

Project Postmortem

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Introduction

Neo Drive is a single player racing game which includes three maps all with different themes that includes Industrial, Overgrown and Neo Tokyo. There is also a range of vehicles that have different speeds and various designs that correspond with the maps. My role in the making of neo drive was designing a lot of the main assets within the game ranging from the fast car, and the middle class car to the Mechazilla like monster that is featured in the Neo Tokyo map, I also started work on a model of the Mechazilla creature.

Research Evaluation

I mostly used elaborative research to help me find out how to use zbrush this is due to not knowing shortcuts and certain tools on the program, however this was something I couldn't plan ahead for and was something I had to research whilst modelling Mechazilla.

Technical Research

I self-taught myself to use photoshop to complete most of my concept art and orthographic, to do the orthographic I had to use the ruler tool which took time to find, however that is the only thing I struggled to find. Whilst modelling Mechazilla I used YouTube to find short cuts and as a refresher of all the tools.

Contextual Research

I looked at Transformers age of extinction for the organic armour design of Grimlocke (The T-rex) to get more an idea of how I wanted the body panels to overlap and the general theme I wanted for Mechazilla, I also used various images that are in my production diary to get the right position for my concept design. I also used a Gundam called unicorn from the anime Gundam mobile suits, this is where I got the idea for the horn for the creature. I also used real cars for the vehicle designs for the fast and mid car, the cars I used was a Toyota GT86 widebody as well as a Dodge Charger, this is shown in my production diary, you can also see the changes I made to the vehicles to make them fit into the game.

Research Conclusion

I feel like my research can definitely be improved, because the research I did was not in depth at all, if I was to do my research again, I would definitely add more sources to get more ideas for concept work, I would also research more into how to fix some of the problems I encountered in zbrush and to get a better result because I would know what brushes to use for the outcome I want for the creature.

Technique Evaluation

I recorded all my progress in my production diary to keep a record of what I am doing, and to reflect on my progress as I complete my tasks. I also used a Gantt chart to predict my progress and tasks before I started the project to allocate time slots for each task, I then added extra tasks to my predicted timetable that we did not expect to do or forgot to put down, I also filled out my new Gantt chart as progressed through my project to compare against the predicted Gantt chart. I had to model Mechazilla on zbrush I had not used zbrush in a long time, so I struggled with modelling it, therefore the head was the only part of the model to be completed

Identification & Suitability of Production Methods

I believe I was using the right tools for the job as my time keeping was pretty good during this project as the Gantt chart and my production diary shows, however towards the end of the project I predicted that I would have one extra week to finalise everything, however this was not the case as I had too work up until the hand in to finish everything off.

Development of Techniques & Skills

I stuck to what I know when it came to my production process because I felt like it would be better for the team so that I stay on track and not getting confused by new techniques that may slow down my progress on my set tasks, also putting all of my set tasks in a Gantt chart has helped me stay focused by revisiting it to remind myself what needs doing this shows that this process works for myself to keep me productive and on track.

Overall Quality of Work Produced

I am satisfied with how all of my concept art came out this is due to me doing all of it at the beginning of the project and having a direction of where I wanted my work to go and as I was designing the majority of the vehicles and the main asset (Godzilla) for the game I felt my work had to be to a high level to guide my team in the visual direction I wanted for the game. I was happy with the majority of the orthographic for the game however the front orthographic for the fast car I was not happy with until the third iteration which set me back in terms of time management, also I didn't predict that the modelers would want a top down view of each vehicle which again added a time restriction for my other tasks. I also didn't get to finish the model of Mechazilla as I only completed the head, I plan to remodel the whole creature next semester.

Technique Conclusion

I learned how to use Photoshop more effectively whilst working on the concept art and the orthographic such as using the ruler tools to make guideline to get the most accurate drawings for the modelers to use to get a model that is close to the original concept art. When modelling using zbrush, I forgot most short cuts and had to use YouTube videos to refresh my memory of how to use it properly, this is where I learnt the most due to having to make quite a detailed model from the orthographic and concept art I made for myself and for the block out modeller.

Development Evaluation

My role within this project was concept artist, my main tasks was to design two of the main vehicles used in the game, design the main asset (Godzilla) and to provide orthographic for these concepts, I also completed some smaller asset concept art such as the portals and the bridge. The problems that arose was that the orthographic of some of the vehicles I was finding hard due to, I was inexperienced with completing orthographic and they are still new to me as to how to complete them in the most time efficient way

Creativity

The design I completed for Mechazilla was a completely original design, I did use reference images and ideas from different sources however I believe that I pushed my creativity to get a final design that suits the game and has not been used before. I risked modelling Mechazilla, as I was inexperienced with zbrush however I strongly believed that I was the one who could get the most detail and get my imagined creature to look the way I envisioned from my concept art.

