

ART OF
RADIANT
D A R K

PSYCHOPOMP STUDIOS

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INTRODUCTION



Radiant Dark was worked on over a period of twenty weeks during our team's senior year at the Savannah College of Art and Design. It was initially born from the desire to combine elements from survival games, brutalist architecture, and desolate arctic wastelands.

Our first ten weeks explored the creation of a fully playable adventure and all the assets it required to make it fully tangible, and our final ten weeks focused on polishing it up into a solid demo. Whether we worked on the art, tech, or design side, we all learned a significant amount about collaborating and game development, and we would have created a very different game if our team were built any other way.

This book explores the depths of Radiant Dark's visuals and their transition from our Alpha version into our final Gold senior showcase. We hope you enjoy!

- Wren King, Visual Developer

Games are the bridge between reality and fiction. They not only invite players to observe a unique world, but they allow them to step into that space and interact with it in a way other creative mediums do not permit. Whether the transaction is through a keyboard and mouse, a console controller, or a VR headset, video games help players to step out of their shoes and into someone else's.

When the initial pitch for Radiant Dark was presented to me – a game inspired by visually brutalist architecture in which the player was to play the role of a deranged mechanic stuck in an industrial facility in Alaska – I was absolutely hooked. The aesthetic alone left me so much room to play with as a writer: the parallels between the builders and the users of those brutalist buildings, the feeling of being isolated and lost, and the unique design possibilities given the arctic setting all intrigued me. But of course, nothing is sacred in the field of game design. Iteration and ideation drive us forward, and this pitch was subjected to such processes immediately.

We began thinking of the logic of using the power of something like the Aurora Borealis. We thought about what it was made of, how it could possibly be harnessed, and how far we could take our audience's suspension of disbelief. With these considerations in mind, we took the narrative of the game in a new direction.

We switched locales from somewhere near the North Pole to Marie Byrd Land, in Antarctica, not too far north of the Ross Ice Shelf. The main character became a researcher stationed at McMurdo who, during an expedition beyond the ice shelf, got split up from her group and found the gates of Inua in the whiteout. An era for the facility was established: 1950s-60s. The storehouse became a Manhattan Project-style city, where scientists and laymen live side by side, with the latter having no clue what they are a part of. From there, we thought about who would live there – immediate family of scientists, extended family, civil workers, security guards,

government officials – and began developing a complex facility centered around four laboratories.

As deliverables in our first ten weeks of pre-production demanded significant changes, the role of our protagonist, her tools, and her immediate environment shifted. We've done our best to document the differences in our Alpha and Gold versions of Radiant Dark.

Though it has gone through many changes, the journey of creating this world and refining it has been a fruitful one. The opportunity to breathe life into this world and flesh it out for the players to explore has been incredibly rewarding for myself as a narrative designer, and for our team as developers and artists.

- Jessa Belote, Narrative Designer



ENVIRONMENTS



EXTERIOR



ABOVE: Containment Substation - Eli Gershenfeld
RIGHT: Central Courtyard, North - Eli Gershenfeld



A majority of the concepts behind our Alpha version exteriors was meant to be an exploration of mood and scale. Our art director, Eli, wanted to represent a potential final look for the game, playing with the mood provoked by the lighting. He looked to conceptualize the overall look to the exteriors as opposed to the smaller, fine details to get the big picture of how he wanted the facility to look.

- Jessa Belote, Narrative Designer

EXTERIOR



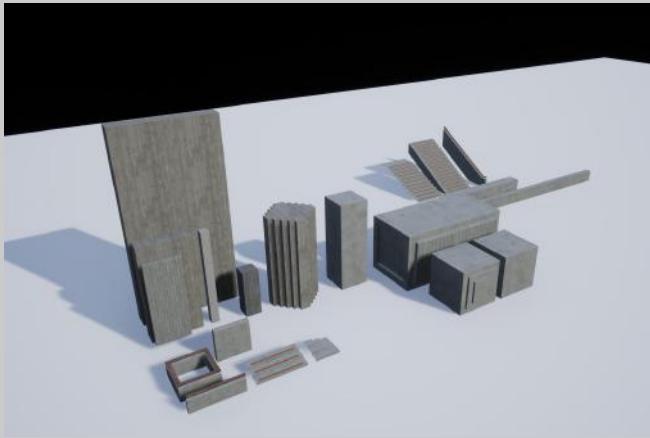
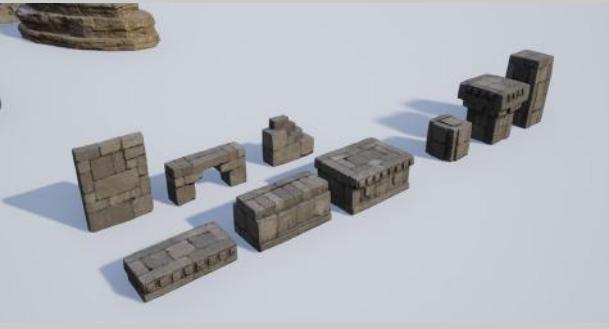
The exterior of Inua both contrasts and complements the aurora itself. The lines created by the brutalist architecture mirror the lines the aurora travels along, creating a visual association between the two, but the quality of the edges is also what creates a divide between the aurora and the facility. The aurora is fluid, free to come and go as it pleases; Inua is rigid and inflexible. Both of the visual themes are reflected in the struggle that takes place prior to the aurora's lashing out in the Harmonic Waterfall. Those in charge of Inua stubbornly marched forward in their pursuit of power, unwavering despite warnings and deaths along the path, and the aurora could not be fully contained.

- Jessa Belote, Narrative Designer



FAR LEFT: 3D Building Render - Kyle Hanselman
LEFT: Exterior Aurora Concepts - Wren King
ABOVE: Inua North Wildlife Concepts - Wren King

ARCHITECTURE KITS



The architecture kit was built to be simple and modular, allowing for easy repetition of small and economic elements in a larger space. Our goal was to match the brutalist aesthetic, so we used large blocks of hard edges with little ornamentation in order to convey the unpretentious, modernist sensibilities of the facility.

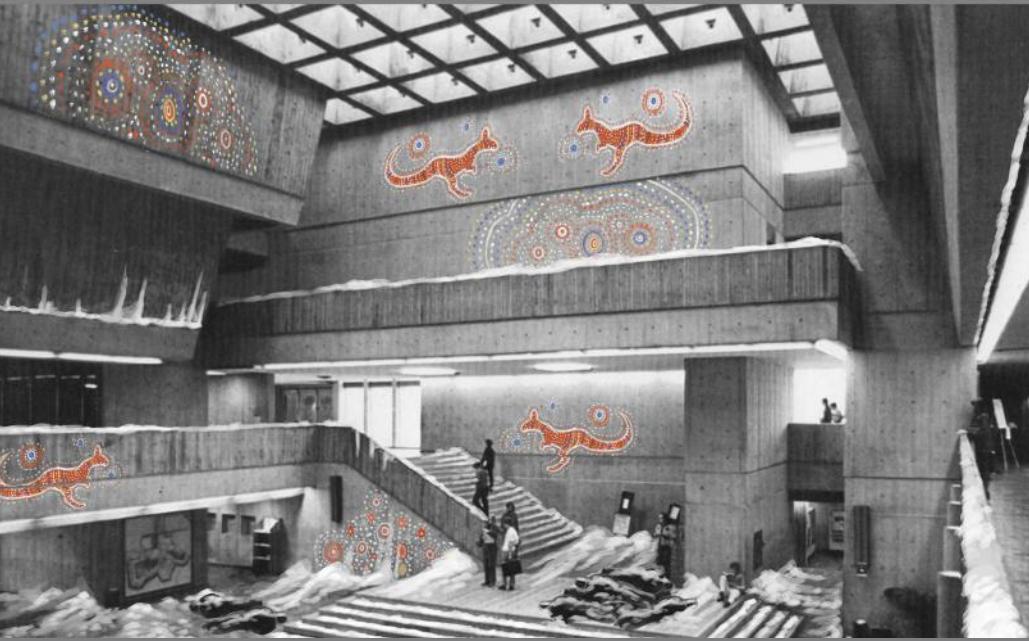
- Jessa Belote, Narrative Designer

LEFT: Architecture Kit Models - Whoever did them

MURALS

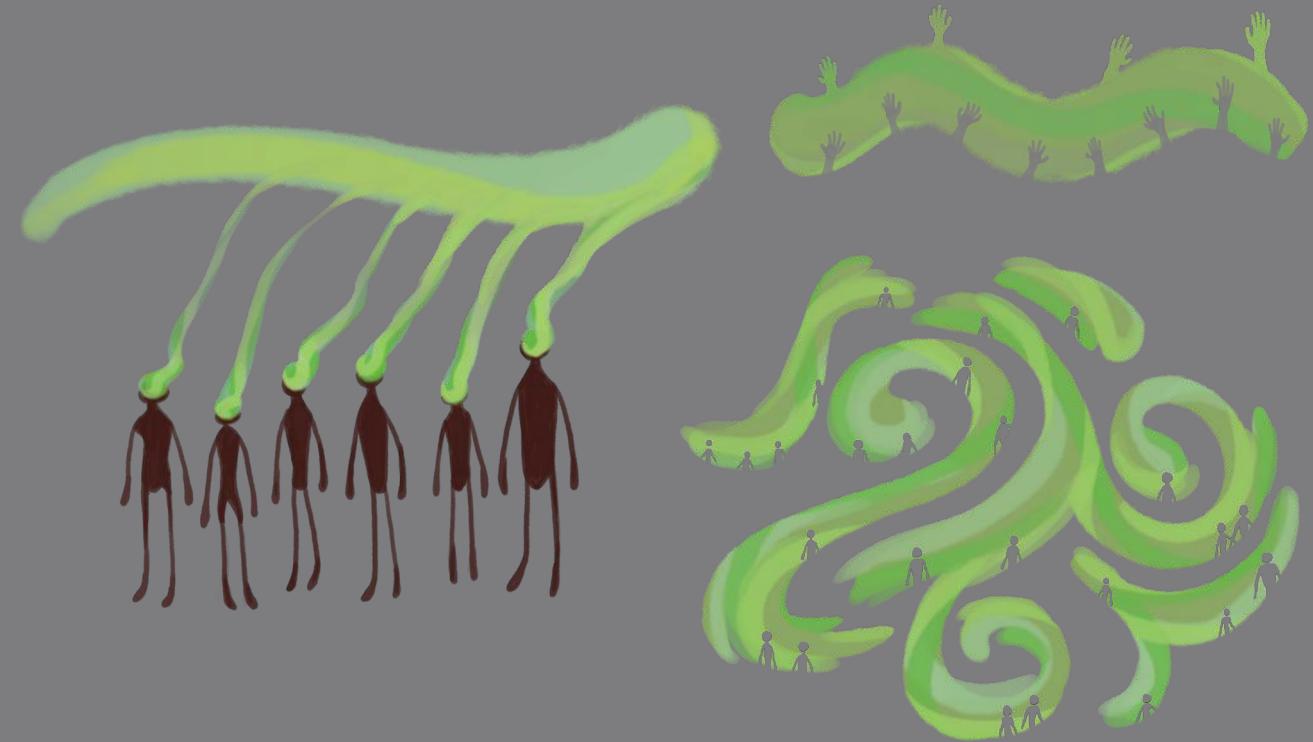
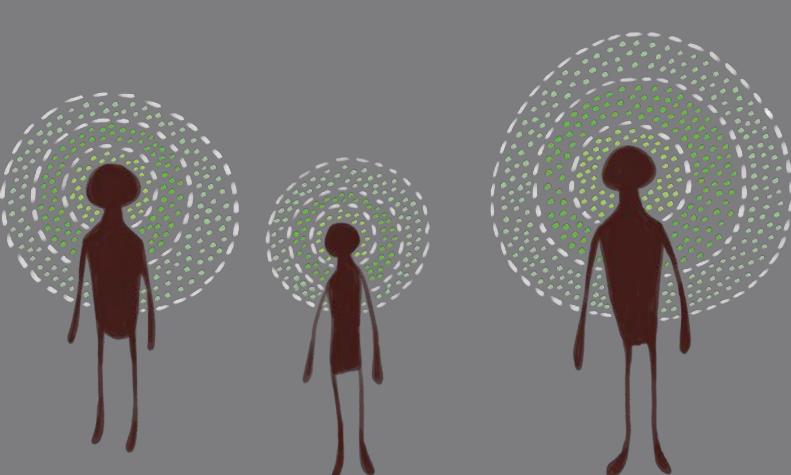
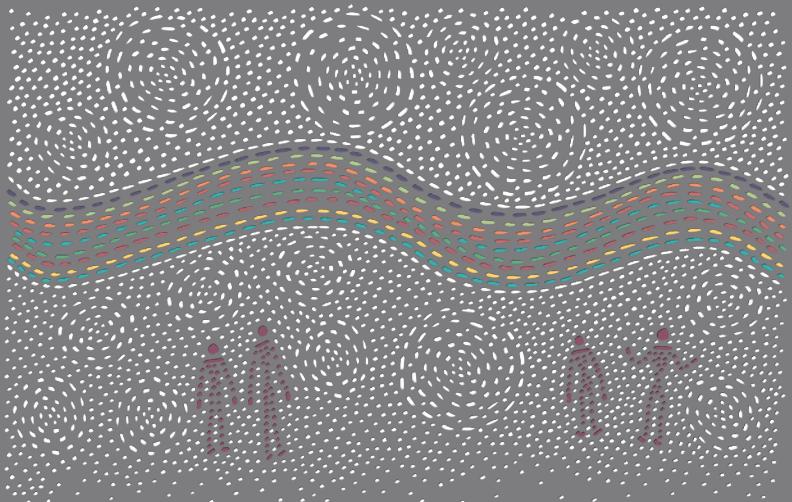
Initial inspiration for the murals scattered throughout Inua came from aboriginal Australian artworks and cave paintings, so the first tests involved studying the shape language and materials, combining them with Radiant Dark's subject matter appropriately.

