

Game Review: Feist

[Adam Koper](#) takes on this challenging indie platforming game

Thursday 23 July 2015

Rating: ★★★★★

Platform: PC

Release Date: 23 July 2015

Developer: Bits & Beasts

In some circles, indie games have gained a reputation for being arty and pretentious. It now seems clichéd to say, when reviewing an indie game, that the developer has focused too much on the art side of things, and not enough on making the game fun.

So with this in mind, I approached *Feist* with a little trepidation. Nevertheless, I was hopeful that this title might break the mould, and prove that indie games can strike a balance between entertainment and art. Indeed, *Feist* succeeds in bucking the trend, providing an experience that manages to display creative skill while also being extremely fun.

This PC platformer, developed by Swiss game studio Bits & Beasts, follows a nameless fluffy creature as he traverses seemingly endless forests and caves, fighting off all manner of enemies along the way. Each enemy type has its own way of attacking you – for example, an overgrown fly may hover around shooting needles at you, while a spike-covered worm may crawl about the stage, just waiting for you to step on them. Combat simply involves throwing stones and pine cones at an enemy, or hitting them over the head with a stick. This basic approach to fighting really pays off, and works well when combined with the platforming side of the game.

Each level ends with a boss fight in which a larger enemy must be defeated using the objects scattered about you. These boss fights are fast-paced, with each boss posing a slightly different challenge. One boss can teleport, dodging your attacks, while another carries a big club to swat you out of the way. Bosses aren't afraid to go on the offensive either, and often use their superior strength to throw your little character about the stage.

This is where the game's main flaw becomes apparent. Boss fights can be frustratingly difficult, and you're guaranteed to die time and time again until you figure out the boss's weakness. Newcomers to the platforming genre may find *Feist* to be that little bit too difficult.

The narrative in *Feist* is minimal. Apart from the odd cutscene, suggesting that the player is hunting down a group of beasts that once imprisoned him, there isn't much to go on. However, this bare-bones way of

telling a story works well, as it allows the player to focus on completing the game, rather than being bogged down by unnecessary detail.

The game goes for a unique look, as all character and objects (along with the environment) appear as silhouettes on a colourful background. On occasions, all you can see of your character are the whites of his eyes, as he dashes from the light of the forest floor into the dark and shadowy undergrowth. Character design is also worth a mention, as each character bears some resemblance to the sort of animals you'd expect to find in the woodland. The only exception to this is the player's own character, which resembles a ball of fluff more than anything else.

Feist is a great game that is both fast paced and challenging, while also being visually pleasing. While the narrative may be a little thin on the ground, the gameplay more than makes up for it. If you're up for a challenging platforming experience, then *Feist* is the game for you.



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