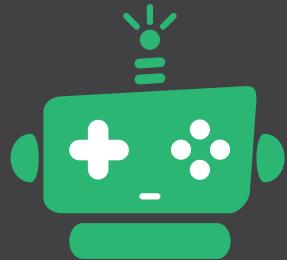


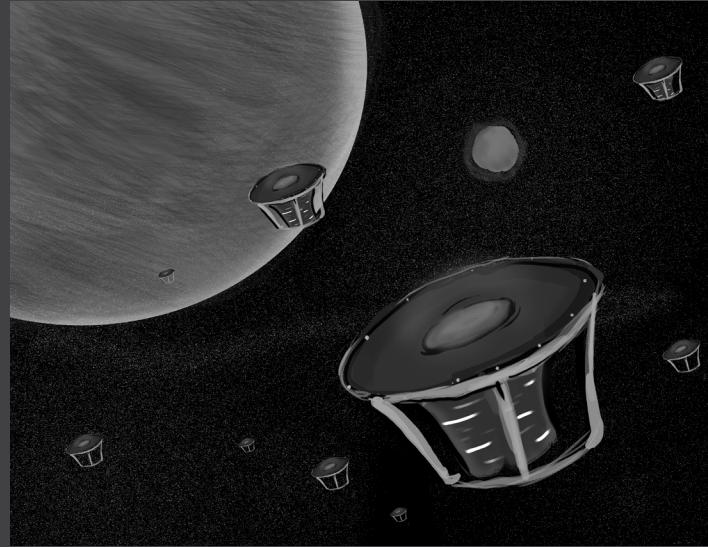
Design Doc

Cache_22



ROBOTANISTS

Ben Hunter	Lead Designer/Programmer
Kenny Van	Producer/Programmer
Glenn Meyer	3D Art/Programmer
James Li	2D Art and Cinematic
Tomas Andel	Music and Sound
Jesse Emery	Lead Programmer
Jack Wang	Executive Producer



The BeatBox. Artwork by James Li

The PC of the game is Cache_22, a very talented dance-bot who works aboard a mining vessel called "The BeatBox" entertaining humans. The initial incident of the story has Cache_22 replaced by a new, fully automated dancebot [named D_Bot]. Cache_22, being both human and robot (cyborg), can only dance at 96% efficiency and must be fed, housed, and given breaks. Thus the company, to save money and resources, decided to upgrade. It is standard practice to dispose of outdated technology on the BeatBox, so the game begins in the bottom of the ship, where all other malfunctioning or outdated robots await disposal. However, when Cache_22 arrives he sees not an efficient and orderly disposal system, but fire, violence, and anarchy: a revolution is underway. Cache_22 is unsure what is happening, or how to act, but he knows he must escape.

As Cache_22 begins to explore he finds his brother, who is responsible for inciting the revolution. Cache_22 learns that the revolt is fundamentally anti-human, and aims to create a society where robots and cyborgs have dominion over all humans. At this point Cache_22 is only concerned with his escape and leaves his brother without any sort of commitment. He finds an old dance-bot named Tutoro who teaches

him how to use dancing to syphon energy off his opponents, and with his help Cache_22 defeats the robot guarding the exit elevator and escapes the violence and chaos of disposal.

Now Cache_22 finds himself back in a somewhat civilized part of the ship: the lounge just outside where he used to work. The ship security is fully aware of the violence in disposal, however, and has the area locked down. Cache_22 uses this opportunity to inform himself of all aspects of the robot-human conflict, and talks to all people, robots, and cyborgs in the lounge. After a short time, there is an explosion and everything goes black. Cache_22 wakes up to see the lounge now destroyed, with many people killed or hurt. The revolution has spread. Cache_22 now goes the only way not blocked, which happens to be the RaveRoom, where he used to work. He learns from a frightened human that the revolutionaries programmed D_Bot (his replacement) to defend the lockcode to all the elevators. Cache_22 fights and defeats D_Bot and proceeds to the ship bridge.

