

GERTRUDE STREET PROJECTION FESTIVAL

Transcription Zoe Mars - New Metro,

Hi there, I'm Zoe Mars, and I made New Metro for the Gertrude Street Projection Festival 2021.

My artwork is this tall, narrow projection that looks like you're on a kind of 60s or 70s subway escalator that keeps on going down and down and down forever and ever. It slowly changes over time, the wall panels change and the colours change, but it never really stops and you never arrive at the platform. It's partly procedurally generated, meaning parts of it being decided live in the unity platform while the projection is running. But other parts of it were parametrically created in advance with the grasshopper software and with blender. It was inspired by the Parliament Station escalators of course, which are super long and can feel like a descent into a kind of bizarre underworld. The Melbourne city loop is 40 years old this year, and for me, it feels like a subterranean artefact of a past version of the city and its aspirations.

I was also influenced by the author Hamid Ismailov's description of the Soviet metro systems as the collective unconscious of Soviet architecture, and as a reflection of something that never really reached fruition above the ground. My partner's an urban designer so I get exposed to ideas about masterplans and psychogeography and public space, and all of those things just through proximity and that's, of course, had an influence on my work as well. He worked on the grasshopper part of this, the unity and the coding are completely new to me for this project, so learning that language and figuring out the logic of it have been incredibly rewarding and I think that's something that I'd like to do more of in my future work. I've never really been able to just pick one medium and stick with it. I'm super interdisciplinary but that idea of a futures that didn't quite work out and failed aspirations and unfulfilled hopes, those are things that keep on springing up across everything that I make, I guess I have a kind of fascination with disappointment.

If I were living 500 years in the future, I think I'd be some kind of digital ghost or maybe a sentient AI, still just trolling the internet and spamming everyone with pictures of old metro stations. Hope you enjoyed this little escalator ride. Thank you for listening