- Wren King, Visual Developer



ABOVE RIGHT: Mural Paintover U of T Scarborough- Wren King

BELOW: Murals - Wren King

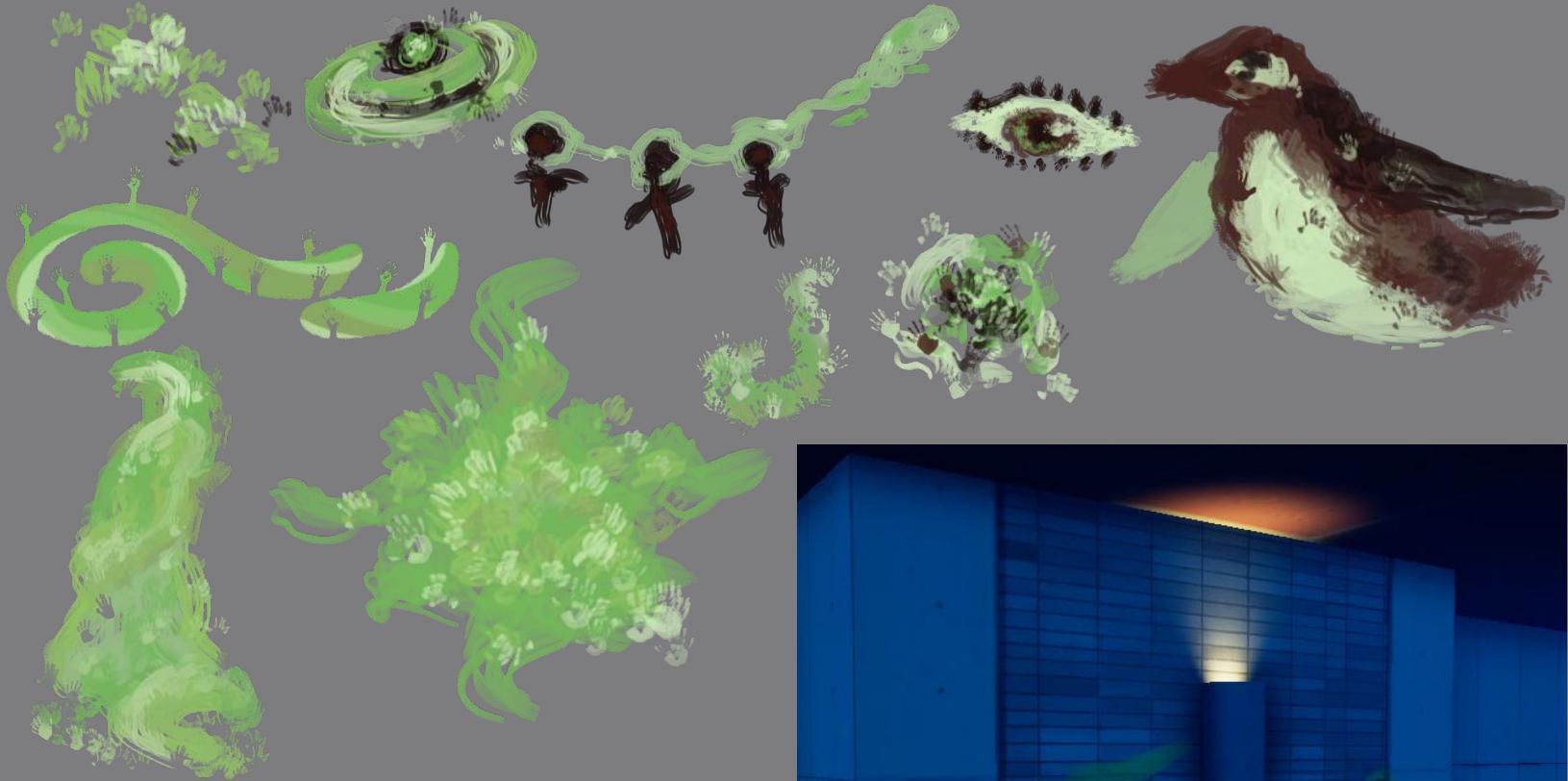


The murals were created by the inhabitants of Inua after succumbing to the aurora's influence, so their design work and craftsmanship is nonsensical, with an unknown substance left behind by messy handprints. The patterns reference the collective consciousness individuals become a part of, the sort of "soup" their souls join, so I replicated iconography that could be interpreted as religious. The humanoid figures are thin and skeletal, so variations on that form led to cross-like shapes that stretched out into alien tendrils.

- Wren King, Visual Developer

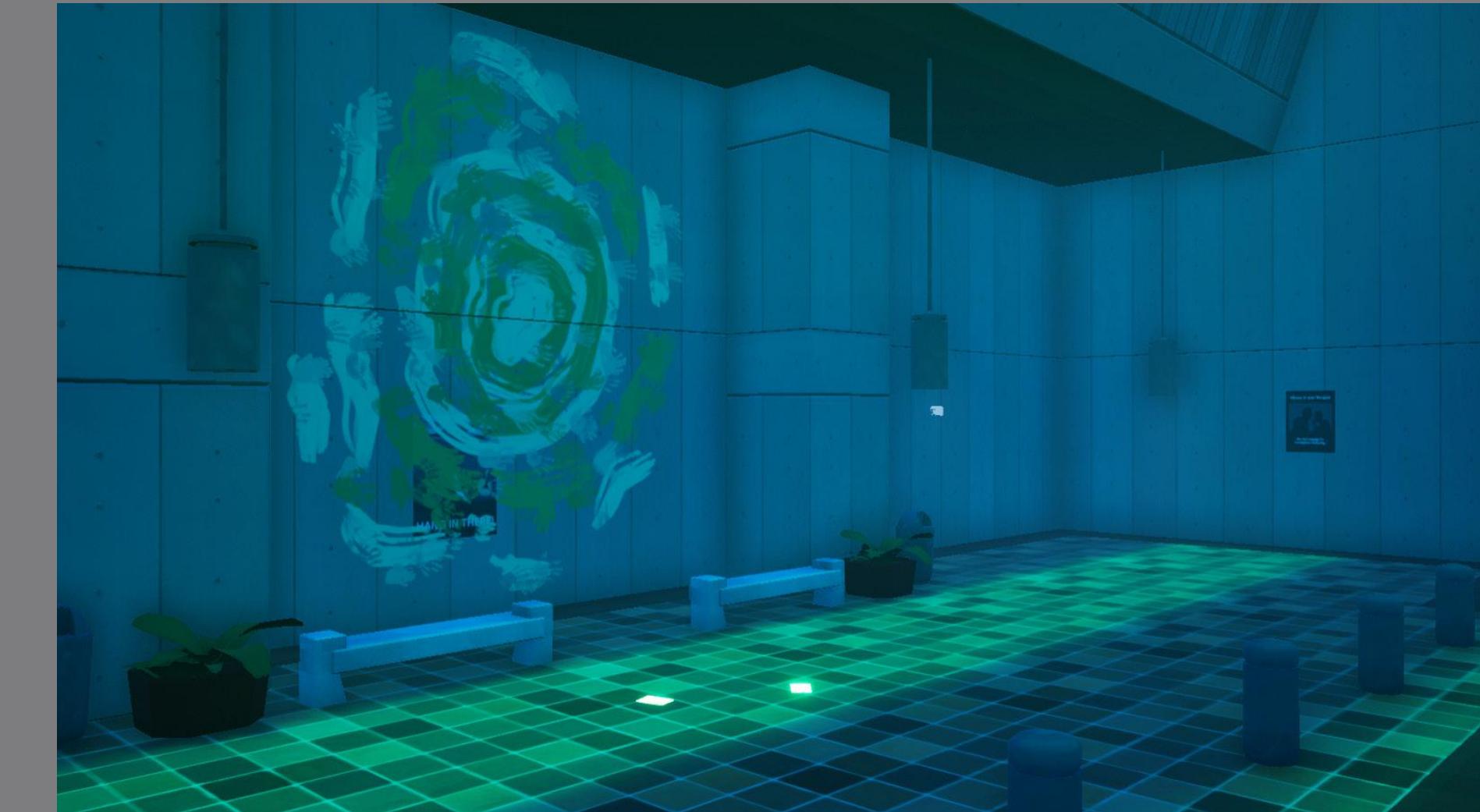
TOP LEFT: Mural Concepts - Eli Gershenfeld
RIGHT: Murals - Wren King

MURALS



Lots of assorted pieces were made in order to fill in the gaps of smaller spaces in the level and smooth the transition between larger murals, but several of them were designed with specific locations in mind, indicating the usage of the lights in our Alpha version.

- Wren King, Visual Developer

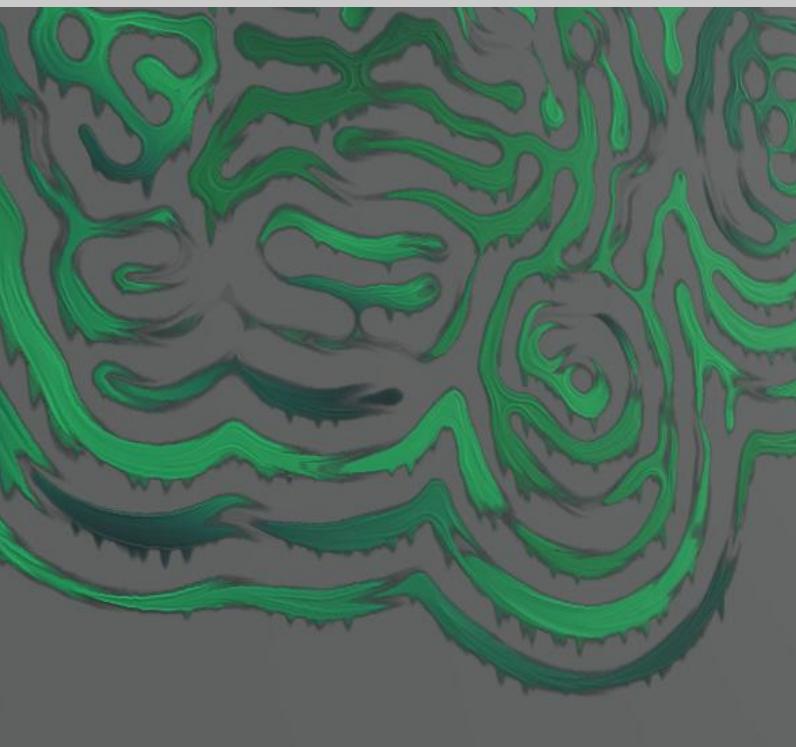
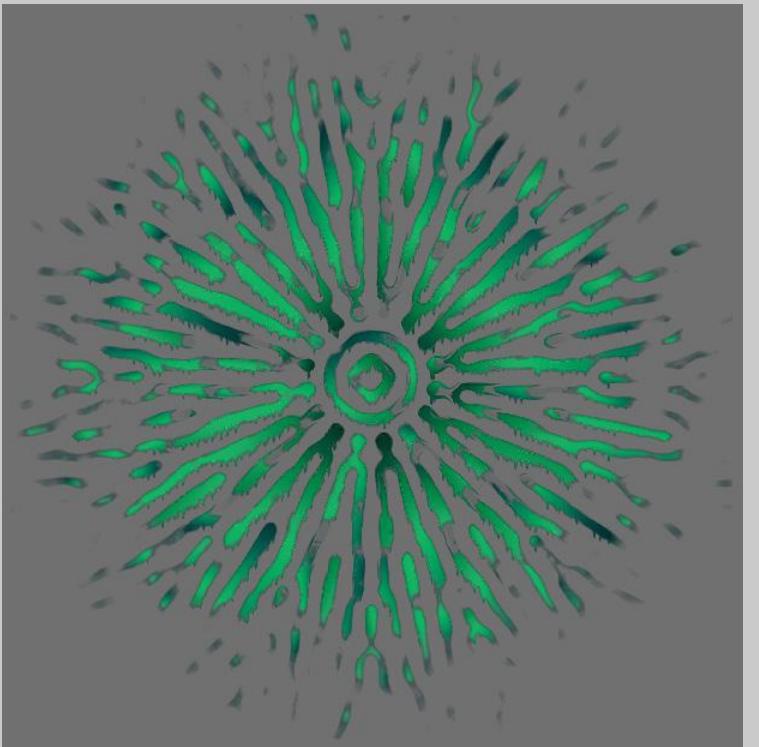


In the Alpha level, murals were placed wherever there was physical space on the walls, including anywhere high enough that the production of them seemed impossible. Inua's inspired community was very motivated.

- Wren King, Visual Developer

FAR LEFT: Murals - Wren King
LEFT and ABOVE: Radiant Dark ALPHA Set Dressing - Kyle Hanselman

MURALS



As our direction changed in post-production to a more realistic art style, Eli found a way to automate mural production in Substance Designer, taking arbitrary shapes as input. The experimentation resulted in abstract designs that better approached our goal of conceptual religious iconography.

