

WB1 World Building 1 - Assignment (13/14)

Course name: World Building 1

Course Code: WB1

Academic year: 2013 - 2014

Lecturer(s): Ronny Franken - franken.r@nhtv.nl

Number of EC's: 4

Title:

World Building - Production Design, Level Geometry and Lighting

Introduction:

This document describes the WB1 World Building 1 assignment for 2013-2014. Please check the WB1 Course Outline for additional course information and learning objectives.

Project type:

Students will work on this assignment in teams, and have the whole block including lectures/workshops, response classes and homework available for this assignment.

Assignment:

During WB1 a team of VA/IGD students is going to develop as well as implement a look and feel for a multi-player death match level created during LD1 Level Design 1.

Without changing gameplay the team will do additional art research and further develop the visual identity of the level. The team will set art guidelines regarding the environment, architecture, props and decoration of the game world. These art requirements will be recorded in a Production Design Document (a template can be found on N@tschool). The art requirements need to take the limitations and opportunities of available technology and the team involved into account.

Primary objective for WB1 is the translation of the look and feel into actual level geometry (textures, shaders and effects will be part of TX3 Texturing 3 and WB2 World Building 2) and prepare it for production using building blocks or any other way of efficient world building they can come up with.

All assets need to be prepared for use in and imported into the Unreal Development Kit. After importing, these assets need to be used to construct the final detailed production ready level. The team also has to make sure to implement a light setup that resembles the intended mood and atmosphere.

Throughout World Building 1, LD2 students will carry out scheduled playtests to ensure playability of the levels at the end of World Building 1. In this process artists and designers will need to discuss changes to level lay-out and how set dressing might affect or improve gameplay.

Unreal Development Kit (UDK):

We will use the July 2013 UDK Beta of the Unreal Development Kit, until further notice.

Teams:

Before week 2, in which art students do a pitch to get approval from the designers, teams will be created. Students get the opportunity to create their own teams; a typical team will consist out of 7/8 students.

Within these teams, members can have specific roles and work on specific tasks. With a well-balanced team this opens the opportunity to deliver a final finished and polished level at the end of WB2 World Building 2. The team has to write a plan that needs to be approved before they can continue.

The team plan (template available on N@tschool) needs to provide an overview of the team members, their roles and responsibilities and an overview of how they think the block should be planned. The plan should also mention the level which the team is going to work on. If approved, the team members will commit themselves to this plan, which will act like a contract.

Besides this, teams will need to setup a Trello-board, which they can use for visually managing their project. This will also be used by the lecturer for tracking the team's progress and how individual team members participate. In addition each team member needs to deliver a personal project portfolio, which should present their contribution to the final project.

Outcome:

- Team Plan
- Trello-board
- Production Design Document (including mood boards)
- Final WB1 presentation (PowerPoint, screenshots and/or trailer)
- Playable level geometry including lighting in the Unreal Development Kit
- Source models
- Personal project portfolio
- Peer assessment

Assessment:

- Project assignment, consisting out of:
 - Project grade: 50%
 - Individual contribution: 50%
- Both project grade and individual contribution need to be 5.5 or higher otherwise the lowest grade counts.

WB1 will result in a project grade that applies to the entire team, in addition individual contribution and performance will be taken into account for final individual grading. Please make sure to provide a personal project portfolio, which visually shows your contribution to the final project. Also the Trello-board will be used to track the team's as well as its individual member's performance. A peer assessment is part of the final deliverables to identify possible issues.

World Building 1 will be graded on a 0-10 point scale. A grade of 6 or above is a passing grade.

Grading criteria:

All items under outcome need to be present otherwise the project will NOT be graded.

The assignment will be assessed according to the following grading criteria. The table shows the criteria, their weight and a description of when a certain performance level is reached.

Rubric Project Grade - WB1 World Building 1 = 50% of overall grade				
Both project grade and individual contribution need to be 5.5 or higher otherwise the lowest grade counts.				
Criteria	Weight	Fail, grade: 0-5	Pass, grade: 6-7	Excellent, grade: 8-10
Production Design Document (PDD) / Presentations	12,5%	The PDD isn't present and/or presentations were not delivered. Although the document does present the required information, it unfortunately can be interpreted in many ways. The document fails to present one coherent look and feel. Presentation(s) weren't well prepared and instead of selling the team's ideas they raise questions and doubt. No attention has been paid to layout, structure, overall presentation and/or readability of documentation and presentations.	The PPD is present and presentations given are well prepared. The look and feel is described clearly and art requirement are illustrated more than sufficient. The information provided can be considered unambiguous and to the point, if strictly followed it provides enough detail to build the level and its assets as intended. The final presentation clearly presents the level, its assets and the project, it evokes interest and clearly illustrates decisions made along the way.	The PDD is a work of art in itself, its look and feel strongly connects to the overall feel it tries to sell. The document is well written and information is illustrated in a professional manner. The document and presentations show well developed ideas and the fact that a lot of thought went into the project. Presentations were well prepared and delivered in a very convincing manner, they sell the team's visual ideas and level identity without raising any questions or doubts.

