The Trine series is known for its colorful fantasy art, breathtaking landscapes and lush whimsical environments. All of these qualities return in the latest installment of the series, Trine 4: The Nightmare Prince.

In this new 2.5D adventure, the three heroes are back again! Amadeus the Wizard, Pontius the Knight, and Zoya the Thief come together on a thrilling quest filled with dangerous foes and fantastical fairytale landscapes, as they seek out the troubled young Prince Selius, whose nightmares are coming to life.



The Art of TRINE 4

The Nightmare Prince



FROZENBYTE MODUS

A Wintery Morning

The Cursed Manor

A Masquerade Night

Craghill Moors

The Thorny Hedge Maze

The Nightmare Prince

Haunted Tombs

Goldleaf Garden

The Badger-borough

Moonlit Forests

The Princes' Dream

Heatherwood Hall

The Nightmare Academy

Firwood Water

The Crackling Mire

The Blueberry Forest

The Gossamer Grove

Snow-Topped Heights

TRINE 4

The Nightmare Prince



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Foreword

The Trine series is known for its magical and lush art style for a decade already. As years have gone by, the art of the series has developed constantly, and Trine 4 is no exception.

The Trine world is inspired by traditional fairytales coming together with the fantasy genre. This time, Trine 4 shines a spotlight on Nordic nature and folk tales, with some of the game's environments based on the nature that surrounds our development team here in Finland. It has allowed us to tap into our personal knowledge and experiences to see how Nordic forests would look like in the whimsical fantasy style of Trine.

We wanted to create a world that is coherent and logical, so that the path of the heroes continues naturally from one environment to another. The elements of fantasy, dreams and nightmares add their own unexpected twists to the journey, allowing us to create surprises and variations in our themes.

In Trine 4 we have kept the original magical Trine feeling, while evolving the art style even further, creating a look that is more stylized and clearer to read visually. To top it all off, we have a new in-house renderer, allowing us to create truly enchanting lighting across our magical landscapes. Our art team has conjured a beautiful and believable world where we hope the players will be as happy to immerse themselves in, much as we have been while working hard to create all of it.

Trine 4 has more characters, levels, bosses and cutscenes than the previous Trine games, demanding hours and hours of elaborate work from our talented artists and animators. This book is a peek behind the scenes about their process of creating a magical world.



Characters

As the whole visual style of Trine is evolving, the character designs have moved into more stylized direction with the rest of the game, giving our heroes a fresh new look.

It's always a challenge to take existing and well-known characters and redesign them, as you'll need to find the balance between the old and the new elements. It's important to maintain the essence of the character and their identity, while coming up with fresh ideas.

When designing characters into a fantasy world where anything is possible, realism is not the first priority. Still, characters should be believable, relate to the world where they live in, and their designs should tell a story about who they are and what their personality is like.



Creating Characters

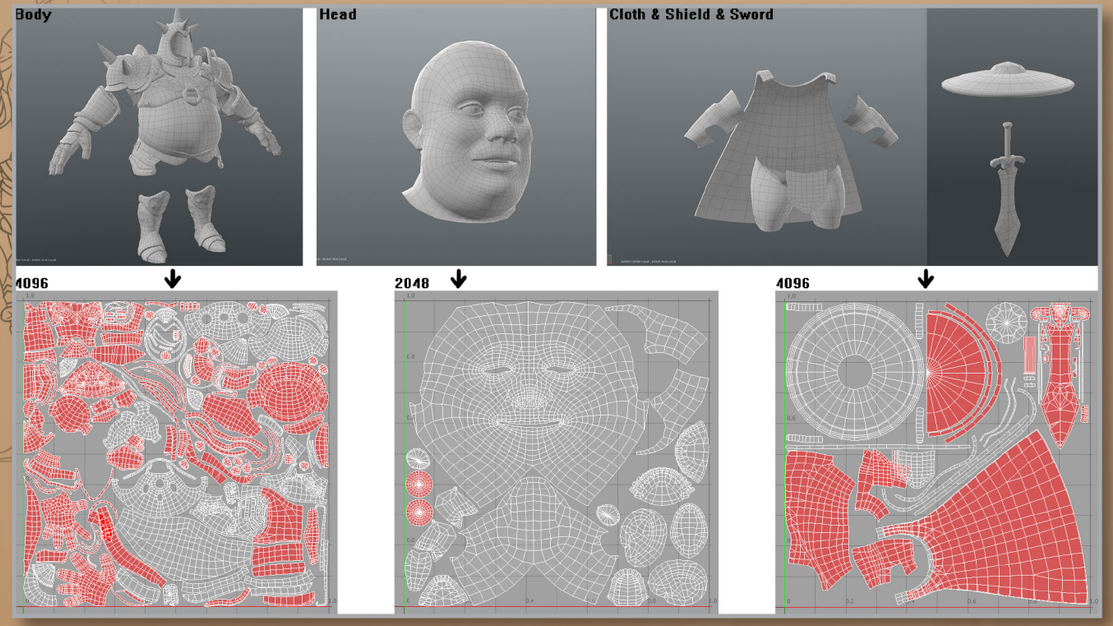
Character design starts with finding out who the character is and how they should look like based on that. We gather visual references and other ideas, and then create concept art until we have what we are looking for.



Then it's time to sculpt a 3D model, using the concept as a reference. The character design might change a bit in this phase, since three dimensions are not the same as two. Once sculpting is done, an optimized lower polygon version is created, and the details of the sculpt are transferred on the low-polygon game model. We can't just put the original sculpture in the game as it has way too many polygons for the game engine to handle in real time.







Next the character's 3D model is textured. Texturing means creating the 2D images that determine the material of the character, for example the local colors and the roughness or shininess of each area. Then the whole thing is added to the game editor, completing the work of the character artist. Of course the animators will need to rig and animate the character to really bring it to life in the final game!











Amadeus the Wizard

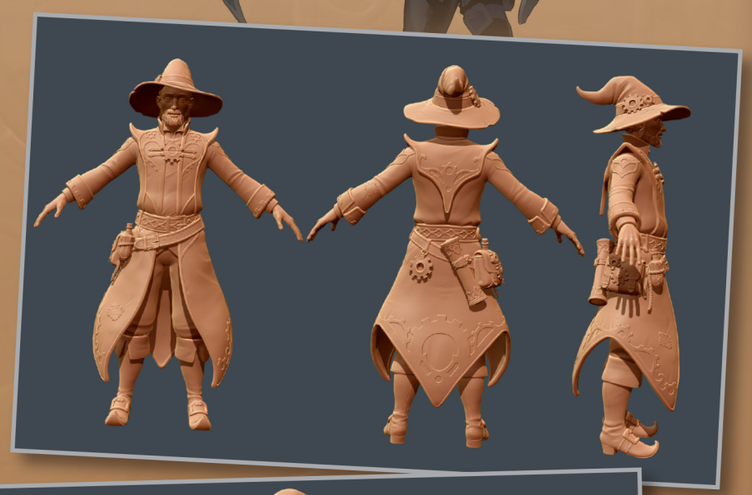
Amadeus would love to be a mighty Fireball-slinging battlemage. Instead, he is well known for his talent for conjuring and levitating Boxes. And sometimes, balls and planks.

Amadeus is married to Margaret, proprietor of Margaret's Arcane Merchandise. Their three children have all mastered the Fireball spell, much to Amadeus's annoyance. After all, he has already spent four adventures attempting to conjure at least a single flaming projectile of majestic wizardry!

Amadeus's design has changed the most compared to his original design. He has gotten more groomed. The turquoise color of his robes is now lighter and with a less saturated tone, and his golden accents have been replaced with silvery tones. Amadeus has a warm presence that brings out his heroic personality, wanting to help and understand others.

















Pontius the Knight

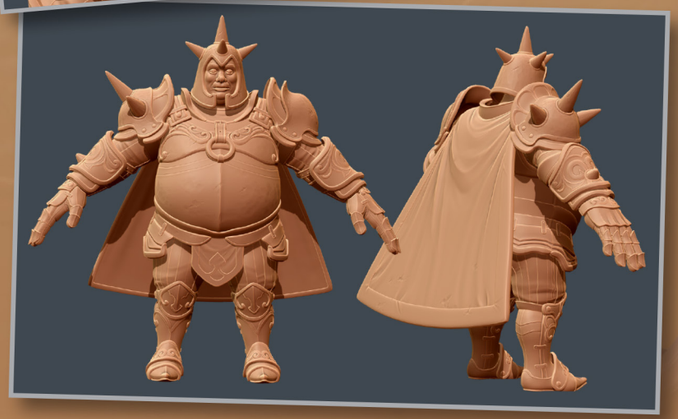
Previously a caretaker at the Astral Academy, Pontius has transformed into an eager champion of the Kingdom, and protector of the common folk. Armed with a mighty sword and shield, he is a formidable fighter. Enemies better beware, when Pontius decides to throw his weight around! Besides justice and rescue missions, Pontius also loves good food and drink. Pontius takes good care of his friends by protecting them from harm - his big shield is almost as big as his heart!

Pontius still wears his iconic helmet. The armor has evolved a bit, but the biggest change is in the general proportions. Pontius is now more stylized with huge arms and hands and shorter legs. Pontius really needed to stand out from the rest of the trio when compared side to side, for he is the strongest of them all. And he might wear spiky armor, but you can tell he is far from evil!













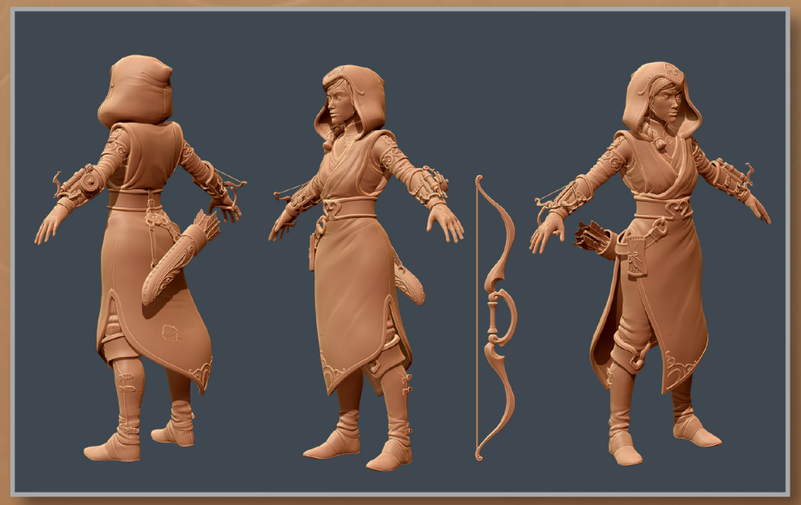
Zoya the Thief

Zoya is known for making her way across dark night-time rooftops and over city walls with her trusty grappling hook and the rope attached to it. Although the business she conducts may be far from heroic, Zoya somehow manages to juggle her roles as a shadow in the night and a daytime hero. Despite near-complete disregard for the ideas of law, family or duty, Zoya is glad to be a part of the heroic trio, for she loves the adventures they share, and the opportunities to find hidden treasures. In combat, Zoya's skill and precision with her bow allow her to fend off enemies from afar.

Visually the essence of Zoya's character is the white hooded tunic with a touch of red and of course her bow and grappling hook. A white outfit for a secretive rogue might not be the most realistic one, but it is an iconic element that needed to be kept with the new design. Her new outfit has evolved into a more practical direction - by the fourth installment of the Trine series all of the heroes have now more adventure appropriate attire. This adds to the believability of the character designs as they are running through snowy mountains as well as summery meadows.













Selius Heatherwood

Selius Heatherwood is a troubled young would-be wizard. His magical talents have a natural connection to the Dream World, even being able to slip in there entirely, as his powers grew stronger. Unfortunately there is a dark Shadow haunting his mind, and it feeds Selius's magic to his own nightmares.

Selius was sent off to the Astral Academy to take control of his powers. As temporal remedy, he was given a talisman that suppresses his dream magic. It prevents Selius from entering the Dream World, while the Shadow is still quite able to conjure all the nightmare monsters it wants. Selius managed to escape the Astral Academy, and is chased across the land by the Heroes of Trine – sent by the wizards of the Astral Academy to retrieve their missing charge. Selius has no wish to return to the Academy, while the Shadow starts to plot how to take over the prince entirely.

Selius is also one of the playable student characters in Nine Parchments. Selius's story starts when the other students accidentally find him in the lower floors of the Astral Academy.











Selius's design with black hair and lean figure is based on him being a morose teenager with a dark outlook on life. He is from a wealthy family, so he is wearing royal elements like ornate cape and jeweled sash. The Shadow is visually like an evil inverted image of Selius, with vibrant red and unnatural blue skin tones telling a story of a twisted character.





Friendly Animals

On their quest to find the missing Prince Selius our heroes run into a number of friendly denizens of the forest needing or offering help.

D.A. Badgerborough

D.A. Badgerborough is a scholar of natural history.

Designing this character was a perfect opportunity to bring out traditional anthropomorphic fairytale characteristics. His look tells you immediately about his personality, how he is a scholar who also enjoys the comforts of life. The pocket watch lets you know he is a punctual person.

The badger lives in his cozy underground home where he writes about the surrounding nature until nightmare hedgehogs come and wreck his home.









Hedley the Hedgehog

Hedley the Hedgehog is a soft-spoken gardener, whose garden and flowers have been trampled by nightmare badgers.

The hedgehog's design lets you know he is a gardener who appreciates anything and everything green that grows out of the ground. Little red rain boots and the makeshift apron show that he is practical and not afraid to get his paws dirty!

Hedley and his scholarly neighbour do not get along at all.











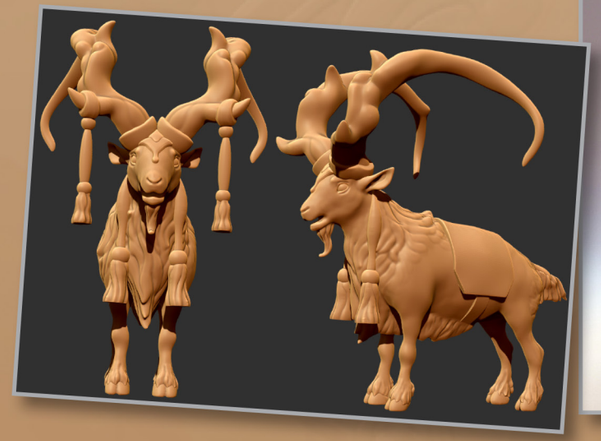




The Goat

The Goat in Amadeus's tutorial was one of the first animals made for Trine 4. He's stubborn, but still willing to give you a hand after you have helped him in return.

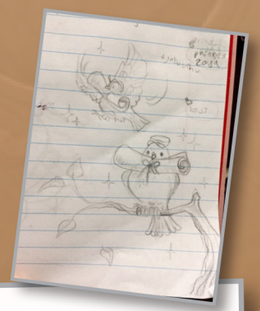
There are other goats in the game, too, but this one is special, with rich red caparisons.





The Message Pigeon

The message pigeon is an important character who delivers messages to our heroes and other inhabitants of the Trine world. If you hear a pigeon cooing, you can assume he is close by!







The Mother and Baby Eagle

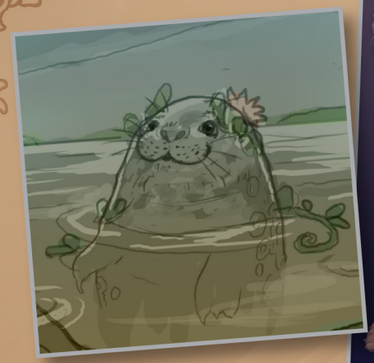
With the Eagles, we wanted to pay homage to large but friendly animals previously seen in Trine games. By helping those in need, you could receive some unexpected assistance in return!





The designs are in part based on a Harpy Eagles, which in themselves already look like they could live in the magical world of Trine.









The Ringed Seal

The seal character is our interpretation of the Saimaa Ringed Seal, an endangered species living in lake Saimaa in Finland. The artist who created this character sees their real-life counterpart every summer.

To add a fantasy twist, this cute and cuddly seal received a water lily garland on her head. In Trine 4, the seal's nightmares are fishing nets.

The Blueberry Bear

Bears can be a bit scary, but this one is a sweetheart. There is a friendly bear living in the Blueberry Forest that curiously appears during the level to greet the players.

In Finnish folklore, the bear is the King of the Forest, perhaps there is more to this particular bear than meets the eye?







Toby the Corgi

In Nine Parchments, Selius can summon the shade of his now-dead dog, Toby. Toby died years ago after trying to pick a fight with a pack of wolves.

Toby was a sweet little pup with a massive ego, and his death is the reason why Selius has nightmares about wolves.













Waffles the Cat

Waffles is Selius's family cat and Selius can't stand her as he feels like the family is more worried about the cat than him.

You can find Waffles roaming around the ruins of Heatherwood Hall. When you enter the same castle in a dream, everything seems to have gone back in time, the castle to its former glory and the cat is seen as a young kitten!











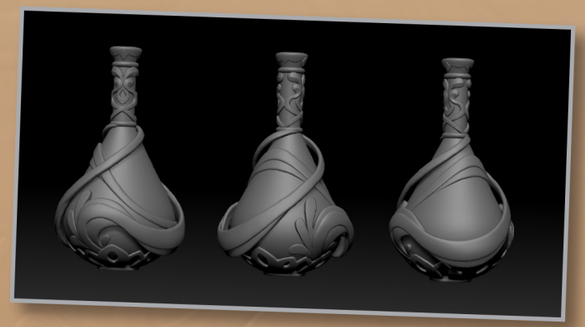
The Three Siblings

The Three Siblings

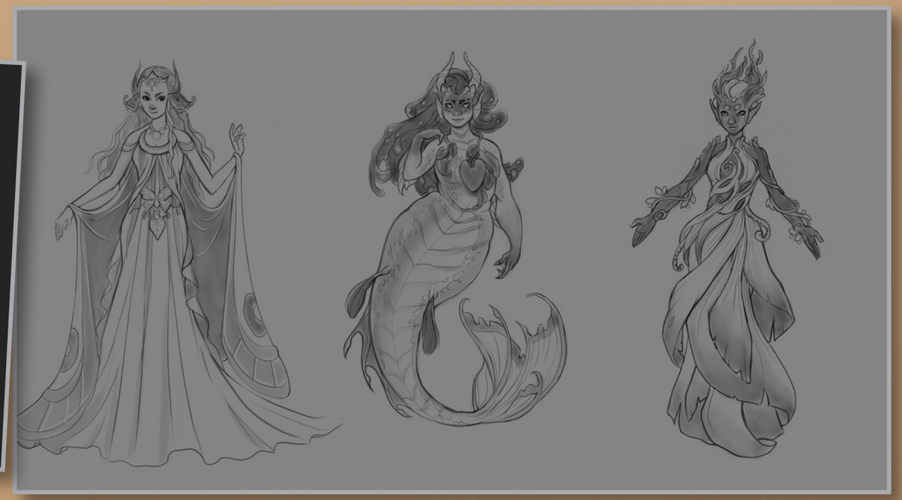
Three siblings live in the magical woods, observing the Three Heroes' quest with great interest, and offer their help when it is most needed.

As characters they are inspired by witches and their cottages in many Nordic and Slavic fairy tales, but instead of being old crones, they are fairy-like creatures that inhabit different natural elements.









Moonshine

Elodea

Linden

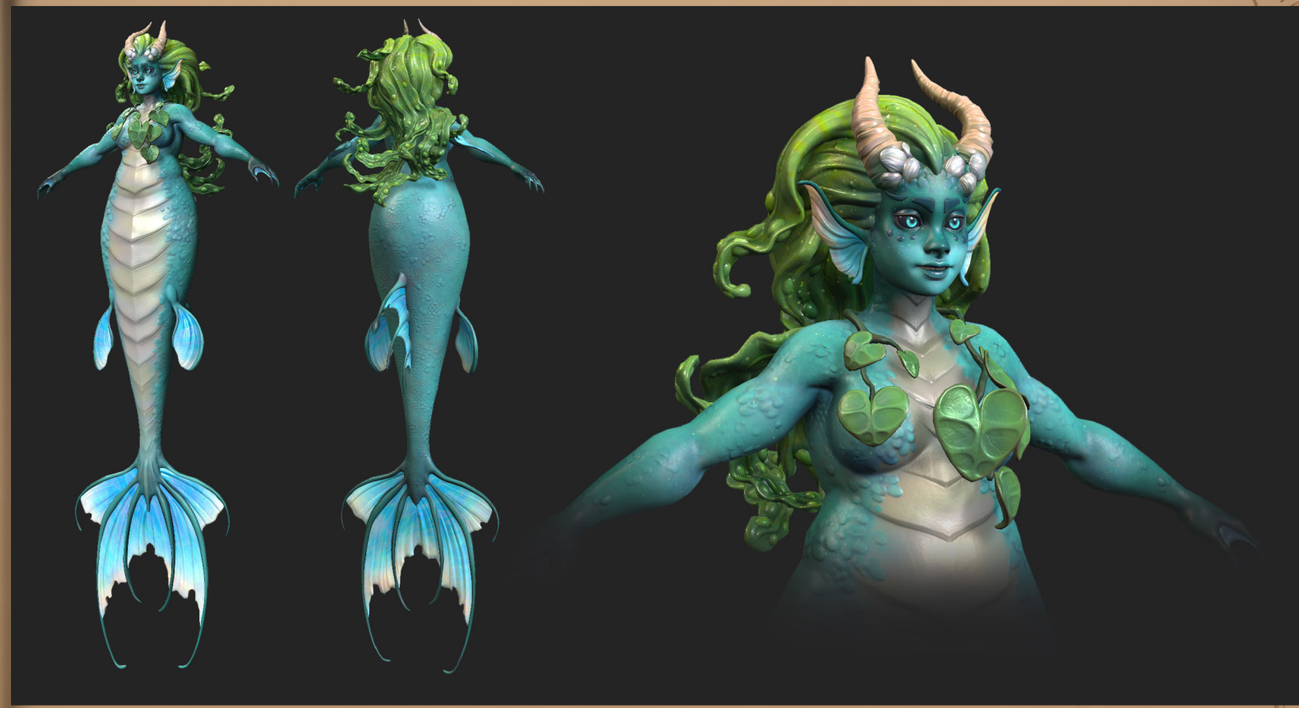
Elodea

Elodea is a marsh mermaid, and patroness of everything that lives in water. She swims in thick and treacherous marsh rivers as well as lakes, and has some resemblance to a pike fish.

