

**PARADISE
KILLER**

ART WORKS



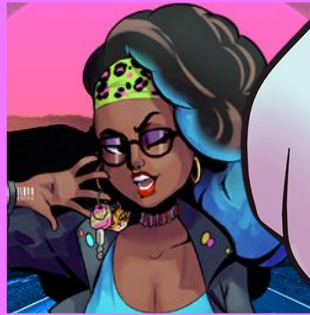
With Paradise Killer we wanted to incorporate high fashion characters, Japanese themed apartments and eldritch nightmare gods into a world but also make it look like a city pop/vaporwave album cover. I was inspired by the work of Tetsuo Hara on the Hokuto no Ken manga. He fused a number of disparate architectural and cultural styles into one cohesive whole. It is not an easy task and while I don't think we were 100% successful, I do think Paradise Island is an island like no other.

We wanted to make a game world you could lose yourself in. We live in awful times where the stresses and pressures of the world are all around us and we're reminded of them constantly. We must not shy away from the world's problems but it is important to escape once in a while. Despite the game being about a mass murder, we created a world of blue skies, luxurious sunsets and vignettes to lose yourself in.

We wanted Paradise to welcome everyone and for as many people as possible to find some kind of representation in the characters. We have been blown away by how much players have enjoyed and identified with the weirdos on Paradise Island.

Thank you to everyone who has played the game. We're still in shock that people like Paradise Killer so much. Please enjoy this look at the characters and world of Paradise and thank you again!

CHARACTERS

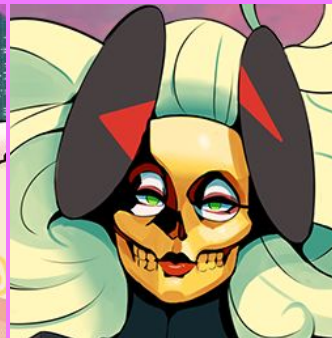


Now that the game has released and I'm no longer writing them, I don't know what to say about the characters of Paradise Killer. They were once my creations but now they stand on their own. It took a long time for some of their personalities to develop. I didn't know how to write them. Now I know exactly who they are and they have their own lives now. Players have identified with them, developed crushes and become deeply invested in this collection of murderous weirdos. They don't feel like our characters any more. They have gone out into the world and found their own path.

Designing them all was a blast. We could do representation however we wanted and we could push their fashion to extremes. All of them have their own style that represents who they are, their beliefs and the culture they came from. We wanted these characters to all be memorable, to communicate something to the player and not be subtle about it.

The design process was very iterative. We worked out the character's function within the story and expanded that out into why they have that function. Knowing that, we could start grabbing ref images. We used high and avant-garde fashion, street wear and traditional clothing from different cultures. These are immortals that hold their heritage very dear but have also explored new avenues of fashion and expression over untold millennia. All of the characters had to have something unexpected about them as well; have you ever seen a doctor like Doctor Doom Jazz?

Thank you to everyone who has made fan-art and talked to us about their favourite characters. We never expected this response and we're so happy that you found a character to enjoy.





LADY LOVE DIES

Born at The Longest Tower, Britain in AD 1000 under the sign of Kiss Me To The Moon.

The Syndicate's lead investigator. After the Damned Harmony Incident on Island 13, the Paradise Psycho Unit was shut down, and Love Dies was exiled to the Idle Lands as punishment.

Oli: When we started, I didn't have a clear idea about how LD should look. Other characters were very easy but LD's design eluded me. We knew we wanted to create a character that goes against the normal video game female body shape. My partner Rachel is a plus-size woman and she never has any representation in games. She also loved Lisa Lisa in Jojo's Bizarre Adventure. So when I started gathering ref, I went for plus sized Lisa Lisa but in an 80's fashionable business suit. Giga did a really great job of taking the ref and making a unique design.

Also, let me bottom line it for you: big women are amazing and they don't feature enough in games except as joke characters written by man-children. Get it together. Stop being cowards. Embrace humanity. Fix your hearts.

CHARACTER SHOWCASE: LADY LOVE DIES



Rachel: I'm pretty tall and overweight, and I've often said to Oli it would be really nice to see my body shape being represented in a game but not have it called out as part of a joke.

I love how he and Gigalithic came up with an outfit that I feel like people with mine and LLD's body shape could cosplay. I used to try to cosplay when I was younger but was always self-conscious about dressing up in outfits that were very much designed for people with a different body shape to mine.

LD wears a high waisted skirt and has her thighs out, because of course you would if you had hips and thighs like that.




Gigalithic: Lady Love dies was the first character I drew, so every time we touched her up I tried to bring her into line with how my techniques had changed over time.









[THE WITNESS TO THE END]
How long has it been since you last did work for our holy masters?

Time moves so strangely here. We are grains of sand that drift in the astral wake of the heavenly titans.

Especially after last night. The island is ready to end. The time flow is broken. The gods are displeased.

We are supposed to be their loyal servants, our only purpose to resurrect them. Now we squabble and scheme. Our holy work brought to a screeching halt by murder.

The end times are looming. So many have strayed from the path. This must be a sign from the gods.

LADY LOVE DIES

- ▶ [HERETICAL] - Capricious idiots
- [ZEALOUS] - Work of the gods

E



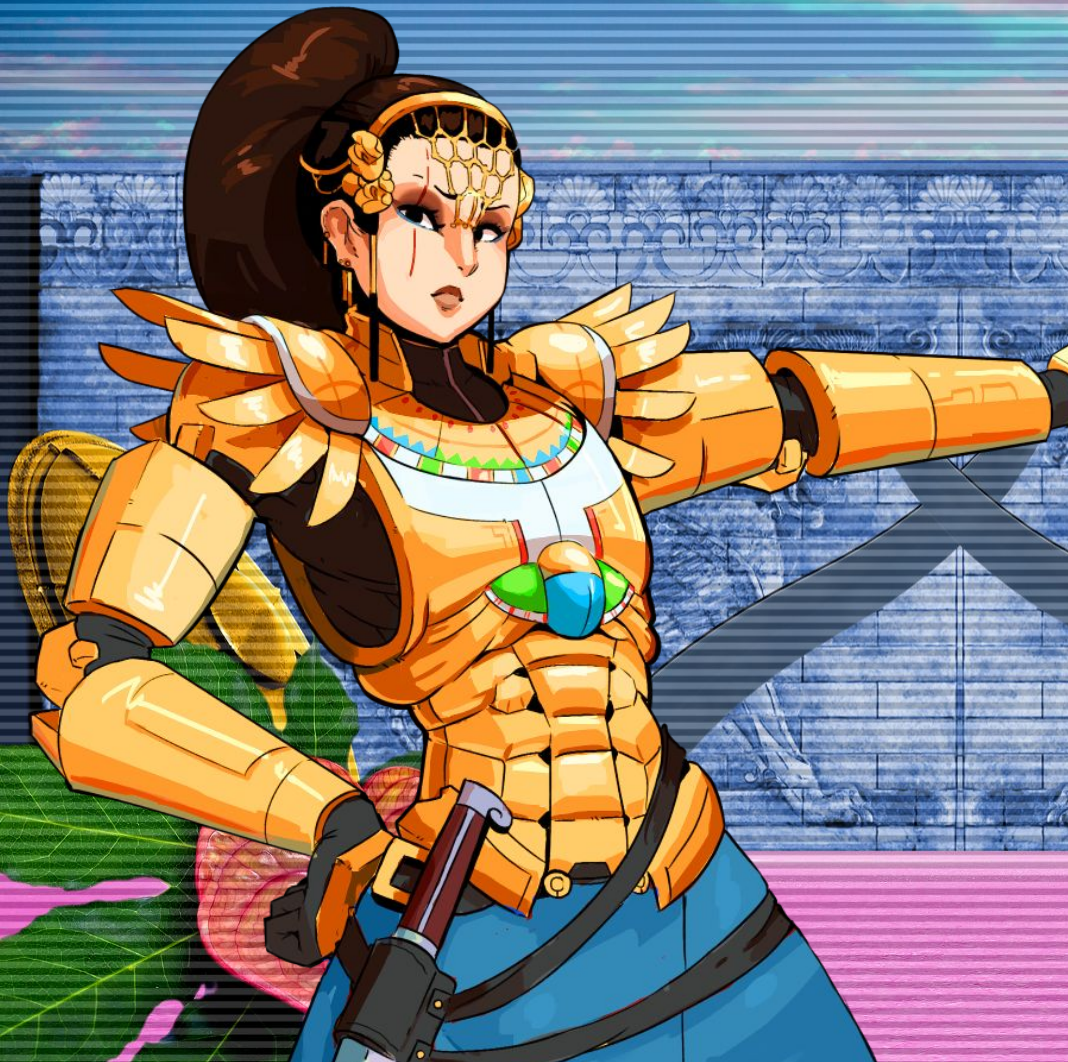
LADY LOVE DIES

There's a tape in here.

Starlight

[LADY LOVE DIES]
A tower that broadcasts music to the speakers on the island.

E



GRAND MARSHAL AKIKO 14

Born in Mihai Day, Romania in AD 991 under the sign of New Night.

The Grand Marshal recruits, trains and leads her Marshals in any military activity the Syndicate performs.

Akiko was born an orphan in Mihai Day, Romania during the reign of the gods. She was drafted into the army of New Night as Damned Harmony's forces pushed across Eastern Europe. At age 13 she was leading guerrilla operations after excelling at hand to hand and weapons based combat.

When the Great Betrayal happened she fled to join the Syndicate. New Night had given her a home and a purpose. She had no intention of forsaking her god.

Oli: Akiko was originally the antagonist in a top down shooter we had started prototyping. When we switched to Paradise Killer she came straight over. I love how angry she is but beneath the surface she is deeply sentimental. She has given her life to soldiering and now can't exist in the world as the rest of us do.

CHARACTER SHOWCASE: GRAND MARSHAL AKIKO 14



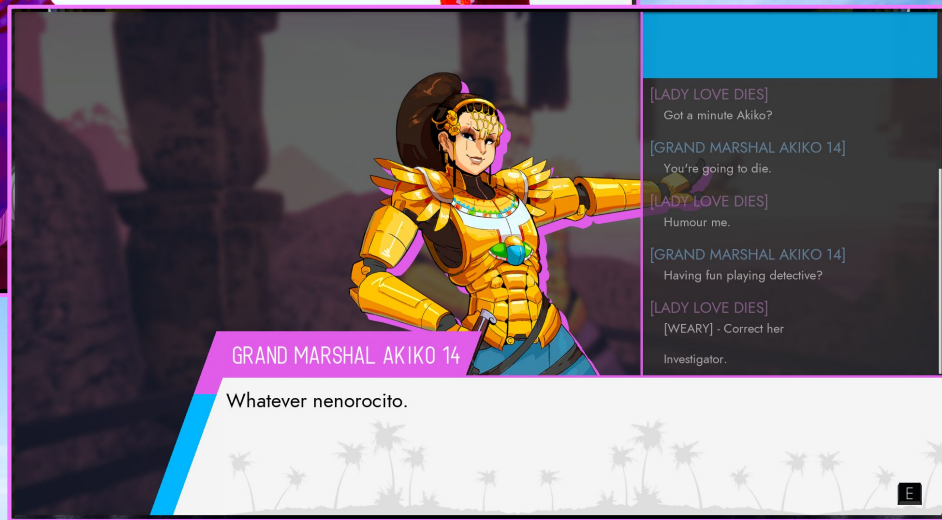




Gardens
ing Achievements



Gigalithic: If I could give any of the characters another shot it would be Akiko. I'm happy with how she turned out but I'm much better at mechanical design and drawing primitive shapes now, and I think I could make her look even cooler.



GRAND MARSHAL AKIKO 14

Whatever nenorocito.

[LADY LOVE DIES]
Got a minute Akiko?

[GRAND MARSHAL AKIKO 14]
You're going to die.

[LADY LOVE DIES]
Humour me.

[GRAND MARSHAL AKIKO 14]
Having fun playing detective?

[LADY LOVE DIES]
[WEARY] - Correct her
Investigator.



CARMELINA SILENCE

Born to Romeo and Natasha Silence on the 4th Island Sequence under the sign of Blood Dancer. Her parents were skilled island architects and taught her how to weave psychic will into structure. Carmelina has since become a genius architect and will soon achieve the perfect island.

Romeo Silence was seduced by the god Cosmic Deceit and committed treason against the Syndicate. As part of his punishment, no member of the Silence family would ever be allowed on the Council. Her mother was killed fighting to protect the Council during the demonic invasion on the 9th Island Sequence.

Carmelina is a private person, preferring to focus on her craft than engaging with the rest of the Syndicate.

Oli: Carmelina came about very early in the creation of the story and her role never changed. I really like the juxtaposition of her personality of a craftswoman with her amazingly beautiful fashion. I really love what Giga did with her face. It is so soft and beautiful and then contorts dramatically when she's angry.

CHARACTER SHOWCASE: CARMELINA SILENCE









CARMELINA SILENCE

Exile wasn't permanent for the investigation freak. Or her little computer.

Sequence.

Born to Romeo and Natasha Silence on the 4th Island Sequence under the sign of Blood Dancer.

Her parents were skilled island architects and taught her how to weave psychic will into structure. Carmelina has since become a genius architect and will soon achieve the perfect island.

Romeo Silence was seduced by the god Cosmic Deceit and committed treason against the Syndicate. As part of his punishment, no member of the Silence family would ever be allowed on the Council.

Her mother was killed fighting to protect the Council during the demonic invasion on the 9th Island Sequence.



CRIMSON ACID

Born in the Hospital of Our Martyred Goat, England, in AD 1002 under the sign of Endless Moon.

As a teenager Crimson left home to fight for Endless Moon in France. She excelled at guerrilla operations and became known as the Glamour of the Battlefield due to her stunning beauty and presence. When the Great Betrayal happened, she fled to join the Syndicate.

During the demonic invasion of Island 19 she operated as not only a figurehead for the troops to rally around but also as a guerrilla warrior. As the demons infested the island she struck at them from the shadows, destabilising their formations and enabling Syndicate victory. The gods sensed this and bestowed a blessing upon her, transforming her head into that of a holy goat.

After her blessing, the Council voted unanimously for Crimson to become an idol for the island. She was presented as an example of holy excellence and aspiration. Soon her image was plastered on drinks cans and motivational posters. Crimson hated it. She was a warrior, not a model.

Oli: Crimson was one of my favourite characters to write and I'm so happy that Crimson has become a fan favourite. I was really worried that her sexualisation, while justified in the story, wouldn't go down well. Again, we wanted to challenge stereotypical media depictions of female beauty. I also wanted her story and motive to speak out against the current pornification present in society. I'd love to do a combat focused prequel about Crimson.

CHARACTER SHOWCASE: CRIMSON ACID





Gigalithic: I drew Crimson's horns in a way that doesn't really make sense in a 3D plane, so figuring them out when I had to draw the variants where her head was tilted took a lot of effort.

Citizen Apartments
COMPACT PARADISE



[CRIMSON ACID]

Good to see you again Lady. It's been too long.

[STARLIGHT]

Born in the Hospital of Our Martyred Goat, England, in AD 1002 under the sign of Endless Moon.

As a teenager Crimson left home to fight for Endless Moon in France.

She excelled at guerrilla operations and became known as the Glamour of the Battlefield due to her stunning beauty and presence. When the Great Betrayal happened, she fled to join the Syndicate.

[CRIMSON ACID]

Hello Starlight.

CRIMSON ACID

We're in a dark time. Someone has played a hell of a hand against the Syndicate.



DOCTOR DOOM JAZZ

Born in the Cannon Fortress, Scotland, in AD 988 under the sign of Cosmic Deceit.

Growing up during a military campaign, Doom Jazz longed to become a doctor to tend to the wounded. He snuck into the Haunted Ziggurat medical school and studied in the library after hours. He was caught but Doom Jazz is a charmer if nothing else and managed to convince them to let him stay. He became their top student and battlefield medic. He was captured during the Great Betrayal, losing his arms in a torture chamber before being rescued by Eyes Kiwami. The two fled to join the Syndicate.

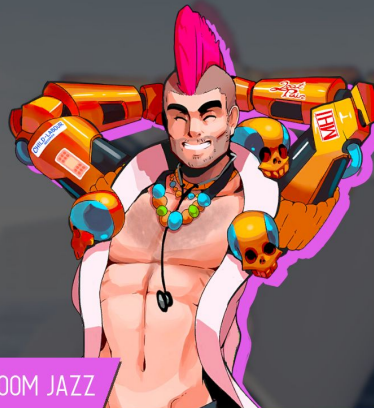
Doom Jazz is a playboy, never settling down with anyone. He lives on his own in a personal yacht, away from the traditional Syndicate residences.

Oli: Doom Jazz was a character developed early and was the start of my trend for not allowing men to wear shirts. I didn't even realise I'd done this until late in dev. Women are often scantily clad in games, why aren't men? There are so many hot men in games covered in armour or badly tailored outfits. Get those abs out.

CHARACTER SHOWCASE: DOCTOR DOOM JAZZ







Doctor Doom Jazz

DOCTOR DOOM JAZZ

Lady Love Dies! As gorgeous as you were 3 million days ago!



HENRY DIVISION

A Citizen born to Rina Division 27 years ago. Father unknown.

Being fatherless left him angry. He swung wildly between being a shut in and almost feral. Intellectual and creative but finds it difficult to apply himself. He struggled through his school work until he became aware of demonology and suddenly developed an interest in occult mathematics. He scraped a pass at the end of the course and continued his studies himself.

Has a chip on his shoulder about being a citizen and the way the Syndicate looks down on the inhabitants of the island.

Oli: It was important to me to always have contrasts in the characters. In this case, Henry is possessed by a demon, has allegedly murdered multiple people, definitely murdered his own mother and has also been arrested for arson and violent robbery. Yet he doesn't look evil. He actually looks quite gentle. We are all victims of the situation we find ourselves in and Henry is no different.

His hair is a bowl cut by the way. Team Beanie are out of their minds.

CHARACTER SHOWCASE: HENRY DIVISION





[HENRY DIVISION]

Who the f**k are you?

