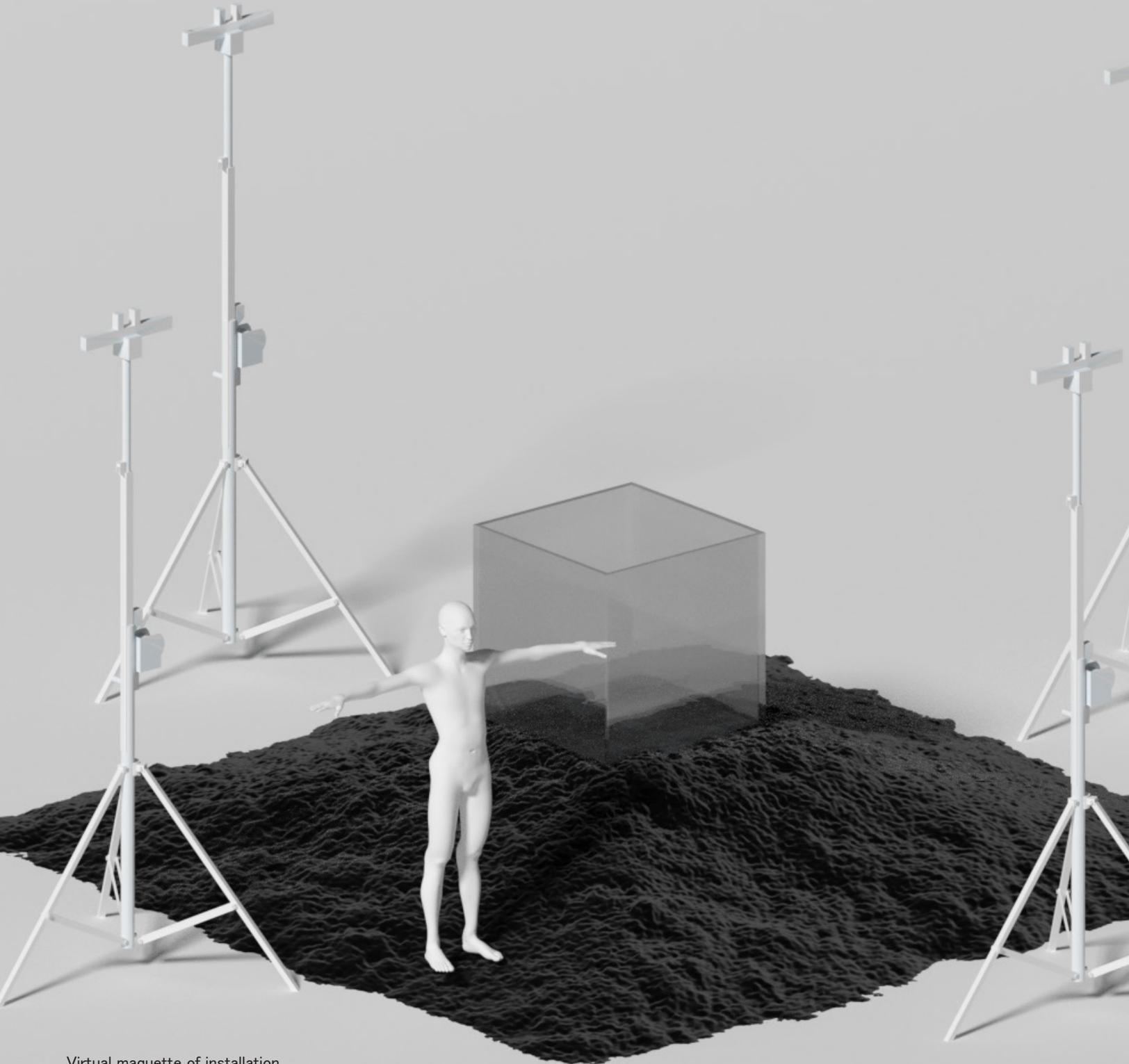


PROJECT CONCEPT
THE CUBE EXPERIMENT

12/19/2016

ANDREW ALAIN
ALEX HERCULE DESJARDINS
SAMUEL WALKER



Virtual maquette of installation

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1) BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF OUR GROUP

We are 3 artists who have been sharing ideas and research for roughly 2 years. We all come from different but complementary disciplines. Andrew Alain specializes in sound, Alex Hercule Desjardins with installation, and Samuel Walker with virtual reality.

