



NAT CLAYTON

SPATIAL STORIES & HIGHLAND SONGS

(art: @abigbat)

CANADIAN



hi i'm nat

based in edinburgh, scotland

indie level designer

experimental game developer

recovering journalist

bitHELL

Since Nov. 2023
(on a very NDA thing)

inkle

2022-23

they make that scripting tool you probably use



2017-22

```
log // error error  
blackbox.exvs OPEN  
88 88 AA 88 88  
88 XX XX XX --
```

CAN ANDROIDS PRAY

variation_**RED**

```
ISSUE VENUSCONF - PROSKWORKS MANF  
ISSUE CLIENT USEREND - PLT_CRT_0A
```

2019

with Xalavier Nelson Jr and Priscilla Snow



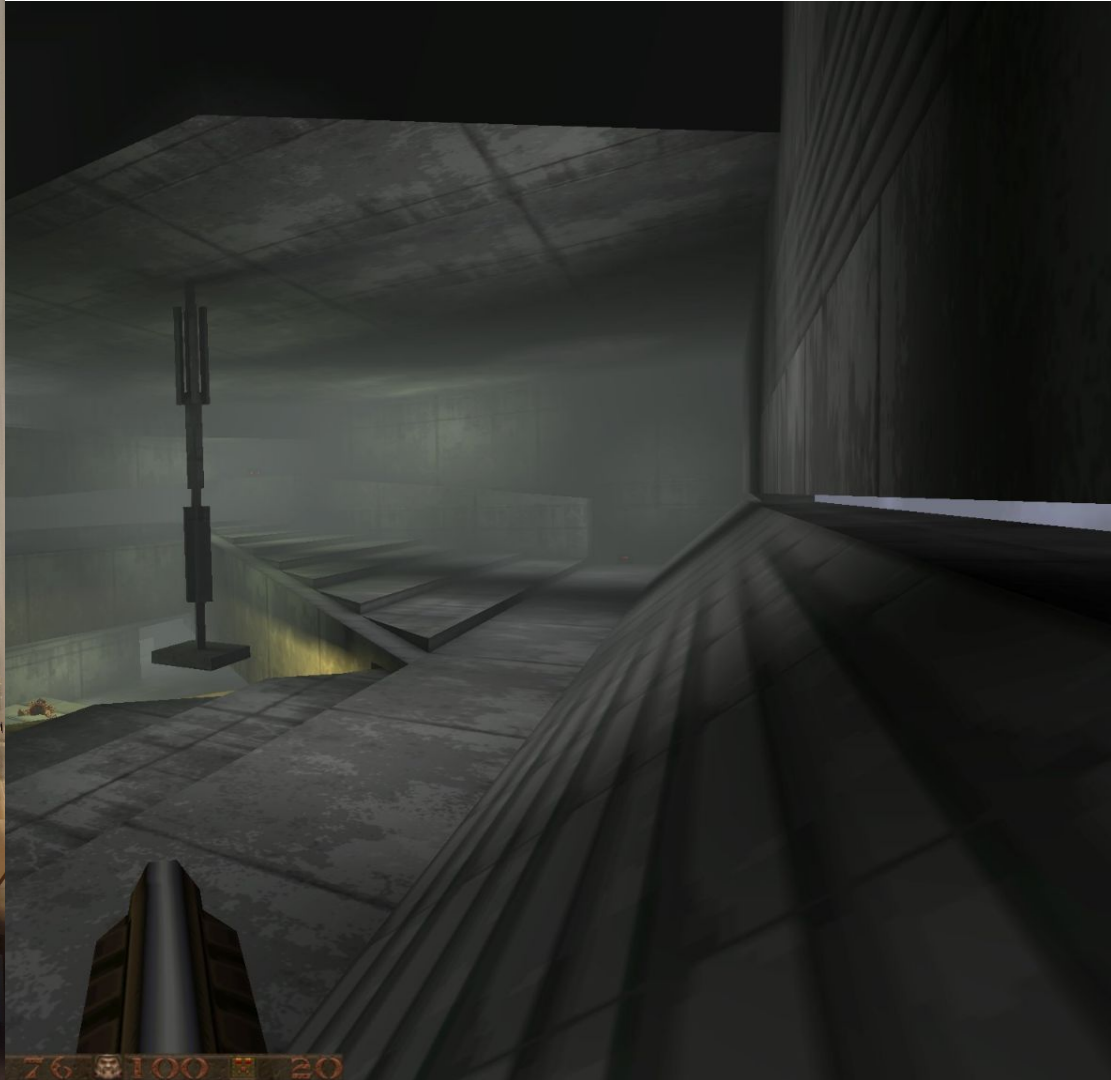
I know I *sound* like
I'm English, but that's
because I'm from Edinburgh.



architecture: it's neat!









