



The Twilight Dwellers

A level by Billy Beanland

1. A Hat In Time

Big Idea

A Hat In Time is a 3D action/adventure platformer in which you put on different hats to gain new abilities and overcome obstacles. The player's overall goal is to collect hourglass objects called *Time Pieces* that are scattered across a wide variety of levels.

The story of *A Hat In Time* follows a young alien, who just happens to look like a little girl, known as *Hat Kid*. *Hat Kid* is on a journey to her home planet in a spaceship powered by *Time Pieces*, when she is interrupted by a man floating outside her ship. The man introduces himself as a member of *The Mafia*, and insist that *Hat Kid* pay a fine for flying over *The Mafia's* island, *Mafia Town*. After *Hat Kid* refuses, *The Mafia* proceeds to break through the window of the spaceship, which causes himself and *Hat Kid* to fly out into space and towards the nearby planet. This also causes the ship's fuel tank to open, and the *Time Pieces* inside to scatter and descend to the planet. With the fuel tank empty, *Hat Kid* has to travel the planet in order to collect the *Time Pieces* and refuel her ship.

Platform

A Hat in Time is available or will be available for all major gaming platforms (PS4, Xbox One, Nintendo Switch, Mac OS, and PC). Creating custom content and adding it to the game however is exclusive to Mac OS and PC.

Core Mechanics

Being a 3D platformer, *A Hat in Time* uses many of the standard controls that other games in the genre use. The player has free roam movement in the current level while also being able to jump twice, wall climb, and dive. On top of this, there are many systems that diversify this game from others:

Hats

- *Hats* are used to access different abilities that *Hat Kid* can use. In order to unlock a *hat*, the player must first collect balls of *yarn*. Once enough *yarn* has been collected for a specific *hat*, the player will unlock that *hat*. There are six total *hats* that the player can use:
 - Kid's Hat: This *hat* will be given to the player at the very beginning of the game, and using it will point the player to their current objective.
 - Sprint Hat: This *hat* allows the player to run in the direction of their choice as long as they continue to hold the designated button. While sprinting, the player will only be able to jump once, but will jump further.
 - Brewing Hat: While wearing this *hat*, the player can brew explosive potions by holding the button down. Once the potion is brewed, they can release the button to throw the potion in the direction they're facing. Upon hitting an object, the potion will explode.
 - Ice Hat: Using this *hat*, *Hat Kid* will transform into a ice sculpture and lift slightly into the air. When the sculpture hits the ground, it will create a large impact, and *Hat Kid* will turn back to normal.
 - Dweller's Mask: This *hat* instead appears as a mask that *Hat Kid* wears, and allows the player to interact with objects that they would normally walk through. This *hat* also has a limited amount of time before its effects wear off. Once this happens, the player will have to wait a short time before they can use it again.
 - Time Stop Hat: This *hat* allows the player to slow down time for a short bit. Much like the *Dweller's Mask*, this *hat's* abilities also wear off and need to recharge.

Combat

- *Hat Kid* is able to attack enemies with two main methods. The first way is by using an umbrella as if it is a sword or bat. *Hat Kid* will acquire the umbrella after playing the first

level, and will be able to use it for the rest of the game. The second method is by diving at enemies from mid air. If the player is close enough to an enemy when they jump, they will be able to target that enemy. Once they do, they will do a mid air dive towards the enemy.

Badges

- *Badges* are used to either give the player new abilities or enhance other abilities. Some examples of badges include giving the player a grappling hook mechanic, replacing the *Sprint Hat* with a scooter, and firing a laser blast from *Hat Kid's umbrella*.

Technology

The main game engine for *A Hat In Time* is Unreal Engine 3, but the level that has been built was made in the game's specific editor, made possible through the Unreal Development Kit (UDK).

Target Audience

A Hat in Time has been heavily targeted towards fans of 3D platformers for the inspiration that it takes from other games in its genre. Gameplay is guided mostly by the goal of collecting all the *Time Pieces*, so those who use an achiever style of play will be attracted to the game. *A Hat in Time* also boasts an art style that is self-described as "cute-as-heck", so those who prefer a more whimsical artistic aspect will likely enjoy the game quite a bit.

