Set Design (Designer: David Lee)

As the main topic of the story is **the blurred boundaries between the real world and the virtual world**, David and I wanted to create an illusion where **two originally unrelated worlds slowly converge** at some point in the play. We had numerous set versions before we decided on the final one, and in the end, we found one element that we had always retained: **the screen**.

Through screens, we can directly see the world on the other side and interact with it, almost like a window. Nowadays, the concept of screens is no longer confined to a simple flat surface; we have 3D, 4D, and various methods of experiencing digital content. Ever since smartphones were invented, **we started viewing the world through these little screens** that we carry around. Therefore, "screens" became the main design direction for the set of this production.

Figure 1, 2   Early versions of the set design

In the final version, not only the smart glass (that can switch from transparent to opaque) is a type of screen on the wall, but the border of the stage also looks like it's framed by another screen. This implies that **every character in the story cannot truly escape the confines of the world's frame**.

Figure 3   Final version of the set design

The Nether shows a world where people were migrating to the virtual world *en masse* after an apocalyptic event that killed most of the plants in the real world. I imagined the virtual world to be dazzling and convenient, and people would rather spend time establishing their online personas and life over there. Consequently, the real world became dull and monotonous. This idea then created **two strikingly different color palettes** for the two worlds in this play.

In the **virtual world scenes**, I had this concept of making the sets and props look like the **white models** one would see in the 3D modeling phase of a game to remind them they were looking at "artificial creation." This prompts the audience to think whether, **in a world as strange and detached as the one they find themselves in, their experiences and emotions are also equally unreal**.

We included three sets of bouquets with different colors. The **bouquets gradually lose their colors until only a completely white bouquet remains on stage**. Visually, the audience witnessed **the transformation of the bouquets from organic to artificial**. However, during the course of watching the play, the audience had already invested their feelings into the characters. Even if there was only an inorganic 3D-modeled bouquet on the stage at the end**, emotionally, we still believed it was real**, just like everything that had happened in the virtual world.

Figure 4, 5   Bouquets transition from organic to artificial

Lighting Design (Designer: Meng-Yu Chen)

Figure 6, 7   Neon green and white lighting in the interrogation room scene

Figure 8, 9   Warmer tones in the virtual world, symbolizing warmth and vitality on the other side
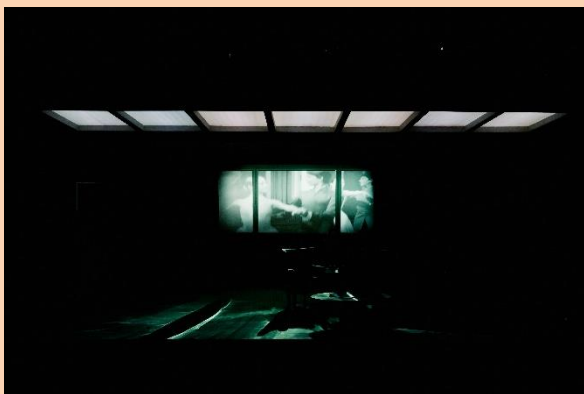

Figure 10   Victorian-era skylights simulating the loading screen progress bar by lighting up one by one

Figure 11   From the right stage to the left stage, the skylights turn from blue to yellow, symbolizing the convergence of reality and the virtual world, and the love between these two characters

Costume Design (Design: Lilian Liao)

I perceive **clothing style as a culture, or an era**.

Before the invention of the Internet, information didn't spread as easily as it does now, so each region had its own distinctive clothing styles and traditions. With today's technological advancements and highly developed information networks, the connections between nations have never been any closer. Additionally, fast fashion has also made it possible for people from all over the world to get ahold of fashion trends in another country. Globalized fashion is the current trend; **fashion looks identical in every country**.

There was a place called The Hideaway in the play where players were required to act and dress as if they were living in the Victorian era. Even though this era is iconic, I wanted the costumes to be a little different in here.

Based on my observation, in the video game industry, the in-game clothing wasn't entirely accurate, historically speaking. They would **make adjustments to serve the genre and how they wanted the players to perceive the characters**. In my opinion, this is what makes video games so interesting because we get to jump out of the box and experience differently.

For instance, Iris, the little Victorian girl in the story, wasn't supposed to dress like that in the Victorian era. Still, because her character was designed to arouse the players, we made her dress more revealing based on our modern standards of "**sexiness**."

Video Design (Designer: Charles Tsai)

The thing that we wanted to talk about through this story is **the relationship between humans and technology**. Our personal information, preferences, photo albums, or browsing histories on the Internet have all become our **identity**.

How does new media shape our experience?

This is the question I have been asking myself constantly, and it became the main focus of this production.

Let's imagine **new media represents technology** in this production. Different worlds have different ways of using technology. In the real-world scenes, the characters use technology as **tools**.

Figure 12   On the top left corner shows the time of interrogation, giving clues to the audience regarding the timeline.

Figure 13   Detective pulling up evidence on the screen

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In the virtual world, the characters perceive those video game elements as **part of the world**.

Figure 14   Chat and status bar above the window

Figure 15   Pop-up windows in the virtual world

Figure 17   Players sharing their screen

During the process, we spent a lot of time trying to deliver the concept of "**reality**." To me, **reality is not a form but a feeling**. Everything in the virtual world is composed of lines of code, but can we say they are not real? If they are not real, why do we feel sad when they leave, joyful when they express love, and sorrowful when they die?

Music Design (Designer: Matt Jhang)

The greatest joy in working on music design is I get to **build a world through sounds**, and that is something people often overlook in worldbuilding.

As the real world was deprived of plants, I imagined the world was filled with **low, ambient sounds**, like the humming of air conditioners or other machines. And so, in the real world, we could hear the unique sound of air purifiers of that world.

In the virtual world, different locations have **distinctive background music**, just like how we normally hear when playing video games.

As the characters' beliefs about the virtual world started to crumble, the background music was mixed with the real-world machine hum, symbolizing **the coexistence of two different worlds.**

Then, in the final scene, I removed the ambient sounds from the real world, and no sound could be heard. This decision was to make the audience feel a **sudden silence**, as if a part of the world had been emptied, allowing the audience to relate to the characters.