ABBEY GAMES – game design intern

July 2014 – September 2015

http://renownedexplorers.com/

During the beginning of my internship I worked on many different parts of Renowned Explorers. The game has three main layers; a strategic world map layer, an exploratory expedition layer and a tactical turn based layer. For the expedition layers I helped prototype mechanics, clarify rules by creating the right visual/textual feedback systems and in the later stages create the main story UI when I worked to resolve multiple feedback issues with minimal support for new assets.

For the world map layer I was allowed to create exploratory designs in its early stages. The name and sources for several resources had already been decided on and was already implemented in content, however their actual use in the strategic layer had not been settled on yet. I got to learn so much by being let loose on some of these issues under the guidance of my peers at Abbey Games.

In the months after I was asked to extend my internship up to the release of Renowned Explorers, I noticed how I became better and better at taking parts of the game(flow) that bothered me and proposing, revising and implementing solutions for them. I also remade the UI that is used to deliver adventure events, created a tutorial, designed and implemented all achievements and later on made in-game debug tools to test all content for missing/mistyped definitions.

STUDENT PROJECT – game, level, 3d design

September - October 2013, 4 members

http://kempink.eu/games/OculusDrift.zip

We designed this game for Johan, who was paralyzed from the shoulder blades down and had suffered a brain aneurism. He really wanted to drive racecars, but there'd be no way for him to actually sit in a real one. I designed the game around head movement as the sole input. It was very important to me to make it a true race game. The game was designed to work especially for him, but I didn't want to pad the racing experience in any other way so that a victory is a victory.

Here are some quotes:

"Wow, I really feel like I'm racing in a racecar!"
        - Johan (our goal)

"Good game."
        - Willem (our king)

We took great care in getting the feel of racing just right. But keeping it approachable as Johan was easily overwhelmed by too much out-of-focus motion, because of past brain damage. It was an interesting juxtaposition against his strong observation skills and awareness of the racing components itself. A very fortunate side-effect to these considerations were that the game has proven to be very playable for people who wouldn't even know how to operate a keyboard or mouse, so ranging from 10 year olds to 70 year olds. In total it took 4 of us students 11 weeks to make this.

My role in this project was both the game design, effects and 3d design. This made it difficult to focus on either one. I worked hard to separate these different production hats. Ultimately the mechanics of the racing as a whole suffered most (the speedup economy never really got to make sense), but I let it go in order to prioritise the racing sensation instead. It was all for a good cause after all.

The game was later nominated for 2 student Dutch Game Awards; Best Student Game and Student Technical Achievement. We didn't win anything, but having school pay for the expensive dinners was already a much greater honor than we had expected to get out of this project.

Everything in Drift is scratch-made, except the trees in above screenshot.

Design, programming, lighting

GGJ 2016, 6 members

http://globalgamejam.org/2016/games/fowl-play

We wanted to make a silly game where players puppeteer birds of paradise in an attempt to woe the subject of their romantic efforts. With simple scoring working very much like Just Dance, I worked together with the other artist to create the theater setting and focused on making the puppeteering feel good and look funny. Because I took the bird from concept to 3D to implementation by myself I was able to work very efficiently and effective on areas that I would think have the most impact when the player toys with the birds.

Design, 3D, programming

GGJ 2015 (6 members)

http://globalgamejam.org/2015/games/authoriteam

This jam game was a total palette cleanser for one friend and I who had been working on turn based games for almost a year at this point. It's a chaotic 8-player "beat-em-up" where you and your friends have to defend the city from an endless alien invasion. I made the city, (destruction) effects and worked with our other artist to shape the animations.

Game, level and 3D design

GGJ 2014, 7 members
http://kempink.eu/games/Toweriser.zip

With Toweriser, we set out to make a funny local multiplayer game. The end result is a deceptively simple co-op platforming game, but the challenge lies in working together with your partner. My goal was to lure people into thinking it was easy to keep oversight on the playing field. The catch is that I deliberately made timing the hard part of the game. The good-spirited bickering that couch co-op can cause was what I was aiming for.The game forces people to take a step back and talk their planned actions through. Instead of internalizing the discussion, players are invited to speak their thoughts out loud. This game won by unanimous vote at our local Jam location for engaging everybody and the polish.

