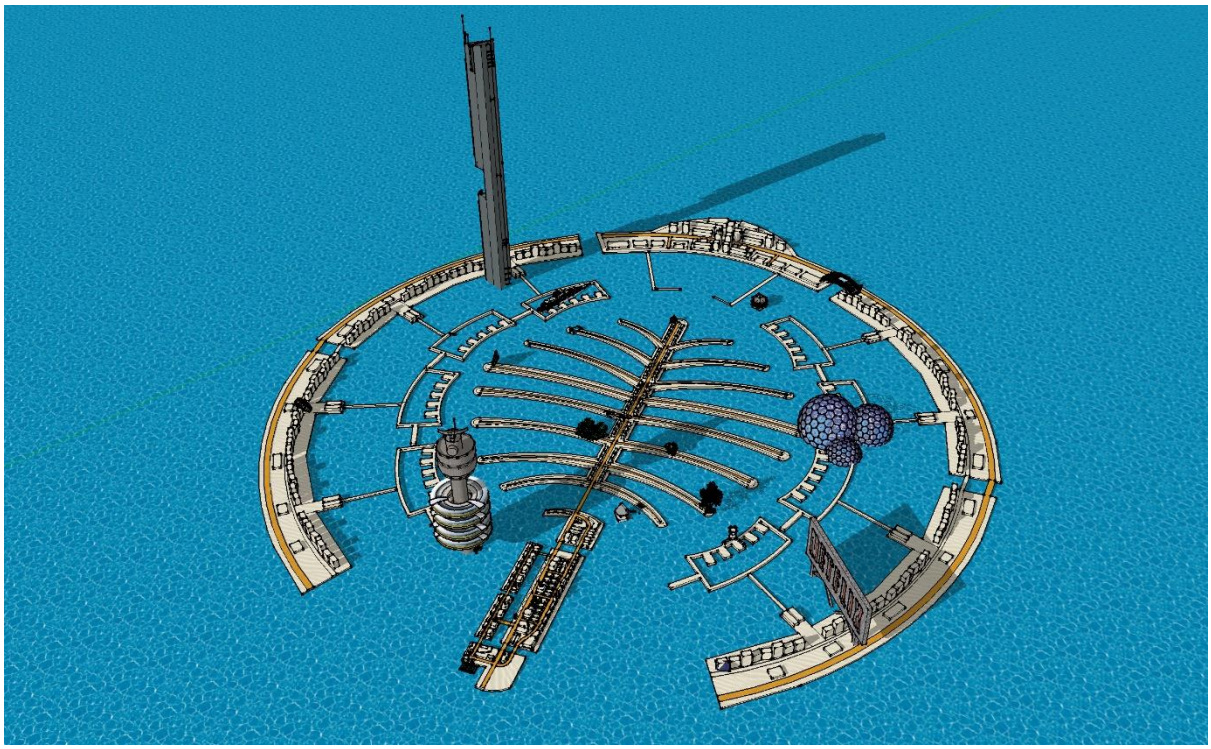
Bob Bicknell-Knight
Palm Island, 2016
Sketchup Residency



Life in the middle of the ocean is incredibly peaceful. Blue seas lap shores, teeming with rays, hermit crabs and barracudas. Trees that stretch up magnificently towards the beaming sun. But at a closer look, the tallest trees are, in fact, mobile phone masts dressed up to look like palms. And those beautiful shores are not the result of waves eroding the softer rocks, leaving harder ones exposed but many hours of human labor.

This is no picture-book desert island. Its size is the most arresting characteristic; an eight-lane motorway is at the Palm's trunk, and each frond is a mile long. Lawns routinely wither without intense watering. Meanwhile, there is yet more expansion, with 40 hotels being built on the breakwater.

Palm Island is the location of Bob Bicknell-Knight's residency. He has taken on the conceptual insanity of the site and responded by creating an almost Easter egg style hunt, tucking hidden gems into every nook and cranny. The island has visibly transformed into a surveillance state, full of Utopian ideas from videogames and films with additional content from contemporary society.

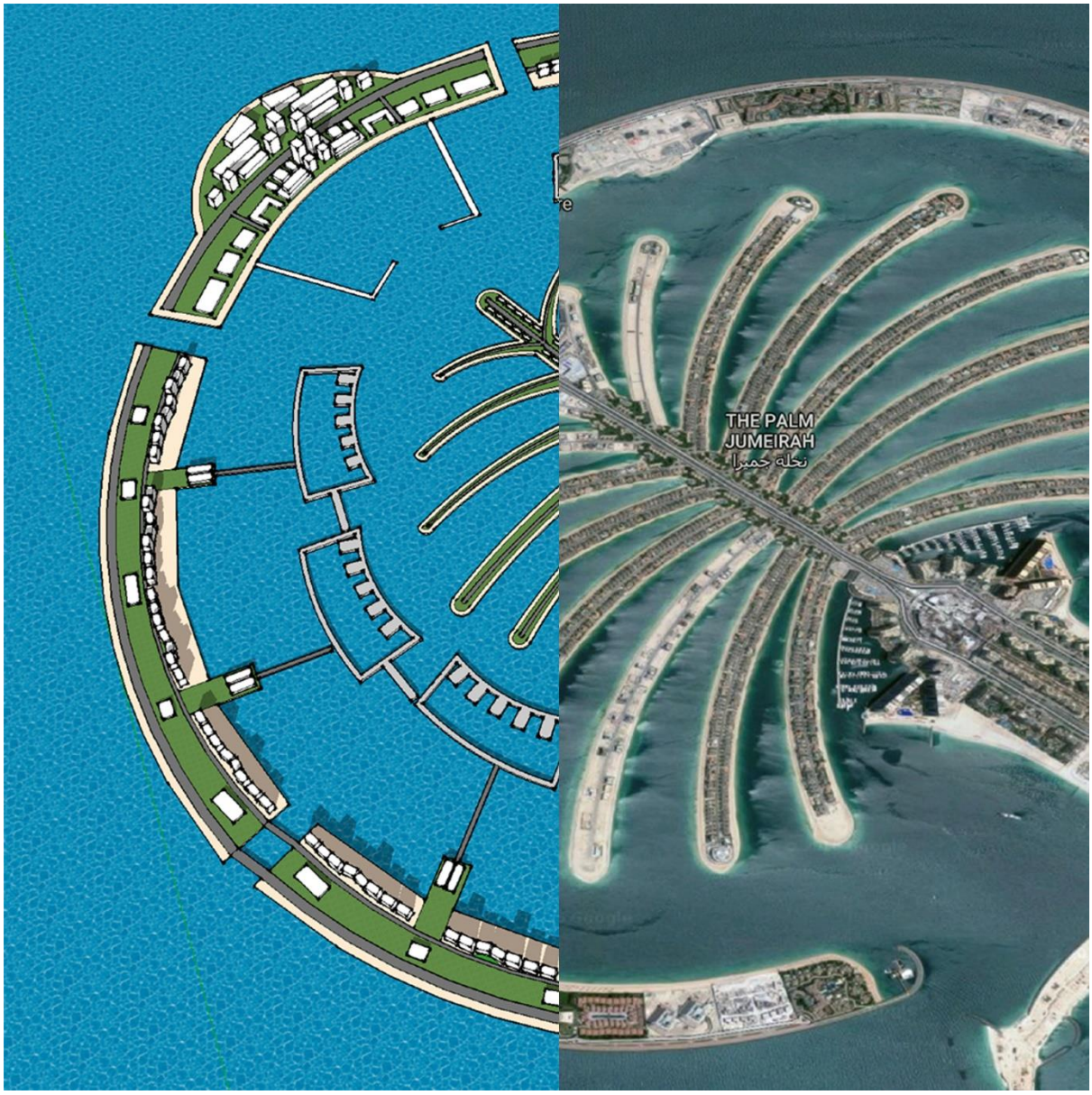
Taking one object as an example, the Venetian bridges hint at Venice's seemingly Utopian petty crime statistics. One would assume that Venice, with its tiny streets and dark alleyways, would be a hub for petty crimes, but in reality it isn't; this is mostly due to tourism, which would be directly affected if crime on the streets rose. This is somewhat peculiar correlation, capitalism reducing crime, and crime reducing capitalism. A simple idea; whenever capitalism is seen to be overhauled, riots occur, shoplifting on a massive scale whilst vandalism occurs in droves. So, dispite their haphazard appearance all these objects nod, like the example above, to Utopian thoughts or considerations. References to the Internet can also be seen throughout, from the gigantic, pebble-textured Netflix billboard on one side to the pair of Bitcoins covertly

situated in line with the outer circle of houses on the other. These scattered tributes can be seen as allusions toward the Internet's highly connected, self perpetuating disposition.

The physical structure of Palm Island itself mirrors the many-to-many communication paradigm that we see throughout the online world; its branches reaching out like multiple users contributing and receiving information, inputting and receiving, connecting and communicating dynamically within a flexibly formed scope.

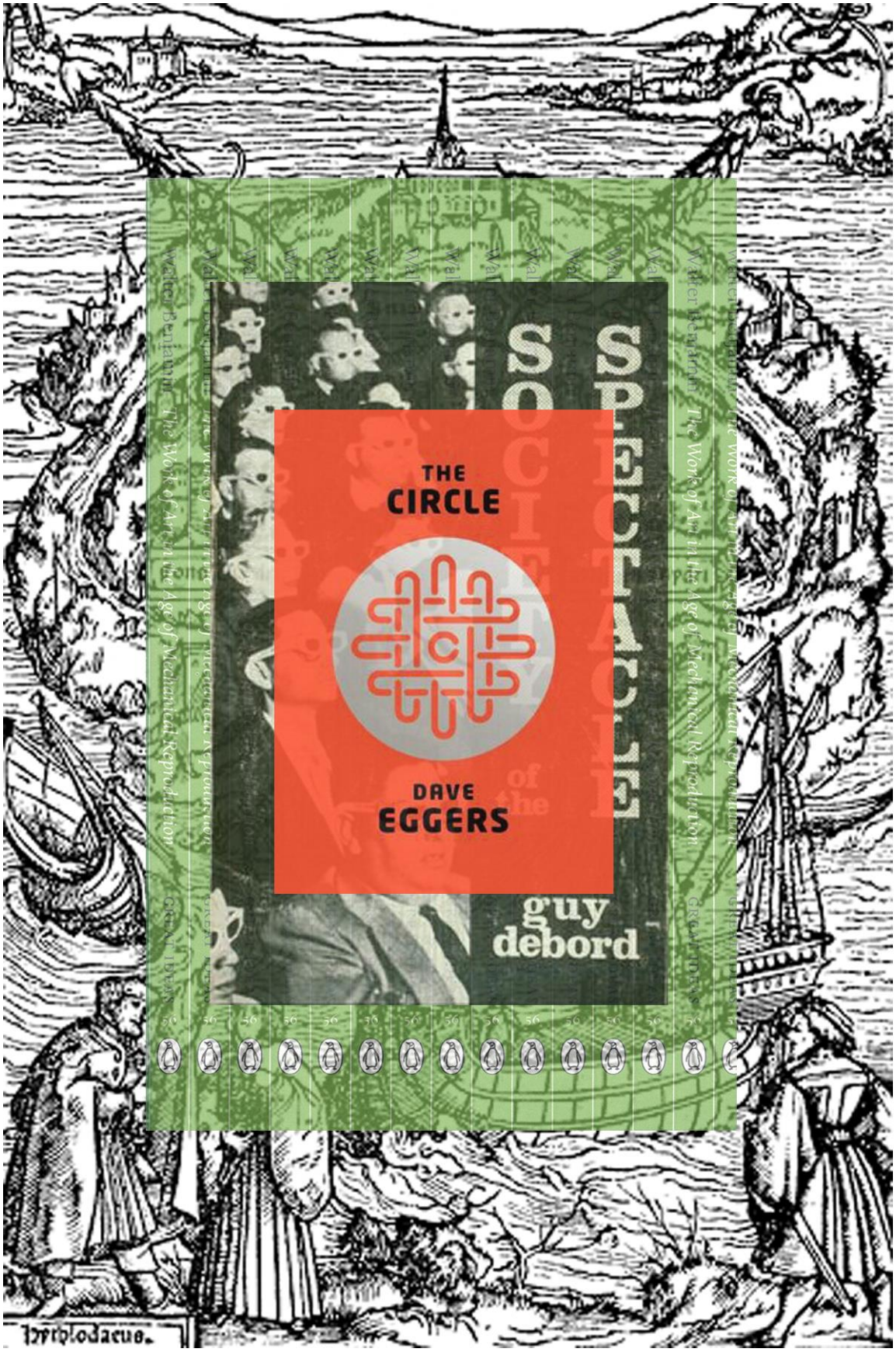
The Internet is flashy and enticing but unquestionably has a dark side in true Palm Island spirit…

