# Journal

The original idea for this score was to create a series of virtual spaces that the audience could move through. In each space there would be a collection of objects that when touched, would become animated and trigger sonic events. The first iteration of the score was limited by what I was able to render out from Blender. The score therefore evolved into a static stance, VR animation and immersive environment that was not interactive.

Process and Materials

The first step in creating this score was to map the photographs of Julian's painting onto the rectangular assets in Blender.
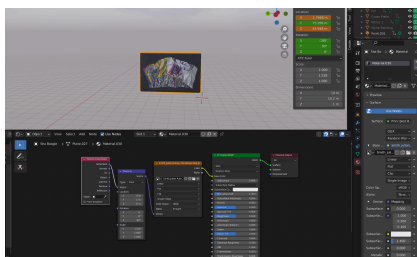
After this process was complete, I created the environments for each painting; sky, land, plants, water etc.
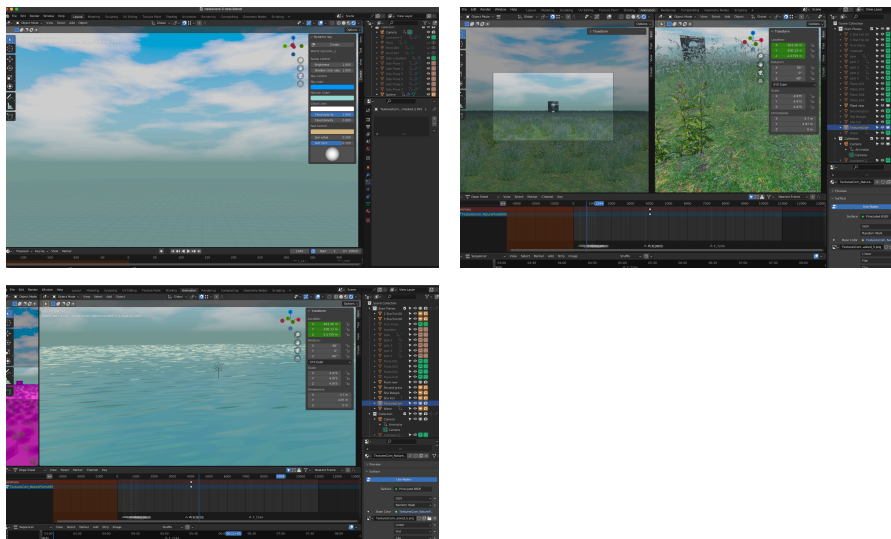
The next step was to create the objects. These assets are created from an initial form like a cube or sphere. The following images capture an aspect of this process.
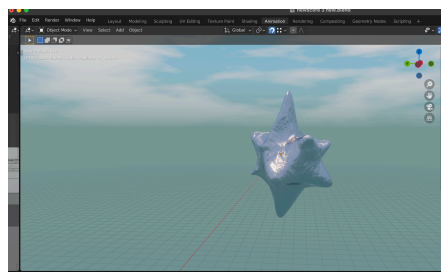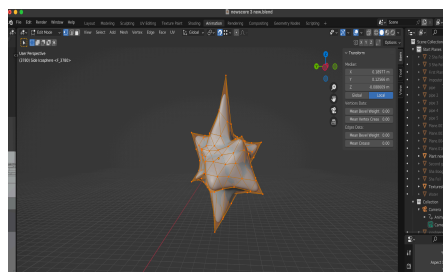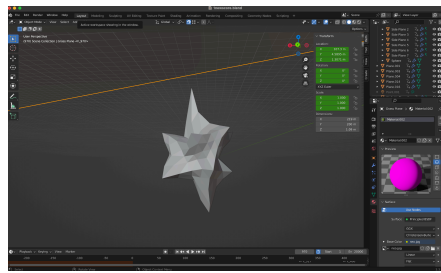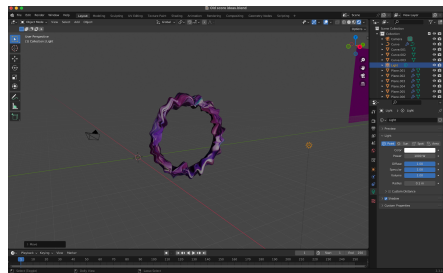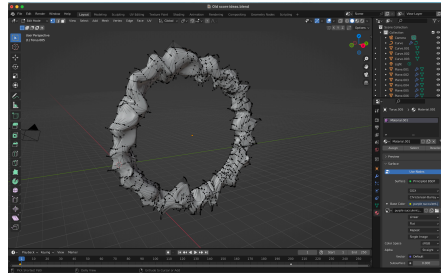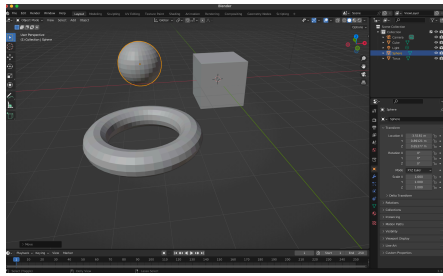
Once all assets had been created they then needed to be animated. The animation process is slow and involves moving each object and inserting keyframes. The camera view (aspect) and lights also need to be animated.
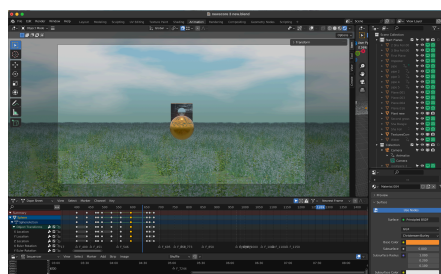
Virtual Reality

