“MELANCHOLY HILL” ENVIRONMENT DESIGN

PROCESS DOCUMENTATION

PROJECT STATEMENT

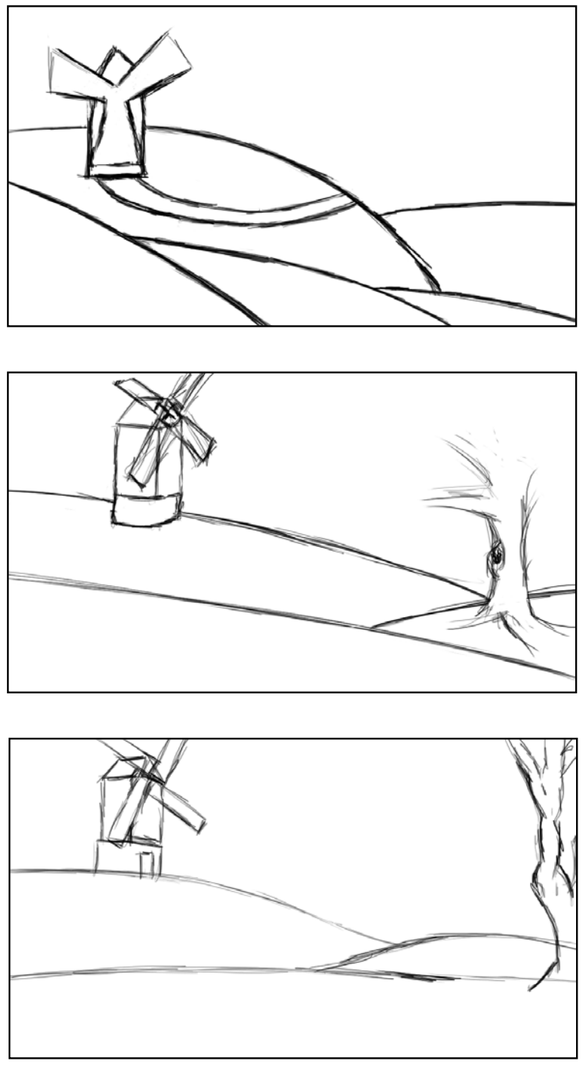
“Melancholy Hill” is a personal experiment in 3D environment design using Cinema 4D and Octane Render. The project explores environmental themes inspired by the company CD Projekt Red with influences from music by the band Gorillaz to explore photorealistic environment creation.

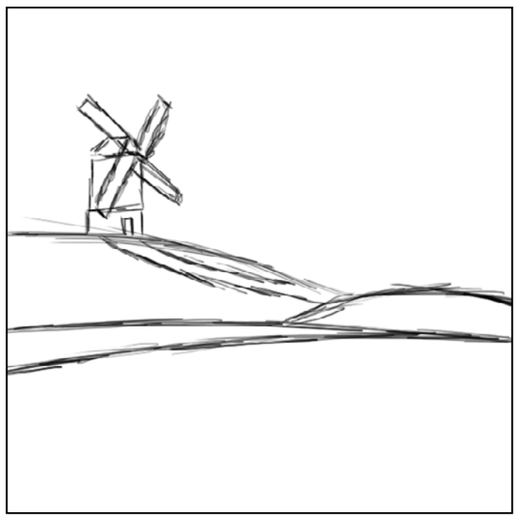
Softwares used include Cinema 4D, Octane Render, and Photoshop with a mixture of pre-made and custom made assets (Quixel, Forester, turbosquid).

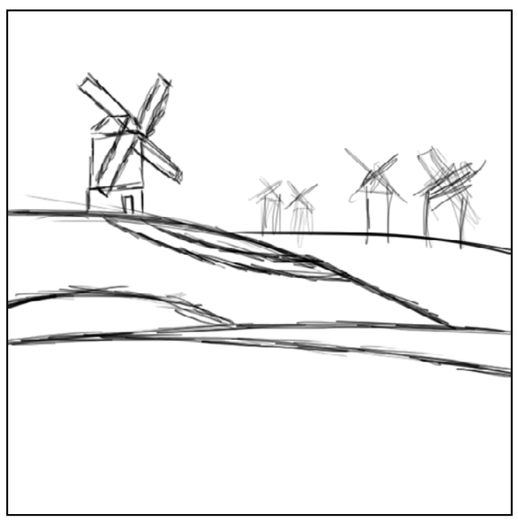
IDEATION

CD Projekt Red’s “The Witcher III” was the strongest source of inspiration for this environment, as well as music from Gorillaz. The album “Plastic Beach” features album artwork with lighting and color grading similar to the look in “Melancholy Hill.” Many Reference images were used to accurately recreate textures and lighting conditions.

