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Production Diary

Creative Practice 3 - M5X01568

Introduction

The Project I will be working on, that being a Racing Game, will incorporate 3 levels for the player to race in, as well as having different themes incorporated in to the visuals of each level that will comprise the game. My primary role within the team will be that of a Modeller, with some overlap in to working on Concept Art, as well as being available to help other team mates either on Model work or in other areas of the level development.

03/10/2018 – Started work on my mood boards, collecting images from online using google. I mainly focused my search towards the Sci-Fi Fantasy, such as *Star Wars* and *Star Trek*, with its architecture and vehicle designs being used as a source of inspiration for the design racer's vehicle and surrounding environment. The second Mood board I've made focuses on a retro-futuristic style, specific to franchises such as *Bioshock* and *Fallout*, with their own takes on environment and design influencing my designs on the various assets that would serve as scenery for the racer.



(Figure 1 and 2, Images from Bioshock's Rapture)

04/10/2018 – Discussed in class and group the features and gameplay we intend to include in the game we will be working toward and the varying aesthetic elements. We established that each group would be creating the 'Shell' of three vehicles, with varying appearances to match the three characteristics of Light, Heavy and Balanced vehicle options for players to select depending on their preference for more armament, greater speed or a balanced experience.

We also established the mapping of controls, core mechanics and the vehicles means of movement, that being Hover-borne rather than using conventional wheels in the model, so as to allow for a more universal core for the vehicle's movement, without breaking the aesthetic of the various level's environments of differing genres.

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05/10/2018 – Displayed my mood boards in class, along with most of the others. General themes that people lean towards are Cyber-punk, Neo-Tokyo-esque environments and elements of Sci-Fi and Fantasy. General sketching by myself on some designs for vehicles, as well as some general brainstorming on the setting of the Level.

(Image from the *Star Wars Edge of the Empire Fly Casual* supplementary book)

One setting I'm particularly keen on is a Sci-Fi-esque city located under the ocean. I can easily draw on elements from existing game series and blend the otherwise disparate elements to make them fit together.

09/10/2018 – The class settled on an overall theme after lengthy discussion which ended in us achieving a consensus of the majority, opting to go with a Neo-Tokyo, Cyberpunk stylised environment as the overall theme and style for all 3 levels of the racing game we aim to make. This will allow us to maximise the amount of assets we have available for each level.

11/10/2018 – Decided upon a new name today, opting for Neo-Drive instead of the previous working name of Mega-Drive. Split up in to our various roles to work in the pods, with myself, Peredur and Hayden as the modellers of the project, with some overlap in working on some elements of concept and the role of the Artists likely to take place as our project develops. Carried on with some brief concept work and arranged to do assets that aren't dependent upon the size of the vehicle to function properly, such as buildings or props for the race track.

12/10/2018 – Talked further on the development of the game's general themes. Looked at some of the map designs that the Concept Artists had produced, as well as some discussion on the three level environments general appearance. Did my own concept work towards some of the buildings that might appear in the level.

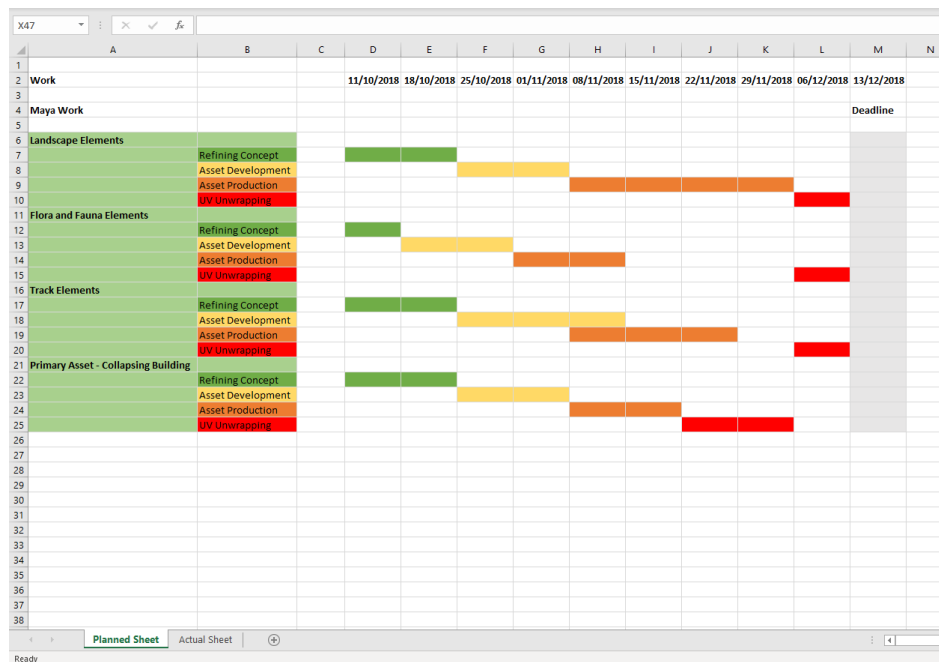
18/10/2018 – Began fleshing out and better developing our team Gantt chart, to organise the flow of our work in our separate teams. In preparation for work toward our roles, everyone in the team has been asked to produce some concept art as an aside from their role. I myself will be working on level concept for the wasteland level. I myself made an individual Gantt chart, to organise my time, to keep track of the priorities and what amount of time is best to allocate where.