FORGER





**Peak
Bleak
Blues**

(and other moods)

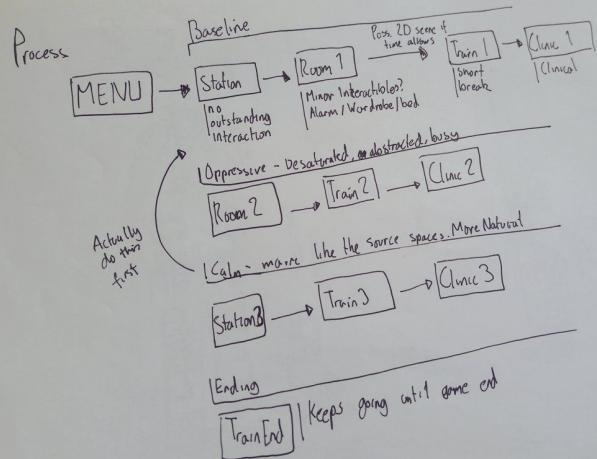
Walking Simulator A Month Club Vol. 3



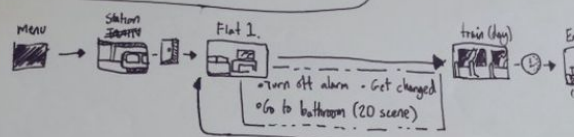
My record collection. Well, mine and a bunch of other people. It's easy to mistake good taste for maturity. People who like good music usually don't take the time to become good people.



TWO YEARS ON A WAITING LIST, GOD KNOWS HOW MANY PHONE CALLS. FINALLY GETTING A MEETING AT THE GIC



Overall goal - Convey start of HRT process



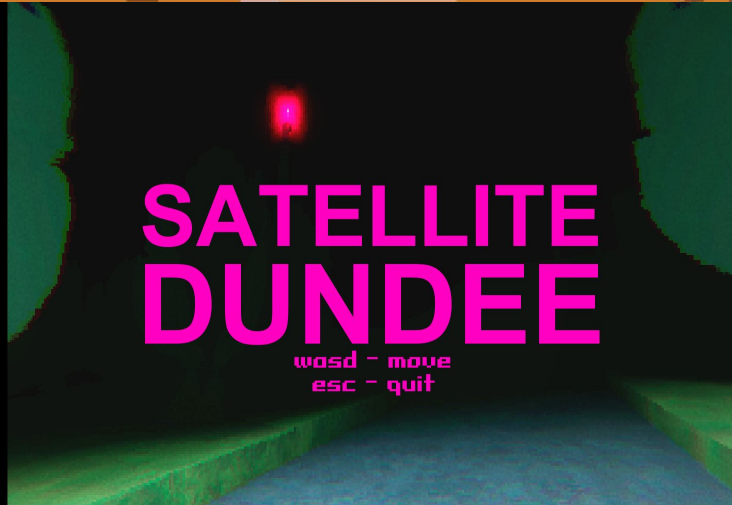
Scenes

- Station
- Flat (2D broom mini-scene)
- Train
- Clinic (do something similar here)

x3?4?
(repeat, alter
Ext. Scene b
VIDEO... games

Transitions

for now, triggers. Make scenes first: |





waypoint

GAMES BY VICE

Find a Cure for Open World Fatigue on the Waterfront of Limbo

'The Exile on the Long Shore' is a spare, small game that evokes rather than overwhelms.



