# Ruari

*Elden Ring*'s open world is a masterpiece in visual storytelling: from the haunted, foggy swamps of Liurnia, the rot-infested hellscape of Caelid, the horrors of the Volcano manor and the war-torn royal capital with its mighty Erdtree and the ethereal, sorrowful beauty of the Haligtree. As is the case with all From Software games, *Elden Ring* truly excels in boss design. These games are well known for featuring little dialogue and almost no exposition, leaving the visual design of bosses to do most of the work in telling their story. This can be observed most noticeably in the main bosses of the game, the shard bearers. Godrick, the first of these bosses, is portrayed as a weak and despicable man, forced to resort to the grafting of limbs to his flesh to increase his strength. His in-game model is a grotesque amalgamation of limbs of different sizes which Godrick has taken from his victims, the theme of stolen power is furthered in the fight, when Godrick resorts to using the head of a dead dragon to kill you.

Melania can be seen to have been eaten away by the scarlet rot, indicated by her missing limbs and blackened flesh. Parts of her body have been replaced by golden and immaculately wrought prosthesis, a gift given by her twin who was cursed in a separate way. Her second phase involves the release of this rot. She unfurls giant wings made of teeming swarms of butterflies and turns the rot inside her against you in a desperate attempt to win. The last time she released this power on an enemy (the great Radahn) she destroyed both his mind and an entire ecosystem in her wake. Rykard, in a bid for unimaginable power, has fed himself to a great serpent, creating a horrifying, bloated snake with human arms and legs. Rykard's face can be seen pressing out of the back of the serpents head, human flesh overlain by reptilian scales.

Radahn, a once grand warrior who has been reduced to no better than a beast by the scarlet rot his demi-god cousin released. A warrior who inspired so much loyalty in his time that there is an entire festival of warriors dedicating their lives to putting him out of his misery. He uses the many spears lodged in his back by his failed assailants as great arrows to launch at you. He has mastered gravity magic and uses his power to reduce his mighty weight so that his old scraggly horse Leonard may still bear him into battle. Ranni is not a boss, but her character model speaks to her intent to not to play by the rules of the cosmic game *Elden Ring* establishes. She has slain her original royal flesh, discarding it and taking up residence in a simple doll, thus freeing her to pursue her own master plan

# Chloe

I like Gravity Rush 2 because it has great visual style which is very unique along with the landscape and character designs

## Ryan

OMORI:

Makes excellent use of contrast, both in terms of colouring (vivid reds, blues and greens vs monochromatic b&w) and level/combatant designs, to convey various emotions and mental states that are core to both the game's mechanics and themes - happiness, sadness, anxiety, mania, depression and fear

Risk of Rain:

The art style of Risk of Rain, be it the original or its 3-D successor, manages to strike a perfect balance between retro-futurism and cyberpunk, where one or more player-controlled Survivors are stranded on Petrichor V - and are required to scavenge crash-landed cargo for items that can help the player grow in power and improve their chances of escaping. These can be anything, from a futuristic portable missile launcher that fires tracking projectiles at nearby combatants - or a rusty knife, which has a slight chance of causing targets to bleed over time and thus inflict more damage over time. The characters, in terms of their design, are nothing short of a motley crew - where the player can take control of a space commando duel-wielding laser pistols, a robot chef, an alien dog who spits acidic bile, a religious wizard that makes use of both magic and nano-technology, and so on.