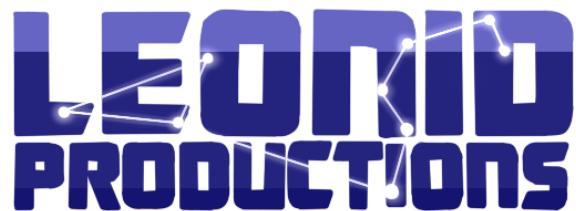




# Design Document

GOLD EDITION

Presented by:



# **Leonid Productions**

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# *Synopsis*

Mia is a young woman who is struggling to move on after the death of her twin sister, Kara. Her irreconcilable grief causes her to slip further and further into despair until she finally has a mental breakdown. Mia then retreats into her psyche where she is prompted to reflect on her relationship with Kara and solve the puzzles in her mind. Mia ultimately overcomes the shadow of grief that haunts her and in the process discovers her inner strength.

# Characters

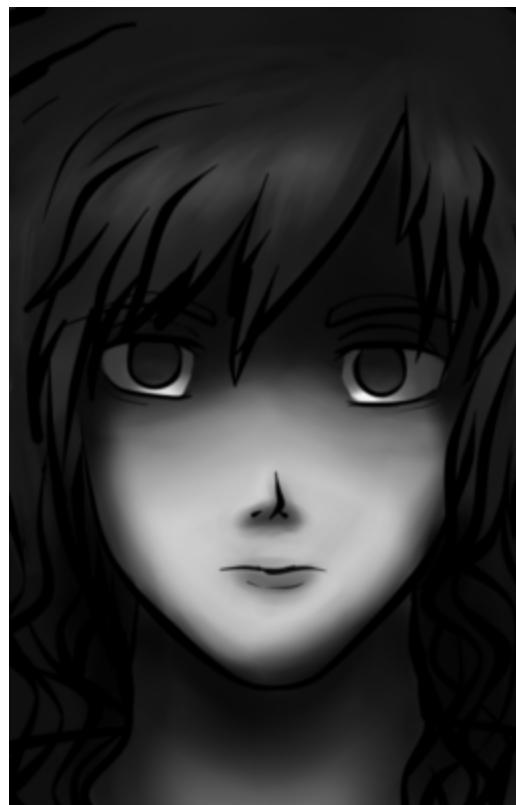
The main protagonist is a young woman named Mia. Along with her sister, Kara, the two make up the cast of the plot. Mia and Kara are identical twins with opposite but complementing personalities. Kara has passed away, and Mia, distraught over the loss of her sister, retreats into her mind to confront her grief and rediscover her individual identity.



Mia in game portrait

Compared to her twin sister, Mia's personality is more serious, uptight, and introverted. In contrast, Kara is more outgoing and carefree. Mia sometimes feels eclipsed by Kara's vibrant nature, but Kara helps her to overcome her insecurities. Their contrasting personalities are further explored through their hobbies. Mia and Kara both love music, but Mia plays more mechanically and with greater precision, while Kara likes to improvise. Though their styles seem incompatible, they make for a nice duet.

In addition to the two main characters, there is a shadow character that acts as the main antagonist in the plot. Exactly what the shadow represents is left intentionally unclear to the player. Story elements suggest that the shadow may represent Kara, but she is ultimately revealed to be a manifestation of Mia's grief, which she must defeat in order to move on physically and emotionally.



Kara shadow in game portrait

# Setting

Mia's mind creates the setting for Duality. Mia's consciousness retreats into an internal library representing an archive of Mia's memories and experiences. The library is composed of a circular central room filled with bookshelves and mirrors that lead into larger chambers containing creative and logical puzzles which convey themes of duality. The first two puzzle chambers are mirrored, and Mia can move between the original and mirror image room by interacting with mirrors along the wall in the middle.

