# 53,921 Files: Watching Ubisoft Montreal Build Myst IV

*From Montreal's lunch hour to the Sunday someone rebuilt the file that runs Serenia*

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**Collection:** Myst IV: Revelation (2004) — Inside the Archive (alongside The Revelation Graph)
**Next:** The Revelation Graph, 1: The 2004 Game as a Graph (glthr.com/revelation-graph-1)
**Interactive browser:** glthr.com/revelation-graph
**All 5 Myst games:** glthr.com/myst-graphs (Myst, Riven, Exile, Revelation, End of Ages)

**Abstract**

The original *Myst IV: Revelation* DVDs carry the dates of 53,921 files that Ubisoft Montreal used to make the game. I could pick out the studio's lunch hour, and even the afternoon when four of Haven's monkey files jumped to 2085. The dates on the discs themselves tell the last part of the story. On Sunday afternoon the team rebuilt one file, the one that runs Serenia's game logic. Seventeen minutes later, DVD 1 had its final master.

Every office has a lunch hour. Ubisoft Montreal's is pressed onto the DVDs of **Myst IV: Revelation** (2004), though nobody asked for it.

I first opened the game's main data file to map its 618 places for The Revelation Graph. Beside the pictures and scripts for each place was a list of the files the studio used to make it. The list even gave the second at which each file was last saved.

I wondered how much of the studio's working day those dates had kept. To find out, I started with the files and the clock on the wall in Montreal.

*I used the original two-DVD release of September 2004 and compared it with version 1.03. The Revelation Graph lets you visit the places mentioned below, including Tomahna's canyon walkway.*

## How to Read the Diary

Here is how I got from 618 places to the chart below.

1. The game keeps each of its places in a package of its own. There are 620 packages: the 618 places, plus two that hold what several places share.
2. Each package carries three logs written by the studio's build tool.
3. One of the three lists every working file that went into the package, with the three dates that Windows keeps for any file: when it was created, when it was last opened, and when it was last saved.
4. Together, the logs name 53,921 distinct working files. When a file appears in two logs, both give it the same dates.

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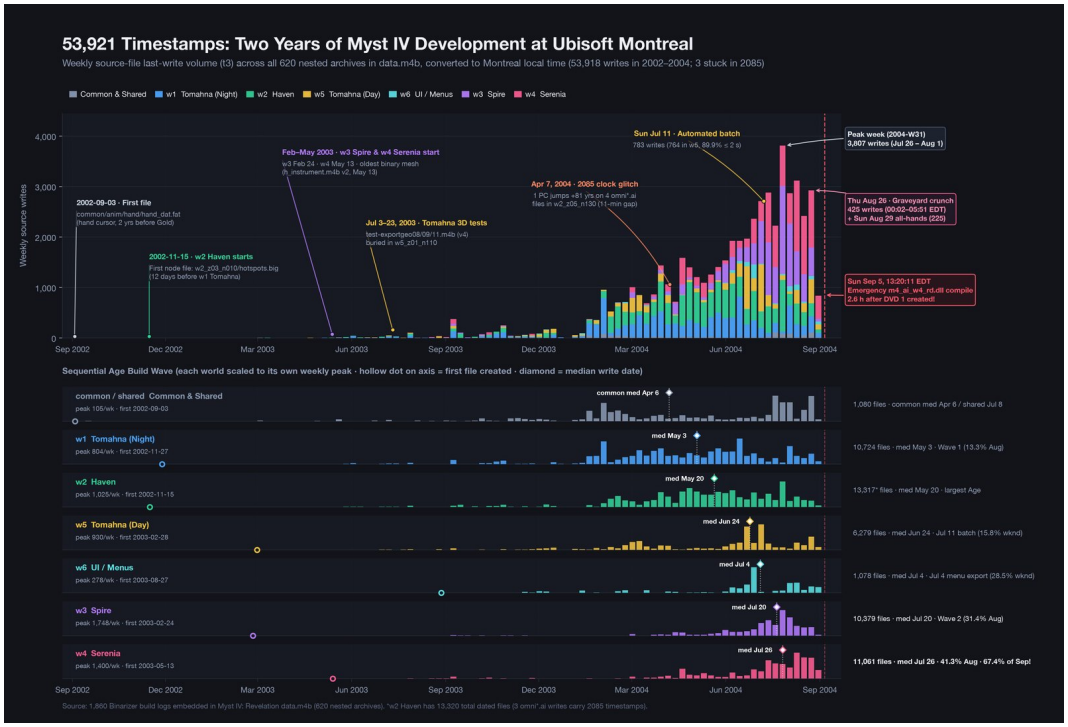
5. Four files have a date in 2085. Three of the four have their last save in that year. That leaves 53,918 last saves between September 3, 2002 and September 3, 2004.

Only the main data file of the game carries such logs. The sound, the videos and the language files have none.

