

= Secrets of Rætikon =

Secrets of Rætikon is an action @-@ adventure , open world video game developed and published by Broken Rules . The player controls a bird and must explore the environment of Rætikon to find its secrets . Game elements include animals with specific behaviors and ancient puzzles . Development began in 2011 and the game was formally announced in July 2013 and followed by alpha and Steam Early Access releases . Rætikon was released on April 17 , 2014 for Windows , OS X , and Linux platforms . It received mixed reviews from reviewers , who praised its artwork and movement physics , but criticized its inconsistency , lack of cohesion , and technical issues .

= = Gameplay = =

Secrets of Rætikon is a single @-@ player , story @-@ driven , open world sandbox action @-@ adventure video game . The player @-@ character takes form of a bird . The player controls the bird with three buttons : one that flaps its wings , another that takes items into the bird 's beak , and another that makes bird sounds . While the game can be played through keyboard and mouse , the developers instead recommend a controller .

The objective is to fly through the Rætikon environment to find its titular secrets , namely by collecting relics to power an ancient device . The environment is split into themed levels such as swamp , lagoon , mountaintops , and forests . Glowing are shards dispersed throughout each level , which can be collected and redeemed at an altar within each themed level for a glowing relic . These relics can be returned to where the player started the game to power a mysterious , ancient device . The player @-@ character carries the relics past aggressive enemies and treacherous environment , and completes puzzles of reconstructing animal statues from its pieces to access new levels . Each level features different animals and contain environmental objects that player can interact with .

= = Development = =

Rætikon was first announced in July 2013 , though its development began in 2011 . The game 's Viennese developer and publisher , Broken Rules Games , had previously worked on the 2012 Wii U game Chasing Aurora , which itself was based on a multiplayer prototype for Rætikon . The game is partly based on an Alps region culture conquered by the Roman Empire . Its visuals were inspired by dream @-@ like flying sensations . In an effort to increase the game 's replay value , the developers emphasized its artificial intelligence , physics , and interactive qualities , including animal @-@ specific behaviors and strippable plant foliage .

Broken Rules released an alpha version of the game in October 2013 . Around the same time , they announced an Indiegogo crowdfunding campaign in lieu of searching for a publisher . The game later entered Steam Early Access . Rætikon was released on April 17 , 2014 for Windows , OS X , and Linux platforms via Steam , the Mac App Store , and the Humble Store . The Steam edition of the game supports Steam Workshop with a level editor for users to build and share original content .

= = Reception = =

The game received " mixed or average reviews " , according to video game review score aggregator Metacritic . Reviewers praised the game 's artwork and movement physics , but criticized its lack of cohesion . Some appreciated the moments where the game 's elements coalesced . They estimated the game to run between two and three hours in length .

Joystiq 's Sam Prell said that the adventure felt restrictive and linear , " like a guided tour " . He wrote that Rætikon 's map design encourages players to think methodically about their path rather than to explore the game as a non @-@ linear open world . In this way , he felt that its gameplay philosophies contradicted . Hardcore Gamer 's Geoff Thew wrote that the game " commits a number of fundamental design sins " as one of " few games so ceaselessly tiring to play " . He felt that the

animals who steal the game objectives created " busywork " , and complained of copious backtracking and the " straight up discourteous " exclusion of an in @-@ game map . Eurogamer 's Jon Denton added that numerous " extremely irritating conflicts " with off @-@ screen animals hurt the game 's pacing . He noted its gameplay influence from Fez and compared its blue shards game mechanics to that of Dark Souls . Denton did not feel that the game deserved the amount of effort it required of its players to understand its story . Reviewers noted technical issues and glitches within the game . Prell noted issues in the game 's physics and game save features . As Rætikon does not support manual saves , he frequently found his progress automatically saved while his player @-@ character was stuck in the environment . Thew of Hardcore Gamer found similar physics glitches that trapped him in the environment , which led him to use his keyboard alongside the Xbox 360 controller to circumvent controller compatibility issues .

When mentioning the game 's art style , most reviewers gave positive response . Denton described the style as a " beautifully drawn , angular 2D world " . Prell wrote that Rætikon 's triangle @-@ based art style made its characters feel like papercraft and gave the game " a sense of reverence and spirituality " when complemented by the story , and gave comparison to Shadow of the Colossus . Thew gave similar response noting that it is reminiscent of Origami . However , Thew continued to state that while the visuals were " distinctive " , the game 's " alpine " area was " clichéd and predictable " and its " good looks and smooth movement mechanics " did not compensate for the rest of the game 's design . He found the game " shallow " , uninteresting , and " a disappointment ... on almost every level " . Denton of Eurogamer praised the moments where he figured out how to find a shard or alphabet piece , but ultimately found Rætikon " awkward " , with " substance did not live up to its style " , and causing unjustified and unreasonable frustration .