Relevance to the brief

I believe that I strongly stuck to the brief and completed all the tasks that the brief requires us to complete, this is all shown in my production diary, I completed all of my tasks as a concept artist and as a unexperienced modeller as I wanted to learn more about modelling, I also logged all of my work as I went through the project by logging it in Gantt charts and in a production diary as well as creating a video of all my work. Also completing my set categories for our Game Design Document.

Contribution within a group (group projects)

I attended all meetings with my team, these were shown in my production diary, with the new tasks that got added to my Gantt chart as the meetings went on throughout the project. The sacrifices I made was that I was meant to design more of the Neo Tokyo map, however I found myself at a time crunch and had to pass some of that work on to my colleagues because they had already completed their work, I still managed to design all of the main assets for the map as shown in my production diary however I didn't get to design some of the smaller assets such as the Tokyo Tower. 1042

Working Alone (individual projects)

I was working alone mostly for the concept art work and the modelling as I completed the orthographic for Mechazilla I didn't need to receive anything from my colleagues to go ahead and model the creature, however whilst going through the concept art stage I did have to receive confirmation that my design were suited for the levels and that everyone liked the designs, so that I could continue my work and move on to the orthographic for the cars.

Iterative Design Practice

I have provided iterations of my work in my production diary, especially with Mechazilla because I had to make changes that my team suggested, and also because I had so many ideas it took me a while to get them down and decide which direction, I wanted to take the designs. I also had to improve my orthographic for the fast car a few times because I didn't know how to properly get the right measurements for the most accurate model.

Time Management

I managed my time efficiently and effectively, this is shown in my production diary and most importantly my Gantt chart, on my original Gantt chart of what I planned would happen, I planned for an extra week in case I did not get to finish one of my set tasks, however I ended up working up until the deadline and did not manage to finish Mechazilla, however I plan to remodel it. I kept track of the hours I put into each task on my Gantt chart and it is clearly labelled on the side with different colours meaning different periods of time. The tasks that was prioritized was the tasks I completed first, we also made a priority list that is in my production diary.

Development Conclusion

I plan on coming up with more retro style designs for the cars in the future and mix in a futuristic twist, I wish I went down this route for the fast car. I am also going to start modelling Mechazilla again because I am not happy with the technique, we are using to model the creature as it seems to cause a lot of problems such as disfiguration when adding to the proxy model.

Analysis

Contextualising your work within a wider theoretical practice

When designing the main asset (Mechazilla) I wanted the player to feel small and to be blown away at the design and sheer size of the creature, to make gameplay not just about racing but about the scenery as you go through the Neo Tokyo map. I also wanted the player to feel small compared to the behemoth. Also wanted a contrast in colours through the whole map, this is shown in my concept designs for Mechazilla, the bridge and for the portal, to show clear direction and to give the level a Tokyo feeling with the bright lights contrasting off the concrete surrounding it. I also chose a widebody car for the Neo Tokyo level because I believe it would make the player feel more emerged with the game if the car was fun, different and fitted in with its surroundings.

Critique of the work you have produced

The problems that I encountered whilst modelling Mechazilla is that the fingers and tail on the proxy model that I received seems to shrink and is almost impossible to add clay too, I have not found a solution to fix this problem, so I will be re modelling Mechazilla next semester.

Critique of your own practice (and action taken)

The steps I will take to improve my concept art will be to look at more reference images and to take more care whilst adding colour to my pieces because I think the image I have produced feel flat and have little depth, I will have to take my time with the orthographic I produce to give the modeller a more accurate model to produce which will make the overall game look and feel better. I will also have to put more time into researching about how to use zbrush more efficiently and effectively, to increase the quality of my modelling work. The new skills I learnt whilst doing this project is mainly learning new techniques and shortcuts on zbrush which I will apply to the model of Mechazilla next semester.

I believe that the commutation throughout the project was very good everyone seemed to be on task and every high priority task was completed before the deadline, the team was mostly managed through their own Gantt charts and with weekly meeting reviewing each other's work to make sure no one was falling behind. However, I believe that in the future we could have distributed work better because some people didn't have a lot to do at the beginning of the project, this could have been fixed with people getting low priority tasks to complete whilst the high priority tasks are being completed until their high priority task is able to be completed.