

LEVEL DESIGN EXAMPLE

The following level was designed for the vertical slice presentation: it reflects the main features like piloting a drone and take pictures of a giant creature. The Kaiju Spot is inspired by the area called "Zone 1". It's an entire area where the player encounters the creature for the first time and will follow it into caves and canyons.

The map is based on an alveolus system, alternating confined spaces and vast areas. The creature behavior is diversified but reusing the same animations in different situations.

LEVEL DESIGN RULES: DO'S AND DON'TS

GENERAL DESCRIPTION

LOW-LEVEL DESIGN: DETAILS OF THE FIRST BAY



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LEVEL DESIGN RULES: DO'S AND DON'TS

DO

- Set a limited height for the drone
- Give scale references to the player with familiar objects
- Create a human size environment and place the giant creature in to have this feeling of gigantism
- Create a path for the player to have a bottom view more often (of the creature)
- Put several references to help the player orientate in the level

DON'T

- Let the player see the creature from too far away
- Have too many and too long corridors
- Create environment elements much bigger than the creature

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GENERAL DESCRIPTION

When we design a new level we take several things into account :

- How much time will the player spend in this area?
- What is the goal of this area?
- What skills do we want to challenge?
- What species can the player encounter?
- Can he already use Flash or Recorded Sound?
- Where will be the specific landmarks to help the player navigation?
- How does the player enter the area?
- How does the player leave the area?

In the vertical slice level, the player will access the area by following a rare bird and trying to take a picture of it. The creature appears in the middle of the first bay and will swim up a large river, those moments are made to let the player have time to make his first pictures of the beast. At this Kaiju Spot when the creature surfaces, there are some shooting opportunities with specific animations.

At the end of the Spot, when the creature rests on a big rock, the journalist will ask the player to take close shots. As the player advances to get really close shots with the Flash, the creature gets annoyed by the tiny drone and dives underwater, creating a wave that breaks the drone.

LEVEL DESIGN EXAMPLE

LOW-LEVEL DESIGN : DETAILS OF THE FIRST BAY

The player arrives at the beginning of the zone through the jungle. At some point, he encounters a small pond and follows the stream going out from it. Following the stream, the player enters a grassy canyon, the stream passes under big rocks. At the top of those rocks is a rare bird, belonging to the player's documentary checklist. The journalist asks the player to take a picture of the bird, sadly the bird flies away when he approaches it, starting a chase between the bird and the drone.

The bird is here to maintain the drone just above the stream and ground, it follows the stream path. The bird gets out the jungle canyon by passing under a rocky arch, still following the stream, and arrives on a large bay. The bird stays less than a meter over the sea water and continues its path offshore. Arriving in the middle of the bay, the player is just close enough to take a picture of the bird, at this right moment, an enormous creature jumps out the water in front of the camera.

The creature jump is one of the picture opportunities offered by this level. Once the beast starts swimming to the river at the entry of the bay, the player has multiple times to take pictures of it. The creature's path, starting with the jump out the water and ending with the first dive, is essentially straight and slow. It's the first time the player can see the creature and has to follow it. It has to remain simple for the beginning.

When it has run up the river to a large cliff, the creature dives into an underwater tunnel to pass through the cliff. The journalist orders the player to go into some small rocky tunnels in the cliff, maybe it will lead him to the continuation of the river. This small path is made to force the player swap in "Photograph Mode" and pass into a confined environment. Just after those tunnels, the player will arrive on a large half-closed water cave. The alternation between confined spaces like those tunnels and large spaces like a water cave helps to amaze the player.

