World of Clouds

Escape from Mill Station Blog

A special thank you to Anthony Sipsas, Francois Andlau and Dane Stack for their kind donations to the development of the World of Clouds and the Escape from Mill Station game project.

Thank you :-)

All cinematics in place and working ...

By WoC | May 13, 2017 at 04:23 PM EDT | No Comments

All the cinematics are now in game and in place and are working fine.
The very last ending cinematic has a slight freeze and hesitation before it starts to play probably because its a little big but I am not fixing that at this point.
I am scanning my computer for infections just because of the nasty virus going around the globe at the moment just want to make sure I am not infected.
Then the next steps are to do better renders of the cinematics and reimport them into the project.
I want to use the H.264 codec with the imported mp4's that might solve the slight freezing up problem of the end cinematic.
Then I have a few blocking volumes I want to add here and there and the Dungeon level I want to improve a little.
Then its just the detailed modeling of the Explore level for the teaser trailer and then its compile time.
Hopefully no errors. :-)
After the teaser is published on You Tune its fundraising time.

Family pictures ...
By WoC | May 12, 2017 at 02:36 PM EDT | No Comments

A friend brought a suitcase full of my family pictures over from South Africa. It weighs a ton and
I will probably spend the whole day tomorrow digitizing everything. there are color slides
and printed pictures. I think I will probably just shoot the printed pictures with my HD camera
and the color slides I will have to get scanned in at some point. I am very happy to get it since
I thought I lost a lot of it a while ago between moves. Its turns out that I made extra copies
of everything and my mother had them stored away in a suitcase. With the game its going well.
I have the 2 more cinematics to create in the project and then I just have the trailer left to do.
I cleaned the project up a bit yesterday to hopefully avoid any compiling errors.

Cleaning up ...
By WoC | May 11, 2017 at 08:15 PM EDT | No Comments

Deleted test level, level sequences I used for cinematics and the levels I built for cinematics only.
I will keep a copy of the project file with all those UNDELETED just in case :-)

Menus completed ...
By WoC | May 11, 2017 at 03:33 PM EDT | No Comments

Completed menu system today and it works fine.
I am now going to do the final renders for the cinematics.
Then I have only one thing left to do before I compile the game and that is rebuild level 2
"Dungeon". I want to change a few things there.
After compiling the game its trailer time.

Menus ....
By WoC | May 10, 2017 at 04:53 PM EDT | No Comments

Si I find I have to integrate menus with cinematics so I am working on both at the same time.

Opening cinematic works inside Unreal ...
By WoC | May 09, 2017 at 10:26 PM EDT | No Comments

Yay the opening cinematic on the first level play works great. No issues. So now I have a
method that works and all I have to do is pretty much the same for all the other cinematics.

Completed rough versions of all three cinematics ...

By WoC | May 09, 2017 at 07:39 PM EDT | No Comments

... Rough versions of all the cinematics are rendered out as QuickTimes and I want to import
those as mp4's into Unreal and start building the logic to make them work in the game.
Then it should just be a matter of exchanging them with the final renders later.
I put a request for a tshort quote in with a local company but I haven't heard back from them yet.

Enter a Descriptive Title for your New Blog Entry

By WoC | May 09, 2017 at 07:37 PM EDT | No Comments

Blog here.

Saturday and sunshine ...

