The Departure
Lounge

THE DEPARTURE LOUNGE is a collaboration between MA VR, 3D computer animation and VFX students along with staff and external partners to develop an immersive VR experience that engages users with the reality of global warming in their immediate environment.

The experience consists of traveling through reminiscences in a post-apocalyptic world allowing the viewers to go back to their native planet which all of us were forced to leave at the end of the 21st century.

The team

VR

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3D Computer Animation

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VFX

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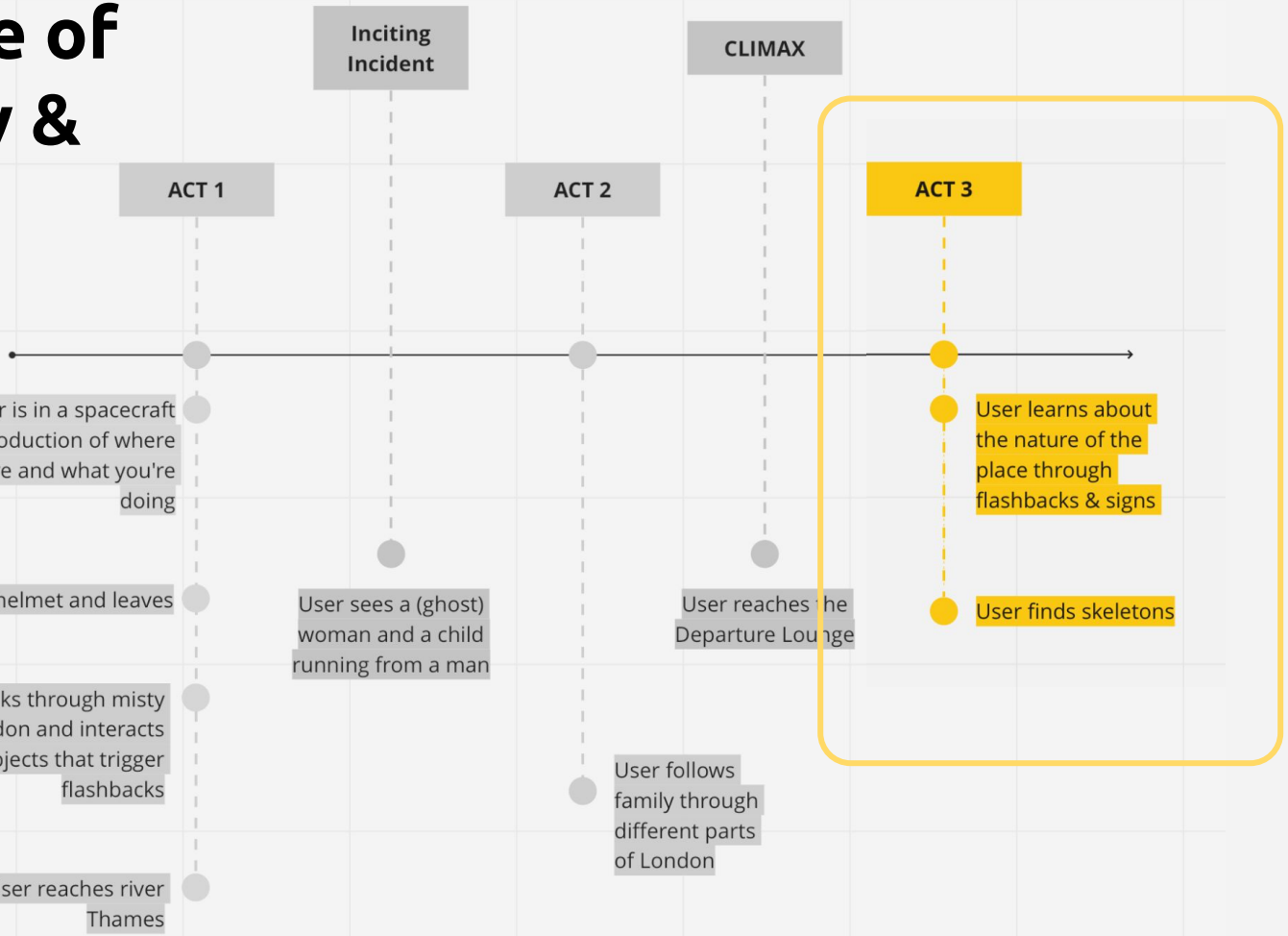
Synopsis

