

Advanced Play Design
Folio 02: Practice and Reflect
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Video Link:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TiAv_swsL4E&ab_channel=PeterMavro

MAGI Link:

<http://magistudio.net/work/apd-folio-2-video-document>

APD Week 1 - Play and Self

MAGI: <http://magistudio.net/work/apd-week-1-play-and-self-potato>



Context

In week one, the task was to focus on the idea between play and self. I created a persona that represented me in my favourite pastime. Through our day-to-day life with our interactions with culture and that around us, people begin to claim certain aspects of those moments as our own (Henricks, 2014). I decided to go with the persona approach, '...to explore the contemporary production of the self in an era of presentational media' (Marshall, et al., 2019). I viewed the theme, play and self, quite literally. When I am not busy, I tend to really enjoy relaxing and playing video games. So much so that you could say I am a bit of a lazy person. I played around with this persona and created this 3D model. While creating this, I experimented with shapes and composition. As you can see, some parts are smooth, and some are low poly. The smooth aspects refer to the most important parts of playing a video game such as the arms, hands, headphones, and controller. While texturing, I tested various couch texture designs and went in the direction of the blue and white colour scheme. This is because my hereditary background is Greek. The top pillows can be inferred as the Greek flag. The only difference is that the blue is more towards navy and that is because I prefer it to be darker, so the focus of the image is my potato persona.

Method

This week I created this project using Blender and ZBrush. They were used to create the objects. ZBrush in practically helped solve merging of objects and sculpting of more higher polygon models. I used Substance Painter for texturing, this was key for the coach and the headphones. For the most part the result I got is what I expected but some tinkering was involved in the coach which game a result I did not expect.

Response

I decided to create a 3D model that focuses on trying out different shape languages to see if they would affect the focal point of the frame. I experimented with smooth and sharp shapes to see how the composition would look like, and thus how I got to the result.

Reflection/Rationale

Week one was a challenging one for me, in terms of understanding the requirements and what is expected of my work. The way I interpreted the theme and proceeded to work with was not creative nor unconventional. Upon receiving feedback, I realised that the weekly tasks were extremely open-ended, and it encouraged students to do the unthinkable. This is particularly difficult for me, and I struggled to accommodate that because I have been taught to colour within the box for so long, that the broad concepts are stumping me.

Regardless, I should have tried to push myself a bit more. I learn from my mistakes, so I am glad that I received this feedback early on. I am glad that I experimented with shape conventions and will keep in mind to really step out of my comfort zone to implement my learnings and creativity into my work for the semester.

If I could do it all again, I would work on a completely different project/approach. One that is more interesting and focuses more on my characteristics to create an outcome that is more unique, such as a brain on a skateboard to signify when my mind is racing as I am doing work.

APD Week 2 - Play and Object

MAGI: <http://magistudio.net/work/apd-week-2-play-and-object>

Video: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xgJ0hpaQ97E&ab_channel=PeterMavro



Context

In week two, the theme was between the relationship of play and object. I especially wanted to use the sounds of objects and play with them to see what would happen if I put them in a completely different context. I created this video while being new to the program. I made a big effort to create something interesting. Wilberg (2018) questioned the possibility of interconnecting unique perspectives and approaches to see if that affects interaction design in any form. I opted to consider this in my video which shifted the overall project in its direction. I also approached known sounds that were wild and wacky to really make a static object have life. I constantly asked myself questions such as, why is it important to have things sounding the way they do? What happens if the sound does not make sense anymore? Torre, L. (2017, p4) argue 'objects are fundamentally full of complexities and uncertainties – and it is because of this pre-existing condition that objects are capable of presenting and assuming a wide-range of alternate personas' (as cited in Experimental Animation: From Analogue to Digital 2019). I was able to take these learnings and completely reimagine the sounds of objects.

