to create my own photographic textures for the world.

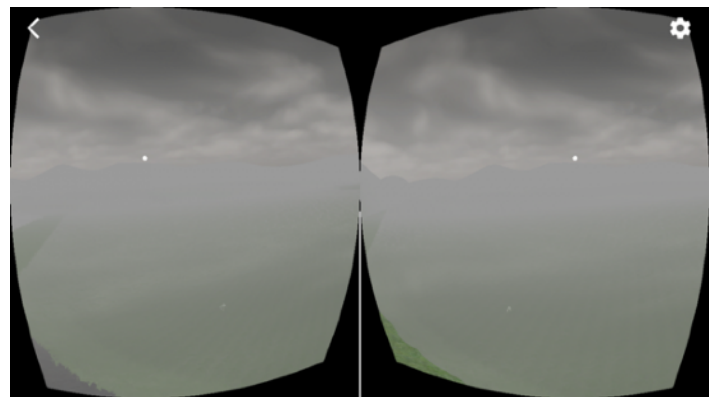
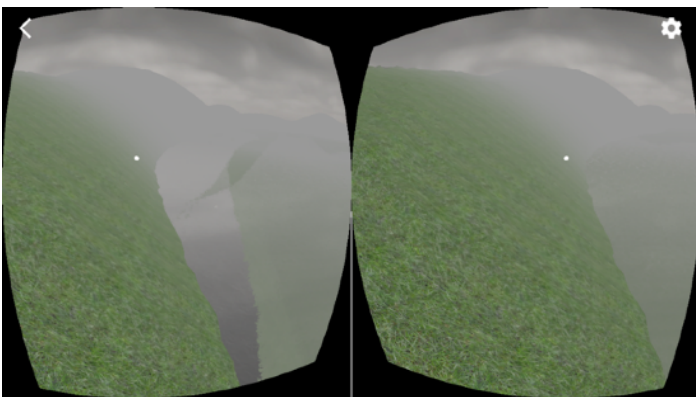


Grass Texture Original

Grass Texture Final

Concrete Texture Original

Concrete Texture Final



Prototype 2

Within this environment I have placed a lake. The purpose of it thus far hasn't been explored. I have only done this based on researching what you are to commonly find in a London park. Most parks within London have lakes or ponds. I feel having a lake here will be useful in the future if I want to use it during development for any communicative purposes of rising sea levels.

Much Larger Objects that are more complicated to 3-Dimensionally scan with photographs such as Trees, I will out source from the Unity Asset Store. This is a store where I can download assets and objects for free, such as trees, that I use in my world royalty free.

Research For Objects

Manila - Philippines

Manila is a city within the Philippines that is currently suffering the devastating impacts of rising sea levels. During a photo story that I came across on the BBC News website, I saw this photographed that I ideologically depicted as telling me the crisis of a nation. The sea levels are rising, Manila had flooding, and a local citizen had a lucky find, a Philippine currency note. Although he is happy to find the note for himself, this ideologically tells me the crisis that the Philippines have as a nation with rising sea levels. This hints to me the national crisis they are facing, and that it isn't just Manila. I also read this as a hint that no amount of money can reverse the rising sea levels. It makes me feel that it is already too late. This photograph as a whole gives me an idea to bring into my VR world a muddy British currency note, to be placed on the pavement as you will walk along as a hint for the crisis. I feel conceptually it would convey how we as a nation will eventually suffer the same consequences as they do in the Philippines.

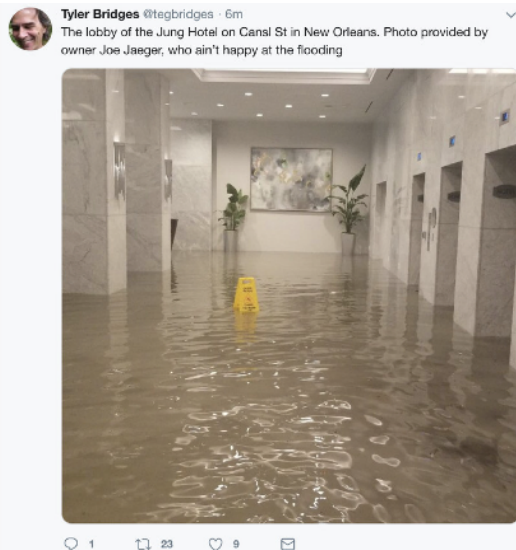


Manila Resident - Philippines Currency

Photo & Info Reference

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-asia-45166382>

https://ichef.bbci.co.uk/news/624/cpsprodpb/1436/production/_102947150_hi048632346.jpg



