Matt Heiniger

Senior Technical Artist

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About

I am a Technical Artist with over 17 years experience developing AAA titles. For the last few years I have largely been focused on the ever-growing complexity of realtime lighting systems in Unreal. I would like to get back to my Tech Art roots and expand my focus on the broader technical challenges that face modern game development. I am also interested in a position where I can share my knowledge and experience with newer developers. Aside from lighting, I have extensive experience with tools development, art pipelines, asset management, shaders, VFX, and mentoring other TAs.

EXPERIENCE

31st Union - *Senior Technical Artist, Lighting/Shading*

July 2023 - Present

"Project Ethos", Xbox One X / PS5 / PC

- Maintaining and updating dynamic Time of Day system
- Working closely between Graphics Engineering and the Art department to direct content that scales to hardware from high end PC all the way down to mobile platforms while maintaining the highest visual quality possible
- Supporting, training, and mentoring Lighting artists overseas
- Building and maintaining a system of blueprints for light fixtures for rapid iteration and future proofing content
- Building various editor utilities for lighting team

Midwinter Entertainment - *Senior Technical Artist, Lighting/Shading*

April 2020 - June 2023

"Scavengers", Xbox One / PS4 / PC

- Built the dynamic Time of Day system from ground up
- Lighting art direction and implementation
- Shader creation and optimization
- Memory audits
- Collision management
- Built a Marketing and Storefront image capture pipeline

Hat Hair Games - *Project Director*

September 2019 - Present

"Reclamation", PC

- Managed an indie studio with 2 full time employees for 1.5 years
- Handled the core programming, art, and core game design for a hand-crafted 3D claymation platformer
- Coordinated with outsourcers
- Pitched a product to publishers
- Handled project financing, budgeting, hiring

Undead Labs - *Senior Technical Artist*

June 2012 - March 2020

"State of Decay 2", Xbox One / PC

- Lighting art direction and implementation
- Real-time Time of Day system
- Third party software support
- Photogrammetry pipeline creation
- Master shader library creation and maintenance
- Vehicle deformation system

"Moonrise", iOS / Android / PC

- Lighting and post processing, weather system
- Dynamic character Combiner
- Dynamic portrait capture system
- Memory profiling and asset policing
- Dynamic spell icons, UI implementation
- Shaders

"State of Decay", Xbox 360 / Xbox One / PC

- Interior light volumes
- Building geometry cleanup and optimization
- Outsource management
- Memory profiling, asset policing, asset reduction
- SQL asset database

Monolith Productions - *Technical Artist, FX Artist*

June 2009 - May 2012

"Guardians of Middle Earth", Xbox 360 / PC

- VFX art creation
- VFX pipeline and engine improvements
- Destructibles
- Training

[Canceled Project], Xbox 360 / PC

- Building Architecture generator
- Procedural Road tool
- Havok cloth physics

Surreal Software - *Associate Technical Artist*

March 2008 - May 2009

"This is Vegas", Xbox 360 / PS3 / PC

- LOD generation
- Shader Complexity tool
- Vehicle physics
- Memory management

Handheld Games - *Intern*

June 2007 - Dec 2007

"Phineas and Ferb" "Disney Fairy Princesses", Nintendo DS

- Character pixel art
- Sprite animations
- Background painting

EDUCATION

Art Institute of Seattle - *Bachelor of Fine Arts, Game Art and Design*

June 2008

Game Art and Design

Graduated with Honors, Dean's List

ACHIEVEMENTS

GDC Speaker, 2019

Big Indie Pitch winner, 2022