

CONFETTI WOUNDS

a UE5 narrative game
by Hao Qin & Yuechen Zhang

Logline

On the troupe leader's birthday, you awaken in an empty mansion where candles, warped stages, and phantom voices guide you through the unraveling history of a circus that once burned too bright.

Your once-close companions — do they celebrate you, or do they still hate you?

Project Info

Genre	First-person narrative puzzle game, 3D
Platform	PC
Engine	Unreal Engine 5
Tools	Maya, Blender, Ps. AI (Midjourney, Chatgpt, Elevenlabs), Substance 3D Designer
Asset	Main environment was built on the "Art Nouveau Mansion" asset from Fab.

Itch.io	https://qin-hao.itch.io/confetti-wound
1min Trailer	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dKbX89m7I1w
Walkthrough	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eilI8YngiU

Production

Our team of two:

Yuechen Zhang

Narrative Design, Level Design,
Character & Voice Design, 2D
Production, Environment Art

Qin Hao

Bluepring Scripting, Level Design,
UI/UX, Environment Art Design,
Video content production

Duration

10 weeks

June 28:
Project Start

July 8:
Layout Planning

July 16:
Revised Narrative

July 27:
Gameplay 2F

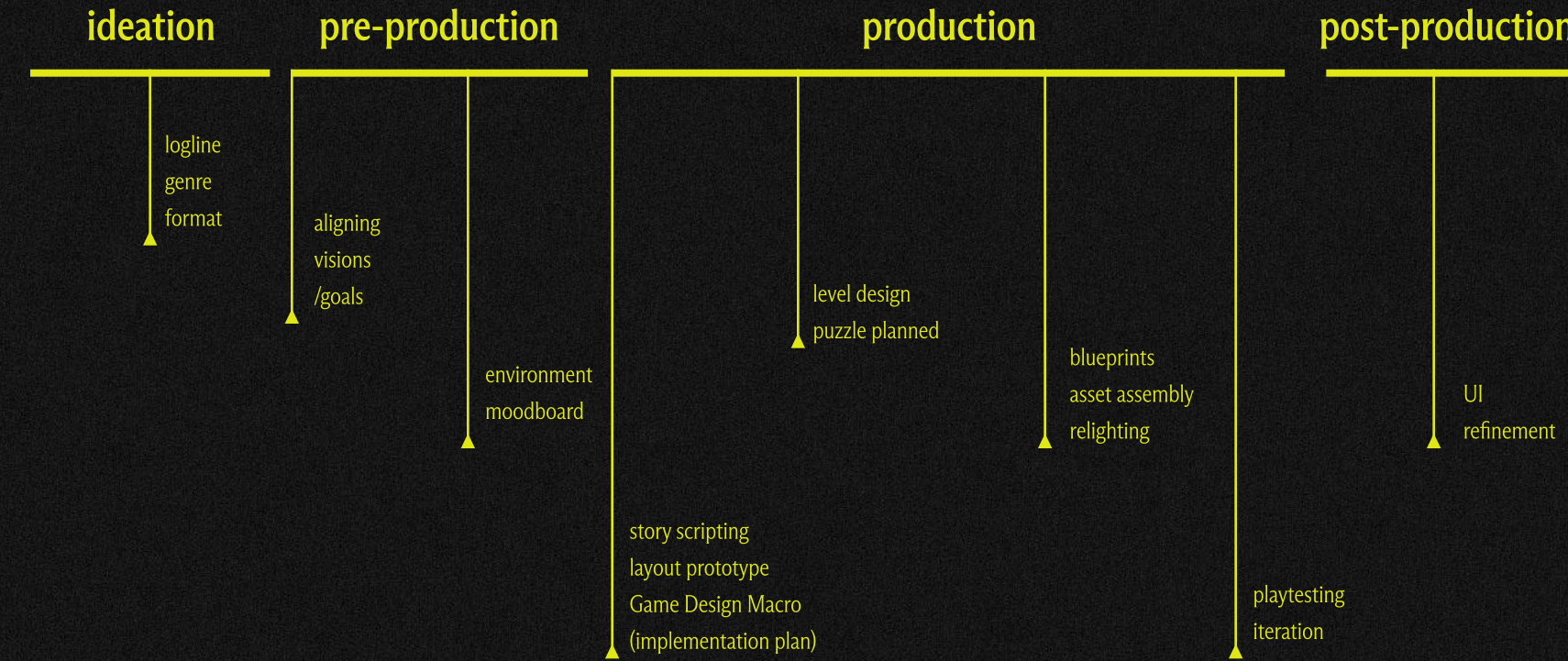
August 6:
Large Puzzle Planning

August 10:
Voices and Sounds

August 24:
Voices and Sounds

August 31:
Presentation Day

Our Process, inspired by Richard Lemarchand's *A Playful Production Process*



Inspiration => Narrative approach



Brainstorming narrative approaches magician narrative inspo: The Prestige Format reference: First person, puzzle narrative, exploration / adventure

From Narrative To In-Game Scenes

Story Script & DevBlog



[Link: Click to Visit](#)
With rounds of revision and iteration, we finalized the story and script.

