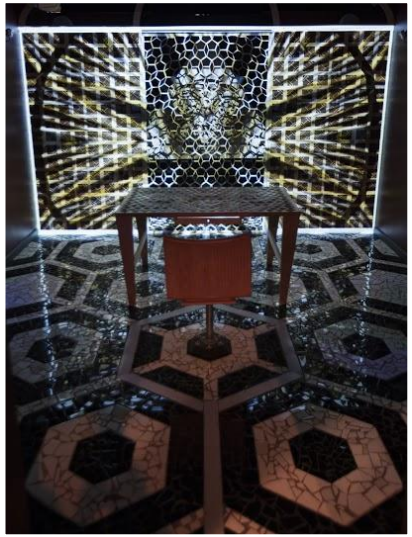
Blurring the Real and Digital Realms in Location-Based Entertainment
MEOW WOLF
Selma Sabera, Executive Producer - XR

Meow Wolf is a Santa Fe, NM Location-Based Entertainment (LBE) company that is redefining immersive storytelling by inviting you to become a participant in our interactive exhibit.

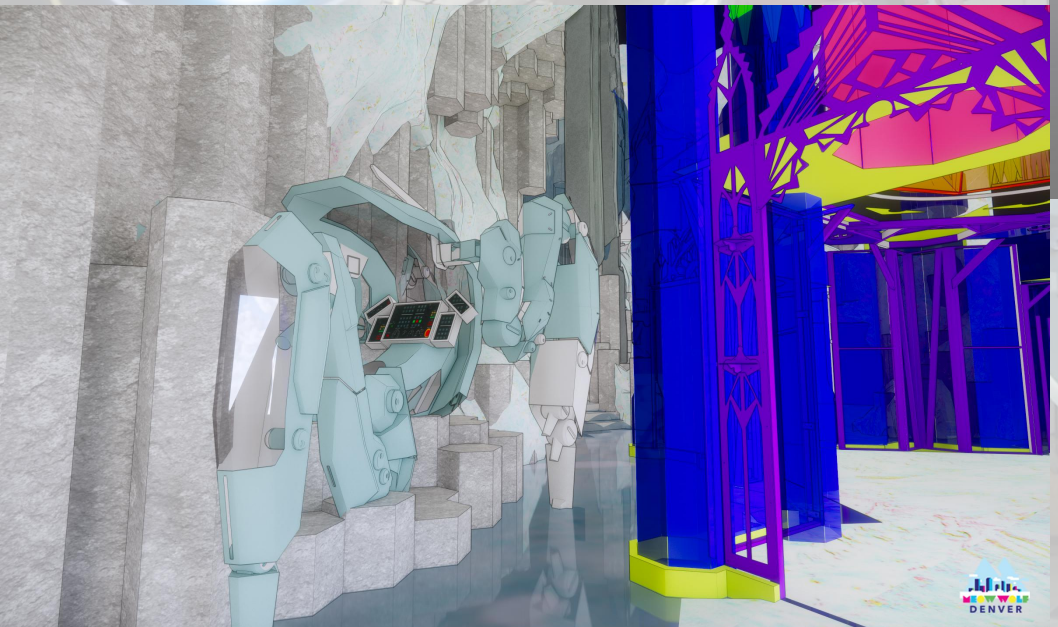


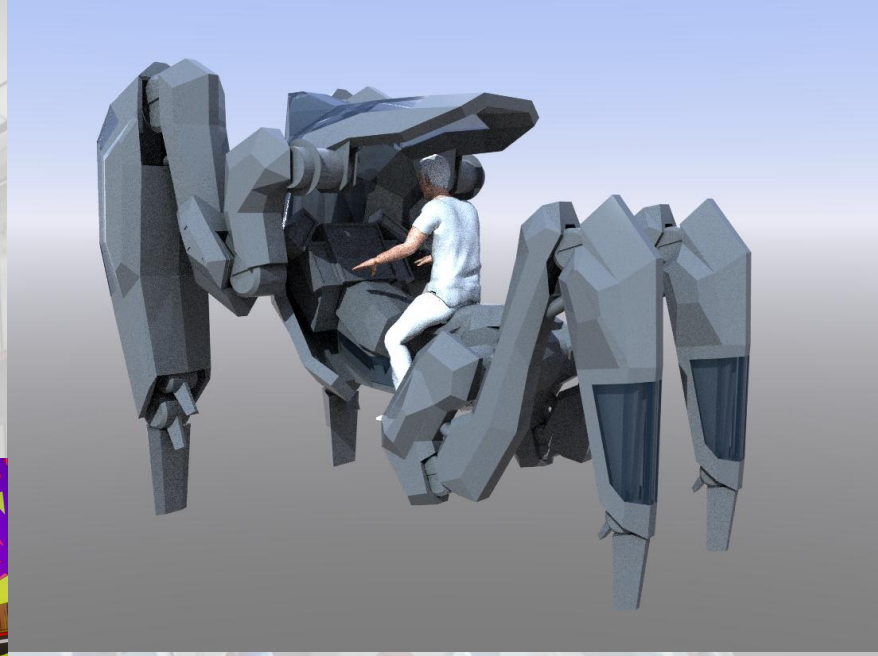
You can explore and enter the multiverse through a glowing refrigerator or slide through a dryer in the laundry room, we look to delight and surprise you, transforming the ordinary into extraordinary.

