

Arron Simpson

Art Director / Lead Artist

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Skills

- Ability to provide artistic vision and creative direction for AAA title.
- Experienced in artistic team leadership and project management – team sizes from 4 – 40 artists.
- Strong artistic skills – with both traditional and digital artistic background.
- More than 9 years games industry experience.
- Experienced in creating documentation - Art Vision, style guides, presentations, instructional guidelines, pipeline and processes.
- Thorough knowledge of game art development – characters, vehicles, props, environment, animation, VFX.
- Strong knowledge of 3D and 2D software – 3DS Max, Photoshop, Mudbox, Z Brush.
- Good knowledge of Flash and Illustrator – in producing vector based content for Facebook.
- Strong understanding of all aspects of internal game development process, from design methodology to artistic creation and production.
- Experienced in working with outsource companies. Communication, planning, tracking + feedback.
- Unreal 3 Engine experience.

Employment History

Art Director – Paragon Studios (NC Soft)

Paragon Studios
2011 - 2012

As Art Director at Paragon Studios, I worked on an unannounced, online multiplayer adventure PC title. My role involved working with the project leads and studio executives to deliver an artistic vision for the product that met the desired goals. The game was a new IP, and was at a very early stage of development when I arrived. Within 10 months we had established the art style, created a range of benchmark and in-game assets, and even put together a range of marketing material for the game. During this period, we also expanded the art team from 8 to 13.

Lead Artist – eeGeo Ltd

eeGeo
2011 - 2011

In January of 2011, I began working as Lead Artist at eeGeo Ltd – art directing the games team at the company. We were specifically working on Facebook games – producing a game called ‘Heist’. I was managing 4 artists internally and one off-site outsource contractor. It was very interesting to get an alternative perspective on games production. Our team used Agile and Lean development techniques, and used Kontagent to analyse the games performance data.

Art Director – APB

Realtime Worlds
2008 – 2010

I moved into the role of Art Director on APB midway through the development cycle, and retained that role for 2.5 years, to the completion of the project. I was responsible for the visual quality, consistency and creative direction of all art for the project - in-game, as well as promotional and marketing. The Art Team fluctuated between 30 – 40 artists in this time.

As Art Director, I focused attention on the quality, consistency and direction of the in-game assets – providing guidance and direction on how we could improve the overall aesthetic of the game in order to achieve a high quality, shippable product. I worked directly with Design, Code and Production Leads, creating requirements documentation for new features and visual tech improvements. I was also responsible for delivering the art on schedule. The majority of the final art assets were completed 8 months prior to the ship date.

As well as the core game visuals, I worked directly with Dave Jones (Creative Director) on the vision for the product, helping establish the 'core pillars' which would guide the marketing of the game. From this, I provided an entirely new marketing art vision for the product – creating presentations, style guides and visual direction both for the team, as well as presenting this to our Board of Directors, and distribution partner - EA. I directed and managed the creation of all marketing and promotional material for the game. This included a new product logo, promo videos, screenshots, magazine covers, box art design, trade show displays – as well as numerous other promotional opportunities.

Lead Vehicle Artist – APB

**Realtime
Worlds**
2007 – 2008

As Lead Vehicle Artist, I scheduled, managed and mentored a team of 4 artists. I personally created benchmark assets for the team, and worked closely with the Lead Artist and Concept Team in creating authentic vehicle designs. I worked directly with the Code and Design Teams – providing them with requirements documentation and guidance for both features, and also for establishing the asset creation pipeline. I also created documentation detailing process and asset creation techniques for the artists – as well as setting out the artistic vision for the vehicles. During this time, I also took on some of the duties of Lead Artist – when our Lead Artist was absent.

As a side duty, I directed and created promotional video material for the project, which was used to showcase the game to the public for the first time at GDC 2008.

Senior Artist – APB

**Realtime
Worlds**
2006 – 2007

As a Senior Artist, I worked directly with the Lead Artist on some major developments of the project. I was heavily involved with recruitment and expansion of the team – assessing CV's and portfolios, interviewing, hiring and mentoring. I was involved in all hiring as we built the team from 5 artists to 25 artists.

I was also heavily involved in the setup and running of our outsource solution for props. With the guidance of the Lead Artist, I tested and chose our outsource partner – providing benchmark prop assets and extensive process documentation for asset creation, submissions, approvals and tracking. I was directly involved in the hiring, training and mentoring of the 5 artists who became our Outsource Review Team – and managed this team through the first two batches of asset submissions, to ensure the quality of the results. I then trained another manager to manage the process. I also travelled to Kiev with the Lead Artist to meet with our outsource partner, presenting our expectations to the 15 artists.

Artist – APB

**Realtime
Worlds**
2005 – 2006

During my first year on the project, I was part of a very small Art Team (5 artists) – which essentially did full pre-production and prototyping of most of the major game systems. I worked with the Lead Artist and Lead Technical Artist on defining the character and vehicle customisation systems – creating prototype assets and having strong input into the scope of the feature set, and how the systems would work.

I also worked on rigging and skinning of the character, as well as evaluating facial animation such as Face FX. As part of this small pre-production team, I was heavily involved in the creation of our processes and pipelines – creating documentation, establishing folder structures and naming conventions etc.

Lead Artist

**Caveman
Arts**
2003 – 2005

Caveman Arts was a small 7 person (4 artists) development team, dedicated to creating quality games for mobile phones. As Lead Artist, I was responsible for the direction and production of all artwork at the company. I also worked directly on 2D and 3D assets for the games themselves. We shipped 3 titles, published by Kuju Games.

Education

2001 - 2003
1996 - 2000

BA Computer Arts – University of Abertay Dundee – Passed with Distinction
BA (Hons) Fine Art: Drawing and Painting–University of Dundee – Passed with First Class Honours
- Awarded the Sandra McNeillance Prize for Drawing and Painting

References

Available on request.