Mind's Isle

Sentient Island

Concept Pitch

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The Brief: Sandbox

Project Goal
Create a sandbox style game.
The player is put into a loosely constrained environment, where they can play and set their own goals.

Required Elements
The sandbox should have a purpose, and should have some amount of “life of its own”, even if the player is not intervening (such as a basic ecosystem of plants, creatures, buildings, or entities of some sort, but this is open to interpretation).

The player should be able to interact with elements in this environment to alter the behaviours and outcomes in that world. This could involve moving things around, building things, collecting things, befriending things, killing things, organizing things, it’s up to you!

Limitations
It may be best to also have an element that adds a certain tension or risk to the player, thus necessitating at least a base level of involvement and focus by them just to survive & play.

Platform
Any.

Summary

Loose Goals

- Sandbox game where the player can set their own goals.

Loose Environment

- Player must be in a loosely constrained environment.

Form of live ecosystem

- “Life of its own” some form of the game living and changing regardless of the player.

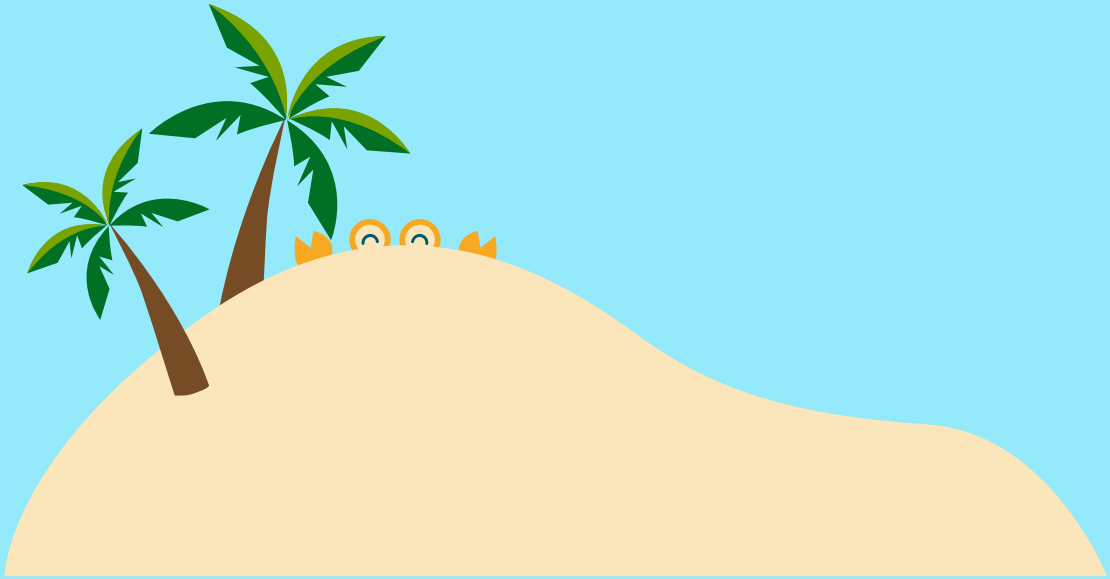
Interactable world

- Interactable environment that change world objects or states.

My Proposal

- Loose Goals, Loose Environment, Form of live ecosystem, Interactable world
- A 3D first person open world sandbox survival game set on a small island.
- The player will be able to gather resources such as wood, stone and metal, which they can use to build structures and weapons. These resources will respawn over time.
- Island will be filled with animals, passive and aggressive.
- The island will be “alive,” reacting to player actions by altering resource and mob respawn rates. This will be determined by quests completed by the player. Example: Cut down 20 trees, walk 15km, build a house, etc.
- Day/Night system, every day a new quest.
- Sad = more enemies, less resources. Happy = less enemies more resources. Unique resources at 0% and 100% happiness, encouraging varied playstyles.
- The goal of the game is up to the player, it can be to build structures to help them survive from enemies or just to complete quests to keep the island happy,

Game Demo



What went well

Tutorials

I was able to find a tutorial for a majority of the systems in my game. This saved a significant amount of time.

Learning

To work from home, I had to learn how to use completely new software and skills: Krita, Blender, and more in-depth c#, which I had no trouble with and gained heaps of experience from.

Kept to schedule

Pretty much kept on track the entire time, towards the end it fell apart a bit with bug fixing and polishing, however, the rest turned out quite smoothly, and I didn't have any extreme cuts or pivots.

What went wrong

Work/Data loss

Had to restart the project three times in the first week due to issues with GitHub and Unity versions. Experienced a few crashes, and despite having backups, I still lost several hours of work .

Unsolvable issues

At the end of my project, I encountered difficulties with the post-processing and audio. I couldn't figure out what was wrong and still haven't. I also faced challenges with my creature AI, which I spent a whole day trying to solve on campus (unsuccessfully), but it worked just fine when I tried it at home.

Wasted a lot of time

Completely my fault, but finding several tutorials that looked great, got about 80% through them then realised it was not going to work in my game or it wasn’t what I wanted, resulting in lots of wasted effort and time.

What would I do different next time?

Scope

I managed to complete pretty much everything I had set to do, with the only feature missing being unique resources at 0/100% happiness levels. It was challenging completing the project to the standard I wanted to, and adjusting the scope would have benefited me with further time to focus on smaller aspects of the game .

Research

Research more in-depth and have a more thorough plan of all the systems earlier on in development. Example, the quest system was the final system I added and took me almost as much time as every other system to implement. If I had done some more research earlier on it, integrating it would have gone a lot smoother.

Larger team

Looking back, I am extremely proud of what I was able to accomplish in this project by myself, however, if I had more people involved in the development the game's quality would've drastically increased overall and could have definitely expanded.

Thanks for listening!

If you'd like to play the game, send me a message on discord and i'll send the build through to you.

Any Questions?