

Notes for the “NMC Campus” Project

Overall Objective

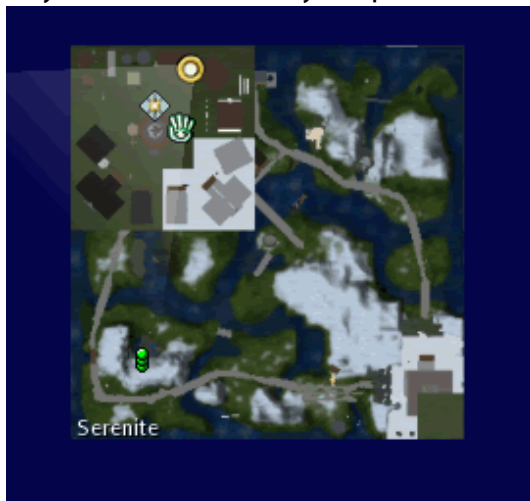
To create an immersive 3-D virtual environment for higher education and museum professionals to interact, collaborate, and experiment that provides a low entry threshold for newcomers, while simultaneously exploring the boundaries of what is possible.

The island will have 3 main functions:

- 1) a place for a variety of live events that use streaming video and web content extensively;
- 2) a place to showcase and access content from the NMC’s online libraries;
- 3) a place to experiment for both the owners/organizers, and for participants.

Topographical Layout

The essential concept is to create the feeling of a campus within the context and boundaries of a standard 256x256 Second Life sim. Additionally, the layout should permit the expansion of the space to additional sims in the future, while at the same time encouraging exploration. We have chosen the existing SL island of Serenite as the ideal model for our topographical layout. It is essentially a square, so new sims can be added on all sides, yet filled with magical little spaces one can discover by walking around.



Features we wish to emulate are the detailed cobblestone walking paths, intricate stone bridges, areas for reflection and gathering in small groups, lush and extremely high quality vegetation, and the many many areas to relax and dangle one’s feet in the water.

In addition we wish to leave areas open for 2 large structures (a museum and a library), a commons area (where teleporters arrive) with a sculpture garden, and a modern amphitheatre modeled on the space on Democracy Island.

Architectural Theme

The architectural theme for all the buildings will be futuristic, but evocative of what might actually occur in the real world as opposed to fantasy-like. Building materials will tend to stone, metals, and glass. Details may be inspired by the art-deco movement.

Aho Museum and Gallery. This building must be stunning in its design. It will house both permanent and visiting exhibitions, some of which will parallel real life exhibitions at museums like the San Francisco Museum of Art and the Exploratorium. We will need at least three gallery spaces, and a formal board room for small meetings seating 12 with an oval table and projection screen. Like a real museum, we will need lots of interior wall space, and an interior design that encourages exploration.

Malcolm B. Brown Library and Conference Center. I'd love to see this building modeled on the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library at Yale University, especially the way the translucent marble walls change in color and luminescence as the sun rotates through the sky. (See http://www.library.yale.edu/beinecke/brblinfo/brblslides_tour.html) The interior of the library should include several comfortable conversation areas, and a central terminal for searching content (functionally a list of content links).



The conference center will contain three meeting rooms. One should emulate a tiered classroom at a university with seating for 30, the second would be smaller room with seating for 20, and the last a conference room with a rectangular table seating for 8. All conference rooms will need a projection screen and a terminal to access the content library.

Gonick Amphitheater. This space should have a modern design and at least three projection surfaces. The space should accommodate as many as 75, all with direct access to the screens, but not all need to be seated. Attendees should be able to easily fly here. There could be standing room areas. One use of this area will be for "town meeting" style gatherings, using Skype or other tools to provide an audio channel.



Each of the projection surfaces needs to be able to show independent content. As in the library, there needs to be an interface to select content. Sometimes we will want to stream live content, and sometime we will want to allow folks to choose from a playlist.

Spohrer Commons and Sculpture Garden. This is the area one arrives in upon teleporting into the NMC Campus. This area should include guideposts that indicate where to go to find the major areas, as well as an events calendar. The sculpture garden should have rotating sculptures, some created by our consultants, some created by visitors as part of an art competition or show.

Sandbox in the Sky. This area, which will float above the island, will be where we provide lessons on building and scripting, and will be an open-access sandbox for visitors. It should have rails to keep people from falling off (or to sit on).

Secret Hidden Room. Somewhere on the island we need a hidden room, requiring a special key for access. I am envisioning it hidden inside one of the hills perhaps. The interior is meant to allow the creation of total fantasy landscapes. Ultimately we may have several of these that we rotate in and out of the secret room. One fantasy-scape should be included in the initial buildout.

Scripts. We will need scripts to enable the various screens and the content selection functions., which can be based on simple lists. We also want extensive gesture balls and sitting functionality, and the ability to dangle feet in the water, swim, float, use an inner tube, etc (See *Serenite* for many examples of what we want.)