

dolce gusto - will i am

'fly on the wall'
initial thoughts
november 2015

DAFFY



You know when a small moth lands on your laptop screen at night when you're watching Netflix, have you ever wondered what the landscape must look like through their eyes? Well... via Will I Am, VR and some luxury coffee I hope to answer that question.



I really enjoyed reading the script. Admittedly I'm not a fan of modern mainstream musicians, gimme Philip Glass, Vangelis or a bit of Portishead and I'm happy. But I do like WILL I AM. He has sass, a cheeky grin and he's obviously a genuinely good musician.



From the script, I'm also into the VR aspect.

I love VR. From the moment I tried on a headset a year ago - and via the process of me converting all of my pet projects to the VR format - this enthusiasm culminated into the creation of The Avengers VR, which I directed for Marvel and Samsung.



it's currently one the most respected VR experiences out there and six months on it's still being used by Samsung in stores worldwide to demo VR as a concept.

A lot of psychology was required (as you can guage from the guy above holding out his arms, believing that his various weapons are engaging)

I'm not sure anyone at 72 and Sunny could have guessed the level of testing, effort and thought that was going to be put into this user experience as a whole.



I talk about Avengers in some detail here as a good reference point to discuss the successes of a VR project. Sunny's original script was fine, but it needed pushing.

To make people truly feel like Iron Man we went beyond the concept of merely creating the famous heads up display, we added texture by giving VR users a physical Iron Man suit when they look down, and a reflection in a window that responds to their own movements.

But more than this we gave Iron Man stature. I positioned Iron Man standing proud overlooking New York City from his luxury pad in Stark Tower. People who wear the VR headset change their stance as they fully assume the role. It's a great pre sequence moment before battle. It gets people in the right frame of mind.



Historically, I've watched countless people try VR experiences, and the general outcome is predictable. They put on the mask, are stunned by the effect of VR space for a minute or so.



Then even in the biggest action adventures, I've seen punters tune out, or worse get sick. When the headset comes off, they talk about how cool the tech is. Not the film itself.



I absolutely wanted my experience to change all of that, and with 'Battle for Avengers Tower' Captain America's shield gets so close it could slice your throat, and Thors hammer scrapes right past your head in full glorious chrome-y slow motion. Its action hero porn... And it appeals to the nerd in all of us.



Finally from your script, I adored the love affair with coffee... Good coffee. Since a kid idolising Agent Cooper and Twin Peaks I've loved the cinematic strength of coffee. I've not tried Dolce Gusto, but I assume I AM is to Gusto as Clooney is to Nespresso. But to be sold good coffee, I need to believe that Will actually loves it. And not that he's just in a commercial to try and sell it.



The current script if executed by the book, will carry with it some serious nausea concerns. Camera movements in general are tricky. I can go into this in more detail at a later date.

BUT as well as adhering to some key nausea rules, I think it's also really important to establish the 'self' in VR.

Who are we?

In the story of Will I Am and his studio, are we playing the role of ourselves?

In the current script Will is conversing with us, so I guess we must be ourself witnessing him in his studio environment as an invited guest. So lets ask questions.

Why are we there?

Why is he so keen to sell us coffee?

Do we have a body? or are we a floating head that he's looking at?

Why are we not responding to his conversation?

How are we clicking options all around him?

If he's waiting for us to click stuff, whats he doing in 'pause mode' as we're looking around?

How is this living hold not awkward?

...and is it strange that he's not weirded out that the conversation is very much one sided.

These sound like very anal questions, but if we cant put decent answers to them, flaws will be omni present in the final experience. People question their role in the experience DURING the experience.

I can't answer these questions myself, So like Avengers, I want to change it all up a bit. Same passion, same intent, same range of coffee but different perspective.

