EPITA 2023

Book of specifications

The Tales of Talris

Author 1:
Stephane Gelibert
Project Leader

Author 2:
Virginie Li

Author 3:
Ayush Saini

Author 4:
Mohd Israt Ahmed Shopnil

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1 Introduction

Starting from now and during pretty much the whole semester, we will have to make a project in group in order to learn how to work as a team. This is This said project is a video game that we will create using the Game Engine called Unity. This is the book of specifications that hopefully will explain the different aspects of the project. We will describe how we found the name of the group, how the game will be and many other things.

2 Project CARD

It's common for a group to be made of people of the same class, but not us. You can call us the leftovers. Now you might ask yourself how a dysfunctional looking group like this is possible, we don't know either. But all of us need each other to do this and function and that is why we know we will strive in the forthcoming endeavors together.

As for our name, well the 4 musketeers sounds quite lame if you ask us. So we came up with CARDS, each suit symbolize something very personal to us. Yes, a surprisingly heartfelt team name.

2.1 Stephane "ShinysArc" Gelibert

I am Stephane Gelibert and I am 18 years old. I have been in a private secondary school and a private high school, so at this point Epita does not change so much for me. I have gotten my high school diploma in Sciences with a specialization in Physics and I got the honors "Good".

I have always known I wanted to study Computer Sciences. In fact, it is mainly thanks to my father who worked as an Engineer in Systems and Networking. I pretty much got the feeling I wanted to do this at the age of 6 or 7. So when I was growing up I already knew it would be IT but I then had to determine which formation I would take.

At that time, a friend of mine told me he joined the school called Epitech, so it was perfect: I had a name to start with. And from that I started doing my own research and discovered Epita which was much more in accordance with my projects. Well still, in the last year of high school I attended many open

days to compare the different schools there were in Paris (or close to... like here in Villejuif, right ?). In the end, the school I wanted to go to was still Epita, and on ParcourSup the other ones pretty much became spare choices just in case. And now here I am, in Epita, about to start my very first IT project with my three other workmates. Let the fun begin !

2.2   Virginie "Nightear" Li

My name is Virginie Li. I am currently 18 years old and I am turning 19 this year. I attended all of my middle school and high school years at Janson de Sailly, located in the 16th district of Paris and known for being the largest city school of France with more than 3850 students from Year 6 all over to second year of preparatory classes. I have recently gotten my high school diploma in Sciences (specialized in Biology and with the option Mathematics) with the honors 'Very Good'. Also, I have studied Chinese as my first language for 7 years in the International Chinese section of the school.

Originally, even all the way through Year 12, I did not know yet what to do and in which field I wanted to work in the future. Last year, when we had to fill in Parcoursup the schools we wanted be in, I was so lost that I was hesitating between putting either medical studies, scientific preparatory classes, UIT and different universities, basically any type of study that could exist. But that is when a friend of mine brought me to one of EPITA's open day that was held around the beginning of 2018, and I launched myself in a field I have considered in the past but never dared to think or practice furthermore: Computer Science. So here I am now, ready to make a whole video game from scratch with my three other workmates, and that is something the past 'me' would have never think of.

2.3   Ayush "ASH" Saini

My name is Ayush Saini. I completed my high school graduation from India. I chose computer science as my major because I always loved solving problems, and computer science became the answer to some of my biggest questions. You press a button on a machine that you use every day, click a button a few times, and suddenly have access to the whole world. It's magical, right? I needed to know how that worked.

I have learned basics of Java, HTML and C and made a few websites just

for fun and also I have made an actual affiliate marketing website which was quiet successful (not bragging!).

As every other student in EPITA, I also play a lot of video games which makes it even harder to make one since I am even more demanding in terms of quality and features, but on the other hand it makes me even more happy to make it. Working on this project is going to be really fun and a good experience for me because my teammates are all amazing!

