

Art Commission Brief

Delve: Isle of Lyre

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Overview

Hi! I'm Aaron, a solo-dev working on my passion project **Delve: Isle of Lyre**, a quasi top-down, procedurally generated, dungeon crawler.

The project was inspired by nostalgic dungeon crawlers of old and cozy fantasy adventure games. It features a winter-bound research outpost, an ever-shifting ancient ruin beneath the surface, puzzles, artifacts, combat, resource gathering, and a community of characters trying to uncover the truth behind a missing father and daughter.

Help Wanted

I'm looking to hire a pixel artist to create core concept art and prototype assets for two key characters in **Delve: Isle of Lyre**. These pieces will help define the game's initial look, feel, and artistic direction.

I have a clear sense of tone, proportion, and worldbuilding, but I value collaboration deeply. I love working with artists who bring their own taste, instincts, and flair to a project. If something in the prompt inspires you toward a stronger design choice, I'd truly love to discuss it.

That said, I'm also responsible for maintaining visual cohesion across the whole project, so I will be guiding final decisions to ensure consistency with the world of Delve. Ideally, we'll find a style that represents both of us.

If you are interested, please contact me at inquiry.delve@gmail.com with:

- Portfolio link
- Relevant examples (character sprites, tilesets, animations)
- Rates
- Availability

Scope & Deliverables (At a glance):

1. Character #1 – Jaime (Playable Character)
 - Idle sprite sheet (3 directions)
 - Walk/Run sprite sheet (3 directions)
 - Melee slash attack sprite sheet (3 directions)
 - Character color palette file
2. Character #2 – Eira (Sidekick)
 - Idle sheet (3 directions)
 - Character color palette file

Deadline & Budget:

- Target deadline for finalized designs: **January 1st**
- Please include a quote in your email – I'm open to discussion
- Preferred payment structure: Per asset, negotiable depending on workload

Payment Terms

- 50% deposit upon agreement
- 50% upon delivery of final approved assets
- Up to 3 revision rounds per asset (sketch → refine → final)
- Additional revisions may incur extra cost

Licensing & Rights

This project is intended for a potentially commercial game.

All commissioned artwork will fall under a Work-For-Hire agreement, in which I, the developer, receive full exclusive commercial rights to use, modify, and distribute

the assets within Delve: Isle of Lyre and any related promotional materials.

You, the artist, retain the right to display the work in your personal portfolio but may not resell, redistribute, or repurpose the assets elsewhere.

Character #1: Jaime *(Playable Character)*

Concept Summary:

Jaime is the protagonist — young, inexperienced, earnest, and unexpectedly courageous. He's a student caught in a mystery far bigger than himself. His design should communicate:

- Youthfulness
- Approachability
- Practicality
- A hint of winter-worn travel gear

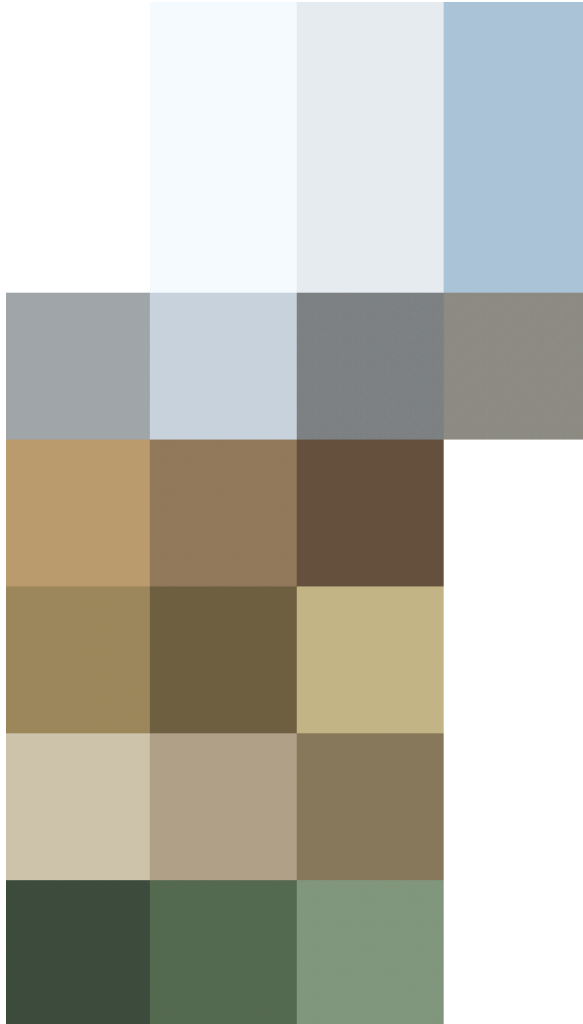
You do not need to lean into heroic fantasy tropes. Jaime becomes a hero by accident, not design.

Silhouette & Clothing

- Slim/medium build
- Winter-appropriate outerwear (tunic, robe, knee-length coat)
- No hats or helmets
- Minimal scarf acceptable
- Optional: modest cloak (simple silhouette, not dramatic)
- Combination of leather belt, strap or satchel preferred
- Short, slightly messy hair (auburn → mahogany)

Environmental Palette (Surface of Lyre):

- Light, blue-toned snow
- Cool Stone paths and structures
- Pinewood
- Old Brass
- Canvas Tents
- Pine Needles

**Lighting Direction:**

Light source from upper-left, consistent across game. Shadow strength, rim lighting, and gradient depth are up to the artist's interpretation.

