Git: https://github.com/RhinoBabies/NinjaCat2

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Description of Game

Story

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). He unites the starving cats to form an army to overthrow their greedy rulers. During the battle, Niko must face his old friend Tomo in mortal combat.

Setting

The setting of the game takes place in Feudal era Neko Tochi. It is a town of beauty that harnesses a dark secret of deception and political strife. It is a land plagued by their history of war. 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.

There are different environments that the player will be able to experience when playing Ninja Cat. From the vast forest to the small rural towns to the grand and elegant castle where the ruler of Neko Tochi resides, the players will experience the culture and beauty of the land.

Introduction of Gameplay

Ninja Cat is a 3D, 3rd person, action-adventure game following the quest of disgraced Royal Guard, Niko. 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. 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.

The game features different gameplay elements that make for a fun and unique gaming experience every time you play, including sneaking, fighting and defending in

combat, and interacting with the world and characters around Niko to gain better depth of understanding about Neko Tochi.

How to Play

The demo begins at the Title Screen where the player can choose from New Game, Options, or Exit Game. Currently, Ninja Cat supports inversion of joystick and mouse input within the Options menu, so players can choose their preference and have this setting persist throughout gameplay. To jump into the incredible world of Nekotochi, push the **Start** button on a controller or hit **Esc** on a keyboard while you have New Game highlighted!

Once you're inside the game, there are two methods to control the main character, Niko: with a game controller or with a mouse and keyboard. It is recommended that you play with a game controller for precise control and more impressive ninja stunts. Look at the images below for button mappings of either method.