“The Navigator” is a large scale, quadruped mech that draws you into a new type of interactive storytelling. Here, a new generation of Navigators must learn to pilot the Mechs and save their planet from endless winter.

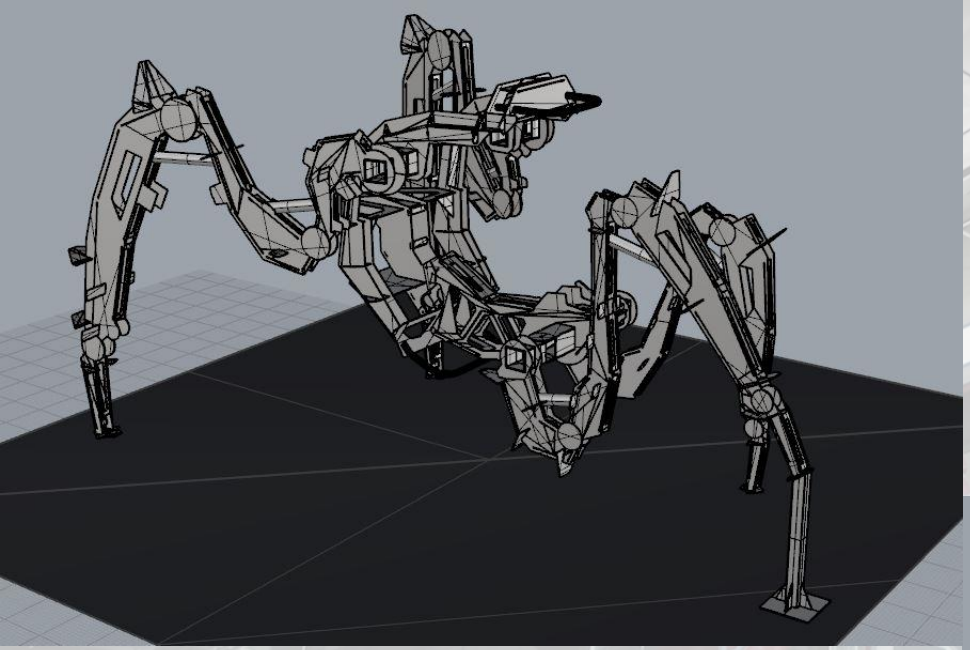
Meow Wolf used emerging technologies like 3D printing, laser cutting and holographic retinal displays with its DIY sensibilities to create “The Navigator” experience.

ZBrush was used to sketch concept art for The Navigator and SketchUp models pre-visualized exhibition placement.

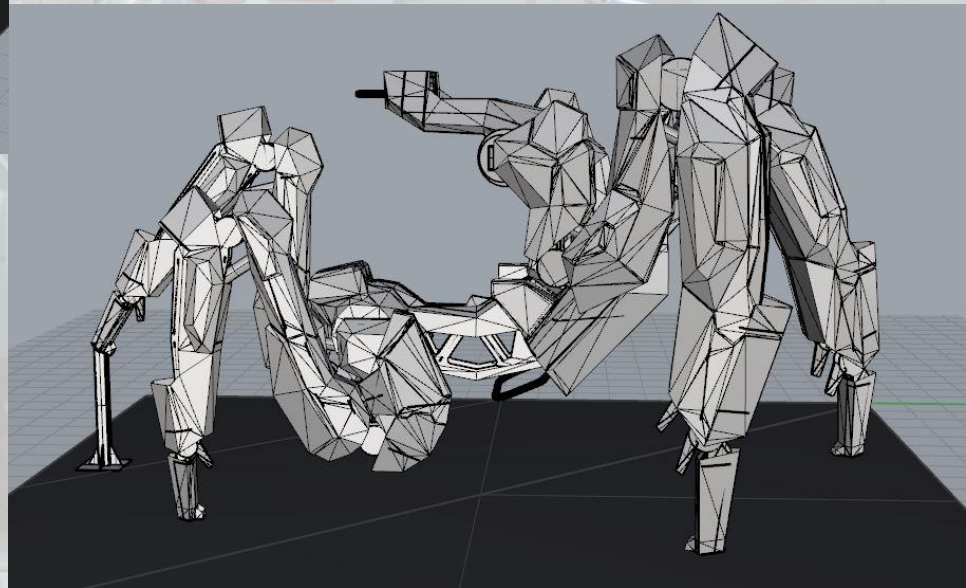




These programs help us work out the scale, placement, and overall look of the sculpture.

