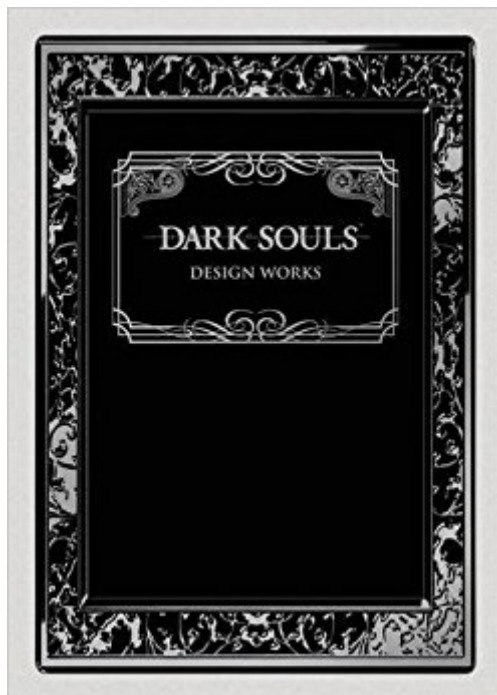


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Dark Souls: Design Works



Synopsis

Showcasing the grim and chilling artwork behind the fan-favorite Dark Souls game in a gorgeous hardcover collection, Dark Souls: Design Works features key visuals, concept art, character & monster designs, rough sketches, and an exclusive interview with the game's creators.

Book Information

Hardcover: 128 pages

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Customer Reviews

The English translated edition of the Dark Souls artbook

is finally out. It's another good job at translating by publisher Udon. The book's still hardcover, 128 pages. The cover is nicer. I like the sandy texture and the cover design is somehow printed over it in high gloss. Since I've already reviewed the Japanese artbook. The review that follows is roughly similar with minor changes. This artbook collects the concept art for characters, enemies, background, weapons and items. There are two chapters, one on concept art and the other on early designs. The chapters are not necessary because they are all concept art. In fact, the organization of content is a bit chaotic. Take the weapons section for example. They are not strictly grouped by type. There are axes together with broad swords, spears with shields, etc. Same thing with the characters and enemies. The concept art featured are nice but with a slightly rough art style. I would have preferred a more finished look especially for the environment art. They are printed quite small because they don't have enough detail to go big, or too unfinished. The designs are great but somehow they don't have the same forbidding feeling you get when playing the game. The Dark Souls world is quite big and I'm surprised they didn't include more environment art. I love the

character designs for this game. The enemies are incredibly scary. There are lots of enemies featured. It's good that some have included many design variations, but many also come with just one design by itself. There aren't any 3D renders. The weapon designs are interesting, but I felt that not all weapons are included. I've the game guide and there are a lot of weapons not included here. The last few pages are interviews with the designers of the game. The book makes more sense to me now that I can understand the captions. One of the highlights would of course be the interviews with the creators Hidetaka Miyazaki, Daisuke Satake, Hiroshi Nakamura, Masanori Waragai and Mai Hastuyama. This book is a bit underwhelming for me. Maybe it's because of the rough style of art (but hey, it's concept art), or because there aren't as much environment art which I was really looking forward to. Anyway, it's still a very fine video game art book, especially if you're into the mythical-knight-armor-castles-monsters fantasy art. (See more pictures of the book on my blog. Just visit my profile for the link.)

Like many, my relationship with Dark Souls started a bit rough. I wasn't quite sure I wanted to continue on with such an abusive relationship. But then, all of a sudden, there was a brief serenity and calmness in all the death and stun-locking that taught me the value of the experience. If you work hard enough, you'll reap the ultimate reward: experiencing that majesty that is Dark Souls. It was at that point that my liking became an obsession. To this day, if I pick up the game I have to know that it will be a while before I put it down again, just for a breather and perhaps a swig of estus. In fact, my obsession was so real that I had the original Japanese Dark Souls: Design Works imported from Japan less than a year ago. I knew that I had no chance in deciphering the vast text in the interview section but, for me, the art alone was worth the premium. Never in my wildest dreams did I think we North Americans would be intentionally treated to such a great work of art. Then, the wonderful people at Udon Entertainment made a dream come true with their announcement of an English translation of Dark Souls: Design Works. After the long and eager wait that comes with pre-ordering an item months ahead of its release, it finally arrived at my doorstep. I was immediately greeted by the grandiose facade, very fitting for Dark Souls, that is its cover. The slipcover is a matte metallic silver stock with a sandpaper texture. The black title plate planted atop it is contrastingly glossy and smooth. On that back is a deeply implanted silver sword silhouette. But the real beauty comes when you remove the luxurious slipcover and reveal the ash black hardcover with text and ornaments as orange as a raging bonfire. As if the presentation was not enough to warrant five stars, inside this tome you will find nothing but the most stunning content. Chapter 1: Concept Art The first 30 pages feature no words - solely massive, sprawling concept art on every

page, all featured on glossy black stock. I spent a good minute at least on each page, just admiring the beauty and quality of each work.

Chapter 2: Design MaterialsThe following 80 pages are broken up into sections, each visually describing the design process of various elements and showing insight into the design of World Materials, NPC Materials, Boss Monster Materials, Monster Materials, Player Equipment Materials, Weapon Materials, Unused Materials (very interesting!), and a brief look at the First Edition Purchase Bonus Poster Materials from the collector's edition release of the game.

Chapter 3: InterviewsThis section is undoubtedly what I looked forward to most. Having held onto the Japanese edition for so long with no hopes of gaining insight into the thought process of the masterminds who crafted the masochistic symphony that is Dark Souls, I couldn't help but skip first to the twelve-page interview with Hidetaka Miyazaki, Daisuke Satake, Hiroshi Nakamura, Masamori Waragai, and Mai Hastuyama. It was everything I could have hoped for. Their insight is breathtaking and inspiring and truly something I don't wish to spoil to any readers, but these twelve pages alone were worth the \$30 purchase price. I really cannot say enough to try and convince onlookers to purchase this, but please do it. Not only will you treat yourself to something truly unique and amazing, but you will be convincing Udon Entertainment to continue their great practice of bringing English translations of beautiful Japanese books to the west.

This book is amazing. This book not only has beautiful pictures of characters and environments from the game, it also works really well as a Reference book for artists who are interested in the design on the characters or levels. This book is great and if you're a fan of Dark Souls or just need a good reference to a Medieval/Fantasy characters this is the book for you.

A fantastic collection of concept art and more detailed images of pretty much every boss, weapon, npc, and suit of armor in the game. It may seem a little pricey, but it is a high quality product worthy of the darksouls brand.

The book isn't perfect, but I love it. The interview in the back is worth the costs alone. Just looking through the design works and remembering how each thing made me feel while playing was great. The book has some mislabeled pictures and some binding glue got on one picture, but overall very happy with the book.

Very nice quality book for any dark souls fan, the edging is a really nice shimmery silver and its textured. I would say its a bit thin compared to some other art books in the market but I'm satisfied

with the product overall

Assuming that you are a Dark Souls collector since you've considered buying this item, you HAVE to get this art book. There is not much collectible Dark Souls merchandise available for purchase in America, so obtaining this item is a must-have. This book contains the bare bones of Dark Souls from its early stages to alternate forms of what didn't make it into the finished product (not to mention the interesting interviews with the From Software team included in the back). If you are on the fence about buying this product and adding it to your Dark Souls memorabilia, ponder no more and buy this product.

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