COMPOSITION SKETCHES



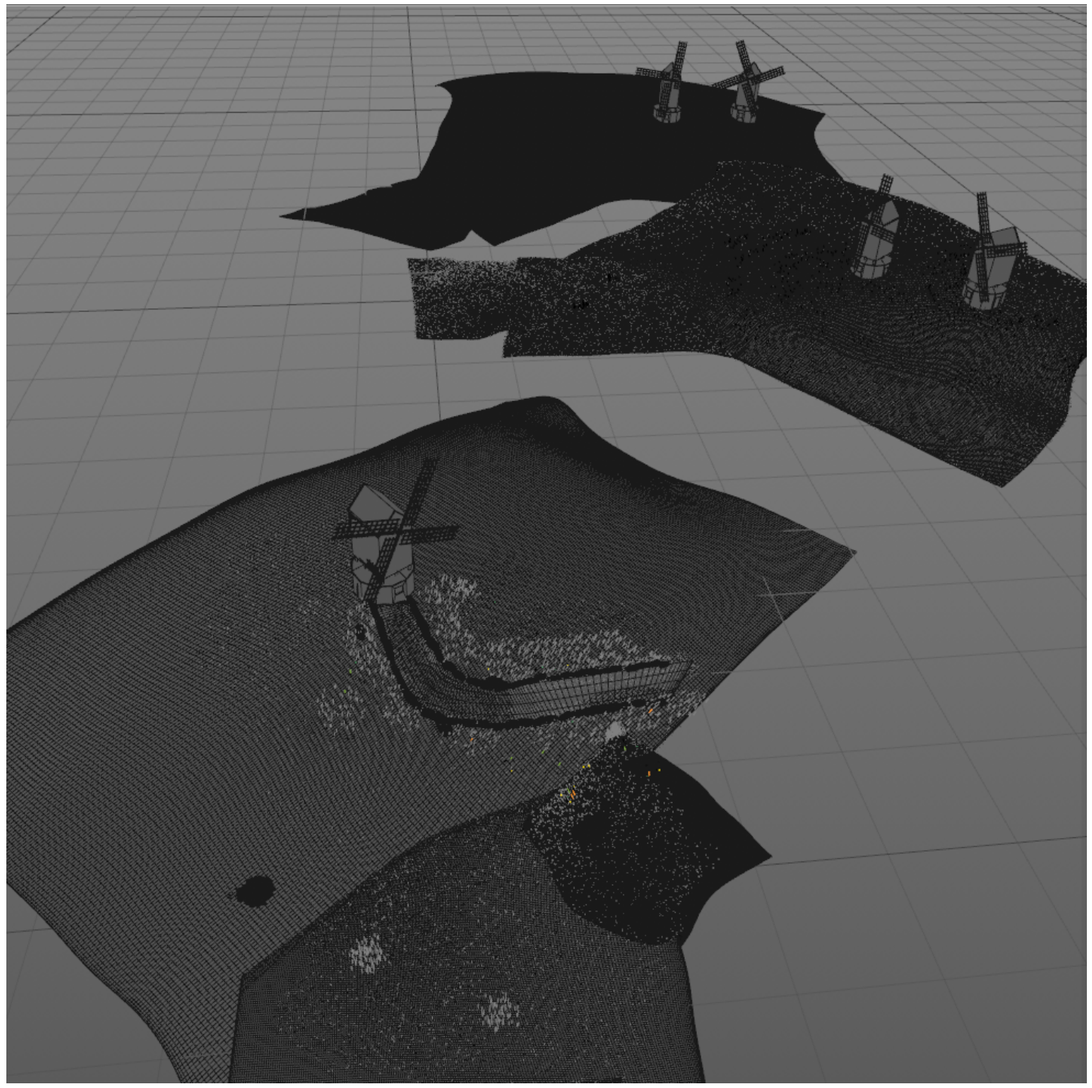


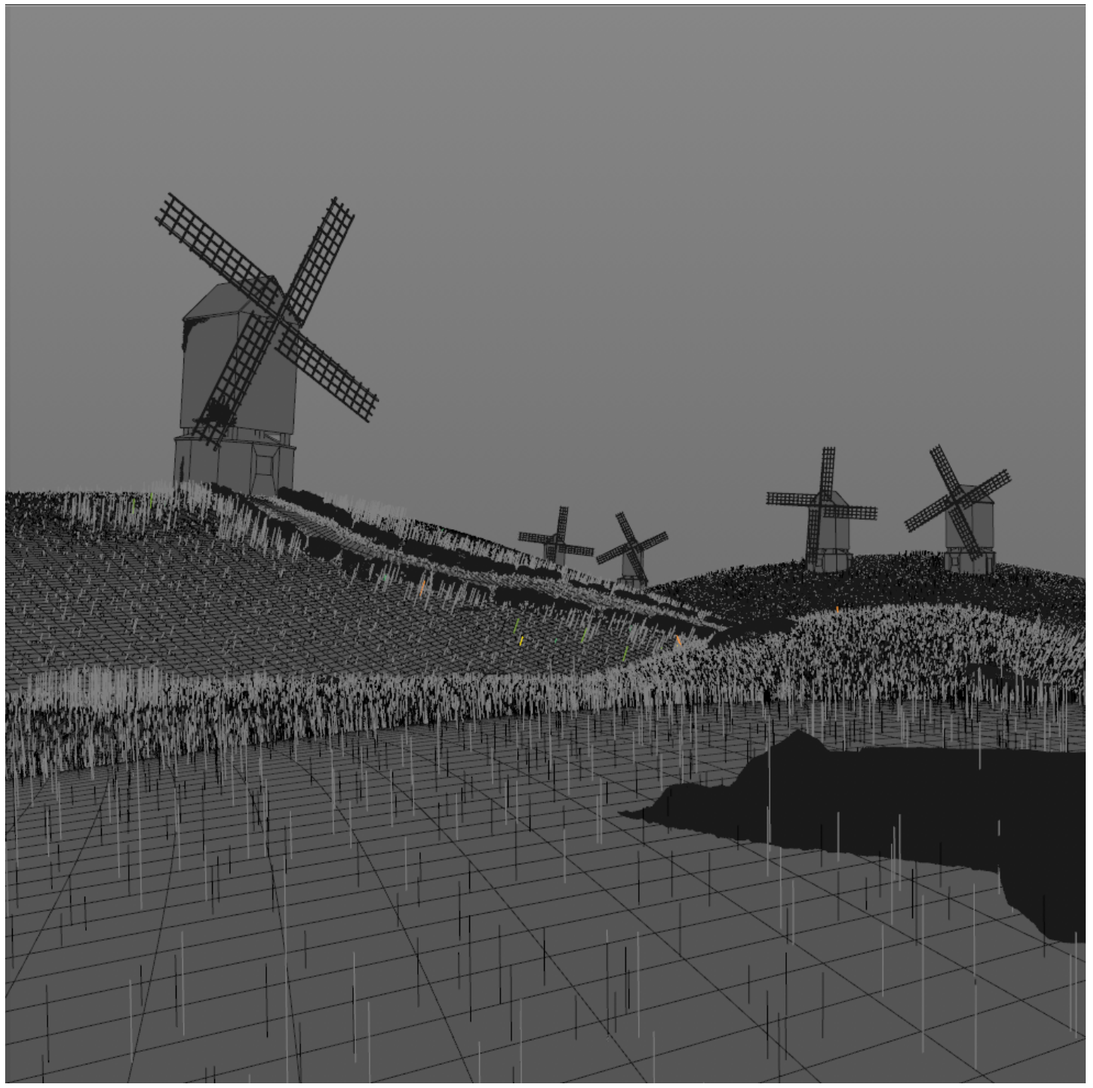


Multiple compositions were explored with different aspect ratios and different foreground/background objects. The final composition (on right) tightens the shot to focus on the windmill while planting the viewer in the fields of tall grass, with varied foliage and rocks in view.

