***Backalley Alchemist***

***Design Document***

By DieserMastro for the 2024 Pirate Software Gamejam

**Introduction**

Game Summary  
 Inspiration  
 Player Experience  
 Platform  
 Development Software  
 Genre  
 Target Audience

**Concept**

Gameplay Overview  
 Theme Interpretation (Shadows and Alchemy)  
 Primary Mechanics  
 Secondary Mechanics  
**Art** Theme Interpretation  
 Design

**Audio**

Music  
 Sound Effects

**Game Experience**

UI  
 Controls

**Development Timeline**

**Assets**

**Introduction**

**Game Summary Pitch**

Backalley Alchemist is a Puzzle/Turn-Based combat game meant to give the player the feeling and experience of being a detective in an Urban Fantasy. The player will be faced with supernatural and paranormal cases, long forgotten by the masses and rarely witnessed by them, that they need to solve using concepts of mythology and alchemy-based magic.

**Inspiration**

* The Dresden Files: the main inspiration for the setting of the game. This book series provides the inspiration for being a wizard detective in modern day society solving supernatural cases using magic, magical and mythological knowledge in a world where the supernatural is something that most people do not come in contact with.
* Supernatural: very similar to The Dresden Files, the game draws the same inspiration for solving cases using knowledge of the supernatural on a case-by-case basis.
* Fullmetal Alchemist: its alchemy power system mainly utilizing the concept of equivalent exchange is the other main inspiration for how this game is meant to handle its magic/alchemy power system.

**Player Experience**

The core gameplay loop the player will experience consists of the following phases:

* Analysis Phase: The player is given a case or a problem that provides only the most basic and necessary information. By analysing the information given, the player can conclude the cause behind given case/problem and move to the next phase.
* Preparation Phase: The player can prepare their upcoming equipment that will aid them in confronting the case/problem in the next phase. Preparation can include tools, crystals, potions and weapons
* Confrontation phase: The player will head to the location of the case with the confrontation taking either the form of a puzzle or combat instance that requires the knowledge the player has accumulated to solve.

**Platform**

The game is developed to be released on Windows PC with potential Mobile release in the future.

**Development Software**

* Unity for Game Development
* Clip Studio Paint / Paint for Sprites and Graphics
* FL Studio / Audacity for Audio and SFX

**Genre**

Singleplayer, Puzzle, Turn-Based RPG, Urban Fantasy

**Target Audience**

Due to the nature of the setting and the mechanics leaning more towards complexity, this game is meant to be for people who are fans of the Urban Fantasy genre and those who are fans of any of the above-mentioned inspirations.

**Concept**

**Gameplay Overview**

The player roleplays as an alchemist detective who, on the surface, runs a small back-alley bar. The bar is merely a cover-up for his secret paranormal detective service.   
Clients will provide the player with paranormal incidents that the player will have to analyse using the information given by the client to figure out the cause of case. After deciding on the cause, the player will be able to prepare the necessary tools and equipment needed to solve the case.   
Based on the case, the client will have to solve puzzles and fight the supernatural using their alchemical and mythological knowledge.

**Theme Interpretation (Shadows and Alchemy)**

The Urban fantasy, secret paranormal society aspect of the setting symbolizes the “shadow” aspect of the theme, while the hidden/forgotten knowledge aspect of the case-solving and the equivalent exchange and transfiguration aspect of both equipment/tool preparation and combat provide the Alchemy aspect.

**Primary Mechanics**

**Analysis-Phase:**

Using information provided by NPCs to determine the cause of a case.  
The player will have access to a “Bestiary” in which they have a basic collection of entities, their features and characteristics, strengths, weaknesses and tactics, giving clues for the player to get to the root of it.

**Preparation-Phase:**

Based on what the player has concluded to be the cause of a case, the player can now prepare tools and equipment using alchemy-based magic by combining materials to create crystals, potions and weapons.

**Confrontation-Phase:**

The Confrontation Phase can take three different shapes:

* Fighting: turn-based combat with the entity where the player uses their prepared tools and equipment to defeat the entity.  
  Damage will be based on the type of magic or equipment the player uses and how these interact with said enemy strengths and weaknesses.
* Extermination/Exorcism: a puzzle based minigame where the player needs to apply their knowledge of an entity to make them leave or non-hostile.
* Trapping: a mixture of the other two shapes where the player can apply their knowledge of the entity before initiating combat to either weaken the enemy or give themselves a substantial advantage in the upcoming battle.

**Secondary Mechanics**

**Mythological/Alchemical Research and experimentation:**

The player will be able to obtain new knowledge, from both clients and in game 3rd party sources such as hidden vendors and book merchants, or experiment with the materials they gathered/bought to try and create new equipment, weapons or potions.

**Intelligent Familiar**

The player will have a companion familiar that will keep track of new knowledge and information the player gains while aiding them in both the analysis and the confrontation phase. The familiar is meant to function as an aid for the player, as well as an always present character for the player’s character to interact with and converse about the in-game relevant topics.