

MA Pitch (Draft)

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Keywords

3D Models, Blender, Experimental Media, Failure

ARTIST STATEMENT

“MA Pitch (Draft)” is a Master’s project rejected before it even started. In October 2023, near the beginning of my second year in my PhD program, I was told that an MA exam that did not fit the norms of traditional scholarship would not be passed, and that the current project I had pitched would need to be reworked into a traditional paper. The project in question was critiquing how the standards of traditional scholarship (writing and presentations) flatten 3D objects and limits them to single orientations, ignoring their unique, virtual physicality. Initially envisioned as a virtual gallery or game, this idea would not be possible in a paper format, and a non-paper project would not be recommended to advance, therefore I began the immediate, and somewhat terrifying, process of applying to other programs.

Using Blender, photography, journal entries, illustration, and glitch work, this .blend file is a record of the overlapping personal, professional, and political actions that non-traditional and creative scholarly work requires. This 3D model, a copy of my bedroom-studio-study-space in graduate housing at the University of California, Irvine, is a site where many of my administrative woes have been contemplated, and a place that is now embedded and representative of this process. I invite users to play with, break, and change this Blender file, see all the little bits and pieces that would have been lost from this 3D space if it had been locked into a screenshot, and what would have vanished from both my work and my scholarly practice if I had abandoned this project altogether.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

This project is an editable file that can be opened and manipulated with Blender. Blender is free and open-source 3D modeling program. This file is not a tutorial on how to use Blender, nor does it necessarily explain how one should navigate the objects of information in this project. I encourage those who are unfamiliar with 3D modeling programs to check out YouTube videos, forum posts, or go to friends for advice on how to use the program. Don’t worry about moving things in the project, in fact, I encourage it, as there are often old models and secrets hidden inside of other objects.

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The Objects

The “main” 3D model in this Blender project is a recreation of my bedroom (see Figure 1). This big, complicated object is a collection of smaller things like desks, books, textures, and vertices.

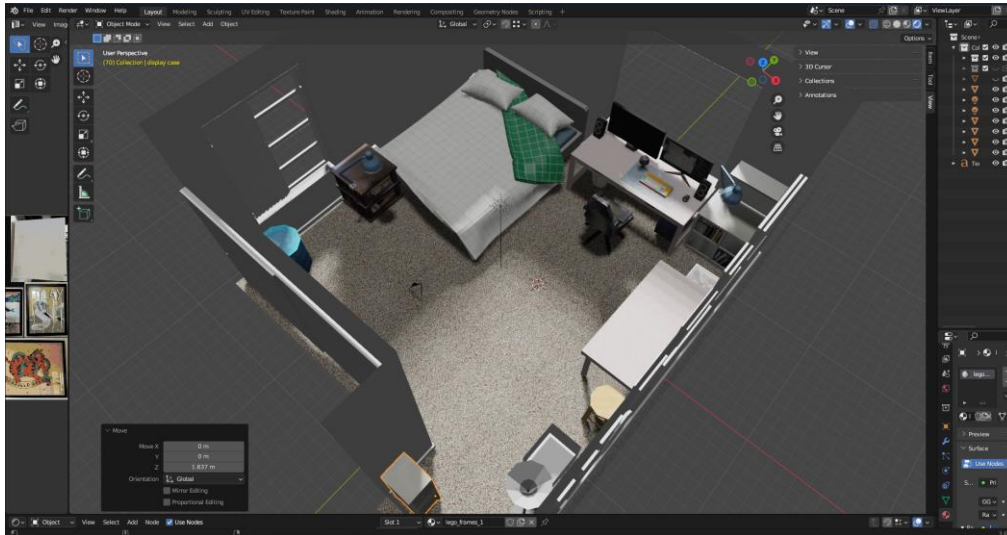


Figure 1: Screenshot of the project

Alongside the 3D objects in the scene there are also other things of interest, like the objects listed on the side of the program, the textures stored as .pngs in the texture editor, and draft objects left in the scene but not made visible in the editor window. All parts of the program are part of this project, intended to bring participants into the literal programs of design in order to talk about 3D modeling, instead of introducing these concepts through an article.