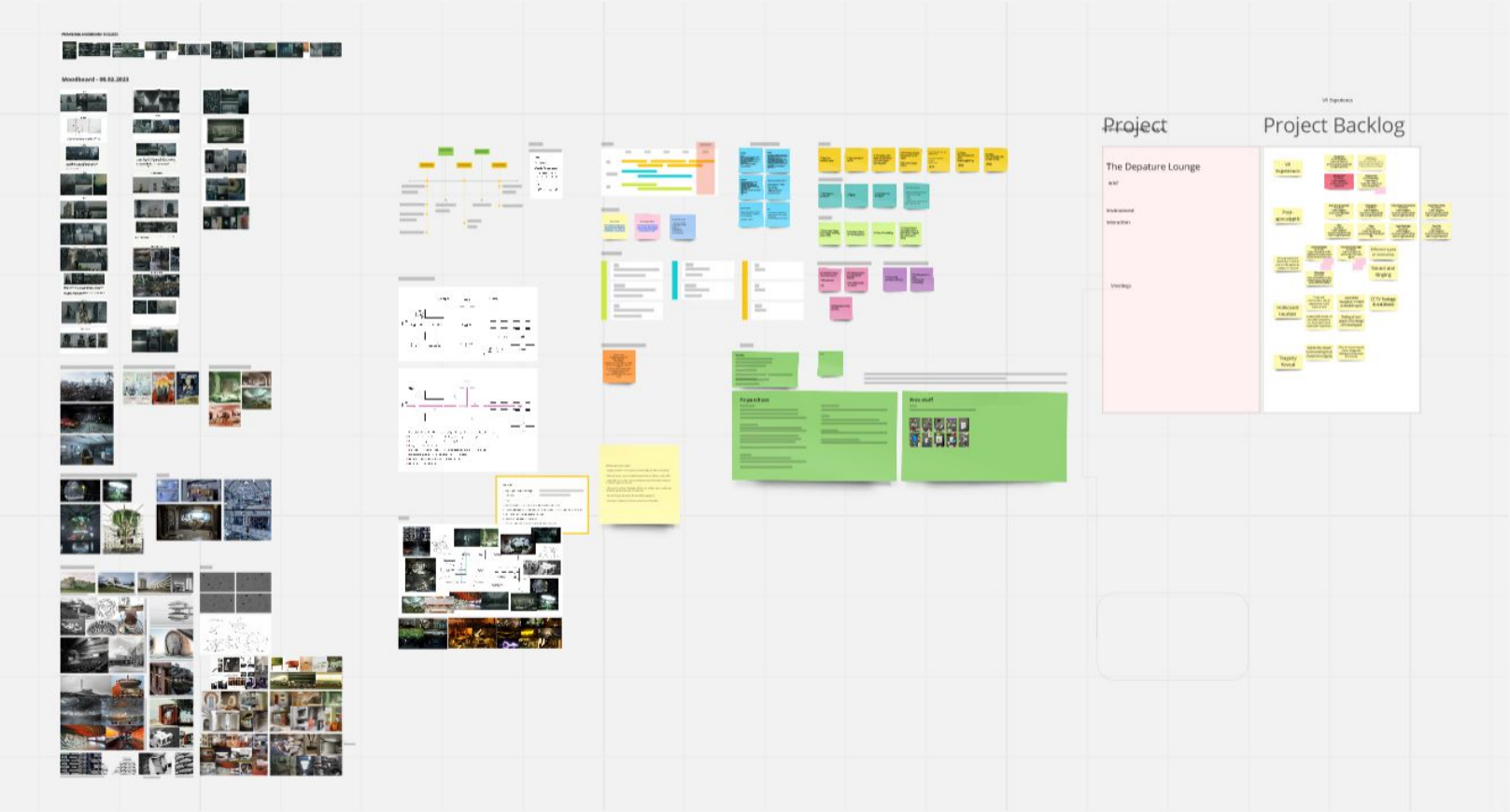
A familiar location such as Battersea Power Station, is rendered in the future present - it's structure crumbling, partially submerged by the Thames, swollen beyond recognition, in a landscape stripped of flora and fauna. But everywhere there are signs of a past civilisation and ghostly voices and memories linger - clues to a planetary trauma.

Removing the VR headset will leave users in an abundant present where catastrophe has yet to destroy everything we cherish. In this sense the experiences can be at once educational, moving, haunting and galvanising with the experiences leaving time tourists with a sense of what may be preserved, rather than one of inevitable devastation.