To view the 3D model, please go to sketchfab.com/3d-models/palm-island-893d913c03d84e6eafa8a240aa7a01dd

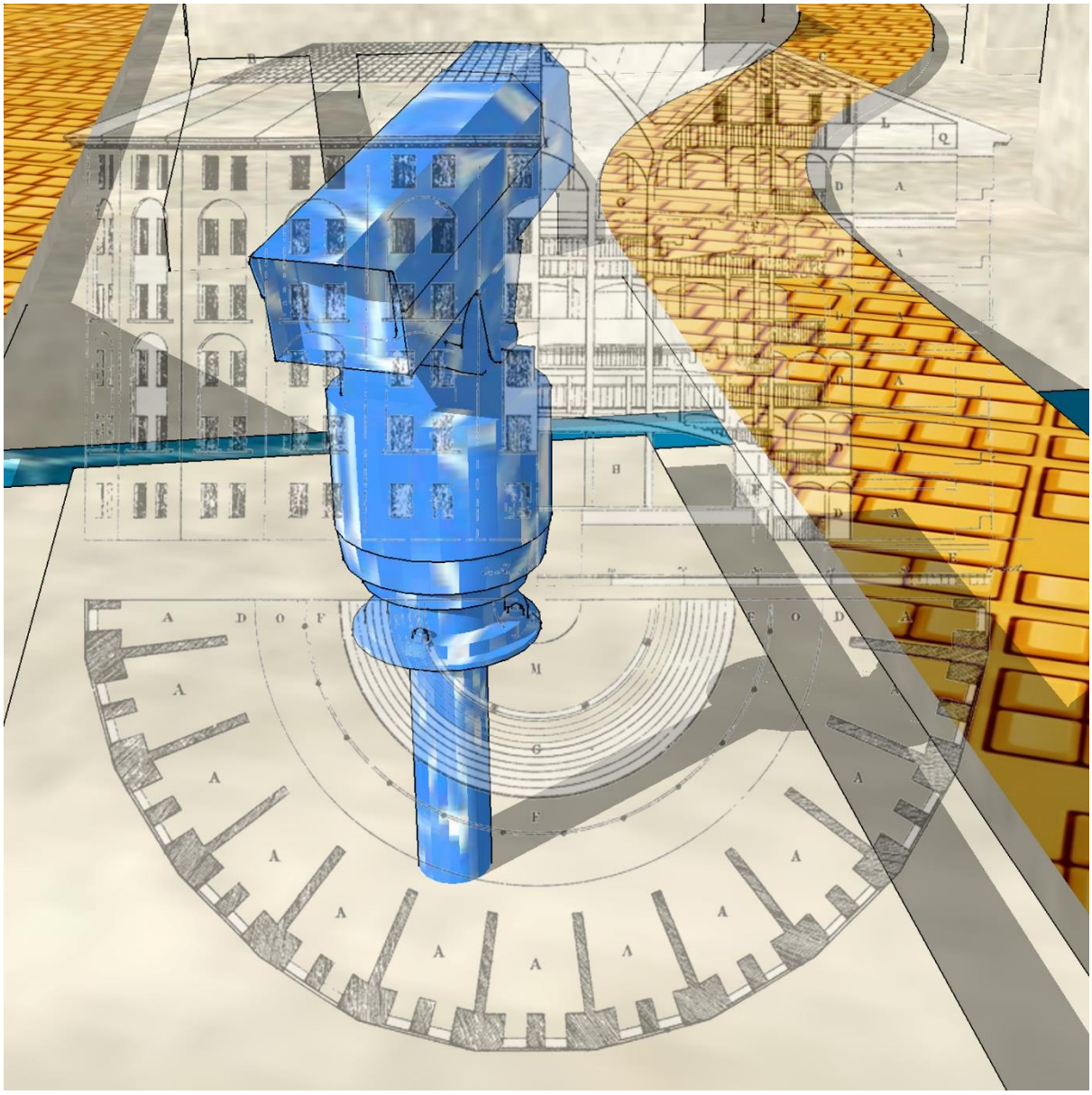


Palm Island, 2016
Digital image

Palm Island, 2016
Digital image



Palm Island, 2016
Digital image



Palm Island, 2016
Digital image

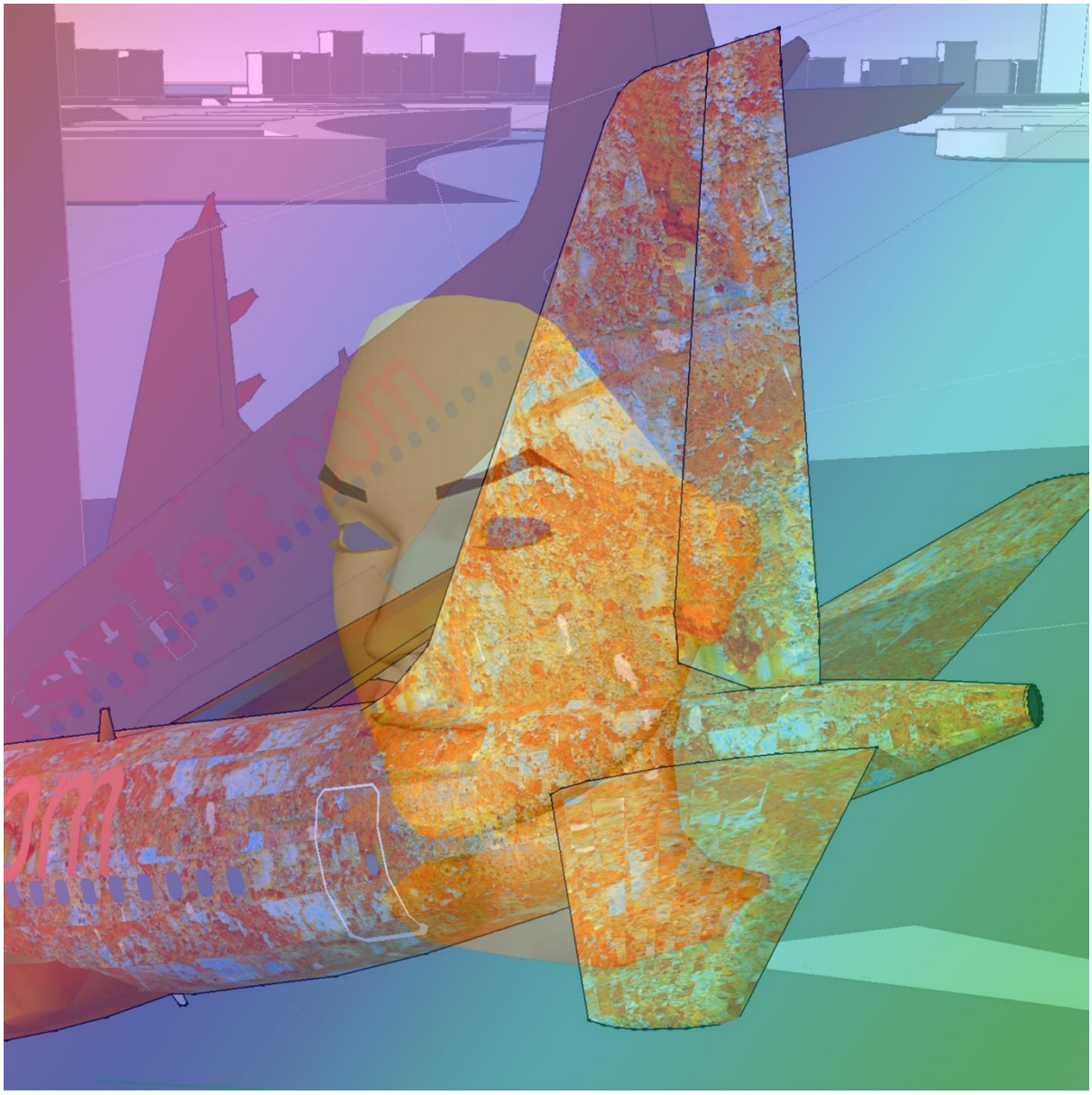
Palm Island, 2016
Digital image

Palm Island, 2016
Digital image

Palm Island, 2016
Digital image

