

Hollow Knight

DPE FRAMEWORK

Ranjith

Storytelling

DESIGNER'S STORY

Hollow Knight actually **started as a game jam project!** During a game jam, the idea is to build a small but fully-formed game within a tight time limit with a small team and focused on a central theme.

Pellen and Gibson met 15 years ago through mutual friends, but didn't start working together until shortly before Hollow Knight's development, when they began entering game jams together.

Hollow Knight's protagonist was conceived during Ludum Dare. They created a top-down survival title called Hungry Knight, in which the now-familiar hero kills bugs to stave off starvation.

STORYTELLING

THE ENDING I GOT

Intro sequence:

In the beginning of the game you see something waking up, and something filling up with orange goop. Then we crossfade to the black egg.

Hornet

Hornet calls you shadow, and does generally not trust you, since she wants to fight you. When you beat hornet, 3 figures appears saying that the seals should not be undone and that the shadow (you) should disappear.

We later learn that these figures are the Dreamers.

City of tears

In the city of tears we spot a large statue of the hollow knight. Some NPC talks about the Hollow Knight and how he must have done something brave, but also sacrificed himself for it. Whatever it was, he succeeded.

We also learn about the position of the Black Egg, and the black egg gets a Hollow Knight symbol.

Infection

You go underground, and as you get the areas cleared and return to the Forgotten Crossroads(The place where you start like a lobby) It has suddenly become infected. Warped. Creatures are more evil, and they explode causing more damage.

If you walk to the black egg, you will notice that is what is emitting this orange fog. This orange infection.

You will have noticed from the beginning has 3 symbols, or rather, 3 masks. The masks of the Dreamers.

Seals.

Dreamers

Finding the Dreamer statue, we learn that the Dreamers were put to sleep, and act as seals for the black egg, so that it cannot be opened. The Dreamers appear again and tell you once again to disappear forever, but you are saved. Saved by a creature that tells you about the Dream nail that you suddenly hold.

You are now on a quest to find the Dreamers and undo the seals they have created.

The black egg

You do so. And as you return to the black egg, it now opens. You walk inside to find somebody wrapped in chains. You recognize his head form as the Hollow Knight. You whack at the chains to free him, and as he becomes free he now starts to fight you.

You fight back. In the midst of the battle, the Hollow Knight starts stabbing himself, as orange infection spills out. He uses the infection to attack you, as if he has gone mad. He keeps stabbing himself.

In the end you beat him. Not only do you beat him. You absorb the infection out from his body, and into yours. Chains swing around you. Your eyes turn orange. You cannot move. You are now the Hollow Knight, guarding the infection.

The black egg closes.

PLAYER'S STORY

The story of the Kingdom of Hallownest can be pieced together through dialogue, cutscenes, lore tablets, visual storytelling, and entries in the Hunter's journey. While there are some ambiguous elements, in general, the information derived from these sources can provide a stable foundation for assembling the overall narrative. As long as all sources have been exhausted and taken into account, a player should, in their own right, have a general understanding of any lore topic.

Gameplay

MECHANICS

Combat

- 4 Directional slashes
- Hit Knockback
- Abilities with 2 versions (shadow)
- Parry mechanics
- Charms
- Nail arts

Metroidvania

- Ability requirement for exploring
- The world changes as we progress through the game
- Souls System (ever hit to something that has life gives soul / your abilities cost souls)
- Fast travel for certain areas(fast travel)

Elden ring like Boss dynamics

- Bosses that you can avoid
- NPCs to help you out
- many mini bosses that you can avoid
- Story completion bosses
- Has multiple ending depending on the bosses and the items you posses

Currency

- Geo collection from mines/enemy death/chests
- selling Tradables like Pale ore, rancid egg, journal etc..
- money can be used to buy maps, certain charms, exploration items, key etc..

DYNAMICS

- when you hit any thing with a hit box you have a knockback which you can use to maneuver and also resets the abilities when the souls allow it
- You will find areas which you'll need certain abilities to unlock but you can go through it with some other combination of abilities, like crystal heart to get through the spikes area but you can just unlock dash and just pogo to get through it
- The ability to attack on all the 4 sides helps you with the
- You don't need to farm geo to finish the game cuz currency in this game is just to enhance abilities and
- Pairing up certain charms will provide you with Powers that both the charms provide
- Massive amounts of speed running opportunities that is Spread throughout hallownest
- From the wide range of content that the game provides you can choose to ignore most of them and just skip to the main story progression bosses and finish the game although it requires a certain set of abilities and charms
- The amount of information that the game provides about the lore is at a very minimum and it kinda lets the player chose how much he want dive into the lore of the world and the characters as its speard across hallownest and requires a most of the abilities to access the Information

AFFECT

- It has this sense of eeriness as you initially start and the game has carried it throughout the game through constant environmental changes in certain areas whilst allowing players to explore and traverse through hallownest meet unexpected tribes and learn their story etc.. in any sequence that you might like
- Initially you can often find yourself being lost, due to its complex layering of levels, and unexpected encounters of bosses who you might stumble across who'll change your course of path but the game has multiple instances that'll let you backtrack most of the area so you'll slowly start to understand the landscape before you fight the Main Boss(eg. the location of the black egg)
- While the Lore being quite difficult to piece together and build that connection to the players, its being compensated by the combat that it provides which will always keep the players engaged to the game since its a Hack and slash, combat centric platformer with multiple combos , and for the narrative driven players who wants to explore the lore behind the world would get information in every area which requires certain abilities or a tough platforming trials (Path of pain) to have them engaged as well SO...i caters to both of these player

User Experience

UI

The Game has heavy gothic architecture characteristics to it . the logo and the interface design could not leave this style aside, so it was decided that they contain gothic ornaments, but with some particularities to maintain the idea of bugs and the aesthetic of handmade.

- One of the main features of this game is the clean, simple and like hand-drawn design. Therefore, this is also reflected in the logo and in the interfaces, such as dialog boxes and menus, as they use hand-drawn abstractions of ornaments seen in gothic architecture.
- A detail that can be considered one of the most curious is the inclusion of the protagonists of this video game, that is, the bugs, in the design of the logo and the interfaces.

Interactivity

- The game on its own has followed and maximized almost every aspect of game feel With Hand painted artstyle, great music, juicy particle effects as you progress in the game
- For every movement or interaction in the game there will be at least 3 or more elements reacting to it from the BG Parallax and shake to the stunning VFX
- Its soundtrack moves with the story. In addition it helps tell the story of the game. It connects places and characters, the ambience of a place to the storyline, and reveals the story further to those who listen
- the interaction between the characters and the player has a really colorful tone in terms of how their personality was shown
- even though as a player you don't speak during your interactions , People would still understand what the character is about when the other characters speak to you
- This further Builds more connection to the player and character

Engagement

Despite the tenderness caused by its characters, the atmosphere of the game aims to provoke that feeling of loneliness and mystery because the story has, as its protagonist a nameless warrior uncertain of his identity or origin and who explores an almost deserted kingdom, where an inhabitant is rarely found.

To achieve the above, the game takes advantage of the music, the monotonous dark palette and especially the settings that seem to be inspired by Gothic architecture since there are sweeping windows, pointed or ogival arches and piers and columns that support them.

The Game really nailed giving players the sense of achievement after every Combat Like any good souls-like would. so That lets the players keep coming back to the game

Depending on the ending this would leave players with a sense of feeling that would last of a long time