[STARLIGHT]

Henry Division. The prime suspect.

A Citizen born to Rina Division 27 years ago.
Father unknown.

Arrested multiple times by the Marshals for assault, robbery, arson and torture. Imprisoned in the Desolation Cell after killing his mother during his possession ten years ago.

Intellectual and creative but finds it difficult to apply himself. He struggled through his school work until he became aware of demonology and suddenly developed an interest in occult mathematics.

HENRY DIVISION

I said, who the f**k are you?



LYDIA DAY BREAK

Born in Mwana Falls, Kenya in AD 1001 under the sign of Beautiful Spectre.

The Syndicate's Ferry Woman, responsible for transporting the Syndicate to new Island Sequences.

After an uninteresting childhood spent in worship of Beautiful Spectre she enlisted in the army during her teens and became known as a titan killer after she successfully defended a temple complex from three monstrosities born from beyond the stars. She then became an assassin, working in the shadows.

One of her targets was Sam Day Break, a hero from an opposing army. They met and faced off in a duel that lasted for two weeks and destroyed the small town of Ras 009. Eventually Lydia triumphed and drove a sword through the heart of Sam.

Sam refused to die. In the two weeks of their duel, Sam had fallen in love with Lydia and the strength of that love transformed Sam's body upon death. Flesh fell away, leaving Sam as a skeleton. Sam professed his love for Lydia. She too had fallen for Sam on the battlefield and they fled to get married. They were in Babylon when the Great Betrayal happened and had no desire to be part of it. They still worshipped their gods. They had heard of the formation of the Syndicate and headed to them.

Oli: Lydia and her car were the stars of a cancelled prototype. I love Lydia's contrast with the rest of the cast. She mixes punk style clothing with her African heritage. She is super chill and an excellent friend. I love her backstory and how Lydia and Sam are the only people that have managed to make love work on the islands.

We have big plans for the Day Breaks. One day when we have several million dollars, we're going to make The Ultimate Action Game about Lydia and she'll kill one or more gods.

CHARACTER SHOWCASE: LYDIA DAY BREAK





Gigalithic: Lydia is extremely cool, and I learned a lot from drawing her, the style of the ombre of her hair is one I learned from my many aborted attempts at drawing fanart for a certain popular game featuring squids who are also kids.



[LYDIA DAY BREAK]
Hey LD!

How's the investigation going?

[LADY LOVE DIES]
It's progressing. Going through my suspect list.

[LYDIA DAY BREAK]
Am I on it? I guess I must be right. We're all guilty until proven innocent when something like this happens right?

[LADY LOVE DIES]
What about getting people to the next island? Anything strange?

LYDIA DAY BREAK

I'm still in charge of getting the Syndicate off this island and on to the next. Some of us got moved but the rest are stuck here until you crack this thing.

E



SAM DAY BREAK

Born in the shadow of the dragon in Turkey in AD 999 under the sign of Shadow Zero.

Sam took to killing like breathing. He killed to survive on the streets and then killed as a soldier before just killing for fun. He became a hitman extraordinaire under the banner of Shadow Zero.

He met Lydia on the battlefield. The two battled for two weeks, destroying the town of Ras 009. Lydia claimed victory and stabbed Sam through the heart. While fighting, he had fallen in love with Lydia and in his moment of death, refused to leave her. His skin fell away and his skeleton hardened, becoming a deep red as he confessed his love for her. She too had fallen for him and accepted his confession. They fled to get married. He renounced his murderous ways and refuses to commit harm to others.

He runs a bar on each Paradise island. Sam collects whiskies from each Island Sequence and pairs them to his customers. He has developed an obsession with carving the perfect ice cubes.

Oli: I love Sam. I really love Sam. He has a tragic side to him but gives everything to his wife and to his bartending. Sam came about because I'm a big fan of Japanese whisky and wanted to put something about it in the game. When I designed his character I wanted to make someone very different from the rest of the cast who would help to expand the possibilities of the game world.

CHARACTER SHOWCASE: SAM DAY BREAK





Gigalithic: I had the most fun with Sam Daybreak's expression, he was also the most difficult character to draw.

Citizen Housing

SAM'S BAR



BAR
THROUGH
THE HEART



Sam Day Break

SAM DAY BREAK

Hey LD! I'd heard you were back.

E



ONE LAST KISS

A mysterious spectre that lingers on the island. Who is she? What does she want?

One Last Kiss is the ghost of murdered Syndicate member Grace Bloodlines. Grace was the Syndicate's exorcist but was murdered during Henry's arrest a decade ago. Is that the truth? Are the facts different?

Oli: One Last Kiss was written into an early version of the story to serve a very specific purpose. [REDACTED] messed up and failed to open the second Seal. One Last Kiss was much more intent on getting revenge against the whole Syndicate and unlocked the second Seal from the other side to help [REDACTED] get through and complete their mission. As the story developed and that bit was written out, we kept One Last Kiss and developed her backstory to bring her into the crime.

CHARACTER SHOWCASE: ONE LAST KISS



Gigalithic: My favorite design is One Last Kiss, I'm really proud of how her mask turned out. It took a few different passes at it to make it not look too jarring, given that skeletons don't usually have lips or eyelashes.



WITNESS TO THE END

Born in the Chaos Palace in northern Iran in AD 981 under the sign of Destroyed Eden.

As a child, Witness was enslaved under the banner of Crying Grudge and put to work building the perpetually growing Chaos Palace in north Persia. During the Great Betrayal Witness refused to budge in his devotion, fleeing to hide within the impossible labyrinth of the Chaos Palace. Ezequial found Witness and urged him to follow him. They became very close. Witness was still a young man and Ezequial older and wiser. Witness looked up to him as a father figure after being taken from his own father at a young age.

Witness holds a great deal of responsibility, overseeing the end of an island. He ensures every failure is perfect. He collects and breeds rare plants in his penthouse.

Witness seems to have taken a dark turn into religious fanaticism recently. He despairs at his perception that the Syndicate have strayed from the path of their holy mission to resurrect the gods, focusing instead on building the perfect Paradise. Does that give him enough motive to commit the crime to end all crimes?

Oli: Paradise Killer was conceived on a Sunday night after a couple of whiskies. I wrote a one page story/setting concept in a frenzy and it was all written in the voice of Witness. He was the first named character. He used to be a much more panicked character, fretting and worrying. All of that was written out and some of his lines were transplanted into Judge's script.


CHARACTER SHOWCASE: WITNESS TO THE END



Gigalithic: I had to squint for a few hours to copy the code of hamurabi as best I could onto the Witness's chest.

The Witness's helmet took inspiration from Emperor Cain from Xenogears and Iron Mask from Gundam F91.






The Witness To The End

THE WITNESS TO THE END

Under the gaze of the gods the so called 'investigation freak' returns to the Island Sequences.





YURI NIGHT

Born in the Marble Chambers on Island Sequence 15 under the sign of Dire Rose.

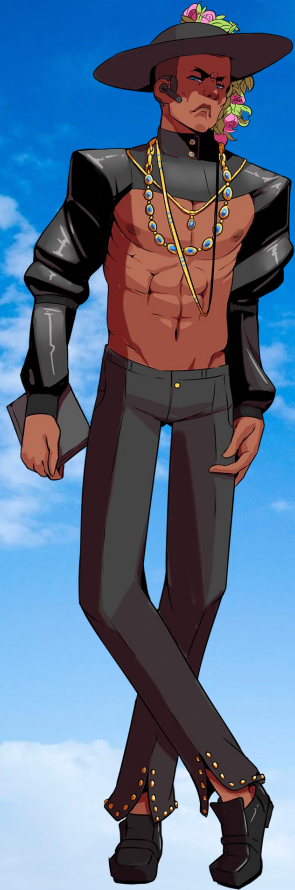
Yuri despised his parents. They didn't have any drive or ambition, they just wanted to serve. He couldn't see a future for himself without more political power within the Syndicate.

An unattractive boy inside and out, Yuri wasn't blessed with any redeeming qualities. Bizarrely and without warning during his late teens, he transformed into the very image of stunning male beauty overnight.

He quickly rose up through the Syndicate with his new found charm and intelligence but people have started to see through him. He is struggling to reach the top of the Syndicate due to cronyism and seethes with resentment.

Oli: I hate Yuri! Absolutely hate him. Snivelling, horrible little shit. He's based on someone I worked with at a certain multinational developer and publisher. He was always playing a game of politics that no one else in the studio was playing. Yuri was a great fun character to write. He has no subtlety which makes his personality come out very easily.

CHARACTER SHOWCASE: YURI NIGHT







[LADY LOVE DIES]
I don't believe we've ever met before?

[STARLIGHT]
Yuri Night. Secretary to the Architect and the Ferry Woman's handler.

Born in the Marble Chambers on Island Sequence 15 under the sign of Dire Rose.

Yuri is new to the Syndicate and has quickly risen through the ranks.

[YURI NIGHT]
I can't believe in our darkest hour that Judge called on you.

[LADY LOVE DIES]
[SNIDE] - Charmer
You're a charmer.

YURI NIGHT

I'm not here to make friends freak.



BEAR-CHAN

Bear-chan seems to have been left behind when everyone went to the slaughter ritual. Why is she hanging out at the park? Why does she have a couple of blood crystals on her? All great questions.

Rachel: Oli and I adopted a shiba inu called Bear, and we wanted her in the game. She was very sick throughout most of Paradise Killer's development and there were points where we were wondering if we were going to lose her, so we wanted to immortalise her in the game. Phil and Amy's pet is also in the game, keep an eye out for Kyary-Hamu-Hamu, the hamster with the best name in the world.

We don't know why she was called Bear, we adopted her when she was around 9 and she'd been known by Bear for all of her life so we didn't change it for her sake.

I drew her in the pose I most often see her in in real life, waiting for a treat with her cheesy grin. She's a good old girl.



JUDGE

Every society needs a form of justice, a Syndicate member volunteered. They believed so deeply in impartial justice that they scrubbed their ego and fused themselves to the island, becoming Judge. They would become the embodiment of justice, acting on behalf of the island.

Oli: Once upon a time, Witness filled Judge's role in game. Back then there was only one conspiracy and the game was more linear. We radically shook the structure up and changed character stories and we needed a character that was unquestionably innocent. My original concept for Judge was a character in bondage gear hung from a crucifix. They would wildly swing from soft spoken philosophy to screaming commands at you. There's probably some merit in that design but I prefer how they turned out.



SHINJI

A demon who came to the island via a psychic pathway that Henry opened during a ritual a decade ago. He is anarchic, obnoxious but wants to help Lady Love Dies in his own way.

Oli: One night while drinking and playing Let it Die, I suddenly decided that we needed a mascot character like Uncle Death. At the time I was feeling pretty aggro about how people were receiving the game. I started believing that we wouldn't get a publisher and that we would only sell about two copies, so I decided to make him obnoxious. Since then he's been rejected from promo art on multiple store fronts so mission accomplished I guess?

He was my favourite character to write as he wasn't linked to the crimes. I could just have fun and crack jokes, philosophise about crime or just talk nonsense.

Gigalithic: Shinji is so much fun. Being symmetrical as he is, it was a constant process of checking and re-checking to make sure that both his sides were different enough to look like I hadn't just copied half of his lineart and flipped it (which I did) but also not so different that it felt like one side was weighted over the other.

I think I was the one who came up with the 3 eyed :dizzy_face: emoji to cover Shinji's genitals. Are they genitals? He's an extra-dimensional being, so who's to say that it isn't censored just based on our anthropic perception of the humanoid form. If this game was made for a world of Shinjis, who's to say we wouldn't have to censor Lady Love Dies's forehead? Just kidding, of course. A world full of Shinjis wouldn't have a ratings board.



DEAD NEBULA

Dead Nebula is the only corporation on Paradise Island. The Syndicate operate it within a labyrinth of caverns under the island. Citizens are enslaved into working within the Deep Factory and the high tech farm.

Every corporation needs a mascot so the mascot Dead Nebula was created. The mascot eventually became the face of the AI that runs the corporation's systems and they are networked into devices across the island. Dead Nebula is another ally for Lady Love Dies, helping her to unlock the Nightmare Computers around the island.

Rachel: Even the most evil mega-corporations benefit from a friendly face representing them. As with all the characters and environments in the game we wanted something cute but also grotesque, so we came up with Dead Nebula.

They drowned by gorging themselves on the disgusting energy drinks they sell, but the energy drink pool in their helmet keeps them going in their zombified state. If Dead Nebula drinks can keep the dead alive, think what they can do for you!

Oli knew that I would love the task of designing the mascot even though I'm a 3D environment artist by trade. I had no idea how to draw characters even half as well as Gigalithic, so Dead Nebula was the only character modelled in 3D, I then drew some little bits over the top to make it fit into the world a little better. We then were able to use the Dead Nebula model around the island too, game dev is all about recycling after all.

Dead Nebula is voiced by the very kawaii Amy of Cakes with Faces, she is also conveniently Phil's wife.

BUY MORE DRINKS!



CRYING GRUDGE

Nearly killed by the Persian army at the Battle of Beyond Revenge.

His body was paraded across the country and displayed above the palace in Shushatra Zero. The tears of the god fertilised the ground and the city became a sea of lilies.

Syndicate members stole the god back and burned the city to the ground.

The god has been moved from island to island ever since and been guarded in a pyramid.

Oli: I really liked the lore I came up with for Crying Grudge. When we decided to put a god in the game, I was drawn to him because he is different to the more animalistic gods and would help show players the infinite possibilities of the astral monsters.

Gigalithic: I think Crying Grudge has a really strong silhouette, and his design was the easiest for me to put together. I really loved drawing the little skulls.



DAINONIGATE

Carmelina's secret son. As part of her plan to murder the Council, she needed a killer that could breach the Holy Seals protecting the Council. She secretly had an affair with a Council member and hid her son. She conditioned him into becoming a killing machine, devoid of personality, ego and morals. He is a dreadful secret and key to Carmelina's conspiracy.

Oli: Although he was in the story from the beginning, we did his art last and I'm glad we did. It allowed him to draw on a lot of different character influences and stand apart from the rest of the Syndicate. Giga did an AMAZING job with the pattern on his suit.

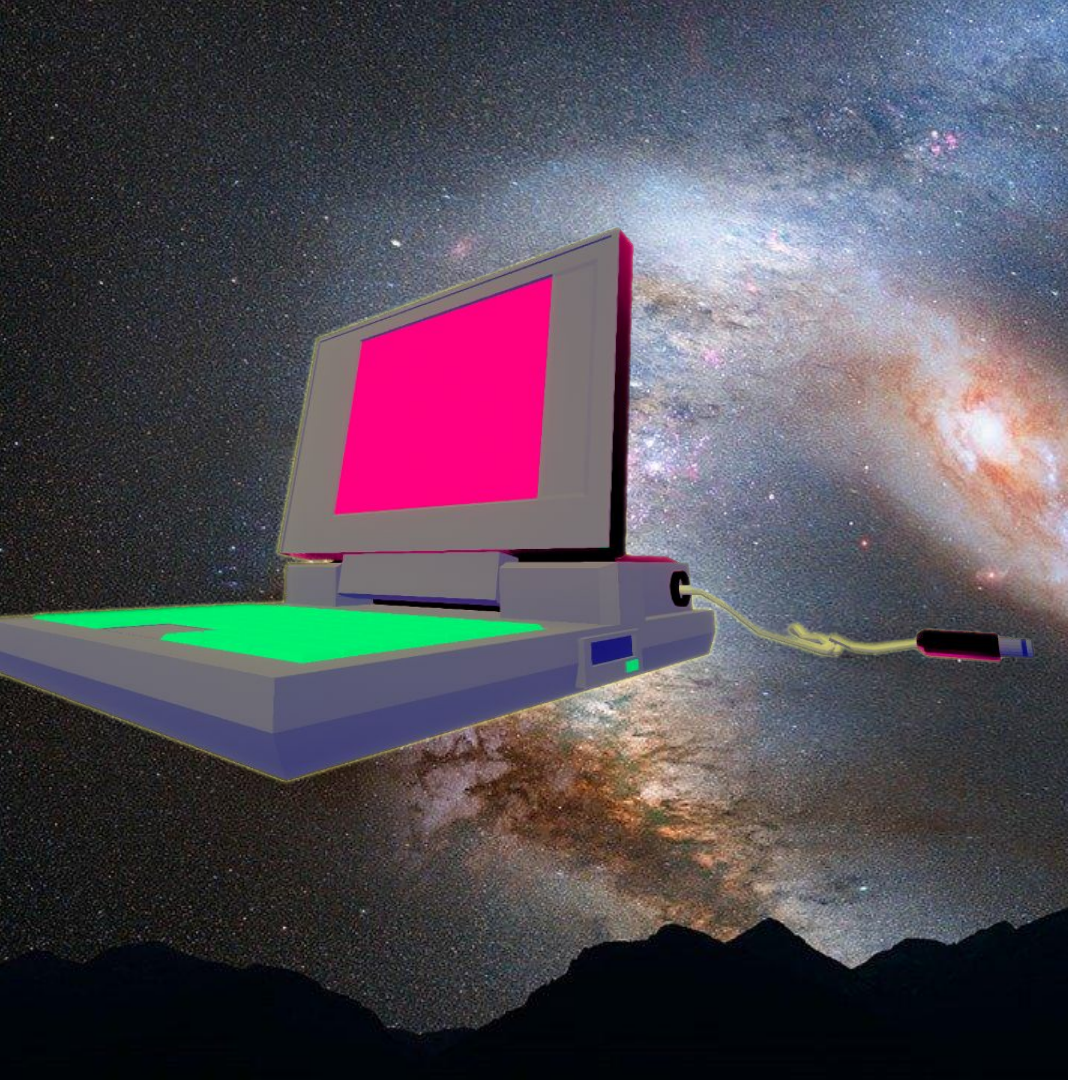


MONSERRAT BREAKER

The Leader of the Syndicate, murdered along with the rest of the Council. Monserrat was forced to kill the original Leader of the Syndicate, Ezequial, on an early Island Sequence. Ezequial descended into murderous paranoia as the Syndicate struggled to find the source of demonic corruption. Monserrat assumed leadership and led the Syndicate into a new age of advancement and success. History always repeats however. Monserrat was succumbing to paranoia and was transitioning from benevolent Leader to paranoid tyrant as the promise of Perfect 25 loomed.

