Design for Interactive Media

Squish!

Design Document

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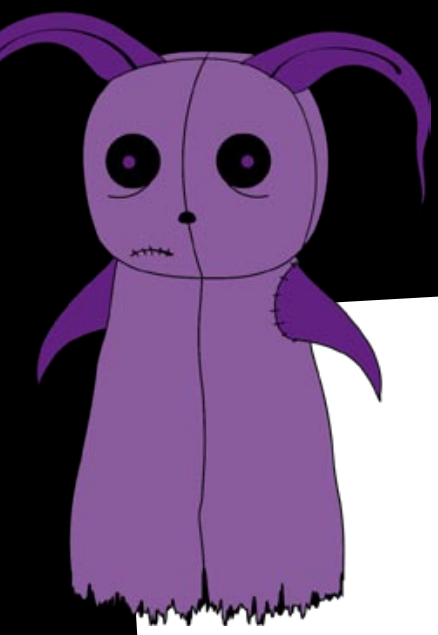

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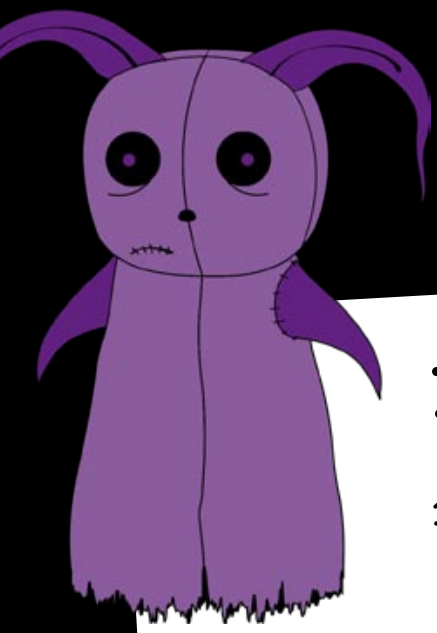
Design Idea Brain Storming

Parameters: Non linear design Simple, design. Sound effects, music etc.

1. Hero's journey – in game/interactive form – snakes and ladders
2. Geek hangman – hang a love to hate geek figure. e.g. ewoks, ja-ja binx, office paperclip etc.
3. Enduring solutions website (make it screen reader accessible)
4. Emo/Goth poetry generator - random overly florid and dramatic words and phrases randomly put together. possibly then the user can drag and drop the words to improve it.
5. Interactive blog – using the idea of identities and life aspects a mask theme/costumes
6. Quotes – floating shapes/clouds that randomly drift around, when clicked on brings up a quote
7. Exploration of Angels – Mythology Relevance, set up like a we page with interlinking branches, images and mythology – possibly liked in with the fallen as well
8. Into the dark – Dark mythology, dark sub cultures, Dark historical figures, dark spiritualities.
9. Hesiod's Theogony – in an interactive form. An interactive family tree of the Greek pantheon that can either be run though start to finish, a movie of Hesiod's Theogony or stopped and started to explore the individual deities and their story.
10. Squish-a-smurf – looking down on smurf village randomise smurfs coming out from houses, each level different unique smurf comes up possibly with a spec, ability making it more difficult to squish.



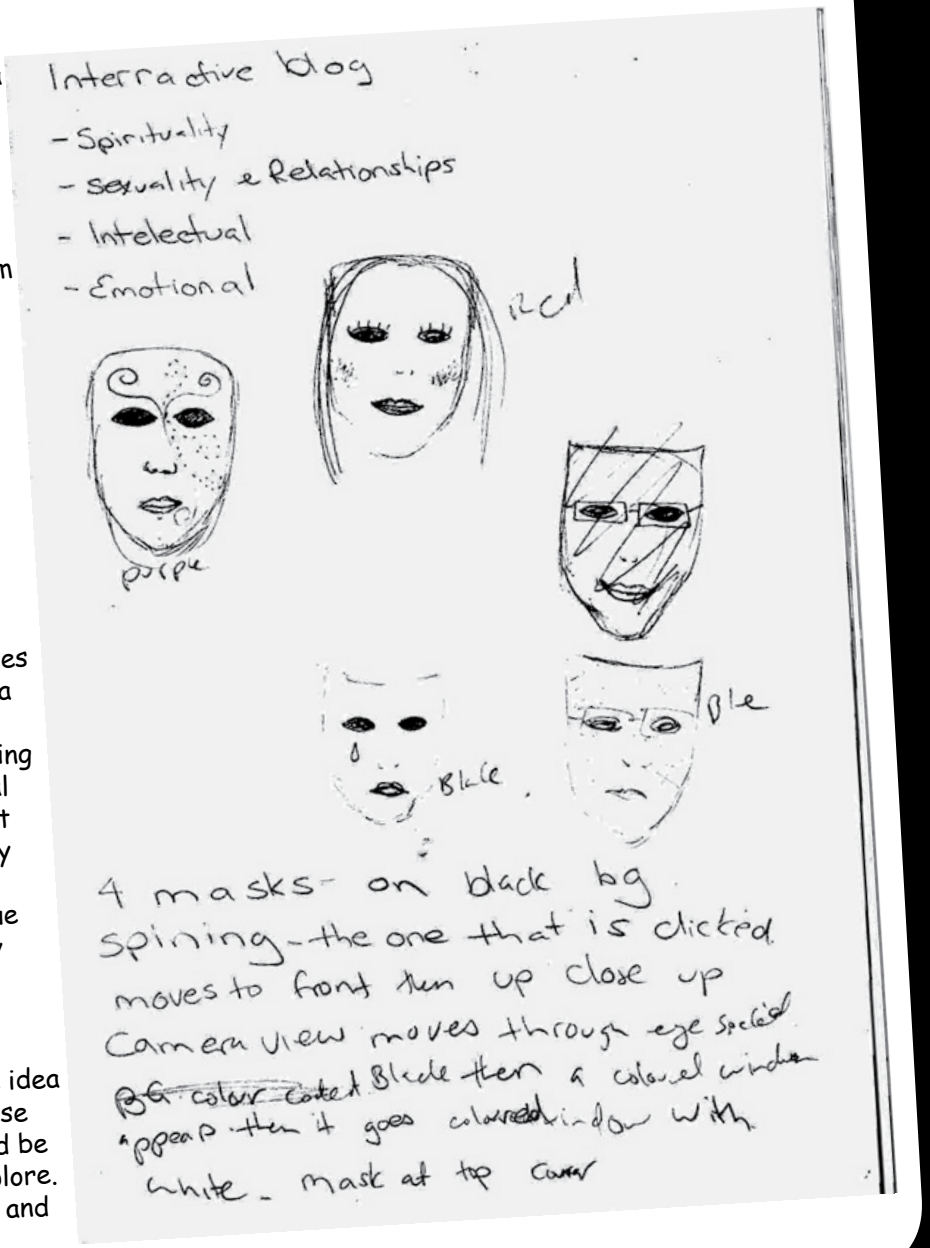
Ideas For Development

1. Interactive blog – using the idea of identities and life aspects a mask theme/costumes

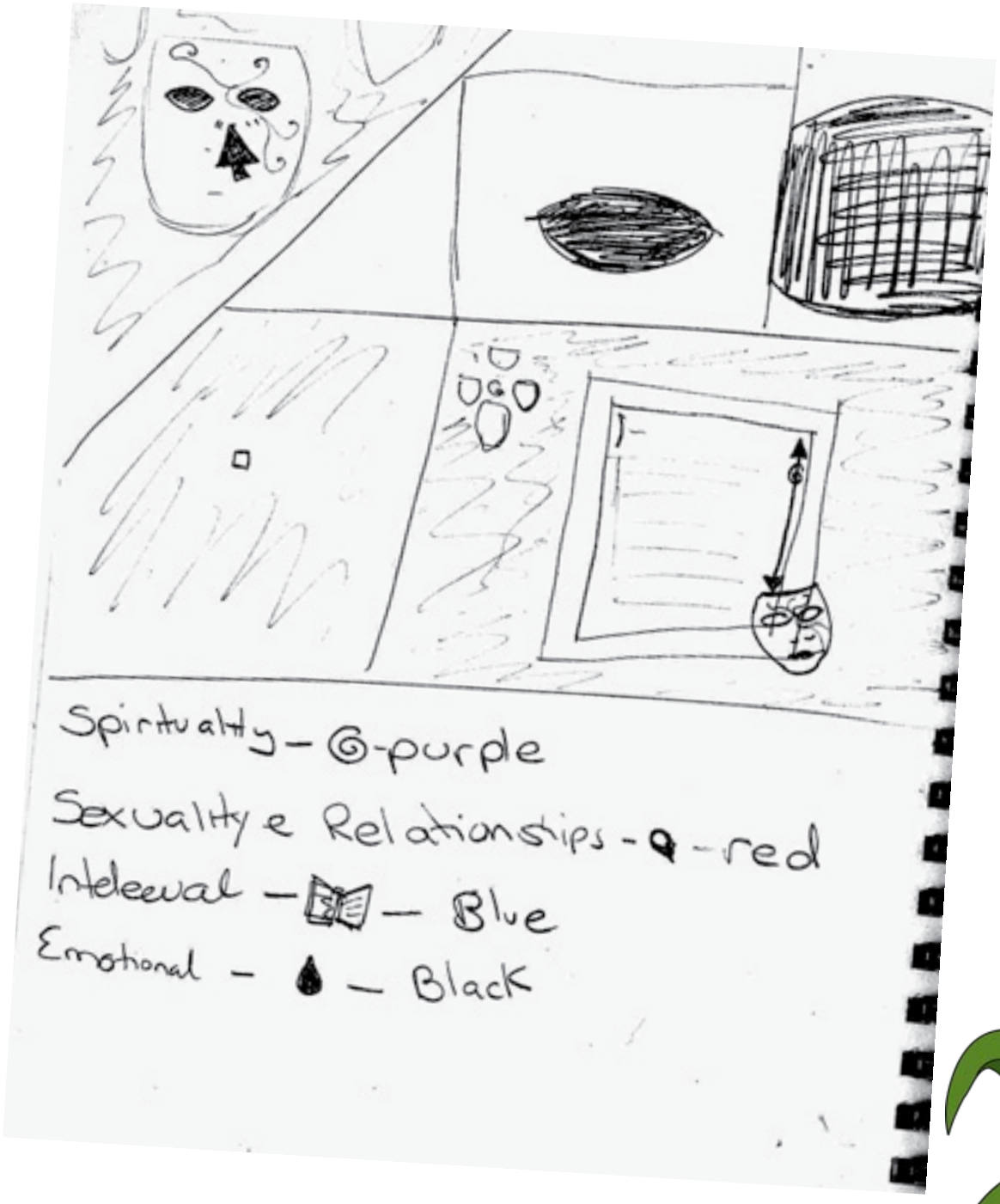
The basis of this idea is the idea of avatarism in digital cultures. Where a persons avatar takes on part or aspects of their personality of a personality a person wishes to express. I wanted to explore this avatarism in a blog type context giving each aspect of a persons identity their own face in the blog.