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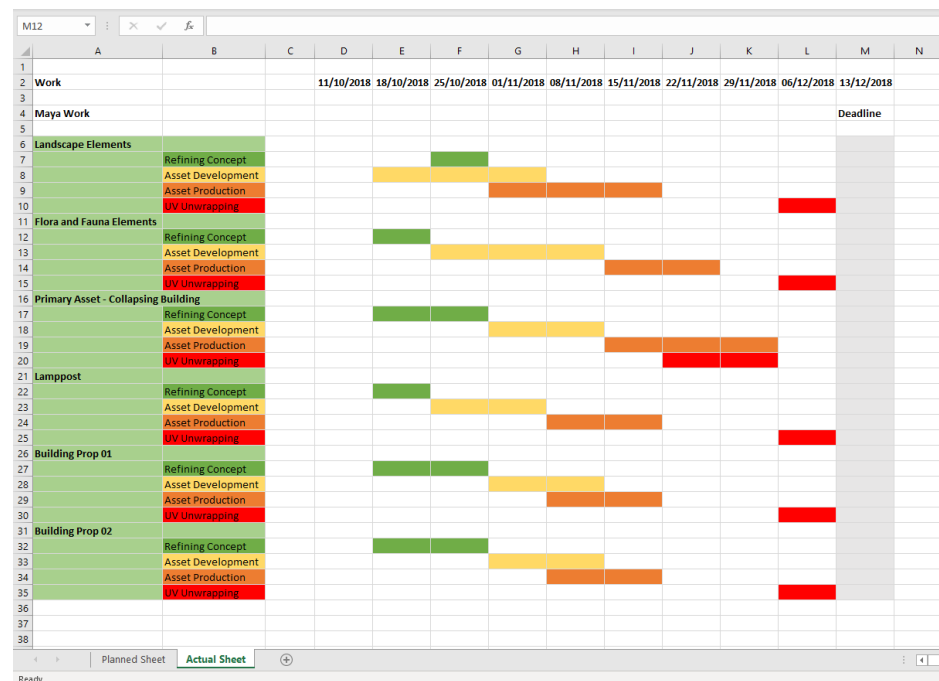
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(Figure 1, displaying the planned timeline of my Gantt chart)



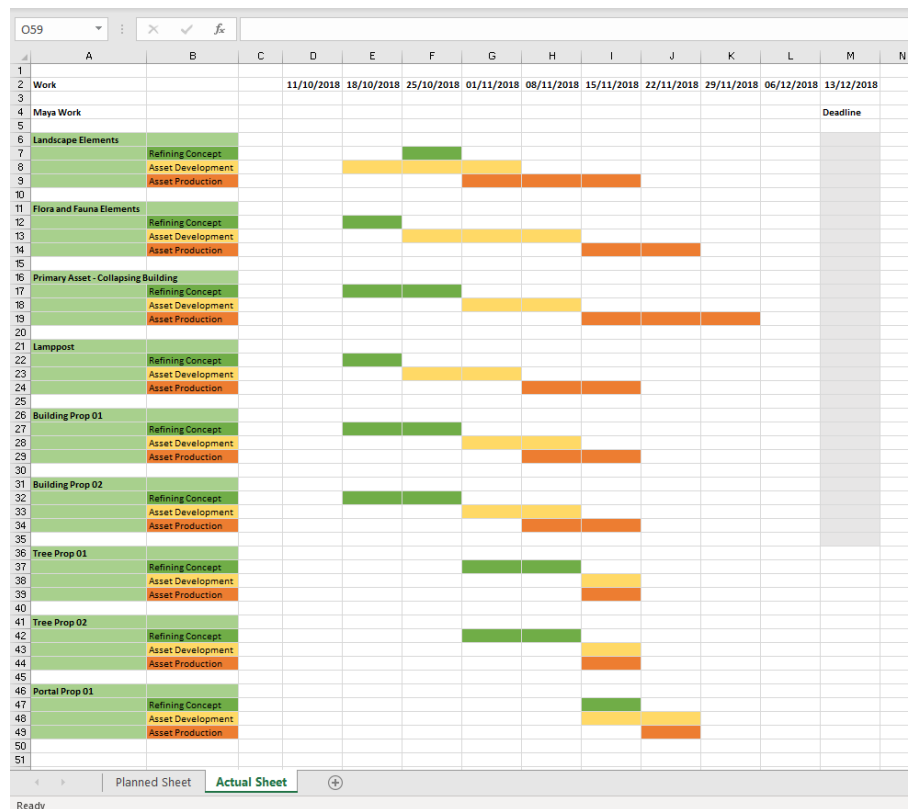
(Figure 2, displaying the iteration of my Gantt chart on the 24th of November)

