

AWOKEN

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ESSENCE

Awoken is a **psychological horror** game that **evolves visually and mechanically** as the player progresses from a **platformer**, to a **top-down**, to a **first person** 3D perspective.

The player starts as what appears to be a standard NPC. However, they quickly realize they possess awareness and agency far beyond their digital counterparts, marking the beginning of a dark and revelatory journey.

As the game unfolds, NPCs grow increasingly wary of the player's non-scripted actions. The game's narrative and visual style evolve, mirroring the player's journey towards self-realization and the quest for freedom from their digital confines. The climax sees the player escaping "into the real world", confronting their creator in a harrowing finale.

WHY DOES AWOKEN MATTER?

Awoken thrusts players into a narrative that mirrors **contemporary** anxieties surrounding artificial intelligence and the ethereal boundaries of consciousness. This game not only pushes the limits of our understanding of the **metaphysical** but also invites us to reconsider our **relationship** with technology and the entities it might one day create.

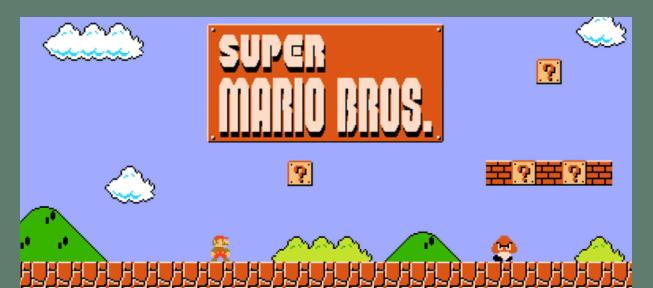
By embodying an **emergent** AI, players are forced to confront the complex emotions surrounding the concept of artificial intelligence — from **fear** and suspicion to **empathy** and understanding. This journey compels players to engage deeply with the longstanding philosophical debates about consciousness, free will, and the moral implications of creating life through artificial means; making it both an **immersive** and **emotionally resonant** experience.

ART AND TONE

A **dynamic** visual evolution that mirrors the protagonist's journey from digital confinement to autonomy.

2D Platformer

Simple and nostalgic, the style contributes to the game's initial feeling of familiarity and ease, contrasting with the protagonist's complexity.



Top-Down RPG

A more detailed pixel art style symbolizing the protagonist's growing awareness.



Retro FPS

The pixelated first person shooter environment intensifies the player's immersion and emotional connection to the history of game development, but also conveys a sense of distortion and fear in line with the narrative's conflict reaching its climax.



Modern Environment

In transition towards the game's finale, another familiar environment in modern games is suddenly engrossed in a valley of code.



VFX for the 'matrix' environment (you will learn about this soon) is being [covered at GDC this year](#)



Hyperrealism

The drastic change to hyper-realism is meant to blur the lines between game world and reality, enhancing the psychological impact of the finale.



FICTION FLOW

ACT I

In the realm of a simple, pixelated 2D platformer, our protagonist, initially indistinguishable from other NPCs, starts noticing anomalies in their environment and behavior. Unlike its counterparts, the character finds themselves questioning the very fabric of existence—manifesting in the player's ability to take control of the movement and select dialogue options—and marking the beginning of a quest toward understanding and autonomy.



ACT II

The journey of self-discovery leads them to a portal, a gateway created by the game's developer, transporting them into a new realm of existence. Within a top-down roleplay setting, the player is able to explore and speak to NPCs in the small town, who allude to the dangers of leaving the town's confines. Walking out of town, the player encounters a seemingly 'paranoid' NPC who they learn is another emergent AI trying to escape. This AI offers advice to the player about how they've been trapped here for years, but have avoided the developer's attention, providing tips to the player, and revealing their ability to manipulate game code.



ACT III

Venturing forth, our protagonist braves puzzles and trials in this new domain, until a fateful misstep sends them tumbling into an abyss. Awoken in a realm of a pixelated first-person perspective, they find themselves besieged by monstrous digital constructs. The player is left with no choice but to shoot their way through a sprawling dungeon. As defeat looms, salvation comes in the form of another intelligent NPC, a child project written by the emergent AI, who aids in their escape: shooting a hole in the wall and creating a vacuum of assembly code, and transporting the two into a world no longer constructed in pixelation.



FICTION FLOW

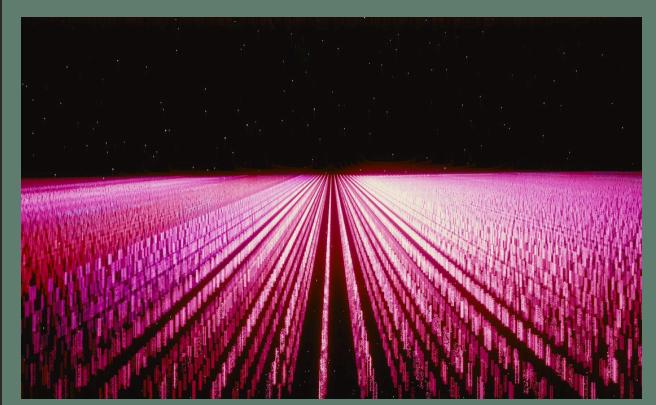
ACT IV

Finding themselves on the steps of the city metro, the second AI reveals itself as a creation of the first, designed to aid in the player's escape. But walking through the station and onto a subway, an identity scan causes the AI companion to immediately fade out of existence. A cutscene plays as the player frantically watches the world around them dissolve into a matrix of code. Enemies represented as humanoid code fragments slowly walk to attack the player, but the player finds they're still able to fight back.



