

Witching Hour Game **Proposal**

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Concept

- *Witching Hour* is a 2D side scrolling game where you play as a young man, **Sol**, who seeks to eradicate the ever encroaching tide of darkness.
- Through a combination of forgotten *magicks* and mysterious *technologies*, you are tasked with discovering the source of what is seemingly an unstoppable force of evil and save your world from utter annihilation.

Experience Goals/Motivation

- The goal of the player is to finish the story and discover who resurrected the **Coven**, and stop them. Along the way, there will be puzzles to solve, traps to avoid, monsters to slay and at the end of each chapter, there will be a boss to defeat.
- By persevering through all of the challenges, the player will bring the story to a close and successfully complete the game.

History

- A hundred years prior to the events of *Witching Hour*, a great battle ensued between the **Night's Vigil** clan and the **Stygian Coven**, a group made up of the most powerful mages from across the land. The conflict was disastrous, and the casualties were high. Both groups were completely decimated, and it was all for naught. The cause of this battle was in fact a dark and ominous artifact, whose origin is of a sinister nature. Found in a tomb below the swamps, the crystallized heart of a formless deity lie beating, an aura

of pure chaos emanating from within, empowering the Coven who stumbled upon it in their search for knowledge. Upon reaching out to this heart, the mages felt their corporeal forms shifting unnaturally, their frames becoming gaunt and frail, but their minds expanding infinitely. What they now lacked in physicality they made up for in intellect. With their newfound abilities, they confidently went into battle against the Night's Vigil, and although they were a force to be reckoned with, they too met their end. Their reign of terror had come to a close, and with it, the land fell into a relative peace for the next century. Now, word has it that the Stygian Coven has returned, stronger than ever before. It is imperative that Sol discovers who or what has resurrected these omnipotent fiends and stop them before it is too late.

Unique Gameplay Features

- There are a variety of unique features in *Witching Hour*. Some of these features are new, and others are currently existing features with a level of innovation added;
 - Randomly generated dungeons in each level
 - Day/night mechanic that transforms/buffs monsters
 - Character advancement system via experience points
 - Crafting system that uses reagents found in the world

Target Platform and Audience

- The intended platform of *Witching Hour* is primarily **PC**. Because of the ease of access for modders, a wide array of custom content can be produced by fans and easily shared online to friends and/or family.
- Another benefit of having *Witching Hour* on PC is that it can be live-streamed in a simple manner, creating an online presence amongst gamers.
- *Witching Hour* is marketed towards **Teen** and **Adult** gamers. Certain features (fantasy violence, blood, and alcohol) make it unsuitable for audiences younger than 12 years of age.

Scope and Learning Objectives

- Through playing *Witching Hour*, players will learn how to counter enemy mechanics, whether it be regular monsters' attacks, or boss abilities.
- Also, a wide array of puzzles will request extrinsic knowledge, common sense and logical thinking to solve and pass onto the next area of the game.
- The traps in *Witching Hour* will require players to have quick reflexes to dodge projectiles and spikes, as well as pre-emptive planning to recognize obstacles and deal with them as necessary.

Gameplay Description

- In *Witching Hour*, the gameplay will feel fast-paced and play as more of a hack-and-slash against regular monsters. Whilst fighting bosses, however, the gameplay will additionally require the player to be more strategic and careful to counter their extremely powerful abilities.
- In order to counter boss mechanics and abilities, the players will need to combine fast and efficient moving (dodges, parries) with careful planning (use of environment, learning and recognizing mechanics) to survive each and every encounter.
- When the enemies run out of health, they are defeated and may drop currency, items and/or experience points. Each level of the game culminates in a boss fight, which must be defeated to end the level and progress to the next chapter of the story.
- If the player runs out of health against monsters, bosses or traps, the game is over and they will be returned to the nearest checkpoint.

Art and Audio Specifications

Art

- The art style of Witching Hour is simplistic yet stylized.
- Despite having a **somber** style overall, depending on the current stage of the day/night cycle, the color scheme will change slightly.
- During the **day**, the color palette will have more **warm** tones because of the sun. During the **night**, however, there will be plenty more **cool** tones because of the darkness.
- There will be a large variety of level themes including forests, swamps, dungeons, graveyards, castles and canyons.
- The main human characters will be medieval styled sharing similar attire ranging from farmers to blacksmiths.
- The *Night's Vigil* clan are unique in the sense that they are adorned with white robes and golden chainmail armor.
- The *Stygian Coven* is comprised of multiple mages that all have a unique look based on their specialization. They appear extremely sickly and have haggardly features. They dress in tattered robes that match their skillset (red for blood, green for plague, etc).

