

Art Style Guide

Mystic Die Studios



Purpose. The single source of truth for how *Reconnection* looks. The game tells two stories in two worlds — a tabletop campaign and the friends playing it — so it deliberately swaps between **two art styles**. This page defines both, plus the shared systems (lighting, UI, VFX, color palettes). Art in this page is both from the original ASG as well as Pinterest.

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1. Core style — two worlds, two looks

Reconnection runs a **meta narrative**: estranged friends rebuilding lost friendships by playing a tabletop RPG together. The presentation mirrors that premise by switching between two distinct styles.

	Real World	Campaign World
What it is	The friends at the table	The TTRPG fantasy they play
Camera	First-person, 2D, from the player’s lens	3D top-down isometric movable. Can move the camera around the characters to either zoom in or zoom out
Characters	2D stills that appear when a friend speaks	Full 3D fantasy heroes and props
Mood	Warm, cozy, nostalgic, realistic	Magical, dramatic, fantastical

Influence A familiar home / game night

Mesoamerican & Native culture inspiration
+ TTRPG fantasy

2. The Real World Style

- **Perspective:** First-person 2D, viewed through the player character's eyes. The PC faces the GM (Valentin / "Val"), so the GM is always on screen.
- **Friends as stills:** The other players are drawn as **2D character stills** that appear when they talk.
- **Atmosphere:** Warm, cozy, and nostalgic, the base palette leans into golden-hour indoors: warm ambers, browns, lamp-light yellows, and soft reds, evoking string lights. The house itself should be treated as a real, continuous location with the same layout, same clutter, and same photos on the wall. Environmental details (board game boxes, an old console, and snacks) reward players who look closely and reinforce the sense of a friend group with real history.
- **Intro cutscene:** The player gets a call from Val, then drives to Val's house, then arrives and meets the others, then they begin the campaign.
- **Big Choices happen here:** Real-world dialogue is where relationships are nurtured or strained (see *Color palettes*). The choices the player makes can affect the environment around them and the lighting/opinions of the other players
- **Realism:** On the cartoon-ish end, close to the original 2D style referenced below, with proportions kept grounded and naturalistic rather than exaggerated.
- **Line Work:** Heavily inked, similar to JoJo's Bizarre Adventure but dialed back. It uses confident, slightly weighted linework on characters, and that line weight can change due to the emotional intensity, going slightly thicker and rougher during a tense confrontation and cleaner during warm, cozy beats. Environments use much thinner lines than characters so the cast always reads as the focal layer.



3. The Campaign World Style

- **Description:** A fantasy world of magic and magical creatures, **inspired by Mesoamerican cultures**, which is visible in the characters, environments, magic, enemies, and lore.
- **Perspective:** Players explore it through a 3D top-down camera, giving a good sense of layout and scale as the party moves through the world.
- **Diorama / miniature read:** Post-processing does a lot of the identity work here: cell shading, miniature faking, and tilt-shift combine to make the world read like painted figurines on a tabletop, reinforcing the idea that this is the game being played by the friends back in the Real World, the diorama look is a visual echo of the tabletop framing device rather than just a stylistic filter.

- **Atmosphere:** Magical, fantastical, and meant to entertain. This world should feel clearly and completely separated from the Real World section, both narratively and visually, so stepping into it feels like a genuine shift in register. The player should forget this is a campaign until they are thrown back into the real world. Color plays a direct role in that: rather than the warm, grounded palette of the house, the Campaign World's colors should lean into the mystical qualities of each environment (glowing magical effects, unnatural colorful fog and lights), giving each location its own distinct color identity tied to its lore and function.
 - **Realism:** Achieved mainly through texture work rather than geometry. Models can stay relatively low-poly, with detail and richness coming from the surface textures themselves, keeping the diorama read intact while still giving the world tactile, believable materials.
 - **Line Work:** Line work carries over from the Real World's heavy inked style, but with a key difference: instead of black outlines, lines are rendered in color, keeping character and environment silhouettes clearly defined while feeling more at home in a stylized, painterly fantasy space than a harsher black-lined comic look would.
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4. Lighting & shaders

Real World lighting

Warm and everyday — house lamps and soft natural ambient light. Designed to feel **cozy, nostalgic, familiar**, reinforcing the home setting. Accent lights such as lamps and wall lights will be used to add more color and warmth to the home. They will compliment furniture and outfits of the characters. Less accent lights will be used in the beginning, showing the estrangement of the friends. As time goes on, it is clear that someone has gotten up to turn on more lights. This shows the friendship rekindling, making the space warmer.

