

Game Concept

Dolma Awaken is a 2D horror adventure platformer in a Metroidvania style. The player controls Dolma, a young girl forced into the Well of Jinns as part of a cruel trial designed by her mother, a powerful dark witch. Using a cursed mask that allows her to understand and manipulate jinns, Dolma must survive a hostile underground world, form spirit pacts, and uncover the true cost of power.

Game Production Pipeline (Visual Diagram)

Phase	Focus	Key Task	Outputs
Pre-Production	Vision & Planning	Vision definition, GDD outline, core mechanics, prototypes	GDD + playable prototype
Production	Development	Assets creation, gameplay systems, level design, audio	Fully playable game
PostProduction	Finalization	Polish, testing, optimization, release preparation	Gold

Pre-Production

Pre-production focuses on defining the creative vision and scope of **Dolma Awaken**. This phase establishes the game's horror tone, narrative themes, and Metroidvania structure. A Game Design Document (GDD) outlines core gameplay mechanics such as exploration, jinn manipulation, mask abilities, and progression systems. Early prototypes are developed to test movement, atmosphere, and the interaction between Dolma and jinns, ensuring the core gameplay is engaging before full production begins.

Production

During production, all major assets and systems are created and integrated. This includes character sprites, enemy designs, environments, animations, UI, and visual effects that support the horror atmosphere. Gameplay systems such as movement, combat, jinn pact mechanics, enemy AI, and level progression are fully implemented. Levels are built in an interconnected Metroidvania layout, and sound design and music are added to enhance tension and immersion.

Post-Production

Post-production is dedicated to refining and finalizing the game experience. This phase includes bug fixing, performance optimization, and gameplay balancing to maintain difficulty and tension. Visual and audio polish is applied, and extensive testing is conducted to ensure stability and clarity. Once complete, the game is prepared for release, including final builds, documentation, and distribution setup.

Team Roles Mapping

Project Context

Dolma Awaken is a 2D horror Metroidvania that combines exploration, narrative, and jinn-manipulation mechanics. The project requires close collaboration between design, programming, art, audio, QA, and production roles to maintain consistency in gameplay, tone, and technical execution.

Team Roles & Responsibilities

Game Designer

The Game Designer defines the core gameplay mechanics, Metroidvania progression, jinn interaction systems, and overall player experience. They maintain the GDD outline and ensure all features align with the game's vision and horror tone.

Narrative Designer

The Narrative Designer develops the story, characters, lore of the jinns, and environmental storytelling. They work closely with the Game Designer to integrate narrative elements into gameplay and level design.

Programmer

The Programmer implements gameplay systems such as movement, combat, jinn pact mechanics, enemy AI, and level progression. They also ensure technical stability, performance optimization, and system integration.

2D Artist

The 2D Artist creates characters, enemies, environments, animations, UI elements, and visual effects. Their work establishes the horror atmosphere and visual identity of the Well of Jinns.

Audio Designer

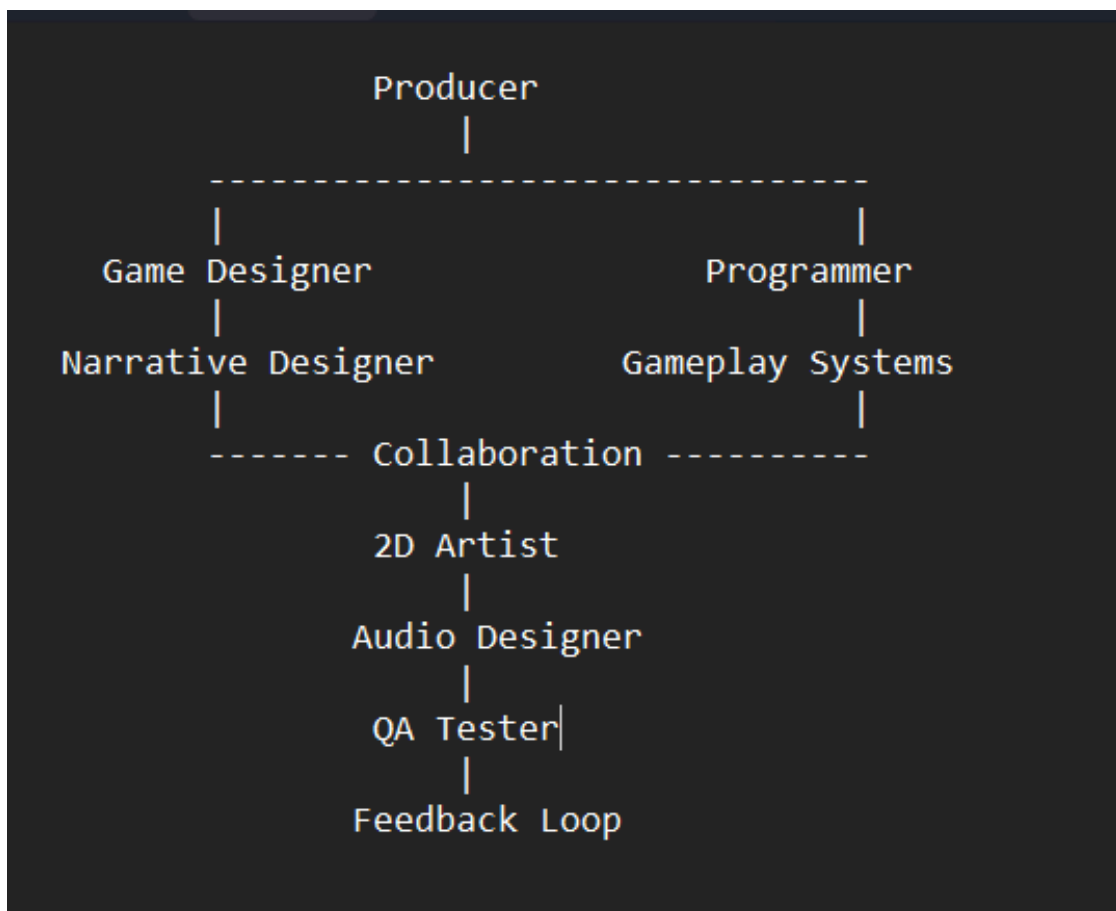
The Audio Designer produces sound effects, ambient audio, and music to reinforce tension and immersion. They collaborate with design and art to synchronize audio cues with gameplay and narrative moments.

