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CART 360/2 AA: Tangible Media
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THEN: Alternative Remotes Proposal

GitHub Repo: https://github.com/RemiJu/RobertoGutierrez_Cart360/tree/master/ASSIGNMENTS/THEN

The field in which we hoped to intervene was that of game controller interface. Our focus is in game design and we have always been quite interested not only in the games themselves, but how they are played and interacted with. Our project would optimally be presented alongside a developed experience that emphasizes the abilities of the project, along with a regular game in order to present the flexibility of the project and potential compatibility with other games and potential ideas. The main audience would be other game developers, though gamers themselves are also a secondary audience that we would target. The main reason developers are the main audience is because we would like to explore the potential of fabric, or environmental/alternative material based controllers and arduino as a tool for interaction.

Our concept has the potential to affect both target audiences in dramatically different ways. A Gaming audience has the potential to experience games and interact with them in a wholly unique manner as opposed to the more general commercial products. For example: fabric or textile controllers have more malleability than regular controllers along with different ways through which to interact with them that aren't possible with regular controllers at the moment. Developers, on the other hand, have the potential and freedom to explore new ways to build games and interactive experiences based off of the functions that things such as Plush remotes would provide. Taking into account the form and the symbolic significance of the material is an important step into exploring this route that we are really interested in delving further into. With it it'd be possible to both subvert original expectations in regards to gaming and control, as well as recalling previously ingrained ideas and concepts about the chosen materials from childhood and either enforce or oppose them.

Another aspect thats is of interest is how to make the concept readily available to interested audience members in an easy to approach and produce manner. This is so that more people may make use of it, and it can expand its sphere of influence. It is impossible to know for certain whether this concept would permanently change or affect how the chosen material is regarded as a whole, but we truly believe that it could permanently affect the way game remotes and games or interactive experiences themselves would be developed should it be done in the right way. The main goal is to go against what commercial entities often look at as the qualities and ultimate functions of materials, using unorthodox objects as a means to approach high end development, or independent game development.

Our original idea in part follows in part through the key term of “Anthropomorphism”. Example: One part of the project follows the concept of plushies and how this can be used as a controller alternative, while the second follows a different set of ideas on what a controller can be or an environment for play and interaction. The idea of Anthropomorphism comes into play due to associations between the object and a sense of self that is applied to it that comes from meaningfully interacting or connecting with it.

The idea is ultimately to study how people interact with different objects in order to achieve certain outcomes. Do a person’s prior preconceptions cause them to gravitate towards a certain type of object, and further, do these preconceptions also affect how they interact with the object meaningfully? Do certain people have an easier time than others succeeding with one type of controller than the other? And so forth. Another theme we are exploring is that of “Toys”. How different types of toys, which have existed for so long, such as plushies or action figures, can be used in new ways through digital game integration. Taking into account things such as the physical world, the Toy’s properties/material qualities and how these same toys are seen by children growing up, the emotions they evoke. What I hope to ultimately pursue is a game that incorporates the use of the plush or toy directly into the digital space. Currently I personally recall the idea of Guardians, and how I used to use plush toys as a means of relieving stress and feeling safer, I want to try and convey something similar if possible.

Similar Projects:

Projects exploring similar Ideas or general concept as my own:

Hexed Heart:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lolOV0IFHDw

Hexed Heart is a project in which an on screen figure is manipulated by an external Handmade device. This device uses the interesting properties of screws as the input method, in which they must be turned in a certain way to have the desired effect. This is similar to one of the ideas I had, and perhaps what could be considered the main idea. It being a project in which the manipulations of the plush would affect the on screen element to a certain degree, in order to achieve the desired effect. Though it does make use of interesting inputs that regular remotes aren't usually capable of, it is a type of input that I believe could be integrated in many different builds. The possible general purpose of the built remote appeals to me to a degree, but it feels more like a specific box for this game rather than a Toy that has transformed into something else, which I want to explore.

Vaccination:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vusNUvvzbJ4

Vaccination is a really interesting project. It is a two player asymmetrical cooperative game game. One of the players scans the body on screen searching for what needs to be vaccinated, and the other player handles vaccination to be rid of the viruses through an Arduino built interface, inspired by the classic 'Operation' Board Game. Originally for the project I had a similar Idea as a means of implementing multiple types of controller, as well as making it easier for my partner to explore alternate control builds, as I was pretty set on working with textiles. This didn't end up working out however. The original concept was inspired by the story of Guigemar, which I had recently read. This was due to my partner wanting to build a remote which acts as a ship and tracks position to transfer to game. I thought this was fitting as the story is about a knight in search of the one to cure their wound, and is led there by a magical ship which they have no control over and moves on its own, as per the whims of fate. It didn't end up working out however.