New Orleans Hotel Wet Floor

New Orleans Floodings & Wet Sign

New Orleans is one of the cities in the USA that actually is at the forefront of facing the threat of rising sea levels. We often think of highly economically developed countries in North America and Europe to have so much money that they are more capable of defending themselves from the threat of rising sea levels, but this is not the case. New Orleans has mass floodings regularly due to the rising sea levels, making flooding more frequent. This photograph was taken in July 2019 by an Instagram User. This specific image was sourced from an article by Curbed New Orleans online. I noticed a great sense of irony within the photograph. The "Wet Floor" sign, that is constructed by humans, brings irony because humans have also constructed the wet floor/flooding itself. The ideology of the wet floor sign I feel is worth exploring in my VR world. I feel this sense of irony can be translated as a reference to the flooding of New Orleans.

Referencing

<https://nola.curbed.com/2019/7/10/20688973/heavy-rain-flood-new-orleans-photos-july-10-tropical-storm>

https://cdn.vox-cdn.com/thumbor/chg3z_P-xgZSFHrrZOHZfjiCncM=/0x0:1186x1228/720x0/

[filters:focal\(0x0:1186x1228\):no_upscale\(\)/cdn.vox-cdn.com/uploads/chorus_asset/file/18300655/](https://cdn.vox-cdn.com/uploads/chorus_asset/file/18300655/)

[Screen_Shot_2019_07_10_at_10.20.45_AM.png](#)

Research For Objects



Kiribati Sandbags

Kiribati

Kiribati is an extremely small island in the Pacific Ocean. There are many small and indigenous islands across the Pacific and Indian Oceans that face the threat of rising sea levels the most, just like Manila in the Philippines. A Photo story from Wired Magazine Online, intrigued me because it shows to what extremes people are going to defend their lives. In a typical London park you would have small railings along the sides of the pavements to keep people off the grass. However instead of using small railings, I feel using sandbags instead would be more interesting and creative as a reference to the sandbags used on Maneaba Island.

Referencing

<https://wi-images.condecdn.net/image/2e8OEN0rw7d/crop/1620/f/005-Kiribati.jpg>

<https://www.wired.co.uk/gallery/kiribati-photostory-gallery>

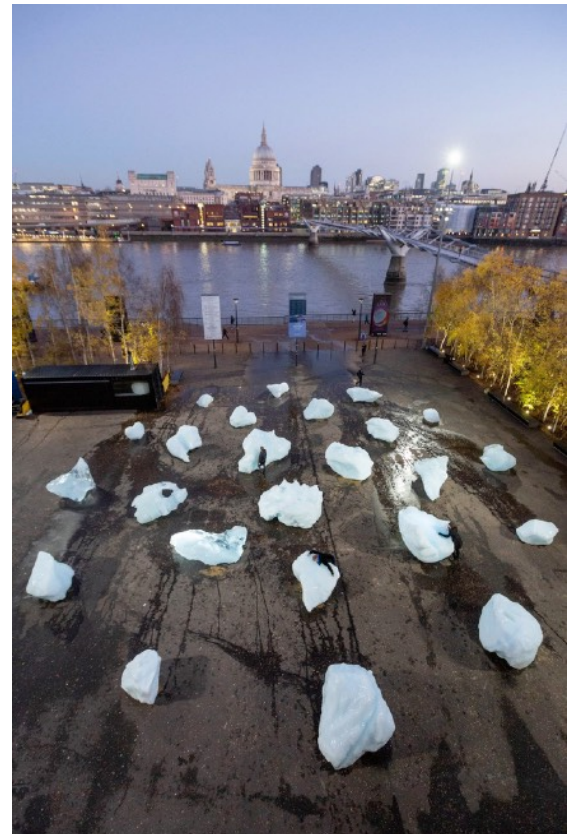
Olafur Eliasson - Melting Ice Tate Modern

Olafur Eliasson is a Danish-Icelandic artist. This is a temporary installation outside of the Tate Modern in London. In late 2018 he extracted glacial ice from Greenland and placed them outside the Tate Modern, where they will be left to melt. This is an impressive piece of work where he is communicating the ever changing world we live in, and to get people to realise how fast the ice is melting.