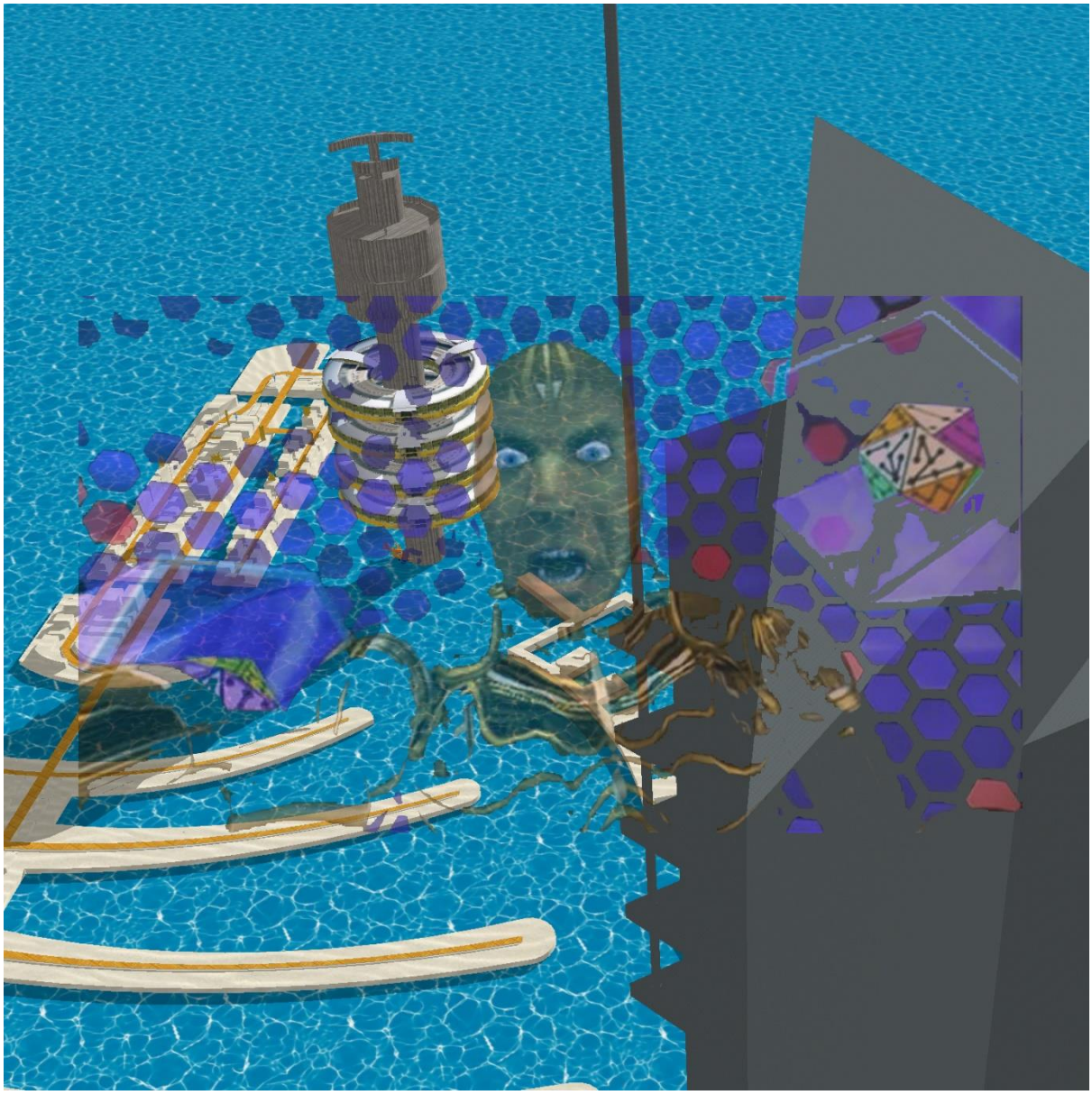
Palm Island, 2016
Digital image

Palm Island, 2016
Digital image



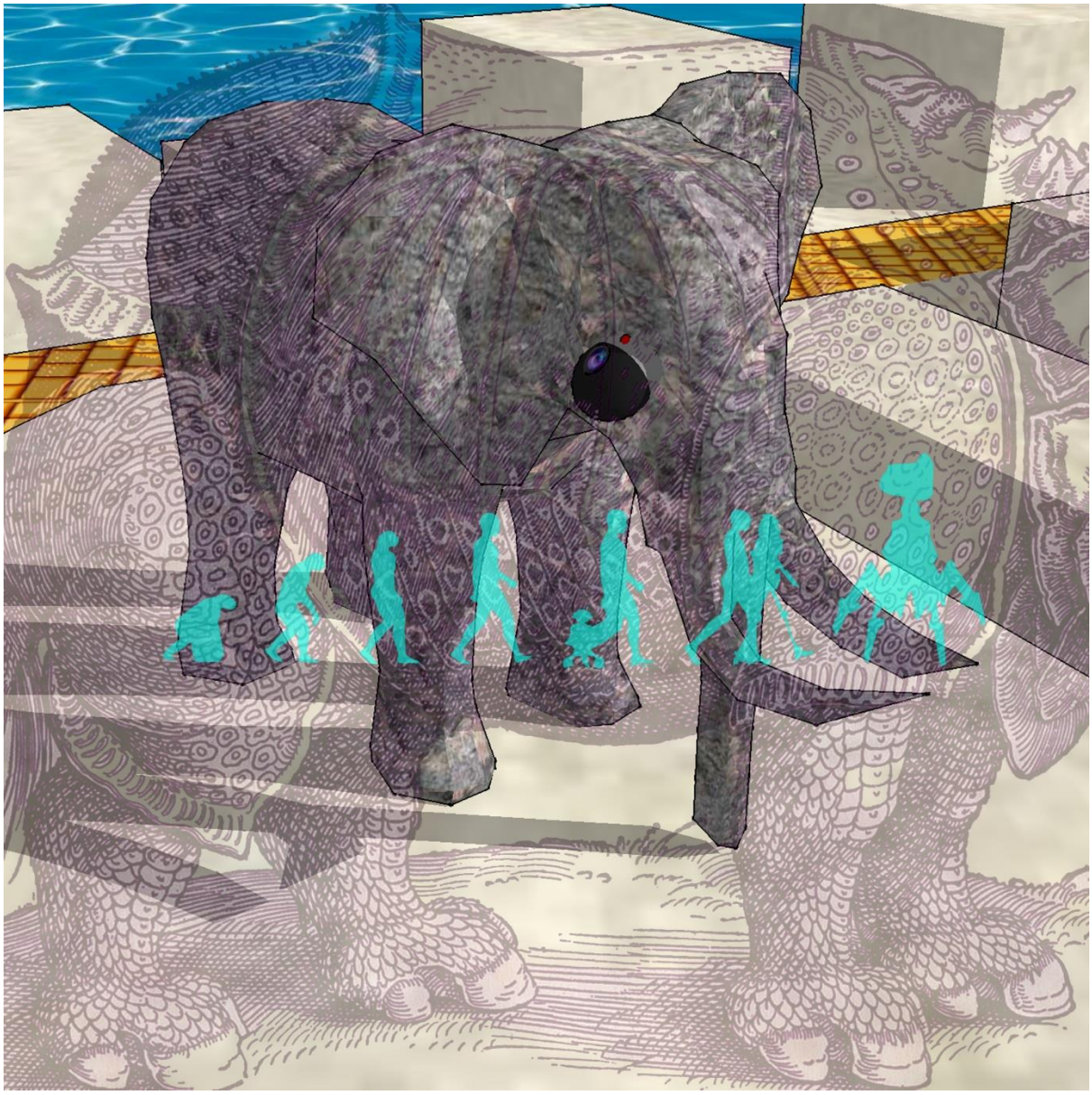
Palm Island, 2016
Digital image

Palm Island, 2016
Digital image



Palm Island, 2016
Digital image

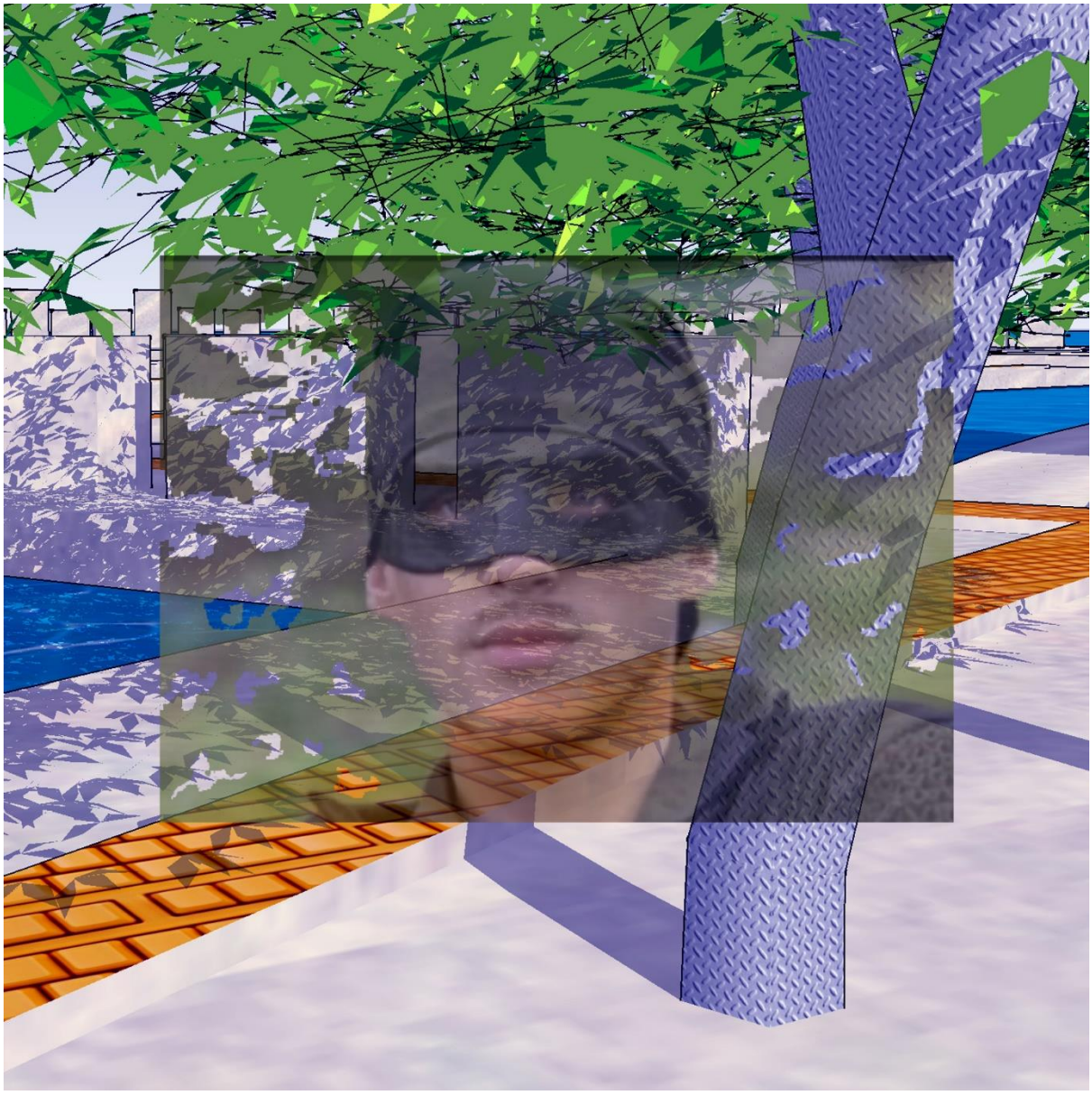
Palm Island, 2016
Digital image



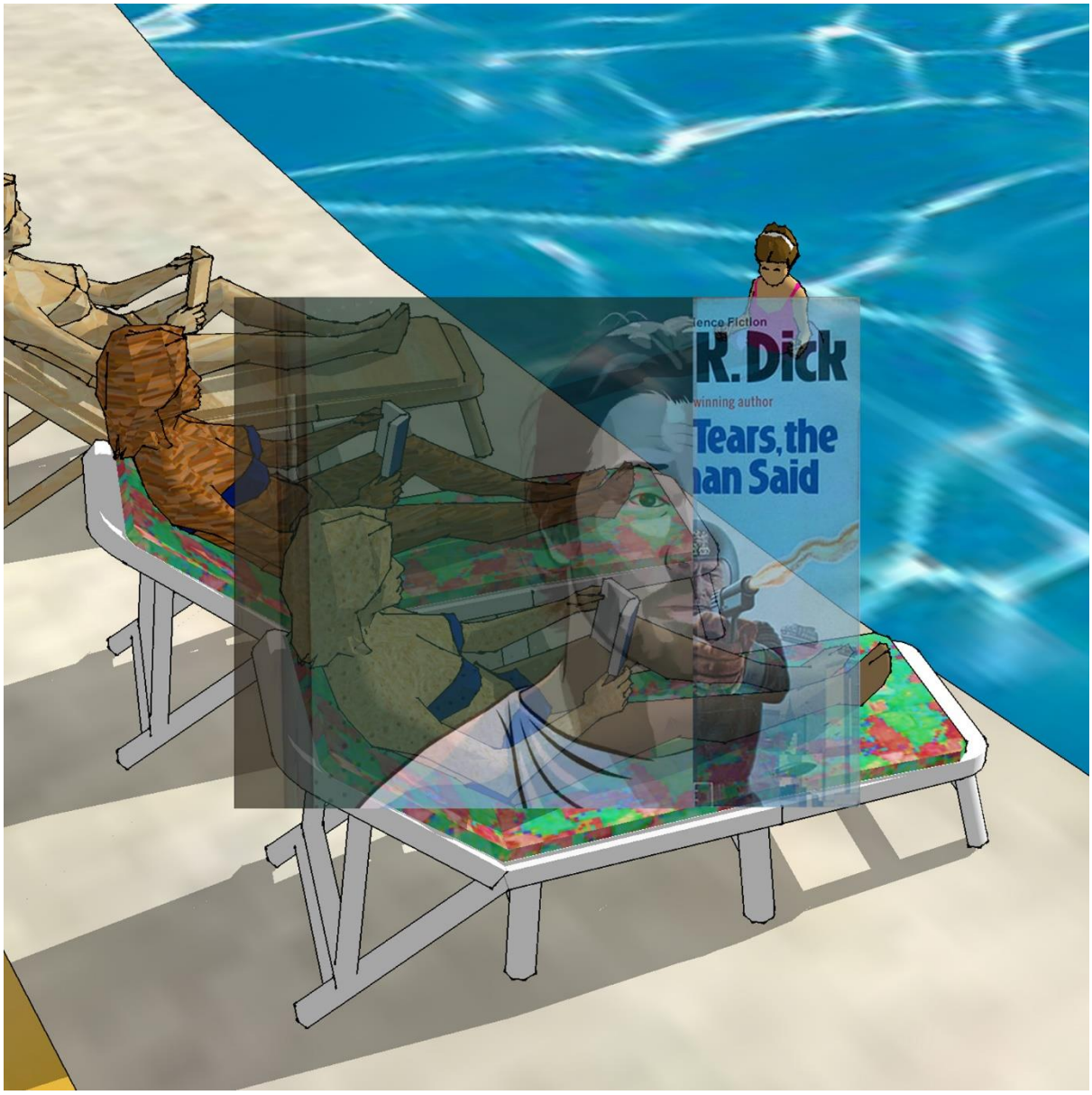
Palm Island, 2016
Digital image

Palm Island, 2016
Digital image

