



General Information Sheet

Game's Full Name: Chronicles of Astraea: Former Dawn

Company's Name: Something Nerdy Studios

Company's Location: Knoxville, TN

Release Date: TBA

Availability: NES, PC, Nintendo Switch, & other consoles

Website: <https://somethingnerdy.com/>

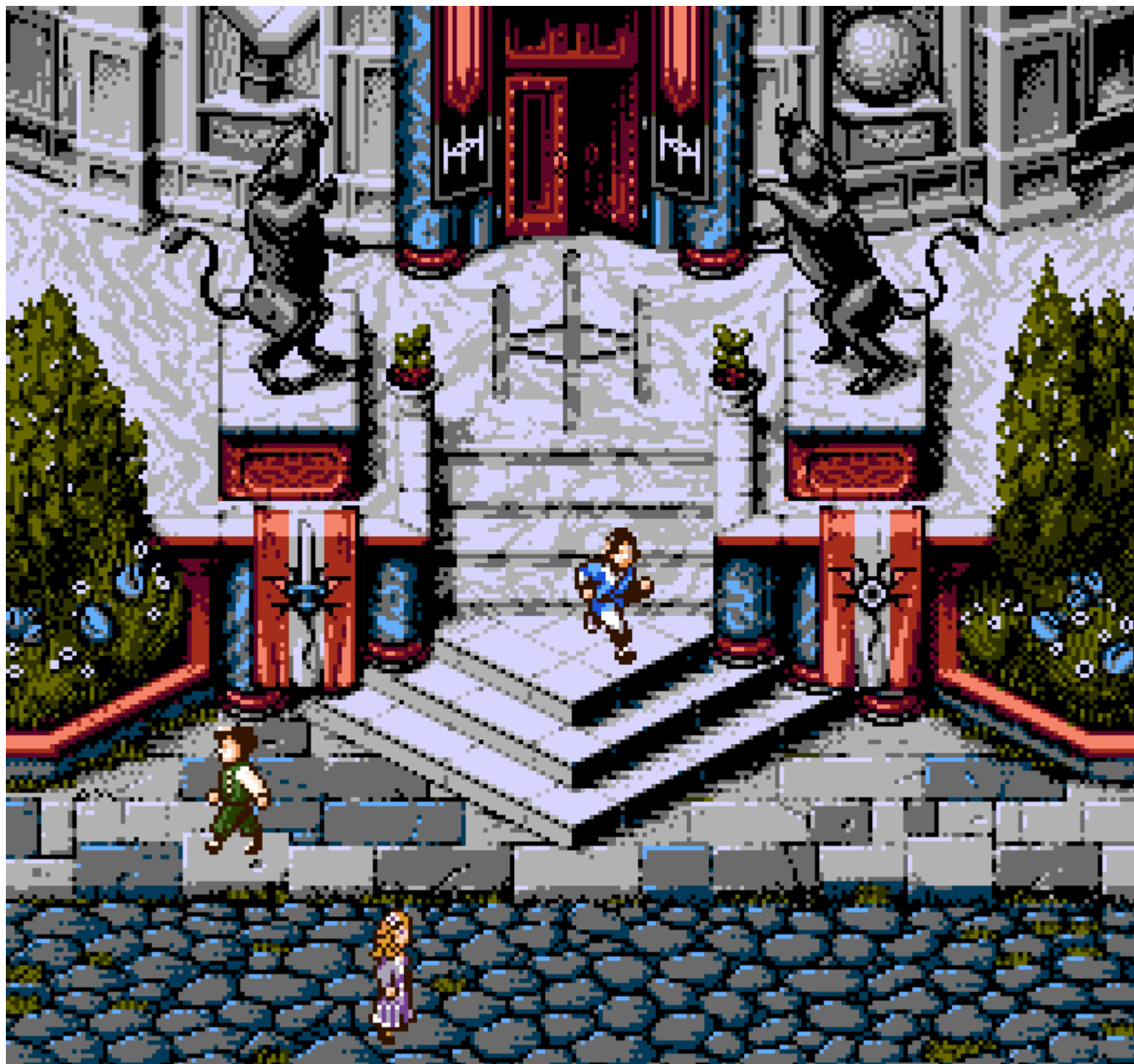
Press Contact: contact@somethingnerdy.com

Social: [Twitter](#) | [Facebook](#) | [Youtube](#)

STORY

After a failed terraforming mission on an exoplanet light years from Earth, humanity dies out but leaves behind a child species(called the “Formers”) that forgets its own origin. You play a common hunter who rediscovers the truth and struggles against the faceless Organization which will stop at nothing to defeat you. Along the way, you recruit a motley crew of brave Formers who are willing to risk everything for Justice.

