

## Comparative Technologies: Final Reflections

### **The Creo Festival Interactive Art Experience** [Google Sketch-Up & 3D Modelling]

This Spring Quarter I have dedicated a portion of my academic life to Google Sketch-Up. I see this as an incredibly valuable investment in my future: most of the employment postings I have researched specify a 3D modelling skillset as mandatory. My career goals include working as an exhibition designer for a museum or with a consultancy firm; hence, CAD and 3D modelling will be programs that will I interact with regularly. Furthermore, via my arts organization Cloud.Break, I am continually exploring ways to evolve my exhibitions and manifest exceptional interactive art space: Google Sketch-Up will be a tool I will continue to utilize and refine for many years. I am grateful that I had the opportunity to dedicate my time to a project that taught me, through experience, how to teach myself a 3D modelling program.

I began this quarter by visiting Eric Schiff's class and met with two of his 6<sup>th</sup> grade students who were exceptionally proficient with Google Sketch-Up. They provided me with a brief introduction to the basic concepts and key tools of the program; from there, I experimented, tried, failed, got frustrated, researched, tried again, and, eventually, successfully finished the project I had intended to create. I like to tackle complex, colorful, and challenging projects, and my 3D modelling endeavor fits this description well: instead of constructing a house, or a park, or an easily recognizable city structure, I decided to create an interactive visionary art gallery comprised of six domes, and adjoining hallways, that could be used in a festival environment (hence, impermanent and mutable).

My inspiration came from my experience with geodesic domes, my love of Platonic solids, and my fascination with ancient Greek/Roman architecture. In my *Museum Theory* class we unpacked the ancient Greek origin of museums: they were, first, in the domain of the household, inhabiting a space that was utilized as both a public and private meeting area. This concept intrigued me, and I considered what it would be like to manifest an exhibition space that felt, simultaneously, private and public; therefore, I decided to research ancient Roman villas. A main feature of this style of architecture is the central courtyard, which is accessible only once you enter the primary entrance, the rest of the rooms are built to encompass this central outdoor/indoor gathering place, and statues, fountains, and plants, are common accoutrements. Based on this concept, I took six geodesic domes and utilized them as my six nodes; I positioned them so that when I placed walls between them they would create a hexagon (based on my Platonic solids inspiration). From this initial blueprint, I worked out the many (often frustrating) details and created skylights for each of the domes, temporary walls between the domes where art could be easily hung, placed sculptures and a fountain in the center courtyard, and, eventually, created

skylights to cover each of the hallways. The featured art was sourced from artists I have worked with for years in Portland, and, I utilized a few of my own pieces as well. The final product is something that I am very proud of, and, I would love to, eventually, receive a grant and create this space in reality; I could easily see an interactive art experience such as this featured at Burning Man and other arts festivals.

At first, Google Sketch-Up was a challenging program to work with; however, I had a break-through about midway through the quarter and felt I gained a familiarity with the tools that allowed me create what I envisioned without too much of a headache. At this point in my learning process, I discovered that I had become very comfortable understanding the physics engine that runs the world of Google Sketch-Up, and once this level of comfort had been established, I would, often, get inspired and stay up late into the night working on my model and refining my creation. The final piece of my project is to create an animation that walks a visitor through my model; while I know what tools to use to make this animation (and have successfully created two) the output is posing a significant challenge: when playing my animation the screen automatically reverts to 3:4 which eliminated 60% of the frame, hence, the animations are not representing the stills I created to populate the video. I will continue to refine and research my animations, but, ultimately, I feel that my model is complete, robust, and detailed, and I am proud of what I have created. To incorporate a truly interdisciplinary multimodal learning experience, my finished project is a main feature of *The Creo Festival* an event that my team researched and designed for our *Events Management* course.



Ariel view: six geodesic domes as nodes, with connecting temporary walls, covered with waterproof and transparent temporary roofs, and encompassing a central courtyard featuring sculptures, a mural, and a fountain.

