A ONE-LEVEL ARENA SHOOTER / MAKING OF

Coral Halo

A masked Warden fires glowing rings at ceramic robots in a stone garden under a coral sky. Three waves, a power orb, then the round gate opens. Built in Unreal Engine 5.8 by Claude Code through the Unreal MCP, with every character, weapon and stone texture generated with Scenario.

~8 h
of active agent work over two days

37
build scripts, run in order

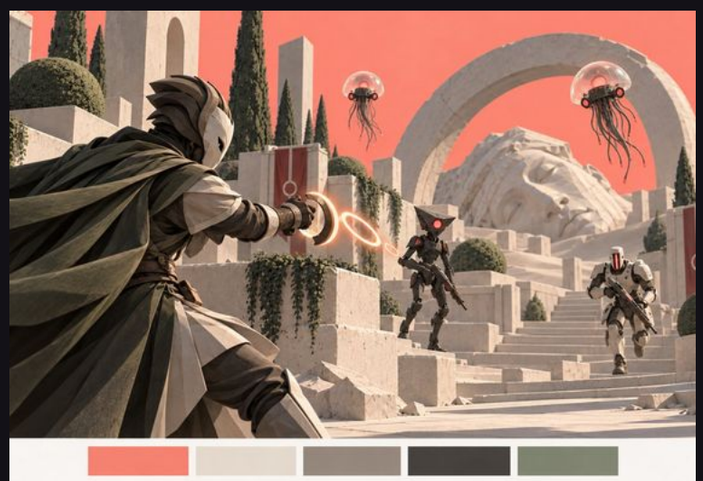
21
final Scenario images and 3D models

2,346
credits (CU), final game assets only

Scenario Scenario MCP Unreal Engine MCP

One player, one level, great rigging.

The brief asked for great quality and, above all, great character rigging: stylized, not childish, no hair, no typical guns, a very small map, played in the editor on a Mac. The concept art came from GPT Image 2.5.



GPT Image 2.5: the concept art.



The arena: the pond and the ring gate.



The game: third person, firing the Halo Caster.

A plan before a level

PLAN.md fixed the world (a sunken stone garden, about 60 m across), the hero, three robot enemies, the weapons, the waves and the risks before anything was built. The cape was replaced by a short stiff tabard so cloth simulation would not be needed.

Built on Unreal's shooter templates

The project was assembled by copying Unreal's Third Person and First Person templates with the Variant_Shooter and Variant_Combat packs: StateTree enemy AI, weapons, projectiles, dash, hit reactions and deaths came ready, so the work went into the art, the rig and the game rules.

A turnaround, four views, one mesh.

GPT Image 2.5 drew the Warden from the front, side and back with C1 as reference. The sheet was cut into four views and Tripo P2 Multiview turned them into one textured mesh with good hands and mask.



GPT Image 2.5: the Warden turnaround (V1, kept).



GPT Image 2.5: the head on its own, for its own 3D model.



Skinned to Unreal's own mannequin skeleton.

A cleaner head piece

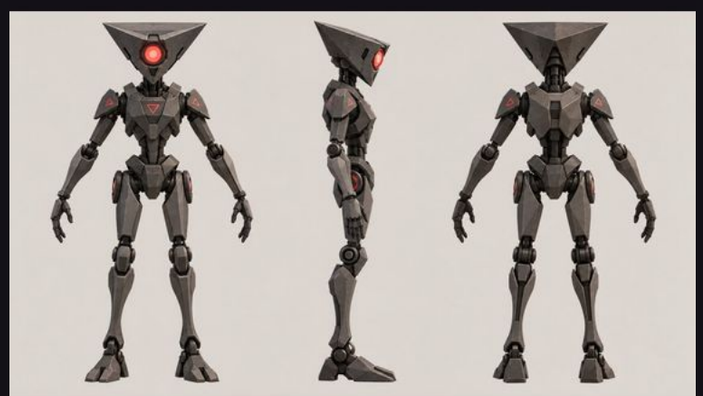
The head piece (crest and mask) was rebuilt on its own for a cleaner result: a GPT Image 2.5 head render, Tripo P2 at 30k faces, then reduced to 8,000 triangles in Blender while keeping the original UVs. Re-baking the texture made it look crumpled.