Chronicles of Astraea: Former Dawn is, in a nutshell, a story of discovery, resistance to evil, and exploration of the human condition. The world is rich, the plot complex, and the characters dynamic and multi-dimensional.



INSPIRATIONS

It wasn't until the SNES and PlayStation console generations that JRPGs took their true form. For us, the most notable ones are *Final Fantasy IV-VI*, *Chrono Trigger*, and *Breath of Fire III - IV* which came out steadily all throughout the 90s.

Much of what we're trying to do is show that the NES, the humble 1980s console on which the JRPG was really born, is capable of supporting JRPG-style games of the sophistication and quality level of those later titles which formed the "golden age" of the JRPG.

Also, there are many excellent games from other genres such as stealth, action-adventure, and tactics that inspire us to combine these diverse elements for a unique, integrated feel. The story is the focus and the gameplay is in service of it, not the other way around. Think of the way that *Half-Life* was a refreshing change from the FPSes that existed up to that point and you'll have an idea of what we're trying to achieve.



GAMEPLAY

The world of RPGs is divided into 2 broad camps based on the style of combat: "action" and "turn-based".

Former Dawn breaks the mold by sporting fully developed versions of both!

Real Time Combat

The main game engine of *Former Dawn* is top-down with smooth 8-directional movement, supporting real time combat, use of tool items, engagement with the environment, and dialogue interactions with NPCs.



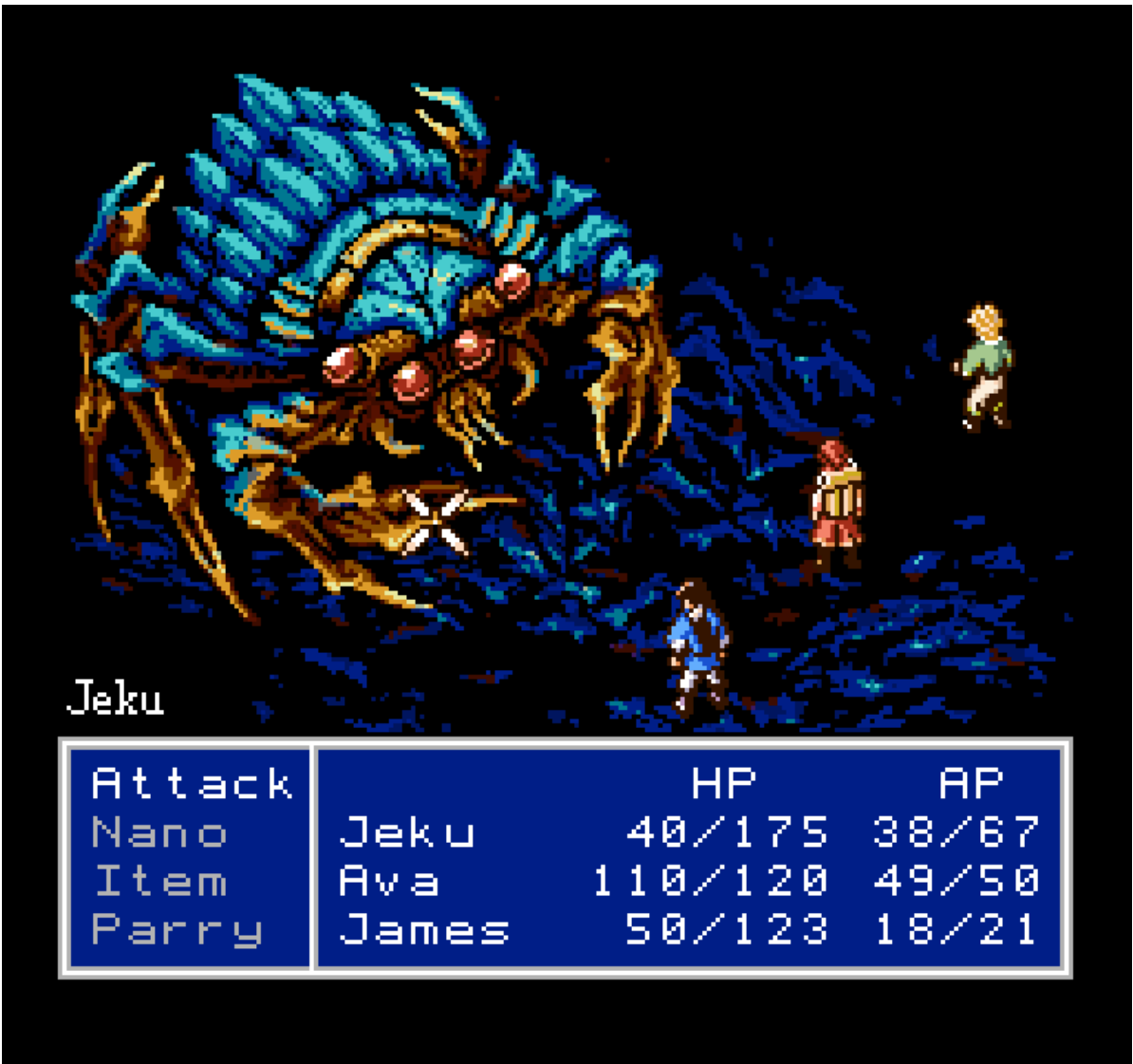
Each character stat (e.g. strength, sword skill, etc.) is influenced by individual actions continuously over time.