Campaign World lighting

Dramatic, high-contrast to sell the magical feel. Lighting shifts hard from level to level. Instead of physical light fixtures adding most of the color, the lighting in this world will be colored. For example, some objects could emit blues, purples, and pinks, the moon could be more blue than white, and the sun an atypical yellow/orange. At first, the world/global light actors are cooler tones with colors to support it. Over time, as the friends become closer, world/global actors become warmer.

Level	Time / place	Lighting
Tutorial	Daytime, start of the adventure	Bright; mostly directional + atmospheric light

Level 1	Dramatic sunset , encampment	Warm directional + VFX light, contrasting the cooler encampment palette
Level 2	Cave , nighttime	Dark; lit mainly by VFX sources (e.g. the blue fire)

- Lighting carries heavy weight on **spells and attacks**, creating vibrancy in combat.

Shaders

- A **water shader** on the lake simulates flowing water (the first implemented shader).
- A **lava shader**?
- A **full post processing shader** to make the campaign world look more saturated. (or could do this through an **infinite post processing volume**)
 - A shader or volume for darker areas- increasing the exposure for visibility, while staying darker, but not increasing the light complexity

5. UI

Surface	Direction
Menu UI	The menu UI should carry the pen-and-paper feel of classic tabletop RPGs, built around the idea that everything on screen is something Val has physically scribbled and doodled into her notebooks between sessions. Menus, item descriptions, and system text can all take on a handwritten, slightly imperfect quality rather than a clean digital font, with small margin doodles or crossed-out notes as optional flourishes where space allows. Tabs within the settings and pause menus should read as sticky tab bookmarks poking out from the edge of a notebook, the kind you'd flag a favorite page with, giving navigation a tactile, physical logic rather than a standard flat UI bar. The paper itself should avoid the ruled-line look typically associated with notebooks, leaning instead toward a sketchpad feel . It should be slightly textured, unlined, with room for doodles and margin notes, which reinforces the sense that this is Val's personal creative space rather than a formal rulebook.
Combat UI	Combat UI shifts into a different visual language, drawing heavily from Mesoamerican art and architecture to stay consistent with the Campaign World it supports. Iconography, borders, health and resource indicators, and turn-order displays can pull from motifs like carved stonework, geometric patterning, and glyph-style symbols, so combat feels like a natural extension of the world rather than a generic overlay dropped on top of it. Keeping this visual throughline between the Campaign World and its Combat UI helps preserve

immersion during the moments, like battles, where the player is most actively engaging with the fantasy setting.

6. Characters

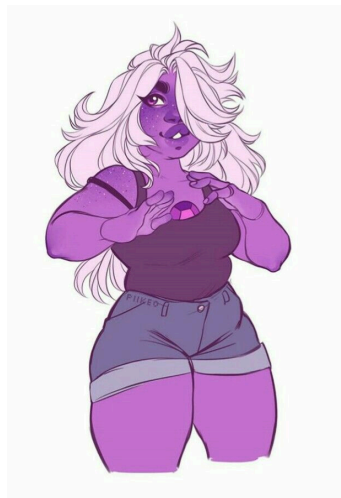
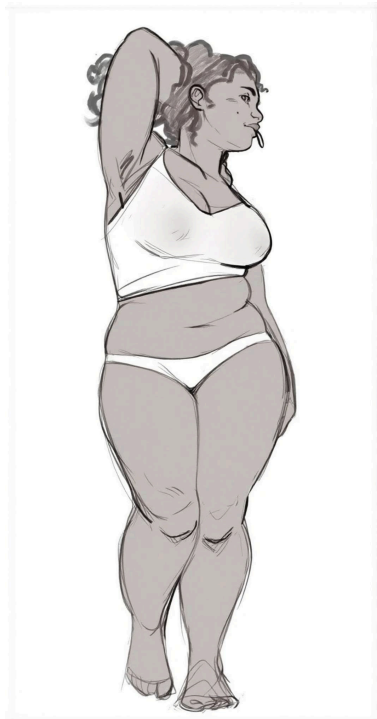
4 main characters total; 3 have both a real-world and a campaign-world version. Each campaign hero is grounded in a specific Native / Mesoamerican cultural influence.

The Player — *Real World Perspective Character*

- **Influence:** Adaptable to the human player
- **Look:** Not visible. Want players to imagine themselves as the character.
- **Story:** One of the old childhood friends that lost touch with the group. This is the first time they have spoken to the others in years.