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(Figure 3, displaying the iteration of my Gantt on the 25th of November, without the UV unwrapping being listed)

19/10/2018 – Established what models were needed in the priority list, and what models would first be worked upon. Concept art is being done by myself in tangent with my particular group to coincide with the visual ides and design we have when designing out levels, though a basic design as well as the Track layout itself has been established.

I've started work pieces of concept relating to the buildings that will appear in the environment of the level itself, as well as experimenting in Maya to familiarise myself with Maya's UV Unwrapping. Worked in Unreal Engine in class as well, working on a basic scene with the class to get a better understanding of the interface and mechanics of the Unreal Engine itself.

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Priority

Medium Vehicle

Track/road – Overgrown/ Broken

Bridge Ramp

Bridge

Crumbling Road

Falling Building

Portal

Ivy

Trees

Bushes

Overgrowth Plants

Abandoned Cars

Building Pieces

Fences

Barriers

Lamposts

Birds

Trashcan

Rubbish

River

Universal list

Portal

Abandoned Cars

Lamposts

Birds

(Our Priority list, highlighted in different colours to denote importance)

23/10/2018 – Continued work in Unreal Engine, carrying on where I left off last time with the class to create a basic environment where a character takes damage from fire, then can use a pickup to restore Health. Familiarised myself further with the layout of Unreal Engine, as well as easier navigation.

25/10/2018 – Discussed the bottlenecks that could arise within our project and created a Flow chart for myself and Hayden to see what the most likely stage in the modelling process would create a bottleneck and established that the most likely stages would be in the model making itself, depending upon the detail, as well as the UV Unwrapping.

27/10/2018 – Worked on the Building concept further, finalising one of the two designs I have planned for the general environment assets of the wasteland map. Worked on the basic shell of the model that will become the basis for both buildings, setting a general scale for the model.

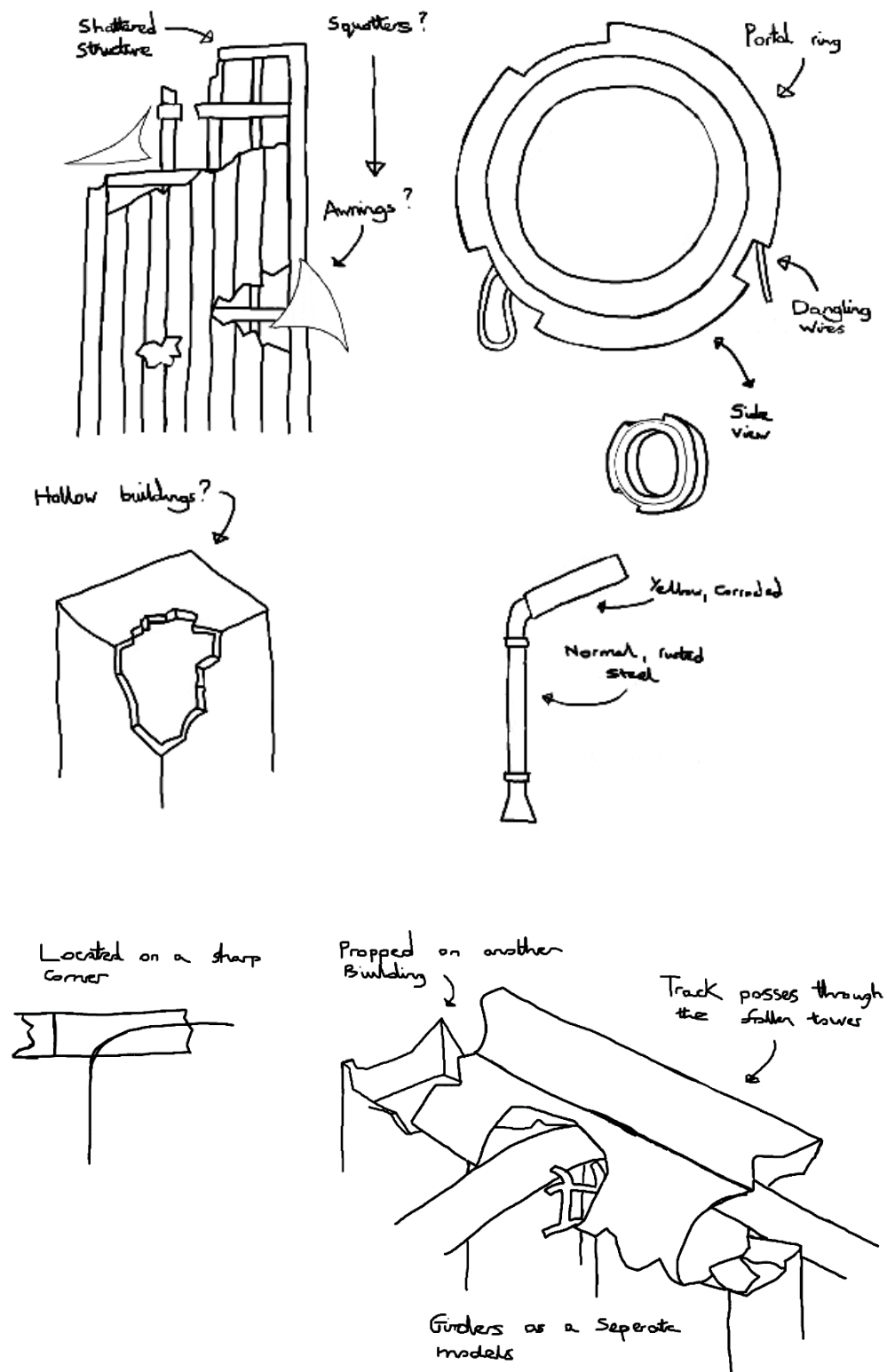
Spoke with the team on what the general size for the vehicles was going to be for reference in later model work regarding the modular track sections. No size is yet confirmed for the moment.