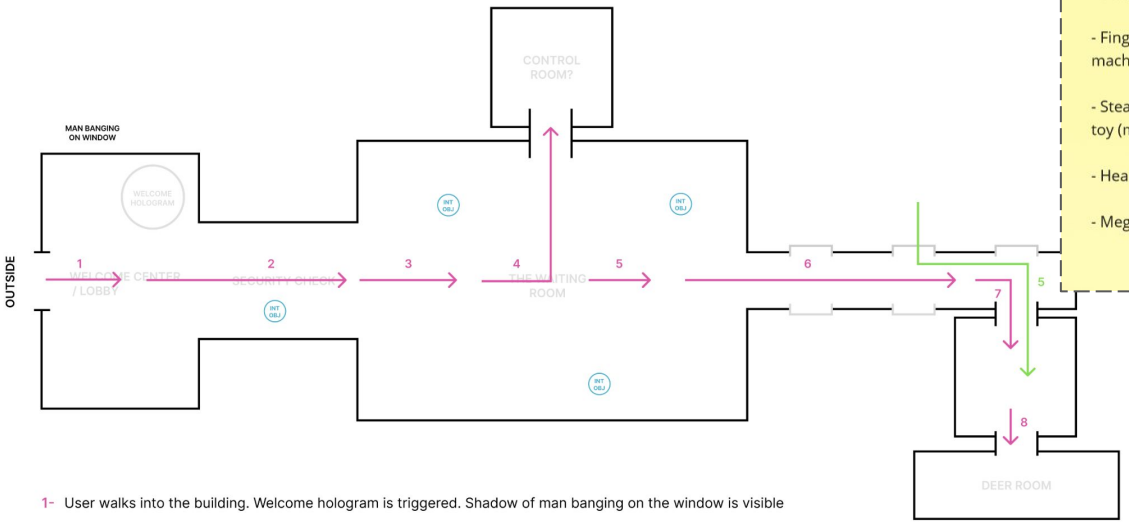
Structure of the story & chosen scene



Organisation



Interactions plan



1- User walks into the building. Welcome hologram is triggered. Shadow of man banging on the window is visible

2- User goes through security check. Can interact with object that triggers sound of people moving/talking though there

3- User goes into waiting room. Can interact with multiple objects

4- User goes to control room (optional)

5- User reaches end of the waiting room. We see ghost woman and child cross the hallway into a room

6- User walks through hallway and can hear woman singing and child crying

7- User walks into room and pod with skeletons rises from the ground

8- User watches deer through window

Object-memory interactions:

- Propaganda poster - man's speech in the poster (lip synch like in a 2D poster).

- Diary - Just sound memory of diary being read (bugs coming from underneath).

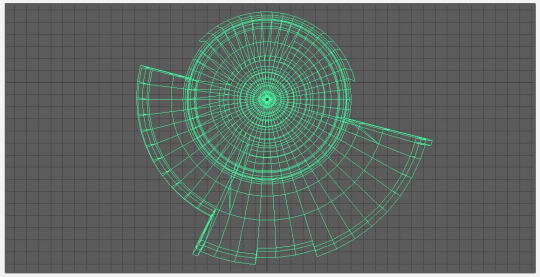
- Finger print scan machine - Someone being forced to put their finger print in the machine to 'signed' the contract.

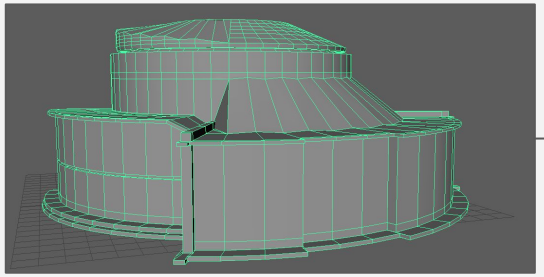
- Steampunk Teddy Bear - Kid playing with toy, mum pulls him to go, and kid drops toy (mother lies kid to take them to euthanise).

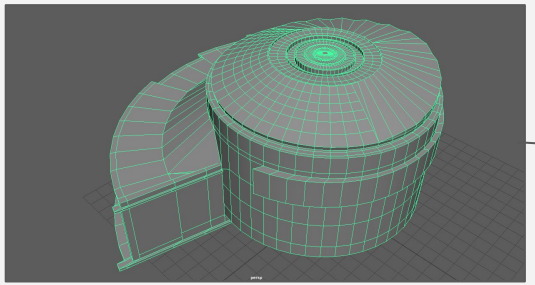
- Headset - Happy song cut off with radio station propaganda.