Oli: When I originally wrote the character, I had a much more generic look in my head. Kind of like Lord Gwynn from Dark Souls. When it came to design Monserrat, I went as far away from that as possible.

In an early story draft, Monserrat escaped the slaughter and you'd find him in his panic room. Depending how long you took to find him, he'd be alive or dead, having bled out. As the story was developed this didn't fit and got cut.



STARLIGHT

"An investigator's best friend; Starlight. It's been a while since me and the girl did the dance of an investigation."

Rachel: I got to voice Starlight which was really fun. We were deep into 2020's coronavirus pandemic and we started to really struggle to find voice actors who had their own home equipment and could record from home, so the dev team had to fill in some of the gaps. I voiced Starlight, our amazing composer Barry voiced Doctor Doom Jazz, Barry's partner Ria voiced Crimson Acid, and Phil's wife Amy voiced Dead Nebula. It wasn't intentional but I find it pretty funny that you can romance both Barry and Ria in the game.

Hiding my Essex dialect was pretty tough while trying to be a posh robotic British voice, and I had never voiced anything before so I was stumbling over words everywhere. Luckily Barry performed a lot of his audio magic on the recordings and saved the day.

I particularly love how multiple people have cited my "Blood Crystal" lines as being the most annoying part of the game. You're welcome.

ENVIRONMENTS



We live in the UK. It's awful! A tragic little place full of ignorance, bitterness, grey skies, wet weather and horrible houses. I wanted to create a world I could escape to and lose myself in. A world of blue skies, scorched concrete and deep orange sunsets glinting off tiles on apartment blocks. Like Japan. Japan's cool as shit!

We took our love of exploring the streets of Tokyo as our starting point. The game had to feel like you'd stepped out on a sunny morning and you never stopped walking, exploring somewhere new with a discovery around every corner. Early on in the project I built a test environment with some first pass assets, lighting and fog. I was tooling around in it one evening, at least one whisky in, and I turned a corner and got chills. I found the kind of view I had been trying to achieve. It felt magical.

This is the first game I've done shippable quality art for. I learned as I went and had a lot of guidance from Rachel. The world art was kept simple so that I could make it all in time and so it was performant on low end systems and didn't cause a streaming nightmare. I love brutalist architecture and find mundane but huge buildings unsettling. This was a happy coincidence since they are less time consuming to make and we could do several material tricks on them to speed up creation.

Creation time was absolutely critical on this project and to that end we made full use of Unreal marketplace assets. Weirdos on the internet react badly to this but let me tell you, most of your precious games that you evangelise feature purchased assets! Every time we used a purchased asset it was hand-edited in some way to fit our art style. Textures were changed, meshes were tweaked and materials rewritten. Phil and I grew up in the DIY punk scene. Nothing was provided to you, there was no formal process for writing music or putting on gigs. You just took what you could find and made what you could within constraints. That's how we made Paradise.

- Oli, Creative Director, Kaizen Game Works

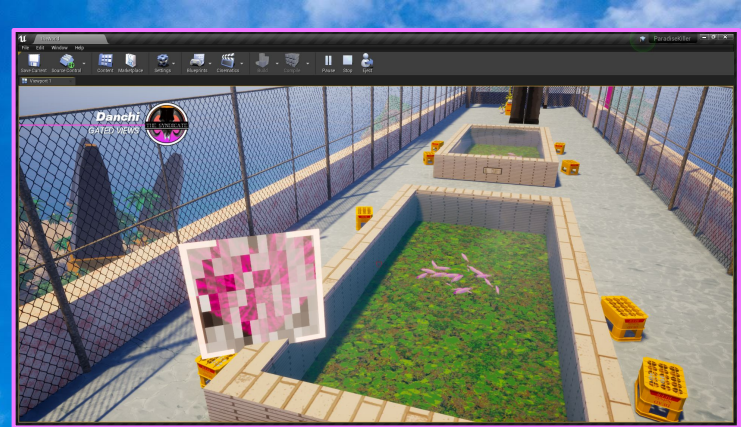
ENVIRONMENT SHOWCASE: CITIZEN APARTMENTS AND HOUSING





Rachel: A lot of our inspiration for Paradise Killer came from our trips to Japan, where we quickly came to realise that nothing prepares you for a walk up a mountain like a convenience store onigiri and bad, sugary coffee from a can. Kaizen Game Works have gone on a few group holidays together and we find a lot of fun and mystery in searching out new snacks in a culture and language we don't understand. We wanted the player to have that experience in our game too.

Unfortunately the amount of items I put in the conbini caused the performance of the game to dip, so sadly there's about 50% less low-poly fried chicken in the finished game as we hoped there would be.





ENVIRONMENT SHOWCASE: THE IDLE LANDS



Rachel: One of my first tasks on the game was figuring out what the Idle Lands could look like. It was quite square and uniform when I started work on the game, but this was the first place where I suggested we could try and make it have a city-pop album cover vibe. We brought in some bright blue water, some palm trees, and put everything at a jaunty angle just as you see in a lot of 80's Japanese pop album covers.

I made my first crystal skull shader for this area, and this is where we first tried out the opulent, disgusting gold material. I feel like this area was where we felt out the vibe for a lot of the rest of the game.

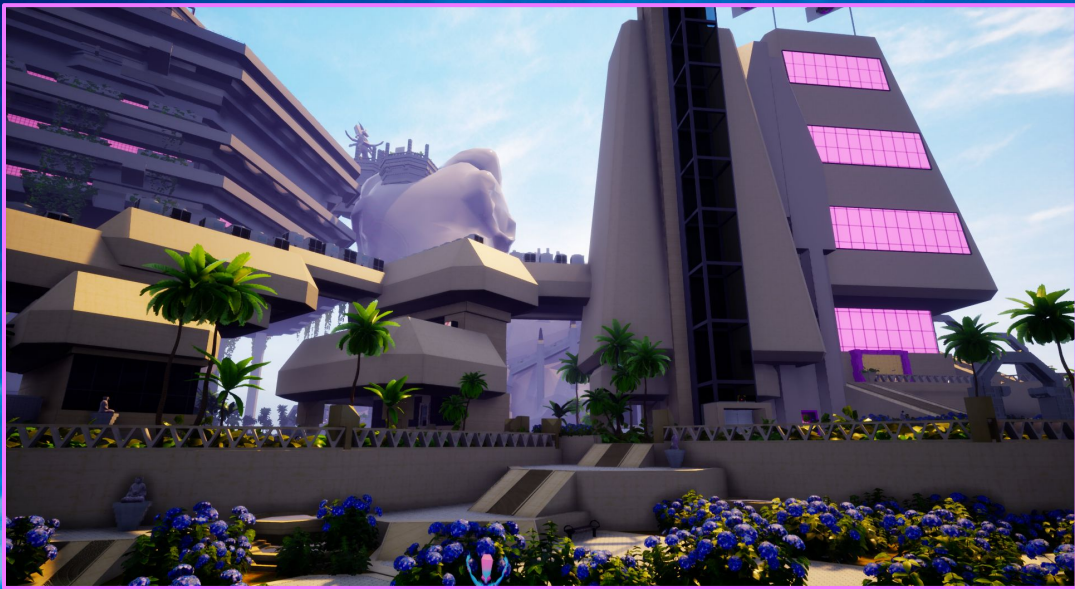


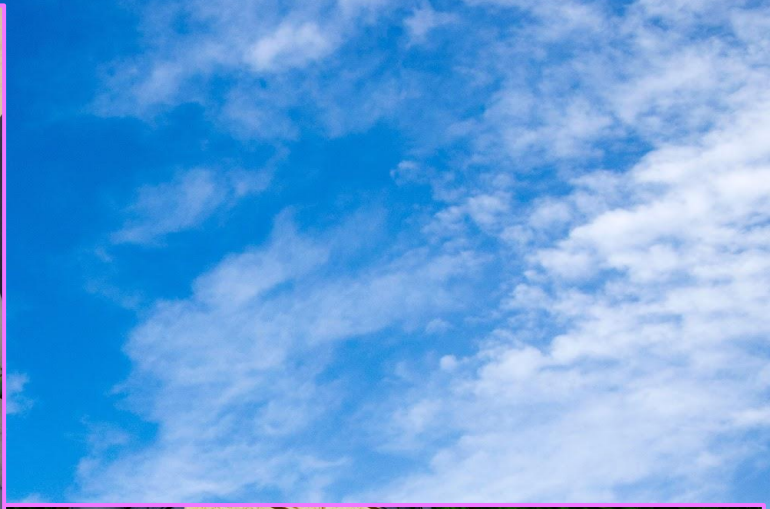
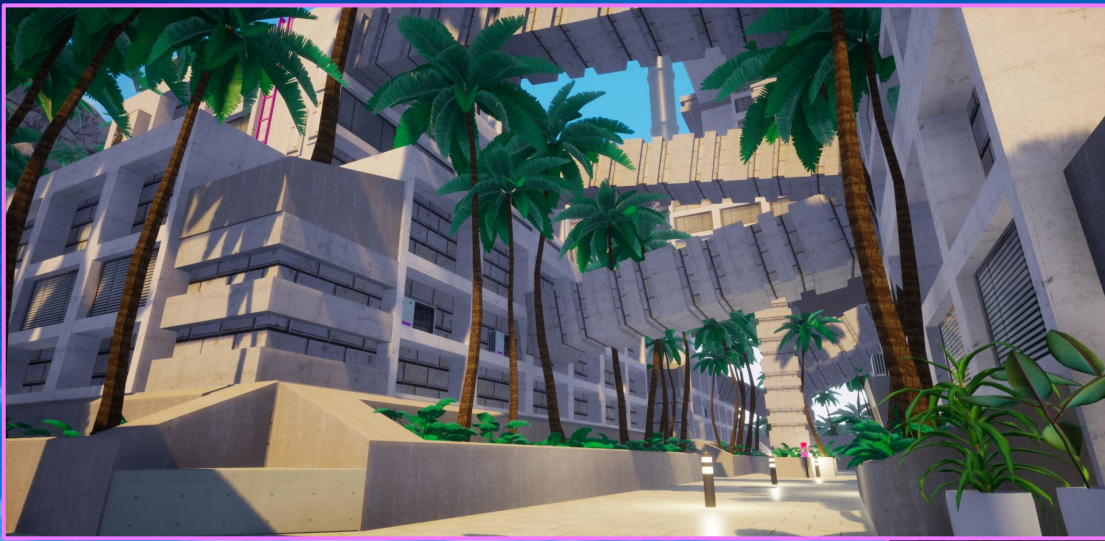


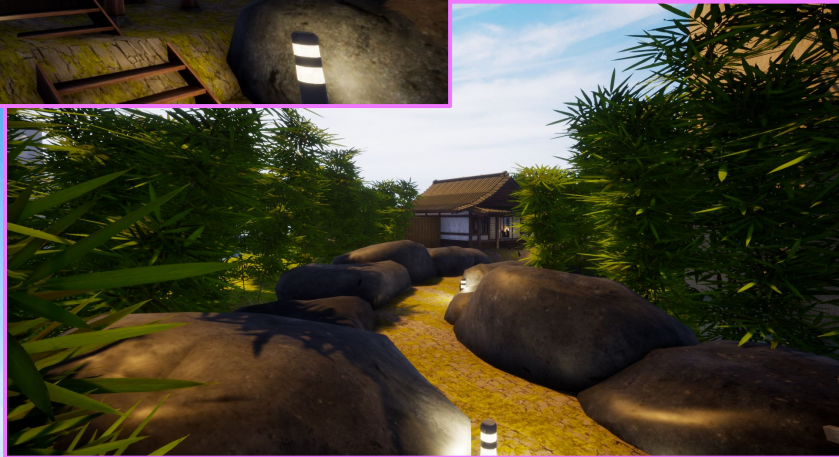
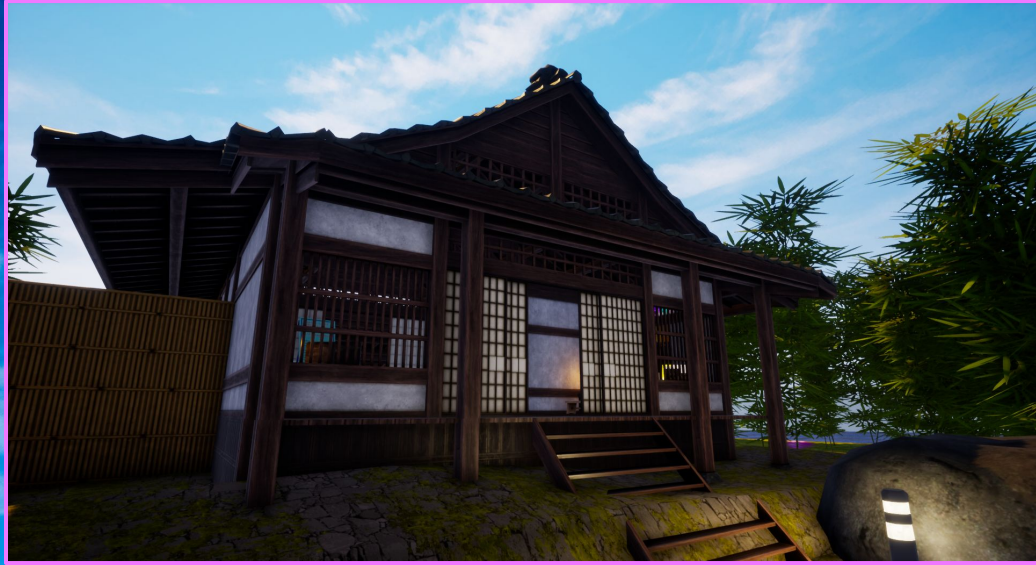
Phil: Early in the game you stand at the edge of the Idle Lands and look down onto Paradise Island. This helps you understand the geography of the island you'll be exploring and familiarise yourself with landmarks. We make sure that the map view in Starlight matches this view to aid navigation.

ENVIRONMENT SHOWCASE: SYNDICATE BUILDINGS





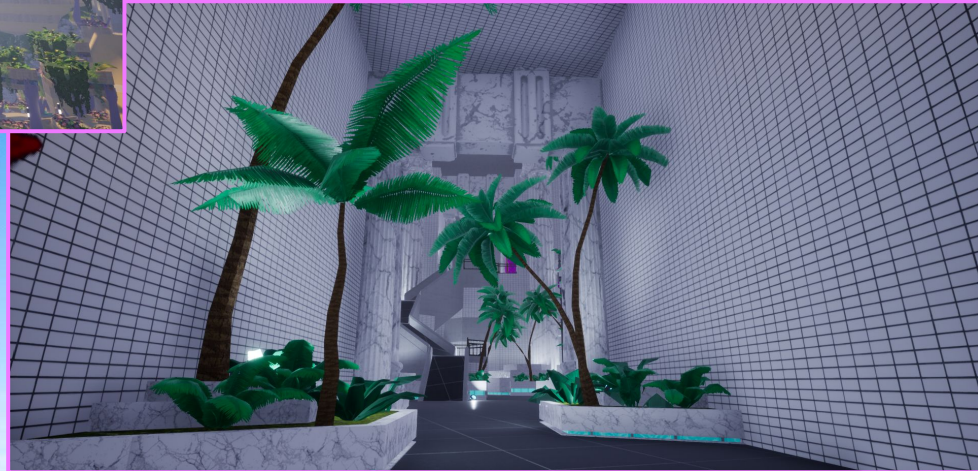


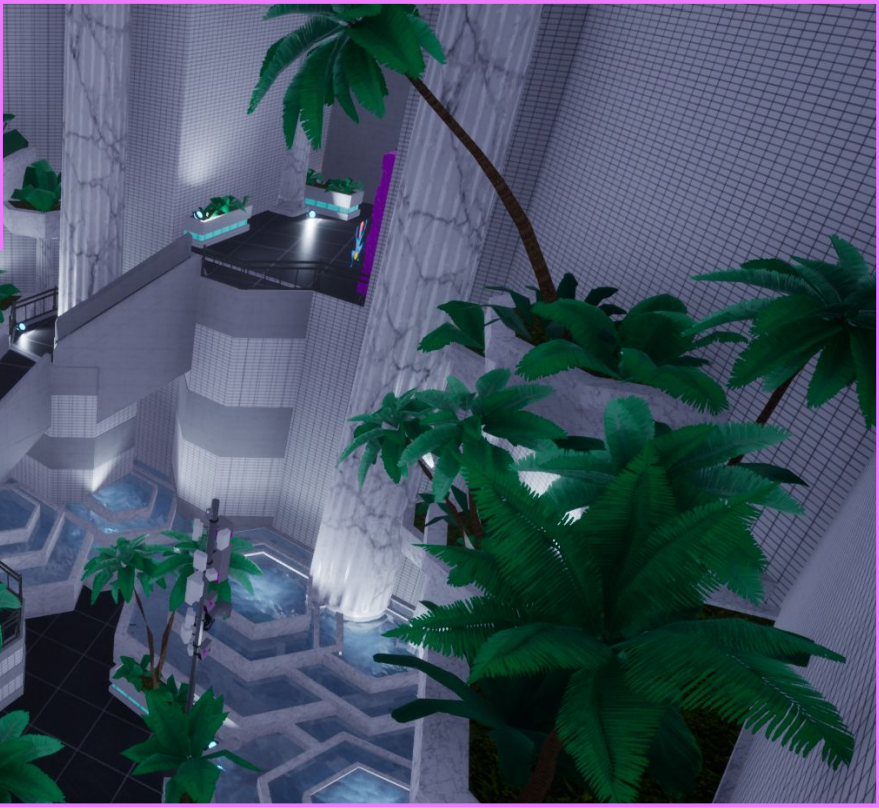


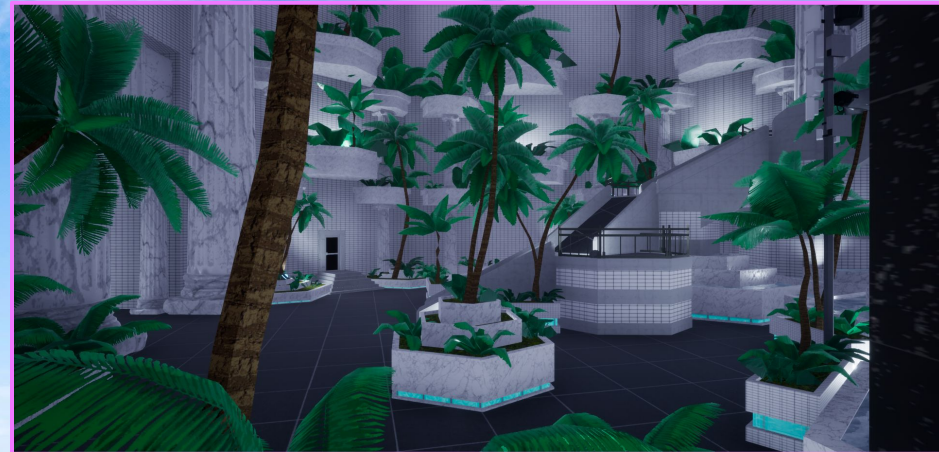




ENVIRONMENT SHOWCASE: THE COUNCIL BUILDING







ENVIRONMENT SHOWCASE: THE BEACH



Rachel: A lot of the game started out looking dark and menacing, and for the longest time the sand on the beach was a muddy brown. As we got further and further into development, we realised that Island 24 should feel like a city pop holiday destination. We turned the beach into somewhere with a lovely blue vaporwave ocean, golden glittery sand, creating somewhere fitting to chill out with music and watch the corrupted sunsets on the island. It's one of my favourite places to hang out with the soundtrack in the game.





