

Song of Pheona

High Concept

Fight bosses, explore castles, caves, and forests, save villages from the evil reign of the Queen, and harness your arcane abilities. Explore a vast fantasy world and discover its secrets of a long forgotten past. Piece together the unsolved mystery of how magic disappeared and restore the three magical cultures to the world to prevent all out war between the remaining regions.

Features

- Magic system, chose from 3 different skill trees, each providing their own gameplay and story experience.
- Uncover secrets from the past, fix the corruption of the present and vindicate the worlds unjust prejudice for magic.
- Exploration of 8+ unique regions, all with their own varying quests and characters.
- Collect loot around the world to upgrade your players stats and to withstand the diverse environments of every region.

Player Motivation

The story is very closely tied with the players abilities and exploration. The more they explore, the more abilities they have, letting them explore further, and letting the story progress further, and in turn presenting them with more places of interest based on story.

The order of events and the events themselves will change and some even be exclusive to the magic tree the player decides to follow at the start of the game. Each magic type provides a different play style too, essentially giving the player an entirely new experience with each playthrough, the only spoiled part would be core locations and regions explored in previous playthroughs. To limit repetition, main quests tied to regions will be changed for each magic type, and X magic type will only require the player explore X region to complete the main story, whereas Y magic type will require the player to explore Y set of regions.

Genre

Fantasy, 3-D, Story driven, Mystery, Action, Adventure, RPG, Third-person, Atmospheric, Open world, and Metroidvania.

Target Customer

The game will have scalable difficulty, but is curated for the average fantasy open world gamer. It will have mature topics, but nothing too intense so a younger audience can still enjoy the game, but it will be primarily marketed to a mature audience. Players interested in meticulous fantasy worlds and lore, magic, fluid combat systems, and open world exploration are the target audience interests.

Competition

Examples of similar games/worlds: The Dark Souls series, The Zelda series, Hollow Knight, Red Dead Redemption, Skyrim, Elden Ring, The Witcher series, The Horizon Series, and God of War (2018).

This game will be taking from many of the open world elements of the mentioned titles but will have a story taking more from Elden Ring's unique locations and cultures and mix it with The Witchers in depth political/societal story telling to craft something more alike the world of Princess Mononoke. It will have a lot fo shared aspects with these titles but I intend to have the combat differ from the bulky/heavy and deliberate flow most of these titles share, and have a more movement-based/poke style combat system. The goal being to blend the core elements that drew many players towards games like Hollow Knight and Spider-Man, with the elements of the games listed previously.

Unique Selling Points

This game is meant to be familiar. There is a small floating wisp of energy as the player companion from time to time, there is an overgrown forest where nature if the dominant force, and also cities of steel with military all in a medieval setting, a higher being that cursed the land because of the greed of one piece of a bigger population. All these aspects and more are heavily inspired by elements from other games and media. This game is taking the best parts from many similar titles to make one large cohesive and handcrafted experience. Comparisons can be drawn to how Elden Ring is heavily influenced by The Legends of Zelda Breath of the Wild, but in a way that merged core design concepts with the traditional souls-like experience.

Target Hardware

It is definitely going to be a big game and require high end hardware. This game is to be released on the big three: PC, Playstation, and Xbox.

Characters

Name: Namuras

Gender	Age	Race	Region	Religion
<i>Male</i>	<i>Late 80s</i>	<i>Human</i>	<i>Essence</i>	<i>Greater Will/Magic</i>

Occupation/Class: *Leader of the Essence magic sect.*

Education: *Lots of magic experience and has practiced and worked under the force of the Will since a very young age.*

Appearance

Skin Tone: *White, almost gray.*

Eye Color: *Changes throughout story. Yellow, formerly black.*

Facial Features: *Long and slightly boney face, sharp chin, wrinkles, long facial hair (eyebrows and beard)*

Hair Color/Texture/Style: *White, formerly brown.*

Build/Body Type: *Tall, in shape but not bulky. What the Scholars of the Silent Isle base their appearances on in the future.*

Height: *6'4"*

Main Outfit: *Dark blue robe with gray accents.*

Special Features: *Corrupted skin (subtle orange glow beneath skin from overflow of magical energy)*

