

Designing GODUS with Peter and Jack - Week 1

Monday - Influences

On Monday we talked about our influences for GODUS:

- *Populous* - We are resurrecting the original concept of raising and lowering land as first conceptualized in Populous and giving it a 21st Century overhaul. This will be a mechanic at the centre of the entire GODUS experience. We are also taking inspiration from the engaging single and multiplayer battles, and earth-shattering god powers, to make up the competitive aspect of the new project. One weak point we wish to learn from with Populous is the technical restraints to show off vast numbers of people. Key to the GODUS experience is that of having hundreds of followers in your world.
- *Dungeon Keeper* - There are two key aspects of Dungeon Keeper that we wish to capture in GODUS: One's a mechanic and one a concept. The first is that of digging and the other is that of expansion. Digging for resources and to customize your landscape will be an addictive and vital activity within your home-world. Secondly, as your power will only stretch as far as the span of your followers in GODUS, the satisfying feeling of watching your believers grow out is a feeling inspired by the sense of expansion in Dungeon Keeper.
- *Black&White* - The feeling we want to capture from Black&White is that of a tactile nature to the experience. We want the player to really feel like they are forming the world with their touch. We love the open world feeling to B&W, the scale, and the charismatic civilizations. These are big inspirations for GODUS.

Tuesday - Gameplay Modes

On Tuesday we announced the framework of GODUS:

- *Home-world* - When the game starts the first thing you will see is your holy-land: The starting point of your existence in the eyes of the land's inhabitants. Bit by bit you will sculpt this world into a utopia and capital of your religion. As you make it more habitable you will gain followers who will populate across it. This is your ongoing quest that will evolve along with you.
- *Battles* - For those who want to grow in power faster, they can expand out into the world and spread faith throughout other lands. This won't be an easy feat however, as the population of each land will already worship another god. The fight to convert the populous of the land will be a challenging one, but also one of epic proportions. Opposing gods start at other ends of the landscape and sculpt the land to make it habitable for their followers to build civilizations on. As they expand in number and belief, the gods will become more powerful. The opposing gods may choose to use destructive powers to jeopardize the growth of the opposing side, or use powers to nurture the growth of their own. Inevitably, the two opposing societies will grow to the point that they meet. It will be up to the gods to form their strategies up to this point and to improvise throughout to make sure that it is their following that concours the land.
- *Followers* - The followers are the character of this world. These inhabitants are rich with personalities, surprising you with every visit. For them to flourish however, they need to live off of the land. They look to you for hope and worship you devoutly. As they outgrow their surroundings they will look to you to show them the way to greater pastures. They will venture to other lands to spread your reach as peaceful missionaries, but will fight for you until the very end. When conflict hits, as powerful as you may be, you cannot affect the free will of non-believers. In which case, it is your followers who are key to your victory, but they cannot prevail without your divine intervention. Your reach is only as powerful as the stretch of your followers, but they can only grow as you alter the land beneath their feet. Therefore you have a beautiful relationship with your believers where you need them, and they need you.

- *Stretch goal: Cooperative play* - We discussed our first desired feature on Tuesday: Our dream of having cooperative play in the game. The vision for this is that you will be able to team up with a friend and form as a duel-god. Then you may battle against a single AI deity together, but also against other player-teams of gods in online god vs god. We'd love to have 8 opposing gods made up of 16 individual players. Not only this, but being able to invite a friend into your home-world to help you sculpt the land around your followers is something we feel very passionate about. We need your help to get closer to our target goal to be able to really talk about these stretch goals further.

