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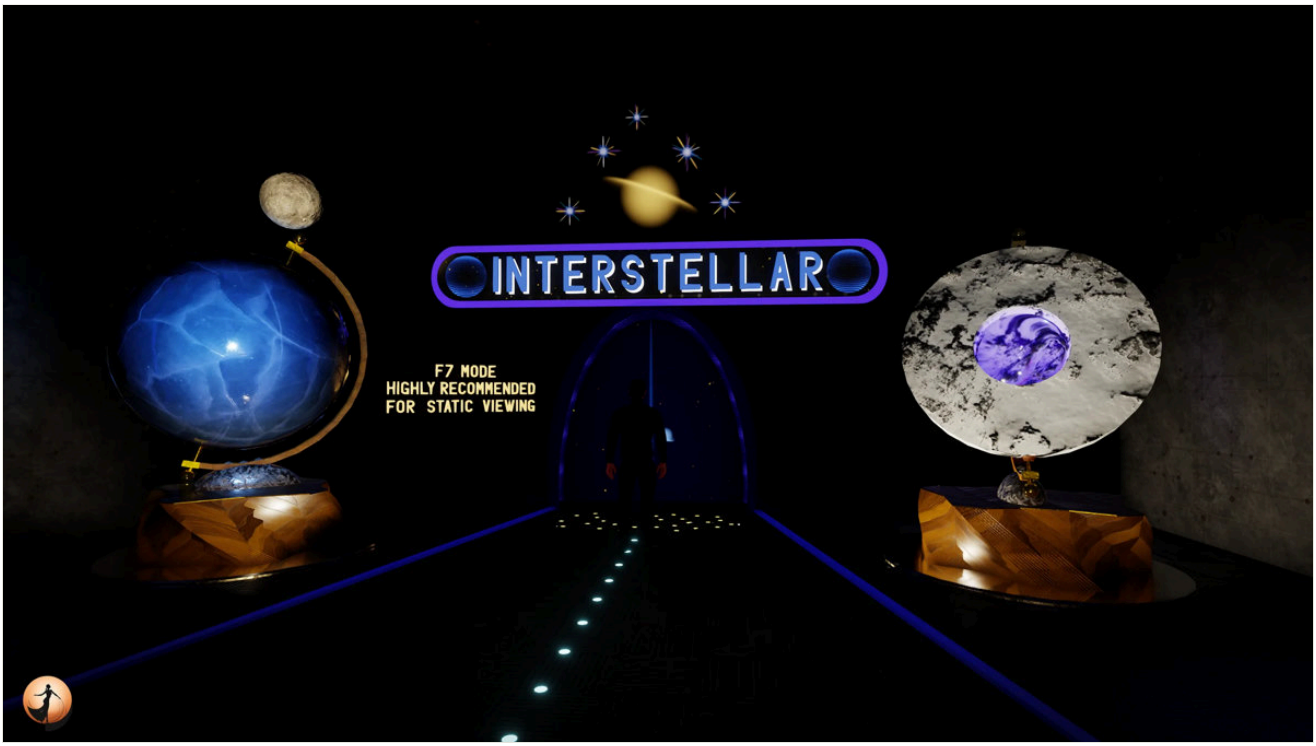
BUILDS

