

In Another's Shadow

DESIGN DOCUMENT

By Morn and Nicholas for Pirate Software Game Jam 15

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Introduction

Game Summary Pitch

- A family of shades (shadow creatures) is disturbed by a human leaving the light on which restricts the shadows they can travel in. One of these shades, named Shen, takes up the task of traveling through the house up to the circuit breaker to return peace to their kind and along the way discovers things about themselves.

Inspiration

- Fullmetal Alchemist (Manipulating shadows, encoding alchemy notes)
- Schim (Shadow traversal)
- Untitled Goose Game (Chaotic puzzle solutions)

Player Experience

- Small puzzles where players manipulate shadows to traverse.
- The player must learn how the things they manipulate interact to make a proper path.
- Players question what it means to be “better” through Shen’s journey
- Novel experience of traveling as an endearing shadow in a cluttered, obscure house

Development Software

- Unity 2022.3.29f1
- Audacity
- Bosca Ceoil
- Autodesk Sketchbook

Genre: Adventure, Puzzle, Narrative

Game Link: <https://nick-will.itch.io/in-anothers-shadow>

Concept

Gameplay Overview

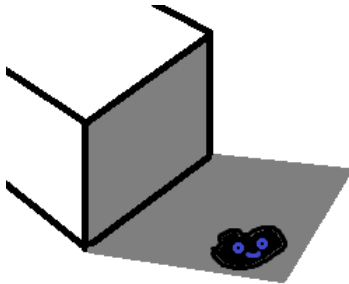
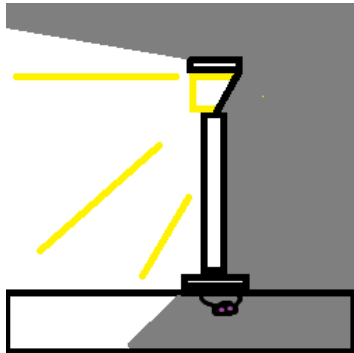
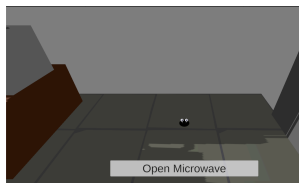
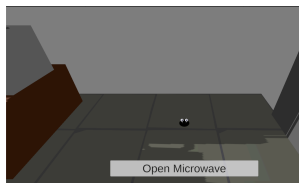
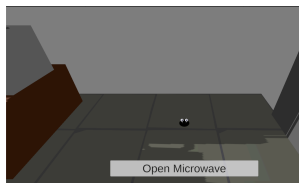
- The player controls a shade that can only exist on surfaces upon which shadows are cast.
- The shade can manipulate objects' shadows to their benefit.
- There are four levels with purely environmental puzzles.

Theme Interpretation (Shadow Alchemy)

Interpretation: Refinement and its Philosophy; "Why would you want to live in the shadow of something? Would you?"

- *Shadow:*
 - **Refinement and Philosophy:** Shen battles a feeling of inferiority, as they literally can only survive "in the shadow" of someone or something.
- *Alchemy:*
 - **Refinement:** Shen manipulates the world around them into their needs – into something "better"
 - **Philosophy:** Narrative and gameplay forces Shen to experience an "inferior" state (only bound to traveling) to a "better" state (being able to control their life), similar to the conversion from any object to the Philosopher's Stone

Mechanics

Mechanic	Mockup	Execution				
<u>Shadow Traversal</u> Player can only move when touching shadows						
<u>Shadow Manipulation</u> Player can interact with object whose shadow they're in to control it in some way		<table><tr><td></td><td>Manipulate Action Prompt (Activate via Space Bar)</td></tr><tr><td></td><td>Shadow particles indicate what players can manipulate</td></tr></table>		Manipulate Action Prompt (Activate via Space Bar)		Shadow particles indicate what players can manipulate
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	Shadow particles indicate what players can manipulate					