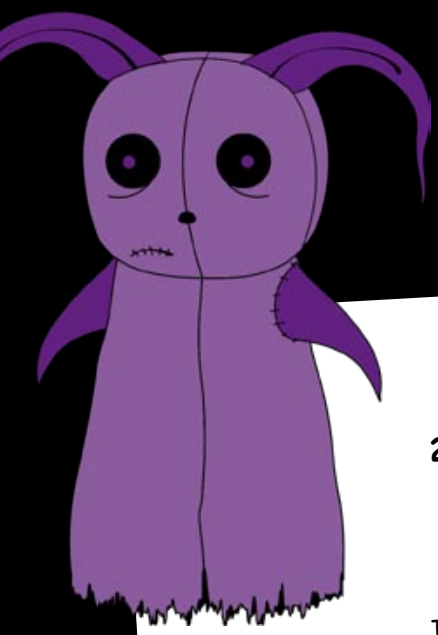
I wanted to develop this idea using the mask motif. Masks are an iconic way to change or hide ones idenity, which have been used throughout history. They were used in theatre to create characters and identities and in esoteric discussions as a metaphor for personal idenity and its multiplicity. I am leaning towards using a classic neutral style mask as the base so that each face is still connected by their base structure, rather than the Italian Carnival esque style where each is distinctly different without the base commonality.

I am still pondering over the idea of using whole figures, the use of clothing, like masks, would be an interesting avenue to explore. Clothing being a very visible and



clear way to express, and explore, personal idenity. I am leaning towards just sticking to the masks, since I don't want to overly clutter the page, something I tend to do in my designs.





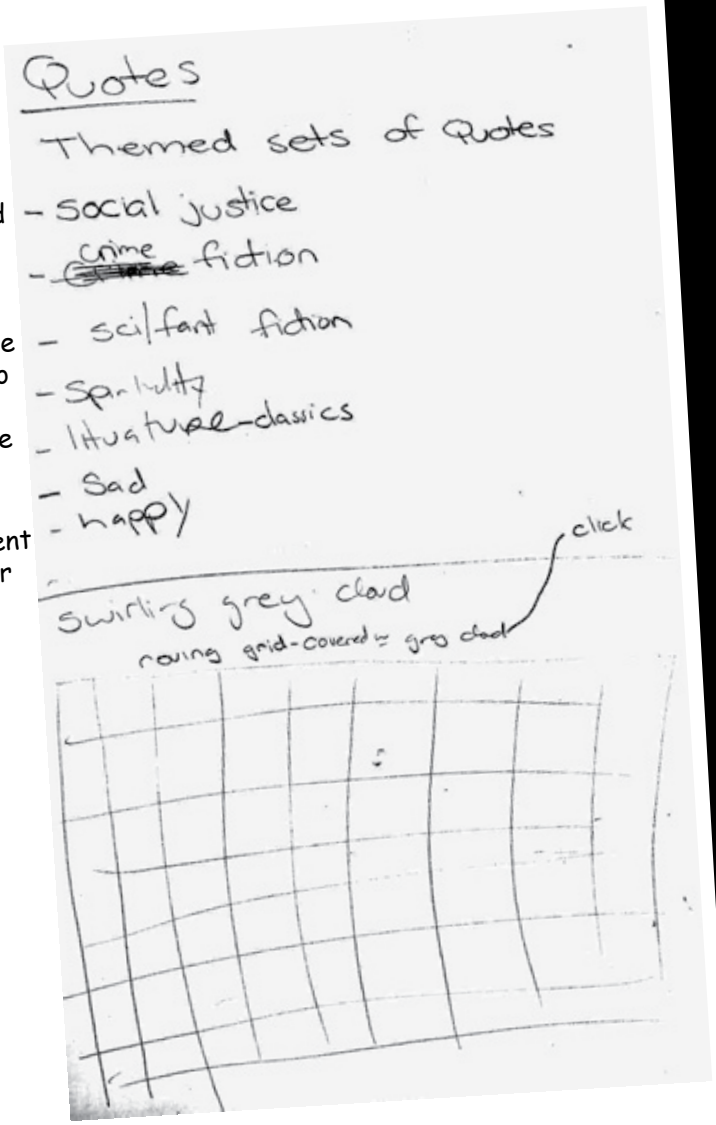
2. Quotes – floating shapes/clouds that randomly drift around, when clicked on brings up a quote

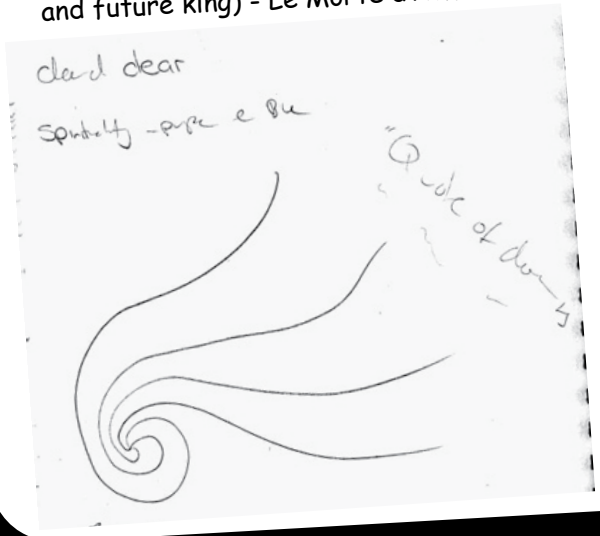
I am a big fan of good quotes. A good quote can inspire, elate, amuse or depress in very few words. I tend to be a fan of inspiring social change type quotes, but all have their place.

This one was inspired by the "We Feel Fine" website (http://www.wefeelfine.org/). I really liked the random floating balls which you could click on and have a peak into someone else's world. I like the idea of wading through a cloud and pulling out a quote not being sure what you will get a bit like a lucky dip. I think I could experiment with transitions, whether the text fades in and out, or if the clouds part to expose the quote, a moment of clarity in the mist so to speak. It makes me think of finding a grain of truth or direction in Dante's Forests. Here are some ideas for quotes I would like to use:

"Our lives begin to end the day we become silent about the things that matter." - Martin Luther King Jr

"HIC IACET ARTURUS, REX QUONDAM REXQUE FUTURUS" (Here lies Arthur, once and future king) - Le Morte d'Athur





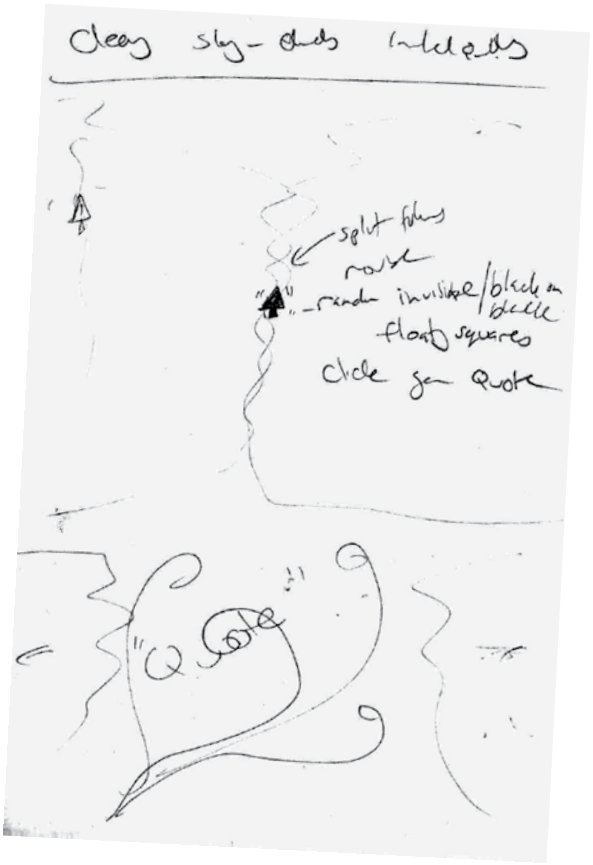
"So many species so little time" - Dr Who

"You people and your quaint categories" - Cpt'n Jack Harkness, Torchwood

"No boom today, Boom tomorrow" - Lt. Cmd, Ivaniva, Babylon 5.

