

BRENDAN BRADLEY PRESENTS

NON-PLAYER CHARACTER

a virtual reality musical

"YOU CAN CONTROL THE ADVENTURE"

When a video game hero dies, the audience must guide a Non-Player Character (performed by a live, singing actor) through five virtual worlds representing the five stages of grief. The line between physical and virtual reality blurs as each audience's actions influence the journey.

Part musical, part escape room, part immersive theater performance, audience members experience NPC as either "Participants" on-stage with a live performer in VR headsets or "Spectators" watching a live feed of the virtual world in theater seating. The story begins when the audience encounters the Hero, an overconfident main-character who sings through the game's tutorial before abruptly dying on the first level. The NPC witnesses the unexpected death with us and brings us inside the game to help them navigate their experience.

NPC takes audiences through the literal heart of this unlikely protagonist where their choices influence the path toward healing. All paths eventually fail and the audience falls into the darkness of the NPC's depression. After lighting the way toward acceptance, the audience members are guided out of the headset, out of the virtual world, and re-introduced to the real-world Spectators who have supported their journey all along.

No two performances of NPC are the same, with a Participant's choices introducing us to new worlds, characters, and stories as they guide the NPC to move through the painful loss. Each performance brings something new for repeat Participants, while ensuring a frictionless experience for newcomers to the technology.



WATCH: Prototype Performance

4 TIERS OF AUDIENCE EXPERIENCE

PARTICIPANT

This experience is designed for groups of four (4) on-site Participants to join the live actor in the play area and fully engage with the narrative arc, exploring the immersive virtual worlds, interacting with the characters they encounter.

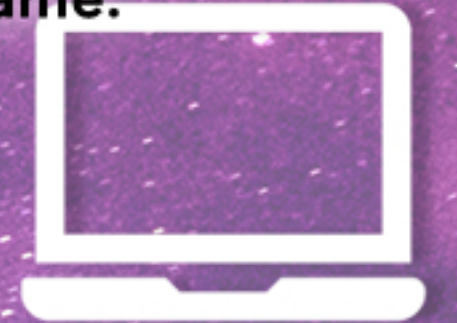
Participants wear VR headsets and receive onboarding instructions prior to the performance, as well as help from the characters throughout the story. This ticket is most similar to being seated on stage as an audience participant at an interactive theater production.



REMOTE

Due to limited capacity and accessibility, this experience is designed using WebXR, which allows most internet connected devices to enter and explore the virtual worlds of the performance while listening to the action of the live actor and Participants.

Due to the risk of disruptions from off-site audiences, these attendees will not be embodied as avatars and be unable to speak to the performer. This tier is most similar to attending a virtual conference or concert in a video game.



SPECTATOR

This experience is designed for an on-site audience sitting in the venue seating who watch a live feed of the virtual world and the action of the actor and participants on stage simultaneously.

This ticket is intended for audiences who are less familiar or comfortable with the technology and audience participation. This tier is most similar to attending a traditional theater production or game show.



ON DEMAND

This experience can be secondarily screened or recorded for viewing on standard video sharing platforms, such as YouTube or Twitch.

This ticket is intended for passive audiences who are less interested in appointment-driven experiences and wish to experience an archival version of the performance. This version may also be useful for festival judges, touring partners, and awards consideration.



We have developed NON-PLAYER CHARACTER using browser-based virtual reality for accessibility via the maximum number of devices and users. The majority of show needs are supported by one Performer and one Stage Manager with their own portable equipment, designed to input into most venue's A/V setup. The checklist below will help us bring NPC to your venue or event:

NEED:

- Ability to input to venue's speaker system
- A wireless microphone connected to venue's speaker system
- A floorplan of venue denoting access to electrical outlets
- Ability to access venue's private WIFI
- On-site staff to help monitor attendees in the lobby and playing area
- Several VR Headsets and sanitization accessories
- Ability to input to venue's projector system
- Venue's preferred remote attendee and/or streaming strategy

