

# Video Games as a Vehicle for Social Change

# *Endangered*

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222.454 Research Project

Interim Presentation

# Rob's Process

## Working Paper Poster



Four stages

Planning



Research



Development



Production

Workbook Blog

<http://robssmajorproj.wordpress.com/>

# Planning

## Overview

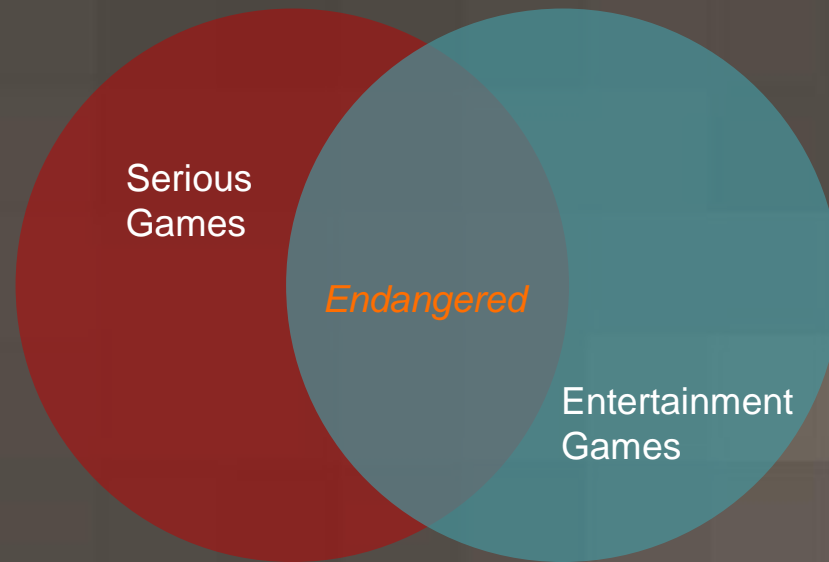
- Design Brief – refined
- Game Narrative – completed
- Character Refinement – completed
- Environment Brainstorming – completed
- Timeline – refined, so far on track
- Movie Shotlist – completed
- Movie Storyboard (walkthrough) – to be completed

# Planning

## Design Brief

- Semester 1 Research: Values, Endangered Species
- Question: How can designers affect social change by producing materials which support the protection of endangered species?

- Answer:  
A “serious” video game which fills a niche in the popular fighting game genre



- Final Product: Short (2 min) movie pitching *Endangered*.

# Planning

## Game Narrative

The year is 2025. The Earth is plagued by severe climatic conditions, overpopulation, deforestation and a loss of biodiversity. The International Whaling Commission has collapsed and there is rampant commercial whaling on the high seas. There are less than 500 tigers left in the wild as a result of poaching for the Asian traditional medicine industry. Polar bears are expected to be extinct within a decade due to habitat loss resulting from climate change. Poaching in Africa continues to be a serious problem.

Governments of the world are preoccupied with the spread of newly emerging infectious diseases, 'technological cults' and two decade-long global financial instability. Resolution of environmental issues is low on the list of priorities.

