

A man with dark hair and a beard, wearing a dark blue t-shirt, stands at a light-colored wooden podium. He is looking slightly to his left and speaking into a microphone. The background is a large wall covered in hundreds of small, colorful photographs and images, creating a dense, textured effect. The text "Cannes Lions 2017: Dinosaurs in Virtual Reality—Bringing History Back to Life" is overlaid in white on the left side of the image.

Cannes Lions 2017: Dinosaurs in Virtual Reality— Bringing History Back to Life

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Xavier Barrade of Google's Creative Lab London, gave attendees at the YouTube Beach in Cannes an insight into how virtual reality is making art and culture more accessible than ever, and is even bringing dinosaurs back to life!

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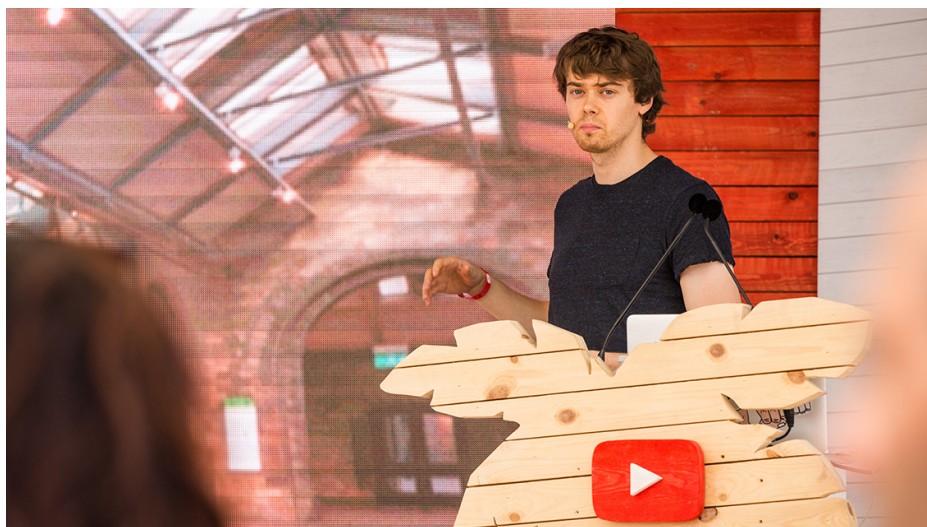
Creative Lab is a small team within Google that aims to marry cutting edge design with technology to produce inspirational, thought-provoking work. For 'Back to Life in Virtual Reality', they collaborated with the Natural History Museum in London and the Museum für Naturkunde in Berlin, to resurrect two of the 300,000 pieces of natural history content available in Google Arts & Culture. Xavier Barrade, Creative Lead at the London Creative Lab, explained that for this project, "our biggest asset was the museums we were working with. We visited and asked ourselves what could technology do here?"



In deciding which of the museums' fossils to bring to life, the team focused on creatures that hadn't already been recreated in movies and television. From London, they chose the [Rhomaleosaurus](#), a marine reptile that lived 180M years ago, while in Berlin the team decided on [Giraffatitan](#), a 150M-year-old dinosaur thought to be among the largest ever to have lived. Working alongside scientists and paleontologists, the Creative Lab team began by learning as much as possible about these animals, before building 3D models reflecting the best of our current knowledge about their appearance and behaviour.

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One of the most exciting aspects of the ‘Back to Life’ experience becomes apparent when viewed within the museum galleries themselves. “We started from a real space that we augmented,” said Xavier, meaning that anyone standing in the right spot near the Rhomaleosaurus or Giraffatitan fossils in London or Berlin can actually watch them come to life within a meticulously reconstructed model of the museum. “We wanted to create a VR experience that works online and in the real world,” recalled Xavier, pointing out that even if you’re not lucky enough to be standing in one of the museums, you can still access ‘Back to Life’ wherever you are on YouTube 360.



‘Back to Life in Virtual Reality’ is just one of Google Arts & Culture’s many immersive experiences, and with advanced technologies such as [Daydream](#) and [WebVR](#) fast emerging, Xavier and the rest of Creative Lab are already looking for new ways to make our shared heritage even more accessible.



Xavier Barrade
Creative Lead, Creative Lab at Google