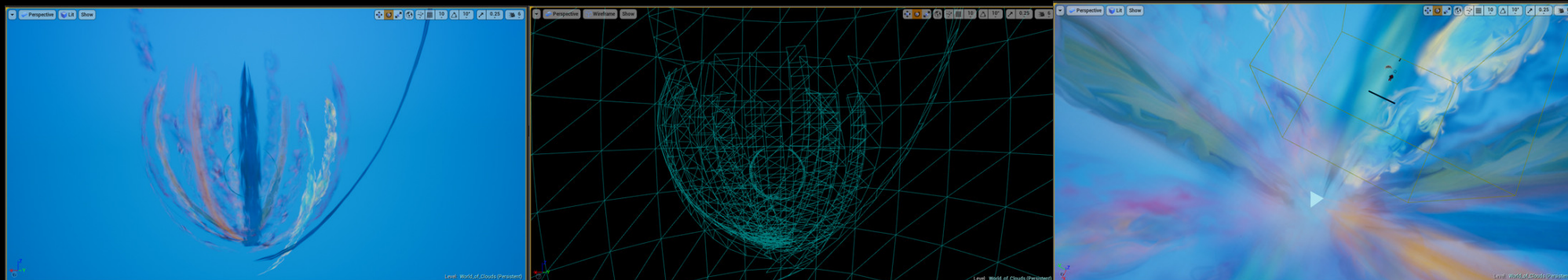By WoC | May 06, 2017 at 01:32 PM EDT | No Comments

Very nice sunny day in Bellingham today and hard to sit in front of the computer.
I did a 1920X1080 test render of my end cinematic out of Premiere and its working fine.
I am rendering a QuickTime out of Premiere and then a mp4 through Digital Fusion. As far as I
know Unreal is best to import a mp4 for cinematics.
I am not bothering with an elaborate end scroll for credits at this point. Just a simple card that
says the end and end credit roll follows. That's it at this point. I am combining two cinematics
I rendered out of Unreal and pencil storyboard sketches of the crew uniting and it works fine. I
just have to do the pencil sketches a bit better and maybe in color. Just so it makes a
better impression. The cinematics rendered out of Unreal looks awesome.

Next aim ...

By WoC | May 05, 2017 at 06:10 PM EDT | No Comments

Its a rainy Friday here in Bellingham.
I am aiming for the 17th of May now to compile my whole game.
Then everything should be in place and hopefully I wont have too many errors.
Then after that its time to do the first teaser trailer and I am looking forward to that.

Completed the last "in Unreal cinematic" and ...

By WoC | May 04, 2017 at 02:43 PM EDT | No Comments

I just completed the last cinematic I need to do inside Unreal.
Now I have the "storyboard cinematics" left to do, menus and trailer.
Getting there :-)
I am waiting for a quote for t-shirts.

Building a World of Clouds with curved planes inside Unreal ...

By WoC | May 03, 2017 at 03:19 PM EDT | No Comments

Trench works well and stays dry in rain ...

By WoC | May 03, 2017 at 02:06 PM EDT | No Comments

So I am happy that the trench I created to stand straight up in doesn't collect water when it
pours down. Last night was a good test. My base 1 setup is getting more and more comfortable
now and the air matrass holds in the air and doesn't deflate.
Other than that I am back on my game today working on the cinematics.

Its Monday 1 May working on cinematics ...

By WoC | May 01, 2017 at 04:08 PM EDT | No Comments

So I have 30 days left of my target time budget to wrap up the blocking of my game.
I am working on the very last cinematic at the moment and hoping to finish that up by tomorrow.
I took yesterday the whole day off just to do some tinkering with my base setup. I still have
some tweaking to do. Otherwise everything has suddenly turned very green and the snow is
finally gone.

Worked on my little base 1 game studio today ...

By WoC | April 30, 2017 at 11:41 PM EDT | No Comments

Added small kitchen, shelving, trench so I can stand straight up inside and better seating.

Air matress …

By WoC | April 29, 2017 at 06:33 PM EDT | No Comments

Bought an air matress and hand pump and oh man my back is saved.

Bus drivers know the time in hours, minutes and seconds …

By WoC | April 29, 2017 at 04:18 PM EDT | No Comments

I asked the bus driver this morning what the approximate time is and he gave it to me in hours, minutes and seconds   LOL