Wednesday - Powers

On Wednesday we answered a few questions before going into the dark side of god powers:

- *Cross-Platform Multiplayer* - On wednesday we eased people's worries concerning the game being developed for both PC and tablet in style... We reassured that the PC version is a priority and that it's graphical quality will not be affected by the low-rez phone/tablet version. Our reasons for developing for touch screen however was to accommodate for an alternative input device as we feel the themes of GODUS can work very well with touch screen. We then announced a very exciting feature: Cross-platform multiplayer! Never again will an intense multiplayer session be interrupted by the need to move away from your computer, simply continue playing on your touch device. This also applies for single player and home-world. We think this is an exciting and revolutionary way to play, and yet never takes it's toll on the graphical or conceptual potential of GODUS for PC.
- *Destructive God Powers* - The key strategic element of multiplayer is that of God Powers. A well placed power can change the tides of any battle. Powers require 'belief' to use, and this belief is only acquired from your followers, so you must make sure to be constructive and not just destructive. Greater powers cost more

belief, and so you can use some early, well-placed, strategic smaller powers or wait to grow a little more and unleash a much more devastating attack. whilst you have wonderful nurturing powers that allow you to sculpt the very foundations of the world that will support your civilizations, the darker side of your spectrum of power can cause destructive havoc onto that same world. What's more empowering that tearing a meteor from the sky and hurling it towards the earth in a screeching inferno, or playfully dragging your finger through the sea with growing momentum to the point that ripples evolve into a tsunami that floods the land of all life that lay before it? But don't think that these powers are merely for evil, as a wise god can use these powers to affect the land in ways that will benefit one's own people. Whilst this power is learnt in your home-land, mastering it's strategic depth will prepare you for battles. We also discussed something called 'gifts of the gods', which we shall elaborate on later in our kickstarter.

- *Stretch Goal: First Person Possession* - A feature a lot of people were asking for, which we also love the idea of, is that of possessing a follower and moving into their body to see the world from their perspective. This was inspired by the ability that originally appeared in Dungeon Keeper. Naturally, we'd love to have this feature to highlight the dramatic change in scale, but it would be a big feature to put in the game. This is why it would require us to reach past our target of £450,000 that we need to produce the initial game features. We need your support to get this feature in the game!

Thursday - Follower Character and Behavior

A deeper look into your followers, and some other questions are answered concerning gameplay themes and genres.

- *Strategy vs Sandbox* - We elaborated on people's confusion over whether the game was primarily a strategy game like Populous or a sandbox like Black&White. It was great to be able to say that we are appealing to both genres. Home-world is a peaceful space that is just yours. It is the origin of your earliest believers, and in your

quest to grow that population and give them a paradise to live in you are free to explore at your own pace. On the other hand, the ventures into further lands that you aim to concur will greet you with deep strategic, and energetic bursts of gameplay. These battles are going to be real-time, god vs god. The more lands you concur, the more powerful you become. Whilst these game modes are intertwined, you are not forced to indulge in both if you are more into a sandbox world or a strategic conflict. The choice is yours!

- *Good/Evil?* - Responding to whether the game would follow the good/evil theme of black&white and the Fable series, we revealed that GODUS uses a much wider spectrum than this. By not emphasizing deep, aesthetic changes in your village of either a good or evil nature, we instead allow the player to reflect on their actions to evoke a greater palette of emotions. Your behavior will certainly be tracked and will have small effects on your people, but we feel that we can make for a more powerful experience by allowing you to objectively perceive the consequences of your actions on the world and your followers.
- *Followers Detailed* - We have briefly discussed followers before but on Thursday we went into more detail. We discussed how Each follower will be full of characteristics and mentioned a few characters as examples. Indestructible Bob, Fragile Fiona, and Suicidal Sid were brought up as examples of followers that present their own gameplay challenges. We talked about how followers would walk around in their society and react accordingly to disasters such as a well placed meteor. We also explored how followers build homes on land that you have flattened, and how after some time these followers will conceive. Once a home becomes full, a follower will leave to build another home, and this cycle, uninterrupted, will allow your populous to expand. We saw how homes will be built up the side of mountains, with older homes starting to build upwards with the charming art-style of ex-Bullfrog art director Paul Mclaughlin.

Friday - Creative Powers

Friday we rounded off the week with a couple of features:

- *The Familiar* - We revealed that we are inspired for the familiar by Norse Mythology ravens named Huginn and Muninn. Your familiar/pet will not be a raven specifically, but a flying creature that will accompany you in home-world and help you on your way.
- Creative Powers - Previously we had talked about destructive powers but we showed the lighter side of god powers. We talked about how you can blossom the land around your villages and give the power of conception. Strategic players will balance the use between creative and destructive powers.