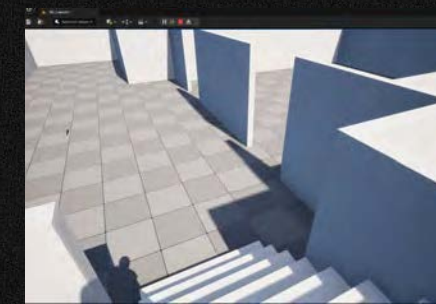


Game Design Macro

[Link: Click to Visit](#)
With 70% of the script complete, we started development by defining the player's goals and emotional experience for each stage, planned the required assets, and created the game macro.



1L-3D Blockout



Initial Environment Testing

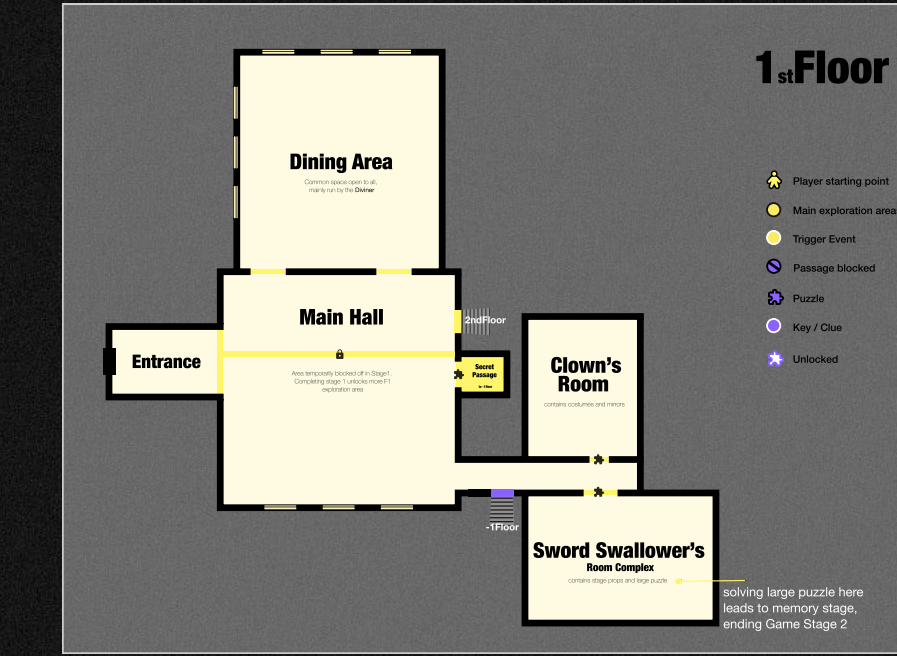


Game Macro

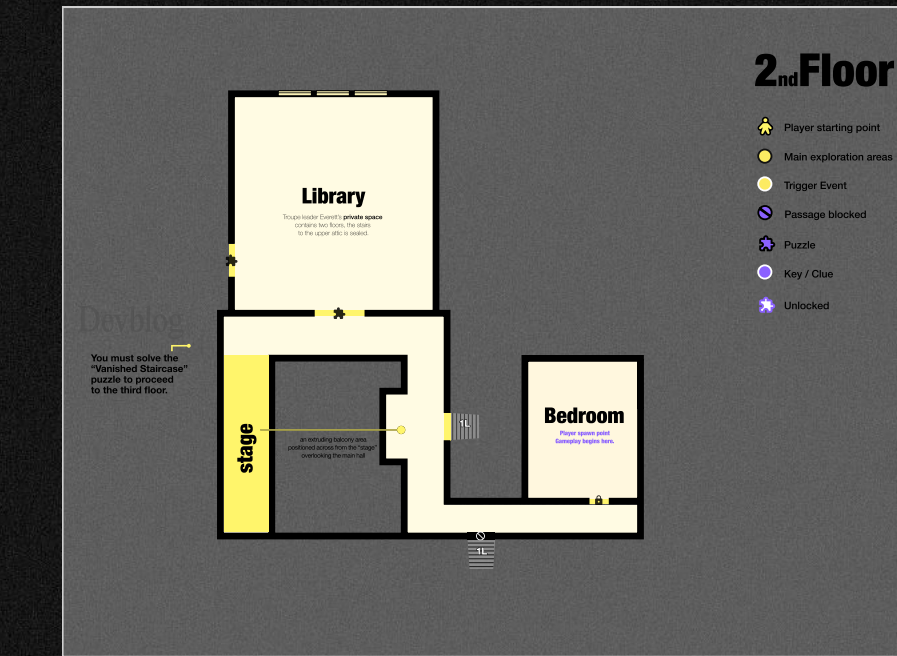


Development Priority Table

Level Layout



Dining Area, 1st Floor



Library, 2nd Floor

Character Design

character inspirations



character portraits were created with the help of Midjourney and Sora.



