

MICHAEL ANNETTA

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SUMMARY

A versatile experience designer who leverages cutting-edge technology to craft immersive and award-winning worlds and games. A proven team leader who proactively manages the development and production lifecycles of diverse creative projects. Hallmarks include creative vision, communication skills, and a dedication to improving the user experience through continual technological innovation.

EXPERIENCE

MATTERVR, Santa Monica, CA, 2017

Lead VR Experience & Narrative Designer, *Wonders of the World*

- Recruited to lead the development and design of *Wonders of the World*, an interactive educational experience for GearVR and Rift, at pioneering VR studio specializing in immersive storytelling
- Crafted all characters and narratives for the story, interfacing with internal creative teams to ensure consistency in execution
- Sketched wireframes to define the user experience, utilized Articy: Draft 3 software to shape the game's overall interactive structure, and drafted comprehensive design document to facilitate streamlined production of future episodes
- Researched extensively to authenticate historical details and inform creative content, adapting ancient board and dice games to build engrossing in-story VR mini-games
- Played lead producer role throughout, advising on pitch documents to secure project funding, making key casting decisions, and directing voiceover talent as necessary

FLYING MOLLUSK, Glendale, CA, 2015 – 2017

Lead VR Designer, Executive Producer, & Academic and Research Liaison

- Spearheaded the creative development and production of *Nevermind*, the first commercially-available, biofeedback-enhanced VR game that earned stellar user reviews for gameplay content, character performances, and real world psychological impact
- Guided the successful adaptation from flatscreen to Unity-built VR game for Rift and HTC Vive
- Expertly tracked and managed all project milestones and deliverables, making strategic decisions to deliver the final game on time and under budget without sacrificing gameplay quality
- Interfaced with university representatives and research professionals to build collaborative relationships, share cutting-edge technologies, and pursue ongoing innovation in the VR and Internet of Things spaces
- Analyzed numerous biotechnology devices to determine optimal compatibility and functionality within *Nevermind*'s existing narrative structure
- Partnered with CEO to shape corporate and creative strategy, scheduled tasks and sprints for Agile development activities, and directed the creation and maintenance of individual game and company websites
- Directed actor voiceover sessions and utilized Audacity and Adobe Audition to edit character audio files for use in-game

AWARDS: Received widespread recognition for VR innovation and gaming quality, earning multiple creative awards and a selection as *Indiecade* Finalist in 2015

WEVR (fmr. WEMO LAB), Venice, CA, 2013 & 2014

VR Designer, *theBluVR*, 2014

- Architected dynamic oceanic educational experience for launch title on GearVR, translating existing PC assets into dynamic, interactive VR space
- Presided over experimental R&D efforts to bring *theBluVR* to the HTC Vive, performing numerous tests of the program on the first Vive device to be used outside of Steam headquarters

Level Designer, *Superfugu*, 2013

- Designed multiple game levels and puzzles in Unity 3D and wrote supplementary educational content for popular children's mobile game

AWARDS: Earned 2015 Proto Awards for Best Mobile Experience and Best Educational Experience for *theBluVR*

EDUCATION

Master of Fine Arts

Interactive
Media & Games
USC School of
Cinematic Arts
Los Angeles, CA
Honors

Fox Fellowship Award

Bachelor of Arts

Film & Communications
Penn State University
State College, PA

SOFTWARE

Unity 3D

Unreal Engine

Oculus Rift SDK

VR Hardware

Rift, HTC Vive, Gear VR

Coding Languages

C#, JavaScript

Adobe Creative Suite

Atlassian Software

Jira, Confluence,

Hipchat

Slack

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EXPERIENCE (CONT'D)

USC SCHOOL OF CINEMATIC ARTS, Los Angeles, CA, 2011 – 2018

Adjunct Professor, Game Design, 2016 – 2018

- Teach cornerstone game design course for the #1 Interactive Media & Game Design program in North America, imparting core game design principles, project management strategies, and production essentials to encourage students' professional development and success
- Mentored two student gaming projects that were selected for specialized publishing course in collaboration with USC's School of Cinematic Arts and achieved \$25,000+ in Kickstarter funding

Curator & Show Producer, Interactive Media Events, 2011 – 2012

- Recruited to produce *Winteractive* 2012 Interactive Media MFA exhibition, leveraging live theater and interactive production experience to design engaging user flows and floor plans
- Determined and coordinated all show content, logistics, and layout for two-day *First Move 2012* interactive exhibition at the Directors Guild of America that showcased MFA thesis projects to industry professionals
- Curated game experiences and event demos for *Out Of Control(ler)* exhibition in 2011, conferring with game developers to devise thematic set elements that elevated the overall user experience for each exhibit

Creative Director & Lead Game Designer, *Seymour Deeply*, 2011 – 2012

- Conceptualized and produced narrative-driven interactive play experience in Unity, integrating consumer-level stereoscopic 3D projection and Microsoft Kinect gestural control
- Composed and scripted comic book transmedia extensions from the core storyworld

Lead Designer & Animator, *Hole in the Wall*, 2011

- Created large scale stereoscopic 3D projection-mapped animation for *Rhythms and Visions* sponsored USC Cinema festival

Design Specialist, USC Mobile & Environmental Media Lab, 2010 – 2011

- Collaborated with BMW on advanced Internet of Things project that leveraged the use of story, character, and sensory data to enhance the user driving experience
- Provided strategic support as part of innovative PUCK doctoral research project, which analyzed sensory data and user behavioral patterns to build characters and voices for modern buildings

THE ALCHEMISTS, Hollywood, CA, 2012 – 2013

UI/UX & Game Designer

- Shaped UI/UX for iPad transmedia extension of Caldecott-winning children's book, *Flotsam*, collaborating with educators and curriculum specialists to build informed design strategy
- Conceived and created an Augmented Reality-enabled trading card game that served as a transmedia story extension for the main game

WALT DISNEY IMAGINEERING, Glendale, CA, 2011

Design Intern, Creative Interactive Attractions

- Designed and prototyped interactive concepts, collaborated with concept artists and budget managers, and created elaborate game design documentation to facilitate a reimagining of popular theme park experience in Orlando, FL

EXPERTISE

Experience Design
Virtual Reality
Strategic Vision
Interactive Media
Storyworld Planning
Project Management
Game Development
Team Leadership
Creative Vision
Production
Scheduling
Budgeting
UI / UX
IoT

VOLUNTEER

Game Developer
Conference
Conference Associate
2012 – 2017