360° Approach for Open World Mission Design

Philippe Bergeron
Level Design Director
Ubisoft Montreal

WHAT THIS TALK IS ABOUT

- Linear Vs Open World mission layouts
- Visualization tool
- Starting point
- Framing things you already do

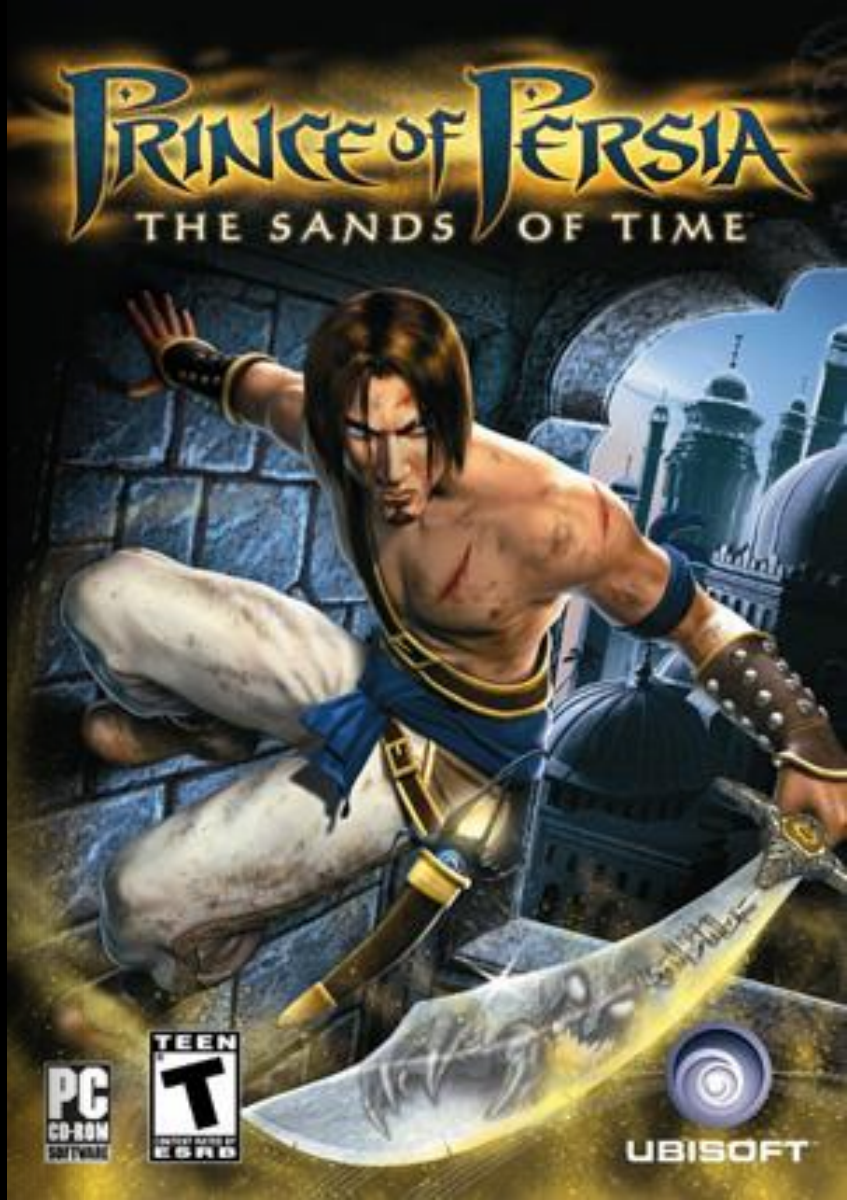
WHAT THIS TALK ISN'T ABOUT

- 3D block-out method
- Mission scripting
- Holy Grail

PERSONAL BACKGROUND

PRINCE OF PERSIA: SANDS OF TIME

Linear platformer



SPLINTER CELL: CHAOS THEORY

Multipath stealth

ASSASSIN'S CREED

First pitch = Epic Linear action adventure

ASSASSIN'S CREED...
...RETAIL

Open World 360° assassination

HOW DO I MANAGE PROGRESSION?

