

lucid
realities

METALLUX

A VIRTUAL REALITY EXPERIENCE

THE BROOM

BY NIM SHAPIRA

קרן בזקור
مندوق مكور
MAKOR
FOUNDATION
For Israeli films (R.A.)

Avec le soutien du
CNC

One night, seeking to awaken his aching mind and unable to shake off his post-immigration melancholy, Leonid had an idea.

As a former Ukrainian art curator, now working as a street sweeper in Jerusalem, he decided to do what he did best: curate an imaginary exhibition dedicated to... brooms.

With this idea firmly in mind and a broom firmly in his hand, he set out on a 40,000-years voyage through art history...

After the dissolution of the Soviet Union, Leonid Pekarovsky had to bid farewell to his cherished role as an art historian and exhibition curator at the Ukraine Ministry of Culture. At 44, he was forced to immigrate with his family to Jerusalem. Despite his qualifications, the only employment opportunity he could secure was that of a municipal street sweeper.

“The Broom” vividly brings to life Leonid's autobiographical short story, titled by the same name. The VR experience invites participants to step into Leonid's shoes and immerse themselves in the poignant narrative of his post-immigration journey.

Navigating the streets of Jerusalem, participants wield a broom and transform the environment that seamlessly merge realism with an oil painting aesthetic. They then embark on a journey through space and time spanning 40000 years of art history. At each stop, Leonid sincerely shares what these artistic depictions of brooms mean to him as a street sweeper, an art curator, an immigrant, and a human.