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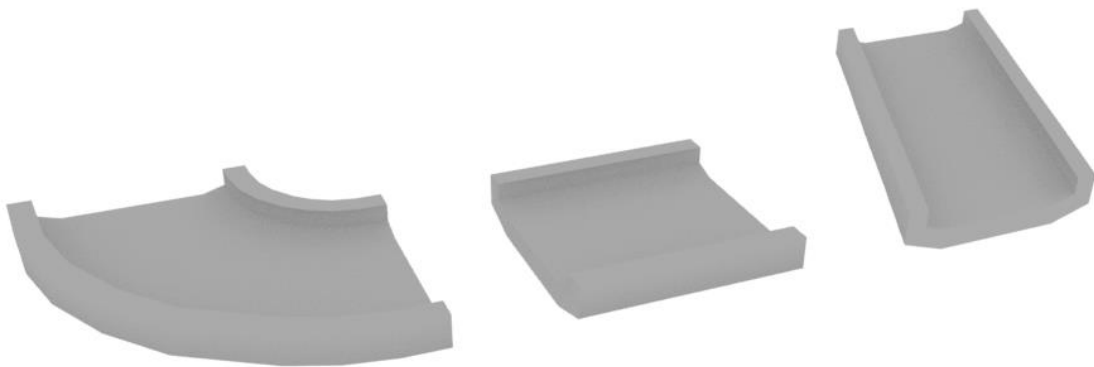
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30/10/2018 – Continued work in Unreal Engine with the class, this time fixing the issue that arose on the Friday with the AI we had added to the project being unable to follow the player.

04/11/2018 – After a brief illness, I discussed Concept Art development with Wasteland level team. Adjusted my initial plan of doing background buildings to use Unreal Engine store, to focus primarily on the collapsed building asset for our level.

Worked on the Racetrack components, to get a basic idea of what the track components will look like. Need to discuss with team the size of the vehicles, to get a gauge of what size the Track components will be.



05/11/2018 – Worked on a building to be installed in to the level, planning to incorporate the prop in to the level down the line. Discussed with group the progress of the project, as well as checking with my team on the wasteland level.

06/11/2018 – Worked further in Unreal, learning the basics for sculpting and generating a new terrain to form a map from, as well as continuing to develop the Halloween levels appearance, which will come in handy for level building in the class assignment, particularly for my teams' level. Also learned in Class how to make a simple particle effect Firefly.

08/11/2018 – Saw the first block-out of two of the three levels, with the basic racing mechanic and the track route itself on display. Communicated my thoughts on the progress of assets for the overgrown level, as well as giving feedback on the 2 block-outs of the planned three levels.

It was decided by our level team to prioritise the work towards the centre-piece of the level, the collapsing building. I began the basic model of the building, discussing the concept art and present model list for our level thus far, with my team.