- Wren King, Visual Developer

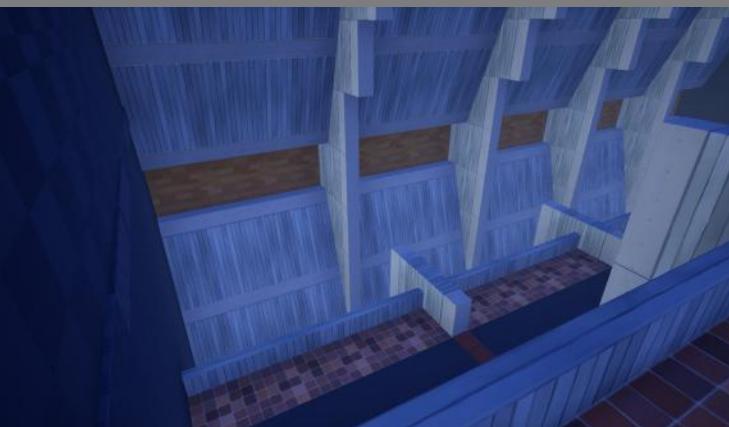
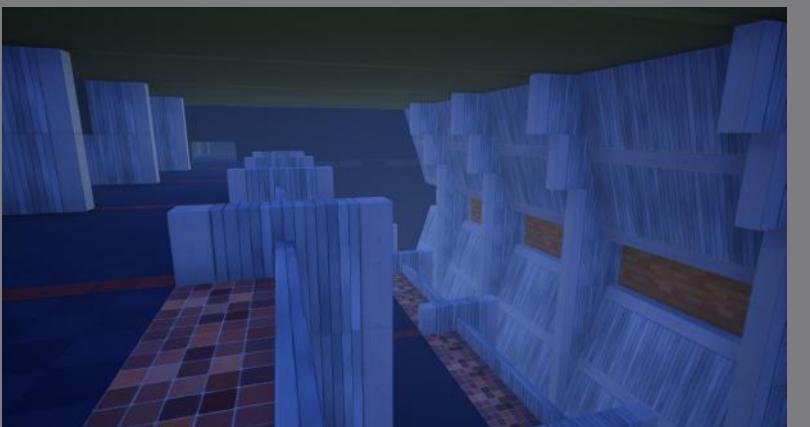
ABOVE: Mural Tests - Eli Gershenfeld
RIGHT: Mural Environment Render - Eli Gershenfeld



Placement in our newer levels grew more intentional, welcoming the player into Inua and daring them to explore marked hallways. The light, sculpted by the brutalist architecture, was essential to driving the line of sight around these points of interest.

- Wren King, Visual Developer

LOBBY



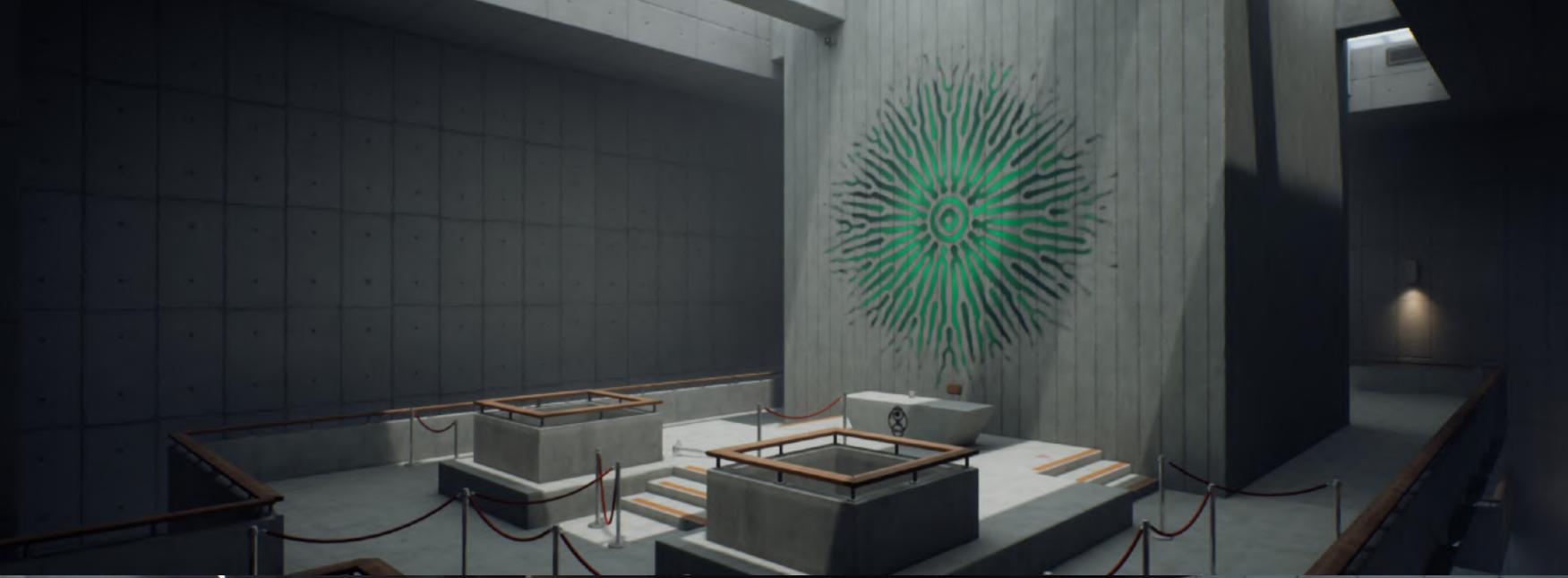
Our Alpha version of the game had large, expansive spaces in both height and width. There were a few dedicated rooms for puzzle spaces and labs, but they were scattered about, sharing lobby spaces, break spaces, and office spaces. We did this to help make the building feel interconnected, but it ultimately resulted in a lack of unity and purpose.

The level progression consisted of solving puzzles to go up floors. The verticality was meant to convey progression in a tangible way, as well as making spaces that are repeatedly visited feel different. Like our undedicated spaces, the verticality design backfired; players were confused about where to go and did not feel a strong sense of progression.

- Kyle Hanselman, Level Designer

ABOVE LEFT: ALPHA Lobby Level Design - Kyle Hanselman
LEFT: ALPHA Lobby Blockout - Kyle Hanselman
ABOVE: ALPHA Beautiful Corner - Eli Gershenfeld

LOBBY



For our Gold version, we wanted to make larger spaces that could be broken down into smaller ones. We ran into the issue during Alpha of big spaces that were empty and purposeless, so we made sure to give more life and function while keeping the large scale in mind by layering rooms instead of laying them out linearly. The lobby area is meant to feel suspended, conveying to the player that there are spaces and levels beneath. We also included a large pillar supporting the structure, only to discover that down in the reception area it is simply a light well. This light well was made to help the space feel memorable due to how it subverts player expectations.

- Eli Gershenson, Art Director

ABOVE LEFT: GOLD Reception Set Dressing - Eli Gershenson
LEFT and ABOVE: GOLD Lobby Set Dressing - Eli Gershenson

DECONTAMINATION



This space is meant to be intimidating. This is where the player descends into the belly of the beast, where the player feels a sinister presence for the first time. This room is also meant to feel claustrophobic compared to the spaces preceding and succeeding it, serving as a bridge from familiarity into uncertainty.

From a narrative perspective, it is an incredibly pivotal room for establishing the identity and function of the facility to the player: decontamination rooms are synonymous with scientific and research spaces, especially in when dangerous pathogens and materials are used. The use of a decontamination room also establishes a sense of danger for the player to whatever lies beyond. The fact that the chemical rinses are malfunctioning and harming the player conveys that the facility has not been properly maintained in some time, creating feelings of isolation, loneliness, and dread.

- Jessa Belote, Narrative Designer



LEFT and ABOVE: Decontamination GOLD Set Dressing - Eli Gershenfeld
LEFT and ABOVE: Spray Particle - Chris Schickler

atrium



The Atrium introduces the first direct obstacle, and the first direct goal, to the player. The large door where the dead worship is only meant to open upon the player completing the puzzle in another area.

This space also introduces important narrative elements. So far it has been rigid and sterile, and this is the first space with some organic shapes – the candles and the statue – and we see the performance of dead bodies engaging in worship. The statue with the shattered crystal represents a lack of control and foreshadowing for other spaces in the facility. This environment brings a sense of mystery and intangible danger about what lies behind the large door.

- Jessa Belote, Narrative Designer

LEFT: Atrium Initial Layout - Eli Gershenfeld
ABOVE: Atrium Final Layout - Eli Gershenfeld
ABOVE: Dybbuk Poses - Chris Schickler

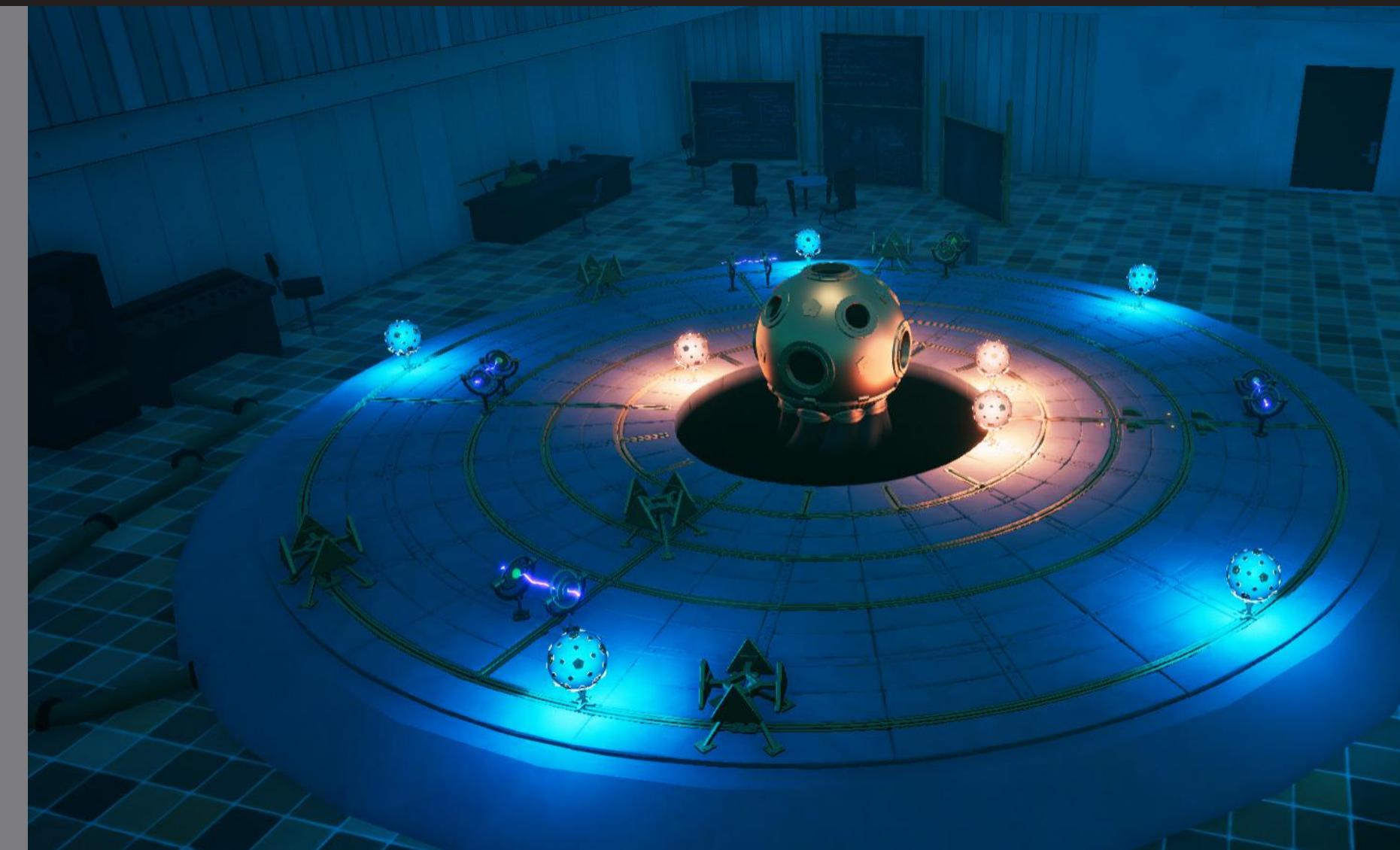
PUZZLE LABS



The labs introduce the puzzles as the driving gameplay mechanic to the player. The areas surrounding the puzzles are filled with chalkboards, papers, and computers, informing the player that this is a place of research. The messiness of the space helps contrast the element of humanity from the inorganic structure of the building.

By solving the puzzles and freeing the bits of aurora trapped within them, the player is able to start to piece together what the facility was used for. Documents scattered about the labs supplement player conclusions, in addition to provoking new questions about the research being conducted and whether or not it was the only goal of this facility.

- Jessa Belote, Narrative Designer



FAR LEFT, ABOVE: Puzzle Placement Concept - Wren King
LEFT: Puzzle Test Renders - Eli Gershenfeld
ABOVE: ALPHA Set Dressing - Kyle Hanselman

PUZZLE LABS



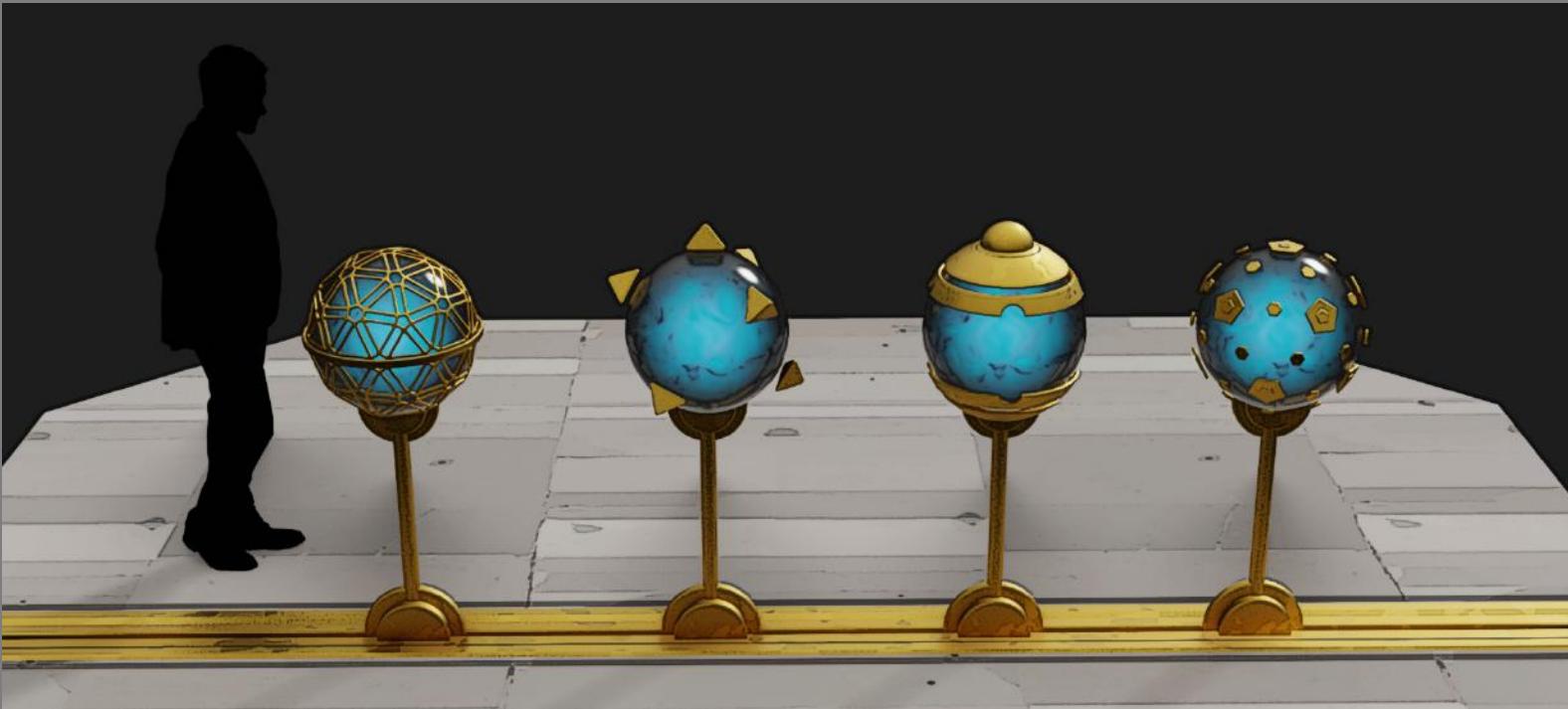
The ethereal atmosphere provided by the presence of the monolithic puzzles would not have been carried out as successfully without the help of Benton Pellet's sound design and Aaron Minich's puzzle music. Chris Schickler was also responsible for seamless implementation of the puzzle tech.

