

Trump is a Holographic Game: How Marshall's Words Visit Us 45 Years Later

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ABSTRACT

This passage is originally written and edited for online publishing on the Looking Glass USA official blog and forum. The focus of the paper is detailing the design lifetime of a single game, *Marshall's Theory*, amidst surmountable political dissonance from recently inaugurated United States President Donald J. Trump. It serves of memoriam to the foresight of mass media writer Marshall McLuhan, how once more his speaking has predicted the status quo of American politics well after his passing, and how his speaking has manifested itself into a highly visual, 3D game that exists on the cult HoloPlayer One system where the President is trapped in his own paranoia riddled nightmare. Using the banality of the current American atmosphere, gameplay and game design while creating the project had taken on a peculiar form where traversing between play and reality was instantaneous. The process of the game's lifetime, combed over from development to real life performance, will show itself to be as oversaturated as the presidency in 2017 [2018].

Keywords

hologram, politics, art, design, process, imagery, technology, history

TRUMP IS A HOLOGRAPHIC GAME

Looking Glass (www.lookingglassfactory.com) was kind enough to let me write some words about a recent interactive game I had made with their latest prototype — HoloPlayer One. Before beginning, I'd like to take the time to thank them for their support, the technology they've been inventing in the lab, and how grand it was to see out a project that was gnawing at my thoughts as it was timely. As most projects I create as well, there seemed to be a numbing visual motif I had to get out too where *Marshall's Theory* fit in well. The dream of the hologram comes closer every day and I'm glad to be a part of it aside Looking Glass. With that said, I think I have created a project that may seem outside of what you would expect from a mainstream tech motif.

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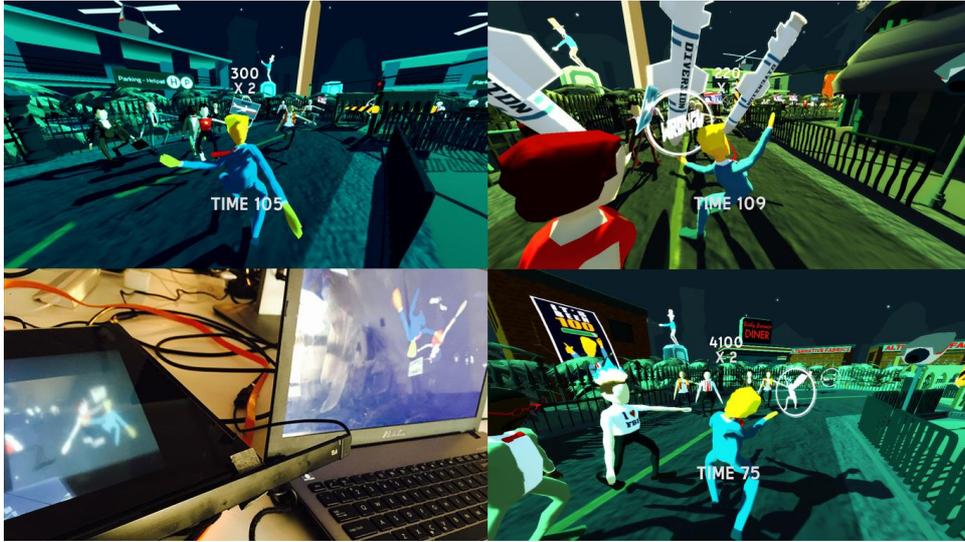


Figure 1: *Marshall's Theory* as seen from multiple, standalone desktop build views. As well as from production of its Aerial/HoloPlayer process of creation.

