Outside In: Design Statement

Outside In is a 3 to 4 player board game based on the concept of "together". This is a cooperative art game where players work together against the board. **It** is an unidentified opponent that slowly covers the board in darkness. With every turn, the world (playing area) becomes smaller and smaller, and the available resources becomes more and more limited. When **It** takes over the entire board, all players lose. The players must work together to completely eradicate **It** from the board. They must work together to keep **It** at bay, before the problem becomes insurmountable.

Each player will randomly pick 1 role card, and work towards collecting the requirements stated on their chosen card. They face the dilemma of choosing between fulfilling their own requirements or helping the others for the long term benefit of everyone. There is nothing in the rules that explicitly prompts the player to help each other, but if they do not, they will not be able to keep up with the pace **It** moves at. They might find that **It** moves rather slowly at the start of the game, as **It** moves along the outer edges of the playing area. However, rings gets smaller closer to the center of the board, hence as **It** covers more and more area, play gets more and more difficult. Players will quickly find themselves using up all their resources to keep themselves alive.

Outside In aims to bring across the message that even though we might have different goals, we all share the same responsibility of protecting our world. Cheesy as it might be, we literally are all on this world together, and if we focus too hard on our individual goals and ignore the world falling apart around us, nobody wins. It also highlights the importance of social cohesion, of putting aside our differences and working together in times of crisis. We all have our individual talents, and no matter how small, we can always help another in some way. We should also not be afraid to ask for help or offer help. If we know that we are in over our heads, we must not forget that there are others who can support us, and help us overcome the obstacles we face.

Outside In was a collaborative effort with 3 other people, over the course of 3 weeks. We were each assigned a role of either Producer, Designer, Tester or Assets developer. I was the game designer and was responsible for the game structure and mechanics, how it should be played, and how the theme emerges through play. I decided the aesthetic style of the game, and wrote and designed the rulebook and role cards

Through this project, I learnt how some game rules can be open for interpretation, adding layers of meanings based on the variations in play it creates. The contrast between different play styles further highlights the diverse possibilities of the experience of play. Through rounds of playtesting, we learnt firsthand how games work best with simple rules that can create complex play possibilities.

Files Associated:

1.   OutsideIn_GameplayDescription.pdf
2.   OutsideIn_GameBoard.png
3.   OutsideIn_RuleBook.pdf
4.   OutsideIn_RoleCards.pdf
5.   OutsideIn_EventCardsList.pdf