

Creative Practise 3 (M5X01568): Production Diary & GDD (Individual Section)

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Production Diary

3rd - 8th October

Generating game ideas/possibilities surrounding a main genre of '*Survival Horror*', with gameplay lasting no more than 7 minutes. My individual theme for a solitary morgue was thought up. A rough presentation will be put together to share with peers the theme and the possibility for my game idea.

The game focused on being locked in a morgue at night, the player would have to survive until morning (7-minute deadline) and would do so by completing minigames (spread around the level) which they needed to complete successfully to avoid losing the game.

Survival Horror Game Theme: Morgue

Setting- Locked up morgue at night. Uneasy and confined surroundings are emphasised by paranormal events.

Age- 18-28

Theme- Modern (current day). The environment should convey an atmosphere of gritty realism, and making the situation feel grounded/believable. By using the morgue setting there is emotional association of sadness and the fear of death (therefore navigating the environment is made uncomfortable).

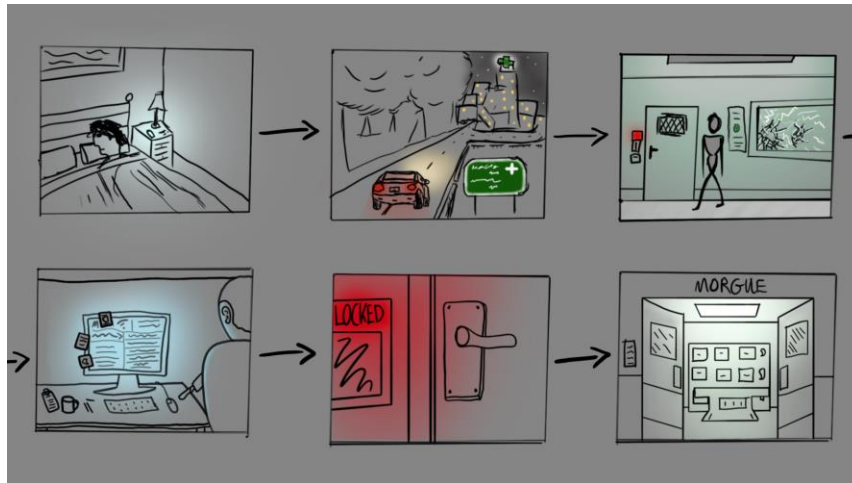
Audience needs to understand the purpose of a morgue, in order to react to the theme/atmosphere.



Above- A slide of the presentation, giving a rough idea on the Theme and Setting of the game. (see Appendix- Presentation 1.)

10th - 17th October

Game theme ideas presented within peer group. A better understanding of what type of game could be worked on as a team. Current individual presentations would now be developed into better formed pitches, focusing on; theme, setting, mechanics, a narrative summary, and an example of an opening sequence for the game.



Above - My storyboard for my individual game opening sequence. This allowed me to present the narrative and desired theme of my game idea.

24th October

Developed pitch (see Appendix- Presentation 2.) presented to peer group, ideas from each individual pitch were discussed, and peers chose final game to move forward with. The game chosen to develop collaboratively was 'Submerged', a game which focuses on the player's escape from a cave system via following a stream of water and avoiding a 'stalking-type' monster. Roles were assigned to each member, my own role being 3D asset design. A rough list of assets appropriate to the game setting would need to be curated, for an understanding of what reference/research material is needed.

31th October

Preliminary map layout discussed, focusing on; events which occur in each Act of the game, what obstacles the player could approach, and how the map would work (the paths the player will follow). The design of each act was also taken into consideration, giving a better idea of what themes/models to include in the list of assets. This discussion provided a more structured layout of what we would work towards for the initial white box game.