QA Tester

The QA Tester identifies bugs, gameplay issues, balance problems, and usability concerns. They test builds throughout development and provide feedback to designers and programmers to improve stability and player experience.

Producer

The Producer manages schedules, task prioritization, and team communication. They ensure milestones are met and that the project stays aligned with scope, time, and quality goals.

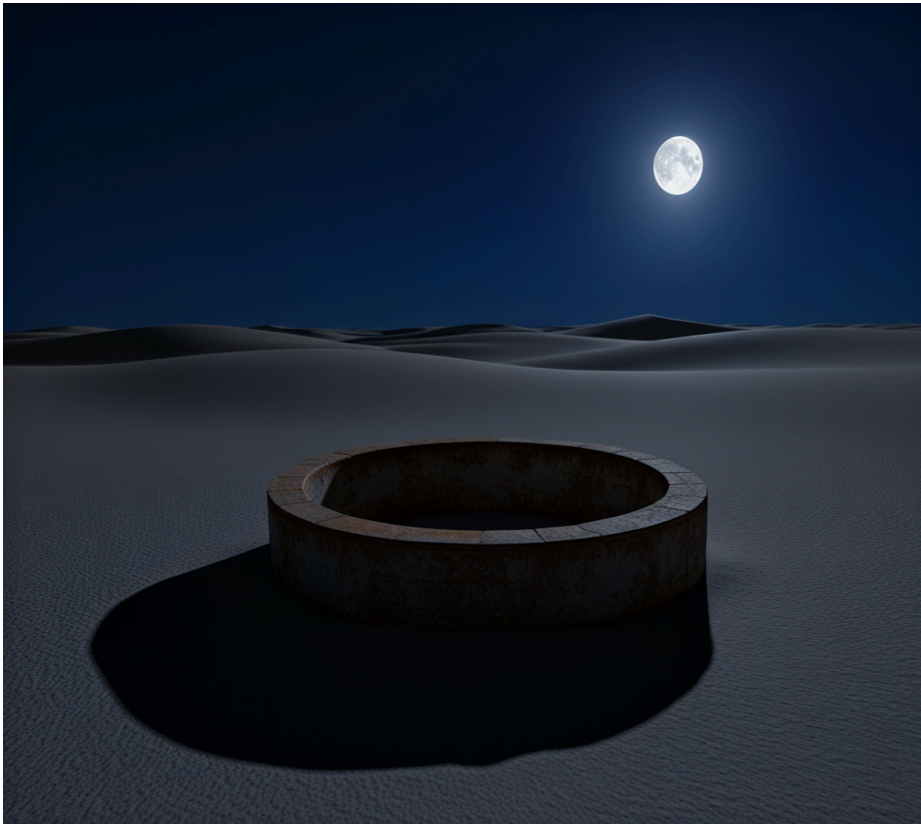


The Producer coordinates all roles and oversees progress. The Game Designer and Narrative Designer define the experience, which is implemented by the Programmer. Artists and Audio Designers build the audiovisual identity based on design direction. QA Testers continuously evaluate the game and feed issues back into design and programming, creating an iterative development loop.

Chosen Gameplay Mechanic

Jinn Pact Mechanic

Dolma uses a cursed mask to communicate with jinns and temporarily binds them to help with traversal or survival (platform creation, light, blocking hazards).



Feedback received:

“The mechanic feels thematically strong and visually consistent with the dark tone of the well and the cursed mask. Using the mask to interact with jinns is intuitive, but the prototype would benefit from a clearer, visible consequence when the mask is activated, such as visual distortion, increased danger, or temporary loss of safety. This would make each use feel more deliberate and reinforce the horror and risk associated with manipulating jinns.”



The prototype effectively communicated the horror tone and narrative weight of the trial, especially when paired with the imagery of the well, the cursed mask, and Dolma’s mother as an imposing figure. The jinn interaction mechanic felt intuitive and reinforced the idea that survival depends on understanding rather than force. However, testing revealed that the mask’s power needs a clearer, immediate consequence to emphasize risk and psychological pressure. Adding visual or gameplay penalties when using the mask would strengthen tension and reinforce the theme of manipulation and control. Overall, the prototype successfully validated the core concept while highlighting areas for emotional and mechanical refinement.