

GDIM 61 - PARACOSM

Game Design Document

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4th April, 2022
UPDATED: 5th May, 2022

Introduction

For our GDIM 61 game, we are making a 2D pixel horror game called PARACOSM. During development, we will be following many principles present in SCRUM such as weekly sprints and the product backlog. We will be meeting up at consistent time frames throughout the week to assess the current sprint we are working on. Additionally, we will revise, edit, and aim for different goals each sprint in order to complete our game on time while having it as high quality as we can possibly make it.

Overview

PARACOSM is a 2D side scrolling pixel horror game created for teens and young adults where the player investigates a spooky mansion that, unknown to the player, houses a mysterious, shapeshifting evil being. The player must face puzzles constructed by the evil lurking in the mansion and escape to discover the true form of the world around them.

Gameplay

First 5 Minutes

Tutorial (Level 0) + Level 1

The player starts with the tutorial level (Level 0) outside of the mansion and learns the mechanics of the game (controls). The player will then fall into the basement of the mansion through a broken door and start Level 1.

First 10 Minutes

Playing Level 1

The player will face a series of puzzles that they must solve in order to progress in the level.

These puzzles include chest unlocking, door lockpicking, a door maze, and performing a ritual.

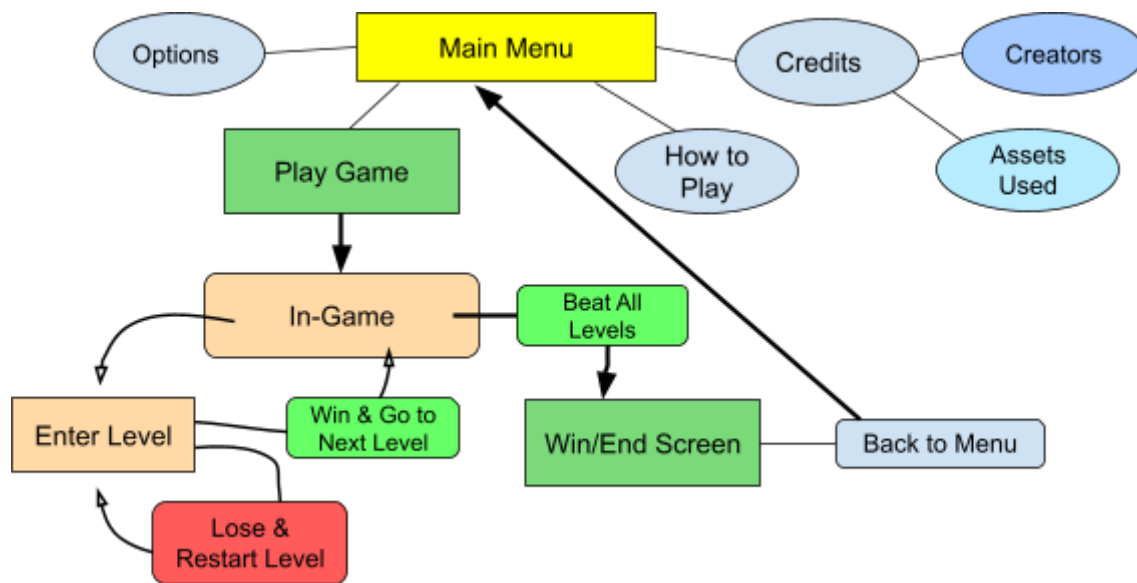
During the level, the player will be given an introduction to the evil that lurks in the mansion, which culminates in the player racing to complete a ritual to ward the attacking evil off, so they can escape the basement and move into a hallway of the mansion.