Mapped Controls
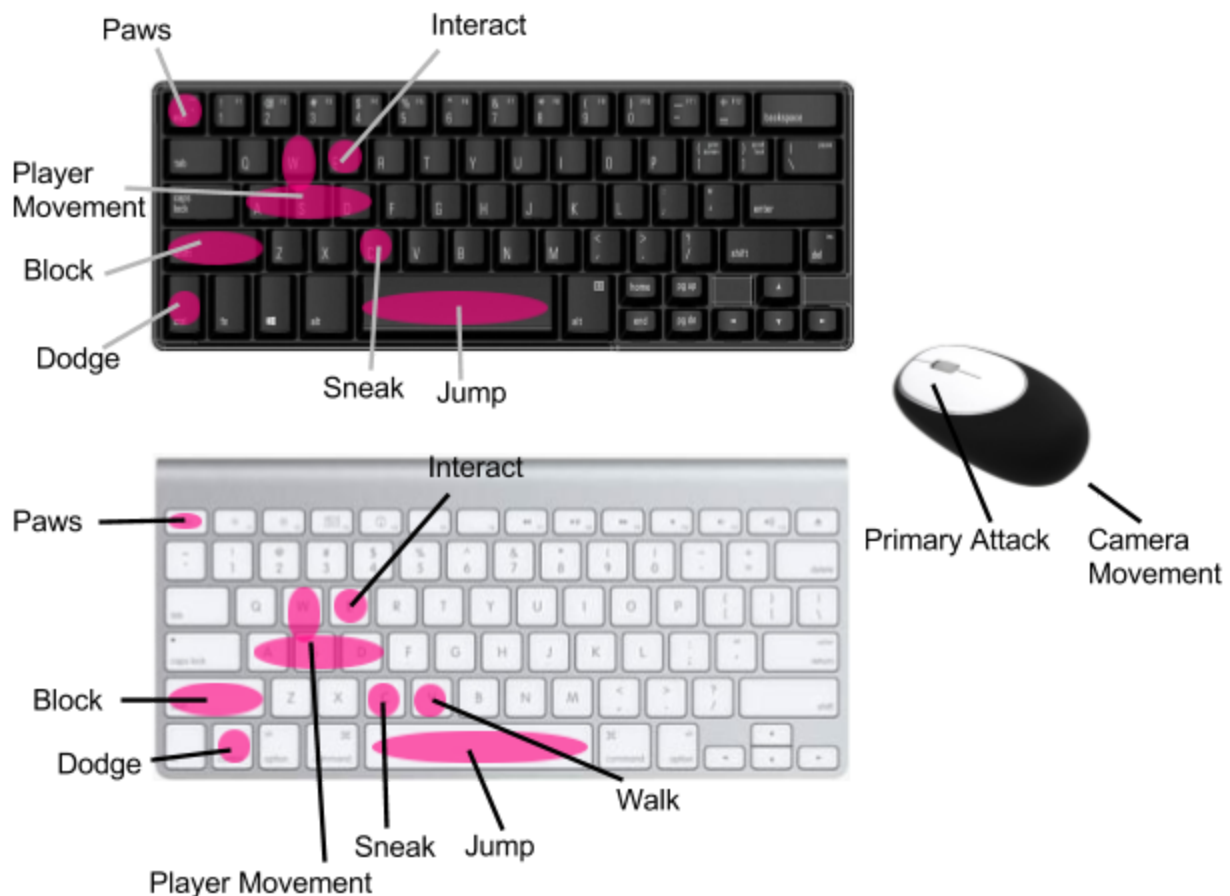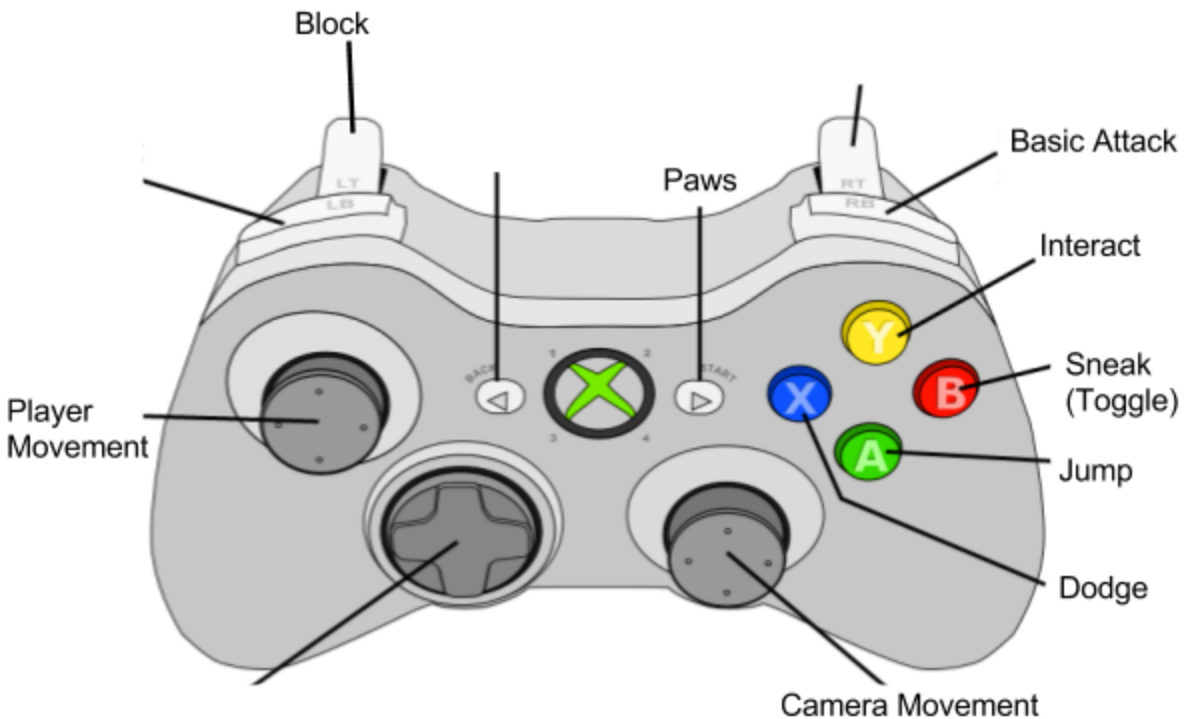
Player and Camera Movement

If you are unfamiliar with the typical movement controls for either method of controls, they are easy to learn and quite intuitive!

Moving Niko around the world is done with the **Player Movement** controls. Pushing **W** or **Forward** on the left joystick will cause Niko to begin moving *in the direction the camera is facing*. Other directional controls are also relative to the facing of the camera. The best way to get used to the controls is to try them out!