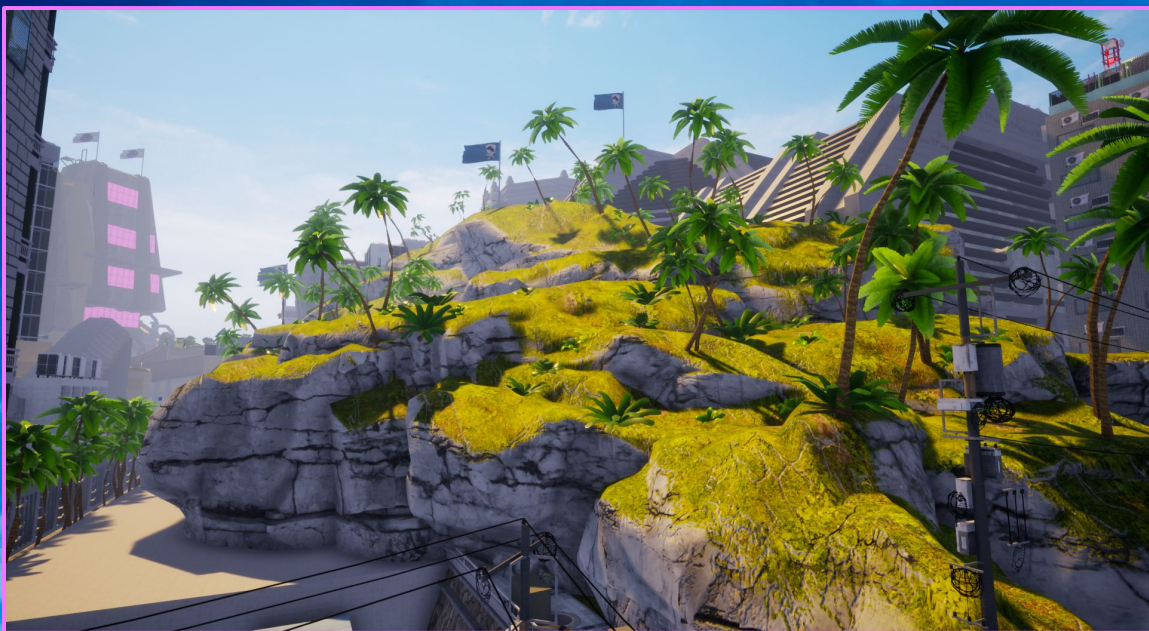
ENVIRONMENT SHOWCASE: THE MOUNTAIN



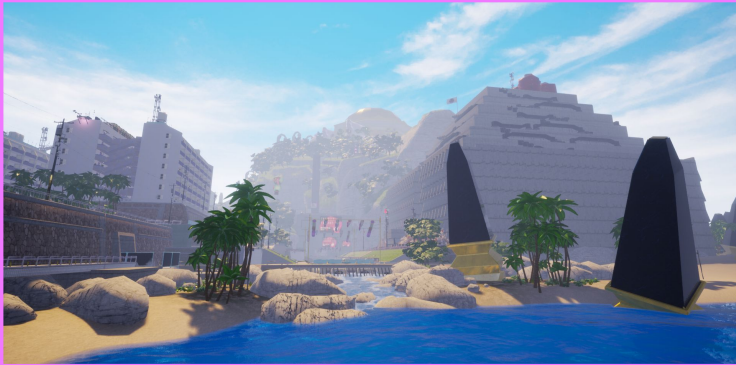
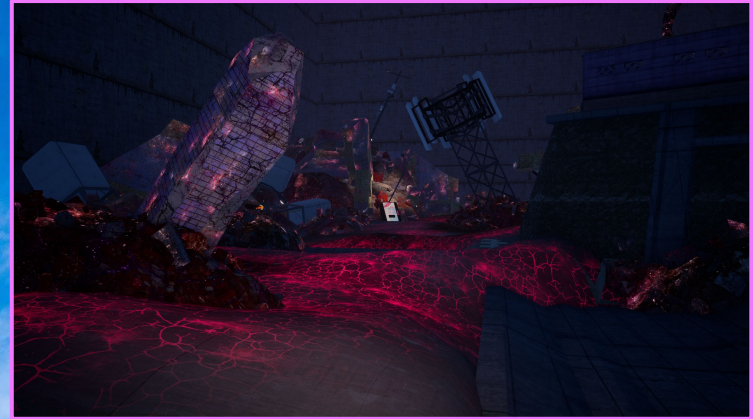
Citizen Housing

SAM'S BAR



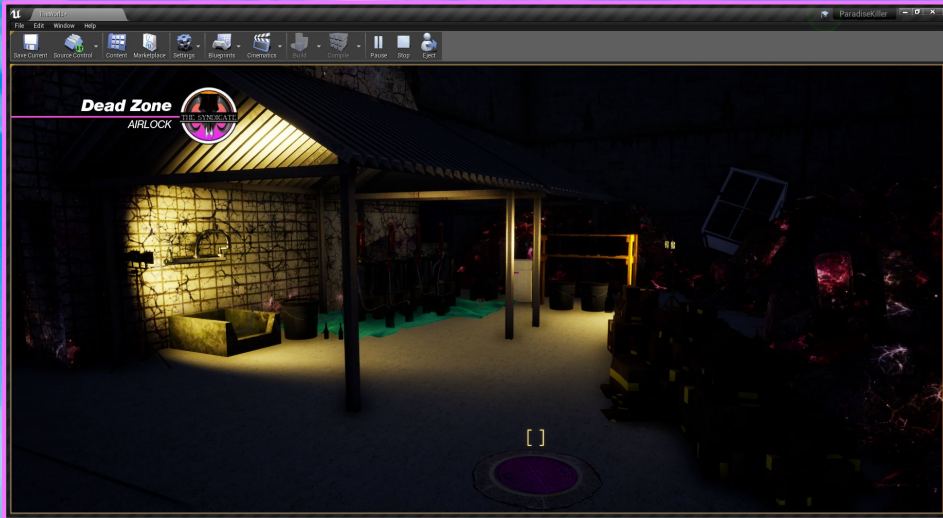
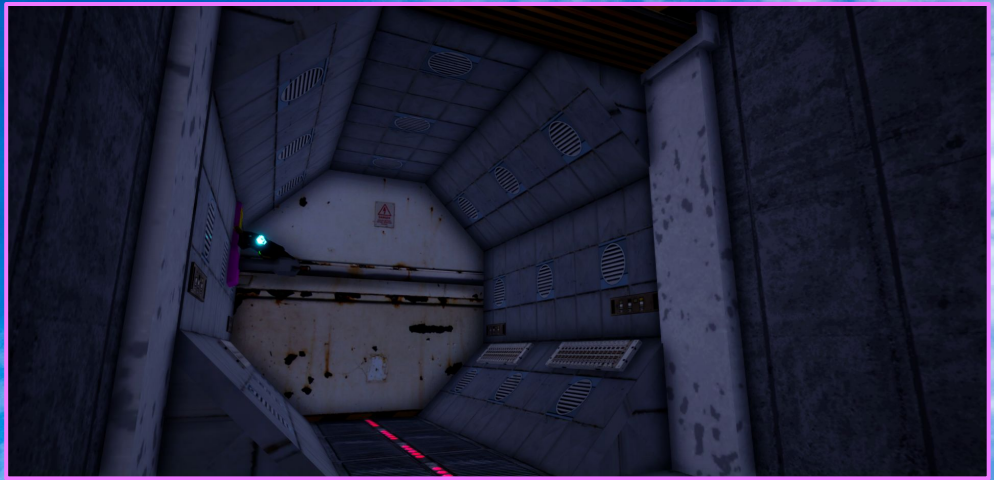
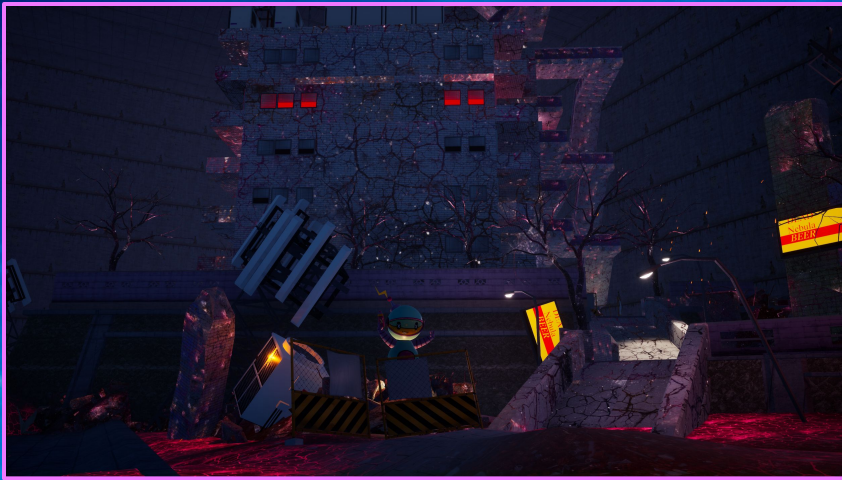


ENVIRONMENT SHOWCASE: THE DEAD ZONE



Rachel: I committed so many art crimes on Paradise Killer, it's ridiculous. If I had made the cosmic space shader that scrolls across The Dead Zone in any of my past AAA game development jobs I would probably have been fired. I love that Oli and Phil just trusted me to go nuts with making something that looked so bad but that fit the cosmic Dreamcast nightmare theme of the game.

We just wanted a style for The Dead Zone where you'd enter it and know some very, VERY rotten stuff had gone down in there, from the creepy broken Dead Nebula statue to the cracked neon pink ground, just the feeling of bad stuff infused into the Dead Zone's core that would have seeped out to infect the rest of the island if it hadn't been contained in the concrete sarcophagus. I hope we managed that.



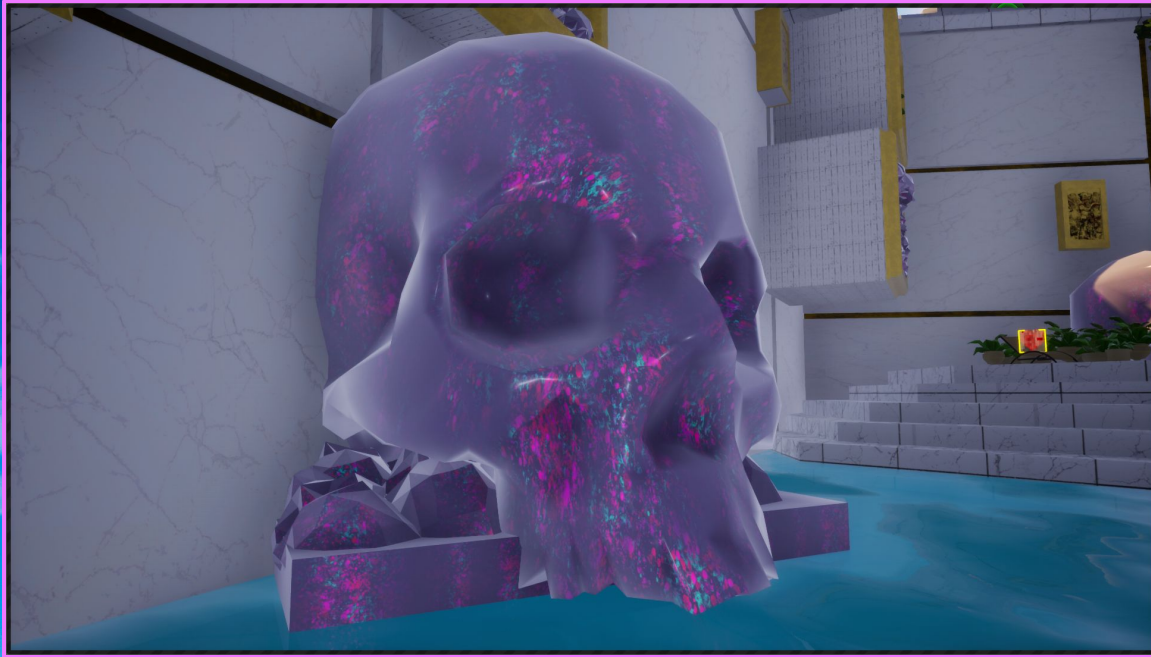
ENVIRONMENT SHOWCASE: RELIGIOUS AREAS



Rachel: Oli asked me to come up with the art style for the crystals. We had been inspired by city pop and vaporwave and the 80's/90's and I wanted to rebel against being told off for using copious amounts of pink and purple in my environment art in previous studios after having my first taste of art freedom. This is how we ended up with the glittery nightmares that they are.

We wanted a lot of the island to just feel like it's all pretty on the surface but with some horrible dark energy lurking just beneath the surface at all times, which was one of the main inspirations for the crystals. In the daytime and when you shine a torch on them they look an innocent white/pink and all glossy and polished, but as soon as the sun goes down and it gets dark you can see the corrupted glittery energy bubbling up from within.

The movement and scale of the crystal and Dead Zone shaders broke after I'd started a job at another company, but Oli and Phil kept them as they were and I like them more now anyway. They fit better in the glitchy mess that is Island 24.



Phil: What material would the Syndicate use to carve statues of their gods? Finding the right look for this was difficult. Gold or rock didn't make these pieces significant enough. Marble with its complex veins added interest but it was still too familiar and earthly. The final version came from imagining what extra-terrestrial crystals might look like, combined with the shimmering pinks and blues of Paradise Killer.





ENVIRONMENT SHOWCASE: AREAS OF INDUSTRY







ENVIRONMENT SHOWCASE: SIGNAGE



ENVIRONMENT SHOWCASE: ADDING MOVEMENT



Phil: Walking around the near deserted Paradise Island can feel lifeless and static so we needed to make sure there was always movement. Foliage sways in the wind, crows and seagulls fly overhead, fountains spurt water and insects flutter around to bring the island to life, but it's the dynamic day / night cycle with its constantly moving shadows that add the most movement.

ENVIRONMENT SHOWCASE: WORLD LIGHTING



Rachel: When I started work on Paradise Killer the lighting on the whole island matched what is now the Desolation Cell, where Henry is being held captive.

We decided that this atmosphere across the whole island was just too oppressive and not fun to be in at all, so I took on the task of relighting the island to be much softer and brighter, and somewhere you might actually want to be for the time it took to solve the Crime to End All Crimes.

I had so much fun when I was trying to match the sky colours to 80s city pop album covers such as Magical by Junko Ohashi, Ride on Time by Tatsuro Yamashita and Adventure by Kikuchi Momoko.

I also took inspiration from walking videos around Japanese towns and from the sunsets over the skyscrapers there, and dialled it all up to 11. My main regret is that I made the night too dark but that was a lesson learned.

RENDERING AN OPEN WORLD

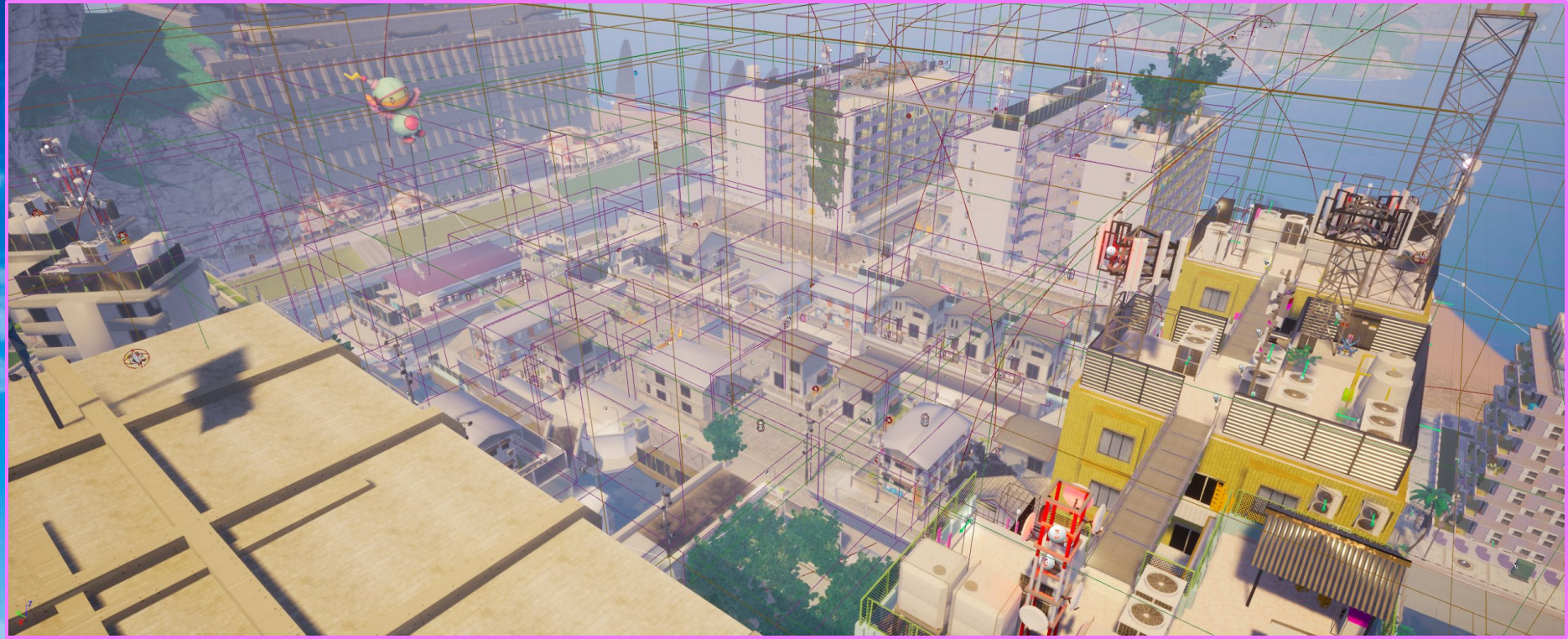


Phil: With everything loaded, Paradise Island has just under 20,000 objects to draw. Even with optimisation that's too many for most PCs and consoles so we needed to dramatically reduce that number. We 'stream' out a lot of actors that are too small to be seen at distance but for big features like buildings need to be visible from a long way off.

