

Ellen "El" Schaefer

Game Designer - Narrative & UI/UX

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Skills

Game Design

- Prototyping - physical and digital
- Playtesting and Iteration
- Design Documenting

Narrative

- Character and Arc Creation
- Worldbuilding
- Interactive Script Writing

UI/UX

- User-Centric Design
- UI Wireframing
- FX Design

Engines

- Unity
- Unreal 4
- Custom Engines

Coding Languages

- C#
- Java

Software

- Figma
- Maya
- Microsoft Office
- Photoshop
- SVN Source Control

Academic Projects

Game Designer – *The Darkworm*, Jan-Apr 2023

2D Action Survival Game, 2-person Team

- Designed gameplay and 5 levels based on cellular automata fluid simulation
- Created UI and effects conveying and supporting gameplay and story
- Guided development with player data collected via 29 surveys and live playtests

Narrative Designer/User Researcher – *Green Reaper*, Aug-Dec 2022

3D Action Game, 23-person Team – *PACE Bellwether Gaming Competition Winner*

- Actively recruited to craft narrative and consult on level & UI design
- Guided development and assessed player engagement from 16 playtests
- 12K+ plays and 150+ positive reviews on Steam, with praise for action and story

Game Designer – *GravitoElectroMagnetism*, Jan-Apr 2021/Sep-Dec 2022

2D Physics Puzzle Game, Solo Project

- Designed and implemented gravity shift mechanic and 10 unique levels
- Crafted a distinct game feel via player interface and audio-visual effects
- Regularly exceeded planned milestones, using additional time for further polish

Narrative/UX Designer – *Anesthesia*, Sep 2021-Apr 2022

3D Puzzle Game, 17-person Team

- Developed and integrated empathetic narrative arc and dialogue into gameplay
- Iterated levels and puzzles based on 20 playtests to create desired atmosphere
- Oversaw environment and UI development for clarity and tonal consistency

Work Experience

Teaching Assistant, DigiPen Institute of Technology

- Cognitive Psychology TA, Jan-Apr 2023
- Introduction to Narrative TA, Sep-Dec 2021
- Introduction to Design TA, Sep-Dec 2020
- Work Lab Supervisor, Sep-Dec 2019

Software Engineering Intern, CDK Global, Jun-Aug 2019

- Prototyped online card game in collaboration with a partner
- Designed and implemented web game UI, controls, and feedback/FX
- Contributed to regular scrums to create a self-guided development plan

Education

DigiPen Institute of Technology, Bachelor of Arts in Game Design, 2019-2023

- Graduated magna cum laude
- 3.7 cumulative GPA
- Minored in English