

Master of Death

Game Design Document

BY CRASH WITH GALAXUS AND QUONIT FOR PIRATE JAM 15

Introduction

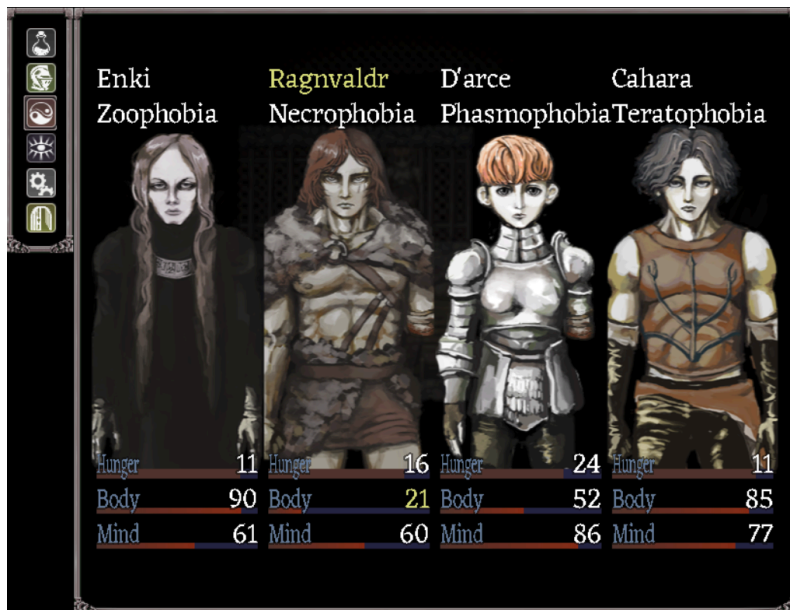
Game Summary Pitch

Master is a game about infiltrating a highly interactive necromancer's lair filled with all manner of dangerous monsters, lethal traps, and elaborate secrets using a wide variety of tools crafted using a custom and in-depth alchemy system.

Inspirations

Fear and Hunger

Fear and Hunger is an RPG Maker game about exploring a corrupted dungeon with dangerous monsters and traps at every corner along with a [heavy emphasis on resource management](#). There is also a deep element of exploration, and the main gameplay loop of the game involves [trying something new, probably dying, and then learning from that experience](#). The limited saves provide tension and risk, and the interactivity and multiple means of accomplishing any goal provide [an extreme variety of potential ways to both succeed and fail](#). [The gritty artstyle is also something that I want to replicate to some extent.]



Enki Zoophobia	Ragnvaldr Necrophobia	D'arce Phasmophobia	Cahara Teratophobia
Hunger 11	Hunger 16	Hunger 24	Hunger 11
Body 90	Body 21	Body 52	Body 85
Mind 61	Mind 60	Mind 86	Mind 77

Potion Craft

Potion Craft is a game with a rich and complex potion crafting system that allows for many different recipes to have the same result. The creation of potions has [a methodology to it that adds depth to alchemy](#) in a way that is unlike more standard methods that are often built on the simple and boring foundation of “These things turn into this”. Making a new potion is often less about finding super rare ingredients and more about [figuring out how to use what you already have in unique ways](#).



Player Experience

In a large interconnected lair, the player will move through rooms dealing with all manner of enemies and obstacles, finding resources both mundane and magical, solving puzzles, crafting potions, and dying repeatedly in order to reach one of the three endings. The player will be tested on their ability to manage resources effectively, find creative solutions to traps and enemies, and [learn from their mistakes](#).

Platform

The game is developed for release on the web version of Itch.io using a Windows compile. It can, however, be simultaneously released as a downloadable Windows, Mac, and Linux game.

Development Software

- Sketchbook Pro for Quonit's contributions and enemy battle sprites
- Paint.net for image editing, color changing, and icon drawing
- Pixel Studio for Galaxus' contributions
- RPG Maker MV for being the game engine used
- Yanfly Engine Plugins for helping to get around a massive number of limitations within the game engine without extensive programming
- Terrax Lighting for making a powerful and versatile lighting plugin that is free to use anywhere

Genre

Singleplayer, RPG, Action-Adventure

Target Audience

With deep and interconnected mechanics, punishing gameplay, and a focus on trial and error, the game is geared towards a more hardcore audience who wants a significant challenge or to learn about the intricacies of how to succeed.

