SONAR

A VIRTUAL REALITY EXPERIENCE

FILMAKADEMIE
BADEN-WÜRTTEMBERG

SONAR

Synopsis

A drone discovers an unknown asteroid. On its journey over the rocky surface it receives a strange signal. To locate its source the drone ventures deep into an ancient labyrinth. A place that holds a secret even darker than space itself.

General information

Genre:	Science Fiction, Horror, Experimental, 3D-360° Immersive VR
Release:	2015
Running Time:	6:20 min
Original Language:	without dialogue
Technique:	3D computer animation
Format:	Equirectangular 3D 360° projection, stereo sound

Credits

Director:	Philipp Maas, Dominik Stockhausen
Film Music:	Alexander Maas
Sounddesign:	Alexander Maas
Executive Producer:	Philipp Maas, Dominik Stockhausen
Production Company:	Filmakademie Baden-Wuerttemberg GmbH

Trailer:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pcqCDWDJYgw

Contact:
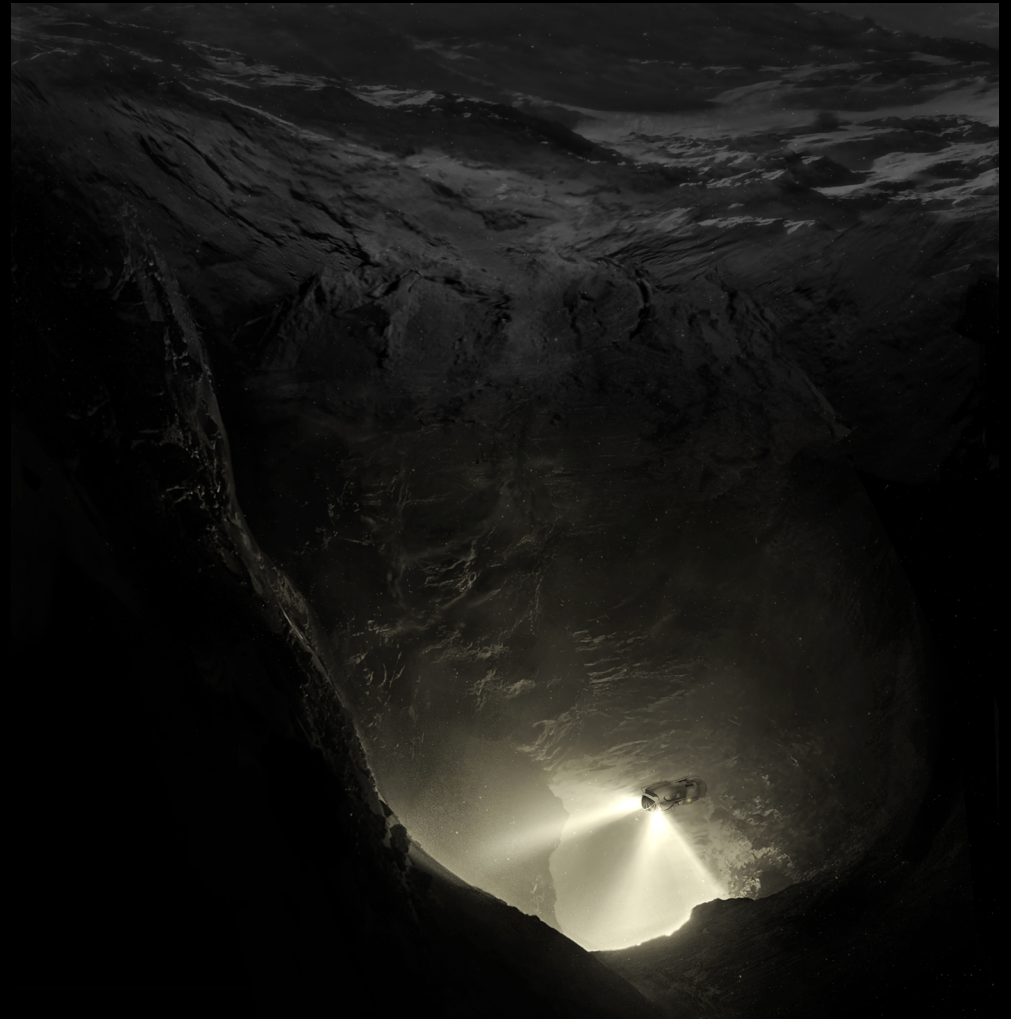
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SONAR
EVERY SIGNAL HAS A SOURCE

