

SHANGRI-LA

M.BABLET

*Shangri-La questions our human ethics
and the future of humanity*



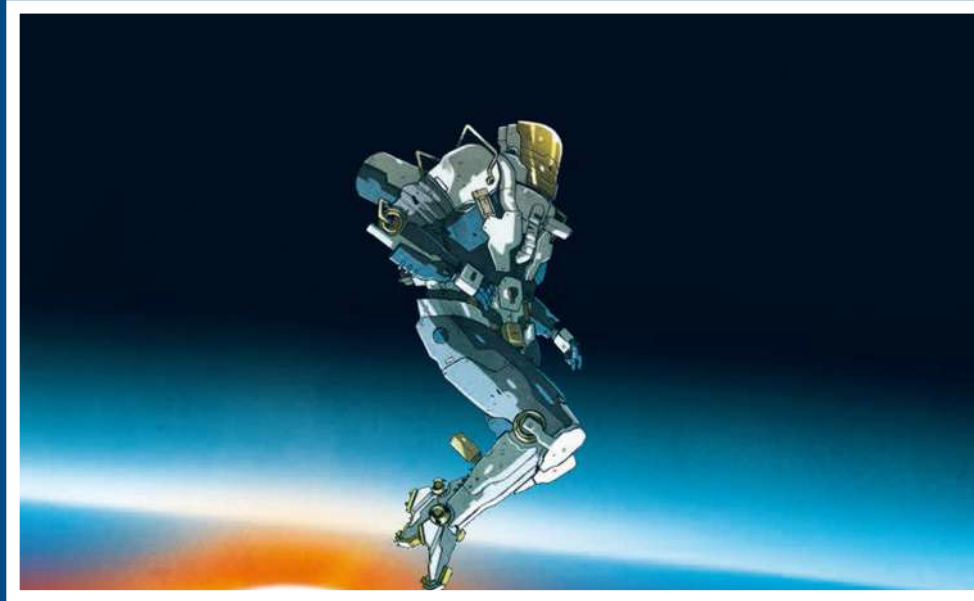
An immersive and transmedia concept created and produced by UMANIMATION & Collectif Or Normes.



SUMMARY

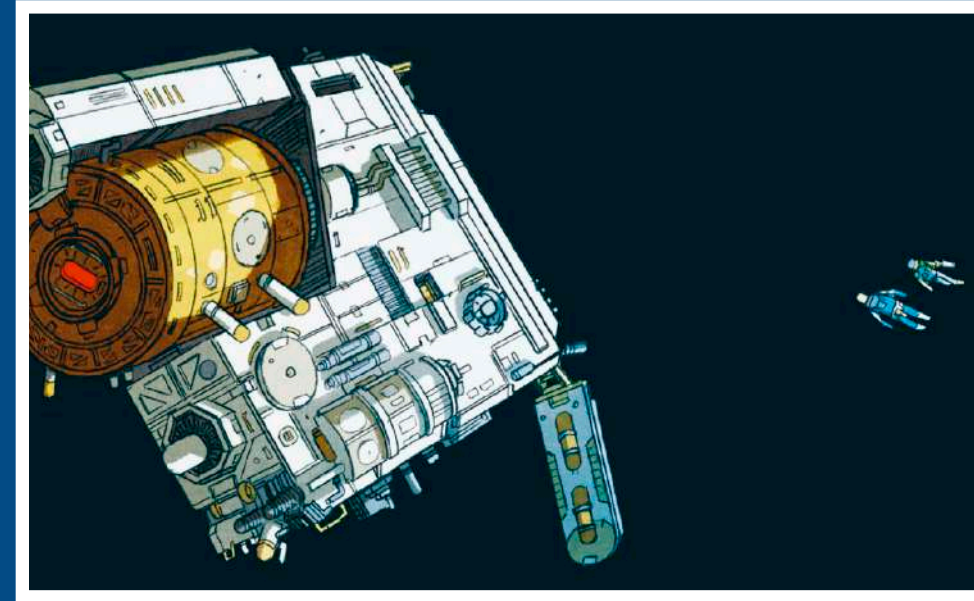
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« Shangri-La » is a **science-fiction comic book**, written, drawn and colored by **Mathieu Bablet**. Published in September 2016, it is edited by Ankama Éditions in the Label 619 collection and has sold more than 98,000 copies.

The comic book was part of the official selection in 2017 at the Angoulême International Comics Festival.

« Shangri-La » was among the finalists for the 2017 Fnac Comics Prize and the 2017 Grand Prix de la critique.

The story evolves around the following themes: dystopia, time travel, space travel, consumerism, racism, lack of individual freedom, genetic manipulation and the desire for rebellion.



PLOT

The story takes place in the distant future. As Earth became uninhabitable, humans took refuge in a space station, where they live a confined life. Tianzhu Enterprises runs the lives of humans and animoids, anthropomorphic species that are half-human, half-animal.

On the surface, everyone seems to be satisfied with this « perfect society » but Scott, one of the main characters, is in charge of investigating mysterious explosions in laboratory stations. These might be related to the program developed by Tianzhu Enterprises to create life from scratch in Shangri-La, one of the most hospitable regions of Titan.

TRANSMEDIA CONTENT



1. SMARTFICTION

Available before the immersive concert, this **mobile-only story** invites the audience to play one of the 3 **secondary characters** from the original comic: Virgil (Scott's brother), Nova (a colleague and young student) or John (an animoid friend).

The smartfiction reproduces the **Tianzhu Phone**, the official smartphone built and distributed by Tianzhu. Playing one of the 3 characters, the reader becomes aware of the **daily life of an inhabitant** of the space ship and what it's like to live under a **dictatorial regime**.



2. IMMERSIVE CONCERT

During this **one-of-a-kind concert**, the audience is immersed in the world of Tianzhu Enterprises through the installation of **4 giant screens creating a cube**. They are sat at the center of the installation where **some of the visuals from the comic book are animated**. Three **musicians play live music** and portray inhabitants of the space station.

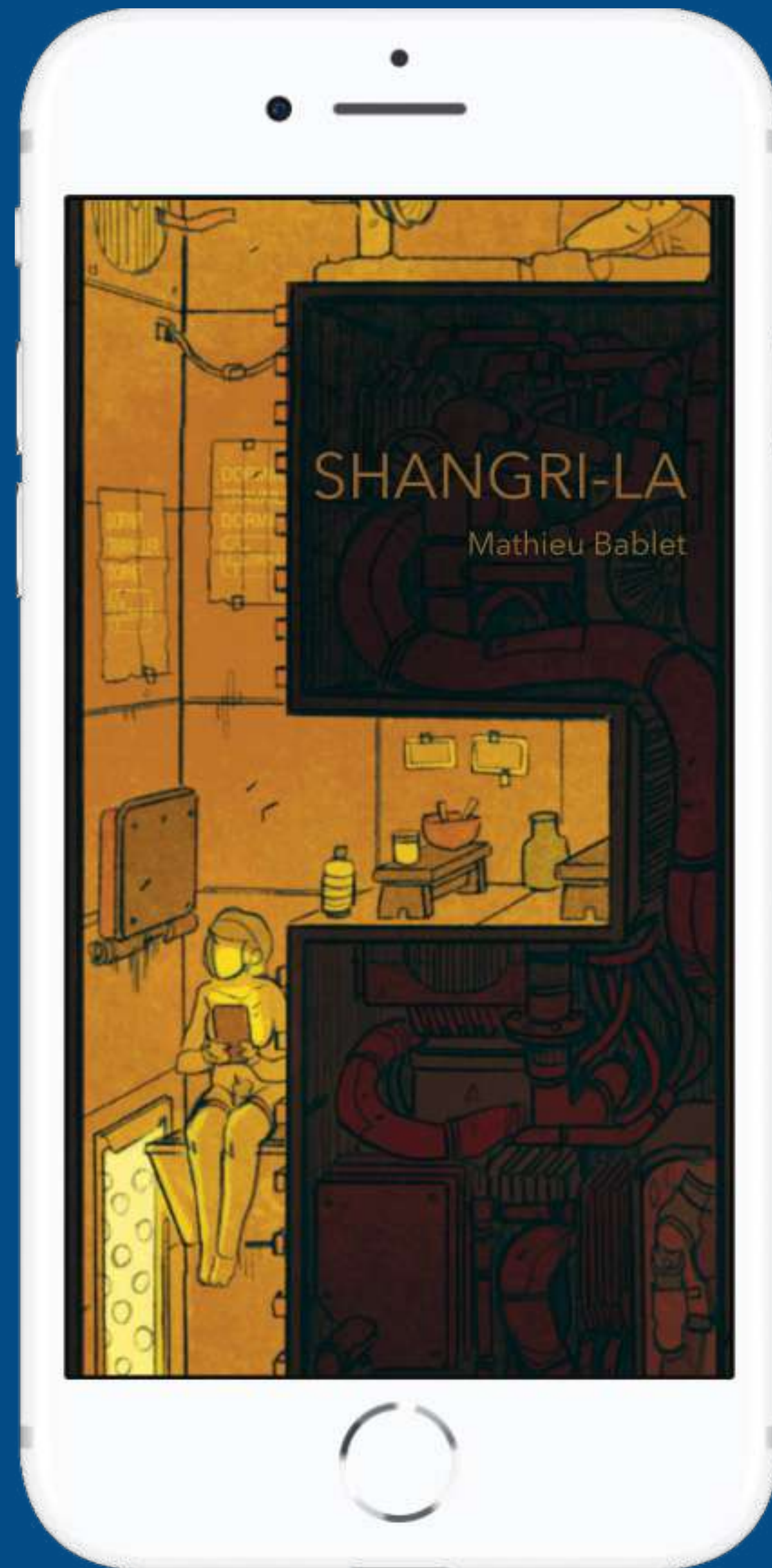
The concert, representing the official National Day of Tianzhu, is a **musical and a sensory reading experience** for the spectators.



3. MOTION COMIC IN VIRTUAL REALITY

Immersion in the « Shangri-La » universe continues after the concert thanks to a **narrative experience in virtual reality**, in the form of a **motion comic**. Immersed in the heart of an arid planet, the spectator discovers the continuation of our main character's adventure (**part of the story not tackled during the concert.**)





1. SMARTFICTION

- Available before and during the concert
- Mobile-only interactive fiction
- Real-time storytelling
- Personalization of the experience

The smartfiction is a **mobile-only interactive story**. Available for free via Poulp*, this narrative and interactive component takes the form of the brand new **TZ-Phone 7** (the latest smartphone created by Tianzhu in the comic book). As a virtual smartphone, it participates in the indoctrination of the population cloistered in the space station.

The **TzPhone** is recreated according to the point of view of 3 characters: **Virgil, Nova and John**. By choosing one of them, the reader/player learns about his character's daily life subjected to Tianzhu's totalitarian regime. Through the dialogues exchanged with their respective friends, the magazines they're subscribed to, the pictures, the musical playlists, the regime-run television programs and other applications, **the reader discovers the political, economic and social life inside this spaceship.**

The TzPhone works as a traditional smartphone with **several apps** participating in the construction of the life story of the character that the reader chose to embody. By visiting each one of them and receiving various **notifications** updating the contents, the reader becomes aware of the dictatorial regime his character lives in. These applications are listed within an **apps menu specific to each character**: for example, with Nova's menu, the reader can access her university courses; content the reader won't be able to access if he chose John or Virgil character.

The aim is to give the reader an immediate accessibility to all the applications.

For this format, we're working with **Mathieu Bablet**, the author of the original work, on brand new creations. He created **new narrative and visual contents** just for the smartfiction: love story for Virgil, private group between animoids on social media for John and university courses (indoctrination) for Nova.

Finally, **the TzPhone will also be used during the « Shangri-La » immersive concerts**, each performance symbolizing the celebration of Tianzhu's National Day. During the concert, the audience will receive various real-time **notifications completing the show's narration.**

The smartfiction can be experienced independently if the user does not wish to go to the concert. It is not mandatory to experience all the project's transmedia contents to understand the general narration.

*Poulp is a digital tool for interactive storytelling architecture (PoulpStudio) and also a smartfiction broadcaster (PoulpCollection.)

