Hello all! This document details the guidelines and procedures for making and uploading the art assets for our project. This will change from time to time as the project grows and takes shape , I will let everyone know when a new version is up. Thanks!

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GETTING STARTED:

Very soon there will be assignments on the trello page assigned to each artist. You are responsible for updating the assignments handed to you on the trello boards. Before getting into the document, know that I am very grateful to you all. You are here because I believe in you and your abilities. If you have a question or suggestion don’t hesitate to send me an email [Mattatlowlit@gmail.com](mailto:Mattatlowlit@gmail.com) or on slack, or Skype. I don’t know everything so maybe your idea will help us out.

When starting your model, research it first. Do not rely on your memory of what you think it should look like. Then use your creativity to make the model unique. Remember we all live in different parts of the world so stuff looks different. Cars, phones, microwaves, tvs all these things have both foreign and domestic brands. Try where possible to make generic looking foreign brands. Because every country will have that in common and we wont have a house with a japanese tv, european telephone and a russian microwave. The assets wont look consistent. Not to say that we wont have themed maps. Maybe we will maybe we wont. The key here is working together to achieve a uniform, consistent look that all fits together or it will ruin the experience. It will break the reality and the focus. There will be times someone is hiding and waiting to be found so if they are like me, they gonna look around at their surroundings. So lets work hard to deliver a product we will be proud of.

A small note on blender. I like this software very much but remember it has, was, isn’t and wont be anytime soon a professional 3d game asset creation tool. It was built specifically as an in-house cgi creation tool for a company in Holland. The company went under before they could really do anything and so some of the people who wrote the code for blender started the blender foundation and instead of charging money for their product decided to do the crazy radical idea of having it open source and free. It has come a very long way in the 8 years ive used it and honestly its more stable then it used to be. It works great as a self sustained toolset. Even though sometimes the normals bake out funny, they look great inside blender but terrible in unreal. This is one reason why. It really works better in unity workflow because it can actually read .blend files, crazy right? My whole point to this is we will have small struggles along the way. Unreal gets a little fussy and blender just isnt a professional game dev tool so it’s missing a few needed features to make it better into unreal. There are some UDK tools but uhh… they don’t work because this isnt UDK.

BASIC REQUIREMENTS:

This game is from first person perspective. All assets need to be appropriate to scale. All assets must be approved before being uploaded to server. I will accept pictures sent to me on slack so I can evaluate the style and textures. All assets must be placed in the correct folders and named according to the agreed upon standard. Each team member is responsible for the maintenance of their own assets. Since we are using perforce the way I would normally handle asset changes will have to be different. I will outline that soon.

Be sure your origin point is always at the bottom of mesh. A good way to fix in blender if it gets away from you is hit ctrl c to center cursor.. Then in object mode shift ctrl alt c set origin to cursor. Shift ctrl alt c again and object to origin. Now tab into edit mode and G then Z until the mesh is just above the red or green line depending you are looking in front “1” or right “3” view mode then in edit mode ctrl s snap to grid.

SUBSTANCE:

A small note on substance. So by now all artists have seen a little on the power of substance. For now it is OK to work independently on substances but ultimately we will using a coordinated workflow. What I mean by this will take a little explaining. So what we can do is set up material bases like one for metal, one for wood, one for rocks etc.. And within those materials can be presets that we w!I’ll per object. Il outline an example here and shortly some pictures too.

Wood surface example. So let’s say I make a wood grain pattern. I would expose parameters like noises that generate the grain pattern. Opacitiy masks for maybe smooth or wet effects. I would also expose some normals intensity. Then on top of that set some patterns on a mask like planks, shingles, boards, tiles. Okay then publish the sbsar file. With that done we have a wood grain material. OK now I want to make some furniture like table and chairs. I’ll import into my table graph the wood grain material to give me that base. Then set the parameters I want for a nice finish for something on furniture blend in some color. I could add effects if it’s an old table, dirt, color wear, dull patches where it wouldn’t be shiny. OK then I want a chair so again import that base wood material, make different adjustments for it, blend in similar colors so it looks like it belongs to a set. Done. Now I want to make a wood floor. You guessed it, import that same base material make adjustments so it looks like a wood floor. Now for a bat for a weapon. Not saying we will have one but you see where I am going. With one base material we can apply it to different things, shaving some time off production and server space ultimately. Also some of these parameters can be set in unreal so that we can import the wood base material and adjust all parameters like color, grain density, roughness, masks so that one material can be very useful.

UPLOADING TO SERVER:

When uploading to server ensure you follow proper naming convention. Later here I will define all labels but a brief example could be: SMextinguisher01. Mbricks\_\_base01. Underscores will be acceptable only to separate the name from the function. Mbricks\_mask01 this helps in unreal when we want to find the brick material and then a mask for it when building the material.

All assets need to be imported directly not migrated. I do not mind if you want to test your models out in some random blank project, messing around with whatever, but do not migrate from here to server project. Import your asset fresh and duplicate the settings from the test project to achieve whatever on the server.

In chat we need some uniformity also in naming stuff. Below is what I have devised so communication is clear but also somewhat consistent with general game dev terminology.

SMALL ASSETS:

This will refer to things that help fill the environment. Like test tubes in a lab. Fire extinguisher. Weapons. Wall painting. Lamp. Rug. Shipping container. Cars. They may or may not be usable as character props. I may have to redefine this category but this is generally what game artists call such assets

CHARACTER PROPS:

This is what will be used to define a prop that will be playable. I want to keep these labelled separate so when we talk about character props this is what we mean. I know someone will think it’s a cool idea to slide around as a pack of cigarettes but honestly I think we need to set some differences here. I could be wrong and I will totally get rid of this label.

LARGE ASSETS:

This is what will be used to define large environmental assets like buildings, walls, trees, roads.

FINAL WORDS/THOUGHTS

I want everyone to know that there is no time limit to turn in work. Take care of yourself and family. Work as hard as you can but don’t kill yourself. All games have features, functions, textures, models that just don’t make it into the final cut. Like movies, it is mostly about consistancy, how much time we are gonna spend on something to get that part finished, so don’t be hurt that I didn’t put something in, I’ve said to Icore and DevilsD that I am sure there will be stuff I make that just wont make it in, it is part of the process. I will be making ways to celebrate the team members in artistic ways throughout the game. Maybe a name tag on the wall somewhere in russian cyrillic saying Paul. Who knows. But the point is itll be subtle to not take away from the atmosphere we are creating. That is most important. As artists I will probably never stop saying this but gamers will notice inconsistancy. And they will complain.