OFFICIAL SELECTION 2016
Celebrating 35 Years of New Frontier
sundance
institute

FILMAKADEMIE BADEN-WÜRTTEMBERG PRESENTS A VIRTUAL REALITY EXPERIENCE
DIRECTED BY PHILIPP MAAS DOMINIK STOCKHAUSEN MUSIC & SOUND BY ALEXANDER MAAS
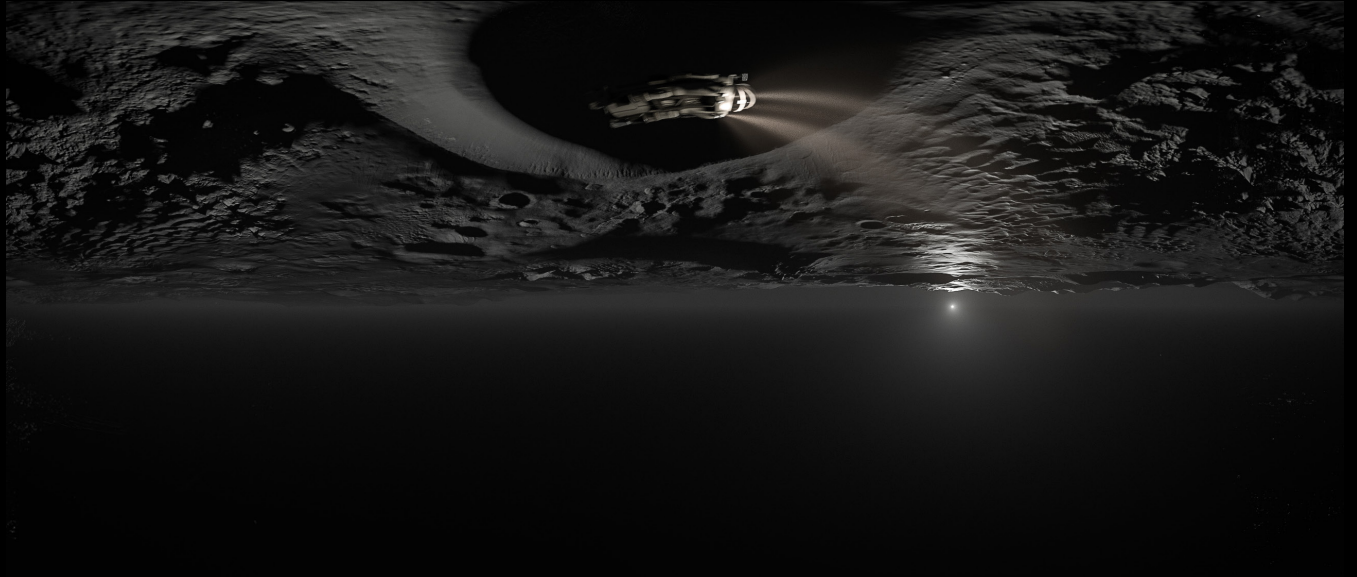FILMAKADEMIE
BADEN-WÜRTTEMBERG

About the experience

"Explore your surroundings and dive deep into an ancient cave system. Follow the drone and discover the horrific truth about the darkest of all places... "

SONAR is a new kind of cinematic entertainment, striking a balance between traditional movie making and interactive media. The short film is a fully immersive, slow paced, 3D-360° computer-generated virtual reality experience at 4k resolution and 60fps.

We made sure to create the most pleasant and immersive experience possible by guiding the audience through the movie in various ways.
Visual composition and the movement of objects always define the point of interest. Slow paced action and smooth editing transitions reduce motion sickness and allow people new to VR to enjoy and explore their surroundings.

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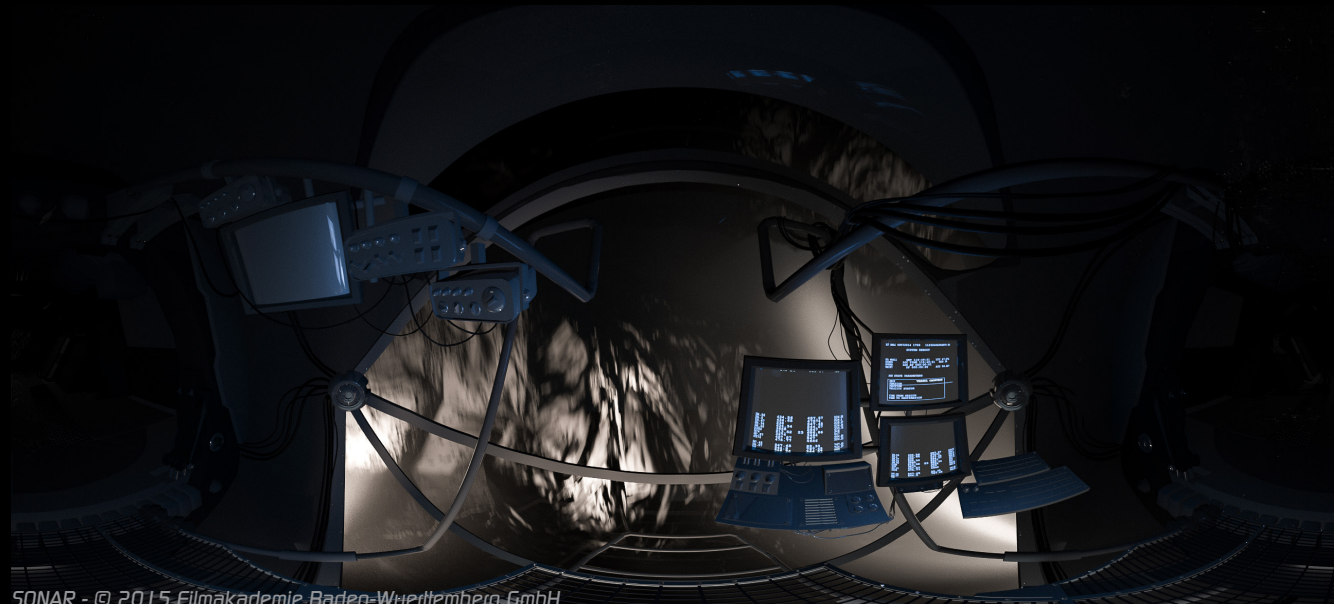
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Changing the point of view introduces a new way of thinking about cinematography in 360°. The audience is not playing a game or just passively watching a giant screen.
Being inside and outside at the same time, never knowing what happens next and never feeling like being in control is undeniably exciting.

