

I Know I'm On Paradise Road

Max King

I am three weeks into a two-month comped stay at the Palms – room service not inclusive, but the buffet is, and whilst nothing is quite as sickly as hastily shoveling away plates of mass-prepped lobster and prawn before you're ushered out again, day after day, come dinner or lunch, I am once again sat at the corner table, closest to the seafood station. The waiter keeps me stocked on soda. They know by now that I'm on a steady rotation of Coke, sweet tea, orange or Sprite (time of day dependent), in that order, and then back to Coke. My arrival here was more of a joke, or in any case, very unplanned. Friend of a friend in Sherman Oaks knew a guy who could get us set up with a room for maybe a night or two, so we drove down here. Next thing you know they're making you spin a wheel in the lobby. Maybe you'll get a discount. Luck bit me in the ass. Nobody rejects two months in Las Vegas, but then who wants to spend two months in Las Vegas?

Sat at the table behind me – fully out of vision, but well within earshot – are two drunk ladies having a go at a royal serving of sweetened oysters with complimentary barbecue sauce. "And then they kicked me out of the Bellagio," says the raspier-toned one, "for penny slots!" "Chris-sake," a mouthful of oysters returns, "for penny slots? Whaddya win, four dollars?" I'm being told I've had enough to eat, so I steal a quick glance at them, glamour galore, what an inspiration. The penny slots in the Bellagio are all the way in the back. Figures. You pass by all the real money, super jackpots, mega jackpots, tables this and tables that. I check the machines for a penny or so of forgotten innings and find myself lucky with an almost two-dollar print out. A machine well out of view of anyone but the eye in the sky gobbles it up and chimes away, loss after loss. My eyes glued to four mechanical

wheels spinning incessantly and briefly pausing on the wrong symbol. It slows down, lucky seven, and it slows down, lucky seven, another slows down, lucky seven, "boy", do I think, "I could really be in for a treat here," as the final wheel takes a painstakingly long while to also stop precisely on a lucky seven. Eight dollars is added to my credit and I'm cashing out whilst I'm on top.

A thermal voucher slides out. Lukewarm. Carrying eight dollars of synthetic triumph, the carpeted maze transforms into a game of escape. Just now I was the prime victim of late-stage capitalism, but somehow, I'm the bad guy now. Winnings cashed – no issue – and I head to the Palms' spa. Perhaps it's the cucumber-mist scent, perhaps it's the bubbles, but something gets to me, and I fall asleep. It's a casino I haven't seen before, Vauxhall Pleasure Gardens, done Vegas. In the center of my suite, a box of mint TCG wrappers. I reach in and pull out a 2001 Enduring Freedom foil, a smooth tear. From the far end of the room, I observe myself shuffling through the cards and finding there, right at the end, card #19. What luck!

The logic of this dream catches up with me the moment I wake – it's a sign. The spa accommodates my desires and morphs into a Polymarket control room. I briefly wonder who the next prime minister of Sweden will be. Not my area. There is no point checking the polls – always outperformed by prediction markets. I decide Elon Musk will tweet 205 times this week; up from last week's 186. Will the US Army's Delta Force capture Nicolás Maduro, on January 3rd, 2026? Yes, I'm confident. Am I having lobster for dinner tonight? Yes, with plenty of king prawns, and a Coke on the side. Followed by sweet tea and then a Sprite.

Plicnik Space Initiative

I Know I'm On Paradise Road presents a new body of work by Max King that draws on research into casinos as autonomous environments designed to maximise anticipation.

The exhibition is presented within a new scenography by Heyse Ip, Amélie Mckee, and Melle Nieling.



Max King (b.1999, Norfolk) uses examinations of human behaviour within constructed leisure environments and various other situations, from casinos to seaside piers, to create objects that pose questions about their form, function and designated role. The work combines ready-mades that draw on mass-produced serialised industrial processes, creating objects that exist in their own timeline, appearing as if they were made for a purpose that is not immediately clear. King's work references memories from his youth and current pastimes to explore the evolving foundations of recreation within controlled environments that are orchestrated to create a perceived sense of escapism.

Recent projects include public commission *Dancing in the Shadow of Henry*, London (2025), *My Mother*, Esoterica, New York (2025), *Out From The Grey*, Chica, Arizona (2024), *OpenArea x ASICS*, London (2024), *POST-FASCISM*, Loods6, Semester9, Amsterdam (2024); *BLOODSPORT*, Mauritskade 55c, Semester9, Amsterdam (2023), *Zgriotor Journal*, Usual Business Gallery, London (2022). Max Kind holds a BA in Graphic Communication Design (2022) and an MA in Sculpture from the Royal College of Art (2024).

Plicnik Space Initiative is an artist-curator collective and experimental art space. Founded in 2020 as an online platform by Amélie Mckee and Melle Nieling, it now operates from a physical space in London, UK. The collective investigates the interplay between online and physical space through large-scale scenographies that incorporate works by other artists. By translating the ways machines perceive and interpret into spatial form, Plicnik explores how machine vision is reshaping our experience of space. Its projects offer experimental contexts for artists to develop work, opening discourse on how art is exhibited and encountered.



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