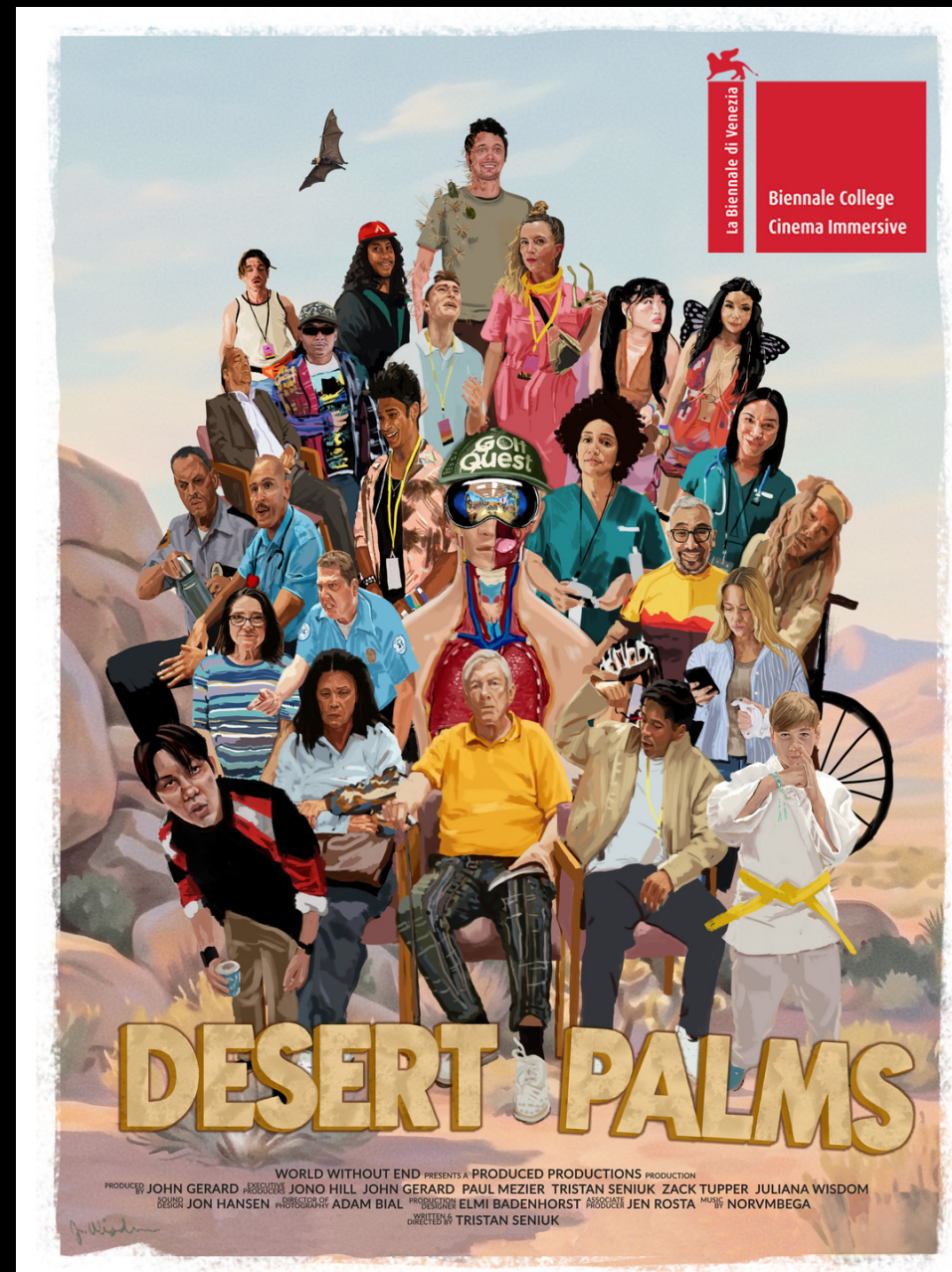




Desert Palms

An Immersive Film by Tristan Seniuk



Set inside a hospital waiting room across the street from a hectic outdoor music festival, *Desert Palms* is a single-take film that follows a throng of injured characters as they wait to be seen by an extremely slow and overwhelmed ER facility.