By [Cameron Kurzelman](#)

23 October 2017, 4:32pm [Share](#) [Tweet](#) [Send](#)



ALL IMAGES CAPTURED BY EDITOR, COURTESY [KobaltTheGame](#)

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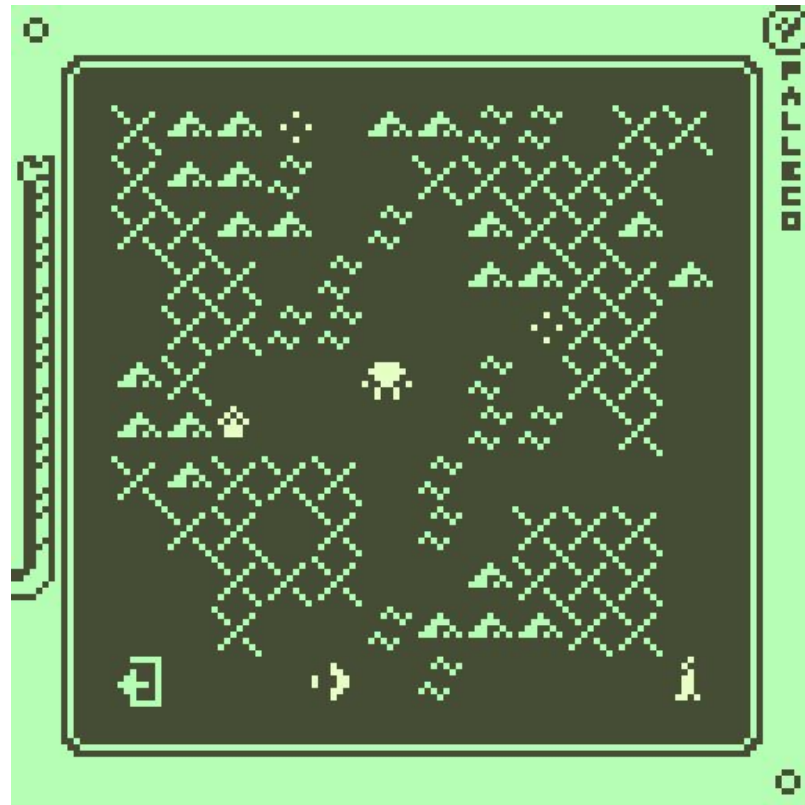
SEVATA PRICER
04.11.18

[Games](#)
'Otto' Is the Noir, Blood Drenched Child of 'Hotline Miami' and 'John Wick'

One of the most beautiful experiences you can have in a game is the feeling of "what happened?" [Immersive sims](#), as a genre, sustain their narratives almost completely on the feelings of awe and confusion about what happened in a time or a place. *Exile's* pixelated graphics, [powered by Bitsy](#) in the same way that [Cemetery Walk](#) is, further obfuscate this world while distancing a player from it. Not only does the game force you to ask about what happened, but it withholds the potential for discovery in a very tactical way.