Method

I collected a bunch of real-life objects that I had around me and recorded small clips on my phone. Then I moved them to my computer and imported them into my video editing program, Hitfilm Express. I sought out SFXs and found a cool website where I downloaded all of them. The website is called Zapsplat.com. I searched for text-to-speech robots and found a nice sounding and usable one for my work at <https://wideo.co/text-to-speech/though>. I then chose a speaker that I liked the most and made a script of what I wanted it to say. Afterward, I combined the sound SFX and robot voice with the videos I recorded to make this video.

Response

The focus of this project was to create an interesting video that relates to play and object. The aspect of an object I was mostly playing with was its sound. I got this idea from our class on Microsoft teams and really decided to pursue it in an interesting way in my work. In this video, the robot decides to market his new product that makes the user interpret and hear sounds differently. The sounds in the video are wacky and out of the blue, such as when spraying hand sanitiser, it makes car crash sounds.

Reflection/Rationale

I did my best to be out of the box and creative with this, I still believe I can improve a lot; however, this is a steppingstone in the right direction for my goal to create more interesting projects in APD. I felt good after I completed this project but a little embarrassed to share it, as I thought it was silly. I feel as I gained a lot of progress in video editing in such a short time. At the time of making this, I have only had Hitfilm Express for 5 days.

APD Week 3 - Play and Time

MAGI: <http://magistudio.net/work/apd-week-3-play-and-time-animation>

Animation: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8JP_sV5cyvU&ab_channel=PeterMavro



Context

I did a lot of research this week which correlated directly to my work. This video was inspired by Mafia City Ads. You can see them on this link https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Yke9BhP1uks&ab_channel=Averroes. One of the biggest inspirations from these ads were the showcase of the leveling system. To me, it is a noteworthy way to show mastery of a certain skill.

I looked up inspirational quotes from various websites (<https://everhour.com/blog/time-management-quotes/> , <https://clockify.me/blog/fun/quotes-about-time-management/> , <https://www.lifehack.org/articles/productivity/70-best-time-management-quotes.html> , <http://www.art-quotes.com/getquotes.php?catid=106> , <https://www.museumofplay.org/education/education-and-play-resources/play-quotes>). Even though I did not use any of these quotes directly, it helped me to form the ending sentence of my video and gave me insight into what be an inspirational message. Afterwards when creating the animation, I wanted to show a correlation between skill and level. This idea also stemmed from my quotes research, and the bar represents the time, failure, and progress as it increases one's skill level, whereas having already mastered something and then investing more time would not increase that skill.

A website that is very informative stated, 'maker culture emphasizes informal, networked, peer-led, and shared learning motivated by fun and self-fulfilment.' (PennState, n.d). The process explained what I did in the overall research and creation of this task.

Method

I used a program called Makehuman to create the character. I wanted this to be an animation exercise, so this really helped to get the character down. The cool part of this program is it is all procedural, and thus I was able to change the age of this character by dragging the age slider, exporting it, and animating it.

I created the pole in Blender with reference to Dragon Ball's power pole, though I did not follow it too closely. It was used to gain a loose idea of what I wanted to make. I made the animations and rendered it in Blender too. Then I put it all together and edited it in Hitfilm Express.

Response

I focused on play and time in terms of personal growth over the years, with the subject being stick spinning mastery. The character which first started out as a child only knew to play with it, but due to his lack of experience, he hits his head and falls over. Years later when he is older, which can be inferred by the way I made the skill level progress, he has practiced throughout the years, so he is able to spin it. However, he ends up dropping it as his catching skills are not yet developed. We move forward to when he has completely mastered the technique and the character shows his cool technique without fail. I wanted to make this video inspirational hence the message at the end. In short, I show someone who practices with a pole over years and thus increases his overall 'skill level' and 'level'.

Reflection/Rationale

For not being an animator or having animated in a long time, I am proud of myself for this project, even though the quality is not perfect. I do believe there is still much more room for improvement, and as this subject encourages 'play' and experimentation, I look forward to trying out new things and growing my skillset.