2.4   Mohd Israt Ahmed "Shoppy" Shopnil

I remember back when I was young, I used to love to just operate our family's computer. Opening up Command Prompt and make it say the date and time. Then when Windows XP was out, I would play around with the themes and such. I was fascinated by it. To be honest, it wasn't just computers that fascinated me, just machines in general did.

That fire of interest in machines never died out. And to this day the fire is growing. As I grew to an age where hobbies were our world, I played with R/C cars. And when they broke, I used to open it up and try to fix it. Failed most of the time, as I would never understood how the circuits worked, but I learned. So making a game is the perfect thing for me!

When internet came along, I couldn't handle the amount of things I could do! First, I obviously had to learn about video games, and that's where another fire in my heart started, this time for video games. I learned how to act on the internet, tips and tricks that made everyone blow their minds, and most importantly, how to code websites! Then, in school, we were introduced to the world of programming with Java, and that's how I got into this.

I gathered some friends who were also interested in setting up a server. We learned that it is not very easy even to maintain such a small company. But that also taught me the importance of keeping a group alive and functional, and that's what I will do in this group! I shall be their personal psychiatrist.

# 3 The game: "The Tales of Talris"

3.1 Type of game

After a long time of pondering, our team has decided to make a survival horror-like game filled with riddles called *"The Tales of Talris"*. Why *"The Tales of Talris"* you might ask ? Well, it pretty much is because we initially had not a lot of inspiration so we decided to take a general game name that would adapt itself with most of video games genres, and as for *"Talris"* we simply found it on a fantasy names generator.

Survival horror is a subgenre of video game greatly inspired by horror fiction. It focuses on setting up a scary and stressful ambiance all along the game, as the player has to focus on making sure the main character he controls survives thoughout the play and as the game tries to frighten him with jump scares. Although combat can be part of the gameplay, the player is made to feel less in control than in typical action games through limited ammunition, health, speed and vision, or through various obstructions of the player's interaction with the game mechanics. The player is also challenged to find items that unlock the path to new areas and solve puzzles to proceed in the game. Games make use of strong horror themes, like dark maze-like environments and unexpected attacks from enemies.

And for that, we have taken inspiration directly from the source of RPG horror games such as:
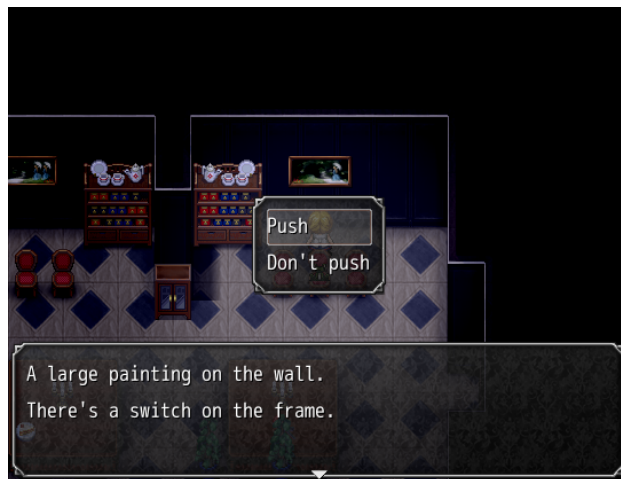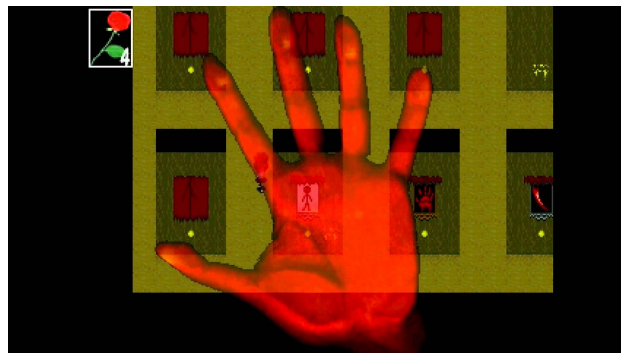
- Ao Oni *(2008)*
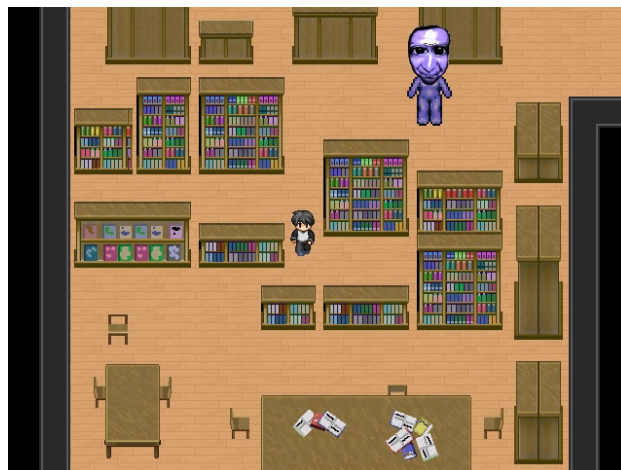
- Corpse Party *(2010)*

