

Benjamin Bauer

or just "Ben"

General Information

Nationality German

Education High School, Vocational School (Media Design)

Languages English, German (Native)

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Key Strengths

- **Creating, Prototyping and Concepting new IPs (5+)**
 - 3 released new AAA IPs and 2+ not released new AAA IPs
- **Game & Creative Direction**
 - Vision, IP holder and creator
 - Art, design, emotions, narrative, realization, etc.
- **Singleplayer Level Design & Direction**
 - Linear, sandbox and open world
 - Systemic and narrative missions including cinematics
- **Leadership**
 - Main writer of Ubisoft Berlin's Leadership Handbook
 - Mentoring leads, directors, and members about leadership
 - Leadership focus on empowering developers
 - Creating resilient, pro-active, and caring teams
 - Breaking down dev-silos to create faster acting units
 - Team building, inspiration, listening, and motivation
- **Analyzing and Directing Playtests**
- **World building**
 - From world vision foundations to final realization
 - Real world-based world logic (inc. history, geo politics, etc.)
 - Fantasy/SciFi campaigns, book writing
- **Game Design**
 - AI behaviors, tactics, classes, weapon balancing, and setup
 - RPG mechanics (progression, classes, abilities, skills, etc.)
 - Boss fights, exotic sequences, experimental, etc.
 - Prototyping (Java Script, visual scripting, card-game, ...)
- **Multiplayer Level Design & Direction**
 - Realistic/believable settings and layouts
 - Round based and continuous respawn game modes
- **Art Direction & Graphics**
 - Art direction: Lighting, env. art, narrative, terrain, etc.
 - Graphical design docs/posters including vector art
 - Concept direction, drawing, and map creation

Known Work Programs

Adobe Audition (limited)	Adobe Photoshop	Marmorset Hexel 3 (limited)	Microsoft Word
Adobe Dreamweaver (limited)	Adobe Premiere Pro	Microsoft Excel	Sketchup
Adobe Illustrator	Adobe Lightroom	Microsoft Outlook	Ubisoft Dunia (limited)
Adobe InDesign	CryEngine Sandbox	Microsoft PowerPoint	Visual Studio Code (Java Script)
Adobe After Effects	GTK Radiant	Microsoft Visio	and more ...

School Education

- 1986 Primary school "Versbach", Würzburg (Germany)
- 1990 Mozart-Gymnasium (secondary/high school) in Würzburg (Germany)
- 2001 Final exam Würzburg (Germany)
- After finishing school I started my alternative/civil service at the "Johanniter Unfall Hilfe KV Würzburg" which I finished in June 2002. Then I made a traineeship in my parent's office as a tax consultant for about five months.
- 2003 Started a German apprenticeship as a print media designer (Crytek)
- 2005 Finished German apprenticeship as a print media designer (Crytek)

Hobbies

- Playing PC games (Indie, mainstream, phone/tablet, ideally with CoOp focus)
- Airsoft (CQB, fire team leading, nightvision, game design, hosting, skirmish, and +24 hour military simulations)
- Geopolitics, modern military history, tactics, and technology
- Having a beer with friends and teammates
- Movies, cinema, and Netflix, etc.
- Reading books (Fantasy and non-fictional military)
- Spending time with wife, cat, and family
- Tabletop roleplay games (Gamemaster, player, writing new game systems, and campaigns)
- Video editing and filming for YouTube channels

FarCry 6 (PC, PS4, PS5, Xbox One, Xbox X/S, Stadia, Luna)

Content Director

Ubisoft Berlin

2018 - 2021

- Core and key studio director for any content development at Ubisoft Berlin and Far Cry 6's Special Operations (Co-Production with Ubisoft Toronto)
- As a Content Director, I was responsible for art, gameplay, and level design direction, including the core direction of all six Special Operations plus concept art, lighting, SFX, level design tech, art tech, etc.
- Ambassador of the Far Cry brand bringing the IP from Toronto and production/design/brand knowledge to the newly founded studio
- Defining, pitching, directing, executing the high-level vision of the Special Operations with the Ubisoft Berlin and the lead studio
- Founding director of the studio in Berlin shaping its culture from the ground up, focusing especially on leadership, diversity, and hiring
- Empowering, mentoring, coaching, and guiding the team to own the mandate
- Build up the local design and content team from the ground up
- Direct report for level design lead, art lead, tech level design lead, tech art lead, concept lead, and other content producing members
- The principal writer of the "Ubisoft Berlin Leadership Handbook".
- I consistently mentored leads and team members, including regular team-wide presentations about the brand, level design, art, leadership, books, etc.



