

Shadow Beast

DESIGN DOCUMENT

By OddRedSock for Pirate Software Game Jam 15

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Introduction



Game Summary Pitch

Shadow beast is a puzzle platformer game where the player can temporarily transform from a corporeal being to a shadow beast via alchemical means. In shadow form, they can not interact with the physical world, and can not enter into light but can pass through gates spikes etc.

Inspiration

Shady Part of Me

Shady Part of Me allows the player to **switch between controlling a little girl and her shadow**, and using **each character's different abilities to solve puzzles** and traverse different 2D and 3D platforming areas.



Luigi's Mansion 3

Luigi's Mansion 3 is another game where **control can be switched to a non corporeal being (Gooigi)**. The new abilities like **squeezing through tight spaces, and not taking damage from things like spikes** lead to interesting puzzles and situations.



Player Experience

While trying to solve the **platforming puzzles** in each room, the player must learn and use their knowledge of the **interactions of the different forms and the environment** to understand how to pass through each area and reach the book of knowledge at the end. The potions that enable them to change form are sometimes **optional to collect**, but to achieve a full flask (think 3 stars in similar games) on each level all 3 potions must be collected.

Platform

The game is developed to be released on Windows, Mac, Linux and Web. The casual / mobile nature of the game lends it to be released on Android and Apple devices as well, but that is out of scope for now as it would need additional onscreen controls.

Development Software

- Godot 4.3.0-beta3 for programming (beta3 for better web export support)
- Aseprite and Clip Paint Studio for graphics and UI
- Blender for 3D modelling and animation
- Audacity for music and SFX

Genre

Single player, puzzle, platformer

Target Audience

With fairly simple gameplay and mechanics, this game is marketed to at least **casual game players** who are up for puzzling challenges, as well as more veteran players up for solving complicated or logical problems if wanting to achieve full scores on each level.

Concept

Gameplay overview

The player controls an aspiring alchemist, who can use a special potion to **temporarily transform** into a shadow beast. When in shadow form, they **can not interact with the physical world, but can pass through obstacles** like gates and be unharmed by spikes. They are however vulnerable to light sources. The player can **strategically manipulate their form between shadow and corporeal** to solve puzzles and navigate the rooms of the order of alchemists to obtain the tomes of knowledge to further their studies.

Theme Interpretation (Shadow and Alchemy)

"Alchemy" - The process of transformation.

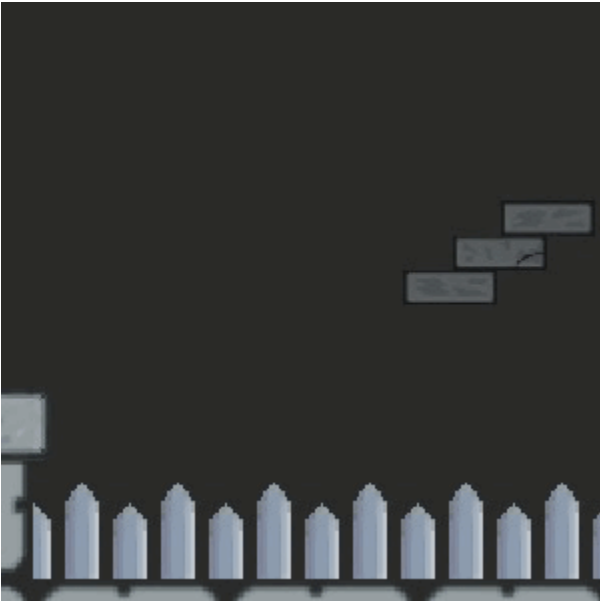
"Shadow" - A dark figure or image cast on a surface due to the absence or intercepting of light.

The player can use a potion to temporarily transform from a corporeal being into a non-corporeal shadow beast. This transformation is alchemy at play.

The shadow beast itself is non-corporeal, made of the absence of light, and takes on the physical properties of a shadow.