- The Witch's House *(2012)*

- Ib *(2012)*

- Mad Father *(2012)*


- Pocket Mirror *(2016), etc.*

As you can notice, the beginning of the 2010's was the golden era of RPG horror games. Most of these games are not really well-known to the main public of video games, they are mostly free games and often in 2D graphics. So we also wanted to make our game look like more mainstream 3D horror games such as:
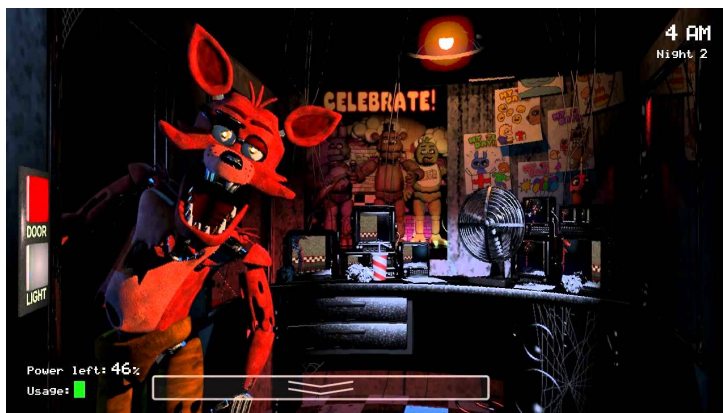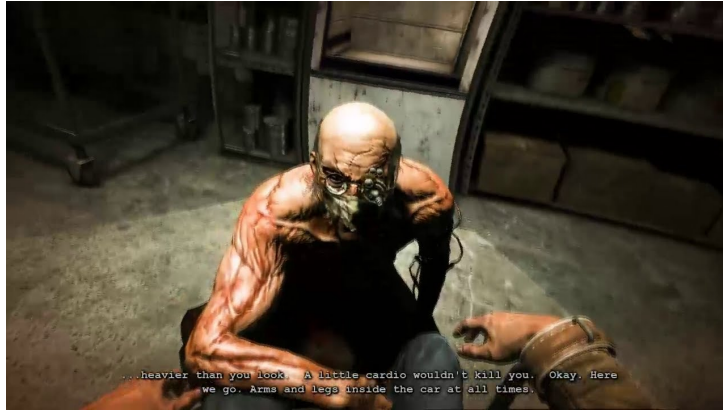
- Amnesia: The Dark Descent *(2010)*

- Slender: The Arrival *(2013)*
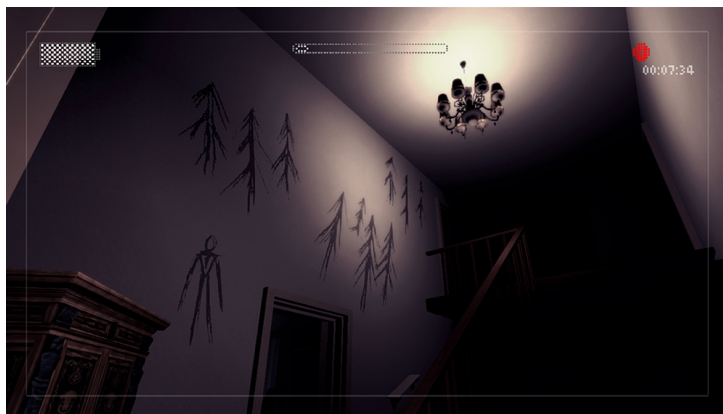
- Five Nights At Freddy's *(2014)*

