



Temple of Philae

- Concept Document -

Kissa always told her son the story of how the goddess Isis had brought him and given him to her care. How he had always been a special child and would one day have to face many challenges in order to become greater than any human being before him. Gamal took in every word and waited for the day he would be old enough to leave his family and ask Isis to become a god. When the day came Kissa was sick and close to dying. Leaving her behind broke Gamal's heart, but he had no choice. Akila, Gamal's sister, begged him to stay, but he would not listen. Akila was not special like him, so how could she understand? It was his desire, his destiny to come to the Temple of Philae. While his actions become more and more complicated, the sacrifices he has to make grow ever crueler. In the end, he has to decide between his reckless ambition and his dysfunctional, but caring family.

Temple of Philae is a 2D Side-Scroller for PC telling the story of the young Egyptian Gamal who sacrifices his humanity in order to become a god. The goddesses Isis and Nephthys are his constant guidance and narrate the story.

Features

- Puzzles and Riddles
- Hieroglyphs
- Ancient Egyptian mythology and culture
- Egyptian gods, goddesses, and sphinxes
- A common mortal who desires to become a god
- A unique art style immersed in the Egyptian theme
- Complex characters and the consequences of narcissistic upbringing

USP

Power fantasy meets moral responsibility in Ancient Egypt.

Target Audiences

Adventure and puzzle gamers between the ages of 16-20 who prefer to play on PC in the evenings or after school. They enjoy narrative games for their entertainment factor.

Entry level employees between the ages of 25-30 who enjoy psychological depth and complex characters in their past time activities.

Characters

GAMAL: Male. 14-18. Arrogant and ambitious, Gamal uses every opportunity he is offered to prove to everyone and – perhaps more importantly – to himself that he is more than a simple, poor farmer boy. He is determined to fulfill his destiny and become a god.

AKILA: Female. 18-20. The sceptic young woman never trusted her mother's fairy-tales and perceives the damage they have done to the family. Over the years she may have lost her faith in functioning family relationships, but she has not lost her wit.

KISSA: Female. 35-40. Kissa has not yet learnt how to be satisfied with her present circumstances. Instead of facing her own reality, she relies on made-up stories to urge her children, Gamal and Akila, to strive for more than she could ever offer. She has recently become very sick and won't live much longer.

ISIS: Female. Isis may love her sister, but Nephthys' unjust schemes with mortals make her uneasy. Being the favorite goddess of the poor, it is her intention to protect Gamal and his family from the consequences of his own arrogance.

NEPHTHYS: Female. Nephthys does not share her twin sister's kindness or graciousness. She is the goddess of death, lamentation, and darkness; the fate of common mortals is nothing more than a game to her.



Concept

The main focus of the game lies on the **decision making**. Gamal wants to become a god. Kissa and Nephthys encourage his plans, while Akila and Isis worry about the consequences of such a reckless endeavor. In the end, it is the player's decision how many and what kind of sacrifices he is willing to make in order to achieve Gamal's desire.

The goddess Nephthys functions as a **narrator** throughout the entire game, giving hints, commenting and evaluating the player's actions. She and her sister Isis are the only ones who will have voiceovers to emphasize their godly origin.

