Mathias Neukam

Senior Level/Game Designer

Experienced **Designer** with a strong track record in crafting engaging gameplay experiences, including work on critically acclaimed stealth strategy titles such as <u>Desperados 3</u> and the most recent <u>Shadow Gambit: The Cursed Crew</u>.

My projects consistently earned high praise, with **outstanding press reviews** and **overwhelmingly positive** Steam scores. These accomplishments are driven by my skills in problem-solving, communication, teamwork, attention to detail, adaptability and understanding of player psychology.

Contact

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Address
Rotwandstraße 3, 81539 Munich

Education

2011-2013
Bachelor of Science in Game Design
Media Design University

2000-2009
A-Levels
St. Thomas Gymnasium Wettenhausen

Expertise

- **Level Design** (Blocking, Layout)
- **Game Design** (Concepts, Mechanics**)**
- **Visual Scripting**
- **Cutscenes** (Ownership, Direction)
- **Quality Assurance**
- **Tools:** Unity 3D, JIRA, Confluence, Premiere, Davinici Resolve, Excel

Language

German (native)

English

French

Experience

2024 - Current Employer
Aesir-Interactive | Munich
Senior Level Designer

2017-2023
Mimimi Games | Munich
Senior Level Designer

My responsibilities at Mimimi Games included:

- **Level Design:** Developed game levels from concept to implementation, ensuring engaging stealth gameplay and challenges
- **Visual Scripting:** Created and scripted in-game cutscenes, dialogues, objectives and logic systems for storytelling
- **Enemy** and **Puzzle Design**: Balanced enemy placements and designed puzzles to enhance gameplay dynamics, as well as tweaking difficulty modes
- **Adaptive Level Design**: Adapted to various level structures, including semi-open world formats, to offer diverse player experiences and choices

2013-2017
Klonk UG | Munich
Game & Level Designer

- **Level and Game Design** for the project Shift Happens a puzzle platformer, alongside mutliple contract work in the interactive media
- **Editted** and **cut** the trailers for **Shift Happens**
- **Communications** on Social Media Channels for Klonk UG and Shift Happens

2012
ÈNDI | Québec City
Level & Level Designer

- Internship for 3 months abroad where I was entrusted with the **Game Design and Level Design** for two projects

References

Johannes Roth
CEO, Mimimi Games

Email
j.roth@mimimi.games

Moritz Wagner
Head of Design, Mimimi Games

Email
m.wagner@mimimi.games

Projects

2023

Shadow Gambit
Mimimi Games
Stealth Strategy
■ ▲

2021

ST: Aikos Choice
Mimimi Games
Stealth Strategy
■ ▲

2020

Desperados3
Mimimi Games
Stealth Strategy
■ ▲

2017

Shift Happens
Klonk UG
Puzzle Platformer
■ ▲

2016

Steampumpkins
USM
Android App
◆ ■ ▲

2014

Calli Clever
Lernspaß f. Kinder
Learn Application
▲

Spike
BTS
Rollercoaster App
◆ ■ ▲

2013

Energie Interaktiv
Deu. Museum
Learn Application
◆

Future Factory
Airbusgroup
Info Video
◆ ▲

2012

Draw Cowboy
ÉNDI, Québec
Android/IOS App

Gear Runner
Platformer
ÉNDI, Québec
◆ ■ ▲

Outline

Genre
Top-Down Stealth
Strategy

Platforms
PC, XBOX, PS5

LD Team Size
3 Senior, 1 Junior

Role
Level Design
Cutscene Direction

Engine
Unity 3D

Release
2023/08/17

Details
Playtime: 25-35hrs
Locations: 8
Missions: 24

Links
Steam
Website
Trailer

My Responsibilities

My role included the following

- **Blocking:** Space Layout, Level Flow, Points of Interest
- **Scripting:** Mission Objectives, Dialogues, Mission Logic
- **Cutscenes:** Direction, Cameras, Scripting
- **Enemy Setups:** Puzzle Design

The biggest challenge of Shadow Gambit compared to our previous titles was the transition from a very linear design to a very open location centric design. Players now have the choice to bring whatever crew member they like as well as have a set of predefined spawn points to choose from.

This meant we had to give up a lot of control over where players come from and what toolset (characters) they bring with them. Thats why instead of levels that players only visit one time per playthrough, we built **big locations** where **multiple missions** take place in different areas.