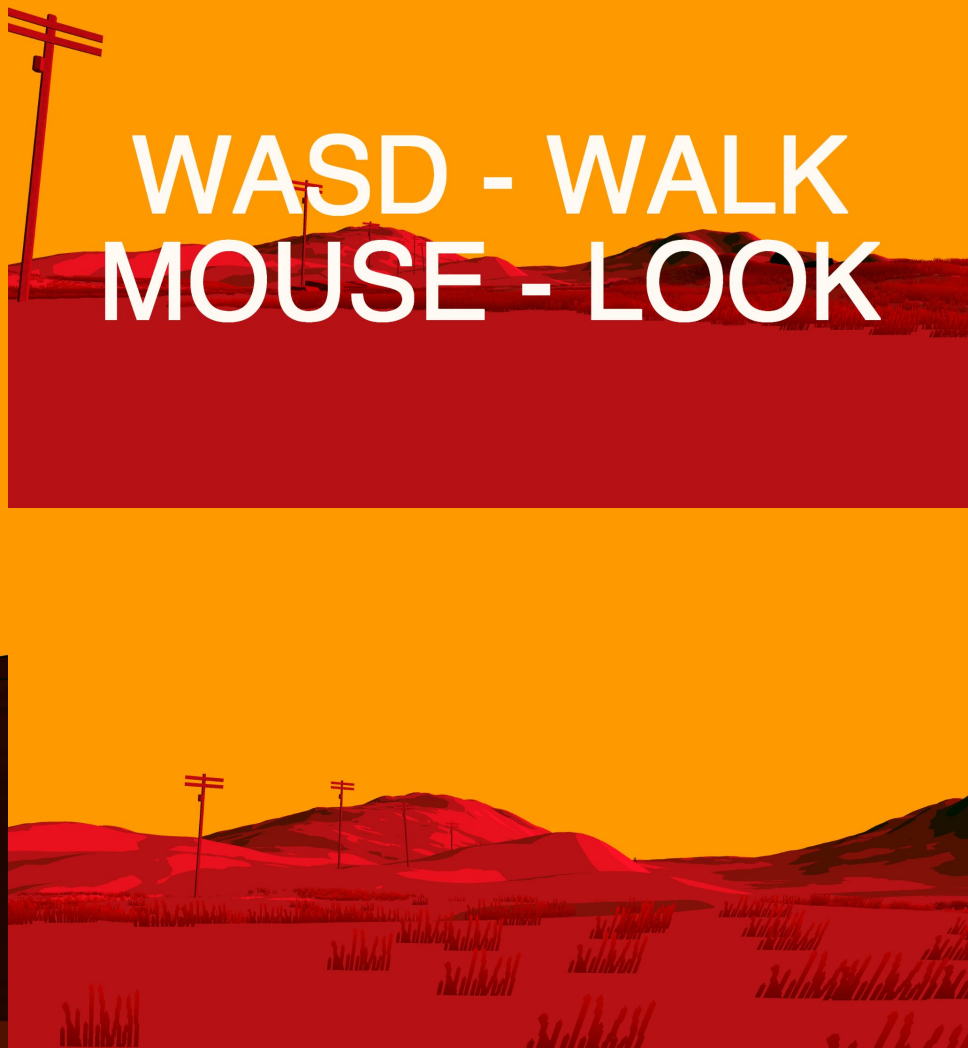
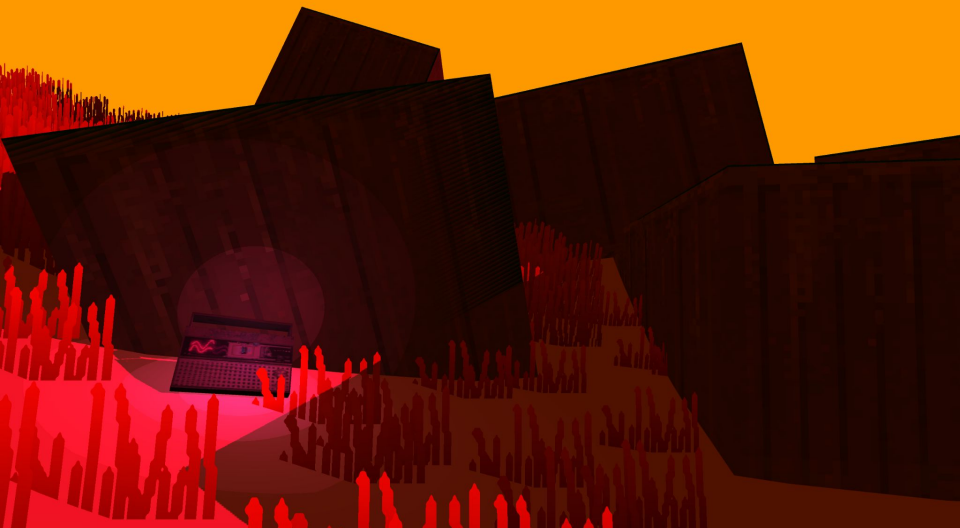
OPTIONAL BOSS



