Level Design Creative Process

Creating a Map Documentation Antoine Fauville

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For the creative process, I'll keep it as a note aside from the final document.

- Planning (Gathering informations about what I need to do),
 - a. Similar games?
 - b. The themes to explore?
 - c. Define the gameplay elements.
- 2. Setting up Ideas and "concrete" planning,
 - a. Setting up a story for the environment and in this case for the game as well,
 - b. I made some overall layout of the map. (UX drawings essentially),
 - c. Create a folder to do a mood board and fill it. (Pictures from books, google, ...),
 - d. Imagine Fun situations that I would love to be confronted (enemies or environment storytelling),
- 3. Progression Chart to space the flow of the experience (you can find them in the document),
- 4. Drawing a first iteration of the map,
- 5. Adapt the map to the Progression Chart,
- Enemies and situations.

Key points: I research a lot before heading in the map drawing, Filing Documents is a continuous process during the creation.

I then imposed some rules in able to create an interesting experience:

- No cover,
- Infiltration FPS, Using light or flashlight from enemies to help you know their light of sight and to know when to navigate,
- Even Though it is about infiltration you should still be able to run, kill all enemies and survive,
- Enemies have Hitscans to know if you are touched you or not (so no "slow" bullet you can dodge like doom),
- Knife and Silent pistol as main weapon,
- Player can throw small objects to distract enemies,
- Ability to Pick up guns from dead enemies,
- The IA could lose you after a while if you disappear otherwise they'll constantly try to run after you to kill you.

I have been inspired by the gameplay of "F.E.A.R." to create this map.

Notes on planning.

Collected notes on things I wanted to keep in mind creating the map and that I should always check at any given point of the creation process.

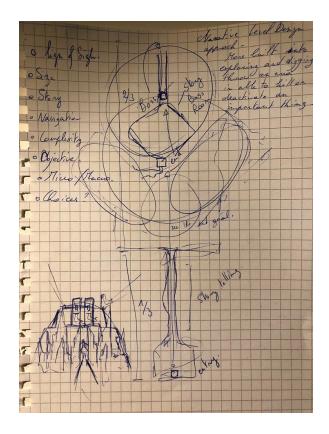
- Light of sight (player, enemies),
- · Size of the room (realistic rooms? lot of windows?),
- Story (through different actors),
- Navigations (multiple choices within navigations, minimum 2 choices)
- Complexity (Not to many encounter at once or navigations choices).
- Objective (Objective clear at the start and keep it updated through the map).
- Micro/Macro Level design (does it works and is it logic as a whole while keeping each specific situation fun ?)
- Al situations should be as interesting as possible (Never place an enemy for the sake of filling).
- Time of implementation (Would this require a lot of art or code power to do? try to stay as creative as possible without needing team power except if the implementation would lead to an unnecessary explosion and cool extra effects).
- Think about performance (not too many things or huge space filled with objects, cut down space to handle fluidity in the game, think like an architect!).

I won't write down every time I'm considering these points.

I think it should be a loop constantly in your head.

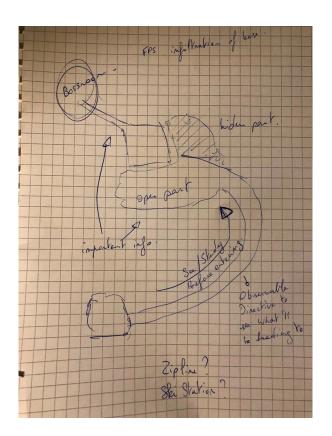
I will write down if I think a specific case need more explanations.

Here is how it worked out. In a high level design approach, I used the "circle design". (Create space and navigation using circles and cross the circles to create dynamic).



First idea, 3 areas to get to the boss, wrote down aside, what I had to keep in mind.

I clearly wanted to have a long area at the beginning to explain the story and put the player in a cold and empty area before heading into the map.