"But I, being poor, have only my dreams;
I have spread my dreams under your feet,
Tread softly because you tread on my dreams" - W.B. Yeats

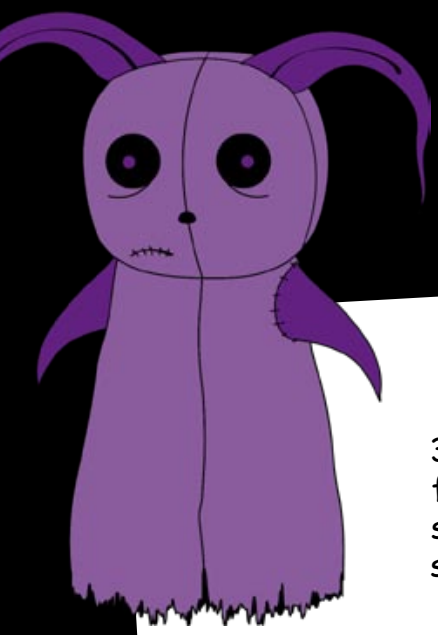
"We believe that the universe itself is conscious in a way we can never truly understand. It is engaged in a search for meaning. So it ... breaks itself apart, investing its own consciousness in every form of life." -Delenn to Brother Edward in Babylon 5:"Passing Through Gethsemane"



"I'd rather be hated for who I am, than loved for who I'm not."

"The tattoo is the mark of the soul. It can act as a window though which we can see inside, or it can be a shield to protect us from those who cannot see past the surface."

"Between what matters and what seems to matter, how should the world we know judge wisely?" - E. C. Bently



3. Hesiod's Theogony – in an interactive form. An interactive family tree of the Greek pantheon that can either be run though start to finish, a movie of Hesiod's Theogony or stopped and started to explore the individual deities and their story.

I have found it interesting how little classical knowledge my classmates have. I wanted to see if it was possible to develop a interactive version of Hesiod's Theogony that would put this knowledge in an accessible form. I would ideally have the main time line as a running version of the birth of the gods, this would build a family tree of sorts which the user could interact with and find out about the deities and their liaisons, it would also be interesting to put key events and the like on it such as the story of Prometheus, it also may be interesting to put other cultural cross references, i.e. the story of Prometheus is similar to that of Azrael or tales of other mythical heros that follow similar archetypal lines.

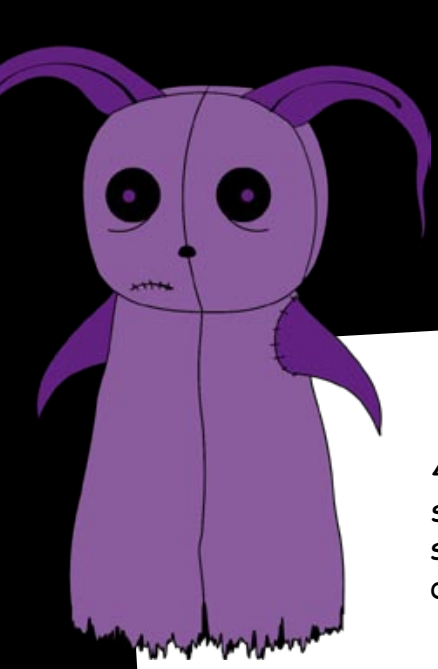
Ill have to ponder about what shape I could put the initial family tree in the classic would be a mountain much like that of Olympus giving that symbolic consistency. However it seems a bit simple with the degree of interrelatedness of the Greek pantheon. I think it might be interesting to do a spherical or at least circular version. I think I will need to do a rough who made who from the theogony to work out the best shape.

In terms of imagery I was thinking of either using famous archetypal images of popular culture characters that depict the personality traits of the deity in question along with an image of a classical representation whether it be a statue, painting or symbolic representation. This dual imagery would give people from a more contemporary background a linking mechanism between the archetypal mythological figures and those more contemporary ones.

In terms of interaction I think it should have a couple of major methods of interaction one would be an animation/film which recites probably an abridged version of Hesiod's theogony. This play through would have stop start back and forwards options. I would like to have a lineage or paragraph per frame with a voice over reading it however I'm not sure if it would work well. Then on each of the frames there would be links to the pages of the different deities and their own stories as well as possibly extracts from the myths about them and a brief biography. These would appear a bit like pop-ups with images and text in a box, though I will definitely have to ponder how it would best work. Especially with the possibility for voice overs and/or the full Theogony animation.

Notes:

- http://www.sacred-texts.com/cla/hesiod/index.htm
- http://www.sacred-texts.com/cla/hesiod/theogony.htm
- Genealogy of the god Lines 116 - 491 of the gods themselves though demigods come later.
- I'm not sure what structure would suit it best... I think I will need to colour code the relationship or have an arrow system because mothers/sons etc bare children together as well as spontaneous birth. The mountain style seems to lineal maybe a 3D version is needed to illustrate the complexity.



4. Squish-a-smurf – looking down on smurf village randomise smurfs coming out from houses, each level different, unique smurfs comes up. Possible with a specific, ability making it more difficult to squish.

OK this one comes from my obsession with doing horrible things to very cute things. This is more of the fun silly idea, less serious and philosophical more brain fluff.

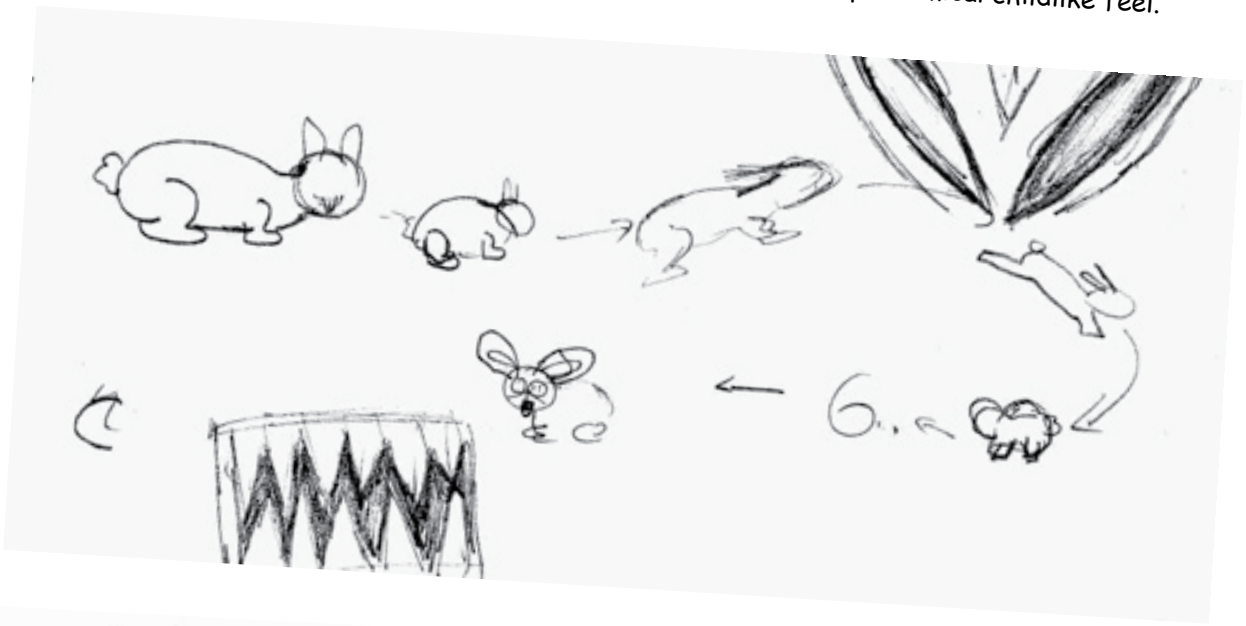
The man idea is that you have smurfs run across the scene probably the smurf village or something that looks like it and have a Gargamell like hand with a hammer which is controlled by the mouse which the player uses to squish smurfs. I'd probably like to have three variations of smurf:

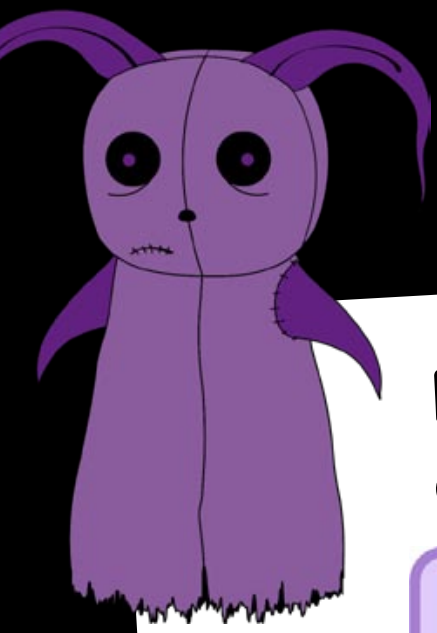
- a generic smurf, which would be the lowest score;
- a brainy smurf which would be the next; and
- a papa smurf which would be the highest scoring.

If I have time I would like to put in a smurfette she would be like the mother ship in space invaders who gives bonuses or lives when squished.

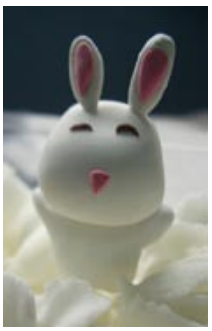
Further Development

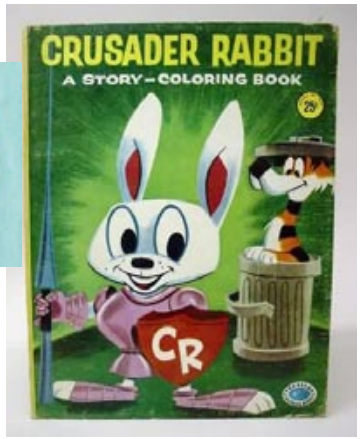
Ok so moving on from the Smurf imagery, keeping the idea of squishing a cute character it would be better to develop my own. I like the idea of squishing toy rabbits, this is mainly because in most peoples minds the rabbit is the height of innocent cuteness. I'd want to stick with a very child like look to the whole thing, using a child's mallet/lollipop/jingly toy as the squishing implement. I would also like to make sure I use sounds that keep a comical childlike feel.





