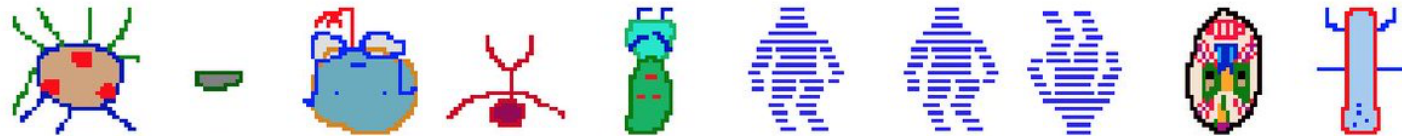


# Indie Freelancing: Creating Community and Collaboration



## GDC Audio Bootcamp - 2019

Josie Brechner (she/her, they/them)  
@visagermusic

Illustrations by Blake Andrews - @snakesandrews

# This is me

[show audience a picture of  
myself to prove I'm not a  
men-in-black style bug  
person wearing human skin]

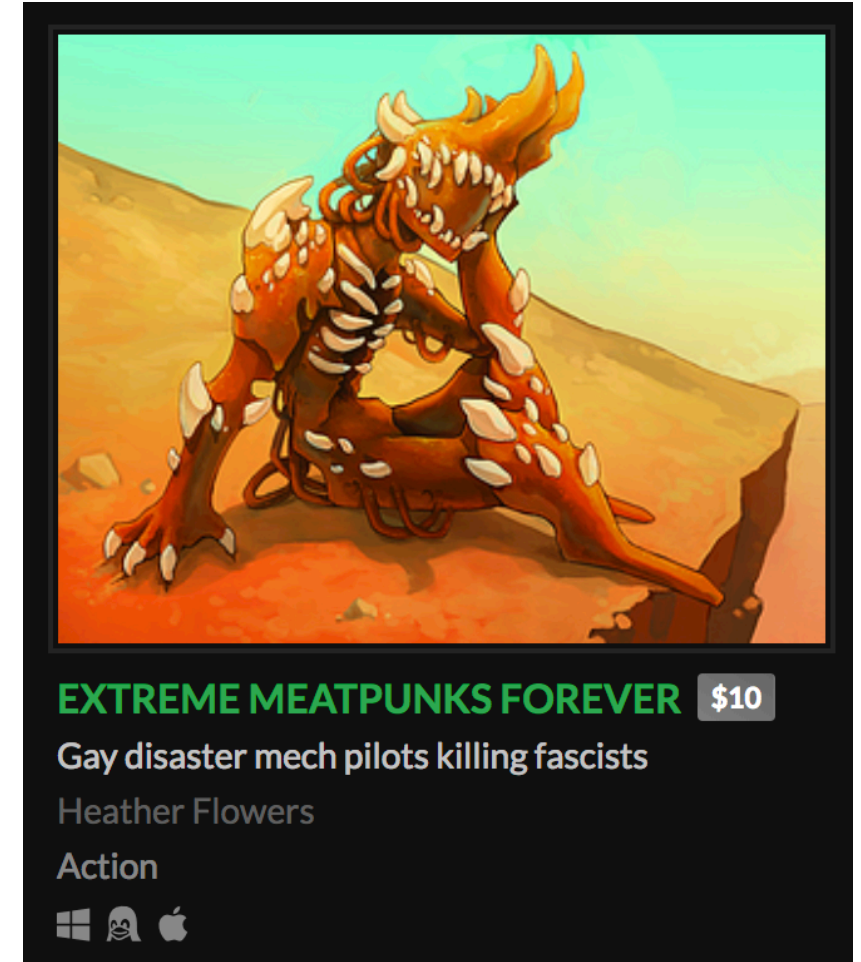
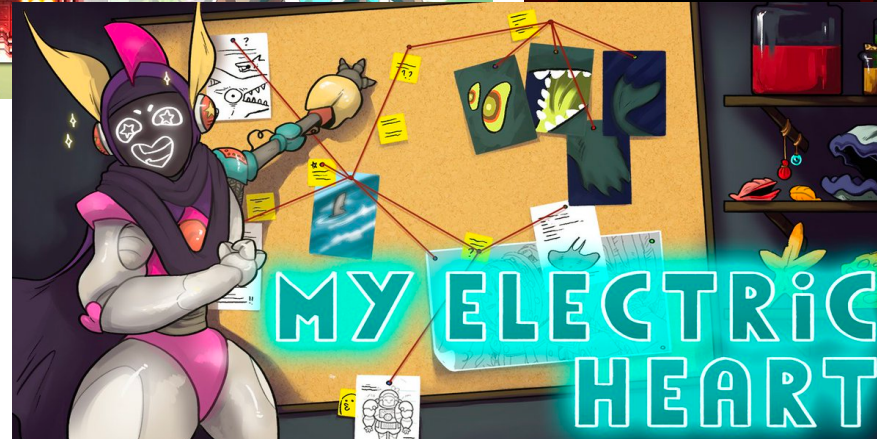
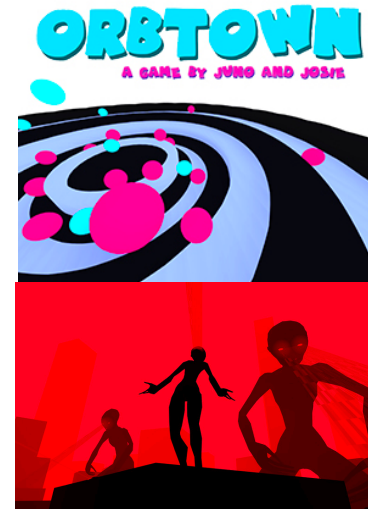