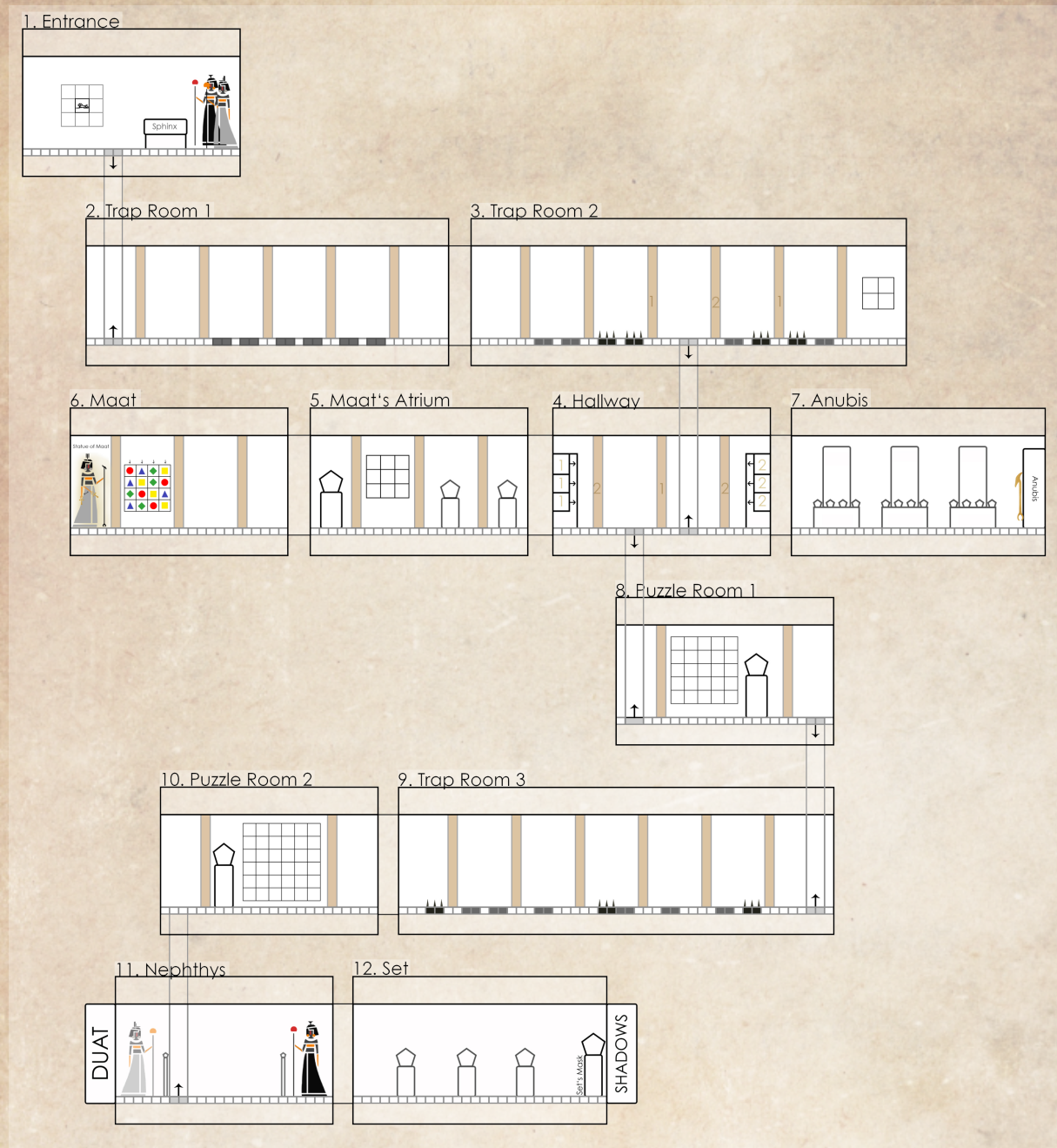
Originally, we wanted to start the game in the home town of Gamal, but we decided that the player would begin in the temple instead.

The **core scene** plays in the temple's chamber of Isis, where the player meets Nephthys instead of her sister, as he had originally expected. It comes as a shock to Gamal that it wasn't his beloved Isis that encouraged him on his way and that called out his name when he approached the chamber. Nephthys tells him that his mother Kissa had died during his journey and is awaiting the heart weighing ceremony. She also informs him that her heart is heavier than the feather of Maat symbolizing truth and order because of all the lies she told during her lifetime. This in turn means that she will be denied existence in the afterlife – her soul will be devoured by the demon Ammit. The player has to make the **most important choice** of the game. He can either enter the Duat and manipulate the ceremony to save his mother from non-existence or he can sacrifice his mother, leave his humanity behind and become a god.

If the player chooses to become a god, he will be forced to do many more horrible things, but the player has no way of stopping him from, for example burning down his childhood village. The gods however are not pleased

with a mortal trying to join their ranks, Nephthys has deceived Gamal. As punishment he is turned into the demon Apep. In a way he reached his goal. He became something more than human, but instead of being worshipped, he is despised. Instead of being glorious and victorious, he is being forced to fight and lose against the Sun god Ra every single night for eternity.

Gameplay



During the game, the player has to collect three artifacts that will make him resemble a god: An Ankh, a Was-Scepter, and the Mask of Set. The Ankh will lighten up your surroundings so that you can see further. The Was-Scepter can be used as a weapon to destroy objects around him. The mask is the last item and can be worn after the confrontation with Nephthys.

There are two kinds of rooms in the Temple of Philae: **Trap Rooms** and **Puzzle Rooms**.

The **Trap Rooms** add a jump 'n' run element to the game. There are two types of spike traps, the player has to avoid. The first type attacks in regular intervals, so the player has to time his actions accordingly and the second type attack upon contact, which means the player has to avoid them entirely. If the spikes hit the player, he dies and respawns at the beginning of the room. The traps exist to create a hostile environment for the player and also to fulfill their expectations. They enter an old temple wanting to prove their abilities in order to be deemed worthy enough to meet Isis.

The **Puzzle Rooms** outnumber the Trap Rooms however. In the beginning, the player has to solve simple puzzles such as activating hieroglyphs in the correct order. These puzzles become much harder over time and once the player has the Scepter, they can choose to destroy the obstacles and therefore not solve the puzzle at all. If the player solves the puzzle properly, they are rewarded with background information to Egyptian mythology and the primary gods and goddesses. If the player destroys the obstacle instead and therefore acts on their desire to progress, the narrator will judge this behavior and the player will miss out on those pieces of information that might help later on during the final decision. For example, some puzzles explain the weighing of the heart ceremony to emphasize how much Egyptians were afraid of not reaching the afterlife. Even though Nephthys explains this as well, having this repetition makes the ceremony more meaningful to the player which in turn might make them consider choosing the human option. If the player destroys all the puzzles instead, they seem much more impatient to become a god and do not know these stories. Therefore, they are much more likely to choose to sacrifice Gamal's mother.

