AURAH

Third-person Futuristic Fantasy Action-Adventure

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Story

Lore / Opening 2D Cutscene

In the year 22XX, scientists made a grave prediction: Earth would inevitably face a catastrophic meteor strike within the next century, with no means to prevent it. In response, humanity ventured into the cosmos in search of a new place to call home. However, even in the face of impending apocalypse, mankind could not reach a unanimous decision to settle on a single planet, resulting in diverse settlements across various habitable planets.

Eventually, in the year 23XX, the predicted meteor finally struck Earth, leading to its utter destruction. The magical essence, known as mana, stored within the Earth's core, dispersed throughout the universe, endowing some individuals with extraordinary abilities of manipulating certain elements. People possessing such powers came to be called the Mystics. Each Mystic could master only one elemental domain.

In the coming years, Mystics established schools on their respective planets to explore their newfound abilities, seeking ways to employ them for the greater good and military purposes. The most proficient among them earned the opportunity to attend the Arch-Academy, positioned on one of the floating remnants of Earth in the expanse of space. The Arch-Academy's primary objective is to train Mystics to become Archlocks, experts in their chosen elemental fields. Meanwhile, there are also people who feel inferior to their mystic counterparts as they do not have any magical powers. This group gains traction and form sort of like anti-magic rebels and call themselves the Healers.

Game Plot

Aurah, a mystic possessing the rare ability to command two elemental forces, fire, and water, has been chosen to attend the prestigious Arch-Academy. Such dual elemental mastery is a unique and exceptional gift, as only a select few throughout the universe can manipulate more than a single element. This makes her mystic classmates despise her as everyone else in the academy can only control one element including the mentors. The origin of Aurah's extraordinary power traces back to her lineage. Her father hails from the Fire Planet, while her mother comes from the Water Planet, two worlds locked in an enduring conflict. It makes her an outsider in the eyes of both planets, as her existence defies the allegiance boundaries of their ongoing war. Therefore, she has always been a lone wolf and despised working together with others.

Following both theoretical and practical classes, the Arch-Academy administers an exam to evaluate and rank its mystic students based on their magical proficiency. This examination takes the form of a tournament, featuring a challenging obstacle course that tests their strategic combat skills and puzzle-solving abilities while using their mystic powers. Arcamax, the mentor, occasionally appears as a hologram to provide guidance and hints to the students. As all students navigate the same obstacle course, Aurah encounters peers who battle her to get the upper hand. While she easily defeats most, a formidable rival named Rivian gives her a tough competition. Aurah and Rivian clash repeatedly throughout the course, proving to be evenly matched. Additionally, Aurah encounters students who offer assistance, teaching her the value of teamwork.

In the tournament's climax, Aurah and Rivian emerge as finalists, and they must fight each other for one of them to become the true winner. However, their battle is interrupted by a massive explosion within the Arch-Academy. The anti-magic extremists, the Healers, infiltrate the academy, driven to extreme measures upon discovering that it was an artificially manufactured meteor that struck Earth in the past to release the mana core. The students realize it was Arcamax, the academy mentor, who betrayed his own by aiding the Healers, breaching the force field, and orchestrating the tournament to assemble a large number of mystics in one place for the rebels to target.

The obstacle course and the academy become a battlefield, with mystic students and mentors on the brink of defeat. Aurah and Rivian realize that they can survive only if they work together. All mystic students, regardless of their backgrounds and powers, unite to defeat the Healers. The final showdown unfolds against the treacherous mentor, Arcamax, with Aurah and Rivian working in tandem to emerge victorious.

The academy is saved. Aurah becomes an expert in manipulating fire and water. More importantly, she forges meaningful friendships, realizing the true strength of teamwork. Judges declare both Aurah and Rivian as the rank 1 winners of the exam. However, their victory against the Healers marks the initiation of a long-anticipated war: Mystics versus Healers.

Game Structure & Gameplay

Aurah, our playable protagonist, is a mystic possessing the rare ability to command two elemental forces: Fire and Water. Such dual elemental mastery is a unique and exceptional gift, as only a select few throughout the universe can manipulate more than a single element. Consequently, she has been chosen to attend the prestigious Arch-Academy.

Our game commences in third-person with an elaborate obstacle course, meticulously designed by the Arch-Academy to evaluate and instruct mystics in harnessing their unique abilities. This course presents a myriad of challenges, including traps, puzzles, platforming and combat drones, each serving as a vital lesson in mastering their powers. Within this challenging terrain, Aurah encounters not only her own formidable capabilities but also a rival, as well as fellow mystics, all navigating the course's complexities. Dynamics of the game include combat, puzzle-solving, and minor exploration.

In the later part of the game, the anti-magic rebels also invade the academy forcing the mystic students to unite and fight back.

Win & Lose Conditions

- WIN: Player reaches the destination or achieves the goal as specified by the game objectives.
- LOSE: When Health is 0, player dematerializes and materializes (spawns) in the nearest/last-visited Teleportal (checkpoint) with full Health. There is no player death or game over screen in the game.

Challenge Complexity

Aurah is aimed for Balanced Fun. Skills required is the combination/variation of spell mechanics needed to be understood and executed in combat as well as puzzle-solving situations.

Stress is minimal in the starting sections and is increased in later sections. This is done by increasing the interval of Teleportals. This provides a punishment to the player in which the player has to respawn further from death in later sections of the game. Time pressure is also featured in later parts of the game.