Game Experience

UI

- Players have access to the Main Menu and can pause or restart a level.
- When players manipulate objects, a Manipulation Prompt will appear on the screen – indicating possible action and results.
- The End Choice Prompt are story-based options – following the narrative of inferiority and growth.
 - “Basement Only” - will only shut down the basement, representing Shen’s healthy self-confidence
 - “All of Them” - shut down all circuits in house, representing Shen’s bravado

Controls - PC

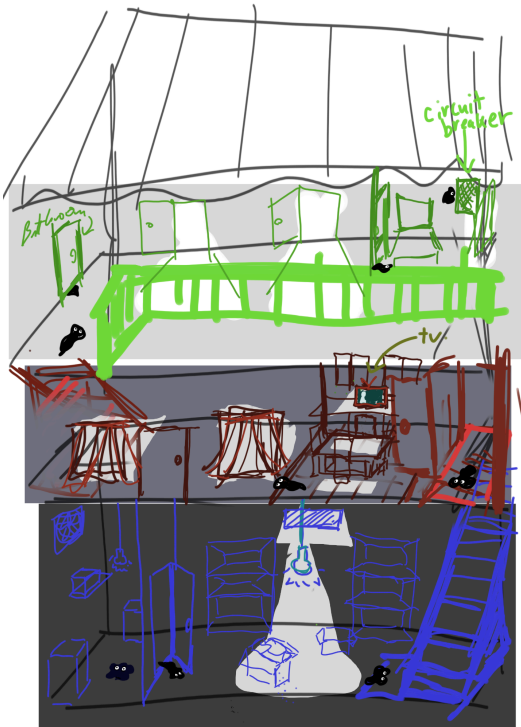
- WASD - Move
- Space - Manipulate
- E - Change Perspective

Art

Using the Eldamar Studio Asset Pack and hand drawn 2D facial features shows the contrasts between the player and the environment whilst being visually charming. Whilst simple, 3D assets showed the grandeur of people (representing an enlightened Philosopher’s Stone) versus the endearing, two-dimensional Shades (representing impure matter) as the game explores what it means to be “better.”

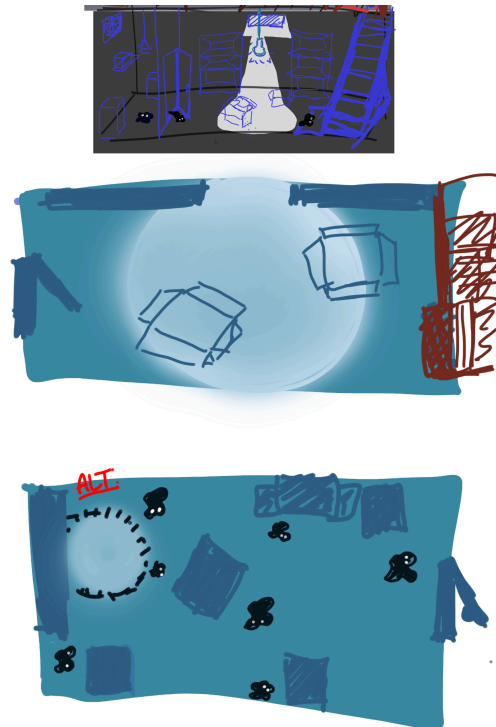
Concept art:

House idea (3 levels)



Basement Level [Top: Sketch from "House idea (3 levels)"; Middle: Main room; Bottom*: Storage Room]

*NPCs with the shadows. There's a few guarding the light source in the storage room telling the player to not go there or else they'll die



In-Game Art:

Level Design (Using Eldamar Studio Asset Pack)	Character Art (Shades: 2D, hand drawn approach)	Final Result
		
Basement Level	Left: Shen Right: Mustached “Older” Shade NPC	Basement Level (Storage Room): Gameplay screenshot

Audio

Music

- Basement Song
 - Familiar
 - Subdued
 - Gloomy
- Main Floor Song
 - Refreshing
 - Optimistic
 - Calm

Sound Effects

- Sound Effects were sourced from <https://pixabay.com/>
- Shen’s SFX were based on “ghostly” or cold sounds to associate with shadows, which would allow players to audibly experience life as a shade.
 - Examples:

