

“A FASCINATING COMPENDIUM OF DESIGN FLAWS, ERRORS, GLITCHES, AND ODDITIES THAT PUNCTURES ANY OPTIMISTIC READ OF WHERE DIGITAL REALMS ARE LEADING US.”

- Kentucker Audley, NoBudge



WELCOME TO *The Enclave*

a film by Sarah Lasley





CUM BUCKET

Built inside Unity game engine, "Welcome to the Enclave" uses live-action avatars in a 3D environment to echo the dissonance of two naive Texas women colonizing an internet space they know nothing about.




LOGLINE

Two Texas sisters fight to save their digital utopia from demise amidst an onslaught of Reddit trolls.

SYNOPSIS

Two Texas sisters fled to the metaverse at the onset of the pandemic, creating The Enclave, a cyber-haven for 'like-minded women.' Years later, the suburb is on the verge of bankruptcy, and owner Moni Calvioni is crowdfunding to save her digital utopia. With no awareness of online culture, she and her sister Blair turn to Twitch and Reddit to pitch their idealized vision only to fall prey to a slew of internet trolls who write profanities on their street signs and graffiti their walls with sexual imagery. Helpless to the ensuing chaos, they're forced to accept their fate - Blair with bedsheets covering the lewd insults and Moni with a swan song dance routine. The rapidly encroaching digital mountainscape only further unravels the delusion of The Enclave's pursuit for the white, suburban ideal and exposes the baggage we bring to online spaces if we don't fix our very real IRL problems.



A woman with dark hair, wearing a bright red sleeveless top and a black skirt, is captured in a dynamic, expressive pose against a green screen background. Her eyes are closed, her mouth is open in a shout or gasp, and her arms are outstretched. Her right arm is raised high, and her left arm is extended to the side. Her hair is blowing, suggesting a fan or wind machine is being used. She is barefoot, and her right foot is touching the floor. The floor is made of light-colored tiles. The green screen is hung from the ceiling with black straps. The overall scene is a professional studio setup for motion capture or green screen work.

The film was made in collaboration with Brenna Palughi who plays both characters. Brenna and I have worked together for over 17 years, and our process is highly intuitive and improvisational. I can bring her any wild idea, and she steps into it with ease. Over the two and half years of Covid isolation, I meticulously modeled and animated the digital neighborhood while Brenna co-wrote and performed the characters inside of it. The green screen performances were shot in my kitchen in Texas and Brenna's living room in Brooklyn, with the first shot of the film captured two years before the last. Given that I was new to 3D animation, my project file was built poorly, and I had to buy (and later return) a high-powered MacPro computer just to render out the final tracking shot.



SARAH LASLEY

Sarah Lasley is an award-winning filmmaker from Louisville, Kentucky and an Assistant Professor of Film at Cal Poly Humboldt. Her no-crew, no-budget experimental films critique our current moment with absurdist humor. She has screened internationally at festivals, museums, galleries, and universities such as the Cucalorus Film Festival, Cairo Video Festival, 25 FPS Film Festival, Nitehawk Cinemas, Katonah Museum of Art, and the Wrong Biennale. She holds an MFA from Yale School of Art and a BFA from University of Louisville and was a resident at the Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture in 2004.



BRENNA PALUGHI

Brenna Palughi is an actor, director, and choreographer based in Brooklyn. Her recent theatre credits include "A Time To Kill" on Broadway, "Scared of Sarah" (La Mama), "The Veterans Project: Homecoming" (IMPACT Theatre), "Small Mouth Sounds" (Tour), and World Builders (CATF). She had a recurring role on Showtime's "The First Lady" and HBO's "High Maintenance" and recently starred in the short film "Hannahs". She is Artistic Director of the physical theater company Virago, a Teaching Artist at HB Studios, and a proud company member of The Actor's Center in NYC, SAG-AFTRA, Actor's Equity. She received her MFA from Yale School of Drama.



POOP

FILM INFORMATION

Original Title: Welcome to the Enclave
Country of Production: USA
Duration: 12 minutes

TECHNICAL DETAILS

Screening Format: DCP, Quicktime
Sound: Stereo
Resolution: 4K
Aspect Ratio: 1.77
Speed: 30, 24 fps
Language: English
Subtitles: English, Spanish

SCREENINGS

Slamdance Film Festival
Cucalorus Film Festival
Chicago Underground Film Festival
NoBudge Live @ Nitehawk Cinemas
Everything Must Change @ Bob Baker Marionette Theatre
The Wrong Biennale
27 Videomedaja
CutOut Fest International
Bideodromo 2023

TRAILER

vimeo.com/741491319

WEBSITE/SOCIAL

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DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

I started building the digital neighborhood in 2020 after my location-based shoots were cancelled due to Covid. At the time, I was having tough conversations with my southern, Christian mother who one day called me excited because she just heard about the concept of the "metaverse". She drank all Zuckerberg's Kool-aid and was ready to move in. So I decided to make a film about how it might go if my mom brought her utopian, Christian ideals into an online space.

The film uses live-action characters in a 3D simulated environment to heighten the dissonance of these two naive women colonizing an internet space they know nothing about. This is a film about cognitive dissonance, techno-utopianism, and how technology often exacerbates our real-world problems. I hope the film will prompt others to question when they chose comfort over justice and inspire them to confront the uncomfortable parts of their lives.

A young boy with short brown hair, wearing a teal long-sleeved shirt and brown pants, is running across a green lawn at night. To his left is a large, dark, jagged rock formation. In the background, there is a two-story white house with a grey roof and a white picket fence. The sky is dark with some clouds, and a street lamp is visible. The scene is lit with a mix of natural and artificial light, creating a dramatic atmosphere.

FULL CREDITS

Writer. Director. Animator. Editor
Sarah Lasley

Moni/Blair. Co-Writer
Brenna Palughi

Post-Production Sound Mix
Branden Brown

Special Thanks
Porous Walker
Deron Fraley