Melting Ice is something I wish to include into my VR world, perhaps literally ice melting as the user walks around the VR space as a reference of research to Eliasson's exhibition. I feel this would be appropriate, as then I can create sea levels to rise as you travel inside the VR world.

Referencing

<https://www.dezeen.com/2018/12/12/ice-watch-olafur-eliasson-installation/>



**- Olafur Eliasson -
Tate Modern Ice**



The Garden of Earthly Delights - Hieronymus Bosch

The Garden of Earthly Delights

While watching a documentary called "Before The Flood", the opening began with Leonardo Dicaprio narrating about a piece of art that hung above his crib as a child. This painting was called "The Garden of Earthly Delights, painted by Hieronymus Bosch around 1500. The exact date is unknown. However Leo told explained the art that tells a story in three panels.

In the first panel you have Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden, inspired by Christian Stories. Human activity is at a minimum and nature prospers peacefully. In the second panel we have Human expansion. The population has grown, people are developing at a fast rate with how they live. In the third panel you have destruction and chaos of the natural world. This almost feels like Bosch could predict the eventual future of the Earth, and that the Anthropocene would eventually become inevitable as long as Humans keep populating. Of course back then in 1500, it wouldn't have been called the Anthropocene.

I feel this piece of work would be hugely valuable to include in my Virtual Reality Space. As an opening to the experience, this could serve as an introduction to the Anthropocene, showing you that ironically we have known about this ideological problem for hundreds of years. I see early ideologies of Capitalism in this painting as well as consumerism and greed. If I start to appropriate other works into my Virtual Reality Space, it would be moral and ethical for me to credit them as apart of the final piece.



Leonardo Dicaprio

Greenland & Before The Flood



Leonardo DiCaprio & Professor Jason Box



Before The Flood Poster

Greenland

Greenland as a country is mostly just Ice. In this documentary we see Leo talk with Professor Jason Box about how Greenland is losing ice at a dangerous rate. I see them give visual references to give you a sense of how much ice Greenland has lost in the past few years. Ice melting is a big factor for Sea Levels rising. I would like to reference this scene and moment of the documentary into my project. Perhaps by having Ice melting in the middle of the path.

Research Referencing

https://www.imdb.com/title/tt5929776/fullcredits/?ref_=tt_ov_st_sm

https://images-na.ssl-images-amazon.com/images/I/91Zs1Vb3KxL._RI_.jpg

https://geographical.co.uk/media/k2/items/cache/7dc6c9bbc0eb72b26f3c6f1eccadf155_XL.jpg

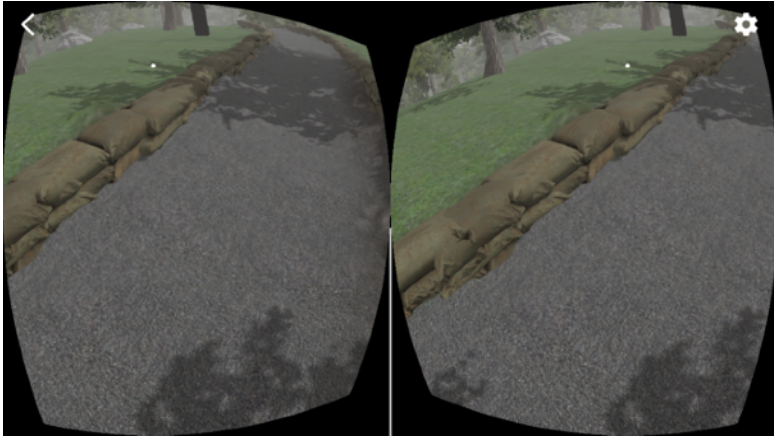
<https://etcanada.com/news/175808/leonardo-dicaprio-almost-drowned-filming-before-the-flood/>

<https://shawetcanada.files.wordpress.com/2016/10/leo.jpg?quality=80&strip=all>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D9xFFyUOpXo>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KiB4akWGVwE>