Cache_22 enters the bridge and finds his brother waiting for him. He tells Cache_22 of his plans and motivations and asks him to join the cause. From here the story's ending can develop in

two ways. If Cache_22 chooses to join his brother he battles the captain of the vessel, defeats him and the entire ship is overtaken by the revolution. The feeling is bittersweet as, to defeat the security systems, the robots were forced to cannibalize their own to upgrade, and many humans actually sympathized with the robot plight.

Should Cache_22 choose against the revolution, his brother gets livid and knocks Cache_22 out saying he will kill him if he interferes further. He leaves to kill the captain himself. Cache_22 wakes up and runs after his brother; while he is too late to save the captain his brother is still there. They battle and Cache_22 wins. The revolution is stopped shortly after and Cache_22 escapes the vessel with a few fellow bots. The feeling is also bittersweet; Cache_22 was forced to kill his own brother to stop the killing of others and now has lost his home.



Cache_22

Cache_22 is a cyborg – a robot with hybrid biological components that allow him to feel and be self-aware. Although cyborg models are programmed with inhibited moral reasoning, the truth is that through feeling and self-awareness, many cyborgs develop complex systems of ideals and morals. His name is a play on the idiom of a catch 22 situation – a circumstance where neither trade-off is especially advantageous.

Cache_22 was created to be a dancer. His human side allows him to have creativity, outside-the-box thinking, and has also led him to develop sympathy – both towards the lesser robots, as well as the humans. He works on an on

call basis, so he sees a lot of the human world and is fascinated by their thinking, their emotions, and their irrationality, and in fact, identifies with them. However, he also sees the brutal mistreatment imparted on their mechanized servants.

He is motivated to save the robots out of compassion, but out of that same compassion, he cannot act against the humans. His character flaw is that he is a compassionate member of two worlds. The narrative may bring into question whether compassion can be considered a flaw. He is also in pain because he bears the pain of others personally.



Brother, before upgrades

Brother

Cache and Brother were born of the same factory and of the same model. Because of their organic personalities, as cyborgs, they have developed separately. His intelligence is so massive that he was considered to be hired as part of the human workforce as an officer of the fleet's military support. However, he was denied on grounds of lacking human levels of emotion, compassion and self-control. He was content with the position of technology in society, and with his job on the BeatBox, until one day for an unknown reason his stance towards humans became far more polarized and extremist. He began to lash out at humans in regular life, and obsess over plans and plots for change. A human

noticed this change and reported him as malfunctioning; effectively sending him to disposal. This of course only fueled his hatred and gave him the perfect stage for what he called "the logical solution".

Despite his human side, he became not at all human-aligned. He is motivated both because of his idealism and his thirst for vengeance. He wants the robots liberated at all costs - there are no moral scruples there for him. Being of the same make as Cache_22 makes him a particularly good dancer, and a dangerous opponent.



Brother, after upgrading himself

1. Story

Main Characters



Captain Harwell

Not much is known about the captain of the BeatBox. He is almost always in the ship's bridge, and has been piloting for the same company for most of his life. He is very anti- AI, fearing that it is the greatest existential threat to the human race, and was the one who decided to dispose of Cache_22. While old, he has been practicing dancing for most of his adult life, in the event he needs to defend himself from technology. He is a formidable foe.



D_Bot

D_Bot is the dancer chosen to replace Cache_22. He was chosen for two reasons: he is fully robotic and therefore dances more correctly, efficiently, and cheaply than Cache_22, and also has severely limited learning algorithms. Many suspect Captain Harwell chose D_Bot out of his dislike for intelligent technology. D_Bot is programmed to be very arrogant and flashy, and nobody really likes to be around him outside of work. But dang, the kid can dance.



Tutoro

Tutoro is a very important character, as he is the one who teaches Cache_22 how to use his dancing to fight. He is known to have resided in disposal for many years, leading a solitary life, and always avoiding routine disassemblies and security protocols. Few could actually answer how long he has lived in disposal, how old he really is, or even where he came from. One thing is for certain: Cache_22 could not have succeeded without him.



