

Critical Appraisal

This project was a very insightful and unique opportunity to not only further develop our technical skills but also gave us the chance to work with people who are completely unrelated to our current field of study. It was refreshing to attend the joint classes and consider different approaches when tackling this challenge. Our group aimed to create a 360 video that encompassed the movement of 5 different elements: air, fire, earth, water and the unifying human being. To do this, we not only used the tools and software already familiar and available to us but also relied on the LCDS students' knowledge of dance and performance to tie it all together. Therefore, the physical interpretation and choreography-making became their focus throughout the project. Whereas for me and my colleague Ana, our job was to turn those interpretive movements into something more realistic and immersive, giving it life through our visual and technical knowledge.

Concept-wise, I believe our piece was strong, to begin with. Even though it can be a bit repetitive, the interpretation of the 4 elements in this project was given a new dimension that I feel very few have explored like this before. Furthermore, the additional fifth element opens a new door for interpretation. While it was also a way to include all dance students equally, it actually also served as a deeper meaning that unified all the elements while building the narrative around them as a concept of the human mind, and therefore dependent on its existence. On the other hand, we were able to keep the original idea of the three states of matter. As we can see by the final result, their physical characteristics do shine. However, we merged it with the current concept and in my opinion, it made it more human and familiar, or in other words, less cold and scientific. As humans, we often look for comfort in the natural world, and that is what we did with this project. Also, there is a somewhat mechanical feel to the final piece, which coincides with the technology used to experience it. A robotic yet natural interpretation of nature if you will.

Then again, even though it was not me and Ana's task, I think the choreographies we ended up with in the final video were extremely well thought out and depicted each of their elements in a personal, yet very concise way. They worked and experimented continuously to give us their best performances, and in the end, they fit their character's roles pretty well.

In terms of the final video, we were very proud of what we were able to accomplish, especially considering the amount of time we had and other ongoing projects that we had to manage at the same time. I think the characters overall look great, and the involved environment gave it a mysterious aura that isolated each element and made it the focus of the viewer's attention. The switch from Blender to Premier Pro to stitch the videos together almost did not affect us. It was actually our salvation in this entire process. It is quite hard to

tell that there are 5 videos in that one final piece, which is exactly what we were aiming for. Overall, it was a very successful risk.

However, this is not to say there are things we wouldn't change. I think some of the character's definitions could be better, and the angle of the camera could allow for a wider format so that the particles from the characters don't suddenly disappear from the frame of view. I also would've liked to have had a longer video. But then again, we have considerable limits in terms of rendering and, if taken into account that our laptops did a better job at rendering than the university's desktops, I think this would indeed be a challenge, even if we were to change it now. Finally, I would make the human character more visible since it was kind of lost in the midst of the particles.

In conclusion, I am very content with our final piece, and hopefully, Ana feels the same way. It was, in fact, a great challenge at times due to factors outside of our control however, we were able to use those obstacles to go even further and find solutions. Additionally, we learned a lot from this experience, and all the experience we got from generating this piece of work will pay off in the future.