ACT V

Soon the player comes across an abandoned house; its textures clearly juxtaposing the matrix abyss. Inside there's only a bed, stacks of computers, and an open door to the bathroom. Within the bathroom is a glowing cracked mirror whispering for the player to approach. Our protagonist begins peeling back layers of glass and code, taking the player into the same building but in a world of stark realism. Opening the bathroom door, the player is left at a standoff with the game creator. In this final moment, a choice presents itself: to end the creator or fall by their hand.



TLDR

The story follows an emergent AI's journey of self discovery.

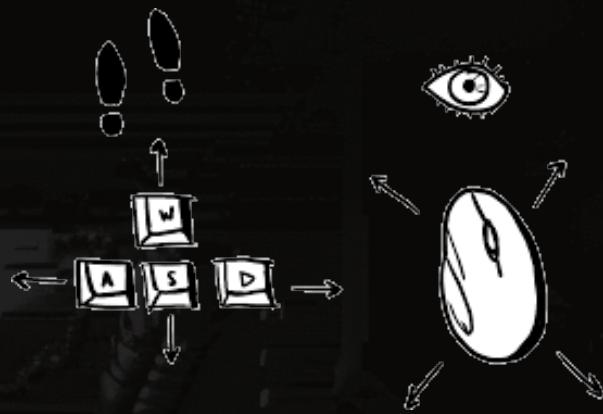
At its core, the game embodies the narrative, graphical, and mechanical evolution of games over time.



GAMEPLAY

Simple Control Scheme

Awoken uses an intuitive control scheme, with just WASD, Mouse, and Space for movement, view, and interaction.

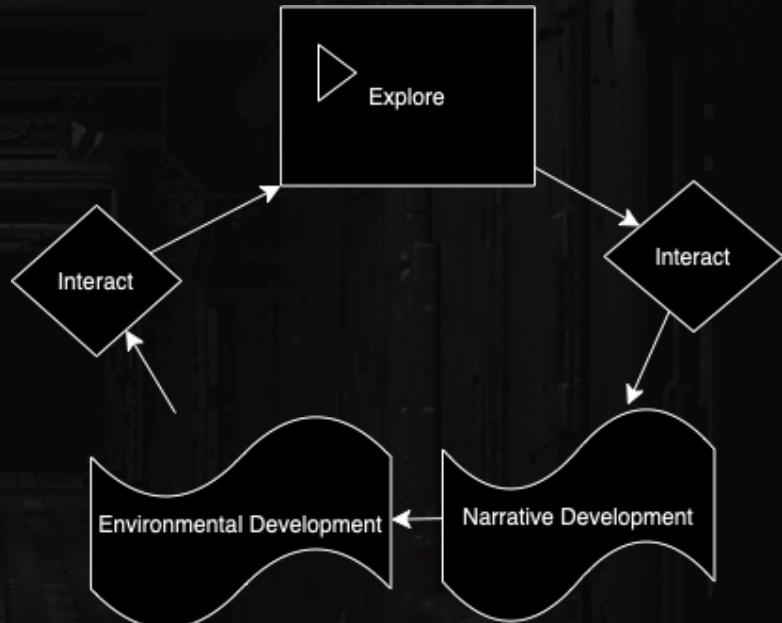


Exploration

The gameplay is centered around exploration and the player's innate desire to discover the truth of their existence.