Elodea's look was one of the most interesting to come up with. The idea of combining a gloomy bog environment with a mermaid, that you'd usually think as this sweet little girl with a fish tail, was interesting. Stereotypes can be very useful things in character design, but it's always more interesting to try and come up with something more unique.











Linden

Linden is a tree spirit, and patron of the trees and flowers in the enchanted woods. He lives inside a hollow old Linden tree in the Blueberry forest.

The idea for the visual design came from the blueberry forest environment. There is wood, ferns and blueberries, but the more unique element for a dryad type creature is the skirt-like lower part which is actually inspired by the blueberry flower.

Originally the plan was to have all the three siblings female, but to make things more versatile and interesting, we decided to change one of them into a male. There was already a preliminary sketch of the character so it was just edited towards a more traditionally masculine body type.











Moonshine

Moonshine is a wispy air spirit, intangible as moonlight. Moonshine is patroness to all airborne creatures in these woods, and prefers the high canopies of trees as a resting place.

Moonshine's elegant and airy design was inspired by the magical Crystal Wing Moths that live in the Moonlit Woods where our heroes first see her. It is said that Moonshine can only be seen in moonlight, a bit like the nocturnal Crystal Wing Moths that seem to appear wherever she goes.













Enemies and Bosses

Because of Prince Selius and his runaway magical talents, monstrous nightmares are able to slip into reality and wreak havoc on the waking world.

In addition to monstrous enemy fights, the heroes will also meet more unique encounters. The most interesting of these are the ones that bring out the three heroes' personal nightmares, allowing us to know them much deeper than ever before.

Common Nightmares

Nightmare Wolves

Selius is seriously afraid of wolves. They are the first creatures to come out of his nightmares, and, thus, the most common ones the Heroes meet on their path. They have big teeth and a mean snarl, and are ready to hunt you down.





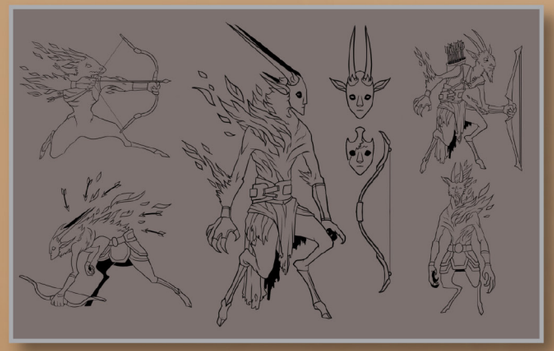






Nightmare Satyrs

Faceless creatures, with only expressionless masks to hide whatever is underneath. The Nightmare Satyr's conjure different types of projectiles to hinder your path.









Nightmare Spiders

Alongside wolves, Selius the Prince is afraid of spiders, too. His brothers once did a prank involving spiders, causing permanent mental scars for their little brother.

We tried to make the models look a bit nicer than "traditional" spider enemies, to make them less abhorrent to players with arachnophobia. The spiders spit ice and fire projectiles, and are immune to their own element.

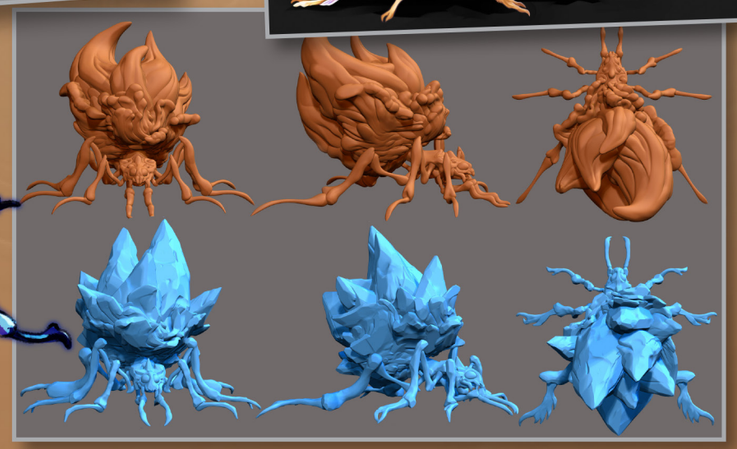


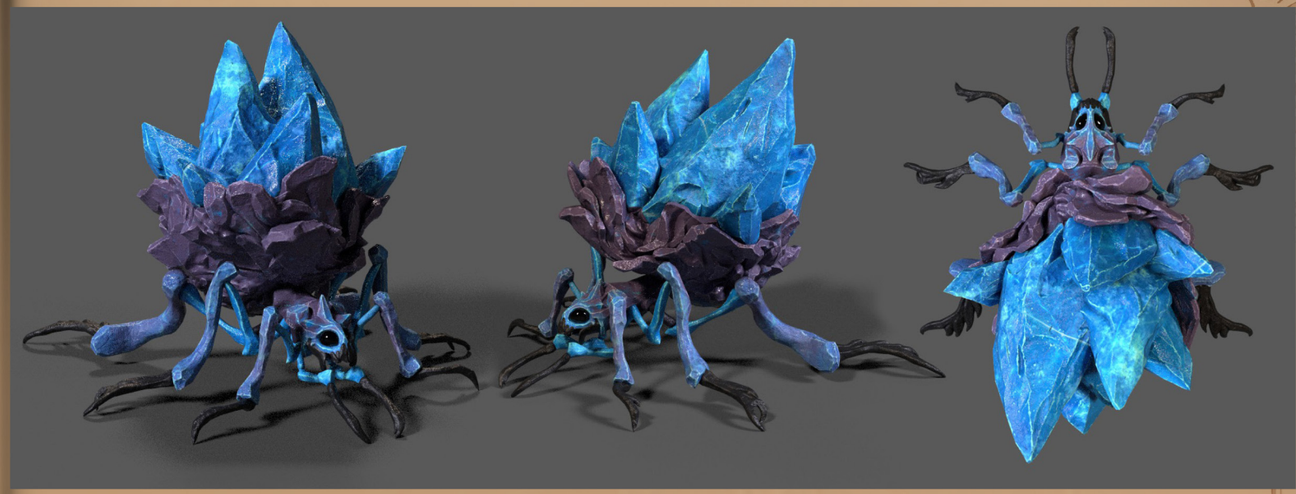














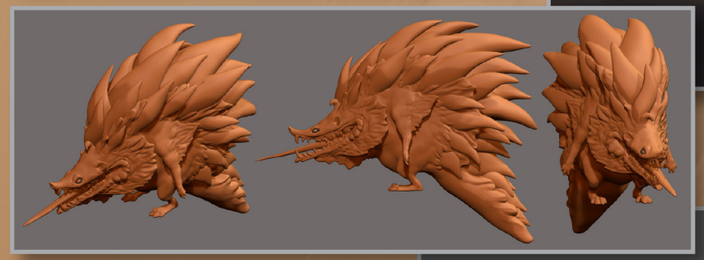
Nightmare Hedgehogs

The Nightmare Hedgehogs are D. A. Badgerborough's nightmare images of his neighbor, Hedley the Hedgehog. With extra large spikes and a wicked grin, they give the spooks to anyone who encounters them.









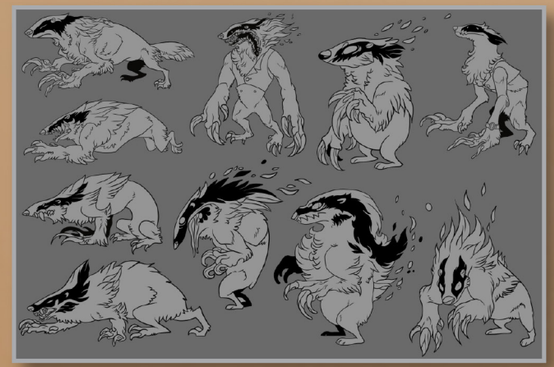




Nightmare Badgers

Hedley the Hedgehog has had nightmares of evil badgers, which are a distortion of his neighbor, D. A. Badgerborough. Unlike their counterpart, they walk on all fours and have much larger claws.











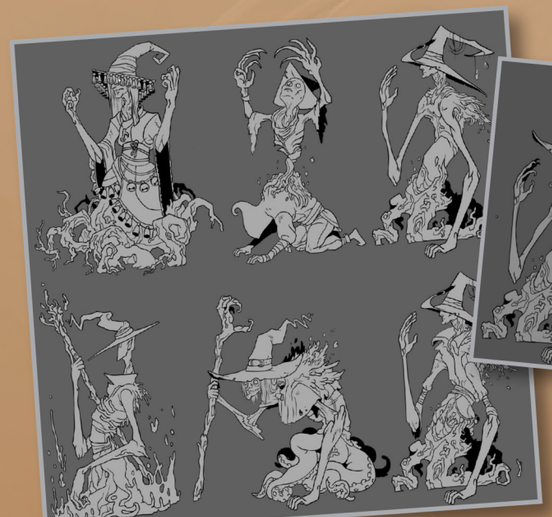


Nightmare Wizards

Selius has no fond memories of the Astral Academy after being under lock and key for so long, and so he has a seriously distorted perception of what they look like.

The Nightmare Wizards' feet may be rooted to the ground, but their arms have a long reach.













Elite Nightmare Enemies

There are more tough, armored versions of some of the nightmarish creatures, with more tricks up their sleeves. At least Elite Badgers, Elite Wolves, and Elite Satyrs have been spotted causing havoc in Selius's wake.













The Cursed Knight

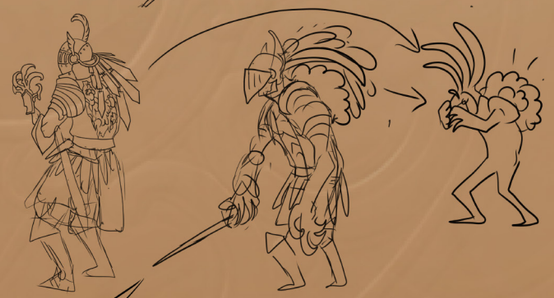
Pontius meets a cursed, undead knight who had possessed a noble spirit a long time ago. But the knight died alone and abandoned, and returned to haunt his old home as a bitter and broken shadow of his old self. Pontius the Knight needs to confront him and ultimately set him free.

The Cursed Knight is the only enemy in the game which isn't a nightmare, as he's encountered before the Heroes get tangled with Selius.















A Giant Nightmare Wolf

The unique nightmare enemy the heroes meet is the Giant Nightmare Wolf. This one needed to be big and scary, but still fit to the fairytale feel of Trine without looking too brutal. Most importantly, She has to look the part for when Pontius stomps on her head...







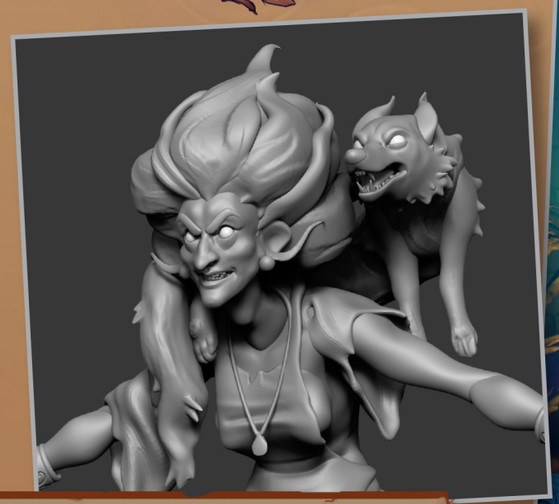


Aunt Gretchen

Amadeus's long-time nightmare about his overpowering and possibly insane witch-aunt, who he was very very scared of when he was five and who curiously is strikingly similar-looking to Amadeus's wife Margaret.















The Three Knights

The Three Knights are Pontius's well-repressed self-doubts about whether or not he is good enough to be a knight or a hero, especially after their last adventure with Trine revealed that Pontius was chosen to be one only by accident and convenience.

The Three Knights are all somehow better than Pontius in some respect; being more wise, more respectable, or more attractive; they also represent the kingdom's knighthood who perhaps have snubbed Pontius for his unorthodox way of joining their order.

Originally all of the knights were planned to be male characters but again to make things more interesting just with as The Three Siblings, we swapped one of the knights to female.



















Princess Zoya

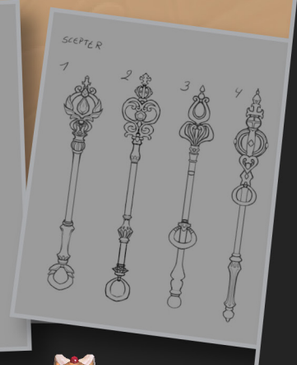
During her time on her own, Zoya had an adventure in a far-off land, which could have ended with her becoming a princess by marriage. Zoya declined the offer, but the prospect of having been Ridiculously Rich has been bothering Zoya ever since, especially because she isn't really getting any younger, and doing rope tricks is a career with an eventual expiration date. Princess Zoya is an apparition of regret that shows up to mock Zoya, because she fears she made the wrong decision by not choosing a gilded cage.



















The Shadow Beast

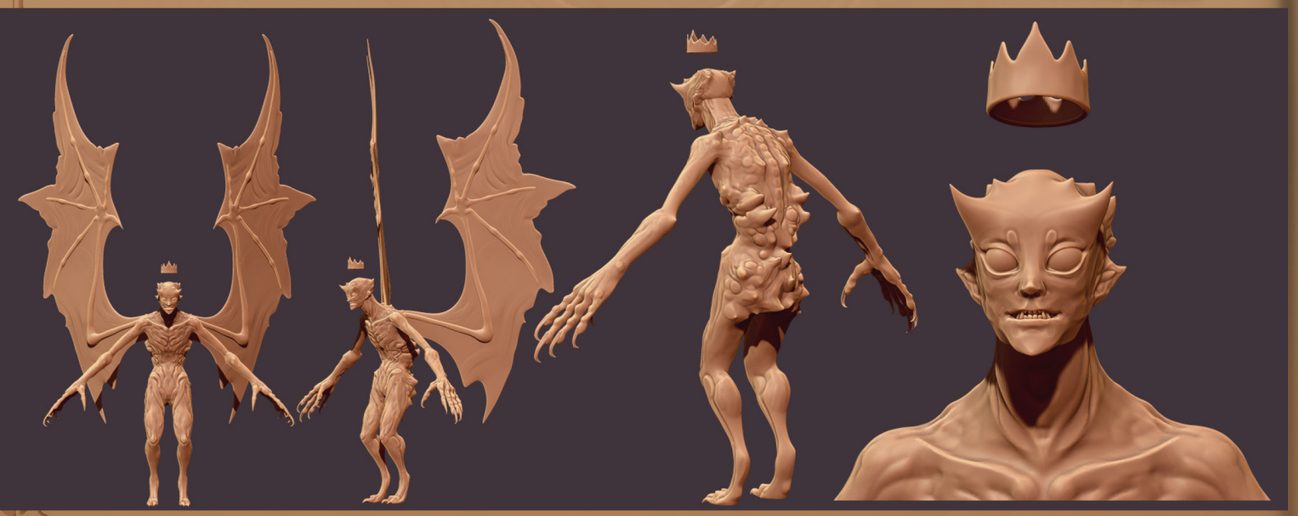
The Shadow Beast is the final encounter in Trine 4: The Nightmare Prince. They are a beast that is formed in the inner conflict that Selius is having with his Shadow. They are void of all light, as Selius is finally succumbed to his dark thoughts, with little control anymore. If the Shadow Beast is free to roam the Trine realm, all hope is lost. It is up to our heroes to help Selius regain power over himself.

The Shadow Beast is the most violent showcase of his nightmares we have yet seen. The look is quite traditionally demonic, which supports the story.













Environments

Trine level art is created by two key groups of artists.

A team of 3D artists create all the 3D objects that are needed to build a level. This means that every rock, tree, mushroom and patch of grass is painstakingly made from scratch. Each 3D asset is created by first coming up with the visual concept, then modeling the object digitally, and finally texturing it to give it the material and colors it needs. The objects are then imported inside the Frozenbyte game development engine.

Once we have a library of assets that are needed for a specific level, the level artists step in. The level artists take those 3D assets and use them to build the whole level, and use lighting to create the fantastic feeling that Trine is known for.



General Level Art

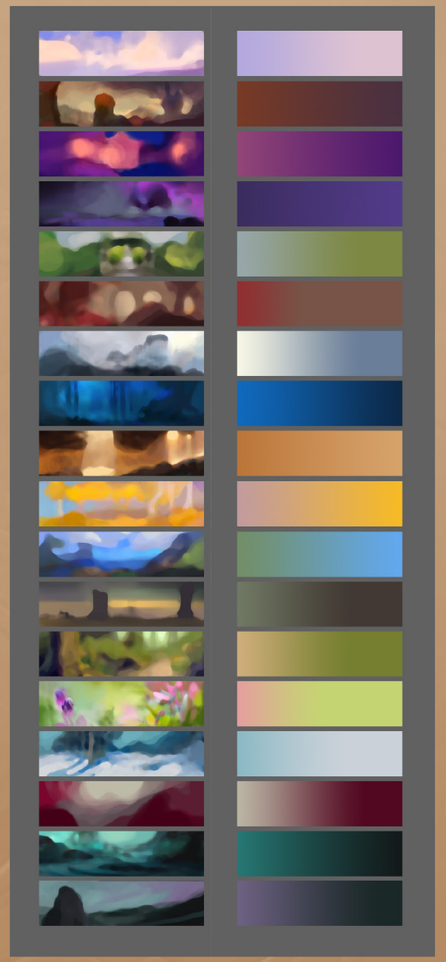
Each level in Trine 4 is carefully handcrafted by our team of talented level artists.

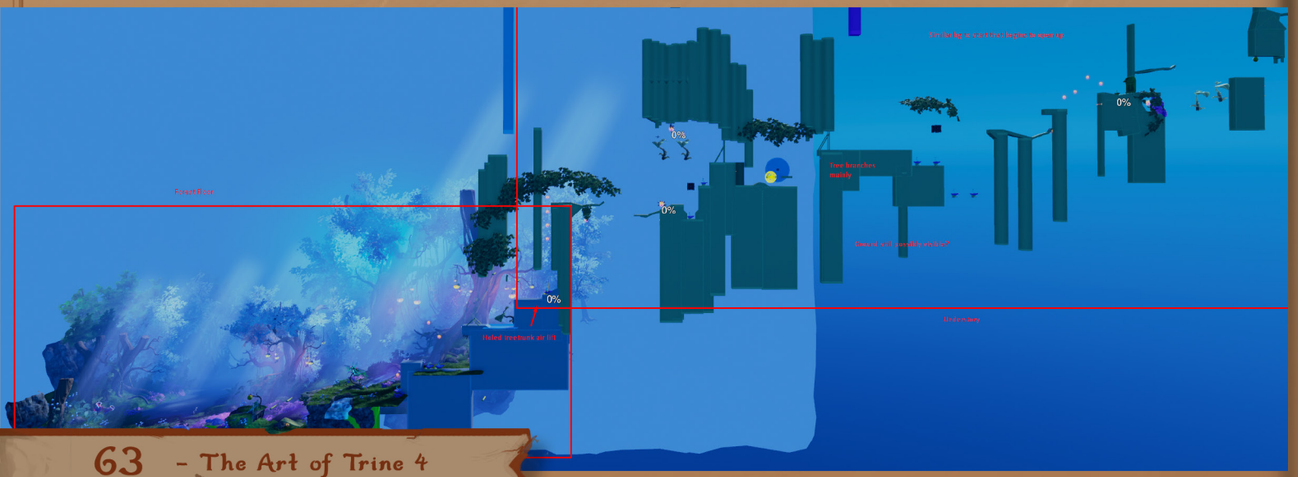
First, gameplay level designers create the tangible basic structure of a level by using simple grey collision boxes. Then a level artist steps in and starts creating our magical fantasy world in a visual form.

The large shapes and effects are placed in the level first, such as preliminary lighting, large cliffs, big walls, and the ground. This helps to sketch the overall look of the level, so the environment stays coherent. Once the big shapes are in, details are added with smaller rocks, plants and props.

It's important to optimize the level art at all times as we don't want to strain the performance of the game. Of course the goal is to make each level unique and beautiful but that is not the only thing level artists need to deliver.

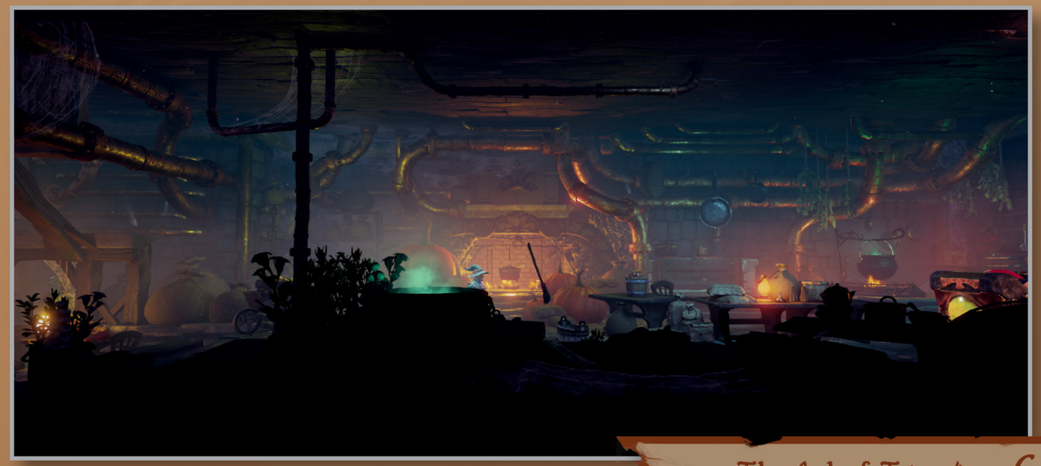
Game design and game art go hand in hand, and level art plays a key role in supporting gameplay, by highlighting important elements and guiding the player into the right direction. Artists have many ways to accomplish this, such as composition, visual flow and the distribution of detail and being able to use the color and lighting fundamentals like value contrast to their advantage.

