



THE
BODY
VIRTUAL PRODUCTION



THE GOAL

ACHIEVE THE SURREAL

The LED WALLS allow us to push the visuals and storytelling techniques into the realm of satire and the surreal. If the visuals are hyper-stylized, then the dark and masochistic tendencies in the script can be taken as metaphor and not fact.

When the film opens, something doesn't look or feel quite right. It's not exactly what the audience expects to see.

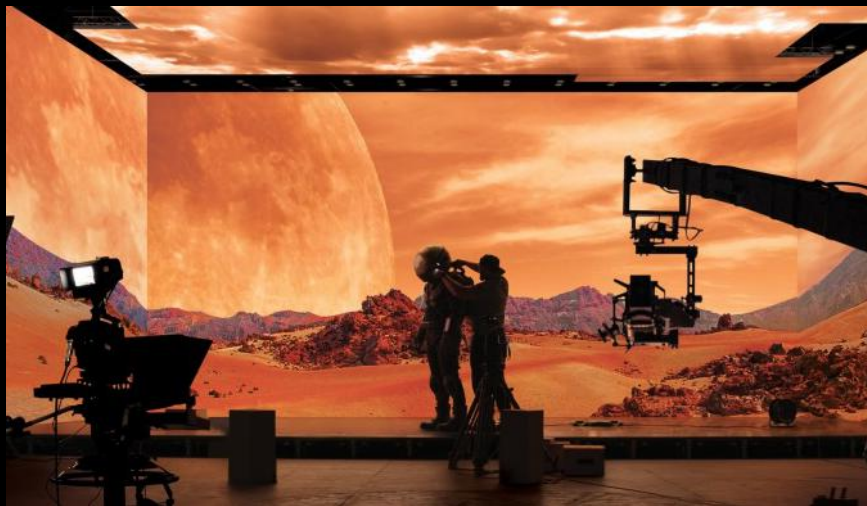
AND THATS THE POINT

We don't want photo-realism but true surrealism.

A world that feels like ours – but is slightly off.

We want to harness and unlock the creative potential innate in the *UNREAL SETS*. There's something fundamentally intangible about the digital backgrounds in each scene which plays into the themes and metaphors imbedded throughout the script.

The story is better served by shooting on the LED WALLS. Once the audience accepts the world, then they can be consumed by the story.





THE GOAL

CREATE THE 'UNREAL'

This movie is inherently 'not real.' We are completely entombed in a world created by the mind of SAM: our unstable and unreliable narrator.

Lost in a realm of Sam's making, I want to use the inherent look and feel of the *Unreal Sets* to make this film feel like a Kubrick or Dario Argento film – horrifically beautiful; yet poignant.

EMBRACE THE WALL

There are limitations inherent in shooting on the LED WALL, but this is a blessing – not a curse. I am a firm believer that limitations breed creativity, as it forces you to think differently and intentionally. You need to know the *WHY* behind every choice.

This style will force us to re-envision the shots and sets needed to tell the story – distilling the image down to its basic needs.



THE STYLE

SPARSE SETS

Leaning into the low-budget feel of this project, we will focus on set design specifically and strategically placed for emotional impact. A prop or piece of set dressing will only exist in this world if – and only if – it *NEEDS* to be there.

We will strip the sets down to the bare minimum, heightening their importance in the story. Each element – because it is intentionally placed – will have increased significance.



INCREASED SEPARATION

We want to heighten and highlight the inherent separation that naturally exists between the subject and the LED WALL. This is a good thing for the story!

Sam is separated and isolated from everyone in society and has locked himself inside his mind – unable to escape. With the LED WALLS, we can manipulate this ‘limitation’ into a storytelling device. The audience will feel a sense of anxiety because Sam is never truly grounded in his reality.

EMBRACE THE WALL



SUNRISE, SUNSET & NIGHT

The LED WALLS perform best when the colors of the natural landscape can be heightened and exaggerated. Now, specific sequences will have an otherworldly feel as there are a multitude of colors to play with: reds, oranges, yellows, purples and blues. We will use the heightened colors to push the desert landscapes into the realm of the surreal – heightening the tension and horror.



Practically, we have fundamental advantages that are lost when shooting on location. DAY/NIGHT balance is no longer a need. Originally, I wrote more day scenes, but now some scenes can shift to night – where they naturally would have taken place. Plus, we can take advantage of the superior night look and feel inherent in the LED WALLS.

Second, time of day is no longer a constraint. Without the urgency required to race the rising and/or setting sun, we will be able to focus on the actors' performance and specific shots needed to elicit the proper emotional response in the audience.

EMBRACE THE WALL



CLEVER CAMERA

Because of the controlled environment in which we are shooting, we will be able to position the camera in unique and precise ways. With intention behind the choices, we create meaning behind the camera positions and movement. Repetitive imagery will also be key, revisiting certain shots, frames, and shot progressions – ultimately playing with audience's expectation of what 'should happen next.'

MOVEMENT: As mentioned, meandering in purgatory is a central theme, and it will also be reinforced by how we move the camera. It too will meander through the dialogue scenes, giving them a stream of consciousness feel. It will feel mystical, because "in real life" the camera shouldn't be able to move that way.

PLACEMENT: The thing I love most about Kubrick films is that he puts his camera in places that do not exist "in real life." It heightens the tension and keeps the audience on their toes because they don't know what to expect next. We can replicate this feeling because of the freedom given to us by the LED WALLS.

FRAMING & FOCUS: We are stuck in Sam's mind, so the camera will be stuck to Sam. Center framed, and constantly in focus, the BG will fall off into a hazy dreamworld.