Ava the Diviner
& her cat Boo



Carlyle the Clown
& Sienna the Sword Swallower



Everett
The Troupe Leader of Everlight Circus
(player's perspective)

Game Flow Iterations

It took several revisions for the flow of our first room, where the player wakes up to receive the treasure hunt quest, to become clear.

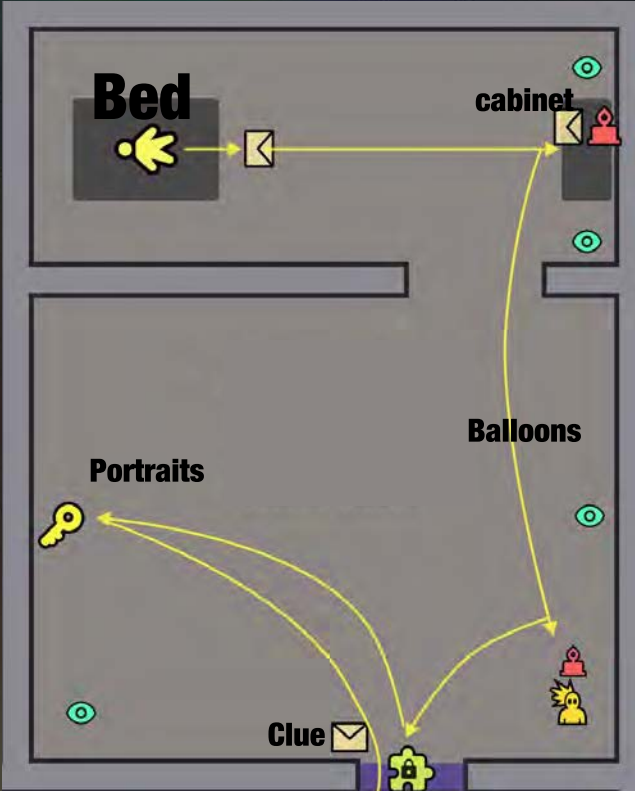
During development, we built a new package every week for playtesting. We invited friends to try the latest version, recorded the issues they encountered, and refined the experience in the next iteration.

The room was too big, and our testers wandered around aimlessly. We partitioned the space into a smaller bedroom and a larger play area, so that players' attention would fall on one object at a time after opening their eyes in bed.

First, they see the birthday envelope, then the balloons, then the cabinet with candles and clues. A balloon path was created to guide the players along the intended route, complete with a 'balloon popping' mechanism that could potentially trigger clown laughter.