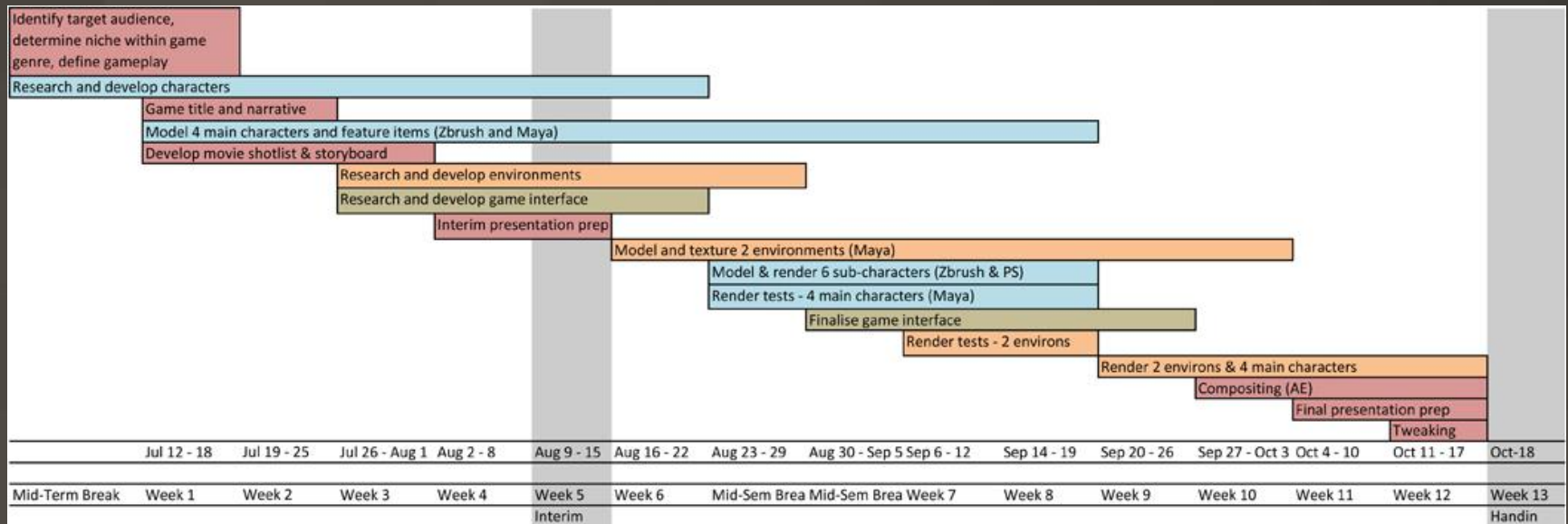
Cooper Shields, global media magnate and owner of an internationally acclaimed K1 combat sports competition, has recently turned to philanthropy. Shields is particularly concerned about the future prospects of many of the world's endangered species.

Shields decides to host an internationally broadcast exhibition tournament where two sides will be pitted against each other to highlight the conflict over protecting and using endangered species. Shields brings together fighters from around the world who represent various interests in the debate. One team of five fighters, the "Protectors", will fight for the pro-conservation cause. The five fighters of the "Consumers" will fight for the right to use natural resources, even endangered ones.

Competitors will be flown around the world to rival's homes to fight for their beliefs. The side with the most victories will win \$10 million for their cause and, more importantly, a contract for a TV series to document their perspective.

# Planning

## Timeline



# Research

## Characters



Wambua Adayo the Kenyan Wildlife Ranger



## Two teams of five: *Protectors vs Consumers*

Protectors	Consumers
<b>Tomas Van Buren the Eco Terrorist</b>	<b>Lian Zhang the Chinese Herbalist</b>
<b>Wambua Adayo the Kenyan Wildlife Ranger</b>	<b>Jun Tanaka the Whaler</b>
Dr Tai Muliaina the Marine Biologist	Anyu Aariak the Inuit Hunter
Brittany Beal the Hollywood Socialite	Philippe Durand the French Fisherman
Manuel Cordeiro the Brazilian Whalewatching Tour Guide	Aishwarya Tata the Indian Industrialist

## Four main characters, six sub-characters

Character			
<b>Name</b>	Dr Tai Muliaina	<b>Team</b>	Protector
<b>Age</b>	31	<b>Nationality/Ethnicity</b>	Samoan/Hawaiian
<b>Occupation/Role</b>	Marine Biologist	<b>Gender</b>	Female
<b>Physique/Appearance</b>	Tall, athletic, black wavy hair, brown eyes, olive complexion		
<b>Clothing/Attire</b>	Wetsuit, diving gear, utility knife, camera		
<b>Other Feature Items</b>	Bone hook necklace, <u>exo-suit</u>		
<b>Martial Art/Special Skills/Moves</b>	Art of <u>Lua</u> (traditional Polynesian grappling and hitting martial art), <u>exo-suit combat</u>		
<b>Motivation for participation in Tournament</b>	Wants to stop trawling fleets from distant foreign countries, in particular Asia and Europe, plundering Polynesia's endangered species, including tuna, sharks and corals, as the small island developing states are so dependent on the oceans for their future economic prosperity.		
<b>Backstory</b>	Daughter of a Samoan fisherman and Hawaiian biology teacher, Tai grew up in Samoa in a small village by the ocean. Tai invented a marine <u>exo-suit</u> while researching for her PhD in marine biology at the Hawaii Institute of Oceans Affairs. A natural sportsperson, Tai worked as a wrestler in the WWF to raise funds for the suit's development and manufacturing costs.		





