



ADG

AVENUE 5

ADG AWARDS PRODUCTION DESIGN PRESENTATION 2021

PRODUCTION DESIGNER
SIMON BOWLES



A futuristic spaceship with a sleek, aerodynamic design, primarily white with gold accents. The ship is shown from a low angle, flying over a city at night, with the lights of the buildings visible through the transparent sections of the hull. The name 'AVENUE 5' is written in a stylized, glowing yellow font on the side of the ship. The background is a dark, starry space.

WELCOME TO AVENUE 5

- Avenue 5 is a futuristic comedy drama series for HBO created by Armando Iannucci (Veep, Death of Stalin & Private Life of David Copperfield). It follows an eight-week space cruise from Earth around Saturn and back again onboard the very glamorous Avenue 5 spaceship. Set 40 years in the future, it stars Hugh Laurie, Josh Gad, Suzy Nakamura, Rebecca Front, Zach Woods, Lenora Crichlow and Nikki Amuka-Bird.



THE DESIGN BRIEF

- The brief was to design sets that could be built on three stages at Warner Brothers Studios Leavesden, just outside London. Armando had written wonderful scenes set in many large and small spaces within the cruise liner spaceship.
- The initial draft of the first episode mostly featured scenes taking place in the passenger area of the ship with occasional moments with the crew behind the scenes. I thought to create a visual feast as dramatic as the scripted events I'd pull these two worlds apart as much as possible; the passengers inhabiting vast open spaces with curving gleaming white walls with gold and marble details, the crew are crushed into the industrial rear section of the ship which is more like a noisy badly lit oil rig crammed with machinery where the possibility that people would inhabit it is an afterthought.

CONCEPTUALIZING AVENUE 5

- When starting to design Avenue 5 I decided to use as much up-to-date 3D design technology to physically affect the way I work, and hence to create something futuristic. I utilised 3D software that would behave in an organic way, to push and pull the geometry and continue to be adjust them further until I was happy. Fusion 360 achieved this look brilliantly. Without having to consider real-world forces like gravity and the weight of materials I could design the sets by sculpting huge organic forms in this virtual world. Only once I'd settled on these structures my team then began working out how we'd physically construct them on the huge stages.







Upcoming Shows

- 26 Botanica
- 03 Sailing Christmas
- 15 Hannover Stripland
- 20 Elmer Isler Signs
- 26 Botanica
- 03 Sailing Christmas
- 15 Hannover Stripland
- 20 Elmer Isler Signs
- 26 Botanica
- 03 Sailing Christmas
- 15 Hannover Stripland
- 20 Elmer Isler Signs
- 26 Botanica
- 03 Sailing Christmas
- 15 Hannover Stripland
- 20 Elmer Isler Signs

