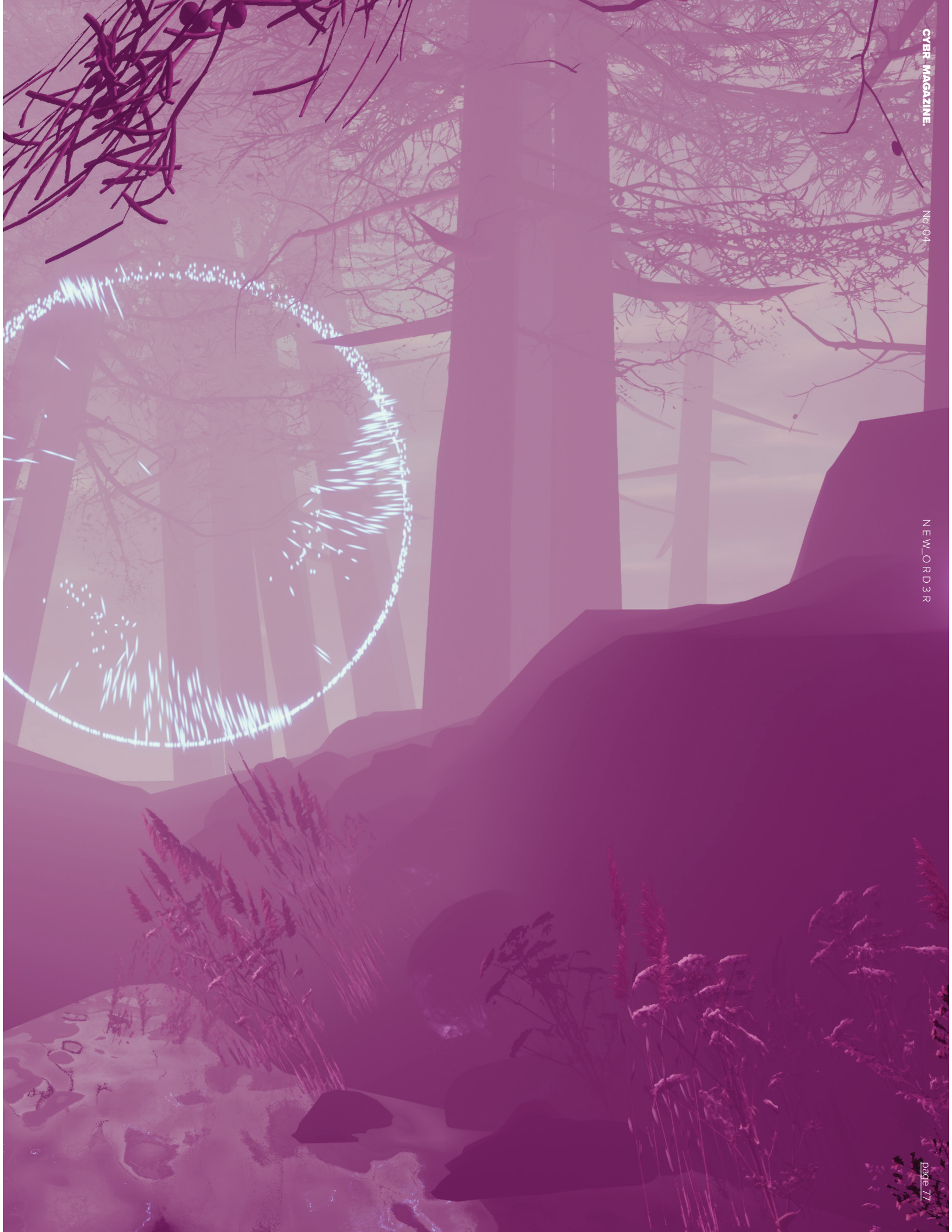

article
CULTURE

REVERA CORP.