APD Week 4 - Play and Place

MAGI: <http://magistudio.net/work/apd-week-4-play-and-place-beach>

Video: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UR3TPWDIqPc&ab_channel=PeterMavro



Context

I had a lot of Ideas this week, but I decided to go with this piece. It is of two children playing in the sand morphing the world to create a sand person. The idea for the sand person was from this image (<https://www.google.com/search?q=sandshorturl>). 'The space of the city is utilized for play; the landmarks and streets become mere spaces on an existing game board,' said Flanagan (2008, p.4). In this case, the sand is the game board and the pieces. The sand of the beach is almost like real-life Minecraft just with the exception it is not boxy or a video game. I chose this location as it was one where play could be fostered, and the environment was open to fun activities. As design engineers, Kara and Bosia (2017) wrote about how to create designs that are meaningful but also measurable, they need to possess a certain level of comfort, in which "comfort is a physiological and psychological state expressing satisfaction with the environment" (p.156-157). Through this, I was reinforced that this location had promise and that I could use it to attempt to make something cool.

Method

I created this project in TVPaint 11. I recently just learned the program in the 'TVPaint workshop' taught by Uyen. It was a fun way to learn a new program, and I was so inspired by it that I decided to extend and advance the learning by creating a longer work for this class. This project had lots of frames, approximately 800. All the elements in the drawing are hand-drawn by me on my Wacom tablet. I do not digitally hand draw many things, so I had to undergo a lot of trial and error to get things to look right. Once I liked the animation, I screen-recorded two versions of it - one where the characters were visible, and one where the characters were invisible. I moved onto Hitfilm Express, a video editor that I enjoy using, and began to lay it all out. In that program, I managed to layer the videos and use opacity to make the characters disappear. Then I added a blue tint and played around with the effects to try to simulate night-time once the characters have left.

Response

After looking at the examples, I wanted to simulate play in an environment in an animation format. I considered a few ideas to try to use what I learned from past student work to create something new but share a similar ideology. The examples I remember seeing the most were of real-life events such as, find the bomb through a series of paper notes, I do not have access to an environment where I can do something fun like that with people, so after countless thought, I was led to, 'if I can't do something in real life why don't I simulate it in an animation?' That thought process led me to this project. It is of two children playing in the sand creating a sand character. Throughout the day they are pulling from the floor around them and using the environment to create a new one with their mark in it.

Reflection/Rationale

This project was a fun experience, and I enjoyed my dabble within TVPaint. After this project, the trial will shortly end, and I will be unable to use it again for a while, so I am glad I made the most of it while I had it! The topic was a challenging one for me; however, especially in the ideation phase, I felt I learned a lot about morphing spaces around through creating this project. I am honestly happy with my growth and I really enjoy how the course is promoting my growth by allowing me to try new mediums and learn. I am also impressed with my drawings as they are not something, I am confident in.

ADP Week 5 – Play and Forces

MAGI: <http://magistudio.net/work/apd-week-5-play-and-forces-9>

Video: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xVjrgSHPyKo&ab_channel=PeterMavro



Context

I struggled to figure out how I can incorporate forces into my work. I went into Houdini to see if I could do it there, but I could not work it out at all. The examples this week were inspiring, but I really do not have the skills to code, and I did not want to do a sound related task as I saw too many of them already. I went through my software to see which ones were compatible with forces. Once I found some compatible ones, I began searching through YouTube to find something to be inspired by. I found this video (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9IHn2uTW8nA&ab_channel=BlockSimulations). I liked this idea of an object falling and causing mayhem, so I created this response. According to Murphy, '...nature remains embedded in technology and so does its potential to escape control' (2008). Blender simulates gravity well, and its methods make it much like its real counterpart. The way I approached this project really made my control limited.

My vision for this project was to create falling that started off with a few objects and as time progressed more objects fall in a cluster state. I wanted the beginning to ease the viewer in and there was a satisfying effect I got from watching them fall for a while. I then added some different shapes as they would affect the other objects differently.

Method

I created this project in Blender. I started trying out gravity-based simulations and could not get it to work for a while. I then watched some YouTube videos and tried various types of simulations, such as soft body, rigid body, etc. After getting things to work, I randomly added more objects to fall and selected mass at random.