Levels are assessed from the stats instead of the other way around, and there are no arbitrary hard level caps to block progress in the game.

Turn Based Combat

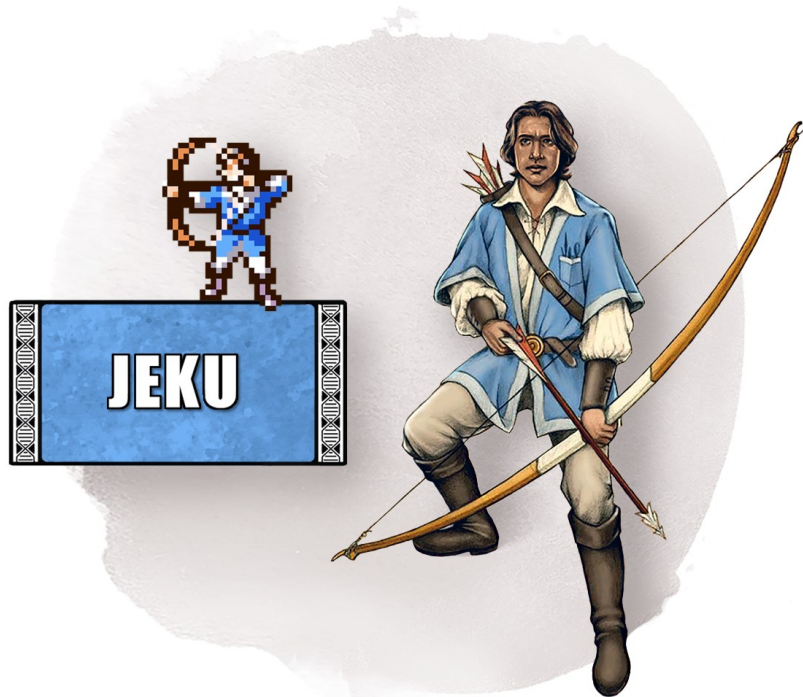
Because of the technical limitations of the NES, bosses are typically composed of background graphics instead of sprites. *Former Dawn* is no exception to this. In fact, we leaned into it by creating an entirely separate turn based combat engine! It leverages our mapper tech to conduct large scale animations, making for engaging and exciting boss battles.

The turn based combat engine and the real time combat engine are 100% integrated. Your party's stats, abilities, and items carry over from one to the other.