Mechanic Assets:

- Pickaxe- Tom
- Rocks (Thrown to distract Monster)- Tom
- Wooden Boards- Tom
- Harness
- Rope- Baptiste
- Climbing Clip (Carabiner)- Baptiste
- Hook/Grappling Hook- Baptiste

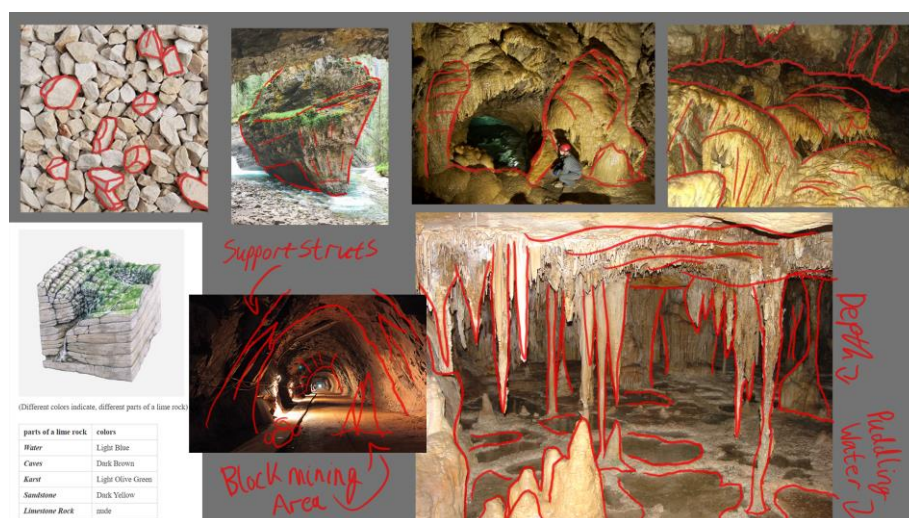
Above- A sample of the asset list. These were the prioritised assets, which the player would interact with. The list was divided up and the assets were developed individually. (see Appendix- Asset List)

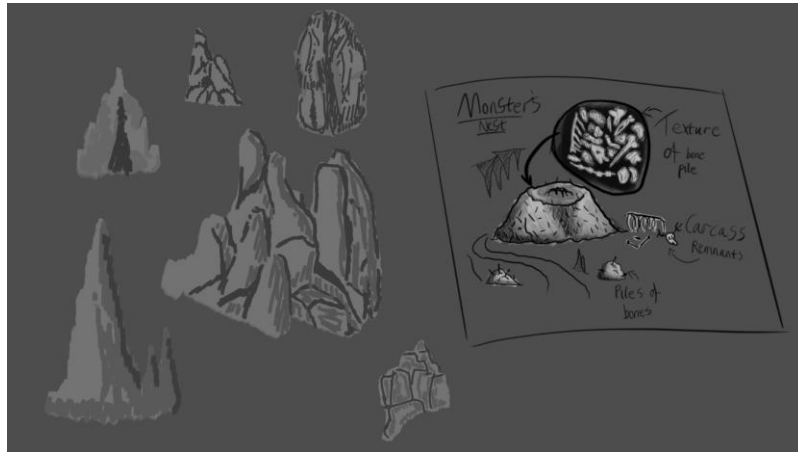
7th November

Rough generalisation of what assets are needed has been created (see GDD). Themes of the level areas discussed. Researched into the appropriate real-world location to base the cave's aesthetic design on. Established that the appropriate real-world location to use as inspiration is Banff National Park, Canada. Research began for location detail, to specify asset design (e.g. Limestone cave system, rock shape) and form an aesthetic.

8th - 11th November (and continuing)

Using collated images of Banff National Park caves and the discussed map structure (themes of each area), sketches were made to get an idea of the structure of organic assets (rock formations appropriate to a limestone cave).





