

The Pitch

"Asteroids meets Total War". A top down 2D space shooter with Newtonian physics meets a persistent strategic campaign where your wins and losses matter.

Could also describe as Wing Commander meets Xcom in 2D.

The action part of the game is designed around taking 90s 3D space shooters like Wing Commander and X-Wing and putting them in a 2D play space. I want to evoke nostalgia in people who grew up playing space sims of the 90s and deliver them an up-to-date experience in a similar vein.

- 2D lends the player better situational awareness in a dogfight
- 2D allows a lot of pretty things to be put on screen in the background and to stay there.
- 90s shooters featured Wingmen and a degree of ship boarding mechanics (played out over audio) but they weren't well-realised. I want to make these things a more active part of gameplay.

The strategy/persistent part of the game is similar to the Xcom strategy layer crossed with a Wing Commander "rooms" system.

- Pilots train, gain XP, live and die in the battles and they appear in the bar or med bay after the missions.
- Attack and defend points of interest at will on a world (solar system) map.
- Research and building new craft takes a number of days.
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- The bar can crate a lot of story exposition and world building. The hangar is where you customise your ships, etc.

This is a truly unique space game at the moment as you're focussed on being a pilot in a war. All other space games currently seem to focus on entire fleets (making gigantic spaceships then feel very small) or economic trading games with some fighting mechanics thrown in.

The Background Story

You control a private military company contracted to protect civilian mining operations from pirate attacks. Your employers are your home nation - the planet of Kolrir. They are a disgruntled, expansionist, xenophobic race of humans (think 1930s Germany). They have a one-world government in the Kolrir system. You play in a colony star system (name TBD) that Kolrir is expanding into.

You're presented the situation as you're bringing technology and trade to an inferior people. Helping them out. You're told that they're up for this but there's a few pirates in the area. As the game progresses you realise that you're fighting against an organised resistance with legitimate grievances, not just criminals.

The Kolrir faction are descended from Earth humans but by thousands of years. The Sol system (ie Earth) is a demilitarised zone since about 1000BC. The game is set around 2200

AD. Earth is mentioned but not involved. Earth doesn't yet know about the wider peoples of the galaxy.

There is also a sort of space-UN headed by the Cestral. Mentioned, but not an active part of the game.

The Gameplay Story

Will be decided more when the game's systems are better nailed down, but it will be light on story and cutscenes. Game systems and your own progression will create unique situations for you. That's your story.

Probable story moments progressing into Act 1, Act 2, Act 3 + Ending. Only one ending, not multiple. Similar to Xcom (2012) and Xcom 2 in this way.

Campaign loss could also be a simple ending, though I want to consider always having a fallback option and never being able to fully lose the campaign.

Themes

Kolrir has gender and (human) race equality but in a typically sci-fi way, those issues are transferred to 'aliens'. Man always finds *outsiders*. They're useful to unite and control the *insiders*.

Truth as the first casualty of war. You're being lied to about why you fight.

Is it right to defend civilians when they're stealing from others? Native Americans, Aborigines and many others for inspiration to this question.

The game seeks to ask many questions, but not answer too many.

The tone is dark and the themes heavy, so humorous characters and light-hearted situations need to be paced in. *The Banner Saga* attempted this admirably.

The Visuals

I did actually think of one game that's done art deco. [80 days](#). It suits an adventure game or a game with architecture and characters very well. I'm still excited but unsure about what the top down spaceships would look like though. Most art deco vehicles seem to be drawn from a to-the-side-and-underneath angle looking up at the vehicle. Flat top-down I've hardly ever seen.

As for tone, I still see it suiting more like the Bruce Timm Batman / Justice League cartoon end of art deco than the Flash Gordon end.

We could totally steal [this](#) for launching fighters.

I'm not the expert at all, and I've conveyed the tone I'm going for since we spoke on Friday, so I'll trust you. Just saying what I personally favour.

The Sales Numbers

I'm just going to talk about Year 1. The tail of any game's sales is nearly universally low, but worth having all the same.

I feel that guessing sales units is very wishy-washy when it comes to games but investors want to see what it's been thought about I guess..

This game is unique enough that I believe it will get good attention from Youtubers and fans of 90s space games OR fans of *Xcom*. Even without publisher support I think it would hold its own in terms of generating interest, particularly if Scott Manley plays it on his channel, as he said he would (he also mailed me recently about it, so he wasn't just saying it when I met him at GDC).

Since *Versus Evil* said they were interested I was looking to see what sort of numbers their games do (on Steam Spy). You'd know better than I but I think Guild is over 70,000 now in under a year. *The Banner Saga* is 584k and *Skyshine's Bedlam* (which had mixed reviews on Steam and elsewhere) is at 33k.

There's a rogue-like element and an attractive art style to all of those games (and *Sons of Sol* - assuming art deco), so I think the numbers are usable. My gameplay is more action oriented than turn based, but it still has down-time in between missions. Missions should take 4-10 minutes. Good for YouTube/Twitch I think. I'm also looking at Twitch Integration.

Anyway, I want to err on the side of pessimism and say if the game gets publisher support and does 'only okay' it would sell about **30,000 units**. I'd be happy with that (the more the merrier though). I also remember Colm said that about *GoD* before it released.

Without publisher support I'm looking at self-publishes games in similar veins. *Xenonauts* has over 200k units but is very based on the original *Xcom*. *Kinetic Void* 120k. *Gimbal* (10k, though it's a very simplistic game). *Destination Sol* (350k though it's free to play so that's a distorted number).

Where I see unfinished Early Access messes or buggy games with negative reviews that's where I see 10k units. Obviously we don't aim for that, but there'd still be some money to split between a small team at that.

Price Point

Depending on content and what's recommended to us, I want to price the game at €15-20. At €17.50, once you subtract Steam cut and VAT (and allow for some sales discounts), **each unit should bring in €10.**

If that goes through a publisher, then they take their cut, but if they make the pie larger, they can have their slice, as far as I see it.