

# The Stolen Art Gallery

**Sunday, 10 May 2015**

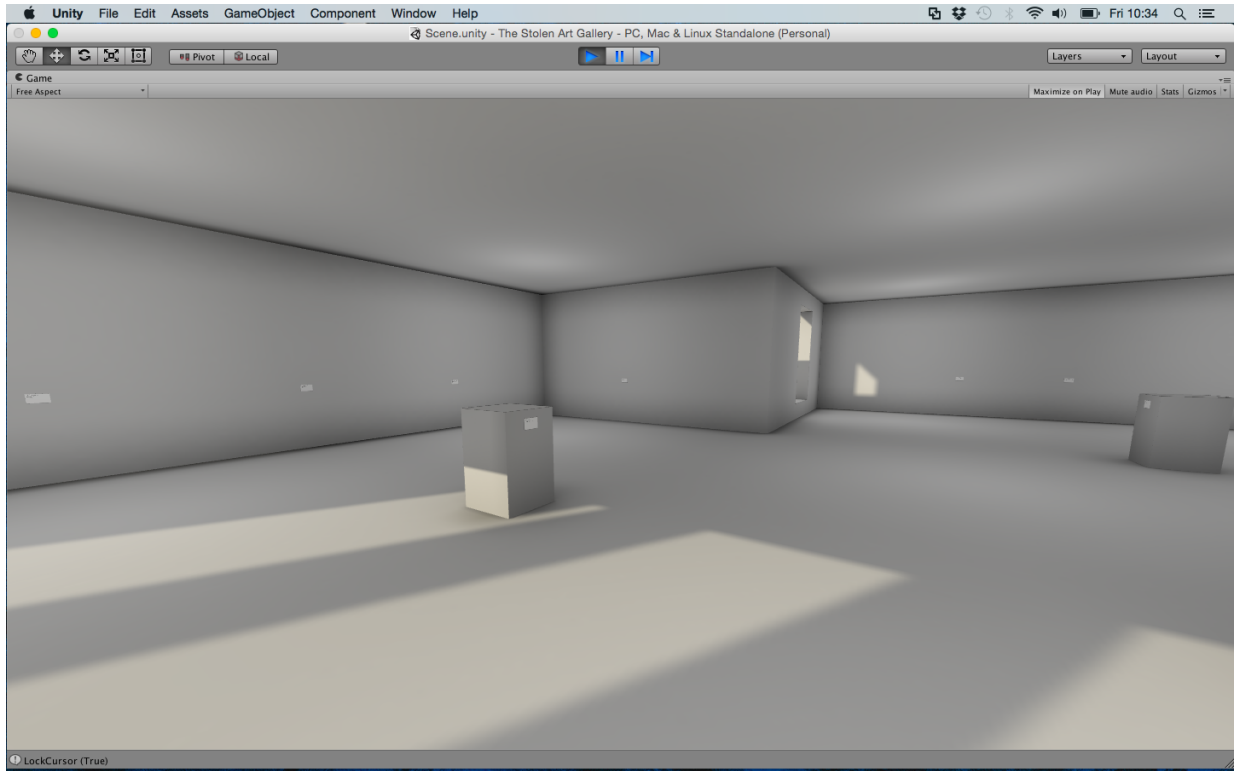
**15:46**

Just a quick note to say that later on Friday I sorted out with Kill Screen to release on Tuesday so that's coming up and it a good thing. Looking forward to it being out. Will also share to the art places that have bothered to cover me in the past as well. Need to write the official draft blog post for it too so it's 100% ready. But yeah, the project is complete. So it took... wow, roughly speaking less than two weeks! Nice job me. Learned a lot in that time, and it's great that I just plunged in and made something, and that I chose a project that was plausible that kind of time frame.

**Friday, 8 May 2015**

**17:25**

Okay now it's done done? Jim and Mary have looked and managed to navigate. Problems were identified and solved. The best one was making the material of the labels slightly emissive so that they're so much easier to spot against the walls in the room, like this:



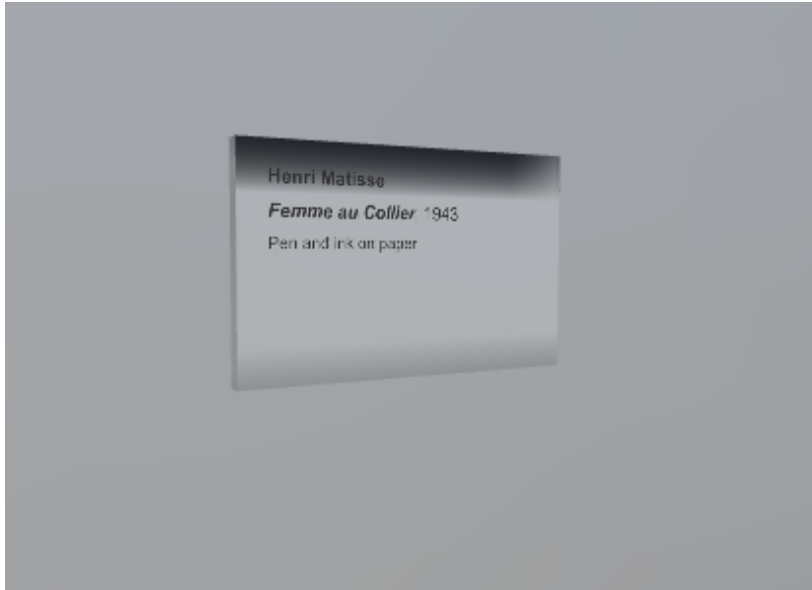
The space is very mellow feeling which is nice, too, I'm quite happy with it. In fact I'm going to get in touch with Kill Screen about it for a possible release early next week? Happy days. Even have a logo?