Initial Room Layout



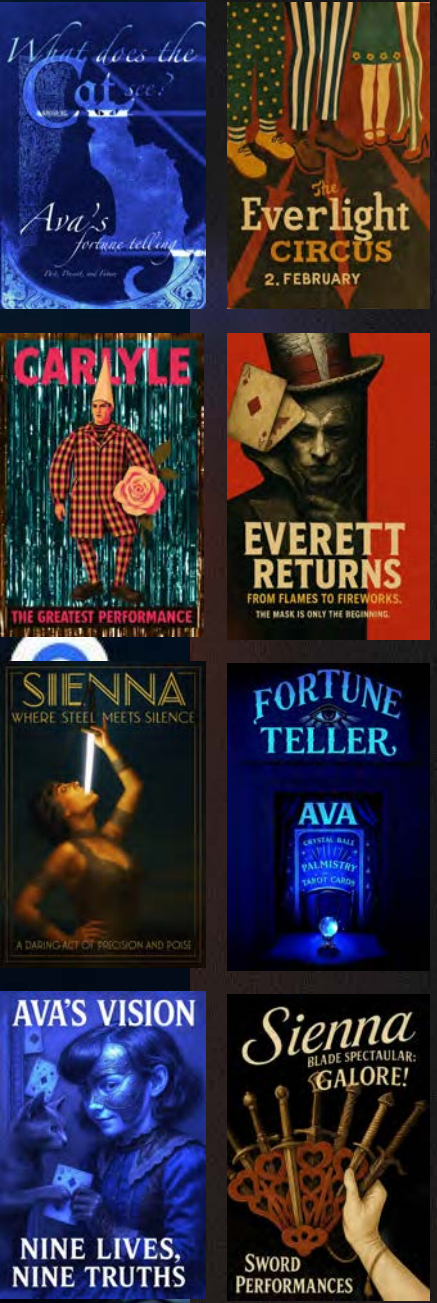
Design Optimization



Optimized Room Layout

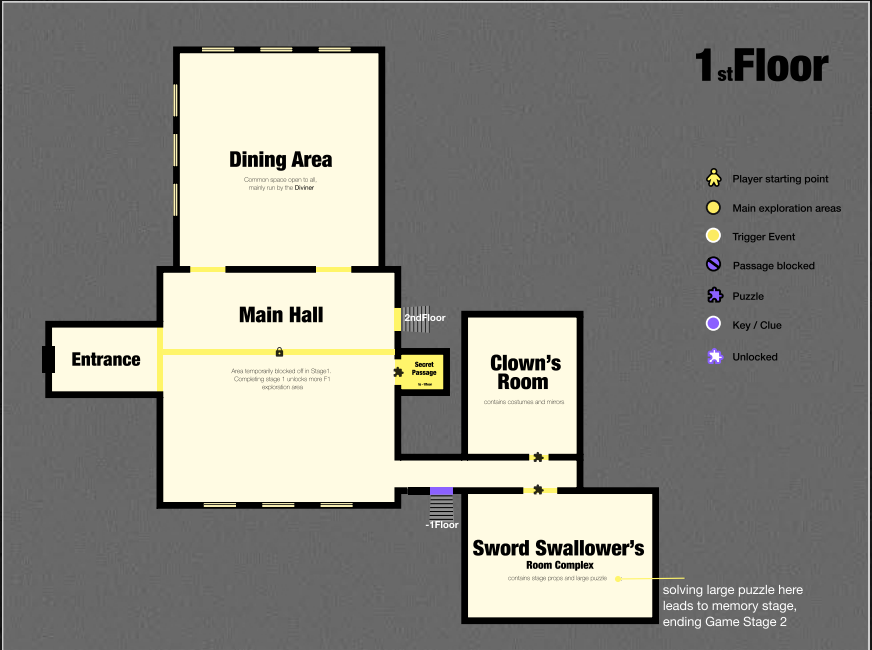


Posters are placed in hallways in select rooms as narrative cues.