Look and Feel	12,5%	The look and feel is seriously under developed. Although all the boxes have been ticked, the visual design doesn't stand out in any way and feels very bland and uninspiring. The chosen theme is very obvious and done many times before, the team didn't take the opportunity to add anything new or original. The look and feel doesn't meet the intended purpose or story to be told.	Although the look and feel isn't very original, it is described and implemented very well. The team managed to implement their own take on an existing theme and did this in a quite convincing and original manner. It got a serious amount of attention which clearly shows in the final design of the level and its assets. All elements present form a consistent whole, they all clearly belong to the same theme, they strengthen each other and together create an appealing look and feel.	The visual design of the level shows a lot of appeal, and evokes interest and curiosity. It makes you want to see more of the world the game takes place in. It clearly demonstrates the team's creativity and artistic vision. The look and feel and all the development time that went into it is clearly responsible for the aesthetic quality of the level. The level is very appealing and brings a smile to people's faces or make them stare in awe.
Level	12,5%	The level isn't finished or not present at all. The level shows serious flaws in execution with regard to art requirements and intended look and feel. All assets needed have been built and are used to construct the level, but the assets don't integrate very well or fail to feel consistent. Set dressing hasn't been addressed.	The level and its geometry meet the art requirements as set in the PDD. While playing the level it is very clear the look and feel is very well translated into actual level geometry. The level shows the team paid close attention to composition, proportions, details and level silhouettes. There is a clear connection between the playable level area and the outside world. The team paid close attention to how assets intersect, connect and integrate with the level. The level shows a consistent feel in all areas. The level shows more than sufficient attention for readability and hierarchy.	In addition the level shows thorough and lush set dressing, which makes sense and adds life to the scene. The level clearly tells a story. The level at this stage (without textures, shaders and final effects) already feels rich and very detailed.
Efficient World Building	12,5%	The team didn't pay any attention to efficient world building. The level mainly consists out of large assets that could easily have been broken into smaller pieces that could have been re-used. Parts of the level are exported from Maya as a whole. In no way attention has been paid to clever world building.	The team implemented a modular way of construction, like using Building Blocks and paid attention to all things involved (pivot placement, grid alignment, scalability, flexibility and re-usability). The team came up with an alternative way to facilitate efficient world building, the way this is implemented makes sense and works out great in practice.	The team showed great problem solving skills in this matter and came up with unique solutions. In addition the team took care of using clear naming conventions and carefully organized level assets using packages, resulting in a neatly ordered asset browser.
Geometry and Lightmap UV's	12,5%	The geometry is clearly rushed and built without error checking. The team didn't decide on uniform guidelines of how geometry should be built. Lightmap UV's are not present or weren't addressed carefully.	The level features clean and well-built geometry. The Level geometry features collision meshes and decent lightmap UV's. The geometry has the right detail to sell the unique features of the intended look and feel without going overboard with superfluous detail.	The team set clear guidelines for geometry (amount of detail required, poly limits and poly distribution), which were followed by every team member. Lightmap UV's got a serious amount of effort and secure beautiful lighting.
Lighting	12,5%	Lighting isn't addressed or clearly not finished. Although lighting requirements are described very clearly in the PDD and the team has defined clear goals, there is no match between these and how the lighting is implemented in the actual level.	The team shows clearly developed ideas about lighting as described in the PDD, which were successfully implemented. The general mood and atmosphere as created by the light setup strongly meets the requirements as set in the PDD.	The implemented lighting and how it affects the look of the level gives a general idea of how it impacts the needed level of detail and finish regarding final textures, shaders and geometry. The lighting doesn't only meet functional requirements but at this stage already clearly enriches the intended mood and atmosphere.

Playability	12,5%	Level playability completely got lost during art development. Communication between artists and designer seriously lacked during the project.	The level is still playable and meeting both design and art requirements as well as wishes from both sides. Artists and designers worked closely together and sought for well-founded solutions in case art and design needed to be aligned.	Level art supports design in all facets. Playability improved during art development even further from both art and additional design involvement.
Completeness	12,5%	The project is clearly not finished or simply not delivered. The deliverables are all there but show serious flaws, quality and level of finish seriously had to suffer to meet the final deadline. The projects shows a lot of effort in some areas but lacks in others.	The project is finished in all areas. All subjects (PDD, look and feel, level, level geometry, playability, efficient world building, and lighting) got addresses coherently and to a more than sufficient level.	The team didn't cut any corners in any areas and managed to deliver everything that was intended and required. The project in all facets is done completely and to a professional standard.