The project is *Marshall's Theory* (<http://www.benjaminpoynter.com/marshalls-theory.php>) (see Figure 1), a game with the central theme of paranoia. In *Marshall's Theory*, you as player assume the role of our nation's Commander-in-Chief. Your character falls asleep, but only to dream of the reality which comes from lies spread in the waking world. "Alternative facts", if you will. The characters in your dream — fabricated in form of distinctive protesters, a picture of surrealist Washington D.C. streets — want your head. However, the Commander-in-Chief (i.e. you) has something at his arsenal: his image. For the image or his projected image of himself will be more powerful than his politics will ever be. He will battle to the death in his nightmare with images that he used to perforate the institution of democracy. Whether that be Putin slamming down a shockwave from the skies, the press secretary as a disposable human shield, or a weaponized tweet, the Commander-in-Chief will use what he simply does in real life to rescue himself — avoid reality and run.

It all sounds like a nightmare; but one not so distant where we stand. It is a representation of what the namesake Marshall McLuhan said 45 years ago that leads us to where the titular namesake comes in — Marshall, and of course, his theory.

INCEPTION (POLITICAL ATMOSPHERE)

I feel it is important to elaborate on where the initial inspiration and meaning of the work plays out before speaking on the technical details of the game's development. The idea was fermented by a couple of key ingredients: (1) A visit my wife and I did to Washington D.C. the weekend of the travel ban's creation where members of Middle

Eastern countries could not visit the United States and (2) a re-visitation of my old library book after considering another “serious game” post-activity as an [ex] Assistant Professor for the New York Institute of Technology in Beijing, China and Manhattan, New York. What is a “serious game”? For me, serious games are ones that address a social or political concern, one where fun is not the immediate gesture in lieu of morals or education. Of course, “serious games” should still be fun as to initiate the type of vanguard they seek in this writer’s opinion. In some ways, a topic that should be serious is the most banal. This is where we are at with the current American presidency.

As my wife (see Figure 2) and I were set to depart on a cold breezy, January Sunday after a nice weekend visit and lunch at Old Ebbitt Grill back towards NYC, we were swept up in an impromptu protest in the streets leading up to the footsteps of the White House. It was unexpected and also quite the spectacle. Since I spent the last 18 months prior living in Beijing, China, I forgot what it meant to have that kind of voice. I was living peacefully in a system. Upon my return to my home, America, with a spouse, I witnessed another system that had run off the rails.



Figure 2: Wife of the author. A primary motivation for taking on the political subject matter at position of being interactive developer.

At the time, I had just begun to revisit a book titled ‘*Dream: Re-imagining Progressive Politics in an Age of Fantasy*’ authored by Stephen Duncombe. Duncombe fashioned this concept of the ‘Dreampolitik’: where Western culture as a whole, even unrelated to social or political topics, has this way of inadvertently clashing with the possible dream of better constituent representation. Such as how the simulated world of a game is a depiction of utopia/dystopia that the real world could try emulating itself given the right guidance. Artists I find inspiring me in this light include The Yes Men, Molleindustria, Joseph DeLappe, and far more. In particular, the visual discourse of the middle informed my visual discourse with *Marshall's Theory* where the political discourse of the former and latter informed my concept. I considered that if an indie

title such as *Unmanned* were able to convey a bracket of political speak into a short-form narrative while being visual and into itself, I would follow in the vein of its discourse. (MolleIndustria, 2012).

In ‘*Dream*’, I came across the titular quote from Marshall McLuhan — renowned Canadian mass media writer and critic who may as well predicted several elements of the current American atmosphere. Along with some very poignant technological notes, including predicting the internet, linking the coming motion of technology into art, and the idea of the ‘global tribe’, McLuhan speaks in a Maclean's interview in 1972:

“The successor to politics will be propaganda, not in the sense of a message or ideology, but the impact of the whole technology of the times. Politics will eventually be replaced by imagery. The politician will only be too happy to abdicate in favor of his image, because the image will be much more powerful than he could ever be.” (McLuhan, 1972).

In a time where facts or words lose their impact, the image is next in line to communicate. Lies need the projected image to survive. The blood of a lie is image (read: propaganda). It is a time where artistic representation comes into the limelight: an image, artwork, visual coding, or creation as distinct as it may be as as good an opportunity at depicting a social issue as the static carving or etching.