Concept

Gameplay Overview

The player controls a single person moving through the necromancer's lair, collecting items, finding secrets, avoiding traps, fighting and/or avoiding enemies, and brewing potions. Different potions will offer solutions to the vast majority of the problems if you know how to make them, and finding potion materials and new potion recipes will be one of the rewards for successful exploration. Enemies will be highly deadly in head to head combat, and there will be multiple ways to safely deal with them such as debilitating status effects and outright avoiding them in the first place. Secrets are plentiful throughout the vast interconnected lair, and finding them will give all manner of magical items hidden away by the necromancer, including potion recipes, powerful spells, and magical items.

Theme Interpretation (Shadows and Alchemy)

Shadows interpretation 1: The player has limited visibility. Many areas are difficult to see in without the help of a light source, and even then the visibility granted would be limited. Who knows what may be lurking just out of sight?

Visibility will often be limited, giving ample opportunity for things to jump out at the player if they aren't careful. This will create an atmosphere of paranoia that is apt for a necromancer's lair, and provide another level of trial and error in the form of simply knowing where things are. **The literal shadows in a dark place may hide things fantastical and dangerous.**

Shadows interpretation 2: The setting and circumstances are shrouded in mystery. Understanding is fought for rather than simply given out freely.

The player will be given very little background into who they are, what their goals are, or even the significance of where they are. Such knowledge will be gained by hints and small bits of

information strewn throughout the game in fragmented pieces. **The shadows surrounding the circumstances of the game are heavy, and great effort is required of the player to lift them.**

Alchemy interpretation 1: Brewing potions is an important part of the gameplay.

One of the player's main tools is the making of potions. This is a central mechanic of the game and is both a strong motivator of exploration and a means of dealing with any obstacles and setbacks found in the lair. **Using alchemy to make potions is central to the gameplay, and understanding its function is highly important to success for the player.**

Alchemy interpretation 2: All manner of things have been hidden with all manner of magic within the lair. An important part of gameplay is solving puzzles, disarming traps, and finding secrets.

All manner of things may happen to an unfortunate player such as falling through a false floor onto a pit of spikes, being disintegrated instantly upon walking through a doorway, and having all cold things in their possession destroyed. **Learning how to avoid and circumvent such alchemical traps is central to successful exploration for the player.**

Each of the themes has been woven into many, many aspects of the game, and I reckon that will be clearly visible in the end product.

Primary Mechanics

Mechanic	Example
Alchemical Concocting	The player wants to make an explosive vial, so they add one unit of Quicklime to increase the Hot and Dry of their mixture. This is not enough heat, however, and they do not want to use up more Quicklime on this, so instead they add in mundane Charcoal, then adding water until the impurity is reduced enough to the point at which equilibrium between Hot, Dry, and Pure is enough for the Explosive Vial to be successfully created.
Randomized Loot Drops	The player searches a cupboard, but instead of finding a specific item the game then rolls a random number between 1 and 11. There would be a specified loot table, but in this instance it may roll a 4, and that would mean the player loots Coal from the cupboard. If the player comes back on a different run, it is likely that a different random number would

	be rolled and different loot would be found.
Combo Based Battle System (CBB)	A battle starts, and the player has 10 Agility. As a result, they generate 10 Combo Points (CP) on their turn. Perhaps Firebolt costs 8 CP and they decide to use it, dropping their CP to 2 and not ending their turn. They then end their turn with a regular action, either a basic attack, an item, or guarding, each of which do not require CP but end the user's turn. The player's CP is then halved down to 1. On the player's next turn, they once again generate 10 CP bringing their total up to 11, perhaps allowing them to perform an action that costs 11 CP.
Dynamic Puzzle Solving	The player comes across a chest locked with a weak magical lock. The lock cannot be picked or unlocked by any keys, but otherwise it is a standard metal lock. If the player has an acid vial then they can melt the lock. If the player has sufficient Strength, likely from a combination of a Strength-boosting potion and a powerful weapon, then they can smash the lock. If the player has learned the prerequisite spell to break this sort of magical security put in place by the necromancer, then they can simply use that to unlock the lock. Any of the above can unlock the chest and grant the contents to the Player.