**Thursday, 7 May 2015**

**13:25**

Today things have gone better again and it's kind of "done" except that I've run into a bunch of issues with the First Person Drifter controller I've been using with the system (made by Ben Esposito). I do seem to have conquered the lighting (I mean, to the extent that's possible for me on this particular outing obviously). One really annoying problem I had today was this:

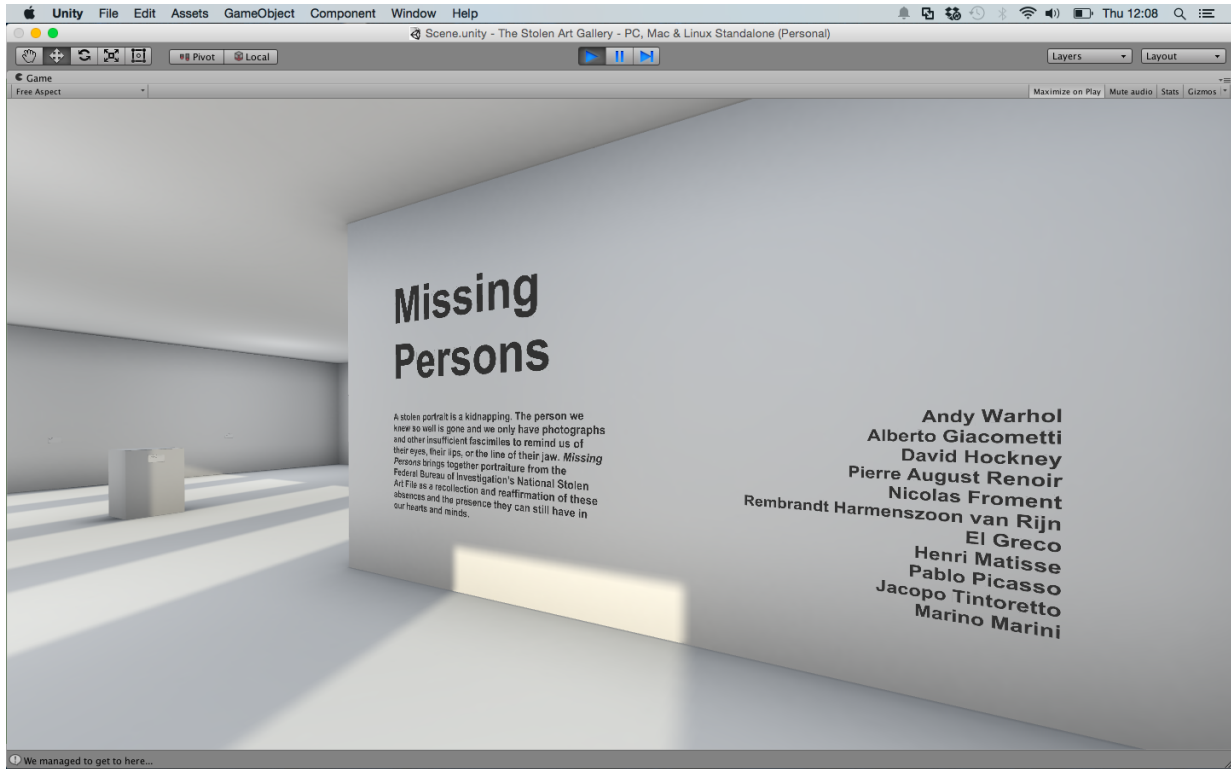


Where I was constantly getting weird fucking shadows. After much fiddling it turned out that if I rotated the specific label object it kind of fixed it? It only affected a select few of the labels and seemed to correspond to when I'd been rotating the labels around the gallery. But I did that in SketchUp. Weird. Then I changed some lighting stuff and it went haywire yet again (on every label) which I then "fixed" with a more high quality bake? I don't really get it. Maybe I'll understand light a bit more next time.

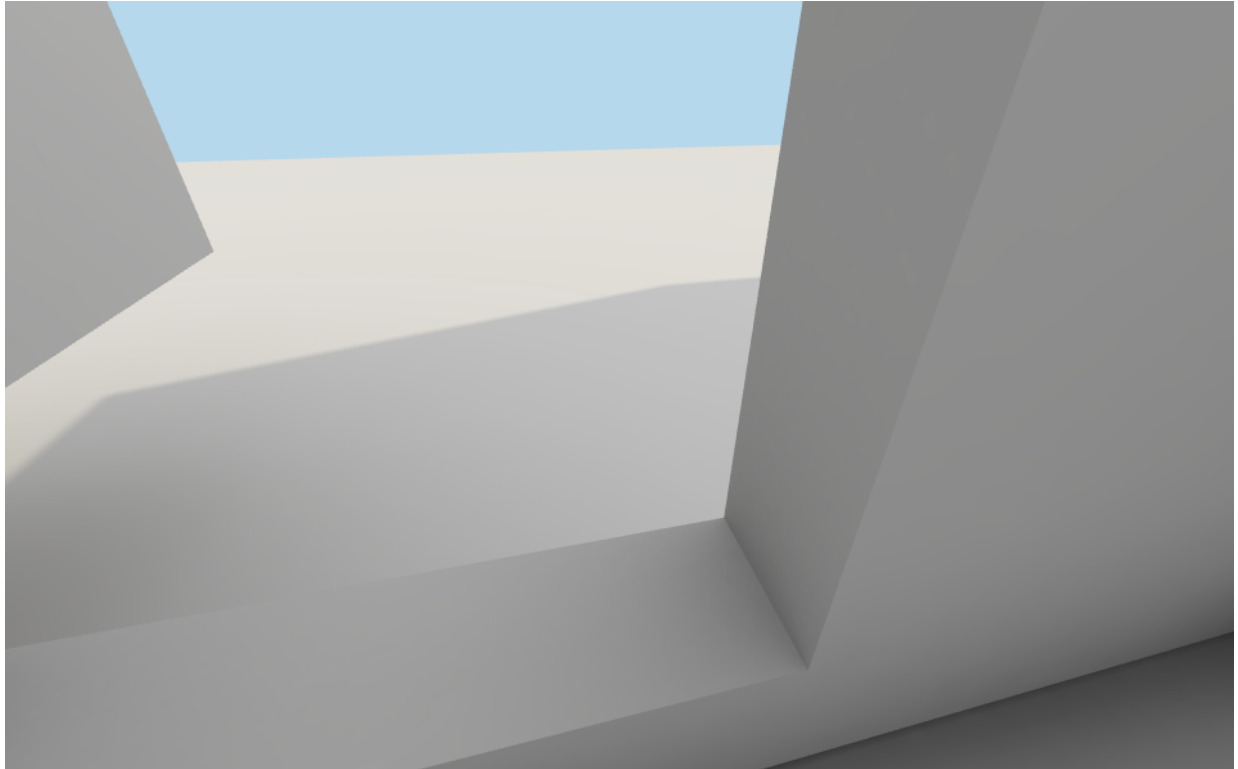
Anyway I added a plane outside to stand on and some invisible walls. Fixed the weird "juddering" effect of approaching a window by putting invisible colliders over them. And the juddering stairs replaced with an invisible ramp. I feel a tiny bit clever with all that.