SALVAGE CREW

nat clayton presents
EIGHT THIRTY, NOWHERE

WASD - WALK MOUSE - LOOK







TAB

a highland song



Sit down

R



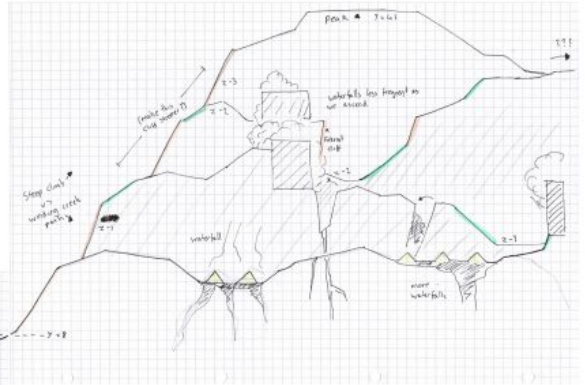
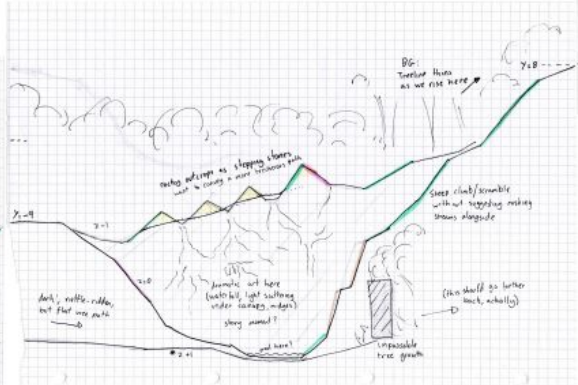
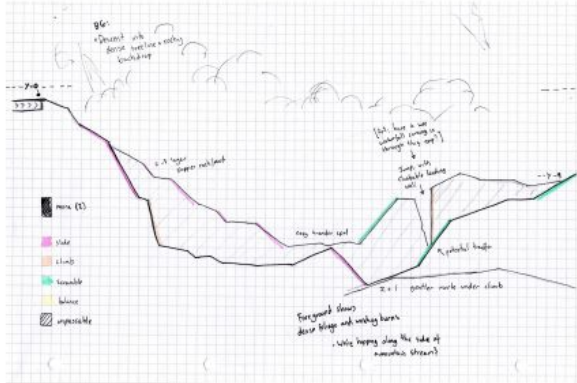
For this level, I drew both on memories of canyoning up the Highlands on childhood “adventure camps” and a strong fondness for winding burns and rocky streams in recent walks with my partner through Edinburgh, Oban and Dunkeld. I wanted to create a snapshot of a level that sees the player descent through a tangle of streams, thicket, waterfalls and slippery rockfall, before scrambling above the treeline to summit the next peak—a moment of grandeur as they emerge into a stunning mountain vista.

refs: Blackford Hermitage, Edinburgh; Tay Forest Park, Dunkeld; Canyoning in Fort William