Each file contributes one mark to the chart, in the week of its last save. A file edited fifty times still counts only once. An overnight export can contribute hundreds of marks.




*Two years of production: the saves of each week (top) and the same weeks for each part of the game, one after the other (bottom), in Montreal local time.*

## Lunch at Noon, Montreal Time

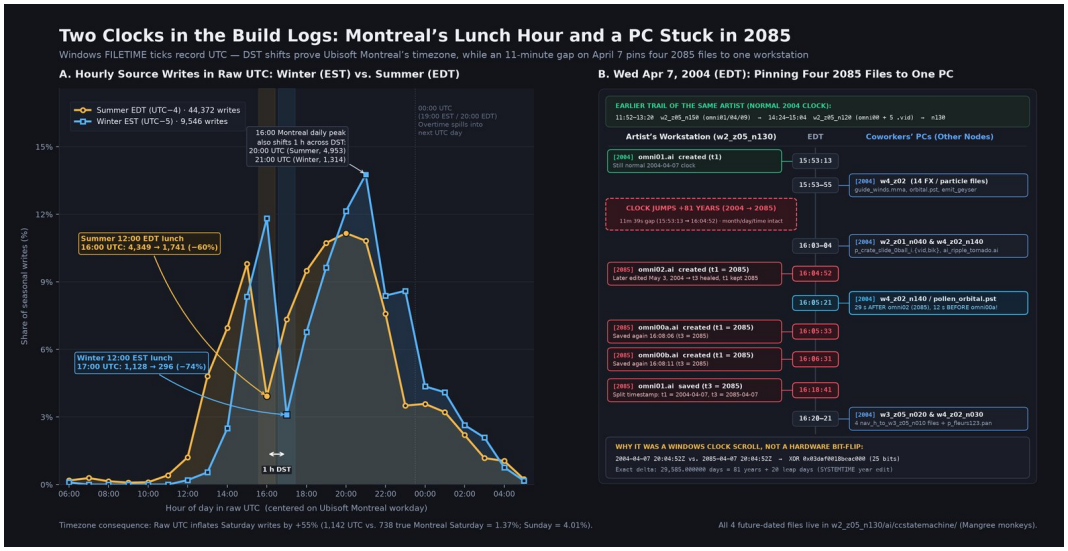
Windows records the time in UTC. The lunch hour gave me a way to check that converting it to Montreal time put the saves in the right part of the day.

Montreal changed its clocks four times during these two years. Sort the saves into winter and summer, and the same working day appears twice, one hour apart in universal time. In Montreal time the two days line up: a busy end of morning, a sharp drop at noon, a recovery at one, and the busiest hour of the day at four in the afternoon.

| Montreal time | Winter saves (of 9,546) | Summer saves (of 44,372) |
|---|---:|---:|
| 11:00 | 1,128 | 4,349 |
| 12:00 | 296 | 1,741 |
| 13:00 | 646 | 3,253 |
| 16:00 | 1,314 | 4,953 |

At noon the saves fall by 74% in winter and by 60% in summer. Lunch is taken more seriously in winter.

Reading the dates in the right time zone matters. In universal time, Saturdays look 55% busier than they were, because the overtime of Friday evening, from 8 p.m. to midnight, lands after midnight. In Montreal time, Mondays are the busiest days of the week and Fridays the quietest. Saturdays hold about 1% of the saves, and Sundays 4%.




*Left: the saves of each hour, in winter and in summer. The noon drop and the afternoon peak move by one hour with the change of clocks. Right: April 7, 2004, minute by minute, on the computer that jumped to 2085.*

## One Computer Jumps to 2085

None of the files is older than September 3, 2002, and four are dated after September 4, 2004. All four are in 2085. All four drive the Mangree monkeys at one place of Haven's canopy, w2_z05_n130.

The right half of the figure above follows Wednesday, April 7, 2004, minute by minute.

1. From 11:52 to 13:20, files are saved at a first place of the canopy. Every one is dated 2004.
2. From 14:24 to 15:04, the work moves to a second place. Still 2004.
3. At 15:53, at a third place, a first monkey file is created. Still 2004.
4. At 16:04, the next file is created in 2085. In the eleven minutes between the two, the year jumped 81 years ahead. The month, the day and the time of day kept ticking.
5. Two more files are created and saved in 2085 between 16:05 and 16:08, and the file of step 3 is saved at 16:18, in 2085 too.

The sequence reads like one person's afternoon, on one computer. The rest of the studio stayed in 2004: files were saved at four other places between 16:03 and 16:21, all dated April 7, 2004. One of those saves, at 16:05, falls between two files of 2085: half a minute after one, a few seconds before the next. A clock change confined to one computer fits both sequences.

One of the four files was edited again on May 3, 2004. Its save date went back to 2004, but Windows kept its creation date: 2085.

