

January 26th, 2024: Paralives Developer Weekly Chat

This weekly chat is held on Discord for Hero and Legend tier patrons. Every week, you can ask a few questions to any developer from Friday 12PM to Monday 12PM ET and they will get back to you with their answers the next Friday.
Visit www.patreon.com/alexmasse/ for details.

Disclaimer: As we are advancing on the game's development, we've been sharing *more sneak peeks and details on gameplay features to our Patrons that have not been made public yet. As such, some public dev chats may seem shorter than usual as we have to redact some Patreon-only content!*

☀️ Community's choice question

These questions all got 3 votes from the Super Patrons on Discord!

Possible Assassin (Ny):

I've noticed a lot of the time when you guys share a new video or pictures of the game it tends to spark the topic of if the game will look like that or not typically there are some people who wonder if anything was prerendered or at least claim that it was so I'm asking for an official answer
Have you guys ever used pre rendered visuals for any of the images/videos you've shared of the game?

Alex:

Since the very beginning of the project, all the videos have been captured from the game engine so we never did pre-rendered video. We did change the art style over the years though. Other than that, in the past, we've added special effects like dust particles in the air, for instance. These might not end up in the game because they were added manually in the engine just before capturing the video and we might not have enough time to integrate them before the release.

Possible Assassin (Ny):

↖↗ soooooooo chloé it's been a while since I've asked, I'm only bringing it back up cause I recently saw a post comparing the holiday outfit video to the Paramaker video.
How's the lighting/shaders of the game coming along? Have you guys changed your mind on being closer to the holiday outfit feel of the game or is it something you guys will go back to working on once you finish having the basics of everything else done?

Chloé:

Hello!

Shaders have been worked on, but only to the extent of creating VFXs for the game and adding functionalities that we were lacking. Our shaders for the game's items and characters have not changed visually all that much. In terms of lighting, it has been studied a bit as we go through production, and lighting from items will be adjusted later down the line. In terms of natural lighting (sunlight and moonlight), we are pretty set on it, as we wanted the shadows to look a certain way on characters. It might, of course, be tweaked later since nothing is set in stone.

Looking at the holiday video, I'd say the main difference in terms of lighting is that it's softer than what we have currently, and the items have a lot of smoothness (making them appear shinier and more "3D"). Items are chunkier in their details. The character shader changed since then to be more cell-shaded. Light is emitted from the tree lights. Because of technical and visual constraints of the game, the lighting is harsher than it was, the details on the items are daintier, and tree light will appear to shine light but will not actually emit light, amongst other things.

So in terms of both environment and characters, our shaders will not go through significant changes going forward. I can say that with the game's current lighting limitations and shaders, we probably won't be bridging the gap further.

I hope it clears things up a little! :D

Jamie:

Will paras get sick, if so would they have different kinds of illnesses like a cold, a stomach bug, headaches, etc?

Anna:

That's not confirmed at the moment! I think it would be nice to have a few simple illnesses like the ones you mentioned!

🎮 General questions

Possible Assassin (Ny):

I know this is a small detail and may not matter to some people, but i've been going over the roadmap lately and have wondered, will you guys be adding photos for all the little nodes under done? some things have it and some don't which ive always wondered why not. Not only does it make it looks a bit better visually but it can also help people understand by connecting the words with it visually even if it's something small

Alex:

Great suggestion, thanks! I'll try to do that soon when I find a bit of time :)

👉 Devs questions

Gui

Time for the call roll! Hi Alex! How are you? How was your week?

Alex:

Verrrrrry excited for this week's Patreon post and next week!

Hi Léa! How are you? How was your week?

Léa:

Hello Gui! My week was good thank you 😊 I'm super excited for the new video released, I can't wait for you to see our hard work!

Hi Anna! How are you? How was your week?

Anna:

Hi Gui! I'm good, thank you!

Hi Alice! How are you? How was your week?

Alice:

Hi Gui, everything's good on my side. I've been playing the game coffee talk and I find it very relaxing! ☕

Hi Jérémie! How are you? How was your week?

Jérémie:

hi

Hi Sonia! How are you? How was your week?

Sonia:

Hello, I'm doing good thanks! My week was nice

Hi Andrei! How are you? How was your week?

Andrei:

What's up Gui! I had a pretty chill week! So many music shows to play! Hope you're doing well :)

Hi Chloé! How are you? How was your week?

Chloé:

Hello Gui! Week has been good :)

Hi Gabrielle! How are you? How was your week?

Gabrielle:

heyyyyy

Hi Richard! How are you? How was your week?

Richard:

Yea :D

Hi Alejandro! How are you? How was your week?

Alejandro:

I had a great week! I hope yours was just as great!

Rootbeer128:

I love the blonde haired guy's look. Something about the clothes and the way they fit together looks so comfy. All of it looks comfy but that in particular. 🍻

I think it's just swell that you're adding milkshakes to the game. I look forward to seeing them, assuming everything works out.

Léa:

I'm happy you like it, I wanted a very chill/surfer dude kinda vibe 😊

SarahTheSloth:

What is your favorite animal? And would you put it in the game if you could?