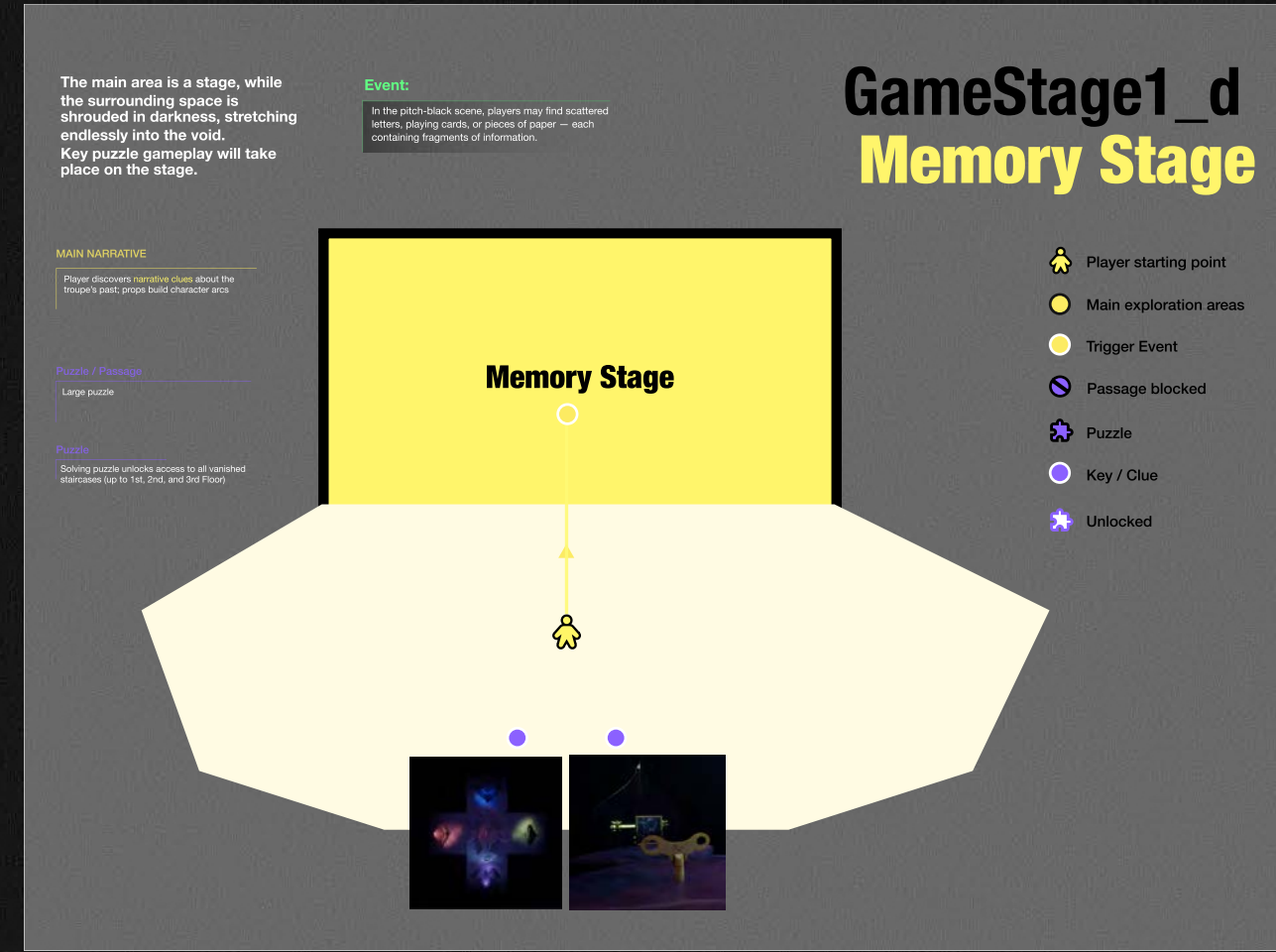