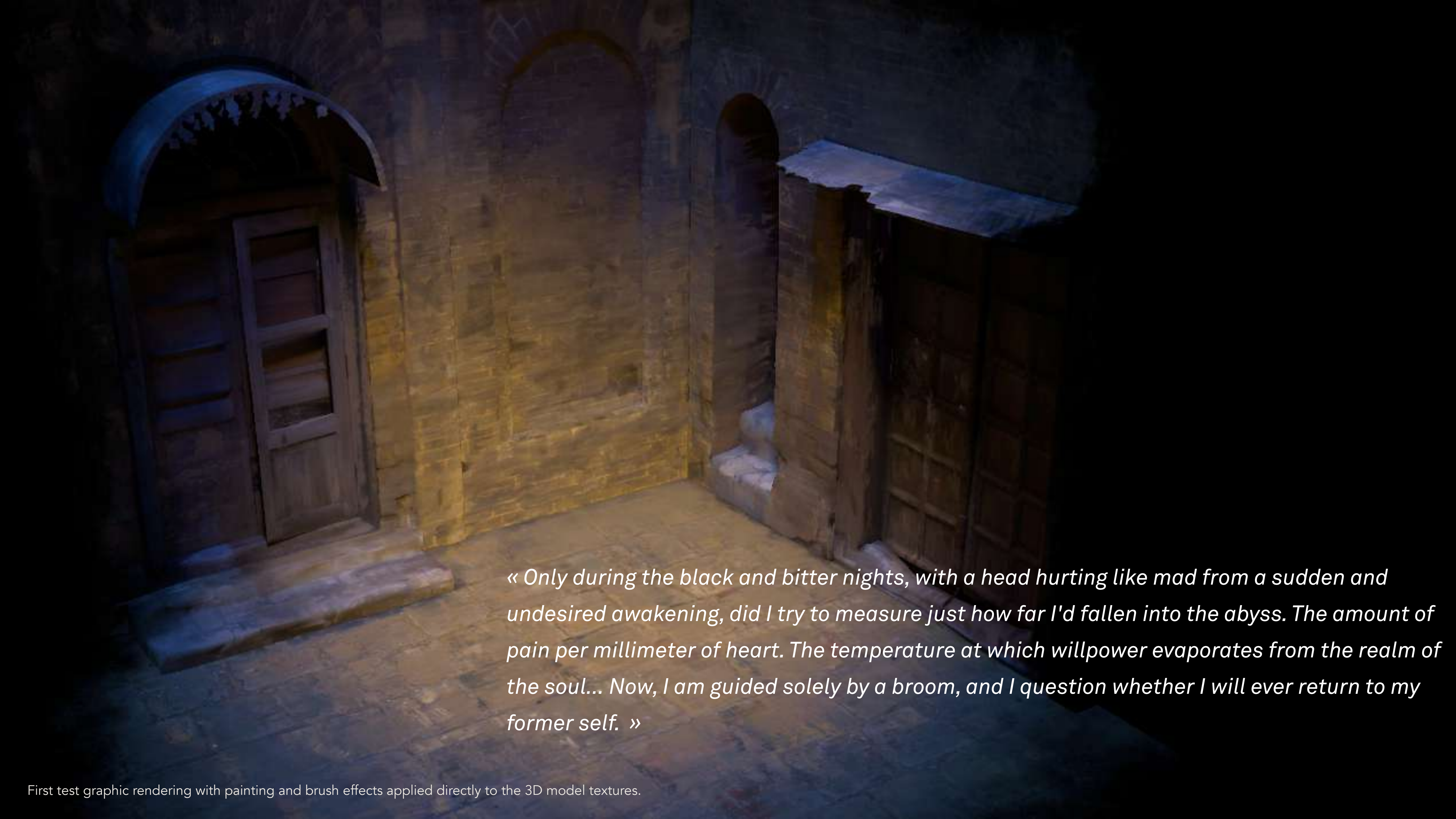
Leonid Pekarovsky

GENRE: Fiction, based on a true story

EXPERIENCE: Interactive 6DoF, Single user, 1st POV

DURATION: 10-12 minutes for LBE/ 15-20 minutes Online

LANGUAGES: English, French, Ukrainian, Hebrew, Arabic



« Only during the black and bitter nights, with a head hurting like mad from a sudden and undesired awakening, did I try to measure just how far I'd fallen into the abyss. The amount of pain per millimeter of heart. The temperature at which willpower evaporates from the realm of the soul... Now, I am guided solely by a broom, and I question whether I will ever return to my former self. »

CONCEPT

Since Leonid Pekarovsky immigrated to Jerusalem and embraced the life of a street sweeper, he observed a gradual dimming of his thought processes. The routine nature of his daily job and the absence of intellectual stimulation began to wear on his once-vibrant thinking.

As participants don a VR headset and step into Leonid's world, they become immersed in his thoughts, guided by his stream of consciousness. Through the act of sweeping, they transport themselves from the lively streets of Jerusalem to significant moments in art history. Can they revive Leonid's thought process?

At each stop on this virtual journey, brooms in iconic paintings and artifacts come to life – from ancient cave drawings to an Egyptian tomb and a Chinese mausoleum to an encounter with Vincent Van Gogh. Drawing on his experience as an art curator, he questions the images, reflects on art and what it must have meant to people in other times and places, and what it means to him.

He talks about the challenges of uprooting, the gap between his old world and his new life. We follow him on his emotional journey, in search of a new dimension in which to exist, to be himself again.

Through the magic of VR, "The Broom" invites participants to travel through space and time, witnessing the curation of an impossible art exhibition. The juxtaposition of one of the earliest tools invented by humans with the pinnacle of modern technology, symbolized by the union of an age-old broom and cutting-edge VR technology, creates a potent and inspiring experience for the users.

This VR experience encourages participants to gain a fresh perspective, fostering empathy and adopting a more compassionate outlook towards displaced people.

Can participants liberate Leonid from the monotony of his daily routine and overcome the stagnation of his thought process caused by manual work?

Will they truly come to understand him?

Leonid's collection spans 40,000 years of art, from Spain to Egypt, from Chine to the Netherlands, all centered around the broom as a symbolic motif, revealing a timeless narrative of human creativity.



-37 000 avant JC. Grotte El Castillo,



700 avant JC. Bas-reliefs d'un Mausolée. Chine



- 2 600 avant JC. Hiéroglyphes. Egypte
1881. Route d'Etten, Vincent Van Gogh



AUTHOR'S NOTE

A decade ago, I immigrated from Tel Aviv to New York. It was during this time that I realized my grandparents had also undertaken a similar journey, immigrating in their thirties just before the Holocaust, from Europe to Israel. Similarly, Leonid immigrated due to the fall of the USSR. While I will never fully comprehend the challenges they faced, I do recognize common threads of displacement, hardship, and the barriers of culture and language in my own life.

