Interactive Arts + Media

Production Information

PRODUCTION

Dismantle Repair is the first senior project from Columbia College Chicago's Interactive Arts and Media Game Major. Senior class students worked on a year-long project, divided into pre– and production phases, using industry best-practices adapted to an educational environment. Divided over two semesters, the Game Project/Game Studio class focused initially on planning, prototyping, and scheduling in preparation for late Fall semester and Spring semester production.

Twenty-seven students from the four concentrations of the Game Major — Art/Animation, Design/Development, Programming, and Sound/Music — worked together in hierarchical teams from a task schedule maintained in Microsoft Project and provided updates to Management (faculty) via a Microsoft SharePoint portal. Students worked on weekly task assignments prepared by the student-leads and were responsible for submitting timesheets to account for their time and effort.

Regular milestones were scheduled throughout production and status assessments occurred formally at each milestone, with adjustments made to the production plan, as appropriate. Students were taught the value of planning and scheduling, and proper time estimation, as "go/no-go" decisions on assets and features that were not complete at a major milestone were quick and sometimes brutal.

Faculty, acting as Management and Publisher, assisted by guiding and facilitating, but the Game Project/Game Studio class functioned as a production class where students made use of the technical and artistic skills learned in prior courses. Students were appropriately assisted at critical junctions, or when problems arose that were outside of their experience or capabilities, but the students were allowed to chart their own course and the ultimate success or failure of the project was primarily in their hands.

STUDENT CONCENTRATIONS

Art/Animation students were responsible for defining the artistic vision for the project starting with early concept art and finishing with the completion of the game, as well as marketing and promotional material. A full production pipeline was established for the technology in use, and determinations made as to what assets would be produced by the team, and which were to be outsourced.

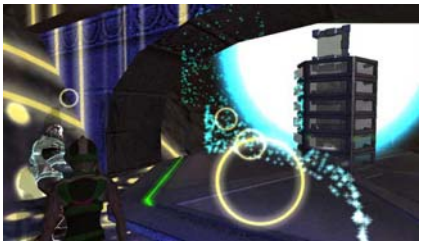
Design/Development students oversaw gameplay and fun, and were responsible for conceiving, planning, and building the game levels, as well as implementing the scripting necessary to make those levels work. Students in this concentration also organized formal playtesting and evaluated observational data gathered at those sessions, as well as metrics exported from the game (ability use, death locations, etc.) The game was also full localized into the Spanish language, selectable on installation.

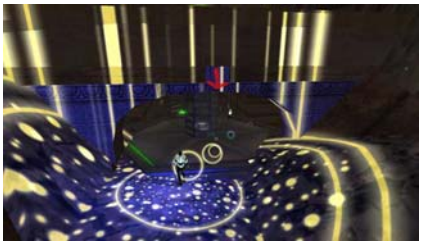
Programming students were responsible for building and maintaining the production framework for the game. This included adapting and updating the game engine code, as well as working on server and client-side systems in the engine's scripting language. They also maintained the version control system, build system, localization, and provided across-the-project technical leadership as required.

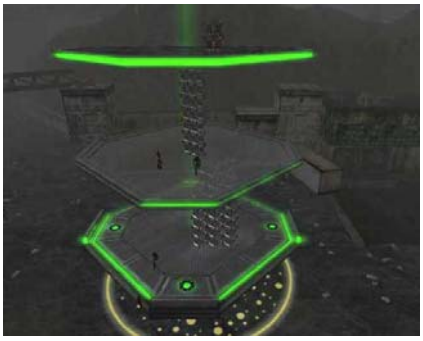
Sound/Music students crafted the aural soundscape for the project and were responsible for the creation of all of the sound and music assets. These students were also responsible for ensuring the proper triggers and emitters were present in the game, and did so by either placing them themselves or working with Design and Programming students on that task. Multiple sound concepts were worked up for all sound and music pieces and tested in-game before selecting the final version.

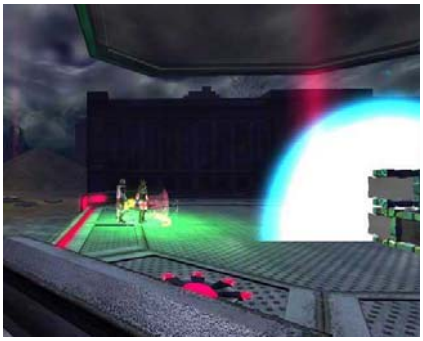
TOOLS USED (partial list)

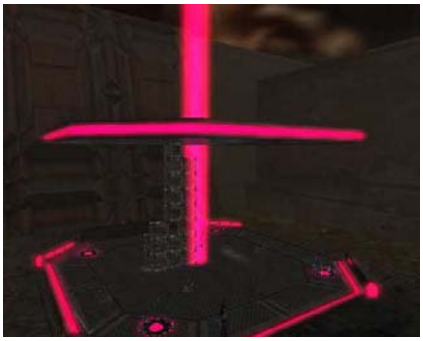
Torque Game Engined Advanced (1.7.1) ShowTool Pro, and Constructor — *GarageGames*
Torsion IDE (for TorqueScript) — *Sickhead Games*
Visual Studio 2008, Project and SharePoint— *Microsoft*
TortoiseSVN and Subversion
Maya 2008 and MotionBuilder — *Autodesk*
"Hawk" Mo-Cap System and EVaRT — *Motion Analysis*
Houdini Apprentice HD — *Side Effects Software*
Z-Brush – *Pixologic*
Acid and SoundForge — *Sony*
ProTools — *DigiDesign*











http://game.colum.edu/Projects/DismantleRepair