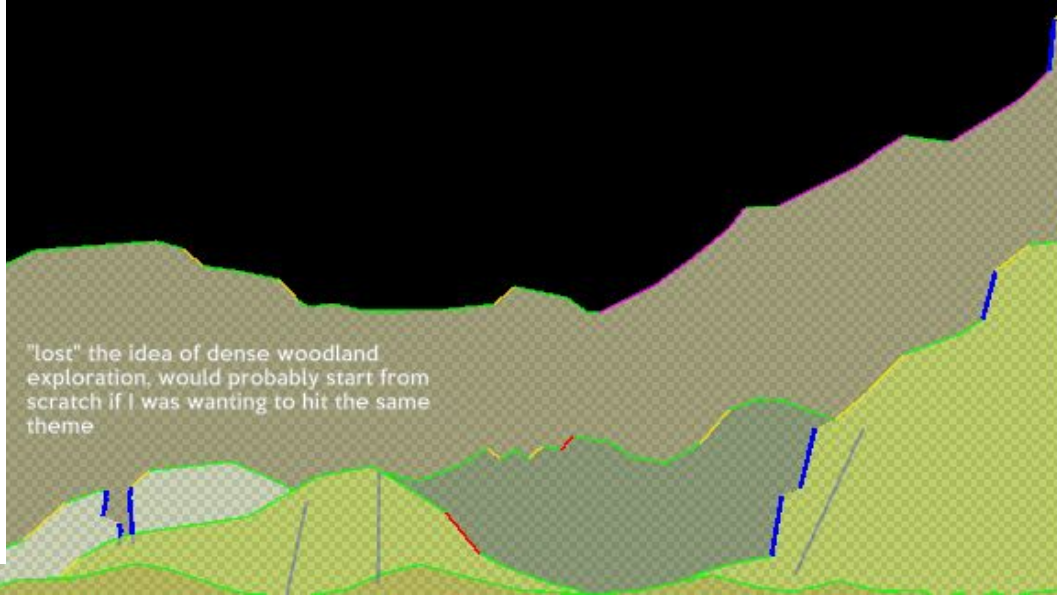


Assembled Stage

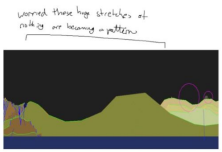
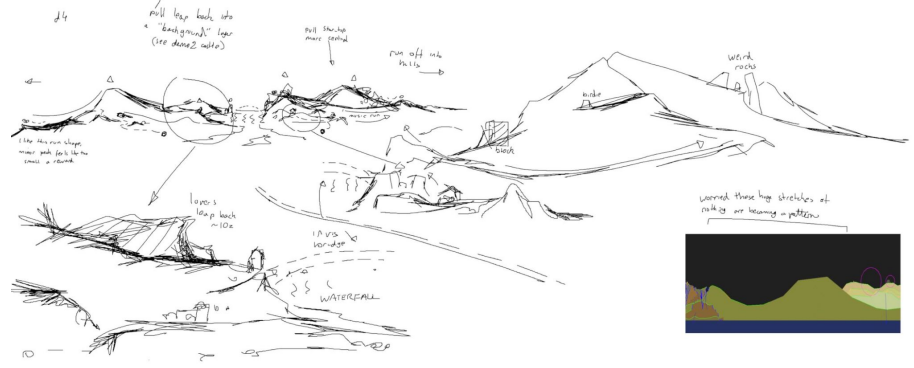
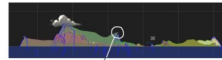
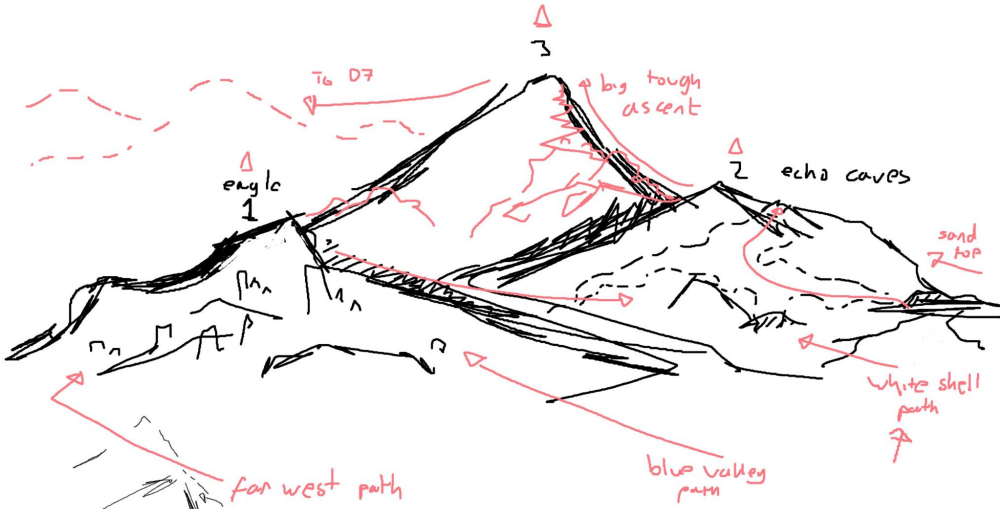





```
9
10 ▾ === function allGamePeaks()
11 ~ return LIST_ALL(Peaks) - FakePeaks
12
13 VAR MinorThingPeaks = (EAST_SIDE_BROKEN_PROMISE)
14
15 LIST Peaks =
16
17 // DEMO 1
18 HOME_HILL,
19 GIANTS_TOOTH,HILL_BEHIND_HOUSE_MINOR_PEAK,
20
21 // DEMO 2 West
22 THE_OUTER_WALL,
23 LITTLE_GUARD,
24 GULLS_PERCH,
25 D2W_CLIFF_EDGE_BY_BOTHY,
26
27
28
29
30 // DEMO 3 West
31 ABOVE_GIANTS_COTTAGE,
32 GOLDEN_FIELD,
33 GAME_PEAK,
34 RINGING_STONE_PEAK,
35
36 // DEMO 4 West
37 WRESTLING_WROCK,
38 LOVERS_LEAP,
39
40 // DEMO 2 East
41
42 THE_PILLARS,
43 WATERFALL_PEAK ,
44 STANDING_STONE_PEAK,
45
46 // DEMO 3 East
47 WOES_WEDDING,
48 FINGERS_UP_PEAK,
49 FLAT_TOP,
50
51 // DEMO 4 East
52 PAIL_O_MILK,
53 TOP_OF_DAM_BUILDING,
54 PRIORY_ARCH,
55 PRIORY_ARCH_LOWER,
56
57 DOUGLAS_CAIRN_PEAK,
58 STAR_TOP,
59 EAST_SIDE_BROKEN_PROMISE,
60
```



"lost" the idea of dense woodland exploration, would probably start from scratch if I was wanting to hit the same theme



workshop those top sketches of valley are becoming a pattern



Early Evening




- △
- ☰ "Is there somewhere I can sleep?" A
 - ☰ "Have you ever been to the sea?"
 - ☰ "What are you doing here?"