Custom Engine Project

STUDENT PROJECT – designer, programmer

September – Januari 2015, 3 members
https://github.com/mswf/MeepMeep/

Within the study there was an opportunity to work on an individual project of your own choosing for personal development. So I teamed up with two other students. After my internship I was very interested in the potential benefits a custom pipeline could bring to the development process. One group member focused on rendering, the other on tools and script binding and I worked on a base library of Lua scripts and the dummy prototype project to test/verify our efforts. But of course we all collaborated on our design and work processes. My main goal was to make everything hot reloadable (including any scripts), and create nice systems to add callbacks to files or categories of files. I also studied some performance characteristics of LuaJIT from mailing lists and experiments, documented the relevant advice and applied this to the core scripts.

It was quite satisfying to deliberately take more time to become more intimate with some lower level bits of production.
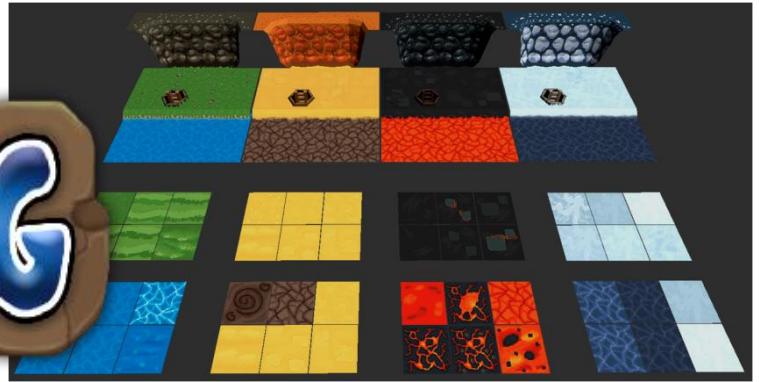
STUDENT PROJECT – level, game, fx, 3D design

August – October 2014, 9 members
http://kempink.eu/games/KeepDreaming.zip

This was a game build in a custom engine built from scratch in C++ during this project. One programmer and I got to figure out the entire art pipeline and an entire line of editors was build to support this. Although the end result doesn't play too that smooth, we were very successful in getting a "content pipeline" up and running, where both artists and programmers got to easily implement and test new features. Tools included in .zip.

I worked on all the game designs also, although unfortunately nothing really came of it as implementing basic functionality in this first-time C++ project took too long already. I also did all the 3D modeling, made some attack animations and was the one who would integrate all the assets into the build using our tools.