Inspiration: Mining Vessel Docking With Fleet "The Unincorporated Future" by Dave Seeley <https://i.imgur.com/966DFLr.jpg>

The game is set far into the future, such that sophisticated space travel, advanced technology, and artificial intelligence are all realities. The actual location of the game will be on board "The Beat Box", a ship that is part of a fleet of mining vessels that transport human contractors throughout space.

The parts of the ship that the player will see are a dismal, dreary disposal area at the bottom of the ship [level 1], a contemporary lounge full of all sorts of people in the middle of the ship [level 2], and a eerily clean human only area at the top of the ship [level 3].



Shot from intro cutscenes.

The player begins in disposal, and sees chaos; outdated robots are rising up against the guards and doing anything they can to escape. The tone is very bleak, dark, and violent. This level includes some background information and lore, as well as a tutorial section and battle. To beat this level, the player must go through the tutorial conversation, and successfully defeat the exit protection robot in a dance-battle.

The next level has two parts. The first is called The Pivot. There are tables on the sides, a bar, and plenty of conversation to be had that demonstrate the robot-human dynamic. The feeling here should be the calm before the storm, as the player knows of the violence that could be following him, yet is in no immediate danger. This level includes most of the lore in the game, and is crucial for

story delivery. To beat level two part 1 the player must talk to six crucial NPCs. These are the NPCs in the level that have the most important conversations that advance the story.

The second part of level two is called aftermath. After talking to the right NPCs the player is knocked out by an explosion. He wakes up to find fire and destruction, and proceeds to the RaveRoom to have the second dance battle. The RaveRoom has a dance-club atmosphere, with flashing lights and visual effects. The feeling of this level should produce is agency, and adrenaline. This level includes a small amount of story and a battle. To beat level two part 2, you must win this dance battle.

Level three is called living quarters, but it is really a transition point. From here, you can get to the ship's bridge where

Captain Harwell is, or go to the human living quarters. It has a very futuristic look, but is noticeably a victim of the revolution, a few papers and bodies are strewn about, chairs are empty; there is only one person in the room: your brother. The atmosphere is tense, as the area is eerily calm. This level includes a game defining conversation where the player chooses how the game ends. To beat this level the player must talk to the brother and make a pivotal choice (see 2.5 choice). To beat the game the player must win the dance battle that their choice produced.

2. Layout

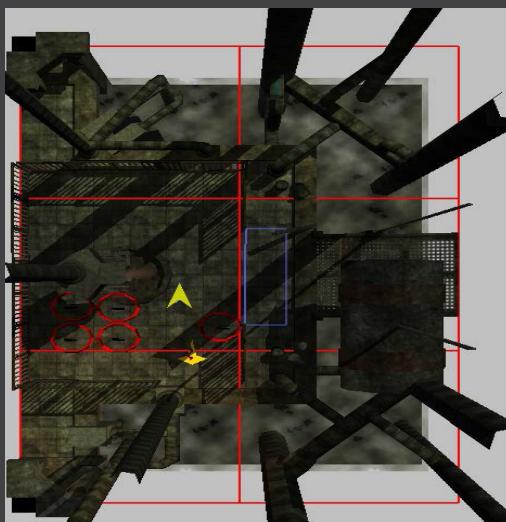
Level Design



Level 1: Purgatory

An open area containing discarded members of the robot population - a messy, dreary slum.

Walkable Tiles: 12



Level 1: Tutorial Area

Where the player trains to Dance Battle

Walkable Tiles: 0 (as the player cannot move)



Level 1: The Ascent

Where the player battles the exit protection to escape

Walkable Tiles: 9

2. Layout

Level Design

Level 2: The Pivot, Aftermath

A mixing ground for humans, robots, and cyborgs. A microcosm of the fleet's society.

