Final Artist Statement

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Final Art Piece: https://emilykrasser.github.io/DonutTheory/

This was a really fun project to create and challenged my ability to create an interactive remix environment from many different types of media. Donut Theory is a web based remix video game experience. It was made in the Unity game engine and it is a WebGL build. The game itself was inspired by many things, but I specifically wanted to capture the feel of some of the old video games that I've grown up with as well as the strange, flarfy nature that indie games have nowadays. Interactive remix artists like Jason Nelson (specifically his piece Game, Game, Game, And Again Game) helped to guide the direction of player interaction for Donut Theory; creating an experience that would be similar between players, but still individualized. When taking inspiration from Nelson and his chaotic remixes, I began to realize that it's alright if the player doesn't quite grasp what is happening in the world; more importantly is their experience in interacting with the world created around them.

As well, song remix artists like Vandoorea in their creative mashups of video game music and quotes also inspired this piece, specifically the audio. When pink donuts are created from the donut portal near the ground level, they emit audio loops. This combined with the ambient track in the background, creates a sense of audio remixing in a game, if only in a rudimentary way. The tracks that the pink donuts emit are randomly chosen when they are created, thus causing each player to experience something slightly different each time.

Inside of Donut Theory, the various elements of the environment are created of a collage of images (mostly donuts). As well the two non-playable characters and the player are strange collages of somewhat humanoid characters. These various character and environmental collages were heavily inspired by artists featured on The Weird Show, like Charles Wilkin and Tyler Spangler, with the goal of taking these collages and creating something interactive from them.

I wanted this piece to incorporate the major forms of media that remix art is comprised of; static images, sound, text, and video. Speaking of video, I did implement the ability for players to instantiate televisions around the environment that would then play randomly selected videos that either inspired parts of this game or related to it in some other way. Unfortunately, even though this works in the Unity editor, the final WebGL build does not have the videos included in it, since apparently Unity has a bug that doesn't allow for that functionality. In the playable build of the game, the videos just appear as blank TVs around the scene (functional TVs and videos can be seen working in the trailer on the first page of the website). While this is not what I intended initially, I think that the blank TVs add a strange sense of vintage, more pastel, apoclolypse to the game. The players can still add and remove these TVs from the environment, adding even more power to the player's impact on the remix piece and experience.

Overall, I learned a lot from making this piece, from bugs in the software I was using, to the many, many forms that remix art can take. While there are certain ideas that I wish this piece had done a better job of conveying, I sincerely think that it's a good portrayal of interactive remix art and how versatile remixing really is. As well, while working on this, I learned to let go of the idea that video games have to have a clear goal in order to be engaging. Creating a small remix game of my own, I came to the conclusion that simply playing around with and experimenting with the elements given to me can be just as engaging, if not more engaging. The same

principals hold true in the act of creating remix art and experimenting with the elements given to you to create something amazing.