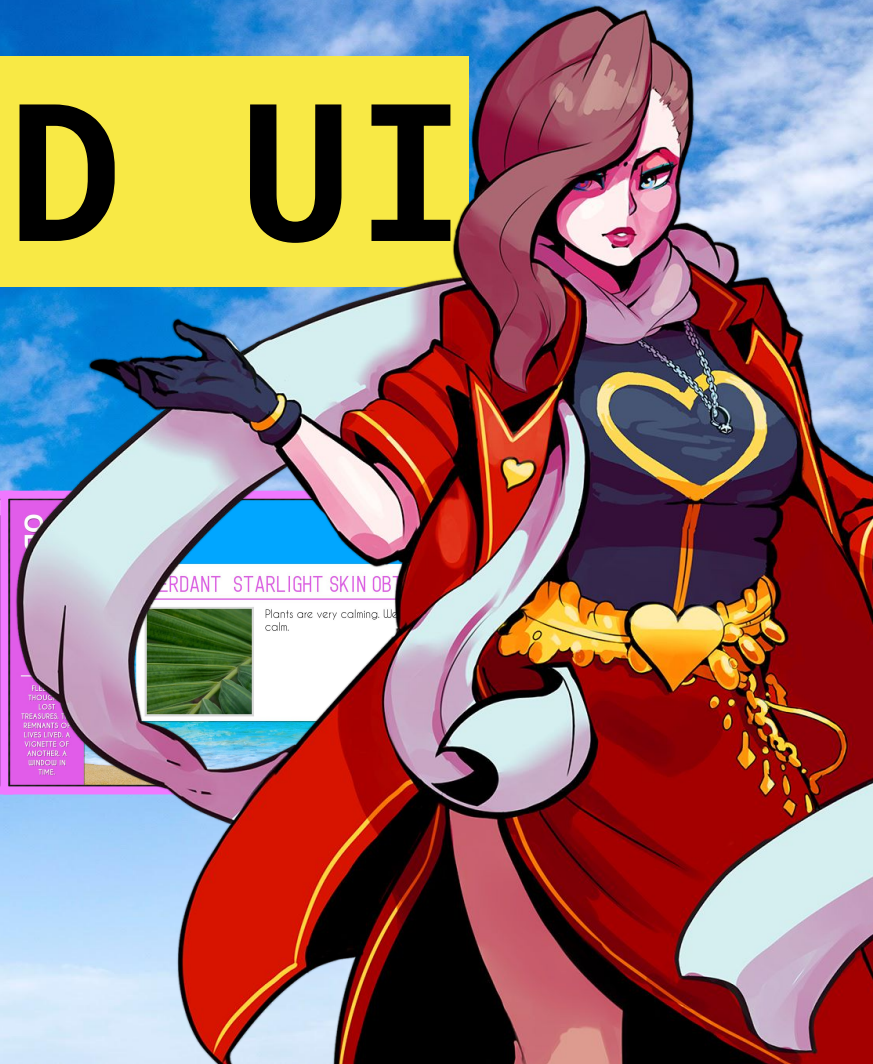
We bundle nearby objects together in a low quality approximation of the shapes and textures so an area which had 1000 objects can now become 20. We need to switch between these low quality approximations and the full quality objects as you get closer.

The world is split into many volumes. As the player moves between these volumes parts of the world are loaded or unloaded to improve performance.





2D ART AND UI



MEDITATION



Phil: Meditation originally served as a method of locating ghost characters, but the mechanic caused more frustration than reward, so it was re-purposed to help locate collectables. Originally the collectables were simple spheres but they were changed to hearts during the last few weeks of development to help tie the mechanic to Lady Love Dies and to be more visually interesting. The hearts pulse and fade between pink and yellow to mimic interaction markers and ensure they are identifiable at distance.

AR MODE



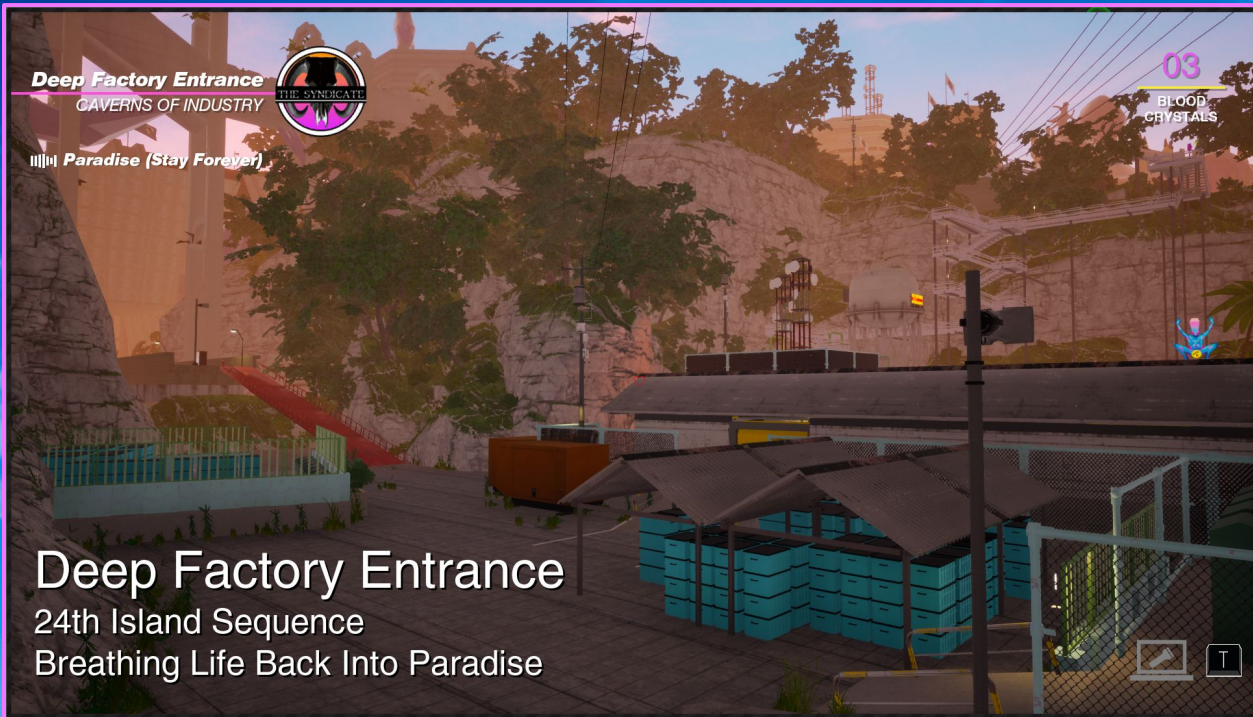
Phil: AR mode is a function of Starlight, so a scanline monitor post processing effect is added to match the scanlines seen when using the Starlight UI. The screen is desaturated to help the player recognise the mode activation as well as allowing for key items like Save / Fast Travel Points and character locations to be highlighted.

AIR DASH



Phil: No good investigator would be without Air Dash. When you dash we wanted to give the sense of speed which is commonly done through blur, speed lines or FOV changes. We wanted something more visually in keeping with Paradise Killer so we chose to perform a pseudo chromatic separation by sampling the screen and creating separate layers for red, green and blue channels overlaid on the original camera view. The amount of separation for each channel and its opacity changes over time which disrupts the normal flow of movement. The chromatic separation simulates the lightheadedness and distorted vision associated with a headrush and ties into the overall vaporwave aesthetic.

HUD



Center: A heart shaped crosshair, the symbol of Lady Love Dies.

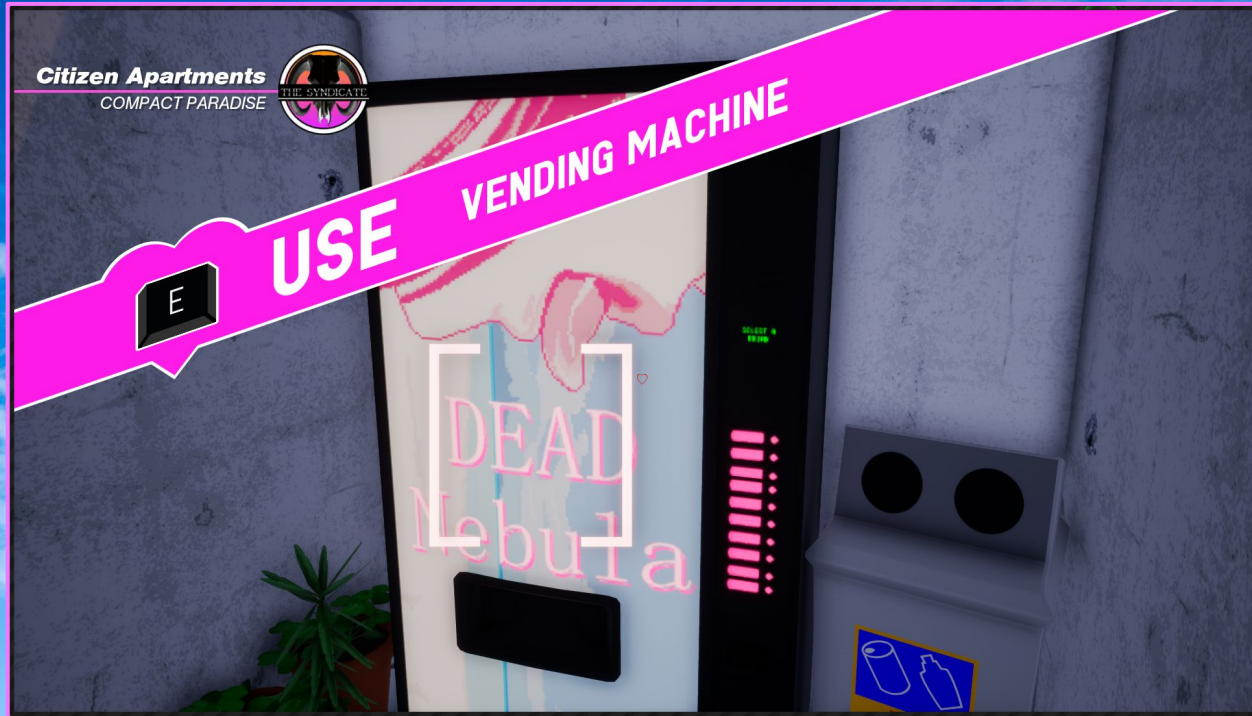
Top Left: A constant reminder of the Syndicate's influence on the island paired with your location. Each area on Paradise Island has its own name and 'nickname'. When a new music track starts you'll see the title here, reminding you that you are in control of the music that plays.

Bottom Left: In MTV style music channels you'd see the song and band name appear on screen as the tracks starts. In Paradise Killer the name of each area as you enter it appears instead.

Top Right: Your Blood Crystal count. We experimented with removing the Blood Crystal count but having it so visually accessible makes it easier to understand progress when saving up for something. Early versions of the HUD also included counters for how many Case Files you'd opened but it was removed as it had no benefit.

Bottom Right: Torch activation. This appears as the sun sets and the world gets darker to remind you that there is a torch available. It also helps contextualize the torch as being part of Starlight.

INTERACTION BAR



Phil: The interaction bar was one of the first things we developed that helped drive the final style of the Paradise Killer UI. Instead of a small, subtle prompt we wanted something bold and aggressive. Originally just a simple pink bar, the heart was added to help tie the interaction to Lady Love Dies along with contextual information like 'Vending Machine' to help understand what action you're taking.

The angle for the interaction bar is 22 degrees to represent a knife edge. Earlier versions had a shallower angle closer to a Japanese knife edge.

INTERACTION BAR: PREVIOUS ITERATIONS



PICK UPS



Phil: Exploration is everything, but we wanted to make sure that it was easy to locate pickups you were close to and make them identifiable at distance. We wanted to make sure they would always catch the players eye so found ways of adding movement to a static location. The pickups are 2D billboards aligned to the player camera which helps pull them out of the environmental surroundings. The strong yellow outline fades to pink as you approach a pixelated, monochrome fill sampled from the player camera means that there are always small changes with player or background movement.





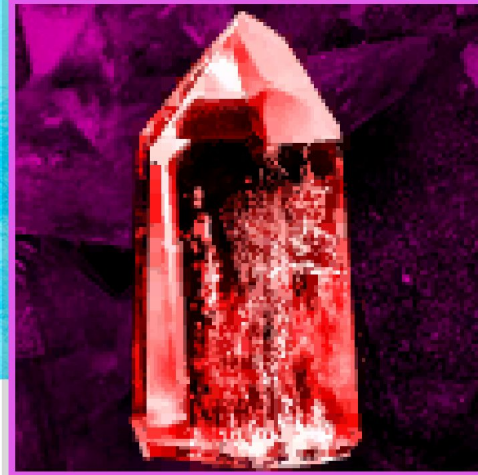
BLOOD CRYSTAL UI

B L O O D
C R Y S T A L

Owned: 01

1 Obtained

A prized unit of currency
used by the Syndicate.



CLOSE 

Phil: Blood Crystals are the currency of Paradise Island. Early in development we knew that the collection of blood crystals should present a large, full screen UI. This adds some friction to a common action but it reinforces the importance of collection and your decisions on how to spend that currency. We use ornate fonts and a layout unique to Blood Crystals to show their importance.

DIALOGUE UI



Phil: The dialogue draws inspiration from visual novels. With complex dialogue we needed to dedicate a lot of screen space to presenting text. We also needed to ensure that it would always be readable regardless of what was in the background or the time of day. After many iterations the simplistic white box with the pink and blue borders and a drop shadow provided the best result. A palm tree watermark and slight tint helps reduce eye strain and breaks up the space.

Colours are used to highlight character names and making the information easier to consume.

The 'dialogue history' box on the right was a late addition, but we added it to make it easy to review information.

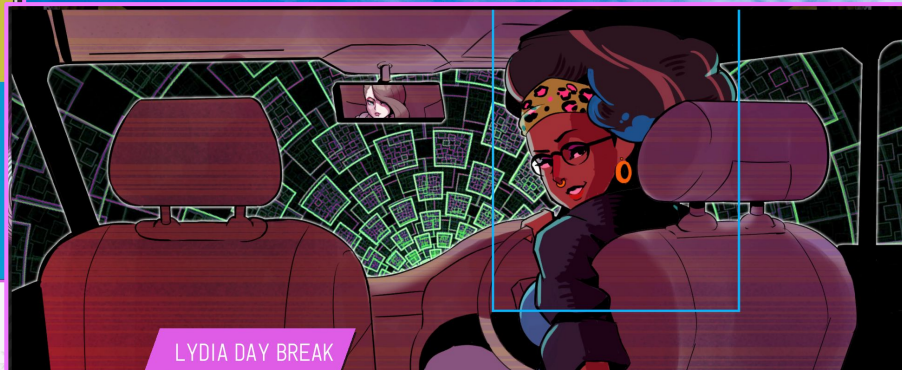
Some dialogues use different backgrounds. Others use different layouts entirely to fit the context.



Carmelina Silence

CARMELINA SILENCE

Lady Love Dies.



LYDIA DAY BREAK

Hey LD!



LADY LOVE DIES

[UNSURPRISED] - These islands

[COMPLIMENT] - New style

She excelled at guerrilla warfare, known as the Glamour of the Great Betrayal happened. Syndicate.

[CRIMSON ACID]

Hello Starlight.

We're in a dark time. Someone has played a hell of a hand against the Syndicate.

It's bad enough to bring the exile back.

[LADY LOVE DIES]

Forgive me for being blunt Crimson but-

[CRIMSON ACID]

The head? Things change. While you were gone I got blessed by the gods.

Gigalithic: I'd have loved to have done more scenes like the fast travel screen, it was a lot of fun, especially as I'd never even thought about drawing the inside of a car before. Aside from an abundance of perspective rulers, it was a real trip constructing a view from such a confined space, and considering the scale of the characters in it.

STARLIGHT

INCOMING CALL!

STARLIGHT

STARLIGHT

SYNDICATE OS

KNIFE & CRYSTAL



Lady Love Dies



Dead Nebula

Dead Nebula thanks you for your purchase!

