



FOUNTAIN OF YOUTH



The Fountain of Youth: A Journey Through Time, Legend, and Design

The Fountain of Youth is a terrific journey through time, legend, and an iconic inspiration for mankind's obsession with eternal life and the divine. We filmed across three continents and visited some of the most iconic sites and historic locations known to humanity.

Asia: Bangkok's Vibrant Pulse

Starting in Asia, Bangkok was the most vibrant and colourful opening to the film. I had the most wonderful art department, who worked high days and holidays to make the schedule work—building oversized train carriages, water towers, and vernacular shacks for stunts, and gutting a two-level building in Bangkok for a market scene where motorbikes chase through crowded streets and apartment block accommodations. We had such a great time in Bangkok, and it allowed us to capture a wonderful energy for the film.

Europe: Vienna's Timeless Grandeur

Leaving Asia, we headed for Europe and Vienna. I looked for the most beautiful library I could find, with an endless stock of antiquarian books. The National Library in Vienna was mind-blowing—they welcomed us to film inside, even with drones. We staged stunts and replaced specific books around action sequences. I then designed and built an annex room for a stunt and explosion sequence, which we carried out on the stage at Leavesden Studios. The set was inspired by the main library, and I used elements from libraries in Oxford, Liverpool, and Paris to give it more flair. We also filmed in other areas of Vienna, including iconic landscapes previously used in *The Third Man*.

Middle East: Egypt's Monumental Mystique

Next, we travelled to the Middle East and Egypt. We filmed at the Pyramids of Giza, becoming the largest film crew ever allowed to work at this magnificent site. I built an entrance to the pyramid that embraced the fabulous world created in the script, where our players search for the notorious Fountain of Youth—having gathered clues from marks left on ancient paintings from the time of Leonardo da Vinci and Rembrandt.

One of the biggest sets we built and dressed was on the exterior tank at Leavesden Studios—we were the last crew to use this facility. The Lusitania liner, a sister ship of the Titanic that was sunk off the Irish coast in 1915, contained a vault with a Rembrandt painting bearing one of these codes. The set was vast and needed to rise from the depths where it was sunk, then sink again with our players aboard. I researched the relevant spaces on the ship and had furniture and cabinets carved and sandblasted in India, imported them, and dressed the set with an enormous amount of sustainable nautical waste and greenery. We sprayed the steel with vibrant colours and cast barnacles and distress on the flamage to match our reference pictures. It was a huge SFX operation, requiring many departments to work closely together to make it a success. We also built a supply ship deck and control room from which the operation took place.

On three stages, we built the interior sets for the fountain chamber journey—various corridors and passageways that needed to be blown open, revealing routes through the pyramid. A magical music chamber was designed where the players discover the secret to gaining access to the fountain chamber. Here, I created a set based on elements of pyramids and temples from other areas of Egypt, including Abu Simbel and Luxor. Because we were now in a fantasy world, I was able to import elements from different places to create a wonderful architecture. I used a lot of gold leaf, as we had no source of light, and this gave us beautiful highlights for torch or fire flames. Designing for a dark environment allows you to push boundaries and accentuate areas that would normally be too extreme.

The step wall needed to move in and out, creating a wall of steps and a sheer cliff in one set. We used huge hydraulic rams on the rear of the set to allow it to physically move in shot. The only CGI was used to extend the set—our actors could move freely over the vast staircase. I based it on an Indian stepwell (Chand Baori), which I visited on holiday. It's reminiscent of an inverted pyramid.

The Fountain Chamber is a rotunda at the base of the pyramid—the source of eternal life and the Fountain of Youth. This set, being pivotal to the end of the story, underwent a number of concept iterations. The spiral staircases were based on a DNA helix. We initially had a tank in the centre, but in the end, the water was a CGI element. On the way out of the pyramid, when everything is closing and collapsing, we built a glyph corridor where Nefertiti-inspired goddesses flank the walls. I based her on Grace Jones—I was once in a birthday cake with her, and she was both amazing and terrifying at the same time. Perfect for this space.

Liverpool: Renaissance Meets Action

We also filmed in Liverpool as a match for the National Gallery, which was sadly too restrictive for our content. The Walker Gallery gave us a marvellous opportunity to take our chase sequence to the streets of Liverpool, where we could achieve a great stunt sequence with much more control. The artworks inside the gallery also provided a perfect Renaissance backdrop for the painting that needed to be stolen.

I feel so blessed to have been allowed to design this film. It meant I could explore so many historic areas of legend and give them a creative twist that allowed all of my team to be part of and enjoy being creative as well. The film is a travelogue through time and place—with a deep existential meaning for today.

