What Level Designers Bring to VR

Lee Perry - *Big Dorks Entertainment*

About me

- Epic Games, Squaresoft, Ion Storm, BitMonster
- Big Dorks Entertainment!
- Dream Team Partners!
- Level Design, Art, Scripting, Audio, Animation, Coding – Unreal, Unity… all the things…

The controversy

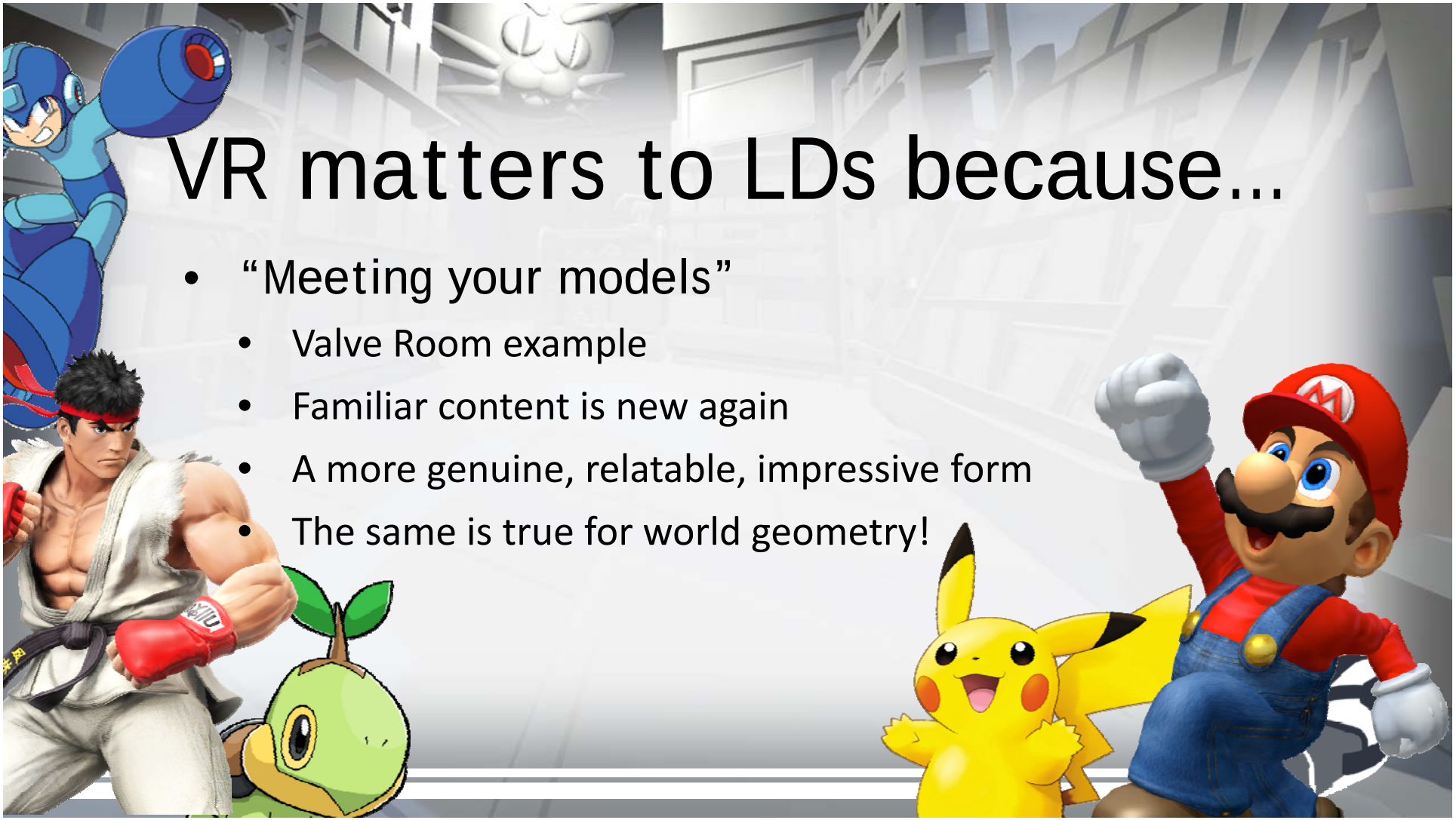
- Practicality
- Costs
- Sensationalism and backlash
- Design limitations
- Looks dorky
- Isolating