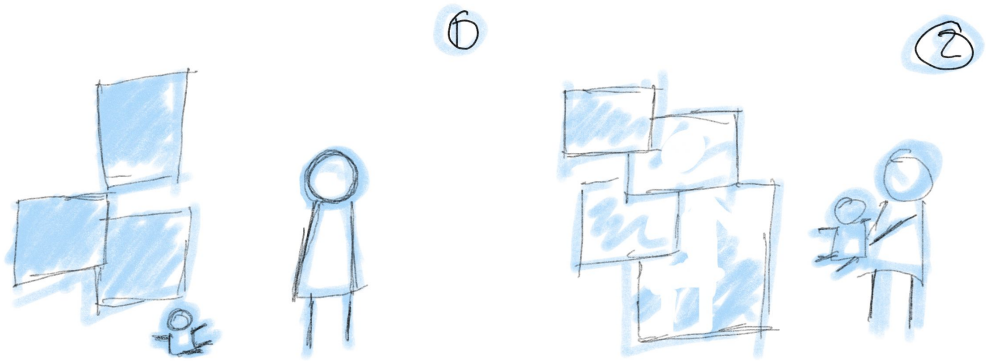
Arduino Game Controller:

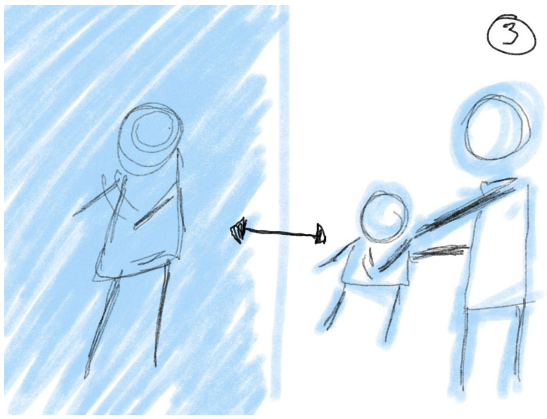
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6HfvNa7VteY

https://howtomechatronics.com/projects/arduino-game-controller/

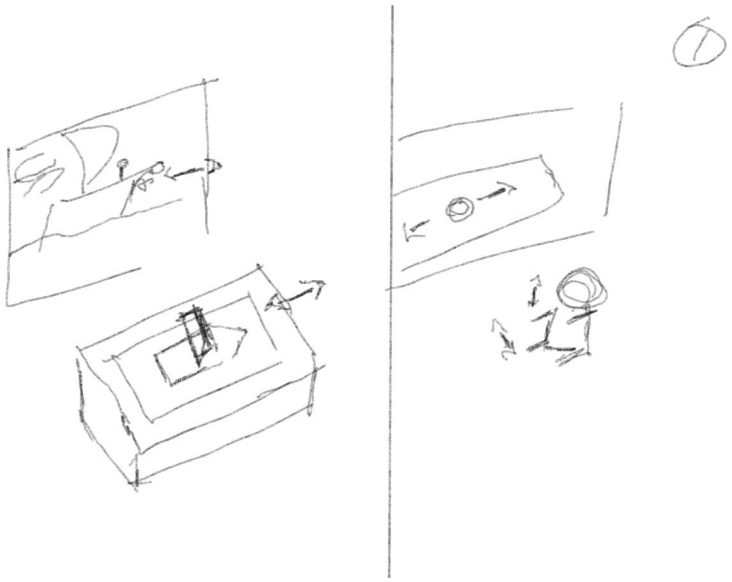
How to Mechatronics' arduino Remote is a fairly common type of remote integration. Many projects can be found online which make remotes that replicate old remote models or add on commercial remotes. This particular project is a clear reference to the Nintendo Power Glove. Nevertheless it is an impressive project, and the way to integrate the remote to the game may be a good reference down the line. My Ideas differ from this project however.

Storyboard:

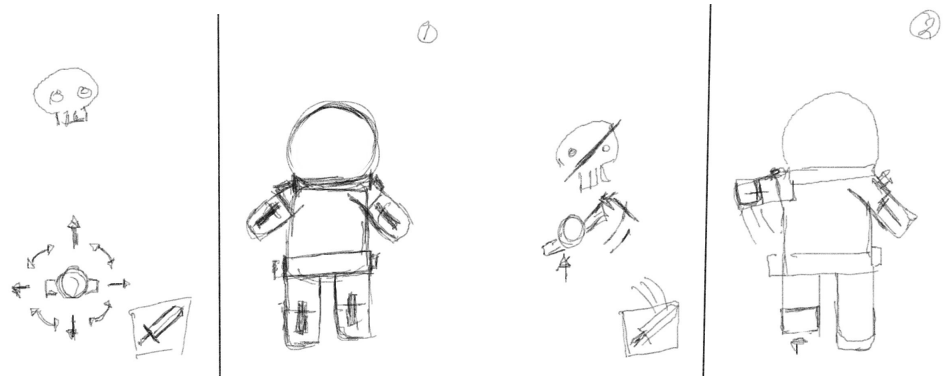




Transfer Plush Movements to Screen Character.



Basic display of how ship and Knight would interact. Ship navigates world, while knight must maintain ship and self. Catch food, rest, fight enemies, etc. All while on deck.



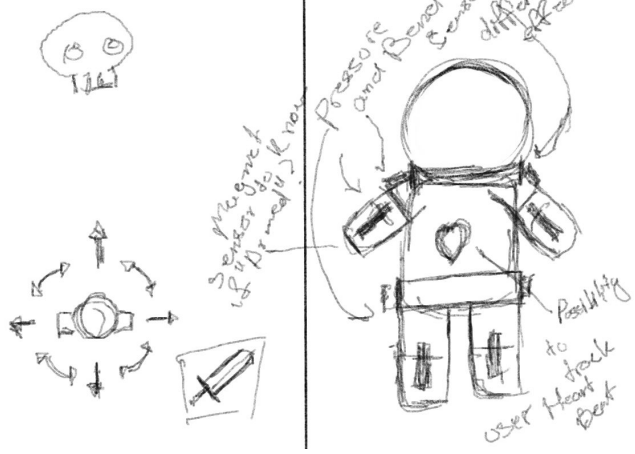


Diagram and sketch for how plush would be set up, as well as how it would affect the on screen character.