INTERIOR UK STUDIO BUILD



SET 22
LUSITANIA
INTERIOR & EXTERIOR
UK BUILD TANK



CONCEPT ARTWORK

01



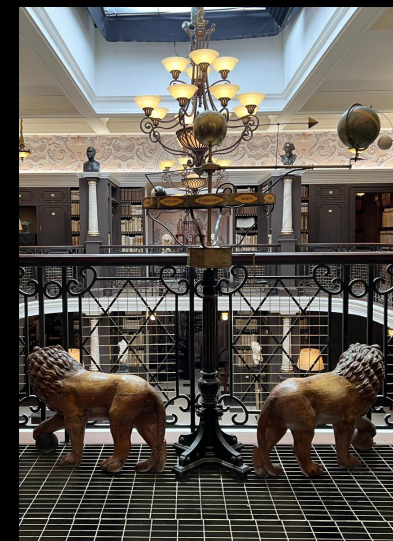
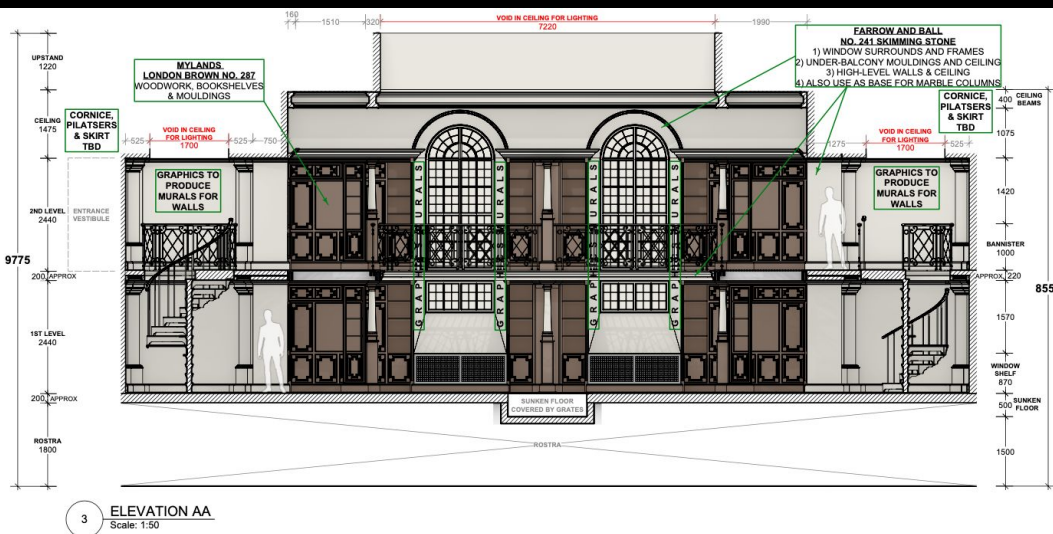




VIENNA HISTORIC LIBRARY

A screenshot from the game 'The Elder Scrolls V: Skyrim' showing a second-floor balcony in a grand library. The balcony has a wooden floor and an ornate black metal railing. To the left is a long wall of wooden bookshelves filled with books. A large glass door is visible in the background. The floor below is a checkered tile pattern, and light streams in from a window on the right.

09



SET 35

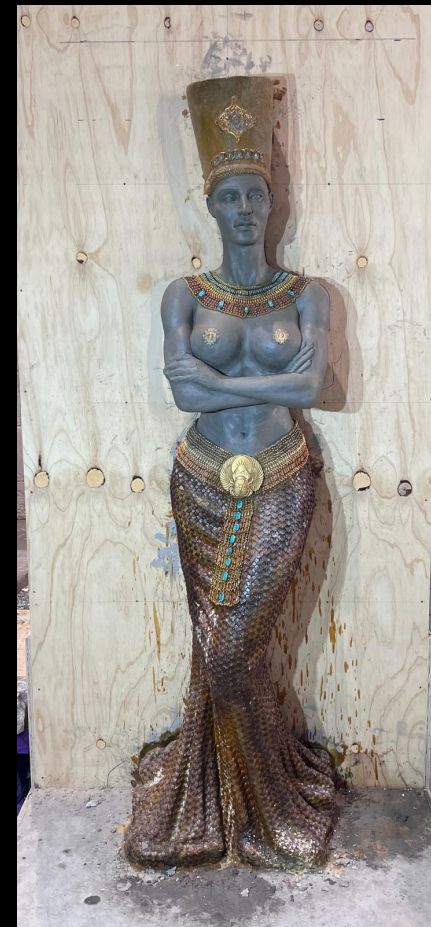
SUBTERRANEAN MUSIC CHAMBER

INTERIOR
UK BUILD



CONCEPT ARTWORK

13





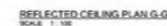
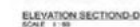
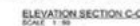
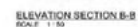
CONCEPT ARTWORK