Secondary Mechanics

Mechanic	Example
Basic Combining	The player wants to turn their gold nugget into a vial of Fulminating Gold. This isn't necessarily the concoction of a potion so much as it is the combination of gold and sal ammoniac without much room for other components being used (especially the gold). Therefore, for this particular item it would be more accurate to add it to a more simple crafting menu where the components are the gold nugget and a unit of sal ammoniac and the result is one unit of Fulminating Gold.

Delayed Healing	The player is at 50 health and uses a tier I health potion. The health potion doesn't actually heal 36 health, instead it applies a regen effect that heals 12 every turn for 3 turns. This means that you cannot simply use healing whenever you need it. Instead, the player must plan ahead if they desire to heal when they need it.
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Art

Theme Interpretation

The game will be quite dark, with white on black UI, a lighting system making it difficult to see things that are far away, and a more dull color palette to convey a more harsh atmosphere. Colors will still be present in many icons and in highly lit areas, but largely absent from portraits and UI.

Design

The overall design will be **harsh and gritty**, with more realist oriented characters and ugly, grotesque monsters. Things are not necessarily meant to be pleasant to look at, and mundane objects will take on a more rugged aesthetic while more mystical objects will be largely more alien and disturbing.

[Add a menu screenshot and an overworld screenshot]

Audio

Music

Music will vary widely, but will generally follow an unnerving tone. Music in safe(r) areas will be sparse and a little tense, while actively dangerous scenarios will trigger accompanying jarring music and battles will be somewhere in between considering their methodical yet unpredictable nature.

Sound Effects

Sound effects will largely be gotten from the engine, but there will be a few additional sound effects made to accommodate important things such as when an enemy spots the player. In

general, synthetic or artificial noises will be reserved for things such as magic and most actions such as interacting with menus will be supplemented with mundane sound effects.

Game Experience

UI

The UI will be visually rather minimalistic. Lists of options are going to do the heavy lifting in terms of player interaction with specific objects, and the game's menu will be where the player accesses potion concocting, item usage outside of battle, equipment, settings, and all those sorts of independent actions. In battle, the UI will be altered to be more grayscale, but will largely be stock RPG Maker MV/Yanfly.

Controls

Keyboard & Mouse:

- Arrow Keys/Left Click to move and navigate menus
- Z/Enter/Space/Left Click to confirm
- X/Escape/Num0/Right Click to cancel/open the main menu
- Shift to dash
- F4 to toggle fullscreen
- F5 to reset the game

Gamepad [Format: Xbox/Playstation]:

- D-pad to move and navigate menus
- A/X to confirm
- B/Circle to cancel
- Y/Triangle to open the menu
- X/Square to dash

MINIMUM VIABLE PRODUCT CHECKLIST

All items listed below are subject to be changed and added onto even after their status is marked 'Finished'.

#	Assignment	Type	Status	Finished	Notes
1	Design Document	Design ▾	Finished ▾	Jul 17,...	
2	Design outline of overall layout of lair	Design ▾	Finished ▾	Jul 18,...	
3	Change Menu Visuals	Coding ▾	Finished ▾	Jul 17,...	
4	Implement Temporary Player Character's Face	Art ▾	Finished ▾	Jul 17,...	
5	Create Player Out-of-battle Sprite	Art ▾	Finished ▾ {by Quonit}	Jul 29,...	
6	Implement Alchemy w/ Text-based UI	Coding ▾	Finished ▾	Jul 19,...	
7	Implement better Alchemy UI w/ SRD's UI Tool [might be skipped]	Coding ▾	Cancelled ▾		Skipped, text based is completely fine and works stylistically for me
8	Implement Simple Crafting	Coding ▾	Finished ▾	Jul 20,...	I cannot believe this actually worked with how I implemented it
9	Make Alchemy Items	Design ▾	Finished ▾	Jul 19,...	
10	Make Potions	Design ▾	Finished ▾	Jul 18,...	
11	Make Icons for the Items and Potions	Art ▾	Finished ▾ (by Galaxus)	Jul 27,...	
12	Design Spells	Design ▾	Finished ▾	Jul 18,...	