The decision of when to transform between forms to use the unique abilities of each is the key to solving the puzzles and allowing progression. For example, switching to shadow form to pass through a locked gate, but needing to be corporeal to press a switch or climb a ladder.

Primary Mechanics

Mechanic	Animated Mockup (Art not necessarily final)
<u>Form Switching</u> Switching between corporeal and non-corporeal forms	 A character with a white beard and dark clothing stands on a grey stone platform. The background is black, and the character is rendered in a pixelated, 3D style.
<u>Spikes</u> Spikes are dangerous when corporeal but can safely be bypassed when non-corporeal	 A character stands on a grey stone platform. The background is black, and the character is rendered in a pixelated, 3D style. The platform has a row of spikes along its edge.

Mechanic	Animated Mockup (Art not necessarily final)
<u>Gates / Fences / Non-Solid Obstacles</u> The non-corporeal form can pass freely through non-solid obstacles.	
<u>Light Sources</u> Light sources are dangerous when non-corporeal but can safely be bypassed when corporeal	

Mechanic	Animated Mockup (Art not necessarily final)
<u>Interactables</u> Interactable objects in the physical world can only be interacted with when in corporeal form.	

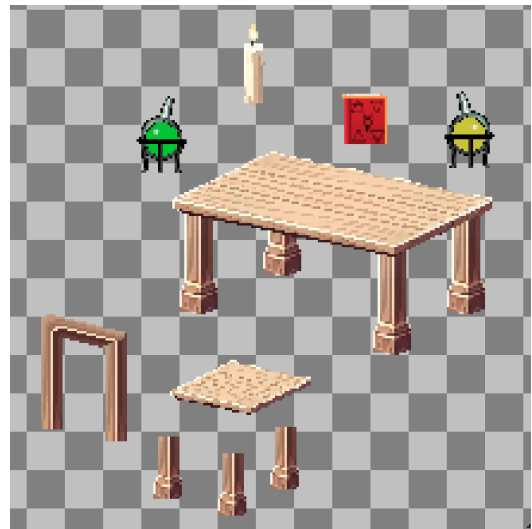
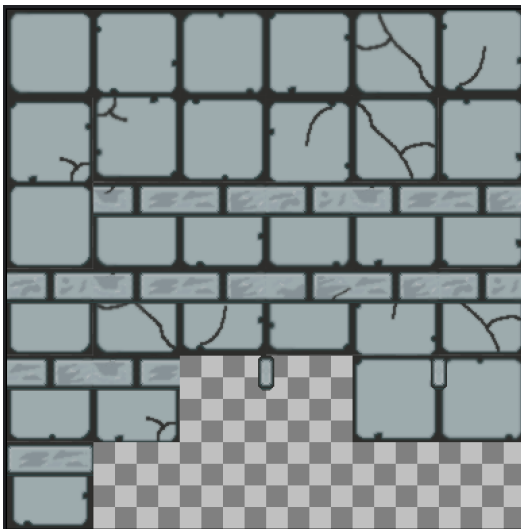
Secondary Mechanics

Mechanic	Animated Mockup (Art not necessarily final)
<u>Stealth</u> When in non-corporeal form, enemies could be avoided by blending into the shadows.	
<u>Grounding Stone</u> When in corporeal form, a grounding stone can be obtained and placed as a point to return to when switching back from non-corporeal form	

Art

Design

For the prototype, **large tiled pixel art** will be used for environments and items due to relative skill and velocity of producing assets in this range. This will use a **limited pallet** to match a **dark shadowy castle / dungeon vibe** with **bright colours for items** to make them stand out.



The player character sprites (person and shadow beast) will be created **based on 3D models**. These models will be rigged and animated in blender. They are then imported into Godot, **projected onto a 2D plane**, **scaled** down, **shaders** added, and then each frame exported as a sprite. These sprites are then **hand edited** and cleaned up in Aseprite to product the animated sprite sheets.