3D MODEL

15





-PRACTICAL PAGE 100
 -PRACTICAL PAGE 101
 -PRACTICAL TOWARD SCIENCE (SCIENCE) AND SCIENCE, INSTRUMENTS
 -SCIENCE FOR SCIENCE (SCIENCE) AND SCIENCE (SCIENCE)

MAKE EVERYTHING IN THIS SET FIREPROOF AS POSSIBLE

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CLARK, AREA OF STUDY TO RECORD OPEN-FOOTED LIGHTS. SURVEILLANCE
FACILITY TO BE BUILT

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RIMINI

SET	INT. SUBSTITUTIONAL CHANGES	SET No.	8
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DETAIL: MUSIC CHAIRS PUFFS	35
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Model	US & UK	Panel structure	Panel structure	Panel structure
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Date: 10/09/2010
 Time: 09:00:00
 Page: 10/10

Category	Sub-category	Value	Unit	Notes
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Variable	Unit	Source	Year
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Urban population	Persons	World Bank	2000
Female population	Persons	World Bank	2000

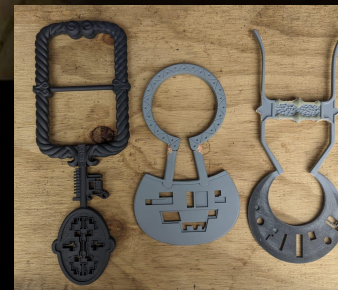
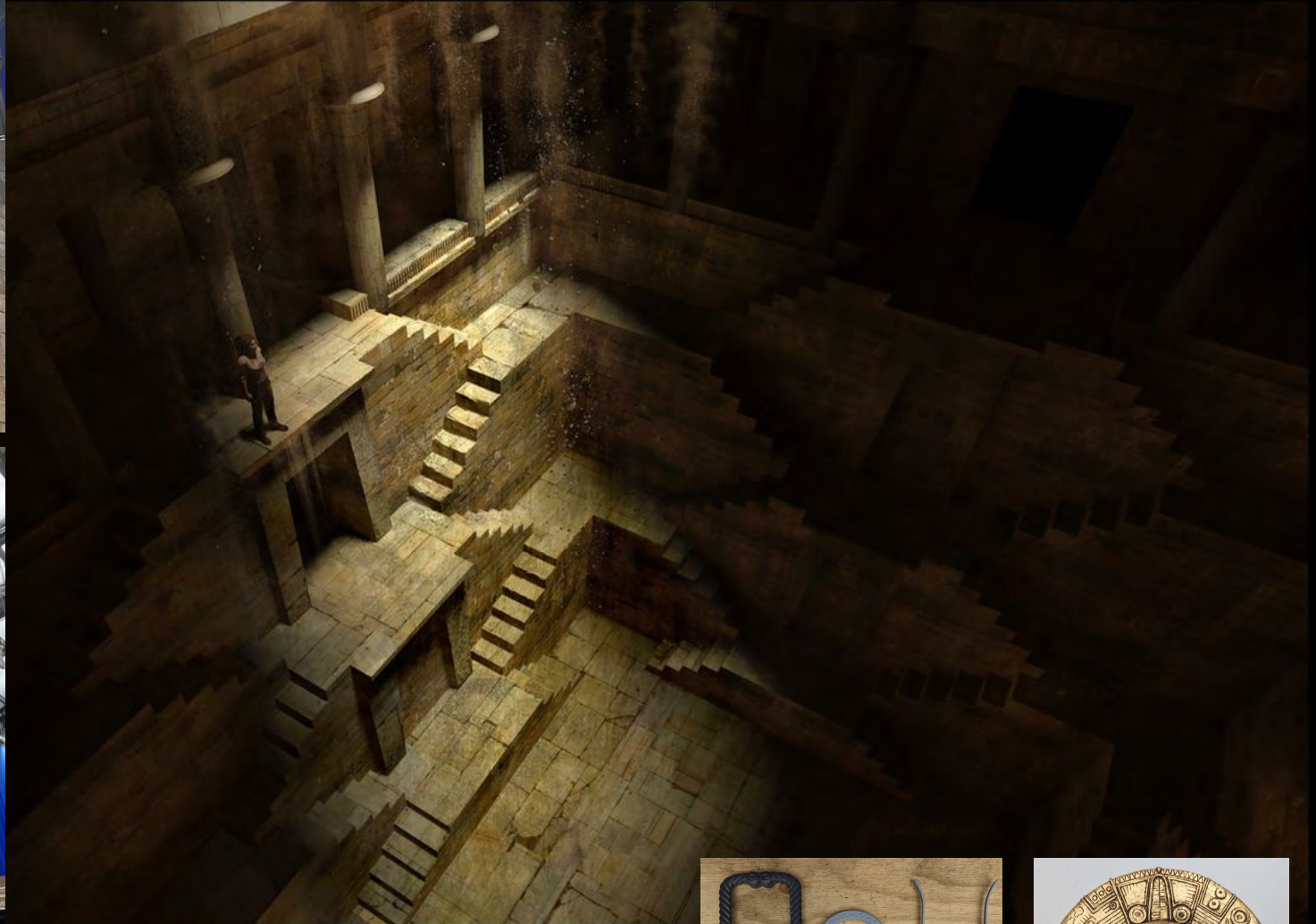
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Project Name/Number	DATE: _____	APPROVAL:
Submitted by/for	DATE: _____	

