

Gregory 0:21

Hi, and welcome to the Future Proof games update podcast. We've started talking about the stuff we've been working on each month. Talk about what's coming up in the next month. So if you like to introduce yourself?

Melissa

I'm Melissa Avery-Weir.

Gregory

And I'm Gregory Avery-Weir. And boy it is July. More than halfway through the year.

Melissa

Oh, yeah. It's one of those things where you're like have we finished--are we halfway through the projects we said we would do in 2018.

Gregory

Yeah. Which I think our estimation has been better this year than it has previously.

Melissa

It could hardly be worse.

Gregory 0:59

Yeah, our big project lately has been Rosette, Rosette Diceless, our GM-less role playing game that works for tabletop or live action. We will be finishing it up. We're gonna be releasing July 25.

Melissa

That's like 10 days.

Gregory

Yep. We've ordered a proof copy of the paperback print on demand and it is currently in North Carolina so... and we're also in North Carolina.

Melissa

That helps.

Gregory

Yes, so we should be getting it any day now.

Melissa

Yes. That media mail, though.

Gregory

Yeah. It's cheap but it takes a while. The printing took longer, I think.

Melissa
That's true.

Gregory
I'm really looking forward to seeing it as a physical thing. We've like printed out on our printers before but that's not the same.

Melissa
Right! To actually like feel the pages in your hand flipping.

Gregory
Yeah.

Melissa 2:00
So yeah, like 10 days. I feel like... I don't know, marketing is hard.

Gregory 2:05
Yeah, we're still sorting out exactly how we want to do it. I mean, if, if folks want us to run a game for them on a Twitch stream, or anything like that, we're happy to, and we'll be reaching out to folks over the next few weeks to do that, and hopefully, is an ongoing thing.

Melissa
Yeah, yes.

Gregory
I don't think I don't think people are quite as concerned with the new latest and greatest when it comes to role playing games as they are when it comes to video games.

Melissa
Yeah. And, you know, when, when it comes to marketing, like we kind of have, we have a few people to reach out to. We have a lot of people to reach out to, we've got sort of a tentative plan. It's gonna be a lot of work. But there's, there's a little thing we're doing this upcoming week that is kind of exciting.

Gregory 2:51
Yeah. For both for all our games, really.

Melissa 2:56
Yeah. I heard about it from Hannah Flynn from Failbetter Games. They are the makers of Fallen London, Sunless Sea, Sunless Skies, and probably a few other things. But this is like a focused week in which everybody in the indie industry and indie players sort of share reviews and just...

I don't know it's like a big week of patting each other on the back.

Gregory

Sort of give away stuff to the audience and stuff to each other without really the expectation of return. The folks that as a community, we're helping each other up.

Melissa

I mean, one of the things that's so huge is getting getting reviews for games, like Steam reviews or blog posts or whatever/. Like getting things that are like positive feedback--hopefully positive, yeah, it's presumptive--um, but hearing that from real people instead of just kind of tossing your game into the void and hoping it makes money or hoping people like it with no loop to close there so. That should be fun.

I have a have a few games in mind that I want to review as part of it. I've been doing a little bit of twitch streaming myself, so I will probably fire up twitch as part of that and and point folks there.

So that--especially coming right off the end of the Steam Summer Sale--is some marketing fun. I haven't actually figured out how I want to loop in Rosette Diceless.

Gregory 4:47

Yeah, yeah. So the other thing that's coming up kind of with a hard date is that we have a trademark application in for The Majesty of Colors, which has been challenging. We're not lawyers. We don't have a lawyer, and we can't afford a lawyer under our current budget and so we submitted a trademark application because just as protection against like folks who try and clone the game.

We've already had the old Flash game Majesty of Colors very poorly ported by some rando.

Melissa

To iOS.

Gregory

Yeah, and had to shut it down and so on. It would have been probably a smoother process if we would have been like "Here's our trademark you're using our name."

Melissa

Right.

Gregory 5:31

But currently the review status is "Hey, there's a trademark for a game called Majesty. The Majesty of Colors is not sufficiently different."

Melissa

Right.

Gregory

Which totally understandable. We're hoping to convince and communicate that that's a distinct enough mark. But it involves, you know, writing a legal response.

Melissa

Which we've done.

Gregory

Yes, we've got it almost ready to send.

Melissa

All it needs is a salutation.

Gregory

I think we need to polish up some parts of it. But it's um. It's one of those things where it's like, we spent a lot of time figuring out how to say what we wanted to say.