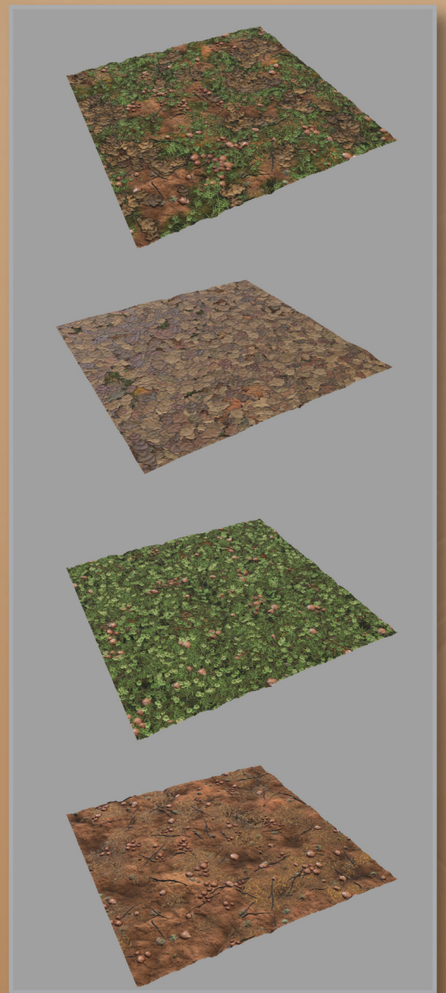


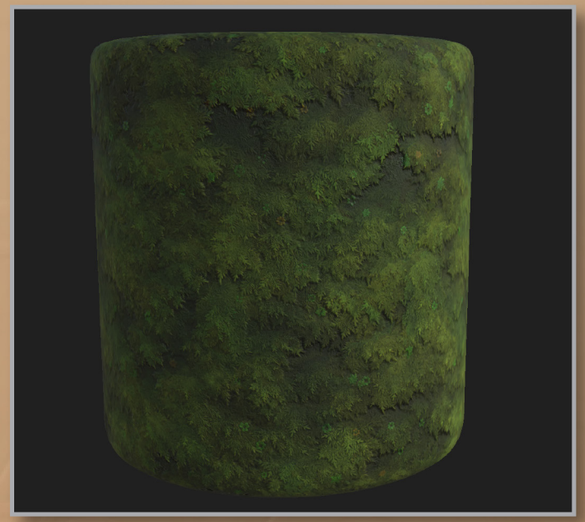


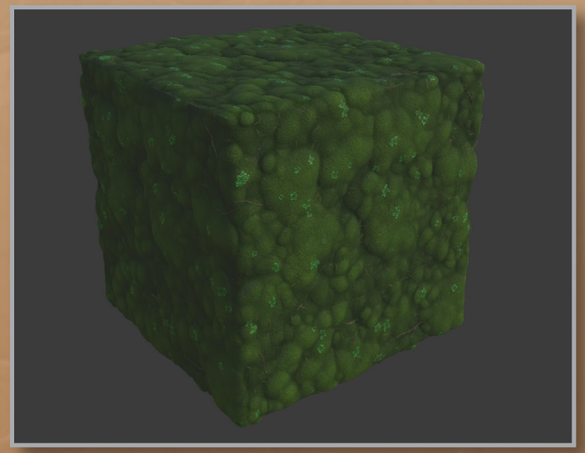


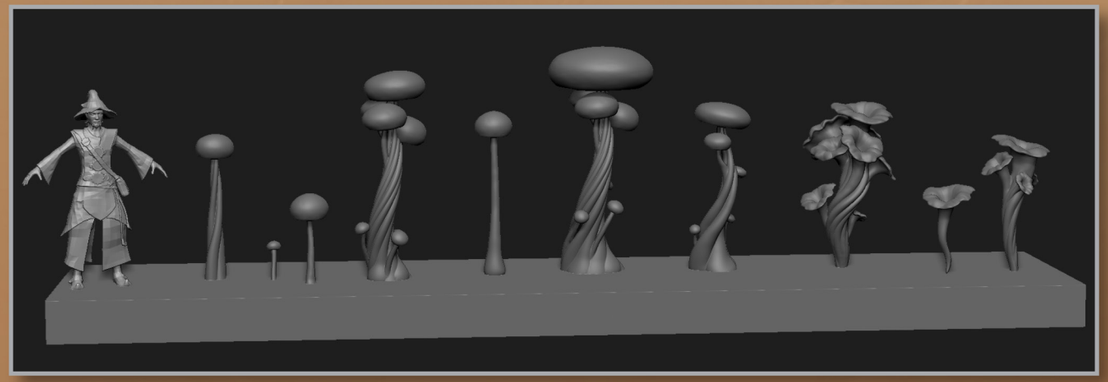


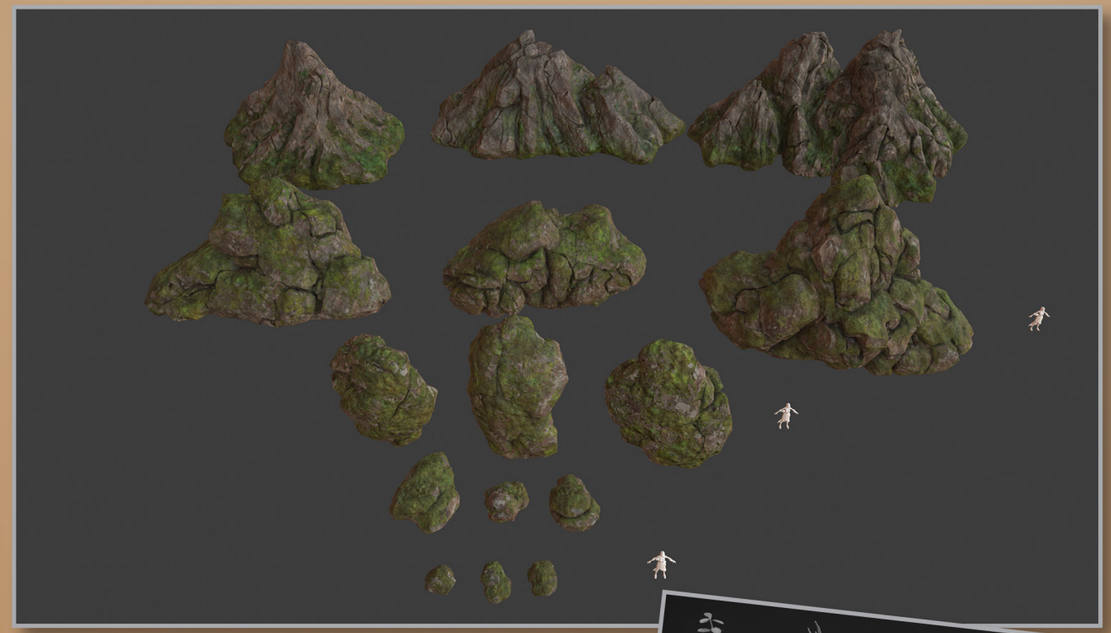


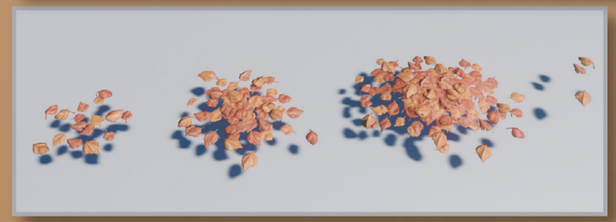















Moonlit forest vegetation
work in progress

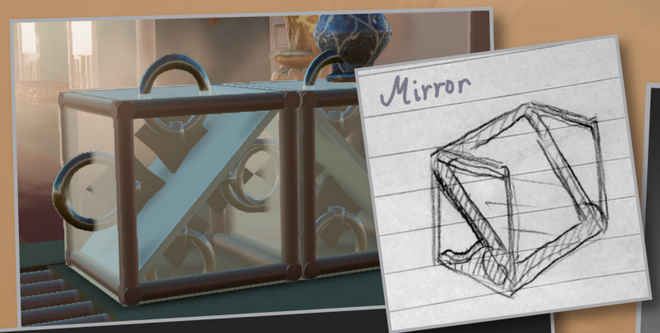
Gameplay Assets

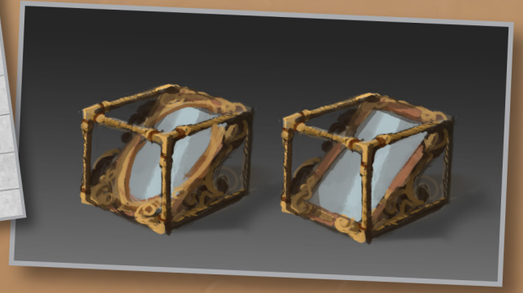
Gameplay assets are 3D assets that the players can interact with while playing. They can be anything from boxes, planks and balls to more unique elements. The gameplay assets need to be visually very clear and their purpose has to be obvious by just looking at them.

It can be a challenge to come up with a visual look for puzzle elements that might not instantly feel like they can be fitted to the visual theme of the level. However, after some thinking, they'll always fit right in as Trine's fantasy world can have mechanical gears and wooden or metallic structures which can pretty much go with any level theme.

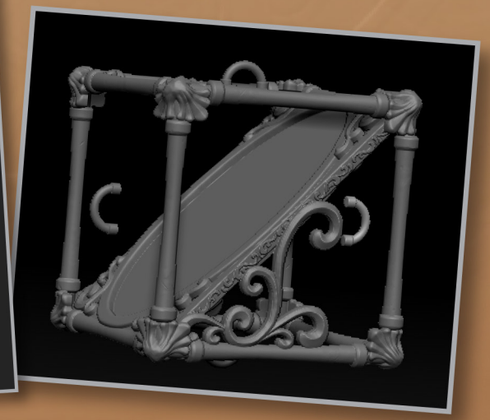
It is important to communicate with the gameplay designers during their design process so that we can get the best possible solutions that satisfy everyone.





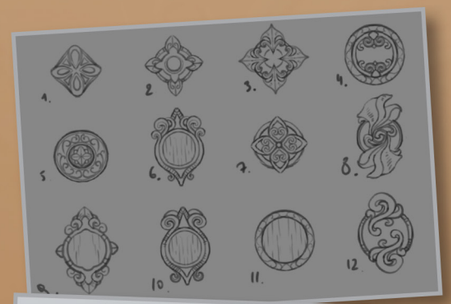


















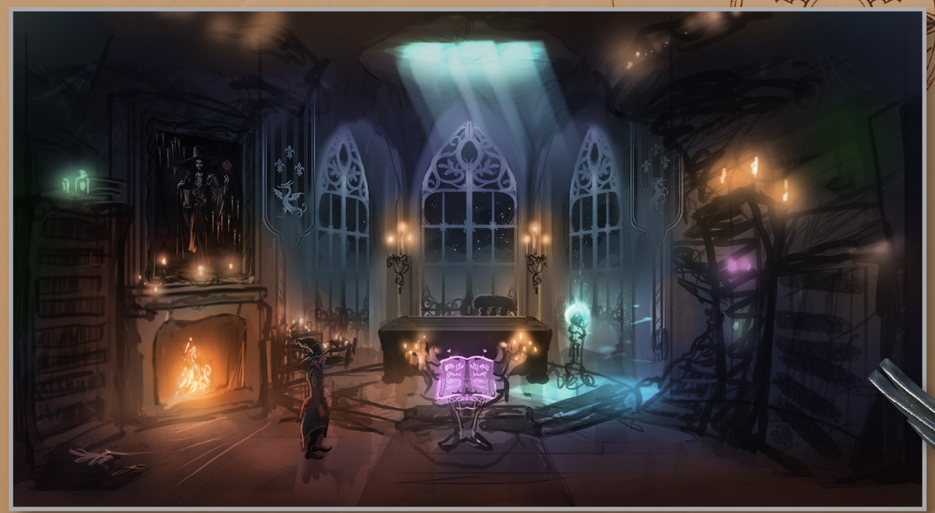
Heatherwood Study

Heatherwood Study

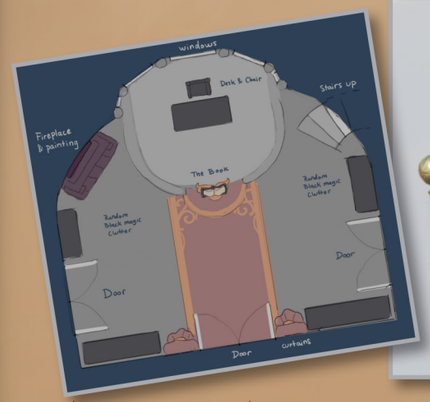
Most Trine games have had playable main menus. In Trine 4, the main menu is set in the Heatherwood Study: this place is visited by the heroes once during the game, and before that in Selius's backstory cutscenes.

This is Selius's father's private and usually locked-up study, so it has more gothic vibes than the rest of Heatherwood Hall.















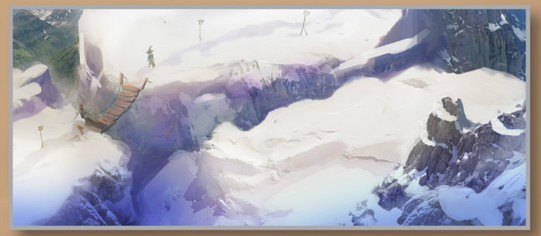


A Wintery Morning

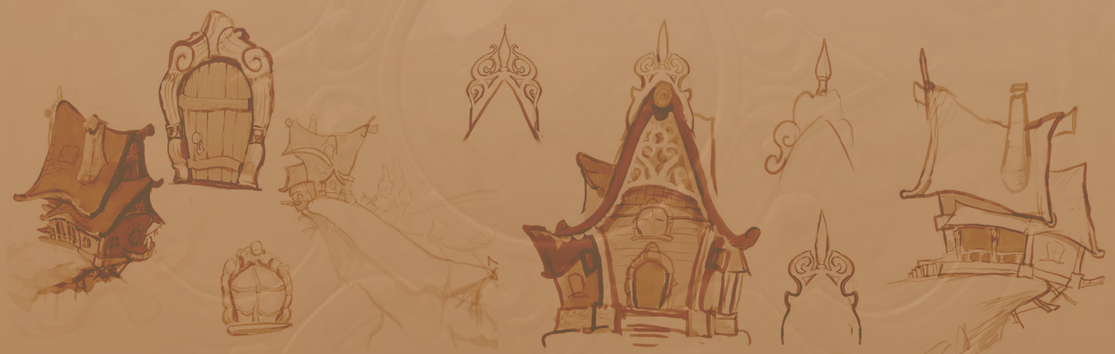
A Wintery Morning

Our adventure starts in a scenic snowy mountain cottage landscape bathing in the warm colors of sunrise. Amadeus the Wizard is attending a wizarding conference and has rented this cozy Alpine style cottage with all the amenities. Amadeus embarks on a dangerous and riveting journey for the nearest mailbox, and meets a distressed goat on the way - a typical day for a heroic wizard.

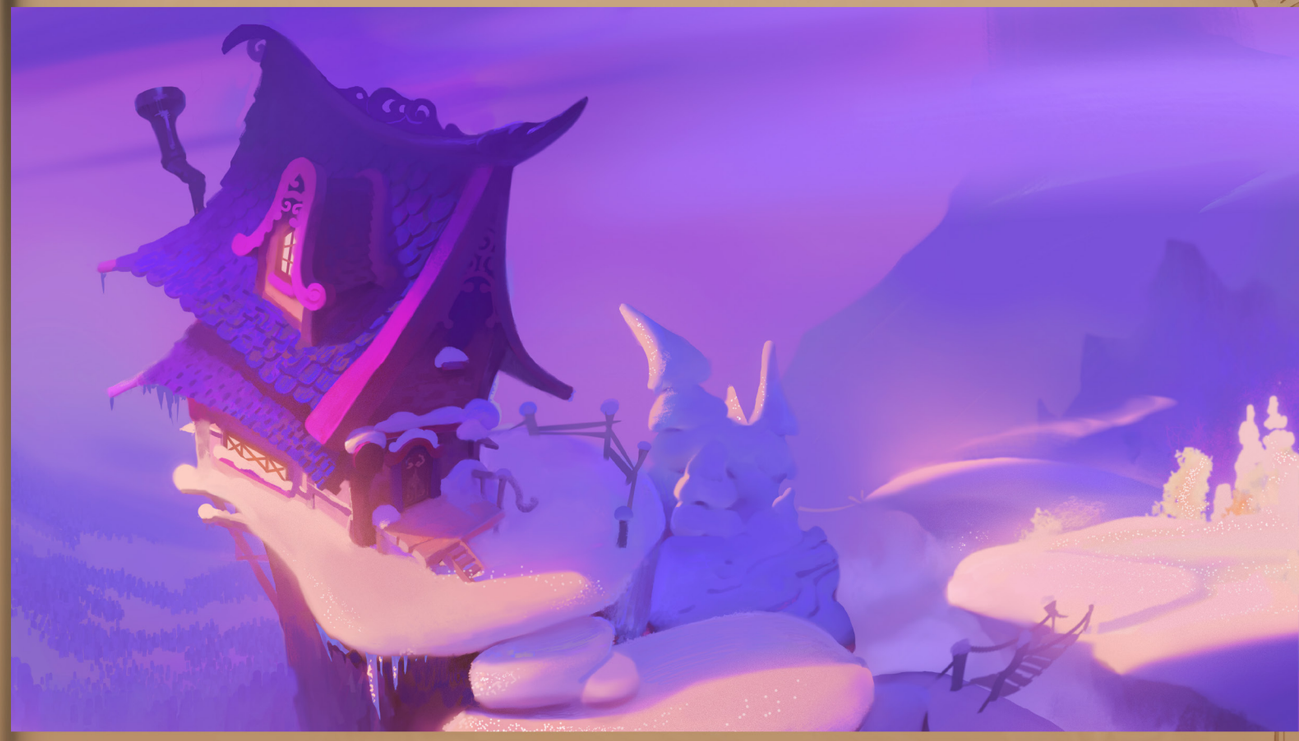
In this level warm pinkish light contrasts with purple shadows. The shape language of this level was designed to be inviting and friendly with fluffy snow mounds. As the first level it needs to draw in the player immediately. We added a great sense of height to create a slight sense of danger in order to heighten the feeling of an adventure about start. To create contrast and get a break from all the snow, there are green forests and fields visible way down in the valleys between mountains.











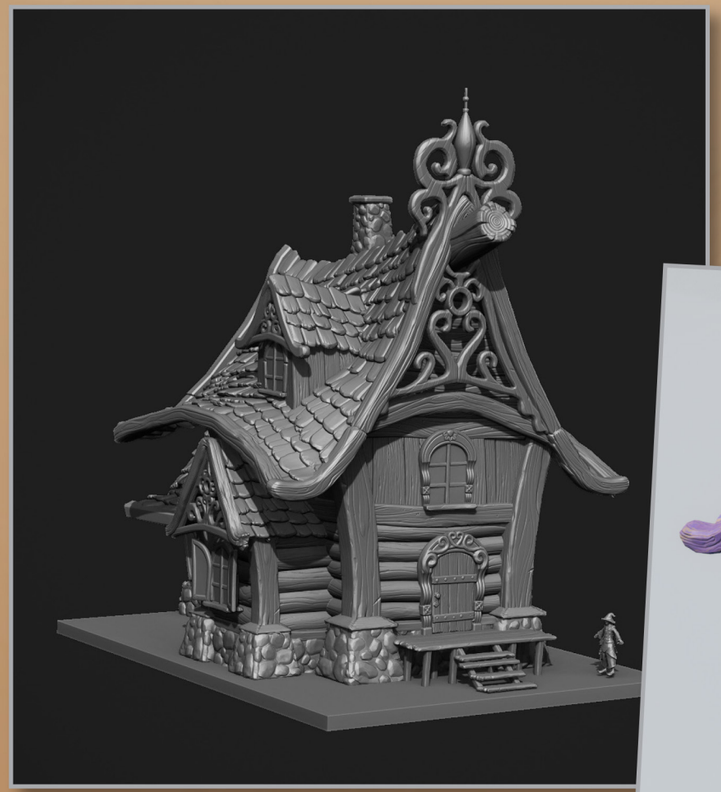


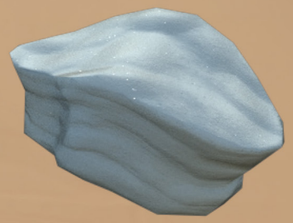






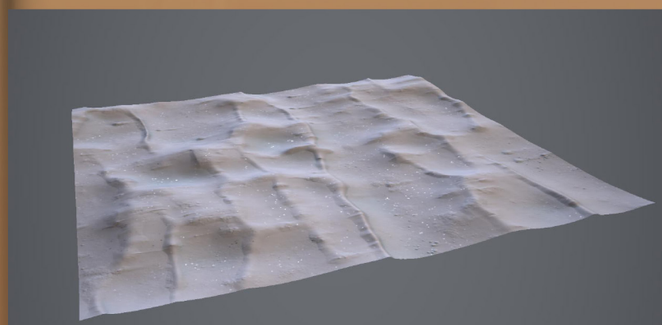


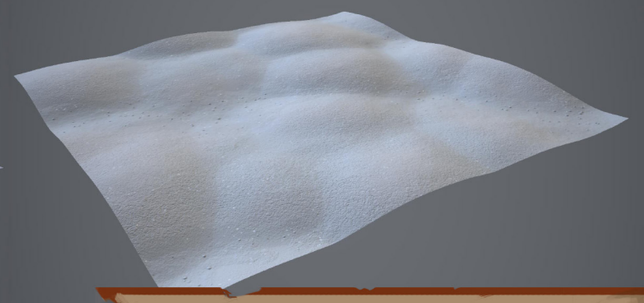














The Cursed Manor

The Cursed Manor

The Cursed Manor is where we meet Pontius the Knight. Pontius has strategically chosen to come here at noon to avoid any risk of being scared of the cursed undead knight inside.