Response

I created an animation of shapes falling from the sky. Play and forces were a tricky concept for me. I really could not work out what I wanted to do. I first tried to do some random number generators but that did not work out for me as I could not really figure out to incorporate it. I really wanted to push the gravity aspect and started creating objects very high from the ground and randomising their properties. I then moved onto adding different shapes and got a very explosive result at the end. I was happy with it once I saw it as it was a surprise I did not intend, so I decided to not change anything as the forces of gravity and randomness got me here, I did not want to start tinkering and ruin it.

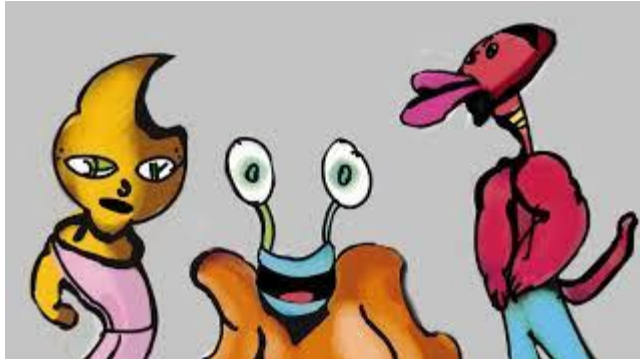
Reflection/Rationale

For a task that seemed easy to make, I struggled a lot to get things to work; rendering also took a long time and I had to pre-bake everything for any animation to animate at all! I learnt a lot experimenting in these types of simulations, and I think it will prove useful one day. I gained new skills in the art of simulating and looking to extend on my learning with this. I ultimately do feel that this project is a little bland. Yes, I like it, but it would have been nice if I were able to make something more advanced. As a steppingstone its good but I feel uneasy about this task as it may be overly basic in concept, even though I spent a long time struggling to work things out technically.

APD Week 6 – Play and Sound (Monster Band)

Magi: <http://magistudio.net/work/apd-week-6-play-and-sound-monsterband>

YouTube: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=m6xlyEnjki4&ab_channel=PeterMavro



Context

Play and sound was an interesting topic for me. I wanted to do something with music this week, but I am not that good at it. However, it did not stop me from experimenting in different applications to see what I could do. The thought of it sounded fun. As my music making skills are not great, I decided to use my lack of knowledge in this field as a strength and opted to create a different world where the music I make is celebrated and glorified. 'In an international art world dominated by visual works, sound has long been perceived as a challenging and esoteric medium' (Delany, 2013). And thus, I have created this project by merging the two components into one and I have given meaning to the sound within the video by associating them to a character. Each character goes off a different musical tune based on their appearance and what I believe they would sound like in this world. In *Play and the Experience of Interactive Art*, Brigid Costello explains that there are thirteen characteristics of the play experience, some being, exploration, creation, and difficulty (Costello, 2009, p.10). I have decided to discuss three of the thirteen characteristics that Costello has discussed as they have been the for the making of this project. I have explored music and different sounds, and different characters during this process. Through this, I have created something somewhat whimsical, and fun. An interesting concept arrived through the difficulty of not knowing the medium of creating sound and having to play around with many different elements and software.

Method

I began playing around in a song editor called FamiStudio (<https://famistudio.org/>). I was unable to make anything that sounded nice after a lot of attempts playing with different tunes and melodies. So, I decided to try out Chrome Labs Song Maker (<https://musiclab.chromeexperiments.com/Song-Maker>). It was easier to make something that sounded decent in this browser software. I was still not happy with the result but opted to make an environment where there would be happiness attached to this type of music. And add an element of the culture that these creatures would have in relation to the song in which they are singing. I also used photoshop to create the creatures and a separate image of them singing. I used HitFilm Express to edit these photos in place and used the sound to dictate when they would animate.