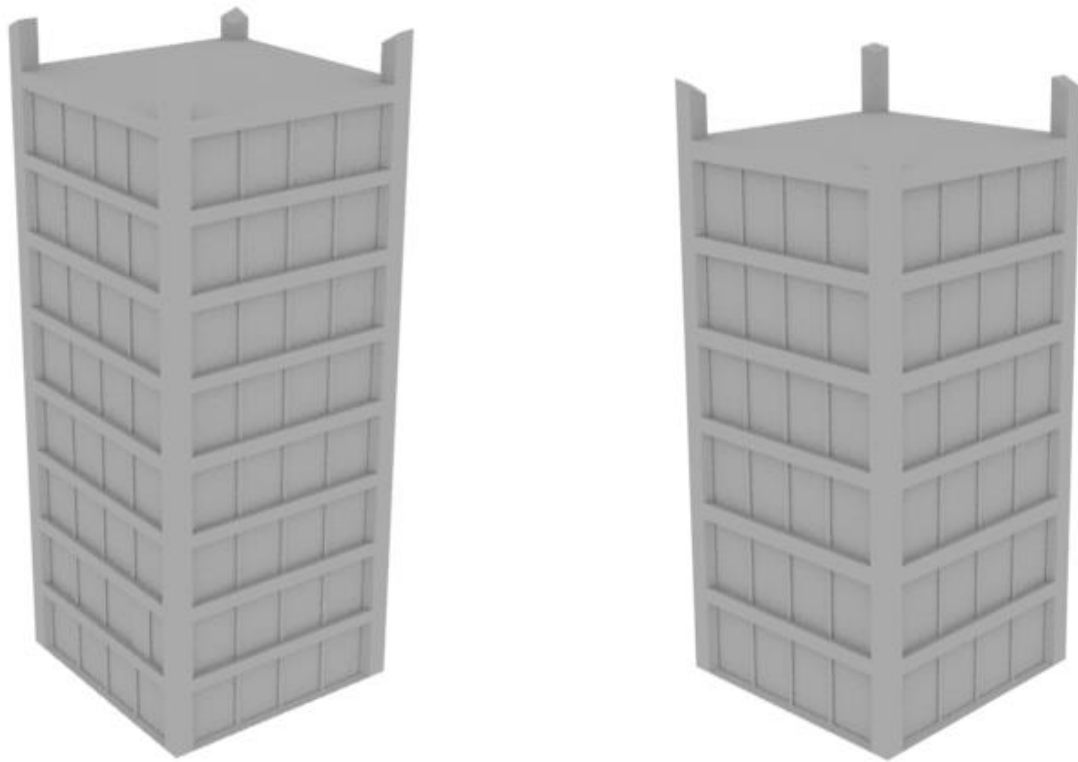
09/11/2018 – Finished work on 1st iteration of the Prop building for the Wasteland Level, leaving UV unwrapping alone to do next Semester, as only a block out is required for this Semester, thus allowing me more time to focus on other practical matters, as well as written work. I'm continuing work with the primary asset as well as starting on a 2nd iteration of the Prop building for variety.

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10/11/2018 – Made a 2nd iteration of the Prop Building for the Wasteland level, which is now being called the Overgrown level as that name more closely matches the intended appearance of the level. Continued work on the main asset for the overgrown level.

12/11/2018 – Checked with the team and the priority list to confirm progress on the project and what progress we had made in our separate team for the Level. Confirmed that I will be working on the primary asset and some prop buildings, as well as keeping myself free in case I'm needed to model the Portal asset.

13/11/2018 – Created a lamppost asset to be used on the track itself and did some minor work on the 1st Building Prop Iteration. Identified some files which were absent on my Seagate expansion drive that were present on my Home Computer. Prioritising the work on the main asset whilst leaving myself open to working on the Portal asset if required.

My track pieces are now redundant, as Joe has modelled his own track pieces that the team will be using for our level. Continued work on the main asset and uploaded Obj. files of finished props for the track to the shared Drive.

15/11/2018 – Began work on a variation of a tree, following the priority list and what models I'm intended to do. Posed the question of whether it should be based off a Sequoia tree or a simple tree. I expanded the Gantt chart actual to incorporate the new assets that I've been doing, aside from the

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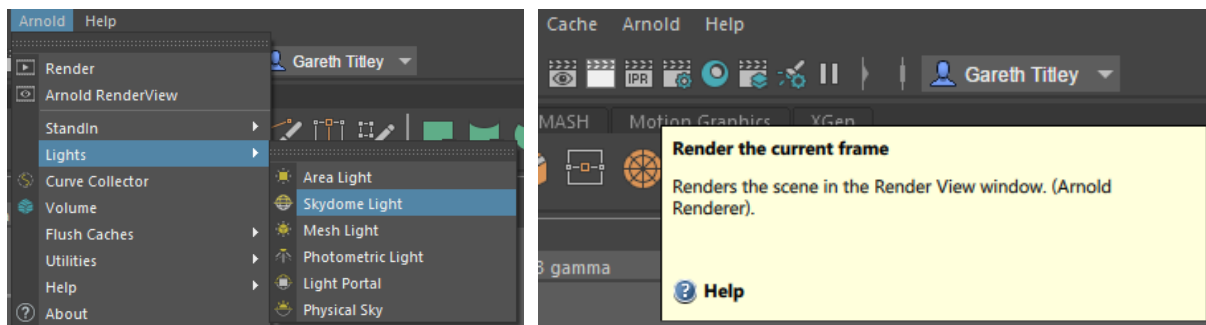
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track pieces, which has been removed from my Gantt chart as it's now being made by Joe rather than myself.

