

# Ninja Exile

## *Design Document*

### Concept

You are an exiled ninja who has been wrongly out casted from his home and framed for killing the emperor. In your bloodthirst, the time has dawned to exact your revenge deep into the forbidden lands.

### Experience

The game ninja exile is based on the concept of ancient Japan where samurais and ninjas roamed the lands. The protagonist must mercilessly defeat an ongoing horde of ninja assassins whilst delving ever deeper into their lands. There is a giant theme of sensation which we are going after which follows this concept and tries to further immerse the player. The second major part of the game is the challenge which relies on the game's two movement mechanics: the double jump and the dash. This is needed in order to effectively traverse some of the increasingly difficult jumping puzzles. The last design experience is the drama which is solely created by the stealth aspect of the game which defines the pace in which the player will be move onwards throughout the game.

### Sensation

**Art Style** - We have used the traditional stereotype of samurais and ninjas and Japan's environment to further immerse the player in the theme. The lush forests and tall mountains as a background in combination with the cartoony tile set that we have downloaded helps to portray the theme of the game. If we had more time, we would have created several levels – each with their own distinct appearance which would be connected to the ninja theme. Such an example would be a Japanese architecture castle and dungeons.

**Enemies** – The enemies have a strong contrast in appearance to the personal character. This is used specifically to view the enemies as non-evil but actually as humans. This further provides perspective of this game being an 'evil' game with an especially evil protagonist. The enemy characters have skin colour faces, a regular casual blue robe and the basic but differently styled dagger. The dagger represents the alliance to a certain side. We wanted to include many more different enemy styles but due to the prototype nature of the assignment, we only included the one. In our initial plans, we wanted to create a series of slightly different enemies which would provide variety and enhance the immersion sensation.

**Character** - The character is visually represented as an evil looking assassin figure which closely resembles a ninja. This is to help immerse the player in the general storyline in which this character had been wrongly exiled and therefore aspires to seek his revenge on all those who casted him out of the kingdom. The character has a red hood, red eyes and a dark robe. His weapons include the dagger which he uses to assassinate his targets.

**Particles** – The player has two main methods of movement. The first one is the jump and double jump. The main factor increasing the experience of sensation here is the red trail which follows the character at all times. This symbolises the path of destruction that the assassin follows. The initial idea was to make this trail last 5 times longer than normal which combined with the incredible speed of the character, would give the player the concept of precise speed and skill which ninjas possess. The long trail gives a bit of perspective on how fast the character is moving.

The second movement factor is the dash which was implemented halfway through. This dash using the shift button allows the character to get a sudden burst in speed in the direction he is facing. This gives the character a big red trail behind and also a little red spark which returns a little notion of feedback to the player that something just happened. It's important to show the player visually when something different happens because then they will feel subconsciously more rewarded.

The last pieces of particles in the game are the initial fires in the beginning. In the beginning we planned to have the fires throughout the game to act as the negative environment interaction but we quickly realised that having 50+ particle entities would be quite terrible for the computers running the game since we decided to have a very large map. If we changed the game to have smaller levels, we would have fully decked out the level with fire particle effects which would add variety to the game's puzzles.

## Challenge

**Physical (jump puzzles):** In the overall game there are two main areas where challenge comes from. One of them is through the jump puzzles which are created in such a way in which they resemble ninjas jumping across rooftops which harbour a bunch of enemies below. The jump puzzles start off quite easy with little or no consequence for failing the jumps but as the level progresses, the jumps get more frequent, harder and more difficult. Eventually jumps will need to utilise the mechanic of the dash in combination with the double jump in order to successfully make traversal of an obstacle. Near the end of the level, there are more and more consequences for mistiming or overshooting a jump. Consequences come in the form of falling down to a previous level which the character has made it past. These are only little setbacks because we don't want the player to get increasingly frustrated by missing hard jumps. Other consequences include falling into a shallow pit where an enemy or two reside, forcing engagement and loss of health points.

**Intellectual (stealth):** The way we created the game was to eliminate ranged play and instead fill the void with strategy. This void is our way in which we found easiest to introduce stealth to the game in a way which eliminates the super safe and easy method of playing the game. The enemies naturally patrol their location back and forth quite slowly. They will strategically have a 'vision cone' placed right in front of their eyes and not behind their heads. This will require the player to time their attacks when the enemy has their back turned which will force them to sit and wait for the best time to strike and effectively scout out the area if they spot one or more enemies situated together.

## Drama

**Pacing:** The pacing in the game has been strategically reduced in contrast to the players really fast speed specifically to portray the assassin-like nature of the protagonist through the red trail and quick agility dashes. The pacing is slow at times because of the fact that both the character and

enemies are both melee and at any time they both face off together, the character will always take a hit of damage. There is not enough health packs available to replenish all possible enemy encounters. Therefore, the player is forced to take their time traversing the level as they should only encounter and attack enemies when their back is turned. They have a few seconds window of opportunity each time before they must wait again. This allows the game to speed up and slow down dynamically whenever enemies are about. This factor multiplies when the character is faced with an area where there are multiple enemies. Lining up the attack windows perfectly minimises health loss but must take extra care.

Another element that drives the drama experience of the game is the steadily rising difficulty in the challenges of parkour. There are no consequences at the start for mistiming a jump but as the level continues, missing a jump could be extremely costly to the character's health and may even spell a game over for them.

## Mechanics

**Character movement:** The player has two main methods of movement. The first one is the jump and double jump. The second is the dash. This dash using the shift button allows the character to get a sudden burst in speed in the direction he is facing

**Enemy Movement:** The enemy has a patrol mode of movement. They move forward and back to their original position continually searching for the player.

**Health Bar:** The health bar is on the top corner of the window and decreases whenever the main character takes any form of damage but increases whenever the player heals.

## Improvements

Since there was a limited timeframe to complete this project and the only assets to be used were the free ones, there were a few limitations to the quality of the project. We would have loved to add unique immersive music and sounds which follow jumps, dashes, kills and deaths but we didn't have time to create them.

Another improvement would be the level design. There weren't enough assets which we found which could act as obstacles or some sort of device which made the levels unique. Instead we had to rely on increasingly difficult jump puzzles which can sometimes be bland and repetitive.

If we had more time, I would have loved additional levels that also match the ninja theme. introducing character levelling and movement/offensive abilities which will make the game fresh as the player continues. The tiles we very nice looking but I think they needed a little variation over time. We only downloaded the day and night version of the tile set and tried to use it as well as we could with the resources we had.