Gravity

Completed: 30-06-2019

During an interstellar voyage, a single crew member (Tom) awakes from hypersleep for a routine inspection of the Solaris-1 Space Station. Space can be a lonely place for a virile single man on duty and the facilities of a virtual reality room eventually bring some solace during the long solitary nights.

HAL 3000, a small spherical drone designed for technical assistance, carefully observes every movement of the young engineer and tries to help whenever he can. Perceiving the urge for real physical contact of his human companion, the little floating friend develops a cunning plan. After collecting the necessary data with a small electronic ring, the drone secretly selects the perfect match for Tom from one of the sleeping co-passengers. So, when Tom ventures into the virtual room again a few days later, he has no idea that the massive red-haired hunk sitting at the other end of the bar at a Jazz Club is not a digital projection. It's the real deal!

The Settings

With this project, I wanted to return once more to the wonderful world of sci-fi. I had done several futuristic series before (*Narcissus* and *Genesis*), but there's always so much more to explore in this genre and the possibilities are endless. 3D is of course ideal to bring this imaginary scientific world to life and the number of sci-fi objects and scenes available on the market is truly enormous. There're literally hundreds of models out there and a quick search on sci-fi corridors alone resulted in more than 50 options! So, I had ample to choose from for this project.

The main stage of the story is a large space station during an interstellar voyage. The many rooms and corridors are empty, for all the passengers and crew members (except one) are in hypersleep. The addition of a virtual reality room (an entertainment facility for passenger) gives an ideal framework to add many more,
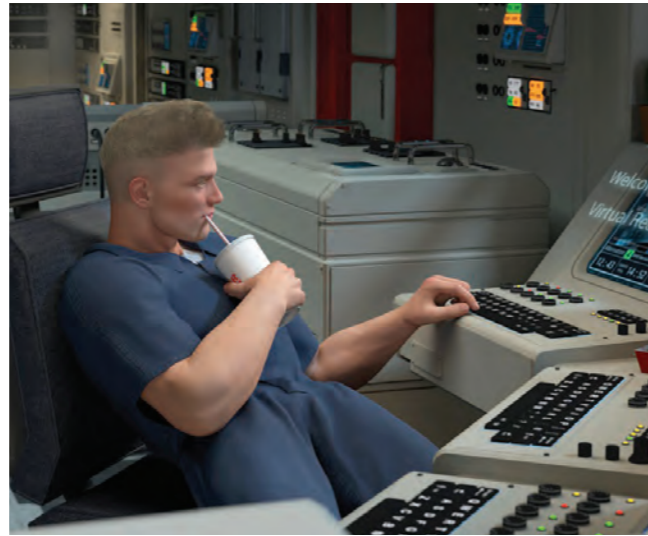
totally unrelated settings to the story. So, apart from the clean high-tech rooms on board of the Solaris-1, there's a glossy gay nightclub, an Art Deco bedroom, and finally, a jazz club and a gay night lounge. Both of these last two seem to be located in what looks like a rundown baroque palace. In addition, there's an industrial platform located on a lava planet for one of the Add-Ons series.


In total, I used 14 different settings for this project and (in order of appearance) I used the following DAZ models as a basis: *Solaris Space Station 1 and 2- The Hexagon* (first room) - *Corridor 2013* (first corridor) - *Solaris Cabin* (Solaris kitchen, bedroom, and bathroom) - *Panorama Room* (corridor to the Virtual Reality Room) - *Training Room* (Virtual Reality Room) - *The Night Lounge* (glossy nightclub) - *Holiday Hotel Room* (Art Deco bedroom) - *Utopia Deck C - The Vessel* (passengers sleeping quarters) - *The Nova* (Solaris command center) - *West Park Lobby* (grand staircase to jazz club) - *Jazz Corner + The Private Garden + Abandoned Home Sweet Home* (for jazz club and night lounge) - *Planet Lava* (for the Add-Ons series 02)

The biggest transformation was undoubtedly undergone by the *West Park Lobby* to create the grand staircase to the jazz club. In the end, only the outline and a few small fragments remained of the original model. Combined with elements of *The Private Garden* and *Abandoned Home* it served as a basis for all the following settings of the club and lounge. The ornamental furniture and decorations are objects downloaded from **Archive3D** (https://archive3d.net: a free 3D model and objects archive) and the sculptures are from **Sketchfab** (https://sketchfab.com).

Apart from several baroque paintings I also used for this section of the project some works by *William-Adolphe Bouguereau*, a 19th-century French academic painter. Although not exactly matching with the style of the ornamental interiors, these sensual paintings seem to fit very well into the setting of a luxurious nightclub.