JUDD
— GALAXY

Reception
JUDD

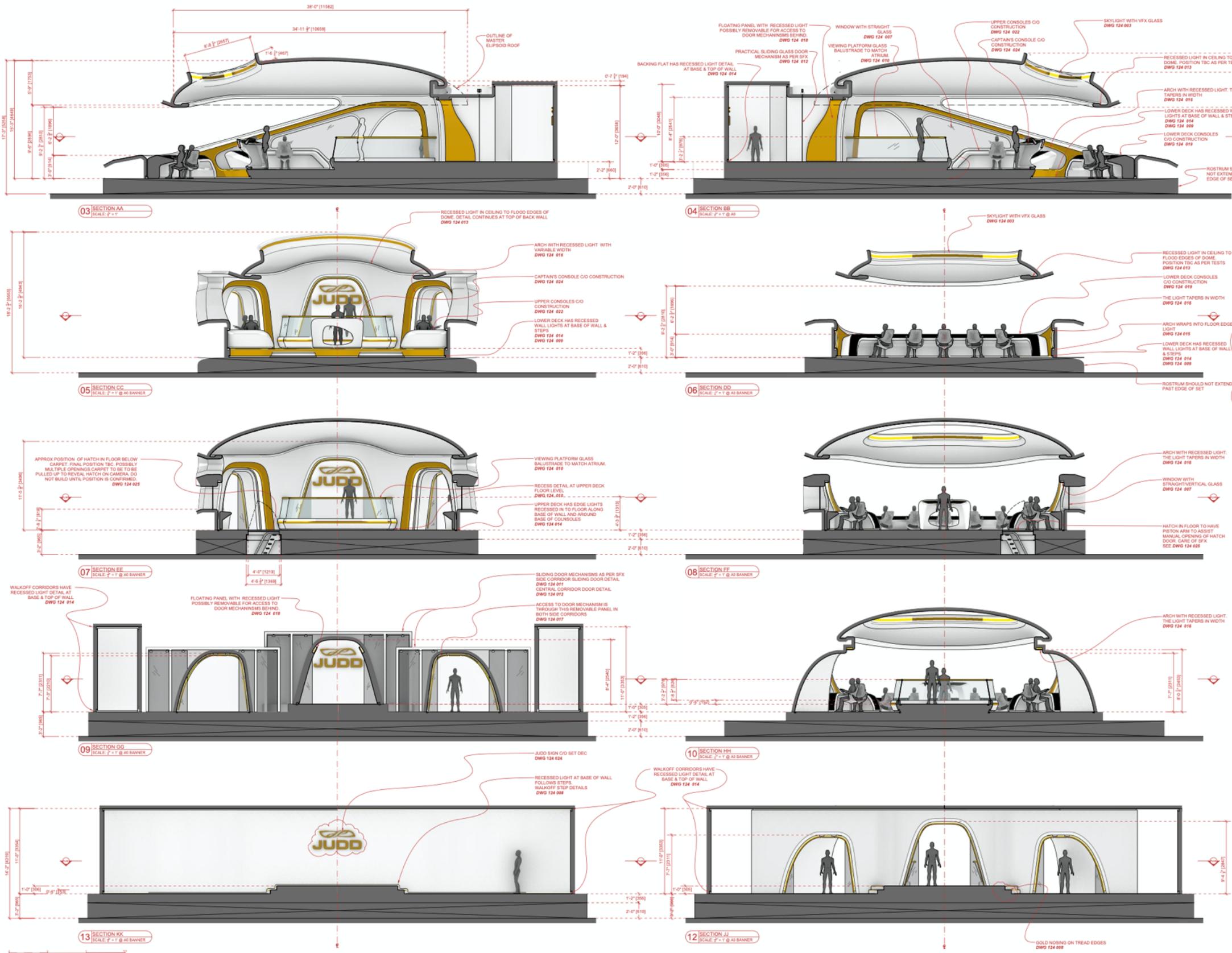
JUDD
— GALAXY

USING VIRTUAL REALITY

- We loaded the 3D files of the set designs into a gaming PC and via an Oculus Rift virtual reality headset so I could walk around the sets as if I were on them in their finished states. In virtual reality I could consider the flow of the script through the spaces, try out my built-in architectural lighting, discuss blocking and camera angles with the director months before construction was started.
- It sounds odd but the emotional response of a set is far more apparent in virtual reality than looking at an illustration or model. A looming piece of architecture is far more present in virtual reality, a tight space more claustrophobic when standing inside it.
- Construction drawings were created from these 3D concept models. Those files were then sent to an industrial CNC company who computer carved out the exact shape from those files. These huge blocks of styrene were delivered to us at the studio and fixed together. This process ensured symmetry and freed up sculptors to work on other sets.







GENERAL NOTES

- SET BUILT ON 2'-0" ROOSTRUM WHICH SHOULD BE TIGHT TO THE FRONT EDGE OF THE SET
- WALLS ARE GLOSS WHITE
- FLOORS ARE CARPET WITH WHITE UNDLATING VINYL BORDERS
- UPPER DECK AND VIEWING PLATFORM HAVE RECESSED LIGHTS SET INTO THE EDGE OF THE FLOORS AND AROUND THE BASE OF THE CONSOLES
- LOWER DECK HAS RECESSED WALL LIGHT IN THE BASE OF THE WALLS
- CEILING IS TO BE FINISHED IN A SATN / SLIGHTLY FLOCKED FINISH TO MINIMISE REFLECTIONS. TBC AS PER TEST SAMPLES.
- ALL CONSOLES ARE CARE OF CONSTRUCTION
- GLASS IN WINDOWS ARE STRAIGHT AND VERTICAL
- GLASS SLIDING DOOR MECHANISMS AS PER SFX POSITION OF HATCH IN FLOOR TBC.
- INTERIOR HATCH TO BE DRESSED WITH PIPEWORK / PAINTING

GRAPHICS / PROJECTION NOTES

- ALL MONITORS IN CONSOLES TBC. SEE CONSOLE DETAILS FOR FINAL COUNT.
- JUDD SIGN ON WALK OFF WALL TO BE FLOATING AND BACKLIT WITH LEDS

SET DEC NOTES

- INTERIOR HATCH TO BE DRESSED WITH PIPEWORK / DUCTING
- JUDD SIGN ON WALK OFF WALL TO BE FLOATING AND BACKLIT WITH LEDS. SEE DWG 124 024
- CHAIRS AS PER SET DEC
- FLOORS ARE CARPET WITH WHITE UNDLATING VINYL BORDERS

SFX NOTES

- 3 SETS OF SLIDING GLASS DOORS. SEE DWG 124 001 AND DWG 124 012
- HATCH IN FLOOR TO HAVE PISTON ARM TO ASSIST MANUAL OPENING OF HATCH DOORS. SEE DWG 124 025