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# This is not me but pics of things I've done



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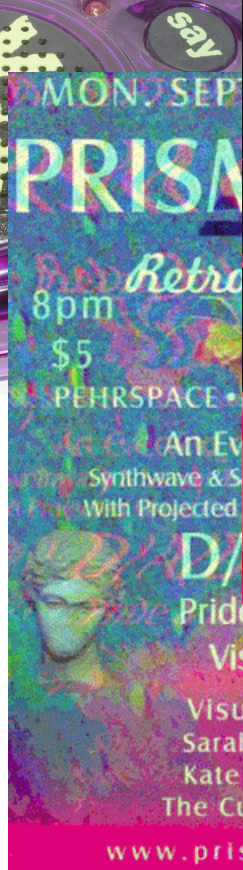
# Agenda

- 🧩 Where am I coming from
- 🌐 Some ways you might be able to think more collaboratively
- 🧑‍🎓 Q & A





# Assorted facts about me



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# Thinking Collaboratively



Ditching competitive attitudes



Building and growing with your peers



Being collaborative in practice



# Ditching Competitive Attitudes

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# Ditching Competitive Attitudes



A ton of bad messaging out there

Speaks only to author's experience

Doesn't examine internal/external bias

Capitalism is a fuck

Being the best is overrated

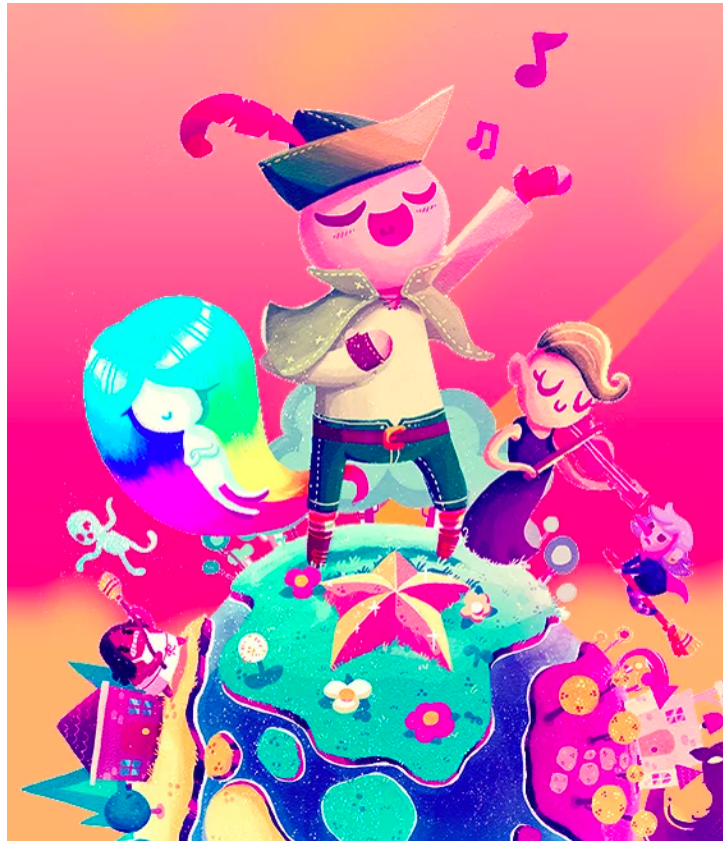


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# Ditching Competitive Attitudes



How can we be a better member of a larger, interconnected community?

Wandersong art (2018)

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# Ditching Competitive Attitudes

Striving for authenticity over other peoples' measures of success

We all have a lot to learn from people at different experience levels

Games is an inherently collaborative medium



**Growing with your peers** 

@visagermusic



# Growing with your peers



Celebrating others' successes

Building a community that understands you

Learning from voices outside the groups we  
feel comfiest with



# Growing with your peers

Having a place to be vulnerable & sharing emotional labor

Admitting you don't know something is cool

Allows people to relate with you and share in return



