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Fellowship Planning Document

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Project Concept

Primary Goal

The primary goal of the game “Division” is for two players to work together to solve platformer puzzles in order to beat levels.

Environment / Setting

The game’s environment involves small chambers where both players must reach the exit together. Currently these environments are abstract in aesthetic with a very low-poly and geometric look and feel.

Mood

The mood of the game should feel whimsical as there are ways for the players to both help and potentially hurt one another in each level. The game should feel challenging but not so much so that it cannot eventually be solved through trial and error. Deaths should feel comical and not serious.

Overview

Project Nature

The nature of “Division” is that of a co-op game that forces players to work together in order to progress. One player cannot beat a level without their companion so communication should be a key aspect of the game. Each level is meant to involve only a few puzzles at a time to give the feeling of a quick experience of progression.

Genre / Experience

The genre of the game is a multiplayer 3D platformer/puzzler with a focus on providing the two players a co-op experience.

Inspiration

Aspects of “Division” are inspired by many different games. The puzzle mechanics are inspired by “Portal” and “Portal 2”. The camera and player controller style is inspired by “Super Mario 3D World”. Lastly the player interactions are inspired by asymmetrical gameplay elements from games like “Team Fortress 2” or even the idea of roles that players play in a game like “DoTA2”.

Engagement Techniques

Rank of Techniques for Achieving Engagement Type

“Division” primarily focuses on the Fellowship engagement type. In order of importance, “Division” uses the following techniques to help achieve this engagement type:

1. **Cooperation**: Most puzzles in the game involve one person doing something to help the other, the game puts a high emphasis on cooperating in order to succeed.
2. **Benefaction**: The different forms a player can take involve giving or taking mass from the other player so a certain level of benefaction comes into play. At times a player may need to shield the other player using their larger mass or even sacrifice themselves so one player can make it through.
3. **Affiliation**: Respect for the other player is needed in order to work well together, but there are certainly ways in which the players can mess each other up whether it is intentional or not.

Mechanics

Core Mechanics List and Implementation

Considering that “Division” is a 3D platformer, the mechanics that follow are primarily related to this genre. There are, however, mechanics that are unique to this game which involve the co-op experience. My goal is to get as much as possible out of just a few mechanics in order to be efficient. These co-op mechanics are subject to change depending on the degree of which they reinforce the co-op nature of this game:

**Mechanics:**

* Movement
* Running
* Jumping
* Wall-Jumping
* Linking
* Transfer Mass
* Bouncing Off Of The Other Player
* Swallow Player
* Shoot Out Player
* Sink
* Float
* Activate Button
* Squash Enemy
* Block Projectile

Controls

Control Scheme and Layout

“Division” has simple controls that should be familiar to anyone who has played a platformer using a gamepad, but with the additions of mechanic specific controls found in “Division”:

**Gamepad Controls:**

* Left Analog Stick: Movement
* A Button: Jump
* Left Trigger: Run
* Right Bumper: Toggle Link
* Right Trigger: Transfer Mass
* Start Button: Pause Menu

User Interface

UI Breakdown

Due to the small nature of the levels and the top-down isometric view of the game, the UI is shared between both players in “Division”. The UI features a game timer, level name, cubes collected, and a shared lives system. As levels are completed there is a level recap screen that shows the how well the players did as far as time and cubes collected are concerned. I imagine that there could also be a game over and level countdown timer per level, as well. The standard menu and pause system of start a new game/resume game, controls, credits and quit game are also elements to consider. The game is still early in conception so more UI elements might come up during the production of the game.

Learning

Primary Teaching Methods for Players

“Division” will feature an in-game learning system where the early levels will introduce the players to the controls of the game and simple platforming. Sequential levels will use simple versions of puzzles that highlight different mechanics in the game in order to solve them. Through carefully curated levels that introduce the mechanics of the game I expect the players to be able to learn the game as they play. However, if playtesting shows that this is not enough I will consider using text overlay and graphical examples for learning, as well.

Feedback

Visual Feedback Systems

I’ll be making use of particle systems, screen shake, colors, and screen overlay text in order to provide feedback to the players for their actions. The biggest concern I have is consistency so that players will quickly begin to associate the feedback presented with what I’m trying to communicate to them.

Audio Feedback Systems

I’ll be making used of sound effects in conjunction with the visual feedback systems in order to effectively communicate feedback to the players. Just like the visual feedback, I will be sure to use the sound effects consistently so that the feedback is quickly understood and learned.

Focal Points

Key Visual Landmarks

Because I’ll be using a low poly art style in “Division” I’ll be restricting my environments to geometrical shapes with limited color scheme per level in order to provide key visuals in the game. Just like with feedback, I want the interactive elements or puzzles to be consistently represented through form and color, as well.

Art Assets

Art Assets List

The art assets I’ll need for “Division” are subject to change, as I will be making these assets myself, and currently are listed as follows:

**Art Assets:**

* Player Models (small/med/large)
* Button Model
* Gate Model
* Water Texture
* Ground Texture
* Death Zone Model/Texture
* Gravity Swap Model
* Turret
* Projectile
* Exit Portal
* Basic Enemy Model
* Controls Diagram
* Tutorial Images
* Title Logo

Audio Assets

Audio Assets List

The audio assets I’ll need for “Division” are subject to change, and will be comprised of assets I make and assets that I use from the DigiPen sound library. These assets are currently are listed as follows:

**Audio Assets:**

* Button Hover
* Button Selected
* Menu Music
* Player Death
* Player Start
* Transfer Mass
* Gravity Swap
* Button Activated
* Level Completed
* Projectile Hit
* Jump
* Player Swallow
* Enemy Death
* Game Over

Risks & Mitigations

Specific Risks

The biggest concern I have for risks involve the scope of my game in its conceptual form. Right now I’m planning on making a 3D game but this could potentially make things more complicated. I also might be planning on doing too many mechanics. Because I have a lot of potential puzzles that I can make with these mechanics I might have too much to learn and too much content to create.

Specific Mitigations

In order to mitigate the over scope that I might have in “Division” I’m prepared to work on my mechanics in 3D firstly in order to see if I can do this quickly or not. If I feel like it is taking too much time to do everything that I need to do in a 3D environment I will be scrapping the idea of doing this game in 3D by the end of next week in favor of a 2D environment of which I’m more comfortable working in. If there is still too much to do as far as mechanics go I might cut the transfer mass mechanic due to potential issues with physics and the player controllers. Lastly, if I cut this mechanic I’ll probably consider focusing primarily as a co-op platformer with less variety in puzzles to make a more focused experience.