In the starting stages, the player has no abilities and only basic controls which the player has to use to progress in the game. However, after certain sections, the player gains new abilities which the player must use to progress in the game increasing challenge complexity.

Players who need more challenge can try to find the secret health upgrades in the game. There is a reward for players who collect all health upgrades in the game: A secret ending.

Players who have prior experience in playing adventure games and puzzle games will find it easier to master the mechanics featured in the game.

Challenge Types

- **SPATIAL CHALLENGES**
  - Player has to figure out how to get from point A to B. Player has to have to idea of the level's geometry and mechanics to proceed.
- **BODILY-KINESTHETIC CHALLENGES**
  - The player have to time jumps between platforms and time dodges between enemies and projectiles to progress and survive. The game tests the player's sense of timing and reaction.
- **LOGICAL CHALLENGES**
  - Player has to have an understanding and logic of spell mechanics and puzzles presented to proceed.

Gameplay Situations

- **SECOND-TO-SECOND**
  - "There's a projectile coming towards me, I need to decide to dodge either left or right."
- **MINUTE-TO-MINUTE**
  - "Cast Water Orbs at the drone while trying to avoid all its fire projectiles."
- **HOUR-TO-HOUR**
  - "You must go and use the Flamethrower spell learnt in class to progress in the obstacle course and win the tournament."
- **OVERARCHING**
  - "The obstacle course has begun, you must navigate through the platforms, puzzles and enemies to win the tournament."

Game Pillars

- **MAGIC FANTASY**
  - Learn & Cast Magic Spells
  - Explore Magic Fantasy World
  - Learn More Lore about Magic and its origin
- **FUTURE SCI-FI**
  - Futuristic Technology
  - Explore Futuristic World
  - Learn about Different Planets & Their Backstories
- **SCHOOL**
  - School Student Relationships
  - Attend the Futuristic Magic School in Space
  - Obstacle Course Tournament to Rank Students

Gameplay Pillars

- Learn & Cast Magic Spells
- Combat Enemies
- Solve Puzzles
- Platforming

Character Development & Moral of the Story

The futuristic fantasy game focuses on the character development and building of Aurah who is a lone wolf type character in the beginning of the game. As she has been banned from her parent planets, she has always been an outsider. So, she has always been independent, prefers working alone and does not like working with others.

However, towards the end of the game, the rebels invade, and she is forced to work together with her rival, Rivian. She realizes there are many downsides to being isolated and not depending on others. She learns the power of friendship and teamwork by working with Rivian and defeating the rebels.

Aurah's transformation throughout the game illustrates that isolating oneself and avoiding collaboration can limit personal growth and hinder the ability to address greater threats. Ultimately, the story teaches us that the strength of unity and the bonds of friendship can lead to greater achievements and personal fulfillment.

Inspirations

- Harry Potter Games (For Third-Person Platforming & Puzzle Gameplay)
- Star Wars Movies (For Futuristic Fantasy Setting)
- Elder Scrolls V: Skyrim (For Magic Combat Gameplay)
- Mortal Kombat 1 (For 2D Cutscenes)

Levels

The primary location of the game will be in the Arch-Academy interiors and campus which is situated on a floating remnant of Earth in space. The campus is protected by a force field.

Level 1 is the Simulator Grounds which is a simulation room of the academy. This can be used to generate any world for training and education purposes. In this level, the Simulator Grounds generate the Floating Islands in which each subsection is divided into separate islands for the magical feel and proper level structure. Magic fantasy visuals are used in this level.