E

THE WAY OF BLOOD BAR

25th Island Sequence

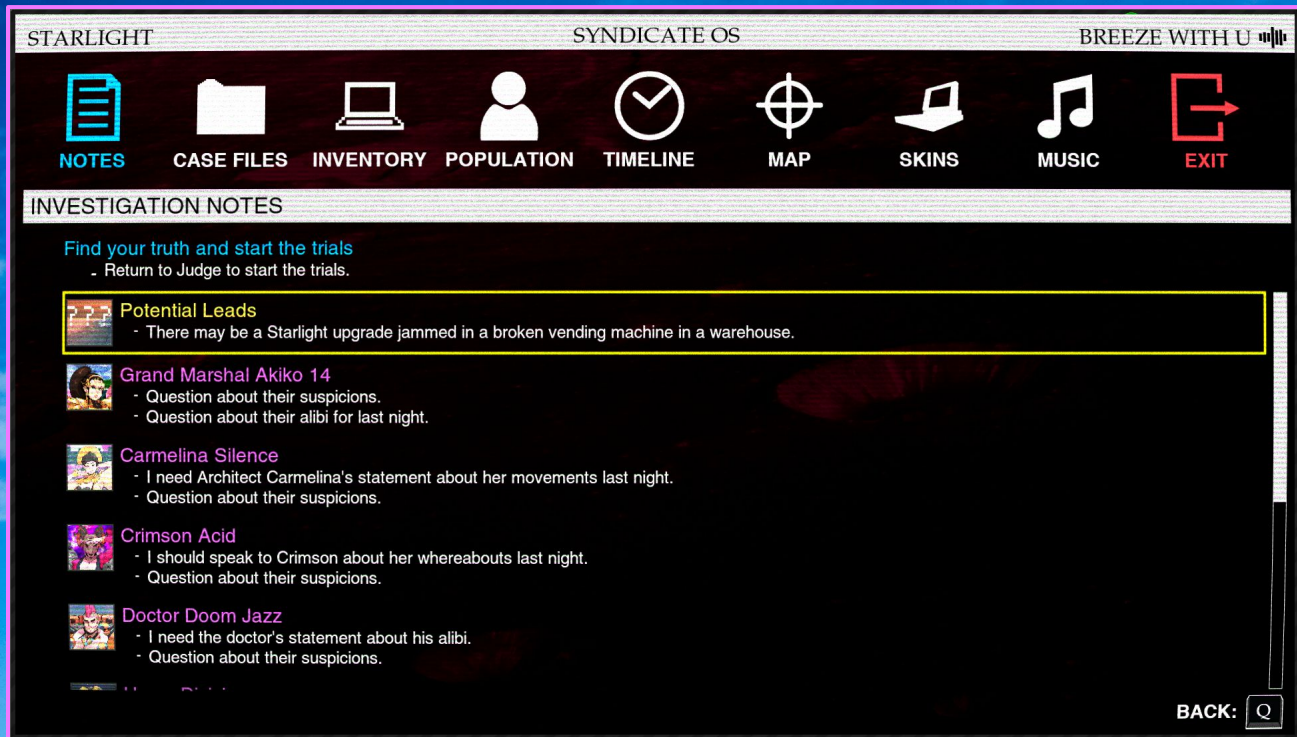
Ash Street
Housing District

#####

why do you think there are so many mysteries

E

STARLIGHT UI



Phil: Your investigative assistant. Starlight helps you understand the world and track the information you've received. We always wanted to give Starlight a clunky, 80's laptop feel so we use simple colours and low-fi images throughout. We use a scanline and slight distortion effect to represent the limit of technology from the 80's and take inspiration from early versions of DOS, Windows 3.1 and OSX.

Creating an interface that was capable of presenting a lot of information and being easily navigable using only a controller proved to be one of the biggest challenges of Paradise Killer.

STARLIGHT SYNDICATE OS BREEZE WITH U

NOTES CASE FILES **INVENTORY** POPULATION TIMELINE MAP SKINS MUSIC EXIT

KEY ITEMS UPGRADES RELICS

INVENTORY

BLOOD VIAL

Lady Love Dies members have unique blood

STARLIGHT SYNDICATE OS BREEZE WITH U

NOTES CASE FILES INVENTORY **POPULATION** TIMELINE MAP SKINS MUSIC EXIT

COUNCIL

LEADER MONSERRAT MURDERED	GABRIELLA DEVOTION MURDERED	PANDORA TUD MURDERED	KAFKA MEMORY MURDERED	LUNATIC POPE MURDERED	FINE STRANGER MURDERED	LEON DISASTER MURDERED	MAKEN ORIGIN MURDERED	EYES KEWANI SUICIDE
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SYNDICATE

MOVED TO NEXT ISLAND	MOVED TO NEXT ISLAND	MOVED TO NEXT ISLAND	MOVED TO NEXT ISLAND	MOVED TO NEXT ISLAND	MURDERED	MISSING	

CITIZENS

	CITIZENS 3106 WORSHIPPERS AND WORKERS
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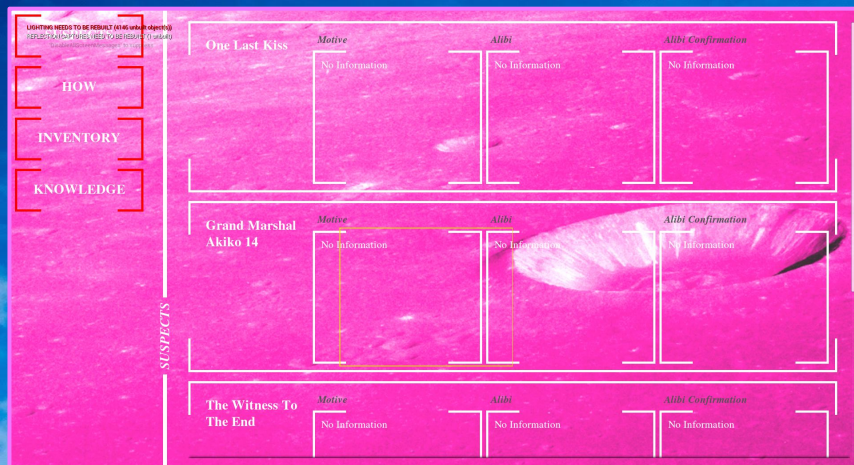
LADY LOVE DIES

Born at The Longest Tower, Britain in AD 1000 under the sign of Kiss Me To The Moon.

The Syndicate's lead investigator. After the Damned Harmony Incident on Island 13, the Paradise Psycho Unit was shut down, and Love Dies was exiled to the Idle Lands as punishment.

BACK:

STARLIGHT EVOLUTION



Phil: Starlight went through more rounds of iteration than anything else in Paradise Killer. Originally intended to mimic the interfaces of PC-98 we had to find a way of presenting a lot of information to the player without making it difficult to access.

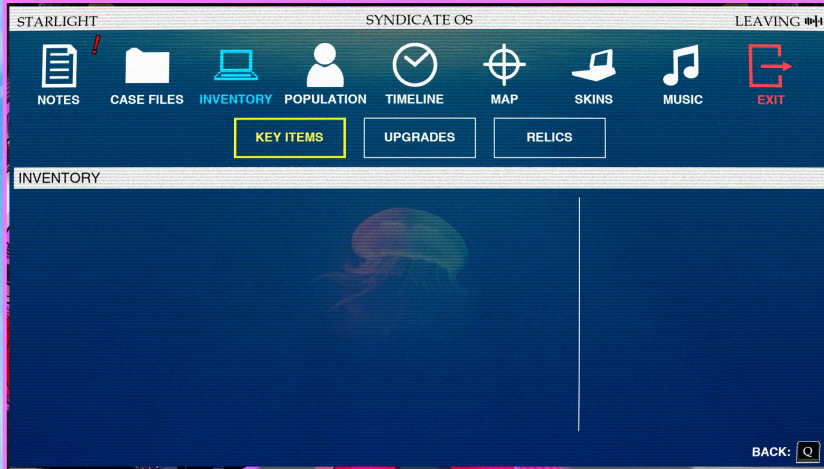
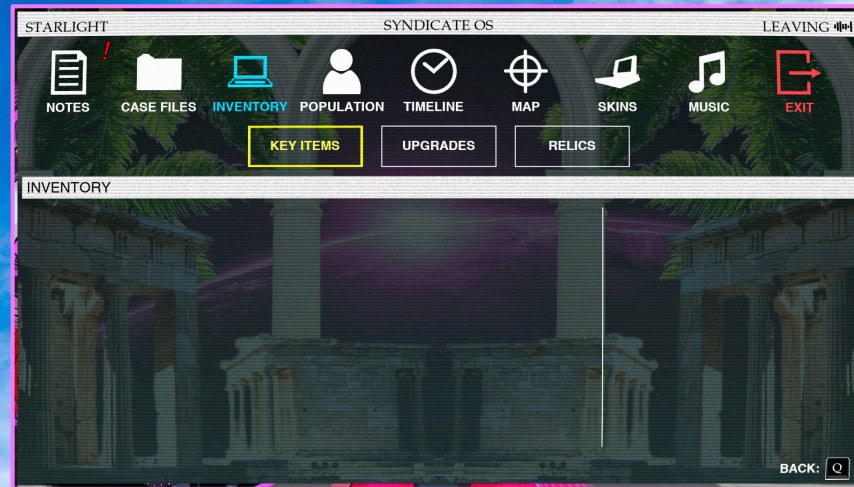
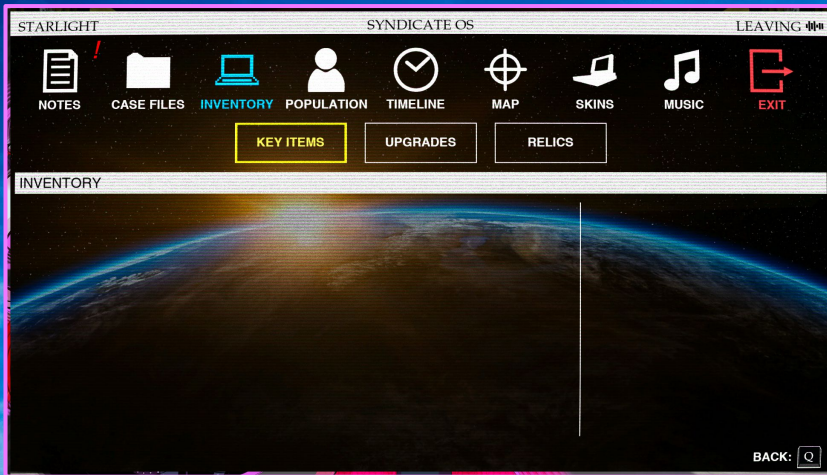
Original designs had the main navigation down the left of the screen, presenting case files as tree structures and the use of a wider range of fonts.

The inventory originally had blank slots which would be filled in as you collect, but this suggested that the player should collect everything to fill the slots before starting the Trials. We never wanted Paradise Killer to feel like you were completing lists so the blank spaces were removed.

Starlight grew along with the game and eventually became littered with inconsistency which caused confusion and frustration, so we took the decision to do a complete redesign based on what we'd learned throughout development.

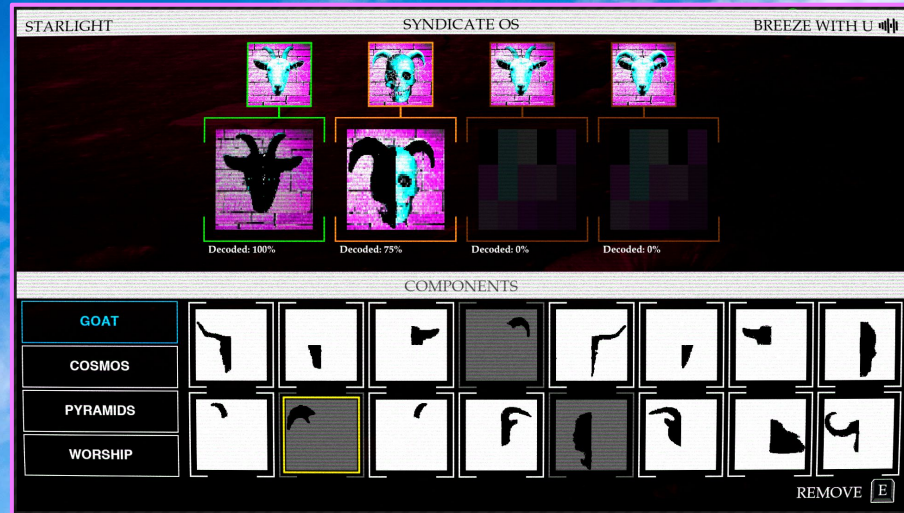


STARLIGHT SKINS



Phil: Personalising Starlight gives the opportunity for the player to express a bit of themselves to the game and it gave us an opportunity to add more flavour to the world. What would a member of the Syndicate have as their desktop image?

NIGHTMARE COMPUTERS



Phil: Starlight connects to Nightmare Computers to decode the information. To show that you are solving puzzles via Starlight we use the familiar scanlines and UI elements present in the main Starlight interface.

Early versions of these puzzles did not provide any help or hints as to how to solve the puzzle and instead required learning an alien language via environmental clues. This ended up being a frustrating experience so Nightmare Computers were reworked.

As you place pieces the background of the puzzle you're solving becomes less pixelated to show progress. This is accompanied by a 'decoded' percentage which ties this back into Starlight assessing progress.

NIGHTMARE COMPUTER EVOLUTION

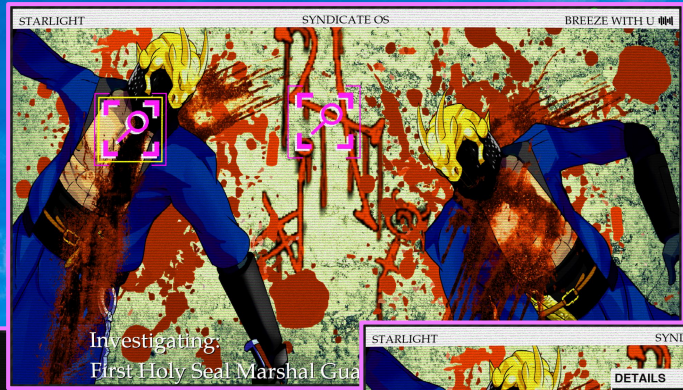
Natural	Tree	Mountain	Sea
Time	Morning	Evening	Midday
Animal	Crow	Eagle	Fox
Sky	Moon	Half Moon	Clouds / Covered Moon
Item / Owner	Container	Home	Collection

Bird Crow Flock of birds Murder of crows Eagle
 Sun Crescent Moon Eclipse Sunset Full moon
 Mountain Altar Forest City River

Animals Sky
 Drawing tools: diagonal line, vertical line, horizontal line, zigzag line, single line.

A: Grid-based drawing of a zigzag line with steps 1 and 2.
 B: Box-based drawing of a zigzag line with steps 1, 2, and 3.
 C: Box-based drawing of a zigzag line with steps 1 and 2.

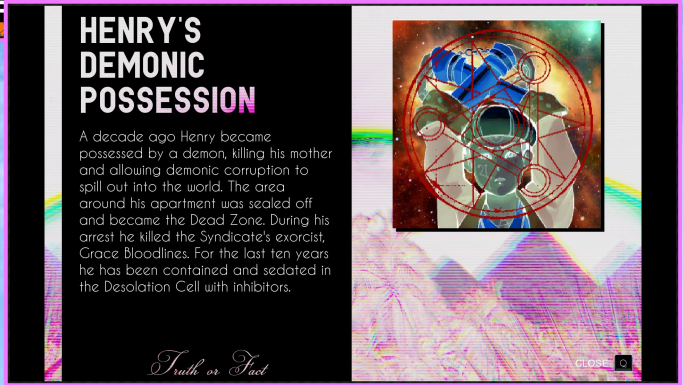
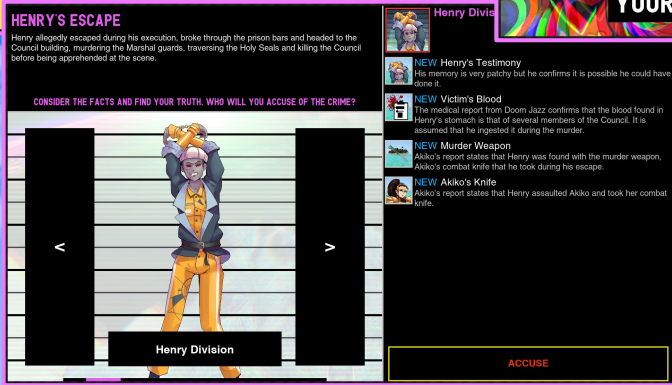
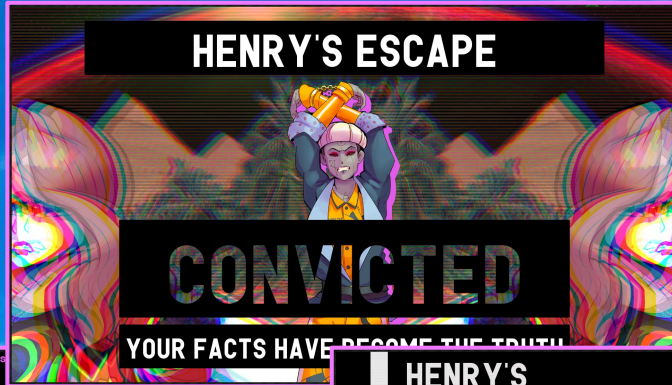
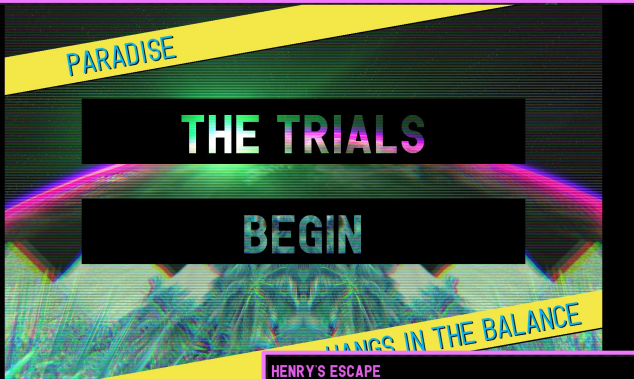
SCENE INVESTIGATION



Phil: Scene Investigations enable you to analyse a room or crime scene using Starlight. We always wanted our interactions to make sense in the world and not a superpower, which is why we have the 'connecting' animations to show how Starlight is interfacing with the Island.