Prototype 3



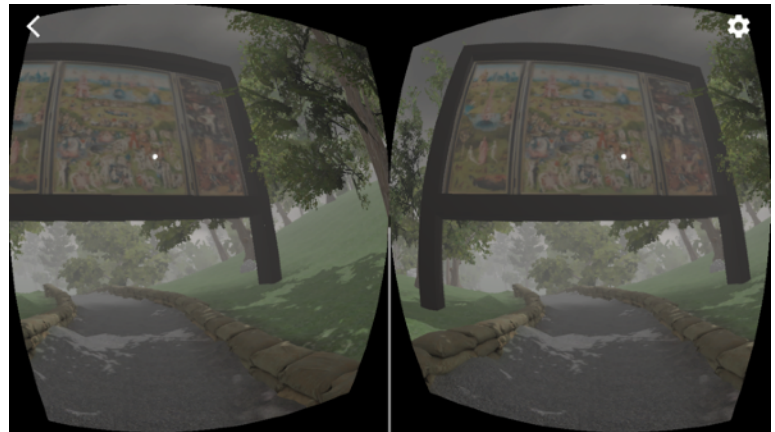
Sandbags Along Path

Sandbags

After looking at the photograph of Kiribati's sandbag walls. It felt incredibly empowering to see people going this far to protect their own land. I remember looking at how London pavements in parks have black railings along the side, to prevent people from going on the grass. I felt conceptually that it would be interesting to replace the railings in my park with Sandbags. Ideologically people associate sandbags with defence, and war. Sandbags are used in war zones for protection. It seems like that due to the Anthropocene. We are now at war with rising sea levels, and as we created this problem, we are at war with ourselves perhaps.

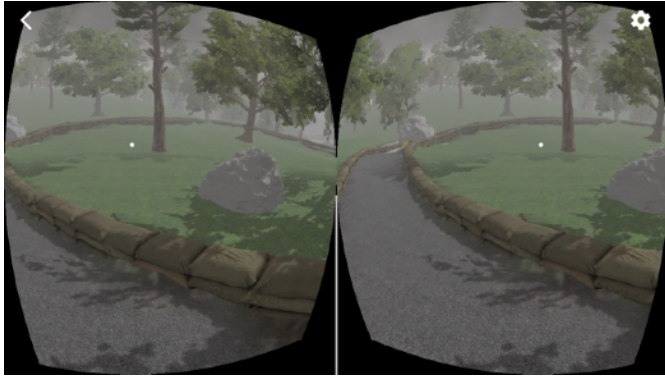
The Garden of Earthly Delights

As you walk forward through this path, your first encounter is "The Garden of Earthly Delights" by Hieronymus Bosch. I felt this was an appropriate opening to explain the state of our planet. We are currently in-between the second and third panel, We haven't come to catastrophe yet, but that is where we are going. I strongly felt sound was important to make this experience feel uneasy and uncomfortable. So I had the voice of Leonardo DiCaprio explain the painting as you walk towards it. He tells you a general understanding of what is happening, and why it relates to us now. I've shown research through this work by appropriating the audio directly from "Before The Flood" documentary, by National Geographic and Leonardo DiCaprio.

