

The background image is a dark, atmospheric scene from a video game. It features a large, dark, rocky structure with a glowing blue light source on the right side. In the foreground, there are some dark, leafy plants. The overall color palette is dark with some blue and green highlights. A large white rectangular placeholder is centered in the upper half of the image.

VIDEO GAMES #1

**A LEVEL GRAPHICS
EXEMPLAR**

STATEMENT OF INTENT

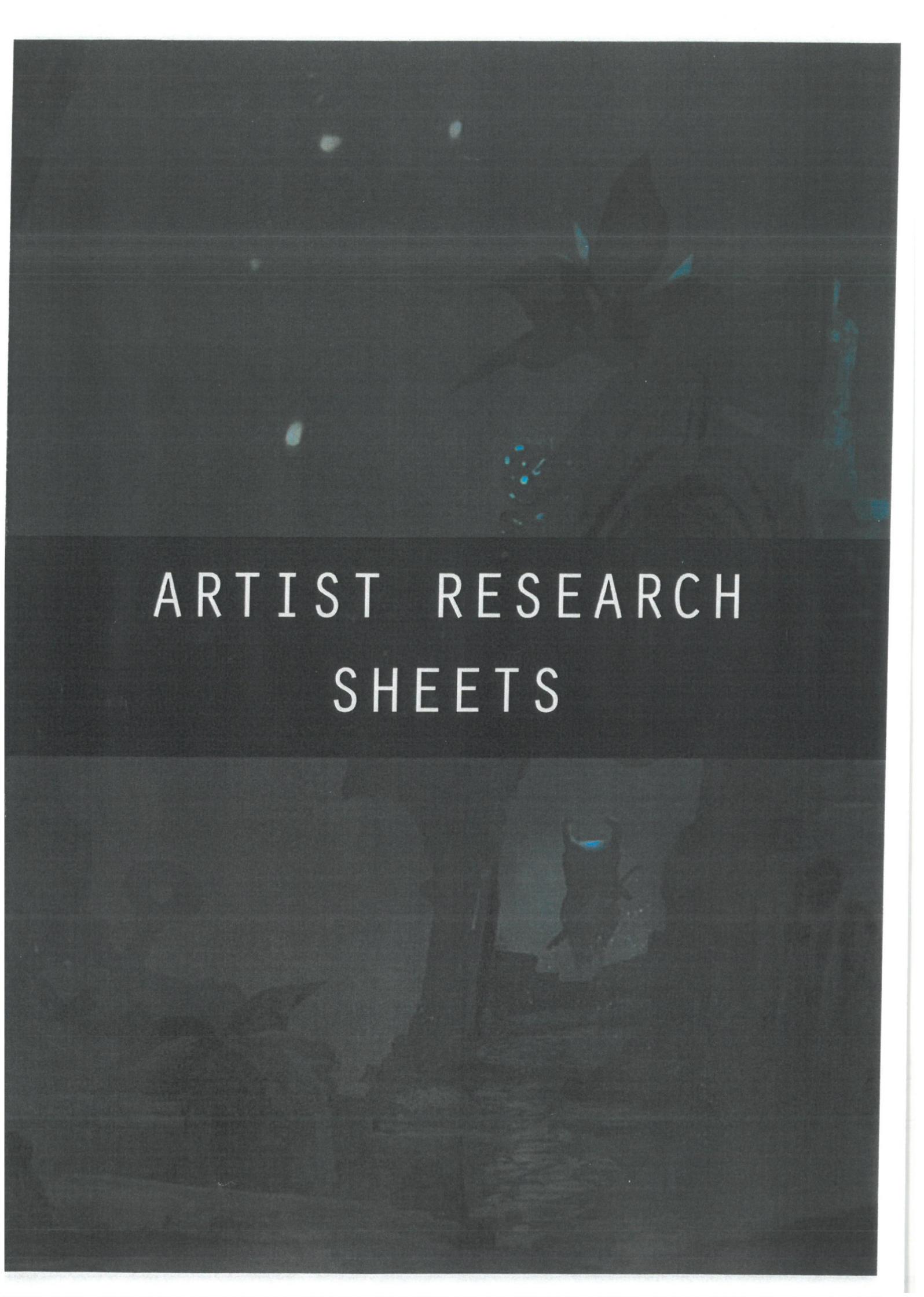
For this project brief I will be exploring the brand of video games and the surrounding market. Specifically, I'll be looking at concept Art that has been produced for video games, Art that has been created to convey ideas for use in video games.

In terms of research I'll be utilizing the internet, looking for official pages, interviews, videos and Art that pertains to my project. I'll also be attending video game related events, such as the Yorkshire Games Festival. I'll be exploring the work of artists who have created work that is related to video games or have worked on video games themselves. Such artists could be Olly Moss, Zen Monkey Studios and Fred Augis. My artist impressions will be created in order to understand the artist's process, theme, media, technologies, and processes. I intend on developing my ideas through research and experimentation, both of which I will document thoroughly.

I hope to explore a multitude of techniques and skills, such as utilizing a graphics tablet, using different tools on Photoshop, and sketching ideas. I'll develop new skills through experimentation and mastery over time. In order to refine my work I'll ask my peers for constructive criticism whilst also criticising my own work. Through criticism, reviewing and reflecting I'll be able to refine my work. I believe I should take certain risks with my work, possibly trying things I've never tried before. Some of these risks may include painting, drawing or a larger focus on typography in my work than I've done before. I believe that through risks will eventually come reward and I hope to show this belief through my work.

I'll be recording my ideas and insights through either sketches, text, annotations or perhaps a mood board. Critique and changes will be shown in review sheets. I'll ensure my final outcomes are informed by my research by taking inspiration and ideas from research, whether it be an artist's style or an existing piece of work which may be a logo, a box cover, an advert or simply a piece of art. My presentation and identity will remain consistent by constantly using the same font, text size, border size and overall layout. I'll also be trying to keep my overall colour palette relatively similar. I'll be presenting my creative journey through pictures and screenshots as well as text on review sheets or annotations. I will also create a timeline in order to show my journey from start to finish- in this timeline I'll be able to record when I came up with certain ideas. My final outcomes will most likely include a logo design, an advertisement, and a box design, all for my own video game.





ARTIST RESEARCH
SHEETS

JUSTIN MALLER

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"Artists should know to do this: go out with people and just be a f*cking human. I've had people come up to me and I can tell they're just trying to network—there's no interest in having a genuine conversation or starting a friendship. I've got no time for that. I like meeting people and making new friends; I'm happy to be your friend and do anything I can for you, but if I can tell you're just trying to use me, then I don't want to know about you. Networking is bullsh*t, and people need to learn the value of making a real connection and creating a real friendship with people."

"Don't quit your day job. This is a tough business, and you want to leave yourself with outs. Test the waters, see how it goes, but make sure you have a way to support yourself through the initial tough times."

Justin Maller is an Australian freelance illustrator and art director based in Brooklyn, NY. He has been creating digital art for over fifteen years, and has been a full time freelance artist for the last eight. He is the Creative Director of The Depthcore Collective, an international modern art collective he established in June 2002. Possibly his most famous independent work is his Facets project, a 365 day long project in which he created a single image per day. The Facets project included mostly low poly art however it also included cultural icons such as Deadpool and The Joker.

Justin Maller's work is interesting to me. I like it due to its sharp, bold shapes as well as the strong colours. The variety of his work, ranging from pop culture icons to animals to crystalline objects makes his work all the more exciting. My favourite piece(s) of his work is the Facets collection, a 365 day project with an immense amount of variety, colour, and uniqueness. I prefer his abstract work over his character work because he isn't limited to someone else's imagination, and so he's able to do whatever he wants. Overall, the low poly style of Justin Maller stands out against the competitive art scene, and his work is one I've never seen the likes of before. His art makes me feel excited, enticed, and extremely inspired.



ZEN MONKEY STUDIOS

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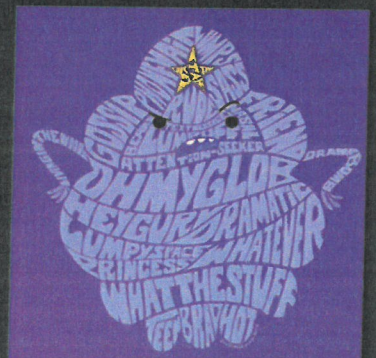
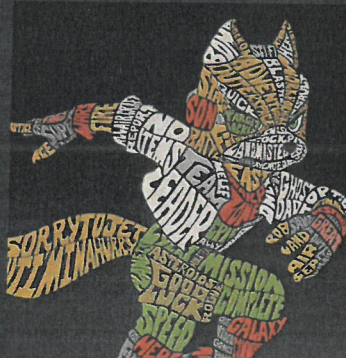
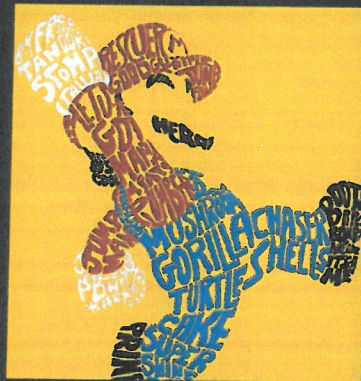
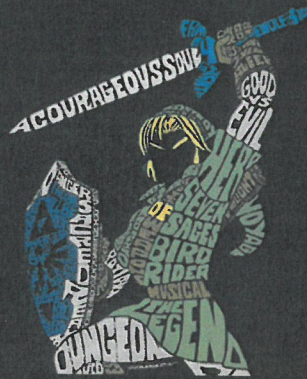
"Remember that bootleg socks we found in Las Vegas half a year ago? Yeah they want us to sell their stuff haha"

"But then tonight, after a hard day of learning there are problems with our orders for NYCC, Mom read Grandpa's letter to me. He talked about his day. He talked about going to the doctor with Grandma (she was recovering from cancer), and how his desk was always cluttered. That he would just tell Grandma how he has too many papers and too many thoughts to keep a clean desk. And with teary-eyes I said to myself, 'Aha, that's where I get it from.'"

"I made concept art for an ad agency, who would call me at 1am to have things ready for him at 3am. I would get scolded at for sleeping through a 'BIG JOB' at 9am, because I was up working on childrens books the night before."

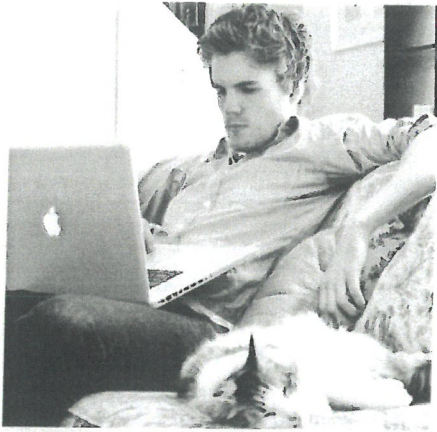
Zen Monkey Studios is an American based company that was founded on July 4th, 2012 by Joseph Miriam. Miriam is a calligram designer, illustrator and art enthusiast based in NYC. He won a certificate of excellence from the Typography Director's Club for his work within the industry. Zen Monkey Studios has produced official merchandise for shows such as Rick and Morty, Legend of Korra, Spongebob Squarepants and Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles.

Zen Monkey Studios is one of my favourite artists for a multitude of reasons. The way they have kept the forms, colours and details of the characters whilst also using warped typography is exceedingly good. The way they incorporate the background into the piece adds to this excellency as the colours both compliment the character and their colour scheme. Note how some characters don't have faces- this is typically done with characters with multiple iterations, e.g Link and Megaman. Whilst I feel like it takes away some of their identity, I believe it brings more attention towards the typography. The lack of a face shows both an eye for detail and knowledge of the audience of the character, as they wouldn't take away the face of a character that isn't as widely recognised as Mario.



OLLY MOSS

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"It's like grading a film -- you can export screenshots to Photoshop, tweak the colours and export it back into the game."

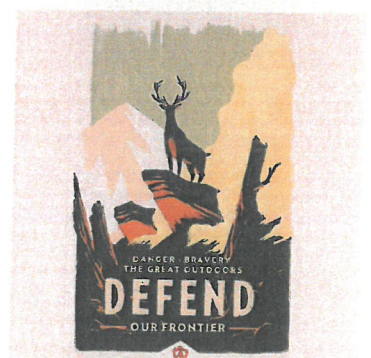
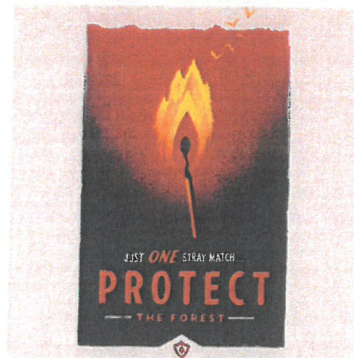
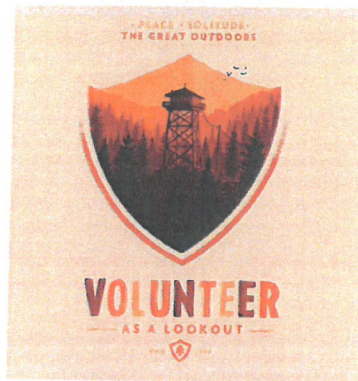
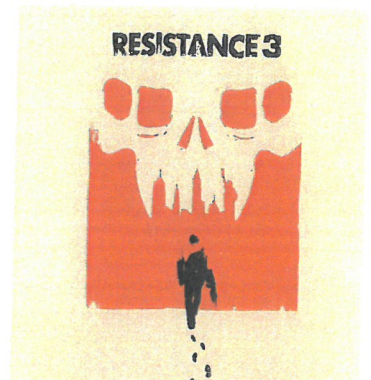
"Every time I get bored with drawing rocks and trees I go, 'Fuck it, I'm going to make a book cover. It's like having dessert after a meal of trees, rocks and sky.'"

