

Video Game Design

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Rapid Prototyping



Gamasutra – Rapid Prototyping

- “How to Prototype a Game in Under 7 Days: Tips and Tricks from 4 Grad Students Who Made Over 50 Games in 1 Semester”
- Experimental Gameplay Project at Carnegie Mellon's Entertainment Technology Center
- http://www.gamasutra.com/features/20051026/gabler_01.shtml
- <http://experimentalgameplay.com>



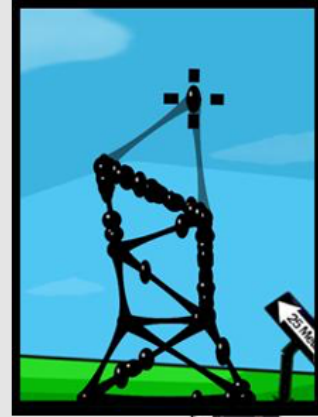
Rapid Prototyping

- 1. Each game must be made in less than seven days,
- 2. Each game must be made by exactly one person,
- 3. Each game must be based around a common theme i.e. "gravity", "vegetation", "swarms", etc.



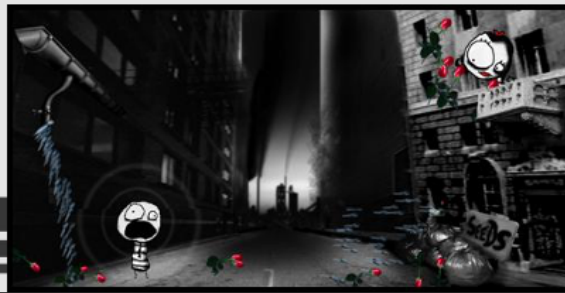
Setup: Rapid is a State of Mind

- Embrace the Possibility of Failure - it Encourages Creative Risk Taking
- Enforce Short Development Cycles (More Time != More Quality)
- Constrain Creativity to Make You Want it Even More (limit to themes, ex: gravity, springs, predator and prey, etc)
- Gather a Kickass Team and an Objective Advisor/Manager – Mindset is as Important as Talent
- Develop in Parallel for Maximum Splatter (risk mitigation, friendly competition, wider thematic exploration, sharing)



Design: Creativity and the Myth of Brainstorming

- “Formal Brainstorming Has a 0% Success Rate” (gets people thinking-ideas come later, good for incremental improvements on ideas)
- Gather Concept Art and Music to Create an Emotional Target
- Simulate in Your Head – Pre-Prototype the Prototype



Development: Nobody Knows How You Made it, and Nobody Cares

- Build the Toy First
- If You Can Get Away With it, Fake it
- Cut Your Losses and "Learn When to Shoot Your Baby in the Crib"
- Heavy Theming Will Not Salvage Bad Design (or "You Can't Polish a Turd")
- But Overall Aesthetic Matters! Apply a Healthy Spread of Art, Sound, and Music
- Nobody Cares About Your Great Engineering



General Gameplay: Sensual Lessons in Juicy Fun

- Complexity is Not Necessary for Fun
- Create a Sense of Ownership to Keep 'em
Crawling Back for More
- "Experimental" Does Not Mean "Complex"
- Build Toward a Well Defined Goal
- Make it Juicy! (lots of feedback to user)

