

Design Document for:

Rise of the Dead: Laduca's Children

(Formerly Trick or Treat)

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Design History

Version 3

This is the third and final game design created after substantial revisions to the team's design goal. Due to the team's inexperience in creating quality art assets, the team decided to revise its goal. The game's story, situation, and aesthetics are changed. The game will fall more squarely in the traditional dungeon-crawler style. The game is changed to utilize realistic environments that emulate the feel of the original Gauntlet game.

Version 2

This is the second game design document created after version 1. There were a few minor changes to the language in this document. The general game design remained the same.

Version 1

This is the initial game design created after some discussion about the features set and requirements of the game.

Game Overview

Concept Overview

In Rise of the Dead, the player characters have been trapped in the labyrinth of a castle. They must escape by destroying the monsters and solving the maze. Rise of the Dead: Laduca's Children is a third person perspective action game.

Game Philosophy

Remake Gauntlet

This game seeks to recreate the fun of the classic game, Gauntlet. Gauntlet's fun comes from the following:

- Cooperative play between as many as four players
- Navigating a maze
- The ability to see enemies lurking on the other side of walls
- Large numbers of enemies
- Challenging game play with a simple game mechanic (Hack and Slash)

Although Gauntlet was a two dimensional game, Rise of the Dead: Laduca's Children seeks to exploit these gameplay elements on a three-dimensional, stereoscopic environment.

Motivation

This project seeks to meet the requirements of the University of Illinois Game Development course. The impetus for this project is academic and non-commercial.

Game Play Overview

Rise of the Dead: Laduca's Children is a third person action game. In the game community vernacular, it is a simple *Hack and Slash* title. The player's goal is to escape the castle while destroying any enemy in their way. In keeping with tradition, enemies vary in skill, appearance, and intelligence. There will be a boss to destroy at the end of each level.

The Player:

The players are a band of characters with special abilities. The players must to destroy enemies using the player character's weapons. The weapons vary by character, as does their efficacy in destroying enemies. Each character has a set of strategic benefits and weaknesses. For example, one player may move quickly but may not provide much damage when attacking.

The Challenge

The challenge comes in three forms; maintaining player character health, the large number of adversaries, solving the level maze.

- *The character's health energy declines as time passes.* In order to continue fighting the player must collect food items.
- *The game will spawn multiple enemy characters until the source of the spawn is destroyed.*
- *The game world is a maze of hallways and rooms.* In order to make progress in the game the player must find a way out of the maze.

Perspective

The game is viewed from a top-down perspective. Most game play is viewed from a slightly angled aerial perspective. The camera tracks the player characters through the maze. The player will be able to see enemies waiting behind doors and around corners.

Environment

The game world is a variety of floors in an enormous haunted castle. Each floor is a game level. Each game level is a complicated maze populated with enemies and objects. Some rooms contain doors that prevent entry until the player character has a key to open it.

Feature Set

General Feature Overview

- Large Maze World
- 4 Player Characters
- Player Character Animation
- Enemy Character Animation
- Destructible Enemy Spawn Locations
- Multiple Collectible Character Enhancements
- Digital Sound Effects
- 3D graphics
- Stereoscopic Display

Game Play Features

- 4-player cooperative gameplay
- 3 Game modes: standard, arena battle, item collection
- Various enemy characters
- End level enemy bosses
- Challenging mazes
- Various player character enhancements
- Multiple levels
- The ability to see enemies lurking on the other side of walls
- Challenging game play with a simple game mechanic
- Intelligent, automated camera manipulation for ease of play

The Game World

Overview

There is one primary game world, the castle. Each floor of the castle has a slightly different appearance. Players work from the bottom floor to the top floor of the castle.

The player experiences three locations in the castle:

1. The Dungeon
2. The Pits
3. The Arena

Each floor has a limited number of locked doors and keys that unlock them.

Dungeon

The first level is the dungeon. The dungeon is poorly lit. It contains the weakest enemy characters and the most amount of food and enhancements.

The dungeon is a stone maze.