2. The Twilight Dwellers Level

Context

The level takes place in the *Twilight Realm*; a section of *Alpine Skyline* that is only accessible through ringing the *Twilight Bell*. The level itself consists of a center area that branches off into different paths that the player can take to explore more. The idea of the level is centered

around a final resting place for the main inhabitants; The *Forest Dwellers*. After passing on, *Forest Dwellers* are transported to the *Twilight Realm* to live out the rest of their existence, and to prevent them from leaving, they are guarded by a platoon of *Goats* that stand watch at the gates of the *Twilight Realm*.

The story sees *Hat Kid* entering the *Twilight Realm* in order to collect another *Time Piece*. Upon arrival, *Hat Kid* is met by a *Forest Dweller* that expresses their strong desire to leave the *Twilight Realm* and return to their home in the *Subcon Forest*. To do so, the *Forest Dweller* asks *Hat Kid* if she can distract the *Goats* guarding the exits so that all the *Forest Dwellers* can escape, and offers to give *Hat Kid* a *Time Piece* that they found the other day.

Objectives

Distract/Move the *Goats* to open the paths out of the *Twilight Realm*

- Cross each path that branches from the center
- Locate and press the buttons that will distract/move each *Goat*

Collect Items to use for game progression (Optional)

- Collect *Pons* to use for buying *Badges*/unlocking levels
- Collect *Health Pons* to regain lost health.
- Collect *Rift Tokens* to use on the *Orb Slot Machine*

Environment

The *Twilight Realm* is designed to have a mysterious tone. Surrounded by a dark environment, the architecture is primarily marble pathways and blocks with etchings of goats and horseshoes carved into them. The only inhabitants of the *Twilight Realm* are the various *Forest Dwellers* and *Goats*.

Difficulty

Seeing as the *Twilight Realm* is introduced to the player much later in the game, this level will present a higher level of challenge. Obstacles are geared towards the use of the *Dweller's Mask* to overcome them and progress. As the player moves further along each path, they will be presented with harder challenges, and will usually involve activating the *Dweller Mask's* and then quickly deactivating it.

Estimated Playtime: 10-15 Minutes

3. Obstacles

Grappling Hooks

Grappling hooks are only usable if the player has the *Hookshot Badge* equipped. By being in range and pressing the designated button, the player will extend their *hookshot* and grab the *grappling hook*, suspending them in midair. The player will stay on the *grappling hook* as long as they are holding the button, and can rotate and swing back and forth.

Dweller Platforms

Dweller platforms will appear to the player as phasable green platforms, but by using the *Dweller's Mask*, the platforms will become solid until the *hat's* ability runs out. There are also *inverted dweller platforms*, which appear as solid purple platforms, and will become phasable while using the *Dweller's Mask*.

Dweller Bells

Dweller Bells function similarly to the *Dweller's Mask*, except that they are objects that the player can hit to activate. Upon hitting one, it will create a field-of-effect that will change *Dweller Platforms*. Some of these will only last a certain amount of time, or will need to be hit again to turn off. There are also *Negative Dweller Bells*, which will always make a *Dweller Platform* phasable. These ones are also able to move in certain paths and can't be hit.

Tightrope

Tightropes are used to get from one destination to another. While on them, the player will be restricted to moving in a straight path, and by jumping repeatedly, they will be able to jump higher on the *tightrope*.

