

Game Design and Asset Creation 2 Written Evaluation Report - Shaun Tierney

by Shaun Tierney

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Game Design and Asset Creation 2

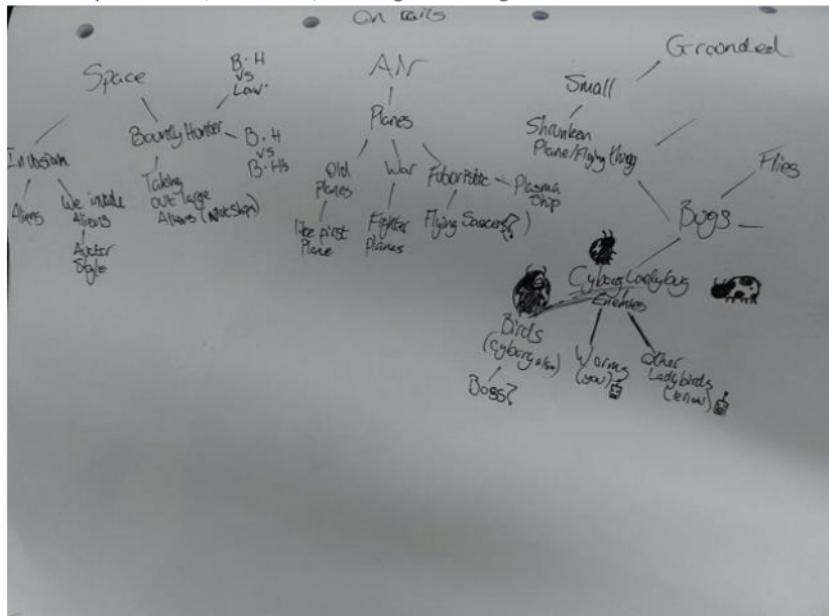
Written Evaluation Report

General Game Overview

My game, CyBug, is a game in which you play as a cyborg ladybug whose occupation is that of a bounty hunter. In the game, you play as said bug and are tasked with hunting down and eliminating all enemy ladybugs and other enemies in their home base. This game would be aimed at a younger audience and those who enjoy playing against themselves to beat their own high score, for example, fans of other on rails shooters and games like Space Invaders.

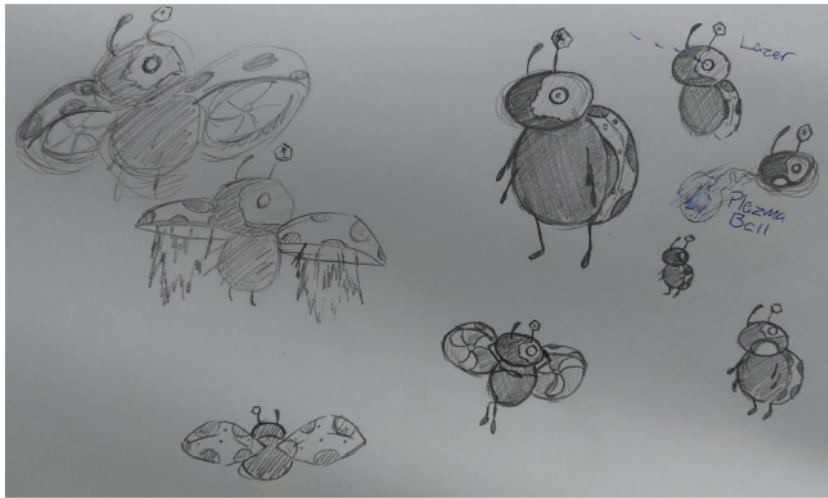
When coming up with the concept of the game I went through many different iterations of the core concept. It took some time for me to come to a final standing on what kind of theme and gameplay I should do. Firstly I had to decide on the theme of the game, where would it take place? What time period? What would the player play as? I set up 3 different starting points "Space", "Air" and "Small". I brainstormed my ideas using a mind map, branching off from the starting points as I came up with different settings and such. Some ideas I considered more closely were a space bounty hunter, invading

an alien planet and, of course, the bug themed game.