The Pits

The pits are the second level. The enemy characters are more difficult and health items are somewhat less available. This maze includes a set of unnatural channels, called the pits. If the player falls into any of the pits, the player will die.

The Arena

The arena is an arena is designed for fight-to-the-death battle. At its center is a large pit. It contains no maze.

The Physical World

Overview

The game employs standard world navigation mechanics. The player navigates the player character through the game. Players may collect player character enhancements in every game world. Each game world introduces a new enemy type.

Objects

Each of the following objects can be collected from within the various game levels:

Keys:

- Players collect keys to open doors. Locked doors prevent the character from entering certain sections of the game maze. Keys are not specific to a door, but a key can be used once and only once.

Food:

All food items have a different effect on player's health.

- **Turkey Leg:** The turkey leg enhances the player's health.
- **Poison Turkey Leg:** The poison turkey leg is a rancid looking turkey leg that will diminish character health.
- **Grapes:** Grapes enhance player character health marginally. The turkey leg provides more player health than grapes.

All special items are effective for a limited amount of time. These items are littered about each game level.

Special Potions:

There are three potions available in the game. Potions increase player's magic abilities.

- **Red potion:** offers to the strongest increase to player magic abilities
- **Yellow potion:** moderate increase to player magic abilities.
- **Cough Medicine:** marginal increase to player magic abilities.

Special Collect Items:

- **Boots of Horachek:** These boots increase the player's size and power against enemies.
- **Boots of Grace:** These boots increase the player's speed and decrease the player's size. The Boots of Grace are useful for navigating enclosed spaces and evading enemies.
- **Tunic of Connelly:** This tunic protects the player from enemy attacks. Enemy attacks take less damage when the player wears the Tunic of Connelly.
- **Wings of Hermes:** These wings allow the player to float over the walls of the maze. The player cannot attack when floating, but they can get behind locked doors and across maze.

Special Collect Items (Weapons):

- **MOG (Mace of Grace):** The mace of grace is club with spikes at one end. When collected it increases the strength of the player's attack.
- **Horachek Sabre:** The Horachek Sabre is a powerful sword. When collected it increases the strength of the player's attack.

Scale

The characters will be approximately 1/6 scale of the viewer's screen. Enemies will be of appropriate relative scale. Collect items will be 2-4 times larger than proportion to allow players to identify them easily.

Time

The player's health steadily declines as time progresses. Although there is no literal timer in the game, the player's declining health limits the amount of time a player can remain on any level.

Visualization System

Overview

Rise of the Dead: Laduca's Children will be rendered in 3D, 2-point perspective. It will employ stereographic depiction for virtual 3D imaging.

3D Rendering Engine

Rise of the Dead: Laduca's Children will use the Blitz3D rendering system.

Camera

The camera will maintain a stationary distance and angle above the game action. The camera will follow the player characters on screen. The camera will remain centered on the game action. All players will be viewable on screen¹. When appropriate the camera will tilt to provide an optimal player-character viewing position. The camera cannot be positioned by the player character.

¹ Even when multiple players are on screen the camera will be locked to the center of game action. This was a part of the experience of the original Gauntlet game. This game mechanic forces reasonable cooperation between game players and simplifies game code.

Game Engine

Overview

Rise of the Dead: Laduca's Children will use the Blitz3D game engine. This engine will handle rendering, lighting, navigation, and collision detection.

The Blitz3D game engine allows creation of games appropriate to the scale and scope of this project. It employs simplified language syntax familiar to the development team. It supports standard game mechanics and implementation details. It also has a large developer community and a solid record of accomplishment for creating games similar to Rise of the Dead: Laduca's Children.

The Blitz3D is also easily expanded with third party products offered widely on the Internet.

Game Characters

Overview

The game characters are a team who has been trapped in an enormous haunted castle.

Each player character will have the following separate animations:

- Idle / Wait
- Running
- Jumping
- Shooting
- Taking an enemy hit
- Dieing

Each enemy character will have the following animations:

- Idle
- Walking
- Attacking
- Taking damage
- Dieing

Player Characters:

Each character is costumed analogous to their corresponding character in the original Gauntlet game.

