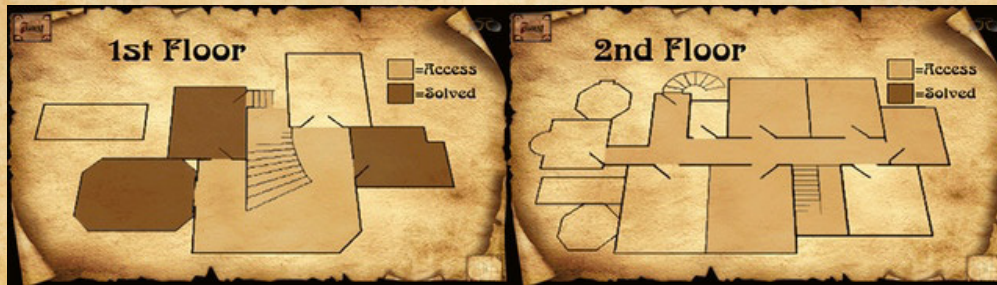


# Building the Foundation

## How we started...

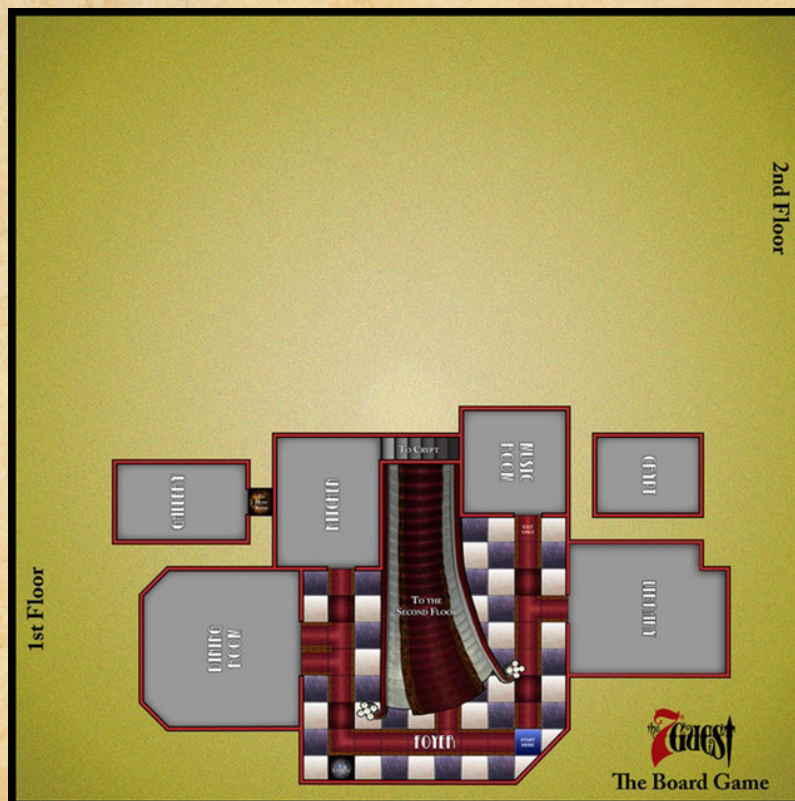
I had mentioned that sticking to the original computer game scheme, the tabletop board game would practically design itself. When it came to the development of the board itself, that was certainly no exception. Quite the opposite - it was essential. After all, we had a mansion and a floorplan. That was the foundation around which the game would be designed and the landscape upon which it would be played. No question.

I started by taking the maps from the original game and, with some adjustments and enhancements, used those as the basic templates for the layout.



*Maps from the 7th Guest Special Edition for Android*

The next step was to add floor tiles to the Foyer for use as navigation spaces.



*This is the very first iteration of the game board with only the 1st floor blocked in.*



Of course, a most important graphic element was wanting at this point... illustrative representations of the rooms in place of the blank gray areas. Fortunately, the good folks at **Attic Door Productions**, who are working on *The 13th Doll*, the fan based game, and have recreated nearly all of the rooms of Stauff's mansion in 3D, not only graciously granted my request to provide us with their 3D models, but went even farther by loaning us their lead programmer and 3D artist, James Bateman to render the top-down views of the rooms.



*Here is the next iteration with the first two rendered rooms in place and with the 1st and 2nd floors laid out. Added lighting effects and some vegetation to the Foyer.*

We think it worked out to be a beautiful collaboration between the work of **Trilobyte**, the 7th Guest's original creators, and the work of the game's most devoted fans. Many heartfelt thanks to James Bateman, Ryan Holtkamp and **Attic Door's** entire crew. Your participation was invaluable. And a shout out to William Hennes who also contributed his graphic talents to the development of the board.





*In this iteration, more room illustrations are incorporated. I refined the Foyer tiles to a more elegant, diagonal layout, using only the carpet runners for the navigation path. All secret passages, which are as in the original game, are added.*



*Final version of the board with all room illustrations incorporated. The Little Room at the Top is now in its proper pentagonal shape, and all against a field of purple, the color of horror and Stauf's favorite.*



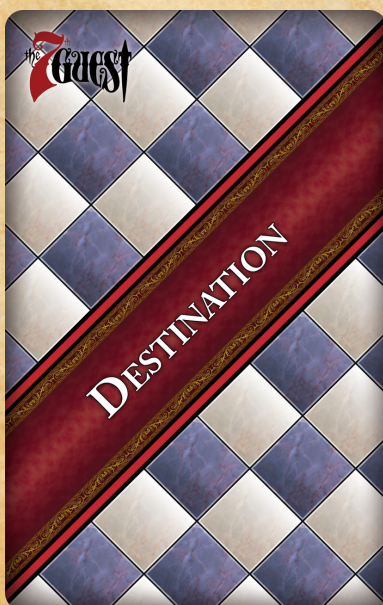
## It's In The Cards

After the determining the design of the board, the next crucial components to address was the cards. The first consideration would be the design for the card backs. After a few conceptual experiments, I decided on restating the theme of the tiled floor of the Foyer and the rug runner paths. The three types of cards are labeled and color coded.