Interaction with the Scene Investigations is kept simple. We explored the idea of using a puzzle to make the information harder to extract, but this felt like unnecessary mechanics and frustration, so instead we make sure it's easy to find information and ensure that everything has been read. As Scene Investigations take place via Starlight, the scanlines are added and the UI is kept in line with the main Starlight interface.

TRIAL UI



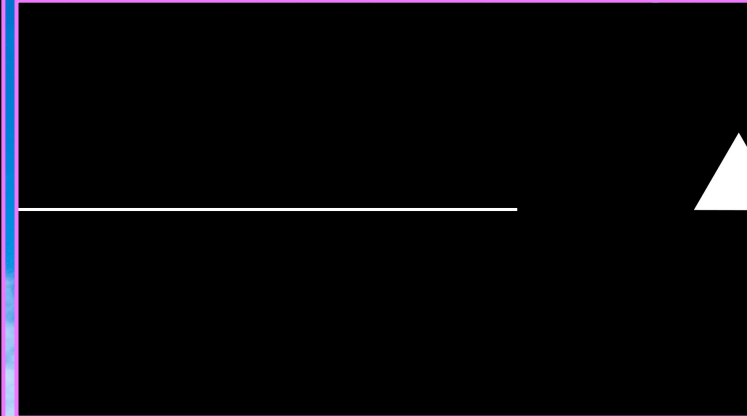
Phil: The trial UI marks a shift in tone. Transitions and animation have slow build ups and dramatic stamps to mimic the flow and drama of a courtroom trial and the use of inverted colours represent the two sides of justice and guilt, truth and facts. The moving chromatic separation suggests that the lines between justice and guilt aren't always clear.

VENDING MACHINE UI

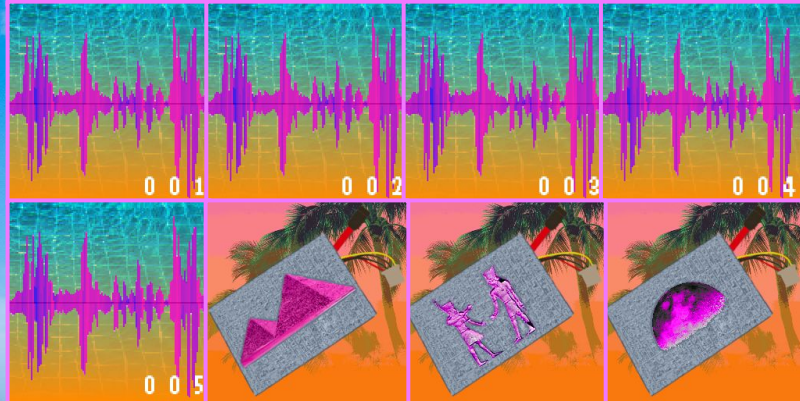
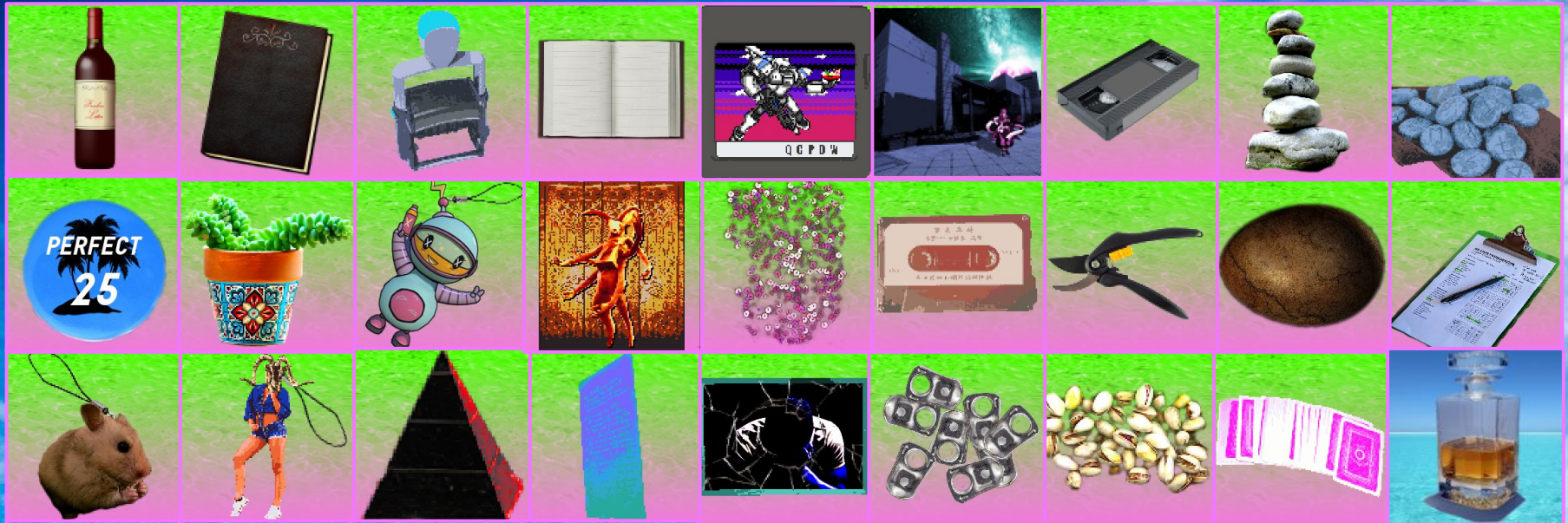


Phil: Vending Machines were one of the first fully interactable pieces of UI made for Paradise Killer.

TRAVELLING



Phil: In the final few weeks of development we wanted to add interest to some of the travel methods. Previously just a black screen, hearts were added to elevators which move to show the direction of travel.

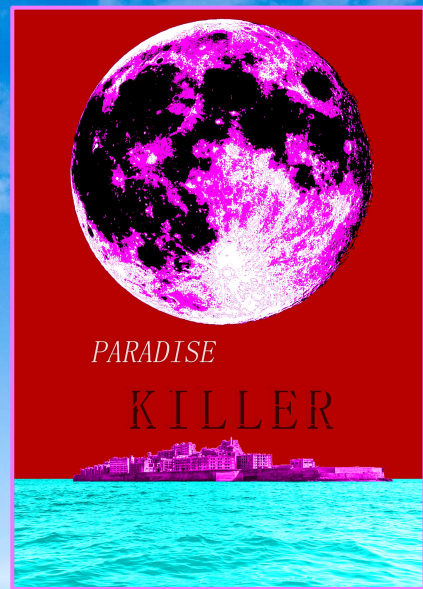


Oli: For the inventory icons I originally wanted to have 3D models you could spin around like in Resident Evil. That's a load of work for a small team so instead we did low resolution images made from stock photos and our own pixel art. The game was always supposed to feel like what might have happened if the PS1 and Dreamcast were the last consoles ever made and we were still developing for them. I love the low res 2D graphics in PS1 games and wanted to emulate them here.



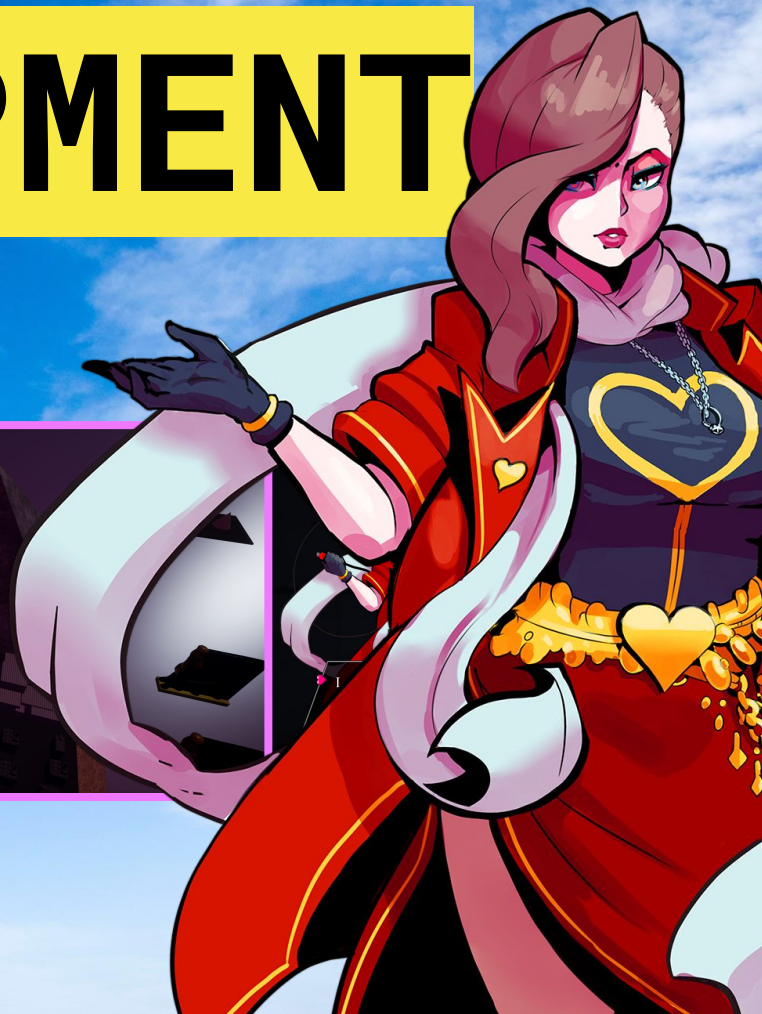
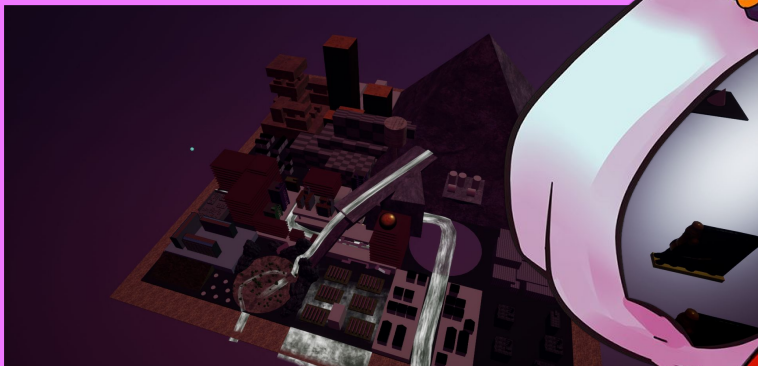
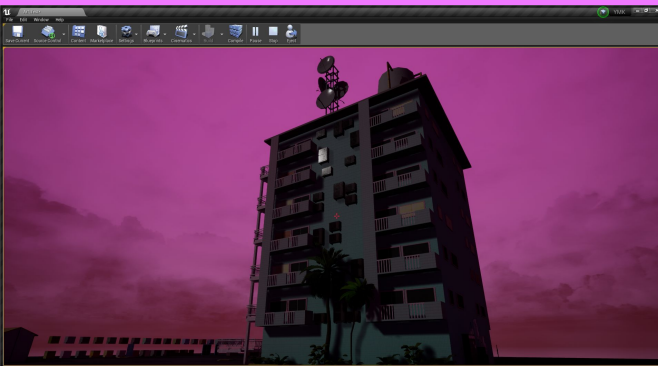


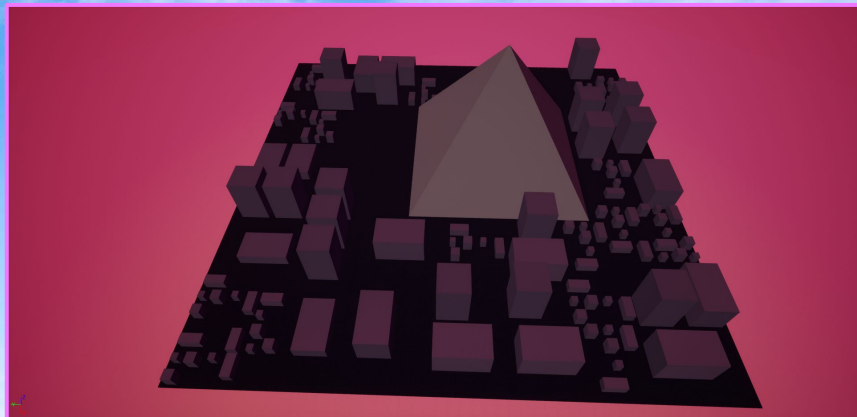
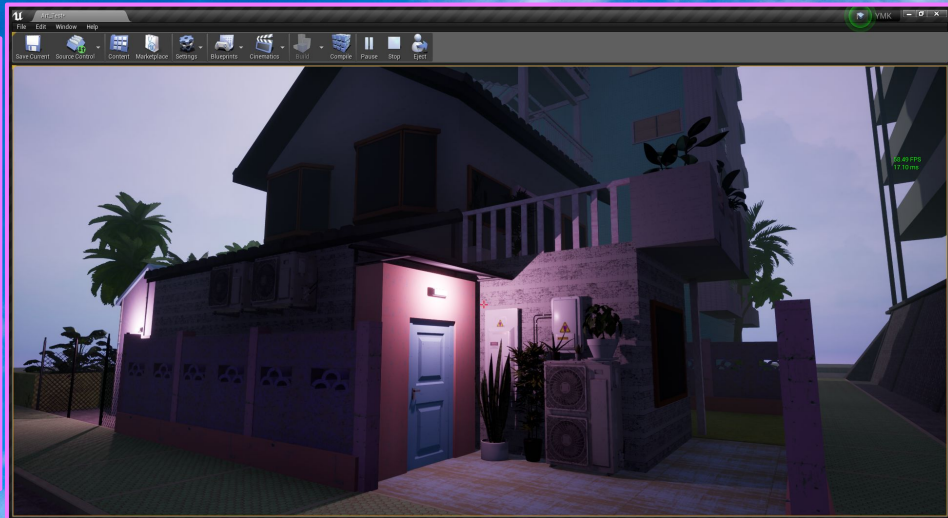
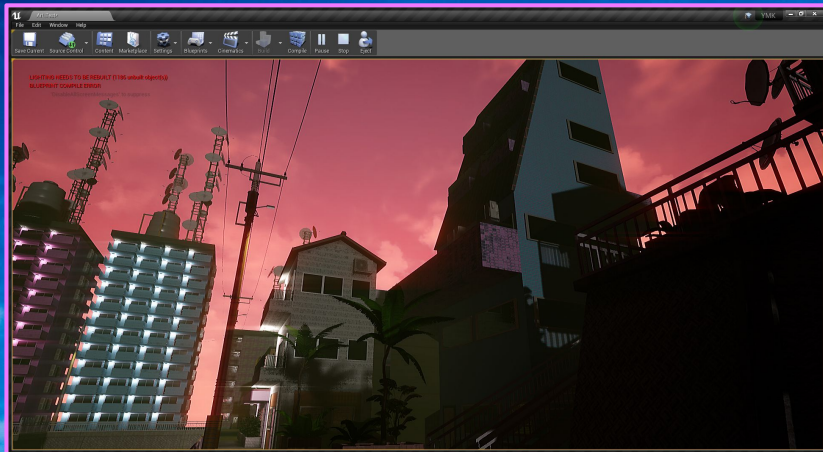
LOGO DEVELOPMENT

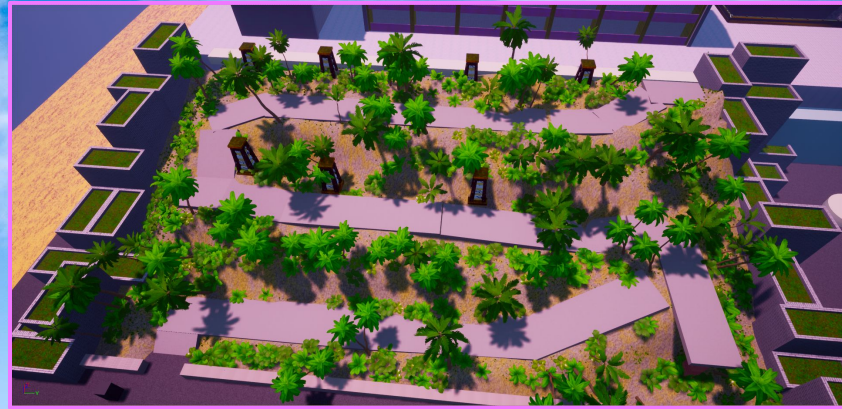
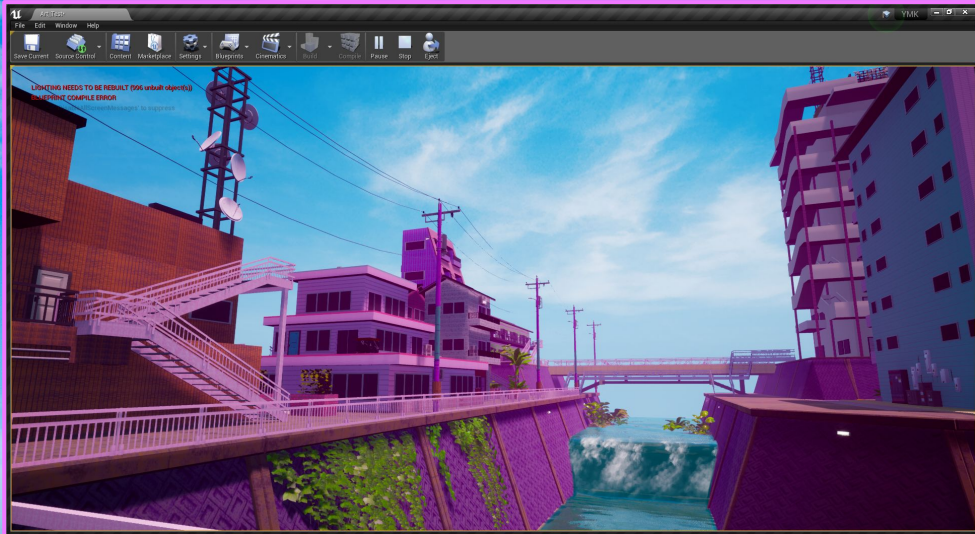
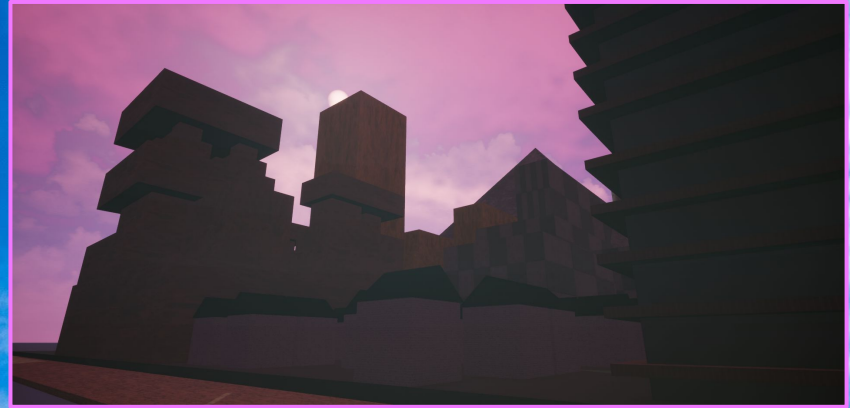
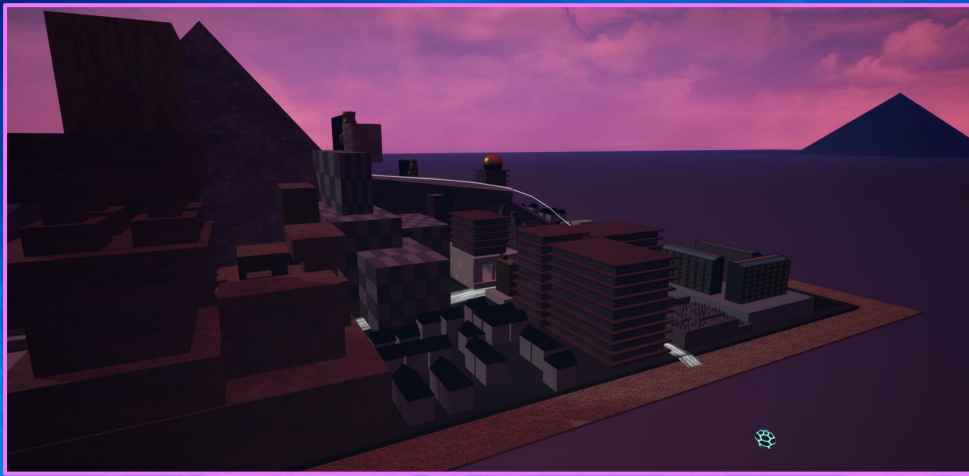


