



Proposal for UMMA Site Project
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“Come Closer”

(working title)

Summary

My goal with this project is to involve the audience as a primary source. The design centers around an actual mirror, backed by a large projection screen, and monitored by two remote cameras. One camera will be hidden in the mirror frame, and another will recapture the projection plus participants' shadows from the back of the screen.

These two video feeds will be combined and live-projected in a second area that cannot be seen from the initial 'stage'. Between the two sites, the audience should get a sense of trying to peek into a projected world through the mirror, and later discover people looking out at them through the other side. The aim is to insinuate a 'portal' experience between real and projected environments.

My preferred sites are the balcony above the sculpture garden, and the alcove underneath it. Both sites can be set up with sharing in mind, so that other projects can use the same equipment at different times throughout the evening with minimal reconfiguration.

Layout 1: Over

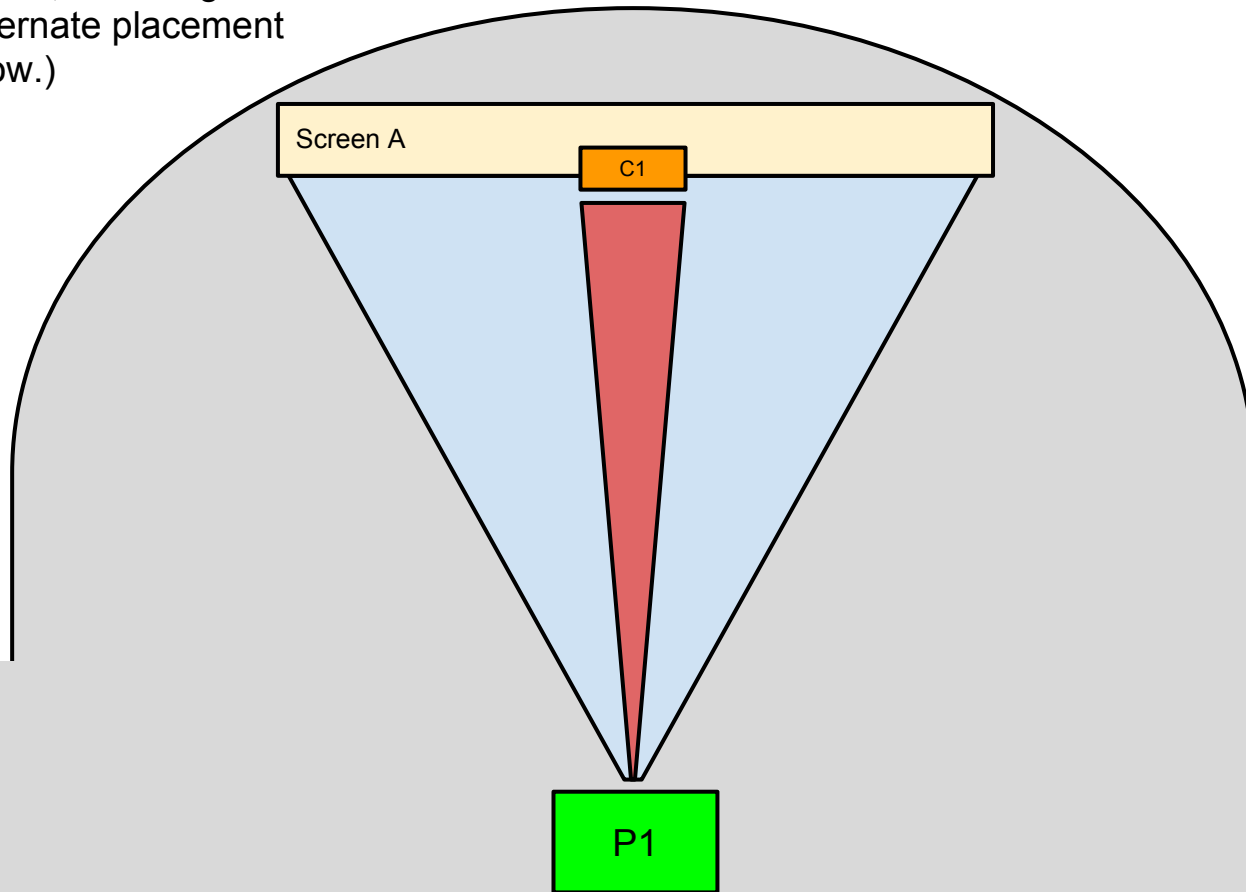
C2

Camera 1 is a hidden remote camera within a vanity mirror (facing P1) capturing an interactive audience.