Research: Visual References and Inspiration

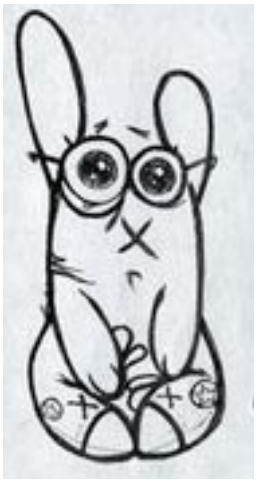




ZOMBIE

BUNNIES DON'T
HEAR, SPEAK OR SEE NO EVIL

GharExpert.com
DOGS

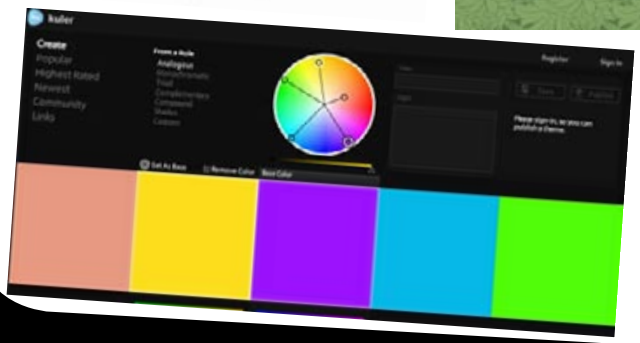


GharExpert.com
DOGS

domain of the bunny-obsessed
bakenius*

HAT

UMM, BE HAPPY, OKAY? I KILLED IT FOR YOU.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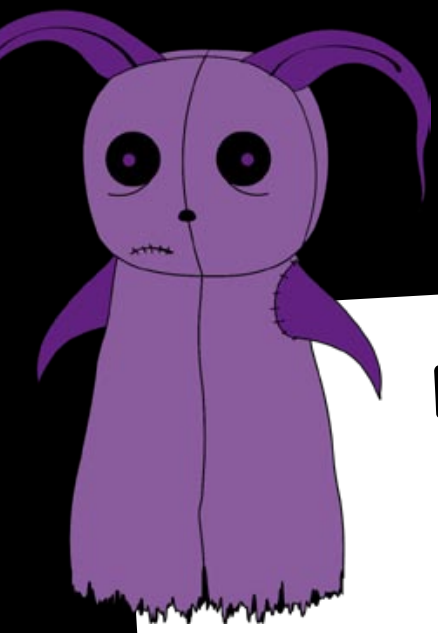
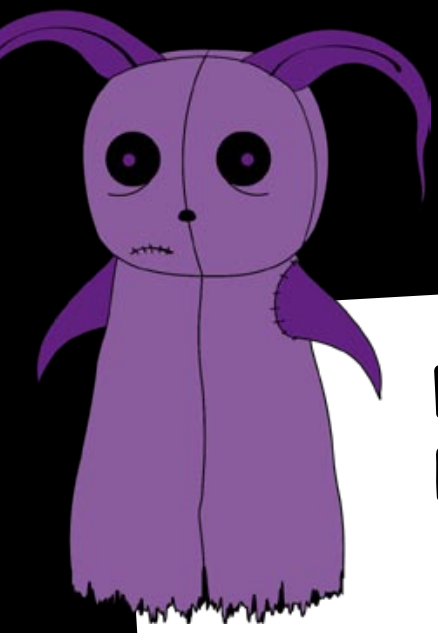
Create
Popular
Highest Rated
Newest
Community
Links