Rigged onto Unreal's skeleton

Instead of retargeting, Blender transfers skin weights from Unreal's Quinn mannequin onto the Warden and exports it on the SK_Mannequin skeleton, in centimetres, through the legacy FBX importer. The template animations then play on it directly. A later pass bent each arm so the wrists land on the hand bones: before, the hands sank into the hips.

Three enemies, three weapons, no gun shapes.

Sheets for the Pyramid Sentinel, the Visor Guard, the Jelly Drone and the weapons came from GPT Image 2.5, two variants each. The picks went to Tripo P2: multiview for the two robots, single image for the drone, the Halo Caster, the Pulse Brick, the arm cannon and a giant stone head.



GPT Image 2.5: the Pyramid Sentinel, design B.



GPT Image 2.5: the Jelly Drone, design A.



The Visor Guard in game, firing its Pulse Brick.

Rigid robots, a soft drone

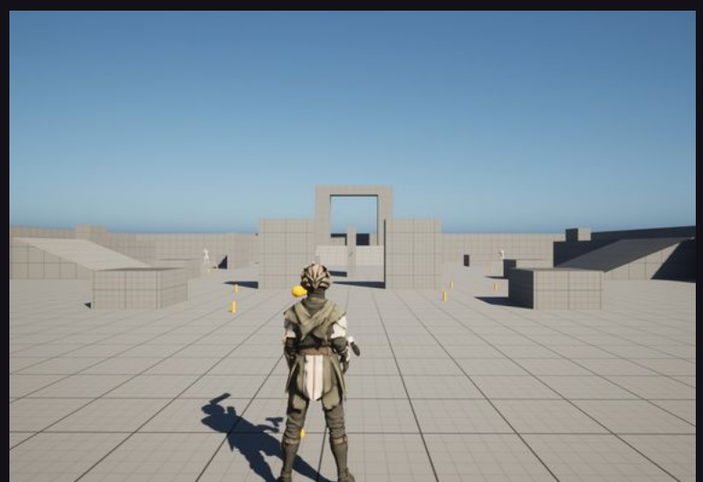
The robots use the same rig script with hard weights, one part per bone, so they move like machines. The drone was generated without its glass dome; the dome is a separate mesh with a fresnel glass material, and the tentacles sway with a vertex-offset material plus a three-tentacle rig.

Effects without Niagara

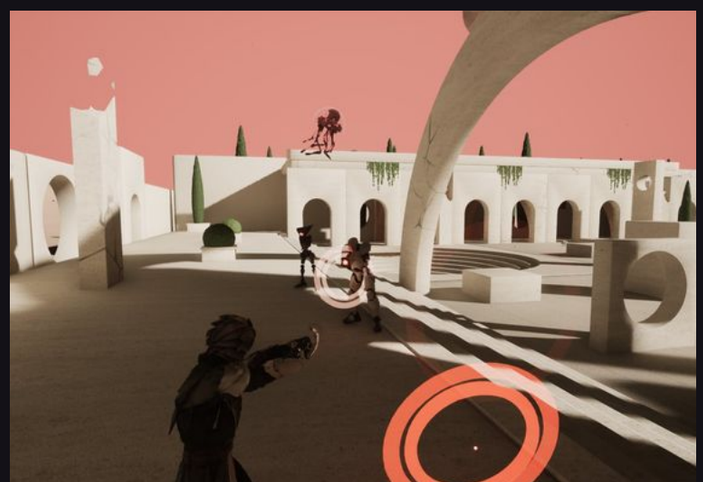
No Niagara system was authored. The muzzle flash, ring impacts, sparks and the shatter on death are meshes, additive materials and 16 physics shards, spawned from Blueprints. The ring disc was slowed to 40% on its first tick so its spin reads.

Blueprints written as text.

Waves of three, four and five enemies, a gate that opens after the last wave, a slow-motion win, a death screen that reloads the level, sprint, dash and double jump. Eight DSL scripts wrote these graphs through the MCP's write_graph_dsl, about 125 runs in all.



Phase 1: the gray box, with the rigged Warden.