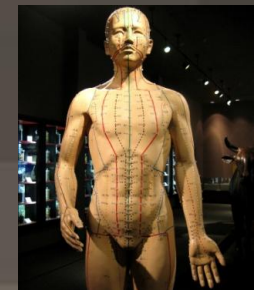
# Research

## Environments

Two “Home” environments

- Zhang Lian’s Chinese Medicine Store
- Jun Tanaka’s Taiji Maru 3 (whaling vessel)

Chinese  
Medicine Store



Jun Tanaka’s “Home” Environment			
Name	Taiji Maru 3	Inside/Outside	Outside
General Atmosphere	Icy, sunny, windy, heavy seas and big swells		
Feature Items	Whaling vessel, whale being killed, ropes, harpoons		
Connection to Character	New place of work, upholding father’s legacy		
Where does fighting take place?	On the deck of the Japanese whaling vessel, the <u>Taiji Maru 3</u> (filmed from helicopter?)		





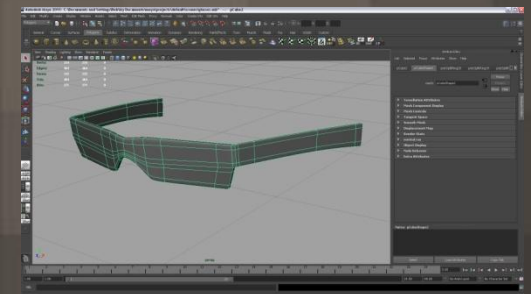
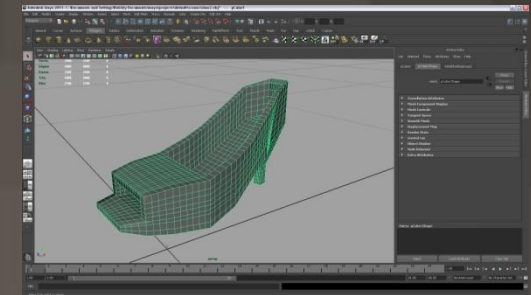
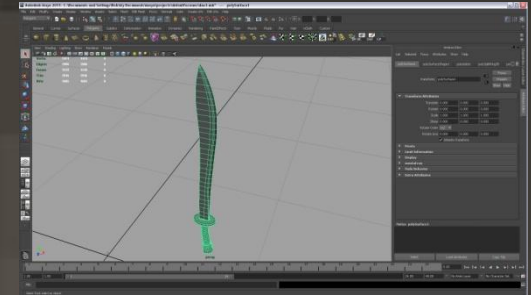
# Research