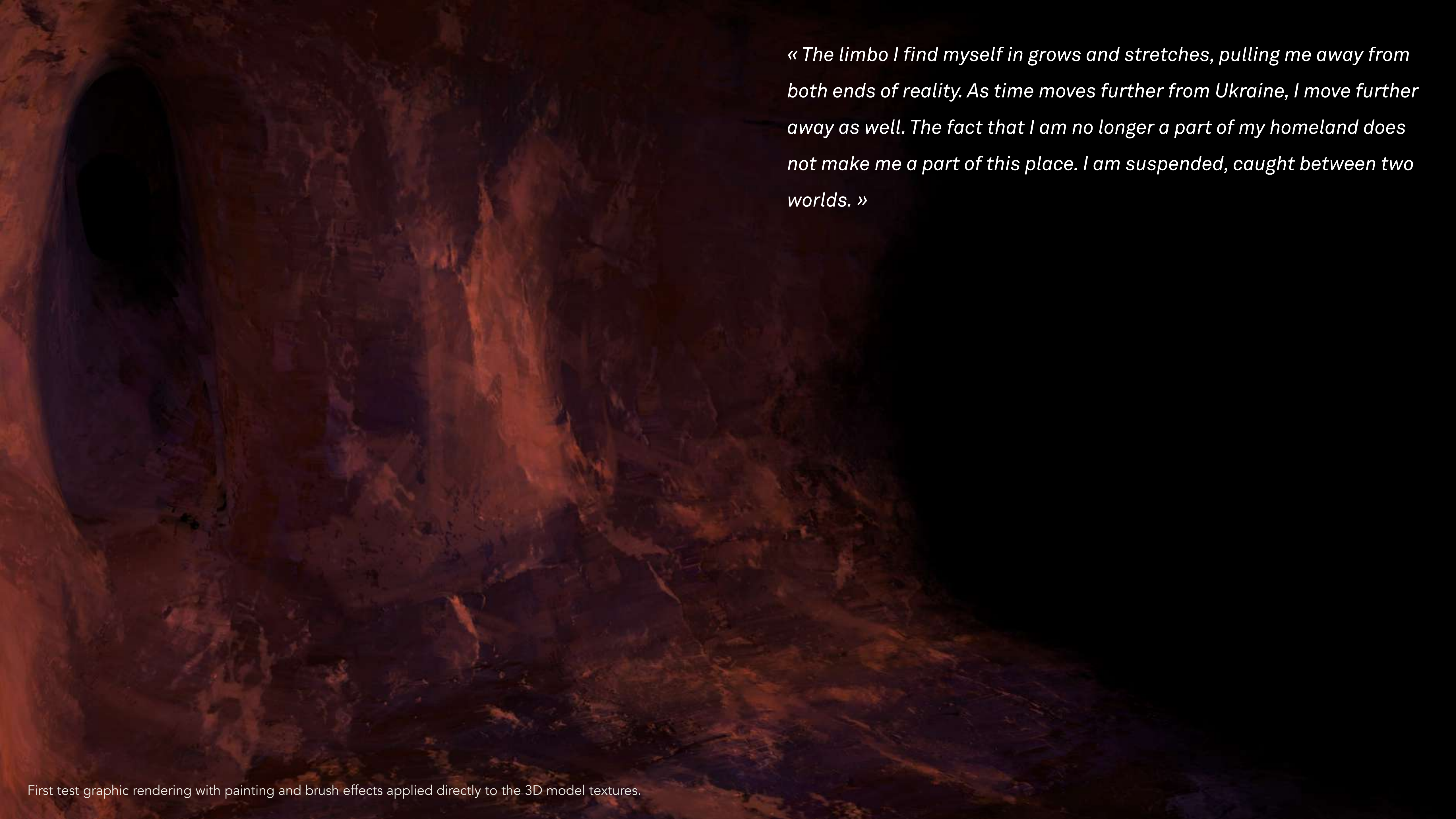
While reading Leonid Pekarovsky's "The Broom," I found questions and themes surrounding immigrant life, distance from family, and adjusting to a new culture resurfaced. As an immigrant with Ukrainian lineage, I aimed to release the project on the anniversary of the USSR dissolution.

However, in a tragic twist of events, with Russia's invasion of Ukraine leading to the fastest and largest displacement of people in Europe since World War II, the project's relevance

in focusing on migrant experiences became more vital than ever.

While Leonid's story doesn't represent all immigrant experiences, it provides an intimate look into the mind, heart, and soul of one individual. In our society, we often fail to acknowledge the diverse population around us. We attribute complex traits primarily to friends, acquaintances, peers, or those we see as social counterparts, seldom extending the same consideration to those labeled as 'other' by society.

"The Broom" VR experience doesn't claim that all street sweepers hold a PhD in art history or possess a hidden set of expertise. Instead, it emphasizes that street sweepers, like all people, are individuals with their own past memories, future aspirations, hopes, and dreams.



« The limbo I find myself in grows and stretches, pulling me away from both ends of reality. As time moves further from Ukraine, I move further away as well. The fact that I am no longer a part of my homeland does not make me a part of this place. I am suspended, caught between two worlds. »

SYNOPSIS

With dusk settling and a cold, bleak light enveloping the surroundings, participants find themselves on a Jerusalem street. A broom materializes in front of them. Upon grasping it, they hear Leonid's voice instructing them, 'sweep, don't think,' echoing the daily directive from his supervisors.

As participants sweep the street clean, Leonid reflects on his descent into this abyss—a downturn that not only halted his professional pursuits as an art curator but also disrupted his cognitive processes. He contemplates how thoughts, once perceived as ceaseless and infinite, have now come to a complete standstill since he started wielding a broom. But then, a thought crosses Leonid's mind:

Can an ordinary broom become a muse? Could this simple tool reignite his thought process and remind him of who he was?