Alejandro:

My personal favorite are the penguins, tigers and axolotls (honorable mention would be Platypuses)

Chloé:

Hard to say, I'm split between cat, fox and owl. At least cats will make it in the game so!

Léa:

N°1 would be Dogs for me, and they are already confirmed. I've been pushing for YEARS to add crows to the game for Halloween (but you know... Priorities ✨😂) Would love to add raccoons and chickens too!

Alice:

I feel like I never answer the same thing to this question, I'm sorry (I just love many animals) 😊.
I really love dogs, elephants, parrots...

Alex:

Bernese mountain dogs because I had one as a kid! I would very much put them in the game (during the early access phase)!

Poutine Connaisseur Gui:

Trains, do you prefer steam, diesel or electric?

Alejandro:

Levitating trains ✨

Chloé:

I like steam trains the best. Otherwise 2nd favorites are specifically Japanese special edition electric trains. I love seeing the cherry blossom themed trains, or the pikachu trains, with their boxy frames!

Léa:

Steam trains 🍷 (I like the Harry Potter vibes)

Alice:

I like them all!

Alex:

Electric ⚡ Side note: I love riding the new REM in Montreal and standing at the front window as if I was the conductor!

Poutine Connaisseur Gui:

Favorite snack

Richard:

Poutine of course :)

Alejandro:

Hmmmm I would say cucumbers with Tajin or Lays with Valentina, or chocolate

Chloé:

Wafer rolls and popcorn

Sonia:

Grapes!

Léa:

Pop Corns!

Alice:

I like cheese. 🧀

Alex:

Bread and butter (or cheese)!

Andrei:

Apple pudding!

FrozEnt:

Favourite office party? Real or imagined

Alejandro:

Christmas party :D

Anna:

Just two words: ball pit
Hopefully it might get real one day? 🎈

Léa:

This year Christmas Party, we had a good laugh, it was a good time 🥰

Alice:

BALL PIT?????????????????????????????????????

Alex:

a very big buffet

Gabrielle:

there's an arcade bar in Montréal i want us to go to so bad!!

Andrei:

A Paralives music jam ™

🌱 Live mode

lceman:

I'm watching a simmer on YouTube play with mods, and in one of them, you can define how your sim feels toward being pregnant. Will our Parafolks have different reactions to pregnancy depending on which stage of their life they're in, and their overall feelings toward having kids?

Anna:

The gameplay around pregnancy, parenting and even emotions or preference is not set right now so it's hard to answer precisely. For now we aim to keep it simple, at least for early access, but there might be a little more depth to it in the future.

lceman:

If you guys include a library in the initial version of the world, will librarians enforce the noise level inside? Maybe certain actions have a noise level value, and really noisy ones will draw the ire of the library staff

Anna:

If we have a noise system for other things in game, it would be fun, but I don't think we want to have such a specific thing in just one place of our town, it feels a little bit mini-gamey to me. Maybe it could be simpler, such as some loud interactions triggering an initiative from the librarian to go and split the group you're in or ask you to leave maybe? Something like that looks more realisable!

lceman:

What do you think of parakids playing tag or hide and seek?

Anna:

I think it would be a challenge with pathfinding 😊 But it could bring so much life into the town, seeing kids running around each other outside!

🎨 Paramaker

SarahTheSloth:

Will there be an age slider? Choosing the age for paras?

Jérémie:

Hello and thank you for the question! At the moment we do not plan to have an age slider in the game and will rather offer the player the option to pick a lifestage for their Paras when they are created. I feel that on a game balance side, mixing and matching ages with lifestages would become quite thorny! Imagine creating a kid at the maximum age limit before they turn into the next lifestage, you would have no time to do kid-specific skills and activities, amongst other issues. Have a great day!

SarahTheSloth:

Have you thought of hair physics? Hair gets messy or wet?

Jérémie:

Our hairs already have physics, you can see that [in this news post from 2021!](#) As for hair changing states, it's not something we're planning to do at the moment. Having to track whether hair is clean or dry and figuring out the best way to visually represent that would be a big challenge that we don't feel is in the priorities right now. Hope that answers your question, thank you!

Art

Lanearoo:

You've piqued my curiosity - why are trees so challenging to make?

Chloé:

Trees are just awkward to make! They are quite figurative, yet so abstract. I know what a tree looks like, but I feel like creating one in 3D is kind of abstract.

You place leaves (triangles) all over, and then you look at them from every angle to make sure the tree looks good in all angles possible (they never do ahah). You want leaves, but not too much, but not too many either! They easily get heavy in terms of polygons, so now your tree is too heavy for the game. So you spend a lot of time undoing the work you've done and removing leaves. You take a good look, and now the tree is ugly from most angles! It's sometimes a frustrating process, ahah. And through all that, you have to make sure the tree you're making looks like the tree it's supposed to be!

There are tools out there that automate or facilitates the process (such as Speedtree or Blender plugins) but we are not using them since our production pipeline isn't built with them in mind.