



Piece to Find

GAME DESIGN DOCUMENT

R. T. LEONE

Premise | Project | Team | Programming | Art | Sound | Writing

P R E M I S E

A blind architect who shall remain nameless (okay, maybe he's "Lester Broom" of Shackelford County, Texas) has fallen asleep after a day of mundanity and perhaps a little admonishment from employer-and-wife. Despite comfort and acceptance of his disability, his life has not panned out as expected, and he laments no longer having any of his youthful joys, including music. As his state of mind deteriorates, even his dreams have become challenging, creating worlds that are more vivid than reality.

In this particular dream, memories are attached to musical notes, and as he collects them to add layers to the background music, he not only constructs a harmonious song, but begins to make sense of his purpose in life.

P R O J E C T

Title: Piece to Find

Engine: Godot 4.1

Perspective: 2D Platformer

Resolution: 960 x 540

Development Cycle: August 11, 2023 - August 20, 2023

Game Jam: Godot Wild Jam 60

Project Management: <https://trello.com/b/vqjCvsRQ/godot-wild-jam-60>

Repository: https://github.com/jseudev/gn_gwj60.git

T E A M

Artist: Silivar (<https://silivar.itch.io/>)

Producer / Writer: Ricky Leone (<https://rtleone.itch.io/>)

Programmer / Level Designer: Joe Cloutier (<https://smokin-joe.itch.io/>)

Sound Designer / Composer: Art Mont (<https://artmont.itch.io/>)

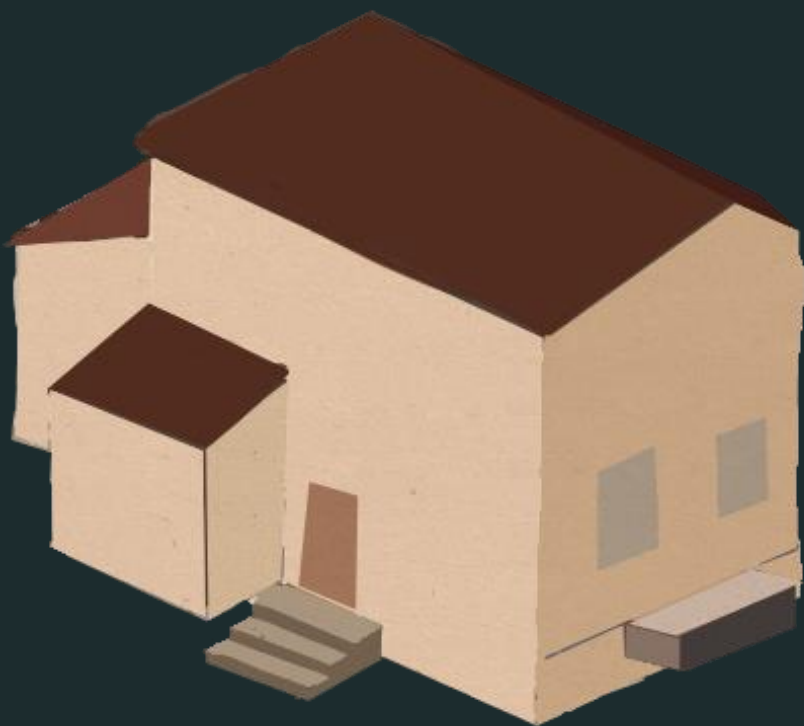
PROGRAMMING

REQUIREMENTS

To realize this vision, we will require the following:

- A player controller that walks, runs, and jumps left + right, inputted by WASD + "E" key for use.
- A camera that centers on the player and follows it around the game world.
- "Falling" logic in case the player surpasses the edge of the world.
- A musical note object that adds another track to the background music when collected.
- A memory node object that can emit a signal when the character passes through it.
- Constructed levels that start off blurred and are centered around locating memories and musical notes.
- A blur filter that can be sharpened upon collecting memory nodes.
- Interactable objects (musical notes) that can play a musical layer when collected.
- A simple inventory system that allows the player to remove objects from the environment (visibility toggle) and add them to their inventory.
- A narrative system that can play a scrolling pre-level narration, as well as show "thought bubbles" attached to memory nodes laid out in the environment.
- An autoloaded scene that can store global variables and run global nodes across all scenes.
- Level-transitioning that will retain the global variables and the player's inventory on each transition.