## The Ages, One After the Other

**The oldest file of *Myst IV* is the hand cursor** **.** It was created on September 3, 2002 at 14:07, Montreal time, and saved for the last time on September 20, 2002.

Haven beat Tomahna to its first place by twelve days: November 15, 2002 against November 27. Two small navigation scripts of Tomahna, written on March 7, 2003, shipped unchanged eighteen months later. They are the oldest untouched scripts of a place.

Sorted by the date when half of its files had been saved for the last time, the production comes in two waves.

| Part of the game | Dated saves | First file created | Half saved by | Saved from 9 p.m. to 6 a.m. |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Core files and cursor | 471 | September 3, 2002 | April 6, 2004 | 7% |
| Tomahna by night | 10,724 | November 27, 2002 | May 3, 2004 | 6% |
| Haven (the largest) | 13,317 | November 15, 2002 | May 20, 2004 | 8% |
| Tomahna by day | 6,279 | February 28, 2003 | June 24, 2004 | 9% |
| Menus | 1,078 | August 27, 2003 | July 4, 2004 | 4% |
| Shared files | 609 | June 27, 2003 | July 8, 2004 | 9% |
| Spire | 10,379 | February 24, 2003 | July 20, 2004 | 8% |
| Serenia (the last) | 11,061 | May 13, 2003 | July 26, 2004 | 10% |

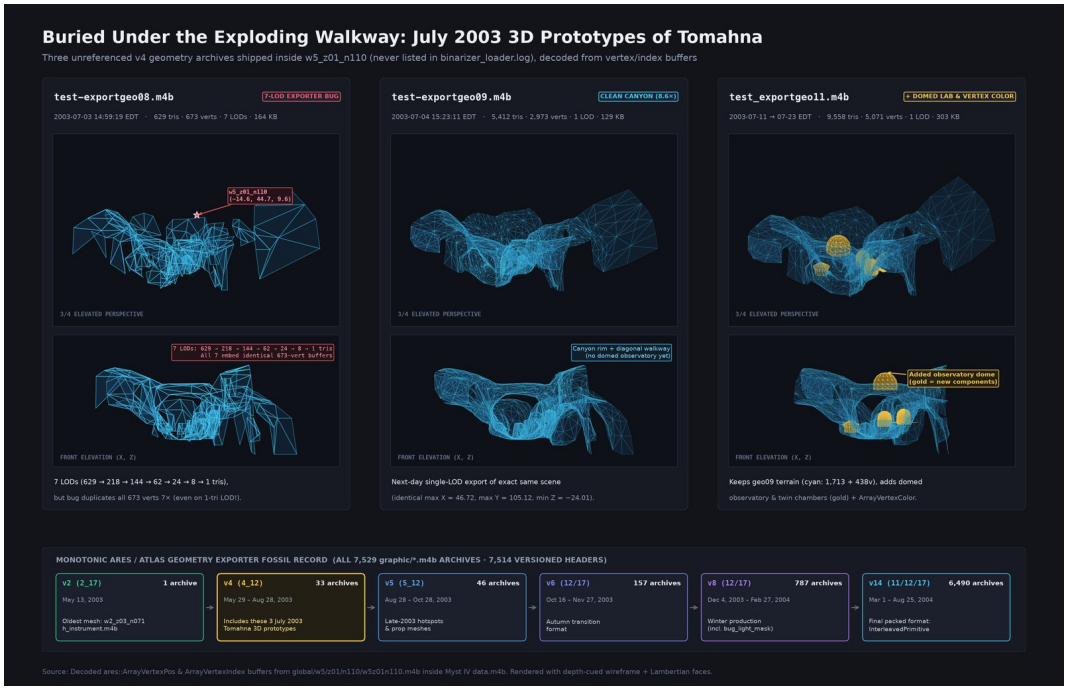
By May 20, half the files in both Tomahna by night and Haven had reached their final form. Spire and Serenia reached the same point in the second half of July. July and August 2004 hold about 12,000 saves each. The busiest week of the whole production is the last one of July, and one save of August in seven was made late at night.

Serenia accounts for two thirds of September's last saves. Four in ten of its files had their last save in August, and one in ten after nine at night or before six in the morning, the highest share of any Age.

## Tomahna in Wireframe, July 2003

Almost every model carries the version of the tool that exported it. Those numbers rise over time, from version 2 in May 2003 to version 14 in the spring and summer of 2004. Most models are of version 14. The oldest model of the whole game is an instrument of Haven, the only one of version 2, exported on May 13, 2003.

Among the 33 models of the next oldest version, three are test exports of July 2003 that the game never loads. They sit in the package of the canyon walkway of Tomahna that explodes, w5_z01_n110. Decoded, they are early 3D wireframes of Tomahna's canyon, walkway and domed laboratory.