Zip Lines

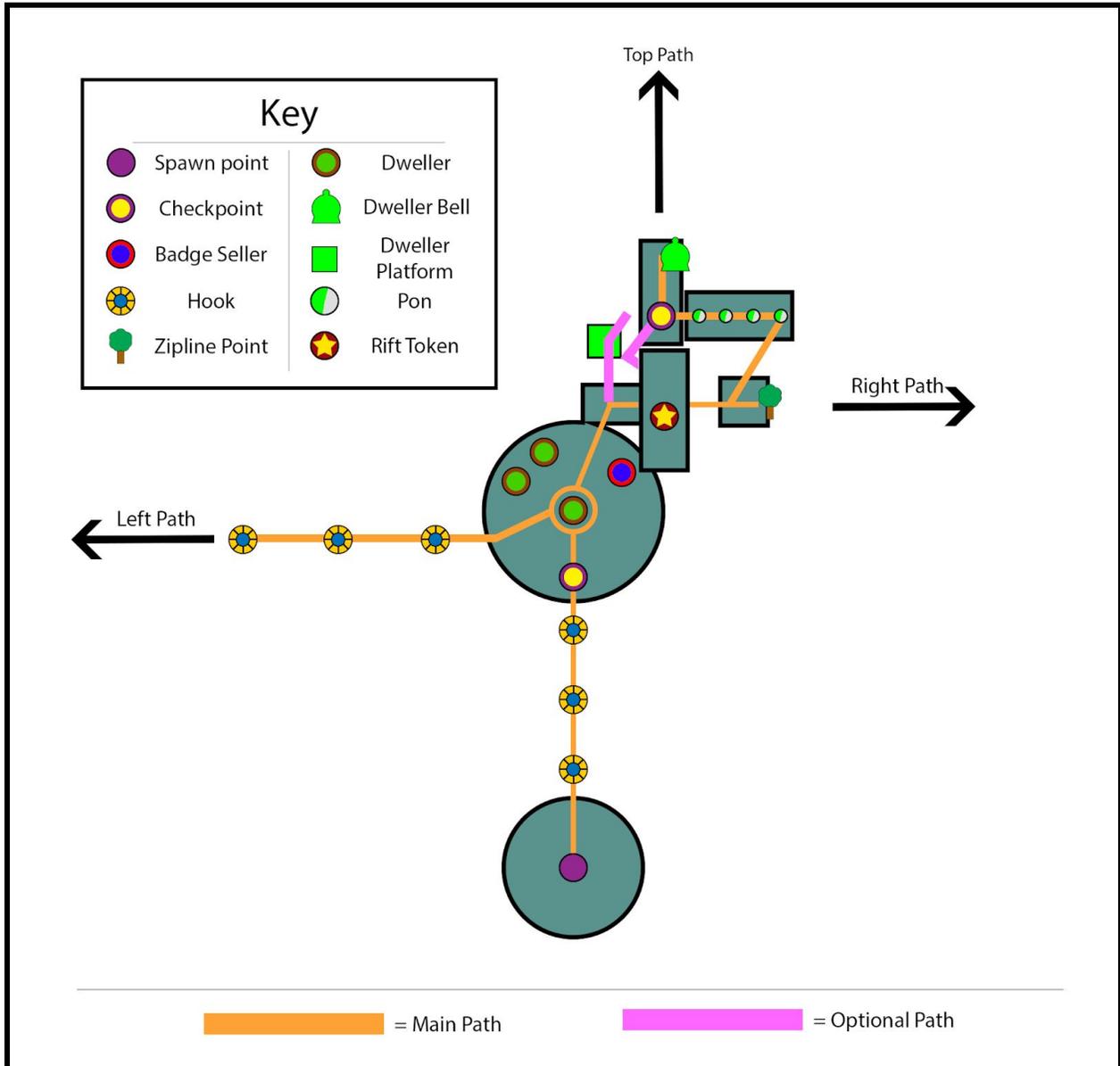
The player will only be able to use *zip lines* if they have the *Hookshot Badge* equipped. While they are in range, they can use the *hookshot* to grab onto the zipline, which will rapidly propel them to the other end. While on a *zip line*, the player can move left and right to grab items.

Buttons

By pressing *in-level buttons*, the player will activate level specific features. In this case, they will make the *goats* disappear so the *Forest Dwellers* to escape.