Response

This week I created a world of creatures who sing songs in different tunes. I created the song in Chrome Labs Song Maker (<https://musiclab.chromeexperiments.com/Song-Maker>). I experimented with different instruments and tunes. I am not an expert in making audio and after having many failed attempts in different programs, I thought to myself, what if I make a world in which the music, I make is considered good? This led me on my path to creating a world filled with monsters that can sing in different musical tunes. I decided to give them character and played with shapes and proportions until I got an interesting concept for them. I used play and sound in this project as my workflow consisted of exploration and trial and error.

Reflection

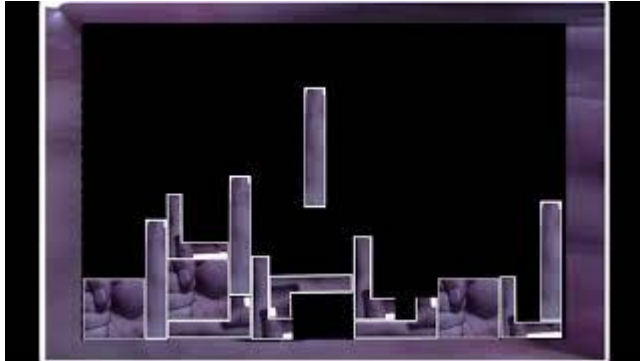
There were a lot of different elements in this production, from making music, to drawing characters, colouring them in, creating a singing animation for them, editing it in the film editor and matching the clips to the audio. Of course, each element of the production could have been more fine-tuned, but I was going for a more conceptual piece as I wanted to get my ideas out there and make a cool concept instead of spending a lot of time on one element and not being able to have fun and experiment with all the options.

Overall, I am glad I was able to have this opportunity to experiment and explore a lot of different elements in this production and it has aided me in understanding some extra options that I can explore in the future.

APD Week 7 – Play and Body (Hand Tetris)

Magi: <http://magistudio.net/work/apd-week-7-play-and-body-9>

YouTube: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wmoX23XkjU4&ab_channel=PeterMavro



Context

My work this week is heavily inspired by the original Tetris (Alexey Pajitnov, Tetris) and all Tetris games that came after that. I wanted to create a concept using the original game and use my physical hands and fingers for the artistic reasons. My work was also inspired by another student work by Stella Lin, also known as Yuxing Lin, for the response about Play and Place, where she used the city as Tetris pieces, of which at the time of seeing it I thought it was cool and it had stuck with me since. And thus, while thinking of my options for Play and Body, I came to this project. Brian Sutton-Smith lists many different types of playful behaviours, such as playing around, playing upon others, and putting something into play, etc. (Sutton-Smith, 2001, p. 4). While all the ones I mentioned in this quote apply, I just wanted to focus on the 'playing upon others' and 'putting something into play.' I have demonstrated both when I took reference from other student work and playing upon their idea but also by using the original Tetris game as inspiration too. By doing so I arrived at this concept. While incorporating play into body, I was intrigued by how hands signals can give off different meanings. 'There is a fascination with hands and their expression of human behavior' (Kivell, 2016, p. 6). While considering this, I made the fist the cube shape as I wanted to show 'rock solid' such as the shape you would make in the game rock paper scissors. I used thumbs down to show you lose, etc.

Method

I got a family member to take a bunch of pictures of my hand on the wall. I made different poses and envisioned what Tetris pieces I could make with my hands. I made some extra stuff in case I would change my idea in the future. I then used Affinity Photo to cut out the parts I wanted from the various photos and then I removed transparency. I made shapes based on some of the existing pieces in the game that I found from a Tetris Wiki page (<https://tetris.fandom.com/wiki/Tetromino>). I made some of these pieces and added my own custom pieces too. I gave them all white outlines as I believed it made everything look

nicer and for practical reasons that will be covered in response. I then moved to my video editor, HitFilm Express and set up how the scene would look at the end of the video and worked backwards from there. I did not want smooth animation in this video so while working back, I cut up the video slider, slightly moved the Tetris piece cut again and did those countless times until I got the whole video animating. I did not want to stop there. I wanted to push it a little more so I used some of the photos I took previously to make the start of the video which states the name of the concept game and some fingers that I was hoping would look like grass.