The upshot it that the whole thing is "there" and I've sent it over to the parentals at this point. It kind of works as a thing. I wrote a somewhat pretentious but on the mark wall text. I think it's vastly more interesting and provocative (and less naive/earnest) than the Museum of Stolen Art it riffs on/teases.

Here's another image:



Look how official that looks! Dayum! And I also had the pleasure (having swapped out the skybox for just a colour) of seeing some nice abstract art constructed in the viewport:



Which is another odd and nice thing about these sorts of projects after all - making our own art through what we see.

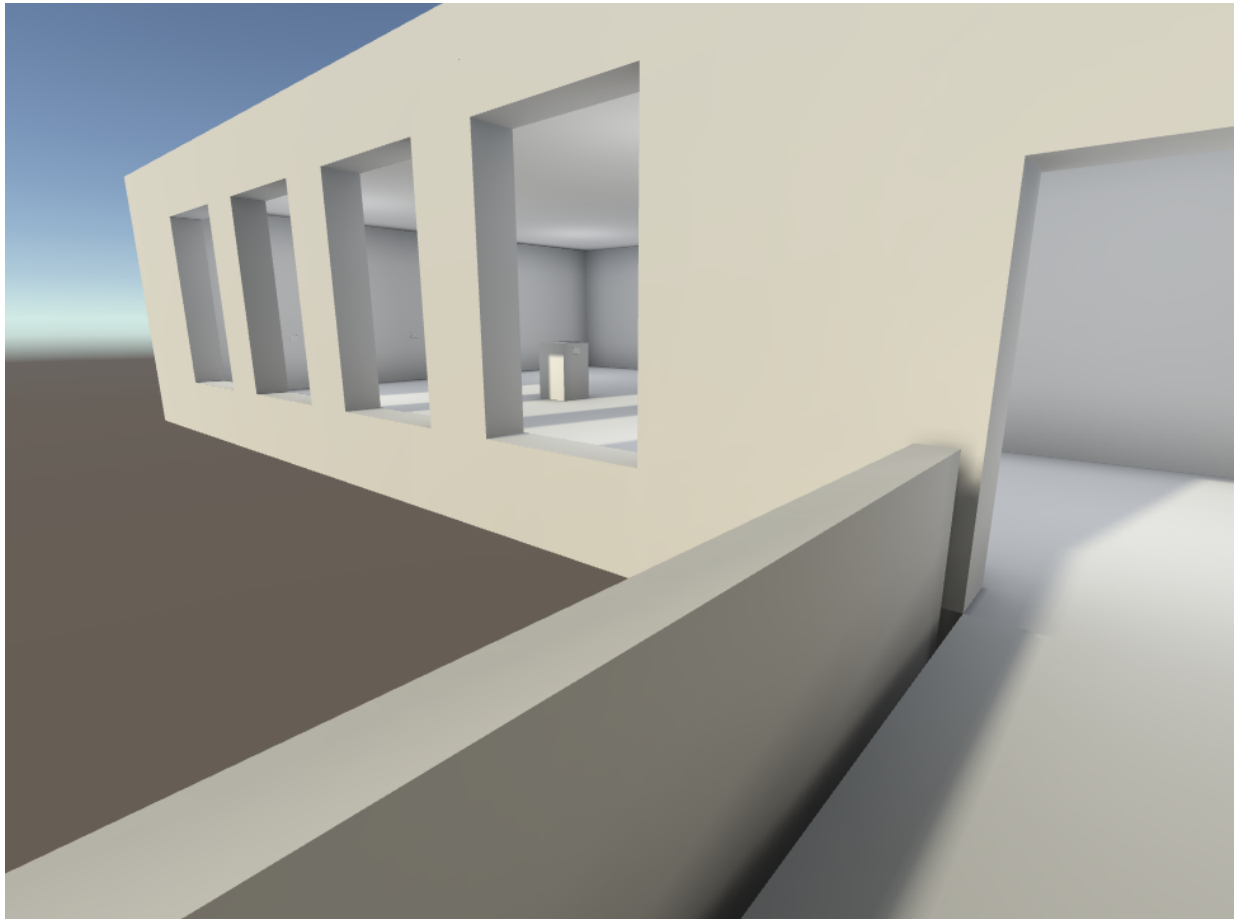
In fact that reminds me of the "photography game" I was going to make and gives me confidence again that it could be rather nice?

Anyway, the final message is: it's basically done other than J+M look at it and reveal how broken and non-intuitive it is at which point I have to fix things. But I feel like there's an outside shot of it being done. And then could even release on Friday? Or more likely early next week? Anyway, doesn't seem like there's a great deal left to do on it. ALTHOUGH I need to remember to put a bloody sign up. I think just lettering stuck to the wall if fine in the end.

