Gameplay

Player 2

Player 1

Key

- Player 1 Vision
- Player 2 Vision
- **1** - Teddy Bear
- **2** - Clock Cat
- **3** - Tax-Dog
- **4** - Painting
- **5** - Doll
- **6** - Mannequin
- **7** - Spider
- **8** - Kid Ghost
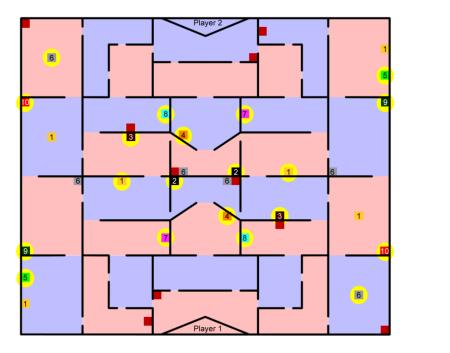- **9** - Jack-Box
- **10** - Santa
- - Fireplace
- - Main Spawn

Game Narrative / Summary

Two players take the roles of night-shift employees tasked to observe the potential paranormal activities occurring at a famous occult museum. Through a progression of stages, commonly referred as 'nights', players will be required to monitor and interact with an increasing number of Entities. As the museum continues to gain attention from day-time visitors, it further seeks to provide new additions in the form of supposedly haunted artifacts. While not all of these contributions are actually haunted, some will display bizarre behaviors, specifically during the night-shift.

As the museum is aware of the possibility of actual hauntings, both employees are well-informed of the potential dangers of monitoring the occult. A high salary offering, or even appeal of risks and thrills, has persuaded both employees to participate in night-time observations, allowing the museum to effectively monitor the behavior of the exhibits. This allows them to provide visitors with evidence of activity, research which objects have value based on ethereal activity, and also ensure that the specter's do not attempt to exit the museum or harm its foundation, simply by positioning two employees in the vicinity as a distraction.

Given the variety of haunted objects available at the museum, employees run the risk of fatal interactions if they do not proceed cautiously. Some specters, whether intentional or not, have the possible chance to harm or kill the employees upon direct engagement. In order to reduce this unfortunate result, the museum offers the employees a number of simple tools and information pieces to assist in warding off the exhibits.

Given an intercom and text-messaging system, both employees are able to openly communicate with each other during their night-shift. Employees are also given a tablet, allowing them to monitor activates in the museum rooms. As each museum room typically contains two cameras, visibility is divided between employees, allowing them a single camera view in each room. While this means that they will only be responsible for half of the cameras, it also requires them to constantly communicate with the other employee in case something else is present in the other part of the rooms.

Employees are also given a number of other tools to survive the night, and many of these features may only become available with the addition of certain Entities. However, universally, the employees are given the following interactions. A collection of museum pamphlets are available of their desk, each providing a summary of noticeable specters residing in the museum. Although the room is dimly lit, the four door corridors are pitch-black, and therefore employees are given four buttons to light up the doors. Employees are also given a unique middle button to turn-off their power. Finally, while not an actual tool, employees are encouraged and allowed to hide under their desk if desired.

By communicating with the other player, and by making use of the available tools to prevent Entities from entering their room and harming them, players attempt to survive each night and earn their pay. As gameplay progresses, more Entities may be introduced and mixed with previous Entities, and the interactions may become more aggressive. This requires a combination of individual skill, collaboration, and trust between players to last until the end of their shift each night.

Gameplay Screens

Main Screen

      At this stage of development, the main screen provided a limited number of options. Specifically, these will allow the player to either Host or Join a lobby. Additional selection options may include Exit, Options, and Archives.

Archives

      The Archives is a visual representation of previous game losses. In simple terms, each time the player loses a night, the end screen will display a newspaper clipping elaborating on their death. This will be detailed further in this topic, but the main purpose of the Archives is to store the collection of newspaper clippings, providing the player with a saved backlog of informational dialogues concerning deaths.

      In particular, aside from also visualizing the newspaper clipping, the Archives will also provide information concerning the night, time of death, cause of death, employee name, and partner employee name. The Archives is not necessary to gameplay, but could be an interesting method to visualize gameplay data, remind the player of noteworthy game sessions, and detail analytical data to show which Entities provide the most difficult, what time of night the player usually fails at, as well as other miscellaneous information.

Employee Name Prompt

      Regardless of whether the player chooses to host or join a lobby, the game may prompt the player for an employee name before continuation. If this represents the first session, the player will be instructed to create a first and last name for their employee. This ID is primarily for novelty value, but will be visible to the other player, available on their desk as a name card, and become the name-source on the newspaper clippings upon employee death.