In addition to level design I overlooked **all cutscenes**, did the **camera work** as well as the **cutscene direction** for key plot moments. All cutscenes are a combination of Unity timeline and Gameplay Scripting in our Visual Editor. We roughly differentiate between Gameplay and Story Cutscenes.

YT-Link: Shadow Gambit Level Design Insights

Quotes & Reviews

"Shadow Gambit is a peak example of the stealth tactics genre from a studio that is clearly mastering its craft[..]."
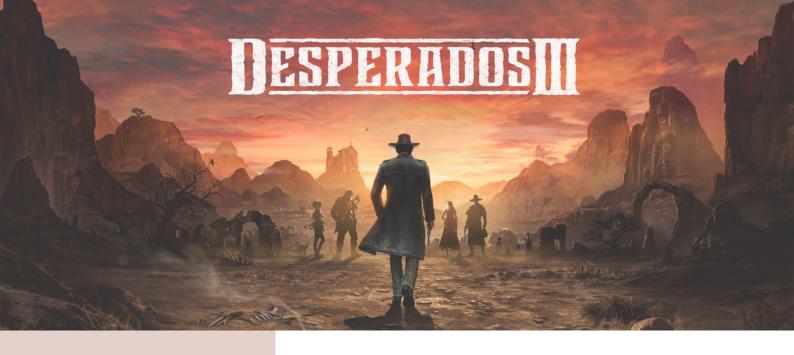**IGN Review - 9/10**

"Each island feels like a testament to Mimimi's dioramic level design, which not only accounts for different objectives with different insertion points for your crew, but also for different traversal options based on your particular squad."
Polygon Review

"Shadow Gambit: The Cursed Crew takes Mimimi's talent for devious level design and dastardly challenge to another level."
God is a Geek Review - 100/100

DESPERADOS III

Outline

Genre
Top-Down Stealth
Strategy

Platforms
PC, XBOX, PS5

LD Team Size
3 Level Designers

Role
Level Design
Cutscene Direction

Engine
Unity 3D

Release
2020/06/16

Details
Playtime: 20-30hrs
Missions: 16 +3 DLCs
Headhunter Missions: 12

Links
Steam
Website
Dev-Trailer (done by me)

My Responsibilities

My role included the following

- **Blocking:** Space Layout, Level Flow, Points of Interest
- **Scripting:** Mission Objectives, Dialogues, Mission Logic
- **Cutscenes:** Direction, Cameras, Scripting
- **Enemy Setups:** Puzzle Design

I joined Mimimi shortly after the Pre-Alpha phase, approximately six months into development. I designed two complete missions from scratch: *Mississippi River* and *Las Piedras*. I also worked on several other missions, including *Casa Devitt*, *O'Hara Ranch*, *New Orleans*, *Docks* and *On the Hunt*. In these missions, I iterated on existing **blockouts** and handled **scripting** (objectives, dialogues, logic), **cutscenes**, **enemy setups**, and **level flow**.

I took responsibility for game's cutscenes, overseeing almost all of them in the game. This included **scripting**, **implementation**, and **polishing**. I was also deeply involved in **camera work**.

For the game's **DLCs**, I worked on all cutscenes and all relevant aspects such as blocking and scripting, particularly in the DLC mission *The Eagle's Nest*. Additionally I designed 4 out of 12 headhunter missions for the DLC, which featured quirky and funny ideas on existing levels.

YT Link: Designing Enemy Setups

Quotes & Reviews

Accolades Trailer

"Desperados III is without a doubt one of the most tightly-crafted stealth games I've played in recent years."
God Is a Geek Review - 95/100

"Some of the best real time tactics of this generation."
Polygon Review

"One of the best games I have played all year."
Dualshockers Review - 9/10

SHADOW TACTICS: BLADES OF THE SHOGUN — AIKO'S CHOICE

Outline

Genre
Top-Down Stealth Strategy

Platform
PC

LD Team Size
3 Level Designers

Role
Level Design
Cutscene Direction

Engine
Unity 3D

Release
2021/12/06

Details
Development: 6 months
Playtime: 8-10hrs
Missions: 3 full, 3 small

Links
Steam
Trailer

My Responsibilities

My role included the following

- **Blocking:** Space Layout, Level Flow, Points of Interest
- **Scripting:** Mission Objectives, Dialogues, Mission Logic
- **Cutscenes:** Direction, Cameras, Scripting
- **Enemy Setups:** Puzzle Design

Similar to my work on the Desperados 3 DLCs, I designed 1.5 missions. There were also smaller in-between missions exploring storytelling without gameplay.

