

River Vondi

(they/them)

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EDUCATION

Lindenwood University – St. Charles, MO

Bachelor of Arts in Game Design

Expected: Fall 2025

WORK EXPERIENCE

Lead + Senior Level Designer

TransmogriFY, Odyssey Entertainment, Remote

July 2022 – April 2023

- Led the level design team – 1 level artist, 2 junior level designers, and myself – to **update and polish all 76 levels in the game**
- Mentored the other 2 level designers, **providing feedback** on their work and guiding them on **level design best practices**
- **Advanced existing levels through the level design development pipeline** by **refining and iterating** upon the puzzles, flow and progression
- Evaluated the progression and flow within the 76 existing levels and analyzed how they related to the surrounding levels within and between the 4 worlds
- Completed moderate redesigns to 17 levels, major redesign on 12 levels, and completely scratched and **rebuilt 2 levels in the Godot game engine** which **significantly improved the game's progression and flow**
- Edited 28 additional levels with minor improvements to cohesiveness, fixes to broken puzzles, and minor touches to improve polish
- **Provided guidance and instructions to other level designers** for improvement on the remaining 17 levels
- **Collaborated cross-department** with team members from development, art, and audio
- Worked with the Game Director to make **design improvements to existing enemies** in World 4 to better improve the evolution of mechanics and difficulty
- **Communicated issues to developers** on broken mechanics and systems, and **collaborated to find solutions**
- Assisted with project management by monitoring progress of tasks on other development teams and **effectively delegating assignments**
- Utilized a Kanban-like approach set by the Game Director to keep the project's Trello board up-to-date with current, in-progress, and completed tasks
- Contributed to narrative design to flesh out the existing story, creating new voice lines for two key characters to support the new direction of the storyline
- **Collaborated with the Game Director on the completion of the narrative** to interweave the narrative elements into new and existing levels so as to create **meaningful context to the challenges and puzzles**
- **Updated level design documents**, narrative design documents, and the developer's README
- **Advocated for colorblind-friendly design elements**, and researched and implemented color changes based upon my research

QA Tester

Skator Gator 3D, Weathered Sweater, Remote

July 2022 – March 2023

TECHNICAL SKILLS

Unreal Engine 4

Godot 3.4/5

Krita

Blender

BitBucket

SourceTree

Trello

Discord Server Management and Creation

Corel VideoStudio 2020

StreamLabs OBS

OBS Studio

Twitch

MS Office Word

MS Office Excel

MS Office PowerPoint

Webflow

- Playtested the game to find bugs
- Documented bugs on a Google Doc including procedures for reproduction
- **Recorded playtest sessions with OBS Studio** while providing feedback based on level design observations and other gameplay issues

Level Designer and Community Manager

April 2022 – June 2022

Bang! Howdy, Affliction Networks, Remote

- Identified maps for the cooperative mode that needed balance changes/updates
- Analyzed the reasons why these maps were incorrectly balanced to successfully bring them in-line with the difficulty of the other maps
- Collaborated with team members to ideate improvements to unbalanced maps
- **Play-tested updated maps** to ensure proper balance
- **Iterated on layouts** until the map was successfully adjusted
- Transformed select competitive mode maps to accommodate 2-player co-op gameplay by adjusting spawn points of enemies, players, powerups, and protection objectives
- **Designed brand-new maps** for 3-player and 4-player cooperative mode using the in-house level designer application as well as **Krita for paper iterations** and heightmap creation and modifications
- Playtested new changes to the game and reported bugs to the developer
- Designed new maps specifically for an “unlocked” single player hard-mode version of the cooperative mode for the purpose of a tournament for the community
- Updated the Steam capsule/banner/etc. so that it would have a more modern visual appeal
- Hosted live streams on Twitch for the purpose of community building
- Overhauled the Discord server to be more user friendly, while also incorporating game elements into the server, such as the roles reflecting the ranking system in-game
- **Engaged the community on Discord** and kept a pulse check on the community and its trends

Customer Service Manager

September 2016 – December 2019

Walmart, Decatur, IL and Savoy, IL

- Regularly interacted with a diverse range of customers, addressing their needs and resolving their issues
- Handled customer complaints and found solutions to various problems, demonstrating **strong problem-solving skills**
- **Collaborated with a team** to ensure smooth front-end operations and a high level of customer satisfaction
- Adapted to a fast-paced retail environment, **managing multiple tasks simultaneously and responding to changing priorities**
- Delegated responsibilities according to each associates’ strengths and weaknesses
- Communicated with other Customer Service Managers to assure a smooth flow of front-end operations
- **Identified trends** in products based upon social media trends or even local trends to predict an increase in YoY profits on the product
- **Communicated with internal stakeholders about problems** in other departments that were affecting the front-end’s productivity

PERSONAL PROJECTS (2015-2018)

3D Maze Designs

- **Initiated a self-learning project** focused on game development and design, with a specific emphasis on level design and player guidance techniques within 3D maze environments
- **Designed and implemented a series of increasingly complex 3D mazes using Unreal Engine 4**, incorporating a variety of mechanics such as elevators and secret triggers to enhance gameplay

- Utilized **Blender for 3D modeling** of maze walls and decorative elements, Krita for art creation, and Substance for normal map generation
- **Conducted iterative design based on user feedback, employing questionnaires** to assess player experience and the effectiveness of design techniques in guiding players to the mazes' endings
- **Successfully improved player navigation and reduced confusion** in each iteration, demonstrating a strong commitment to user-centered design principles
- Introduced new gameplay mechanics with each maze iteration, effectively balancing complexity and player guidance without overt handholding
- Created these mechanics utilizing **Unreal Engine 4's Blueprint Visual Scripting system**

House Puzzle Game – World, Level, and Environment Design

- Worked on a personal project to create an **interactive, exploration-based game** inspired by the gameplay of The Stanley Parable, demonstrating creativity and initiative in game design
- Designed an intricate floor plan for an expansive house setting, complete with secret doors, rooms, and specific decorations, showcasing **attention to detail and spatial design skills**
- Utilized Unreal Engine for game development, further enhancing proficiency with the engine and gaining experience with its lighting tools
- Included purchased 3D models and art assets into the game for **set dressing**

3D Modeling Experience

- Initiated a personal journey into 3D modeling, starting with **self-guided exploration of Blender** and progressing to more **structured learning through tutorials**
- Developed a range of 3D models, starting with simple swords and character heads, and advancing to more complex and realistic models, including a well-crafted character body and detailed sword models
- Gained knowledge of texture painting within Blender and Substance to enhance the realism and visual appeal of my models
- Learned and applied UV mapping techniques, including creating seams and unwrapping the model's meshes, to successfully import UV maps into Unreal Engine
- Utilized a variety of tools within Blender to improve the quality and efficiency of my 3D modeling process
- **Created basic props** for personal game projects, demonstrating the ability to create 3D assets that contribute to a cohesive game environment
- Utilized **Unreal Engine 4's Blueprint Visual Scripting system** to hook up pre-purchased animations to the default character model to visualize my 3D modeled swords in action