What *I* like about VR

- New creative frontier (not business frontier)
- Natural reactions of players
- Not the same cold war of visual fidelity
- Less crowded business space
- Unknowns… chance to rethink

VR matters to LDs because…

- "Meeting your models"
  - Valve Room example
  - Familiar content is new again
  - A more genuine, relatable, impressive form
  - The same is true for world geometry!

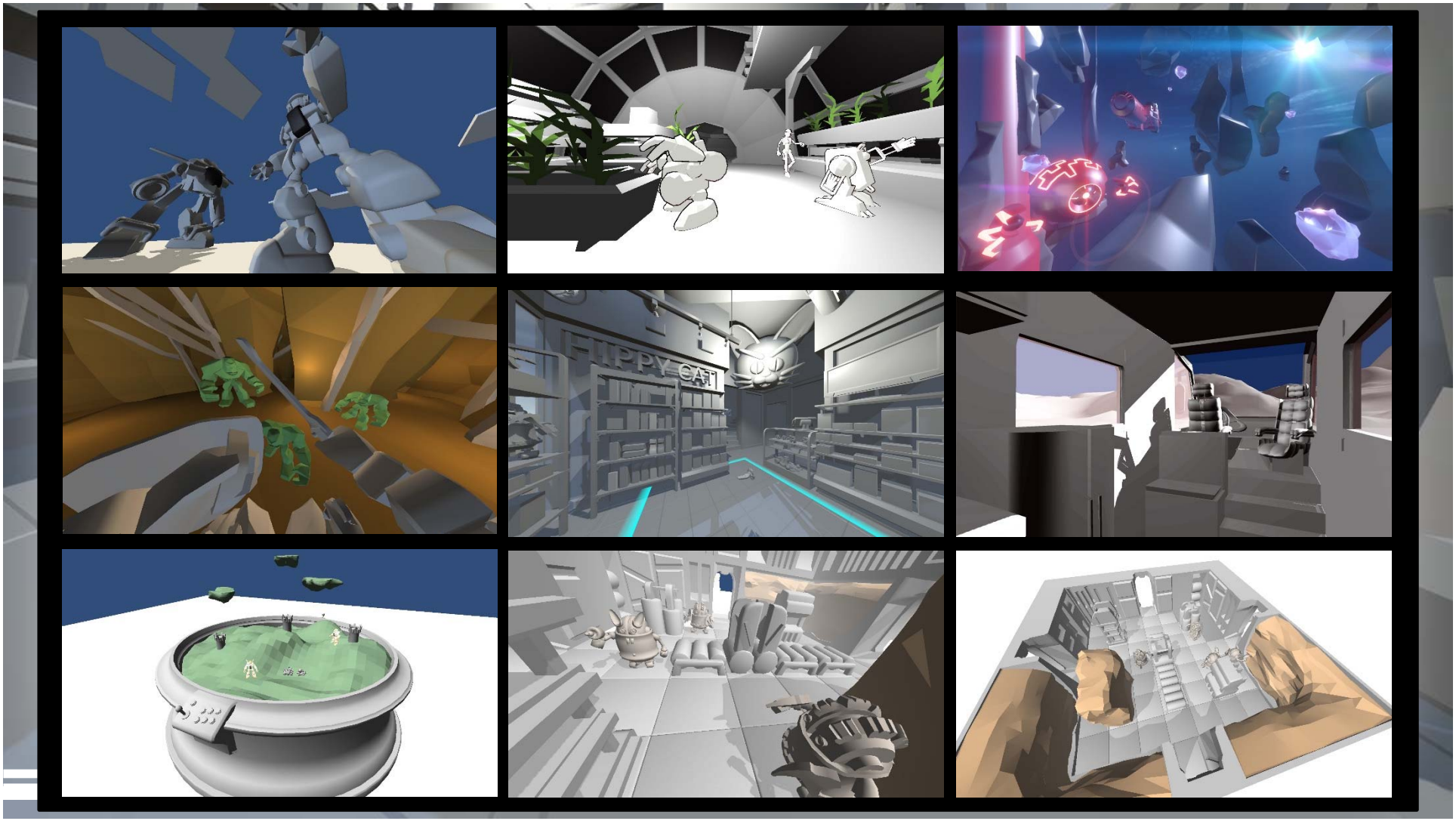


VR matters to LDs because…

- Scale matters
  - Unique to VR
  - Even small changes matter
  - Perception of characters change
  - Users change that perception
- It's an aspect of design in itself

VR matters to LDs because…

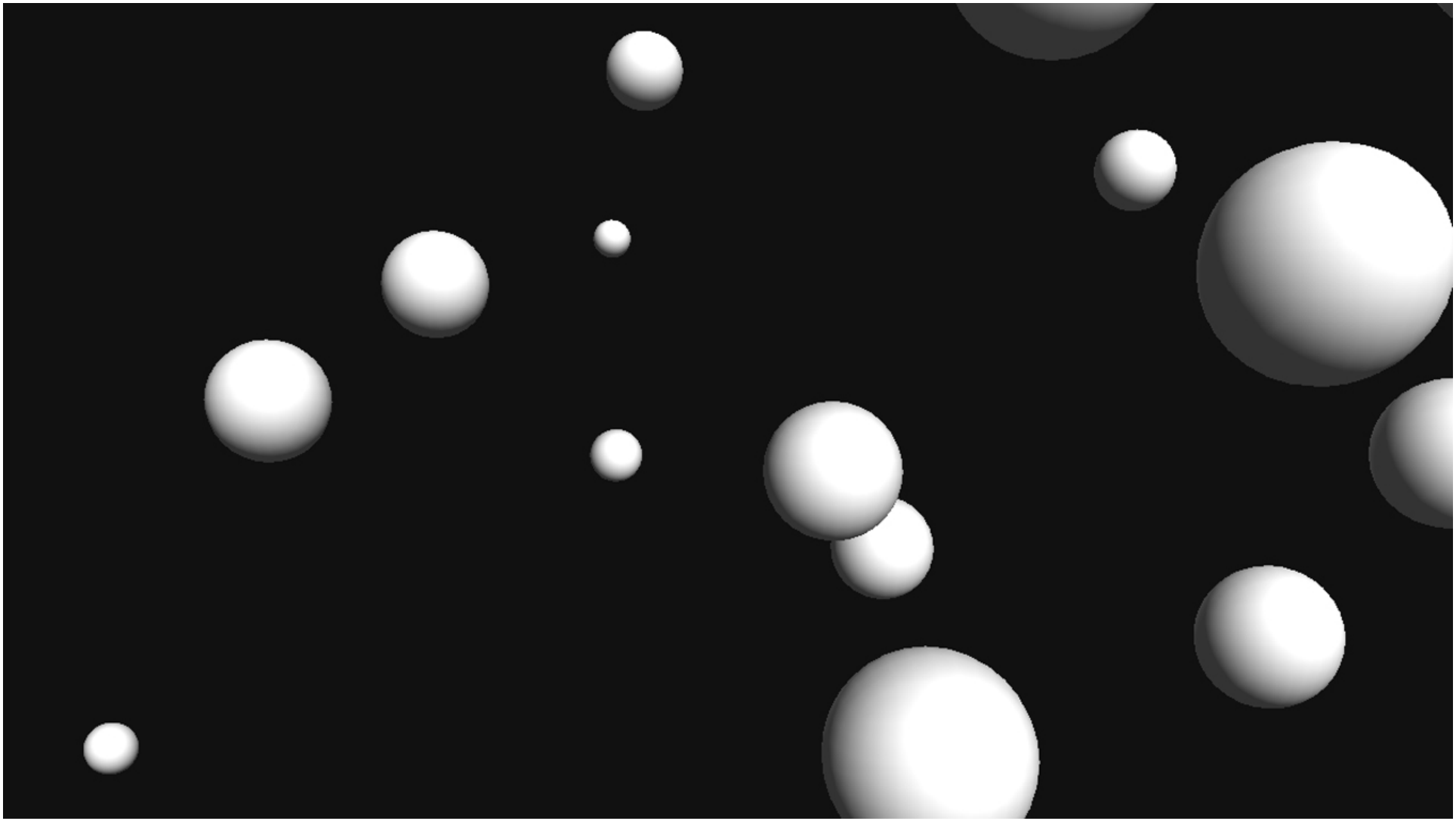
- Surroundings matter - “Danger rooms”