The lands of the manor are straight from your Halloween dreams with the crooked pumpkins and autumn vibes. The manor is filled with cursed growth that poisons the neighborhood. Windows are nailed shut with just thin rays of light reaching inside, creating a spooky atmosphere. The cursed growth shuns daylight, and is promptly burned away by prolonged contact with light. Some fungal growth can still reach outside through the roof to puff out their foul smokes.

In the heart of the manor Pontius meets the Cursed Knight, requiring Pontius to use his wits in order to shine some light on the situation.

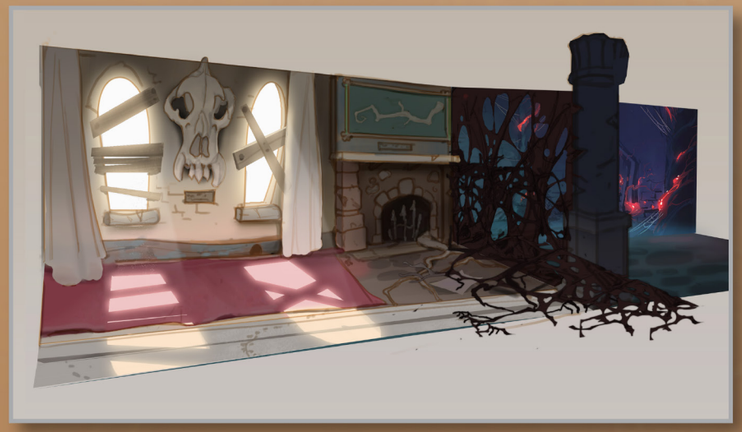






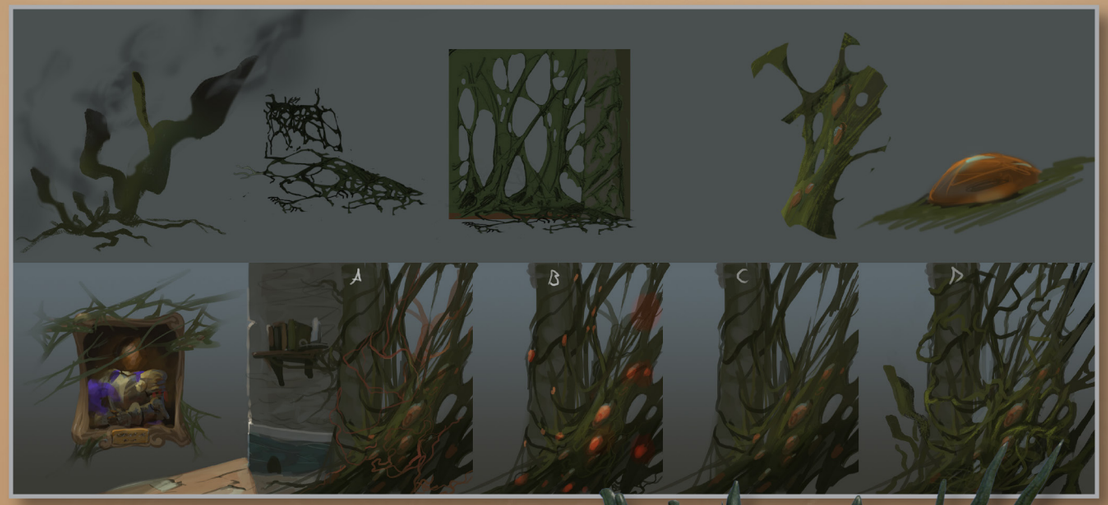








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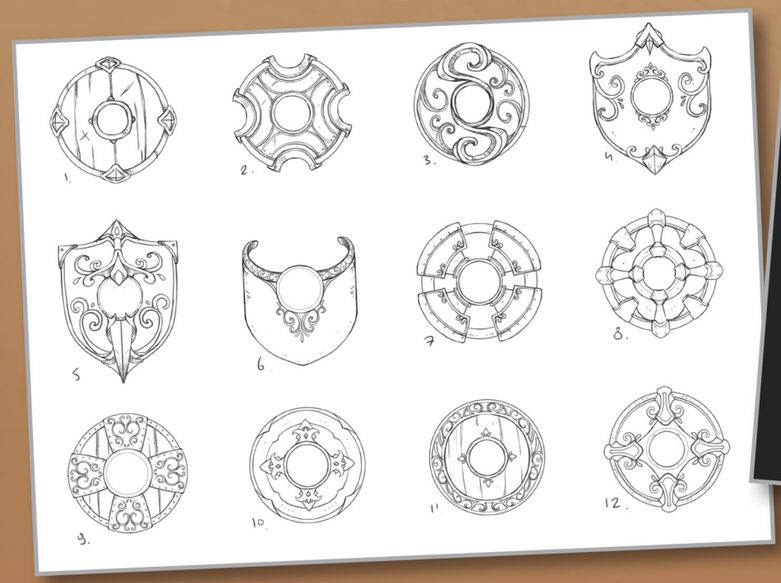
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A Masquerade Night

A Masquerade Night

Zoya is thieving the night away while the Festival of Masks is taking over the nocturnal town around her. We also see a glimpse of two familiar characters from Nine Parchments heading out to enjoy the carnival.

The visual emphasis is on warm and bright tones brought by various lights from the carnival, including streetlights, lanterns and fireworks. Featured are wealthier areas with fancier buildings, but at the end of the level on the outskirts of the town there is a shabby orphanage that Zoya finds uncomfortably familiar.

























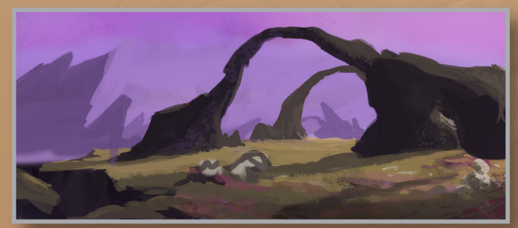
Craghill Moors

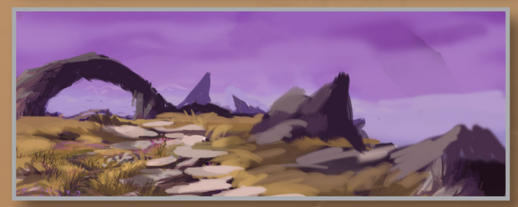
Craghill Moors

The three heroes are sent by the Astral Academy to this wind beaten heath. Their quest is to find the missing Prince Selius there.

The scenery is dominated by spiky rocks with green and purple grass and heather. Stone arches and ancient machinery add a slight sense of magic in the air. Here the heroes meet their first nightmare encounter and begin their journey to discover what is going on with their missing Prince.

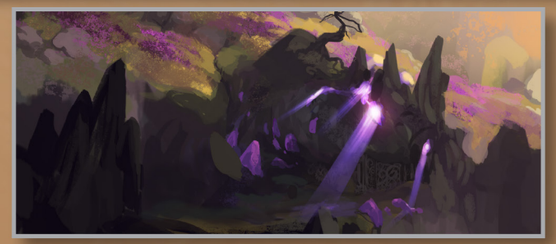


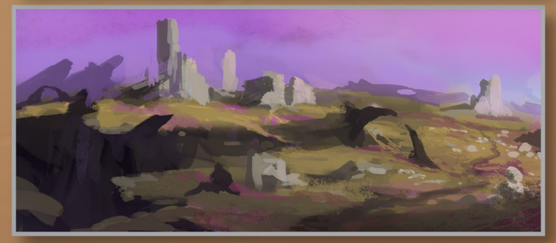




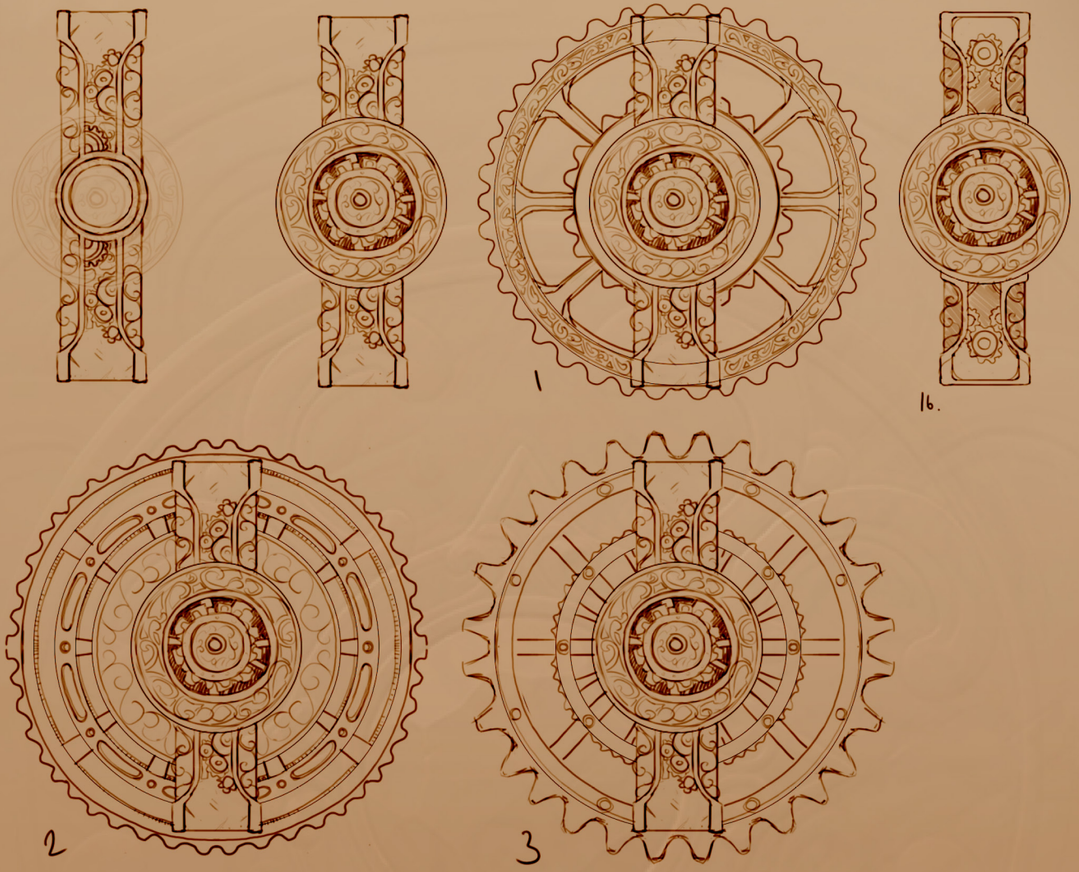








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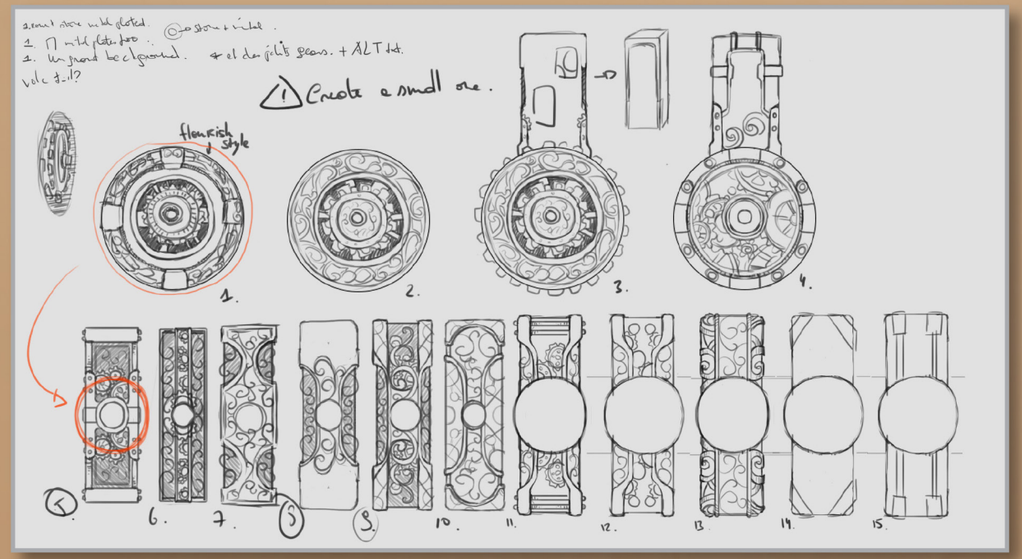
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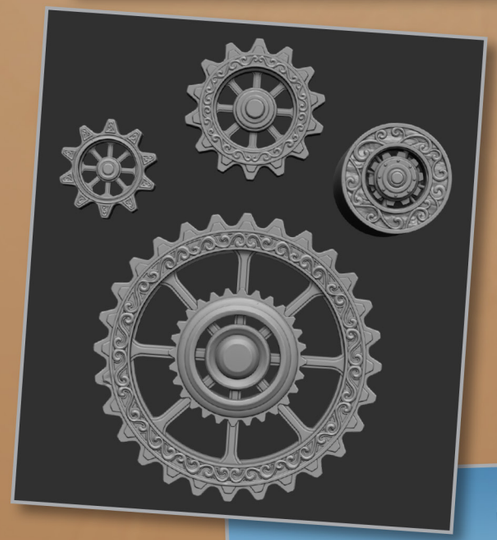
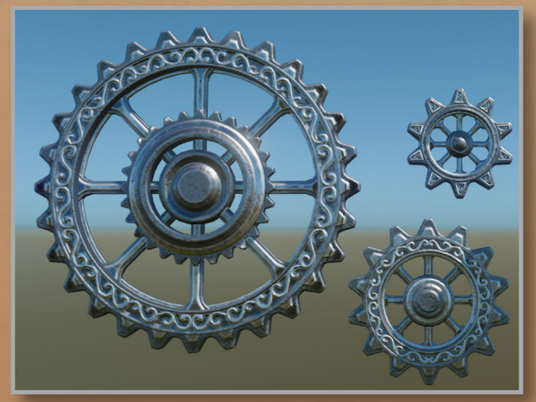
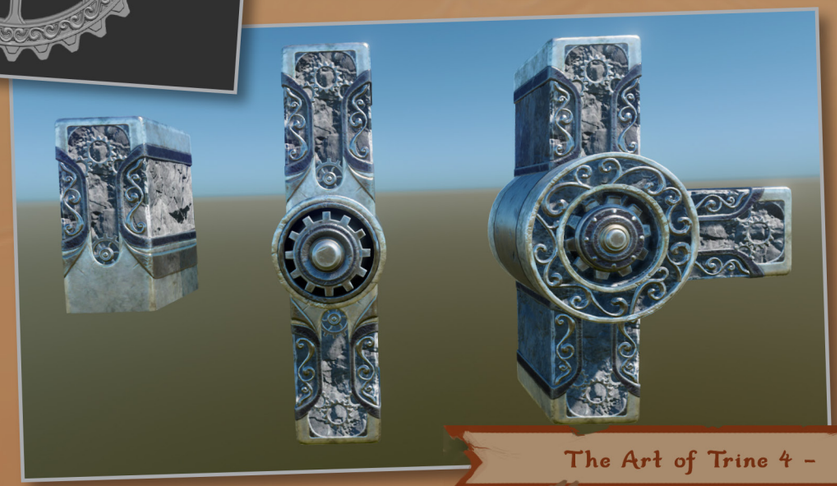






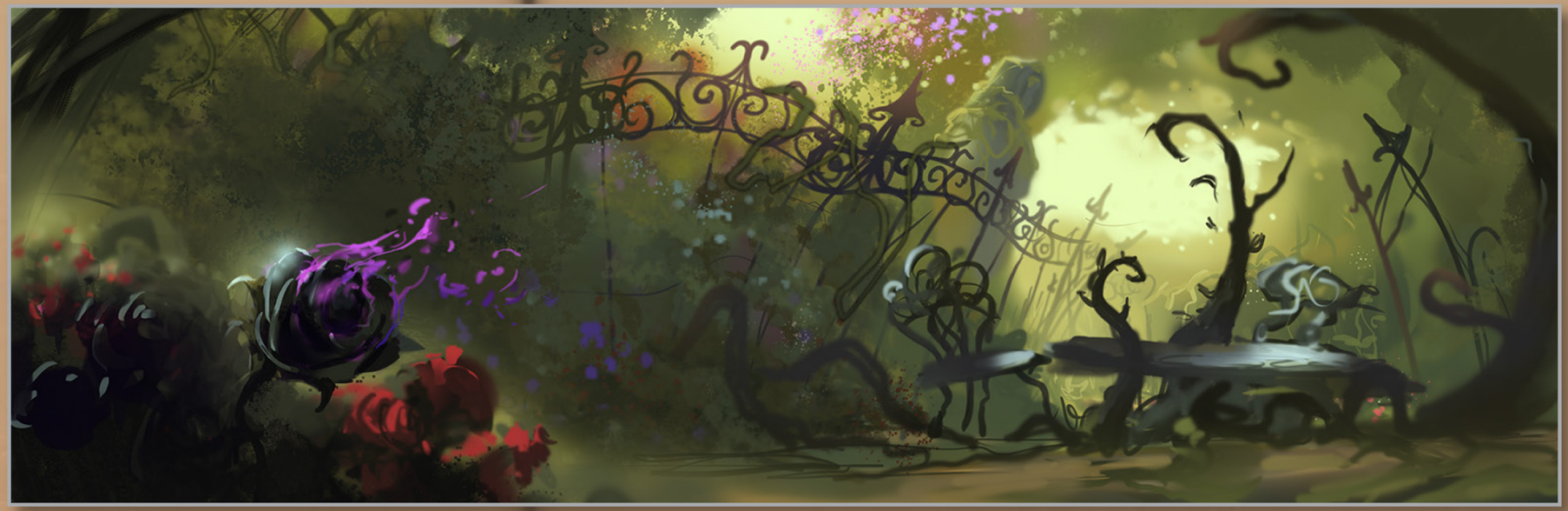
The Thorny Hedge Maze

The Thorny Hedge Maze

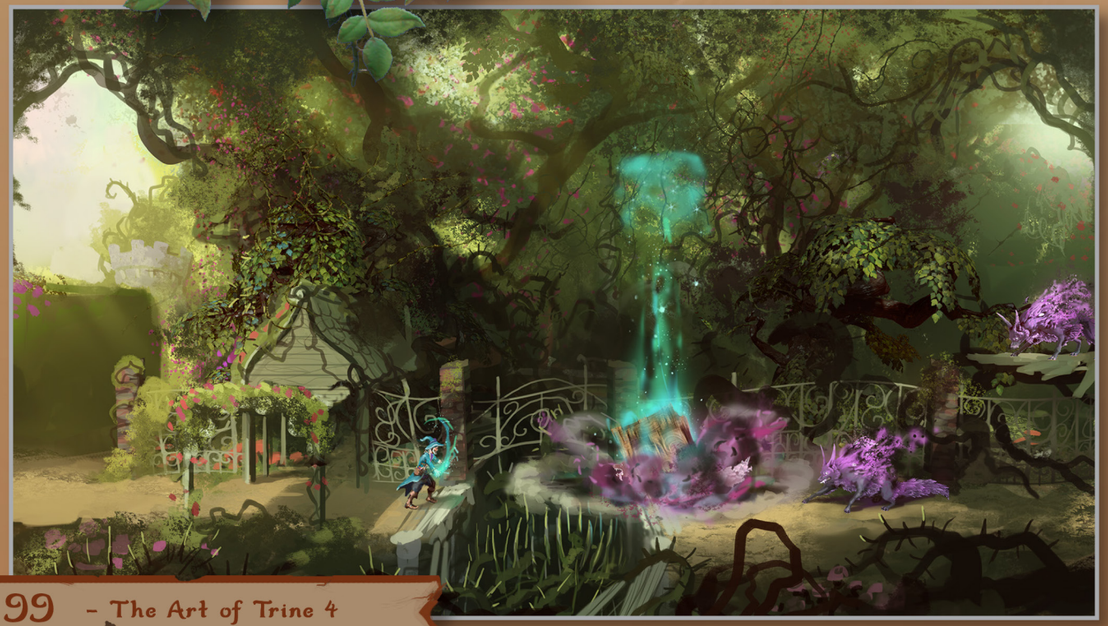
As they chase after Selius, our heroes find themselves in an overgrown and unkempt hedge maze garden.

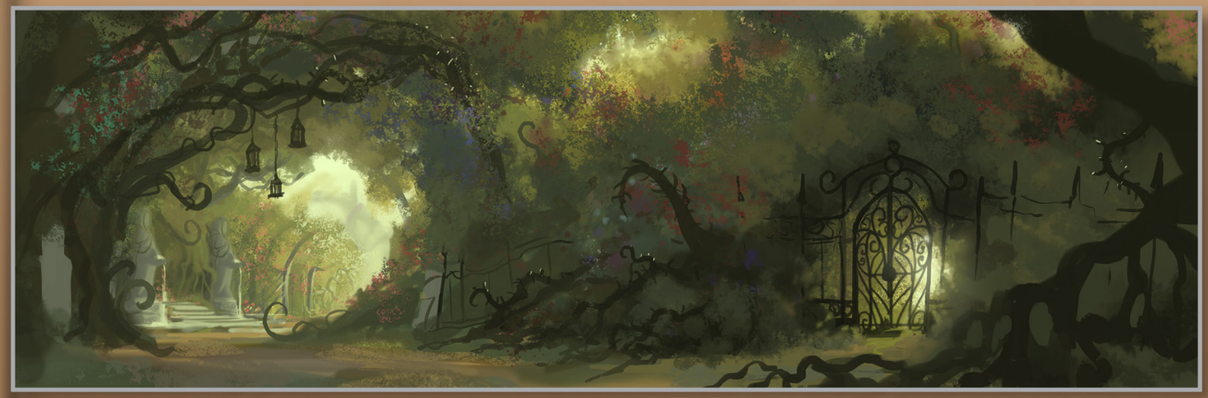
The place has a lot of wild growth tearing the garden structures apart. The garden may have been flawlessly pruned in the past, but is now taken over by the forces of the nature. Its once beautiful statues are starting to crumble down and the iron fences are vanishing under the weight of wildly growing vines. There are also some new nightmares lurking under the green canopies.