The barriers that once regulated ‘what artworks should achieve normalcy and what should appease the lighter senses’ have long since denigrated. Thus, the ‘game’ is apt to address politics. It is a simulated world talking about another simulated world. Takes one to know one. I have a history of creating this type of game: including *In a Permanent Save State* that addressed labor and death issues in Asia to be subsequently nominated for ‘Best Serious Game’ at the 2013 International Mobile Gaming Awards and *The Dreamer* which was a political experiment situated in Debordian philosophy developed far back as 2011 that placed the previous Commander-in-Chief as the protagonist in a similar plot device to *Marshall's Theory*. It had been 5 years since I felt I made a game in this motif of political investigation. Production began, as did my tenure with a group of artists, engineers, and out-of-work comedians seeking the dream of the hologram in New York City: Looking Glass. Looking Glass invented the technology the game appears on, where as I developed the game.

SINGLE ARTIST PIPELINE (BIAS)

Given the open frontier of what interactive works are capable of, I have a few regulations on what content or methods I use. I do however, have a cardinal rule: The Work Must Be Visual.

It must be visual in the sense that it triggers a feeling or memory from the body and can be understood as a cohesive style that differentiates itself from the zeitgeist. This rule can be considered a strong preference or as a bias from my visual arts background. Now, visual does not necessarily mean the visual image itself but also encompasses the assets, the animation, and especially the coding. In the case for *Marshall's Theory: C#*.

Since I have experience in developing with different programs and methods — at times a clear 50–50 split workflow between the ‘visual’ and the ‘scripting’ — I tend to think of interactive works as a Gesamtkunstwerk: the German word for ‘the whole piece’. Of

particular note, the work methodology of that seems to suggest a cataclysm of sounds and shapes that may not have immediate meaning next to one another. So when addressing my actual subject matter, the Trump administration, I found it to be befitting.

William H. Huber writes in his paper "Epic Spatialities" when discussing the *Final Fantasy* (SquareEnix, 1987-2017) series:

"An undifferentiated hermeneutics of video game space cannot manage an analysis of these spatialities with adequate granularity. It is within genres, franchises, and titles that we can unwind strategies and methods by which space is produced, represented, and engaged (outside the categorical observation that video game space is, materially, software-generated space). The *Final Fantasy* franchise is one such framework for conceiving the practices of spatiality within the authorship and play of video games, particularly insofar as it utilizes techniques of telescoping scale and acceleration through space in the service of the creation of what is still an expansive, epic Gesamtkunstwerk." (Huber, 2009).

Games have their own universal, safe bubble to exist in as does politics. They are both simulated realms where reality's rules do not have their fullest effect. When Huber is discussing is the interconnected being of *Final Fantasy* across SquareEnix's various titles in the franchise. In the context of games which take on real life, political subject matter, there is still a series. Whereas, the latest in the series is a game which has manifested as a result from the political events which led to it prior. As games and politics share an even tier of simulation, the 'whole' nature of the Gesamtkunstwerk remains in relative tact.

ANIMATION

To take an example, knowing computation allows me to know that a 3D mesh will fail under certain circumstances of pressure from a called function. I'll always be asking myself questions such as: "Is the poly count too high? Are the normals reversed and do they display properly? If I add physics, will it crash everything I've already set up?" Animation draws from computation much the same and vice versa (see Figure 3). I love animation, but many things in the project that needed a semblance of structure I began to distaste as the subject matter was anything but 'structured'.