EMBRACE THE WALL



SISYPHEAN QUEST

Like Sisyphus, Sam & Dean are cursed to be constantly moving but not actually going anywhere. They constantly meander in a purgatory of Sam's making – from driving in the endless night, to traversing the endless terrain of the barren desert.

Throughout this story, there are numerous dialog scenes where they banter about where they are, why they are, and how they got there. Few answers are found, but they keep searching.

The LED WALLS allow us to feature this visually. Like the top image, they will be walking on a treadmill as the background surreally moves past them. They are literally not going anywhere, even though they desperately want to get to somewhere.

THE GRADUATE



The famous opening sequence from *The Graduate* focused on Hoffman's character riding a people mover. He was moving, but against his will – a great visual metaphor for what the film is really about. Twisting this visual on its head, the LED WALLS allow us to revisit this visual metaphor over and over again.

EMBRACE THE WALL



FEVER DREAM

The size of LED WALL creates limitations where true wide and establishing shots will be hard to come by. However, this is a gift, as it gives rise to unique transitions between scenes.

EDITING: Cohen's Macbeth did a fantastic job using subtle match-cuts and cutting from close-up to close-up as a way to transition between scenes. It gave a true fever dream feeling – not really knowing when or where you are. Stealing this feeling, by utilizing similar techniques, we can enhance the audience's participation in Sam's decaying mental state.

PRACTICAL TRANSITIONS: Because of the digital nature of the 'UNREAL SETS' we will have the ability to transition from reality, to fantasy, to memory and back-again – practically, in real-time – further heightening Sam's fragile mind. Again, constantly keeping the audience on their toes and engaged – regularly sorting through the vital clues.

***WHATS REAL x WHATS FAKE
WHAT REALLY HAPPENED***

EMBRACE THE WALL



SET MIRRORING

Since we are building all the sets from scratch, and have limited funds, we need to be frugal and calculated. However, this limitation serves the story extremely well. Because we are locked inside SAM'S mind, the different sets can have the same feel – even specific elements can reappear. It's all SAM'S perception of reality. The surreal allows us to take liberties.

For example, the *Motel Set* and his *Bedroom Set* will be exact replicas, just different colors and textures.



THE SUN AS CHARACTER

The sun has always played a huge role in this script. Instantly, we have direct and full control over the sun's involvement, as we are no longer beholden to practical limitations.

Influenced by Camu's *The Stranger*, I've always wanted the sun to be a constant companion, highlighting Sam's inner conflicts, and laying the groundwork for his break with reality. As the heat beats Sam into submission, the sun can then symbolize the indifference of the universe towards his existence.

EMBRACE THE WALL



FANTASY ON THE WALL

Another aspect of the LED WALL I want to explore is the idea that SAM'S *fantasies and memories* can be projected for all the world to see. Again, alluding to the fact that he is out of touch with all his emotions and thoughts.

Examples to be explored:

- Suburban Street Flashback
 - Sam and Dean are 'real' while the memory of Young Sam killing the cat is on the LED WALL
- Diner Sequence
 - When Dean and Many enter the back room.
- Surreal Funhouse Mirror Scene
 - Various versions of SAM on the screen and in the BG.

SIDE NOTE:

I've ALWAYS loved this scene from Clockwork Orange. It's so fantastical, so surreal, and so inherently 'not real.' It's like they are on a magical journey because the rear projection gives a sense of 'fakeness.' This is the feeling we are chasing.

THE INSPIRATION

VON TRIER'S DOGVILLE



With the sparse set design, emotions are elevated to the forefront. It brings a type of stage play sensibility that allows the audience to focus on the interpersonal relationships between the characters. The tight quarters and proximity plays into the story, because everyone's intimately connected, there are no walls – literally.

Borrowing this aesthetic, our goal is to increase the feeling of Sam's isolation from himself, others, and his reality as a whole.

COHEN'S MACBETH

The tone of the film was created with a visual grammar that included sparse, but moody, set design. It kept things simple, avoiding visual distractions within each scene, while still adding enough emotional weight to support the story.

Similarly, we want to use the LED WALLS to establish the isolation Sam is experiencing. The LED WALLS are our tool to establish the visual language of this film, while serving the needs of the story.



STYLE NOTES



Actors will have foreground elements to interact with, giving a sense of a grounded reality. However, because of the built-in separation between the practical and the digital – there’s a sense of unease because it’s not the truth we know.



Practical Set Design will blend into the digital background. However, we want a bit more intention behind the elements. Let’s play with audience’s expectations and the lack of ‘reality’ that *SHOULD BE THERE*.

STYLE NOTES



Foreground elements in front of the camera, will give a sense of separation. It will give us something to 'shoot through' to give the feeling of a reality that the audience expects.



Simple dirt sets give the 'desert' feel – but we are much more interested in the inner workings of Sam's mind and his lack of connection with the world around him.

MORE INSPIRATION



As the story takes off, instead of Sam staring into the abyss of nothingness, there will be a delineation between his reality around him on the stage versus his supposed reality on the LED WALL. The audience will also be forced to focus on the few set design elements and the meaning behind their placement and involvement.



Constantly keeping the focus on SAM, the LED WALLS will be constantly blurry and just out of reach, keeping the audience fixated on Sam's plight. We become invested in his both inward & outward journey.



We won't be able to achieve the scope and scale, but we can replicate the mood and the feel.



The surrealness that is captured in this image (and the film as a whole) is tangible. It's almost as if you can touch it – it's a character on the journey as well. This feeling is what we want to capture.

**TIME TO BRING
THE BODY TO LIFE**