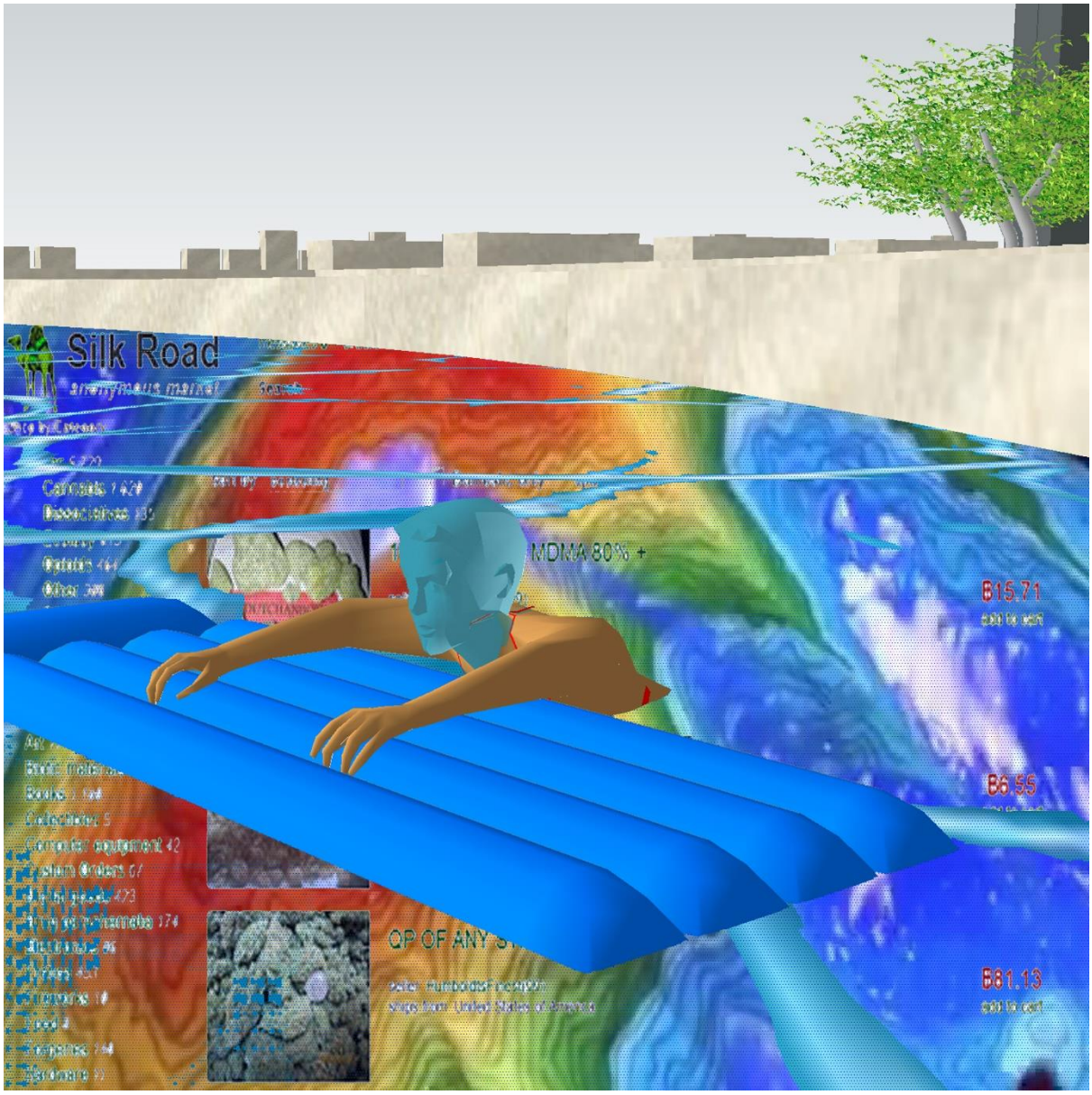
Palm Island, 2016
Digital image



Palm Island, 2016
Digital image

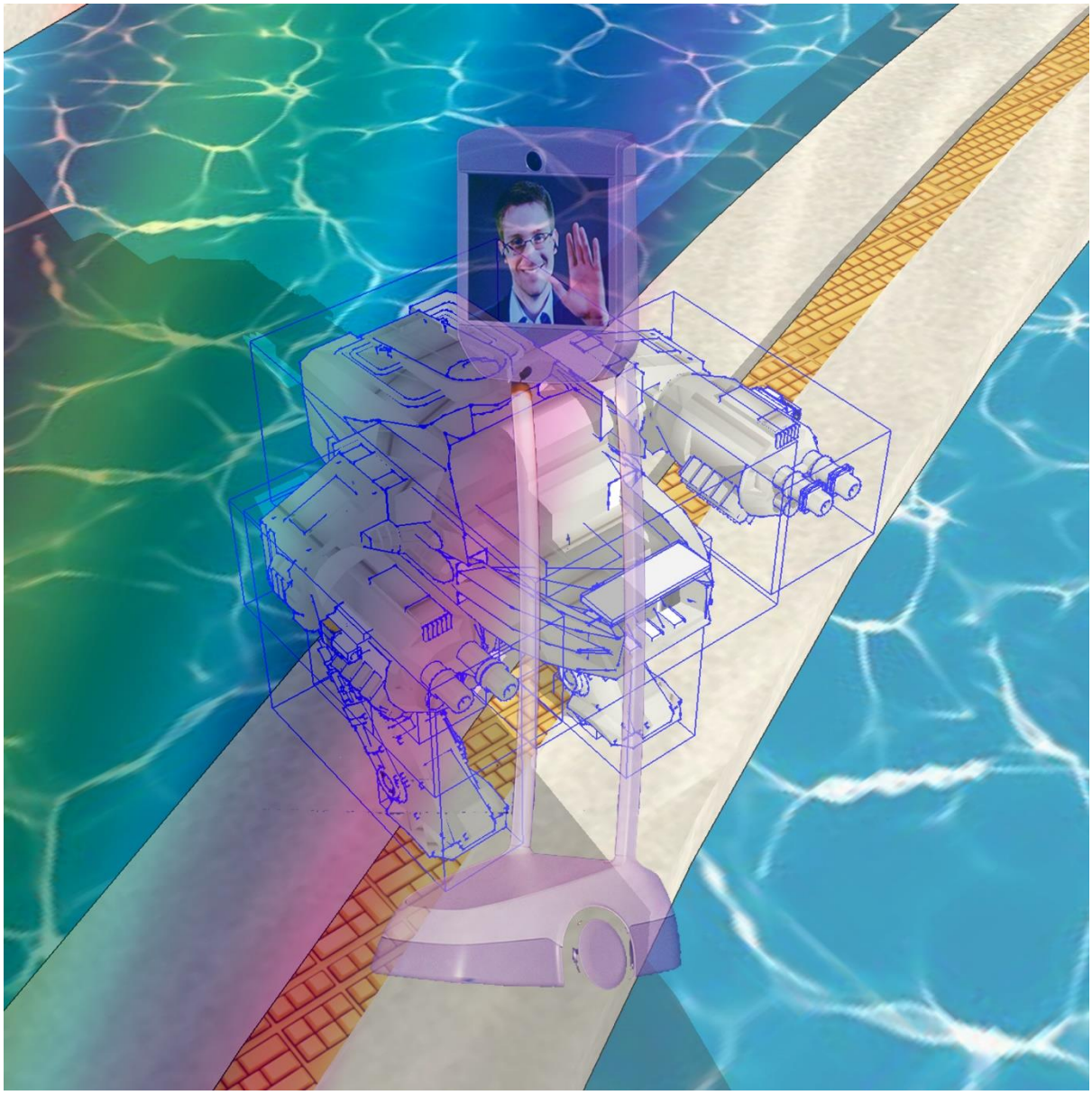


Palm Island, 2016
Digital image

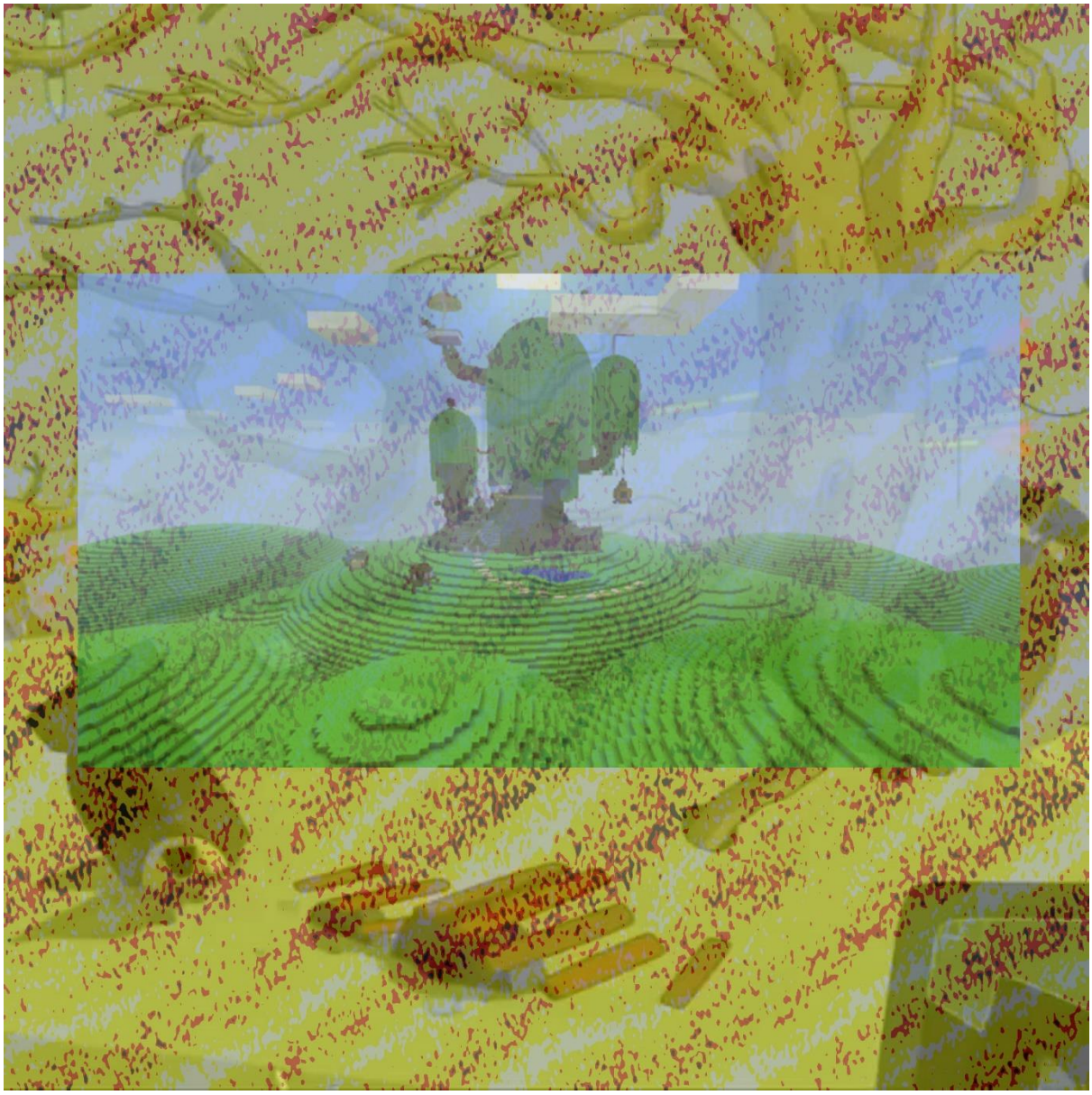


Palm Island, 2016
Digital image

Palm Island, 2016
Digital image



Palm Island, 2016
Digital image



Palm Island, 2016
Digital image

Palm Island, 2016
Digital image

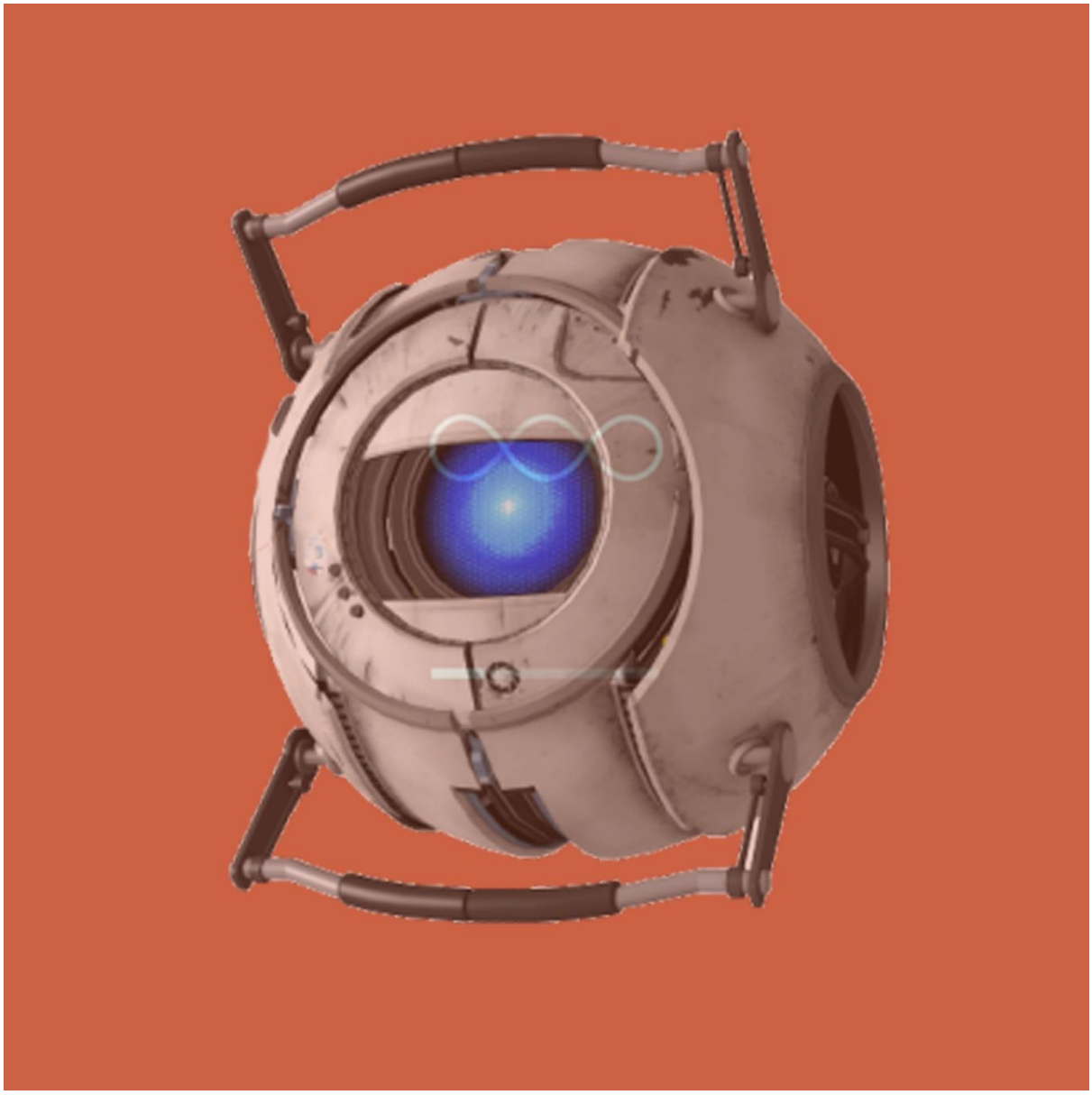
