

Example Pitches

The following include example pitches from some of the highest-scoring pitches in the submissions for the first half of 2023. The game designers have given their approval for their pitches to be shared. We encourage you to use these as a model, along with the rubric, to get a better idea of what OMEGA's expectations are for the level of readiness and detail we would like to see in pitches.

For your convenience, a link to our rubric:

<https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1D7yCjIKM3Cw-ISHYPXadzkJTA9-bRZ2mYYW7nua7F0/edit#gid=0>

Biblios

Game Designer: Kyle

Setting

A VRMMO (Virtual Reality Massively Multiplayer Online Game) called Biblios, an urban fantasy setting whose players protected the human citizens of its storybook city from the chaos of external gods infiltrating the city. Assume the game to be set in the near future, though this is likely not to be relevant itself since the "in-game" environment is a mixture of stories and themes from various time periods. It will meld PG-13 urban reality with various stories and myths from the public domain, adding in dashes of surreal technological horror through the presence of QUERIES.

Situation

Biblios is due to be shut down in 8 weeks, and all manner of strange glitches and Queries have begun popping up. Yesterday, a Biblios player died both in the game and in reality. The task of the AI (game players) is to address the existing Queries, discover the truths of their world, and understand what it means to live and die. Ultimately, they must decide what is most important to them - what matters at the end of the world.

In gameplay terms, characters will be able to engage in three types of actions: Queries (Main Plot Quests), Sidequests (more character-focused actions/narratives), and Miscellaneous Actions that may unlock secrets and surprises. Thematically the game will revolve around nihilism, whether that means despair or hope. The choice between attempting not to die, fulfilling one's duties, or simply living life to its fullest.

Safety

So, as mentioned in the above, the game will delve into issues of philosophy and existence. It will cover nihilism as a concept, and will tackle depression and possibly even suicidal ideations/tendencies (in the form of certain non-player characters who accept or even welcome the end times due to the nature of

their electronic existence). There is a careful balancing act required here, and these themes will be a constant in the background of the game. Emails and quests that deal heavily in this WILL have content warnings attached!

Other Setting and Situation Notes

The setting will deal with a lot of serial numbers filed off literary and mythical characters, due to the nature of the game. Any horror will be PG-13!

Types of Characters

The players will not be in the role of “players” of Biblios, but rather in the role of Denizens and Executors - AI patterned off the thoughts and memories of existing human beings, designed to assist players of Biblios in having an optimal experience. They will be exercising their abilities to deal with “player”(NPC) generated Queries, while also being provided the freedom to do whatever they wish (within the game's action structure) in the 6-8 weeks leading up to the end of their world.

Player Count

10-20

Control Count

3-5

Other Notes about Players and Control

Control may be required to do a fair bit of pre-writing for the admin privileges, but I expect/hope for their workload to be lighter during the game itself. Action resolutions will be SHORTER.

Core Gameplay Loops

- Address Queries within the game - solving mysteries, clearing tasks, making things better for those on the outside. - Engage in Sidequests - partake in fun activities to while away the time and potentially earn new powers, helpers, or gratitude. - Interact with NPCs - Learn their secrets, help them understand who they are as they awaken to the reality of existence. Assist them in developing a sense of personhood - Unlock Admin Features and Backend Secrets - With the use of rolled dice, learn secret information pertaining to Biblios that can help further your understanding of the game, as well as fantastic new dice-manipulating powers.

Additional Docs

Rulebook: <https://bibliospbem.notion.site/Rulebook-a1b5d0264caf4a04b5a11582f727a800>

Public Board Sample:

<https://bibliospbem.notion.site/00b727fb1c1748abb83d5b0bb3cd2ad6?v=9474ba1b9d404a88b89eaa181bb0b485>

Admin Privilege Sample:

<https://bibliospbem.notion.site/Admin-Privileges-0ee2c712354b493eb37b2ad7f972f30a>

Character Index:

<https://bibliospbem.notion.site/3a787395f6c94980a819033abeb61d51?v=211a3280b1ad4ebdbc2c2c850552c83b>

Kairos

Game designer: Steph

Setting

Because this is a game about time travel, the answer to this question is somewhat complicated. The primary setting is KAIROS (Keepers And Investigative Regulators Of Spacetime), a time travel corporation, whose headquarters is located in 2030 Edo, Japan (an analogue to modern-day Tokyo). The vibe for KAIROS the organization is somewhere between the silly lightheartedness of the Time Variance Authority or TVA in Loki and the serious and organized Commission in The Umbrella Academy. It is most similar to The Conclave in The Psychology of Time Travel by Kate Mascarenhas. KAIROS is not an overbearing capitalistic machine nor a complicated and disorganized mess. Instead, it functions like both a company and a “way of life.”

Players will spend the week located in this time, but during their actions, can travel to different Times (meaning which timeline, year, and location a place is located.) Each week, the Times players can time travel to will be posted in advance and will be pre-determined by control. The in-universe reason for this is that based on the nature of time travel, only specific Times are “stable” enough to travel to.

