

Project RPG

Moving to Montreal 2 months ago has led to the most change I have ever experienced in my life. All of it has been overwhelmingly positive. I had previously been struggling with a lack of self belief and self efficacy. I wanted to work on creative projects, but always felt as if I was light years away from being able to create something which I would perceive to have value. A major reason that this is no longer the case has been from my experience in this Computation Arts degree. I went from doing almost nothing productive with my time, to learning 3 programming languages along with a variety of other creative skills. I feel unstoppable with what I can achieve with how much I have been enjoying my courses. The fantastic support and assistance that my friends and professors have provided me has allowed me to thrive during this transition.

Despite my constant obsession with video games growing up, I always viewed game design in the same light as rocket science. I could not comprehend how indie developers could put forward games like Celeste and Undertale. However, with each passing week in CART 253, the blinding complexities of these games began to peel away. After discovering the p5.play library extension, I saw that I had the knowledge and resources available to actually put forward a decent game. The main theme I want my game to revolve around comes from another aspect of my life I had been struggling with; human connection. A theme I hope many will relate with due to the pandemic.

The vision I have for this game can be described as a pixelated top down perspective role playing game, with a focus placed more on dialogue and art instead of combat and progression. It can therefore also be described as an interactive visual novel, which looks and plays like a RPG. Narrative wise, my idea can be summarised as a story where the user controls a protagonist who is clearly unhappy with his life. I plan to reflect this through the early portion of the game's art and sound, as well as through the phone feature. The protagonist will have a gender neutral design, along with them having no dialogue besides that of which the user selects. This is to help make sure any user is able to connect with the protagonist. After the user is given a reason to leave his house and go outside, they eventually bump into a stranger after exploring the sad lonely city. Let's call this character the 'friend'. The two hit it off, and decide to venture away from the city.

At the bottom right of the screen, the user has access to a smartphone. It will have 4 apps; messages, camera, music, and a game. The messages app will be used to help set the story's exposition. The camera app only has a selfie mode. When used, it prints a picture of the users face along with a background depending on where the user is. If the user is standing next to the friend, it prints a picture of both of them. The music app

simply plays a selected song. The game app will be unplayable until you meet the friend.

Technically, this concept comes with an array of challenges. The first would be understanding and learning to utilize the p5.play library. Learning regular p5 functions was made easy by the resources available on moodle and github. There is unfortunately a lack of demonstrative tutorials on the internet about the p5.play library. This means that explanations of each function from the library's author is all I will have to work with. Secondly, I have not worked with object oriented programming long enough to have a crystal clear idea of how all of it works. For the amount of code that is required for my game, the use of OOP will be necessary. However I am confident that in due time, I will improve enough to get to the level I need to be at. Finally, I imagine handling multiple states, events, and objects simultaneously is only going to get more difficult the more code I add to the program. I will need to remember to regularly save drafts of my code as I keep making progress. Patience and mindfulness will also be imperative for when things eventually go wrong.

Artistically, working with so many new art forms is as daunting as it is exciting. I have not worked with pixel art, nor have I written a script for a game before. I am making sure not to write off pixel art as 'easy' or 'simple', and that I put time and love into the art form whilst also constantly thinking about ways I can innovate and add my own creative touches. Writing wise, I am relying on the fact that the themes, ideas and emotions I am trying to represent are all ones I strongly relate with already. The challenge is being able to translate my subjective experiences and thoughts in a more general and relatable manner.

Innovation and creativity are 2 ideas which have constantly been stressed in this course. My game's spine and core concepts are based on conventions which have already been thoroughly explored in the indie game scene. It is therefore my responsibility to make sure I pay special attention to working on unique concepts and touches which will be scattered throughout the simulation. I do have a fair share of ideas I feel have not been fully fleshed out in top down RPGs before. Furthermore, I am not going to be limiting myself to having 100 percent of my gameplay play as a top down RPG. I see plenty of opportunities to add mini-games and interactions which will allow me to express more out of the ordinary ideas.

One aspect I need to pay extra attention to is the style of my code. Not doing so for project 1 was a crucial mistake. I have gotten into the habit of committing after progress is made. I plan to go over my code with friends of mine who are also into programming to see if they find any of my formatting, commenting, and variable/function names to be

confusing or misleading. I previously ignored the value of this since I would tunnel vision on making my program function and appear better. This time I will not make the same mistake.

The color pallette I will mostly be sticking to



The first draft of my character design



Wireframe of how the page will be organized

8 bit themed background
with colors and imagery
related to the games
themes and ideas