## Game Interface



# Development

## Main Character 1: Zhang Lian the Chinese Herbalist



# Development

Main Character 2: Tomas Van Buren the Eco Terrorist





# Development

## Environment 1: Chinese Medicine Store



# Production

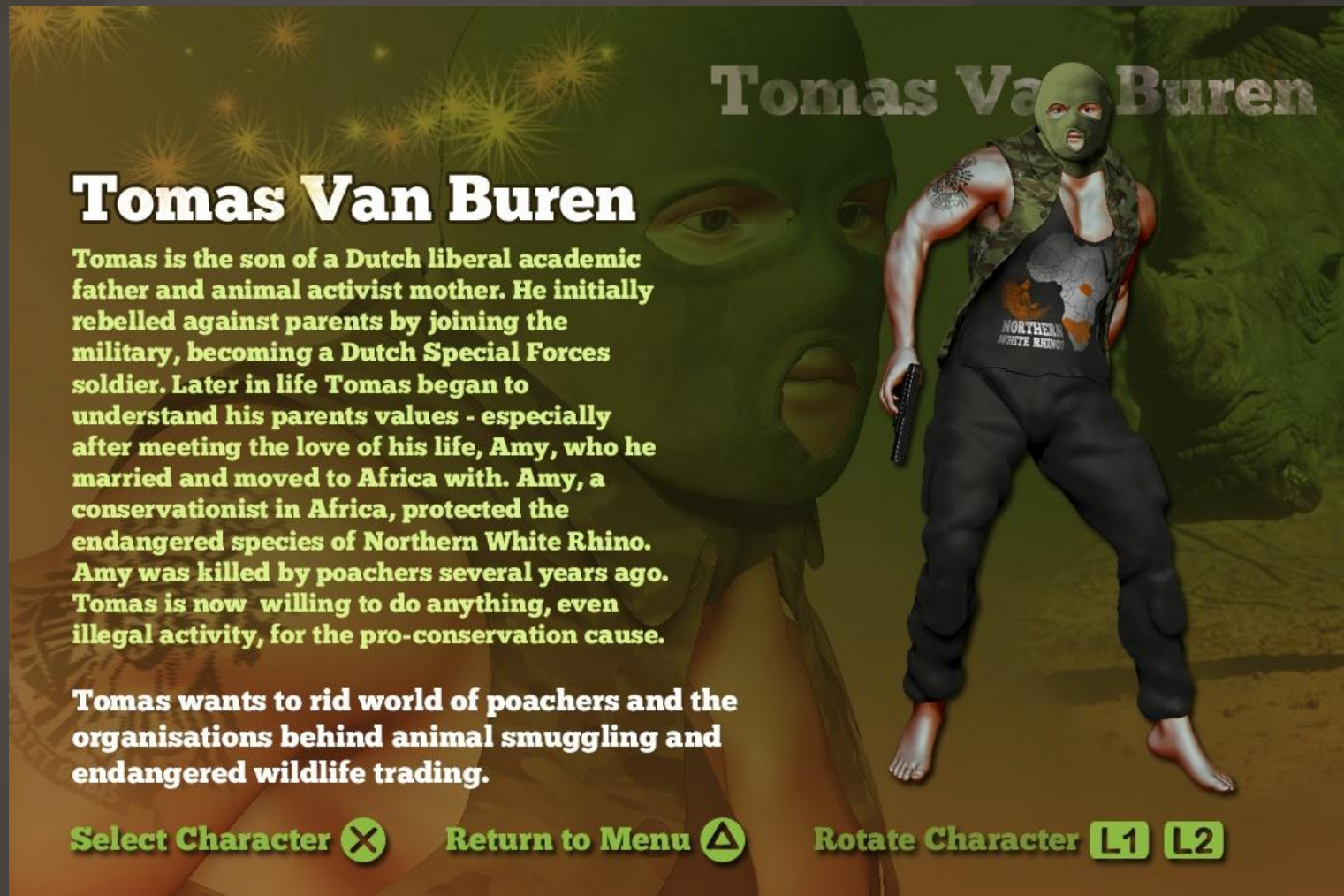
## Zhang Lian's Character Selection Profile Screen





# Production





## Tomas Van Buren's Character Selection Profile Screen



### Tomas Van Buren

**Tomas is the son of a Dutch liberal academic father and animal activist mother. He initially rebelled against parents by joining the military, becoming a Dutch Special Forces soldier. Later in life Tomas began to understand his parents values - especially after meeting the love of his life, Amy, who he married and moved to Africa with. Amy, a conservationist in Africa, protected the endangered species of Northern White Rhino. Amy was killed by poachers several years ago. Tomas is now willing to do anything, even illegal activity, for the pro-conservation cause.**

**Tomas wants to rid world of poachers and the organisations behind animal smuggling and endangered wildlife trading.**

**Select Character**  **Return to Menu**  **Rotate Character**  



# Critique

- Limiting the scope to modelling, texturing and rendering
- Appropriateness of the fighting game genre to my issue
- Tournament format too clean-cut
- Key impediments
  - importing highly detailed models from ZBrush into Maya
  - ability to texture and write shading networks in Maya