COMP 323 – Video Game Design and Development

In this class we learned all about video game design turning points in history that changed the ways we play video games over the years. We critically analyzed video game concepts, design aesthetics, and overall mechanics. We looked at old classic arcade games and how those evolved to today’s video games. We also looked at individual video game designers/developers, how they came up with their innovative ideas, and how their ideas affected the consumers. In each class we also gathered in groups and were tasked to create a video game design pitch based on specific requirements by the professor.

For the final project, we were asked to come up with a new video game idea (completely new from existing video games) and create a demo version of a much larger project. We were separated into groups, and I grouped up with another classmate, Elena Murphy. Together we came up with a simulation/role playing farming game called “Honey, I’m Home”. We both came up with the designs, layouts, story outline, concept ideas, mechanics, research for inspiration, and character designs. But I focused mainly on the design and planning process while Elena worked more heavily with developing the game.

The Idea:

When we first came together and discussed our ideas, we started by discussing various video games that we liked playing. Ultimately, we came to the conclusion that we really liked games with cutsie game characters and simulation games like *Harvest Moon*, *Stardew Valley*, and *Animal Crossing*. Intitially, we wanted to make it a 2-d platform game because it would be an easy thing to program (I was brand new to developing video games, and Elena had some experience as well). But we decided to make it something related to simulation farming games.

The story of the game is that there is a mountain called The Restless Mountain which has been active for the last couple of years. Every so often it shakes and rattles and destroys villagers homes. No one knows why or what is causing such activity. You are a bear that has been forced out of her home. While travelling the woods to find a new home, you come across a town of animals who were also affected by the activity of the mountain. They tell you that this phenomenon has been happening for years, but only now has it almost destroyed the entire town. You offer to help rebuild the town and stay there. To make a living you become a farmer and grow out your business as you try to figure out how to calm the Restless Mountain.

When thinking of a theme and style mood, we decided that the game should be pixelated with a colorful pallet and cutely design characters. Later, we solidified the idea that our main character should be a grisly bear. The grisly bear was going to be of honey-like color and it was going to be a pixelated bear.

We also looked at how the map of the world should look like. We came up with the idea that, since the story takes place in a mountain, the areas should be forest. I came up with the lake and shops scenes, which included creating how the map looked, were certain spaces would go (i.e. The bridge, the shops, the lake, pathways, etc.) Here you can see the doc with the inspiration and the sketches that Elena beautifully drew out based on my ideas (Elena was the artist in our group, before those plans, the sketches looked like scribbles!). We then started to plan some of the goals within the game and overall mechanics or things you can do outside of the main story.

Bellow is a PDF of the doc where we were brainstorming ideas and gathered inspiration from online images:

Here are screenshots of the presentation we planned for the class explaining the final idea we came up with for our game:

Final Look

Here are screenshots of the final game demo. We were really proud that we had the overall movement of the main character and we had solidified great ideas for the design of the maps. I personally was really proud of the starting main menu, which I coded myself and designed the layout for.