Palm Island, 2016
Digital image

Palm Island, 2016
Digital image

Palm Island, 2016
Digital image

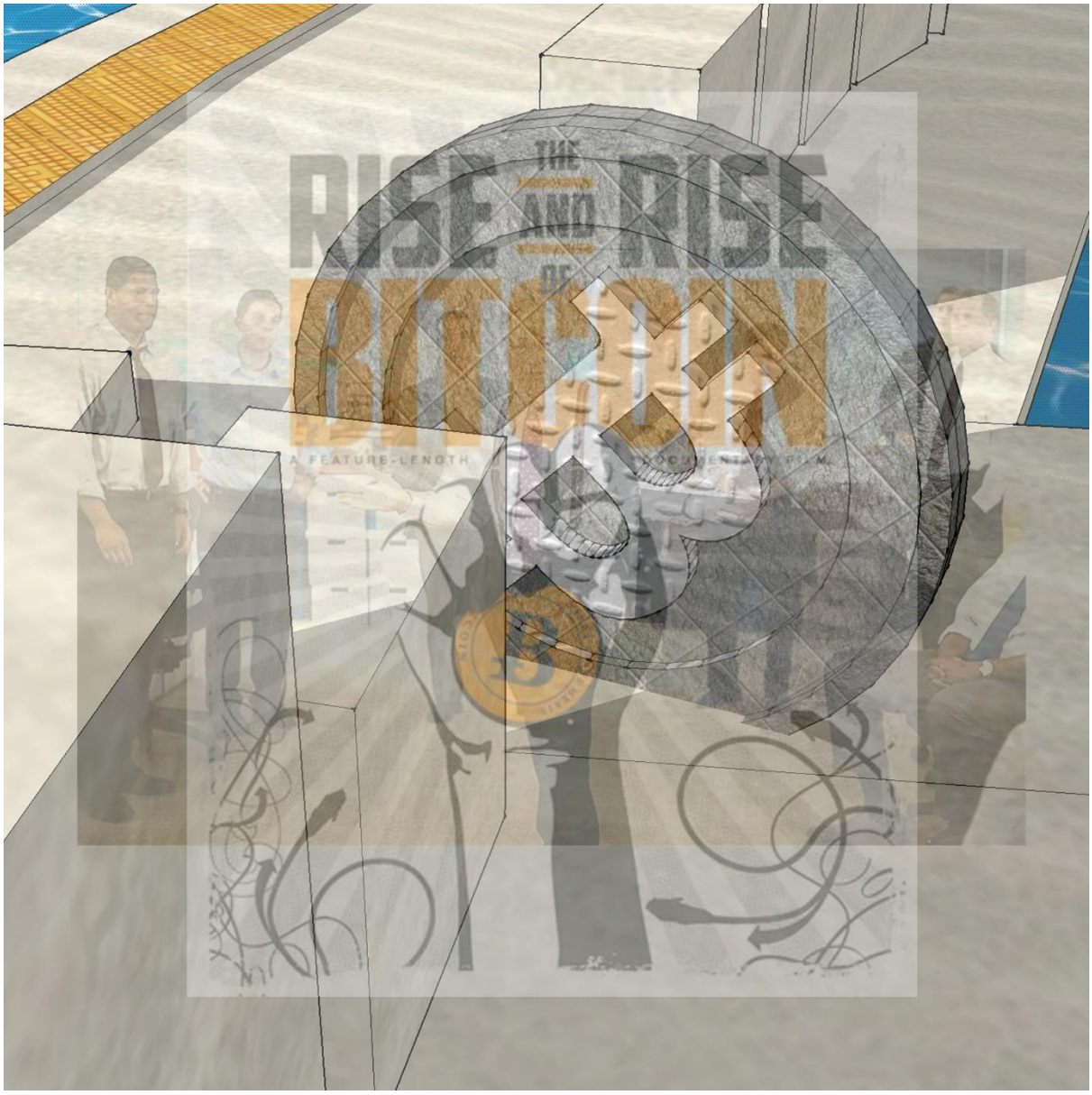
Palm Island, 2016
Digital image

Palm Island, 2016
Digital image

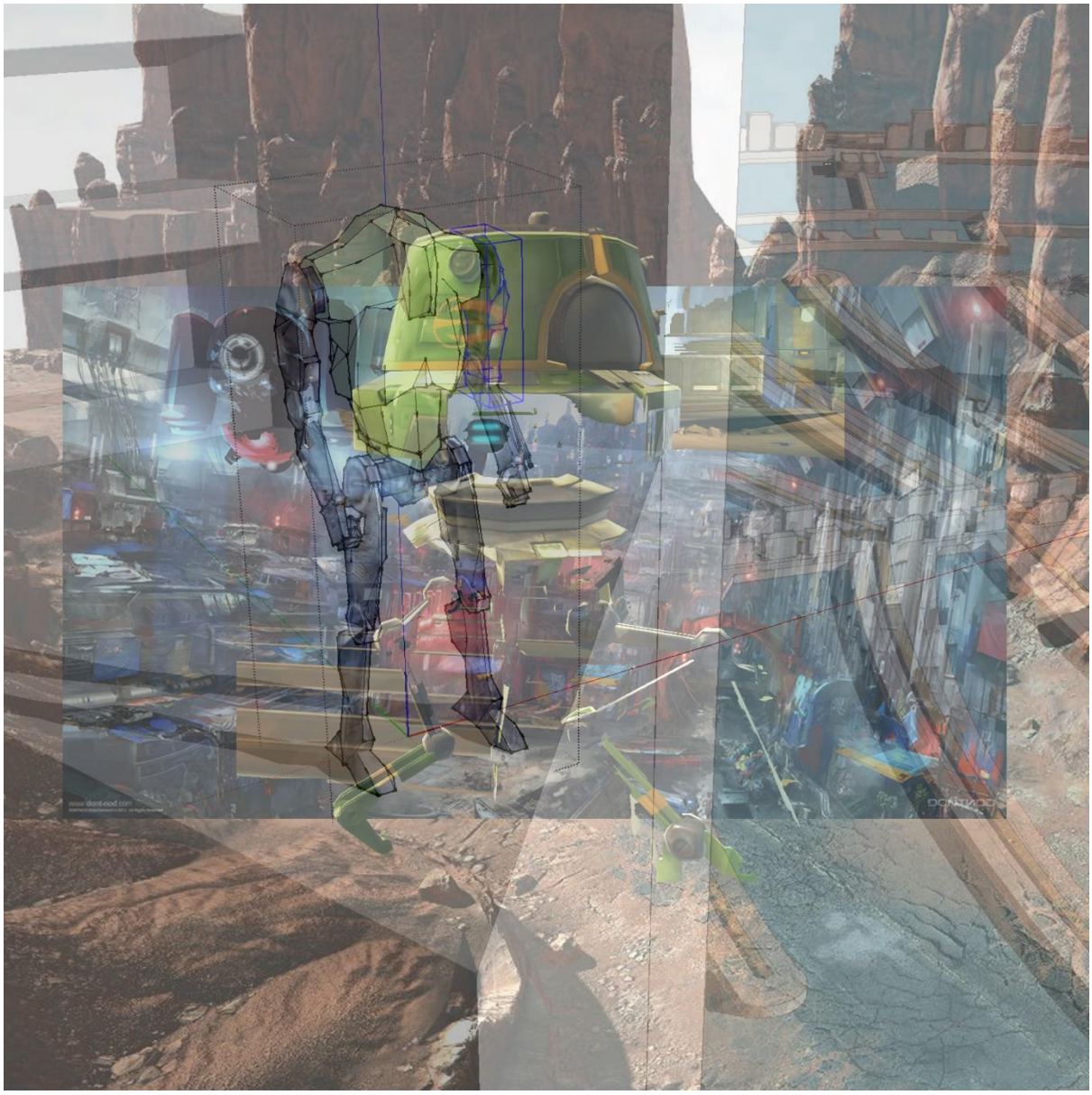


Palm Island, 2016
Digital image

Palm Island, 2016
Digital image

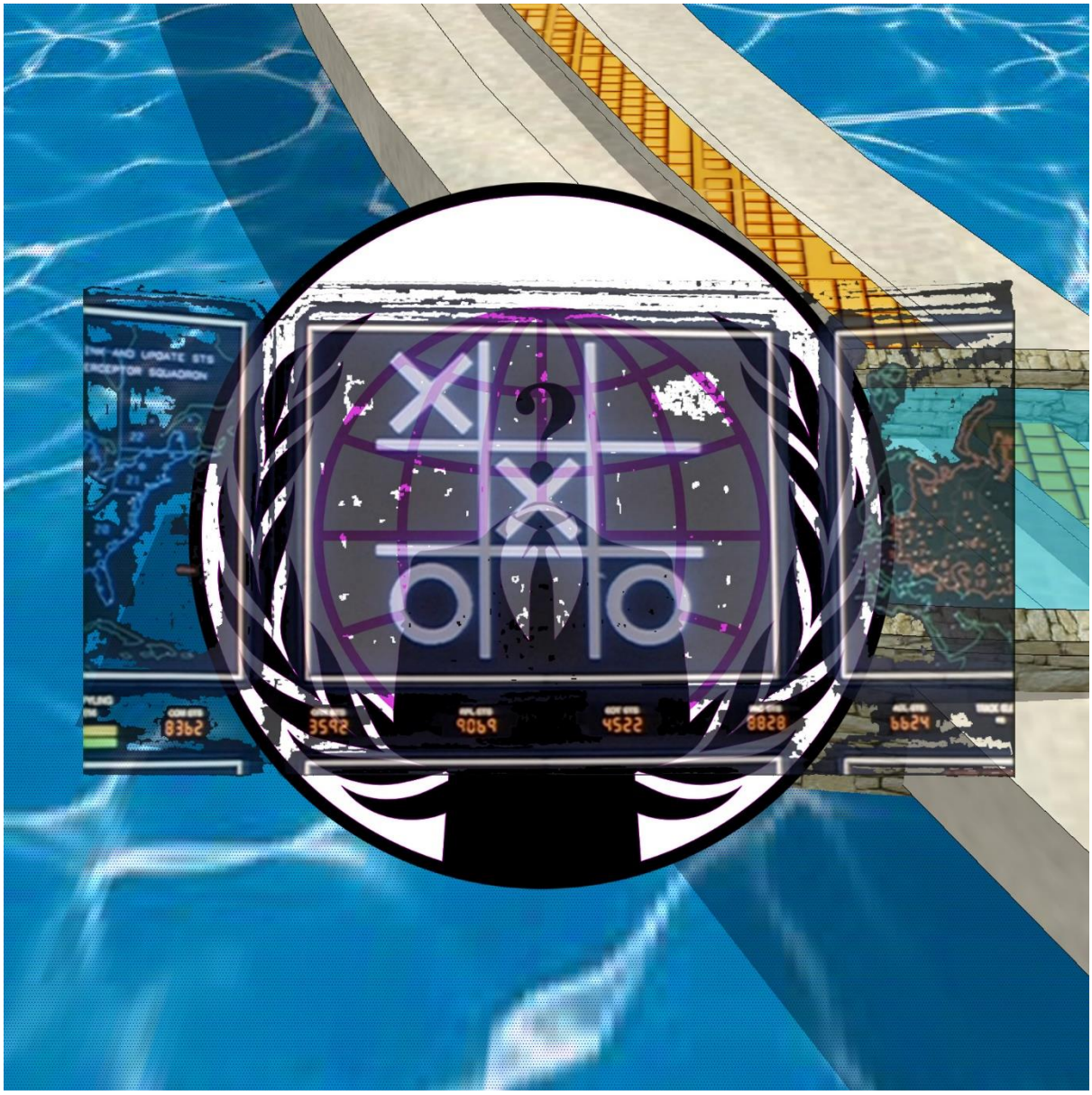


Palm Island, 2016
Digital image



Palm Island, 2016
