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Civilisation Z

Treatment

The multi-platform project *Civilisation Z* intends to produce a narrative associated with the codes and conventions characterised by the science-fiction, adventure genre. In the format of a webisode series - with supplementary content on further platforms - the series accompanies an interplanetary archaeologist's search on a neglected celestial body; exploring the conception of space exploration. Directed towards an audience comprising sixteen to thirty years of age, the journey undertaken in *Civilisation Z* evolves to confront viewers with the issue of environmental crisis; in short, reflecting the destructive actions and damaging practices humanity performs in contemporary society which hold a negative effect on the Earth - communicated through the representation of the project's given planet and its appropriate dystopian condition.

The series will be complemented by additional narrative context located on manifold new media platforms; enriching the journey for thoroughly engaged audiences. A website will consist of audio accounts featuring the protagonist's thoughts on occurrences recently having transpired on the series, reinforced with journal entries recording events which occur amidst each episode. The audience will come across images captured by the protagonist concerning phenomena introduced in the series - in the company of notes – on social media platforms, as well as a blog with records hinting at the cause of the inhabitable condition of the planet in question - providing the opportunity for participants to propose, contribute to and extend upon their own hypotheses. Altogether, the aforesaid content will be composed as if addressed to a form of headquarters, positioning the audience to become more engaged in the story and hold a sense of responsibility across the venture.

The production *Odyssey* will function as the pilot of the series *Civilisation Z* - the commencement of fifteen total episodes. Throughout *Odyssey*, the protagonist-referred to as "Wolf"-embarks upon his journey on a forgotten planet, pursuing an unidentified energy source; in which, once found, sets in motion the narrative for the series.

Odyssey opens to the sight of a planet, viewed through the window of a spaceship. This opening sequence exhibits the protagonist's entry into the planet. As the space vessel becomes

engulfed into thick red, lightning-filled clouds, Wolf is shown in front of a door: he leaps out; initiating a skydiving montage, pieced together through cutting. Among this sequence, shots tracking Wolf skydiving exhibit a desert surface, featuring mountains in the distance. The concluding shot of the sequence displays the protagonist in a parachute, contrasted against the raging storm behind; and cutting to the title "*Civilisation Z*". A black screen cuts to sand dunes, the storm continuing in the sky; Wolf, in a medium-long shot, walks towards the camera. Another medium close-up displays Wolf, gazing towards a cluster of mountains, whilst the camera - in accordance with Wolf's gaze - focuses on the tallest peak; this collection of shots allows for opening credits.

A long shot is cut to, featuring the inside of a confined cave entrance, as the main character cautiously walks past. This is complemented by shots featuring rough walls, until the tunnel opens through an establishing shot; describing the new surroundings, as the main character ventures further. This goes on to an extreme close-up of a bright blue sphere, floating in the air, radiating energy. Wolf approaches the object; a close-up shot features his hand slowly move to interact with the sphere. Suddenly, a close up of Wolf's face suggests something momentous is happening in front of him. After a bright light dies down, a P.O.V. shot reveals a holographic projection cast by the sphere, revealing a star map; and a black screen is cut to - credits roll.

A multitude of technical and symbolic codes are implemented to provide meaning. Across the production, a significant amount of red and blue is employed to identify the film as science-fiction; this is evident within the significantly red clouds and sky during the skydiving montage, in which red is implemented to engender a sense of danger and action. Concerning the energy sphere, it has been created to radiate soft blue light representing wisdom and the intelligence it holds within.

With reference to technical codes, lighting is taken advantage of to heighten experiences: the cave carries a heavy vignette and contains dark lighting to convey a sense of mystery and the unknown.

Space, the planet, space vessel and the energy sphere - characteristics of science-fiction iconography - and a manifest of further elements across the production, will be created through rich composition of digital elements in post-production. A heat distortion will be used on the planet to mimic a mirage, suggesting the hot temperature of the environment. During the scene in space, the camera will gradually dolly outwards, combined with an anti-clockwise roll to replicate an outer space feel. Additionally, a camera shake will be employed frequently when the protagonist journeys on the planet to emphasise a realistic

look and ground the production. The skydiving scene undertakes intense camera movement to enhance the rapid pace; inside the cave, the camera will gradually dolly inwards into the unknown, setting a gloomy tone.

To increase the ominous mood, the actor will slowly creep cautiously within the cave with an uncertain expression. This will complement shots of a long duration with sparse cuts to intensify mystery - unlike the skydiving montage which will take advantage of fast cutting to intensify the action and rapid pace.

Music is applied to complement the pace of the production: a fast-paced soundtrack will underly the skydiving scene to enrich the momentum of the production; as opposed to a slower, ominous soundtrack when the protagonist ventures into the darkness of the cave to develop mystery.

Ultimately, *Civilisation Z* is designed to propose an attractive multi-platform narrative; resisting the biggest threat to transmedia projects of audience reluctance by providing the audience with a role and sense of responsibility throughout the series, and by offering a mystery-filled plot so that content containing further information – and thus the project as a whole – is greatly anticipated.

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