2. IMMERSIVE CONCERT

- **One-of-a-kind concert**
- **Immersive installation with 4 screens**
- **Augmented concert thanks to the smartfiction**
- **Live music**
- **National and international tour**

The main narrative component of our transmedia project is the **immersive concert**. The comic book will come to life through a one-of-a-kind concert allowing to discover the musical and visual universe of the comic book thanks to an **original musical creation**. Much more than a simple concert, the spectator lives a **true narrative experience** in which he is immersed in **the standardized world of Tianzhu Enterprises** (totalitarian society, absolute master of thought and daily life.)

The stage consists of an **installation of 4 giant screens creating an immersive cube** (the cubic shape is reminiscent of the spaceship's volumes and spaces). The spectators are sat in the center, on stools allowing a 360° rotation. The screens broadcast some of the visuals from the comic book that will be reworked and animated for the occasion. Three musicians, located in the corners of the cube, **play the original soundtrack live simultaneously with the animations** on the screens and the punctual narrative elements of the smartfiction. They portray fictional characters living in the space station and will be dressed in orange suits, the typical outfit in the comic book.

The concert does not deal with the comic book's storyline in a linear and integral way. Indeed, the aim is to offer a **different narrative** in which only certain parts of the comic book are treated.

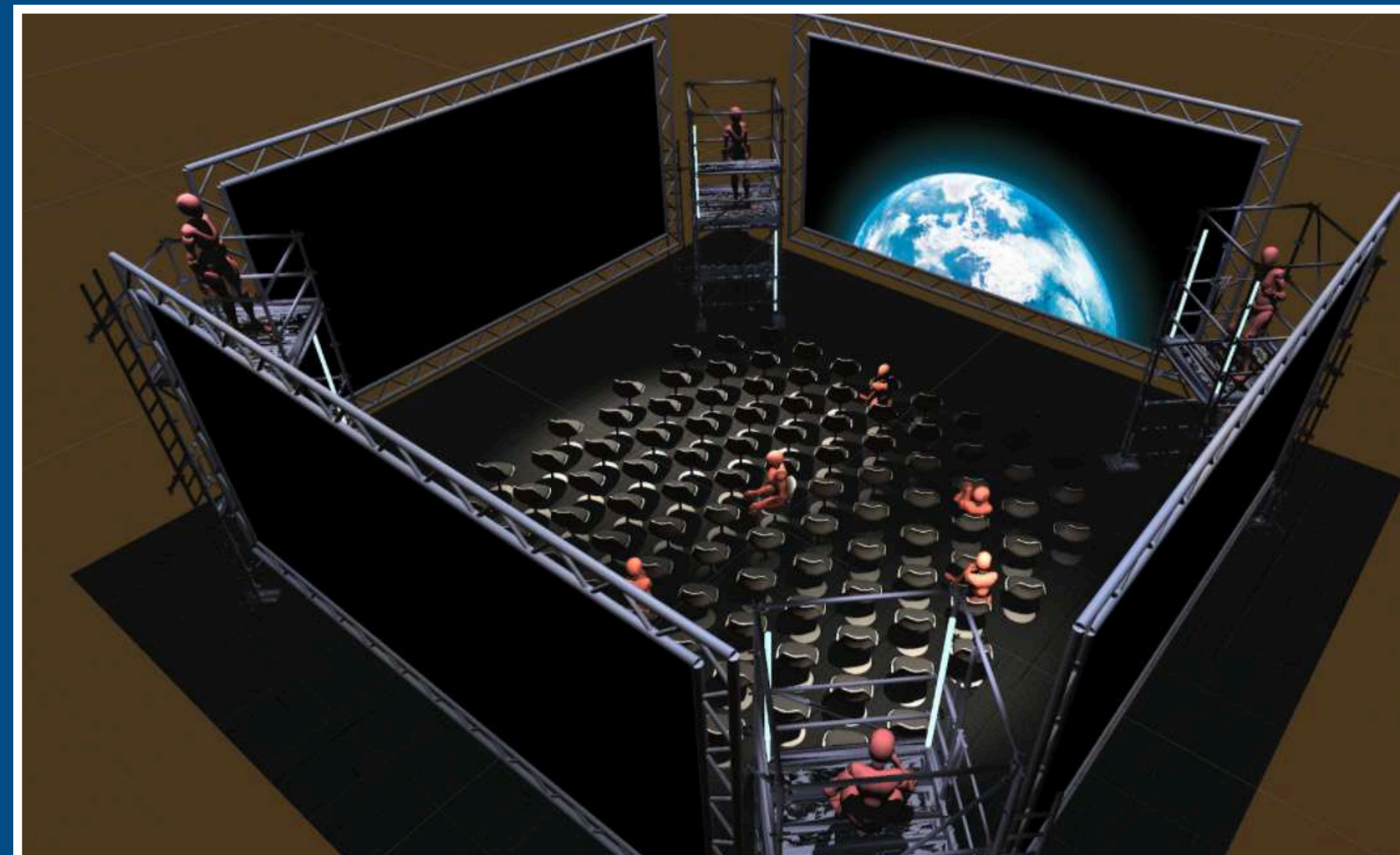
In order to immerse viewers in the heart of Tianzhu's dictatorship, the point of view of the audience is Scott's (the main character) and what is seen and heard by all the inhabitants of Tianzhu.

The concert can be experienced independently. The spectator does not have to have previously participated in the smartfiction to attend the concert and understand the narration.

Similarly, the use of the smartfiction during the concert is not mandatory (it is considered as an additional narrative layer.) Spectators can follow the concert without any interaction on their smartphones.

A **national tour** is being scheduled for the concert. With two technicians, the three musicians will perform in concert halls, theaters, cultural centers, festival, etc. throughout France and worldwide.

From the very beginning, the project is also developed in English for an international tour. The show has also been labeled by the **TRAS network** ([https:// www.reseau-tras.eu/](https://www.reseau-tras.eu/))



SCENOGRAPHY :

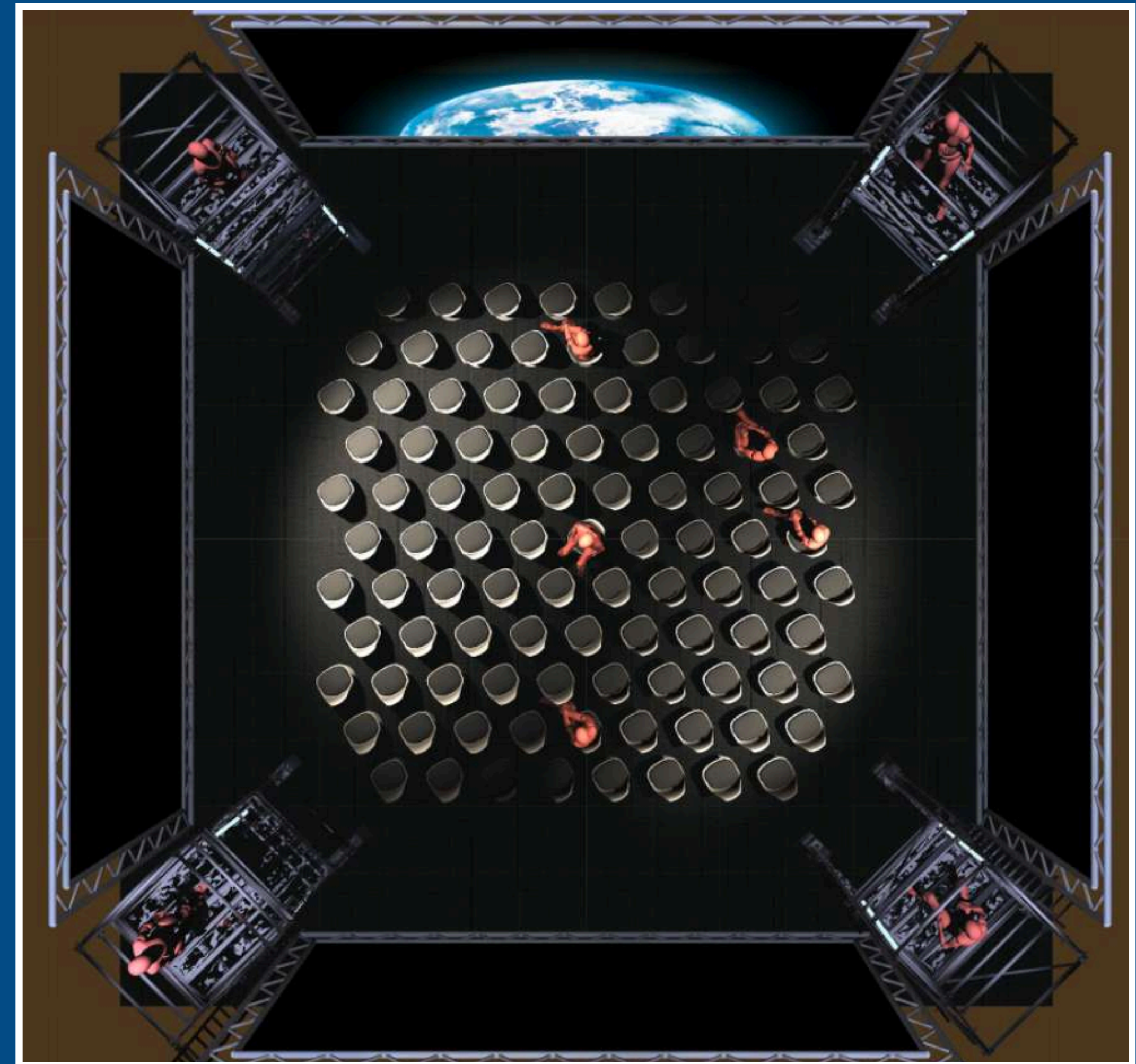
Mathieu Bablet's drawings invite us into space and into a space station. This **scenography composed of 4 screens** takes us both into the great spaces and the confined space of the station. The audience will be immersed in **the infinitely large (space) and the Tianzhu station**, (re)discovering the daily life of this futuristic humanity.

The animated images of the comic book will be projected on **4 screens arranged in a square around the audience**, and the music will be played by 3 musicians in **scaffolding towers located at the 4 corners of the stage** (the 4th tower is dedicated to the technicians). These 4 towers remind us of the volumes, footbridges and floors of the Tianzhu station. The aesthetic choice of scaffolding gives a more **industrial design**, putting back the steel, the lines, the tubes in the cold atmosphere that Mathieu Bablet offers in his comic book.

The 4 screens are stretched in a 300 mm 2-point bridge structure frame. This provides both an effect of the **rigidity of the projection surfaces** and is reminiscent of the **advertising billboards** (propaganda) in the station.

The aluminum structure further supports the industrial and technical aesthetics of the station.

As for the public, they will **enter the stage through the « tunnels »** under two of the towers. They will be sitting on **rotating chairs**, allowing them to follow the 360° animations. The stage is designed for 100 people. **The points of interest, the animations, will guide them in their rotations.** It will sometimes happen that the points of interest invite a **free rotation**, but this will remain sporadic. It is a matter of not losing the audience and to succeed in repositioning it as desired so that it focuses back on the animations.



Stage dimensions:

- Total space: 12m x 12m
- Area for the audience: 9m x 9m (100 seats)
- Screens: 4 x (8m x 4m)
- Tower 1: 1.5m x 1.5m, total height: 4,5m
- Tower 2: 1.5m x 1.5m, total height: 4,5m
- Tower 3: 1.5m x 1.5m, total height: 4m
- Tower 4: 1.5m x 1.5m, total height: 4m

3. VIRTUAL REALITY MOTION COMIC

- Available after the concert
- Ends the narration
- Narrative reading experience in virtual reality

Following the concert, the spectator can **pursue the immersion** in universe of « Shangri-La » thanks to a virtual reality narrative experience in the form of a **motion comic**. It matches Scott's point of view and gives access to the end of the story, representing the cyclical history of our humanity: life-death-life.

In the same way as for the concert, the visuals of the comic book will be animated and set to music with brand new titles (different from the concert) recorded for the occasion in **binaural sound** (spatialized sound) to immerse the spectator.