- *Shen's movement* ("[Haunted Ghost Ship](#)"): references something mysterious "swimming"
 - *Shen's death SFX* ("[Ice Break](#)"): sounds similar to fire crackling (inferring light's burning effect on shades), while sounding cold
- The UI and environmental ambiance were realistic to show differences between the humans and Shen.
 - Examples:
 - *User Interface*: Main Menu and Pause Screen clicks as "[Gas Burner 01](#)", sounding satisfying and brings players into the human/light-focused environment that Shen experiences
 - *Ambiance*: Creates the sense of house that Shen must traverse. In the Kitchen, Shen turns off the television – removing an obstacle and making the space "better" to traverse for Shen.

Development Timeline

Minimum Viable Product

Assignment	Type	Status	Finish By	Notes
Design Document	Other ▾	Finished ▾	Jul 31, ...	
Shadow Traversal	Coding ▾	Finished ▾	Jul 18, ...	
Shadow Manipulation	Coding ▾	Finished ▾	Jul 19, ...	
Main Menu	Other ▾	Finished ▾	Jul 28, ...	Menu on top of simple start cutscene
Pause Menu	Other ▾	Finished ▾	Jul 28, ...	Pause menu with restart button
Start Cutscene	Other ▾	Finished ▾	Jul 29, ...	Person forgets something before

Assignment	Type	Status	Finish By	Notes
				leaving and comes into the basement storage room to grab it, leaving the light on
Other shades' dialog	Other ▾	Finished ▾	Jul 31, ...	There will be other shades around with dialog in speech bubbles
Level 1 Design (Basement)	Art ▾	Finished ▾	Jul 21, ...	First draft made (with puzzles)
Level 2 Design (Kitchen/Living Room)	Art ▾	Finished ▾	Jul 24, ...	First draft made (with puzzles)
Level Transition	Coding ▾	Finished ▾	Jul 29, ...	Mini cutscenes in between levels as a check-in with Shen and transition to stairs, speech bubbles
End Cutscene Choice	Coding ▾	Finished ▾	Jul 30, ...	
Music	Audio ▾	Finished ▾	Jul 30, ...	Look into music inspiration from nocturnes etc.
Sound Effects	Audio ▾	Finished ▾	Jul 30, ...	
Shade Face Sprites	Art ▾	Finished ▾	Jul 24, ...	
Light Death	Coding ▾	Finished ▾	Jul 22, ...	Reset Shen to beginning of the level if caught in the light
Rush Hour style puzzle	Coding ▾	Finished ▾	Jul 26, ...	Cars are blocking a train track, so they have to move them in

Assignment	Type	Status	Finish By	Notes
				the right order to let it pass
Manipulation particle effect	Art ▾	Finished ▾	Jul 28, ...	A shadowy particle effect to objects that can be manipulated
Camera swap	Coding ▾	Finished ▾	Jul 28, ...	

Extras

Assignment	Type	Status	Finish By	Notes
Shadow Out Shader	Coding ▾	Not st... ▾	📅 Date	
Settings	Other ▾	Not st... ▾	📅 Date	Pause, Go back to main menu, Music, SFX
Skip Cutscenes Button	Other ▾	Not st... ▾	📅 Date	
Add People Rig	Art ▾	Not st... ▾	📅 Date	
Shader for binary lighting	Coding ▾	Not st... ▾	📅 Date	
Level 1: Fine tuning	Other ▾	Finished ▾	Jul 2...	Adding barriers, decor, concrete path for players
Improve camera	Other ▾	Finished ▾	Jul 2...	Make camera more dynamic without being blocked
Level 2: Fine tuning	Other ▾	Finished ▾	Jul 2...	Adding barriers, decor, concrete path for players
Level 3 Design	Art ▾	Not st... ▾	Jul 2...	Overall sketch

Assignment	Type	Status	Finish By	Notes
(Bathroom/Hallway/Upper floor)				created