- Wren King, Visual Developer



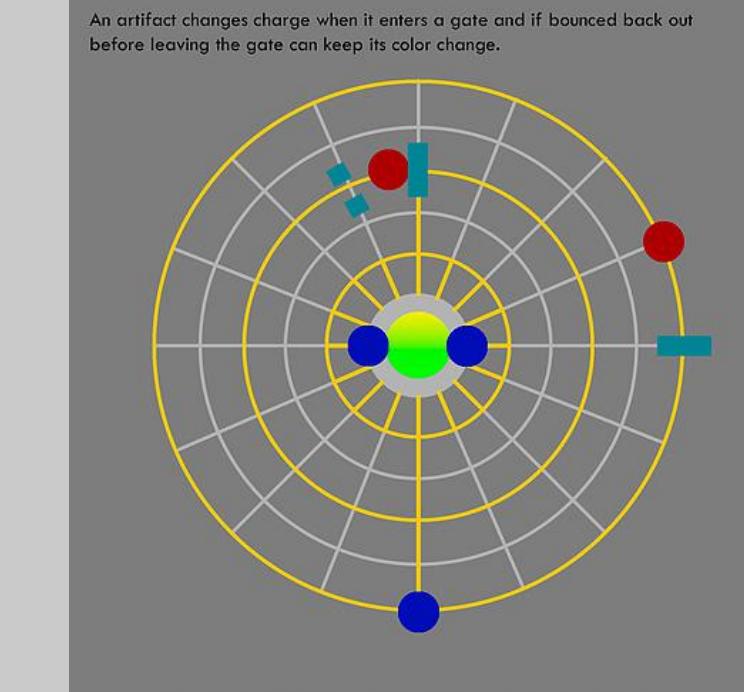
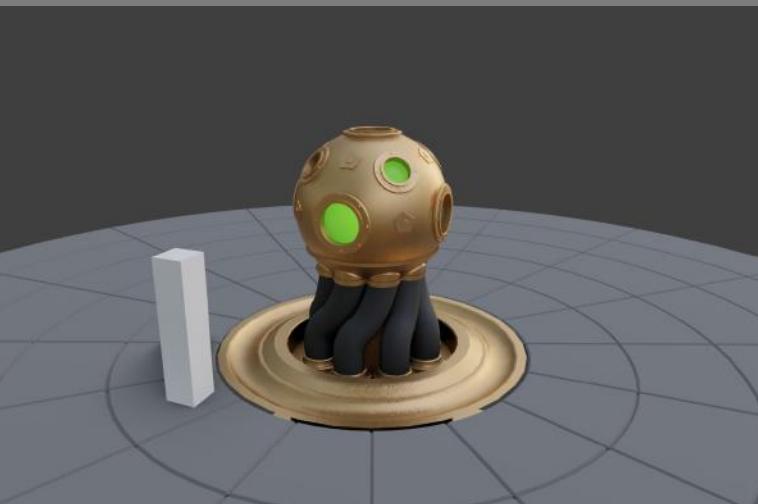
LEFT: ALPHA Puzzle Lab Set Dressing - Kyle Hanselman
ABOVE: GOLD Puzzle Lab Set Dressing - Eli Gershenfeld

PUZZLE KITS



We wanted the puzzle pieces to feel a little older, tying the facility modernism of the facility and the antiquity of the aurora together. The design philosophy behind the puzzles come from the design of an atom, where electrons hover in a cloud around protons and the nucleus. We wanted to include this ring and center design due to the nature of how an aurora is created: by electrons decreasing energy levels, which results in light particles being released into what we see as an aurora.

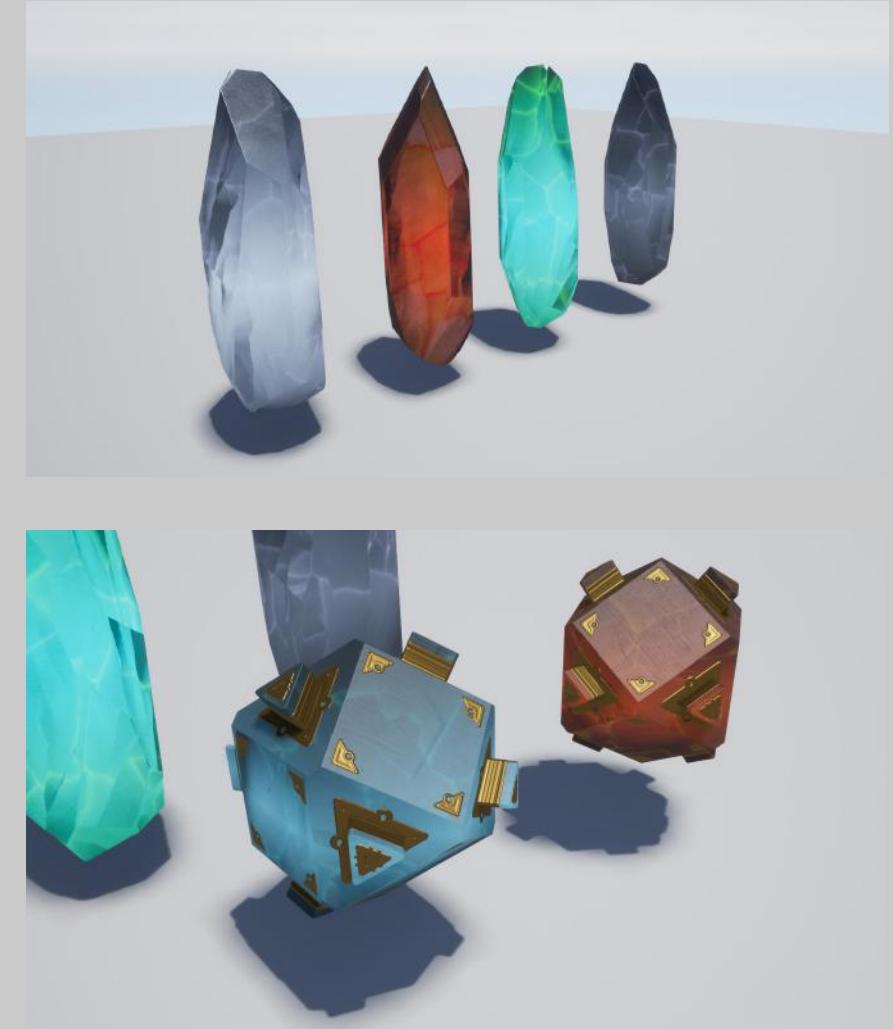
- Jessa Belote, Narrative Designer



The mechanics of the puzzles revolves around moving an equal amount of negatively and positively charged pieces to the center, neutralizing the central containment unit for part of the aurora. We also wanted to include obstacles and devices to change the way players performed this task: gates that change the charges of individual pieces, walls that stop pieces from moving, and bouncers that dictate a specific path a piece will follow.

- Jessa Belote, Narrative Designer

LEFT: Puzzle Concepts - Eli Gershenfeld
ABOVE: Puzzle Designs - Kyle Hanselman
RIGHT: GOLD Puzzle Piece Tests - Eli Gershenfeld



HUB



The Hub is the central point of the Gold version of Radiant Dark, as well as the first indication of the final goal of the game: freeing the aurora. It lies beyond the doors of the Atrium, lined by statues, stalactites, and stalagmites. This space is far more organic than the previous ones; it sets it apart not only from a visual standpoint, but a narrative one as. The Hub conveys that the closer you get to the aurora, the more organic the environment grows, showing the freedom and fluidity of the aurora in contrast to the harsh rigidity of the scientific facility.

- Jessa Belote, Narrative Designer

ABOVE: Hub Blockout - Eli Gershenfeld
RIGHT: Hub Set Dressing - Eli Gershenfeld



HUB



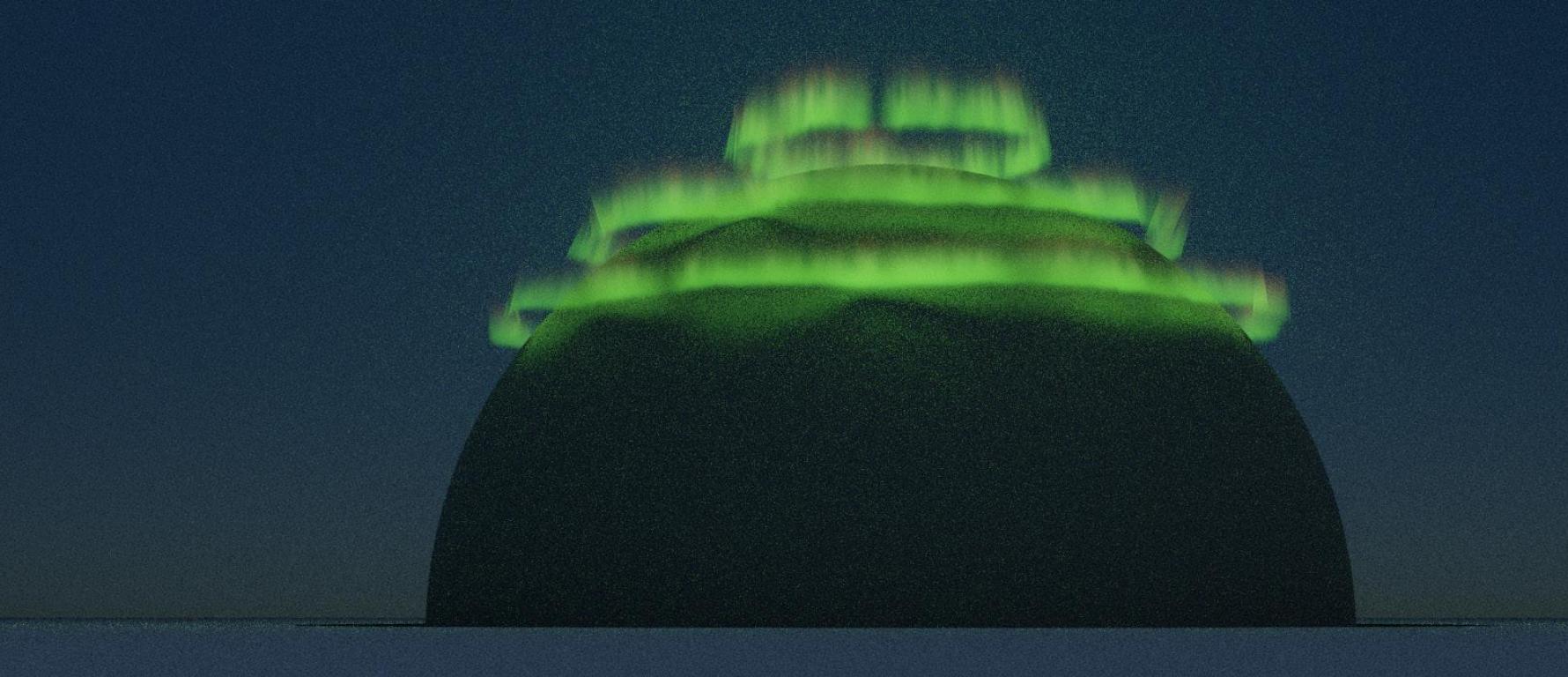
LEFT and ABOVE: Hub Set Dressing - Eli Gershenfeld



CHARACTERS



THE AURORA



Release of the Aurora Australis is both the end goal of Radiant Dark and the driving factor in the events of the Harmonic Waterfall. Referred to as Adelaide due to the name of the project (an acronym for Australis Developmental Energy Legislation for Antarctic Investigation to Direct Emissions), she is an ancient deity that ferries souls from this life to the next. The afterlife is directly intertwined with her being. Unlike her brother, Pana (the aurora borealis, whose name is an acronym for Polar Auroral Navigation in Alaska), who is warm and helpful, she is cold and indifferent. She doesn't care about the souls she harbors. She simply exists and prefers not to interact with her worshippers.

Adelaide, upon being tampered with and partially captured, lashed out and stole the souls of those who interacted with her in ways she disliked and put multiple souls from the afterlife back in random bodies to do her bidding. All of these attempts resulted in Dybbukim with their own, incomprehensible agendas. As Inua continued to experiment on her, she continued to experiment on them, changing and altering Dybbukim in different ways to see if she could make them her loyal servants. Rengo was the only partial success.

