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12/13/21

Culmination Reflection

These past 7 months have been a long sequence of challenges between myself and my friends creating this game, Project Myth. This was in development immediately after our Spring 2021 Tech Production class where we worked on a group game project for that class. While that class gave us a prewritten story, world, and document. This culmination was our first time really creating something original. All of us had already figured out what we wanted to do individually for this project but we didn't know exactly how to execute what we wanted to do since we still lacked a lot of skills and experience. Though I was passionate about 3D modelling, my limited laptop held me back from doing ambitious models and I was going through a personal shift into music as I've been learning bass guitar for the past couple years now. I decided from the start I would work on 3D models as it is something I am skilled at and my left over time could be reserved towards making a background bass track and borrowing my dad's snare drum for some percussion, though I did not know anything about drums I'd try to make a looping beat.

The start of the game was slow… we had ideas but were slow to put out on paper and share amongst each other so we had different interpretations of what our game would be and we had an inefficient pipeline of one person developing deliverables which would be passed onto the next and then passing all deliverables to one or two people to put together in the game engine. The moment someone procrastinated or was late with deliverables it delayed all of us so we started splitting off working at our own speeds individually. It was here some of us began having tension amongst each other. It was summer and we had jobs, internships, relationships, and even moving to another state got in the way and some of us just sucked at communicating amongs each other when we'd meet up online or simply texting one another. We promised each other we'd work on the bulk of the game in the summer but that was a failure.

Up until this point we Had Professor Heidi Boivert guiding us with our game since she was head of the department and new all of us after a number of years. A couple of weeks before the Fall Semester began She announced she would be leaving CIty Tech which left us feel lost without any guidance. With that we continued working on our own individual tasks while trying to communicate to each other what we needed done each week. The Semester started off with Professor Sam Levine taking the role of our technical advisor to meet with us (online) and give us feedback for our game and it was at this point he told us our game and pipeline was a mess. We had no version control, we were working too slowly for what our end goal was supposed to be, and up to that point we were mostly procrastinating deliverables or were busy with work, internships, and now classes.

I'd been takes with co creating an asset list with my group for 3D models and I was also supposed to wait on my level designer to draw up levels so that I could model them and then send them over to our game engine developer but it was way too slow as most of us ended up waiting for work to do while the first person had to finish up their deliverables. I decided to work on my own stuff that could either be used for the game or my own portfolio in the meantime and practice playing bass.

By October a lot would happen with both the group and myself. Despite our initial budget sitting at $0, I decided to buy an electric guitar for both my personal use and to use for the project.

Only issue is I had a month to learn how to play it and I had to figure out how to record instrumentals. Within my group we had a lot of arguments amongst each other from failing to deliver promises, having differing ideas for the game and realizing we had to cut a lot of ideas from making it into the game. Around Mid- October we had an online meeting discussing that we had about a month left to finish the game and that we need to make serious concessions and cuts so that the game is both playable beginning to end, and that this game would be fun because up until that point the game was a pretty open field with no purpose or things to do. In addition we all decided to meet up late October at my house along with two of our friends to playtest and give us crucial feedback. By that point I was done with making whatever 3D models I had time to create and moved onto music along with taking the role of Foley artist. At my house everyone were able to distribute all necessary files, assets and have the latest build of the game which solved our version control issue while I was in my room recording guitars and bass tracks with an 8-track my father let me borrow. This Meetup became a catalyst for our culmination team as it was a huge morale and motivation boost. The next month we had to crunch a lot and get multiple playtests from our technical advisor before he could approve it. Once he'd approved it we crunched last minute bug fixes and balancing along with some graphical and UI elements. With the game done we moved onto rehearsing our presentation, recalling what each person did and ending it off with a video I made consisting of clips of our process making the game up to the end.

Creating this game was very stressful and really tested our friendship and patiences towards each other. All four of us had been friends for several years so we got very comfortable amongst each other making the game initially and that comfort got the better of us when we had to crunch and end up with multiple arguments. We're still friends thankfully since making the game but if we ever make a game again we need a much stricter pipeline and leadership to get us to focus and understand what it is we were creating to begin with. I love 3D modelling still but this was a wake up call for me to save up and upgrade my laptop to a much more capable PC and getting out of my comfort zone to create my own music was very fun experience. I'd also like to learn more about how I can take foley to the next level with investing in proper recording equipment.