

Shadowscape

DESIGN DOCUMENT

By NatePanda for the Pirate Software - Game Jam 15 2024

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Introduction

Game Summary Pitch

Shadowscape is a Warcraft 2 / Starcraft inspired Strategy game with a single mission - to escape the Shadowscape before the timer runs out. This is achieved by harvesting resources and building various buildings to convert resources into Antimatter to escape.

Inspiration

Warcraft II

I've always loved Warcraft and Warcraft II "grid" style of movement. Shadowscape's movement, collision and pathing is based off Warcraft II.

Starcraft: Brood War

Starcraft: Brood War was a large inspiration for units, buildings and statistics. The Spitter enemy is based off of the iconic Dragoon, as are

the Defensive Towers for the Player. I always loved the stats introduced in Starcraft that Warcraft/II was missing.

LOTR: Battle for Middle Earth

The “Node” system used for buildings is inspired by how BfME functioned. I loved this game and prefer the node system for a short experience like Shadowscape as it gives me as the developer control over how many building choices the Player has, but still allows for freedom of strategy.

Player Experience

The Player has 30 minutes to build a Portal and click on it to escape and win the game. Every 5 minutes the player is attacked from random locations by a small wave of enemies that will attack whatever is closest. If the Player’s base falls, they lose. If the timer runs out, they lose.

Platform

The game is developed for PC and Browser as a requirement for the Game Jam.

Development Software

- Gamemaker Studio 2
- Aseprite for graphics
- SFXR for sound effects

Genre

Singleplayer, RTS

Target Audience

Warcraft II / Starcraft fans, or any fans of old school RTS games. It's not a difficult mission to complete and the features are in line with most other RTS games out there so should be easy to pick-up on.

Concept

Gameplay overview

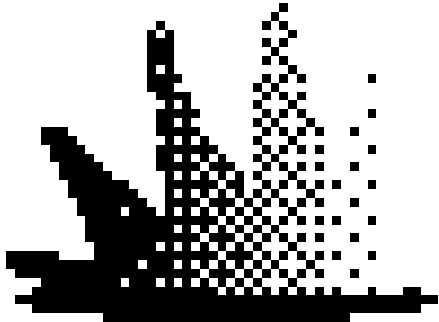
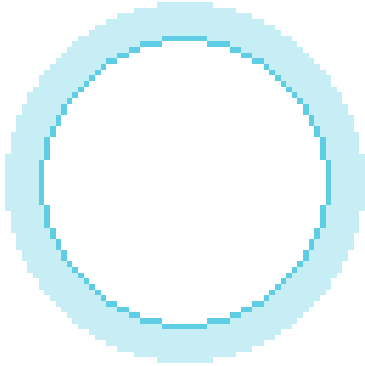
The Player summons workers from their Base structure that will collect Crystals and Magma. These resources are then converted into Antimatter at the Alchemy Lab. Once enough Antimatter is generated, the Player can then summon a Portal to leave the Shadowscape. Players must also build defenses in the form of Turrets to protect their buildings, base and workers from waves of enemies.

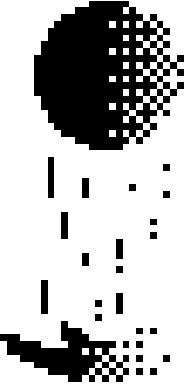
Theme Interpretation (Shadows and Alchemy)

'Alchemy' interpretation: The Player must convert/transform/synthesize Antimatter using the resources available to them in the Shadowscape.

'Shadow' interpretation: The map is shrouded in a fog of war, the buildings and environment monochromatic. Shadow creatures emerge and attack the Player. Only the players' Constructs and Buildings offer any source of light.

Primary Mechanics

Mechanic	Examples
<u>Enemies</u> Shadow base enemies like the Spitter and Scarab emerge from the shadows. Capable of spawning anywhere on the map at a moment's notice.	
<u>Resource Gathering</u> Crystals are the “primary” currency. Magma is the secondary that is required to further the Player’s Tech and unlock the necessary buildings to win.	
<u>Portal</u> The Player must construct, and click on to use, the Portal in order to escape and win the game. The Portal is slow to summon and expensive.	
<u>Constructs</u> Alchemical beings made of bottled light and infused with magic to animate them. They are barely sentient and designed to be the Players “Workers”.	

Mechanic	Animated Mockup <i>(Art not necessarily final)</i>
<u>Turrets</u> Turrets are the only way the Player is able to defend themselves from the Shadow units. These are also Alchemical in nature and harness Plasma to shoot at enemies.	

Art

Theme Interpretation

Monochromatic, with small pops of colour. The map is intentionally greyscale, buildings and units also have a grayscale dither effect on them to keep everything feeling dark and somber.

Design

Minimalistic and pixel-art inspired, limited detail and dithering. A very dark palette is used with units and buildings emitting light so the player isn't completely in the dark.

Audio

Music

A retro soundtrack to add a bit of energy and fun I felt was needed, otherwise the game was a bit dead feeling. I have included a Mute on the title screen just in case it was a bit much though.

Sound Effects

Without sound the game once again felt a bit dead and boring. I used very basic sounds generated with SFXR to add some feedback on what was happening. These still fit in nicely with the retro theme.

Game Experience

UI

My UI is extremely minimalistic by design and is mostly all mouseover. I still wanted the player to realize when units and buildings were injured however, so a choice was made to show this while keeping everything else mostly hidden or out of the way.

Controls

LMB - Select Unit

RMB - Order Unit

Shift+LMB - Multiple Selection of Units

Click and Drag to select multiple units in a bounding box

Home - Center Camera on Base