"I just made things based on what I was really interested in, and being a massive nerd, I was really interested in films and video games. People seem to really dig it, so now I'm able to make a career out of it."

"A lot of the minimalist posters completely ignore the idea, they just focus on the style, and the style is completely the least important part of it. It's about the thought behind it, what are you trying to communicate, and a lot of those posters don't really communicate anything [about the media]."

Olly Moss is an English graphic artist based in Winchester, UK. He is known for his reimagining of movie posters, such as *My Neighbour Totoro*, *Batman*, and *Harry Potter*. Moss was commissioned by Marvel Entertainment executives to make a poster for the cast of *Thor* (2011). Olly Moss' most notable work comes from video games: in September 2013 Olly Moss, alongside other former game designers, went on to form Camp Sanatos. He went on to be the art director of Camp Sanatos' first game, *Firewatch*.

I enjoy how Olly Moss focuses so much on colour; each individual piece has a primary colour, usually red. His style is remarkably bold, using simple shapes whilst featuring backgrounds, foregrounds, characters and text. I enjoy his style more due to its eye catching nature as well as the strong shapes. One of the most interesting traits within his work is how he blends symbols or characters into the background. I particularly like his *Firewatch* posters as they encompass the feeling of the game as well as fitting in with the game's aesthetic whilst also advertising the titular job- being a Firewatch. The posters advertise what occurs in the game as well which makes me like the posters even more.



FRED AUGIS

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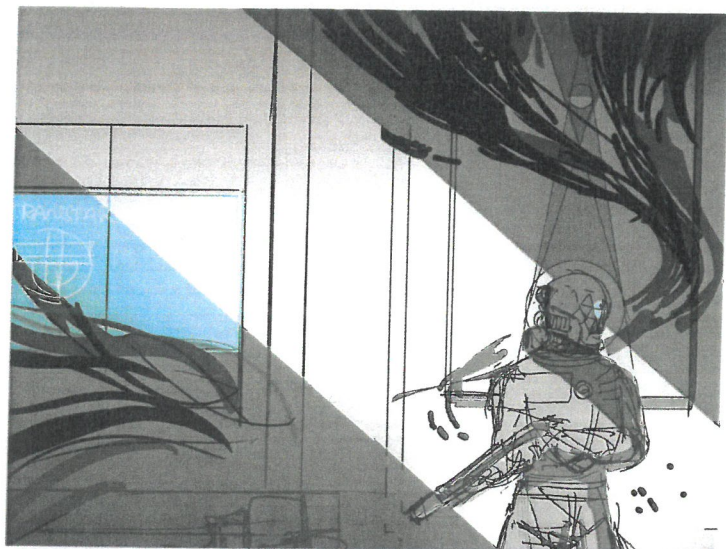
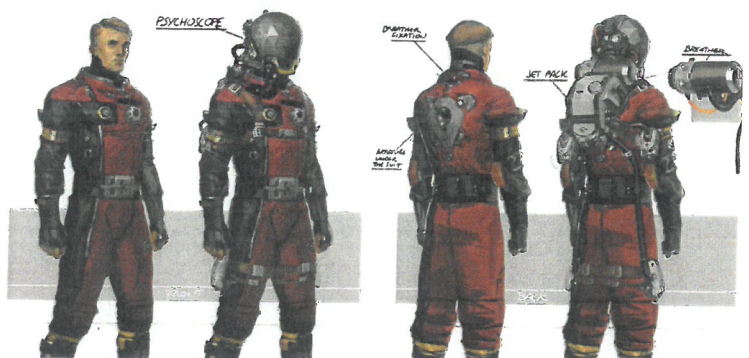
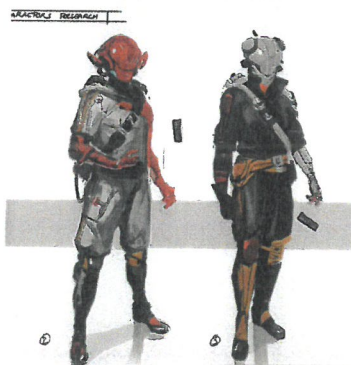


"I became interested in digital art when I was still a student at a visual communication school. I was playing around in Photoshop and I would often use a Wacom tablet to do graphic design. The first time I actually used a graphics tablet to make illustrations and concept art was after I graduated. I liked the idea because I saw some great artists doing amazing work by painting it digitally."

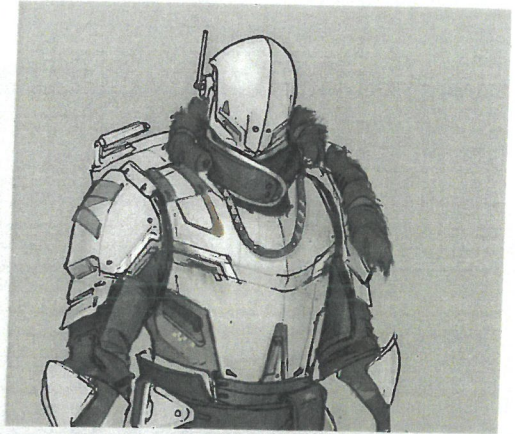
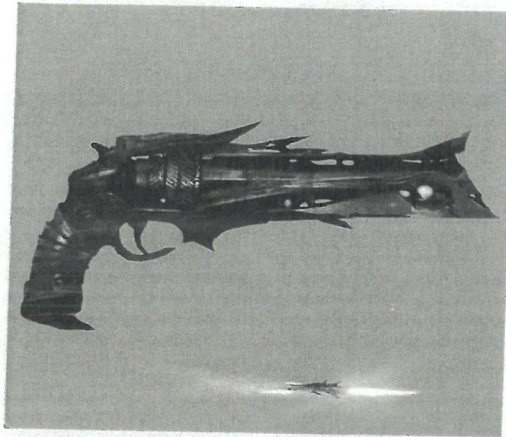
"It's necessary to have a solid workflow, you need to have the technique down and you need to be pretty quick if you want to work in the industry. Also, try and be creative when the opportunity is there, you don't need to be mainstream all the time. Ditch the mainstream inspirations whenever you can!"

Frédéric Augis, more commonly known as Fred Augis, is a concept artist and freelance illustrator. He has worked on visual design for more than 10 years and he studied at a visual communication school. Prior to his involvement in Life is Strange's development, he already worked on Dontnod's first game, Remember Me (released in 2013). He later worked on Prey, a video game developed by Arkane Studios, and, most recently, in 2017, on Beyond Good and Evil 2 by Ubisoft.

I love Fred Augis' work. The patchy semi-realistic style is really intricate and compliments the common sci-fi themes that are present throughout his work. The way he illustrates different materials, such as hair, leather and skin, is extremely well thought out: he has an excellent grasp on how light hits certain materials, how different materials fold and press against each other, and the weight of different things. His understanding of colour pallets is something to be praised too: if his work is part of a project then certain colour pallets will always symbolize different things. For example, purple, blue and black in Arkane Studios' Prey symbolizes aliens and eldritch knowledge, red and black symbolizes humanity, green and white symbolizes science, and so forth.



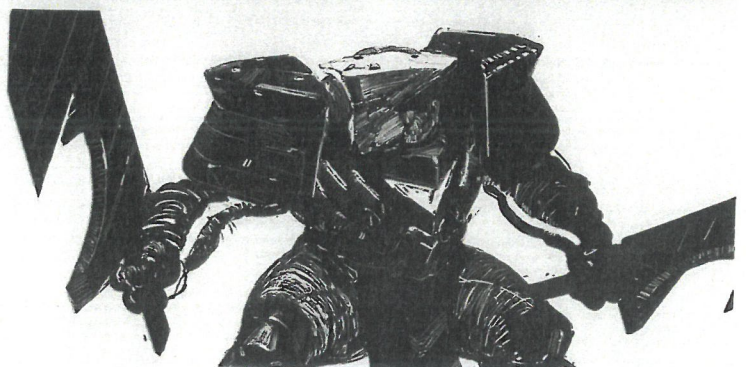
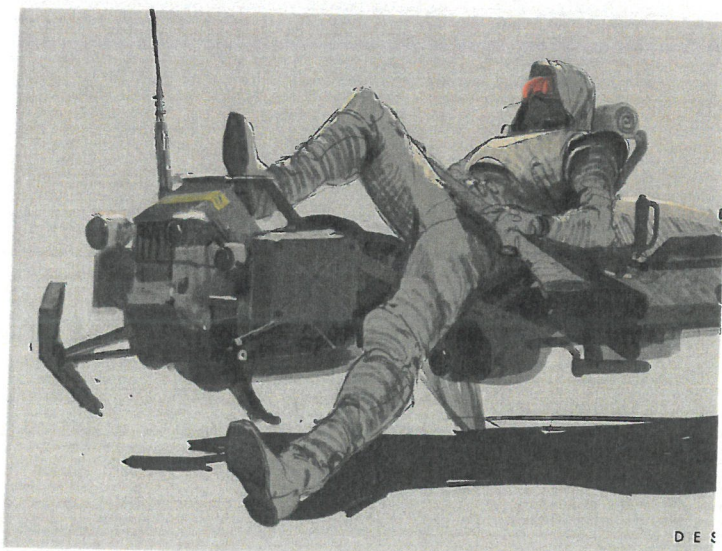
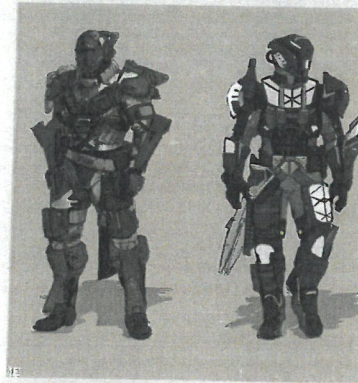
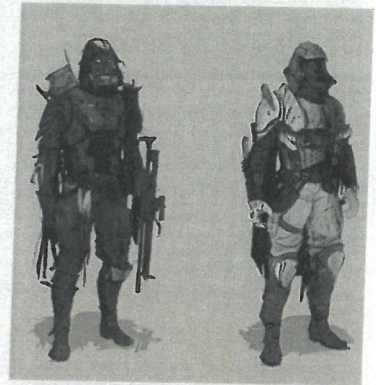
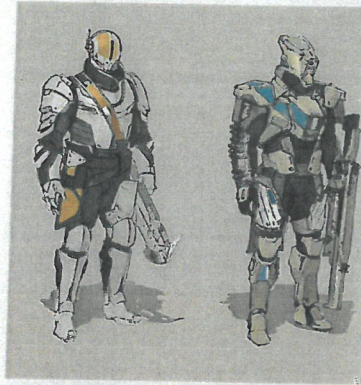
RYAN DEMITA



Ryan DeMita is a concept artist and freelance illustrator. He has worked for companies such as Bungie where he designed characters, environments, vehicles and creatures for Destiny 1 and Destiny 2. He graduated from the University of Cambridge.



Ryan DeMita's style is the style I think of when I think of video game concept art. He incorporates so much thought into each design, taking into account where that design would be found in-game, the story behind the design, and other themes that relate and/or influence the design (whether it be in-game themes or out of game themes). He's able to capture so much life within his illustrations- typically this energy comes from the poses, but also most of his designs look like they would be used / have been used in the media he's designing for (typically Destiny, a sci-fi game). The multiple styles he uses always work, too, whether it be his sketchy black and white style, the refined, clean style, or somewhere inbetween.



The background of the cover is a dark, atmospheric video game scene. In the center, there is a glowing blue, cylindrical object with a bright light at its top. Several small, glowing blue particles are floating around it. The scene is dimly lit, with some faint blue light reflecting off surfaces in the background. The overall mood is mysterious and futuristic.

