JAMES ANSWER

TECHNICAL ARTIST

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Over 2 decades of experience in the game industry, using code and art to empower artists and tackle challenging problems. A creative problem solver, having worked on many games that require new ways of working and thinking. Driving and executing custom technology and helping art teams hone their craft.

Broad range of technical and artistic roles covering many aspects of technical art, experience of full development cycles of multiple AAA titles.

Passionate about all things rendering, works closely with rendering teams to drive cutting edge technology appropriate to the game vision.

EXPERIENCE

Spliced Inc. (NetEase)
2024 - present

TECHNICAL ART DIRECTOR

Unannounced Online Game (All major platforms)

- Directing the technical art team on an ambitious, highly varied online title using Unreal Engine 5.
- Working closely with the art team to define and realise stylisation goals including custom shading techniques.
- Customising Unreal Engine to deliver scalable, performant visuals across a large range of devices, from mobile to high-end PC.

Sony PlayStation London Studio
2007 – 2024

LEAD ARTIST / LEAD TECHNICAL ARTIST

Unannounced Urban Fantasy (PS5/PC)

- Built and co-led the art team on an ambitious AAA co-op title.
- Delivered proof of concept visuals for a stylised, premium look running in engine.
- Transitioned the internal Soho engine to an new iteration, fully based around current generation technology including raytracing, SSD and micropolygon.
- Built and led technical art team to deliver new material and GPU particle editors and procedural systems in Houdini.

LEAD TECHNICAL ARTIST

Horizon: Call of the Mountain (PS5)

- Ported extensive material graph code from Horizon: Forbidden West (using Decima engine) to Unreal Engine, including rock, terrain and prop master materials, allowing for re-use between the two projects.
- Implemented improved character lighting models optimized for VR usage

based upon technology developed in Blood & Truth.

Blood & Truth (PS4/PSVR)

- Delivered best-in-class visuals and technology in VR for a widely critically acclaimed game.
- Extensive character rendering improvements to Soho engine, which formed the basis of a Siggraph talk.
- Developed majority of shaders in the game.
- Creating epic city vistas as the backdrop to key moments, using a variety of methods including Houdini generated cityscapes, drone photography and projection mapping.

PRINCIPAL TECHNICAL ARTIST

PlayStation VR Worlds (PS4/PSVR)

- Working on PlayStation VR headsets from the earliest prototypes, defining new rules and best practices for art and technology in the new medium.
- Transitioned studio to physically based lighting, including implementation of lighting code in engine and training of art team in best practices.
- Met strict performance budgets, invented VR specific rendering techniques to improve performance.
- Developed majority of shader library for the game.
- Simplygon integration including pipeline to flatten in-house materials.

Wonderbook – Book of Spells, Book of Potions, Diggs Nightcrawler (PS3)

- All London Studio Wonderbook games including the Harry Potter games Book of Spells and Book of Potions, and supported Diggs Nightcrawler.
- Working in a fast paced innovative environment to create fun and visually impressive experiences using the augmented reality book peripheral.
- Developed bespoke techniques such as ink bleed reveals, portals, filters and other visual tricks.

EyePet / EyePet Move Edition (PS3)

- Developing rendering techniques to integrate high quality real time rendering augmented over live feed camera.
- Created character rig and character animation tooling.
- Contributed towards development of fur rendering and simulation.
- Many bespoke shaders for pet activities, and custom rendering for skin shading and ambient occlusion.

Fuse Games
2004 – 2007

LEAD ARTIST

Metroid Prime Pinball (DS)

- Small team working using the Extreme Programming pair development methodology – learned a lot about agile and game design.
- Created all artwork in game along with three other artists (using 3ds Max).
- Developed tools to crop and pack sprites, and compress full screen animations.

Also worked on **Pokemon Pinball** prototype (unreleased) and **Active Health.**

| Minds Eye Productions 2002 – 2004 | **LEAD TECHNICAL ARTIST** |

Minds Eye Productions
2002 – 2004

LEAD TECHNICAL ARTIST

Starsky and Hutch (PS2, XBOX, PC)

- Developed vertex lighting baking pipeline.
- Created various elements of Maya tooling to handle development of city environments.
- Remodelled existing vehicles and reworked shading.

Starsky and Hutch 2 (unreleased)

- Modelled hero characters and cars.

Cunning Developments
2000 – 2002

ARTIST

Endgame (PS2)

- Modelled and lit environments.
- Developed Maya scripts.

EDUCATION

Bournemouth University
1997-2000

BA COMPUTER VISUALISATION AND ANIMATION

SKILLS

Expert in:

- Technical leadership
- Shader authoring – from node graphs to low level shader code
- Optimisation + Profiling - Razor/Pix, education
- Autodesk Maya (MEL and Python)
- Photoshop
- Unreal Engine

Knowledgeable in:

- Houdini - Procedural modelling, VEX, Python
- Python / C#
- Substance Designer/Painter

Experience in:

- Autodesk 3ds Max

PATENTS

US 11,353703 B2
2022

Image Processing via Multi-sample Anti-aliasing

TALKS AND PUBLICATIONS

SIGGRAPH
4th August 2020

Character Rendering for VR in "Blood & Truth"

Game Developers Conference
7th March 2016

Fast and Flexible – Technical Art and Rendering for the Unknown

Develop Conference
14th July 2010

Pet Tricks: The Technical Art of EyePet