By moving the **mouse** or **right joystick** around, you can control the facing of the camera to get a better perspective around obstacles or just to admire the beautiful kingdom of Nekotochi. If the camera movement seems backwards and unnatural to you, hit the **Pause** button to open the menu and try inverting the axes in the **Options Menu**.

As a cat, Niko is rather agile and can even jump and dodge! Use these abilities in the right situations to find secrets or evade certain death. Pressing the respective **Jump** and **Dodge** buttons will activate those movements. Note that concurrent movement during these actions is limited.

Attacking

As a ninja, Niko is trained in countless martial arts and was even classically trained by a samurai. His favorite weapon happens to be the katana and, at times, you will have to take advantage of its reach and sharp blade to seek vengeance for the Emperor.

Pressing the **Basic Attack** button will initiate an attack combo! There are 3 slashes that comprise this basic combo and they each feature a unique animation. Only well-trained ninja are capable of achieving the 3-strike combo since it requires accurately timed button presses to activate the following attack.

Blocking

The enemies in Nekotochi won't just let you push them around and test just how sharp your blade is, though; they fight back! There are a few techniques to save your hide in combat, but one of the most useful is by defending incoming attacks.

Pressing the **Block** button will put Niko in a defensive stance. You will still take damage, but not nearly as much as if you took an undefended hit. Protip: blocking at the right moment and timing your own attacks when the enemy is defenseless is the surest way to victory.

Sneaking

In Nekotochi, there are a lot of creatures that have you on their hit list. Sometimes it's easier to sneak around a corner and avoid detection than to alert an entire group of enemies of your presence.

Pressing the **Crouch** button allows you to duck down and move around more silently to avoid detection. But be cautious! You move much slower while sneaking around and enemies can quickly catch up to you.

Interacting: NPCs and Items

Not everyone in the kingdom wants to try their method of skinning a cat! There are also a lot of non-playable characters (NPCs) with whom Niko is able to interact. Some may give Niko valuable advice or allow him to advance farther in the story.

Simply pressing the **Interact** button while close enough to and facing an NPC and they'll let you know what they have to say.

This same **Interact** button is also used for triggering certain items within the environment. In order to enter the throne room of the palace, you must use the Interact button to open the large foreboding door that Niko once sought protection behind.

References

This is a list of references that were used in the creation of Ninja Cat. Not all of these references were used in the final form of Ninja Cat, but each played a role in creating the final form of the game.

Unity was the engine used for the creation of this game from start to finish.
https://unity3d.com

Many of the assets used in the final project of the game such as foliage and other plants were taken from the Unity Free Asset Store
https://www.assetstore.unity3d.com

Git was the cloud storage system used by the team in order to share and communicate changes to the game assets.
https://github.com

Slack was one of the key communications used by the team.
https://slack.com

In the initial creation of environmental models and the research into tools for creating models, YouTube tutorials were extremely useful in learning to make environments. This includes creation, painting, and texturing.
Maya Tutorial for Beginners 2016 | 2017

When it was decided that characters would be created from scratch, tutorials were necessary for learning how to model a basic cartoon model.
Maya: Simple Character Part 01 - Modeling

When the characters were created, the rigging and joint weight painting process needed to be done correctly for the character to move how it was supposed to.
MAYA CHARACTER RIGGING TUTORIAL: JOINTS & SKINNING

Finally adding clothes and more personal touches helped the characters come to life.
Maya Modeling Techniques - Character clothes

Individual Contributions

Donnie Baltazar:
- Project Manager
- Level Designer
- AI Engineer
- Story Writer

Lauren Carr:
- Art/Style Director
- Initial Story Creator
- Creation and management of Maya Character models
- Creation and management of Maya Environmental models
- Concept Artist

Efren Martinez:
- Sound Engineer
- Level Designer/Editor
- Game Programmer

Kurt Shumaker:
- Physics Engineer
- Level Designer
- Game Programmer
- Story Writer

Justin Vessey:
- Animation Director
- Asset Manager
- Level Designer/Editor
- Story Writer
- Game Programmer