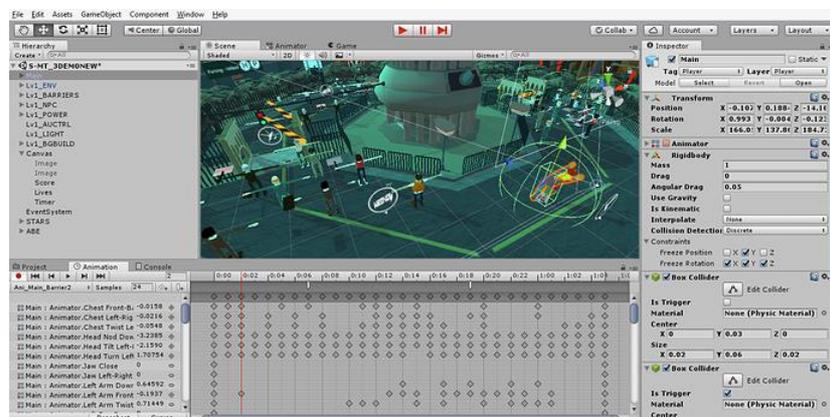


Figure 3: Process of modifying animation files imported in as assets from Autodesk Maya into Unity 3D software for the game.

As an ex-teacher, I've always wanted to gamify or add interactive elements to animation-based lectures because they have everything to teach about proper timing and when to call a certain action. In coding, what may be referred to as `transform.position[ing]` or `Delta.Time` may be alluded to as 'blocking' on flat animation tangents. The more I work between the disciplines, the more I analyze similarities. Developing therefore becomes less about 'art', or 'animation', or 'coding', or 'texturing', or 'rigging'; it just becomes a 'thing'. My days become much more serene when I work with 'things'. Hence, when the project became more of a 'thing', I felt it addressed the theme of dissonance more properly.

For *Marshall's Theory*, I followed the 50–50 trace of development. While I had a subject matter that could have easily served as a pure aesthetic portraiture, I wanted to focus on a fun, bizarre, and original experience that would have the player come for the visual shock and stay for the hidden nuances and user experience of the HoloPlayer. On the art and animation side, I found myself bouncing rapidly between Maya, Unity, and whatever headline there was that day.

From direct memory, the animation sequences for Mr. President himself excluding the title pages are: IDLE-WALKING, WORD SHOUT, HERO SUMMON, SHIELD RUSH, PAUSE DANCE, GOLF CART MASSACRE, FETAL POSITION (GAME OVER), VICTORY YELLING, and of course the BOMB EVERYTHING AROUND YOU AND LOSE ONLY ONE LIFE. I took the 'LOSE LIFE' animation from the headline that we had done a test bombing under the Trump administration in Syria. My fears that this event would reoccur sometime between 2018 and 2020 fabricated themselves enough for me to leave it in as 'precautionary black satire'. In fact, there's at least 50+ elements to the game I could add were I given the year from inauguration that I am at.

The technical process of bringing these animation sequences from Maya to Unity involves rigging the characters with bones, constraint-curves, and IK handles. Then, I had to animate with that rig (which takes time in and of itself), bake the keyframes to last the full timeline (Unity dislikes it if you do not do this), and import as an FBX to be situated in the virtual world. From there, I adjusted in Unity.

If the animation settings are set and well, and not often if you were my NPC protesters, then they could be added to an animation controller and manipulated by the Mechanim system. I would share parameters between the Mechanim system and my various C-Sharp scripts and call certain functions of the script through animation events set on Unity's own timeline system. The more I became comfortable with this system over the last years, the more I began to utilize what nuances the system had. For segments in *Marshall's Theory* as well, I relied less on the animation I did in Maya and even built elements of it in Unity. For example, in the winning cutscene after successfully completing the 2-minute survival in Washington D.C. where Abraham Lincoln impales himself on the George Washington monument, I animated the general appendage motions and spinal twists in Maya but positioned the 'whole' body and weight in Unity to save time that would have undoubtedly gone towards calculating precise positioning.

Once more, there is a certain logic at work while creating these images. Even while creating them, I was continually asking myself if 'this methodology is far too proper?'

Even in chaos, I should think people should be able to walk on their own two, bipedal legs. Possibly.