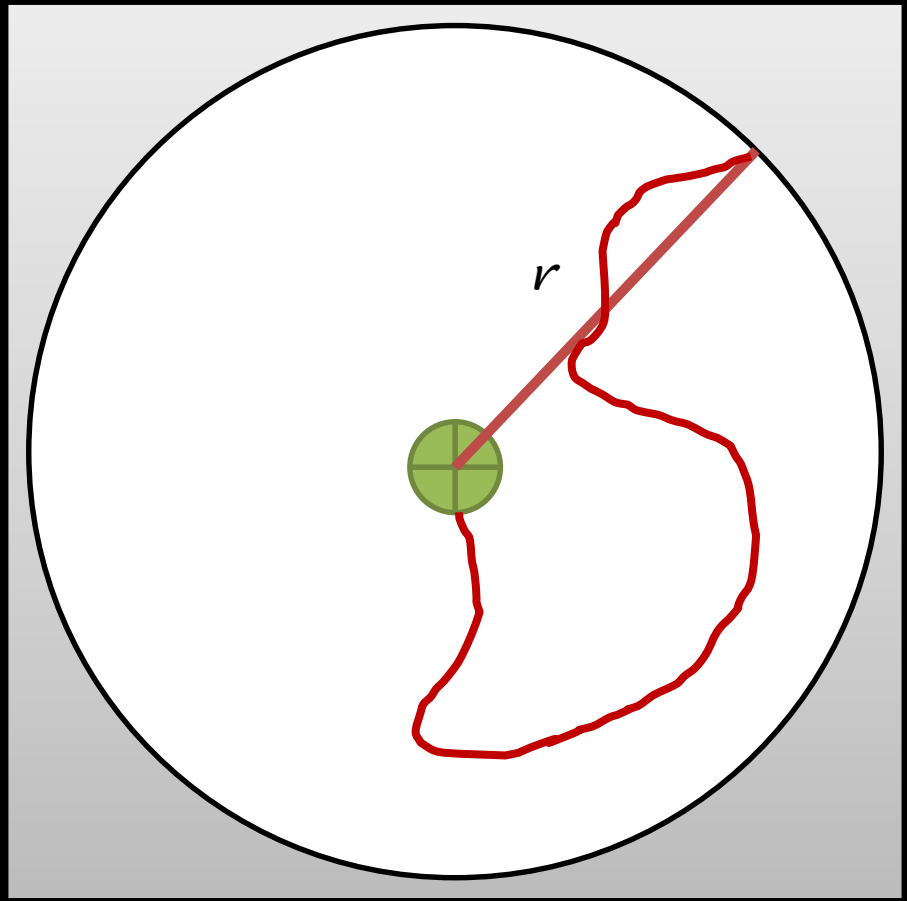
LINEAR GAME PROGRESSION

If linear game progression can be represented by a line...