VFX NOTES

- GLASS IN LOWER DECK WINDOW AND IN SKYLIGHT ARE VFX
- SEE STAGE LAYOUT SLH FOR POSITIONS OF BLUE SCREENS

REFERENCES

DWG NO.	NAME
SLH	STAGE LAYOUT FOR H STAGE
124 002	MAIN ROOM WALL PROFILES
124 003	REFLECTED CEILING PLAN & PROFILES
124 004	FLOOR PROFILES
124 005	SIDE PASSAGE PROFILES
124 006	CENTRAL PASSAGE PROFILES
124 007	WINDOW DETAILS
124 008	WALKOFF STEPS DETAIL
124 009	BRIDGE STEPS DETAIL
124 010	VIEWING PLATFORM / BALUSTRADE DETAIL
124 011	SIDE PASSAGE DOOR DETAILS
124 012	CENTRAL PASSAGE DOOR DETAILS
124 013	CEILING LIGHT DETAILS
124 014	WALL LIGHT DETAIL
124 015	FLOOR LIGHT DETAILS
124 016	ARCHED LIGHT DETAIL
124 017	FLOATING LIGHT PANEL DETAILS - SIDE PASSAGE
124 018	FLOATING LIGHT PANEL DETAIL, CENTRAL PASSAGE
124 019	LOWER DECK CONSOLE DETAILS
124 022	UPPER DECK CONSOLE DETAILS
124 023	CAPTAIN'S CONSOLE DETAILS
124 024	JUDD SIGNLIGHT DETAIL
124 025	HATCH DETAILS

REVISION NOTES

REV NO.	REVISION
A	JUDD SIGN ON BACKING FLAT REPLACES PROJECTION OF CAPTAIN'S
	SHAPE OF BACKING FLAT/ WALKOFF CORRIDOR MODIFIED
	NOISING ON WALKOFF AREA STEPS CHANGED TO GOLD