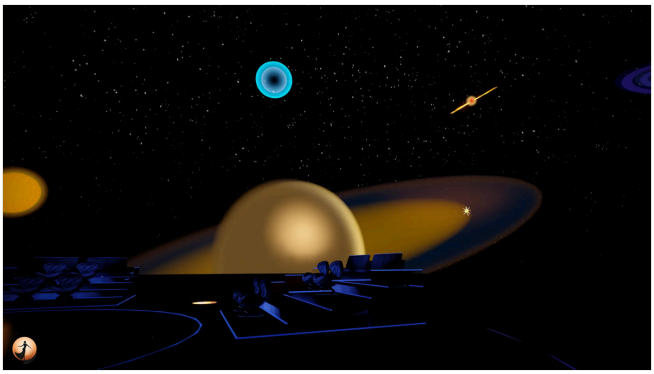
Interstellar

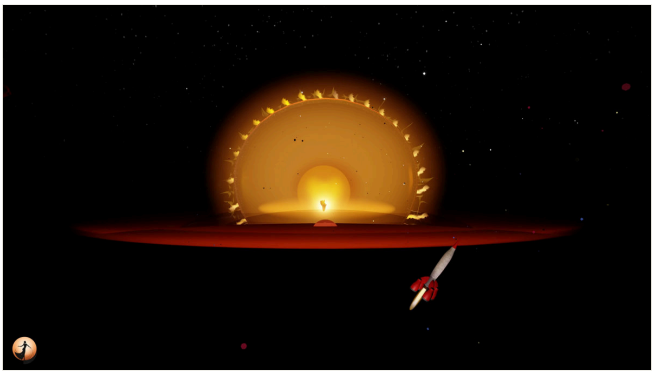
BY **CURT WOODMAN** — 2026-10-31

There are rooms made for parties, rooms made for exploration, and rooms that simply invite us to stop and look. *Interstellar* belongs firmly to the latter. Conceived as a planetarium beneath a vast starry vault, *JanLou*'s latest creation takes visitors away from the familiar landscapes of 3DX and into the darkness and beauty of space.

The room is a new incarnation of *Dimensions*, a private build Jan created several years ago for his wife. Its purpose was deeply personal: to bring one of their shared dreams to life by giving them a place beneath an immense, star-filled sky.