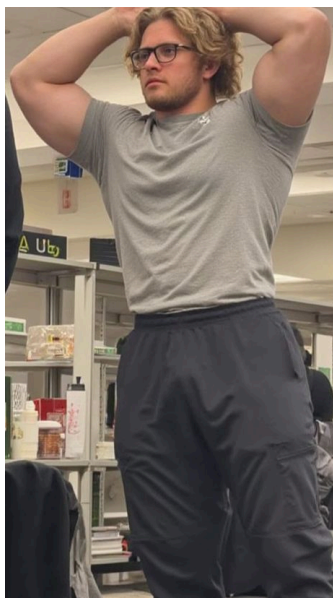
Shae — *Real World Killa Player*

- **Influence:** Native American influence (Cherokee?)
- **Personality:** High energy, passionate, ambitious, bubbly, loves the dark and mysterious, a bit witchy/spiritual.
- **Look:** On the chubby side, flowy dress, lots of layers (maybe mimicking feathers), long hair (play around with braided style), wears a lot of jewelry accessories. (Also somewhat colorful maybe red, but still incorporates black into her outfits)
- **Story:** High-energy, passionate, ambitious; drawn to the dark and mysterious. Always wanted to play but never had the time or the friends, thrilled to reunite and finally play.



Oscar — *Real World Pacari Player*

- **Influence:** MesoAmerican influence (unsure specific culture)
- **Personality:** athlete, gym-bro, very accepting and excited to play, f-boy (sorta), Chad (sorta), part geek, easy-going, puts his all into everything he does.
- **Look:** Big and bulky, very clearly athletic, wears gym clothes, very colorful outfit, could show up in a backwards hat, short hair.
- **Story:** Full-time athlete, part-time geek; easygoing “go with the flow.” New to the rules but eager to learn, and gets so invested he feels like he *becomes* his character.



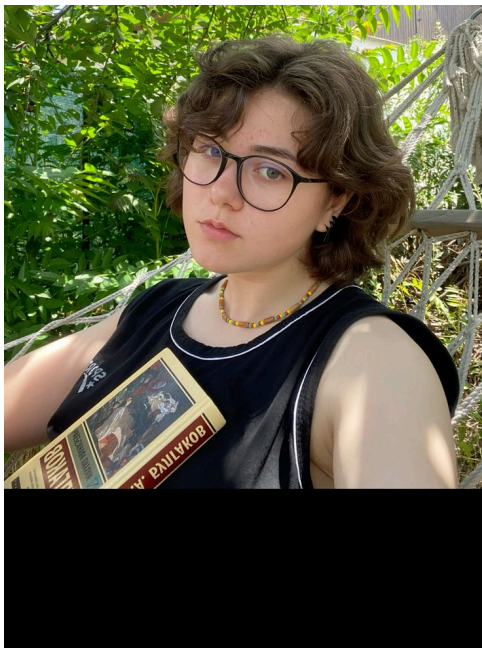
Valentin — *Real World DM*

- **Influence:** Puerto Rican influence
- **Personality:** Quiet around strangers, animated around friends, creative, loves to doodle and draw, loves to write (obviously) but a lot in spare time, has multiple world creations, maximalism.
- **Look:** Short hair brown hair, glasses, pastels, colorful hair clip accessories, wears casual clothes dressed up with accessories.
- **Story:** The Dungeon Master of the game. She spent so long creating this world and loves delving into its depths, developing every little piece of it she can. In childhood, was the “glue friend.” She is the one who stayed in contact with everyone and reached back



out.





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Karu — *the Nomad* · the player's hero

- **Influence:** Native American + Mesoamerican inspired

- **Form:** masked, VERY androgynous human.
- **Look:** heavily decorated mask, light, somewhat flowy clothing built for fast movement and ranged attacks.
- **Color Palatte:** Earthy colors, greens, oranges as an accent color, some browns.
- **Role:** The ranged fighter, can also handle some melee attacks, but best at ranged.
- **Story:** The deciding force of the group. They are the final say in certain decisions and try to do the best for the group, but can also destroy everything if they do not balance things properly.

The Scry (Killa) — *the Healer* · Shae's hero

- **Influence:** Native American inspired (Cherokee?)
- **Form:** red tailed hawk/harpy / bird woman (human face and form, bird features).
- **Look:** tight fit aerodynamic clothing, big and very tall, lots of feathers, short feathers for hair with two very long feathers (like native braids?), no arms only wings, long legs with clawed feet.
- **Color Palatte:** Lots from red tailed hawk, dark and light browns, orangey tones, reds ONLY in tail feathers/bottom cloth, **TEAL BLUE** accents (look at authentic native jewelry).
- **Role:** heals allies and debuffs enemies (wind magic).
- **Story:** IN PROGRESS.

