

## PROJECT TEAM AND ALLOCATED ROLES

### Team Name:

The Cat's PJs

### Github:

<https://github.com/KurtShumaker/NinjaCat>

### Project Roles:

- Donald Baltazar
  - Audio Engineer
  - Game Programmer
  - Writer
- Lauren Carr
  - Artist
  - Animator
  - Writer
- Efren Martinez
  - Audio Engineer
  - Game Designer
- Kurt Shumaker
  - Game Programmer
  - Level Editor
  - Writer
- Justin Vessey
  - Technical Artist
  - Game Programmer
  - Level Editor

# HIGH CONCEPT DOCUMENT

## High Concept

Neko Tochi has been overtaken! The people starve as they struggle to provide for their new leaders. Sneak back into the palace and defeat the new top dog! Are you a cool enough cat to save Neko Tochi?

## Story Overview

The wilderness, Farmlands, and Palace City in Feudal era Neko Tochi is where our story takes place. Farmers are cats. The dogs and mice have overthrown the cat emperor and now overtax the working class cats to support the lavish lifestyles of the new nobility.

Chancellor Inu conspires with a mysterious mouse to assassinate the cat emperor and take the throne. Royal Guard Niko overhears the plot, and when he tells his best friend Royal Guard Tomodachi (Tomo). However, Tomo betrays him and Niko is taken to the wilderness and left for dead, where he is found by a mushroom-hunting farmer. Eventually Niko recovers, but he has lost his former strength. Mouse patrols roam the farmlands collecting exorbitant taxes to support the lifestyles of the dogs and mice that now live in the Capital. Niko must regain his strength through a series of game challenges (defeating mouse patrols, dog mini-bosses, braving the wilds) and discovers legendary items in the wilds that had been lost for centuries. He unites the starving cat farmers and city cats cast out from the palace town to form an army to overthrow their greedy rulers. During the battle, Niko must face his old friend Tomo in mortal combat.

## Features

- The hero of our story is the Ninja Cat, Niko. Throughout the game the player can earn specialized weapons to fight off enemies. Players will be challenged to win levels using stealth, cunning, and ninja prowess. He must face many different foes:
  - Mouse soldiers patrolling the farmlands
  - Dog mini-bosses. The dogs could be patrol leaders as well.
  - Wild creatures in the forests and mountains such as Wolves, Snakes, Birds, Macaques, etc.
- Keyboard and joystick controls should both be implemented for those interested. Ninja Cat can fight, sneak, walk, run, jump, roll, and talk to NPCs to gather information or shop at stores.
- Ninja Cat will start without equipment and must rely on his claws alone to survive; the basic attack is his first fighting ability. Successfully sneaking around enemies is one way to avoid combat and can be done while sneaking/stalking. Ninja Cat can block attacks; the amount of damage that is blocked is dependent on the equipped weapon (i.e. sword

will block more damage than claws). Ninja Cat can throw shuriken/kunai, swing a ninjato/katana blade, scratch with his claws, and, when a high enough level, hiss to intimidate his weaker enemies.

- Accumulate Ninpo through combat by giving and taking damage to unleash Niko's full potential as a ninja. Channel his ninpo to slow down time and perform incredible feats. Catnip can be found in the environment or dropped from bosses and used as an item to fully charge Niko's Ninpo. Visually, it is like a health bar on the HUD)
- Platforming challenges: skirting the cliff ledge to get to that item on the other side; jumping between roofs in the palace city; climbing trees in the mountain forests, etc.
- Progression-Locked Obstacles: obstacles that can only be cleared with a certain item or powerup; obstacles that must be crossed by performing a quest (e.g. rescuing the carpenter so he can build that bridge over the river)
- Stealth missions or sections. Either with enemy mice/dogs in populated areas, or wild packs of wolves or other wildlife in the wilds (e.g. sneaking past a hot spring full of japanese macaques).