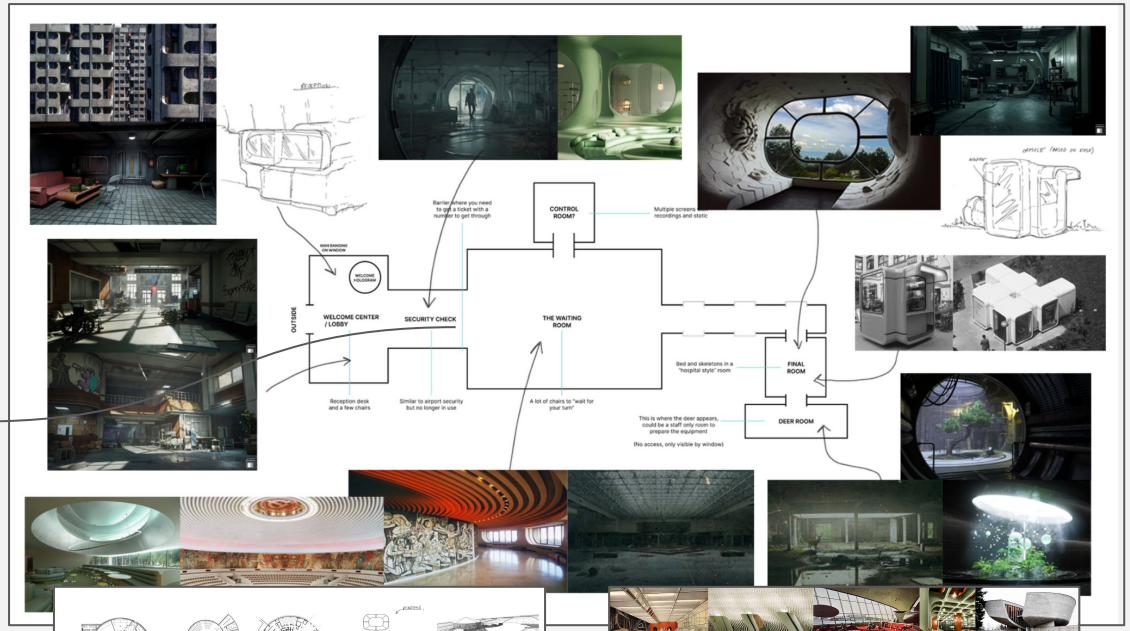
- Megaphone - calling person that is next in the queue to be killed.

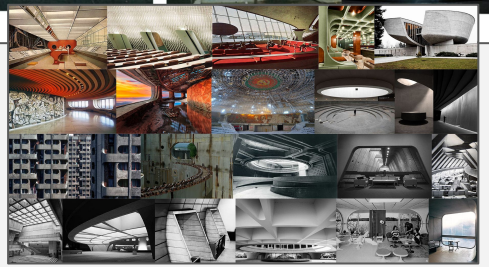
The Departure Lounge





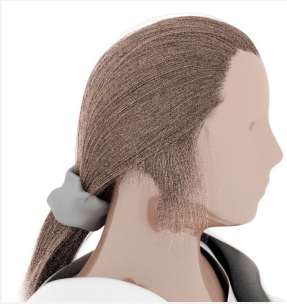






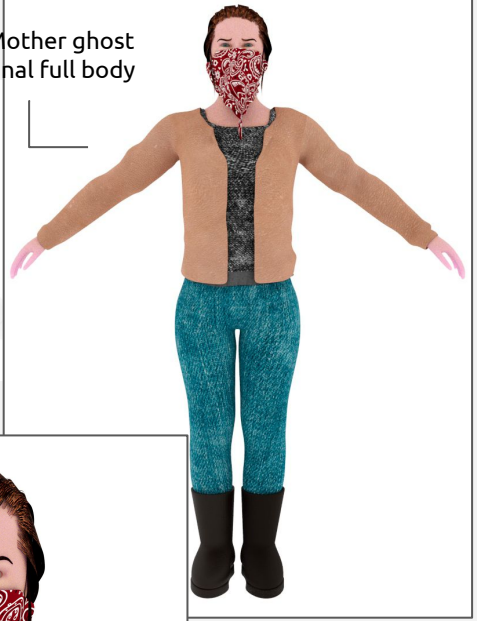
Mother ghost - references & first models

References



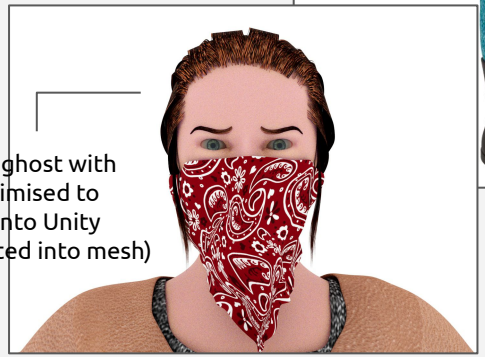
Mother ghost
with xGen hair

Mother ghost
final full body



Child ghost close up
and full body

Mother ghost with
hair optimised to
import into Unity
(converted into mesh)



Challenges/Project evolution

- ➔ Creating correct amount of tension in the environment. Ensuring user does not miss parts of the story by looking a different way (user navigation & interaction with environment). Possible interactions with the environment challenge us to create a transition between reality and flashbacks.
- ➔ Adding personalities to ghosts by animating them (facial expressions, walking cycle, etc). Optimising the main characters and changing their appearance according to the environment/story stages (apparitions from other memories).
- ➔ Preparing models for animation and implementation in Unity (topology, texturing). Will need to keep 3D models simple, proportioned, and without any complicated effects like xgen hair, MASH, etc (effects will be added in Unity later on).
- ➔ Minimising the scope of the project. Multi-person project coordination. Reporting to a third party.

Storytelling challenges

Technical challenges

Coordination challenges

Thank you