      This employee title remains active until the player dies, whereupon the employee name is added into the archive, and upon additional gameplay, the player must choose a new employee name. If the player lost a previous round, returning to the host or join lobby option will once more prompt them to choose a name. Otherwise, there employee name will remain visible on the main screen with progress information. It should also be noted that the employee name prompt will default to their last entered name, allowing the player to choose creating new employee names, or to simply continue playing as a new version of the previous employee.

      Regardless of the player's employee name, this does not hinder gameplay and will not require them to start over the entirety of the game. Upon player / employee death, a new 'employee' is hired, therefore continuing the game in place of the deceased employee. This means that if the player fails on Night 4, they will need to create a new employee name, but can

continue from Night 4. If the player dies on Night 4, but their partner manages to complete the shift alone, they will need to create a new employee, but may continue from Night 5. Therefore, the creation of the employee name is merely meant to add immersion and facilitate the collection of death information.

Host / Join Lobby

On the Main Screen, these will likely be represented by separate buttons. Upon hosting a game, the player will be given the option of selecting a Night, depending on their overall progress. This means that, having beaten Night 2, the player will only be able to select up to Night 3. A custom mode, which may be unlocked later, may only become available after the player has beaten the entirety of the game. The player may also set the game to private, adding a password to only allow a friend to enter the game. Otherwise, other options may eventually become relevant, but aside from setting the game to private and selecting a stage, no other choices are required.

Joining a game will simply present the player with a list of available hosted lobbies. They player will be able to filter the list depending on the alphabetical order of the lobby host's employee name and the current Night. By clicking on a lobby, it will either immediately join or prompt the player for a password if designated as private. Any player would only be able to join lobbies with Nights currently unlocked. Due to the methods in which this could limit match-making, this might need to be a toggled option for players.

The Lobby will display the following. On the left side of the screen both player name tags will be enlarged and visible, primarily conveying the employee name. It could also detail the pay earned as well. Within each employee name tag, an imprinted box is visible that can also be clicked. By clicking the box, an inked checkmark appears, indicating that the player is ready. Once both players are ready, a brief countdown occurs, and the game starts.

On the Lobby screen, a few other features could be made apparent for the players. An exit game button would likely need to be available in the corner of the screen, returning the player to the list of available lobbies. If the host presses this button, it returns them to the Main Screen and returns to the other member, if applicable, to the lobby list.

Players would also be able to visualize the current Night being played, as well as a brief blurb describing or hinting at the Night structure.

End Screen

Depending on results, both players will be returned to an end screen, and upon hitting a continuation button, will be returned to the lobby with the current Night incremented.

If players successfully complete the Night, both players will be able to visualize both of their corresponding paychecks, along with a possible clue or notice hinting at the upcoming

Night. These paychecks will be signed-out to each of the employee names, and would typically be calculated to the same amount. However, further development could deduct costs or provide bonuses depending on player actions, such as reducing the amount of time spent activating door-lights. Regardless, this would not impact gameplay, and only provide a subtle challenge for players wanting to maximize salary income.

If both players lose, the end screen would display a single newspaper clipping. This clipping would briefly announce the death of both employee names, while also incorporating their plausible death scenarios into the newspaper descriptions. Players will then be able to return to the lobby, but must continue from the same Night.

If one player loses, but the other manages to survive the night, the end screen may be somewhat different. The player that survives would have their available paycheck, but on the other player's side a newspaper clipping would detail the event of their death. In this situation, the surviving player may be involved in the article, commenting on the disappearance of their co-worker during the night. Regardless, once returning to the lobby, both players may continue from the next Night.

Game Flow

Night Start

At the start of each Night, both players may receive a voice-mail from one of the museum's day-time employees. This employee is present when new artifacts are added to the exhibit, and is consistently aware of museum events designed to attract additional visitors. However, since they acknowledge the difficulties of the night-shift, they will attempt to assist both players by providing the players with pamphlets and note blurbs. These pamphlets are cut-out versions of tourist pamphlets for specific exhibits, but also consist of inked-in hints and suggestions for players.

While the day-worker may find information based on subtle events that occur during their shift, they typically relay useful strategies by contacting previous artifact owners. Therefore, they may not know for sure what the players may have to manage during the night-shift, but they will convey suggestions acquired from previous artifact owners, if applicable. Therefore, at the beginning of each Night, players will receive a brief voice-mail from the day-worker. Initial Nights may serve to teach the player of the basic mechanics available, while later nights may focus on warning the player of new additions and possible interactions. All-in-all, the day-worker is an ally, and because they don't want to move to the night-shift, will attempt to assist both players in surviving the night by leaving pamphlets and voice-mails.