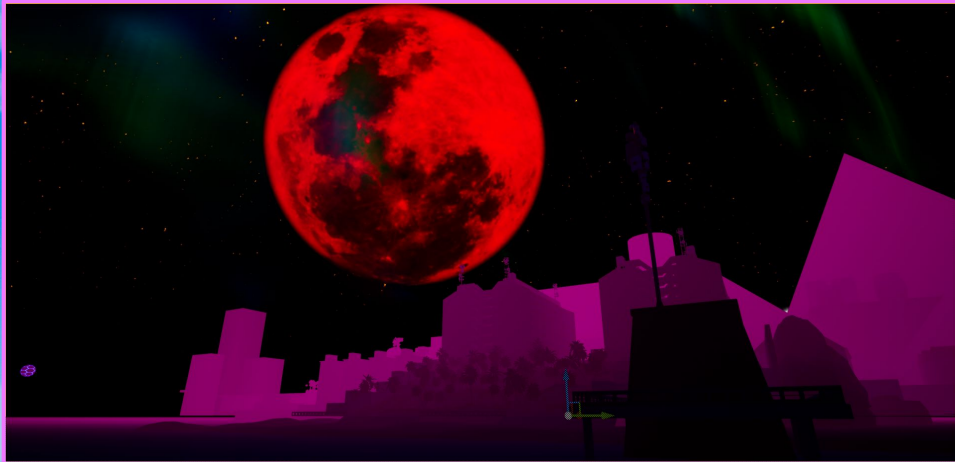
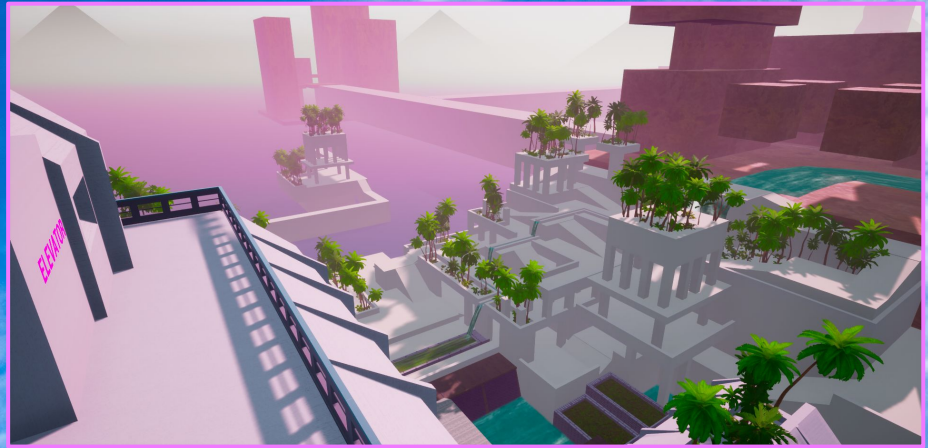
Oli: These are all early treatments for the game logo. We initially announced the game using the thin font. We really liked this one because it felt classy and 80s. Our publishing team and Steam both pushed back saying it's hard to read so we did some further treatments, eventually getting Amy to modify an existing font to include hearts and palm trees.

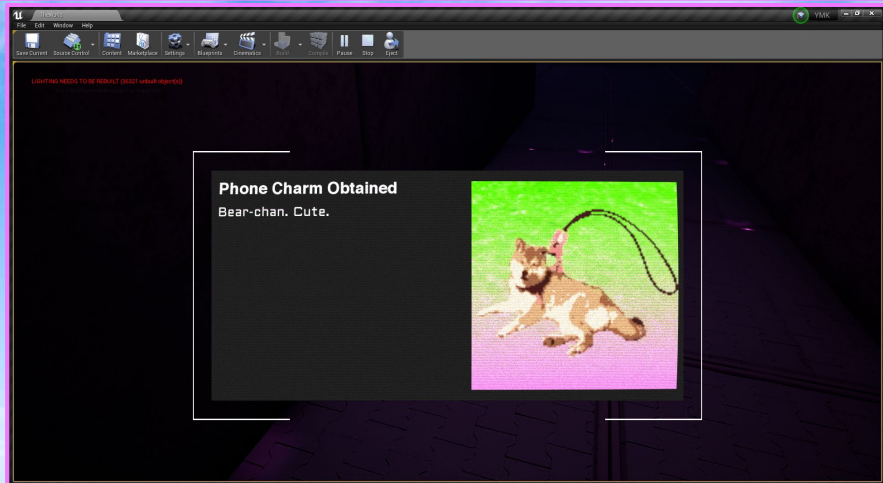
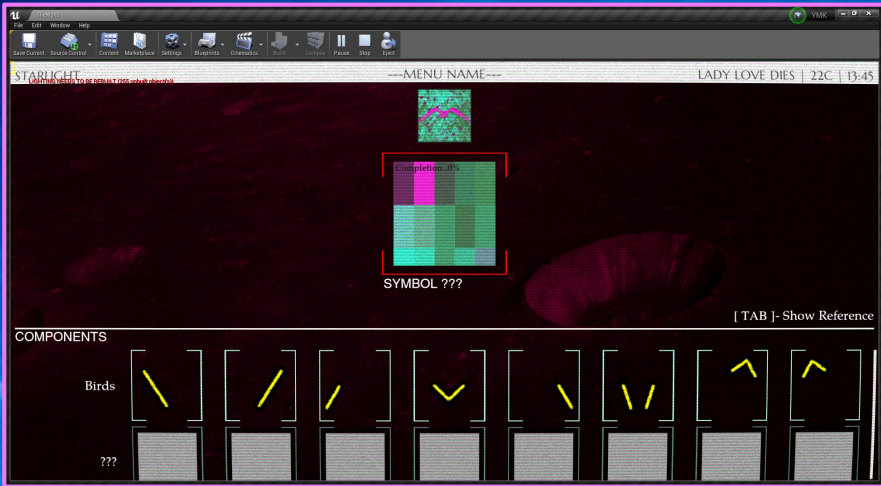
IN DEVELOPMENT











INTERROGATION

INVESTIGATING

BREATHING LIFE BACK INTO PARADISE

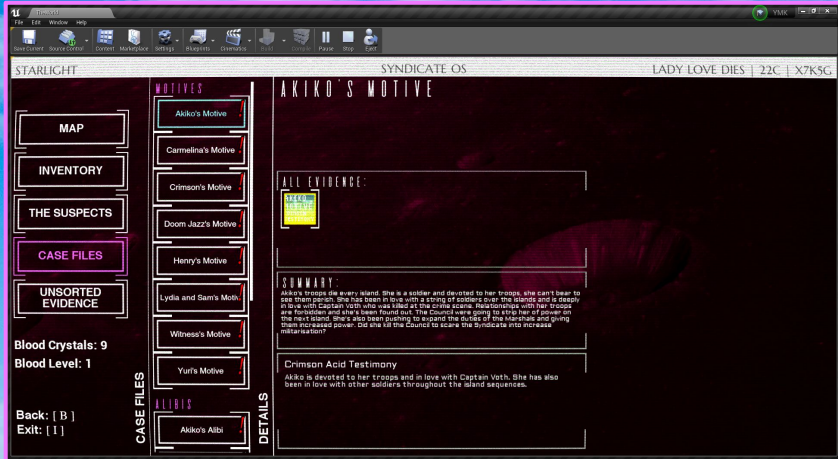
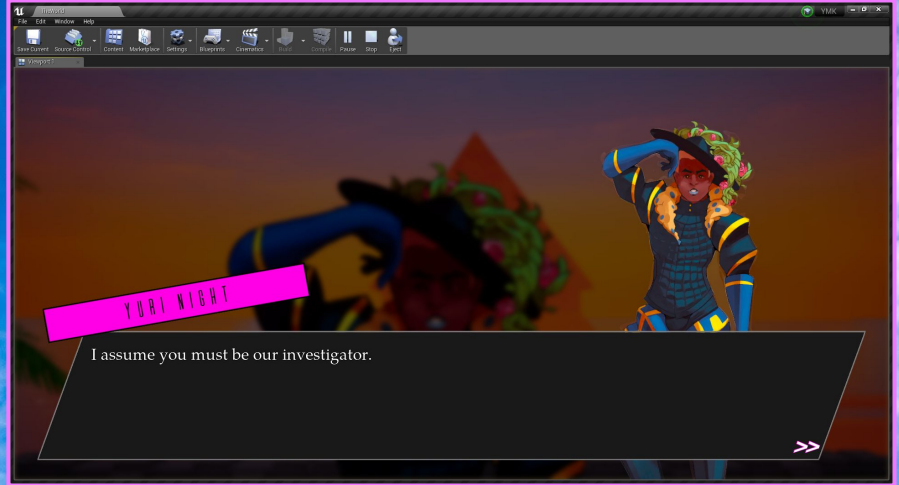


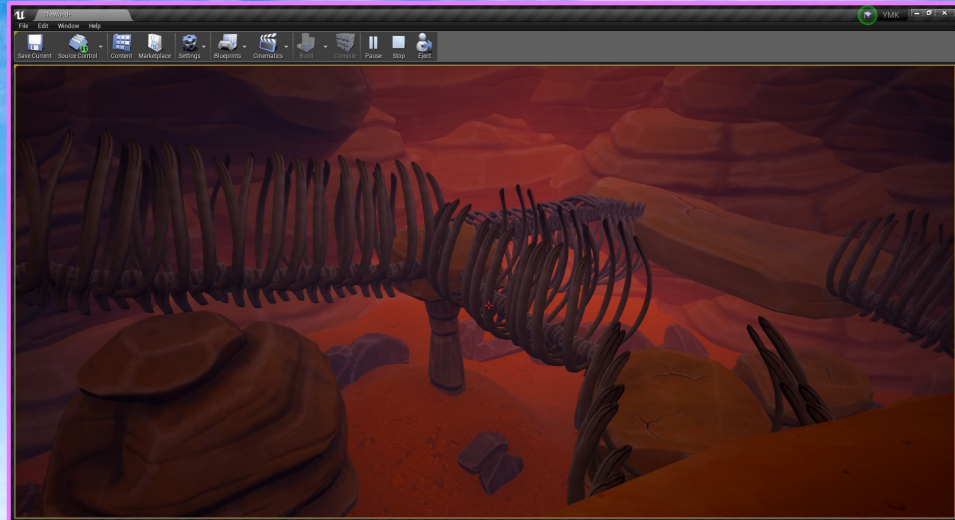
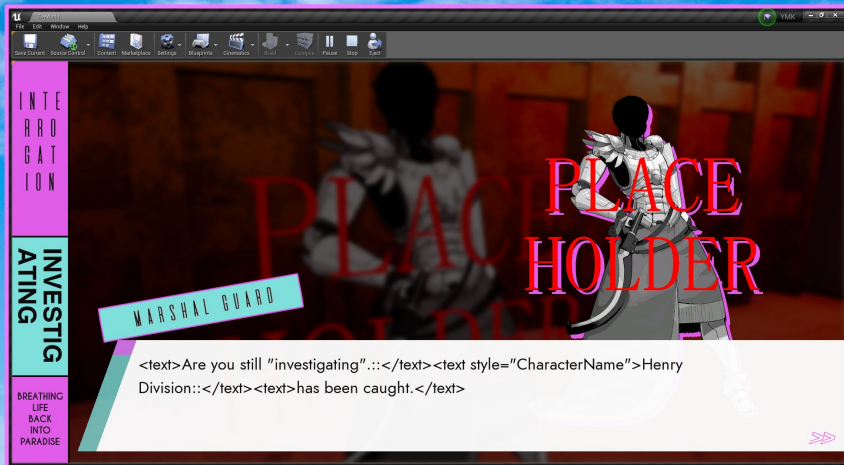
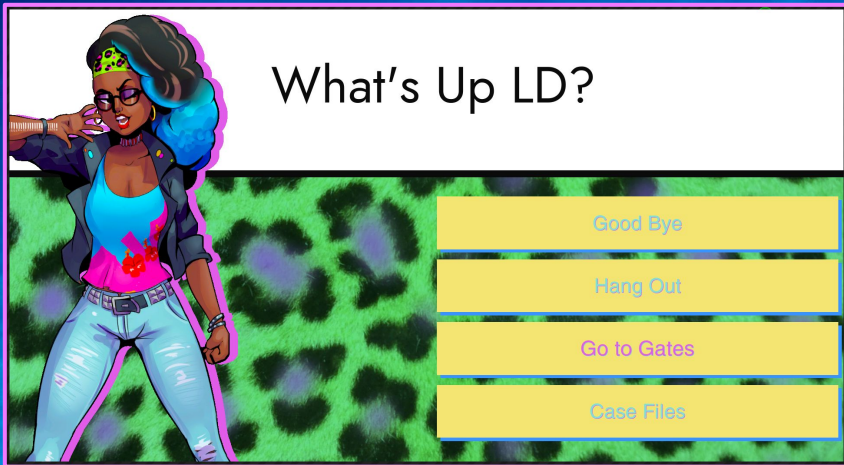
Doctor Doom Jazz:
It's no act. You know I've always had a soft spot for you Love Dies.

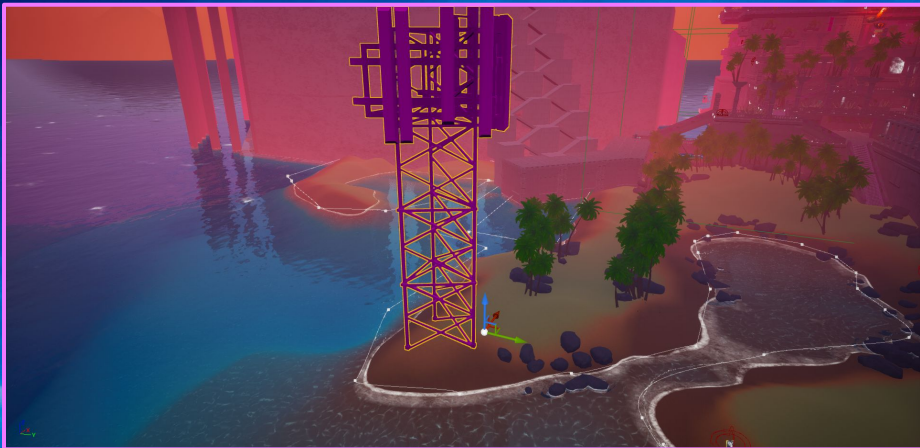
Lady Love Dies

▶ It won't work, I'm here on business.

How have you been?







An investigation into the heart of madness begins.

Lady Love Dies must find the facts and assemble the truth.

The road to her truth will be a long one. The journey will be hard. The light of her truth shines dimly, but with facts it will shine bright.

NEW CASE FILE:



WHO KILLED THE COUNCIL?

All of the Council were killed as they birthed the new island. Who did it?

[6]

EVIDENCE
GATHERED

WITNESS LEFT THE ROOM



Witness had a phone call from Grand Marshal Akiko a short while before the Council murder. He stepped out of the room, away from Carmelina, for some privacy.

IS THIS A FACT
OR THE TRUTH?
ARE THEY THE
SAME? DOES IT
MAKE ANY
DIFFERENCE?

THE WITNESS TO
THE END



GRAND MARSHAL
AKIKO IN



CREATED BY KAIZEN GAME WORKS

Oli Clarke Smith and Phil Crabtree

3D Art

Oli Clarke Smith

Rachel Noy

Character Art

Curran "Gigalithic" Gregory

Rachel Noy

Oli Clarke Smith

2D Art

Oli Clarke Smith

Rachel Noy

Amy Crabtree

UI/UX

Phil Crabtree

Sophie Hodge

Oli Clarke Smith

Amy Crabtree