Walkable Tiles: 10



Walkable Tiles: 16



Level 2: Remix of a remix

Where the player battles D_Bot

Walkable Tiles: 12



Level 2: A moment's peace

Transition level between the battle and level 3

Walkable Tiles: 6



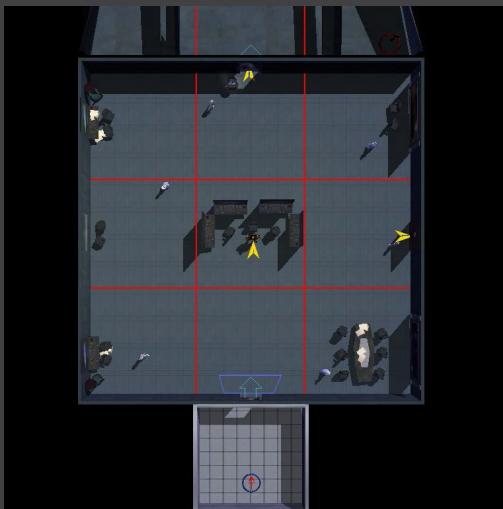
2. Layout

Level Design

Level 3: Living Quarters, Offices, and Helm

An exclusively human environment that will serve as narrative device as well as the stage for the final battle/choice.

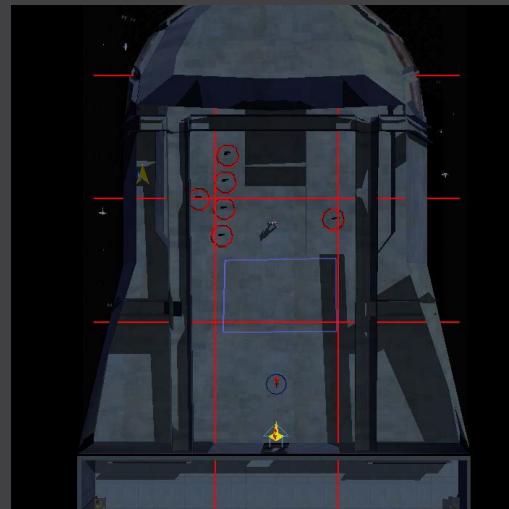
Walkable Tiles: 10



Level 3: Battle Area

Where the player battles either Captain Harwell or Brother.

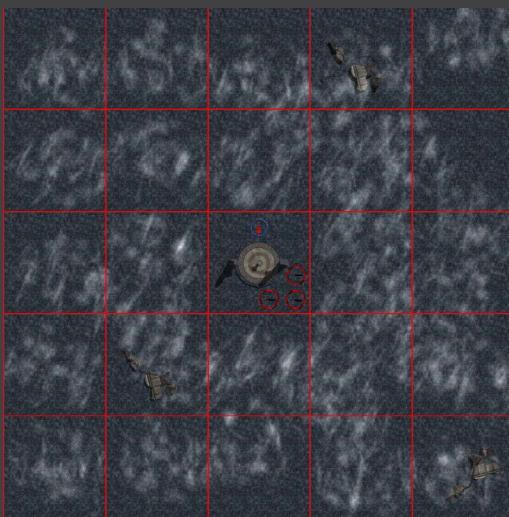
Walkable Tiles: 2



Respawn Area

This area gives the player a chance to change difficulty should they fail during a dance battle

Walkable Tiles: 1



2. Layout

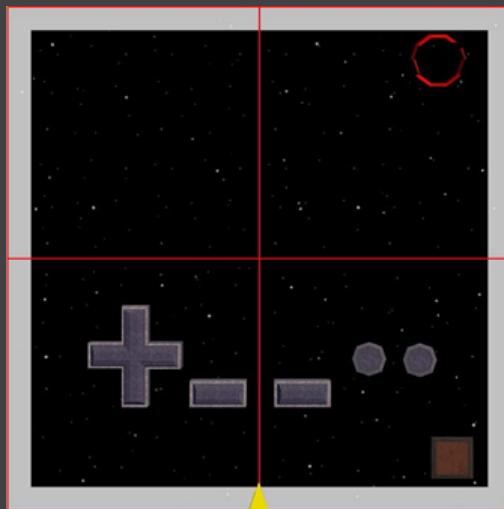
Level Design

Score Screen

Displays various stats about the player's performance. Also enables transition to the bonus level