Combat mode: rings fired both ways.



A Jelly Drone, tentacles swaying.

What the graph language did well

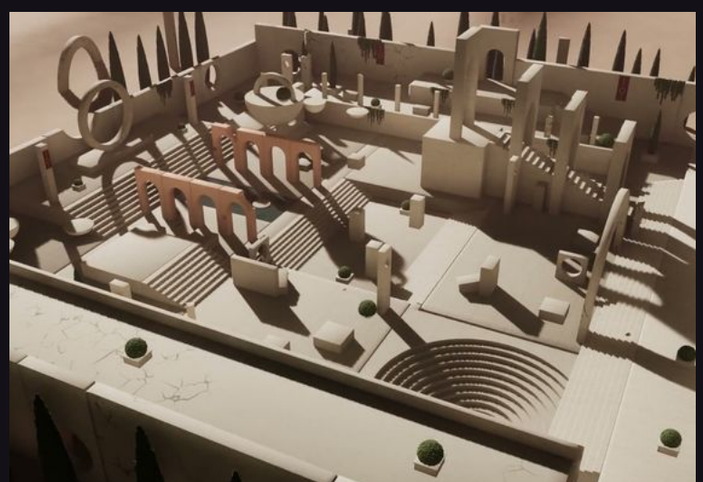
Functions, variables, events and whole event graphs from a few lines of text, compiled and tested in Play from the same script. Anim graph nodes (a layered blend to lower the gun, Transform Bone chains for pose fixes) were added with create_node and connect_pins.

And where it fought back

The tool results hold 33 write_graph_dsl errors. No parent-call nodes, so BeginPlay overrides became Tick plus DoOnce. Custom events must exist before they are called. Pins with spaces must be positional. SwitchOnInt only offers pins 0 and 1. A failed write leaves stale nodes, so the function is wiped and rewritten.

A procedural kit, cut in Blender.

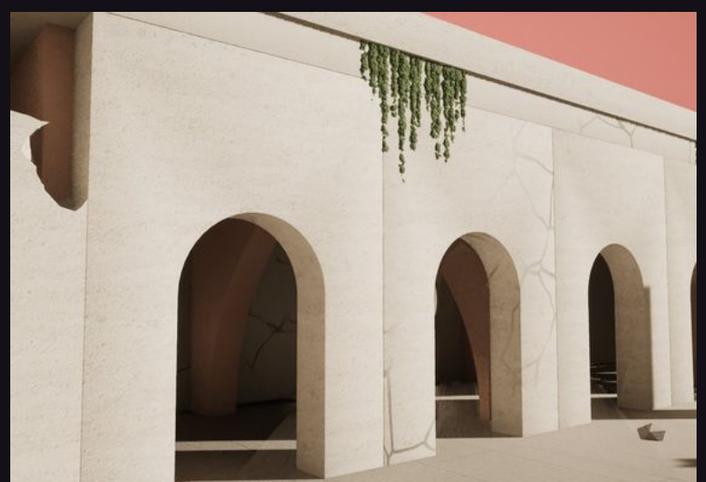
The architecture is a kit written in Blender Python: blocks, stairs, arches, ring walls, a stepped well, a mirror disc, cypresses and topiaries, broken columns. Two Unreal scripts place hundreds of pieces: the 84 m arena with an arcade, a pond, floating stones and a power orb up terracotta stairs.



The arena being placed by script.



The pond, the arcades and the ring gate.



The west arcade: travertine with hairline cracks.

Stone, the third try

PATINA returned near-blank maps (five jobs, not used). Ideogram V4 tiling gave usable paving, but its travertine and plaster came back grey or blocked. GPT Image 2.5 swatches made seamless in Python finally worked, with a triplanar material, soft anti-tiling and open Voronoi cracks.

Level traps

FBX static meshes arrived with no collision, so it was added explicitly. A "no collision" flag alone did not stick, and a 2 km sky sphere pushed the player out of the world. Re-creating a material deleted it from every placed actor, so the level scripts are re-run after any material rebuild.

Same bones, joints moved into the body.