- Jessa Belote, Narrative Designer



Adelaide, though wishing to be freed, initially views the player as a threat. She cannot distinguish one person from another, or one time period from the next. She has no concept or concern for individual souls. As far as she knows, the player has come to hurt her, and her aggression towards them manifests in the hostile nature of the Dybbukim the player encounters.

- Jessa Belote, Narrative Designer

LEFT: Planetary Scale Test - Eli Gershenfeld
ABOVE: ALPHA Aurora Spline - Kyle Hanselman

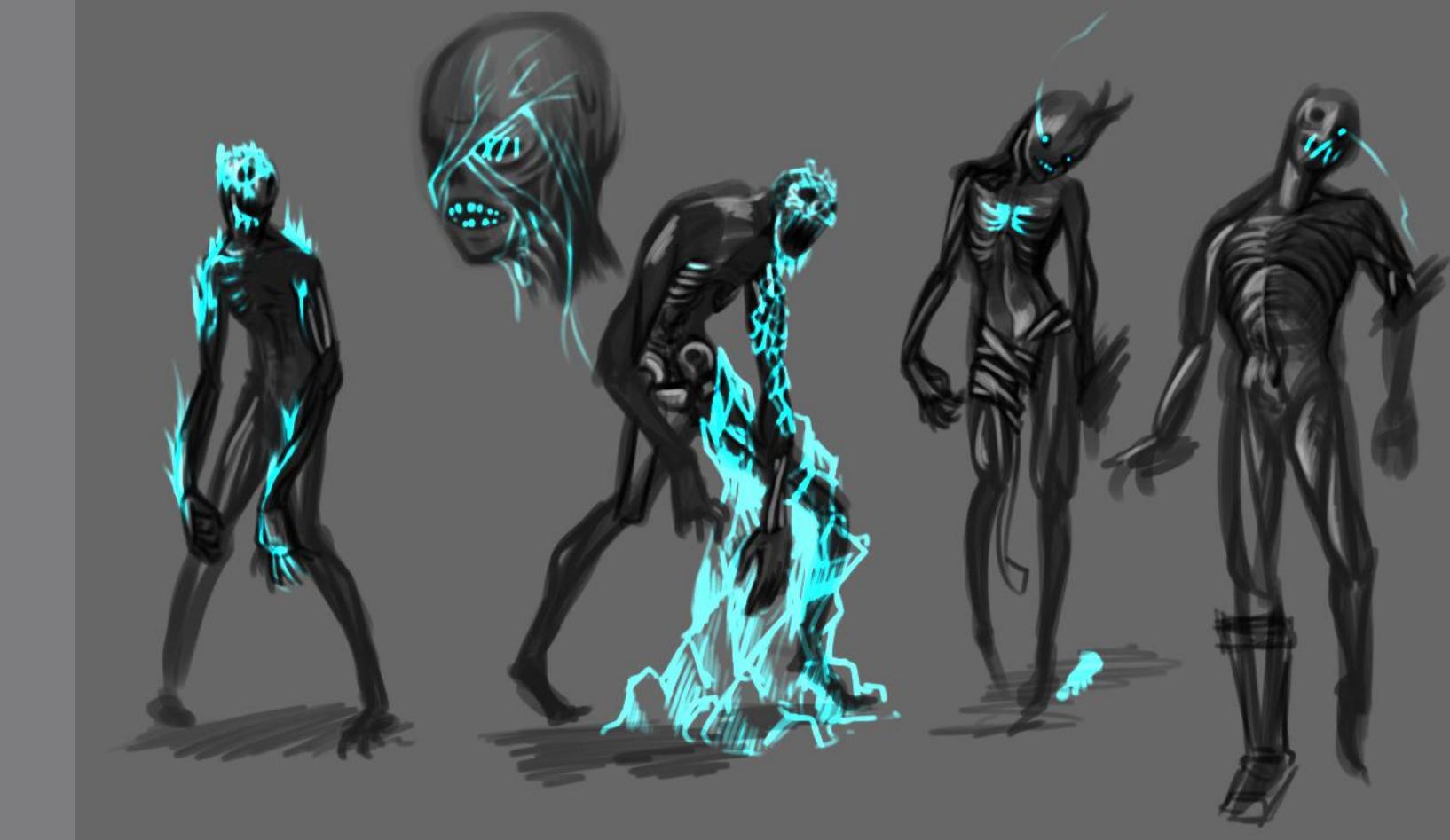
DYBBUK

The Dybbukim are a by-product of the aurora interacting directly with the human consciousness. They are an amalgamation of souls that the aurora has stripped from human bodies. These souls were once a part of a cosmic pool attached to the aurora's existence that have been shoved into a soulless body. Because there are many souls in one body, Dybbukim rarely have any coherent thought or individual drive. They mindlessly act out impulses and fragments of memory, both of which can be either benign or violent, and the only thing that catches their attention is a living, functioning human. They are attracted to individual souls, seeking to plunge them into the cosmic pool from whence they came themselves.

- Jessa Belote, Narrative Designer



ABOVE: Dybbuk Concepts - Eli Gershenfeld
RIGHT: Dybbuk Concepts - Suhkyung Lee



The design of the Dybbukim is inspired by frostbitten corpses found in Everest and in other snowy locations around the world. We had the idea that these undead, for lack of a better word, people would be exposed to the freezing and bitter cold of Antarctica without people maintaining generators, windows, and doors in the facility. The effects around them are visual distortions from the auroral energy that lingers around them.

- Jessa Belote, Narrative Designer

DYBBUK



ABOVE: Dybbuk Sculpt - Suhkyung Lee
LEFT: Dybbuk in ALPHA Lobby Set Dressing - Kyle Hanselman



The dybbukim still wear the clothes they “died” in - parkas, boots, and other warm clothing. Though the facility has generators and heating to accommodate its residents, travel from building to building still requires appropriate gear. Most of the residents that became dybbukim during the Harmonic Waterfall were either in transit to another building to hide or were fleeing out into the arctic away from the facility as a whole, resulting in the majority being dressed in their cold weather gear.

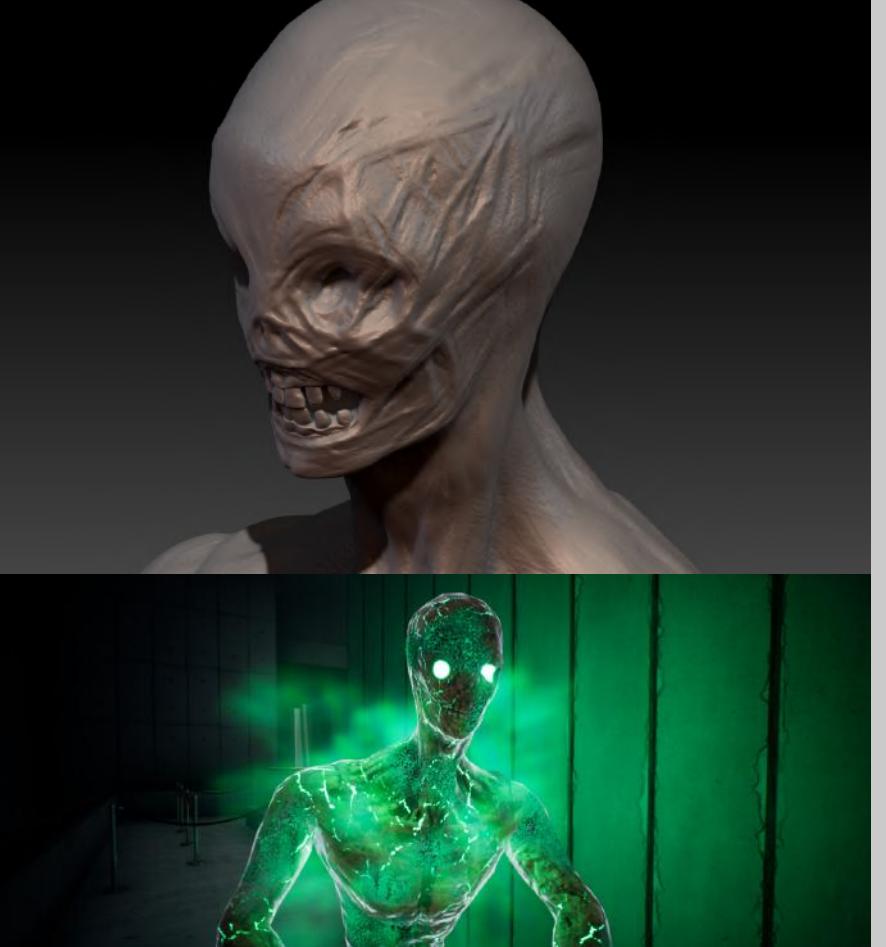
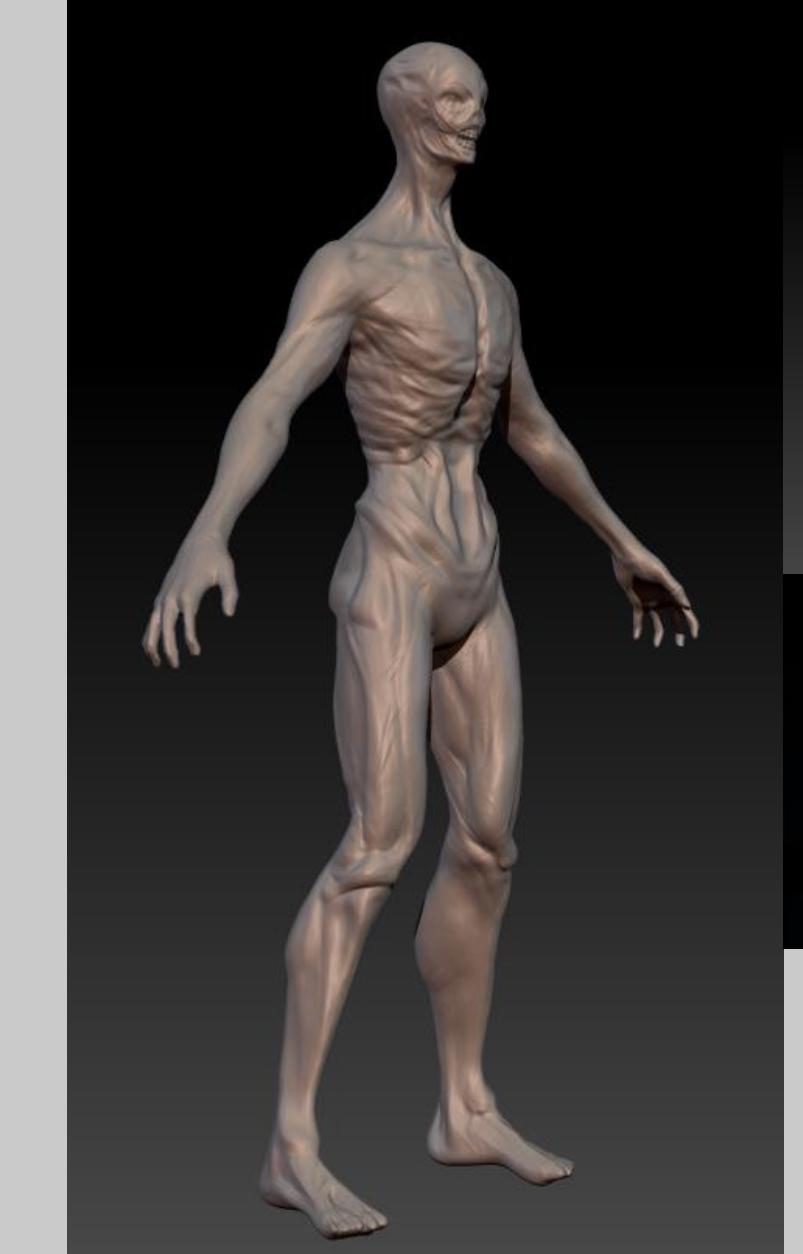
- Jessa Belote, Narrative Designer

DYBBUK



Jay Rengo was a scientist who worked for Inua, studying the Dybbukim, but he eventually fell prey to the aurora and was tested upon. The goal in his testing was to nullify the aurora's effects on his mind and body, but the scientists only created a more powerful Dybbuk. The spikes that protrude from him are icicles and pieces of quartz that were used on him during lab tests. His form is hulking and bulged from the power of the aurora flowing through him, so much that he dwarfs the glasses he used to wear. We wanted to make him feel unsettling and threatening while also hinting at his former humanity and the materials used upon him that are littered throughout the facility.

- Jessa Belote, Narrative Designer



Not much changed in the Gold iteration of our Dybbukim, except to make them more realistic, more nude, and a little flashier.

- Wren King, Visual Developer

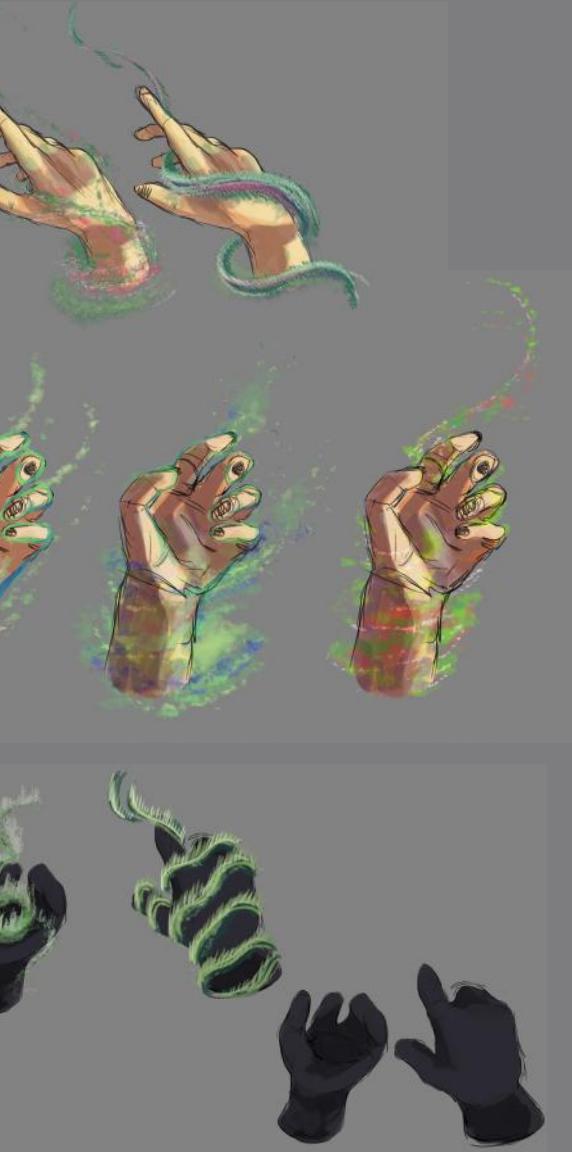
FAR LEFT: Rengo Sculpt - Suhkyung Lee
LEFT and TOP: GOLD Dybbuk Sculpt - Suhkyung Lee
ABOVE: Dybbuk Texture Effect - Chris Schickler

VIVIAN

Vivian Siegler was an agent for the CIA in an indefinite time past the Harmonic Waterfall of 1960. She was sent to unravel what happened years ago at Inua South and retrieve all intact information about the facility and their research.