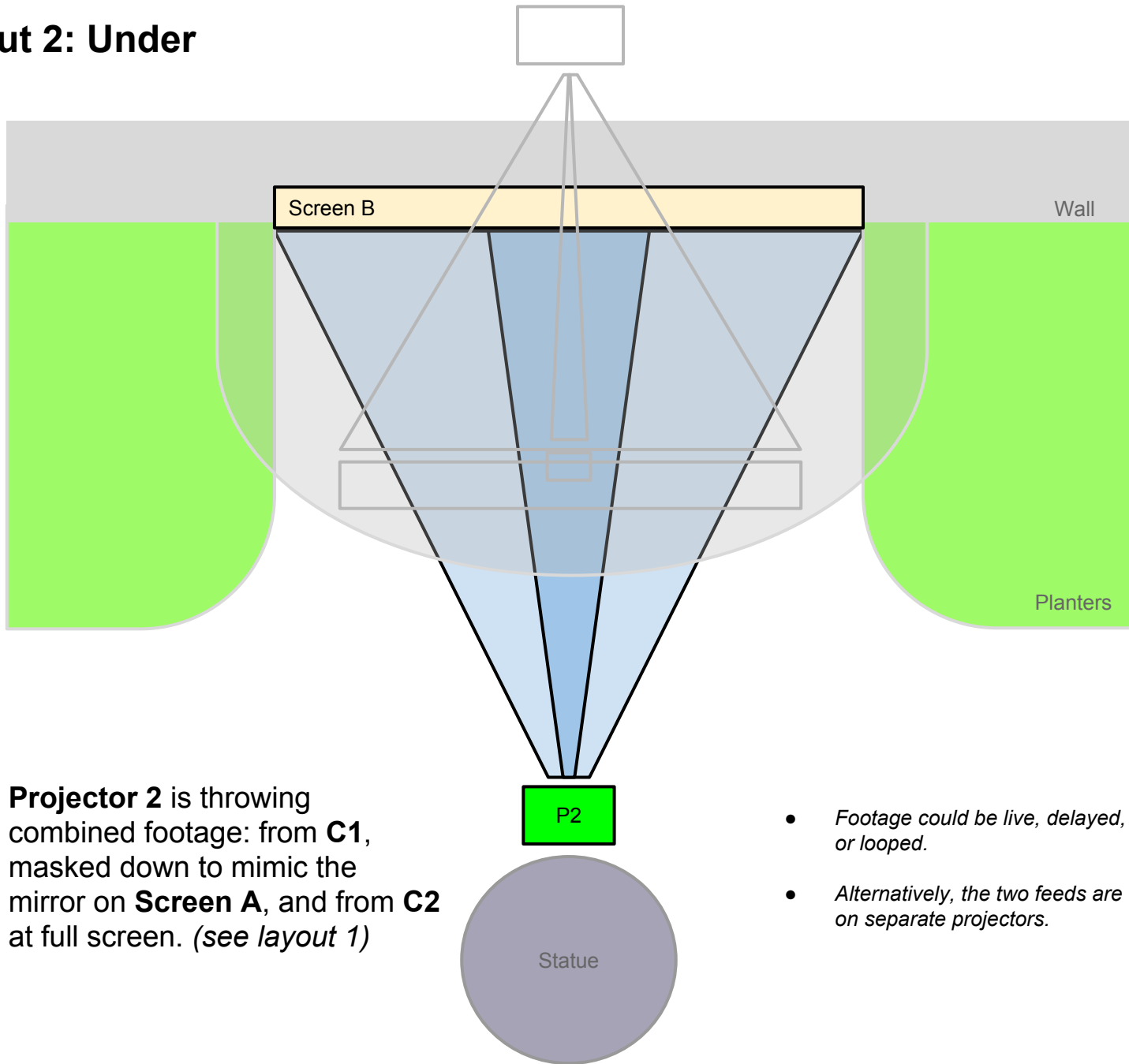
Camera 2 is on a boom, capturing the rear of **Screen A**, including audience shadows. (Alternate placement on statue below.)

Projector 1 is throwing prepared video with instructions to “COME CLOSER”.