Bauer Design Solutions

Core Member

[YouTube Channel](#)

2016 - now

- Over 2800 subscribers
- The channel is about sharing my thoughts, theories, and concepts regarding world building, game, and level design, or other topics in the future in the spirit of my previous articles.
- Topics like:
 - Open World Coop Level Design
 - Common Stealth Level Design Mistakes
 - High-Level Layout Composition
 - From Abstract Layouts to Specifics
 - The Abstract Deconstruction of de_dust2
 - Level Design Cover 101 - Placement & Mindset
- I've created all the material myself, including vector graphics, pixel art, audio recording, audio editing/cleanup, writing (with editors), animations, video editing, etc.
- My main tools are: Adobe After Effects, Adobe Premiere Pro, Adobe Illustrator, Adobe Audition, and Marmoset Hexel 3



Open World
Coop
Level Design
Guidelines

Common Stealth
Level Design
Mistakes



FarCry 5 (PC, PS4, Xbox One)

Associate Game Director

Ubisoft Toronto

2015 - 2018

- Directing a team of narrative, level design, art, and realization directors
- Directing the entire North of FarCry 5 (~1/3 of the game)
 - All outposts, side and key missions
 - Treasure hunts, Clutch Nixon challenges, etc.
 - From whole world logic to believable location layouts
 - Terrain, biome, atrocities, thematics, etc.
 - Characters like Jacob Seed, Eli, Jess, Judge Wolves, etc.
 - Design and direction of the "Trials" ("Only You ...")
 - World set-dressing and branding (Cheeseburger!)
- Creative vision holder for the Toronto mandate (Co-Production)
- Mentoring a team of directors and leads
- Working directly with the core team in Montreal
- Fishing game design: Direction, design, playtest feedback, etc.
- Working closely with playtest labs



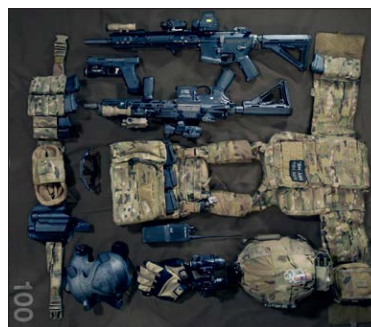
Dark Gray Project

Core Member

[YouTube Channel](#)

2015 - 2018

- Over 2800 subscribers
- The channel is devoted to airsoft footage and only genuine advanced military tactical gear reviews, e.g., night vision, thermals, optics, game design, military simulations, loudouts, etc.
- I'm the core provider of game footage, the leading video and audio editor, and handling forums, Facebook, YouTube, etc.



FarCry Primal (PC, PS4, Xbox One)

Level Design Director

Ubisoft Toronto

2014 - 2015

- Mentoring and guiding four level designers and a lead level designer
- Directed the game and level design of all the Beast Master Hunts from the original idea, conception over prototyping to the final product:
 - "Bloodfang Sabretooth"
 - "Great Scar Bear"
 - "Bloodtusk Mammoth"
 - "Snowblood Dire Wolves"
- The Great Beast Master Hunts were the first real open world missions in FarCry
- Pushed forward the technical challenges with the Technical Director of Level Design
- In charge of the emotional setup and mood of the Great Beast Master Hunts together with art, narrative and sound
- Working close with the lead studio in Montreal
- Analyzing and monitoring live playtests and playtest data



Harvard University

Guest Lecturer

Harvard University

2014

- Two hour long guest lecture for the course "Immersive Landscape: Representation through Gaming Technology" at Harvard University by the course instructors: Chad Oppenheim and Eric de Broche des Combes
- Main topics of my presentation: Mandates of a level designer, personal design and development lessons learned along my career and my sources of inspirations