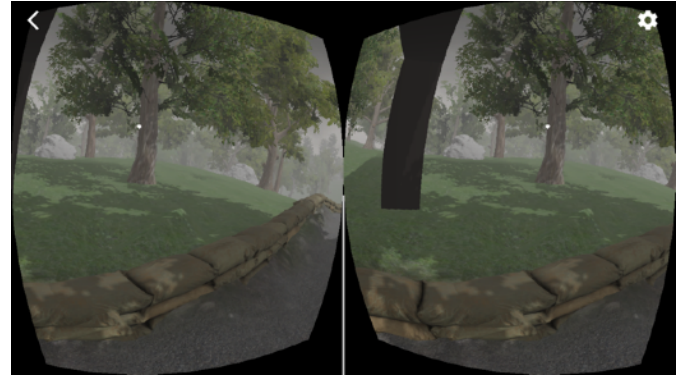


The Garden of Earthly Delights

Prototype 3



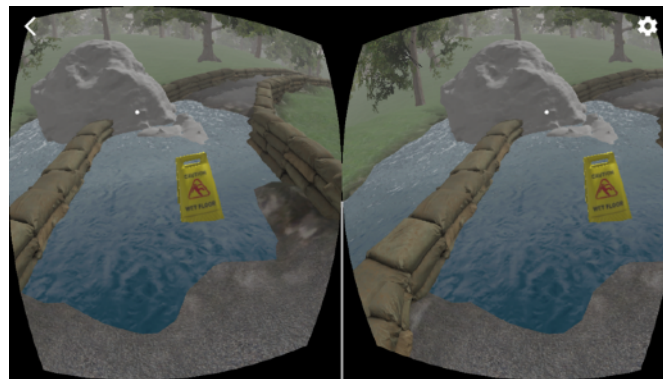
Scattered Grey Icebergs



Scattered Grey Icebergs

Grey Icebergs

I wanted to place Grey Icebergs around the area as you walk through the space. It feels like they shouldn't be there, it feels wrong. But they are there. You know something doesn't feel right as you see the Icebergs are grey. But this is what's happening right now. My inspiration for this came from Olafur Eliason's Installation of melting ice at the Tate Modern. Icebergs in Greenland are losing their colour and turning grey and melting away into the sea. These Icebergs are small, and they're spread out, symbolising how fragile they are, how fragile the environment is.

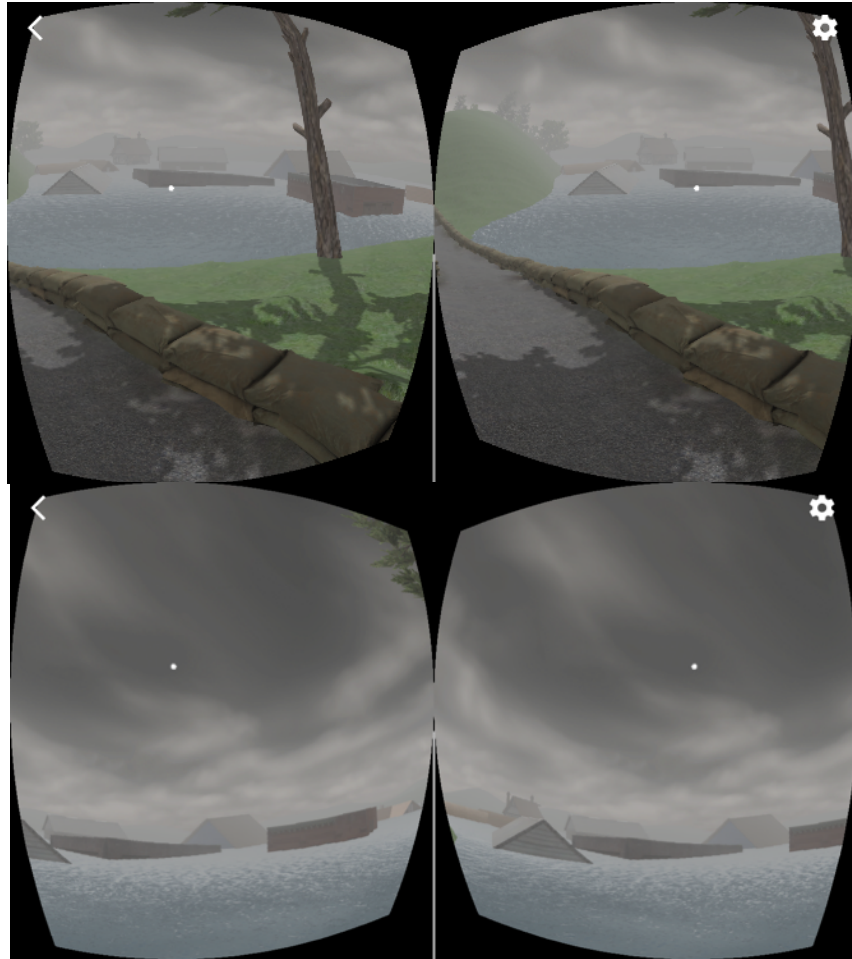


Greenland & Wet Floor Sign

Greenland

As you walk down the path, you eventually come to an Iceberg with melting water. As you approach it, you begin to hear the voice of Jason Box. The Professor from Before The Flood that tells us about the melting ice of Greenland. The Wet Floor sign has been inspiration from the Wet Floor sign that Tyler Bridges photographed in a New Orleans hotel, his photograph created a sense of irony. I wanted to replicate this irony into my world with an Iceberg that is melting. Soon, all of the floor will be wet, and we will no longer be able to stand.