Response

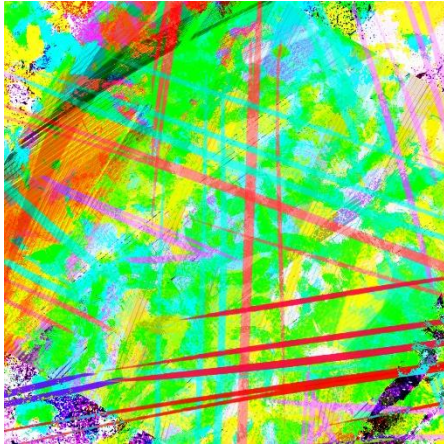
For the week of play and body, I opted to use my hands as artwork for my project of Tetris. It was highly experimental and a challenge to make it look nice. I wanted to use my body for some sort of game, while I had other ideas such as the claw machines, PAC-MAN etc. I opted for this project as I could envision it a lot easier before I began production. And the thought of making a claw machine when you could use a hand to win different body parts kind of frightened me. I explored how I could use my hands to show exactly that they are pieces and opted for the white outlines around the shapes. As this is a concept for a game, it had to make sense, if I did not do it then how would people know what shapes could fit? How would it be easy to understand? I had to consider this when making it. Through this project, I also experimented with a different animation style. I did not want smooth animation. I wanted it to look a little choppy just like the real Tetris game. I achieved this by cutting the image in the video editor and moved the piece slightly in the second image. I also saw that by having the picture still for a while helped to portray the feeling I wanted.

Reflection

Overall, I am happy with the outcome of this project. I experimented with a different animation style and learnt a few new tricks when creating a choppier style. I liked that I was able to use my hand and fingers for the art. I will say that I do not think it looks super fantastic, but I believe a concept like this could work for another project in which I had more time. I regret adding the text "You Lose" as I could have just had my hand animating 'thumbs down'. And by removing it, I would be able to say that this project was made exclusively with my hands and outlines. I do think that the text breaks the immersion a little too. But I am glad I was able to realise this and explore the animation realm further through this project.

APD Week 8 – Abstraction (Art)

Magi: <http://magistudio.net/work/apd-week-9-play-and-abstraction-art-peices>



Context

In the class, we saw many examples of abstract animation. I did not want to make one as it seemed like that was a common approach to the topic and I wanted to do something different. I had the idea to make art drawings that are abstract instead. I saw this video on Facebook <https://fb.watch/5gETVaxy07/>. It got me to start thinking creatively about the topic and thus, I began searching on Google for different abstract ideas, and found this image (<https://www.vectorstock.com/royalty-free-vector/mosaic-abstraction-vector-508037>). I attempted to create something similar in this triangle style to get started, as I have no prior experience with abstract art, so doing this was a good warm-up in the journey of creating all the abstract art I made. 'There is a large overlap in image properties between abstract art and traditional art styles' (Redies & Branchmann, 2017). After reading this, I understood that abstract art is a topic that does not require a checklist. Rather, it is a unique genre of art but also a free and fun one. So, when making this project, I opted to go for something that represented my insight into this topic. I experimented, tinkered, and explored different ideas, brushes, effects and more. 'We can safely assert, even, that human civilization has added no essential feature to the general idea of play. Animals play just like men. We have only to watch young dogs to see all the essentials of human play are present' (Salen & Zimmerman, 2006, p. 97). Therefore, when creating this art, I have used my primitive instincts to 'play' in a way that I feel is fitting in the context of the project, no rules, draw lines and doodle, add fun colours, play with filters and multipliers, etc.

Method

I began drawing in Affinity Photo, a program that is like the well-known Photoshop. I drew different patterns and ideas. I randomly made some abstracted creature - it is visible in some of the pieces I made but in others, I attempted to hide it. I began to play with mixing options and made some interesting ideas. I pushed this idea as far as I could and got some very interesting outcomes that made it in the top 16 of all the work, I have showcased on the MAGI website. I have made 59 different drawings and iterations through the whole process. I will provide them in the file list if possible. While creating these different pieces, I used a bunch of different brushes and created things based on trial and error. While getting very creative and interesting ideas from the brushes themselves, I also wanted to push this as much as I could throughout the process.