It is a more **contemplative and poetic vision** by adopting an internal point of view.

The VR experience will be accessible from home individually via online stores or it could be experienced on location in theaters or in cultural centers giving their visitors access to virtual reality headsets for the occasion.



You can get a first look at the virtual reality motion comic with the prototype (work-in-progress) of one of the 6 chapters in the form of a 360 ° video at the following link:

umanimation.com/projets/shangri-la/vr

INNOVATIVE IMMERSIVE EXPERIENCE FOR THE SPECTATOR

Emotional experience:

The premise of a show, whatever it is, is based on **emotions**. The audience expects to **feel emotions it receives nowhere else**, and at the same time, the show and its artistic and technical team, wish to generate the **strongest experience** by conveying the most vivid emotions.

Christelle Derré chose to use **new technologies** to share the universality of « Shangri-La », a futuristic narrative, in order to cause more emotions and to support even more the comic book's discourse. In short, technology generates stronger emotions and spread through the audience with the author's reflection. **Technology is therefore a powerful way to bring this work to life and allow reflection.**

In addition, digital technologies allow to **deconstruct the writing process** and creates a new dramaturgy. It is an orchestration of the sensory channels to achieve **multisensory harmonization**. The audience is immersed in a universe where stimuli are everywhere. They are at the heart of the work because they are not just spectators of Tianzhu: they are its citizens.

Thus, thanks to technology, the collective immersive experience opens a new and innovative way of receiving « Shangri-La », which materializes this society confined in its space station.

Collective immersion:

The experience brings together spectators who come to **experience the concert individually** while taking advantage of everyone's presence to **feel it collectively** as well. Indeed, some spectators may find themselves face to face, as if they were facing themselves in some way. The stools spin 360° and, depending on how the stimuli are staged and how the spectator receives them, moments of « **encounters** » between spectators will happen.

This observation is even stronger as the immersive experience exacerbates individual and collective sensations and emotions. Technology serves the immersion by creating a **new relationship between fiction and reality**. The spectator increasingly loses the notion of fiction confusing it with reality. The immersive experience is a **modernization of the public's relationship to the work**, blurring the boundary between fiction and reality, thanks to the power of the scenography.

The scenography perfectly fits to « Shangri-La », which transposes the very real problems of our current world through a futuristic fiction.

The immersion is worked according to virtual reality standards. Thanks to the sound design, we **stimulate the spectators' senses** with various sound intentions but always synchronous and coherent with what they will visually see. The role of sound design is to **attract the spectator's attention** and keep it within the dramaturgical intention. The music also accompanies and reveals the stakes of the scenes and the characters, and therefore also summons the sensitive.



« Shangri-La » is **definitely a modern work** by tackling current themes in a dystopian way. Mathieu Bablet's work questions the readers on a wide range of strong topics. It deals, through Tianzhu's totalitarianism, with human existence, its role on its environment and the species that surrounds it, on its way of life, on intolerance and racism, on citizen manipulation, on the use of technology to control the human species, on power: **it questions our human ethics and the future of humanity**. This is a panel of successfully intertwined reflections to which no one can be indifferent. This work obviously generates doubts and questions. It is imperative in its desire to **awaken and revolt consciences**.

Thus, to work on Mathieu Bablet's creation for a live performance, Collectif Or Normes' and UMANIMATION' identities and their technological tools allow this **merger between the work and its staging**. Indeed, in our case, the power of our creation technologies perfectly matches the power of the work in which technology is omnipresent. We are witnessing an **artistic mise en abyme**, at the service of a reflection that is absolutely necessary in the current context. Also, the role of the musicians participates in the dramatization by **making the spectators a sample of Tianzhu's citizens**.

Through the immersive experience, applied to the show « Shangri-La », UMANIMATION and Collectif Or Normes want to **shake up people's minds**, by raising questions as strong as Mathieu Bablet's work.

The comic book's themes and concerns:

With our project « Shangri-La », **all the artistic and technical disciplines serve an innovative reception for the spectator** based on the sensitive.

He is at the heart of the story, **at the heart of a sound and visual system that immerses him in our story**. He is also an inhabitant of the Tianzhu station, surrounded by screens, confined and gathered with the rest of humanity in a space station while the Earth is no longer habitable.

Therefore, it is a chance to have **a futuristic projection of our world**: *Would man be able, in the more or less near future, to make the Earth uninhabitable? What would become of our humanity if we were all to be confined in the same space? Will we be able to defy natural laws and create a new human species? Will we take ourselves for God?*

Adaptation for new formats:

Mathieu Bablet's science-fiction comic book is the **starting point** of this incredible transmedia proposal. Through this project, we propose to (re)discover this story-world through **new formats**, allowing to push the narration and the immersion in the universe of Tianzhu even further.

The immersive project is therefore based on a **new division of the original work**. We don't want to show the comic book in a linear and integral way on new media but rather to use some elements to offer an **augmented narration**. To do so, transmedia artist, Christelle Derré (both scriptwriter and director) reconstructs the comic book's narration and carefully selects some of the visuals.

For the smartfiction, **Mathieu Bablet will take part of the writing stage and he will create new stories** extending the universe of the initial comic book.

Original soundtrack and sound spatialization:

The transmedia project proposes an **original musical creation by Vincent Girault** on all narrative media (smartfiction, immersive concert and motion comic in virtual reality) with **post-rock influences**. The main universe of the comic book will be set to music differently since it will give pride of place to a more **synthetic, electronic music**, while keeping an organic aspect influenced by the sound of bands such as Pink Floyd, Radiohead and also Blade Runner's Vangelis.

Vincent Girault and the musicians will work on **sound spatialization** for both the stage and the virtual reality experience. Depending on the physical position of the instruments/musicians, the composition can then be recorded in **ambisonic** (3D sound recording) and be used in **binaural** for the virtual reality, and in **quadriphony** for the stage.

Technical aspects and theatrical treaty:

In addition to the scenographic choice, a research is worked on the **technical processes related to dramaturgy** to serve our history. This is particularly the case for the **the text of the comic book**. Indeed, the text is

an actor in its own right. Like any actor, a dramaturgical identity had to be grasped. To characterize it, work on the display of the text and the choice of typographical characters (font, size, capital letters, effect) was carried out in order to determine different acting intentions.

Sometimes the text is also processed by actors' **voice-overs**, depending on the level of information transmission (radio broadcast, computer-operator voice) or when the characters are out in space.

Visually, from Mathieu Bablet's drawings, we have to use and develop different effects for the images:

- **parallax, travelling et zooming** will give the impression of movement in space;
- **split screen** will help situate the audience at the heart of a space with an image divided over several screens;
- **animations**, for example Mister Sunshine's call for resistance, will emphasize some of the main events.

Intimate point of view:

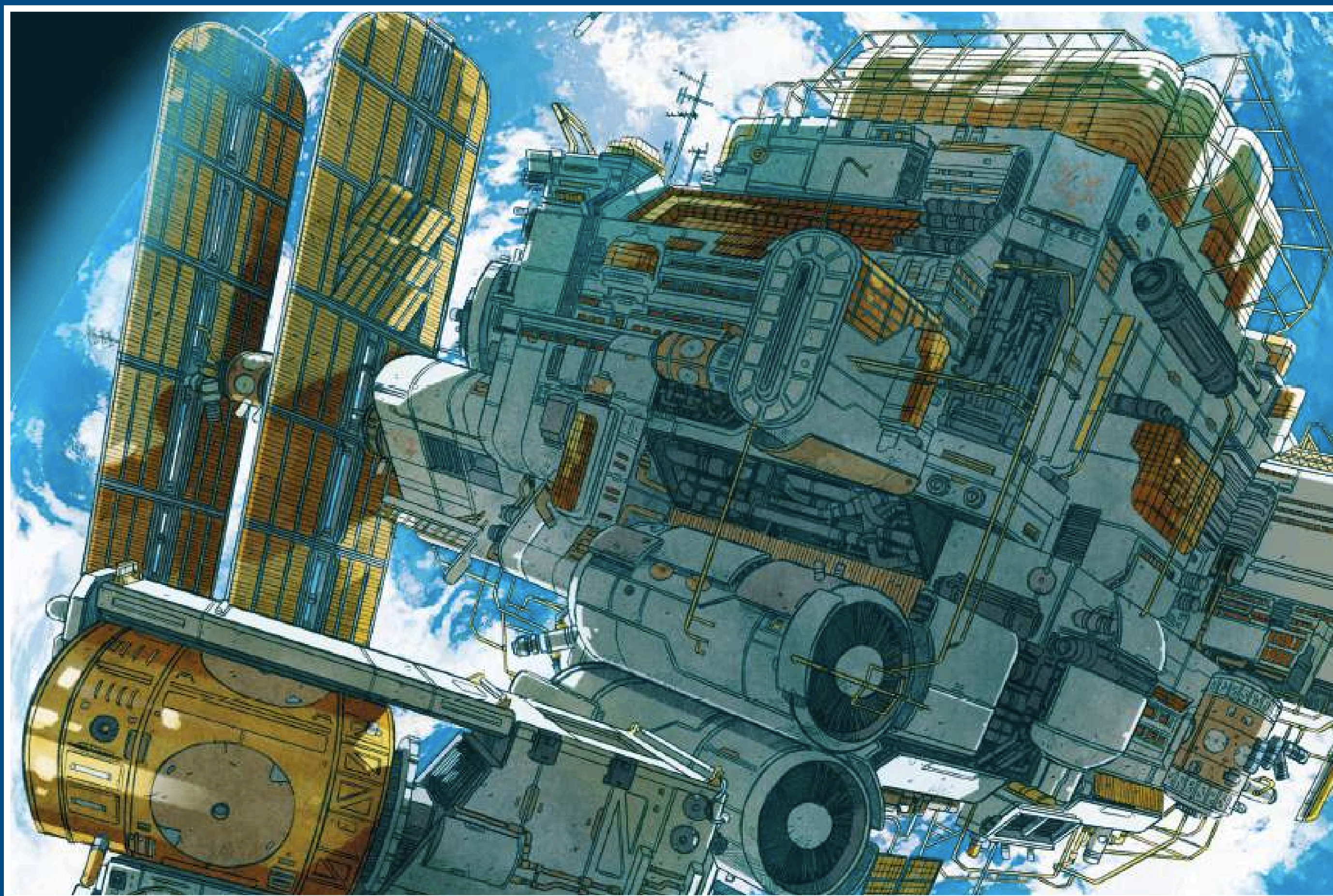
During the immersive concert, the audience's point of view matches Scott's, the main character, and what is seen and heard by all the people of Tianzhu. **We are at the heart of this dictatorship**.