Prototype 3



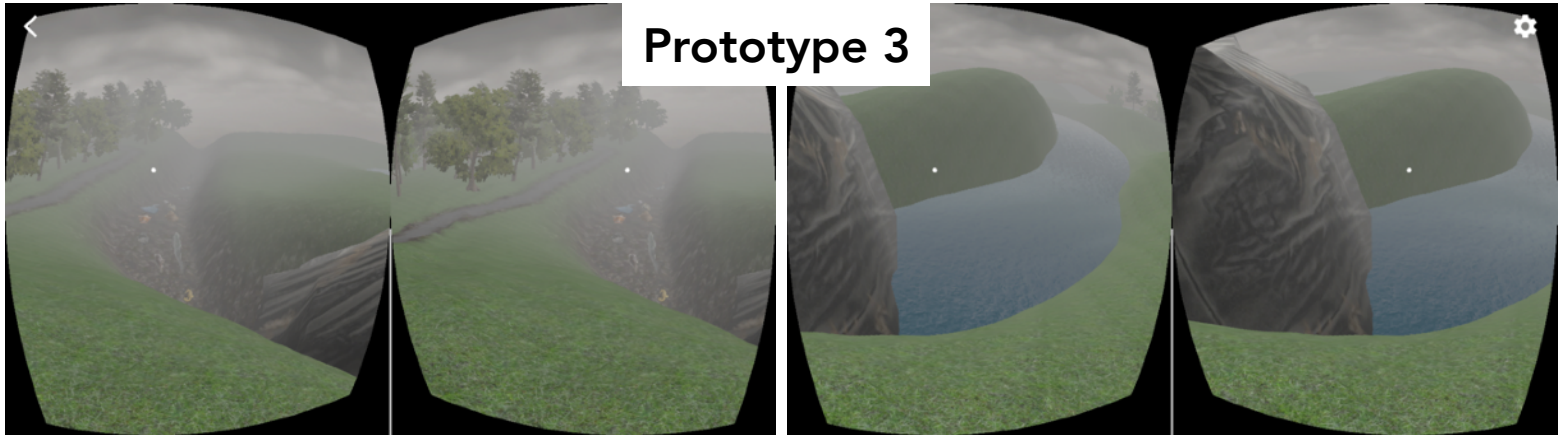
Underwater Houses Flooding // Manila Flooding

These houses have no cultural symbolism. This is because I wanted the viewer to interpret what they see.

Originally I wanted to show houses underwater to symbolise that this is your home, and soon it will be like this. Soon due to these rising sea levels, what you call home, won't exist no more. However I came across the stories of flooding in Manila, The Philippines. I remember watching videos of seeing the families literally losing there homes, being underwater like the houses are in my VR world. Their voices of crying for help struck my soul hard. Imagine working so hard for so little, then losing it all. I created the space so that the closer you walk towards the water along the path, the louder you hear these screams and cries from the Filipino people. With surround sound headphones on, you can hear the noises directly coming from the houses. From experience, to me, this feels very depressing to experience.

Two Ways to See This Piece

So the Ideology of this piece is a combination of two ideals, you can look at this and see it as your home in the future, the one that you will lose due to rising sea levels. Or perhaps you listen to the people of Manila crying and screaming, seeing that this is actually something which is happening now. These are the homes they are losing.

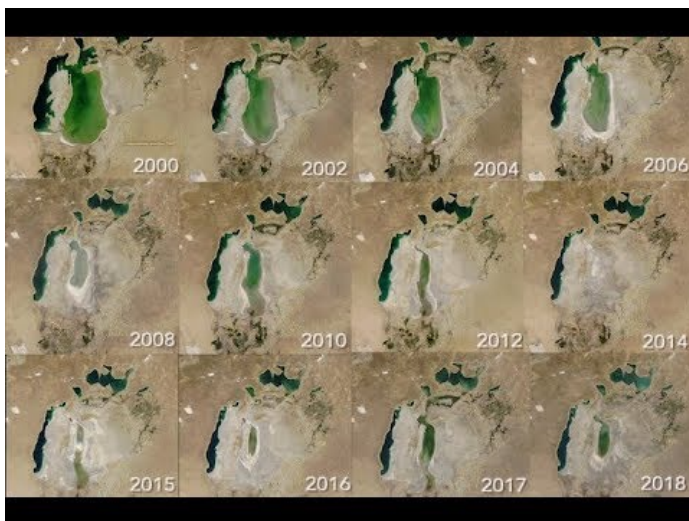
**Dead Fish and Dried Out River (Left of Trash Bag)****Natural River (Right of Trash Bag)**

Greenland

Sea Levels are rising, but the increasing temperatures in the atmosphere is also causing lakes and small-seas to dry out. On the left we have a satellite Diagram by Nasa. They captured photographs of the Aral Sea, and compared how it has dried out over the years. Typically Human Rubbish and Waste has caused death of sea life. Animals in the ocean will chew, swallow, and choke on plastic and inedible items that are in the sea.