Detail Level:

Simplified pixel art. No single-pixel noise, no excessive dithering. Character should have a clear silhouette with moderate shading and emphasis on readability over realism.

Reference Image:

Rudimentary sketch (by me) of Jaime.



Character Design (Jaime) Specifications:

Scale:

~20x32

(reference sketch is 18x32)

Facing Directions Required:

- Down (front-facing)
- Up (back-facing)
- Left

Animations may be mirrored for left/right-facing

Detail-level:

Expressive but clean. Intentional shapes, restrained shading, and a stylized look over realism.

Animations Needed:

- Idle
 - ~4-8 frames
- Walk/Run

- ~4-8 frames
- Melee slash attack
 - ~6-8 frames

Format:

Spritesheet

Animation Reference:

- *Idle should be modest. No heavy breathing or overly aggressive stances.*
- *Melee attack should have some (simple) flourish.*
- *You do not need to include a weapon model unless you'd like to for clarity. Weapon sprites will be added separately.*

Gameplay Requirements:

- Character feet must occupy a consistent anchor point. Top of head can move, but feet shouldn't shift horizontally in walk animations.
- Attack frames need clear anticipations, readable motion and expressive arcs
- Attacks **can** break frame boundaries

Future Animation Needs (Based on Pipeline)

These are **not needed** at this time. Once the above has been finalized, these will be the next assets required:

- Ranged bow attack
 - ~4-6 frames
- Magic staff attack
 - ~6-8 frames
- Guard/Block
 - ~4-6 frames
- Counter/Parry
 - ~6-8 frames
- Hurt
 - ~1-2 frames
- Death
 - ~4-6 frames

Character #2: Eira (Sidekick... kinda)

Character Concept:

Eira is a major supporting character, a mysterious being who identifies herself as one of the **Forma**, an ancient race of constructs animated by the occult energy emerging from the Ruins of Lyre.

The player meets her very early in the game, and from that moment on, she becomes their guide, companion, and merchant inside each dungeon passage. Her personality is aloof, curious, expressive, and slightly mischievous.. She is not a comforting presence, but rather strange, enigmatic, and compelling.

Eira's central purpose is to push the player forward; not by hand-holding, but through questions, theories, and an obsessive drive to uncover the source of the magic within the ruins. Her fascination with her own origins, and what lies at the bottom, is her defining motivation.

Reference Images:

Draft of Eira



Design Prompt:

Eira's final design is not fully solidified yet. I'm open to discussion and feedback about her design concept. The goal is to capture her essence:

- Mysterious but not sinister
- Expressive with very few features
- Mystical in design (should fit within the ruins and environment)

- Should feel organic from ancient ruins, not created by humans
- Hints of weathering, age or a forgotten time

I'm drawn to the vaguely humanoid design, hooded figure, trailing teal(ish) scarf. I would like a more distinct color palette for the robe or outfit, and ideally some defining pattern (even if only a few pixels) to differentiate her from other Forma (all of which will be aggressive to the player, and feature a more intimidating design).

Outside of a small handful of scenes, Eira is contained to one location, facing towards the camera, in an idle animation. She is visible to the player each time they begin a new dungeon passage, waiting at the center of the base room. The player can speak to her for hints, flavor dialog about the current dungeon theme, information on items found in the dungeon, or most commonly, purchase various items to aid them on their current passage.

Character Design Specifications:

Scale:

~16x32

(Scarf in reference image extends... perhaps too much)

- Body should be around half the size of the player (not including clothing).

Facing Directions Required:

- Down (front-facing)
- Up (back-facing)
- Left

Animations may be mirrored for left/right-facing

Animations Needed:

- Idle
 - ~4-6 frames

Format:

Spritesheet

Animation Reference:

- *Idle animation should be of her floating, with gentle movement in the clothing.*

Closing Thoughts

Thank you for taking the time to read this brief! I'm excited to find the right artist who can help bring these characters, and this world, to life. If this initial phase goes well and we work well together, I'd love to continue collaborating on future assets depending on availability and budget.

For further details about game scope and upcoming asset needs, see below.

Full Project Scope

If you have interest in creating tilesets, my next commission (once references and concepts are fully in place) will be a tileset of the first dungeon theme: **Fortified**. I am looking to commission a tileset of the starting room/base room, which will define the tone and environmental art direction for the remainder of the dungeon themes.

Final Character Designs (above) must be in place before the following projects are commissioned:

Dungeon Base Room (Highest Priority):

- Tileset for the base room of the first dungeon theme: **Fortified**
 - Procedural rooms (including base room) are all roughly **360x360** in scope (generous padding, sub-rooms broken into sections)
 - **~20x20** Tile Size (possibly larger based on final character design)
 - Theme is heavily inspired by eccentric medieval wine cellars, libraries, war rooms. Warm, rich wood tones, cool stone accents, mint-green magic accents.

Project goals moving into the start of 2026:

Environmental (High Priority):

- Dungeon tilesets for 6 themes
- Tilesets and environment for surface island (6-8 locations + interiors)
- Modular rooms (combat, puzzle, lore, resource, facility)
- Upgradeable facilities & props

Character (High Priority):

- ~15 NPCs (sprites, animations, optional portraits)

Enemies (Medium Priority):

- 25-40 enemy types
- 30 semi-unique mini-bosses
- 6 major bosses

Gear, Resources, Loot, Misc (Low Priority):

- 15-20 weapons (melee, range, magic)
 - Will need projectiles
- 50+ resource, artifact, various loot items

UI (Low Priority):

- Inventory
- Skill trees
- Menus
- Icons