Narrative

Role/Plot Involvement: *The magic leader that tried to overpower the Greater Will and ended up forsaking the wilds and almost the rest of the world.*

Backstory: *At a very young age Namuras held a very strong connection to the Will and was stronger than all his peers, he became leader of the Essence when the previous leader died by his side in battle in an old war. Namuras has been using his magic to age slower than normal humans and has been the leader for two generations of mages now. Namuras discovered the origin of the Will and how it used to oppose the humans and fight for its safety, from this he was able to take advantage of the altar ceremony by instilling fear and asserting power rather than proving faith to the Will, this gave him immense power for some time until it eventually rotted him from the inside.*

Goals: *Power and immortality.*

Motivation: *A feeling of righteousness and a belief in a destiny he made up for himself to become the ruler of the world with his wisdom from living for so long and natural connection to the Will.*

Fear: *To be as powerful as his peers, or worse, weaker than them.*

Fatal Flaw: *Greed and blinded by his own power.*

Personality

Overall Personality	Strengths	Weakness	Flaws
<i>Pensive and arrogant</i>	<i>Persuasion</i>	<i>Ego</i>	<i>Incapable of collaboration</i>

Audio

Language	Dialect/accents/Voice
<i>English</i>	<i>Deep Spanish accent (Javier Bardem)</i>

Name: Pheona

Gender	Age	Race	Region	Religion
<i>Female</i>	<i>20</i>	<i>Human</i>	<i>Southern Veridi</i>	<i>None</i>

Occupation/Class: *Resident of Fort Novos*

Education: *None, later taught magic by The First One*

Appearance

Skin Tone: *Tan.*

Eye Color: *Light Brown.*

Facial Features: *Rough face and bold eyebrows.*

Hair Color/Texture/Style: *Straight black hair up to right below her shoulders.*

Build/Body Type: *Slightly muscular ectomorph.*

Height: *5'7"*

Main Outfit: *A Cornell Red tunic with an Oxford Blue undershirt, Drab Dark Brown boots, and Gray trousers.*

Special Features: *Small scars on her face, torso, and arms.*

Narrative

Role/Plot Involvement: *Pheona is the main protagonist of the game. The story revolves around her journey discovering the world outside of Southern Veridi, and navigating the challenges of being bestowed magical powers, having come from having almost nothing most of her life. She has her own motives and goals in the story, but along the way helps restore magic into the world and put an end to the dictatorship the Queen of Calum has over Southern Veridi. She also becomes involved in the misguided plot the Scholars of the Silent Isle have, which is to locate and the Greater Will and use it for power.*

Backstory: *Growing up an orphan in the city surrounding Fort Novos, Pheona learned to fend for herself and lived with a group of other orphans in the streets and in hideaways in abandoned homes. Somewhere along the line she was running lots of errands for a guard of Fort Novos and would receive food and goods in return. Their relationship eventually grew to be abusive and the guard blackmailed her into working for him or he'd apprehended and send Pheona and her friends to Stream's End. She had to fake her death to escape that situation and has been laying low ever since.*

Goals: *Master her magical abilities and help her friends find better life outside of Southern Veridis. Later she learns secrets of the worlds past and is asked to go on a quest by the Greater Will in order to keep advancing in her arcane academics.*

Motivation: *Her chosen family of friends, they depend on her very much.*

Fear: *Losing her friends, and at certain points in the game she fears losing her magical powers.*

Fatal Flaw: *Pheona has been living with very little ever since she was born, so when she gets her powers it becomes a struggle for her to keep her composure and not become too power hungry and stay on a moral path.*

Personality

Overall Personality	Strengths	Weakness
<i>Witty, Scrapp, and intelligent.</i>	<i>Magic.</i>	<i>Easily trusting.</i>

Audio

Language	Dialect/accent/Voice
<i>English</i>	<i>Violet from Arcane</i>

Name: Greater Will / The Will / Higher Will / The Force / The First One / The Gift / Higher Being

Gender	Age	Race	Region	Religion
--------	-----	------	--------	----------

None None Unknown Unknown None

Occupation/Class: *Former God to all the lands, now a forgotten*

Appearance

Can often manifest itself physically as orbs of light.

