

Brief Game Design Document

Pixelated Horror

Contents

Short Description / Key concept	1
Game Mechanics.....	2
Core Loop	2
Gamespace	2
Objects, Attributes and States	2
Actions.....	4
Rules	4
Skill	4
Chance.....	4
Unique Selling Proposition	5
Look and feel	5
Demographics.....	5
Resources	5

Short Description / Key concept

This game is a classic survival horror with tank controls, fixed camera angles, physics and environment based puzzles. The games target audience is ages 18 – 40 from western countries who play psychological horror games.

The game's story revolves around the main character, a former psychologist, who suffers from lack of sleep caused by his past experiences with her 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.

Game Mechanics

Core Loop

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

Gamespace

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.

Objects, Attributes and States

Object: Player

Attributes:

- Health
- Sprint speed
- Walking speed
- Inventory size

States:

- Alive, dead
- Normal mode, puzzle mode
- Armed, unarmed
- Moving, stationary
- Sprinting, walking
- Aiming, not aiming
- Reloading, not reloading

Object: Enemy (nemesis)

Attributes:

- Health
- Speed

States:

- Alive, dead
- Sees the player, does not see the player
- Chasing the player, not chasing the player
- Roaming, stationary

Object: Puzzle door

Attributes:

- Puzzle type
- Required key

States:

- Requires key, does not require key
- Solved, not solved

Object: Key

Attributes:

- Name
- Quantity

States:

- Stackable, not stackable

Actions

- Fighting enemies
- Avoiding enemies
- Using items
- Collecting items
- Navigating environment
- Discovering clues
- Healing
- Solving puzzles
- Discovering lore

Rules

- Player must conserve bullets and other consumable items
- Killing enemies does not give any direct benefits, but may sometimes make completing other tasks easier
- Progress is made by exploring, gathering clues, finding keys and solving puzzles
- The story is mostly told to player through environment

Skill

To master the game, the player needs to think of combat or avoiding the enemies as a puzzle. This skill can be improved upon by learning more about the game's story and the environment, and then applying the information to solve the problem. For example, instead of simply shooting the enemy, the player could lure the enemy somewhere else on the map, or use an item or the environment to defeat the enemy.

Chance

Gameplay mechanics wise there is a very little emphasis on chance. If the player has discovered enough information about the environment, there should be no room for a random chance. However, when the player explores a new area, the lack of information does create unpredictable encounters. The player's sense of predictability can also be altered by placing randomly occurring events on the level.

Unique Selling Proposition

What makes this game unique is that it uses physics based puzzles that are each built around a narrative. For example, a door with a physics puzzle is like an enemy character with a backstory. The physics puzzle could have many different forms, one of which being a maze that needs to be completed by moving an object through it.

Look and feel

The art style is a mix of German expressionism, steampunk and PS1 aesthetic. The visuals can be divided into two different types, which are day and nightmare. Day sections have slightly distorted geometry and somewhat possible architecture. These sections will have usual colors that are expected for the environment. The nightmare sections have distorted geometry and weird architecture. The world will have a dominant color and other complementary colors that guide the player. The soundscape contains warm and chill sounds in the normal world. Trippy and atmospheric (Creaks, drones) sounds in the nightmare world.



Demographics

The games target audience is ages 18 – 40 from western countries who play psychological horror games, and who seek the thrill of horror, identification, emotional bonding and intriguing narrative.

Resources

This game requires at least a programmer, a narrative designer, a character artist, an environment artist, a level designer and a sound designer. These task can be divided among 5-7 people, but will require the team members to have generalist skills. The approximate development time would be around 1,5 years.

The minimum required software: Blender, Unreal 5, Gimp, Any version control (For example Diversion).

The minimum required hardware: a computer setup that can reliably run Unreal 5, Blender, and Gimp.