Fanyi Yu

104459447

Desma 157

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World Building Response

I played the Empty Dreams by Jingjie Chen and I love it. I think the artist built a world of her dreams or memories, and the players are invited to explore the world by controlling the avatar of a little girl. While exploring the world, the girl is trying to find her own identity.

First of all, I really like the art of this project. The hand drawn illustrations are extruded nicely and look like real 3D objects. They not only look pretty, but also help express the subjects of this project. The black and white creates a feeling of "emptiness", a key element of the game. The color choice and the hand drawing style also create a nostalgic atmosphere, which corresponds to the subject of "memory". The little girl has no face, which probably means her identity is unknown, so she is looking for it in this world.

The walking speed of the girl is relatively slow and there is no way to speed up. At first I wish it could be faster, but later I think it is necessary to keep it slow in order to achieve a kind of dreamy effect.

The content of the game is what I like the most about this project. The world the artist built is very large and complex, and everything looks personal. According to the artist's description, this project is somewhat autobiographical of her own experience. As both she and I share the Chinese culture background, I feel connected to the world she built when I explore it. For example, the neon billboards of the Chinese restaurants remind me of the neighborhood I lived in

when I was little. Near the destination, there are planes and taxi (with English "taxi" on it). For me, they relate to my experience of leaving my hometown and living in a foreign country. Therefore, personally I feel very nostalgic when I play this game, and I love how much impact it has on players from the same cultural background.

One thing I wish the artist could improve is the gameplay. I understand since it's a project for the Worldbuilding class, maybe she was only required to build a "world" rather than making a game. But if someday the project was published as a game, perhaps she should consider giving the player more control and make the gameplay more engaging. Other than that, I think this project is great in terms of art and concept, especially its emotional effect.