The Titan (Pacari) — *the Tank* · Oscar's hero

- **Influence:** Mesoamerican · **Form:** human / **jaguar** hybrid.
- **Look:** armor resembling **dried lava**, with the jaguar pattern formed *by* the lava; jaguar cowl; wields a **macuahuitl**.
- **Story:** an honorable, respected soldier of the coastal army who has protected many towns. Sent on this mission by the Capital, he carries it with pride and fights to punish those who would harm his homeland.
- **Influence:** Mesoamerican inspired (Aztec?)
- **Form:** (DND) Tabaxi / **Jaguar** / human-cat hybrid.
- **Look:** VERY Aztec inspired armor, wears less armor (look at original model), chest piece that connects waist armor and neck armor (Chest piece made of dried lava), Gold armor, Wrist armor, wields a macuahuitl, layered short-ish loincloth.

- **Color Palatte:** Traditional jaguar colors for fur (although artists play around with both natural and unnatural colors), browns, GOLD, oranges, black and greys.
- **Role:** Tank character, front lines, hits hard.
- **Story:** IN PROGRESS.

General Philimon — *the General of Serontil* · antagonist

- **Form:** Elven Man
- **Look:** Custom one of a kind icy armor, PRISTINE, not a scratch on it, Pale, Spiky ICE white hair with LITERAL frosted tips (true ice, not dye).
- **Personality:** supreme arrogance, believes himself superior and lets his army fight for him. The confidence **evaporates the moment he's vulnerable**: cornered, he begs for mercy and will do anything to survive.

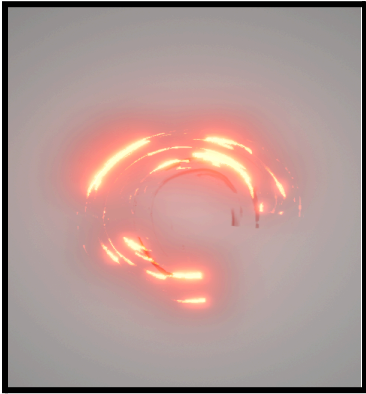
Enemies

- **Helmet Wisp** — the **souls of fallen Serontil soldiers**, trapped in an icy purgatory and still serving the army they died for.
- **Granizo** — the **souls of captured Ysgilati (Ysgiloti) people**, forced to serve their invaders in the afterlife.
- Together they form the **front line of the Serontil army**, fought across many levels.

7. VFX

Signature effects authored so far: **Nomad** attack, **Scry** healing, **Granizo** attack, **Titan** attack, and **Frozen** (status/elemental). Lighting and VFX are the main source of vibrancy in campaign combat.

Description	VFX
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• Old Karu attack • Using a bow • Green and nature • Leaf motifs	
• Old Killa Heal • Blue similar to the accents, but should change to another warm, nature color • Keep healing VFX very magical, but natural colors and motifs.	
• Old Titan attack • Lava motif	

8. Environments

- Show **both** worlds — the real table and the fantasy campaign.
- Use post-processing (**cell shading, Miniature Faking, Tilt-Shift**) to bring out the **miniature / tabletop** look of the campaign characters.

- The campaign world leans on **fantasy themes filtered through Mesoamerican design**.
 - **Campaign levels:** Tutorial / Town → Level 1 (sunset encampment) → Level 2 (cave, blue fire).
 - **Assets:** low-poly **trees** with texture variations for reuse across levels.
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9. Color palettes

💡 **Color logic (both worlds).** Color **foreshadows relationships and choices**. **Brighter / more vibrant** = a more **positive** outcome or bond; **cooler / darker / more somber** = a more **negative** one. In the Real World, each character has its own ways to be nurtured or hindered, and the palette reflects that current state.

The named palettes below are the originals from the ASG. Hex values are read directly from these swatches for reference when matching materials, UI, or marketing.

Palette	Hex (read from the swatches above)
Real World	#2E1209 · #C27437 · #79381D · #7DA09F
Forest Levels	#C8DA8D · #94C289
Ice Levels (Serontil)	#2D3034 · #B13D3F · #4BB6CC · #E17135
Pacari	#260E0B · #894C21
Killa	#6D231C · #845E3B · #4DB0D0 · #7A3832
Karu	#D9CABC · #393031

Reconnection ASG · internal reference. Coastal / Indigenous-inspired cultures are fictional and should be developed with cultural consultants.