PRE-RELEASE PROJECT

3D Digital Game Art

POST-SECONDARY

3D Digital Game Art 2023 Overview:

This pre-release project is intended to give you an idea of what to expect for the two-day competition in Winnipeg 2023. Please see the Contest Description for more details.

During this competition, you will be challenged with 6 modules to demonstrate your skills. Each module will be judged independently and is independent of the previous module. Each module will have a distinct submission requirement. For the final module, you will combine your results from each of the modules to create a final scene.

The modules will allow you to demonstrate:
1. Your ability to create concept art based on a design brief.
2. Your ability to model a hard surface object and a sculpted organic object
3. Your skill with UV unwrapping
4. Your ability to surface models
5. Your skill to prepare a model for animation, and to animate the models.
6. Your ability to combine files and publish them on a platform (Sketchfab).

The two days of competition will be broken into modules for a total of 12 hours. Day 1 will start with a modelling module followed by a UV mapping module. Day 2 will start with a surfacing module followed by an animation module, and finish with an exporting module. You are asked to complete the concept art module prior to the contest and arrive with the concept art. More details are provided below to help you start practising for this competition.

The game art you will create for these challenges will be styled after the dark fantasy aesthetic of the well known game, Elden Ring. Aim for photorealistic look mixed with fictional mediaeval styles.

A detailed design brief will be provided at the beginning of the contest. The brief will detail the required models, surfaces, and animations for the challenge.
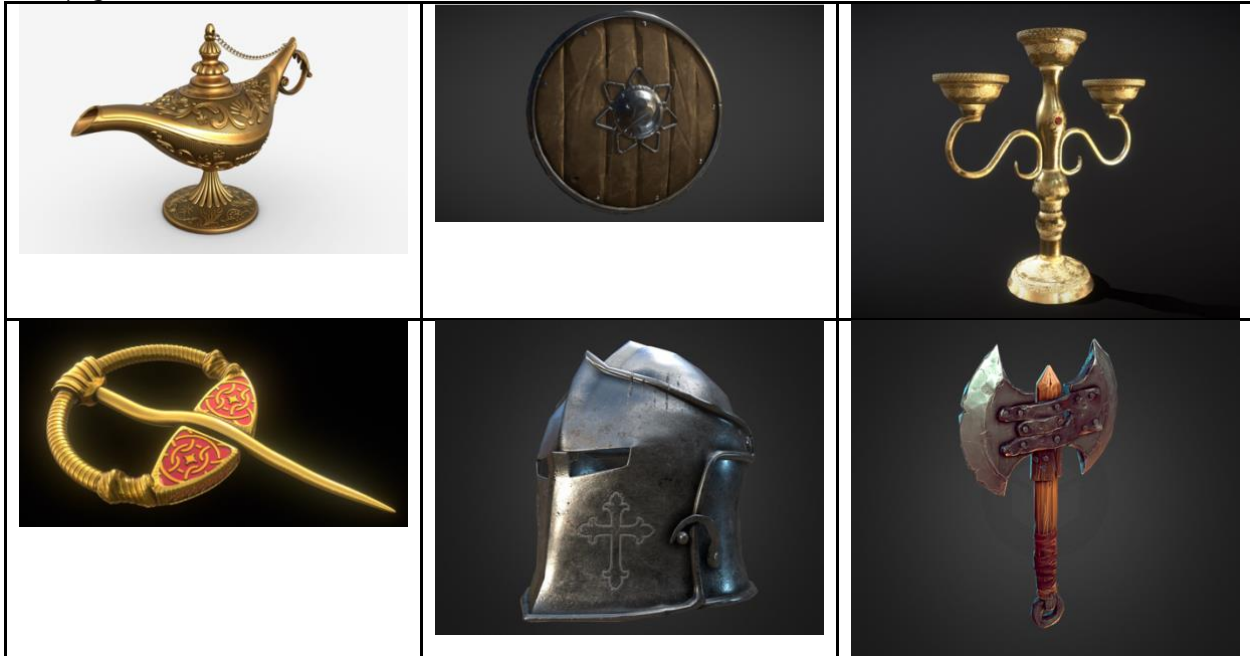
DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT AND TASKS
The competition will be composed of distinct modules over the course of two days. Additional detail for each module is provided below.

Module 1: Concept Art
The first module will test your ability to create effective concept art. You are tasked to create concept art for a "Treasure Room" within a fantasy style dungeon. Produce a piece of full colour concept art. Use the supplied wireframe template file to demonstrate your skills with perspective, shading, and proportion to illustrate the interior of the Treasure Room.

Design Brief
Hidden deep in the layers of a dangerous and dark dungeon, lies the mysterious vault of stolen treasures. This room features sturdy grey stone walls. The bricks and cobblestones of the walls and floors are hewn from the same granite stone material. The door is constructed from heavy black iron and wood.. The room is dimly lit by torches mounted to the walls. The torches are mounted to the walls with black iron brackets. Within the chamber, there is a large chest sitting at an angle atop a pile of loose treasure. The pile of treasure is a mix of gold coins, and colourful jewels. The locked chest itself is very sturdy, constructed of heavy wood panels and iron metal braces. It features some decorative elements in the form of gold accents and runes hammered into the iron. There is a fortified lock built into the front of the chest.

