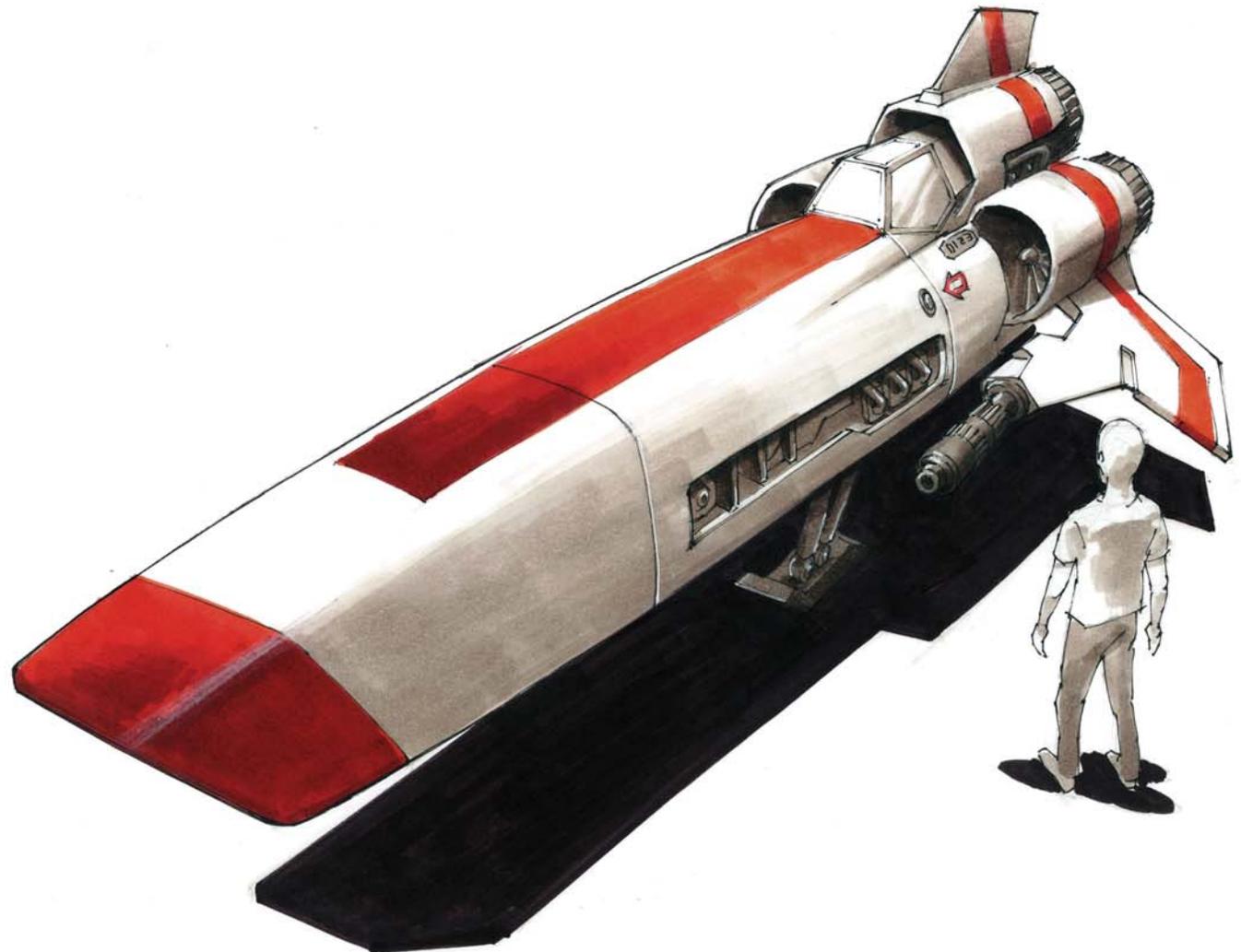


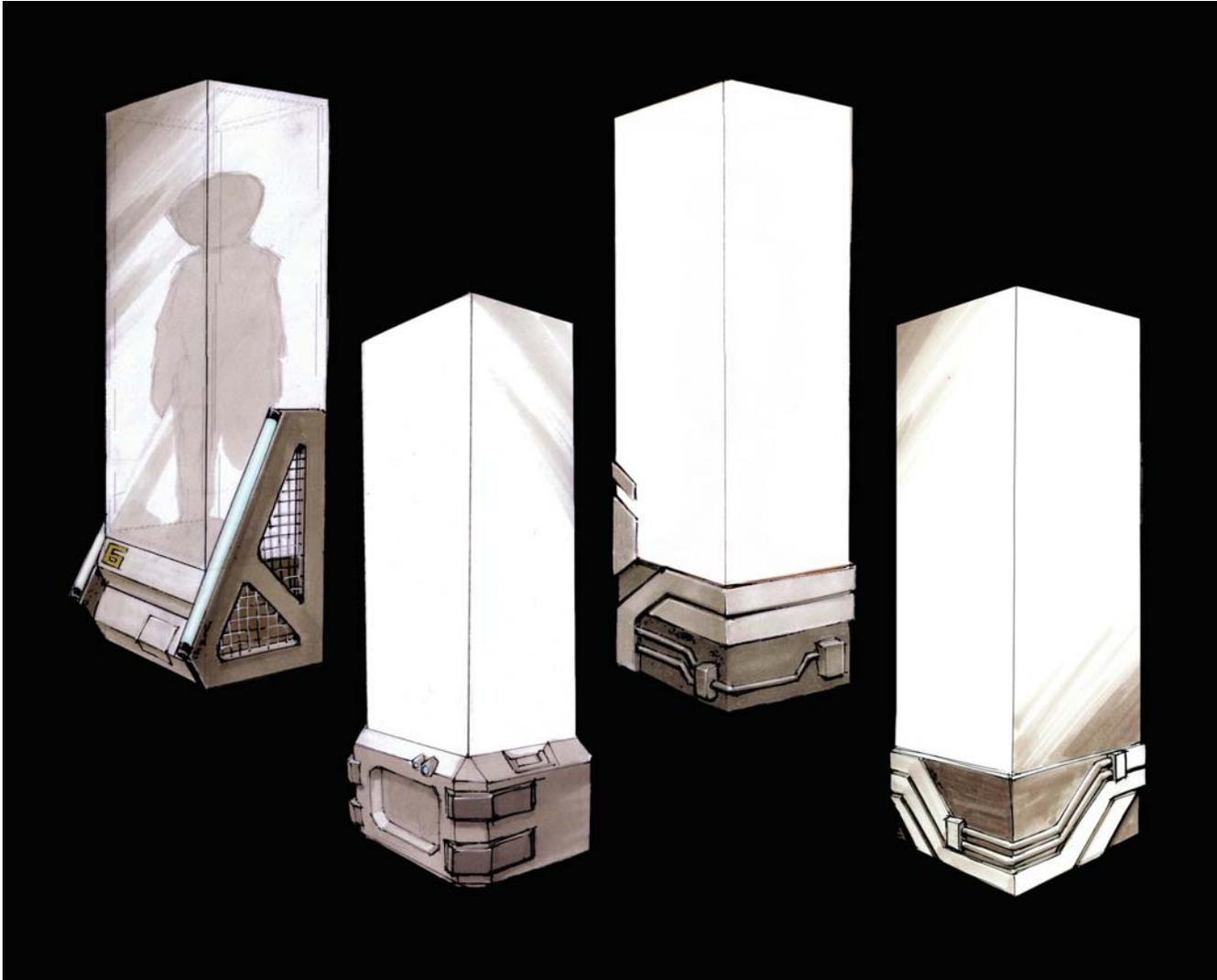
## BSG: The Exhibition

After the conclusion of the *Battlestar Galactica* television series in 2009 NBC Universal had three full-scale spaceships they weren't sure what to do with. They approached Seattle's Experience Music Project/Sci-fi Museum about possibly displaying the ships. The EMP's curatorial staff decided to put together a more comprehensive exhibit about Galactica, and I was brought on board as a designer. During the nine months I worked on the project I did research and concept development and designed the casework and scenery. I also worked on interactive and graphic design, dealt with vendors and fabricators, and promoted the exhibit.