CONCEPT ART

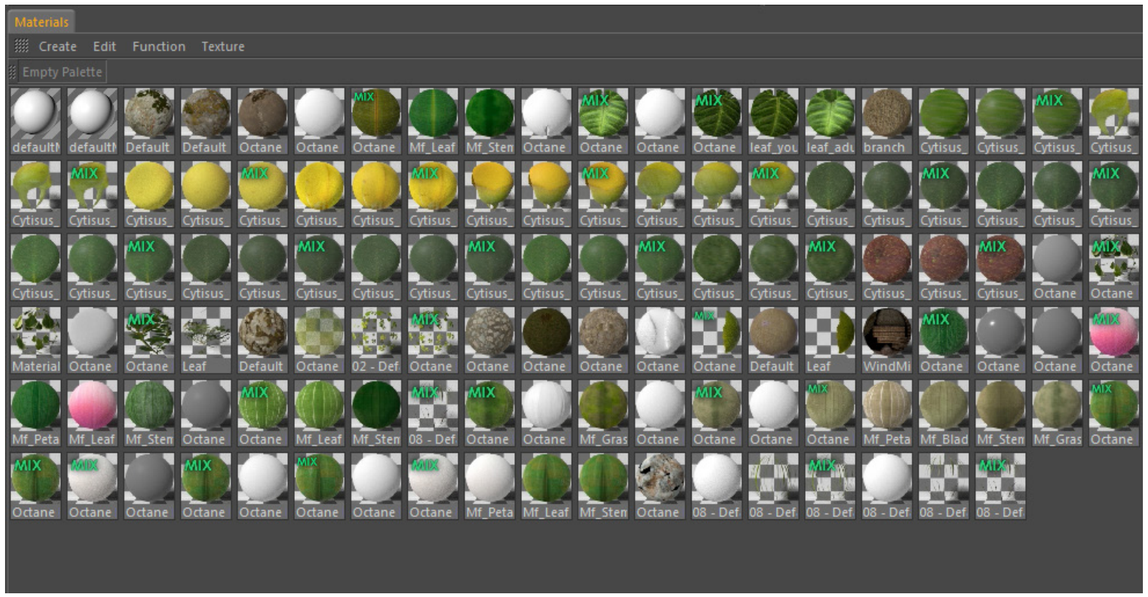
SCENE ASSEMBLY

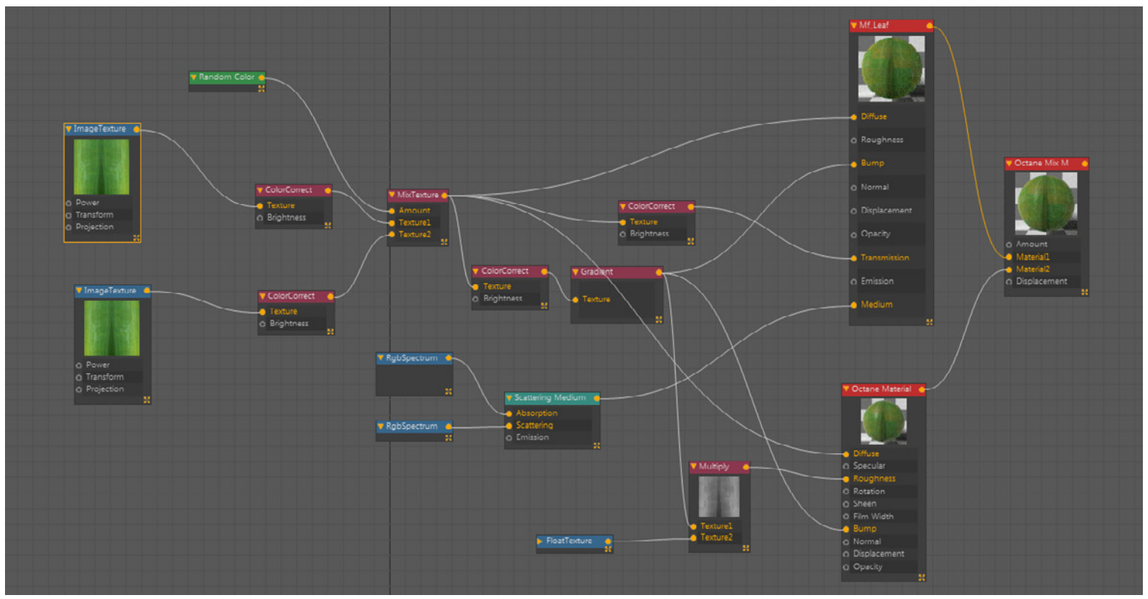




Foliage assets from Quixel were assembled and scattered using Octane, and a TurboSquid windmill was also imported. Plant Factory was used to create larger foliage.