I quickly decided to go with the bug idea, mainly due to the template given to us being space themed and I wanted to attempt something different and let my imagination run free a bit. To figure out what I wanted to do exactly I looked into a few games that might relate to my chosen theme. Being a bug, everything around the player would be much larger than a regular person would be and I wanted to look into games that have a similar scale. My first thought was of the game Grounded [1.], a game a friend of mine had talked a lot about, followed by It Takes Two [2.] and Little Nightmares [3.] among others after some research.

Once my inspiration was decided upon I had to narrow down my ideas once again, upon choosing the Ladybug idea I let ideas wonder further. How would the character attack? What kind of map would I have? I narrowed my ideas down on either a sci-fi cyborg or a steampunk cyborg, the map layout and atmosphere changing depending on which idea I go with. As I decided I created a design for the player ladybug for each of the two settings (seen below) as I tried to decide upon which one to go with.



(sci-fi design)



(steampunk design)

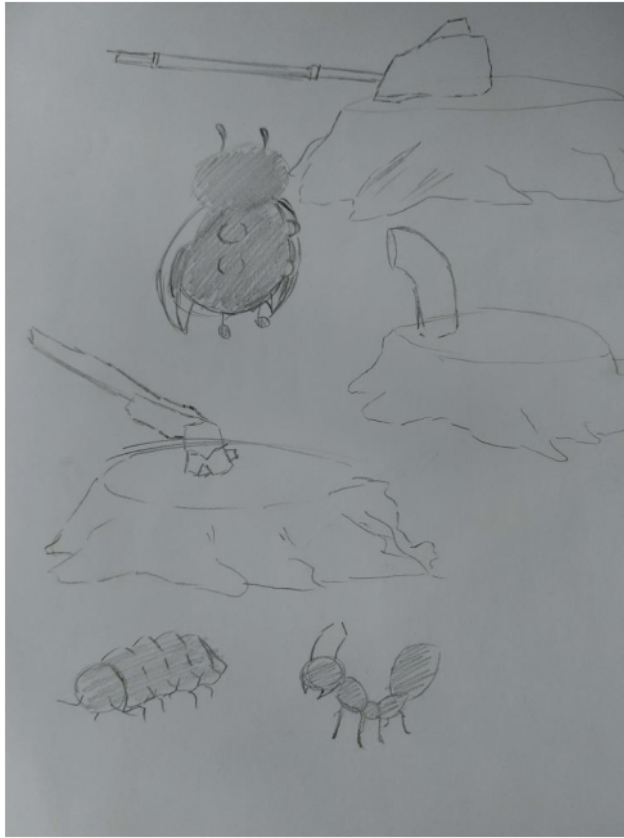
Originally, I decided to focus on the Steampunk idea, choosing to go with the on rails shooter type of game mode. I was planning to remove the boss at the end and instead just let people shoot as many enemies as they can. My two main ideas for this in terms of a level were that of a riverside steampunk

village for smaller animals and a nest themed. However, these ideas were soon scrapped due to a number of reasons. One, the main enemy I designed, the steampunk bird, was not turning out as I had hoped. I was attempting to use Zbrush in order to create the enemy but I soon decided to scarp the idea as my modelling skills were not good enough to create it. This basically killed the idea of the nest map, and caused me to think about which of the two remaining maps to choose.



Lookin at the riverside village map I had an issue with it, finding it more fitting to use the survival mode template, how would I justify staying in the box of said stage with such an open area? How far would I have to create the land in which the player couldn't even reach? With myself being unable to justify this I decided to go with the back garden map, a more vibrant place filled with items, plant life and surrounded by walls. I also decided to drop the steampunk idea and instead go with a more sci-fi kind or direction, though really it seems more realistic than sci-fi, robot bugs aside.