*Three unused test models of July 2003 found in the package of w5_z01_n110 (top), and the versions of the export tool across all the models of the game (bottom).*

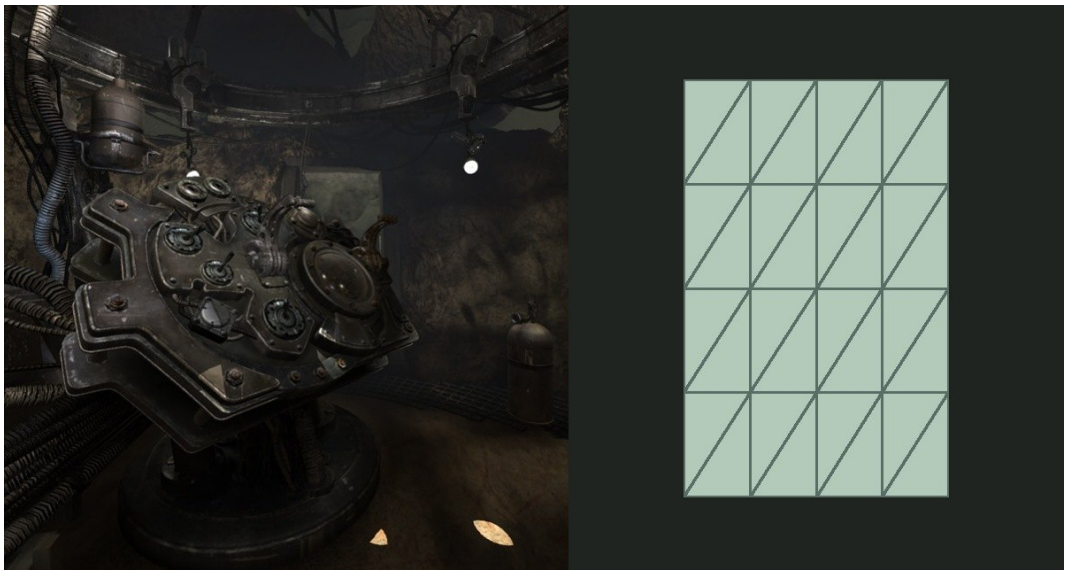
- **July 3, 2003.** A test of seven levels of detail, from about 600 triangles down to a single one. It encloses the spot where the player stands in the finished game. The same points are stored seven times, once per level, even for the level made of one triangle.
- **July 4, 2003.** The next day, the same canyon is exported in one level, nearly nine times more detailed (about 5,400 triangles). The file is smaller than the first, because the copies are gone.
- **July 11, 2003, rewritten on July 23.** The model grows to about 9,600 triangles. It keeps the terrain of the previous one and adds the roof of the domed observatory and two twin chambers.

## The Names the Studio Left Behind

The file names also keep a few relics of the studio.

- **World 9, Zone 42.** Three test lighting sets, from March to May 2004, are filed under a test world whose numbers recall *The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy*.
- **A twelfth zone of Spire.** A lightning effect of November 14, 2003 is filed under Zone 12 of Spire. The Spire that shipped ends at Zone 6: this zone was cut or renumbered.

- **Mr. Potato Head.** In the Memory Chamber of Serenia, w4_z06_n220, the clickable area of the Dream Mask, the climax of the game, was created on August 18, 2004 under the name “Mr. Patate”.
- **Places that no longer exist.** The file names still mention 29 places that are not in the game, and 5 Japanese textures of plaques and journal pages that did not ship.



*The Memory Chamber on the left. On the right is the surface the game checks for a click on the Dream Mask, shown face-on. The studio named it “Mr. Patate”.*

## Sundays for Machines, Sundays for People

In the summer of 2004, the work spills into the weekends. The gaps between saves give a clue to what was happening. A few hundred pairs of files written seconds apart look quite different from a night spent moving between rooms.

- **A machine.** On Sunday, July 11, nearly 800 files were written in four hours, and nine in ten followed the previous one within two seconds. Almost all are paired model files of Tomahna by day. This one batch explains why about 16% of the saves of Tomahna by day fall on a weekend.
- **Another machine.** On Sunday, July 4, from two in the afternoon to eleven at night, nine saves in ten were exports for the menus of the game. The menus have more than a quarter of their saves on weekends.
- **People, at night.** On Sunday, August 22, there were about a hundred saves, and only one in six followed the previous one within two seconds. The day began just past midnight on the sound of a rock explosion in Spire, went on until after four in the morning, and resumed at eleven across all six worlds.
- **The following Sunday.** On Sunday, August 29, more than 200 saves ran from noon to midnight in every part of the game. The first two files of the day belong to the credits.

Over the two years, about 900 saves fall between midnight and six in the morning. Nearly half of them belong to one night, that of Thursday, August 26, 2004, and most of the files of that night are subtitles.