## Player Motivation

- The player should empathize with the plight of the starving cats working out in their fields to feed the dogs and mice who rule them through fear.
- The player may also feel a desire to get revenge on their old friend Tomo and the evil now-Emperor Inu.
- The player should be motivated to help the common people they meet and help throughout the game.
- The player should be motivated to keep playing so they can get the next item or achievement.
- Players will be rewarded for exploring the indepth world that the game offers. Player can earn special items by accomplishing side missions throughout the game. The appeal of earning powerful weapons and skills will keep the player engaged for hours.
- Hidden throughout the world could be diary entries of good friend Tomo or Chancellor Inu that shed light into the motivation for overthrowing the cat rulership. These will instill sad emotions in the player and help them empathize with the bad guys and create a conflict of morality.
- The atrocities committed against the player's fellow cats should outweigh the empathy for the bad guys and motivate the player to take back the throne. (This could bring added weight to the final showdown between Niko and Tomo) These are non-mandatory items hidden off the path to promote exploration of the world.

## Genre

This game is an action-adventure game with RPG-elements.

## Target Customer

Our target customer is the kid in everyone regardless of their true age. We want the players to have a fun light hearted adventure to look forward to at the end of the day. Fuzzy animal characters should appeal to kids, and their compelling stories should be appeal to adults (adults who don't hate animals). What will draw in this type of customer is:

- A clear story goal is given in the beginning, which motivates the player to finish the story.
- Players will be rewarded for exploring the beautiful pre-modern landscapes.
- There are many items to collect with unique effects, so the player can learn new ways to interact with the environment (and pass certain obstacles).
- Combat with the player's enemies is fast-paced and exciting.

## Competition

Ninja Cat hosts a beautifully designed world with a cartoon feel and cultural influences from Japan. Okami, Legend of Kay, Kingdom Hearts and Tom & Jerry are a few games/shows that have relatable artistic styles. Games that encourage exploration of the environment and feature action-packed battles are similar to Ninja Cat. Some examples are Prince of Persia, Brave Fencer Musashi, Ninja Gaiden (remakes), Crash Bandicoot 2, Spyro the Dragon, Ratchet and Clank, Metroid, and Zelda. The audience attracted to games like Crash Bandicoot 2, Spyro the Dragon, and Ratchet and Clank is our target audience. This game will be generally suitable for all ages and may contain minimal cartoon violence.

## Unique Selling Points

- Our game will offer original cartoon artwork that will bring our characters to life! The story of the ninja cat is unique and will offer players a complex and fun universe to explore.
- The user interface will offer several benefits:
  - Menus should be quick to interact with (i.e. it shouldn't take 30s to change items)
  - Purpose of Icons should be clear, so the user can navigate quickly
  - Players shouldn't need to go 6 levels deep into a menu to access something (especially if it needs to be changed frequently)

## Target Hardware

Computer (Linux, Windows, Mac) with a keyboard/mouse or joystick

## Design Goals

- The goal of our game is to keep the play light and fun. With that in mind we are aiming for a cartoon world look that will appeal to the player. The game will incorporate artwork

that will be reminiscent of feudal Japan yet utilize a full spectrum of color. To keep the mood just right, we will use a rounded cuddler approach to character and background design.

- Some of the tools that will be used include Unity, Maya, Doodle for scheduling meetings, general sound recording tools, and Photoshop.
- Aside from Unity itself, free assets from Unity's store can help with creating the basics of the game, like vegetation. Maya, which will help create 3D models to make the characters unique.
- Program/UI specific goals:
  - Their health bar will be visible at all times, unless a cinematic or other story element occurs. Player will always see icons representing their currently carried equipment and a few items which are assigned to hotkeys for quick use.
  - Player will be able to reassign their equipment/items with easy and intuitive button combinations to avoid pulling up a full inventory menu.
  - Alternate inventory menu on Paws screen to show more detailed information concerning player's current level, player stats, armor, weapons, etc.
  - Player will be able to view game map highlighting visited areas; current destination/objective will be marked and a fog of war will cover unexplored regions.
  - Game options/Paws menu can be accessed any time during gameplay to change Master Volume, other options (gore? subtitles?), and view list of game statistics (e.g. earned achievements/trophies, number of enemies killed, damage taken, damage given, total money earned, spent, etc.).
- Our goal is to allow the player to experience at a minimum: the beginning of the story and the story and the final battle. With additional time we will produce extended versions that will add more scenes and capabilities to our demo.