In an attempt to cut down rambling I will briefly discuss assets that made it into the game and things that didn't. Firstly, I changed the main enemy of the game from the bird to an enemy yellow ladybug. They are less cybernetic than the player but still fire lasers. I wanted to have a ground-based enemy so I created a turret replacement in the form of a tree stump turret that fires at the player. I also wanted to create an enemy soldier for the ground, something like a woodlouse or an ant, though these were soon scrapped due to there not really being a floor-based enemy beside the turret.



(Turret Designs & Scrapped
Ground Enemy)

One final thing to mention here would be my placement of the enemy spawners. I wanted the places in which enemies spawn to make sense, instead of making enemies spawn from thin air. While creating assets for the steampunk themed idea I carried over some assets from it and applied them to the new backyard map. I kept the pipes I had made for the pot house and mushroom house and placed the spawners on top of these places. I came up with the idea that the enemy fliers would crawl out of the larger pipes upon hearing about a intruder, meaning I had a valid reason to let enemies spawn from these areas.

Research and Self-Directed Learning

As far as research went, I was mainly focused on finding games with a similar premise to my own, that being a focus on size. The player in my game is that of a bug and therefore very small, therefore, items and objects around them will be much bigger. For this reason, I wanted to look into games that have a similar scale of size. Firstly I asked some friends for some examples, the main one being brought up being Grounded. [1.] Grounded is a game in which the player is shrunk down and must survive the perils

of a backyard. This game was very much something I wanted to find to help base my sense of scale off, though of course, this game is far more detailed than anything I could produce in terms of models and textures. Looking up other games myself I found a couple more games that could aid me, those being 'It Takes Two' [2.] and 'Little Nightmares'. [3.] I had previously played Little Nightmares on my own time so I simply revisited the game during my research just to get a sense of scope and scale of things. I also looked online for other games similar to the previous ones online, finding a few lists online [4.] [5.], though I mainly focused on the previously mentioned trio.

In terms of self-directed learning, I mostly did so in terms of Unreal. By this I mean looking up videos on how to do certain things in the engine. For example, I wanted to change the skybox on the stage to an image of a light, cloudy sky I had taken myself. To do that I found the skybox model in the template, though had no idea how to change it. To help myself with this issue I looked through a few guides online, though I had to resort to a YouTube tutorial [6.] for a clearer step by step guide. This tutorial was simple to understand, and the reason I usually prefer to look for video tutorials, thanks to the easy breakdown and visual aid of what the person does.

Similarly, to the previous part I once again found a useful video, this time in how to spawn entities that could damage my player, my own object being a falling Conker. Upon asking my lecturer I was sent a video [7.] that taught me how to do so.

Reflection and Changes

In terms of reflection there are plenty of areas I need to improve on or things I could change if I were given more time to continue this project. Due to Time management issues along with unavoidable real-life issues that took up my time I wasn't able to give this project the full attention I should have shown it.

So firstly, with that in mind, the first area of improvement I would need to look into would be said time management. I often find myself postponing substantial progress on my work until I feel I *need* to do it. This is a major issue for myself, not just in university work but outside of such work as well, for example planning trips with friends. The best way I can think to remedy this is, for future projects to be planned out from the beginning using a Gantt Chart. I tend to enjoy using and making things in Excel so creating a plan for my projects and give myself self-induced deadlines along the way would improve my workflow.

Next, I feel as though my presentation of my game did not go as well as I had hoped. There was some scuff at the beginning when trying to open my game file and the presentation itself didn't go that great either. I wasn't able to cover everything I wanted to, plus I feel as though I stumbled over my words a little too much. I should have rehearsed my presentation more than I had to avoid this as well as remember to include my reference list which I left out of my actual presentation. This will for sure cause me to lose marks on that aspect, but unfortunately, I cannot change that now. In future I will have to be more thorough in making sure I have included everything I need to.