# Gameplay

As Mia, the player must manage her health by avoiding prolonged direct encounters with her shadow. In the original room the player is safe and free to solve the puzzle on their own time. However, in the mirror image of any puzzle room, the shadow will attempt to stop the player from completing the puzzle by following Mia and draining her health, as well as directly interfering as Mia progresses through the puzzles. Should Mia be reduced to zero health, the player must restart the puzzle from the very beginning.

Journal entries will be updated throughout the game to document Mia's experiences. Instructions will be provided in a tome in each puzzle room, should the player require more direction. Diary entries and notes can also be found in the rooms, which chronicle some of her past life with Kara and explain the story backdrop for each of the puzzles in the game.

# Cutscenes

In addition to the opening and ending scenes, cutscenes with subtitles will play at the beginning and end of each puzzle that set the context for the puzzle room.

## **Opening Scene**

The game opens with Mia and Kara as young girls playing hide and seek. Mia counts while Kara hides just around the corner. As Mia looks behind a curtain, Kara will be shown just behind her, with her hands over her mouth, concealing her giggles. Mia gives

up her search and Kara comes up and hugs her from behind. She laughs and tells Mia that she was hiding in her shadow. Fade to an older Mia standing over Kara's grave, with her shadow falling over her twin's resting place. The scene then fades black to Mia standing in front of a mirror in her bedroom, with her hand on the mirror. She suddenly breaks down crying and crumples to her knees. The image turns black, and white text appears as Mia says, "I miss you." The text rearranges to show "You're missing from me" while Kara whispers in the background. Mia then looks up at the mirror from the floor. Next is a series of zoomed in shots of her eye. Finally, the scene ends with a zoomed out image of Mia, still sitting on the floor, but now surrounded by bookshelves.

### **Music Room Opening**

The scene opens with young Mia and Kara seated at a grand piano together. Mia is playing the song perfectly. She tells Kara to play it just as she does. Kara plays it right at first, but changes the ending entirely. Mia scolds her for not playing it properly. Kara answers that she prefers her own ending over the one in the sheet music. Mia argues that Kara can't just play what she likes; she's supposed to play the song correctly, in the proper order. As Mia tells Kara to play it again from the top, the window next to them shows that it is getting dark outside.

### **Music Room Ending**

Seated again at the piano at a brighter time of day, Mia tells Kara more patiently to give it another go. Kara asks Mia to play it again for her, which Mia does. As she approaches the ending, Kara joins in with her own improvised ending, and the song becomes a duet. They both turn to each other and smile, and Mia tells Kara that the song sounds really nice played together.

### **Observatory Opening**

Mia and Kara are sitting bundled up on a grassy hill awaiting a meteor shower. Kara is impatient for it to start and Mia replies that it should be starting any minute. Just then a meteor streaks by in the sky and Kara tells Mia to make a wish. Mia sits silently with her eyes closed for a couple seconds and opens them. Kara asks Mia what she wished for, but Mia doesn't want to tell her at first. Upon further prompting, Mia tells Kara that she wished she could be as bold and sunny as her and not have to borrow Kara's light like the moon to shine.

## **Observatory Ending**

Still seated on the hillside, it is close to the break of dawn and the meteors have peaked. After some thought, Kara says that Mia might be the moon or might not. Either way she doesn't think of her that way and sees her only as a protective older sister. Mia cuts in and retorts that she's only older than her by an hour. Kara laughs and replies that still, sometimes she can be careless and Mia always watches out for her. Kara calls Mia a knight of the night, complete with shining armour. The image then shows several streaking meteors as Kara finishes by telling Mia not to waste any more wishes because she shines plenty bright already on her own.