4. Level Walkthrough

Center Area

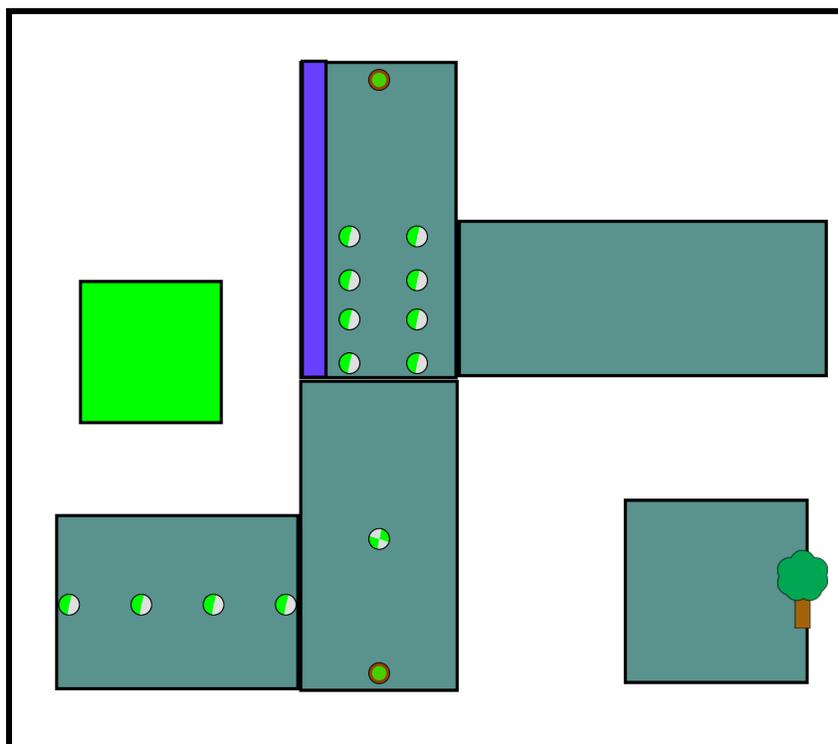


The player starts the level on a nearby platform, and will need to use the *grappling hooks* to get to the center. Once there, they will be introduced to the main *Forest Dweller*, who will introduce the plot of the level. Afterwards, they will be free to choose any of the paths that

they wish to explore. This area will also be the main point of interest, as once the player has left one area, they will need to come back here to get to the next area. This is also where the *Time Piece* appears once all of the buttons have been pressed.

Along with the main *Forest Dweller*, there are a few other NPCs that will be in the center area. Two additional *Forest Dwellers* will be present in the center, but will not be interactable. There is also the *Badge Seller*; a recurring character in *A Hat in Time* that the player can buy *badges* from using the *pons* they have collected. Lastly, there are another two *Forest Dwellers* in hidden areas of the level.

Center (Hidden Areas)



Many of the platforms in the level have large arches, but some of them have additional areas underneath that the player will have to explore for. The first in the center area requires the player to drop down and use the *Dweller's Mask* to go through a wall. Here, they will find additional pons, and a *Forest Dweller* to talk to.



Image 1: The player has found the first secret area, and needs to use the Dweller's Mask to get past the wall.

The second area must be accessed by first getting to a higher point, which will most likely be just before going to the top path. The player will jump off the bottom right corner of the platform, and go to *wall climb* on the side of the platform next to it. If successful, they will reach the secret area, where there will be a *pon time trial* and an additional *Forest Dweller*.



Image 2: The player is preparing to jump and wall climb to the secret area.

Top Path



The top path begins with a series of *dweller platforms* and *dweller bells*. The player will need to hit each *dweller bell* in order to make the platforms solid, but will also be able to use their *Dweller's Mask* if they choose. Once the *dweller bells* are hit, they will begin to drain, so the player will need to hurry in order to cross the obstacle.

After the first obstacle, they will be rewarded with pons, and come across a *Forest Dweller* staring at a *goat*. This will show them where the goat for this path is, and allow them to speak with the *Forest Dweller*. Afterwards, the player will reach the first checkpoint of the path.

The second half of the top path starts with the player using their *Dweller's Mask* to pass through an *inverted dweller platform*. Afterwards, they will repeatedly turn the ability on and off to successfully platform to the final challenge of the path. At this point, they will encounter two *negative dweller bells* moving back and forth on a long *inverted dweller platform*. The player will need to time their movements correctly in order to reach the final platform and press the button. From here, they simply have to jump down to the center and choose another path.

Additionally, there is a side challenge on this path; the player can jump from the long *inverted dweller platform* to get to a *Rift Token*. The challenge is a bit high-risk, as failing will result in a large fall that will bring them back to the center. If done successfully though, the player will receive the rift token, and can jump back to the long *inverted dweller platform* more easily.