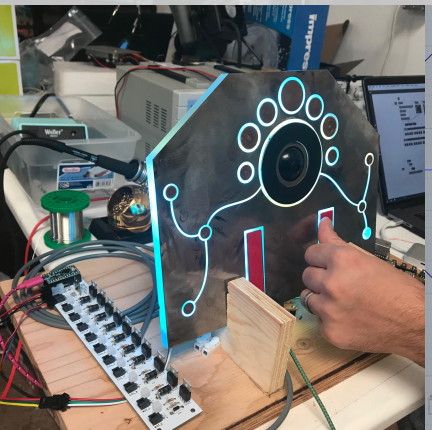


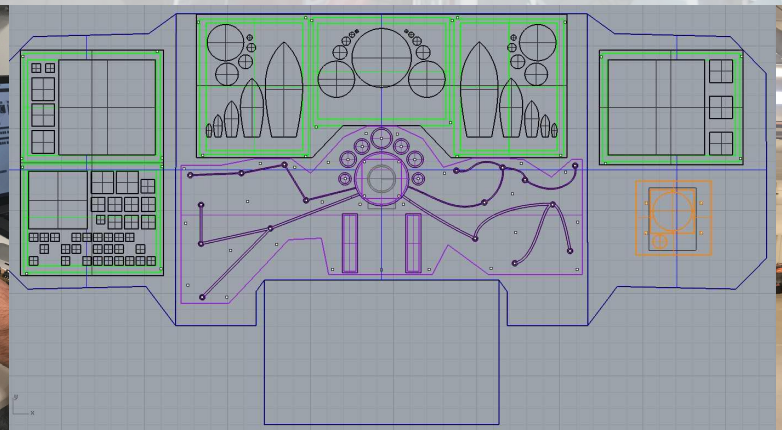
The sketches help our structural designers develop the carrying skeleton and statics of the sculpture, and ensure that it’s safe for climbing.

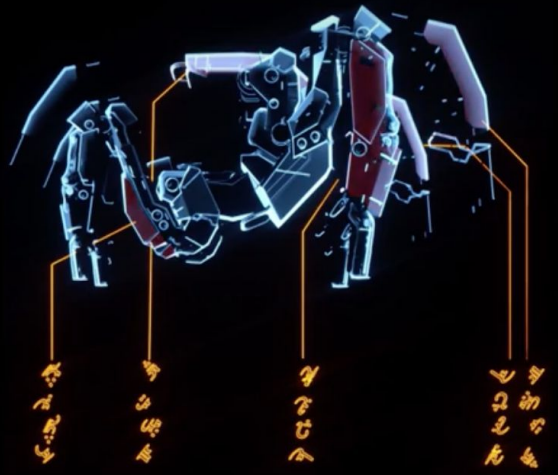


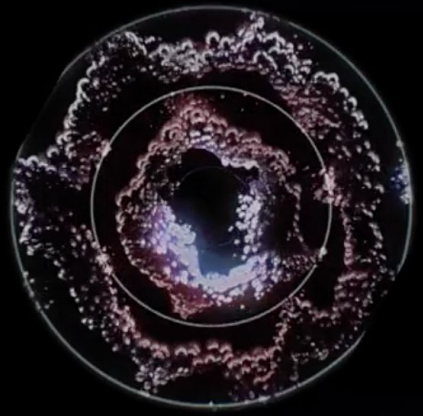
Rhino was used to prepare the skinning of the sculpture for laser cutting and 3D printing.

In parallel, our technology team built prototypes of the control panel that drives the Mech's interactivity. In front of the pilot seat, there is a unique control panel that uses a number of custom made capacitive touch sensors, a trackball, programmable LEDs, and retina displays. The electronics of the control panel are driven by Arduino, Teensy, and a Windows PC.







