

CARL AHLUND

Senior Game Designer

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PROFESSIONAL SUMMARY Senior game designer and artist with 20 years of experience in game development. Portfolio of 11 titles launched across multiple genres and platforms. Strategic, creative leader with direct hiring and team management experience along with extensive individual contributions. Thrives in a team environment. Passionate about fostering collaboration between cross-functional teams to unify gameplay, narrative, and art into a cohesive experience.

- QUALIFICATIONS**
- Proven leadership in guiding design teams to create innovative and memorable game experiences
 - Expert in designing complex game systems with a focus on impactful player engagement
 - Strong cross-disciplinary collaborator
 - Experienced in seamlessly integrating art, narrative, and tech into gameplay experiences
 - Dynamic, adaptable leader accustomed to working within a variety of team structures
 - Thorough knowledge of all aspects of the game development cycle
 - Well-versed in both the creative and technical aspects of game design
 - Develops clear, concise GDDs
 - Deep experience in writing specs and development tasks
 - Art skills leveraged to create detailed mockups for dev team
 - Extensive experience in balancing and editing game data
 - Proficient in UE and Unity
 - Well versed in UI/UX design

EXPERIENCE

Sept 2022 – Current [Hometopia Inc.](#)
Game Director

Lead team through a restructuring and turnaround that revitalized the project, improving efficiency and aligning creative vision. Successfully launched the title in early access on Steam. Worked closely with engineers conveying design goals to help them refactor or rewrite code to support new systems and mechanics. Worked with artists to repair the art pipeline and existing assets, which were unoptimized and non-performant. Interfaced with an incubator within Walmart who was extremely interested in the project and was planning to feature Walmart furniture and accessories in the game.

Hometopia™, launched September 2024

Aug 2016 – Sept 2022 [Otherside Entertainment](#)
Lead Designer

Served as Lead Designer responsible for design of major systems as well as managing the wider team of designers. Worked with engineers to implement and iterate on systems and mechanics in both Unity and Unreal engine. Led development of various prototypes to pitch to publishers, leading to multiple offers and signed deals.

Lead Designer, D&D Heist Game (unreleased)

- Responsible for design of core systems and interfacing with counterparts at Wizards of the Coast.
- Worked with engineers in Unreal Engine to implement and iterate on systems, mechanics and tooling.
- Worked with level designers and narrative designer to create missions that were both replayable and coherent within a larger narrative framework.
- Tasked to faithfully recreate a specific, popular D&D setting.

Lead Designer, Thick As Thieves

- Responsible for design of major systems as well as managing the wider team of designers.
- Worked with engineers to implement and iterate on systems and mechanics in both Unity and Unreal engine.
- Prototyped core mechanics with focus on immersive simulation, co-op tactics, "kinetic stealth," and energetic parkour-style movement.

Lead Designer, System Shock VR Project (unreleased)

- Responsible for design of UI/UX, major game systems, narrative design and level design.
- Tasked with creating a VR "immersive sim in cyberspace" that could connect and interact with other players in some capacity.
- Worked with engineers in Unity to implement mechanics optimized for the Vive and Oculus VR platforms

Lead Designer, Mobile VR title: Underworld Overlord

- Responsible for design of major systems and coordinating with level and narrative designers
- Leveraged "Google Daydream" mobile VR technology to create an immersive tower defense game
- Worked in Unity to create a midcore game experience that was satisfying and could overcome the limitations of mobile VR hardware

July 2008 – Aug 2016

App Minis / Monad Games

Creative Director, Principal

Co-founded independent mobile game development studio. Self-funded ten titles, achieving over \$7 million in gross revenues and 23 million downloads. Accountable for design and art production of signature titles. Additional responsibilities for budgeting, resource planning and staffing.

Design This Castle™, launched March 2016

- Ranked #4 in Top Free Overall
- Featured in Best New Games on iOS App Store

Design This Home™, launched January 2012

- Ranked #2 in Top Grossing
- 14 million downloads
- 300k Facebook fans

Rhythm Spirit™, launched July 2010:

- Critical acclaim and high scores from major iPhone game review sites such as TouchArcade.com, 148apps.com, Gamezebo.com, Appmodo.com, etc.
- Top 10 ranking in music games on the App Store

July 2005 – July 2008

Electronic Arts

Environment Modeler

Environment modeler and texture artist for the following published titles:

- EA SPORTS GameShow (released 2008 for PC, XBLA)
- NASCAR 08 (released 2007 for XBOX 360, PS3)
- Superman Returns (released 2006 for XBOX, XBOX 360, PS2)

Assigned to cross-functional teams producing non-traditional titles including the launch of the first live broadcast video game. Responsibilities included collaboration with art director, development director and core development team to deliver assets in a timely manner during all phases of the production timeline.

September 2002 – 2004

University of Georgia, Fine Arts Department

Lead 3D Artist, New Media Designer

Modeler, animator and texture artist for \$1M funded Virtual Vaudeville project. Core responsibilities included studying historical content to accurately model, animate and texture photo-realistic, low-poly and high-poly characters of Vaudeville stage performers, audience members and theater. Managed junior artists to deliver assets meeting project specifications.

SOFTWARE

Unreal, Unity, SVN/Git, Perforce, Jira, Blender, Photoshop, Resolve, Figma, Maya, Substance, Audacity

EDUCATION

University of Georgia - AB Studio Art & BFA Digital Media

INTERESTS

History, animation, video games, tabletop games, guitar, drawing