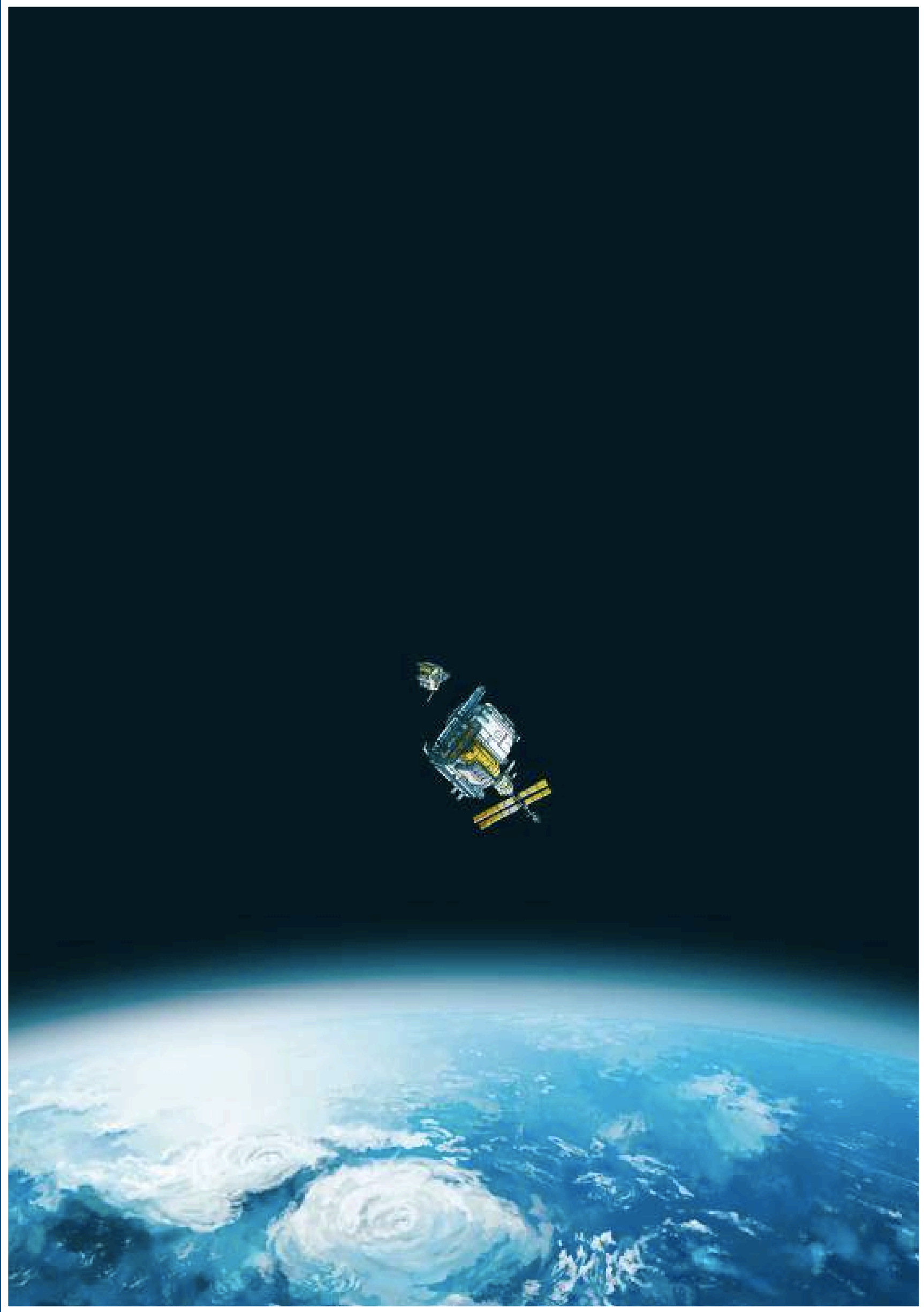
The **virtual reality motion comic** is seen as a **continuation of the immersive concert**, but it is intended for personal use. We wish to offer the audience a more **contemplative** way to discover the end of « Shangri-La ». This involves a slightly different plot (change of location and narrative style) and a change of tone (calmer, more meditative.)

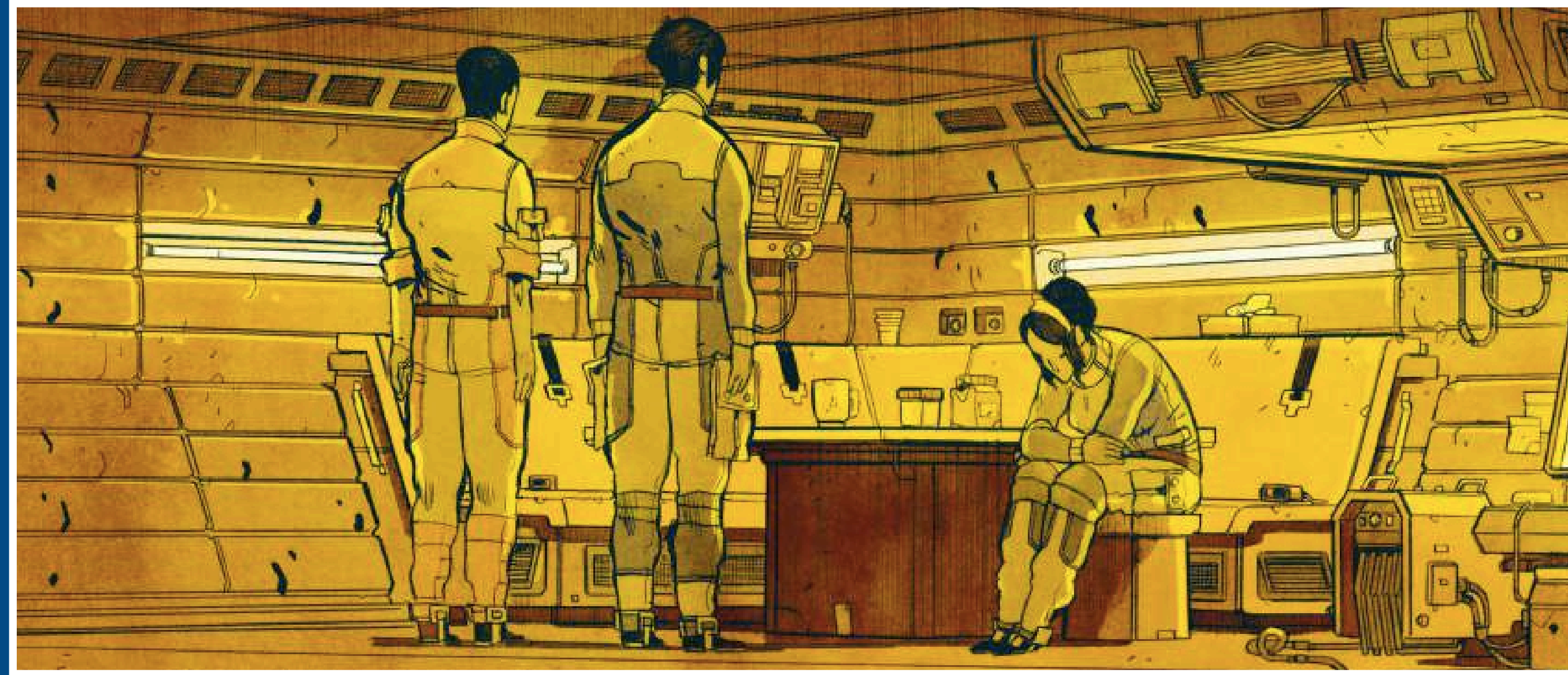
Moreover, during the immersive concert, the **smartfiction's notifications** are considered as **complements to the show's narration**. These directions cause a mise en abyme: it is the gateway/**intrusion of Tianzhu into their private lives**. The audience then has the same position as the hero and may wonder if they've become consumers of this system too.