- Outlast *(2016), etc.*

3.2   Features

As stated previously, our game will follow the canon of the survival horror genre. With that being said, it means that the basic plot of the game will revolve around following the main character around as he/she tries to find a way out of the place he/she is trapped in, while trying to survive the attacks of a monster. And for that, we will need to include features such as:

- **First-person perspective:** Making a first-person view game is really important. This subgenre has its asset to help the player get into the game more easily. It will help us have the most immersive experience while playing the game, and it is necessary when the whole point of the game is to play with the emotions of the player. So the camera will have to follow the position of the main character as he/she advances through the game. And we are supposed to see everything through his/her eyes.

- **Health/Sanity:** The survival of the main character will depend on his/her health or mental heath (we have not decided which one yet, or maybe we will have both). Every time he/she takes a hit, the health bar will lower. Same goes for when he/she witnesses a traumatic event while trying to escape, his/her sanity will lower and this will affect the gameplay (for example field of vision reduced, slower movements, etc.). However, we will choose to hide the health bar since it would relieve

the stress of the player too much when knowing his/her exact chances of survival. Instead, we will add a system with a ratio of hits taken before a 'Game Over'. For example, 1 "small" hit from the monster = gameplay affected but survives, 2 hits = Game Over, but 1 hit taken full force = Instant Game Over.

- **Realistic sounds:** One of our members having a good-quality microphone, we will try to record our own sounds as much as possible, such as the breathing of the main character, the sounds of doors grinding or even the chairs scraping against the floor, once again adding to the realism of the game. Otherwise, pre-recorded sounds will be used, but we will try to have really few background music to avoid that the player gets distracted too much.

- **Puzzles:** Simply finding a way out is too easy, by a few plays we will have already learned the exact map of the place by heart. However, throwing in some puzzles and riddles along the game will not only allow us to keep track of our progression in the game, but also add more difficulty since solving one while being stressed does not sound as easy as we might think.

- **Multiplayer:** Of course the multiplayer will be a big part of the project. If there are two players, one of them will play as the main character trying to escape, while the other one will be the monster pursuing him/her. If there are more than two players, there will be one side with different players all helping each other to escape and another side with the killer who is also controlled by a player (a bit like the Murder Mode of the game Garry's Mod's).

- **Jump scares:** And finally jump scares. Yup, everyone hates them, but this is a technique often used in the horror genre, almost a mandatory step. It consists in a brutal change of image or event, usually occurring with a loud and frightening sound intended to scare the player and put him/her under stress.

Other than that, there will also be the general features of a 3D game like respecting real life physics, and we have also decided to not include a fighting feature, as the purpose of the game is not fighting back against the monster. The list of features still goes on and on, since we will be adding

more throughout the project, but we will explain furthermore during the first report.

3.3   Art Concept

While at first, we may have strictly thought of making realistic graphics and making the game as true to real life as possible. But we have also contemplated the possibility of having cartoon and almost "cute" visuals for the game, making the whole atmosphere of the game grotesque or even more unsettling. The best example to illustrate what we are trying to say by that is the famous novel *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* by the English author Lewis Caroll.

Nowadays, *Alice in Wonderland* is such a classic that it has been adapted and re-adapted countless times, including the film version in traditional animation by Walt Disney, which is arguably the most well-known of the Alice film adaptations, but also Tim Burton's 2010 movie. All of them always have had in common very particular, almost creepy atmosphere despite supposedly looking like a fantasy world and innocent at first sight. The novel even ended up inspiring a horror game called Alice: Madness Returns.