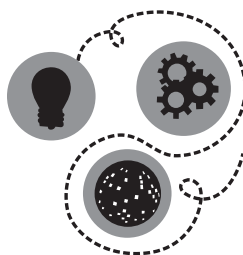
Walt Disney Imagineering Ideation 2014

Panelist

Disney Imagineers LA

2014

- Topic "Playful Environments" where I represented "Digital Game/Level Design"
- Other panelists: Pete Higgins (Immersive Theater), Helle Burlingame (Manufacturer of children's play equipment & think-tank), Gerdo Aquino (Landscape Architecture) and Chad Oppenheim (Architecture)



DISNEY
IDEATION
DRIVEN BY DIVERSITY



Unannounced Projects

Level Design Director

Ubisoft Toronto

2013 - 2014

- Being part of the core team working on the creative direction of a new IP
- Visual design documentation
- Prototyping and designing new game concepts, game loops, level direction, innovative narrative design, technology, etc.
- Card-game prototyping

TOP SECRET
Unannounced Projects

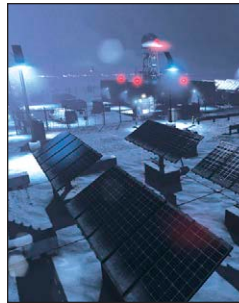
Splinter Cell Blacklist (PC, PS3, Xbox 360)

Level Design Director

Ubisoft Toronto

2011 - 2013

- Being responsible for six level designers
- Directing six single player levels from the creative direction, pre-production till the final product
 - "Safehouse": Benghazi, Libya
 - "Private Estate": Ciudad Del Este, Paraguay
 - "Abandoned Mill": London, UK
 - "Detention Facility": Guantanamo Bay, Cuba
 - "American Fuel (LNG Terminal)": Sabine Pass, USA
 - "American Blood (Site F)": Denver, USA
- Developing project and studio wide level design documentation standard
- Creating and designing entire game progression and its documentation
- Analyzing and monitoring live playtests and playtest data
- Working close with art, story, game design, sound, cutscene team and AI
- Provided geopolitical, tactical, realism and weapon research & support



Dark III

Lead Designer

Private

2009 - now

- Dark III (working title) is an unreleased dark fantasy in space tabletop roleplay game with a unique and deep customizable combat and magic system
- I wrote the entire game system from scratch in addition to character editor, graphics, campaigns and world background with in total over 500 pages so far



Ryse - Codename Kingdoms (Xbox One)

Lead Level Designer

Crytek Hungary

2008 - 2011

- Concepting and prototyping new IP for a Xbox One launch title (1st party Microsoft)
- Being in charge of an up to 10 man level design team
- Creating level design directions and workflows for a new IP and platform
- Guiding and developing iterative level pre-production
- Communicating close with publisher and Frankfurt (head office)
- Training and supporting other Crytek studios (Editor, engine, AI design, optimization)



Crysis Warhead (PC)

Lead Level Designer

Crytek Hungary

2007 - 2008

- Being in charge of an up to 5 man level design team
- Communicated close with Frankfurt (head office) and the publisher (EA)
- Mentoring and build up the level design department of the new Crytek Budapest studio
 - CryEngine and Sandbox Editor coaching
 - Crysis design (level and game design) teaching
 - Organization and scheduling support
- Responsible for the overall single player level experience and quality
 - Writing level design documents
 - Script and art implementation
 - Art and level performance optimizations
 - Cutscene, sound and story support
- Responsible for shipping all levels on time within the expected quality
 - Supported the new project manager (not a single milestone slipped)
 - Reached the expected Metacritic score
 - Helped to establishing agile development in the studio



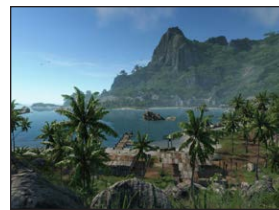
Crysis 1 (PC)