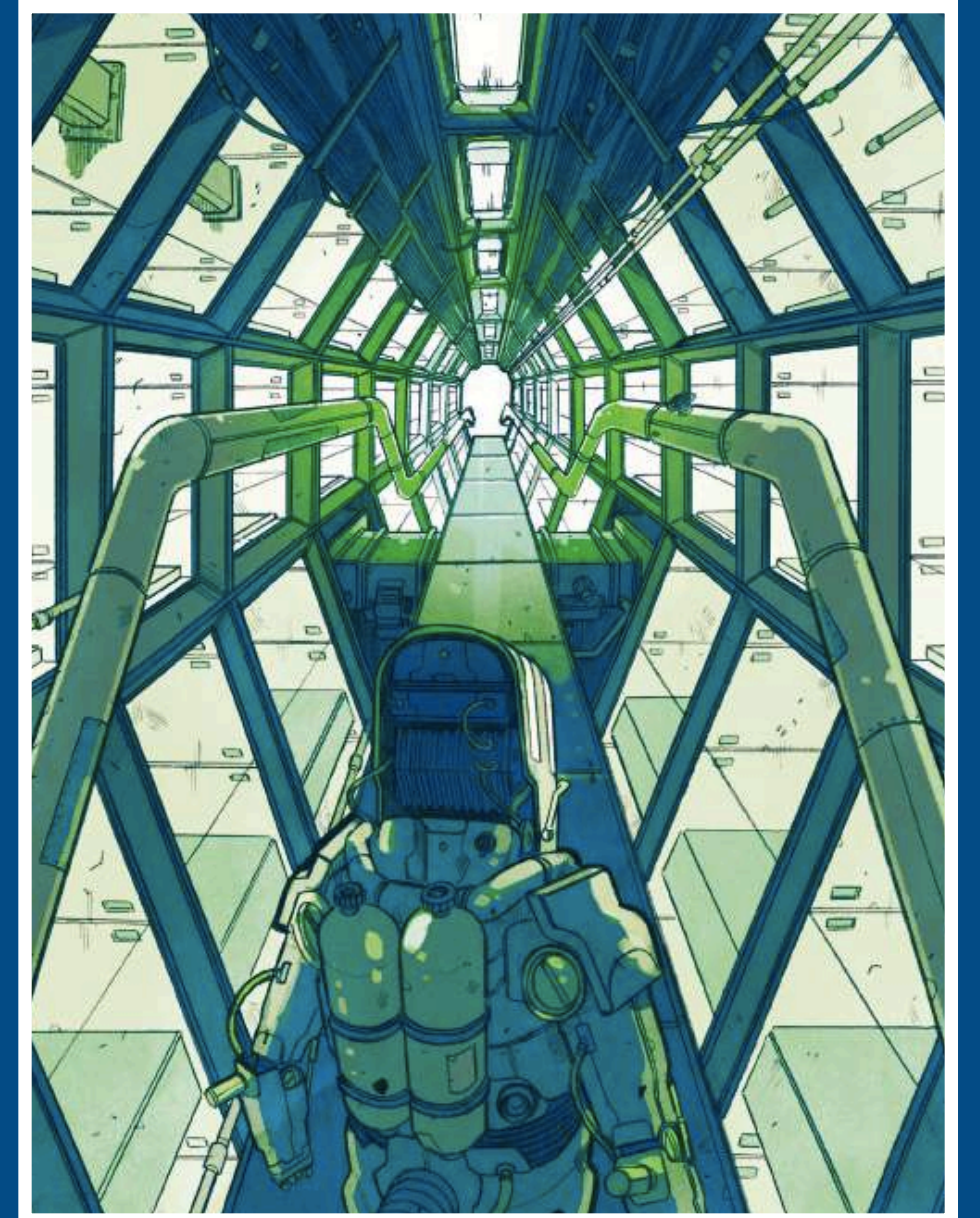
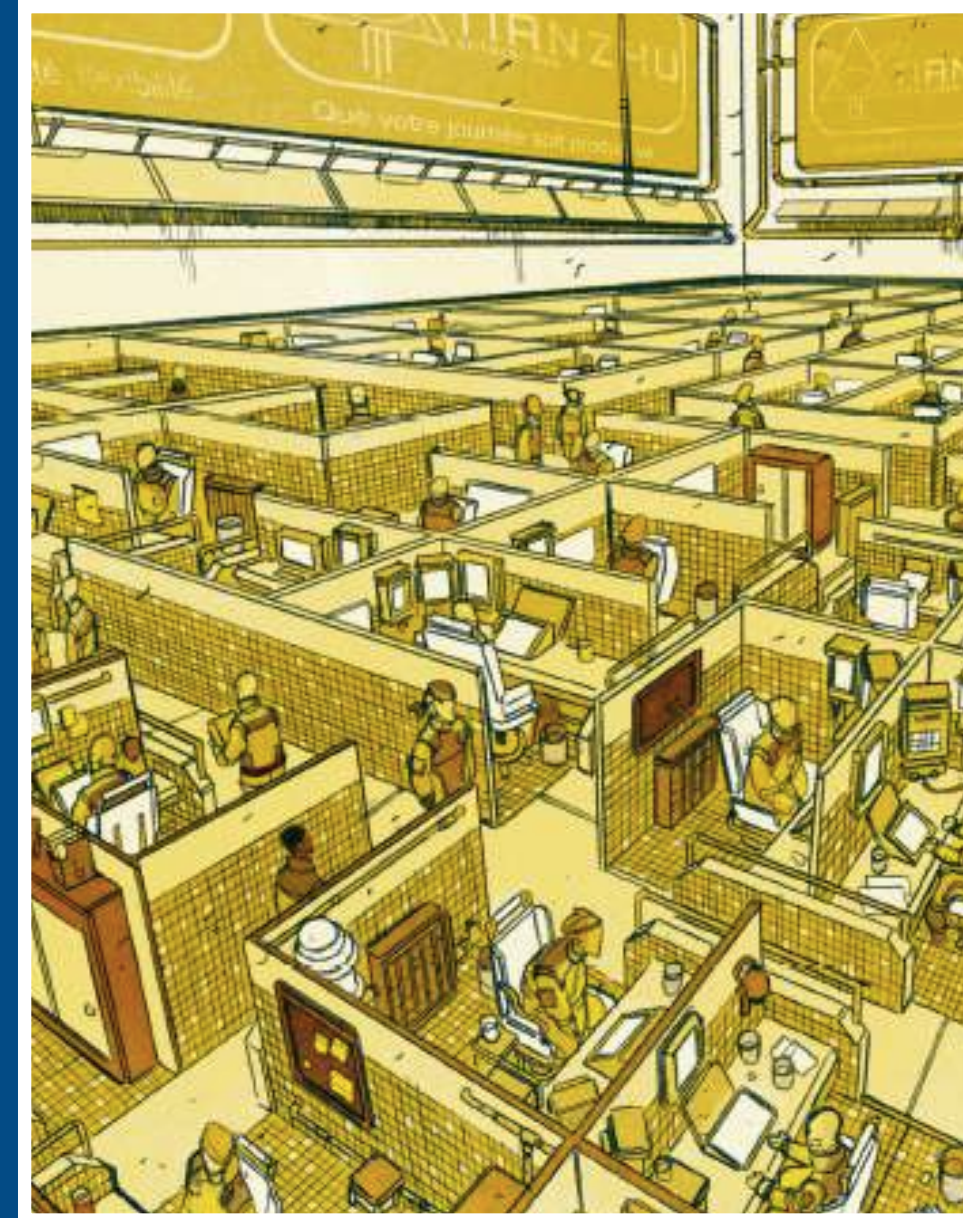
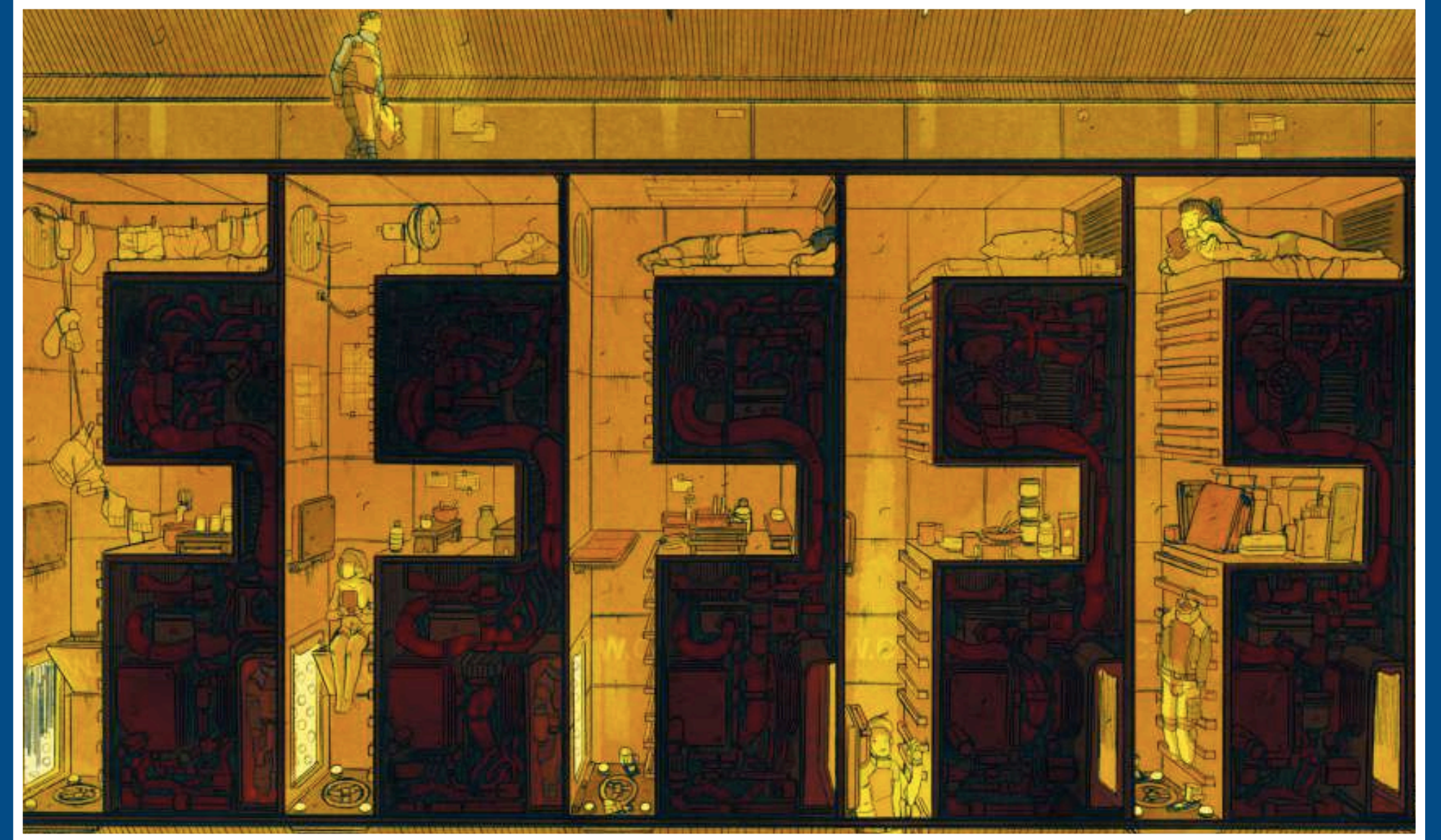
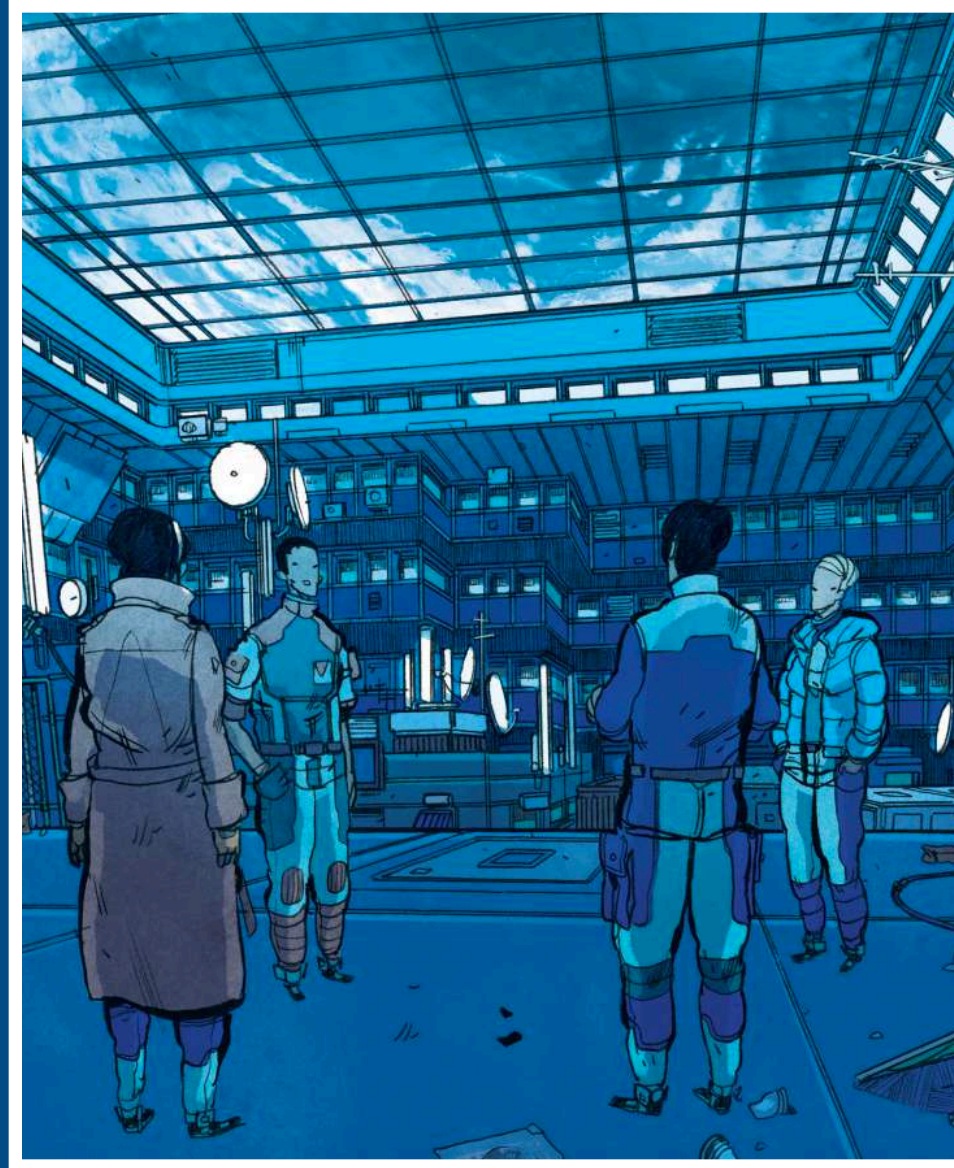
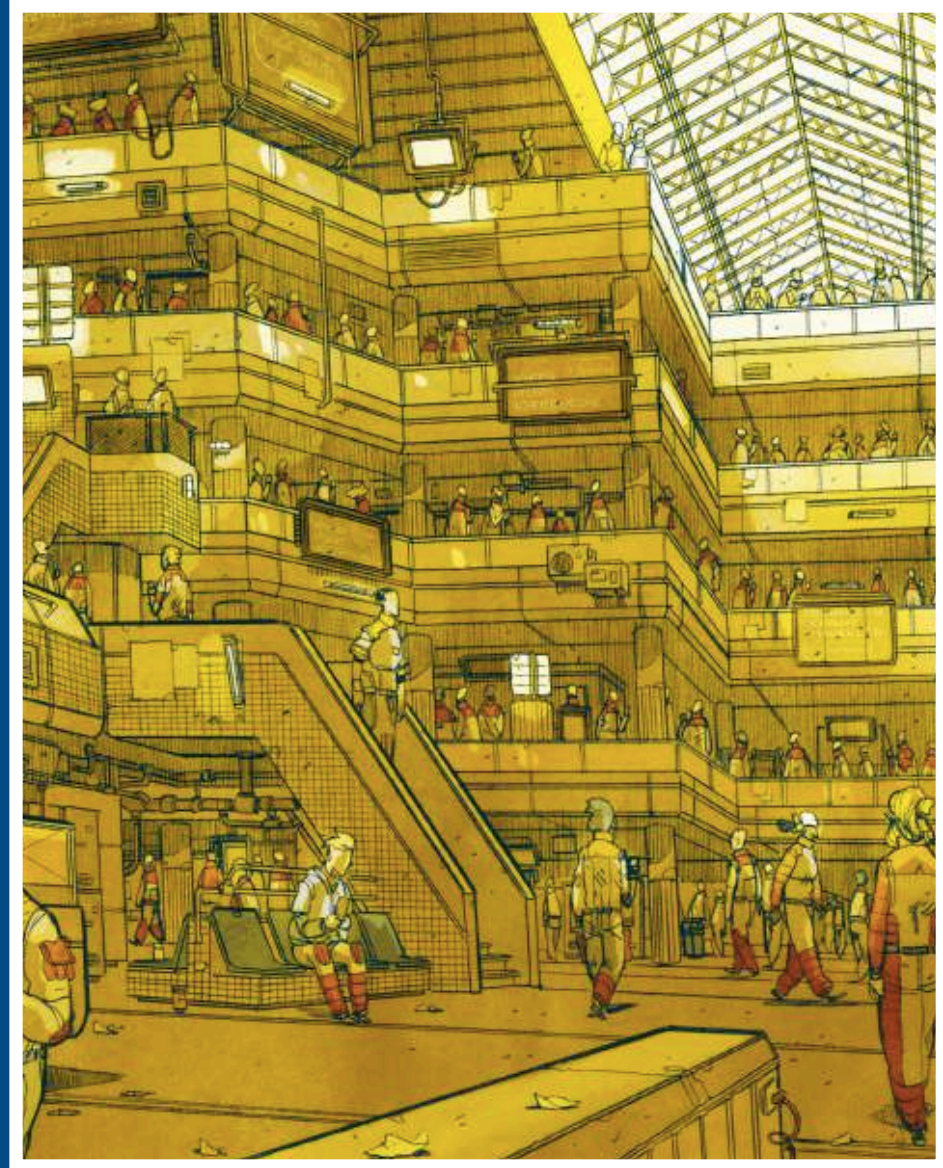
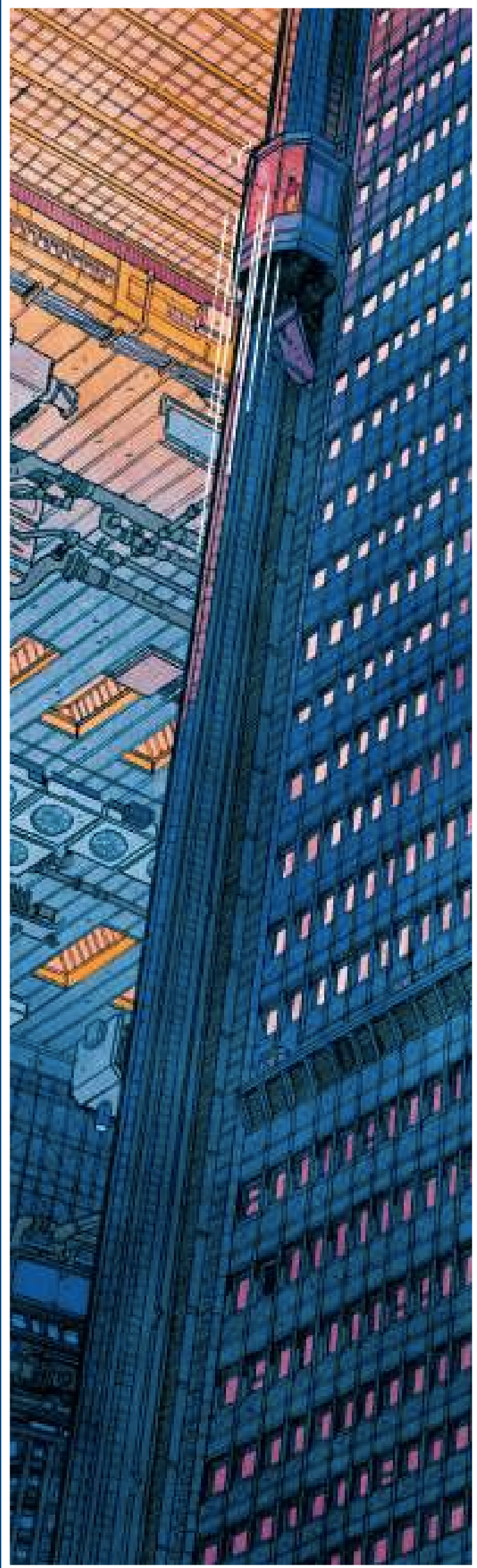
GRAPHIC UNIVERSE