Patch Notes

As the project developed and my place at my university changed, the written component of the project (including but not limited to engagement with other scholars, issues with modeling, and reflections on the application process), was reimagined from a standard paper/artists statement to a flexible log of new changes. This text is not structured chronologically or by theme and discusses the issues with record keeping and citing research when the form of a research project is not only object based but done in a program that is not built to handle text (see Figure 2 and Figure 3).

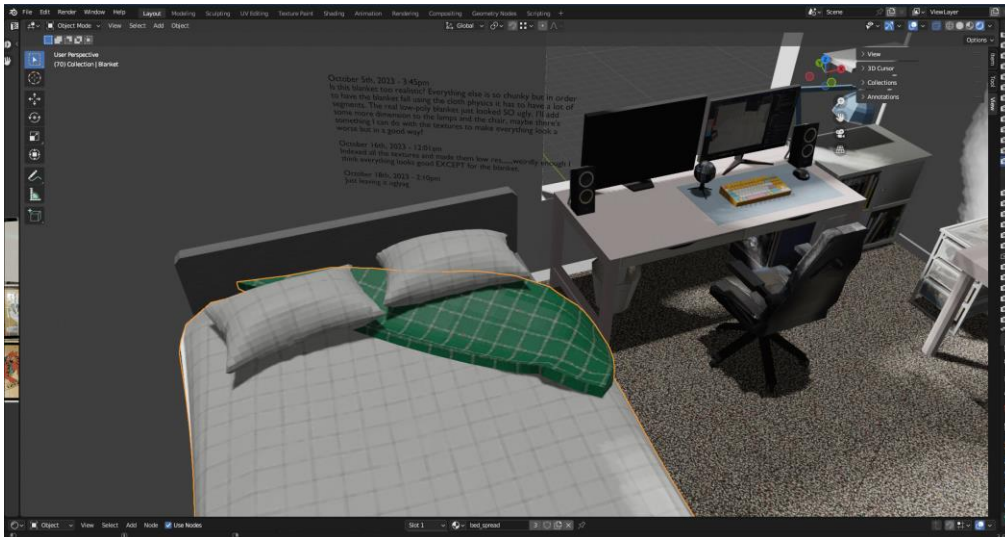


Figure 2: An example of the patch notes in Blender

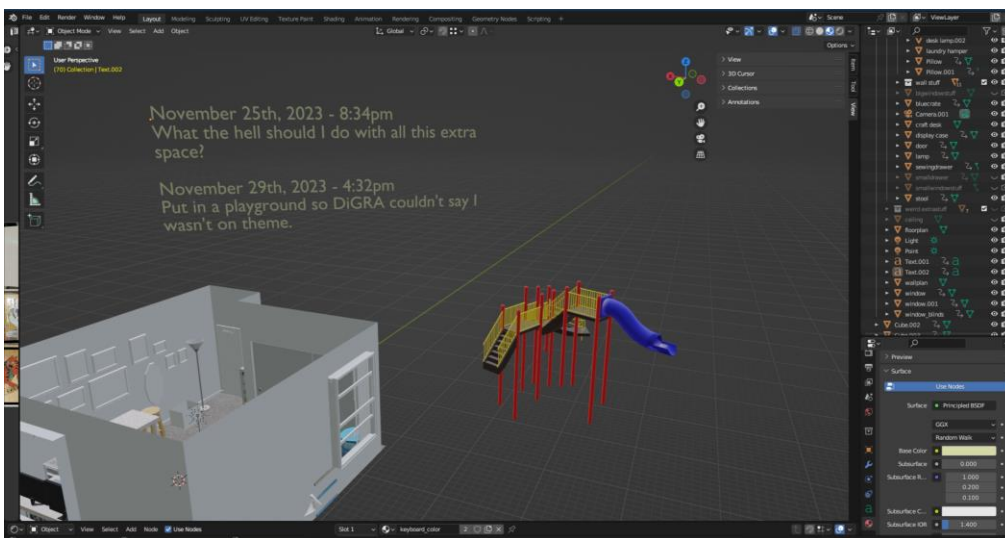


Figure 3: Not so empty space outside of the main model