The four player character types are:

- Amazon Warrior
- Wizard
- Elf
- Dwarf Warrior

Each character is distinguished by their appearance, weapon, and a set of four traits. These four traits are strength of attack, speed, stamina, and magic.

Amazon Warrior

The valkyrie is the most well rounded character. The valkyrie is equally skilled in strength, speed, stamina and magic.

She is dressed in a functional battle costume and attacks with a flying dagger.

Wizard

The wizard's strongest trait is magic. The wizard's weakest trait is speed. The wizard does not move easily, but the wizard is most strongly affected by magic potions.

The wizard wears a robe and attacks with magic orbs.

Elf

The elf is the fastest character. The elf has the least strength. The elf is lithe and direct in her movements.

The elf attacks with arrows and wears a light armor.

Warrior

The dwarf warrior has the strongest attack of all of the characters. However, this strength prevents the character from moving quickly.

The warrior is clothed in simple functional battle costumer and attacks with a flying axe.

Enemy Characters

There are five enemy types. The enemies are monsters born from a specific item in any given room. Destroying the item, from which the enemies are born, prevents more enemies from being created.

Specters:

Specters are born from large sepulchers. Specters can be destroyed easily. Destroying the sepulcher from which they are spawned is also easy. Specters appear as robed skeletons. The color of the specters' robe indicates their strength and intelligence. These enemies abound in the dungeon level.

Killer Hounds:

Hounds are born from tombstones. They are easily to destroy, but move more quickly than Specters. They appear on every level.

Mummies:

Mummies are fast moving enemies. They are spawned from sarcophagi. They are strong and sometimes difficult to destroy. Mummies abound in the second level.

Limping Beasts:

Limping beasts are human-like, slow-moving, strong enemies. They are spawned from tombstones. They abound on the second floor.

Laduca:

Laduca is the castle owner. He is exceptionally strong. Laduca serves as the final character to be destroyed in the game. The castle owner is found on the second floor.

User Interface

Overview

The user interface employs standard visualizations. Individual player health and player magic will be the only player status indicators.

Player health is described using a simple health bar. The health bar will display player health as a percentage at the top of the screen. Health bars will only be displayed for characters actively playing.

Player magic will be displayed a magic bar parallel to the player health. Both status bars will be semi-transparent to prevent visual obstructions. The design of these status bars will be simple and functional. They will be placed in the periphery of player view.

Music and Sound Effects

Overview

Sound is integrated into the game play of Rise of the Dead: Laduca's Children. Each level has a different musical score. Specific game events will have the following audio cues:

Player Attacks: The sound of their weapon being fired. For the axe and sword, there is a whooshing sound. For the arrow, there is screech. For the wizard's fireball, there is a crackle and boom.

Player is Attacked: When each of the players is attacked there is a respective audio response. The player responses indicate pain in a voice respective of the character's physical build.

Player Weak: A throbbing alarm begins when the player is near death.

Enemy Ambient Noise: When enemy characters are on screen a cacophony of their respective howls and cackles are audible.

The following lists specific sounds required for the in-game audio:

- Player attack
- Player take damage
- Player walk
- Player die
- Enemy attack
- Enemy take damage
- Enemy die
- Door open
- Door locked
- Special item collect

In addition, the following sounds are required for game start, end, and other states:

- Game Start
- Player Select
- Game End
- Game Title

Musical Scores

The following musical scores will be provided in the game:

- Game Level 1
- Game Level 2
- Game Level: Arena Battle
- Game Level:
- Game title screen
- Player select
- Game end
- Game credits
- High score display

Sound Style

The sounds are realistic. The musical score is subtle and tense. The musical score is non-contemporary.

Extra Thoughts

Overview

The 426 Studios team has considered the following ideas as part of game play for Rise of the Dead:

- Level 1 Boss: Three Large, skeletons
- Level two Boss fight: Many particle effects
- Level 2 Environment: Poisonous ooze in each pit