Building very last cinematic …

By WoC | April 28, 2017 at 12:49 PM EDT | No Comments

On the very last cinematic of the game.
Building an "actual mini World of Clouds" using a sphere I just created inside unreal.
I scaled it up to 100 000.
I was playing around with a sky box idea but since this is only a cinematic I decided to build the clouds, islands, etc. in real 3D space.
Then I cheat by making the ships in the scene really small   :-)
So I don't have to drag the meshes of the clouds and triangle away very far to get the idea of great distance. :-)
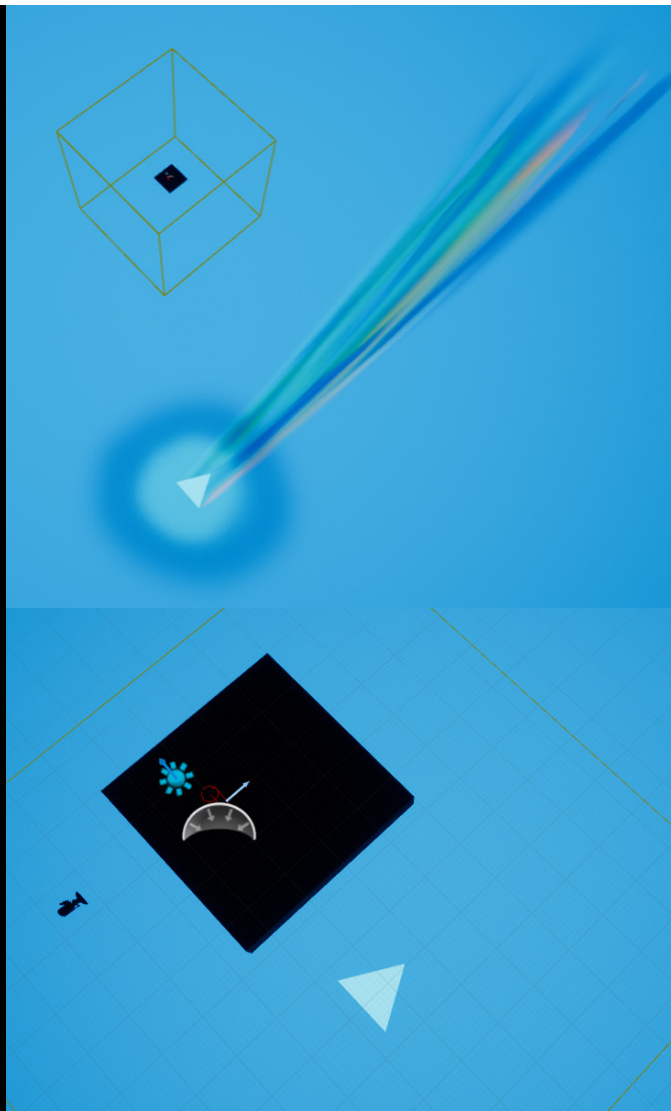Hopefully it will work.
What seems to work really well is an alpha matte with very soft edge with images projected onto curve cards.
The shape of the cards is slightly curved so it more or less fakes a sphere.
I am done testing this and ready to start painting the actual clouds in.
Essentially this is becoming a matte painting projected onto cards.

[Phone …](#)
By WoC | April 28, 2017 at 10:46 AM EDT | No Comments

So ATT&T has this brilliant scheme where they want me to keep spending money to keep my phone "active".
So no I gizzed them with my own brilliance and only use my phone to check email at free wifi locations.
Sick and tired of corporations sucking money all the time. Time to put a sock in that.

[Skybox …](#)
By WoC | April 27, 2017 at 02:44 PM EDT | No Comments

Building a skybox today for my World of Clouds cinematic. I downloaded and installed Nvidia's Skybox file format DD3 I think it is. So I can import that into the Unreal engine.

[Part of the ending cinematic captured …](#)
By WoC | April 26, 2017 at 06:42 PM EDT | No Comments

… with Matinee and I rendered it out as single frame HD .png files. Made a QuickTime of that and it looks good. I am keeping that under wraps of course since its a major spoiler. I am now working on the other parts of the final cinematic and then I need to revisit the header of the game.

Most complex Sequencer and animation cinematic working …

By WoC | April 25, 2017 at 08:36 PM EDT | No Comments

Well I am relieved that the most complex Sequencer animated cinematic of the game works at
the end. I cant show it because it will reveal too much about the story but its looking really great.
I am now just finishing it up and then I need to complete the rest of the cinematics.
Then its trailer time heh.