Future Implementations

Controls and Mechanics

Currently, Ninja Cat features only a few, basic mechanics while exploring the world. Most of the movement abilities have been implemented, but there is a lot we would still like to develop in regards to the combat system and level progression. Since Niko is able to jump, levels could be built out to introduce more platforming challenges and even offer

some hard-to-reach treasures. The control schemes were also originally configured for more complicated gameplay. Shown below is the full, button mapping for controlling Niko. You will notice that there is an additional attack button, Secondary Attack, which was
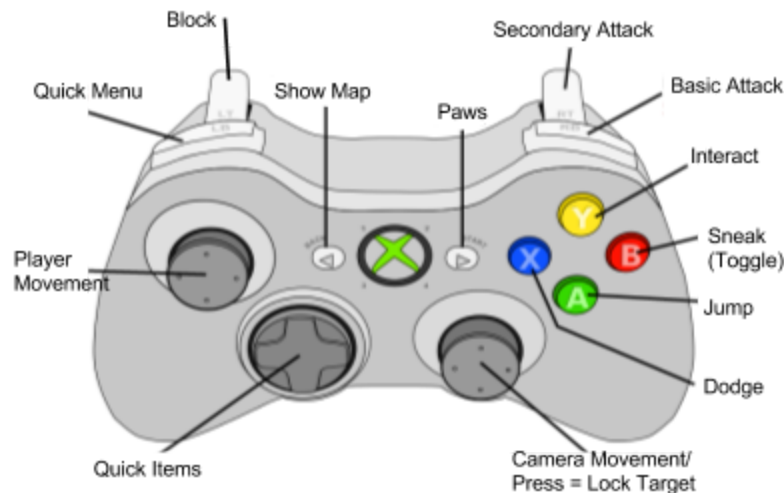
planned to be used for either a stronger attack or a different weapon entirely. Since Niko's history involves an array of martial arts and weapons training, both melee and ranged, there were several weapons with which we were hoping to kill some baddies. Equipping these weapons (shurikens, kunai, etc.) would be done with the Quick Menu button, where a player could choose their gear and items on the fly. Quick Item buttons were also in the design since the beginning and could be used for recovery, enemy distraction, or other typical action-adventure items. An additional component that was thrown about was the idea of locking onto a specific enemy during combat by clicking the right joystick in. Since Niko can be in a battle with several enemies at once, sometimes it can be challenging to isolate which specific enemy the player wants to focus their attacks on. This feature would assist with that goal and better allow strategic and further controllable gameplay in Ninja Cat. There is also a Ninpo bar that is visible on the HUD, underneath Niko's health bar, that we plan to use for special ninja abilities. These include invisibility, lightning speed, and superhuman strength, to name a few.

Although Niko is able to crouch and sneak around, this doesn't actually play a huge role how the game actually plays and how enemies react. Ideally, Niko will be less detectable by both sight and sound when he is crouched, but these are complicated mechanics to implement fully and correctly. Other actions like running and jumping would also make Niko *more* likely to be detected by nearby enemies and greatly increase the "ninja" aspect of the game that we were originally aspiring towards. The game as a whole would be large enough for the player to traverse and experience multiple regions, recruiting other ninjas and warriors to follow him in his quest for vengeance. Throughout these travels, a minimap was planned to be implemented, where the player could track their progress and return to other previous locations. Some locations would have areas that could not explored without proper items and the player would have to revisit these areas in order to fully experience all the facets of Ninja Cat.

Models and Characters

There are many future implementations and growth that can be made in terms of characters and their modeling. Originally, there were designs for another set of characters that you would meet along the way and they would fight alongside you. Due to time issues as well as the issue of having to learn to make the models while making them, creating this characters was scratched in the final project. These characters would be implemented in the future as companions or another player you can choose. They would include models of different animals like squirrels, mice, dogs, pandas, and other animals relevant to Japanese environments. Also in terms of other models to be created there would be many different types of buildings and plants and the structures to go along with these changes such as bridges for rivers and logs for details.

Even though there are several models already in the game made from scratch, they were made in conjunction with learning the program. Their quality is that of someone that is not very familiar to Maya, and as the project continued, the quality and speed of making the models increased. If these models were to be made again, their quality would be much better and easier to upload into Unity. There would be more intricacy in the mapping and rigging of the characters and other models, as well as more details in both the models and the painting. Also they type of file sizes would have to grow to support this change and so another type of cloud storage and sharing program would have to be used instead of Git to support files of this size.