AESTHETICS

I wanted the aesthetic style for *Marshall's Theory* to be a hybrid between a modern infographic—reliant on color theory and low-poly virtual icons and elements — and maximalist composition chaos. Our current political landscape is full of noise, uncertainty, and enough visual images crossing the corneas of our eyes to make even the deepest Plato, cave dweller see light.

In this day and age, there is a natural instinct from designers to control this hysteria by limiting visual motifs to simple expressions; cubic, solid, or low in density (read: minimalism) (see: Figure 4). However, these attempts falter because an expression, no matter how simple, always adds to the bigger pile that is the ‘superbrain of visual overload’. The great ball of postmodernity. Additionally, I always have a fake aneurysm when a product or situation that is not simple is advertised as such. The aesthetic of our times is based on maximalism. To ask someone to describe the current American debacle in a blurb or two is to simplify the superbrain. Thus, it is a challenge even for minimalists. No matter how simple, the content of the work itself will mostly give way to the context it creates outside of it. To be an artist today is to beat the spectator over the head on multiple occasions with the overloaded canvas and ask them to like it. Realizing my inevitable defeat at trying to maintain a cohesive aesthetic for the piece, despite my intentions, I went all out with the prior notion.

From a technical standpoint, creating the visuals was an immensely fun and not particularly laborious despite the fact that I modeled every single asset, character, UV-texture alone, and composed them in the various game scenes. Another cardinal rule I have for myself: work fast. The longer the wait between initial idea and brush stroke, the duller the stroke gets. This has its own issues, but for the sake of the paper we will not go into those



Figure 4: The minimal visual style of the game that becomes none so minimal when used in a maximalist composition.

TECHNOLOGY

Looking Glass, the Brooklyn lab where *Marshall's Theory* was created, seeks the dream of the hologram. Created more recently, in addition to the existing Volume and Toy Volume devices and recently the Aerial 2D, is the HoloPlayer One (see Figure 5). This technology a very clever and calculatedly traditional way of approaching the floating image and light. I know the lab and hardware developers have spent quite an ordeal making it into the shape it is at today; such as CTO Shawn Frayne and CEO Alex Hornstein. The HoloPlayer is beam of reflected lights floating in the air above the apparatus which shines it. Effectively, how the floating image appears is a collaboration between that reflection and natural two-eyesight, finishing the illusion. The screen itself is rotated towards the viewer of the player-interactor. The magic of transferring a Unity game to the HoloPlayer display is achievable through the SDK provided by computer engineers such as Kyle Appelgate at Looking Glass who manages the lab as a whole. 32 individual camera views of a digital, 3D object will enable a camera to project to the HoloPlayer from Unity.



Figure 5: The HoloPlayer one and a promotional image released by Looking Glass USA.

Interaction is controlled through an embedded Intel RealSense camera that calibrates to a single touch in Unity. In the latter versions of *Marshall's Theory*, the game is controlled not only with keypress but finger touch and drag. This is done as a method to enhance the surreal value of the game and tie in the technology with the politics. As well, make good for showing off the capability of the HoloPlayer.

Along the way in my trials with Looking Glass, the hardware has made leaps and bounds to upgrade as well. For instance, a brightly lit environment will not destroy the

impact of the viewable screen; though a dark area is still very much preferable. There was still the difficulty of needing to calibrate nearly every time for every system I needed to test the game on before, but that comes with the territory of developing for avant garde tech. Since, the need for manual calibration has downsized. For *Marshall's Theory*, there is certainly a PC-2D version and a HoloPlayer One version. I found myself in the challenge of developing both at once. At first glance, one may think a tall glass of order is being asked for by creating for the HoloPlayer. However, in my particular case, there is a direct cohesion between the languages I speak in my working style and what the HoloPlayer is. A very enjoyable case if I say so myself.