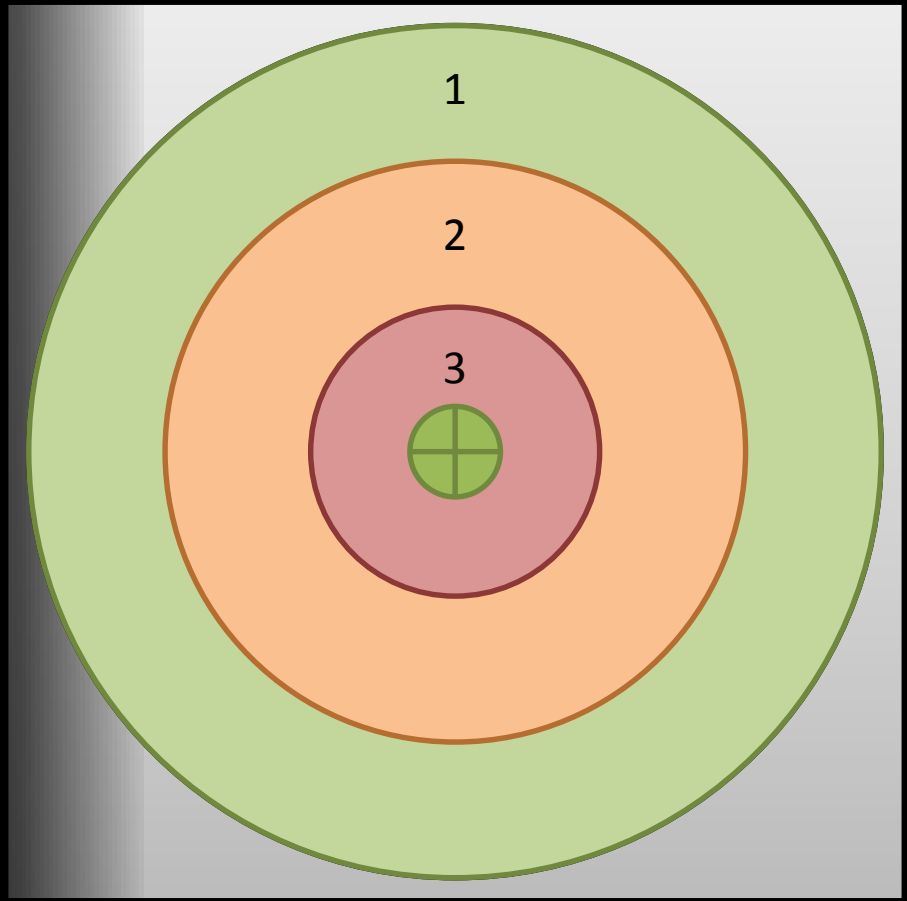
OPEN WORLD GAME PROGRESSION

A mission area can be represented by a simple shape, like a circle...

...then the radius of a circle can act as your progression in an open world setup.