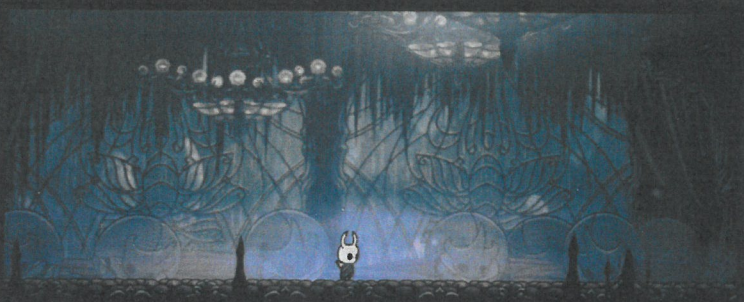
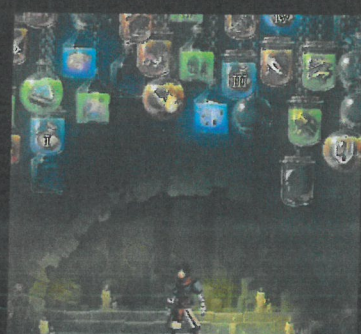
VIDEO GAME GENRES

METROIDVANIA

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Metroidvania (portmanteau of the game series Metroid and Castlevania) is a subgenre of action-adventure video games. Metroidvania games typically feature a large interconnected world map the player can explore, although access to certain areas of the world is limited and may only be explored once the player has acquired special items, tools, weapons or abilities within the game. Acquiring such improvements will also aid the player in defeating more difficult enemies and locating shortcuts and secret areas, and often includes retracing one's steps across the world map. Through this, Metroidvania games include tighter integration of story and level design, careful design of levels and character controls to encourage exploration and experimentation, and a means for the player to become more invested in their player character. Typically Metroidvania games are sidescrolling platformers, but can also include other genre types. Though popularized during the early console generations, the genre saw a resurgence starting in the 2000s due to a large amount of crucially praised indie (independently developed) games.

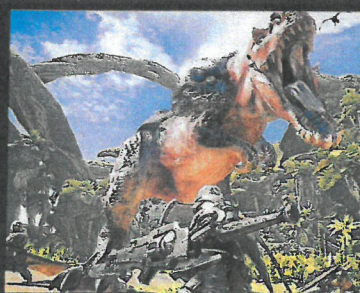
Some Metroidvania games are *Hollow Knight*, *Samus Returns*, *Dead Cells*, *Ori and the Blind Forest* and *Salt and Sanctuary*.



ACTION RPG

Action role-playing games are a subgenre of role-playing video games. These games emphasize real-time combat (where the player has direct control over characters) over turn-based or menu-based combat. These games often use action game combat systems similar to hack and slash or shooter games. Role-playing video game (commonly referred to as simply as an RPG) is a video game genre in which the player controls the actions of a character (and/or several party members) immersed in a well-defined world. Many RPG games have origins in tabletop role-playing games (such as Dungeons & Dragons) and use much of the same terminology, settings and game mechanics. Other major similarities with such games include developed story-telling and narrative elements, player character development, complexity, as well as replayability and immersion. In RPG games player control a central game character, or multiple game characters (often referred to as a party), and attain victory by completing a series of quests or reaching the conclusion of a central storyline. Players explore a game world, while solving puzzles and engaging in combat. A key feature of the genre is that characters grow in power and abilities, and characters are typically designed by the player.

Some Action RPG games are *Dark Souls*, *Bloodborne*, *Monster Hunter World*, *Destiny* and *The Witcher*.



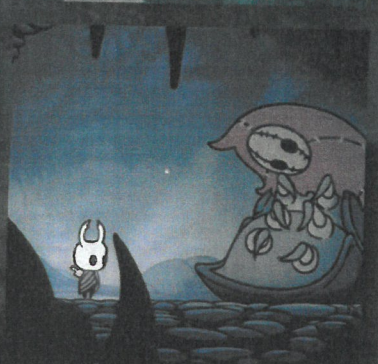
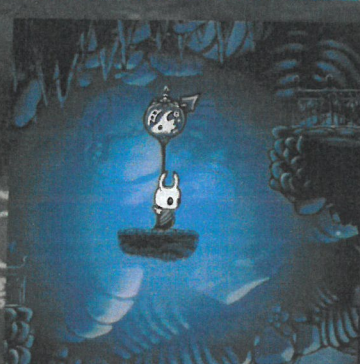
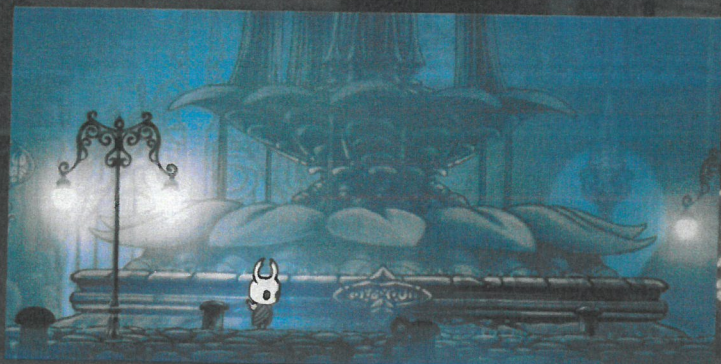
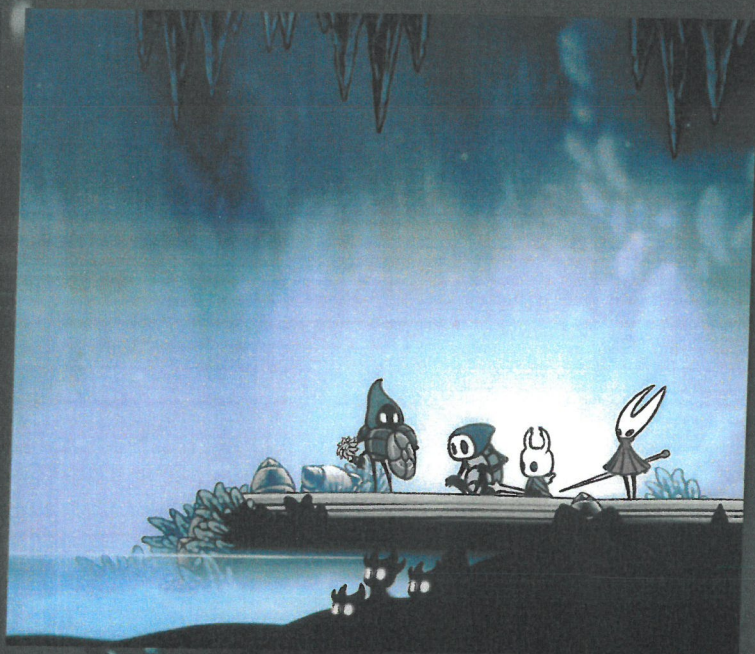
HOLLOW KNIGHT

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Hollow Knight is a metroidvania game developed and published by Team Cherry. The player controls an insect-like, silent and nameless knight whilst exploring the sombre underground world. Throughout the game the player will encounter both enemies and non-player characters that resemble insects. By striking enemies, the knight gains Soul, which is stored in the Soul Vessel. If all masks are lost, the knight dies and a Shade appears at that place. The player needs to defeat the Shade to recover the lost currency and to carry normal amount of Soul. The game continues from a last visited bench (save points that are scattered throughout the world) but the player loses all Geo and can hold a smaller amount of Soul. Initially the player can only use Soul to "Focus" and regenerate mask shards, but as the game progresses the player unlocks several offensive spells, which consume Soul.

Hollow Knight is easily one of the best looking games I've ever played. It prides itself on its use of consistency and smoothness of change when it comes to colour palettes- should different areas have contrasting colour palettes there will be a section in-between where the colours shall be a blend of the two parallel areas in order to provide a smooth transition. The game mostly uses dull greens, blues, purples and pinks in order to produce feelings of either melancholy or wonder. Within the game the primary antagonistic force is "The Infection" which is presented as a bright citrus orange. This bright orange contrasts immensely with the other dull colours (often being part of a complementary palette), giving "The Infection" an off-putting and unnatural tone. Due to all these factors the player will often know where they are simply because of the colours.

Outside of colour palettes, Hollow Knight roots itself in a cartoonish hand drawn aesthetic whilst also using very complex designs and illustrations for the backgrounds. The game uses different frame rates for different things- characters and enemies are rendered in slower framerates than the background. Even objects, such as doors, levers and lifts have light reflecting off them in the same slow framerate as the characters. Slower framerates are indicative that the player can interact with the asset.



ACTION

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Action games emphasize physical challenges, including hand-eye coordination and reaction-time. The genre includes a large variety of sub-genres, such as fighting games, shooter games and platform games, though multiplayer online battle arena and some real-time strategy games are also considered to be action games. In an action game, the player typically controls a character often in the form of a protagonist or avatar. This player character must navigate a level, collecting objects, avoiding obstacles, and battling enemies with their natural skills as well as weapons and other tools at their disposal. At the end of a level or group of levels, the player must often defeat a boss enemy that is more challenging and often a major antagonist in the game's story. Enemy attacks and obstacles deplete the player character's health and lives, and the player receives a Game over when they run out of lives. Alternatively, the player gets to the end of the game by finishing a sequence of levels and seeing the credits. But some action games, such as early arcade games, are unbeatable and have an indefinite number of levels; with the player's only goal being to get as far as they can to maximize their score.

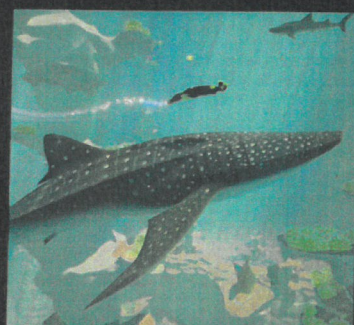
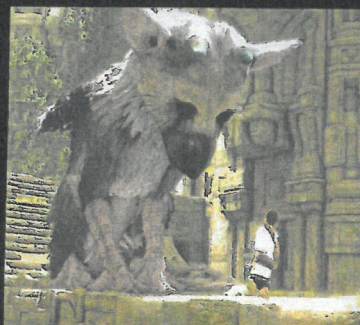
Some Action games are *Nier: Automata*, *Hellblade*, *For Honor*, *God of War*, and *Devil May Cry*.



ADVENTURE

Adventure games are games in which the player assumes the role of a protagonist in an interactive story driven by exploration and often puzzle-solving. The genre's focus on story allows it to draw heavily from other narrative-based media, literature and film, encompassing a wide variety of literary genres. Many adventure games are designed for a single player, since this emphasis on story and character makes multi-player design difficult. Adventure games contain a variety of puzzles, decoding messages, finding and using items, opening locked doors, or finding and exploring new locations. More than any other genre, adventure games depend upon their story and setting to create a compelling single-player experience. They are typically set in an immersive environment and try to vary the setting from chapter to chapter to add novelty and interest to the experience. Since adventure games are driven by storytelling, character development usually follows literary conventions of personal and emotional growth, rather than new powers or abilities that affect gameplay. The player often embarks upon a quest, or is required to unravel a mystery or situation about which little is known.

Some Adventure games are *The Last Guardian*, *Abzu*, *Firewatch*, *Oxenfree* and *Journey*.



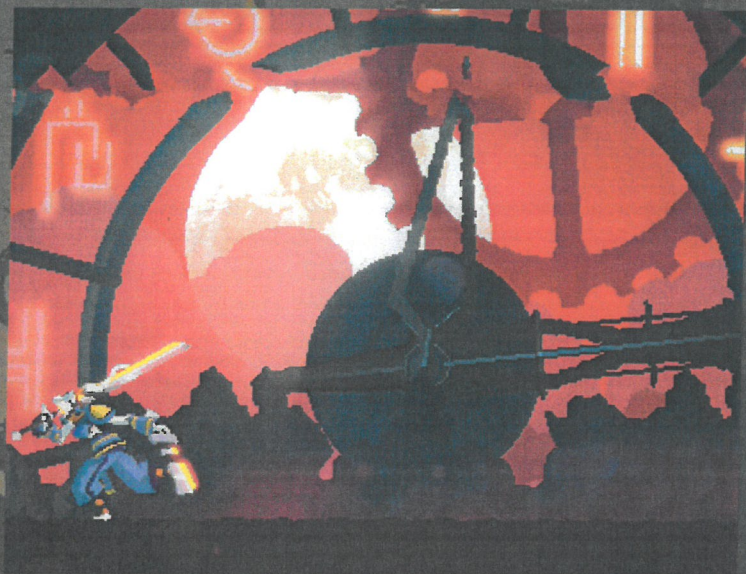
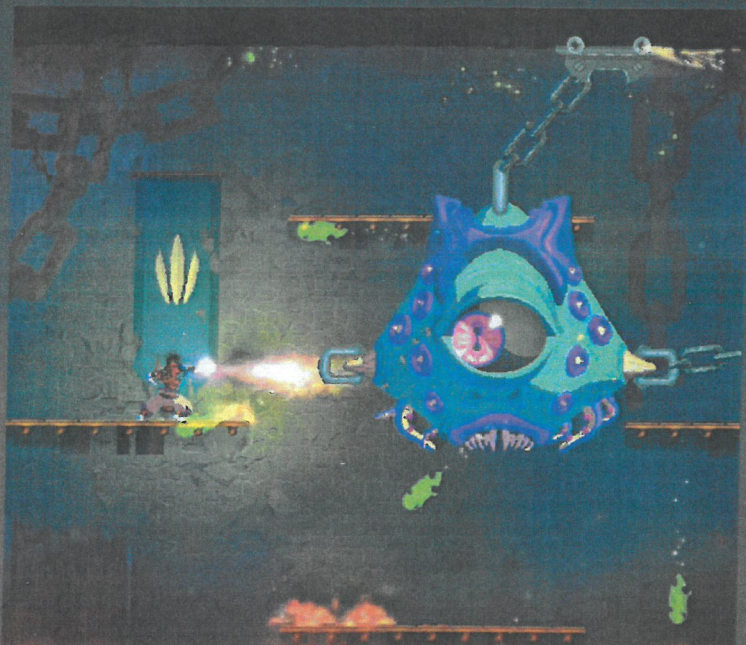
DEAD CELLS



Dead Cells is a roguelike-metroidvania video game developed and published by Motion Twin. In the game, the player takes the role of a body of cells that control a corpse in a dungeon, through which they must fight their way out. The player acquires various weapons, treasure and other tools through exploration of procedurally generated levels, all of which contain enemies for the player to fight. The player will often gain "cells", an in-game currency used to purchase permanent upgrades for the player if they reach the vendor between each level. Should they die with cells on themselves, all their cells shall be lost and they shall have to start "the run" again (thus lending it the title of roguelike).

