

Elysium

Elysium is a metaverse environment that gives zhizha, traditional Chinese paper art, a world beyond the ritual. Built at the intersection of cultural heritage and spatial design, it transforms a disappearing folk tradition into an immersive digital experience where fear becomes curiosity, and impermanence finds a permanent home.



Background

Zhizha is a traditional Chinese paper art rooted in folk religious sacrifice, handcrafted from bamboo, wood, and colored paper into elaborate offerings, courtyards, furniture, and human figures, each made with extraordinary skill, and each destined to be burned.



courtyards



cash cows



tables, chairs and benches



statues of gods and people

Research

The research made one thing clear: zhizha is not disappearing because the craft has lost its quality. It is disappearing because the culture surrounding it has made it untouchable.



Yet among younger generations, a quiet shift is emerging.

Gen Z is beginning to rediscover zhizha not as a symbol of death, but as a living craft worth learning.



才能把它攒在一起



What I found! 💡

Digital tools can preserve what time cannot.

Academic research confirms that digital environments can effectively digitize and disseminate traditional paper arts, demonstrating strong potential for immersive cultural preservation.

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Research article

The impact of traditional Chinese paper-cutting in digital protection for intangible cultural heritage under virtual reality technology

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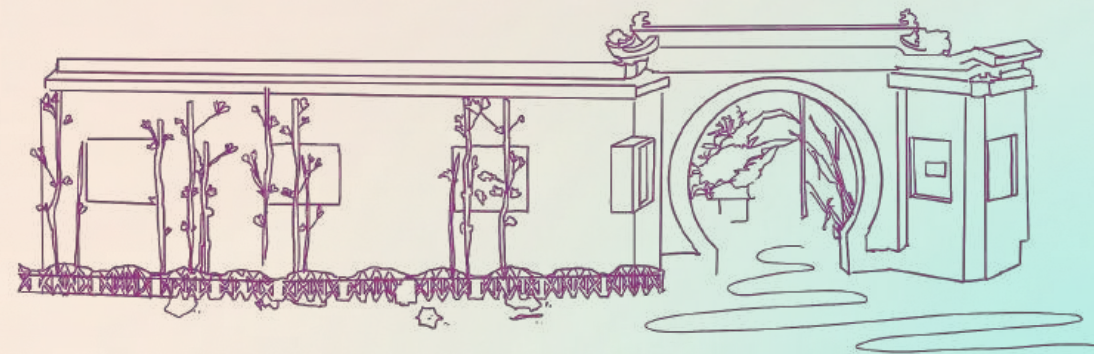
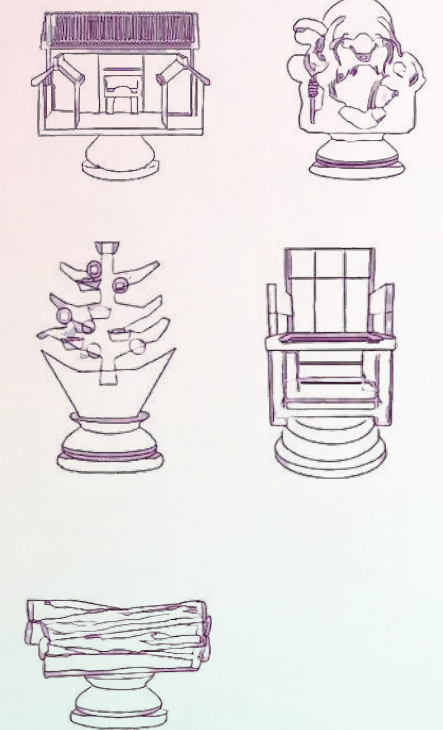
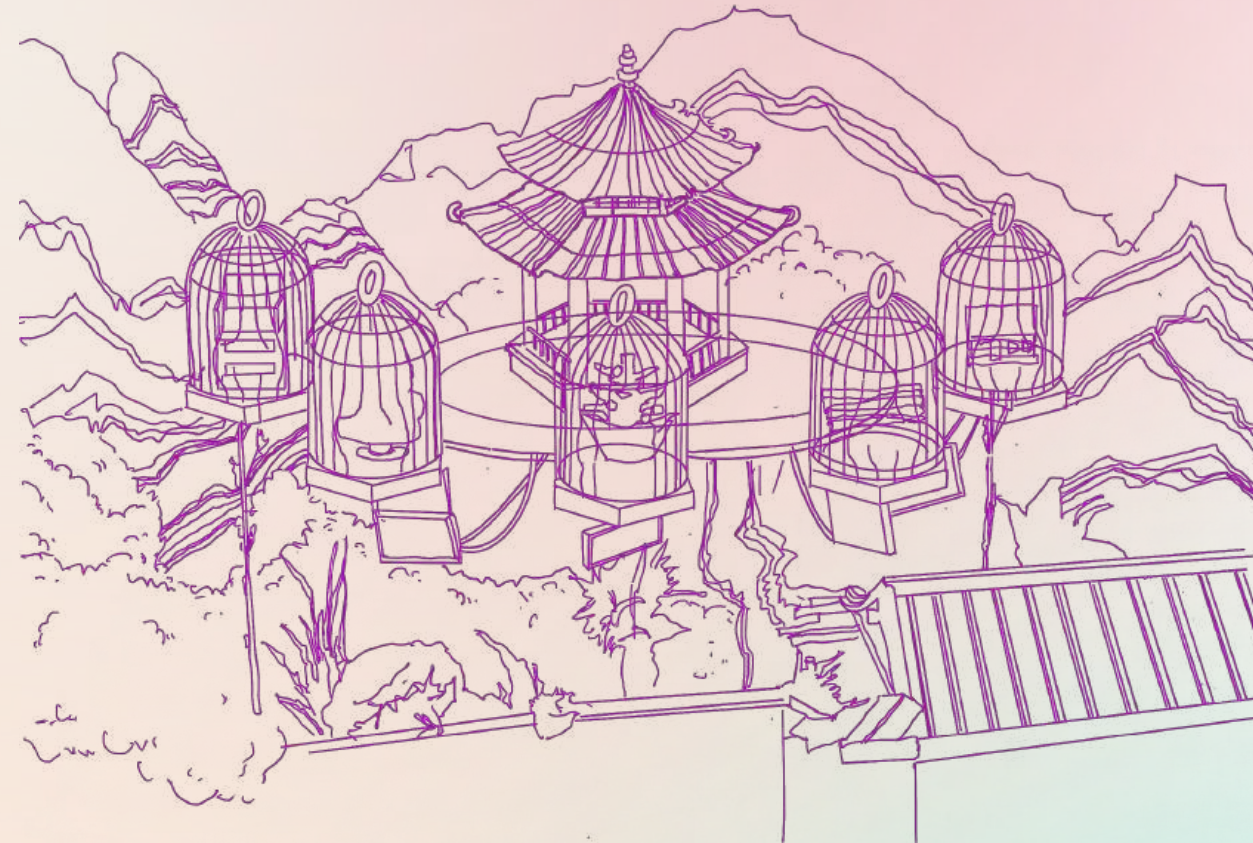
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Abstract

Under the impact of the digital wave, traditional paper-cutting art faces unprecedented challenges in preservation and dissemination. Given the urgent need for Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) protection, this study explores the application of Virtual Reality (VR) technology in the preservation of paper-cutting art. VR efficiently digitizes and widely disseminates paper-cutting art by skillfully integrating modern technological elements. The study not only deeply analyzes how VR technology can safeguard and inherit traditional Chinese paper-cutting art but also focuses on the meticulous design