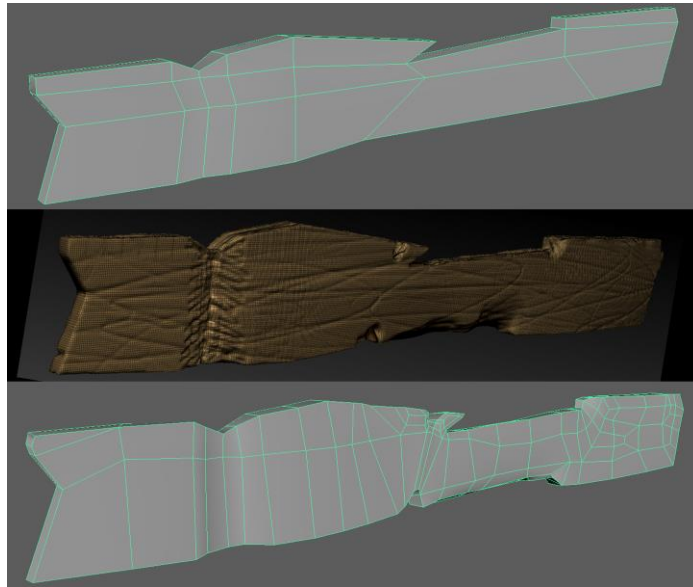
Above- Reference imagery for the assets. This gives an accurate portrayal of the appropriate rock types and shape of limestone caves. Shapes of rock assets were derived from sampling (outlining) silhouettes of real limestone cave environments.

12th - 15th November (and continuing)

Developed workflow of asset modelling;

- Block-out the basic shape of the asset in Maya. (Using my sketches and reference images)
- The block-out is then exported to ZBrush, resolution increased.
- Asset is manipulated in Zbrush to resemble a more organic/natural shape.
- Detail is added (possibly for future texture work and helps visualise the shape), and a re-meshed version is exported back into Maya.
- The asset is reduced to a poly size appropriate for the game engine, via retopology.
- Finally, the asset is put into the engine to test if lighting works and troubleshoot any issues.

Organic modelling would continue, currently focusing on rocks to build up the cave interior.



Above- An example of the asset workflow: 1st - Block out shape, 2nd - More natural shape added in high poly format (possibly used for details in future texturing), 3rd - Retopology used to create low poly for game white box (retaining some of the natural shape from ZBrush).

15th - 18th November

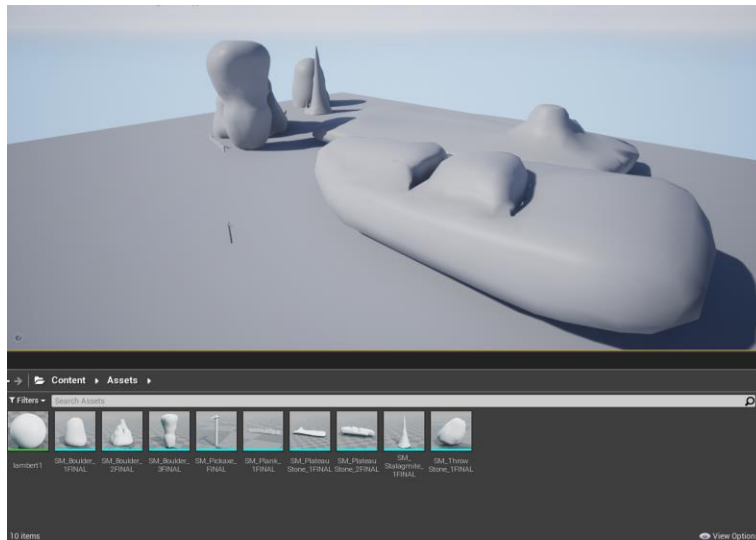
Researched information on designs for a Pickaxe (in-game tool picked up by the character and is used to break wooden planks). Discovered from the research that the most appropriate variation of Pickaxe would be a Mattock, due to its design for chopping wood.



Above- Sketch/image reference sheet for Mattock Pickaxe designs. Possibly more appropriate for texturing and details but provides a basic idea for the form of the model.

18th - 24th November

Majority of asset modelling is completed. Finishing each model by applying hard/soft edges, to give better lighting to the assets when in the engine Whitebox. Models have been shared with the white box designers/level developers.



Above- Screenshot of the models being tested in the engine (checking lighting on blank texture maps).

GDD- Individual Section

(Asset Creation)

Visual Style (Focus on Location)

In consideration to the desired visual style/layout of the game, the inspiration for the location would need to be; a limestone cave, where deer are common, where mining projects can occur, in a forest area and near a creek/lake type feature.