I wanted to combine these two ideas into a 3D piece in my VR world. Here I have a big black bin bag, blocking the water from getting to the fish, the result is the drying out of the water, and all the fish die. I'm planning to place plastic items in the dried out Side of the river. So ironically as the earlier part of the VR world focuses on rising sea levels, this piece flips the ideas upside down and shows the devastating effects of what happens when fish eat and chew plastic, and what happens when seas and lakes dry out.

Aral Sea Photo Reference: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UZwLTJroLpE>

**Aral Sea Dried Lake**

Why I've used other 3D objects.

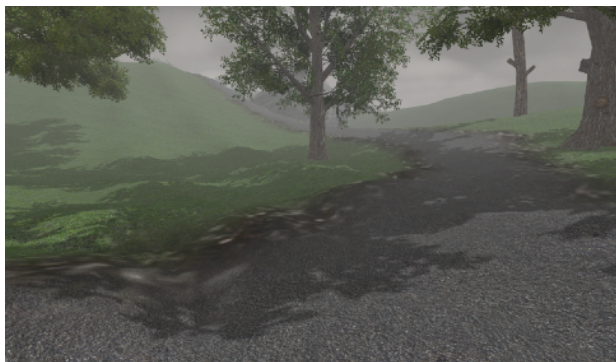
These 3D objects, where have they come from you may ask? Did you photo scan all these? My answer is of course not. Due to the time limit I have with this project, I wouldn't have the time to complete this project if I were to create all the objects myself. I started this project as a big experiment because I had no experience of Virtual Reality, 3D Modelling, Unity, or Xcode at all. I had to learn this all from scratch while I was creating this world. As time has passed, I've decided to use royalty free 3D models from the Unity Asset Store and SketchFab. I had spent a lot of time to photoscan with Blender and other softwares and I couldn't get anything good at all. This will be the only choice I felt I've had left. So although I've had to compromise due to the time limit of the unit, I've still been able to build a world and communicate ideas through that world.

Prototype 4



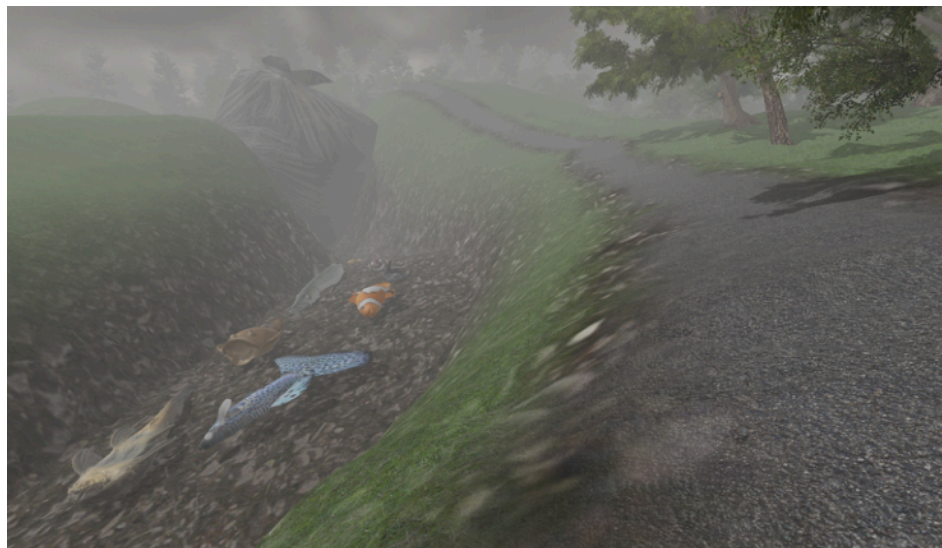
Hall Of Shame

Between the drought of dead fish, and the flood houses, was a long pathway without any content to keep the viewers attention. I've used this pathway space to create what I call the "Hall of Shame". This is an open hallway, featuring climate deniers, or people who have funded climate denial groups. Some may surprise you, such as the CEO of Google, Sundar Pichai. He isn't claimed to be a climate denier. However according to the Guardian, Google have been funding climate denial groups. Other people in the Hall of Shame feature recognisable world leaders, the biggest climate denial funders, and climate denial journalists. The photographs of these individuals have been linked to there original source at the bottom of this page.