The first rig was automatic: in Blender, Unreal's Quinn skeleton and its skin weights were copied onto the Warden, so every Unreal animation played on him at once. But the bones sat where Quinn's are, not where his body is.



Before: the hand joints far up the forearm, inside the bracer.



After: the hand joints in the glove, one bone line per finger.



Aiming the Halo Caster: Quinn, the auto rig, the improved rig.

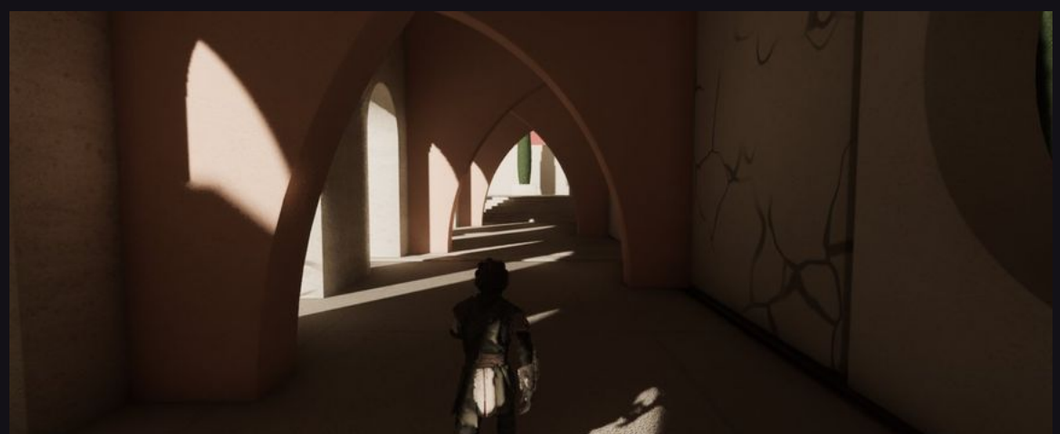
Before: the automatic rig

The shoulders sat inside the chest and the hand joints were badly misplaced, so the gloves and the fingers stretched whenever the hands moved. The skeleton was Unreal's own, which is why every clip still played.

After: a Claude skill, then a few joints by hand

A rig skill moved each joint into the middle of its body part, found the true wrists at the glove cuffs, fitted the fingers and redid the skin weights the mannequin's way, keeping every bone's orientation so Unreal's clips still play. A few joints were then moved by hand on a rig check page beside Quinn. The skill gives an automatic rig a slight improvement, not a full fix.

12 images and 9 3D models.



Under the arcade.



Across the pond's stepping stones.

Made with

Claude Code driving the Scenario MCP and the Unreal MCP, Unreal Engine 5.8 on a Mac, Unreal's shooter templates, Blender for the rig and the kit, claude.ai pages for the pose studio and the rig check, three.js for the turntables, ffmpeg for the edit.

The receipt

Key art, Warden, enemy and weapon sheets, head, cannon: GPT Image 2.5 (9)	121 CU
Travertine and plaster swatches: GPT Image 2.5 (2)	23 CU
Floor paving: Ideogram V4 tiling (1)	42 CU
Warden body, Sentinel, Guard: Tripo P2 Multiview (3)	720 CU
Head, drone, Halo Caster, Pulse Brick, cannon, giant head: Tripo P2 (6)	1,440 CU
Total, 21 finished Scenario generations	2,346 CU

From the production's Scenario job records.

The prompts, word for word.

The Warden, turnaround sheet (GPT Image 2.5, from the key art)

Professional 3D game character turnaround model sheet of the masked hero from the attached concept art (the cloaked figure in the foreground), redesigned for a real-time game rig. Same art style: stylized matte clay 3D, smooth simplified sculpted forms, premium indie game character, adult and elegant.

Three full-body views side by side, same scale, evenly spaced, feet on one ground line: FRONT view, SIDE view (facing right), BACK view. Neutral standing A-pose: arms held straight down and slightly out from the body at about 40 degrees, palms facing the thighs, legs straight and slightly apart, looking straight ahead.

