Bullet Hell Artistry 5
Unbelievable Allies

Judgements by Python

# Preamble

In this document, I will evaluate and grade each submission to the Bullet Hell Artistry 5 contest held in Bullet Hell Engines. The submissions will be awarded points in the following categories up to a total of 50. For comparison with the other judges’ scores, all scores (not just mine) will have their range adjusted to 0 - 25 for the final tally. My goal in particular is to provide constructive criticism in all aspects that I see myself able to, such that all participants may improve their further work accordingly.

Categories per pattern. The final score in these categories is the arithmetic mean of the individual scores of each pattern.

Theming (\*/15)

Factors in how well the pattern presented suits each character and how well it implements the contest theme itself.

Pattern Design (\*/15)

Factors in the fun had while dodging and the difficulty level of the attack, in particular how well I (as a Normal/Hard player) am able to learn to deal with it on the contest difficulty or the designated Normal/Hard difficulty.

Pattern Aesthetics (\*/10)

Factors in pattern-specific visuals and sound design. By default you’ll get 5 points here, with more points awarded for nice effects and visually pleasing patterns and less if there are visibility issues or the pattern feels especially bland.

~~Modular Spell, No = 1, Yes = 0~~

~~Boolean value multiplied to the rest of the pattern’s score.~~

Global categories. Score is awarded only once here, evaluating the script as a whole.

Presentation (\*/10)

Factors in overall visuals, sound and system design. If there’s a stage, its evaluation also falls under this category.

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# Ryann’s Entry

*東方夢郷寇　～ the Renaissance of Vernacular Disassimilation*

Touhou Character: Doremy Sweet, Shizuha Aki, Clownpiece

Foreign Character: Reshino Oshiromi (Mrs. Estacion)

Before we begin there is one thought I wanted to state that couldn’t comfortably fit into any of the categories. The assortment of Touhou characters strikes me as a little random. Since you’re using three and one of them wound up being Shizuha I was looking for connections to the three other maingame bosses of Mrs. Estacion but couldn’t really find any. Therefore I think using multiple Touhou characters here is a bit of a cheap cop-out out of having to plan a full fight with just two characters in general. As such 2 points will be deducted from each pattern’s Theming category to signify that it impacts the entire game.

## Nonspell 1

Theming (10/15)

It’s almost like the pattern is too simple to comfortably attribute it to either character. Well, I guess Doremy’s spiral blobs are sufficiently present at least. Both characters contribute equal parts to dodging it as well.

Pattern Design (9/15)

A comfortable opening that doesn’t instantly overwhelm the player, but since we’re sufficiently warmed up from the stage already I feel like it could do a little bit more?

Pattern Aesthetics (5/10)

Not bad, not worthy of further comment.

## Circular Dream “Unending Captivity”

Theming (13/15)

Very apparent and very well-executed. Like the first non it generally follows the idea of one character being mainly responsible for the big dodging part while the other imposes a restriction on your movement. Sort of.

Pattern Design (13/15)

Simple and fun, I really don’t have anything particularly negative to say about it other than that the circles around the player don’t really work as a movement restriction.

Pattern Aesthetics (4/10)

The circles shooting out from the player greatly strain my eyes. Less frequent, slower and larger bullets would probably have worked better to avoid this problem.

## Nonspell 2

Theming (12/15)

Same approach as the previous patterns - it works. I do like that Reshino’s style adjusts a little to suit Clownpiece’s more, what with the lasers and all.

Pattern Design (12/15)

Simple and easy, a nice breather from the previous micrododgy madness, which is exactly what I expect in a nonspell - a chance to recover from whatever spell you previously fought. Constant high energy battles are not for me, chief!

Pattern Aesthetics (4/10)

‘cause your stars don’t spin and if they don’t spin well they’re no stars of mine! Reshino’s burst also looks a little huuuuuhhhh…bland.

## Unrelenting Flaming Dream “Piercing Streak”

Theming (13/15)

Yes. I think you’ve got this down.

Pattern Design (12/15)

It took me a tiny bit of time to adjust myself to keeping ahead of Clownpiece. For a moment it looked like there’s a safespot in the bottom corner, since Clownpiece’s ball of flame doesn’t reach there but Reshino can snipe you there, so it’s all good.

Pattern Aesthetics (8/10)

Orderly, and that hint of randomness makes it flow more “naturally” than if it were completely orderly. I like that.

## Nonspell 3

Theming (13/15)

Yes. I think you’ve got this down. No, this is not an accidental duplicate.

Pattern Design (11/15)

This one is a lot tougher to dodge than previous nonspells. I tried to lead Reshino in a circle without getting too close to Shizuha, that seemed like the best approach.

Pattern Aesthetics (5/10)

Not bad, not worthy of further comment.

## Waving Attraction Dream “Dwindling Plummeting”

Theming (6/15)

Ooooor not. Reshino absolutely dominates this pattern to the point where it wouldn’t be very different if Shizuha wasn’t there at all.

Pattern Design (11/15)

The difficulty kicks up a great deal now, which I suppose the previous non already hinted at, so it’s not that big of a detriment in my opinion. A slight difficulty curve is totally fine. The pattern is mostly fine to dodge, but Shizuha’s bullets kind of get drowned out by Reshino’s Everything Else, so there are high chances of undeservingly getting sniped by one of those.

Pattern Aesthetics (9/10)

Beautiful wave motion.

## Nonspell 4

Theming (3/15)

Everyone kind of shoots the same pattern, which really hurts the idea of this being four (FOUR) different characters. Then again if everyone had their own pattern it’d be totally overwhelming so my verdict is you shot yourself in the foot with your character choice here.

Pattern Design (12/15)

I said a slight difficulty curve is fine, why does it feel like it’s exponentially increaaassiiiing!! Despite the difficulty the pattern itself is simple and fun to avoid when I’m able to.

Pattern Aesthetics (7/10)

There’s an enjoyable cyclic nature to the way the individual characters shoot the line pattern.

## Cupid’s Bow “Bowditch Enchantment”

Theming (4/15)

Same problem as the previous one, the pattern centers on Reshino with everyone else just acting as bullet spawners with no real contribution of their own.

Pattern Design (13/15)

The red and blue bullets look too much like random spray here. An unwinding pattern would’ve probably looked better for Reshino’s Lissajous curve setup, but that’s more of a critique on its aesthetic, actually. I just personally don’t like purely random trajectories.

Pattern Aesthetics (7/10)

Said randomness puts a bit of a dampener on the otherwise very finale-esque aesthetic of the spell. And I guess I’m personally a fan of ramp-up finals, so I’m missing that a little, too.

## Presentation (8/10)

Haha byzantine sobriquet go brrrrrr

As I said on stream I adore the retro aesthetic and I’d say that your ZUN-like art style lends itself far better to EoSD style than the modern one. This overall retro feeling is also perfectly consistent throughout visual design, sound design and music - in short, you did a stellar job with the aesthetic.

The game’s system design however is not without its flaws, such as that settings don’t save when closing the game and that specifically the pause menu is racist[[1]](#footnote-0) whereas the rest of the system isn’t. The title theme is kind of ill-fitting in my opinion, and the music is horribly mixed across the board - at the volume at which the title theme was comfortable to listen to, the stage theme was too quiet and the boss theme still far too loud.

##

*Theming (9.25/15)*

*+ Pattern Design (11.625/15)*

*+ Pattern Aesthetics (6.125/10)*

*+ Presentation (8/10)*

# Total Points: 35/50

*Judgement Score: 17.5*

# PickledCow’s Entry

Touhou Character: Remilia Scarlet

Foreign Character: Galacta Knight (Kirby series)

## Nonspell 1

Theming (14/15)

I have never touched a Kirby game in my life, so I looked up some videos to judge Galacta Knight’s patterns. And I’d say yeah, this one works. Although it looks like Remilia dominates the pattern after the opening, Galacta Knight’s knife waves are a pretty big obstacle given how dense Remilia’s pattern already is, so his contribution is absolutely sufficient.

Pattern Design (13/15)

Opening is hella nice but prone to catching you off guard the first time. Which isn’t really a complaint, since restarting takes no time. Everything thereafter is fairly standard, but that’s not to say it’s not fun. Galacta Knight’s knife waves serve to keep you on your toes as you move through Remilia’s bullets.

Pattern Aesthetics (8/10)

Pleasingly regular patterns. The lightning strikes in the opening are also pretty, but altogether it’s nothing outstanding yet.

## big laser

Theming (14/15)

Well I can’t say it doesn’t fit. The eponymous big laser is lifted straight from one of the Galacta Knight boss fights in Kirby, and Remilia’s pattern is vaaaaguely reminiscent of Scarlet Gensokyo.

Pattern Design (4/15)

Unfortunately the implementation of this attack is really…eh. The big laser can be pretty much ignored, and its main purpose ends up being to obscure bullet trajectories. So you’re forced to dodge the bootleg SG in the corner of the screen, but even that isn’t particularly difficult.