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How to draw an owl

1.



2.



1. Draw some circles

2. Draw the rest of the fucking owl





**Putting this into practice** 🧑

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# Putting this into practice



Sharing opportunities, co-contracting,  
mentoring



## The Audio Mentoring Project

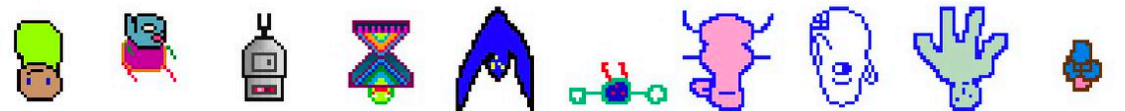
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# Putting this into practice

Sharing opportunities, co-contracting,  
mentoring

Collaborative projects of all sizes



# MEMORY

## BLOCKS



**Priscilla Snow**

@ghoulnoise Follows you

Ghoulish audio person: Mama Possum, Southern Monsters, Voyageur, The Silence Under Your Bed, & A Good Snowman is Hard to Build.

#whatsmusicworth



**Damage Camp** @DamageCamp · 31 Aug 2018

Dive deep into **MEMORY BLOCKS**, a Twine anthology that's a huge parade of collaborators musing on **memory** cards. This collection features some of your favs and ours too, including @ghoulnoise, @WritNelson, @zarfeblong, @bravemule, @dtraposo, @spyrosmithy, @johnnemann + more!



Upon touching the dispenser, the can  
yellow. You stare at the laquered surf

(words by Priscilla Snow @ghoulnois

writing from Andrew Plotk

**Happy Birthday!**

Dear Sam,  
Wow, I can send letters to mys  
elf in the future. It's your b  
irthday! Or it will be! Hahah!  
Hope you're hanging in there.  
Yourself, Sam



(words from Kevin Snow @bravemule)

<< back



MEMORY

B L O C K S



**Priscilla Snow**

@ghoulnoise Follows you

Ghoulish audio person: Mama Possum, Southern Monsters, Voyageur, The Silence Under Your Bed, & A Good Snowman is Hard to Build.

