Artistic Vision

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# Overview

This document is to serve as insight into the artistic and creative visions of the project. This includes a great deal of ***background lore*** to give the developers a mental image of the story to be told. In order to make a game more immersive, it is important to tell a story visually without words. This document should be used as a guide to inspire and fuel the story telling objective.

# Terminology

***Soul –*** Basic being in the realm. Can be a vessel, deity, or a basic soul.

***Vessel –*** A soul that fights directly in the arena. They have a physical form.

***Deity –*** A soul that fights in the arena by aiding or hindering vessels. They do not have a physical form.

***Gatekeepers –*** The general term for all monsters present.

***Arbiter –*** Omnipresent force and overlord of the realm. Also considered the “big boss”.

***Guardians –*** The henchmen of the Arbiter.

***The Lost - Small*** creatures that were once souls.

# The World

The game begins with the ***vessels*** being placed on a mystical island that does not exist in our current world. This island is in a realm between life and death; a crossroad realm where spirits of the dead come in order to be judged. Surrounding the island entirely is dark and stormy water, isolating it and providing a sense that this island is potentially the only land.

The island itself is a very flat environment. Rigid Cliffside drops off into the raging sea all around the island with moss and grass growing upon the cliffs. This grassland extends a decent amount into the island on all sides. It is the most tranquil part of the island and is inhabited by various flora and fauna. Not all of them are necessarily friendly.

As you travel inward into the island the grassland slowly dies out and soon turns to gray stone land. The lighting becomes dimmer. There is still small patches of life existing but the further inland traveled, the more it becomes apparently that there is no life forms living in the most inland, or central region of the island. Instead, ruins of ancient monuments, fallen pillars and other remnants lay upon the stone.

At the very most center of the map resides the altar. This altar serves as a connection between the vessels and the ***Arbiter***,the divine force of the realm, and the neutral being whom controls and decides all. The altar and its surrounding region is lit with candles and ambient lighting.

# The Ritual

When a person has died in the living world their souls passes on to the cross road, also known as the island. For thousands of years these fresh souls have been placed in an arena by the omnipotent Arbiter in order to be judged. If the ritual takes too long the Arbiter begins to get impatient and slowly encloses the arena. The arena will shrink towards the center and force the players toward the Arbiter’s domain.

Each of the souls in the arena is fighting in order to be reincarnated back into the living world. They are given a ***Vessel*** in order to participate. If the vessel loses, they will stay in the realm as a basic deity after the ritual ends. This does not necessarily mean they will never return to the living world though. During the ritual the vessels are expected not only to fight each other, but also the environment. Various monsters and obstacles exist. Since the vessels must kill each other in the end, they must get stronger with only what the land gives.

In addition to the vessels in the arena, deities are selected by the Arbiter to be part of the battle as an outsider affecting the battlefield. Even though the old spirits cannot directly interact with Arbiter, they still have the ability to be noticed for their extreme malevolence, strategic play, or care for the vessels in play. This results in the deity being reincarnated and removed from the realm as well. Deities can aid or harm their fellow spirits that are fighting in the arena. Perhaps they knew the sprit in the previous life and wish to save them, or punish them.

# The Souls

Souls are broken into two categories when they are participating in the ritual: **vessels** and **deities**. Deities have no physical or visual representation and are fluid being. They are only present based off their actions and participation.

On the other hand, vessels *do* have a physical form. The soul has lost its physical body but is given a shadowy humanoid figure in order to do battle. The humanoid body they take possession of is genderless and of neutral build. It serves simply as a vessel for the ritual. However, each champion has one unique characteristic that separates them visually from the rest. Upon the shadowed body’s faceless head is a mask, characterised and painted based off the remnants of memories from their living days. In addition to the markings and colors, these masks take various shapes and sizes. When a champion ‘dies’ while taking place in the ritual their mask shatters and a piece of their memories is lost forever. They then become basic souls that can view the ritual till the end.

# The Gatekeepers

The gatekeepers of the realm are of spiritual nature. On the outermost edges of the island the living critters are much more tame and natural feeling. As the gatekeepers reside closer to the Arbiter’s grounds they become more abstract and bizarrely shaped. The gatekeepers come in three tiers; ***The Lost,*** ***Guardians,*** and the ***Arbiter***.



*The Lost* are the most lesser of gatekeepers and are simple creatures. They are not particularly strong or intelligent. The Lost are souls that once participated in the ritual but performed so poorly that the Arbiter gave them lesser forms. They generally have imperfect shapes and are small in size.

*Guardians* on the other hand are essentially the pawns of the Arbiter. They can traverse the entire map and vary in appearance. Guardians are slightly larger than a vessel and have a variety in attacks.

# The Arbiter

In addition to small monsters, the vessels may also challenge the **Arbiter** to a duel via the central temple. The Arbiter is the divine being of the realm. It is a neutral being created to pass judgement on the quality of the spirits.

Appearance wise, the Arbiter is based off a white-blue-gray color scheme, contrasting the dark environment. It is also the only other humanoid creature in the arena other than the vessels, but is at least 3 times the size of a champion. The Arbiter wears a mask, but in a different style than the vessels. The masks has simple features and is of one single pale color. It wears long and bulky robes coving its hands and feet giving it an endless feeling.

The Arbiter does not appear immediately in the arena. It is either challenged by a champion and thus summoned onto the map or may appear after some time. Its motions are fluid and calm with an eerie edge. Its presence is daunting and commanding.

Upon bringing the Arbiter to near-death conditions, the Arbiter will become un-attackable and will bless the champion whom dealt the last blow. A blessed champion appears white instead of the original black and dons a new mask identical in characteristics to the Arbiter’s.

If the Arbiter kills a champion, the champion is remove from the arena as it has lost the challenge. The Arbiter will remain in arena awaiting the next champion. It is unable to leave its temple grounds.