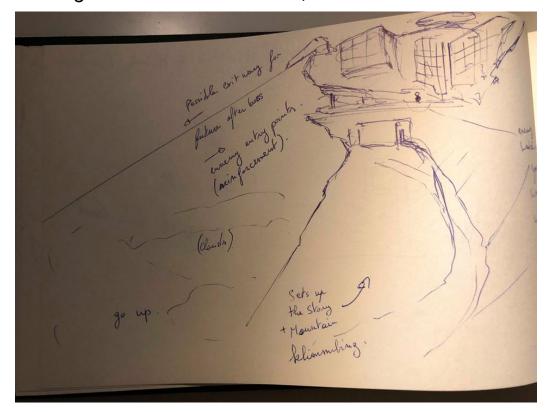


I rotated the area so we could see the entire map before heading into it.

Creative Process - Mood board



The moodboard is a sample of the research I collected. I have more references in my local folder. But since it's a test, I won't go too much into details, at least for the mood board. So I'm aware that this is not enough.



After some research, I went for the observation center followed by the scientific research laboratory.

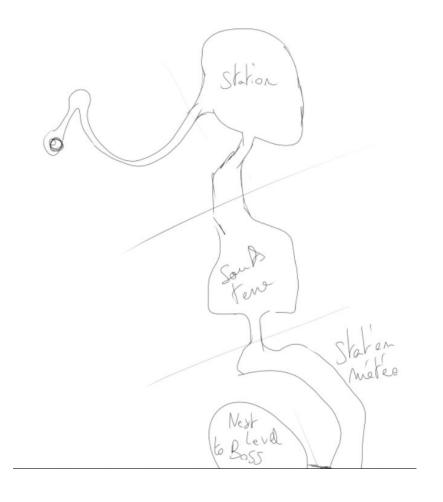
I was also thinking about the implementation. Artists would only need to make a few buildings and we could concentrate on making the interior stunning and filled with details.

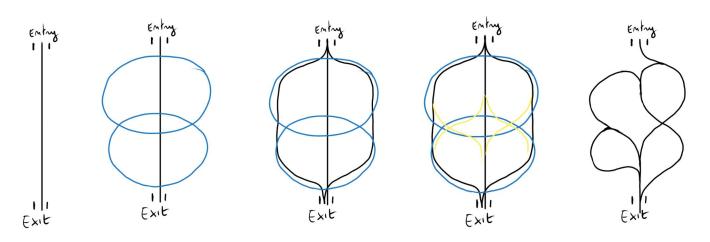


Clouds around the whole place to not have to deal with creating too many assets. And they would make the space feel higher which create tension, just what I was searching for!

I then focus on spacing the map, splitting it into 3 parts. Area 1 + Intro (Touristic Observation Station), Area 3 (Astrological Center) and I needed something to link them in between.

I chose to fill it with a bunker. He could have been built before the two centers during world war. And it would leave us room to play with if we need to space out the map a bit more. Or add extra objectives.





