

Zena's CS269j Assignment 2 and 3 - Art and Music

For this game, I made a lot of art, but for Assignment 2, I will be talking about how I designed sprites, with the intention to animate them. Here is a sprite sheet for Melody's exploration mode walking:



Originally, I had intended for all characters to be able to walk on the screen out of battle, but after seeing how long it took for Melody, I decided to have just her.

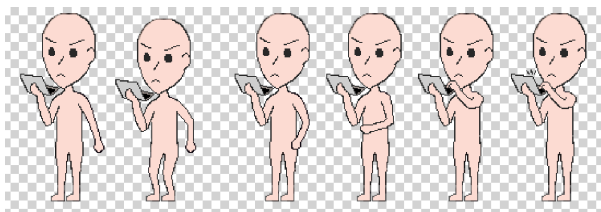
The other animations I made were attacks for everyone and deaths for everyone:

[AllAttack.mp4](#) (sound effect by Fatimah, distorted in Garageband by me)

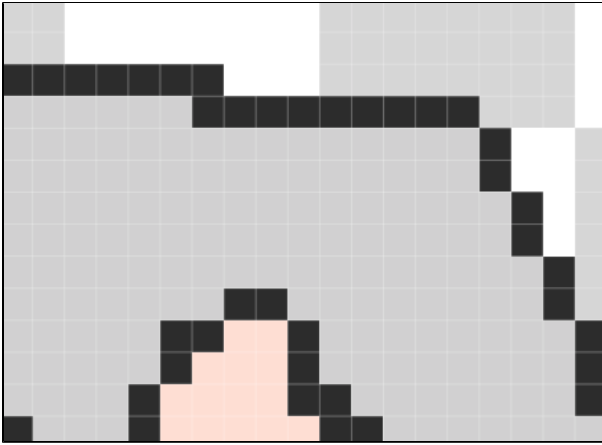
[MelodyDeath.mp4](#)

All of my sprites were made in Photoshop. To be honest, making them was quite tedious, but seeing the end result is really satisfying. As an example, I will walk through how I made a Melody attack animation.

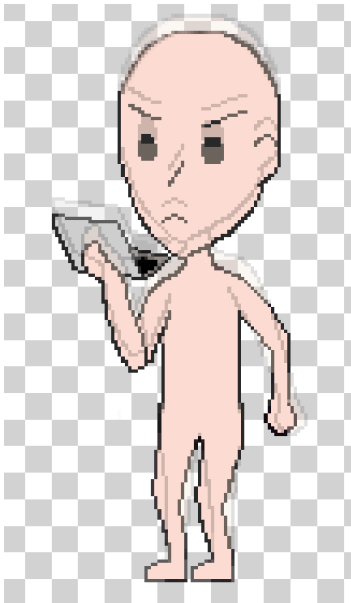
First, I thought up the animation and designed it with a blank doll kind of sprite, so I could add features of each character on later. I used the pencil tool and made sure that no lines were wider than one pixel across. The following picture is a series of sprites representing a stationary bouncing animation (first two frames) and an arm moving to push a key on the laptop (last four frames).



When designing the sprites, I would sometimes have to experiment with the lines, deciding, for example, between including an extra pixel here or there. Looking at the picture below, you can see what I mean; the laptop's...top... line has two black pixels in a row vertically. Meanwhile, the line on the hand farthest up is not directly neighboring any other line.



Another thing I had to be careful of was keeping the sprites similarly sized and consistent in style, which is why I copied and pasted each previous frame on top of the next and reduced the opacity so I had a guide to draw on top of. In the picture below, for example, I saw where the positions of everything were and used that as a guide for where to draw the body to make it look like it was moving downward. I tried to keep the hands in line and bend the arms, and make the body shift down and therefore bend the legs.



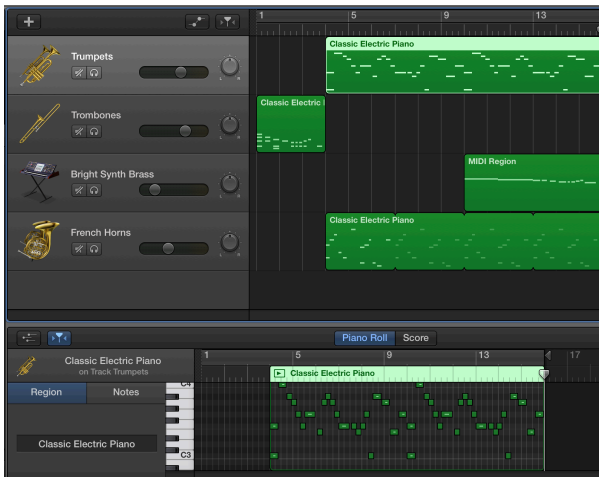
Next, once I had the base person done, I used it to draw Melody on top. I didn't need to redraw much except the arm while animating the attack, but for the death animation, I had to redraw a lot because the entire body needed to move.



Then I did this for all of the sprites, and tested the animation by making a frame-layer animation file in photoshop, which I exported to an mp4. The result of this is shown in the video above.

For the next assignment, I felt particularly ambitious, so I decided to make my own music instead of using loops provided by GarageBand. The other day, I suddenly got a random tune in my head and thought it was worth remembering, so when I made this, it was the result of coming back to a recording of me humming it. Halfway through, however, I thought it could pass for victory music, so I changed the instruments from pianos to trumpets and such. It was made entirely in GarageBand.

To start the song, I put down the main tune into notes, making sure they were spaced evenly and of equal length when necessary, to make it sound cleaner. This main track is on the trumpets in the following screenshot. Please ignore the fact that it says "Classic Electric Piano" above the notes...



Next, I thought up a supporting melody by playing around with the notes and trying to see if I liked what I heard. This is what the French horns are for. My minimal piano knowledge helped a bit. Then, I thought it would be interesting if the song had a unique start, so I added a new track, which the trombones are for. And to make the period when the tune is repeated more interesting, I added high pitched descending notes on the bright synth brass keyboard. I listened to it a few times to make sure the timing lined up and the volume felt right, then I exported it to an mp3.

This exercise in using Garageband was helpful for learning shortcuts in note placements and such, and I'd like to make another tune someday if something else comes to me. It was fun experimenting with the various instruments, too. Still, I'm much more used to the Photoshop UI than the Garageband one...

Anyways, here is the ~30 second song I made. It was made to be able to loop at the end if it were in a game

[song](#)