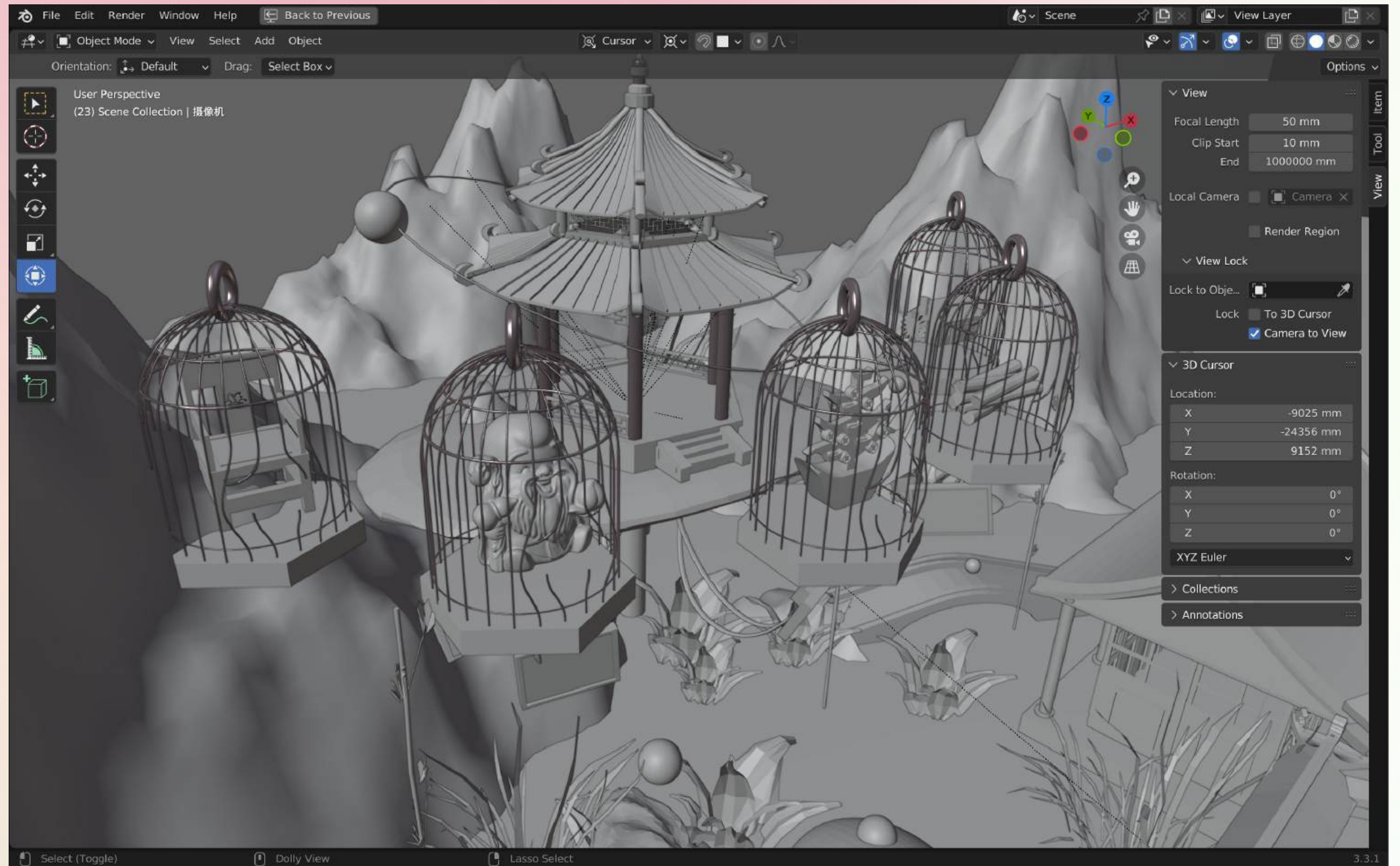
This inspired Elysium 💡

A digital world where zhizha could finally exist beyond the ceremony.