In conclusion, the **two core mechanics** of the game are destruction and puzzles.

In total, there will be 12 rooms.

The glyphs in the game are based on real ancient Egyptian hieroglyphs to stay authentic to the time and culture.



Visuals

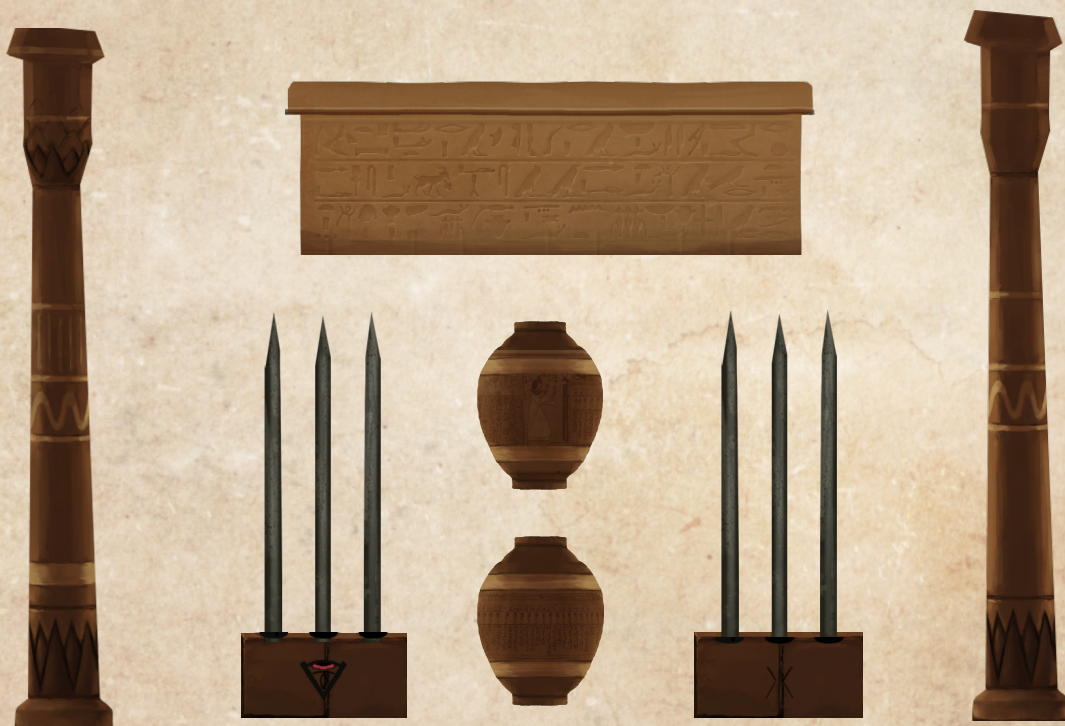
We went for a 2D game with a few background layers for more depth and a parallax scrolling effect.



We wanted to create an immersive atmosphere with lighting and dramatic shadows. In order for the player not to get distracted, the dialogue system is part of the game world, represented visually with speech bubbles.

The overall visual style is rough, chalky, and playful. With each artifact the player collects in the temple, the surroundings lose their color to symbolize Gamal's loss of humanity, as well as making the overall atmosphere grimmer.

We didn't work on the first part of the story in Gamal's home village. Nonetheless, here is a concept showing what we initially had in mind:





The **animation technique** we used was frame by frame animation. In order to have more animated features inside the game we created simple, clean but visually appealing characters.





Programming

Unity was chosen as the engine to develop the game with since it was the engine everyone on the team had the most experience with. Dedicated puzzle adventure engines like Visionaire studio were briefly discussed but ultimately, Unity was better suited to achieve our vision of the game both in gameplay and visuals.

“Temple of Philae’s” core mechanics are different puzzles, jump’n’run sequences, and a narrative with two different endings the player can influence through their actions.

The player can interact with the environment, activate and take objects, and observe and time movement over lethal spike traps that move out and retract in certain intervals or kill the player upon contact. Auditory feedback is played on player’s actions to avoid confusion and ambience sound furthers immersion. The player’s actions will trigger different reactions of the narrator, the player character or other NPCs as well as change the environment.

In addition to the subtitles, the game features a voice actress for the narrator’s dialogue as a means to outline her otherworldly and godly nature.

Since the game’s narrative is strongly supported by the overall atmosphere of the setting, lighting, post processing and particle effects as well as shaders are utilized to achieve stunning visuals.

Team Info and Contacts

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