Pattern Aesthetics (9/10)

Big laser is faithfully recreated and that’s about the only pattern-specific aesthetic there is.

##

## Nonspell 2

Theming (9/15)

This nonspell is less spectacular. Remilia’s part in it is profoundly generic and primarily serves as an extra obstacle to weave through while avoiding Galacta Knight’s random rain. An example solution I can think of is to give Remilia the lasers from one of her StB patterns, *God Devil “Remilia Stoker”* which could’ve served the same purpose.

Pattern Design (8/15)

The pattern is not particularly fun to play for me since I abhor random trajectories. Said randomness also feels like an unwarranted difficulty spike.

Pattern Aesthetics (4/10)

Said randomness hurts it more in my opinion as well. In my eyes it’d definitely be nicer to give the rain a more regular shape such that the bullets form lanes to move through, which would also improve the fun factor.

## you gonna get speared

Theming (9/15)

This time Galacta Knight’s part is the one that feels generic, albeit to lesser extent compared to Remilia’s in the previous attack. It’s also almost totally irrelevant to the pattern, Remilia dominates it far too much.

Pattern Design (8/15)

I’m critically bad at micrododging, especially at the resolution the game is offered at, so my only chance of dealing with this attack is by trying to redirect Remilia’s spear as close to the screen edges as at all possible, which becomes increasingly difficult the more fire lanes are on screen.

Pattern Aesthetics (8/10)

Remilia’s spear is made quite nicely, but in comparison to it Galacta Knight’s part once again just kinda falls under the table. Then again, given the name, I guess the spear is the main part of the attack to begin with.

##

## Nonspell 3

Theming (13/15)

Remilia has her Scarlet Meister bursts to limit your movement and Galacta Knight brings out the bouncy knives. We’re back on track with fitting patterns, that interact well with each other.

Pattern Design (11/15)

In addition to micrododging I’m also bad at avoiding bullets coming from multiple directions at the same time, so it took quite a few attempts until I could comfortably deal with this. If they were just a little bit slower I think I’d be fine with it. In terms of what I’m actually dodging though it’s not that interesting.

Pattern Aesthetics (6/10)

It’s sufficiently nice to look at.

## red tornado

Theming (14/15)

Very fitting with the scarlet mist up above and Galacta Knight’s tornado attack pushing you through the resultant rain. The idea is a really good start, but I think overall the pattern is greatly being held back by its design choice for the main danmaku.

Pattern Design (6/15)

More random rain. The point I’ve brought up before still applies here, it’s a poor excuse for a pattern. The tornado forcing you to move across the entire width of the screen makes dodging it quite tough in the latter phases, too, and it’s about the only interesting element in the attack.

Pattern Aesthetics (5/10)

The reason for that is also partially because it’s a great graphical effect. Very eye-catching. But once again the random falling bullets kind of negate the pretty points that the tornado would introduce. This one also has a comically ill-fitting background when compared with everything up until now.

## Presentation (8/10)

It’s very apparent that this game focuses very, very heavily on graphics, and I’d be lying if I said I’m not applauding the creator for what they’ve pulled off here. The 3D backgrounds and shader effect work are beautiful and altogether it really feels as though the contest was just an excuse to make cool visual effects. The game itself wasn’t the focus.

Unfortunately the entry is also racist[[2]](#footnote-1), system settings do not save properly and the main menu is lackluster. There are also a couple of tiny details that in my eyes contradict the otherwise very refined appearance of this game (meme spell names, rage comic health indicator, static sprites). But in the face of the absurd graphical prowess this script otherwise offers, I can’t deduct more points than I already have.

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*Theming (12.17/15)*

*+ Pattern Design (8.33/15)*

*+ Pattern Aesthetics (6.67/10)*

*+ Presentation (8/10)*

# Total Points: 35.17/50

*Judgement Score: 17.585*

# Syoudre’s Entry

*Darkness Over the Hill*

Touhou Character: Rumia

Foreign Character: Cyaegha Ultios Tenebrae (Incarnation Erased From History)

Judged Difficulty: Hard

## Nonspell 1

Theming (13/15)

Despite being a youkai of darkness, Rumia sure is prone to use colorful bullets, isn’t she? Well anyhow, I took a gander at Cyaegha’s fight in IEFH and I am *so* happy you opted not to use his weird deceptive bullet curving. Both characters contribute equal parts to this fairly chill opener.

Pattern Design (13/15)

Chill opener to get into the fight. The crazy gimmicks are for later.

Pattern Aesthetics (5/10)

Cyaegha’s trademark dark bullets look a little…off here. Looks like they’re simply alpha-inverted fireballs. For future reference, he’s doing the same thing as Nezu does in BoSM: subtract-blend the bullet, and layer it on top of either a white one or one of the opposite color. So for example if you want a dark red fireball, subtract-blend a cyan-colored fireball on top of a white one or a red one. You want the back-layer bullets to generally have a lower render priority (and possibly no collision) to avoid interference.

## \*The Piercing Ray on the Primordial Darkness\*

Theming (9/15)

This one doesn’t really feel like a Rumia pattern at all, and her only contribution is the dark bubbles that eventually shoot red lasers. Incidentally I can’t find a whole lot of darkness in this “primordial darkness” spell…

Pattern Design (13/15)

I can’t really figure out the pattern to the red lasers. Is it just at regular intervals? The startup is done very nicely though, good telegraphing there, and altogether it’s fun to dodge.

Pattern Aesthetics (6/10)

The startup to the pattern syncs soooooo well with the music if done right! The red lasers seem strangely disruptive compared to the rest of the pattern. I guess that’s the point in the end, but maybe it’d have been more interesting if they were, say, aimed at the player.

## Nonspell 2

Theming (11/15)

Well I was wrong to think we could get through a Cyaegha fight without scary curving. So here come the snakes. The snakes are scary scary scary and also the one thing I gotta give DLW massive credit for: curvy laser warnings. They make reading them so much less stressful. Buuuut we don’t have them here so they dominate my attention a little too much compared to Rumia throwing Skittles around.

Pattern Design (13/15)

The aforementioned laser warnings would really help with making curvy lasers less jank. So most of the time I’m focused on getting out of the way of those to the point I don’t really notice anything Rumia does. It’s a good call to not have her danmaku reach the player while they’re still preoccupied with the lasers though, instead serving as a “cooldown” to the stress.

Pattern Aesthetics (7/10)

But as terrifying as they are, curvy lasers also have a unique beauty to them.

## \*Awakening of the Night-Touched\*

Theming (13/15)

Cyaegha rains rand calls on you while Rumia supplies the darkness cloud gimmick that is…also rand calls. And some regular white dots and lasers. Yeah I think both parts fit their respective executors, but Cyaegha dominates it for me just a little more because of my incapability to dodge random bullets well.

Pattern Design (8/15)

Dodging tiny, random bullets is terrible!! Don’t make me do that!! Well at least there are some other things going on as well. I think this pattern’s potential is greatly held back by its design choice of random rain though. More predictable waves of rain would allow for more regular waves of Rumia darkness to more reliably cover danmaku without making it impossible to dodge since you can easily memorize what it looks like under the darkness. This pattern is somehow also really hard to kill even with other shot types because Cyaegha’s spirits just block them.

Pattern Aesthetics (3/10)

Tiny random bullets are not aesthetic!! Random darkness clouds are not aesthetic!! Oh but there are cool lasers hmmm…

## Nonspell 3

Theming (14/15)

Works really well, and it finally feels like the roles reverse a little bit. Cyaegha supplies the “gimmicky” part of the attack while Rumia is in charge of the main fire. Both of them contribute meaningfully, and their attacks suit them.

Pattern Design (14/15)

Heeeey I remember doing something like this in one of my scripts (and you better know I’ll fuckin’ do it again because I think it’s cool). Difficulty is starting to pick up quite a bit now with Hard mode in mind, but I think that’s warranted.

Pattern Aesthetics (9/10)

The snaking flower thing is aesthetic as fuck though.

## \*They Who Hate the World, They Who Stalk Within the Darkness\*

~~Modular Spell (0/1)~~

~~Sucks to be you, you get nothing. You lose. Good day, Sir.~~

Theming (~~0/15~~ 6/15)

Here’s a wordy spell name. The only thematic part I could really identify here was the darkness. Otherwise it’s one of those five-element modular spells that you could’ve easily given to any other five-element character (Patchouli, Ayame, Widefurry Ayame, etc.) and it’d have worked just the same. I can’t identify what part of it Rumia even uniquely contributes to it other than the darkness effect, which Cyaegha could do all the same.