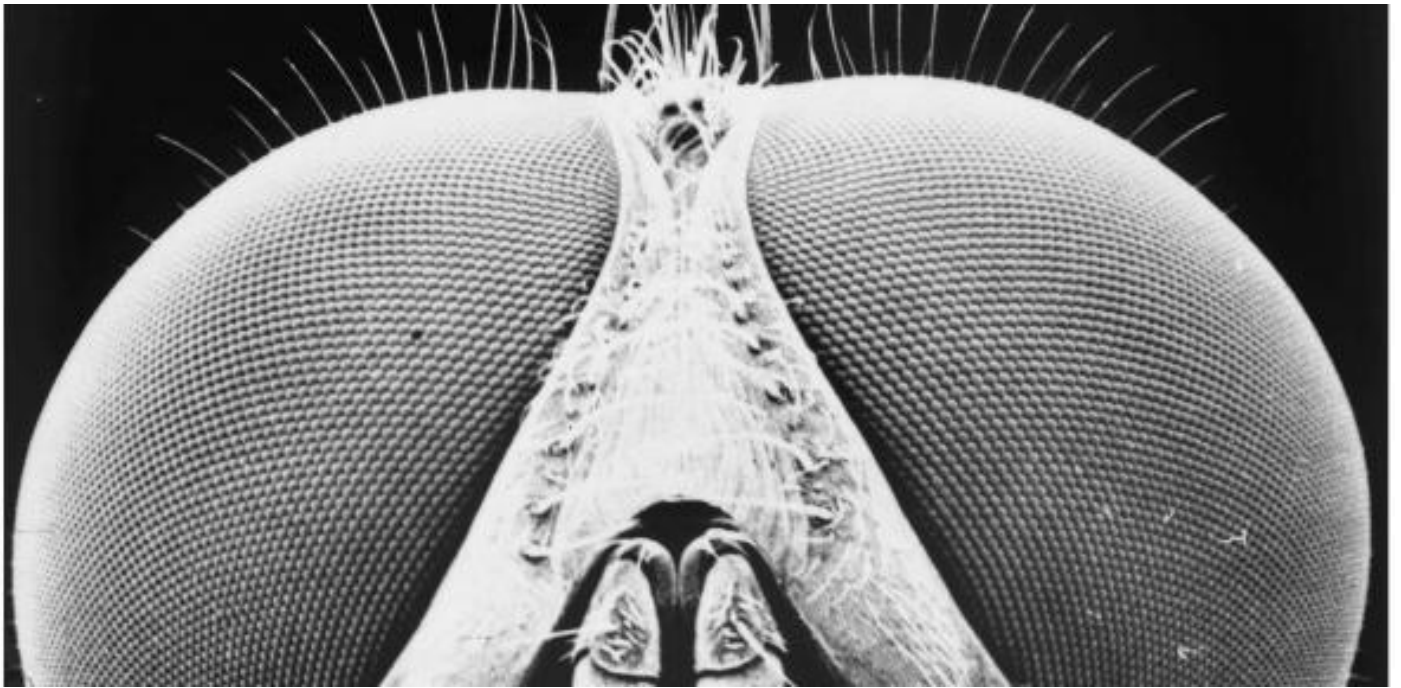
To be blunt, when I read this aspect of the script, you know... going to meet the actual Will I Am! and then... he gives me some spiel about roasting beans... I immediately thought of those poor competition winners, who get to have brunch with Kanye West, and end up sat in the corner as he's tapping away on his iPhone.

In our case it currently feels like Will's there contractually, but not for any other reason. In VR we want to be Will's best mate, or conversely we want to 'experience' him in a slightly more voyeuristic manner.

Given that we're not his best mate, this is my idea.

I want to stage a VR theatrical play in a recording studio, in which we get a glimpse of Will I Am, his life, his art and his relationships, all told with coffee as the central theme, and all told via a fly on a wall type perspective.

Who are we?



The fly on the wall.



Peoples off screen persona is often very different than the on. And aside from parties, I've been to various directors houses, sound mixes and post production sessions, where amazing, larger than life people meet in the same room and instanstly electrify it. The energy is palpable and the stories are always very revealing and interesting.

What kind of conversations happen behind closed doors?
If we could be a fly on the wall, where would we most like to be?

Gaga's changing room?

Beiber's bedroom?

Jenner's bathroom?!

Given how funny, talented, stylish and well connected Will I Am is, I wouldn't mind listening in on some of his music sessions.