The missions I worked on for **level design** are *Reunion at Nagoya* and the *Epilogue*. I too did all the relevant **cutscene work** for the whole standalone expansion, like **camera**, **scripting** and **direction**.

The biggest challenge for the DLC was the fact that we had to come back to a way older version of unity and therefore very old outdated tools that had gotten big improvements for Desperados 3. That meant a lot of processes were way slower and more complicated but we still managed to develop the whole thing in three months.

Quotes & Reviews

"These abilities are so fun to find new uses for, and these levels are so good looking and cleverly designed, that I felt like I had an appetite for a dozen more."
IGN Review - **9/10**

"A masterful, methodical journey through the shadows of Edo Japan – brilliantly polished and perfectly paced, my only real sadness is that there was not more of it."
Well-Played Review - **95/100**

"The missions in between are 'travel' missions, and are really a surprising highlight."
Gamingtrend Review - **90/100**

Outline

Genre
Co-Op Puzzle Platformer

Platforms
PC, XBOX1, PS4, Switch

LD Team Size
2 Level Designers

Role
Level & Game Design
Trailer
Communications

Engine
Unity 3D

Release
2020/07/05

Details
Development: 3yr.(on/off)
Playtime: 10hrs
Level: 42 co-op,
32 singleplayer

Links
Steam
Website
Trailer (done by me)

My Responsibilities

My role included the following

- **Game & Level Design:** Conception, Mechanics, Blockouts, Puzzle Design
- **Scripting:** Camera POIs, Level Trigger
- **Trailer:** Recording Footage, Cutting, Editing

Shift Happens is a **cooperative puzzle platformer** for two people. Players can change their mass, throw each other around and solve puzzles in four different stylized worlds.

The concept of Shift Happens arose from the core mechanic of Mercury Shift 2D and was brought from Flash to the Unity 3D Engine. It was then produced in our self-founded company Klonk with a team of 10 people. The USP of Shift Happens is the focus on cooperation that presented a special challenge for Game and Level Design. That is why the singleplayer features a completely different set of puzzle-oriented levels.

My field of activity in Shift Happens consisted of developing the **concept** of a true co-op game and the **creation** and **testing of blockouts** and **puzzles** via an inhouse editor. Communicating with the team as well as representing the game on events were also tasks that I did. Other responsibilities were **cutting gameplay trailers** and **community management** on Steam Early Access.

YT Link: Shift Happens - a 5 year evolution

Awards & Recognition

Winner Best Game at the FilmFest München, "White Elephant",
Child-Media-Awards 2016

Winner Best Gamedesign
and Best Kids Game
German Video Game Awards 2016

Thimbleweed Park

- **Genre:** Point & Click Adventure
- **Engine:** Ron Gilbert's and David Fox's Engine
- **Platforms:** Android and iOS, Windows, Xbox One
- **Duration:** 5 months

Thimbleweed Park is a classic Point & Click Adventure developed by Ron Gilbert and Gary Winnick launched by a Kickstarter Campaign.

My task was to **playtest** the game on Windows and Xbox One involving all the relevant **Xbox Requirements (XR's)** and to **track bugs via FogBugz**.

Steampumkins

- **Genre:** Geo Artillery Game
- **Engine:** Unity 3D
- **Platforms:** Android and iOS
- **Duration:** 6 months
- **Gameplay**

My task in Steampumpkins was to **analyse an existing concept** and **prototype** and improve it in order to make it more enjoyable to play. I was responsible for the **conception** of new as well as reiteration of existing **mechanics**, **balancing** and **customer contact**.

Draw Cowboy

- **Genre:** Rail-Shooter with Drawing
- **Engine:** Unity 3D
- **Platforms:** Android Tablets and iOS
- **Duration:** 8 weeks
- **Gameplay**

My tasks consisted of designing **features** and **mechanics** for the game, **balancing the drawing-recognition system**, as well as communicate with the team on a daily basis. Additionally I had to hold weekly **presentations** in front of our committee.

Draw Cowboy was the most successful Project of the ÉNDI so far. After the last milestone, the rights for the project were sold to Frima Studio Inc.