## **Final Room Opening**

Mia stands, frustrated, in front of a blank piece of paper on an easel. Next is a close up of the different strokes she is adding to the canvas. As strokes are added, we hear a ghostly monologue from Kara about her theory about their twin personalities. It is revealed that Mia is painting a picture of someone, and that someone is Kara. Kara's painted face suddenly shows tears falling on her cheek, and we see that Mia has burst into tears. She cries out that she can't do this, can't do anything anymore without Kara. Mia frustratingly paints over Kara's picture in black. She then throws down her brush and we see that the canvas with the image of Kara now looks very much like the shadow. The final shot is of Mia tearfully approaching the mirror as she does in the opening cinematic.

## **Ending Cinematic**

Upon leaving through the exit mirror, there is a close up image of Mia's eye, which zooms out to show that she's back in her bedroom. She closes her eyes in exhaustion. Opening her eyes, she starts speaking to her reflection about her own theory of being twins. She smiles halfheartedly and whispers "I love you, Kara" to her reflection. As Mia turns away, her hand remains against the mirror, which is then shown in a close-up, pressed against the reflection's hand. Mia takes a breath and steps away from the mirror, genuinely smiling. The reflection in the mirror is then shown to be Kara, smiling back and whispering "I love you too".

# Level Design

## Central Chamber

The central chamber serves as a hub in the story and is the location where the player begins and where the shadow is first introduced. The chamber is a circular room with walls lined with bookshelves. A signpost in the centre will prompt the player to decide which of the two starting puzzle chambers to begin with. The player can then enter those chambers by interacting with the mirrors along the circumference of the hub. The surrounding objects and jumbled voices coming from the mirror hint at what the player will encounter in each room. The player returns to this central chamber after completing each puzzle to enter the next puzzle room. After completing all three puzzles, the player can finish the game by interacting with the glowing Exit Mirror to return to reality.



Layout of the Hubs

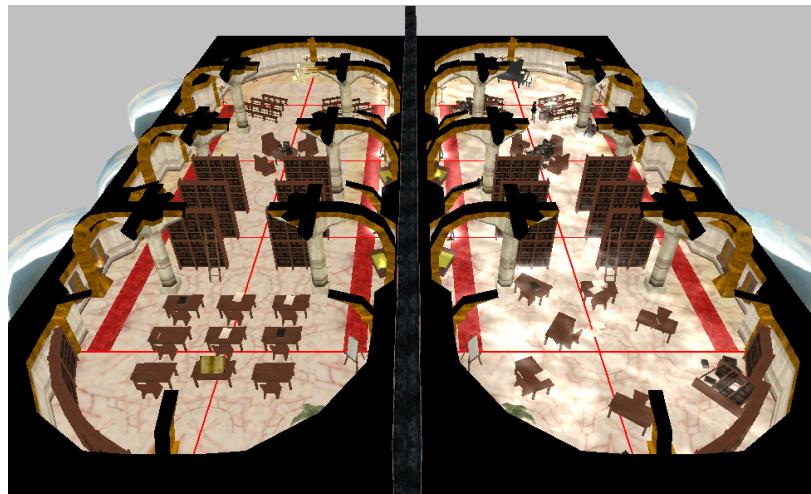
## Music Room

The music room is one of two puzzle rooms with which the player can begin. When the player interacts with the Light Piano, a melody plays, and four musical orbs spawn and scatter throughout the room. Mia must interact with these orbs to recreate four measures from a piano duet that she had previously played with Kara. During Cut Scene Mode when Mia is sitting at the piano, the differently-coloured orbs will spawn according to their

respective measures of the song. The challenge of the puzzle comes from how accurately a player can remember and recreate the song by finding and selecting the orbs in the right order. Each orb will play its song segment when the player approaches it. Should the player need a reminder of the melody, they may return to the piano to restart.

Once the first part of the puzzle is complete, the player is then prompted to solve the second part of the puzzle by travelling through the mirror in the wall, interacting with the Dark Piano in the other room, and finding the orbs in the correct order again; this time for Kara's part of the melody, and with the shadow following and attacking. If the player chooses to start with the music room, then upon completion of the music puzzle, an orb-like monument will appear, which contains a spell that the player can equip. This *intontimento* spell enables the player to temporarily freeze anything that moves and can be used 5 times.