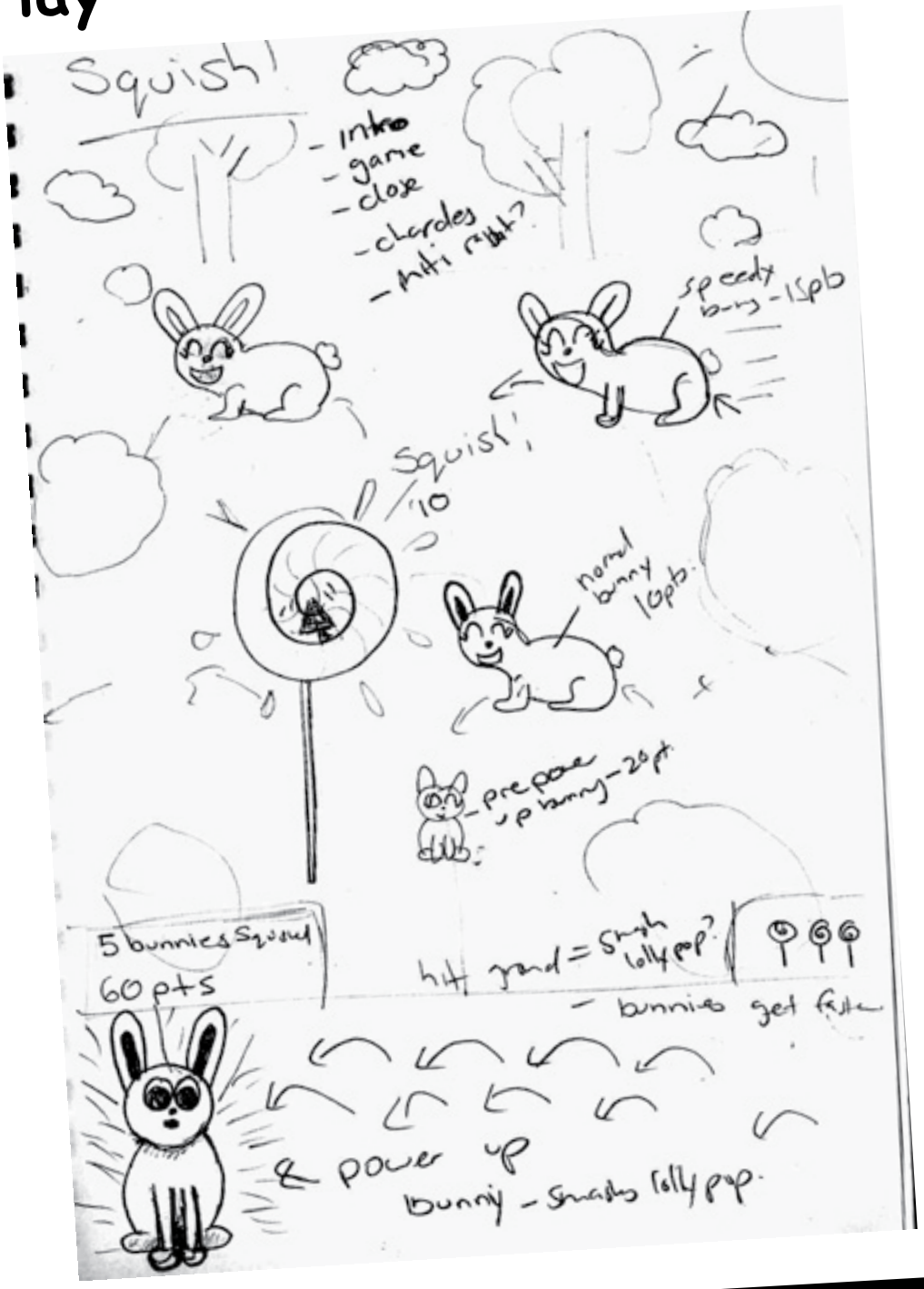


Rough Sketches - Character

Developed Sketches - Character

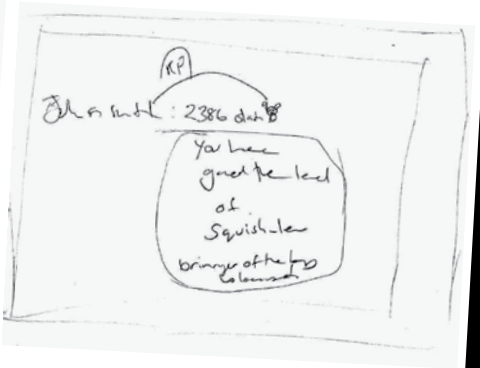


Rough Sketches - Game Play



Squish
-eep'
2:30
01238

SQISH!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You have
gained the lead
of
Squish-lea
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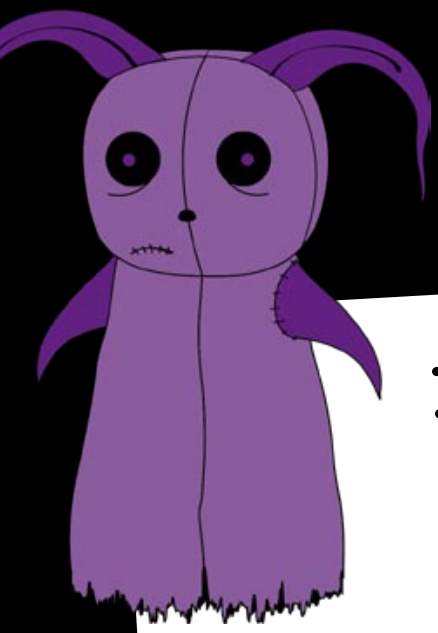
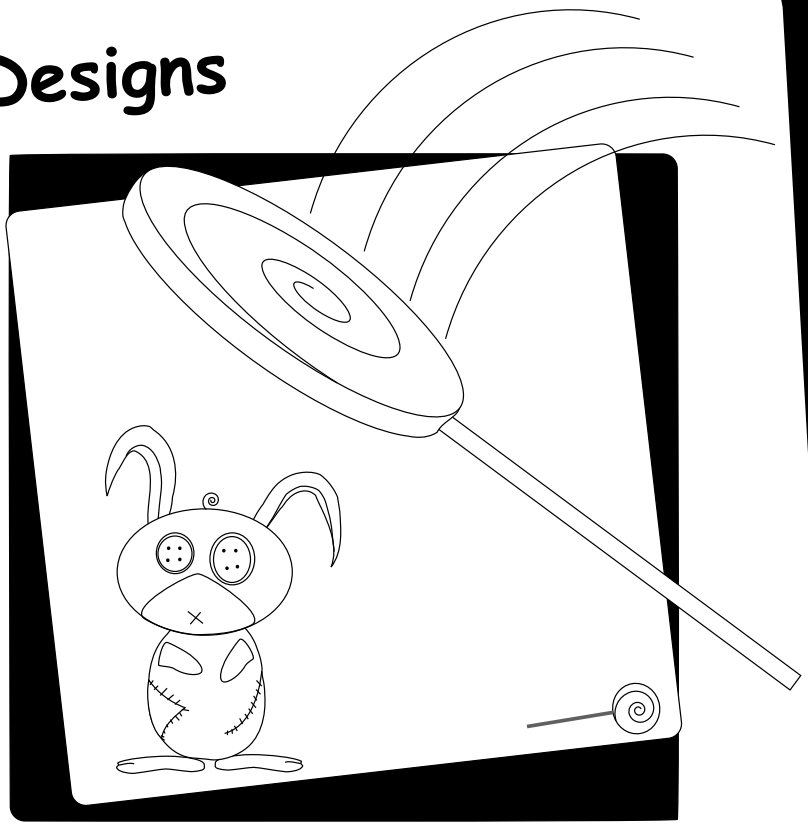
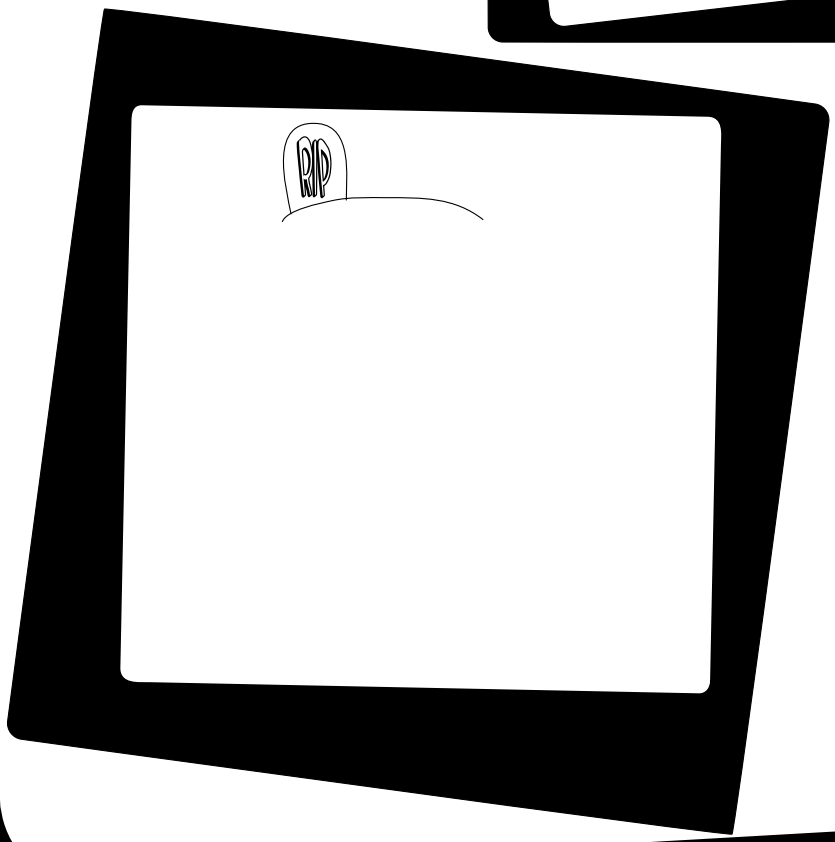
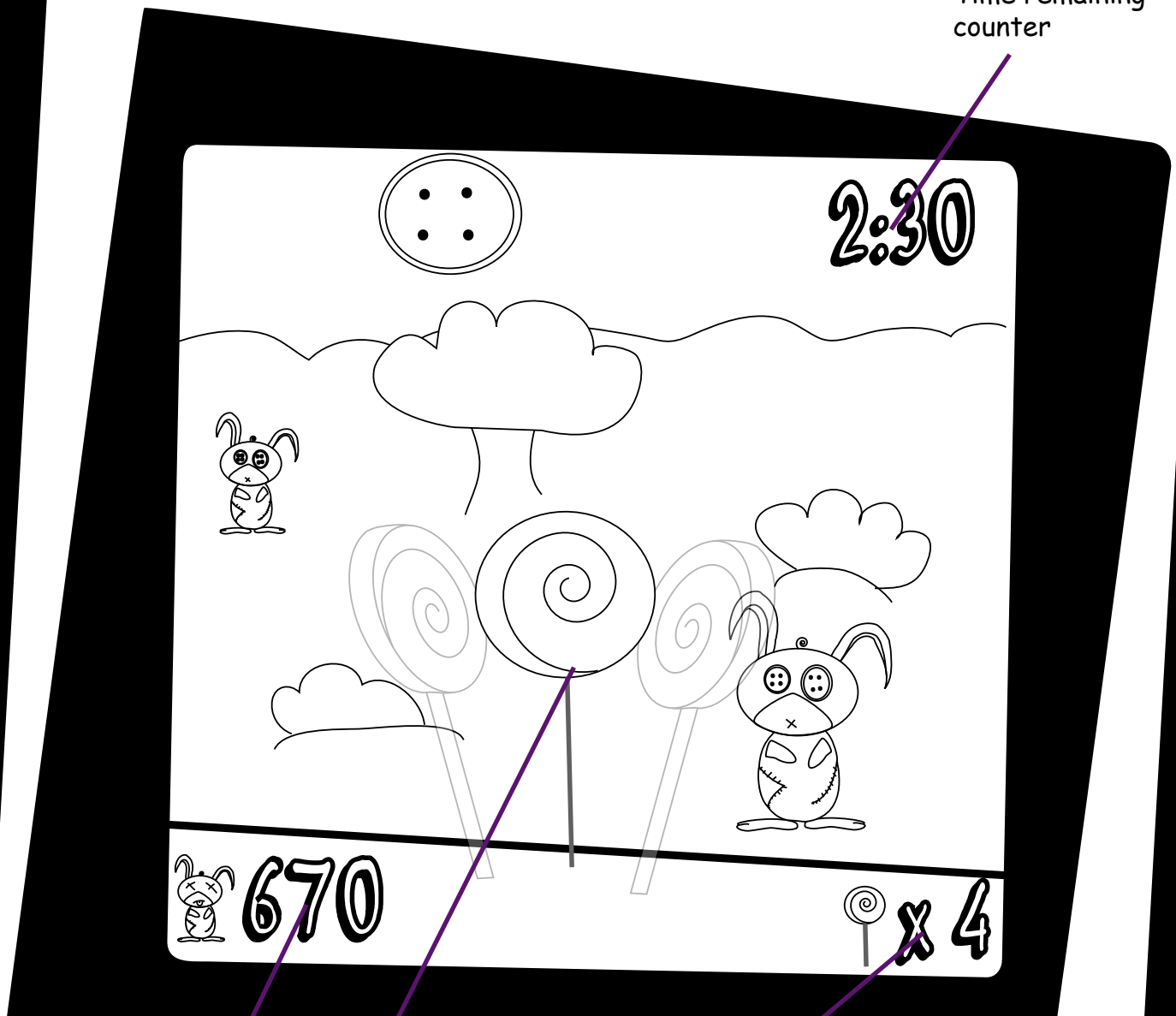


