

MARCH 29TH, 2013

WEEK 10: GDC 2013

WEEK OVERVIEW

This week was the 2013 Game Developers Conference in San Francisco, and all members of Project Heidegger were in attendance. Due to the madcap pace of the conference, and because it necessitated that most of us be away from the OCCO for the majority of the week, progress on our project all but halted, as it did for all other ETC project teams. Regardless, we each attended panels and discussions which proved inspirational for either our goals on the project, or our careers (and, in some cases, both).

IN DETAIL

Martin saw Jason VandenBerghe from Ubisoft deliver a talk about his highly specified player type research, which is similar to the focus of our project, and which validated our direction. As a result of this talk, Martin suggested that we incorporate a 30-question Bartle Type survey into our playtesting process, so as to better support the subjective predictions we're making about each player. Concerning videogame storytelling, Anabelle was impressed by much of what she saw during the Narrative Summit in its GDC San Francisco debut, but was perhaps most moved by Japanese developer Kotaro Uchikoshi's discussion about *Virtue's Last Reward*, a visual novel available on the PlayStation Vita and Nintendo 3DS. Uchikoshi's concept that game narratives should be driven by discomfort stuck with Anabelle, who is currently creating a visual novel game for her independent study. Further, she thought Uchikoshi adorable (as did Nathan, who was also present). Jenova Chen's lecture about the design of *Journey* (which won six Game Developers Choice Awards this year) made Star more conscious of the emotional capacity of videogames as an



Hideo Kojima, father of Metal Gear, as captured by Shaveen.

art form, and made him consider the potential of genres beyond the standard fare of FPS, RTS, MMO, MOBA, and so forth. The GDC Awards were the most memorable conference event for Shaveen, who was charmed by the hosting prowess of Tim Schafer, and who was vitalized by the enthusiasm and passion displayed by the winning developers during their acceptance speeches. Emmanuel was fascinated by a talk delivered by Luke Muscat, CCO of Halfbrick, who found that a new game he was prototyping caused his friends to conspire against each other in reality. For Emmanuel, this was an illustration of how powerful games can be, and that game design comes with some responsibilities. Vera received most from the Career Expo, and was able to gather much useful information about Kojima Productions--one of her dream companies--in both Tokyo and Los Angeles. Last, Nathan found the three Japanese developer talks, about *Tokyo Jungle*, *Dragon's Dogma*, and *Virtue's Last Reward*, respectively, to be refreshingly antithetical in both tone and intent to those delivered by Western developers, and restored his hope that humility and creativity can co-exist within the industry.

NEXT WEEK

Looking ahead, we plan implement both our custom *Dead Space 3* level and *Army of Two: The Devil's Cartel* into our playtesting process next week. Our Data Team will be preparing to run our first batch of data through our algorithm, and our Origin Team is making visual refinements to the module as well as expanding its functionality.

Nathan Baran, Emmanuel Eytan, Shaveen Kumar, Martin Mittner, Anabelle Lee, Feiran Li, Xing Xu