Leonid starts to daydream, and the journey through space and time begins. As we sweep, Jerusalem begins to transform, and the cobblestones under our feet slowly disappear while the walls, doors, and arches of the streets morph and let appear, one by one, four locations, each with its own distinctive light and color: The red of El Castillo Cave adorned with glorious cave paintings first; then the yellow of an Egyptian tomb; a bluish Chinese Shrine in the moonlight, and finally a windy, foggy street in the Netherlands. Each time, the broom shape shifts to allow us to interact with the new environment: a torch or lantern to illuminate; a telescope to observe the stars.

Accompanied by Leonid's voice, we explore, observe, and sweep. At each stop along the journey, Leonid will weave together not only the story of the artworks but also reflections and feelings from his personal experience—

loss of his homeland, the inscrutable new language barrier, complex relations with his father in Ukraine, and his son's embarrassment towards him.

Finally, sweeping more litter transports the participants to a foggy road in the Netherlands, where they witness Vincent Van Gogh drawing a work of art in real-time. The meeting with the latter is where the journey climaxes as participants (and Leonid) witness Van Gogh creating "Road in Etten" - an artwork that focuses not only on a sole broom but puts a street sweeper at its center. For the first time, Leonid feels truly 'seen.'

As dawn breaks, participants return to the Jerusalem street with newfound hope that the unassuming act of sweeping not only brought back Leonid's thought process but also allowed him to escape the dull reality.