Add to that a rich soundscape as well as an exceptional orchestral score and the mood is set for an epic adventure through space.

SONAR is a perfect example for creative storytelling in VR and can be a great introduction to the technology.

About the production

SONAR was created by Philipp Maas and Dominik Stock-hausen at Filmakademie Baden-Wuerttemberg in Ludwigs-burg, Germany, during the summer term of 2014. The original score was written by Alexander Maas, who also did the sounddesign and mixing. Production started in May and finished at the end of July 2014.

The initial concept of a classical scifi-horror short in the cinemascope screening format was turned upside down as we got our hands on the Oculus Rift DK1.
Immediately hooked by the technology and its creative potential, we were eager to produce the first 360° shortfilm at the Filmakademie.

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After a few days of R&D, we knew what was possible for us to achieve and what workflow to use.

During production, we had to drop stereoscopic rendering and binaural audio engines due to the additional complexity of those technologies and our limited resources at the time. Using mostly our own equipment, we managed to produce six minutes worth of 3D animation on only four workstations by utilizing the latest GPU rendering technology.

Advancing our workflow for VR productions, we updat-ed the project one year later in 2015 to high-resolution, omni-directional stereoscopic 3D and 60fps. We are currently developing novel ideas and techniques for virtual reality en-tertainment, commercials and education.
Extending our professional network even further, we would be very happy to hear from potential clients, post-production facilities and agencies, interested in the project and the future of VR.

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About us

Philipp Maas - Director, Producer

Philipp Maas is a freelancer working as a CG generalist in Germany and also a student at the Filmakademie in Ludwigsburg with his main focus being computer animation. He directed and created the first stereoscopic 360° animated shortfilm SONAR at the Filmakademie in 2014.
Before specializing in VR, he gathered 4+ years experience working in the CG & VFX industry on commercials and short films.
He is currently looking into novel ideas and workflows for virtual reality storytelling.

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Filmography:

- Lichtspiel (2015) - ITFS trailer / commercial - director
- Seven Rooms (2015) - short - 3D Artist
- Electrofly (2015) - short - digital compositor
- Sonar (2014) - short - director, producer
- Golf All (2013) - short - director, editor
- Der Pirat (2013) - short - director of photography
- Der edle Mensch (2013) - short - director
- Escape from Tibet (2012) - feature - digital compositor
- Ich Kauf Dir Ein Schloss (2011) - short - digital compositor
- No Comment (2011) - music video - director
- Citylights (2010) - music video - director

Dominik Stockhausen - Director, Producer

Dominik Stockhausen was born 1988 in Schwabach, Germany. He studied Theater and Media Studies at the University of Bayreuth where he worked on several movie and theater productions. Since 2012 he is a student of Animation and Visual Effects at the Filmakademie Baden-Wuerttemberg.
Working as a CG generalist and director his focus lies on finding innovative new ways of storytelling.

https://vimeo.com/dominikstockhausen/
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🐦 @von_Stockhausen

Filmography: (excerpt)

- Auster (2015) - ITFS trailer / commercial - director
- Sonar (2014) - short - director, producer
- Dustbuster (2013) - short - visual effects supervisor
- Mecarnicum (2013) - short - director, editor, animation
- SMSvonGesternNacht (2012) - video installation - director, producer
- Schuld (2011) - short - visual effects supervisor
- Yellow Brick Road (2011) - music video - 2D animation

Alexander Maas - Composer, Sounddesigner

Film composer Alexander Maas was born on April 12, 1988, in Saarlouis, Germany. He began studying the piano at the age of six and quickly developed a love for playing film music.

He composed for several (international) short films and wrote the orchestral score for "Honor Flight", a feature-length WWII documentary which broke the Guinness world record for the largest film screening in history. He currently lives in Kaiserslautern, Germany.

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Filmography: (excerpt)

- Porsche Macan (2014) - Commercial
- Vincents Dream (2014) - Mobile Game, 01/15
- Sonar (2014) - short - 360° Sci-Fi Horror for the Oculus Rift
- LIBRE Initiative (2013–2014) - Commercials
- Der edle Mensch (2013) - short
- Der Pirat (2013) - short
- Golf All (2013) - short
- Honor Flight (2012) - feature documentary
- Oiedysse (2010) - short