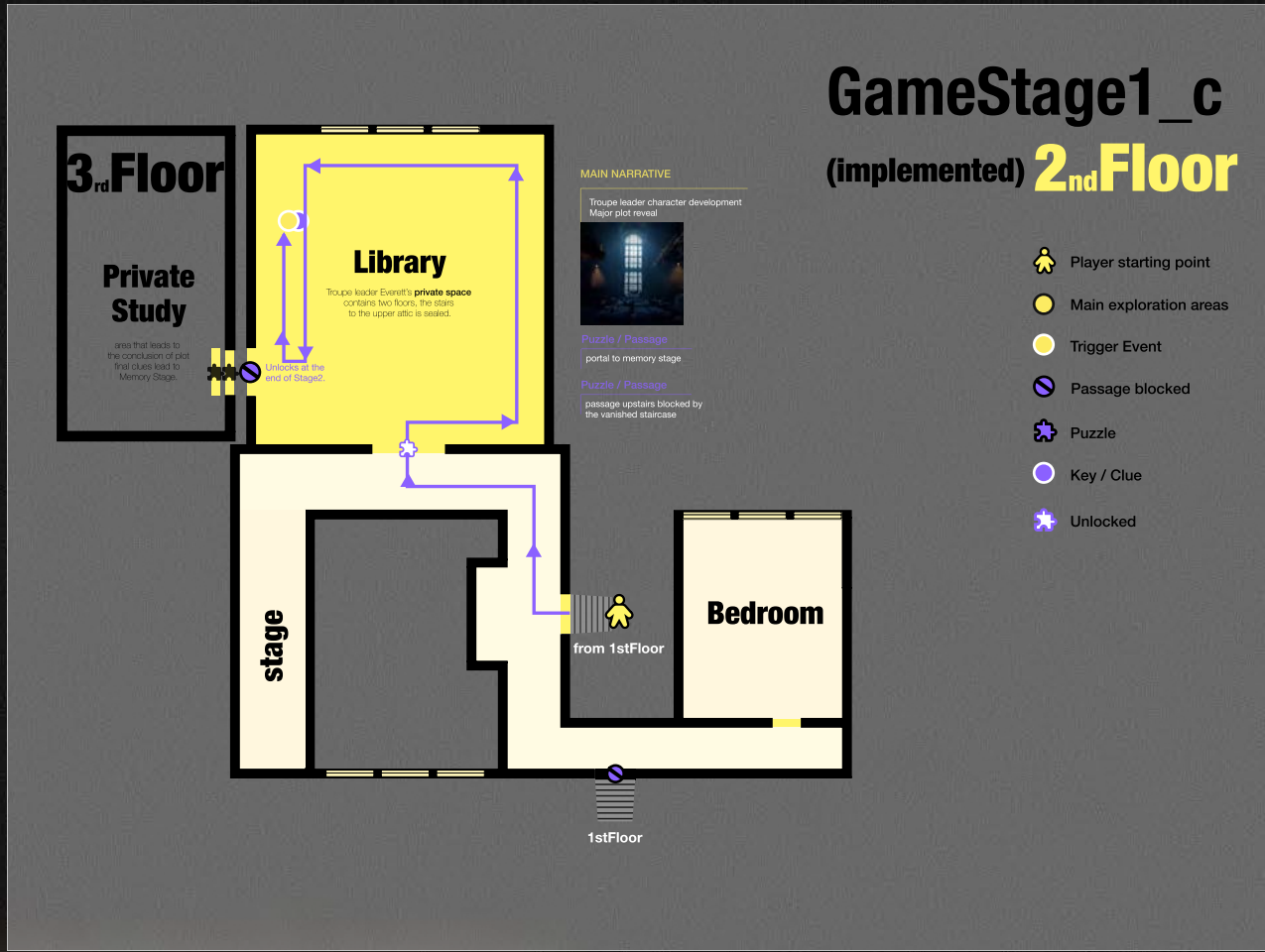
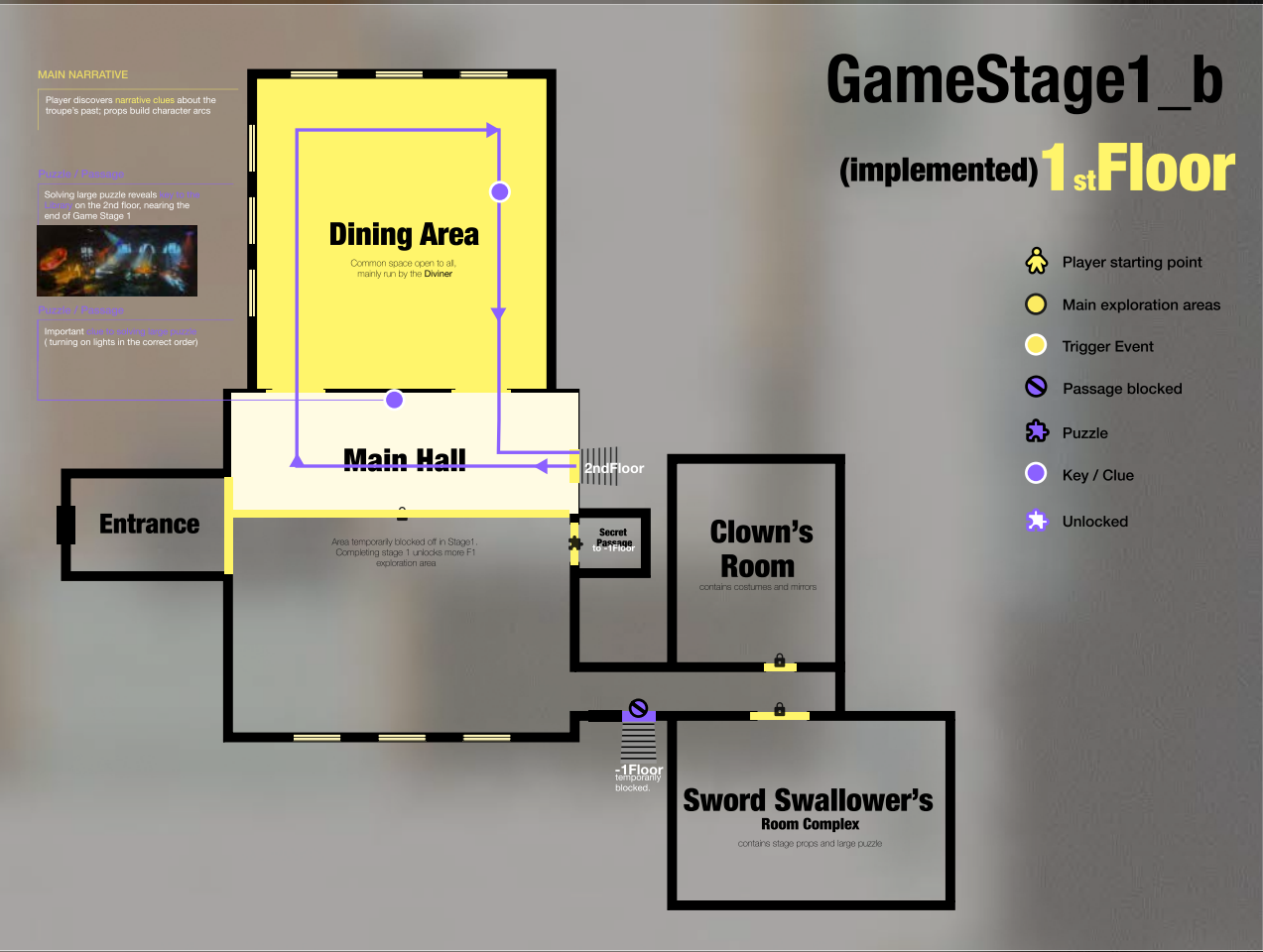