Initial Designs

Right: Opening Screen
Below: Closing Screen
Far Right: Game Play Screen





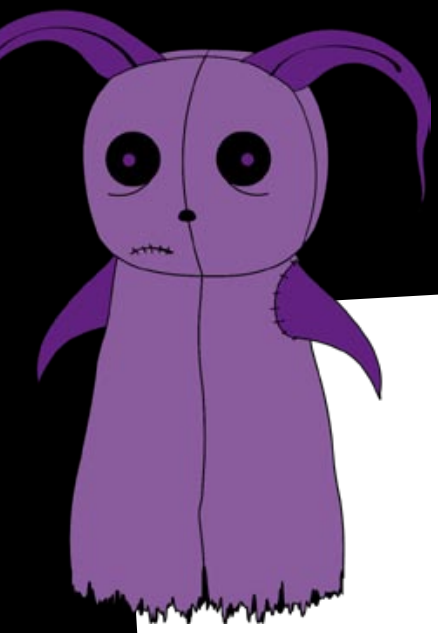


Time remaining counter

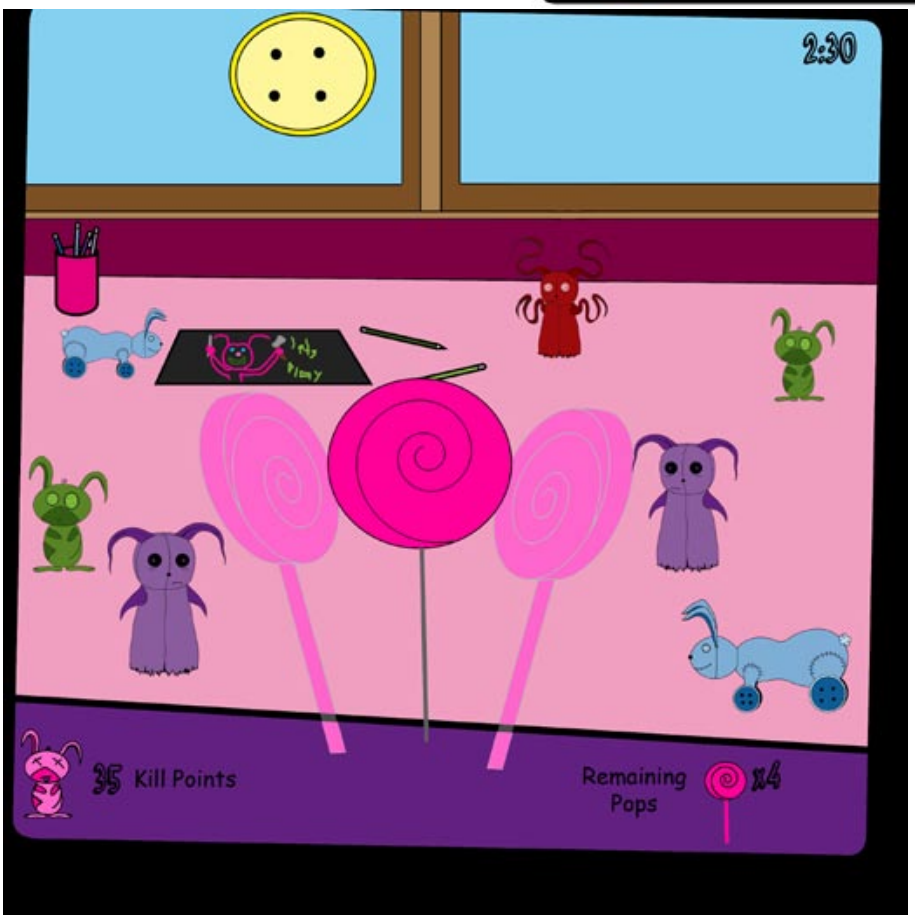
Kill count/score

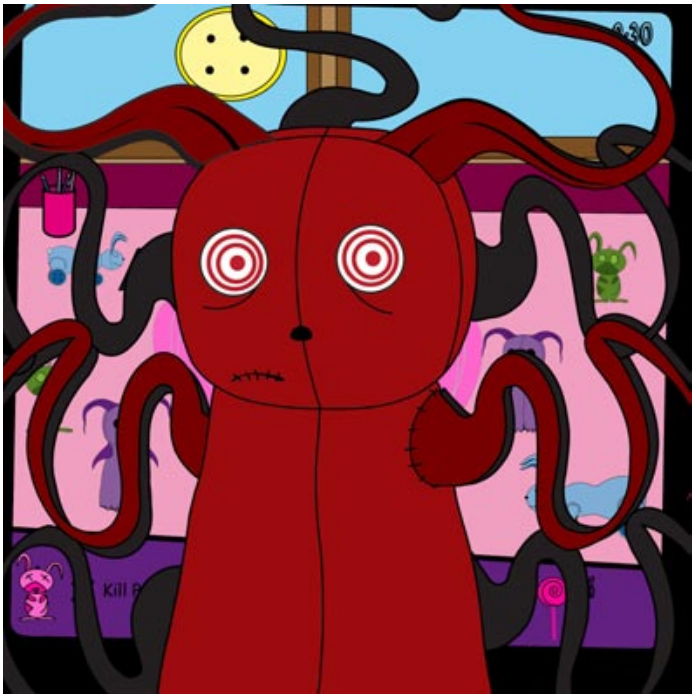
Lollipop follows the mouse click to make it hit the bunnies

Lives/Lollipops left

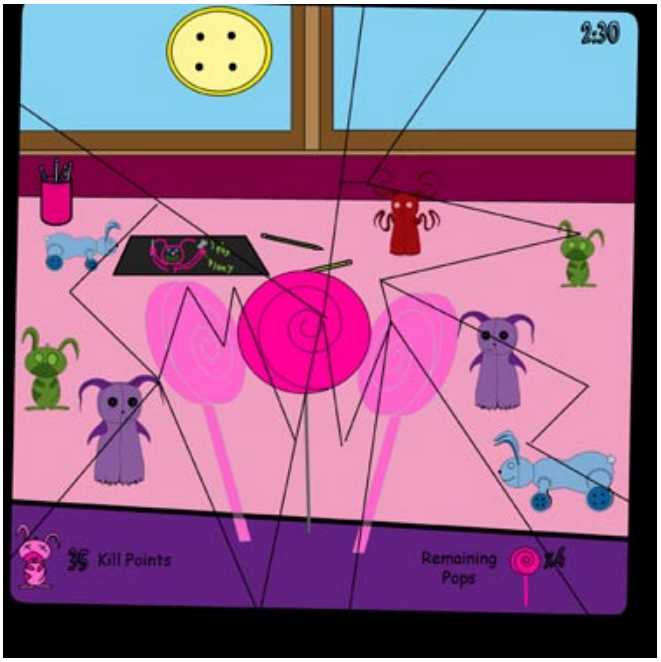


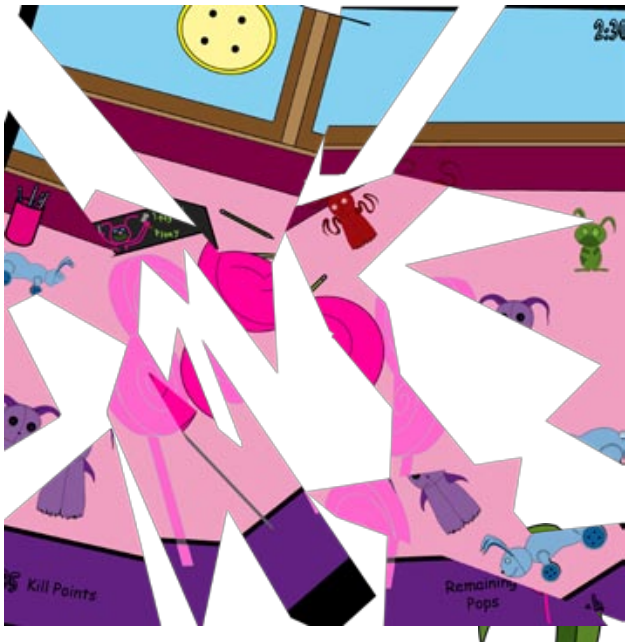
Squish!
play

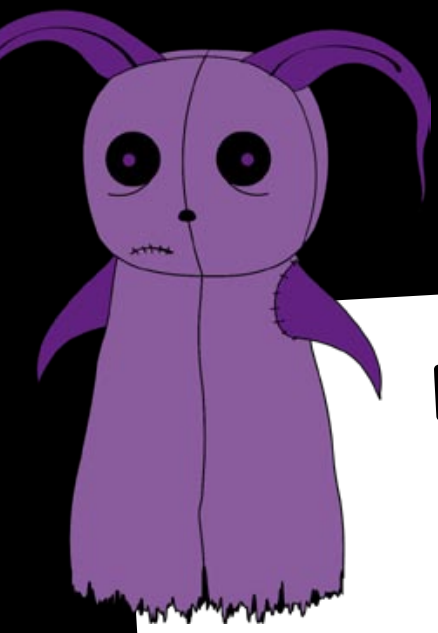

2:30
35 Kill Points
Remaining Pops
x4



Possible Death Screens
above: if killed by demon bunny
below: if stick smashes on ground