#whatsmusicworth



**Damage Camp**

Dive deep into  
collaborators m  
favs and ours to  
@bravemule, @

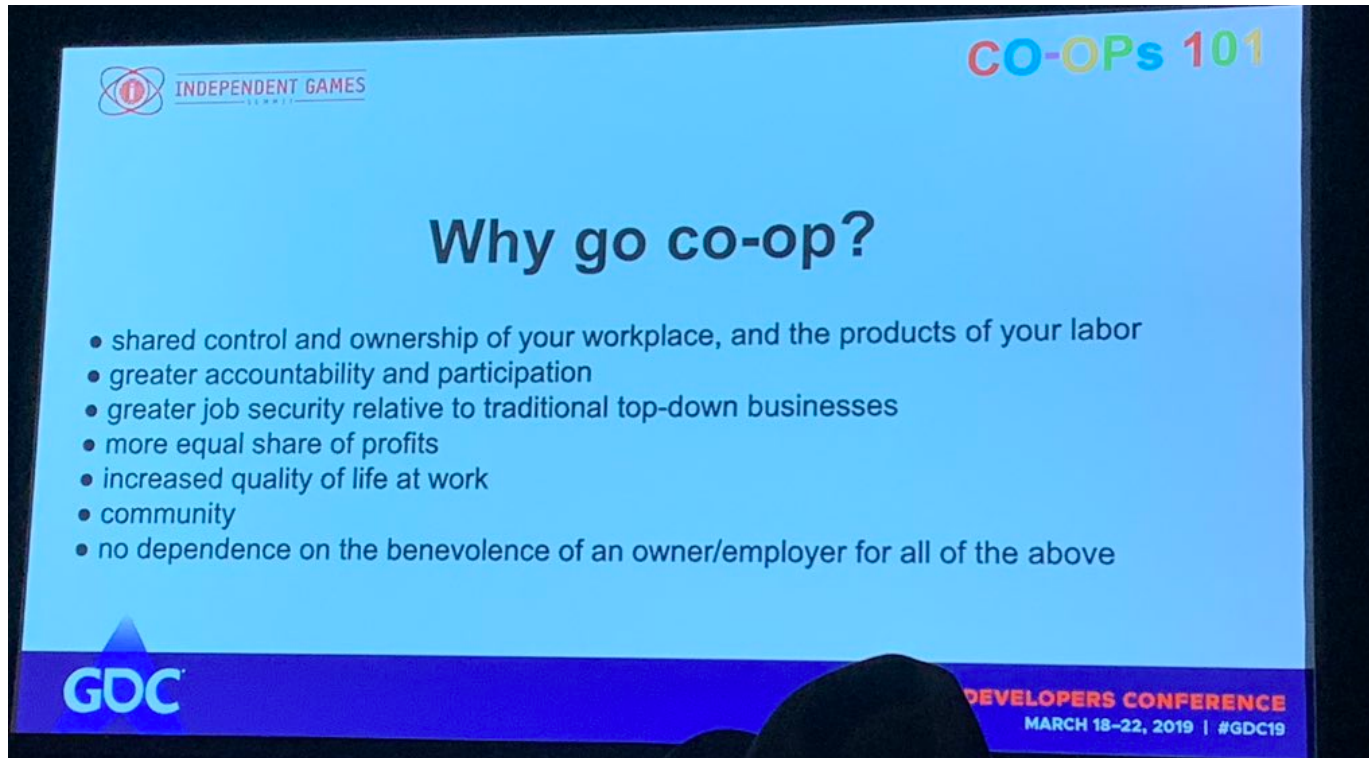
# CAN ANDROIDS PRAY

LIFE AND DEATH AND MECHS IN A PIECE OF INTERACTIVE FICTION  
WRITTEN BY XALAVIER NELSON JR @WRITNELSON  
DEVELOPED BY NATALIE CLAYTON @SCARLETCATALIE  
WITH MUSIC BY PRISCILLA SNOW @GHOULNOISE

de of  
your



# Putting this into practice

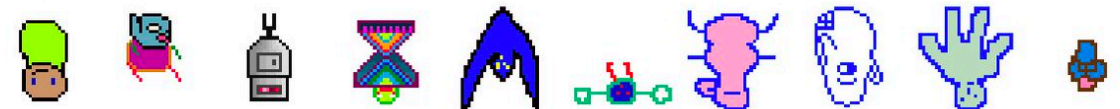


This morning!

