Game Design Document

Elicatza

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Contents

Introduction

My submission for the Pirate Software game jam 2024.

Summary

Cube managing internal alchemy in a puzzling and shadowy world.

Theme interpretation

The themes are *Alchemy and Shadows*. I'm choosing to interpret alchemy in the direction of transformations. Specifically gender transformations and changes in internal alchemy. Aesthetically will display a more literal interpretation of alchemy.

Possibly the Taoist use of alchemy to attain immortality with focus on spirituality.

In regards to shadows, forceful isolation — an undesired retreat from social life — will be my interpretation. Contrast between light and dark will be employed with shadows to emphasise this effect.

My hopes with shadows is to be able to showcase the turning point when isolation no longer remains sufficient. Like Zarathustra, there comes a time for sharing your blossoming soul.

Inspiration

Nietzsche, Laozi (Tao Te Ching), Spinoza.

Software

- Raylib C
- Aseprite
- NeoVim

Target Audience

Myself

Concept

Once the theme is released:

- Figure out which story to tell.
- Create gameplay to aid story.
- Use Aseprite to find artstyle.
- I've never done audio before.

Gameplay

Life is a puzzle. The gameplay should reflect that. From completing them, you gain an understanding of the world and therefore yourself.

The player will be presented with several puzzles / actions. When completing tasks, the player learns how the character responds. Mostly bad. A pain and energy meter is what governs what actions are possible. You'll have to balance pain, energy and socialization. As a game maker I want the player to seek out socialization, which will progress the game, but causes fatigue and pain. Shadow and fatigue are equal. Pain represents all other ways of being hurt.

Puzzles that improve health and energy, will be boring, but necessary to achieve development. Downtime like this should invoke the player to think. The actions that cause development hurts you. Very *Tao Te Ching* if you will. Solving the mystery. Dying offers no way to replay (delete cookies to restart).

Mechanics

You are a cube. Glide around with arrow keys (wasd). Roll around with shift + arrow keys (wasd). Rolling causes pain. The ground will have different heights, forcing the player to roll.

During activities (puzzles), you'll have the additional ability to split the cube and causing pain. The other option is to mirror shape across line.

There will be two (or more) gameplay modes utilizing these mechanics. In one you create shapes, in another you traverse area, getting shapes to holes. Splits that do not end in holes, hurt you.

Story

TODO

Art

TODO

Audio

TODO

Don't have a microphone, nor software for creating music. I've heard silent films are all the rage, but I might have to look into public domain music.

Roadmap

#	Assignment	Date	Notes
1	Write roadmap	07-17	Basic overview of steps
2	Write GDD	07-17	Figure out themes and content
3	Basic build	07-18	C + Emscripten + Raylib fun
4	Quick puzzle demo	07-21	"Quick" they said
5	Puzzle formats	07-21	Byte array spec
6	Environment format	07-23	Embedded file format
7	Design environment	07-25	Where the player moves
8	Basic lighting	07-25	It Makes you see stuff
9	Design basic hud	07-25	User feedback
10	Integrate features	TODO	It's a game
11	Finalize gameplay	TODO	add whitespace?
X	Story	TODO	Write story
X	Animations	TODO	rotate, fade, etc.
X	Balancing	TODO	Give user "good" incentives
X	UI	TODO	Start, pause, end & status
X	ART style	TODO	How should the game look?
X	title	TODO	something something
X	Submit	TODO	And we're off