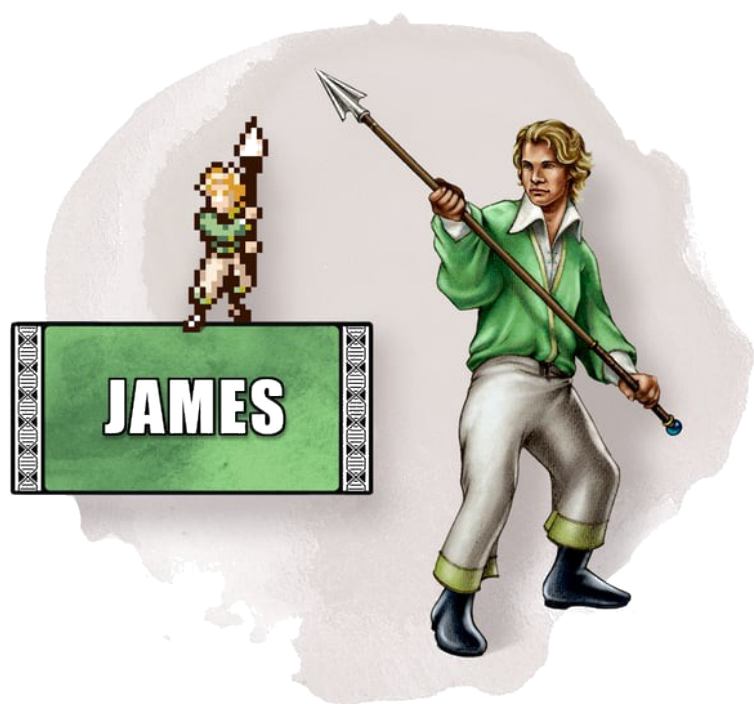
CHARACTERS

Playable characters



Jekuthiel is a Hunter from the coastal village of Gerosch on the Western side of the continent. He toils away at the lowest ranks of The Organization, but in his spare time dares to study Science, designing and building his own gadgets to aid in his forbidden pursuits.

Ava is The Org's highest ranking Persuader and lives underground beneath the Tower at Cossin. She can control the mind of anyone who is unfortunate enough to be brought before her, but she never abuses her incredible power. Her one dream is to know the outside world...



James is Jeku's younger brother, and is finishing his preliminary studies in the hopes that he could be lucky enough to be inducted into one of the Schools of the Three Fingers. Skilled with a spear and gifted with wits and courage, he is a formidable youth with much promise.

Hailing from the city of Sai-Wun, **Kwen** is a Punk who enjoys sneaking into places he shouldn't be, blowing things up, and generally living on the edge. His skills are highly valuable, especially once he joins Jeku's resistance movement against The Org.



4 More Playable Characters await you among the residents of Astraea.

HARDWARE

Memory Mapper

Our custom memory mapper, MXM-1, is the most significant innovation in NES cartridge hardware since Nintendo's MMC5 which debuted in 1989. The most advanced NES games of the original commercial era were almost entirely MMC3 or MMC5 games, which meant that their ROM sizes were capped at 768KiB or 2,048KiB. MXM-1 allows direct access to many times more than this, and indirect access to CD-ROM quantities of data.

Expansion Audio

The NES is actually capable of expansion audio, much like its Japanese predecessor the Famicom. However, it does require a simple expansion audio bridge to be installed into its expansion port. We've decided to include one of these for free with every cartridge edition of Former Dawn. The sound track and sound effects are greatly enhanced by MXM-1 which produces audio akin to the SNES's D-DSP or the Amiga's PAULA. It sports 8 channels of genuine 8-bit PCM audio, an echo buffer, wavetable support, and smooth sinc function based interpolation.