Aside from the voice-mail, which will only play during the players' first attempt at the Night, players will always begin with a neat desk station. All available Entities will begin in their initial positions; always remain idle for a short amount of time. The beginning of every mission gives players a moment to communicate, listen to the voice-mail, and prepare for the Entities in play.

Night Experience

The core experience occurs once Entities are activated and begin moving between rooms. The museum layout is founded on a single floor, and connections between rooms are mostly symmetrical. This means that while both players may reside on opposite ends of the museum, all connections and paths between players are mostly mirrored. While the contents and exhibits within the rooms may be drastically different, the manner in which Entities can move toward players will remain the same, regardless of which side they are on. Some Entities may always begin an equal distance away from players, while others may randomly begin in any room at the start of the Night.

Most, if not all, of the museum may be available on Night 1. Most rooms will have multiple doorways, implying that Entities may be able to choose multiple directions to wander. It may also be possible that some rooms may be 'unlocked' on later Nights. These rooms may begin obscured, having no camera visibility, and may be activated if the museum expands its

territory and positions cameras inside. This could offer a chance to incorporate dead-end rooms with a single entrance, increasing the difficulty of the Night by including closets, offices, shipment areas, or bathrooms for the players to monitor.

In most rooms, each player will be able to view a section of the room from a single camera. If a room is imagined as being relatively square, this means that each player may be able to envision a triangular section, allowing them to see half of the room's contents. Certain rooms may be limited to one camera, but this functionality would imply that each player has a similar camera view on the opposite side of the museum. For instance, if player 1 has the only camera in the bottom-left room, this means that player 2 has the only camera in the top-right room.

Each player will always have camera perspectives that favor visibility closest to the other player. This means that player 1 will always be able to see doorways leading to player 2, and vice-versa. This forces both players to rely on each other to monitor Entity progress toward their respective rooms. Player rooms do not contain cameras.

Player Interactions

While communicating with each other, players will need to navigate between camera feeds to monitor the activity of Entities during the night. Examining Entities will provide important information, conveying if the Entity has left its exhibit, where it currently is located, and what threats are closest to either player.

In the event of an approaching Entity, players will be able to react in a number of ways in order to ward off the Entity, usually causing it to return to its original exhibit. These reactions are often completed by the targeted player, usually within the confines of their desk space. These interactions involve checking door-lights, activating desk mechanics, or hiding under their desk. The other player, while not directly involved, can assist by watching the other rooms while the other player is occupied, notifying them when the assaulting Entity has reappeared in a different room.

Night Completion

A Night is completed when both players have either lost to the Entities, or they have reached the morning time. Typically, players will begin the night-shift at a certain time, and at a specified game flow time, will win the Night if the manage to survive until a certain game hour is reached. For example, a game session may take 20 minutes, but this may be conveyed by a 9pm – 6am shift, therefore compressing each hour into a little over 2 minutes. The current status of time may also influence the intensity of Entity movements, causing the gameplay to become much more stressful as it reaches its finale.

If a player is caught by an Entity, following a jump-scare attack, they will then be allowed to spectate the other player for the duration of the remaining game session. During this

time, they may be unable to communicate with the other player. Given the death of their partner, the possibility of completing a Night with limited visibility may be unlikely, but if only a small amount of time remains, a surviving player may be able to last until the final hour. If both players are caught, after a brief delay, the corresponding End Screen is represented, and they are returned to the lobby.

Night Flow Draft

      Night 1: Teddy Bear / Cuckoo Clock Cat

      Night 2: Taxidermy Dog

      Night 3: Painting

      Night 4: Doll / Mannequin (Exterior Columns Become Available)

      Night 5: Jeweled Spider

      Night 6: Playful Ghost

      Night 7: Jack-in-the-Box

      Night 8: Santa

      Night 9: Finale

Player Tools

Each night, the player has a collection of mechanics to assist the process of monitoring Entities, or to react when approached by an Entity. The majority of these tools can be defined as Universal Mechanics, indicating that they are always available, in some form, for the player to utilize. Most of these mechanics have simple functions that may have shared interactions between multiple Entities. Some tools can be defined as Isolated Mechanics, indicating that their activation is only relevant in response to certain Entities. While Isolated Mechanics may only be introduced when the appropriate Entity is incorporated within gameplay, they often may provide additional features that impact other Entities.

<u>Universal Mechanics</u>

Tablet / Cameras

The player's most prominent interaction relates to their ability to review camera feeds throughout the museum. From their desk position, they can click on available tablet to raise it to their face, clicking another button to return it to the desk and continue looking around their room. The tablet offers to methods for examining cameras. First, the player can scroll through available cameras in order. Second, a map of the museum is visible in the bottom right corner, allowing the player to click on any of the rooms in order to switch to the room's camera feed.