**Wednesday, 6 May 2015**

**20:53**

Later that day. Went through plenty more bullshit today but am currently in a stable place. More lighting in there now, and it's less blue. It looks like this:

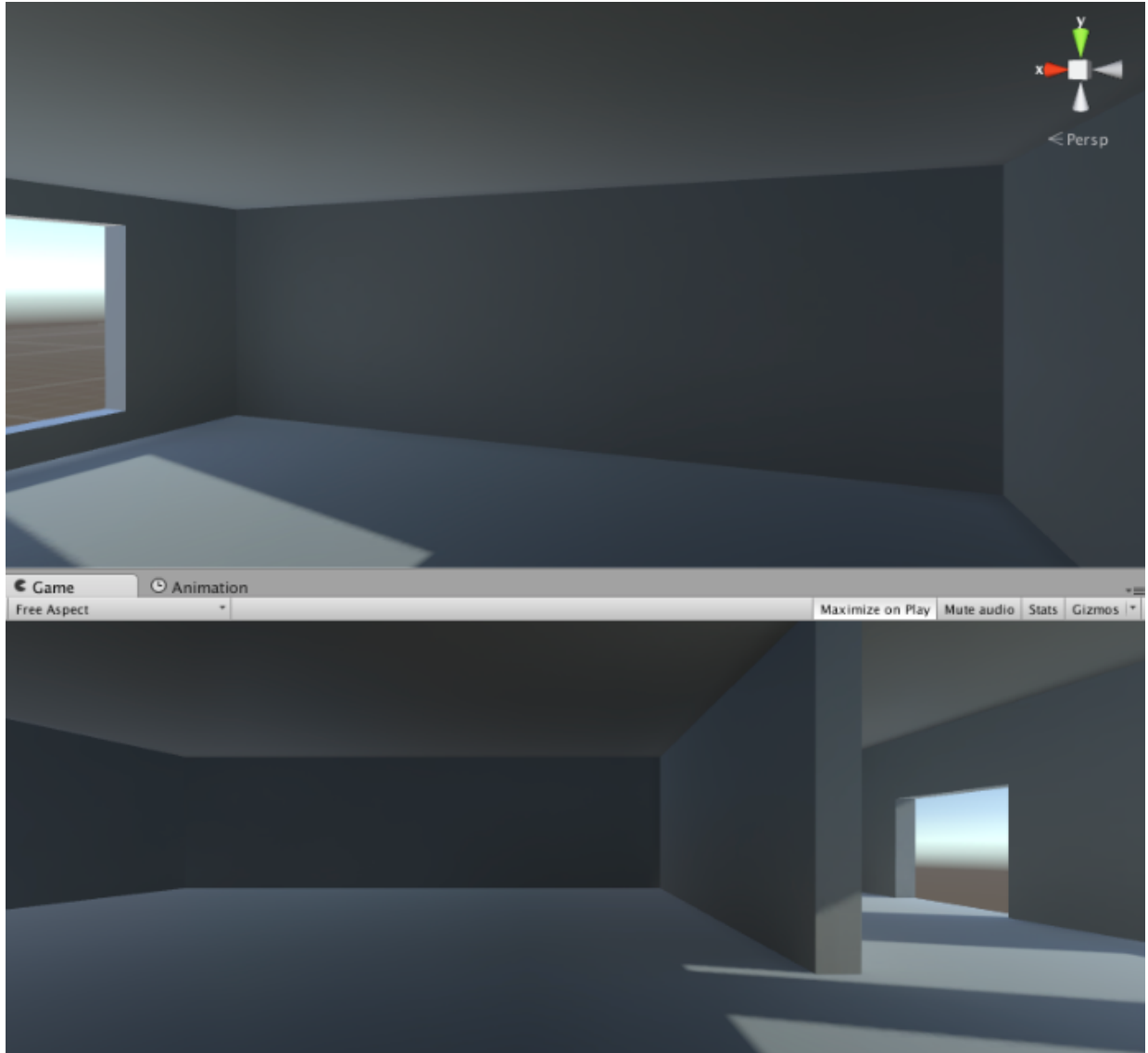


Remaining is to think about the world around the gallery, the wall text, and two more labels. And then after that there's some usability... but it's MAYBE coming together? MAYBE. FUCKING MAYBE. Just maybe.

**Wednesday, 6 May 2015**

**09:28**

Now it's the next morning and I MIGHT have got a working version by restarting the entire process? I'm not clear on what has changed though and it feels tenuous, like the whole thing could just collapse at a moment's notice. Here's what it looks like as of now:



Importantly this is with ambient lighting and one directional light (the “sun”) and all the lighting is baked rather than realtime, which is where I’ve been having a huge amount of trouble. As you can see it looks pretty convincing at the moment with the exception that the walls are very much the wrong colour which I need to work on and which, like anything else, could ruin anything. Basically, I feel like a building manager in a lot of ways: I paint the walls, I install lights, I determine where the windows and doors go, I figure out what materials the floor and everything else should be. Then I’m also a gallerist, determining where to hang the paintings, how to write the labels, what the wall text should say. And throughout this I’m meant to be “God” through Unity and Sketchup, but I’m a god who can’t do anything right, whose buildings contort and shatter, whose lights cast ugly shadows and patterns on the walls, whose



art labels fall off, whose handrails are a health and safety disaster, and on and on. The "physicality" of 3D and it's "realism" in terms of spatiality make it feel that much more like a "real" experience of these problems somehow, that this is a place much more. (Though architecturally I think Jostle Parent's house had some of that too, it's just with pixel graphics you don't have many of these same problems - though you do have different ones.)

I've commented before that it's surreal how some things that should be hard are easy: physics simply exists, I can raise a wall in a moment, I can spin the world on it's axis, examine it from afar or up close, install a pane of glass instantly, "wire up lights" with a click, etc. But then things that should be easy are hard: finding a decent bulb for those lights, getting my art labels to stick to the wall, knowing in advance what colour those walls are going to be.

