

AINT 253

Research and Design
Documentation.

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Initial Idea:

For my street scene I will be creating a horror scene in which the player must search for clues to progress the story. The general premise will be that the player is an investigator sent to discover the fate of multiple people that have disappeared within a district, and ultimately meets his own demise.

Below I have created a list of features I will need to consider when creating my scene and the direction the project will take:

Location & Time Period:

- Where are you?
- What kind of factory is it?
- What kind of building structures would you expect?
- What kind of equipment would you expect?
- What is the time Period?
- Time of day?
- Play area restrictions?
- Scene surroundings? (context)

Fear Factor:

- How to scare the player?
- Jump scares?
- Audio?
- Running/in-fear of always present being?
- Triggered events? (objects fall/ shake)
- Darkness?

Story progression:

- What is the story?
- Player thought voice over?
- How is the player introduced to the scene?
- How are clues found?
- What are the clues?
- Where do clues lead you to?
- Beginning, middle and end?
- What is the ominous being?
- How do you build to the end?

Theme:

- Art style?
- Texturing?
- Lighting?

Goal:

To have a scene consisting of 2 explorable areas, where the player finds clues that point to locations around the player around the scene until the final explorable location is found and the story ends. The scene will house multiple interactions that trigger speech events.

Stretch Goal:

- To include more trigger events and objects within the scene
- Include more interesting clues and interesting methods of finding clues.
- Have a more active introduction sequence.
- Have a more active end scene.

Inspiration:

A lot of inspiration comes from horror games in which the player is defenceless, the player not being able to fight back creates a great sense of unease and constant vulnerability.

Play Inspiration include:

- Slender Man - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5qeOtbYnPml>
- Outlast - <https://youtu.be/70iSt8LGnaM?t=33s>
- 5 nights at freddy's - <https://youtu.be/wTb2HhvT87Y?t=26s>
- Limbo - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=90jMeHJMEKY>
- Amnesia - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ChpCk72yofM>

Enemy/ominous being inspiration: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R_NAoNd4YyY

The Psychology and Fear Factor of Horror Games:

Atmosphere is key to horror games and films, it is what instills emotions into the player and allows you to manipulate their feelings and emotions. The general consensus is that horror games and films provide a rewarding experience, making the consumer feel brave, and from this you can see a horror game must offer a reward to it's players for pushing themselves to progress.

Within video games the interactions the player has creates a psychological feeling of presence within the game, and thus there is a genuine urge to be scared and fight for survival. Engagement is key in keeping the player "in the game" with a sense of presence, this is can usually created through empathy, visuals and audio. The player can empathise with the character they are controlling if they can relate to them, this can be through either the actions they are controlling or audio cues such as voice overs.

Audio then adds to this by creating a feeling of unease through drastic theme changes, and unexpected and violent noise.

Visuals are used greatly to manipulate the feelings of fear within the player, dark scenes uses the fear of the unknown and unexpected on keep the player on edge, especially if the player feels like they are being chased. All these elements must interact together in such a way to create the perfect scary experience.

I used this video to help further my understanding of this:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zBhiE6QZjzY>

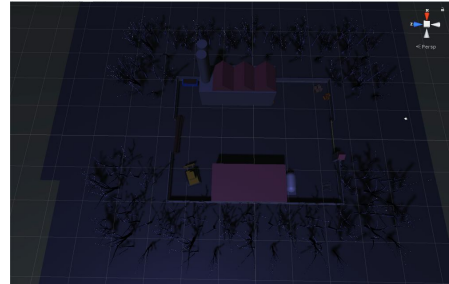
Personal Experience:

From my personal experience of playing horror games, I have always been drawn in by the urge to find out more of the story, and what brought the terrifying situation about. As a young teen first playing the slender man games, I fought through the fear and anxiety created by the game in order to find out more on the origins of slenderman, and even went on to research this further than the games. I believe this was achieved through the drip feeding of information of extend periods of time, leaving a lot to the players imagination, allowing them to create their own backstory and lore. I can implement this within my game by revealing only the necessary details (clues) to progressing the narrative, and leaving a lot of the story for the player to fill in, such as: the purpose of the factory, what the ominouse being is, and the origins of its creation ect.

Design:

Scene Structure:

In order to design the layout of the horror scene I have drawn sketches of each key aspect in the scene, with annotation marking key features I wish to implement. From these sketches I have then whiteboxed my scene using basic geometry and basic material colours. This will help me to get an idea of the scale of objects within the scene. Physical representations of my idea can help with designing the visuals and narrative progression within the scene. I can also use the white boxed scene to help design the lighting the scene will have, using it to experiment with different ambient and spotlight sources.

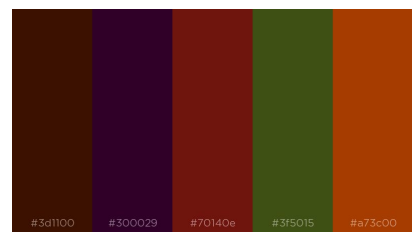


Placing a first person controller into the scene allowed me to explore the scene and make decision about the placement of clues and trigger that the player will interactive, and the best path for the player to lead through.