Narrative

Role/Plot Involvement: *The Will is a major player in all of the games story. Both post and pre-cataclysm, and even is involved in the worlds history before then. The Will is meant to be a mentor figure for Pheona for most of the game, but also has its own motives of survival. It has been dormant since the cataclysm, but with the arrival of Pheona, it finally has a chance to restore it's place in the world with her help. It is also what grants Pheona her powers.*

Backstory: *It is unclear when The First One came into existence, but it is alluded to that it was once a human or some mortal of whatever species roamed the earth before humans. It is unclear how long ago this was, but it was once at war with the humans, it was a race between assimilating the world to it's faith before it's opposition could locate it's physical location on the world and destroy forever. It won. From then on decades, maybe centuries, went on of a world that was relatively at peace, and flourishing with magic. The three magic sects came to be and magic evolved from it's uniform way of casting. Each sect nurtured their own variation and from then on it became the norm for magic welders to commit to one style. Cross-breeding the two 'dialects' of magic was forbidden. The Will found no issue with this, as it had come to learn that with time, itself as a figure and and in turn the way it is worshiped will change and transform into ways that may not always be correct, but as long as magic is practiced under it's gift, all is the same in the end. Then of course thing's changed for the worse and Namuras broke the trust*

between The Force and humans, causing it to forsake the sects and their regions and sever the connection between itself and humans, entering a deep dormant state, until Pheona found it.

Goals: It intends to re-establish the faith/religion it had with the humans, by whatever means necessary. It wants to reinvent the relationship between humans had with magic to better fits it's new idea of what it should be. It does not intend to repeat the past and have a symbiotic relationship with the humans, it intends to give them magic again in return for rulership so that it can undo all the damage the humans have done to the earth, and spread the dominant nature of the Forsaken Wilds to the rest of the regions.

Motivation: The memories of what the world was like before the sects were formed, and the long lasting peace that the world had.

Fear: Having it's true location on earth be known.

Fatal Flaw: If it's physical location is found, it can easily be destroyed.

Personality

Overall Personality
Wise

Strengths
Granting magical powers

Weakness
It's location.

Audio

Language
All

Dialect/accent/Voice
Multiple voices layered

Narrative

Pheona is a orphaned peasant living with her friends in the streets of Fort Novos in Southern Veridi. Low on gold and running out of rations to share with her group of friends that

she calls family, of which she is the eldest of, she decides to go out and steal something to get them back on their feet. She leaves at the break of day and on her way out she is caught by the youngest of the group who asks her when they will have food again, and where she is going, to which Pheona replies, "Very soon, and I'll be back very soon. Don't worry". Almost immediately she gets into some trouble and steals a bag that she underestimated the value of, and in a moment of bravery, jumps into The Stream in order to escape the guards chasing her. Luckily for her, inside the bag was a gem that once belonged to the leader of one of the three magic sects of a previous world. Upon jumping into the river she blacks out, and a long cutscene plays that showcases what the world was like during the prime of the three sects. The player will get to know the three different kinds of magic that each sect used, and at the end of the cutscene they will pick a sect from which the gem is from. A message is displayed on screen that says "This choice will determine which magic type Pheona will learn for the rest of the game". Depending on which magic sect is selected, the story changes in some minor ways that more affect the gameplay, but the core story beats that occur go as follow. Pheona wakes up somewhere far along the shore of The Stream, completely unharmed and with the gem in her hand, which dissolves into glowing dust that forms a path into the Forsaken Wilds. She hears a voice calling her name, telling her to follow the trail of light, and with nowhere else to go enters the Forsaken Wilds.