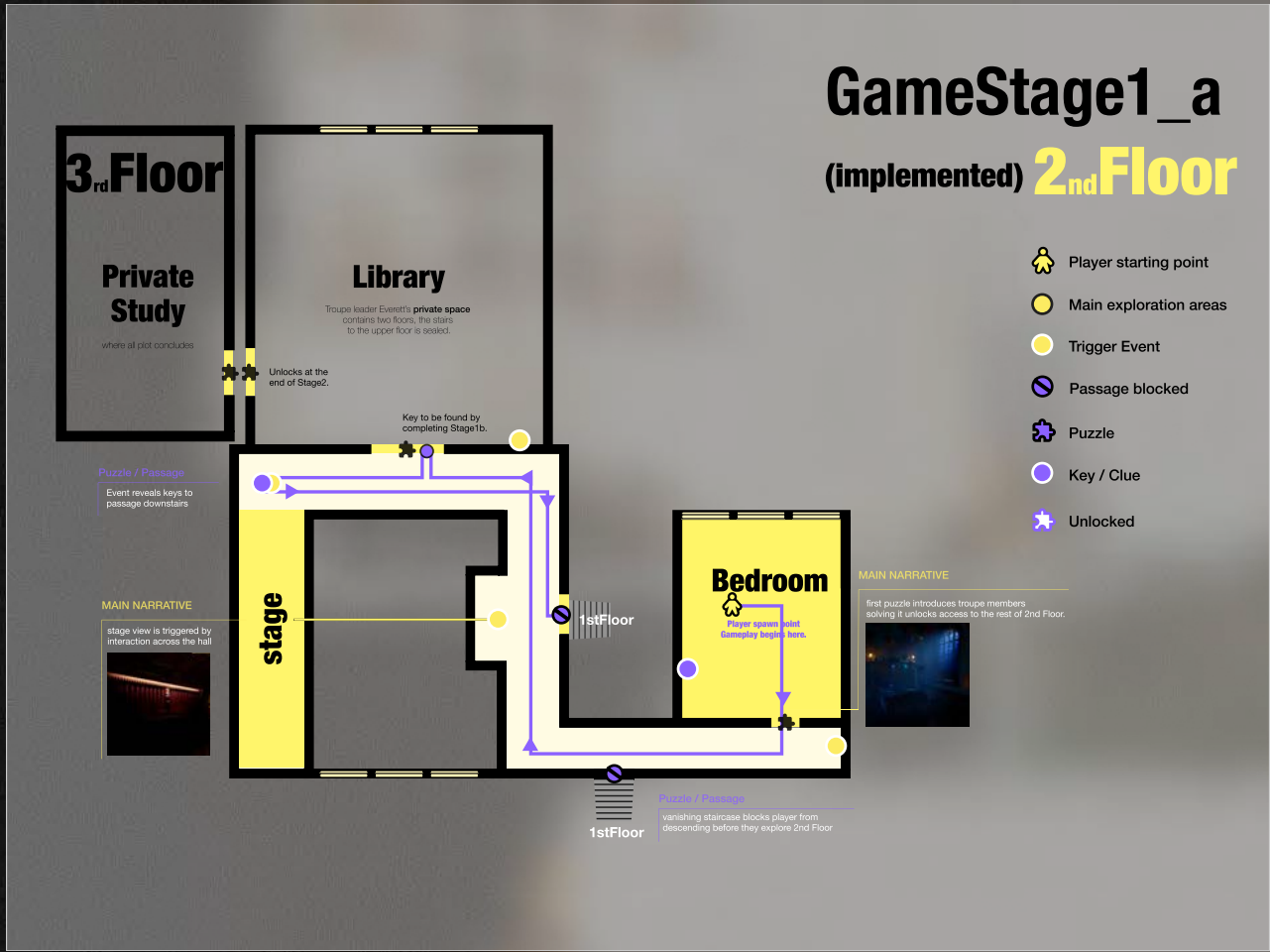