Left Path



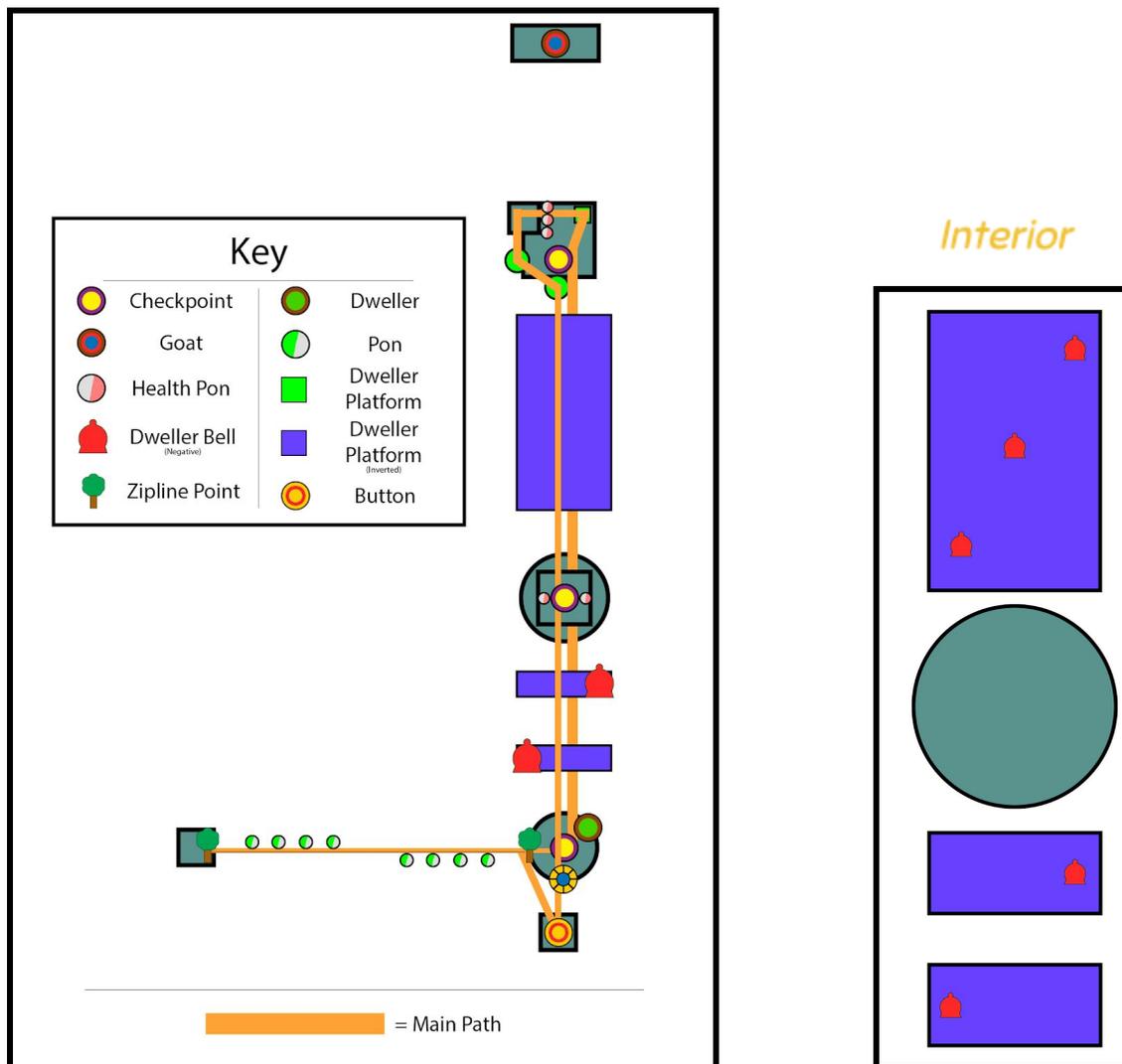
After grappling over to the left path, the player will be presented with a platform where a group of *mad crows* wait. The *crows* will try to attack the player, and the player can choose to fight back, or try to evade them. After this section, they will jump underneath an archway, where a grappling hook will be waiting, the player will need to use the *grappling hook* to get from the first platform to the next, where they will get a checkpoint and *health pons* in case they lost any health against the *crows*.

The next obstacles will involve heavier use of the *dweller platforms*. It begins with a *wall jump* that uses a *dweller platform*. After that, the player will come to a large *inverted dweller platform* with two *negative dweller bells* moving in a square path. Just before the platform, there will also be an optional *time trial*, which upon touching it, will create a path of *pons* that will disappear in a short amount of time. If the player chooses, they can attempt to collect the

pons, otherwise they will cross the platform, hook onto another *grappling hook* underneath the arched platform, and reach the next checkpoint.

The final obstacles will involve the player moving across a *tightrope*, and using a *dweller bell* to make more platforms solid for a limited time. After crossing these obstacles, the player will reach the button that will get rid of the *goat*, and will be able to use the *grappling hook* next to the *button* to get back to the center. Upon hooking to it, the *grappling hook* will move them back to the center. The player will then choose another path to take.