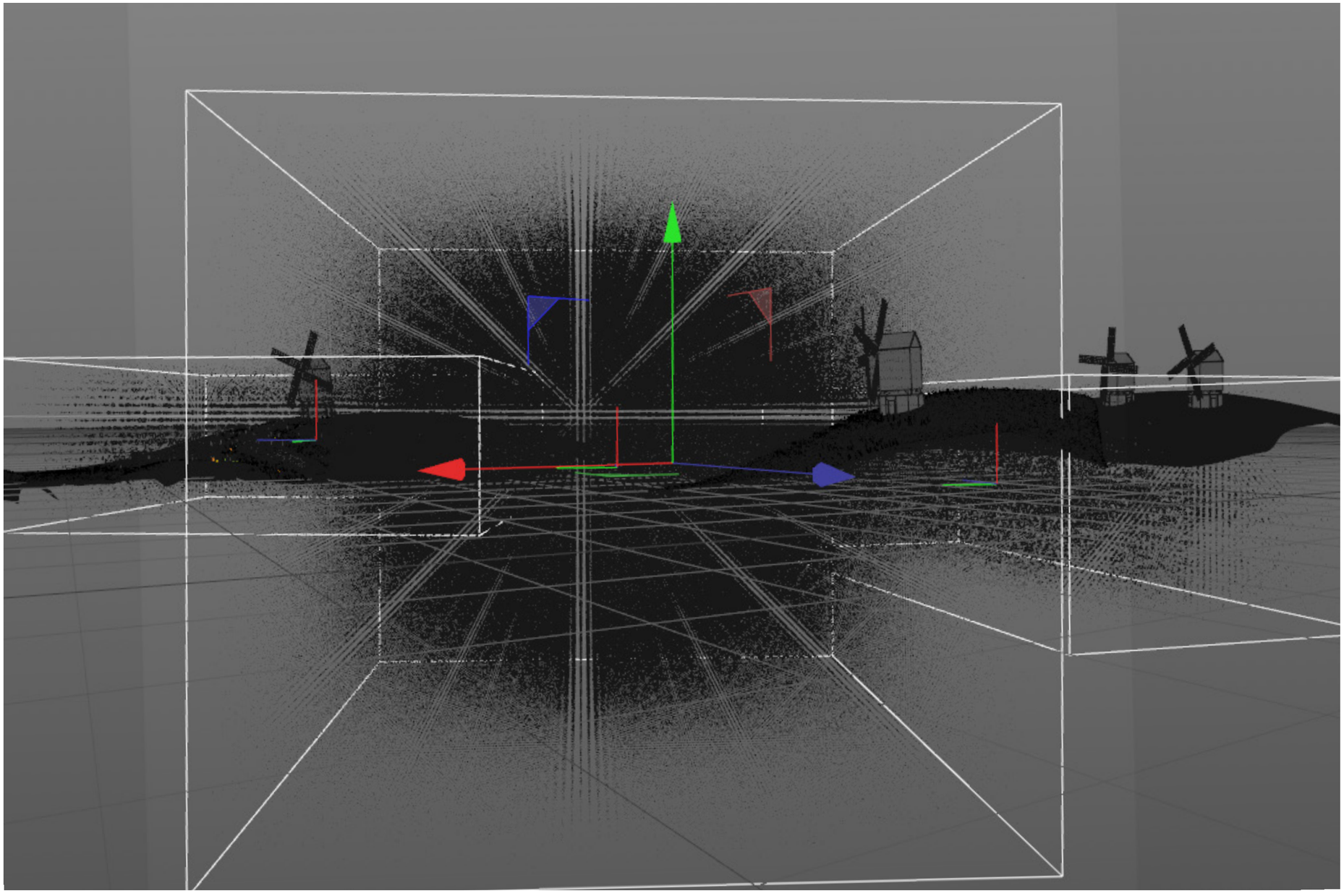
TEXTURE AND MATERIALS





All materials were custom made or hevaily edited use a mixture of image textures, Octane nodes, and math nodes. Random variations were introduced to cut down on a large number of textures for render time, and other transmission tricks were used to help optimize and reduce the usage of subsurface scattering. Other texturing includes UV mapping the curved road and re-mapping the windmill.

LIGHTING AND ATMOSPHERE



The scene was lit using a simple HDRI map and an Octane Sun, and three fog volumes to add visual depth. The foreground low lying fog catches light near the grass, while the middle and background fog layers add the illusion of distance without increasing the clipping plane.

FINAL RENDER