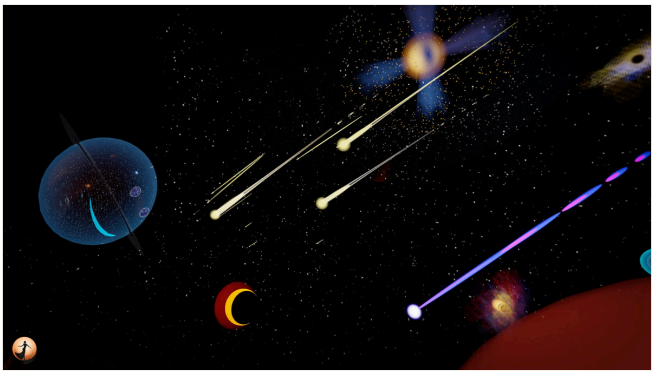


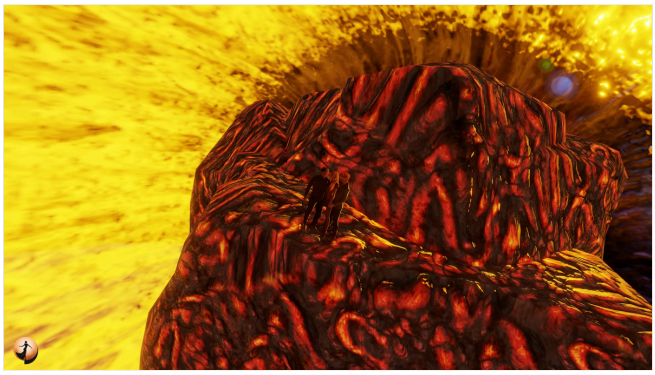


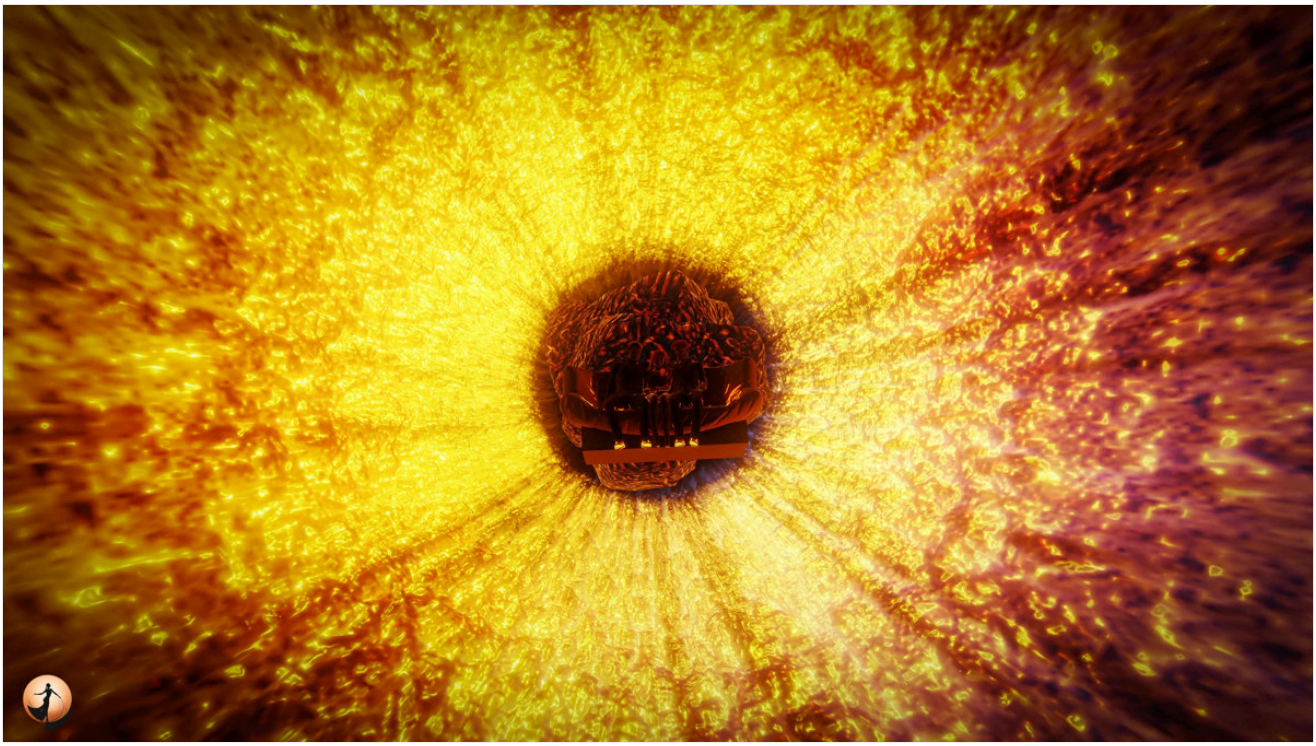
The original room was impressive for its time, but the limited textures and effects then available placed restrictions on what could be achieved. It had no central viewpoint, was too large to explore comfortably on foot and was accompanied by music chosen for very personal reasons. For the most part, it remained private.

After upgrading his graphics card and seeing the room again, with both its details and its shortcomings newly revealed, JanLou decided to rebuild it.

Interstellar preserves the spirit of the original while transforming it into a more complete experience. Comfortable seating surrounds a central observation point, giving visitors a 360-degree view of the celestial display. Other areas can be reached on foot, rewarding those who venture away from the centre, but this is not a conventional exploration room. It is, as JanLou describes it, a visual exhibition.







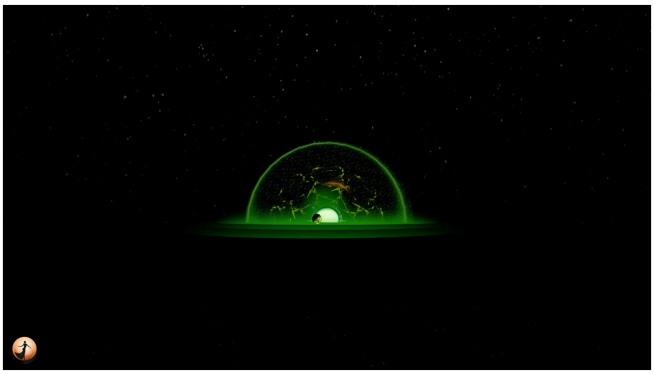
Creating that exhibition presented a particular challenge. The room is both enormous and deliberately dark, and every celestial body had to be constructed with the central viewing position in mind. Objects needed to remain clearly visible at a great distance, retain their colour and lighting effects, and face the observer correctly.

