

Melissa Janowicz

Gameplay Designer at BioWare

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ABOUT

I am a Gameplay Designer with a focus on creature design at BioWare Edmonton. For 11 years prior to this I collaborated with incredible teams to help build top tier interactive experiences, mostly as an Art Director, Art Department Lead, UX Designer or Concept Artist, but also as a Game Designer and Associate Producer. Credits include an unnamed Dragon Age project, Anthem, Club Penguin, The Four Kings Casino and Slots, Shuyan Saga and much more. Many of my game credits are under my maiden name, Melissa Davidson.

EXPERIENCE

Gameplay Designer BioWare

Edmonton, AB

May 2017 - Present

I create pitches and prototypes and work with many teams internally to create new features for video game software. My biggest focus has been on creature design, but I have also worked in multiple other areas.

Projects:

Anthem

- Worked as a creature designer on this game.
- Also, a member of the UI/UX "finaling team" in the last few months of production.

Women's Resource Group Lead

- I acted as the leader in BioWare's internal Women's Resource Group for the 2017-2018 season, with a focus on making BioWare the employer of choice for talented women in the games industry.

Sidequest

- Co-led the development and creatig of a video game jam for 150 people within BioWare Edmonton and BioWare Austin.

Game Design Architect/Associate Producer/Artist Lofty Sky Entertainment

Edmonton, Alberta

May 2016 - Apr 2017

Oversaw production of games and interactive entertainment. Created game designs, performing market research studies and illustrating backgrounds and props for interactive entertainment, including children's interactive media and virtual reality experiences.

Projects:

Shuyan Saga (Steam, iOS, Android)

- In 2018 Shuyan Saga was nominated for a Canadian Screen Award (Gemini Award) for "Best Original Interactive Production".

Miaomiao (Multiple Projects, iOS)

Managed a Rapid Prototype Lab with a focus on VR games and interactive video.

Art Director SHG Studios

Hamilton, Ontario

Jan 2016 - Apr 2016

Designed a studio-wide pipeline for use in game development. Set the art style for a ftp mobile game. Also designed UI/UX for this game, created illustrations. Managed a small team.

Creative Director Hard Circle

Hamilton, Ontario

Apr 2016 - May 2016

Provided art and creative direction. Created game art assets (illustrations, UI).

Projects:

Billions of Cats (Android)

Lead Game Designer

Mark Media

Toronto, Ontario

Sep 2015 - Dec 2015

In charge of level design on video game software. Also worked on UX and UI design and performed market research studies.

Project:

Shuyan Saga (Steam, iOS, Android)

Art Director

Pala Interactive

Toronto, Ontario

Jul 2014 - Sep 2015

Was the art director on more than a dozen slot and table games. Created production and concept art. Designed several slot games and their associated UI/UX. Led a team of artists. Managed some outsource teams.

Projects:

Pala Casino

Pala Poker

More Than a Dozen Unique Slot Games

Re-skins of Roulette and other Pre-Existing Games

2D Art Lead

Digital Leisure

Richmond Hill, Ontario

Apr 2013 - Jul 2014

Created concept and production art as well as 2D animation and UI artwork for several console, PC, and mobile games. Worked as a part of a greater team to create casual/social experiences and MMORPGs.

Projects:

The Four Kings Casino and Slots (PS4/Steam)

Get off My Lawn (Steam and Six Other Platforms)

Western Frontier (PS3)

Playstation Home Casino (PS3)

Dragon's Lair Ports (Multi-Console)

2D Artist

Longbow Games

Toronto, Ontario

Feb 2013 - Mar 2013

Did illustration and UI artwork as well as high poly 3D assets for world map renders.

Projects:

Hegemony Rome (Steam)

Senior Interactive Background Designer

Disney Interactive

Kelowna, BC

Dec 2011 - Nov 2012

I designed, illustrated and animated interactive backgrounds for Club Penguin. I also designed monthly "party" game experiences and helped re-design the art style of the game.

Projects:
Club Penguin (PC)
Unreleased Projects (PC)

Creative Director

Lera Games

Toronto, Canada
Jul 2010 - Feb 2012

I worked on all creative levels (story, art, and design) on unreleased PC software and consulted in the creation of an unreleased PC video game engine.

Projects:
Unreleased PC Software
Unreleased PC Games Engine
Several Flash Games

Lead Artist

Black Chicken Studios

San Diego, California
Dec 2010 - Jul 2011

I drew all of the 2D artwork for an unreleased Facebook game as well as for interactive novel software for PC.

Projects:
1931: Scheherazade at the Library of Pergamum (Steam)
Unreleased Facebook Game

Art Consultant

Team KAIZEN Games

Toronto, Canada
Jan 2009 - Jan 2015

Created 3D models and textures, and provided consultation for art for games.

Projects:
Children's Camps
Unreleased PS4 Software

EDUCATION

Humber College

Multimedia 3D Animation

2005 - 2007
Received diploma.

Humber College

3D for Games and Interactive Entertainment

2007 - 2008
Graduated with honours.

Harvard University

Disney Creativity and Innovation Course

2011 - 2011
Received online certificate through Harvard University.

CGSociety

Becoming a Better Artist with Robert Chang

2014 - 2014
Received online certificate through CGSociety.com.

Schoolism

Painting with Light and Colour

2015 - 2015

Taught by Dice Tsusumi and Robert Kondo. Received certificate through Schoolism.

Schoolism

Digital Painting with Bobby Chiu

2015 - 2015

Received certificate through Schoolism.com.

Schoolism

Environment Design with Nathan Fowkes

2016 - 2016

Received certificate through Schoolism.com.

Etc.

2000 - 2016

I have attended hundreds of industry meetups, conferences, and panels throughout my career, as well as participated in over 50 video game jams, usually as an artist.

AWARDS

Community Member of the Year Nomination

DaGA

Feb 2019

Nominated for my work in bringing together, educating and advocating for women in games through my #yegfemdev monthly meetups and other community outreach.

Canadian Screen Award/Gemini Nomination

Feb 2018

"2018 Best Original Interactive Production"

- Received for Shuyan Saga.

Screen-Based Media Production Program Award

CMPA

May 2016

Won a production mentorship program through the Canadian Media Producers Association, which allowed me to work alongside experienced Executive Producers and learn a lot about production methodologies and corporate leadership.

PROJECTS

#yegfemdev

I run the largest Professional Games industry event in Edmonton, with a focus on helping talented and gifted female and non-binary professionals in the industry develop their professional network, as well as providing them crucial information to help them build and further their careers.

Sidequest

BioWare

Co-led the development and creation of a studio-wide game jam for BioWare Edmonton and BioWare Edmonton. There were over 150 attendees.

Game Jam Games

I have attended more than 50 in-person (not online) gam jams, with personal or group projects emerging from the vast majority of them.

SKILLS

5+ Years Experience As an Art Director or Art Department Lead

11 Years of Collective Professional Experience

Over 30 Shipped Games (Collectively - Console, PC, Mobile, Web)

As a designer successfully doubled DAU (3.2 mil to 6.1 mil) and ARPPDAU for a game.

As an artist, extremely versatile (decade of professional exp. as a concept artist, UI/UX designer, 2D animator, 3D texture artist/modeler).

CONTACT

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