This is not a particular concern anyone has had for me yet, but because I feel like addressing it I will speak on it through this forum: is there a conceptual purpose a game such as *Marshall's Theory* would have been displayed exclusively on the HoloPlayer? In other words, why does it need to be on the device and not any other device such as a pad or PC? For one, I certainly would like to put the game out for PC. Then still, why on the HoloPlayer? Marshall also had something else to say and it is a most notable banner he has come to be known by: "the medium is the message."

There was a period around when McLuhan and a modern understanding of politics came to be where hundreds of artists discovered filmic technology for the first time. From the past, the Sony Portapak (est. 1967) came to through experimentation and social purpose. The purpose of 'medium is the message' is that usage of the technology came inherit with timely meaning. Any artist using film and video technologies at that time are historically looked upon as radical beings who used it to express identity, race, gender, or other issues that would not have been evident had they not been supplied with the technology. As soon as performance or video artists gained usage of the video camera and subsequently television set, the paradigm shifted. Nam June Paik became one of the period's saviors. Simply by using, the technology held an established meaning. Now, reverberating back on an area where I mentioned the over-saturation of imagery and information, such banner has little meaning when anyone has access to it. Except, perhaps, if it is unseen technology. The newer technology is and the lesser access the main market has to it, the more aura it has and the more it will establish an inherit meaning as video cameras did circa middle of 20th century. Walter Benjamin, in "*The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction*", writes, "One might generalize by saying: the technique of reproduction detaches the reproduced object from the domain of tradition. By making many reproductions it substitutes a plurality of copies for a unique existence." (Benjamin, 1931) With associating the game with the HoloPlayer, I feel it had a balance between a re-producible object and one with its own, initial being. Beyond that, aesthetically, when I look at a turned on a HoloPlayer system in the lab, it reminded me of a vibrating television set from the 70s where-in McLuhan could be speaking on various subjects himself while around a chain smoking panel. It is the way I envisioned the HoloPlayer when developing the game. Something from the future, but something that undoubtedly reverberated the finer, nostalgic aspects of the past.

PROGRAMMING

The coding experience for the game is quite similar to the established tone from the 'ANIMATION. ARTWORK' section. While I enjoy coding very much, I feel as though the methods in which I do are in direct relationship to the visual experience. From a purely structural standpoint, I am learning more and I enjoy learning. Nothing is certain with art and technology. Its a fascinating thing about this field that keeps it interesting.

Often times I wish I could go back in time and inform my early 20s self not to do silly things such as call everything from 'void update()' or make better usage of particular features a software or tool had. I had several of those moments while developing *Marshall's Theory*. Though, admittedly, I feel as though I got lucky several times during development where as many of what I thought to be trials to errors eventually made the final product. For instance, my very first script for the project is labeled 'Scr_RotateMouse' as I planned on rehearsing some different commands related out before setting on a more formally named script such as 'Scr_MainCharacter'. The more I kept running with development, in the visual sense and computation sense, I just did not look back and went with what I had as it managed to work out. In subsequent sketches and demos I have begun developing for Looking Glass, I assure the experience has been more on par with the usual 'it blows up in my face' routine. Though it is nice to hit most of the green lights for once. This is another instance where the subject matter could not alter the structure that its game-like component needed to be.