Dead Cells is a visually stunning and exciting game. The use of highly saturated colours works excellently when it comes to keeping the player alert and awake, drawing the eye to any new element that appears on the screen. This leads the player to having a better understanding of the action and therefore a better reaction time when responding to threats. This works excellently as Dead Cells is a fast paced game. Not only do the colours help the player when playing, but they also contrast with the "lore" of the game- The plot of Dead Cells occurs on an island that has gone to ruin and is now in possession of monsters. Often games like Dead Cells (in which a foreboding sense of danger never leaves the player) have highly contrasted and low saturated colours (such as Dark Souls), however Dead Cells proves that a violent, cryptic ambiance does not necessitate dull colours.

The backgrounds of Dead Cells creates a forboding atmosphere and allows the player to create an idea of what happened in the world. From hanging corpses to laboratories with strange experiments alluding to the creation of this now rampant "disease", the world of Dead Cells is a scary yet colourful world.



Bloodborne

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Bloodborne is an action role-playing game developed by FromSoftware and published by Sony Computer Entertainment. Bloodborne follows the player character through the decrepit Gothic city of Yharnam, whose inhabitants have been afflicted with an abnormal blood-borne disease, with the player character unraveling the city's intriguing mysteries while fighting beasts, ultimately attempting to find the source of the plague and stop it. Players control a customizable protagonist, and gameplay is focused on weapons-based combat and exploration. Players battle varied enemies using items such as swords and firearms, and journey through the story, exploring the game's different locations, interacting with non-player characters and unraveling the world's many mysteries. Bloodborne was inspired by the literary works of authors H. P. Lovecraft and Bram Stoker.



Bloodborne looks like a Dark Romanticism painting that has come to life. The similarities of David Friedrich's darker works and Bloodborne are undeniable, with these works often dominated by Gothic architecture towering over skewed tombstones, neglected graveyards, and tiny, shadowy figures. If it isn't a man-made structure, such as a cathedral, towering over everything, then nature's tall trees shall take this role. The way this has been done is phenomenal and creates a constant feeling of being smaller than everything else. This links in with the cosmic horror genre, that which it is set in, and how we are insignificantly small compared to our surroundings. Even the bosses are larger than us, especially the "Great Old Ones", beings so powerful that we are like ants to them.

Dreary, unsaturated colours with high contrast with lighter colours have been used in order to create a sense of mystery and fear. Often the game will contrast its unsaturated colours with either red or blue- red is representative of humanity and blue is representative of alien knowledge, which is common in Bloodborne. Overall, Bloodborne may not be the most visually stunning game however there are a lot of links with other things outside of the game and inside the game.



NIER: AUTOMATA

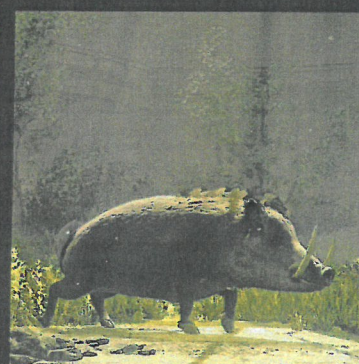
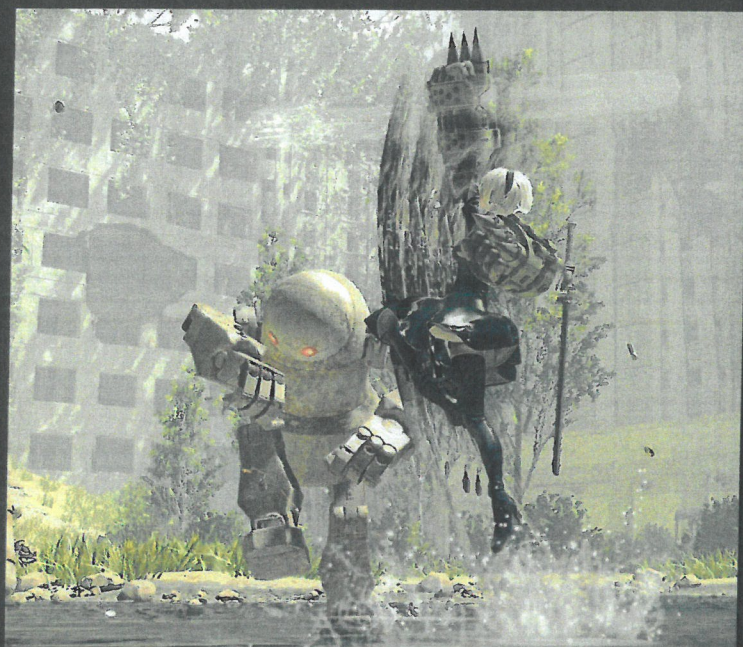
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Nier: Automata is a hack and slash game where players take the role of "YoRHa" robotic combat units across an open world environment. The game shares the post-apocalyptic setting of the original Nier, despite lacking any narrative connection. Set in 11945 AD, the story revolves around a war between human-made androids and the machine army of invaders from another world. Lacking both emotions and true names, androids have particular attitudes that distinguish them from their fellows. The "YoRHa" android forces are commanded from the Bunker, a reconnaissance base in orbit above Earth. They fight alongside the pre-YoRHa androids on Earth (known as the resistance) to drive back the Machines. As with the previous game, during navigation in some environments, the camera shifts from its standard third-person perspective to an overhead or side-scrolling view.

Nier: Automata could be considered an "art game", such as the games Journey and Abzu. It's made to be appreciated mainly on an aesthetic level, and it has multiple layers of meaning, symbolism and strong artistic messages. The difference between Journey and Nier: Automata is that Nier: Automata plays like a game, whilst Journey plays like art.

The strong use of green and orange colours shows how humanity is completely gone. Greens show vegetation and wilderness taking over, whilst oranges show desolation and large deserts void of any life due to acts that have been committed in the past, possibly hinting as to why humanity is extinct. Character designs are very important as well- in the end, without spoilers, the only difference between the androids and the robots is how they look. The androids look human, with facial expressions, skin and even blood. The robots all have the same face, the same body type and even the same style of moving.

Nier: Automata is an incredibly detailed game, and because of its intricacy it is stunning. All visual aspects work together, and it's especially great when the player is walking around the wilderness and the HUD disappears on its own and the music shuts off. Moments like these fully immerse the player, letting us experience this masterful piece of art.



FIREWATCH

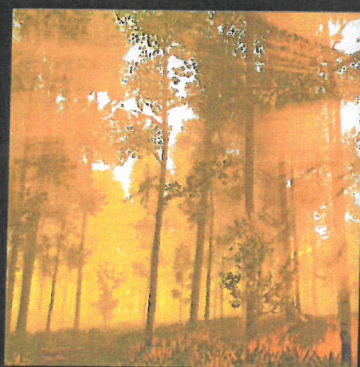
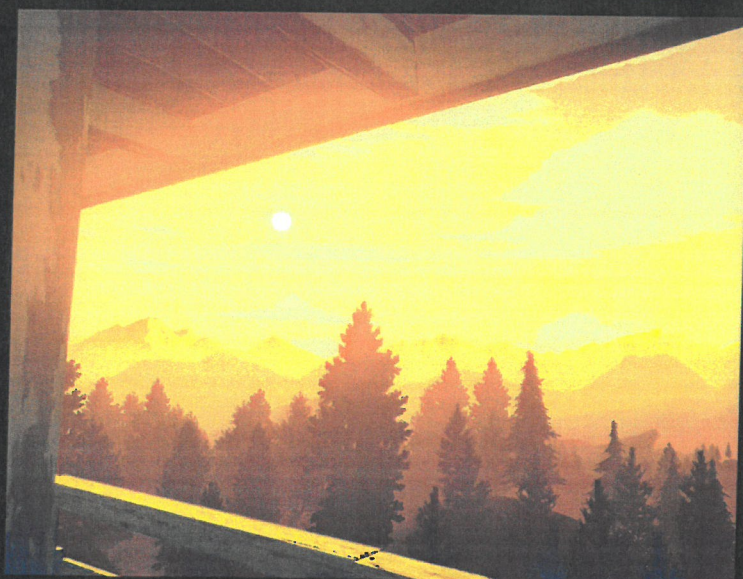
S

Firewatch is a single-player first-person adventure video game where you, as a man named Henry, explore the Wyoming wilderness after taking a summer job as a fire lookout. What is supposed to be a peaceful respite from your complicated life takes a turn when you start to question some of the things that are happening to you. Your only human connection is over a handheld radio, which you'll use to speak with your supervisor Delilah about the things both of you are experiencing. Your exchanges with Delilah inform the process by which their relationship is developed. Olly Moss acted as the head art director for Firewatch. The game's environment was modelled by Ng, based on a single painting by Moss. The game draws inspiration from New Deal advertisements by the National Park Service and field research conducted in Yosemite National Park.

Firewatch is a warm, amazing game with an extremely bold and unique style. Olly Moss' style truly shines through this game, with saturated colours and blocky shapes, almost low-polygonal. As the player walks through the world they can feel themselves moving, the grass shuffles beneath them and their shadow is thrown across the landscape. The "skyboxes" are exceedingly beautiful moving paintings that show off bold shapes and soft gradients. One can get lost whilst looking up.

There's not much symbolism in Firewatch. It's a game that allows the player to make their own symbolism and stories by exploring the vast wilderness. Much of the story has no deeper meaning- it's surface level.

Over the time of the story the player is shown that the time has changed (through the weather, the sun and whatnot) and when time passing is shoved in the player's face it is backed up by the world evolving. As the story slowly draws to a close everything begins to get drearier, gloomier and oppressive as the narrative takes multiple dark turns. The world at the end of the story visually represents how the player and the character of Henry both feel- it is convoluted, small and dangerous.



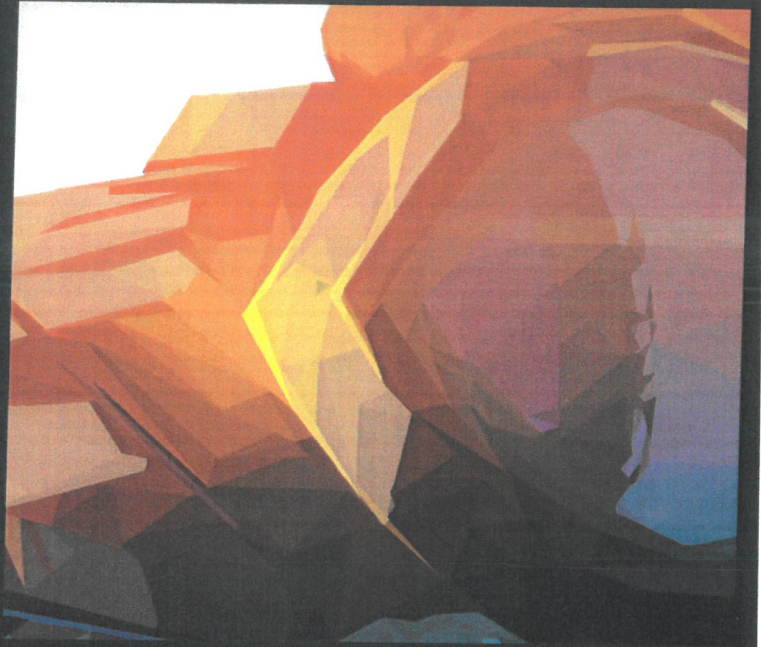
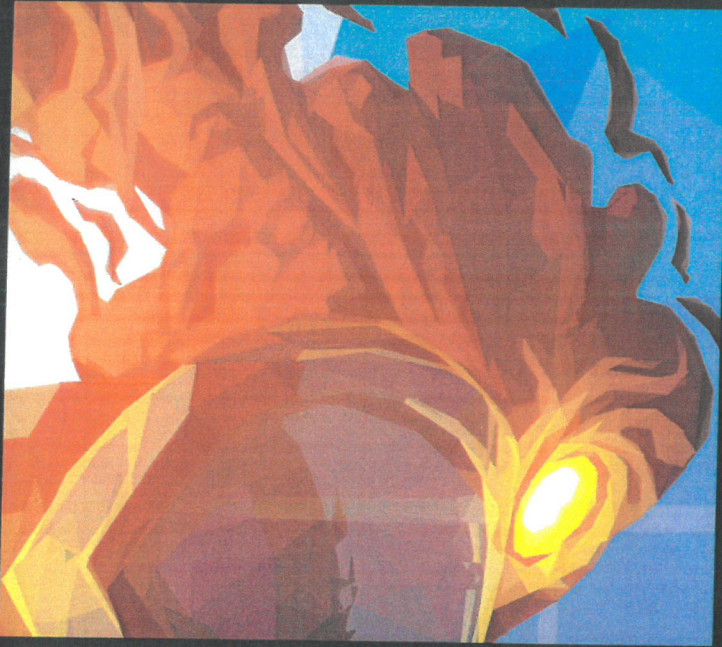


