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VENUES

The Lake, Seven Years On

BY **CURT ROSEWOOD** — 2024-10-25



For seven years now *The Lake* has been a staple of 3DX. On Saturday, October 12th, this fact was celebrated with an amazing birthday party that saw 156 fans and supporters gather together for an evening of music and dance. DJs *Impy*, *AvaBliss*, *Animay* and headliner *CardinalCopia* provided the tunes. Moreover, keeping to a long tradition, *The Lake* also saw 4 marriages that day.

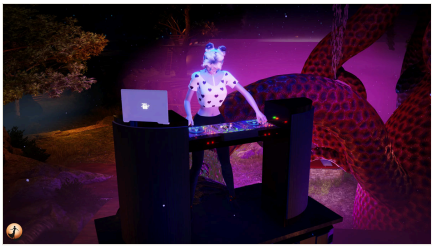








The Lake has been around for so long it feels like an intergal part of 3DX Chat. Yet it wasn't always there and it went through a long evolution over the years. This seventh anniversary seemed like the perfect opportunity to grab founder *Keely* for an interview and reminisce on the long history of this beloved room.









Keely, can you share with us how The Lake came to be?

KEELY In 2017, The Lake was born from a vision to create a sanctuary amidst the sometimes toxic environments of the 3dx chat world. Frustrated by negativity and toxicity, I envisioned a space where people could find solace, connection, a sense of belonging and of course, love. What began as a simple bamboo hut on a serene island quickly evolved into a vibrant virtual retreat, designed to uplift, inspire, and connect. As the years rolled by, the Lake underwent numerous transformations, reflecting the diverse needs and desires of its visitors.

You had to leave 3DX a few years later though?

KEELY In 2019 I faced a significant challenge when I became ill and abruptly left 3DX Chat, which forced me to close the Lake. At that time, I was not sure if I would ever return, and I knew it would be hard to keep things going. I did not realize that on my absence people thought I had died. Also, during my absence, the Lake was reopened with a copy that I had not provided.

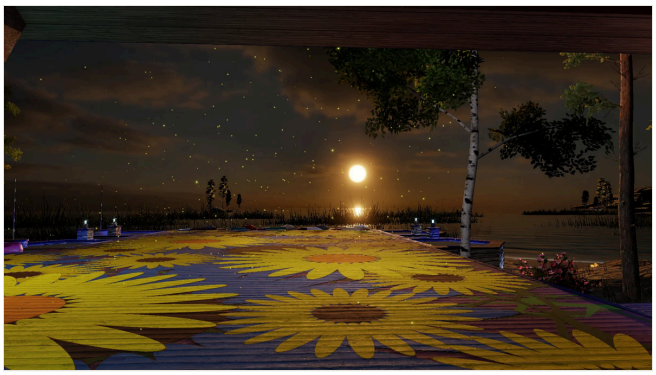
That must have come as a shock when you returned?

KEELY When I returned in 2021, I was initially angry to discover that the Lake had been open without my permission for about 2 years. Though it had been renamed "Lake Keely" in my honor, it still stung. The Lake meant a lot to me, and I viewed it as a work of art. I wandered around other rooms and felt lost not knowing what I should do or how I should manage it. One poignant moment came when I met a girl with "Keely" in her name. She shared that she and her wife had the last name "Keely" because they had fallen in love at the Lake and gotten married there; it meant a great deal to them. In that moment, I realized that, in a small way, what I had created continued to positively affect people in my absence. I considered that the Lake was meant to be here, and I quickly moved past my initial pettiness. I approached the current host and explained that while he could continue to manage the room, I would like to update the Lake. He agreed, and everything continued like that until he left for a brief time, at which point I took on hosting duties again as Fable. He and I have remained friends, and he visits the Lake daily.

What was the biggest challenge you faced building The Lake?

KEELY One of the greatest challenges I faced came in 2021 when I decided to rotate the entire Lake to face the sunset. Previously, the Lake faced the low-hanging sun, but I wanted the view from the pavilion to look out into the stunning orange sky of the sunset. This change proved difficult; moving grouped items of thousands of objects was cumbersome and often inaccurate, resulting in the Lake being slightly off from the intended 90-degree turn. Despite the challenges, this transformation enhanced the overall experience for everyone who visits.







The Lake has always had this tranquility about it, would you say it is the one constant?

KEELY While places like the wedding chapel and the Ferris wheel came and went, the essence of the Lake remained unchanged: a commitment to fostering a natural setting filled with soothing music and ambient sounds. This environment allowed guests to escape the chaos of their daily lives and immerse themselves in tranquility.







The Lake is always evolving though?

KEELY People often ask why certain features or locations disappear, and I always operate on the mantra that if something is not used often, there is a good chance it will be replaced. The Lake cannot expand infinitely, and so I make choices to change things that are not as frequently enjoyed, allowing room for new experiences that better serve the community.

Amidst the changes, the elements of the Lake have stood the test of time. The iconic lighthouse, with its steadfast beam of light, and the welcoming pavilion, serving as a gathering place for friends old and new, have become symbols of the Lake's enduring spirit. And no matter how the landscape shifted, the breathtaking backdrop of a never-ending sunset has continued to capture the hearts of all who visit, providing a constant reminder of the beauty and serenity that the Lake embodies.







Do you have any parting words for those wanting to replicate your success?

KEELY For those trying to start a room in 3DX Chat and who want it to be successful for a long time, I have a few pearls of wisdom from someone who has been hosting rooms since well before the Lake.

- *Consistency: The room should be open all the time or on a set schedule. That commitment is not an easy one to make. For the first year and a half of the Lake, I was present constantly, ensuring that it never dropped to zero visitors and closed.*
- *Design: Keep it simple in the beginning. A key to this is I recommend never making people walk more than about twenty feet to reach the main area.*
- *Audience: A room also needs to serve a community or niche; if there are already many rooms competing for the same audience, it may not be the best community to cater to with your room.*
- *Realistic goals: Do not get discouraged if your room does not have one hundred people in it; I never aimed for the Lake to be one of those crowded spaces. Today, the Lake is almost self-perpetuating, thanks to its loyal community, where someone is always present.*

Today, after seven years, the Lake stands as a testament to community, resilience, and the power of creating a space where everyone is welcome. As we look to the future, we remain dedicated to maintaining this sanctuary, ensuring that the Lake continues to be a cherished escape for all who seek its shores.

With special thanks to Keely.