Pattern Design (~~0/15~~ 7/15)

I love the walls closing in, but I’m just a sucker for nice wavy motions like that. Unfortunately this does not remedy by seething hate for modular spells. The waves are random and the modules do not fit with each other nicely. It didn’t seem like there were any glaring problems with modules overlapping each other to create stupidly difficult waves to avoid at least, but it’s still a cheap cop-out.

Pattern Aesthetics (~~0/10~~ 2/10)

Those dark blue stars that appear sometimes are downright impossible to see. The spell also just suffers from the same problem all modular spells suffer from: there’s no unifying aesthetic to them. It’s just five patterns that can’t stand as spells on their own, tossed into one of those 80s bubble gum dispensers that’s procedurally dispensing them randomly.

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## Presentation (8/10)

During the stream I thought the game’s config\_ph3sx.exe was broken such that I couldn’t adjust my resolution. As it turns out the config.dat file was hidden, and deleting that fixed the problem. Yet even at the highest resolution the game felt…awfully small and a little bit…how should I say…crunchy even, which made dodging the tiny bullets even more horrifying than it already was.

In spite of that there is clearly effort that’s gone into making your own graphical assets, even if the result is not quite to my liking. The system works nicely, the package menu is well done, the sound balancing is correct, the characters have unique little auras - overall it was super fun to play too (except for the last spell, I really really really want to rank modular spells like that a fat 0 in all categories but I think the other judges would get angry at me for that).

*Theming (11/15)*

*+ Pattern Design (11.33/15)*

*+ Pattern Aesthetics (5.33/10)*

*+ Presentation (8/10)*

# Total Points: 35.66/50

*Judgement Score: 17.83*

# Luna & Roka’s Entry

*Memories of a Past Dream*

Touhou Character: Mike Goutokuji

Foreign Character: Diona (Genshin Impact)

Disqualified.

Reason: Both Nonspell 1 and Rainbow Sign “Rainbow Road” feature Mike exclusively, thus violating the “one solo pattern per character” rule of the contest.

## Nonspell 1 (Mike Solo)

Theming (5/15)

So…I know the rules said that one solo pattern per character is fine, but that still doesn’t mean you’ll get full credits for it. This *is* a duo contest, and a run-of-the-mill nonspell for Mike like this does not stand out sufficiently to make up for the fact you’re basically ignoring the theme here. That said, it does fit her at least, if only because it’s literally the same thing she does in UM.

Pattern Design (3/15)

There’s no originality to be felt in this one. UM’s patterns are largely boring as it is so it’s kind of saddening to see one basically copied over like this.

Pattern Aesthetics (5/10)

As dull as its design, nothing outstanding.

## Rainbow Sign “Rainbow Road” (Mike Solo)

Theming (x/15)

I actually had no idea this game had spell names until I played it for the third time. In any case, it’s another solo pattern for Mike. The rules clearly state that only one solo pattern per character is allowed, therefore this pattern’s existence disqualifies your entry.

Pattern Design (x/15)

Less work for me.

Pattern Aesthetics (x/10)

Thank you~

## Presentation (x/10)

So what’s the deal with that opening bit anyway? Just a leftover from testing? It feels wholly disjointed from the rest of the script.

The music sounds like Katzenjammer[[3]](#footnote-2) (shoutouts to Ryann) which is stylistically a hilarious choice at least. By the time I got sick of it I randomly triggered a different version with proper instruments.

This entry is also racist[[4]](#footnote-3) like all of the other submissions that come packaged with their own custom-developed engines. I understand there being time constraints for contests, but if you ever plan to go public with larger projects using this engine, please add one. And a retry option to the pause menu.

*Theming (a/15)*

*+ Pattern Design (b/15)*

*+ Pattern Aesthetics (c/10)*

*+ Presentation (d/10)*

# Total Points: 0/50

*Judgement Score: 0*

# Akemi Yume’s Entry

*Touhou x Kirby Dream Land Rift*

Touhou Character: Flandre Scarlet

Foreign Character: Marx (Kirby series)

## Nonspell 1

Theming (13/15)

The patterns feel a little bit disjointed, but overall do contribute to one whole attack equally.

Pattern Design (10/15)

Simple and effective opener. Flandre has this problem of having all-around boring nonspells in her canon appearances so there’s really more to be done with her than just copying those, but for an introduction to the fight this is fine. Despite the sparse fire I wound up finding dodging Marx’s dark stars much harder mostly because they’re hard to see.

Pattern Aesthetics (6/10)

The background transition’s really nice, but overall also suffers from the general visibility problems I will go into more detail on later - the dark bullets especially.

## Taboo “Rose Destruction”

Theming (15/15)

For duo bosses, I like patterns where one character interacts with the other’s danmaku. This is exactly what’s happening here, and it’s executed very well.

Pattern Design (13/15)

Where where where have I seen this before? I’ve never played a Kirby game before…in any case, at first the rose bullets caught me a little off-guard but the second time playing I managed to dodge them without problems. I have this slight feeling that Marx’s patterns overall deserve to feel a little more intense though. The biggest problem I see here is Marx’s descent attack, where the telegraphing is done…questionably. The safe place to be ends up being inside the warning lasers even though they suggest otherwise. It’s fine if you know about it, but it’s pretty mean.

Pattern Aesthetics (7/10)

I just generally enjoy the way this attack flows. May have benefitted from using actual rose graphics for the roses, or setting them up with like…rings of heart bullets or something like that for that extra flavor.

## Nonspell 2

Theming (10/15)

Marx effectively reuses the same pattern as before, a little more variation would be nice.

Pattern Design (9/15)

Simple streaming pattern that requires you to keep the dark stars in mind. Still nothing that’s exactly groundbreaking, but it works.

Pattern Aesthetics (5/10)

Not bad, not worthy of further comment.

## Heart Break Sign “Soul Piercing Needle Storm”

Theming (15/15)

One boss impeding your movement and the other chiming in to force you to dodge something with that restricted movement is another great strategy for duo bosses. Marx’s needle spray, without sufficient practice, feels threatening enough to stand on its own as his contribution to the pattern.

Pattern Design (13/15)

This one was a massive step up in difficulty because of how hard it was to consistently escape Marx’s burst after being restricted in your movement so much by Flandre’s wavy fire, so it required a bit of practice. One problem I often ran into was that Marx was at the bottom of the screen when the attack ended, and I just…waltzed straight into his hitbox, which is a problem if it keeps happening.

Pattern Aesthetics (6/10)

Marx’s telegraph suggests a far more visually impressive attack than what ends up being shot at you to dodge, which is exactly what I meant earlier when I said his attacks should only feel more intense without exactly being more difficult thus.

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## Nonspell 3

Theming (10/15)

Okay come on, still nothing new on the dark star front? I’m sure there is more to be done in terms of Marx nonspells. Were it not for Flandre I’d feel like all the nonspells are the same.

Pattern Design (11/15)

Flandre’s patterns are slowly leaving canon territory and thus becoming more interesting to dodge as well. The way the lanes form, I think Marx could absolutely afford to do something different to make dodging this more satisfying.

Pattern Aesthetics (5/10)

Not bad, not worthy of further comment.

## Hole Sign “Event Horizon Decompression”

Theming (15/15)

Well even I know Marx’s gotta have some kind of suction attack.

Pattern Design (8/15)

The gimmick is neat but the shots fired by Flandre wound up often sniping me mere frames after spawning because altogether I think the movement on the bullets here is just too fast to adjust to. The telegraph lines don’t really help me here, since when they’re going off to the side I still got hit in the middle (where the telegraph lines say it’s safe) because of how the shots moved, and how suddenly they did. Giving them a little time to accelerate into motion would massively help this issue.

Pattern Aesthetics (5/10)

The hole is done neatly, but the pattern that ends up getting sucked into it is kind of…eh?

## Nonspell 4

Theming (10/15)

Now here’s a neat Flandre nonspell. Oh and Marx is here, too, I guess. It’s almost like his contributions matter increasingly little with each nonspell.

Pattern Design (12/15)

I can see the idea behind the stream of stars lingering on screen for a long time, but in terms of streaming through Flandre’s stuff I actually think it’s easier than the second nonspell where the roles were reversed (once again courtesy of Marx’s stars being quite hard to see).

Pattern Aesthetics (7/10)

Pretty rainbow…curve…thing. I like how it unfolds.

## Full Body Kyuu “Blood Vessel Sever”

Theming (15/15)

Flandre is once again destroying Marx’s setups and it still works very nicely.

Pattern Design (8/15)

SDGDGDG CURVY LASERS with trajectories that are difficult to predict. This type of pattern would benefit a lot from telegraphing the curvies appropriately. They’re even harder to avoid with the random bullets flying around after the first wave and I don’t think I ever managed to clear this without a single death.

Pattern Aesthetics (7/10)

Just the usual “pretty but deadly” that comes with most curvy laser patterns.

## Nonspell 5

Theming (14/15)

Marx’s stars finally feel relevant again, but at this point there’s barely any recovering from my disappointment over how little variation he had across the fight’s nonspells.