Melissa

Yeah? Kind of like cobbling together you know, you think of like, there is very clear like one what guidelines it's denying you this trademark. And so you look at those and you say, "okay, except part B of this" or "here's an exception". And some of those are from like other law cases, right? So do we go--do we try to find those and sift through those? Do we find--we found there are some lawyers or game devs (or hybrids) that have posted their responses to similar kickbacks. Which it's incredibly common to be told that your mark your, your trademark is too close to someone else's.

Like that's really common. And that's not to say that this person didn't do a good job. But there are some easy buckets by saying like "there's not enough difference between Majesty and The Majesty of Colors because of the Majesty in the phrase." You know, you're like, well, the "of colors" part is important. Right?

Gregory

Right. And that's where I get the impression that it's pretty common for the first step the you know, the first attempt to the trademark to get pushed back and said, "No, you need to clarify it". I mean, it's almost like they're saying convince me of this.

Melissa

Right. And it's not like a contentious or rude thing. It's all very chill and but you know, you kind of fake the lingo, right? Like you're trying to, obviously, they will know we're not lawyers, but hopefully we can sort of piece things together in a way that's sufficient.

Gregory

And in a way that's like respectful of their time and expertise.

Melissa

Like, yeah, you don't want to you don't throw the kitchen sink and be like here's 75 ways, even though I only actually needed to refute three. So. There's a whole bunch of other stuff we could have done. Like one suggestion that people have is just call the lawyer that did the review that rejected it. Just call them informally and ask them what their thought process was, because it may not--you may think you need to refute all these things and really, they had a particular angle or a particular reason that you could focus on. You can save yourself some work with that.

Gregory

The reasoning was pretty clear.

Melissa

Yeah, yeah. So that's just another another thing some people do. But yeah, it we finally sat down a few weeks ago and just spent hours on a weekend--hours--pouring through everything.

Gregory

Organizing references, yeah.

Melissa

It was shenanigans.

Gregory

So we talked about some stuff for Rosette Diceless that has a deadline. There's another part of it that we're hoping to get done real soon but isn't isn't something we're promising for release that Melissa has been working hard.

Melissa 9:23

I think I can do it. It has been working on a Kindle version. We probably won't immediately do print on Amazon because of the can of worms his has been in digital form. But essentially taking our HTML and CSS. So that's not rocket science.

Gregory

It's just like a web page.

Melissa

Yeah, just like a big web page and styling it for Kindle. So we already have that for print. But on Kindle, you can't have left page/right page. You can't have, like, there's no concept of paging. It's concept of whatever its browser is--

Gregory

Whatever it uses to, like convert from web to ebook format, right?

Melissa

Yeah, whatever it does to convert between HTML and ebook. It's just different than what we're doing for print. And it's different than Chrome. So I cannot open it in Chrome or IE, or anything and see it the way Kindle will. So there's this conversion process that takes about two full minutes, which is a lot of time when you're coding to wait for feedback on something.

And so it's coming along. There were a few parts that were tricky and a few parts I'm still struggling with, like how to center images and how to center our kind of asides and things like that. So it's been kind of a technical slog.

And I spent a couple few hours, like, making changes and nothing was showing and I was like, "What is wrong with this?! Like, it's just HTML and CSS to me." It's ignoring media queries ignoring this, that. And it turns out that it *requires* an attribute in HTML that is optional. And it requires it.

Or it's not gonna, it's not going to use your CSS where, yeah. And it was hours and hours and hours. This is one of those things where it's like this whole thing, it's going to take me 12 to 16 hours. But the actual amount of fingers to keyboard work involved is like four to six, you know.

Gregory

It just took you so long to go down false paths and figure out how to do the work that you need to do.

Melissa

Right. So, but that's, that's coming together. I think we'll be able to launch with Kindle support. And that's I mean, for all that work, it is relatively secondary. I think that's not the venue people tend to buy their indie games. But I think it's worth doing for having our name in the Amazon Marketplace.

Gregory

Yeah.

Melissa

And being able to sort of start to establish a presence there, especially if we do continue on with the rest of the Rosette books.

Gregory

Definitely. You can, as usual find all our stuff at futureproofgames.com. Find us over on twitter @PlayFutureProof and on Facebook as Future Proof Games. Let us know what you think of the podcast we're doing. If you've got any tips or requests they're totally welcome--give us

comments. Our theme music is do "Juparo" by Broke for Free, which is available under a Creative Commons Attribution 3.0 license.