THE BROOM



1. ONBOARDING

2. JERUSALEM
AT DUSK
Loneliness

3. EL CASTILLO
CAVE
A human fossil

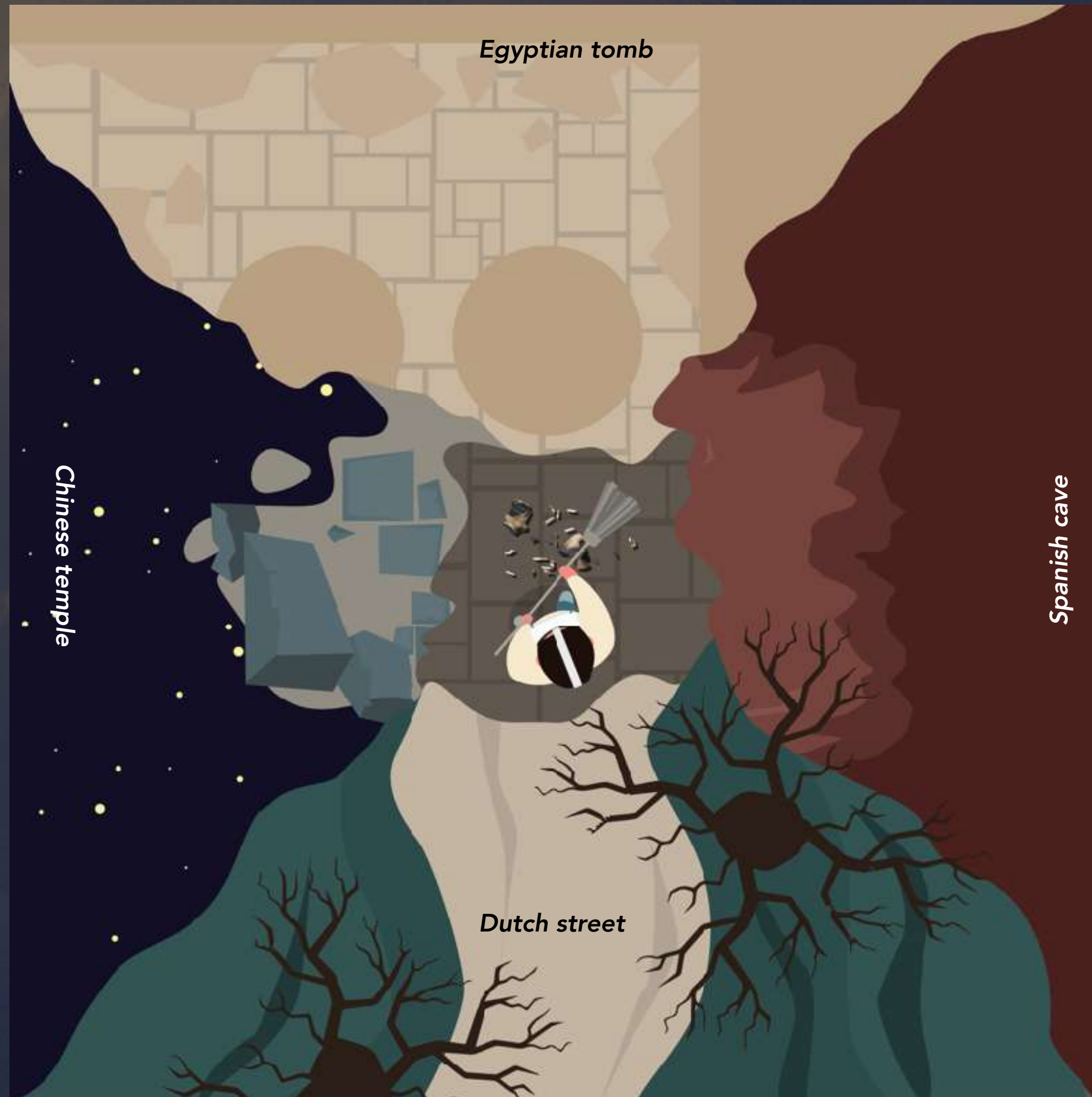
4. THE EGYPTIAN
TOMB
Incommunicability

5. THE CHINESE
MAUSOLEUM
Loss

6. THE NETHERLANDS
Being seen

7. JERUSALEM
AT DAWN
Hope

EXPERIENCE DESIGN



Floor plan for scene setting - December 2023. The floor plan show the 4 location but they will never be visible simultaneously in the experience.

- **A first person narrative.** Through Leonid touching inner monologue we follow his emotional journey to overcome the challenges of his new life as an immigrant.
- **To create an intimate connection with the underappreciated and often unnoticed toil that street sweepers endure.** Participants must interact with the broom to progress in the experience and undertake the often-overlooked and seemingly endless task of sweeping.
- **An interactive environment.** Participants stand at the center of the Jerusalem street junction. They never leave this space but, through the act of sweeping, streets and alleyways gradually transform into diverse locations: an arch morphing into a cave, a door becoming the entrance of a temple, or the alley reshaping into a street in the Dutch countryside. Like Leonid, participants find themselves in a limbo, suspended between present and past, navigating the blurred line between reality and dreams.

ART DIRECTION

Monochromes and hand-painted textures

The flickering space of Leonid's memories comes through life through an art direction that mixes realism and documentary sources with a rendering inspired by the techniques of oil painting, transporting the users through time, space, and colors.

The 3D model of each location is based on documentary sources or photogrammetry when possible to respect the original work.

Starting from realistic textures (Jerusalem stone, cave rocks..) each environment will receive specific treatment through color and lighting, while maintaining a consistent texture play to ensure continuity throughout the experience.

The work on hand-painted textures, with the mix of colors and brush strokes provide depth and dimension to the environments.

First test graphic rendering with painting and brush effects applied directly to the 3D model textures.



«This broom, that monk Shide is holding, removes the cobwebs not only from the corners of the monastery, but also from human souls. Souls, like monasteries, also need cleaning from time to time.»

DISTRIBUTION

While 'The Broom' tells a global story, its presentation will be tailored to local contexts. We aspire to showcase it to varied audiences worldwide, ranging from policymakers to art enthusiasts, and from educators and students to the general public.

We intend to create versions of this experience narrated in languages such as Hebrew, English, French, Arabic, and Ukrainian.

To reach different types of the public, we plan to deliver the experience in two formats:

- A shorter version - 10/12 minutes for Location-Based Entertainment (LBE), requiring a standalone VR headset.
- A longer version of 15-20 minutes for online distribution that could leverage the communities touched by the LBE events.

The distribution plan for the project includes a debut on the festival circuit (Venice Film Festival, Tribeca,

IDFA), followed by showcases within cultural venues, themed events, museums, and libraries worldwide.

To support the LBE distribution, we can rely on our newly launched BtoB platform Unframed Collection, specifically designed to facilitate the deployment of VR exhibitions in museums and cultural spaces, managing screening licenses, setting up the space, and training on-site staff.

The multi-level narrative allows us to imagine different types of venues, including Immigration Museums, Jewish Museums and Cultural Centers, Art and Digital Centers, schools, and library networks such as Sites of Conscience - a network of 24 Migration Museums in 17 countries.

EUROPE

Musée National d'Histoire de l'Immigration, Paris
Migration Museum, London
Museum Europäischer Kulturen, Berlin
Musée d'Art et Histoire du Judaïsme, Paris 104, Paris
Gaité Lyrique

NORTH AMERICA

Phi Center, Montréal
Gray Area, San Francisco
Museum of Tolerance, Los Angeles
Jewish Museum, New York
Contemporary Jewish Museum, San Francisco

ISRAEL

Tel Aviv Museum, Tel Aviv
Israel Museum, Jerusalem
Israel's National Library, Jerusalem

DEVELOPMENT STATUS AND FINANCING

"The Broom" has been featured and incubated in various film festival programs and markets:

Biennale College, Italy La Biennale di Venezia program

IDFA's DocLab Forum, Netherlands organized by the International Documentary Film Festival Amsterdam (IDFA)


New Images Festival's XR Financing Market

"The Broom" was also workshopped at the MIT Open Documentary Lab (a lab that brings storytellers, technologists, and scholars together to advance the new arts of documentary) and at NEWINC (NYC's NEWMUSEUM cultural incubator).