Avenue 5

INT BRIDGE

PG 2 OF 2

LEAVESSEN H STAGE

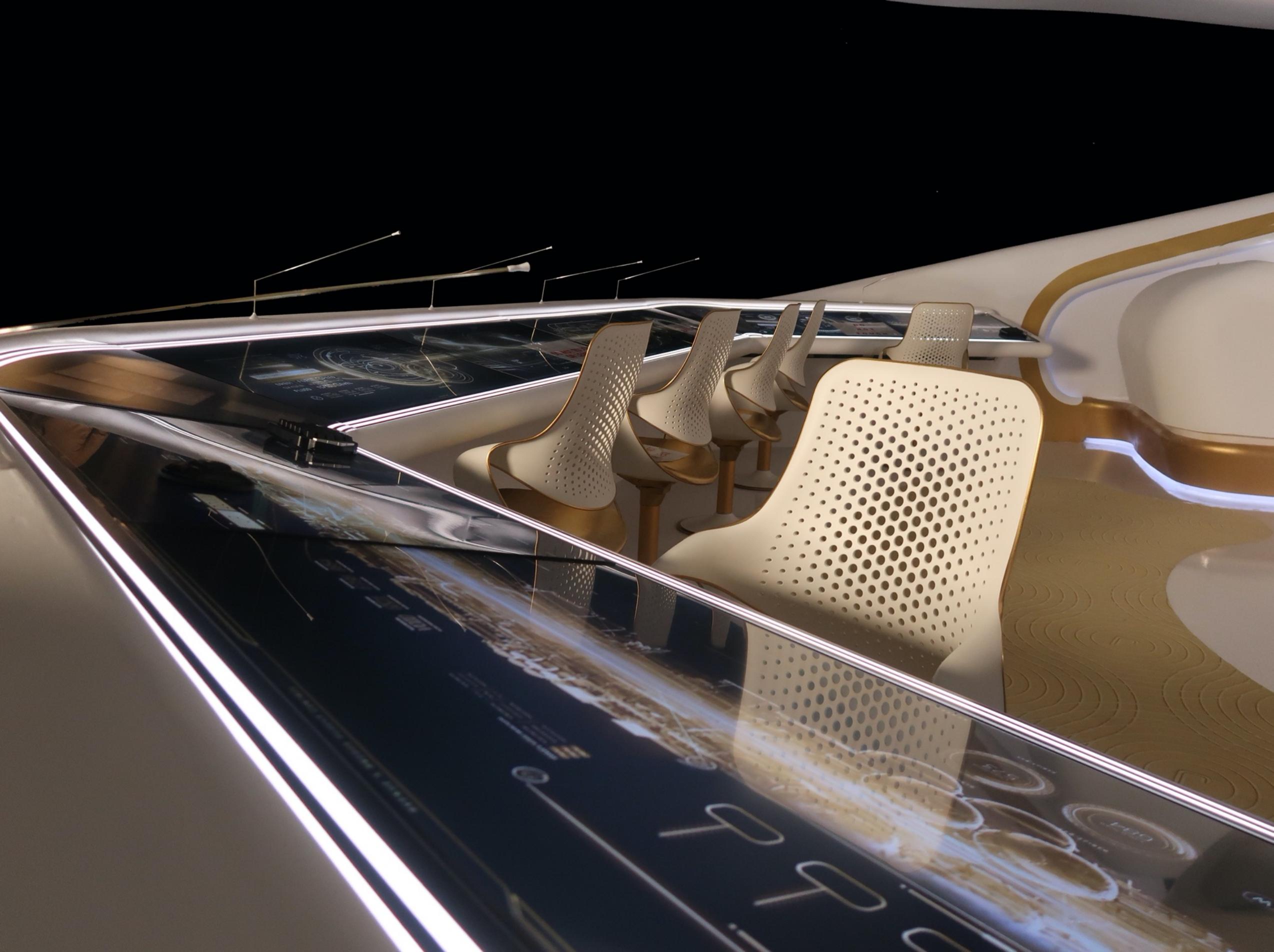
2018.10.16

SCALE: 1/4" = 1' @ A0

DATE ISSUED: 1. 2018.10.18

124 001 A







3D PRINTING

- As well as creating traditional printed rendered illustrations of these sets to show the episode directors I could now also walk them around them in virtual reality, exploring the spaces and inspiring the scriptwriting with these physical structures in mind.
- As the sets were of a very organic styling building traditional card and foam models was not going to be accurate enough. As all the sets and furniture were designed using 3D software the next natural step was to build tabletop models using 3D printers. We had up to eight 3D printers and a team of model makers building maquettes of all the sets and even the entire ship. These were far easier to demonstrate the connectivity of the sets than with drawn plans.



THE ATRIUM

- Opening scenes were scripted set in a huge atrium where hundreds of passengers were doing yoga. For these establishing moments I felt this set should incorporate all of the main scenes into one huge three-storey atrium set. This worked well for the budget too as the background always looked spectacular with other sets acting as supporting characters. This connectivity became a real advantage when filming as it allowed opportunities to follow cast from one scene in a particular room, out, along a corridor and into another room for the next scene. Directors subsequently shot more like filming on a location than on a studio set.
- This three-storey set took many months to construct, using plaster, fibreglass, timber, polystyrene, glass and steel.







JUDD

JUDD

JUDD

JUDD

DD

JUDD



23/10/2018
Atrium Color Keys
Production Designer:
Simon Bowles
Artist:
Jort van Welbergen