Right Path



To get to the right path, the player will take a *zipline* from the center. There will be a series of *pons* on the *zipline* that the player can swing left and right to get as they move towards the path. After they make it to the other side, there will first be a *Forest Dweller* that the player can speak with, after which they will encounter a series of *inverted dweller platforms*. These platforms will have a square hole in them and a *negative dweller bell* moving in a square path on the inside. The further the player progresses, the faster the *negative dweller bells* will move.

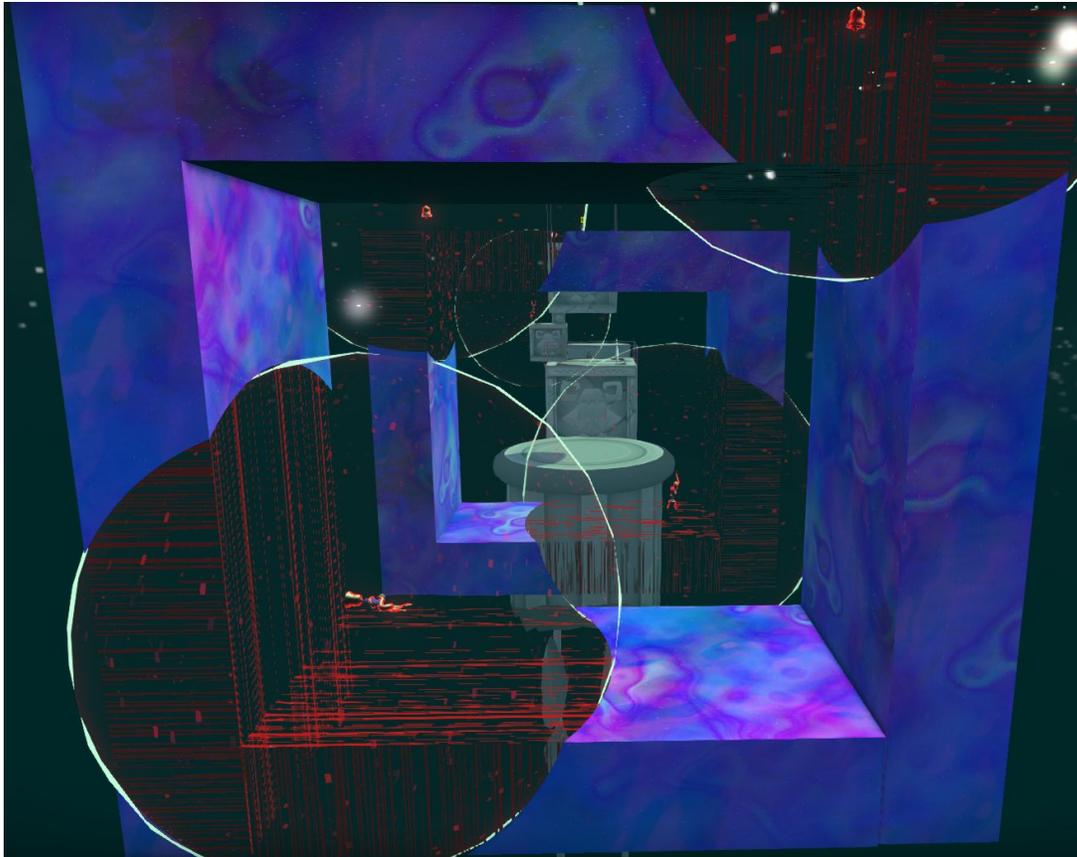


Image 3: The interior of the *inverted dweller platforms* on the right path.

The player will reach a checkpoint after clearing the previous path, where a set of *health pons* will be in case they need them. From there, there will be some basic challenges that use the *Dweller's Mask* that bring them on top of the path they used to get there. The player will need to make their way across the tops of the platforms while avoiding the *negative dweller bells*, which will continue to rotate underneath them and making the platforms phasable.

In between the long platform and the short platforms, there will be a checkpoint with two additional *health pons*. The next platforms will not only have the original *negative dweller bells* below, but two additional *negative dweller bells* on the top moving back and forth. The player will need to time their jumps properly in order to get to the *grappling hook* on the other side and reach the *button*. After pressing the *button*, the player will take the *zipline* back to the center and move on to another path if they need to.

Final Task

Once all of the buttons have been pressed, the *Time Piece* will appear back at the center of the level. Once they have collected the *Time Piece*, the level will end. Since this level isn't a part of the main story, the player will be rewarded with a *rift token* instead of the *Time Piece*.



Image: The *Time Piece* at the center of the level.