Time in the K0 timeline (the one in which KAIROS headquarters is located) moves linearly. When players time travel, they will nearly always return from the other Times seconds after they leave. Otherwise, in game time (in 2030 Edo) will generally function like it does in most PbEm games.

Situation

Players will be playing as time travelers, working for KAIROS, an organizational body that governs all time travel. Players are a new class of Time Keeper (what time travelers are called by KAIROS) recruits. They have completed their training, meaning they already have some experience with time travel itself, and are able to independently time travel.

At game start, players will find themselves with an unexpected promotion due to a terrible tragedy that has just occurred. The 28th K-Infinity Time Travel Conference, attended by the KAIROS organization leaders and most senior Time Keepers, has gone dark. All communication with this Time has been lost and it has become too unstable to travel to, see into, or otherwise interact with in any way. The purpose of the game will be to travel to other Times and gain clues about what happened at the Conference and why that Time is going dark (i.e. impossible to travel to with time travel). At the same time, players will be able

to make connections with NPCs in multiple Times, including K0 and their home timelines, as well as learn the stories of KAIROS employees- including those gone missing.

The nature of time is fascinating and interesting to explore in a multiverse setting. Unlike many stories about time travel, this isn't a story about using time travel to change the future and make a better world. I want players to question the purpose of time travel and the purpose of KAIROS, while they are working to uphold its values.

One of my major inspirations for this game was a book called the Psychology of Time Travel by Kate Mascarenhas. What I loved about that book is that it focused on individual stories- how did time travel affect people's personal lives?- rather than an apocalyptic multiverse event. This game will not be about using time travel to save the world, but about how time travel has affected people. I want players to feel torn between their jobs and their personal lives and connections with people, both because their job is a secret to laypeople and because they no longer live in their home timelines. Will they be torn between those and the connections they've made in K0? Will they choose one over the other? Will they find their time travel work more important than human connection?

Safety

I do not foresee any specific mature themes or sensitive issues unique to this game in particular. I have drafted a statement on Safety and Etiquette in the attached rulebook outlining what topics are generally disallowed in any OMEGA game and will ensure that all control and players follow these guidelines. I will also ask people in advance for any triggering topics and be sure to avoid those while preserving their anonymity and comfort.

In addition, I have included a section in the rulebook on the consideration of racism, sexism, homophobia, etc. in the various historical periods we will explore in Kairos. I am including this here as well:

Kairos will feature a variety of timelines, including some that, in our world's analogues, have strong themes of sexism, racism, homophobia, and other issues. All the timelines in Kairos are alternative history, and any that are explored in game will not deal with these issues. In all Kairos timelines, women and people of all cultures have equal rights to white men. Non-heterosexual sexual orientations, the full gender spectrum, and non-monogamous relationships are also an accepted part of society. Modern western colonialism and slavery never really took off. Thus, racism, sexism, and homophobia are not themes that are going to be addressed or are welcome in this game. We have made these changes purposefully so that players of all races, genders, sexualities, etc. can enjoy all timelines without the feeling that they could not have truly belonged in such places. We have altered history so that our non-cis/white/heterosexual players can create and tell their own stories in this world. The decision to exclude these themes was one made not to belittle the struggles made for equality nor to diminish the stories that could be told with these themes in such a setting. These struggles and these stories are incredibly important, but they are not the ones that we are telling in this world or in this game.

Other Setting and Situation Notes

Typically, time travel is treated in one of two ways in science fiction: where the future is fixed or dynamic. This game will be a combination of both- the K0 Timeline is fixed. Players cannot change what is happening because time travel is not possible in this timeline at all. Every other timeline is dynamic. While it is difficult to make lasting change in other Times, it is quite possible and players will often be doing this

through their actions. Doing so will help them to learn about the world and get clues for solving the primary mystery.

Types of Characters

Players will be human time travelers aka Time Keepers working for KAIROS. KAIROS has recruited Time Keepers from a variety of different Times, so players can be from the future, past, or present of the K0 Timeline or any other. Player briefs will include this information. While players may not have any supernatural abilities, all will have access to the technology at KAIROS and ability to time travel during their actions. They will also have access to other technology related to time-based powers.

Player Count

20-25

Control Count

5-7

Other Notes about Players and Control

None

Core Gameplay Loops

The two primary core gameplay loops are time travel and the core mystery. Players will be traveling through different Times to gain clues about what happened at the 28th K-Infinity Time Travel Conference and to the KAIROS organization leaders. Each week, players will have the option to take actions in the K0 Timeline and/or any other single Time that is available. Control will plan in advance a main set of Timelines that will be available for players to travel to and what KAIROS knows about them. Players will also be able to bond with NPCs in a variety of Timelines. This will be both for fun and personal gain as well as in pursuit of the story. That is, many core plots will be found through interacting with and getting close to NPCs.

Additional Docs

Provisional rulebook, including mechanics, setting, safety, and more information about time travel:

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1wpD838fEqqqSUs9j2FBvRcMCiEbeKekP374-XEDoFJw/edit?usp=sharing>