- Art of the 2D isometric style, consisting of parallax-ready backgrounds, tiles, objects, and a character spritesheet.
- Sound effects and layered music reflecting a serene atmosphere.
- A main menu that starts the game, shows controls, lets the player adjust volume, shows credits, and closes the game.



PLAYER JOURNEY

A step-by-step of how the user will navigate throughout the game:

- Upon pressing “Start” on the Main Menu, a brief introduction explaining the main character’s peril will establish purpose for the player.
- The first scene will open: the level will be severely blurred. As the player uses the sound of footsteps to traverse around the environment, they will run into **memory nodes**. These voiced over “thought bubbles” will give some insight into the main character’s life, and will slightly de-blur the camera.
- As the player develops a better view of the scene, they will be able to see **musical symbols** in the environment. Collecting these will play another layer in the background music. However, navigating to these symbols may have challenges to them (one-way spinning tiles on a timer, pressure switches, projectile traps).
- The exploration will continue until the player has discovered all the musical symbols in the level. This will unlock the following level.
- After completing three levels, the player will have collected all musical symbols, listened to most or all of the story, and reached the win condition, which would give the player a choice to wake up or continue living in the dream world.
- There are no loss conditions; if the player falls over the edge of the map, they will be returned to the last location to continue experiencing the story.

ART

ENVIRONMENT

A soft combination of beige offset by light-to-mid-range blues and greens will form a dreamlike colour palette that will differentiate this world from realism.

The scale and positioning of the background parallax clouds compared to the isometric character and props will further establish the fantasy aspect of the story.



PROPS

Musical notes will be collectible and will play an additional layer of the background music as well as progress the player throughout the level. A house will base around the player's starting point, and most other objects in the scene will be non-interactable set dressing or obstructions. Gates will be obstructive until a musical note is found. Additional interactables may be added to make the level design more challenging.



SOUND

SOUND DESIGN

Synthesized sounds reflective of a relaxing atmosphere will be attached to object pickups and character movement (soft footsteps).

MUSIC

To match the serenity of the art, the music will be lo-fi and evoke a sense of “chill,” making the atmosphere relaxing and contrary to the pressures of reality.

Layers of music will add onto each other as the player collects musical note objects, and along with level exploration, will be the core of the game’s progression system.

WRITING

Thought bubbles will appear over the player's head when crossing a memory node.

WIFE (f): "Fix the walkway before you go out, please. The path stones are in the back."

LESTER (m): "I remember doing that."

EMPLOYER (m): "Okay... Lester Broom—that's an interesting name. So what brings you to Lowenstein Company this morning? What inspired you to get into residential architecture?"

LESTER (m): *"Nothing. I hate it. I wanted to design three-dimensional masterpieces like the Rookery in Chicago. I thought I was the spiritual heir of Burnham & Root. I don't know how I ended up applying for this soul-sucking job. I guess I need the money."*

LESTER (m): "I'm enthusiastic about efficiency and repeatability. That if one plan works for one house, why shouldn't it work for another? It's not like homeowners in Atlanta are ever likely to visit the same house in Poughkeepsie. So these cost-saving measures are very exciting for me."

Pedestrian smacks into Lester

PEDESTRIAN (f): "Oh my sweet Jesus, I didn't realize."

LESTER (m): "That's okay."

PEDESTRIAN (f): "Do you need any help getting those to your car? My husband is around the corner."

LESTER (m): "I'm good; thank you."

PEDESTRIAN (f): "Oh, of course you don't drive, I'm sorry. Life must be really tough for you. I feel so bad."

LESTER (m): "It's alright. Have a nice day."

WIFE (f): "Did you want another muffin, baby?"

LESTER (m): "Yeah. No. The double-chocolate? How many calories in them again?"

WIFE (f): "680 on the label. The ones from Costco, that you like."

LESTER (m): "Alright, bring one."