The subtitles were the last rush. All the subtitle files, 236 for each of six languages, were created in a window of 12 days that starts on August 20, 2004. A quarter of them were written between nine in the evening and six in the morning.

## The Last Weekend

The save dates stop on a Friday. The dates of the programs and of the two DVDs carry the story to Sunday.

1. **Friday, September 3.** The last edits come in: Haven until 13:58, Tomahna by day and Serenia until 15:08. The very last working files are saved at 15:16: 24 texts of the help map of the menus, in six languages.
2. **Saturday, 04:04 to 04:35.** The final build opens the files of all 620 packages, in alphabetical order, in half an hour.
3. **Saturday afternoon and evening.** The main data file is packed at 13:15. The engine is built. The second DVD is mastered between 20:07 and 20:38.
4. **Sunday, 00:50 to 00:59.** Past midnight, the code of the game is compiled, and the game program itself last, at 00:59.
5. **Sunday, 10:42.** The first DVD is created.
6. **Sunday, 13:20.** The code of one world, Serenia, is compiled again: more than twelve hours after everything else, and more than two and a half hours after the first DVD was created.
7. **Sunday, 13:37.** The first DVD is saved again, a quarter of an hour later. This is the final master.

What needed another build on Sunday? The timestamps give no reason. Five months later, patch 1.03 changed the game logic for Tomahna, Haven and Spire. Serenia still had the logic from that Sunday afternoon.

## Technical Details

The boxes below give the file names, the counts and the method behind each section, in the same order.

> **The logs and their three dates**
>
> Of the 35 `.m4b` archives of the two DVDs and of version 1.03, one carries build dates: `data.m4b` (1,552,835,500 bytes). `sound.m4b`, the six `<lang>/sound.m4b` and `<lang>/data.m4b`, and `video_1..8.m4b` hold no build log. The `patch.m4b` of version 1.03 (844,147 bytes) holds 115 empty `binarizer_loader.log` files of 12 bytes, and no other log.
>
> `data.m4b` holds 620 nested archives: the 618 nodes, `common` and `shared`. Each stores `binarizer_export.log`, `binarizer_loader.log` and `binarizer_bf_builder.log`, written by the studio's build tool, Binarizer: 1,860 logs.
>
> For 50,241 binary outputs, the export logs list 61,429 source entries: 7,128 folders without a date, and 54,301 dated references that name 53,921 distinct files, all under `/gamedata_ldt/`. Repeated entries agree on all three dates, and every `FILETIME` can be decoded. Each entry gives the creation time (`t1`), the last access (`t2`) and the last write (`t3`). Four files of Haven carry dates of 2085 (three in `t1`, three in `t3`). That leaves 53,918 usable creation dates and 53,918 usable write dates, from 2002-09-03 to 2004-09-03.
>
> Everything here was read in the files. Nothing was run.

### The lunch hour in universal time

Windows records these file times in UTC. Montreal was on EST (UTC−5) or EDT (UTC−4), with four changes of clock between 2002 and 2004. Split into winter (9,546) and summer (44,372), the 53,918 writes show the same working day one hour apart in UTC:

- **Winter (EST):** 1,128 writes at 16:00 UTC (11:00 in Montreal), 296 at 17:00 UTC (noon, −74%), 646 at 18:00 UTC, and the peak of the day, 1,314, at 21:00 UTC (16:00).
- **Summer (EDT):** 4,349 writes at 15:00 UTC (11:00 in Montreal), 1,741 at 16:00 UTC (noon, −60%), 3,253 at 17:00 UTC, and the peak, 4,953, at 20:00 UTC (16:00).

The conversion uses the historical rules of `America/Toronto`. In UTC, Saturdays count 1,142 writes instead of 738 (+55%): the Friday evening, from 20:00 to 23:59 EDT, passes midnight. In local time, the week runs from 10,753 writes on Mondays to 8,183 on Fridays, with 738 on Saturdays (1.37%) and 2,161 on Sundays (4.01%).

### The four files of 2085

No file is older than 2002-09-03, and four are later than 2004-09-04. All four are state machines of the Mangree monkeys at w2_z05_n130, under `/gamedata_ldt/global/w2/z05/n130/ai/ccstatemachine/`:

| File | Size | Creation (`t1`, EDT) | Last write (`t3`, EDT) |
|---|---|---|---|
| `omni01.ai` | 3,813 B | 2004-04-07 15:53:13 | **2085**-04-07 16:18:41 |
| `omni02.ai` | 3,812 B | **2085**-04-07 16:04:52 | 2004-05-03 16:28:22 |
| `omni00a.ai` | 629 B | **2085**-04-07 16:05:33 | **2085**-04-07 16:08:06 |
| `omni00b.ai` | 629 B | **2085**-04-07 16:06:31 | **2085**-04-07 16:08:11 |

The same Wednesday, place by place: from 11:52 to 13:20 EDT at w2_z05_n150 (`omni01.ai`, `omni04.ai` and `omni09.ai`), from 14:24 to 15:04 at w2_z05_n120 (`omni00.ai` and five `.vid` files), then at w2_z05_n130, where `omni01.ai` is created at 15:53:13, still in 2004. `omni02.ai` is created 11 minutes and 39 seconds later, in 2085. It was written again on May 3, 2004: its `t3` is back in 2004, and NTFS kept its `t1`.