TECHNICAL SPECS

- English, United States, No Subs (*by artistic choice*)
- Existential Comedy
- Color, TRT 32 min
- 90fps

- Stereoscopic VR180 Apple Immersive Video (AIVU)
- Apple Spatial Audio Format (ASAF)
- Presented on Apple Vision Pro
- Compatible with MetaQuest and other VR headsets
- Filmed in Blackmagic URSA Cine Immersive 16k BRAV

AWARDS

Winner, Venice Biennale College Cinema Immersive Grant 2026



DIRECTOR STATEMENT

Desert Palms grew out of a desire to explore the capabilities of immersive filmmaking from a multi-story perspective where we rely on volumetric storytelling to capture parallel stories within the same frame. Pulling inspiration from American 1970s auteur Robert Altman, with his use of multi-channel audio to weave together multiple stories within the same shot, I was interested in what a film of Altman's would look like if you added the element of three dimensional immersive space combined with the classical painting-inspired visual tableau style of Peter Greenaway or Roy Andersson.

Instead of expanding the visual universe outward, we show a story set in a thoroughly anti-cinematic setting, the most mundane of the mundane – an emergency room waiting room. For the duration of the run time, we force the viewer to live in this environment in a single, long take as various slices of life unfold.

Outside these walls, privilege, class, and race can determine one's path and opportunities in life, but here within the ER, all walks of life are treated equally and with the same urgency and care. In this one small compact space, we can see an entire cross-section of the human spectrum, and we explore this world through the use of layered spatial audio and meticulous staging, creating a multi-dimensional tapestry of humanity.