As she follows the voice and trail deeper into the forest, they begin to speak with one another. Pheona learns that it was what kept her safe when she jumped into The Stream, and it also teaches her how to cast basic spells. Pheona is ecstatic about her new powers and is excited by the potential she has. The voice promises it will teach her more if she keeps doing what it asks, and tells her that it is leading her to somewhere very special and long forgotten. After

becoming familiar with a small set of basic spells, and traversing her way through a couple of small obstacles on the way, they arrive to The Altar. It is in an overgrown state, but still in much better condition than the ruins she passed on the trek over. Here, The Greater Will introduces itself and give Pheona a brief history of the world and the forsaking of the Wilds. This entirely reshapes Pheona's view of the world and magic, she always felt like the narrative being told by Eastern Calumites and the Queen wasn't right, but she never knew the extent to which this corruption went. The Greater Will then give Pheona an choice, to help it re-enter the world and bring back an age of magic, and in turn she can keep her magical abilities and it will teach her how to master her skills, but if she declines, she will lose her powers and go back to the unjust life she'd been living. Pheona thinks of her family and how in a world of magic they would all have a chance at a better life and Southern Veridi and become sovereign from Calum. Pheona accepts and is told to venture to a far away region and explore an old hidden tomb/temple/academy, the regions and landmarks will vary depending on what magic sect the player chose at the start. When exploring the landmark, The Will has to reactivate the magic at those locations for Pheona to explore them further, there is a lot of history to be told from these environments. The reactivation of these landmarks brings the unwanted attention of their regions. Pheona finds an artifact that The Will sent her there to find and on her way out tries to sneak past the region's enemies but is caught and captured. Depending on which route the player is on, they are taken to a different region after being captured. If the landmark is in Southern Veridi, Pheona is taken to the Eastern Calum Capital, if the landmark is in Eastern End, the player is thrown into the Sorland Wilds, and if the landmark is on the Silent Isle, the player is thrown into Stream's End. Using the new abilities she's learned overtime, she escapes and has to go back to where she

was originally apprehended to take back the artifact and returns it to the Altar in the Forsaken Reaches. Regardless of route, this event catches the attention of The Queen.

After speaking with the Will again at the Altar, Pheona decides to go back to Southern Veridi and see her friends again, since last time she was there, they were not doing so well, and were waiting on her for help. She goes back and has lots of food from the Forsaken Wilds. When she returns she's happy to find that the town's old codger known as Poor Old Ruben had been watching over them while she was away. She tells them about her journey and explains that she's going to have to go away again for some time. They aren't happy but understand, and don't bother complaining about it to her since they assume it means she will come back with more food again later. Poor Old Ruben tells Pheona to be careful, the guards have been on high alert ever since she got away from them.

Pheona goes back into the Forsaken Wilds and is sent to explore more landmarks but this time all of which are within the Forsaken Wilds region. At each landmark she collects more old artifacts all of which contain Magic Dew for the Higher Being to consume. After returning from the final landmark, she finds the Altar littered with the Queen's Guard, all in exaggerated protection and on edge in fear of entering the Forsaken Wilds. They had followed her back from Fort Novos. The Altar is even more overgrown than before, likely done by the Will in efforts to disguise itself from any suspicion. Pheona also realizes that her powers are gone, the Will had re-entered its dormant state, and Pheona sees all the artifacts being taken away by guards. She flees the scene. She realizes that her best shot at awakening the Higher Will again is going to be to go to it at its true location, and she recalls from the story it had told her that the only person who had known it in a very long time was Namuras, the leader whom the Scholars of the Silent Isle worship, so with that lead, she goes to the Silent Isle.

After lots of fighting, hiding, exploring, and reading, she narrows it down to a couple of ruins deep in Sorland, in fact it is the furthest point in all the lands from the Altar. There, she finds the First One and is able to awaken it once again. It is utterly terrified that Pheona has found it, and tries to fight her, but Pheona is able reason with it after surviving it's attacks for long enough. Pheona is taken aback by its strange and different demeanor from what it normally was like. Reassuring it that she has no intentions of harming it, they devise a plan to go to Fort Novos, take back the artifacts, return them to the Altar, and use them to reverse the corruption that the Will spread all throughout the Forsaken Wilds. And in turn take back Fort Novos for the Veridians. All goes as planned except for on her way out, Pheona is confronted by the Queen herself who is quite the adversary. After defeating her and almost dying, Pheona takes refuge at the Altar to recover herself, meanwhile the Will continues with the plan. Once all is done and the Wilds are back to their original state, the Will offers Pheona a choice. The player can choose to either introduce magic back into the world as it first came into existence, one uniform practice, and all of the Wills worshipers will depend on repeated ceremonies of faith and depend on the Will to learn magic, or to try again at the different sects of magic and let magic evolve separate from the Wills guidance. Depending on the choice, the final cutscene will be different, but both are hommages to the original showcase of the world in the beginning of the game, just now of the future and what becomes of Pheona, her family, and the Will. Both endings are 'good' endings.

