Sean O’Dalaigh-Pulford

This project was interesting, and I feel like there was considerably more that I could have done with it. But I had made a conscious decision to prioritise a different project, which was a mistake.

Initially, my idea was to have a platformer in which one would have to leap over gaps in platforms and avoid obstacles, however this didn’t actuate as I wanted it to as I couldn’t, for some as yet unknown reason, get several of the animations that were ideal for my purposes to work and mesh with the models that were available. As a result of this and the lack of time I imposed on myself, my end result came out rather lacking though I did manage to make a platforming game with some narrow walkways that, should the player fall off, reset them back to the start point. Not a particularly complex game, but a simple place to start off to create something more complex and I wasn’t sure how much I needed to put in for a vertical slice, perhaps something I should ask in the future.

With regards to what I learned from this project, Time management has been a large one, on top of the, what I presume, was the goal of the project of learning how to use more advanced control methods that we had learned previously, coupled with the learning of how to integrate animations into our games using blend trees and animations found from other sources, or indeed, those we create ourselves in the future. I would say it’s not a topic I would find myself comfortable in spontaneously throwing myself at, but this has certainly been a learning experience from which I can improve my skills with both Unity and C#.

Aside from what has been learned with regards to Unity, C# and animations; Github, its repositories, and its features are something I will require more work to get used to, while I have gotten into the habit of constantly saving my work, I, throughout this project, constantly and consistently forgot to push updates through Github, and as a result didn’t push many minor updates, instead posting a few very large ones as and when I remembered that I was supposed to be using Github.

My development process, once I started, was an odd one, even for a project as clear cut as this, I began while I was still working on another project and managed to get the briefs of the two confused for a brief time. Once I had resolved this issue, I decided on the style of game I wanted to make, that being a platformer. I wanted my model to reflect that, so the model I initially chose was chosen due to its reasonably sporty attire. However, there I was obstructed by an issue with the Collada(.dae) files I was downloading for both the animations and the model, the two weren’t merging for some reason to do with the mixamorx hips not matching with the human bone ‘Hips’. This ended up being a major issue that I was unable to fix before the final week of the project, so while I had the concept I wanted to actuate ready, I couldn’t begin to work on the animation, animator and scripts until I had this resolved, this wasn’t actually the case, but I had managed to convince myself that this was the case.

Eventually giving up on having a model that I liked I decided to revert to using the Jasper we picked up during our lecture, though I still couldn’t get the model to work with the Run or Jump animations I wanted, so I eventually settled for ones that I knew worked: the ones from the lectures.

With my intent to make a platforming experience I created a small loop, to show my intent, with a restart code should the player fall off the platforms, and a ‘finish line’ to explain to the player that they had completed the demo and that they could press the ‘R’ key to restart the game. The platforms slope up and drop down, and the further along the player is, the narrower the platforms get, adding a slight difficulty curve. This end result is lesser than the concept I had in mind, a result of my having to rush the project once I had managed to get the animations to work with the model.

I will admit, towards the end of this project I felt somewhat defeated, I had imported all of the animations we had used in our lectures, my code was more or less a copy of what we had done in the lectures, I had, for all intents and purposes, taken the lecture project, trimmed off the pieces I didn’t want, and thrown some platforms together, and called it a day, which is terrible. But at the same time, I know how everything in this project works, which is a considerably better result compared to other projects I’ve worked on. I know I need I work on my time management and will be taking steps to do so. I know I need to push to the Github repository more often so as to allow myself to recover as much as possible should something game-breaking occur and will be working on that by making it a habit, any time I change something in a project from this point on I intend to commit it.

Following this project, while I feel like I’ve failed this assignment due to my own failures in working with the program, making a time plan for myself and not utilising Github to its fullest, I feel like I have learned from those same failures and intend to use this learning in my next project, should I make it to that point, all that is left to do is to actuate those intentions in my future projects, which will, in all likelihood, improve the quality of those projects, to varying degrees.