Had a large team meeting to begin work on the GDD and confirm what was and what was not being worked upon, with me being assigned the Visual Style and Audio Style sections of the GDD to write out.



16/11/2018 – Found a new method for Print screen taking, with Nathan helping to explain the method to me. The Tool, Sky dome Light, can be found under the Arnold header. Once added in, proceeding to the Render Current Frame tool opens a separate window to allow for better pictures of the assets I've been modelling.

20/11/2018 – Found a series of 3 videos relating to creating trees which can be used for the development of my tree mesh, including making a canopy for the tree, though not strictly applicable to the type of tree that I have been modelling. Can be easily applied to the tree that I'm presently doing, which is based off a Sequoia tree.

(<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t8Qt7VwfrK8>).

Uploaded the concept art which I've drawn in my note pad on to my computer, for ease of reference and for cleaning up the concept art.

21/11/2018 – Worked on my sections of the Game Design Document that I'd been assigned in our previous team meeting regarding the Game Design Document completion. Updated the backup I have on my hard-drive from my Seagate Expansion Drive.

22/11/2018 – Received feedback on models. Building models were noted as being small, whilst the tree meshes themselves aren't favoured due to their poor appearance when in Engine, due to the make of the model. I'll be reviewing the model to see if I'm able to change it, as well as going on to modelling the portal. I'll first communicate with the group on what other models could be done by myself.

The Portal will be done by myself, whilst the tree model we have will be used by the Unreal Time just as a stand in for the meantime, in absence of a better model. I'll have to visit doing a tree model again, since it came out poorly when I attempted it this time around. Also found out about OBS Studio after being shown it by Joe and Richard, which I'll be getting for my home computer as a free video recording software, which will be handy for documenting my work.

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[\(https://obsproject.com/\)](https://obsproject.com/)

23/11/2018 – Began work on the Portal asset, using my concept work to model the asset itself. Sought feedback on the Portal to ensure that I don't make the same mistake as I did the tree meshes, which weren't ideal for the Level. Also discussed the trees with Joe, our team artist and found that I'd deviated from the original design of the tree, which was to be more of a Fir tree design rather than a Sequoia.

24/11/2018 – Continued work on the Portal asset. Found an easier way of filling holes in a prop and avoiding Ngons by just using Polygon primitives to fill holes, using combine and then Quad draw to fill in any gaps in the Asset.

26/11/2018 – Continued work on the GDD. Had to attend to a family members poor health, making my absence nescesary in

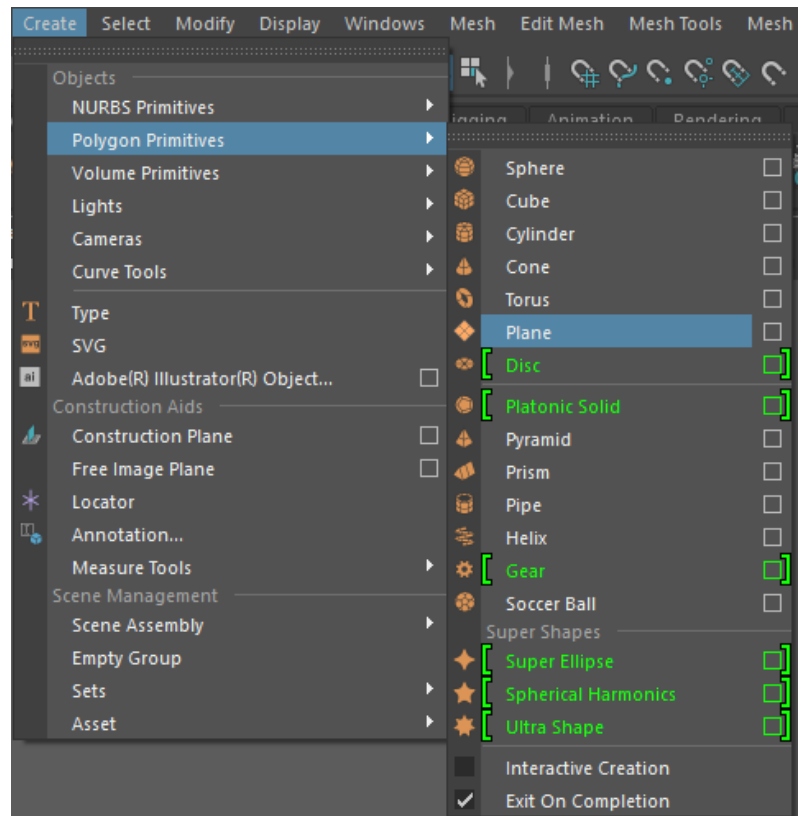
27/11/2018 – Conferred with team on progress of the level. Issues have again arisen with my models, this time on scale of the models in the scene themselves, as they appear to be too small. This can be attributed to my not knowing a proper scale to aim for when modelling the assets themselves.