Level 2 is the Tech Tower of the academy which is the building that takes care of all the technological aspects of the academy. This level is more focused on vertical navigation in which the player has to climb up to the top floor to finish the level. Futuristic high technology visuals are used in this level.
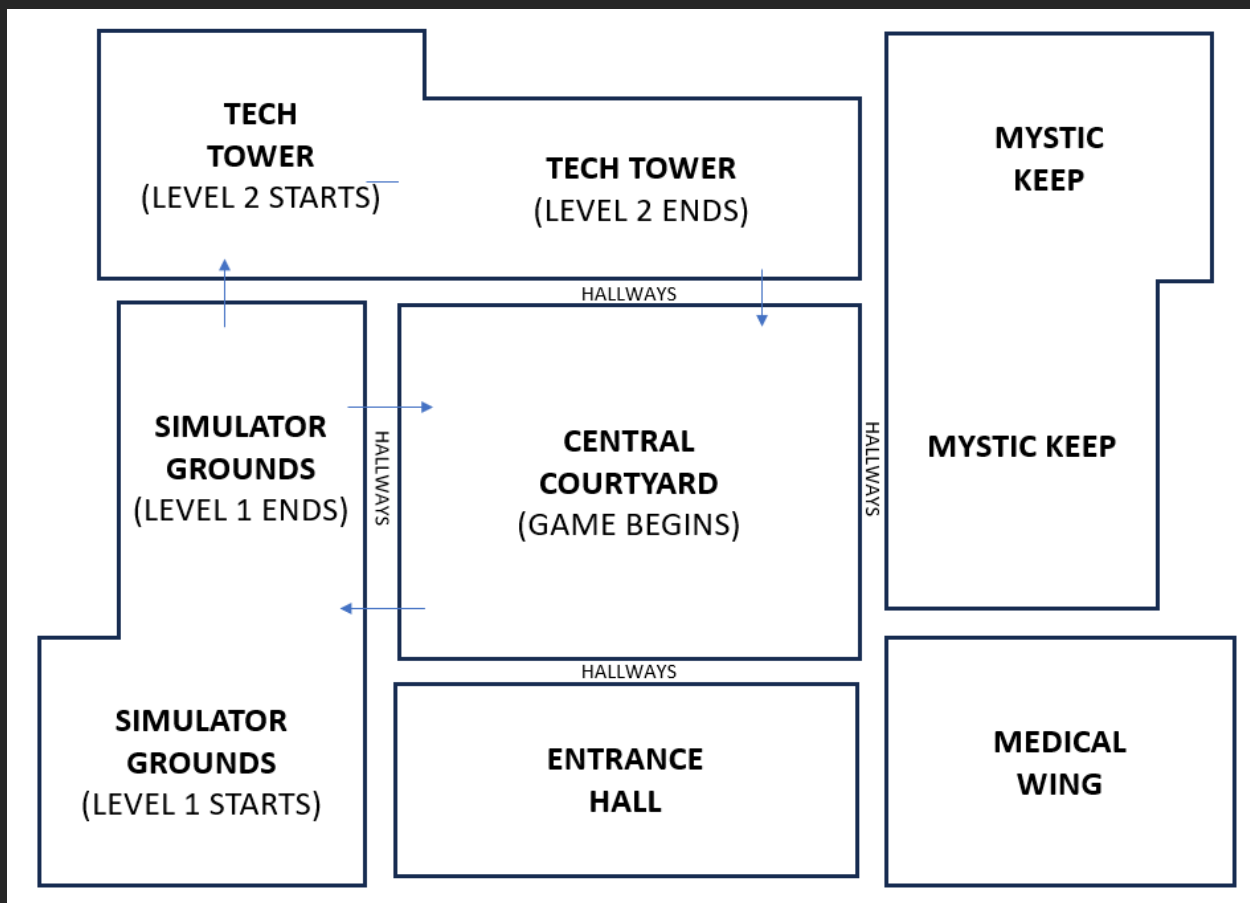
LEVEL 1: Simulator Grounds

FEATURED SPELL: Water Orb

Section 1: Basic Navigation

The player is put into the obstacle course. The first level environment is the Simulator Grounds. Mentor Arcamax appears in the nearest Holospace and explains the obstacle course and the objectives and tells player to try navigating through the course. The player has to then progress through a short section of the course that requires basic movement (WASD), looking (Mouse) and jumping (Space) mechanics to proceed.

Section 2: Teleportals & Health

Mentor Arcamax appears in the Holospace and explains about Teleportals and HyperBlinks in short. The HP gauge appears on screen permanently after saying that HyperBlinks can be used to monitor health. The player has to then navigate through the section that has teleportals and harmful obstacles that reduce health. The player also experiences what happens when the health reaches 0. As soon as HP reaches 0, player is teleported to last Teleportal and Health is restored. Player learns about checkpoints, death & respawn, teleportation, healing and harmful obstacles in this section.

Section 3: Spell Tutorial – Water Orb

Mentor Arcamax appears in the Holospace and tells Aurah to try using the Water Orb spell (Tap Left-Click) that she learnt in class to proceed in the course. A focus point (crosshair) for casting spells permanently

appears on screen. The player has to progress through the section with the new spell WATER ORB (Left-Click) that will only have puzzle elements without any harmful obstacles.

Section 4: Main Course

Mentor Arcamax appears in the Holospace and tells Aurah that the real course has started and to use everything she has learnt to progress. This section will contain a combination of every mechanic learned so far including harmful obstacles.

Level Summary

The Simulator Grounds is like a simulation room that can generate any world for academy training purposes. In this level, the Simulator Grounds generate floating islands in clouds giving it a magical feel.

Level 1 was chosen for tutorial as it is also the first section of the obstacle course making it meaningful for the game to explain basic controls to the player as the Mentor explains about the course to the student.

Level 1 follows the game loop very well in which the student begins by learning new stuff, implementing it in navigation and obstacles and then facing hard challenges based on learned elements. Obstacles can include platforming, puzzle sections and battling with enemies (drones).

The unique feature introduced in Level 1 is the first spell, Water Orb that can be used both as an attack move and a mechanic to solve puzzles. Teleportals are also new mechanics introduced in the first level.

The intensity of the level is slow-paced in the beginning (section 1) as the player is getting accustomed and learning the basics. Intensity is increased in section 2 and 3 as the player will face harmful obstacles and has to use a spell to navigate and solve puzzles. Section 4 which is the climax of the first level will have highest intensity of the level as the player has to face everything learnt so far on a timer.

The player is engaged with the level with the following factors

- Learning about the lore of the game
- Seeing the environment of the Academy for the first time
- Learning new spell (Water Orb) and using it in the level
- Learning about Teleportals and using it in level

The level takes place in Simulator Grounds which is a futuristic training grounds for the academy. The environment will be designed with this in mind making it a primary point of interest for the game.

The challenges unique to the level include puzzle sections that require the use of the Water Orb spell to proceed. Another major challenge presented is section 4 of the level which will have high-intensity challenges on a timer.

