

Artist Statement- Crystal Convergence Podcast

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Bio

Madelyn “Maddy” Wessling is an American New Media designer and creator. Maddy grew up in Indiana and moved to Florida the summer before starting high school. Going to a public high school for the first time, she discovered how to truly express herself in every aspect. For two years at the University of Tampa, Maddy was a Forensic Science Major. After the challenging semester during COVID, she discovered her passion and became a New Media Major with a Digital Media Minor. Maddy is proficient in many different programs, continuously expanding her media industry knowledge.

Statement

For this project, I set out to create a Dungeons and Dragons 5e podcast, full of fun and creativity. My original goal was to have a 3-5 hour captivating storyline with characters played by my friends. I also wanted to incorporate other programs like Adobe Audition, Ableton, Unreal Engine, etc. that I learned in my degree for this project on a website. I went beyond my goal, creating 8 hours 11 minutes and 46 seconds worth of podcast episodes and plenty of assets to go along with the website.

The first thing I tackled when creating this project was writing the story. Creating a story for D&D can be difficult, as the players define what happens in between key points in the narrative. I started by creating the main area (Amberglade) where the majority of the beginning would take place. I then created NPCs (Non-player characters) to help guide the players (the Party) to the other key areas of the story. I also created conflict for the players to encounter almost immediately in order to move the story along. I then had the players create their own

characters and backstory which was then incorporated into the beginning of the storyline. I was then ready to begin creating visual assets including Unreal Engine worlds, a map, illustrations of the NPCs, and more to not only show the Party while they were playing, but also for the listeners to view on the website. I also had the Party members create illustrations of their own characters so listeners could have an idea of what they look like. We then recorded the one shot in one take, which was edited into episodes using Adobe Audition. I finally finished by creating a website using Dreamhost and Wordpress to hold all of the content and sorted it by episode.

I did face a few challenges while creating this project. One of which was the uncertainty of where the story would go. In the moment, I wasn't sure where the Party would take the story and I had to go with the flow. Editing was also a challenge as I had around 10 hours of content uncut. This took a long time to edit and process. There was also some popcorn and quiet dialogue in the audio which was a challenge to edit. I wish I had had more time to make the edited material a bit more polished, but I think it is good quality for the amount of time that I had. Another challenge was creating the website. Wordpress has a lot of functionality and it was hard at times to find certain settings to achieve the look and feel I wanted. Overall, I am proud of what I was able to accomplish and that I was able to overcome these challenges.

Altogether, this project was an amazing experience and incredibly fun to create. I wanted to do a project that not only showed my technical skills in many areas, but also one that I was passionate about as well. It was a lot of fun gathering my friends to come play D&D while also creating tons of lore and visuals using what I have learned at UT. This project truly converges (pun intended) my skill set in New Media, as well as my love for D&D.

Website Link

<https://www.crystalconvergencepodcast.com/>

Visuals



Logo created using Procreate, Photoshop, and Blender



Map created using Inkarnate



Visual of the Temple of the Lost King created in Unreal Engine 5

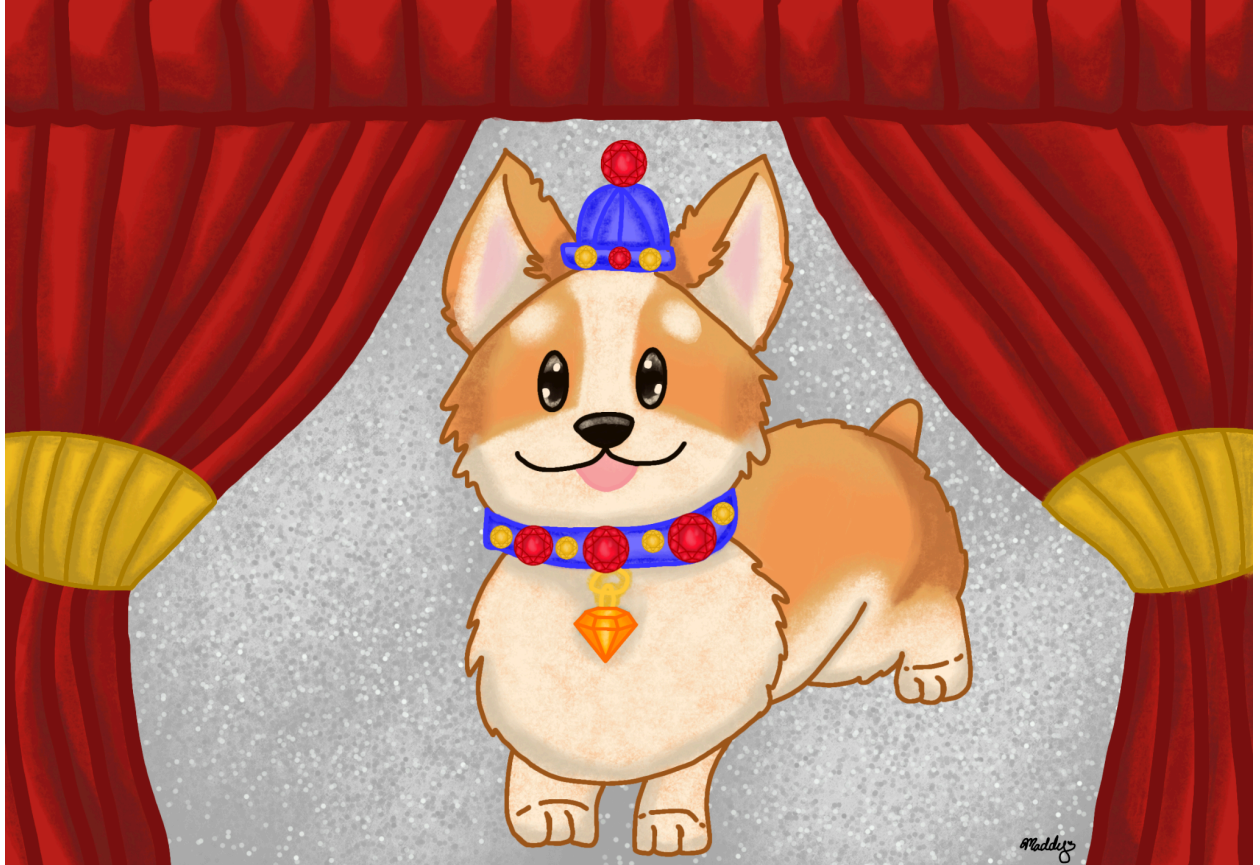


Illustration of Wiggle (one of the NPCs) created in Procreate