The opening weekend for *Battlestar Galactica: The Exhibition* was the most successful in the EMP's 10 year history. The exhibit opened October 23rd, 2010 and will run for 18 months before going on tour.



Sketch of the Viper Mk.2 used for marketing materials

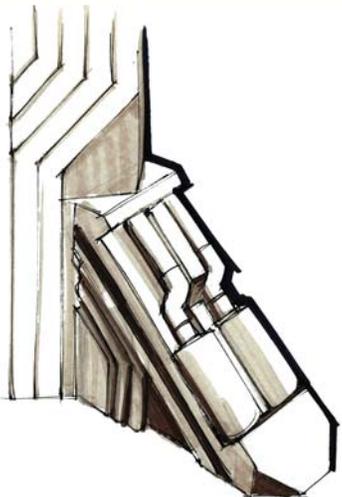
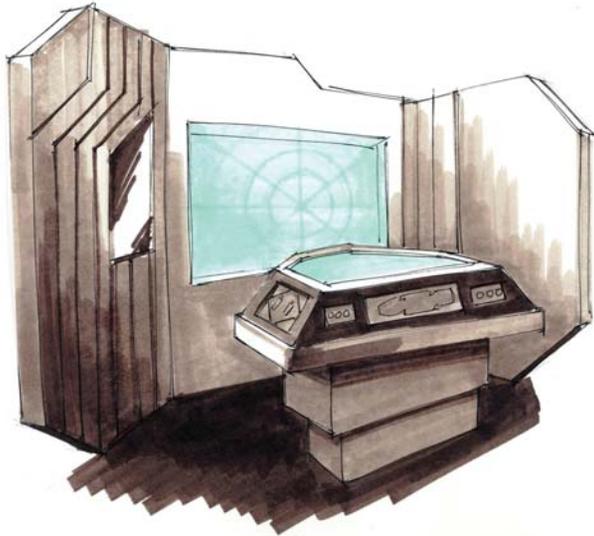


We carefully chose a few dozen artifacts to tell the story of *Battlestar Galactica*. These ranged from costumes to concept designs, which required a diverse array of custom cases to be built, as well as the modification of existing cases. The challenge in their design was integrating the cases with the exhibition's immersive environment without competing for attention with the pieces on display. The sketches above show the evolution of the costume case design. At right is the final case design in the exhibit.



## Scenery

The look of *Battlestar Galactica* was futuristic, but also believable. To achieve this look, the shows designers used off the shelf props and materials. I used the same design language to ground the scenic elements of the exhibit.