The water spell (Water Orb) and Teleportals will be reused in later levels. The same level will also be reused in the final stages of the game when the rebels invade. However the navigation will be different as the level will appear damaged, with rebels and the player will also have more spells to navigate through the level.

FEATURED SPELL: Flamethrower

Section 1: Battle Basics

The course introduces basic enemies like robot elementals which are futuristic drones with elemental magic integrated into them through magical crystals. Fire Elementals appear in this section which can be destroyed with the Water Orb that the player learned in the first level. Fire Elementals can cause big damage to the player with their Fire Ball projectiles. Players will use the movement they have learned to this point to avoid the different attacks from the drones

Section 2: Spell Tutorial – Flamethrower

Mentor Arcamax will again appear in the form of a hologram to talk to Aurah about the fire spells that she can use; he tells her to try using the Flamethrower spell (Hold Right-Click) that she learnt in class to proceed in the course. She will do so by burning down obstacles so she can pass through.

Section 3: Advanced Battles

Once the player has understood how to use the flamethrower she will arrive in a section where she will face off against ice elementals which are drones that can shoot ice projectiles that cause small damage to the player but will slow the player down for a few seconds. Those drones will be weak to fire attack so the player will have to find a way to close the gap between them and the drones so that they can use the flamethrower to destroy them.

Section 4: Fire & Water

In this section the player will put all knowledge that has been gathered to this point to complete a combination of puzzles and fighting the different drones that have been encountered so far and also fighting a boss type enemy. The challenge will be harder than the previous ones.

Boss Fight:

At the end of the second level the player will encounter a boss battle against her rival Rivian.

Level Summary

The Second level will feature the tech tower which is the part of the school focused on technology with the aesthetics really leaning into the high-tech style which is a contrast to the magical aesthetics of level 1. Tech Tower will have vertical navigation level structure which is a contrast to the horizontal navigation level structure featured in level 1 (Simulator Grounds).

The different obstacles will be more science and technology focused in terms of aesthetics and style. The second level will also feature high tech training robots that will help you practice your combat.

The game Loop will be similar to the first level but since the player has already learned the basics in the first level he will skip the basics and start by doing battle training with the robots and then learning a new spell and then doing harder challenges. The level will end with more story building and dialogue situations similar to the first level.

Most of the assets used in the level are planned to be reused later on in the game towards the final part where every part of the game will be revisited.

FIRE ELEMENTAL

Futuristic drones powered with magical crystals. Fire elementals emit red energy and shoots fire projectile that can cause heavy damage to player. Fire Elementals can only be deactivated with the Water Orb spell.

ICE ELEMENTAL

Futuristic drones powered with magical crystals. Ice elementals emit blue energy and shoots ice projectile that can cause medium damage to player and also slows down the player for some time. Ice Elementals can only be deactivated with the Flamethrower spell.

RIVIAN (Level 2 Boss Fight)

Being capable of controlling lightning magic, Rivian's mechanics will be a very fast lightning dash and throwing electric bolts. Rivian will be on an electric hoverboard, and he will be flying around the arena while attacking you. This boss fight will test the players accuracy and movement as she will have to shoot water orbs at a very fast-moving target while also avoiding fast moving electric bolts. The player will also be able to use advanced tactics to defeat the boss like trying to get in close to use her flamethrower by using the water orb to temporarily paralyze Rivian.

EARTH ELEMENTAL (Level 3)

Futuristic drones powered with magical crystals. Earth elementals emit green energy and shoots short-ranged rock projectile that can cause 3x damage to player. Earth Elementals can be deactivated quickly with the Water Jet spell.

ELECTRIC ELEMENTAL (Level 3)

Futuristic drones powered with magical crystals. Electric elementals emit yellow energy and shoots lightning projectile that can cause medium damage to player and also stuns the player for a short time. Electric Elementals can be deactivated quickly with the Fire Ball spell.

REBEL RANGER (Level 4)

Light Ranged Soldiers of the anti-magic rebels, the Healers. Rebel Rangers use high tech weapons such as laser rifles to neutralize mystics. Rebel Rangers can be damaged with both Water Orb and Flamethrower. However, it is easier to defeat them quickly with the Water Orb.

REBEL KNIGHT (Level 4)

Heavy Melee Soldiers of the anti-magic rebels, the Healers. Rebel Knights use high tech weapons such as laser swords to neutralize mystics. Rebel Knights can be damaged with both Water Orb and Flamethrower. However, Flamethrowers cause more damage and Water Orb cause only minor damage due to their heavy armor.

Interactable Objects

HOLOSPACE

The mentor or other mystics can appear in the hologram projector to guide or communicate with the player. The player can also interact with hologram projectors to call the mentor to repeat the dialogue or clue given earlier.

TELEPORTALS & HYPERBLINKS

Teleportal is a Teleportation Platform that teleports the player to a specific teleportal. It also acts as a checkpoint / respawn point and healing point. As soon as HP reaches 0, player is teleported to last Teleportal and Health is restored

In-game Story for Mechanic: "The Academy does not include any lethal obstacles in the course. As soon as the Academy detects one of the students is in harm's way, that student is teleported to the last or nearest Teleportal. The Academy does this with the help of high tech chips called HyperBlinks installed in student's necks which can be used to monitor their location and health. "

The rebels use these chips later in the game to disable the students' powers and to know their location, resulting in the students destroying the HyperBlinks stored in their necks.

