JUSTIN ZWACK

LEAD / SENIOR LEVEL DESIGNER

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PROFILE

Award-Winning Game Developer & Lead / Senior Level Designer with 10 years of experience in AA and AAA game development across third-person action, open-world shooter, stealth, and real-time strategy genres for PC and consoles. Hands-on design lead, experienced in shaping gameplay vision, establishing production workflows, leading multidisciplinary teams, and delivering engaging gameplay experiences from early concept to final implementation.

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

KING Art Games | 2017 – Present | 9+ years

Unannounced "Project Schießeisen" – Lead Level Designer — *Third-Person Open World Coop Shooter*

- Led multidisciplinary Design teams through pre-production and managed Level Design department during main production, incl. individual mentoring, frequent design reviews, sprint and production planning.
- Established world, mission, and encounter design pillars and frameworks, production workflows, and quality standards.

Warhammer 40.000: Dawn of War IV – Lead Level Designer — *Real-Time Strategy with strong established IP (Main Game, DLC, Addon)*

- Owned complete Skirmish and Multiplayer Level Design scope across 50+ maps, while contributing to boss fights and several campaign missions.
- Led an 8-person Level Design team from alpha to launch.
- Reorganized level design pipelines to support post-launch mission development from concept to playable and shipped content.

Iron Harvest – Game & Level Designer — *Real-Time Strategy with Dieselpunk Mechs (Main Game, DLC, Addon)*

- Designed and implemented campaign and multiplayer levels for release and post-launch, incl. the initial tutorial and final boss fight, as well as promotional content for events.

Unannounced Survival Horror – Design Intern — *Third-Person Stealth Action*

- Contributed to the early development of a fixed-camera project that later evolved into a third-person stealth experience.

bluebox interactive | 2017 – 2018 | 10 months

Monster Menace Matthew – Part-time Designer — *Cancelled 2D Dungeon Crawler*

LEADERSHIP & COLLABORATION

- **Team Leadership & Mentoring:** Building and mentoring Level Design teams, fostering ownership, providing feedback, and supporting individual development.
- **Vision Alignment:** Working closely with Game Direction, acting as a design vision holder, translating creative direction into clear design goals.
- **Cross-disciplinary Collaboration:** Aligning Design, Art, Narrative, and Tech to solve challenges, and create a cohesive experience with the player at the center.
- **Production & Workflow Development:** Scoping content, managing priorities and risks, establishing design conventions, production frameworks, and high-quality standards.

DESIGN

- **World & Level Design:** Structuring and planning open worlds with story missions and systemic encounters, for complex content distribution and engaging player progression.
- **Mission & Encounter Design:** Shaping mission flow, combat encounters, and pacing to support clear objectives and meaningful choices throughout the level.
- **Level Metrics & Visual Language:** Establishing consistent spatial and gameplay level-metrics, clear visual language, and intuitive environmental player guidance.

IMPLEMENTATION

- **Design Documentation & Prototyping:** Translating design concepts into 2D layouts, 3D blockouts, and playable prototypes to validate gameplay intentions.
- **Gameplay Scripting & Staging:** Implementing mission logic, systemic and replayable encounters, AI behavior, custom gameplay events, dialogue, and cutscenes.
- **Iteration & Quality Assurance:** Driving iterative development through playtesting, design reviews, feedback, and collaboration with QA to polish and prepare for release.

SKILLS & SOFTWARE

Game Engines: Unity, Unreal | **Documentation:** MS Office, Google Tools, Confluence
2D: Photoshop, Illustrator | **3D:** Unity ProBuilder, Maya
Scripting: Visual, XML, JSON | **Basic Programming:** C#

EDUCATION

CGMA Online Course | 2020

Level Design for Games — *Lectures by Emilia Schatz (Naughty Dog); Teacher Shane Canning (Square Enix)*

HS Mittweida – University of Applied Sciences | 2014 – 2018

Media Informatics and Interactive Entertainment — *Bachelor of Science*

AWARDS & RECOGNITIONS

- **Dawn of War IV:** PC Gaming Show – Most Wanted 2025
- **Iron Harvest:** Best Game Design & Best German Game at German Developer Awards 2020