Digital image

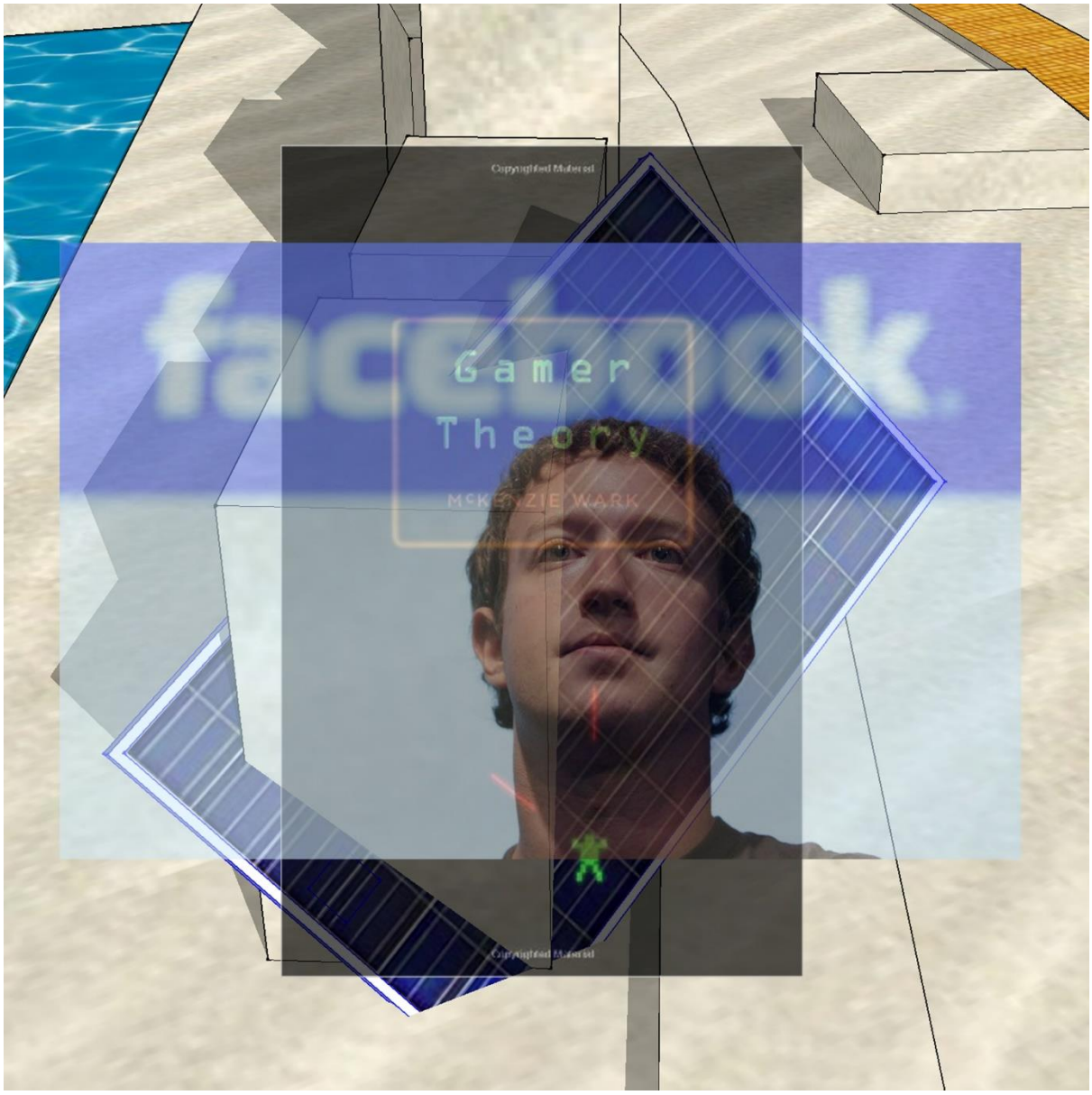
Palm Island, 2016
Digital image



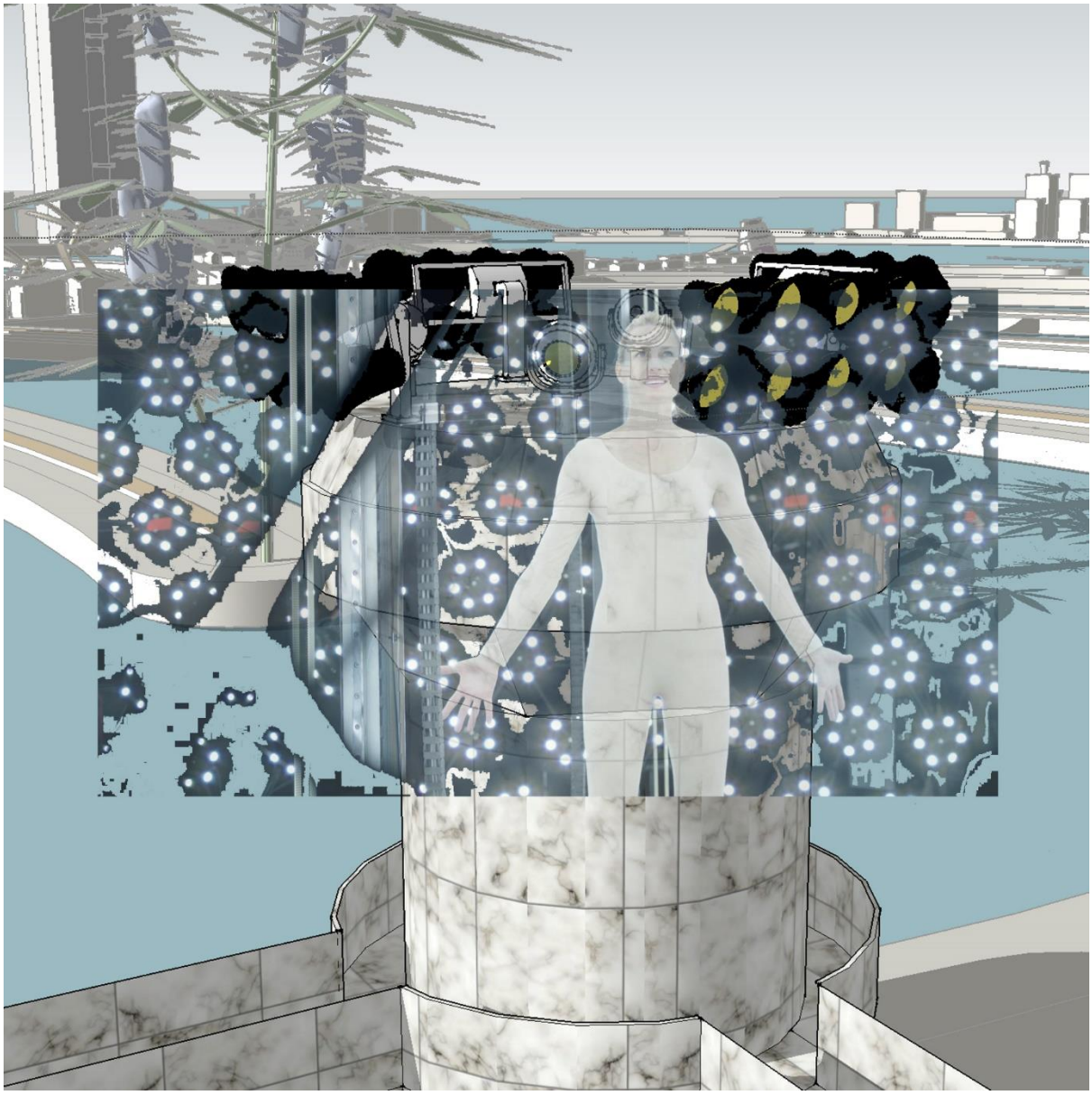
Palm Island, 2016
Digital image

Palm Island, 2016
Digital image

Palm Island, 2016
Digital image

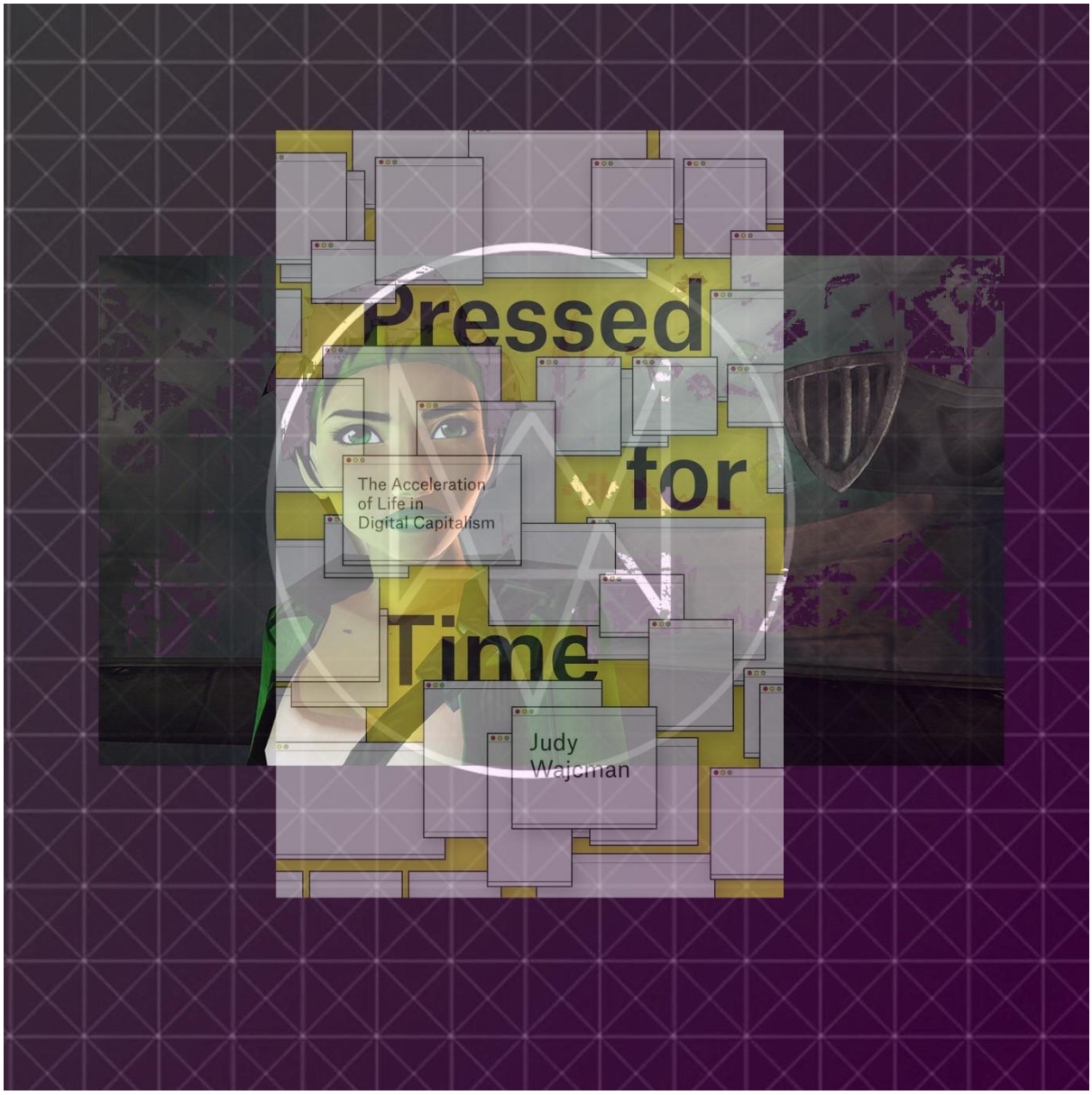


Palm Island, 2016
Digital image



Palm Island, 2016
Digital image

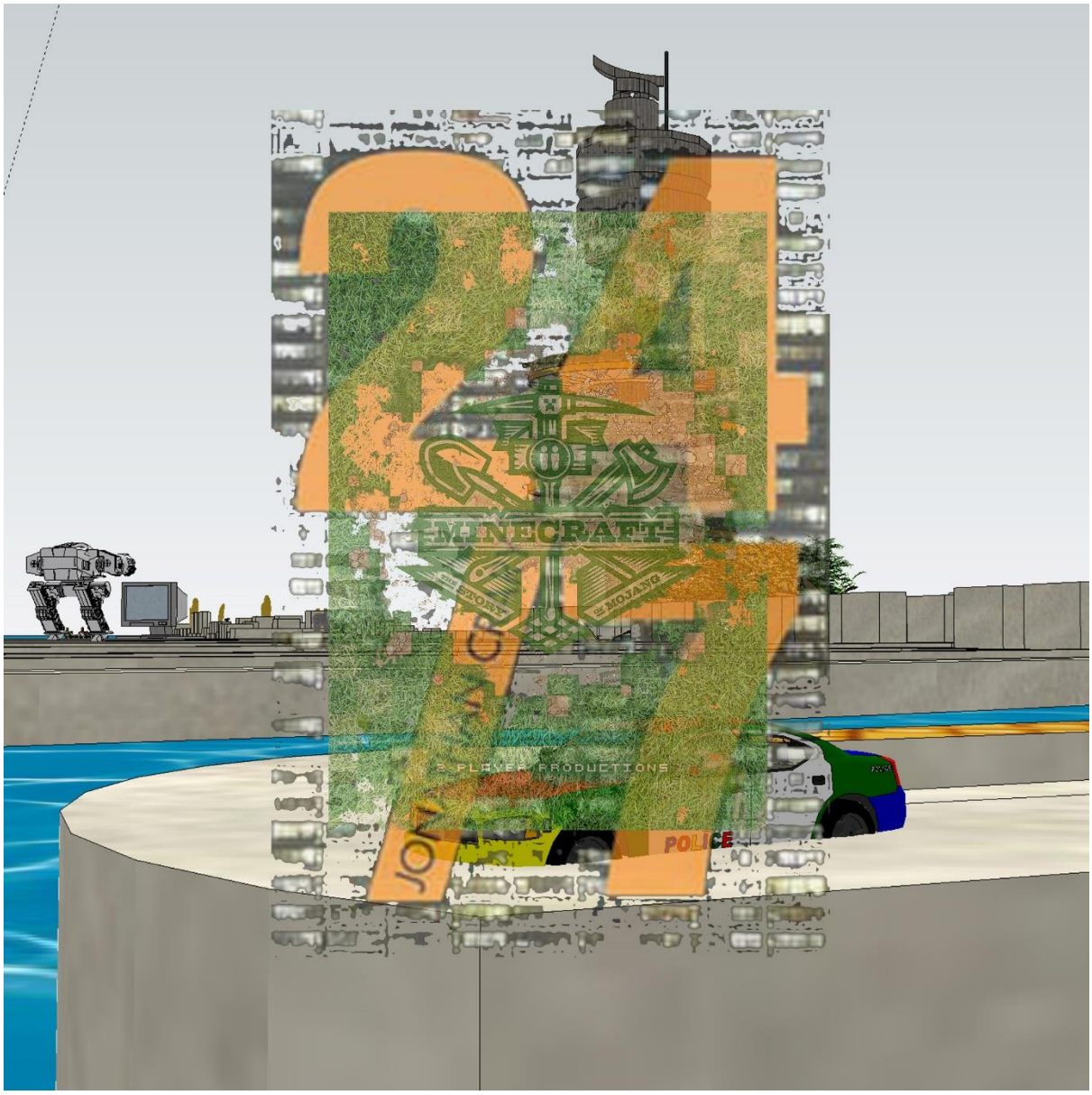
Palm Island, 2016
Digital image



Palm Island, 2016