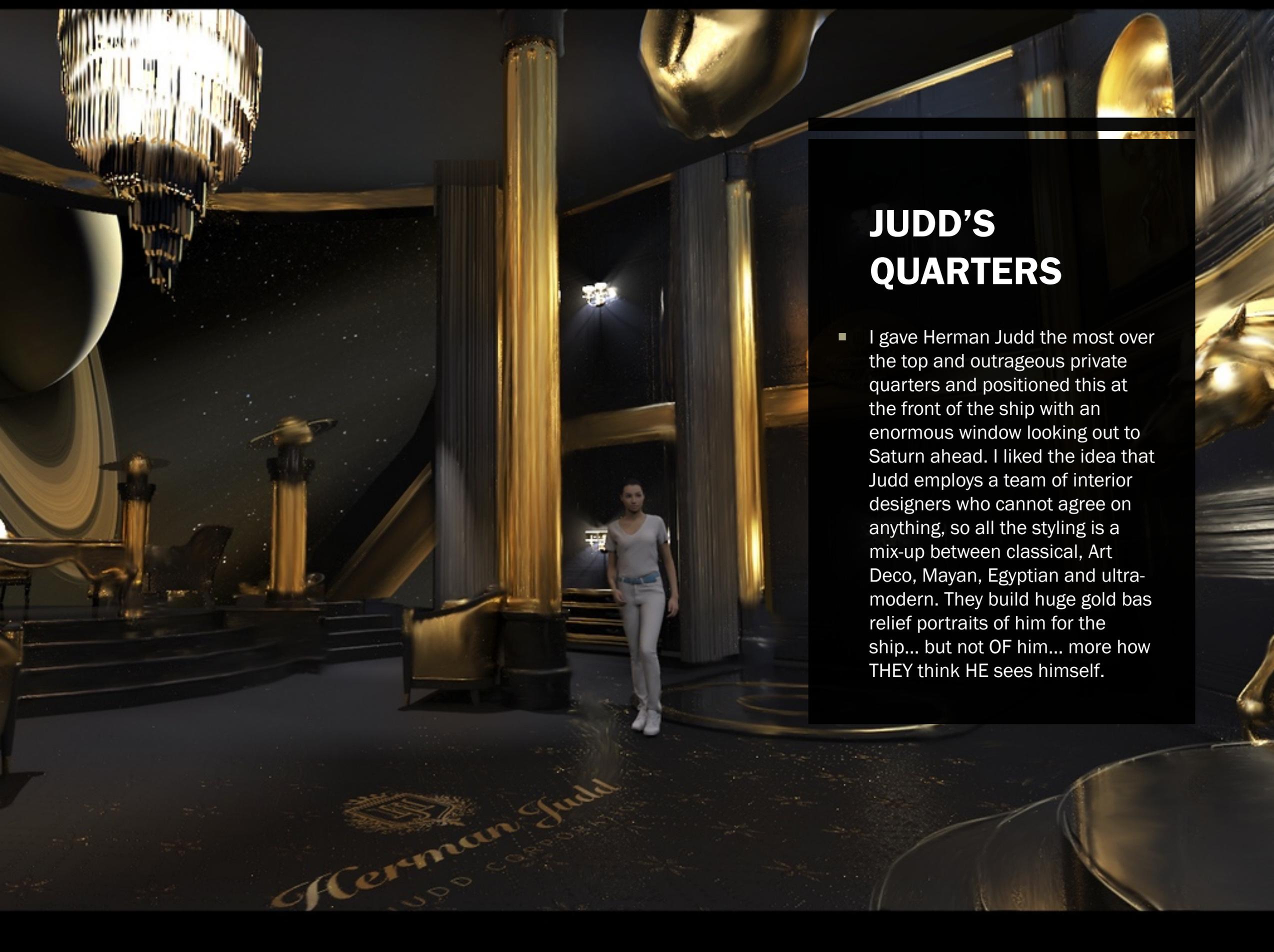
INTEGRATED LIGHTING

- While conceptualising the sets I designed the lighting as an integral part of the architecture with sculptural elements; curvaceous wondering ceiling units, Art Deco inspired pillars of light and glowing lines to accentuate the architectural form. I employed the use of colour LED tape so that at a press of a button I could change the set from day, to sunset, to night. At the end of season one we counted up how much LED light tape we'd used on all the sets; over seven miles of the stuff!



date: 23/10/2018
location: Atrium Color Keys
version nr.: 1v1
fase: preliminary
Production Designer: Simon Bowles
Artist: Jort van Welbergen





JUDD'S QUARTERS

- I gave Herman Judd the most over the top and outrageous private quarters and positioned this at the front of the ship with an enormous window looking out to Saturn ahead. I liked the idea that Judd employs a team of interior designers who cannot agree on anything, so all the styling is a mix-up between classical, Art Deco, Mayan, Egyptian and ultra-modern. They build huge gold bas relief portraits of him for the ship... but not OF him... more how THEY think HE sees himself.









Avenue 5

Date: 23/10/18
Prop: Judd Savory_Rice tower
Version: 01
Fase: preliminary

Production Designer:
Artist

Simon Bowles
Lee Oliver

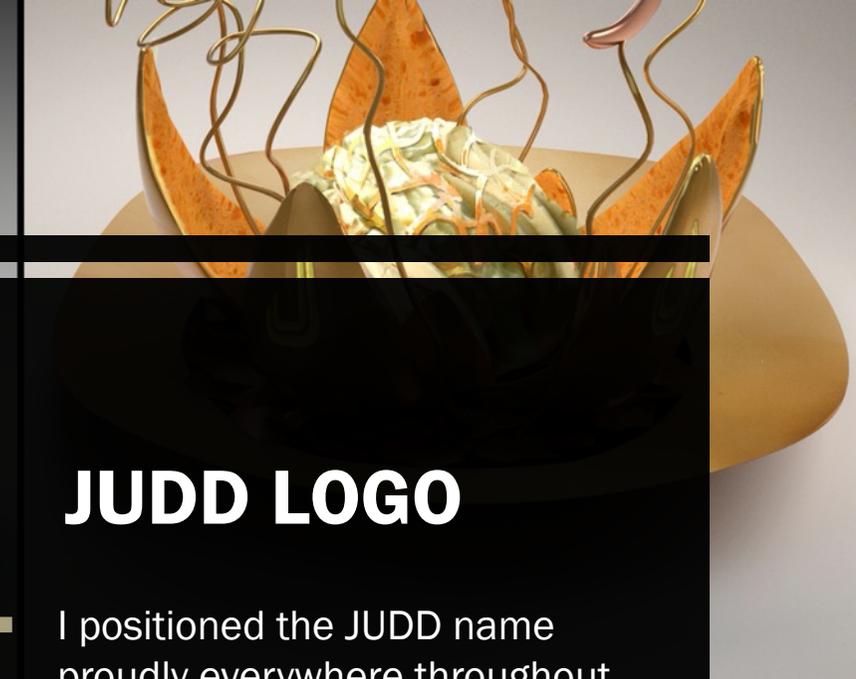


Avenue 5

Date: 16/10/018
Prop: Judd Pudding_Ice Ball
Version: 06
Fase: preliminary

Production Designer:
Artist

Simon Bc
Lee Olive



JUDD LOGO

- I positioned the JUDD name proudly everywhere throughout the ship so there was always at least one visible in any shot. The logo was built into the set, props and furniture; on the walls, in the carpet patterns, as part of the lighting, in gold lettering on the wine glasses, printed onto the rolls of toilet tissue and on special Saturn-related food incorporating the JUDD logo into the meals.