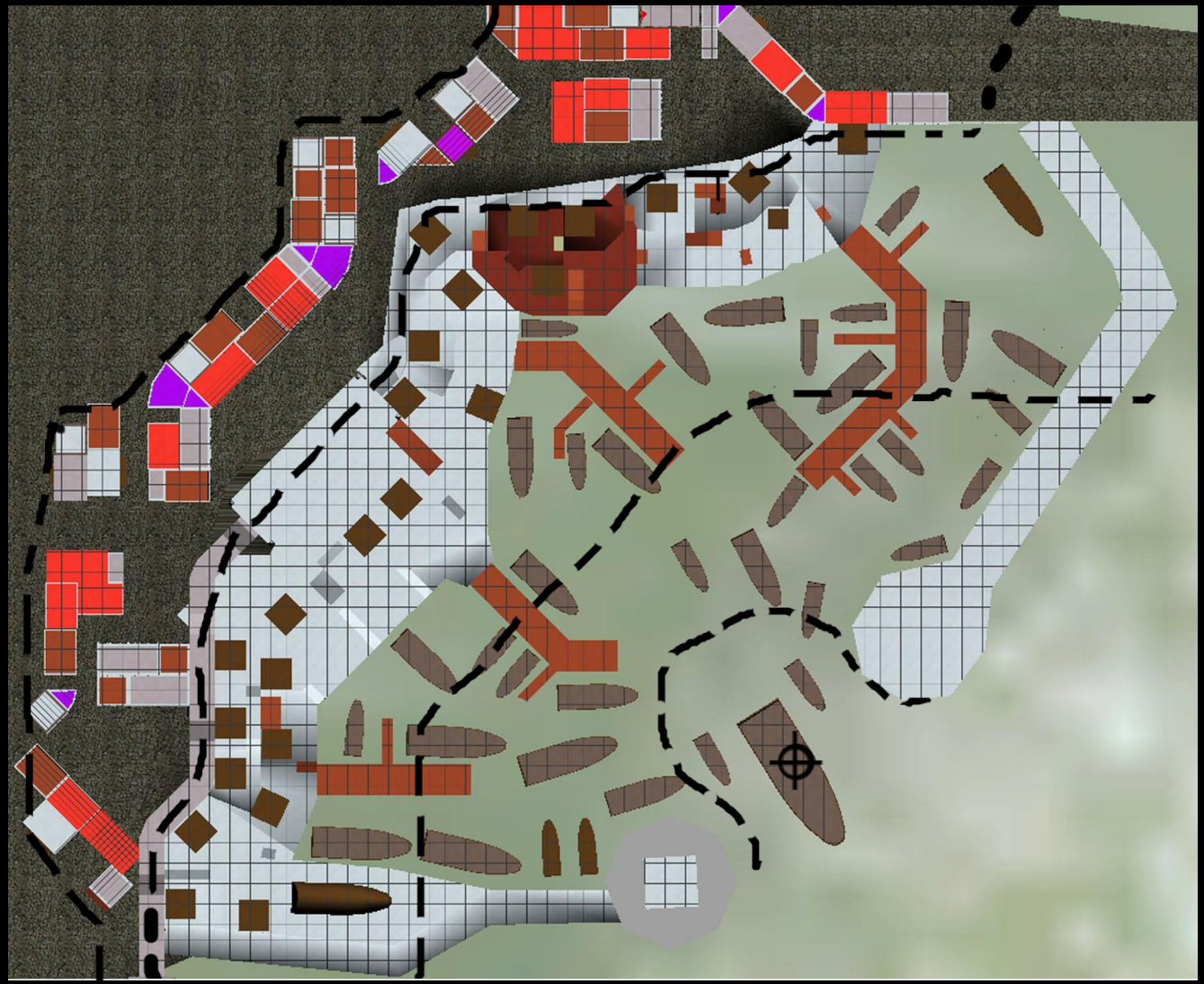
SEGMENTED OPEN WORLD PROGRESSION



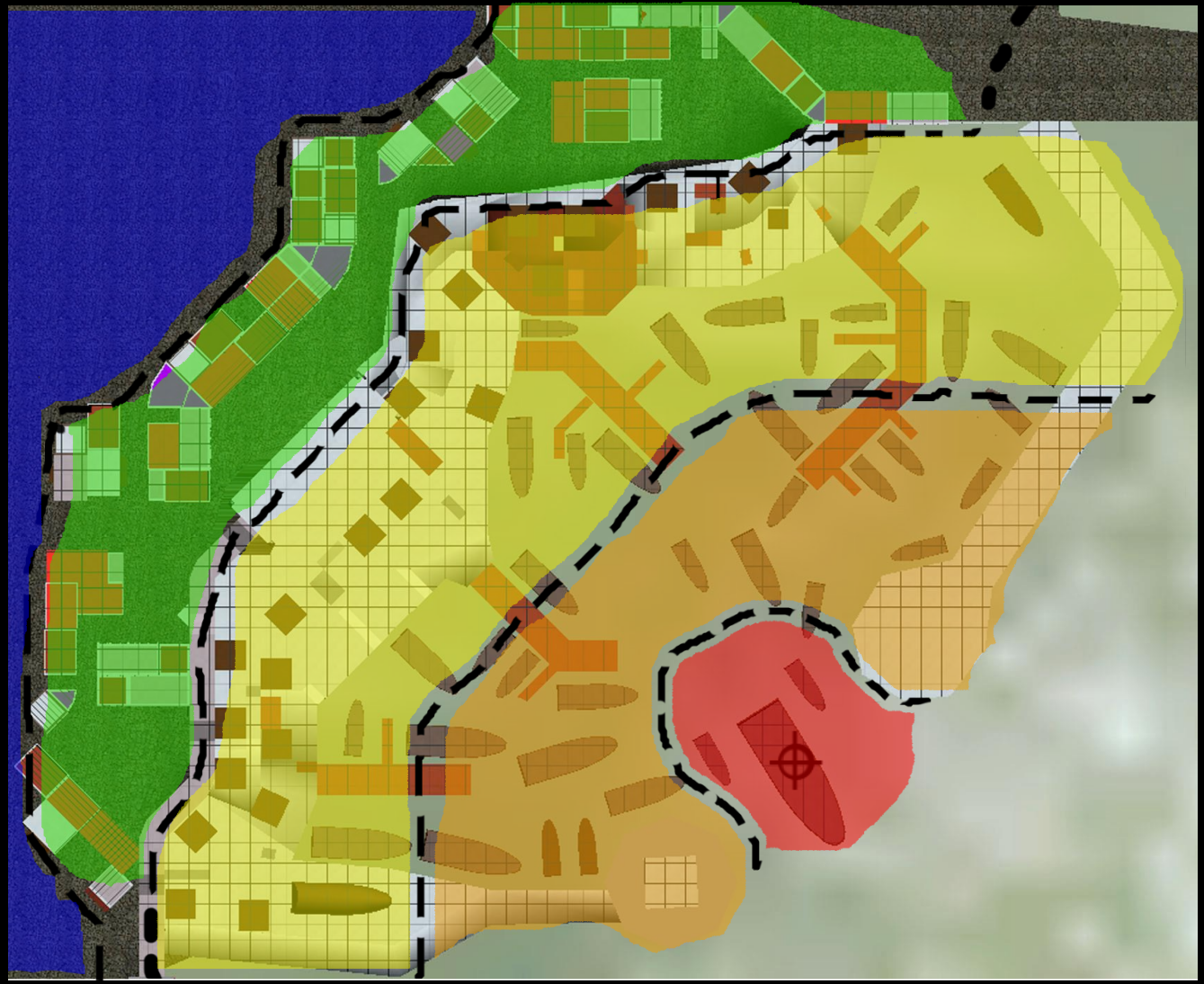
METHOD EXAMPLE

LAYOUT
TOP-DOWN

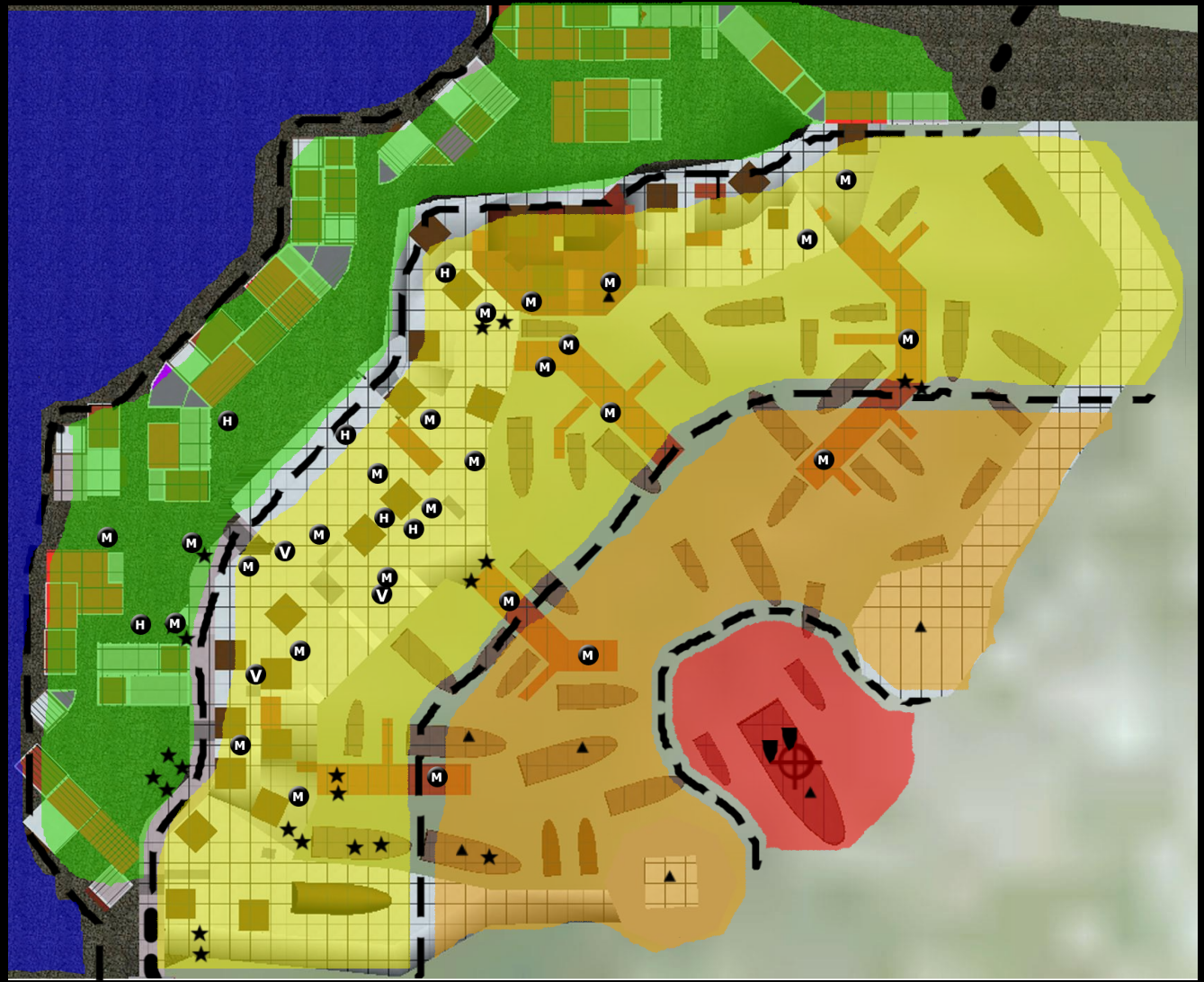
DEFINE APPROACH ZONES



ADD
COLOR



DISTRIBUTE INGREDIENTS



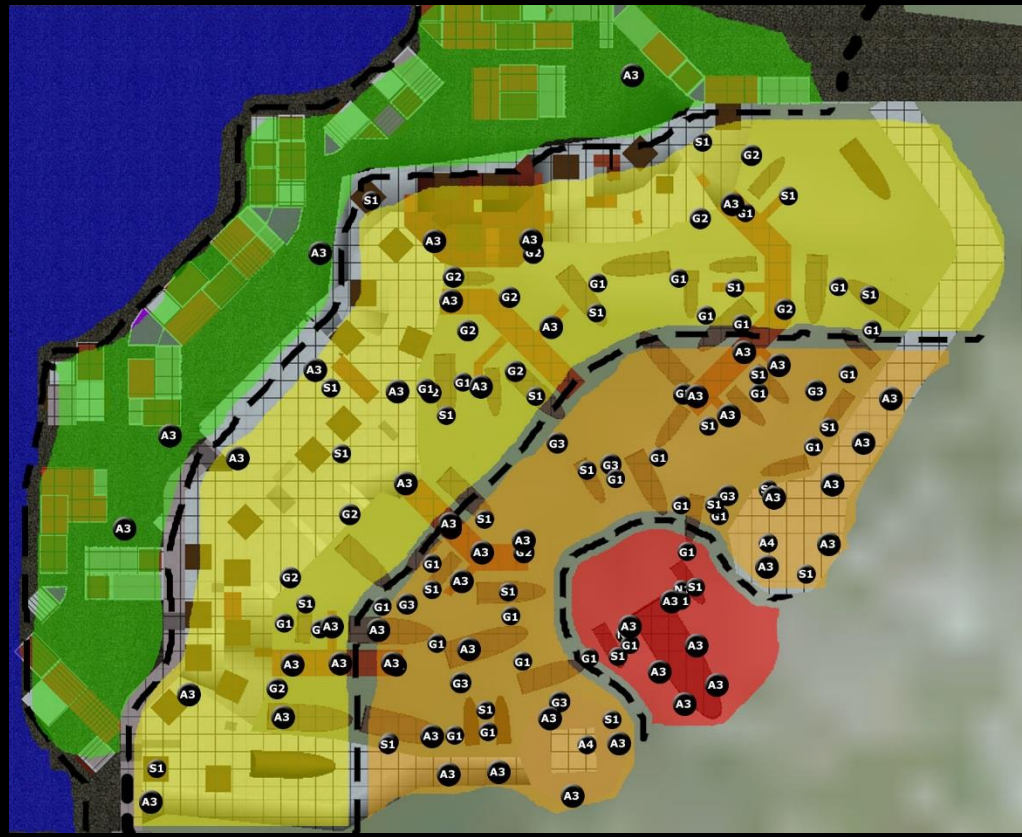
GET IN THE ENGINE AND ADAPT☺

HOW TO CHOOSE YOUR INGREDIENTS

DIFFICULTY

FIRST CHOOSE A DIMENSION

Identify which values are important for your project and what you want to show progression on



ACTS »

CHOOSE A THEME

With the game's important dimensions Identified you can then identify which flavor of that theme mission or layout will represent

GAMEPLAY FOCUS

- ACROBATICS
- STEALTH
- FIGHT

LIST APPROPRIATE INGREDIENTS

Take your game's ingredients and start listing which ones are appropriate and best represent your sub dimension