For this game I also did a lot of research into balancing approaches, a subject which I initially feared but where I later developed a deep of interest for. I didn't get to practice this a lot, as tooling design and team coach proved troublesome up till week 8. But decision modeling, Machinations and paper prototyping for interplay at least became a part of my vocabulary.
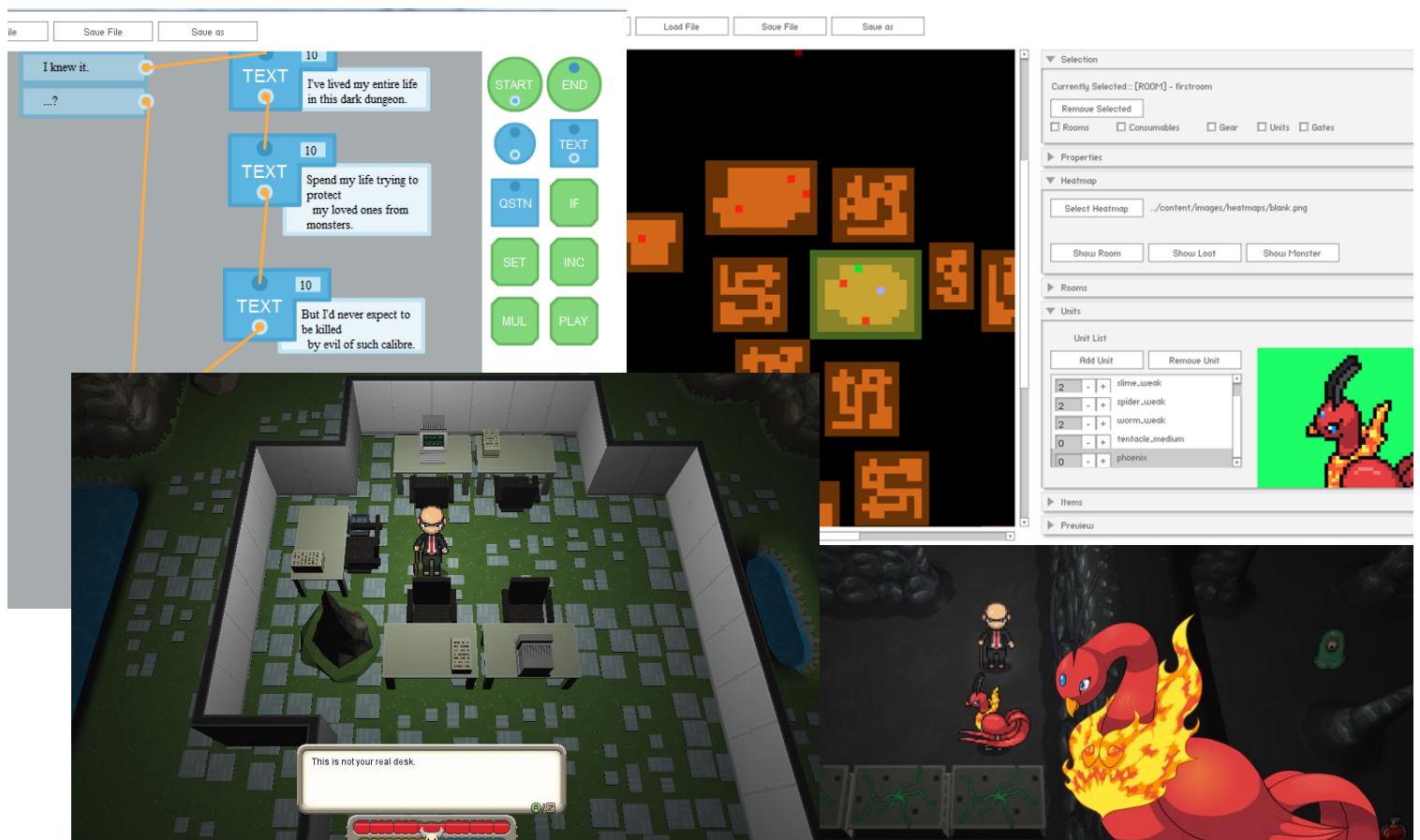
Blown Away

STUDENT PROJECT – game design, 3D art, production

http://kempink.eu/games/BlownAway.zip

A game with windmills, for an interactive exposition at a museum. We spend a lot of time figuring out better ways to communicate and write down our designs. We used Onenote as our living design document. I was responsible for the design, while also doing most of the 3d modeling and lighting. I also programmed the weather transition systems and other animations, as well as several custom shaders.

The entirety of the scenes in the above screenshots are made by myself.