Simon Bowles
Lee Oliver



Avenue 5

Date: 22/10/018
Prop: Judd pudding_Mac Spaceship
Version: 07
Fase: preliminary

Production Designer:
Artist

Simon Bowles
Lee Oliver

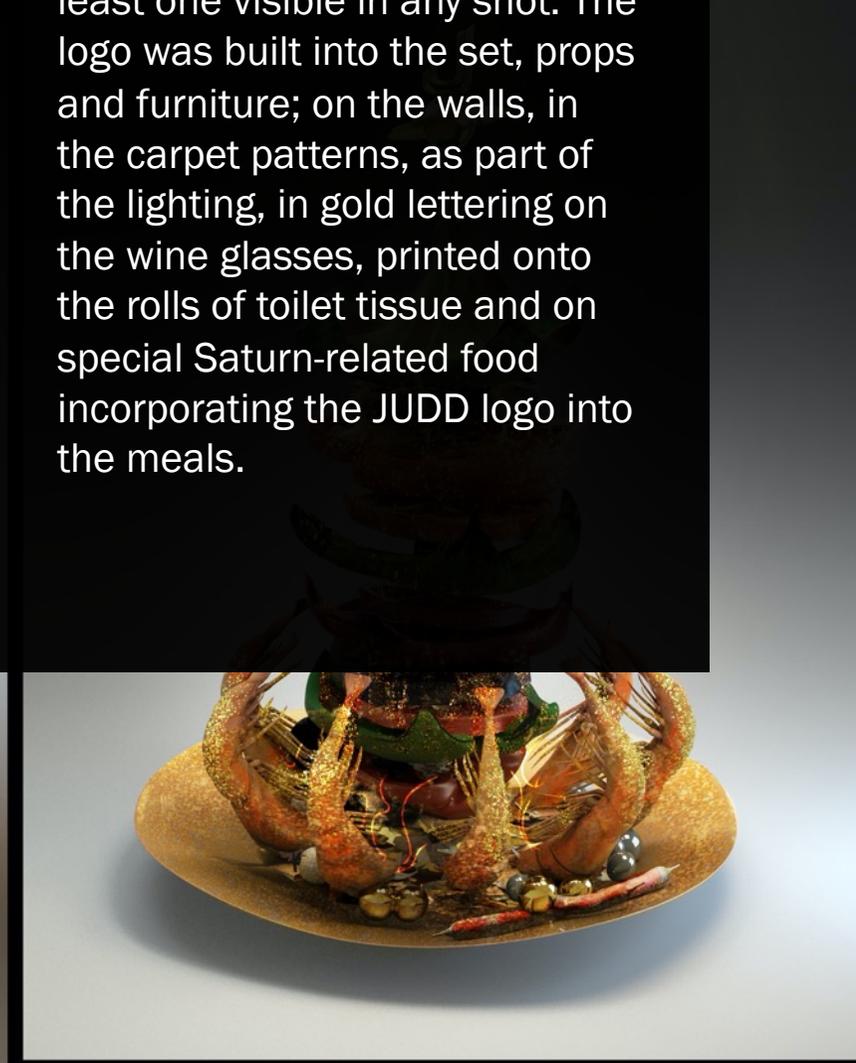


Avenue 5

Date: 24/10/018
Prop: Judd Pudding_Lava Brick
Version: 04
Fase: preliminary

Production Designer:
Artist

Simon Bowles
Lee Oliver



Avenue 5

Date: 18/10/18
Prop: Judd Savory_Pepper Tower
Version: 02
Fase: preliminary

Production Designer:
Artist

Simon Bowles
Lee Oliver




JUDD

THE PRAYER ROOM

- Armando had written wonderful scenes in a Multifaith Prayer Room in the first episode. I relished designing this as I grew up in the medieval city of Wells in Somerset, England, which has a very grand ancient cathedral at its heart. I have many childhood memories exploring its vast nave and climbing the tight spiral staircase up to the Chapter House. I used these thirteenth century monastic structures as inspiration for the Avenue 5 Prayer Room, stripping back the details of the gothic architecture to bare sinews then creating them from white synthetic materials.



JUDD
— GALACTIC —







ENGINEERING ROOM

- I wanted to flood the engineer's part of the ship with colour and texture, layering repairs and decay with personal character dressing. In a stark contrast to the clean futuristic technology of the passenger areas of the ship I made the crew areas technologically disappointing and very dated, going to the extent of using 1980s computer screens running simple 1990s graphics.







DETAILED DRESSING

- So many little details were squeezed onto the sets for the series as creator Armando Iannucci encourages his cast to improvise using what is around them. Items such as food, lighting and character dressing were conceptualized within the set decorating department to fit in with the design theme for the ship.
- Many action and dressing props were 3D printed for speed, accuracy and to give a synthetic quality to the finished item.