Response

This week I created a response that was a bunch of abstract drawings. I began with looking up context and decided to draw something like one of them that I liked. To get a sense of what abstraction is, I started creating more interesting pieces and drawings. Through making these pieces, I began to see what else I could do with the pictures, so I opted to try different mixing modes and edited some previous drawings to create a whole new drawing with many different layers. When asking some friends for feedback, I got the response, 'what is it?'. I was instantly happy with that reply as that is how I felt in class when the examples were shown. What is it? This is the reaction I am trying to receive from my work and thus I simply responded with thank you.

Reflection

Through exploring with different brushes, layer mixing, and having fun drawing, I have a better understanding of the software and what it can offer. I am happy with the results that I got with the project I made. I made a lot of iterations and drawings to ensure that I got as deep as I could for this project. I feel as now I am equipped with different thinking regarding making different works. I could use these patterns and artworks for textures or even create textures with the idea of abstraction in mind in the future.

APD Week 9 - Play and Nature

Magi: <http://magistudio.net/work/apd-week-9-play-and-nature-7>

YouTube: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AbGF0twZrQA&ab_channel=PeterMavro



Context

Dr Riley asked some seriously important questions when considering the 'natural' for his AR project. "What do we consider to be natural or artificial? What constitutes a natural environment or place now? What does it mean when we change nature?" (Riley, 2018, p. 6). I have had the pleasure of knowing him as he is my teacher for APD, and while being in class for the Play and Nature week, he helped us understand these questions, and I have related it to this project. I consider nature for my work to be the animals that consist of it - a natural environment would be the world around my animals. In this case, I did not conceptualise that, however, the natural is also and the beings themselves, which I did spend a lot of time on with their design and aesthetics. I would like to focus on his third question being, 'what does it mean when we change nature?' And for this project I have changed the animals into more humanoid beings in a sense that they are able to partake in human activities such as boxing. While it is common to fight in real wildlife, I have taken my own spin on this idea to create a concept that is also relatable to us as humans. Play was necessary in our primitive state along with fighting. In the book 'Play: Psychoanalytic Perspectives, Survival and Human Development' Emilia Perroni states, 'The first human beings, as well as our contemporary mammal cousins, had to know how to play when in their infancies in order to survive.' (Perroni, 2013). And thus, by playing around with the thought of survival and play, while experimenting and exploring this, I attempted to flip this by asking, what if it was not to survive but for fun? It is apparent that fighting is natural and could be seen as a type of play, and thus, through this line of thinking, and the one I previously mentioned, this project was born.

Response

This week I decided to experiment with anchor points in the animation, this is a first for me as I have usually done animation with frame-by-frame drawing and moving the objects around but not animate by rotating from a pivot. For play and nature, I opted to go for something with animals, while struggling a lot with coming up with a solution, I decided to go for animal boxing.

Method

I first drew and coloured the characters with reference to the animals I wanted to create in Affinity Photo. The kangaroo was initially supposed to be a dog, however, I am not the best drawer and it turned out looking more like a kangaroo so I decided to just turn it into one on the fly. I moved onto cutting up the animal into different layers based on the body parts I wanted to animate. I used HitFilm express to test out this type of animation, did some mock tests to make sure that this would work in the long run. After discovering that it does work, I decided to create the chicken. I, of course, experimented in creating lots of different animals, including a bird that flies around. Unfortunately, I was not liking how it was looking. While doing the animation process itself, I kept running into issues where body parts would misalign and/or float away from the body and it was a super tedious process to get everything working right.

Reflection

Overall, for my first attempt in this style of pivot animation, I am happy with the result I got. While it's not perfect, it was a good learning experience, and I am now able to consider this option in future projects. As for the concept, while at the time it was exciting for me to think about a battle of animals in a more humanised way, but I believe it is not so creative of an idea as there are other projects that have done this before, therefore I feel that I could have created something that was more conceptually original.