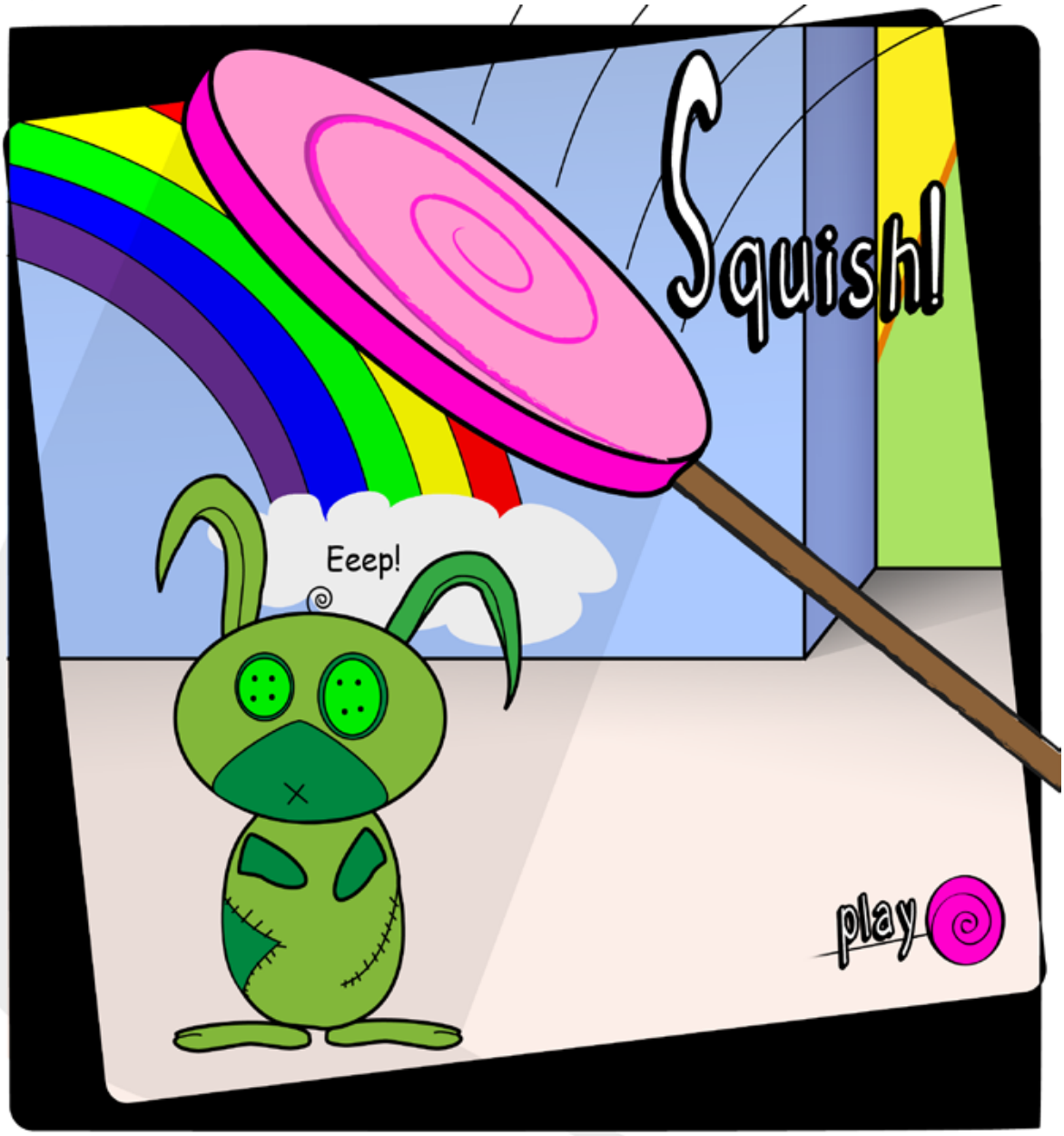




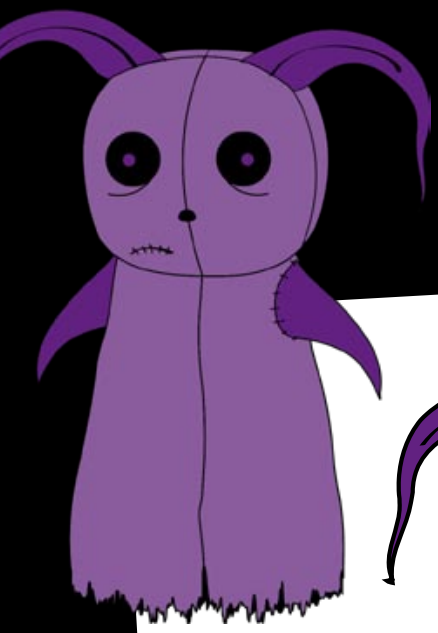


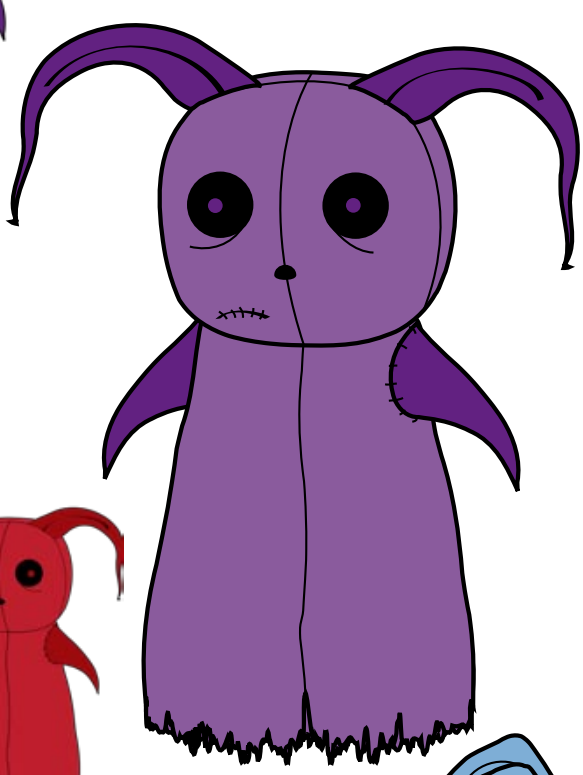
Final Design Mockups

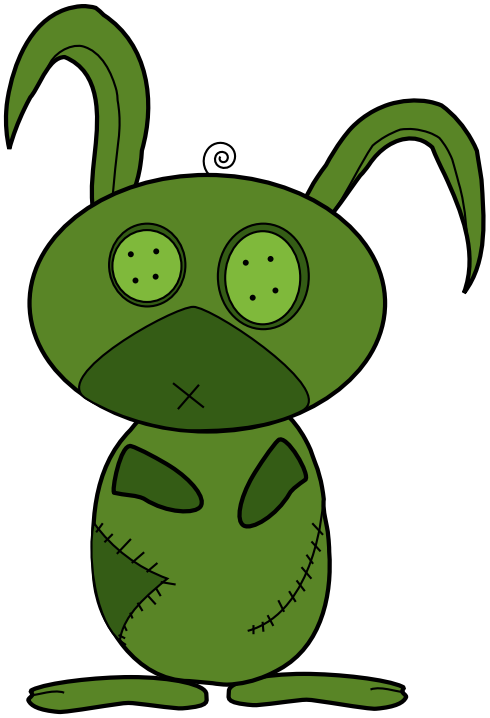
Start Screen

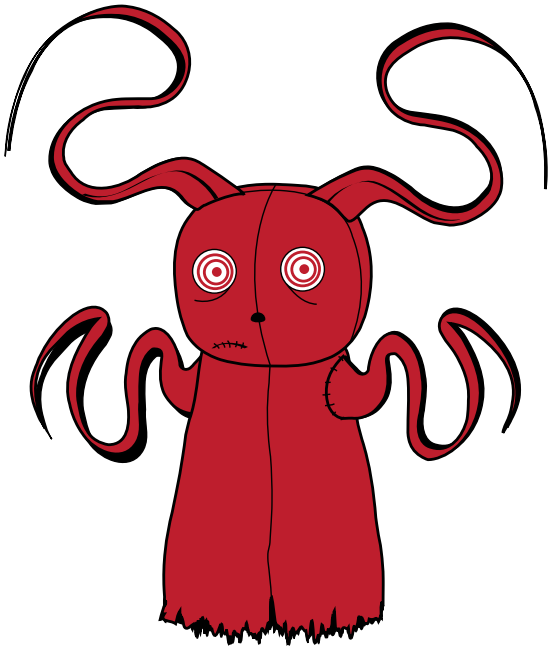


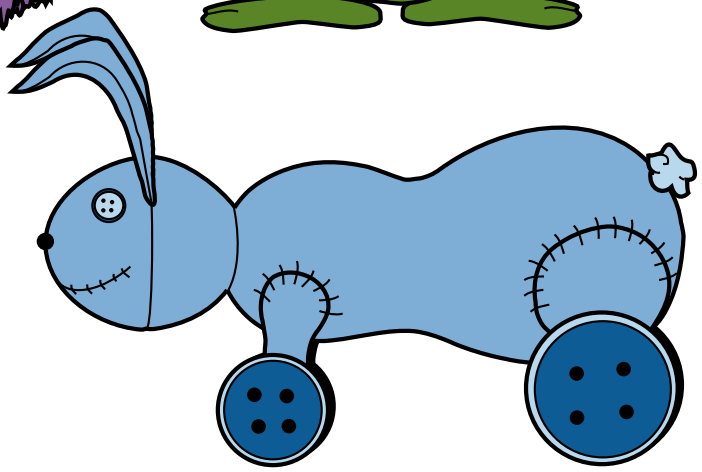
Run Screen



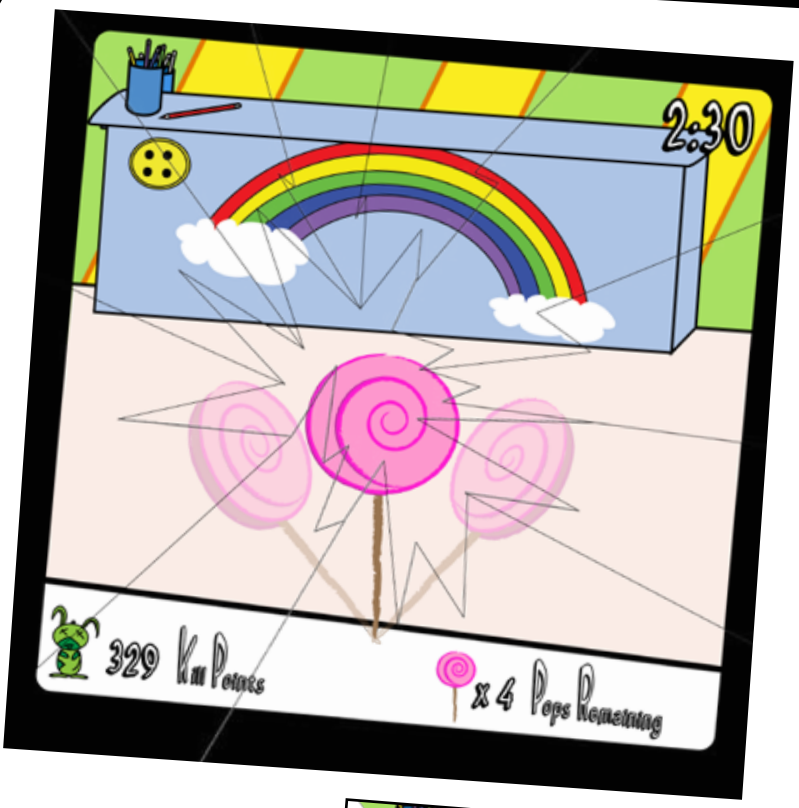




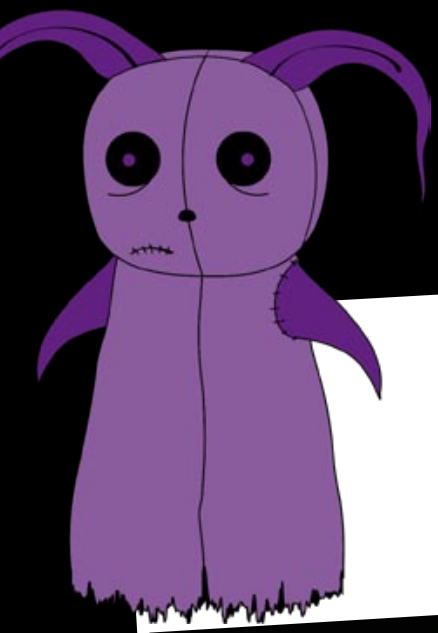




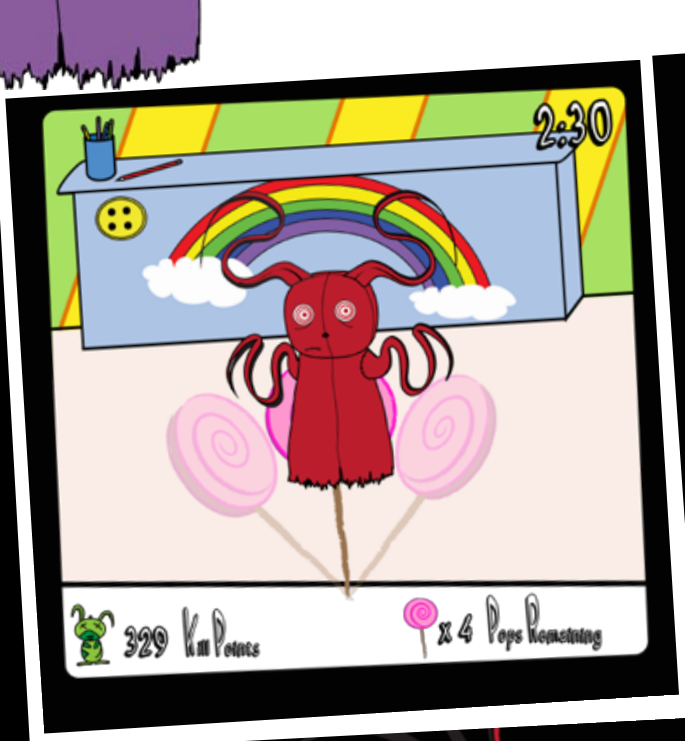
Characters from top left: demon bunny, generic bunny, powered up demo bunny, Speedy bunny.

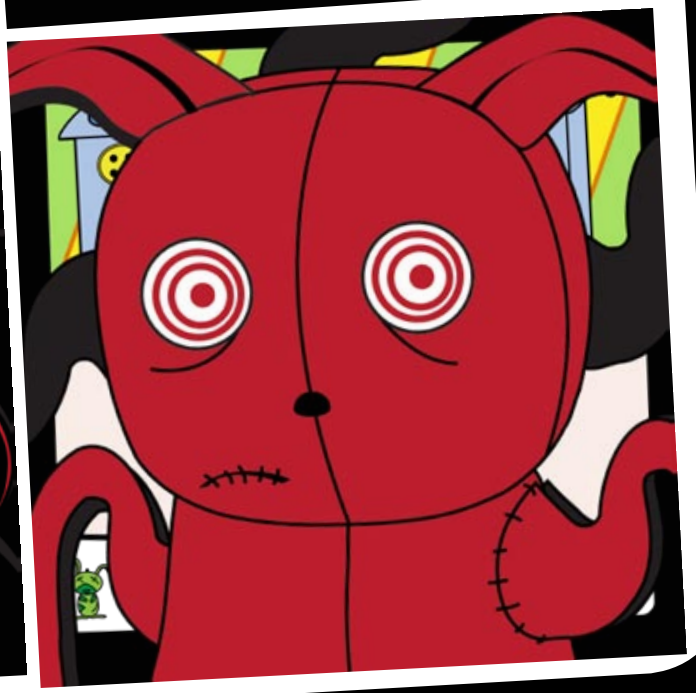


Death Screen if run out of lives by missing a rabbit.



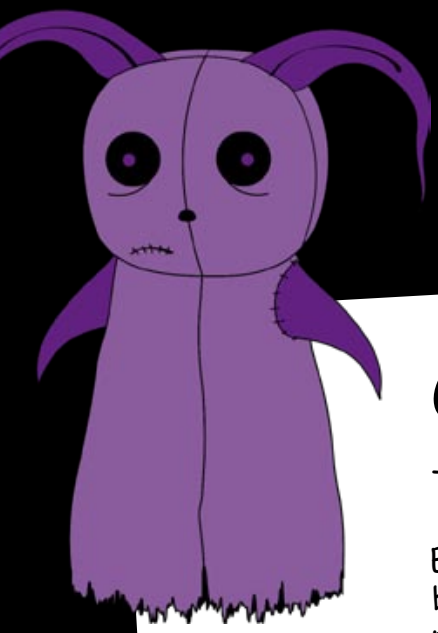
Death Screen if run out of lives by hitting a powered up bunny.





You have gained the rank of:
Squishler
Bringer of the bunny holocaust
play again

End Screen



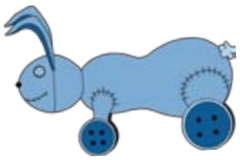
Game Notes and Rules

The game should run a maximum of 3-4 minutes.

Each 20-30sconds the bunny intensity should increase. The first bunnies focus mainly on the generic bunnies, then the fast the power up bunnies scattered irregularly through the group but gain frequency as game speeds up.

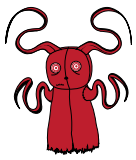
Points:

10

 15

20

30 & extra life (lollipop)

 Death

High Score Messages:

=<100 Road Kill, you tried to argue with a truck... guess who won.

101-200 Squishy, a frolicker and tree huger of great renowned

201-300 Squish-tacular, you got some.... really you did.

301-400 Squish master, you run the dojo of squish

401-500 Squisholini, A squishtator of ill repute

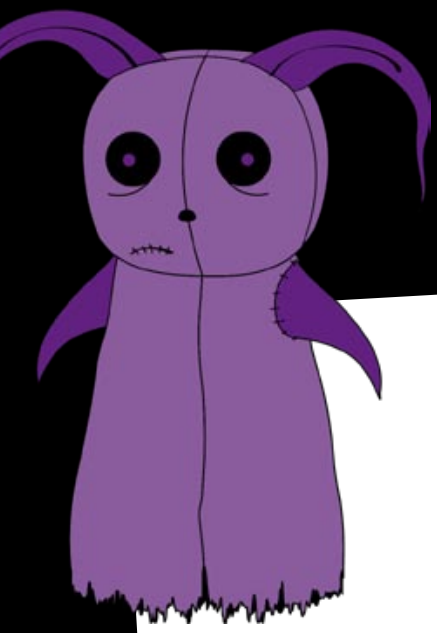
501>= Squishler, bringer of the bunny holocaust

Colour Scemes (R,G,B):

Rabbits:
Dark purple: 98,33,129
Light Purple: 138,91,157
Light Green: 127,185,59
Dark Green: 52,92,21
Middle Green: 89,133,38
Very Light Blue: 184,216,237
Middle Blue: 126,174,214
Dark Blue: 13,92,149

Lollipop:
Bright Pink: 255,0,204
Light Pink: 255,153,207
Dark Pink: 179,18,146
Brown: 140,98,57

Background:
Yellow (wall): 252,238,33
Green (wall):170,226,99