Full Motion Video

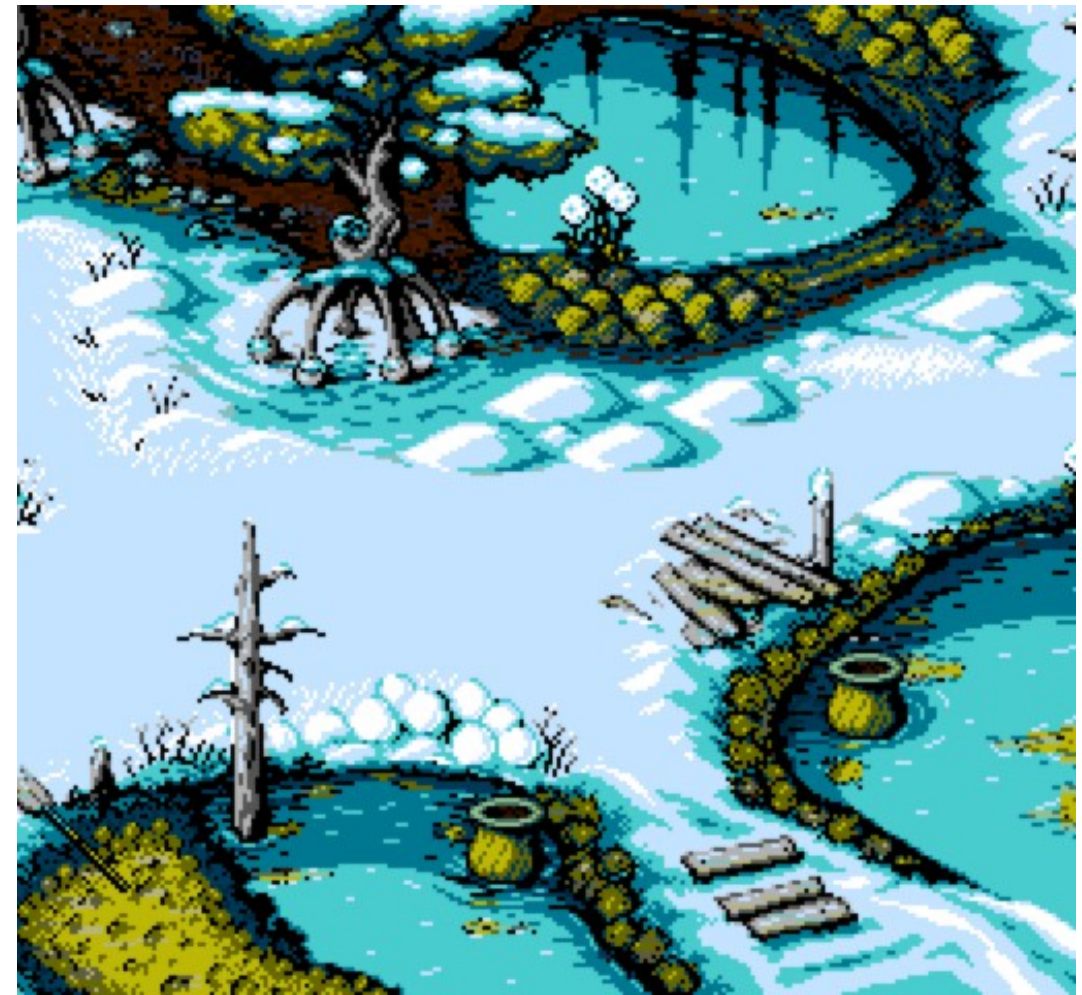