The agency I have in Unity is very different from the agency I've had with past languages and visual tools, in other words. And it's all been interesting and frustrating. Maybe I'm over the hump now, or maybe I'm... not.

**Tuesday, 5 May 2015**

**16:49**

Oh my GOD I am annoyed with this game by now. Having huge difficulties in lighting the scene to be legible and not a complete and utter mess. It looks like I might have to slowly rebuild everything from scratch in sketchup unfortunately - depressing to think about, but doable. Also not guaranteed to actually solve my problems, but that's life. Fucksticks. It's weird to me to read yesterday's notes where I sound neutral and okay, whereas over the course of that day (and today) I was torn apart by the lighting problem.

The basic thing is that I want baked lighting - for performance and because there will be precisely no dynamic shadows or lights in the entire thing. But every attempt at properly lighting the scene with baked lighting has 100% not worked. Shitter. Shit shit shitter. Shit shit shitter. Shit shit shitter. Shit shit shitter.

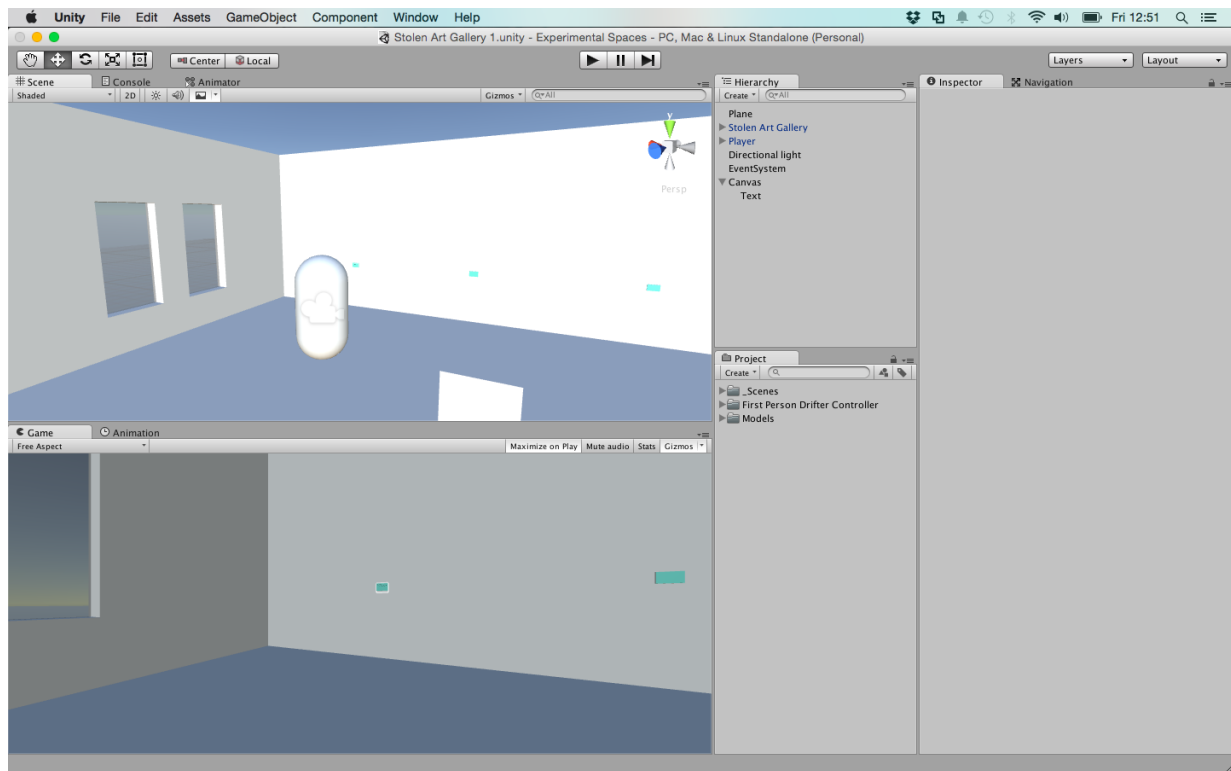
Still I will make it through though, I will.

Maybe.