*Neko Tochi has been overtaken!*

*The people starve as they struggle to provide for their new leaders.*

*Avenge the true emperor by sneaking back into the palace and  
restoring the kingdom to its former glory.*

*Claw your way through adversity to bring down the top dog!*

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### *The Cat's PJs*

*Donald Baltazar*

*Lauren Carr*

*Efren Martinez*

*Kurt Shumaker*

*Justin Vessey*

# GAME TREATMENT DOCUMENT

## Executive Summary

- Ninja Cat is a 3D, 3rd person, action-adventure game following the quest of disgraced Royal Guard, Niko.
- Target audience is kids to adults, with cute characters and a compelling story that is appropriate for younger players.
- Target hardware is low- to medium-range PCs. Controller recommended, but playable with keyboard and mouse.
- This game draws inspiration from the many games that are already on the market that gamers, both casual and hardcore, love. With these inspirations this game creates a familiar experience to welcome gamers. It is with this base that a new gaming experience is built that combines what we love as gamers into a single exclusive adventure.
- Unique art style and design with original character models crafted in Maya and Blender
- Unique animations and noises that make the characters more realistic and fun
- 3D world that the player can interact with using a variety of different items and abilities, allowing challenges to be overcome in different ways. Ensures that each playthrough is a unique and engaging experience.
- Clear and concise storytelling to motivate the player.
- Experience in gaming by the team reflected in the layout of the experience and world.
- Powerful development tools allow more development time to be spent on building the game world, rather than the game engine.

## Game Overview

- Characters
  - The main protagonist is Niko, the Ninja Cat and former member of the royal guard. He is betrayed by his good friend, Tomo.
  - The supporting antagonist, Tomo is also a member of the royal guard. He betrays his friend Niko for Chancellor Inu's cause.
  - The main antagonist, Chancellor Inu is the dog who managed to become main advisor to the Emperor. He conspires with the mice of the lost war to assassinate the Emperor and take the throne.
- Setting
  - The game is set in the feudal world of Neko Tochi. This is in the golden age where the Cat Emperor rules the land and all felines and canines live in harmony. However there is a brewing undercurrent of court intrigue and espionage that threatens the very fabric of the great kingdom.
- Core Gameplay

- Niko is able to explore the world of Neko Tochi by interacting with his environment, jumping over obstacles, and conversing with other inhabitants of the land. There is a solid combat system centered around the abilities of a trained ninja, which further highlights the culture by including diverse weapons and armor. Certain items must be acquired to access all the regions of the game, further inspiring a completionist attitude and sense of achievement.
- Main Theme
  - The theme of the game is one of redemption and a race against the clock. The player must guide Niko through the hazards that await and eventually fight in the ultimate battle to save the kingdom.

### *High Concept*

Chancellor Inu conspires with a mysterious mouse to assassinate the cat emperor and take the throne. Ninja Cat, Niko, overhears the plot and is targeted for it, cast out and left for dead. He must regain his strength to stop the coup of the Emperor. Through various combat, level, and story challenges Niko must regain his former strength and save Neko Tochi from the corrupt Chancellor Inu before his plot prevails. Face old friends, unite the people against the evil Dog Regime, and save the kingdom.

### *Genre*

This is a 3D action-adventure game with RPG elements.

Throughout the game, the player follows the story of Niko and develops a connection with the experiences he goes through. A fast-paced combat system allows the player to help Niko to regain his strength, while hidden treasures inspire the exploration and discovery of Neko Tochi.