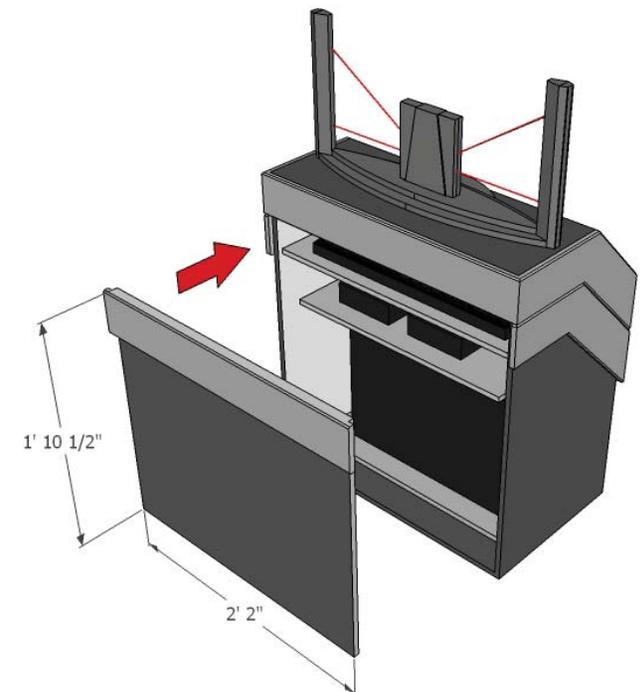
Concept sketches for scenic elements



The third floor gallery, Milestones, that the exhibit was to be displayed in had three entrances. We planned a narrative that built on itself as visitors traveled through the exhibit. We wanted a way to direct visitors to move through the desired path without substantially modifying the existing structure or compromising the experience. I designed the arch above to be an unmistakable entryway that was robust enough to travel when broken down into its modular pieces.

## Computer Model

I created accurate 3D models of all the exhibit elements and the gallery space. This made it possible for me to hand off precise engineering drawings to the fabrication team. My 3D model of the exhibit space, shown at left, allowed me to show the museum administration and other institutions what the exhibit experience would be like when completed.



Engineering drawing of a kiosk for a music interactive.

## Interactives

The Cylon detector interactive below used a narrowly-focused, hidden speaker to randomly deliver an “activation signal” to museum visitors standing on this spot who may have been cylon agents.



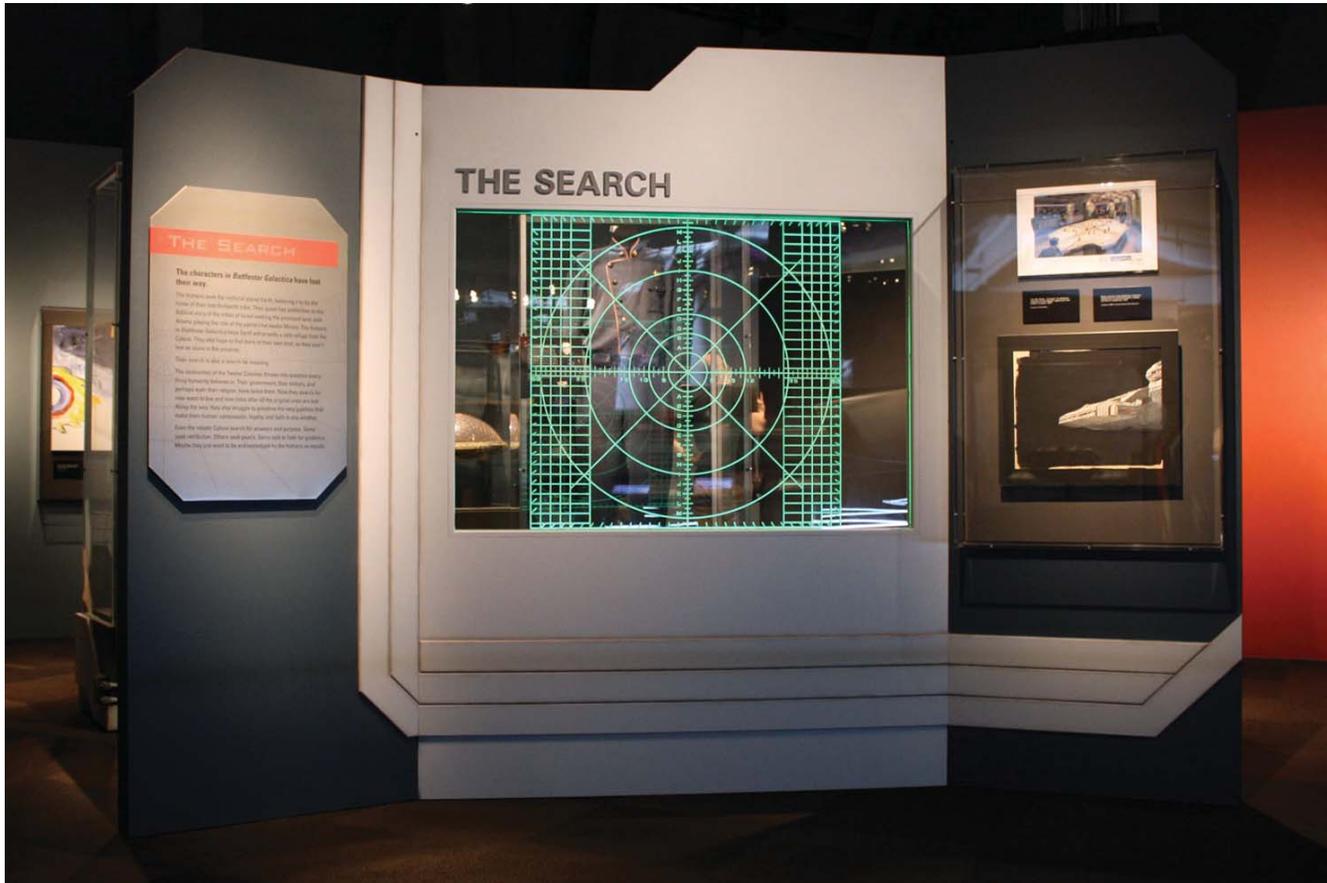
Designing the interactive elements of the exhibition was the most fun part of the whole job. The interactives are the real meat of the exhibit, compelling visitors to think about what they have seen in greater detail.