Rubric Individual Contribution - WB1 World Building 1 = 50% of overall grade				
Both project grade and individual contribution need to be 5.5 or higher otherwise the lowest grade counts.				
Criteria	Weight	Fail, grade: 0-5	Pass, grade: 6 -7	Excellent, grade: 8 - 10
Individual Contribution	100%	The personal project portfolio isn't present or clearly shows the team member didn't put enough effort into the project. Trello-activity of this team member is almost non-existent. The team member didn't show up for class or presentations and didn't participate in any team activities. Although the team member might have put a considerable amount of effort into the project, his work doesn't show or didn't add anything special to the final project. The student showed to be a bad teamplayer.	The team member's efforts are on par with other team members' activity. The student more than sufficiently participated in the project, his ideas or efforts are clearly visible in the final product. The team member showed commitment and responsibility for the success of the final product.	The success of the project was highly dependent on this team member. He/she was highly committed to deliver a special, high quality final product.

Grading standards:

- 10 - High Professional Standard
- 8+ - Professional Standard
- 6+ - Academic Standard
- 5+ - Poor Academic Standard
- 3+ - Incomplete
- 1+ - Seriously incomplete

Time schedule, milestones and deadlines:

Below you'll find an overview of important milestones and subsequent homework.

In-Class Activities	Out-of-Class Activities (Homework)
<p>Week 01</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LD1 students pitch their levels, 6 minute presentations each including Q&A. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ During each presentation VA students pay attention to scope, complexity and judge if the level sparks new ideas. ○ At the end of all presentations levels will be assigned to teams. • WB1 Introduction • Lecture: "Production Design and Storytelling" 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • VA students prepare a presentation to show their initial (visual) ideas, this can be done using mood boards, reference images, concept art or by any other means of inspiration. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Goal of this presentation is to get the initial ideas running as soon as possible as well as making them concrete by showing them in a presentation. ○ Please use the PDD template as a reference to get initial ideas. • Students make a start on the project, during the block this will entail the following tasks: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Getting familiar with the Unreal Development Kit. ○ Defining look and feel and describing art requirements, these need to be archived in a Production Design Document (template available on N@tschool). ○ Modeling the level and subsequent assets. ○ Preparing and importing level assets. ○ World building and set dressing. ○ Lighting. • Team plan <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Roles and tasks need to be divided. ○ Team plan (template available on N@tschool) needs to be written.

<p>Week 02</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • VA/IGD students pitch back, showing their initial (visual) ideas to designers, team members and supervisors, 6 minute presentations using mood boards or similar. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ After each presentation there will be time for Q&A. • Lecture: “Efficiently Building Game Worlds” • Exporting/importing static meshes. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Follow along exercises. • Team plan needs to be handed in. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ The plan needs to be approved before the team can continue. • Setup Trello-board. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue with project.
<p>Week 03</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guest lecture Jack Ward Fincham on Team and Project Management. • Lecture: “World Building, Do’s and Don’ts” • Guest lectures: World Building 1213 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue with project.
<p>Week 04</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lecture: “Lighting Game Environments” • Lighting in UDK. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Follow along exercises. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare level for playtest in week 5. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ In week 5 the levels in progress will be play tested by LD2 students in their LD2 class. The levels need to be prepared to facilitate this.
<p>Week 05</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LD2 students present gameplay review. • Class critique and feedback. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue with project.
<p>Week 06</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Class critique and feedback. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare level for playtest in week 7. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ In week 7 the levels in progress will be play tested again by LD2 students in their LD2 class.
<p>Week 07</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LD2 students present gameplay review. • Class critique and feedback. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue with project. • Prepare and finalize levels for final presentation and hand in.

<p>Study Week</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rehearsals for final presentation. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ TBA 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue with project. • Prepare and finalize levels for final presentation and hand in.
<p>Exam Week</p> <p>FINAL DEADLINE: Tuesday January 21, 12:00</p> <p>Please use WeTransfer or hand-in with teacher, I'll be available on that day at the Hopmansstraat.</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Artists and designers deliver final presentations to peers and industry professionals. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Level design and look and feel will be presented in full detail as well as level visuals will be shown in Maya and UDK. Artists will discuss the modular system or other ways of efficient world building they have come up with. ○ After each presentation there will be time for Q&A. ○ Projects will be handed in after presentations. • Round table with industry professionals. • TBA (guest lecture) 	

Retake:

In case a team fails WB1 they can finish their project in the first weeks of TX3 to get it to a sufficient level and to be able to continue on the project during TX3 Texturing 3.

In case individuals fail WB1 a suitable retake assignment will be defined by the lecturer. This might involve finishing/improving the assets the student was assigned to initially. A student can also be assigned to another team and work on a part of the level and/or assets that need improvements.

Retake deadline: Tuesday April 15 2014, before 12:00 (or before)

In case a student needs to retake GA2;

- He can join a team or form a team with fellow students and work on the WB1 assignment as it is described above, the current WB1 grading criteria will apply.
- In exceptional cases the student can work on the same assignment as described in this document individually, the current WB1 grading criteria will apply. Scope and level of detail need to be discussed with the lecturer to make it fit a one-man team.