Piirl

PC/Unity

STUDENT PROJECT – level design, 3d modeling, animation

March - June 2013, 5 members
http://kempink.eu/games/Piiri.zip

We wanted first hand experience in why people were advised to not make 1st person puzzle games. Levels are made by using Blender model the scene and fleshed out inside of Unity3D with effects and scripting. This was my first 3d project, 3/4 year into the study. As a group we struggled in designing the game and scope of the levels. I was the only 3D modeler of note within the group, so I became a choke-point for a lot of things because I also needed to work on the base design. Through this project and our reflections on it afterwards I learned a lot about collaborating and formulating design ideas.
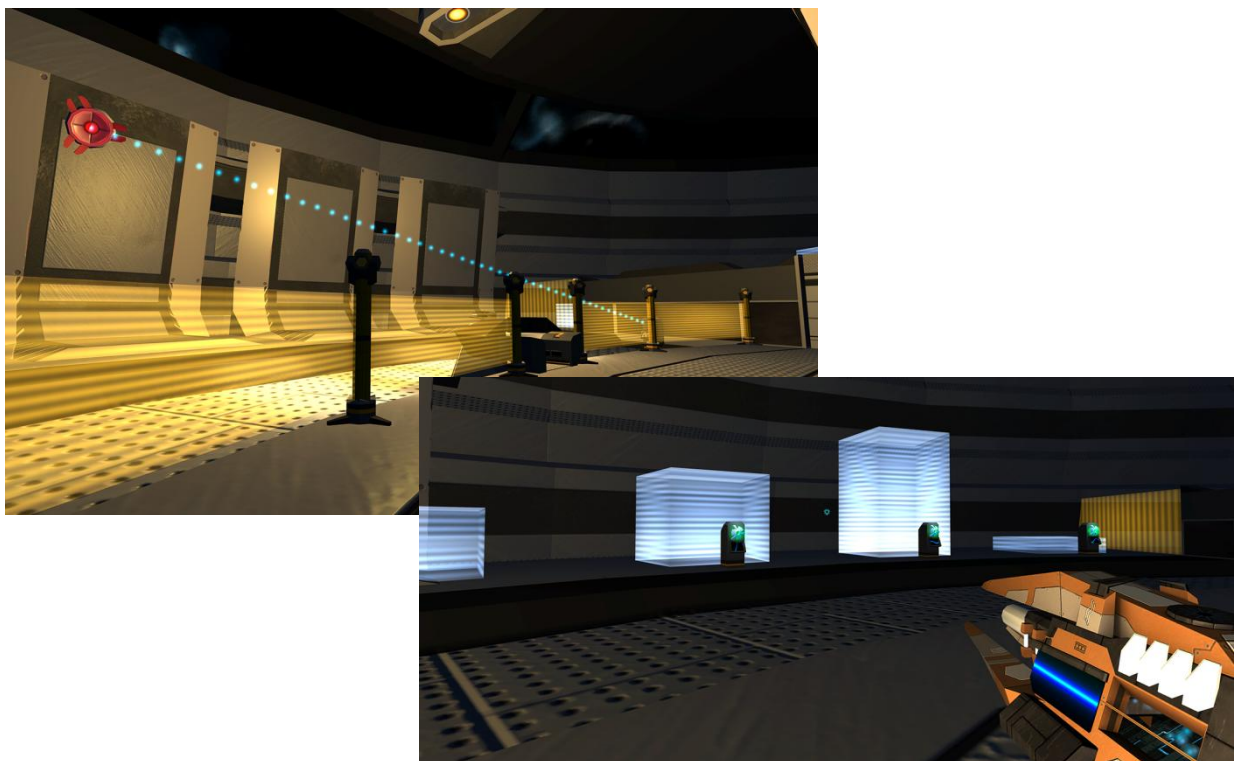
AnTactics

Android

STUDENT PROJECT – game, level design, scripting

Februari - April 2013 , 3 members

http://kempink.eu/games/AnTactics.zip

Levels were made using xml based level scripts. Designed for android phones and made in Adobe Air.

I really wanted to make a simplified game, where you could still apply strategy to after becoming inspired by some design books I read. I learned a lot about converting design intentions into words and flowcharts in order to structure my thought process.

Palpito

PC/Flash
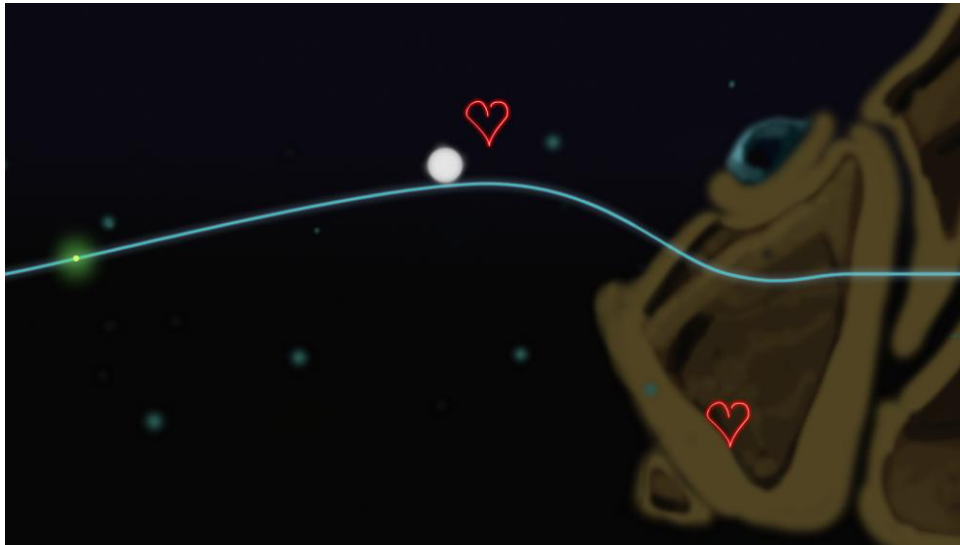
## GGJ – graphics & level design