Both North America and Canada are suitable locations for the requirements, but from further research into 'Block Caving' (a process in which tunnels are made to undercut ore deposits, see Canadian Mining Journal, 2018), I have found block caving is currently being implemented in some areas of Canada. Ultimately, Canada is the most appropriate and plausible place to set the game in (and draw inspiration from).

Assets- Pickups

- *Pickaxe*- Mattock, equipped with flat blade side and pointed traditional pick. The majority of the pick's detail would be captured within the texture, giving definition to the material of the pick and the shape (texture applied in the future).
- *Rocks (Thrown to distract Monster)*- More compact shape than the environmental boulders (also scaled to player size/hand) and should focus around limestone 'chipping style' rocks.
- *Wooden Boards*- Placed to board up certain pathways, more gnarled/rustic planks, due to weathering of age and water (again, most detail would be in the texture, but the shape of the model should add to the weathered style)

Assets- Environment

- Cave Entrance- Asset transition from Creek (plant/nature) to rocky cave theme
- Fern plants to transition into the cave
- Rock formations appropriate to cave type (stalactites, stalagmites, smooth limestone, jagged hard stone) with varying roughness qualities
- Moss textured on stones (near mouth of cave)
- Possibly bioluminescent plant/fungus species (blue/green glow emitters)

Focusing on a variation of rock/boulder models, to allow the level designers to add more structure and diversity to the level map. More decorative assets (stalagmites) wouldn't be integral at this stage but would help 'break up' and form a good aesthetic level layout. Organic foliage may also be unnecessary to the level creation at this stage, due to it being more appropriate to the finalisation of the level's visual design and overall completion of the game.

Reference;

Canadian Mining Journal. 2018. Block Caving. [ONLINE] Available at: <http://www.canadianminingjournal.com/features/block-caving/>. [Accessed 20 November 2019].

Appendix

Presentation 1;

Survival Horror Game Theme: Morgue

Setting- Locked up morgue at night. Uneasy and confined surroundings are emphasised by paranormal events.

Theme- Modern (current day). The environment should convey an atmosphere of gritty realism, and making the situation feel grounded/believable. By using the morgue setting there is emotional association of sadness and the fear of death (therefore navigating the environment is made uncomfortable).

Age- 18-28

Audience needs to understand the purpose of a morgue, in order to react to the theme/atmosphere.



Aspects/Premise of Game

- Player locked in room
- Monitor in room gives guidance through emails
- Player must complete tasks in room, to prevent spirit (enemy) contaminating the room
- The set amount of tasks are repeated, and repeat quicker as the game progresses
- If tasks aren't tended to within a certain time, player loses game
- Game is won once set time (7mins) is reached and night becomes morning

Possible Gameplay Inspiration- Overcooked, Viscera Cleanup Detail

Morgue Theme Mood Board



Presentation 2;

Morgue Maintenance

1st Pass GDD Presentation

Overview

Gameplay Brief

Morgue Maintenance is a game in which the player must survive in a locked morgue until morning. They win the game by completing minigames (which repeat) within a timeframe of 7 minutes.

Each repeating minigame must be completed within smaller timeframes, if the time for the minigame's completion expires, the player will lose the game.

Target Audience

The audience age range for the game is 18-28. The audience should enjoy games which utilise time management but would also appreciate the psychological horror genre. The target audience will also be acceptive of the setting/location, a morgue.

The game will be for the PC platform.