The kiosk above confronted visitors with some of the tough moral decisions that were made by characters on *Battlestar Galactica*. The polling booth style enclosure gave visitors the privacy to be honest in their decisions. After the visitor made a decision, the kiosk showed how all previous visitors chose, and finally what choice the character made on the show.

The phone interactive at right was a lighter contrast. The anachronistic corded army phone was an iconic part of the series. It would buzz every few minutes, delivering a random message from one of the characters.

## Introduction + Search

We divided the artifacts into four discrete sections to create a narrative about *Battlestar Galactica*. The first section introduced visitors to the series, and the spaceship for which it was named.



In the Search section we displayed the main characters' costumes and concept art from the show, as well as interactive kiosks exploring the music of *Battlestar Galactica*. We used a freestanding triptych wall to separate the search section from the rest of the gallery. To attract visitors the central section featured a glowing "tactical display" window. This provided a dramatic glimpse of the iconic costumes and an exciting backdrop for photos.



## The Ships

The three full scale-fighters were the focal point of the show. Though they looked menacing, they were actually very fragile. We needed a barrier to protect the ships that did not block visitors' view. We used 13mm fiber optic cable to create a "psychological" barrier. At 18" from the ground it could easily be stepped over, but the bright glow made it obvious that the area was out of bounds, as well as contributing to the sci-fi feel of the exhibit.

Artifacts and content specific to the ships were mounted on reader rails which also housed the illuminators for the fiber optic cable. Freestanding steel stanchions supported the cable, and made the barrier modular for future travel.



Reader rail concept sketch.



## Humans + Cylons

Our goal with expanding the exhibit beyond just the three ships was to get visitors to think about how science fiction like *Battlestar Galactica* could be used as a mirror for the world we live in today. Because it is fantastic, it is a safe venue to explore issues that people are uncomfortable facing directly.



The last section, Humans and Cylons, focused on the conflict between humans and the mechanical cylons. This section featured character costumes and personal effects, as well as interactives. To differentiate this section from the main gallery a second triptych wall was used. We chose a cleaner, more robotic aesthetic for this section. The wall had a choice of two doorways that corresponded to the costume displays beyond. The center section had a prison-like window to ominously highlight the costume visible on the other side.