REACHING FORWARD WHILE SIMULTANEOUSLY LOOKING BACK



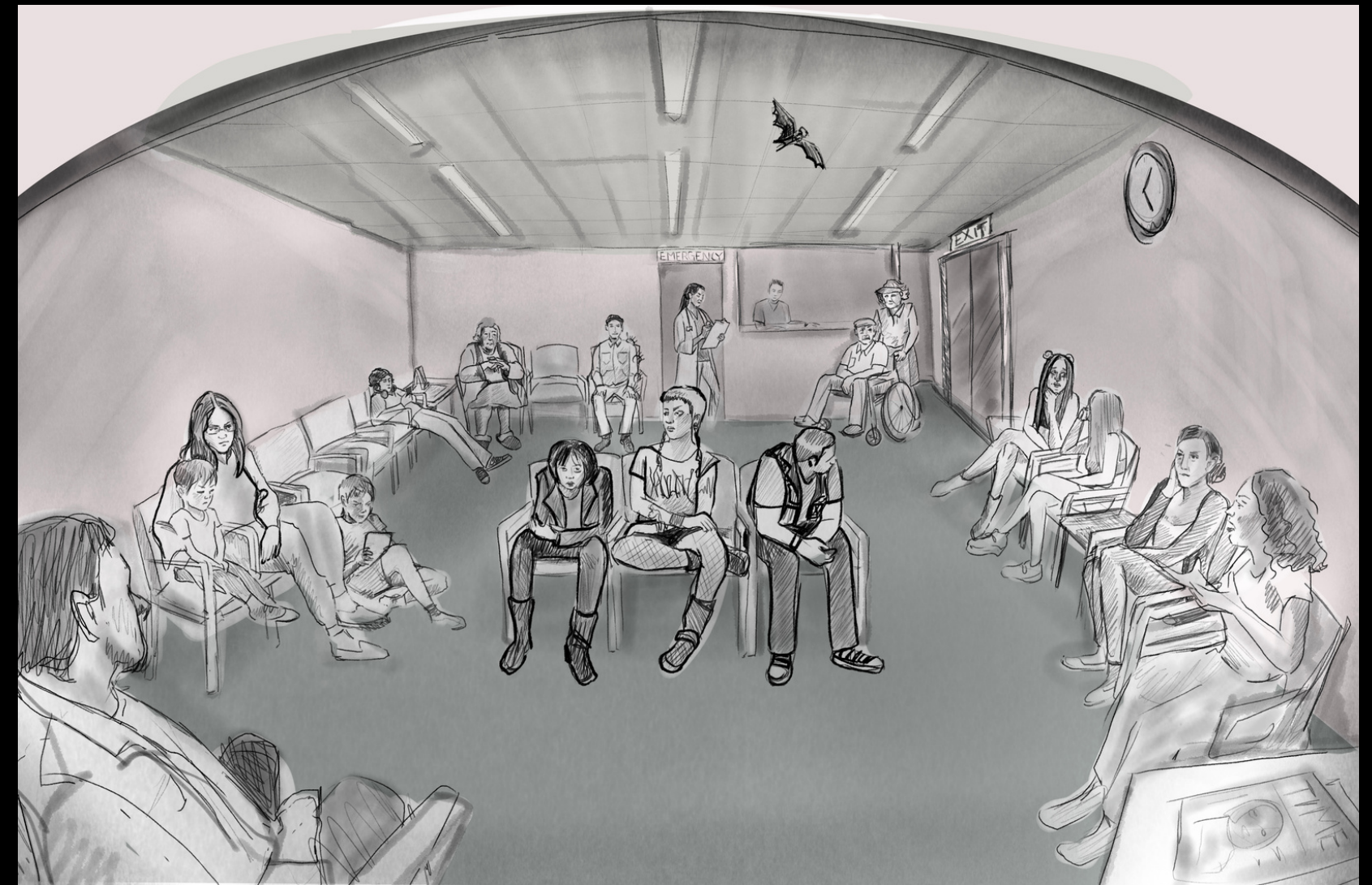
Immersive filmmaking, while being the most tech-forward visual medium, functions in a very similar way to how artists of the 15th and 16th centuries attempted to capture multi-dimensional stories within one large frame. From the frescos of Masaccio depicting religious life to Bruegel capturing large scale scenes of village life and revelry to Raphael's *The School of Athens* with its throng of Greek philosophers in various discussions, these artists (as well as multitudes more) were creating, in a way, proto film experiences using the tools they had available to them in a medium that made sense at the time.

With modern filmmaking, utilizing montage and various focal lengths, we can now inhabit these large stories as broken apart elements and intercut scenes, but we have traded this idea of all-encompassing world-building and passive omniscience for individualism and guided story perspective.

With *Desert Palms* and immersive technology, we are essentially aiming to put the fragments back together and present the story as these old masters once did - omniscient and unbiased - and incidentally the way we as humans experience life. In the real world, narratives play out in front of us whether we are looking at those specific actions or not, and with our film the viewer can choose what moments to engage with and what commands their gaze.



LOOKING BACK AT CLASSICAL ART STAGING



Linking a futuristic visual medium with past art history, our initial concept sketch for the staging of *Desert Palms* is reflective of the staging and perspective employed in Raphael's *The School of Athens* in the early 1500s.



Tristan Seniuk is a multi-hyphenate filmmaker who has worked for more than 20 years within the film industry in roles including but not limited to director, producer, editor, colorist, and art director - but his true passion lies in directing. With each new project, whether it be a narrative, documentary, installation art piece, or music video, Seniuk always tries to simultaneously push the visual medium forward in new and interesting ways, but also reach back, drawing from his deep well of film and art history knowledge and reverence.

Seniuk's work has been exhibited around the world in festivals from Cambodia to Spain to Guam to Canada to the UK. He has won several awards for his short film work including Best Narrative Short at the San Diego Asian Film Festival, Best Soundtrack at NYC's Hip Hop Festival for his short Cambodian-American slice of life film *Float* (2017) as well as Best Sound Design for his experimental documentary *Zero Zero*, which explores life on the trail of an blind ultra distance hiker. Seniuk currently resides in Los Angeles, CA.