LESTER (m): "I used to be a kid with dreams of flying to New Zealand for an afternoon tea, before checking out India before the night was over. My plane would transmute its emissions back into gasoline, and a robot would perform maintenance work on the aircraft and itself while I was eating roti and lamb curry in Calcutta. I'd float on the ocean of air, and would only touch the ground when I was curious. I'm not curious anymore."

EMPLOYER (m): "How're the Glengarry Estate floorplans coming along?"

LESTER (m): "Good, thinking about doing something creative in the foyer, an oval window over the front —"

EMPLOYER (m): "Uh huh, uh huh, yep, just keep it simple; when's the ETA on completion?"

BULLY (m): "Hey dude, nice shades. Y'know where the Oreos are." laughs "Actually, could ya draw me a map to Hubbard Creek?"

LESTER (m): "... Next aisle halfway on the north shelf. And take the 180 eastwards until you get to County Road 214. Turn at it, and step on the gas as far as it'll go. Don't mind the cliff; it's just a mirage."

WIFE (f): "Not Havana again this year. We need to do Europe at least once. Geneva maybe. I'll check Expedia, and if I can find a deal —"

LESTER (m): "Then you can forget about the backsplit."

WIFE (f): "I didn't want one anyway!"

LESTER (m): "I remember Chilley. I wonder if he still wears the hooded cape."

EMPLOYER (m): "Are you sure you don't need any assistance with that blueprint? We can get a junior drawer —"

LESTER (m): "It's fine. This braille ruler has served me well since the first semester at McMurry University."

LESTER (m): "... when are you going to ditch that Camry, Claire? Whenever you hit a rock, it feels like a mine detonates in my ass on the passenger seat. Take it over to the Throckmorton car yard; they'll give you a couple hundred."

WIFE (f): "I'm not going there. They say those Mortons eat people."

LESTER (m): "Who says that?"

WIFE (f): "I hear it in the ward every now and then. And one of them came into radiology once. He didn't have any teeth, and couldn't write, so Lisa had to kind of lead him around. She said it smelled worse than boiled sewage, and she couldn't get the oily handprints off her white coat."

LESTER (m): "Chilley once defeated a hybrid phoenix-anaconda in the back of dad's van and built himself a house in the Sandlands. I told mom to turn up 102.1 FM. Chilley loved music. Even in his young age, he could hear the drums separate from the bass and synthesizers, and I fantasized about us playing together, if dad could've bought me an instrument one day instead of cases of Budweiser."

EMPLOYER (m): "We're notifying you of a routine reduction of staff at Lowenstein. Your position has been made redundant. We're glad of your service, and have no doubt you will land on your feet in today's thriving climate."

LESTER (m): "Oh, well. I was in the middle of the Bloomfield plans, can't I finish at the end of —"

EMPLOYER (m): "Those are to be taken over by our promoted junior staff. We appreciate your enthusiasm. If you can vacate your desk before the hour, that would be great. We'll prorate today's wages."

LESTER (m): "Oh, okay. Well, I appreciate all the years at —"

EMPLOYER (m): "We appreciate it, too. Goodbye Mr. Broom. All the best."

LESTER (m): "When did Chilley disappear? Oh, I don't know. Maybe when I was fourteen. Maybe when dad came back to Shackelford that one year, and apparently shot a collared peccary at long-range instead of coming to see us. Maybe the exact point when mom had taken a Hungry Man out of the microwave, and I imagined him serving pork to his new wife and kid. Chilley never came to mind after that."

WIFE (f): "I hate it here. I hate it here. I hate it here. When are we moving back to Dallas?"

LESTER (m): "When we were in Fort Worth, you wouldn't shut up about getting out to the country."

WIFE (f): "Because we could afford the country. And we could buy here, instead of kicking up all our money to your landlord."

LESTER (m): "We can't buy in Dallas. Not for a few more years. And not if the market goes up again."

WIFE (f): "We're stuck. Here. Forever."

LESTER (m): "Check Expedia for next year's trip, can maybe get it cheaper ten months in advance."

LESTER (m): "I could live with you forever this time, Chilley. I could."