170 MM APPROX



123 MM APPROX



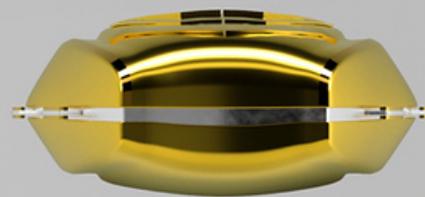
Avenue 5

Date: 10/12/18
 Prop: Billie Data Device
 Version: 2
 Fase: preliminary

Production Designer: Simon Bowles
 Artist: Peter Day



220 CM APPROX



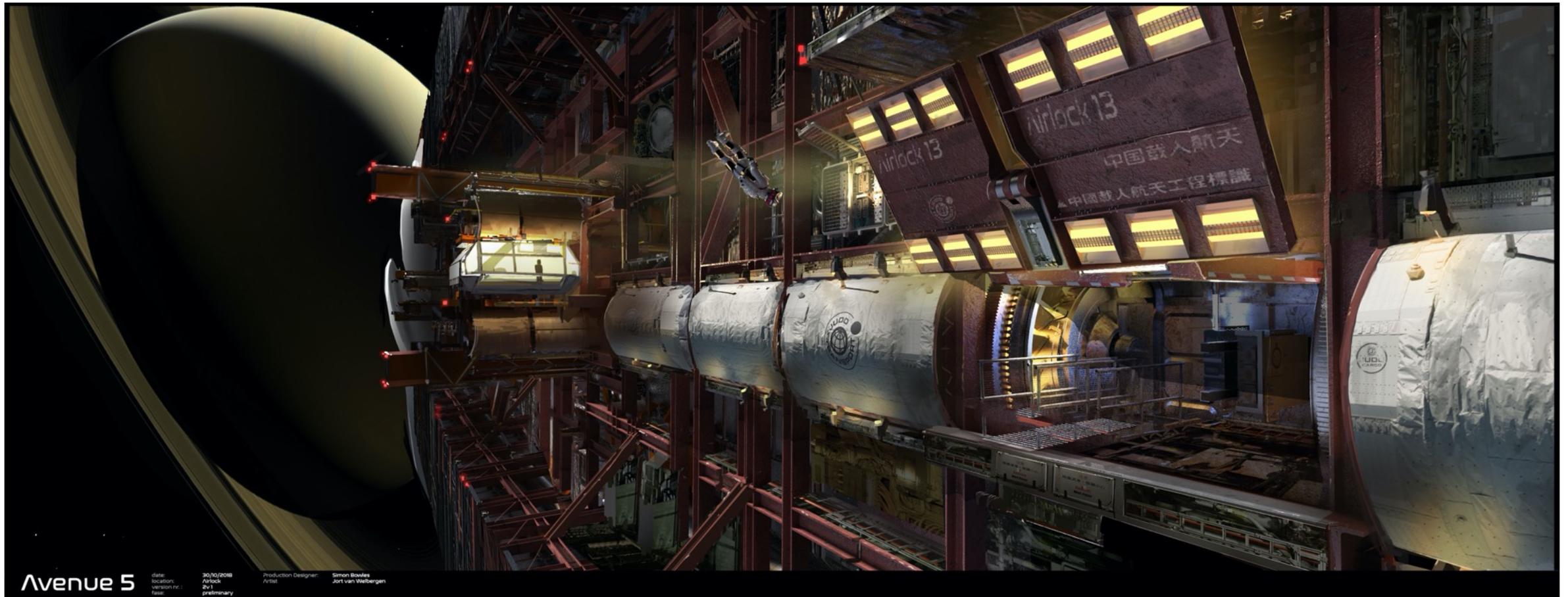
47 CM APPROX

105 CM APPROX

Avenue 5

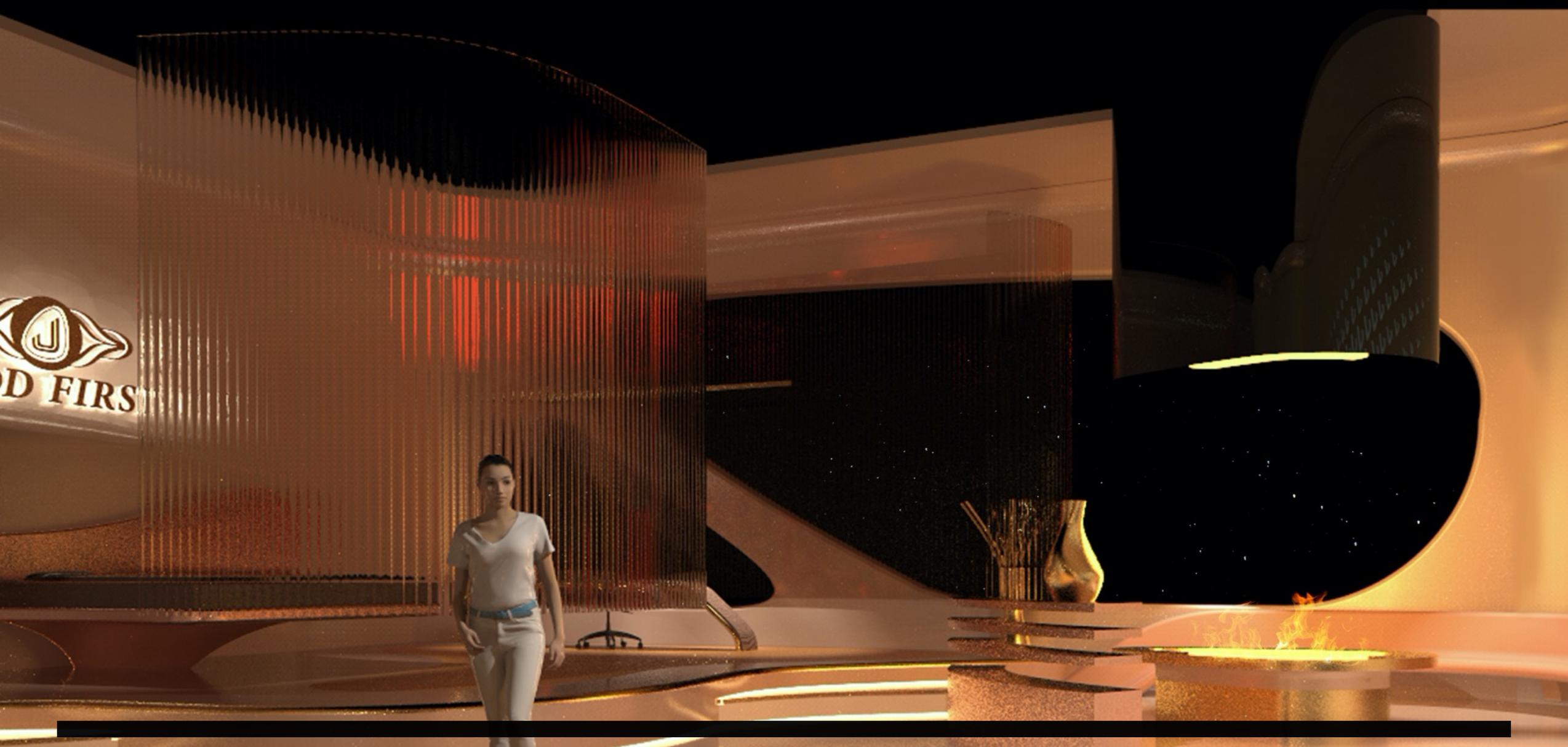
Date: 13/03
Prop: Judd Coffin
Version: A
Fase: Preliminary

Production Designer: Simon Bowles
Artist: Peter Day



VISUAL EFFECTS

- I wanted to design the look of the ship itself alongside designing the interiors as they are connected so visually by their shape and the specific view in a particular scene. Generating the ship in 3D also allowed the model to be used in previz and ultimately provide a detailed pre-approved design for VFX in post-production.



STARGAZER CABINS

- The first class “Stargazer” cabins were designed with the upmost of opulence in mind, with no care for the cost of floorspace in space! A mixture of gold and rose gold, black onyx and fire.



AVENUE 5

- Avenue 5 is an enormously creative project which I knew would stretch my talented crew, but we are all incredibly proud of each and every episode. I am delighted to submit the first episode for consideration in this year's ADG awards as it contains so much of the design work in just those 28 minutes!