If the player selects an orb out of order, all orbs in that part of the puzzle will reappear and have to be selected again in order. If the player dies because of the Shadow's damage, the puzzle will be reset to its original state and the player will have to restart at the piano.



Layout of the Music Room

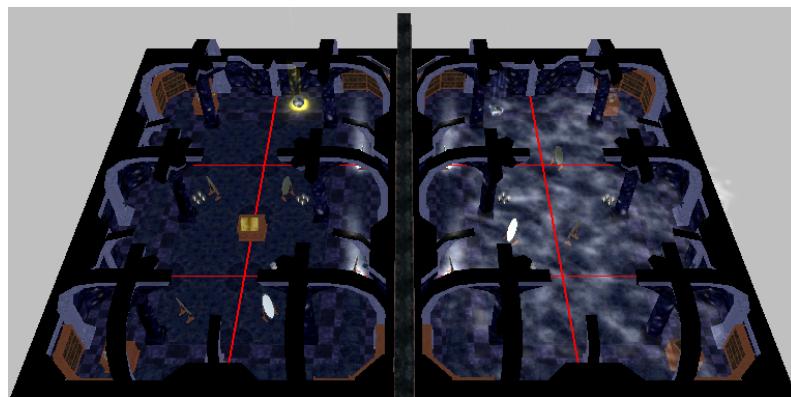
## Observatory

The observatory is the other puzzle room with which the player can begin. This puzzle contains a source of light, the Sun, that creates a beam of light that must ultimately be directed to the Moon in the shadow room. To achieve this the player must rotate

mirrors into the right position to have the sun beam reflect onto the spherical crystal that is next to the mirror leading to the shadowed room. The beam appears each time the sun is clicked.

Once the first part of the puzzle is complete, the player is prompted to travel through the mirror to the shadowed side. Again the player must rotate mirrors there but this time to direct sunlight stored in the spherical crystal to the Moon, and with the shadow ever-present. The beam appears whenever the glowing crystal is clicked. If the player chooses to start with the observatory room, then upon completion of the mirror puzzle, an armoire will appear, which contains a suit of armour that the player can equip. This armour allows the player to recover some health once in each room when Mia's health falls to a critical level.

If the player dies because of the Shadow's damage the puzzle will be reset to its original state and the player will have to restart.