STEALTH

- **CROWD**
- **MONK PATROLS**
- **HIGH BEAMS**
- **HAY CARTS**
- **BENCHES**
- **2 meter COVER**

EXAMPLE EMOTIONAL THEME: VERTIGO

- SWING POLES
- CORNER SWING
- ARCHERS
- TIGHTROPES
- HIGH BUILDINGS
- FLYING BIRDS
- WIND AMBIENCE

ASSASSINS'S CREED II:
SAN GIMGNIANO

EXAMPLE NARRATIVE PACING: DESTABILIZE

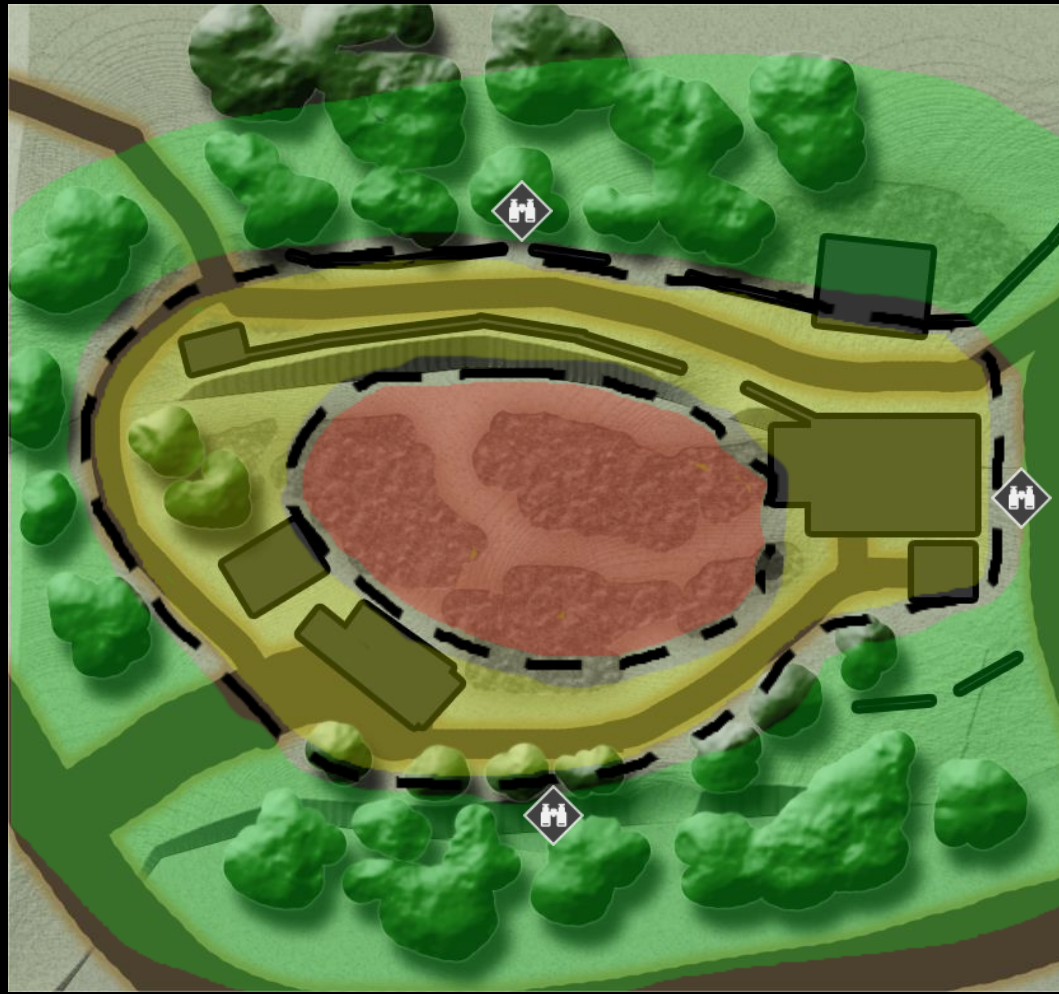
- ENEMY BEHAVIOR
  - TELEPORTING
  - MELEE
  - WALL CRAWL
  - SMOKE GRENADE
- GRAFFITI