Path Changes

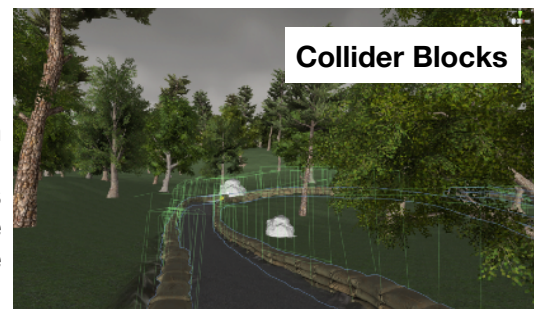
I wanted to make some adjustments to the path in the virtual world. For example as you come to the drought of dead fish, I've moved the path so that at the beginning, you can see the water that the rubbish bag is blocking more clearly, and you are able to come closer to the dead fish than you could before.



Path Adjustments, Closer to Fish

Collider Blocks

Of course I wanted the user to specifically stay on the path and to follow it. In order to stop people from diverting onto the grass and anywhere as they wish, I set up objects that are called "Box Colliders" within the Unity software. This means that the player cannot go behind the green boxed lines that you see below. They have to specifically follow the path as that is the purpose of the VR experience.





Original Image



After Editing

Greta Thunberg

At the beginning of this journey, we started with the Hieronymus Bosch painting called "The Garden of Earthly Delights". This is the earliest painting or artwork I can find that references to man made destruction and how humans can impact the planet. Today in 2019, the biggest story in the climate world is how a 16 year old from Sweden, Greta Thunberg, has caused a mass movement for climate advocacy across the world. This young Swedish girl, only began campaigning outside her countries parliament on Fridays by striking from school. This is the latest push for climate awareness in 2019. This is the end of the path, as it is to signify today.

Greta Thunberg

I wanted to use this photograph of Greta and her climate sign to make the viewer feel that they are apart of the problem. The start would be by having a big "You" as the beginning of the signs sentence. The sign clearly saying to go away and to take a good look at yourself in the mirror. From here I will exhibit a mirror on a wall with this Virtual Reality project, so that once you take the headset off, you can actually take a good look at yourself in the mirror, as Greta has told you do in my VR world. I wanted the final sign to be large as the Bosch painting was, to signify further that this is the end of your virtual experience. I've also placed an audio source around the painting, so you can hear a segment of Greta's speech from the United Nations Climate Summit in 2019.



Prototype 4

References For Prototype 4:

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<https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2019/oct/11/google-contributions-climate-change-deniers>

300 Word Conclusion

The Climate Awakening was an ambitious attempt to use Virtual Reality to wake people up to the Climate Emergency that we are facing as a civilisation. Sea levels don't care about whether your conservative, liberal, socialist, communist or fascist. All it knows what to do, is rise.

I wanted to open the experience with the earliest prediction of Climate Change. Hieronymus Bosch painted an early depiction of how humanity could eventually destroy the planet titled "The Garden of Earthly Delights" around 1500. This is to make you realise how long we have been aware of this ecological disaster. This Virtual Experience holds irony considering Climate Change isn't so virtual, it's real.

I specifically wanted to focus on the threat of rising sea levels and how it affects the most vulnerable locations on earth. Ironically the latter half of the virtual experience takes a twist into showing you how droughts can also form due to extreme heat temperatures. Between the drought and rising sea levels experiences, I have incorporated an open virtual gallery of the most influential climate deniers who either: fund fossil fuel companies, are journalists denying climate, or are corrupt politicians denying the science. This gives you a reminder of who is destroying your future ecologically.

The audio experience is what brings this piece to life. Hearing the voices of the citizens of Manila screaming as their houses become flooded, brings shivers up your spine. Hearing the voice of a little girl from Sweden who campaigns against Climate Change, could bring tears to some. Leonardo DiCaprio's narration guides your mind through the visuals of what you see and feel. It all means to be confrontational and urging

The Experience Ends with a photograph of Greta Thunberg, today in the contemporary era. You started this experience from a painting in 1500, and now you finish it in 2019. Today we have to face our greatest challenge as a species. I urge you to take some action in joining groups such as extinction rebellion, individually we cannot make a difference, but together, we can overcome the greatest hurdle ever thrown at the human race.

Project Title Reveal - The Climate Awakening