Vivian, as in many narrative heavy games, was not initially meant to be a silent protagonist. We had planned conversations between her, the aurora, and potentially other NPCs in the Alpha version of our game. As the direction of our final game changed, we opted to make her a relatively silent protagonist, beyond some minor commentary, to make her more relatable and more obviously on death's door.

- Jessa Belote, Narrative Designer

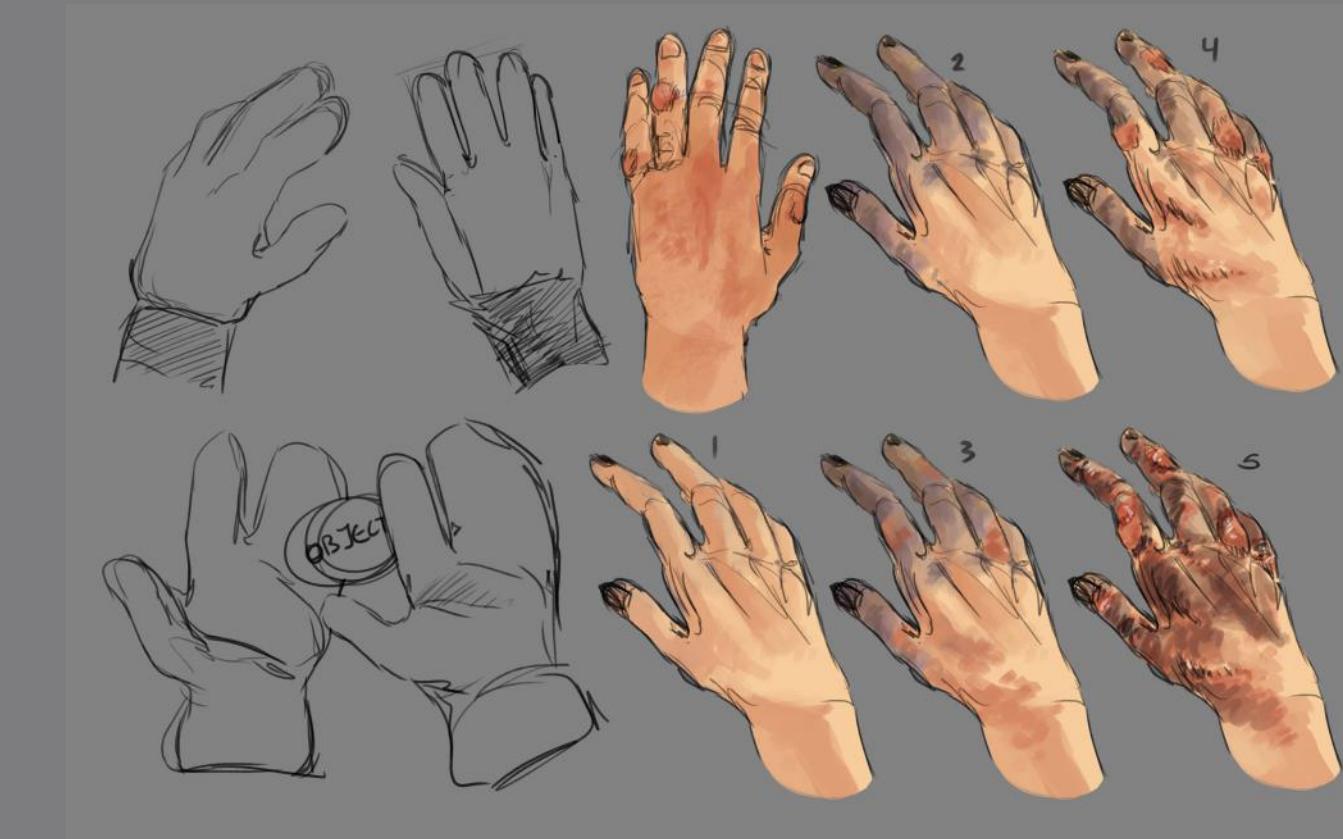


ABOVE: Vivian Hand Concepts - Wren King
RIGHT: Vivian Frostbitten Concepts - Wren King

In the Alpha version of Radiant Dark, Vivian was meant to die at the gates of Inua and resurrect in the body of one of the Dybbukim outside. She had the ability to go from body to body, and, through the hands of any body that she was in, she could channel the power of the aurora. It was used to power up lights, take energy away from other Dybbukim to incapacitate them, and manipulate the positions of objects.

Because the Dybbukim are the product of long frozen corpses, we wanted to show various stages of frostbite on the hands, including blistering, discoloration, and loss of fingers. For some of the Dybbukim, the gloves they wore had various different designs. We ultimately favored the mitten-type with the thumb and forefinger separated. We also made sure to make it seem like the aurora was being siphoned via the palms of the gloved hands.

- Jessa Belote, Narrative Designer

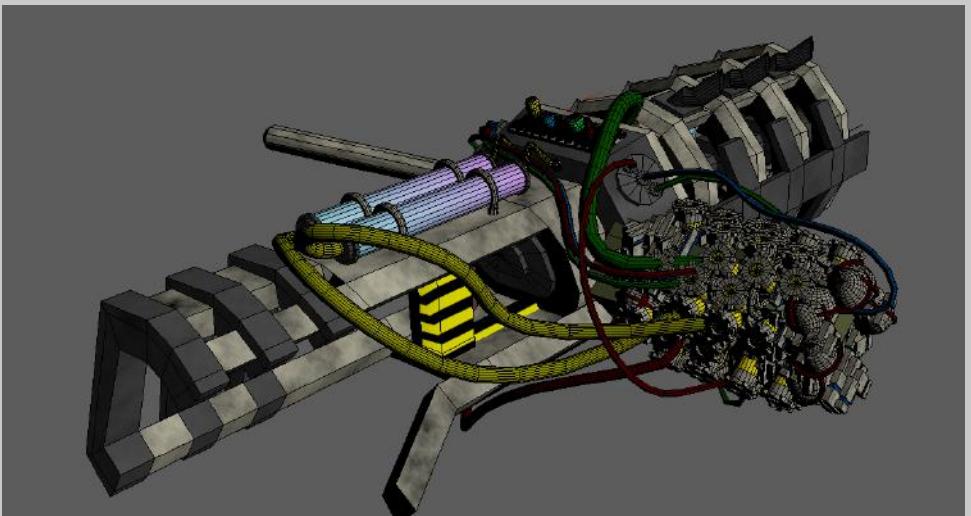
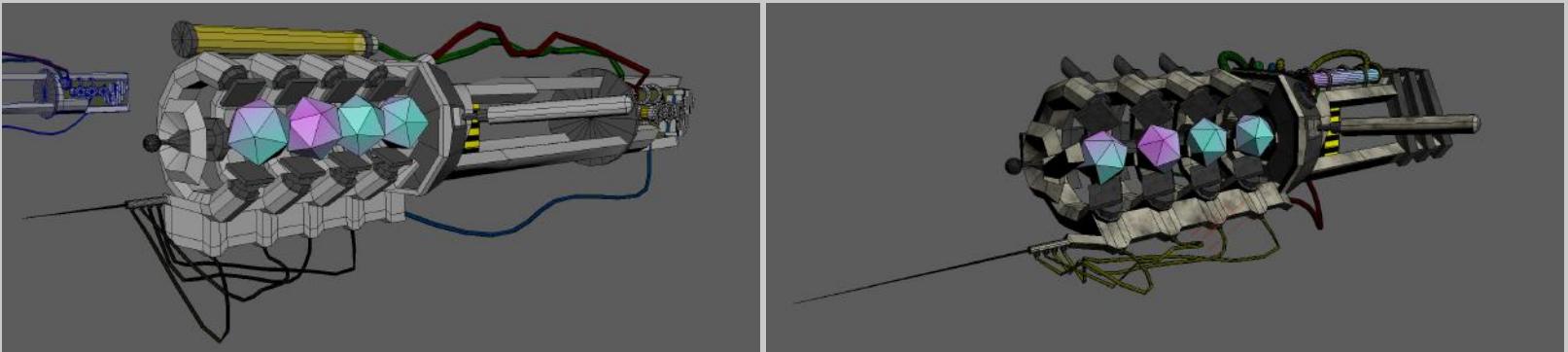


MULTI-TOOL

Upon revisiting the mechanics for Radiant Dark in our final ten weeks, we wanted the player to make use of a tool that could be developed as they progressed through the many levels of the game.

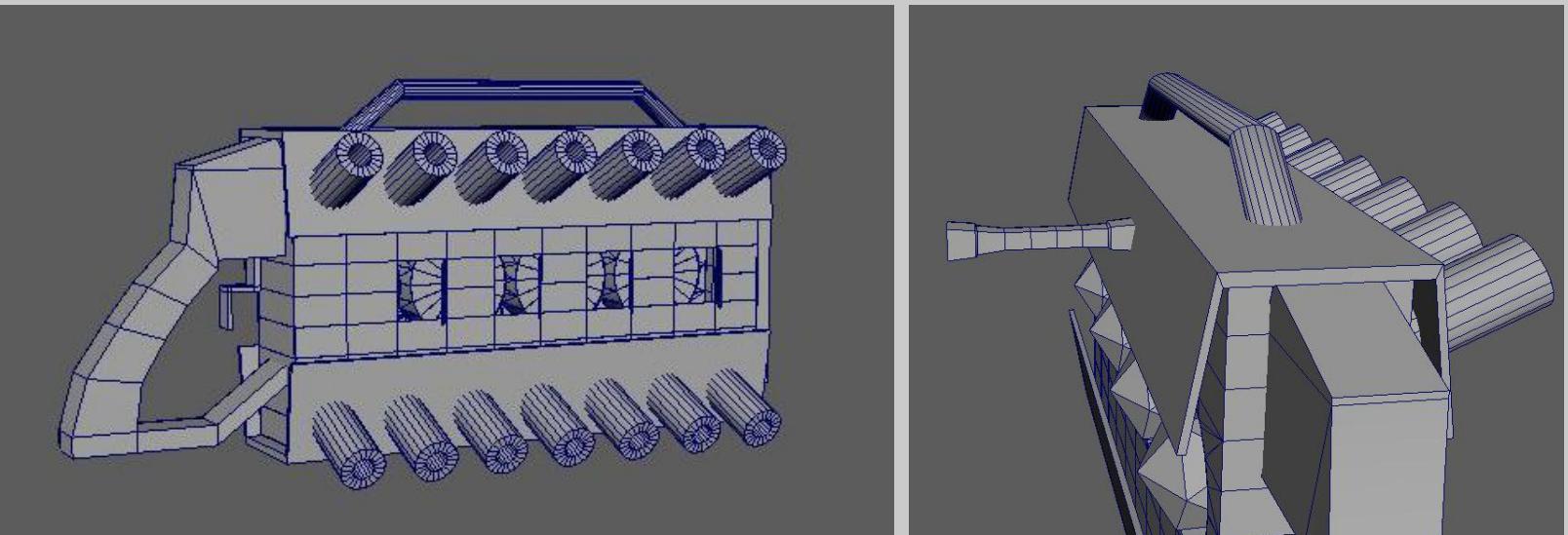
The first mechanism assigned to the tool was to have projectile capabilities, but limiting it to the form of a gun was something we strictly wanted to avoid. Several members of the team exercised various design philosophies.

- Wren King, Visual Developer



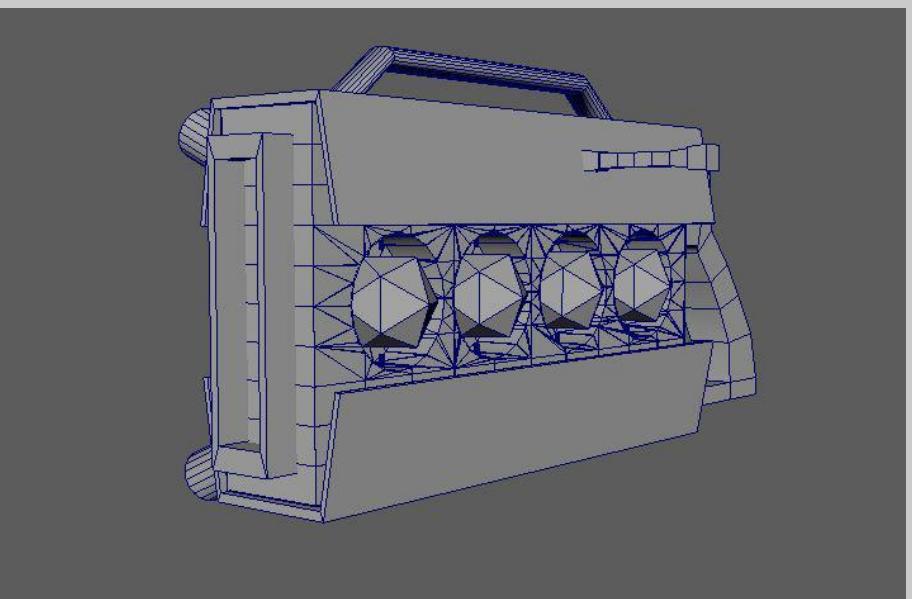
Chris devised the first iterations, exploring the feedback given to the player by visibly planting ammo on the tool. His inspiration in the silhouette and overall design was the sensibilities of hand-held tools that could be added or removed to the device, like brooms, screwdrivers, and mops. His goal was to make it feel jury-rigged, like it was slapped together out of necessity, rather than mass-produced and pristine.