The "Broom" team has secured development grants (2022-2023) from the French film fund CNC and the Israeli film funds Makor & Gesher and is currently in the process of securing production grants. A prototype, allowing us to define the interaction design and artistic direction, is in development

and will be completed by the end of 2024. **Production will begin in 2025, and we expect to deliver the project by winter 2025.**





« I discovered something that previously had seemed like a terribly heretical idea to me: that a broom could be a serious object of thought...And then, the honking horns, screeching brakes, shouts and construction-site noise harmoniously merge into an expansive melody that grabs the broom. And it, in a passionate dance full of complex motions, leaves behind a pure white cleanliness. I'm the one who directs the broom's dance. »



**Nim (Nimrod)
Shapira**
**Creator, Director,
Co-writer &
Producer at
Metallux Studio**

Nim is an award-winning creative director, filmmaker, and artist working at the intersection of art, storytelling, and technological innovation. His work spans a spectrum of the moving image, from traditional 'linear' filmmaking to virtual-reality experiences and AI experiments.

Nim was a 2021/2022 fellow at the MIT Open Documentary Lab. He was a 2020 alumni of NEWINC (NYC's New Museum's cultural incubator) and a graduate of the La Biennale Di Venezia's College Cinema for VR. As an XR filmmaker, Nim is dedicated to creating a positive social impact in the world. His work revolves around questions of humanism, guilt and compassion.

His first VR experience 'Bystanding', a co-production between Canada, Germany and Israel had its world premiere at the 2021 Tribeca Film Festival and has been officially selected to 30+ film festivals.

As a creative director, Nim worked for JOAN Creative (2022 Adweek's Small Agency of the Year) and for Eko (a leading innovator of web-based interactive experiences). He won Webby, Addy, Clio, Telly & Lovie awards for his films, digital campaigns, commercials, interactive experiences, and XR projects.

Nim holds a BFA from the Steve Tisch School of Film and Television in Tel Aviv University.

He lives in Brooklyn with his husband and cat.
<https://www.nimshap.com/>



Leonid Pekarovsky
**Screenwriter, co-
writer**

Leonid Pekarovsky is a Kyiv-born writer, journalist, and art critic. He served in the Red Army and studied art theory and history at the Kyiv Fine Arts Institute. He worked for the Ukrainian Ministry of Culture for many years, curating art exhibitions in the USSR and worldwide. His essays on art theory and history have been published in professional journals.

After he immigrated to Israel in 1991, he worked as a street sweeper, a cemetery gardener and in a printing house. Since 1995 he has been working as a security guard and receptionist. His stories and novellas have been printed in the Russian press and in Haaretz Culture & Literature section.

His first book, *Broom and Other Stories*, was published in 2012. His second book *A Parabola of Success* was published in 2015. His third book *10 cents* was published in 2018.



Timothée Marnat
Artistic Director

After graduating of ESAD in Reims, a school of graphic design, and of Gobelins - School of Image (specializing in Master Interactive Digital Experiences Design), Timothée specialized early in creating interactive experiences. In 2016, he co-directed a student project, *HINA*, which was officially selected at the I Love Transmedia festival and also won the Beaumarchais Award. That same year, he joined Ubisoft's R&D team to work in VR video games.

He later expanded his career as a freelance professional before joining Novelab's team in 2018, where he held various roles, including VFX artist, 3D graphic designer, and art director. He eventually assumed the positions of 3D Art Director and Art Director of Productions. In 2022, he joined the Lucid Realities team as an Art Director.

ARTISTIC TEAM

Mark Ivanir was born in Chernovtsi (now Chernivtsi), Ukrainian SSR. His family emigrated to Israel in 1972.