Global Game Jam 2013, 4 members

http://kempink.eu/games/Palpito.exe

Cardénas

PC/Flash

STUDENT PROJECT –level design, graphics

November - December 2012, 5 members

http://kempink.eu/games/cardenas.swf

This was my first group project. Levels were made by placing native Adobe Flash movieclips and scripted using AS3. Going through all the ropes of development as we tried to create those ropes was an awesome experience. I'm really happy that I got to experience the joy and benefits of working together right from the start.
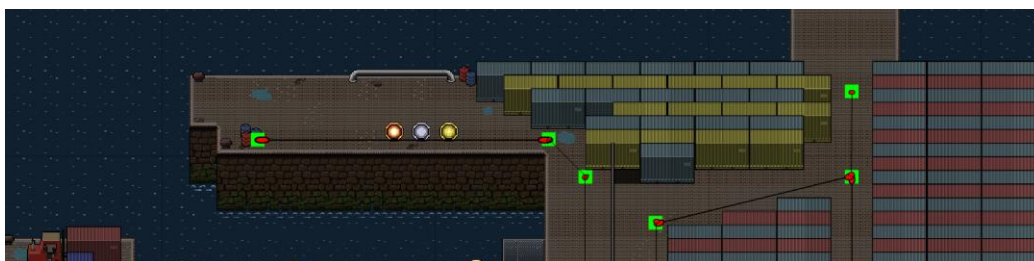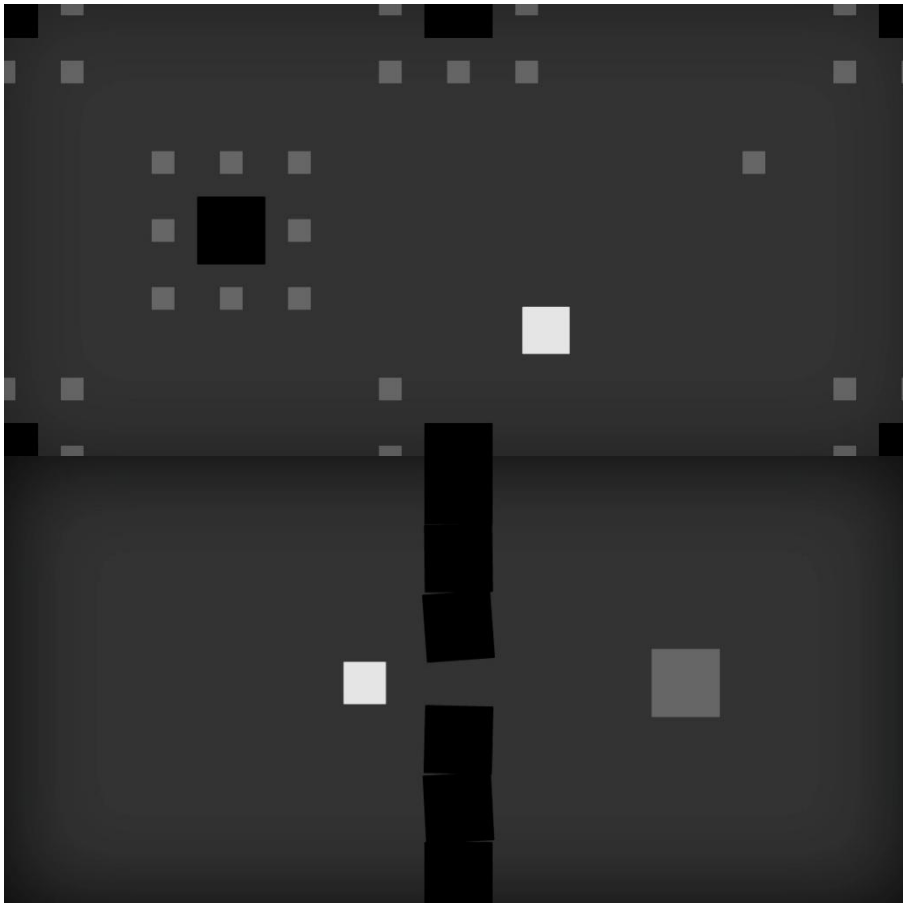
"ALONE"