Digital image

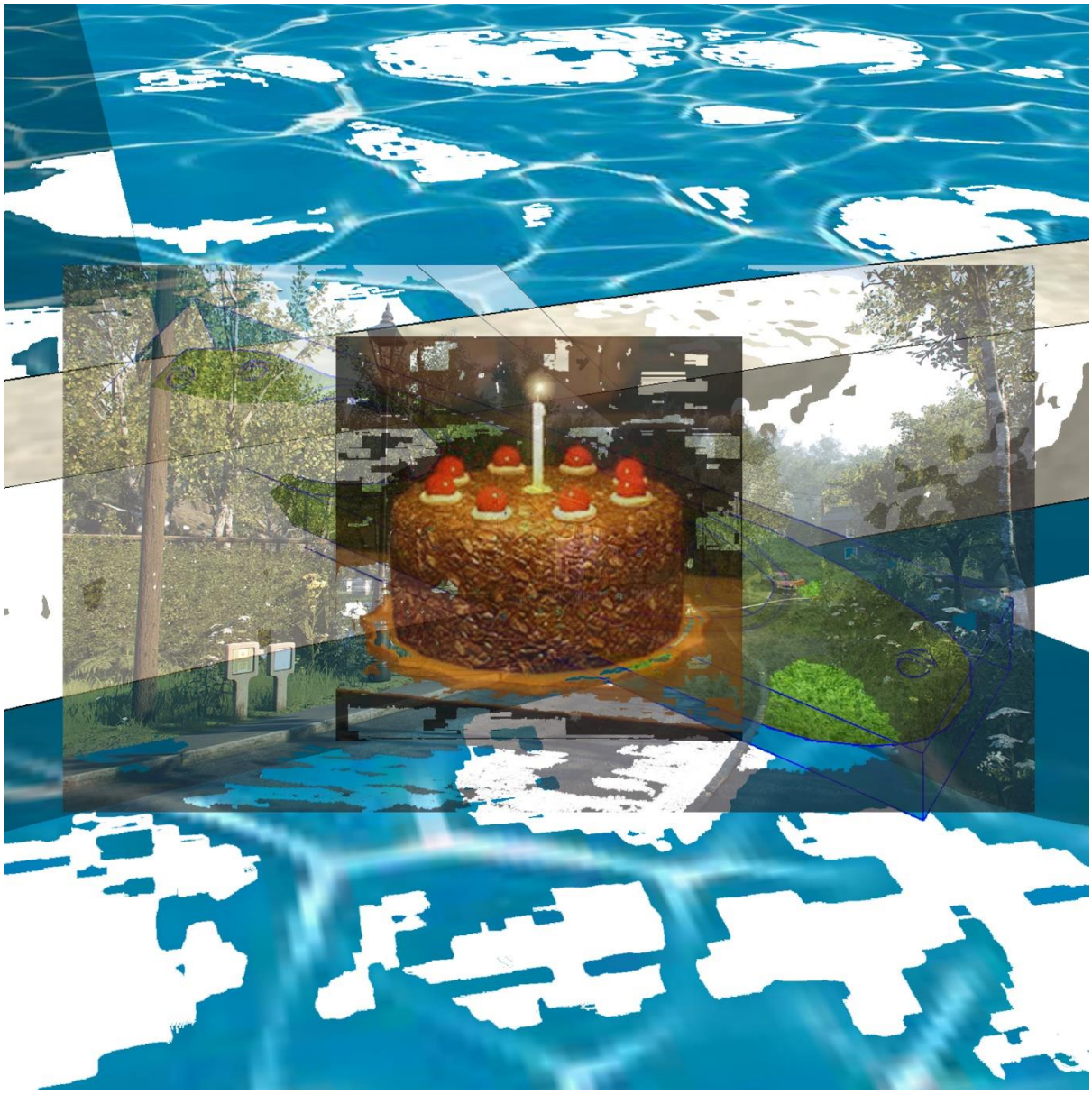
Palm Island, 2016
Digital image

Palm Island, 2016
Digital image



Palm Island, 2016
Digital image

Palm Island, 2016
Digital image

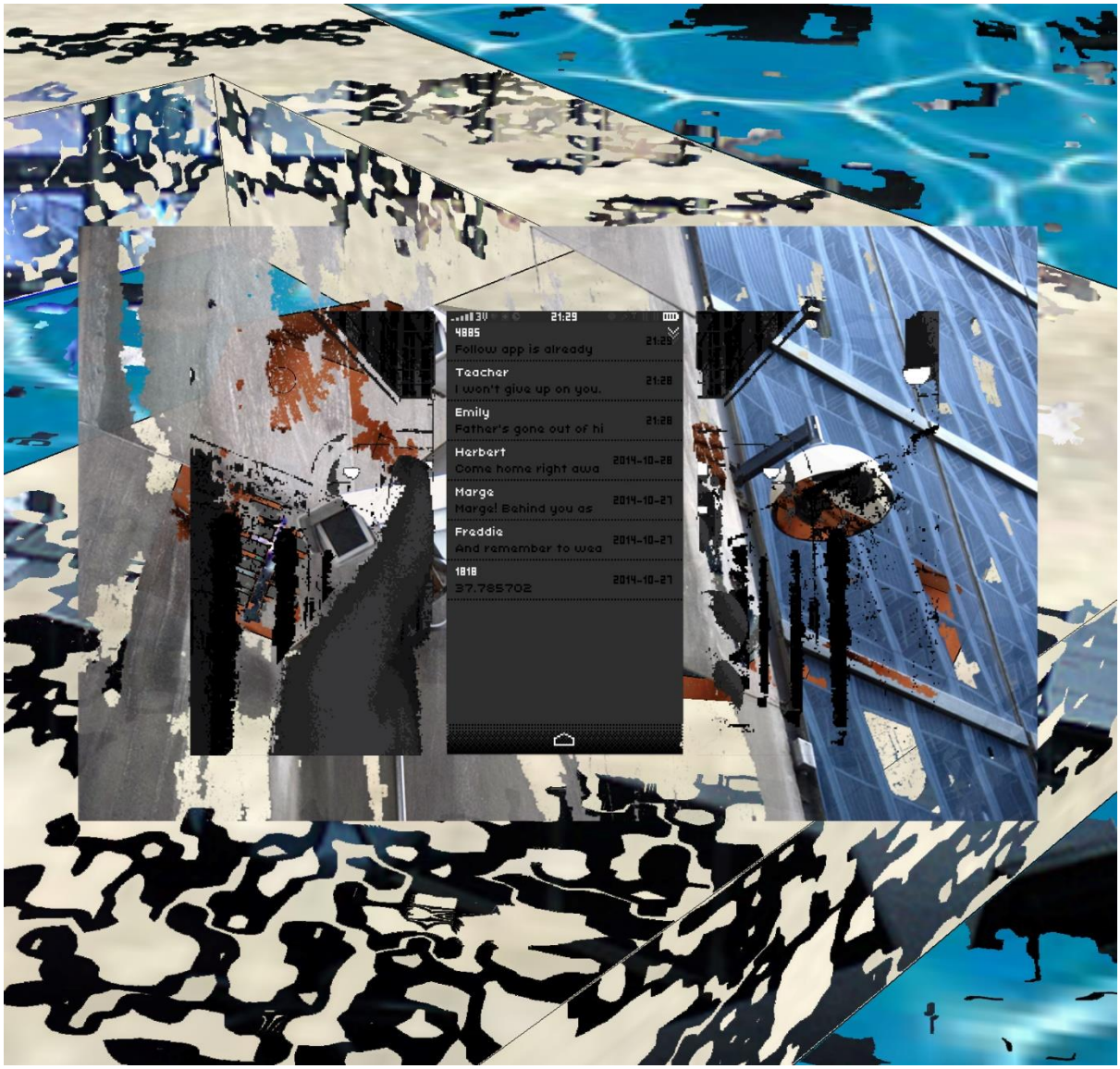


Palm Island, 2016
Digital image

Palm Island, 2016
Digital image

Palm Island, 2016
Digital image

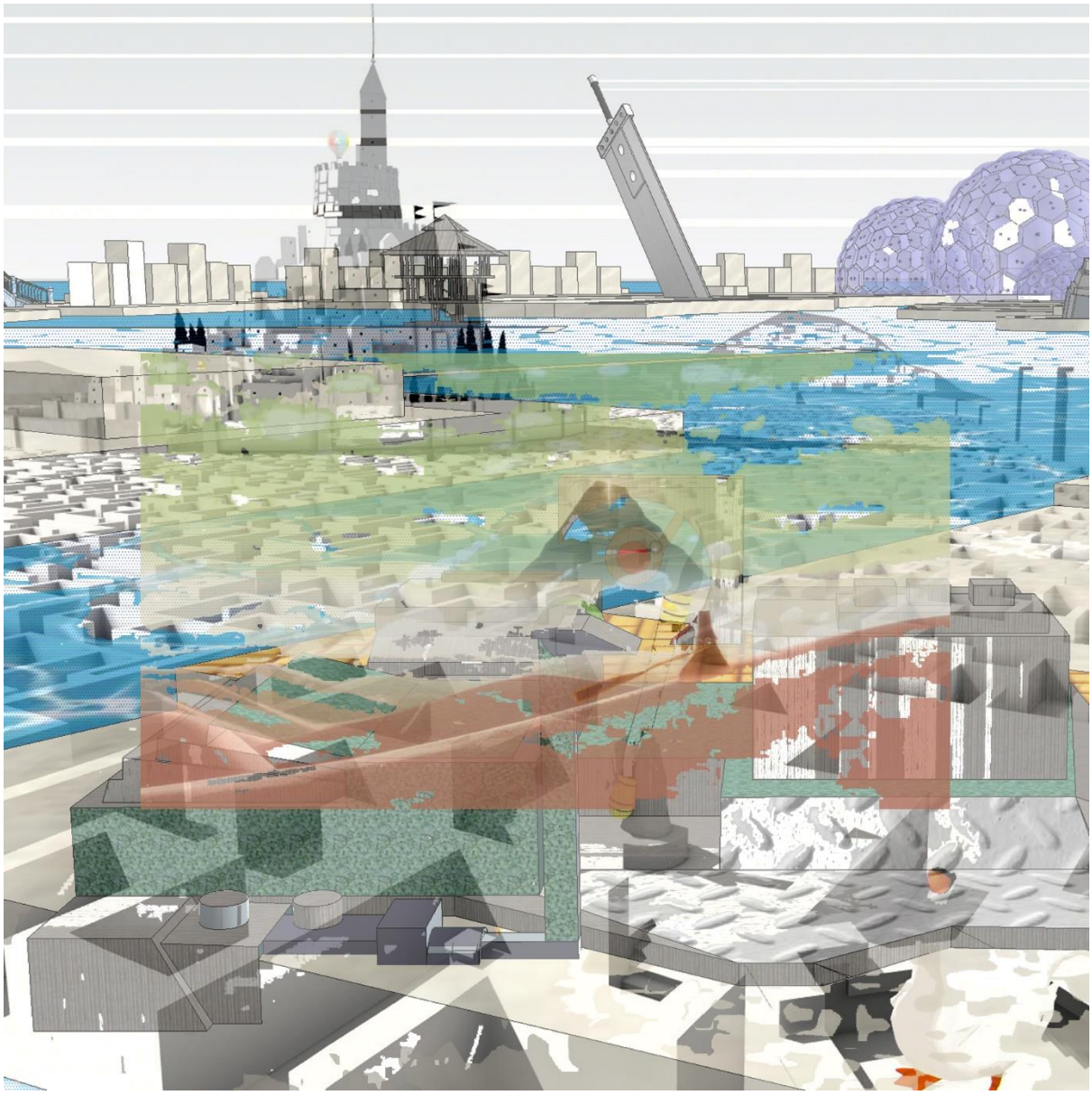
Palm Island, 2016
Digital image



Palm Island, 2016