Senior Level Designer

Crytek Germany

2005 - 2007

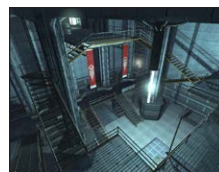
- Part of the core team to create a new IP
- Senior responsibilities:
 - Set standard for Crysis sandbox level design
 - Responsible for human AI and weapon design
 - Game wide performance optimizations
 - Coaching junior level designers
 - Interviewing level design candidates
 - Lead level designer substitute
- Being in charge of the following levels:
 - "Village" (All scripts & art, start to finish)
 - "Rescue" (All scripts & art, start to finish)
 - "Island" (Combat & cover design, AI scripts)
 - "Harbor" (Combat & cover design, AI scripts)
 - "Tank" (Combat & cover design, AI scripts)
 - "Mine" (Combat & cover design, AI scripts)
- Game design
 - Being in charge of the human AI behaviors and mechanic design
 - Working close with AI and game coders
 - Weapon balancing and realism expert working with art
- R&D and tool support
 - Working close with R&D regarding performance optimization, engine features and "Sandbox Editor" tools plus level design workflows
 - Held presentations for engine licensees
- SCRUM master



Crytek FarCry Multiplayer Map Pack

Level Designer Crytek Germany 2004

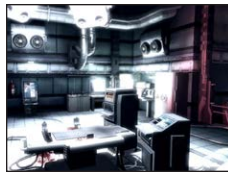
- I created three FarCry multiplayer maps for an official map pack from start to finish (indoor & outdoor)
- They were specifically tailored to tournament and clan matches with the primary goal for balance and being well tweaked



Crytek & ATI Techdemo 2004 "Machinima"

Level Designer Crytek Germany 2004

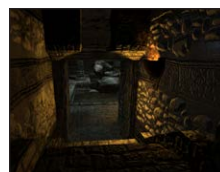
- It was a 5 minute video showing the power of the new ATI graphic card using the CryEngine 1
- I created the scenery and light setup based on concept art and storyboards



Crytek GDC Demo 2004

Level Designer Crytek Germany 2004

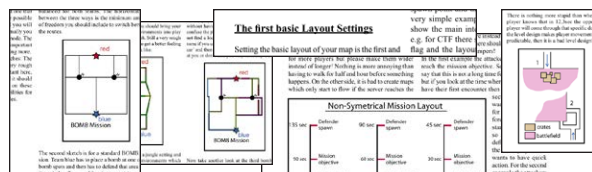
- Implementation and presentation of the latest features of the CryEngine 1 in a 3D tech showcase for GDC 2004
- My main focus were dynamic light, shader, polybump, physic and other indoor features



"Ben's small Bible of realistic Multiplayer Level Design"

Writer Article 2004

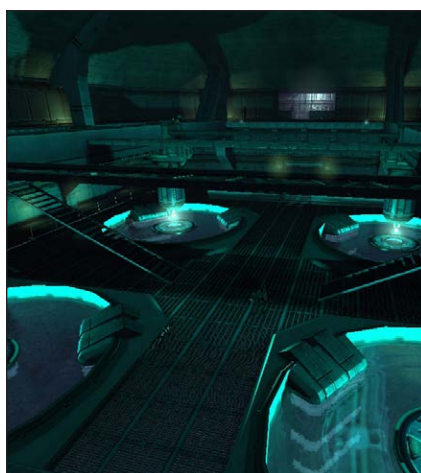
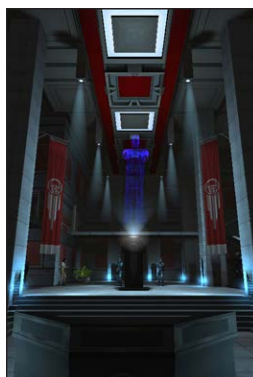
- The article describes how to make a multiplayer level from scratch to the end for a realistic setting
- It became an often referenced paper for many level designers all around the world



FarCry 1 (PC)

Level Designer Crytek Germany 2003 - 2004

- Being in charge of the following levels:
 - "Training" (Tutorial, script & art, start to finish)
 - "Archive" (Script & art, start to finish)
 - "Cooler" (Script & art, start to finish)
 - "Catacombs" (Script & art rework to final)
 - "Factory" (Art, start to finish)
 - "Volcano" (Script & art, rework to final)
- Multiplayer level design
- Game design
 - AI behavior design
- Light, art quality, gameplay, AI passes for all levels



"Art'n'Leveldesign"

Writer

Article

2003

- The article describes my opinion that art and emotions are an important factor in level design compared to common design