Theme and Setting

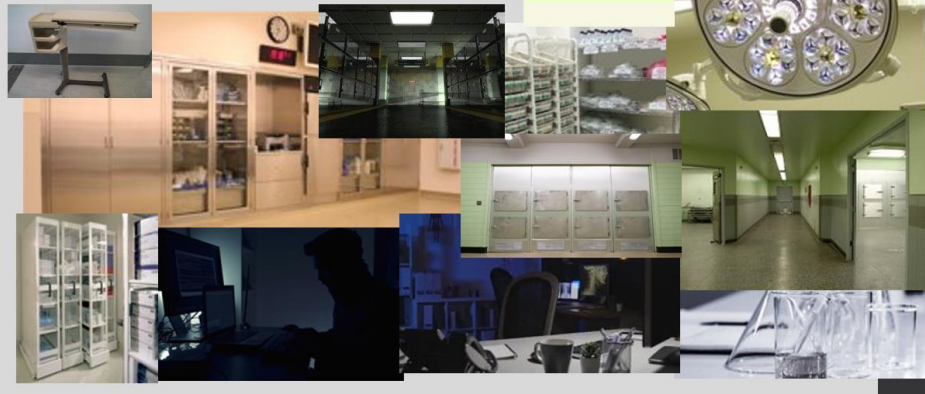
Setting

- 1st Person perspective game
- Located in a locked morgue
- Takes place at night, however, the game ends as the sun rises
- Clinical- ultra clean environment, bland lighting and colour
- Emptiness- a subtle droning/buzzing of lights, will set a room tone which gives a solitary feel

Theme

- Isolation- The emptiness of the location should emphasise the fear of the unknown or death
- Death- The morgue location creates an uneasy feeling, and a confrontation with the inevitability of death
- Insomnia- This is the main character's trait, a plausible explanation for the supernatural. Creating gritty realism out of the situation

Visual Style Moodboard



Gameplay

Game Experience

- The player can begin the game and access basic settings through the main menu
- Upon beginning the game, a cut scene will be played, this delivers the game's narrative
- Once gameplay begins, the player will discover a computer terminal (giving them instructions on what to do), after reading the computer, the game begins
- There is no HUD or map, scripted events will be used to help the player identify where the incomplete minigames are
- Minigames will repeat, the speed at which the minigames repeat will become quicker as the game reaches the end
- If the player reaches the 7-minute mark, they win, and the morgue exit will be unlocked (returning to main menu)

Mechanics

Movement/Player Controls

- To navigate the morgue the player can only walk (no sprint, jump, crouch), common controls- WASD to move and mouse to look
- The player can begin interaction with the minigames via left click

Minigames

- Power Switchboard (Lights flicker)- Player must memorise a flashing light pattern to turn on switches in the correct order. Completion- lights stop flickering
- Server Access (Smoke emits)- On one side of the room is a note with a password, player must enter password when the server shuts down (the note keeps changing). Completion- Smoke dissipates
- Security Terminal (Doors close)- Player views a screen in which they must pause a bar as it gets to a certain part of the screen (reaction based). Completion- Doors open
- Closing storage- If any of the body storage doors have slightly opened, the player must look at the door and click to close it. Completion- All storage doors closed

Character and Narrative

Main Character

- A male lab technician (Irvine, 38), his job requires him to file and send records from the daily morgue reports.
- He is used to staying after work hours, to keep up with the information gathered during the day.
- Recently Irvine began to have problems with sleep and has been diagnosed with medical insomnia.
- Irvine combats tiredness with caffeine to get the work done in time (worsening his insomniac condition).

Game Narrative

- Irvine receives an email from his manager, the email states that Irvine has made a filing error that must be resolved straight away.
- Irvine drives to the hospital morgue in the early hours of the morning.
- As Irvine enters the morgue, he is unaware of what seems to be a break-in, due to his sleep deprivation.
- Once he resolves his error, Irvine realises he's locked in, he stays awake until morning by tending to machines in the morgue which are turning on unexpectedly, and he begins to hallucinate shadowed figures.

Opening Sequence Storyboard

Chronology

Frame 1- Receives email to go in to work

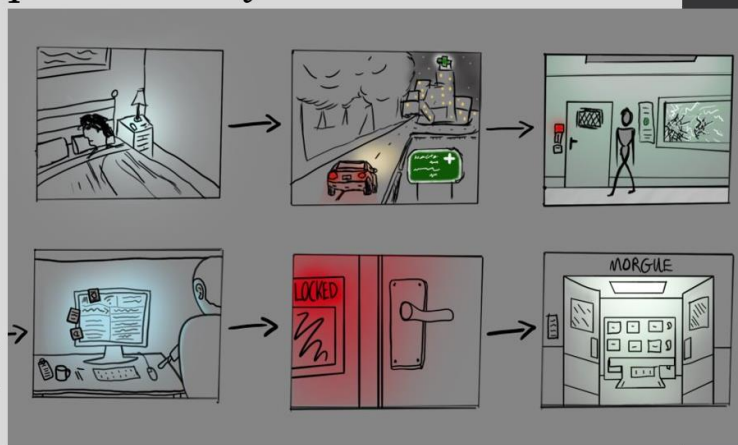
Frame 2- Drives through the night to the hospital