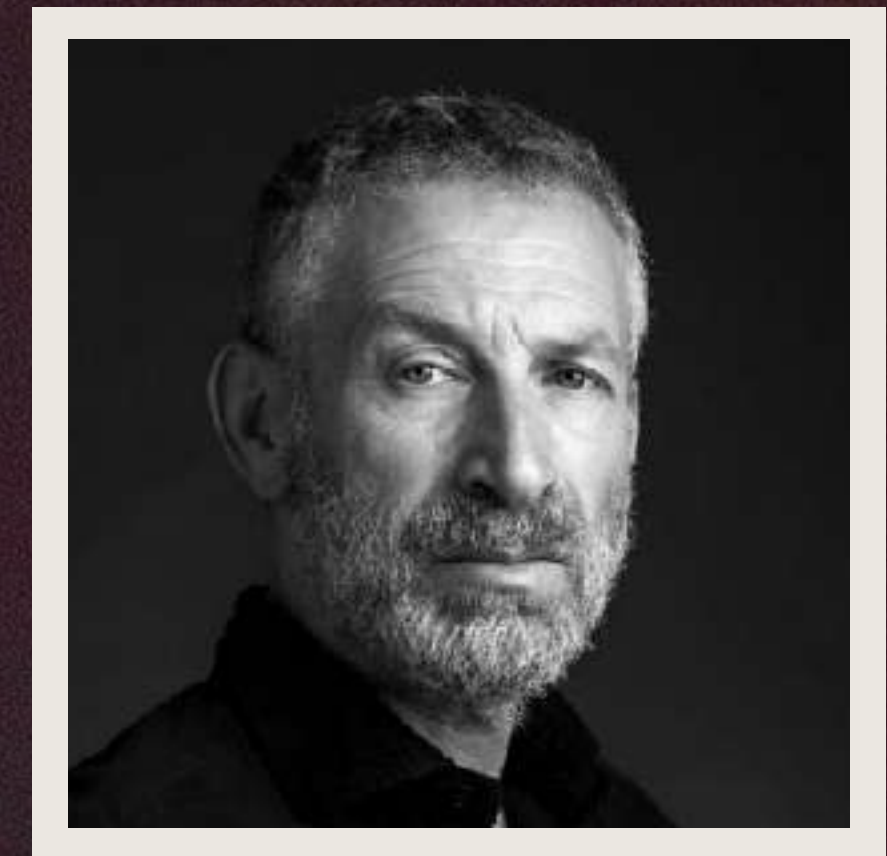
Ivanir's first major film role was in Steven Spielberg's 1993 Oscar-winning epic Schindler's List, where he played Marcel Goldberg. He worked with Spielberg twice thereafter, first for a cameo appearance in The Terminal, then again for The Adventures of Tintin: The Secret of the Unicorn.

Ivanir held a pivotal role in Robert De Niro's 2006 film, The Good Shepherd, for which he won the Silver Bear Award at the Berlin Film Festival, later landing a role in Barry Levinson's What Just Happened, this time acting alongside De Niro. In 2011, he appeared in Universal's Johnny English Reborn, Universal's Big Miracle and 360.

His biggest part to date was on the critically acclaimed A Late Quartet, released from RKO pictures in the United States, in fall 2012. The film was voted as one of the New York Daily News 10 top films of the year. Ivanir played Daniel Lerner, the first violin of the string quartet, whose other members are played by Philip Seymour Hoffman, Catherine Keener and Christopher Walken.

Ivanir has had over 60 guest star and guest lead roles on television shows such as 24, Monk, CSI: NY, Law & Order, Fringe, CSI: Miami, Nikita and Royal Pains. In 2016 Ivanir had a recurring role on Homeland as Russian intelligence agent Ivan Krupin. The season was nominated for the SAG Awards and for the Emmy's. In 2017, he played a Holocaust survivor in the critically acclaimed German-language film "Bye Bye Germany" and recurred on Amazon's "Transparent". In 2018, he co-starred in the film Entebbe, directed by José Padilha, the creator of Narcos, and Bill Hader's HBO comedy Barry, in which he recurs as three Chechen brothers. He appeared in The Red Sea Diving Resort, as the head of the Mossad, alongside Sir Ben Kingsley, Chris Evans and Greg Kinnear.

Ivanir is fluent in Hebrew, Russian, English, Ukrainian, French and Yiddish, and adept in German and Arabic.



Mark Ivanir as *Leonid Pekarovsky*
Actor



Nevo Shinaar
Producer
Metallux Studio

Nevo Shinaar is a creative producer and multimedia artist. He currently serves as the head of development for Chicago-based production company Mitten Media for both documentary and scripts projects.

As a producer, his award-winning films played at film festivals including Sundance, SXSW, AFI Docs and Palm Springs, acquired by Disney+, POV/PBS, the NY Times and the Criterion Channel, and supported by Tribeca Film Institute, Sundance Institute and Kartemquin Films.

Nevo produced *Stay Close*, a short documentary which was shortlisted for the 92nd Academy Awards and co-produced *White Eye* (supported by Makor Film Fund) which was nominated at the 93rd Academy Awards. He is a founding member of SITE collective and of Wolf + Me Films and holds an MFA from Northwestern University in Documentary Media.