So... Instead of Will I Am staring at a VR floating head, selling the merits of coffee, I propose that we catch him on an average day, recording a final bit of music with fellow artists, and the coffee sells itself by association. It's the key stone conversation starter as he hosts his fellow friends and music artists. And as for a reasoning to be in a room uninvited, I propose that we, the viewers are only there because we're that annoying fly buzzing at the window.

Throughout, Will is drinking the coffee, discussing the coffee with his invited friends, even describing the various coffees like a wine tasting event. He prides himself on wanting to offer up a good coffee. So whilst his comedian friend is interspersing the recording session to tell a story about something that happened last night, and whilst Will remains perfect guest by commenting on the recording artists red carpet dress, he's mainly keen to keep his focus on laying down his voice track. The whole scenario feeling very real.

Different guests drink different coffee. Will has something mild and steady as he's in for a long night. Recording artist needs it STRONG. She's been on the road, has come in last minute to sing then has to rush to an event, the crazed comedian? Decaf thinks Will... definately decaf.

I find when story is interesting like this, people don't mind being advertised to. Even though the faux storyline is an obvious act, its 'honest' in its creativity. You buy that Will is making an advert, as opposed to Will reading lines about coffee, which to me screams of him just making a buck.



As 'the fly' we get to see this all play out in the weirdest perspectives VR has ever seen.



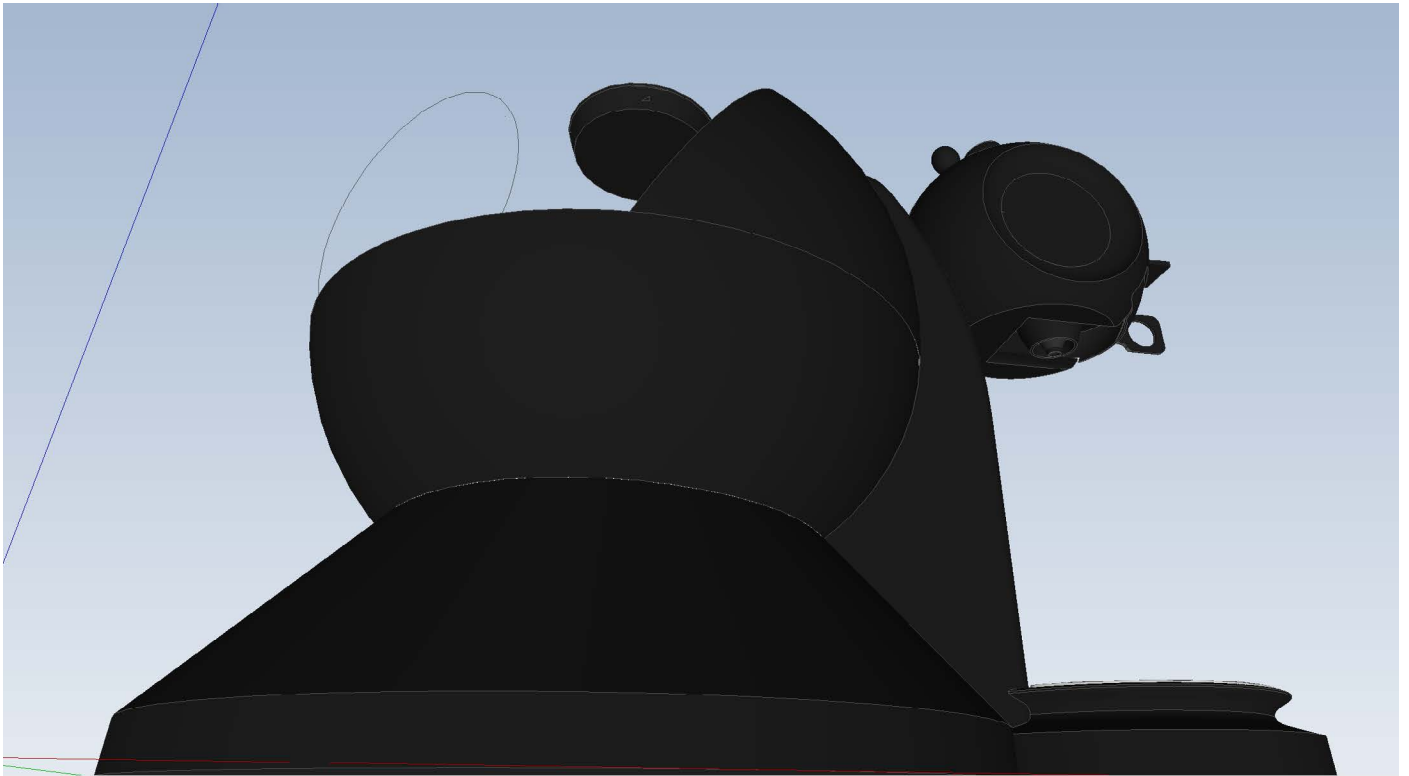
As we land on the mixing desk, the sliders are as tall as doors, the lights are like an airport runway strip and Will I Am is an absolute giant. We see every ridge in his finger prints as he slides his sliders towards us and over our heads.