### Destination Cards

Upon arriving at the mansion, Stauf assigns each of his guests a series of rooms they must visit and solve the puzzles therein. This takes the form of the Destination Cards. The number of cards used can be determined by the players for longer or shorter games. Since the decks are shuffled prior to play, the sequence is random and unknown. The design and layout for these would be fairly straightforward and simple with only a label and an illustration. Once again, the Attic Door folks came to the rescue, providing snapshots of the room interiors.



**LIBRARY**



**KITCHEN**



## Mystery Spell Cards

This is a game of skill and smarts, but there is also quite a bit of randomness thrown in for some unexpected twists and turns. Like any indecent haunted house, Stauf's mansion has "cold spots" that are haunted with magic spells that are sometimes good, sometimes not-so-good, and sometime just bad. You never know what you're going to get. There are currently 18 different spells with more on the way. Each spell is duplicated once for a total of 36 cards. You can try to avoid the spells, or you might just want to take your chances in hopes of drawing a card that gives you an edge.



## Puzzler Cards

Finally there are the cards that lie at the heart of the game. They would consist of three basic types of brain-teasers - logic problems, riddles and trivia. In the original video game, Stauf was generous with his hints, and here is no exception. With most of the more difficult puzzles, hints are provided and players may ask for them. However for every hint requested, some navigational ability is sacrificed.

Here are example cards typical of the three types of puzzlers. Good luck coming up with the answers (without Googling).





## Figurine It Out

Just a few words and images to take you behind the scenes in the creation of the miniature playing pieces.



*The six guests and Lady in White*

Making decision about the design of the board was not exactly excruciating. We had the floorplan from the video game and that dictated most decisions regarding the layout. By the same token (pardon the pun) the number of player pieces as well as their character, was dictated by the original storyline (although the game is called *The 7th Guest*, there were really only six guests who competed against one another, the identity and nature of the 7th guest being the mystery). I mention this as another example of how and why this game practically designed itself.

The first matter to address was how to sculpt the models. It soon became apparent that the best way would be to find an accomplished artist proficient with *Zbrush*, the digital sculpting tool from **Pixologic**. After putting out a call on **Pixologic**'s forum, and screening several applicants, we were fortunate to settle upon the very talented Romanian artist Romeo Salbatecu, aka Silvaticus, who, when not sculpting, often wonders the Carpathian mountains in the footsteps of Vlad the Impaler. (Okay, I'm being a bit melodramatic here, but it's a good story, and true.)

Yet there was a slight hurdle to overcome - that being the dearth of good reference material for the character design. Certainly, we had the videos from the game, but because they were pixelated and halfway transparent - literally ghosted - that source was almost worthless.

At the same time, it was not critical to get accurate likenesses of the original actors. It would be much more important to capture the nature of each character through body pose, gesture and attitude. So it was a matter of me providing quick sketches and notes to Silvaticus, him submitting initial roughs, me making additional notes and going back and forth in that manner two or three times until we got the the desired results.



Here are some examples of that process, from initial conceptual character sketches and reference materials, to first rough sculpts, follow-up notes, and final results.



*Martine Burden*



*Brian Dutton*



*Hamilton Temple*



## A Personalized Miniature Story

As part of our *7th Guest: The Board Game* Kickstarter, we offered – and continue to offer through our online pre-order store – customized miniatures, sculpted to your likeness or to a likeness of your choosing. One of our backers, to our delight, took full advantage of our offer by providing a unique persona that made for a most fun and interesting miniature figure.



*Royce Cobblepot, a very special guest.*



# Spirits Can You Tell Me? Is There Life After Kickstarter?



At the beginning of the campaign, the Trilobyte team pondered the question, “what sort of add-on items should we offer our supporters”? After days of indecision, we pulled out the prototype of our *Sphinx Spirit Board*, gathered round a small table in a darkened parlor illuminated only by candlelight to invoke and consult with the spirit of Osiris.

“Oh great spirit, hear us! Should we offer mass-produced things like coffee mugs, t-shirts and baseball caps?”, we implored. The spirit quickly moved the Eye of Providence over “NO”.

“Should we offer a line of exclusive hand-crafted, signed and numbered limited editions of premium products that are directly related to the 7th Guest brand?”, we beseeched. A powerful force that was beyond our control pushed the solid wood planchette decisively over “YES”.

As it turned out, the ancient Egyptian god of the underworld and the afterlife proved to be right... once again... as usual. What a know-it-all.



*Disclaimer: We do not guarantee powerful ancient spirits will be summoned with your own hand-crafted spirit board. It all depends on the sincerity of the supplicants. But we can guarantee that we are pleased with the performance of our board and are definitely pleased that our add-on items have been so well received by our backers.*