Pattern Design (13/15)

Ooh this is fun, and finally moving sufficiently far away from canon Flandre boringness. It’s almost like she’s developing throughout the fight.

Pattern Aesthetics (6/10)

More pretty rainbow curve things that I enjoy the unfolding of.

## Betrayal “I Can Do This On My Own” (Flandre Solo)

Theming (8/15)

The bosses stop wanting to work together? Wowzers. Unfortunately beyond the spell name this isn’t really worth calling an attack, but it does remind me of a contest many years ago focusing on a dual boss fight where the bosses fight each other and the player’s just in the crossfire. We should bring that back one day.

Pattern Design (8/15)

What I wound up dodging wasn’t half as interesting as what I was looking at.

Pattern Aesthetics (5/10)

Ka-fuckin’-boom. It’s an unusual but interesting finale, but just a vomit of bullets isn’t going to cut it for me for an attack aiming to destroy your partner.

## Finale (Marx Solo)

Theming (11/15)

Naturally I can’t give you full marks (or Marx?) here either because this is a solo spell, even if a single solo per character is allowed, so you’ve exhausted your solo attacks. But wow this blew me away. Were I feeling cynical today I’d say this is a desperate attempt to make up for Marx’s dull nonspell contributions up until now. But it’s not completely out of the left field either when viewed in the context of the game’s plot and the previous attack. It’s not there for the sake of being there, which really saves it in my opinion.

Pattern Design (12/15)

Fun, but also ridiculously hard even by Touhou TLB standards when compared with the rest of the fight. Even just the streaming part felt a little too hard due to how fast the bullets were. So I wanted to practice this solo, but since the game is constantly loading and releasing textures for Marx, there are a lot of FPS fluctuations when playing this outside of the main game where the textures are properly being pre-loaded.

Pattern Aesthetics (9/10)

A most pleasing and satisfying finale even in spite of constant dying.

## Presentation (9/10)

As I frequently paused in order to write my comments down on each pattern I noticed the little comments on each of them. The script is full of cute effects and details like that, and there’s clearly a great deal of effort that went into presentation, yet never at the expense of gameplay. Honestly I just love how much personality this game has to offer.

However, this game suffers from very big visibility problems, which are large the fault of the chosen background’s brightness and speed. This adds an extra difficulty factor onto its already pretty challenging patterns.

*Theming (12.36/15)*

*+ Pattern Design (10.64/15)*

*+ Pattern Aesthetics (6.18/10)*

*+ Presentation (9/10)*

# Total Points: 38.18/50

*Judgement Score: 19.09*

# BrownCake13’s Entry

*Unbelievable Allies ~ Singing Duo*

Touhou Character: Raiko Horikawa

Foreign Character: Sayaka Maizono (Danganronpa: Trigger-Happy Havoc)

Judged Difficulty: Fanatic (as per BrownCake’s request)

Disqualified.

Reason: The difficulty to be judged features a character that does not match the character requirements presented by the contest - Hatsune Miku does not originate from a video game.

## Nonspell 1

Theming (13/15)

The patterns feel a little bit disjointed, but overall do contribute to one whole attack equally.

Pattern Design (10/15)

Simple and effective opener. Flandre has this problem of having all-around boring nonspells in her canon appearances so there’s really more to be done with her than just copying those, but for an introduction to the fight this is fine. Despite the sparse fire I wound up finding dodging Marx’s dark stars much harder mostly because they’re hard to see.

Pattern Aesthetics (6/10)

The background transition’s really nice, but overall also suffers from the general visibility problems I will go into more detail on later - the dark bullets especially.

## Presentation (x/10)

So uhhhh…this game’s system is broken as all nine hells. There’s a power system, and you lose power upon death, and your sole means of recovering it is the Full Power item you get when you’re on your last life. Replaying the game kills the music, and on Fanatic, Sayaka turns into Hatsune Miku (but only on Fanatic difficulty, which basically means this game would be disqualified).

*Theming (a/15)*

*+ Pattern Design (b/15)*

*+ Pattern Aesthetics (c/10)*

*+ Presentation (d/10)*

# Total Points: 0/50

*Judgement Score: 0*

# MarchosiasNull’s Entry

*Kaleidoscopic Dayglow*

Touhou Character: Mike Goutokuji

Foreign Character: Ciel (Forget Not Primordial Chaos)

## Nonspell 1

Theming (10/15)

The patterns suit their characters but feel a little disjointed, both Ciel and Mike are just kind of doing whatever and not really embracing the idea of working together.

Pattern Design (8/15)

Both characters are basically just independently using one of their nonspells from their original appearances, which doesn’t make for particularly interesting design in my opinion.

Pattern Aesthetics (5/10)

Not bad, but not worthy of further comment.

## Koban Sign “International Currency Exchange” (Mike Solo)

Theming (10/15)

More people should use coins in Mike’s danmaku. It’s just appropriate. But no full marks for solo patterns in a dual boss contest.

Pattern Design (9/15)

There’s a LOT more going on here compared to the previous nonspell, which also constitutes a bit of a difficulty spike in my opinion. I don’t like that the bulk of this spell is reliant on random dodging though.

Pattern Aesthetics (3/10)

Said randomness also hurts the pattern’s visual presentation in my opinion.

## Nonspell 2

Theming (11/15)

Still disjointed, but Ciel isn’t as ignorable anymore, becoming a much bigger component of the pattern as a whole.

Pattern Design (9/15)

Mike’s pattern feels the same as before but Ciel’s fortunately has more substance to it now.

Pattern Aesthetics (5/10)

Not bad, but not worthy of further comment.

## Aeranthes “The Golden Key” (Ciel Solo)

Theming (9/15)

Solo patterns in an explicit duo boss contest disappoint me so. Either way I couldn’t exactly figure out much of a theme for this spell either and how it relates to Ciel.

Pattern Design (6/15)

The bulk of this is once again random dodging - the keys spawn in random places, dissolve into random spray upon hitting the bottom edge, there’s random rain - it’s really not interesting to dodge at all. You could have a wave of keys appearing to fly straight down and cause orderly bursts there, then maybe a wave of keys aimed at the player with the same behavior upon hitting the ground. It’d be so much more fun.

Pattern Aesthetics (5/10)

Well the keys certainly look cute, but the randomness of the entire pattern ruins that. What good is an aesthetic setup if you’re just going to destroy it anyway? It’s the same reason I dislike things like Lissajous curves for epic math moment bullet spawn points only for them to just fly out randomly.

## Nonspell 3

Theming (9/15)

Well I liked the previous nonspell more, now it’s just rain on Ciel’s part…Mike is straying from her canon spells more but not in a way that feels unique to her.

Pattern Design (7/15)

More randomness where it really shouldn’t have to be. You could make this so much more interesting by having Ciel’s rain form lanes to restrict your movement, and then arc Mike’s circles, possibly with some size variation so you can try to macrododge around the smaller ones or move through the larger ones depending on where the rain guides you.

Pattern Aesthetics (4/10)

Random bullet trajectories continue to ruin it for me. I think such “anti-patterns” are neither interesting to dodge nor to look at.

##

## Anuenue “Troubles in Paradise”

Theming (13/15)

W-what does that word even mean??? Oh, it’s the name of a ukulele manufacturer. Huh?? Oh, wait, it’s a Hawaiian/Polynesian name meaning rainbow. Bit of a Ryann thing to do if you ask me. Anyway, we’re now more in line with what I expected out of a dual boss contest entry now with equal thematic contributions from both characters.

Pattern Design (11/15)

This is a pattern that tries to implement a good design approach for dual boss patterns - Ciel is firing bullets that impede your movement abilities while Mike is in charge of the bulk of the fire. Mike’s pattern is sufficiently novel without feeling completely unrelated to her as well. There’s still a bit of, in my opinion, unwarranted randomness to be found though, but altogether I did enjoy dodging this one the most so far.

Pattern Aesthetics (5/10)

The red circles on the maneki-neko familiars are quite strange, at first I thought it was a development leftover and you had turned on hitbox visualization, but that’s not the case.

## Nonspell 4

Theming (6/15)

After solo patterns this is the second type of sin in dual boss battles: homogenous patterns, where all characters are shooting identical danmaku with no variations to it.

Pattern Design (9/15)

A non-random pattern after so much randomness is a sight for sore eyes, but the simplicity of the pattern leads me to believe it’s a setup to something grand. I was very disappointed when it wasn’t quite as grand as I was hoping.

Pattern Aesthetics (5/10)

Not bad, but not worthy of further comment.

##

## Bubble Economy “Cryptocurrency Crash”

Theming (10/15)

Here’s the other good design approach for dual boss battles: one character directly interacting with the other one’s patterns, in this case it’s Mike’s coins turning into rain after hitting the ground. It’s a very tiny interaction, but it’s there.