Scattered about the room is evidence of failed heists- on the floor lies a broken sword, a shield riddled with arrows, and a few broken bones and skulls.

Concept Art Guidelines

- The digital painting demonstrates shading;
- The digital painting demonstrates perspective drawing skills;
- Digital painting indicates proportion;
- Consistent colour palette and lighting consistent with design brief;
- Digital painting views are labelled
- File organisation - named layers within the working file and sensible folder structure;

Submission Guidelines

- Digital images (original (PSD or other to demonstrate file organisation)
- Images should be 4K (3840 x 2160 pixels)
- Submissions will be collected by NTC members at the beginning of day 1 of the contest. (Communication systems will be explained on Day 1)

Module 2: Modelling

You will be modelling two assets for this module. Competitors will be provided with a detailed design brief on the day of the contest.

- **Item 1** (hard surface modelling) Competitors will model a solid surfaced item. UV mapping is not required for this module. Note; The model will only require materials like glass and metal.
- **Item 2** (sculpting) Competitors will be challenged to model an intricate sculpted object. No UV mapping required. Note: Application of a material is required.

Modelling Guidelines

- Appropriate distribution of polys
- No Ngons
- Clean unified geometry
- Designs conform to the design brief

Submission Guidelines

- Each model must be exported and uploaded individually to Sketchfab.

- Submit Sketchfab links to the NTC by the end of the module.

Module 3: UV Mapping

All competitors will be provided with the same unmapped model (FBX format) by the NTC. Competitors will create a UV map within their chosen 3D software. Submission of the UV map is required for judging.

UV Mapping Guidelines

- UV Unwrap the objects provided. UV unwrap should cause as little distortion as possible to the wireframe and keep seams to a minimum. Note: Distortion of polygons should be kept to a minimum.
- Create UV Map appropriate to the model and professional standards.

Submission Guidelines

- We are looking for manually unwrapped shells. (Do not use automatic unwrap tools)
- Your model must UV'd. Apply using the supplied UVGrid.PNG file as a texture, then export and uploaded to Sketchfab for judging.
- Submit your Sketchfab link for judging by the end of the module.
- Submit your UV map (screen capture) as well to the NTC by the end of the module.

Module 4: Surfacing (Maps and Materials)

All competitors will be provided with the same 2 models to surface. Both models will have a completed UV map. Competitors will use their preferred tools to create detailed surfaces. Surfaces and textures are expected to follow the design brief that will be provided on the day of the contest.

Surfacing Guidelines

- The art style for these assets is inspired by games such as Elden Ring and Dark Souls. Materials and maps should use a PBR workflow and aim for photorealism.
- Base shaders and tones represent the model successfully

- Maps represent materials correctly. The appropriate materials have been created for the objects.
- Maps are consistent with the specified art style, and conform to the overall style of the project
- Maps look seamless on model, no obvious joins or break in texture.
- A variety of physical materials have been represented
- Multiple PBR maps have been used (normal, transparency, etc)

Submission Guidelines

- The surfaced models must be exported and uploaded to Sketchfab.
- Send the completed Sketchfab links to the NTC by the end of the module.

Module 5: Animation

Competitors will animate their surfaced model based on the design brief directions. They will be tasked to prepare and animate the supplied models from the Surfacing module and the competitor created hard surface model from the Modelling module. Combine your hard surface model and your surfaced models into a single scene before animating.

Animation Guidelines

- Ensure your animation loop is seamless and without glitches.
- Employ at least three animation principles such as: ease in, ease out, anticipation, overlapping action, etc. (https://lesley.edu/article/the-12-principles-of-animation)
- Ensure your animation set-up contains a hierarchy using appropriate tools within your software.

Submission Guidelines

- Create a draft quality video to demonstrate your animation (in Maya, create a "playblast", in Blender, a "Viewport Render Animation"). Your video can show simple shading to allow judges to focus on the animation. Directions for where to submit the draft render will be given on the day of the contest.

Module 6: Export and Presentation
To complete this contest, competitors will combine the assets from the Modelling module with their surfaced and animated assets from the Surfacing and Animation

modules. Competitors will combine their scenes and animation and upload the properly exported scene to Sketchfab within a ½ hour of the end of the competition

Export and Presentation Guidelines

- Export: In addition to the final presentation, ensure you have exported the individual assets as explained in each module at the end of each module.
- For the final module, competitors must combine the required assets into a complete scene. The design brief will clarify the required components.
- Each module should reflect the requirements to fit into the game style as outlined in the provided design brief.
- Prepare the scene, lighting, composition, post processing effects, and animation settings in Sketchfab to optimise the presentation as you see fit.

Submission Guidelines

- Submit the finished Sketchfab link to the NTC by the end of the contest for judging.

Please submit any questions regarding this document to either
Derek Ford (Chair) fordd@assiniboine.net
Or
Étienne Carpentier-Mathieu – Co-Chair etienne.carpentier@hotmail.com