From a game and level design perspective: very amusing. Funny enough, sculpting the environment was in the latter stages of development. I wanted to get a good tune in on the core gameplay before attempting anything immersive. I had in my mind what type of stage I wanted; or rather stage's'. On my drawing board, I had it in mind to go from Washington D.C. to Congress to Mar-A-Lago to the Mexican Wall to a dark surreal finishing stage. I wanted to have a golfing sniper battle with Uncle Sam. I wanted to start a West Side Story style turf war between all the countries offended by America in this cathartic expression of ignorance. Though, I feel the current stage in nightmare Washington D.C. encompasses the core feeling. That, and I can only do so much on a certain schedule. When I develop a stage or 3D space, I always believe a simple turn or pause will allow one member of the audience to have a completely different interpretation or feeling as the other. There is something which always modulates about how a player acts or experiences in virtual space. Level design is about controlling that. When I developed the Washington D.C. stage, I thought about it as a racing game as much as a survival horror game. The D.C. traffic bridges allows access and disallows access which focuses in on a mechanic of proper timing. I wanted that element of timing along with chance to inform the gameplay. Part of the challenge was not making it just another Trump game as I am sure there would be hundreds. Another challenge was not disassociating the gameplay so far from the core narrative that it seems displaced. I wanted to visualize how the player will proceed in the virtual space and try to imagine the most fun that would come out of it. Incase bashing an enemy's head in with a Sean Spicer human shield wouldn't do that.

PARALLEL VERSIONS AND INTERACTION

A caveat of developing *Marshall's Theory* is that there has always been two visualizations of the project : a standalone-PC executable and the Aerial/HoloPlayer version (see Figure 6). By this point, it may not be realized but the game started out in a prototype system in the lab called the 2D Aerial that utilized AIRBAR controls which captured only X and Y values and performed interaction based on mouse touch when the air above the AIRBAR was touched. This was the very initial state of the project. At this point, I began to generate distinct differences between a floating light display and standard screen display for this piece and others which could have followed. Here's the main comparison which prevails to this date in time-

Marshall's Theory – Floating Lightfield

- Interaction based on touch.*
 - Hard to film and visualize through documentation. Intensive visuals left unseen.
 - More intriguing and takes the ‘dream’ narrative to a different angle.
 - A version that clearly helps the brand.
 - SDK camera is immersive. Though, game requires overhauling to fit camera capture.
- *Even for some instances of HoloPlayer life, keystroke-controller persisted.

Marshall's Theory – Standalone Desktop

- Interaction based on keys-controller.
- Easier to capture and document screen. Intensive visuals are seen.
- Not as intriguing as light display. Dream narrative could be just cosmetic.
- A version that alludes to the brand, but indirectly.
- Regular camera is standard, but with post-processing wide lens, and can see further.



Figure 6: An installation of the game in New York City that paralleled both styles of playable versions.

In the end, both versions needed to exist. The game served as a work that would expose positive qualities of the HoloPlayer. However, without the documentation in full effect, the title may not have properly shown the game's own qualities and what it could offer the HoloPlayer. The dual documentation and versions of the game served to display potential discourse for those in a similar situation. As well, a focal point of the game's appeal is its minimalistic yet erratic visual style that could be best realized in clear and full view.

The current day version of *Marshall's Theory* on the HoloPlayer, latest showing being at IndieCade West in Los Angeles, USA, made strides to optimizing the game directly for the system; RealSense interaction in tow. Another caveat, this being related to the clipping distances of the camera, is that is the far clip is too far into the distance, the 3D effect becomes more of a blurry array of blinded views more than depth. This created an issue for standard immersion in the HoloPlayer SDK the way the PC standalone version is capable of. Features needed to be sacrificed.

Features Available in PC Standalone which Changed for HoloPlayer, Vice Versa *

*Beginning and ending cutscenes. Instead of a single camera capturing the nightmare Washington D.C. in full view, video files of both cutscenes needed to be captured and then transposed onto a modeled TV set (in the spirit to the 70s/Watergate) that showed it on a 2D plane. The TV set was concealed of an object to be 3D enough without stressing the clipping distances of the SDK camera.

*The instructions page now features a vignette of the nightmare Washington D.C. floating beneath the commands you may have in the game once you enter. This is added for the environment makes less of an appearance in the main game stage as it does in the Standalone PC version. In the standalone, there are three bodies of characters: the president, the protesters, and the world. In the HoloPlayer version, there are two: the president and the protesters with the environment taking a backseat. The information lost in the main scene is hopefully recovered via other placements of the world.