BIOSHOCK: FORT FROLIC

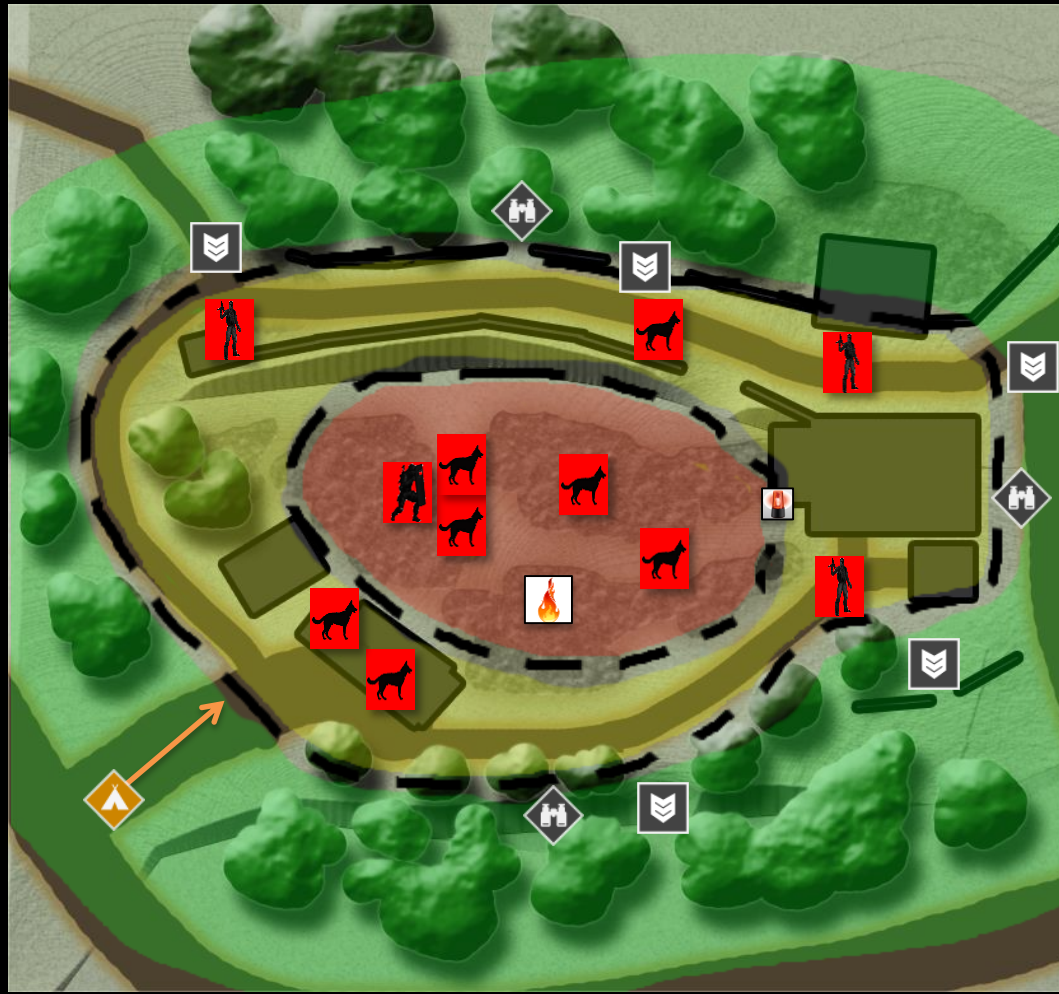
GAMEPLAY INGREDIENT FOCUS EXAMPLE

OUTPOST LAYOUT

APPROACH ZONES



INGREDIENT DISTRIBUTION



INTEGRATE IN ENGINE AND ADAPT☺

WHAT'S THE DOWNSIDE OF THIS METHOD

Dependent on block out and existing ingredients

Quickly outdated

It's not in **3D!**

↳ Use a 3D mockup tool

SUMMARY

TOP DOWN

IDENTIFY ZONES

LIST INGREDIENTS

DISTRIBUTE

INTEGRATE AND ADAPT

THANKS!

Q&A

PHILIPPE
BERGERON

Email:
philippe.bergeron
@ubisoft.com

Twitter: @PhyzBot