CHARACTER: 'The Warden'. Body proportions like a realistic slim athletic adult (standard game mannequin proportions, about 7.5 heads tall, normal-length arms and legs). HEAD: smooth cream ceramic full-face mask with two thin dark eye slits, and a sculpted solid swept crest made of layered curved ceramic-like blades sweeping back over the head instead of hair; the crest stays close to the head and does not extend past the shoulders. No hair at all. NO CAPE and no cloak. OUTFIT: fitted charcoal long-sleeve tunic with layered sage-green shoulder pieces; a short stiff split tabard: one front panel and one back panel hanging from the belt to mid-thigh, open at both sides so the legs are free; leather belt; slim charcoal trousers; cream ceramic bracers on the forearms; sturdy knee-high charcoal boots. GLOVES: dark fitted gloves with five clearly separated fingers, hands open and relaxed, fingers slightly apart. No weapon, nothing in the hands.

PALETTE: charcoal, sage green, warm cream, warm grey, one small red accent stripe on the tabard. Plain flat light-grey background, soft even studio lighting, no shadows on the background, no text, no labels.

The Warden's head, on its own (GPT Image 2.5)

Clean high-resolution 3D character asset render of ONLY THE HEAD of the masked character in the attached images (the first image shows the head from the front, three-quarter and side), seen in a THREE-QUARTER FRONT VIEW (turned about 35 degrees to the viewer's right), centred, filling most of the frame. Keep the exact same design and proportions: the cream ceramic face mask sits LOW on the face, covering the face from the brow down to a pointed chin, with two slanted almond eye openings that are dark, a central vertical ridge and two pointed tips at the top edge; ABOVE and BEHIND the mask, the sculpted crest of layered curved blades in warm taupe and grey-brown sweeps back over the skull, with one central blade rising between the two mask tips. The crest is NOT covered by the mask. Under the mask, a dark charcoal fabric hood wraps the head and continues into a SHORT plain neck that ends cleanly - NO scarf, NO collar, NO shoulders, no body.

Make it much cleaner and more refined than the reference: crisp smooth facets, clean sharp edges, smooth continuous ceramic surfaces, no lumps, no dirt, no smudges, matte stylized clay-like materials, premium indie game character quality. Plain flat light grey background, soft even studio lighting, no cast shadow, no text.

The prompts, word for word, continued.

Pyramid Sentinel sheet (GPT Image 2.5, two designs from one prompt)

Character design turnaround sheet for a stylized indie game enemy robot, matching the art style of the reference image (matte clay / ceramic look, soft late-afternoon light, restrained palette). The robot is the 'Pyramid Sentinel', the dark triangle-headed sniper robot from the reference: tall and thin humanoid robot, head is a sharp downward-pointing triangular pyramid with ONE round glowing red eye in the centre, slim charcoal-grey ceramic armour plates over dark joints, small red triangle marking on the chest, long thin legs, elegant and menacing. Show FRONT view, SIDE view and BACK view, full body, standing in a neutral A-pose with arms slightly away from the body and empty hands (no weapon), feet flat, evenly lit, plain light warm-grey background, no shadows on the background, no text. Clean readable silhouette suitable for 3D modelling.

Visor Guard sheet (GPT Image 2.5)

Character design turnaround sheet for a stylized indie game enemy robot, matching the art style of the reference image (matte clay / ceramic look, soft late-afternoon light, restrained palette). The robot is the 'Visor Guard', the white armoured robot from the reference: sturdy boxy humanoid with off-white / cream ceramic armour plates, a rounded helmet head with a single tall vertical red glowing visor slit, dark grey joints and under-suit, chunky shoulders and shins, heroic but simple shapes, a few thin red accent lines. Show FRONT view, SIDE view and BACK view, full body, standing in a neutral A-pose with arms slightly away from the body and empty hands (no weapon), feet flat, evenly lit, plain light warm-grey background, no text. Clean readable silhouette suitable for 3D modelling.

Jelly Drone sheet (GPT Image 2.5)

Design sheet for a stylized indie game enemy, matching the art style of the reference image: the 'Jelly Drone', a floating robot jellyfish.

A clear glass dome (slightly pink tinted, glossy) over a compact charcoal-grey mechanical core with one round glowing red eye/light inside, a ring of small round red lights around the rim, and 6-8 hanging segmented black cable tentacles ending in small red glowing tips. Show FRONT view, SIDE view, and a view from BELOW, floating, evenly lit, plain light warm-grey background, no text. Simple clean shapes suitable for 3D modelling.

