***ESCAPE ASYLUM***

**Digital Art Design Project WSOA2006A: Exam Technical Document by Exam Group 16: Anand Ramnarain (2486020), Naadirah Karim (2427389), Anele Mzaza (2375681)**

**Introduction:**

The aim of this exam was to create and build a game that portrays spatial awareness in digital spaces, feedback and communication, design flow through a system, application of movement, user interface, and system expression. Our game is based on an escape room theme but is based on an abandoned asylum, and the genre is a point-and-click adventure game with puzzles implemented into the three levels along with a time limit; the fourth level is more of an exit than an actual puzzle. Escape the asylum or die.

**Specific Creative and Technical Intentions for Selecting the Mechanical Sets for the Game You Created:**

Our intentions for this game were to create a fast-paced game that inflicts stress on the player, using a creepy "escape the asylum" theme to help with this idea. The storyline and the movement from our pitch idea were adjusted in order to develop the narrative, level designs, system, and mechanics, but the overall concept of being drugged and kidnapped remained. The player is drugged and left in the asylum with no electricity. The overall idea of this game is to turn on the electricity, find information about the antidote and how to make it, as well as the passcode to escape the asylum.

**Mechanical descriptions and reasons, related to the above (both ludic and programming):**

It revolves around finishing one task before moving on to the next until the goal is met. The mechanics used include:

**Point:** The point system within this game is created through painkillers. The painkillers are used to increase the player’s survival time by 2 minutes. and the player only gets one syringe every time they enter one of the three available rooms in the asylum, which is an indication of their progress in the game as they have made it to the next stage. 0: The game will end and the player will have died due to the poison or being trapped, which is indicated through the death scene. The game will be completed if the player creates the antidote and leaves the asylum before time runs out. To survive, the player must complete each level as quickly as possible.

**Constraints:** Within levels 2 and 3 of the game, the timer serves as a reminder of the constraint mechanic. This mechanic is used to restrain the player's time and provide a greater sense of urgency. If the player makes the wrong choice, their survival time decreases by one minute, giving them less time to create the antidote and escape trapped. The major constraint in the game is how the player has to complete all three levels to be able to escape the asylum.

**Movement:** The movement through the game is linear, as the players have to move from one room to the next, but changes towards the end to anopen-ended layout as the player is able to go back to the completed stages when the alarm goes off; this is in the hallway connecting each room together in order to figure out the passcode for the exit.

**Level design descriptions and reasons related to the above (both ludic and programming):**

Our goal is to make it enjoyable while also being challenging and, most importantly, transparent. Instead of giving them a click-through-only experience, we want to give them the chance to fully engage with the game. We want to elicit the feeling of "Oh, why did I not do that?" Returning to the idea of making everything plain, give the players fair warning by placing clues around the chambers. The art must support the game's narrative since it is its primary focus. There must be evidence to support the fact that the game is set in an abandoned asylum. Lack of power and old, poor paint in dark spaces made it difficult to demonstrate that this is a true asylum for illegal objects, so we designed two chambers in color.

The goal of the introduction level is to set the tone for the game and instruct or demonstrate how to play to the player. The problems get harder as the game progresses, so it doesn't have to be very easy or extremely difficult. For instance, when they make a mistake on the first level, the timer does not stop; nevertheless, this changes on the subsequent levels. The whole reason of increasing the difficulty in each level was create stress within the player

**Level 1:** The first level is based on the electrical room. Through the alteration of the mouse cursor, the feedback mechanism is used to show the player what they can interact with. The player now has something to work with. The first task is wiring. The player can then click and drag one end of the wire to connect with the other, and this is shown as the wire will move with the mouse if held onto and connected. If the connection is correct, the light on one end will light up. This again is seen in the Breaker task, as when the player clicks on a switch, it will either go on or off, with the light providing feedback to the player if they are on the correct path. The code for the player to escape the first level is set so that once the tasks are completed, the tag on the game object relating to that task is changed to "complete." Then, through the update function, the code checks if both objects have the tag "complete,” and then it will bring up the door for the player to escape the room.

**Level 2:** The first part of level 2 is key to player memory and clues. As the first part is a password system, the player must be able to look around the room and pick up key points to figure out the password to gain access to the computer to figure out what the ingredients for the antidote are. The feedback system is the focus of the level's second half. As seen in the game, if the player chooses the incorrect folder, they lose 1 minute of their time, but if they choose correctly, they increase the progress bar leading to their escape in that room.The code within the incorrect folders is connected through the scripts. In the timer script, there is a function that takes the current time and allows us to decrease it. The timer script is referred to on the erroneous folders via an OnMouseUp function that permits calls for timer decreases, allowing the player to double-click a folder to shorten the duration.

**Level 3:** This level contains two puzzles. The reason for this is that the level of difficulty is related to giving the player two options. Time management is the biggest issue at this level. If the player feels frustrated by one of the puzzles, they have the option to do the other puzzle, but this comes at the risk of losing time from what they have already wasted and inflicting more stress as they could die without finishing the game. One puzzle contains a slide puzzle that is randomized through the code to fix a medicine bottle, thus allowing the antidote to be formed. The second puzzle is related to picking the correct ingredients off the shelf via a list to form the antidote; unfortunately, the disadvantage when picking the incorrect bottles is a decrease in time/lifespan. After completing the antidote, the player is cured of the drug poison and may proceed to leave the asylum.

**Exit Door Passcode:** This is the game's final stage, in which the player must remember specific amounts of objects after completing all of the levels. The passcode is a 3-digit code. Players can return to previous levels to figure out the passcode to the door to leave the asylum.

**System design descriptions and reasons:**

The system design contains the feedback and the user interface, along with communication and balance throughout the game.

**Feedback:** The game relies on feedback from the player as it allows for an indication of what is happening and why. This is seen throughout the game through text and images. other than the playtesting feedback, which made time a factor to fix. Feedback throughout the game is represented through color. Purple is usually a color that is associated with poison or painkillers, and the antidote are usually green or blue, which we implemented. The sound effect of the alarm going off is feedback to the player that the game is not over just because they obtained the antidote; now it's about escaping the asylum.

**User Interface:** The communication displayed between the player and the game allows the player to fully understand what is happening in the game and how certain choices have consequences for them. There are also hints throughout the game that allow the player to understand what they need to complete in each level. The balance represented throughout the game contributes to system design, as does feedback, which also plays a role.

**Critical evaluation of the game you created in relation to the preceding:**

The reason why the storyline had to change from the pitch was because there was a lack of logic and sense to why certain aspects of the game were happening and how the player would communicate with that. The storyline was not completely changed and was still able to keep the dark and mysterious atmosphere throughout the game. The narrative allows the game to flow. In order to cooperate, we had to add a few things, like drugs (medicine) and a clean office that would be perfect for/resemble the "doctor."

**Conclusion:**

Therefore, we can conclude that we, as Exam Group 16, were able to develop our idea into a fully playable game. To display the prerequisites for the game, we developed a useful way to display them. The game has three levels that allow for the difficulty to gradually increase. There are disadvantages and advantages within this game in relation to the player's lifespan (time). The narrative, art, text, and sound effects play a huge role in feedback and the user interface.

**References:** Art made in Krita by group members.

Sound Effects:[1] "pixabay," [Online]. Available: https://pixabay.com/sound-effects/search/fire%20alarm/?manual\_search=1&order=None. [Accessed 19 November 2022].

[2] "Tubidy," [Online]. Available: https://tubidy.com/. [Accessed 15 November 2022].