Controls & UI/UX

Controls

- Movement   - WASD
- Jump / Double Jump   - Space
- Interact   - E
- Dodge   - Double-tap WASD
- Fire Dash   - Shift + WASD (Learned in Level 2 Section 2)
- Cast Water Orb   - Left-Click (Learned in Level 1 Section 3)
- Cast Charged Water Orb- Hold Left-Click (Learned in Level 1 Section 3)
- Cast Water Jet   - Shift + Hold Left-Click (Learned in Level 3)
- Cast Flamethrower   - Hold Right-Click (Learned in Level 2 Section 2)
- Cast Fire Ball   - Shift + Right-Click (Learned in Level 4)
- Pause Game   - ESC

HUD

- **Focus Point (Crosshair)**
  - A crosshair for aiming and casting spells
- **Health**
  - Starting maximum health is 100. It can be extended by collecting secret Health Extender powerups (+10 to maximum health).

Menus

- Main Menu
- Settings Menu
- Pause Menu / In-game Menu
- Save/Load Menu
- Exit
- Credits

2D Cutscenes

As the scope is large, 2D cutscenes will be used for the following events

- **Opening Cinematic**
- **Rebel Invasion**
- **Game Ending**

In-game Cutscenes

Multiple in-game cutscenes or dialogue interaction will be required for more storytelling, world-building, and character development especially the character arc of Aurah in which she becomes a team worker from a lone wolf.

Spell Mechanics

Aurah has different hand gestures for fire and water. She uses **closed fist** to cast water spells and **open palm** to cast fire spells. Similarly the player uses Left-click for closed fist / water spells and Right-click for open palm / fire spells.

WATER ORB

- Learnt & Featured in Level 1
- Long-range Projectile Attack with Small Damage
- Interact with Switches from a long distance
- Extinguish Minor Fire Obstacles from a distance
- Effective against Fire Elementals (Drones)
- Control: Tap Mouse Left-Click

FLAMETHROWER

- Learnt & Featured in Level 2
- Short-range Continuous Attack that Deals more damage the longer its fired on an enemy
- Burn Flammable Obstacles
- Effective against Ice Elementals (Drones)
- Control: Hold Mouse Right-Click

FIRE DASH

- Learnt in Level 2
- Damage enemies on contact
- Can be used to dodge attacks
- Double jump

WATER JET

- Learnt & Featured in Level 3
- Short-distance Spray Attack Med-damage
- Push heavy objects/enemies with force
- Extinguish major fire obstacles
- Control: Hold Ctrl + Mouse Left-Click

FIRE BALL

- Learnt & Featured in Level 4
- Med-distance AOE Attack Big-damage
- Explode breakable objects/walls
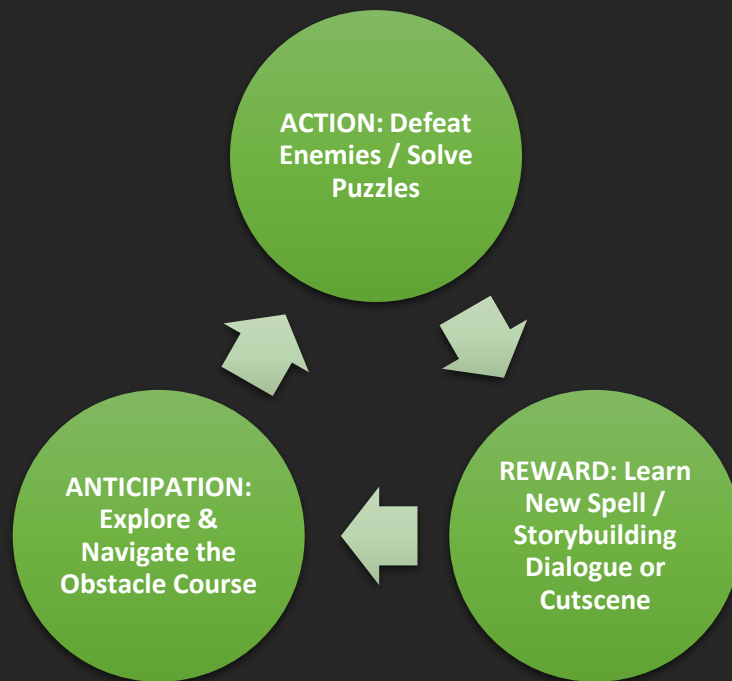- Control: Hold Ctrl + Mouse Right-Click

SPELL MANA SPECTRUM (For Lore Purpose)

	TYPE		Examples
ELEMENTAL	**YELLOW**	**LIGHTNING**	*Summon Chain Lightning, Lightning Bolt, Lightning Weapons*
		ELECTRIC	*Electric Shock, Magnetic Blast, Electrify Weapons*
		WIND	*Wind Blast, Cyclone, Flying Weapons*
	GREEN	**METAL**	*Sand Storm, Sand Cyclone, Quicksand, Metal Armor*
		EARTH	*Earthquake, Rock Armor, Rock Wall*
		BIO	*Beast Morph, Control Animals, Control Plants*
	RED	**BLOOD**	*Absorb Blood, Blood Drain, Blood Clone*
		FIRE	*Fire Ball, Flamethrower, Fire Dash, Fire Rain, Fire Ring, Flaming Weapons*
		LAVA	*Lava Rock, Meteor Rain, Lava Armor, Lava Wall*
	BLUE	**ICE**	*Ice Spikes, Ice Weapons, Freeze Blast, Hailstorm*
		WATER	*Water Orb, Water Shield, Water Jet, Hurricane, Tsunami*
		TOXIC	*Acid Rain, Poison Ball, Acid Geyser, Poison Weapons*
COSMIC	**WHITE**	**LIGHT**	*Blinding Light, Invisibility, Light Speed*
		SPACE	*Space Portal, Black Hole, Space Warp*
		TIME	*Slow Time, Stop Time, Reverse Time*
	BLACK	**SHADOW**	*Shadow Tentacles, Shadow Phasing*
		MIND	*Brainwash, Memory Manipulation*
		DARK	*Cloaking Darkness, Dark Matter Blast*