**Monday, 4 May 2015**

**09:13**

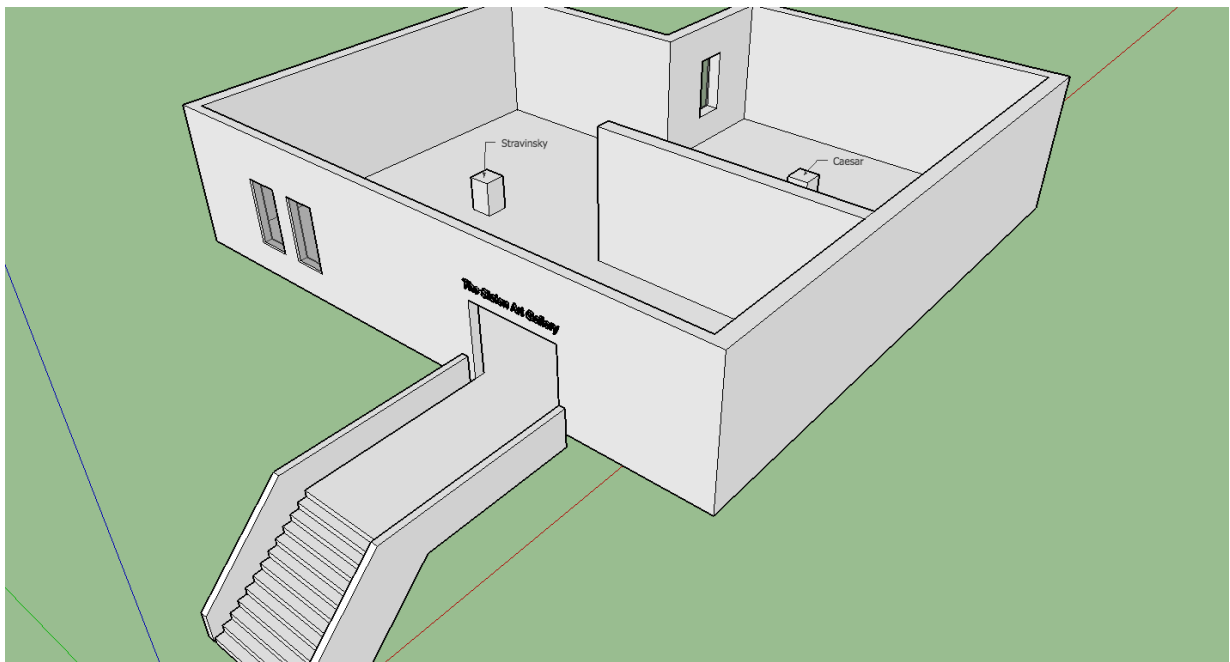
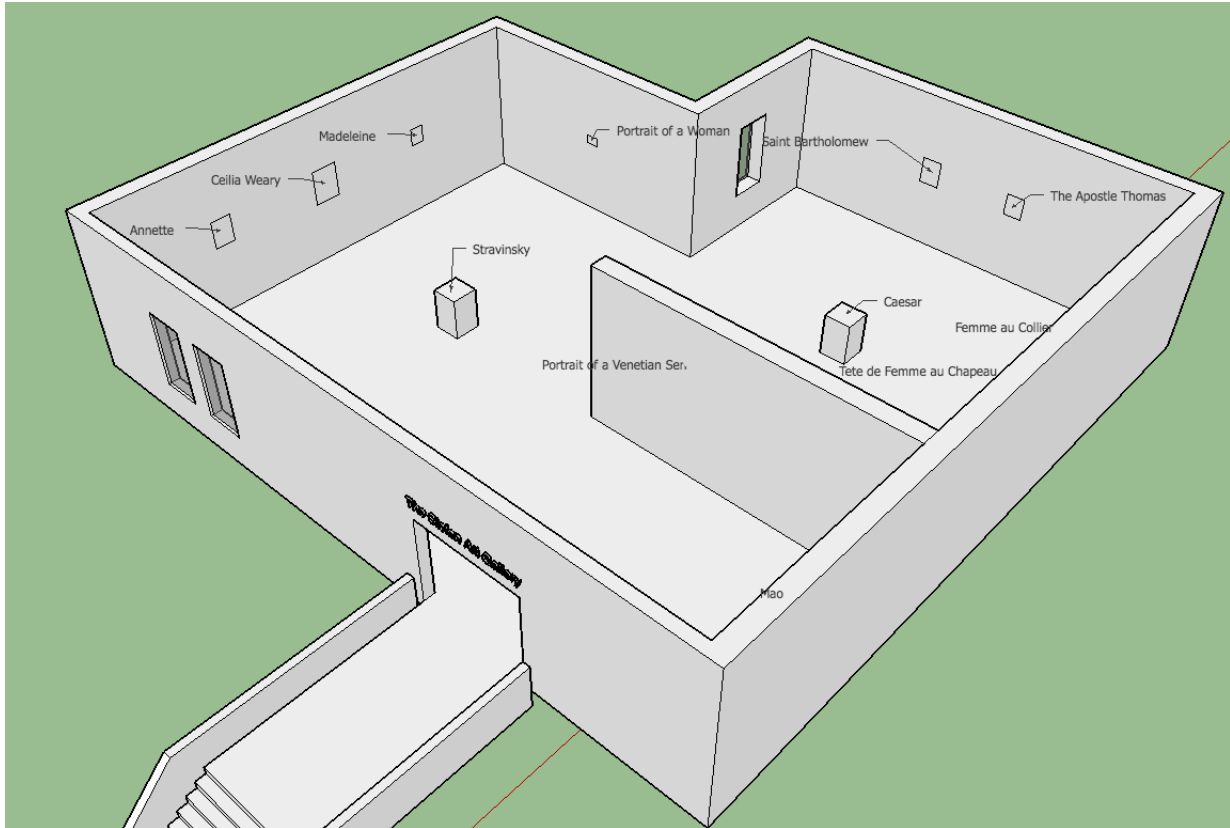
Some process screenshots, not in much of the way of an order.



The gallery in Unity, looking at the positions of the labels. I had to tint the labels greenish blue in order to be able to see them on the walls because of the behaviour of light in the world and specifically the concept of materials. That is, because the labels were the same as the wall (white "material") they lit in exactly the same way and thus were exactly the same colour. The things we take for granted in day to day life, that things are of different materials and so reflect light in different ways (even if they're the same "colour"). The literal-mindedness of a computer is so weird here... it's both "fair" and insane to have to think about things like this. The whole process of