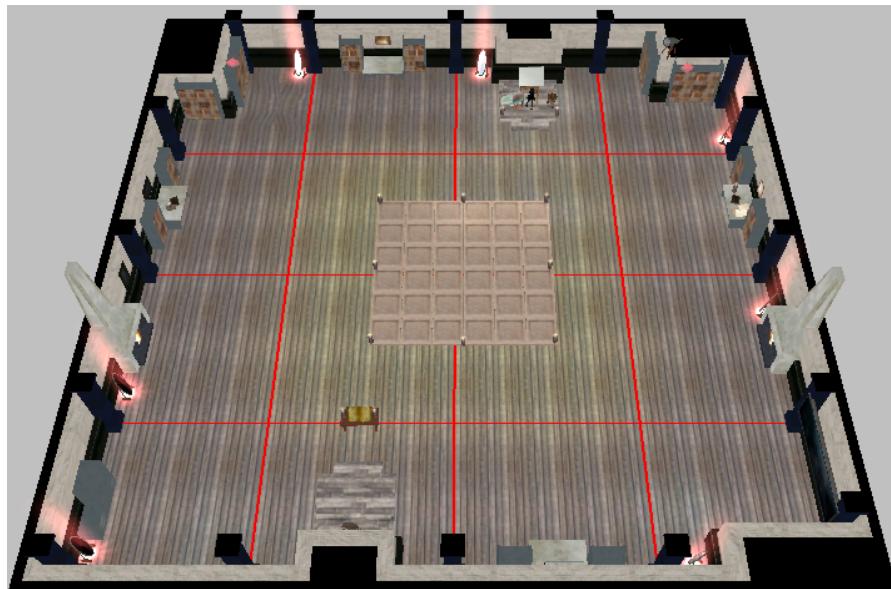
Layout of the Observatory room

## Final Room

The final chamber can only be entered once the other two puzzle chambers have been solved. It is a large, open rectangular room with mirrors placed around the perimeter. When the player encounters the shadow in the room, Cut Scene Mode begins and the shadow then runs to the tiles in the center of the room and spawns multiple copies of itself, prompting Mia to find the real one. As they despawn off the tiles, they are replaced by Rays of Light, and the shadows begin to spawn in waves at the mirrors around the

room to extinguish these lights. The grid of lights represents Mia's hope, which she must protect from the onslaught of shadows.

In order to complete the puzzle, the player has to circle around the room and find the shadow that looks different from the others. The player must correctly select the real shadow five times to end the onslaught. If all the rays of light are put out or if Mia dies from damage taken when too many incorrect shadows are selected, the puzzle will be reset to its original state and the player will have to restart the level.



Layout of the Final Room

## Production Details

### Tile Budgets

Room	Dimensions	Tiles
<i>Central Chamber (Hub)</i>	4 x (2 x 2)	16
<i>Music Room</i>	4 x 5	20
<i>Observatory</i>	4 x 3	12
<i>Final Room</i>	4 x 4	16

Total: 64 tiles

## **Custom Assets**

The following custom content will be created for this production:

- Original music composed for:
  - Main theme for opening and ending cutscenes
  - Sound track for the music puzzle
  - Ambient theme for hubs and observatory
  - Battle theme for final encounter with the shadow
  - Additional tracks for cutscenes
  - Gameplay trailer theme

## **Challenges**

The following challenges are anticipated during development:

- Camera angle control to hide division between mirrored and unmirrored rooms
- Manipulation of visual effects to
  - Remove or alter the appearance of shadows
  - Provide or remove lighting in the environment to differentiate mirrored and unmirrored rooms
- Visual elements/queues to aid the music room puzzles
- Providing enough explanation for players to understand the varied gameplay
- Separate modules for interweaving cut scenes as transitions

## **Contingencies**

Due to time constraints, custom 3-D models will be left out of the final release.

## **Schedule**

### **Milestones**

1. ~~January 9 - Team Formation~~
2. ~~January 16 - Concept Presentation~~
3. ~~January 24 - Design Document~~
4. ~~February 14 - Vertical slice walkthrough with Executive Producer~~
5. ~~February 24 - Vertical slice walkthrough with Instructor~~
6. ~~March 14 - Beta Release~~

7. ~~March 21 - Beta Evaluation~~
8. ~~April 3 - Game Trailer~~
9. ~~April 8 - Final Release~~

## Timeline

~~January 20 to January 24 - Conceptual Design~~

~~January 20 to February 3 - Vertical slice asset creation, level design, and script~~

~~January 27 - Vertical slice detailed design review~~

~~February 3 - Vertical slice assets, level design, and story components complete~~

~~February 3 to February 13 - Vertical slice integration and testing~~

~~February 14 - Vertical slice complete~~

~~February 14 - Story and script complete~~

~~February 14 to February 23 - Outstanding asset creation, level design, script revision~~

~~February 24 - Outstanding assets, level design, and script revision complete~~

~~February 24 to March 13 - Beta integration and testing~~

~~March 7 - Observatory room implementation complete~~

~~March 12 - Final room implementation complete~~

~~March 13 - All cutscenes complete~~

~~March 14 - Beta release complete~~

~~March 15 to April 3 - Game trailer production~~

~~March 15 to April 8 - Final bug fixes and testing~~

~~April 3 - Game trailer release~~

~~April 8 - Final Release complete~~