Pattern Design (11/15)

The Youkai Polygraph-like gimmick is pretty cool, though it takes a bit of time to get used to. A line on the player to signal that something’s happening there would’ve helped that in my opinion.

Pattern Aesthetics (6/10)

Funky-looking graph danmaku!

## “Creation of a Card”

Theming (8/15)

I really do not feel Mike or Ciel in this pattern at all and I’m not sure what to think of it. I guess that at least makes it not a solo pattern since both are equally not present.

Pattern Design (9/15)

It’s an agonizingly long and slow survival spell that could probably do with a quicker startup, or outright without the first few phases where the bubbles are only going in circles. Speaking of which, that first time the bubbles spawn they do so without warning and can kill the player if they happen to be in the center.

Pattern Aesthetics (8/10)

It’s definitely very pretty to look at, especially when compared to all of that extremely random danmaku that came before it. Which is not to say there isn’t any randomness, but it feels less like it dominates the entire pattern’s structure.

##

## “Kaleidoscopic Dayglow”

Theming (9/15)

And to finish it all off we have another very homogenous spell, which is an utter letdown in terms of thematics in my opinion. It also feels more connected to Mike than to Ciel, although I guess the idea was that the rainbow bullets represent both, the coins turning into kunai like in Chimata’s final represent Mike, and the reflecting stars represent Ciel. The only problem with this is the stars feel like a complete non-issue throughout the pattern.

Pattern Design (11/15)

Despite the thematic shortcomings it’s a final spell that I think was very fun to dodge. Like the survival it benefits from the absence of extreme randomness like the patterns that came before it.

Pattern Aesthetics (7/10)

Same deal with respect to the randomness as above, although the speed variations in the rainbow danmaku had me a little perplexed.

##

## Presentation (6/10)

The visuals are homegrown and cute, the music fits the fight, though I’m not 100% sure about the title theme. I think I also noticed looping issues with both themes, namely the title theme just not looping at all and the boss theme looping imperfectly.

The general scarcity of sound effects was a little bit jarring for me as well, and overall the script strikes me as being generally more slow-paced. A little too much so, honestly, the player feels like they’re moving through glue.

Lastly, the readme file mentions a C mechanic but I don’t think I ever got it to activate. I’m assuming it has to do with the white circle that appears around Reimu sometimes, but it felt like it just did that randomly and not in response to pressing C. A better explanation and visual or audio feedback would help with that.

*Theming (9.5/15)*

*+ Pattern Design (9/15)*

*+ Pattern Aesthetics (5.3/10)*

*+ Presentation (6/10)*

# Total Points: 29.8/50

*Judgement Score: 14.9*

# Makuta Matara’s Entry

*Touhou ~ Frigidness under Cold Kingdom*

Touhou Character: Letty Whiterock

Foreign Character: Ice King (Fortnite)

Judged Difficulty: Novice

Before we begin I would like to stress how utterly ridiculous this script’s difficulty level is. Even on Novice difficulty it’s quite a challenge that required a lot of practice. I believe if you’re going to design a game to be judged in a contest you should absolutely account for players less skilled than yourself. There’ll generally be some points deducted in the Pattern Design category to account for this.

## Nonspell 1

Theming (12/15)

Both character shoot a substantial amount of danmaku. What footage I could find of the Ice King himself displayed his abilities as generally having a lot of overlap with Letty, so it’s quite difficult to actually judge his thematics in a vacuum. Instead I’ll focus more on how the characters’ patterns interact with each other.

Pattern Design (12/15)

The way the patterns intersect makes for a fun, if challenging, dodging experience, and it’s by far one of the more tolerable patterns. In playing it multiple times it seems that the bosses sometimes mix up which patterns they’re going to use but it’s nothing deal-breaking.

Pattern Aesthetics (7/10)

Sure feels like I’m in a snowstorm. Curvy laser spawnpoints also get extra points from me.

## Ice Arts “Infinite Blade Carving”

Theming (11/15)

The bulk of this pattern is definitely the Ice King’s work. Maybe instead of spawning her own bullets with the snow clouds it would’ve been nicer if Letty wound up dissolving the large orbs shot by him when he reaches the bottom of the screen for more interaction.

Pattern Design (12/15)

I think a general theme with this entry is going to be bosses using multiple different patterns in one attack that interact with each other differently and I think that’s a great approach actually. It definitely works here. The attacks are telegraphed well, too.

Pattern Aesthetics (7/10)

Orderly line slashes are aesthetically pleasing and the spirals form lanes to move through. That’s what I think makes this pattern look good and feel pleasing to dodge.

## Nonspell 2

Theming (9/15)

Well I guess we had to get into gun territory eventually, and the problem I see here is that this might as well be any Fortnite character. There’s nothing particularly icy about it, it’s just…gun.

Pattern Design (5/15)

Aaaaand here we do a complete 180 for some bad telegraphing! I get the idea, it’s just…not a good one if the reticles are arranged completely randomly on the screen. In particular if they’re close to the Ice King it becomes very difficult to gauge the direction in which the bullets will be shot, and it’s not like you can avoid them reactively. If they were at least placed at a uniform distance away from the boss this could still work. Letty is mostly a non-issue, too, at least on this difficulty, but go one higher and her patterns are highly prone to walling you. A lot.

Pattern Aesthetics (4/10)

Randomness is not a creative aesthetic.

## Gestalt “Infinity Blade Pavilion” (Ice King Solo)

Theming (9/15)

I can’t really estimate how well this fits, but I can definitely say it doesn’t feel completely out there. As usual though, solo patterns in a duo boss contest can not earn full points.

Pattern Design (8/15)

This spell suffers tremendously from having too much health. The ideal way to shoot this down would be to try and arrange the blade, the Ice King and yourself in such a triangle that the blade is somewhere on the side and definitely not below you, and the Ice King is directly above you. Which, since the blade bounces, is rather difficult to set up. I often ended up in situations where I just could not shoot the Ice King, or even if I could, he ended up ramming me on the way to collect the sword he dropped. I don’t think the whole “boss chasing after you” part of the spell is at all necessary to make it work, since it’s got some stuff to stand on its own.

Pattern Aesthetics (5/10)

Not bad, but not worthy of further comment.

## Nonspell 3

Theming (8/15)

This type of pattern is what I call “homogenous” - both bosses shoot the exact same danmaku pattern. There is no personal variation on either end so it’s really just like it’s one character’s attack and the other is a glorified familiar. Less than ideal for a duo boss.

Pattern Design (9/15)

This is another tough one. The bullet curving is a little awkward, but once you get a feel for it it’s actually kind of fun. Even so, the large wave might demand a little much movement on this difficulty.

Pattern Aesthetics (5/10)

Not bad, but not worthy of further comment.

## Construct “Pykrete Castle Crashers” (Letty Solo)

Theming (4/15)

Huh??? Now this is the sort of attack I wouldn’t have questioned if it was the Fortnite guy, but definitely will for Letty.

Pattern Design (4/15)

This attack does not at all telegraph well what it expects you to do initially. And as it progresses and it becomes increasingly harder to navigate through it, the timing to reach the goal becomes absurdly tight. The checkpoint system looks like a genius idea at first, until you realize that even with it you really can’t afford to die even once. This might’ve worked better as a timeout of sorts, see other maze navigation spells of its kind (for example the one in InceRabbit’s “Hecatia and the Fairy”).

Pattern Aesthetics (4/10)

It tries to look pleasing, but fills the holes with randomness. The pattern Letty shoots when the goal of the parcour is reached is necessarily simple but it could do without the random spray and some other aesthetic element in its place.

##

## Nonspell 4

Theming (6/15)

I know Letty is in this pattern but the entirety of it just looks like the Ice King’s doing in the end, without any sort of elements to set Letty apart. It doesn’t help that the poorly telegraphed nonsense shooting absolutely dominates my attention.

Pattern Design (2/15)

Just when I thought the gun telegraphing was already at its worst you prove me wrong, congratulations. No matter how much I practice I just can not figure out how to read the Ice King’s nonsense shooting.

Pattern Aesthetics (4/10)

At least this pattern’s aesthetics are just as absurd as the pattern itself. That’s not a good thing, though…

## Storm Warning “Risk of Rain”

Theming (8/15)

I think the Ice King has absolutely taken over the game’s pattern design now and Letty is just here for show.

Pattern Design (5/15)

Misdirecting the Ice King is not consistently possible since his initial spawn points seem somewhat random, so it’s hard to prepare for it. The telegraph line is also static so you have no room to maneuver him around. Once the circle closes in sufficiently, you’re dead no questions asked. Even if it were possible, maneuvering around with the many small stray bullets floating around is also not exactly easy or consistently possible.

Pattern Aesthetics (3/10)

The purple circle hurts my eyes. A lot.