Between 16:03 and 16:21 EDT, files were saved with dates of 2004-04-07 at w2_z01_n040, w4_z02_n140, w3_z05_n020 and w4_z02_n030. One of them, `w4_z02_n140/particles/pollen_orbital.pst`, at 16:05:21, falls 29 seconds after `omni02.ai` and 12 seconds before `omni00a.ai`.

The instants `2004-04-07 20:04:52Z` (`0x01c41cdb96678a00`) and `2085-04-07 20:04:52Z` (`0x021eecda1d8d4a00`) differ by 25 bits (`0x03daf0018beac000`), and by 29,585 days to the second: 81 years, with their 20 leap days. One flipped bit does not explain it. A year changed in the `SYSTEMTIME` of Windows does.

### The build wave, world by world

The 620 archives, sorted by the median of their creation dates and of their write dates:

| World | Part of the game | Usable `t3` | First created | Median created | Median written | Late (21:00 to 06:00) | August 2004 | September 2004 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| `common` | Core files and cursor | 471 | 2002-09-03 | 2004-02-26 | 2004-04-06 | 6.58% | 134 | 3 |
| `shared` | Shared files | 609 | 2003-06-27 | 2004-04-27 | 2004-07-08 | 8.87% | 104 | 4 |
| `w1` | Tomahna by night | 10,724 | 2002-11-27 | 2004-02-25 | 2004-05-03 | 5.64% | 1,428 | 5 |

| World | Part of the game | Usable `t3` | First created | Median created | Median written | Late (21:00 to 06:00) | August 2004 | September 2004 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| `w2` | Haven | 13,317 | 2002-11-15 | 2004-03-19 | 2004-05-20 | 8.09% | 1,230 | 4 |
| `w5` | Tomahna by day | 6,279 | 2003-02-28 | 2004-02-24 | 2004-06-24 | 8.66% | 1,025 | 34 |
| `w6` | Menus | 1,078 | 2003-08-27 | 2004-03-17 | 2004-07-04 | 3.71% | 340 | 34 |
| `w3` | Spire | 10,379 | 2003-02-24 | 2004-06-21 | 2004-07-20 | 8.26% | 3,261 | 1 |
| `w4` | Serenia | 11,061 | 2003-05-13 | 2004-07-12 | 2004-07-26 | 10.38% | 4,571 | 176 |

The oldest file is the hand cursor, `/gamedata_ldt/common/anim/hand/hand_dat.fat` (7,304 bytes), created 2002-09-03 14:07:07 EDT and last written 2002-09-20 15:57:44 EDT. The first file of a node is `w2/z03/n010/graphic/hotspots.big`, at w2_z03_n010 (2002-11-15 14:56:33 EST), twelve days before `w1/z01/n090/graphic/hotspots.big`, at w1_z01_n090 (2002-11-27 13:26:06 EST). The oldest node scripts that shipped unchanged are at w1_z01_n310: `nav_h_to_w1_z01_n090_click.cmd` (25 bytes, 2003-03-07 10:03:41 EST) and `nav_h_to_w1_z01_n090.ai` (382 bytes, 14:41:50 EST).

The first wave ends with Tomahna by night (`w1`, median write May 3) and Haven (`w2`, May 20). The second holds Spire (`w3`, median creation June 21; the upper rooms of Sirrus, `w3_z02`, July 28) and Serenia (`w4`, median creation July 12; its finale, `w4_z06`, median write August 9). July has 12,449 writes, with the peak in week 2004-W31 (3,807), and August 12,093, of which 14.5% late at night. Serenia has 41.3% of its writes in August (4,571), the highest share at night (10.38%), and 176 of the 261 writes of September (67.4%).

### Exporter versions and the three test models

The 7,529 `graphic/*.m4b` archives carry the version of the studio's exporter in their header (7,514 of them have one), and the versions rise with time: `v2` (1 archive, 2003-05-13), `v4` (33, May to August 2003), `v5` (46), `v6` (157), `v8` (787, December 2003 to February 2004, among them `shared/graphic/bug_light_mask.m4b`, which is never loaded) and `v14` (6,490, March to August 2004, with the packed `ares::InterleavedPrimitive`).