Audio

- The audio of Witching Hour matches the overall feel and mood of the game but has a few changes based on what is happening while in-game.
- The default **music** during the day will be a fast paced and light-hearted *major sounding* piece. It will be casual yet still upbeat. This music will be a combination of electronic music and acoustic guitars.
- Once night arrives, the **music** will shift into a *melodic minor* feel that emphasizes the danger lurking about. There will be a heavy use of background sounds such as wolves howling and growling to keep the player on edge.
- During boss encounters, the **music** will be melodic and very epic to inspire the player to overcome the challenge thrown at them. There will be an element of *symphonic* music added such as choir singing and orchestral instruments.
- Whilst in dungeons, the music will become *eerie and mysterious* to reflect the dangerous nature of the dungeon. Added **ambience** such as water dripping and wind howling will make the player feel alone and more cautious of their surroundings.
- Many elements in the game will have unique **sound effects**. There will be *explosive* blasts from the firearms, *elemental pulse sounds* for the magic abilities, and *slashes/thumps* for the melee weapons. Additionally, there will be many *creature sounds* ranging from wolves to bloodworms and everything in between.

Marketing Analysis

- In the past few years, indie games have had a huge resurgence in the mainstream market. Some of these are 2D side-scrolling games that have been dubbed “**Metroidvania**” games, because elements from both the Castlevania and Metroid series being present in these games.
- These same elements are what contribute to the primary game mode of Witching Hour.
- Due to not only the nostalgia factor of these retro games, but also the success and popularity of these elements, Witching Hour would find wide recognition amongst the player base of these titles.
- Alternatively, the optional game content and custom editor offer mechanics similar to the Diablo and even Minecraft franchises, such as the loot system and building your own content.
- As of 2016, both **Metroid** and **Castlevania** have over 1 million units sold, which considering the timeline of video games combined with the availability of the NES, is quite a large amount for its time.
- The original **Diablo** boasts roughly 1.5 million units sold in the past 20 years.
- **Minecraft**, on the other hand, has sold over 20 million units in the past 7 years on PC alone, with a combined total

of nearly 70 million copies across all systems. For this reason, the building aspect of Witching Hour will be a major focus of the game in regards to replayability and content highlights/sharing.

- Witching Hour takes a variety of elements from these games and gives them a unique twist that sets it apart from the rest. The game will contain many optional content paths such as dungeon crawling, which were not features of Metroid or Castlevania.
- In regards to Diablo, the ability to combine different weapons and tools to essentially create your own “class” breaks the mold that players are pigeonholed into.
- Finally, the game will be heavily story-driven, setting itself apart from the likes of Minecraft, which expects players to create their own stories.

Concept Art



Daytime color scheme



Nighttime color scheme



Dungeon style and color scheme

Control Scheme



Keyboard

The movement will be primarily based around the WASD keys. The common move set will be applied to Witching Hour meaning that:

- W** – Jump
- A** – Move backwards (left)
- S** – Crouch
- D** – Move forwards (right)

The **spacebar** will be used to interact with objects in the world including but not limited to; doors, chests, levers, etc.

Players can access their inventories with the “**I**” button, and within the inventory there will be a series of sub-menus that include crafting reagents, consumables and an equipment screen.

Mouse

The mouse will be used for attacking and blocking, via the **left and right mouse buttons**, respectively. Alternatively, if the player is using magic or firearms alongside their weapon, then the right mouse button will become an alternate fire button.

Lastly, the **Escape** key will bring the game into an Options menu, which simultaneously pauses the game.

Scheduling

Witching Hour is estimated to have an allotted period of 12 months of development time, due to the ambitious multiplayer and custom editor functionality. Development is expected to begin in Q2 2016 and be completed in Q2 2017.

The **first milestone** is the completion of the Pre-Production phase, which will follow this format:

Pre-Production (8 weeks total)

- Pitch document (1 week)
- Proposal document (1 week)
- GDD (3 weeks)
- TDD and ADD (3 weeks)

The **second milestone** is the completion of the *Programming* during the Production phase, which will follow this format:

Production (32 weeks total)

- Programming completion (12 weeks)
- Design and Art (10 weeks)
- Prototyping (4 weeks)
- QA/Testing (6 weeks)

The **third milestone** is completion of the *Design and Art* during the Production phase.

The **fourth milestone** is the completion of the Production phase entirely, covering *Prototyping* as well as *Testing*.

The **fifth milestone** is the completion of the Post-Production phase, which will follow this format:

Post-Production (12 weeks total)

- Postmortem (3 weeks)
- Promotion (6 weeks)
- Certification (3 weeks)

Upon finishing the production cycle, the game will be shipped out to retailers worldwide, and from there post-launch work will begin, mostly focusing on patches, and potentially **DLC** (downloadable content) to further extend the lifetime of the game.