FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Museum Announces VR Starship Beta Competition

Washington, DC (March 1, 2019) Museum of Science Fiction and Isovista.org are proud to announce a beta competition for starships modeled primarily in a VR tool such as (but not limited to): Gravity Sketch, Oculus Medium, and Google Tiltbrush. Winners will each receive 200.00, receive VIP passes to Escape Velocity 2020, and have their work displayed in a prototype multiuser VR gallery. The competition starts March 4th and runs to April 20th 2019. The competition is open to all students, designers, engineers, builders and artists working in VR.

Competition Website:
http://isovista.org/vr-starship-contest/introduction

Conference Website:
https://escapevelocity.events

Virtual Reality, Science, & Science Fiction

There are four goals for this competition and each relates to the complex interrelations between virtual reality, science, and science fiction. First, a great VR Starship might center on a slick visual design, but that beauty is often built on much more. Ideas of culture (warlike, exploratory – organic, robotic), technology (warp drive, solar sails, rockets) and stories of the crew (a solo pilot, a unique team, a faceless army) all inform the artist's design choices. It's in this vein that science and science fiction connect and support each other. Second, in VR,

the artist and their work express the affordances of the software. Here, the competition hopes to push for the creation of ever better tools and features within the emergent domain of VR modeling and world building. Winning artists will be asked to share their design process and production pipelines. Third, this competition and its long-term goal of sharing work in a multiuser space connects the world of fiction to HCI & UX driven design. Combined, we look not to copy reality, but to create it. We look to leverage 30+ years of VR design history with science fiction creativity towards the understanding of an innovative social interface – the virtual museum. Lastly, but perhaps most importantly, is our goal of helping new innovative designers to share their work and of support VR veterans in sharing their design experience.

Why Beta, Why Starships

There is a vastness to the virtual that creates not only great opportunities, but also great challenges. VR is an emerging medium whose design practices and production pipelines are a work in progress. VR Starships represent a manageable starting point for collecting, evaluating, and presenting virtual works. In future years, this competition may include: VR props, avatars, buildings, and scenes. It could go even further and explore interactivity, storytelling, and all manner of creative virtual expression. In coming years, as this competition develops, we hope you join the conversation.

Details and Rules

There are three size focused categories: Small Starships 20 meters and under, Medium Starships 20 – 80 meters, and Large Starships 80+ meters. These size categories support the goal of gallery presentation and allow for the greatest diversity of work. Starships can be stand-alone original designs or related to a fictional universe. Starships should not be a minor upgrade to any fictional class of starship. Be creative, be bold

here. Ships will be judged on craftsmanship (topology, optimization, texture use), visual impact (the expressiveness of the design), and design clarity (each submission requires a design statement connecting the ship to matters of culture, technology, and story). Judges are a volunteer group of university faculty, science fiction experts, 3D professionals, and award-winning VR developers.

About Isovista.org

In 1995 VRML, or Virtual Reality Modeling Language, was introduced and a wave of interest in developing online 3D worlds, spaces, interfaces, and art ensued. It was a heady time, with so much hype on one side and crude bleeding edge technology on the other. In the midst of it, sites like Web3DArt and MacWeb3D supported communities of creative developers. Novel interfaces, rich theory, and art work that literally broke reality apart was the order of the day. In that light, we hope to share past lessons and inspire future designers. Isovista.org is dedicated to old friends and old timers who ran those early community sites as well as to today's young developers who have taken up the challenge of creating a new virtual reality. www.isovista.org

Museum of Science Fiction & Escape Velocity 2019

The nonprofit Museum of Science Fiction will be the world's first comprehensive science fiction museum, covering the history of the genre across the arts and providing a narrative on its relationship to the real world. The Museum will show how science fiction continually inspires individuals, influences cultures, and impacts societies. Also serving as an educational catalyst to expand interest in the science, technology, engineering, art, and math (STEAM)areas, the Museum uses tools such as mobile applications and wifi-enabled display objects to engage and entertain. For a full press packet on the Museum of Science Fiction's vision and other information,

please visit:
www.museumofsciencefiction.org/presspacket

The Museum of Science Fiction and NASA are partnering to bring Escape Velocity 2019 to Washington, DC. The event is a futuristic world's fair to promote informal STEAM educational activities within the context of science fiction using the fun of comic cons and fascination of science and engineering festivals. Escape Velocity 2019 seeks to make a measurable positive impact to boost informal learning on the more conceptually challenging academic areas. Escape Velocity's mission is to attract young people to science, technology, engineering, art, and math by producing and presenting the most compelling, exciting, educational, and entertaining science festival in the United States using science fiction as its primary engine. Escape Velocity will achieve orbit on May 24-26, 2019 at the Marriott Gaylord Hotel and Convention Center in National Harbor, Maryland, just outside of Washington, DC. For a full press packet on Escape Velocity, please visit:
www.escapevelocity.events/press-media