In terms of what I could do to improve my project if given more time there are also a few more things I would consider changing. Firstly, is to add another kind of flying enemy to bring some diversity to the game. I would also create a few more assets to fill out the area a little more, perhaps create more alterations to existing assets and finally I would attempt to find out how the foliage brush works and find a way to implement it, without it my project looks a little barren. I would then also see if I had time to add a tree outside the map that covers the map from above. This would give a valid reason for the falling conkers from above and another place enemies could reasonably spawn from.

Upon a full reflection of my time on this project I think I have taken away some substantial information on what I want to do going forward with my studies. First of all, will be taking time management far more seriously going forward, if I want to do anything in the future, I will have to get this sorted out and handled appropriately. Secondly, I feel I have cemented my stance on what I enjoy in this kind of work. I find it more enjoyable to come up with ideas and characters, settings and other such, though when it comes to creating these things, I feel like there is a lot to be desired when the final project is shown. This may be due to my lesser knowledge on 3D modelling as a whole. Upon next year coming around, I wish to try my hand at something 2D if given the chance, whether it be hand drawings or perhaps a pixel art based game. I just don't have the same passion for 3D modelling as I do for 2D games, so I would like to attempt something I feel I could be more passionate about.

[1.] *Grounded (Video Game)*, Developed by Obsidian Entertainment, Found on Steam here:

<https://store.steampowered.com/app/962130/Grounded/>

[2.] *It Takes Two (Video Game)*, Developed by Hazelight Studios, Found on Steam here:

https://store.steampowered.com/app/1426210/It_Takes_Two/

[3.] *Little Nightmares (Video Game)*, Developed by Tarsier Studios, Found on Steam here:

https://store.steampowered.com/app/424840/Little_Nightmares/

[4.] *Small Scale Games: 16 Intimate Videogame Worlds*, (June 2, 2017) Amr Al-Aaser, Found online here:

<https://www.pastemagazine.com/games/cool-spot/small-scale-games>

[5.] *6 Games With Tiny Characters in Big Worlds*, (August 22, 2022), Kim Snaith, Found online here:

<https://www.gamespew.com/2022/08/games-with-tiny-characters/>

[6.] *How To Create And Use A Custom Sky Sphere In Unreal Engine 5 (Tutorial)*, (June 29, 2022), Matt

Aspland, Found on YouTube here: [How To Create And Use A Custom Sky Sphere In Unreal Engine 5 \(Tutorial\)](#)

[7.] *Blueprint Quickshot: Spawning Physics Actors | 04 | v4.7 Tutorial Series | Unreal Engine*, (April 20,

2015), Unreal Engine, Found on YouTube here: [Blueprint Quickshot: Spawning Physics Actors | 04 | v4.7 Tutorial Series | Unreal Engine](#)

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GRADEMARK REPORT

FINAL GRADE

51 / 100

GENERAL COMMENTS

Instructor

1. Engagement with Literature Skills - 13/25

There is a good amount of research and inspirations noted in the document with IEEE referencing used, bibliography present. Well done.

Potentially more references in bibliography to tutorials/articles used. You can never have too many references!

2. Knowledge and Understanding Skills - 14/25

There is a sound base of knowledge shown with clear application of fundamental artistic skills. Work in a 3D space has been explained competently and some games design theory elements have been touched upon. Good job.

3. Cognitive and Intellectual Skills - 11/25

I'd liked to have seen more reflection overall, especially relating to research. Further detail on how you research. How would you rate your personal skills in relation to gathering information and did this effect workflow? How did you organise information?

4. Practical Application Skills - 6/10

Document is presented well with sound formatting principles applied. Perhaps a separate title and contents page?

5. Transferable Skills for Life and Professional Practice - 7/15

Be wary when self analysing
your performance that you aren't too harsh on
yourself. We can be our own worst critic
sometimes and
it can be hard to have confidence in your work.
Don't forget that this is a learning experience and
that self analysis
can lead to improving not only how you work, but
how you feel while working.

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