"Embracing the co-op studio model in indie games"

<https://schedule.gdconf.com/session/embracing-the-co-op-studio-model-in-indie-games/863419>

@visagermusic

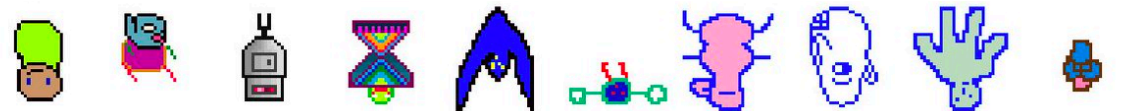


# Putting this into practice

Sharing opportunities, co-contracting,  
mentoring

Collaborative projects of all sizes

Rethinking freelancing payment models



# Rethinking Freelancing Models



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SUCCESS

# Rethinking Freelancing Models

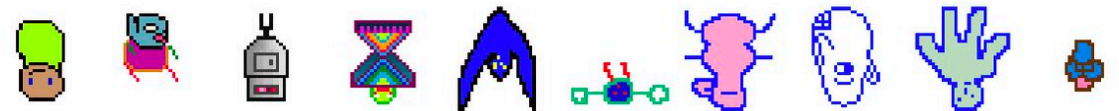


Classically, “starvation” versus  
“subsistence” mindsets

Inherent tension between  
wanting work and valuing  
your time

**#whatsmusicworth**

@visagermusic





# Rethinking Freelancing Models



## DON'T: HOW **NOT** TO WORK IN GAME AUDIO

GDC 2018 - Ryan Ike, Carlye Nyte, Akash Thakkar



AKASH THAKKAR



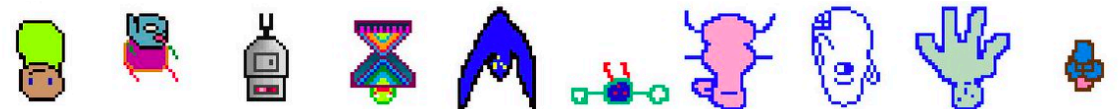
RYAN IKE



CARLYE NYTE

<https://www.gdcvault.com/play/1025481/Don-ts-How-NOT-to>

@visagermusic



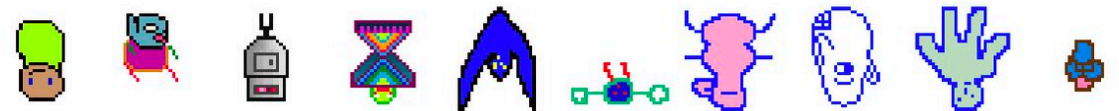
# Rethinking Freelancing Models



Merrywetheer's Stichtings

Skill trades and bartering!

