Videogame Storytelling

Saturday 23rd October

Online Workshop

2pm-5pm

Join games writer and narrative designer Elizabeth Smyth to explore the craft of storytelling for games and interactive fiction. After learning the fundamentals, you will have the chance to apply what you have learned in Twine, a free, text-based game engine requiring no previous coding experience. By the end of the workshop you will have completed your own interactive story with a world that players can engage with.

This event will take place through Zoom.

Led by Elizabeth Smyth, https://www.elizabethsmyth.com/

Course outline:

1.55-2.00	Workshop participants asked to login 5 minutes before the start of the workshop.
2.00-2.10	Welcome and Introduction by V&A Staff
2.10-2.20	Overview of the session and outcomes with Elizabeth Smyth. Introduction to videogame and interactive storytelling narrative design and definition of key terms.
2.20-2.30	Introduction to the theory of narrative design: branch structures, narrative requirements, different modes of interaction, and creating a playable character.
2.30-2.45	Analysis of example games (see list of materials and course preparations) and how they have implemented the theory in practice.
2.45-3.00	Warm-up activity – students use provided images from the Alice: Curiouser and Curiouser exhibition to generate game ideas (characters/world building/themes).
3.00-3.20	Course leader introduces free, online video game builder Twine – overview of using Twine and tools.
3.20-3.40	First Twine activity: students create a simple explorable space.

3.40-3.50	Students share their results of the first activity and get feedback from the course leader.
3.50-4.00	Break
4.00-4.30	Students create a branching scene, incorporating everything they have learned as well as images, and music into a short interactive game.
4.30-4.45	Students share their final interactive games, have a chance to play games created by other students, and receive feedback from the course leader.
4.45-5.00	Course leader shares recommendations for other tools, resources and ways to develop their storytelling skills further.

List of Materials:

- Plain or coloured paper, pencils and/or pens for brainstorming and making notes
- Text games to play in advance (not necessarily in full, just get a sense of them, please set aside 20-30 minutes in advance of the course if possible):
    - Bring Me a Head! by Chandler Groover
      https://ifdb.org/viewgame?id=vhud0bjh6zdz702z
    - Diviner by Josh Labelle
      https://ifdb.org/viewgame?id=87qupdxnh83wv4t
    - Bogeyman by Elizabeth Smyth
      https://ifdb.org/viewgame?id=ltwvgb2lubkx82yi
- https://twinery.org/ Twine Interactive Game tool: It is recommended that attendees use the online version (available through the 'Use it online' link on the right side of the webpage). This option requires no setup or downloading of software. This course assumes no prior knowledge and an introduction of Twine will be covered, but participants are welcome to use the resources linked on the webpage to get familiar with Twine in advance of the workshop if they wish.
- Reference images to use as inspiration for your game: Find a selection of images from the Alice: Curiouser and Curiouser exhibition here
  https://www.dropbox.com/sh/uj3qlelw1yvirnr/AADg0IXxezmP8GOYiXX5TypBa?dl=0
  Participants are also welcome to bring their own inspirations: atmospheric images, themes they wish to explore, quotes, characters etc.