Camera feeds may either be static, or may rotate back-and-forth within a room. These cameras allow the player to monitor Entity activity and confirm the location of Entities. This ensures that players can prepare for Entity interaction by prioritizing Entities that are closer to either player room.

Since player camera feeds prioritize doors leading toward the other player, both players must share the responsibility of trading information, notifying each other when a threat is imminent.

Some Entity movement may be visible on the camera feed, but many times Entities may change their locations when the players are not looking. If an Entity needs to change its position, but a player is still examining the camera feed, the camera feed may fizzle briefly, allowing the Entity to swap its location. This fizzle can also occur on a camera feed where the Entity is moving to.

While some Entities may be overtly visible on the screen, others may require the player to listen for audio indications or detect faint visible within the room, requiring both players to comb the museum to track certain Entities.

Hiding under the Desk

At any given time, while outside of the camera feed, the player may quickly hide under the desk to avoid Entity confrontation. While this may not be effective for all Entities, it can deter some of them. The player can remain under the desk for any amount of time, and will be able to continue communicating with the other player during this action. The player, while under the desk, will have their vision locked in the opposite direction, staring out from under the desk at the wall. This mechanic limits to player by preventing them from checking camera feeds or door-lights.

Door-lights

Each player room has four doors available. One on each of the left and right walls, and two positioned in front of them on opposite ends of the farthest wall. While the room is mostly lit, the interior or the doorways and visibility into the adjacent rooms is pitch-black, intentionally designed to avoid attract Entities via the player room light. However, if the player needs to check for Entities nearby, they can toggle a spotlight within any of the doorways at any time. This can assist in revealing approaching Entities, therefore allowing the player to react only when absolutely necessary.

Breaker Button

This button, centered on their desk, immediately turns off the ambient lighting in the player's room. The player can still access the door-lights, but will be unable to hide under their desk, examine pamphlets, interact with Isolated Mechanics, or review the tablet during this time. The Breaker Button and door-lights will be lit in the darkness, allowing the player to activate them by clicks normally. This button allows the player to avoid visual confrontation with certain Entities, preventing them from visualizing the player, and possible dissuading Entities from entering the room.

Pamphlets

The player will have access to a number of Entity notes in the form of pamphlet cut-outs. The number of these is dependent on the Entities in play, and contains relevant information from the day-worker. Each pamphlet represents an official museum informational strip, providing the Entity's name, image, and biography statement. Following this, the day-worker will also provide a few penned notes, hinting at cautions the player should take and potential was to keep the Entity at bay. These can be clicked on to review or return to the desk.

Communication

The player will be able to consistently speak to the other player, as long as both are alive. While this could be represented by an intercom, it may make more sense for players to be 'wearing' headsets to allow them to speak, regardless of what they are doing. Furthermore, in the event of both players not utilizing voice, a possible means for text-messaging should be

available. This could be conveyed as a HUD element, similar to a smartphone screen that shows an ongoing list of texts players may be able to scroll through.

Isolated Mechanics

Picture Frame

Upon being introduced to the Painting Ghost, both players will receive a picture frame on top of the desk. This picture frame can be clicked on, allowing it to be placed on its stand, or positioning it facedown. This mechanic serves to allow players to attract and capture the Painting Ghost within the picture frame, turning it facedown when the specter is within the blank picture. Having the picture frame facedown when the Painting Ghost arrives forces it into the tablet device, attacking the player on camera use. Standing the picture frame also assists in appeasing the Santa Statue later in the game.

Peppermint Jar

The peppermint jar is introduced along with the addition of the Doll. This provides a means for the player to appease the Doll. When the Doll is present on the desk, the player may click on the jar to open its contents, clicking on its interior to place candies in front of the Doll. Following interactions involve having the player hide under the desk after providing the offering. The player may also close the jar as well, which represents a further interaction to neaten the desk to appease the Santa Statue later.

Dog Whistle

With the addition of the Taxidermy Dog, players are given a dog whistle to attract the Dog to their location. Both players take turns using the dog whistle, keeping the Dog consistently moving between rooms. Doing so also enhances the movement of other Entities, discouraging players from spamming the whistle.

Block Selection

When the Playful Ghost arrives in the player's room, it will present the player with three blocks to choose from. Using prior knowledge of the Ghost's favorite block, the player must simply select the correct choice, causing the blocks to fall off the front of the desk and disappear. This is a temporary mechanic that is only available when the Playful Ghost resides within the player's room.