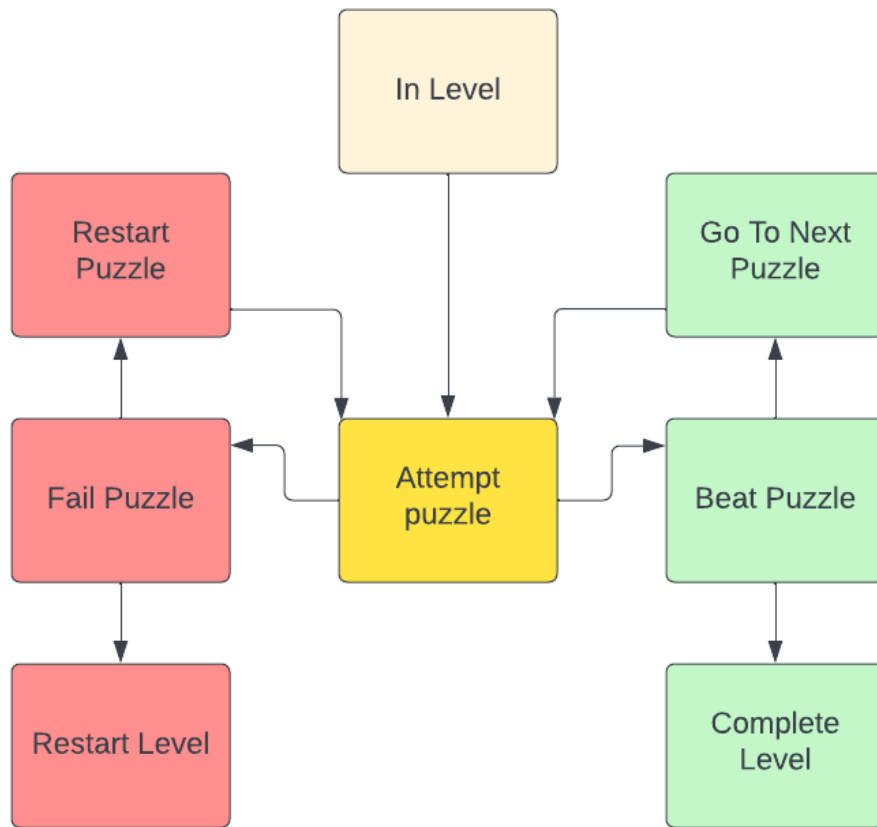
First 20 Minutes

The player should have now made it to Level 2. The second level continues the puzzle mechanics from the first level, progressing the story and possibly increasing in time/difficulty. Currently, only Level 0 and Level 1 are done so the game will end once the player reaches Level 2.

Gameflow

Explore the environment and try to solve the puzzle.





Victory Conditions

Finish all the puzzles in the level, to reach the end of the level and progress to the next stage.

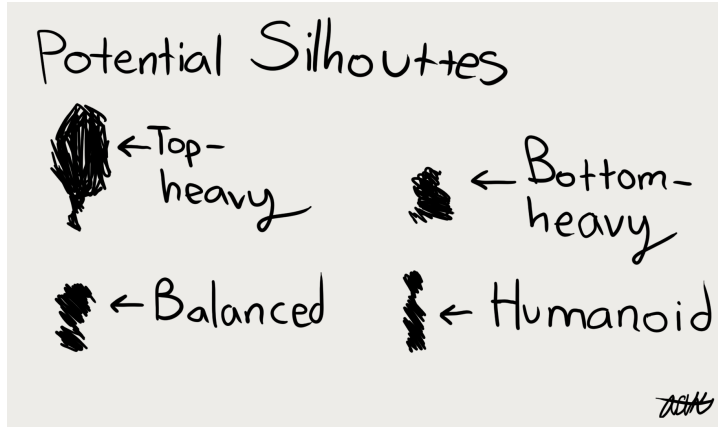
Win state = defeat all of the levels and reach the end of the story. In a level, winning would be completing a puzzle.

Lose state = some puzzles have a lose mechanic such as taking too long to complete the ritual which will kill the player and respawn them at the start of the puzzle. Additionally, the mechanic of an insanity bar is being worked on which would fill up when the player does negative things such as taking too long on a puzzle and would ultimately kill the player once completely filled up.