Game Loops

Game Loop

ACTION: Defeat Enemies / Solve Puzzles

REWARD: Learn New Spell / Storybuilding Dialogue or Cutscene

ANTICIPATION: Explore & Navigate the Obstacle Course

Combat Core Loop

Dodge & Aim

Cast Spell

Defeat Enemy

Move to Next Enemy

Puzzle Core Loop

Investigate Puzzle

Solve Puzzle

Find New Puzzle
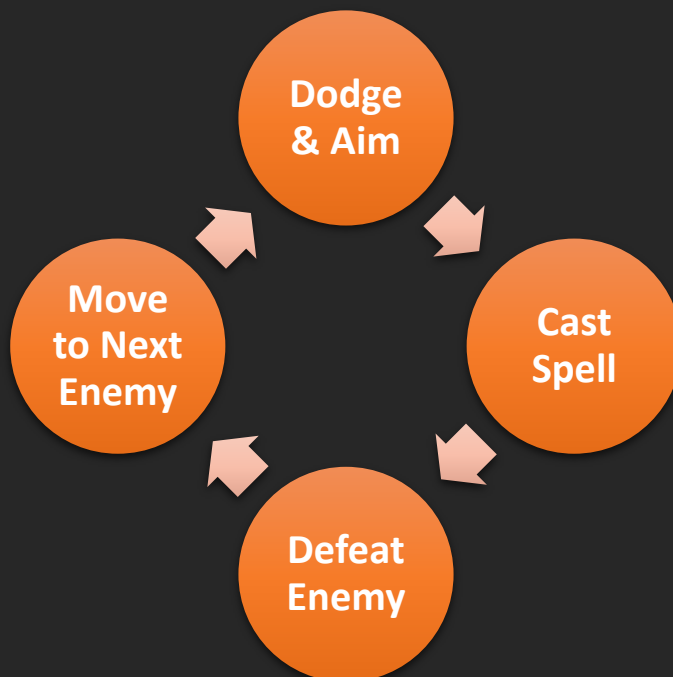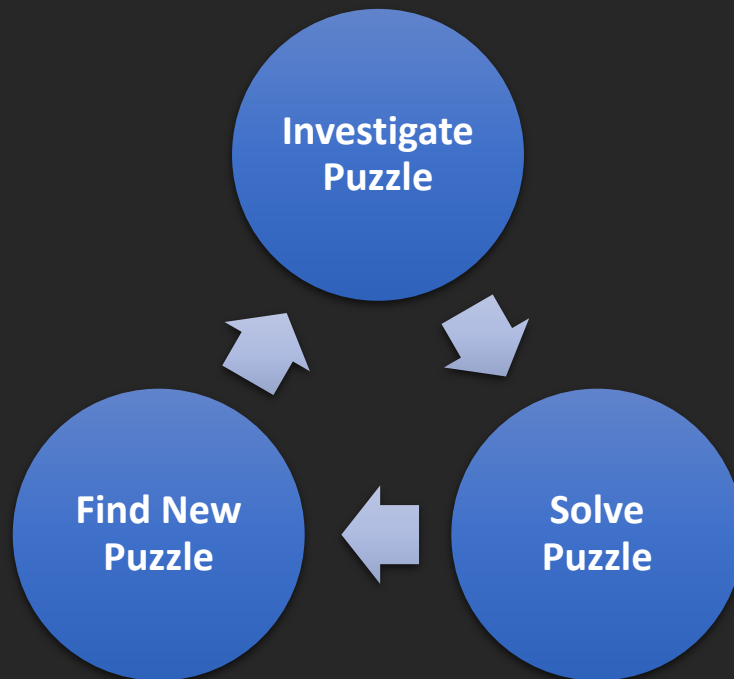
Combat + Puzzle Secondary Loop

