

“Treasure Trap!” Response

For this project I was excited to explore lighting and texture while building on the skills that I had picked up during project one. The additional element of group-based work was also new, but I thankfully found a good match in Derek and our work went off without a hitch.

Our brainstorming for this project was guided by the desire to give ourselves many kinds of textures and light sources to play with. We settled on the idea of two objects connected both by their relationship to one another (predator/prey) and their construction (both wielding claws but for different purposes). The treasure chest monster is functioning as a predator, and the submarine is functioning as the prey. In fact, a small, destroyed submarine is visible in one of the renders, showing that the monster has successfully trapped other explorers before. In my personal “head cannon” I like to think that this creature consumes the inhabitants of the submarine, then absorbing the metal scraps and converting them into fake jewels to attract more victims. We decided that I would tackle the treasure chest monster and its contents, while Derek focused on putting together the complex little submarine.

Putting these ideas into practice was challenging at times, but overall, very rewarding. I enjoyed creating a form that was a bit more angular and less organic than my first project. I created the top and bottom of the chest separately and joined them together with Boolean operations. I used inner extrusion to keep the contents of the chest flush with its edges while preserving the illusion of it being separate. I extruded eyes and claws to help bring the form to life, and I created NURB coins and polygonal diamonds.

I was pleased to find out that texturing could be done face-by-face and not just object-by-object. This allowed me to keep my monster as one piece (except for the shiny objects)

which made transferring files between Derek and myself easier. It was around this time that we combined our files and began to help one another through the texturing, lighting, and staging process. We each had our own ideas of what would look the best, and we were able to keep the core scene the same while leaning into our unique visions of the final product. I took a photo of my brother's bowl of soup and used it for the texture of the ocean floor (which I made with a plane and sculpting tools), then Derek sent me a bump map that he had been using which added nicely to the effect. We had a good mix of shiny and more matte textures in the scene, and I moved towards lighting and atmosphere.

We had several ideas for how we would light and set up this scene: Use an artificial sun and have it take place on an island, create a giant sphere of water to surround everything, color lighting to look especially aquatic. However, what ended up working the best was simply adding a colored atmosphere to the entire scene and using tinted area lights which I adjusted for each render. This created a solid impression of a deep-sea environment which was easily adjustable depending on the needs of the scene.

Overall, I am very happy with both our teamwork on this project and the result. I think that both of our sets of renders show interesting and compelling sides of a similar story, and I feel comfortable and confident in my lighting and texturing abilities now.