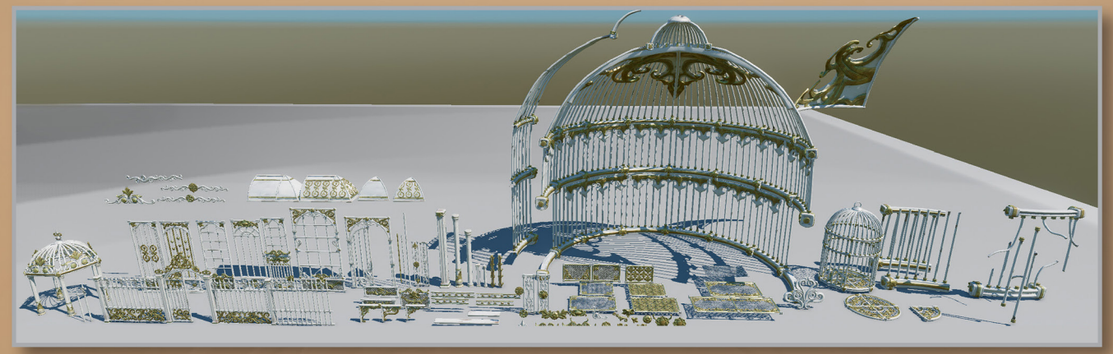




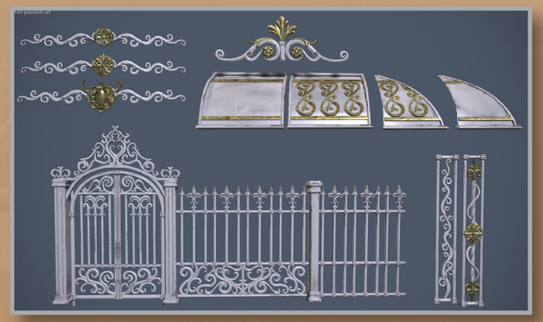















Garden flowers
Roses


Garden flowers
High poly Wisteria




Garden flowers
Wisteria flowers

Heatherwood Hall and The Prince's Dream

Heatherwood Hall

Heatherwood Hall was Selius's home, but now it is in ruins, much like the garden surrounding it. Nature has entered the castle, and is overtaking it room by room. There are no straight walls and everything is bent and covered in lush vegetation. We find out that Selius is the involuntary culprit of this destruction as he let the nightmares loose and they devastated his once glorious home.

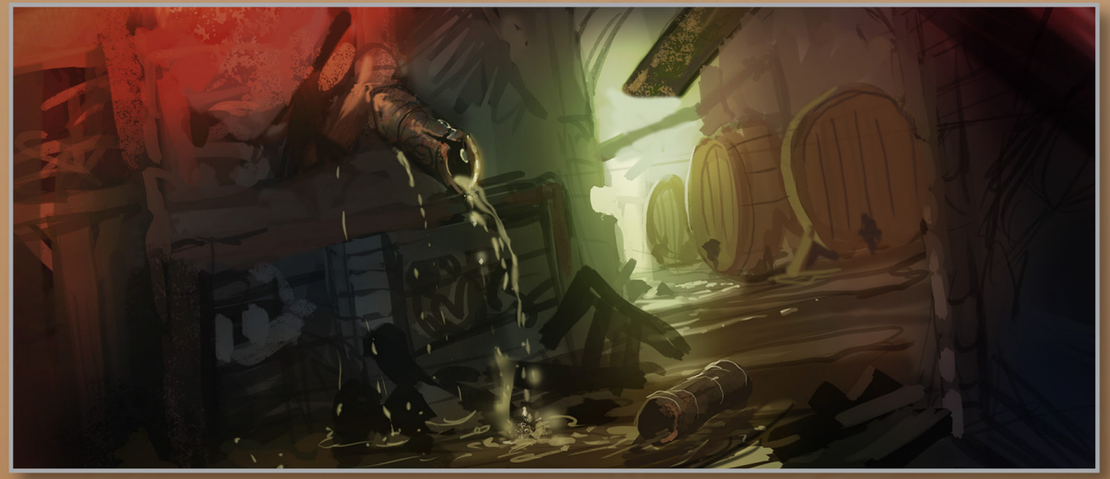
This level was interesting to create as it is based on the next level, The Prince's Dream. In that level we see the same castle but it is happening inside Selius's dream, so we are able to see the castle intact again. Any geometrical differences between the same rooms of The Prince's Dream and Heatherwood Hall's ruins can be explained by things like roofs caving in, collapsed structures, fallen debris, broken down furniture, plants taking over. Some possible inconsistencies could be explained by the dream being a dream. Selius can dream things differently and bend his dream world to his liking, regardless of reality.

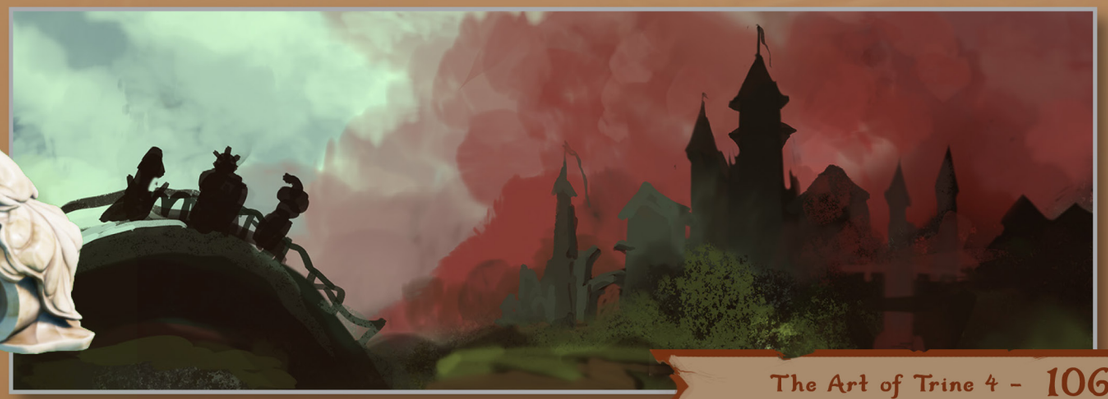


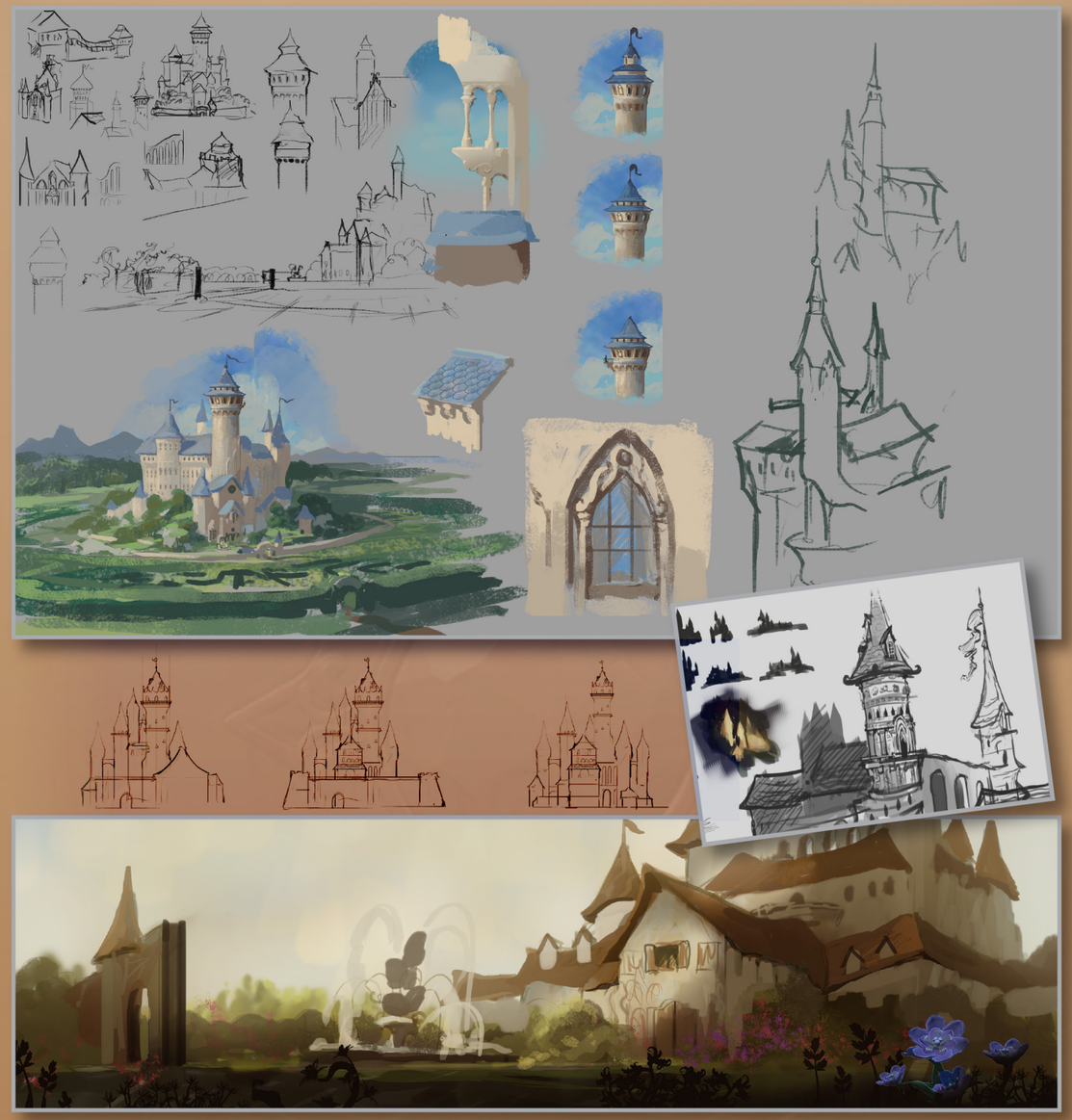














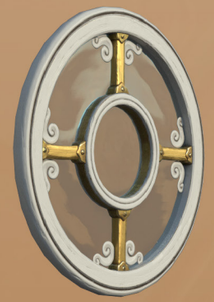


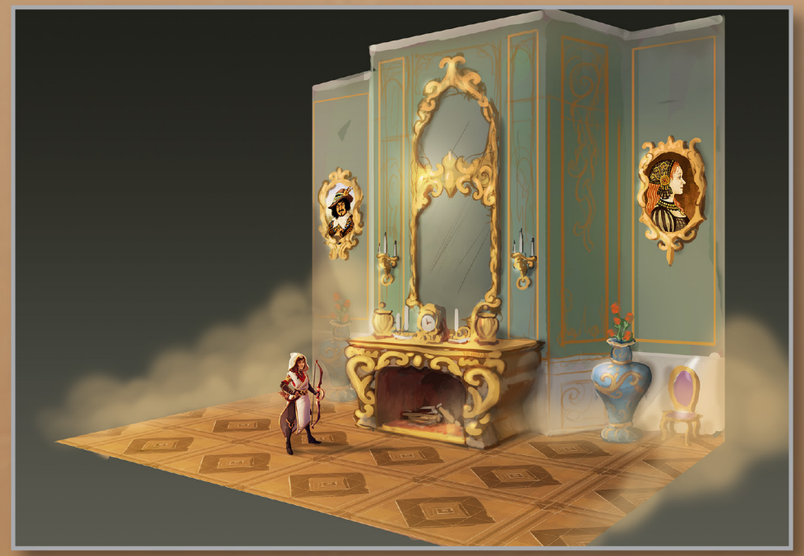
The Prince's Dream

Heatherwood Hall and The Prince's Dream are the same place, but in different dimensions and time. We first build The Prince's Dream level, and then copied it and made it ruined for the Heatherwood Hall level. But both levels have a lot of unique areas and only some of the areas are the same.

The two levels are like day and night, one is clean and has light colors, the other one is more organic and has a darker color scheme. This allows us variation and keeps both levels interesting even though we visit the same place twice.

The castle's interior art style is loosely inspired by rococo. Selius's father's study on the other hand is inspired by dark and heavy baroque and gothic styles, while areas like the cellar can even go towards medieval styles. In the end everything is tied together with Trine's own fantasy style, so we haven't felt it necessary to restrict ourselves to a single period or look.







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4.






























Gold and white.





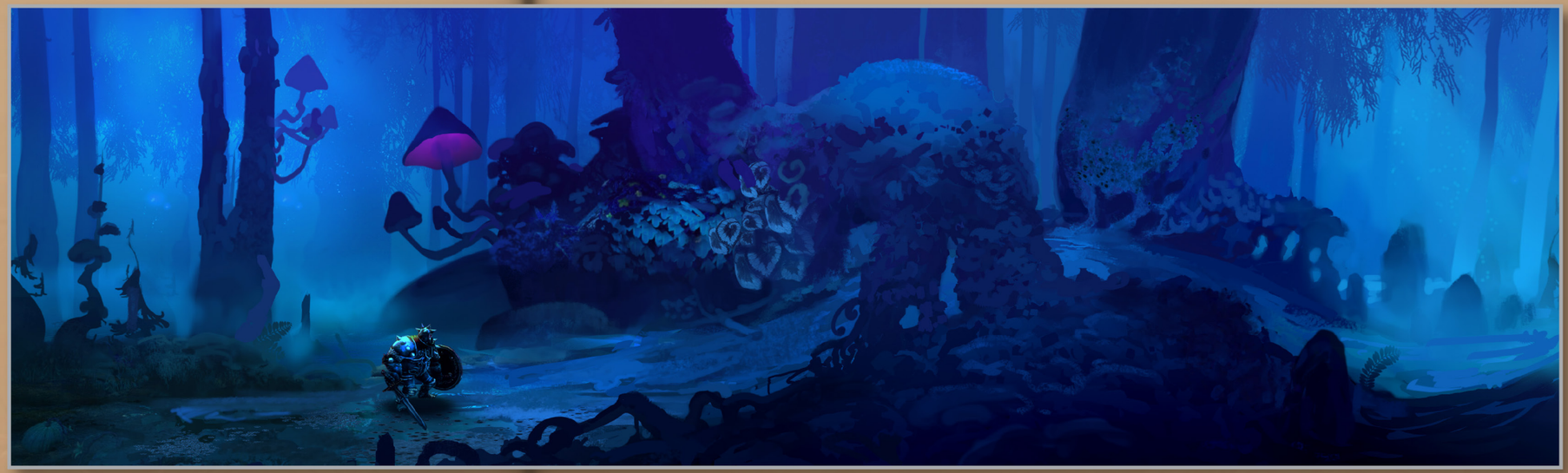


Moonlit Forest

Moonlit Forests

The heroes wake up from the Prince's Dream at the edge of the Moonlit Forests, magical woods occupied by glowing moths and self-illuminating vegetation.

The shape language of this level is based on vertical long shapes in the background and horizontal shapes on the foreground. The trees closest to the camera are huge and thick curvy trees which feel very old. The trees on the background are narrow long ones. The vegetation seems a little peculiar, some of it glows in the dark, with a slightly subtropical look to them. The full moon is the main light source creating a magical night-time feeling. Enchanted crystal wing moths are flying here and there spreading their magic. The color scheme is monochromatic blue and purple tones with some warm tones in the end foreshadowing the upcoming sunrise. Ancient stones and wooden structures that all tell their story of the folks who lived here long ago. Swan symbols can be spotted in these forests as statues.

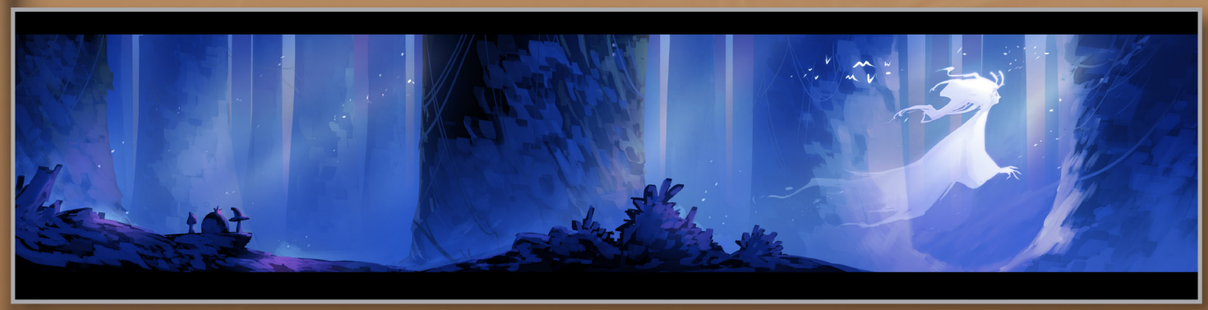






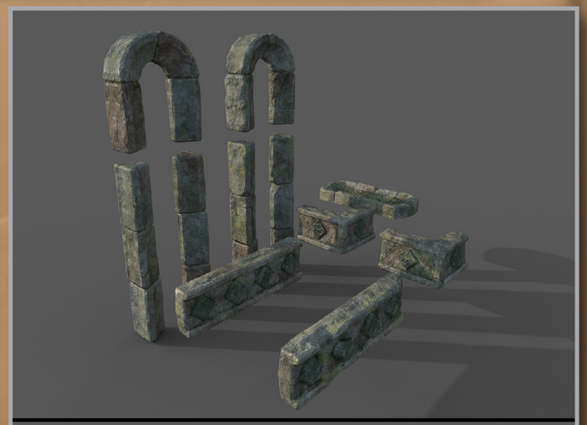


























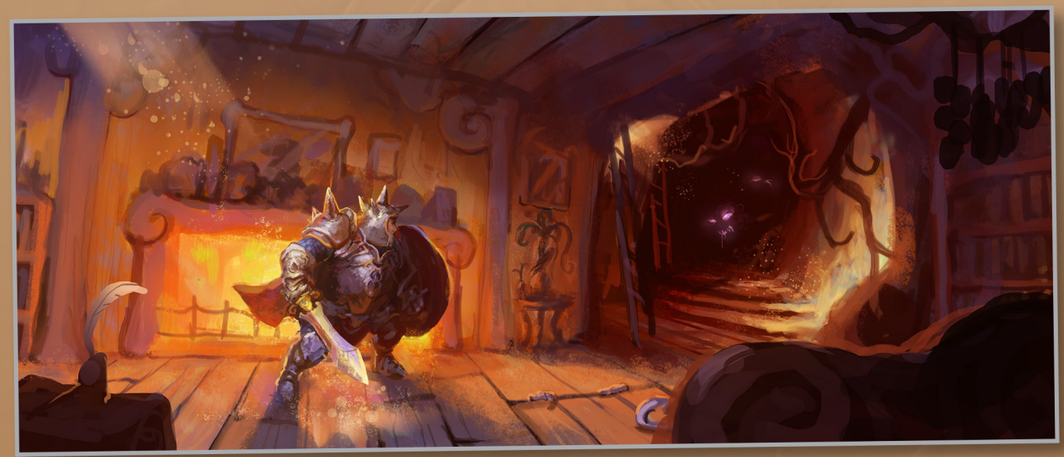
The Badgerborough

The Badgerborough

The Badgerborough level is the perfect example of the coziest fairy tale book environment there can be. D.A. Badgerborough is enjoying his quiet life in his home and writing a book on natural history. Through his home he can get to the larger cave network which has lots of interesting plants, mushrooms and insects he can observe. The Moonlit Forests are also close by and there have just been increasing sightings of rare Crystal Wing Moths.

The badger's home consists of round cavernous spaces with curvy roots that have cozy living areas integrated to them. Further down the caverns there is a network of bigger caves in their natural state, with solid rock walls, and thick tree roots crossing our pathways. The badger's domestic home area has warm inviting tones but the wilder cave area has a colder atmosphere.















Badgers kitchen items



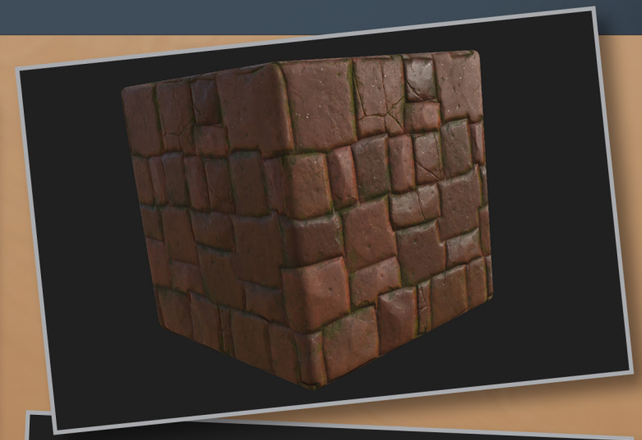
Badger's herb bundles

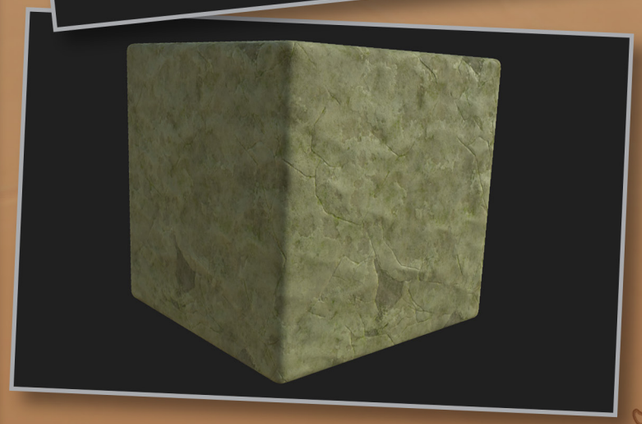


badger wood set









Goldleaf Garden

Goldleaf Garden

Hedley the Hedgehog is a passionate gardener living in the middle of a beautiful birch grove meadow. The level has plenty of uniquely shaped birch trees, layered cliffs and large, whimsical flowers.