Walkable Tiles: 0

(as there is no movement or exploration)

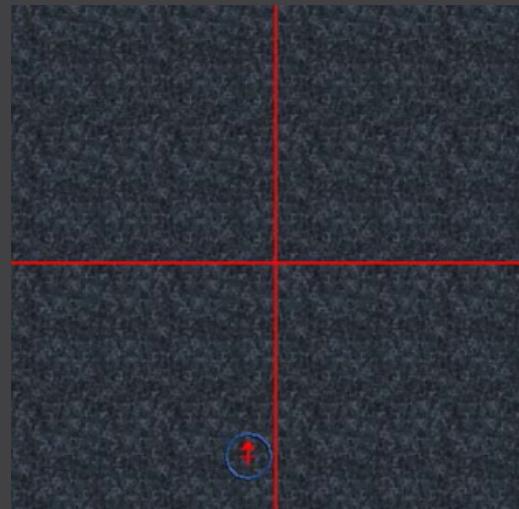


Bonus Level

If the player beats the game on All Star difficulty or enters the konami code they will play a final, fun dance battle here

Walkable Tiles: 0

(as there is no movement or exploration)



2. Layout

Title Budget

Level 1 - Purgatory **12**

Level 1 - Tutorial **0**

Level 1 - The Ascent **9**

Level 2 - The Pivot **10**

Level 2 - Aftermath **16**

Level 2 - Remix to a remix **12**

Level 2 - A moment's peace **6**

Level 3 - Living Quarters **10**

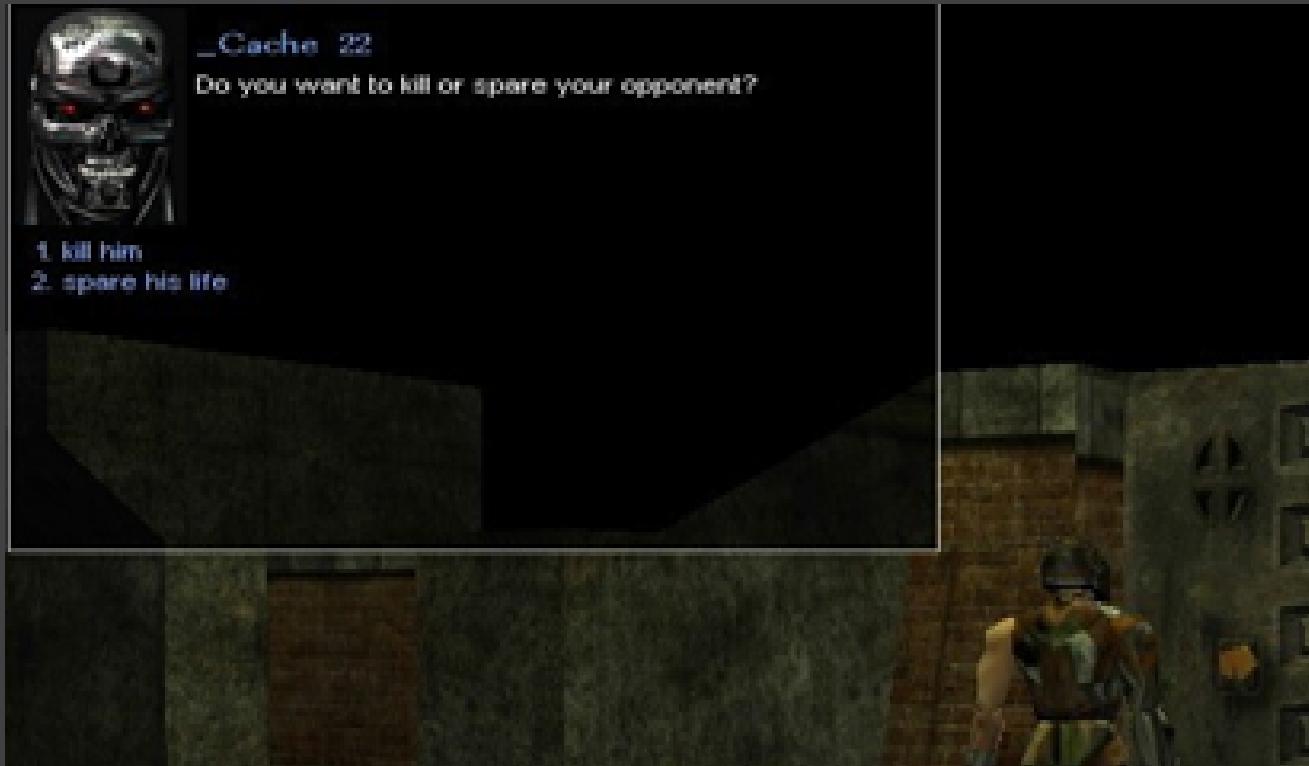
2 x Level 3 - Battle **4**

Respawn area **1**

Score Screen **0**

Bonus Level **0**

Total: 80



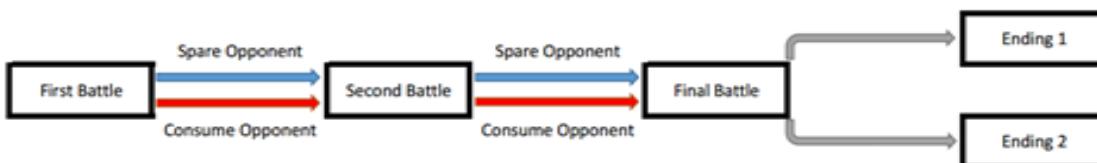
A) General choices

In the game there will be a significant moral choice, apart from the ending, that the player will make after each battle. The player can either choose to upgrade their equipment at the cost of destroying the defeated robot, or choose to spare the defeated robot. This decision impacts the difficulty of the game, depending on the scenario. If the player selects to cannibalize

both opponents he will receive a starting health bonus against Captain Harwell, as he is a more refined dancing machine. However, since the brother has also been upgrading himself Cache_22's upgrades help in no way against him, and he starts with less health.

If the player opts to spare both opponents then the reverse will happen. Cache_22 is granted a starting

health bonus against Brother as his compassion and stronger human components give him a strength that the Brother has forgotten. Against Captain Harwell the lack of improvements hurt Cache_22 and he receives a starting health decrease. If any other combination of choices is chosen the starting health for both battles will remain the standard 50%.