I opted to increase the size of the building by roughly 2x the scale. I'll likely repeat this with all assets. Joe raised concerns it will affect the windows scale themselves, though I'm confident it won't affect the appearance of the building prop too much. I should have adopted a simpler design for the building prop, given the difficulties encountered during the level build in unreal with scales. Had some help of Nathan to re-size all the models to a more appropriate scale that would translate better in to Unreal, as opposed to the scales that I had previously used.

Used a video online to figure out how to turn off the gradient background in my home version of Maya, as the gradient would cause difficulty in viewing the models when they were at an increased scale. I didn't get exactly what I wanted but did find the video helpful as it allowed me to find the location to toggle on or off other features relating to the display. Found another link for increasing the draw distance, which will be helpful for asset work down the line.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-s7T05poNFU>

<http://forums.cgsociety.org/t/how-to-increase-the-draw-distance-in-maya/922643>



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28/11/2018 – Continued work on the portal, coming to the end of the minor detail additions. The details themselves are time consuming to make, but I've ample time to finish them. After finishing the Portal, I Continued on with the Game Design Document, filling in much of the Audio Section of the GDD.

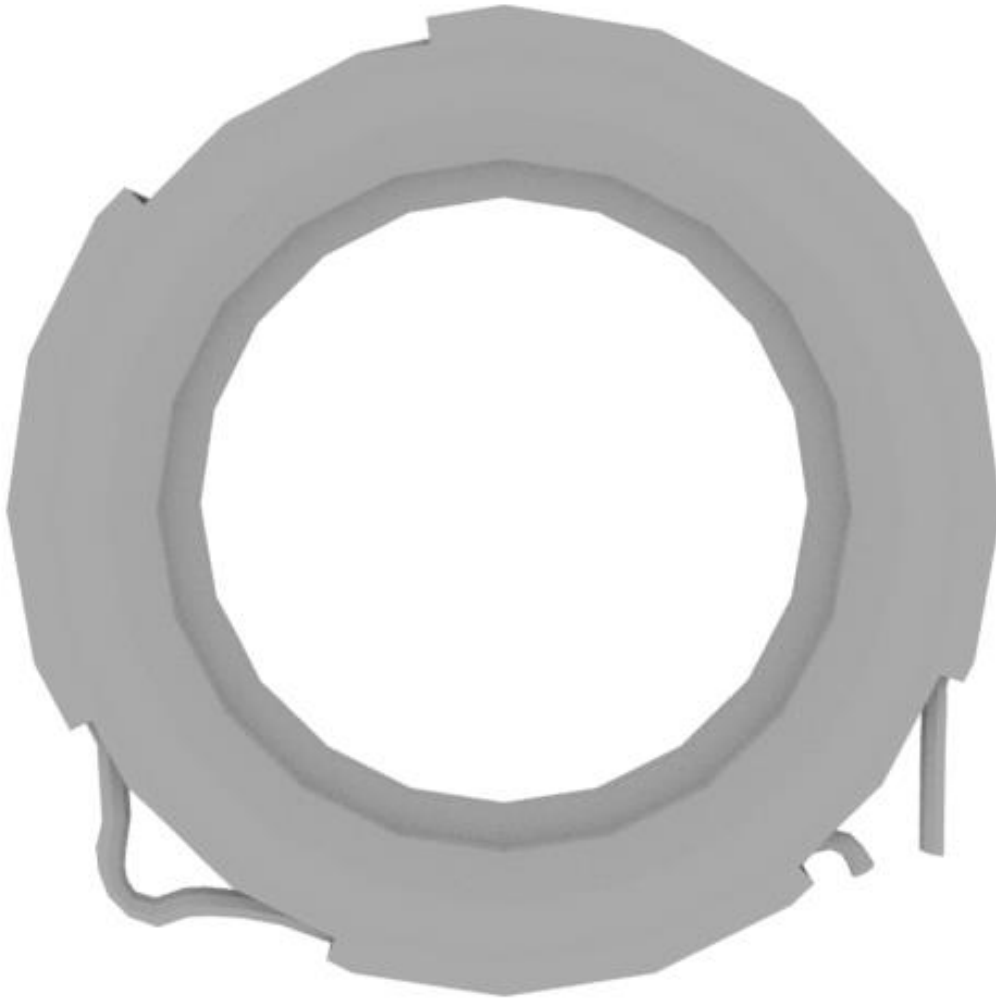
Got to grips with OBS Studio, which I'll be using to record the 30 second video of my work in Game Design and Asset Creation 1. Specifically, I used the starting guide on the website to set up the source, record the video and then convert it in to a MP4 file.