Our practice is based on a multidisciplinary approach and a cross-pollination of ideas. Our individual focuses inform one another aesthetically and conceptually. In the past years, we have been professionally fabricating, creating, and developing concepts for a multitude of clients in the creative industry. We have worked collaboratively, as well as separately. Now, we are collaborating as a group based on the strengths of our individual practices, to develop our own body of work.

Our work aims to create impossible spaces and virtual playgrounds, playing on the dissonance between the virtual and the real. Our focus is to question the world we live in, using a variety of methods to engage our viewers to think about how they fundamentally perceive and interact with their own realities.

Andrew Alain (b.1984 in Ottawa, ON) is a sound artist and musician based in Montréal. Though working in several different styles, mediums and genres, his focus has been on investigating the relationship between environments and their associated sounds. Furthermore, how altering the sound of a space can completely change your relationship with reality and in turn your own identity. Aside from his music being released on several record labels – his work has appeared in film and art installations in Montreal, New York, Berlin, London (UK) and Ottawa.

Alex Hercule Desjardins (b.1987 in Montréal, Qc) studied architecture and landscape architecture. Since then, Alex has been fabricating environments, atmospheres and objects for many different clients including Arcade Fire, Bjork, Jon Rafman, Marie Brassard, Grimes, Chloe Wise, SSENSE, Signe Pierce, Serge Denoncourt, Nicholas Archambault and the Tom of Finland Foundation.

Alex runs a workshop on the Plateau Mont-Royal and mostly fabricates objects and architectural elements for movie productions, advertising, artists and performers.

Samuel Walker (b.1987 in Ottawa, ON) is a multidisciplinary visual artist based in Montreal. His focus is on investigating virtual spaces and the construction of identities based on negotiations between the body and its surrounding environment. He has developed VR work with clients such as Jon Rafman, and Seventeen Gallery, which have been exhibited at the Musée d'art contemporain de Montréal, Arsenal Montréal, Zabłudowicz Collection, the 9th Berlin Biennale, and at the Frieze London Art Fair.

2) AN ESTIMATE OF THE TECHNICAL MATERIAL

Our project budget for materials is estimated at 6000\$. Below is a breakdown of our expenses.

INSTALLATION COMPONENT:

- + Plexiglass cube — (Provided, no cost)
 - + Flex Foam it III by SmoothOn for the pile
 - + Structural materials for the pile
-

TOTAL: \$1600.00

AUDIO COMPONENT:

- + 4/8 (+subs) Speaker system — RENTAL
 - + Amplifier — RENTAL
 - + Installation labor
-

TOTAL: \$2000.00

VR COMPONENT:

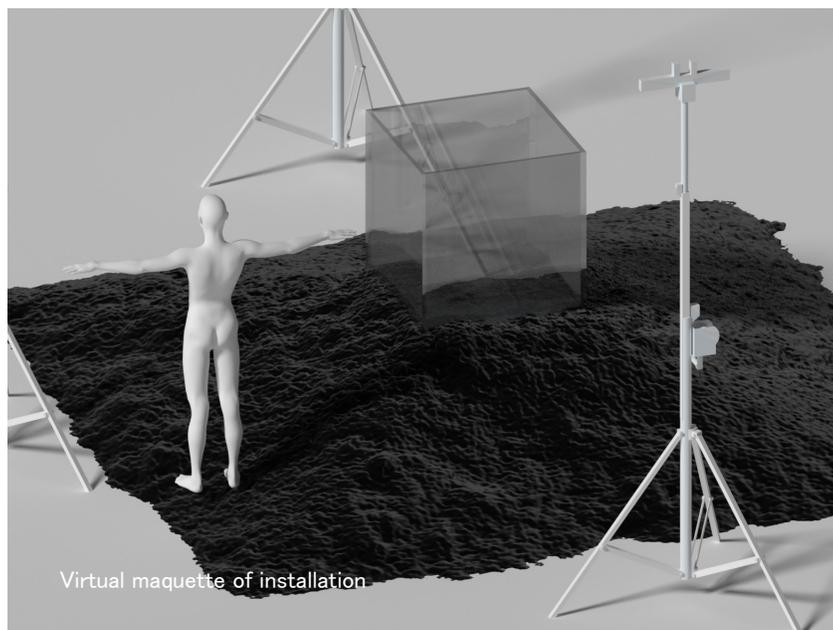
- + VR-ready Computer
 - + Oculus headset + sensor — (Provided, no cost)
 - + Oculus Touch
 - + Peripheral equipment (USBs, cables, etc.)
-

TOTAL: \$2400.00

3) SUMMARY OF PROJECT

The project we are proposing is a sculptural installation coupled with a virtual reality experience. The installation will feature a surrounding audio work to interconnect with events happening both in the physical and virtual space. The participant, when donning the VR headset, will have complete 360 degree of freedom movement to explore the surrounding sculptural installation, while experiencing an original real-time VR narrative.

The sculptural installation sits in a large empty space. A large transparent cube is visibly pronounced sitting on top a large 9'x9' wide and 3'tall pile of unidentifiable material resembling gravel but made of squishy foam. Surrounding the pile of foam, there are four (4) tripods housing speakers, sensors, spotlights, and a computer. From the computer, wires will connect to a virtual reality Oculus Rift headset, suspended above the installation. The participant will be asked to put the headset on to begin the experience.



The virtual space inside the Oculus Rift headset will be a to-scale simulation of the existing installation. The participant will be immediately confronted with an ontological dilemma – consolidating the disparate physical and virtual spaces. The simulacrum of the transparent cube and the large pile will provide the participant with a reference point of a bridge between these two parallel worlds. As the participant approaches the cube, their footing will be uncertain on the rising pile of squishy foam. The uncertainty will amplify a feeling of presence. The carefully designed spacing and composition of the installation will recall a sense of performance ritual. The central focus being the participant's relationship to the cube, encircled by a series of watchful tripod stands, will appear from the outside as a performance. Participants will engage in a sort of rite of passage act into the virtual world, learning to navigate their new temporal bodies. Their sense of space will be heightened by the haptic feedback felt by physically walking on, touching, and manipulating the sculptural materials. In the VR headset, the immediate space will be dynamic. The landscape will morph freely, and the transparent cube will spawn strange 'happenings' and impossible objects. The cube, as subject, will introduce the expansive possibilities of the virtual world – where space is infinite, and our concepts of physical dimensions are turned upside down. The cube is the 'nursery of ideas', like a stellar nursery. It births concepts and narratives. Three (3) separate narratives will play out, varying between themes of regeneration, artificial intelligence, virtual body dysphoria, and 'the void'. The participant will experience one (1) of three (3) narratives, programmed at random.

These experiences will then be compiled post-exhibition, through discussion & storytelling, to form a collective memory of the overall narrative. VR is such a private experience, that the re-telling of one's individual experience can be profoundly subjective. The compilation of a multitude of these powerful experiences will make for an interesting, dynamic, and temporary memory of the work.

Playing on the dissonance between the virtual and the real, will be a strong audio work that will function both in and out of the VR experience. Two separate pieces of audio work will complement each other while existing apart from one another. Four (4) tripods housing speakers will surround the pile, as mentioned, playing audio sourced from various images' binary code converted into audio files. They will then be treated through various effects to sound organic or of coming from a natural environment. In the VR headset, various natural sounds and field recordings will be treated entirely digitally, while still retaining key elements of their original sources. The audio will lose its original identity and be partially lost in a digital facade.