##

## Nonspell 5

Theming (12/15)

Well this part feels appropriate for Letty again. The patterns do interact with each other, since Letty restricts your movement space available to dodge the Ice King’s attacks, which is a good approach for duo spells.

Pattern Design (8/15)

It could be a nice breather from the nonsense that preceded this, but it isn’t. The Ice King’s danmaku is just too tightly packed and prone to almost-walling you such that small mistakes do kill you.

Pattern Aesthetics (7/10)

Nice ice lanes woo.

## “Avalanche on the Polar Peaks”

Theming (2/15)

So why are we playing Pong now? This came completely out of nowhere.

Pattern Design (4/15)

I’ve tried to score against Letty, which is pretty hard but doable. Unfortunately it does nothing. I guess the idea is that reflecting the ball with your…ball reflector eases the load of stuff you have to dodge since no bullets are coming from your sides. The only problem is you still have to focus on dodging the stuff that comes from above you, which makes it too hard to chase after the ball if it’s getting reflected at an inconvenient angle far away from you. The lasers the Ice King spawns only hammer this point in further.

Pattern Aesthetics (5/10)

Not bad, but not worthy of further comment.

##

## “Fourteen Nights at the Ice Kingdom”

Theming (12/15)

The final spell once again feels like a coherent effort between both characters with Letty supplying more or less position-restricting danmaku and the Ice King providing more or less aimed danmaku to avoid while weaving through that.

Pattern Design (8/15)

So that disgusting gun telegraphing returns but this time it’s actually done right! It gets extremely, absurdly messy towards the end even by ramp-up final spell standards.

Pattern Aesthetics (7/10)

An orderly finale. It’s definitely pleasing to look at until it becomes messy. The lack of randomness also makes it stand out compared to some of the previous attacks.

## Presentation (5/10)

Haha funi acronym go brrrrrrr

There’s effort put into a homegrown coherent aesthetic. You can probably tell from my wording choices that judging this was an extremely exhausting experience, so I have little energy to try and come up with other nice things to say about the script. Which mind you isn’t a bad thing, it’s just so much easier to point out flaws.

The gun gimmick more often than not just gets in the way. Trying to use it is cumbersome, trying to rely on it to clear patterns more quickly is downright unfeasible with how much the game’s difficulty keeps you on your toes. This combination leads to a consistent problem of specifically spells taking basically forever to shoot down. The one and only time I’ve been able to make use of it effectively was during the final spell by killing it instantly once with the grenade launcher, but that kind of defeats the purpose in a way.

*Theming (8.45/15)*

*+ Pattern Design (7/15)*

*+ Pattern Aesthetics (5.27/10)*

*+ Presentation (5/10)*

# Total Points: 25.72/50

*Judgement Score: 12.86*

# Kevinmonitor’s Entry

*東方虹埴遇 ~ Multi-dimensional Convocation of Unexpected Genius*

Touhou Character: Kogasa Tatara

Foreign Character: Sukune Katano (Len’en series)

Judged difficulty: Original

## Nonspell 1

Theming (15/15)

Good teamwork on Kogasa’s and Sukune’s part here, and their patterns are thematic to their characters.

Pattern Design (12/15)

We start off high-speed and this is a general theme we’ll keep seeing in this script. What kept throwing me off is the way Kogasa’s spirals spin, or if they spin at all, since it’s tied to how she moves? Some more regularity here would’ve been nice.

Pattern Aesthetics (5/10)

I’m pretty sure Kogasa’s spirals are arranged in a rainbow somehow, but it’s not very clearly visible. Might work better if the colors advanced with each time the spiral shoots a circle, so like…red circle, orange circle, yellow circle, etc.

## Dangerous Surprise “Indiscriminate Burning of Karakasa Bridge”

Theming (15/15)

Again, both characters contribute substantially to this pattern.

Pattern Design (11/15)

The rocket haniwa is VERY liable to catch you off guard because of how fast it moves and because it reflects. Lastly, I’m no fan of being forced towards the top of the screen, much less through random fire.

Pattern Aesthetics (5/10)

Not bad, not worthy of further comment.

##

## Nonspell 2

Theming (13/15)

After seeing Sukune use haniwa rockets for two patterns I would’ve liked to dodge something else to mix it up here. There’s more to be done with this character.

Pattern Design (11/15)

Design-wise it looks simple but I struggled quite a bit with this non. I can’t even confidently say why, it always felt like the blue orbs left behind by Kogasa’s umbrellas kept trapping me.

Pattern Aesthetics (5/10)

Not bad, not worthy of further comment.

## “Unstoppable Rainfall and Unbreakable Haniwa Barrier”

Theming (11/15)

Kogasa’s part dominates this pattern quite a bit even if the main part of it is the interaction with Sukune’s barrier. I’d say it does work well but there’s more that could’ve been done with Sukune’s part instead of just destroying the barrier later. I swear to god if I see one more haniwa rocket…

Pattern Design (10/15)

I think I frequently got walled by the rainbow bullets. This pattern is extremely frantic and left me with no room to breathe, which is a consistent issue I have with this entire game so I might as well just bring it up now.

Personally I don’t like this design philosophy. High speed action is fun, but only if you get a chance to recover at some point, otherwise it feels like you’re sprinting a marathon. You’re welcome to try that, it won’t end well for you.

Pattern Aesthetics (4/10)

Feels very frantic in terms of visuals as well, to the point where I really can’t tell where all the bullets are even coming from.

##

## Haniwa Sumo “Rainbow-Colored Amazement-Inducing Immolation”

Theming (12/15)

This spell also feels like it’s dominated by Kogasa specifically because of the aesthetics. Rainbows are kinda her thing, since she’s there already. But hey, no haniwa rockets this time at least.

Pattern Design (12/15)

This is probably the most breather-like pattern at first, but Sukune’s part reminds you that you’re in a low-oxygen environment here.

Pattern Aesthetics (5/10)

Not bad, not worthy of further comment.

## Impossible Allies “Terracotta’s Gay Supernova”

Theming (15/15)

Heeeey, finally, some proper Sukune coverage!

Pattern Design (13/15)

Altogether I felt like the space to which your movement is confined by the big lasers is a little bit too small to comfortably dodge anything in, especially since this script’s bullets are very large. The same goes for the second major phase of the pattern, where it became a harder, larger version of Kaguya’s “Rainbow Danmaku”.

Pattern Aesthetics (6/10)

Climactic final-esque visuals that end the script with a bang, worthy of a Sukune final. The first phase unfortunately suffers from some visibility issues courtesy of everything being blended additively. I wish the boss explosion felt a bit more satisfying as well, since the rest of the script is so fast-paced it feels like a kick in the face to end it so…vanilla.

## Presentation (7/10)

Haha slightly less-than-Ryann-tier byzantine sobriquet go brrrrrrrrr.

That’s not what I’m here to judge though (not officially at least). What I will judge is the game not providing a large enough window size on its own. It scales down at least, but not up, so I added a new window size for my convenience. I shouldn’t have to do that though.

The game’s organization is a little messy with how every single script is visible to the player in the same folder. You should either hide them in a subfolder or alternatively just remove the #TouhouDanmakufu header to prevent them from showing up in the list in the first place. For a contest script though I recommend chucking them into a subfolder for pattern practice. And make sure they can still be played solo if that’s what you do.

Lastly, I will definitely commend the amount of effort that went into portraits and sprite work. The music feels appropriate to the tone of the script (and is very fun, actually, I love it), sound effects and such are also well-balanced. In short, the visual presentation itself was crafted with a lot of care and effort. Well done.

*Theming (13.5/15)*

*+ Pattern Design (11.5/15)*

*+ Pattern Aesthetics (5/10)*

*+ Presentation (7/10)*

# Total Points: 37/50

*Judgement Score: 18.5*

# Pivot’s Entry

Touhou Character: Reisen Udongein Inaba

Foreign Character: Erina (RabiRibi)

Disqualified.

Reason: Both Nonspell 1 and Illusion Bomb “Mind Explosion” feature Reisen exclusively, thus violating the “one solo pattern per character” rule of the contest. Erina might be present in the first one but she does literally nothing, so she might as well not be there.

## Nonspell 1 (Reisen Solo)

Theming (6/15)

While what the nonspell does is thematically appropriate for Reisen it’s also still fairly generic. And that said, solo patterns should generally rank lower on account of this being a dual boss contest.

Pattern Design (5/15)

The circle shifting movement rather suddenly can be a bit disorienting. Try decelerating it to prepare the player. Since this is obviously based on Reisen’s first non in IN, you’ll notice that that’s what’s happening there as well. The random spray doesn’t really add much to the pattern either, you’d get more mileage out of aimed bursts to force the player to move more.

Pattern Aesthetics (4/10)

Bit empty, plus randomness.