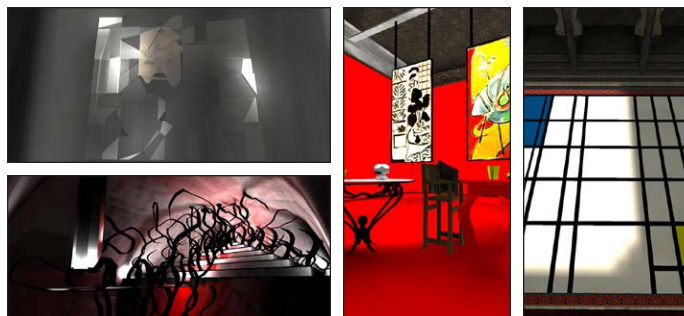
"A virtual museum of the 20th century"

Student

School Project

2001

- This is school project was part of my final exam at the end of secondary high school in Bavaria (Germany)
- The goal was to create a virtual museum which reinterprets the art of the 20th century with the Quake3Arena 3D engine
- The transformation to 3D allows new perspectives, intension and completely new interpretations compared to the previous artist
- Some were fresh new art "installations" about a specific style instead of a specific piece of art or artist



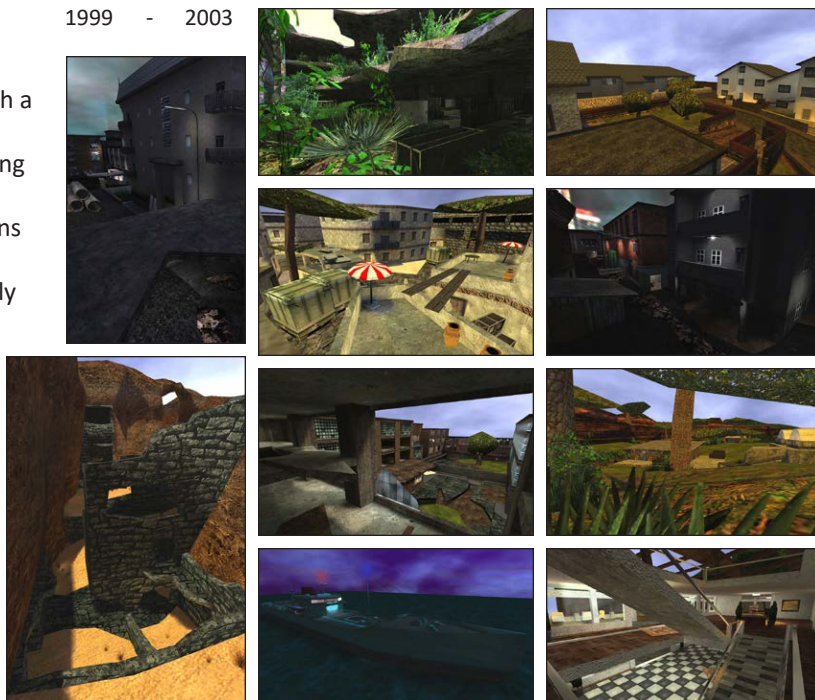
Navy Seals : Covert Operations (PC)

Lead Level Designer

Team Mirage

1999 - 2003

- Award winning Quake 3 Mod
- NS:CO is a round based, multiplayer, tactic shooter with a unique RPG layer:
 - Player gain experience points while playing increasing stats like accuracy, strength, stealth, stamina, etc.
 - Increasing certain stats also unlocks specific weapons and attachments
 - The player can distribute his experience points freely
 - Therefore each round all the players develop in unknown and exciting ways
- Level Design
 - Created +16 multiplayer levels
 - Mentoring freelancer and junior level designers
- Game design
 - RPG experience point design
 - Weapon & class balancing
 - Realism advisor
 - Core design and documents
- Shader artist/scripter
- Texture artist



Navy Fortress (PC)

Lead Level Designer

Team Mirage

1998 - 1999

- A Quake 2 Mod which was the first to combine classes (like Team Fortress) with a realistic tactic shooter



Misc unreleased Private Level Design Projects

Private

Private

1994 - 1998

- AD&D Dungeon Builder, Duke Nukem 3D, Quake 1, Quake 2, etc.
- They were never releases publicly, only shared among family and friends



Misc unreleased Tabletop Roleplay Games

Private

Private

1990 - 1998

- After my 10th birthday I started to write tabletop roleplay games on a typewriter
- They were never releases publicly, just for family and friends