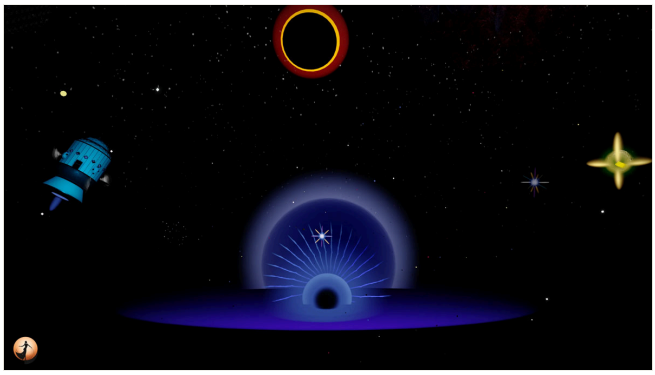
There were few useful reference points inside the immense, dimly lit sphere. Some objects that appear to be fully spherical are, in fact, flat constructions, something that amused JanLou by calling to mind the old flat-Earth theories.

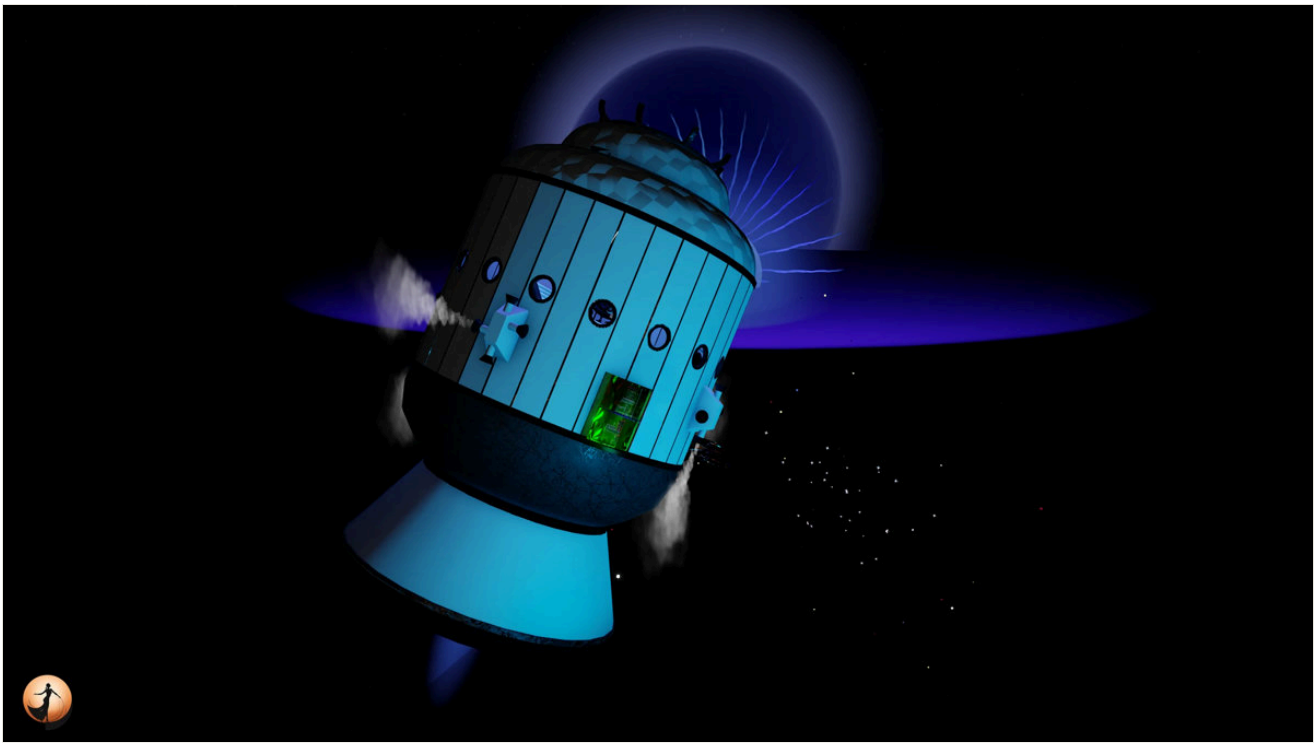
The visual variety of *Interstellar* was achieved through extensive experimentation with combinations of textures, transparency and lighting. Large luminous objects can affect one another, while the final appearance may vary according to a visitor's graphics hardware. JanLou tested the room using three different graphics processors in search of a balance that would work for as many visitors as possible.

