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Writing Games

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Project 2 Essay

My game involves a simple objective and simple tasks to complete them, but I believe that it establishes character through the gameplay. The game initially gives some background to the player character, who is an artist. They must create some sort of work of art for a gallery opening which is in a few days. At the start of the game, the player is uninspired, and has no idea as to what they want to paint. This is revealed by examining the easel or canvas, or trying to paint without first finding a source of inspiration. The entire goal of the game is to become inspired so that the artist can create something for the gallery. This can be done by examining the objects in the room. Several of the items are red herrings, like the bowl of fruit, which may lead the player on a somewhat comical side path, but will not inspire them. The real development of the player character occurs when examining the “inspiring” objects. Examining the dog in the room will reveal a scene from the character’s childhood, playing with the dog. Reading a letter from the artist’s grandmother will bring back memories of vacationing as a child. Looking out the window will tell about the artist’s romantic relationship, since the park that is seen from the window is where they went on their first date. After examining one of these items, the player then becomes inspired and can paint a picture (presumably about the inspiring object or memory) and win the game. However, the player character can only become inspired by one source per playthrough, and if they attempt to examine an inspiring source while already inspired, they will be sent back toward the canvas. If the player wants to learn more about the artist’s past, they can play through the short game multiple times and learn more about the other inspiring sources. My goal in this game was to make a character that is initially fairly plain, given through the introduction dialogue, but gains depth as the game progresses. I wove their character backstory into the progression of the game, hopefully making their development integral to the story, and therefore important to the person playing the game.