Blender Prototype

The prototype is modeled as a stylized, low-to-mid poly 3D environment in Blender, using a cohesive grayscale blockout to emphasize form, hierarchy, and spatial composition before materialization.

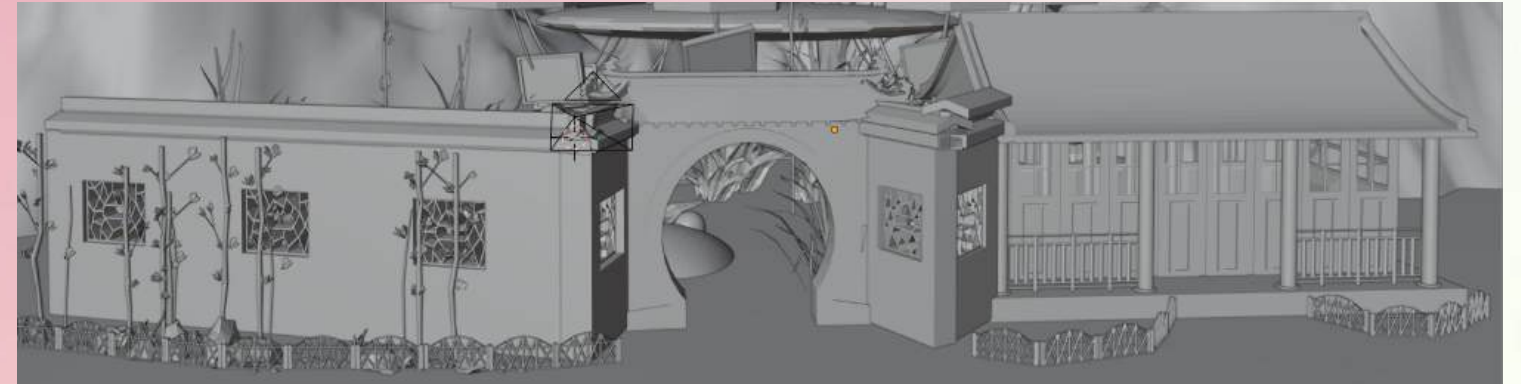


Pavilion



The pavilion, inspired by the zhizha 'Fugui Building,' serves as the central structure, bridging traditional craftsmanship with digital technology.

Chinese paper products



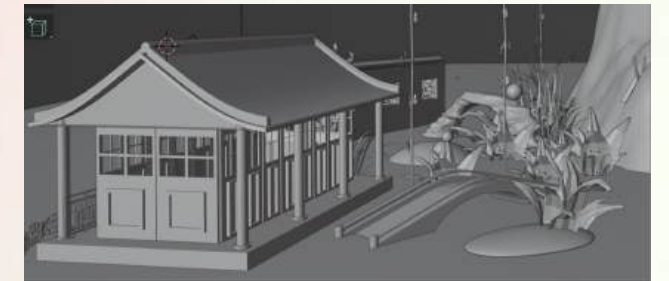
Panoramic



Windows of Su-style building



Arch of Su-style architecture



House built by Su-style

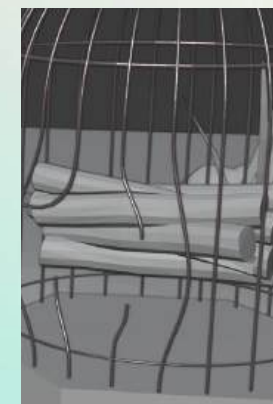
Architectural elements



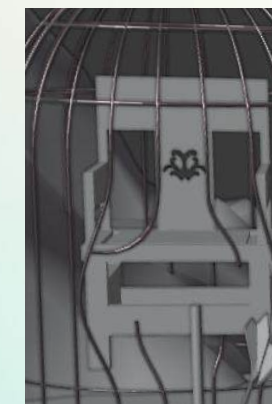
Statues of god



Cash cows



Benches



Chairs



Courtyards