APD Week 10 – Play and Stillness (Ninja Meditation)

Magi: <http://magistudio.net/work/apd-week-10-stillness-meditation>

YouTube: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w-sJJvcGyYw&ab_channel=PeterMavro



Context

For the final week I created a ninja who is meditating. I started off by experimenting with different background animations. In the beginning, I wanted to create it in 3D, however, I opted for 2D after my experiments were deemed too hard for their outcome. I looked into different animated backgrounds such as (https://www.google.com/search?q=backgrounds+animated&rlz=1C1GIGM_enAU751AU751&source=lnms&tbm=isch&sa=X&ved=2ahUKEwjtVZj56dLwAhW_yzgGHZpKC2gQ_AUoAXoECAEQAw&biw=1280&bih=625#imgrc=TYt4I8cM7hAdAM) and opted to create a few of my own. While making some that were 'fails,' I did end up with the stars, and the cycling of time backgrounds. 'Even in more contemporary contexts, play is the domain of the artist, not the audience' (Sharp, 2015, p. 81). In my regard, I played with all the ways I could incorporate stillness in my project. I explored making the character motionless, gravity and time still, the stopping of music, and the contrast between the static and the moving. 'How is that possible? In a painting, a horse cannot gallop; it can only appear to do so, in a stilled, «pregnant moment' (Bal, 2016, p. 2). And thus, the still image can infer meaning beyond what it is physically doing. In my project do you see a Ninja who is doing nothing? Or do you see a Ninja who is meditating, sleeping, or thinking? When designing this project, I wanted to indicate he is doing either of the three but primarily meditating, using the still image.

Response

For play and stillness, I opted to play around with the contrast between the still image and the moving one, in the beginning of my project, I make the ninja close his eyes and be still, while the background behind him is moving. The day turns to night and as his meditation becomes deeper, the background becomes more creative just like the mind. It was so creative that he was thinking of a creature eating a star. Soon after he envisions himself in a videogame, while he is dodging bullets. I also used stillness here in a non-conventional way

where he dodges the bullet by remaining still in the air. This defies gravity, however, this is APD, so I opted to try something weird and unusual like this. I also use full stillness at the end when he 'wakes up' from his meditation, everything stops moving and even the audio stops. This was another one of my wacky ideas. The thought of it is like when you wake up from a scary dream and everything stops except your heartbeat. While making it I did find myself shocked every time I watched it, which was the whole intention and thus I decided to keep it in.

Method

To make this project, I used Affinity Photo, which is like a Photoshop program and HitFilm Express. I played around with shapes and forms this week using shape tools opposed to drawing like I usually do. I wanted to explore art in this style as I have seen some in the past that looked nice. I created different components of things that will animate. I animated it in different styles such as, pivot animation, frame by frame animation, smooth animation, and a bunch more different ways, that really tied my learning from my APD journey and all the different projects I made in an animation format into the project.

Reflection/Overall Reflection

Overall, with this project I am happy with the result I got. I am glad I got to tie in some different animation styles that I have learnt throughout the semester, I am happy with the mood and feeling of this piece, and I am also pleased with how it looks. I think there has been a big improvement shown throughout the semester and I am grateful to have this opportunity, environment, and the freedom to try new mediums. Before this semester I did not animate at all. So, throughout APD this has been a ride of where I went from basically no skills and low experience in animation to being able to create something that seems nice. I am happy with my concepts and ideas throughout APD as well as in this project. I feel I have come a long way in my journey, and while I can still always improve, it is still nice to look back and see how I started, and where I am now. I am also glad about my creative skills when faced with challenges - when it comes to software constraints, some projects, such as this one, forced me to make something even though I did not have all the 'industry quality' programs. I just did not have them available like I did in other weeks, and thus, I had to consider all the different ways I could make within these limitations. And while this project only used Affinity Photo and HitFilm, with enough practice and thought, you can always work out a way to create something nice.

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