Enemies

- The Greater Will. Upon waking up the Will the second time, A boss fight commences, and Pheona does so little damage against the Will, it keep hitting her with a barrage of

magical attacks of all kinds, but as the fight progresses there is lots of dialogue between the two characters and Pheona reasons with the Will to end the fight. The player must survive long enough to see the fight end in order to 'win'.

- Silent Isle Soldier. This is a late game grunt that the player will encounter when infiltrating the Academy of the Silent Isle. They have medium ranged attacks and wield a chain and sickle. They are very hostile and will attack on sight. They have rather high speeds but very telegraphed attacks when using their chain and sickle weapon. They can cast simple spells and use them infrequently in combat. They may quickly conjure a smoke cloud and vanish for a moment and reappear at the player's flank, or light the sickle of their weapon on fire to cause extra damage. The player can defeat these enemies by well timed attacks or managing the space between them and using ranged attacks. They have a medium health pool compared to other world enemies and deal lots of damage per hit. They drop rather high amounts of gold, magic enhancing armor, and lots of xp.
- Dew Dropped Spider. This is the first enemy that the player will encounter in the game. They are hostile but have long pauses between attacks for the player to figure out how to perform intended attacks. They very much telegraph their attacks, and have two attacks they cycle through. One ranged attack where they spit a web projectile at the player, and one lunge attack. They have very low health, and should be killed within 2-5 hits from the player's default attacks and damage stats. They drop natural resources that can be sold/consumed and nothing else.

Level

Main Objective

Follow the mysterious voice/energy leading player to the Altar

Sub Objectives

Discover new enemy types and the region specific loot/resources.

Environment

Forsaken Wilds; vast forest with gigantic trees, mutated wild life, some hostile and some not. Sun peeks through the branches in strong beams every couple of feet, giving the forest a dim but warm glow. In the more shaded spots of the environment where the light reaches the least, small specks of red glow. These are noticeable on the fauna as well when they pass through darker spaces. None of the encounters or puzzles in this level will be overwhelming in this level. The idea is to make it a very calm and disarming environment that is still a flourishing natural environment, different from what the rest of the world considers nature-esque, but still a very harmonized ecosystem. When the player starts the level it is meant to subvert their expectations of the 'big scary forest nobody dares to enter'.

Color Palette



Rewards

Unlocks magic abilities system.

Items

Ability boosting charms, gold (currency), and natural resources.

Secrets

If the player back tracks to prior obstacle spaces after learning later mechanics they will be able to slightly diverge from the path to find an item or two that can boost stats, some specific to the new abilities they are honing in this level or that they will unlock at the end of the level.

Puzzles

The puzzles will not be very complicated in this level. The player will have to navigate minor obstacles, these may not even be considered puzzles. An example would be shoot the vine to drop the fallen tree so you can cross a stream.

Gameplay mechanics

Since this level is fairly early on in the game, the player still hasn't learned all the mechanics of the game and of the abilities they have at hand. The level consists of following what seems to be a magical trail of energy that is calling to the player. It leads them deep into the forest but ever so often there is an environmental obstacle in the way of the energy path. Each of these obstacles will teach a player a mechanic.

Enemies

- Dew dropped spiders (large spiders)
- Dew dropped sparrows (large aggressive birds)

Objects/Clutter

Bushes, small cliffsides/steep hills that form a path for the level, rocks, boulders.

Aesthetic

Secret of the Forest - Chronotrigger

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fKex3QoPc8Ak>

Where does it fit in the story?