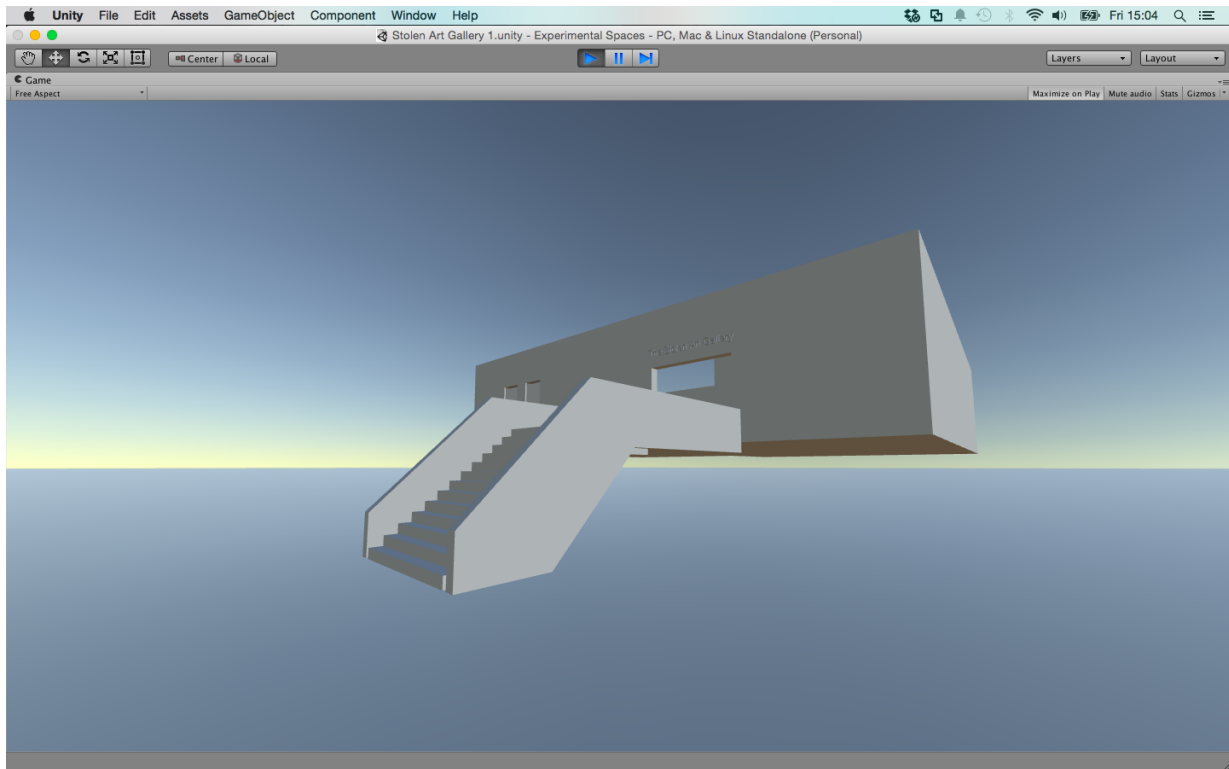
hanging the show once in Unity has really been quite difficult and interesting for these sorts of reasons.

The actual labeling was pretty hard too because of having to work out how to position the text (which was made in Unity) on the labels (which are part of the SketchUp model). Spent a lot of time learning how to drag the text around at all in a decent way, and then discovered a "vertex snapping" mode which let me snap the text to the same plane as the labels, and then I could move it manually into place. Not bad, me. That was a high point.

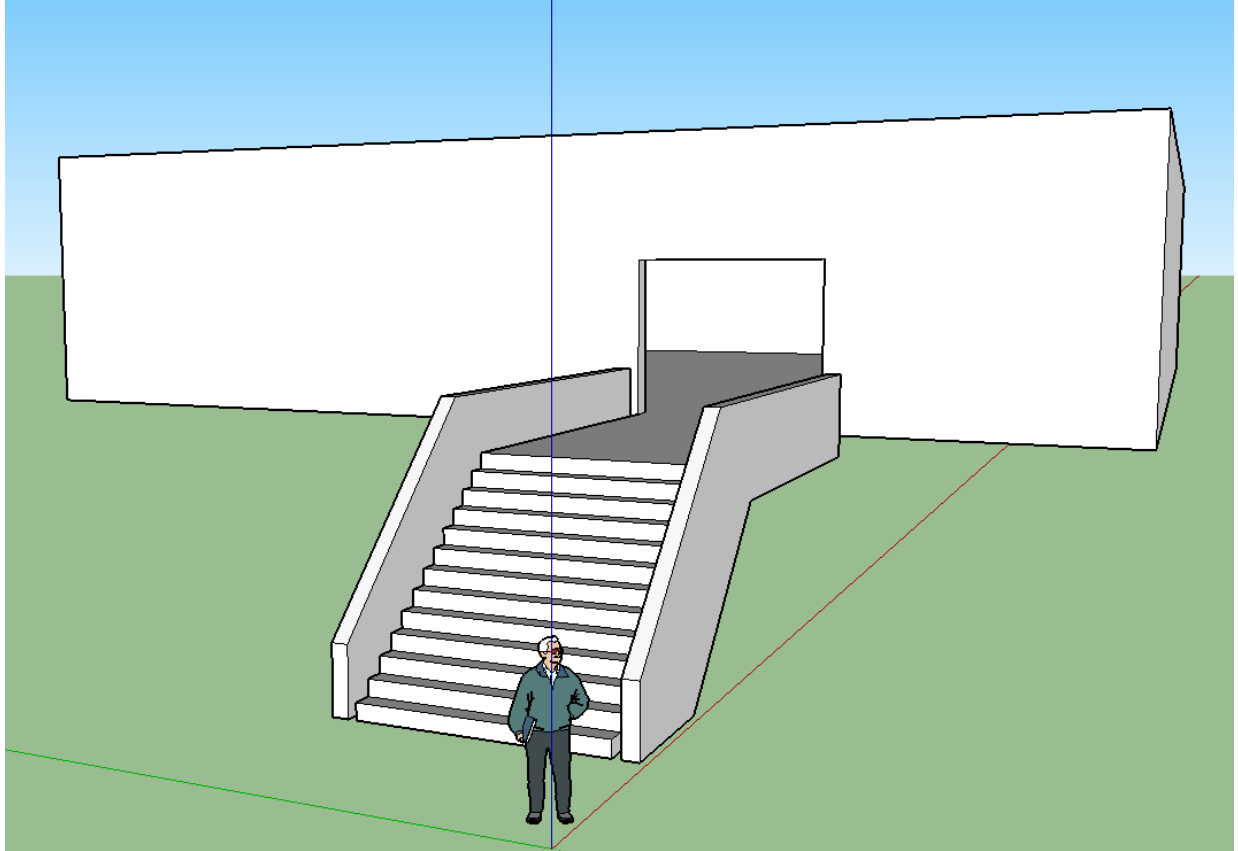


A couple of shots of the progress of the SketchUp model. The top one is basically the finished project. Looking good. By the time I'd made the model to this degree I was feeling rather comfortable in SketchUp. Learned some tricks for alignment, could