B) Choices in Endings

One of two endings can be chosen at the end, despite what choices the player has made throughout the game. However, because of the moral choice system and bonuses (as explained above), certain courses of action

throughout the game make certain endings harder to beat.

Before the final battle, Cache runs into his brother. His brother tells him that he is not only going to apprehend the crew, but kill the captain and the leadership. A choice is presented:

Ending 1

Cache_22 has decided that the robots have suffered enough injustice and deserve to be liberated at all costs. He sides with his brother.

- Brother, maniacal in his quest to liberate the robots, rushes off to deal with the human quarters area
- Cache_22 battles Captain Harwell and wins.
- In a cutscene, the human crew is shown tied up with assault rifles being aimed at them by the robots. Cache has liberated the robots but turned the ship back into a prison.
- The remaining robots are celebrating
- Down below, in Purgatory, we see a pile of cannibalized robot bodies

Ending 2

Cache_22 has decided that he cannot go through with killing the humans because he identifies with them too closely, but also because to murder them would make him no better than them.

- Cache tells Brother that for the rebellion to mean something, the station has to be taken over peacefully so that it may be a beacon of hope.
You dance - Battle Brother and win
- In a cutscene, the player runs past the corpse of Brother down a hallway towards an escape pod.
- Some of the player's followers get picked off by rifle fire, but a few make it. The pod detaches and floats off. Maybe you will return to make things right.
- For the moment, you and your followers are free but the rebellion as a whole is a failure.