#	Assignment	Type	Status	Finished	Notes
13	Spell Animations & Icons	Art ▾	Finished ▾	Jul 18,...	Animations can for sure be premade
14	Lighting System	Coding ▾	Finished ▾	Jul 19,...	Annoying but cool
15	Design some enemies	Design ▾	Finished ▾	Jul 18,...	
16	Give sprites to those enemies	Art ▾	Finished ▾	Jul 27,...	Double task? oops
17	Implement Combo Based Battle System	Coding ▾	Finished ▾	Jul 18,...	
18	Design Status Effects	Design ▾	Finished ▾	Jul 18,...	
19	Design Status Icons	Art ▾	Finished ▾	Jul 28,...	
20	Overworld sprites for enemies	Art ▾	Finished ▾ {by Quonit}	Jul 29,...	Some enemies have placeholders from RPG maker
21	Create starting room draft	Design ▾	Finished ▾	Jul 19,...	
22	Make a book describing the basics of alchemy	Design ▾	Finished ▾	Jul 21,...	Writing a few more as well for bookshelves
23	Mechanically design Weapons	Design ▾	Finished ▾	Jul 18,...	
24	Design Weapon Icons	Art ▾	Cancelled ▾		really minimalist
25	Mechanically design Armor	Design ▾	Finished ▾	Jul 18,...	
26	Design Armor Icons	Art ▾	Cancelled ▾		design on these ;)
27	Make the damage numbers cooler	Art ▾	Finished ▾	Jul 27,...	

#	Assignment	Type	Status	Finished	Notes
28	New system messages for the important ones	Design ▾	Finished ▾	Jul 19,...	
29	Design alchemy ingredient properties	Design ▾	Finished ▾	Jul 19,...	
30	Design alchemical properties of potions	Design ▾	Finished ▾	Jul 19,...	
31	Implement alchemical properties	Coding ▾	Finished ▾	Jul 19,...	
32	SFX for damage/heals	Art ▾	Finished ▾	Jul 27,...	
33	SFX for taking damage and dying	Art ▾	Finished ▾	Jul 27,...	
34	New SFX for getting spotted	Art ▾	Finished ▾	Jul 27,...	
35	Design basement1	Design ▾	Finished ▾	Jul 21,...	
36	Implement movement between basement 1 and front	Coding ▾	Finished ▾	Jul 21,...	
37	Design entrance	Design ▾	Finished ▾	Jul 20,...	
38	Implement movement between entrance and front	Coding ▾	Finished ▾	Jul 21,...	Entrance is an ugly word, I swear that should be an e instead of an a
39	Design Mundane Items	Design ▾	Finished ▾	Jul 20,...	
40	Mundane Items Alchemical Properties	Coding ▾	Finished ▾	Jul 20,...	
41	RLS (RNG loot system) working concept	Design ▾	Finished ▾	Jul 20,...	Acronyms within acronyms

#	Assignment	Type	Status	Finished	Notes
42	RLS spell table	Coding ▾	Finished ▾	Jul 20,...	I know how much you
43	RLS weapon table	Coding ▾	Finished ▾	Jul 20,...	love acronyms, P.S.T.
44	RLS armor table	Coding ▾	Finished ▾	Jul 20,...	Pirate Software Thor
45	RLS ingredient table	Coding ▾	Finished ▾	Jul 20,...	
46	RLS mundane table	Coding ▾	Finished ▾	Jul 20,...	
47	Entrance bell ringing spawns enemy	Coding ▾	Finished ▾	Jul 20,...	
48	RLS loot for first rooms	Coding ▾	Finished ▾	Jul 21,...	
49	RLS accessory table	Coding ▾	Finished ▾	Jul 20,...	
50	Implement Saving	Coding ▾	Finished ▾	Jul 21,...	
51	Cooler enemy appears when bell is rung	Design ▾	Finished ▾	Jul 21,...	
52	Party mechanics	Design ▾	Finished ▾	Jul 21,...	Dw about what this is
53	Add Tier II explosives and buff Tier X	Design ▾	Finished ▾	Jul 21,...	
54	Add alchemical properties to potions	Design ▾	Finished ▾	Jul 22,...	
55	Give special effects to magic items	Design ▾	Finished ▾	Jul 23,...	
56	Add more ruinous decorations to interior	Design ▾	Cancelled ▾		Didn't feel like doing all that work lol
57	Door unlocking	Design ▾	Finished ▾	Jul 21,...	
58	Fix RLS freezing if own all equips	Coding ▾	Finished ▾	Jul 21,...	