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## Unexpected results



# Rethinking Freelancing Models



**prashast** ✓ @akaPrash · Mar 3

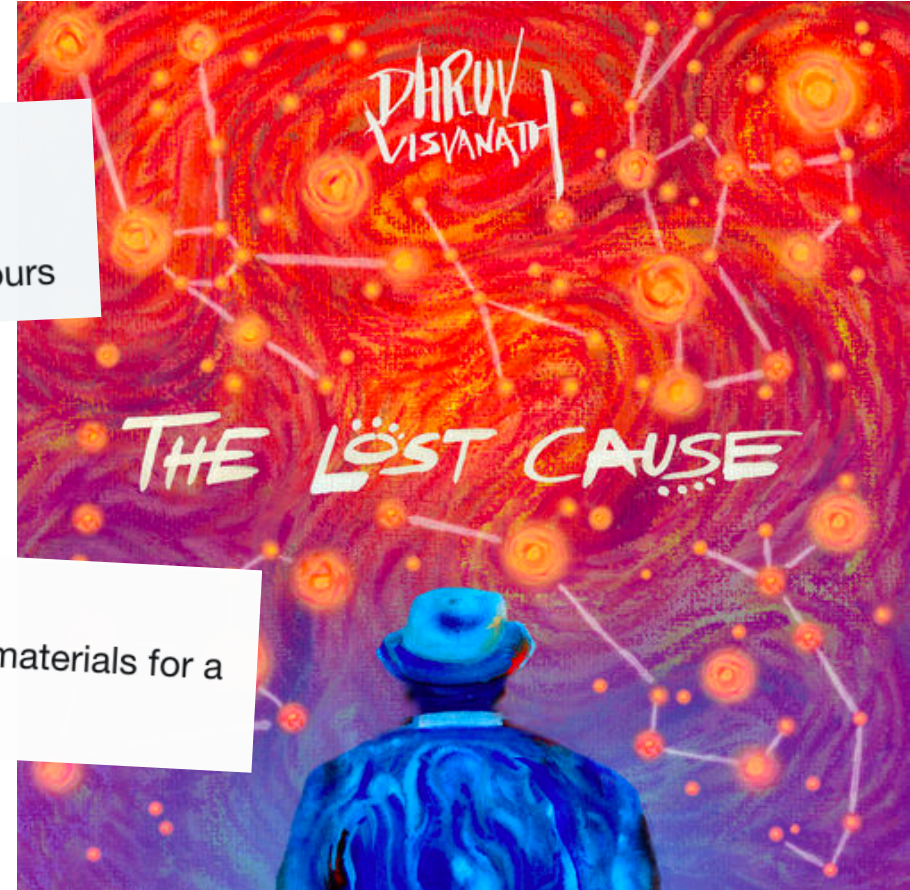
Replying to @visagermusic

sit in the same space for a few hours and do each other creative favours



**prashast** ✓ @akaPrash · Mar 3

off the top of my head... i made album art and other branded materials for a friend in exchange for video game music / SFX



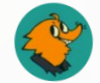
@visagermusic



# Rethinking Freelancing Models



**Owlbunny** @\_owlbunny · Mar 3  
i once made someone art in exchange for some bones if that counts



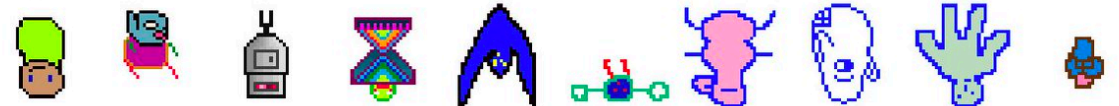
**Owlbunny**  
@\_owlbunny

Following

Replying to @visagermusic

it was before i had paypal and couldn't take money for comms, so I just had my friend send me a coyote skull he had instead! worth it imo