This is one of the levels that takes inspiration from Finnish nature, specifically early autumn the birch leaves are colored in vibrant yellow tones. To create some contrast with the yellow, there are purple tones in the shadows. We have mixed up different seasons and made a combination of spring and autumn. For an artist the fantasy genre is such a wonderful playground to work with as everything is possible!






























Hedgehog's meadow flowers

Birch grove vegetables

Firwood Water

Firwood Water

This level is based on a lake in the heart of Finland. Saimaa has quite unique nature, and this level is a tribute to it - with our own little Trine twist on it. Small rocky islands with beautifully curving pine trees are something relatively rare for the genre of fantasy environments.

The whole level is mostly a lake with islands in varying sizes chained one after another. Moss and lichen patches color the ground, and everything is surrounded by pristine blue lake water. A Saimaa-inspired level wouldn't be complete without the seal friend enjoying its life sunbathing on a rock. The beginning of the level is illuminated by bright midday sun, turning into warm afternoon sun by the end of the level. The mood of the level changes from the happy adventure into a more menacing nightmare towards the end.



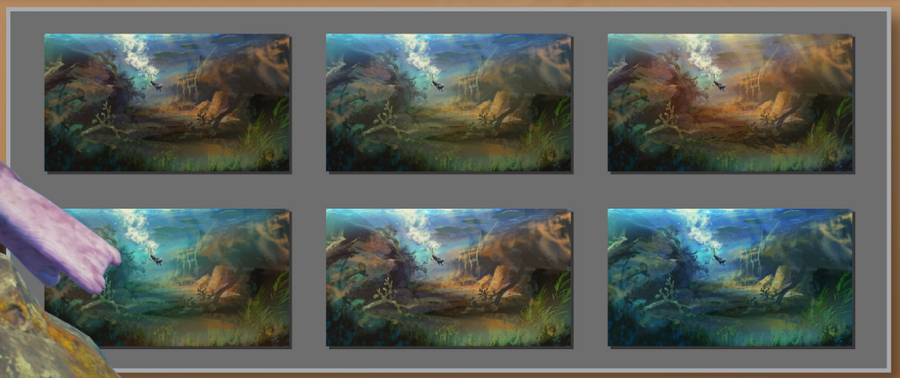




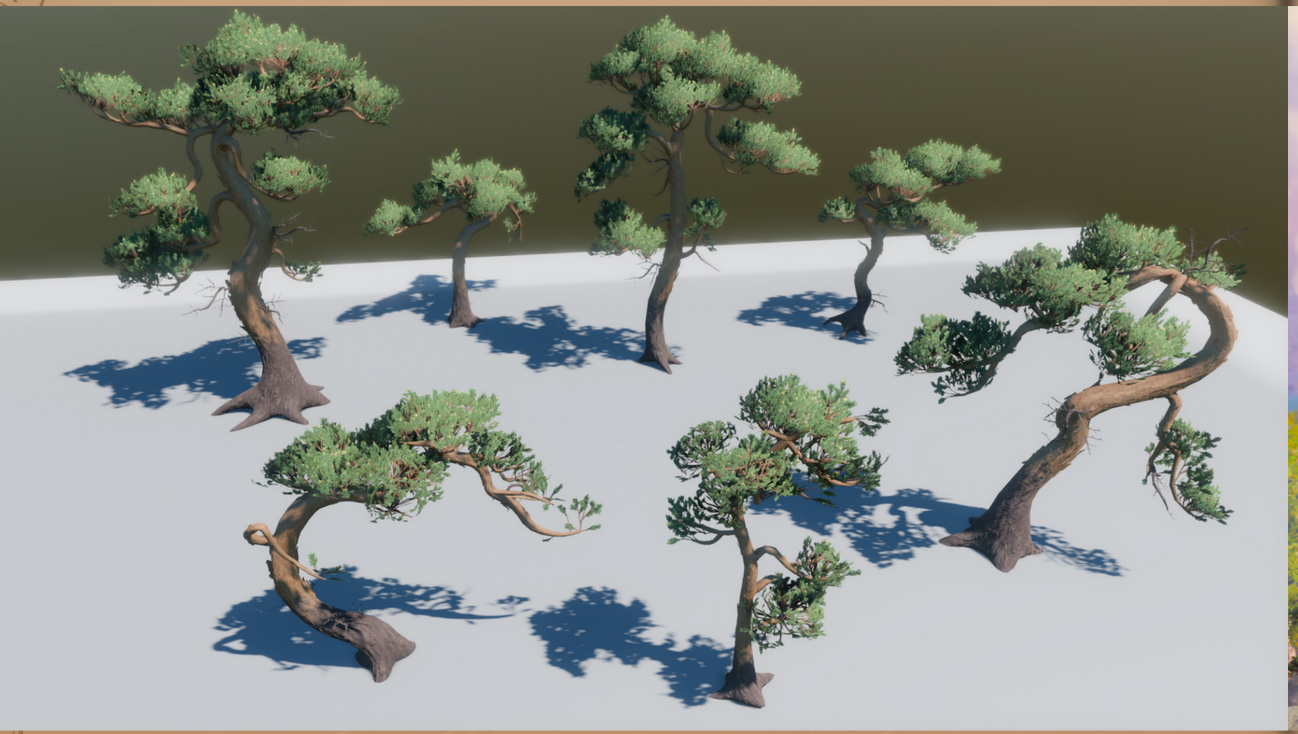


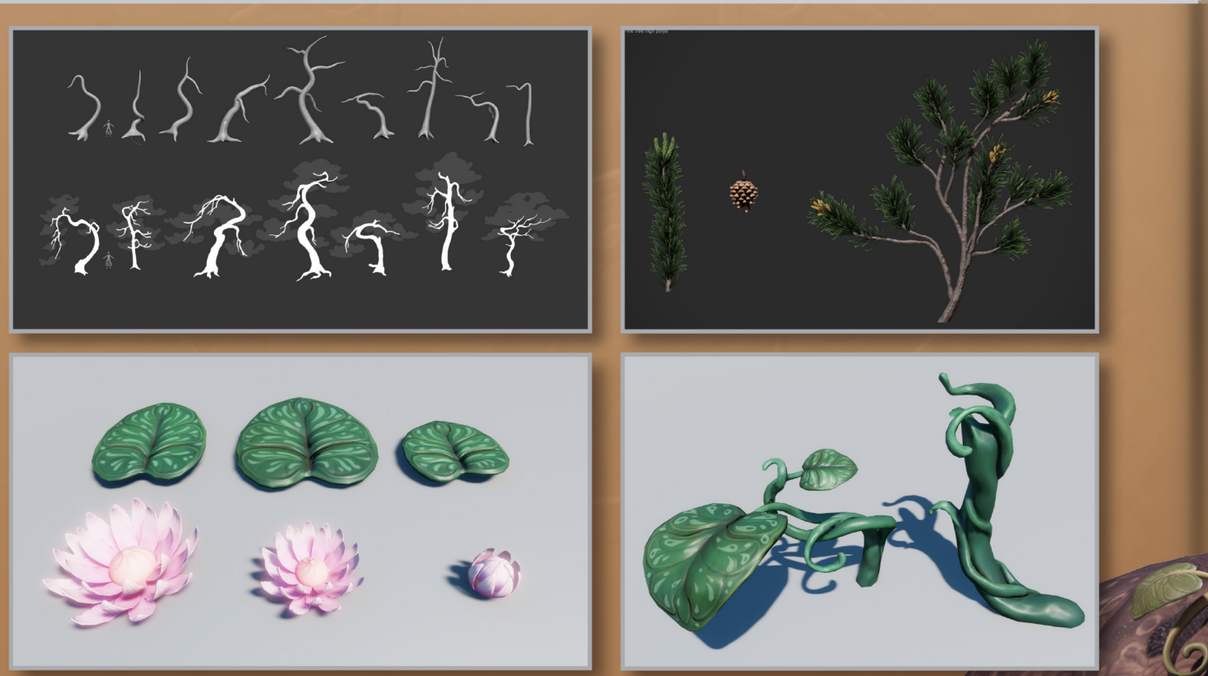


















The Crackling Mire

The Crackling Mire

The Crackling Mire is a dark and dismal marshland that has been polluted by a now abandoned swamp gas factory. It is a tragedy that the beautiful nature has been ruined, but the spirit living nearby makes sure the factory stays out of order.

The dominating visual elements here are the factory machinery with its gears and bolts that are still leaking some dangerous electricity to the surrounding area. Also huge skeletons of ancient dragons are a big part of the look of the level. Some of the makeshift cottages and factory facilities are built on top of the skeletal remains which tells how ignorant the builders were, not appreciating these marvelous creatures of the past.



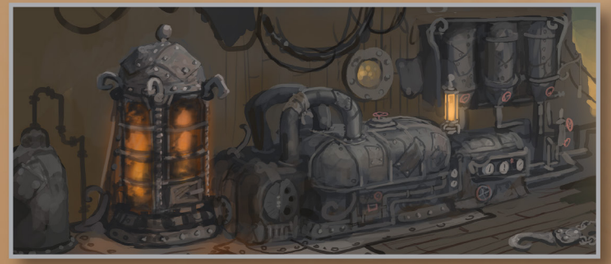


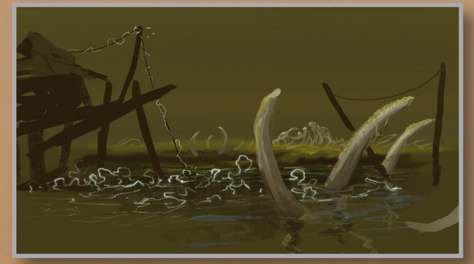






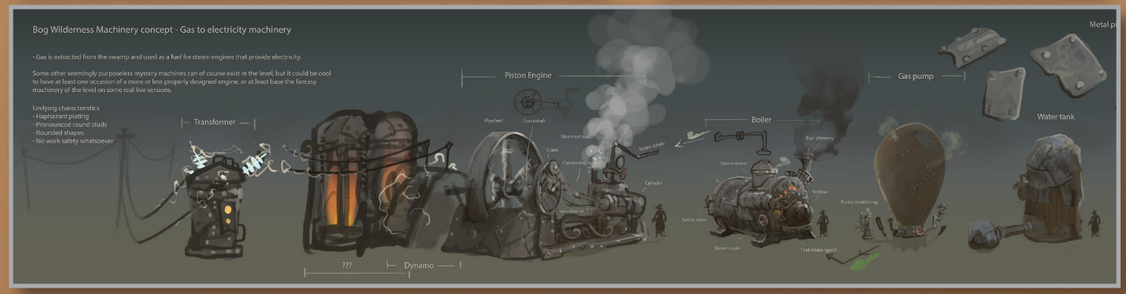


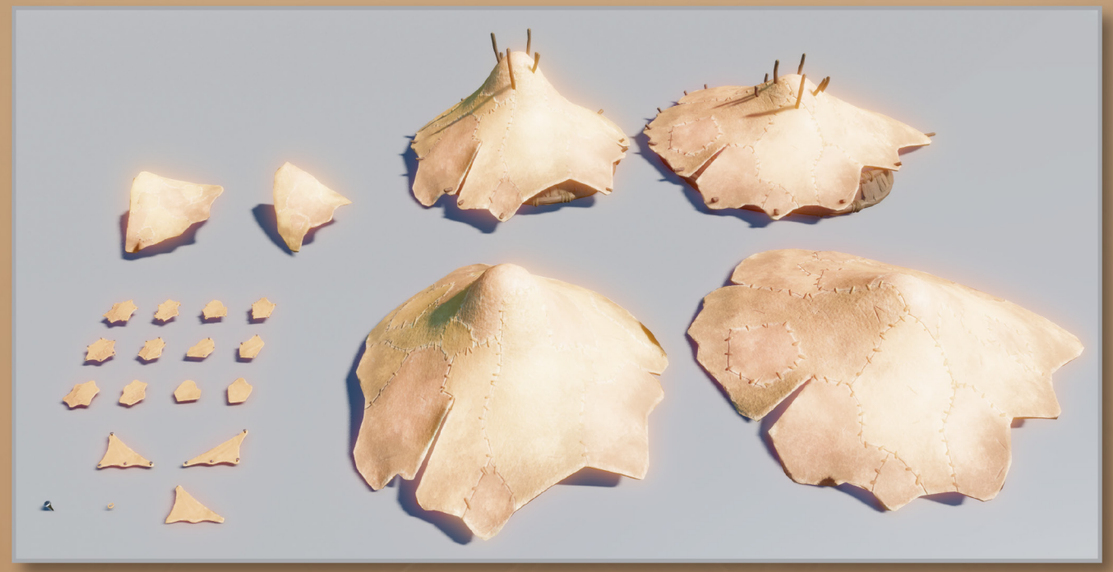


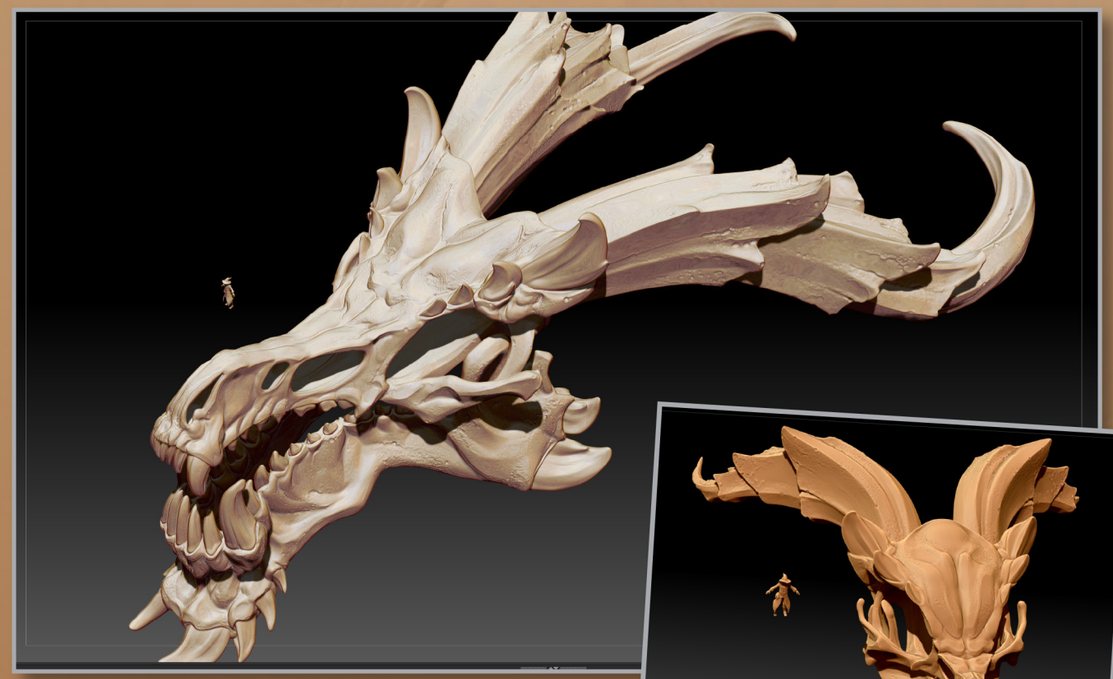


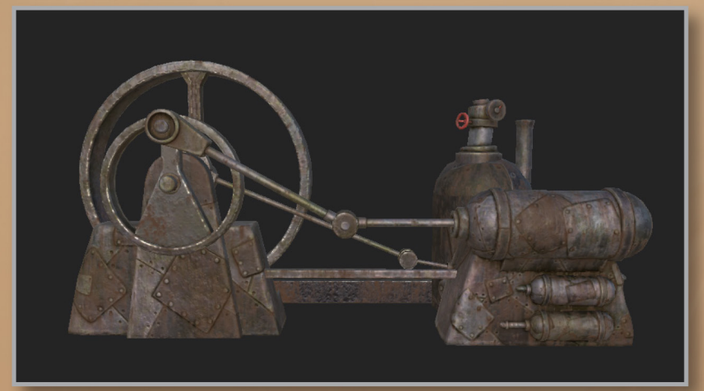




















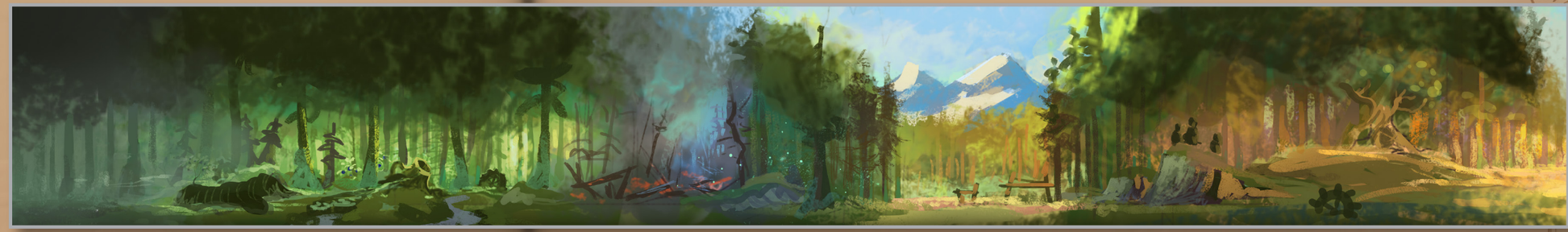


The Blueberry Forest

The Blueberry Forest

The Blueberry Forest begins with heavy and eerie fog, before the heroes meet the Blueberry Bear and a sunnier, more uplifting part of the level starts.

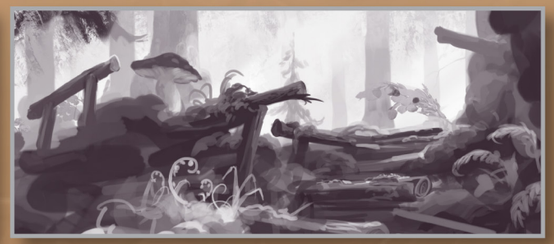
This is another level heavily inspired by Nordic nature, with abnormally huge blueberries taking over the green moss-covered forest floor. We also have large mushrooms, as we do in every forest of the Trine world. There are some marks of ancient machinery like stone gears laying around here and there, but this forest is mostly left in peace, perhaps because of the spirit who protects these lands. The eerie bear statues raise questions, are the bears in the forest turning into statues or are the statues turning into living bears?

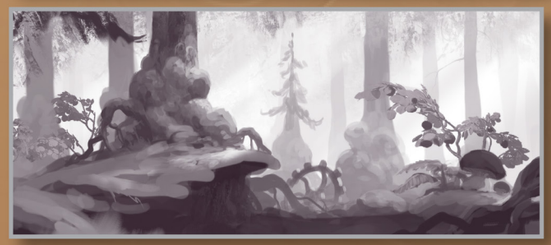








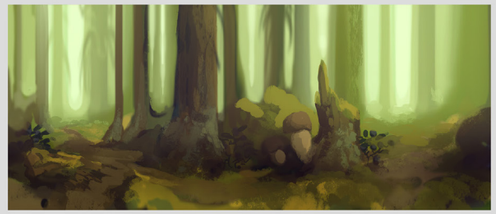


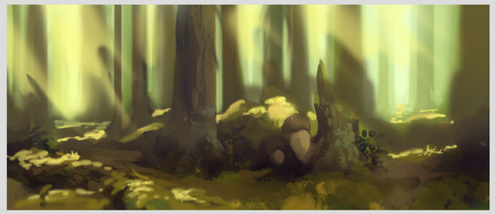


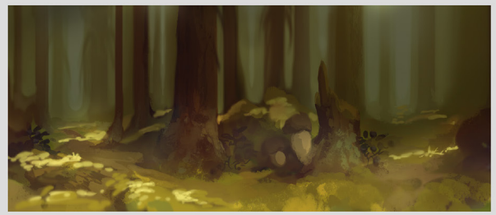


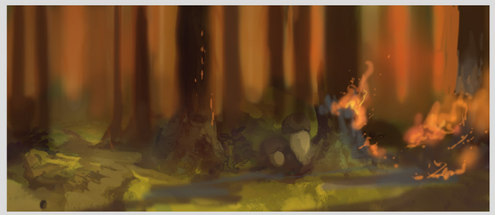
























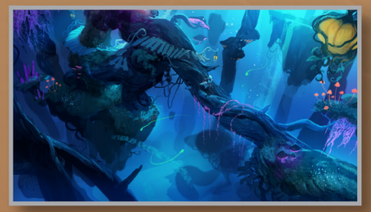
The Gossamer Grove

The Gossamer Grove

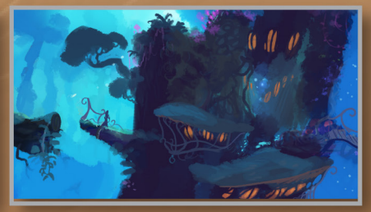
This is a true fantasy fairy forest with glowing mushrooms, lights and colors. Huge ancient trees are populated by all kinds of forest creatures whose tree houses add interest to the surroundings.