Although not a real fan of the big sci-fi blockbusters, many elements of the project were (often without knowing) inspired by scenes from these
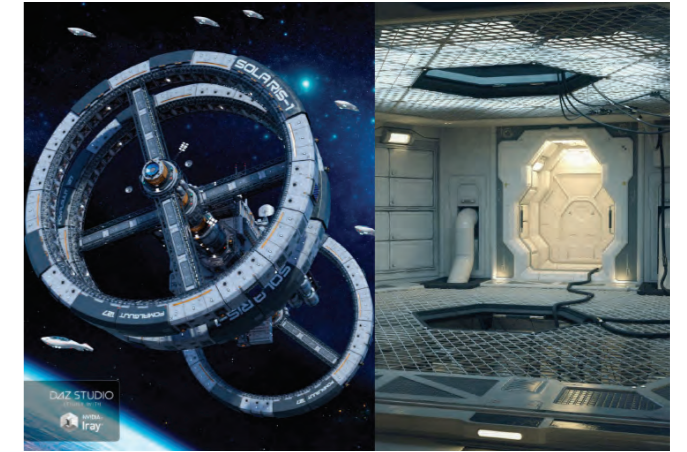
movies. Looking back on the series I recognize many elements from movies like *Tron* (1982), *2001: A Space Odyssey* (1968), *Passengers* (2016), *Gravity* (2013), *Interstellar* (2014), *Event Horizon* (1997), and of course the inevitable and never-ending *Star Wars* movies and *Star Trek* series. My all-time favorites however are still *Alien* (Ridley Scott, 1979) and *Aliens* (James Cameron, 1986). Although real old-timers by now, they're still fascinating and scary as hell. Both true classics that defined the genre, with their original plots, macabre settings and sinister alien creatures designed by *H. R. Giger*. But for this series, I had something more positive and less dark in mind. I'll leave that for another time...
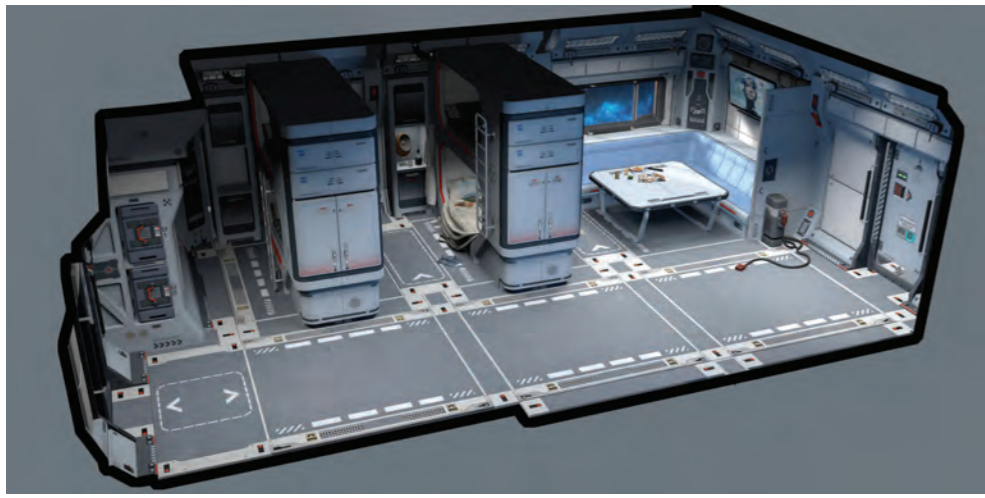
To give an impression, hereby an overview of some settings I compiled for this project:

Tom and Harry

The main character of the series is a young man called Tommy (Tom for friends).
He's an engineer on board of the Solaris-1 Space Station and we meet him during his solitary inspection shift on his first interstellar voyage. The basis for the character is the same model used for Harry (Braxton for Genesis), so in a way, they're related. An earlier version of this blond clean-cut character was used for *"Black & White"* and in the *"Inner Sanctum 03"* series, where he appears at the university library as one of the students.

His companion on board is a spherical recon drone, dubbed HAL 3000 by one of his fans. He's designed for technical assistance, very observant, and luckily for our hero, not so malignant as his relative from the 9000 series in A Space Odyssey. The floater bot model is re-created by *Stonemason* (https://www.daz3d.com/stonemason#) and is described as "being in every bit as useless as the original, primarily designed to float around the air and send info back to home base." However, in the series this

hovering device turns out to be much more sophisticated than that, with a compassionate mind, determined to find a suitable match for his lonely mate.

Full House

Apart from many different settings used for this series, the project was also an exercise in crowd rendering. To give the virtual clubs the appearance of a lively and exciting nightlife, I needed to add as many characters as technically possible to fill the scenes. In contrast to the empty rooms and deserted corridors on board of the Solaris-1, I wanted the different bars to be fully crowded and animated places, full of life and excitement.

To do this I used a large variety of characters from every DAZ generation available, adding many different clothes, accessories, and hair objects that matched the different settings.

The first nightclub is a modern exuberant hotspot, a place with muscular leathered strippers and orgiastic parties for cosmopolitan gay men. I haven't counted the number of characters used for these scenes, but here below are the main models:

The jazz club is, by contrast, a more classic environment. It's a fashionable meeting place for smart-looking people and elegant couples. A place for masked balls, with sophisticated cocktails and smooth live music in the background. Finally, there's an elaborate palatial gay night lounge next door, filled with gilded baroque furniture, paintings, sculptures, crystal chandeliers, ornamental decorations, and heavy draperies. All couches and sofas are occupied by lovemaking couples, so Tom and Harry have difficulty in finding a place of their own.