Building cinematics …

By WoC | April 25, 2017 at 04:06 PM EDT | No Comments

Working on cinematics. Not showing the end cinematic at this point because it will reveal too
much about the story. I did a few tests in Sequencer on how to capture gameplay with
destructible meshes and effects and seems to work fine. So I am just finishing off the opening
and ending cinematics now and then its trailer time :-)

Adding one or two more things …

By WoC | April 23, 2017 at 03:20 PM EDT | No Comments

… to level 14. I forgot to put a tail drive unit in and a skin shield.
So I am adding that today and then I kick off on the cinematics.
I will do level 15 first which is the conclusion of the game. Then bounce back to the start of
the game and do the opening cinematic. After that its menus time.
I started off with my Asus ROG booting into a boot manager loop again this morning. It
happens pretty often now. No idea what is causing it. But once it boots up it works fine so I
can keep working.

Date of the first compile and pack test …

By WoC | April 22, 2017 at 10:37 PM EDT | No Comments

Test_15.exe 2015-08-31T20:26:46.366Z
I found the exact date when I did my first compile and pack test right before I kicked of on
the actual level building.

All 14 playable levels blocked out …

By WoC | April 22, 2017 at 08:57 PM EDT | No Comments

Done. Cinematics, menus and trailer remains.

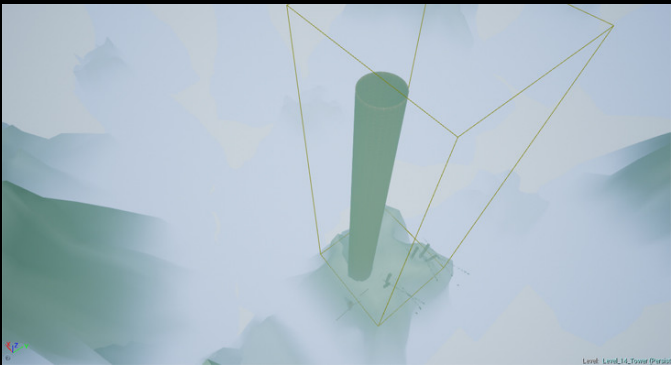Tips of tower …

By WoC | April 21, 2017 at 10:53 PM EDT | No Comments

Looking up inside tower …

By WoC | April 21, 2017 at 09:19 PM EDT | No Comments

Harvesting Flying stones ...
By WoC | April 21, 2017 at 07:27 PM EDT | No Comments

Building Tower level ...
By WoC | April 21, 2017 at 03:20 PM EDT | No Comments


Skin pipe and cranes up last thing the tower itself to do ...
By WoC | April 20, 2017 at 03:07 PM EDT | No Comments

Working on the last bits of level 13 ...
By WoC | April 19, 2017 at 09:40 PM EDT | No Comments

The tower is now going up on the mountain in front of the last cable car stop. Then I need to add the big pipes that lead up to the tower through which the human and alien skin travels. Character will also be walking over these pipes towards the tower. Then I need the cranes behind the mountain which were used to lift the tanks up from the Ironworks level up into the tower.
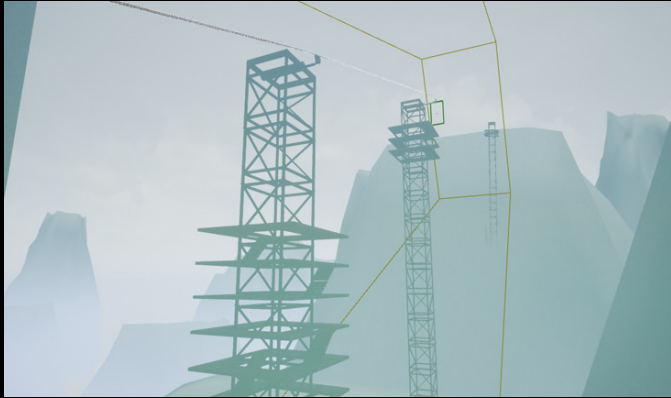
First trailer tests ...
By WoC | April 18, 2017 at 10:33 PM EDT | No Comments

Did a few cut scene tests in 4K single PNG file sequences in Sequencer. It looks like I will be able to do a nice trailer with it looking forward to it.
Meanwhile finishing up on the rest of level 13.