Defeat Enemies / Solve Puzzles

Clear Area

Move to Next Area
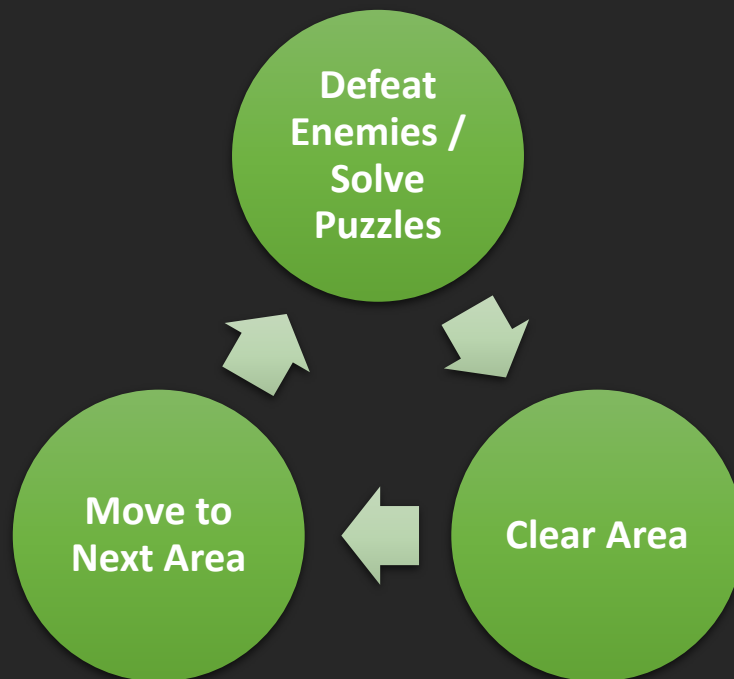
Combat + Puzzle Tertiary Loop

Clear Objective

Advance Story

Learn New Mechanic

Level Loop

Level 1

Level 2

Level 3

Level 4

WARM UP:
Learn New Spell

CHALLENGE:
Obstacle Course
integrating New Spell

CHALLENGE:
Obstacle Course
(Rebel Invasion)

REWARD/REST:
Storybuilding
Cutscenes or
Dialogues

CHALLENGE CLIMAX:
Boss Fight / Difficult
Challenge

CHALLENGE CLIMAX:
Final Boss Fight
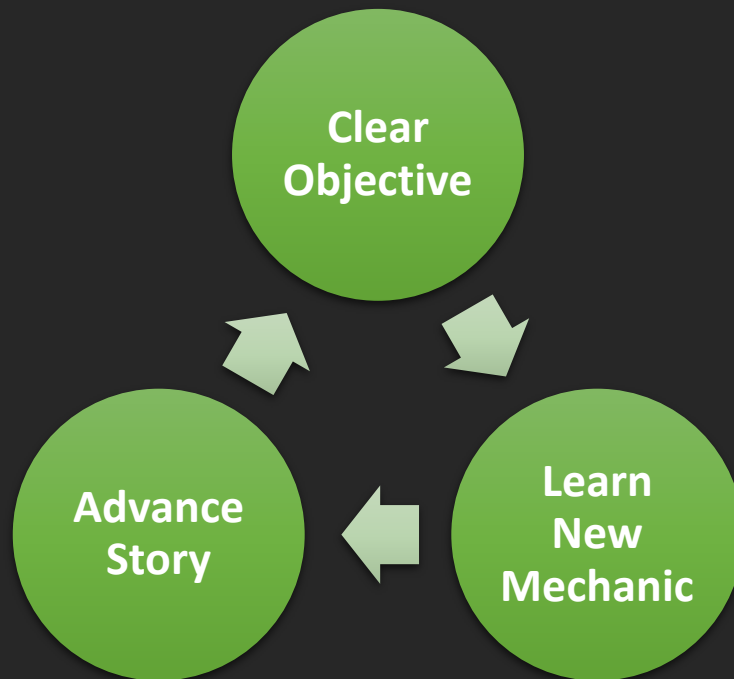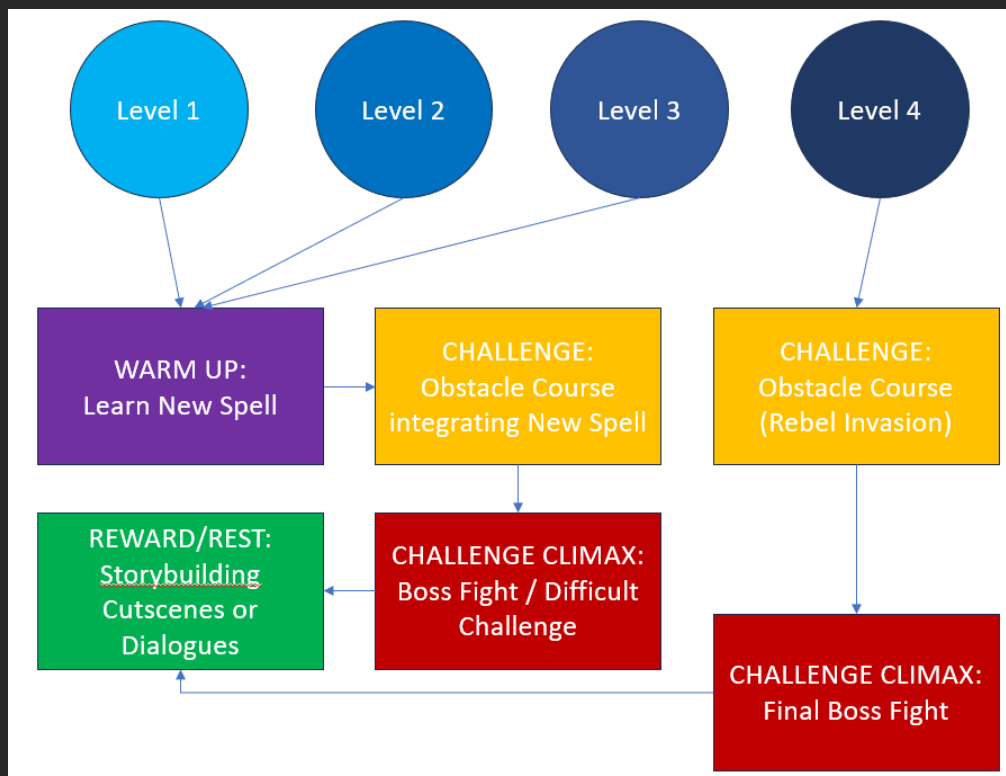
Genre & Target Audience