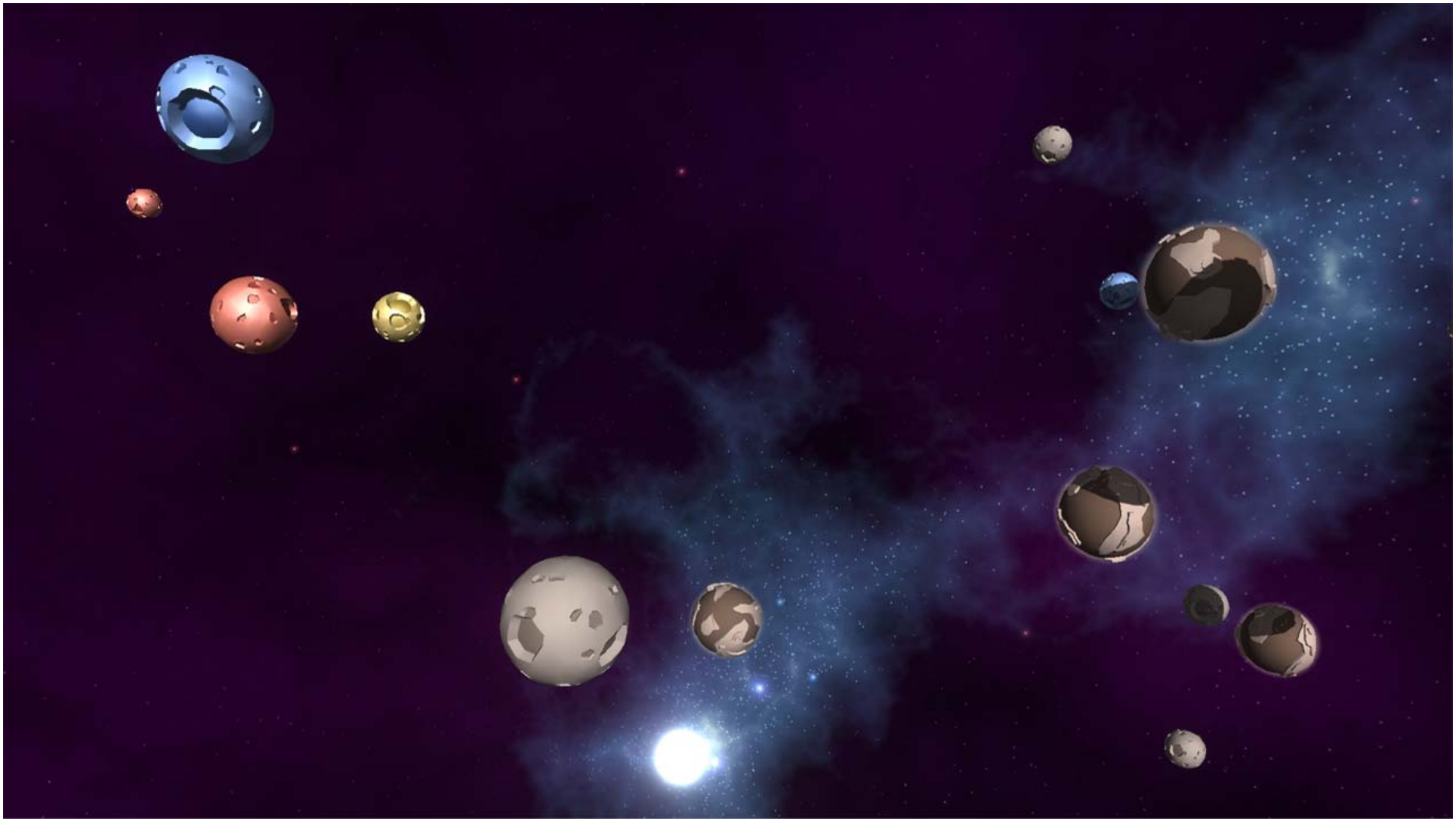


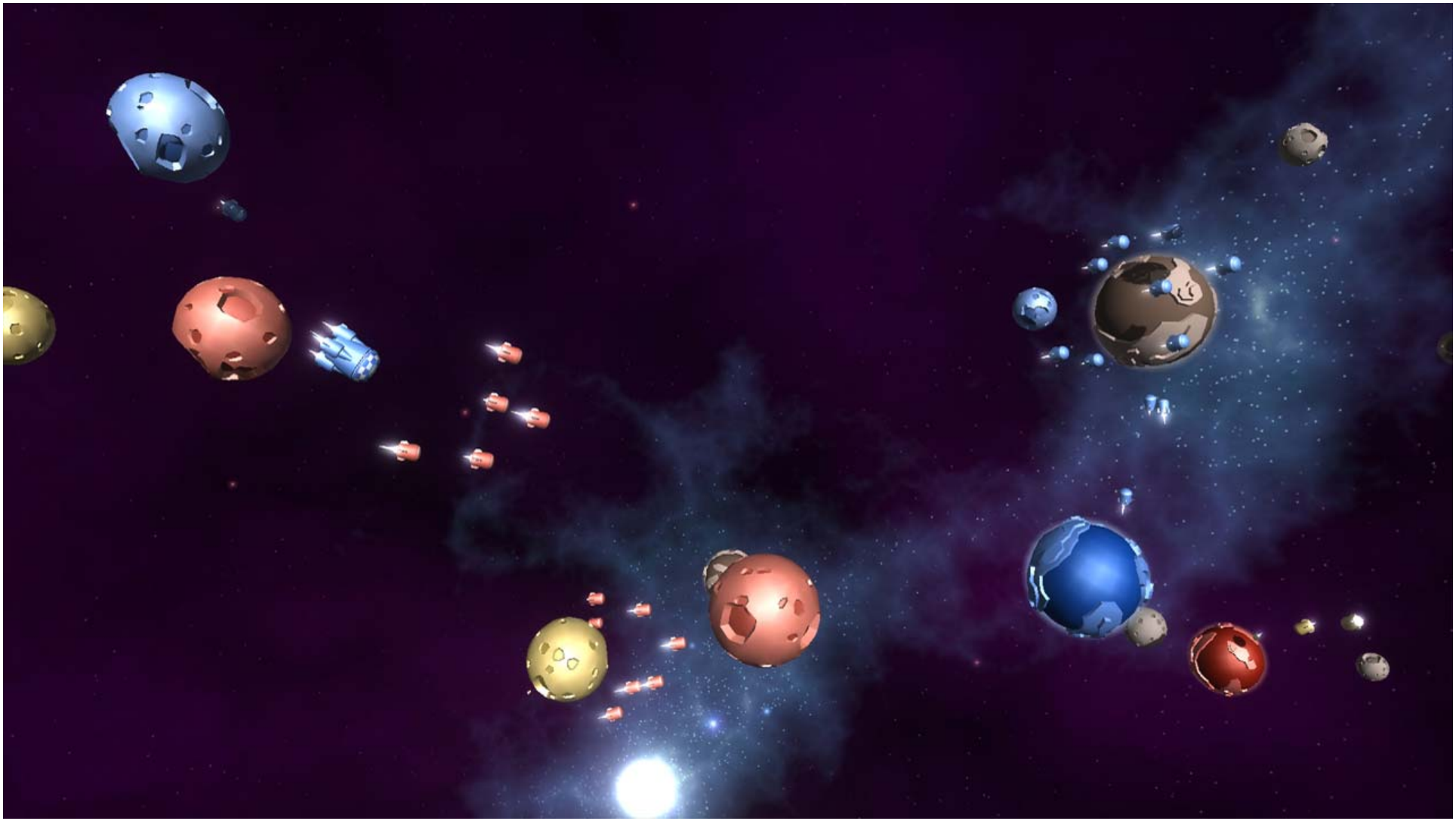
VR matters to LDs because…

- Surroundings matter - “Danger rooms”
  - Most important (?) aspect in VR, the setting
  - Design writes itself
  - Get a sense of scope early
  - Rapidly iterate in a small area
  - Giggle factor
  - Can quickly see dead ends

Case study







E-25
E-10
MOON
STRIKE

LIFE IS STRANGE
NEW FLAVORS
SLUSH-ES
SLUSHEE MART
100 FOR $100

VR matters to LDs because…

- Environmental Emphasis
- Some genres are a natural fit
  - Less reliance on action dynamics