Building the mountains ...
By WoC | April 16, 2017 at 11:05 PM EDT | No Comments

Running game as standalone on its own process …

By WoC | April 15, 2017 at 08:22 PM EDT | No Comments

Interesting I notice the cable car's wheels are a lot more stable if I run the game level not in selected editor viewer but as standalone on its own process. Looks like it might work out great then.

3293 Spheres, 3 towers and still going strong …

By WoC | April 15, 2017 at 02:32 PM EDT | No Comments

2549 Spheres …

By WoC | April 13, 2017 at 05:27 PM EDT | No Comments

… and the cable is still holding up.

1789 Spheres …

By WoC | April 12, 2017 at 06:46 PM EDT | No Comments

So far I have 1789 spheres linked together with physical constraints to make up the cable car's cable and its all holding together without breaking.   :-)

Aptio boot manager …

By WoC | April 12, 2017 at 11:07 AM EDT | No Comments

My Asus ROG keeps booting into the famous and WELL KNOWN PROBLEMATIC Aptio app boot manager. This has been an ongoing problem.
Who knows what it is.
All I know Asus doesn't care and the blogs on the web are filled up with other people having the same problem.
… while Asus is fast asleep at the wheel.
I mean … they already took my money why would they care?

Cable building …

By WoC | April 11, 2017 at 09:21 PM EDT | No Comments

Looks like it will be crazy cable building next 2 days or so   :-(

Moving forward with level 13 and its cable car finally …

By WoC | April 11, 2017 at 07:02 PM EDT | No Comments

I briefly broke the cable car again this morning when I swapped out the anchor object. It seems really sensitive to even the size, shape and position and it really affects how the cable car sits on the cable. Got it to work again and I added a "fender" with a slight curve to help the car's head and wheels over the first mast and onto the next section cable. It works good

enough now I think and I am building the rest of level 13 now while listening to the soundtrack
of Uncharted 4 :-)

Snails and cable cars ...
By WoC | April 10, 2017 at 02:04 PM EDT | No Comments

I learned yesterday that a naked snail can come down a tree just like a spider does, releasing a
thin wire of slime and sliding down along it.
Kinda like a cable car actually ...
I didn't know they could do that caught me by surprise.
Then I Googled it and yeah they can in fact do that.
The cable car is now up to a level where it works good enough for the block version of the game.
So now the next step is to just improve the masts' heads where the handover from one cable
to another takes place and build a better "docking station" for the cable car at the starting point
of the ride.

Force node...
By WoC | April 09, 2017 at 08:18 PM EDT | No Comments

Well I just discovered the "Force" node in Blueprint and now I can apply a consistence force in
any direction on any component of the cable car. That is great now I don't need to use
Sequencer anymore to push the car. Much more stable. And it actually gets over difficult
uneven joints in the cable at the masts.

Issues with physics cable ....
By WoC | April 09, 2017 at 04:27 PM EDT | No Comments

I picked up a few issues with the spheres cable. Unfortunately it looks like I will have to use a
"hard cable" - a rod static mesh rather than spheres that can move. First problem is that
the spheres keep on sagging as play time on the level continues. So the cable stretches way to
low. The other problem is is that it doesn't sag evenly at the bottom ends. So that will create
a problem when I try and push the cable car over those areas with Sequencer. So I think
just making a cable that has a forced and predefined shape is probably better way to go. Its a bit
of a compromise (for now anyways) but I don't want to spend time developing this cable car
rig right now. Its time better spent on building the rest of the level I think.

Cable ...
By WoC | April 08, 2017 at 09:14 PM EDT | No Comments

Building the actual cable now for the cable car. I finished the first section and the only problem I
see so far is that is sags a little too low under its own weight. Otherwise it seems to work fine. I
will either have to adjust its mass or maybe limit its Z movement on its physics constraints.

