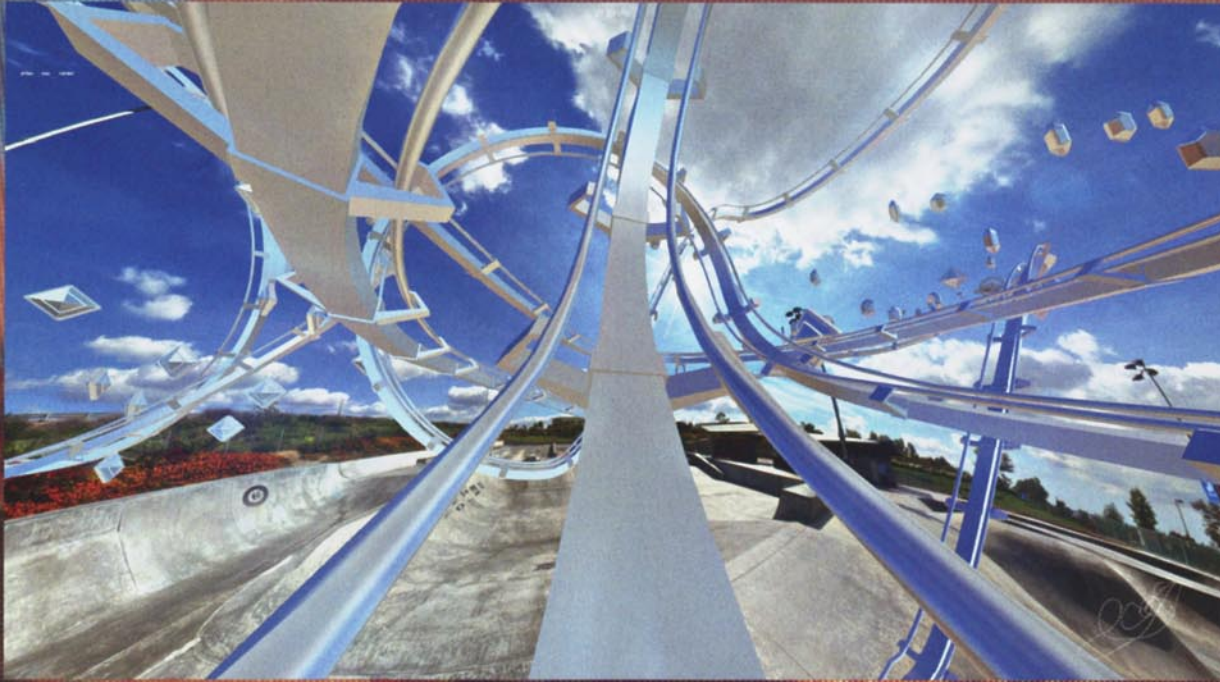


# NEW WORLDS

CGI landscapers are creating a limitless, virtual psychogeography. Tabor Robak, Nic Hamilton and Iain Sinclair discuss what lies at the intersection of audio, gaming and fine art



what I think makes it even more beautiful. It's like that plastic bag in the wind in *American Beauty*. There's this cheesy sentimentality about these things with no function in a medium that's all about function and linearity.

**ILLUSTRATE THE ELEMENTS**  
Play up the atmosphere and the physicality of the world. As you're moving through the worlds in *Red Dead Redemption*, there are little particles in the air that describe the space you're moving through: you're impacting the earth.

### USE LANDMARKS TO TEASE THE JOURNEY

So often in video games there are things in the background you never end up interacting with, like a castle tower. But in the *Dark Souls* series, it might take 12 hours to reach that tower, but when you're there you can look back and reflect on how much you've been through in the game.

### VARIETY, VARIETY, VARIETY

The level of immersion or the realism of the game can be measured in the amount of variety that's depicted. In *Dark Souls*, you spend the first five hours in a very drab medieval village and you feel like the game's going to be this forever. Then later on you're in a dirty swamp and it's realised just as realistically, which communicates how rich this world is. Then it does it again and again. It's very generous on the developer's part. It's like calorie-free ice-cream for the gamer."

TEXT RUTH SAXELBY

November 21-January 12, *Next-Gen Open Beta*, Team Gallery, New York. teamgal.com

### TABOR ROBAK'S GUIDE TO MAKING AN IMMERSIVE CGI WORLD

"I bought *Grand Theft Auto V* last week and the first thing I did was steal a car," says CGI artist Tabor Robak. "I'm living in New York and I've been craving a little nature so I went for a scenic drive. It was great." Robak knows more about immersive worlds than most. Last year he created a multi-world game for Gatekeeper's *Exo* album, and his solo exhibition *Next-Gen Open Beta*, which presents his artistic response to gaming, opens this month in New York. Here he shares his top five tips for keeping gamers happy.

#### USE AMBIENT STORYTELLING

"A video game is an interactive medium, so a lot of the time you're doing your thing and then there's a cut scene and all of sudden it's storytime. For the gamer there's a disconnection there, so the story is best told during the gameplay. For example, if the game is taking place in an oppressive society, like in *BioShock Infinite*, in the back alleyways you might find graffiti of the dissenting population.

#### CREATE DETAILS TO IGNORE

Rolling off that are details that are there for you to ignore or to notice accidentally. A great example of this is in *Skyrim*. The game is filled with hundreds of books, which you could read if you felt so inclined to. But they're mostly there for you to open up and say, 'Wow, I'm not going to read this.' Being able to ignore these details is