## Helper “Another Bunny Asked Me to Help Her”

Theming (9/15)

Reisen’s bullet shiting gimmick exists, but contributes little to the actual pattern (see my comments on design). Erina’s contribution seems bigger than it is, since she pretty much becomes a non-issue once you realize she has no hitbox and her danmaku is rather sparse.

Pattern Design (6/15)

This spell suffers a bit from poor communication with the player. Erina suddenly swooping down on the player incentivizes them to move out of the way, possibly up into Reisen’s bullets. And because the bullet shifting happens very suddenly and neither its start nor end are telegraphed, it’ll definitely catch them off guard. In IN the timing of Reisen’s eye effect helps with preparing for the bullets’ reappearance. This entire threat is voided once you realize that Erina doesn’t shoot at the very bottom of the screen and doesn’t have a hitbox, at which point the spell becomes fairly uninteresting.

Pattern Aesthetics (5/10)

Not bad, not worthy of further comment.

## Nonspell 2

Theming (7/15)

Reisen keeps the gimmick while Erina forces the player to stay on their toes and actually weave between the bullets. Theoretically at least. Her part though is too bland to really be judged thematically appropriate or not appropriate.

Pattern Design (7/15)

Apart from being completely able to ignore this pattern’s main part since the bullets don’t quite reach the bottom of the screen, this idea actually works really well if it is fleshed out a little bit more. As before the bullet shifts need to be telegraphed better, be it with an effect or decelerating movement or something else. If the bullets came alternately from left and right it’d be much more interesting to dodge as well. Less randomness could alleviate the resulting increase in difficulty slightly. Lastly, Erina’s contribution keeps the player moving even if it’s thematically and aesthetically lacking.

Pattern Aesthetics (4/10)

The randomness and sparseness makes the pattern feel more like pepper loosely sprayed on a fried egg.

## Air Dash “I Can’t Fly So I’ll Ride”

Theming (8/15)

This one is lacking on Reisen’s part - her bullet pattern is pretty generic and the bigger threat is Erina by a landslide.

Pattern Design (5/15)

This spell also suffers from poor communication. Erina does telegraph her movement, but she does so incorrectly. When she actually moves, she doesn’t do so along the warning line (as she should if it *is indeed* supposed to be warning line), and instead recalculates movement angle based on the player. In short, the warning line is completely useless since she will always move towards the player anyway. Luring her around the screen thus becomes a little difficult as it keeps getting crowded with more and more of her bullets.

Pattern Aesthetics (5/10)

Not bad, not worthy of further comment.

## Nonspell 3

Theming (9/15)

Generally works in terms of theming and the interaction between both bosses’ actions.

Pattern Design (7/15)

Reisen’s pattern retains the bad telegraphing for her bullet shifting and altogether feels a bit sparse again. Erina’s laser is prone to catching you off-guard the first time due to its quick expansion. It could stand to expand slower and in exchange maybe do some other things, like spawning bullets to each side.

Pattern Aesthetics (5/10)

Not bad, not worthy of further comment.

## Carrot Bomb “Because Ms. Bunny Asked Me To”

Theming (8/15)

A good effort on both parts. Reisen’s danmaku feels very simple and generic once again. Something that could help with that are decelrating motion and bullets bunching up. A nice little interaction I would’ve tried here to trip people up is use a bullet shift here when the bombs have “landed”, but just before they explode.

Pattern Design (7/15)

The yellow explosions are very sudden as well. Decelerating motion could assist the player in anticipating where they land.

Pattern Aesthetics (5/10)

Not bad, not worthy of further comment.

## Nonspell 4

Theming (7/15)

I’m assuming the squished bubble is meant to represent Reisen’s “Corona Vision” attack from the fighters. It’s a bit of a simple representation, but that aside she also contributes a little too little to the attack.

Pattern Design (6/15)

Same concept as the second nonspell, and it’d work if Erina’s fire had a little more of a pattern to it and wasn’t purely random.

Pattern Aesthetics (5/10)

Not bad, not worthy of further comment.

## Wall Jump “I Can Bounce From the Walls”

Theming (7/15)

Patterns are representative, but there isn’t much interaction, especially since Reisen’s boils down to random fire. Erina’s shots largely just blend in with that so I forget she exists until she dashes towards me.

Pattern Design (5/15)

Both parts suffer from the same bad telegraphing I’ve already brought up multiple times (bullet shift is sudden, Erina’s dash is telegraphed wrong). The randomness doesn’t make the pattern any more fun or interesting either. Personally I think going for an actual pattern with regularity to it is almost always going to be better than just plain random fire.

Pattern Aesthetics (4/10)

Suffers from the randomness.

## Hammer Wave “She Said to Shoot”

Theming (5/15)

The pattern is too simple to really judge whether it suits the characters. But I firmly believe that they at least don’t blend well together at all.

Pattern Design (2/15)

Quite frankly I don’t know what’s up with that laser. If it’s an Honest Man’s Death type of thing, I guess it would be fine (although I also think Honest Man’s Death is bad telegraphing). The laser can be ignored anyway by staying above Reisen and streaming Erina’s fire.

Pattern Aesthetics (4/10)

There’s…not really any sort of aesthetic to judge here. Oh, staying above Reisen does pull apart Erina’s aimed shots in possibly unintended ways.

##

## Illusion Bomb “Mind Explosion” (Reisen Solo)

Theming (9/15)

Big win on Reisen’s part. Unfortunately this spell’s existence violates the contest rule of one solo pattern per character. Clever of you to save it for the end though, such that you can get feedback on your script despite it being disqualified. I’ll be nice and finish that part up then, might as well.

Pattern Design (4/15)

There’s a good chance bullets might spawn on top of you. And amidst all of the bright red explosions, spotting the next wave of missile bullets can be a little tough. The pattern looks a lot cooler than it feels playing.

Pattern Aesthetics (5/10)

The explosions are made very nicely actually, even if they’re simple, but the pattern is really just yet more randomness.

## Presentation (x/10)

Oops the launcher menu is partially off-screen, but it’s still usable. The usual LuaSTG problems are here, too. Ditch the power system, especially if you’re starting the player at 1 power level.

*Theming (a/15)*

*+ Pattern Design (b/15)*

*+ Pattern Aesthetics (c/10)*

*+ Presentation (d/10)*

# Total Points: 0/50

*Judgement Score: 0*

# Samario’s Entry

*Underground Forgotten Soul*

Touhou Character: Yukari Yakumo

Foreign Character: Chara (Undertale)

## Nonspell 1

Theming (9/15)

Standard Yukari opener. Chara copying it makes it awfully homogenous though, which is undesirable for a dual boss script. Every character should uniquely contribute to the pattern instead of being reduced to a mere familiar for the other character.

Pattern Design (7/15)

Standard Yukari nonspells are unfortunately not particularly interesting. It’s just streaming, but the way the bullets layer over each other makes restreaming absurd.

Pattern Aesthetics (5/10)

Not bad, but not worthy of further comment.

## Spirit of Determination “Death Loop Black Butterfly”

Theming (8/15)

Double Black Death Butterfly but it has extra spawnpoints.

Pattern Design (6/15)

Double Black Death Butterfly but it has extra spawnpoints so it feels even more like random curving bullets from all sides.

Pattern Aesthetics (4/10)

Randomness is not an aesthetic.

## Nonspell 2

Theming (12/15)

Feels more in-line with what each character should do, well done.

Pattern Design (7/15)

Yukari’s bullets come out a little too fast and are rather hard to see at that speed and size. Although they seemed sparse I always managed to dodge right into a line of them. Every single time. A spinny pattern with a narrow forward focus shot is also a terrible idea.

Pattern Aesthetics (5/10)

Not bad, but not worthy of further comment.

## Magic Barrier “Seven Sages’ Barrier betwixt Human and Monster”

Theming (7/15)

Yukari looks to be doing all of the actual pattern work here, Chara just contributes a thematic part that’s not even relevant to what the player is dodging - the red fountain might as well just be generated by the orb itself, since it’s random anyway.

Pattern Design (7/15)

Suffers from the same general “everything is too small and I can not see it” problem as the rest of the game. Chasing Yukari through the fountain makes this spell effectively a survival, and a pretty boring one at that.

Pattern Aesthetics (4/10)

Randomness is not an aesthetic.

## Nonspell 3

Theming (7/15)

Double Black Death Butterfly but it’s a nonspell component. Chara again just feels like an extension of Yukari’s.

Pattern Design (9/15)

Fundamentally not a terrible idea. Could be made better if the DBDB part had more regularity and structure to it and Yukari’s fire was a bit slower altogether.

Pattern Aesthetics (5/10)

Not bad, but not worthy of further comment.

## Angel of Death “The Martyr Spirited Away”

Theming (14/15)

Now this is what I was imagining when I heard “Chara and Yukari dual boss”. Well, strictly speaking it would be more “Asriel and Yukari dual boss”, but it’s not unthinkable that Chara would imitate their friend’s attacks.