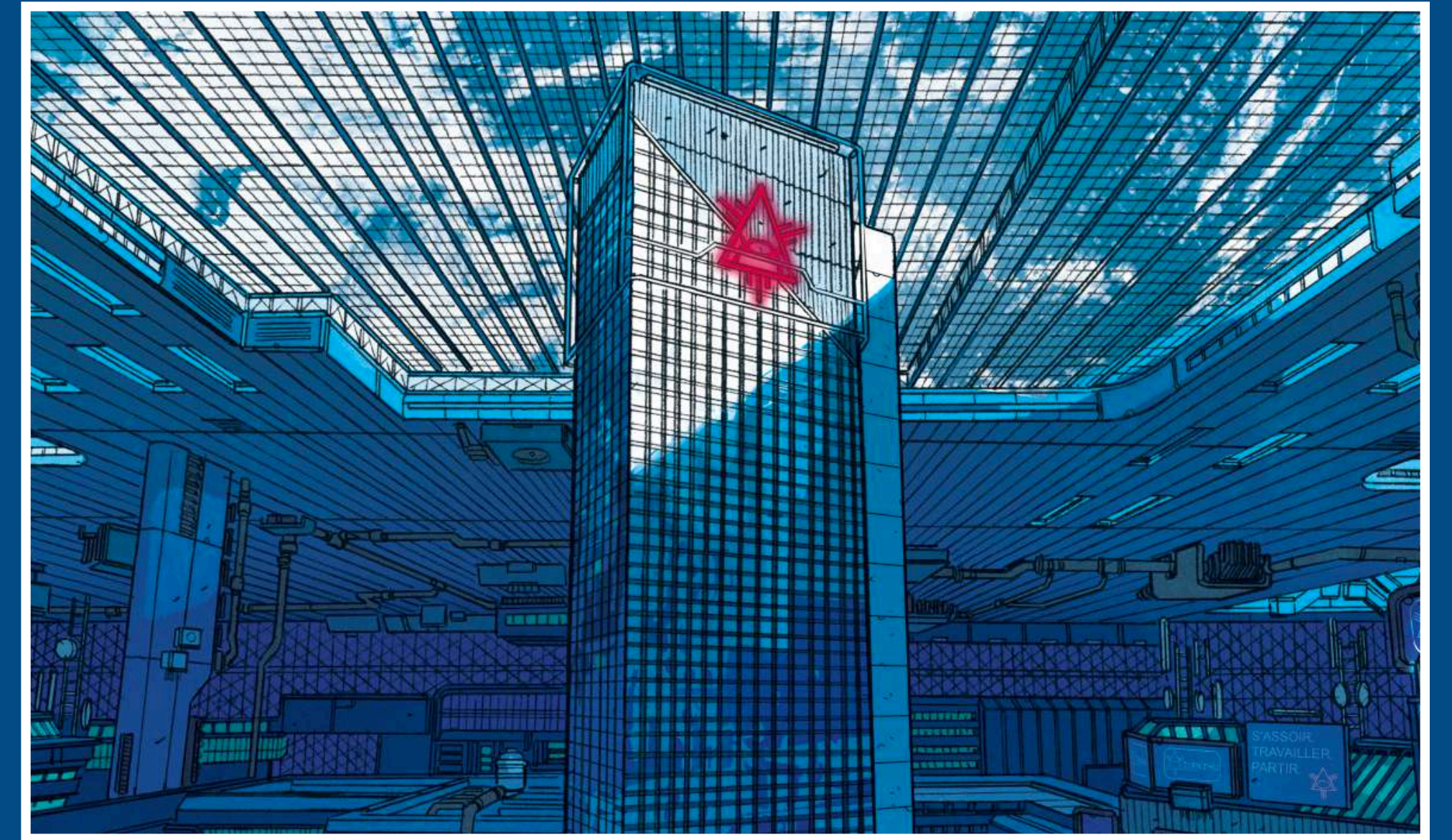
Our project uses the visual and graphic universe of the original comic book, drawn and colored by Mathieu Bablet himself. The frames are cut out and some elements are redrawn as faithfully as possible in order to animate them. Mathieu Bablet also created new visuals for the project.

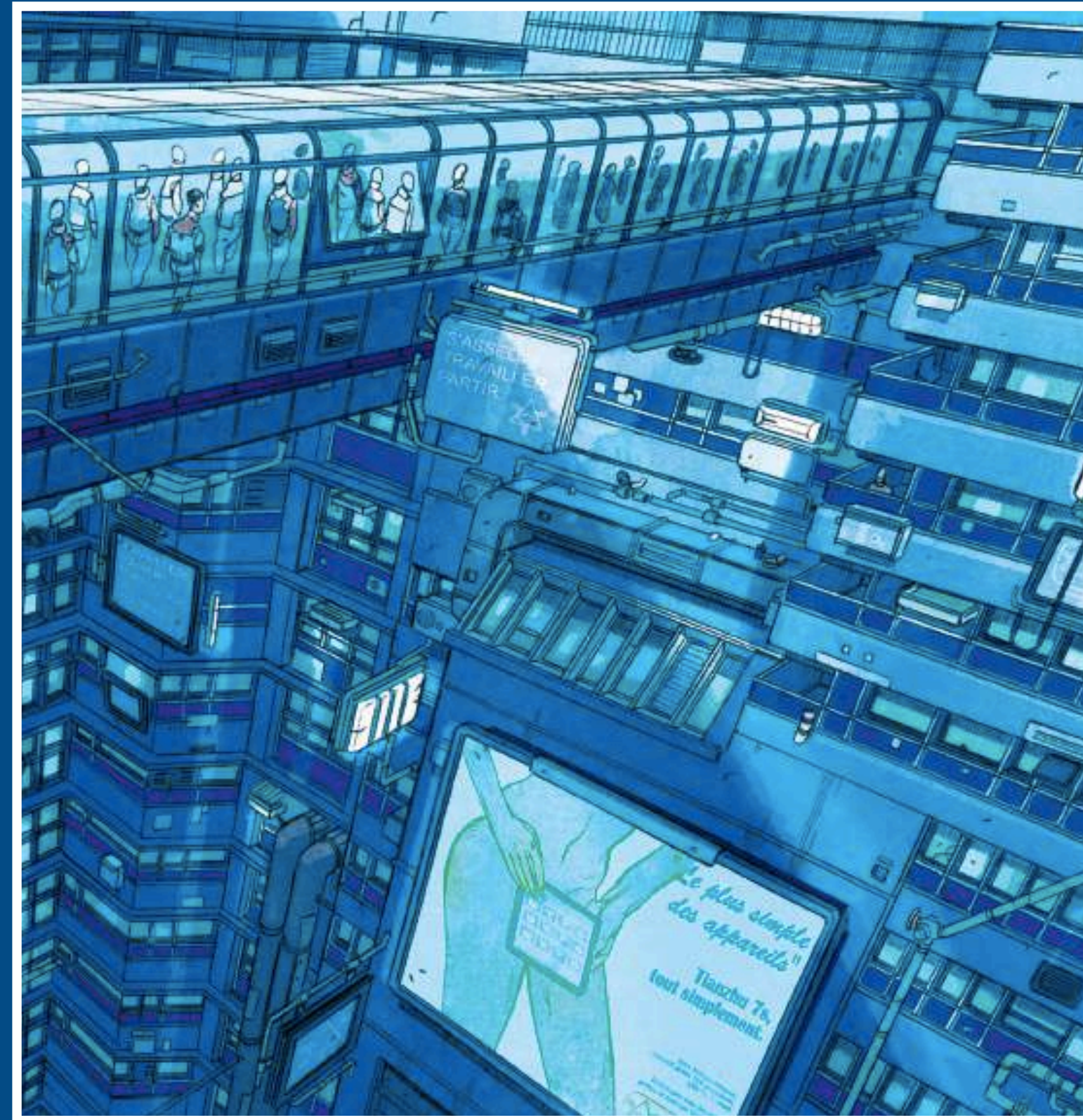
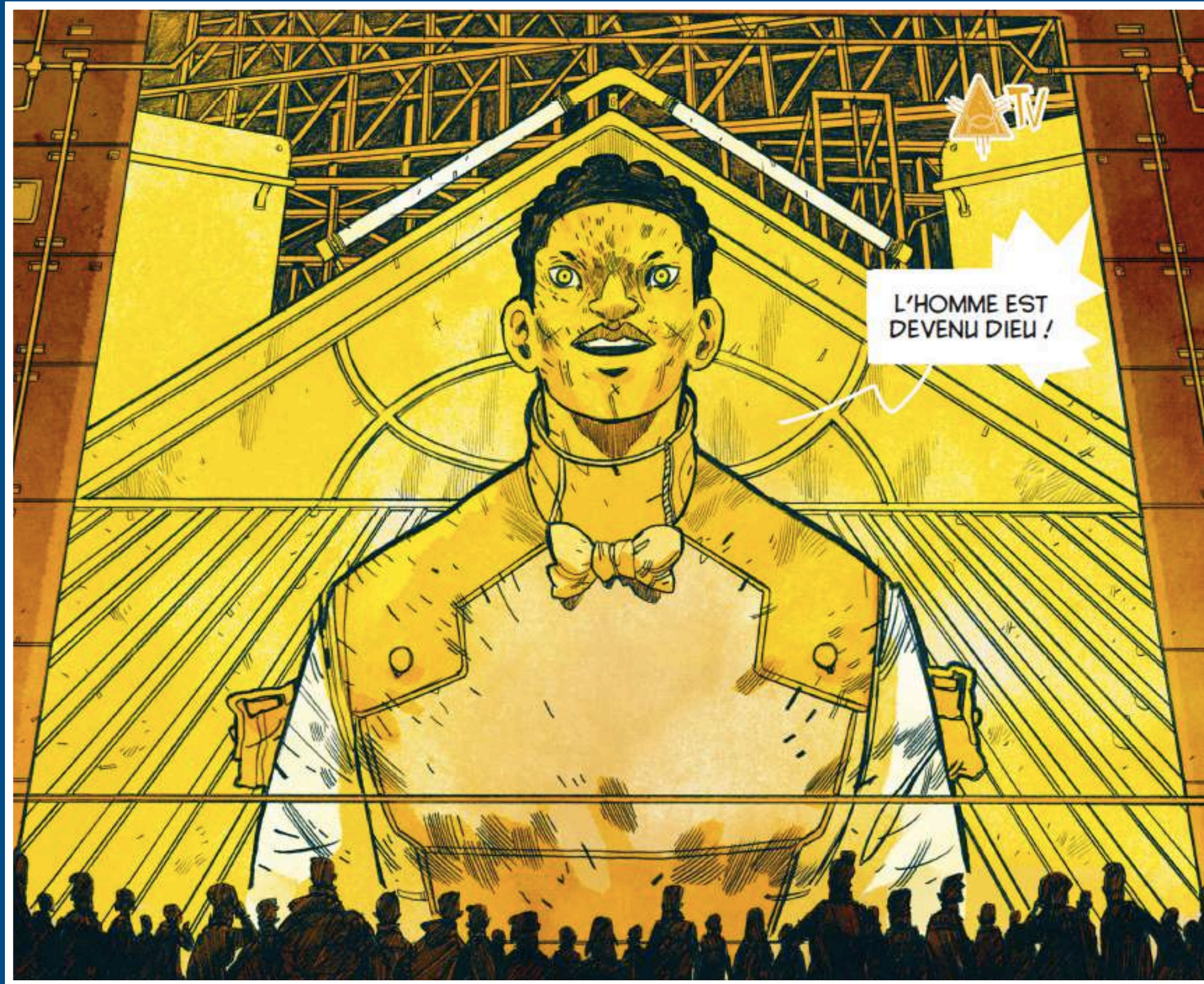