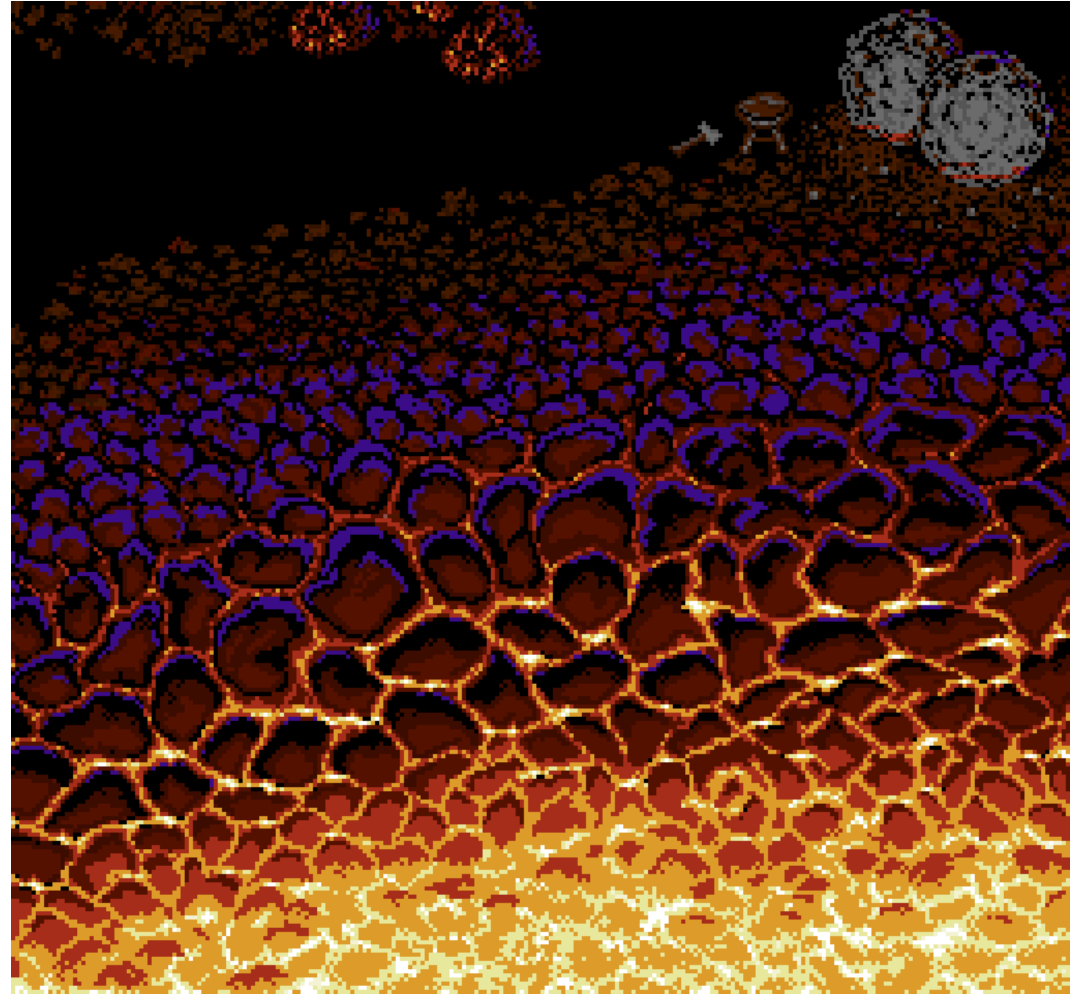
Using MXM-1, we have achieved FMV on the NES!



