



Building a Universe

Alain Damasio

To build a credible science-fiction world requires proposing an extreme hypothesis from the start and sticking with it, until reality as we know it suddenly bends and reshapes itself to verify that hypothesis. In my opinion, it's quite close to the work of an actor, or to some kind of conceptual and emotional athletics, as it involves jumping into another body and spirit. A long apnea in a universe where all the rules are changed, but still remain somehow logical.

In *Remember Me*, the hypothesis is both very simple and quite radical: a new technology is created, called the Sensen, which enables its creators to digitize all of our memories, and then to extract them from the most intimate part of our brains, transforming them into mere data accessible to anyone. In other words, it's the idea of being able to transfer human memory. It's a way to externalize the deepest, most secret, most personal parts of our lives. Imagine for a second how our economy would shift towards consuming, selling, and illegally dealing those memories, with all the potential excesses and possible perversions you can think of. Our social order would redefine itself around those memories being shared. Psychology would become irrelevant, as what constitutes our inner self gets raped over and over. Sensen piracy would become an incredible power, manipulating both individual character and collective memory. All of that is, of course, extremely exciting to play with at the same time.

The believability of such a universe comes from the original concept's echoes in the story, the characters, and even the structure of the city. The concept has to be like a tank, moving forward inexorably while firing off shells of coherent future. Shells of pure concrete that shape this new Paris, which has been destroyed while humanity reinvents the way it connects to the world. The story flows quite naturally from there. If every memory is digitized, it also becomes transferable and can potentially be manipulated. The main character therefore must be a hacker, able to create miracles. And she'll use that power to change the world.

ALAIN DAMASIO
Cofounder and Narrative Director



CONCEPT PRICES for the first and largest store of Neo-Paris, where the commercial heart of the city. Different sections are divided by massive dams, and by the Seine. In addition to a few recognizable, contemporary French buildings, an early version of the astonishing Montparnasse tower stands prominently in the background.



THE SETTING IS NEO-PARIS in 2084, a clear reference to the George Orwell classic. A great deal of brainstorming went into deciding which city would best depict an interesting near future, incorporating geopolitical and climatic changes, as well as the rise of the oceans due to global warming . . . San Francisco and Sydney were considered, and Neo-Tokyo was already taken . . .

The team ultimately decided on Paris. As home to Dontnod's studio, Paris provided the team with the ability to more accurately convey the proper mood, atmosphere, and cultural references, with easy access to real-world inspirations for concept art. The team went on several trips into the city to take photographs and think about different level paths onsite.

Despite its place as one of the world's most-visited cities, Paris hasn't previously been the setting of many sci-fi stories, except as a money shot in several films in which the Eiffel Tower is destroyed . . .



All art this page | MKO |





NEO-PARIS WAS DESIGNED with an eye toward offering strong, recognizable entry points for players through contemporary references in the environments, characters, vehicles, and graphic design. — Anything too fancy runs the risk of losing the audience. Once recognizable elements were established, then the “larger than life” elements could be layered on top. The greatest difficulty was finding the right balance.

[PCM]



[PCH]



[PCH]

BECAUSE THE ADVENTURE takes place within a single city, one of the team's primary challenges was to broaden the experience and offer a wider spectrum of environments. The solution was to divide the city into three different types of environments, each offering a distinct flavor.

Deep-Paris is composed of colorful slums and abandoned areas.

Mid-Paris is the environment most similar to today's Paris, featuring recognizable architecture with 2084 additions, as in these Haussmann-era buildings topped by futuristic plugs.

High-Paris comprises the luxurious, autonomous towers that make up Mnéopolis.



[QJA]