

Raphaëlle Garcia
CART 253
Final Assignment

SUMMARY

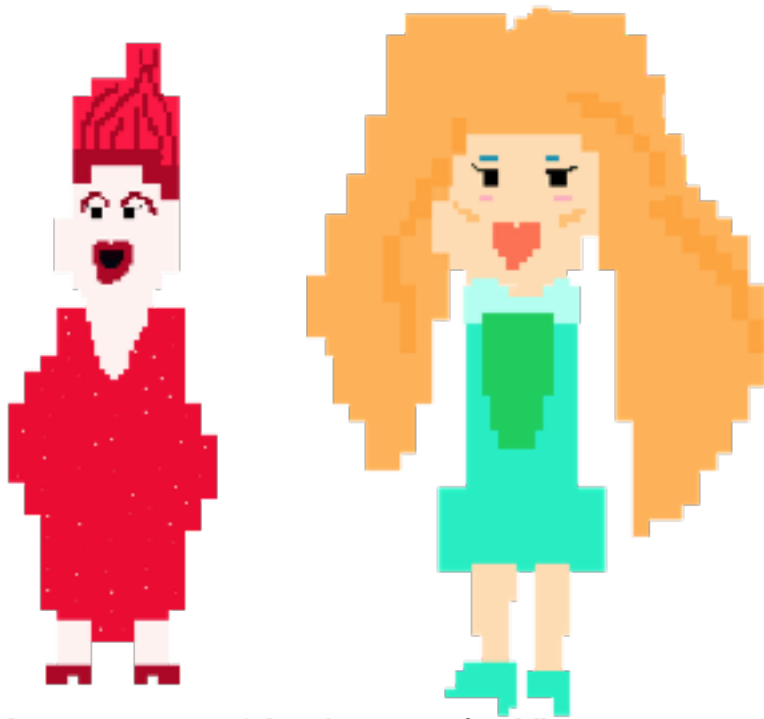
The game I am making is a version of Pong that has been adapted to the famous TV show RuPaul's Drag Race. Each player is a drag queen of the show and the ball has been replaced by a shady quote randomly selected from the cast of season 9. When a player hits the ball, a new quote appears, meaner than the previous one. When a drag queen misses the ball, their side of the game becomes a shade darker, as though they truly have been shaded on. This dark area becomes as pitch as black when they miss too many balls, where the player cannot see its character's position in space, nor where the ball is located, forcing them to lose the game.

MEDIA



Cast of the season 9

I started with images of the RuPaul's Drag Race latest cast, and decided to give them a game look by re-drawing them on a website called Make8BitArt. I drew their faces with pixels of colour to make them look more 8-bit-y. I thought it was important for the characters to not look real because the game aspect of it would be less obvious. In a sense, they are recognizable, but we can detach ourselves from the actual queens a bit. The quotes used are also not necessarily used by the characters on the game. I changed the logo of the tv show to RuPong, as a pun to both the show and the classic game. The song playing in the background is the theme song of the show, with a higher pitch to give a chipmunk feel and detach the game a bit from reality, all while being anchored in real sources.



First prototypes of the characters/paddles



Final decision for the characters/paddles

INSPIRATIONS

I was inspired by the drag queen show because it is a subject that, outside of class is of interest to me. As I studied communication studies in my first BA, we touched upon gender studies, and it has coloured the creative work that I do nowadays. In creating this game, I wanted to create a metaphor for the “shady” lines the queens throw at each other, and give another perspective on the tv series through juxtaposing it on the game Pong. What I realized after creating the game and experiencing it, is that, for the first few times, it’s quite funny, yet after a while, you start to realize how deeply hurtful the shady quotes can be, and make you start realizing how harsh of an environment drag queens live in. It revolves back, on a smaller scale, to the culture of violence that those communities live in and perpetuate sometimes without being conscious of it. The action of turning a side of the screen darker is not only a direct reference to the very definition of shade, but can also carry the weight of out_lighting another. This interactive feature has the capacity to impact non-technological and human

interactions. What started as something funny made me aware of how myself can sometimes be unaware that certain behaviours deemed as “entertainment” can have such an impact. In a sense I find it very inspiring that through making an interactive project, my perception has shifted in the real world.

TECHNICAL APPROACH

To make this game, I needed to use arrays, game states, for loops, if conditions, load images, collisions, updates, modulo. They were maybe not the most complex, but for someone just starting to code it was quite a brain stretch. Nevertheless, this way of coding and the clean way of understanding what I wrote and altered on top of the first pong game code you (Pippin) shared with us, made me understand better how coding works and how to command actions to the program. The most important aspect is to be able to switch the quotes as they hit the paddles and for the screen to dim as the players miss the ball. Organizing the game into game states to give it a more well rounded experience is also a key factor of this game. They are 3 challenges I had to tackle, and that really have given me a sense of higher step I have gotten to.

TECHNICAL RESEARCH

I've been needing a bit of help from the internet to do this, especially in what concerns the game states to be able to create a more elaborate version of this Pong game, as well as push the graphic aspect. Working with arrays and images has also been an element I had to research online to make sure I would be able to store them properly and find the easiest/concise way to code it.

The tutorials by John McCaffrey (video published on 28 Sept 2016, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q8rP6R0LCss>) on the subject of game states, and John Park (Video published on 1 Feb 2014, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xILShhnzA14>), on the subject of arrays and images have been my go-to tutorials in order to make best use of the functionalities of the game. After having made sense of these ways of coding, I was lucky to receive the help of Nina Parenteau in our class who reviewed my code and helped me figure out better ways to write the code for the arrays and black rectangles, in a cleaner and concise way. Her help opened doors for me to push the game further and not stay blocked on ugly code syntax and general questions that I had on whether using a dark rectangle for the shade or use an image of a black rectangle. I was able to understand how to use values as assets and how to use those variables to get to a specific end. For instance the opacity of the rectangles. By giving a name to the variable of the image's alpha, it was then possible to update that value in a later part when a point is being made by the opponent. The interactivity within the code itself was an interesting aspect to get to finally understand.