

Erik Robson

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As a game designer, my goal is to use my understanding of space, narrative, atmosphere, and the psychology of learning in order to create irresistibly compelling interactive experiences.

SKILLS

*Versed in game design at all levels – level layout, system design and analysis, pacing, PvE and PvP combat balancing, puzzle design and contextualization, narrative integration, usability testing, character dialog, player retention, and all the other nasty bits that managing a game design entails

*Affinity for atmosphere - extensive experience using lighting, visual FX, and sound to capture a mood

*For level and asset creation, experienced with Hammer, Unity, Unreal 5, Maya, and Photoshop

*For documentation and game design work, experienced with Excel, Illustrator, Visio, Word, and The Brain (a mind-mapping utility)

*Scripting experience in C#, Lua, Unreal 5 BP, ECMAScript, and light C++

*Deep practical playtesting experience – I've run hundreds of playtests and post-playtest interviews and organized the results into clear action items for the team

*Excellent verbal and written communication skills with an emphasis on design documentation and upkeep

*Extensive management experience

*Passionate gamer and student of game design across genres and platforms

Designer/artist - Valve Software

At Valve I wore many hats across many projects!

- *Unannounced project (2020-2023): Level design - layouts, lighting, combat encounters, and puzzles

- *Artifact Foundry (2.0 Beta) (2018-2020): Single-player content design and scripting - a full beginner campaign, bonus puzzles/challenges, and a new tutorial

- *Artifact 1.0 (2016-2018): Visual FX - responsible for creating about 2/3 of the spell FX. Some high-level C++ work

- *The Lab (VR) (2014-2016): Lead on the "Secret Shop" and "Solar System" sections - game design, C# scripting, 3D modeling, visual FX, lighting, and lots of VR prototyping. Additional VFX in Slingshot and the Hub

- *Unannounced project (2013-2014): Single-player level design - open world layouts, systemic/modular encounter design, VFX

- *Unannounced project (2013): R&D on an exploration of games in education (and the medium's untapped potential)

- *Team Fortress 2 (2012-2016, providing support on the side): Item mechanics and VFX

- *DOTA 2 (2012-2013): Hero Visual FX - heroes Death Prophet, Dragon Knight, Lifestealer, Shadow Demon, Luna, Undying, KotL, and Medusa

- *CSGO (2011-2012): Visual FX – Weapon feel tuning and all shipping FX (weapon, impact, and environmental)

- *Portal 2 (2010-2011): Level design on 3 maps and lighting & polish on 10 maps

Lead Designer - Double Fine Productions

- *Brutal Legend (2005-2010)

- *Managed a 2-member design team

- *Championed a playability-first production process, honing the mechanics in Unreal while the engine was being built

- *Produced team-facing design documentation

- *Performed quantitative analysis of playtesting data in order to maintain PVE and PVP parity

*Psychonauts (2002-2005)

- *Oversaw a soft reboot of the game's systems and levels
- *Managed a 6-member world-building team
- *Produced extensive documentation for game systems and individual level designs
- *Personally responsible for gray-box layout and lighting most of the game's levels
- *Tim Schafer and I were nominated for a Game Developers Choice Award in Game Design

Lead Designer - 3DO (1999-2002)

- *Lead Designer on Crusaders of Might and Magic (PC), Warriors of Might and Magic (PS2), and Shifters (PS2)
- *Managed and mentored a design team of 4 amidst some very aggressive schedules
- *Team-facing game design documentation
- *Lighting on every level of every game

Level Designer - Cyclone Studios

- *Requiem:Avenging Angel (1998-1999)
 - *Responsible for 5 single-player maps and 2 deathmatch maps
 - *Lit every level in the game
 - *My Power Plant level was chosen as the game's official demo
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