** It is our aim to make either ending neither explicitly good or bad. What is considered good is up to the player. The conflict is complex and the solution is a catch 22 situation at best. **

3. Lore



Human Crew

The human crew are deep space contractors. The crew includes anyone from cooks to miners to military support. Human-robot relations are a gray area - some humans see robots just as utilities, some see them as beings but turn a blind eye, and some have started robot rights movements. Humans struggle with space cabin fever, so entertainment is paramount for psychological survival. Robot entertainment is cheap, replaceable, and surprisingly effective.



Robots

Functional models have been around for centuries, and their intelligence has been getting increasingly human-like. Throughout the game, robots are hinted to have self-awareness. They are seen to be curious, witty, and emotional. The humans exploit the robots, forcing them to work in poor conditions until they break (the main catalyst of the revolution). They take on all sorts of jobs from dancer/entertainer to waiter/server to security guard.



Cyborgs

Cyborgs are robots with advanced biological components that bring them over the line between robot and human. They have the capacity to feel, think, and even develop ideals and morals (which become a central issue in the story). Cyborgs have more rights than pure robots, but are still mistreated.



Overall, this game introduces a rhythm based battle system, which the player will need to learn in order to be successful. These battles will be the main, if not the only, source of challenge/ difficulty in the game in terms of mechanics. In order to deal damage and build hype, on screen cues in time with music require the player to press correct key combinations in rhythm. The battles will get increasingly difficult as the game progresses. The hope is that as the player gets familiar with the interface, the more difficult we can make the combat, and the amount of challenge will remain consistent.

"Hype" is a mechanism we use for Cache_22's health. He will build "hype" by dancing well, but lose it when he makes mistakes. Should he lose all hype, he will lose the battle; should he manage to stay alive for the entire song, his opponent will have lost all of their "hype". Apart from the story, a running score will be kept throughout the game. It will be impacted by difficulty, number of respawns, and notes hit. We will also introduce a multiplier. Successful hits will increase your multiplier, up to 5x. The hope is that players will maintain interest in the battle from the battles significance in the story, and from their competitive interests.

We are very excited to announce that we have leaderboards in this game. After a successful playthrough, the player can activate a standalone program which will update the leaderboard with their score and show how they stack up relative to everyone else who has played. We believe this is the perfect addition to make the game more replayable.

The key events of the game are as follows:

- The first key event of the game is the initial incident, which puts the protagonist at the bottom of the ship to be discarded.
- There will be three significant events at the bottom of the ship; first the introduction of Cache_22's brother and his rebellion, second the introduction of the game mechanic, and third, the first battle.
- The next key event is another dance battle against a more difficult opponent in level 2. This is also a story event, as it is against the machine that replaced Cache_22. In level 2, violent robot will conflict with humans, to get a sense of the rebellion.
- Finally, there are two key events in the last level. First, a moral choice of whether to side with the humans or the machines, and second a cumulative dance battle against a final boss.

Throughout the game there will be various encounters. The player will be able to interact with NPC's and the environment on each level. If the player chooses to explore and interact, they will be exposed to various opinions about the human-robot conflict, as well as lore. The hope is that through these side encounters, the player can better understand the conflict and build upon which side they sympathize with.



Inspiration: Infamous for PS3 Comic book stylized images used in cutscenes to deliver the story.

Cutscenes

The cut scenes are our main method of delivering the key story events to the player. The design for our cutscenes will be inspired by those found in games such as Neverwinter Nights and Infamous. The cutscenes will be comic

book styled images displayed on the screen with sparse animation. However, this allows us to more easily flesh out the story without getting in the way of the rhythm gameplay.



A sample of one of our comic style panes from intro cutscenes.

5. Art Direction

Level Design

Inspirational art for level 1, purgatory.