PERSONAL – cube wrangler

September 2012
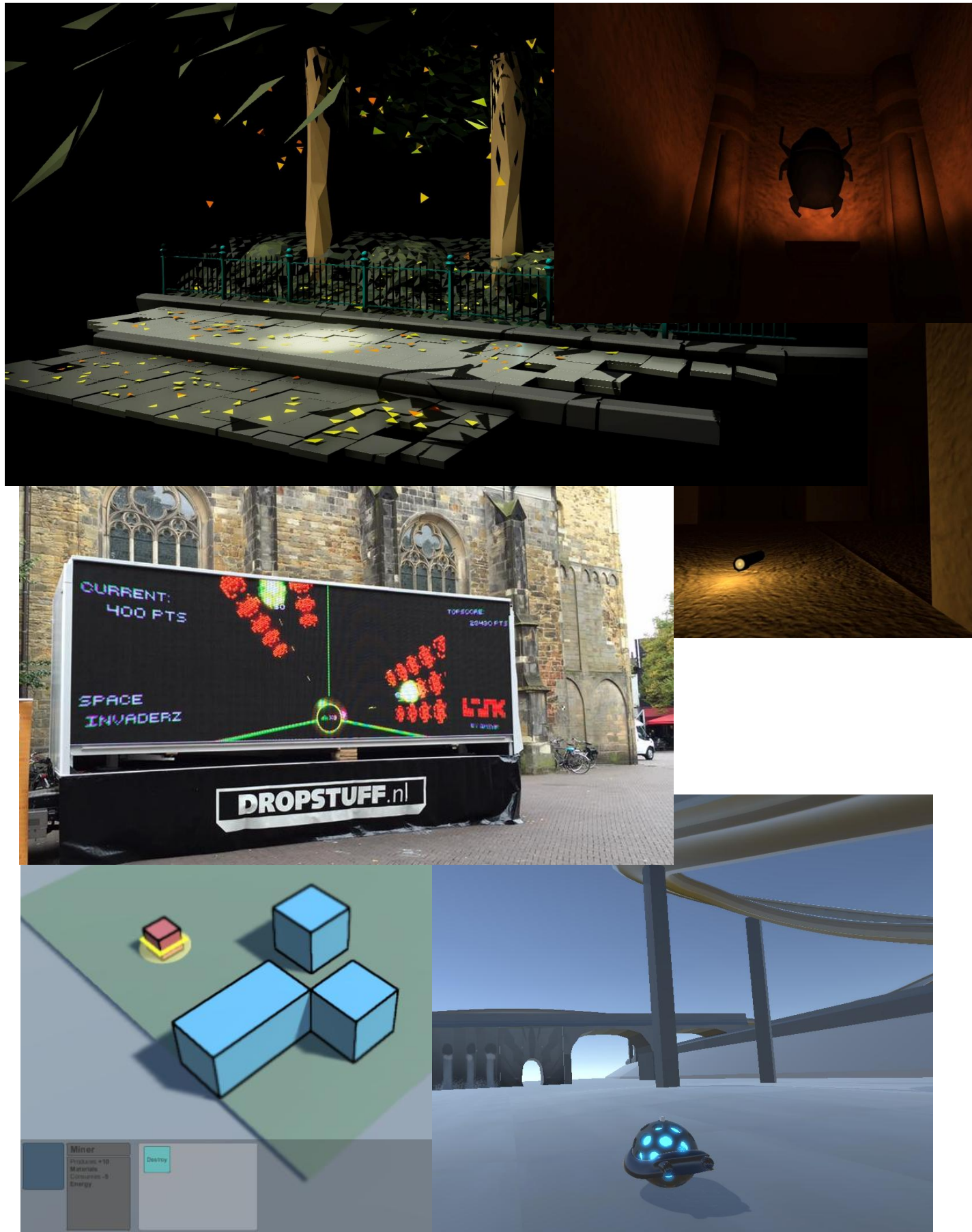
http://kempink.eu/games/alone.swf

I wanted to explore storytelling through mechanics and subtle sound cues.

(I swear this was before I heard about Thomas Was Alone)

Personal Projects Collage

Miscallenous

Ones – Not Even Once
This was a short 4 hour joke project after a programmer
and I decided that there were not enough games
copying Threes.
http://ones.vadinci.net/