The oldest mesh is `graphic/h_instrument.m4b` at w2_z03_n071: `v2`, 7,342 bytes, 2003-05-13 17:24:25Z, three quads of 25 vertices and 32 triangles named `h_wheel01..03`. Across all kinds of files, 316 shipped as they were before 2003-08-01.

The three test exports are among the 33 `v4` archives, in the package of w5_z01_n110, and `binarizer_loader.log` does not list them. Their buffers `ares::ArrayVertexPos` and `ArrayVertexIndex` give the wireframes:

- `test-exportgeo08.m4b` (164,006 bytes, 2003-07-03 14:59:19 EDT): an `atlas::GeometricInstanceLOD` of seven levels (629, 218, 144, 62, 24, 8 and 1 triangles; 53 components). Its box, `X = [-66.56, 46.72]`, `Y = [-51.19, 105.12]`, `Z = [-24.01, 26.12]`, encloses the position of w5_z01_n110 in the shipped game, `(-14.62, 44.71, 9.57)`. The same buffer of 673 vertices is stored seven times.
- `test-exportgeo09.m4b` (129,328 bytes, 2003-07-04 15:23:11 EDT): the same canyon (`max X = 46.721`, `max Y = 105.117`, `min Z = -24.014`) in one level, with 5,412 triangles, 2,973 vertices and 12 components.
- `test_exportgeo11.m4b` (302,623 bytes, 2003-07-11 16:12:13, written again 2003-07-23 12:11:13 EDT): 9,558 triangles, 5,071 vertices, 8 components. It keeps the two terrain shells of the previous one (1,713 and 438 vertices, in cyan in the figure) and adds the roof of the domed observatory and two chambers of 1,093 and 289 vertices (in gold), with a color stream `ares::ArrayVertexColor` of 5,071 × 4 floats.

### The names, the lost places and the orientation files

- **Test world and cut zone.** `common.m4b` holds three test light sets filed under world 9, zone 42 (`ls_w9_z42_test_{add,mod,add2}.ls`, March to May 2004), and an interpolator filed under a zone 12 of Spire (`w3_z12_n010_lightning_01.int`, 2003-11-14). The Spire that shipped ends at `z06`.
- **The Dream Mask.** At w4_z06_n220, the hotspot of the mask (2004-08-18) is `h_mr_patate`, wired as `m_mask_h = "w4_z06_n220.h_mr_patate"`.
- **Lost places.** The source paths name 29 nodes that are not in the game, such as `w2_z02_n060` (in w2_z02_n051), `w3_z02_n181` (in w3_z02_n202) and `w4_z06_n090` (in w4_z06_n230), and 5 textures under `/textures/japanese/` that did not ship, for `w1_z01_n241`, `w1_z03_n094`, `w1_z09_n041`, `w1_z09_n061` and `w5_z01_n241`.
- **The orientation files.** The logs also settle what the 97 files `orientations.nav` are (480 to 740 bytes; `w1`: 16, `w2`: 42, `w3`: 17, `w4`: 10, `w5`: 12). They are listed beside `node.dsc` as inputs of `/node/node.bin`, and 94 of them match the 94 nodes whose `node.bin` overrides the direction that the player faces on arrival, without exception. The three others, at w2_z04_n070, w5_z01_n140 and w5_z01_n240, are empty templates.

### Batches, nights and copied files

- **Sunday, July 11, 2004** (13:51 to 17:59 EDT): 783 files, 764 of them in `w5` (382 `.geo` and 382 `.big`, in pairs), and 89.9% of the gaps between two writes at 2 seconds or less. This batch accounts for the 15.83% of weekend writes of Tomahna by day.
- **Sunday, July 4** (14:02 to 23:17 EDT): 226 of the 244 writes are exports of `w6`, the menus (155 `.png` and 71 `.pan`), hence its 28.48% of weekend writes.
- **Sunday, August 22** (00:00 to 21:52 EDT): 105 writes, with 16.3% of the gaps at 2 seconds or less. They start 28 seconds after midnight on the rock-explosion sounds of Spire, stop at 04:17, and resume at 11:00 in the six worlds.
- **Sunday, August 29** (12:41 to 23:46 EDT): 225 writes in every part (`w3`: 68, `w2`: 42, `w4`: 39, `w5`: 34, `w1`: 32, `shared`: 6, `w6`: 3, `common`: 1), starting with `credits_menu_ui.wdg` (12:41) and `credits_start.cmd` (12:46).

From 2002 to 2004, 908 writes fall between 00:00 and 05:59. The night of Thursday, August 26 (00:02 to 05:51 EDT) holds 425 of them: 270 `.sub`, 101 `.cmd` and 41 `.ai`.

The 1,416 `.sub` files (236 for each of six languages) were created within 12 days from 2004-08-20, and 25.85% of them were written between 21:00 and 06:00 EDT.