ARTIST STUDIES

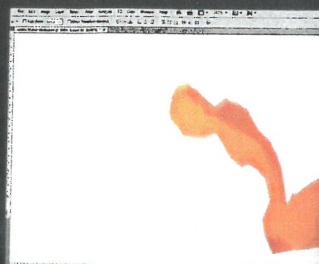


STUDY CLOSEUPS

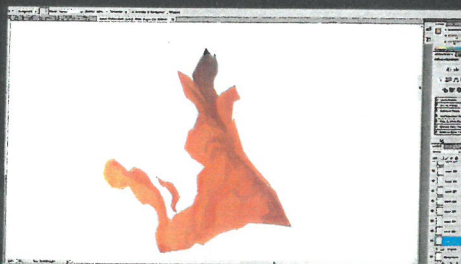
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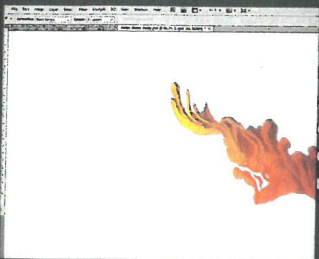
JUSTIN MALLER STUDY REVIEW SHEET



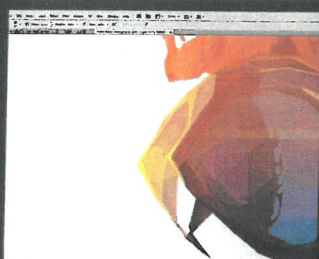
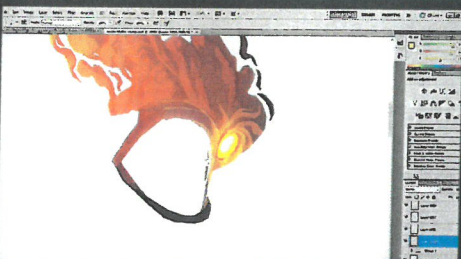
The hair was one of the hardest parts due to the amount of detail required.



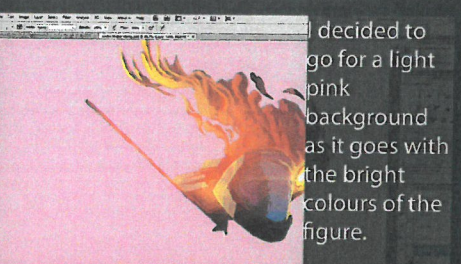
Despite all the detail required I used triangles and only triangles. This made it a little easier to capture the form.



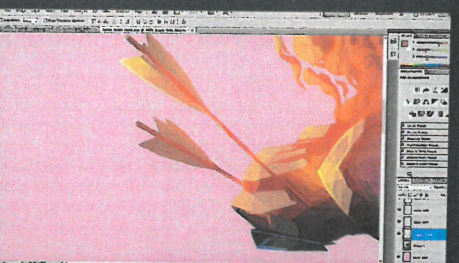
Finishing up the hair, I had to change some of the colours as they didn't look right.



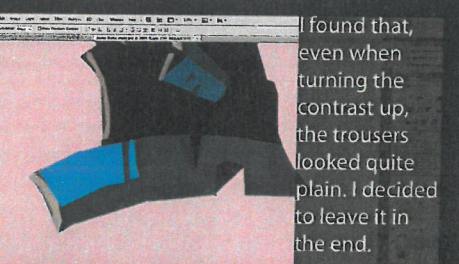
I altered the opacity of the eye glare whilst making the shoulder colours reflect the eye glare's light.



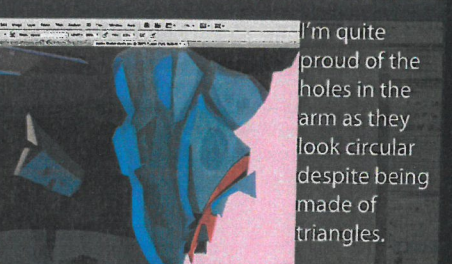
I decided to go for a light pink background as it goes with the bright colours of the figure.



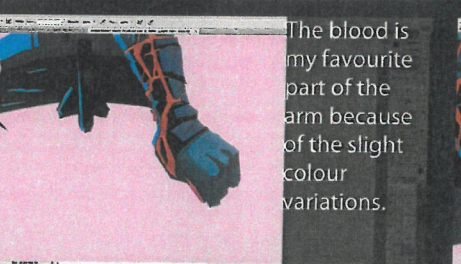
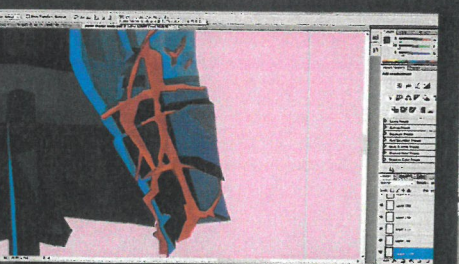
I wanted to make sure the scarf looked low-poly so I turned the contrast of the colours up.



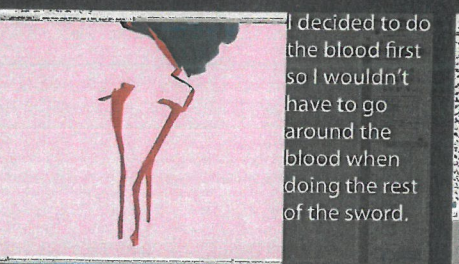
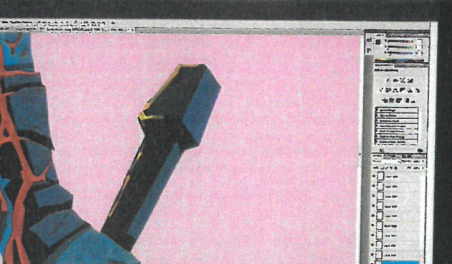
I found that, even when turning the contrast up, the trousers looked quite plain. I decided to leave it in the end.



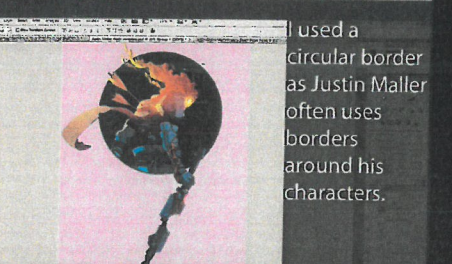
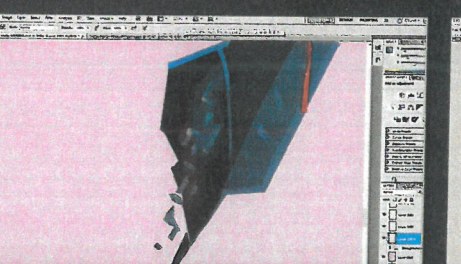
I'm quite proud of the holes in the arm as they look circular despite being made of triangles.



The blood is my favourite part of the arm because of the slight colour variations.



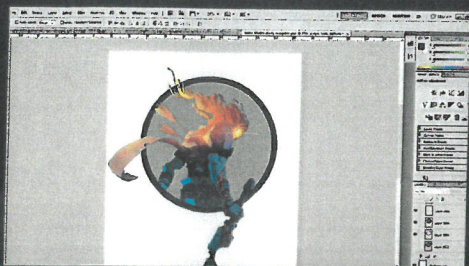
I decided to do the blood first so I wouldn't have to go around the blood when doing the rest of the sword.



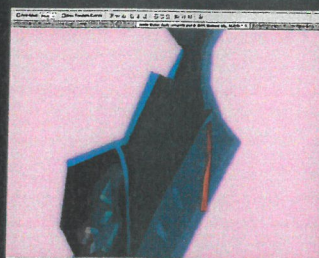
I used a circular border as Justin Maller often uses borders around his characters.

JUSTIN MALLER STUDY REVIEW SHEET

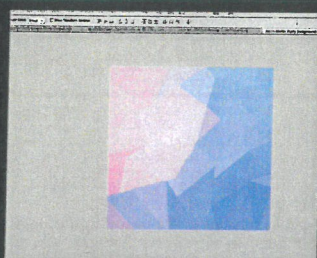
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By duplicating the border and rearranging parts I created a more interesting looking "frame" for my piece.



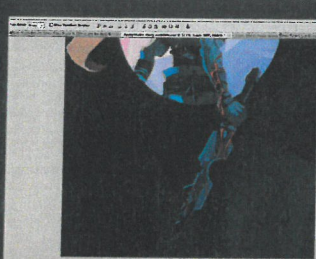
I decided to add an outer glow and an emboss effect to the parts that were outside of the frame.



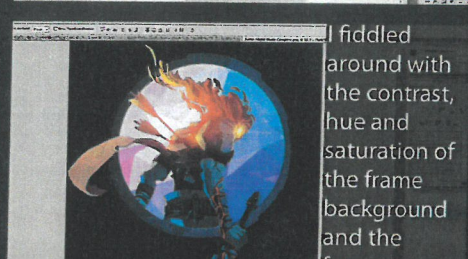
I wanted the inside of my frame to have a low-poly background so I created one quickly.



Copying my previous background I started to experiment with a full background on the entire page.



I decided to use a blue as the sword is one of the most prominent out-of-frame aspects.

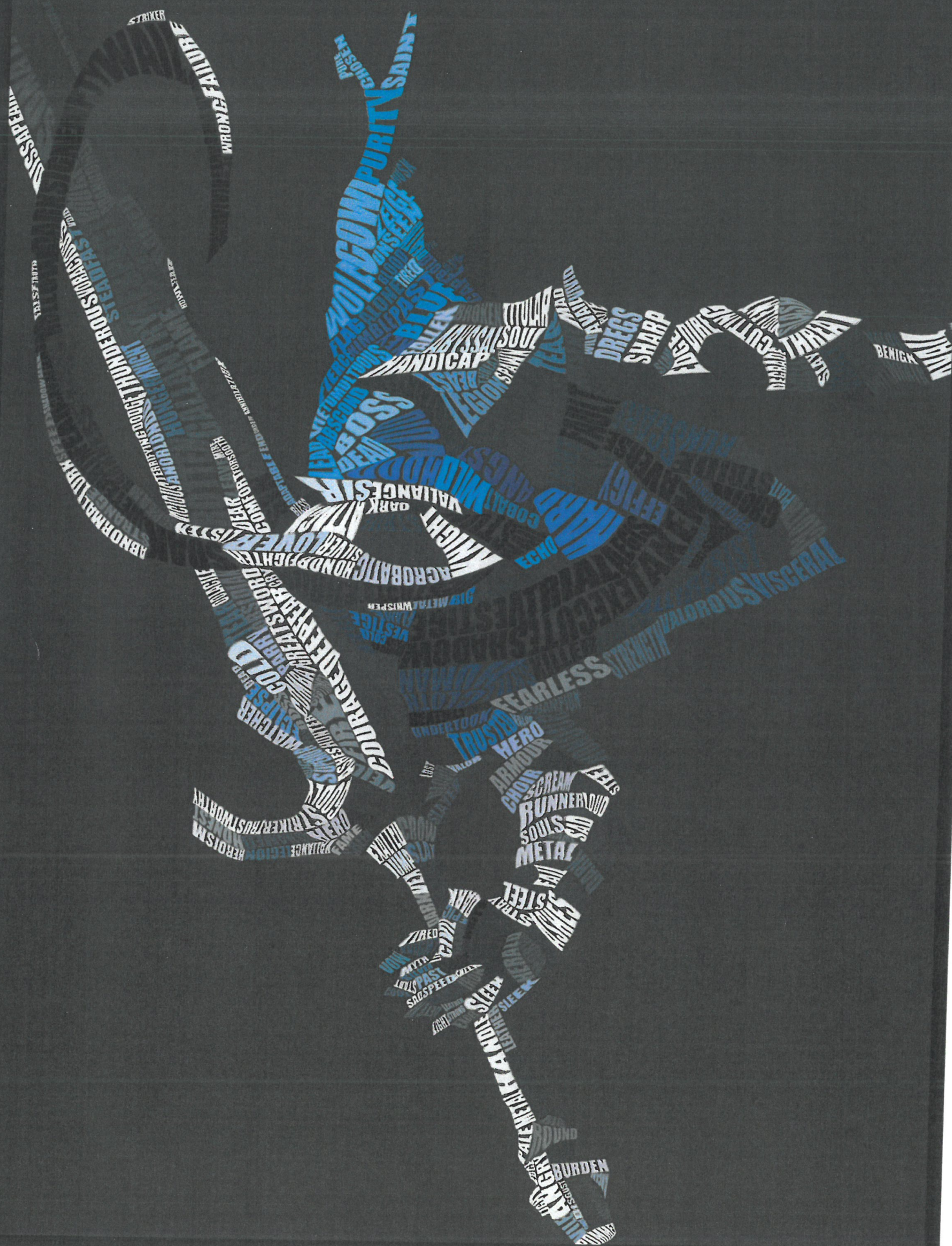


I fiddled around with the contrast, hue and saturation of the frame background and the frame.

