

Pixelated Horror

Game Identity / Mantra

Stylized survival horror where you try to survive your nightmares.

Design Pillars

The goal is to get the player to be immersed with the game's world and make the player constantly feel lingering dread, which will build up during the gameplay. The tension will then be released by introducing sudden distress to the player. Therefore, the design pillars are **Immersion, lingering dread, distress**

Genre, story and mechanics summary

This game is a classic survival horror with tank controls, fixed camera angles and physics based puzzles. The game splits into two sections, day and nightmare. The day section allows the player to discover clues that help the player to survive the nightmare section. The player transitions between worlds by going to sleep or passing out.

Story synopsis

The game's story revolves around the main character, a former psychologist, who suffers from lack of sleep caused by his past experiences with his patients. This happened because the main character had all the information she had to prevent the deaths of her patients, but she failed to see the connections in the past. The sudden trauma has made her realize that she could have been able to prevent the deaths. In shock, she denies the fact that the patients are dead, and starts to believe that the patients are still alive. Now, she has to go through each patient's case, and come to terms with the reality. **(Learning the story should be voluntary)**

Gameplay loops

Day sections:

1. Explore
2. Collect items/clues
3. Enter the nightmare section

Nightmare sections:

1. Explore
2. Avoid nemesis
3. Use items/clues to escape the nightmare

Features

- Physics based inventory management
- Traveling between reality and nightmare sections
- Puzzles
- A scripted nemesis that torments the player

Interface & Controls

- Classic tank controls and a modernized hybrid control scheme
- Physics based puzzles

Example fail states

- Player is hit by an enemy
- Player takes fall damage

Example success states

- Player reaches a certain area on the level
- Player defeats a designated boss enemy or nemesis
- Player solves a puzzle

Interactions with the environment

Player can interact in the following ways with the game environment:

- Levers / switches to pull to activate something on the level
- Solve puzzles to open locked doors etc.
- Examine objects to reveal lore etc.
- Pick up items
- Use items on things

Art Style

Art style is a mix of German expressionism, steampunk and PS1 aesthetic.

Day section

Day sections have slightly distorted geometry and somewhat possible architecture. These sections will have usual colors that are expected for the environment.

Nightmare section

The nightmare sections have distorted geometry and weird architecture. The world will have a dominant color and other complementary colors that guide the player.



List of example art references

- PS1 style low poly and low resolution textures (Vagrant Story style)
- German expressionism (The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari architecture)
- Steampunk (Level of technology and fashion)

[Mood board 1](#)

[Mood board 2](#)

Music/Sound

Warm and chill sounds in the normal world. Trippy and atmospheric (Creaks, drones) sounds in the nightmare world.

Development Roadmap / Launch Criteria

Platform: PC

Audience: Fans of horror

For people who enjoy horror games that explore psychological themes / People who enjoy story driven games & unique art direction / Age group of 20-40 / Most likely female audience, or a male with nostalgia towards classic survival horror.

Example audience profile 1: Woman in 20s with interest in horror.

Example audience profile 2: Man in 30-40s with interest in old school survival horror.

Goals of character design: (identification, emotional bond) (strong recognizable silhouette)
Visual interest, identification, emotional bond)

Add road map and MVP, stretch goals.

- 1. Milestone 11-15.11: Character controls, inventory, blockmesh level**
- 2. Milestone 18-22.11: Implementation of player character and Nemesis**
- 3. Milestone 25-29.11: Implementation of visuals and art assets, sounds**
- 4. Milestone 2-6.12: Implementation of the story elements**
- 5. Milestone 9-13.12: QA and tweaking**
- 6. Milestone 16-18.12: Final tweaks**

MVP

15 min nightmare section with a simple puzzle to move an object from A to B, and a scripted nemesis that torments the player.