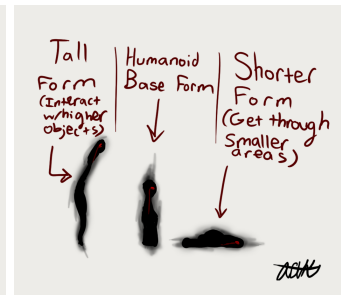
In sum, the lose state is whenever the player fails to finish a puzzle.

Art

Early Art:



•



(early

ideas for the player and exploration of the shapeshifting idea)



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(early art for the evil)

Newer Art:

•



(ritual book animation)

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(a spooky painting)

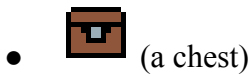


(outside the

mansion)



(stairs to the basement from outside the mansion)



- (items in the world)

Technical Aspects

The physical system requirements are still not finalized due to the game only being in early development, however, the requirements will likely not be too powerful in the sense that most computers (including lower ends ones) should be able to run the game. Game will be built using Unity and will be playable on Windows and Mac.

Composition

Target Audience & Platform

PARACOSM will appeal to players of ages 13-25 (teens and young adults) who enjoy horror games and solving puzzles. Those who enjoy 2D strategic sidescrollers and are interested in discovering and learning about a creepy, shapeshifting monster inside a strange mansion will be attracted to PARACOSM. The game will have an ESRB rating of Teen due to some violence and minimal blood.

Currently, the game is being developed for both Windows and Mac (PC).

Future Plans

- Complete Levels 2 and 3 and start brainstorming idea for further levels
- Develop the story further (through new levels and/or stronger storytelling/backstory)
- New map setting (something other than the mansion)
- More monsters (instead of just one shapeshifting monster, multiple monsters)

The Introduction Section

Key Features

- A player character who is able to move, jump, crawl, and interact with some aspects of their environment.
- Insanity meter to show the progress of player's insanity (WIP).
- Player has an inventory to hold and display items needed to complete the level.
- Multiple levels for the player to explore.
- Fun and unique puzzles.
- A unique, shapeshifting monster for the player to fight throughout the game.

Third-Party Softwares Used

- Aseprite
- Photoshop
- Unity
- Visual Studio
- Adobe Audition
- MuseScore
- Audacity

HUDs

We will have a player inventory of 9 slots. An insanity meter is currently being worked on.

Sounds

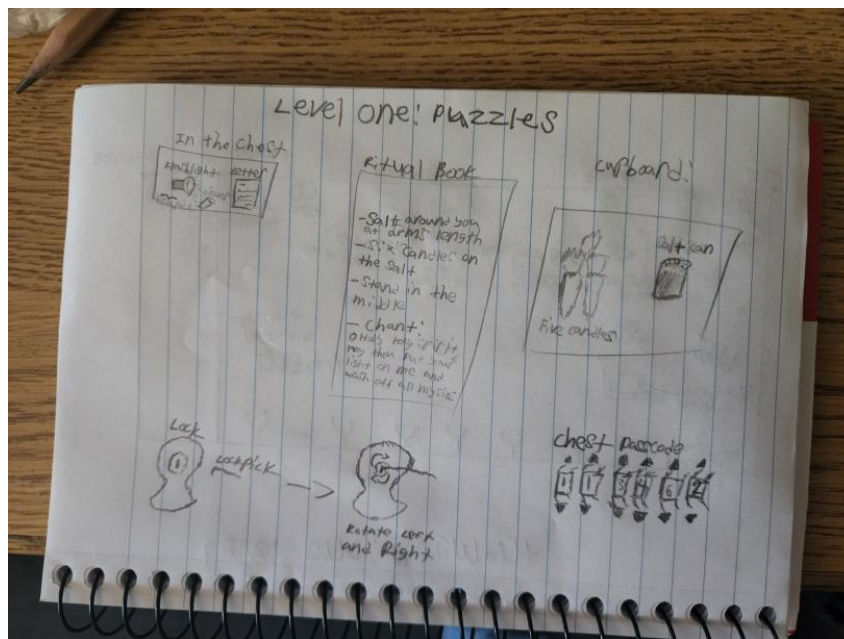
The game's sound will be played using Unity's sound engine. Specifically, a SoundManager will handle the playing of sound effects (SFX) and background music (BGM) by routing them through an AudioManager which will adjust sound volumes accordingly (lowering BGM sound while a SFX is playing). The types of BGM music will often be spooky or creepy ambient music, which will help set the creepy/horror mood. SFX will vary, but they will be responsive to the player in the sense that they will play in response to the player's actions such as interacting with something, walking somewhere specific, or seeing something such as a chest opening.