Adding the physics constraints to the spheres that make up the cable ...
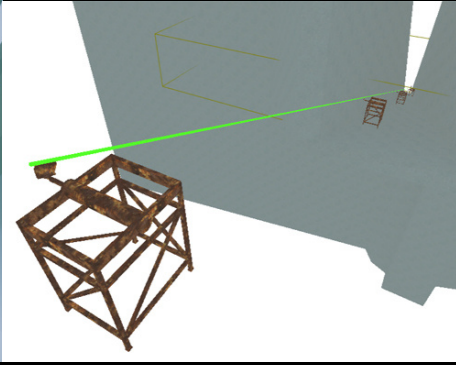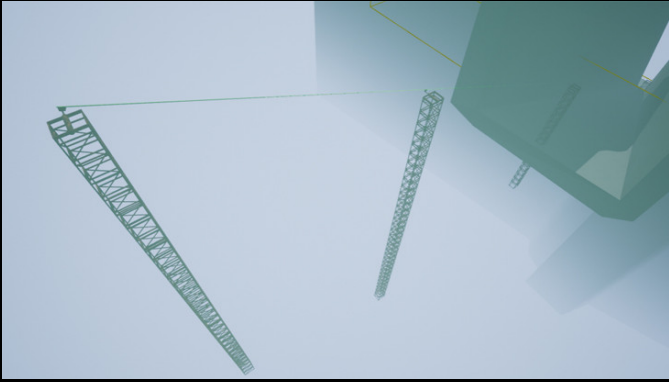By WoC | April 07, 2017 at 07:54 PM EDT | No Comments

Updated roadmap and target date for blocking completion ...
By WoC | April 07, 2017 at 03:40 PM EDT | No Comments

Looks like the 28th of May will be the new target date for blocking phase completion and launch
of fundraising.

Building the masts / towers for the cable car ...
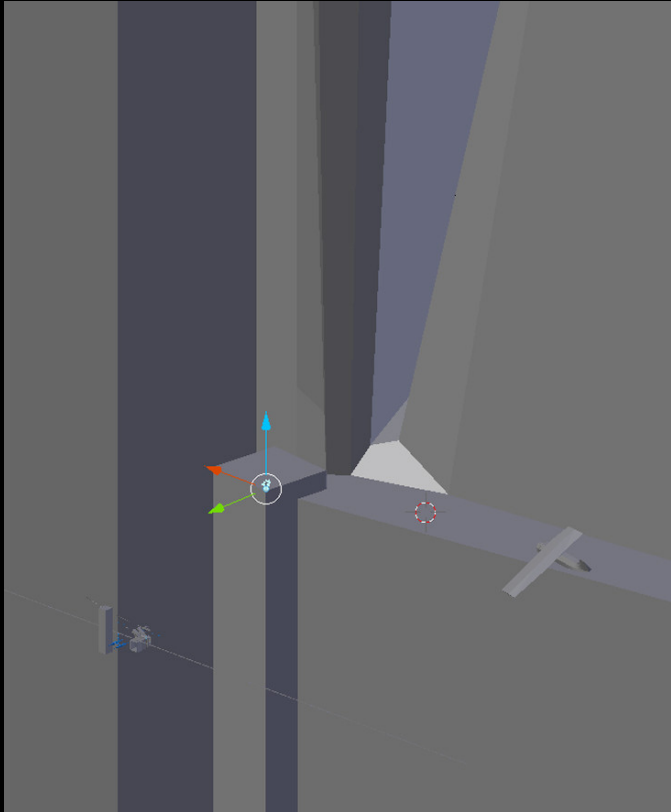By WoC | April 07, 2017 at 12:27 PM EDT | No Comments

Added some temp textures to cable car ...
By WoC | April 06, 2017 at 06:39 PM EDT | No Comments

TEMP textures

[Done cable car testing and building level 13 now ...](#)
By WoC | April 05, 2017 at 09:38 PM EDT | No Comments

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