- Production Designer - Simon Bowles
- Supervising Art Director - Stuart Kearns
- Set Decorator - Liz Griffiths
- Art Directors - Shira Hockman & Marco Restivo
- Concept Artists - Jort van Welbergen, Peter Day, Ian Bunting, Lee Oliver & Glenn Marsh
- Assistant Set Decorator - Billy Edwards
- Production Buyer - Geraint Powell
- Action Prop Buyers - Clare Holton & Becky Thomas
- Assistant Art Directors - Jamie Shakespeare & Chantelle Valentine
- Set Dec Art Directors - Jonathan Houlding, Danny Rogers & Olly Williams
- Graphic Designers - Sam Mouldsdale & Tim Brockbank





AVENUE 5

"impressive production design" - Rolling Stone magazine

"The true star of Avenue 5 is the luxury spaceship cruise liner. Airy, immaculate, and gleaming in white marble and gold, it's a neofuturistic visual wonder." - Architectural Digest

"a marvel of production design" - HBO Watch

"immaculate production design" - Indiewire

"Simon Bowles' production design is full of curved arches and rounded edges" - The Hollywood Reporter

"flawless production design" - The Media Times

"Part of the fun in watching Avenue 5 is its gleaming, technologically advanced vision of the near future." - New York Vulture

"sleek production design" - The Spool

"the set is sublime" - BBC Radio 4

"The setting of HBO's new sci-fi comedy is as impressive as the comedy" - Inverse.com