

John Bernhelm

VR & Game Designer

www.bernhelm.net

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San Francisco, CA
@Bernhelm

Creative Design, Prototyping, Storytelling

Technical designer with 12+ years of experience enabling teams to craft games, virtual reality, and interactive narratives from a player-first mentality.

Unity - C# Unreal 4 - Blueprint C++ Maya Photoshop Figma

Facebook

2019-Present

Product Design Prototyper | Horizon

- Drove feature development for social VR platform's Avatar and Social teams by building Unity prototypes, designing Figma UX flows, and shipping code and tunings.
- Features include: 3d avatar editor, gesture and emote systems, wearable costume system, performant vr shaders, and social integrity features.

Wevr

Lead Designer | The Blu: Deep Rescue

2018

- Helmed scripting, layout, mechanics, and narrative for multiplayer location-based Unity VR underwater experience.
- Collaborated with Dreamscape Immersive's hardware engineers to design physical props, set layout, and haptic effects.

Oculus

2016-2017

R&D Sausalito | Lead Prototyper

- Lead development of a multiplayer Unreal 4 VR experience that first merged Oculus R&D's face, body, and finger tracking technologies.

Story Studio | Senior Experience Designer | The Wolves in the Walls

- Designed sequence flow, AI branching, and interaction for 2018 Sundance Selection and Emmy Finalist narrative VR experience.
- Created dozens of Unreal 4 VR prototypes including virtual interactive objects, AI systems, locomotion mechanics, and world-scale shifts.

Wevr

2016

Lead Designer | Gnomes & Goblins (Preview)

- Led experience design, layout, and scripting for Unreal 4 VR project in collaboration with Academy Award-winning director Jon Favreau.

Telltale Games

2015-2016

Interactive Story Designer | The Walking Dead: Michonne Ep. 2 (Lead) | Tales from the Borderlands Ep. 4 (Lead), 3, 2

- Owned player narrative experience throughout production, designed environment layouts, and co-wrote story scripts with writing team.

Double Fine Productions

2012-2014

Game Designer | Massive Chalice

- Designed systems and levels for epic turn-based strategy game.
- Co-led a \$1.2 million Kickstarter campaign that exceeded its fundraising goal by 65%.

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Naughty Dog

2011-2012

Game Designer | Uncharted 4: A Thief's End

- Created over a dozen game mechanic and puzzle system prototypes to push the boundaries of melee combat and adventure puzzles.

Game Designer | Uncharted 3: Drake's Deception

- Choreographed and scripted game-opening "bar brawl" level.
- Level scripting and placement, combat and boss encounter design.

EA Visceral Games

2008-2010

Player and NPC Combat Designer | Dante's Inferno / Trials of St. Lucia

- Designed and implemented a full suite of player combat abilities.
- AI behavior and attack design for over a dozen enemies and bosses.

VR Prototypes

I've been building VR experiences in Unreal and Unity since 2015 including:

- **Roobound:** Pilot a robotic kangaroo through procedurally generated levels filled with cybernetic Australian critters.
- **Insect Rescue Squad:** Save trapped insects by climbing a giant spider's web after metamorphosing into a human-sized beetle.
- **Monster Barber:** Run a barbershop for giant hairy monsters, giving them stylish or terrifying haircuts using touch controls.
- **Bat Touch:** A creature encounter where you use Leap Motion to interact with a cute AI-driven bat. Top 20 finalist in the Leap Motion 3D jam 2015.

Education

Georgia Institute of Technology

B.S. | Computational Media, High Honors 2008

- Team lead for 12 student game projects including interactive fiction and games for pc, Atari 2600, and Game Boy Advance.
- Led "XNA Playing" research team advised by Ian Bogost.

Internships:

- Design Intern EA LA | Steven Spielberg's "LMNO" - 2007
- Production Intern EA Tiburon - 2006

Game Community Leadership

Game Design Speaking Engagements - USC, Georgia Tech, ITU

Juror | Indiegade

2011 - 2017

Conference Associate | Game Developer's Conference

2007 - 2010

Founder | Extra Life for Kids

2003 - 2007

- Raised over \$25,000 for children's hospitals by creating first-ever series of charity gaming marathons.

Interests and Hobbies

- Film, animation, board/card games, and comics.
- Scuba diving, underwater photography, ukulele, and extremely spicy food.
- Karaoke-ing and dancing to rock hits of the 80s.