- Wren King, Visual Developer



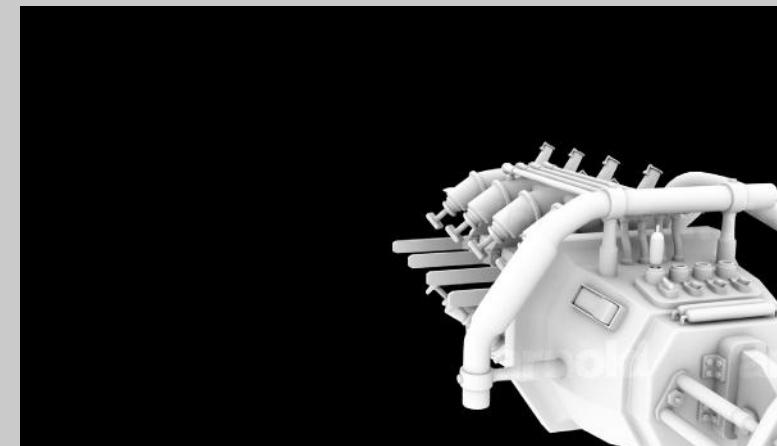
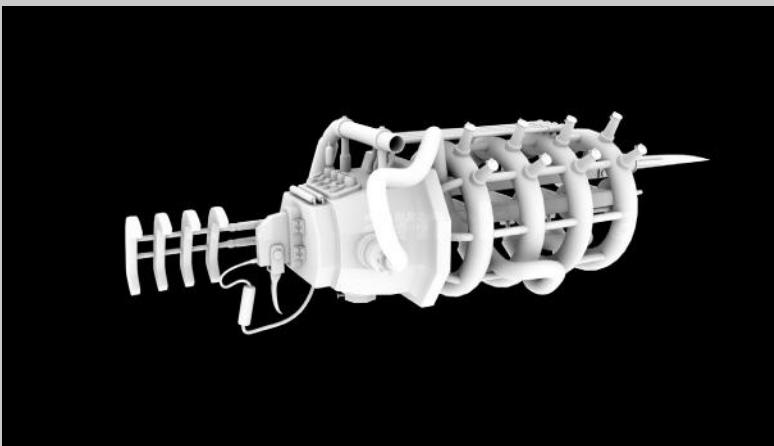
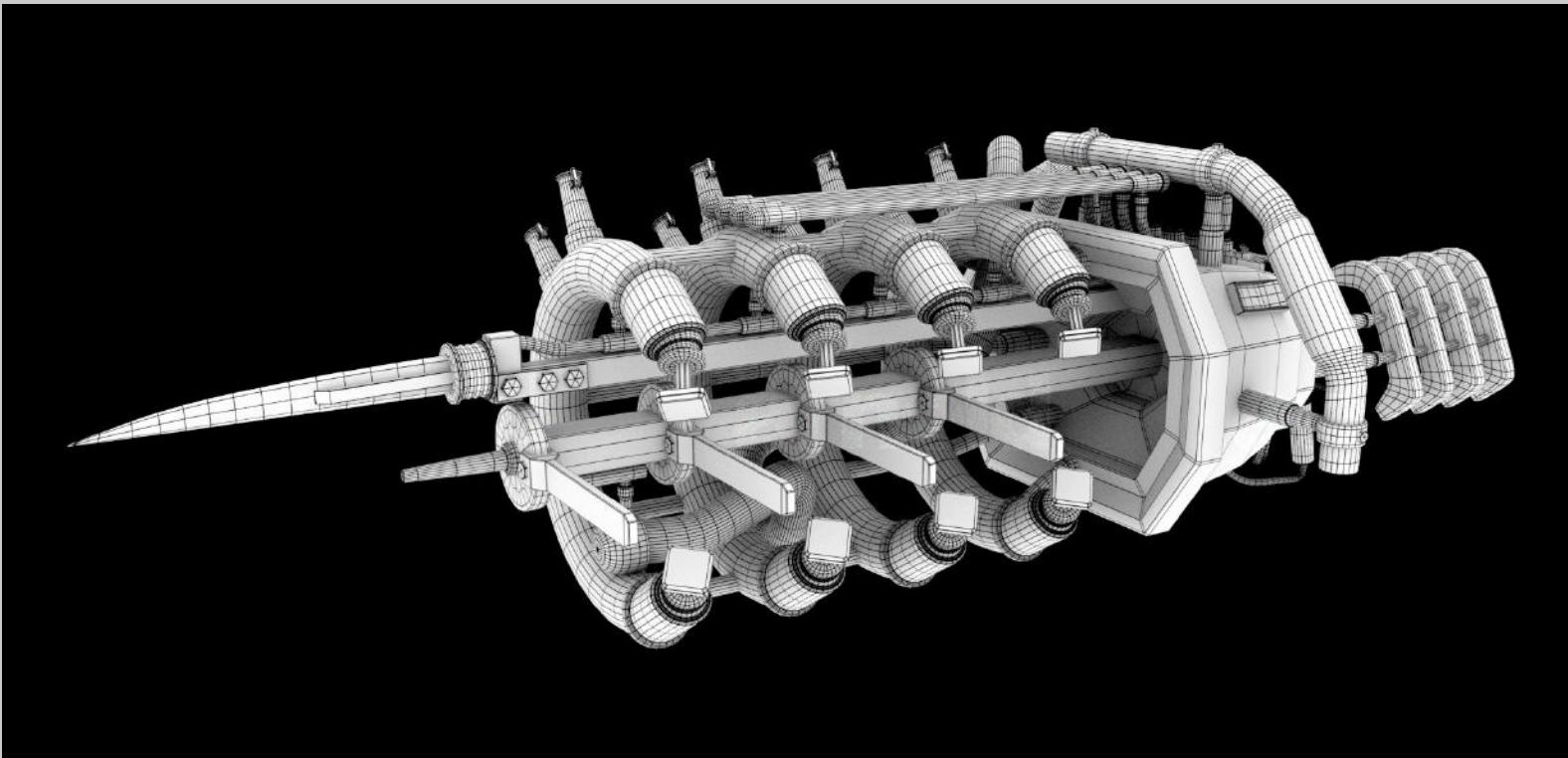
JT's concepts for the tool explored conveyance of the weight and how it would feel to be held. The most striking element was the handle on the suitcase-esque design, and it carried through into the final version.

- Wren King, Visual Developer



LEFT: Multi-tool Model Concepts - Chris Schickler
ABOVE: Multi-tool Model Concepts - JT Ruffin

MULTI-TOOL



Kyle took the various purposeful elements of Chris and JT's work and synthesized them into a sturdy tool that felt more like a piece of tech than a gun. The visual feedback on the unit negated any need for UI in the HUD, something we were trying to avoid in favor of having a gameplay environment that wasn't interrupted by on-screen data, and he left plenty of room for the tool to have moving parts to provide a sense of change through multiple hours of gameplay.

- Wren King, Visual Developer

LEFT: Final Multi-tool Renders - Kyle Hanselman
ABOVE: Final Textured Multi-tool Render - Kyle Hanselman

PROPS



PROP KITS



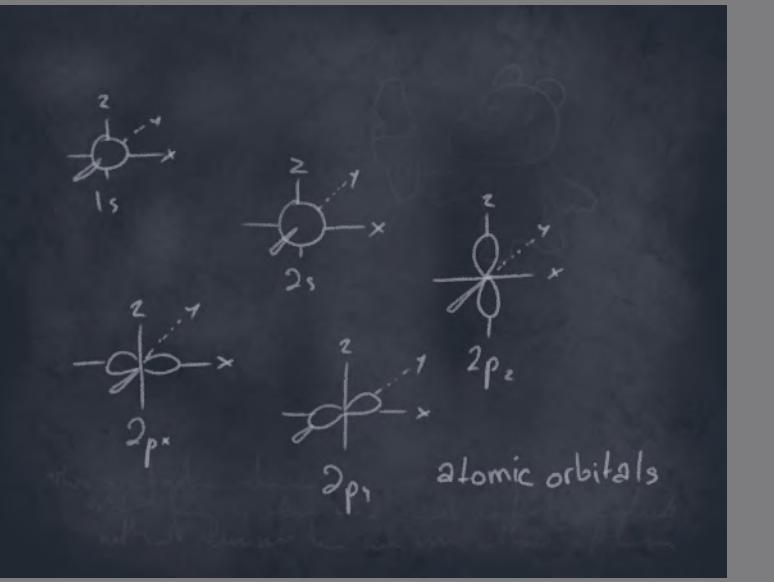
The majority of the prop kits were designed to flesh out the spaces without being particularly eye-catching. Their presence isn't noticed, but their absence is felt. Each prop was made to contextualize the spaces the player moves through. Some prop kits, like the technology and lab sets, are meant to stand out so the player considers their usage in the context of their discoveries, serving an important role in our visual storytelling.

- Jessa Belote, Narrative Designer



FAR LEFT: Prop Kit GOLD Set Dressing - Eli Gershenfeld
ABOVE: Prop Kit Models - Kyle Hanselman

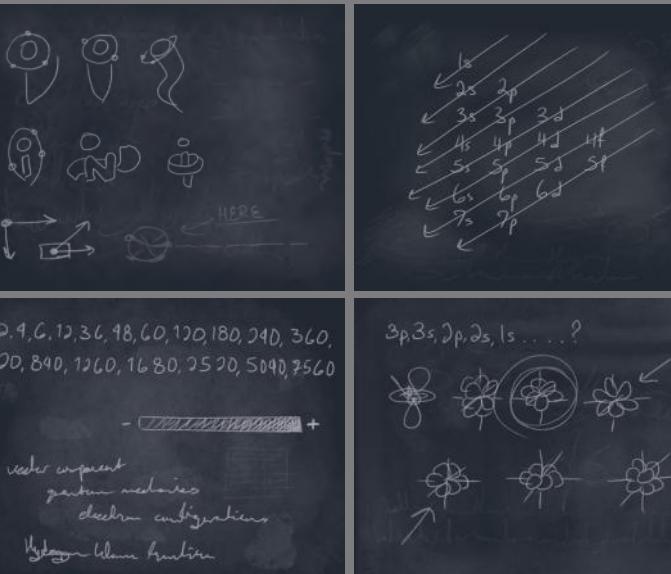
CHALKBOARDS



For the chalkboards, we referenced 1950s office and lab spaces. Most chalkboards depict points of discussion among the scientists and government workers of Inua, including atomic orbitals, the machinations of the poles, and free Polar Pal lunch days.

Polar Pal, the most frequently placed corporate iconography around the facility, was born from the first chalkboard doodle. He's based off the Frosty Boy soft serve company and was very popular among the team.

- Wren King Visual Developer



1,2,4,6,12,36,48,60,120,180,240,360,
720,840,1260,1680,2520,5040,7560

- ~~████████~~ +
water vapor
giant mechanics
decent configurations
Idiot Human Runtime



Each board has a second layer beneath it of scribbled chalk that was wiped away, so even though a certain number of chalkboards is legible, there exists a previous board beneath it, effectively doubling the amount of text and imagery. Most of the underlying text references dramatic life around the office, but some of it is illicit data regarding the dybbuk.

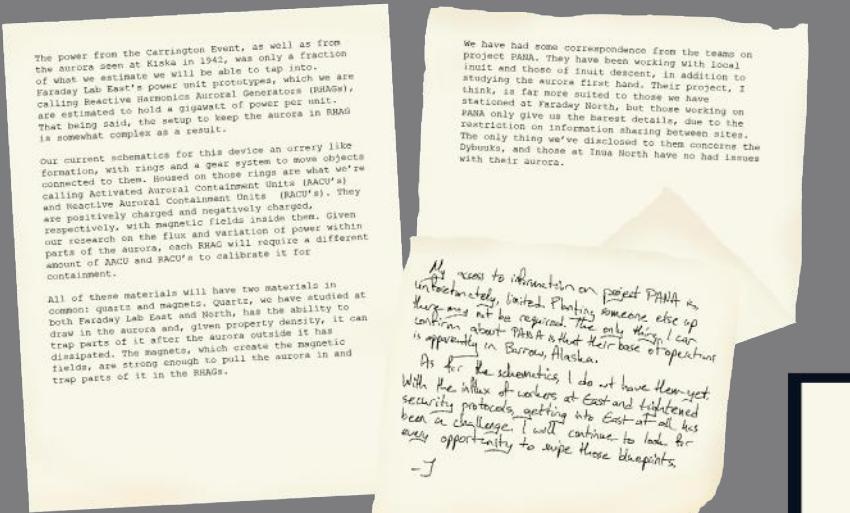
LEFT and ABOVE: Chalkboard Drawings - Wren King

- Wren King, Visual Developer

DOCUMENTS

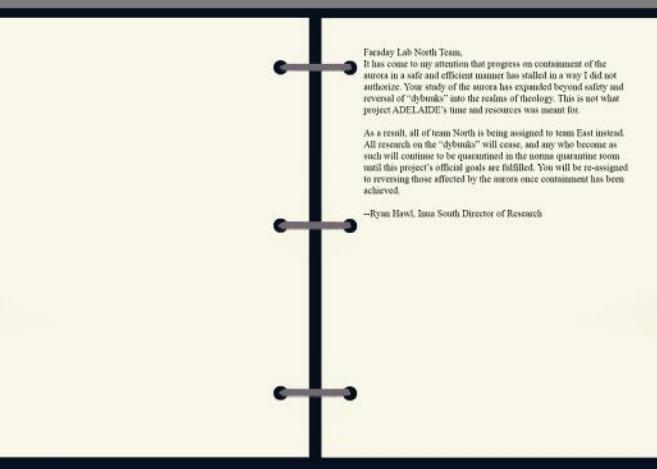
We wanted the document art to feel as in-era as the rest of the facility. Due to the fact that Inua is effectively a small city outside of the labs, we referenced purchase receipts, bank slips, checkbooks, and other formal paperwork in addition to personal agendas and paper types from the 50s. Text on most documents is handwritten to give a sense of authenticity to them, and documents written by the same person have a consistent handwritten style, making them identifiable regardless of them having a signature.