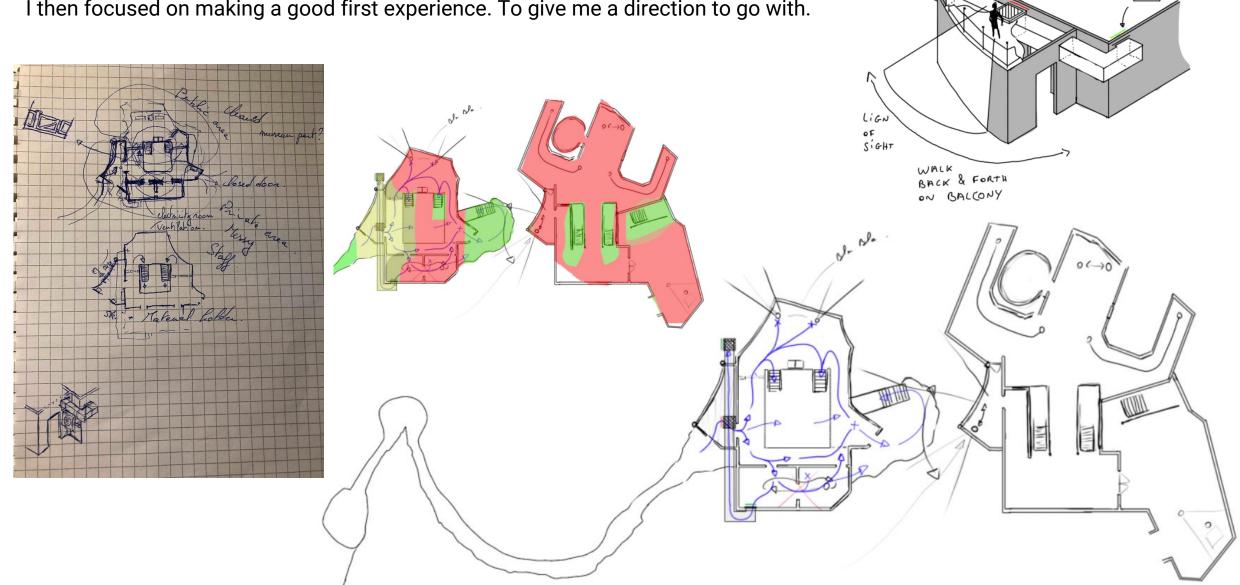
Circle creative process.

Iterate on the Path to the objectives.

Branch out and create loop of navigation leading to objectives.

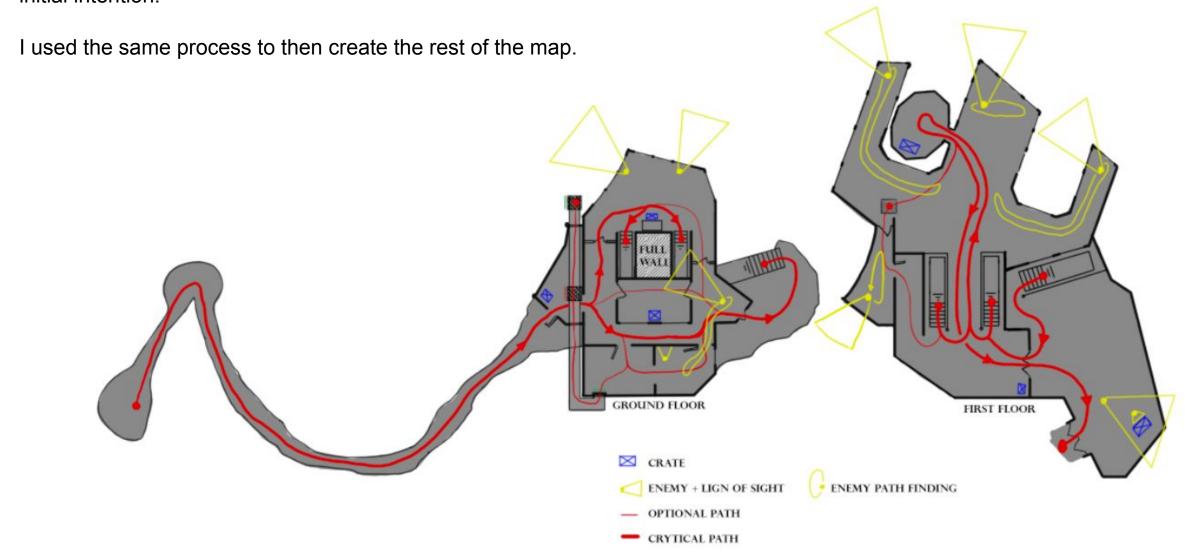
Play around with Small and narrow space to create sensations.

I then focused on making a good first experience. To give me a direction to go with.



ACCESS

I then polished the map, added some more possible path, as long as it was keeping the initial intention.



I did some variations along the way, for example at the beginning i had this layout which seems very interesting, lots of navigation and it was a little crazy, but it didn't fit with the Progress Chart that I initially designed. Too much room. The bunker area didn't feel like a transition anymore. So I erased some the areas to keep it simple.