SET 37

FOUNTAIN CHAMBER SFX WALL

INTERIOR
UK BUILD



FOUNTAIN OF YOUTH

FOUNTAIN CHAMBER - SFX WALL. SCALE 1:50
M. STAGE

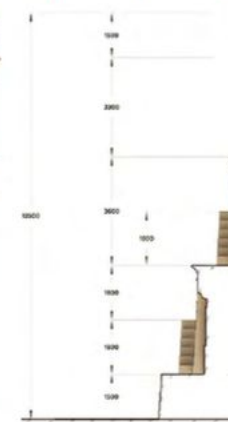
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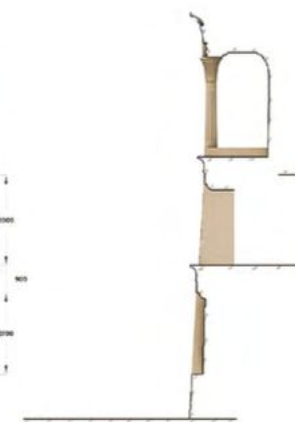
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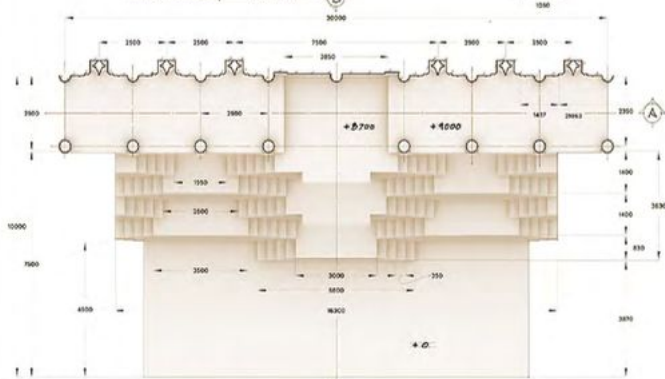
FRONT ELV.
(WALLS SLID IN)



SECTION B-B



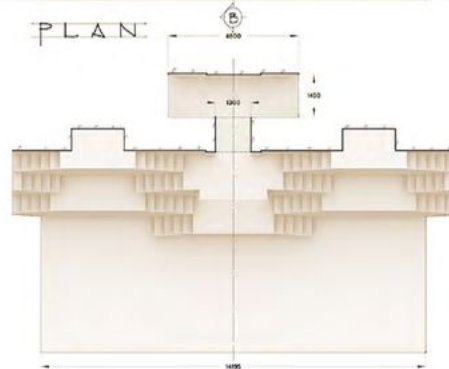
SECTION B-B
(WALLS SLID IN)



PLAN



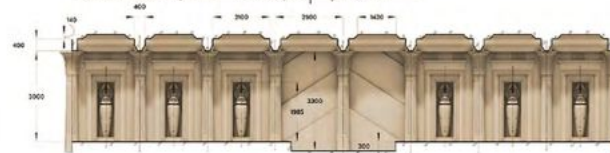
PLAN



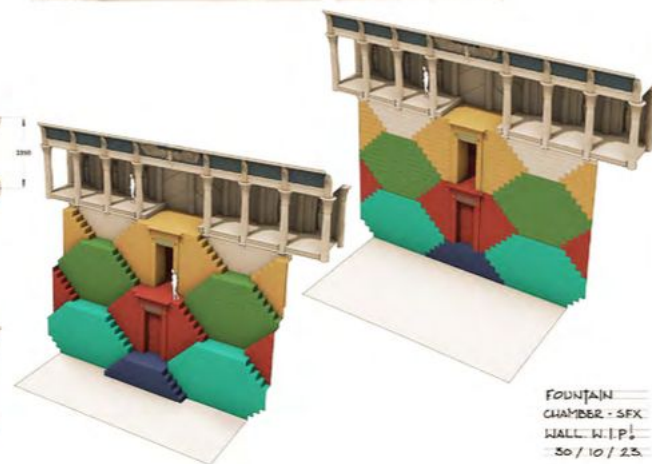
PLAN C-C



REFLECTED CEILING PLAN



SECTION A-A



FOUNTAIN
CHAMBER - SFX
WALL W.I.P.
30 / 10 / 23