#	Assignment	Type	Status	Finished	Notes
59	Figure out sprite formatting	Art ▾	Finished ▾	Jul 22,...	Time to try again, failed at this already
60	Add Junk Storage Room	Design ▾	Finished ▾	Jul 21,...	
61	Basement Bell Party :)	Coding ▾	Finished ▾	Jul 21,...	Fun for everyone
62	Reduce length of relevant song intros	Art ▾	Finished ▾	Jul 22,...	
63	Party out of battle art	Art ▾	Finished ▾ {by Quonit}		
64	Junk Storage Room	Design ▾	Finished ▾	Jul 21,...	
65	Basement3 + Albert's Room	Design ▾	Finished ▾	Jul 22,...	
66	Decide if weapons & armor can be alchemy ingredients	Other ▾	Finished ▾	Jul 22,...	What a stupid idea but allllsoooooo
67	Puzzle for decrypting Baldwin's Memoir	Coding ▾	Finished ▾	Jul 26,...	
68	Write Baldwin's Grimoire	Design ▾	Finished ▾	Jul 26,...	
69	Add rubble to blow up with Explosive Vials	Design ▾	Finished ▾	Jul 23,...	
70	Weapons alchemical properties	Coding ▾	Cancelled ▾	rip	Weapons and Armor can't run common events and
71	Armor alchemical properties	Coding ▾	Cancelled ▾	rip	they cannot be used like items outside of battle
72	Sublimation Doorway	Art ▾	Finished ▾	Jul 23,...	
73	F1 Room 2	Design ▾	Finished ▾	Jul 23,...	

#	Assignment	Type	Status	Finished	Notes
74	Greater Soul Stone	Coding ▾	Finished ▾	Jul 25,...	
75	Party Sword In-fighting	Coding ▾	Finished ▾	Jul 22,...	
76	Make buffs and debuffs mutually exclusive	Coding ▾	Finished ▾	Jul 22,...	
77	1x2 doors	Art ▾	Finished ▾	Jul 23,...	Just used rmmv asset lollll
78	Tomb of the Fool	Design ▾	Finished ▾	Jul 23,...	
79	Golem	Design ▾	Finished ▾	Jul 23,...	
80	Dogs smell old owner	Design ▾	Finished ▾	Jul 23,...	
81	Music for Pillar fight	Art ▾	Finished ▾	Jul 23,...	
82	Experimentation Room	Design ▾	Finished ▾	Jul 24,...	
83	Necromancer Battle	Design ▾	Finished ▾	Jul 23,...	
84	Wonders of Necromancy	Design ▾	Finished ▾	Jul 23,...	
85	Preserve destroyed parts of Party	Coding ▾	Finished ▾	Jul 23,...	
86	Ending Text	Design ▾	Finished ▾	Jul 23,...	
87	PET THE DOGGO	Design ▾	Finished ▾	Jul 23,...	
88	Necromancer Text	Design ▾	Finished ▾	Jul 26,...	
89	MEAT MEAT MEAT MEAT MEAT MEAT MEAT MEAT MEAT	Coding ▾	Finished ▾	Jul 26,...	MEAT MEAT MEAT MEAT MEAT MEAT MEAT MEAT MEAT MEAT MEAT MEAT
90	MEAT MEAT MEAT MEAT MEAT MEAT	Art ▾	Finished ▾	Jul 27,...	MEAT MEAT MEAT MEAT MEAT MEAT