Due to time and computer processing constraints, I was unable to make this score interactive, like I had originally intended. This would have involved importing each Blender asset into a game engine like Unity or Unreal and creating the score in this program, which would have meant learning to use another program in less than a week. For future iterations of this project, Unity or Unreal would be more suitable programs to make the score interactive and to run the score live, rather than rendering it out.
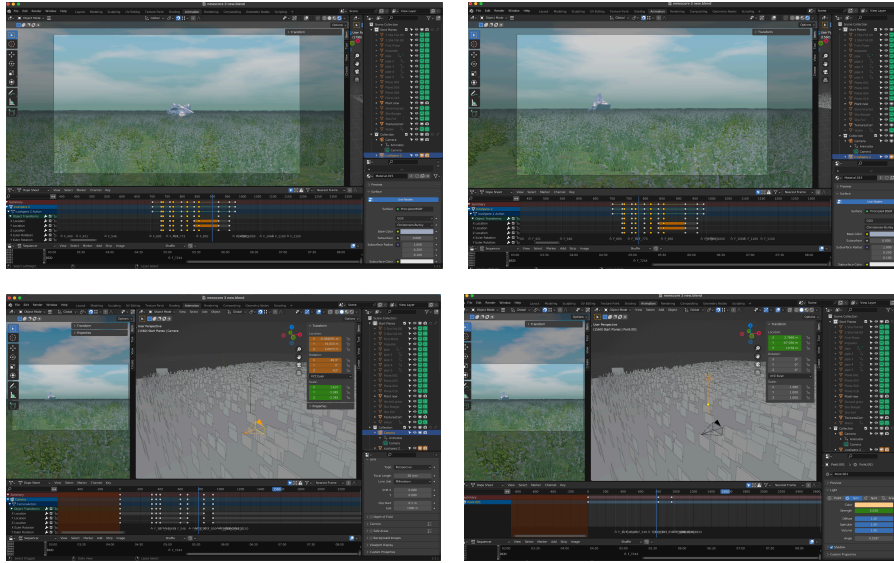
Instead, after everything had been animated, I started the process of rendering the animation for VR through Blender. I managed to render out one frame as a complete 360 degree environment and this took 20 minutes, so obviously rendering out an eight minute animation, with each frame taking 20 minutes was not realistic. As a result I chose instead to render the animation out as a movie and then use a program called 'Spatial Media Metadata Injector' to convert it to a VR file. I am pleased I was able to make the score in VR eventually, however, this was definitely the most basic iteration of the VR score and very much needs a lot more development from this point.

Interpretation of the score

I recorded my interpretation of the score once it was rendered. This interpretation is what can be heard on the VR version of the score. I developed a series of instructions for the score, these were:

- The overarching concept behind the score is to capture a sort of alien environment; a world eerily absent of any perceivable human life. The score attempts to replicate a feeling of curiosity, awe, but also the alienation one might have when walking into the wilderness or any other environment that is not yet dominated by human beings.
- This overarching concept influenced the creation of the score and should thus influence the interpretation of the score.
- The visual aesthetics of the score should match the sonic aesthetics of the interpretation, in whatever way this might be understood.
- The work must include fielding recordings of 'natural sounds' and animals.

- Each distinct place (loosely four) in the score needs to be accompanied by different sonic material.
- The movement of objects can be accented or accentuated by the sonic material but this is not a definite requirement.

Flow

The piece was composed first and foremost around Julian's paintings and how they might be encountered by the audience throughout the work. For example, paintings one and two both depict, what could be perceived as, portals into other places. In response to this, the animation starts in one environment with the first painting being gradually revealed from behind slabs of stone, representing the division of one space from the next. As the painting is revealed the audience moves closer and closer towards the 'portal', eventually travelling through to the other side. In the next painting we see a golden sphere mimic this movement by emerging from the portal and transitioning through the space towards the audience. In this way the paintings were the first building blocks for the score creation. Each painting is responded to through the creation of the specific environment and objects that inhabit it, as well the animation of these environments and objects.

Just as the interpretation of (or response to) the paintings were the impetus for creating the accompanying environments, objects and animation, the overall score was intended to be sonically responded to in a similar way.

Digital Skills:

As mentioned above, the initial creation of this score involved working with Blender, which for me is in many ways a similar process to creating a musical work in a DAW such as Reaper. To create an animation in Blender I need 'assets' or objects, which are akin to placing source material/wav files into Reaper. Once I complete an asset, or source recording, I then need to decide how it behaves temporally and how it behaves in relation to the other assets/source material around it. In this way, creating a work in Blender could be viewed as an 'extension' of digital musicianship.

In terms of the interpretation of the score, a musician needs to 'read' the Blender assets and their behaviour as sonic cues. It could be argued that this process extends 'digital musicianship' to encompass a more audio-visual way of thinking about music making.

Transformations:

For myself the creation of this score was a transformative experience in terms of thinking about how the score could operate in a more interactive, immersive VR environment. An idea for a future iteration of this project is for the audience to be able to 'play' the score by interacting with objects that become animated and trigger sonic events. This could be a transformative experience for the audience in that it would allow them to become the 'performers' of the score, which is generally reserved for musicians with specific expertise. I also like the idea of the sonic events being generated randomly by the game engine, meaning each audience member would produce a unique iteration of the score that wasn't determined by them or the composer, but by the game engine itself. The resulting relinquishing of control by the composer and the performer could be a transformative experience.