

# Arrow, Gorgeous Look at the 10,000 Year Clock With 'The Clock of the Long Now'

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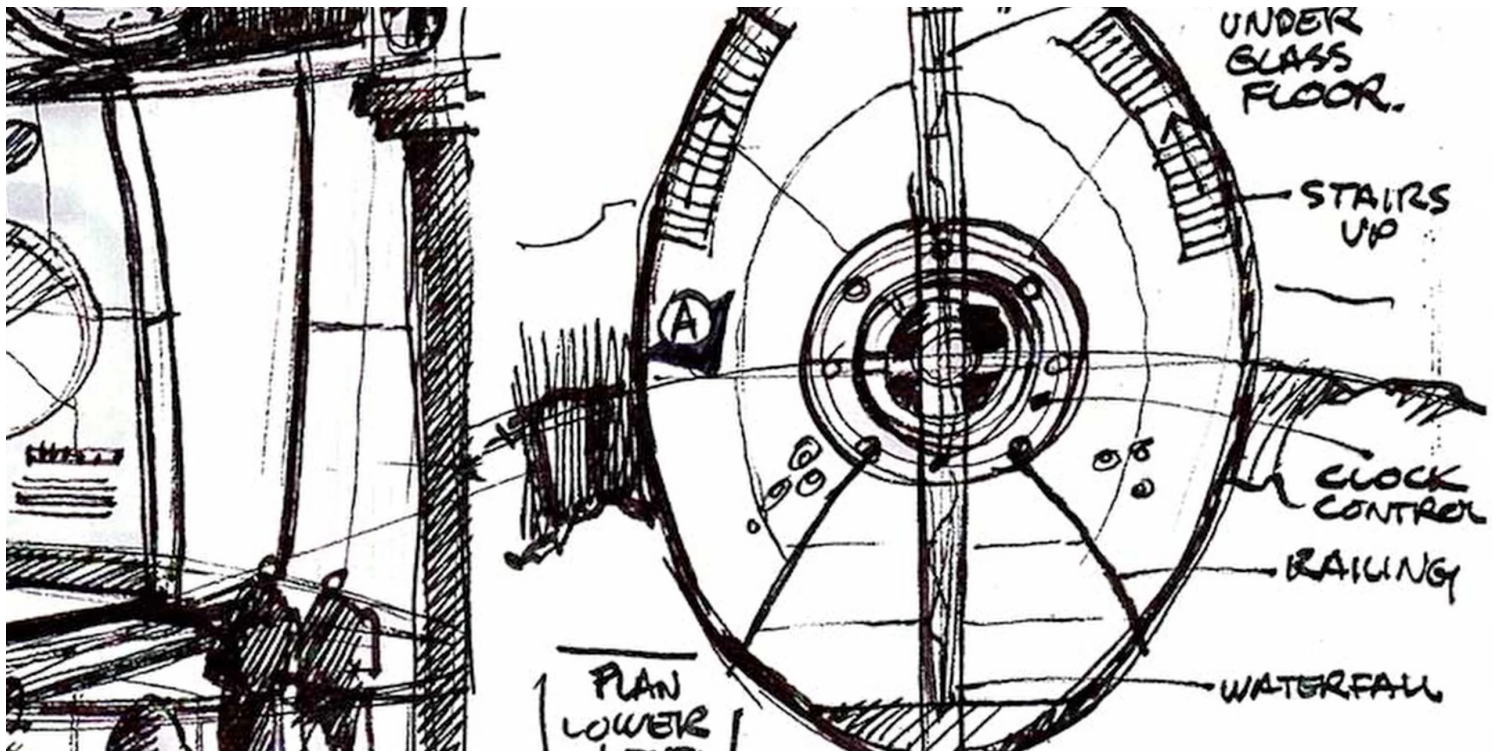
Tatiana Craine (</user/54-tatiana-craine>) | November 21, 2015

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It's been nearly three decades since Danny Hillis developed the idea for a clock. But not just any clock – this one is going to last for a long, long time. It seems his fascination partially stemmed from how it seemed like everyone was always counting down to the year 2000 since he was a kid. “It was almost as if the future had been shrinking my entire life,” Hillis says with a smile in the new short film, “The Clock of the Long Now,” which just premiered at the 2015 [DOC NYC festival](http://www.docnyc.net/film/cllock-of-the-long-now%E2%80%8B-the/#.Vk_jgK6rTR1) ([http://www.docnyc.net/film/cllock-of-the-long-now%E2%80%8B-the/#.Vk\\_jgK6rTR1](http://www.docnyc.net/film/cllock-of-the-long-now%E2%80%8B-the/#.Vk_jgK6rTR1)).



Directed by Jimmy Goldblum and Adam Weber of [Public Record](http://thepublicrecord.tv/) (<http://thepublicrecord.tv/>), the film profiles Hillis and a couple of his collaborators, Stewart Brand (a futurist) and Alexander Rose (an engineer), as they explain the years-long process that has gone into making this monumental clock.



When Hillis first came up with the idea in 1986, everyone else in his life was speeding up, but Hillis realized he “needed to think on a different time scale.” Specifically – a scale of 10,000 years.

The 10,000 Year Clock works with the kinds of tools that Galileo would have understood: gears, levers, and a lens to synchronize the clock to the sun for accuracy. (Only this lens is made out of a massive piece of quartz.)

On the Long Now Foundation’s website, Hillis says that he wants to build a clock that ticks once a year with a cuckoo that comes out every 1,000 years. But his clock-related goals aren’t all so lofty (or few and far between). At solar noon each day, the chimes start. Designed by Brian Eno (yes, that Brian Eno

[https://twitter.com/dark\\_shark/status/667826973800927232](https://twitter.com/dark_shark/status/667826973800927232))

of Devo and “The Microsoft Sound

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l3Ak5VgyEoc>”), the chime

generator will play a different sequence on 10 chimes each day of the 10,000 years. In fact, Eno also came up with the Long Now Foundation's [name \(http://longnow.org/about/\)](http://longnow.org/about/), in efforts to expand the public's understanding of what "now" means and how it affects the future.)

The question on Rose's mind is about generational thinking – are we being good ancestors? If humans keep executing more projects that look towards the future with hope and optimism, it's hard to argue.



Interested in seeing what the 10,000 Year Clock might end up looking like? You can sip on coffee at the Long Now's [San Francisco cafe \(/article/6455-at-the-long-now-coffee-gets-poured-while-time-stretches\)](/article/6455-at-the-long-now-coffee-gets-poured-while-time-stretches) before checking out the [museum \(/article/6229-7-great-science-tourism-destinations-to-visit-while-you-still-can\)](/article/6229-7-great-science-tourism-destinations-to-visit-while-you-still-can) and the other sundry wonders at the facilities while the real deal is being built into a mountain in West Texas.

*Photos via Vimeo Screenshot*

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