Projection is masked to avoid camera/mirror.



Layout 2: Under



Projector 2 is throwing combined footage: from **C1**, masked down to mimic the mirror on **Screen A**, and from **C2** at full screen. (see layout 1)

- Footage could be live, delayed, or looped.
- Alternatively, the two feeds are on separate projectors.

Site 1 Projection

The video for Site 1 should consist of a digitally processed loop of throngs of people; my initial thought was the rush-hour scene in *Koyaanisqatsi*; I would like to sample some of this footage and work it into something new but recognizable. Briefly appearing here and there on the screen throughout the loop are the words “COME CLOSER” (and other brief invitations) in large text. The intent is to show a kinetic and highly visible image, and draw people in to look in the mirror.

Setup - Site 1

See “Layout 1: Over” for illustration. For the mirror stage, I’d like to block off the couple of parking spots directly in front of the balcony, so that we have some room to set up the projector. This focal point in front of the building is perfect for Site 1 as it will attract people who are arriving, and have not yet had an opportunity to see the other part of the piece. The screen would span the far side of the balcony at roughly the size of a wall, likely not bigger than 9x12 feet. A vanity mirror, hopefully about 20”x30”, will be supported in the middle of the screen at eye level, with a small remote camera attached inconspicuously to the frame. The projection will need to be masked to black out the area of the mirror and camera so that people can approach without being blinded.

The second camera will be mounted either high up on the statue below or on a makeshift boom extended from the balcony out over the garden. It will be aimed back at the rear of the screen, catching the shadows of people approaching the mirror cast on top of the processed video footage. This camera will ideally be remote as well, but if a connection is needed, the projector setup for Site 2 will be immediately underneath, so cables may be feasible. One important aspect of the cameras is to have them time-synced so that the two can be played together.

Site 2 Projection

The imagery on the second screen will be a composite feed from the two cameras at the first site, such that the content from the hidden camera will be cast inside of a shape that recalls the mirror from above, surrounded by the cast-shadow footage from the rear camera. Depending on the quality, some processing may be done to the video feeds. I would like to experiment with filters on both of them, for best impact. If it seems inappropriate to clearly show people’s recorded interactions with the mirror, I can distort them to anonymity. I’d also want the flexibility to create a loop of the active record, rather than a truly live stream, so that there are still characters in the Site 2 projection even when Site 1 is vacant/between visitors. Site 1 will need minimal attention once set up, but Site 2 will require active work in casting the right clips, hopefully so that the two feeds maintain matching time signatures - I want to show the shadows moving toward the mirror and have the faces appear within at the right time.

Setup - Site 2

See "Layout 2: Under" for illustration. Underneath the overhang of the balcony there is an alcove flanked by two low rock wall planters. The back of this space is an ideal projection surface because it's directly underneath the first and can't be seen from above. I also like the way the proximity works within the theme of the project as a whole. A projector will be set up on the north side of the garden's central statue (facing the alcove), and the image should fill the back wall under the overhang.

If working with two live feeds from the remote cameras can't easily be done with one computer, I'd like to be able to consider the option of using two separate projectors, each with its own computer and video feed.

Required Equipment

- 2 (or 3) projectors capable of a 9x12' image at 15 to 20 feet distance
- 2 (or 3) laptops to push video to the projectors
 - Site 1 could be done with a projector that accepts a USB drive
 - Site 2 will need system(s) with live-editing software
- Power supply or batteries at both sites
- 2 small remote cameras
- Free standing white screen for Site 1, up to 9x12'
- A medium sized mirror
- Mounting solution for Camera 2

Open Questions

1. Can ambient lighting be minimized?
2. Can we block the parking spots in front of the balcony?
3. Final dimensions of the 2 sites - screen size, distance; this will determine the type of projectors needed.
4. Video capture process - can this be done as envisioned, and will it need two separate systems?
5. Remote cameras - are there 2 viable options available, and what kind of video quality do they provide? Can they be time-synced?
6. How will the mirror be mounted to the screen at Site 1? (Or at least appear to be mounted to it.)
7. How will the cameras be mounted?
8. Can live video be processed/looped while still being recorded/streamed? Can I use stop/start intervals to create saved clips to work with?
9. Will producing this as designed require significant help from other people?
10. Battery life and other factors (such as sharing the sites) will determine length of projection time.