Orange (wall): 229,123,4
Light Blue (box): 171,201,255
Cream (floor): 252,238,232
Yellow (Sun): 250,255,41
Red (Rainbow): 255,0,0
Yellow (Rainbow): 255,255,0
Green (Rainbow): 0,255,0
Blue (Rainbow): 0,0,255
Purple (Rainbow): 102,45,145



Design Alterations

Game play:

Originally you would loose a life if you hit the ground and no bunnies, however because I chose to code generate the bunnies, I had difficulty making sure that you didn't loose a life if you hit one bunny while missing another. I ended up removing this feature and adding a minus points if the bunnies made it to the other side of the screen, this kept the difficulty up while still making it fun.

To make this work I altered the scoring structure slightly:

- Generic Bunnies +5 points if hit, -5 points if missed
- Wheeled Bunnies +10 points if hit, -10 points if missed
- Demon Bunnies +10 points if hit while purple, +25 points and +1 life if hit while red, -1 life if hit while tentacled, -10 points if missed.

Scoring Levels:

To compensate for the changes in game play and the ease of building up points I altered the scoring structure slightly:

- =<200 Road Kill, you tried to argue with a truck... guess who won.
- 201-300 Squishy, a frolicker and tree huger of great renowned
- 301-500 Squish-tacular, you got some.... really you did.
- 501-600 Squish master, you run the dojo of squish
- 601-700 Squisholini, A squishtator of ill repute
- 501>= Squishler, bringer of the bunny holocaust

Screens:

I also added a help screen with game instructions and a credits screen on exit.

Reflections:

I would've liked to develop the code a bit more, making sure that bunnies while appearing randomly also appeared in order in terms of perceived distance in game. otherwise I feel like the development went well. I had to alter the way I did a number of things in the play screen, most of it is code generated rather than placed so that was a learning curve all in all I think it is fun and a bit silly, so it achieved its goal. Thanks for all your hard work

Cheers

Anna T