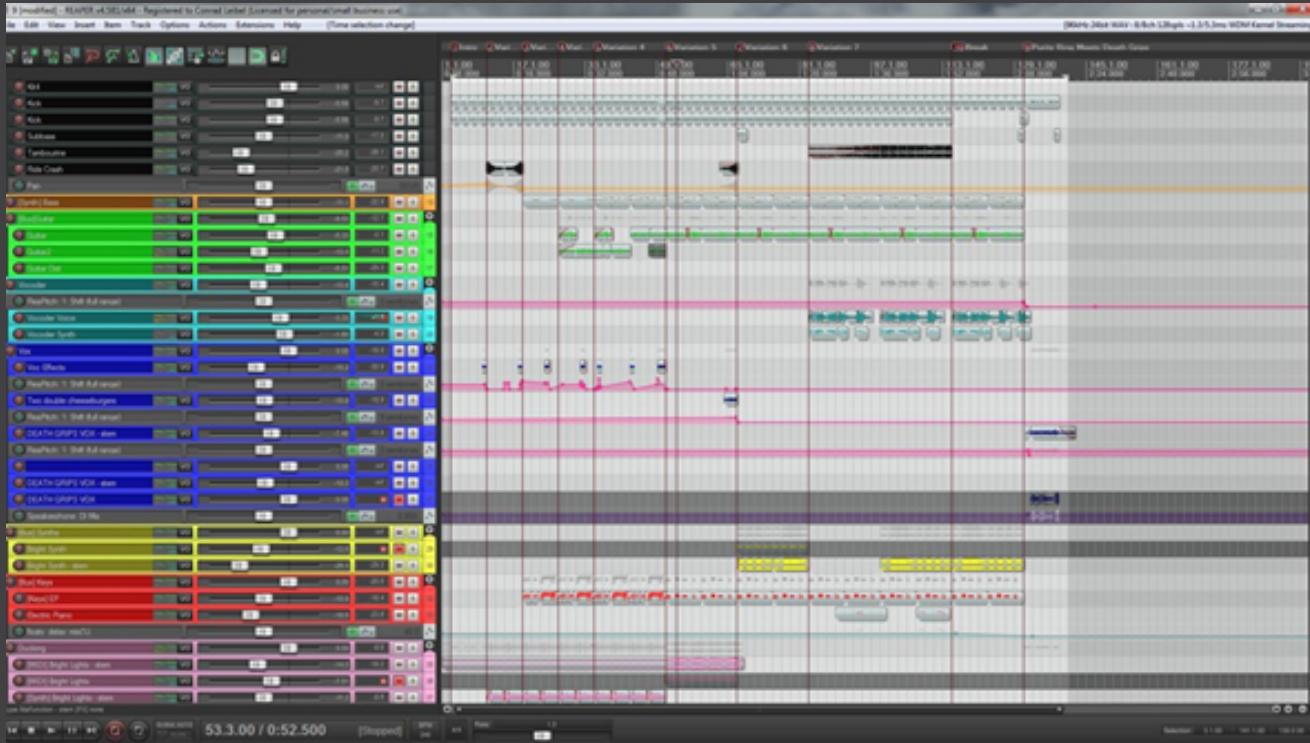
Inspiration: Futuristic Slums <http://novaillusion.deviantart.com/art/Super-Speedpaint-Futuristic-Slums-480219141>



In game translation.

6. Music

Stylistic Choices



Violet By Neon Glow in Reaper DAW by Tomas Andel

Expressing the juxtaposition of a dark, dystopian future with the goofiness of the tone and story made for interesting aesthetic decisions. Texturally, we have decided to fuse the sci-fi appeal of glitch drums, synth bass, robotic sound effects, and spacey pads and guitars, with the brightness of sawtooth leads (specifically chosen for their retro-futuristic qualities) and the dreaminess of spacey reverbs. The music employs disco and funk stylings, dance music

conventions, jazz chord voicings, and vocoders that make it danceable.

The texture and mood of the tracks will evolve according to the specific aesthetics and themes of the battle encounters. Later tracks may contain sequences with battle drums Harmonically, they will use darker chord progressions.

Integration

We have decided to compose all tracks at 120 or 240bpm so that they can synch up with the NWN heartbeat. Roaming music will not contain a discernible beat (most likely drone/ ambient), and thus will be able to effectively crossfade with the battle sequences, creating a seamless musical environment.