- Jessa Belote, Narrative Designer



After the initial contact with the Faraday Lab North team, we have started to receive more information on their work. They have been working on a new device that can generate power from the aurora. This device is called the Faraday Power Unit (FPU). The FPU is a small, rectangular device that can be easily transported. It is powered by a battery and can generate up to 1000 watts of power. The FPU is currently being tested at the Faraday Lab North facility. The team is optimistic about the results of the tests.

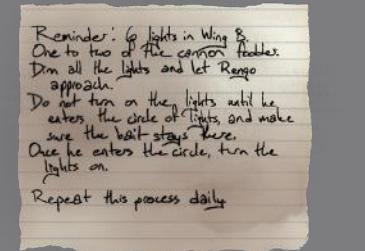
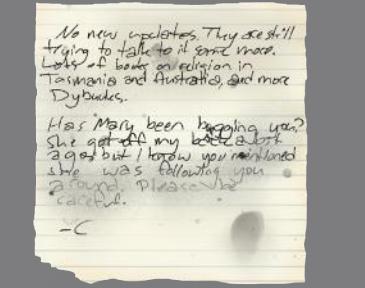
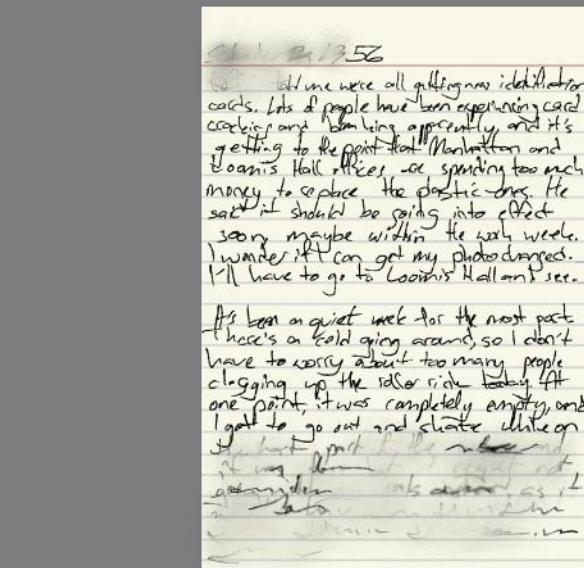
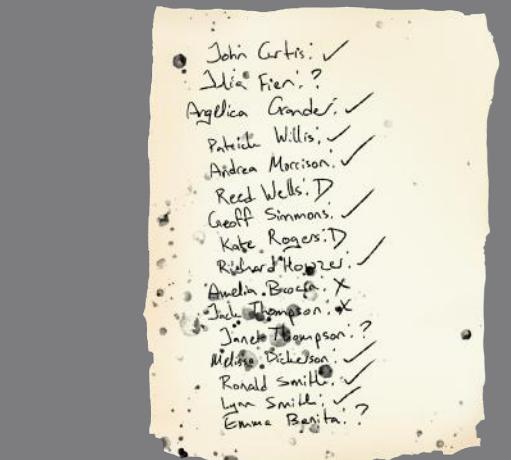
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- Ryan Hawl, Inua South Director of Research

Penguins Storehouse	
Inua, Antarctica	
Chicken breasts, packet of ink	2
Chilled Heat-Block Penguin-Legume Red, 1920	2



A primary antagonist in the Alpha version of Radiant Dark, Rengo is a scientist-turned-Dybbuk who grew incredibly violent after successive experimentation. He makes himself known to the player as a hulking beast encased in hazy shadow.

- Wren King, Visual Developer

LEFT and ABOVE: Document Textures and Art - Wren King
LEFT and ABOVE: Document Contents - Jessa Belote

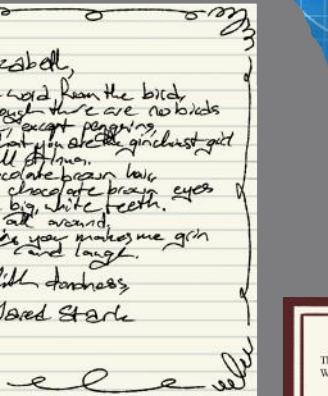
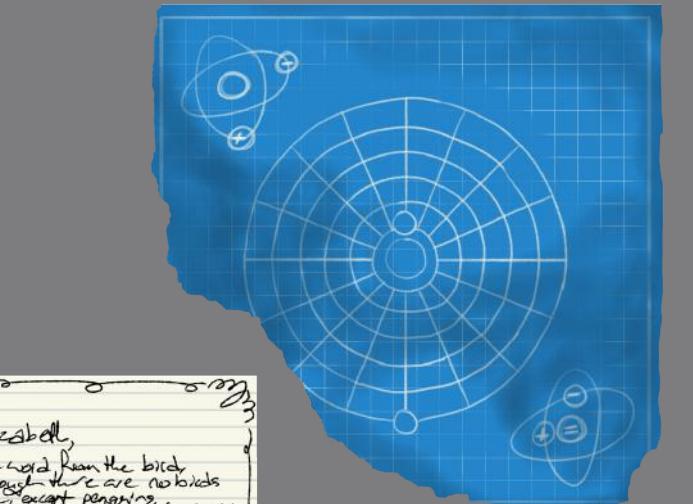
DOCUMENTS

ID cards were implemented in Radiant Dark's Alpha version in order to allow the player passage into various areas after being allowed passage into various bodies.

- Wren King, Visual Developer

The letter on the ID represents an overarching class of clearance. For instance, all Resident Class (R-Class) carriers have access to civilian facilities. The number following the letter on the card denotes any other specific clearances the general class might not have.

- Jessa Belote, Narrative Designer



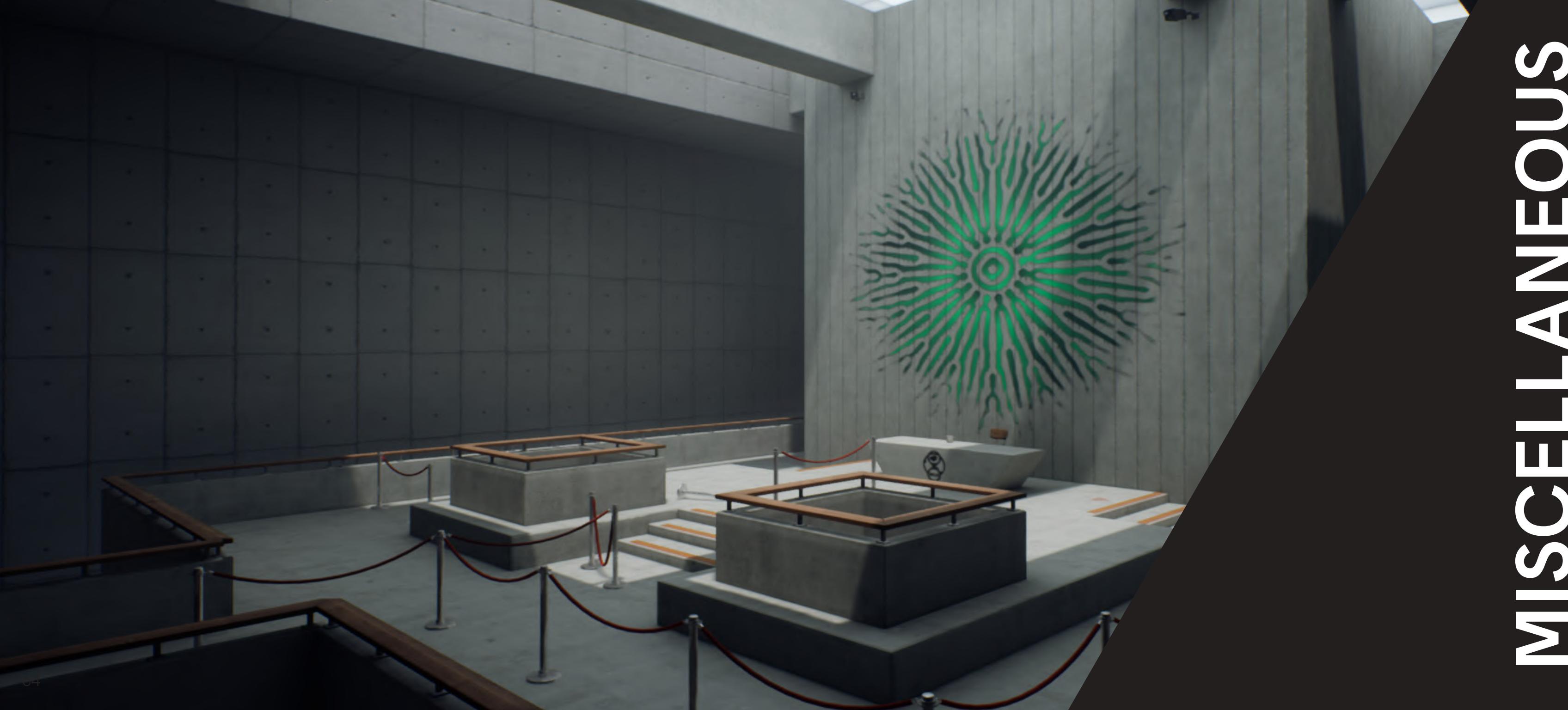
thank you four
giving me a floo
shurt. thank
you for takin car of
peoples like mee.
being sick iz bad.
sincerely,
lawsen davis



January 12th, 1960	
Organize Files	-Color code. Mandy file sections based on topic.
	-Alphabetize. Mandy files per section.
Clear inbox	-Remind Mandy that file organization is just as important as her notes and charts.
Figure out who is to	-Ask Mandy to go through her inbox.
	-Make sure Mandy clears her inbox by the end of the day.
	-Mandy is to bring the cassette tapes



LEFT and ABOVE: Document Textures and Art - Wren King
LEFT and ABOVE: Document Contents - Jessa Belote



MISCELLANEOUS

PENGUINS



Penguins were something the entire team wanted since we agreed to place our game in Antarctica. They were a stretch goal for our Alpha version of Radiant Dark, which ended up being unattainable, but we were determined to implement them in Gold.

The penguins are meant to help the contrast between natural and artificial, rigid and fluid. They are passive creatures that are curious about the player's presence. They are the only remotely friendly thing in Inua, and they act as a breather from the unease and anxiety of the rest of the facility.

- Jessa Belote, Narrative Designer



LEFT: Penguin Sculpt - Suhkyung Lee
ABOVE: Penguin Textures - Suhkyung Lee

BANNERS



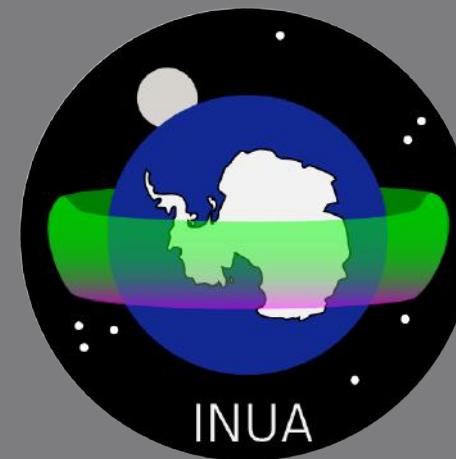
The banners seen around Inua were designed as an element to introduce more color into the environment. They were also created to help flesh out the world, offering a sense of malice and hints at Inua's intentions.

- Jessa Belote, Narrative Designer

ABOVE: ALPHA Banners - Eli Gershenfeld



LOGOS



The first drafts of Inua's company logo were inspired by 1950s manufacturing logos, as the very first version of Inua's backstory involved the facility's origin as an Inuit home goods manufacturing company. We tried to show how globally powerful the aurora was by setting it against a dark, heavy space background, with Antarctica fully visible.

As the intentions of the facility grew more nefarious and our direction changed into that of a clandestine government project, we shifted away from the graphic 50s logo. The result was a subtler image that belies Inua's secrets.

- Wren King, Visual Developer



A psychopomp is a spiritual guide into the afterlife, but can also be seen as a deity escorting people through various stages of life, fitting the goals of our team well considering the themes of Radiant Dark. Eli wanted Anubis on the logo, so he designed the first iteration based on the frontal perspective of Egyptian art. I cleaned it up and made it more graphic under his instruction, making the logo look like it was chiseled out of rock.

- Wren King, Visual Developer



TOP: Inua Logo Concepts - Kyle Hanselman
ABOVE RIGHT: Final Inua Logo - Eli Gershenfeld

ABOVE LEFT: Initial Logo - Eli Gershenfeld
ABOVE RIGHT: Final Logo - Wren King

AFTERWORD



The arduous pain of the work put into Radiant Dark to bridge the gap between reality and fiction is something we all experienced on this team. From week one to week twenty, we toiled together to figure out how to tell our story and bring the player into our world so that they may experience it all in its best possible version. Radiant Dark has been a journey for us all, teaching us more about ourselves and our vision through the processes of iteration.

We rebuilt the level twice in the first ten weeks, and then another rebuild (completely abandoning our former design) occurred during the latter ten weeks. Props were remade, assets were polished, and our lore was tuned to fit the new vision of our game. None of the initial, scrapped work was a mistake in our eyes; it was pre-production necessary for us to realize our the scope of our limits and ambitions. Through it all, everyone on our team was able to help shape Radiant Dark into what it is now.

- Jessa Belote, Narrative Designer

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS



STUDIO TEAM:

Jessa Belote
Phillip Dove
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RADIANTDARKGAME.COM