Controls

- A and D to move left and right
- Space key to jump / interact with ritual puzzle
- W to interact (more functionality when an inventory item is selected using 1-9)
- 1-9 to change selected inventory slot
- Enter/Return to continue dialogue
- ESC to toggle and pause menu (WIP)
- Left click to interact with menus

Game-Specific Subsections

Pieces



Lock picking:

- The player would need to use a lockpick to rotate the lock left and right
- If the lockpick starts shaking, it means he would need rotate the other way
- There will be three layers of locks the player would need to complete in order to open the door
- There will be a click sound once a layer has been complete

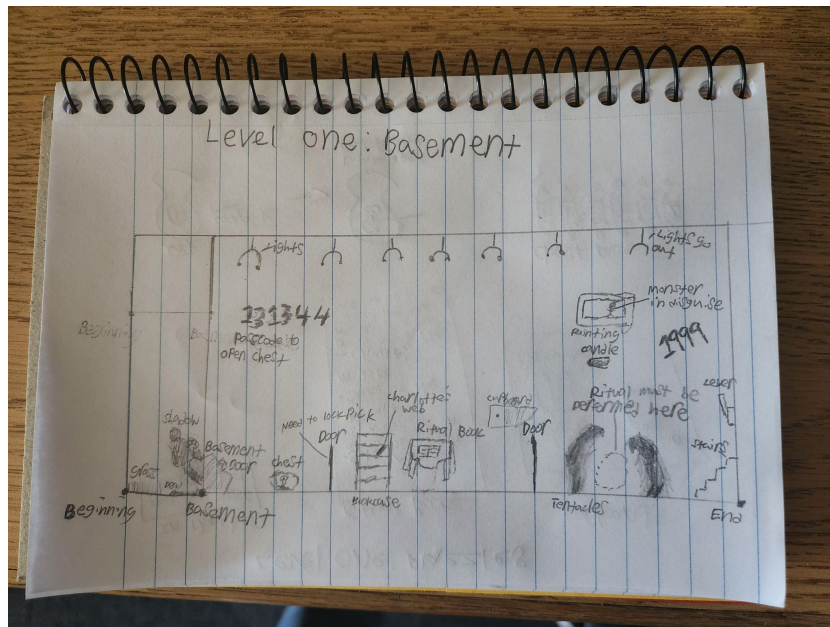
Number code:

- Multiple doors in the basement where the player can gather supplies or encounter traps
 - Use levers to open doors
 - Some may be missing and the players has to find it

Ritual:

- Place the salt around the player by clicking on the ground
- Place six candles evenly on the salt
 - There will be animation of the player moving around to place the salt
- Lit the candles by clicking on it
- Have the player be at the middle and perform the incantation

Level Design



This is the level one design for the game where it starts right outside of the mansion and then transitions to the basement. The camera perspective only moves from left to right that focuses on the player and they can only see what room they are in currently, but the next one is blacked out. The first part of the level is the tutorial, which starts outside of the mansion where the player learns the basic movement mechanics like moving and jumping. Once the player has mastered the basic controls, they would have to go into the basement where they would see a chest, which is the first puzzle of the game, that contains the tools they need to go through the basement. After unlocking the chest, the player would have to lockpick a door, the second puzzle, to proceed to the next room, which contains the ritual book, Charlotte's Web book, salt, and candles. After the player takes the materials, they will proceed to the last part of the basement where the ritual must be performed to fight back against the first encounter of the monster. After the player defeats the monster, they would have to pull the lever to make the stars available to go to the second level of the game.