AI-assisted poster production
for the Troupe's past performances.

Level Layout



Game Flow - Stage 1.



Dream

Bedroom

2ndFloor Hallway

Dining Area

Library

Memory Stage

Tutorial

Easy Puzzle & Quest reveal.

Narrative + small puzzles

Main narrative +Large puzzle

Narrative + portal

Narrative + large puzzle.

Gameplay is structured around object pickups, triggered audio-narratives, and circulation-based level design. Lighting and material adjustments are calibrated to direct player attention, adjust pacing, and shift mood and turn the mansion into a stage-like space.

Scene Making & Re-Lighting



Dream

Bedroom



2ndFloor Hallway



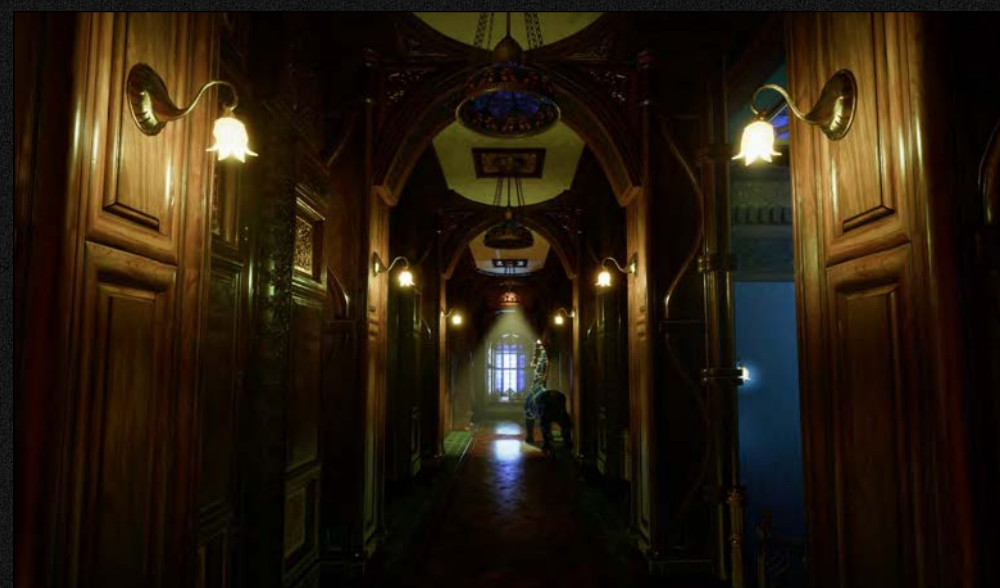
Dining Area



Library



Memory Stage



Dining Room Large Puzzle

- Design Goal

Deliver a major narrative reveal through an immersive-theater-style puzzle where each table embodies a different moment in the troupe's history.
- Player objective

Obtain the key to the second-floor study.
- Puzzle mechanic

Activate the birthday hats in the correct chronological order.

The dining room serves as Ava's curated memory installation, **where five tables represent five frozen scenes in the troupe's history — from their peak to the point each member left, ending in Everett's isolation.** Instead of reading a timeline, players move through it, gathering narrative clues embedded in props, notes, and atmosphere.

To solve the puzzle, the player must **light the birthday hats in the order** these departures occurred. Ava's divination theme provides subtle hints through a star chart and fortune-teller notes, guiding players toward the correct progression.

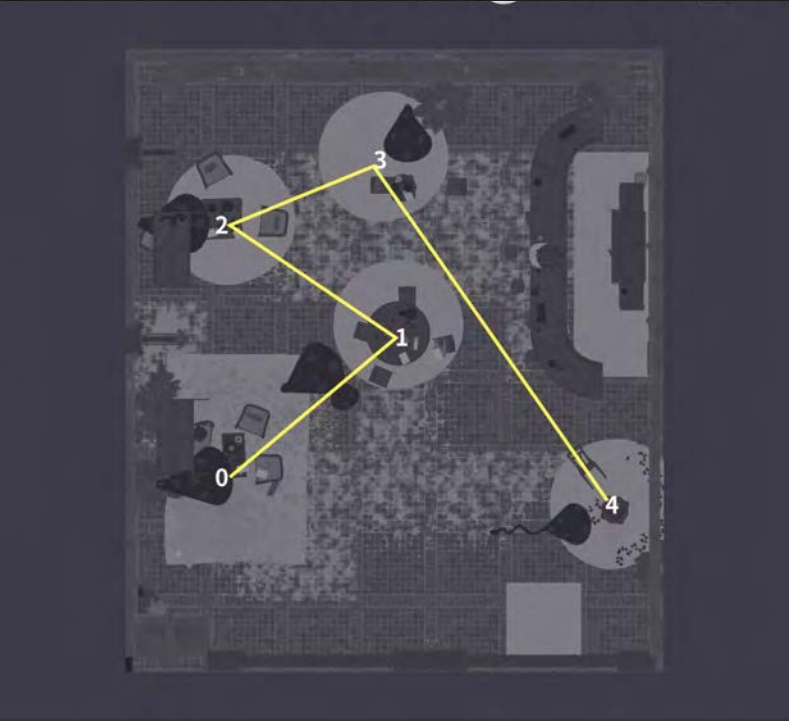
This puzzle merges environmental storytelling with interaction, transforming the dining room into a theatrical timeline the player must assemble to earn the library key.



Before Solving the Puzzle



After Solving the Puzzle



DiningRoom_Chronological Table Order



This table captures the troupe at its pinnacle: all four members gathered around a feast of awards and overflowing gift.

Yet Ava's cat slipped away, the first ominous sign — a tiny departure foreshadowing larger ones to come.