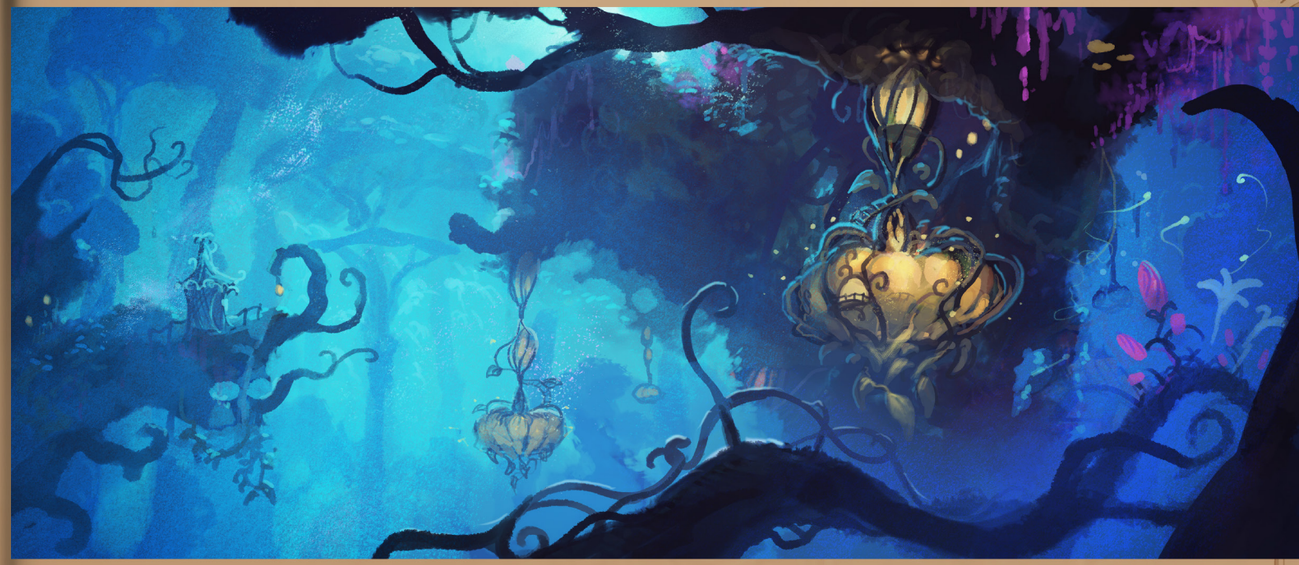
Deeper in the forest high up in the treetops there is a whole city with beautiful architecture that is mirroring the organic shapes of the tree branches. There are big lantern-like plants that some of the inhabitants of the forest have made into their homes. There are lots of blooming lights and fluorescent plants of varying colors. To add more magic, there are floating islands with little streams of water falling out of them.

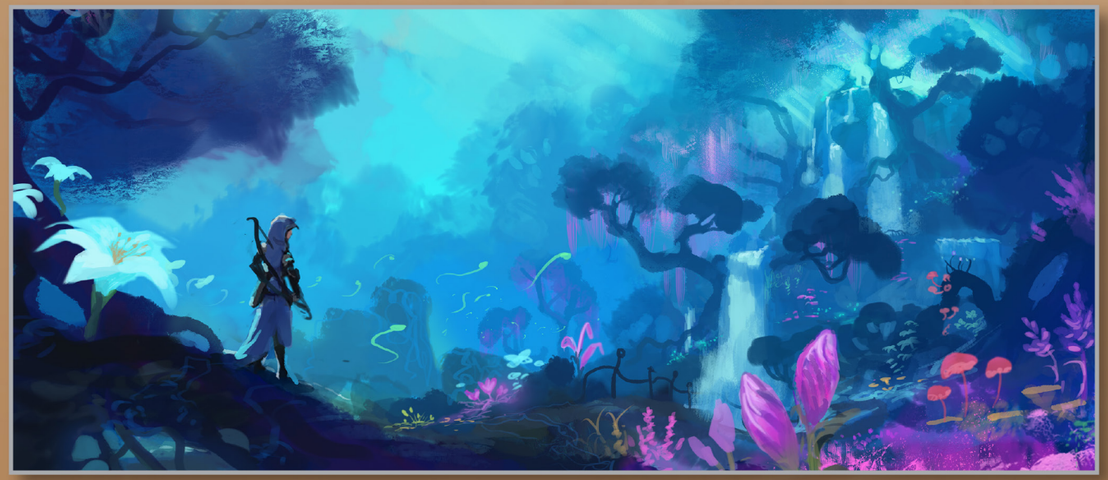


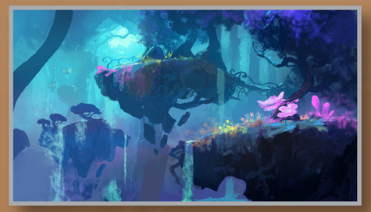


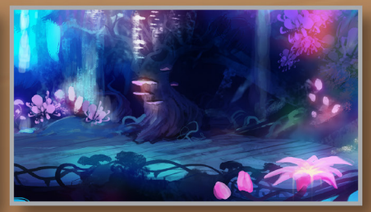


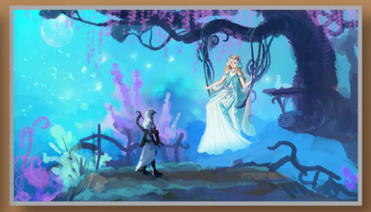


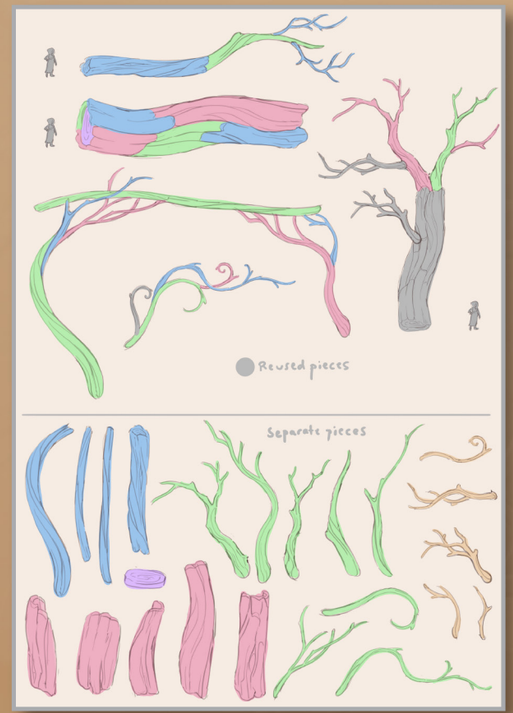




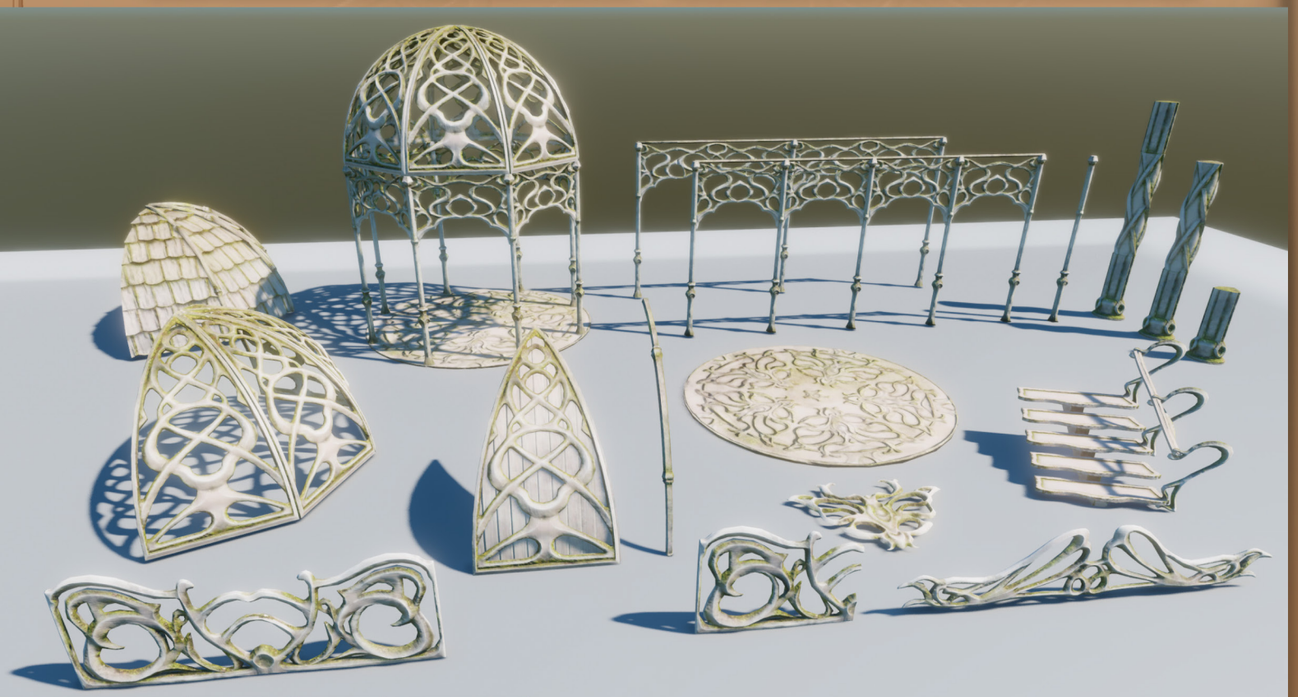







Reused pieces
Separate pieces





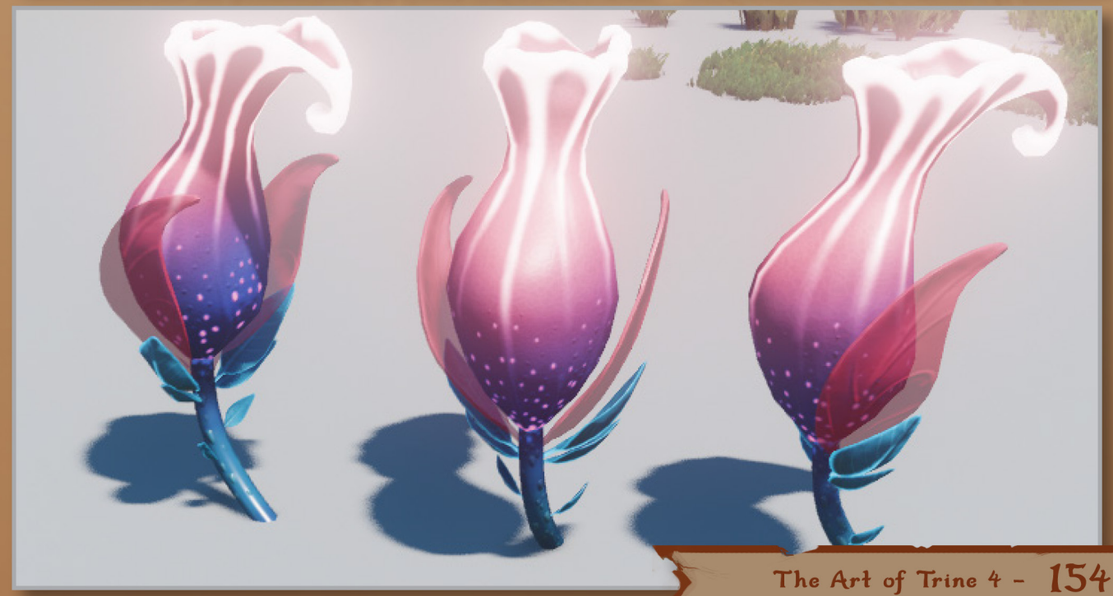










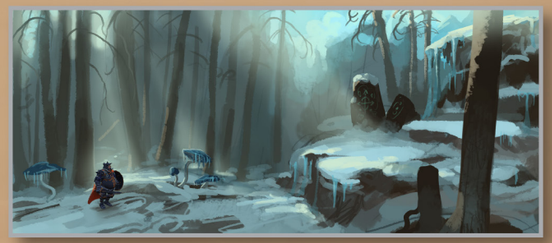


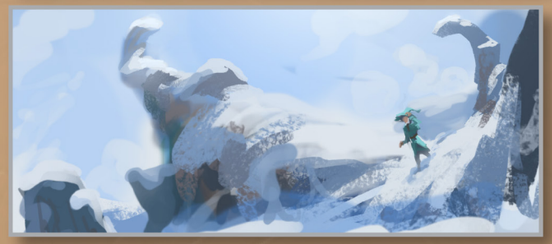
Snow-topped Heights

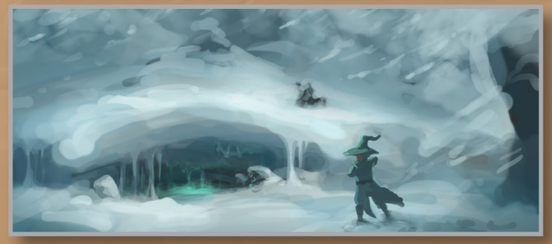
Snow-Topped Heights

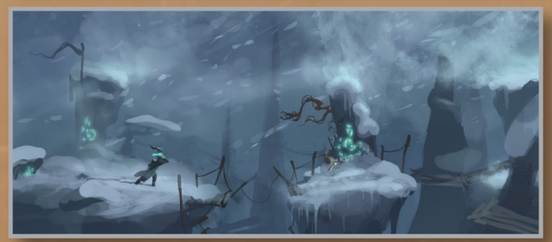
Towards the end of the game the environments are getting more hostile to add drama as the plot thickens. Cold, harsh mountains with deadly ravines, hazardous paths and snowstorms are in big contrast to the warm and inviting levels earlier in the game.

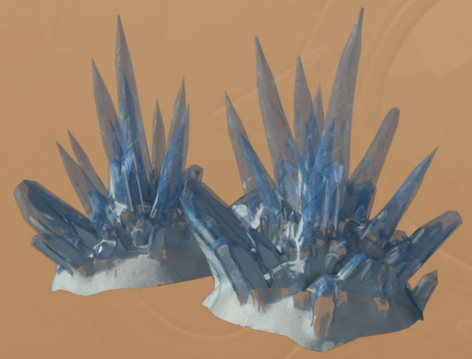
The level starts in a frozen forest from which the heroes ascend to traverse through the mountains. Ancient machinery are hidden within the mountains. The gears, machinery, pipes, steam engines, huge fans and turbines are not only visual elements but also have a role in gameplay. By the end of the level the heroes find themselves in a snowstorm that seems to get stronger and stronger.

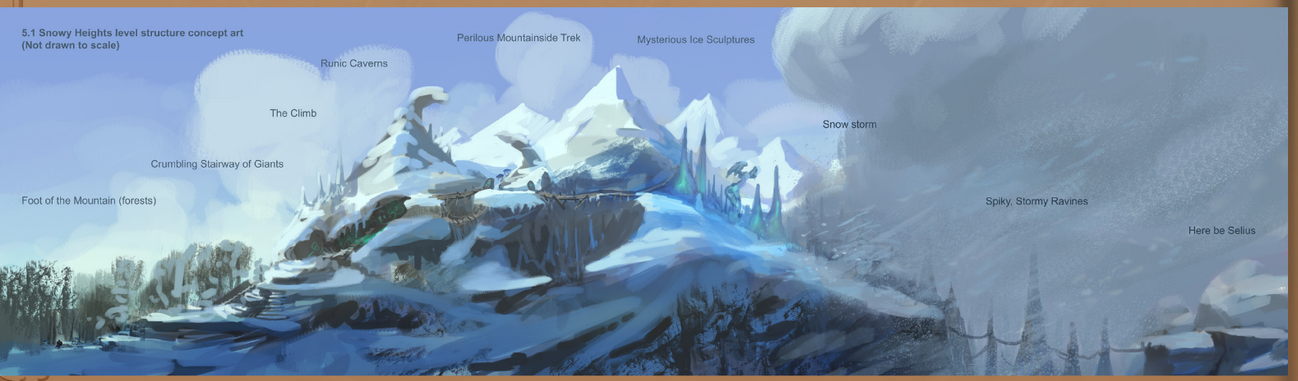




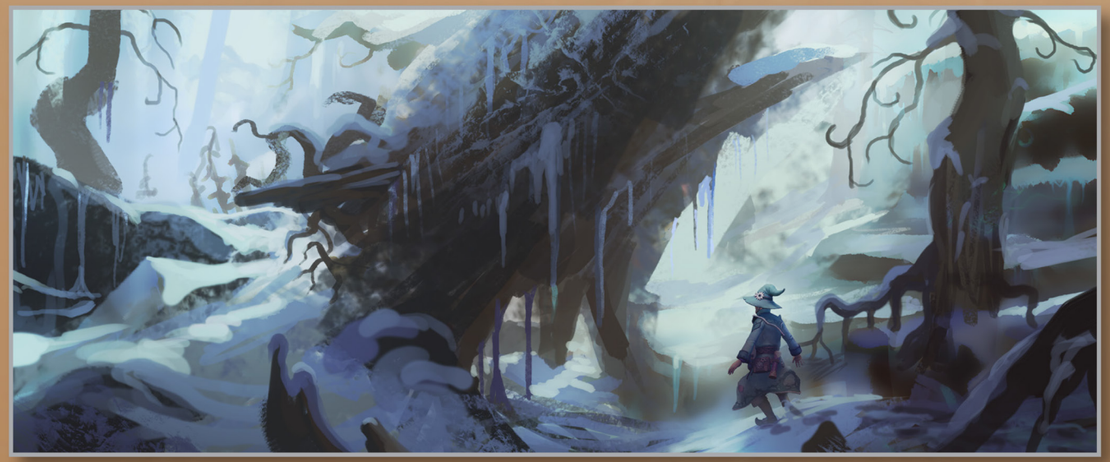


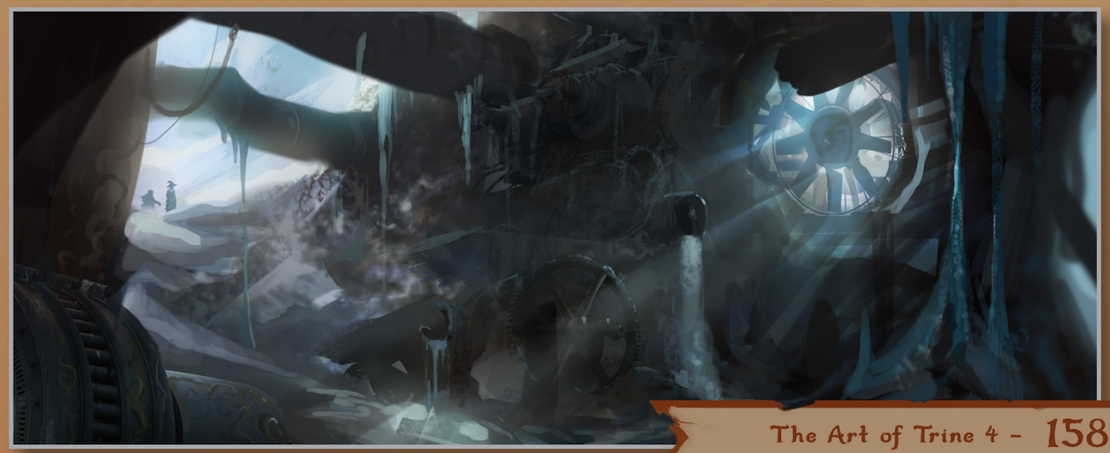






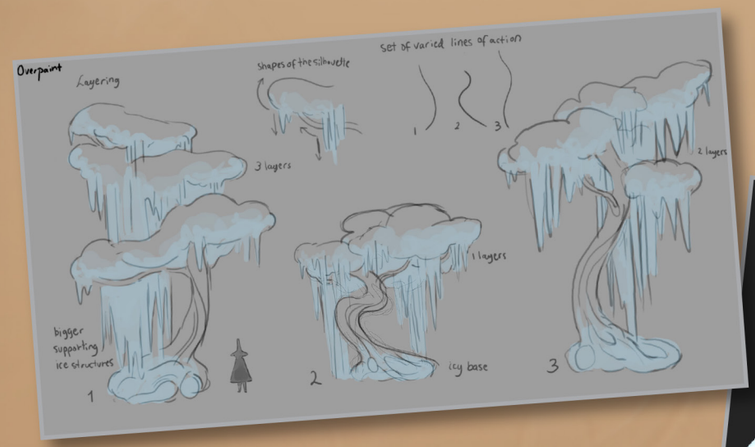




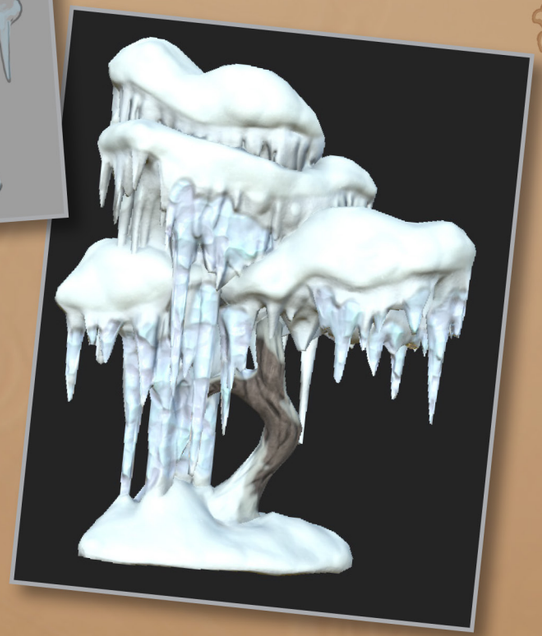







Overpaint
Layering
shapes of the silhouette
set of varied lines of action
3 layers
2 layers
1 layers
bigger supporting ice structures
icy base
1
2
3







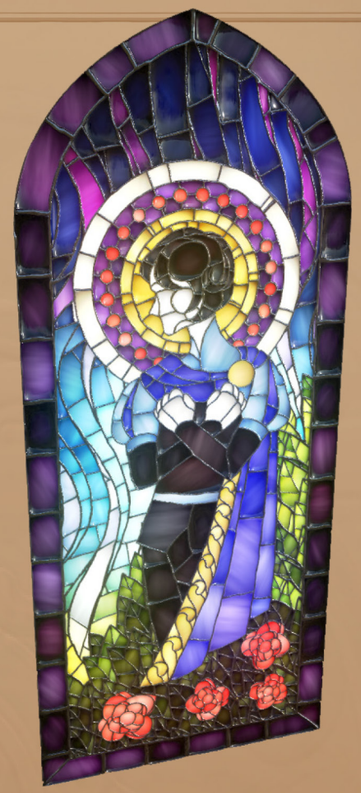
The Nightmare Academy

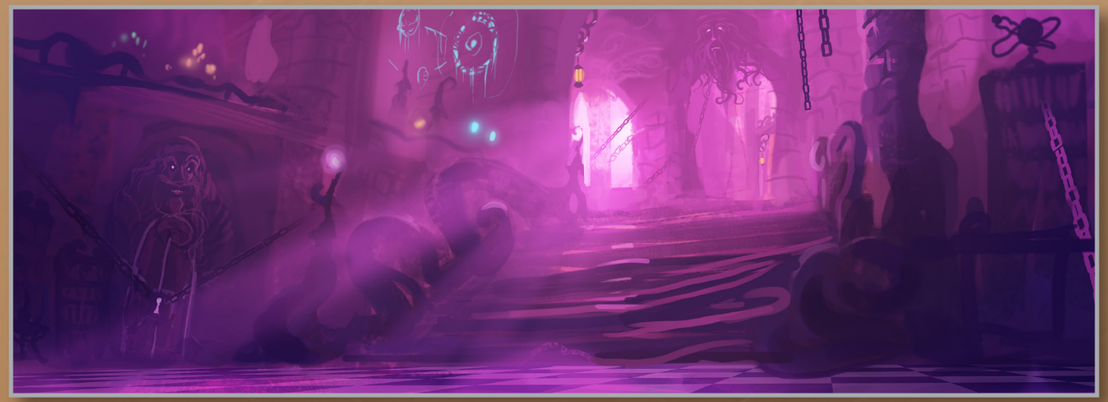
The Nightmare Academy

The heroes are caught up in Selius's nightmarish vision of a familiar Trine series location, the Astral Academy. The twisted nightmare version of the real Astral Academy is shaped by Selius's time spent imprisoned there.

