

# Jet of Blood

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**Abstract**— A virtual production of Antonin Artaud’s 1925 play, *Jet of Blood*.

**Keywords**— Virtual Performance, Theatre of Cruelty, Surreal VR

*Jet of Blood* is a short play written by Antonin Artaud in 1925. Considered unstageable, a production of the play was not mounted until 1964 during the *Shakespeare Production Company’s* Season of Cruelty. The play is often considered surreal with a non-linear, nightmare-like plot structure. The play attempts to attack the senses in order to overcome the conscious mind and speak directly to the subconscious.

In this production, the play has been reimagined within a virtual world. The experience is being designed for the HTC Vive and the Oculus Quest 2 for an asynchronous production of the performance.



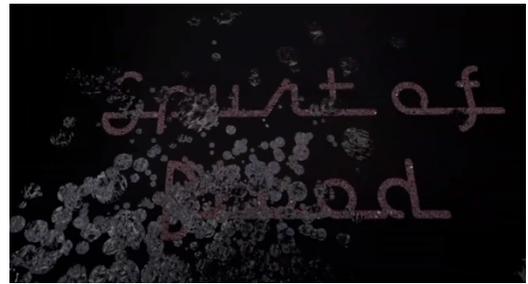
*Fig. 1. The opening scene of virtual **Jet of Blood** is an homage to the first surrealist film, the **Seashell and the Clergyman** from 1928. It was directed by Germaine Dulac from a scenario by Antonin Artaud*

## I. VIRTUAL STAGING

*Jet of Blood* is a research project, an experiment in creating virtual productions that leverage the immediacy and presence of VR, enacted storytelling from game design, and Artaud’s ideas of the relationship between audience, actors and spectacle. Artaud felt that the audience should be situated in the middle of the play, surrounded by the actors and action. Limitations of physical space and structures have restricted the ability

of past productions to fully explore Artaud’s ideas of bombarding the audience with sensation.

Virtual Reality is at its best when the player, or audience, is put in the center of things. Using first person perspective, this proof of concept presents our ongoing experiment with structuring a virtual performance.



*Fig. 2. The title of the film is presented diegetically, within the scene. Avoiding extra-diegetic user interfaces helps maintain immersion.*

## II. DESIGN DETAILS

In order to bring Artaud’s themes to life, stage directions have been interpreted to bring in a number of features from game design. For example, mechanics and interaction are used to make the “audience” active and complicit. Post process, audio and particle effects are used to surround the player with overwhelming stimuli to express themes of creation and destruction.



*Fig. 3. Particle, audio and post process effects are used to evoke emotion and overwhelm the audience. [Jet of Blood video link](#).*