ART

Revolutionary 8-bit Background Art Style

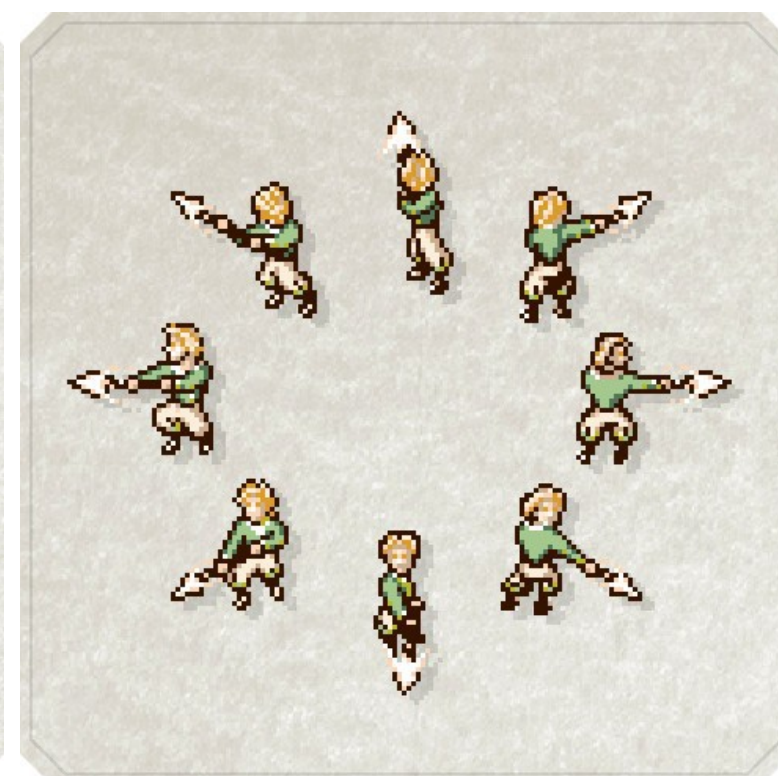
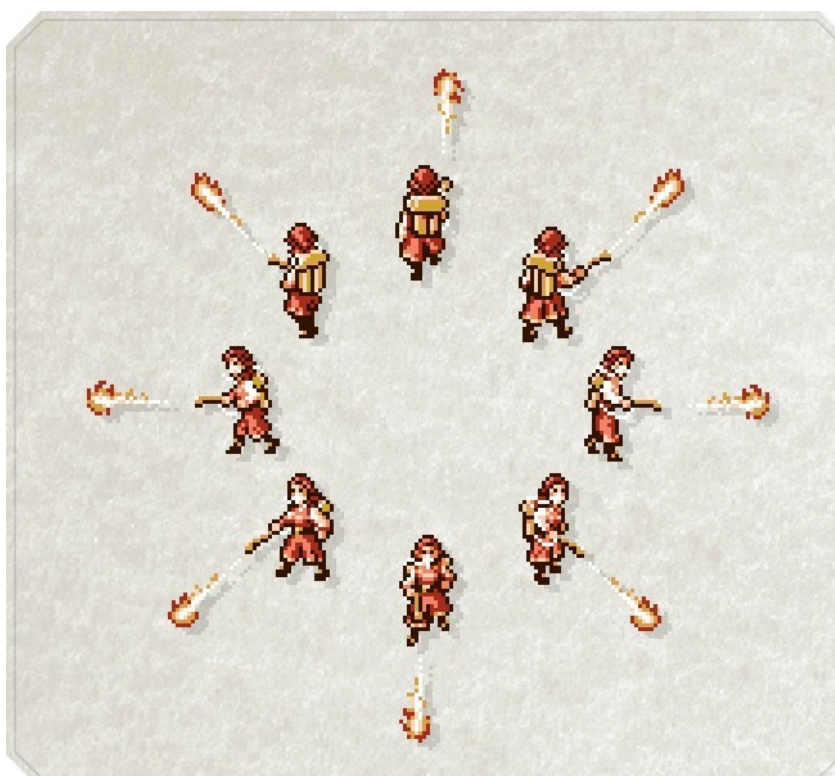
One of the most useful features of MXM-1 is its "8x1 attributes": every 8 pixel wide strip of pixels can subscribe to its own color palette from the 4 available. This means 32 times the stock color density. As a consequence, skilled artists can now create artwork for the NES which is more like modern indie game pixel art than it is classical NES graphics.



ART

Arcade Quality Sprite Animations on the NES

One of the hallmarks of the artwork on this project has been that every playable character is illustrated using about 10 colors and smoothly animated in all 8 directions. What "smooth" means depends on exactly what is being depicted, but it's often in the ballpark of 12-16 frames per direction.