Enemies

We will have a single shape-shifting monster persistent throughout the game taking the form of various monsters throughout the levels.

Plot

Level 1:

- The main character arrives at the mansion to see what furnitures to sell
- He then sees a shadow of his father then vanished into the basement doors
- He goes inside of the basement and turns on the lights
- He sees a chest, unlocks it, and discovers important objects
- The letter was written by a person who also got sucked into the basement and tries to get out (The player can see his rotting body in Level 2)
 - The letter instructs the player that there is a ritual book to fight against the monster
- The player will then enter a magical door puzzle where they will more items they need
- Near the end of the level one map, the wall will have a painting and there will be a pale looking man in the painting that will come out and become a monster that will try to kill the player
- The large monster starts killing the player with its tentacles and the player needs to use a ritual to scare off the monster
 - The player needs to gather candles, salt, and the ritual book to make the ritual happen with limited time where the monster slowly tries to kill the player where tentacles show up in the screen
 - After the ritual is complete, the monster will leave and the player would need to pull the lever to make the stairs appear that will transition to the second level

Following is a WIP for Level 2:

- In the second level, the main character sees a series of doors and has to pick the right one to pass through the room

- After he leaving the first room, he sees an endless dining table and suddenly he sees a black figure becoming bigger and bigger until it is recognizable

- He sees a snake coming fast and jumps at him

- The main character quickly dodges and the snake lands on the ground

- The main character gets onto the table and starts running to the end

- The snake keeps spitting acid until the door on the other side melts and the main character goes to the next level

- In the third and last level, sunlight can be seen through the windows and the main character sees an illusion of his child self on a bed with his father who was telling him a story called the Charlotte's Web

- As the main character proceeds to the next room, he sees a painting that are in puzzle pieces that needs to be placed in the right spots

- The main character discovers a chest that contains a cross, a bundle of candles, and a salt can, which signals the main character that those materials are used to make the ritual again

- After the main character finishes the puzzle, he sees a very faint appearance of his father, an illusion, that calls him to come into the room to find "answers" about his disappearance ten years ago

- As the main character enters the last room, the room becomes dark and the peaceful painting on the wall becomes horrifying and bloody
- A dark figure of his father tells him to come join him in hell and he starts to slowly walk towards the main character
- The main character then makes another ritual but with the cross this time
- The cross breaks into pieces and the player has to put it back together
- After he fixes the cross the main character completes the ritual and his father vanishes and leaves a key on the ground, which leads him to out of the mansion
- The book the main character finds, Charlotte's Web, is a childhood book his father used to read to him
- The father is just like Charlotte who became ill and becomes weak
 - That is why his father left him to find a way to cure his terminal cancer
 - Unfortunately, his father has been stuck in the mansions for decades and became a monster
- The father was the monster all along and tries to make his own son into a monster too
- The uncle tried to cure his brother's illness by using black magic but instead made him into a monster and gets killed by him
- Before the uncle died, he had a ritual book just in case the black magic didn't work and he could use it to fight against the monster

Characters

- Shapeshifting monster (is later revealed to be a representation of the character's father)
 - The monster has different forms, but they are all technically the same monster
- Main character/player character, is a distinct person but is not named throughout the game; intended to be a character with which the player associates and emotionally attaches to.

Artificial Intelligence

We will have our monster teleport around the map to try to haunt the player and to increase his sanity in order to pressure the player to play better.

This is currently under development and will not be present in the first playable/alpha.

Technical Aspects Section

TBD - the game is still early in development so it has hard to get exact requirements and details.