🕒 Sit down



Well, then.



 Sit down **R**

 Look **Z**





Early
Afternoon








 Path around loch edge
5 HOURS

 Glen Fechie
3 HOURS

 **A** REMOVE WAYPOINT



I'll need to find shelter soon before I freeze.

Reset view X

Hide Maps Y

Aye, there it is!

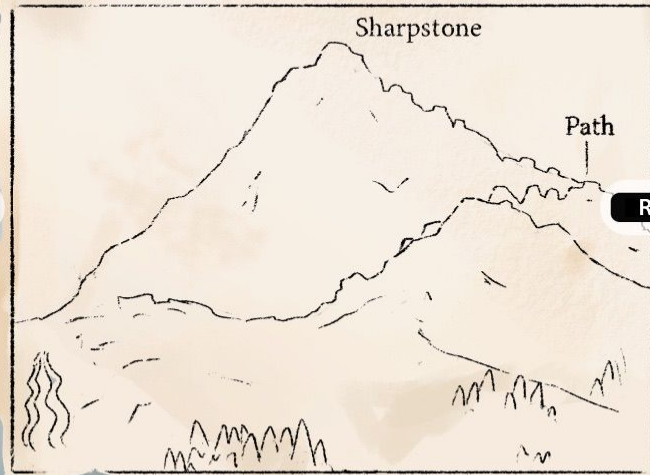


Here instead?

A



Climbing down from Sharpstone one takes one's life into one's hands. Many a traveller has slid, stumbled, and fallen in between the cracks, or mistaken a gully for an innocent heap of stone. But there is a safe way - marked with a cairn.



ZL



ZR

Onward!

B



TAB

🌿 Arrived at 3pm, two days before Beltane. 🌿



IV.



SEUMAS MCNALLY GRAND PRIZE

1000xRESIST (Sunset Visitor / Fellow Traveller)

A Highland Song (Inkle)

Anthology of the Killer (Thecatamites, Tommy Tone, A. Degen / Thecatamites)

COCOON (Geometric Interactive / Annapurna Interactive)

Mediterranea Inferno (Lorenzo Redaelli, Eyeguys / Santa Ragione)

Venba (Visai Games)

Honorable Mentions: *Chants of Sennaar* (Rundisc / Focus Entertainment), *Final Profit: A Shop RPG* (Brent Arnold), *Goodbye Volcano High* (KO_OP), *In Stars and Time* (insertdisc5 / Armor Games Inc.), *Rhythm Doctor* (7th Beat Games / 7th Beat Games, indienova), *Tchia* (Awaceb / Kepler Interactive), *The Cosmic Wheel Sisterhood* (Deconstructeam / Devolver Digital)

[VIEW ALL 2024 ENTRANTS](#)

Review

A Highland Song review - a moving, magical-realist journey through Scottish scenery and mythology

★★★★★

Nintendo Switch, PC; inkle

This trek across forbidding crags and through crumbling caves demands resilience and determination, but rewards it with a wonderfully rich and atmospheric sense of place

A Highland Song review - a magical sonnet hidden beneath a game

Peak performance.



Image credit: Inkle.



Review by [Chris Tapsell](#) | Deputy Editor

Published on 5 Dec 2023

19 comments

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While platforming, rhythm, and navigation mechanics might clash at times, turning the map upside down reveals a game that puts all in service of nature and experience.

“I’ve done the kind of multi-day trek that Moira is on; taken journeys where you spend cumulative hours squinting at the terrain, looking down at a map, looking back up again, and still feeling like you’re not where you should be. I’ve experienced the sensation of time turning into a psychedelic mush – days merging into one another before crystallizing in a single moment, perhaps during a particularly dicey scramble. A Highland Song summons these feelings through a suite of robust, interlocking systems: a dynamic day-and-night cycle, a fully functioning weather system (how many 2D platformers can boast having these two elements?!), and surprisingly flexible traversal mechanics.”

- Lewis Gordon, Remap





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cohost: itsnatclayton