In my Justin Maller study I used a multitude of tools. The most used tools were the polygonal lasso, the eyedropper and the paint bucket. Some of the other tools I used were the gradient tool, the hue, saturation and luminosity editor and contrast editor. By referencing a picture of the main character of Dead Cells I created a low poly rendition. I did this by zooming into the picture and sectioning colours into triangles, then filling the triangle selection in with the colour. Whilst Justin Maller uses other shapes than triangles I decided that, as I'm working in an interpretation of his style (not a copy), I'm more comfortable working in only triangles. I feel like this choice was the correct one as I was able to capture a lot of shape and form through only using triangles. Overall I'm very happy with this study- it's reminiscent of Maller's style but it also has my own personal touch. I think I captured the character very well. I believe that by making certain aspects of the character (the hair, the sword and the scarf) come out of the frame I gave it more depth. Should I do another study in the style of Maller I'd try adding more gradients into my triangles. I'd also try to create a more interesting background and border, as right now they both blend into each other.

ORIGINAL

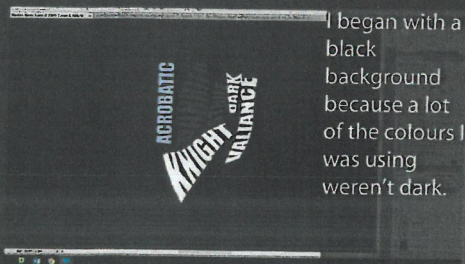




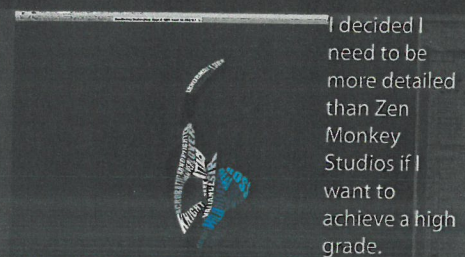
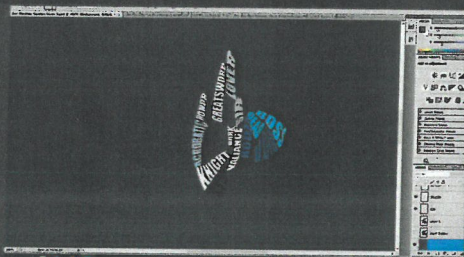
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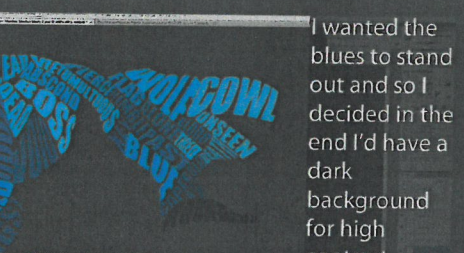
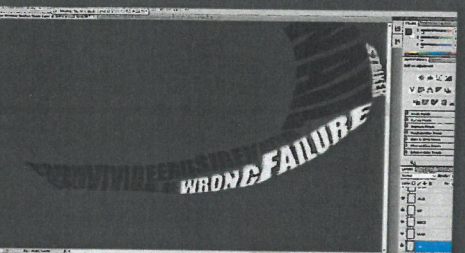
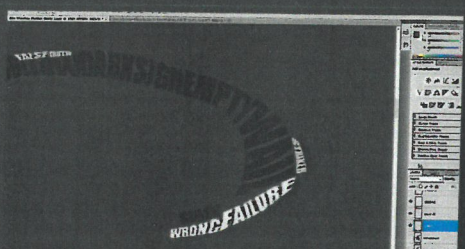
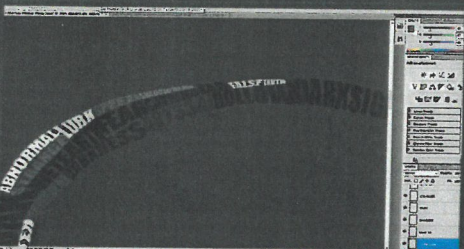
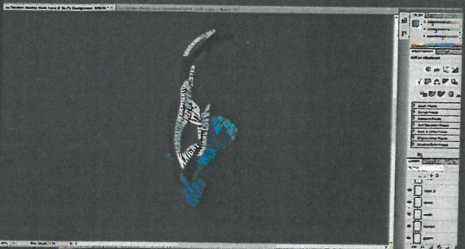
ZEN MONKEY STUDY REVIEW SHEET



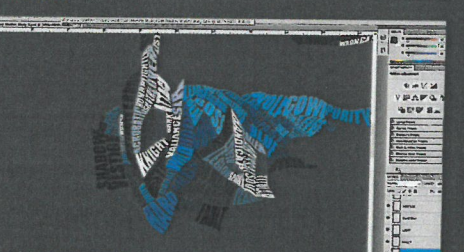
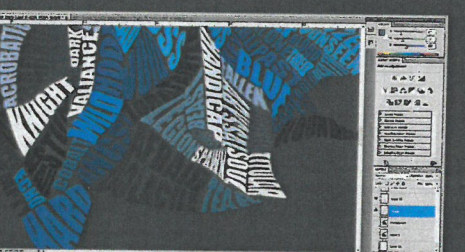
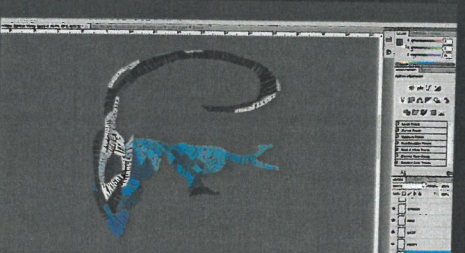
I began with a black background because a lot of the colours I was using weren't dark.



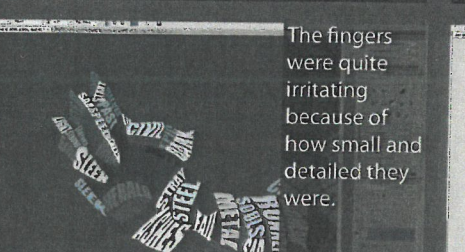
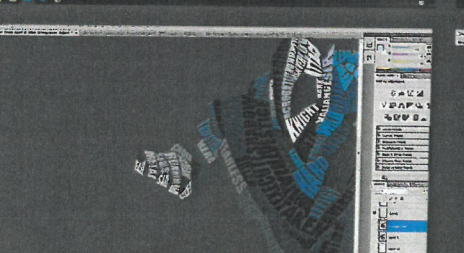
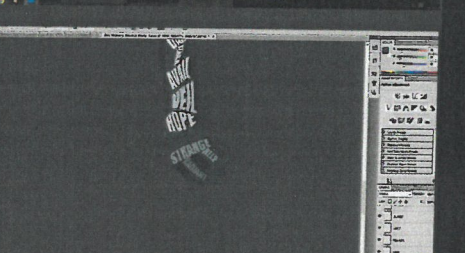
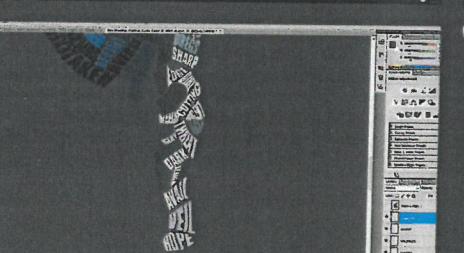
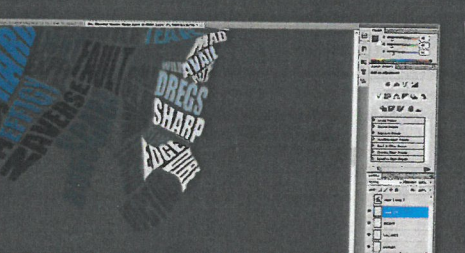
I decided I need to be more detailed than Zen Monkey Studios if I want to achieve a high grade.



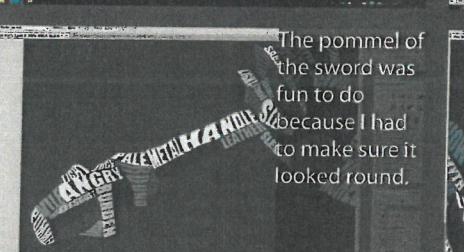
I wanted the blues to stand out and so I decided in the end I'd have a dark background for high contrast.



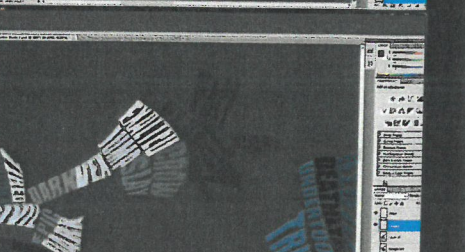
I wanted contrast between the colours so I selected some darker colours to contrast with the whites.



The fingers were quite irritating because of how small and detailed they were.

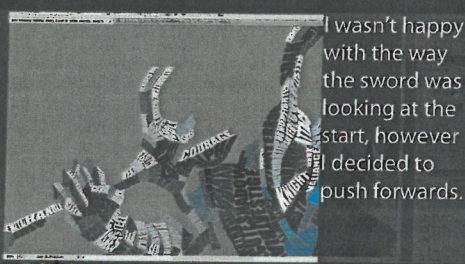
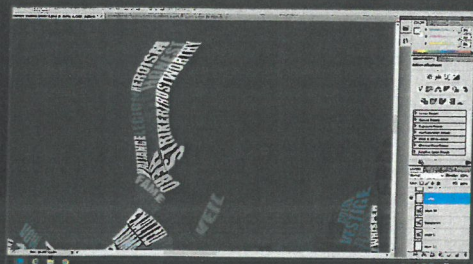


The pommel of the sword was fun to do because I had to make sure it looked round.

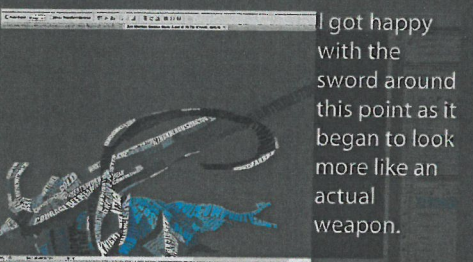
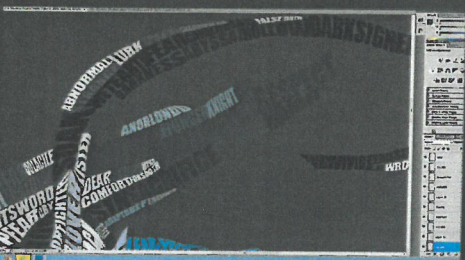


ZEN MONKEY STUDY REVIEW SHEET

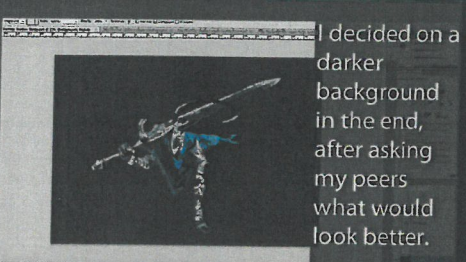
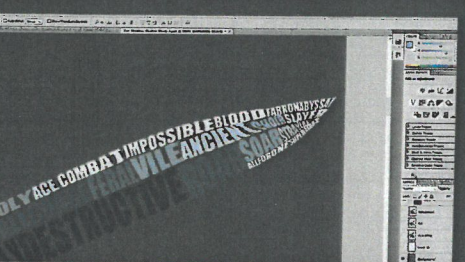
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I wasn't happy with the way the sword was looking at the start, however I decided to push forwards.



I got happy with the sword around this point as it began to look more like an actual weapon.



I decided on a darker background in the end, after asking my peers what would look better.

In my Zen Monkey Studios artist study I used the warp tool alongside the text tool in order to replicate their style which they've used countless times with video game characters. Due to the complexity of the character I used a vast amount of words, most of which relate to Dark Souls, the game the character came from. Other words describe the character, as this is what Zen Monkey Studios does. I feel like this study was quite successful I replicated the Zen Monkey Studios style very well whilst also putting my own spin on their style. A big difference between mine and Zen Monkey Studios' work is that Zen Monkey Studios uses block colours whilst I have used a large variety of colours in order to capture lighting. I feel like this study will influence my typographical skills in the future as I've gained further prowess with the warp tool. If I were to do this study again I would do a simpler character and I would try use block colours instead. I would also aim to not repeat words as I had to repeat a few words in this study because of the complexity. Whilst I believe this study is good I feel as if it would have been better if I captured the entire figure of the character, but I stopped because of a lack of time and a need to move onto other things.