AUDIO

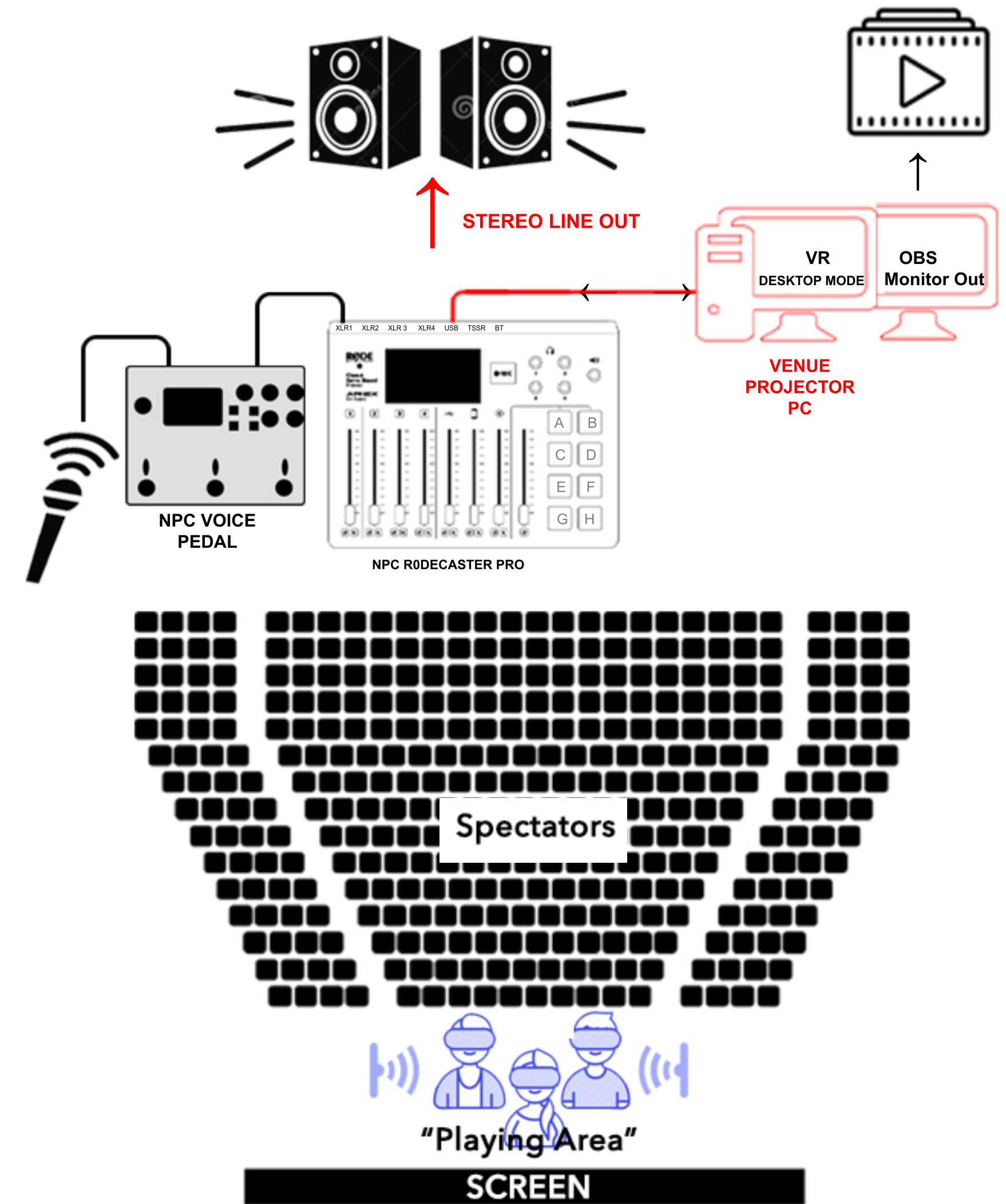
We are providing an audio interface to mix one (1) performer's wireless microphone with music tracks and sound effects to output to the venue's speaker system. This interface also connects via USB to broadcast audio to remote or streaming audiences.

PARTICIPANTS

The experience is designed for four (4) audience Participants to wear VR headsets in a designated "PLAYING AREA" between the front row of seating and screen of the venue. We are providing two infrared lights to optimize the headset tracking. We can also provide LED lights to illuminate the playing area.

SPECTATORS

The experience is designed for Spectators to observe from the traditional VENUE SEATING as the virtual world is projected onto the SCREEN, like a traditional film screening. Attendees may also join the virtual world remotely on their own web-connected device.



NPC x Visuals & World Building



Five virtual worlds and live songs capture the five stages of our protagonist's grief. NPC avoids photo-realism, deeply distinguishing the audience's journey between the physical and virtual world, allowing audience members to bring their own imagination to these stylized, low-polygon, painted textures. As if stepping inside an indie game, NPC is expressive across all platforms: VR headsets, remote attendee devices, or the big screen.

Brendan Andolsek Bradley is a multi-award winning actor and creator, known as "*America's Scrappy Storyteller*" (AR Post) with 100+ film and television credits, 50M+ views online and a leader in the virtual theater movement. He established *The Integrative Technology Lab* at NYU's Tisch School of the Arts, co-founded *The 5th Wall Forum* educating and empowering a community of hundreds of artists and technologists, "reveal" eleven original prototypes for live performance, and hosts a weekly podcast with influencers in the emerging XR industry. Brendan's VR play, *Jettison*, was a Finalist for the Producers Guild of America's Innovation Award and he is currently starring in the VR play, *Welcome To Respite*, at international festivals, including The Venice Film Festival, Raindance and IndieCad. Brendan is the Artistic Director of *#OnBoardXR*, a seasonal, collaborative anthology of short, live performances experimenting at the bleeding edge of multi-user, metaversal experiences.

Michael Morran is a theatre director, performer, and creative technologist from Austin, TX currently based in New York City. He loves to research the application of new media for live performance and tell stories that reflect and criticize the increasingly digital realities that his generation has grown up in. In the past, he has made performances using XR, web-design, MoCap, and networked devices. Michael also loves to teach and empower other creators with tools to tell stories about the technology that fascinates them.

