ARI VELAZQUEZ

Game Developer in Melbourne, Australia

ari.v@me.com
(+61) 0421 803 885
https://arivelazquez.com/

EXPERIENCE

RiffRaff Games

March 2025 – January 2027
Technical Designer
Global Remote

A PC/Console studio working on a hard-boiled magic noir stealth action game called **Sleight of Hand**. I worked as a technical designer to help architect core systems following a project reboot as well as planned out and built in-house servers for version control and CI/CD game builds. Game is still in development.

Responsibilities

- **Assisted in architecting a systemic sandbox** in Unreal Engine 5 largely through the Gameplay Ability System (GAS) utilizing both blueprint and C++.
- **Specced and built in-house servers** to manage our own Perforce depots and build pipeline with Epic's Horde CI/CD system.
- **Maintained a strong sense of self-motivation** in an environment intentionally low on overhead and process to enable rapid iteration and prototype of core mechanics and systems.

In Development

- **Sleight of Hand** – Steam, Xbox Game Pass

Blankhans

August 2021 – July 2024
Technical Designer, Senior Game Designer
Global Remote

A PC studio formed to create an online multiplayer survival game called **Coreborn**. I worked first as a technical designer to create our prototype and then mainly as a systems and content game designer once we received funding and moved into production. We shipped on Steam Early Access on July 18, 2023.

Responsibilities

- **Prototyped a fully functional 4-player survival game** prototype in Unreal Engine with EOS backend.
- **Created a structured GDD wiki** from disparate documents and whiteboards.
- **Designed the majority of survival systems** such as gathering, building, crafting, skills, inventory, player and enemy stats, combat, and more.
- **Directed user interface development** working closely with the team's UI/UX designer.
- **Implemented in-engine tools** to help with tedious tasks, such as a crafting recipe importer that took the output of a spreadsheet and automatically generated assets and auto-tuned relevant systems.
- **Operated as de-facto lead designer**, working across multiple disciplines to maintain vision and scope while also training and supervising junior designers.

Shipped

- **Coreborn: Nations of the Ultracore** – Steam Early Access

Independent Development

January 2020 – July 2021

Worked on a variety of game projects in my free time to better my experience with Unreal Engine and Unity3D as well as hone my own design skills. Each project had an intentionally small scope and focused on specific aspects of design and technical skill to learn. Only one made it to a shipped state before new work picked up.

Shipped

- **Astronomia (PC/Mac):** A spatial 3D puzzle game with a minimalist classic arcade art style developed entirely solo over five months in Unreal Engine 4. Focused on Unreal Engine basics such as blueprints and materials, and also learned about application deployment and store page management on Steam and itchi.io platforms.

Maxis, Electronic Arts
November 2017 – October 2018
Technical Game Designer **Redwood City, CA, USA**

A historied PC/Console studio within Electronic Arts mostly known for Sim City and The Sims. I worked as a technical designer on **The Sims 4** and shipped two Expansion Packs (**EP05 "Seasons"** and **EP06 "Get Famous"**) focusing on implementation of features into the game via custom toolset.

Responsibilities

- **Implementation and iteration** of features in our in-house made tools such as Object Editor and Sage.
- **Regular communication across disciplines** to keep parties up-to-date on implementation progress and new or changed expectations.
- **Tracking down and fixing bugs** from across all of the game's Expansion, Game, and Stuff packs, based both on internal prioritization and community feedback.

Shipped

- Expansion Pack 05 – **"Seasons"**
- Expansion Pack 06 – **"Get Famous"**

Magnet Hill Games
November 2015 – March 2017
Co-Founder, Lead Designer **San Francisco, CA, USA**

An indie studio founded in 2015 that lasted for a year and a half. We worked on a few game projects and met with many publishers and platform holders, but ultimately were not able to secure enough funding to continue. I was the designer and producer for each project and also managed the studio needs like hiring and biz-dev.

Responsibilities

- **Documentation and organization** of design docs, audio needs, story codices, etc, in GDrive and Trello.
- **Design and iteration** of game systems and mechanics with regular feedback from stakeholders.
- **Task and milestone planning** for each of our projects and adjusting schedules and sprints to adapt to new developments or problems in Trello.

Waystone Games, Electronic Arts
November 2014 – March 2015
Game Designer **Redwood City, CA, USA**

A mobile game studio, previously PC, trying to figure out what we were going to work on in the wake of Dawngate's closure. I transitioned into a design role.

Responsibilities

- **Documentation** of various pre-production design and planning in Confluence.
- **In-engine tuning and scripting** for procedurally generated levels in Unity.
- **Rapid iterative prototyping** on new ideas and possible directions in Unity and browser-based HTML/JS.

Waystone Games, Electronic Arts
January – November 2014
Web Engineer **Redwood City, CA, USA**

A PC studio within Electronic Arts working on a live-service story-driven MOBA called **Dawngate**. EA ultimately shut down the game due to a shift away from free-to-play PC games.

Highlighted Projects

- **Dawngate client homepage:** I created an Akamai-hosted Javascript/jQuery homepage for the game software upon logging in. The client wrapped an embedded WebKit browser, allowing us to update homepage content without requiring a client patch. The homepage was able to communicate with various player systems to display data about games played, as well as list latest news articles.
- **Dawngate Chronicles:** I stood up a Wordpress instance with many plugins and manual modifications on AWS to host our game's webcomic. The producer who used the backend was able to upload a new comic, appropriately tag it by season and episode, and schedule it in the future with ease.

EDUCATION

Georgia Institute of Technology
August 2005 – May 2010
B.S. in Computational Media **Atlanta, GA, USA**