ORIGINAL



REFINED OLLY MOSS STUDY

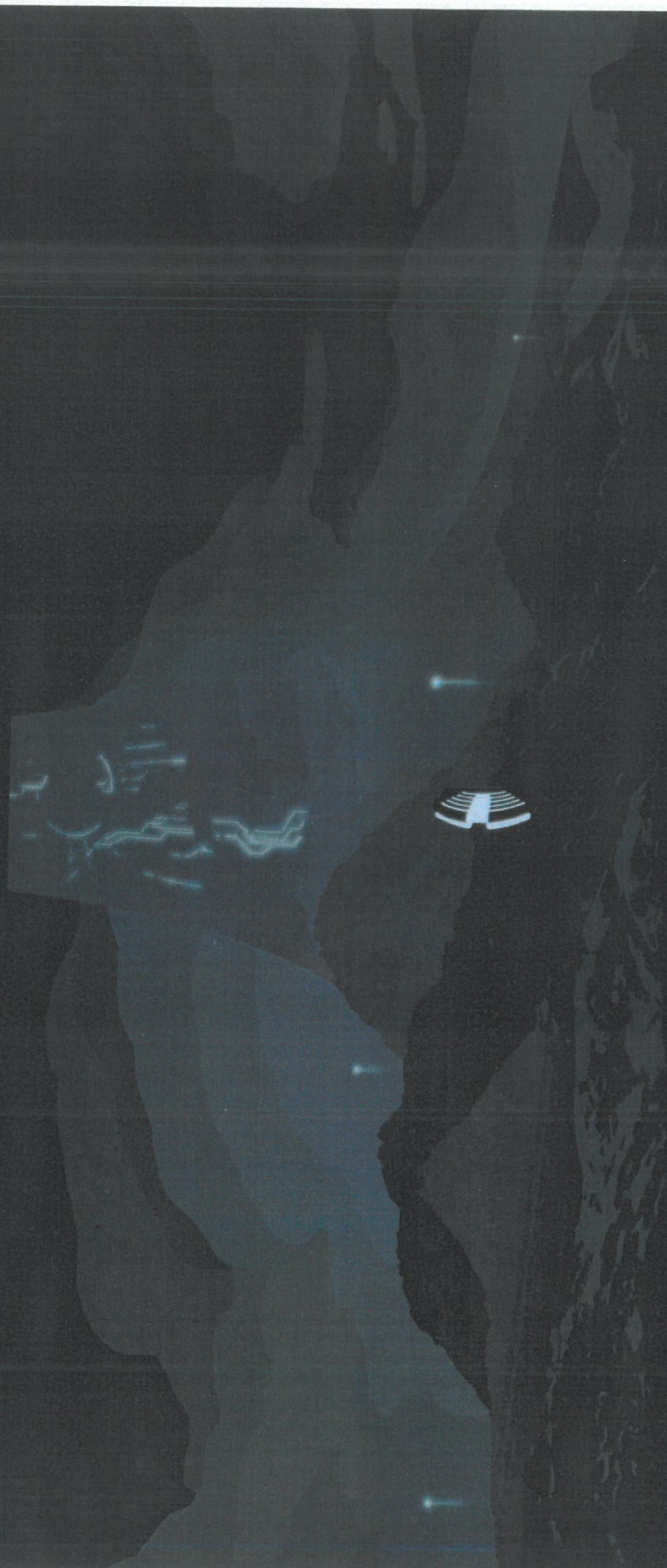
Added clouds on right (using brush tool, colour picker, opacity, and layer styles)

Added snow / details on mountains (brush tool, lasso tool, opacity, layer styles)

Edited the glowing "runes" in the background to be less flat and have depth, also made sure they looked like they were curving towards the viewer (transformation tool)

Added a slight glow behind the building and the structure (brush tool, gaussian blur)

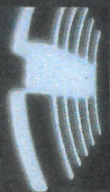
Made the building's glow brighter (duplicated layers, increased saturation, gaussian blur)



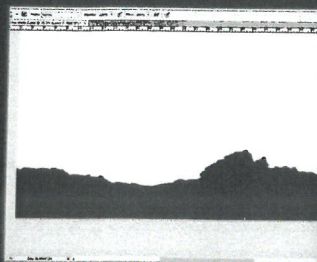
The previous version(s), like most other sheets, are behind this one. Feel free to temporarily take this sheet out and see the previous version.

REFINED STUDY CLOSEUPS

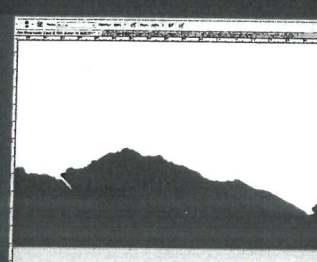
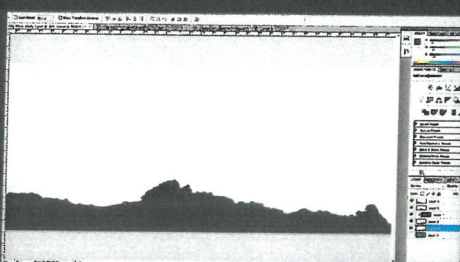
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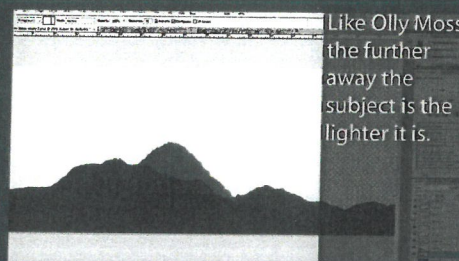
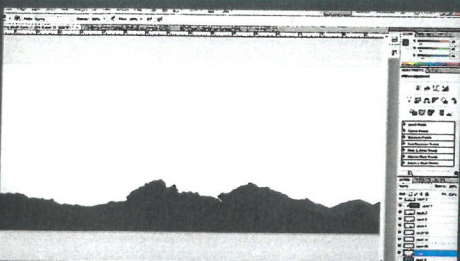
OLLY MOSS STUDY REVIEW SHEET



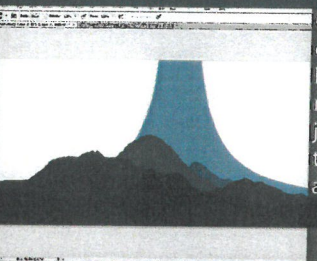
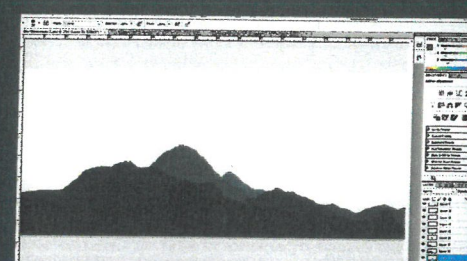
Began by using a mixture of the quick selection tool, the pen tool and the brush tool to make the terrain.



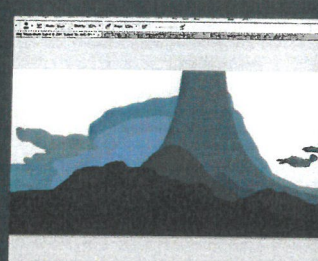
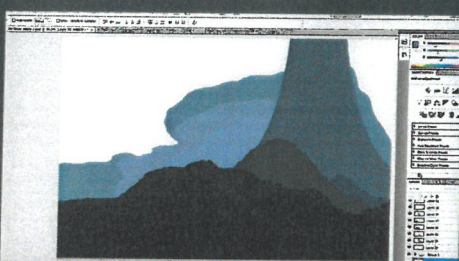
Olly Moss defines his style through layers. I wanted to capture the layered feeling his art style establishes.



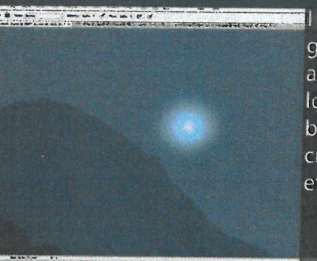
Like Olly Moss, the further away the subject is the lighter it is.



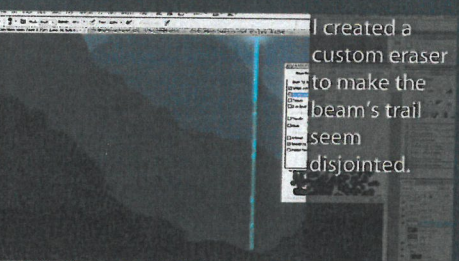
Olly Moss also changes the hue and saturation as subjects get further away, so I also did that.



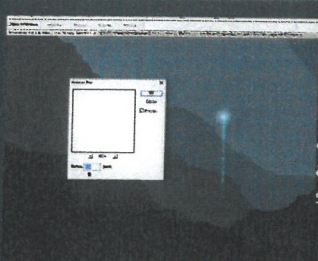
I wanted the sky to not draw the audience's complete attention, but also for it to not be busy.



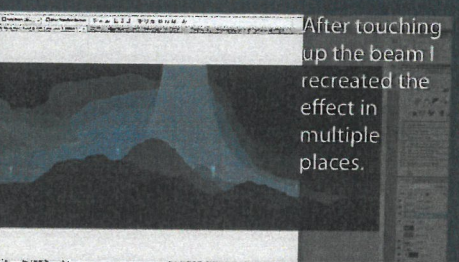
I used both gaussian blur and a low-hardness brush to create this effect.



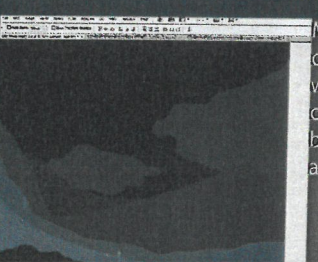
I created a custom eraser to make the beam's trail seem disjointed.



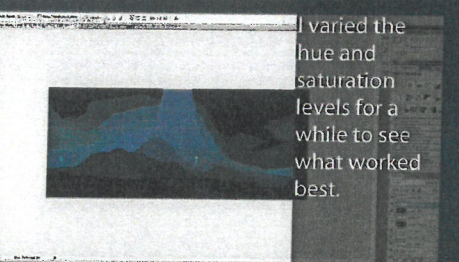
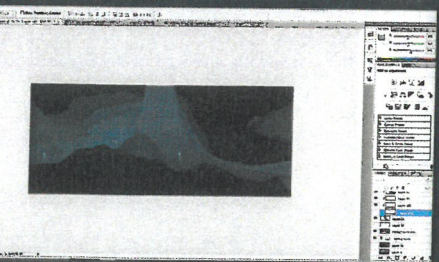
Here I'm using gaussian blur so it doesn't look so crisp, as it's a far away light source.



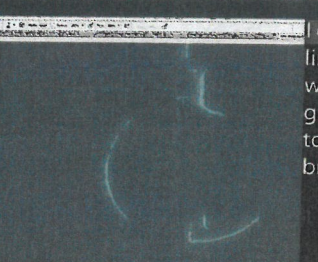
After touching up the beam I recreated the effect in multiple places.



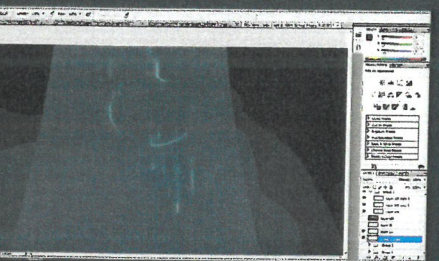
Murky green clouds add welcome contrast to the blue piece of art.



I varied the hue and saturation levels for a while to see what worked best.



I created the lines of energy with the gaussian blur tool and the brush tool.



OLLY MOSS STUDY REVIEW SHEET

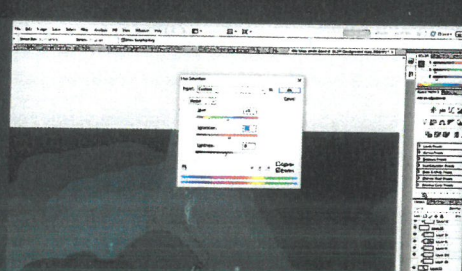
S



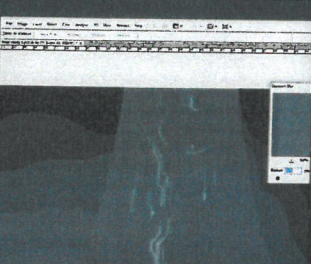
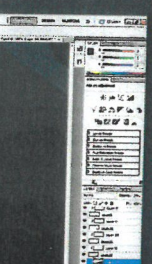
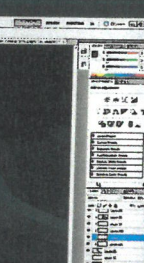
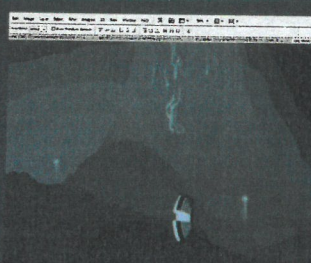
To add another layer of intricacy I created a building to contrast against the dark landscape.



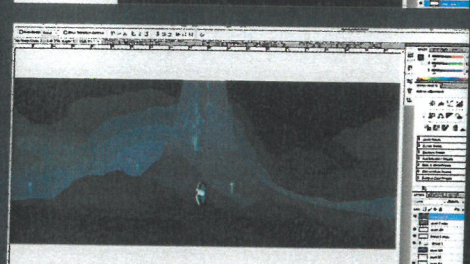
Slightly altered the beam colours so they are more unique.



Increased the intensity of the gradients on the mountains.



Added a slight blur to the structure so the edge isn't as crisp.