True astronomical scale was, naturally, impossible. If Mercury were represented with a diameter of just one centimetre, displaying the entire Sun beside it would already require a screen more than six metres across. Reproducing the corresponding distances would require kilometres. Instead, the planets and other celestial objects have been carefully proportioned to create a convincing visual experience.

With the exception of an armchair, a sofa and a few standard editor items, the planetarium was made entirely by hand. There are no downloaded models, no objects imported from external graphics tools and no use of artificial intelligence. JanLou describes his approach as *"pixel craftsmanship."*







The finished room contains approximately 11,000 objects while weighing only 1,850 KB, remarkably light for a build of this apparent scale. Much of what visitors see is an illusion, and that is precisely the point.

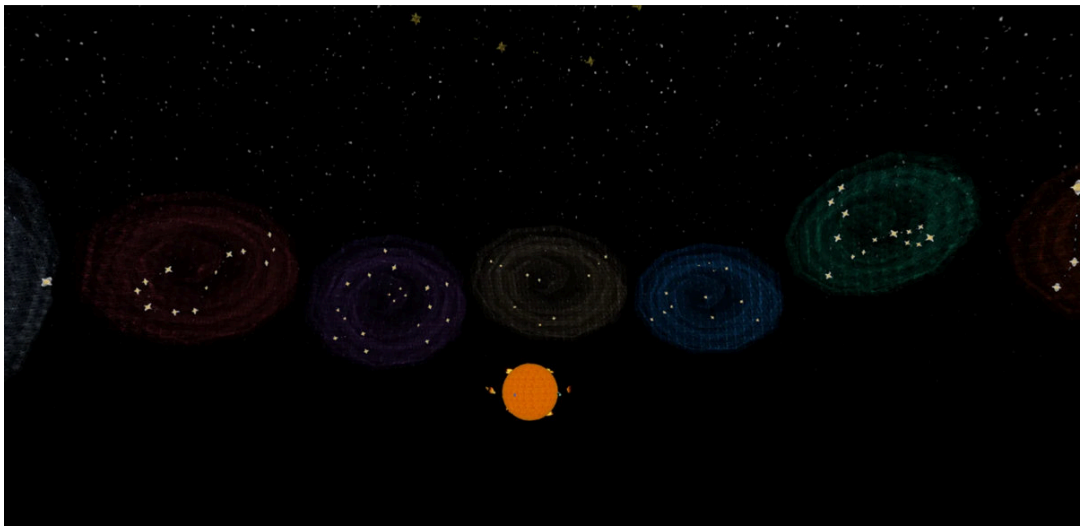
The room is locked to the Night Zero setting, while F5 mode has been disabled for visitors. This preserves the composition and prevents the individual pieces behind the celestial bodies from becoming visible at close range. Name display remains active so that visitors do not lose sight of one another in the darkness, although those exploring alone may prefer to switch it off.

F7 view mode is highly recommended.

> *I do not claim to be a great builder. I simply take great pleasure in making my lady's eyes shine. In fact, she is often the one who suggests that I open my rooms to the public. JanLou*

That sentiment lies at the heart of *Interstellar*. Behind its glowing planets, distant stars and carefully constructed illusions is a room originally created for two people, a private dream that has gradually grown into something the wider community can now experience.

Visitors looking for a quiet journey through space will find comfortable places to sit, soft poses to share and a universe waiting in the darkness. Those fortunate enough to meet JanLou there may even be shown a few secret locations that only the room's owner can reach.

Welcome to a new dimension.

With special thanks to Jan and May.