Visuals:

Due to the dark nature of the scene, I will not be approaching texturing with goal of achieving as much of a photorealistic representation as possible. But using key colours with highlights or accents to add depth to models, where possible I will also use normal maps to also achieve this effect. For example a barrel in my scene barrels will have an overall solid colours with key distinguishable features of the model, with areas of rust highlights placed around it. I have created a moodboard of visual style influes to aid my design. Drawing on top of a base texture within photoshop.

The scene will have a dark colour pallet that contains deep purples, browns, oranges and greens. The colours have a minor tone that portray the decay and death. A display of the colours can be seen to the right. I have created the colour pallet taking into account the scenes ambient lighting, and the colours reaction to yellow torch light, testing them within my white boxed scene.



Audio:

My research informed me of the importance of audio within my horror scene and the tone it will take. I believe I will be successful in creating the desired emotional effects of the scene. I will be using nano studios and garageband in order to create my desired audio loops, creating my own custom base systems to achieve my desired effects. I will be using a large amount of attack and cut-off to create a pulsating bass effect, and a sense of dread. As the narrative progresses the tension created by the music will increase, I will be creating audio loops that can be stacked on top of one another to build to the suspense of the final discovery. Not only does this keep the player engaged, and “in” the game, but also helps to add to the atmosphere. I have created a track that contains all the key soundtrack features to demonstrate the desired effects.

Inspirations:

The thing (1982) - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EnFc7D0ZoCc>

Stranger things - <https://youtu.be/WfYOMuX-tH8?t=2m25s>

Audio speech triggers when ‘inspecting’ objects around the scene will spur on the players curiosity and desire to progress through the story. The deep distorting effects on the enemies voice will help aid the sense of fear. I will be adding pulsing phaser effects to the enemies voice, making it very inhuman and unnerving.

Narrative:

The game narrative will be progressed via audio clue triggers in which the player interacts with the environment, After planning the scene with my whitebox, I can then judge and plan the best route to send the player on to explore the scene and the ways in which I can do so. I have mapped out the clue placement, and the clues as below.

The clues will eventually lead to the player triggering a control panel in the warehouse which will be reveals the vent to be an entrance to the underground secret lab.

Gameplay:

The design for the clues is as follows below:

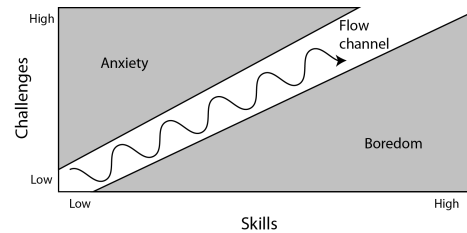


- 1.) The initial intro sets the scene with a dark screen and just audio of the player talking into a dictaphone, at which point strange distorted voices play through it.
- 2.) Inspecting the vent triggers a narrated clue, with a monologue from the player questioning its purpose.
- 3.) As the player inspects the rubbish container a monologue is triggered, pointing out a crumpled note on the top. The player is encouraged to approach it and can pick it up. A monologue then reads the note aloud (a new control panel invoice, that is housed within the warehouse)
- 4.) As the player inspects the logs and large bulldozer the monologue remarks how it looks like this was purposely set-up from the inside, almost to trap something in, rather than keep anything out.
- 5.) All the clues then point to there being something contained underneath the warehouse. Upon examining the warehouse, once the player interacts with the control panel the vent will open and another Monologue is triggered.
- 6.) The player will then venture down the vent hole and stumble upon the lab with the creature, at which point the creature's monologue plays and the player is killed.

Flow Theory:

Considering the method of progression within the game it is important that Flow Theory is considered when maintaining the players engagement, the clue progression system must spark intrigue within the player and desire to find the next clue, as well as balancing the difficulty of solving the clue. Most of clue will give small hints towards the main story of the scene, and up to the player to interpret. The main clue for the player to solve will be how to access the lab hinted at in the clues. Solving this clue should not be overly difficult, however should not be so obvious that the player discovers it upon entering the scene, it should require the whole scene to be explored and each hint to be found.

I will achieve this with each progressive clue in the scene hinting towards one location, the main warehouse building and the machinery inside it hidden within the monologue. Interacting with this machinery will then reveal the lab.



Setting the Scene:

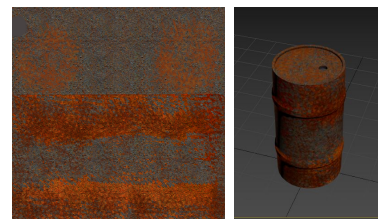
In order to generate the desired ominous theme the player must feel a sense of isolation, as of this the scene is set within a hilly forest, the player will only be able to see the dense and bare surrounding tree tops. The road entering the factory will wind off into the forest and hills so the player feels there is no escape to the location. A thick fog will also coat the ground, again adding to the mystery and uneasy feelings about the factory.

The player will enter the scene with a black screen with only audio of the player talking into their dictaphone as they approach the factory.