Pattern Design (8/15)

Chara’s stars demand my visual attention to the point that I can not make out Yukari’s curving balls until they hit me. The lasers are functually pretty much irrelevant to the pattern, too.

Pattern Aesthetics (5/10)

Not bad, but not worthy of further comment.

## Nonspell 4

Theming (12/15)

Though simple, both patterns work for both characters.

Pattern Design (7/15)

Yukari’s pattern is poorly thought-out. Micrododging is not an option at this resolution, but macrododging it requires lightning fast reflexes because the gaps’ appearances are neither telegraphed nor do they follow a consistent and easily readable pattern.

Pattern Aesthetics (5/10)

Not bad, but not worthy of further comment.

## Arcanum of the Fallen Human “Terrible Memory of a Great War”

Theming (12/15)

Yukari’s part feels a little rather basic and doesn’t interact very well with Chara’s pattern but altogether it’s not too bad.

Pattern Design (7/15)

Basically works like the TLB of Earthen Miraculous Sword. BUT because the player’s grazebox is so ludicrously tiny it’s pretty much impossible to build up flashbomb charge in time for Chara’s wall of certain death. That, or you die from getting too close to the rainbow lines when trying to get that flashbomb charge. Since chasing Yukari through this abominable pattern is out of the question I need to hold down C at all times to shoot Chara, and since I need to be able to flashbomb at all times basically my hand ends up in a position in which it never usually is when playing Touhou.

Pattern Aesthetics (5/10)

Not bad, but not worthy of further comment.

## Nonspell 5

Theming (5/15)

Homogenous BoWaP, the filler pattern to end all filler patterns. At least it’s the right character. Or 50% of it.

Pattern Design (2/15)



The filler pattern to end all filler patterns, like I said. You already met the pattern requirements, so…why this?

Pattern Aesthetics (5/10)

Not border, but not wave of further particle.

## Evil, Bloodstained Flower “Forsaken Buttercup Tainted by Spirits”

Theming (10/15)

Can you really call this a sufficiently long spell name, I didn’t even need a second line to contain it or anything. Anyway, I would’ve wished Yukari’s part would’ve at least looked more thematically in line. Like, say, Aerial Bait style. It would’ve worked perfectly!

Pattern Design (13/15)

This is the fairest, best designed pattern in this entire game by a landslide factoring in the resolution, player and flashbomb gimmick.

Pattern Aesthetics (6/10)

Nicely made flowers.

## Nonspell 6

Theming (9/15)

Chara’s contribution feels lacking. Yukari’s pattern already dominates this nonspell as it is so her part could absolutely stand to be smaller to give Chara some space.

Pattern Design (9/15)

Iiiiit’s fine. Yukari’s pattern is hard enough to dodge on its own, Chara’s knives add an extra level of difficulty to it that’s really not necessary.

Pattern Aesthetics (5/10)

Not bad, but not worthy of further comment.

## Underground Princess’ Danmaku Barrier “Cursed, Forsaken Locket”

Theming (15/15)

Yes, this is a very good interaction between the characters.

Pattern Design (12/15)

For a minute I got worried when I read “Danmaku Barrier”. But when the pattern actually got going I was relieved to see that I wasn’t perfectly right. My primary gripe with this is that the knives force you to quickly get into position while there’s still random garbage flying around, which makes that really difficult. And although I can shoot the bosses it’s very clear that this is intended as a survival spell, but if every phase of this minute-long survival is exactly the same it just drags on for way, way, way too long.

Pattern Aesthetics (5/10)

Not bad, but not worthy of further comment.

## The Eight Human Souls “Forgotten Heroes’ Elegy” (Chara Solo)

Theming (10/15)

A fitting finale for Chara. Looks to me like every soul’s contribution works well and is sort of reminiscent of Flowey’s usage of them.

Pattern Design (10/15)

Your usual ramp-up finale. Towards the end it gets extremely messy and cluttered though.

Pattern Aesthetics (5/10)

Not bad, but not worthy of further comment.

## Presentation (5/10)

The visuals are cute and charming for sure, and never feel too intrusive. The dialogue is pretty funny the first time around as well.

Most unfortunately this entry suffers intensely from having a window too small for the average contemporary monitor resolutions, even more so than any of its predecessors. It requires you to flashbomb in certain patterns but the grazebox also feels much too small to easily and comfortably generate flashbomb charge. These two factors globally affect the difficulty of the game (and as such weigh heavily on the Pattern Design scores as you have noticed). I don’t believe I’ve ever cleared this script with fewer than 100 deaths.

Not being able to skip dialogue made replaying it for evaluation needlessly grueling, which is also why I gave up on trying to perform well after the fourth or fifth try. The lack of an enemy indicator (usually at the bottom of the screen, though some people use a line cross centered on the boss) is very detrimental to actually being able to deal damage to the bosses with this narrow forward-focused shot, since they move quite a lot and quite far on most patterns.

*Theming (10/15)*

*+ Pattern Design (8/15)*

*+ Pattern Aesthetics (4.92/10)*

*+ Presentation (5/10)*

# Total Points: 27.92/50

*Judgement Score: 13.96*

# Texel’s Entry

Touhou Character: Keine Kamishirasawa

Foreign Character: Fortune (Praecantor Lila ~ Bell Spell)

##

## Pattern 1 (Fortune Solo)

Theming (6/15)

Apart from being a solo spell, I can’t really recognize too much of any thematic link between this pattern and Fortune, but it also doesn’t completely feel like it doesn’t belong?

Pattern Design (9/15)

It’s an okay opener, but it feels a lot denser than it really is mostly because of the resolution.

Pattern Aesthetics (5/10)

Not bad, but not worthy of further comment.

## Pattern 2

Theming (8/15)

This is a very homogenous spell that probably embodies Keine’s style more than it reflects Fortune’s own.

Pattern Design (11/15)

To me this looks like one of the fairest patterns in the game with respect to the resolution. As a result it’s also one of the most fun ones.

Pattern Aesthetics (5/10)

Not bad, but not worthy of further comment.

## Pattern 3

Theming (7/15)

Keine’s part here feels wholly inappropriate, visually and gameplay-wise.

Pattern Design (11/15)

This is also high on the fair-and-fun rating for this entry, although Keine’s involvement in the pattern could probably be structured a bit more clearly.

Pattern Aesthetics (6/10)

Fortune’s spiral is VERY nice to look at for some reason.

## Pattern 4

Theming (2/15)

Yeah I think the idea of character-appropriate theming was just completely thrown out the window from here on out.

Pattern Design (3/15)

Easily the worst pattern in the entire entry. It boils down to streaming, but due to the large formations and their spawn rate, restreaming becomes ridiculously difficult.

Pattern Aesthetics (4/10)

The heart formations don’t really salvage this being just a big streaming spell.

## Pattern 5

Theming (1/15)

Same issue as the preceding pattern with the addition of being BASICALLY a solo pattern, or at the least an extremely homogenous one.

Pattern Design (11/15)

This one feels SO much better to dodge though, even if there isn’t much to it.

Pattern Aesthetics (5/10)

Not bad, but not worthy of further comment.

## Pattern 6

Theming (6/15)

CAVED!! Was probably the thought process behind this one. Besides meme value it’s also rather inappropriate for both characters, not to mention that Fortune isn’t really contributing anything to the pattern itself either.

Pattern Design (5/15)

While the general concept isn’t that bad and it probably would be okay to dodge, this is the most egregious example of the game’s resolution not fitting its genre because of how tiny the dot bullets are.

Pattern Aesthetics (5/10)

Not bad, but not worthy of further comment.

##

## Presentation (3/10)

The game’s style is cute and despite the tiny resolution there’s clearly some personality squeezed into the characters.

Unfortunately said tiny resolution also means it’s dreadfully inadequate for bullet hells, most of all because the hitboxes are downright impossible to judge. Even when you think you should be hit, you might not be, and vice versa. Deaths aren’t being communicated very well outside of all bullets promptly disappearing. The visibility is pretty bad at times and the game ends in an infinite loop instead of terminating properly.

*Theming (5/15)*

*+ Pattern Design (8.33/15)*

*+ Pattern Aesthetics (5/10)*

*+ Presentation (3/10)*

# Total Points: 21.33/50

*Judgement Score: 10.67*

1. It requires me to push Z to confirm despite my QWERTZ layout. Non-racist interfaces accept Y as the confirm/shot key. ~~Danmakufu by default is not racist for example and therefore superior to LuaSTG. :^)~~ [↑](#footnote-ref-0)
2. It requires me to push Z to confirm despite my QWERTZ layout. Non-racist interfaces accept Y as the confirm/shot key. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
3. lit. German for “cat whining”. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
4. It requires me to push Z to confirm despite my QWERTZ layout. Non-racist interfaces accept Y as the confirm/shot key. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)