PC PORT

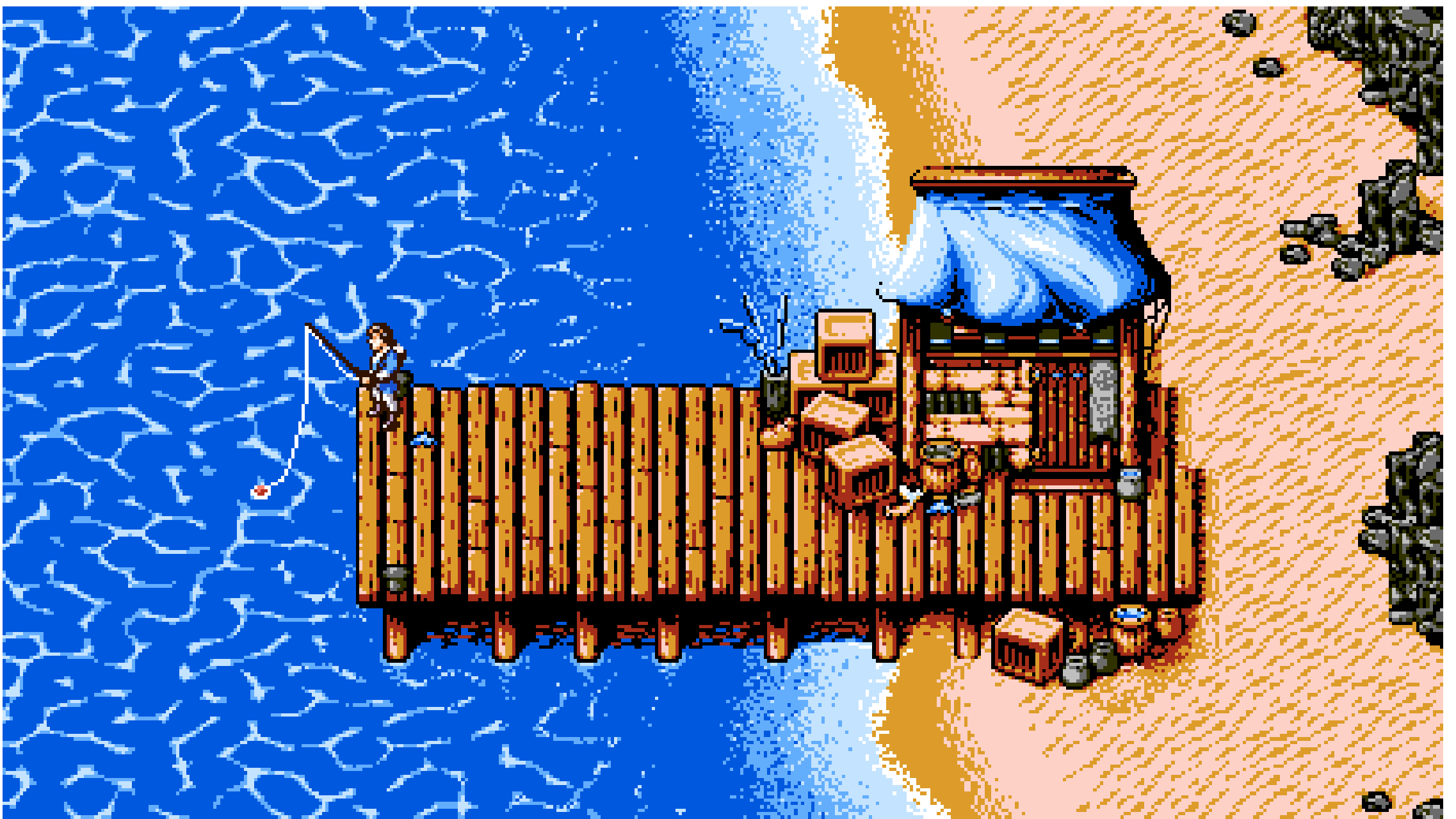
A version tailored for a modern experience

The vast majority of NES games that are sold on modern digital distribution platforms like Steam usually ship an emulator and the ROM packaged together. This has the effect of making the game feel not tailored for the PC.

But modern PCs overwhelmingly have widescreen monitors, stereo sound, and controllers more advanced than the NES's.

We decided to create an actual port of *Former Dawn* to the PC. It is being written in C++ using the SDL2 multimedia library.

Here's an example of the widescreen mode that we're making available in the PC version of the game:



QUOTES AND ARTICLES

“The only game that I can think of that gives me similar feelings is ‘Chrono Trigger’.”

- RETROBREW Magazine

“**Former Dawn** is a promising NES RPG [...] which impressively combines a retro feel with modern game mechanics.”

- Turn Based Lovers

“They’ve managed to do some real witchcraft with Nintendo’s 8-bit console and squeeze every last bit of its circuits [...]”

- Nintendúo

“Former Dawn is [...] looking very impressive considering the hardware.”

- Retro Faith

“Now we have a truly remarkable announcement for the console: that of **Former Dawn**.”

- Nintenderos

“The level of detail in characters, *backgrounds* and the fluid movement of *NPCs* is noteworthy for being one of the best ever seen on the platform.”

- Jogo Véio

“Something Nerdy Studios’ **Former Dawn** looks set to be truly something special.”

- Time Extension

“The graphical detail in this game is simply astonishing.”

- Pixel Addict

“If you’re looking for a new NES game to try and want one to satisfy your retro gaming needs [...] then look no further [...]”

- Indie Retro News

“[...] the displayed image has broken away from the rigid grid of tiles look that largely characterized [the NES’s] background graphics.”

- RetroRGB

“[SNS] is currently working on an original NES RPG titled *Former Dawn*, which will utilize this FMV sorcery to bring its story to life.”

- Gambit Magazine