Age Rating: PG-13

Player Types

- Science Fiction Enthusiasts: People who enjoy science fiction stories, particularly those involving space exploration, post-apocalyptic scenarios, and the consequences of natural disasters.
- Fantasy Fans: Those who appreciate fantasy elements, such as the presence of mana and the abilities of the Mystics. The combination of science fiction and fantasy could be appealing.
- Fans of Post-Apocalyptic Settings: Those who are drawn to post-apocalyptic settings and stories about humanity's survival and adaptation in the aftermath of a catastrophic event.
- Story-Driven & World-Building Fans: Those who appreciate games with well-developed lore, world-building, and a deep backstory, as the game seems to have an intricate and immersive universe.
- Magic Enthusiasts: Love to use magic spells for combat and exploration. Love to explore the mysteries of the magical academy of the future in space.
- Puzzle Solvers: Love puzzles and have fun solving it. Love to use spell mechanics to solve the creative and out-of-the-box puzzles.

Dedication Spectrum

Both casual gamers and core gamers will like this game as it is short fun experience. Hardcore Gamers will find this game fun due to the secret health powerups. Collecting all secret health powerups will unlock a secret ending for the game. (Does not exist in the first 2 levels)

The Bartle Types

Achievers will have fun playing the game as there are secret health powerups. Collecting all secret health powerups will unlock a secret ending for the game. (Does not exist in the first 2 levels). Explorers will have fun exploring the futuristic magic academy in space.

Caillois' Ideas on Play

Aurah features elements of mainly Agon and Ludus as it is a linear goal-oriented and narrative game.

Moodboard

All images were generated using Midjourney AI except for the cover image.
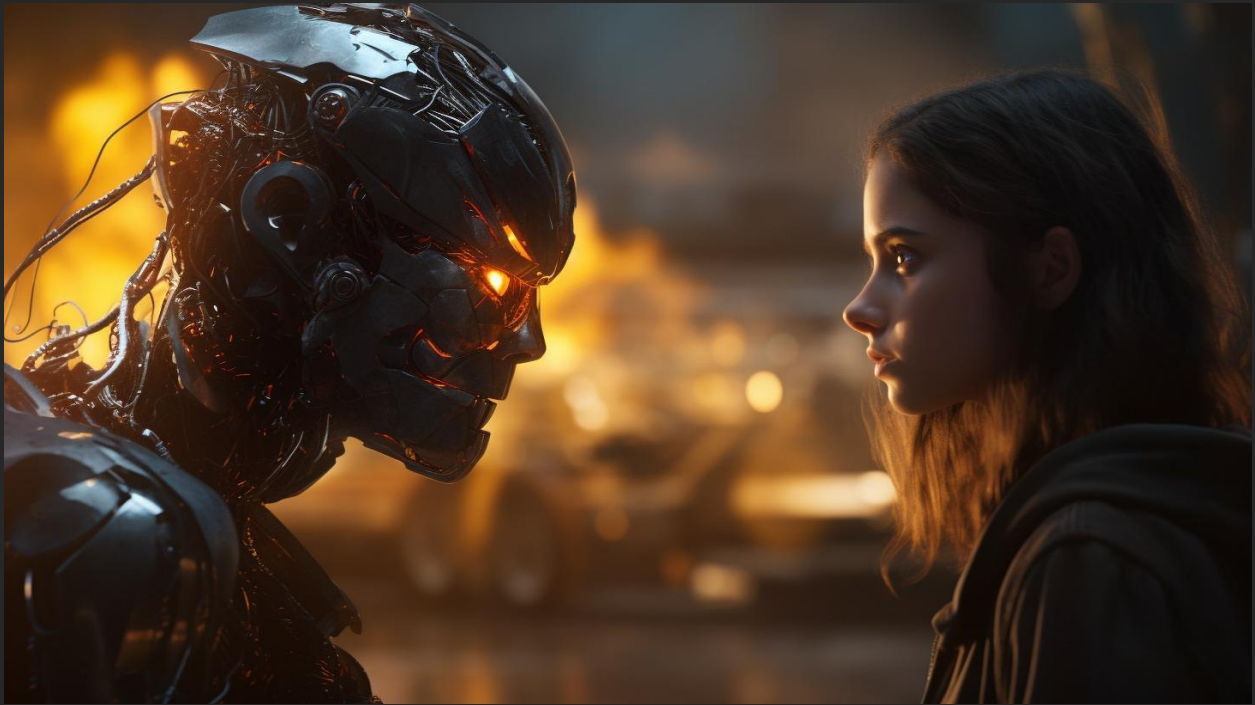
Team

TEAM APEX

- Cristian Mihai Calugaru   - Technical & System Designer
- Manyu Vikrant Kumar   - Modelling & Texture Artist
- Mohammed Salman Salim   - Narrative & Gameplay Designer
- Natarajan Kalaiazhagan   - Animation & Sound Designer