LINKS + CONTACT

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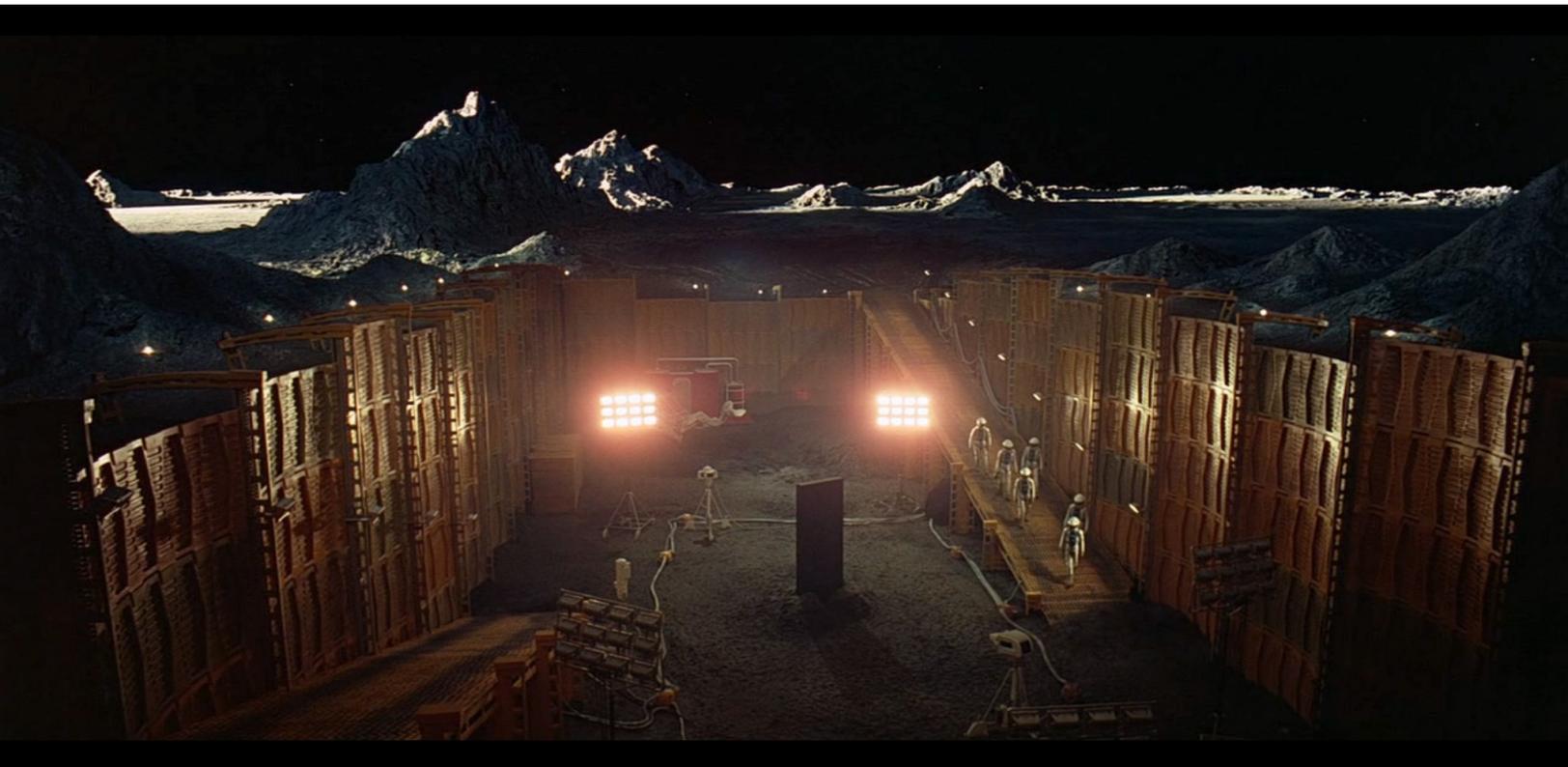
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