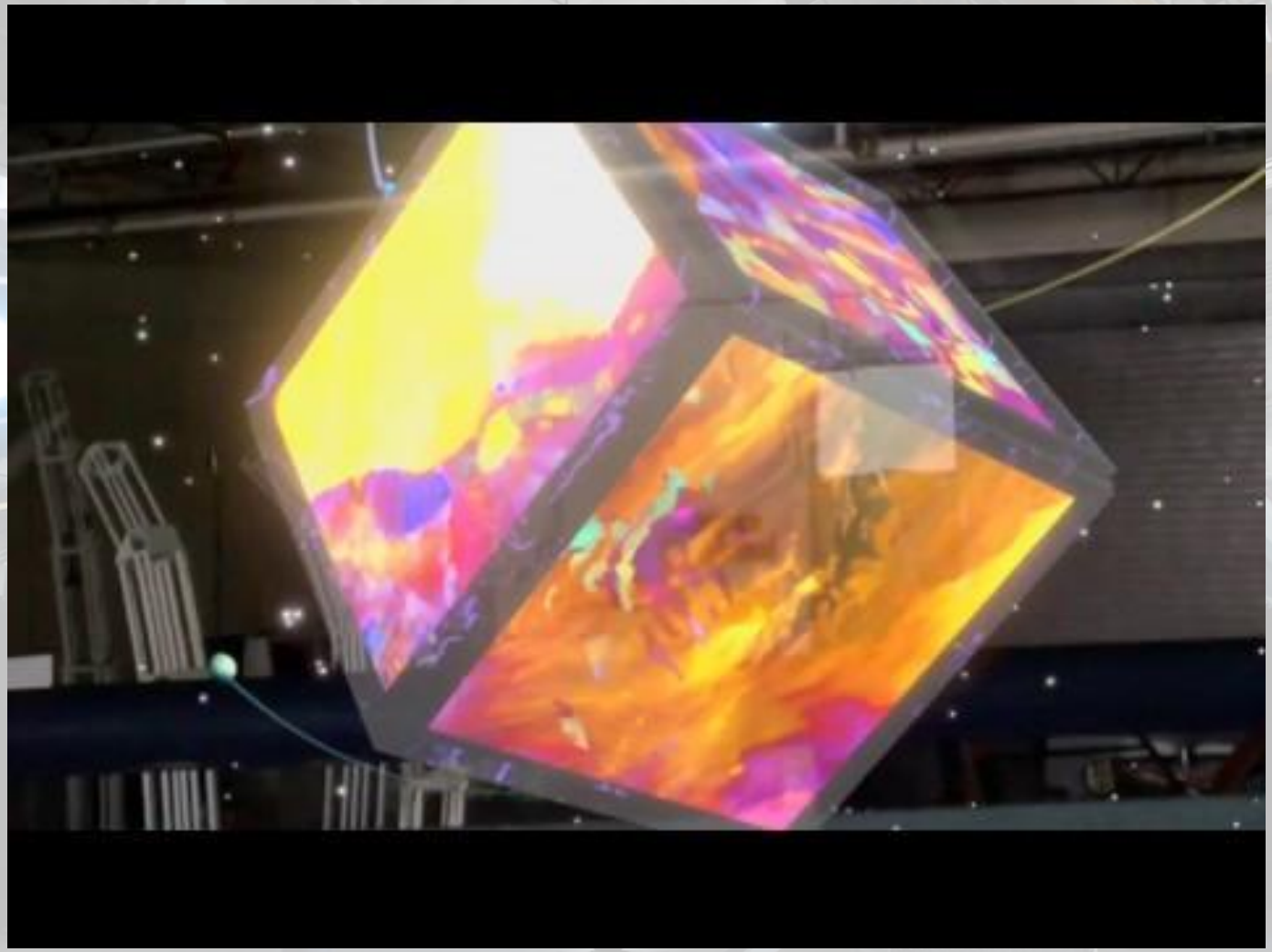


As the physical components of The Navigator were being built, the content teams designed visuals for the cross-reality experience and the control panel. We used Cinema 4D to create otherworldly animations for the control panel.

Meow Wolf partnered with Magnopus in LA to create the visuals displayed in Magic Leap. We created a remote workflow between our two studios.

Magnopus used an iPad simulator with TouchOSC to mimic the controls of the physical panel. This way we could test the gameplay while it was in development. Unity was used as the game engine.

The gameplay has two modes: explorer and navigator. In explorer mode, the pilot can choose and explore any one of the seven planets of a two-sun solar system. When the navigator mode is entered, the mech pilot is prompted to solve puzzles by aligning the planets. When they get the planets in alignment, a cinematic animation plays out as a reward.



Putting all of these elements together and mixing the physical and digital realms created a new type of participant interactivity. We look forward to incorporating true cross-reality experiences in our future exhibit locations.

Q & A

Thank You