@visagermusic





# MEATPUNKS as a Test Case

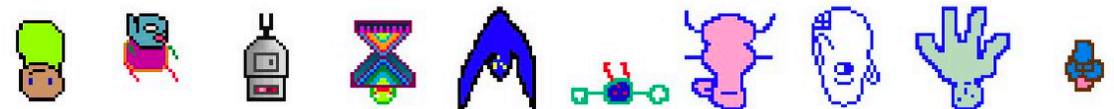


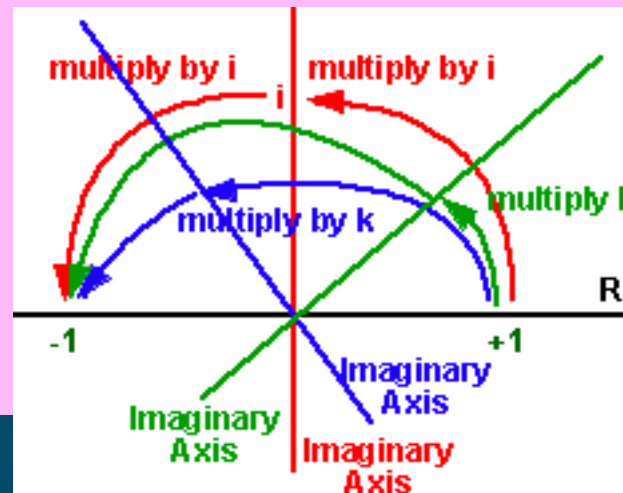
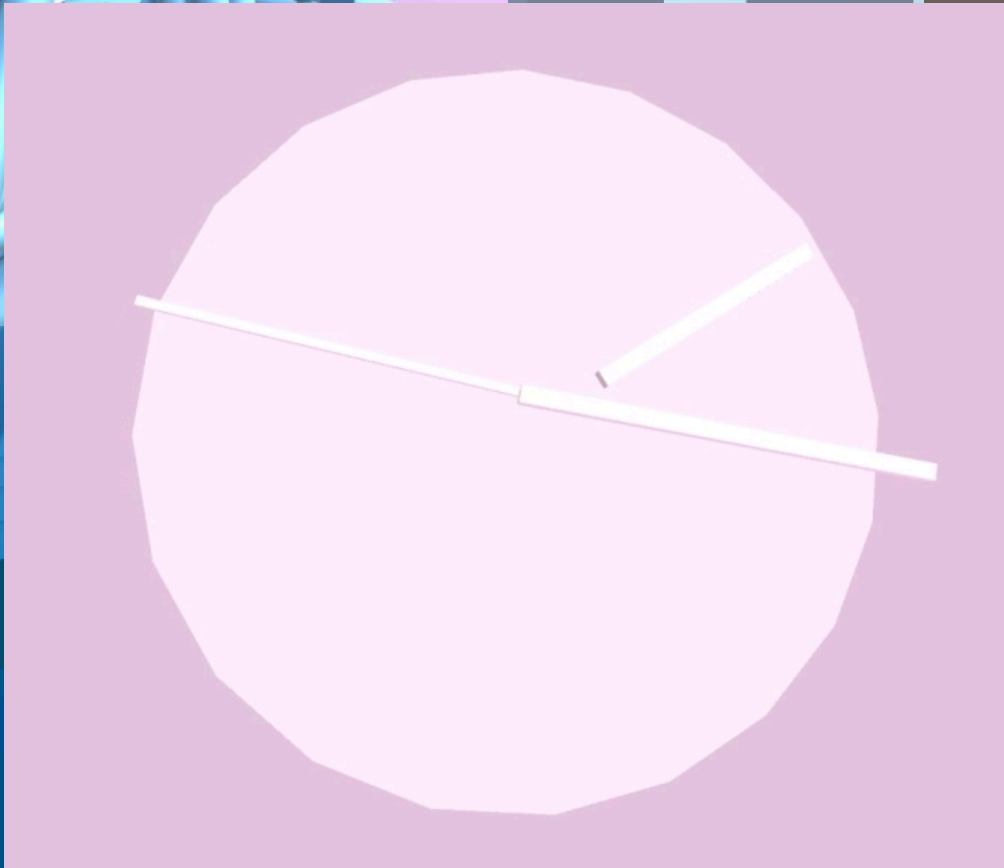
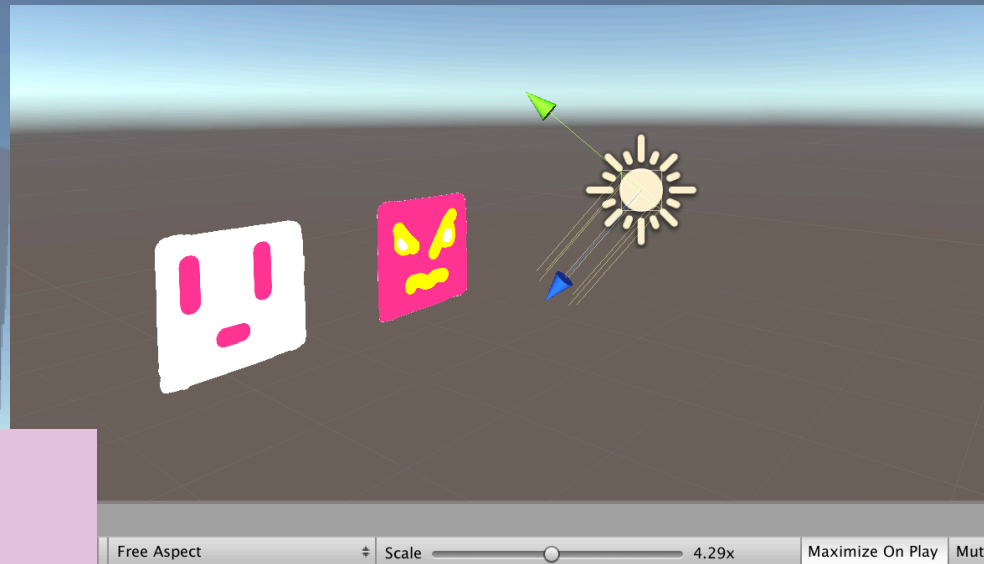
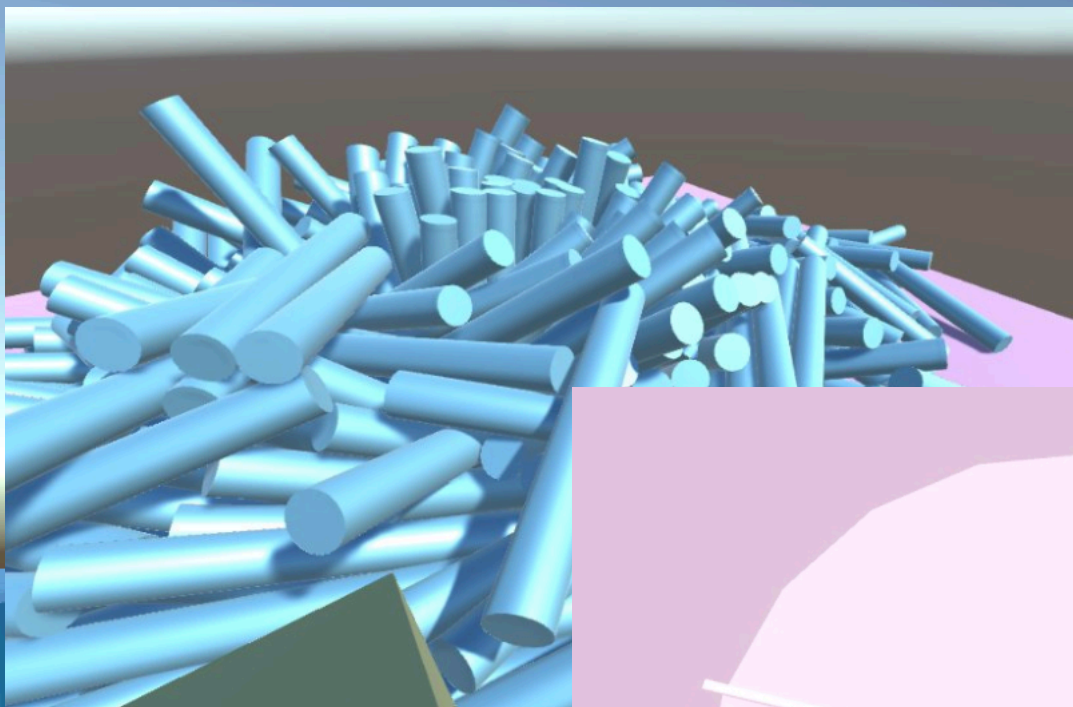
Needed to reconcile a budget that was  $1/4^{\text{th}}$  my rate

Used coding lessons to make up the difference

$3/4$  the score funded by skill swapping!

@visagermusic





"quaternions"



so,

**Challenge the normative ideas you're told about freelancing (including mine!)**

**Question how your politics influence the ways you approach your work**

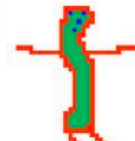
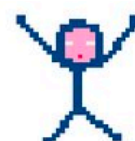
**Consider how you can give back to the communities you're a part of**

**Working with a collaborative  
mindset makes a more  
sustainable industry for you  
and those around you.**

@visagermusic



# Thanks!





Questions?

**Josie Brechner**

**@visagermusic - visageraudio.com**

**GDC Audio Bootcamp - 2019**