### *Hooks*

This game will feature fun and light side adventures for the player to explore. One of the greatest features of this action based RPG is that the player doesn't have to get bogged down in tedious wealth building or filler tasks. The games character interactions are the side adventure! Players will have plenty of opportunities to solve puzzles and collect items but are not force to. This game is meant to be a refreshing escape not just from the daily grind of life but the over serious nature of action based RPG's.

Ninja cat will display a tour de force of original artwork and loveable characters. The world of Neko Tochi will feature colorful landscapes and interesting takes on feudal Japanese architecture and dress.

Sounds natural to the landscape, like a gentle breeze outside the kingdom, or the echoes of footsteps in isolated rooms. To accompany these sounds, light calming music will play to soothe the player during tense action sequences, or tense music will play to highlight the tension of stealth sequences.



Fast platforming and combat draws the player in with a feeling of power and excitement. Stealth sequences offer feelings of suspense while the player explores the ninja side of the character. However, the player may also be reminded that Niko is a cat before a ninja, when running into things like baths, lasers, and catnip. Beware: enemies may take advantage of these vulnerabilities as well.

Classic motifs of betrayal and revenge will pull players in, while the heroism of saving the kingdom will provide the satisfaction of a job well done.

Niko's ninja ways are made obvious in the realm of Neko Tochi. Classic ninja and Japanese weapons can be utilized in Niko's pursuit for revenge as well as channeling a ninja's spiritual power. Japanese cultural elements have an undeniable presence in the game's environment, level, and other conceptual designs.

### *Gameplay Highlights*

Frequent rewards in the form of new items and ways to interact with the world give the player that feedback that they're progressing in the game and should leave them wanting more.

Niko can run, jump, climb, scratch, sneak, and chat with NPCs. Collecting items will enable Niko to perform new feats and pass previously impassable obstacles.

Examples include:

- The grappling hook enables Niko to swing across large gaps to new areas.
- Swords enable Niko to cut down his enemies and to cut through thick brush to reach new areas.
- Iron claws enable Niko to climb rockier surfaces to reach new heights.
- And more...

### *Technology Highlights*

- Unity 3D will be used to create the majority of the project. This engine allows for development on many different platforms. For this game, the focused platform will be PC/MAC.
- For the animation and 3D art design, Autodesk Maya and Blender Creation Software will be used to create unique and animated characters as well as environmental objects.
- For conceptual art and any 2D elements that could be included such as backgrounds or textures on objects will be created using Krita Digital Painting software, an open source painting software.
- Git and Github will be used for version control.

### *Art and Audio Highlights*

- This game will have a special audio soundtrack produced by the team that will reflect the themes and environments of the game.
- Sounds within the game such as voices, sound effects, and other necessary noises will be recorded in a studio setting.
- The art style for this game requires a very unique style and touch to the characters and environment. This will be accomplished by the team of art designers, creators, and animators in order to accurately portray the characters.
- Since Unity is the main engine being used to make this game possible, many of the different elements in the game can be found in free open source packs on the Unity Asset store in order to lessen the burden on the art team and speed development time.
- However, much of the art will be original and this unique art style in the characters, environments, and animations help make *Ninja Cat* a unique and memorable experience.

### *Target Hardware*

PC/Mac

### *Production Details*

#### *Development Team*

- Donald Baltazar
  - Audio Engineer, Game Programmer, Writer
- Lauren Carr
  - Artist, Animator, Writer
- Efren Martinez
  - Audio Engineer, Game Designer
- Kurt Shumaker
  - Game Programmer, Level Editor, Writer
- Justin Vessey
  - Technical Artist, Game Programmer, Level Editor

#### *Budget*

The overall budget for this project is minimal. Most of the developer tools that will be utilized are open sourced or obtained with free student provisions. The development team are unpaid student workers and no salary or workers benefits apply.

The true expenditure of resources will be time. The group is dedicated to producing a playable and presentable product. This will be a challenge with full time students in upper division classes. This is being managed by a “billable hours” system, to ensure the team puts in a consistent effort throughout the semester.