Audio

Music

To add to the overall theme and vibe of the game, there will be background music. This will be relatively non-intrusive to not distract the player from the puzzles. This will be sourced from an existing library of purchased game music.

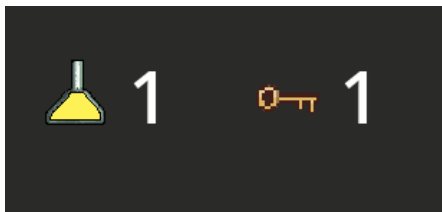
Sound Effects

Sounds effects will be used to give weight and feedback to the player's actions but will be used sparingly as these same limited number of action will be repeated many times. For simplicity and velocity, mouth sounds will be used to create these effects.

Game Experience

UI

In game UI will be minimal as the only items to keep track of are the number of potions and keys. The player's current form will be very obvious, thus does not need dedicated UI, though an indicator for when shadow form is about to run out is needed.



Progress through the levels is indicated on the level select screen. Completing a level will unlock the next one. Completing a level by collecting 0, 1, 2 or 3 potions will fill the flask for that level. Collection of all 3 potions will fill the flask and make it sparkle to indicate mastery of that level. A purple mushroom will denote the secret mushroom has been found



Controls

Keyboard

WASD -> Move

Space -> Jump

Shift -> Use a potion to transform into a shadow beast.

Delete -> Restart level

Controller

Left Analog Stick -> Move

Bottom Button (Xbox A, Sony Cross, Nintendo B) -> Jump

Right Bumper / Trigger (Xbox RT / RB, Sony R1 / R2, Nintendo

Right Shoulder) -> Use a potion to transform into a shadow beast.

Top Button (Xbox Y, Sony Triangle, Nintendo X) -> Restart level

Development Timeline

MINIMUM VIABLE PRODUCT

#	Assignment	Type	Status	Finish By	Notes
1	Design Document	Other ▾	Finished ▾	Jul 20,...	
2	Project Setup	Coding ▾	Finished ▾	Jul 18,...	
3	CI / Itch.io deploy	Coding ▾	Finished ▾	18 Jul ...	
4	Main menu / Settings	Coding ▾	Finished ▾	Jul 18,...	
5	Prototype tile set	Art ▾	Finished ▾	Jul 18,...	
6	Testing scene	Coding ▾	Finished ▾	18 Jul ...	
7	Player movement	Coding ▾	Finished ▾	Jul 19,...	
8	Form switching	Coding ▾	Finished ▾	19 Jul ...	
9	Lights	Coding ▾	Finished ▾	Jul 20,...	
10	Spikes	Coding ▾	Finished ▾	Jul 21,...	
11	Non-solid objects	Coding ▾	Finished ▾	Jul 21,...	
12	Interactables	Coding ▾	Finished ▾	Jul 24,...	
13	Player animation	Art ▾	Finished ▾	Jul 25,...	
14	Level progress / restart	Coding ▾	Finished ▾	26 Jul ...	
15	Sound effects	Audio ▾	Finished ▾	Jul 28,...	
16	Pause menu	Coding ▾	Finished ▾	Jul 26,...	
17	Save / Load	Coding ▾	Finished ▾	24 Jul ...	
18	Dungeon designs	Other ▾	Finished ▾	Jul 30,...	
19	Any extra polish	Other ▾	Finished ▾	Jul 30,...	
20	SUBMIT	Other ▾	Finished ▾	Jul 30,...	

BEYOND (if ahead of schedule / extra time)

Stealth	Coding ▾	Not sta... ▾	Enemies out of scope for prototype, thus no stealth
Grounding Stone	Coding ▾	Not sta... ▾	Additional mechanic to assist in level design
Timers / speed run mode	Coding ▾	In progr... ▾	Timers implemented but no way to display or high scores yet
Secrets / Easter eggs	Coding ▾	In progr... ▾	Hidden areas and secret pickup are done. Plans to hide a Porta Cipher in the environment, not going to be done in time