Modeling & Texturing:

When modeling and I will be using reference images to model from for small objects such as barrels and boxes where by I can manipulate base shapes into the desired designs. For larger more complex objects such as the bulldozer I will source side and front blueprints to which I can import into 3DS max to use as a template to model from.

For texturing models I will source a base image (for example wooden paneling for crates, and sheet metal for the cilo), to which I can then manipulate within photoshop to add appropriate details such as rust, mold and variation to the models. I demonstrated and tested this with a rusty barrel to attempt to achieve the desired effects, the completed model and texture map can be seen to the left.



Lighting and Effects:

The scenes lighting is key to the ominous and scary feel for the scene, will have an overall blue ambient light, with the main light source being the large moon in the sky, casting long deep shadows and creating large dark areas; the player will have a small torch to explore the darker areas.

The laboratory will have a dirty white light that flickers sparks in the far corners indicating its damage. The main source of light source in the scene will be the creature held in the container of the lab which will radiate a red colour, with electricity arcing around it. The arcing electricity will create a feeling of chaos with a lack of control, as well as aging the room showing how the equipment has been disregarded and left to decay.

User Experience:

In order to ensure a solid user experience the player will be greeted by a simple Menu system with an the option to play or to exit the game. In game the user can then press escape at any time to exit back to the main menu.

Script:

INTRO:-

[Investigator walking towards the factory, screen is black and fades in as speech finishes]

Player: This is log entry 32, I am currently approaching the Factory, I have still been unable to find out it's original purpose from the locals. Upon asking them a look a sheer terror strikes their faces and they make any excuse to leave. The only information I have been able to extract is that it was opened by a pharmaceutical company in the early 2000s, but has laid abandoned for many years now. However as I approach the factory now it seems quite small, and more reminiscent of a lumber yard than a big pharma factory.

INSPECTING VENT:-

Player: That's odd... Where does this vent lead from? And more importantly what's down there?... There must be some way of accessing it!

INSPECTING: RUBBISH CONTAINER:-

Player: There seems to be a note in this rubbish bin... Hmm... It says it's an invoice, for a new control panel, within the warehouse? But what could that be for?

INSPECTING LOGS:-

Player: These logs look like they've been placed here to keep something out... or maybe keep something in... why would anyone do that?

TRIGGERING CONTROLLER:-

Player: That sounds like the vent opening... There must be more to this...

ENTERING LAB:-

Player: Oh, oh god! What the hell is this thing! It looks like a pulsating ball of flesh and gristle! This must be what happened to all those people, they were lured here and absorbed by this creature, reduced to nothing more than mush!

MONSTER'S MONOLOGUE:

Monster: You stupid incelent human, another one of you kind that can't help but intervene in business that is not theirs! I am to be left alone after all these year, years of poking and prodding and experimenting, to then be left, isolated, in a cell. Well not anymore you! You are the final piece of my puzzle, using your life force and the dozens that came before you I can finally break free from this cage and have my revenge! ... Prepare to be part of the next generation.

Research References:

Thematic Moodboard:

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<https://game-insider.com/2015/10/22/slender-the-arrival-launches-for-wii-u-just-in-time-for-halloween/>
http://images.bit-tech.net/content_images/2010/06/amnesia-the-dark-descent-hands-on-preview/amnesia-descent-preview-02.jpg
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<http://uk.businessinsider.com/why-horror-films-scary-fear-neuroscience-psychology-2016-10>
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<https://www.newscientist.com/article/dn28375-how-the-scariest-video-games-use-our-own-minds-to-terrify-us/>
<http://www.bbc.com/culture/story/20161031-what-makes-a-great-horror-movie-soundtrack>

Environmental Moodboard:

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<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Factory>
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<http://www.warehouse-building.com/images/monoslope/lrq-oss.jpg>
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Warehouse Internals Moodboard:

<https://img2.cgtrader.com/items/600164/7e6ae0af56/large/factory-warehouse-3d-model-low-poly-obj-3ds-fbx-blend-mtl.jpg>
<https://anime.astronerboy.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/10/x03-Warehouse.jpg>
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https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/d/dd/ITP_Zamudio.jpg
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https://pre00.deviantart.net/fbf8/th/pre/i/2014/179/7/b/eh_abandoned_factory_by_owen_c-d7obojob.jpg
https://www.americansurplus.com/blogs/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/b1_belt_conveyor.jpg
<http://leeds.carpediem.cd/data/afisha/o/0b/2e/0b2e65c2c3.jpg>

Lab Internals Moodboard:

<https://vignette3.wikia.nocookie.net/fallout/images/8/8c/Institute-Cafeteria-Fallout4.jpg/revision/latest?cb=20161012234215>
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Design References:

(All outsourced assets were used on a personal basis and not in breach of copyright clauses)

Barrel Texture:

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Grass texture:

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Font:

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Unity Assets:

Standard Assets

Post Processing: <https://www.assetstore.unity3d.com/en/#!/content/83912>

Particle Effects: <https://www.assetstore.unity3d.com/en/#!/content/83179>

Skybox: <https://www.assetstore.unity3d.com/en/#!/content/32236>