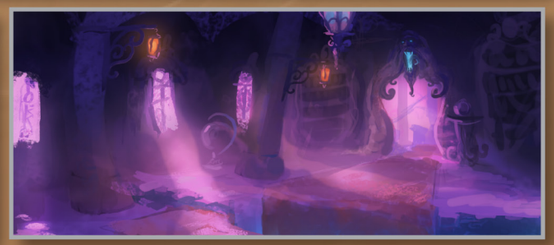
The features are twisted and swirly compared to what they are in reality. Locks and chains are symbolizing Selius's feelings related to being imprisoned and unable to escape. The creepy statue faces are resembling how Selius sees the wizards of the Academy.

As this is a strong nightmare we wanted to make the world threatening and surreal so one moment you are walking in the halls of the academy and suddenly you are in the outer space with furniture and planets floating around. In the end the heroes descend through the stratosphere to the Astral Academy dungeons.



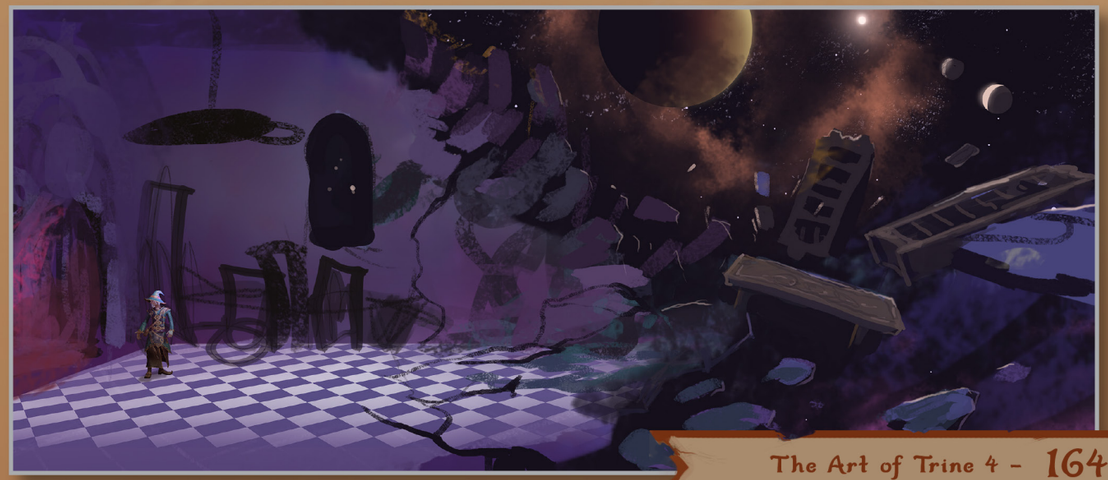


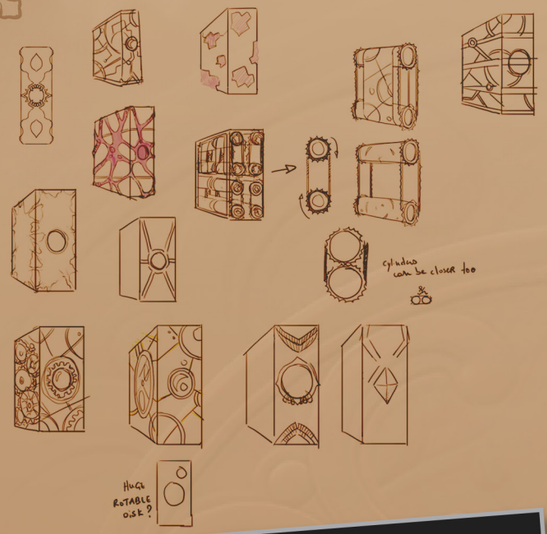




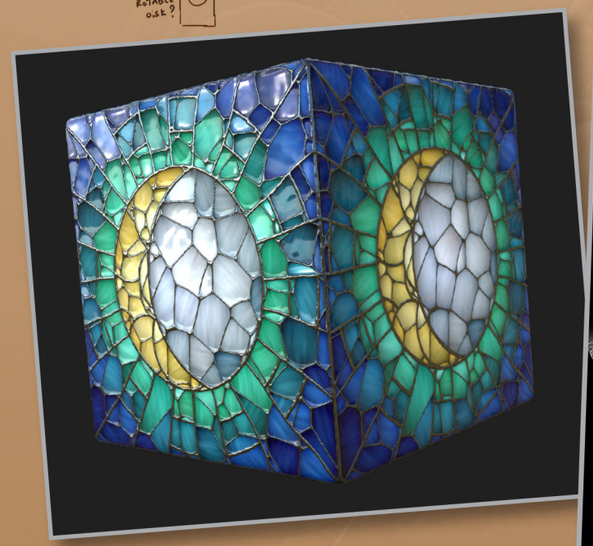


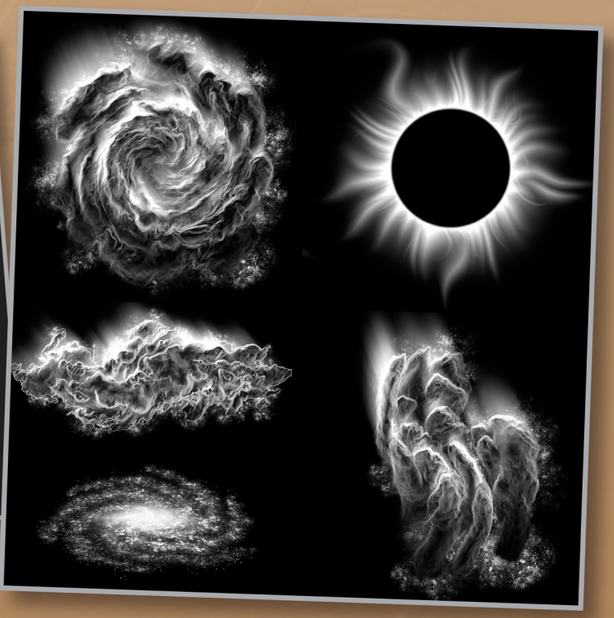





splashes can be closer too
HUGE ROTABLE O.S.T ?














Twisted Astral Academy parts

Haunted Tombs

Haunted Tombs

After the nightmare the heroes wake up in the spot where they were left off. They are at the gates of the Haunted Tombs and the snowstorm is still raging on. The heroes seek shelter inside the tombs. The atmosphere is dark and cold with blue and green tones. Magnets and ancient sensors work great with the theme as well as the stone and metal gears. The tombs are meant to feel a bit claustrophobic and eerie, you might spot a ghost if you look carefully!

It takes a while to reach the first exterior area where you get to find your way across ravines. When reaching the fresh air you are met with a somber and tranquil sunset after the storm, which works as a calm before another storm.

As this is the last level before the final encounter with Selius's Shadow, it is important to set the mood here right. The change in color and atmosphere works as a little in between breather. In contrast to the musty tombs this is a pleasant change and prevents the level feeling too heavy all the way through.



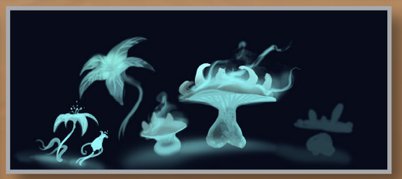





















Tomb statues
King


Tomb statues
Gargoyle 02


Tomb statues
Gargoyle 01

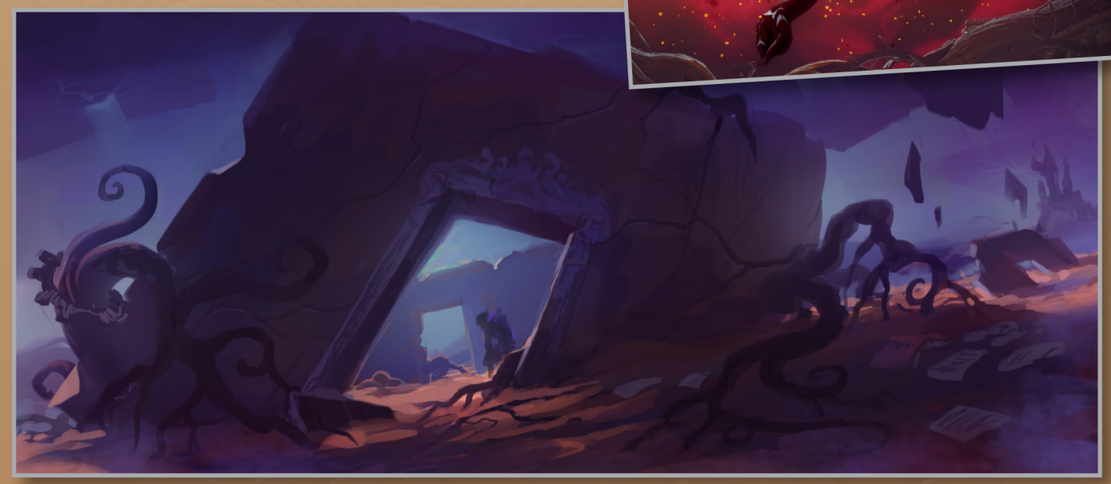
The Nightmare Prince

The Nightmare Prince

The transition from the tombs to the final boss fight is very dramatic and the fight happens inside the deepest, darkest nightmare. For the first time in the game the color red is used this strongly. There have been only glimpses of red in the eyes of the nightmare beings, but now the nightmare world is taking over for real.

Once the battle is over and we move to the epilogue, the mood changes completely. After all the drama is over and done with and things are good again, we can see that also in the bright colors of the final cutscene.



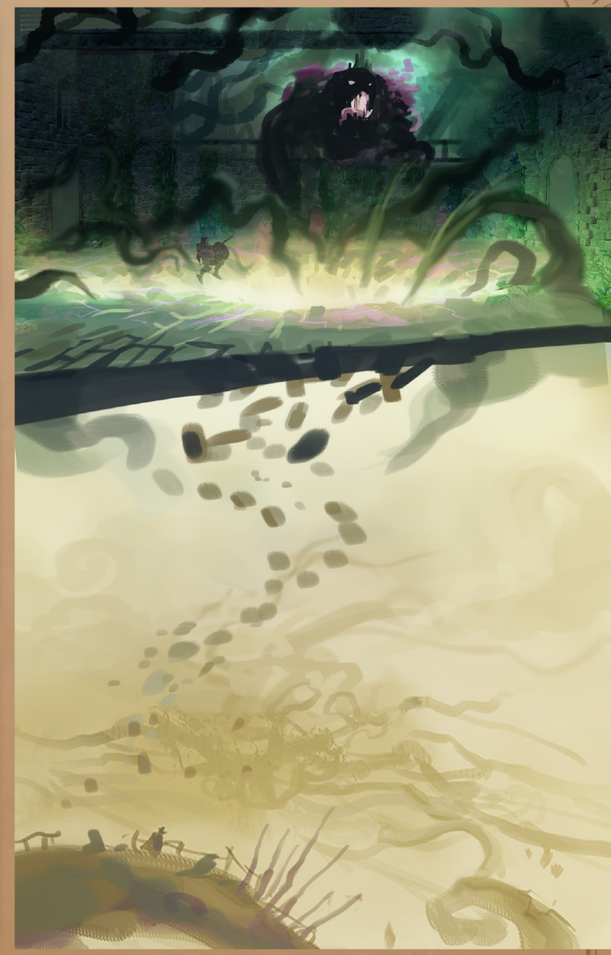


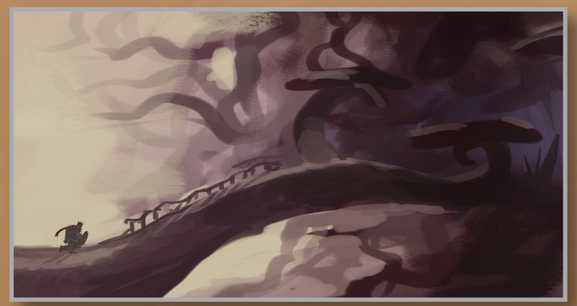




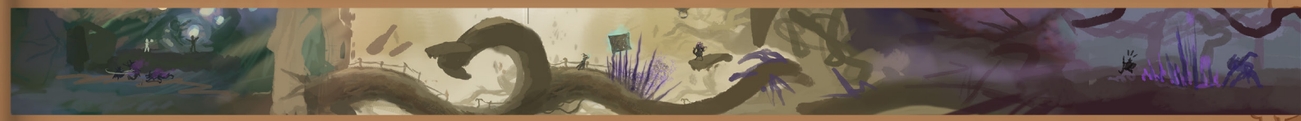


















Toby's Dream

Toby's Dream

Toby's dream is an optional bonus level which is located in the story after The Prince's Dream level. This is the dog's dream with gentle light colors and tranquil atmosphere.

As a fun detail the experience collectibles have been replaced with floating dog biscuits. The heroes are chasing the dog trough the cloudy gardens. This is a fun and whimsical level which was a real dream to work with!









Animations

Animation is an important part of storytelling and bringing out the characters' personality and feelings. It also plays an equally important part in making the game feel responsive as well as clearly visualizing things.

There are two types of animation in the game, the gameplay animations which include all the movement of the characters or objects that happens while playing the game. Then there are the various cutscene animations that are like little movies in between the actual gameplay. The cutscenes are a crucial tool in the telling of our story, combining recorded dialogue with cinematic animators' ideas on how to visually emphasize what is happening.



Gameplay Animations











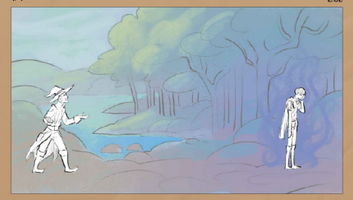
Cutscene Animations

11-LAKES

Page: 1 / 1

Boards: 18 | Shots: 3 | Duration: 0:40 | Aspect Ratio: 16 : 9
DRAFT: FEBRUARY 9, 2015

1A 0:00



AMADEUS: Your uncontrolled magic is taking over the forest with nightmares!

1B 0:04



ZOYA: Unless you intend to bury yourself under a mountain, there's no safe place for you in this kingdom.

1C 0:12

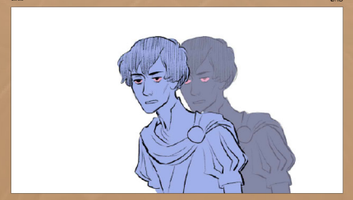


PONTIUS: Your Highness, there's no other choice. You have to come with us!

2A 0:14



2B 0:16



SELIUS: Let's see what other nightmares the three of you hide in your hearts.

3A 0:21



What are you afraid of, sir Knight?

3B 0:24



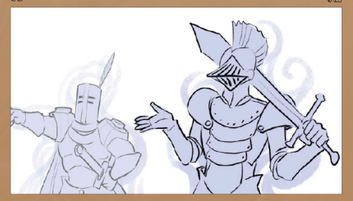
THE BOLD KNIGHT: Sir Pontius is a fraud!

3C 0:25



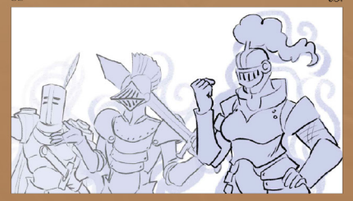
THE BOLD KNIGHT: Sir Pontius is a fraud!

3D 0:28



THE BRAVE KNIGHT: He wouldn't be a Knight if it wasn't for the enchanted powers he only came to by accident!

3E 0:34



THE BEAUTIFUL KNIGHT: Let's take back his cloak and show him and his friends their true place - in the dirt.









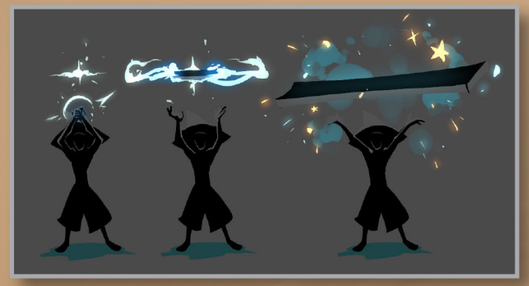




Effects

Visual effects are an important part of the art of a game. They not only make the game more beautiful and lively, but are playing a role in making the playing experience itself more responsive and enjoyable. When the player is trying to solve a puzzle, effects are needed to show the player if they are going to the right direction. For example when a beam of light is aimed at a light receiver, a progress effect appears around the receiver. Once the progress effect is filled, a rewarding sparkle effect communicates that the puzzle is solved. It might all still work without the effects, but it wouldn't be as clear and rewarding to the player. There are also a lot of little effects all around the levels, making the world lively and believable.





















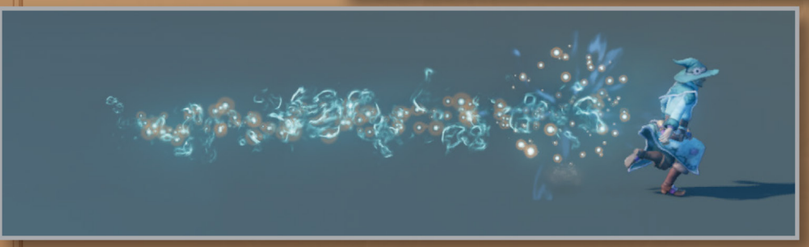












Shield breaking stages



1 hit left:
Meshes (1 type)+ particles



Shield breaking:
Mesh particles+ billboard particles
(Current version works fine)



Cooldown period:
Some kind of billboard based
particles (tbd)



End of cooldown:
Burst of particles, shield model reappears
(current version works fine)

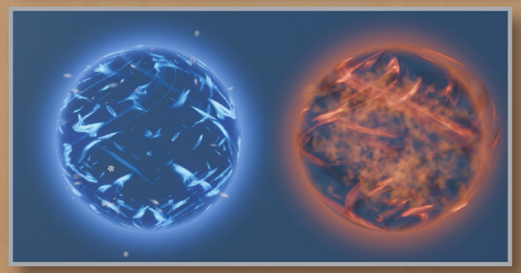


(default state)













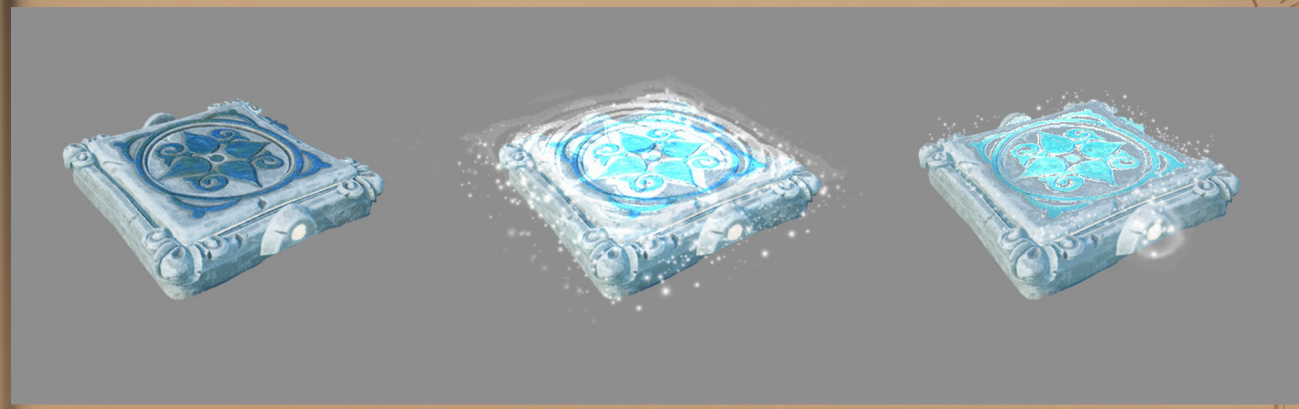


















Graphical User Interface

The Graphical User Interface means all the menus and information that pops up on the screen while playing. The goal when creating visuals for the interface was to keep the general aesthetic simple and clear. It should be easy to read visually on any platform while still having smaller details to keep the familiar Trine aesthetic. It was important to keep things bright and approachable with hints of a storybook theme using simple icons and lots of imagery.

A new key addition was to give the player customization options for how they want to experience the game. Our main goal was fast and easy navigation so the players can enjoy the beautiful world of Trine without distractions.








Collections
Q
Letters
Treasures
Knicknacks
E
Dear, radiant, witty, and handsome Zoya,
The Thief of my Heart! I have not
forgotten you, although you suspected I was
a man of shallow feeling. Allow me to list
the ways in which I have thought of you
since you left... (the list is long. Very
long.)
With all my Royal Affection -X-
Zoom In
Esc
Back
























Saving..
Player 1
Player 2
Player 3
Pontius: Let's knock some sense into its head!
A Giant Nightmare Wolf








Fast Draw
2
All skills acquired
820/820
Next upgrade point 67/80
5
Info
Q
E
Navigate
Reset upgrade
Esc
Close


A
B
X
Y





TRINE 4
The Nightmare Prince

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