#	Assignment	Type	Status	Finished	Notes
	MEAT MEAT MEAT				MEAT MEAT MEAT MEAT MEAT MEAT
91	MEAT MEAT MEAT MEAT MEAT MEAT MEAT MEAT MEAT	Design ▾	Finished ▾	Jul 26,...	MEAT MEAT MEAT MEAT MEAT MEAT MEAT MEAT MEAT MEAT MEAT MEAT
92	MEAT MEAT MEAT MEAT MEAT MEAT MEAT MEAT MEAT	Audio ▾	Finished ▾	Jul 26,...	MEAT MEAT MEAT MEAT MEAT MEAT MEAT MEAT MEAT MEAT MEAT MEAT
93	Normal hallway	Design ▾	Finished ▾	Jul 25,...	Nothing to see here
94	Corpse storage room	Design ▾	Finished ▾	Jul 25,...	
95	Ingredients storage room	Design ▾	Finished ▾	Jul 25,...	
96	Add ways to get weapons and armor	Design ▾	Finished ▾	Jul 26,...	Lol this literally wasn't in the game
97	Garden	Design ▾	Finished ▾	Jul 25,...	We gon ride
98	Figure out what 2 other rooms actually are	Design ▾	Finished ▾	Jul 25,...	Furnace room Armor room
99	Receptionist	Design ▾	Finished ▾	Jul 26,...	
a0	Incineration Room	Design ▾	Finished ▾	Jul 26,...	We goin hex on them codes
a1	Armory	Design ▾	Finished ▾	Jul 26,...	(but only in 10s place)
a2	Friends only!!!! room	Design ▾	Finished ▾	Jul 26,...	
a3	Difficulty Settings	Design ▾	Finished ▾	Jul 26,...	
a4	Exploitation "Ending"	Design ▾	Finished ▾	Jul 26,...	
a5	Fix alchemy bug	Coding ▾	Finished ▾	Jul 27,...	Glad I didnt just give up on this one

#	Assignment	Type	Status	Finished	Notes
a6	Playtest a playthrough	Other ▾	Finished ▾	Jul 27,...	
a7	Beat the hardest enemy with bare hands	Other ▾	Finished ▾	Jul 27,...	idk why not
a8	Credits	Design ▾	Finished ▾	Jul 29,...	
a9	Ingredient Icons	Art ▾	Finished ▾	Jul 27,...	
b0	In-battle enemy sprites	Art ▾	Finished ▾	Jul 27,...	
b1	Rearrange troops for new sprites	Design ▾	Finished ▾	Jul 27,...	
b2	Design front page	Design ▾	Finished ▾	Jul 29,...	
b3	Take screenshots	Other ▾	Finished ▾	Jul 30,...	Waited on most of these for sprites
b4	Playtest compiled version of game	Other ▾	Finished ▾	Jul 30,...	
b5	Key Item Icons	Art ▾	Finished ▾ (by Galaxus)	Jul 28,...	
b6	Game Thumbnail	Art ▾	Finished ▾ {by Quonit}	Jul 30,...	
b6	Send it out	Other ▾	Finished ▾	Jul 30,...	AYYYYYYYYY

BEYOND (if ahead of schedule / extra time)

Buy Aseprite off Humble Bundle	Art ▾	Finished ▾	Jul 22, 2024
Make the menu UI better in any and every way	Coding ▾	Finished ▾	~ Jul 20, 2024

Damage/status effects on enemies stay if run away from and refought	Coding ▾	Not sta... ▾	
Dialogue for using various items outside of alchemy	Design ▾	Finished ▾	Jul 28, 2024
This game would be rad as an actual roguelike	Coding ▾	Not sta... ▾	
Remove fluff from combine menu	Coding ▾	Finished ▾	Jul 28, 2024
Potion target scope depends on Alchemy switch	Coding ▾	Not sta... ▾	
Make MC sideview battler	Art ▾	Not sta... ▾	This is definitely a huge stretch goal
Implement SV Battle	Coding ▾	Not sta... ▾	
Footstep SFX	Art ▾	Not sta... ▾	Tried this one but it sounded bad and don't feel like putting that much work into it