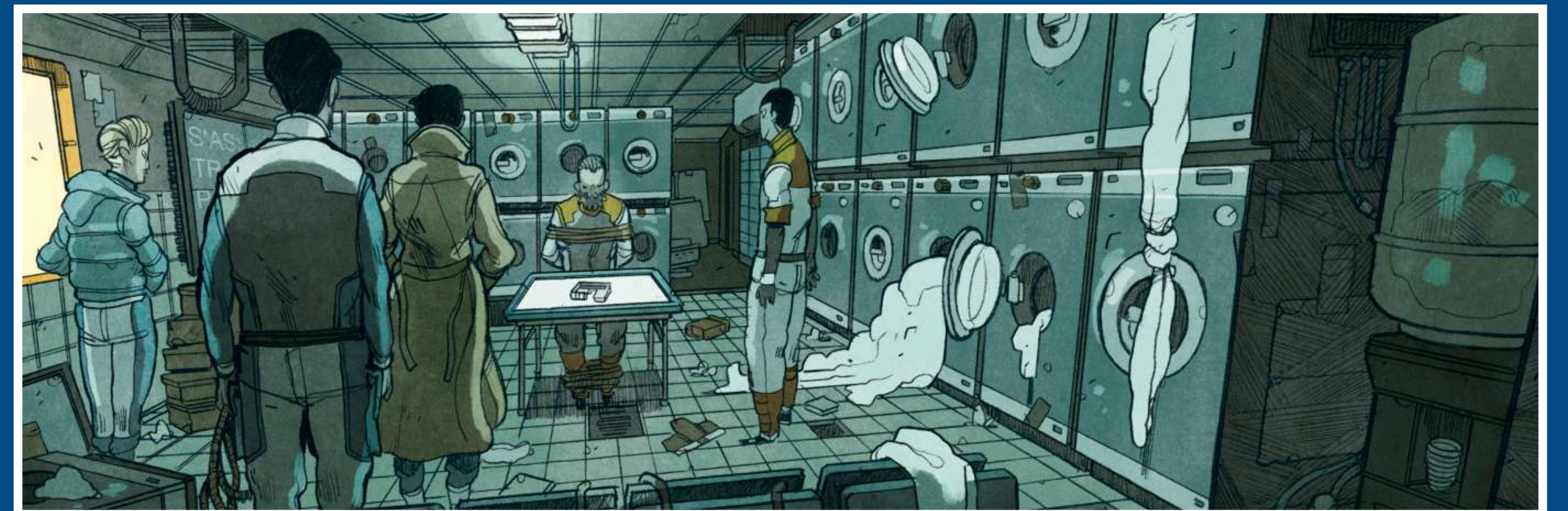
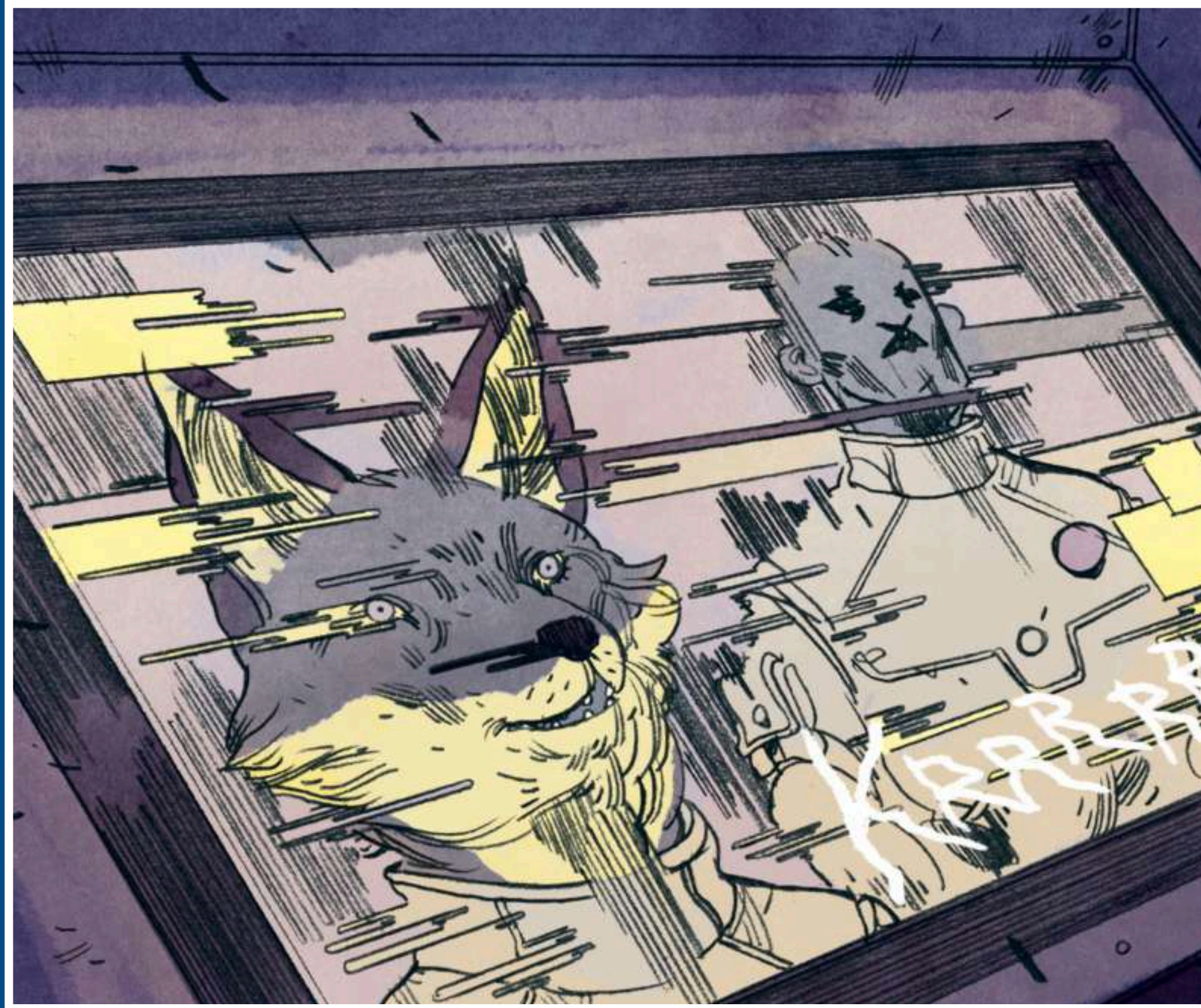














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UMANIMATION is an **XR animation production** company founded by Aymeric Castaing. With a team of talented storytellers, artists and designers, our aim is to define the next generation of entertainment content by producing transmedia universes that enlist different technologies and platforms. The company positions itself as a startup of the creative economy at the crossroads of culture, digital and innovation.



GLOBOZONE (2019)

Web series : 10 x 2'30
 Co-production with ARTE France



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 09 50 93 20 13
 CONTACT@COLLECTIFORNORMES.FR
 WWW.ACCUEIL.COLLECTIFORNORMES.FR

Christelle Derré (director, transmedia artist) and Martin Rossi (artist developer, digital designer) make up this Art and Technology duo which offers transmedia artistic creations which question digital narration and which are deployed on different media, physical or digital (stage, web and screens).



ALBATROS, DE FABRICE MELQUIOT

Coproduced with La Coursive, Scène Nationale de la Rochelle and l'OARA, in partnership with the CNC, Adami and SPEDIDAM.



