

Note - was submitted within 1 week, just to incorrect link

by Sharmaine Williams

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**A Study of the Effects of Artistic Styles in Splash Screens on
Player Expectations and Emotions in Video Games.**

by

Sharmaine Williams

Project submitted as part of the requirements for the award of
BA (Hons) Computer Games Design

April 2025

What are the Effects of Artistic Styles in Splash Screens on Player Expectations and Emotions in Video Games?

In this personal project, I would like to explore different styles of splash screens through a 2D medium. These splash screens, though 2D in style, will have the illusion of life brought to them through flowing, layered animation. This will be accomplished by using two different programs. Clip Studio Paint [1], and Adobe After Effects [2]. The program Clip Studio Paint [1], will allow me to create detailed artworks that I can layer. These layers will ensure that there are no gaps under the work when it is later animated with the puppet tool in Adobe After Effects [2].

I will create 3 different splash screens for a hypothetical relaxing farming simulator Video Game. Each splash screen created will have the same character at the forefront, but they will all differ in style and colour to give a variety of choices and results for gamers to review. I will create this character with animation in mind, ensuring that it is simple, yet eye-catching with a recognisable silhouette. The theme for the game is farming, so I will create a character that looks like they belong to the environment they are set in, whether that be through their clothing through colour, or other relevant details. I will have this design completed with a clear 2D reference sheet showing each orthographic view by the end of November.

Splash screens play a vital part in the player's experience, as they are the first visual the player will see. Whereas some may see them as nothing more than a decorative visual, splash screens set the tone and expectations for the player right at the start and give them an introduction to the game ahead. A good splash screen should create excitement and immersion, capturing the essence of the Video Game it represents before it even starts. They also promote the game's brand by keeping a consistent theme and can create the practical illusion of shorter loading times, as the player is distracted by the visuals. [3]

Before I begin this project, I will do some research on existing game splash screens and read up on the fundamentals of animation. Some media that inspires me includes Stardew Valley [4], Muse Dash [5], and Cuphead [6]. These games all include animated splash screens with dynamic movement and vibrant colours, which I would like to incorporate into my own work. I will also be including fundamentals from books like "The Art of Animation" by Bob Thomas [7], and "The Illusion of Life: Disney Animation" by Frank Thomas and Ollie Johnston [8].

I will gather feedback from at least 10 different people with experience in gaming with the use of a google form, recording their expectations and emotional response to these splash screens by using a series of related questions. Once the feedback is in, I will

review the responses and conclude which splash screen best fits the theme of the hypothetical game and theme set for this project.

Before I begin, I will work on my skills in Adobe After Effects [2], becoming more familiar with the program before I dive into the project itself. I will also use this time to create the dynamic character design which I can use for each of the splash screens. I then aim to complete one splash screen by the end of each month for December, January, and February, with some time allocated in March to fix any issues I encounter along the way.

I will have all splash screens completed at the very latest by 1st April 2025, along with a google form. This will give me time to distribute the google doc to my target audience of gamers and give them a week to respond. Once I have all the responses I need, I will begin to dive into the specifics of each demographic, and what their responses were to each screen. This will help me to come to a conclusion on how art style can affect a player's initial expectations of a video game.

My project will be complete on April 22nd 2025, giving me a week to look over everything I have done and make any last-minute changes.

With this research, I hope to design an effective splash screen which can most effectively convey the impression of a relaxing farming simulator. Integrating principals learned from my cited sources, [7], [8], along with the reviews I receive, I will conclude the elements that best capture the player's attention and interest for the selected theme and discuss how this can be applied in a more general term to the gaming industry.

REFERENCES:

- [1] *Clip Studio Paint*, Celsys, Inc., [Online]. Available: <https://www.clipstudio.net/en/>. [Accessed: 21-Oct-2024].
- [2] *Adobe After Effects*, Adobe Inc., [Online]. Available: <https://www.adobe.com/products/aftereffects.html>. [Accessed: 21-Oct-2024].
- [3] S. Moyers, "Use Splash Screens the Right Way," *Spinxdigital*, Sep. 20, 2022. [Online]. Available: <https://www.spinxdigital.com/blog/use-splash-screens-the-right-way/>. [Accessed: 21-Oct-2024].
- [4] E. Barone, *Stardew Valley*, ConcernedApe, 2016.
- [5] X. Y. Wu, *Muse Dash*, PeroPeroGames, 2018.
- [6] C. and M. Moldenhauer, *Cuphead*, Studio MDHR, 2017.
- [7] B. Thomas, *The Art of Animation*. Disney Editions, 1991.
- [8] F. Thomas and O. Johnston, *The Illusion of Life: Disney Animation*. Hyperion, 1995.

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GRADEMARK REPORT

FINAL GRADE

GENERAL COMMENTS

40/100

BA GAMES – PROJECT PROPOSAL – ACCA6020
INDEPENDENT PROJECT (5%)

Student **Sharmaine Williams**
Mark **40 (54)**

Intro / A&O (500 words)		
Project title; Identification of a specific problem to be investigated; Well-defined aims and SMART objectives; Explaining why this project is worth doing; Discussion of what the project needs to do in order to be a success; Description any deliverables that will be produced at the end of the project	40	19
A topic has been identified for research and project work, though this feels a little light on both content and scope – three splash screens for a game seems as though this is playing safe.		

Some more definition in the output with the use of SMART goals and objectives would be good to see here.		
Background to the Project (500 words)		
Description of how the work to be done by in the project relates to the work identified in the literature review; Discussion of any ethical issues raised by the project Identifying what has already been done within the field; Topic familiarity; Brief literature review using appropriate sources – 6-8 journal papers and book chapters rather than just websites; Selection of relevant models & concepts This project feels like it is best suited for an Animation student and does not seem to utilise game theory or skillsets. Unreal Engine would be ideal for the splash screen tests in a prototype but no mention is made of interaction or testing – only the programs used for creation. Information on the theoretical side seems to focus solely on animation principles but splash screens traditionally do not include much in the way of animation, so how will the literature be applied?	40	14

A bibliography of work has been presented in the proposal with examples of potential research sources, which is good to see.		
Document Presentation		
Correct spelling, grammar and punctuation; Flow of narrative/fluency; Coherence; Word processed ; Correct use of referencing with bibliography; Strict word limit Presentation of the work is good with cover page and a flow to the written work outlining a project proposal. A bit more detail could be evidenced, such as a greater focus on the literature and how it is relevant to the practical project. Proposal has been submitted after the stated deadline, meaning the University penalty for late submission must be applied.	20	19
TOTAL	100	54

PAGE 1

PAGE 2

PAGE 3

PAGE 4
