

SMBA DEV DIARY #3

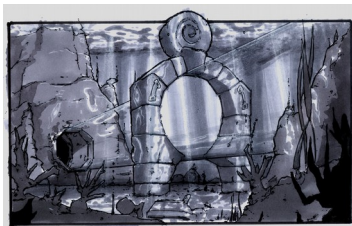
Art Style - What is the visual feel they want to achieve with the look of the game?

The Brief

Monkey ball always had a unique art style that could be referred to as a colourful kids comic. Previous games showed hints of environments in both the puzzle tray environments and the cut scenes and we had to then realise these environments into full three-dimensional worlds, whilst keeping with the original style.

The first area that needed to be designed was the home of the monkey ball team, Jungle Island. The main inspiration came from the cut scene at the start of Super Monkey Ball 2, when Dr. Bad-boon came to suck up all the bananas for himself. This brief cut scene showed a tropical island with small wicker huts and lots of palm like banana trees. Once we had this reference and our changing rooms style sheet (see diary 2), we moved onto the task of putting textured objects into the environment to give us a feel of the place, and the direction it may take.

When we knew we were heading in the right direction, we started to compile ideas for the other worlds. By then we had an idea of what each world's story would be and from this we found out what kind of places we wanted those stories to be told in. We had to ensure that the game had a constant art feel so the characters would not look out of place in each of the environments, but we wanted to make the environments all very distinctive. This caused the hardest problem, but we had very talented concept artists.



Kongri-la Concept



Monkitropolis Concept

Working closely with Brandon Smith at Sega Europe and Nagoshi san at Sega Japan we were able to identify overall world styles that fitted within the global brief from Sega. After the styles, tone, and storey were set, Sega gave us the go ahead for each of the levels, we went through the process of mapping out how we wanted each to play, and over several cycles, came up with a basic layout which became the levels.



Basic Layout



First Pass texturing



Final Textures