

Presenting Swing: Disseminating Process Work in VR Using Mozilla Hubs

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Swing is a narrative film in the virtual reality space. The film was completed in January 2020 just as COVID-19 began to shut down the world. Adapting and overcoming, we found Mozilla Hubs as an extremely effective tool for displaying our process work and having the viewer virtually experience the environment with any web browser or VR headset.

This talk will discuss the problem of having to disseminate information about a VR film while people are not able to gather, let alone share a VR headset. We will discuss the process of creating the virtual gallery and the hosting of talks within the space.

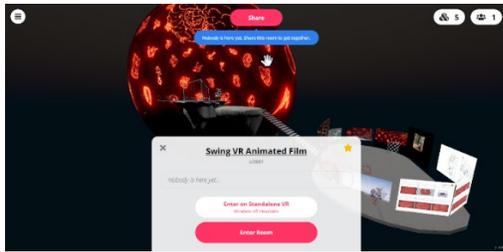


Fig. 1. Mozilla Hubs Landing Page

I. DISCUSSION ABOUT DISSEMINATING A VR FILM IN VIRTUAL SPACE

After completing our VR film in January 2020, we were ready to send it to festivals. At almost the exact same time, COVID-19 started to become a serious threat in the world. Festivals began to shut down their in-person offerings and move to an online version. The first online event that we took part in was IEEE. I discovered we could make a Mozilla Hubs room and host our own Birds of a Feather talk to discuss our film and the production of it. We met about 25 conference attendees and they expressed their excitement for not only the film, but for the actual creation of the Hubs room. Many of the spaces used for the conference did not have any customizations and were “stock” rooms. In Mozilla Hubs, I was able to take the assets we made for the film, since they were already optimized for VR, and import

them to create a pseudo-version of our film. There are two areas, the process area and the film environment area. The viewer enters the space facing a wall with a playthrough of the film. Around the “walls” are images of our production process from storyboards all the way through production assets. This gives the viewer an idea of the scope of work and our thought process as we created the film. Through an archway in back is a set of stairs that lead to a second level encompassed by a sphere. On this level, viewers stand on the same floor used in the film and are surrounded with the images used in the film. The main 3D character can be found here as well as a sample of the Quill animation geometry.

This virtual gallery gives the viewer a sense of scale of the space in the film as well as information about the creation. Forcing conferences online proved beneficial because instead of presenting at a conference where the viewer would only see what we were showing them, they were instead able to explore on their own. Through Hubs we are able to present our work immersively rather than having the viewer passively sitting in a theater. <https://hubs.mozilla.com/5omxQTA/swing-vr-animated-film>



Fig. 2. IEEE Birds of a Feather

II. CONCLUSION

2020 has been a difficult year for VR film dissemination. Using that struggle to help find a new outlet to keep innovating has been an experience that others can learn from. The online nature of this virtual gallery allows the work to be explored at any time, even long after the conference has ended.

III. ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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