*The main scene's overworld itself is altered tremendously. The backdrop of flashing buildings, motions, and Uncle Sam playing golf has been dissolved into a skybox that is in best focus in the backdrop. Buildings are more scattered in the main gameplay area while there is only one cone of light that helps makes the clipping plane coming into view more bearable. This is the most significant change. In the end, it is sacrificing the surreal backdrop for immersive, 3D floating graphics. A trade which hopefully benefits the player.

The last addition was the prior mentioned RealSense controls. Which work very, very effectively with piece and harkens it back to its initial Aerial 2D version. The programming commands I am giving are something of this sort with the needed math in C#.

-FOLLOW CURSOR POSITION

-ONLY DETECT CURSOR IF IN 90 DEGREE VIEW CONE IN FRONT (ROUGHLY THE SAME AS HOLOPLAYER SPECS).

-DEPENDING ON DISTANCE AWAY FROM PLAYER CENTER, ADD FORCE (CLOSER-WEAKER, FURTHER-STRONGER).

At this point in writing, the embedded buttons in the latest HoloPlayer models controls the four various attacks as well. The development cycle of *Marshall's Theory* has long ended in the wake of other projects.

PROLOGUE

The game follows an array of previous odd-ball titles adopted for avant-garde holographic technology from Sega: *Time Traveler* and *Holosseum*. The bizarre and experimental are synonymous with new technology as a means of discovering the social or the self before reaching a more concrete market. When I see the cowboy prot[ant]agonist gun down Indians in holographic view amidst *Time Traveler*, one can only be bizarre when seeing the possibilities of what is new.

In a strange occurrence where the ending of a game stage is the colossus version of Abraham Lincoln impaling himself onto the monument of George Washington after the air has been rid of dream-oxygen, this pales in comparison to the fantasy-based warfare that exists in the headlines of reality. Detournement is dead. We allowed ourselves to exist in a dreampolitik where comedy comes to tangibility. Now the joke is all around us. And no one is laughing. Reality subsides fantasy in banality. Fantasy subsides reality in reason.

Why did Trump need to be a hologram? Good point.

*As mentioned before, artists use new technology as a means of social or personal exploration before the technology becomes marketed.

*The aura of a hologram is that of a fluctuating dream.

*A hologram reflects. The fact is nothing if not reflected today.

*Serious often needs what is 'fun' to be taken seriously.

*When Michael Jackson died, he was resurrected in a hologram. When Tupac died, he was resurrected in a hologram. Now that democracy has died, it too can be resurrected with a hologram.

*Because the people at Looking Glass let me.

Marshall's Theory has appeared and demoed at IndieCade West in Los Angeles, Play NYC in New York City, a Geek.Com live video demo where an article was written, Games for Change on stage in Manhattan, the PixelPop Festival in St. Louis, and various other trade shows in the tri-state area.

Reactions to the game can be quantified into three groups is highest to lowest probability of occurring: "tell me more about the system", "that's hilarious", "why are politics in my game?". I knew I was making a gamble to begin with by creating a

dreamlike, visually focused game for a system that does not necessarily speak that language. If nothing else, it allowed me and the HoloPlayer access into realms that would not come just from the HoloPlayer alone. As well, I got some people to laugh at the banal nature of what America is now. I felt the spirit of the 70's while making the work and Marshall McLuhan himself informed it. I suppose it answers an oddball question: if Marshall were to exist today in this current climate, people would just accuse him of telling lies. I am sure there are a lot of brilliant people now who are discarded due to the new rules of the game that is 21st century politics.

Because of the game's narrative and content, it was not part of the launcher application of 8 individual apps that were sent out to all customers of the HoloPlayer to date. It is simply a bizarre application that mirrors the bizarre atmosphere of America's worst destined to float among the lost signals of protest. Though, it can be accessed now for standalone PC-MAC and HoloPlayer. This is incase you like those types of lost signals.

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