Frame 3- Walks to morgue

Frame 4- Enters, goes straight to office fix problem

Frame 5- Realises locked in

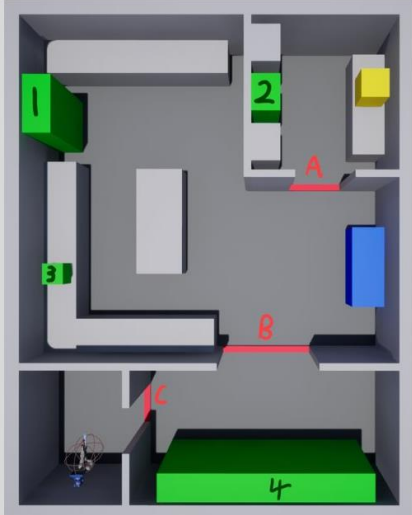
Frame 6- Transitions to FP, and turns to face the morgue



Level Block Out

Key

- Green- Minigames**
 - 1- Power Switchboard
 - 2- Server Access
 - 3- Security Terminal
 - 4- Closing Storage
- Yellow-** Office computer which gives the player instructions
- Blue-** Window or clock, which gives the player a sense of time passing
- Red- Doors**
 - A&B- Close when Security Terminal needs to be fixed.
 - C- Stays shut once player goes through at start



Key

Green- Minigames **Yellow- Office computer**

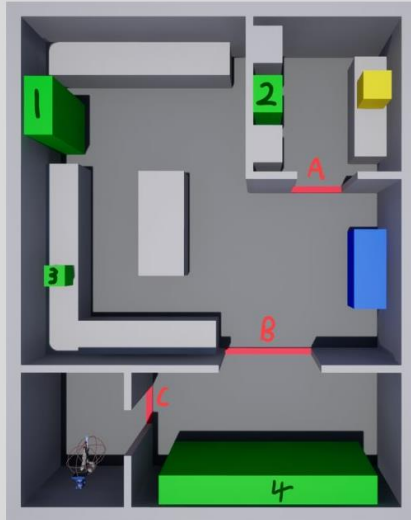
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Asset List;

Submerged- Rough Asset List

Creek

Creek- Organic-

- Foliage (Alpha map focused, bushes, plants, etc.)
- Trees (Based upon the environment, possibly swamp based Cypress Trees)
- Rocks (Smooth stones around water's edge)
- Grass (Taller variations/reeds around the body of water) (Alphas)

*Creek- Non-Organic-

- Drainage pipe leading into creek (Modular Asset)
- Signposts/Trail markers
- Road section (crash rails, road surface type, rubbish at side of road)
- Small dilapidated boardwalk/dock on creek edge
- Small derelict building (Wooden shack, boathouse, etc)

Cave Tunnels (Majority of Map) ***Priority for Whitebox***

Cave- Organic-

- Cave Entrance- Asset transition from Creek (plant/nature) to rocky cave theme
- Fern plants to transition into the cave (Alpha)
- Rock formations appropriate to cave type (stalactites, stalagmites, smooth limestone, jagged hard stone) with varying roughness qualities
- Moss textured on stones (near mouth of cave)
- Possibly bioluminescent plant/fungus species (blue/green glow emitters)

Cave Monster's Nest

- Piles of bones (human, deer, etc.), skulls
- The nest of the monster (formed from the bones)
- Ledge looking down upon this Act/Area
- Piles of bones (irregular mound shape, with bone collage texture applied)

Cave with Human Influence (Machinery)

- Power generators (petrol powered, pull start ignition)
- Lighting sources/lamps (construction, industrial style fixtures)
- Spray paint marking cave excavation on walls

Mechanic Assets:

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