Its 'honey I shrunk the kids' but in a recording studio.



The coffee cup placed in our path, obscuring Will for a moment, is emblazoned with a Dolce Gusto logo that looks like a Times Square billboard.



The coffee machine itself is like a skyscraper, as we watch a normally mundane task of making a coffee, become a breathtaking and spectacular architectural moment.

As a fly, given that we can land on any surface, means that we can be on walls, ceilings, instruments, on Will I Am's face, on the rim of a coffee cup, and for humour, the buzzing of our wings, can ruin a perfectly good take of the artist he's recording.

We also get to hear secret conversations kept from other people in the room.

i.e.

- We get to hear Will say 'That's Great!... and then say 'OMG was she drinking last night?'

- We might hear Will saying to the over excited Comedian yes to one type of coffee, but witness first hand him giving him the decaf.

And none of it's real, like Ricky Gervais's Extra's, everyone's in on the act.

Benefits of being a fly...

We see an amazing studio but feeling like a city.

We hear a recording happen in full binaural sound.

We get excited about coffee. A little bit spills and it becomes a black lake for our probiscus to taste!

We witness celebrity life close up and personal.

And generally we see the world from a new set of eyes.

The overall project will instigate a real hype, so instead of

“did you try the Will I Am / Gusto thing? Cool studio but kinda got SOLD TO... sooooo many options I wasn't sure when it was polite to stop“

I'd be hoping for.

“Did you see the Will I Am thing in VR? Its like an artpiece, a multi perspective bit of voyeuristic theatre, you get to actually be a fly on the wall. Its for Nescafe, very good”

In summary I'm proposing to make this project bigger and smaller at the same time.

Bigger in concept, bigger in production values, more celebrity and hefty CGI recreation of the studio to achieve tricky perspectives.

Smaller in that it's not a complex series of clickable chapters, it's not a disingenuous sales pitch which I think is harder to make a success.

Notable moments.

You land on a 4k plasma screen. Your viewpoint is sideways, and the vista is like a vast desert of led pixels.

Like the moth on your laptop!

Will I Am is watching and discussing and praising 'Running by Beyonce' with whoever's in the room.

Will gets changed, in his 'walk in closet' we see him rummaging through a clothing collection fit for a prince. Or Prince himself.

Another celebrity holds a guitar, we're resting on a string, as he plucks we see the string reverberations heading towards us at speed.

In the lift we start upside down. We look up and a celebrity is going up to meet Will, she's doing her makeup using her compact mirror. We get hints to her identity.

Fly is in the recording booth, vocal artist (a Rihanna type) is texting, we're sat on the phone. The bubbles of text are enormous. She checks her hair with the iphone camera.

Fly is on the glass between booth and recording studio, it's deadly silent, and then we hear a perfect take from the artists vocal, gives us goose bumps.

Finally we're in the main studio, the Rihanna-type is fully dressed. They all celebrate the amazing sound of the new audio. Once they've gone Will can hear something. The buzz of a fly on the recording, end shot.



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