Jelly Drone without its dome, for 3D (GPT Image 2.5, an edit)

Edit the reference: show ONLY the jellyfish drone's mechanical body with the glass dome completely REMOVED - no glass, no transparent bubble. Keep the charcoal mechanical core with the round glowing red eye on top, the ring of round red lights around the rim, and the hanging segmented black cable tentacles with red glowing tips, exactly as designed. Single object, three-quarter front view from slightly above, floating, centred, whole object visible with margin, plain light warm-grey background, even soft lighting, no text.

Weapons sheet (GPT Image 2.5)

Weapon design sheet for a stylized indie game, matching the art style of the reference image (matte ceramic and clay, restrained palette: cream, warm grey, charcoal, coral glow). Three weapons that are NOT typical guns, each shown in side view and three-quarter view, evenly lit on a plain light warm-grey background, no text, no hands: 1) 'Halo Caster' (player, one-handed): a small cream ceramic half-moon / crescent mounted above a short charcoal pistol-style grip with a trigger, a thin coral-glowing groove running along the inner edge of the crescent, compact and elegant. 2) 'Prism Lance' (sniper robot, two-handed, held like a rifle): long thin charcoal tuning-fork emitter, two parallel prongs at the front with a small red crystal between them, a stock and grip at the back. 3) 'Pulse Brick' (guard robot, two-handed): chunky rectangular cream ceramic block emitter with a round red glowing port at the front, a carry handle on top, and a grip underneath. Clean readable shapes suitable for 3D modelling.

The prompts, word for word, continued.

The Sentinel's arm cannon (GPT Image 2.5)

Game prop design, single object, clean product render on a plain light warm-grey background, three-quarter side view, horizontal, pointing to the right.

Object: an ARM CANNON for the robot in the reference (the Pyramid Sentinel). It replaces the robot's right forearm and hand completely: there is NO hand and NO fingers. The back end is a rounded elbow socket cup that would attach to the robot's upper arm. From the socket, a sturdy forearm housing in the same dark gunmetal charcoal armor as the robot, with a cream / off-white accent plate along the top like the stock of the reference rifle. The front half becomes the weapon: two short parallel barrels / rails with glowing coral-red energy lines and small red crystal emitter tips, a compact version of the long twin-rail lance rifle in the reference, but much SHORTER and chunkier - total length about 2.5 times the forearm housing width. A small red glowing ring vent on the side near the socket.

Style: same as the reference robot - sleek stylized hard-surface sci-fi, smooth bevelled forms, dark gunmetal with cream accents and coral-red emissive details. Whole object fully visible, nothing cropped, no robot body, no arm, no hand, no background props, no text.

Giant stone head (GPT Image 2.5, for its 3D model)

A single giant carved stone sculpture of a serene human face/head lying on its side on the ground, like the giant head in the background of the reference concept art: geometric, faceted, stylized classical face with closed calm eyes, strong nose and lips, carved from pale cream limestone with subtle cracks, matte clay look. The head rests on its cheek, the face turned toward the viewer, the top of the head to the right. Three-quarter front view, whole sculpture visible with margin, centred, plain light warm-grey background, even soft lighting, no plants, no base, no text. Suitable for 3D modelling.

The 3D models: images in, no text.

Tripo P2 builds a model from images, so the 3D models have no prompt: each one was made from the images below, textured with PBR materials at the detailed texture quality. Faces is the triangle limit set for each.

MODEL	MADE FROM	FACES
Warden body	Multiview: front, back, left and right, cut from the Warden sheet	40,000
Warden head	The head render	30,000
Pyramid Sentinel	Multiview: front, side and back, cut from its sheet	20,000
Visor Guard	Multiview: front, side and back, cut from its sheet	20,000
Jelly Drone	The drone without its dome	15,000
Halo Caster	Cut from the weapons sheet	8,000
Pulse Brick	Cut from the weapons sheet	8,000
Arm cannon	The arm cannon image	12,000
Giant stone head	The giant head image	20,000