KEYS

John Gerard PRODUCER

John has 20 years of experience in commercial film and digital production, collaborating with A-list directors and elevating global brands.

Having lived and filmed around the world, John brings a truly global perspective and network to every project. He worked for 8 years as an Executive Producer at award winning international commercial production company Hobby Film. Before that in international agency Dentsu Creative, Achtung McGarryBowen, and Studio Kraftwerk in Amsterdam, and Los Angeles motion graphics studio We Are Royale.

Jen Rosta ASSOCIATE PRODUCER

Jen Rosta is a Peabody and Primetime Emmy Award-winning producer and writer whose career spans over two decades. As a creative, her recent work includes commercial and branded storytelling projects for creative studios and clients such as RadicalMedia, Paramount Global, A&E TV, Google, and Invisible Collective. Jen's deeper background includes political satire, late-night comedy, and docuseries development for television. The first decade of her career was spent as part of the production staff of The Colbert Report and Saturday Night Live.

Adam Bial DOP

Adam Bial is a cinematographer working across television, documentary, and narrative film. In his documentary work, he's known for capturing sinewy, cinematic visuals in the lives of the world's most elite athletes. He is based in Los Angeles and works internationally.



Elmi Badenhorst PROD. DESIGNER

Elmi has more than 20 years of experience working in both art and costume department on commercials, narrative and documentary feature films, and music videos. She has worked with world-renowned directors such as Ellen Kuras, Mark Molloy, Miles Jay, Brett Morgen, Niclas Larsson, Terence Neale, and Andreas Nilsson. Originally from South Africa, Elmi has worked all over the world including many years in London. Elmi is represented by Iconic Talent and currently resides in Los Angeles, CA.

Moung Hui Park HAIR & MAKEUP

Moung Hui is a member of IATSE Local 706, Make-up Artists & Hair Stylists Guild, and the owner of RedKelly Beauty. She started her career in Korea as a make-up artist in 1999. She has worked on more than 300 episodes of TV shows for major Korean broadcast networks such as KBS and SBS. The shows she worked on were broadcasted all around Asia, including China, Japan, and Hong Kong. She currently resides in Los Angeles, CA.

NORVMBEGA SOUND

NORVMBEGA is the audio collaboration between Jon Hansen and Jono Hill. Driven by a passion for emerging technology, their work explores the intersection of composition, spatial audio, and immersive storytelling, blending organic sonic textures with modern, experimental production techniques. They have collaborated with artists including ODESZA, Macklemore, and Kesha, and their music and sound design have been featured across film, advertising, and interactive media. Together, NORVMBEGA strives to create deeply immersive experiences where sound becomes a narrative force, inviting audiences to engage with stories in new and transformative ways.

CAST

Rosamaría Gomez Arjón MARÍA CARMEN GARCÍA
Daniel Torres MIGUEL RAMIREZ
Jennifer Beatty KRYSTAL REEVES
Platon Peligramm CAMERON REEVES
Chantelle Tibbs NURSE DESTINY
Jordan Preston GUS RONALDSON
Tony Teav ROCKY MANG
Sarah Liu KAYLEIGH MILLER
Rebecca Ann Benedict NAVAEH TURTLEMEISTER
Arek Tatevossian HAROUT KEBABIAN
Mark Valeriano MYSTERY DISEASE MAN
Vanah de Guzman NURSE ANGELA



Marcus Allen Thomas EMT ERNIE
Caitlin Thorburn SAVANNAH JAMESON
London Smith, MD BENSON CAULDER
David Lowe KARL SPELLMAN
Deborah Benson Wald TESS SPELLMAN
Matt Tramel RODNEY ROBERTSON
Ben Solenberger EMT KYLE
Vishay V. Singh PETEY P
Domenico Pugliese GRADY SMALLS
Kyle Tran PHIL TRAN
Harry Baluran HARRY CLEAN
Will Della Morte RICHARD TANNER



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MOLQ out end