Anyway, no matter if we end up choosing the first or the latter, it is important to keep our options open.

4 Material resources

4.1 Tasks distribution

Tasks	ShinysArc	Nightear	A$H	Shoppy
Gameplay	-	-	X	-
Game Menu	X	-	-	-
Interface	-	-	-	X
3D Models	-	X	-	-
Animation	-	X	-	-
Physics	-	X	-	-
Multiplayer	-	-	-	X
AI	-	-	X	-
SFX/Music	X	-	-	-
Video/Cinematics	X	-	-	-
Website	-	-	X	-

Table 1: X : Main / - : Helper

Here is what each task will be about:

- **Gameplay:** How the camera, the movements is going to be handled, especially for our main character.

- **Game Menu:** The way our starting menu, with the title, the background, the settings are going to look like.

- **Interface:** The head-up display or the status bar that will visually display information on the screen of the player in order to inform him about the controlled character.

- **3D Models:** The whole process of developing a mathematical representation of the surface of an object in three dimensions with the used of specialized software.

- **Animation:** Because simply pretty 3D models will not be enough. They need to have a fluid animation and realistic movements of the models.

- **Physics:** This part will be about the scripts of the entities in the game, how they will react with each other depending on where they are in the game.

- **Multiplayer:** Mandatory step, already explained in the previous section.

- **AI:** The Artificial Intelligence will be one of the most challenging feature of the game (as in, the entire difficulty of the game will depend on it). We want to make sure it is not too 'dumb' so that the player can put up of a fight against it, but also not too punitive so that the player will not be discouraged of playing the game.

- **SFX/Music:** We actually plan to make most of the sounds ourselves since one of our members have a good quality microphone, some of them with our mouths (for example the breathing of the character) and others with what we will find.

- **Video/Cinematics:** We will try every now and then to punctuate the game with small cinematics and videos, so that the experience of the game and its story can be more enjoyable and not just some texts for the player to read.

- **Website:** We want to create a website that resembles us since we will be presenting our game but also ourselves on it. Therefore, we are planning to make use of both HTML and CSS languages to make one from scratch.

4.2   Progression

Tasks	1st Report	2nd Report	Last Report
Gameplay	30%	80%	100%
Game Menu	50%	70%	100%
Interface	40%	60%	100%
3D Models	30%	70%	100%
Animation	20%	70%	100%
Physics	30%	60%	100%
Multiplayer	50%	80%	100%
AI	10%	80%	100%
SFX/Music	0%	30%	100%
Video/Cinematics	10%	60%	100%
Website	50%	80%	100%

Table 2: Progression of each task throughout every report

4.3   Software used

And here is the list of all the softwares we are planning to use during this project:

- **Unity:** A cross-platform game engine which can be used to create both three-dimensional and two-dimensional games as well as simulations for its many platforms. We will use the Unity Game Engine to create our video game and as said before, it will be a 3D horror-based game.

- **Blender:** A free and open-source 3D computer graphics software toolset for creating animated films, visual effects, art, 3D printed models, interactive 3D applications and video games. We will use it to create our 3D models like the different entities in the game such as objects and enemies.

- **Audacity:** A free and open-source digital audio editor and recording application software. We will mainly use it to record our voices and the sounds needed for the game.

- **Adobe Photoshop:** A raster graphics editor developed by Adobe. This software will be used to create the main graphics of the game such as the Game Menu, the Interface, etc.

- **Adobe Premiere Pro:** A timeline-based video editing app developed by Adobe. We will use it to create our cinematics and the final trailer of the game.

5   Conclusion

We have formed a really motivated group of people to create our game which plans to be maybe not necessarily innovative, but that will have its own charm and still will be enjoyable. We will try to create a gameplay as fluid as possible as well as add as much technical specifications as possible. We are conscious that this game will be a challenge, but we are ready to overcome it and go past our goals with flying colors. Time will of course be a real trial in itself, but we have already planned many slots for us to work properly, and we will embrace the difficulty, if needed. Hopefully, the making of this game will be fun !