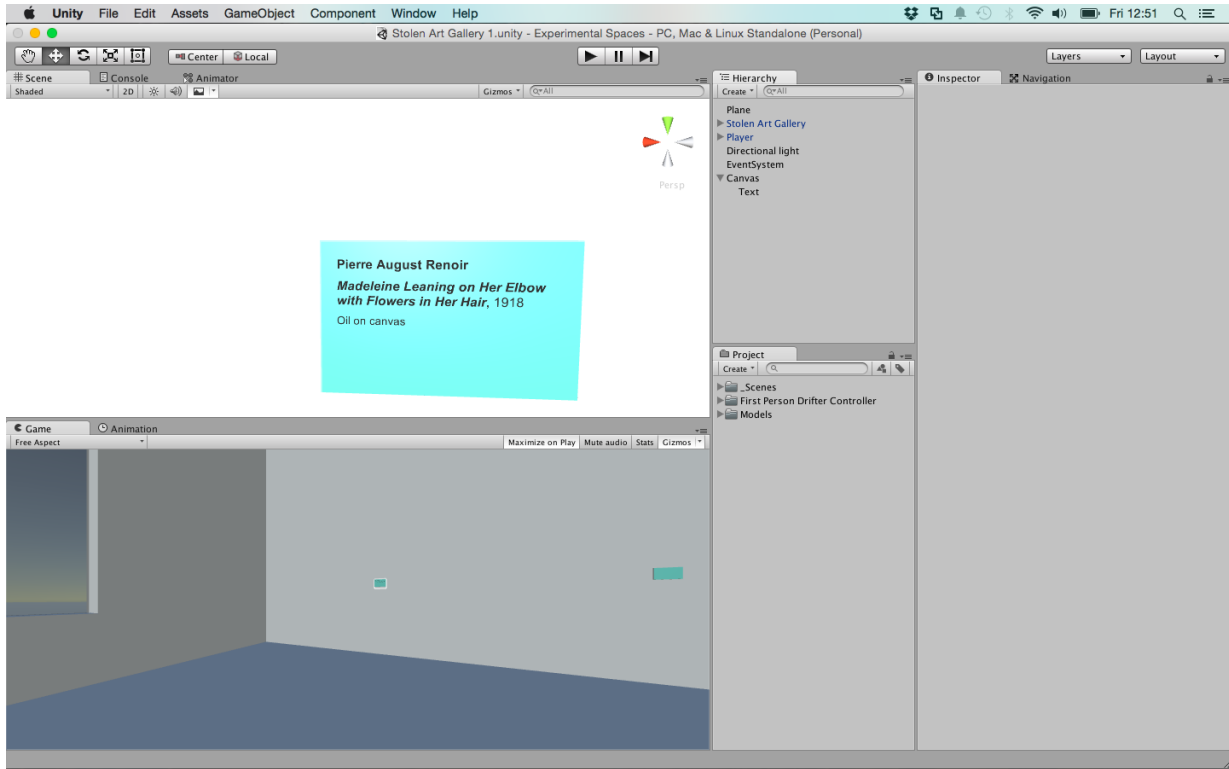
move around the space with some decent effectiveness. There are many details I'm still terrible at though (I'm pretty sure components are more important than I'm giving them credit for, for instance, at the very least as a way of grouping things and avoid mistakes.



The model in Unity in the early days. Back in the carefree days when I was satisfied with just getting it into Unity in the first place and walking around it. Those were the days.



Very early shot of the gallery back when I was just happy to have a cool-looking staircase into the space. It's kind of amazing how brief these periods of satisfaction are. That was a big accomplishment to me at the time, but now I could care less.



Close up of a successful label. Took the style from one version of a MoMA label and they look pretty authentic in the end. Not unhappy with it.

**Friday, 1 May 2015**

**10:04**

A calculation of hanging the show (abandoned)

13.27m (long wall)

Madeleine

0.5017m, 0.4128m

Annette

0.8m, 0.58m

Celia Weary  
1.02m, 0.76m

$0.4128 + 0.58 + 0.76 = 1.7528$  (the three paintings)

$13.27 - 1.7528 = 11.5172$  (blank wall)

2m in from either side, leaves 7.5172

Which is gaps of fuck this.

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**Thursday, 30 April 2015**

**22:24**

Built out the space including some cute features like windows and some shape to the room and a divider. Then started "curating" a show by searching/looking at the FBI database and interpol. Felt really excited for a while by the prospect of having a "Portraits by Andy Warhol" show and went a ways to picking out which works would be in it. But then was let down by the database not having dimensions for most of the images and not even materials for a lot (or years). So eventually after some gnashing of I gave up on that in favour of a generalised portraits show from the FBI database, which I've managed to populate with 12 works (including two sculptures which will have plinths). I largely just chose for: recognisable artists, with all the details available, and preferably more "specific" portraits over less. Though I've ended up with a "good" number of generalised portraits (e.g. "a woman" etc.). Still I think the show is quite good, I've even grouped the works into related themes per hanging group, so that there's some idea of meaning in the show. I'm going to call it "Missing Persons" for now, which is hilarious right? Next step is determining where the paintings would hang and then placing the labels - need to work out/remember how labels are placed (is it only relative to the work, or is in relative to the wall, or what?). Fun and interesting feeling some of the interactions between space and curation, and art and curation, and thinking about the actual experience of going into the space and



so on. Adding windows as a way to break up the walls and have some "sight lines". General rookie architecture stuff which has been really quite satisfying. So I'm happy with how it's going. It's conceivable I could finish it tomorrow and then would just have to decide about doing sliding doors or not. Sliding doors. Or not.

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### **Earlier...**

Just a small dealer gallery in Unity with labels indicated stolen artworks on the walls and that's about it. Maybe play around with some surrealist entryway and "outdoors" space.