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<https://obsproject.com/wiki/OBS-Studio-Quickstart>

29/11/2018 – Began work on my PowerPoint for the presentation of my work. Plan is to compile our work in to one PowerPoint document, as a team. Some class discussion on the progress of the GDD and the general progress of our work.

30/11/2018 – Continued work on Game Design Document and PowerPoint presentation. Checked with others on the contents of the GDD, as well as checking in with everyone on the progress of their assigned sections.

04/12/2018 – Worked further on my sections Game Design Document, otherwise completing the two sections, as well as conferring with team to check on the progress of the game. Also saw the block out of our level, the Overgrown map. Very pleased with its progress and current state.

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Reflection

My overall output and the quality of my work this semester was good for what I had originally planned in the initial stages of my production process, such as on my Gantt Chart. Though my planning was somewhat delayed and I had planned to have a large portion of time set aside for cross-team work, it was more than ample to use as a time reference for what I was and was not doing, particularly when it came to referencing the list of for the models I had set out to do at the start and later been assigned as the Project advanced.

The models themselves turned out otherwise alright, with some concept used in the initial stages of the creating of my models. Where some models, such as my attempt at trees for our level, went awry was in the lack of concept art by myself or general communication on what the consensus for the design of the tree would be in the level. Some models would prove to be redundant, such as my work on Track components for the level, which weren't used as Joe would instead model his own track pieces. Whilst I'm not so pleased with the quantity of models I produced, I'm more than happy with the quality of the props I've produced for the level.

In future, I'd like to dedicate more time on the modelling side of my work, particularly for levels which require numerous props to achieve a cluttered environment, as well as going in to models that I didn't dedicate as much time in to looking at as I should have, such as the trees, making a better quality of model and retaining the quality of models I did produce well, but with a greater quantity than I've achieved this semester. Better planning would likely have helped in the expansion of the list of models I've made this semester, allowing me to better account for set-backs that I didn't prepare as much for this semester.

Mood Board making - 05/10/2018

- Brainstorming themes
- Mood Board making

Total time spent for Week – 2 Hour

Mood Board making - 09/10/2018

- Brainstorming themes
- Mood Board making

Concept and Planning - 11/10/2018

- Deciding upon themes
- Concept art work

Total time spent for Week – 3 Hour

Concept Art - 18/10/2018

- Theme Discussion
- Concept Art drawing

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- Gantt Chart work

Total time spent for Week – 4 Hours

Unreal Engine work - 26/10/2018

- Class work in engine
- Home work in engine

Maya work - 27/10/2018

- Concept finalising
- Building Prop work
- Team discussion

Total time spent for Week – 6 Hour

Unreal Engine work - 30/10/2018

- Class work in engine
- Home work in engine
- Team discussion

Maya work - 04/11/2018

- Concept discussion
- Racetrack component work
- Environment concept reviewed

Total time spent for Week – 4 Hour

Maya work - 05/11/2018

- Building Props work
- Team discussion

Unreal Engine work - 06/11/2018

- Class work in engine

Maya work - 08/11/2018

- Primary Asset work

Maya work - 09/11/2018

- Finished 1st iteration building prop

Maya work - 10/11/2018

- Finished 2nd Iteration Building prop
- Main Asset work

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Total time spent for Week – 7 Hour

Maya work - 13/11/2018

- Worked on concept toward the new Map
- Created a Lamppost asset for the track
- Did minor work on existing prop building assets
- Continued work on Primary asset
- Uploaded all finished props to google Drive

Maya work - 15/11/2018

- Started work on Tree for wasteland environment
- Team discussion on the GDD and section assignment

Maya work - 15/11/2018

- Continued work on tree
- Class discussion on Briefs and establishing deadlines

Total time spent for Week – 8 Hour

Maya and Research work - 20/11/2018

- Watched 3 videos on the development of a mesh of a tree
- Worked on tree mesh itself, with 2nd iteration (Tree trunk) done
- Uploaded finished model to google drive
- Concept uploading and modifying

Game Design Document work - 21/11/2018

- GDD Sections work

Game Design Document work - 22/11/2018

- Team discussion and feedback

Maya work - 23/11/2018

- Portal model work

Maya work - 24/11/2018

- Portal model work

Total time spent for Week – 7 Hour

Game Design Document work - 26/11/2018

- GDD Sections work

Maya work - 27/11/2018

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- Maya asset scale adjustment
- Portal model work
- Updated all assets with correct scales, put on google drive

Maya and Game Design Document work - 28/11/2018

- Portal model work
- GDD work
- OBS Studio testing
- Concept work

Game Design Document work and Presentation work - 29/11/2018

- GDD work
- Presentation Work

Game Design Document work and Presentation work - 30/11/2018

- GDD work
- Presentation Work

Total time spent for Week – 11 Hour

Game Design Document work - 04/12/2018

- GDD work

Total time spent for Week – 2 Hour

References:

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