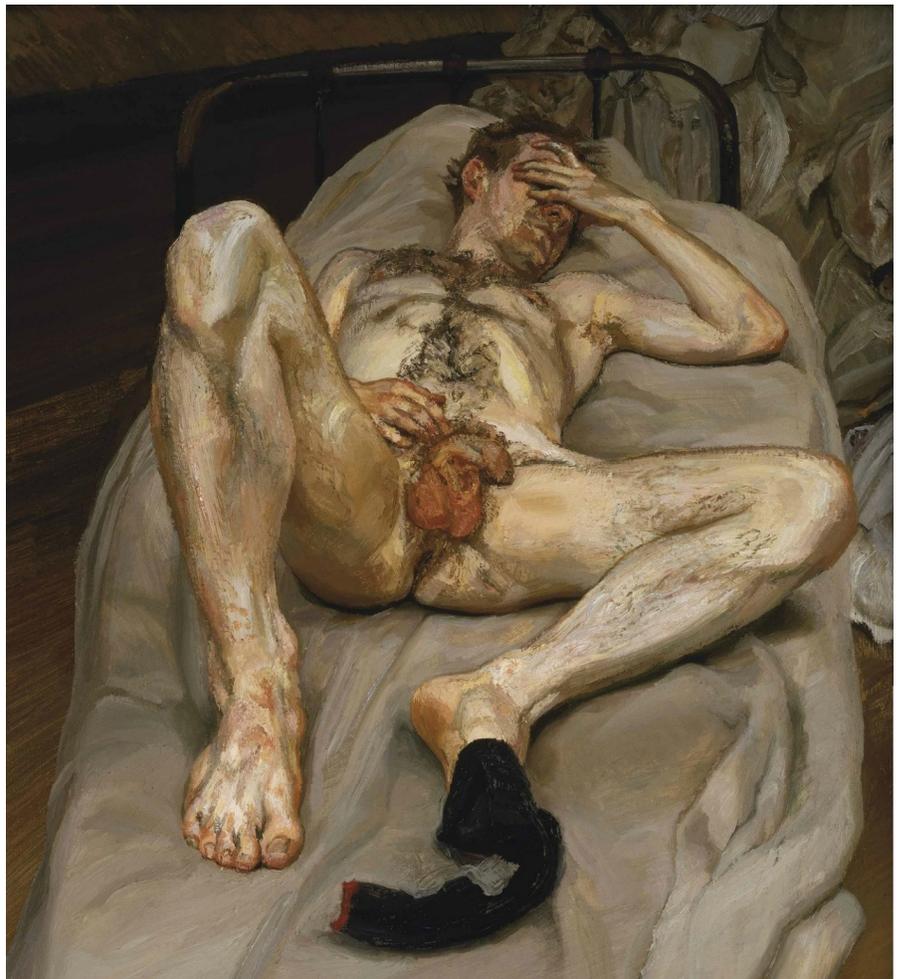
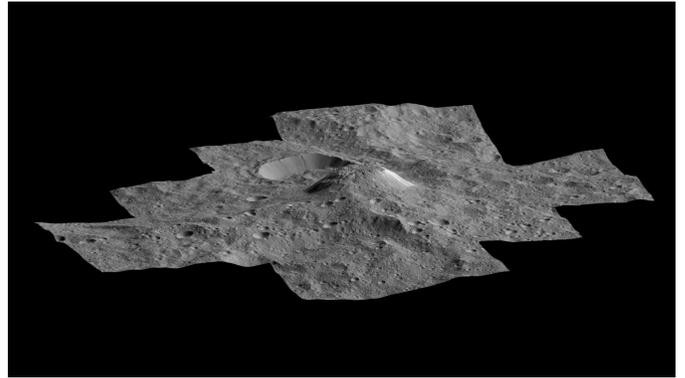
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