

## ***Heist in Eb Minor:***

A turn-based 2D shooter that immerses the player in the fast-paced and dangerous world of interstellar piracy. Join and command your fully-voiced crew of thugs as you set off for yet another heist... and hope it won't be your last!

This game is designed for somewhat mature audiences (13+ most likely) that enjoy engaging in difficult and punishing turn-based strategy. Unlike most turn-based combat, however, the actions of the player will be under time constraints! Take too long and you've snapped under the pressure, sacrificing your turn to the enemy.

A lot of the flow of combat will be decided at the character selection screen - make sure to select a crew that synergizes well together and leaves no weaknesses for your enemy to exploit. Among the potential crewmates will be a sniper, a demolitionist, a melee fighter, a heavy-weapons specialist, and a utility mechanic (more TBA).

The story, the character development, and the music will all work in tandem to help supplement the gameplay to create a fully immersed user experience that is so often sought for in RPGs but with a fresh spin to help diversify what can often be a genre riddled with generic characters and plotlines.

### **Gameplay:**

Challenge structure is based on the necessity of combat encounters to advance through the ship which endangers the survival of your various group members. Puzzles are not explicit, in that the puzzle lays in creating a combat strategy to enable group survival.

Play flow is segmented between exploration and battle mode, with the mechanics of each being similar (battle mode simply adds the elements of attacking and turn-based movement).

### **Mechanics:**

Players move about in their group of characters in an up-down-left-right manner, triggering encounters upon entering the line of sight of enemy characters. Battle encounters generally follow the pattern: move a limited number of spaces and then choose a target area to attack.

### **Story/Setting:**

You control a team of space-pirate mercenaries and you're about to embark on one of the biggest heists of your life. You customize your crew by selecting from a diverse

pool of these intense fighters. As you sail on in your space ship named “It Still Floats” and land on the enemy’s ship “E Flat Minor” you are suddenly surrounded and realized you were set up! You’re thrown in the brig and left for dead...until someone lets you out. You play through levels with you and your crew, defeating the enemies left and right. You work your way from the bottom jail cells up through the cabins and finally to the top, with each level being a different floor on the ship. Eventually you get to the top of the ship, find the betrayer, and complete the heist.

### **Levels:**

Introductory level is in “easy” mode, with few enemies and straight-forward battle encounters to introduce players to the game mechanics and flow. Subsequent levels introduce more powerful/numerous enemies to make combat harder while the necessity of encounters to access certain areas of the ship increases the dependency of advancement on previous actions.

Finally reach the main deck of the ship, where the players have to engage in a large boss battle.

### **Interface:**

Visual is top-down and 2D but certain actions in combat encounters are shown in 3D (for instance, missile attacks that “hop” over obstacles).

Key Elements: health bar for each character (could be displayed below map display), stats for each character upon selection (damage, range, movement capabilities, ammo, health), list of items that the party has collected/can use, on-map display of attack ranges (green areas are high hit-chance; yellow, average; red, low). Maybe a list of character icons to demonstrate the order of turns that exist in the game.

### **Artificial Intelligence:**

1. friendlies are given hard-commands by the player
2. Enemy AI can use a greedy approach where they focus on the nearest possible targets
  - a. but we also want to give them some sort of knowledge/useage of the terrain as it applies to game tactics
  - b. Consider doing weighted random decisions, to favor the greedy approach but also introducing a level of randomness to movement/attack to avoid player taking advantage of AI patterns
  - c. Randomly generate enemy paths at beginning of encounter?

### **Technical:**

Unity 2D - need to research how to make top-down 2D games, potentially mixing 3D elements into a 2D game, making sure that github will work for version control. Researching how to create 2D art, text boxes, etc. How to film cutscenes. How to incorporate music, and have that music transition between songs.

### **Game Art:**

We want the classic feel of the *Pirates of the Caribbean*, but in the skies. We want to upgrade everything while still having that same rustic feel. The new feel is going to be steampunk: a lot of grungy mechanicals added to the classic pirate ship (similar to something seen in say *Treasure Planet*). As an addition we want the characters to look and feel like scruffy pirates with upgrades, such as arm cannons, plasma rapiers, and eye patches that double as laser beams. On top of all that, we want monkeys to be in the game, adding the game feel of futuristic alien races. In terms of art, we want either (or both!) a large tricked out steampunk pirate gorilla or a sophisticated pirate with a monocle chimpanzee.

### **Audio:**

The soundscape of this game is going to be a large jump from the usual space style. We will depart from the ambient tones and sparse piano melodies that are often associated with the massive-scale of space travel (e.g. *Mass Effect*). Instead, we will be creating a jazz-infused Hip-Hop soundtrack inspired by the current wave of artists coming out of Chicago (e.g. Chance the Rapper, Joey Bada\$\$, Vic Mensa, Noname Gypsy, Saba).

We also will be writing a full script that will be voice-acted by actors we will cast later on in the semester through selection (or potentially even auditions). All music and voice acting for the show will be recorded, edited, mixed, and mastered using ProTools 11. Some music may be requested for use from artists independent from the project.

### **Milestones and Production Timeline:**

See Production Schedule