#### *Tentative Schedule*

- Storyboard Completion: Friday, October 6th
- Main Character Art Design: Friday, October 20th
- Playable Beta Completion: Friday, October 20th
- Level Concept Art Completion: Friday, November 3rd
- Audio Design Completion: Monday, November 6th
- Game Physics Deployment: Friday, November 10th
- Game A.I. Deployment: Friday, November 10th
- Demo/First Level Completion: Friday, November 24th
- Testing and Refactoring Completion: Friday, December 8th

## Competition

Ninja Cat will be competing especially with Nintendo's Super Mario Odyssey for Switch and Activision's Crash Bandicoot N. Sane Trilogy for Playstation 4.

Crash Bandicoot N. Sane Trilogy released on June 30, 2017 and received a 6/10 reception from GameSpot's critical review. Super Mario Odyssey is set to release October 27, 2017

Both are 3D platforming games building on well-respected IPs

Super Mario Odyssey has many unique abilities available to the player temporarily by interacting with different enemies, as well as coins collected through gameplay used to collect in-game rewards.

While Crash Bandicoot provides intense platforming action and Super Mario does provide many unique abilities to play with, Ninja Cat offers persistent upgrades to the player in the form of new items and abilities. These allow the player to interact with the game in new and exciting ways and will open up new areas to explore. These upgrades give the player a feeling that they are progressing through the game by gaining more tools for the final showdown.

Many interactions with NPCs and the environment will leave a lasting impression on the world. This also will make the player feel as if their actions make a difference in the world they are ultimately trying to save.

## Game World

### Backstory

The backstory of our adventure centers on the political history of the kingdom of Neko Tochi. During the Great Wars, cats and mice fought each other for control of the land. The Great War lasted two and a half decades and was barely won by the cat army with the aid of dog allies. The fragile peace that resulted has lasted for 80 years under the newly instated Kamioka dynasty. The treachery of the mice and their desire to seize back power of the land has left the citizens of Neko Tochi in dire straits.

### *Objective*

The player must overthrow the new oppressive regime and bring peace and prosperity back to the land.

### *Characters*

- The main character and hero of our tale is Niko, Royal Guard and Ninja.
- The main villain is Chancellor Inu who is in an active conspiracy to overthrow the Kamioka Dynasty. He is aided by Niko's former best friend and fellow Royal Guard Tomo.
- Tanuki, the shape-shifting (into humans or objects) raccoon dog. Tanuki is an ally to Niko, whose trust can be gained by helping him/her find their home. (Tanuki have a reputation of forgetfulness.)
- Marten/Sable, of the weasel family. Since sable fur is highly expensive, Marten/Sable acts as a merchant for Niko to buy supplies, armor/weapon upgrades. (Could be a humor pair between Tanuki and Marten since raccoons are known for stealing shiny objects.)
- Red Fox (kitsune), the wise magic-wielder. Could be found in a hidden area in the game, or as a requirement in order to gain the power necessary to defeat the final boss. Aids Niko by enchanting his weapons/armor with magic to make them more powerful and resilient.

### *Mission or Story Progression*

#### *Story*

Niko overhears the plot to assassinate the cat emperor and take the throne, and he is betrayed by his friend Tomo who leaves him in the woods to die.

The game begins with Niko having recovered from his wounds in a peasant's home. Niko regains his strength (as well as his arsenal of ninja goodies) and builds a following among the Neko Tochi peasants.

Niko leads an attack on the capital with his new peasant army.

The game ends in the palace with Niko defeating his old friend Tomo in single combat while the two armies fight outside.

A new ruler is seated on the throne and peace is restored to the kingdom.

#### *Success/Failure*

The game will have a linear story progression. Failure simply requires the player to restart at a recent checkpoint. This requires less development time and less frustration to players who want to see all the possible endings.

Completing certain side quests may *slightly* alter the ending cinematic.

#### *Ending Tone*

The music should be calm and sad, because even though the protagonist saved the kingdom, the final showdown with the player's old friend should be emotional.