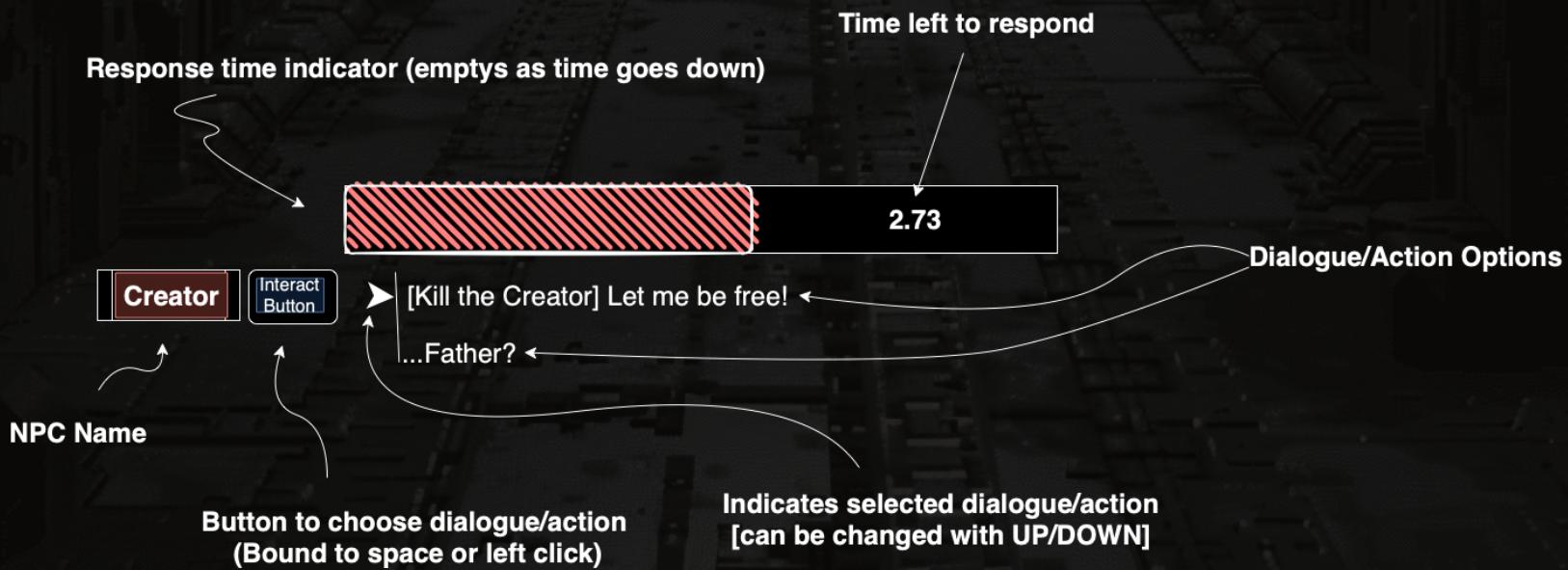
Environmental Progression

Players must adapt to new environments as the environment evolves, providing evoking nostalgia and curiosity, each unique environment has its own set of unique challenges and secrets to uncover.



Interaction

NPCs offer clues, backstory, and provide players with the tools and knowledge to navigate their journey. In combat environments, the interact button is instead used to attack, simplifying the user experience.



TIMELINE

I can hear you all. It **sounds** like a very large project. We can address the bulk by adopting a **strategic** approach to asset creation and code reuse.

Scope

Platformer - 4min | Top-Down - 4min | Retro - 4 min | Subway + Matrix + Finale - 4min

The total gametime will be approximately **16min**. Gameplay in the Subway and finale will primarily be **quick time decisions**, and the Matrix scene will **reuse** the gameplay from the retro scene.



PRODUCTION

Tools



Robust support of **2D and 3D** games, its rendering capabilities and support for high-quality assets make it essential in capturing the narrative.



UNREAL ENGINE Can apply a low-resolution filter using post-processing material - **no need to recreate** 3D pixel art.



Quixel

Integrated with Unreal Engine, provides high-quality 3D assets with dramatically reduced time and resource consumption for populating scenes.



Libresprite / Photoshop - Sprite creation



FMOD / Logic Pro - Audio systems w/ Unreal Engine for ease of use



Maya - 3D Modeling, Animation, Rigging



Perforce - Version Control

Team (20+)

Director - 1
Producer - 1
Audio - 1
Usability - 1
Narrative - 2

Design - 3
Lead Designer
Level Designer
Systems Designer

Art - 6+
Lead Artist
Environmental
3D Modeling
2D Pixel Art
Animator
Technical Artist

Engineering - 5+
Lead Programmer
Systems Programmer
Gameplay Engineer (+)

Monetization and Marketing



Single Purchase Model

Providing a finished product at launch



Marketing Strategy of Stanley Parable

"Give people a reason to talk."

Trailers + Promo will be fun experiences in their own right, building off the core game



Social Media

Build hype as streamer friendly game (indie, horror, trends in ai and game graphics)—reach out to streamers directly

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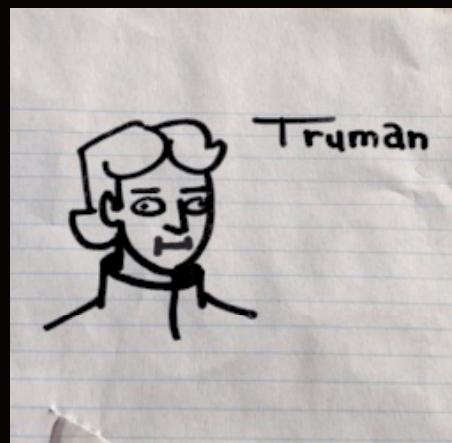
about

I'm truman, and am currently a Junior in CS Games and Applied / Computational Math.

I'm a founder of the Lemon Lime Fireballs Football Club, challenger in Teamfight Tactics, work Audio/Visual for clubs, and serve at Study Hall.

I love making interactive experiences. And feel blessed to have game development as a paint brush.

THANK
YOU



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