Another 3,449 files have a write date older than their creation date (`t3 < t1`), which is what a copy leaves under NTFS: the copy is created today and keeps the write date of its original. `.pst` files (801) and `.sub` files (591) lead, and the peak is 2004-08-24, with 435.

### The last 72 hours, to the second

Four sources are combined: the last writes (`t3`), the last accesses (`t2`) left by the final build, the `TimeDateStamp` in the header of the 37 Ubisoft programs of DVD 1, and the volume descriptors of the two discs (ISO 9660).

| Montreal (EDT) | Event |
|---|---|
| Fri Sep 3, 11:32 to 13:58 | Last edits of `w2`, at w2_z05_n080: `vm_p_spores_plant.ai`, `{spores,poison}_right.cmd` |

| Montreal (EDT) | Event |
|---|---|
| Fri Sep 3, 14:20 to 15:08 | Last edit of `w5` (`snd_init.cmd` at w5_z04_n010), then last edits of `w4`: five `quality.qua` files, `w4_z05_n060..090` (w4_z05_n060) |
| Fri Sep 3, 15:16:14 to 15:16:24 | The last source files: 24 `t_helpmap.trc`, in `w6_z06_n081..084/text/<6 languages>/` (w6_z06_n081) |
| Sat Sep 4, 04:04 to 04:35 | The final build reads the 620 archives in alphabetical order (`t2`), in 31 min 29 s: `common` at 04:04:17, then `w1` to `w6`, then `shared` at 04:35:46. Only 64 files kept an older `t2` |
| Sat Sep 4, 13:15 to 20:56 | `DATA.M4B` packed (13:15:37); engine libraries built (17:53 to 18:12; `m4_base_rd.dll` at 20:56:42); DVD 2 (`MYST4_2`) mastered (20:07:33 to 20:38:14) |
| Sun Sep 5, 00:50 to 00:59 | Game code compiled: `m4_snd_rd`, `Serializer_rd`, `m4_thor_rd`, `m4_aisdk_rd`, `m4_ai_{thor,global,w1,w2,w3,w5,w6,all}_rd`, then `Myst4.exe` (00:59:30) |
| Sun Sep 5, 10:42:18 | DVD 1 (`MYST4_1`) created |
| Sun Sep 5, 13:20:11 | `m4_ai_w4_rd.dll` (Serenia) compiled again, 12 h 20 min after the other libraries and 2 h 38 min after DVD 1 was created (its entry on the disc: 13:20:12) |
| Sun Sep 5, 13:37:02 | Volume descriptor of DVD 1 saved again, 16 min 50 s later: the final master |

In patch 1.03, five months later, `m4_ai_w4_rd.dll` has no change in its game logic.

## Conclusion

The hand cursor was last saved in September 2002. Two years later, on a Sunday at 13:20, somebody rebuilt the file that controls what happens in Serenia. **At 13:37** the studio finished the master for DVD 1. In between, the most regular event on either DVD is still lunch.

*Even the timestamp belongs to the early 2000s.*

## Series and Companion Articles

**Myst IV: Revelation (2004):** The Revelation Graph & Inside the Archive

| Group | Article | Address |
|---|---|---|
| Graph | The Revelation Graph, 1: The 2004 Game as a Graph | glthr.com/revelation-graph-1 |
| Graph | The Revelation Graph, 2: Where the Nodes Stand | glthr.com/revelation-graph-2 |
| Finding | The Vision the Amulet Never Showed: Myst IV: Revelation (2004) | glthr.com/revelation-visions-the-amulet-never-showed |
| Finding | **53,921 Files: Watching Ubisoft Montreal Build Myst IV** (this article) | glthr.com/revelation-build-calendar |

**The 5 Myst Studies on glthr.com** (glthr.com/myst-graphs)

| Game | Graph Study & Browser | Findings |
|---|---|---|
| Myst (1993) | The Myst Graph (3) · Browser | The Library Ceiling Shortcut, Behind the Ages, Trapped in Myst |
| Riven (1997) | The Riven Graph (2) · Browser | The Riven Diffs, The Contradictions of the Fifth Age, Catherine Is Still in Her Cell, The Sixth Knock, What Changed Between Riven's CDs and DVD |
| Myst III: Exile (2001) | The Exile Graph (2) · Browser | Linking Without a Book, The Valve That Refuses to Turn, The Two Realities of the Edanna Tusk |
| **Myst IV: Revelation (2004)** | The Revelation Graph (2) · Browser | The Vision the Amulet Never Showed, 53,921 Files: Watching Ubisoft Montreal Build Myst IV |
| Myst V: End of Ages (2005) | The End of Ages Graph (2) · Browser | Commands Beyond the Slate, Inside Myst V's 2005 Neural Network, Ghosts of Uru |

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  url    = {https://glthr.com/revelation-build-calendar},
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Your questions and leads are welcome: myst@glthr.com

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