MATHIEU BABLET
Author



CHRISTELLE DERRÉ
Director, transmedia
scenarist



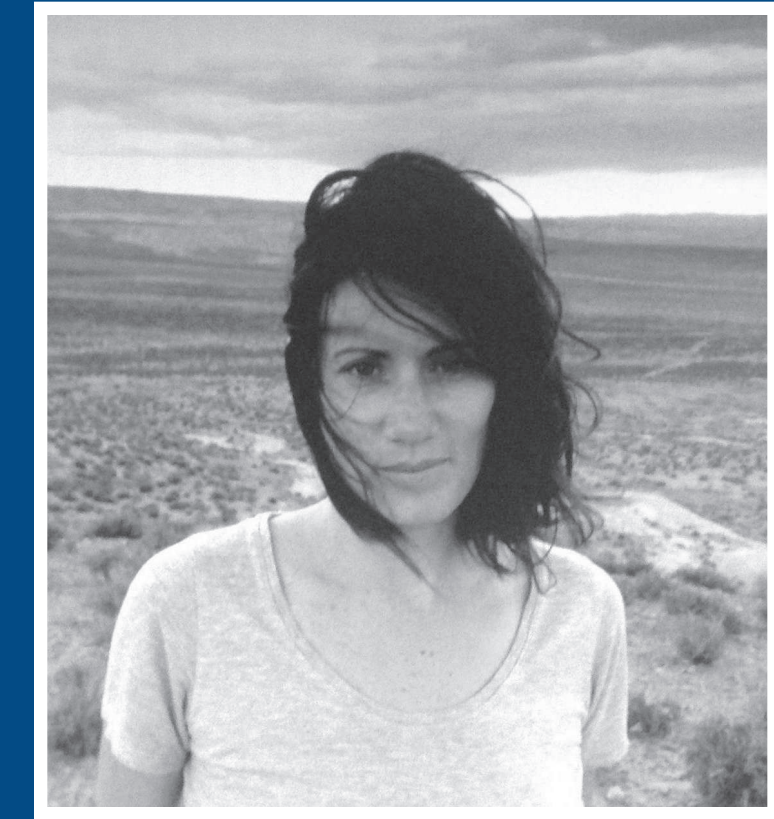
AYMERIC CASTAING
Producer



VINCENT GIRAULT
Composer



DAVID COUTURIER
Musician, sound designer



NADÈGE FEYRIT
Musician



GUILLAUME HENRION
Videographer



MARTIN ROSSI
Set designer



ALEXANDRE COIRIER
Technical director



MANON PICARD
PhD student - Smartfiction



RÉMI CONEJERO
Production assistant



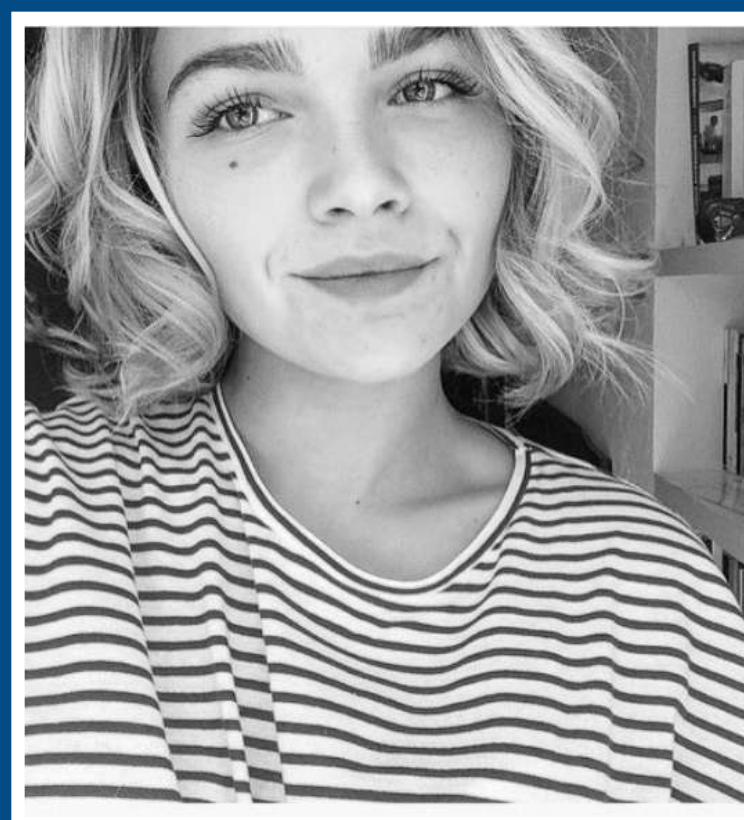
ESTELLE GRIMAUD
Intern - theater directing



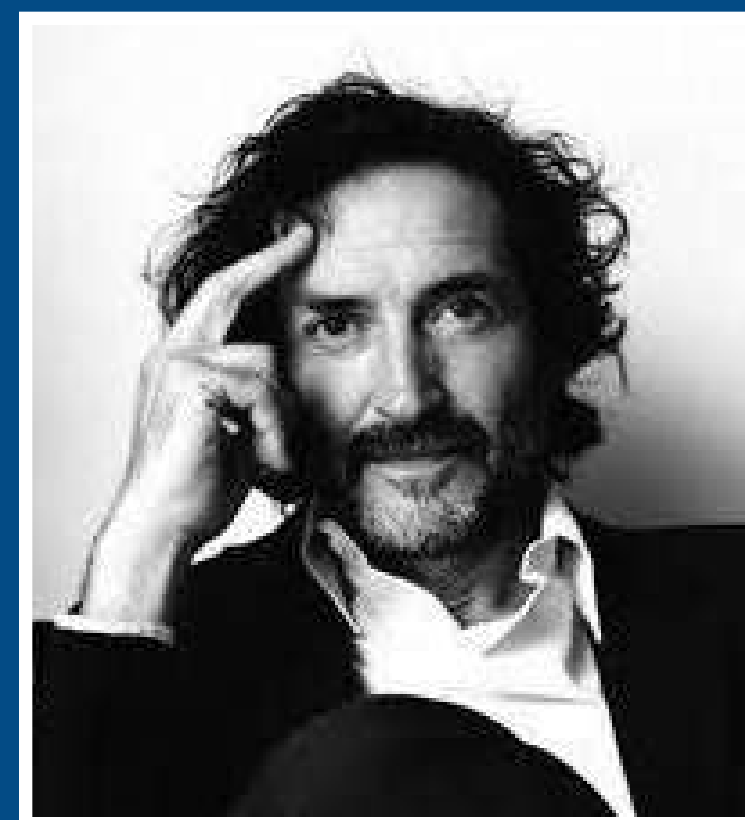
ADELINE CHAIGNE
Actress (Nova)



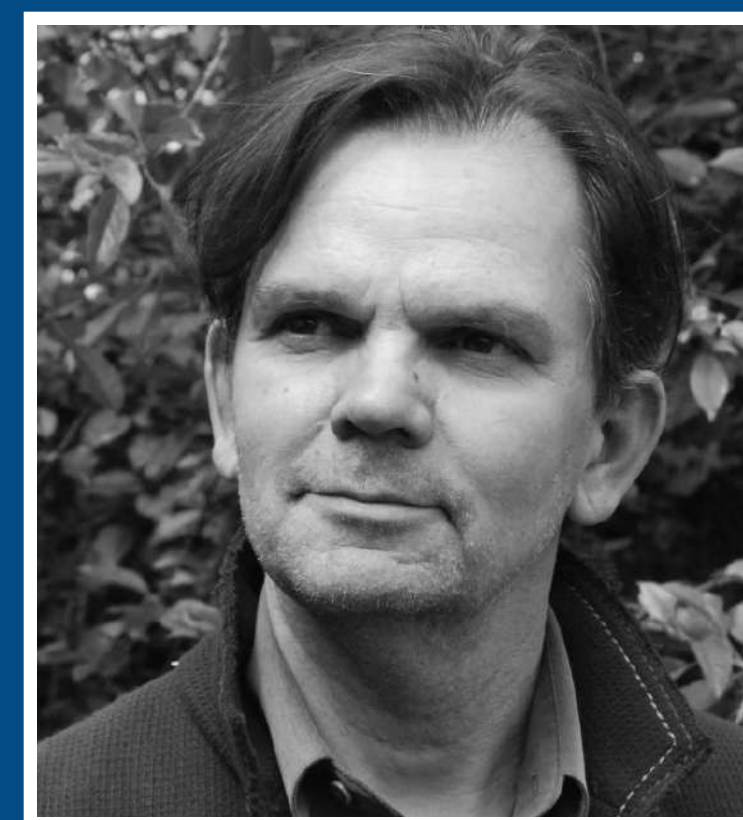
**ANATOLE DEVOUCOUX DE
BUYSSON**
Actor (John)



CAMILLE LERICHE
Actress (Mr Sunshine)



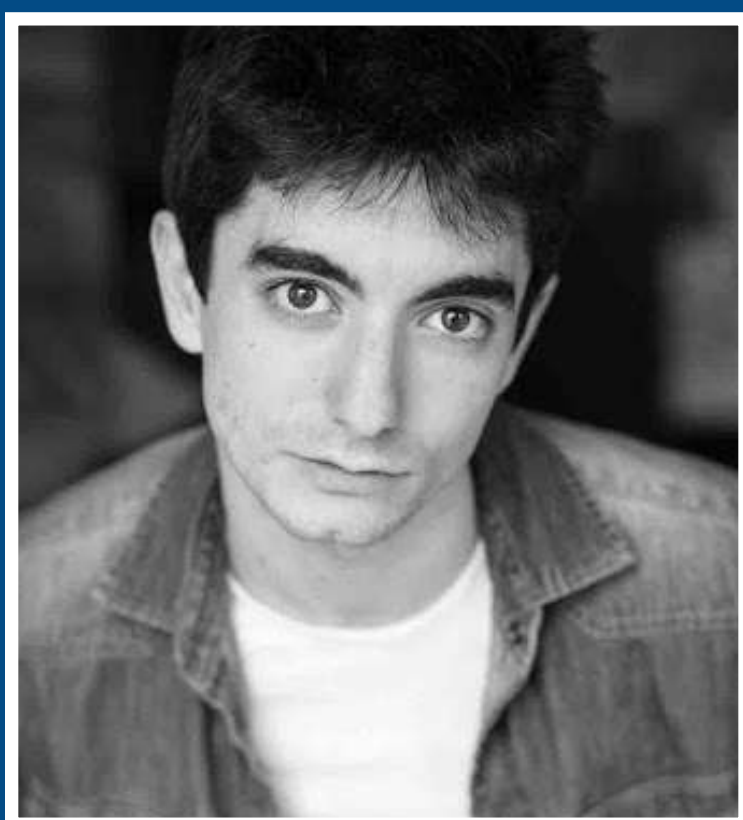
STÉPHANE GODEFROY
Actor (Scientist)



ÉRIC BERGEONNEAU
Actor (Tianzhu board member)



BERNARD FARGE
Actor (Doctor Clark)



DAVID BRÉMAUD
Actor (Scott)



CHARLOTTE GUTIERREZ
Actress (TV host)



BENJAMIN SAVARIT
Actor (Scientist)

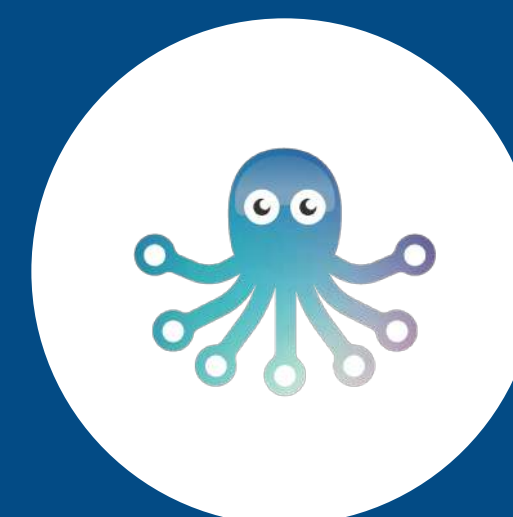
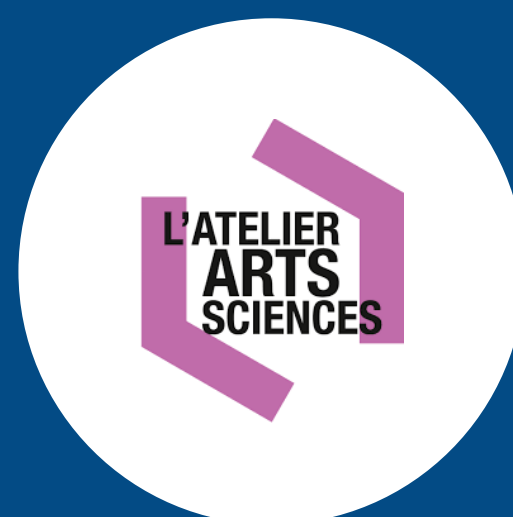


OLYMPE BOUCHET
Costume designer

« Shangri-La » is a project created and produced by UMANIMATION and Collectif Or Normes. It is co-produced with OARA, Scène Nationale de l'Hexagone, l'atelier Arts et Sciences and théâtre d'Aurillac; in partnership with the Nouvelle Aquitaine region, Aquitaine Cultures Connectées, SPEDIDAM, Sacem, IRCAM, the Vienne department and Grand Poitiers.

La Faïencerie Théâtre de Creil, SMAC d'Angoulême: la Nef, théâtre du Cloître Bellac, théâtre Charles-Trenet Chauvigny and Le Lieu Multiple support us as creative residencies partners.

Finally, we are also supported by Ankama Éditions, Poulp and Homido.



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