  - Natural instinct to inspect / observe
  - Chance at broader appeal

VR matters to LDs because…

- General design sense and scripting options
  - Not just geometry blocking
  - General controls
  - Interactions
  - Scripting sequences

VR matters to LDs because…

- Technical challenges
  - Performance
  - Shifting SDKs
  - Troubleshooting

unity

VR matters to LDs because…

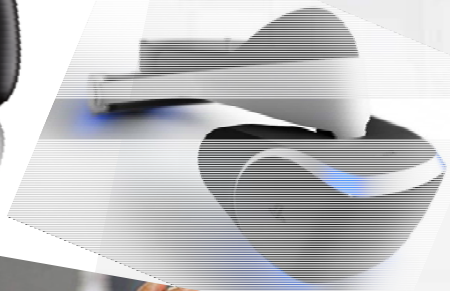
- We're unique!
  - Animation?
  - Concept art?
  - Physics?
  - Shaders?
  - Networking?
  - Modeling?
  - BUT US?…

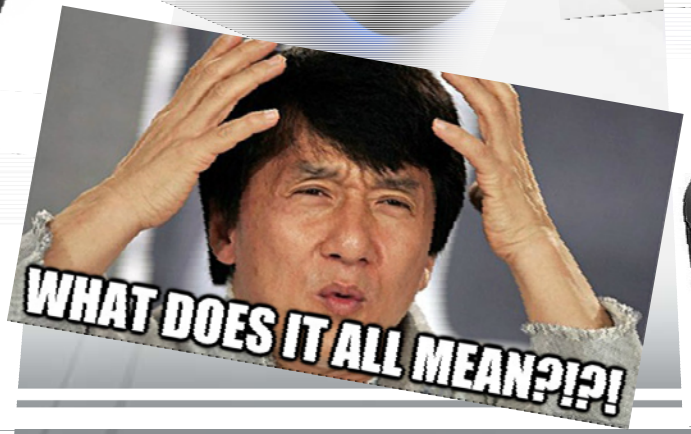
LDs have the DEFINITIVE skillset for VR!

Challenges and limitations

- Movement issues
- Performance
- Kinder, gentler
- Session lengths
- Project scope
- Need new genres

Different Platforms!





It’s… complicated

	Directional	Positional	Controllers	Free Move	Desk Scale
RIFT	Y	Y	MIXED	N	Y
VIVE	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
PS VR	Y	Y	MIXED	N	Y
GEAR VR	Y	N	N	N	Y
THE VOID	Y	Y	Y	Y	N
FUTURE	?	?	?	?	?

CALL to ACTION

VR EDITION

- DANGER ROOMS!
- DO WHAT VR DOES WELL!

Thanks so much!

Lee Perry

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