Digital image

Palm Island, 2016
Digital image

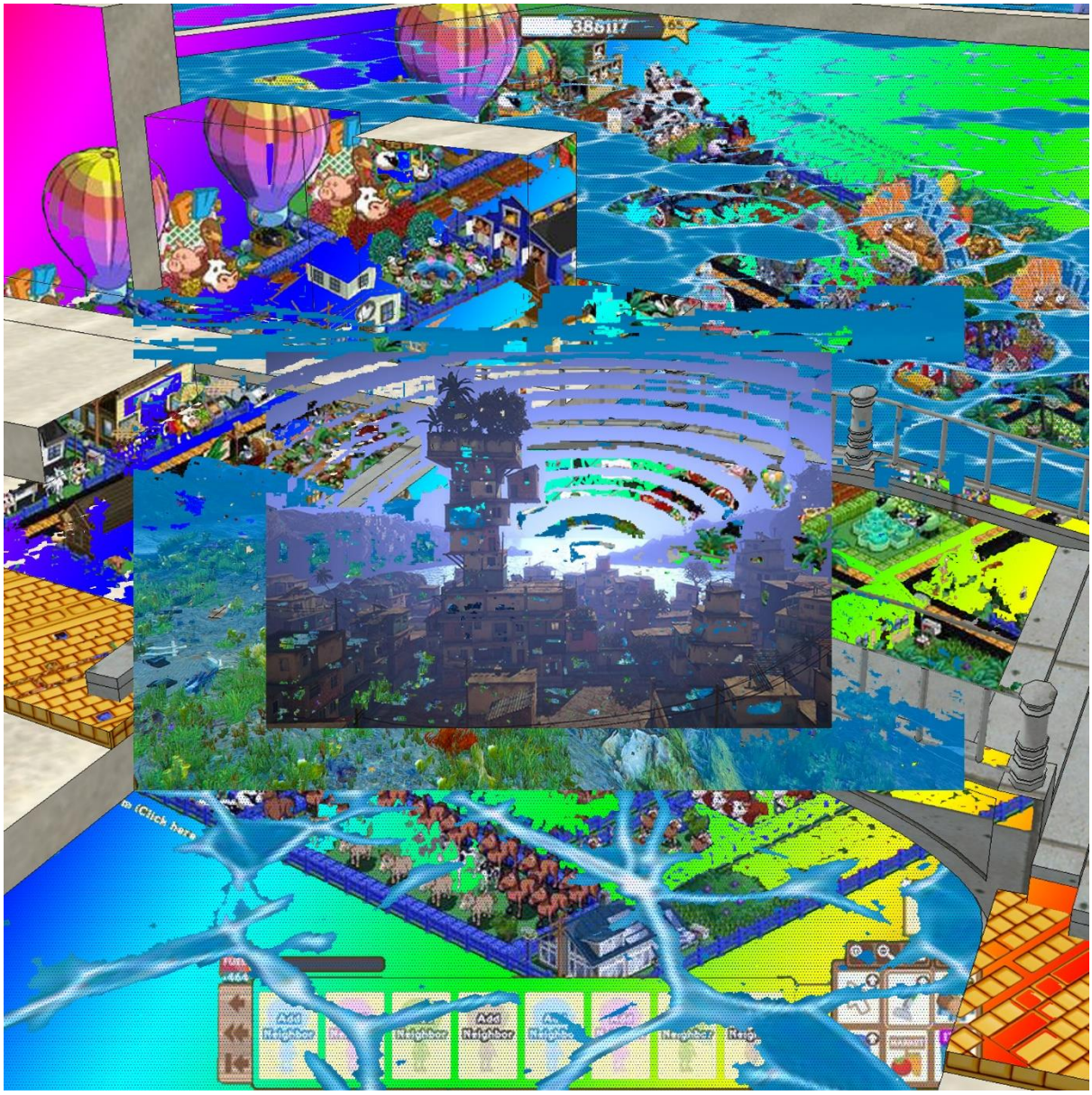
Palm Island, 2016
Digital image



Palm Island, 2016
Digital image

Palm Island, 2016
Digital image

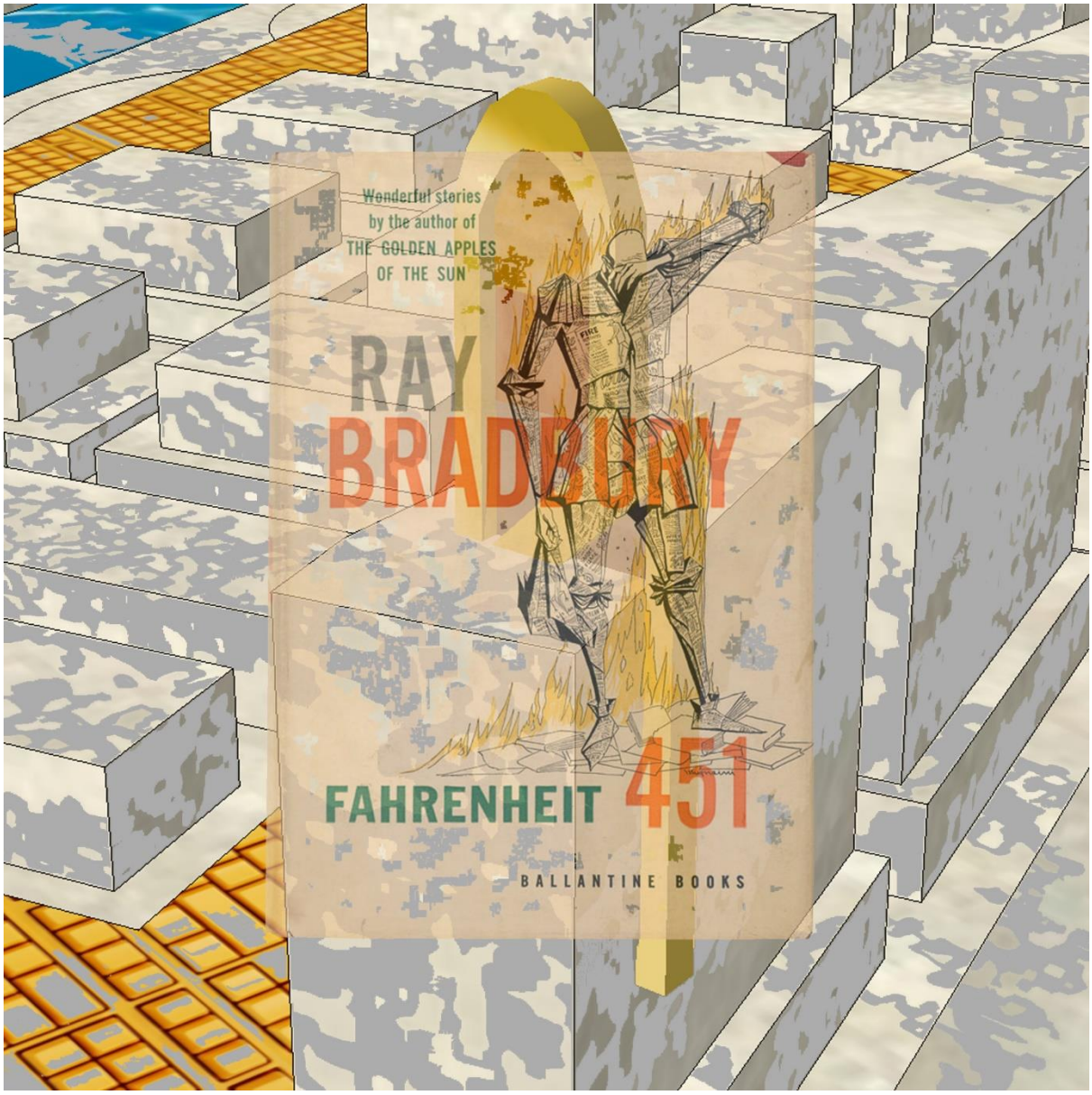
Palm Island, 2016
Digital image



Palm Island, 2016
Digital image

Palm Island, 2016
Digital image

Palm Island, 2016
Digital image



Palm Island, 2016
Digital image

Palm Island, 2016
Digital image