

DEVELOPMENT OF THE GRAPHIC CONCEPT FOR THE INDIE GAME "GLOW OF THE FOREST"

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Introduction.

Contemporary graphic design is characterized by the aspiration to create emotionally rich and personalized visual experiences, which is particularly evident in video game development. Indie games occupy a special niche – authorial projects that combine the developer's artistic vision with interactivity, creating a unique form of communication between the player and the visual world.

The indie game industry demonstrates steady growth due to the uniqueness of visual style, authorial approach to game design, and the opportunity to experiment with unconventional artistic solutions (Fig. 1).



Fig. 1. "Ori and the Blind Forest" game

The "Glow of the Forest" project is dedicated to developing a graphic concept for an indie game about a family of magical mushrooms in an enchanted forest. The visual style combines sketchy hand-drawn aesthetics, a warm color palette, and natural organic motifs, forming a cohesive and recognizable visual identity.

The relevance of the topic is determined by the growing demand for aesthetically-emotional games that promote relaxation and emotional restoration, the increasing interest in nature-related themes in media space, as well as the need to

develop contemporary Ukrainian graphic design in the game development sphere

The research is based on the analysis of trends in indie game graphic design and the application of emotional design principles to create a cohesive visual concept for the gaming project..

Aim.

The aim of the research is to develop a graphic concept for the indie game "Glow of the Forest" that combines artistic individuality, emotionality, and natural aesthetics. The main objective is to form a cohesive visual style that conveys the atmosphere of a magical forest, family warmth, and tranquility.

To achieve the set goal, the following tasks have been defined:

To analyze current trends in indie game visual design and identify key principles for creating an emotionally rich graphic environment.

To investigate successful indie game cases with unique visual identity.

To develop the game character concept and game environment system using natural organic forms.

To create the game's brand identity, including the logo and interface graphic elements.

To form a cohesive graphic system for the project, where all elements are stylistically and chromatically coordinated

Materials and methods.

The research was conducted using a comprehensive approach that combines theoretical analysis and practical development of graphic elements.

The theoretical foundation includes works by Alex White "The Elements of Graphic Design" (Allworth Press, 2022) and Ellen Lupton "Thinking with Type" (Princeton Architectural Press, 2010), as well as research on emotional design and color psychology.

Research methods:

Comparative analysis – studying visual solutions of successful indie games (Ori and the Blind Forest, Unravel 2, Hollow Knight, Gris).

Moodboarding – creating visual collages to establish the project's atmosphere

and define the color palette.

Iterative design – gradual development of graphic elements through a series of sketches.

Таблиця 1

Методи дослідження та інструменти розробки

Етап роботи	Методи	Інструменти
Analytical	Comparative analysis, moodboarding	Pinterest, Behance, gaming platforms
Conceptual	Sketching, iterative design	Pencil, paper, graphic tablet
Character development	Sketching, digital drawing	Adobe Photoshop
Environment development	Compositional analysis, color theory	Adobe Illustrator, Photoshop
Brand identity	Typographic design, vector graphics	Adobe Illustrator
Final concept	Systematization, presentation	Figma

Results and discussion

As a result of work on the "Glow of the Forest" project, a graphic concept for an indie game has been formed that combines the emotional depth of the narrative with expressive artistic style

Analysis of indie game visual trends

Comparative analysis of successful indie projects (Ori and the Blind Forest, Unravel Two, Hollow Knight, Gris) revealed key trends: combining artistic expressiveness with emotional simplicity, using organic forms and authorial style. Unravel Two demonstrates realistic textures (Fig. 2), Hollow Knight features dark minimalist graphics (Fig. 3).

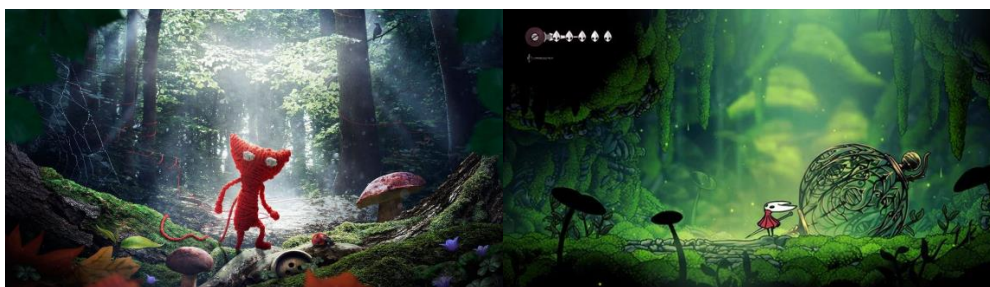


Fig. 2. "Unravel Two" game Fig. 3. "Hollow Knight" game

Character concept development

The central elements are a family of magical mushrooms: mother (soft forms, beige-pink shades), father (stable form, brown-green palette), son (rounded forms, pastel colors). All characters are executed in a sketchy style.

Color palette and atmosphere

The color solution is built on a natural palette with a predominance of warm tones. The foundation consists of shades of green, warm mustard, soft mint, and accents of golden glow

Logo and brand identity development

A typographic logo sketch for "Glow of the Forest" has been created, combining natural organic forms and handwritten stylization. The composition is built around the mushroom symbol as a sign of life and family unity (Fig. 4).



Fig. 4. Logo sketch

Typographic solutions are based on the principles of Ellen Lupton in "Thinking with Type" (2010). The mushroom symbol can be used as a separate element of brand identity..

Game environment and composition

Within the project framework, the creation of a visual environment concept is planned – an enchanted forest with multi-layered composition.

The compositional structure will be based on the principles of balance and

rhythm described by Alex White in "The Elements of Graphic Design" (Allworth Press, 2022).

Comparative characteristics of the project

The project differs from analogues through its sketchy style, warm palette, and focus on family themes, which is rarely found in indie games.

Conclusions.

As a result of the research, a graphic concept for the indie game "Glow of the Forest" has been developed, combining authorial artistic style with an emotional narrative about a family of magical mushrooms.

Trend analysis revealed key principles of successful projects: uniqueness of visual identity, combination of artistic expressiveness with functionality, use of organic forms. A logo sketch with decorative typography has been created, a color palette based on warm tones has been developed, and a character concept has been formed.

The uniqueness of the project lies in its focus on family themes and sketchy style. The concept can serve as a foundation for further game development.

REFERENCES

1. White A. W. The Elements of Graphic Design / Alex W. White. – 3rd ed. – New York: Allworth Press, 2022. – 272 p.
2. Lupton E. Thinking with Type: A Critical Guide for Designers, Writers, Editors, & Students / Ellen Lupton. – 2nd ed. – New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 2010. – 176 p.