The player just discovered their magical abilities which activated as a last resort out of panic when escaping The Queen's Guards, because she was caught stealing a sack of confiscated goods from a guard. Little did she know in that bag was a gem used by the leaders of the old tribes, before the cataclysm, and when she took it into her belonging it awoke the Great Will. The guards cornered her to the cliffside of The Stream, and she was forced to take a leap of faith and jump into the stream and hope she can come out on the other side. The level begins with the player waking up somewhere much further down the stream than where she had come from, and she is full unscathed and has the gem glowing in her hand. She looks at the gem as it disintegrates and turns glowing dust that begins to form a trail in the air into the forests of the Forsaken Wilds. With nowhere else to go, the player must follow the trail.

Implicit storytelling elements

When the player gets close enough to the Altar, remnants of the past world can be seen in the environment. Old shop stands and small pedestals and pillars with strange carvings on them.

UI

Main menu

The main menu will be interactive/engaging. Heavily inspired by the beginning main menu of God of War 2018. It is trying to replicate the immersion, but applying that seamless transitions of menu to moment of gameplay the player last left off on. The solution would be to have the main menu take place in an idle environment of whichever region/key location the player saved in. If the player ended their last session in a forest, the main menu will be a medium shot of the forest and the trees swaying and every few seconds some animals moving in the distance, and if the player ended their last session in the temple, it will be a medium shot of the empty halls of the

temple dimly lit by the candle. In that specific case the UI sounds will have an echo effect to them to really sell the background and immersion.

Shop Menu

when visiting a vendor one of the main action options will be sell excess goods, which will automatically sell all of the junk resources. Along with the other two options of sell loot and buy loot. This is so that immersion isn't broken when collecting gold from killing a big spider or walking tree. The other options will be pretty industry default. A sell option that will take you to a filtered inventory screen for player to pick what to sell. A buy option that will open up a shop inventory on screen and information regarding how an item will change stats or affect the player and other information will be displayed on the side for whichever item is currently selected.

Loading Screen

The loading screen will be split by the bottom 2/5ths of the screen, where the players stats, currency, level, and active quest will be displayed. I think it gives the player something to think about while loading and also will make it easier for the player to not forget what they were actively doing before entering the loading screen. The amount of times I play a game and then spend 2 minutes loading just to forget why I fast traveled somewhere to begin with is a painfully high count. The upper 3/5ths will be a little cinematic or still image of the game world. I really want to sell the idea that the game world doesn't solely revolve around the player, and I think that along with the main menu, showing menial everyday events can push this idea. For example, a loading screen for the Silent Isle Academy could be a candle stick going out by a breeze over a scholar reading a massive dusty book, and they relight the candle and go back to their original studying pose to end the loop. Of course this is all hoping that it wouldn't defeat the purpose of not exerting too much cpu/gpu whatever while loading, so it isn't a necessary detail.

Quests

Quest Name

Rumored Haven

Quest Type

Exploration

Objective

Locate a rumored haven for outcasts somewhere hidden in the Forsaken Wilds, and report back to Poor Old Ruben of its existence.

Success Criteria

Discover the Secret Village and then speak to Poor Old Ruben in Southern Veridi.

Setting(s)

Secret Village (North-West corner of Forsaken Wilds) and Southern Veridi (Fort Novos)

Place in the story

Anytime after beginning the main quest.

Characters

Poor Old Ruben

Story Purpose

Incentivize exploration, contextualizing the world, and display of culture and people.

Gameplay Purpose

Unlocks a safe zone/area in Forsaken Wilds other than the Altar. Also forced player to explore what was previously the Essence region of the Forsaken Wilds, which is required for the player to learn Essence abilities from the Altar. When the quest is selected, a region of the map will be highlighted by a circle, giving the player some direction in where to look for the village,

but still big enough that they will have to explore a good chunk of that corner of the Forsaken Wilds.

Misc.

After completing the quest, Poor Man Ruben can be found in the Secret Village. You can speak to him to begin another quest within the village that will reward the player with the shops in the village having larger libraries of items. And another detail is that Poor Man Ruben's name will have changed to Old Man Ruben after completing the Rumored Haven quest and finding him in the Secret Village.