Chloé Jarry
CEO & Executive Producer
Lucid Realities

Chloé Jarry is the co-founder of the immersive and interactive production company Lucid Realities. Prior to this, she served as a new media producer at Camera Lucida, where she worked on significant interactive projects for over eight years. She is the executive producer of *The Enemy*, a virtual and augmented reality project directed by Karim Ben Khelifa, which premiered at the Institut du Monde Arabe in Paris in May 2017 and was showcased at the MIT Museum in Cambridge in the fall of 2017.

Lucid Realities has since launched several VR projects, including confirming Chloé's passion for artists and cultural subjects. This year, the Musée d'Orsay trusted her for the third time, with a new VR piece accompanying their major exhibition of the season, showing her capacity to find new ways to distribute New Medias with cultural institutions.



Alessandra Bogi
Producer
Lucid Realities

Alessandra is a creative producer of immersive experiences, passionate about storytelling and finding new ways of bringing compelling stories to engage the audience, with over 15 years of experience in the media industry.

She is currently a producer at the XR production company Lucid Realities in Paris where she worked on award-winning XR experiences such as Claude Monet-The Waterlilies obsession, The Little Dancer, Champollion The Egyptian, Archi VR and The Van Gogh's Palette currently show cased at Musée d'Orsay in Paris.

Before diving into the immersive experiences field, Alessandra had a background in anthropology and worked in documentary film production for major international broadcaster such as ARTE, France Televisions, YLE, PBS. She holds a master's degree in interactive design at the prestigious Ecole des Gobelins.

METALLUX

Nim Shapira founded Metallux Studios in 2019. By harnessing extended realities, the studio focuses on narratives that promote social impact, LGBTQIA+ rights, and climate and immigrant justice through spatial and sensory experiences.

Metallux Studio's first VR experience 'Bystanding', a co-production between Canada, Germany and Israel had its world premiere at the 2021 Tribeca Film Festival and has been officially selected to 30+ film festivals including Slamdance, SIGGRAPH, Bifan, Kaohsiung and many more.

Using novel techniques of volumetric capture, photogrammetry, and 360° animations, participants can step into strangers' shoes and listen to their deepest confessions. Will they identify with the bystanders that stayed on the riverbank and didn't rescue a drowning rowing champion'?

"Bystanding" also won GOLD at The w3 Awards for "Immersive - Best Documentary Experience" (illuminating Brilliance in Digital Experiences, Content, and Creativity \ Selected by the Academy of Interactive and Visual Arts) and GOLD at The LOVIE Awards for "Best Virtual Narrative Experience" (Honoring the Best of the European Internet \ Selected by the International Academy of Digital Arts and Sciences, IADAS), and SILVER at the TELLY Awards for "Immersive and XR: Social Impact".

'Bystanding' was selected to be a part of the Israeli National Culture Program, an educational initiative that exposes students, to culture and art as part of the formal education system.

<https://www.nimshap.com/>



Bystanding - the Feingold Syndrome

lucid realities

Lucid Realities is an immersive and interactive production and distribution company based in Paris and founded in 2018.

XR is much more than just a technology, it is primarily an opportunity to create a new form of experiences that harness the emotional power of virtual realities in the service of writers and authors looking to make a social or educational impact, or simply to immerse us in their stories. Our first virtual reality project, *The Enemy* by Karim Ben Khelifa, which our team produced for Camera Lucida, demonstrated our ability to create innovative distribution models.

Since its creation, the Lucid Realities team has produced several VR works, including *Claude Monet - The Water Lilies Obsession* by Nicolas Thépot co-produced with the Musée d'Orsay and the Musée de l'Orangerie - winner of the Viveport Award for Best Art/Culture Experience of the Year, *Endodrome* created by the visual artist Dominique Gonzalez-Foerster and presented at the Venice Art Biennale in 2019, *Alienarium* by the same artist, showcased at the Serpentine Gallery in London, *The Starry Sand Beach*, a virtual reality project by Huang Hsin-Chien and Nina Barbier selected for the Venice Film Festival in 2021, and *Champollion the Egyptian* by Gordon and Agnès Molia, exhibited at the Louvre-Lens and the Louvre Museum in Paris in 2022, *La Palette de Van Gogh* by the same directors, co-produced with and exhibited at the Musée d'Orsay with Vive Arts.

Since 2019, we have also developed several augmented reality narratives, such as *Seven Grams* by Karim Ben Khelifa co-produced with France Télévisions, POV, Think Films and *The Little Dancer* by Gordon and Marie Sellier co-produced with the Musée d'Orsay and France Télévisions.



THANK YOU

Contact : abogi@lucidrealities.studio