VIRTUAL REALITY MUSIC

POP DUO VIVIA + REVERA CORP
HAVE PARTNERED TO CREATE
A VR WORLD OF THEIR MUSIC





article
CULTURE

“Could this be the future of how music is presented?”

A glowing azure willow tree moves gently in the distance, as a purple river of iridescent reflection flows underneath you. Giant ice cream cones the size of mountains tower above you as you look around this horizonless virtual space. It might sound like a video game, or a new map from Fortnite, but this isn't either. This is the new Anima album and VR experience from electronic music duo Vivia.

For this release Vivia collaborated with record label The Revera Corporation, owned by Elizabeth Ann Clark or Virgo as she's known. For those of you familiar with CYBR you'll remember her work from issue one, and the Water Planet computer game Virgo designed for the Steam platform.

Vivia consists of Mikael Henaff and Jessee Egan. The duo hail from Brooklyn, New York and focus on creating musical narratives within the context of modern dance music. In hindsight, it seems perfect then to release their music in the narrative of a VR experience, but what's interesting is the timing of what Vivia and The Revera Corporation have created.

There's no doubt that it's ahead of its time, we won't see Dua Lipa releasing her music as a narrative led VR experience anytime soon, but there is every chance that this could be the future of music, and Anima the catalyst of that change.

In this issue we've spoken about how virtual reality ironically is becoming an immersive technology, that has the ability to remove you from the distractions and pressures of every-day life. It really does become just you and your environment, within this new reality. Instead of album artwork that was once eagerly awaited by fans could this be the future of how music is presented?

The biggest problem the music industry has had in the past decade is tangibility. As soon as physical mediums were removed and digital mediums introduced whether through piracy or legal entities, the value dropped. It didn't feel tangible anymore, and to us humans tangibility often means worth. As streaming has gripped hold of the music industry and single songs have become the dominant force, an album let alone a concept album has fallen off the radar of many.

Following this, 'passive media' has become a term popularized only in the past year, basically meaning the nature of the media doesn't require the user to interact with it, leaving them free to multitask by doing something important, whether driving, going on a run, or working whilst listening to music or spoken word. It's really the equivalent of watching a movie on your phone. It's not

appreciating the artistry to its full extent, or allowing yourself to really feel and reflect.

So imagine placing a VR headset on, with high quality headphones and either laying back, or walking around to reflect and explore a landscape that's specifically created in harmony with the musician's artistry. It creates an immersive, distraction free experience which adds tangibility and a chance to truly absorb the work. Yes, access may be limited now, but as virtual reality grows and more headsets reach more households, this medium could really catch on as more want to disconnect and unwind.

The ethereal and meditative scenes we see in Vivia's Anima are inspired by the life journey of a biomorph. Speaking to CYBR Vivia explains their narrative:

“The VR experience goes through several different worlds which correspond to different stages in the life cycle of an unknown entity - from birth to childhood, adulthood and old age. Each one has its own colors and visual motifs - soft and enclosed for the early stages, then more expansive and finally more designed and inwards-looking. The inspiration was to recast familiar life experiences through the lens of alien or otherworldly landscapes and reflect on their universal nature.”

To create the visuals for the album and produce it all into a VR experience Vivia worked closely with Revera Corp, mood boards were created for each of the life stages and the associated feelings that they were designed to evoke. Revera then took these mood boards and brought the whole project to life within Unreal Engine.

We'll leave you with Vivia's thoughts about the future of music, and whether VR can really become a place where we can bring back the immersive hi-fi experience of vinyl.

“We think that VR has the potential to make the experience of listening to music much more intentional. Music is so ubiquitous now that it is rarer to take a moment and give it one's full attention, and VR provides a space to experience the artist's work in a fuller way. At the same time new technologies have historically been the catalyst for new artistic forms, and we're excited to see what creative uses of VR will appear in the coming years.”

Anima is available both on SteamVR and Youtube 360. To find out more visit @reveracorp and @_v_i_v_i_a_ on Instagram.