In my Olly Moss artist study I used the magic wand tool, the brush tool, the paint bucket tool, the gradient tool, and the quick selection tool to replicate the style he used in his Firewatch cover piece. I also used Gaussian blur, the hue and saturation editor, and the brightness and contrast editor. By referencing a picture taken from Halo Infinite's trailer I created a layered piece that is reminiscent of Olly Moss' style. I did this by selecting parts from the original picture and placing them on a new document, rearranging them slightly and recolouring them. I also added a few extra details in order to make the work more complex, such as the dark gradients and the beams of light. Whilst I believe I successfully replicated Olly Moss' style, I believe I could've chosen a better image to work off of as the image I worked off of isn't as bright as or as intricate as his work. I also believe I should have taken a lot of images and placed them together so it doesn't feel as bare as it does. Outside of these issues I'm happy with this piece. If I were to do this again I'd take into account my issues with it and work off of them. I'd also use a different type of landscape.

ORIGINAL



The background of the page is a dark, grainy image. In the upper right, there are some faint, glowing blue and white shapes that look like distant lights or perhaps a cityscape at night. In the lower center, there is a bright, glowing blue light source, possibly a fire or a large screen, with a dark, silhouetted figure standing in front of it. The overall mood is mysterious and futuristic.

NAME GENERATION

DEVELOPER NAME GENERATION S

DARK

MYSTERY

TECHNOLOGY

EVOCATIVE

VORPAL
STUDIOS

RUNIC
GAMES

FIREWALL
GAMES

TITAN
STUDIOS

Named after the weapon used to behead the Jabberwocky in four hits. *"The vorpal blade went snicker-snack!"*

Runic meaning "having some secret or mysterious meaning".

Firewall is associated with protection and fire is associated with power.

Titan has connotations of power.

CRIMSON
SOFTWARE

NEBULOUS
PRODUCTIONS

CRIMSON
BYTES

VALIANCE
DEVELOPERS

Crimson has been used in order to create the image of blood.

Related to space. Sounds mysterious.

Crimson has been used in order to create the image of blood.

Valiance means great determination and courage. Has connotations of victory.

BLACKEST BOX

ECLIPSE
INTERACTIVE

SHROUDED
CODING
STUDIOS

VOLITION
INTERACTIVE

An alteration of black box, a device used in aircraft. Blackest establishes an imposing and fearful feeling.

Related to space. Sounds mysterious.

Shrouded has connotations of mystery.

Volition means the power of using one's will.

HIVEMIND
SOFTWARE

TWILIGHT
INTERACTIVE

CORRUPTED
CODE

RAMPANT
GAMES

Named for the horror trope of hiveminds, many individuals working under one brain.

Sounds mysterious.

Implies the code has been altered by a dark and malevolent force.

Rampant has connotations of unrelenting power and strength.

The first two themes, dark and mystery, were chosen as they're the themes I'm most interested in. Therefore I want the developer to create these types of games. Developers I will look to to get inspiration from are From Software (Dark Souls, Bloodborne), Red Hook Studios (Darkest Dungeon), and Team Cherry (Hollow Knight) as they make games which have both dark and mysterious tropes and themes.

The last two themes, technology and evocative, were chosen as a lot of 'mainstream' developers have names that fit in to those themes (i.e BioWare, Electronic Arts, and Ubisoft). I'm not too fond of these themes (technology and evocative) because they feel like they're overdone and don't give much identity to the developer outside of their games. Because of this I'll be sticking with the first two themes (dark and mysterious) but I may mix the first two and the last two together.

DEVELOPER NAME SHORTLIST S

BEST OF 4

DISCUSSION

BEST OF 2

BLACKEST BOX

I like this name because of its ominous vibes. Unlike most names it doesn't have any indication it's a games studio. Top video game studios typically don't include an indication so they stand out more against the crowd.

BLACK BOX

HIVEMIND
SOFTWARE

I like this name because of its relation to the horror genre. It could be shortened to simply "Hivemind" in references to it.

I chose this name over the other as I have more ideas for the logo. I altered it to be Black Box because my peers believe it sounds better.

ECLIPSE
INTERACTIVE

This name is okay. It's wordy but it has potential for a logo.

ECLIPSE
INTERACTIVE

TWILIGHT
INTERACTIVE

This name is also okay. It's also wordy but where it doesn't have potential for a logo it has more links to mystery than Eclipse Interactive.

I chose this name over the other as I have more ideas for the logo.

CRIMSON
BYTES

I like this name. It's sinister and links to the horror genre (due to its links with blood). I also like its links to technology.

CRIMSON
BYTES

CORRUPTED
CODE

This name is good because of its links to its horror as well as technology. I like the alliteration as well.

I chose this name as it sounds darker and more interesting.

VOLITION
INTERACTIVE

This name is quite a mouthful. The only reason I like it is the use of "volition".

RAMPANT
GAMES

RAMPANT
GAMES

I like that this name links with both the technology theme and the dark theme. The idea that the games are rampant and have an intelligence of their own is interesting.

I chose this name because I just like this one more than Volition Interactive.

I created a shortlist in order to pinpoint the best names from each category. First I chose the best two names from each category. I then discussed positives and negatives of each name. After that, taking into account my discussion of each name, I shortened the list of names down to the best names I have. I then discussed why I chose that name rather than the other name.

In choosing my names I chose names that showed that the game company creates dark, mystery-ridden games. Secondly, I wanted a range of different names so the questionnaire has more variety. Thirdly, I chose names that sounded good and were easy to say- they also had to look good written down. Finally the names I picked had to have good logo potential. I wanted names that could be shown through an instantly recognizable, unique logo. To have a unique logo would mean I have to have a unique name that presents unique imagery.

DEVELOPER NAME QUESTIONNAIRE S

NAMES

WHY YOU SHOULD PICK THIS NAME

TICKBOX

BLACK BOX

- This name is linked to the object people search for after a disaster, thus giving it ominous connotations.
- This name has a *lot* of logo potential.
- Able to establish a colour palette with "Black".

ECLIPSE
INTERACTIVE

- Linked to an event people often find magical and mysterious.
- This name has some logo potential.
- Indicates it's a game developer with "Interactive".

CRIMSON
BYTES

- Linked to blood. Creates a sinister tone.
- Able to establish a colour palette with "Crimson".

RAMPANT
GAMES

- Interesting connotations, suggests the games are powerful.
- Indicates it's a game developer with "Games".

REASON BEHIND
CHOICE? (OPTIONAL)

DEVELOPER NAME QUESTIONNAIRE S

NAMES

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- Indicates it's a game developer with "Games".

REASON BEHIND
CHOICE? (OPTIONAL)

GAME NAME GENERATION



SPACE

OMINOUS

HUNGER

DIVINITY

FROM THE
COSMOS

HUNGER AND
MADNESS

VORACIOUS

COME UNTO
YOUR MAKER

This name describes the protagonist, as she has come from space ("cosmos").

This name describes the protagonist's hungry nature, as well as her links to madness (as she is an eldritch horror).

This name describes the protagonist's need to devour great quantities of food.

This name describes how the protagonist is akin to a god, as she is an eldritch horror. She is the "maker" in this name.

BORN OF THE
VOID

HUNGER MADE
FLESH

INSATIABLE

COMMUNION

This name describes the protagonist, as she has come from space ("the void").

This name describes how the protagonist's primary motive is to eat and how her entire existence seems to revolve around it.

This name describes how no matter how much the protagonist eats, she will always be hungry.

This name is ironic. Communion is typically people eating a god's metaphorical blood and flesh to get closer to their gods. It is reversed in this case, in which the protagonist is eating the people's literal blood and flesh.

STAR-SPAWNED

THE STARS
MUST FEED

DEVOUR

OBLATION

This name describes the protagonist, as she has come from space ("star").

This name describes how the protagonist came from space and how she must eat.

This name describes the protagonist's hungry nature.

Oblation means "a thing presented to a god". In this case, the people are being presented to the protagonist.

HUNGER OF
THE STARS

FEAST

BOTTOMLESS
PIT

HECATOMB

This name describes the protagonist's hungry nature, and how she has come from space.

This name describes the protagonist's hungry nature. "Feast" was used to describe the scale of her "meal".

This name describes how no matter how much the protagonist eats, she will always be hungry.

Hecatomb means "an extensive loss of life for a particular cause". The cause is the protagonist's hunger.

The themes were each chosen as they're the themes I'm most interested in, and fit in with the overarching theme of cosmic horror (a theme the game will include in the narrative). Games I will look to to get inspiration from are From Software's Bloodborne, Red Hook Studios' Darkest Dungeon, Team Cherry's Hollow Knight and Visceral Games' Dead Space trilogy, as they are all games with cosmic horror related aspects. Darkest Dungeon will be my biggest inspiration due to its gameplay aspects as well as its narrative themes.

Whilst thinking of the names I referenced other cosmic horror media such as H.P. Lovecraft's work. The entire space column could be possible names for a "Great Old One", powerful and unknowable god-equivalent creatures that are heavily included in the cosmic horror genre.

GAME NAME SHORTLIST



BEST OF 4

STAR-SPAWNED

I like this name because of the sibilance. It's short and snappy.

HUNGER OF
THE STARS

I like this name because it feels like the name of a cosmic horror / H.P Lovecraft novel. It also describes the protagonist quite well.

THE STARS
MUST FEED

I really like this name. It also feels like the name of a cosmic horror / H.P Lovecraft novel, whilst also describing the protagonist. I like the use of "must" because it adds an ominous feeling.

FEAST

This name is alright. I like that it's only one word. It's not too ominous, though.

INSATIABLE

This name is good. It's an uncommon word and so it brings an ominous alien feeling to it.

BOTTOMLESS
PIT

This name, whilst descriptive of the protagonist, could easily be misinterpreted.

COMMUNION

I like this name for the irony it brings, as well as how it's a single word name.

HECATOMB

This name is great. It's an extremely rare word, so it has an ominous and alien feeling to it. The fact that it means both a loss of life for a cause and the sacrifice of cattle has interesting connotations.

BEST OF 2

HUNGER OF
THE STARS

I picked this name because of its links to cosmic horror / H.P Lovecraft novels.

THE STARS
MUST FEED

I picked this name because of its links to cosmic horror / H.P Lovecraft novels, and how it's ominous.

INSATIABLE

I picked this name because it can't be misinterpreted, as well as how it sounds ominous.

HECATOMB

I picked this name because it's so much better than "communion" for so many reasons.

I created a shortlist in order to pinpoint the best names from each category. First I chose the best two names from each category. I then discussed positives and negatives of each name. After that, taking into account my discussion of each name, I shortened the list of names down to the best names I have. I then discussed why I chose that name rather than the other name.

In choosing my names I chose names that showed that the game is dark and has cosmic horror tropes. Secondly, I wanted the name to describe the protagonist. Thirdly, I chose names that sounded good and were easy to say- they also had to look good written down. Finally I wanted the names to be unique from other games and to not be a common word, as then it would be hard to search, research, and possibly buy.

GAME NAME QUESTIONNAIRE



NAMES

WHY YOU SHOULD PICK THIS NAME

TICKBOX

HUNGER OF
THE STARS

- Describes the protagonist
- Has links to the cosmic horror genre

THE STARS
MUST FEED

- Describes the protagonist
- Has links to the cosmic horror genre

INSATIABLE

- Describes the protagonist
- Ominous

HECATOMB

- Describes the protagonist
- Unusual name
- Ominous
- Multiple definitions that all work

REASON BEHIND
CHOICE? (OPTIONAL)

GAME NAME QUESTIONNAIRE



NAMES

WHY YOU SHOULD PICK THIS NAME

TICKBOX

HUNGER OF
THE STARS

- Describes the protagonist
- Has links to the cosmic horror genre

THE STARS
MUST FEED

- Describes the protagonist
- Has links to the cosmic horror genre

INSATIABLE

- Describes the protagonist
- Ominous

HECATOMB

- Describes the protagonist
- Unusual name
- Ominous
- Multiple definitions that all work

REASON BEHIND
CHOICE? (OPTIONAL)

DEVELOPER NAME QUESTIONNAIRE S

NAMES	TALLY	DISCUSSION
BLACK BOX	3/6	I'm unsurprised that Black Box won. In my opinion it has the best logo possibilities. The name itself is cool and short, and would be easily recognizable.
ECLIPSE INTERACTIVE	1/6	I'm surprised that Eclipse Interactive was voted for. In my opinion it's the weakest name here.
CRIMSON BYTES	2/6	I'm not surprised by this. Crimson Bytes is an obvious close winner. It almost hits all the same fields that Black Box did, but Black Box did it better.
RAMPANT GAMES	0/6	I was thinking that Rampant Games might've gotten one or two votes, so I'm a little (but not entirely) surprised that it didn't get any.

THE CHOSEN DEVELOPER NAME WAS BLACK BOX

GAME NAME QUESTIONNAIRE S

NAMES	TALLY	DISCUSSION
HUNGER OF THE STARS	0/6	I'm quite surprised that this didn't get any votes. I thought it was a pretty strong, ominous name.
THE STARS MUST FEED	2/6	I'm quite surprised that this name got two votes and "Hunger of the Stars" got none. However, this name is more ominous than "Hunger of the Stars" I suppose.
INSATIABLE	1/6	Insatiable was one of the cooler names here, however I don't think it would've completely fit a game as a name. Therefore I'm unsurprised that it only got one vote.
HECATOMB	3/6	Unsurprising. Hecatomb is such an interesting word. Not only is it old, but it means the slaughter and/or sacrifice of many living things. Whilst the sacrifice is typically cattle, it has interesting possibilities.

THE CHOSEN GAME NAME WAS HECATOMB